

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Conspiracy charges on workers fighting Lump

POLICE ATTACK ON MILITANTS

by Granville Williams
FIVE BUILDING WORKERS in Birmingham were charged by the police last week with unlawful assembly and conspiracy to trespass.

The charges—which are extremely serious and carry no limit on sentences—came more than two months after building workers had occupied the offices of a firm called SOS, which supplies 'lump labour' to building employers.

The occupation was part of the campaign in Birmingham to break the lump system, which drains the strength of the trade union movement in the building industry.

When the five—Phil Beyer, Gerry Kelly, Fred Ainslie, Pete Davidson and Graham Stevenson—were removed from the SOS offices in February, police told them they would hear within a fortnight whether the SOS manager wanted to press charges. They heard nothing.

Now they have been told that the police are bringing the prosecution. Once again, the employers have got the 'impartial' police to do their dirty work for them.

'TEST CASE'

Three television cameramen who filmed the occupation have also been charged with the same offences.

Ken Barlowe, regional secretary of UCATT, the main building union, four of whose members have been charged, told Socialist Worker: 'It is quite obvious that the protest occupation was to publicise the dangers of the lump. The building workers would not have informed press and television beforehand if it was their intention to wreck the place.'

'If our lads had been picked up and fined 50p for technical purposes we wouldn't have done anything,' he added. 'But now the case has clearly moved into the political arena, with the charges being used as a test case by the police.'

'We shall seek to protect the five men with every means at our disposal because the seriousness of the charges indicates a real attempt is being made to blow the issue up.'

Next Friday 26 building workers appear in court again in Shrewsbury for committal for trial on a battery of conspiracy and intimidation charges arising out of picketing during the official building workers' strike last summer. The prosecutions were authorised by the Director of Public Prosecutions at the request of leading building employers.

Both cases are part of a concerted attack by government and employers on workers and their organisations. The Industrial Relations Act is now almost

to back page



UCATT members on picket duty at Laing's Livery Street site in Birmingham

'This cancer has got to be smashed'

IT IS NO ACCIDENT that the police chose last week to bring conspiracy charges against the five Birmingham building workers. Summonses were actually issued in mid-April.

But they were served only on the 2 May. That morning the UCATT Midland Region's campaign against the lump got off the ground again.

Stewards from Laing's Sutton Coldfield site, where there is 100 per cent trade unionism, started picketing another Laing's site in Livery Street, Birmingham, which was riddled with the lump. The stewards gave out the official UCATT leaflet explaining the threat of the lump in a bid to organise the site.

Malachy Doyle, convenor of the Sutton Coldfield site, described the peril of the lump. He pointed to the scaffolding on Livery Street and said scathingly: 'It's going at all angles. They don't bother to use a skilled scaffolder. Anybody puts it up. In the working rule agreement it states that for safety's sake all scaffolds

THE LUMP: special feature on centre pages.

should be erected by skilled men.'

'On another big lump job in the city, Laing's had to pull down the work that the lump sub-contractors had just finished. That's how bad it was,' Malachy Doyle added. 'On our site, where more than 200 men are directly employed, we've been told that everyone is really pleased with the quality of the workmanship. But the lump merchants and sub-contractors are just in and out.'

'When we asked about safety at the Livery Street job, the sub-contractor just said "I'll be the safety officer." That's why the lump is a cancer that's got to be cut out.'

The picket at Livery Street was successful. The majority of the men left the site, had a meeting in a nearby pub, joined the union and elected Eddie Elicott, the crane driver, as shop steward.

'There's no canteen on the site. They've just promised one month after month,' said Eddie Elicott. 'You're meant to have canteen facilities when there are over 15 men. But not here. And men carried on working in the rain because the subbie told them to. We need the union here to get some decent working conditions,' he added.

Malachy Doyle and his stewards know that the Livery Street victory is part of a tough campaign. As Ken Barlowe, UCATT regional secretary, puts it: 'Employers are using the lump, even though it can be costly, to break the union. It's a crucial battle. If we can't control the lump we're no good as a union.'

'The employers are not interested in keeping their side of the declaration in the working rule agreement. Every situation we have investigated proves it. So we're dealing with the matter now by a policy of direct confrontation.'

Which is why the employers have trumped up the conspiracy charges.

FUND: ONE LAST HEAVE

WE'RE not kidding—we really are almost there. This week's postbag of £519 brings the printshop fund to £29,386—only £614 short of our target. Let's get it over with in the next few days.

Readers have donated more than £100 of their May Day wages. Readers on Little London estate, Leeds, sent £3.55, Woodhead coil springs shop stewards committee £3, GEC (Rugby) turbine

generators £1.68.

Our own branches have again given generously, including Southampton £9.55, Hull £82, Colindale £300, Ealing £19.20, Cardiff £5.40, Leeds £1.50, Tottenham £6.40, Cambridge £1, Peterborough £12, Oxford £6.50.

●Rush donations to: Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

TUC gets back to the real business

SW Reporters

TUC LEADERS are eagerly getting back to their original business now that the May Day stoppage is safely out of the way. Vic Feather and co are putting together an agenda for their next round of formal talks with the Tory government and the Confederation of British Industry.

At their secret talks with the Tories on 18 March and 19 April (after the TUC special congress had decided on the May Day strike) left as well as right trade union leaders made it clear that they would be only too happy to co-operate in a 'voluntary' incomes policy for Phase Three in the autumn. Once again their only problem is terms of the deal.

What these terms are is now beginning to be clear. They are almost identical with the ones the Tories refused last autumn when the talks broke down and the freeze was introduced.

The TUC will be trying to horse-trade on token increases in the housebuilding programme, changes in the administration of VAT and some tougher government gestures to control price increases.

The one major difference is that there is no formal mention of repeal or non-implementation of the Industrial Relations Act. The reason—as Hugh Scanlon has indicated—is that the TUC leaders are now prepared to swallow the Act if a few amendments are made to it.

Distress

And the Tories may be quite pleased to grant the amendments which would actually give the Act a bit of credibility after the rank and file showed it to be almost totally useless last year.

But the small matter of their secret talks with the Tories becoming public knowledge is continuing to cause the TUC leaders some distress.

Last Friday Jack Jones, Transport Workers secretary, was addressing shop stewards at the Billingham ICI plant on Teesside. He announced that reports of the secret talks were no more than an outrageous example of the distortions of the capitalist press.

'The so-called secret meetings were not secret as far as I was concerned. It is simply that the press did not publicise them,' he stated.

It may well be that Jones' friends in Fleet Street knew what was going on. But the talks certainly came as a surprise to members of the TGWU executive council and shop stewards up and down the country, including many at the Billingham meeting.

FIGHT THE REPRESSION

Release the Stoke Newington 5
Protest march and meeting
Saturday 12 May
4pm, Speakers' Corner
Meeting Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square, 6pm
Speakers include:
Paul Foot (IS), Angela Weir, Robin
Blackburn (IMG), Beatrix Campbell
(CP), Eamonn McCann, Althea LaCoint
(Black Panthers)
Chairman: David Widgery

WATERGATE



AFFAIR

White House: just Nixon and the bugs are left...

IT WAS unfortunate for President Nixon that he chose to place a bust of Abraham Lincoln on his desk during his nationwide television broadcast on the Watergate affair. For as most Americans know, it was Lincoln who coined the phrase, 'You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.'

And if the opinion polls are any guide, most of the people—including the much-loved vote fodder of the conservative 'silent majority'—are sick of being fooled. They believe that Nixon has lied about his role in the bugging of the Democratic Party HQ last June and that he was not an innocent victim of the top-level conspiracy to hush up the whole affair.

In a desperate attempt to stem the flood of accusations and the death-bed conversions to honesty by his former associates, Nixon last week invoked 'executive privilege', forbidding current or past members of the White House staff from disclosing discussions with him on Watergate.

This use of naked police state gagging shows just how rattled Nixon is. And it has done little to stop the finger of suspicion pointing firmly in his direction. On Monday, John Dean, the president's legal adviser who was sacked for 'misleading'

him over Watergate, told Newsweek magazine that the president had been intimately involved in the cover-up plot.

Dean claims he was called to Nixon's office last September with Bob Haldeman, the president's chief of staff. Nixon congratulated Dean on the way in which the cover-up operation was keeping suspicion from top White House staff.

Dean confirms that Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, Nixon's domestic affairs adviser, had organised the conspiracy to stop the truth leaking out.

Impartial

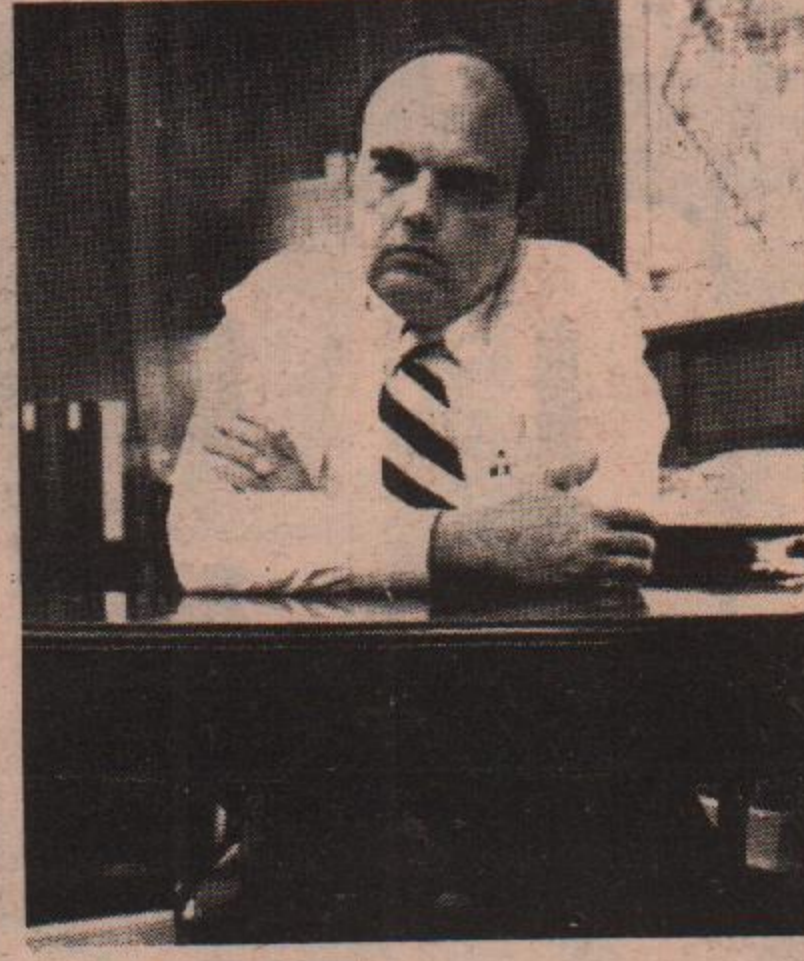
Haldeman and Ehrlichman have now resigned from the White House, along with Attorney General Kleindienst, who in turn replaced Attorney General John Mitchell last year. The Justice Department, supposedly heading an impartial investigation into the Watergate affair, has lost all credibility, with the rapid departure of two Attorney Generals.

The new nominee for the job is yet another staunch Nixonite. This has proved too much even for the flabby Democrats to stomach and a storm of protest has forced Nixon to agree to an independent inquiry into Watergate.

Now the Watergate affair has been shown to have close links with the Pentagon Papers trial. In Los Angeles, Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony J Russo are on trial for their alleged part in leaking to the press last year top secret military



Haldeman and Ehrlichman: absent friends



papers on the conduct of the Vietnam war.

It is likely that the Pentagon Papers trial judge will order a mistrial this week as the widening cesspit of Watergate corruption threatens to engulf the prosecution's case against Ellsberg and Russo.

One of the Watergate conspirators, E Howard Hunt, has now declared under oath that he and another Watergate man, Gordon Liddy, broke into the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in an attempt to find incriminating documents.

According to Hunt, the break-in was planned with two members of Haldeman's and Ehrlichman's staffs at the White House, with the support of the CIA. The aim of the

operation was simple: to provide extra evidence for the prosecution in the Pentagon Papers trial.

Judge Matt Byrne, presiding at the trial, now has to decide whether any illegally-obtained information was passed on secretly to the prosecution.

His task has not been made any easier by disclosures that John Ehrlichman had offered the judge the directorship of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a job vacant since the death of arch-witchhunter J Edgar Hoover.

Nixon has often been called the 'lonely man in the White House' because of his aloof, secretive nature and his contempt for Congress. Now the description is close to the literal truth, as he surveys the ruins of his administration, with the offices of

all his closest advisers empty save for the bugging devices.

Bereft of any arguments to explain the greatest political scandal of the 20th century, he is reduced to the pathetic claim that the disclosure of Watergate is living proof of the free, democratic nature of the American system. Some enterprising movie producer should immediately offer him a walk-on part in the next remake of Nineteen Eighty Four.

Impeach

Also in the best Orwell tradition, the CIA has announced its intention to investigate the role of a government agency in the Watergate affair. The agency is... the CIA.

There is some talk of attempting to impeach the president, the only way to remove the head of state. This requires a successful vote in the House of Representatives and a two-thirds majority in the Senate.

It is unlikely to succeed, because majority ruling class opinion would be terrified of the impact on the whole political system if their chosen executive was toppled.

And Nixon has his own built-in safeguard against impeachment. It is called Spiro T Agnew.

However, Nixon does have a few admirers left. So anxious are the Russian leaders to maintain friendly links with America that not one word of a scandal that mercilessly exposes the corruption and hypocrisy of capitalist democracy has appeared in the Russian papers.

HOW LONG BEFORE THE BOOM BURSTS?

A MOTORIST whose car engine was dangerously over heating would be regarded as foolish if he insisted on keeping his foot hard on the accelerator. If the British economy is to be compared to a car it certainly is not to a 1973 Aston Martin but to a ramshackle, 20-years-old Morris 8. And, to pursue the analogy, the car is almost out of oil and is operating on low grade petrol.

What is happening to the British economy at present? There can be no doubt that output has increased sharply, unemployment has fallen and many firms which a year ago were working with spare capacity are now working to full capacity.

By resorting to every inflationary device in his repertoire, notably by printing much more money, Heath has engineered a boom.

This boom looks even less healthy than any of those other short-lived periods of high growth which punctuated the long years of economic stagnation in the 1950s and 1960s.

This boom is being fed by an extraordinary volume of imports—both of raw materials and of semi-manufactured and manufactured goods. And to make matters worse, successive devaluations of the pound against foreign currencies means that these imports are costing even more

by John Palmer

than they otherwise would.

On the other hand income from exports is falling for the same reason.

In short the British economy is getting deeper and deeper into the red. Most estimates of the total gap between export earnings and imports this year are around £1000 millions. Much smaller sums have sparked off full-scale sterling crises in the past.

In the face of these unpalatable facts Heath and company are trying to keep up a brave face. 'Things are different this time round,' they insist.

INDUCEMENT

Now the pound is floating brave and free on the currency markets which means that its value does not have to be defended by the old-fashioned 'stop-go' policies. Secondly British currency reserves are running at more than £3000 millions—an all-time record.

This means, the Tories insist, that the boom can continue without interruption, lifting the British growth rate to a respectable 5 per cent a year or more, keeping unemployment low and increasing investment, modernisation and living standards.

This is the main inducement which Heath has held out in his successful bid to woo the TUC leaders back to Downing Street for talks on wages. As an economic prospectus it is a phoney.

In the first place, whatever Heath

says now the government cannot afford to allow the payments deficit to grow at its present rate. Although in theory the pound is free to bear the cost of this deficit in reality there is a limit to the amount by which the government dare let the exchange rate for sterling fall on the currency markets.

For a start the other Common Market governments who are already opposed to a floating pound will not stand by and see the British sneak through another devaluation under the cloak of a float.

Secondly, the more the pound floats down in value, as the deficit grows, the more the prices of all imported goods will shoot up. As things stand, and even with wages frozen more or less solid, prices are rising at more than 8 per cent a year.

Even without a new rise in import costs, inflation will be running at 10 per cent or more by the year end. So in practice Heath will be forced to defend the pound at some point: and this will involve introducing a credit squeeze and other curbs on consumption.

It is no use Heath boasting about the size of the British gold and currency reserves. Even at their present size they would barely be enough to stave off the speculators for one week in the event of a full-blown currency crisis.

