

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

McALPINES

ON a cold picket line in Eldon Square, Newcastle, 200 scaffolders are fighting for the life of trade unionism in the building trade.

Their bitter dispute was deliberately provoked by the most ruthless employers in the trade, McAlpines. McAlpines have staged some of the fiercest battles against building trade unionists: at London's South Bank Shell Centre in 1958, at the Barbican—again in London—in the late 1960s.

McAlpines, through their numerous contacts in the police and the courts, persuaded the last Tory government to prosecute building pickets at one of their lump sites during the building strike of 1972. As a result of that prosecution, Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson are now in jail.

Now McAlpines are making full use of the recession and the massive unemployment in the building trade to try to smash the growing trade union organisation on the building sites of Tyneside. They have hired scabs and bulldozed through the picket lines with armoured trucks.

In all this they have had the full co-operation of the police, the men's union officials and the local press.

This week the Newcastle Journal pocketed £426.93 for a half-page advertisement from McAlpines which pretended to tell the reader 'The Facts about Eldon Square'.

Policemen, press lords, union officials and councillors have all claimed that McAlpines were justified last November when they sacked 14 scaffolders. The men, claim McAlpines' hacks, were 'trying to steal an afternoon's pay'.

In fact the scaffolders took an

By PAUL FOOT

afternoon off after a long union meeting, knowing that they would not be paid.

The real reason was that Eddie Brady, deputy shop steward for the scaffolders, was one of the 14. It was Eddie and the militants around him who built up trade union organisation from nothing, forced the site management to install decent toilets, to introduce hand rails, to reinstate men who had been arbitrarily sacked.

In the last week of October the site was organised 100 per cent. In the first week of November, the first-ever Transport and General Workers branch for all scaffolders in the city was inaugurated, with 200 members. On 12 November a mass meeting of workers on site met to demand better safety facilities.

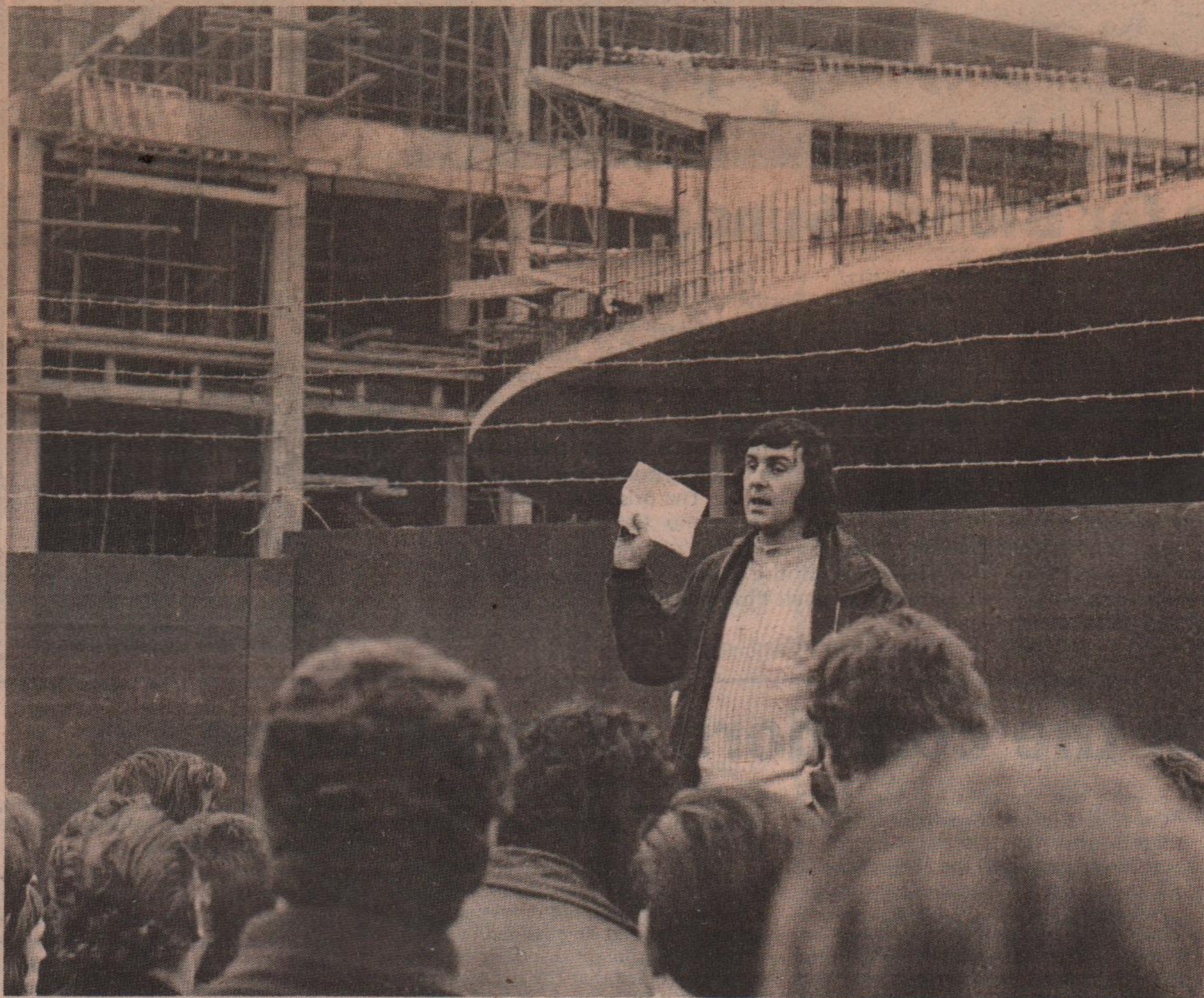
On 13 November a joiner told Davie Dean, a member of the strike committee: 'I've been talking to a foreman. He says McAlpines are prepared to close this site to get rid of Brady and you scaffolders.' On 14 November Eddie Brady and 13 others were sacked.

All the scaffolders walked out that day. They have been out ever since. The rest of the workers voted by a small majority to walk out with them, but were persuaded to stay at work by the three local UCATT officials, who visited the site for the first time ever.

McAlpines tried tougher tactics. Hired trucks, trussed in chicken wire, were driven through the gates

Turn to page 16.

ON THE RAMPAGE!



'We must stick together'—Eddie Brady, deputy shop steward speaking to the striking scaffolders outside the huge Eldon Square site on Monday. PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

£500 FOR SOCIALIST WORKER FIGHTING FUND

THIS letter came with £5 for the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund this week:

'This is a donation to the fighting fund from a woman, an Irish Catholic, who believes fervently in the fight for a free Ireland and supports and argues for this cause in spite of the animosity of those who hear her. She bought Socialist Worker this week and then came back with this donation for the paper. She wants to remain anonymous.'

The letter came from a paper seller in Darlington.

The total sent to the fund this week was £500.

This included: York University IS Society £6, Birmingham teachers £5, Socialist Worker readers, Monmouth £10, C A Parsons £22, Southwark IS £15.89, SW readers, Burnage Estate, Manchester £1.20, Enfield/Edmonton IS £10.50, West London hospital workers IS £36.50, North London hospital workers £8.81, Edinburgh IS £14, SW readers, North London Poly £2.50.

Party bugged, steward deported

THE discovery of a 'bug' in the London headquarters of the Communist Party on Tuesday proves something this paper has long argued. The growing battery of powers at the disposal of the police and the intelligence services are being used to infiltrate and impede the development of the left within the working-class movement.

There was yet another instance of this on Monday. Joe Gallacher, a shop steward in the building workers' union UCATT, was arrested on Monday, under the so-called 'anti-terrorist law'. The 'crime' for which he is being held without trial and for which he may be deported are coming to England 20 years ago from Donegal and being a member of the Communist Party.

This law is being used to hunt down anyone suspected of sympathy with the cause of a Free Ireland. It makes no difference if they and the organisations they belong to condemn terrorism. The very fact that they stand up against the murderous activities of the British army and support united Ireland is grounds enough.

Doubtless it will not be long before this legislation is used to hunt down other such enemies of the state—trade unionists and socialists of any remotely militant hue.

The National Council for Civil Liberties estimates that already 150 people are being held without trial under these laws.

Four people who were in custody for months on charges of murder and conspiracy over the Guildford bombings were released on Monday.

The prosecution announced that it was dropping all charges. This was after the four had been held in solitary confinement, in continuous artificial light for the past two months. They've lost their jobs, their family life has been shattered and the detention has cost them hundreds of pounds.

This legislation hits directly at the British labour movement, to divide, to disrupt, to terrorise. It has to go.

South West London District IS (meetings, jumble sale, collections) £70, Harlesden IS £9, Behind the Wire film collections: Bristol £13.50, Swansea £7, Coventry £22.50.

Croydon Trades Council £5, Leicester engineers £2, SW readers, Meanwood Estate £4, Peterborough IS £4.50, Kirkby IS £3.

The crisis hits socialist and capitalist alike with increasing paper, electricity, telephone, petrol prices, all adding to the weekly cost of producing Socialist Worker. Send donations to Mel Norris, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

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FREE THE TWO!



PIT branches throughout Nottingham are calling special meetings this month to discuss the Shrewsbury jailings. At its meeting on Sunday the Calverton branch in Nottinghamshire, attended by 120 miners, voted with only one vote against to demand that the TUC call all-out strike action to free the pickets.

SUPPORT is flowing in for the Liverpool Trades Council 'Free the Two' conference this Sunday (3pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant).

Shop stewards' committees from all over the city—including Fords, British Leyland, the docks and several building sites—have

already indicated that they will be sending delegations.

Simon Fraser, Trades Council secretary, says that the conference has been called 'to discuss how to continue the campaign to free the lads.' The Trades Council executive will be meeting before the conference to propose a resolution calling on the TUC for official industrial action to Free the Two.

THE executive of the Society of Litho Artists and Design Engravers (SLADE) has called on the TUC to call a one-day national strike to Free the Two.

A CONFERENCE was held last Saturday in Edinburgh by four trade union branches which sent delegates to the Second Rank and File Conference. More than 30 people

attended from different trades union branches. The meeting decided on more joint action in the city to force the TUC into industrial action to Free the Two.

AMONG the trade union bodies which called on the TUC to stage a one-day strike for the immediate release of the Shrewsbury pickets last week were: the South West district council of the National Union of Railwaymen, Blackpool Trades Council, East Kilbride No 5 and Edmonton No 3 branches of the AUEW, and Derbyshire Miners Area Council.

The London Regional Committee of UCATT and the AUEW South Essex district committee have called on their respective executives to press the TUC for a one-day strike.

Abortion The critics are wrong

by Margaret Renn

THIS Friday an attempt is to be made to reduce the chances of women getting abortions. A Bill is to be introduced into parliament, and if it gets through abortion will only be possible for women who are likely to suffer direct physical harm from childbirth.

All sorts of arguments are being thrown up by those who are hysterically opposed to abortion under any circumstances. One example was a disgusting article written by Malcolm Muggeridge in the Sunday Times.

Muggeridge wrote about a massive increase in the number of abortions. Most of these, he says, are late abortions (after three months of pregnancy) involving developed foetuses. Everyone of the arguments is false.

Firstly there is no 'alarming increase' in the number of abortions. In fact there were 163,000 abortions last year—fewer than in 1973. In Italy, a Catholic country where abortions are illegal and supporters of abortion are thrown into jail, there were four times as many, all illegal and many carried out under dangerous conditions.

A third of the abortions in this country were, in fact, for foreign women, driven to come to this country because of the laws in their own countries.

Positive

Secondly, four-fifths of abortions are carried out in the first three months, by a simple and safe operation. The late abortions that give rise to the hair-raising stories only occur because of the continued difficulty many women still have in getting 'early' abortions. As the total number of abortions has increased, the number of 'late' abortions has naturally fallen.

The way to reduce the number still more, as well as to eliminate the unknown number of dangerous, backstreet abortions is to loosen the law further, providing an adequate service through the National Health Service—which only does about a third of the operations at the moment.

Malcolm Muggeridge, and all the other middle-class do-gooders like him, can invoke righteousness, justice and god on their side, but in the end the argument is paper thin. It is propped up by emotional horror stories, and they will never come out and say that they believe that no woman has the right to control her own body, and decide when she will have a child. And when she will not.

If the Bill is successful in getting through its second reading in the House of Commons on Friday, it will represent a threat to millions of working-class women. An all-out campaign will be needed to prevent it becoming law.

NEXT WEEK London busman Pete Glatter writes about violence on the buses, and how to stop it.



2000 march for Bloody Sunday

LONDON: 2000 people marched last Saturday demanding the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and the release of internees. It marked the third anniversary of Bloody Sunday, when 14 civil rights demonstrators in Derry were shot by British paratroopers.

Speakers at the rally before the march included Bernadette McAliskey and Steve Jefferys (right) from the International Socialists. Pointing to a policeman busily taking shorthand notes of his speech, Steve pointed out that 'this was one of the features of the Anti-Terrorism Act, that PC F131 should be noting everything being said by speakers in Hyde Park, supposedly one of the homes of British free speech.'

'What is less noted is the 71,914 British army raids on homes in Northern Ireland. They are the

real terrorists.'

Meanwhile in Portlaoise prison, in the south of Ireland, Patrick Ward, a member of the Provisional IRA, was reported as 'very serious' on Tuesday. He is on hunger strike over the withdrawal of political status from IRA prisoners. The status was awarded after a 1973 hunger strike.

After the mass break-out from the prison last month the authorities began to punish the prisoners who had remained behind. The prisoners protested. Now they have no beds, no furniture and no heating. They eat and sleep off the floors. Ward's fight against the British government's junior partners in Dublin may result this week in his death.

This week in Ireland—page 6.



Pictures: Andrew Ward and Chris Davies (Report)

Crossman in the corridors of impotence

THE Crossman Diaries in the Sunday Times give a hint of who really runs the country.

They show that while Cabinet ministers seem to be powerful, the state bureaucracy—in the shape of sleek and dedicated civil servants—actually run the show.

Crossman tells how he felt after being appointed Minister of Housing: 'The room in which I sit is the same in which I saw Nye Bevan for almost the first time when he was Minister of Health and already I realise the tremendous effort it requires not to be taken over by the civil service.'

He also gives an intriguing picture of a Cabinet meeting getting to grips with the economic crisis.

... we were told as little about it as the National Executive of the Party is ever told. It really was an absolute farce to have George Brown saying: 'Naturally you won't want to be told for fear of the information leaking how serious the situation is. You won't want to be told what methods we shall take but we shall take them.'

What was all that about parliamentary sovereignty and Cabinet power?

But if parliament or the Cabinet

doesn't run the country, who does? On this, Richard Crossman is rather less helpful.

He suggests that the civil service is a collection of bureaucrats outside and above the rest of society. This is not at all the case. In fact, it was set up—and operates—with a very definite and precise relationship to the dominant force in society: big business.

Labour

The Foreign Office is staffed by career diplomats. But diplomats are from the same class as those who pursued careers in business or the law. They do everything in their power to advance the interests of that class of

people—and at the slightest sniff of radicalism they move to quell the disturbance.

This is every bit as true with the Ministry of Housing. Analyse the policies pursued under Crossman and you will see that he presided over the private government of public money. You would see that the big construction firms, the owners of land banks, the developers and property magnates were the people who called the shots.

The central character in Crossman's memoirs is proof enough of this. Dame Evelyn Sharp, permanent secretary at the Ministry of Housing, a bureaucrat extraordinaire, simply moved over on retirement. She became a director of the Bovis building firm and is still, as far as we know, a

valuable asset to that organisation, which does so much business with the Ministry of Housing.

It is a rare treat to have access to this inside version of the reality of government. Crossman's diaries have been subjected to less than the usual surgery and censorship, though if Harold Wilson gets his way, we may be reading no more of them.

But think of the other things we're still lacking. The inside story of how the Tory Cabinet planned Bloody Sunday, how they fought the miners and the dockers in 1972, how they set up the Shrewsbury prosecution

A social revolution will be necessary to get the facts about these events.

Luncheon

H M Government
Miss Joan Lestor, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, was host yesterday at a luncheon given at Lancaster House in honour of the Premier of Dominica.

LESTOR WE FORGET...

JOAN LESTOR, parliamentary under-secretary at the Foreign Office, is deeply opposed to repression in the Third World, and has spent a lot of her political life fighting dictators. No doubt she is horrified by the recent wave of repression in Dominica, and particularly by the death sentence imposed, on a trumped-up murder charge, on the young unemployed youth leader, Desmond Trotter.

She must know all about it, as this announcement in The Times last week makes clear.

International Socialists at work on the shop floor

THE second conference of factory and workplace branches of the International Socialists is to be held in Manchester on Saturday 22 February. It is 20 months since IS first decided to set up branches in factories. Branches have since been established in most car plants, and in many engineering, print and other factories. Since October 1974 a few branches have been established in white-collar workplaces.

Some branches survived, a few were broken by management or other pressures. The experience has been enormous, of factory struggles, of fighting for the best tactics in a strike, in some cases of leading strikes and battles, of organising solidarity blacking, helping visiting delegations of strikers or victimised workers.

This is the experience which will be brought together and discussed and analysed at the conference. For IS the key to all our organisation is the workplace, where the real power of the working class is concentrated.

From this conference the next wave of IS workplace branches will be firmly established on the experience of the first. So IS members in factories where there are just two or three members should also attend the conference. One of the key sessions will be on how to change from a few members to being a branch.

George Kelly, the Electricians and Plumbers Union convenor of Glas-

International Socialists FACTORY AND WORKPLACE BRANCHES CONFERENCE

Saturday 22 February, 11am-5.30pm
Basement Theatre, Manchester Town Hall extension
(between St Peter's Square and Albert Square)

gow Corporation Electrical Workshops, helped build the IS Glasgow Corporation Branch. The branch was founded two years ago, after some debate on whether the link-up of white-collar local government officers union members (NALGO) and electricians would work.

Active

'It is now an established unit in the Glasgow area. It meets regularly every two weeks and includes electricians, clerks, firemen and bus drivers.

'The branch has helped in many ways to co-ordinate work on the shop floor and in the union. After discussions at the branch we have successfully raised and moved resolutions on Chile, the Shrewsbury trials, Ireland

'The branch publishes regularly a news sheet, 'Corporation Worker', which has been well received and is intended to help our long-term perspective of building a construction workers branch.

'One example of the possibilities the branch has opened up occurred recently when corporation plumbers were on strike. Through one of our NALGO members we were able to arrange for plumbers' stewards to address a NALGO branch meeting and, following this, organise their members to help in stopping outside contractors from scabbing on the plumbers.

