

Workers' fight

3p

No. 69. — Sept. 14th to Sept. 21st 1974.

**SUPPORT CHILEAN
RESISTANCE!
DEMONSTRATE 15th
Assemble lpm, Hyde Park**

TORY MANIFESTO—JUST THE OLD WEAPONS...

THE AXE & THE CUDGEL

THE Tories' election manifesto has got off to a ragged start. It has been overshadowed by the promises of massive unemployment and welfare cuts from Sir Keith Joseph and calls for a patriotic vigilante force by Geoffrey Rippon; and then leaked before time.

It is the manifesto of a party which can see that the social system it defends is crumbling.

The newest things in it are the humbled tone in which it looks at the Industrial Relations Act and the even more plaintive appeal to Jeremy Thorpe and his Liberal lilliputians.

"We will invite people from outside the ranks of our party to join with us in overcoming Britain's difficulties. The nation's crisis should transcend party differences", says the manifesto.

The main stress of the

document, however, is on the problem of inflation. A price stabilisation programme, it says, "will use every tolerable (?) means available to fight inflation. We will rigorously cut public spending (though they warn there will be tax increases) and the money supply and there must be restraint in prices and incomes. Because of the economic crisis there will be no room for any early improvement in living

standards."

And how is this standstill — or, as it will really be, a fall — in living standards to be enforced? In an amazing bit of doublespeak the Tories warn they will enforce "voluntary" (?) wage restraint by law — "we shall need to support the voluntary restraint that is achieved with the back-up of the law".

And the Tories promise to stop social security payments to strikers' families and to "seek ways to regulate the conduct of picketing".

STAGNATES

The Tories say that the "strict arrangements adopted by the National Union of Mineworkers in February 1974" (i.e. splitting up pickets into small groups — no more than six at a time — discouraging any militancy) will be their basis for regulating pickets. There couldn't be a clearer example of how this sort of "moderation" and "restraint" practised by the NUM plays into the Tories' hands.

So, as taxes rise, as unemployment soars, as low pay stagnates, as wages are held down, and as social services are cut, we are told to stand around straining only to haul the rich out of their crisis.

If we do try to exert ourselves further, then we are likely to be faced by a revamped "Public Order Act 1936 to... control processions and demonstrations".

HARMLESS

As far as Ireland and the question of immigration are concerned, there is no change on either. "Ulster is part of the UK", we are told; and there is a reaffirmed commitment to "strictly limited immigration" on the no doubt narrower basis of a new "British nationality law".

There is one ray of brightness which shines like a rising sun through the whole dismal, anti-working class document. It is the one paragraph printed in bold type. It says: "We do not believe that the great majority of people want revolutionary change in society, or for that matter that the future happiness of society depends on completely altering it".

Ten years ago any smooth, modern Tory would have told you that revolutionaries were a weird, harmless lunatic fringe, living in the past. Today the Tory manifesto anxiously bends itself to refuting revolutionary views. Times are changing. Any worker inclined to think that socialist revolution is a hopeless ideal had better take new hope from this.

VOTE LABOUR AND PREPARE TO FIGHT!

**...and a heavy
dose of
chloroform**



A black soldier guards a Portuguese child on a train. It is such soldiers, who have been part of the colonial army, that in some cases are siding with the whites.

MOZAMBIQUE ARMY WAVERS AS RIOTING GROWS

THE Lusaka agreement between Frelimo and the Portuguese government granting independence for April 1975 has brought about the expected violent white backlash in Mozambique.

Shortly after the announcement came, the white reactionary groupings, especially in the southern port of Lourenco Marques, tried to take over. With the initial help, or at least neutrality, of the Portuguese armed forces and the police, they took over strategic points for several days. The white settler population came out in strength realising that the next weeks would be the last chance to stop Black independence under a Frelimo government.

RIOTING

After several days of radio announcements, demonstrations, looting and rioting, but above all growing signs that the heavily pro-Frelimo black population would take action

against the putschists themselves, the Army was ordered in to stop the attempted coup. Spinoza's military advisors, who had flown in only a few days earlier, gave the orders to put the settlers down.

BLOODBATH

For Lisbon is now very eager to fulfil the Lusaka agreement. It has already concluded a favourable agreement for the independence of Guinea Bissau with the PAIGC, and that country was freed of at least formal Portuguese occupation on September 12th. Now, Spinoza wants to conclude a similar peace with the independence fighters of Mozambique. He wants a stable Frelimo provisional government (in which the Portuguese are represented) he wants to avoid a racial bloodbath (which would have repercussions both in Angola and Portugal itself); but above all he wants to create a new

relationship with a black-governed Mozambique.

Portugal and its imperialist allies, including Britain, still have their large investments in the country, not least in the strategic Cabora Bassa dam. It wants to maintain these investments. And the imperialist powers hope that Frelimo's "goodwill" in this matter will mean they can continue exploiting Mozambique.

SETTLERS

Certainly for the next few weeks, if not months, the fighting will continue. The white settlers, caught in the contradictions of Portugal's colonial career, will fight a rearguard action. And if the outcome in Mozambique is still uncertain, then civil war is yet more likely in the much richer colony of Angola, where the interests of South African capitalism are correspondingly greater.

