

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

81% Great vote—now united fight
can beat tottering Tories

HEATH IS ON THE RUN!

THE TORIES are on the ropes. 188,393 mighty punches from the miners' ballot have knocked them sideways.

For months they have been demanding a ballot of the miners. 'The ordinary miner,' they shrieked, 'is out of touch with his leaders.'

Now we know the truth. In a magnificent display of strength and solidarity, the miners have declared their contempt for the Tories, contempt for the wage freeze laws, contempt for the red-baiting Labour leaders and contempt for the union leaders of other workers who have settled within Phase Three.

Backed by the 81 per cent ballot, the NUM executive has spelled out their members' message to the Tories: the full claim or an unlimited strike from Saturday night.

Punch-drunk, split down the middle, the Tories' are juggling with their options.

ORGANISE

Some Ministers, hounded by industrialists, are crying: 'Pay the miners and give us back our profits.'

Others demand: 'Fight the miners to the finish!'

Others search for a 'middle way'. They want a 'new mandate' and an increased majority after a hastily-called and bitterly-fought general election.

Whichever path they choose, we must be ready for them.

If the miners' claim is met, other workers must organise to punch a larger hole in Phase Three. They must ensure that the Tories are not rescued by their faithful seconds, the TUC leaders.

They must argue as we have argued for the past two years: The miners are not a 'special case'. They are special to the Tories because they have had the courage to stand and fight.

All other groups of workers can win if they stand and fight as well.

BEATEN

If the Tories want a fight to the finish, we must all join in the fight against them. They will try to stop the mass pickets and united action which closed the coke depot of Saltley in 1972.

Their police and their troops will be much tougher than in 1972. And the tougher they are, the more united we must be.

Finally, if the Tories call for an election, they can be beaten—but only if the miners stand firm and continue their strike and other workers stand firm in their solidarity with the strike.

If the present determination slackens, if the strike is postponed pending an election, the Tories will get their breath back and prepare for a counter-attack.

We've got the vote. We've got the power. We've got the smell of victory. LET'S GO!



That 81% feeling! Victory grins from NUM executive members Eric Clark (left) and Jack Collins when the ballot was announced on Monday. Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

Police prepare for picket battle

BRITAIN'S police forces are steeling themselves for battle with the miners.

John Gerrard, a Scotland Yard deputy assistant commissioner, has been put in charge of a national police intelligence unit which will attempt to provide advance information on where the pickets will be going.

The purpose of the operation is to allow the special anti-picket squads to move into position and cordon off power stations before the arrival of the mass pickets which hit home so successfully in 1972.

Chief Superintendent Dennis Hoban of Leeds City CID has been put in charge of Leeds policemen seconded to the Yorkshire West Riding force's special anti-picket

units.

According to reports, the West Riding anti-picket squads intend to move in and barricade access roads to Thorpe Marsh, Eggborough and Drax power stations from several miles away.

The police intend to do what they can to make the recent amended regulations on picketing stick.

Chief Superintendent Hoban is understood to have some liaison with armed service units. But it seems that the initial role of troops will be confined to moving trains.

But there has been a major build-up of armoured personnel carriers at Catterick army camp and these could be placed at the disposal of the police.

But the police strategy has many weaknesses. Their manpower is restricted and cannot deal with truly massive pickets which are deployed in such a manner as to outwit police intelligence networks.

The other equally decisive factor is working-class solidarity and firm action in support of the miners. To that Chief Superintendent Hoban and his friends have no reply.

Win more new readers - NOW

LAST WEEK 40,000 copies of Socialist Worker were printed—an all-time record for the paper.

And this week the print order shot up again to 41,000. Every week, branches of the International Socialists are increasing their orders by several hundred copies and still cannot satisfy the demand.

Last week, for example, Glasgow IS took and sold 1700 copies. This week the branch ordered 2000.

At the end of October we were printing 30,000 copies. We have put on 11,000 since then.

The reason for this dramatic rise is not hard to discover. The savagery of the Tory-employer attack on working people is proving just how urgent and correct Socialist Worker's policies are.

But we are not resting on our laurels. We are not satisfied with 41,000. We want 50,000 as the first step towards an even bigger circulation.

The miners' magnificent ballot result means that the decks have been cleared for a fight to the finish with the Tories.

The government and the employers will use all the weapons at their command to divide and defeat the workers. 90 per cent of the press in Britain is owned by seven giant monopolies, pouring out Tory lies day in and day out.

Television and radio also join in the chorus of anti-union abuse.

In the crucial Shrewsbury frame-up trials of building workers, the Tory press has ignored them or printed disgusting lies. Socialist Worker has rammed home the importance of the trials—but still too few workers know about them.

Workers cannot expect fair treatment from newspapers and television stations owned and controlled by our enemies. We must create our own weapons.

And that is what Socialist Worker is. A weapon. A workers' paper arguing the socialist case, hammering out policies to win each and every battle of the working class, organising for a mass socialist party to end this barbarous Tory system.

We must build our sales to build our influence, to win thousands of new readers to the ideas of revolutionary socialism.

And that's where we depend on YOU, the present readers. We urge you to fill in the form below, take extra copies of the paper to sell to your workmates and neighbours.

Every new reader won is a front-line soldier in the battle against the Tories, a battle we can win!

Tony Cliff
Roger Protz

Rush me copies of Socialist Worker each week on a sale or return basis.

Name

Address

Send to: Margaret Renn, Circulation Manager, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2.

'We need hundreds of Saltleys' — p16

The real face of Shrewsbury violence

SW Reporter

COMPANY DIRECTOR Frank Galliers, one of the main prosecution witnesses in the first Shrewsbury pickets trial, 'forgot' to mention a genuinely violent incident which took place on his firm's site long after the supposed violent picketing in Shrewsbury.

For on 16 March 1973, six months before Mr Galliers stepped into the witness box to give evidence against the six pickets facing conspiracy charges, one of his firm's self-employed 'lump' bricklayers, Frederick Gittins, fell off a working platform on the site and broke his neck.

Since the incident Mr Gittins has been totally incapacitated and is unlikely ever to work again.

Almost immediately after this 'accident', Brian Brunswick, a Department of Employment construction inspector, visited the site—the Maurice Graham 'Mount' site—to make an investigation. He found three flagrant breaches of the industrial safety regulations on the working platform alone.

Contract

The platform had no guard rail, toe boards were missing and the scaffolding was not securely fastened.

This is not surprising since the scaffold, which should be erected by a trained worker, had been put up by Mr Gittins himself, a bricklayer, and his labourer Tony Pugh. They put up the platform as they did all their work under a lump contract with Maurice Graham.

Mr Brunswick decided that tough action was needed if future incidents were to be prevented. He resolved to prosecute and the case came before Shrewsbury magistrates court on 18 July last year.

In court the firm denied all three charges. The firm's lawyer did not argue that Maurice Graham had a good safety record or that there was no faults with the scaffold.

He said quite unashamedly that the firm was outside the law, that they owed no responsibilities to abide by the safety regulations since they operated the lump.

But the Shrewsbury magistrates held that Mr Gittins was not genuinely self-employed and accordingly the firm was found guilty.

Penalty

The maximum fine for breaches of the industrial safety laws is £300 on each offence. Maurice Graham did not receive even that fine.

They were fined £70 on each of the three charges, with £37.37 costs—a total of £247.77. And if the directors of Maurice Graham Ltd had had their way there wouldn't have been any penalty at all.

For last week Maurice Graham Ltd attempted to get their conviction quashed altogether. They went to the Court of Appeal and only just failed to convince the judges that they had no responsibilities whatsoever since they used the device of the lump.

Students of the law would do well to remember that Des Warren, Ricky Tomlinson and John McKinsie Jones are now in prison for trying to clear the lump off Shrewsbury's building sites and for picketing with others the very site where Frederick Gittins was later to be maimed.

Labour's role of dishonour

THERE is one word for people who attack trade union leaders for their militancy on the eve of a strike: SCABS.

It is the only word which correctly describes the 95 Labour MPs who have now signed Harold Wilson's motion bitterly attacking NUM vice-president Mick McGahey, for his 'threat' to urge troops not to blackleg during the miners' dispute.

The motion tried to cover itself with some standard criticism of the Tories, but the attack on McGahey got all the emphasis and all the publicity. The impression created by the motion was that the Labour leaders disapproved of McGahey even more than they disapproved of Heath.

The Labour renegades flocked to sign the motion. So far the following have signed:

E Short (Newcastle Central); J Callaghan (Cardiff South East); D Houghton (Sowerby); R Mellish (Bermondsey); E Varley (Chesterfield); D Ginsberg (Dewbury); W Rodgers (Stockton); M O'Halloran (Islington North); R Mitchell (Itchen); D Davies (Llanelli); J White (Pollok); T Leadbitter (Hartle-

pools); W Harrison (Wakefield); M Williams (Warrington); E Morgan (Cardigan); Leo Abse (Pontypool); G Grant (Morpeh); W Ross (Kilmarnock); R Cant (Stoke Central); E Armstrong (Durham North West); A Faulds (Smethwick); M Hughes (Durham); J P W Mallalieu (Huddersfield East); W H Johnson (Derby South); J Harper (Pontefract); R Douglas (Clackmannan); G Bagier (Sunderland South); T Urwin (Houghton-le-Spring); J Gormond (Easington); T Pendry (Stalybridge); Sir Myer Galpern (Shettleston); Alexander Wilson (Hamilton)*; M Edelman (Coventry); Hugh Brown (Provan); Laurie Pavitt (Willesden West); Bert Oram (East Ham S); Joel Barnett (Heywood); P Whitehead (Derby N); D Weitzmann (Stoke Newington); G Jones (Carmarthen); T Davis (Bromsgrove); Roy Mason (Barnsley)*; H Lever (Cheetham); D Owen (Plymouth Sutton); M Meacher (Oldham West); J Concannon (Mansfield)*; R Woof (Blydon)*; E Wainwright (Dearne Valley)*; J Hamilton (Bothwell); J Cunningham (Whitehaven); D Coleman (Neath); R Brown (Newcastle West); G Radice (Chester-le-Street); C Pannell (Leeds West); C Laughlin (Gloucestershire West); M Cocks (Bristol South); J Wellbeloved (Erith); T Cox (Wandsworth Central); D Marquand (Ashfield); I Campbell (Dunbartonshire West); T Oswald (Edinburgh Central); E Bishop (Newark); C

Hughes (Anglesey); A Probert (Aberdare); A Williams (Swansea West); R Ellis (Wrexham); A Fitch (Wigan); W Hamilton (West Fife); G Janner (Leicester North West); J Smith (North Lanarkshire); R MacLennan (Caithness and Sutherland); J Boyden (Bishop Auckland); Goronwy Roberts (Caernarvon); R Leonard (Romford); G Rhodes (Newcastle East); Doris Fisher (Ladywood); J Lamond (Oldham East); Neil McBride (Swansea East); I Davies (Gower); G Davies (Rhondda East); J Bennett (Bridgeton); M Rees (Leeds South); G Cunningham (Islington SW); S Cohen (Leeds South East); E Griffiths (Sheffield Brightside); G Thomas (Cardiff West); D Watkins (Consett); D Stoddart (Swindon); R Buchanan (Springburn); Sir G de Freitas (Kettering); G Mackenzie (Rutherglen); A Roberts (Normanton); R Freeson (Willesden East) and Peter Hardy (Rother Valley).

The asterisks indicate that the scab concerned is paid a minimum of £250 a year by the National Union of Mineworkers. Any Socialist Worker reader in any of the areas named above could do worse than write to the MP concerned and ask him if he was elected by the workers in his area in order publicly to scab on the National Union of Mineworkers.

New cracks in Ulster's ranks

by Mike Miller in Belfast

THE LATEST TWIST in Northern Ireland politics is the surprise move by the illegal para-military Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force towards links with the Catholics.

The UVF has urged that rank and file Protestants and Catholics should come together to 'save Ulster' from the planned Council of Ireland. In its place they propose a Council of Ulster within a

federated Irish state which would ensure a continuing Protestant majority within the six northern counties.

Both Provisional and Official wings of the IRA have welcomed the proposals, which are almost identical with those of Desmond Boal, one-time

chairman of the Rev Ian Paisley's party. Boal has been in close contact with the UVF. It is known that the UVF has also met the Provisionals recently.

The UVF has made a dramatic break with main line Tory Unionism by publicly recognising that the Unionist 'upper middle class' has used sectarianism to maintain power for 50 years.

But by identifying with Boal they are not representing genuine working-class interests. They have no independent position identifying them with working-class struggle.

To do so they would not only have to break with official Unionism and British imperialism but also the small capitalists represented by people like Boal, Paisley and company.

Boal and his friends clearly recognise that British support for a one-party state is at an end. The political link with Britain itself is in jeopardy.

They see the 'Council of Ulster' as a means of keeping power in their hands within the coming 32 county state.

Mixture

They are attempting to do this by forging an alliance with those Catholics who express non-working class politics but who still reject the present political set-up.

The UVF describes Gerry Fitt's Social Democratic and Labour Party as 'right wing conservatives', but their own appeal is being made to 'rank and file people', an unspecified mixture of workers and lower middle class.

The UVF leaders do not represent the majority of their members in this policy switch, let alone the Protestant working class. Many of the grassroots members of the Protestant para-military groups are straining at the leash to reopen the sectarian war against Catholics.

The lack of cohesion for such a bloodbath campaign is the only thing that has allowed the UVF 'political thinkers' to keep their members in check.

The present state of total confusion among Loyalist workers should provide opportunities for socialists. But two things must be stated firmly:

No solution confined to the six counties would advance the workers' cause.

And Protestant workers must make a definite break with Desmond Boal and the reactionary capitalist policies he represents.



Right-wing ranter Paisley: his deputy Boal is moving to talks with middle-class Catholics

Irish unions kick out new wages deal

by Brian Trench: Dublin

THE IRISH VERSION of incomes policy took a severe knock on 29 January when, by a majority of three to one, the 400 delegates to the Congress of Irish Trade Unions rejected the wage packet from the Employer-Labour conference.

The Employer-Labour conference is a joint body made up of the leaders of the Congress of Trade Unions and the Federated Union of Employers. Each year it sets out the limits of trade union advance on wages and conditions.

This year the package offered an increase in real wages only to those earning less than £20. In addition, the

trade union leaders agreed to nine clauses in the proposed agreement that would rule out industrial action.

Any additional claims would have to be processed through the semi-legal Labour Court.

The leadership of the two biggest unions, the Irish TGWU and the Irish Workers' Union, recommended acceptance.

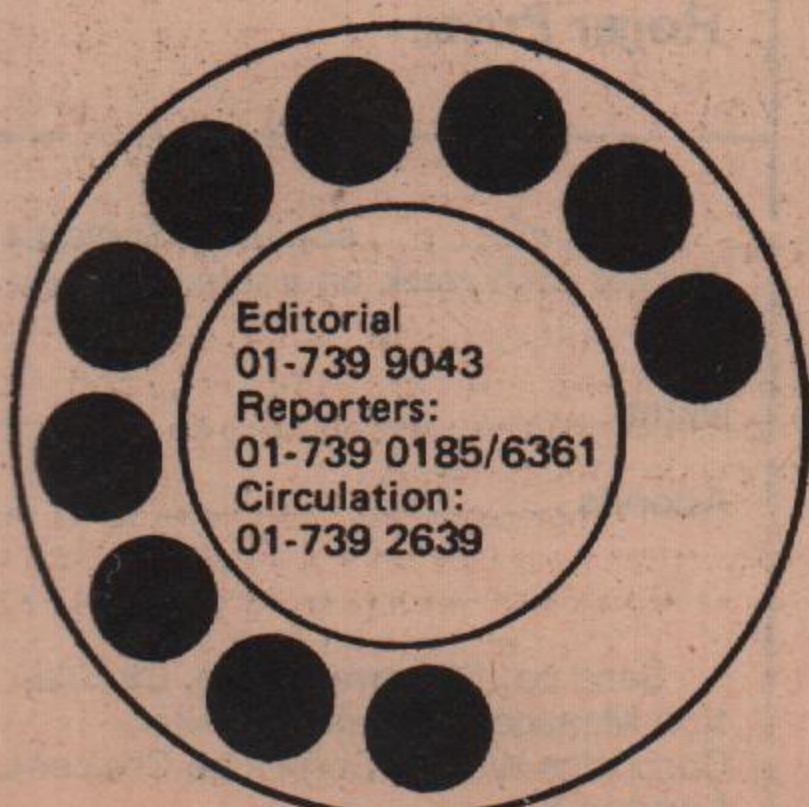
But for the first time a majority of unions held a ballot of the members on accepting the deal. For the first time shop stewards committees campaigned against

the proposed deal, particularly in Dublin.

Factories were leafleted and public meetings held. The vote was close in the ITGWU but nevertheless a majority was against. In the IWA a two to one majority voted against.

Irish incomes policy lies in ruins. A number of unions have already put in claims that far exceed the proposed norm.

Even more important an organised opposition has appeared within the CITU. Shop stewards have indicated their real power when they organise.



'LINK UP MILITANTS - THAT IS OUR AIM'

THE rank and file conference to be held at the end of March could be the start of a national organisation linking tens of thousands of trade unionists.

That is the hope of the rank and file papers sponsoring the conference. Roger Cox, president of Chiswick No 5 branch of the Engineering Union, is secretary of the organising committee. He is also on the editorial board of Carworker.

Last week he spoke to Socialist Worker.

The conference follows directly from the growth of rank and file papers in many industries. These papers are still expanding, and have a joint readership of probably more than 100,000.

'There's always been an informal network of militants,' said Roger Cox. 'During the Perkins lockout in the summer, members of the dispute committee stayed with me after we offered to help them through the Carworker. I fixed up for them to go down to the London docks through two dock shop stewards I knew who helped produce Dockworker.'

'We've been inviting each other to conferences of our own rank and file papers for two years now. It's this which laid the basis for the conference.'

'Several of the papers got together, and we wrote to all the papers we had heard of, everything from the London Platform to the Building Workers Charter. Of course not everyone has replied yet, but we have sponsorship from most of the papers, and no one has refused so far.'

PROVED

'First of all something already exists. We've proved our muscle in the last few years. In the Ryton 'shoddy work' dispute at Chrysler Coventry, the whole national press was attacking the Chrysler workers. We brought out a special Carworker that proved that management deliberately provoked the strike.'

'This sold thousands of copies in Coventry. It helped turn the tide in the dispute. In fact the only contact between the Chrysler plants in Coventry and Scotland was through Carworker. Our supporters in Coventry went up to Linwood to meet the Carworker supporters there.'

'This applies to the other papers as well. NALGO Action News actually



Roger Cox: It must be a working conference, not a talking shop

got one of its candidates elected to the union executive.

'But it's more than that. The conference will succeed because it meets a need. What trade unionist isn't worried by what's going on at the moment? The whole movement is under attack.'

But the conference is not to be only of supporters of the rank and file papers. These supporters are going to trade union branches and shop stewards committees and arguing the need for a conference, trying to get every trade union body to send delegates.

He said the sponsoring papers hoped the conference would achieve an overall link-up of militants. The individual papers each try to give a picture of what is going on in its industry, but such a picture was needed for the whole country.

'Look at what we could have done if the conference had been six months before Shrewsbury. The organising committee of the conference could have issued a statement calling on

bodies which support it for action. We should have co-ordinated something beforehand—motions to union executives, financial help, and strike action.'

'With the miners we need to organise nationally to help them on their picket lines, to make sure that in every town there are phone numbers, addresses, accommodation for pickets, help from branches and district committees. We must have Transport Union banners on every miners' picket line to stop transport drivers.'

'And if the police arrest NUM members on the picket line we need to be organised in all the local factories, to get out to help the miners.'

'We want far more in the long run from the conference,' he said. 'We need to make the beginnings of a national rank and file organisation, supported by thousands of trade union bodies, controlled by annual conferences, capable of making an immediate response to attacks on our movement.'