And the government will hit the



Heath: danger of overheating

boom on the head long before those reserves have been transferred to the international bankers and other currency speculators.

Of course the Tories will only kill this boom as a last resort. For they know that another period of stagnation, nil growth, and falling industrial investment can only accelerate the international decline

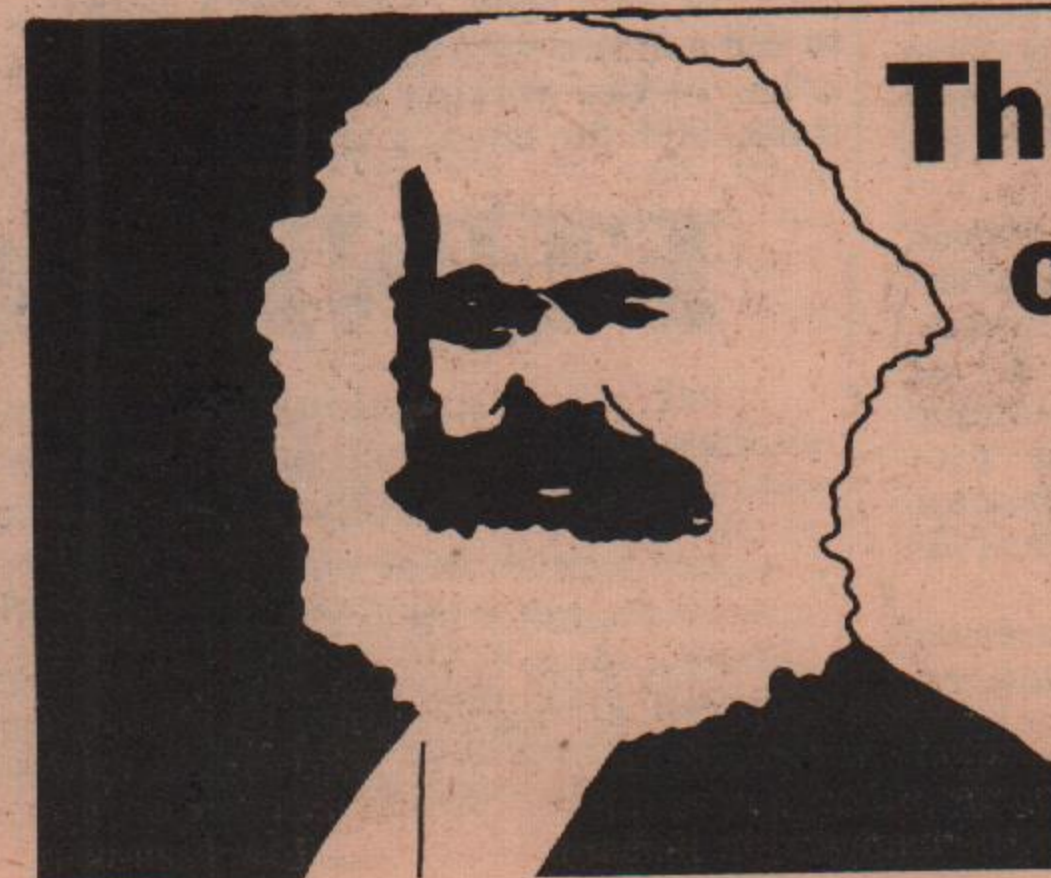
of British capitalism.

But if the Tories are to buy time for the boom (and even more so if the boom collapses) there can be no relaxation on the wages front. Profits are at a peak at present but this does not disguise the serious long-term downward trend in the overall rate of profit.

If this is to be halted wages must continue to be held below the rate of increase in prices.

Although Heath says that the agenda for the new Downing Street talks is 'wide open' in reality there is only one topic—how to bail out the ailing British capitalist economy and the Tory government.

Which is why Heath is so anxious to patch up an agreement on wage curbs with the TUC chiefs before that overheated engine finally blows up.



The Meaning of Marxism

by Duncan Hallas

20p plus 3p postage
IS Books
6 Cottons Gardens,
London E2 8DN



Telephone
01 739 9043
editorial

'KICK YOU OUT' COURTS THREAT TO BLACKS

SW Reporter

ABOUT 2500 immigrants working in this country are living in fear of deportation, following an extraordinary decision by the Court of Appeal last Thursday.

These are people who entered the country by 'illegal' means—that is, without a permit under the Immigration Acts of 1962 and 1968. Until 1 January these people could be found guilty only of 'illegal landing'. More importantly, if the immigrant could escape the notice of the police for six months, he could not be deported for the offence. The 1962 and 1968 Acts gave all 'illegal' immigrants an immunity from deportation after six months.

The Immigration Act, 1971, which came into force this year, closed this 'loophole'. It states that people who enter the country without a permit are guilty of 'illegal entry' which is punishable by deportation on the say-so of the Home Secretary without any right of appeal. There is no time limit. A man who enters illegally can be deported for his offence even if he has been living in this country for 20 years.

WITCH-HUNT

Now Lord Denning, and the Court of Appeal have added a new reactionary twist to this already deeply reactionary legislation. Lord Denning has decided that people who entered the country without permission before the Immigration Act became law must also be deported.

By a majority of two to one, the judges decided that the Act is retrospective indefinitely. Anyone who entered illegally even as early as 1962 when the first Commonwealth immigration controls were introduced can be deported.

The Court was hearing the appeal of Mohammad Azam, who has been living in South Wales for more than three years, Gurbar Singh Khera who has been living in Wolverhampton for five years, and Malkit Singh Sidhu who also came in on an 'illegal' boat five years ago after



Denning: Powellite abuse

twice trying to get an immigration permit.

These three were arrested as part of a massive police witch-hunt against 'illegal immigrants'. There are 24 Asians now in Pentonville Prison, who will be deported if the House of Lords upholds Lord Denning's judgement.

Typical of these is Tarsen Singh, who came to this country five years ago without a permit, and has been working ever since. He thought he was safe, and wrote to his wife and three children asking them to join him.

As soon as their application for an entry permit was received by the Home Office, police swooped on Tarsen Singh's workplace, arrested him and took him to Pentonville without allowing him to see a lawyer. It was only when his relatives discovered that he was missing that a solicitor was engaged, and his whereabouts discovered.

Lord Denning, incidentally, was not content with wrongly interpreting the law so immigrants should be deported. 'I can see why,' he told the court. 'These men, if once here by leave, will seek to bring their wives and children over. If the men are allowed to remain, it will be difficult to refuse the wives and children. If this were allowed, the number of immigrants would be increased so that there would not be room for everybody.'

This nonsense had nothing to do with the case. Lord Denning, like so many other judges, could not resist an opportunity to make a little free Powellite propaganda in the name of independent justice.

Lord Denning, incidentally, is president of the National Marriage Guidance Council.

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

HEATH, Barber and their tame press and television have been boasting about their 'success' in limiting the scale of the May Day strikes and demonstrations. One paper called the outcome 'a huge success for the nation' ('nation' means bosses in Fleet Street jargon), another called it 'a vote by the silent majority for sanity and responsibility' ('sanity and responsibility' means right wing politics in Fleet Street jargon).

In fact the strike of about two million workers, an avowedly political stoppage, was a very impressive anti-government demonstration. And it was achieved in the face of out and out sabotage by the majority of the trade union leadership. Vic Feather, supposedly 'leader' of the national day of stoppage and protest, set the example by announcing that he would be working normally.

The actual demonstrations were unusually large and militant and of course they were systematically under-reported by the mass media.

Two things are happening in the trade union movement. The leadership is undoubtedly moving to the right. In the run-up to May Day top union leaders secretly met Heath on 18 March and again on 19 April for talks about a new incomes policy deal, and only this week a new official invitation to the TUC has come out of Downing Street. Not just the right wing but also the Scanlon-Jones left are committed to a deal with the Tories. The only dispute is about terms.

It is equally clear that there is a growing movement to the left among independent sections of rank and file militants. The gap between the official 'lefts' and many militants is increasing. As inflation speeds up this summer—and this is inevitable—revolutionary socialists in industry will have greater opportunity and greater responsibilities for forging a new leadership than ever before.

There are certainly no grounds for pessimism. Far from being defeated, the rash of occupations and strikes against victimisation, for union rights and equal pay, together with the spirited response to May Day, show there is still a great determination among militant workers to settle accounts with Heath and his government.

The setbacks that have taken place are the result of a total lack of leadership and willingness to fight at the top. More and more workers are becoming convinced that to wait for their leaders to fight is to wait until hell freezes. The task of revolutionary socialists is to convince those workers of the need to build a movement capable of giving the necessary cohesion and leadership.

'We'll pitch a tent if you evict us' family tells council

SHOP STEWARDS occupying a council house in Suffield, Norfolk, since 5 March, appeared in the High Court in London last week.

They were in court because Erpingham rural district council has ignored appeals to keep Eric Amies and his family together and is demanding possession of the occupied house because of alleged rent arrears.

Mr Amies has been a council tenant since 1961. He did not get into trouble with his rent until 1969. At the time his wages were £18 a week.

He lost a lot of time at work looking after his daughter who died

SW Reporter

after a four-years' illness from diabetes. He later broke his foot and was off work for a considerable time.

Then his wife was taken into hospital with high blood pressure. Throughout this long and difficult period, his rent arrears never amounted to more than £17.

When Erpingham council won its first eviction order, Mr Amies' rent arrears amounted to £3.25. When he was evicted no money was owing at all.

Eric, his wife, two boys aged 11 and 8 and a baby daughter had nowhere to live. On 5 March, when two council officials arrived to hold an inventory of the furniture, the family moved back into the house.

They were accompanied by stewards and workmates from Crane Fruehauf Containers where Mr Amies works as a welder. They have remained in occupation ever since.

Crane Fruehauf has guaranteed that future rent will be paid and letters of support for the Amies family have been sent to the council. But the landed gentry, millionaires and ex-army officers that pack Erpingham council are unmoved.

High Court judges are not renowned for their working-class sympathies. Yet Mr Justice Bean directed that the possession order should not be enforced for 28 days.

He said that although he was forced to give the order he accepted there must be a good reason for workmates to rally round the family, losing time and money.

He hoped that Erpingham council would give Mr Amies one last chance and he asked the council's barrister to convey his opinion to the local authority.

If the Amies family are still without a home when the 28 days are up, they intend to pitch a tent on the land in front of the house.

Costs of £70 were awarded against Mr Amies at a previous court hearing. £20 of this amount is still outstanding. The High Court costs have also been awarded against Mr Amies and the stewards. The amount is likely to be substantial.

A collection on the Norwich May Day march raised £11. Donations would be appreciated and should be sent to: Shop stewards' committee: c/o Crane Fruehauf Containers, Cromer Road, North Walsham, Norfolk.

PICKETS BEAT POLICE

POLICE attempts to prosecute two militant hospital workers for picketing during the recent strikes failed at Marylebone Court in London this week when the magistrate dismissed the cases because of insufficient evidence.

Don Steadman, NUPE branch secretary at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington, and St Mary's shop steward Peter Barker were arrested as police tried to reduce the effective-

ness of the picket outside the hospital on 22 March this year.

Both men were charged with obstruction. In evidence Inspector Andrew Little alleged that the two were arrested because they refused to tell other pickets to move on, and told him to 'get stuffed'.

This was denied by defence lawyers who added that shop stewards had neither power nor obligation to order fellow members to move on.

After the case was dismissed on Monday, Peter Barker and Don Steadman were cheered by a crowd of St Mary's workers who had come to the court. Three more London NUPE members, from St George's Hospital, Hyde Park, were due in court on Thursday to face similar charges also arising out of picketing during the strike.

At the NUPE conference in Eastbourne this week, news of the St Mary's acquittals was greeted with a standing ovation. Delegates also passed an emergency motion supporting the pickets and making strike action in solidarity with them official.



THE SCANDAL OF WOMEN'S PENSIONS

WOMEN are to be brought into the earnings-related pensions scheme—with benefits at two-thirds or less than the corresponding rates for men. At the very time when the government is back-peddling its own 'equal pay' legislation (an inevitable consequence of an 'incomes policy' which penalises all the lower paid) it is introducing a fresh abuse.

The arguments used to justify this scandal are what are called 'actuarial'. They amount to this. Not only do women retire earlier than men, they also have the effrontery to live longer on the average. For these crimes they must be penalised by sub-standard pensions.

Earnings-related pensions are in any case a means of further discriminating against all lower paid workers. Women, the largest group of the lower paid, are now to be doubly discriminated against. Incidentally, the earnings-related scheme was first introduced by the so-called Labour government of Harold Wilson.

Contrast the treatment given to the bosses of private and nationalised industry. The governor of the Bank of England (which you all are supposed to 'own') retires in June and the Observer notes: 'Lord O'Brien should be able to afford a little leisure. He is paid £30,000 a year . . . and that does not include pensions contributions from the bank itself thought to come to almost as much as his salary.'

Such are the values of capitalism. Lord O'Brien was, of course, appointed and his salary and pension determined by the Wilson government.

6 COTTONS GDNS, LONDON E2 8DN



BRIEFING

TOKIO and other Japanese cities were paralysed by a general strike of public sector workers which hit railways, post and telecommunications, docks, hospitals, rubbish disposal and internal airways two weeks ago. The strike, which was planned to last three days, ended with concessions by the government after the first day.

The public sector strike was part of a strike wave that usually happens in Japan every spring as wages are renegotiated. In the past 20 years of Japan's 'economic miracle', annual wage increases have been

between 10 and 15 per cent. This year the unions, encouraged by socialist and Communist Party gains in December's elections, are fighting for improved pensions and social services as well as for a record wage increase.

The struggle in the public sector is especially bitter as the government still refuses to recognise public employees' right to strike and follows each strike with harsh reprisals.

The riots of Tokio commuters against striking railwaymen—who have been

operating selective strikes for some weeks—have received publicity in Britain. But on 27 April 382 students were arrested at a locomotive depot in a Tokio suburb for attempting to demonstrate solidarity with the strikers. This received no publicity.

WHEN the French Communist Party launched its 'post-electoral campaign' at Toulouse party leader Georges Marchais said the common programme of the Communists, Socialists and Left Radicals, on which they fought the election, was still the party's goal. The programme is a list of moderate reforms which offers no major changes for French workers.

Marchais, stressing the alliance with these parties, attacked 'ultra-left' groups which 'give pre-eminence to the latest minority group', but went on immediately to say that the Communist Party fully supports the struggles of youth and immigrant workers.

While the Party is clearly anxious to put itself at the head of today's workers' struggles, it is at the same time concerned to maintain the 'safe' parliamentary image it cultivated during the elections. This was summed up by Marchais as 'We are liberals.'

'Russia is Russia... France is France,' he went on to say. 'The way we have chosen is different, as our country, our people and our customs are different, and also because this is 1973 and not 1917.'

LEBANON STRIKES AT THE PALESTINIANS

by Julian Harber

IT IS not at all clear who started last week's fighting in Beirut between the Lebanese army and Palestinian guerrillas. But it is not surprising that fighting broke out.

Lebanon is now the only country bordering Israel where Palestinian guerrillas are allowed any real freedom to operate. In Jordan they have yet to recover from their crushing defeat at the hands of King Hussein's army in September 1970. In Egypt and Syria their activities are tightly controlled.

All three countries have clamped down on the Palestinians because of two threats. On the one hand there is the military strength of Israel, which has constantly held Arab governments responsible for guerrilla raids carried out from their countries and has launched heavy retaliation. On the other hand the presence of armed Palestinians (especially those calling themselves marxist-leninist) poses a threat to the stability of the Arab ruling classes.

Traditionally the Lebanese ruling classes have tried to keep out of the Arab-Israeli conflict as much as possible. This has been partly because many of Lebanon's Arabs are christians and have shown little interest in the aspirations of the displaced Palestinians.

But mainly it has been because Lebanon is the centre of Western capitalism in the Arab Middle East. The more neutral the country is seen to be, the more the banks, insurance companies and import/export agencies that are the main sources of Lebanese wealth flourish.

But with more than 20,000 Palestinians living in Lebanon this neutrality has been difficult to maintain—especially in the wake of the 1967 Arab/Israeli war, which caused a wave of Palestinian nationalism to sweep the refugee camps strengthening and extending the liberation organisations.

