

# PUT THE BOSSES ON THE DOLE!

As the crisis deepens, more and more firms will go bankrupt. The working class must refuse responsibility for this situation. The blame must be put where it lies – with the ruling class and their state. The demand for **nationalisation without compensation** is a key demand, but having the state as boss will not guarantee against loss of jobs – ask British Steel, Coal Board British Leyland workers.

Workers co-operatives have been another demand of the working class movement. Again there are problems. The government will not give any more money to the Meriden motor bike Co-op and the Scottish Daily News. As a result the workers have lost a lot of their own money they invested in the co-ops and again face the threat of no job.

As we said earlier, some unemployment is inevitable under capitalism. So our perspective must also include those who are now unemployed – **A GUARANTEED INCOME WORK OR NO WORK**

This demand can unite employed and unemployed with a clear anti-capitalist perspective. The demand for the Right to Work for instance begs many questions, for example, work under what conditions? We are certainly not fighting to retain the conditions of work imposed by capitalism. We are not begging capitalists to provide jobs at any cost. We are fighting to maintain and strengthen working class organisation at work. The fight for socialism is the fight to change the relations of production, to win working class control of the work process. It is not the fight for 'work' itself.

The Trade Unions have a poor record of fighting unemployment. Len Murray has tried to stop the November 26th demo. Unemployed workers cannot rely on the TU movement to take the initiative over fighting unemployment. Local unemployed workers action groups, organising separately will provide a stronger basis for taking their demands to local TU organisations. It will be essential for unemployed workers to build links with rank and file trade unionists (let's be clear the union bureaucracy and the Labour Party Left are not going to be much help.

The 'crisis' has been with us so long now, you begin to get bored hearing about it. With a bit of a fight, with a bit of economy, many people could just about get by and still have a drink at the weekend.

But now this crisis really is coming down on us. Councils are turning the screws to get in rent and rate arrears; wages are being held right down; and unemployment is trying to outdo even inflation rates. It could be 2 million by next spring – but already expecting anything when you go down to the Job Centre is like believing in Father Christmas, "It's all very sad" says Denis Healey, as he goes off and gets an IMF loan on the one main condition that he does nothing to halve unemployment. "It's all very sad" say Chrysler, and the millionaire bankers behind them. Now they are wondering whether Linwood or Ryton workers should have any sort of Christmas. And "It's all very sad" in thousands of

workplaces, where worker after worker is going down the road.

There's nothing "sad" about it! We've not noticed factories falling down all over the place; we've seen no machines disintegrate before our eyes; we've not noticed people not wanting to buy goods. What we've seen is profitability fall and bosses deciding that without full profits they don't want to invest; what we've seen is bosses using unemployment to streamline their competitiveness; what we've seen is the government go along with this and cut back on all spending which was "social" and therefore not sufficiently geared to expanding profit.

### SOCIALIST SOLUTION

There is nothing inevitable about unemployment – socialist countries have no unemployment. It is a direct product of the capitalist system. The fight to end unemployment is inseparable from the fight for socialism. The tasks of socialists now is to fight for demands that clearly identify the needs of

the working class against the plans of the ruling class. Don't be fooled by pseudo-socialist demands like import controls.

See box on back page

Unemployment is at an intolerable level. Immediate organisation at the place of work is needed to prepare for the fight against redundancies, around the slogans:

- NO REDUNDANCIES
- NO CUTS IN MANNING LEVELS
- NO 'NATURAL' WASTAGE
- NO CUTS IN GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Unemployment in the building trade in particular is the result of such cuts. Where there is work it should be shared by reducing basic hours, and reducing overtime. **35 HR WEEK** If the AUEW policy of a 35 hour week had been implemented, there would now be no unemployment in the engineering industry. The reason why there is so much overtime working in this country is because the basic rates are so low. So the demand for a 35 hour week must go together with the fight for a good basic rate, which in most cases will mean smashing the £6 limit.

## STEWARD REINSTATED- AND A VACANCY FILLED

700 ANCILLARIES AT WALTON HOSPITAL WIN DOUBLE VICTORY

The latest attempt of management at victimising and intimidating workers at Walton Hospital has resulted in a victory for the workers.

Last week management tried to sack a militant shop steward for (as they say), refusing to do a job that isn't in the handbook. The steward quite rightly said that with unemployment as it is, another man should be taken off the dole queues to do the extra job.

The union spent 6 hours trying to negotiate with management and when this failed called a mass meeting of ancillary workers on the evening shift. The meeting agreed to go on strike until the steward was reinstated.

The next day the day shift also voted to stay out, despite the fact that an 'appeal' had been set up and the stewards had recommended a return to work pending that appeal.

This obviously put the wind up the management who reinstated the man and agreed to take on another to do the job in dispute.

Because the workers stuck by this one worker it will make it much harder for management to try sacking anyone again.

In a case like this it is clear that action must be taken. To stop them victimising those people who stand up to them. And to force them to stop cutting back the workforce and to take people on from the dole queues.

Waltons not the only place that management are up to their dirty tricks.....

"It's like a concentration camp this place."

They often say that at Fazakerley Hospital and they said it recently when management tried to discipline a woman who they alleged had taken a few chips off the ward. And when they suspended the woman and threatened her with court action, the ancillary workers turned words into action, and walked out. They stayed out for two hours got the woman reinstated and the court action dropped.

Fazakerley is not the only concentration camp. At the Southern, management are so mean that they're refusing to give a gold watch to a woman domestic with 25 years service, at her retirement. They say that because she changed to part-time on her husband's death a few years ago, she's not eligible. How low can you get!!!

Everywhere managements are tightening up to get hospital workers to work harder, and to get them tame and scared of losing their jobs. It's all part of the plan to cut spending and make us pay for their crisis. But they are not succeeding.

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO



WOMEN ON THE PICKET LINE AT NORTHGATE, ST-HELENS

REPORT ON BACK PAGE

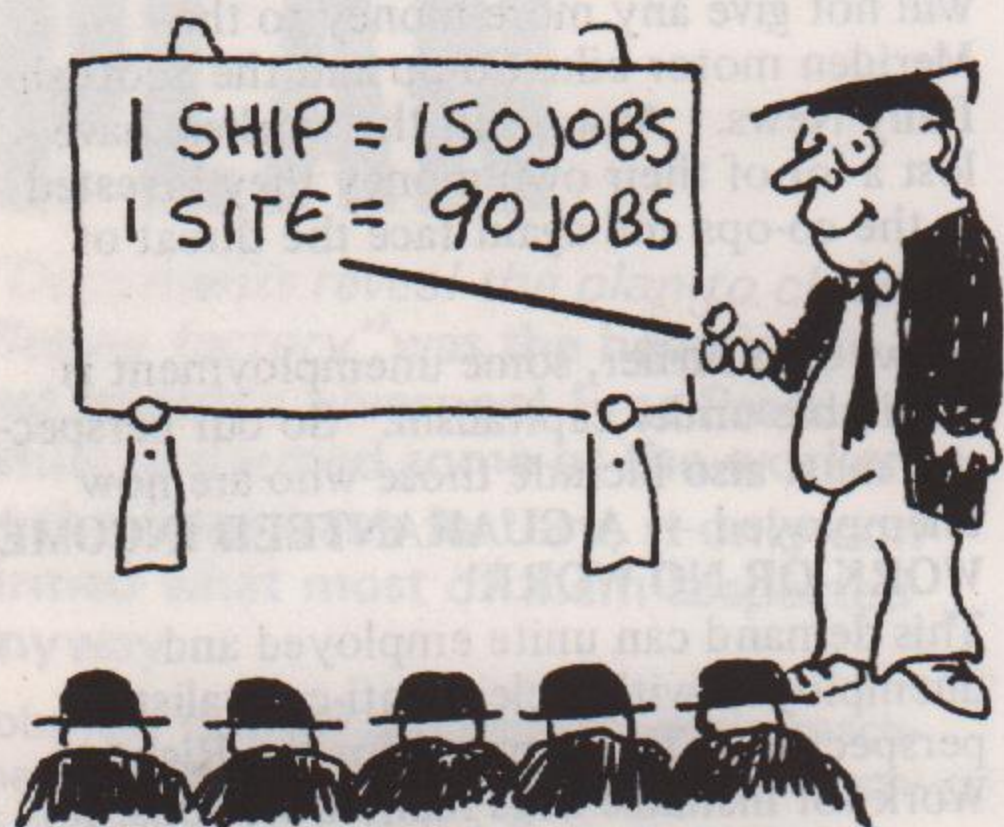
## WOMEN FIGHT FOR FULL £6



# NOT SO SILLY STRIKES

The local press had a field day recently over the strikes on Merseyside. "Silly Strikes" they were called. First there was the occupation of the 'Mary Elisabeth'. Which the Echo made sound ridiculous, as if everyone was arguing about the words 'ship' or 'building site'. Next came the strike at Imperial Metals in Kirkby. Once again the Echo painted a pathetic picture of pettiness over 'who fills the tea-machines'. The real issues never came out. The strikes were anything but "silly" or "petty". But of course, the editors of the Echo wouldn't see the truth if it jumped up and butted them in the face. These two strikes were a vital part of the fight against unemployment. Below we describe them from the workers point of view and put over the REAL ISSUES.

## THE NEW MATHS



## SHIP OCCUPATION

Six weeks ago an unusual occupation took place on the ship "Mary Elizabeth" in the West Gladstone Dock.