'But this is not going to be done simply on 30 March. We have to hold a practical working conference. There have been conferences in the past where all the speeches have been very militant and everyone has agreed with what has been said but nothing has been achieved.'

'What the conference wants to do, what policies we adopt will be decided democratically by the conference, and any trade unionists who can get delegated can come and put his point of view.'

BIGGER

'The organising committee will draw up a draft resolution. It will be circulated to all trade union bodies that have applied for delegate credentials a month before the conference. Any may move amendments.'

'The resolution will be quite general. Most delegates should agree to it but I think we'll have a lot of arguments on the amendments, and that's where we can all learn in the conference.'

'We've got to fight 40 years of passive acceptance, years of conferences which were just fixed.'

'We'll be making the start in building a national organisation, supported by tens of thousands of trade unionists and their branches and organisations. Eventually we'll want committees in every city and town, across every combine, and across every union, linking up the rank and file and pulling in our ideas and experience together.'

The conference will be held at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham, on Saturday 30 March, starting at 11.30am. Full details from Roger Cox, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

Let the rank and file voice be heard

Last of three articles by the International Socialists' industrial organiser as a contribution to the discussion preceding next month's rank and file trade union conference.

by Andreas Magliati

THE CENTRE of working-class struggle has shifted. In the 1950s and 1960s, trade union power rested on the shop floor.

Wage drift on locally-negotiated piece rates was the all important part of the men's wage. The government stood aloof. The employers did not fight in a united way.

The economy was healthy enough for them to do so. The union at the national level did not seem very vital or important. Branch meetings became depleted.

The shop stewards committees grew in strength and acted independently of the union machinery and often of one another.

This is no longer possible. The drift to measured day work has decreased dramatically the ability to influence wages locally. National negotiations, or at least plant wide or combine wide negotiations or combine wide negotiations are now important.

The government's interventions are presenting new problems that effect the whole of the trade union movement, and not just sections of it. The importance of the official movement has increased and will continue to do so.

Problem

A centralised plan and strategy are necessary. The quick response that only a real national leadership can give is needed. The working class must have all the weapons that the ruling class has.

The rank and file conference called by a number of rank and file papers for 30 March in Birmingham is an attempt to come to grips with these problems. The conference will attempt to bring together isolated militants from up and down the country.

From such a conference we hope that we will get a lead in the attempt to bring the voice of the rank and file much more to the fore within the official trade union movement. It is hoped that the conference will take positive and practical steps to strengthen and at times create fractions to fight within the official trade union movement.

The programme of such fractions must include militant policies for the problems of the day. It must fight and organise for the removal of right-wing leaders and their replacement by left candidates standing on the fraction's programme.

All too often, the election of left leaders has been seen by militants as the beginning and the end of their struggle inside the trade unions. It is hoped that the conference will clearly reject this view. Unless the union itself is transformed and the leadership made really accountable, even a left leadership would soon drift from those that elected it.

Such a conference would also bring together the sponsoring rank and file papers. It will increase their influence and make them better able to co-ordinate their activities and campaigns.

Policies

Most of all, it is hoped that the conference will maintain a permanent centre able to disseminate information and re-call the conference itself on specific issues and at specific turning points in the class struggle. It could slowly develop into a real leadership. Obviously the task cannot be achieved overnight.

Often the development of a real leadership outside the official apparatus is presented in opposition to working within the movement. Nothing could be further from the truth. The prestige of such a rank and file leadership will depend on its ability to provide the policies, the slogans and the organisation that can bring the voice of the militants inside the official movement.

But the strength of that voice, and the seriousness with which it will be taken, will depend on the grassroots support, the work done on the shop floor. Militants need an orientation towards the official movement, and an independent organisation that allows them to put pressure and act independently if needed in opposition to the union bureaucracy.

The rank and file conference is an important step, but only a small beginning. Only time and much effort will prove whether its potential can be realised.

What is important today is that each reader of this paper fight in his union bodies to send delegates to the conference and to ensure that a maximum amount of delegates are present

SOCIALIST WORKER

WE HAVE BEEN SEEING a lot about subversives, extremists and wreckers in the press lately. We will be seeing a lot more in the weeks ahead. A general election is on the cards and a 'red scare' is one of the oldest election stunts in the Tory book.

But what is subversion? Are we subversives? According to the Oxford dictionary subversion means 'the turning [of a thing] upside down or uprooting it from its position'. Socialists must necessarily be in favour of uprooting capitalism. How else is it possible to build a new society?

So of course any serious socialist movement is, by definition, out to subvert capitalism. The only people who are not subversives are those who support what they are pleased to call 'the free enterprise system'.

Put in this factual and objective way the idea of subversion is not much use as a bogeyword so naturally the right wing propaganda boys don't put it this way. They also like to contrast the 'moderates' (their supporters) with the 'extremists' (their opponents). What is moderate and what is extreme depends entirely on where you put the middle.

For example, the capitalist newspapers all described Mr Dick Taverne as a moderate. In terms of the Labour Party, of which he used to be a member, Mr Taverne was, of course, a right wing extremist. So extreme in fact that he left the party to set up his own 'Democratic Labour Party' which is neither democratic (it is the personal property of Mr Taverne) nor labour (its main activity is finding candidates to oppose Labour candidates in marginal seats, ie, to elect Tories). None of this stops our 'free press' from contrasting Taverne's 'moderation' with the 'extremism' of his opponents.

WHAT WE THINK

Extremism: a torrent of lies

Nowadays the words moderate and extreme, as used by our press and television commentators, simply means right and left. It is a misuse of language in the interests of right-wing policies and politicians. One of the latest volleys in this propaganda barrage is the report on 'Sources of Conflict in British Industry' issued by the 'Institute for the Study of Conflict', a fine, scientific sort of title meant to give the impression that here are impartial seekers after truth.

'The aim of the extremist organisation,' it tells us, 'are incompatible with any normally accepted concept of democracy.' These extremists are making a 'systematic effort to discredit our economic and democratic system'. What do they mean by 'our economic and democratic system'?

The cloven hoof soon peeps through. 'Because they want to discredit the free enterprise system extremists are opposed . . . etc. How shocking! And what is democratic about private profiteering?

Who are the moderate men behind this Institute? Its director is a Mr Brian Crozier, an

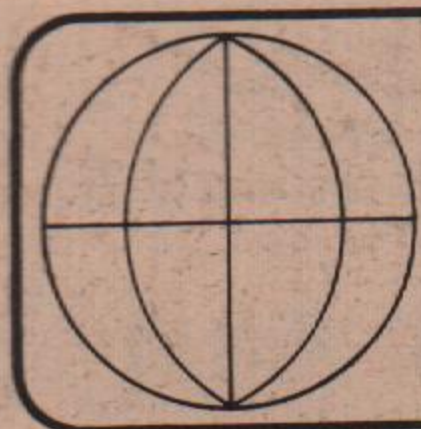
enthusiastic supporter of US intervention in Vietnam and a man who sees much to admire in Franco's Spain. A prominent member of the Council of the Institute is Professor Max Beloff, well known for his moderate views on educational matters. Professor Beloff disapproves entirely of grants for students and recently tried to set up a 'private enterprise' university strictly for those who could afford the fees.

Naturally this Institute and the whole Tory propaganda machine, deplores violence and intimidation. Only the violence that upsets them seems to be confined to that used by pickets in self-defence.

It has just been announced that British arms sales to oil sheiks and others have reached a record £500 million a year. The main sponsor of these sales is the British government. You might suppose that people who condemn violence so loudly would be concerned about the government acting as what used to be called a 'merchant of death'. Not a bit of it. Sales of guns, tanks and planes are good for profits. And profits is the god they worship.

The torrent of lying and hypocritical propaganda about 'subversives' and 'extremists' which is now being poured out is part and parcel of the government's attempt to isolate and defeat the miners and to prepare the way for another five years of Tory misrule. Socialists should never run away from it. We do not conceal our views.

We ARE against the comically miscalled 'private enterprise' system. We ARE against the fake 'moderates' who serve capitalist interests. We ARE for militant working-class action in defence of living standards and we DO believe that out of these actions a movement can be developed that will destroy not only the Tory government but the capitalist system.



India

by
**Nigel
Harris**

'WANTED: 17 Social Education Officers. Salary £15 per month, rising to £32 per month.'

An advertisement something like this recently attracted nearly 100,000 applications in the Indian state of West Bengal. That is only a small part of the more than one million educated unemployed in the State, which is only a small part of the 50 or 60 million unemployed in India.

The jobs could have been created. The factories could have been built. But not in a world that strangles the Indian economy every time it moves, and not with an Indian ruling class up to its eyebrows in corruption.

India's economy has deteriorated steadily since the government scrapped effective planning in the mid-1960s. There was a slump and disastrous droughts up to 1969. Like an animal with its back broken, the economy made some efforts at recovery in 1970 and 1971, and then slumped again—with another disastrous harvest—in 1972 and 1973.

The country made nothing out of the last boom in world capitalism. Yet now the world system is heading for recession, and will drag India down even further. Real income per head has fallen to roughly £44 a year.

But Delhi still lives with its fairy stories. One—just published—is the Fifth Five Year Plan. It is full of stirring talk, but it assumes, for example, that oil prices will be three to four dollars a barrel up to 1978. The price is 11.65 dollars now. At that price, more than half of India's export earnings must go to buy oil, and there will be almost nothing to buy machinery or scarce industrial raw materials.

Without oil, fertiliser output will collapse. There will be nothing to run the well and irrigation pumps, to drive the trucks that get the seeds to the villages. One small variation in the weather could bring a gigantic famine.

But this is far away from Mrs Gandhi, India's Prime Minister. Her Congress government won a landslide victory at the polls in 1971 and 1972 on the basis of the war with Pakistan and her bland slogan, 'Abolish Poverty!'

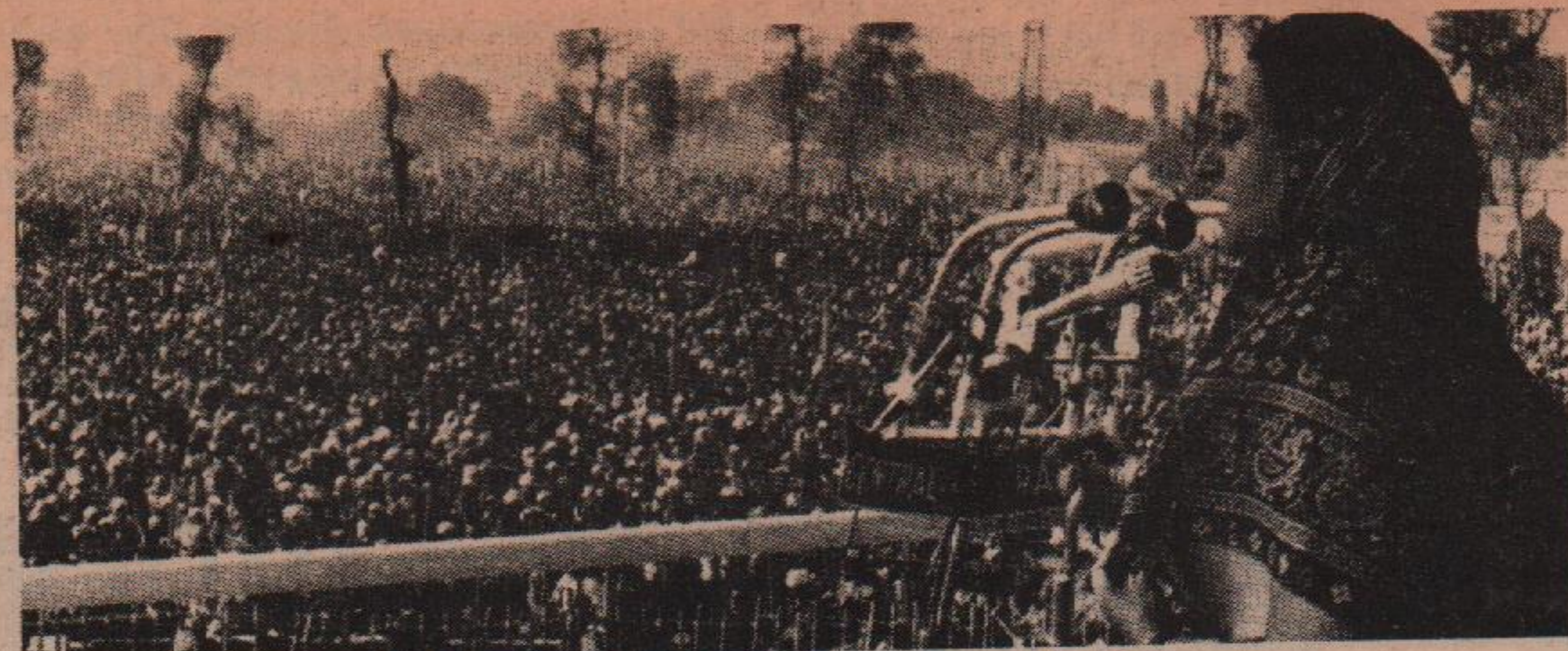
Mrs Gandhi is no more capable of lifting India out of its oppression than Shirley Temple. But she had a brief moment. Now it is finished.

RIOTS

With inflation running at more than 20 per cent a year, with food in great shortage because of hoarding, speculation and corruption, there is nothing between the mass of workers and poor peasants and starvation.

Every demonstration inevitably turns into a riot in conditions of such desperation. Some 35 people have just been shot dead by the police after three weeks of food riots in the western state of Gujarat and military rule has now been introduced in the city of Ahmedabad. In Maharashtra, Mysore and Uttar Pradesh, hunger turns men mad so that they attack not their enemies, but their neighbours—Mysoreans in Maharashtra, Marathis in Mysore, Muslims in Uttar Pradesh. Maybe another 20 have been slaughtered by the police in these states.

In all cases, the extreme right organises violence against minorities as its means of moving to power. Looting is profitable for these gangsters. In Bombay, the notorious



Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi: she can offer only words, not food

Shiva Sena led a deliberate campaign to loot restaurants and stores owned by Mysoreans.

Men turn on their neighbours instead of their enemies when they can see no way out. Scapegoats provide temporary relief. The lack of an alternative is the failure of the labour movement to provide a clear workers' revolutionary opposition to Mrs Gandhi and her leeches.

The militancy is certainly not lacking. The railway workers have waged a long battle. 200,000 jute

workers have just been on strike, just as the employers were trying to force seven-day, three-shift working in order to scoop a world market deprived of packing material by the oil shortage.

Middle-class unions have been particularly active. Delhi doctors and nurses, engineers, airline pilots, university teachers, and the employees of the enormous Life Insurance Corporation are either on strike or have been locked out.

Mrs Gandhi's response is to call for



Digging for water in a dried-up well in Maharashtra, India. Already rising prices have caused food riots—a slight change in the weather could bring mass starvation

A PEOPLE STRANGLERED BY WORLD SLUMP

a ban on strikes for 'a few years'. This is a handful of straw to hold down a typhoon. The last revolt—in Calcutta and Eastern India between 1968 and 1970—found the rest of the country looking on while Mrs Gandhi tore out the heart of the rebellion. Now the fire has ignited in Western India—Gujarat and Maharashtra, which includes Bombay. Perhaps this time the rest will not watch passively.

The political standing of Congress has begun to collapse in the storm. But it is far from finished. It has met a rash of humiliating by-election defeats, and now faces state general elections in Uttar Pradesh, the largest Indian state and Orissa. The party is racked by faction fights and the most obscene corruption.

In the recent Central Bombay by-election, Congress allied with the extreme right, Shiva Sena, against its own national ally, the Communist Party of India. This did not prevent a crushing defeat for Mrs Gandhi's candidate.

So extreme is the crisis, Mrs Gandhi is finding it difficult to find

the usual left-wing dust to throw in the eyes of her opponent. So few people believe in the Fifth Plan, it is rather a waste of paper for propaganda purposes. No doubt Mrs Gandhi will soon say she intends to nationalise lots of things, but no one may hear her in the clamour. She is appointing old left-wingers in her Cabinet—the aged Malaviya is the best known—but again, few people will have time to notice.

CORRUPTION

Whatever Mrs Gandhi invents, she can deliver very little. World slump and escalating oil prices are hammer blows on India's economy. Internally she has given so much away to private interests—it is called 'liberalisation' and is the government's response to any crisis—she has little leverage over the economy. Congress is afflicted with the creeping plague of corruption, and the infection spreads throughout the State machine.

The one child Mrs Gandhi has pampered is defence. The shadow of the armed forces has grown longer and longer. Bread may be short, but she has never skimmed on the bayonets to keep down the starving.

The generals, as always, watch and wait. Last year, the revolt of the police in Uttar Pradesh must have alarmed them. Now the collapse of economic policy, the riots and rebellion must frighten them even more. If there has to be a change, they will try to ensure a change in their direction.

The long-drawn-out agony of India—part of the apparently endless torment of the peoples of the backward countries—continues solely because of the failure of the left. The failure of the workers of the world to achieve victory in any single country, and the almost complete degeneration of those middle-class parties in Asia that call themselves 'proletarian'—Communist, Revolutionary, Socialist, what have you—means that there is no way out.

Things can go on getting worse. Capitalism has no answers now. Shooting off guns in the villages gives pleasure only to the romantic.

With its large, well-organised and very militant working class, all the essentials for a workers' revolutionary alternative are present in India—except that the party does not exist.

More workers' leaders in the dock

by Martin Piper

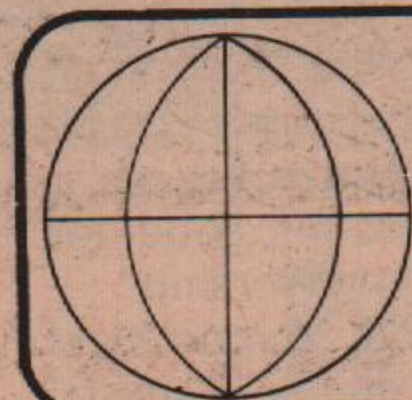
GENERAL FRANCO'S regime enters 1974 determined that its inflationary overheated economy must be rescued by working-class sacrifice, and determined that the conditions for this can be created by force.

The vicious sentences on the Carabanchel 10 were only the centre-piece of a massive legal attack on workers' leaders. In the next few weeks, major trials are scheduled by the regime for:

● Strike leaders in the shipyards of El Ferrol, two of whom were shot in cold blood by the police during the strike.

● Four alleged members of the executive of UGT, a social democratic union federation that is automatically illegal.

● Six workers from SEAT, the main Spanish car firm, part-owned by Fiat, who are charged with organising a factory occupation in Barcelona. Three lawyers will also appear in this trial charged with helping the workers.



Spain

● Ten alleged members of the USO, a Catholic socialist union organisation, also automatically proscribed.

This is the legal arm of a tremendous and continual police repression against the working class. A lawyer involved in the defence of the Carabanchel prisoners told me there were more than 10,000 trials a year for political offences, and it is common knowledge that brutality and torture is a regular and systematic part of arrest and interrogation.

The intensity of the repression stems from 15-20 per cent inflation, and all the other economic diseases that result from being a cheap labour backyard for a recession-ridden

Common Market.

The ways out chosen by Franco's latest caretaker government will be familiar to British workers. The first is the legally-binding collective wage agreement, which binds workers hand and foot while leaving the employers free to exploit tax and dividend loopholes. The second is the wholesale mortgaging of the country to international corporations.

Both Ford and British Leyland are planning large expansion in Spain at the moment, and French and German capital is not far behind when it comes to soaking up cheap land and labour. The legal minimum wage is £1.50 a day, but the jails are not exactly bulging with employers who pay less.

