

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Union backs Shrewsbury strike

THE BUILDING and construction sections of the Transport Union have issued a call for a complete stoppage in the construction industry on Tuesday (15 January).

This is in protest against all the Shrewsbury pickets trials and for the immediate release of the men already

by Laurie Flynn, Socialist Worker Industrial Reporter

jailed, John McKinsie Jones, Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson.

This decision, taken at Tuesday's meeting of the building and construction sections national com-

mittees, gives a massive fillip to the campaign to free the three.

The TGWU statement denounces the trials as 'political and persecutive'. It goes on to condemn the sentences

against the three as 'barbarous' and issues a clear call for strike action on 15 January 'as a first step to unite the labour movement behind the campaign for the release of the workers'.

The statement also puts demands on the TUC to launch a defence campaign

The TGWU decision came after John Llywarch, one of the Shrewsbury six on a suspended sentence, addressed the meeting. Earlier in the morning more than 200 building workers (including 40 who travelled down from Manchester) lobbied the executive of the Union of Construction and Allied Trades and Technicians.

But UCATT only decided it would not object to its regional committees launching action.

The TGWU's official call to action came just before the three jailed men's applications for bail and leave to appeal were made on Friday. Early this week there was every indication that the Appeal Court judges intended to give the three another dose of legal poison.

Last Friday John McKinsie Jones sought bail and leave to appeal. He was given short shrift. His lawyers were told that his appeal would not be dealt with on its own.

Unlawful

Another excellent reason for making the stoppage on 15 January even wider—if they were needed—is that it is the first actual day of trial for nine more of the Shrewsbury 24.

All remaining 18 have to surrender bail on Monday. Then on Tuesday, before Mr Justice Chetwynd Talbot, the prosecution case against the nine is due to open. They are being prosecuted for unlawful assembly and affray, the charges the prosecution feels are most likely to stick.

Before the TGWU moved officially, building workers in several major areas resolved to strike this Friday, the day of the bail and appeal applications. Among these were Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool.

In Manchester the call went out from the Manchester Workers' Forum. Action was pledged by most of the big organised sites in the town.

Organise

In Liverpool a meeting of 200 shop stewards made similar pledges for Friday. At the meeting many delegates pointed out that a one-day strike was not enough to free the three and that a campaign for all-out action was needed.

In Birmingham on Monday 30 building stewards met, set up a defence committee and decided to organise a major campaign in the area. The meeting unanimously carried a resolution calling for steps towards an all-out strike to free the three.

The TGWU's call is an important step forward. But the real need is to build on it and put some real flesh and blood into the campaign.

All out on 15 January! Free the Three! Stop the trials!

John Carpenter writes: page 16

London Trades Council and London Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee

**March to
Free the 3
Against
lockout**

Tuesday 15 January
Assemble Tower Hill
1pm

JOHN LLYWARCH, one of the three men who got suspended sentences in the frameup trial of the Shrewsbury pickets, seen speaking to building workers who lobbied UCATT's head office on Tuesday.

200 building workers turned up to demand action from the union executive to free the jailed three.

The three — John McKinsie Jones, Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson—have now been moved to separate jails. Their wives have to travel hundreds of miles to Nottingham, Bedford and Stafford respectively to see them for half an hour each month. The men are allowed only one letter a month. But solidarity telegrams can be sent to the respective jails.

Picture: Peter Harrap (Report)

Lobby hears trial man



KNOCK OUT THE LOCKOUT

THE FIGHT IS ON. We are locked in the fiercest class battle for a generation.

The Tories and the powerful employers who pay them are prepared to close down half British industry rather than lose the battle. Last time—in 1972—they fought the miners with appeals and smears on press and television. They lost.

This time they have taken up the most powerful weapon in their class armoury: the full-scale lockout.

If the Tories win their battle with the miners they will trample all of us in the dirt. Trade union organisation, already crippled by the attacks on pickets at Shrewsbury and in the House of Lords, will be most firmly shackled.

Engineers, railwaymen, postmen, farmworkers, and millions of other workers will lose all chance of wage increases which

they have claimed. Civil liberties in the working-class movement will be wiped out.

The way will be clear for a catch-all wage freeze, vicious deflation and the highest unemployment since the 1930s.

What is the reaction of the trade union leaders to this, the greatest crisis of their time?

They are running for cover.

ACTION

Leaders of the Engineering and Transport Union, whose two million members in engineering are claiming an increase of £10 a week, have 'postponed' any industrial action until 'after the crisis.'

Even then, they have limited the action to an overtime ban.

An overtime ban after several weeks on half pay. What a pathetic

by Socialist Worker political correspondent

joke!

When workers are locked out by an individual employer they can expect some trade union action to defend them.

Now almost all the workers in the country are locked out for half the week—and the trade union leaders have postponed all action.

They want to leave the battle to the miners.

That's just what the Tories want. They've made all their plans on the basis of a straight fight with the miners. They have no way of fighting other trade unionists at the same time.

That's why workers on the shop floor must take action for themselves to fight the Tory lockout. If the Tories use the most powerful weapons at their disposal, so must we.

If they use the lockout, we must use the solidarity strike, the

factory occupation, the mass demonstration.

That's why the engineers should start action NOW in support of their claim—not with an overtime ban, but with all-out strike action.

That's why all other trade unionists with wage claims or grievances should put the boot in NOW.

We all have sympathy with the miners. But sympathy will do nothing for them and worse for the rest of us.

Mass industrial action CAN win. The bosses are weak and worried. The Confederation of British Industry is drumming up support for the government.

But already some of the biggest bosses—men like Lord Kearton of Courtaulds and Sir Raymond Brookes of GKN—are squealing about lost profits, and demanding concessions to the miners.

The class enemy is half way down. Now is the time to deliver the knockout punch.

Fitt keeps Faulkner in power

by Mike Miller

BELFAST:—The resignation of Brian Faulkner, leader of the Unionist Party, has come as no surprise. Faulkner has fallen foul of the same political machine which he himself used to oust the two previous party leaders, O'Neill and Chichester-Clark.

It was the Orange Order, the secret right-wing society which dominates the party, that ensured Faulkner's defeat, with its block of 150 votes on the Unionist Council. For the Orange bosses the new Executive and proposed Council of Ireland will mean an end to their 50 years of uninterrupted power, so they rejected it.

The Orange monster, used by the British ruling class to rule the Six Counties on their behalf, has now turned against its master.

Faulkner still has the support of 17 Assembly Unionists, but without the absolute loyal support now given to him by the middle-class Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party he would not be able to continue as Chief Executive.

It is not only the SDLP that is propping up the new Faulkner regime. The Southern Irish government has also offered a crutch for him to lean on.

Ancient

In an attempt to stave off opposition to Faulkner from within his party, Prime Minister Liam Cosgrave's government re-introduced an ancient law—first passed in 1861 in the days when Britain ruled the whole of Ireland with an iron fist—to prove to the Unionist hardliners that his government could be as reactionary as any in the North.

Those wanted by the British for murder or manslaughter, or as accessories, can now be put on trial in Dublin's Special Court. Just about anyone who has resisted British military rule in the North is now open to arrest and detention in the South as soon as the British give the order.

SDLP leader Gerry Fitt, who still calls himself a 'socialist republican', has said that he is completely unimpressed by the repressive measures so far adopted by the Southern regime. Along with Faulkner he is demanding harsher measures.

At the same time a massive recruitment campaign for the Southern army is underway. £50,000 is to be spent in a drive to recruit 3000 more men to bring the force up to 12,400.

Promise

The equivalent in Britain would be a standing army of 175,000 engaged in 'law and order' activities, patrolling the streets and roads, searching people and homes at all times. New barracks are being built and new battalions formed specifically to smash all opposition to British rule.

This is the real face of the 'New Ireland' promise by the politicians at Sunningdale. It will be an Ireland with thousands of political prisoners, permanent military mobilisation, special and secret courts, and where police will have virtually unlimited powers.

The rejection of Faulkner and his policies shows that there is widespread disapproval among Protestants, including many workers, for British plans. But as before, this opposition has been channelled entirely into right-wing waters.

In terms of the numbers who support them, Craig and Paisley are as strong as ever but in terms of their alternative strategies they are weaker than ever now that the Executive has actually taken office.

The struggle against British big business domination must go on, and it is the task of British socialists to continue to support it. But in Ireland itself the struggle must go beyond the question of British rule and raise the question of the political power of the tiny minority of Irish capitalists, North and South, who permit British domination of our lives.

FEARS GROW FOR HUNGER STRIKE 4

DOLOURS PRICE, Marion Price, Hugh Feeney and Gerald Kelly—jailed following the Winchester bomb trial—are in their ninth week of hunger strike to back their demand to be treated as political prisoners and returned to Northern Ireland.

Fears are growing for the health of the four. In particular, Dolours Price's situation gives grounds

by Jim Higgins

to fear for her life.

Since 4 December the prisoners have been force fed. According to the Joint Action Committee, fighting to get them transferred to Northern Ireland, forced feeding involves four wardens holding Dolours, a wooden clamp is jammed into her

mouth to keep the jaws open and then a thick, greased tube is inserted into her stomach, down which liquid food is poured.

This inhuman and degrading process is the closest to the medieval torture of forced drowning that the Home Office and the prison service can devise. Forced feeding contravenes the European Convention of Human Rights.

But even the brutal ingenuity of the prison doctors is unable to overcome the fact that Dolours Price's body rejects this grisly method of feeding.

The Joint Action Committee claims that she is vomiting practically all the food forced into her body. It is this that gives rise to fears for her life.

The physical condition of all the four is deteriorating. Dolours and Marion have lost two and a half stone.

Gerald Kelly lost one stone in the first eight days of the hunger strike and Hugh Feeney has lost two stones and suffered a 'mild' heart attack.

Hugh and Gerald are refusing to wear prison clothes as part of their demand to be treated as political prisoners. The prison authorities are therefore denying them any clothes at all.

This piece of bureaucratic inhumanity is made worse by the refusal to allow them any visitors because of their nudity.

Women prisoners are not required to wear prison clothing and so Dolours and Marion cannot be denied visitors on that score. But the prison authorities make it as difficult as possible.

Mrs Chrissie Price having travelled from Belfast, at the expense of time and much money, was required by the governor of Brixton prison, to



Picture of Richard Chavez by Chris Davies (Report)

Boycott grapes call by US farmworkers

RICHARD CHAVEZ is visiting England to drum up support for a boycott of California grapes. He is the brother of Cesar Chavez who has led the struggle of the California grape-workers to get unionised and to fight the appalling conditions of farmworkers in California.

Recently the union has been under heavy pressure. The successes of the late 1960s in forcing the growers into conceding minimal union rights and rates of pay have been eroded by the activities of the racketeer-dominated Teamsters Union. Membership has plummeted from 100,000 to 8500.

Despite this Richard Chavez remained optimistic. The union's consumer boycott has met with considerable success in the United States, he claimed. 'The Teamsters are playing a game of political football—with us as the ball. They've had support from the growers. But their involvement won't last.'

He wasn't optimistic about the state of the American labour move-

ment. 'It's been going backwards for years. There are a lot of people with running it who should have retired years ago. It's big, fat and comfortable, the other unions started like us but they've forgotten—they're big business.'

'As for the student movement, it's dead. We used to speak to audiences of up to 1500 at colleges—now we're lucky if we get 250. The spirit of the 1960s is dead. We get support from some rank and file trade unionists—including workers in the Teamsters and carworkers, and from the Church.'

'There is no history of any organisation that happened overnight,' he argued. 'And we haven't got past scratching the surface. We've just held our constitutional convention.'

'We have some strength in

Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Oregon and of course California. If we can't make it in California we can't make it. There is a potential of three million members.'

The union is weakened by the nature of the work, which shifts over the state with the grape harvests and by the pool of destitute unemployed Mexican-Americans who can provide strike-breakers, and by the lack of effective union support both within and outside the USA.

Despite the failure of the leadership of the British Transport Union to support the blacking of ships with California grapes in British docks, Chavez retained confidence. 'The European trade union movement will do all it can to help us—and the Teamsters will pull out of the farmworkers' struggle and stop trying to split us.'

Taxing time for Euro MPs

BRITAIN'S first year in Europe has brought with it vastly increased spending power and lower taxes for the 14 MPs and eight peers who represent Britain in Strasbourg.

Each MP gets £120 'travel allowance, every time he flies to Strasbourg. The air fare by scheduled flight costs £53.70. But the MPs hired a charter flight which takes them to Strasbourg and back for £47.20.

Mr Peter Kirk, the Tory who leads the British delegation, has explained the difference between the allowance

and the cost as follows: 'It balances out against other expenses that the Euro MPs have to incur.'

'For example there is a considerable representational function which requires the presence of members' wives because of the entertainment that arises. In the same way it is often necessary for an MP's secretary to be present to deal with his own constituency problems.'

Mr Kirk forgot to mention that the Euro MPs also receive an expense allowance of £27.03 a day or part of a day over and above the travel allowance:

So if an MP flies to Strasbourg for a meeting on a Monday afternoon and another on Tuesday morning, he gets £54.06 expenses and makes a clear profit of £72.80 on his travel expenses.

Allowing for the fantastic amount which MPs—and their secretaries—spend on food and hotels in Strasbourg, this means a clear profit of £100 a day for each Euro MP, including Dick Taverne, breakaway MP for Lincoln.

The Inspector of Taxes has agreed that none of this profit should be taxed.



Dolours Price

provide a picture of herself and was then kept waiting for some hours while he decided if she was 'a fit person' to see her own daughters.

Lord Colville, Tory Minister of State with responsibility for prisons, issued a letter last Thursday making it clear 'there was no chance of the four being transferred.'

This blank refusal to accept the norms of civilised behaviour makes visiting by relations an expensive and hazardous business. It flies right in the face of recent procedure.

Robert Carr has stated in the House of Commons that since 1969, 18 prisoners have, at their own request been transferred from Northern Ireland to England.

Of these 18, one is a member of the Loyalist UDA who has murdered four people. In addition four have transferred from English jails to Northern Ireland in the same period.

There seems to be no other explanation that the government's desire to cruelly and excessively punish the four Irish republicans.

Messages of sympathy and support can be sent to the Price sisters at Brixton prison. Hugh Feeney is in Gartree Prison, Leicestershire and Gerald Kelly is in Wormwood Scrubs.

The government also should be flooded with demands from trade union bodies for the ending of the barbarities committed in their name and at their command for the transfer to Northern Ireland of Dolours Price and her comrades. Robert Carr's address is: The Home Office, Headquarters Office, Whitehall, SW1.

The three bob loaf —that's the bread men's aim

LAST MONDAY the Price Commission increased the price of bread for the fourth time in only seven months. The large standard loaf is now to cost 13½p—an increase of 29 per cent since 1972.

But the three big companies who control 70 per cent of bread production in Britain are still dissatisfied. They are confident that before the end of 1974 the government will allow further increases, taking the price of the standard loaf to 16½p.

The three shilling loaf (15p) is expected as early as March. At least one newspaper, The Guardian, regards these further increases as 'inevitable'.

The government has explained that bread has to be dearer because of a sharp rise in world grain prices. It has not explained why the full effect of world price increases has to be unloaded directly on to the household budget of British workers.

Dominate

Bread and similar items of basic food could easily be subsidised if the government was interested in keeping down the cost of living.

In any case, world grain prices are only part of the story. The three companies who dominate the bread market are already under investigation by the Monopolies Commission—especially for the massive profits they make from the flour milling part of the operation.

As bread prices soar, so do the profits of the major bread producers—up to a combined total of £123 million in 1973:

	% share of bread sales	Profits 1972	Profits 1973
Ranks	25	£38.6m	£48.4m
Assoc. British	24	£44.0m	£56.3m
Spiller French	21	£15.3m	£18.5m

Socialist tortured by Chile junta

THE CHILEAN revolutionary group, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) has confirmed the capture last month of Bautista von Schouwen in a church in Santiago.

Von Schouwen is one of the founders of MIR and a member of the political committee since 1967. He rose to become its second ranking leader under general secretary Miguel Enriquez.

He was among the 10 most wanted political leaders after the military coup of 11 September, carrying, like the others, a price on his head. His capture has not been announced by the army, obviously so that the Junta can do what it wants with him.

Opposition

In their communique, MIR states: 'For several days Von Schouwen has been subjected to the most savage torture. He has been physically destroyed by his torturers'.

The Chilean army does not hesitate to use any method to extract information about revolutionaries. The MIR has never hidden its opposition to the possibility of a 'legal road to socialism'. Under the government of Allende, to which it gave tactical support, it had maintained its semi-secret organisation.

MIR concludes their statement by stating: 'MIR does not seek asylum in embassies. The remainder of the leadership of MIR continue in their posts, fulfilling their tasks'.

SOCIALIST WORKER

'THE PRIME MINISTER is determined that there can be no further concessions to the miners or the rail drivers,' writes the political correspondent of the Sunday Telegraph.

'Whatever the immediate consequences the three-day week may have for the country in terms of lost wages, production and exports... He believes that to surrender now would not only open the floodgates [to other claims] but would be seen as a demonstration that militant extremism can defeat the elected government... Mr Heath's authority... together with that of the Conservative Party as a whole is now at stake.'

In other words, for the government, the defeat of the miners is a political question. The Telegraph, of course, reflects the right wing of Toryism. But the same story is told by the 'liberal' Observer: 'The left-wing critics of the government's attempts to defend Stage Three are quite correct in arguing that the government is engaged in a political confrontation with the unions.'

Madness

There is no doubt about it. The cost of conceding the miners claim in full, £40 million a year, is peanuts compared to the £540 million a week cost of prolonged three-day working. In purely economic terms the government's policy is madness from a capitalist point of view.

But there is no such thing as a purely economic question nowadays. Faced with the growing crisis of British and world capitalism, the Tory government is trying to break the power of the unions in order to make possible drastic cuts in working-class living standards.

What is at stake is not just the miners' claim but the whole balance of power in industry. A defeat for the miners would make it easier for

It is a political fight

the government to 'solve' the developing crisis at the expense of the working class. A victory for the miners would shake the government to its foundations and transform the whole situation.

Every working man and woman has a vital interest in the defeat of the Tories in this confrontation.

The government is now facing defeat in the near future. One thing only can save it. That is the activities of the so-called 'moderates' (in reality the right wing) in the NUM and its allies in the TUC. For it is now a battle of wills. Three-day working as a threat to put pressure on the NUM appeared to the Tories to be a powerful weapon. Three-day working as a reality is immensely costly to the capitalist class and cannot, in practice, be maintained for more than a few weeks.

The right wingers are playing the Tories' game, and not just in terms of the wage claim. Whether consciously or not they are working to save the Tory government from destruction.

The real need is to step up action, to cut coal production further to counteract the increasing imports of American and Polish coal, best of all to turn the overtime ban into a strike.

WHAT WE THINK

One big heave now will win the claim and destroy 'Mr Heath's authority... together with that of the Conservative Party as a whole'.

To those workers who still have the illusion that 'politics should be kept out' it has to be made clear that this is impossible nowadays. The Tories have made it impossible. They have no illusions about the possibilities of a purely economic struggle. They have made the miners' action the central political question of the day. Questions of bread and butter and questions of power are now inseparable.

Unless the right-wing of the NUM can get them off the hook, the Tories will probably be forced to call an early election. For several years the threat of a 'who runs Britain?', union-bashing election campaign has been used as a

Prospects

bogy. Now it is on the cards. In any case an election sometime this year is a near-certainty.

The same people in the labour movement who are now trying to sap the will of the miners will soon be arguing that industrial action will soon be arguing that industrial action will damage Labour's election prospects. And they will be joined by many further to the 'left'. Don't believe a word of it. Without the action of the firemen, the power engineers, the rail drivers, the miners and others, the government would be set fair for a new term of office with intensified attacks on the working class.

An electoral defeat for the Tories would be a step forward. It would mark a swing to the left in the country and a rejection of capitalist values and priorities. We say this without having any illusions that the Labour Party is, in any sense, socialist. But let there be no mistake about this. Only if the miners win will the government be driven to the wall.

CORBRIDGE WORKS, CORBRIDGE CRESCENT, LONDON E2 01-739 9043/0185/6361

Peanuts: Phase 3 mines offer

by Jim Kincaid

HOW MUCH have the miners actually been offered? The government says 16 per cent.

Press and television have uncritically swallowed this figure and proclaimed the offer as the most generous in the history of the mining industry.

In fact the miners are being handed peanuts. If the present NCB offer was accepted the average miner would be only 61p a week better off in March than he was in April 1973.

The details have been worked out by Michael Meacher, Labour MP for Oldham. His analysis is shown in the table.