Boilermakers and other trades occupied the vessel in protest against the bosses' decision to call the "Mary Elizabeth" a site and not a ship. Traditional union practice in ship repair requires more men on a welding job than are found on less well-organised construction sites. So a ship repair agreement provides more jobs than a site agreement, which is why the bosses started to rewrite the dictionary.

## FAIRY GODMOTHER

IPI, a Swiss company backed by 30 world banks, who own the ship, are refusing to back down. They want the ship converted into a floating ammonia plant for the Far East - but they are prepared to wait. As a recent London meeting between workers and management broke down, it became clear that IPI have no immediate plans and a lack of materials to continue the job. The ship is still occupied. It is believed that the bosses have now hired three wizards and a fairy godmother to transform the obstinate floating ship into a less expensive non-floating site.

## IMPERIAL METALS

Against loss of jobs and victimisation....a strike at Yorkshire Imperial Metals ended in victory. In October, a worker refused to fill a job-cutting vending machine, and was sacked. At a mass meeting the whole workforce came out in support. After 2 weeks she was reinstated, and the workers had also won a £6 pay rise and equal pay for women.

The strike was an important show of strength against managements attempts to cut jobs. They'd like to axe certain canteen shifts and use vending machines instead. Which means more workers on the dole. A permanent loss of the jobs available to the unemployed. And more women forced to live with no money of their own - no wage, and if they are married most likely no benefit or social security.

Its happening all over. Machines could now produce more of what we need, and free the working class for a better life with less work to do and more time and means to live. But in capitalist society machines are used against us. They are owned by the bosses and used solely to make profit. Workers replaced by machines lose their wages and their right to live. The remaining workforce is still forced to work hard, with long hours.

At Yorkshire Imperial Metals, management have also been cutting the workforce through 'natural' wastage. There's nothing natural about it. Its a deliberate policy of not replacing workers when they leave. All in the name of productivity.

Just take the cleaning staff. There were 22 cleaners, now there are 19 and next year there will be less. But the cleaners left still have to cover the whole plant. So they get more and more tired and run more risk of falling ill. And like all housewives, they've got another job at home as well - and that gets harder too.

So the strike was really important for the whole workforce. And they knew it. They sacrificed their wages in support of one sacked worker, and as usual got a run around trying to get social security. Some families were reduced to starvation level.

Winning the wage rise was part of the same fight. For the right to live, for a living wage, against harder work, against loss of jobs and unemployment.

be cause of the cutbacks only 4 out of 60 nurses due to leave the Fazak & Walton training school, have been offered a job anywhere.

One of the nurses' unions, COHSE, has accepted the redundancies but nurses in NUPE were called to a meeting at which it was agreed with management that there would be a three month reprieve. This is a start to the fight for jobs for all nurses, but also to a fight for a better health service for the whole of the working class.

## Big Flame Hospital Group.....

The Big Flame hospital group distributes free, the "BF Hospital Newsheets" in five Liverpool hospitals. Our aim is to spread information and analysis of the many struggles that there are in the hospitals nowadays. In this way we can help to give strength and power to all hospital workers who are having to put up a fight to live. We are also trying to expand the hospital group to include more hospital workers and to encourage the development of militant grass roots organisation throughout the health service. The struggle in the hospitals today is at the centre of the whole struggle of the working class against the crisis. Against unemployment, against the cut-backs in social services available to the whole of our class.

# 'ECHO' - THE SICKEST YET

Only a month ago the Liverpool Echo ran a week long series on the misery of unemployment. They almost convinced their readers that they genuinely cared.

But they soon gave the game away with this advert. They now not only rake in money from their "Situations Vacant" column, they are now onto making money out of the "Vacancies Filled" column. Like all bosses papers they really appreciate the high level of unemployment, it seems. "With such a good choice of applicants", they announce cheerfully, "its easy to find the right one for the job."

Some people make money out of unemployed people short of cash. The money-lenders, the pawnbrokers, the get-rich-quick merchants of all types. But the worst kind are like the Liverpool Echo who spend a whole week denouncing the rising unemployment levels and then decide to make a few bob on the side out of other people's misfortunes.

- ★ A Merseyside Company advertised for a time served Engineer and received well over 40 replies.
- ★ A Bold Street based company advertised for a "Top Personality Girl" and their replies totalled over 80.
- ★ 200 replies were received by a Liverpool Insurance Company when they advertised for a typist with office experience.
- ★ When a city centre Travel Agency advertised for a Travel Clerk, they had over 400 replies from a 30 mile radius.

Part of the Echo advert.

# DOCKSIDE JOBS LOST

## DOCKS AND BIBBYS - THE WEDGE GETS THICKER

The only difference between the docks and most other industries during the present wave of redundancies is that they pay you to leave the docks and call it "voluntary redundancy". That's a small tribute to the dockers' militancy and organisation. But if the Dock bosses' present plan for 830 redundancies succeeds, it could be the last tribute the bosses have to pay.

## MILITANTS LEAVE

Under their latest scheme, the Dockboard will pay more than £2½ million in 'golden handshakes' - but that's chickenfeed, since they pay a quarter of this each week in fall-back pay to registered dockers for whom there is no work. A small price to pay. The scheme is designed to shove out the sick and those with long service. Or, to put it another way, those who carried through the hard struggles of the last 20 years.

## DOCK 'FACTORY'

For those who remain their workplace will become more like a factory, less like the docks their fathers knew. New gates are built and a special dock police force created to match the Seaforth Terminal style of "reorganisation" which the bosses have pushed and planned for the last three years.

## BYE BYE BIBBY?

At present their plans look like succeeding, but it wont be the end of "reorganisation" for Liverpool's dockland. Nearby firms like Bibbys are now threatened by the modern mill facilities at Seaforth Dock, which can handle all the milling Bibby's workers do at present.

## STEPPING OUT

Bibbys' have agreed to "share" milling with Seaforth, but they too have recently given the "handshake" to 150 older workers. 150 more jobs have disappeared from the North End of Liverpool. When the bosses have "re-organised" INSIDE the docks, they will step outside. And this is where the fight back must be based.

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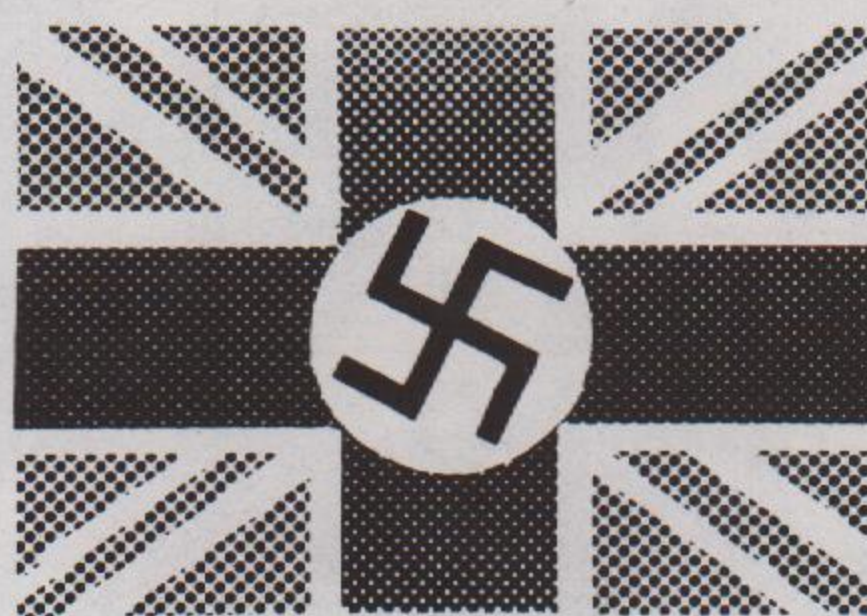
# WALTON VICTORY CONT...

## Management intimidation fails....

At Newsham they tried to accuse four porters of being absent from work in work hours. They were said to have been seen entering and leaving the local. But at the time one of the accused was on his day off and the other three were working with nurses and supervisors who were prepared to stand witness. So management's 'warning' was a farce and the case has been dropped. So what were they playing at?.....One of the men was a militant shop-steward, and they wanted him down the road so they might have a more frightened workforce.

## Jobs for nurses.....

The plan by the authorities to sack 100 nurses is not getting very far either. Until now nurses who passed their final exams were more or less guaranteed a job in the hospital in which they trained. But this year



# HYPOCRISY

You cant beat the National Front for hypocrisy. On Armistice Day their Merseyside branch laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on Magazine Brow in Wallasey, in remembrance of the millions who died in two world wars.

Pretty sickening when you remember that the NF was set up and is run by fascists who were members of Nazi organisations, and that a member of their national directorate, Andrew Fontaine, was imprisoned during the war for his pro-Hitler activities!

# VAN LADS IN VANGUARD

You don't have to a trade-unionist for 20 years to fight the bosses. Thats what 6 teenage lads are proving in Wallasey.