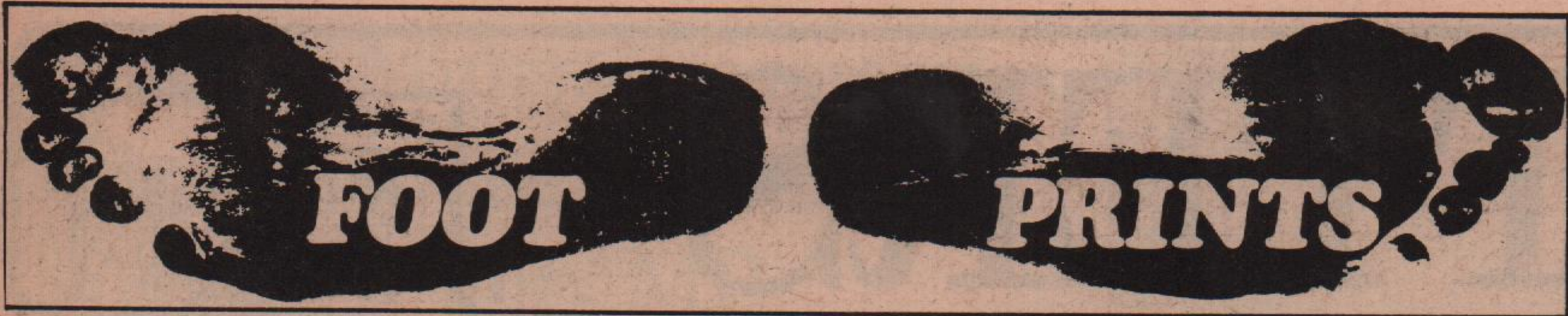
The other major struggle is that of the oppressed national minorities in Catalonia and the Basque Country. Although both show signs of interest in revolutionary class politics, their tactics to date have been capable of creating crisis for the regime, but not able to take advantage of it.

Nonetheless, the very success of guerrilla action enables workers to see the weakness of the regime and the corruption of those forces on the right and in the armed forces who back it up.

A final weapon of the government has been dirty deals abroad. Lord Carrington sold them a few jets through an American dealer.

And the Peoples Republic of China opened an embassy in the Palace Hotel Madrid, where Henry Kissinger stays on his visits. This last deal threw the Spanish Maoists into terrible confusion. In their paper Workers' Vanguard they had just denounced the Poles for doing the same thing: arguing quite correctly any recognition of Franco was monstrous at a time when the dictatorship was grovelling desperately for friends abroad.

The Spanish left now has a real chance to connect its ideas with a militant working class. The result could have implications for the whole of Europe and beyond.



Brushing your teeth with thalidomide

A LOT has been written about the unfortunate Patrick Jenkin, Minister for Energy, and his advice to us to 'clean your teeth in the dark'. Strangely, nothing has been said in any of the newspapers about Jenkin's long-standing association with Distillers Ltd, the manufacturers and marketers of thalidomide.

During the period when thalidomide was being manufactured and marketed in the late 1950s, Jenkin was rapidly climbing up the Distillers tree, and from 1959-1963, when some 400 babies were born deformed because their mothers took thalidomide, he was division secretary of Distillers' Chemicals Division.

One reason the babies were born deformed was that Distillers did not test thalidomide on the foetus, though their advertisements specifically recommended the drug for pregnant women.

Jenkin's work in the Chemicals Division commended him to his employers and in 1963 he was promoted to the group secretariat of Distillers' chemicals and plastics group.

His senior position at Distillers enormously impressed the Tories at Wanstead and Woodford, who selected him in 1964 to follow Sir Winston Churchill as their MP.

After entering parliament, Jenkin kept up his connections with the multi-millionaire Distillers. He was the paid 'adviser' to the firm throughout the office of the last Labour government, and was chairman of the parliamentary group on the chemical industry, which worked so hard to ensure that the Labour government did not injure the shareholders of chemical companies.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

'THE miners will be getting more than the rest of us'—Campbell Adamson, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (£300 a week).

'THE International Socialists mainly attract young workers, partly because they go in for discos, weak and camps, beach barbecues, football matches etc'—The Sunday Post (union-bashing Scottish weekly paper) 13 January.

'I have no brain power, but I am the best thief in the business'—Ernest Marples, Tory MP, (of Marples Ridgway), Daily Telegraph 23 January.

'We're all in it together' dept

PROPERTY NEWS BY JOHN FANSHAW

ONLY THE BEST

CRISES OF ONE KIND or another react on property and the fuel situation is no exception. There are fears that the business in country houses and cottages could be severely curtailed if the present emergency lasts very long, though it is by no means certain that this will be the case.

Already those in more remote districts fearing that their cars will be laid up because of petrol scarcity have taken to the road on bikes and it seems would rather pedal to the nearest station than give up their homes.

In the present state of the market it is highly unlikely that owners of country houses and cottages, should they wish to sell, would receive very tempting offers unless they fall into the category of having the best to offer.

Under all circumstances, the best sells easiest and quickest as the present situation bears out. There is ample money around for the most attractive properties as John D. Wood & Co. discovered recently when they were empowered to bid £340,000 for an Oxfordshire house.

This is Dean Manor, at Charlbury, 17 miles from Oxford and 29 from Cheltenham, Glos. Bidding for Dean Manor, which is a 44-acre country estate, embracing a Queen Anne house with staff flat and staff bungalow, started at £150,000 when it was submitted by Lane Fox & Partners.

There had been pre-auction expectations of £200,000, but the final figure for this eight-bedroom house indicates that the money is available for the 'right' property.

from the January issue of The Tatler

HONEST JOEL

JOEL BARNETT, Labour MP for Heywood and Royton, is strongly tipped as a future Labour Chancellor, and he knows a thing or two about money. His daughter, Erica Barnett, enthusiastically supports her fellow-students at St David's College, Lampeter, in their rent strike in protest against the government's starvation level grants. Erica joined the students on rent strike, but discovered a few days later that her socialist dad had paid her rent without asking her: 'It's my money, responded Mr Barnett to protesting students, 'I can do what I like with it.'

Brompton Robbery

THE public inquiry into the proposed takeover of Centre Point, the 31-storey office block in Central London still empty and profitable 10 years after it was built, has turned over a few stones in the property world and revealed some horrible, crawling things underneath.

Derek Walker Smith, former property company director and Tory Minister of Health, who is appearing for Harry Hyams, Centre Point's owner, and has surprised even the government inspector by his consistent offensiveness to Camden Council officials, is not the only thing found underneath.

The prize for chief parasite at the inquiry is held by Campbell Palmer, who owns 99 per cent of the shares in Brompton Securities.

Brompton's main purpose is to make money for Mr Palmer by letting furnished luxury flats in the centre of London to visiting businessmen. At the moment he owns 110 flats in seven blocks, including the Euston Centre, the office block near

Euston which has made a few million pounds for Joe Levy, formerly of Stock Conversion and Investment Trust.

The flats are rented at rates varying from £80 to £120 a week. Palmer told the inquiry: 'This is a very worthwhile service to the country, bringing in much business and foreign currency from businessmen who prefer such an arrangement to hotels.'

In 1972, said Palmer, he applied to Sovmots Investments, Harry Hyams' company, asking if he could let the 35 residential flats at Centre Point. No, said Sovmots. Centre Point could only be let in one unit.

Costs

Then Camden Council slapped a compulsory order on the Centre Point flats. Suddenly, Sovmots approached Palmer, offered him a lease on the 35 flats and agreed to pay £5000 towards his legal costs if he objected to the council takeover at the public inquiry. Palmer readily agreed.

In the year since he had opened negotiations incidentally, the rent for the flats had risen by 30 per cent—from £54,000 to £72,000.

Palmer told the inquiry that after all the expense for the flats had been met, he expected to pocket at least £20,000 from the venture—that's £400 a week. On this reckoning, he is already making £1500 a week from renting other flats in Central London.

On top of that, however, Palmer runs a lot of other companies which made profits from the flats which he let. They include a laundry company, a cleaning company, a company which provides 'maid services' from Monday to Friday, a television hire company, and a building and decorating company.

Add all the profits and dividends accruing to Palmer from all these operations to the rent he gets from expense-account executives and his total income must be around £100,000 a year—£2000 a week.

Crisis

Said Palmer: 'Brompton's business has been very successful and the group very rarely has any vacancies in the flats for any length of time. This has proved to me that there is a very real need for this class of furnished flat in Central London.' He also made it clear that this 'very real need' would not be affected by any economic crisis through which the country might be passing.

He claimed that Camden Council should not be allowed to take over the flats for homeless people because of the 'service' he intended to provide.

Mr Widdicombe, representing Camden Council, questioned Palmer about this 'service': 'Do the tenants bring their families?'

'Not usually.'

'But there are two bedrooms in each flat in Centre Point, and you're going to put four beds in?'

'A businessman likes to have one room as a guest room.'

Palmer hastened to assure everyone that his letting policy was 'very strict'. 'I would never authorise the letting of a flat to a woman on her own unless she was an employee of an established company or a member of the staff of a foreign embassy,' he stressed.

Janie Jones, for instance, would never get in there alone.

Evans



It's no murder—death at £200 a time

'VIOLENCE IN THE FACTORY!' was not the headline in Coventry's local newspaper after two recent court cases.

On 19 December, magistrates at Kenilworth heard of Noel Dunn, a building worker who died on 28 August last year while working for a lump firm on the Kenilworth by-pass. Noel was electrocuted after a crane had driven into an electric cable which was not marked as live.

The prosecuting lawyer attacked the firm for not observing the most elementary safety measures. 'If simple precautions had been taken by the contractors, this accident could so easily have been avoided,' he said.

The firm—Formlaying Civil Engineering of Southminster, Essex—pleaded guilty to charges of

failing to take safety precautions. They pleaded in mitigation that 'the company was a small business and was not used to being responsible for ensuring that safety precautions were taken.' And again, in the words of their lawyer, 'Formlaying were not aware of what precautions should have been taken.'

The magistrates appear to have been deeply influenced by these pleas. They fined the firm only £250.

The defence of small firms, didn't know, couldn't care less' was not available a few weeks later at Coventry Magistrates Court, where the defendants were Matrix Machine Tools, a subsidiary of the Coventry engineering firm Gauge and Tool, in turn a subsidiary of the giant Tube Investments combine.

Matrix were charged with an offence under the Factories Act, namely that they did not provide fencing around the platform of a fork lift truck. Bryan Lupson, the district factories inspector, spoke quite firmly—for him—on the failure of the firm to carry out this elementary precaution, especially as it had led to the death of engineering worker Donald Meneaud. Donald was standing on the truck on 27 September when it moved suddenly and he plunged 13ft to his death.

The firm had no defence at all. But the magistrates weren't at all worried. They fined Matrix £200—with £20 costs—and passed on to the next case.

Tube Investments last year made profits of £28 million.

The Editor,
Socialist Worker,
Cobridge Works,
Cobridge, Warwick,
London E2 9PS

LETTERS



THREE VIEWS ON THE 19 JANUARY EDITORIAL—'WHY WE SAY VOTE LABOUR.'

... It was one of the most intelligent leading articles that it has been my pleasure to read. It is absolutely essential in these days of onslaught against the working class that all progressive forces in the working class should unite around the demand for the return of the Labour Government. I am an individual member of the Labour Party but would welcome the help of International Socialists in all aspects of Labour Party election work.—JOHN POWER, AUEW Oxford District President.

... It was hypocritical and opportunist... You print a pamphlet which debunks the view that socialism can come through parliament, you expose the fallacy that the Labour Party is anything but a Tory wolf in socialist lamb's clothing... Wilson is parading the same team of opportunists and capitalist boot-lickers who starred the last time he made it... Yet you say vote for them. Under the Tories we at least know who the enemy is... —REX STANLEY, Llanbradach

... If Labour's 'moderate, reformist proposals cannot be implemented without making real inroads into the power of the capitalist class then might it not be sound tactics for revolutionary socialists to join forces with left-wing social democrats in the fight for such reformist measures? Labour's manifesto has many limitations, but it is stronger on public ownership than you claim. Such reforms would hardly usher in socialism, but they would force capitalists into finding ways to regain their position, which in turn would produce open conflicts between Capital and Labour. However, it will take more than an electoral victory to establish Labour's programme—even if the vote includes the International Socialists'. One avenue through which the fight for Labour's policy can be continued is the organisation of the Labour Party itself—that is where the dedication of an extra 5000 marxist activists would really be invaluable.—HARRY BARNES, Sheffield.

WE NEED A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY... Although the coming recession will not be comparable to 1929 to 1934, we shouldn't underestimate the seriousness of the crisis. There is it will pose to the ruling class. There is no economic crisis that the capitalists cannot overcome, provided the working class is prepared to pay the price... To inflict the measure of defeat on the British working class today, they suffered in the 1930s, would require over five million unemployed within the next 18 months. The working class is just too used to winning to allow that to happen (which by no means removes our obligation to make sure it bloody well doesn't!)... That makes the crisis more serious for the ruling class. The political situation will remain incredibly volatile, with the danger that the movement of one section of the class could suddenly leap far beyond the ability of other sections to provide the necessary solidarity and support required to win through against the ruling class. This makes the building of the International Socialists and its rapid transformation into a revolutionary party with roots in all sections of the class of even more pressing importance. Tied up with this is the vital question of the building of a complementary rank-and-file movement. Each week that goes by shows more clearly that IS's strategy is the only one that stands a cat in hell's chance of realising the potential for building a real revolutionary party in the coming recession.—ERIC CAMERON, Oxford.

WHAT REVOLUTIONARY PARTY?... Revolution is the most efficient means of ridding civilisation of capitalism but the question facing the non-revolutionary left is what price non-revolutionary left is what price socialism? 'The Struggle For Workers' Power' (Socialist Worker Pamphlet) states that revolution 'will constantly defend its gains from any attempts to restore the old system'. So what will be the answer to counter-revolutionaries—concentration camps?... Socialist Worker keeps me informed of industrial and political affairs which don't appear in the Fleet Street press. But I will be uncommitted to revolution until 'what price socialism?' is favourably answered.—K A ANDERSON, Sale.

Up the creek—with the union

I'M A MEMBER of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers Union. Before Christmas the union submitted a claim for higher wages and better conditions. It was the best claim in the 10 years I have worked in the industry.

The union didn't call upon the members to support the claim. We settled for no sick pay, no holiday credit and no 52 week working or pay.

Holiday credit went up from nine and a quarter to ten and a fifth per cent, instead of ten and three quarters per cent.

The overtime rate, as far as I'm concerned stayed the same. We had a rise of £2.80 instead of £4, and a bad deal over our claim for a night allowance.

We (you will note we) have agreed to co-operate in the use of work study analysis. What really gets me is that two years ago we, the union, threatened to strike for the first time since 1948 to back up our claim. The Employers Federation gave in without a fight.

Membership of the union went up by 400 a week. The lesson was not learnt—membership has declined since then.

The fact is that NUHKW bureaucrats, like all union bureaucrats like a quiet life. They will avoid a fight if they can.

I am sure that if members of the union had been mobilised to support the original claim we would have got the lot—without the works study breathing down our necks.—M ANDREWS, Leicester.

Grotty or not?

I READ YOUR article in Footnotes (15 December), 'Grotty Ottey', on Roy Ottey, the full-time secretary of the Midlands Power Group of the National Union of Mineworkers.

I'm secretary of the Lea Hall Branch of the Power Group, and I'd like to tell your readers the truth.

You report that Roy Ottey is against all militant activity in the pits. In fact he seconded the motion at the National Executive meeting calling for a complete ban on overtime working.

Relating to the business of the Lea Hall Branch. I'm afraid that once again you have been misinformed. The resolution called for 'regular election of all NUM full-time officers' was proposed seconded and accepted by the members of the branch at the meeting held on Saturday 19 January, 1973.

Your informant, Jim Clarke, whom you say moved the resolution, didn't attend the branch meeting, as his apologies are recorded. The resolution was posted to the central office in the normal way.

At Mr Ottey's request the Unit Secretary and Branch Chairman travelled to his office.

It's not just Bird's music that lives...



Charlie Parker, brilliant jazzman, dead at 32. His biography by Ross Russell was reviewed last year in Socialist Worker.

OF the reviews received in America and England of Bird Lives! three or four made great impressions on me and yours was one of them.

Of course Charlie Parker was a political as well as a musical subject. In spite of my feelings about American society and politics I saw no opportunity of publicising those views explicitly. So I took another course and wrote the book you reviewed and hoped that its implicit message would be revealed, at least to a few perceptive readers. Most reviewers had no interest in the political implications of Parker's life and music. Indeed it would not be considered appropriate to discuss them in any political context in very many publications in the world.

Your review devoted just two sentences to the quality of the biography. The rest of the page was devoted to a precis of Parker's life, lifestyle and music and it was a model of dialectical writing. Which, I suppose, just goes to show that a sound education along the lines of marxism has lasting value.

Thanks very much. With all best wishes for your continuing success and that of Socialist Worker.—ROSS RUSSELL, Escondido, California.

Mr Ottey and the Assistant General Secretary Mr Carey, although obviously not delighted to receive this particular resolution relating to their job, did in fact advise the two branch officers that the resolution, 'as it was then worded' would be thrown out at the conference.

So as you can see they assisted in forming a resolution that could eventually have costed them their jobs. The resolution was debated—and defeated at the conference by a majority vote.

If you must concern yourself with our branch business please contact me. That way you'll receive the correct information first time round.—J B SIMMONS, and Branch Committee, Lea Hall Colliery, Rugeley, Staffordshire.

Roy Ottey once again showed his true colours last week when he jumped in and supported the witch-hunt against Mick McGahey, NUM vice-president. Ottey called on all miners to defend Britain's wonderful democracy against the reds who he argued were no longer under the bed, but, god forbid, on it.

With regard to the motion for the election of officials, Socialist Worker was misinformed, but only very slightly.

Jim Clarke was not at the branch meeting. But he did move the motion—at the branch committee meeting the day before.

There is little doubt that Roy Ottey did try to get the motion dropped, apparently even threatening to resign if it went forward to national conference.

Socialist Worker will however only be too pleased to check all future stories concerning the Staffordshire Power Group with Brother Simmons.

Railway strike: some facts

LITTLE HAS BEEN said in Socialist Worker about the railway dispute. I'd like to combat some of the Fleet Street press lies against the locomotive men.

The drivers' basic rate is £33, of which £3.30 bonus for mileage is already consolidated into this. A second man's rate is only £23.40 for his first year and £24.85 for his second year.

Only some men work mileage jobs which raise their basic rate above that which is already consolidated.

We are claiming that all mileage payments up to 125 miles be eliminated and £2.45 added to the basic rate for drivers, and a proportion for secondmen—whether they work mileage jobs continuously or not.

The British Railways Board offer would, in fact, mean a wage cut for many men. The average payment of men in some depots would be a loss of 20p—instead of a rise of £2.45.

We also want 10 per cent built into the basic pay of all loco-men as a compensation for unsocial hours. In my case I could start one day at three in the morning and not finish before seven in the morning of the following day!

The £52 million restructuring deal would end up as a sell-out if the ASLEF executive are allowed to give in to the BRB's plans.

Feeling is strong amongst the rank and file to win this claim. It must also be said that the idea we are in dispute with our brothers in the National Union of Railwaymen and the

Transport Salaried Staff Association is a misunderstanding used by the capitalist press. The fact is that the BRB has offered £52 million to be shared out with the three railway unions. As the other two have sorted out what they want it hasn't left us with much.

We don't want the other unions to sacrifice their justifiable claims. On the contrary, we want the board to come up with more money to meet our claim.

For two years the BRB has held up the restructuring deal. By using the less militant NUR and TSSA executives on the working party they have established the talks to a meaningless end.

It's now clear that the dispute is between ASLEF and the BRB. All loco-men should bring pressure on Buckton and the Executive Committee not to settle within the £52 million package and to force the board to provide more money.—JOHN McLELLARD, branch committee member, Glasgow Branch, ASLEF.