Over the past year, according to the government, economic growth in Britain amounted to 6 per cent. The current NCB offer amounts to no more than a 2 per cent improvement in miners purchasing power.

This analysis of the offer made to the miners highlights the miserable character of recent Phase Three settlements accepted by their union leaders on behalf of nearly three million workers.

Pay deals have been agreed, among others, for council workers, farm workers, dockers, electrical contract workers, hospital workers, and city

Total pay rise offered by NCB: £44.75m per year
No. of miners involved 197,000
Average weekly wage increase £4.36
FROM WHICH DEDUCT
Income tax £1.31
National Insurance 22p
Loss of purchasing power of miners' wage by inflation—April 73 to March 74 £2.22
Increase in purchasing power of miners wage if offer accepted 61p

busmen.

After tax and national insurance the settlements are worth an average of only 7 per cent to the workers involved. This is before taking account of price erosion.

Yet over the past 12 months, the cost of living has risen by 10 per cent. Food prices alone have gone up by 19 per cent. The latest issue of the Economist reports that in the past

few months the overall rate of price increase has risen to 15 per cent a year, and goes on to predict a further acceleration.

The living standards of workers are being reduced—and at an increasing speed. Every union leader who signs a Phase Three deal is conniving at wage cuts for his members.

As a result company profits have been reaching all-time record levels.

The Financial Times of 2 January reports that over the whole of 1973 profits of industrial companies rose by 25.8 per cent.

Here, too there is acceleration. For companies reporting in the third quarter of 1973, the profit figures were an unprecedented 37.8 per cent higher than in the previous year.

On 26 November, the Treasury announced that by mid-1973 dividend payments made to share holders was 31.5 per cent higher than at the end of 1972.

If you strip away the lies and official propaganda, the plain truth is that Phase Three is a device to cut wages in favour of profits. Three million workers have already been conned into acceptance.

The issue now turns on the fighting capability of the miners, and the support they can win from the rest of the labour movement.

Mersey Libs to wield homes axe

MASSIVE REDUNDANCIES for manual workers, the end of hopes for a new home for 40,000 people living in slums, the selling of council houses and the building of council houses for sale by the direct labour department, higher and higher council rents—these are some of the prospects for the workers of Liverpool when the new Liberal council takes over in April.

In a confidential document leaked

to Socialist Worker by angry council workers, the Liverpool district council Liberal group outlines its housing policy. The policy is underlined in two letters from the director of housing to senior staff outlining the views of Councillor William Smyth who will be Liberal chairman of the city's housing committee.

The policy document accepts the principle of 'fair rents', as outlined in the government's Rent Act. The slum clearance programme, it says

'requires urgent review' and should be drastically cut. Even 'medical priorities should be limited to genuine need (approximately 280 to 300 cases a year).'

Although there are 16,500 people on Liverpool's housing waiting list, the document proposes selling off the council house stock 'at 20 per cent below market price', and even, for the first time in the history of local government, using council labour to build houses for sale.

One of the director's letters mentions cryptically: 'He [Councillor Smyth] mentioned an arrangement at Bootle involving Wimpeys and Unit'. Which means presumably that council labour will build the houses, and Wimpeys and Units Construction will take some of the profit of their sale.

If any council tenant falls behind on his rent, he can expect swift revenge from the Liberals. A small sub-committee on arrears will be set up to ensure 'early action on arrears'.

CRISIS ROUND-UP

United States

THE fuel shortage in the United States began with a deliberate cut-back in production by the big oil monopolies, aimed at putting pressure on the government to remove restrictions on the industry. Events in the Middle East have merely added to this, making the fuel shortage America's number one shortage.

In ruling circles, a debate is raging over exactly what steps the government should take. But one thing has been made clear by the new chief energy adviser: 'The American consumer, not industry, must bear the brunt' of the shortage. In other words, the working class, through price rises, goods shortages and lay-

offs in heavy industry, must be made to pay.

The television and press are putting all effort into selling the idea that Americans have been wasting energy by their style of living. The implication is that workers have been pig-headedly driving their 'luxury' cars at weekends, and keeping their homes too warm in winter. Those who will really suffer when petrol and heating oil prices hit the roof are workers who cannot get to work by public transport and who will not be able to afford to heat their homes at all.

The first to suffer from unemployment are carworkers. 290,000 workers have been laid off—two-fifths of the total labour force in the industry. 50,000 of these have been sacked outright. Workers with least

seniority—those who are worst off already, including blacks, Arabs and women—are the first to go.

To help 'the industry', the government recently suspended all wage and price controls in car manufacturing—the day after a three-year wage contract had been signed by the carworkers' union leaders. So car industry bosses were freed from controls on their profits just as soon as they had made it as difficult as possible for workers to demand increased wages.

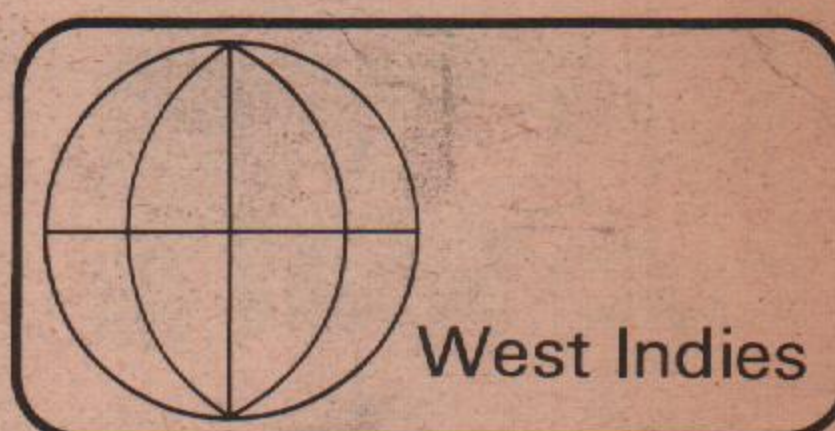
Yugoslavia

THOUGH Yugoslavia is one of the European countries least affected directly by the oil crisis, the crisis in other countries could have serious

effects there. West Germany, Austria and Denmark have already stopped all further entry by foreign 'guest workers', of whom a large proportion come from Yugoslavia.

Besides relieving pressure on employment in Yugoslavia, these emigrant workers send home valuable foreign currency: the total for 1973 was almost £600 million.

In countries such as France, which have not yet banned the entry of migrant workers, firms are postponing or withdrawing offers of employment. The Peugeot car firm has announced that it will not be renewing the contracts of 245 Yugoslav workers this year. France's latest immigration laws mean that foreign workers whose contracts are not renewed are almost certain to be expelled.



The bosses won't let Premier resign

by Malcolm Cumberbatch

DR ERIC WILLIAMS, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, has decided to stay on, and it looks as though he may be in power for some time yet. He had announced that he was leaving the political arena for keeps, but soon reversed his decision.

It does not call for a lot of homework to understand what has been going on inside this small oil-producing country on the north-eastern tip of Venezuela. The foreign powers who drain the land of what wealth it has have clearly argued with Williams' decision to go at this critical time.

The country is still unstable after the industrial disturbances and riots of 1970, and it seems likely that it will not be long before discontent among the workers of Trinidad breeds another uprising.

Struggle

Williams has built himself an image of grandeur, so that during his first dozen or so years of rule his personality cult enabled him to ride the waves. The fact that Trinidad has been relatively better off than other islands in the West Indies, mainly because of its oil, has helped him. His failure to provide for the local Indian peoples adequately meant that blacks have regarded him as 'their' man, but recently men of African descent and Indian origin have been joining hands in the struggle.

During Williams' many years in power, he has never sponsored any capable heir-apparent to take over when he goes, but has been a champion one-man team, the star who could ill afford to leave the field. Clearly the companies that dominate Trinidad's economy have seen this as the wrong moment to throw a novice into the fray, and feel they need time to look around for a staunch ally as Williams' replacement. They are sticking to their determination to have no more Cubas.

BRIEFING

DESPITE the savage sentences passed on worker militants last week, Spanish workers are not cowed into submission. 350 workers in Pamplona, in Northern Spain, have been suspended for two days after striking in support of four dismissed colleagues. The management doing the sacking and suspending is the Spanish subsidiary of British Leyland.

THERE is at last a working-class fly in the ointment for the Brazilian dictatorship, so much admired by British and American bosses for its economic success story achieved by repression and torture.

Workers in Sao Paulo, the centre of Brazilian heavy industry, have been organising strikes and go-slows, especially in the car industry, where there is a shortage of skilled labour. At the Villares lift factory, a delegation of workers even negotiated with the management for a ten per cent wage rise. In Brazil, where most unions have no negotiating rights and are liable to be placed under direct state control if they show any militancy, this is a breakthrough.

THE TRIAL of the men and women accused of plotting the assassination of Zanzibari leader Sheikh Karume in April 1972 appears to be drawing to a close. Although Zanzibar is technically part of Tanzania, the island is still separate from the mainland in many ways, including its legal system, and the mainland leader Julius Nyerere is still refusing to hand over the 18 accused men and women held on the mainland.

On a former occasion when two men, the former vice-president of Zanzibar and a former Tanzanian ambassador to the USA, were handed over to Zanzibar, they disappeared and was later declared to have been shot.

Much of the evidence presented by prosecution witnesses—nine of them accused men and women who pleaded guilty—claims that the leader of the plot was Abdurahman Babu, the former Tanzanian minister of economic development. Babu is a marxist, long active in Zanzibari politics, who went to the mainland and became one of Nyerere's leading advisors shortly after the two countries were united.

The trial has been adjourned since last November. It is possible that the accused may be shot without further procedure, or that they may be offered an amnesty. Any gesture of clemency which Zanzibar's new leader, Jumbe, makes is bound to be window-dressing only, for he is concerned about his international reputation but has not dismantled any of the apparatus of repression set up by Karume.

IN THE pre-Christmas 'crisis' an important event in France was largely ignored by the British press. This was the explosion of a bomb in the Algerian consulate in Marseilles.

The bomb was not aimed at diplomats but exploded in a waiting-room crowded with immigrant workers. Four were killed and 16 injured—some of them will be permanently disabled.

The bomb was placed by an extreme-right commando calling itself 'Charles Martel' which has made it clear that its aim is to terrorise the whole Arab immigrant community. Arab workers responded at once. On a number of sites they struck for the rest of the day. In the docks there was a one-hour strike and some French workers also joined, despite the attempts by the Communist-led CGT union to oppose any action.

The next day 1500 Arab workers and revolutionary socialists demonstrated in Marseilles and more than 10,000 turned out for the funeral. A general strike of Arab workers was called for the 18 December in Marseilles. On that day too there was a demonstration of several thousand in Paris called by the 'Arab Workers' Movement and by the various revolutionary groups.

Once again the immigrant workers have shown they will not be intimidated.



RECOGNISE the man on the left? No, it's not Chairman Mao in specs, but Gilbert Hunt, boss of Chrysler Great Britain. Back home, Mr Hunt is given to frequent vicious attacks on strikers, militants and 'communist wreckers'. But here he is on an official visit to China, hobnobbing with the communists and adopting their dress.

The reason for the visit? To try to sell Chrysler cars, of

course. Which just shows what a hypocrite Hunt is. 'Communists' are okay when you're doing business with them.

And if you think that the Chinese government shouldn't be welcoming British bosses who hire blacklegs to drive through picket lines, then that is nothing compared to Peking's official message of condolence to the Spanish government following the assassination of Prime Minister Carrero Blanco.

No change for the Palestinians

by Stephen Marks

ISRAEL'S elections have come and gone with little real change. Golda Meir's Labour Alignment group will find it harder to go along with the American-Russian drive for a Middle East peace deal, after losing half a dozen seats to the right-wing opposition in Israel's 120-seat Parliament. New elections may be necessary later in the year.

But far more important than the jockeying for power between possible partners in any new coalition are the things the parties have in common. All accept the Zionist nature of the Israeli state, and favour holding on to as much of the occupied territories as they can get away with. They differ only on the question of just how much territory that is.

The Western press has played up the results as showing a limited gain for the 'hawks' of the right against the 'doves' of Golda Meir's 'left'. The opposition could be called the 'ugly face of Zionism'.

Opposition leader Menahem Begin was a leader of the Irgun, the infamous terrorist organisation which carried out the massacre of 250 Arab villagers at Deir Yassin in 1948, and used the terror created by this and other atrocities to drive out as many Arabs as possible from the new borders of the Israeli state. He later boasted of his role in reducing Israel's Arab population from 850,000 to 150,000 in a few months.

It is ironic that Israel's voters gave his party increased support on the

very day that Arab terrorists shot leading British Zionist and head of Marks and Spencers, Edward Sieff. Begin joined other Israeli politicians in condemning 'terrorists'—Arab ones, that is.

Unlike Begin, Golda Meir is prepared to withdraw from some of the occupied territories on the West Bank. But her main reason, apart from the fact that Washington wants her to, is that the area is heavily populated by Arabs, who might threaten the exclusively Jewish nature of the state. As Golda once charmingly put it: 'I don't want to have to wake up tomorrow morning wondering how many Arabs have been born during the night.'

Settlement

The real situation was accurately described by one of the 'moderate' leaders of the Labour Alignment: 'Peace in the Middle East doesn't depend on the Israeli elections. In the last analysis Washington and Moscow will impose a settlement one way or another, on the Israelis and the Arabs.'

'Even if Menahem Begin came to power he'd have to go along with it, because our country cannot hold out without the support we get, in many different ways, from the USA'.

But the results did show a swing to the left by Israel's Arab voters. The pro-government Arab party lost one



Golda Meir voting in the election

of its four seats to the pro-Moscow Communist Party, which also won control of Nazareth town council in the local election held the same day.

Militant Israeli Arabs have traditionally voted for the pro-Moscow Communists, as all attempts to form an Arab nationalist party have been banned, and anti-Zionist socialists are jailed or restricted. In the Arab part of Jerusalem, annexed by Israel in 1967, Arabs were not allowed to vote in the national elections, and though they were

allowed to vote in the local elections, nine out of ten boycotted the polls.

Meanwhile, no votes were cast by the 2½ million Palestinian Arabs, the original population of the country, who were forced to flee when Israel was created in 1948 and now live in camps in the surrounding countries or under Israeli military rule in Gaza and the West Bank. On the question of their right to return to their country there were no 'doves' in the election—keeping things that way is the basis of Israeli 'democracy'.

FOOT

PRINTS

UP GOES THE OLD VIC

CONGRATULATIONS are flooding in for those newly elevated in the New Years' Honour. My own special greetings to the Baron Feather-my-Nest, Sir Frank Taylor of Ronan Point, to John Boyd of the Engineers' Union who has been awarded the CBE (Christian Bureaucrats Everywhere), and Percy Coldrick of the Transport Salaried Staff union who got the OBE (Other Bastards' Efforts).



COUNCILLOR SMART
Darling of Labour right-wing

All tied up in Knottingley



COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN
Rents Act switch

ONE ASPECT of the Poulson trial at Leeds which did not attract much publicity was the reference to Councillor Bill O'Brien, King of Knottingley.

Councillor O'Brien is treasurer of the Knottingley Labour Party, and owns a garage at Nevison. In the late 1960s he was chairman of the Pontefract, Goole and Selby Water Board, which awarded a series of lucrative pipeline contracts—worth more than £1 million—to Poulson.

According to Poulson's statement in court, it was round about the same time that Poulson's engineering firm agreed that their fleet of cars should be serviced, repaired and supplied with petrol at Councillor O'Brien's garage.

The councillor's garage is proof of his flexibility as far as fuel is concerned. For he is also lodge secretary of the miners' union at Glasshoughton Colliery, near Castleford.

The chairman of the lodge is another local government king, Councillor Bill Smart JP, former Mayor of Castleford. O'Brien and Smart are the darlings of the Labour Party right wing in the NUM. At last year's Labour Party Conference, special coaches were organised across the Pennines for a meeting of the Labour Miners Association 'Stop Briscoe' movement, which was promoting Councillor O'Brien for the secretaryship of the Yorkshire NUM.

Owen Briscoe, I'm glad to say, finally won the contest. O'Brien and Smart were also the heroes of the notorious News

of the World series in 1972—The Strife Makers. Both men spoke of the Communist menace in the NUM and how they and the newly-formed Labour Miners Association were going to root it out.

O'Brien and Smart were both in trouble this time last year after the election for the Yorkshire compensation agent in the NUM—eventually won by Arthur Scargill. About 350 papers were returned unfolded, and clearly not written in different handwriting. Most of the papers, which were declared invalid, came from Glasshoughton and Bill O'Brien was summoned to a meeting of the Yorkshire NUM's executive disciplinary committee in Barnsley to explain why.

After some delay, apparently, the committee accepted his explanation.

Bill O'Brien is opposed to the government's Housing Finance Act, but he is much more opposed to people in his area who take action against it. In October 1972, tenants at Warwick council estate, Knottingley, staged a rent strike in protest against the £1-a-week increases introduced by the council.

Shock

O'Brien rushed into the local press to denounce the strike leaders as 'neo-fascists'. Wendy Green, who was secretary of the tenants' association at the time tells me that O'Brien was against the implementation of the Housing Finance Act before the 1972 council elections, but in favour of implementation soon afterwards. 'He's not for us at all,' she says mildly. 'He's for himself.'

Councillor O'Brien's business relationship with John Poulson will not come as a shock to those who have studied right-wing Labour politics in South Yorkshire over the past 10 years. Councillor T Roebuck of Mexborough Urban Council, for instance, was not unknown to John Poulson, nor was Alderman C Dews, JP, also of Castleford, or Councillor Jack Smart JP.

Some Yorkshire miners who should know better are going around saying that the initials JP after a person's name stand for John Poulson. They do not. They stand for Justice of the Peace.

Oh to be a farmer's boy...

REGINALD COLLINS has worked for 20 years for Joseph Bostock at Roundhill Farm, Kenilworth, Warwickshire. Last October he was sacked and evicted from his tied cottage. The reason was that Bostock's son had failed his 'O' levels, and was given Reginald's job.

Reginald Collins appealed to a Birmingham industrial tribunal under the Industrial Relations Court. The tribunal refused his claim for unfair dismissal—because the Act does not cover firms with fewer than four workers.

They awarded him £380 redundancy pay, based on his salary of £20 a week.

Ernest Loveridge had worked for most of his 59 years at Stone Farm, Ombersley, Worcestershire, when, on 28 September, he fell into a potato harvester and was mangled to death.

The managing director of the farm, W A Silvester, told the inquest that the harvester had a guard rail when it was first bought, but it had been broken. Replacement parts for the machine had not arrived in time for the potato harvest. Nevertheless, he ordered it to be used because he was 'desperate' to harvest his 100 acres of potatoes.

He swore that he was 'unaware' that the machine did not have a guard over the drive shaft. This, he said was 'an unfortunate case of ignorance on my part.'