Clive Bane

ation and rationalisation. Confrontations if necessary — but conciliation first.

It is on the basis of this supposed "lesser evil" that the Labour leaders are united. It is called the Social Contract.

Labour's programme — the Social Contract — is an anti-working class programme. It is not even a lesser evil, except from the most blind short-term point of view.

But it is quite clear that the question of what policies the next government will have, and exactly how much it will bend to working class pressure, is of serious importance to the working class. It is a fact that millions of workers, knowing that the Labour Party was founded by the working class and rests on the trade unions, will want to put the Labour Party in power and put pressure on it to defend workers' interests.

What socialists must do is campaign for the policies — including a sliding scale of wages, work or full pay, and workers' self defence — needed to defend workers' interests. We must fight for them inside the Labour movement (which will mean against the Labour leadership) — coupling our fight with a

VOTE LABOUR AND PREPARE TO FIGHT.

UNDERNEATH the bluster and cries of electioneering, an important struggle on the wages front is quietly warming up.

Most existing threshold agreements expire in November. In the negotiations for new agreements employers are trying as hard as they can to get rid of threshold clauses.

Many militants — the Liverpool dockers, for example — are, however, pressing for cost of living increases to be continued. The reasons are simple enough. Price rises are becoming steeper and steeper. It's past the point where the effect of price rises could be absorbed in a routine manner during regular wage negotiations every year or so. Even in a few months, price increases can take up to £5 off the real value of wages.

Some generalised method is needed to come to terms with this problem of rising prices. Workers know very well, by now, that government "price control" schemes are just a sham. In fact, under capitalism, they are bound to be a sham.

AUTOMATIC

Since government price controls can't be relied on, automatic cost-of-living increases are the obvious way to defend working class living standards. The policy of automatic cost of living increases also provides a basis on which large sections of workers can be united, instead of each

by
Chris Reynolds

workplace or union or industry fighting its own solitary battle against rising prices with its own particular demands. Normal wage increase demands necessarily vary widely in form and content from place to place or from industry to industry. A demand for cost of living increases can be uniform and unifying for the whole working class.

Campaigns can — and should — be carried on in trade unions for the union leaderships and the TUC to commit themselves to the demand for cost-of-living increases. Further, in the

A SLIDING SCA OF WAGES

unions, in Labour election meetings, and in our propaganda, we should push the demand for the Labour government to bring in legally-binding cost of living increases, to apply to everyone, unionised or not, and to apply to all state grants and benefits as well as to wages.

Every government trying to bring in incomes policy always makes a great show of "caring for the lower paid", though the

benefit of the incomes policy always goes to the most highly paid, the capitalists.

We should take this argument away from them. We should show that it is only the labour movement that will really do anything about the lower-paid, by building support for the demand for a £30 National Minimum Wage for everyone — including pensioners, the unemployed, etc. This minimum should increase automatically to keep

pace with the cost of living.

The need for cost of living increases becomes very clear when you look at an example. Suppose you have a basic rate, at present, of £40 per week. Prices are rising at about 20% per year. Since about one-third of the apparent value of any wage increase is lost in increased taxes, you need about 30% or £12, increase over one year to keep pace.

A cost of living escalator on the present basis of 40p for each 1% (but with a zero, not a 7% threshold) would give £8 increase over the year. 60p for each 1% would give more adequate cover, with a £12 increase over the year. A flat rate increase on top of that is then a real increase.

A flat rate increase of 30% would cover price rises — if the rate of price increases is 20% and if you actually win the 30%. If prices were to rise 24% over the year — hardly impossible! — you would be £2.40 per week out of pocket by the end of the year on the basis of a simple flat rate increase.

FORBIDS

There is also the problem that some workers will be unwilling to fight hard for 30% now on the grounds that they'll need the money in twelve months' time. Offered 15 or 20% most workers will naturally take it. But even the most un-militant worker can see the need for some agreement to give protection against price increases.

Of course, no trade unionist should sign an agreement which forbids reopening wage negotiations before 12 months are up — and any trade unionists who find they have had such an agreement signed for them should certainly ignore it.

But it's better to concentrate your forces for a struggle for one agreement really coming to terms with price rises, than attempt a straggling struggle to keep up by piecemeal increases. It also puts you in a better position in the likely event of a new government imposing a wage freeze. They may not dare to include already-signed cost of living agreements in the freeze; and

if they do you're in a far better position to fight them. Workers who might accept a simple freeze for the good of the "national interest" will be far less tolerant of a freeze that seeks to take back increases already agreed on.

The argument sometimes used in favour of cost of living increases, that they enable you to keep up living standards without constant struggle, is not true though. Even once you have won a satisfactory agreement — and that needs a fight! — there will still be struggles to renew it, to stop the employers twisting the agreement or going back on it, and to stop the government freezing it.

MILITANCY

The same argument is sometimes turned upside down and used as an argument against cost of living increases. Cost of living agreements would, so the argument goes, defuse class struggle and stabilise capitalism, so socialists should oppose them.