The right chord

FOR THE FIRST TIME, I have bought a copy of Socialist Worker, and I found it such a refreshing change from the normal daily press that I thought I should write and express my whole-hearted support for the International Socialists and the paper.

I am a student of music, which perhaps puts me on the wrong side of the fence, but I think I have now realised through your newspaper where my true loyalties lie.

All the very best from a fellow socialist. — ROBERT JOHNSON, Paisley.

LEAFLET WANTED

DON'T YOU THINK it would be a good idea to bring out a leaflet especially for housewives explaining the causes of rising food prices? Over the past three and a half years it's been a massive 45 per cent!

There has never been a better opportunity to draw more women into our ranks. A lot of them would also wake up their dozy husbands!

Also an important factor that could be coupled with the subject of rising prices is the 'problem' of racialism. Although the majority of people in the working class districts of Norwich vote Labour there is massive moral support for Enoch Powell. Especially on the large housing estates here. We can't afford to ignore this.

Perhaps the printing of dual leaflets on these topics in the near future would give the International Socialists a big boost.

It's worth reminding council tenants what Powell really thinks of the council tenants. Two years ago at Edinburgh, Powell said of council tenants: 'They can afford to ride around in cars, they can afford to go to Bingo every night, why can't they afford their own houses to live in?'

Massive canvassing this year would give us a tremendous boost. We must fight harder and grasp every opportunity open to us.

Next year may be too late.—P STEWART, Norwich.

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

(second reprint now out),

Rosenberg, 10p

WATERGATE, Alternative News

Service, 50p

TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE

WORLD, Reed, 45p

SOCIALIST REGISTER 1973, ed

Milliband and Saville, £2

BLACK JACOBINS, C L R James,

95p

REVOLUTION IN GUINEA,

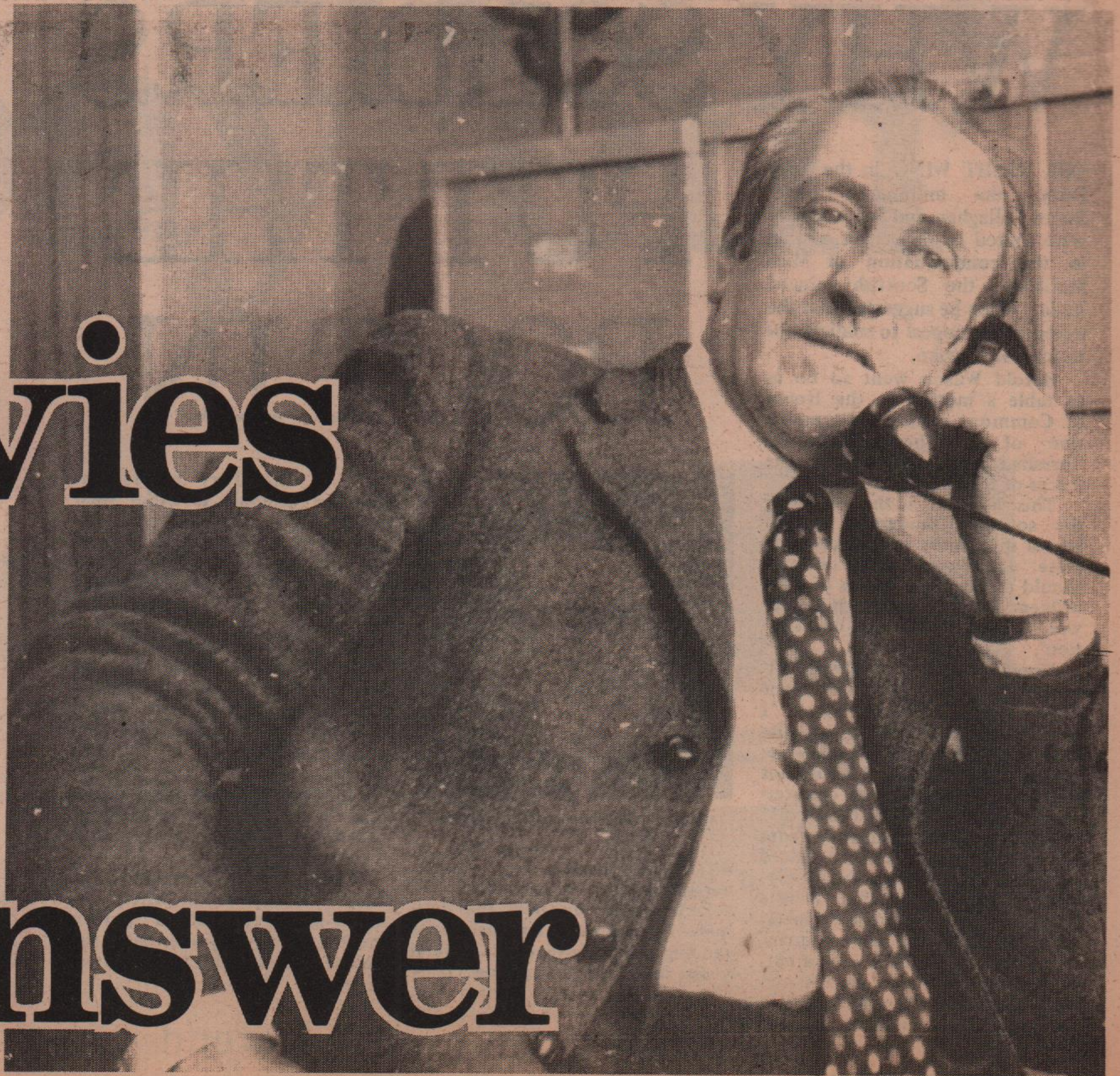
Amalcar Cabral, 45p





Miners are enemies of the community, a Tory MP said last week...

Dai Davies gives a dusty answer



DAI DAVIES pauses in conversation more frequently than most people. About once every minute, he stops talking and labours for breath.

He has pneumoconiosis, the chest disease that kills and maims hundreds of miners every year.

'It's a terrible thing, pneumoconiosis,' he says. 'It is incurable. No doctor has yet come up with a cure for it. It destroys a man's manhood. He's unable to breathe properly. He is a most unpleasant man to live with, for he's always spitting.'

Dai Davies spent 30 years in the pits until he was diagnosed as having '10 per cent pneumoconiosis'. For the last 10 years he has been an official in Pontypridd of the South Wales area of the miners' union and is now the compensation officer, fighting to wring a pittance out of the Coal Board for his fellow workers struck down by disease or maimed by accidents.

Sometimes—all too often—the compensation is not for miners but their widows and families. The mines have been his life since he was a lad. He was nine when the general strike of 1926 was called in support of the miners and he recalls vividly the events in the South Wales valleys.

'Some of the strikers used to get hold of the blacklegs and put white shirts on them. That's how they came to be called "Whiteshirts".'

His father, a miner, was set upon one day by a car load of burly West Country policemen, specially drafted into South Wales to deal with the pickets. Although Mr Davies hadn't taken part in the attacks on blacklegs, he was beaten insensible by the police as a 'lesson' to the other strikers.

Tyrants

Dai Davies remembers, those many years ago, the day when his father was brought home and put on a sofa, bleeding and unconscious.

'It was a time of terrible poverty and degradation,' he says, 'I was one of six children. The men were on strike following a reduction in their wages by those terrible tyrants, the coal owners.'

'The men dreamt of nationalisation, the day when they would wrest control of the mines from the coal owners and run them themselves for the benefit of the country rather than make vast profits for the coal owners.'

1 January 1947 was the red letter day for miners. It was the day the

Roger Protz talks to an NUM compensation officer

post-war Labour government nationalised the industry. But the high hopes of the old miners for a total transformation in the running of the industry were dashed:

'The old owners, despite the terrific hatred they had engendered, were treated very well by the nationalisation Act,' Dai says. 'Terrific compensation was paid to them and was continued to be paid to them for two decades after the Act.'

The Labour government doled out £600 million on the day of takeover to the old owners. And cash continued to flow into the pockets of these old parasites.

Dai points out that even when collieries were closed when the coal was exhausted, compensation continued to be paid.

Labour's generosity was in stark contrast to the owner's tight-fisted attitude before the war. They ganged up to ensure that workers who suffered injury or dust disease would get as little as possible from the miserable provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Injured men would crawl back to work before they were fit to avoid starvation. If they got lighter work but at the same rates of pay before their injuries then they would lose all claims to compensation.

The owners blackmailed men into accepting lump sums in compensation to avoid having to pay out over the years. They would threaten miners with eviction from their homes if

'Men will go and bowel in the earth —but only for decent wages'

they refused lump sums.

There are still several hundred disabled miners alive today who were swindled out of compensation. The NUM has lobbied successive postwar governments to reimburse them, but so far without success.

But in spite of nationalisation, the terrible toll of death and disease goes on—and the sickening mixtures of intolerance and miserliness by the state. It says a lot for the state of the mining industry that men like Dai Davies, the compensation and social insurance officers of the union, are still key men.

'One miner officially dies every day from pneumoconiosis,' Dai says. 'Last year 357 men died.'

'And for every miner who dies "officially", four in my estimation, die unofficially.'

There are 38,000 certified sufferers from pneumoconiosis. But many thousands more are confined to their homes with chronic bronchitis or emphysema. They are contracted in the pits but are not "scheduled diseases" and the men get no compensation.'

Deprive

He adds quietly but bitterly: 'I am always amazed to what lengths people in the Ministry of Social Security will go to deprive men of their rightful benefits.'

In most countries now, miners who have pneumoconiosis and die of heart attacks are certified as 'death due to pneumoconiosis' and their widows receive compensation.

But in Britain, the new, modern, welfare stated, life's better with the Conservatives Britain, a miner who dies of heart attack has his heart and lungs removed and sent for examina-

tion by a pathologist. The pathologist, in his neat laboratory far removed from the dust and grime of the pits, may decide that pneumoconiosis was not the cause of heart failure—a decision that means possible destitution for widows and families.

Dai Davies feels strongly that the government and Coal Board must be forced to recognise bronchitis as a scheduled disease and dramatically increase the totally inadequate rates of compensation currently paid out. At present a man with 10 per cent pneumoconiosis gets £1.28 a week, which might be described as a 'sick joke'.

There are worse tragedies even than dust disease. One miner dies every day in the pits and four or five are seriously injured.

And Dai Davies feels that because of competition with oil, the Coal Board in recent years has placed the need for 'profitability' above precautions against dust and safety.

Dai Davies is scornful of the Tory claim that miners are to blame for the current crisis.

'We argued for a national fuel policy that would find a rightful place for coal along with other fuels. But successive governments—both Labour and Tory—murdered collieries and destroyed whole communities with their closures. Villages have been left derelict in South Wales.'

There were 112,000 miners in South Wales at the time of nationalisation, now there are 30,000.

There were 360 pits, now there are 49.

'There are unlimited reserves of high-grade coal in Britain. Men will go down and bowel in the earth, but only if they are paid decent wages.'

After 40 years in the industry, 30 of them underground, and still at first hand seeing the suffering caused to miners by the capitalist quest for coal, Dai Davies was understandably outraged by the Tory pressure to cut off miners' families from social security benefits in the event of a strike.

Parasites

'Do they think we are criminals or rapists or something? The people who should be deprived of their benefits are the men in the directors' chairs who never do a hard day's work, who live off vast profits from speculation.'

'If they can afford to pay the Queen £1 million a year then they can afford to provide the bare necessities for a miners' family.'

Mrs Jill Knight, Tory MP for Edgbaston, last week described the miners as 'enemies of the state'.

'What utter rubbish!' Dai says. 'She and the parasites like her are the real enemies of the country.'

One thing is certain. Neither Jill Knight nor Ted Heath have to pause for breath every minute or embarrass their friends by spitting.

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There are 38,000 miners with 'certified' dust disease...

WHY SOLDIERS PUT THE BOOT IN

THE RIGHT WING in the Tory Party, the millionaire press, James Callaghan and Joe Gormley were united in their rush to join in the condemnation of Mick McGahey, the Scottish miners' leader, when he suggested that the union might appeal to soldiers not to scab on a strike.

Harold Wilson went so far as to table a motion in the House of Commons calling for repudiation of McGahey's statement 'foreshadowing an appeal to the forces of the crown...'

This, it seems, is the one thing the so-called moderates in the labour movement cannot contemplate: that workers in uniform should disobey the orders of their officers. Such an action, it is said, would 'undermine the constitution'.

Even McGahey himself retracted part of his statement under the barrage of abuse. 'I want to make it quite clear,' the Morning Star of 30 January reported him as saying, 'I would not ask one single soldier to countermand an instruction he received.'

Yet the cries of dismay from the so-called moderates amounted to one thing and one thing only. They were saying that if the government tries to break a miners' strike by using the armed forces, then there is nothing the miners should do about it - except perhaps hope that a few Labour MPs will protest in parliament.



McGahey: attacked by 'moderates'

officer is treated in a much harsher manner than a worker in a factory who disobeys the foreman. He can expect punishments ranging from 'fatigues' to several years in a military prison. It is all part of trying to turn him into an armed robot under the control of his officers.

Almost all the officers in the armed forces come from the middle and upper classes. And the further up the chain of command you go, the more this is true.

A quick examination of the list of the top generals in Britain at the moment shows that they all went to public schools. Their parents clearly belonged to that minute slice of the population who can afford to spend more on the education of one child than the average take-home pay of a surface worker in the mines.

The officers themselves are protected from any of the financial sacrifices we are told we must all make 'in the national interest'. The pay of a general will range from £180 a week to £320 a week.

But, you might ask, don't the generals in turn have to take their orders from democratically-elected political leaders?

Certainly, the government ministers sometimes tell the generals what to do. And if the issue is not fundamentally harmful to the class from which the generals come, they will obey.

So if the Tory government tells the generals to order their troops to break picket lines, the generals will willingly do so. And the rank and file will face mutiny charges if they side with the workers against the generals and the Tories.

But it does not at all follow that the generals would obey the orders of a left-wing parliamentary government if it meant clashing with the interests of their friends at the top of industry and the banks.

The case of Chile shows how easy it is for army officers to overthrow an elected government, if they so wish.

There is only one reason this has never happened in Britain: our mealy-mouthed Labour government have never presented a sufficient threat to big business interests.

Defend

The army is a powerful weapon in the hands of the 1 per cent of the population who own 80 per cent of the stocks and shares, to use against those who try to touch their privileges.

Such a weapon cannot be wished away through the ballot box. It has to be broken from the grasp of the ruling class. In the last 200 years, no real social change has been possible anywhere without workers using physical means to defend themselves against the armed forces and calling upon troops to turn against their officers.

If the army moves in to smash picket lines, marking a cross on a piece of paper will not prevent increased misery and hardship to the miners.

What will be necessary is the employment of the same sort of mass action against the army as was used against the police at Saitley in 1972. At the same time, other workers should be prepared to come out on strike in solidarity with the miners and against the use of troops.

Class

Are we in favour of troops disobeying orders to attack picket lines? Soldiers are workers in uniform and we are in favour of using any means to dissuade workers from scabbing.

The only proviso is that it is no use just one individual in a unit disobeying orders and becoming isolated, any more than it is any good just a single worker walking out on strike by himself.

In the long term, what the working class will need to protect itself from the trend for physical threats to be used against strikers is the start of organisation within the army, so that socialists can point out to their fellow soldiers their real class interests.

Because of the rigid discipline and heavy punishments within the army, that task is much more difficult for socialists than organising in the factories.

We have to build a strong revolutionary party that can do such work if we are ever to break the power in the hands of the army officers and prevent it being used by them against the organisations of the working class.

Chris Harman

'We c

Hard times of Tories who say miners want too much...

'We'd love to pay the miners, but we can't afford it! The country's in a state of emergency, five million other workers are pulling in their belts to suit Phase Three, we must get our shoulders to the wall, our noses to the wheel and our backs to the grindstone so that we can pull the dear old country round.'

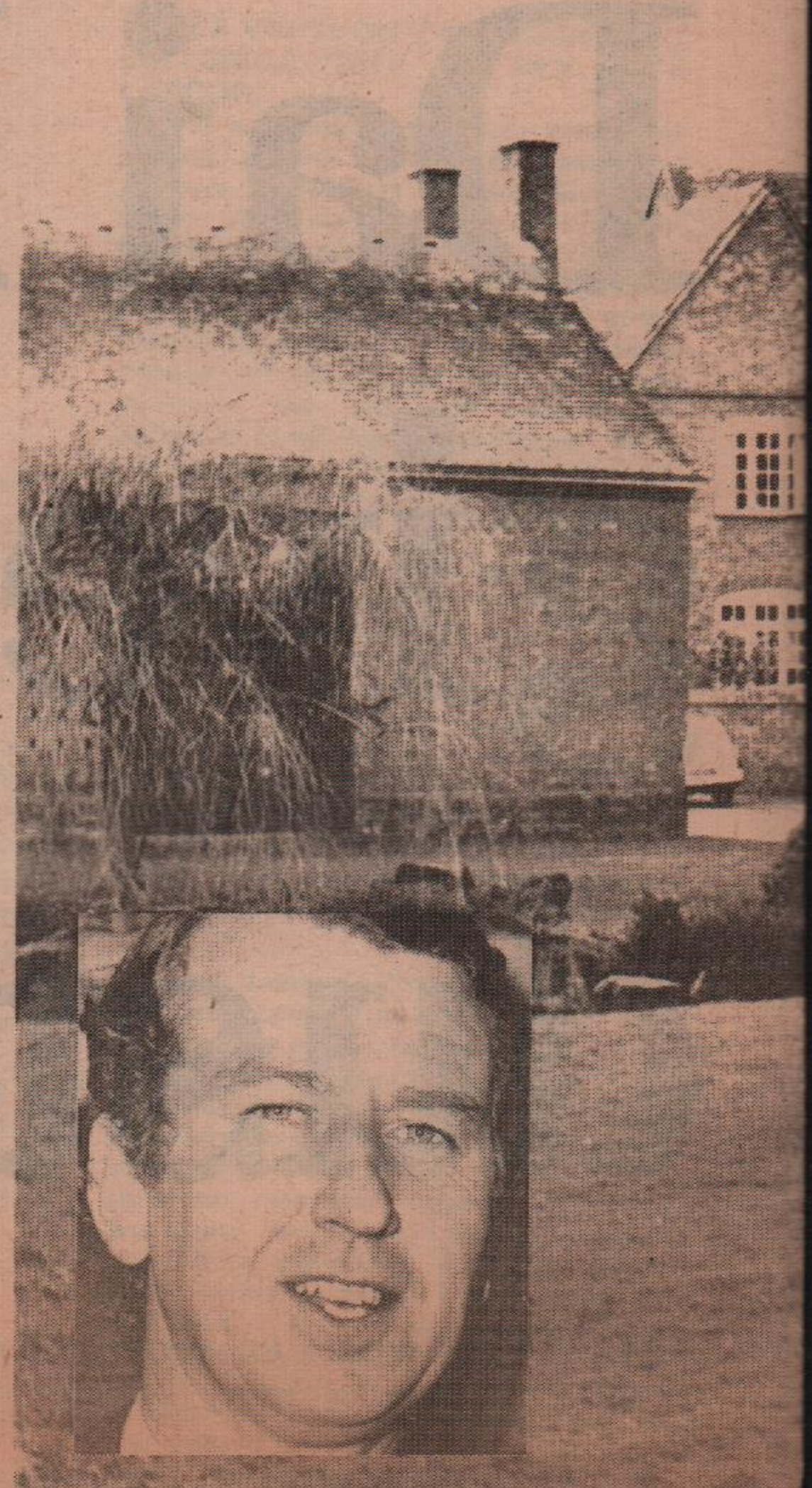
These are the pathetic cries of the Tory ministers as they face up to the miners.

We've been on a trip round the country to find out how the Tory ministers are coping in the nation's hour of need.