INVASION

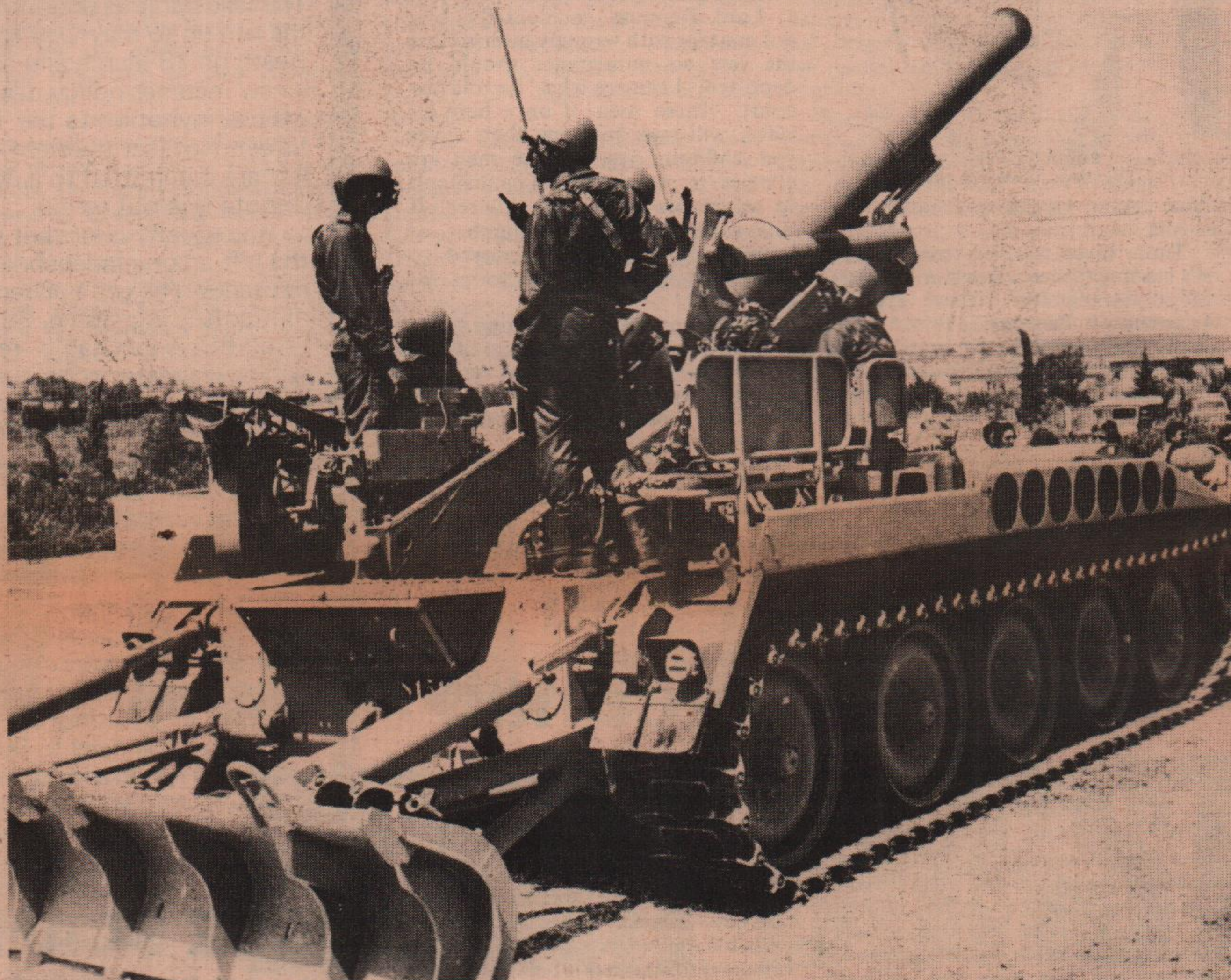
With a weak army—Lebanon is the only country in the Middle East that does not have conscription—and a country liable to disintegrate into religious in-fighting if there is a really serious crisis, successive Lebanese governments have tended to leave the Palestinians alone as much as possible.

But as in other Arab countries this has led to a series of attacks by Israel, such as the blowing up of Middle East Airlines planes at Beirut Airport in 1968 and the invasion last autumn. These attacks are now tending to strike before Palestinian action rather than to retaliate after it.

The latest was the assassination of the three Palestinian resistance leaders last month at their homes in Beirut—an operation quite clearly planned weeks in advance of the Palestinian operations in Cyprus, which Israel used as justification for the murders.

The assassinations and the invasions have undoubtedly increased the sympathy of the Lebanese people

...as Israel shows off her arms



An American manufactured M-110 self-propelled howitzer put on show in Israel. It was with weapons such as this that Israel invaded Lebanon last year. Israel's continuous military threat forces the Arab governments to attack Palestinian guerrillas.

towards the Palestinian cause and to some extent also their desires for Arab unity. The funeral of the three murdered men in Beirut attracted an estimated quarter of a million people—by far the largest demonstration this small country has ever seen—as well as causing large demonstrations in Lebanon's two other main cities, Sidon and Tripoli. Even the traditionally conservative christian Arabs have been outraged by Israel's activities.

Any move to the left by the people

towards the Palestinian cause and to some extent also their desires for Arab unity. The funeral of the three murdered men in Beirut attracted an estimated quarter of a million people—by far the largest demonstration this small country has ever seen—as well as causing large demonstrations in Lebanon's two other main cities, Sidon and Tripoli. Even the traditionally conservative christian Arabs have been outraged by Israel's activities.

So the army must inevitably be used against the guerrillas. This time the conflict may be quickly settled without either side losing any ground, but such a settlement is only likely to be temporary. And Israel knows this, so is likely to do as much as

possible, by direct attack and underhand manoeuvring, to increase tension between the two sides.

Whether the Lebanese army does manage to overawe the guerrillas or whether the country slips into another civil war still remains to be seen. In either case the victor will be Israel and the losers the thousands of Palestinian refugees who live in appalling poverty and who still lack any organisation with a realistic programme capable of restoring their country to them.

Diamond Harry learns to love the blacks

by Alan Berger

ANY DOUBTS about the purpose of the campaign in Britain to get black wages in South Africa increased were dispelled by a recent statement by Harry Oppenheimer.

Oppenheimer is the white South African multi-millionaire who heads the Anglo-American Corporation, the world's biggest non-American multi-national company, and speaks for international capitalism in South Africa. He regards the salutary and often fully justified criticism of South African practices from our friends overseas as helpful, if a bit behind the times, in supporting him and other employers in attempts to rationalise South African capitalism.

He puts their position in a nutshell: 'Businessmen and industrialists of all shades of political opinion see that improved

productivity offers the only escape from the stagnation that has confronted South Africa for the past three years and have come to regard South Africa's huge underemployed African population not just as a problem but as a glittering opportunity.'

As well as more efficient exploitation of labour, they also have problems in finding markets. Britain and Europe are being cut off as markets for manufactured goods and their 'natural market' in southern Africa is poor and underdeveloped. Hence the increased drive to develop internal markets.

International capital understands such considerations and is pressing the nationalist government to increase wages,

make job reservation more flexible and modify hard-line apartheid. What it is most certainly not advocating is any significant shift in the country's power structure. Perpetual white supremacy is synonymous with economic stability and high profits.

Profits up

Oppenheimer's own companies provide good examples. From 1 April, De Beers, his giant diamond company in South Africa and Namibia, increased its black wages by 20 per cent. It also announced increased profits for 1972 of 59 per cent, from 102 million Rand to 163 million Rand. The Guardian pension fund will be among the investors to benefit.

In its gold mines Anglo-American has put up the wages of its 120,000 black workers by an average of 26 per cent.

DENMARK'S revolutionary left groups staged a united march and rally in Copenhagen on May Day in opposition to rallies by the Communist Party and the social democrats, whose main speaker was the prime minister. The revolutionary left aimed to demonstrate its strength and this was certainly achieved—several thousand people took part despite pouring rain.

Groups taking part included several of Maoist origin, the Communist League—formerly a faction of the Left Socialist Party, the Danish International Socialists and the Danish supporters of the US Fourth International. Duncan Hallas, a member of the British International Socialists' national committee, spoke at the rally about the struggle in Britain.

This puts the average underground worker on R32 per month (£17). In 1972 pre-tax profits rose by 50 per cent to R238 million—more than eight times the black wage rise.

Higher wages and more effective use of labour is necessary to maintain this level of profits. But South Africa's crisis is not just a result of economic factors. It also stems from the renewed militancy of black workers, from the constant political ferment and the intensified challenges from Mozambique, Angola, Namibia and now Rhodesia.

Oppenheimer and his international backers desperately want stability. But the crumbs they are offering the black working class cannot permanently buy off their struggle, since it is a struggle against capitalism and not just against the cruder aspects of racism.

FIRM SWITCHES PROFIT FIGURES TO SACK 900

PETER DIXONS, the Grimsby paper mill where 800 jobs face the axe, need not close. An examination of events leading up to the closure decision reveals that the closure is not due to losses, but a simple sacrifice of jobs for profits.

The company has switched production and profits from Grimsby to its subsidiary in Finland and concentrated its energies on the packaging division of the company, so that one day it could join the property bonanza by selling the Grimsby site it has occupied since 1904.

On 14 April the company announced that the Grimsby mill was to be closed and the packaging division of the company sold for £5½ million. As this move, which involves the sacking of 900 men, was expected to increase the value of the company's shares, the directors asked for dealings in the shares to be suspended.

The Grimsby mill was said to be losing £14,000 a week, or around £700,000 a year, despite strong demand for newsprint, the company's main product. The reasons are the price freeze, management's dogged commitment to a consistently unsuccessful machine and its refusal to operate the plant at full capacity. Recent developments make it clear that if the plant was run at full capacity, the losses could be halted.

The Vertiforma, a modern newsprint machine, was first installed in September 1969 with the help of a government loan of £350,000. In June 1970 the company reported: 'The greater part of the [profit] shortfall in the paper division is directly attributable to the enormous difficulties we have experienced with the new paper machine.' The story was the same at the beginning of 1972.

Yet investment in this machine has continued, with £1½ million insurance money from a fire in 1970 being spent on it.

Meanwhile things were going a bit better in the company's Finnish pulp mill. Profits were £332,000 in 1970 and higher still in 1971—all on an original investment of £186,000. One of its chief customers was Dixon's Grimsby plant.

It would make no difference to Dixons' total profits for the Finnish mill to charge the Grimsby mill high prices, and this has the double advantage of getting capital out of this country and persuading people that the Grimsby mill was unprofitable.

LOSING

But, perhaps more ominous, the Finnish mill appears to have been producing newsprint to sell in competition with that produced at Grimsby. There is no mention of this in the company report and accounts and as recently as 21 April a director of Dixons referred to the Finnish operation as a pulp mill.

But the 1972 report and accounts did say the company was 'studying other ways of developing its business,' and a recent visitor to the Grimsby Evening Telegraph printshop noticed Dixon newsprint with 'Made in Finland' stamped on it.

The company now claims the Grimsby plant is losing £14,000 a week, and considering what's been going on, perhaps this is not surprising. But the situation has been made worse by the freeze. The newsprint producers were going to put up the price of newsprint by £7 a ton, but the government restricted the increase to £2. The paper trade was almost unanimous in claiming this decision was made



with T H Rogmorton

under pressure from the press barons. Foremost among those condemning the decision was Philip Dixon, managing director of Dixons.

Now there is a desperate shortage of newsprint. Thirty-five provincial newspapers, entirely reliant on Dixons for their newsprint, are reported by The Times to be considering buying the Grimsby plant.

Against this background Dixons decided to put up prices. The press gave hardly any coverage to the news on 27 April that Dixons' newsprint was to be increased by £10.75 a ton. Because Dixons' sales are less than £50 million they do not need the consent of the Price Commission.

Dixons' production is around 40,000 tons a year, so an increase of £10.75 should mean about £400,000 off their losses. But the newsprint machines are operating well below full capacity. This fact, reported to Socialist Worker, has not been mentioned in the capitalist press. If output was increased, the mill could at least break even. One can only deduce the firm doesn't want to make it break even.

The workers of Grimsby—whose average wage is around £30 a week, compared with the directors' average wage of £140—are in no way responsible for the problems there, which are the result of management neglect and the madness of capitalist economics. But they are being asked to pay for it, with their jobs.

South Africa's

Secret police in London raid

by Paul
Foot

Tuesday and Thursday. On average seven Africans are hanged every month.

The condemned used to sing hymns and prayers for 36 hours before each execution, explains Hugh Lewin. 'Suddenly, at 5.30 in the morning, there would be silence. We would then have to walk past the gallows on our way to the exercise yard, and would be kept in the yard while the coffins were nailed down. The whole thing is quite horrifying.'

'In Moumbaris' case, where he has been kept in solitary confinement under rigorous examination on a capital charge, of course it is impossible to estimate the effects.'

On 11 April, Moumbaris' counsel, Mr G Bizos, told the Pretoria court how his client, after a few days in the death cell, had tried to kill himself by running his head repeatedly against the prison wall—and had nearly succeeded.'

John Hosey's counsel has also alleged that his client was tortured. The four Africans on trial have not even had the chance yet to speak about their ordeal.

The South African authorities, meanwhile, are rubbing their hands with glee at their new catch. Last November, the Minister of Police, Mr Louwrens Muller, admitted to the Rand Daily Mail that he had leaked

the story of the men's arrests to a Nationalist Party newspaper.

Over the past three months, the government press has been openly licking its chops at a prospect of a show trial of 'terrorists'.

The South African police have stopped at nothing to 'prove' their case.

On 5 August a fortnight after Alex Moumbaris and his wife had been arrested in South Africa, Mrs Moumbaris' mother, Mrs Helen Amiel, who runs a travel agency in Paris, was visited by a charming young South African with a 'note' from Alex.

The 'note' asked Mrs Amiel to hand over the key to the Moumbaris' flat in Clapham, London, since 'the bearer' of the note 'has asked me if he can spend a couple of days there.'

Unsuspecting (she had not heard from Alex) Mrs Moumbaris handed over the key. The 'young man', who was an agent from the South African Bureau of State Security, duly raided Moumbaris' flat.

Evidence

The raid on Moumbaris' flat was publicised by the Sunday Times last January, with evidence from Mrs Moumbaris, who by then had been released, heavily pregnant, after four months in solitary confinement in Pretoria.

Mr Alex Lyon, Labour MP for York, duly wrote to the Home Secretary, Robert Carr, asking him to

Refined

Alex Moumbaris was held for several weeks in one of the death cells of the Pretoria Central prison, where a new gallows has recently been constructed.

This refined and disgusting torture is a favourite of the South African authorities when they are dealing with political prisoners.

Hugh Lewin, a South African now working for the Defence and Aid Fund in London, served seven years in Pretoria prisons after a 'sabotage' trial in 1964. He and his fellow 'conspirators' were kept for eight months in that part of the prison which contained the gallows.

South Africa holds the world record for hangings. Hanging days are

FACTS, ARGUMENTS, ANALYSIS
for every trade unionist in the
fight against the Tories

ANTI FREEZE

a handbook for trade unionists
by Roger Kline



An International Socialist pamphlet
price 2p

Single copy
5p (inc. post)
10 copies or more
post free.
From IS Books,
6 Cottons Gdns
London E2 8DN

How Tory handouts to the rich help push up the cost of living

by Jim Kincaid

BONANZA

SHARP INCREASES in the cost of repaying a mortgage have served to spotlight the massive doubling of interest rates in the past 10 months.

Except during the first weeks of panic at the start of World War One in 1914, interest rates in the British economy have never risen so high, so fast. The cost of hire purchase, bank loans and mortgages have risen steeply as a result.

Government policy is mainly to blame. Last year it spent some £3000 million more than its income from taxation.

In the current financial year, the government's budgetary deficit will be even greater—an estimated £4400 million.

A large part of this gap has occurred because business taxes have been cut in order to increase company profits and because the higher income groups have been presented with about £1000 million a year in tax cuts introduced in 1970-72.

The recent budget reduced still further government income, since an additional £360 million was sliced from the taxes paid by the rich, and especially those with a large income from investments.

To fill the gap between its income and expenditure, the government has been borrowing heavily. The result: the general level of interest rates has risen sky-high.

In turn the building societies have been forced to improve the rate of return to

their depositors, who otherwise would take their savings elsewhere. At the end of the line, people paying off a mortgage have to foot the bill.