If this argument was true, then we could do nothing about it anyway. If the capitalists could make an offer which would grant workers adequate living standards without struggle, most workers would soon take that offer, and tell the socialists to get lost. Workers will certainly not go on strike just because socialists tell them that militancy will help raise their class consciousness!

DIVERT

But the basic drive of capitalism is always towards increasing the rate of exploitation, and we need have no fear (or hope, if you look at it that way) of a peaceful agreement between capitalists and workers for maintaining living standards.

It is true that when the Tories proposed thresholds as part of Phase 3 their purpose was to divert workers from the struggle for straight wage increases. They hoped that workers, instead of smashing their "Phases" outright, would settle for this inadequate half-

LAST Wednesday marked the first anniversary of the coup in Chile which overthrew the Popular Unity government headed by Salvador Allende.

The savage repression begun by the military last September continues, although the junta prefers knocking on doors after midnight now to the past practice of shooting workers on street corners during the day. To improve their "image" abroad, the armed forces murder and torture behind closed doors.

In answer to this repression, resistance to the military government is gaining momentum slowly. Hardly surprising — not only are many working class militants in jail, exile, or unknown graves; many, also, suffer from disillusion with the traditional parties within the working class. These parties, by failing to prepare the people against counter-revolutionary dangers, have made the recovery of the will to struggle for socialism a painful process.

Jackboot

The defeat the Chilean people suffered after three years with Allende as President has clearly not ended as he promised with the building of "socialism without social cost". The difference between Allende's rhetorical promises — such as that the Chilean army was "professional" and therefore "loyal to Chile's constitution and its president" — and the stark new dawn of life under the jackboot poses many questions for socialists and communists who held high Chile as the living proof of the feasibility of the "peaceful road" to socialism. Despite the "social cost" in human life and suffering born by the Chilean working class, these questions have been answered only with half-truths and downright lies and slanders from the "parliamentary socialists".

Failure

Helios Prieto's book "Chile: the gorillas are amongst us" is important, because it is one of the few major works to appear in Britain attempting to draw lessons from the Chilean experience by objectively analysing the development and the failure of the Popular Unity.

Prieto starts his analysis by examining how Allende "triumphed". In the 1970 presidential election he only got 36% of the vote, but he got in because the Chilean bourgeoisie fielded two



CHILE: THE GORILLAS ARE AMONGST US

candidates. A Congress with a majority opposed to Allende's politics had to notify his position as president. This was done in return for Allende promising to sign a statute of "Constitutional Guarantees", which effectively meant he promised not to challenge the props of capitalist order — Church, media, courts, and armed forces.

This start summed up Allende's whole approach. Rather than face up to the bourgeoisie, confronting them as enemies of socialism, he sought to "win them over" to a social system which would end their existence as the privileged ruling class of society.

There were some measures — the nationalisation of copper, and some land reforms — that Allende did manage to carry through with the cooperation of the bourgeoisie. At first the bourgeoisie stepped cautiously, in case rash moves against the Popular Unity unleashed further mobilisations of the workers and peasants.

Allende's position became weaker as he failed to take any

decisive socialist measures to tackle inflation. In autumn 1972 there was the "businessmen's strike". The result was the inclusion of three military leaders in the Cabinet.

The bourgeoisie expected Allende to suffer losses in the March 1973 legislative elections. Instead, the Popular Unity was successful in gaining 44% of the vote. After that, the bourgeoisie was increasingly less disposed to dealing with Allende constitutionally.

Mobile

In April 1973, the copper miners at El Teniente went on strike. The copper miners had traditionally been one of the most militant sections of the working class. Any socialist government should have supported them. But the UP opposed the strike in the name of the "battle for production", sent in mobile riot squads against the workers, and called the strike leader a Nazi.

The right-wing, demagogically seizing their chance, began to support the

strike. Thus the UP destroyed its own social base.

The UP was not blind to the possibility of a coup. On the contrary, they were constantly raising alarms — shouting "coup" on at least 20 occasions before September 1973 — and calling for everyone to rally round. But when the real coup came, Allende was still looking for the "loyal sections of the armed forces".

When, in August 1973, a group of UP sympathisers in the ranks of the Navy did start to make contingency plans to oppose the use of the armed forces for a coup, Allende supported the top officers who arrested them.

The end result was that in September 1973 only a few advanced sections of the working class could mount any resistance to the coup. Most of the workers who in September 1970 had supported Popular Unity with great hopes had been disoriented, disorganised, and disillusioned by three years of the "parliamentary road".

BAS HARDY

Occupations workers' co

Dear comrades,
One point isn't clear in the article on unemployment in *Workers Fight* no.67. What exactly is meant by workers' control?

WF 67 states "Occupy factories threatened with redundancy and put them under workers' control. Demand nationalisation without compensation; where workers' control has been won, we must fight to keep and extend that control under nationalisation."

At the same time, WF 67 points out the dangers of a workforce taking over an individual place of work. "As long as it's each group of workers on their own, the logic is that we end up cutting

our own wages and speeding up our own work, in order to prove the enterprise "viable" (that is, profit making) or keep it going on capitalist terms as a cooperative. We end up doing the capitalists' work for them."

