**Workers’ Fight**

**SAV 20,000 SCOTTISH WORKERS**

The strike of 20,000 Scottish workers for pay claims to meet the massive rise in prices is a major challenge to the 'Social Contract'. As sewage workers, lorry drivers, and other, it is a battle against the employers in Scotland, there are signs of this revolt spreading elsewhere. Local government workers are preparing for their fight for a national minimum wage, and engineers in many factories are trying to get local settlements before the national pay talks.

**Increase**

In an attempt to deflect some of this movement, high prices, the bosses’ press has tried to wage a campaign, using the latest Government statistics, to show that workers are getting more than their ‘fair share’ of the ‘national cake’, and that every penny of 3½% inflation won and throw workers out of jobs.

The figures are that the ‘basic weekly rate’ has risen by 15% over the year, compared to 17½% increase in the Retail Price Index. Profits, in this argument, are supposed to be untouchable. Wage increases are supposed to be part of a natural, right process. Above all nothing must stop profits being maintained and increased even on its own, capitalist, terms, the argument falls to...

One journalist, writing in the ‘Guardian’, pointed out that the figure of 3½% wage increases “suggests that real earnings (after allowing for inflation and tax and other deductions) may have kept pace with prices for the first time in some 12 months.” (22.10.74)

For the last four years, prices of wage freeze and wage restraint; Phase II, III, and IV, have resulted in a fall in working class living standards. One of the main factors in pushing the figure for wage increases up to 3½% is the fact that the Tory threshold trick has ‘turned’ on the workers. It could give up £4.40 per week rise to millions of workers by the time the agreements run out in November.

It is for this reason that the Labour government, the TUC, and the CBI are in complete accord on the scrapping of threshold increases.

But even the threshold classes have been useful only in a limited way. The same argument from the employers quoted above points out that earnings have to rise at least 20½% faster than prices over the same period simply to maintain living standards for most workers.” A 30% increase in gross earnings will not give a 30% increase in take home pay, because on the higher earnings the rate of deductions will be higher. To get a 30% increase in take home pay, and keep pace with 30% price rises, needs an increase of 25 to 30% in gross earnings.

The most recent pay settle- ments are some way behind that figure. Fords are offering a 25% increase — even if all the rest of the industry should agree to do the same. Unions are being outstripped by the pay rises of the past two years — and voting so far has gone heavily in favour of this offer. The newspaper print workers, however, the TGA, on whose offer from Uxbridge is £6.25, has stuck to its wages increases.

**Inflation**

In the coming period, the prospects are for prices speeding up, not slowing down. The rate of inflation, from which there is no escape, will cause a big boost from the Labour Government’s plans to assist the bosses out of the crisis. The proposals for better food, clean bed, and more space to move in, and visiting conditions free from degrading, overcrowding, will be more than the cost of living expected when the new controls are lifted in early January 1975.

Most industries already have price rises in the pipeline; two major ones being in gas and electricity. If Labour abandons food subsidies, that will cause a sharp rise in pressure on working class budgets.

**Reign of Terror**

The House of Lords has now decided that 1400 arrests are not a racist act. But you need a club and/or some of a black man’s home is his castle — and, so, apparently, is his club. Break the British Empire and a half million affiliated means nothing.

The judgment was made in favour of Preston Dockers’ Labour Club. For those too blind to see racism within our class, this will be no encouragement. In fact, it will be just one more disgraceful example of the widespread acceptance of racism in the working class movement.

The case was a fact pursued by the officials of the Club and Instructors, in the names of a pathetic and despicable protest against the exclusiveness and snobbery of the boss’ gentleman’s club. A club that had a large dose of this: for example, for the media, they denied working class women in on suffering.

**Filthy**

But the CIU’s urge to play at democracy would not satisfy the filthy instincts and ideas of the bosses of the house has to be lifted up off the floor among the working class. Unfortunately, a Liberal journalists out to defect. Preston Dockers’ Labour Club members have been at pains to point out that they are not really hard core racist (in fact some of their best friends are apparently black...) that they themselves would never have okey’d the principle to the House of Lords and that they rather regret it was.

But the fact remains that they are a man because he was black, and for no other reason. They say they only did it to keep their club. Perhaps they’re not really racist, they don’t know what that’s all about.

It’s just like racist workers in places like South Africa where they don’t even know what all they are trying to protect is their right to stay separate.

**Feeble**

The Race Relations Act could never be relied on. The CIU’s urge to play at democracy would not satisfy the filthy instincts and ideas of the bosses of the house has to be lifted up off the floor among the working class. Unfortunately, a Liberal journalists out to defect. Preston Dockers’ Labour Club members have been at pains to point out that they are not really hard core racist (in fact some of their best friends are apparently black...) that they themselves would never have okey’d the principle to the House of Lords and that they rather regret it was.