The building societies explained that mortgage rates should have been increased even more this spring—to a level of 10 per cent. To prevent the imposition of the extra half per cent, the Tories decided to give a special £15 million subsidy to the building societies.

This subsidy will not be used to give particular help to the less well-off group with mortgages. On the contrary, the £15 million will be distributed strictly according to the size of the mortgage. The people with the biggest incomes and the largest mortgages will get a correspondingly larger share of the subsidy.

MASSIVE

The government's decision will sharpen still further the contrast between Tory treatment of owner occupiers and council tenants.

In spite of the freeze, rents of one million council tenants are being raised by 50p. The rise in interest rates over the past year will have a massive impact on the housing accounts of local authorities and, as a result, on council rents.

Last year, even before interest rates began to climb, about two-thirds of the money taken in rent from council tenants was being spent on interest charges. This

terror regime puts six trade unionists on trial

take action. On 31 January Mr Carr wrote back:

'The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis has carried out a thorough investigation, but has not found evidence to support the suggestion in the newspaper report that the flat was raided by South African agents.'

Stolen

The evidence is now available in abundance.

At his trial, Alex Moumbaris has identified several of the exhibits that will be used in evidence against him as items stolen from his flat in Clapham. The British Home Office has shown no interest in these disclosures.

The six accused face a minimum sentence of five years in prison and a maximum sentence on the gallows. The Terrorism Act which lays down these sentences was passed in 1967, and made retrospective to 1962, with the specific purpose of removing all rights from people arrested on suspicion of sabotage or other political offences.

It empowers the authorities to hold people arrested under the Act indefinitely in prison, without having to bring evidence against them, and without any right of legal or consular access to the prisoners.

The Terrorism Act has provided BOSS and the police with an absolute licence to torture, since the prisoners do not even have to appear regularly before magistrates.

From time to time, the torture is overdone. In February 1969,



John Hosey: allegations of torture

Nichodimus Kgoathe died three months after being detained under the Terrorism Act. Three weeks later, Solomon Modipane died only three days after his detention.

According to the South African Special Branch, both men died of the

same cause. They had 'slipped on a piece of soap while showering'.

In September 1969, Iman Abdullah Haron also died while in detention under the Terrorism Act. The authorities explained that he had died from 'an accidental fall down a flight of

stairs'.

In October 1971, Ahmed Timol died after falling from the tenth floor of the security headquarters in Johannesburg. For some reason, the police explained, Timol had thrown himself out of the window. The

familiar torture of holding detainees from great heights by one foot or hand had not, they protested, been used in Timol's case.

At least 10 people held under the Terrorism Act have died under questioning by the savages who are currently defending white Christian civilisation in South Africa.

Growing

The six men currently on trial in Pretoria have been preserved largely so that the authorities can prove to the satisfaction of their captive press that communists, subversives and guerrillas are at work in Southern Africa.

In Britain press and television take the stand expected of them by the South African government. In at least half the press, the trial is not mentioned. In the other half, liberals can be heard to mutter sorrowfully: 'Well, perhaps they are guilty of sabotage, and we can't have much sympathy with that, can we?'

The six on trial should know that there is in Britain a growing body of socialists and trade unionists who take the opposite view.

Our attitude is clear: the greater the guilt of the accused in subverting the murderous regime of Vorster, Muller and company, the greater our solidarity with them.

Messages of support and donations to help the defence funds should be sent to: The Coventry Defence Committee, 57 Marlcroft, Willenhall, Coventry.

FOR THE BIG MONEYLENDERS

proportion is certain to have risen even higher.

Most local authorities will react by cutting back their programme of council house building.

Under last year's Housing Finance Act, the total subsidy to council tenants was fixed at £250 million a year—less than £1 a week for each council house.

Yet owner occupiers get £350 million a year in the form of relief on mortgage interest. Already in 1970-71, the average person buying a house on a mortgage was getting a tax relief subsidy of £1.20 a week.

And the size of the subsidy must have risen steeply over the past two years, because both interest rates and the size of mortgages are now much higher. In addition, owner occupiers get a further subsidy of £750 million because the increase in the value of their house is exempt from capital gains tax.

Both of these tax relief subsidies operate particularly to the benefit of the richer section of owner occupiers. The more expensive the house, the bigger the share

of subsidy that it attracts.

The subsidy will also have the effect of pushing up the prices of houses coming on to the market. The Economist magazine reckons that over the three month period of the special subsidy, the effect will be to raise home prices by an average of £100 per house—which still further inflates the amount that has to be borrowed in order to buy a house for the first time.

LOWEST

A recent survey reports that between 1968 and 1972 the proportion of mortgages granted to wage earners dropped from 44 per cent to 38 per cent. Yet competition for council houses is intensifying, as the output of new council houses is allowed to lag.

The number of council houses built in 1972 was the second lowest in any year since 1947—close to the worst year for council house production, 1961.

On the other hand, last year the cost of houses to buy rose at least three times as

fast as any other element in the cost of living—by 40 per cent for secondhand houses and by 50 per cent for new houses.

Families needing a place to live face an increasingly bleak prospect. Many are trapped between a council house they can't obtain and a house to buy which they cannot afford.

And the moneylenders are crying all the way to the bank.

BACK NUMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL URGENTLY NEEDED

Copies of issues numbers 9, 12, 20, 28 and 29 needed for the production of the special issue for August. Please contact Bill Kaye, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN, phone 01-739 1878

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Social Security for Strikers

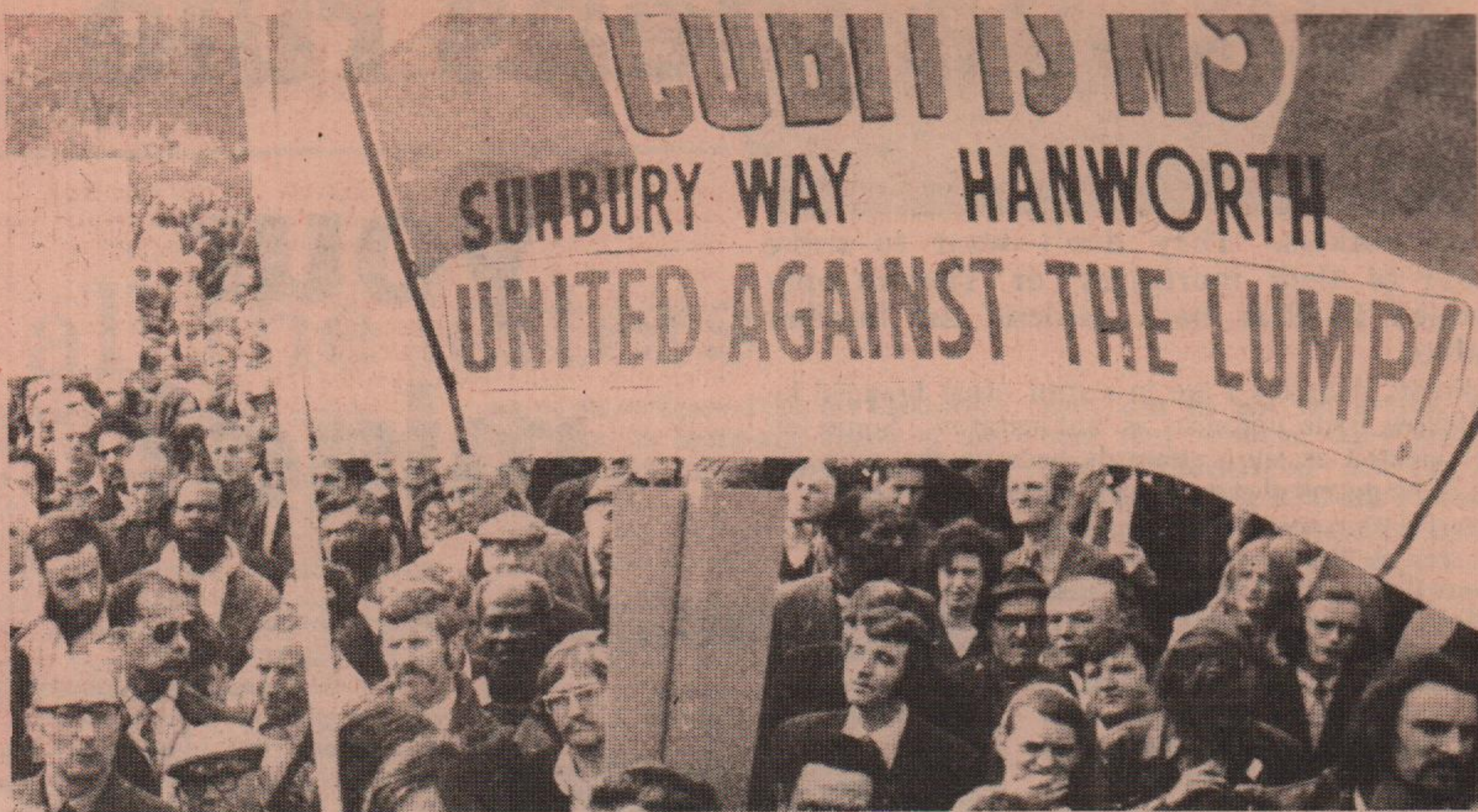


a Socialist Worker pamphlet 2p

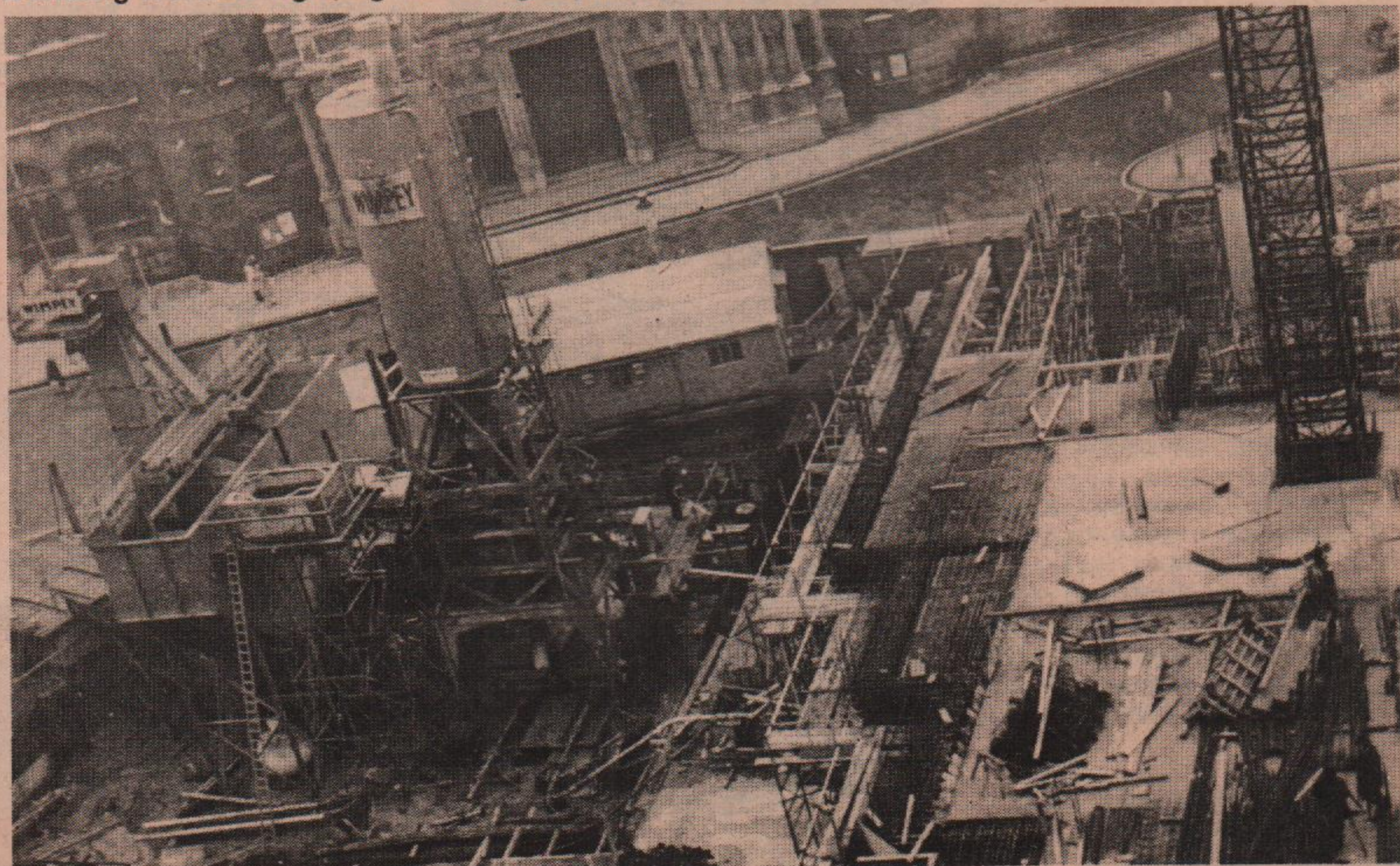
5p (inc post), 10 or more post free, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

EMPLOYERS MAIM... THE LUMP KILLS... THE LUMP MAIMS... THE

Socialist Worker special report by Laurie Flynn



Building workers fighting the savage system, such as . . .



. . . Wimpey's vast site in London's Victoria Street, employing lump labour

got a labour-only
in Marples Ridg-
on Bridge.
operates from the
of the directors'
even constituted
until three months
collapse, register-
y's House as a
with only two £1
on 28 February

voted enormous energies to ensur-
ing that local authorities do not
ban the lump on public housing
contracts. They are now well on
the way to success.

Last June the London Boroughs
Association—the umbrella organi-
sation of all the councils—decided
to try to prevent contractors from
using the lump and the other
various sub-contracting devices on
council contracts. 31 London
boroughs followed their lead.

The employers then organised
a boycott through the National
Federation of Building Trades
Employers, taking advantage of
the construction boom engineered
by their friends in the Tory
government.

Again they refused to tender or
lodged grossly inflated tenders.
On 21 March the London
Boroughs Association altered its

policy. Since then council after
council has fallen back into line
and opened up its jobs to the lump.

On May Day the staunchly
Labour Islington council collapsed.

And when the Labour govern-
ment was in power the situation
was little better. Their Selective
Employment Tax was supposedly
to shift skilled labour into the
manufacturing industries where, it
was said, there was a labour
shortage.

LOOPHOLES

*In construction the lump was
given a massive fillip. In the period
1965 to 1971 the number of
building workers on the lump
doubled, reaching well over
400,000 as the employers became
ever more attracted to tax dodging*

and the system's unique union-
busting powers.

In 1970, not long before the
election, John Silkin then Labour
Minister of Public Building and
Works, brought in his anti-lump
measure—the Construction Indus-
try Contracts Bill. This was shot
through with loopholes, inserted
there at the request of the big
construction firms and their place-
men in the Labour Party and
accepted because of the Labour
Party's fundamental desire to work
with big business.

It fell after the 1970 Tory
election victory.

For public consumption, the
new Tory government was con-
cerned too about the lump. In
1971 it introduced a Finance Act
which made the lump sub-contractors
liable for tax.

This was so riddled with loop-

holes that the Inland Revenue was
forced to admit that they had been
put there deliberately so the lump
would continue to exist and in fact
increase its domination.

BEGGING

*The building workers strike was
the first national challenge it got
and naturally the most effective
one. But the sell-out came quite
predictably and the lump workers
who had joined the strike and the
union returned to their former
existence. The right wing trade
union leaders had frittered the
opportunities and their sacrifices
away.*

Even now, as UCATT's spon-
sored MP, Eric Heffer is at work
with his Private Member's Bill, the
right-wing construction union

leaders are moving in the opposite
direction.

George Smith, the UCATT
general secretary, is begging the
employers to let him and his
union be their policemen in the
industry. Instead of campaigning
against the lump, Smith and co
are prepared to offer the employers
a deal which would involve union
recognition for labour-only sub-
contracting.

There is only one condition—
that UCATT gets union dues from
the lumpers.

What has been suggested to the
employers is that 'co-operatives'
of lump workers should be set up.
So the graveyard of trade unionism
would at least provide that the
corpses paid their dues.