Surely we must fight for aspects of workers' control — workers' inquiries, etc. Also we must use occupations as a tactic. At the same time we fight for workers' control over production as a whole. But it must be made clear that, whilst we can achieve aspects of workers' control and can occupy individual places of work under capitalism, we can only begin to achieve workers' control over production as a whole when

LE

sliding scale, escalator clause, cost of living agreement, or threshold, the only difference is in how much money they give you, whether they keep up with prices fully or only partially.

In 1938 the sliding scale was put forward as a demand to bind the working class together to begin a fight back against severe depression, falling living standards, and black defeat.

In 1973, the situation was different.

Now, in 1974, it's different again. It makes no sense to talk of the danger of diverting people to a struggle round thresholds. You can't divert people to a road they're already on!

Living standards are falling quite sharply. And, instead of confronting a Tory government with large straight wage claims, the working class is, to an extent, holding back for the "social contract", waiting to see what Labour will do for us. By pressing the demand for the sliding scale now, we can cut through the mist of vague promises of Labour producing some social reforms some day, and help to mobilise workers against the social contract more effectively.

STIFLES

There still are dangers associated with the sliding scale demand. A couple of months ago there were some articles in the business press advocating the system of "indexation" and praising the model of Brazil. The idea is that wages are "indexed" to the cost of living. In Brazil, a brutal military dictatorship makes quite sure that wages don't rise above the "indexed" level.

It's obvious why big business might like that system. It keeps the workers' share static (or slightly falling, given the inevitable fiddles), and stifles industrial conflict. While arguing for the sliding

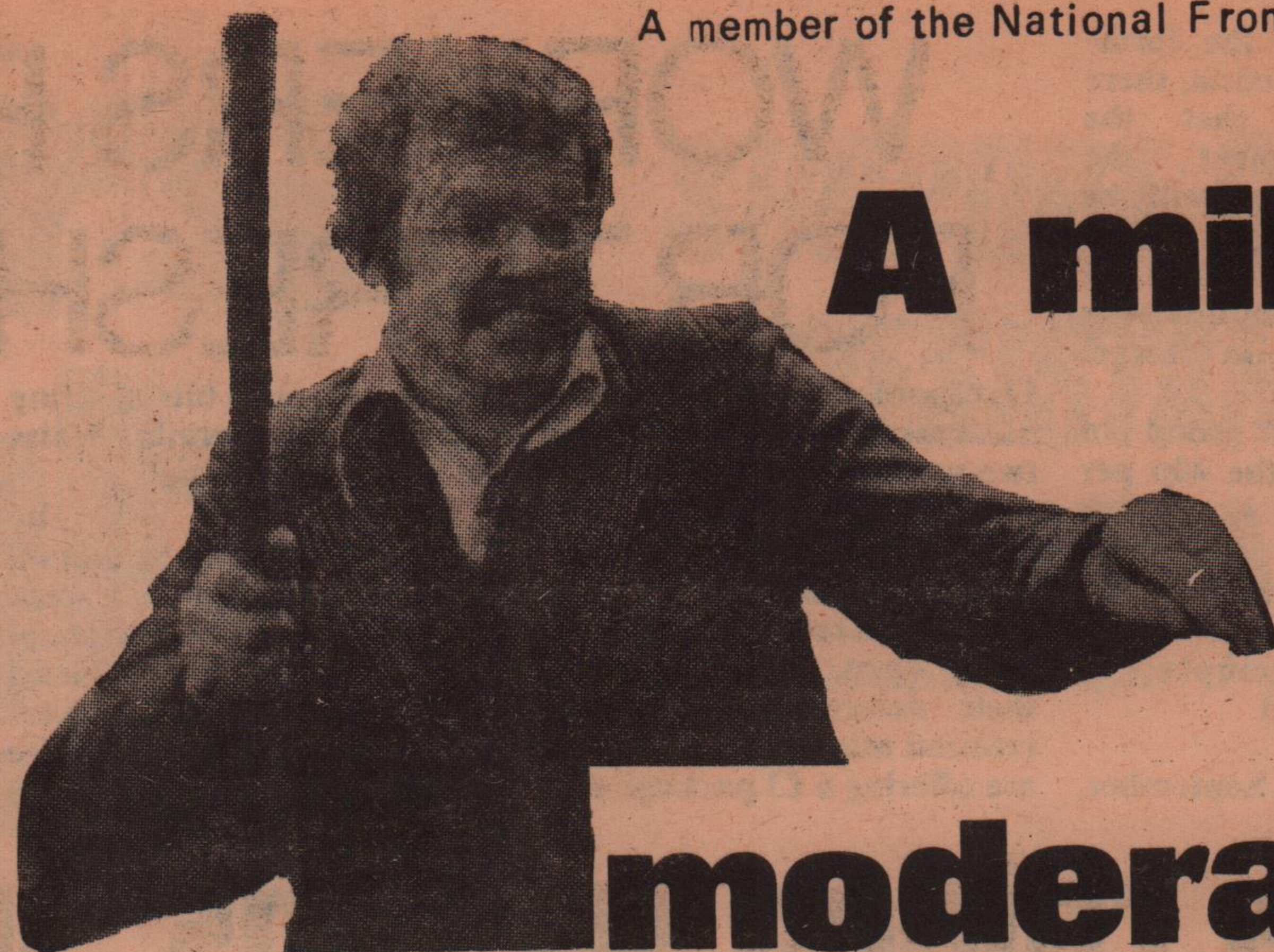
The labour movement in Belgium has demanded the indexing of scales of taxation upon wages. For example, if the ceiling on wages and salaries for which a tax of 15% is paid is 25,000 Francs, it would automatically rise to 27,000 Francs, if the cost of living increased by 10%.