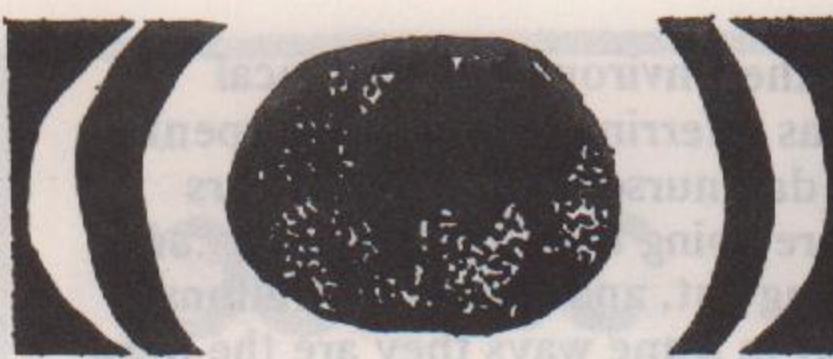
And you don't have to work in a huge factory with thousands of other workers, because in this case the six 17 and 18 year olds are the total workforce on the vans of a small Wallasey laundry.

In small firms like this the rate of exploitation is usually higher. £14.75 for an 18 year old with terrible conditions of work. They get no guaranteed 40 hour week and often only get paid for 35. Little wonder that they decided to strike, for more money and what they describe as "justice and trade-union principles".

The 6 lads have been sacked, but they are keeping up their month long picket of the premises. They deserve our support, financial and otherwise. Send to.....

Keith Simpson  
69, Livingstone Rd, Leasowe  
Wirral, Merseyside.





## ANGOLA

### PEOPLES' VICTORY ATTACKED

On 11 November, the independence of the People's Republic of Angola was proclaimed — its capital is Luanda, its president, Agostinho Neto, leader of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Already, big business interests abroad have plunged the country into civil war.

Officially, the imperialist powers — Britain, Portugal, France, South Africa and the US — no longer run the country since they were not strong enough to prevent the MPLA taking governmental power. But that hasn't prevented them from trying to defeat the MPLA, an organisation which has won the people's support in the course of a long struggle begun in 1961.

#### POPULAR POWER BUILT

The growth of the MPLA's support, especially in the cities, has recently accelerated. After 25 April 1974, when fascism was overthrown in Portugal, white reactionaries decided to establish their own law and order to prevent the formation of a black socialist government in Angola. Whilst the Army mostly turned a blind eye, these whites attacked the shanty towns where most of the blacks live.

Aided and encouraged by the MPLA, the blacks created their own popular militia to fend off the attacks. Sympathetic Portuguese soldiers provided some arms. In recent months, these militias have been taking on other tasks. Controlling prices, to prevent speculation, and rents, as well as setting up schools and wall-newspapers in the shanty towns. Committees to deal with housing, propaganda and illiteracy have been set up.

Whilst popular power was being built in Luanda and in the MPLA-controlled countryside, the Lisbon Government searched for ways to maintain capitalist control of Angola. Because of the military balance of forces, the MPLA was forced in January to agree to a compromise form of government, to rule the country until independence. It would include the FNLA and UNITA as well as the MPLA.

These two movements, which now control large portions of Angola, are nationalist and anti-socialist, and so they have received much help and finance from the CIA and from South Africa. If they were to win, Angola — and southern Africa — would remain safe for capitalism and the Angolan people would go on suffering the miserable conditions of a colonial country.

The revolutionary struggles in Angola and Portugal are closely linked. Mario Soares, leader of the Socialist Party, has said that he would take his party out of the Government if it recognised the People's Republic. But with the collapse of the Lisbon Government, it may be that Portugal will now give its backing to the MPLA.

Time is short for a socialist Angola. The military balance favours the FNLA and UNITA as they advance on Luanda. More and more South African troops are being thrown into the fray. In 1974, it was the liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies which compelled the armed forces to overthrow fascism, opening the way to the rapid build up of working class power in Portugal. Today, the Portuguese working class may be able to repay that debt by disposing of the Government that has helped the anti-MPLA forces.



#### WHAT'S AT STAKE IN ANGOLA?

Capitalism's fight to keep control of Angola, through its support for the anti-socialist movements, UNITA and FNLA, has been more determined than in the other ex-colonies of Portugal, Guine-Bissau and Mozambique. The reason is that Angola is one of the richest countries of Africa in mineral wealth.

- COTTON — large US companies control the market, together with COTONANG, a Belgian firm.
- DIAMONDS — Angola is the world's fifth producer with an annual production of £60 million. US and South African firms control production.
- IRON ORE — ore shipped through the port of Lobito is owned by the German Krupp company, a Danish and a French company, as well as the British Steel Corporation which is investing in Africa whilst making workers redundant in Britain. Another British company with large financial interests in Angolan ore is LONHRO which has presented Savimbi, leader of UNITA, with a private jet as well as military equipment. Lonhro, along with Slater-Walker, was once described as the 'unacceptable face of capitalism' by Edward Heath who somehow forgot to mention that he had shares in both companies.
- OIL — large deposits are owned by the US multinational Gulf Oil through its subsidiary, Cabinda Gulf. The value of the yearly production of Cabinda Gulf, £285 million, represents the highest profit rate for an oil producer anywhere in the world.



The War Room. That's the new name for the headquarters of the transport police in one of New York's busiest subway stations.

It's an apt name, because it's a war that's being fought between the transport police and the thousands of workers using the city's underground system since the sudden 43% jump in train fares.

all the turnstiles at main stations except one to be guarded by armed police. The result, of course, was complete chaos. Thousands of commuters invading the stations at rush hour finding only one turnstile in use!

#### TOTAL BREAKDOWN

This only caused the passengers to step up their action. The police responded. In a midtown Manhattan station, two little girls jumped the turnstiles, but were grabbed by police. Horrified passers-by watched as the

## WAR IN NEW YORK

#### AMAZING STUPIDITY

Last month action groups against the increases were formed in the working class suburbs of New York, in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Lower East Side Manhattan. At peak hours, groups of activists have been occupying the turnstiles or chaining the exit gates open, allowing thousands to swarm over and around the ticket booths without paying.

So, with amazing stupidity, the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority decided to fight the rebellious subway riders by closing

police began to beat the girls, even turning down offers to pay the girls' fares. In the end, they were both arrested.

Later, at a station in Brooklyn, Paul Carlton, a 48 year old black worker jumped the turnstiles to avoid a 50 cent fare. A policeman opened fire, pumping five bullets into Carlton. Incidents like these have hardened the passengers' feelings

Somebody's got to pay for the crisis that's taking the city to breakdown, but it won't be the workers.

## ORANGE SPLITS

"We must build up dossiers on those men and women in this country who are a menace to this country because one of these days, if and when the politicians fail us, it may be our job to liquidate the enemy."

The words of a man the British press calls 'moderate'. When Loyalist politician, William Craig spoke these words he was describing his attitude to opponents of British rule in Ireland.

As a top Orange boss, Craig wants a return to Protestant supremacy in Northern Ireland. But, unlike the majority of his colleagues in the United Ulster Unionist Coalition (UUUC), he is afraid that a complete rejection of Catholic participation in government appears too extreme.

#### HORNETS NEST

So he recently stuck his neck out and suggested that the most pro-British Catholic party, the SDLP, should have two members on a 10 man cabinet, "in emergencies". They would have to accept the decisions of the others, all Loyalists, and could be fired at any time.

Unbelievably, the SDLP welcomed this as a breakthrough in power sharing! Merlyn Rees, for the British Government, also welcomed it. But Craig's suggestion has stirred up a hornets nest.

The rest of the UUUC, led by Paisley and West, has rejected ANY chance of Roman Catholics (even crawlers like the SDLP) having a say in running Northern Ireland. And they are supported by the most vicious Loyalist murder gang, the UVF

#### THE UVF

On 2 October, the UVF murdered 12 people, mostly innocent Catholics, as a show of strength. The Government promptly declared the UVF illegal as a gesture of support for Craig.

The Government moves against Loyalists like the UVF don't impress the Catholic population. They know that the vast majority of raids and arrests are directed at them. All the remaining 90 internees are Republicans, while the released internees are still being harassed, raided and re-arrested.

Apart from acts of retaliation (like the

blowing up of the notorious interrogation centre at Castlereagh, Belfast), the IRA leadership are maintaining the truce. They have been promised by the British Government that troops will be withdrawn once the present 'solution', the Ulster Convention, collapses.

As a result they are reluctant to re-open the campaign.

#### BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

But many IRA members understandably distrust any British promises. They fear that Rees will cooperate with the Loyalist 'law and order' fanatics like Paisley when the present policy fails. Such a move, supported by Army commanders who always favour the hard, bloody line, looks like the only option open, other than a British withdrawal.

Fearing that a new British hardline would produce even bloodier conflict, some Republicans may decide to launch private wars against the Establishment in Britain and Ireland. This may explain the kidnapping of Dutch businessman Tiede Herrema, without Provisional IRA approval.

Meanwhile, a wave of bombings has hit London. It's impossible to say who is really responsible. It may be that some Republicans, frustrated at the continuing ceasefire while the British state prepares to hand power over to Loyalist bigots, have decided to threaten the Government with carnage if they don't withdraw.

#### BLOODY CONFLICT

But the Government has never shown any horror at civilian casualties.

The bombings will not affect Government policy, except in allowing them to get away with even more repressive laws.

Desperation produces a bombing campaign like the one in Britain today. The Labour Government knows that an announcement of withdrawal from Ireland would end the horror immediately. But rather than admit that the British presence in Ireland has produced nothing but bloody conflict, they are prepared to hang on by handing power to the gang of extremists led by Paisley and West.

It is Rees and the rest of the Labour Government who are really responsible for the constant killing. The troops must be withdrawn immediately.