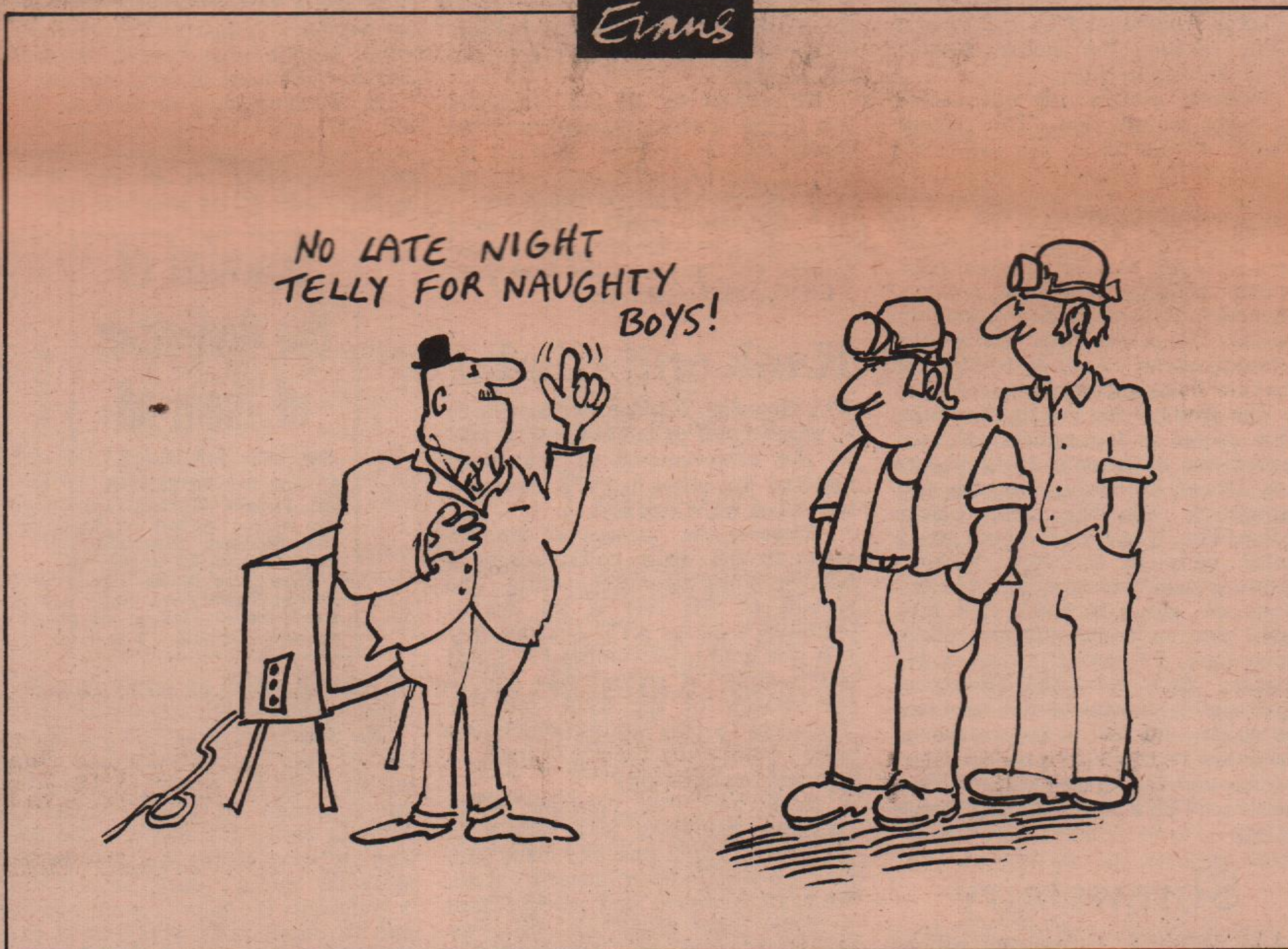
The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

ANYONE would have thought that the directors of Cedar Holdings, the latest 'secondary' bank to have gone bust, had had some inkling of catastrophe. Last June, the board announced some salary increases.

Jack Morrison, the chairman, raised his own salary from £19,300 to £38,200—an increase of nearly 100 per cent, which was entirely within the government's Phase Two policy.

In 1972 there were eight directors and none of them earned more than £20,000 a year. In 1973, there are 15 directors. Apart from the chairman, two are earning more than £35,000 a year (£700 a week). Among the new directors were P D Johnstone from the Coal Board's pension fund and G D Cumming from the Electricity Supply Pension Fund.

Both had made sure for several years that millions of pounds of miners' and power workers' money went at low interest rates into the coffers of Cedar Holdings.



Crisis! The rich tighten their belts

THE ATMOSPHERE in the West End of London on New Year's Eve was full of crisis.

At Tothill Street at 4pm, Harry Hyams arrived to preside over the annual general meeting of his property company, Oldham Estates, which owns Centre Point. He pooh-poohed the suggestion that his million shares in the company were worth £3.50 each, as has been estimated. His stake, he said, couldn't possibly be more than £250 million, that's 10 times

what it was worth six years ago and more than double what it was worth when the Tories came to office.

That evening, at London's top hotels, the prices of New Year's Eve dinners had gone up—and so had the attendances.

800 people packed the restaurant at the Savoy for the standard five-course dinner which cost £15 per head this year, excluding drinks, compared with £12.10 last year. Everyone enjoyed the dinner so much

that Silvio Stefano Trompetto, the Savoy's chief chef, got the MBE the next day (Mr Big Eater).

The Park Tower Hotel was advertising, for its first New Year's Eve ever: 'An eight-course dinner in the Trianon Restaurant at £20 per head including VAT and service—oysters, perdreau, filet de boeuf, peche, to Sylvestre, two bands and a singer.'

I cannot report whether the guests at either hotel included company chairman Malcolm Stevens and his

wife. Mr and Mrs Stevens, who live in London's Kensington, were featured in the Daily Telegraph Magazine of 14 December in an article about food.

In the week they were interviewed, they spent £91.74 on food and £59.85 on drink—a total of £151.59.

'Ruth does not shop for bargains,' says the article. 'I'm not a woman to be seen carrying bags; not the type, either, to be running out for the sugar. I've got better ways to spend my time,' said Mrs Stevens. All shopping, except for the odd loaf, is by telephone. Household bills are settled monthly. 'And I like to serve game—no substitute for that—and it's never seen at my table without all the trimmings. I'm a perfectionist; the table must be set properly.'

'Malcolm raids the refrigerator for chocolate profiteroles, pie or trifle, when he gets up at 5.30am to work. His cook at the office prepares business lunches. Ruth nips off to the Ritz, or a similar chic rendezvous, for a bite with a friend.'

'As her husband says: "Food is about the most important thing in life. We don't plan on economising".'

THE ROYALS ARE DOING THEIR BIT

THE Royal Family was doing its bit for the crisis over the holiday. A 'shoot' was especially early this year so that Prince Charles could get a pot-shot at a few grouse before going to join his frigate in Singapore. More than 7000 pheasants were bagged, many of them by the prince and his father in a glorious two-day week's shooting.

'The Royal prowess with the gun', reported the London Evening Standard, 'Helped to bring down the cost of living.'

So many pheasants were off-

loaded into shops at Kings Lynn that prices were slashed from £1 to 85p for a dressed pheasant. These prices were the lowest in the country. 'Housewives were snapping them up', reported the Standard.

In a bad shooting year, I gather, the housewives of Kings Lynn are not so lucky. Last year, only 2300 pheasants were 'bagged' and very few of these went into the shops. The Standard explained: 'The Royal Family kept several hundred pheasants for their own game larder. Others were given to friends and to

staff. Only those surplus to requirements are sold to the public and the proceeds go towards running the estate.'

The costs are higher this year. Sandringham is being redecorated at a cost of £250,000.

Not content with this major contribution to lowering the cost of living, the Royal Family also demonstrated its concern at the fuel crisis. They made the journey to church last Sunday by minibus, not the usual Rolls. The journey was all of 300 yards.

Shrewsbury, the Mirror's lies, elections, our paper, plus Postal Points

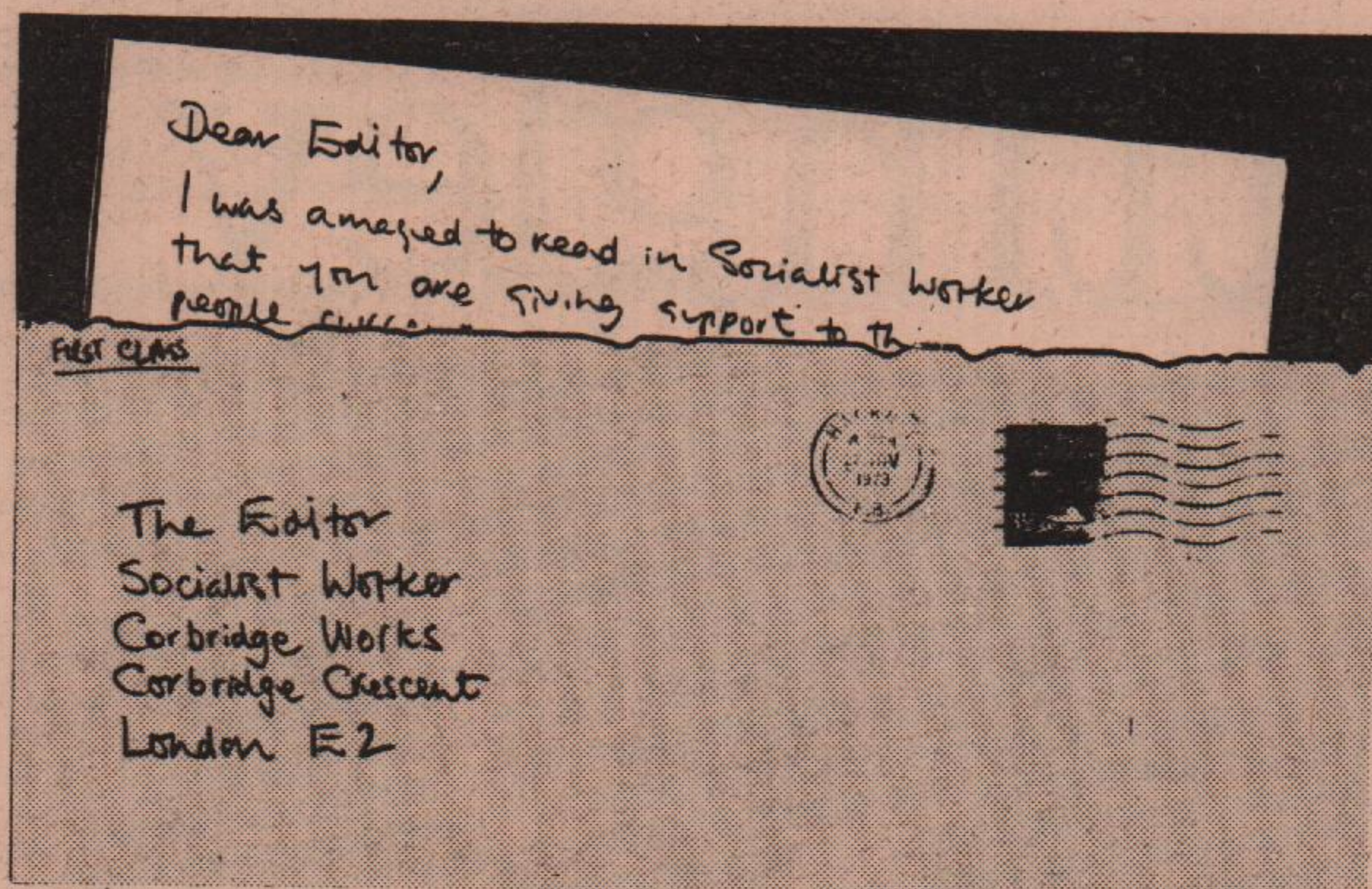
Miners: heroes to villains...

A FEW months ago the miners were proclaimed heroes as they fought against all odds to try to save their mates in water-filled Lofthouse, in the rubble-blocked tunnel at Seaforth and at the bottom of a pit shaft at Markham.

When miners die there are no finer men on earth but when they fight for a reasonable rate of pay for a dirty, dangerous and soul-destroying job they are labelled by the 'popular' press and set up as scapegoats by the Tories to hide their own incompetence and cover up the total failure of their economic policies.

As a miner's wife I am thoroughly sick of the lies and the mud being thrown at my husband and his comrades in the National Union of Miners.

I appeal to every member of the trade union movement to pledge their support and resources to the miners' cause. Help them to keep the heads of the working class of this country above water, and kick out Phase Three, the milestone designed by the Tories to drag us down to the murky depths of poverty. J HALL, Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts.



Whose fault?

THERE IS one thing that everyone in Britain agrees about: there is a crisis in energy and the economy. Where disagreement begins, is where the blame belongs.

The government have stated emphatically that it is all the fault of the 'greedy' miners and their 'nasty' overtime ban. They are enthusiastically supported by the popular press, TV and even some so-called trades unionists—Tom Jackson and the like.

On all the TV talk shows we hear phrases like 'if the miners go back to work' and 'the miners should return to normal working'. Do these people think we are all on strike? Do they not realise that for the vast majority of miners, a five day week is normal working?

The blame for the crisis must be laid squarely at the feet of those who caused it—Ted Heath and his capitalist band. Their disastrous economic policies, relying purely and simply on a philosophy of 'rob the poor to glut the rich', have without doubt been the main cause.

If, as we are led to believe, the industrial actions of the miners and railmen have contributed toward them, then that is only further proof of the fact that the private sector in industry (and its shareholders) have been getting fat on the backs of the grossly undervalued public sector.

Anthony Barber, in his Commons speech, delivered a particularly vicious attack on the miners. This should come as no surprise to older miners, especially in the Nottinghamshire area, where his family were among the most savage of the old coal-owners.

Heath has never forgiven us for our victory in 1972. Since that time he has nursed a pathological hatred

for the miners, he is now attempting to spread his hatred to the general public through the media. What a lot he still has to learn.

Working people are not fooled as easily as all that. They know exactly who to blame for the three-day week and the rest of the miseries inflicted by the emergency measures; certainly not the miners.

Never has the case for an alliance been stronger. Concerted effort must be made to unite the miners, railmen, engineers, gasworkers and electricity workers, in a real fight against the common enemy—Tory destruction of workers' living standards.

The strategy for the fight is quite clear as far as the miners are concerned; the overtime ban will deplete coal stocks certainly, but not fast enough to win the claim before spring. What is needed is all-out strike action early in the New Year to ensure a swift and complete victory. If we are going to fight, then let's fight and not pussyfoot around. Remember: £35-£40-£45 no less. No retreat on November/November agreement. Anti-social payment for all shifts. All shifts are anti-social. No return to indiscriminate overtime. No surrender to Heath and his Tory bandits. STEVE ABBOTT (Calverton NUM).

Shrewsbury

LAST MONTH, before the jailings of the Shrewsbury Three we unanimously passed the following at the monthly joint meeting of the NUPE and GMWU Hospital Ancillary Branches at Moorfields Eye Hospitals.

These branches offer their fraternal support to the Shrewsbury 24 in their struggle in defence of basic trade union rights and supports the

appeal by the 'Hospital Worker' paper for a collection to give the families of the 24 some extra comforts this Christmas.

We appeal to all our brothers and sisters in stronger sections of the movement to prepare to take industrial action in support of the 24 if any one of them is sent down.

A collection was taken to send Co-op Vouchers for the families and £13.82 was raised on the first day. S LUDLAM, London N1.

Rank and riled...

ALL Socialist Worker readers will be as pleased and proud as I was to read of the achievements of the International Socialists in 1973, as reported in last week's paper.

However, the passage on the successes in the white collar unions is open to some misunderstanding. The success of the left at the special conference of the ATTI (incidentally this was held in December 1972, not last summer as stated) was due to the activity of the Rank and File Technical Teacher groups (which have since come together to form a national organisation).

Rank and File contains ATTI members belonging to a variety of political organisations, and many who have no political commitments at all. While IS members have worked hard to help build Rank and File, we wouldn't dream of claiming all the credit. On the contrary, we want to see a rank and file that will grow bigger and stronger until it becomes a focus for all left-wingers in the union. IAN BIRCHALL, London N19.

Sorry for the confusion. The intended meaning of the report was that there had been spectacular gains by rank and file groups in the white-collar unions and that IS members had played an active role in this.

We can beat their lies

AFTER the three building workers were sentenced at Shrewsbury on 19 December the press went to town on the case, after having covered up weeks of court evidence.

I enclose one particularly disgusting piece of 'journalism' from the Daily Mirror. I rang up the writer, Mr Macauley, to ask him, as a fellow journalist, what was the point of his story and where he got his 'facts' from.

He claimed not to be really responsible, but that an investigation had been carried out and all the facts were true.

When asked why it was important that Dennis Warren 'had a colour TV' (he has a black and white set) and what evidence he had for the existence of 'terror squads', 'hellbent on wrecking industry at shop-floor level?' Mr Macauley became shy but said that 'it's none of your business.'

He claimed that the colour TV was 'relevant'—but he thought that to mention that the MacAlpine family had a monopoly on law and order in the North Wales area was not at

Downfall of the Godfather of them all

By TED MACAULEY

STEEL-ERECTOR Dennis Warren ran his terror squad with the efficiency of a military commando group. They were called 'The Flying Pickets'—a hundred-strong force of radical students and

all relevant. Then he asked what my politics were—another investigation?

He didn't see how being a member of the journalists union was relevant either, though journalists are supposed to have a code of conduct which includes the elimination of news distortion. Maybe Mr Macauley doesn't think any of this is relevant (perhaps others would like to discuss this with him at the Mirror's Manchester office). There isn't much that can be done against creatures like him—yet. But for a start this type of case can and must be raised in branches of the NUJ. A little more can be done to worry the bosses' mouthpieces in the press. As workers fight back more and more, there will be more and more Macauleys witch-hunting and lying their way into the bosses' favour. DAVID SCHONFIELD, London W1.

Vote Labour? or for us?

SPECULATION in the bosses' press recently about the possibility of a general election being held in the spring raises the question of our role in that situation.

In past general elections, we have raised the slogan 'Vote Labour, without illusions'. This was in a period when we were much smaller and less strong than we now are. We did not have the strength to fight the election as International Socialists, but had to point out that, although the Labour Party in government are traitors pushing through anti-working class policies every time they are elected, they are traditionally the party of the working class, as opposed to the Tories, the traditional party of the middle class.

The possibility of a general election soon and the greater strength and presence among the working class which we now have, raises the question, should we be putting up candidates?

While having no illusions in the parliamentary system (my illusions were smashed within six weeks of Labour gaining 'power' in 1964) I feel that we should, as a tactic which would allow us a valuable means of propaganda, put up a limited number of candidates, in areas of our greatest strength.

We do not aim to represent the working class in parliament, but to bring to the attention of as many other working people as possible our politics—which includes our ideas about Parliament.

Standing in elections is one way of doing that. LEE McKINEY, London N7.

Thanks

OUR SINCERE thanks for your wonderful support in our hour of need.

I am pleased to report that we won a great victory but this couldn't have done without the help of people like you and your organisation. We also had help from the Mid-Devon branch of the International Socialists at Newton Abbot and I am endeavouring to answer all letters of support personally.

My fellow trade unionists at Swifts Engineering wish me to inform you that should you in the future need our help—JUST GIVE THE WORD! Once again many thanks. JOHN HILLMAN, shop steward, Exmouth.

Copies of the following have recently come into stock:

JAMES CONNOLLY: SELECTED WRITINGS, ed. Ellis, 50p

CHILE'S ROAD TO SOCIALISM, Allende, 40p

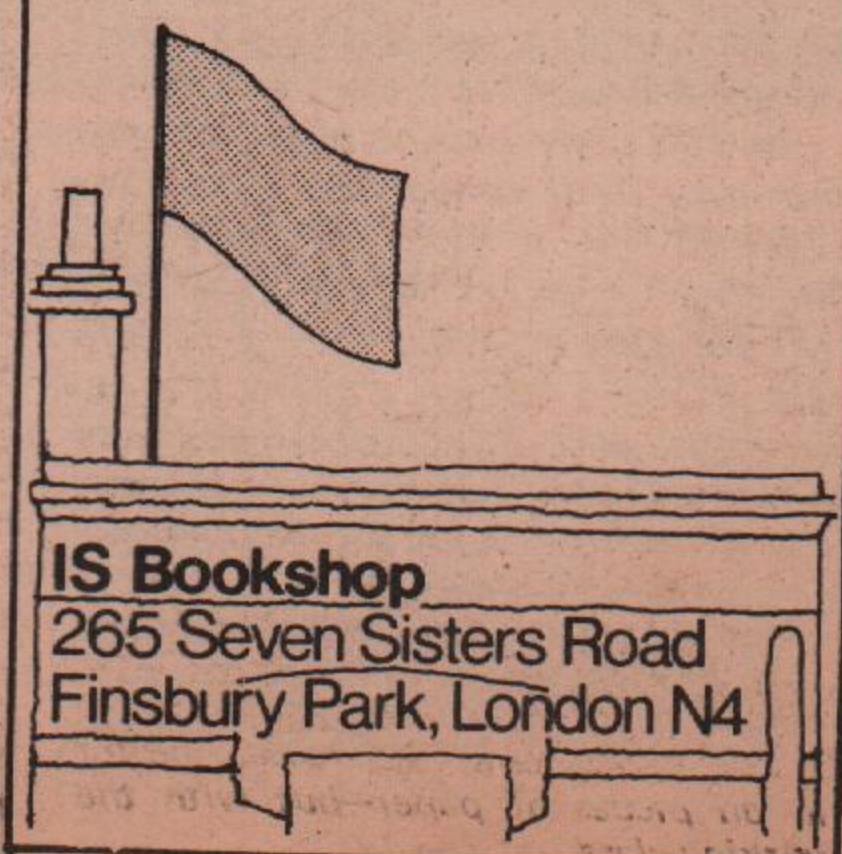
THE TUPAMAROS, Labrousse, 40p.

DAVID AND GOLIATH, BARNBURY '73, Power, 25p

TV HANDBOOK, Free Communication Group, 20p.

Write for our free booklet.