Another difficulty with the sliding scale is the question of how the cost of living index is worked out. In a number of ways, the official index underestimates the working class cost of living. For a start, working class people spend a higher proportion of their money on food and other basic essentials, which have much more rapidly rising prices than other commodities.

SOLUTION

In France the trade union federations have their own cost of living indexes, and in Belgium the trade unions have won the right to veto the official index. That sort of idea will become increasingly necessary in Britain. The best variant is rank and file price-watch committees of workers and housewives. Such committees would draw housewives into the struggle alongside the labour movement, and prevent "inflation" being used as a wedge to split them from the working class. The committees could also expose, and take action against, price increases simply due to gross profiteering.

Other points that need to be stressed together with the sliding scale demand are: the need for the cost of living increases to be continuously consolidated into the basic rate (and no playing around at counting them twice as increases, once when they're first gained, and again when they're consolidated); the need for the agreement to be open ended; and that the sliding scale should "slide"



A member of the National Front's private army

A militia of moderates

"I THOUGHT it was a moderate speech which would appeal to moderate people", claimed the "startled and astonished" Mr Geoffrey Rippon after the furore that followed his call for a "citizens' voluntary reserve". He covered himself carefully: "Their precise role would be for the Government to determine". And then added "They could be used to help in flood disasters by driving ambulances and digging barriers for instance".

Who's he trying to kid? Rippon doesn't work for the Meteorological Office! His speech refers to three

tasks of the Tories. "First, we must show our determination to secure a just balance between the demands of the modern state and the freedom and status of the individual..."

Nothing about flood disasters so far! "Secondly, we must stand firmly for parliamentary democracy and the rule of law".

I think he means driving a "black maria", not an "ambulance".

"Thirdly, at a time when our foundations are shaken by violence and extremism, we must take steps to ensure the maintenance of law and order".

Now I can just see the

connection between that and "digging barriers, for instance..."

"To achieve these ends, men of moderation everywhere must concert their efforts... But it needs organisation and training. A Conservative Government... must create a citizens' voluntary reserve for home defence and duties in aid of civil powers. But it can only be activated through Parliament if we are to avoid a national disaster."

That is what he really said. Not what he is now claiming he said. And that is the version being circulated by the Conservative Central Office.

The Army asserts its authority

UNDER the pseudonym of "Andrew Sefton", someone claiming to be a subaltern in the British army has written an article in the Monday Club's weekly "Monday World", embarrassing both the Army and the Government.

Speaking of the Ulster Workers' Council strike of nearly four months ago, the officer writes, "For the first time the army, which it was right, that it knew best and the politicians had better toe the line."

STRIKE

The fact is that the Government decided to use troops to break the strike on May 23rd. This decision was endorsed by the Cabinet on the following day, despite the misgivings of the Minister, Secretary of Defence Roy Mason. Yet these orders were not acted on.

Even according to the Guardian, the troops did not actually go in until May 27th. But even this is too generous a claim. In fact the British Army went along with the strike throughout.

This refusal by the army to carry out the orders of the Government is not as new as "Andrew Sefton" would like to think. Certainly any Irishman will tell you about the Curragh mutiny of 1914 when British troops refused to carry out the orders of Parliament on the question of Home Rule.

"Even without Northern Ireland", the article continues, "conflict" (between the Army and "socialist administration") would be inevitable. But with Ireland the army finds itself in a position of strength. The politicians need the army and not just in Northern Ireland.

"For at least two years now it has been a topic of conversation in the messes of

the army that, sooner or later, it would be called on to act in England itself. The operations at Heathrow — three this year so far — are ominous signs that this is not just a remote possibility."

The article goes on to talk of the present as "an era when industrial action has become a threat to the very existence of the country".

All the manoeuvres — at Heathrow, Hull and elsewhere — together with the army's role in Northern Ireland have brought them "closer to the grass roots of the routine of actually running a country than ever before".

But while this may embarrass the Army and the Government it serves as a warning for revolutionaries.

Even if the general assessments of the army's future role intervening directly and on its own authority into civilian matters are exaggerated, there can be little doubt that the army would be used in any major industrial confrontation — just as the Tories threatened to use troops against striking miners earlier this year.