# TYNDALE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL?



**PARENTS ARGUING OUTSIDE WILLIAM TYNDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL IN LONDON** where a public enquiry is now going on to investigate the 'teaching, organisation and management' of the school. The affair has now become the most important focus for the debate over educational aims and methods which goes beyond the usual Progressive versus Traditional arguments.

Events have divided all concerned. Most of the staff, including the Head, are fighting the Inner London Educational Authority and a minority of the staff. Parents are split, equal numbers have signed petitions backing and opposing the school's aims and methods. The enquiry was set up when the long running dispute ended with the Head and six of the staff going on strike against outside interference. The issues involved are of vital importance to every working class parent.

## RIGHT WING PROVOKES THE EVENTS

The events at William Tyndale School have, from the beginning been provoked by a concentrated campaign by right wing forces to discredit the school and the staff. It was all started by the circulation of a document by a part-time teacher, Mrs Dolly Walker.

Unknown to the full-time staff, she went around to parents with the document, which distorted the aims and methods of the school and exaggerated incidents. The aim was to stir up demands from parents for a return to the traditional methods of education — like parrot learning and stricter control — which she favoured.

Her efforts fitted in with the desires of the local section of the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA) to control the school. The ILEA and the school's managing body are run by a group of powerful Labour right-wingers whose aim is to gain greater control over the local schools.

Since then, collusion between the various groups hostile to the Head and the staff has increased. At the public enquiry, the staff's counsel said that

*'every major decision that brought about the William Tyndale confrontation took place behind closed doors with the official bodies acting as rubber stamps.'*

Reactionaries everywhere have gleefully used the events to bash what they see as 'progressive education'. The newspapers have been full of articles re-producing the views of the school managers, parents and teachers who are attacking the school.

## SCHOOLS IN CRISIS

Despite the vicious hysteria campaign, the issues involved are real. There IS a crisis in the schools. Kids, especially in the inner city areas, react against the type of education given with a mixture of apathy, resentment and occasional violence. There is often little learning going on. There ARE too many people leaving school without a grasp of reading, writing and numerical skills. Because of this many working class parents accept the view put forward in the media that it's all the fault of 'progressive education'.

One parent with kids at William Tyndale said,

*Quite a lot of upper class parents support Ellis and his free expression policies. They can afford to. Their children have motivation, they have books at home, their parents have done all right, they have the money and they know their children will do all right and have money too.*

*But the majority of the kids at Tyndale are working class and a lot, well, they have no motivation from home. And they get none at school. The middle class kids sit down and read because their parents do and they want to. Working class kids must be made*

*to. To me, the kids badly need what I got at my school. Stability, discipline, and the three R's...and the teacher should be a dominant figure.'*

## MADE TO LEARN?

The tragedy about these views is that they do not answer the question, why is it that working class kids have to be 'made to learn'.

After all the traditional methods, for generations, did not interest the mass of pupils in learning. They may have kept them quieter, but there were just as many, if not more, who were illiterate, or uninterested, and who ended up hating school.

Similar views to those of the parent we've just quoted were expressed in a letter sent to the left wing teachers magazine, Rank and File, by a 'worried mum'. A London teacher, Chis Searle, wrote this reply:

Dear mum,  
We're worried too, very worried,  
We also see the things you see:  
Our children unfulfilled, their minds frustrated.  
Our working class denied, our schools confused,  
Our teachers cynical, our parents angry.

But you talk about the needs,  
which you say we do not heed.  
You talk about the 'politics',  
which you say are our preoccupation.

Where do these politics begin, mum?  
Did we suddenly start them  
With our struggle?

The schooling of the largest class:  
Education for underdevelopment,  
streamed for the dole queue,  
smiling courses for factory fodder -  
Are these are children's needs?

While others step through school to control.  
Tutorage for manipulation,  
Saved for choice, for opportunity,  
Schooled for power.  
While working class is bottom class -  
Did we begin these politics?  
Are we wrong to disrupt them?

Our politics are those of need, mum.  
To each according to his needs,  
From each according to his potential,  
From each according to his humanity.  
These are real, not trends or fashions  
And these are what we teach.

We are on the same side mum,  
We are not enemies.  
Struggle alongside us.

## CREATIVE POTENTIAL

We all want kids to have a better and more enjoyable education, and they do need the basic skills of reading and writing.

But how?

The real reason for lack of interest and learning among so many working class kids is nothing to do with traditional or progressive methods of education methods of education.

"The party is over," Mr Crosland, Secretary of State for the Environment told local authorities in a speech in Manchester on 9th May. He was referring to what they spent on things like education, roads, hospitals, libraries, housing, day nurseries and pensioners facilities. The message was that these essential services are going to be cut and cut...and cut. When people hear things about public spending being cut, and figures in millions being bandied about, it often seems a far away thing. But in some ways they are the most important political issues facing the working class. Ruling class and government policies on wages and jobs are bad, but the breadth and amount of damage to our lives that will result from the cutbacks is staggering.

To take an example, the effect on women, especially on work in the home. As part of these so-called 'economy' drives, school meals are being cut out by some authorities like Leicestershire, nurseries are being closed, health care e.g. patients are being discharged from hospital sooner and have to be cared for by women in the home. All this means more work for women, feeding, caring for and looking after children. As a bonus for the bosses, many women will be forced to give up jobs outside the home, allowing them to cutback the labour force and squeeze more work out of the remaining workers.

What is particularly sickening is the way the Labour Party is carrying on and extending previous Tory policies on public spending. Barber, the Tory Chancellor cut the public expenditure programme for 1974/75 by £1,360 million. When the Labour Party was returned in February 1974, it was forced by working class pressure to increase spending on the things we need, like food and rent subsidies and higher pensions. But once Harold and his crew realised that their attempt to reduce living standards through the Social Contract wasn't working, they reversed the policies. Wilson said at the Labour Party Conference of 1974 "If the social contract doesn't work, we'll have to find another way of cutting wages." Those ways were the £6 pay limit, deliberate creation of unemployment and public spending cuts. The 1975 White Paper on Public Expenditure to 1978/79 aimed to reduce the growth of public spending to less than 2% per year. With inflation running at 17-25% per year, this amounted to massive planned cutbacks. The Budget of April '75 marked even worse policies. Food subsidies axed by £150m and phased out by 1977. Housing cut by £115m, education by £86m, and health and personal services by £75m. The effect on jobs must not be forgotten, any of these cutbacks means less teachers, nurses, hospital workers, local government workers than are needed.

Meanwhile the government makes sure it's got its own priorities right. Spending on police and probation services can increase. Mr Joel Barnett, Chief Secretary to the Treasury said that the government's priorities for less cutbacks were social security and housing - the reason - "to increase industrial efficiency." In a capitalist system you can forget about human need, whether Tories or Labour are in power.

## WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

The only time we get told about what's happening to government finances is when they tell us "the country is in trouble". When they want to cut wages or services, they bombard us with words like "budget

deficit,' which they hope will confuse us enough to accept the situation.

The way that the government talks about the social wage, which is the benefits we receive in health, education and the social services, you'd think it was a handout they'd kindly given us. But the money to pay for those services comes mostly from us, the working class. Public spending is financed by taxation on income and sales of products like beer and tobacco, national insurance contributions, rates etc. It's a fact that the working class pays the majority of taxes. So what's happening at the moment is that the money that's taken from us to pay for essential services we need is being re-cycled by the government to aid big business and to pay back loans to the moneylenders. This has included in recent times — £15,000,000,000 subsidies to private industry and £2,000,000,000 to banks and moneylenders as interest payments. Let's see why this is happening.

When the state is spending too much we're often told that it's a "crisis of socialism." But public spending has been an essential part of the growth of capitalist economies. After all the fastest growth has been in Japan, the country with the most "free enterprise" After the last war the system had to give in to demands of the working class for decent health, education and welfare services. The Tory MP Quintin Hogg, said at the time that: "If you don't give the people reforms, they will give you revolution." Not that these state services have ever really served us. For instance the Health Service is a paradise for profiteering. Drug companies and building firms, mostly owned by Tories, are making huge profits by overcharging or doing shoddy work.

It is shown who the services are really controlled by when a crisis comes along. When the profits of private industry are too low for their healthy survival, whichever government is in power shifts resources from services which we need, but do not produce profits into aid to companies. The effect: less benefits and less jobs for government workers. It's as much an attack on our living standards as a wage freeze.

## A CRAZY SYSTEM

As socialists we should hammer home the message about the cuts. There are no better examples of what a crazy system we live under. Resources are wasted on £4,000m defence spending every year, on having 1½m people unemployed, on having unproductive parasites like advertising men, property speculators and bureaucratic officials, and on building products that fall apart soon after you've bought them. When anyone says that "the money isn't there" to spend on services, pensions, schools and hospitals, they're only right because we live in a capitalist society. A planned democratically controlled socialist society would get rid of all the graft and profiteering, the waste and the anarchy, that comes from not planning for the needs of the mass of people.



**300 pupils and parents march against fare increases which are put up because of Council's economy drives.**

It's because kids, and increasingly, teachers and parents, know that equality of opportunity is a myth. The schools are turning out the same kids into the same old jobs. What's taught in schools, especially to the 300,000 kids a year who have to go into unskilled jobs is an irrelevancy.

Until a socialist system reorganises production and society, altering the nature of work and the way it's allocated, this situation will continue.