NOTE: IS Bookshop will be open on Monday 24 December and will be closed from 25 December to 2 January.



an International Socialist pamphlet 10p

ROGER KLINE

can Socialism come through Parliament?

Roger Kline's CAN SOCIALISM COME THROUGH PARLIAMENT? draws the lessons from the antics of the Labour Party, in government and in opposition, as reformers of capitalism, and argues what we can do to bring socialism.

10p plus 3p postage (10 or more copies post free) from IS BOOKS, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

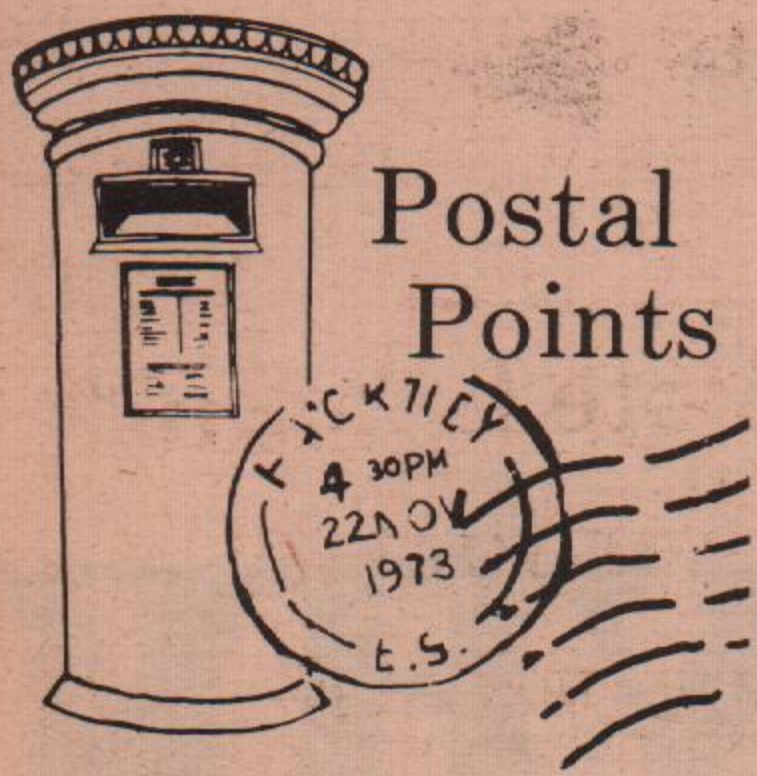
You should read the journal!

I AM fed up with people complaining that Socialist Worker doesn't give enough theory. These people overlook completely the function of Socialist Worker as an agitational paper.

It needs to be so in the present political climate and must give the real facts and figures to counteract the lies of the Tory press and so that militants on the shop-floor can waken other workers to what is happening.

The International Socialists don't neglect in any way the political theory that these critics keep asking for. It is in many pamphlets and books as well as International Socialism journal, which every month puts socialist theory into world events.

This theory could not be condensed to go into Socialist Worker without being cut in one way or another and needs more space to be realised in full. Meanwhile Socialist Worker must bite away and destroy the lies of the ruling-class press and act as an introduction to why the International Socialists exist. CHRIS FULLER, Norwich.



Postal Points



DISGUSTED (DERBY) . . . I was disgusted at the way you see fit to twist facts in your article about students' grants (Socialist Worker 15 December) . . . I'm a student and the £485 we receive is not divided into 52 weeks, but 33—with £43 of the grant meant for vacations—when most students live with their parents who are usually willing to keep them. Most students work in the vacation, which provides us with necessary experience outside education . . . Thus we get £13.39 a week, not £9.30 . . . it would be nice to have more but not essential. It hurts nobody to have to practice economy. That way we learn the true value of money:—ANNE MARGERRISON, Derby.



HARRY SELBY (CONCLUDING EPISODE) . . . Lenin repeatedly warned against sectarianism and ultra-leftism. This is the logical outcome of projecting consciousness on to the class as a whole, as Des Wright (15 December) does. Unless you can project the International Socialists as the political alternative, capable of acting as a party, capable of calling the working class into political action, capable of leading that class into taking power, remembering that parliamentary democracy is only an indication of the maturity of the working class, then I suggest that the assertion that 'the Labour Party is completely discredited' is a bit premature . . . There is definitely a growing militancy and a developing consciousness of the need for more individual participation in the struggle. But I insist that politically after the industrial struggle ends in a compromise sell-out the working-class will fall back on the traditional Labour Party . . . I shouldn't like to forecast what will happen but the demand will be for more 'class' action and interests rather than on 'national' ones. Here the role of the left is more vital than ever. Either a Labour government with socialist policies—or . . .

Mick Napier (22 December) accuses me of 'hysterics' then 'silence'. Where was I hysterical? In my original letter I stated 'Sillars speaks for himself and I speak for myself'—but this was cut from Socialist Worker. I supported the Glasgow firemen's strike unequivocally.—HARRY SELBY, Glasgow, G5.



A SPARK FOR ELECTRICIANS . . . At last a spark of light for the rank and file of the Electrical and Plumbing Trade Union. After the December Manchester meeting there seems to be a united front to get rid of the autocratic rule that has this union in a steel grip. Trade unionists should give their support to the National Co-ordinating Committee that was set up to get more rank and file representation within the EPTU . . . A union should be run by the people for the people and not by one or two for each other.—THOMAS H MORRIS, Sunderland.



COME BACK MAGNA CARTA . . . Legislation that is so biased against working class interests could be challenged on the grounds that it is unconstitutional . . . We are governed by a giant confidence trick . . . surely disputed legislation could be challenged on these grounds. We need a right and proper 'Bill of Rights' based on humanity and not property, framed by the finest jurists. We are governed by giant monopolies but these people could be by-passed. We need a proper constitution, a new code of law, members of parliament not associated with business or industry, and the break-up of the combines:—W A LYSTER, Birmingham. Yes, we are 'governed' by a confidence trick, but no 'bill of rights' is going to remove it, or 'finest jurists' or members of parliament. The answer doesn't lie on pieces of paper—but with the working class . . .

Tories inflict 'health crisis' on London's East End workers

Picture: PETER HARRAP (Report)

AMONG THE MANY LIGHTS switched off by Edward Heath this week is one in the heart of East London's dockland which may never go on again. It belongs to the Casualty and Admissions Department of Poplar Hospital, a black, brick-built tower off the East India Dock Road.

It was never a very fancy hospital, no East London hospitals are. But for more than a hundred years it has served the dockers, factory workers and seamen and their wives and kids who live and work on the Isle of Dogs, in Poplar and down towards Newham.

For a year now, the hospital administrators have been playing bureaucratic games with a strong local campaign to save the 81-bed hospital. The official local campaign, which consisted mainly of press statements by the local Labour MPs, were confident that their protests had registered and had in writing a promise that Poplar would stay open at least until April 1974.

Then two days before Christmas, the bureaucrats struck. 'The staffing difficulties in Poplar Hospital have now reached a point where it is considered that the level of care that can be given to the patients is below that required for safety and in the best interests of the patients it has been decided that there is no alternative but to suspend admissions to Poplar from 31 December 1973 . . . Arrangements will be made to divert ambulances . . . As and when it is found that staff are no longer required at Poplar Hospital they will, if they wish, be transferred to other hospitals,' wrote L C Phipps, the Hospital Secretary, who had promised exactly the reverse only two months before.

The Labour MPs have issued another hurt statement, but the nurses, technicians, porters, telephonists and cleaners at the hospital, many of whom live themselves on the vast, isolated estates which surround the hospital, had no time for indignation.

Extreme

On the morning of 21 December they were simply herded into a meeting, of which no warning was given, and told the hospital was to cease admitting patients. When nurses and doctors demanded to know who had decided 'the medical standards' had fallen, they were told there was 'a panel of impartial medical advisers'. When NUPE stewards wanted to know why management were suddenly concerned about 'staff shortages', the secretary could offer 'no details'.

And details of the promised alternative jobs in 'other hospitals' were vague in the extreme. As a NUPE steward at Poplar told me, 'At the rate the regional board is going, it doesn't look like there will be any hospitals left to transfer ourselves to. And after this shambles, I don't think any of us will ever believe another word from hospital management.'

For the people of the area, the news was broken still more brutally. Early on New Year's morning, a docker who arrived with a child with a badly scalded hand took a swing at the gate porter who had to tell him that the casualty had been closed on midnight that night, for good.

Handful

When your kid is screaming with pain, you can't cope with 'shadow regional health authorities' and 'formal recommendations to the Secretary of State'. You just know that one more of the handful of amenities provided for East London workers has gone. And you lash out.

For anyone in a workshop accident, a pub fight or a late night overdose on the Isle of Dogs, that vast floating housing estate circled by cranes, will now have another quarter of an hour added to their emergency journey. If they are on foot, and many casualties walk into hospital, the journey to the nearest, already overloaded Casualty Department at Bow could mean another half hour.

And the loss of Poplar Hospital, which during the Blitz became something of a symbol in the East End and which has provided medical care for more than 100 years to four generations of East Londoners, shows quite how severe the cuts in social spending are biting.

A man outside the closed Casualty with a hand dripping with blood who,

Death of a hospital

by Dr Gerry Dawson

surprisingly good naturedly, offered to sign a protest petition in his own haemoglobin said, 'Well unless they start knocking down the estates and selling them for firewood, there's nothing much else down this way they can close, is there?'

For the implications of the Thames Group Management's apparent success in outmanoeuvring the protesters and disregarding one of the strongest Labour councils in Britain, MPs and all are frightening. Plans to close the German Hospital, a fine old Lutheran charity hospital in Dalston and the Metropolitan Hospital in Shoreditch have already been announced.

The London Jewish Hospital in Whitechapel is under the axe. Each East End hospital closure meets with a storm of local protest, packed town hall meetings, furious letters to the papers. People who have seen death and birth of those close to them in their local hospitals don't like them suddenly vanishing or being turned into old folks homes.

Closure

On paper there are ambitious new plans to build regional super-hospitals, all piped music and waitress service. The Board of Governors of the London Hospital quietly announced last month they intend razing to the ground the East End's most famous hospital, with, of course, plans to replace it with a medical skyscraper some time early in 1980.

But given the overall economic situation, the continuously unrelenting cuts in health expenditure and the almost inevitable delays in all hospital building (the new Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead is about 10 years behind schedule), East Enders are doubtful about the closure of existing facilities in the name of

future medical promises.

A meeting of NUPE stewards in the Thames Group last Friday at St Clements' Hospital took a hard line against any loss in jobs or medical facilities until satisfactory alternatives are actually in existence. Hospital workers in the remaining open hospitals are learning the hard way quite how ruthless the new-style cost-conscious NHS administrators are.

Nobody, least of all the patients and staff of the threatened hospitals in East London, or the many other parts of Britain where the same battles are in the offing, are arguing that these old hospitals are the answer. However hard you try to overcome it, they are grim and still bear the stamp

of the Poor Law.

If health care really was developing in Britain, these hospitals would probably be best developed as local community hospitals, run mainly by GPs and housing day centres for the old, nurseries and anti-natal and child care centres which fitted what is needed for the continuous good health of the working class and not the emergencies of accidents and acute illness.

Until hospital workers and hospital patients can assert some control over the mysterious forces which govern the present health service and thwart their plans to dispose of existing medical services, this is so much pie in the sky. Ask the man with the scalded baby.

Available from
IS BOOKS
265 Seven Sisters Road
London N4
5p (inc post)
10 or more post free

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Social Security for Strikers



a Socialist Worker pamphlet 2p

How workers' unity won major victory over Tories



Miners and engineers block a lorry at Saltley

From Saltley to Shrewsbury

IT IS NEARLY two years since the massive display of working-class power—the alliance of Birmingham engineers and miners—shut the gates at Saltley coke depot.

The victory at Saltley was one of the turning points in the 1972 miners' strike.

From the start of the strike on 8 January 1972 the rank and file adopted an offensive picketing strategy, moving away from the mining areas. In the opening days Kent miners stopped coal being moved to Croydon power station, pickets were mounted on Longannet and Kincardine power stations to prevent coal movements and Kent miners mounted a 24-hour picket on the Fulham and Tilbury coal distribution centres which supplied 30 London power stations.

Power

NUM instructions of 13 January made the issue clear—the flying picket, hitting at strategic targets, was the key to victory: 'If this strike is to be fully effective and of as short a duration as possible... all power stations, steelworks, ports, coal depots, etc, must be picketed.'

In the next month the effects of this militant policy were felt widely. As the experience and organisation increased, miners moved rapidly once reports were received of coal stocks being moved.

Responsibilities for non-mining areas were allocated, with Yorkshire miners covering East Anglia, Kent miners covering the South-East, and so on. With the web getting wider and wider many links were forged through solidarity action with trade unionists in different localities.

Fantastic support was revealed: students in East Anglia, construction workers at Fiddlers Ferry power station, brewery workers at Ansell's, Birmingham. All sections of the trade union movement were behind the miners. The Post Office workers London District collected more than £2000 while Rugeley and Cannock councils provided shelters for pickets and free school meals for miners' children.

As the strike entered February,

by
GRANVILLE WILLIAMS

the effective picketing bit home as power stations and blast furnaces closed down. The Tories decided on a new 'get tough' policy.

As reports came in of increasing police harassment and intimidation of pickets, miners' leaders believed orders had gone out from Reginald Maudling, the Home Secretary, telling police to harden up on pickets.

The most dramatic example of this new policy occurred at the Saltley coke depot in Birmingham. The 100,000 ton pile was the only one left by this stage of the strike and convoys of lorries were coming from all over the country for loads.

Pickets from Hem Heath Colliery, Stoke on Trent, moved to Birmingham on Friday 4 February to persuade drivers not to cross the picket lines. From that day and for the next week Saltley became a symbol, with both government and trade unionists digging in to defend what the symbol meant.

Pickets

The government was faced with declaring a 'state of emergency' and massive lay-offs as power stations closed. To give in at Saltley meant that the figleaf would be torn away and their law and order discredited and shown to be impotent.

For the miners it was simple. The closing of the depot became a matter of principle and as one miners' leader said, 'We may have to bring sufficient pickets here to make it physically impossible for a lorry to drive through the gates.'

The call went out on the Saturday for men to come from Barnsley. The striking evidence of how miners responded to the call for pickets is shown by the fact that on the Sunday 600 miners were at the Saltley gates. The Gas

Board closed them but announced they would open the next day.

On the Monday and Tuesday frustration and tension mounted as lorries went through the pickets. In one case a lorry burst through the crowd. The chant began—'Close the gates! Close the gates!'

Building workers, car delivery drivers and delegations from factories supported the picket but as the picketing force increased it seemed as though the police could call on unlimited reinforcements. Hundreds of extra police were brought in and the total built up until they practically outnumbered pickets.

Plain clothes police in the crowd directed snatch squads to arrest militants among the pickets. At this stage it seemed as if the police would hold the line and through arrests and a massive display of strength keep the gates open.

Marched

The decisive events which swung the struggle to victory began on Tuesday evening, 8 February, when the East District Committee of the engineering union in Birmingham called a meeting of senior stewards for the following day. At the meeting over 200 senior stewards issued a call for a solidarity stoppage and a march on Saltley on Thursday morning.

The response was amazing. 40,000 workers struck from scores of Birmingham factories and 10,000 marched to Saltley.

The 1000 police gave up. They were no match for such a massive display of working-class solidarity with workers from Rover, Lucas, Tractors and Transmissions, Wilmot Breeden and many, many others assembled outside the gates. To massive cheers, the Chief Constable ordered the gates shut at 10.42 'in the interests of public safety.'

The tremendous elation and the sweet taste of victory remains today among those who took part in the action. It gave us all a brief glimpse of the power of working people acting together.

Yet now we face the grim fact that three trade unionists—building workers doing exactly what thousands did at Saltley—are jailed by the Tories in their law courts at Shrewsbury. We must ensure that there is a massive and organised protest against such attacks on trade unionists and the example of the unity of engineers and miners at Saltley—must be hammered home.

The gates of Saltley were not closed by police appeals but mass action. The men at Shrewsbury will be free only if we organise in the same way.

A way

Chris Harman replies to readers' queries

People who support the government continually repeat one claim: They say that the country is in a mess and that if things are not to get worse, we all have to make sacrifices. Is this true?

ONE POINT in this is absolutely true. The government and big business are hoping that they can persuade workers to make massive sacrifices in the next year.

The Economist, a big business magazine, has confidently predicted that most people in this country will face the first real cuts in their living standards for more than 25 years.

And Labour MP Michael Meacher has shown that over the last year 'for most people, when extra tax and insurance payments are deducted, their real living standards declined by an average of 2.8 per cent.'

Meacher also shows that wage awards under Phase Three will mean a continuation of this state of affairs. The average miner, for instance, would be only 63p a week better off in real terms than 12 months ago if he accepted the government's present offer.

And Tory ministers have gone out of their way to stress that the miners are being offered more under Phase Three than other groups of workers can expect.

Cutback

Yet within the ruling class, moves are already underway to refuse even the meagre wage increases allowed under Phase Three. Edward Heath threatened before Christmas that if 'as a result of the cutback in industry it is not possible to have that growth, then the logical conclusion is that there ought to be some cutback in the facilities of Phase Three.'

In other words, if the government gets its way, life for working-class families over the next year is going to be rougher than most of us can ever remember. Living standards will fall and unemployment will rise, probably to something approaching the million mark by the autumn.

But no one should take the talk of 'equality of sacrifice' at all seriously. Last year the profits of big business grew by well over 20 per cent, after growing by about 17 per cent the year before.

If you look at the city pages of the papers you will see that virtually every large firm is still boasting record profits. That is not really surprising, given the way wages were held back.

For British industry has been churning out more wealth than ever before in its history.

Economic output was about five per cent higher last year than the year before.

And if this increased output did not go to the workers, it must have gone to the owners of industry—to the one per cent of the population who own 80 per cent of stocks and shares.

But if profits are so high, why is the government trying to hold wages back even more? And why has it shut down industry for two days a week?

CAPITALISM internationally is entering a very rough period. In every major country, governments are attempting to deal with the question of rising prices by stopping economic growth and increasing unemployment.

That means that if big business is to continue keeping the big profits it has been making in the last two or three years, then it must impose an ever greater discipline on workers, by holding back wages and by pushing through speed-ups.

The present confrontation with the miners and the imposition of the two-day a week lock-out is designed to break workers' resistance to such measures in advance. The Tories want British business to be able to enter the world recession with the working-class movement weak and demoralised.

REAL C

So you're saying that there is no immediate economic crisis, it's just a bluff used by the government to turn people against the miners. But what about the oil shortage?

THE REAL ECONOMIC crisis will hit us in the summer or the autumn. The government is preparing for it by trying to weaken trade union organisation now.

As for the oil shortage, no one knows for certain how serious it is. The big oil companies are so large that no existing government is capable of controlling their actions.

The Tories themselves have recognised as much—the government's Oil Industry Emergency Committee is made up of representatives of the oil companies and meets in Shell Mex house. The result is that while the Minister for Industry, Peter Walker, claims there is no petrol shortage, there are queues at garages and old age pensioners cannot get paraffin to heat their rooms.

The most probable explanation is that the oil companies have been holding back supplies until prices rise still further.

What is certain, however, is that the price of oil is shooting

The era of cheap

up. After years companies go Middle East for and made imm result—last year made nearly 90 profit—the boe other foot.

British big have to fork of £2000 million for the increa top of its alread of payments d just about eat profits it made.