FASCIST

Together with the plottings of Sir Walter Walker, Colonel Stirling and the other privateers, with the weekend ranting of Geoffrey Rippon and with the Tory manifesto's calls for an enlargement of the Special Constabulary as well as the army and police, this article in 'Monday World' helps round out an extremely ominous picture. It shows a Tory rightwing not only increasingly thinking in terms of strongarm actions, but the gradual coming together of their thoughts, the ideas of the freelance thugs of fascist groups, like the National Front, and the uniformed, official strongarm force, the army and police.



Plessey workers at Beeston listen to a speech during their strike to force the employers to pay up on threshold agreements.

thresholds were a vile trick of the Tories. Therefore they could have nothing in common. How could anyone compare the luscious fruit of Trotskyism with the poisonous, shrivelled seed of the Tories?

This is nonsense. Call it

scale, we must be quite clear that flat rate increases are necessary as well, and no trade unionist should ever sign away their right to negotiate such increases.

There is one sort of indexation which might be useful.

one way only, upwards — the possibility is totally remote at present, but in a severe world recession such as is gathering on the horizon, prices could start to fall.

But we have said already that the sliding scale does not amount to a long-term

way. Thus generalised propaganda (in the manner of the Institute for Workers' Control) for workers' control of production as the next stage of socialist advance, separated from the question of state power, does just lead to the situation where "we end up doing the capitalists' work for them" — as at UCS.

However, Cynthia Baldry's assertion that "we can only begin to achieve workers' control over production as a whole when capitalism is collapsing and workers are already forming their own government" is not true.

If "workers control over production as a whole" is intended to mean workers' control over the national economy as a whole — then that can not be achieved even under collapsing capitalism, but only after capitalism has been replaced by a socialist state.

But if we are talking about workers' control of production on the level of the workplace, then that can be achieved before workers "form their own government". Not just can be achieved — has been

achieved: on a small scale in such cases as Briant Colour Printing just a couple of years ago, on quite a large scale in Spain in 1936, for example. There is even the case of Bolivia, where workers' control was maintained in the tin mines for several years (in the '50s) without any workers' government — but that is exceptional.

Actions

It is true that unless a workers' government is formed workers' control will eventually be suppressed. But that is the end of the process, not the beginning.

"only when capitalism is collapsing"? Yes — but whether or not capitalism is collapsing depends to a large extent on the actions of the working class — whether, for example, workers do or don't press to win, retain, and extend workers' control. Thus it would be quite wrong to look at the situation, say "capitalism is not collapsing yet", and on those grounds reject the slogan of workers' control.

M.T.

and control

capitalism is collapsing and workers are already forming their own government. We can only make sure of consolidating workers' control when workers, not bosses, are in charge of the economy and the state.

Cynthia Baldry

A REPLY

It certainly is the case that workers' control over production is something which can be achieved only through sharp class struggle, and there can be no thought of workers' control of the factories coexisting with capitalist control of the state in a stable

WHOEVER wins the forthcoming general election, there is little doubt that the 'threshold agreement', the bosses' boomerang, will be discouraged.

The way in which it backfired on the employers is something they won't forget in a hurry.

But not every group of workers has got the 40p per 1% cost of living rise which was the model for most threshold agreements.

This last week has seen a number of attempts to conclude threshold agreements.

On Sunday 8th September,

WORKERS RUSH FOR THRESHOLDS

Liverpool dockers voted at a mass meeting to strike within two weeks for a £2.80 rise and a threshold deal. The employers plead poverty, scream blue murder about the Seaforth Grain Terminal not being open, (on account of their determination to get reduced manning scales), and are offering a £3 package deal

tied up with such bits of string as the reduced manning scales for the Grain terminal.

The workers of the Celanese plant, in Spondon, Derbyshire, struck last week for cost of living threshold payments. At Wallend Dunlop factory, 1000 workers have given two weeks notice of strike action. The men

want the latest rise due under the threshold agreement to be paid up. This struggle could spread to other Dunlop factories.

300 workers at the Dresser Europe factory which manufactures petrol pumps, at Bracknell, have locked out their bosses by occupying the factory. Their demand is to

pay up on a threshold increase of £1.60, and to honour all future threshold payments. The workers, who belong to the AUEW, have also put in for an increase on the basic rate.

At Hemel Hempstead, 1500 workers at the Adressograph-Multigraph factory struck on Monday to force their employers to pay up on a 40p threshold rise.

As the November deadline set for agreements under Phase 3 comes nearer, the battle will be to extend the agreements, or in some cases to win them for the first time.

S.C.

100 women from Netherley flats — a new housing estate outside Liverpool looking more like a prison camp — marched to the Town Hall and the Housing Manager's Office on Friday 6th September and demanded rehousing.

The demonstration was sparked off by a child climbing over a landing wall and falling 35 feet. Miraculously the child was only badly injured, not killed. Women had been warning the council of the danger for many months, but up to now they have only been ignored.

Two of the women, Maria O'Reilly and Linda Doyle, told me: "We wish to be regarded as a slum clearance area and treated accordingly on the housing list. We are not going to compromise."



Residents of the Cheylesmore district of Coventry have been warned not to eat any of their home-grown fruit and vegetables because of chronic acid fall-out from Rolls Royce (Parkside) chimneys.