If it's true that the country's on the rocks, we assumed, why surely the people in charge must be on the rocks too. Surely if anyone personifies the need for sacrifices, it is the very men who talk about it all the time.

Here are some facts about the life style of three of our current rulers. From time to time, we will be returning to the others.

Report: Paul Foot
Pictures: Peter Harrap and Chris Davies (Report)

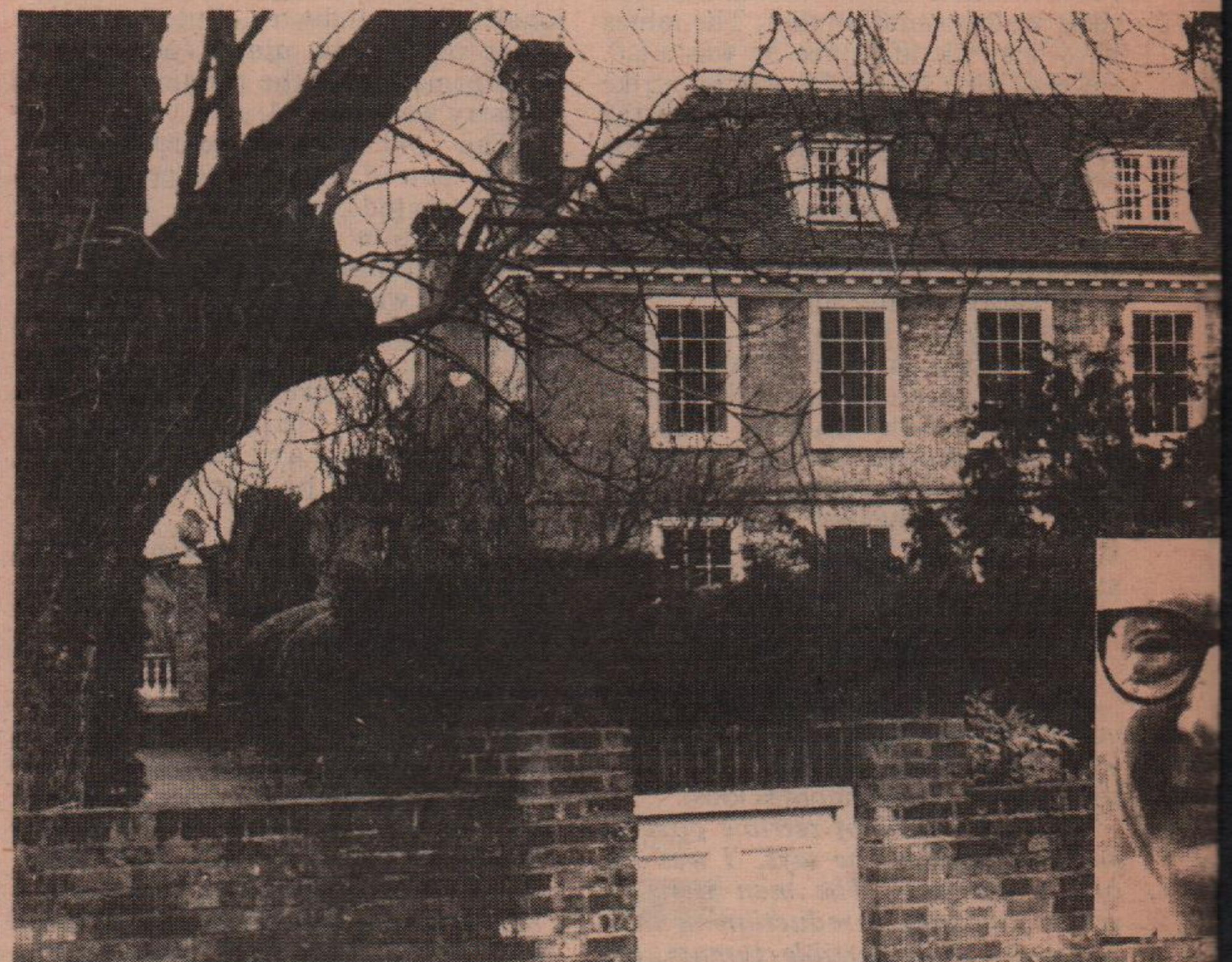


Walker—qui

PETER WALKER, Minister for Trade and Industry, lives in his constituency—at this little place near Droitwich. He also has a 'gentleman's flat' in fashionable Belgravia.

Mr Walker is a multi-millionaire, but he didn't inherit his fortune. He 'made it', mainly in insurance, unit trusts and 'playing the Stock Exchange'. He is a co-founder of the investment, financial and banking organisation, Slater Walker, and when the Tories came to office in 1970,

his personal stake worth about £3 million. Add to that other holdings, and a dozen other Adwest Engine made a killing near Reading). One of Slater when Walker took and Aitchison, chain. In October sold Dolland a



Carrington—energetic profiteer

LORD CARRINGTON's magnificent country home is at Princes Risborough Buckinghamshire. Lord Carrington's family owns thousands of acres of prime development land around his country seat.

The policies of the government of which Lord Carrington is fourth in command and the Tory Party of which he is chairman have paved the way for some nifty property speculation to the noble Lord's benefit. 140 acres of his land is to be sold

to the local Wy price when the in 1972 was pounds. Now it Last month out a statement personally would profit. The m would be going children. Early last y had to put out about his other

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in the company was £1,000.

enormous property directorships of some companies (including optical retailing which has just development land

Walker's subsidiaries office was Dolland the optical retailing 1970, Slater Walker Aitchison to the

cigarette magnates Gallaher Ltd for a handsome £10.5 million.

A few days later, Peter Walker's government announced a sharp increase in charges for spectacles, contact lenses and other optical equipment. The Sunday Times pointed out that the increase had considerably reduced the prospects and the value of Dolland and Aitchison.

QUOTE OF HIS CAREER: 'Politics is just something I greatly enjoy'. (1958).

Why Paul Channon is a stout fellow

KELVEDON Hall, Brentwood, is one of the homes of Mr Paul Channon, who is Minister of Housing. Brentwood is 30 miles from London, so naturally Mr Channon needs a town house as well.

Here it is, at 55 Chester Square. The Chester Square House would sell at about £150,000, and there is no limit to the price of Kelvedon Hall.

Mr Channon is the Tory MP for Southend, because his father married into the Guinness family (the people who make the stout). The Southend seat is owned by the Guinnesses.

The second Lord Iveagh (King of Guinness) was MP for Southend from 1918, until he became an earl in 1927. The Southend Tories were so sorry to see him go to the House of Lords that they selected his wife as the Tory candidate. She was Tory MP for Southend until 1935.

By then Paul Channon's father, known as 'Chips', had married Lady Iveagh's daughter, so he became Tory MP for Southend until he died in 1958. Naturally, young Paul was selected to follow him. The Guinnesses have been sitting for Southend for 55 years, and just to make absolutely sure of the succession, Paul Channon has married another Guinness.

Until he joined the government, Paul Channon was a director of Arthur Guinness and Sons, and he still holds about two million shares in this highly profitable company. Average dividends coming into the Minister of Housing's pockets from his family firm—£100,000 a year.

QUOTE OF HIS CAREER? Paul Channon has never said anything interesting, but his father's diaries are full of fabulous quotes about how the rich lived it up in the 1930s—the decade of mass unemployment. On 28 March 1939, he wrote about the Tory Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, who was busy appeasing Hitler: 'I know now that I really love the Prime Minister and have great hero-worship for him.'

a director of the British Metal Corporation, Barclays Bank, Hambros Bank, Schweppes, Smith Industries.

When Barclaycards were introduced, Lord Carrington happened to be in San Francisco. He went into Albert Samuels jewellery shop and bought a £100 watch, paying by Barclaycard. 'I don't really need another watch,' he told an interviewer, 'but how else can I find out if our credit card system works abroad?'



ombe authority. The le was first mooted st over a million £8½ million.

ord Carrington put explaining that he not be making a ey, he explained, into a trust for his

r, Lord Carrington another statement—roperty, his lovely

Georgian residence in Ovington Gardens, Kensington. Two houses next door which had been a church school became empty, and were snapped up by Lord Carrington for a bargain £100,000.

With the help of a £7000 improvement grant from Kensington Council, Lord Carrington split the two houses into six flats and sold them for £50,000 each.

Net profit to Lord Carrington: £200,000.

When questions were asked in parliament about this use of rate-payers money in a borough full of slums and homeless people, Lord Carrington explained that none of the money would be coming to him. It was going into a trust for his children.

Before reaching high office, Lord Carrington spent most of his time in the City of London. He was chairman of the Australia and New Zealand Bank (£8500 a year salary), and



The latest issue of International Socialism provides essential, in-depth analysis of many of the issues facing readers of Socialist Worker.

In an important article Andreas Nagliati discusses the need for a rank and file movement and the difficulties facing attempts to build one. The article is particularly relevant in view of the conference called by a number of rank and file papers for the end of March.

Frank Roberts provides a fascinating account of the effort of the Uruguayan Tupamaros to change society using urban guerrilla methods. He draws the conclusion that they could not succeed because such methods rely upon the heroism of a few individuals, not the organisation and initiative of the working class itself.

Luis Angel Fernandez Hermana describes how such organisation and initiative developed spontaneously in the industrial areas in Chile before the coup, despite the efforts of the main working-class parties to discourage it. And Duncan Hallas begins an important new series of articles on the revolutionary ideas of the Communist International in its early years.

Finally, Notes of the Month analyse the pressures that have been driving the government towards confrontations with the miners, its fear of losing such a confrontation, and the way in which the TUC general council has tried to help it out of a tight spot.

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International Socialism

For services rendered

VIC FEATHER is still very much in business. The former TUC general secretary returned recently from South Africa where he led an official British trade union delegation to look at the conditions of black workers.

And as a tribute to his services to British capitalists over the years, he was elevated to the peerage in the New Year's Honours List by a grateful Tory government.

Baron Feather has been a frequent traveller abroad. One of his most important trips was the one he made in 1945 when he went to Greece with Sir Vincent Tewson. Tewson was later to become TUC general secretary when Lord Citrine retired in 1946.

Feather stayed on in Greece after Tewson had left. His task was to re-organise the trade union movement. He had been sent when the British ambassador in Greece begged Churchill to request Citrine to provide someone.

Remarkable

At the time, Greece was nearing the end of a bitter civil war between the Communist resistance movement and the monarchists and neo-fascists backed by

Feather's visit must rate as one of the most remarkable ever made by any trade union leader. Although he was not a soldier, Feather was given the rank of colonel and a room at the luxurious British Military Headquarters in Athens.

He stayed in Athens from February to April and finally formed the Greek Confederation of Labour.

Colonel Feather returned home but within a year the Confederation had fallen apart and some of its leaders imprisoned. Feather's handpicked leader, Fotis Makris, survived until after the colonels' military coup in 1967 when he was sacked.

During the first ten years of Makris' rule no major strikes took place at all. In 1955 he approved a law which allowed the government to cancel any local wage rises.

But finally, in 1956, he was forced to lead a brief general strike. This annoyed some of his closest friends. And one of the angriest of them all was an American named Brown.

Like Colonel Feather, Brown had also been in Athens in 1945. Like the colonel, he had also decided that Makris would make an ideal leader for the new Greek TUC.

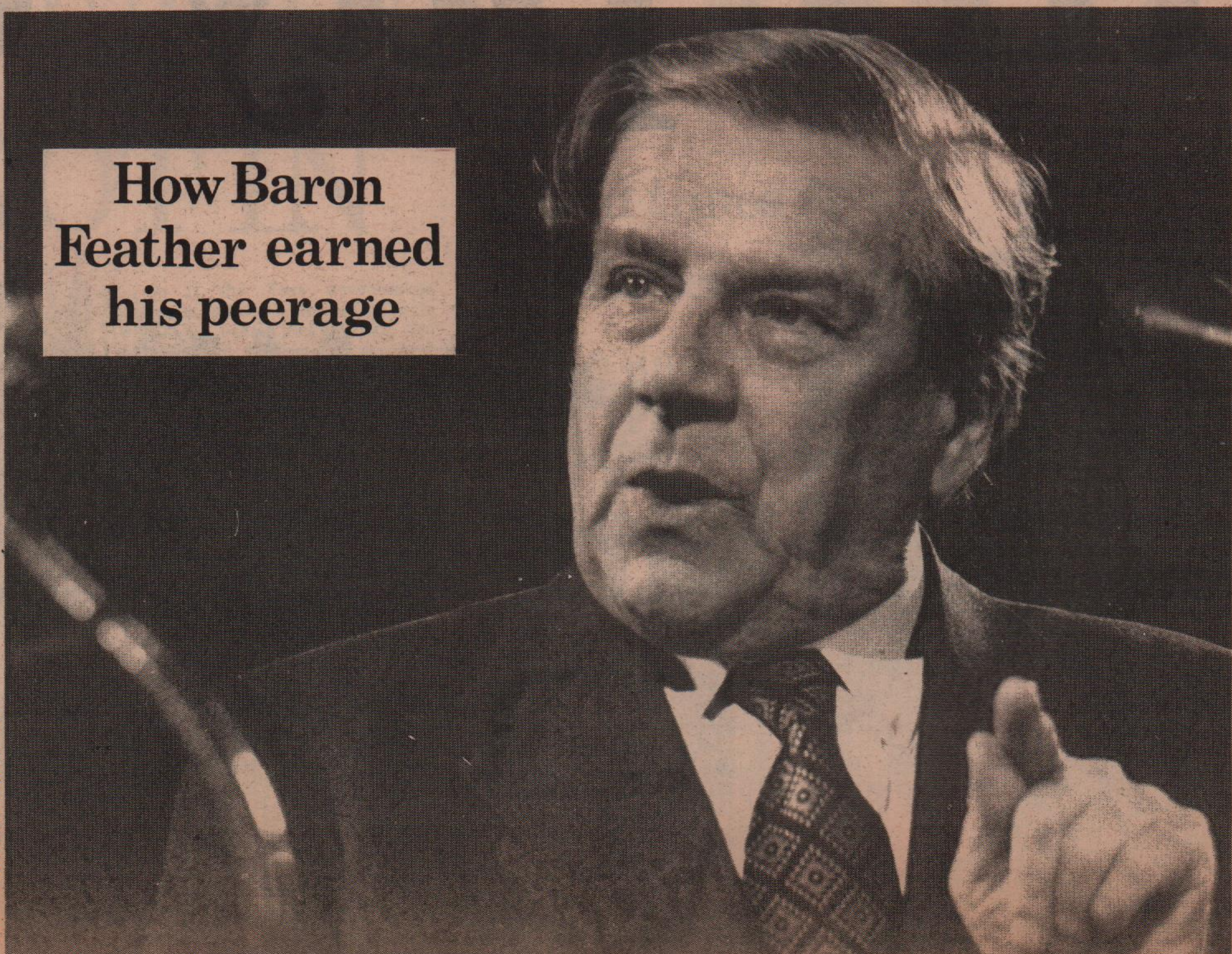
Brown is employed in the international department of the American AFL-CIO, the US equivalent of the TUC. In 1966, the United Automobile Workers Union of America accused the department of having 'permitted themselves to be used by the Central Intelligence Agency for clandestine operations abroad.'

One of these 'operations' had been in Greece. In 1956, when Brown criticised Makris for calling the strike, he complained: 'I gave the so-and-so 200,000 dollars and look what he is doing now.'

In 1967 a delegate from the Draughtsmens' Union spoke at the TUC and asked for a statement

How Baron Feather earned his peerage

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)



by ROGER ROSEWELL

on the allegations that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions—of which the TUC is a member—was receiving large amounts of money from the CIA.

George Woodcock, then TUC general secretary—Feather was his deputy—denied that the ICFTU had received any such money and the matter was allowed to drop.

But one little nagging doubt was left. In the same year it was also reported that Lord Cooper, of the General and Municipal Workers Union, was the British auditor of the ICFTU's finances.

This was innocent enough but the doubts were caused by the fact that Cooper was at the same time a director of the little-known Atlas

Foundation.

In 1967 this was accused of being a 'respectable front' for British Intelligence and of supporting various CIA-financed student conferences.

In 1845 Feather went to France to warn against communism in the trade unions. In 1946—remarkably for such a minor TUC official—he accompanied Charlie Dukes of the General and Municipal Workers Union and later to become Lord Dukeston to the European conference where the treaties were signed between the victorious allies and the defeated Axis powers.

In 1949 he went to West Germany where the re-organised unions—partially influenced by the British military and TUC visitors—agreed to

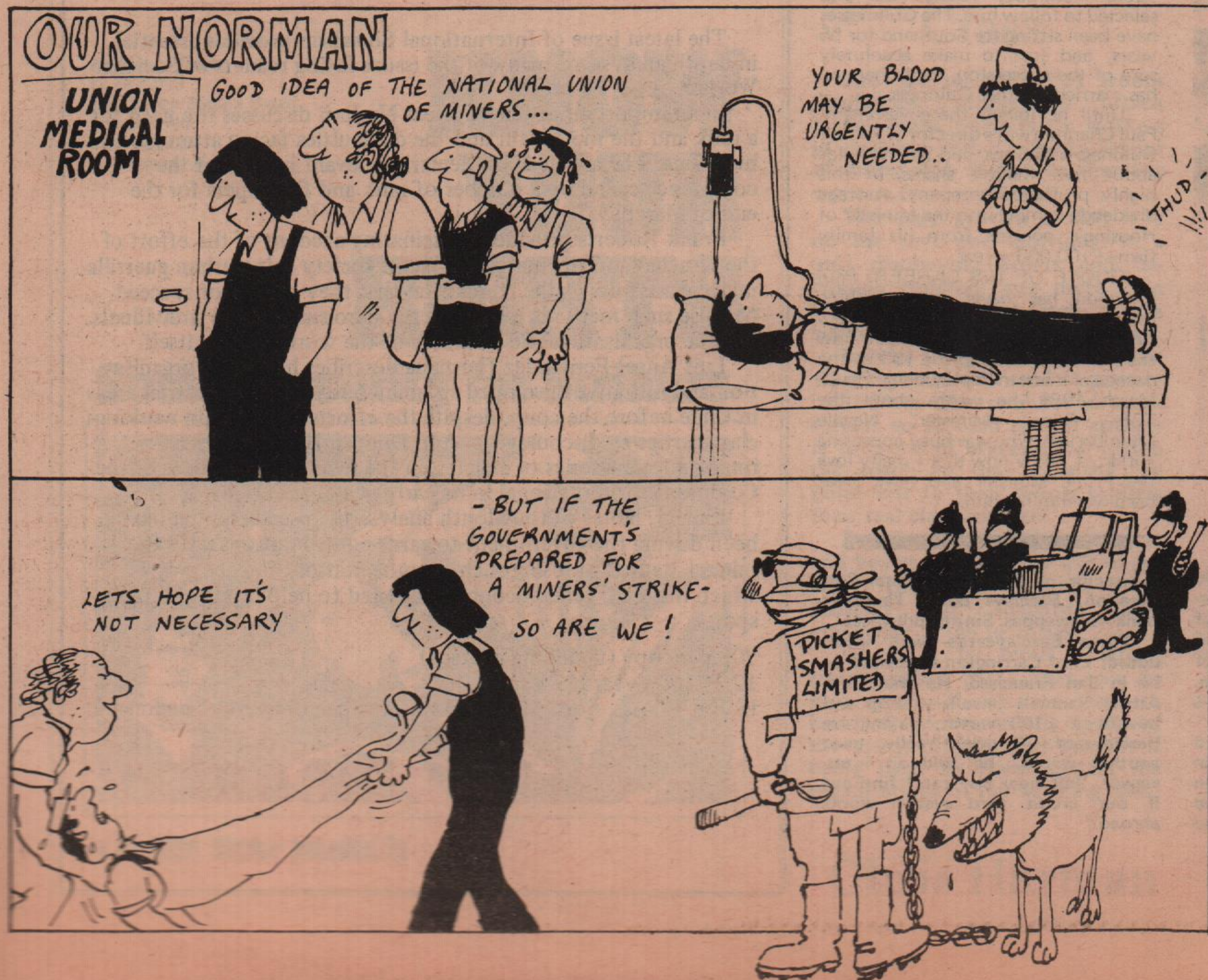


CHURCHILL: a special request

incomes policies with Ted Heath.