It is a burd rather force through reduce

Pro

But surely against busi profits? After make profits invest, the eco to a halt and would grow en

IT'S TRUE organised as people are only if the one pe industry can regard as a big

But it does just because b

Socialist Worker

Birmingham Sun 20 Jan

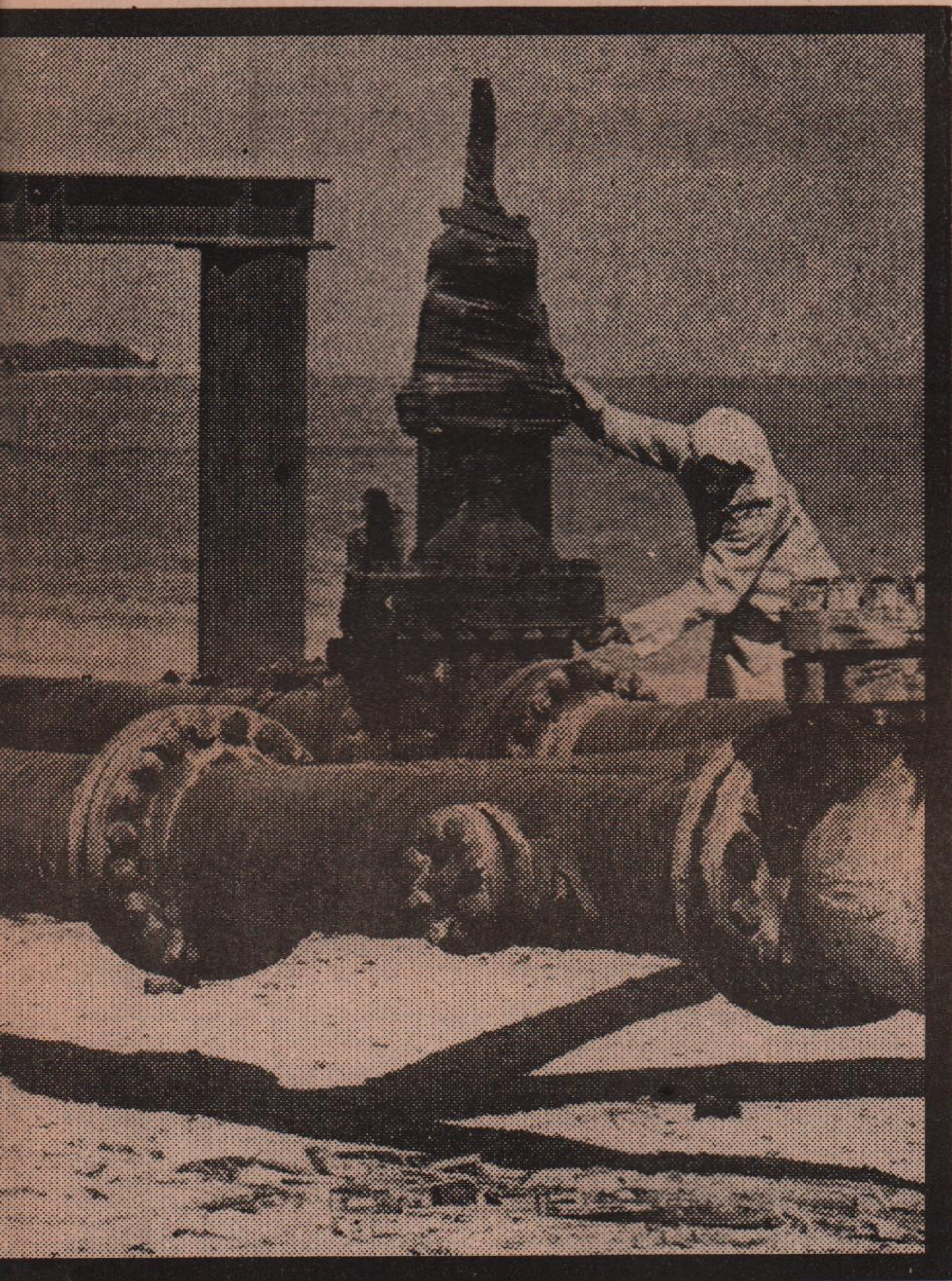
Speakers: John Carpenter and John Llywarch, two of the Shrewsbury defendants, and Paul Foot

Entertainment by The Combine

Digbeth Civic Hall 7.30pm

Admission 10p at door or from 25 Selbourne Road, Birmingham 20 (554 1193)

Out of the mess...



Oil and massive profits in the West is over

CRISIS AHEAD

in which western oil from the next to nothing

business is going to anything up to year extra to pay cost of oil, on massive balance deficit. That would up the increase in last year.

fits

you cannot be messmen making ill, if they did not they would not omy would grind unemployment larger.

that with society t is at present allowed to work cent who own make what they ough profit. not follow that profits are being

made everything runs smoothly. Record profits are being made at the moment, the rich are living it up as never before—just look at the holiday ads in some of the posh papers—yet there is continual talk of crisis.

The reason is that the chaotic organisation of the economy prevents even big business itself forecasting accurately what is going to happen in a few months' time. And so those with wealth are not prepared to risk investing in new plant and machinery.

Take, for instance, the chemical industry. In the years 1967-70 there was massive investment in new chemical plants. But by the time these plants came into operation there was a turn down in industry and little demand.

Now the industry is once again making massive profits. But its owners are not prepared to invest in case the same thing happens as last time—in fact they are planning to invest less than at any time since the early 1960s.

What will then be the effect if workers accept Phase Three or even less?

IN THE SHORT TERM at least it will mean that unemployment will grow more rapidly. After all, a fall in real living standards means that fewer goods

are bought. And workers who would otherwise have made those goods are likely to end up on the end of the dole queue.

Capitalists have always said when there is a crisis that the goods can be sold abroad. They claim that wage cuts will lead to a cheapening of goods, increased sales and therefore increased jobs.

Demand

The trouble is that foreign capitalists are telling their workers exactly the same. Workers in Germany, Japan, Italy and so on are all being told they must tighten their belts. If workers in the different countries accept the demand, they will all be effectively competing in a Dutch auction over wages with one another, cutting living standards and increasing unemployment.

Meanwhile, the employers maintain their profits. After all, you don't hear many stories about landlords demanding only three days rent, or mortgage companies accepting a two-thirds reduction in your repayments. Nor, for that matter, are dividends going to be automatically cut by 40 per cent for the weeks of the lockout 'to help the country'.

But what is your alternative?
IT'S SIMPLE ENOUGH. Those who create the wealth should control industry and determine who benefits from it. If the majority of workers in this country were in charge of deciding what should be produced and how they would not be so absurd as to say that a million or more people should be unemployed, with factories empty, just so that the wages of the miners could be held down and a few thousand people make bigger profits.

It would be quite easy for workers to make such key decisions. At present most of the actual organisation of production is done by workers, if you include groups such as draughtsmen, toolmakers, computer operators, technicians, all of whom work for a living.

But the organisation is done under the control of a few thousand individuals who happen to own shares, and who are not experts at anything except buying and selling at a profit. The skills which workers possess could just as easily be used under the directions of representatives of workers nationally.

Increase

But how would that solve the problem of shortages which the economy faces at present? Even under that system, if the miners had a pay rise, someone else would have to go without.

FIRSTLY, the condition of the mass of working people would be transformed by dividing up the immense wealth at present in very few hands. For instance in 1972, £3,701 millions were paid out in rent, dividends and interests to individuals.

That would be enough, for instance, to give each of the lowest paid six million workers a wage increase of £10 a week.

Secondly, the present system of society is extremely wasteful. Think what the £3½ billion spent on arms could be used for, the hundreds of millions spent on advertising, or the hundreds of millions wasted in the City of London in institutions concerned solely with dividing between different businessmen the profits made out of the sweat of the workers.

Or imagine how much wealth would be created if the half a million people currently unemployed (let alone the number likely to be in dole queues in a years time) were given the opportunity to work.

One very cautious estimate made for the US economy recently suggests that more than half the wealth produced in US is wasted in one way or another.

But how would this deal with the energy crisis that is hitting all countries at the moment?

WELL, firstly it would mean paying the miners a decent amount so that they saw no reason to strike. And the oil problem is not any more difficult.

Only answer: workers' control

In Britain today, private motor cars use about 12 times as much fuel as do public service vehicles, including taxis, even though half the families in this country have no cars. And many people with cars would gladly travel by public transport rather than sit in traffic jams—if only the bus and train service were better.

It is not difficult to see how a massive saving of fuel could be combined with a drastic speed-up in transport for everyone if there was a free, considerably expanded, public transport system.

But first decisions would have to be taken by the mass of workers and not by governments which are subject to the pressures of the great oil and car firms. In a similar way, there could be a considerable saving on the 6½ million tons of oil that goes to commercial transport if goods were switched from road to rail.

You talk of closing down sections of industry producing arms, Concorde, and even cars. Would that not lead to massive unemployment?

NO. In a society run by the working class, workers in such industries could be paid full wages to do nothing while the factories were reorganised to produce more useful goods.

duce more useful goods.

But such massive changes cannot be brought about merely by electing people to parliament and waiting for them to change things—Chile proved that if nothing else does.

What is needed is a mass movement of workers prepared to fight for control of every pit, dock, factory, and office, replacing the present system by one run by democratically elected workers' delegates.

Intense

But, of course, such a really massive movement does not yet exist. Most workers continue to take the existing system of society for granted and only want small, gradual changes in it.

But the behaviour of the government itself is bound to cause the start of a change of attitude. Its determination to force down living standards is leading to a period of bitter and intense class struggles, in which every worker is going to have to question a great deal that was taken for granted in the past.

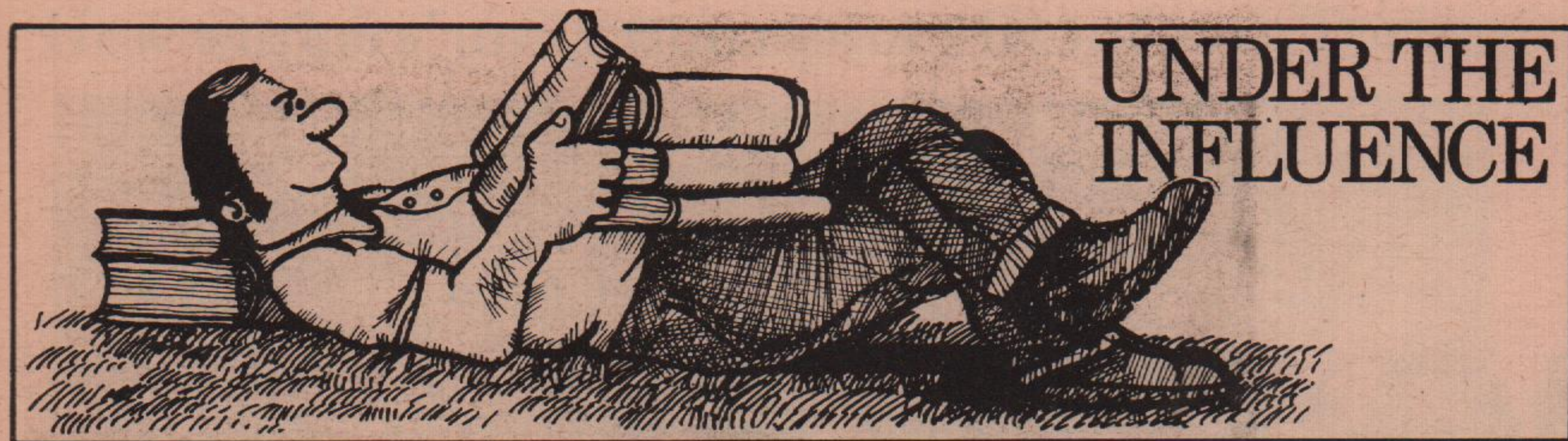
In such a situation we can build a mass socialist movement capable at a later point of going on to the offensive and fighting to take control of society from the ruling class.

Lenin
50 years later
1924-74
Greater Manchester
15 meeting
with speaker
Tony Cliff

8.00pm
Tuesday
22nd January 1974

Lesser Free
Trade Hall
Peter Street
Central Manchester

Tickets 10p from
22 Lidgate Grove
Manchester 20



UNDER THE INFLUENCE is where socialists write about what helped make them revolutionaries, perhaps a book, a play, a song—or a strike, a sit-in or a demonstration.

This week, Michael Fenn, a London docker and member of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union, writes about **THE RAGGED TROU-**

SERED PHILANTHROPISTS, by Robert Tressell, the story of a man with a vision of a just society who agitates among his workmates, housepainters, to try to rouse them from their passive acceptance of the system. It is available in Panther paperback, price 65p including postage, from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

Worker's masterpiece born out of anger

THE BOOK I expected to start the 'Under the Influence' series was *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, and I was surprised and rather sorry that no one had chosen to pay tribute to this great book. Maybe those who have written previously in this series had taken it for granted, as I had, that someone else would be doing it.

I hope I can do enough credit to the memory of the man who wrote it, a house painter called Robert Noonan, who used the pen name Tressell, who lived in and wrote about Hastings at the beginning of the century and of the misery that the people he lived and worked with went through.

I should imagine Robert Noonan has done more to influence socialists than any other working-class writer.

The book is written in an easy way to read as a novel. It contains comedy and tragedy but the thing I remember it for is that the man who wrote it was very angry with the injustice and hypocrisy of the system that he lived under and which is still with us today. Every aware trade unionist must feel the very same anger when watching maggots like Reginald Maudling and Duncan Sandys talking about the miners 'holding the country to ransom' or 'law and order' while they are at the same time investing money in crooked companies and having their wages paid in the Cayman Islands to avoid paying income tax.

These are the people Noonan writes about, and unfortunately they are still with us in abundance. We read of the Rev Belcher, a fat vicar who pounces pennies from poverty-stricken kids so that he can go to the South of France to rest from overwork. We read of the socialist councillor, Dr Weakling, who, when speaking in the chamber, is so humble that he practically apologises for being a nuisance.

I once witnessed Ashley Brammel, a Labour Greater London councillor, do exactly the same thing at a GLC meeting, and the *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* came flooding back as I sat there.



The workers Noonan described are the same as you meet every day: some honest, decent, others grassers and crawlers. Very little has passed the attention of this great writer. The tipster everyone follows is Captain Kiddum, which is exactly what tipsters do, the newspaper is called *The Obscure*, and it does just that about the truth—which the national press still does every day of the week.

In one chapter he describes how, because the gas company was losing money, the council has to take it over, giving the shareholders generous compensation. Who are the shareholders? Why, the councillors and businessmen of Mugsborough, who are at the same time investing their money in the new electric light company, which is making money, but which of course is not taken over.

That's exactly what happened to the railways and mines some 50 years after this book was written, the railway owners turning to the road haulage associations and the mine owners to the giant oil companies—who DO hold the country to ransom.

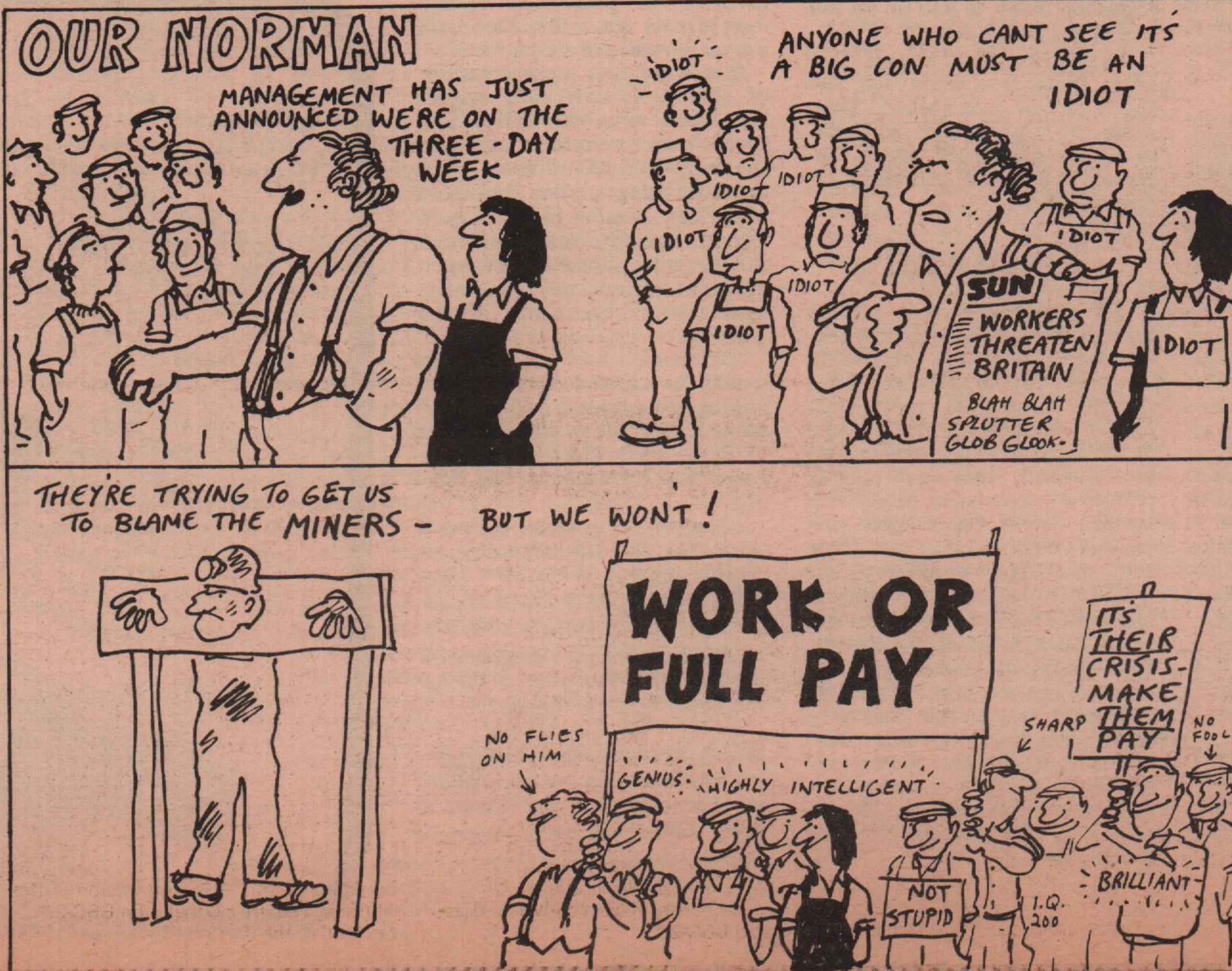
The interests of these companies are looked after by the same corrupt politicians we find in the *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*. We now



Robert Tressell

have Tory MPs talking of de-nationalising the mines as coal once again becomes a cheaper fuel than oil. I don't seem to recall any Tory MPs calling for the nationalisation of the oil industry in the national interest.

I have read some books by Charles Dickens, who is considered one of Britain's greatest descriptive writers, but I found that Robert Noonan could make people and places in his book really come alive. This is probably because, unlike Dickens, he lived the life he describes every day and the feelings that he had about what he went through are clearly expressed in the book.



How they taught Alan to be a failure

A WALK WITH ALAN, by Tom Hart, Quartet £1.25.

IF THERE are any readers of *Socialist Worker* who still do not feel the need to smash our rotten system once and for all, they should read this book. This is another in the tradition of *Cathy Come Home*, *Edna the Inebriate*, *Gale is Dead* exposures of our 'Child Care' system, with not very much exposure of the root cause of the problem.

But this book is by far the best of its kind because it is honest. Tom Hart feels a personal guilt about Alan, and wants to warn others.

Alan at seven years old is 'a filthy beast, who sleeps with his penis tied up with a piece of string, and cotton reels sewn into his pyjamas so he cannot sleep on his back'. No, this is not some piece of medieval torture, but Alan's own efforts to stop bed-wetting, because of the awful punishment his house-mother will give him.

The book begins with Alan's funeral at the age of 31 after he hung himself in Wandsworth prison. It traces (disjointedly—like Alan's life) his life in care, degraded by being made to drink urine for bed-wetting, shoved from one institution to another, finally borstal, taking to drugs, the life of overdose, wash-out, drug unit, rejection, more drugs, and prison.

A Walk with Alan comes nearer the truth, because Alan's anger is allowed to speak out, anger at being rejected for being difficult: for being patronised and made the object of the 'theories' of experts. Alan was angry when he saw Gale is Dead on television, because he knew Gale, and the film hid her justified anger.

But despite his healthy aggression, Alan was trapped in the web Tom Hart describes so well. For Alan absorbed from those who 'cared' for him the role of failure, guilty one. 'I am bloody useless', he said, and finally he became so despairing he ended his life, a life of potential talent and creativity.

Hart himself sees the failure in personal terms, as the failure of those who cared for Alan. 'For Alan, care meant turning out carbon copies of themselves—socially acceptable, hardworking automatons,' and

This wishy will wash and wash

COMPUTERS AND SOCIALISM by Stephen Bodington, Spokesman Books, £4.

COMPUTERS are the crucial technical aid to workers' power. That's the message of Stephen Bodington's book. Even a bad book here would still be worth ordering from your local library—and this book isn't bad. It's brave. Why? Because it's one of the first (shame on us all).

Information can now be stored and transmitted incredibly neatly. Soon it may be scanned with incredible sophistication. Why haven't revolutionaries got excited over the democratic possibilities here? Probably because under capitalism information technology can become terrifyingly anti-democratic.

And revolutionaries are shy of being

though Hart is at pains to show the other heroic side of many residential social workers, basically he looks no further than the institutions and the people in them for the causes of the problem.

For a socialist, his conclusion is certainly no answer—all that is left for Alan is a better chance in the life after death.