The firm claim the fall-out is the result of an accident last month, but residents say that matters have been getting worse for some considerable time. Clearly Rolls Royce must be forced to pay compensation to the people in the area, but no money is adequate to pay for the hours of wasted toil on allotments and for the poisoning of the air people breathe.

In this great land of freedom, a working man apparently cannot even get away from it all on his allotment without some bastard trying to ruin him. Worse still, as one housewife put it, "We think it's bad here, what the hell must it be like working inside the place?"



ON Friday September 6th a Birmingham Industrial Tribunal published a very important decision in the case of Alan Law. Law is a Transport and General Workers' Union official who rules despotically over his territory — the lucrative operation of vehicle transport.

The decision was that an agreement entered into by Law without his members' consent but in their name was binding on them. He had actually made an agreement with Autocar and Transport Ltd that their regular drivers would get a guaranteed week during the three day week, brushing aside the work sharing plan that the men themselves had worked out. Law's decision meant the redundancy of all the drivers not on the regular list.

But the principle of the legally binding decision is what is most important. The trade union movement needs to fight this ruling.



ABOUT 400 members of the National Association of Schoolmasters (NAS) walked out of their schools in Coventry last Tuesday, forcing many secondary schools to close early.

This action was taken in protest against the delay in the negotiations for the current pay claim. The Coventry NAS have also adopted a policy of not covering for unfilled

vacancies or for illnesses (after the first three days) as a way of combatting the extra work load forced on them by the present staff shortages.

Their Local Education Authority employs no supply teachers at all in secondary schools.

Further, as part of their fight for overtime payments for teachers, they have called for a ban on all professional consultation with parents outside of school hours.

Members of the National Union of Teachers have followed their union policy and refused to cover for NAS members taking any of these actions.

R.L.

Flats raided as cops search for 'disaffection' leaflets

SIX raids were carried out simultaneously by ordinary and Special Branch police between 6.30 and 8.30 am on Tuesday 10th September. The police were looking for leaflets of the type distributed by pacifist anti-war campaigner Pat Arrowsmith, which led to her 18 month sentence under the Incitement to Disaffection Act.

In each case the warrants the police produced during the raids stated that they had been made out under that Act.

Wendy Butlin, whose flat in Hornsey in North London was raided at 6.30 by three plainclothes men and one woman police officer, said that they shook out books, searched suitcases and under beds in the hour and a half they were there. "They took away a diary and two address books".

At a flat in Tufnell Park, Albert Beale and Gwyn Williams woke to find six policemen and a policewoman already in the flat — carrying crowbars in one hand and warrants in the other — claiming they had been "let in by somebody".

The police conducted a very thorough search of Gwyn Williams' room and removed leaflets and files.

Later more police turned up at

the offices of Peace News, the pacifist newspaper, where they carried out a search and removed more material. They also broke into the temporary offices of Wildcat, a new radical newspaper, and searched the premises next to Peace News, which had been an address of War Resisters International.

The searches seemed to be carried out "according to a list of names they had picked up from people giving out leaflets", said Albert Beale. In many cases the police had demanded the names of leafleters without preferring any charges; now, it seems, using those names, they are trying to destroy all copies of the leaflet Pat Arrowsmith was charged with distributing ("Some Information for British Soldiers") and a revised version of it ("Some Information for discontented soldiers").

As an act of defiance, and to prove that, if the police thought they could nip this campaign in the bud they are wrong, many anti war activists went out immediately after the raids to various London railway stations and gave out copies of the revised leaflet to soldiers passing through.

Pat Arrowsmith has been rearrested and is in Holloway Prison. A.H.



These marchers in Newry understand the real role of the British Army.

ON Monday 9th September, the AUEW and Liverpool Trades Council organised a mass picket at Wingrove and Rogers in Liverpool.

Apart from many of the 200 women on strike at W&R, the picket included many workers from local factories and political groups.

Because of police protection, the scabs managed to get in, but the management were so frightened by the show of solidarity that they offered to negotiate there and then.

On the picket, a policeman complained to one striker that they had always "cooperated" before. "Yes", she replied, "that's why we are still on strike".

In fact, the strike has been going on for 12 weeks. The strike started over threatened victimisations following from a work to rule, which itself came from demands for a bonus scheme and threshold payments from the recently formed union.

Rained

The anti-union management is well known locally for forcing women to work at disgusting rates of pay and in appalling conditions. When it rained, the women had to work under umbrellas!

The strike was immediately made official, but only recently has blacking been organised, largely through the efforts of the shop stewards and the strike committee. The local union leadership has only recently been pushed into helping.

The negotiations offered on Monday were inconclusive. The management still refuses to accept the strikers' demands — threshold payment amounting to £2.30,

the employers' splitting tactic, and continue to press for the full £3.50 all round. They also insisted on backdating to November, 1972, while the Executive is willing to settle for backdating to April 1974.

A Rank & File meeting at the University of London Union, Malet St, on Friday 13th (6.30pm) will decide on further

no redundancies, a bonus scheme, and no victimisations.

The strikers say they will stay out until all these demands are granted. Further negotiations, due on

Wednesday 11th, might see a victory. But the mass picket must be kept up and extended every day. That is the key to winning this strike.