But make no mistake, progressive methods which put the stress on the children learning for themselves, with lessons more relevant to their own experience, CAN make going to school a more useful and enjoyable experience. For proof, read Chris Searle's new book, 'Classrooms of Resistance'.

In it, kids, often from the lowest forms, express their feelings and creative potential through poems, plays and stories. Read it, because there's no better argument against the Tyndale witchhunters or the doom-mongering traditionalists.



public  
spending  
cuts

# WHAT A CARVE UP!



KIDS IN LIVERPOOL, FIGHTING THE RUN-DOWN OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

## IN THE COMMUNITY

One of the most serious effects of the cuts is on housing and community facilities. House-building is falling back, yet thousands of building workers are on the dole. Repairs and grants for improvement of houses is also declining. This means facilities in areas

In Liverpool, the latest victim of the cuts is the Rialto Community Centre in Liverpool 8. This is in an area which according to a recent government report on the inner city already makes do with the lowest public spending of any area in Liverpool. The ruling party, the Liberals, hanging on to Town Hall power by the skin of their teeth, decided to sacrifice the need for decent facilities in return for paltry rate cuts and electoral popularity with the better-off.

The Liberals came to power in Liverpool on

the slogan of 'Community politics.' But there's no mystery about why they're prepared to massacre community centres, transport schemes, holiday programmes and the like. They feel threatened by the community politics which comes from the energy and determination of working class people in Liverpool 8 to transform one of Europe's most ghastly ruins into a decent place to live. Similar patterns can be detected from all over the country. Faced with orders to cut back millions from local government spending, Councils will turn first to easy targets like community facilities and projects - especially when they're worried that people are using them as a means of really transforming their lives, instead of accepting them as a sop to keep them quiet.

## IN EDUCATION

£150m a year since 1974 has been cut from education spending with 'promises of more to come. Some of the effects are:

\* Estimated teacher unemployment this winter of 5,000-7,000, with a massive reduction in teacher training places. The result: bigger classes than ever and less individual attention to each child's needs.

\* School building and maintenance programmes cut. Few new schools will be completed and kids and teachers will have to put up with the many old, delapidated buildings in which it's impossible to learn anything.

\* The quality of school meals is going down but prices are going up. Remember the notorious excuse at the Knighton Field Primary School in Leicester where only 130 out of 385 children were given school meals. Bus fares are going up and bus services to

schools are being cut. In Surrey no-one who lives within three miles of school can have a free ride, they now have to pay £1.60 a week. Imagine that if you have 3 or 4 kids!

\* Staff-pupil relations are bound to deteriorate as classes get bigger, special activities are stopped and materials like books cannot be given out. Teachers will be forced into a more disciplinarian role and the number of 'problem children' will increase.

\* Nursery education spending has been cut from £21m to £9m. Thatcher, when she was education minister promised that the majority of under fives would have nursery education within 10 years. Under present circumstances, where half the building of new nurseries has been stopped, nursery education has become a prize instead of a basic provision.

## IN THE HOSPITALS

In our last issue we dealt with at length some of the effects of cutbacks on our health services, such as cuts in staff, building programmes, closures of operating theatres, wards and local hospitals, as well as long waiting lists. A doctor in Dorset recently told the press that patients have died at home waiting to enter hospital, emergency cases had to wait several days for treatment and cancer victims, because of six week delays are having increased risks of tumours spreading.

Despite this we are constantly learning of new and dangerous cut-backs. At Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, consultants and heads of departments have been told to make savings in expenditure "even if doing so the service to patients is affected" Much of the present cut-backs are affecting staffing levels. The most absurd example is

the possibility of thousands of student nurses having no jobs when they qualify. In the Sefton Area of Liverpool only 4 out of over 100 student nurses due to qualify in December have got jobs if they pass.

Nurses and ancillary workers who leave are often not replaced. A shop steward in London said:

*"We've had one woman covering six wards on occasions and the women here have had just about enough of it, they're very tired. The domestic superintendent's attitude was that if the women didn't want to work they could get out."*

The present cuts are felt by hospital workers to be only the start, yet here as in other areas the fight-back has begun.



Nurses and other hospital workers demonstrate for more pay and against cuts.

## NO SURRENDER!

As the realisation sinks in of the fantastic damage done to our lives by the cuts, the fight-backs have begun. Some examples are:

\* Workers in St James Hospital in Portsmouth voted to ban admissions and overtime in protest against the severe cuts proposed by the district management. They forced them to withdraw the lists of cuts and to negotiate any future economies with the union branch. In Haverfordswest in South Wales, 100 building workers blacked all work on a hospital children's wing demanding that the number of beds was increased. A Medical Committee Against Private Practice with wide support in the hospitals has been set up with the aim of co-ordinating resistance to cuts.

\* Social workers are hitting back at attempts to cut back services and jobs. 230 social workers in Tower Hamlets went on strike for a day against understaffing. Thirty social workers demonstrated on the Chester Town Hall steps against a plan to spend £20,000 to improve the inside of the building. Their spokeswoman said: "Civic prestige projects like this can wait, the needs of the homeless cannot."

\* Teachers are starting to refuse to cover for absent staff or sacked part-timers, to force the authorities to employ realistic numbers. Plans are being made to refuse to teach classes over thirty. Demonstrations and strikes

against the cut-backs have been held in London. In Liverpool a Committee to Fight the Education Cuts has been formed. A recent meeting attracted 200 people.

\* Local women staged a "wash-in" in the corporation wash house at Speke, Liverpool, in an attempt to stop its closure.

The most important aspect of the fight-back is the refusal to regard any sector as "more deserving" an escape from the hatchet. We must fight all cuts, every area of our life is important. "Divided, the state will pick us off one by one. Actions like these can have an effect in particular by forcing local authorities into disobeying government orders on amounts to be cut-back.

These actions and demands need to be spread and co-ordinated by the rank and file organisations that are springing up to fight back. Local action committees like the East London Committee Against the Cuts are a good start.

Stopping the cuts or spending more money will not solve all our problems. We'll still have education, health and welfare systems that are not run in our interests. But fighting the cuts can not only stop the rot, but sweep away the cause - the capitalist system.



# BIG FLAME GOES NATIONAL

From our next issue, *Big Flame* will be produced as a national paper with regional editions. For three years we have produced a local paper in Liverpool and this year an edition sharing common inside pages, was started by our Manchester group. We've reported what's happening and more importantly, why it's happening.

There are many excellent local papers, but they usually stick to descriptions of events, rather than providing a political perspective on struggles. Despite being local, our papers have tried to put local battles in the context of national trends and to give a coverage to wider political and international issues.

The most important part of our papers have been their attempt to reflect and analyse the daily, local fights against the system waged by every section of the working class. This combination, we believe is unique in left-wing papers. These papers so often seem to miss out the real dynamics of struggles; often small and unrecognised, but vital politically, that are waged by people in local areas. Having local papers has also been an essential part of our politics. They have helped us sink political roots into the areas where we organise, enabling us to reach audiences, particularly in communities that are often not reached by the left press.

But as *Big Flame* and the needs of the class struggle have changed so must our forms of propaganda. In the last two years *Big Flame* has changed from being a local group in Liverpool, to having the beginnings of a strong and influential national organisation, with co-ordinated mass interventions in car factories and hospitals, other workplaces and communities and campaigns like the *Troops Out Movement*. To make our politics more effective and capable of reaching a wider audience, we need a national paper that can be sold by militants in any part of the country. Not sold merely for the sake of it, but hopefully because it is a useful weapon for learning from and building the independent mass activity and organisation of the working class.

A national paper is also needed to cope with the changed conditions of struggle. The attacks of the ruling class and the state cover every aspect of our lives and every part of the country. The fight back is happening, but needs publicising, generalising and linking-up. This goes especially for fights waged by women, immigrants and other less traditional and sometimes less powerful sections that sometimes get under-reported even in the left press. A national paper needs to inform its readers about the important facts and lessons about battles being fought in local areas. For instance workers at the Charing Cross Hospital in West London have uncovered secret management plans to save half a million pounds by cutting staffing levels. Information like this can give a boost to others trying to investigate and stop the plans of their own bosses.

Having a national paper does not mean we are doing away with either the benefits gained from local papers or with the good things about the content of our present editions. Manchester, Liverpool and London will have their own local editions. This will consist of local outside pages as well as possible additional inserts. There will be six common national pages. For other parts of the country national outside pages will be printed, that can be sold anywhere. We realise that a national eight page monthly is not enough to reflect the breadth and complexity of what's going on. But we hope to expand the pages and frequency when we've built up a

national sales framework and when *Big Flame* has the national organisation capable of preventing a bigger and more frequent paper turning us into a paper selling machine which some other organisations appear to be. To us a practice among the mass of the working class will always come before newspaper sales. We will also still have our many other forms of local propaganda - mass leaflets, local bulletins and broadsheets. While at national level, the paper, our theoretical journal and pamphlets like the recent highly successful ones on Chile, Portugal and Ireland.

The paper's content will include international and letter/review pages, features and detailed reports of struggles from all round the country as well as the local news if you live in Liverpool, Manchester or London.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Going national will effect our sales network subscriptions, prices and most importantly, how we get our stories. Much of our success will depend on the kind of response we get from readers all round the country, in terms of writing for and selling the paper. Here are some of the changes:

The paper will be produced from Liverpool. For bulk orders and individual subscriptions for the national edition, write to Box BF, 48, Manchester Street, Liverpool

Subs and orders for the other local editions should be sent direct to the Manchester and London addresses. The price of the paper and therefore of subscriptions has not been finally fixed. Details will be sent to anyone ordering.