'The branch's immediate future is well set. A public meeting is being arranged for corporation workers. The production of the 'Corporation Worker' is continuing and hopefully we will recruit more building workers. Not a tremendously exciting programme, but then that's what building a factory branch is all about. Hard patient work and slow but sure progress.'

For full details and credentials for the Conference, contact the IS Industrial Department, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. (phone 01-739 6273).

The IS Industrial Department is arranging a party booking from London Euston to Manchester, at £2 less than the normal rate. Tickets will be £4.50 each. Money with orders please to the Industrial Department, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN, to arrive by Wednesday 19 February. The train leaves at 8.05am.

WHAT THEY SAID IN PARLIAMENT ABOUT JOHN STONEHOUSE, COMMODITY SPECULATOR, PASSPORT FORGER, HYPOCRITE, THIEF

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Wednesday 29 January:

Edward Heath: 'The House is widely known to be compassionate and understanding in difficult personal matters of this kind.'

William Molloy (Labour, Ealing): 'There was a long history of public endeavour on the part of the Rt Hon Member for Walsall North which belonged very much to the honourable and credit side.'

Geoffrey Edge (Tribune Group of Labour MPs): 'It would be improper for the Select Committee to pry into the business affairs of the Right Hon Gentleman.'

John Prescott (Tribune Group of Labour MPs): 'It is particularly important [to investigate Stonehouse's allegations of blackmail] as there are organisations outside the House which are prepared to use such matters to undermine the reputations of Members of Parliament...'

Mr John Stokes (Tory ultra-right-winger): 'Everything about the Right Hon Gentleman was extremely kind and courteous.'

Mr Tom Ellis (Labour MP for Wrexham and friend of the McAlpine family): 'The Rt Hon Gentleman is in an unusual position.'

And, finally, this classic definition of parliamentary democracy from Robin Maxwell-Hyslop, Tory MP for Tiverton:

Mr Edge: 'Does not the Hon Gentleman accept that the people of Walsall North elected the right hon. member in good faith and now feel themselves to have been betrayed? Does he suggest that they have no redress?'

Mr Maxwell-Hyslop: 'Yes. Their redress will come at the next election.'

Mr Russell Kerr: 'In four years' time?'

Mr Maxwell-Hyslop: 'The right hon. Member was elected to serve for this Parliament [Interruption]. The constituents are not innocent; they elected him.'

THE BILL AND BENN SHOW

THE Labour government's new Industry Bill, published last Friday, may have been met with a storm of fabricated protest and concern by Britain's employers, but even the most superficial examination of the measures it contains shows that the Bill is no threat to the private profiteers.

Further, could the captains of industry but see the light, the legislation is designed to bale them out with public money.

The single most notable feature of Tony Benn's Bill is that it marks a wholesale retreat from even a token commitment to public ownership and nationalisation.

Instead of public ownership, the new National Enterprise Board will get to work by buying slices of private companies. This is a polite term for pumping large quantities of public money into privately-controlled companies.

Just how threatening an operation this is was outlined by The Observer last Sunday which noted simply that 'no company will be forced to sell to the government against its will.'

FORCED

The National Enterprise Board is going to be pretty free from government interference too. Its chairman, the ruthless entrepreneur Sir Don Ryder, has repeatedly insisted that he and his servants must be free to get on with the job. He has even compelled the government to agree that his organisation will be paid a 'consultancy fee' when it deals with what he charmingly calls 'Hospital cases', such as unemployment on the Humber side caused by the sudden departure of a multi-national.

The reason the NEB has been set up is simple. British investors are on strike and public money has to be

pumped in to replace the funds.

So what, you might ask, is all the fuss about? It is the provisions about disclosure of information? Partly, but then they're no more radical than those advocated by the Liberal Party or the Industrial Society.

The main reason for the offensive against Benn is not fear of the man or his policies. It is yet another assertion of business power. It is yet another attempt, even in this time of crisis to head off social disquiet and the smell of radical ideas by trumpeting the alleged virtues of capitalism.

REMARK

One product of all this is to give a radical hue to the policies of one Tony Benn. Benn himself, however is prepared to spell out exactly what it's all about. Speaking on Panorama on Monday, he said: 'The degree of interdependence of management, unions and government is greater than ever before... You can do nothing unless you get the goodwill of the people who create the nation's wealth... Just as voters are allowed to decide who represents them in parliament, workers should be able to discuss what happens at work.'

Discuss, not decide, be it noted, a line of argument Benn underlined in another remark on Panorama about his long-term planning agreements: 'Why shouldn't workers have a bit of advance warning notice about redundancies?'

Clearly what Benn wants is more painless executions. He wants closer involvement of workers in a destiny that has already been decided by the pressures and priorities of the big business system. Most of all he wants us to help British big business in its time of trial through a system of participation where the lamb is bound to the lion and where workers are involved in building and maintaining the fence that surround their lives.

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WHAT WE THINK

A danger to democracy?

THE British press has worked itself into a bout of hysteria over events in Portugal. On Sunday both ITV's Weekend World and BBC News claimed at length that 'democracy' was in danger there.

What first aroused this fury were demonstrations a fortnight ago which prevented the so-called 'Democratic Centre' party from holding a conference. The leaders of this party are former fascists. Four were in the government of the fascist Caetano, until it was removed by a military coup last April.

The press concern for the rights of such people stands in marked contrast to its previous record. For nearly 50 years Portugal was run by a regime that copied the methods of Mussolini and Hitler—yet there was no continual press outcry in this country.

The British government willingly supplied that regime with the arms it needed to bomb the inhabitants of its African colonies and to frighten opposition in Portugal itself. When the dictator Caetano visited Britain 18 months ago, only the extreme Left protested.

Even after the coup, the press and TV remained silent when it came to the rights of trade unionists and left wingers in Portugal. There were no screams of protest when troops were used, in connivance with trade union leaders, to break a postal workers' strike last summer, to arrest striking maintenance workers at Lisbon Airport, and to break up a demonstration of Lisnavé shipyard workers.

There were no complaints when a press law was introduced which led to the banning of a Maoist paper, and a Labour law worse than the Industrial Relations Act. A mere four weeks ago, a small demonstration of women's liberationists was savagely attacked by a bigoted mob in a Lisbon park. There was no leaping to their defence in the British press.

So why the sudden concern about the rights of former fascists?

The answer is simple. After the anti-Caetano coup last April, Portuguese big business had to make considerable concessions to the workers in order to maintain control of the situation. In particular, it gave considerable power to trade union leaders who were prepared to condemn strikes, even if these leaders were members of the Communist Party.

British firms with big investments in Portugal—Plesseys, Leyland, Timex, STC—were among those that benefitted from this arrangement. And so, naturally, their friends who control the British press and TV made no protests.

Rank and file

Now, however, big business wants to reassert its own direct political control, to deal with the growing economic crisis. To do this, it has to prevent workers exercising power in the factories and on the streets. And it has to take back from trade union and Communist Party leaders some of the influence it allowed them last year. Having used them to hold back the upsurge of rank and file workers, it now feels it can dispense with them.

Big business knows that one of the most reliable weapons it can use for this task is the organisation of former Caetano supporters into parties like the 'Democratic Centre'.

That is why the British press has suddenly raised the hue and cry about 'democracy'. By this it means the 'right' of employers to close down factories and make workers unemployed, the 'right' of former fascists to plan a return to the methods of Caetano, the 'right' of the rich who own massive printing plants to determine what appears in the newspapers.

For Portuguese workers, democracy must mean quite the opposite—the right of workers to kick out employers, the right to prevent physically the development of organisations which would physically attack the workers' movement, the right of printers and journalists to determine what goes in the papers they produce, and above all, the right democratically to control their own organisations.

That is why what is really at stake in Portugal is not democracy as such, but a choice between the 'democracy' of the employers and the democracy of the workers.

The experience of Chile showed that this choice is not decided by peaceful means. Giant firms like ITT, which operates in Portugal, as well as Chile, are prepared to use any means to ensure their victory. If they are allowed to build up organisations like the 'democratic centre' today, they will use them to shoot and imprison the defenders of working-class democracy tomorrow. That is why Portuguese workers have to fight now to destroy the 'rights' of big business and its supporters.

THE UNIONS

YET ANOTHER union leadership has stabbed its members in the back in its desperation to preserve the Social Contract.

In the recent wages ballot of the builders' union, UCATT, the executive broke three National Delegate Conference mandates.

The members voted on a new wage deal which will give craftsmen £34 basic and labourers £29. The second stage of the deal, which will not come into effect until June, will give craftsmen £37 and labourers £31.40. With the new guaranteed minimum bonus, this will give building workers a guaranteed wage of £40 and £34.

Last June's National Delegate Conference voted for 'negotiations to begin forthwith with a view to securing a minimum rate of £1.50 an hour for craftsmen and £1.40 an hour for labourers, for a 35-hour five-day week. Conference further calls for agreement of no more than 12 months' duration etc.'

The agreement comes nowhere near this.

BROKEN is the decision to fight for a minimum rate that would have given craftsmen a basic £60 wage and labourers £56.

BROKEN is the decision to fight for a 35-hour, five-day week.

BROKEN is the decision to go for a 12-month agreement. Instead, the present claim will last for 18 months.

The executive are arguing that a yearly January-January agreement is against building workers' interests as their bargaining power is strongest in the summer months. This is true, but with the current agreement lasting for 18 months they should have gone for an even higher basic rate.

Reject

The executive statement urging the members to accept the deal is an abject capitulation to the bosses and the government. It said: 'Bearing in mind the time of year and the depressed state of the industry, to reject this offer could be to the long-term detriment of building workers...'

'Rejection of the offer would inevitably cause grave hardship in a situation of high unemployment among building workers and in the middle of the worst building weather.'

They conveniently forgot that, while this is the worst building weather, most building workers are rained off, anyway, and do not receive anything like their top rate as rain money. And the state of the industry will not get any better by waiting for good weather.

The recession now ravaging the building industry will only get progressively worse unless a real fight is mounted. What the executive have done is to play into the hands of the lump firms by refusing to mount any offensive on wages, hours or the general state of the industry.

They also played a rather dirty trick. The members were asked to vote on a deal which was to come into operation on 6 January. The ballot papers came out after this.

The size of the vote is crucial.

The Contract's latest victims...



GEORGE SMITH, General Secretary of UCATT, earns more than £6000 a year plus expenses. He has just pushed through a deal that will give labourers a basic £29 a week.



Building workers on strike in 1972: they linked up their wage claim with the struggle against the Lump. With the recession in the industry and the growth of unemployment that struggle must now be stepped up. Picture: Christopher Davies (Report)

In a union with 260,620 members, the total vote cast was 24,463, less than a tenth of the total membership.

The voting was by branch ballot. Every member is supposed to receive a notice calling them to a special branch meeting.

In an industry where the membership of many branches changes from week to week, because of men mov-

ing from one job to another, or from one area to another, this method is obviously unsuitable.

The executive also ratted on another agreed conference resolution—the rejection of separate negotiations for local authority workers. The executive did not even ballot them.

Instead, they agreed on a deal which will give local authority

workers £37 a week basic for craftsmen and £32.50 a week for labourers backdated to November. They have not increased the basic, only raised the level of the bonus calculator from £26 to £33.

All these developments must be fought. With membership of the building unions declining and the economic pundits cheerfully predicting 300,000 unemployed in the in-

dustry by this spring, militants should fight for a progressive overtime ban and a guaranteed fallback bonus.

To fight the blacklist which will result from the growing unemployment, the unions should be pushed into setting up local or regional registers, and winning 100 per cent trade unionism on every site.

The fight within this thoroughly undemocratic union, where the members cannot even change the rule book, must be stepped up.

The magnificent national strike in 1972 showed the potential. That spirit must be brought back.

Promise

During the general election, the executive urged the members to vote Labour, quoting the promise of Anthony Crosland, now Secretary of State for the Environment, to extend council works departments and increase municipal building 'in a reasonable period.'

Militants must take this up as a priority now. The recession in the industry must be fought on the basis of creating jobs which are socially necessary, such as the building of schools, houses and hospitals, and not the building of Centre Points.

The rank and file group, the Building Workers Charter, must be strengthened and made into a fighting force.

The executive's sell-out must be challenged. And the fight against the use of lump labour and for legislation to municipalise the industry must begin in earnest.

Local committees should be set up to co-ordinate the fight which must be waged if the industry is to survive.

Part of this fight is to challenge the treacherous leadership at every level.

ALICE MURRAY

Another victory for socialism...

THE ASCENDANCY of Lord Richard Briginshaw of NATSOPA to the peerage has not gone down so well with the union's members.

At the Revisers, Ink and Roller Makers branch delegate meeting last week, several attacks on his taking the peerage were greeted with loud applause. When the platform gave their reply supporting Briginshaw, it was met with 'deathly silence', as one militant described it.

And The Observer night machine chapel has sent a resolution to the London Machine branch and the Executive Council condemning their Lord, saying they viewed his actions with contempt, regarding it as a betrayal of socialist principles.

His Lordship replied that he intended to fight for socialism in the House of Lords. This letter came up for discussion at The Observer chapel meeting last week and the chairman moved that it be noted. The meeting after several harangues, moved that his letter be noted 'with contempt'.

At the Machine Branch delegate meeting last Tuesday, the matter was referred to in the London Machine Branch committee minutes. The branch committee moved congratulation of Briginshaw. The matter was passed over in about three seconds. No-one spoke. As one militant described it: 'It was met with a cold, contemptuous silence!'

While Lord Richard is in the House of Lords fighting for socialism, militants in the print are having to mount a fight against redundancy and closure. The best redundancy they could create would be the post in NATSOPA that their Lord holds. Perhaps then we could one day go on to initiate real closures, such as that of his new-found home.



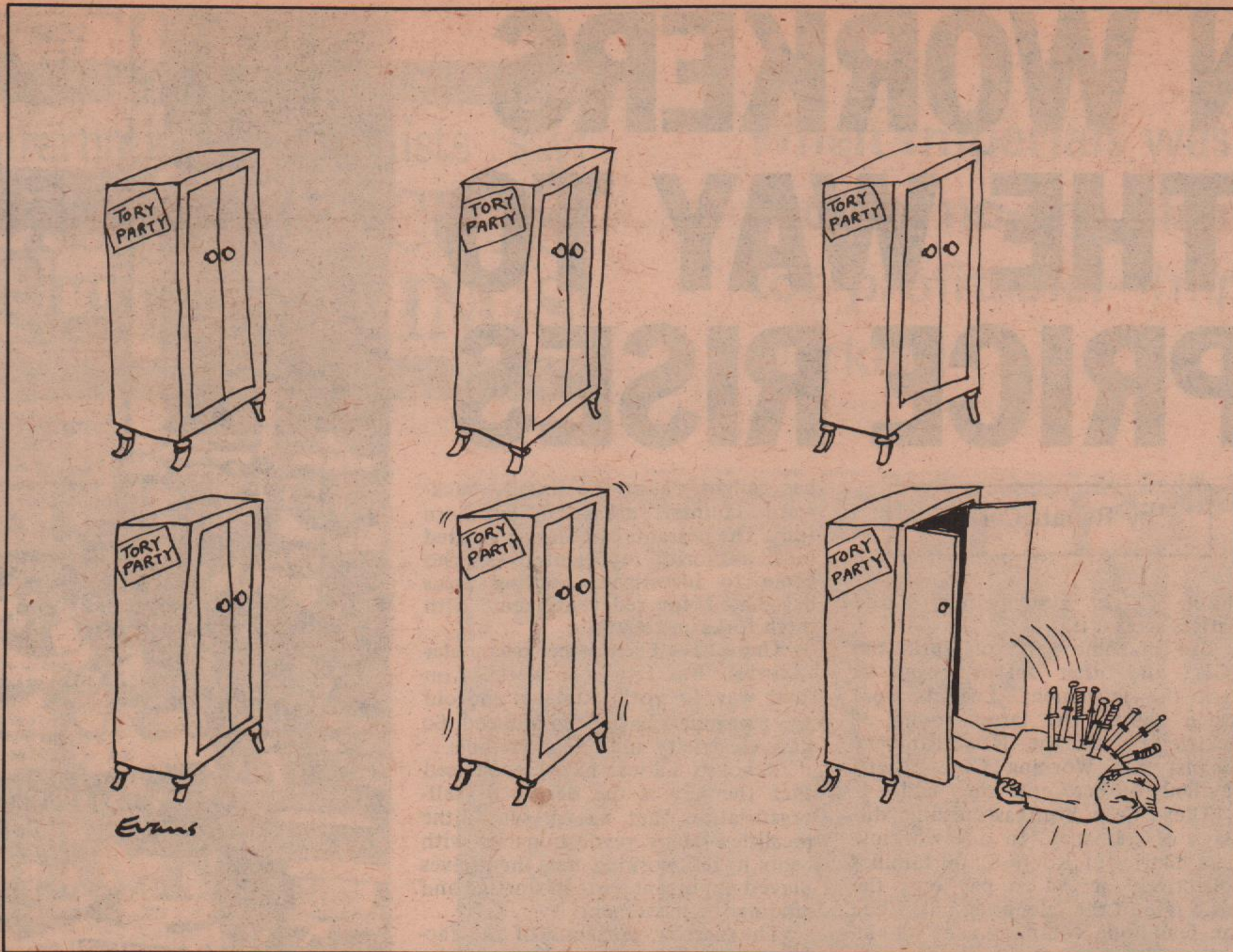
TEN YEARS ON

REACTION to the US Air Force's bombing of North Vietnam on 8 February 1965 continued to include reports like this in The Times, 12 February 1965. 'Mr Wilson has assured the President that the British government support the action taken by the American government in what is called a 'measured and equivalent response.'

The Daily Telegraph reported George Brown, Labour's Economics minister announcing the National Board for Prices and Incomes. 'The new board will have a vitally important role to play in making effective the whole policy for prices and incomes.'

Lord Snow, number two at the Ministry of Technology spoke on the virtues of comprehensive school education, and he was asked why he had sent his son to Eton.

'It seems to me,' the Daily Telegraph on 11 Feb 1965 reported him as saying, 'that if you are living in a fairly prosperous home it is a mistake to educate your child differently from the mass of people you know socially.'



fifth column



Reg, waiting and hoping...

RALLYING...

AS THE CAMPAIGN intensifies to ensure the Tories lose the next election by winning, for a further term, Edward Heath as leader more worthies climb on to his bandwagon. Last week Lord Brentford wrote a letter to The Times.

In it he reproached other Tories who had questioned Heath's ability. He had read their letters with 'shame and sorrow' he wrote.

'We have the finest leader of the day in Mr Heath, it is not he who lost three elections, it is the Conservative Party as a whole who have departed from the Conservative principles which Mr Heath proclaims.