The honorary army colonel and anti-communist was now firmly guiding the trade union bureaucracy along the lines laid down by the system.

Last month's peerage was a formality.



join the ICFTU.

Feather's next three trips were arranged by the Foreign Office, the Commonwealth Office and the CIA-financed ICFTU.

In 1957 he toured South-East Asia for two months and visited several countries. One of these was Singapore where a number of left-wing trade union leaders were imprisoned by the notorious Labour Front government.

When a delegate from the Engineering Workers Union asked about these arrests at the 1957 TUC, Sir Vincent Tewson replied vaguely: 'There are real difficulties in Singapore . . . but I want to assure congress that this is not a case of general trade union persecution. Far from it.'

Articles

In 1960 Tewson retired and Colonel Feather was promoted to the rank of assistant general secretary.

Again he was very busy but this time in Britain. In February he wrote anonymous articles in the Sunday Times against the communists in the Electricians Union and arranging for Les Cannon—the leader of the right wing—to meet and get money from David James, the Tory MP for Brighton Kemp Town.

In 1970 he was elected a member of the exclusive Grillions Club and in 1972 and 1973 led the TUC to Downing Street to chat about

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JACK ASHLEY (Labour MP for Stoke South): 'Would the right hon Gentleman care to visit the Victoria Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent where he would see a vivid, exciting and convincing portrayal of the reasons for retaining Shelton steelworks? Does he realise that it would be an act of great folly to close the steelworks, which has such a distinguished history of steel production, and could still have a distinguished future if the British Steel Corporation were prepared to invest a few million pounds?'

PETER WALKER (MP, Tory Secretary of State for Trade and Industry): 'I have always been worried about going to the theatre since Abraham Lincoln went to one on a certain occasion.'

MR WALKER made his little joke in the House of Commons, London SW1.

The Shelton Bar Steel Works sprawls over six square miles of the Potteries in North Staffordshire. Steel has been made there since 1839. The British Steel Corporation intends that tradition should end as soon as possible—preferably by 1975.

The effect on the area will be disastrous. Unemployment currently at four per cent will rise to seven per cent. 10,000 people will be directly affected by the closure.

But then, there are pressing reasons for the closure. As the late Lord Melchett, head of BSC said: 'The corporation is an aggressive international corporation, not a public utility.' Which sums it up well. The corporation exists to make money, to make more money, and to make people 'redundant'.

'We have to cut costs and improve efficiency, to rationalise,' said a spokesman for the BSC.

I walked around the old part of the works last week. A part which dates back well before the Great War. Where the buildings look like ruined Victorian railway stations.

You see few people. Industry has worked well on this landscape so much as to be a part of it. It isn't a concrete wasteland, but a wasteland of rubble, grey grass, moss, puddles, ditches, ruined buildings, huge black derricks, pipes, and steam, hissing out of holes in the earth, out of pipes high above one's head.

As if a huge, metal animal has landed in North Staffordshire and buried itself into the earth and into the community. It feeds the community, gives the community life, and feeds off the community, sucking peoples lives, and killing them.

But behind the animals were men, from 1839 onwards Steel-Masters came, made money from the mill, built large houses, some left, some stayed, one of them is involved in the struggle to keep the place open.

Eventually, courtesy of Harold Wilson, Tony Benn and others came nationalisation, the Labour leaders imitation of socialism. In the name of the 'state' the new corporation continued the exploitation of the industry. But more 'efficiently'. With the aid of a computer the works was found redundant and in need of 'rationalisation'

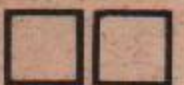
FIGHT for Shelton Bar is a play about the projected closure. It is on over the next few months at the Victoria Theatre Hartshill Road, Stoke-on-Trent.

The Victoria, opposite the local infants school, down the road from the pub, looks more like a local bingo hall or cinema than a theatre. Light years away from London's West End—or even the new civic theatres in places like Nottingham or Sheffield.

Peter Cheeseman, the director, calls it 'North Staffordshire's theatre', and Fight for Shelton Bar is very much North Staffordshire's play. The dialogue comes from 120 hours of tape recording from the workers at Shelton, compressed into two and a half hours. The songs were written by the theatre.

And in this lies the play's strength—and its weaknesses.

'Capitalism' is men like Peter Walker, and the new boss of BSC, Monty Finniston, in London, planning and plotting together. And making jokes about other people's dole queues.



Against this tight little group are the workers of this country and other countries. Separated by geography, tradition, trade, accent, sex, colour of skin. By the lies of the press, by the lies of radio and television.

United by a common experience of exploitation by the Heaths, Walkers and Wilsons. But when this experience is diverted it is submerged by a fierce regional pride. Based on generations of craftsmanship, common triumphs, common sufferings.

A justifiable pride—but a pride which is a sitting duck for the 'lame duck' philosophy of the

Walkers and Finnistons.

The disbelief that people who have done so much, worked so hard for so long can be tossed aside is highlighted in a scene when the now dead ex-Chairman of BSC Lord Melchett, visits Shelton, Melchett, whose personal fortune could buy Stoke three times over is presented with a Wedgewood bowl. Melchett's response is to announce the closure of the works.

Last Autumn his successor, Finniston showed up. He is given a Spode china statuette. He ifs-and-butts his way out of the meeting . . .

The courageous fight of the workers at Shelton Bar has been conducted with an underlying belief that petitioning for the *locality* is the answer. BSC think differently. All over Britain that corporation is laying waste to the jobs of 100,000 people, backed by the Tory government—and when in power by the Labour Party.

Represented by men like Benn,

who the committee went to see . . .

'If people leave the Bar, or anywhere else and get another job, they'll face the same situation again and they can keep crawling away into the corner, but in the end there 'ent a corner to creep into . . . when do you sort of stand up and fight? That's what it amounts to.' Bill Foster of the Action Committee.



Which is so true. But he has only got one part of the answer. We have to stand and fight, like the workers at Shelton Bar are doing, but we have also to seal the holes which the Tories and Labour Party are trying to push us into.

Which means getting past the region, past one works, into the industry nationally, and into a political battle. It involves realising that it is within our power to decide our future—not a question

for Finniston, Walker, or sympathetic local MPs.

'We haven't had sit-ins and demonstrations here' says someone during the course of the play. They've all been hard-working and don't strike. Perhaps other workers are strikers and wreckers, and 'subversives'. Which is a common belief much fostered by the Daily Mirror, Sun and Express.

It lasts until that day when you too get your cards and watch a car park or office block replace your factory.

It is a good play, often a moving one, and the total reliance on the workers for the dialogue gives it strength.

But the politics are terribly wrong. The inch of rope the workers at Shelton are fighting for *alone* is the inch that will throttle their work-mates on Teesside, or in Wales, or everywhere the Tories are attempting to smash us.

NIGEL FOUNTAIN



Art and life. Ted Smith of the Action Committee with Graham Watkins who plays him in *Fight for Shelton Bar*.

The Battle of Shelton Bar

TELEVISION

'ESCAPE AND GORMLESS GERMANS are the current fashion at the BBC' writes Christian Ferber of *Die Welt*, the German equivalent of *The Times*.

He points out that the coverage is unlikely to improve Anglo-German relations.

What a ridiculous accusation. The World at War this week was dealing with shooting *Japanese* in Burma which had very little to do with the Germans anyway.

And look at *Family At War*, it's up to Episode 44, admittedly of the repeat of the series. Next week's episode deals with David Ashton's last bombing raid, so the mighty bombers of Granada TV should at last be silent.

And look at *Colditz*. Why no one's escaped in months! The introduction of kilted William Rushton the other week can hardly have struck terror into the heart of the BBC's mock-up Nazi bunker.

Compared with the coverage given to groups of reds and wreckers like the Miners and Railwaymen the Germans have got off quite lightly.

Last week for instance there was only *Carrie's War* (for children), the *Film of the Week—What Did You Do In The War Daddy?* (about failing to shoot Italians), *It Ain't Half Hot Mum* (about how funny Indians are when you take over their country and make racist jokes about them), *Dad's Army*, *Zeppelins Over England* (about how to shoot down any airships which might be over your way), *Hurt Hawks* (about First World War airmen recovering from being shot at by Germans).

There's nothing like hating foreigners to make you realise what a nice bloke Heath is—a man who shot his fair share of Germans.

And all these sinister Nazis makes you realise that English soldiers in their quaint little tanks aren't dangerous at all.

If it wasn't for Army commercials on TV then you'd never get the government to admit that factory life is boring, back-breaking and monotonous, and that you'd be far better off in the Professionals . . .

JOHN TELFAIR

PREVIEW

SATURDAY: BBC-2, Yesterday's Witness is *THE VILLAGE ON THE WALL**, contrasting the traditional life on Woodgreen, a village in the New Forest, in the 1930s and the situation today.

SUNDAY: BBC-1. Yet another terrible movie to remind us of the good old wartime spirit. Hollywood's attempt at 'everyday' life in England. *MRS MINIVER**. On BBC-2 is *Edition* which features a filmed profile of agony columnist Evelyn Home*.

MONDAY: BBC-1, 8pm. *OIL TODAY, OIL TOMORROW?* Panorama dealing with Saudi Arabia and oil. *Horizon* on BBC-2 has *THE WRITING ON THE WALL** examining why there is a New York crime wave, and could it happen in Britain? Answers to the BBC please, not Socialist Worker . . . RADIO-4 has the classic JM Synge comedy, *PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD**

TUESDAY: RADIO-4. The first Labour Administration of 1924, that perfect trailer for half a century of sell-out is examined in *A TASTE OF POWER** with Lords Shinwell, Boothby, Brockway and Lady Margaret Cole. Wonder why Karl Marx never got a knighthood . . . On BBC-1 an investigation in the Tuesday Documentary of the KGB—*THE SOVIET SECRET POLICE**. It goes on for 90 minutes. A fascinating and horrifying subject. I wonder why it is on *now*? Doubtless programmes on MI-5, SAS, CIA, FBI, Savak, Gestapo, Deuxieme Bureau etc are being prepared . . .

THURSDAY: BBC-1. Play for Today is *JOE'S ARK** by the sometimes good writer Dennis Potter.

*Times not known at time of going to press.

Post Office firmly on the hook

IN THE midst of the economic crisis it has gone almost unnoticed that the Post Office is in a particularly serious state. Postal and telephone services are struggling on despite appalling staff shortages, but the aftermath of comparatively minor industrial action which ended last November is creating a serious cash crisis.

For Post Office workers the crisis presents an unprecedented bargaining situation which could be used to improve their lousy pay. Yet a huge question mark hangs over the willingness of union leaders to seize this opportunity.

A campaign of guerrilla strikes by 65,000 telecommunications and postal white-collar workers during October and November resulted in telephone accounts and reminders being delayed. Revenue of £120 million failed to come in during the

by Gordon Blair
Chairman, Post Office
Data Processing Services
Branch,
Society of Civil Servants

strike. The loss in interest from this revenue has put the Post Office management right on the hook, and this even though only 600 key staff, members of the Civil and Public Services Association and the Society of Civil Servants, were actually on all-out strike.

The strikes were in protest against the failure of the government to grant 'anomaly status' to Post Office workers. Just as the action began to bite last November, the union leaders did a deal—after secret talks with Post Office chairman Sir William Ryland—and the strikes were called

off on the promise that the Pay Board's Relativities Report would solve the problem.

The strikes ended with a backlog of 3½ million telephone bills in the Data Processing Service computer centres. Now there is a backlog of 4½ million.

Such was the disgust with which union members greeted the sell-out, that not only was there a ripple of unprecedented unofficial protest stoppages in telephone areas, but a spontaneous overtime ban and non-cooperation movement sprung up in the crucial computer centres.

The DPS unions staff-side committee, which represents the 4000 Post Office computer workers, was recently addressed by the managing director of telecommunications, E J Fennessy, who was adamant that unless the outstanding revenue of £75 millions was recovered before

the end of the financial year, then the already perilous borrowing power of the Post Office would be threatened.

This could not fail to have serious repercussions on the expansion of telephone services, since the investment situation is already acute as a result of years of neglect by both Labour and Tory governments.

Hell-bent

National officials of both the SCS and CPSA, the computer and clerical unions, have admitted to branch officials that unofficial action has placed a wonderful weapon in the hands of the negotiators. Yet they seem to be hell-bent on squandering it. Both unions have just concluded a Phase Three deal, and despite the claims of the officials that they were unable to use the situation to extract

the maximum possible out of Phase Three, it still means a cut in take-home pay for workers who can least afford it.

Some senior officials have actually urged in private that the unofficial action be retained since they still believe they can use the Post Office's cash crisis to secure an extra pay rise under the Relativities Report recommendations.

They do not seem to understand that even when members are bitter their morale is damaged by the complete lack of official national action. Some computer workers, while fully in favour of action, are fed up with losing overtime pay while other union members are working normally.

But there is little doubt that members in the key areas are willing to continue the fight. The DPS branch committee of the SCS, which represents the 1000 computer supervisory grades, has called on the union's executive to act on its pledge to restart official action to get a 'Relativities' pay rise and resoundingly defeated a proposal to return to full co-operation with management.

It will be a difficult fight to beat Phase Three at this second and belated attempt. But the opportunity is definitely there. If only the national officers were wholeheartedly to support action, a significant victory could be won.

THE UNIONS

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.

ENGINEERS: WE MUST DEFEND 40 HOUR DEAL

by Gerry Walsh (AUEW)

THE TORIES have made it clear that there is going to be no immediate end to the three-day week. Indeed soon they may cut it to two days.

As Socialist Worker has stressed, all workers must fight to make sure we don't pay the price.

For three million of us in engineering our key weapon in this fight is the guaranteed week agreement. But our unions have done precious little to give a real lead on defending and using this agreement, and all over the country deals

have been made which either abandon the guaranteed week or fail to use its full possibilities.

We can't just let matters rest here, hoping that the problem will blow over in a week or two.

The guaranteed week agreement in engineering says basically that if a full week's work is not available then we are paid 40 hours at consolidated time rate. Bonus is absorbed, but overtime and Saturday premiums are paid over and above.

In many cases this agreement has

been misguidedly abandoned in the belief that we can get more cash from three days work at perhaps 10 hours a day plus two or three

For many workers, particularly women and those who earn low bonus, that's just plain wrong—you don't get more money that way. But the argument doesn't stop here.

If there is two-day working, then the abandoning of the guaranteed week no longer looks so attractive.

Even with three-day working it can only pay to abandon it by working 10 or 11 hours on the three days—and once it is abandoned we have no way of resisting that.

Abandoning of agreements and working long hours will be used as precedents to attack our conditions in the future.

But if you keep the guaranteed week then you have no need to work more than eight hours a day. Indeed it isn't worth working more because you'd be effectively paid from 21p (skilled) to 15½p (women) an hour for it.

Nor is there any incentive to graft if you are on piecework under the guaranteed week because bonus payments get absorbed into the guarantee. And these two facts, once we have successfully defended the guaranteed week, give us powerful levers to push up our earnings.

At scarcely any cost at all, we can ban all overtime and go slow until we are paid a full week's pay. The guaranteed week must not just be defended, it must be built upon.

So these are the two messages that came from last week's national meeting of IS engineers, messages that must be rammed home in every engineering shop over the next couple of weeks.

ONE: Defend the guaranteed week. If you don't you are immediately harming many of your members, creating precedents for future attacks on conditions and taking 10 or 11 hours working lying down. TWO: Build on the guaranteed week. Not a minute over eight hours! Go slow until we get a full week's pay.

Officers strike blow at GLC union's democracy

THE senior officers of the Greater London Council Staff Association have suspended all normal union activities of its 18,000 members. In a move described as 'unprecedented' they have banned all meetings of elected delegates.

The rank and file pressure group in the association, The 1970 Group, commented: 'Every other union is working normally and we cannot understand why it should be necessary to suspend our normal procedure.' One reason advanced is the difficulty of finding meeting rooms.

The suspension was made by the officers under a rule which allows them to govern the union without recourse to the elected governing body. The irony is that the senior officers are all appointed by the governing body.

There is strong suspicion that the suspension has nothing to do with the crisis and a great deal to do with the officers' lack of activity on the £500 a year London allowance claim.

The claim was first set out by the officers, who successfully recommended a joint campaign with the local government officers' union NALGO. But then no campaign was mounted. Such was the lack of activity that

the 1970 Group started a move to gather the necessary signatures, under rule, for a general meeting of all the association's members.

The announcement of the suspension coincided with the news that the group had got the necessary 250 signatures and had it not been for the officers' action a general meeting was inevitable.

Many members are shocked and angry at the arbitrary action of their officers. The need for democracy in the trade union movement is highlighted by this anti-democratic procedure.

The election of officers, their accountability, control and, if necessary, recall are questions that are being raised more and more throughout the trade union movement. In the GLC Staff Association a good start could be made by removing the iniquitous rule which gave the officers power of suspension.

Another aspect of this disgraceful situation is that GLC Staff Association officers refuse to discuss the matter with the press. Those who howl about the activities of left-wingers in trade unions have of course maintained a discreet silence on the whole affair.



There's not a moment to lose

A CALL to action goes out this week to all branches and members of the International Socialists from the IS Executive which met last Friday.

'ALL members of IS, whatever their circumstances, have to put the miners' strike top of the list for their activities. Whatever happens in the dispute each one of our members must make up their minds that they will do their utmost to ensure com-

Wanted! —for helping Labour

LIZ BALFOUR is a member of Colindale IS, North London, and took charge last December of an IS campaign against the National Front candidate in the Brentwater Ward by-election. She and other comrades drew up a leaflet exposing the Front's racialist politics and calling for a Labour vote to humiliate the National Front.

Before distributing the leaflet, Liz rang Terry McMahon, the Labour agent in the East Willesden constituency, explaining their intention. McMahon replied: 'I wouldn't touch anything the IS did. I warn you if you go ahead with the leaflet, I'll do you.'

The IS branch went ahead with leafletting and distributed some 2000 leaflets. Three days later the Labour candidate was returned with an improved majority in a relatively high poll. The National Front candidate came well bottom of the poll with a miserable 186 votes.

A few weeks later Liz got a letter from Detective Inspector C Ashdown asking for 'an interview in relation to an inquiry'. Liz eventually went to see the inspector, who asked at once if she had been expecting an approach from the police. 'No', replied Liz.

Anger

'Oh', said the inspector, 'Mr McMahon said he'd told you that he'd be telling us about your intervention in the election and complaining that it was in breach of the Representation of the People Act.'

Liz refused to answer any questions, and the inspector told her that he had forwarded the papers to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The behaviour of McMahon has aroused some anger in the local labour movement. The following resolution was passed in a local union branch on 1 February:

'Wilkesden 5 AUEW protests at the decision of the Brent East Labour Party to initiate a prosecution against a member of the International Socialists because she was concerned in the production of a leaflet against the National Front during a recent by-election.'

'In this current economic crisis, the Tories and their fascist allies are seeking to use every possible weapon against the working class. One of the employers' oldest weapons is that of divide and rule, and now the Tories and fascist groups such as the National Front are seeking to use racialism to divide workers, and to use immigrants as a scapegoat.'

'In this situation it is necessary for all trade unionists and socialists actively to oppose racialism and fascism. We therefore call on Brent East Labour Party to withdraw their complaint to the police.'

plete victory for the miners. 'This means:

'ONE: Working in every area for the formation of genuine representative 'Support the Miners' Committees. These committees must be based on factory and union branch organisations. A handful of individual socialists is no substitute for genuine representation.