Hart rejects the idea of looking at wider society and trying to change it as the only answer to Alan's agony. 'Some say we must change society before we can save the Alans of this world, but if this is true, then before that can happen, a lot of young people are going to die as ignominiously as Alan.'

He does not face the fact that there is no alternative way to help the Alans of the world, that *unless* we change the system, a lot of young people are going to go on suffering and dying, whereas perhaps through the process of change to socialism, some can be saved.

His book reveals a crying need within the care institutions for a campaign on wages and conditions to direct ordinary people into the service and avoid the self-denial that attracts those with warped attitudes who can make life hell for kids. Hart reveals how children's justified anger is hidden in care, but again does not see the need to stop analysing it away as maladjustment.

Perhaps it is because he does not look outside the institutions of care that he does not note the pressures on parents to maltreat and neglect kids, which get them into care in the first place. Many social workers believe that a change of society to socialism would remove such pressures, and reduce the need for institutional care dramatically.

Though Hart is not a socialist, he cares deeply and sensitively for the Alans in the world, and this is what makes this book well worth reading.

SANDY ROSE

called utopian. Marx made the 'utopians' of his generation look so silly.

They tried to show, *literally*, how life would be lived in a socialist society. They looked to their pretty pictures, not to the working class. But that doesn't mean that revolutionaries could keep silent about what workers' power is and isn't. Did Marx? Certainly the working class cannot bring socialism about blindly.

No, they'll need to use all the means to hand. It's simply that the conditions may be anything between good and, at the worst, the Pentagon gassing and bombing us back into the Stone Age.

Bodington introduces computers to socialists, and explains to computer-minded people the need for socialism. Both tasks are desperately urgent.

But he honestly never pretends to be precise. *Politically* precise. This sometimes leads him into vagueness and repetition. I'm not grumbling that he calls Russia 'socialist'. He does, but he agrees that it's poles apart from the sort of society we're working for.

He refers, as if uncritically, to those East European bureaucrats whose solution was to give real power *not* to the factory floor but to the factory managers.

And here's the nub: Bodington shifts from very concrete to very abstract and everywhere in between. He must do this. But surely it's a howler for a mathematician to leave me confused as to how abstract he's being at any time?

Bodington would agree that a revolutionary culture is vital for a working-class revolution. And a sense of how workers *might*—not 'would'—run everything is vital to revolutionary culture. But so is revolutionary theory and political clarity. Bodington expounds some likely approaches from many academic disciplines. These are *lists*: interesting but no more.

Bodington is prominent in the Institute for Workers' Control, which has promoted the culture at the cost of the clarity. Not that he makes the Institute's commonest mistake, overemphasis on union officialdom. But I'm just as worried when he gestures towards the old Guild Socialists—who suffered from the classic British working-class misapprehension that capitalism would die of desertion if workers ignored it and calmly produced for themselves. It's a similar mistake. It's nice to be reminded that Britain has a 'workers' control' tradition. But correctness is even nicer.

Like the Guild Socialists, the Institute for Workers Control is good at dispensing political warmth. Until about 1971, warmth was all a lot of militants wanted from socialist groups. But now they want light. Some socialists still can't see this.

LOGIE BARTON

Did someone mention violence?

SERIOUS SOCIALISTS, militant pickets and others active against the present organisation of society often have the charge of violence levelled against them.

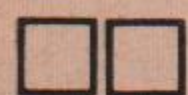
Unfortunately their replies have never been given the space or the recognition that the accusations get in the newspapers and elsewhere.

They are powerful arguments too. They point to the violence involved in the fact that twice as many working-class kids die in the first weeks of life as do children of the rich.

They remind you that life expectancy for working-class people is on average 10 years less than those in middle and upper classes.

And they underline, with great insistence, the constant violence involved in so-called industrial diseases and so-called accidents.

Pat Kinnersly's book 'The Hazards of Work: How to fight them' (published this week*) would be a great service to the labour movement if all it did was to provide a massive arsenal of arguments and information about the real violence in society.



This Pat Kinnersly has done. But he has done much more. His magnificent book is not just a handbook of facts, figures and information about the terrible crimes committed against people at work. It is a handbook and a call for action to right this situation. It is this which makes 'The Hazards of Work' one of the most important working-class publishing events of this year or any year.

The book opens with atrocity stories, told in a calm, low key which arouses concern and anger all the more effectively. Here is just one from the book which shows just why it is that industrial 'accidents' take place with such awful regularity and with such awful results.

Mr E Peel for the company (W and C French) said that if the regulations regarding shoring-up of trenches were rigidly enforced there would be a thousand such prosecutions a day. There would have been no prosecution now had there not been an accident.

He added that contractors would

Laurie Flynn reviews a vital book for trade unionists

find many jobs economically impractical if they shored earth works as thoroughly as the regulations demanded.

(Report in Colchester Evening Gazette of magistrates court case after a man was injured in a trench collapse. The company was fined £50).

But the atrocity stories, the information on what shift work, Measured Day Work and just plain work do to people are only a prelude to a simple, hard hitting outline of what specific hazards workers in any number of industries will face and what they alone will do about them.

Pat Kinnersly's reasons for writing 'Hazards' give the strongest indication of what the book is all about. Pat told Socialist Worker:

'I was trained as a technical journalist. But most technical journalism is concerned with getting information from those who are in the know and passing it on to others who are also in the know. The information never gets out of the club and into the hands of those who really need it.

'Writing this book was the first real opportunity I'd had to use the supposed skills of the technical journalist in a truly useful way.

'I came to the subject from looking on the other side of building

'The real violence in society'—dead worker being pulled out of a collapsed embankment on a site in South London

sites. As journalists we were just supposed to see the glossy finished products of the construction industry.

'But I came to look behind the scenes—at the six foot deep trenches without any shoring, at the sites where there were no toilets and nowhere for workers to hang their clothes.

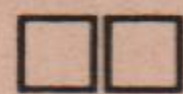
'I realised the cost workers and other people were paying for the achievements of capitalism. I realised that the exploitation which alone makes the profits possible is something that should not just be asphalted over.'

Kinnersly's book is a fantastically thorough book. It does not spare the sorry record of the trade unions and the TUC in the field of fighting the employers for industrial safety.

It also outlines the weaknesses of the other official institutions which

are supposed to protect us all—the law, the joke industrial police force, the Factory Inspectorate, and many others.

But none of this is written in a hopeless manner. The book is continually creative, suggesting how to get improved performance from the Factory Inspectorate, how to use law in so far as it exists.



Time and time again the book makes the same huge contribution. It makes complex technical information understandable and reachable.

It unfolds for the first time in any systematic fashion the rights workers are supposed to have. And, most important of all, it urges and assists workers to fight and organise for

those rights against the attentions of profit-hungry employers.

If the book is widely read and used (and the second edition further improved by organised workers sending their knowledge and experience of how to fight and organise for safety in to the publishers) then a good start will have been made to ending the situation summed up by a Coventry sandblaster in the 1930s:

'Join the navy, see the world
Be a sandblaster, see the next.'

And that will be a giant step down the road to the sort of world where, in Pat Kinnersly's concluding words, 'workers control society and can direct their skill and labour into meeting the needs of all people. In freeing them from the struggle for survival, they will free them for the boundless possibilities of human existence.'



PREVIEW

WITH Preview missing a week some new programmes have started, some which might be worth seeing. In case you're reading this earlier than Saturday, 12 January, a couple of programmes have been included that don't feature in the usual Saturday to Friday period.

Apologies over the plug for 'Z' which appeared in the 22 December issue. Mr Heath's crisis pushed that off the screen and the BBC recognised its priorities in ensuring that Uri Geller and his bent spoons took preference over assassinations and bent cops.

THURSDAY (10 January): ITV, 9.30 pm, Yorkshire Television's CONFRONTATION AT CLAY CROSS. It deals with the attempts of the small Derbyshire town to put into practice the socialist politics that the Labour Party nationally claim to believe in. Councillor David Skinner puts the case for Clay Cross, while Dick Taverner 'Democratic Labour' MP for Lincoln argues that Clay Cross has brought an element

to British politics that 'some soccer specials have brought to British Rail'. He claims that 'this is the road to Fascism in the 1970s'. A really principled man Taverner.

FRIDAY (11 January): BBC-2 THE ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE directed by Luis Bunuel is in the World Cinema series. Luis Bunel is a very great film director. * THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT, same channel is the Money Programme's contribution to the crisis. It features the people of Nottinghamshire mining village Clipstone giving their views... * THE TYNE SLIDES BY, the last in the Camera and the Song series, is on the seven ages of a Newcastle-upon-Tyne shipbuilder, with music by Alex Glasgow, also BBC-2. *

SUNDAY: If your dedication to the small screen gets you watching it at midday you can watch WEEKEND WORLD, London Weekend's current affairs programme, and following it in the Manchester and London areas is Granada's WHAT THE PAPERS SAY, a good programme which disgracefully has never got a good time slot or national showing.

MONDAY: BBC-1, 8.00pm, PANORAMA ON PAY deals with the 'problem' of allocating pay. On ITV Granada's WORLD IN ACTION* enters week two of its new series, as does the company's new drama serial A RAGING CALM by Stan Barstow.

TUESDAY: Some people (not including me) will be interested in WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE LIKELY LADS? On BBC-1. Others may fancy Laurence Olivier's imitation of Cy Grant in the 1965 film version of the National Theatre's Othello on BBC-2. * On BBC-1 the Tuesday Documentary is

on the effect of the oil exploitation on the Shetlands. * WEDNESDAY: BBC-1. Alf Garnett ploughs on in TILL DEATH US DO PART. * ON TOUR WITH THE OSMONDS* deals with the last Autumn's visit by the revolting American 'family' group.

THURSDAY: BBC-1, the third episode of IT AIN'T HALF HOT MUM* which I haven't seen but is by the writers of Dad's Army. Set in India in 1945 it is about a group of Army conscripts, it might be funny, or might just be an opportunity for more music hall racism.

FRIDAY: BBC-2's Money Programme is on the effect of Heath's governmental lock-out on a small London manufacturing company in North London.

*Times of showing not known at time of going to press. All programmes may be liable to cancellation or re-scheduling to 10-30pm shut-down.

NIGEL FOUNTAIN

*Published by Pluto Press. Single copies 90p. Special reductions for bulk orders: 10-500 copies—60p each, more than 500—50p each. All prices include postage and packing. Orders to Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcott Road, London NW1 8LH. Telephone 01-722 0141.

THE UNIONS

Journalists' union scuppers militancy

A NEW agreement has been reached between the National Union of Journalists and the press barons of the Newspaper Society, the employers' organisation representing the phenomenally profitable daily papers outside London, local weeklies and twice weeklies.

The Newspaper Society agreement is the most important in the field of organised journalism. It covers 9000 workers, nearly one third of the NUJ's total membership. Wages in general are low, excepting only the

well-organised chapels (workplace branches) where good 'house' agreements have been won.

The Newspaper Society journalists were claiming up to £15 a week more from the enormously wealthy newspaper proprietors. The campaign started with a tremendous burst of militancy in November in support of special attention for the super-exploited 'junior' journalists and for the right to negotiate supplementary house agreements.

But now over Christmas the claim has been sold away. A settlement has been agreed which is entirely within Phase Three and in reply to the £15

claim the union has secured increases averaging only £2.50.

The vote of the members involved overwhelmingly accepted the employers' pitiful offer. At first sight it seems the new deal is a major setback for fighting trade unionism in the NUJ. The vote to accept was seven to one in favour.

But on closer examination this proves entirely superficial.

What has happened is that the leadership of the NUJ, the general secretary, his deputy and the majority on the national executive, have dodged any fight and battled only for a settlement, any settlement.

Just before Christmas the NUJ's committee of lay negotiators met and resolved to urge the executive to reject the Newspaper Society's paltry offer because it was inadequate on juniors' pay, house agreements and was within Phase Three. They urged the union to recommend to the members a struggle including industrial action. All this was considered at a national executive meeting later the same day, 21 December.

Details

But even before these two meetings NUJ general secretary Ken Morgan had sent out a circular to all branch secretaries instructing them to summon meetings to consider the employers' 'final offer', setting out the details and outlining union policy on offers which fall far short of claims.

This document rambles through the details of the offer. It is set out in such a way as to make them far from easy to grasp. What's more, the first paragraph said a reply had to be received almost by return of post if the increases were to be paid from the starting date of the new agreement.

From this it becomes clear that the NUJ leaders were not prepared to put up any fight, even for backdating.

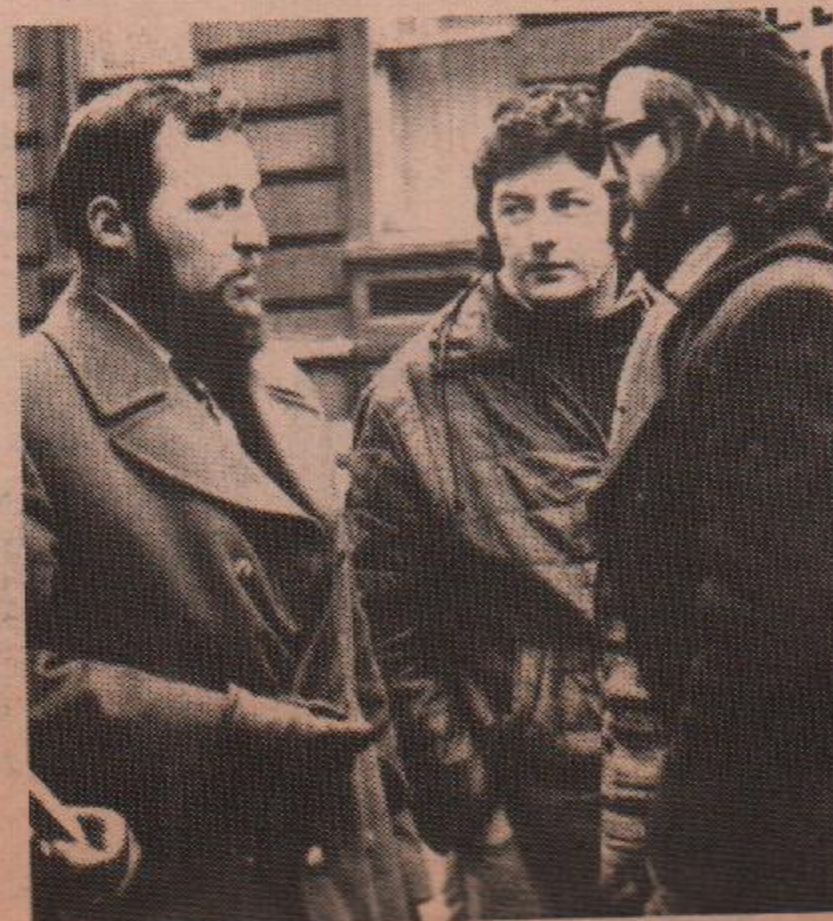
When the executive met to consider the offer, they first refused the negotiators' call for rejection. Then they endorsed the general secretary's document.

General secretary Ken Morgan even persuaded the executive to turn down a motion endorsing the union Annual Delegate Meeting's call for the rejection of offers which clearly fall far short of claims.

Executive member Mark Pickering, of the militant Sheffield chapel, called for the meetings to vote on the offer to be delayed until after Christmas. Deputy general secretary Eric Blott opposed this with the absurd argument that it would infringe the Annual Delegate Meeting's decision



NUJ general secretary Ken Morgan, who engineered the deal



NUJ president John Bailey (left) talking to pickets outside the talks with the bosses

that new agreements must be dated from when the previous deals ran out.

The ADM decision was designed to ensure that if there was a protracted struggle increases won should be backdated. Indeed the motion was passed after the union leadership had refused to fight for just such a backdating three years ago.

Despite all this, Blott's argument was enough to persuade NUJ president John Bailey to rule Pickering's motion out of order.

Deprived

General secretary Ken Morgan then rounded off the performance by saying it would be 'absolutely barmy' for the executive to go along with the conference call for industrial action in support of claims which had in no way been met. Because, he said, the conference decision was made without any knowledge of the 'prevailing circumstances'—that is, the Tories' Incomes Policy, to which the NUJ leadership do not wish to mount any fighting challenge.

So with a compliant majority on the executive, no fighting lead was given. The members, deprived of any leadership, responded predictably and voted overwhelmingly to accept the offer.

The whole sorry story once again underlines the desperate need for organised militant leadership in the unions. In the NUJ this is unlikely to emerge until all executive elections are made into contests over policy and until all full-time officials are made properly accountable to the membership by regular elections.

Press exploits rail unions' split

IN THE battle on the railways the press has got more than a little mileage out of the divisions between the drivers' union, ASLEF, and the National Union of Railwaymen, whose leaders are falling over themselves to accept British Rail's offer.

ASLEF has at least been consistent in the struggle over pay restructuring, though its leaders are playing down the fact that the locomotive will have to fight the government to win their demands.

The NUR leaders, however, and in particular Sir Sidney Greene and Sidney Weighell, have been kidding their members all along.

In September Weighell announced at a conference in Ayr that agreement was almost reached with the employers, when he must have known that the proposals had not been properly discussed by all the unions together. Now he attacks ASLEF for breaking 'unity'. What unity?

Both he and Greene must know that the restructuring deal, whatever it offers in cash, couldn't come in from 1 January without a fight with the Pay Board and their Tory masters. In any case it is 99 per cent certain that the Pay Board will laugh at the proposed deal if the unions intend to have their usual annual wage increase as well.

The NUR leaders have preached 'unity'—with the British Railways Board. Their argument is that management can persuade the Pay Board. They must know that the only way the restructuring can go through without a fight is by sacrificing the wage increase in April. A curious sort of unity—inviting all railwaymen to cut their throats together.

Instead of preparing the members for battle the NUR leaders have attacked ASLEF, who at least have given some sort of a lead.

A FOOT IN THE DOOR AT KODAK

THE three-month strike by 120 technicians in the colour processing division at Kodak, Hemel Hempstead, has been called off with the company's anti-union policy denied.

In a separate agreement with the men's union, the film and television union ACTT, the management have conceded shop floor union organisation, union notices on company premises and the right of the union to make individual, departmental agreements on behalf of its members.

All these rights have been refused by Kodak for years.

Although the ACTT have not achieved national negotiating rights with Kodak, the Union of Kodak Workers, creation of the management, which has more than half Kodak workers, is furious at the settlement.

Last Friday the UKW officials met Kodak representatives in the International Hotel in London to demand the immediate withdrawal of the agreement. Every attempt will be made by the UKW leaders and Kodak to sabotage the gains made by the ACTT strikers.

The ACTT workers, however, are equally determined to expand the small base captured by the strike. A mass recruitment campaign among UKW members is planned, and special resignation forms addressed to the UKW have been printed.

Says Ken Roberts, ACTT official who has been dealing with Kodak: 'We've got our foot in the door. Now we want to push the door right open. The UKW have no protection from the Bridlington Agreement or from the trade union movement. We're going right ahead to build a proper trade union organisation throughout Kodak.'

Victory for hotel workers

THE threat of a Christmas strike at the four-star Dudley Hotel in Hove made Trust House Forte management promise to recognise the General and Municipal Workers Union as wage negotiators for workers in the group.

A toothless agreement signed two years ago gave the union the right to recruit employees in the hotel group, and little else.

Last summer the number of vacant jobs at the Dudley Hotel became alarmingly large and staff began to suspect a deliberate policy aimed at saving on wages at the expense of the remaining staff. The shop stewards' demand for a full staff or splitting the saved wages among the remaining staff was rejected by the management out of hand as outside the agreement with the union.

In October the stewards gave notice of industrial action, then embarked on bedraggled and pointless negotiations which invariably ended with the answer: the agreement does not allow this to be negotiated. At the beginning of December, with a lukewarm blessing from the union, the shop stewards gave an ultimatum: either redraw an agreement which does allow negotiations on our demands, or we strike over Christmas.

With a week to Christmas, it looked like two large hotels in the group might be on strike. The management beat the retreat.

As the New Year opens, all the demands by the Dudley Hotel workers have been or are being met.

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.

FOR THE ADDRESS OF YOUR LOCAL BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS, WRITE TO THE NATIONAL SECRETARY, 8 COTTONS GARDENS, LONDON E2 8DN.



PICKETS TRIAL TWO TO SPEAK AT IS RALLIES

TWO of the six men recently on trial for conspiracy in the Shrewsbury pickets trial, John Llywarch and John Carpenter, will be speaking at International Socialist rallies all over the country.

Rallies have already been organised in all the major cities, starting at Coventry on Thursday and moving on through Manchester, Liverpool, Wolverhampton, Nottingham, Birmingham, London (four meetings), Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Teesside, to a final rally on Tyneside at the beginning of February.