*And the Loddon Bridges of this
society would continue to go up
and fall down.*

Walker's throat

by another go-
er Walker, then
tripping. The Ray
s-in fact the first
bankers Slater
to the market.
partners had known
ears.

s now Minister of
stry in the Tory
it until recently
of state for the
the Environment,
h overlooks the
dustry and the
works programme.
course a director
r until the 1970

daughter. She is two years old
and therefore takes some small
advice from her dad when it
comes to casting her votes at
Slater Walker's annual general
meetings.

Peter Walker has inside know-
ledge of the value of the lump.
Doubtless this helped him to take
notice of the regular reminders
from giant building firms that it
is vital to the continuation of civilisa-
tion as he knows it, and to
construction's main distinguishing
feature—the subjection of the
working class.

Jailers

For the lump has a certain
varnish on its surface. It enables
the employers to make workers
their own jailers. It offers them
the dubious short-term advantage
of a higher income than the union
can negotiate although it will kill
them quicker and injure them

more often than if they worked
on an organised job.

The key to the eradication
of the lump lies in job organisation,
as in Birmingham. It lies in the
fight to clear out the collaborators
from their positions of control in
the unions by building a powerful
and uncompromising rank and file
movement. And it lies indeed in
the fight to get rid of the Slaters
and the Walkers of this world by
running society under workers'
control.

What goes on from site to site
is not haphazard. The employers
and their government have highly
organised plans to turn most of the
construction industry over to lump
labour to break the back of trade
unionism. They have similar plans
in other industries.

In the docks they are out to
smash registration. And they most
certainly do not keep politics out
of their business concerns.

International Socialism 58

Labour Party/Gaullism and after/Steel in crisis/The CP and the left May 1973 15p
Lenin and the revolutionary party



The May issue of International
Socialism features an important and
controversial article by Tony Cliff
Lenin on the Revolutionary Party.
This is an article that will be quoted
and argued about for a long time.

Other features include:

Crisis in Steel: Rob Clay and Nick
Howard

The Communist Party and the Left:
Steve Jefferys

Gaullism and After: Ian Birchall
Memoirs of a Revolutionary Part V:
Reg Groves

Reforming the Labour Party?
Duncan Hallas

Plus Notes of the Month and Reviews.

International Socialism Journal
6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN
Annual subscription £2.10

Whose ideas rule your mind?

MILITANTS often complain about apathy among workers. 'They don't want to strike because of their mortgages' or 'They're only interested in their back gardens' are familiar grumbles.

Militants themselves are in return often branded by their fellow trade unionists as 'red agitators'. Some fail to get elected as shop stewards because the men are afraid of being called out on strike 'every other day'.

Clearly, the power of the ruling class over men's ideas is very great. If it were not for this power, capitalism wouldn't last five minutes. Indeed, the capitalists who cream off the wealth produced by the workers are able to maintain their control over society by relying overwhelmingly on this ability to instil into the majority their own view of the world. The Daily Mirror is a far more effective class weapon than the machine-gun.

Our rulers are able to dominate the minds of most workers because they wield economic and political power. As Marx put it: 'The ruling ideas of a society are the ideas of the ruling class.'

The situation of the workers under capitalism is quite different from that of the capitalist class before the revolutions in which they won political power. In the French Revolution of 1789, for example, the middle classes in the towns led the rest of the people in the overthrow of the monarchy and nobility.

But the middle classes had already built themselves up economically as the most powerful class in France. The merchants, bankers and small industrialists had been happy to allow the king and the nobility to control the state as long as this didn't prevent them from accumulating increasing wealth.

Exploitation

They began to feel the need for political power only when the king and nobility threatened their economic power. Because the middle classes dominated French society economically well before the revolution, prevailing ideas reflected their interests and aspirations. From their economic power flowed their confidence in their cultural superiority over all other classes, including the nobility.

For this reason, there was no need before the 1789 revolution to build a revolutionary party expressing the ideas of the middle classes and fighting for their interests.

But under capitalism the need for a revolutionary party of the working class arises because, as Lenin put it, 'The masses of workers are constantly

memo

Now is the
time for all
good men *and women*
to come to
the aid of
the party...

A series by Sabby Sagall

process begins early in life and is continually reinforced.

The newspaper and television present a picture of the world that strengthens the ideas that workers are taught at school. Working-class children are taught no more than the skills the ruling class needs them to have so they can produce those profits. Overcrowded classes ensure that however good the intentions of individual teachers may be, maintaining discipline is the major priority. The child trained to blindly obey the teacher becomes the worker who believes he has to accept the orders of the boss.

Fight

The educational system also instils into working-class kids the idea that success in life depends on individual talent and hard work. Because a few so-called 'talented' kids are able to rise up the educational, and later, the social ladder, the vast majority who don't succeed are made to feel responsible for their own failure.

All these things combine to give the working-class kid the idea that he is backward and inferior—which is necessary if he is to carry out unquestioningly those dreary tasks that produce profits for the bosses.

But in spite of this and of daily subordination, workers constantly show they can stand up and fight. If the ruling class could achieve complete control over men's ideas, there would never be any strikes.

It is through struggle that workers win back dignity and confidence and begin to learn that they CAN control their own lives and build a new society. But working-class opposition to capitalism develops unevenly. The fact that a picket line is often needed to defend a strike shows that not all the workers involved have reached the same level of understanding or the same determination to win.

The task of a revolutionary party is to unite those workers who have thrown off indoctrination and who have the strongest belief that workers can change society.

subjected to exploitation and cannot develop their human faculties.'

The experience of the working class under capitalism is that of subordination. Workers are required to obey orders, not to take decisions or display initiative. As George Orwell wrote: 'A thousand influences constantly press a working man down into a passive role.'

Workers who have had habits of obedience drummed into them, who have been taught passivity rather than self-reliance, come to accept the ideas and values of those they are supposed to bow down to. This

BOOKS

REVIEW

Guevara's other great love

ERNESTO: A MEMOIR OF CHE GUEVARA, by Hilda Gadea, W H Allen, £2.75.

GUEVARA once confessed 'at the risk of seeming ridiculous' that the revolutionary 'is guided by great feelings of love.'

One can think of some revolutionaries, alas, of whom this obviously isn't true: its applicability to Che must reflect his two commitments—to revolutionary politics and to Hilda Gadea. During 1953-56 they shared the turmoil of political emigration in Central America, managing in all the upheavals of arrest, imprisonment and flight to learn some basic marxism, get married and produce a baby daughter—a few months before Che sailed with Fidel Castro to begin the Cuban revolutionary war.

Hilda Gadea is a political science graduate and at first a marxist-inclined Peruvian nationalist. She shed many of her political illusions in Guevara's company and despite her modesty it is clear that her influence on him was formative.

Their courtship was dramatic, beginning with long daily discussions about economics, public health, novels, current politics and the like. At one point, when they were discussing plans for a joint trip to China, Che insisted on promising solemnly that he'd make no attempt to get off with her. Then, three months after they had met, Guevara suddenly presented her with a poem which was a marriage proposal. That, more or less, was it.

Their politics were well to the left of the Latin American Communist Party even in those days. Guevara was particularly shocked by the passivity of the Guatemalan Communists in the face of the US-backed coup against the left-liberal Arbenz government in 1954, and wrote his first political article about the necessity for armed struggle around this time.

But the Stalinoid myths about 'the socialist camp' seem to have been accepted by the Guevaras and their circle, in a manner typical of most leftists in the Cold War: one would dearly love to know how, during 1956, that year of shock for Communist Party members and fellow-travellers, the Khrushchev disclosures about Stalin and the Hungarian revolution



*CHE GUEVARA
'Better I had died in combat'*

made their impact on Che and his wife.

But the effect may have been slight: it was a busy time, with the birth of Hilda, intense guerilla training with Fidel's force, and then departure for Cuba and danger.

The author's words on Che's departure for Cuba are poignant: 'He left that weekend and did not come back.' The next time they met, in Havana on the day of victory, Guevara was to tell his wife that their marriage was over as he was now with someone else. Realising her pain, he said: 'Better I had died in combat.'

The flatness of the narrative and the sparseness of personal detail in this book no doubt reflects the pain of Hilda Gadea's recollection. But there is a shining vitality in the messages that Che sent back to his young daughter, even from the secret battleground in Bolivia where he met his death. 'Study and maintain the revolutionary attitude: honest behaviour, seriousness, love for the revolution, comradeship... Above all, always be capable of feeling most deeply any injustice committed against anyone in the world. That is the most beautiful quality in a revolutionary.'

Guevara and his ex-wife remained friends and comrades. This book commemorates the continuous element in their relationship.

PETER SEDGWICK

HOW TO GIVE DAILY TELEGRAPH READERS FITS

RADICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE ARTS, edited by Lee Baxandall, Pelican, 65p.

SOME of the 19 essays in this book are genuine thought-provoking contributions to the problem of the relation of the arts to the revolutionary struggle, some are obscurely academic, and some—too many—are pretentious rubbish.

For more than 40 years marxism, in the minds of most people, was identified with the official doctrines of the Russian state. The marxist approach to art was equated with the dictatorial decrees and boring hack-works produced in the name of 'socialist realism'.

Unfortunately the main criticism of Stalinism in the arts was a liberal throw-back to the 19th century cult of 'art for art's sake—the glorification of the 'independence' of the artist. But in the last resort the independence of art is also its irrelevance. Meredith Tax shows this with devastating clarity in her essay 'Culture is not neutral; whom does it serve?'

The volume contains—for those who like that sort of thing—a lengthy statement on 'Socialist Realism' by the Cultural Theory Panel of the Hungarian Communist Party. This includes the sentence: 'Art that identifies itself with the objectives of the working class cannot dispense with direction from the party.'

It is all too easy to shudder and exclaim: 'How dare you! Hands off our creative individualism.' A more considered reaction would be: 'Right. Art can and should identify with the working class, and of course, with the party that leads it. But the Hungarian Communist Party, as was shown in 1956 and frequently after, is an anti-working-class party.'

Some of the essays in the book—by Lukacs, Sartre and, perhaps best of all, John Berger on painting and sculpture—are by serious writers with serious problems, but who are unable to get away from the idea that somehow, despite everything, Russia has got something to do with socialism.

The alternative radical tradition is one which tries to attack the established ideas of what 'art' is. This has a long history, from Marcel Duchamp's exhibition of a reproduction of the Mona Lisa with a moustache drawn on it, to Rauschenberg, who presented—instead of a painting of a bed—his own blanket and pillow sprayed with colour.

Unfortunately the ruling-class will not be wiped out by giving apoplexy to Daily Telegraph readers. This path leads to futility and, eventually, the evasion of politics.

For example, a critic commented on Peter Weiss' play Vietnam-Discourse that 'The politics of Vietnam are discussed in the theatre owing to the refusal of the parliament in Bonn to take on this—for it, legitimate—task.' The function of the theatre has been changed. True enough, but the danger is that lefties prefer to sit in a small theatre in company with other lefties feeling proud of how left they are, instead of fighting the real political struggle.

The high point of this attempt to turn politics into spectacle is William Burroughs' proposal (quoted approvingly in a footnote) that 'a massive crowd ought to be gathered around the Trafalgar monument to launch an insistent overwhelming chant of "Bugger the Queen!"'. The Queen might enjoy it, but the ruling class would survive.

Too much of this book looks to the tragedies and defeats of the past, rather than the possibility now open that artists and workers can come together in building a revolutionary movement.

Perhaps the best advice for the future comes from Brecht, who wrote at length in praise of the Party—but never joined it. 'Nowadays, anyone who wishes to combat lies and ignorance and to write the truth must overcome at least five difficulties. He must have the courage to write the truth when truth is everywhere opposed; the keenness to recognise it, although it is everywhere concealed; the skill to manipulate it as a weapon; the judgment to select those in whose hands it will be effective; and the cunning to spread the truth among such persons.'

IAN BIRCHALL

FREDERICK ENGELS
THE CONDITION
OF THE
WORKING CLASS
IN ENGLAND
INTRODUCTION BY ERIC HOBBSBAWM

ENGELS

It is common to think of Friedrich Engels as the shadow and rich benefactor of Marx, and nothing more. He was, however, a man of outstanding ability in his own right—and much of Marx's work was based on Engels knowledge of 19th century working conditions.

Price 50p, plus 6p postage

IS BOOKS
6 Cottons Gardens
London E2 8DN

THANKS for writing, all those who did. And to all those who haven't yet, get your biros out and let me hear from you.

I won't pretend the response to my plea for letters was overwhelming, but, as many of you pointed out, you don't have too much spare time for letter-writing, and I fully understand that. But your letters are valuable because they tell me what you're interested in, and give me an idea how you feel about the telly and this column.

I can't take up today all the points you made in your letters, though I hope to touch on most of them over the next few weeks.

In general most of you feel the telly suffers from two major failings. It fails to reflect 'reality' and it appears to you to be used as a propaganda tool to reinforce acceptance of the status quo. I'm not going to argue with that.

A couple of you say you wouldn't have it in the house, and one denounces the box as a diabolical in-

Thanks for all the letters



strument of capitalist brainwashing and takes me to task for having anything to do with it. Nothing will change it, he writes, until the revolution changes everything, and the telly along with it.

I'm not going to be tempted into a battle about reformism, but television does change. The telly we get now isn't the same as it was in the 1950s, nor as it was in the 1960s. To

my mind it's considerably worse.

There are two reasons for this. Firstly the climate of television is set by the BBC, whether we like it or not. The reason is that the Corporation enjoys a certain freedom from pressure to adjust its programmes to the demands of the majority audience, because its income is not linked to audience figures.

In other words, it can and does transmit programmes it knows won't command huge audiences. ITV is thus set an example which it can't altogether ignore, and programmes like *This Week or World in Action* owe their existence to competition with the BBC current affairs coverage, just as the various ITV drama spots would disappear if the BBC stopped transmitting single plays.

But whatever guarantees of independence the BBC Charter may set forth in broad terms, the fact re-

mains that it depends on the Establishment for its bread-and-butter in the form of government approval of the licence fee.

Now we all know what sort of Establishment we've got. I should think, too, that it's pretty clear that a solid backlash runs right through the ranks of those with power which has had the effect of constricting freedom of expression in almost every direction.



In the case of television the backlash has pushed into positions of power the kind of man who is not only prepared to toe the Establishment line, but who is anxious to do so because his own attitudes are authoritarian—which is why he's where he is.

The point I'm making is that these

men can be got rid of just as the men they replaced were got rid of. The authoritarian, anti-democratic structure of the BBC can be changed, just as the rather more liberal climate of the BBC in pre-Hill days has been changed.

One of the letters I received was from the leader of a group of day-release apprentices, 100 of them, who wrote to Charles Curran protesting about the attention paid by the BBC to Mary Whitehouse's Listeners and Viewers Association and similar right-wing bodies. Their protest got them a smooth letter back from old Charlie, and I'm sure he didn't lose any sleep over it, but it also made a headlined story in the local paper which printed the nub of what they were complaining about.

When I suggested that you should write in to individual producers, directors or writers about the programmes for which they are responsible, I wasn't trying to con you into thinking you could bring down the Establishment overnight. I've always said that that's just a drip of water on the stone.

But that's not all you can do. A great many of you belong to various organisations—groups within the unions, action committees, tenants' associations, parent-teachers' associations and so on. These groups can be used to bring pressure to bear not only on BBC and ITV directly, but through larger organisations such as local Labour Parties



Further, there is no need to restrict your activities to complaints. You can pressure your regional television, BBC or ITV, to take notice of local events

One of those who wrote to me was on the Clay Cross march of 14 April. It never hit the BBC or ITV news. Next time make sure it does, or make a fuss.

An item in *Socialist Worker* of the same date exposed the scandal of lack of public transport in rural areas. Westward or BBC Plymouth news magazine programmes might be persuaded to take this up—I'll try this one myself and let you know what happens.

A reader points out the way in which Establishment figures like Norman St John Stevas or David Frost talk their opponents into the ground by ignoring rational argument and making generalised pronouncements with an air of authority which makes idiots of anyone trying his best to take the subject under discussion seriously. I myself pointed out how Eric Heffer was subjected to this treatment on *Midweek*. A strongly worded protest, with a copy of the letter to the victim, written by a group such as a shop stewards' committee or a trades council, is going to have an effect—if only to stiffen the victim's backbone for him and teach him to do his own bit of shouting down next time.

Finally, I'd like to say thank you for your criticisms of the column. I've taken note of all your suggestions and I'll do my best to put them into practice.