'Work for these committees must not be left only to our members in

factories. All our members must concentrate their efforts on visiting militants, pushing resolutions for the formation of committees on shop stewards' committees, trade union branches and trades councils.

'TWO: The committees must be mobilised to provide the maximum possible support for miners' pickets at local power stations, coal and coke depots and so on.

'THREE: They should also organise mass meetings in the places of work at which miners' representatives can put the miners' case and explain the miners' tactics.

'FOUR: If a miners' strike does take place, there will be a sharp rise in political consciousness. IS members must make every effort to develop this consciousness into permanent socialist organisation.

'Mass recruitment, especially among miners, is crucial. We must not be satisfied simply with an increase in the circulation of Socialist Worker. This must be turned into permanent socialist commitment to IS if the circulation rise is to be maintained after the strike.

'FIVE: Every effort should be made to link the demand for the freeing of the Shrewsbury Three with demands for effective miners' pickets.

Miner explodes '16 per cent' myth

OXFORD:—More than 100 people heard Paul Foot and John Glass, a miner from Daw Mill Colliery, Warwickshire, speak on the crisis. John exploded the myth of the '16 per cent rise', showing how 150,000 of the 270,000 miners would get no more than the Phase Three maximum of 7 per cent.

Jock Wight, a former shop steward from Pressed Steel who was recently victimised and pushed out of the night shift, spoke up powerfully for independent political organisation in the working class. 'What drives the bosses mad is principled action. They can't understand it. They think everything can be bought or bullied out of the workers, and when they see workers acting from principle, they don't know what to do', he said.

Six people joined IS, and the meeting collected £35—half for the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund, half for the families of the Shrewsbury Three.

trade unionists to tell other trade unionists the truth should put up their hands. The meeting of 170 was unanimous in support. More than £120 was raised in the collection. Five people decided to join IS.

Miner slams TUC

LONDON:—Standing room was full when 170 people crammed into a meeting at the Cricklewood Hotel to hear Trevor Ball, a miner from Rugeley, speak about the miners' pay claim. He said the TUC had no right to promise that other workers would hold back their claims so the miners could get more. All workers must be involved in this fight against the Tory government.

Keith Dobie, a building workers' shop steward, said the union leaders were trying with all their power to forget that three building workers were in jail. Money alone was not enough. Only industrial action would free the three.

Tony Cliff, from the IS National Committee, said that while we were involved in the most tremendous battle, our leaders in the unions acted like total cowards in the face of the Tory enemy. Every cowardly act by the TUC strengthened the Tories and led to more demands for

Free the Three!

SOUTH EAST LONDON district IS public meeting to launch a Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee. Speakers: John Llywarch (building worker convicted of picketing at Shrewsbury), Wally Preston and a speaker from Greenwich Trades Council. Friday 8 February, 8pm, Charlton House, The Village, London SE7. Sponsored by Greenwich Trades Council.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Worker public meeting: Free the Three! Speakers

Victory to the Miners

HIGH PEAK Socialist Worker public meeting: Support the miners—kick out the Tories. Speakers: Bill Message and a member of the NUM. Sunday 10 February, 8pm, Ashwood Park Hotel, Fairfield Road, Buxton.

MIDDLETON AND MOSTON IS public meeting: Support the miners! Speakers: Mick Osborne (Maltby NUM) and Glyn Carver (Manchester IS organiser). Thursday 14 February, 8pm, The Railway Hotel, St Mary's Road, Moston.

SWANSEA VALLEY IS public meeting: Why the miners must win. Speaker: Kinsey Gough (Caerou NUM Lodge committee). Monday 11 February, 7.30pm, Three Compasses, Clydach.

CAMDEN IS and LONDON BUILDING WORKERS IS public meeting: Support the miners! Speaker Wally Preston. Tuesday 12 February, 8pm, Kings Cross Regional Training Centre, Birkenhead

Their crisis—our answer

EAST LANCASHIRE district IS public meeting: The crisis and how to fight it. Speakers: Paul Foot and John Carpenter (building worker convicted of picketing at Shrewsbury). Friday 8 February, 8pm, Regency Hall, King George's Halls,

NORTHERN HOME COUNTIES Region IS aggregate meeting: Sunday 10 February, 2pm-5pm, Bedwell Centre, Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage. Speaker Jim Higgins. All IS members in the region should attend.

WOMEN'S VOICE Special Crisis issue ready now. News and interviews on Women and the crisis, and general features. IS branches please phone orders to Harlow 37205.

BOUND VOLUMES of International Socialist Journal: A limited number of bound volumes of issues 36-55 have been produced for those who did not take advantage of our pre-publication offer. Price, including postage, £7.30 each. Send your orders in flow please. Delivery will take a couple of weeks.

BOLTON IS holds regular meetings in the Spinners Hall every Friday. If interested, why not come along, or write to Paul Kennedy, 70 Stewart Street, Bolton (phone 25226).

STUDENT GRANTS AND THE CRISIS—a new IS Students' pamphlet. 5p each (£1 for 25 copies, cash with order) from IS Students, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

WIGAN TRADES COUNCIL DEMONSTRATION: Wigan district IS urges all trade unionists and socialists to attend. Saturday, 9 February, 11.30am, Support the miners. Free the Shrewsbury Three. Bring down the Tory government. All IS members in Lancashire to attend. IS members to meet 11am Market Hotel.

cuts in out living standards.

A collection, to be shared between the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund and the Shrewsbury Defence Committee, raised £52. Six people joined IS.

170 at rally

SHEFFIELD:—170 people came to a Free the Three rally in Sheffield to hear John Carpenter, one of the three builders' pickets tried at Shrewsbury, and Tony Cliff. The chairman was Greg Douglas, chairman of the Rotherham branch of the Constructional section of the Engineers' Union. Songs from Alex Glasgow and the Grey Cock folk group were very well received. The meeting raised £63 for the Shrewsbury families.

Port backs meeting

HULL:—80 people heard John Carpenter and Dave Peers, IS national secretary, speak on 'Shrewsbury and the Crisis'. The meeting was sponsored by the Hull Port Shop Stewards committee, Transport and Stevedores Union branches in the docks, and the building workers' joint stewards' committee. Speakers from the floor included Jean Jepson, the victimised convener of Armstrongs, Beverley.

John Carpenter (building worker convicted of picketing at Shrewsbury) and Duncan Hallas. Tuesday 12 February, 7.45pm, Marlands Hall, Tickets 10p, in advance from sellers of Socialist Worker or at the door.

SOUTH LONDON District IS public meeting: Free the Shrewsbury Three! Speaker John Llywarch (building worker convicted of picketing at Shrewsbury). Wednesday 13 February, 8pm, Christchurch Hall, Cabal Road, Battersea, London, SW11.

Street, London WC1 (opposite Kings Cross Station).

NORWICH IS public meeting: Victory to the Miners! Speaker from NUM. Thursday 21 February, 7.45pm, Central Library, Norwich. All trade unionists welcome.

DEMONSTRATION: 'Free the Shrewsbury 3' 'Victory to the Miners!' Saturday 9 February, 2pm, assemble Victoria Square, Stafford. Followed by meeting: speakers include Jim Clarke (NUM, Lea Hall Colliery) and speaker from building workers. Organised by Midlands Region IS. For further details phone Coventry 21662.

BIRMINGHAM Socialist Worker public meeting: Miners' strike—the key to victory. Speakers: Duncan Hallas and Trevor Ball (NUM, Lea Hall Colliery). Friday 15 February, 7.45pm, Lecture Room 2, Digbeth Civic Hall.

Northgate, Blackburn.

WORCESTER IS public meeting: The crisis—the socialist alternative. Speaker Paul Foot. Thursday 14 February, 8pm, Technical College, Deansway, Worcester.

BRIGHTON AND CRAWLEY IS Day School: Building the revolutionary party—speaker Chris Harman (editor IS journal). Revolutionary work in the trade unions—speaker Roger Cox (AUEW shop steward). Sunday 10 February, 10am-5pm, Sussex University. MEMBERS ONLY.

LEICESTER IS Day School: Where we've been and where we are going. Sunday 10 February, 2pm. Highfields Community Centre, Melbourne Road. Jason Meyler on The lessons of the pre-war movement. Duncan Hallas on IS political perspectives.

EAST MIDLANDS IS aggregate meeting: The rank and file conference. Speaker Pete Clark. Tuesday 19 February, Leicester University Students Union. All IS trade union members to attend.

MERSEYSIDE district IS public meeting: Lenin—50 years later, 1924-1974. Speaker Tony Cliff. Thursday 21 February, 8pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

IS Training Committee would like to hear from members with experience of tape recording equipment that could be made available to the committee on loan for short periods to enable recordings to be duplicated for use by branches. Please ring Chris Davidson at 01-808 3200.

Tottenham IS public meeting: Victory to the miners! Speaker from NUM and Duncan Hallas. Thursday 14 February, 8pm, YWCA, (Near Scotland Green), 628 High Road, N17. All welcome.

WOULD IS members please note that the deadline for entries in the WHAT'S ON column is first post Monday. Many notices are still arriving on Tuesdays and so failing to get in.

NEWS-IN-BRIEF

NEWBURY:—The growing interest in socialist ideas was in evidence at South Buckinghamshire College of Further Education, where Tim Whitfield of Reading IS and Helena Cobban, Oxford IS organiser, spoke to 70 people about the student grants campaign, the crisis and the need for socialist organisation. 17 joined the IS Society and three joined IS.

Boost for branch

MAIDSTONE:—The IS branch at Maidstone, Kent, got a big boost from an enthusiastic meeting of 30 people addressed by Roger Protz, editor of Socialist Worker. He spoke about the coal crisis con-trick and about the much more economic crisis coming in the autumn. He criticised the trade union leaders and called for the strongest possible socialist organisation.

Bomb threat to picket

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE:—Police cleared the Nixon Hall after a bomb threat during a speech by John Llywarch, one of the building pickets tried at Shrewsbury. When the hall had been checked John Llywarch asked that anyone who disagreed with his description of what happened at the trial or who disagreed that it was his duty as a

More than £100 was raised in collections and donations for the families of the Shrewsbury Three, and John Carpenter took a collection on the door for Jean Jepson.

Students aid miners

THROUGHOUT the country students are mobilising in support of the miners. The London Student Organisation has fixed a delegate conference to co-ordinate a London pool of pickets, accommodation, welfare, fund raising and propaganda. Colleges throughout the Home Counties are to adopt miners' lodges for close liaison. Every college should follow this.

Solidarity with the miners is essential. Socialist students must intervene in the campaign to get beyond the feeling of 'sympathy' for the pitmen. The struggle is not one of a 'special case'. Students struggling for a higher grant must be clear that the clash between the miners and the Tories is also their fight. The only way for students to get practical gains is to unite in the struggle to smash Phase Three and the Tory government behind it.

Miners' representatives were to attend the student grants demonstration on Friday.

Pickets trials: 800 call for action

THE 800 delegates to Saturday's Liverpool recall conference on the Shrewsbury pickets' trials virtually unanimously backed the platform's call for a campaign to bring the issues home in the working-class movement over the next six weeks.

The conference called for a day of action in every region during the week beginning Monday 18 March and for a massive lobby of the Court of Appeal hearing in London on Tuesday 19 February when the appeals of the three jailed pickets will be heard.

Alan Abrahams, speaking for the North Wales Defence Committee, said the day of action in March had to be of the same order as the massive TUC demonstration against the Industrial Relations Act. Sporadic outbursts of action here and there were not enough, he said.

Abrahams was the first of many speakers who spoke of the problems with the campaign to free the three. Throughout the conference speakers drew attention to the vital importance of the Shrewsbury trial for the whole future of the working-class movement and to the fact that the issues were far from simple to explain.

Bernard Donaghy, one of the National Union of Mineworkers agents in Lancashire, spoke strongly on the meaning of the trial. He insisted that it was the miners' success in 1972 which led to the tightening of the picketing laws and the jailing of the Shrewsbury Three.

He added that the NUM would not be intimidated by the Tories. The whole movement should stand solid behind the building pickets and the miners, he said.

Lead

Lou Armour, a UCATT full-time official in the North West region, appealed for the maximum unity in the campaign.

He said he realised how frustrated people felt at the campaign so far, which had seen no official lead from his own union.

Peter Carter, speaking on behalf of the Midlands region of UCATT,

by Socialist Worker reporter

stressed that there was a tremendous amount of confusion in the working-class movement about the Shrewsbury issue.

He said the lack of publicity on the nature of the charges and the course of the trial meant that the field was clear for papers such as the Daily Mirror to weigh in when the verdicts came out.

In this situation, he added, there was a desperate need to unite all workers on a common platform. The Transport Union and UCATT in the Midlands had already summoned a conference on Shrewsbury and the job now was to ensure that there were firm declarations of action from every possible factory and site.

John Deeson, from St Helens Trades Council, insisted that while there were difficulties facing the movement, it was absolutely clear that one-day stoppages would not

get the lads out of jail and that the TUC would only move if massive pressure was built up.

He said the campaign had to build towards prolonged industrial action. For these reasons the conference declaration desperately needed to be strengthened.

Nick Howard, from Sheffield Trades Council, said that while unity was essential, so too was criticism. He said that the building industry in Sheffield was appallingly badly organised. This made it even more necessary to bring the issue home to well-organised workers.

Action

He described how John Carpenter, one of the three men on suspended sentences, had spoken to miners about the trial and brought the issue home to them.

Bert Smith, chairman of the UCATT General Council, made the final speech in support of the platform's declaration. He vigorously attacked the stab-in-the-back statement which had just been released by the executive of his own union.

The conference accepted recommendations from the platform against the endorsement of amendments suggested by the International Socialist delegates and others.

The amendment from Willie Lee, an AUEW senior shop steward at Chrysler Linwood and an IS member, sought to bring the question of prolonged industrial action to the centre of the campaign. This was rejected, but his suggestion that the declaration should support the miners was accepted.

Last week the applications by the three Shrewsbury pickets for bail were refused again. Their appeal against conviction and sentence will now be heard on 19 February.

Every trade unionist should be campaigning for the maximum attendance on delegations to lobby the appeal court hearing. They should also be campaigning strongly for stoppages on the day of action in the week beginning 18 March and for a monster attendance at the expected demonstration in London.

JOHN LLYWARCH HITS BACK

JOHN LLYWARCH, one of the three men who got suspended sentences in the first Shrewsbury trial, hit out strongly when two Communist Party members leafleted his meeting in Teesside on Thursday last week with criticisms of his conduct and of the International Socialists' activities on Shrewsbury.

John made his usual normal speech at the meeting, outlining what really went on

Open letter to the defence committee

IN RESPONSE to an attack in the Morning Star on the International Socialists' campaign to free the Shrewsbury Three, the following letter was sent to the North Wales Defence Committee. A copy was sent to the Morning Star.

Dear Brothers,

We were surprised to read your press statement to the Morning Star of 31 January in which you attack the methods of the International Socialists in the campaign to free the Shrewsbury Three.

We cannot understand why you did not write directly either to us or to John Llywarch or John Carpenter before speaking to the press. Not only are your allegations completely unfounded, but they can only serve to damage the whole campaign at a time when the maximum unity of all sections of the working class movement is required to get these trade unionists released.

You allege that IS is writing to organisations offering speakers on the campaign and that this is a cheap and unprincipled means of attempting to recruit to this political organisation, and you imply that John Carpenter and John Llywarch claim to be speaking on behalf of the North Wales Defence Committee. Both these statements are simply untrue.

We have not written to any organisation offering speakers on Shrewsbury, and the Socialist Worker rallies at which John Carpenter and John Llywarch have spoken have been openly advertised as IS meetings and all money collected at these meetings is divided equally between the Socialist Worker Shrewsbury Campaign and the Defence Committee. Both John Llywarch and John Carpenter make no secret of the fact that they are members of IS and surely they are entitled to address meetings of their own organisation. What is 'underhand' about that?

When John Llywarch and John Carpenter have spoken at site meetings, trade union branches or shop stewards committees they have done so not on behalf of the North Wales Defence Committee but in their own right and it is not up to you or anyone else to deny them that right.

But they do insist at these meetings that any money raised in collections or trade union donations be sent directly to

your committee. Their intention has been simply to bring home to other trade unionists the importance of what happened to them and the other Shrewsbury pickets and to build support for the movement to get Des Warren, Ricky Tomlinson and John McKinsie Jones out of jail.

They know that you disapprove of what they are doing and that you have tried to stop them; but they have brought the message of Shrewsbury to thousands of workers in dozens of meetings over the past few weeks. Through their efforts hundreds of pounds has been sent to your committee.

Release

They have taken personal risk in doing this, because they are on suspended sentences, but it was their decision to undertake this campaign. It is their contribution to bringing about the release of their three brothers in prison, and IS is proud to be able to assist them in this. What would you have them do—sit at home and do nothing?

We intend to continue the campaign to release the Shrewsbury Three by every means at our disposal. This is our clear duty as socialists and trade unionists.

But we would prefer to do this in unity with the North Wales Defence Committee and we cannot understand why you have chosen this time—on the eve of the Liverpool Trades Council's Shrewsbury Conference—to launch this unprovoked attack upon IS and the two Shrewsbury defendants. We would welcome the opportunity to refute these charges in front of your committee in the hope that we can achieve united action in our common aims.

Fraternally,
Dave Peers, National Secretary on behalf of IS Executive Committee

The Morning Star declined to publish this letter in full and quoted only a few lines of it out of context.



The scene at last Saturday's conference on the Shrewsbury trials. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)

Classified

Copy for the Classified section must arrive by first post Monday morning. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 1p per word, semi-display 2p per word. CASH WITH COPY to Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS

Open meeting on education cuts, education White Paper, and staff-student ratios. Speaker Harry Cowan (West Lancs RFTT). Sunday 10 February, 7pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London, W1.

ARCHITECTS AND SURVEYORS NEEDED to work within co-operative housing association in groups of eight to ten workers including social workers and housing management. On new work and conversions in Lewisham/Southwark area of London. Salary negotiable. Frank Vickery, Solon Housing Association, 381 Clapham Road, London SW9. Phone 274-9998.

IRISH PRISONERS' HOSTAGES' COMMITTEE: Sunday 10 February, 2.30pm, assemble Clapham Common for march to Brixton Prison in solidarity with Dolours and Marian Price. Sunday 17 February, 2pm, picket outside Gartree Prison, Leicester, in solidarity with Hugh Feeny, Coach leaves London 10am from Quex Road, Kilburn.

CITIES OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER TRADES COUNCIL and LONDON CO-OP POLITICAL COMMITTEE public meeting, Porchester Hall, Porchester Road, London W2: Fight against Tory policies. Tuesday 12 February, 7.30pm, Arthur Latham MP, Reg Taylor (LCS Political Committee) and NUM, ASLEF and AUEW speakers.

LAW AND CLASS: The third of a series of meetings. Jeremy Smith speaks on The changing role of criminal law. Tuesday 12 February, 6.45pm, London School of Economics (Room 510) Houghton Street, London WC2. Admission free, Organised by the Haldane Society.

COMRADE NEEDS ROOM in socialist flat or house, London. North of the river. Contact Jan Golab, 11 Broadhurst Gardens, London, NW6.

STEPHEN BODINGTON discusses Computers and Socialism with The Socialist Party, Saturday 23 February, 8pm, General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London N1 (near Kings Cross Station). The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

WOMEN AGAINST THE TORIES Conference organised by London IMG: Sunday 17 February, 10am-5.30pm, Imperial College, Prince Consort Road, London SW7. Workshop will include: Shrewsbury, equal pay, and the miners. A planning meeting for the conference will be held at 8pm on Friday 8 February at the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London N1. All welcome.