'He is a person of outstanding ability, integrity and experience, let us support him loyally and to the full.'

A moving tribute, and as an ex-Tory MP, junior minister and son of one of the most notoriously reactionary of Tory Home Secretaries Reginald Joynson-Hicks, Lord Brentford should be well qualified to comment. But was it an entirely unsolicited tribute?

No. For Lord Brentford has another friend in the Tory Party for whom he has a deep admiration. A man whose ministerial career was cut short by his unfortunate habit of joining the boards of companies whose directors have the unfortunate

knack of winding up in jug. The Right Hon. Reginald Maudling.

Brentford in fact is the man who introduced Maudling to Jerome D Hoffmann. Hoffmann is the man who ran the Real Estate Fund of America, an international swindle, which featured the hapless Reg as president.

Maudling is nothing if not a trier. And he still has ambitions to return to the Tory front bench. So what better than having a few of his friends rally round the Heath Flag, like Lord Brentford with his fulsome tributes? And in return the victorious Heath will be able to reward Maudling with a shadow cabinet post.

Perhaps it will be for housing and the environment. In which case Reginald might pay a visit to T Dan Smith, who is being allowed out of his jail to testify at Leeds against the Ex-Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Albert Hadwin. Smith drummed up trade for Poulson's (also jailed) Open System Building company of which Maudling was a director.

Smith has gone out of his way to include Maudling in his evidence. The press has generally gone out of its way to ignore this part of his evidence.

Perhaps Smith should write to The Times about it.

INA ROSS aged 86 and her blind 79 year old husband John died in Inverness the other week. They refused all medical and social help for years it was claimed. Consequently they had no coal and died of the cold.

A tragic example of how people have been conditioned to regard what social services there are as charity and not as their right.

Well John Junor, writing the Current Events Column in the Sunday Express had strong feelings about it too. 'John and Ina carried

independence far too far. But don't you think this country would be a better place if there was just a little more of their spirit in this age of the Welfare State and the pampered layabout?'

It's an interesting thought, John. Just think of the money The Nation (a code word the Express uses, meaning that paper's owner, Sir Max Aitken) could save if more OAPs were to take a cue from the Ross's.

In fact why stop at OAPs? The country is clearly ridiculously overcrowded. Perhaps the paper could start another of their little Union Jack campaigns with something like 'I'm dying to save Britain' as a slogan. Perhaps that's what the Express means by the Silent Majority.

Leisure hours

IN WORTHING Mrs Maria De Roland Peel is building the Women's Resistance Movement. She wants a million members. She claims at the moment 41, a double barrelled shotgun, and two months supply of food.

She is worried, it was reported in the Daily Telegraph that there was going to be a communist takeover of the country. She expects it sometime in August.

In London Captain Lawrence Orr, past Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Council of the World, Enoch Powell's predecessor as MP for South Down, ex-director of numerous companies and currently a director of Associated Leisure Ltd is building the Middle Class Association.

Mrs Peel claims to have fought in the French War in Vietnam. She urged her neighbours to dig up the local lawns and flower beds and plant them with vegetables to withstand the red seige she anticipates.

Captain Orr, is one of the people whose keen interest in Northern Ireland have made it the peaceful and tranquil place it is today. In a letter to The Times, he has itemised some of the recruits who've come under his new banner.

They include a bloodstock agent, an antique restorer, a consultant astrologist, a jockey club handicapper, a pedigree cat breeder and an heir to a dukedom. 'All have in common a desire to be self-reliant' claims Captain Orr.

Working with Mrs Peel, her shotgun and her 41 piece orchestra they could prove a formidable check to the red tide. The bloodstock agent could provide galloping anti-pickets, while the handicapper might be set to work attaching lead weights to militants' legs outside strike-bound factories.

The antique restorer could use-

fully be set to work reviving Sir Winston Churchill, now celebrating his tenth anniversary six foot under to provide a suitable leader, while the astrologer can doubtless provide invaluable advance information on the development of the red conspiracy.

When middle class life slips out of joint all sorts of fantasies and nightmares float through the cracks. In the early stages they are laughable, Captain Orr and Mrs Page are barmy, but as time passes the nightmares begin to take form. Other people take their dreams seriously, buy themselves uniforms and practice clubbing people over the head.

Had these two been slightly touched workers then the press stories would have been different. RED DEATH PLOT EXPOSED, the headlines would have run, MILITANTS ORGANISE TAKE-OVER PLAN. But they weren't, they were respectable middle class people. And, they won't do any harm.

Will they?

The fight of Clay Cross

CLAY CROSS has by now joined the legends of the Labour movement—the gallant little Labour council that refused to knuckle under to the Tories wicked plans to double council rents.

For a period, it proved a symbol of resistance to the Housing Finance Act—and it is just that the courage of the 11 councillors should be recorded in this little book by Julia Langdon and David Skinner.*

At this level the book is a fair and readable account of their struggle.

It fails, however, to analyse the contribution Clay Cross made in the wide struggle against the rent rises. Whether, for example, their various attempts at legal battles were tactically correct at a time when thousands of tenants around Britain were on rent strike and would have welcomed being joined by Clay Cross tenants.

Certainly, at least two of the councillors at the time thought so, a fact that Julia Langdon does not record.

The book also fails to discuss the wider political significance of Clay Cross, other than voicing a vague hope that it would dispel political apathy in the Labour Party! The major importance of Clay Cross was that it was wholly untypical of the Labour Party.

But if the action, or lack of action, of Labour councils does not finally make the political point about the nature of the Labour Party, then surely the actions of the Labour leaders, and the Labour government over Clay Cross, should.

Despite two resolutions passed by Labour conference in 1972 and 1973, the Labour government has refused, since taking office, to relieve the councillors of their surcharge of £7000.

More than that, Crosland, the Minister responsible, insisted on the Clay Cross rents going up by £1 at a time when he had frozen all other rents!

Two news items last week reinforced the point: Clay Cross councillors expect to be further surcharged perhaps up to £80,000, when they meet the District Auditor on 10 February, with no action expected from the Labour government. And Crosland announced that Labour's new Housing Bill would result in average increases of 45p a week for council tenants (this, of course, is instead of 50p a week under the Tory Housing Act!)

The story of Clay Cross should properly be read as an obituary to any socialism that ever existed in the Labour Party.

HUGH KERR

*The Story of Clay Cross by Julia Langdon and David Skinner, (Spokesman Books, 65p).



Crisis in British Leyland—Our answer

Written with the aid of International Socialist members working in British Leyland and of supporters of CARWORKER, the paper produced by rank and file trade unionists in the car industry.

10p plus postage from Industrial dept, International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

The struggle in Ireland

Chris Harman

The aim of this pamphlet is to give a brief history of British domination, to show its effects on Ireland today, to show that the problems of the people of Ireland will not be solved until the domination is ended, and to indicate the way this can be done.

An International Socialists pamphlet 15p

Available from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

The crumbling of Temple

THE TROUBLES of BBC documentary production clearly have no end. After Fifth Column's story last week on dirty doings with the 'To Be A Farmers Boy' episode of the 'Inside Story' series comes the tale of 'A Day In The Life'.

This series, centring on everyday happenings of everyday people, took a trip to Hong Kong, the last jewel in the British Empire. That's the place where Chief Superintendent Godber has had to take an enforced holiday after being found making a fortune out of the drugs trade he was employed to clean up.

Four film crews were sent out to show the other side of the story. A day in the life of gang busting Detective Superintendent Norman Temple. The film went well, through the cess pits and hell holes of the Eastern city they followed Temple in his remorseless war on crime.

Then, on the last day of filming the team stumbled on Mr Big, the man behind the trail of human misery. Unfortunately this turned out to be none other than Mr Norman Temple, who had the ill-fortune to be arrested and charged with corruption on that very day.

The film has, in BBC jargon, been shelved...

ITALIAN WORKERS SHOW THE WAY TO FIGHT PRICE RISES

ITALIAN workers have a new answer to the assault on the wage packet, which gets smaller day by day.

All the aspects of the world-wide economic crisis which are affecting British workers are also hitting those in Italy, but there is an important difference. The Italians have hit upon a new form of struggle.

They have taken the fight against inflation from inside the factory into wider society. Organised workers are involving those outside their own ranks in campaigns in the community to refuse to pay the price increases.

The city of Turin, the heart of the movement for workers' councils after the First World War and the flashpoint of huge battles with the police in 1969 over appalling housing conditions, is the spearhead of the new movement. It was the Fiat car workers who, one hot morning in August, 'broke the law' in a way that quickly caught the imagination of hundreds of thousands of others across the land.

by Renata Carlos

union, CGIL, actually distributed leaflets against it.

But in some parts of Turin the CGIL, and other unions, began to back the movement. Leaflets were issued calling the latest round of electricity bills the New Robbery Against the Working Class: 'Let's Pay Only 50 Per Cent!' they said.

There have been astonishing displays of solidarity. In one working-class district of Rome 8,500 families collectively agreed to pay only the basic rate of the telephone bill. When the telephone company sent its employees to disconnect the phones they were refused entry.

Did they call the police? No. They joined in a demonstration with the local people outside the company headquarters!

Particularly menacing for the government is the way the movement

has caught on in the usually backward country areas of Southern Italy. The peasants of Calabria greeted local authority representatives, who came to investigate housing areas designated for redevelopment, with pitch forks and scythes.

There have been some spectacular victories. Bus fares for workers on their way to work, students and old age pensioners have been reduced. So have electricity and telephone bills.

Revolutionaries have recognised that the key is the degree of self-organisation that has grown in the localities. Many revolutionaries with roots in the working class themselves played important parts in starting and guiding the movement.

The narrow horizons of the factory committees broadened as delegates from different kinds of workplaces came together to organise the price reductions. The credibility of this form of organisation was quickly realised by the simplicity of these actions. With little cost to the participants victories were possible.



Thousands of trade unionists demonstrating last week in Rome against price rises and for higher pensions.

SPREAD

Two hundred carworkers who go by bus to work each morning decided to answer the 34 per cent increase in the price of the season ticket. They nominated their own collector who collected money for the monthly ticket at the old price and in return gave them a receipt. He then took the money to the company.

With firm organisation workers discovered that they could ignore other price increases as well. If one man refuses to pay an increased electricity bill he's in trouble but if 50,000 sign a statement refusing to pay and there is collective organisation to support it, the Turin workers discovered, the authorities are at a loss.

The movement spread so quickly that the trades union bureaucracy was caught off its guard and split over whether to support the resistance. For example in Milan, the largest city in Italy, a section of the Communist Party-dominated trades

PORTUGAL: Gains for revolutionary left

RESULTS of two recent trade union elections in Portugal show that while the government parties have been quarrelling among themselves, a growing number of workers have been moving towards the revolutionary left.

In the post office there was a long strike last summer which the government denounced as 'reactionary' and used its troops to break. The elections for a new leadership for the postal and telecommunications union network were contested by two rival states—List A was dominated by the Communist Party, which supported the government's attack on the strike, and List B backed the strike and put forward a programme for social change. List A received 5,193 votes, list B 13,291.

Even more interesting was the result of the bank workers union election in the

north of Portugal. The union has been the traditional stronghold of the Communist Party, which it used last year to establish its hold on the TUC, the Intersyndicale. But in the election the Communist candidate, Avalino Goncalves, who was Minister of Labour last year and denounced many strikes, received only 2,142 votes against 4,063 for the revolutionary candidates, out of a total union membership in the area of 7,717.

YUGOSLAVIA: Eight Marxists sacked

YUGOSLAVIA claims to be a 'socialist' state. But last week it sacked eight deeply committed Marxist university lecturers as 'undesirable teachers'.

What the Yugoslav government objects to is that over the years the eight have been developing criticisms of Yugoslavia from a Marxist standpoint. The journal they produce, Praxis, has

moved from abstract philosophical questions to a debate about the nature of Yugoslavia.

Some of the conclusions drawn have been very radical indeed. A number of them describe the rulers of Yugoslavia as 'a new type of bourgeoisie'. Bozidor Jaksic, for instance, wrote in Praxis: 'When all things are considered, Yugoslavia has a class structure'. He also noted that while 80.2 per cent of government officials were in the Communist Party, only 13.4 per cent of workers were. And between 1955 and 1970 there were no fewer than 2000 strikes.

The action now taken against the editors of Praxis confirms the judgement made by another of its writers. Stevotzar Stajonovic: "Socialism" for which such things as debureaucratisation and democratisation, elimination of police terror, introduction of workers' self-management, amount to counter-revolution, can by no means be socialism in Marx's meaning of the word.'

ARMS: £100,000 million last year

POLITICIANS throughout the world have been repeating with one voice that there is not enough wealth for further improvements in living standards. Figures released by the US government last week show there is something else the world's rulers have in common. They have been wasting ever greater amounts of wealth than before on threatening to blow each other (and the rest of us) to smithereens.

No less than £100,000 million was spent on 'defence' throughout the world—an increase by a quarter since 1964. At the same time, the great powers have been doing their utmost to push up their profits by selling arms to poorer countries. Last year the US sold £2,000 million worth of arms, the USSR £1,000 million and France and Britain £150-200 million each.

FRIDAY 24 January: The Times newspaper in London refused to publish a memorial notice for the victims of Bloody Sunday in Derry because of its 'political content'. The notice which the Prisoners Aid Committee wanted to insert read: 'For the 14 citizens who died while marching for civil rights in Derry on January 30th 1972.' Could it be that the Prisoners Aid Committee is now regarded as an illegal organisation? Last year The Times printed memorial notices of an Irish martyr, Sir Roger Casement.

SATURDAY 25 January: Three families in County Fermanagh were isolated from Northern Ireland by a crater blown in the Mullinhinch to Inver road by a British army unit at midday.

The nine children of the three families, including an eight-year-old handicapped girl, will now have to make a five-mile detour through the South to get to school.

SUNDAY 26 January: Father Dennis Faul accused the British army of rearresting an ex-internee so that they could conclude a study of experimental torture.

James Auld's wife stated that her husband suffered a black-out on Saturday night, only the latest in a series. James received 'in depth' interrogation for six days in August 1971—and has now been interro-



NEWS THE BRITISH PRESS DOESN'T PRINT

gated at length about his earlier interrogation.

James was awarded £16,000 compensation for his treatment. He

has been refused access by the authorities to John McGuffin's book, The Guinea Pigs, which describes the treatment meted out to

him.

TUESDAY 28 January: Mathew Michael Bradley of the Lower Falls was awarded £550 damages at the High Court in Belfast. He had been kicked in the ribs and the stomach by British soldiers. He is at present detained in Long Kesh.

WEDNESDAY 29 January: The cost of keeping the British army in Northern Ireland during 1974-75 will be about £33 million. In the period up to mid-1978 the government expects to pay out £122 million in criminal injury and damage compensation, revealed the government's White Paper on Public Expenditure.

THURSDAY 30 January: A British soldier described in a psychiatrist's report as 'an aggressive psychopath' was sent to prison for 12 years in Armagh for shooting a private in the Ulster Defence Regiment. He escaped from the army and was helped by the IRA to flee to Sweden. He was found and returned to Northern Ireland for sentence.

Life sentence was also passed on Peter Lawrence, a gunner in the Royal Artillery, who murdered his staff sergeant.

FRIDAY 31 January: An open verdict was returned at an inquest

into the death of John Patrick Cunningham, 27, who was mentally retarded. John died instantly last June after being struck by three army bullets when he ran away from an approaching patrol near his home in Benburb.

John's doctor, Doctor Ghosh, told the hearing of how a year before he had seen soldiers putting John into a Saracen armoured car. He explained to them John's mental condition.

No charges have been laid against the two soldiers responsible.

SUNDAY 2 February: A new book published in America and written by Thomas O'Hanlon, The Irish, deals with corruption and financial deals in the South and the growing power of the multinationals.

It points out that the number of religious clerics in the south has doubled in the past 70 years. 'Only a handful of clergy have ever visited the festering slums of Dublin,' says the author.

He asks: 'Why does one individual get most of the subsidies for new hotel construction... or why is a farmer allowed to pollute an entire lake so badly that ecologists feel it is beyond reclamation? Why does a government-financed housing programme result in the construction of uninhabitable houses with improperly designed heating and ventilation systems?'



International Socialists say:
STOP THE CUTS!
STOP THE SACKINGS!

Don't let them pass the buck to us...

SINCE THE management at Imperial Typewriters in Leicester announced their plans to close the plant there has been much talk among the workers of nationalisation. Last week I spent several dinner breaks discussing a question that has long been the basis for theoretical argument in the socialist movement. But in Dan's Cafe, amid the clatter of dinner plates, such discussion was no longer an academic debate. It was a question of jobs and how to save them. The following is a summary of the conclusions we came to.

ONCE the capitalist system goes wrong, employers blame the workers. Litton Industries (a two billion dollar multi-national) plan to close their Imperial Typewriters plants in Hull and Leicester to safeguard their profitability.

3000 workers will be thrown on the dole. 3000 people have not been speculating on world markets and causing the rate of inflation to increase. 3000 people who are not involved in the scramble for profits.

It's not their system that is in crisis. Yet it is they who face the dole. As one lad wryly put it: 'When Imperials was fisting in the profits no one blamed us for being too profitable.'

To resist managerial ruthlessness, we have to win our fellow workmates to the idea that it is the bosses' crisis not ours, and therefore it's not we who should be making the sacrifices.

'They can sack 3000 and merely express regret', pointed out one worker. 'And they expect us to feel guilty and humbly accept a pittance on the dole.'

But the guilt lies with the employers and it's up to them to pay the price. They must provide five days' work or five days' pay.

By
JOHN DEASON

But how are work or pay to be guaranteed if the employer claims he is going broke? Nationalisation is central to this argument.

We hear much fine talk from Wedgwood Benn and the Labour government. But their idea of helping is to dish out large sums of taxpayers' money (our money) to companies in financial trouble.

In return for this cash to the employer, the employees are then urged to show gratitude, work harder, and accept wage restraint and erosion of workshop practices. Giving money to the very concerns that are at the heart of the crisis is like trying to revive a drowning man with a glass of water.

Where cash handouts are insufficient to prop up a tottering firm, workers co-operatives' have been formed, as at Triumph Meriden and IPD in Kirkby.

These co-operatives catch the imagination of many workers. They represent a vague expression of the sentiment that says 'well, if the bosses can't run the place—then we will.'



Workers at IPD, Kirkby out the finishing touches to their factory occupation last July. Now they have a workers' co-operative—but is it any answer? Picture: Ron McCormick (IFL)

Unfortunately, 'running the place' under capitalism means making profits. And so the co-operatives have to increase productivity and cut manning levels to survive.