Barbara Wojciechowska

UCATT leaders take up anti-'lump' campaign

ON Monday 9th September, negotiations opened between the building employers and the Union of Construction and Allied Trades Technicians (UCATT).

UCATT's claim, an 80% increase for craftsmen and 107% for labourers, together with a 35 hour week, obviously breaks the 'Social Contract'. The Communist Party-led 'Charter' group have started a campaign to back up the claim, but it is not because of pressure from "Charter" that UCATT general secretary George Smith is going ahead with the claim despite voting for the Social Contract.

Pressure from rank and file

LONDON Workers' Fight Readers' Meeting. "The Labour Party and the General Election". Speaker — Clive Bane. 8pm, Sunday 22nd September, at "The George", Liverpool Road, N1.

NOTTINGHAM Sawley Road Ward Labour Party, Long Eaton, Nottingham — public meeting. Andrew Hornung on the Left in Labour's History 8pm, Thursday 19th September, at Long Eaton Labour Club.

action. Demands decided on at Wednesday's meeting included an immediate ballot for strike action to be called by the Executive, with the results published by 25th September. But it looks as if the Executive will soon make a settlement, and the only resort will be unofficial strike action. Ian Hollingworth 11.9.74

MASS PICKET AID NEEDED NOW

delegates at the last UCATT CONFERENCE HUMILIATED THE UNION Executive Committee and forced them into the present claim. This happened despite Charter playing no particular leading role. Charter has lost some influence since it failed to appear during the 1972 strike.

Also every region bar the North East has shown a decline in UCATT membership. Some regions, like London, have had wild ups and downs in membership. That puts pressure on the union officials to do something about the claim; otherwise amalgamation talks with the T&GWU or with the G&MWU will have to start in earnest.

Campaign

The employers have made no offer, and building workers will now have to wait until 23rd September to hear more. But it is important to oppose any attempt to postpone serious discussion on the claim to later next year, with a short term settlement (e.g. consolidation of threshold payments) and perhaps a campaign against the Lump for now.

The building industry has already entered a period of cutbacks and unemployment. Estimates say up to 100,000 workers could lose their jobs over the winter. While work may pick up after the winter, it will be some time before many of the building workers laid off are working again.

The UCATT leaders have revealed plans for a campaign against the Lump. This campaign is vital — but along with the wages campaign, not instead of it. The plan is to check to see which employers are using Lump labour, and then to take action, maybe in November. Possibly flying pickets will be used.

A.B.

Nazi Front still able to meet and march

ON Saturday 7th September, with the aid of massive police protection and a hasty change of route, the fascists of the National Front managed to complete their "Smash the IRA" march through London.

There were about 1000 National Front marchers. It was not a march calculated to improve the image of the NF as a quiet, peace-loving organisation for all the family. Each NF demonstrator was a burly-looking man carrying a heavy Union Jack flagpole (very useful for all sorts of purposes besides flying Union Jacks). But they were greatly outnumbered and forced to change their route by about 3,000 anti-fascist demonstrators.

If the left had been better organised, the NF march need never even have finished their changed route.

Shortly before the demonstration, the Ulster Defence Association had condemned the National Front as a "neo-Nazi" organisation. No-one should be complacent, but it is a fact that the NF's much-boasted Loyalist support was not very visible on the march.

On Monday the National

Front tried again, holding a meeting in East Ham Town Hall to endorse their General Election candidate. A large anti-fascist contingent attended, and the NF soon called in the police to throw out hecklers.

But, despite the cautions of their more thoughtful fellow fascists, wanting to put on a good face for the election, many of the thugs of the National Front could not contain their zeal. Had they joined this "virile" organisation just to see the NF meekly give over the job of throwing out leftists to the police?

Tables and cahirs were thrown, and glasses smashed, while the left withdrew.

Both on Saturday and on Monday there was a partial victory for anti-fascist demonstrators. But the fact also came out that the antifascist forces are far less well organised than the fascists are. For Saturday's rally there was no coordinated organisation for campaigning for support in the labour movement or for discussing stewarding arrangements. A national anti-fascist coordinating committee should be set up as soon as possible.

Bob Sugden

Teachers may go on unofficial strike

IT LOOKS like unofficial strike action from Tuesday for London teachers.

At the Burnham committee meeting on 11th September, the employers offered £351 for Inner London, £261 for Outer London, and £141 for certain "fringe" areas surrounding London in reply to the union's long-standing claim for a £350 London allowance.

They also offered to include six extra boroughs in the £351 allowance area: Newham, Haringey, Ealing, Barking, Brent, and Merton.

This would mean £351 for ten Inner London boroughs

and six Outer London boroughs, and £261 for the remaining 16 boroughs. As far as anyone can see, the lucky six are chosen on the basis of being the most militant of the Outer London boroughs.

The NUT Executive seem to have accepted the proposed "three tier" system, and are haggling only about an increase in the 'outer London' allowance from £261 to £276. They are due to meet with the employers again on Monday.

300 teachers attended a lobby of the Burnham Committee, and 250 a Rank & File meeting at Hamilton House. They voted to reject