But I shan't stop urging you to take action. If you don't do anything how are you going to get a medal for not being reformist?

Tom Clarke

IN THE DAYS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

Nigel Fountain reviews two of the latest films



The 1950s personified: a stomp in a students' union—a scene from *That'll Be The Day*

THE newly released *That'll Be The Day* is a film about growing up. The time is the late 1950s, the hero a grammar school dropout named Jim.

Certain standard images flit across the mind when one thinks about the 1950s—Teds, Elvis, Suez, Hungary, boredom, money. It was a time when most Western countries grew richer and people assumed it would go on for ever. There was still poverty, but they said, like cloth caps and hunger marches, it would just fade away. Things were getting better.

And indeed they were, in some ways and for some people. There was relatively full employment and wages were high.

A new social group appeared called teenagers. People between the ages of 14 and 20 were no longer large children or small grown-ups sharing the clothes and tastes of older generations. Individually they may have been skint, but as a group they had buying power, and plenty of people to flog them records, magazines and Coca-Cola to prove it.

Politics was boring. Wages went on rising, the Labour Party threw out the last bits of its commitment to socialism. 'There are no classes any more,' went the popular slogan of Labour and Tory politicians, 'everybody is too busy buying fridges.'

In this situation dissent went into other channels. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament collected thousands of people in a movement that embraced Tories, Liberals and Socialists around an issue which—although important—didn't challenge the basic structure of society.

For many young people the United States was Eldorado, the country where big cars and rock'n'roll stars

came from. 'Why don't you write your own stuff?' asks the film's hero of a tatty drummer in a holiday camp. 'Why do you only do all this Cliff Richard stuff?'

'Firstly 'cos I can't write,' says the musician, brilliantly played by Keith Moon of The Who pop group, 'and second 'cos Americans are the only people who can do it, aren't they?' He returns resignedly to banging his drums.

Which is just about right. If Rock has been the folk music of the young for the past 20 years then for the first 10 it was almost exclusively an import from America.

Class struggle seemed to have been replaced by a squabble about age, and all the weapons of youth 'culture', from pony-tails to electric guitars, arrived courtesy of Pan-Am airlines.

Tattiness

What is good about this film is the way it illustrates this divide. On the one hand the familiar tattiness of English life: dirty school-caps, drop handlebars and sex in noisy holiday camp chalets. On the other, the dream world of the American entertainment machine: 'I wish I was Elvis,' says the hero, unhappily swigging his quarter bottle of whisky. 'He's a star.'

The film's weakness is that it loves its subject too much. It recreates the atmosphere of the 1950s through clothes, styles of speech, the obsessions of the time, but never shows any of the underlying forces that made these things so. It turns into the tale of a young man's love affair with a guitar, and its eventual consummation. Watching it is enjoyable, but it is like playing an old record—when it ends you've learned nothing, and are back in 1973.

ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE

WHILE *That'll Be The Day* deals with the export of the American dream in the 1950s, *Across 110th Street* attempts to grapple with the reality in the 1970s. The attempt is flawed by the loud ringing of the box office cash till in the background.

A few weeks ago Barry Almeida, writing about *Superfly*, pointed out that the US cinema is now obsessed with blacks because blacks are its main audience, and the result is a series of black versions of hackneyed Hollywood themes. Well, other things go well at the box office too. Since *The Godfather*, the mafia is popular, and the tired cop who has beaten up one suspect too many has always been a good seller.

So why not combine the three? That's just what *Across 110th Street* does. The street is the dividing line between the Harlem black ghetto and the white areas of New York, which is pointed out by an ageing mafia chieftain (who has a pleasing resemblance to the Pope) to his elegant thug son-in-law Nick D'Salvio (played by Anthony Franciosa). D'Salvio's task is to hunt out a group of blacks who robbed a meeting of black and mafia gangsters of the takings from a bank raid.

The plot is a bit like a production line, but the film is not bad. It succeeds in portraying a society so corrupt that the only person one can feel any sympathy for is the black gangster who periodically mows the cast down with a sub-machine gun.

The ageing cop is played by Anthony Quinn, who is at the end of

his career and whose only future is the scrapheap. He works by beating up small-time crooks 'because it gets results,' and his principal income is a hand-out from the local black gang boss. His methods of investigation and his racism continually bring him into conflict with the official head of policy enquiry, a black lieutenant.

Racial tension also extends into the criminal community. The film shows how people in the black ghetto turn to crime as a desperate protest at their situation, only to find they are simply taken in as junior partners in that section of American capitalism operated by the mafia.

Only the freelance criminal motivated by the misery and hopelessness of his life in the ghetto, preserves his dignity. But as a lone operator, running his one-man guerrilla war, he is doomed.

The American political system stinks. It would be interesting to see a film about killing it, not just being killed by it.

LEON TROTSKY

On Black Nationalism and Self-Determination 45p
Fascism What it is and how to fight it 25p
On the Trade Unions 40p

Plus 3p post on each or 6p on the three.
IS Books
6 Cottons Gardens
London E2 8DN

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dundee
Edinburgh
Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling

NORTH EAST
Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle upon Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Dewsbury
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Pontefract/
Knottingley
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

EAST
Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

NORTH WEST
Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Burnley
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
Preston
Rochdale
Salford
St Helens
Stoke
Stockport
Trafford
Wigan
Wrexham

MIDLANDS
Birmingham NE
Birmingham S
Coventry
Derby
Dudley
Leamington and
Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Rugby
Warley
Wolverhampton

SOUTH
Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Eastbourne
Guildford
Portsmouth
Southampton

WALES and SOUTH WEST
Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
Swansea Valley

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES
Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon
Ealing
East London
Enfield
Fulham and
Hammersmith
Hackney and
Islington
Harlesden
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
High Wycombe
Hornsey
Houslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
North Herts
Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Wandsworth
Watford
Woolwich

THE UNIONS

Clive Jenkins: He has ignored 1972 ASTMS conference vote to oppose industrial court



MEMBERS OUT TO WIN CONTROL OF UNION

by Colwyn Williamson

THE main issues facing delegates to the ASTMS supervisory union's annual conference in Eastbourne this weekend are those that face all trade unionists: how to fight back against the wage freeze and how to cope with a leadership that seems hell bent on compromise at any price.

This is why the most important resolutions before conference are those dealing with the freeze, with the Industrial Relations Act and with democracy in the union.

This year's conference is striking for the number of resolutions about union democracy. There are resolutions calling for the union paper to be put under the control of a rank and file editorial board, demanding that the membership be kept regularly informed of the extent to which the national executive is carrying out conference decisions, and that a record of how executive members vote be made available.

STRUGGLE

There are resolutions instructing the general secretary to act in accordance with union policy, and even a resolution suggesting that the position of general secretary should be subject to election.

It is easy to explain this flood of resolutions on democracy. Ever since the 1971 conference, members have had a real struggle on their hands to get the ASTMS leadership to comply with conference decisions calling for a serious fight against the Tories.

Clive Jenkins, the general secretary, urged the 1971 conference to register ASTMS under the Industrial Relations Act. Though he was defeated on this at both the 1971 and 1972 conference, he still continued to compromise and ASTMS was finally deregistered only after it was threatened with expulsion from the TUC.

At the 1972 conference Jenkins put a resolution authorising him to co-operate with the Industrial Relations Court and the Tories' other legal machinery. This was decisively rejected by the delegates and another resolution demanding total opposition was passed instead. But Jenkins has continued as before to run to the court whenever it suits him.

The same pattern of compromise is now developing over the freeze. The executive has declared that it is completely opposed to what it describes as a 'straightforward plot to depress the living standards of the people at large and to sway the balance in favour of shareholders, landlords and currency manipulators.' But all that has been offered so far is the prospect of finding legal loopholes in the wage legislation.

As in the case of the Industrial Relations Act, Jenkins seems to think that the best people to fight political battles are lawyers.

REFUSE

It is a symptom of the general attitude of the ASTMS leaders to the union's members that the main resolutions on the Industrial Relations Act call for the national executive to stop ignoring last year's conference.

Perhaps the most important resolutions of all are those that call on the executive to refuse to co-operate with any form of incomes policy. Some ASTMS branches have clearly been giving thought to the role of the Labour Party and the TUC in the freeze. Resolutions spell out that ASTMS must be equally opposed to any so-called voluntary policy for restraining wages and condemn TUC leaders for collaborating with the government.

The 1973 conference represents a key stage in the development of ASTMS. As the attack on wages and living conditions intensifies and as the union leaders move closer to collaboration with the government, conditions are ripe for the development of a rank and file movement of those prepared to put up a real fight.

Construction union on its uppers

GEORGE SMITH, general secretary of the Union of Construction and Allied Trades and Technicians, set off from his plush London office last Wednesday and headed for the even plusher headquarters of the General and Municipal Workers Union at Ruxley Towers in Esher.

Smith's mission was to press on with talks about the merger of his organisation with the General and Municipal, a task that is daily becoming ever more urgent.

For several years UCATT (and its predecessor the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers and Painters) has been on the verge of bankruptcy. This is mainly because of the activities of the building employers, who have turned the industry into a cesspool of self-employment and corruption, so making it difficult for the union to keep members, never mind recruit new ones.

This decline was not inevitable, but the union's right-wing policies and officials ensured that it had no chance to prove to building workers the enormous benefits of trade unionism. Instead Smith and Co set out to prove to the Laings, McAlpines and Wimpeys that they could be extremely reliable policemen over the rank and file.

Predictable

This strategy was seriously upset in the building workers' national strike last summer, and for a brief moment UCATT made great headway. Members flowed in, as lump workers joined the strike and the union.

But the refusal of the leaders to develop the strike into an all-out battle, the predictable sell-out that followed, and the refusal of the most important sections of the left to challenge them then or since, ensured that the gains were all too brief. Since the strike more and more workers

have gone back on to the lump and UCATT membership has fallen to a new low. The places where the rank and file movement was most highly developed have been the only exceptions.

In the aftermath of the strike, Smith and Co have quite predictably reverted to their vicious brand of right-wing union politics. They made use of the lefts in the union during and immediately after the strike. Now they have turned on them.

Smith has now sent a circular round the branches describing the rank and file paper, Building Workers Charter (which failed to appear during the strike because it was thought Smith and Co were moving leftward) as an 'anti-trade union' operation. Smith has also insisted that branches must not give money to the Charter or to other unnamed 'anti-trade union' bodies.

Crisis

The move towards the GMWU is part of this. On the one hand, Smith and Co are still hoping that the employers will bail them out by suddenly being converted to the idea of using the union as a police force. On the other, they are cuddling up to the GMWU.

This outfit has already stepped in recently to lend UCATT £250,000 just to keep running. If UCATT does have to join the GMWU in a hurry, it will be interesting to see what price they will have to pay in deleting the little democracy there is in the union rulebook.

Despite the financial crisis in the union, there is one area where Smith has made no cuts. He has pushed through wage rises for himself and other officials.

UCATT has a fantastically over-weighted bureaucracy. There are 25 national officials all on £68 a week plus expenses and with a Ford automatic on the union changed every year. Perhaps this may prove too heavy a burden even for the GMWU.

▽

SOCIALIST WORKER circulation department has moved to:

**Corbridge Works
Corbridge Crescent
London E2. 01-739 2639
From 7 May.**

IS Books and IS industrial department now have a new phone number, 01-739 6273, at 6 Cottons Gardens, E2.

Don't run down communists

ONE THING I don't agree with in Socialist Worker is the fact that it is anti-communist. Why? Some of the finest men in working-class struggles have been and still are communists and were fighting for the working class long before your paper came into existence.

You also run down the Morning Star. I used to read it when it was the Daily Worker and I think no less of it now than I did then. Don't you think

'Unity is Strength' applies to all socialist papers, just as it does to the workers?

And don't you think if socialist papers worked in unity they would be in a stronger position to help the working class in the struggles that lie ahead? I do not say that any of these papers are without fault but surely they could be of help to each other.—(Miss) A WILSON, Boothtown, Halifax.

Socialist Worker is not 'anti-communist'—a difficult thing for a marxist paper to be! We are critical of the policies of the Communist Party while agreeing with Miss Wilson about the dedication of rank and file members of that party. Unity can come only through clarity, which is why there is a healthy tradition on the left of open debate on the issues that divide different tendencies. But we believe strongly in maximum joint work wherever possible between socialist organisations, which is why the International Socialists, among others, have proposed a joint campaign to the Communist Party on the question of the erosion of civil liberties.—EDITOR.

Prisoners the press doesn't shout about

WHILE Peter Niesewand was being held in Rhodesia the British press was full of anxious speculation as to his fate. The press was inundated by outraged public figures with indignant letters talking of 'justice' and 'democracy'.

At the same time detention orders were being issued in Northern Ireland and hundreds of people are interned in concentration camps there. The hypocrisy of these 'democrats' is seen daily as civil liberties, hard-fought for by the working-class movements in the past, are blandly ignored and political trials play an ever-increasing role in this country.

The most significant attack on civil liberties so far was the unlawful detention of 10 Belfast people, seven men and three women, at Heathrow Airport prior to two explosions in London on 8 March. There is no evidence against these 10 except the common denominator of their country of origin—Ireland.

It seems that being Irish is enough of a crime to enable the state to hold both men and women in top security in Brixton Prison. These 10 are being held in Brixton—until now an all-male prison—while the Special Branch try to arrange a formal trial. We stress the formality of the trial as we believe that in the hysterical and characteristically hypocritical aftermath of the two bombs, the British press acted as judge, jury and executioner and showed the impossibility of impartiality towards Ireland and the Irish in this country.

Special Branch used the impetus of the London bombs in order to gain information on the activities of left-wing militants, trade unionists and Irish groups in Britain. Raids were made by the Special Patrol Group, the Bomb Squad and the Special Branch on homes throughout the country, including Coventry, Manchester and Glasgow and people were arrested.

Groups are being set up to defend these people, and the Belfast Ten Defence Committee is a London-based group formed specifically to defend the ten people now being held in Brixton Prison. The prison governor has refused visitors and even relatives of the 10 have been obstructed in their attempts to see their sons and daughters held in Brixton.

The privileges usually accorded remand prisoners have been denied these people. They are being held 23 hours a day in solitary confinement. Attempts to bring them food, clothing and literature in order to make their detention more bearable have been deliberately frustrated by the authorities.

The Belfast Ten Defence Committee has organised a regular weekly picket on Saturdays from 2pm to 4pm, outside Brixton Prison and on Sunday 20 May there will be a rally at Clapham Common at 2pm and a subsequent march to Brixton Prison to demonstrate solidarity with the 10 before committal.—BELFAST TEN DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 88 Roslyn Road, London N15.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive first post Monday. They should be typed or handwritten on one side of the page only. Please write clearly and print names in block capitals to avoid confusion. Letters may be cut for space reasons.

The Paras—by a man from Aden

MORE PEOPLE like George Williams telling their story (the British soldier who refused to carry out orders and went across the Irish border—28 April issue) and the sooner people in this country will wake up to the fact of what the British army is doing in Northern Ireland.

It's not so much 'our lads over there' as our rulers' army, just as it is their police force that hammers pickets, their courts that fine and imprison us and their newspapers that tell us the opposite story.

Capitalism wants to protect its interests in Northern Ireland. The old con trick of so-called 'democracy' has fallen apart. So force is resorted to. When profits are threatened then no life is sacred.

As an ex-Para, I've experienced British capitalism's methods in Aden. Like George Williams, I was hiked off the dole queue. After intense training and militarisation my own mother wouldn't have recognised me—my girl friend didn't.

In Aden we were told about terrorists who thought nothing of human life, backed by a sinister foreign power—Egypt.

After a few months of 'protecting' the people of Aden by brutal treatment and harassment, they stopped burying their dead and went on general strike. The strike was smashed by yours truly, 'our lads over there'.

It was then that some soldiers began to cotton on. The massive protection of the oil refinery made sense. It was more important than people.

The army exists for one purpose—the destruction of any threat to capitalism's profits and property from Northern Ireland to Vietnam. The fact that they use the lives of working-class lads for this purpose is one more reason to rid the world of this system.—NEIL DAVIES, York.

LETTERS

Concorde red herring and the fight for jobs

AS A worker at Rolls-Royce, I read with interest 'Franks' letter (14 April) concerning the cancellation of Concorde.