Articles and reports of struggles for the national edition should also be sent to the Liverpool address. We would also like to start a letters column; so please send your comments on the contents of the paper, or on political issues generally.

## Right Wing Manoeuvres

### PUTSCH IN NATIONAL FRONT

As we go to press news is coming in of an armed takeover bid for the leadership of the National Front. Supporters of the NF Chairman, John Kingsley Read, are reported to have entered the Front's Croydon headquarters armed with gas pistols and have barricaded themselves in. The old-guard leadership, John Tyndall, Martin Webster and Norfolk landowner Andrew Fontaine have been suspended from all NF activities. But they are attempting to fight back by calling an extraordinary Annual General Meeting.

These events are the culmination of the faction fight between the 'populists' (Kingsley Reid etc) and the openly Nazi Tyndall clique. Reid and the populists have long been trying to get rid of the embarrassment of having prominent ex-members of the Nazi Party in the Front. Now Tyndall may be gone, Reid hopes that businessmen will be more willing to pour money into the Front. **The fascist policies of the Front are not expected to change, only the most obvious manifestations have gone.**

### SECRET ARMY MANOEUVRES

*The iron fist slipped out of the velvet glove of British democracy four weeks ago when the Territorial Army was mobilised nationally for the first time since the war.*

*While 30,000 bewildered soldiers subsidised British Rail by travelling around the country, the Government did its best to keep the operation, called 'Inside Right', a secret.*

#### KEY POINTS

*A make believe 'cabinet' gave the orders which started the exercise, which is clearly designed to oil the rusty joints of national security. The whole purpose of the exercise revolved around internal security, with soldiers going off to guard airfields, radio stations and other key points.*

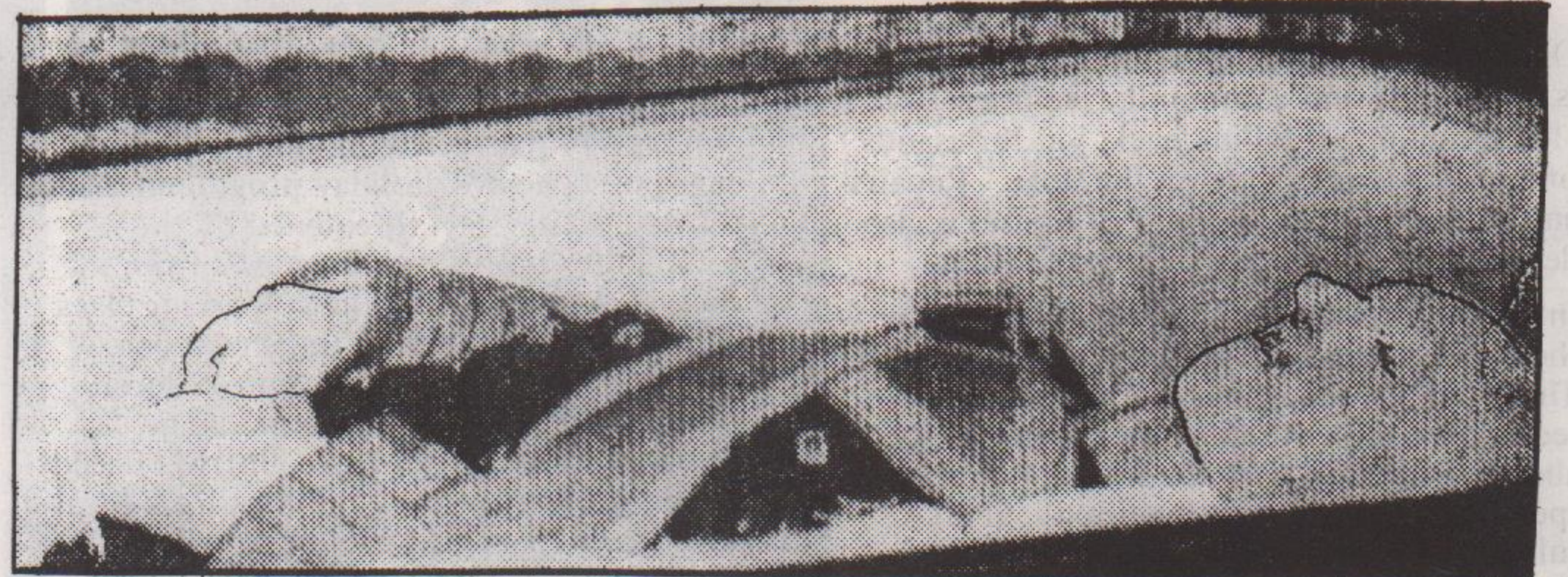
*It's no coincidence that this exercise has taken place at a time when working class militancy is at its highest since the war. The only question now is when that other make believe cabinet led by Harold Wilson will feel the need to use this secret weapon against the British working class.*

#### SWIMMING RUSSIANS

*The Ministry of Defence, of course, made no mention of the exercise. The instruction given to the soldiers was that the 'saboteurs' they were pretending to stop were Russians who had landed from submarines.*

## SUBVERTISEMENTS

Franco, one man who won't be coffin up for the following publications



### BIG FLAME JOURNAL NUMBER TWO.

Out in two weeks. Contents include:  
\*\* An important article on political strategies towards the Labour Party in this phase of class struggle.  
\*\* A number of combined articles on Portugal which bring up to date, the analysis made in our best selling pamphlet. Includes sections on the Communist Party, Socialist Party and Party and Class.  
\*\* A long article on the Crisis, attempting a explanation of Marxist economics in simple terms.  
\*\* A detailed account of developments and struggles in the Hospitals.  
Price....30p.

### WOMENS' STRUGGLE NOTES NUMBER SIX.

Out now from the Big Flame Womens' Commission. Articles on hospitals, housing, cut-backs, community struggles, womens' centres, abortion and accounts of workplace struggles. Price 10p.

PORTUGAL: A BLAZE OF FREEDOM; second edition with new supplement. Price 30p.

WOMENS' STRUGGLE IN PORTUGAL Just out, short pamphlet, price 4p.

VITAL READING FOR SOCIALISTS: Now out: The English Edition of *Republica*, the paper Portugese print-workers took over and which is now the voice of the revolution. Copies can be obtained from the Solidarity Campaign, 12 Little Newport Street, London W 2. Price 25p incl. post.

All the above from the local BF group or 632 Books, 632 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham.

### New from Counter Information Services:

"Crisis Great Britain Ltd." A series of reports on the crisis. The first is:

"Cutting the Welfare State". 45p + 15p post and packaging, from:

CIS, 9 Poland St., London, W.1.





# THE FIGHT FOR JOBS in the CAR INDUSTRY

Only a few days ago the British Leyland management threatened to close the Cowley plant down if workers didn't "work harder". In the meantime the Chrysler saga is continuing with the blackmail of closure hanging on the workers heads.

First of all, it's clear that **not one single job at Chrysler must be allowed to go.** It is a question of the livelihood of thousands of people and it is a political question of the balance of forces between the capitalist class and the working class.

The Chrysler workers have become in the past few years one of the best organised workforces in the country. They certainly showed the way forward last April when they **won** a wage rise despite being threatened left right and centre. And this is the **root of Chrysler's problems in the U.K.**, which is the same as the problems for most bosses in advanced capitalist countries: **the strength of the working class.**

Make no mistake, there's nothing wrong with that, from the point of view of the workers, of course. The Chrysler workers simply had organised themselves to **improve their living standards and decrease the workload per man, i.e. improve conditions.** The key word is **productivity.** The '60's saw an incredible increase in productivity throughout industry, and the car industry in particular all over Western Europe. In Britain, for instance, in those years productivity rose by 4.2% a year. But productivity is **no neutral word.** It means total production per worker. Now if that increases, then either the number of workers is decreasing, or each of them has the workload increased. **So if the bosses' need is to increase productivity, the workers need is to diminish it.** By the '70s things started to look different. It was clear that profits could not continue to rise as fast as they had previously for 3 reasons:

- (1) the working class was getting organised properly and was turning the big assembly plants into bastions of resistance.
- (2) The degree to which the productive process can be smoothed out (i.e. bottle necks abolished) has a limit; when that limit is reached a **major rationalisation** is needed.

LOOKS LIKE OVERMANNING!



- (3) the home markets in Europe started to **contract** and did so enormously with the "energy crisis". The "poor" Chrysler bosses were in trouble on all 3 counts. They never took full part in the "robbery" of the '60s since they came onto the scene a bit too late, when they took over Rootes in the late '60s. Their workforce seemed always to know how to fight for their rights. Their share of the market has always been pathetically small, falling to a mere 4% in recent months.... Nothing down for them. No wonder bully boy Ricardo would like to conclude the British adventure. Unless, of course, he can get away with murder, just like the BLMC management, in cutting down the manning levels by the thousands. Because in the end, the whole question always rotates around the two vital questions of **manning and mobility**, what is sometimes called the **rigidity of labour.**

The project of the bosses in general is very simple. The big car plants in Western

Europe have become a nuisance: either the workforce agrees to be decimated and moved around, or close them down. Or even better, **threaten to close them down so that the workforce will be blackmailed into accepting drastic reductions in manning and complete flexibility.**

If all this seems a bit complicated, take a look at British Leyland. If they could, they would have closed it down; but after all, if you put more than 200,000 people on the dole, you are asking for big trouble. So, make them accept a major rationalisation which involves a slow loss of jobs anyway. Profitability will be restored and .... "only" 25,000 jobs up to now have been lost (in the last 18 months alone). All this is even easier and sounds more "democratic" if it is done under a "Workers participation scheme.