John Llywarch and John Carpenter are raring to go. John Llywarch told Socialist Worker: 'It's vitally important that trade unionists know how ordinary trade union activities can be turned into criminal offences.

'I mean to tell as many people as possible just what happened on the Shrewsbury pickets, how the trial was conducted and how the police investigation was conducted. These are the things that are not known in the trade union movement, because no one has been able to speak out openly. That's the main point of the meetings, as far as I'm concerned.'

John Llywarch stood trial at Shrewsbury after he had refused to act as witness for the prosecution against his brothers. The police officer who originally interviewed him told him: 'Either you give evidence for us, or you will be charged.'

Use the extra two days to sell papers

IT IS vitally important that every branch of IS takes up every opportunity to expand the sales of Socialist Worker during the present crisis. The three-day week means that for some there are now two extra days in which to work for IS.

● All social security offices must be covered constantly, whether they are in the normal offices or at places of work. Find out *now* where they are and when they will be open. Anyone on three-day working must cover these offices the days they are not working.

● Approach new workers in new factories and workplaces, sell on the gates, visit the convenor, search out anyone you may know who works inside.

● Organise mass sales on estates. Sell for two weeks and then go round *talking* about IS to anyone who has bought Socialist Worker more than once. Organise a special meeting. Get someone on the estate to help organise continued sales.

● Have mass sales and meetings in High Streets and markets on Saturdays. Everyone in the branch should be able to help with selling Socialist Worker, leafletting, speaking, or be available to talk to people who stop. If you attract a crowd be prepared to move in and *talk* to people when the meeting ends—don't let them drift away. If people have time during the week, go out to the smaller towns and cover weekday markets which can't normally be done.

To do all this every IS branch must have a meeting now to organise sales of Socialist Worker. Set up a committee to help the Socialist Worker organiser over the next few weeks. Let us know of any new ideas, or difficulties, and success—write to Socialist Worker Circulation, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2.

department reports 'a tremendous response' to the executive's call to raise Socialist Worker sales by 20 per cent in January. This week Merseyside IS has doubled its order. So has Manchester. In Glasgow, the order is 30 per cent up on the week before Christmas. All over the country branches, large and small, are pushing the sale UP and UP.

A variety of stickers have been printed, with slogans including 'Read Socialist Worker', 'Socialist Worker says: A Full Week's Work or a Full Week's Pay', 'Workers produce Wealth, Bosses Produce Crisis', 'The "National Interest"—The Bosses' Interest'.

They cost 15p for 200, including postage. Money with orders to Socialist Worker Circulation, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

New bookshop

COVENTRY: IS has now acquired its own centre in the key industrial town of Coventry. The district committee has negotiated to take over the lease of the former 'Left Centre' bookshop. This gives the IS district its own bookshop and meeting rooms right in the middle of the town.

£600 SENT TO FAMILIES

ACCOUNTS of Concert and Rally held on Monday 17 December to raise funds for the families of the Shrewsbury pickets trial defendants.

INCOME:	Collection at concert	£406.37
	Money from sale of tickets (to 7 January)	£630.61
EXPENDITURE:	Money paid to families	£600.00
	Rent of hall	£70.00
	Backdrop banner	£32.00

The balance in hand on 7 January was £334.98. As soon as all the money is in, it will be sent immediately to the families.

Thousands of leaflets have already been printed and distributed for these rallies. In Glasgow, 500 tickets for the meeting have been printed, and many of them sold, although the rally is not for three weeks. In all the cities, halls have been booked which will hold 400-500 people.

The meetings will be used as major rallying points in the working-class movement for the demand to free the three jailed pickets.

SOCIALIST ORGANISATION

At each meeting, a member of the International Socialists will draw the political lessons of the trial, and link it with the overall Tory attack on workers' liberties and living standards. The meetings will be a central part of the IS effort to build stronger socialist organisation at the heart of the working-class movement.

In Birmingham, where the Digbeth Civic Hall has been booked for the rally on Saturday 20 January, IS members have opened out new areas for publicising the meeting.

Special canvass squads have been touring two of the city's biggest council estates, introducing tenants to Socialist Worker and telling them about the rally. Last weekend 89 copies of Socialist Worker were sold on the Castle Vale estate alone. Pickets, leaflets and posters for the rally are available from 25 Selbourne Road, Birmingham 20.

Another 20 miners join IS

MEETINGS of IS miners in South Wales, Yorkshire and Fife during the past week have reported considerable advances for the organisation in all three areas. More than 20 miners have joined IS since 1 December, and two new pit branches have been formed.

Leaflets written by the IS miners group calling for strike action to win the claim have been distributed in tens of thousands of pits in Scotland, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire and South Wales.

Jim Nichol, from the IS Executive, who has attended many of the miners' meetings, says: 'The important thing for IS miners is to establish a party identity in the pits. Too many IS miners see themselves as members of an organisation which supplies them with a paper, with which they agree, but which is distant from them.

'IS miners must get together more to give a clear political lead in the pits. Sleeping members are no good to us or to the miners.

'It's a question of confidence. Miners who join IS are in many ways the most important members of our organisation at the moment, and must act accordingly.'

Free the Shrewsbury Three!

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Speakers: John Carpenter and John Llywarch, two of the six building workers tried at Shrewsbury

COVENTRY: Friday 11 January, 8pm

Speakers: John Carpenter and Bob Light (London TGWU dockers) Lanchester Polytechnic (arts lecture room)

MANCHESTER: Monday 14 January, 7.30pm

Speakers: John Llywarch and Glyn Carver (IS Manchester organiser) Milton Hall, Deansgate

LIVERPOOL: Tuesday 15 January

Speakers: John Llywarch and Roger Rosewell (IS Merseyside organiser) St George's Hall

WOLVERHAMPTON: Tuesday 22 January

NOTTINGHAM: Friday 18 January

BIRMINGHAM: Sunday 20 January, 7.30pm

Speakers: John Carpenter, John Llywarch and Paul Foot (IS national committee member) Assembly Room, Digbeth Civic Hall

NORTH WEST LONDON: Monday 21 January, 8pm

Speakers: John Carpenter and Tony Cliff (IS executive committee member)

Songs and sketches by The Combine Cricklewood Hotel, Cricklewood Broadway, London NW2

GLASGOW: Wednesday 23 January, 7.30pm

Speakers: John Llywarch and Paul Foot. Chairman George Kelly (electricians' convenor, Glasgow direct labour dept) Kingston Hall, Paisley Road Toll

EDINBURGH: Thursday 24 January, 7.30pm

Speakers: John Llywarch and Paul Foot Leith Town Hall

LEEDS: Sunday 27 January

SHEFFIELD: Monday 28 January

HULL: Tuesday 29 January

TEESSIDE: Thursday 31 January

TYNESIDE: Friday/Saturday 1/2 February

For further details of these meetings, phone the IS national office—01-739 1878. Details will be published in Socialist Worker as they become available.

Their crisis—our answer

HOUNSLOW IS public meeting: The crisis—a Tory con-trick. Speaker Ted Crawford. Friday 18 January, 8pm, 77 Waldegrave Road, Teddington.

NEWCASTLE IS public meeting: Their Crisis—Our Answer. Speakers Tony Cliff (IS Executive) and John Llywarch (convicted Shrewsbury building worker). Friday 1 February, 7.30-9.00pm, Nixon Hall, New YMCA, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne. Admission 10p.

WALTHAM FOREST IS demonstration: 3 days work for 5 days pay. Saturday 12 January, 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Branches please send written reports of anti-racist activity.

IS BUSES fraction meeting: Sunday 20 January, 12 noon, Room 5, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. At least one bus worker from each district to attend. Further details from fraction secretary at 0904-56316.

PETERBOROUGH IS public meeting: The Tories' crisis. Speakers: Wally Preston and a Yorkshire miner. Wednesday 16 January, 8pm, The Locomotive, New England, Peterborough.

WALTHAM FOREST IS party day: Saturday 26 January. Watch this space for details.

EDINBURGH IS social and dance: Friday 11 January, 8pm, Cairn Hotel, Windsor Street. Discotheque, late licence to midnight, tickets 45p.

LONDON IS EPTU Fraction School: Duncan Hallas on the history of the union. Sunday 13 January, 12 noon, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. All IS EPTU members invited.

IS TEACHERS aggregate meeting: Saturday 12 January, 10am, Aston University Students Union Hall, Gosta Green, Birmingham (¾ mile up Corporation Street from New Street Station. By car: take Ringway to Lancaster Circus, down Aston Street, by fire station).

IS AUEW fraction meeting: Saturday 26 January, 12.30-4.30pm, Milton Hall (ground floor lecture hall), Deansgate, Manchester. All districts to send delegates. For further details phone IS industrial department 01-739 6273.

READING IS public meeting: Crisis—blame the bosses! Speakers Mike Caffoor (IS national committee member) and John Whiting (AUEW BEA Heathrow and a member of IS). Tuesday 15 January, 8pm, The Crown Inn, Crown Street, Reading.

KINGS LYNN Socialist Worker public meeting: The Tories' crisis and the socialist alternative. Monday 21 January, 8pm, Kings Lynn Workers Club, Church Street. All trade unionists welcome.

IS BUILDING WORKERS fraction meeting: Saturday 2 February, 2pm, in Manchester. Further details in next week's Socialist Worker. All IS building workers should make it a priority to attend.

LONDON IS Irish Forum: Can the Assembly work? Speaker Jimmy Grealy. Friday 1 February, 8pm, The Metropolitan, 95 Farringdon Road, London EC1 (nearest tube Farringdon).

WEST LONDON IS Social: Saturday 12 January, 8pm, King's Head, Fulham Broadway (next door to tube station). Live group, disco, bar extension. Entrance 45p.

WANDSWORTH IS Social: Saturday 19 January. Book the date now. Details next week.

LENIN MEMORIAL LECTURE (50 years: 1924-1974): Speaker Tony Cliff. Wednesday 23 January, 7pm, Old Theatre, LSE, Houghton Street, London WC2. Admission 10p. Organised by LSE IS Society.

IS POST OFFICE WORKERS meeting: The role of IS trade union fractions. Sunday 20 January, 2.15pm, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS UPW members meeting: Perspectives for 1974. Sunday 20 January, 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS POEU members meeting: Perspectives for 1974. Friday 18 January, 7pm, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

WEST MIDDLESEX District IS members meeting: Sunday 13 January, 11am-1pm, Dominion Cinema (Southall IWA). The IS response to the crisis: speaker Andreas Nagliati. The eight-week lock-out of Asian workers at Perivale Gutterman: speaker Aslam Khan (TGWU convenor). General discussion. All members must attend.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION on Lenin and the Russian Revolution available for IS meetings from 24 January onwards. For details contact Eve Barker at 01-485 0476.

AUEW leaders sidestep struggle

THE LEADERS of the million-strong Engineering Union sidestepped any struggle with the Engineering Employers Federation in support of the £10-a-week pay claim last week.

The union had the employers' derisory reply to the claim before Christmas and at an AUEW national committee meeting last week the engineers' leaders solemnly debated their tactics for busting through Phase Three and compelling the employers to pay up.

They decided on an overtime ban. They decided that the ban would be applied after the present two-day-a-week lock-outs are brought to an end. In short they resolved to do little or nothing. In this they have now received the support of the Transport Union.

In engineering an overtime ban does not even have an outside chance of winning a substantial increase from the employers. Engineering is not the mines, where there is one union and a compact number of highly-organised workplaces. In engineering there are 15 unions and thousands of workplaces.

What is needed in engineering right from the start is all-out war. Only a strike will do the trick against the employers and the Tories.

But the supposedly left-wing leaders of the AUEW have ducked this issue throughout. And as usual they are using as their excuse the manoeuvres of the right wingers, such as Danny McGarvey of the Boilermakers, who has not yet managed to lodge the shipbuilding part of the agreed claim.

At the AUEW National Committee the only group which put up any support for a strike was the right wing. They wanted a ballot on strike action. They knew full well that this would result in a defeat for militant action since there has been no campaign.

The left, however, came up with absolutely no fighting alternative. They plumped for the overtime ban—after the lock-outs are over.

And the Communist Party-led left outside the national committee seems to have reduced its militancy to the level of insisting that the overtime ban should be brought in now, during the three-day week, when it would plainly mean nothing.

The truth is that strike action is needed. As a key part of any campaign to get this off the ground militant engineers need to give concrete support to the miners, who are showing the way.

Fitters' strike now in seventh week

DUDLEY:—A strike over a wage claim and the use of contract labour at the British Federal Welder factory is now in its seventh week. Fitters walked out after management offered only an extension of the production bonus, already a guaranteed 5 per cent payment. The rest of the works came out in support.

The average earnings of skilled fitters and machinists in the factory were only £33 a week before the dispute. The strike has been made official.

LOCK-OUT 100 DEFY BID TO BREAK UNION

ON AN industrial estate in West Ealing, London, 100 Asian workers are engaged in a life and death struggle with a rogue employer determined to humiliate them and smash their trade union organisation.

The employer is H P Vogel, boss of Perivale Gutermann, a thread-making firm which he has built up from almost nothing largely by the exploitation of Asian immigrant labour.

In 1968, in response to prolonged bullying on the shop floor, all the workers joined the Transport and General Workers Union. Vogel could not sack all of them, but he broke the union by promoting all shop stewards to foremen.

In 1970 Aslam Khan was elected chief shop steward. 'The first thing I did was to move a resolution that no workers' representative on the shop floor should accept any promotion,' he told Socialist Worker.

'Since then, I've been offered many management posts. But I've always insisted that I and the other stewards stay on the shop floor.'

The chief grievance against management was the production bonus system, which no one—not even Vogel—has ever understood. Everyone agrees, however, that it is blatantly unfair to the workers.

In May 1971, when the workers first protested about the bonus system, management handed them a list of the 30 most militant workers in the shop. Says Aslam Khan: 'We were told that if we did not accept their norms, these 30 would be sacked. We confess that we submitted to this blackmail and agreed, under duress, to work the system.'

APPALLING

The grievances persisted. All last summer, the pressure of the high norms was intensified by the appalling heat. The temperature in the twisting department was seldom less than 105 degrees. 'I remember one afternoon shift in which the whole department was sweating and crying,' says Aslam.

'I said to the production manager, Mr Field: "You don't regard these



D P GHARATYA, who is 21: seven nights a week at Gutermanns brought him less than £35 before tax. Nearly half was bonus.



Locked-out workers on the picket line outside the factory

Story: Paul Foot
Pictures: Chris Davies
(Report)

men as human beings." He replied: "What can I do?" When I suggested increasing the job condition allowance in the department, which has been 2½p per hour for six years, he refused.'

The workers' fury concentrated on the bonus system. The basic rate for 40 hours work was a miserable £18.40 a week before stoppages. To earn a living wage, the workers had to work alternate shifts, and heavy overtime. They had to earn bonus—but the bonus system was a fraud.

The explosion came in August. In one week, in the Finishing 1 and Sizing departments, 43,000 king spools were completed.

The bonus worked out at 42p per hour per worker. The workers made a supreme effort. Three weeks



ASLAM KHAN: 'We are upholding the banners of the rights of the working class'

later they completed 53,000 king spools. The bonus worked out at 29p per worker.

The stewards told the management on 3 September that unless the bonus system was revised, they might have to take industrial action. The management promptly cancelled the bonus scheme and announced an individual bonus scheme with much higher norms.

'Feeling was running so high that I myself was physically assaulted by the men at one union meeting,' said Aslam Khan.

The workers staged a one-day strike in token protest against the new norms.

Vogel replied with swift savagery. On 22 November four militants were suspended for three days without pay. On 29 November all union members in the factory were suspended for three days without pay.

On 4 December, when they returned for work, they were sacked. They were offered 'new contracts of employment', provided they accepted victimisation as dictated by Vogel, new rules about 'discipline' on the shop floor, and the new, impossible bonus norms.

DISMISSAL

Frank Cosgrove, Transport and General Workers' Union official responsible for the strikers, told Socialist Worker: 'This has been officially declared a lock-out'

'These lads have the full industrial backing of the union. Every organised firm has been instructed not to cross the picket lines,' he said.

The union's role in the dispute

has been tarnished by their recommendation to the workers to sue Vogel for unfair dismissal. The recommendation has been accepted, and the case will be heard by a tribunal under the Industrial Relations Act.

This case will not help the workers' case one jot. It will give further credence to the Industrial Relations Act, which the TGWU officially oppose. The tribunal has no power to reinstate sacked workers, and, if damages are won from Vogel, they will provide an excellent excuse for the union and other workers in the area to abandon the Perivale Gutermann case.

ORGANISED

But the men's mistake in accepting the union's advice does not detract from the seriousness of their case.

The strikers are solid, but urgently need help. Vogel has contested their claim for unemployment benefit, and the local Department of Employment has twice postponed hearings before the tribunal. Pending the tribunal's result, the locked-out men have received no money at all.

'Don't forget we are upholding the banners of the rights of the working class,' said Aslam Khan. 'We need help. We need support to fight the cause of the workers. If this branch of the union is wrapped up by the dictatorial act of one management it will establish a precedent for others to follow suit.'

'Help us, morally, legally, financially and industrially to fight against this brutal management.'

Contributions to Aslam Khan, 39 Dane Road, Southall, Middlesex.

Classified

Copy for the Classified section 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.

HOSPITAL WORKER Social: Saturday 12 January, 7.30pm. University of London Union, Gower Street, London WC1. All welcome.

BARKING AND DAGENHAM Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee public meeting: Free the Three! Wednesday 23 January 8pm, Barking Town Hall (small hall). Speakers: Vic Turner (TGWU), Gerry Kelly (UCATT) and D Jackson (North Wales 24 Defence Committee).

BANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS (London) special meeting for all militants in the ATTI. Sunday 20 January, 7pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London WC1. The three-day strike—the implications for the ATTI. Speaker: Ian Birchall.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM

(Kingston-Richmond-Twickenham area) Public meeting: Speakers: Mike Cooley (TASS), Steven Rose, Jake Bharier and Steve Lynch (GMWU), Surbiton Assembly Rooms (5 minutes from Surbiton Station), Friday 18 January, 7.45pm.

COMRADE SOON REQUIRES ROOM in large flat, Islington, Camden area of London. Please write Box AP, Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

TOTTENHAM branch UCATT Benefit Social for the Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee: Disco and bar (extension to 1am), plus live entertainers, Friday 18 January, 8pm, The Nightingale, Wood Green High Road, London N22 (nearest tube Wood Green). Tickets 50p from K Dobie, 355 Lordship Lane, London N17, phone 808 9285.

SINGLE ROOM needed in Southwark, Kennington, Camberwell area of London in friendly house for girl involved in local politics. Please phone 735 2916.

HOSPITAL WORKER Conference: Sat 12 January, 2pm onwards, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1 (five minutes walk from Euston Station). Sessions on the lessons of the past year and on building the Hospital Worker paper. Nursery and overnight accommodation laid on. Mammoth social and bar in the evening. All welcome. Details from 'Conference', 8 Beverstone Road, London SW2 (phone 01-274 2405).

THE SOCIALIST PARTY aims at building a moneyless world community without frontiers based on common ownership—with production solely for use—not profit. It opposes all other political parties, all leadership, all racialism, all war. Write for specimen socialist literature to 'One World' (SW), The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4.

Call for Castings strike to be made official

NUNEATON:—The strike of Asian workers against victimisation at Coventry Art Castings is now in its sixth week. Conciliation by the Department of Employment failed when the management refused to re-employ all the strikers. Pickets are out on duty from Thursday to Saturday when the plant is working.

Production has slumped but finished components are being moved out to the car plants. The Coventry district committee of the Transport and General Workers Union has recommended that the strike be made official, that goods be blacked and that union members still working explain their position to the district committee. If this policy is implemented Coventry Art

Castings will be brought to heel.

Messages of support and donations to Gurmait Singh Gill, 154 Churchill Road, Coventry.

Miners ready to strike

AMERICAN miners organised in the United Mineworkers of America have made clear that they are preparing for strike action if their demands for a new pay structure are not met. The American coal industry has been run down even faster and more drastically than in Britain. Now the 120,000 UMW members, who recently kicked out their corrupt leaders, are prepared to fight.

The shape of things to come?

FOR THE FIRST time since 1926 armoured troops have been used in England. Scorpion tanks and Saracen armoured personnel carriers interrupted the flow of taxis and cars at London's Heathrow Airport this week.

The Tories probably do feel there is a threat of Arab guerrilla attacks at Heathrow. Hence precautionary measures.