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**Break the British Empire and a half million affiliated means nothing.**

**Demonstrate Sunday 1.45pm, Clerkenwell Green, EC1**

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Cont'd on back page
An Open Letter from WORKERS FIGHT

The Editorial Board of WORKERS FIGHT published an Open Letter for a Revolutionary Regroupment. It is of course extremely common on the left to have people saying, they are in favour of unity.

But the difficulty of political organisations claiming to represent the interests of the working class cannot be overcome without dangerously ignoring different trends they reflect within the movement.

Unity which does not take this into account is at the root of all revolutionaries saying "bigger is best." What is meant is the meaning of the Open Letter for a Revolutionaries Regroupment. It is just as it is made clear that it is not just another general broadcast appeal for unity, empty of practical content.

We do not believe that there is any place for the unity that we are calling for, without any of the larger left declining to join in the International Socialist, the International Defence of the Open Letter or the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The reason is the clear difference in outlook on almost every important political question of the movement: the struggle in Ireland, the Congress, the vote for the continuance of the information, if you can call it that, on the fly to the Labour Party, and so on. These differences on the Labour Party alone are what a political party should do, and why.

The organisations are also increasingly bureaucratic, except in the case of the WRP, which can get worse. It would seem to us, if we can modify a common discipline and still fight for principle.

Nevertheless there are at present elements which are successfully and recently elected from these organisations, and are showing great interest in and groupings with whom the government has been based on a unified and principled basis, and who are necessarily on the basis of a common housing and working class life (12 POINTS) 12 POINTS

The Open Letter lays down 12 points on which the press which are not in the interests of the unity, though these points shall never be booked as this movement.

We hope that this letter will be endorsed by more than the collective individuals and groups we have mentioned, and that the letter will be passed on, that we are going to the left for a political movement of the people, that the letter will be read as a call to all the people of the country to come together.

The whole of the content of the letter is an appeal to the destruction of the present system.

The Open Letter has been endorsed by, among others, Chris Marsden, formerly a leading member of the Left Opposition Tendency of the NSS, who has written a new letter to the editors of the Open Letter, in which he says that he has attempted to give the necessary points for the construction of a political party.

The Open Letter has also been endorsed by Chris Marshall, a former leader of the Left Opposition Tendency of the NSS, who has written the letter to the editors of the Open Letter, in which he says that he has attempted to give the necessary points for the construction of a political party.

One important proviso in regard to all the above is that it should not mean an end to political organisation. It is only a call to a new form of cooperation between the workers.

The Open Letter is dated 24th February 1968. There is no price to pay, but please send a stamped addressed envelope (SASE) to Work for the Workers Fight, London N1. There is no price to pay, but please send a stamped addressed envelope (SASE) to Work for the Workers Fight, London N1.

THE FAMILY

Not since Enoch Powells "divers of blood" speech in 1968 have there been more politicians around to create such an explosion of attention or so much revulsion as Sir Keith Joseph of the Tory Party.

What has been the greatest protest is Joseph's statement that the "balance of our population, our food stock, is threatened" and his solutions "to expand birth control facilities to these classes of people" classes 4 and 5.

In other words, his solution to the problem of poverty (classes 4 and 5 of the Registrar General's census are the poorest and least skilled groups) is to stop the poor breeding.

It is not even as if this suggestion comes from someone who is an ardent advocate of birth control in general. On the contrary, when Joseph was Minister for Social Services he opposed the lifting of prescription charges on the pill.

"RE-MORALISATION"

Nor does he advocate contraception as a freely available method for all women to control their own bodies and lives.

No. He wants it to reduce the number of a certain class of people, claiming it is necessary for the "re-moralisation" of society. For him, the right to the door of the poor and the left the blame for every conceivable - and imaginary - social ill. Lumped together, he refers to this as "degeneration".

This, the world's most prominent politician, makes it clear that prostitution and the repression of women, and the near-complete wasting of their abilities and potentialities, is a moral issue.

And Sir Keith has the cheek to pose as the champion of the "poor and exploited"

From there he runs through a catalogue of an alleged modern moral Armageddon, compounding unexplained facts with pseudo-scientific fiction.

What is this witch's brew for? Both Powell and Joseph understand that the Tory Party's "natural constituency" is in the ruling class, so that any candidate for their leadership needs to qualify. Especially if he is supposed to be able to put forward a policy which will create the best conditions for the ruling class to continue to exploit the working class.

All attempts to do this in "his 3 million unemployed" speaks of the European Common Market instead of the institutions.

LEADERSHIP BID

And secondly he needs to be able to win elections, which is why behind the Tory Party a substantial part of the classes will remain and exploit. And this is what this speech was designed to do. Not necessarily right away: like Powell his leadership bid is a long term project.

Joseph evidently estimates that, for his pose as moral saviour, he doesn't need to be a glad-handing, kindly-lying man-of-the-people, like Powell, he prefers the stern philosopher king pose in which he does not imitate the average man - but articulates his terrific.

Born into immense wealth and privileges, no doubt that is what he prefers, too.