The change in management really makes no difference to the problems posed by the economic crisis. The workers' co-operatives are faced with trying to make a plant profitable in a system over which they have no control.

Workers' co-operatives are the ideal way for governments and employers to pass the buck. Workers end up shouldering the responsibility for the mess that the bosses have made.

Workers' control of individual factories without workers' control of the economic fabric of society

is unrealistic. You cannot build islands of socialism in a sea of capitalism.

Socialists must pose the demand of full nationalisation without compensation for firms threatening closure. This is a realistic alternative to cash hand-outs and co-ops.

It is a way of forcing the government to take responsibility for guaranteeing jobs and paying our wages. It also gets around the problem of profitability.

No compensation must be paid to the employers. Why should companies who have raked in profits in previous years get further payment when they want to shut up shop? Compensation money will be better spent in guaranteeing wages.

WHAT NATIONALISATION

MANY WORKERS at Imperials agree with the need for nationalisation but believe they have only to convince the government of their case. And so plans have been drawn up for delegations and lobbies, reports and feasibility schemes. Anxious not to offend financiers and industrialists, the trade union officials and the labour government will go no further.

Nationalisation without compensation will only be achieved through militant rank and file action, which involves:

STRUGGLING for mutuality on every aspect of the job.

REFUSING to work overtime and insisting on full manning levels.

REFUSING to move plant machinery, stock or spares.

OCCUPYING the factory as soon as the first redundancies are announced.

USING the occupation to campaign for solidarity action in the Labour Movement.

To win we must rely on our own strength, not on the promises of Social Contracting MPs and trade union officials.

MEANS

The shop stewards' organisation built up to obtain the demands must also be maintained after nationalisation by regular meetings, which keep everyone informed, and by the regular election and accountability of shop stewards.

The successful day-to-day struggle to resist management attempts to change work practices and reduce manning levels, would give workers a greater deal of control than the co-operatives ever could.

Questions

But as one young Asian worker at Imperials asked: 'So if we do force nationalisation and the bastards don't get compensated, and then we find out that there really are too many typewriters and we can't sell them, what's the point?' Carworkers might ask similar questions

about the overproduction of cars.

To defend our jobs we have to take a bloody-minded attitude to the employers and make them take responsibility for the crisis. But in the long term, we must also launch the arguments for an alternative to the anarchy of capitalist production.

We live in a society where the only motivation for production is profit. That is why we continue to produce too many of some goods while other commodities are scarce. Only in a society based on production for need and not profit can we get logical planning.

Such problems will not be solved at Imperials alone. Nor is the fight for nationalisation of individual companies a piecemeal path to socialism. Workers' power will only be achieved by defeating all the instruments of power of the existing owners.

But it is from the struggle to defend jobs and our living standards that we develop our organisation and our ideas. Nationalisation without compensation is an immediate defence of our jobs but it also sows the seed of socialist ideas.

A Socialist Worker publication

TONY CLIFF
THE CRISIS
SOCIAL CONTRACT
OR SOCIALISM



75p plus 7p postage from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

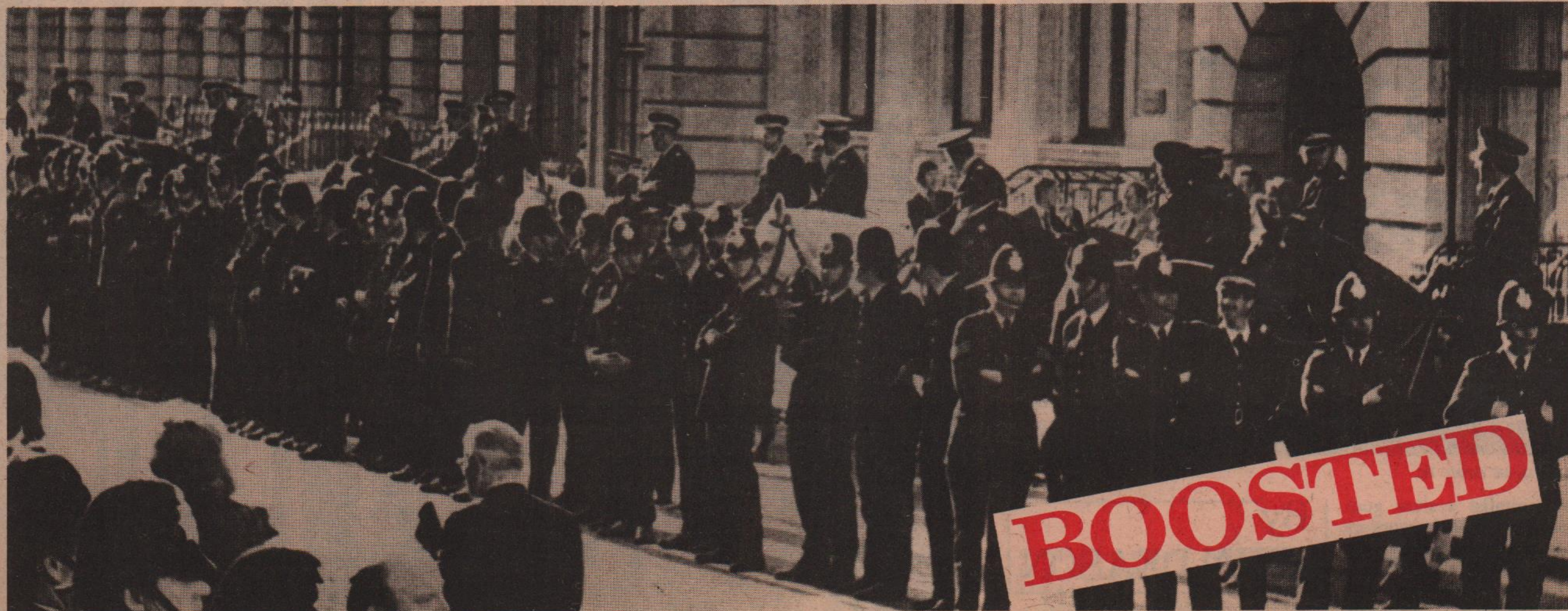
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International Socialists say:
STOP THE CUTS!
STOP THE SACKINGS!

What the cuts mean



MORE
MORE
CHILDREN
WILL BE
NEGLECTED
FOR LACK
OF DAY
MORE
MORE
OLD PEOPLE
WILL BE
LEFT TO
ROT...

BUT ON
GROUP
PEOPLE
WILL BE
COURAGE
TO GROW
THE PO

Pictures:
Davies (Re

FACT

THE government's long-term view of last Friday. Its Public Expenditure Review 1979, revealed that for the present social services to least another five years. For instance, to spend £200m more over the next five years, despite the level of homelessness. This run-down of services is to take place in areas where are also held back.

ment in standard provision in schools. Implementing this Labour statements improvement are to be made. There is massive unemployment in this country, but we do not believe local authorities beyond their means. Tell that to the mentally handicapped, who are under-fives, who sniff of their basic

SPECIAL OFFER

In this first volume of his three-volume study Tony Cliff traces Lenin's life from political obscurity to prominence as the leader of a mass working-class party. It shows him instilling into that organisation the insights gained from every contact no matter how fleeting—with workers. Above all it shows Lenin maturing as a practitioner of revolution in the pre-revolutionary period.

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TONY CLIFF: LENIN

Volume 1: Building the Party



THE HEALTH Service, starved of resources and milked by drug companies and rich consultants, is going down the drain.

The main sufferers are the old, the mentally handicapped and the chronically sick.

But if the Labour government says it is powerless within a capitalist system to stop the profit cancer rotting away the NHS, it is positively trying to bring about the slow death by strangulation of the rest of the Welfare State. Why?

A recent government circular to local authority chiefs spells out instructions and recommendations on what money will be allowed for schools, colleges, children's day nurseries, old people's homes, centres for the handicapped, housing and transport—in fact all the basic services which working people and their families need.

Employ

So that big business gets its profits boosted, Denis Healey, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has told all local councils they must forgo expansion, accept 'net nil growth', not employ any more staff (even where there is often 20 per cent under-staffing).

And that is not all. Public spending must not increase

BY
GORDON PETERS

demand by more than 2% per cent for the next four years. With inflation now anywhere between 17 and 25 per cent per year, that is a huge cut. It means that old people's homes will not open, day nurseries will close (already Buckinghamshire is going to do this), and there will be a clamp-down on concessionary bus fares for the old and sick.

Uniform

It demands more means-testing of the worst kind. 'Each authority should reconsider any policy under which services or facilities are provided on a uniform basis to broad categories of people.'

The circular goes on: 'Some services may have to be provided on a reduced scale.' It then admits that essential Health Service restraint and Council cut-backs will make things doubly worse for everybody. This is what belt-tightening and the Social Contract are all about.

Where is Barbara Castle's 'social wage' now? To spell it out further, one of

Britain's biggest general hospitals, the Whittington in North London has just closed 150 geriatric beds and there is even less chance of providing any 'community facilities' for their totally neglected old people.

But one area is to escape the cutbacks—and will be encouraged to grow: the police force.

The forecast allows for 1000 additional police officers (in 1975-76). If this increase is exceeded, within the limits of authorised police establishments, a specific grant will be paid on the additional expenditure.

An interesting example of the Labour government's priorities...

And what about all the pious statements of Labour ministers and councillors on subsidised, plentiful public transport?

Closer

'The government's aim is that bus operation in general should move much closer towards a position of commercial viability... Where fares have not kept pace with costs in recent months the need will be for higher in-

creases still.'

Anthony Crosland, the Labour Party's theorist of 'modern socialism', shows his true colours as Environment Secretary: 'There may be a generally reduced standard to ratepayers.'

If you're worried about those broken down lifts or damp rising up your nice draughty tower block, our Housing Minister is now telling councils that 'reductions in repair or maintenance expenditure should be made' as this has increased too fast in recent years!

Labour ministers must be as far removed from housing estates as the old Tory landowners in their Rolls Royces.

Contracts

Then there's the Lump. At every level, the Labour Party officially wants it out of the building industry, and some councils refuse contracts with Lump labour.

Yet the same government which keeps in jail the Shrewsbury Two, who fought the Lump, now demands a cut in direct labour forces of local authorities.

'The reduced level of expenditure will affect the direct labour organisations of some authorities where major contracts come to an end in the course of the year or where they have built... direct labour... in the expectation of substantial expenditure on new schemes.'

Housing stagnation and more redundancies! Some Contract!

There is even dependence on shark private firms who already hold councils to ransom through rigging price rings when they tender for contracts. The same firms that erect cheap, shoddy schools like that one in Camden where the roof collapsed last year.

Stands

Is Reg Prentice, Education Minister, who stands for the best comprehensive schooling for all, worried about this?

His contribution to this circular is to 'recognise that there will be no scope for any general improve-

How low can Labour get?

TO HELP the government solve industry's problems, Islington Council in North London is considering a reduction in places in old people's homes and raising the price of meals-on-wheels to destitute pensioners.

Islington is an entirely Labour council, Tower Hamlets is similar. Yet it is these deprived boroughs that are in the greatest haste to add local insult to the government's injury. It is also in these boroughs that workers are beginning to fight back in defence of working-class living standards.

In Islington the local community workers' and tenants' associations are combining with NALGO, other unions and the trades council in a Campaign Against the Cuts. They have already held a successful mass lobby of a council 'participation' meeting which was intended to 'explain' the cuts. The

NALGO branch has mobilised an emergency committee and has a policy of not doing vacancy work or taking part in any rationing exercises.

The major aim now is to inform the working-class community of how government and council intend to take away further services and increase voluntary labour to perform welfare state duties—the latest form of cheap scabbing (no different from students manning trains in the 1926 General Strike).

There must be no substitution of jobs, no reduction in direct labour, staff control of any redeployment, no cuts in services or increased charges, and councils and trade union bodies forced to launch joint campaigns in defence of our welfare state. If there is still no response we must build local rank-and-file action committees.



THE TRIBUNE Group of Labour MPs has just published a lengthy statement on the crisis calling on the government to adopt 'an entirely new economic strategy'.

The statement makes some good points. It recognises that 'we live in a society dominated by multinational, monopolistic companies', that the economy is run by and for these companies and that this cannot be altered 'unless there is public ownership and control of some of these multinational companies'.

Now this is far weaker than our position. Why only 'some' of the giant firms? Nonetheless it at least points in the right direction.

The Tribune MPs also know and say that 'the economic crisis facing Britain is not a short-term one caused wholly or mainly by increased oil prices or the present down-turn in world trade.'

They speak of 'the death of Keynesian economics', that is to say of the economic theories that have dominated all post-war Labour Party economic policy.

They also argue that economic planning cannot be left to the 'Whitehall bureaucracy', that 'trade union involvement' and 'full trade union participation' is essential.

Finally, the statement is clear that the Common Market set-up is incompatible with any kind of real socialist policy.

Good. We agree with all this. Of course, the statement is also full of weaknesses and contradictions. All sorts of issues are fudged and on one central question—public ownership—it is downright wrong.

Why the Left MPs do not have the answer

be changed first of all.

It is not the slightest use to say, as these left MPs do: 'In the most comradely way we warn the government that just as the 1970 Labour government was defeated on its social-democratic policies of 1964 so it could be defeated next time...'

'Comrade' Wilson, 'Comrade' Callaghan and 'Comrade' Jenkins are deaf to such appeals. 'Comrade' Wilson has just been to Washington and publicly stated his 'complete agreement' on economic matters with the right-wing conservative President Ford.

'Comrade' Healey is busy trying to strengthen the International Monetary Fund—and surely every Tribunite knows what that means.

And all these 'comrades' are planning to sell the 'renegotiations' fraud to keep Britain in the Common Market. They are firmly wedded to capitalist policies.

Public

The Tribune MPs believe that the National Enterprise Board (provided it is 'made up of socialists from all walks of life, not the usual placemen from the City establishment') can become the instrument of public ownership.

It clearly cannot. Outright nationalisation of the 'commanding heights' of the economy without so-called compensation is an indispensable part of any socialist plan.

But the main, immediate question is not the weaknesses of many of the proposals.

It is the lack of any indication of how to fight for the policies outlined. The best of plans is worthless unless there is a struggle to achieve it. A very inferior plan may serve its turn if workers can be mobilised to fight for it.

The entire official Labour movement, the TUC as well as the Labour Party leaders, is supporting what the Economist gleefully calls 'Mr Harold Wilson's Tory rule'. This is what has to

Outside

How can a real movement of workers against these reactionary policies be developed? That is the issue. We do not ourselves believe that socialism can be legislated into existence by parliament.

But that does not mean that parliament cannot be used by socialists. The Tribune MPs could make a big contribution to the fight against Wilson's Tory policies if, *inside parliament and outside*, they led an open and continuous agitation against the 'Social Contract'—the heart and centre of the government's plan to rescue British capitalism.

Their statement is very evasive and double-faced about the Contract. We say that you can't have it both ways. You are for the Social Contract and against socialism or for socialism and against the Social Contract.

An ounce of anti-Contract agitation is worth a ton of rhetoric about the multinationals in the present situation.

If the left MPs take their own criticisms of the government at all seriously, if they really want 'a new, socially just society which eschews the barren ideology of capitalism' they must, clearly and unequivocally, fight the whole Social Contract ideology.

To the extent that they (or some of them) do, they can count on our energetic co-operation, notwithstanding all political differences on other matters.

Those who fail to stand up and be counted on this, the basic issue, are covering up for the government's stampede to the right.

Welfare, the reform granted from decades of class struggle, is now fast being eroded by, ironically the reformists, the Labour Party in power.

And in doing this through their own political bankruptcy, a mass of resentment is building up as inflation, redundancies and cuts destroy our living standards.

Realised

But this resentment and anger needs conscious direction if the unfulfilled needs of working people are to be realised.

If the mean conditions of existence which allow thousands of old people to die of hypothermia, or to rot in secluded hospital wards, and which allow kids to be neglected for lack of day care are ever to change, local government workers and consumers of our services—other working people—must mobilise.

Human

Only rank and file unity, initially at local level will demonstrate that our interests are one and the same, and will stop the rot and point the way to a socialist alternative which puts human needs first.

ment has been putting across the story that, if only we tighten our belts for a couple of years, everything will be all right.

The White Paper tells a different story. Its basic message is that there will be no increase in 'personal consumption' until at least 1980.

And that is assuming that things go well for British big business, with no repetition of the present international recession and the continuing world inflation.

Capitalist ownership and market dictates create the basic corruption—the relegation of human needs and decent conditions to the lowest priority.

Public spending means somewhere to live, to see in the dark, the chance to learn. Yet it amounts only to a tenth-rate convenience of the system conceded under the control of profiteers as a result of hard-fought class battles.

The student movement today

by Alex Callinicos and Simon Turner

The building industry

background to a rank and file movement by Alistair Goulding

The return of Bukharin

review article by Peter Sedgwick

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LETTERS

Send your letters to **LETTERS**, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2. Please try to keep them to not more than 250 words. Let us have your name and address but specify if you don't want your name published.

Danger over the wall...

The Prisoners' Aid Committee is concerned about the safety of Irish political prisoners in Britain. There is evidence of systematic victimisation by prison authorities, especially governors, and attempts to create hostility amongst other prisoners.

Seven Irish prisoners have been arbitrarily moved to prisons far away from their families since Xmas. Bobby Gallagher in Hull prison had his cell and all his possessions burnt while he was at work.

Dolours and Marian Price, who were recently moved to Durham prison, have been put on different floors on different parts of the wing. They were told by deputy governor Miss Ford, that this was for 'security reasons'. The cells into which they were moved are filthy. Their lives have been threatened by other prisoners, all of whom, they said in a letter dated 21 January to their father, were in need of medical treatment.

The girls are continually harassed by other prisoners who want to sell their 'stories' about the Price sisters when they get out. They have asked to be separated from Judith Ward whose behaviour is bizarre but Marian has been put into a cell next to her. Despite the fact that the Home Office describes Durham as a 'top security' prison. Dolours and Marian Price and Judith Ward are the only Category A prisoners there, the other 19 prisoners are Category C, and they subject the girls to continuous anti-irish abuse and obscenities.

Miss Ford has instructed them to 'associate' with these prisoners, some of whom have threatened to poison their food.

The family is to complain to the Home Office about this treatment and about abusive treatment of Albert Price, and Mrs Claire Murphy their sister, on the last two visits. This treatment is a marked worsening of the attitudes of prison staff in Brixton where the girls were during their hunger strike.

The PAC is convinced that there is a deliberate attempt by the Home Office to make life in British prisons intolerable for Irish political prisoners. For their own safety, both physical and moral, these prisoners should be moved to prisons where they can be together with fellow political prisoners.