But the threat and the response are two very different things. A SAM-7 missile can be fired by one man sitting on a park bench in West London. The presence of tanks and soldiers a few miles down the road at Heathrow is unlikely to interfere with his aim.

So what's going on?

Just imagine guerrillas had attacked Heathrow. The army replies with 76mm tank guns, sub-machine guns, small arms. The army hasn't yet developed any weapons that can hit guerrillas and miss tourists, airport workers, businessmen, dogs and buildings.

Without much difficulty the army should be able to lay waste large areas of the airport. And they wouldn't want to do that. It's bad for the tourist trade.

With the successes of the miners and other workers the government has gone to some trouble to create a siege mentality in Britain. Hysterical editorials, appeals to 'the nation', even cutting TV at 10.30 pm, all contribute to the feeling that a dark force threatens us on every side. It does, it's called the government.

And what better gesture than to give advance warning that on your next picket line you might be arguing not with a scab lorry driver but a Scorpion tank controlled by a soldier well trained in working with the boys in blue through his experiences in Ulster—and now Heathrow?

It's an airport this time—and the 'enemy' is an Arab bogeyman. But next time it could be your factory, and you could be the Arab...

Story: Nigel Fountain

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)



Policeman and soldier on a roadblock at Heathrow—a partnership we're going to see more of

1000 SCOTTISH AMBULANCEMEN OUT ON STRIKE

Students back miners

by Simon Turner

TWO conferences called by the National Union of Students in the past week have debated the economic crisis and its effect on the students' grants campaign. Both expressed total support for the miners and opposition to the three-day week.

Although there was agreement that the three-day week and the crisis were not due to fuel shortage or the miners' overtime ban, there was confusion as to the motives of the government and the way trade unions and student unions can defeat Phase Three.

Colin Brown of Surrey University, who is a member of the International Socialists, spoke of the Tories' need to turn workers against each other in order to defeat the miners. He said it was futile to expect a grants increase without the miners' victory and the end of the present Tory government.

David Gilles, a representative of the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left group, said that to demand the downfall of the Tories was ridiculous and would in no way help miners or students.

Both conferences also passed resolutions on Russian dissidents. There is growing feeling among students that it is high time the NUS had a policy on this issue, despite the reluctance of the majority of the NUS Executive.

The clear point to emerge from these conferences is the urgency at the start of term to intensify the students' grants campaign and to rally student support for the miners against the Tory government.

The next issue of the *Student Bulletin* (for IS members only) will be out within a week and contains detailed briefings on the grants campaign. A pamphlet on grants will also soon be on sale in colleges.

Call for ITT combine

GLASGOW:—Last week saw a decisive development in the struggle at ITT's McLaren Controls factory in Glasgow. John Morrison, Engineering Union convenor and chairman of the occupation committee, sent a letter to all major factories within the ITT group in Britain and Ireland. In Britain alone ITT employs more than 70,000 workers but until now its anti-trade union policies have resulted in the failure of any attempt to set up a combine committee for manual workers.

The letter says the ITT management 'have made it quite clear that they will only tolerate the unions on their terms. This is fast becoming a standard ITT tactic. If you have not yet been the victim of an ITT hatchet-man sent by and directed from Europe, you will be at some time.'

John Morrison points out that when the McLaren factory was under previous management there were only two minor strikes in 36 years, while under ITT control there have been three increasingly serious ones in less than 36 weeks.

Says the letter: 'It is essential that we establish with extreme urgency an all-British ITT shop stewards' combine on a permanent basis.'

A meeting is proposed within the next month. Said John Morrison: 'This meeting will go ahead as planned, even if we have won our wage fight by then and are back at work.'

For further information about the meeting write to John Morrison, c/o Trades Union Centre, 81-83 Carlton Place, Glasgow.

ALL but 100 of Scotland's 1100 ambulancemen came out on strike last Sunday.

They were pushed to this unprecedented step by an ultimatum from the head of the St Andrew's Scottish Ambulance Service, Derek Buckley.

For the past eight weeks the men have been answering emergency calls only and Buckley, acting on Tory government prompting, decided to bring about the confrontation. He announced that as from last Sunday, they would be paid only for the hours worked and not for the whole 40 hours on duty.

At a mass meeting on Monday afternoon 400 ambulancemen from all over the West of Scotland unanimously endorsed the strike call. The men are determined not to be forced to stop their campaign for an immediate £5.15 rise on their present basic wage of £21.50 a week.

On Sunday Gordon Campbell, Tory Secretary of State for Scotland, issued an appeal for scabs to man the ambulances. A steady trickle of businessmen, medical students and do-gooders turned up at Glasgow's Maitland Street ambulance HQ to do their bit. When asked how good a service these volunteers would give, the personnel officer gave a sarcastic smile and replied: 'Well, you know how well the army did when the firemen were on strike.'

The army had to be pulled out after a week when it became clear that the fire

by SW Reporter

service officers could not keep up continuous working any longer, and that by themselves the army would be a disaster.

One ambulanceman showed his payslip. For 80 hours worked over the past two weeks, he took home £48.02. This included double time for working Christmas Day and time-and-a-third for seven night shifts.

'I've been in the service 13 years,' he said. 'I like this job. If I didn't, I wouldn't be here. Certainly not for the money.'

Walter Douglas, 43, works moving patients from the hospital wards to X-ray clinics. He showed his wage slip. Normally there is no overtime in his job and for working 40 hours he took home £21.51. He has a wife and six children to support.

ANXIOUS

Said ambulanceman Eddie Smith: 'All we want is a decent living wage so we won't have to work overtime every day and night.'

Ambulancemen have to undergo intensive training and pass six examinations before they are accepted into the service. 'If you fail any of them, that's you, and you won't be accepted,' one said. 'And that means that if you have given up a job to start this training, you've lost that job as well. These scabs are just playing ambulancemen. God help the public.'

Clydebank ditches rent fight

GLASGOW:—Clydebank Town Council voted last Monday to implement the second round of increases due under the Housing Finance Act and to pay the £20,000 fine imposed on it for contempt.

The three Communist councillors voted with the Labour Party majority in favour of implementation, while the two Scottish Nationalist members voted against. SNP-controlled councils in Cumbernauld and Stirling had previously implemented rent increases.

A special delegate conference had been held before the Council meeting, to which

selected political organisations and trade unions had been invited. The rebel councillors' intention had been to hold out if these bodies promised to pay the council's fine. This policy of appeasing the courts didn't work last year when only the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' fighting fund made any sizeable donation, and flopped again this year.

Argued

The idea of following the lead of Clay Cross and refusing to pay any fine was ignored. Leading Communist Party trade

unionists argued at the conference for implementation. Jimmy Milne, Assistant General Secretary of the Scotland Trade Union Congress said: 'One local authority can't go it alone.' Hugh Wyper, District Secretary of the Transport union and Vice Chairman of Glasgow Trades Council, argued: 'I think Clydebank Town Council have gone far enough.'

Jimmy Reid, Engineering union convenor of Marathon Manufacturing, and one of the local Communist councillors, claimed: 'We have honoured our obligations to the trade union and labour movement.' Many present disagreed.



I would like to join the
International Socialists

Name

Address

Trade Union

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

MINES STRIKE IS WAY TO WIN

THE TORY government know that if they can hold the line against the miners this winter they will have inflicted a defeat on the entire working-class movement.

The unprecedented campaign, with the massively expensive two-day-a-week lockout shows the stakes the government is prepared to wager to beat the miners. They are prepared to inflict long-term damage to their own economy.

The Tories recognise, as the trade union leaders do not, that the face of British politics would be completely changed by a miners' victory. The Tories are fighting

for their political lives.

Such is the extent of the propaganda offensive that the artificial restriction of steel output may well bring industry to a grinding halt before coal or power supplies run out.

The Tories have done their sums. They calculate that while the miners keep coal production at present levels they can, with the three-day week, get through to the spring. Coal stocks will last until mid-April.

A million tons of Polish and American coal will help. Last Saturday 5500 tons of Polish coal was unloaded at Immingham in Lincolnshire.

With this calculation, the government gave the green light to the Pay Board to turn down Joe Gormley's get-out formula of payment for winding time.

The success of this strategy rests of

course on the miners not stepping up their action. The rising militancy shows that miners recognise the government's strategy and are becoming disillusioned with the overtime ban as a plan for victory.

The calls for stronger action from the larger coalfields are good but not enough. One-day or one-week selective strikes are an advance but time is already running out. The certain road to success is an all-out strike.

RESTORED

The 1972 miners' strike not only won the biggest increase in the history of the industry, it also restored the miners to the front of the trade union movement. It also showed the way to other workers by introducing the flying picket.

Miners have a certain victory on one condition—that they get out of the pits and into the streets.

To beat the workers the government has first to beat the miners. So solidarity with the miners is vital. Unity in struggle, not just in resolutions, is the key to a working-class victory.

The Tory government, with all the paraphernalia of office and state power, will be helpless in the face of a united miners' strike. The Tories know they are in for a hiding if only the miners move. It is up to the miners' leaders to recognise this.

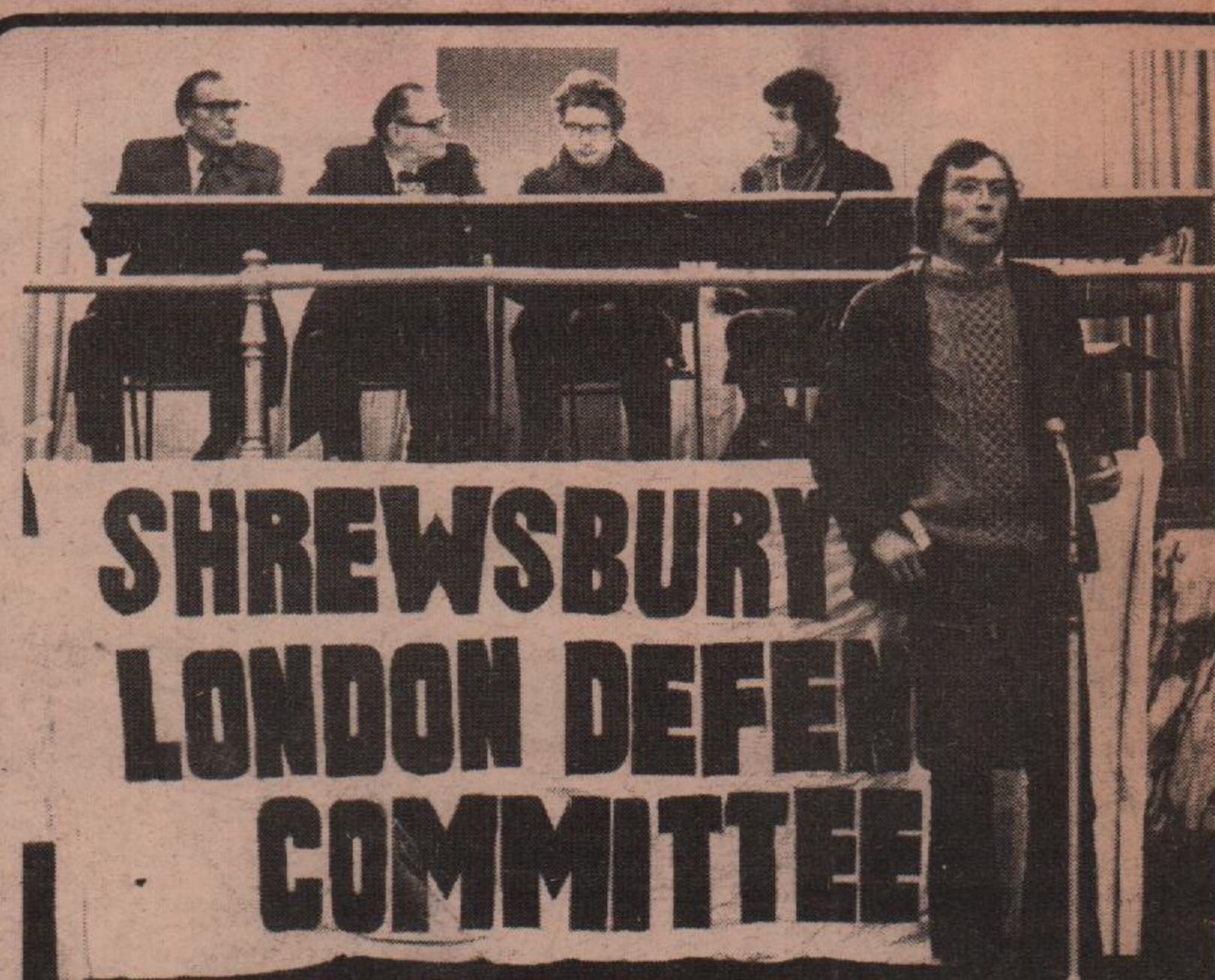
BEATING TORIES COSTS MONEY!

THIS WEEK has seen a tremendous response from Socialist Worker readers and IS members to meet our £5000 target. £1074.24 brings the current total to £1629.24.

Among the contributions have been: £6.15 from Jefferson Smurfit, St Helens, £5 from a Socialist Worker subscriber, £1 from an old age pensioner. Branches sending money have included: Chrysler £10, Romford £8.14, Wolverhampton £10, Edinburgh £65, Camden £125, Croydon £40, Basildon £5, Colindale £6, Newcastle £100, Southampton £50, Teesside £20, Slough £4.40, Barnet £6, Swindon £10, Birmingham £160, Middleton £10, North London £20.

The refusal of the government to pay the miners a decent wage, the reluctance of the trade union leaders to put up a real fight, the viciousness of the courts in not only jailing pickets but moving them to prisons hundreds of miles from their families, are a constant reminder that we now have no choice but to fight back. And for that we need money—dig deep, and quickly!

Rush donations and collections, however large or small, to Jim Nichol IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2, 9DS.



Building worker Roger Headland speaking at last Friday's meeting in London to urge strike action on 15 January. Picture Chris Davies (Report)

Solidarity is our greatest weapon—John Carpenter

JOHN CARPENTER, one of the six building workers' pickets convicted at Shrewsbury, has written to Socialist Worker:

DURING the 11 weeks we six building workers were on trial at Shrewsbury Crown Court, my wife, myself, my five brother trade unionists and their families have been overwhelmed by the greetings and good wishes that have flooded in from all over Britain.

Distance has been no barrier. Friendship and solidarity pledges were our greatest weapon during the trial.

The trial is now over and three of our brothers are now serving prison sentences. I am sure they are now placing great importance on these pledges of solidarity, pledges which I am sure will secure the future of the whole working-class—not just building workers.

Little has been said about the building industry workforce without mentioning the lump and the like. That is as may be. But let everyone remember that 300,000 men employed in the building industry, be they lumpers,

non trade-union members or strong trade unionists, are today enjoying better wages and conditions because of the efforts of men like our three imprisoned brothers.

As this is a personal letter I do not intend to speak of numbers. But I hope that others not committed will come forward with the same pledge I wish to make to my imprisoned brothers.

I pledge my support for the welfare of Des Warren, Eric Tomlinson and John McKinsie Jones. I do so because I know them to be men who, when called upon by the rank and file building workers, led building workers to a victory never before experienced in the building industry. They are now paying the price for your victory. The price—imprisonment.

Yours fraternally

JOHN CARPENTER

Pentonville Five docker warns of threat to pickets

DEREK WATKINS, one of the Pentonville Five dockers' pickets jailed in summer 1972 and released after massive strike action all over the country, has written to Socialist Worker:

When I heard that the Shrewsbury Three had been found guilty and put in jail the first thing that passed through my mind was that it could be any trade unionist. All anyone has to do is be on an effective picket line and you can now be done for conspiracy to intimidate.

I know from the situation we dockers were in during the summer of 1972 that these things can happen to any trade unionist. The evidence used against you is the scrappiest of stuff, and everything is manoeuvred to get you.

Anyone who pauses to think about the Shrewsbury case can see that the only conspiracy was the one ranged against the lads. The lack of publicity, the timing of the verdict and sen-

tences—all this was designed to give these lads a seing to.

The use of these ancient conspiracy laws is very sinister indeed. What it proves is that if the Tories can't beat the pickets one way, they just try another. They were beaten when they tried the Industrial Relations Act against the dockers. So then they picked on the builders of North Wales, a weak area in a badly organised industry.

The Tories are engaged in a wearing down job on the trade union movement. In this situation every trade unionist must take stock, be vigilant and fight back. These men must be freed.

DEREK WATKINS

PIT MILITANCY GROWS DAILY

MILITANCY in the pits is growing day by day. Every attempt by the government to blame the miners strengthens the case for strike action.

LEICESTERSHIRE: Frank Smith is the Leicester Area secretary of the National Union of Miners and a member of the National Executive Committee of the union. He has held the post for 28 years.

Last Sunday he called for an end to the overtime ban, claiming that Communists within the union were prolonging the dispute to harm the country and that most members wanted normal working. The bosses' press was full of praise for this new hero.

But 500 miners at South Leicester and Ellistown pits struck in protest at Smith's speech. Anger was widespread and further strikes were only avoided by a hasty meeting of the area council.

The meeting passed a unanimous vote of no confidence in Smith and called for a mass meeting at Coalville this Saturday, at which Smith will have to explain himself.

In a grovelling statement Smith apologised for misrepresenting the miners' views.

Moves are developing to get a ballot to remove Smith from office.

SOUTH WALES: An attempt by management at Morlais Colliery to get men to walk down a 'drift shaft', a two-mile walk with foul air, because the lodge committee had decided that the haulage ropes could only be checked by men starting at 9am, sparked a strike of all shifts. Only the intervention of top South Wales NUM officials got a return to work.

Morlais, Brynlli and Craig Merthyr pits have banned private contractors from moving coal from the pithead. Only mem-

bers of ASLEF, the train drivers' union, are allowed to move coal out.

Emlyn Williams, South Wales NUM president, has said: 'Only £45 will do,' backing his union executive's call for the tightening of the overtime ban.

YORKSHIRE: At Houghton Main Colliery miner members of the International Socialists handed out leaflets calling for strike action four weeks ago, when the men were satisfied with the overtime ban. Now a growing and significant number of Houghton Main miners are backing a strike call.

Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire NUM president has called for strike action.

SCOTLAND: The Scottish NUM executive has called for week-long selective strikes, for a three or four day and a stepping up of the ban.

STAFFORDSHIRE: The victimisation strike at West Cannock No 5 pit ended after the Coal Board climbed down completely this week. Eleven men of a 23-man team had been sent home after refusing to cut coal because half the team was missing.

Joe McKie, Cannock Chase miners' agent and NUM executive member, called out Littleton and Lea Hall pits. On Monday the men arrived to work to discover the Coal Board was refusing to relent. The strike continued.

West Cannock miners picketed other pits in North Staffordshire and, despite instructions from right-wing Midlands area NUM president Jack Lally not to support the Cannock men, Hemheath Colliery, with some 2000 miners, came out in support.

There was a hurried rethink at the local NCB office and with considerable speed they accepted the men's case.

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

Train drivers' leaders keep it slow

THE train drivers' union executive (ASLEF) has declined to step up industrial action against British Railways though at its meeting on Tuesday it was under strong pressure, particularly from the Scottish region, to step up the struggle.

The Scottish drivers are keen to hit the rail board harder because the work to rule and non-co-operation policy does not hit as hard in Scotland as in the Southern Region.

The executive decided firmly against this. But it did resolve to keep on the work to rule, overtime ban and ban on rest day and Sunday working.

The top ASLEF leadership is still desperately hoping that British Rail will stop insisting that industrial action must

be suspended before new pay talks begin. Ray Buckton, the general secretary, appears to think that new talks or even a meeting with Whitelaw, Tory Secretary for Employment, would be a major advance.

But British Rail has taken its stand under pressure from the Tory government. So any real advances with the pay restructuring claim will only result from strong industrial action.

The train drivers' action is still hitting home hard. 'Because 401 of our engines still lack speedometers nothing is moving on Southern,' Dave Bush, ASLEF branch secretary at the big Slade Green depot, told Socialist Worker.

'But the main line trains, though slow, are getting through,' he added. 'There's lots of talk about us being sent home

and stopped pay. But so far the board hasn't dared to try that. If they did, we would resist to the full.

'As the dispute goes on the men are getting more and more solid just like the miners,' he added.

The train drivers have been mucked about for two and a half years over the pay restructuring exercise. Now they insist that this must lead to an end to the massive wage differentials between drivers and to a decent basic wage.

This is what the battle is about. It also concerns the Tories and their Phase Three. Phase Three will not allow the railwaymen any decent increase. And it certainly will not permit an increase through pay restructuring and an increase from the normal annual pay review.