They call it **overmanning.** It sounds very scientific. But as in everything, there are two sides of the argument. What the bosses call overmanning, the workers call **the right to a job, i.e. a decent income, the right to have a blow during working hours, the right to work the welt if it suits them, the right to physical and mental health, the right to have a social life when they finish work and not drop fast asleep as soon as they get home.**

Of course this point of view is not understood by Keith Joseph, Wilson, Ricardo: but after all, we doubt very much that they've ever worked in the lead booth, or the high line for that matter.

But it's fully understood by the workers of Dunlop, Speke, who, despite the "overmanning" of the place, have won the **automatic replacement of jobs**, so that "natural wastage" can't take place. And it's fully understood by the workers of Innocenti Leyland, Italy, who've refused a cut in the workforce of 1,500 (33%). And when the Italian government said that it would find them other jobs in the same area, they still refused; not because they "love" Leyland, but because that plant is where they've built **their unity, strength and organisation** and are not letting anyone take that away from them.

Some people on the left, in particular the Communist Party and the Labour left argue that the solution to the car industry's problems is to increase investment, and introduce import controls. They justify this by saying that British car workers are the **best** in the world". This strategy is doomed. Why? Firstly, why are British car workers the "best"? Maybe by some divine gift they are better than the "Japs" in fitting wind-screens, or filling the petrol tank. We don't think so. In an assembly plant hardly any skill is involved. And there is no pride involved: if you are doing the same job every 60 secs., 8 hours a day, you don't take pride in it. So what does "best" mean? If you want private capital to be invested, you have to show to them that profitability is high; i.e. that they can extract as much profit from each worker as possible; and that they can reduce manning levels and increase mobility; which means increasing unemployment and breaking down job organisation. That's the mistake the C.P. and the Labour left make. You

can't accept as a starting point the profit/investment argument without ending up by giving in completely to the bosses strategy.

Elsewhere in the paper we argue against import controls; but it's worth taking one argument up again. This sort of line takes the fight away from the place where car workers are strongest: **the shop floor.** It is a tradition in the labour movement that "political" issues such as unemployment are fought by the Labour Party in Parliament. In doing so the fight is taken away from the control of workers.

## THE WAY TO FIGHT

In Ford Halewood, management have complained for months about not being able to meet orders. In the end they started hiring again. This has happened because the New Escorts are selling like hot cakes. Yet at the start of the year they were talking of 1,000 men surplus in the Body plant alone. Now they are hiring, because the shopfloor prevented them from **increasing the workload of each worker.**

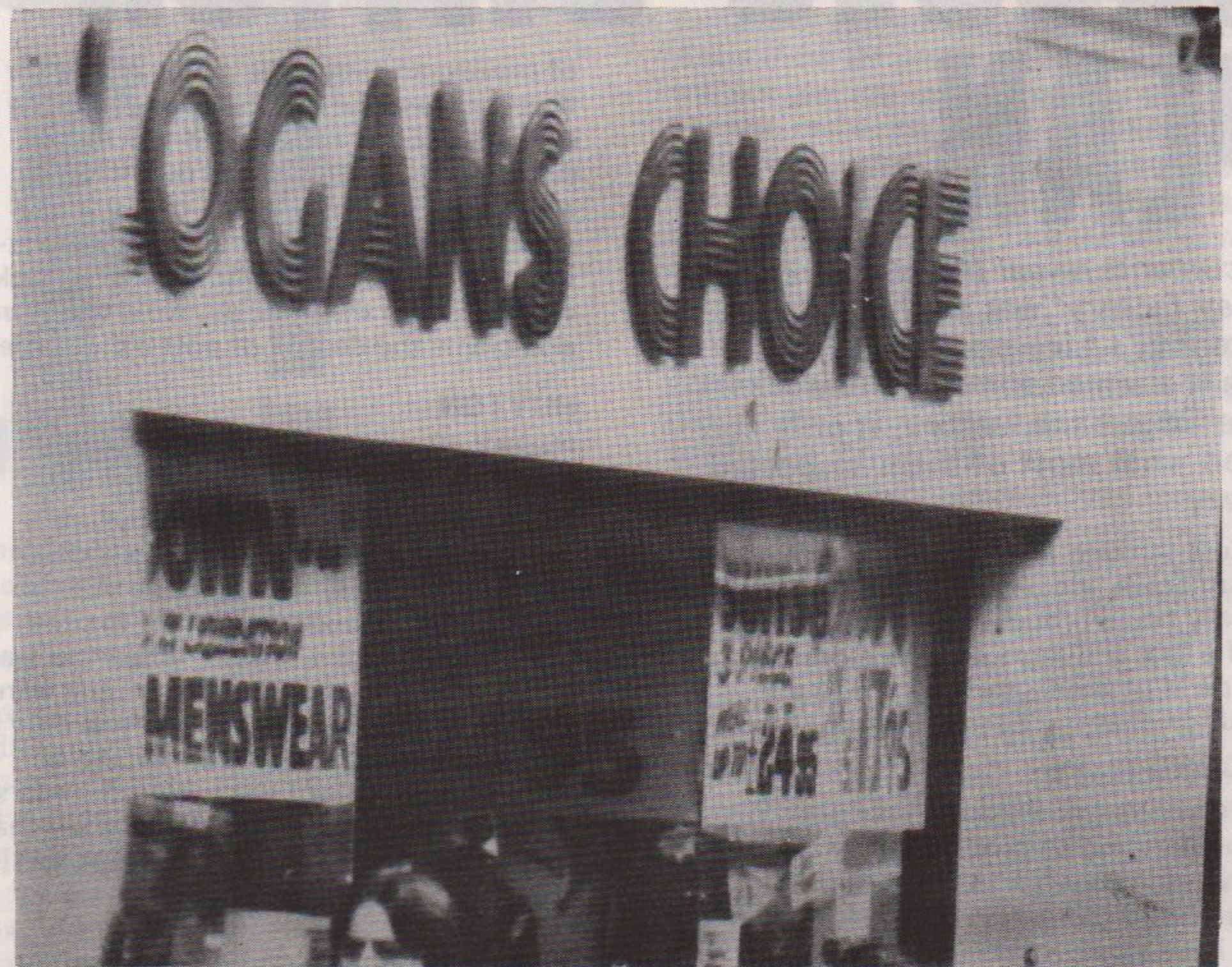
## CHRYSLER

At Chrysler the situation is different: the

bosses want to close it. There the fight must be stepped up by **forcing nationalisation without compensation.** This is the only way to defend **wages and organisation.** This can only come about by starting from the **shop floor.** And taking the strength of the shop floor outside **into the community and the other factories.** Not by compromise, which through some "workers participation" allows the workforce to be decimated like at British Leyland. When the Linwood workers decided to occupy if the place is closed down, they made the right decision.

So we say that a vital demand becomes **35 hour week, without loss of pay.** That's a gain which won't be eaten away by inflation; a working class way to create new jobs. A demand which, along with the fight against manning cuts and mobility, links the **employed to the unemployed**, and combats unemployment starting from the needs of the workers.

**At Chrysler and Leyland as in Fords or Plessey or Dunlop - LESS WORKLOAD FOR THE EMPLOYED IS MORE JOBS FOR THOSE ON THE DOLE.**



# BOUTIQUE BLUES

From time to time in Big Flame we report on the exploitation of shop staff which we sometimes forget, although we meet them every day. Below we print an article sent to us by a carworker who applied for a part-time job in a boutique and discovered the reality behind the flash clothes and the piped music.

I work in a car factory but recently I was laid off. Being desperate for cash I tried to get a casual job until I returned to work.

Looking in the Liverpool Echo I found an ad. that read something like "Saturday staff required for city boutique. Good rates of pay etc..." I applied and got it, the wages only being £4, but I was desperate....

I arrived at the shop (Logans Choice, Richmond St. L1.) promptly at 9.00am and introduced myself to the manager. He said abruptly, "Go upstairs then and tidy the suits on the rails" After I did this unworthwhile chore the manager pounced on me with more tedious jobs.

Having been in the establishment for under half an hour I could feel a most surly atmosphere within the place. The sales staff were on pins every time the manager uttered a word in their direction.

10.00 am. and the shop began to fill with potential customers. If you lost a sale the worm of a manager made some nasty remark like "Don't let Mr. Sales (I'm afraid that really was the man's name - Sales!) see you losing a sale or you'll be in trouble. He's not paying us for nothing, you know."

Later I asked a member of the sales staff who worked there full-time (god help them) who this Sales was, and he replied "Oh, he's one b.....d is Sales. He owns this place along with the Jace boutique in Clayton Square. If he doesn't like your

face he makes your life hell while you're working here, then he just sacks you for no reason at all".

It was not until 11.00am. that I found out that the shop doesn't allow their staff (slaves would be a better word) to take a tea break. They expected the lads to go all out and earn commission ( a measly 1p in the pound) instead of drinking tea - in other words to make more cash for this Mr. Sales.