It is time for Roy Jenkins to stop using 'security' as a spurious cover for victimisation and harassment of prisoners already serving vicious heavy sentences awarded them in the courts of British imperialism.—**JACQUELINE KAYE**, Prisoners Aid Committee, London, SE24.



The danger that awaits the workers of Wards, and thousands of other workers around the country. The dole queue...

NW battle for jobs

WARD AND GOLDSTONE is a group of companies with factories in Northern Ireland and the Lancashire towns of Salford, Eccles, Atherton, Leigh and Knowsley. It employs over 10,000 people making cables and plastics, and is controlled by Sampson Goldstone who is also a Justice of the Peace in Salford. This neat little trick insured that you got the same sort of justice in the courts as you get at work.

The company is known for the lousy wages it pays especially to production workers. The exception is 'common craft', skilled engineers and electricians, who have fought their way to a basic wage of £45 plus bonus for 36 hours. The Transport Union members are still on 40 hours.

Wards have been talking in the

last few months about mass redundancy. This threat was used to smash the last TGWU claim. Already well over 100 workers over retiring age have been fired, and lay-offs threatened in certain divisions. Other divisions like the chemical plant at Eccles are working seven days a week.

The company has continuously refused to give any firm information to the shop stewards Committee about the proposed sackings, until last week. Then they were told that the company wanted to axe 500 jobs, in addition to natural wastage and the firing of pensioners. 250 jobs to go at Atherton and Leigh and the rest in Salford and Eccles.

Simultaneously they staged a diversion by attacking the shop stewards committee. The stewards

were told that they could only have 10 hours a week during working hours, that they had to get pass-outs for union business and that management had to know what the business was, as well as the agendas for all shop stewards committee meetings.

Whatever happens the company will try to solve its problems by taking money or jobs off workers. Wards workers have got to stop this. Being on the dole in Salford is no picnic, especially now if you are semi-skilled, as most of the people at Wards are.

The shop stewards committee plans for sit-ins in case of redundancy needs to be resurrected and organised so that it can be put into action if necessary.—**GERRY DAVIDSON, BRIAN JONES**, Salford.

Fascism in Pakistan?

NEIL ROGALL and Dave Goldsworthy did well in their factual account of the armed struggle in Baluchistan. It's a struggle between the Baluch people, fighting for their democratic rights and the Pakistani armed forces under Prime Minister Bhutto's orders.

He had no elected member in the provincial assembly and seeks to establish personal fascist dictatorship over Pakistan. He dismissed Baluchistan's elected government early in 1973 and ordered the armed forces to crush his opponents and terrorise the people. The onslaught has been the longest if not the most brutal the people of Pakistan have suffered at the hands of their own armed forces and power hungry politicians.

It's also the first time the people

have put up such a sustained armed resistance. It continues despite Bhutto's claims to the contrary.

The reply from a Pakistani (18 January) is confused and avoids deeper analysis. Of course the people's struggle must continue and grow in strength, but the greatest task is to stem the establishment of a fascist dictatorship.

In Pakistan the people of Baluchistan haven't allowed Bhutto to achieve personal fascist dictatorship. The Punjabi people particularly are heavily indebted to them.

The Pakistani correspondent referred to the Bangladesh struggle of 1971. The generals of Yayha Khan's military junta having acquired characteristics of the pre-war Japanese military junta completely miscalculated the results of the 1970 general elections, and the strength of the Bengali's (Bangladeshi's) national feelings.

They set out to undo the (parliamentary) democratic process so that fascist military dictatorship might remain. The moronic action ultimately brought in India, may be for several other reasons but mainly to prevent the national liberation struggle becoming in due course a socialist revolution.—**M K JANJUA** (Editor, Democratic Pakistan), London W2.

NOT BOSS!

My attention has been drawn to an article which appeared in Socialist Worker describing me as 'The Leader of the Labour Group on Dudley Council'.

I am not the leader of the Dudley Labour Group nor ever have been!

Your article states that I promised Council house tenants not to raise the rents, and then raised them by £1.20 as soon as I got back after the Election.

I addressed one large meeting in Dudley and two in Coseley at the request of Council house tenants. At neither of these meetings did I make any such promise or any statement which would lead tenants to believe that I would keep the rents down. I have a typewritten copy of the speech which I delivered.

You mention in the article 'Education Chairman Labour Councillor Wilson has refused to meet students to explain his dictatorial rules concerning extended hours of visiting study bedrooms'. I don't make the rules—the governors of the College Council operate within the articles and instrument of government laid down by the Department of Education and Science.

Under these articles the students have two representatives who sit as governors, and they have been present during discussions on visiting hours—they were present and took part in the discussions and voting. As Chairman, I took no part in the voting which was against increasing the hours.

I see no reason for you to accuse me of being dictatorial!—**JOHN T WILSON**, Coseley.

Profits in danger

AT 4.30pm the other Monday a bomb exploded in the basement of Lewis's department store in Manchester. Management policy is to flash a series of warning lights of red, amber and green—commonly known as traffic lights among the staff—when they receive a bomb warning.

Staff then get down and grovel on the floor, looking for suspicious carrier bags. Customers are not supposed to know what the lights mean. No one is evacuated from the store until a bomb is actually found. On that Monday, as it happened, no one found the bomb until it went off, injuring 19 people, and causing one fellow to lose the sight of his left eye.

This isn't the first time that the store have had bombs planted there. Last year a bomb was left in the carpet department and found after the store had closed. Obviously Lewis's policy of not evacuating until they actually find the bomb is understandable—think of all the profits they will lose closing the store for an hour!—**AILEEN KNOWLES** (ex-Lewis's staff) Manchester.

REPORTS PLEASE! . . . Could any readers who have attended local meetings between NUS and ASTMS on postgraduate students please send reports to me as soon as possible. ASTMS may be preparing to virtually abandon its previous drive to recruit university academic staff—handing over to the AUT on one hand and the NUS on the other. It is therefore essential that we collate as much information as possible on the situation within each university so that we can begin to mount a campaign to get ASTMS to oppose the AUT's application to join the TUC and to assist rank and file activists in extending genuine trade union organisation throughout the university.—**ERIC CAMERON**, 14 St John's Street, Oxford.

LABOUR OF VIRTUE? . . . I thought you'd be interested to hear a resolution was narrowly passed at the Manchester Withington Constituency Labour Party General Management Committee deploring the 'use of bombing against innocent civilians as a means of attempting to achieve political aims', but attacking the 'infringement of basic human rights and civil liberties by the passing of the so-called Anti-Terrorism Act in parliament'. . . . The resolution ended by saying 'a solution to the Irish problem must include the recognition of the right of the Irish people to self-determination and consequently the withdrawal of British Troops from the Six Counties.—**LABOUR PARTY MEMBER**, Manchester.

ABSTAIN? . . . I received my first leaflet of the Anti-Common Market Campaign . . . It showed a weeping Mr Cube saying our sugar had been stolen by Brussels: really there was no shortage at all (quite correct) and if we got out of the Common Market all would be sweetness and light. Apparently shortages and high prices have been 'imposed on us by an authority that has never been elected by us, and was foisted on us by the Tories'. Presumably once out of the Common Market inflation will either disappear or it will be quite acceptable as the government will have been elected 'by us'. However, I recalled a happier Mr Cube recently with Tate & Lyle's pre-tax profits up from £17.1 million to £40.8 million. What did the leaflet have to say about business profiteers? Absolutely nothing. It was 100 per cent nationalist . . . it was issued by the London District of the Communist Party. In June the key issues will be the Social Contract, rising prices and unemployment. In my union, NALGO we shall be fighting the cuts in public expenditure . . . A nationalist anti-Common Market campaign will attract working class attention away from the real issues. . . . The International Socialists should think about running an abstentionist campaign, stating that in or out we live in a capitalist society, the only alternative to which is socialism. We must fight the orgy of nationalism and racialism with class politics and militant workers will see the referendum as the farce that it is.—**PETER MARTIN**, Croydon.

STARVATION . . . May I return to the subject of Bangladesh? 'Our rulers' have done nothing to aid the famine victims; neither have the International Socialists called even for the most minimal token action. Since both IS and 'our rulers' are politicians I assume that this failure to act is based not on inadvertence, but on the belief on the part of each that such action would not advance the interests that each seeks to represent: the capitalist class on one hand, and the working class on the other . . . We are faced here with a convergence of class interests in the genocidal famine presently raging in Bangladesh. Furthermore, in the silence of the IS we must see a cloak for one of the most shameful pieces of class-collaboration yet recorded. I cannot expect the IS to agree with this analysis in public, but I should like to see them try publicly to refute it.—**CHRIS EDDY**, Burton-on-Trent.

Socialist Worker has throughout its existence drawn attention to the murder whether by weapons, or starvation of the Third World. The International Socialists are 'politicians' in a different sense to 'our rulers'. We are concerned with the freeing of the working class, by the working class, and we are part of that class and that struggle. Death in Bangladesh is the death of our brothers and sisters. There is no convergence or collaboration of class interests. We are in Britain, to end mass murder we must make the revolution, and, through geography, we must start here.

The Black Worker in Britain

ब्रिटेन वाशाली क्रमिक

Anwodudu To Wa Ni Iru Oyibo

O Trabalhador Português em Inglaterra

सिखायत मा गुजराती मजदूर

O Κύπριος Εργάτης στην Αγγλία

ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਡਾਰਤੀ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ

Ndi Ojie No Na Obodo Oyibo

برطانیہ میں پاکستانی مزدور

Essential reading for all immigrant workers, the new IS/Chingari pamphlet in English. Available from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, N4. 15p plus 4p postage.

In nineteen seventy two it was
One January day
Throughout the pits the call rang out
We'll strike for decent pay

We'll block supplies, we'll cut them
off
We'll show them that we care
We'll send the flying pickets out
We'll picket everywhere

The flying pickets stole the show
Where ever that they went
From South Wales up to Aberdeen
From Durham down to Kent

The boys in blue were sent along
They sent them by the score
And when the strike was going well
They sent along some more

A hundred thousand tons of coke
At Saltley yard did lie
From Stoke on Trent the miners
came
To form a picket line

Close the gates it was the cry
You shoulda heard the din
Close the gates it was the cry
And still the law came in

On Thursday morning the engineers
All left their work that day
To march down to the picket line
To march to Saltley Gate

They came from Rover, Lucas too
They came from all around
They came from factories everywhere
All over Birmingham town

They marched right up to Saltley
Gate
The coppers soon gave way
The action of ten thousand men
Closed Saltley Gate that day.

—from Saltley Gate, a ballad written
by Sam Richards and sung to the
tune of the Battle of Harlaw.



On film: The Battle of Saltley

For the first time in my life I had a practical demonstration of what workers' solidarity meant. We felt so powerful. We felt we could rule the world—A young AUEW member at Saltley, 9 January 1972.

THE MINERS is a grim and an inspiring film. What's inspiring is to feel again the sheer strength that over flowed from the coal fields in the strikes of 1972 and 1974.

What's grim, is to remember, with a jolt, that in 1974 the political cards really were on the table and the fate of the Labour Movement was literally hanging in the balance. 'If we fail, everyone else goes down' says one miner calmly.

'If there is any section that will break through Phase Three and all it stands for, it's us' says Jack Collins. 'The miners are on the front line and proud to be on the front line'.

The mood is of quiet strength. An older pitman says softly 'We don't want to go about breaking laws. But we'll do what's necessary. If they want to put us in jail, they're going to need a lot of jails'.

We see Heath on TV, jowls a quiver, announcing the three-day week. And we see the force that broke him: the solidarity of the rank and file miners, their wives and their families and the active support of the trade union movement. The film is particularly good in showing just what makes the miners so strong, the confidence of communities which have grown old with struggle.

CINEMA ACTION have *The Miners and other films on Ireland, UCS, the Pentonville Five ready for showing at branches, meetings and schools. Phone 01-586 2762 for information. Cinema Action's address is 35a Winchester Road, London NW3.*

The miner's memories flow easily. They talk of the crushing defeat of 1926 as if it was only yesterday. One older collier remembers queuing up for work and the master coming past asking him 'What can thou do?' When he replied 'I can work.' Then the master turned on him and said: 'I suppose you can sing the Red Flag, then.' Because I needed the job, I didn't own up,' the collier confessed.

They talk bitterly about nationalisation, the waste, the wreckage of productive seams, the swarth of closures that cut through the industry in the Sixties sterilising millions of the tons that are now so urgently sought in the productivity blitz.

But most thrilling are the scenes which show how the miners opened the political eyes of the rest of the Labour Movement and actively won support and solidarity. Ford workers throw

cash into a Sainsbury's bag, London dockers hand over a wad of notes.

Best of all we relive the build-up of support among the Birmingham engineers which led to the closure by force of the Saltley coke depot. The sequence of film starting with the Central Hall AUEW meeting and ending with a detachment of police, faces downcast, retreating amid jeers from the Saltley gates says so much about working class power.

The film has weaknesses. It's much too soft on the NUM leadership's low profile picketing in 1974, when, as Gormley put it, 'the flying pickets flew out of the window'. And some of its captions are heavy-handed and unnecessary because of the clarity with which the miners put their own case.

But overall it's one of the finest of Cinema Action's many fine working class documentaries. It's to be hoped that Jack Collins is right when he asks that the Labour Movement does 'quickly realise the value of Cinema Action and the work they do and then make sure that they are encouraged to continue without being dependent on hand-outs'.

DAVID WIDGERY

The miners did more than give Heath a bloody nose industrially, they broke him politically and drove him from office. This film is a testament to that power. To me the most thrilling sequence was the re-living of the Battle of Saltley. Solidarity in action is too important a lesson to forget. The Labour movement has tended to ignore films too long, mainly because films ignore them. The Miners isn't going to be on at your local Odeon so IS branches, trade union branches and lodges should make a real effort to show it.

—John Deason, IS Industrial Department.

I.S. SOCIAL

Special all-London fund raiser for IS Marching Band

STARRING:

The General Will's Pub Show all the way from Bradford

Blues from The Claimants

Socialist Worker Soul Disco



Friday 8th February from 8pm with bar extension. The Common Room, North London Poly in the Holloway Road, N7. Holloway Underground and Buses 43, 271, 104, 172 & 279. AN EVENING'S DELIGHT FOR ONLY 50p

AKENFIELD: FUNNY HOW NOTHING HAS CHANGED...

AKENFIELD, a new film which had its premier showing on TV recently, is about life in a Suffolk village ten miles from where I live.

It exposes once and for all the evils of the tied-cottage system. Anyone interested in the history of the farmworkers' struggle for a half-decent life—and how that struggle continues—will learn from it.

There's a moving scene at a funeral where a young farm worker remembers his dead grandfather telling him how his union branch collapsed because the blokes were too poor to pay the dues.

One pay day, after a week of wet weather, his grand-dad discovered he had a solitary penny left for himself—and he throws it across the field in disgust.

The humour is typical of farmworkers—black, defiant, yet futile. The old man tried to escape. The appalling poverty, the back-breaking work, the prison of his tied cottage drove him out. Again it's a futile gesture.

At first, it's funny when you hear how he walked 40 miles to

Newmarket, failed to get a job as a stable lad and then walked the 40 miles back. But it's not so funny when his grandson pictures the event and you see a huddled peasant figure, sack over his head and shoulders, trudging back through the rain, defeated.

MERVYN BARKER

Socialist Worker has received many inquiries about the film *Ireland: Behind the Wire*, which is currently finishing a national tour of 16 industrial centres on the third anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

SATURDAY
BBC-2: 11pm. SINKERS ROW in the NETWORK series is a fictionalised documentary about 'life in a Northumberland pit village at the turn of the century'.

SUNDAY
BBC-2: 10pm. LA BETE HUMAINE is a French film, directed by Jean Renoir, from Emile Zola's novel. BBC-1 INSIDE THE PRESS—THE DESKMEN at 11.15pm is about the processing of news. On BBC-1

sary of Bloody Sunday.

No further tour showings can be arranged but the film can be hired from its makers, the Berwick Street Film Collective, 7-9 Earlam Street, London W1 (01-240 2350) who are currently working on a shortened and more up-to-date version. They are also releasing a new feature-length film on the campaign to unionise women night-cleaners.

Ireland: Behind the Wire tickets and posters for London branches can be collected from the IS Bookshop and, for other branches, from SW Circulation.

WHEN TO SWITCH ON

at 10.10pm OMNIBUS examines the work of the French sculptor in CHANGES—AUGUSTE RODIN.

FRIDAY
BBC-1: 10.15pm. A ready supply of nausea is provided by the LARGER THAN LIFE series, which is THE COMPULSIVE GAMBOLLER—JOHN ASPINALL, who after spending his life as a gambler, has now settled down to keeping wild animals on his country estate.

WHAT'S ON

ENTRIES for this column must be posted to reach Socialist Worker by Monday morning—and remember the 'first class' post takes two days as often as one. Due to pressure of work we cannot take What's On entries over the phone. Entries here are free for IS branches and other IS organisations.

THE CRISIS—SOCIAL CONTRACT OR SOCIALISM Public meetings around the new book by Tony Cliff, member of the IS executive committee

- SUNDERLAND:** Thursday 20 February, 7.30pm, Wheatsheaf public house. Speaker Tony Cliff.
- WARLEY:** Thursday 13 February, 8pm, Red Fort Social Club, High Street, Smethwick. Speaker: Steve Jefferys (IS industrial organiser).
- YORK:** Friday 21 February, 8pm, De Grey Rooms, Exhibition Square. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- WATFORD:** Thursday 6 February, 8pm, Trade Union Hall (upstairs room), Woodford Road (near Watford Junction station). Speaker: Nigel Harris (IS national committee member).
- DUDLEY:** Wednesday 12 February, 8pm, Castle and Falcon, Wolverhampton Street. Speaker: Steve Jefferys (IS industrial organiser).
- CENTRAL LONDON:** Thursday 6 February, 6.15pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- SOUTHWARK:** Wednesday 12 February, 8pm, North Peckham Civic Centre (corner of Old Kent Road and Peckham Park Road), London SE15. Speaker to be announced.
- TOWER HAMLETS, East London:** Thursday 6 February, 8pm, The Black Horse, Leman Street, E1. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- MERSEYSIDE:** Thursday 27 February, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- SHEFFIELD:** Monday 17 February, 7.30pm, The Mail Coach, Went Street. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- DUNDEE:** Thursday 1 February, 7.30pm, Main Hall, Royal Centre Hotel, Union Street, Dundee. Speaker: Jimmy McCallum (former AUEW-TASS convenor, John Browns, Glasgow, and IS national committee member).
- BIRMINGHAM:** Sunday 16 February, 7.30pm, Digbeth Civic Hall. Speaker: Tony Cliff.
- NEWHAM, East London:** Tuesday 11 February, 8pm, Princess Alice, Romford Road, Forest Gate. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

IS public meetings

SHELL CARRINGTON IS Group public meeting: The future of Carrington. Speakers: Chris Martin (TGWU shop steward, Shell, Coryton) and national IS speaker. Thursday 13 February, 8pm, Partington Community Centre, Central Road, Partington. All Shell workers invited.