It is not a matter of indifference that workers are making arms under capitalism. Is Bro Franks suggesting workers should take a moralistic viewpoint and refuse to work for any company that is connected with arms production?

And if Bro Franks had read the Socialist Worker article correctly, he would have seen it was not advocating continuation of Concorde, even though it is uneconomical. Instead it poses the question, what work can be considered as economic to the working class under capitalism?

To demand the cancellation of

Concorde on the grounds that it will save 'public money' for more socially-useful projects is a complete red herring, as the 'public money' allocated to the Concorde but not spent is not automatically transferred to other useful projects.

As long as industry produces for profit and not for use, workers will always face attacks on their conditions and jobs.

To talk of alternative work outside the aircraft industry is a diversion. Of course these projects must be taken up to provide work and be

socially useful, but there must be no illusions that workers control the means of production. As long as they do not, there cannot be alternative work brought in from outside the industry.

As workers it is not for us to solve the problems of capitalism. Instead we must force the companies to provide jobs for all. The first priority must be to raise the political demands of the right to work irrespective of what is produced under capitalism.—N CHURCHFIELD, TASS No 2 branch, Rolls-Royce, Bristol.

Danger of reformism

I HAVE BEEN reading Socialist Worker for about a year and would like to congratulate you on presenting the best socialist newspaper that can be bought. But at times I feel that the best needs criticism in order that it may stay that way.

I dislike raising the age-old question of reformist policy especially as there was an excellent article in the journal International Socialism on that very subject recently. But I feel that it must once again be dug up before we all get bogged down in the mire of reformism.

May Day: Feather spells it out

I WOULD like to record three facts which confirm your report on the May Day march in London.

1. When two dockers were arrested for shouting at passing bus and taxi drivers the march was halted and I was asked to inform the head of the march of this. Our intention was to keep the march united. I carried out this task fraternally, only to be told

I know that you will agree that the only way the working class can be liberated is by smashing capitalism, throwing it into the political dustbin and replacing it with socialism. But I have noticed that to achieve this end you are adopting more and more reformist policies. There are many instances of this outlook, the most recent being in the joint declaration with the Socialist Labour League on the government legislation.

You seem to forget that the Tory government is only an instrument of the capitalist class and does what it is told. It is therefore quite futile to condemn the government. (After all that is what the Labour Party is doing).

By condemning the Tories you can lead some people to believe that you are in favour of replacing them with a Labour government and I am sure

that is not what you intend.

I think that you should also drop the fight for a minimum wage of at least £25 per week because a minimum wage policy only serves as a base from which the employers can work. I am sure that most of the capitalist class are quite willing to allow this minimum wage and in order to compensate for it will increase prices accordingly. Therefore as soon as they do this, your whole argument is lost.

You may well be able to put forward clear reasons for this policy of reformism but please, please ensure that your sight is not blunted by reforms. Many other organisations have gone by the wayside because of this one point and I would not like to see IS go the same way.—BRIEN J THOROGOOD, Chelmsford.

by Frank Allaun MP that I was a 'Trotskyist troublemaker trying to spoil a decent march.'

2. The organising committee started the speeches in Hyde Park before most of the marchers had arrived. They used two tin-pot loudspeakers so that most of us could not hear. They failed to call on the services of the musicians and did not

sing the Internationale. Obviously they never planned the day to be one of celebration and defiance.

3. On BBC-1 late news that evening Vic Feather said that the marches were useful because without them it was more likely that trade unionists would protest in other ways later in the year. I was amazed he spelled it out so clearly.—FRANK BRJGGS, London W14.



TROTSKY'S
HISTORY OF
THE RUSSIAN
REVOLUTION

VOLUME ONE

Three volumes, 50p each, post and packing 7p per volume, 15p the three

IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

'The language of the civilised nations has clearly marked off two epochs in the development of Russia. Where the aristocratic culture introduced into world parlance such barbarisms as czar, pogrom, knout, October has internationalised such words as Bolshevik, soviet... This alone justifies the proletarian revolution, if you imagine it needs justification'—Trotsky.

EIGHT-WEEK SIT-IN ANSWERS THE BOSSES

MANCHESTER:—The strike and occupation at the huge Gardners engineering factory in Eccles in reply to the management's determination to hold down wages and break the strength of the shop floor is now in its eighth week.

The dispute started when the workers finally got fed up with their low piecework bonus earnings and, under the Manchester Piecework Agreement, returned to day work—on the basic rate of £22 for 40 hours. The firm, after trying for nine weeks to defeat this action, broke the agreement and laid off the men.

An official strike, quickly followed by a sit-in, was called to defend the piecework agreement.

The management was trying to get out of the agreement with the ludicrous argument that workers could not collectively return to day work if that meant a drop in production. Ray Robinson, AUEW toolroom steward, gave the strikers' answer to that one: 'If the management want piecework, it's up to them to make the price attractive to us. If they can't do that then workers have every right to go back to day work until such time as piecework is attractive financially. That's the principle we are fighting for in this dispute.'

ATTACK

So far, this might appear just a simple domestic dispute, but other factors make it a crucial struggle. The piecework agreement has for years been a key weapon for Manchester engineers and its existence partly explains why Manchester engineers are militant and put up such a magnificent fight during last year's national claim.

If this agreement is destroyed in one Manchester factory it will affect



Warm reception for the boss from Gardners' workers: 'Lost production really hurts'

the others. Mr Thompstone, managing director of Gardners, is president of the local Engineering Employers Association and is getting moral and financial support from the other employers in his campaign to kill off the agreement and wreck the developing shop-floor organisation in a factory that has traditionally been weak.

It is also clear that this dispute is part of a concerted attack on factory organisation by the employers' association and aimed at disarming engineering workers before the inevitable wage battles of summer and autumn. Already the bosses have gained a victory at Ruston-Paxman, Newton-le-Willows, and have used court orders at Basons, Stockport, in an attempt to 'victimise' militants.

In the past two years the Engineering Employers Federation has become much more 'militant', and Manchester has been the centre. At the end of last year's sit-ins its president praised the 'notable solidarity and determination to resist' of the Manchester engineering employers and stressed that 'in resisting on their own account they resisted for the industry as a whole.'

Under Thompstone, who until recently was still regarded by other employers as an extremist for his anti-union views, the local association is once more giving a lead 'for the industry as a whole' by attacking shop-floor organisation. This is what makes the Gardners sit-in important for all trade unionists.

It is important because the bosses

are facing the Gardner workers, not as individuals, but as a united class. The only possible answer is solidarity action from a united working class. Eddie Ankers, the AUEW convenor, said: 'What's needed to win this strike is physical action in other factories so that other employers will put the pressure on Gardners to settle. Financial help is not enough. On its own it doesn't bother them—they can always raise more money than we can. The thing that really hurts them is lost production.'

VITAL

With physical support, such as mass pickets, token strikes, and other factories returning to day-work, the Gardners strikers will be sure of success. So far it has been slow in coming. Everyone in the district agrees on the importance of Gardners but few, not least the officials who could start things moving, seem to grasp the urgency of taking action.

Clearly the lesson of Gardners is a lesson for all workers—when the bosses are making a well-organised offensive it is vital that the organised working-class responds quickly and forcibly.

Shop stewards at Gardners are aware of the need to inform their fellow workers of their struggle and gain concrete support. Eddie Ankers said: 'Apart from the Morning Star, Socialist Worker and Greater Manchester Engineer [the local paper of IS engineers] we've had no publicity at all. You are interested in the facts of our case and getting other workers to support us, but the rest aren't. I rang up Granada TV the other day and they said "Turn a car over and we'll be down there." That just about sums them up.'

Donations to W R Thomas, Gardners Sit-in, 27 Snowden Road, Eccles, Lancs.

'Action not words' warning to miners

by SW reporter

PORHTCAWL:—South Wales miners' annual conference last week voted unanimously to pursue a claim of £50 for men working at the coalface, £43 for other underground workers and £41 for surface workers.

Ron Saint, supporting this move for the executive council, said: 'We as miners have worked too cheap for too long. After 1972, we were walking tall, but we have fallen behind again.'

Emlyn Jenkins, of Lady Windsor lodge, moving the resolution, pointed out that the only worthwhile increases in South Wales had come since the power of the rank and file was unleashed in 1969.

Emlyn Williams, South Wales NUM vice-president, concluded: 'As sure as night follows day, it is obvious we must enter into conflict with the government if we are to obtain the right living standards in this arduous industry of ours. We have got to persuade our men that taking on the government and the law is a battle against the interests which are out to destroy them.'

Bitter

The conference voted unanimously against the wage freeze, the rent act, the Industrial Relations Act and arms expenditure. It also dealt extensively with issues of house coal, safety, and compensation. There was a unanimous call to change the union rules to make a simple majority adequate to call a strike and to reduce 55 per cent the vote required to change the rules.

Most resolutions were passed without opposition, but putting the policies into action will not be so easy. It was disclosed in a bitter debate that the craftsmen's agreement of March 1971 has still not been implemented.

In the past the union and the Coal Board have put a low value on the craftsmen. Terry Thomas, of Brinllw lodge, said: 'This resolution should not be on the agenda. The problem was solved in 1970 at a special area conference.' Reg James (Taff Merthyr) maintained that 'the craftsmen will be out on the first of November 1973 if agreement is not reached. We are being generous in giving the board six months.'

Moreover, the South Wales executive conspicuously opposed industrial action for higher pensions. A resolution moved by Gareth Williams (Morlais), a member of the International Socialists, called for a day of industrial action every month and to invite other trade unionists to join them in support of the pensioners' claim.

Empty

Glyn Williams, retiring South Wales president, in opposing the resolution, claimed that this was the responsibility of the whole trade union movement. The resolution was narrowly defeated, but many delegates knew that motions of support and lobbies of parliament, passed regularly over the past 20 years, have achieved absolutely nothing.

Executive member Ron Saint, summing up the tasks of the conference, said: 'We must now put all the resolutions into practice, otherwise there was no point in us coming here this week.'

If these are not to be empty words, militants have to start campaigning immediately to put over the conference's policies and to prepare the membership for a battle with the government.

NEW UNION ORGANISER IS STRIKE-BREAKER

by Dave Peers

COUNTY DURHAM:—Militants in the engineering union (AUEW) were surprised two weeks ago when the results of the ballot for the post of national organiser were announced. John Bromley, national organiser for two years, was defeated by right-wing candidate Bill Bradley by 17,000 votes. There will be even more surprise that their new national organiser is a strike-breaker.

For the past five weeks a hard core of 50 AUEW members have been on strike at the Timex Corporation, Washington, County Durham, over the victimisation of convenor Albert Ogle. Timex has a long history of anti-union activity and this is the second time they have tried to victimise the convenor.

Although the strike has been endorsed by the AUEW district committee, most AUEW members are still working. One of these is Bill Bradley, who works in the

toolroom. Thanks to these men Timex have dealt a heavy blow to union organisation in the factory.

Strikers are bringing charges against the scabs to the district committee.

In spite of these weaknesses the strike has had effect. One section of the factory is 12 down and the company have offered to re-employ Ogle—but not as a steward. This offer has been rejected by the strikers and by the district committee.

The strike committee was promised two weeks ago industrial action by the stewards at Timex's Dundee plant. All Washington's output goes to Dundee for final assembly and blacking by the Dundee workers would be important. But so far there has been no action.

The dispute started as a claim of parity with Dundee where wages are up to £10 a week higher.

Messages of support and donations to: J H Robinson, 27 Sheraton, Leam Lane Estate, Gateshead, County Durham.

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday morning. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

IS MEETINGS

TOTTENHAM IS public meeting: Watergate—the Rising Tide of Scandal. Thursday 17 May, 8pm, 628 High Road, London N17.

STRETFORD IS public meeting: The Struggle for Socialism. Speaker Tony Cliff. Friday 18 May, 8pm, Dog and Partridge, Chester Road, Stretford.

HIGH PEAK Socialist Worker meeting: Rising Prices and how to fight them. Spkr Brian White, Journalist. Sunday 13 May, 8pm, Glossop Labour Club, Chapel St, near Town Hall.

MANCHESTER IS public meeting: STOP THE RETREAT Speaker Tony Cliff Thursday 17 May, 8pm The Castle, Oldham Street (off Piccadilly) All socialist trade unionists welcome

GRIMSBY IS Basic Day School: Saturday 12 May 12.30pm How Capitalism Works Speaker Dave Turner 3pm The State Speaker Jim Kincaid Duke of Wellington, Pasture St, Grimsby Overnight accommodation available

IS LUCAS WORKERS: public meeting Industrial Pollution and Safety—Who is Responsible? Speaker Laurie Flynn. Sun 13 May, 7.30pm, The White Swan, Navigation St, Birmingham.

IS IRISH FORUM: The National Question and Permanent Revolution Speaker Tony Cliff Friday 25 May, 7.30pm The Plough, Museum St, London WC1 (nearest tube station Holborn) ALL WELCOME

WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: The Liberation Struggle in South Africa. Speaker Wenda Clenaghan. Thursday 17 May, 8pm, The Spreadeagle, Wandsworth High Street, SW18.

OTHER MEETINGS

HOSPITAL WORKER newspaper supporters conference: Sunday 27 May, 2pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Credentials from 86 Mountgrove Road, London N5.

OXFORD COUNCIL OF ACTION: Conference on The Way Forward After May Day, Saturday 12 May, 2pm-6.30pm, Clarendon Press Institute, Walton St. Local speakers.

MANCHESTER Public Sector Alliance: Conference for ALL trade unionists on How to Fight Phase Three. Saturday 12 May, 11.30pm, Manchester Town Hall Basement Theatre, Mount Street. Speakers: Jo Power (CPSA branch secretary), Jack Sutton (NUPE hospitals branch secretary), Tony Richardson (GMWU steward, ICI Blackley).

CONFERENCE ON TRADE UNIONS AND RACIALISM: called by the Mansfield Hosiery Mills Strike Committee. Sat 2 June, 11am-6pm, Digbeth Hall, Birmingham. Details from B Bunsee, 20:03 Victoria Centre, Nottingham. Phone Nottingham 46307.

CONFERENCE ON THE FAMILY: Leeds Polytechnic, 12 and 13 May History of the Family Speakers: Sheila Rowbotham, Linda Smith The Family under Capitalism Speakers: Margaret Coulson, Lee Sanders-Comer The Family in post-Capitalist Society Speaker: Maria Loftus The conference is organised by Leeds Poly Women's Lib but is aimed at all those—female AND male—who see the importance of this subject to our political understanding Facilities for children provided Details: Val Jones, 69 Bagby Road, Leeds 2. Phone: 0532 27777

ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE CONFERENCE

The British Labour Movement and the British Army in Ireland Saturday 19 May, 10am-9pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square London WC1 Sessions on The Politics of Repression, The Theory and Practice of Repression, The Technology of Repression, and The Irish Struggle and the British Labour Movement Further details from M Maguire, 88 Roslyn Rd, London N15

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS FESTIVAL

sponsored by TGWU international workers branch Saturday 26 May Porchester Hall, Porchester Road Queensway, London W2 1pm - 3pm **CONFERENCE: IMMIGRANTS AND THE TRADE UNIONS** 3.30 - 4.30 Film 5-8pm Folk Concert 8.30 - 11pm Dancing Tickets 50p each from TGWU International Workers Branch 21 Theobalds Road, London WC1

NOTICES

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS head office: requires van driver capable of driving 2½-ton Austin. No HGV required. Apply Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Phone 01-739 1870.

SW (Litho) Printers Ltd: requires an apprentice printer. Maximum age 18 years. Will have to sit NGA entry exam. Day release given. Apply Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Phone 01-739 1870.

REVOLUTIONARY FESTIVAL IN FRANCE: weekend 9, 10, 11 June. Lutte Ouvriere Fete, near Paris, entertainment and politics. Last year 20,000 attended. IS stall will be present again. 1. WANTED: examples of bulletins, posters, etc, from local IS work; 2. Anyone interested in attending the festival write for details. For both, contact Dept F, International sub-committee, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

When writing to Socialist Worker, please mark envelopes clearly 'Editorial', 'Circulation' or 'What's On'.



THE latest branch of the International Socialists has been set up by militant bus workers in York. Our picture shows branch members with their banner on the May Day march in York last week.

Victory—but danger of a backdoor deal

by Paul Holborrow

DARLSTON, Staffs:—After a five-week battle strikers at Rubery Owen have won an important victory. The multi-millionaire Owen family's proposals to impose Measured Day Work and end piecework bargaining have been thrown out.