At 2.00 pm. Mr. Sales entered. I thought the manager was bad, but this was worse. He stood behind the shop counter, surveying his staff and passing remarks like :- "Why isn't that over there selling instead of just standing there". and "He can go at the end of the week if he doesn't buck himself up" - making sure that the person would hear it.

I thought to myself, here is a man who is making thousands of pounds by exploiting young men; a man who resorts to 1984 tactics to make an enormous amount of profit and, what's so ironic, he and his like are getting away with it - scot-free.

3.00 pm. and I got the sack ( I was made up, believe me ). The manager gave me my £4 and told me to leave the premises as I was no longer required by Mr. Sales (he mustn't have liked my face!) The manager then said it was customary for all sales staff to be searched when leaving the premises, and he asked what was in my pockets - and it was at this point that I really got annoyed and told the worm to "f... off, and would he please convey this message to his boss, Mr. Sales"

Having finally been free of 'Logans Choice' I thought it would only be right to inform 'Big Flame' in the hope that it will deter some of your readers from ever embarking upon a career in such a disgusting company.

Steve.



# BIG FLAME

## PLESSEY BOSSES SWITCH PLAN

"Documents reveal the plan to close Plessey factory" was the headline in last month's Liverpool Free Press. While it alarmed some of the workers at the Edge Lane factory, it only confirmed what most of them suspected anyway.

Jobs lost through productivity deals, machines run down and not replaced, new machines only being brought in to do someone out of a job, and more storage room in some parts of the factory; all led to the conclusion that Edge Lane was finished.

### A SECOND PLAN

But closure wasn't Plessey's first plan. With the co-operation of Liverpool City Council Plessey wanted to tear up pavements and close roads to the public so that its lorries might have easier access to the factory. It wanted new roads built, the M62 to come almost to the gates and a railway station built beside the factory to link up with the new underground. And, it is claimed, Plessey wanted to throw tenants out of houses it owns nearby in order to build a car park

Even as the council were considering these proposals, Plessey told them that even if they agreed, the company was thinking

of moving anyway! The major reason for that decision must be the strength of the workers in Edge Lane. This will not be the reason that Plessey will publicly announce. They will blame the lack of access without mentioning their negotiations with the Council who bent over backwards to keep them happy. Now they can also blame the decline of post-office orders.

### HUYTON

Plessey's alternative was to build several smaller factories over the next ten years, probably in development areas where they are used to getting thousands of pounds in Government aid. One of these factories has opened in Huyton to produce the new TXE-4 system. When this was planned union officials at Edge Lane were told by the management that it was only temporary and that the work would be transferred to Edge Lane within ten years. Now that it is operational, Plessey says that they didn't promise anything of the sort!

### DIVIDE AND RULE

Plessey have a long history of using small factories and workforces, with the intention of keeping the workers divided with threats of closures or the transfer of work. This method has worked fairly well in Liverpool, where the Kirkby and Speke factories were threatened with closure if the workers didn't knuckle down. Plessey would throw scraps to one factory or another to keep them fighting one another. With the present fight against redundancies Plessey is trying even harder to split

## DOCTORS' CARRY ON

The Junior Hospital Drs have joined the long line of hospital workers taking industrial action and complaining over the state of the NHS.

The trouble began in October when the DHSS presented a new contract to the JHDs. They were offered a 44 hour week and 30% overtime rates, (previously overtime had started at 80 hrs) The doctors immediately rejected this. A wave of strikes, overtime bans etc. resulted. The doctors demanded a 40 hr week, better overtime rates and a 'no-detriment' clause. The final demand was because under the new contract some doctors would actually be worse off than under the old contract.

The JHDs are represented by 3 organisations: The British Medical Association, (JHD section) and the JHD Association - both reactionary organisations. (The BMA fights for privileged status for doctors, pay beds etc. And the Medical Practitioners Union which fights for policies in the interest of the

NHS as a whole. Unfortunately they have no negotiating rights, and are in a minority.

The NHS is skimping over money for doctors, as it does for all sections of the NHS. Too few doctors are working too long and this situation is detrimental to the drs as well as to patients and hospital workers. Big Flame supports the drs demands over basic conditions of pay and work. But we are totally opposed to the politics of self interest which the BMA and the JHD Assoc represent. Their policies will only serve to reinforce the hierarchy in the hospitals and they will result in worse conditions for nurses and ancillary staff.

For the junior doctors the choice is clear: either to join the working class and fight with the ancillary workers and their unions for a socialist health service or to side with the consultants in the defence of professional privileges.

the factories, the staff and the hourly-paid, in order to prevent a united resistance. By putting some workers on a three or four day week and leaving others on five days, and by asking for voluntary redundancies from the staff, they hope to drive a wedge between the workers to smash resistance.

But so far Plessey have had to back down. Firstly, it had to extend the time limit for volunteers to come forward, and then had to announce increased severance pay. This was after Edge Lane staff started selective strike action. Four workers closed up shop and went home with the keys!

### SUNDERLAND

Meanwhile, at Plessey's in Sunderland, 30 white-collar workers were suspended for refusing to do the work of 50 workers made made redundant. But management were forced to back down and re-instate them. A Joint Union Committee at Sunderland represents both staff and hourly-paid, and they are backing up a number of points agreed by stewards from Plessey, GEC and STC at a meeting in Leeds. Important points are:-

- a) An overtime ban for an indefinite period.
- b) The work of redundant workers to be blacked by the remaining employees.
- c) No work or machinery to be touched unless by prior agreement of donor and receptor sites,
- d) A national stoppage on November 26th for the lobby of Parliament against unemployment.

## DUMB IDEAS - FOR EXPORT

The next time your "fighting left-wing" labour MP, or trade-union chief goes on about import controls, ask them one or two of the following questions.....

\*\*What happens when other countries do the same and we are back to square one - only this time a bit more confused?

\*\*Why do we want to try and put foreign workers on the dole and let our own bosses off the hook?

\*\*What do we say to the dockers, airport workers etc who will immediately be threatened if there are controls on imports.

\*\*Why should we fight for controls which will limit the goods available to us as shoppers and therefore push up the prices?

\*\*Why are they so scared of a fight against our own bosses on the shop-floor, instead of joining up with them to go cap in hand to beg for legislation from Westminster?

\*\*Why are they doing the groundwork for the fascist chauvinists of the National Front instead of encouraging the socialism and internationalism of the working class.

**Import controls?? Yes we need them. We should stop the import of stupid ideas into our working-class movement!!!**

## FIGHT FOR £6 NORTHGATE WORKERS' STRIKE CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The Northgate Group is owned by the multinational Courtaulds (1974 profits £116.3m.) It supplies clothing to Marks and Spencer and has 44 factories all over England.

*'It's a hard time to have a strike - the picket line's freezing and it's getting nearer Christmas. But it's even harder for the bosses - they're desperate to get their big Christmas orders out, so they're really getting worried now.'*

The unofficial strike of the clothing workers in the Northgate group (part of Courtaulds) has been going on for three weeks now. It involves four factories in the Merseyside area (St. Helens, Aintree, Lark Hill and Bootle) and eight in the South Wales area.

They are demanding the full £6 increase across the board. They've been offered a mere £3.60p. On top of this management are trying to cut down piecework rates by bringing in time and motion men. The women machinists rely on piecework to boost their low wages (£21.90p) and aren't prepared to let it disappear on the bosses' terms, without a fight.

The employers are trying every trick to get the workers back - threatening redundancies and closures, withholding back pay and tax rebates. The union, the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers (NUGTW), has been having a go too. They've refused to make the strike official so far - so there's no strike pay. They've appealed to the workers to return to work - but they got knocked back.

Despite all this the women and men are standing firm. They've been picketing on a rota basis. In South Wales there are twenty four hour pickets. In Aintree the management are trying to get stocks of finished products out of the factory in large containers. But they haven't much chance of building up more stocks because the only people inside are bosses, supervisors and staff.

### THE RULE BOOK

The main battle at the moment is to get the strike made official and get strike pay for the workers. Some women from St. Helens and the other factories picketed the union office in Manchester last week, demanding support. And at a national shop stewards meeting pushed the union to organise a ballot of the whole membership, 44 factories, over whether the strike should be made official. The NUTGW rule book says there has to be a two thirds majority so no doubt the officials are hoping the 13 militant factories will be defeated. But it could backfire. A lot of factories, like Runcorn for instance, have said they'll come out if it's made official. So they could vote in favour of it. In any case the Merseyside factories may decide to go it alone, official or not.

### A NATIONAL FIGHT

Whatever the outcome the Northgate workers are going to need all the support, financial and otherwise they can get. Northgate group workers aren't the only textile workers fighting for the full £6.



MARKS AND SPENCERS 'NEW LOWER PRICES' - NORTHGATE WORKERS KNOW HOW THEY DO IT !!!!

Women textile workers are out in South Wales in the Kayser Bonder factories, also owned by Courtaulds. They are having to fight a Clothing Manufacturers' Federation which is determined to impose a £3.60p limit on wage increases throughout the industry.

The action of the Northgate workers shows up once and for all one of the biggest con-tricks ever played on the British working class - the £6 wage policy. The main reason many people accepted the limit was because

they believed everyone would get the full amount. Neither the government nor the employers ever had any intention of giving the full amount. If it's going to be won it'll have to be fought for.

The Northgate workers with women once again showing the lead need a victory not only for themselves, but for every worker to follow and knock a hole in the governments wages policies.