BIRMINGHAM District IS Education meeting: The Revolutionary Party. Speaker: Mick Rice (Lucas, AUEW). Monday 10 February, 7.30pm, IS Books, Digbeth.

ABERYSTWYTH IS will be showing the film *Chilean September* to a public meeting on Tuesday 11 February, 7.30pm, Exam Hall, Old College. Admission free.

Meetings for IS members

NOISS Women's Conference: Saturday 8 February, London coach leaves Kings Cross 8am sharp. For further details phone John Joyce 01-802 6572.

NOISS Women's Conference: Saturday 8 February, 10.30am, Leicester University Students Union building. Three delegates per IS Society. Observers welcome.

MANCHESTER IS new members school: Saturday 8 February, 2-6pm, Duncan Hall on Marxism and the Crisis of Capitalism. John Charlton on IS, the revolutionary party and the Rank and File Movement. Manchester University Students Union, upstairs meeting room. Further details, phone 061-792 5780.

IS Teachers' Aggregate Meeting: Saturday 15 February, 10am-5pm, Students Union, Edgbaston Park Road, off Bristol Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Creche. Accommodation available through IS Bookshop, Digbeth, Birmingham (near Digbeth Civic Hall) from 8pm on Friday 14 February. Birmingham District social on the Saturday night. All IS teachers to attend.

NOISS Second Conference of the National Organisation of International Socialist Societies will be held at Leeds University Students Union on 15-16 February. Registration details from Steve Cass, 13 Cliff Mount, Leeds 6.

IS Motor and Components Industry Fraction executive committee meeting: Saturday 8 February, 2.30pm, in Birmingham (except British Leyland and Chrysler). Details from IS Industrial Department (phone 01-739 6273).

IS Building Workers Fraction Weekend School on the Crisis and Unemployment: Saturday 7 February, 12 noon, to Sunday 4pm. Accommodation provided. Inquiries phone Bill Kaye at 01-586 1668.

North West & Yorkshire Region IS Day School: Economics of the Crisis. John Palmer leading discussion. Manchester, Saturday 2 March. Further details next week.

IS notices

CHELMSFORD IS urgently need jumble and helpers for Saturday 15 February. Phone 0245-52009 or 0245-59129.

MORE musicians wanted for IS Marching Band. Contact Chris Barker (01-485 0476).

DARLINGTON IS Social with Shoestring Theatre, Arthur Eals and Dave Blair. Friday 28 February, 8pm, Travellers Rest, Cockerton. Tickets 50p.

Socialist Worker needs an assistant business manager. Office experience and typing are advantages, but willingness to work hard more important. Contact Liz Balfour, Socialist Worker, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN. Phone 01-739 2639.

NO to the Common Market! Posters and leaflets available for local propaganda. Send orders to Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN. Leaflets—25p per 100, posters—75p per 100. Money with orders please.

CRISIS BOOK IS GOING WELL

ALL 20,000 copies of the first printing of *The Crisis—Social Contract or Socialism*, by Tony Cliff, have now been distributed. In some areas the book has already sold out.

The Glasgow District of IS has sold 400 copies and ordered another 100. More than 30 have been sold in Chrysler Linwood in spite of the layoffs. 26 have been sold in Albion Motors.

In Liverpool more than 300 copies have been sold, 16 in Triumph Motors, 18 in Evans Medical including six ordered by the shop stewards committee. Tommy Douras, a member of the IS National Committee, spoke to Speke 4 Branch of the AUEW on the crisis and the need to use Cliff's book. 10 copies were sold to an audience of 31. Tommy Douras has been asked back to the next branch meeting to answer questions on the book.

Meetings are being held in towns throughout Britain. 180 people packed the Co-op Town Hall in Tooting, South London, last week to hear Tony Cliff speak on his book. £40 was raised for the IS Fighting Fund. The South West London District of IS, who organised the meeting, have now sold 400 copies.

The book is essential reading for every socialist and serious trade



unionist. Tony Cliff explains why there is a crisis, what it means for working people, and how succeeding governments attempt to solve it with attacks on wages, the social services and by introducing high unemployment. The book deals with how to organise the fight back against factory closures, against the use of police on picket lines. In the final chapters of the book Cliff argues that the way out of the

crisis is to strengthen the rank and file organisations of the working class and build a mass revolutionary socialist workers party.

Every reader of Socialist Worker should buy this book, and take extra copies to sell at work. The sales reports in the first three weeks make it clear that a really massive sale of the book is possible.

THE CRISIS—SOCIAL CONTRACT OR SOCIALISM is 75p plus 5p postage from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4; from Pluto Press, Unit 10 Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1; or direct from bookshops. Bulk orders for trade union branches, shop stewards committees, etc—write for details.

Asian day school—plus five

LEICESTER:—A successful day school was held last Sunday by the Asian group. Comrades and contacts present included students, apprentices, dustmen, and workers from Imperial Typewriters, Delta Mouldings, H J B Plastics and British Celanese (Derby). In the morning Nigel Harris spoke on the world crisis and we saw a film about the price of a cup of tea, which showed how tea pickers in Ceylon were being starved and exploited in appalling conditions by large British tea companies.

After lunch Soonu Engineer spoke about the problems facing the black worker in Britain and a good discussion followed, bringing out the points of union procedure, organising in factories and how to build unity, solidarity and confidence. The school ended with Martha Osamor explaining more about IS and our aims, after which five Asian comrades joined IS, three from Leicester, two from Derby.

Is there such a thing as a 'fair' wage?

INEQUALITY is built into the very fabric of the society in which we live.

It is founded on the unequal ownership of the land on which we depend for food, the mines and forests that provide the raw materials, and the factories that make all the necessities of our lives.

And it is increased every day by an economic system that gives a fixed wage to the worker, whose labour alone can create wealth, but gives untold profits to those who risk merely money, their 'capital'.

Is it possible to have a system of society that will do away with this inequality?

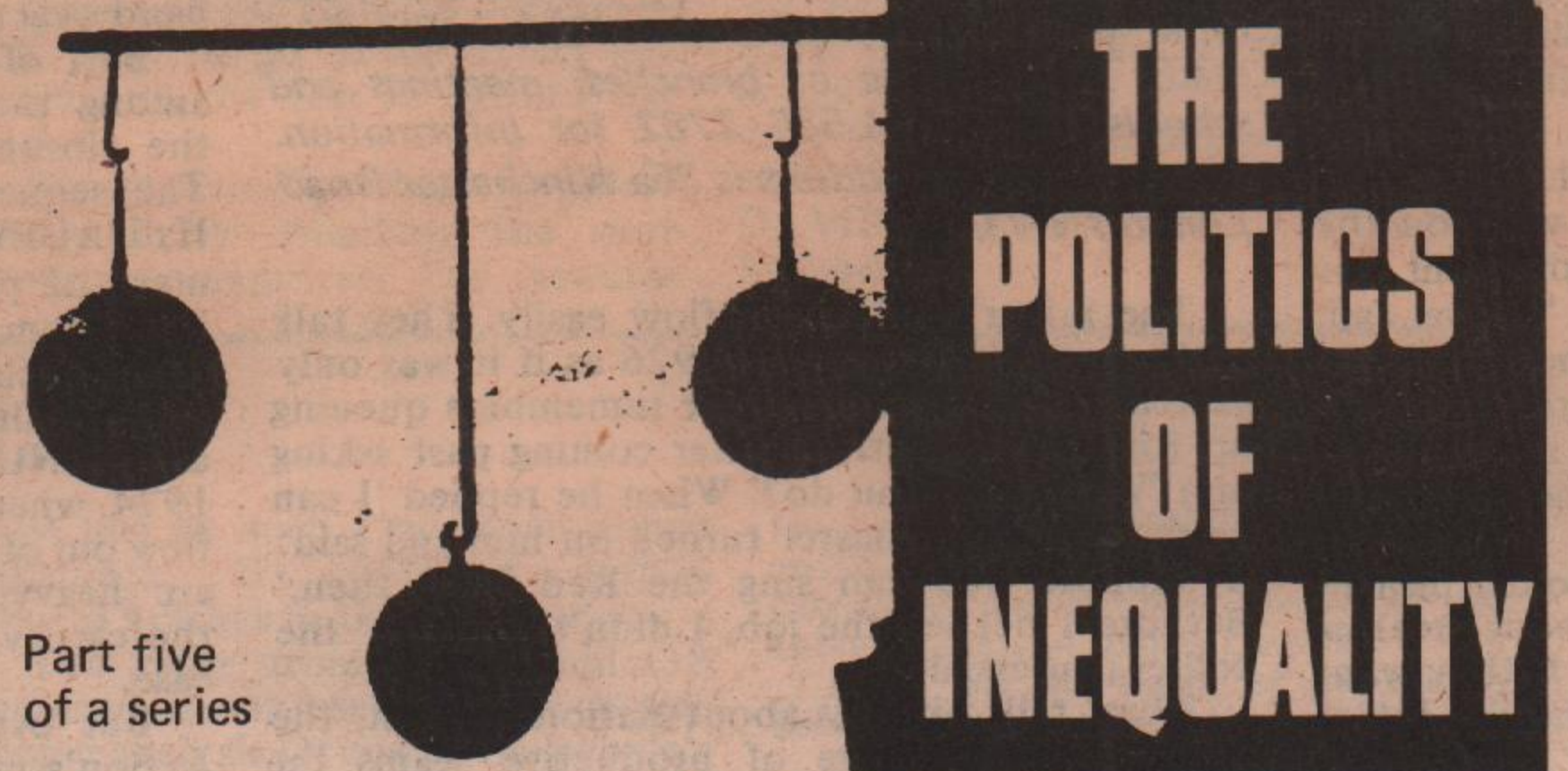
Many people—and there are Labour Party members and trade union leaders among them—will tell you to forget about inequality. 'Fairness' is their concern. Their motto is 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work'.

We live in a free society, they say, which means that if anyone thinks his or her wages are too low, they are free to go out and look for someone who'll pay more.

This 'free labour market' means everyone gets what they're worth: if you are low-paid it means society doesn't need your skills much, and if you're highly-paid then your skills are obviously valuable.

Of course they'll agree there are a few injustices. Yes, the nurses should be paid a bit more.

To such people I would point out that Harry Hyams, probably the highest-paid member of our society,



Part five of a series

gets his money for putting up massive office blocks in Central London and keeping them empty and useless for up to ten years (so far). Clearly this must be of great value to society since his annual income is reckoned in millions.

At the other end of the scale, dustbinmen and sewage workers are among the poorest-paid. Does this mean they are of little value to society?

Water

Surely not, for if they all went on strike at one time it would only be a matter of weeks before festering rubbish was piled in the streets, the rivers were flowing with untreated sewage, and people started dying of cholera, dysentery and other diseases caused by infected drinking water.

society like ours the vast majority of wealth is produced by the co-operation of hundreds, sometimes thousands of men, all of them essential.

Even the carpenter's product is not wholly his. He'd never have produced that ninety quid's worth of furniture if there weren't doctors and hospital workers keeping him healthy, bus drivers to see he got to work, fitters and electricians to see his machinery was working properly, sewage workers to keep the place free from cholera. And so on.

Product

The standard of living in our society depends on the social labour of millions of people. Can anyone truly say that one is more valuable to society than another with such accuracy that it can be measured down to a few pence a week?

No. Capitalism does not grant wages according to how valuable to society you are—but according to how powerful you are. Harry Hyams, useless though his empty office blocks are, gets a lot because he has the power of millions of pounds behind him.

Dustbinmen and sewage workers are poorly-paid because they are a weak, poorly-organised section of workers whose work, though vital to society, is easily done by the army should they strike.

Pete Marsden

CONTROVERSY

CONGRATULATIONS on the 'Politics of Inequality' series. Pete Marsden quotes (18 January) that 5 per cent of the population own 96 per cent of personally-held shares in Britain.

When I have quoted similar figures I have been told that through my pension fund and through my trade union fund I also own shares. So do we all. I have also been told that there are more of these 'institutional' shares than there are privately-held shares. Is this correct?

If this is correct then you have to show how this capitalist class, who personally control a minority of shares, are able to force through capitalist measures such as speed-ups, bonus schemes and redundancies. I hope you

Socialist Worker will carry a regular weekly article on some aspect of socialist ideas. Hand-in-hand with it we hope to run this 'Controversy' section, inviting readers to take up these ideas—perhaps to disagree, perhaps even to expand on them.

can help me.—DAVE BLANE, London, N1.

Pete Marsden writes: 1970 figures show that insurance companies and pension funds own 33 per cent of the shares on the British

stock market, which still leaves the rich with a big majority holding.

But don't be fooled by the argument that because it's your money they've got in the pension fund or tied up behind that insurance policy, then you 'own' shares. Have you any control over what's done with the money? No.

Just who does control what is done with the millions of pounds that is poured, much of it by workers, into the coffers of these big companies? Their boards of directors.

And who are these men? Well, the CIS Anti-Report on insurance companies and pension funds* found that the 38 directors of two companies alone, Eagle Star and Guardian Royal, held between them 946 other directorships, in other companies. The 38 included nine knights

and four members of the House of Lords. In other words they're the same people who own the 96 per cent of personally-held shares.

As CIS point out, the irony lies in the use to which these hard-earned workers' savings are put. They are, of course, invested wherever will give the highest return, and that means in many cases the maximum exploitation of the labour force.

So maybe you will get your pension in the end, but only after the rich and powerful have used your 40 years of contributions to keep your nose to the grindstone.

*published 1974 by Counter-Information Services, 52 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W1, price 30p.

Samco strikers win backing

BRISTOL:-The T & G Senior Shop Steward at Samco Strong has called on all the scabs who cross the picket line to back management against the AUEW. And the EPTU District Officer has written to the strikers calling for a meeting to achieve a resumption of normal working.

Management have written to the strikers' families trying to turn their wives against them.

The £2 offer turned down by the strikers, who are demanding £6 across the board, was, in management's words, 'a gesture of good-will towards productivity talks'. The wages—£32 for skilled workers, £27 for unskilled—are some of the lowest in the district.

Managed

The National Rank and File Movement has been working hard to back this strike. Blacking at Bristol and Liverpool Docks has been won and a delegate from the Rank and File Organising Committee went with the AUEW convenor at Samco's to Newport docks and managed to get blacking there, too. A visit by the convenor to the parent company, BUSM, has also

resulted in blacking.

Bristol No. 5 AUEW branch voted on a weekly levy of 5p a member, which was strongly fought for by R & F delegates at Rolls-Royce and on the Trades Council. This succeeded overwhelmingly and the strikers should be receiving benefit from it in two or three weeks.

They need all the support they can get as the local evening paper has run front page articles on the strike with quotes only from management and the T & G senior steward.

Contributions and letters of support to Stan Holley, 18 Mayfield Park North, Fishponds, Bristol. A mass picket has been called for Monday 18 February at 9pm. All trade unionists in the area should support this and show solidarity. Management have called for free mobility of the remaining scabs, with scabs operating in the fitters shop, which has been run by foremen and supervisors since the strike began.



WHAT WE STAND FOR

THE International Socialists are a revolutionary socialist organisation open to all who accept our main principles and who are willing to work to achieve them. These principles are:

INDEPENDENT WORKING-CLASS ACTION

We believe that socialism can only be achieved by the independent action of the working class.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORMISM

We believe in overthrowing capitalism, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it. We therefore support all struggles of workers against capitalism and fight to break the hold of reformist ideas and leaders.

THE SMASHING OF THE CAPITALIST STATE

The state machine is a weapon of capitalist class rule and therefore must be smashed. The present parliament, army, police and judges cannot simply be taken over and used by the working class. There is, therefore, no parliamentary road to socialism. The working-class revolution needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state, based on councils of workplace delegates.

WORK IN THE MASS ORGANISATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

We believe in working in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly the trade unions, and fighting for rank and file control of them.

INTERNATIONALISM

We are internationalists. We practise and campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries, oppose racism and imperialism, and fully support the struggles of all oppressed peoples. We are opposed to all immigration controls.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country. Revolution is defeated by isolation. Russia, China and Eastern Europe are not socialist but state capitalist. We support the workers' struggle in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party, and all the activity of the International Socialists is directed to the building of such a party by fighting for a programme of political and industrial demands that can strengthen the self-confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

WE ARE

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials. No secret negotiations. All settlements to be voted on by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism. Against all victimisations and blacklisting. Against anti-trade union laws or curbs on the right to strike and on effective picketing.

Against productivity or efficiency deals. Against any form of incomes policy under capitalism.

Against unemployment, redundancies and lay-offs. Instead we demand five days work or five days pay, and the 35-hour week. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' control.

For militant trade union unity, joint shop stewards committees at plant and combine level.

For the building of a national rank and file movement which will fight for these policies in the trade union movement.

Against racism and police victimisation of black people. Against all immigration controls. For the right of black people and other 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 all forms of imperialism, including Russian imperialism.

For unconditional support to all genuine national liberation movements.

For the building of a mass workers' revolutionary party, organised in the workplaces, which can lead the working class to power, and for the building of a revolutionary socialist international.



Residents and hospital ancillary workers marching in North London last week to the Royal Free annexe in Liverpool Road, Highbury. The hospital is threatened with closure. Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

A kick in the teeth from Labour

By Jeff Shaw

THE NEWS of the Building Union, UCATT's acceptance of the 17 per cent employers' offer (from a claim of 100 per cent) was accompanied with the revelation that union negotiators had not pressed the full claim because of the economic situation and the social contract. Building workers now have a rate of 85p as against the £1.50 claim.

How is the Labour government reacting to this co-operation from the trade union movement?

By massive cuts in government spending that will cripple the building industry and thereby the building unions. In Leeds this has taken the form of the destruction of an advanced programme of hospital development. The new Leeds General Infirmary was a far-sighted integration of health services and medical training facilities.

This scheme has been kicked about since 1962. An integrated planning team of 100 is now likely to be dispersed. The original LGI, now over 100 years old, has as a result been starved of any capital developments for 13 years. It is close to breakdown. A women's hospital was demolished and moved five miles out of town. This means that in emergencies specialised services are not available.

Some progress on the scheme has been made, but the feeling is that this amounts to an enormous waste.