The workers have also shown that any attempt to pay the lower paid out of the pockets of the higher paid is totally unacceptable.

Instead of imposing what in some cases would have been wage cuts as high as £11 a week, management has been forced to offer £1 to pieceworkers who earn between £48 and £60 a week, £2.50 to those below £48 and £4 to day workers.

The settlement represents a setback for the company's plans to 'rationalise' its operations at Darlaston. In particular, Fred Straw, the hatchet man the firm brought in at £15,000 a year for his expertise in getting more work out of fewer men, has received a bloody nose.

Yet, while a clear victory has been won, there are dangers ahead. In the agreement to return to work, the negotiating committee promised to open immediate negotiations for a new wage structure. This could be in the form of a back-door measured day work agreement with pieceworkers being paid on time rather than results.

To prevent such developments it is important that at each stage in negotiating all workers are kept informed.

Doug Peach, TGWU convenor, spelt it out when he said of measured day work: 'The high base agreement is no bloody good. And we want no more of it.'

The company has been forced to retreat this time because of the strikers' determination to stick together. This has never happened at Rubery Owen before and the company has learned a bitter lesson. But they will try to come back again, possibly at the end of this year. Preparations built on the confidence of this victory, must be made now for the struggles ahead.

Occupation workers defy court order

by Glyn Carver

STOCKPORT:—The occupation at the Bason-Pasco engineering factory is now entering its fifth week. The dispute started when management tried to use the phoney excuse of redundancy to victimise militants, but the trick didn't work and there was an immediate occupation in defence of 11 jobs.

The next move by management was a court order instructing the occupiers to leave the factory. Since then there has been a stalemate. Said one of the strikers: 'We are still awaiting the sheriff and his merry men.' By the look of things the sheriff will need a lot of merry men to enforce the order. The factory is well



Convenor Monty Hulse

barricaded and the Bason workers have been joined inside by men from virtually every engineering factory in Stockport.

One thing is certain, the factory will not be given up easily. Other workers—from the Gardners sit-in and Stretford dustmen—have visited the besieged factory to add their support.

Workers throughout the district are determined that the bosses' court will not achieve where the Bason management has failed—in its attempt to break the union in the factory.

Monty Hulse, the AUEW convenor, said: 'They are going to realise that going to law is no solution to any industrial matter. It only adds bitterness. At the end of the day the dispute can only be settled if the management get round the table.'

Financial support for the occupiers has been good, but as time goes on it will be increasingly important that regular collections are taken to support them.

Donations to: S Cumston, c/o AUEW, 125, Wellington Road South, Stockport.

Women workers out

HUDDERSFIELD:—The strike of 75 women office workers at the Nu-Swift fire extinguishers works is now in its third week. The women, who recently became organised in TASS, the technical and clerical section of the engineering union, are striking for substantial pay rises. Some of the young women workers take home as little as £8 a week.

Management has sent a letter to each worker in an attempt to weaken the strike, but the shop floor workers, all members of the AUEW engineering section, are still out on strike in support of the women workers. They expect their strike to be made official this week.

A separate dispute in the toolroom was settled this week, but the men concerned have decided to continue their solidarity action.

ELECTRICIANS DEFEAT MOVE BY RIGHT WING

by SW reporter

THE executive of the electricians' and plumbers' union, the EPTU, suffered a resounding defeat last week over the Industrial Relations Act.

A move by the right wing to have the issue of whether the union should register under the Act put to membership ballot was rejected by the union's two-yearly conference in the Isle of Man.

An attempt by Frank Chapple, the union's president and general secretary, to have dissident resolutions sent to the executive was also defeated.

The 1971 conference policy, which took the 400,000-member union off the register, was reaffirmed.

The right wing call for a ballot was a manoeuvre designed to display pretensions of democracy. The postal ballot is notoriously undemocratic.

Its defeat was a considerable success for the left. Since the 1971 conference many of the bigger and more militant branches have been

amalgamated and so have lost delegates.

Many delegates were concerned at the lack of consultation over union reorganisation. The executive replied that the rulebook vested power to reorganise in the executive. This, it seems, includes moving divisions of the union from areas which oppose the executive to those where it has a strong base.

MERGER

The executive position on amalgamation with another union was put by Frank Chapple in terms of building 'economically viable' units. He said that what stood in the way of amalgamation with the General and Municipal Workers Union was its regional organisation and, more importantly, its branch block voting.

As for the AUEW, the alternative candidate for amalgamation, Chapple

said there was a problem with its finances and the fact that 'it has a lay national committee'. Chapple also said that the AUEW had lost 76,000 members last year and assured conference that before any merger took place a special delegate conference would be called.

An unsuccessful attempt was made at the conference to express support for the May Day stoppage. C Montgomery, of Glasgow Central, moved the suspension of standing orders to move a resolution stating that the conference extended greetings and support to May Day demonstrations throughout the country, recognising that these demonstrations called by the TUC were against the government's anti-working class policies and were part of the continuing campaign to defeat them.

This move failed narrowly, with 235 votes for, 282 against.

A resolution condemning the Tories' economic policies and the wage freeze was carried, but conference went on to call on a future Labour government to introduce a 'prices and incomes policy with 'real measures' to control prices and dividends. It defeated two resolutions opposing any government control of wages.

The conference showed that there is still, despite reorganisation, significant opposition to Chapple and Co. If this is to mean anything, the left must move from its limited electoral opposition to tackle the real issues which face the rank and file on the shop floor.

TASS: Lots of fine talk but where's the action

FINE resolutions against the Tory incomes policy, the Industrial Relations Act and on union opposition to both were passed at the annual conference of TASS, the technical and supervisory section of the engineering union, in Eastbourne last week. But no real policy was thrashed out.

The clearest example of this came on the Monday, when the executive moved an emergency motion congratulating the AUEW executive for its resistance against the Tory laws. One delegate said that while supporting the motion, he hoped that the TASS conference, which was expecting to be addressed by AUEW engineering section president Hugh Scanlon the following day, would offer Scanlon a platform to deal with his alleged statements in the press calling for amendments to the Industrial Relations Act.

Arthur Scott, TASS president, leapt to his feet saying that Scanlon had already denied the allegations in the press. General secretary George Doughty added that while some trade union leaders made mistakes, they were at least better than many others. TASS should not do anything to lose the few friends it had, he said.

The next day Hugh Scanlon arrived to make his address and was greeted with a standing ovation. He then went on to repeat almost word for word his previous

call for the Tory government to amend the Industrial Relations Act. After his speech he only got a good handclap.

Other key discussions centred on the restructuring of the union as the amalgamation with the other three sections of the AUEW is tightened. A significant number of delegates voiced concern at the moves of the TASS leadership towards a full-time section executive. While welcoming increasing amalgamation, their concern was that this should be on the most democratic terms possible.

A move to reduce the size of the TASS executive was defeated. The union leaders themselves tried to end the situation where the general treasurer and the immediate past president have places on the executive but were defeated.

FASCIST FIASCO

WOLVERHAMPTON:—Attempts last Saturday by 25 members of Colin Jordan's neo-Nazi British Movement to stage a May Day march were met by a socialist counter-demonstration of 200.

Speakers from the International Socialists and the Indian Workers Association stressed the need to drive the fascists off the streets wherever they attempted to gain respectability. All speakers pointed out that only when there was a united socialist organisation which could replace capitalism would racialism be wiped out.

Socialites maybe...not socialists

by Pat Mazelan

BRITAIN is alone in not having a mass movement among school students, and if last weekend's national conference of the National Union of School Students is anything to go by, it will remain so. The NUSS has been running for a year with a paper membership of 8-10,000, out of a potential of two million.

When the union was first set up as a sister union to the NUS there was a lot of interest and participation. Now, after the novelty has worn off and NUS has decided to stop subsidising it, NUSS is still trying to imitate the NUS and is not putting its own political line.

An attempt to propose a socialist programme was narrowly defeated, and with it the chances of turning the NUSS into an effective movement.

However, NUSS is a worthwhile organisation, and the main priority is to build it and extend its influence. Motions such as opposing school scabs in the hospital workers' strike showed the direction in which NUSS should be moving. Until it has far more active members, NUSS will remain a social club for trendy sixth formers.

PARITY STRIKE STAYS FIRM

GLASGOW:—80 members of the Boilermakers Society working at the Caterpillar factory are now in the second week of a strike for parity with the best paid workers.

The strike began after the company, which makes earth-moving equipment, had been given 21 days notice strike and an overtime ban had been in force for two weeks. The claim was based on the introduction of a welding process that increased production and the risk to health.

The day before the strike, Caterpillar showed its determination to take on the welders by offering other sections which hadn't even submitted a claim the £2 while still refusing it to the welders.

IS BOOKS requires a bookshop manager to deal with developing mail order, bulk and retail sales. Applications from 15 members stating experience, if any, to Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.



I would like to join the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

* Socialist Worker

FORD STRIKE CALL AN ALIBI FOR OFFICIALS

AFTER waiting in the wings for 10 weeks, the union officials of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee called on Ford workers for an all-out strike in support of the claim for a 'substantial increase' last Thursday.

If the call had been made 10 weeks ago, when the gasmen, civil servants, teachers and hospital workers were still fighting the freeze, it could have been decisive in giving Ford workers the confidence they could beat the government.

But it came after two and a half months of sporadic strikes and overtime bans, when confusion had replaced militancy as the key note. The strike call is no more than an attempt by the officials to give

themselves an alibi and shift the blame on to the rank and file.

Tony Barrow, transport union steward at Ford Leamington, expressed the view of many militants when he told Socialist Worker: 'It is with deep gloom that Ford workers see their national officials wake like the hibernating dormouse and call for an all-out attack on the Ford empire in Britain. Gloom because they feel it is too late for such a call.'

Ford workers have seen for themselves the dithering bureaucracy in action. They know that some stewards called on Moss Evans, the transport union's Ford negotiator, to give direct leadership and call an all-out strike more than two months ago, on 1 March. He refused, claiming he did not know the feeling of the shop floor or the various executives.

He waited until 3 May, and then issued the call although practically all the convenors told him it was useless to carry on the fight, that the shop floor was by then fed up and disillusioned.'

The 'left' leaders, just as much as the right, have from the start of the Ford struggle been leading from behind. When Reg Birch was invited by Dagenham stewards to address a mass meeting at the paint, trim and assembly plant, they were told that he was unavailable. The union leaders, while formally endorsing action taken by the rank and file, have addressed no mass meetings, put out no propaganda and paid out no strike benefit.

They need now to polish their tarnished images. Moss Evans in particular is no doubt trying to build support among left militants which will be his springboard for the future general secretaryship of the union.

It is unlikely the engineering union executive will take the strike call seriously and the general purposes committee of the TGWU is likely to refer the matter back to general secretary Jack Jones.

The Ford convenors' committee itself provided neither sufficient propaganda nor the co-ordination needed. No issue of the Ford Workers Bulletin appeared during the 10 weeks of the dispute, nor was the Ford National Shop Stewards Conference recalled—as it should have been—to link militants from the various plants and enable them to hammer out a common strategy.

Tenants set for action

DERBY: 40 tenants from Chaddesden council estate decided to set up a tenants action group in support of the local council's fight against rent rises after Hugh Kerr, of Harlow Tenants Federation and the International Socialists, and Graham Skinner from Clay Cross spoke to a meeting about the 'fair' rents Act.

BELFAST TEN DEFENCE COMMITTEE RALLY

Sunday 20 May, 2pm
Clapham Common, South London
March to Brixton Prison

PICKET BRIXTON PRISON

Every Saturday 2-4pm
outside main entrance

FREE THE BELFAST TEN

PICKET LINES

NOTTINGHAM: 41 Pakistani and Indian workers at E Jaffe and Son, elastic manufacturers, struck on Friday over the victimisation of a worker accused of sleeping at work.

The men are seeking union recognition and better pay and conditions. So far the transport union has not declared the strike official but the Pakistani Friendship League is putting pressure on it 'to do its job'.

ANDOVER: 56 workers at the Norton-Villiers plant are sitting-in to fight redundancies. The occupation began last Monday after management announced the plant was to be closed down, the equipment moved to Wolverhampton and 120 jobs lost.

CHELSEA: The sordid saga of the Worlds End council housing site continues. Cubitts construction firm has now pulled out after failing to get extra cash out of Kensington and Chelsea Council as ransom for completing the contract. The building workers on the site are now demanding the council give them jobs until work starts again, and priority for jobs when it does.

BIRMINGHAM: The strike to reinstate convenor Larry Blewitt at Baxters engineering factory has ended in defeat after more than four weeks. Last Friday the strikers voted to return to work after management threatened to sack them. Ted Young, district secretary of the engineering union, told the workers that if they were sacked they would lose their right to redundancy pay.

YORK: The four print unions stopped the Yorkshire Evening Press last week after management used non-union labour to print the paper on May Day after a deputy foreman showed the production manager how to run the press. Management caved in after two days but provoked anger by saying they would pay the union fine of the man who blacklegged.

THIEU MUST FREE
ALL HIS 200,000
POLITICAL PRISONERS



PICTURE: Mike Cohen

LONDON:—300 people rallied in Trafalgar Square last Saturday in protest at continuing American aggression in South East Asia. Speakers linked the corruption of the US government shown by the Watergate affair with the terrorism used by US forces in Vietnam and Cambodia—and called for solidarity action with the people of Indochina. After the rally,

which included groups from the International Socialists, the International Marxist Group, the Communist Party and the Indian Workers Association and was organised by the Indochina Solidarity Conference, the demonstrators marched to the US and Vietnamese embassies.

Bid to cover up 'Britain's Watergate' breaking down

DUBLIN:—The full facts about the Littlejohn case, which is already being spoken about in Ireland as 'Britain's Watergate', are likely to emerge despite desperate efforts by the British and Irish governments to cover them up.

The deal between the two governments and one of the defendants, Keith Littlejohn, which might have resulted in silence, appears to have broken down.

Keith, his brother Kenneth and Robert Stockman have been extradited from Britain on charges of robbing the Allied Bank, Grafton Street, Dublin, last October—the biggest bank robbery in Irish history.

At their extradition proceedings after arrest last December, the Littlejohn brothers claimed that they had done the robbery as part of their work as agents for

the British government. They claimed that they had been briefed as anti-IRA intelligence agents by Geoffrey Johnson-Smith, parliamentary under secretary at the Ministry of Defence.

After this claim, the extradition hearings were held in secret.

Kenneth Littlejohn and Robert Stockman are now in prison in Ireland after being charged with the robbery in Dublin's High Court. On 15 April, Keith Littlejohn was brought before Dublin's Special Criminal Court, whose normal function is to try political cases under Ireland's notorious Offences Against the State Act.

The court's procedures are much more restricted than those of ordinary courts. Defendants' rights of cross-examination are severely limited.

Keith Littlejohn protested vigorously about his appearance at the Special Court.

He claimed that during his extradition proceedings in London, the Irish Attorney General had produced an affidavit promising that the Littlejohns would not be charged with a political offence. The Attorney General's representative also gave a verbal assurance that they would not be tried in a Special Court.

On 16 April, Keith Littlejohn appeared again in the Special Court and was so infuriated by what he claimed were the government's broken promises that he changed his plea from guilty to not guilty.

He told the court: 'I am not a criminal. It was political and I committed it [the bank robbery] under instructions.'

The case comes up again on 21 May. It is expected that Kenneth Littlejohn and Robert Stockman will appear at the same time. The Irish government and Geoffrey Johnson-Smith are hoping meanwhile that the restricted procedures in the Special Court will stop the Littlejohns from blurting out the truth about the Grafton Street robbery.

POLICE ATTACK

from page one
totally useless due to the activities of rank and file trade unionists. Instead, employers and government are using the common law for their attacks.

Existing laws on picketing are being enforced more rigorously with special police squads. And militants are being picked off on trumped-up conspiracy charges.

Both the Shrewsbury and Birmingham prosecutions will be long drawn-out affairs, unlike the Industrial Relations Court orders against the London dockers last summer.

This makes it even more vital that a strong solidarity movement is built to defend the building workers.

Subscribe Now!

I enclose £_____ for one year/six months

Socialist Worker

(£4 for a year, £2 for six months, bulk orders available on request—post free.)

Name _____

Address _____

Socialist Worker Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2