WORKERS' FIGHT public meeting: Lenin. Speaker Andrew Hornung. Sunday 10 February, 8pm, The Golden Lion, Kings Cross Road, London N1.

SAVE POPLAR HOSPITAL STOP THE EAST END HOSPITAL CLOSURES

A protest procession through the heart of London from the condemned Poplar Hospital in East India Dock Road to the London Hospital, Whitechapel, via local hospitals. Saturday 23 February, starting at 10am prompt, with band and banners.

Neil Milligan (Nat Org ASLEF)

THE RAIL DISPUTE Thursday 7 February, 6.30pm, Central London polytechnic Students Union building, 104-108 Bolsover Street, London W1 (nearest tube Great Portland Street).

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.

Pickets trial: 'Get them at any price'

SHREWSBURY:-The defence case in the second pickets trial opened on Monday when Gary Davies explained from the witness box what happened during the picketing of McAlpine's Brookside site in Telford.

He and five others face charges of unlawful assembly and fighting and making an affray. The five are Alfred James, Arthur Murray, William Pierce, Samuel Warburton and Thomas Williams. Two others, John Clee and Derrick Hughes, are pleading guilty to unlawful assembly.

Gary told the court he had remained by the coaches which brought the pickets to the site until someone had asked him to come over and join the site meeting. He insisted that there was no intention to teach anyone a lesson with the pickets, that there was a large number of pickets to show that the strike was solid.

The ruthless nature of the prosecution was seen when he was cross-questioned. Prosecuting council Maurice Drake attempted to make him admit that since he didn't turn the whole expedition back single-handed and he knew how the picketing was being conducted, then he must have been rampaging across the site.

This 'get them at any price' approach showed time and time again as the prosecution case was drawing to a close.

The prosecution announced that they would drop the charge of affray against Alfred James. They had been unable to produce a single witness to identify James as being involved in any alleged offences of damage or fighting.

Now after their show of magnanimity they presumably hope to show that Alfred James was guilty of unlawful assembly because he committed the terrible crime of attending a site meeting and listened to other people speaking.

Attendance at the site meeting became an important part of the prosecution last week. Constable Williams, for example, told the court he saw a picket help someone with a cut over his eye, but that he saw no damage being done and that he did not go close to the site meeting.

Damage

Nonetheless he said he could identify Des Warren and John Carpenter, both convicted in the first trial, as leaders, and that he could identify the defendants John Clee, Samuel Warburton, Alfred James and William Pierce at the front of the meeting he had never got close to.

A Mr Castle, a carpenter also weighed in with more 'identifications'. He claimed he was told he was on strike by a man whom he described as wearing a white shirt and jeans, and who had a Welsh accent. He identified the man as Eric Tomlinson, who was also convicted in the first trial.

All the photographs show that Tomlinson wore trousers and a flowered shirt. He also has a Liverpool accent.

All the prosecution has to show in support of the affray charge is that though the defendants were doing nothing in particular, they were part of a picket which frightened people.

The most interesting of these last week was a Mr Butler, a labourer on the site. First he said that the pickets who ordered him out of the house he was working in stepped aside at his request to let some women cleaners out.

Immediately after this Mr Butler described the same men as 'a wild horde'. He also reported an interesting conversation he had with one man. 'I told him if he came into my house I'd shoot him with my double-barrelled 12 bore', he said.

Then Mr Butler described how the picket had dared to intimidate him: 'He said I'd have it wrapped around my neck.'

Asked to identify this man, Mr Butler said he knew his name was Warren but that he'd forgotten his glasses. Then, using borrowed glasses, Mr Butler first asserted Warren wasn't on the photo, then picked the wrong man, before spotting him with his hand up speaking.

Hope fades for pickets

WEST LONDON:-Asian workers are continuing the daily picket at Perivale Gutermann, the thread-making firm in Ealing where they were sacked 11 weeks ago. The picket is now only symbolic. The local Department of Employment has been instructed to direct scab labour to the plant and subcontractors are driving the finished products through the picket.

The Transport Workers Union has failed to arouse any physical support for the picket, even though the factory is on one of the largest industrial estates in Ealing. Instead the union has gone to an Industrial Tribunal claiming unfair dismissal.

Some workers believe that the court will re-instate them.



ASTMS postgraduates picketing at University College, Swansea, during their strike

Massive support for strike by student teachers

SWANSEA:-The strike of more than 100 postgraduate student teachers demanding recognition for their union, ASTMS, is now in its third week. 24 hour picketing of supplies into the university is beginning to bite deeply.

Heating has been reduced dramatically and food, beer and stores for various departments are running low. Refuse collectors have not crossed the picket lines and the college safety officer has threatened police action as rubbish piles up.

The strike, with a similar one in Edinburgh, is

making trade union history. Never before have post-graduate students received such support from other trade unionists.

Transport workers, post office engineers, railwaymen and shopworkers have been instructed by their unions not to cross the picket lines. Support has come from university branches of technicians in the ASTMS and the AUEW.

Other messages of support have come from far and wide including several miners' lodges.

Labour MP and chairman of the college council Ifor Davies met a delegation of ASTMS branch officials last week. He implied they should call off the pickets and he refused to give full support to the union demand.

The college authorities' obstruction and obstinacy has hardened the strikers—as has the experience of 24 hour picketing. Most important has been the solidarity of the rest of the trade union movement.

Messages of support and donations to D Jones, 25 Bryn-y-mor Road, Swansea.

NUR JOINS RAIL BOARD ATTACK ON ASLEF MEN

by SW reporter

AS TRAIN DRIVERS in the Western and Eastern regions went on one-day strike this week, a massive assault on their case for better pay was staged by the National Union of Railwaymen.

Leading the attack was Sid Weighall, senior assistant NUR general secretary. On 29 January he wrote a conciliatory article in the Morning Star. 'The issue on which the unions are totally united outnumber by far those on which there is a difference of opinion,' he wrote.

But two days later he called a press conference to announce the distribution of 15,000 NUR leaflets which denounced ASLEF, the drivers' union, for holding out for more money in British Rail's pay restructuring proposals.

This line was taken up by Dave Bowman, a former president of the NUR and former Communist Party candidate in Dundee many times over. Writing to the Sunday Times, he argued that the British Rail offer to engine drivers is much, much better than the engine drivers had made out. Bowman's letter expressed unconditional approval of the British Rail case.

He wrote that the British Rail offer of a 'consolidation allowance' of £2.45 represented a substantial pay increase for most engine drivers. This is not so.

Castings strike official

NUNEATON:-After six weeks of thumb-twiddling and fruitless negotiations, the Transport Workers has made the strike of 83 workers at Coventry Art Castings official. This followed the refusal of management to consider a resolution from a mass meeting of workers still inside the factory asking them to reinstate all the strikers.

So far eight strikers and supporters have been arrested. Charges include obstruction, assault, threatening behaviour, and breach of the peace. Police harassment has been constant, with the police encouraging drivers to cross the picket.

As ASLEF have consistently argued, the 'consolidation' payment spreads the money now paid in mileage allowances evenly among all train drivers. Some on long mileage runs would actually lose. The gain for most can be counted in pennies.

The press, eager to build up the NUR propaganda campaign against the drivers, has put it around that drivers are leaving ASLEF in droves and joining the NUR.

The truth is very different.

STOPPED

In the last two weeks of January 280 men joined ASLEF and 26 left. Of the 26, 24 have left the railways altogether.

Drivers at the Hither Green depot in South London voted unanimously to come out on a one-day strike until the press corrected its lies. The strike was stopped at the last moment by the hurried intervention of an ASLEF official.

All over the country militants have been fully supporting the train drivers' action in support of their claim.

Alan Carlton, ASLEF secretary at the York depot where 40 of the 370 train drivers are in the NUR, told Socialist Worker: 'The attitude of the NUR executive is certainly not the attitude of NUR men in general—

certainly not of NUR footplatemen. The majority have been supporting us through this period.'

Bernard Bell, secretary of the NUR No 7 (York) branch said that he thought the British Rail offer was fair, 'but as a good trade unionist I support the ASLEF men in their action.'

Roger Cooper (NUR, St Pancras) writes:

Two hundred ASLEF members meeting in Central Hall, Westminster, last Thursday decided to set up a liaison committee of delegates from London ASLEF branches to press for stronger and more united action around the claim.

Derek Fullick, speaking for the ASLEF executive, denounced the NUR leadership for ganging up with the British Railways Board against ASLEF.

Speakers from the floor argued that the time had come for stronger action. The day the decision to call off non-co-operation was made was described as 'Black Thursday'.

Before the meeting broke up a motion of support for the miners, pledging the blacking of all coal, was passed unanimously.

Miners give airport men a lift

HEATHROW:-Expectations of a miners' strike has halted the slow slide to acceptance of a Phase Three pay deal at Britain's airports.

The antics of full-time officials like John Cousins of the Transport Union created a mood of despondency amongst the rank and file. The whipping up of fears of redundancies because of the energy crisis made Cousins and others confident they could sell Phase Three before long.

A meeting of engineering and maintenance shop stewards from all manual unions was planned to allow the stewards time to recommend acceptance of the Phase Three deal this week to a mass meeting.

This mass meeting would be followed by a meeting of national officials with the employers to discuss distribution of the Phase Three offer.

But the shop stewards' meeting was dominated by the prospect of a miners' strike. It was clear that no settlement could take place during it.

The mass meeting was postponed until 14 February and officials have been instructed to try to negotiate a better offer—and then recall the stewards.

It was added that no settlement would be reached before the supervisory grades in ASTMS settle. This highlights the £15 gap between engineering and maintenance workers and their chargehands.

So the airports haven't entered the struggle yet. Unlike the pits, docks or car industry no-one knows how serious an airport strike would be. Militants are convinced that this shouldn't stand in their way.

An airports strike would have immediate effects, they argue. Heathrow being the largest international airport in the world, and Britain's second largest port.

Travel News and Flight magazine believe a strike would be 'catastrophic'. Overseas earnings for British airlines amount to £300 million a year—any stoppage would seriously affect the balance of payments.



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Mass pickets key to mines victory

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

'100 SALTLEYS'

THE MINERS' STRIKE is on from midnight Saturday. The union says there will be no talks with the government unless there is cash on the table. There will be large-scale picketing.

The decision has been taken and the key tactic that won in 1972 is to be repeated. But since 1972 the government as well as the miners have learnt the lesson of successful picketing. The Shrewsbury prosecutions are an example of the government's attitudes. From Robert Carr to the House of Lords, legal picketing is considered to be unsuccessful picketing.

But the mass picketing at Saltley two years ago proved that such Tory laws can be made unworkable. The miners can win this time provided there is not just one repetition of the Saltley coke depot mass picket but, as Yorkshire NUM leader Arthur Scargill says, 'Hundreds of Saltleys.'

In the heat of industrial action, what is illegal what our enemies, the bosses, the Tories, their police and judges, can impose on us. They cannot force crippling laws on mass pickets of thousands of workers.

If the miners are determined enough and other workers support them there will not be enough of

Mr Carr's special strike-breaking police squads to go round. In every locality miners' support committees must be formed from delegates from other sections of trade unionists, ready and willing to help in every part of the struggle.

Stewards and militants from other industries should take their turn on the picket line, relieving some of the miners' pickets to go round local factories, meeting stewards' committees and getting further promises of support.

SAFETY BAN

One example of what can be done is in the Neath and Dulais Valleys of South Wales where miners have approached the Joint Unions Committee formed at the end of the 1972 strike. Support has already been pledged by South Wales transport and rail workers. Miners' leaders from six pits in the valleys have met together with delegates from most of the local factories.

Members of NACODS, the overmen and deputies union, in South Wales are presently operating a weekend ban on safety work and are pledged to continue this on through the strike.

Pressure is building up among NUM and many NACODS members for the overmen's union to join the strike. During the 1972 strike the NACODS members carried out vital safety work

in the pits. This time NUM pickets at the collieries should not let any of the members cross the picket line. If this were done, the condition of most mines would very quickly become permanently unworkable, a tremendous pressure on the government to settle.

Every provocation from the police and the government must be met by massive displays of solidarity with the miners by every trade unionist. The preparation for this must start now. Every member of the International Socialists in the coalfields will be in the forefront of the campaign for formation of effective Joint Miners and Trade Unionists' Committees. In every other locality IS members will be fighting for Miners' Support Committees for blacking and picketing help.

All the resources of the labour movement must be mobilised to help the miners to victory.

This time the NUM, nationally and in the areas, has made more careful preparation by asking other unions, particularly transport and rails, not to move coal and oil. They are meeting a favourable response. But this should in no way detract from the need for the maximum use of the flying picket and the mass picket.

Not only must the power stations be effectively picketed but also the coke depots and the steel works and every other enterprise where the miners can hit home.

'We fight on' say Clay X Three

The heroic stand of the 11 Clay Cross councillors who have defied the Tory government's Housing Finance Act for nearly two years, is over... for the time being.

After Lord Denning's announcement in the High Court last week that the councillors should 'stand down', the Labour group on Clay Cross Council met last Thursday. Three of the most militant councillors, Graham and David Skinner and Charlie Bunting, housing committee chairman, were away from Clay Cross that evening. The six at the meeting decided to accept that they were disqualified and to prepare for new elections.

On Monday the two Skinner brothers and Charlie Bunting arrived at the council meeting, but the clerk declared that the meeting could not be held as there wasn't a quorum.

The three men refused to accept that they have been disqualified. 'Lord Denning may say we are but we've had no official notification,' said Charlie Bunting.

Defied

The three argue that the Local Government Act under which they were declared disqualified only provides for disqualification if surcharges are levied on them. Although the councillors have been held liable in court for surcharges, a Department for Environment barrister admitted last week in the High Court that the government would not try to get the money out of the councillors.

In other words the councillors, by sticking together and by winning the support of the labour movement across the country, have defied the law without penalty.

What's more, they have saved the 1500 council tenants of Clay Cross £75 by holding the rents below what was 'permitted' by the Tory Act.

Now the solidarity of the eleven councillors has finally been dented under pressure of government, judges, the leaders of the Labour-controlled North East Derbyshire District Council and local Labour MP Tom Swain.

But the councillors are determined that the fight in Clay Cross against the Tory Rent Act goes on.

'We will be united against the Act in the election for new councillors,' says Charlie Bunting. 'There are seven million council tenants in Britain, and only 800,000 have benefitted in rebates under the Housing Finance Act. Take away old age pensioners and social security cases, and more than five million tenants have been penalised by the Act.'

'We will be asking for the support of Clay Cross tenants at the elections to keep the fight going.'

Full claim - and nothing less!

'THERE MUST BE NO question of compromise. We want the lot and some more besides. They've spent three months knocking on the door, no one has answered. It's time they kicked the bleeder in,' so said Dennis Skinner, former Derbyshire miner and now Labour MP for Bolsover, commenting on the next steps after the overwhelming strike vote in the miner's ballot.

Will Lord, underground worker at Askern Pit, Doncaster, told Socialist Worker: 'The feeling at the pit was fantastic. They were all shouting: "81, we've got it." We should be out as soon as possible. This relativities thing is a load of rubbish, nothing less than the full claim will do for us.'

'Stop negotiating and start mobilising. The executive have been dragging their feet too long already. Now is the time to strike,' says Graham Cooke, of Westhorpe Colliery, Yorkshire.

Joe Anderson of the Castle Hill mine in Fife, commented: 'We want no last minute attempts at any shoddy deals. It must be the full claim and nothing less. The strike must start on 10 February.'

From every coalfield the message comes through loud and clear. The miners are confident of their strength, their solidarity and their determination. They know they can beat the government and the National Coal Board.

The worry arises not from any doubts as to their capacity to beat the enemy but from attempts at a shabby compromise, that might rob them of victory, from the right wing on the executive.

Joe Anderson made clear his and many miners' opinion when he said: 'Either we will get the full claim or we will have Gormley's wages. We can't let it drag on



Miners' union leaders Joe Gormley and Lawrence Daly waiting for the ballot result. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)

into the summer. It is money now we want, not talk of future promises.'

When the miners strike all the forces of the government's tame propaganda machine will be brought to bear against them.

As Labour leader Jim Callaghan proved by his attack on Mick McGahey, attacks supported by a large number of Labour MPs, the Tories have willing allies in the electorally sensitive Labour Party. Central to this propaganda barrage will be the increasing hysteria about a general election.

In circumstances like this the NUM right wing will attempt to use loyalty to Labour as the signal to call off the strike.

All of these pressures must be resisted. The miners have proved that sweet reasonableness, modesty and the employment of smooth negotiators does not bring home the bacon. In the 1972 strike the miners won the best increases in their history. In 1974 they are immeasurably stronger than ever before. It must be an all-out strike until the full claim is won.

Union accused of sackings deal

MERTHYR TYDFIL:-28 members of the Engineers' Union, including four shop stewards, are picketing the gates of the massive Hoover factory. Every day dozens of sympathisers join them.

Two weeks ago 130 were suddenly fired for working only four hours of what management claims should have been an eight-hour Sunday shift. The men say they were told by foremen that due to Sunday double time, they would make up an eight-hour shift in four hours. They are now convinced the incident was deliberately engineered by management.

The other 102 have been reinstated after negotiations between management and the AUEW divisional organiser. Many now believe the 28 were not reinstated because of a deal between management and AUEW officials that Hoover will expand in Merthyr in return for an 'understanding' that the workforce will be kept in line and militants curbed.

DISASTER FOUR SAY 'STRIKE'

'MEN CAME IN from sick leave and day release to vote. The four men still in hospital after the Markham pit-cage disaster phoned us to demand a ballot. When we took the ballots to the hospital, they all insisted on voting openly for the strike and all returned their papers in one envelope.'

That was the response to the strike call at Markham pit described by Ike Carter, local secretary of the NUM. Over 90 per cent voted for the strike at the pit.

The national 81 per cent support for strike action is a swift and crushing reply to the witchhunters screaming 'reds under the beds'. This crucial decision can ensure complete victory for the miners—and humiliating defeat for the government.

Only the clerical and technical section failed to vote more than the necessary 55 per cent majority for strike. Only Frank Smith's Leicestershire area (2519 votes) and a few specialist groups with a handful of members failed to break the 70 per cent figure.

The enthusiasm of rank and file miners, already high, has been further increased.

The ballot victory has hardened demands for the full claim and no compromise. Jim Deacon, a Dodsworth colliery faceworker, said: 'We have voted overwhelmingly for strike action. The executive has got a mandate to lead a real fight for the full claim. There should be no mucking about now with relativities, Royal Commissions and winding time. It must be an all-out strike for the full claim.'

Fighting Fund: What a fantastic response!

'EVERY penny you give is a part of the struggle against the government, the bosses, the system,' we said last week as we launched another special fund to raise £2000 during February. And the response was fantastic—£1324.94 in one week!

If this is a measure of the feeling against the Tories, they had better look out! This week's collections include:

Askern Colliery £2, Apex workers, British Airways Terminal £22, Metal Box and YEB workers, Shipley £3.50, Clifton Estate SW readers, York £2.07, Southwark £33, Chrysler Stoke £5, Hyde £5, SOGAT chapel, SW Litho £25, Cambridge £28.25, Newcastle £20, Walthamstow £49, Newham £9.85, Enfield £11.50, Bradford £20, Dundee £10, Lambeth £90, Paddington £26.50, Hounslow £206,

Warley £10, Tower Hamlets £60, Colindale £10, Wood Green £50, Middleton £29.13, Hackney £70, Mid-Devon £3, Cardiff £25, Lewisham £2.25, York £36.

But don't stop now—with an election on the horizon again, and a miners' strike, our resources will be stretched to the limit. The ever-increasing circulation of Socialist Worker means more and more people are reading our paper, and we as all of you to dig as deep into your pockets as you can.

We still have Fighting Fund collection sheets for anyone who wants them, a new collection cards for regular contributors. Please use them—and keep them money rolling in to Jim Nichol, National Treasurer, International Socialists, Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

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