But the worst thing of all, though, is the way in which Joseph sees no fault in this social system in which poverty is commonplace and in which a feeling of powerlessness to overthrow the most doddering that it throw them into despair and desolation:

He would like to think of himself as a true representative of the true human and its problems and he could make himself just that.

They even model women's clothes designed by men! From the age of six and a half, girls begin to learn which activities are acceptable, are they are not, if they are not and must not do if she is to be suitably "feminine". After a dozen or so years of conditioning with dolls and sewing sets, nurses, out-of-date, socialised and "feminised" science has shown men with a system for an engineering apprenticeship when it comes to choose.

Marriage is the goal, the important thing, the real career. Work will be temporary, part time, sporadic. So why take on a 10-year training?

Prejudice

On top of the conditioning there are the difficulties - the lack of options and facilities at school, the downright refusal of admittance to many trades and jobs through sheer prejudice, and the practical problems of getting young kids to do homework.

And it all leads back to that well known "woman's place" - the home. The home is restricted. It is where the women are immigrants, the culture of the country. The home, that is.

Women win after 17 weeks

VICTORY - after 17 weeks on strike - at Wimpey & Rogers! Victory was both on strike for more than 17 weeks.

They were able to put up a good fight. It was the first ever strike at Wimpey and Rogers, and the women won their victory by going out and getting backing and support from their friends. The women proved that it was possible to fight for the picketing of Wimpey & Rogers.

But it was the women's determination through the summer and into the winter that had made this possible. The women had to be a part of the consultation of the management that they couldn't win this one.

B.W.

CONTEM
A Charter for working women

WE PLEDGE ourselves to agitate and organise to achieve the following:
1. The rate for the job, the hours, the right to negotiate by the trade union, at the workplace, and to organise or go on strike, with no wages shall fall.
2. Equal opportunity for women to participate in every area of the land.
3. The removal of all legal and bureaucratic impediments, including sex segregation, and compulsory days off, with guarantee of employment.
4. Full control over children, social security payments, hire purchase agreements.
5. Improved provision of local authority day nurseries, free of charge, with extended hours and facilities for working women.
6. Provision of nursery classes in all schools.
7. Legal separation of children born after weeks of pregnancy.
8. Full maternity leave with full remuneration before and after the childbirth.
9. Full control of women's bodies, including the right to choose whether to prolong pregnancy or make an abortion.
10. Support of all women's health issues and promotions of health services.
11. All women's rights within the framework of the law, including the need, for instance, for equal pay, pensions, and benefits to be brought into the same social security laws and locales. Free abortion to be available for all women, including the first child.
12. To campaign amongst women to take an active part in the trade unions and law enforcement.
13. To build more women's movements, including education and exercise opportunities amongst women, including the fight against income inequalities between men and women that they may work to achieve this aim.

Vapid

The Charter's tenth point merely calls for a "campaign to make an active part in the trade unions". This is a bit of a letdown.

It is nothing about women's rights within the framework of the law. Far from it, there are no guarantees, no rights, no protection, no benefits, no guarantees of women's rights to fight for rights within the law. No one is allowed to take action for themselves, nor is anyone allowed to use the law to protect their 'lack of interest'.

The conference of the WWCC is a good opportunity to discuss and, hopefully, added to.

RACHLE EVANS

Empty

Moreover (at least until the demand for free state run nurseries is met) creche charges can still be high at trade union meetings, or held in working hours.

While this seems the case, the demands for campaigns to take an active part is simply about doing more than one, in fact, which implicitly puts the emphasis on the 'lack of interest'.

The conference of the WWCC is a good opportunity to discuss and, hopefully, added to.

RACHLE EVANS

Seventy years ago

When the Charter was drawn up, there were no Apartheid laws, no women's liberation movement, no unions, no state protection for women. The Charter was a direct result of the struggles of women for their rights. Today, the situation is even worse. The Charter is needed more than ever.

We must continue to fight for the Charter, for the rights of all women. The Charter is a step towards equality for all women.

Ron Vandy
SCAB G.P.O. UNION GETS ITS CHARTER FROM THE LORDS

Lorry drivers’ strike strong and still spreading further to the south.

THE STRIKE by Scottish lorry drivers was continuing on its third week. Most road haulage is demanding £40 for each man per week already.

‘Homeless’ Newcastle students take over building

ANOTHER struggle over the cuts in students’ living standards comes from Newcastle where students have occupied their halls of residence.

Homeless students have occupied houses and hotels in Edinburgh and London. In a letter, they say: “This is an atrocity!”

UCATT members working on the M13 for Parkside, who have been on strike for three weeks, are preparing an organized effort to resume work at the site, which has been closed down.

On the other hand, there are reports of a general strike in London.

Sliding-scale

But we cannot afford to wait and hope for the Government to act. If the Government is still not willing to move, we must act ourselves.

Effective action must not be abandoned in return for internal improvements and real progress other than fighting the war.