Three million pounds has been spent on land purchase and site clearance and providing a motorway underpass. The whole unit was designed to be self-sufficient in energy. A power station costing £4.6 million is nearing completion and will become a 'white elephant'.

This is an ideal opportunity to embarrass the hypocrites in the Labour Party hierarchy. Both Merlyn Rees and Denis Healey (Chancellor of the Exchequer and directly responsible for the cuts) are Leeds MPs and members of the Cabinet.

WE WANT £12- AND NOTHING LESS

DONCASTER:-All the unions at International Harvesters—except the T&GWU at Wheatley and Cart Hill—have dropped their £12 claim and accepted the company's offer.

The offer gives some members £11.75 and the low-paid workers about £5. It also puts a ceiling on piecework earnings. This the T&GWU cannot and will not accept.

After a week of overtime ban and working to minimum timing rates, a mass T&GWU meeting on Saturday voted to ask management to go to arbitration for £12 across the board with no strings attached. The meeting also voted to keep on the overtime ban, work to minimum timing rates and to lift strike action. But these sanctions will be put back on by the shop steward committee, if the need arises.

Gay teacher victimised

If John Warburton had been prepared to be hypocritical he could, no doubt, have kept his job. The ILEA clearly feel that gay teachers and their supporters are acceptable if they remain silent and unorganised. This is the reaction of an allegedly progressive authority.

Socialists in teaching unions should demand his appointment to Holland Park and call for an end to victimisation of gay teachers, with statements endorsing this position from the ILEA and the Department of Education and Science.

Gay teachers and other workers should have the right to organise in their own defence. Sexist teaching material, particularly in the field of sex education, should be removed from the curriculum.

Busmen unite against racists

by Les Kay, TGWU, Ribble Bus Company

BLACKBURN:-Racism has reared its ugly head on the buses yet again. A notice posted in the busmen's social club in Blackburn, says: 'By order of the committee, in the interests of all the members, English language only will be spoken in the clubroom'.

Two busmen, members of IS, have been expelled from the Social Club for ripping the notice down. This has led to a series of meetings of the Asian busmen and now a campaign has begun among all the busmen to have the two reinstated.

Some of the Asians have complained that they have been kept waiting far longer than the whites for their club membership forms. Time and again, they have been told that they will have to wait a bit longer. It's hardly surprising that they feel an unofficial colour bar is being operated.

More than 40 busmen have signed a petition calling for a general meeting, but no meeting has been called, even though the rules require only 25 signatures. Moves are now being made to organise a union meeting to have the clubroom blacked until the committee reverses its policy. If successful, this will involve contacting the brewery unions and having deliveries stopped.

The rule about speaking English is being ignored. The two Asians who started the petition found that most of the signatories are white busmen, who aren't prepared to support the

committee's decision. The militant racials have gone too far this time and have put themselves out on a limb.

We have improved on the links with Asian busmen formed while collecting money for legal costs following demonstrations against the National Front.

It will be a long time before the committee takes such a step again. We have shown that racism can be fought successfully by opposing it in a militant and political way, by countering every racist argument, by tearing down every racist notice.

Faced with the sacking of conductors and the introduction of one-man operated buses, we need to unite all bus-workers.

Gay teacher victimised

LONDON: John Warburton a teacher has been victimised by the Inner London Education Authority. Last Autumn he was seen by a pupil on a homosexual law reform demonstration. Faced with jeering pupils, he explained his position and answered questions.

Weeks later the headmistress found out, and she told the ILEA. They asked him to sign an agreement that he wouldn't mention homosexuality in the classroom. While prepared not to initiate such a discussion, he refused to sign such a total agreement.

He applied for another job at Holland Park School. There the head was informed by the ILEA he should not be appointed because he had refused to sign the agreement.

International Socialists



If you agree with the views expressed in this paper and would like more information, or would like to join the International Socialists, then send this form to: The International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Name _____

Address _____

Trade Union _____

Farmworkers still ready to fight

THE EXECUTIVE of the Agricultural Workers' Union has decided not to call for national industrial action against the pay increase offered by the Agricultural Wages Board.

The increase would give farmworkers a minimum rate of £28.50 a week from the beginning of February, rising to £30.50 at the end of July. Many farmworkers, particularly in areas remote from big cities where there is alternative employment, get the bare minimum. During the winter there are few opportunities to earn overtime.

Farmworkers are not only among the worst-paid workers in Britain, they are also badly-organised. There are 320,000 full-time farmworkers, some in USDAW and the TGWU, but the majority union is the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, the NUAAW,

with 90,000 members. Less than half of farmworkers unionised.

For many of the leaders of the NUAAW this has become the let out. President Bert Hazell argues that recruitment to the union must be the key priority, that the employers will simply concede if there are enough union members.

The executive has accepted an offer which is still short of the TUC's £30 a week minimum and far short of the £35 the union demanded following a decision at its Biennial Conference in 1974. Branches and County Committees across Britain have called on the executive to reject the offer, and some areas, including Norfolk, South Devon, Yorkshire and Kent, have called for strike action.

The executive's decision does not rule out action in

areas which can force up the local rate. This would help farmworkers in less well organised areas. Process workers in egg packaging, poultry processing and other mechanised jobs are still in a strong position.

In some areas, NUAAW branches are approaching other trade unionists to discuss co-operation with blacking and enforcing picket lines at markets, if strike action is taken. Some factory canteens are supplied direct from local farms, Chrysler's Ryton plant in Coventry for example.

The union has not taken national action to defend its members for more than 50 years. This has caused problems in holding members and widespread discussion about affiliation with the TGWU. But now, for the first time, since the war, farmworkers are preparing to organise for strikes and are building the links with other groups of workers necessary for them to win.

IS NAME 10 FOR STUDENT ELECTIONS

THE NATIONAL Student Committee of the International Socialists last week drew up a list of ten candidates for the elections in the National Union of Students later this term. The list will be recommended to the conference of the National Organisation of IS Societies next week.

For president (against the 'Broad Left' candidate), right of centre Labourite Charles Clarke): Terry Povey, a student at the Institute of Education and former president of North London Poly Students Union, where he played a leading role in the fight against the director, Miller.

For the secretaryship: Carolin Clark, formerly vice-president of Birmingham Polytechnic, where she has been active in the struggle against the cuts.

For treasurer: Tim Whitfield, of Bristol University, who led the big rent strike in Reading two years ago.

For the deputy-presidency: Pete Gillard, who was witchhunted just before Christmas by the press in Leeds for taking a principled line on Ireland.

REJECTS

The Broad Left existing leadership of the NUS has failed over the last year to lead any real fight against the education cuts. NOISS, on the other hand, has led many of the disputes and has tried to provide them with a national focus. The aim of running a slate in the elections is to fight for the sort of militant policy that the present leadership rejects.

The candidates on this list reject the careerism of the Broad Left candidates, who try to gain office at any price, combining individual self-advancement with unprincipled political alliances.

NOISS utterly opposes the politics of gaining control of NUS by behind-the-scenes manipulation, which does not in any way advance the militancy of the mass of students.

For these reasons, NOISS members must regret the decision of Hugh Lanning, a non-full time member of the NUS executive, to run for the full-time post of national treasurer against the NOISS slate. Lanning has stated that he would only support NOISS if it ran him for the treasurer's position, which he thinks he can win because the Broad Left candidate is so inept.

When the IS National Student Committee decided to recommend otherwise to the NOISS conference, Lanning immediately broke with NOISS, refusing even to argue the issue at the forthcoming NOISS Conference. His behaviour shows that his attitude is no different to that of the Broad Left.

Only an organisation based upon principled, militant policies can provide students with the lead they need in the fight against the cuts.

MOTION

IN LONDON, a fight is being waged against some of the worst facilities and conditions of any university in the country.

Canteen prices and hall of residence rents at the London School of Economics went up by 25 per cent at the beginning of this year. Library facilities and staff-student ratios have been cut back. And the maximum permitted number of students in each class is to go up from 12 to 16.

A motion was moved at a recent Students Union meeting giving the School 14 days to agree to increase substantially the grant to the Union, to withdraw the price and rent increases and to restore the cut-backs forthwith and to give a commitment to provide a nursery.

A failure to meet these demands within the stated period would be met by a total disruption of the college. Despite a childish attempt to ridicule the motion by the Broad Left General Secretary and statements by members of the Communist Party that we had no hope of winning, the motion was passed.

LABOUR BOSSES ATTACK DUSTMEN

COVENTRY:—The Labour Corporation this week docked two days' wages from 180 dustmen for not doing 'a fair day's work'. The dustmen are in their third week of a work to rule after a four day strike early in January. The dispute began over Corporation attempts to remove night shift work on bulk bin collections at a time when the Christmas pile-up of rubbish was at its height.

But the men's main grievance is much more than just money. They are fighting for job security and an 'end to wastage of rate-payers' money'. In 1970, a Works Study Bonus Scheme cut back on manning and vehicles by 40 per cent and now, as the crisis hits local government budgets, the Corporation is seeking further savings through attacking the dustmen's already bad working conditions.

The dustmen have carried out a mass leafletting campaign, accusing the management of neglecting agreed procedure, sus-

BUSMEN TO STRIKE FOR £40

BRADFORD:—A mass meeting of 600 busmen voted overwhelmingly on Sunday to pursue their claim for a £40 basic for 40 hours. They also decided against a compromise proposal to hold one-day Saturday strikes giving 14 days' notice, but insisted on lightning strikes with no notice at all, to begin next week.

Picketing at city boundaries will be organised with those busmen on early turn.

A busman told Socialist Worker it was the best union meeting he had been to. 'We got 600 out of about 1000 busmen in Bradford there because we just stopped the buses.'

The meeting completely rejected the call of Bradford full-time TGWU district officer, Jim Durham, to respect the Social Contract.

Rank and file busmen are now realising just how badly off the settlement they agreed to before Christmas has left them. This gave crew drivers a £32 basic and was railroaded through by branch officials and full-timers on the amazing grounds that the national negotiations would certainly give them less.

Management have refused to negotiate on the £40 claim—the TGWU regional full-timer also refused to negotiate on behalf of the busmen.

The busmen have been given to understand that any branch official or full-timer would be 'chopped' from above if they pursued a claim outside Jack Jones' Social Contract.

It is vital that the Bradford busmen are not left to fight alone. Rank and file busmen in Huddersfield have issued a Platform special leaflet calling for Huddersfield busmen to support joint action to win the claim. Busmen in Leeds and Halifax are urged to do the same and should contact Metro Platform, 29 Whetley Lane, Bradford 8.

Science—for us

150 scientists attended a conference called by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science last weekend to discuss science under capitalism. Several speakers emphasised the need for all scientific workers to become active rank and file members of their appropriate union.

Entries for the Classified column 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 Works, Corbridge Crescent, London, E2 9DS. Adverts that arrive without payment will be charged at double the rate.

MEETINGS
CRISIS ON FLEET STREET, discussion on struggle in print industry. NATSOPA Father of Chapel will open. Saturday 8 February, 3.30pm, Centro Iberico, Haverstock Hill, London NW3 (entrance in Steele's Road/Chalk Farm tube). Organised by the Libertarian Communist Group.

DAY CONFERENCE: Socialist Perspectives on Ireland, Saturday 15 February, 10am. Speakers: Bob Purdie, Paddy Prenderville, Mervin Metcalfe and Gerry Lawless. Chelsea College Soc Soc, Manresa Road, London SW3 (phone 01-352 6421 ext 109). Organised with help of Troops Out Movement.

SEXISM AND EDUCATION CONFERENCE: Saturday 1 March, Nottingham Teachers Centre, Cranmer Street, Nottingham. Workshops include: Women and the teaching unions; non-sexist books and teaching materials; gay oppression and education; the Working Women's Charter; sex education. Cashes and accommodation available. Registration, including discussion papers, 50p (postal orders etc payable to T Pamplin) from 18 Corporation Oaks, Nottingham.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP—Edinburgh branch: Public meeting Tuesday 11 February, 7.30pm, Trades Council, Picardy Place. Speaker David Yaffe on 'The tasks facing revolutionary today'.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP—Edinburgh branch: Public meeting Tuesday 11 February, 7.30pm, Trades Council, Picardy Place. Speaker David Yaffe on 'The tasks facing revolutionary today'.

Get your facts straight!

by Mike McGrath, CPSA

THE International Socialists are under attack in yet another union, the 215,000-strong Civil Servants' union, the CPSA, because of their involvement in the rank and file group, Redder Tape.

The General Secretary, Bill Kendall, takes a full page of the February issue of the union journal Red Tape to slander and attack IS politically.

The articles claim IS 'do not aim to change the policies of the trade union movement, they aim to destroy it'. Kendall also states that Redder Tape is mainly concerned with electioneering and is 'under the direction of IS'.

A resolution at the January meeting of the union's National Executive condemned IS, the Redder Tape group and also 'more traditional Marxist influences'—that is to say, the Communist Party and the Broad Left in the union. But, amended, it simply referred to 'extreme elements who would attempt to fulfill their political aims through this association.'

Undoubtedly the leadership is worried about Redder Tape because, though organisationally small, the ideas it develops are increasingly taking root among civil servants.

Against a background of negotiations on productivity in the Post Office that will lead to the loss of at least 600 jobs, where pay increases are being negotiated in top secrecy with no membership involvement, the more active members are becoming disgusted and disillusioned with their leaders.

Redder Tape is accused of electioneering. The hypocrisy is astounding. The paper started as a reaction against the underhand electioneering that dominates the CPSA.

But undoubtedly this attack will lead to calls for disciplinary action. Whether or not this succeeds will depend upon the group's supporters explaining the real issues to the membership: the fight for open and accountable democracy, the fight against management by objectives (productivity deals), against redundancies, against the secrecy of pay negotiations and against the stifling atmosphere of Whitleyism.

Another union smears IS



THE International Socialists reject the slanders against us in the union journal of the CPSA, Red Tape. Our members do work in the rank and file group around Redder Tape. But to claim, as Bill Kendall does, that we 'sponsor' it, and that it is under our direction is a blatant insult to all those rank and file militants who work in Redder Tape and who do not belong to our organisation.

Kendall's article states that 'The International Socialists believe that the end of the capitalist system is imminent and that they are the self-appointed leadership who will drive us all into an undefined communist society. They do not aim to change the trade union movement—they aim to destroy it, in the false belief that something of value to the working class will emerge from the ashes.'

All this is patent nonsense. Our

programme states quite categorically what we want to achieve and how we hope to achieve this.

We believe in the election and accountability of all full-time officials. We are against secret diplomacy, whether in governments or on wage deals. We do believe in building a genuine rank and file movement that will lead and strengthen working class organisation.

In fact our whole programme is rooted in absolute openness and for full democracy in the trade union movement to make it into a real fighting force of the working class.

None of this we have ever denied nor will we cease to fight for what we believe. Perhaps this is why the witch-hunt against us by certain union leaders is taking place. Our idea of trade union democracy and the role of the trade union leaders is not theirs.

WHY ENGINEERS SAID 'NO' TO STRIKE

HEATHROW:—British Airways engineering workers last Friday rejected a joint shop stewards committee recommendation for strike action over their wage claim. The vote reflected their confusion on exactly what they were to strike for rather than their unwillingness to fight.

Guidance from leading shop stewards executive members has been inept and lacking insight into the feelings of the membership. And there has been a reluctance to quantify the 'substantial percentage increases' being pursued. Unofficially it was known to be 23 per cent, officially it was merely 'substantial'.

Before Christmas the employers' offer of 15 per cent in two stages, January and

April, was rejected by a mass meeting which pledged strike action if the claim was not conceded. This resulted in the offer of a threshold to be triggered when the cost of living had risen a further 20 per cent.

Local rank and file representatives then pursued the matter with a member of the British Airways Board. They committed a tactical error in lowering their sights by trying to negotiate marginal improvements—the 15 per cent paid from 1 January and the threshold triggered at a 15 per cent rise in the cost of living. Many workers have the impression that the strike was being called for this marginal improvement.

CHECK-IN and ticketing staff, members of APEX, met on Tuesday to discuss the management's offer over the Glasgow-London British Airways shuttle service dispute. They have been striking for four days over the plan, under which passengers would buy their tickets in flight, and not from ground staff.

BA's offer was to retain the service. The union leadership made no proposal and the local union official wouldn't commit himself.

Most of the staff voted to continue the strike, which has now spread to Manchester. There has been a token stoppage in Glasgow while Aberdeen and Edinburgh staff have been suspended for supporting the London strikers.

Support has also come from other airport workers who have pledged to black work done by scab management labour.

Classified

BIRMINGHAM REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP: Public meeting on Britain and the Irish Revolution, White Lion pub, Bristol Street, 7.30pm, Friday 14 February.

NOTICES

CALGACUS: The Scottish review of politics, current affairs, history and the arts now available. Single issue 40p plus 15p postage and packing. Annual sub (six issues) £3. Available from West Highland Publishing Company, Breakish, Isle of Skye.

JOHN AND MARGARET LLYWARCH invite you to enjoy a North Wales farmhouse holiday. Clean air, mountain streams, country rambles, fishing, wildlife galore, barbecues. A children's paradise and only two miles from a main line railway station. For terms ring 069-186 2272 or write to Bryn Iddon, Bron y Garth, Oswestry, Salop.

MAYDAY THEATRE'S new anti-fascist play 'The adventures of Jack Boot', exposes the myths of everyday life which are the breeding ground for fascism. Discussion after each performance. At Unity Theatre, London NW1, on February 14, 15 and 16. Or contact 01-223 3419 to book it for your organisation—tour begins 18 February.

NORTH WEST SPANNER THEATRE (based but Manchester-based) NEEDS FULL-TIME PERFORMER (S) Past plays—The Irish Play, Union Play for Techs, and plays on the Rent Act, Shrewsbury pickets, and the Nurses for factory gates, meetings, demos, precincts and trades clubs. Musical ability advantage. For further details contact N W Spanner, c/o Inroads, 56 Sussex Street, Salford 7, Lancashire, or phone 061-881 5011.

GLASGOW comrade recently moved to London urgently needs accommodation in house/flat, North London. Phone 01-802 2153.

THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE CIA—the story the Sunday Times withdrew (25p). The Union Makes us Strong—Tony Lane (70p). The UK in 1980—Hudson Report (£1.80). Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—David Riazanov (£1.50). Selected Works of Marx and Engels in one volume: 790 pages, £1.50. Please add 10p postage per book (over £5 post free). EOA Books, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford.

COMRADE seeks room in house or flat in North London (Telephone 452-1958 evenings).

Open Letter for a Revolutionary Regroupment

The Open Letter calls for a revolutionary regroupment, lays down 12 points as political guidelines and maps out practical steps towards unity. Copies from Workers Fight, 98 Gifford St, London N1 CDF. Please enclose 4½p stamp.

FARMHOUSE HOLIDAYS in North Wales. John and Margaret Llywarch invite you to enjoy clean air, woods, mountains, fishing, pony trekking and wild life galore. A children's paradise. Only two miles from main railway. Cheapest rates in North Wales for a full and exciting holiday. Big reductions for children under 12. 'Bryn Iddon', Bron y Garth, Oswestry, Shropshire (069 186-2272).

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 racism, all war. Write for specimen socialist literature to One World (SW) The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4.

THE BATTLE AGAINST REDUNDANCIES

IMPERIALS: 3 WEEKS LEFT...

ANTHONY Wedgwood Benn announced last Friday the appointment of consultants to investigate the possibility of keeping open the Imperial Typewriters' plants at Hull and Leicester, where 3200 workers face the sack.

It took him two weeks from the original closure announcement to do this. The closure is now due in less than three weeks.

Clearly Littons Industries, who own Imperial, intend their profitable German subsidiary to take over their British market. Meanwhile, another West German firm, Olympia, is planning to open a typewriter factory in Belfast and Olivetti are proposing to expand production at their Glasgow factory.

IN HULL, the docks shop stewards' committee have given a lead to the labour movement in Humberside by offering to black the import of typewriters and campaign for similar blacking in other ports. They have pledged to take any action required in support of workers at Imperials.

So far, unfortunately, there is little action at Imperials in support. Despite the evident concern and support that is available from other trade unionists in Hull, the TGWU and AUEW full-time officials are determined not to spread the fight.

When a proposal was made at Hull Trades Council to set up a sub-committee to mobilise support, this was rejected by Peter Grant from the TGWU. Grant and John Prescott, Labour MP for Hull East, say they hope there will be a government decision by 21 February—the day the factory is due to close.

EXPRESSING

There could well be a deliberate intention to let several hundred workers drift away in disillusionment so as to achieve substantial redundancies before offering token assistance to keep the factory running.

IN LEICESTER, the local T&G has called no further meetings and is happy to leave any moves to the government. It has been through the motions of opposition and a resolution was passed expressing anger and concern about the redundancies. But now the union's attitude is that everyone should quietly accept their fate.

Just what that fate will be is not yet clear. The Department of Industry has appointed independent con-

sultants to do a feasibility study. Although Royal Imperial President, John Gilluly, says the factories can stay open only as a charity, the government has no such intentions.

Any moves to keep them open will be accompanied by sackings of a large part of the workforce, and an insistence on massive increases in productivity.

With the absence of any leadership from above, there has been little sign of a fight from the shop floor. Workers are living in a dream world if they think govern-

'Save the ferry' fight steps up

THE SEVEN-MONTH campaign by transport workers to keep open the ferry between Belfast and Heysham, Lancashire, will reach its climax this month. British Rail, which runs the ferry, will be announcing whether it will continue with plans to shut the ferry down.

The closure has been postponed twice since it was first announced in July following an angry campaign by the Belfast and Heysham Trade Union Action Committee, elected by workers on both sides of the Irish Sea.

The committee accuses BR of deliberately running down the ferry so it can be sold to the private enterprise operators, P&O, who run the only other service between England and Northern Ireland. Freight on the Heysham crossing has been cut since P&O started a new cargo service between Larne and Fleetwood.

The workers are angry not only about redundancy—more than 500 of them will lose their jobs—but also about the run-down of the service.

ment machinations are aimed at saving their jobs. Action must start now if the government is going to be forced to save their jobs.

Litton Industries are also cutting back in Sweden. 1500 workers in four factories are losing their jobs. Litton are replacing the electro-mechanical part of the Sweda range with fully electronic registers made in the United States. These will take over the market previously held by Sweda.

PLYMOUTH: 420 workers—mainly women—were sacked on Friday as Texas Instruments cut the workforce by half.

One woman worker on a production line told Socialist Worker what happened. 'The office staff has their dinner early. The supervisors went into a Conference. By 12.30 the canteen was cleared of cutlery. In each section names were read out of those who had to go.'

'They were told to pick up their personal things, not talk to anyone, leave the factory immediately and not come back again. Women and girls were in tears.'

The sacked workers were given a month's pay. It is no joke to lose your job in Plymouth. There are few vacancies for men or women. In the last few months, there have been major lay-offs in eight factories.

Attempts to unionise the factory met determined management resistance. Without trade union organisation, the workforce was unable to fight back.

instance, where management got away with victimising the FoC, the unions are resisting any attempts to cut wages.

In other workplaces up and down the country other workers are resisting. If their forces were to be set to work side by side, then many more victories would be possible. That's what rank and file organisation is about.

To help steel resistance to wage cuts, redundancies, closures and short time, Socialist Worker desperately needs information on who is resisting, where and how.

We must step up our coverage of the vital struggle to protect jobs and defend living standards. Send reports to John Deason, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Telephone 01-739 6273

ANGER AS EVER READY AXE 750

ESSEX: With ice-cold ruthlessness, Ever Ready last week announced the closure of its Maldon and Barking factories. And so 750 workers, having produced, like every other Ever Ready employee a weekly average of £20 profit for the firm last year, will this year be asked to do their bit for those profits by taking a place on the dole queue.

For Ever Ready are rationalising—or as Transport Workers' official Ron Anthony put it 'paralysing'. In Maldon, 600 workers—most of them women—will face the prospect of looking for a job in a rural town where the number of job vacancies, for men and women, stands at 60. The closure of the factory, planned to take place over several months, would increase the number of unemployed locally by 600 per cent.

No wonder, then, that the workers are, in the words of TGWU shop steward Geoffrey Webster, 'very angry and very numb'. Their work is simply being transferred to the firm's Park Lane, Wolverhampton plant.

And the first they heard of it was when Brother Webster received a cutting from a Wolverhampton newspaper quoting local left-wing Labour MP Renee Short's 'delight' that more work was being made available at Park Lane.

In fact, production at Park Lane has recently been cut—and even with the work from Maldon there will be no more jobs.

Meanwhile, Ever Ready are trying to quieten the Maldon workers with vague promises of work being transferred from the Barking factory.

But few are fooled by that. Mass meetings of different shifts—included managers and other non-union members—have voted unanimously against any redundancies.

Now the vital thing is to translate those words into action—fast. Management may well be prepared to negotiate for several weeks, to buy the time to move the machinery out of the factory and to dissipate the workers' anger.

Brother Webster has written to Industry Minister Wedgwood Benn for his intervention. But, as the workers at Imperial Typewriters, still waiting for positive action from Benn with the closure of their factories in Hull and Leicester just weeks away, have found out to their cost, that is disastrous.

The only people the Ever Ready workers can rely on to save their jobs are themselves. And that means, at the very least, organising now to stop the firm moving any equipment out of the factory.

The only sure way to stop Ever Ready dead in its tracks is to occupy the Maldon and Barking plants, to get together with workers in the rest of the Ever Ready empire—and to bring their case to the attention of the entire trade union movement.

The battle against wage cuts

Union officials sign the death warrants...

by Dave Cook

HINCKLEY:—The combination of weak trade union leadership and predatory employers has served workers with yet another social injustice. This time the hybrid monster selected 40 Hinckley hosiery workers to sink its teeth into. It fed voraciously.

Forty workers at Bennett Bros were told by their employers they would be expected to take a wage cut of 20 per cent between 10 February and 17 March. Their immediate reaction was horror and amazement. They contacted a full time union official as quickly as possible.

When the Hosiery Union official, V Towers, arrived on the scene he carried out the customary practice of sprinting straight into the directors' office. With amazing speed he advised the shop-floor representative that nothing could be done: acceptance of the wage cuts was the only answer to coming redundancies.

Receive

This futile visit was closely followed by another. This time Hosiery Union official J Matlock argued the case with Bennett Bros, and again the towel was quickly thrown in. The familiar pattern of Hosiery Union negotiation was running true to form.

Soon the management had painted another victory on their fuselage and Matlock left for Portugal. Will the Portuguese rank and file now receive instruction on how to get wage cuts?

The final blow to the 40 Bennett Bros employees was delivered when a small

group of Hosiery Union officials discussed the situation with the local Hosiery Manufacturers Association, again with dramatic swiftness. It was now blatantly obvious that 40 unfortunate people had been enthusiastically 'sold down the river'.

The workers at Bennetts could do virtually nothing by this stage but sign their own death warrants. When voting eventually took place, 30 voted for the cut and ten voted against.

With the threat of redundancy and a complete lack of inspired leadership who can blame these workers? They were buried alive by weak leadership and profiteering employers.

Other hosiery workers beware!! It may be your turn next.

NO CUTS HERE!

by Ian Lamming, SOGAT FOC, Camelot Press.

EASTLEIGH, Hants:—Attempts at wholesale reductions in shift differentials have been rejected by workers at Caustons printing firm. Management prepared the ground for these moves by victimising the SOGAT Father of the Chapel (branch secretary) Johnny Johnson on the pretext that he revealed in the SOGAT Journal the asset-stripping activities of the firm's previous director.

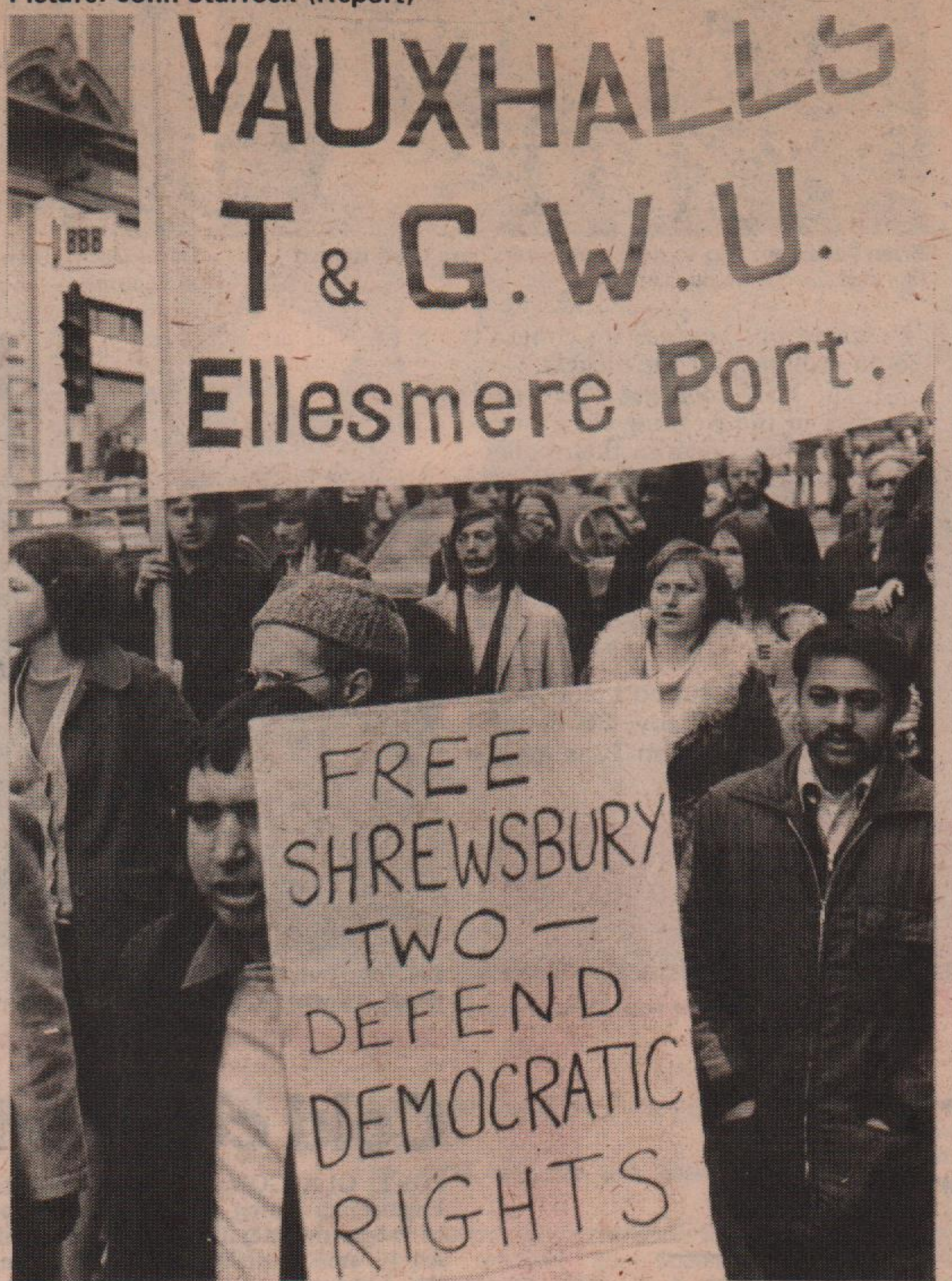
Despite this setback all the unions involved have rejected the cutbacks, although with the threat of closure hanging over the factory only an occupation demanding the nationalisation of the firm without compensation and under the control of the workers on the shop floor would guarantee jobs and wages at the present level.

line. As far as we know no figures were given to back this claim.

A cloak of silence appears to be over the factory since the women have been told that if there is any 'trouble' the factory would be shut down.

At the moment the linkers, who are taking the biggest cut, are working four days, attempting to produce five days work. They were promised if they accepted this cut there would be more work and they would be back on five days.

Picture: John Sturrock (Report)



Part of the march from Wigan to London organised by the Wigan Building Workers Action Group in support of the immediate release of the jailed Shrewsbury pickets.

The march, which is heading through several major industrial centres, is receiving significant support

THE SAME UNION, THE SAME STORY

LOUGHBOROUGH:—The workforce at Mansfield Hosiery was told at a meeting last week that they either had to accept wage cuts ranging from 2 per cent for the men to 34 per cent for the women or the factory would be closed down. The National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers recommended to the predominantly female workforce that they accept the cut in order to keep the factory open.

The reason for the cuts, said management, is that the workers are the highest-paid in the group and must be brought in

EQUAL PAY FIDDLE AS 200 WALK OUT

CHELMSFORD:—200 members of the white-collar union, APEX, walked out at Ransome, Hoffman and Pollard last week after being offered a cost of living rise of £1.50. They held a mass meeting which voted to strike for one day this week if management fail to increase the offer. Members of TASS and ASTMS at RHP have already been offered £2.50.

One reason the firm put forward their inability to pay more was that many of the factory's workers were in APEX—and it was going to cost them a lot to introduce equal pay. In other words, they aim to keep down the pay of the men who the women will be equal with. The meeting instructed the staff representatives to go back for at least £2.50.

Yarnolds: Help needed to get blacking tight

WOLVERHAMPTON:-The official strike of 40 Asian and white members of the Transport Workers Union at Yarnolds curtain factory is now in its ninth week. The strikers are demanding the reinstatement of two victimised shop stewards and union recognition.

Management are using scabs inside the factory. BRS drivers have refused to cross the picket lines outside the factory so cloth is now being brought in at night by non-union transport drivers in Yarnold's vans and in private cars. The cloth is being taken from Plackets in Nottingham, stored in Yarnold's shop in Dudley and then brought in at night.

The basic rate at Yarnolds is £13 for 40 hours. The Labour-controlled council, one of Yarnold's biggest customers, is now investigating the wages with a view to stopping all council contracts.

Support from other workers in Wolverhampton is growing. Workers from Rubery Owen, GKN Sankey and Goodyears have been on the picket line, while the convenor of Fafnir Bearings and the local TGWU official have toured other factories asking for support.

Yarnolds shops in Wolverhampton, Dudley, Bristol and Worcester have been picketed by local trade unionists. In Worcester police have threatened to bring charges against the pickets. In every area where there are Yarnolds shops TGWU members should raise the facts of the case in branch meetings and move resolutions blacking the shops.

Help is needed on the picket lines and there are other Yarnolds shops in Walsall, Stourbridge, Coventry, Solihull, Hanley, Gloucester and Chester.

The strike committee address is Yarnolds Strike Committee, c/o TGWU Offices, 33 Bury Street, Wolverhampton.

DYERS UNION KICKS OUT 40 STRIKERS

THE executive of the Dyers and Bleachers Union has expelled 40 workers from the union at Intex Yarns, Ashton-under-Lyne.

The executive has also removed credentials from all the shop stewards at Shaw Carpets, near Barnsley, where Claude Lavender, who supported the Intex strikers and who was kicked off the union executive for expressing his opinion, is shop stewards' convenor.

The 40 Intex workers have been expelled for allegedly taking part in an occupation of the union's head office in Bradford. This occupation took place during the Intex strike as a protest at the executive's decision to

expel two other Intex workers, Dave Hallsworth and Dave Rhodes. Dave Hallsworth was sacked by management and then informed by the executive that he had been expelled from the union six days earlier - so they couldn't help him fight his victimisation.

Claude Lavender was expelled from the executive and the union in the morning, while the other expulsions were upheld by the executive - which is also the appeal body - in the afternoon. All these have been thrown out under rule 58, for 'acting in any way contrary to the interests of the union'.

But the reaction against this has frightened the executive into its present moves. Claude

Lavender is still convenor of his factory, all his shop stewards support him, so do the workers. He has taken out an injunction against the executive stopping them from confirming his expulsion while a court case is prepared.

On four separate occasions full-time officials have come to the factory to persuade the shop stewards to elect a new convenor. The district secretary, Eddie Haig, has been told that either he gets rid of Lavender or he will face disciplinary proceedings himself.

On the fourth visit of the national officials to the factory the shop stewards were told to elect another convenor or be removed themselves. They refused to give

way and have all had their credentials removed. While the management in Shaw Carpets have kept out of the way, the executive are going to attempt to post notices for new elections, and attempt to organise them. With the workforce solidly behind the present shop stewards and convenor the union executive has little chance.

The 40 Intex workers are considering their situation. More legal action against the executive seems likely.

Claude Lavender explained to Socialist Worker: 'They wanted any excuse to attack me, because I set a precedent in the union, an executive member standing up for someone.'

SCOTS SPARKS DEFY UNION

GLASGOW: Scottish local authority electricians are in to their third week of strike action against the refusal to meet wage agreements.

After the stewards consulted the EETPU executive committee it was believed that the strike would be made official. But the executive decided to take a specific case of non-payment of the 23p increase to court on the grounds that the local authorities had broken an individual contract. They later instructed the sparks to return to work.

Lawyers consulted by the shop stewards said it could take from six weeks to a year, with appeals, to pursue the case through the courts.

The union officials claimed the process would take two weeks, and that the members had nothing to worry about. At a Scottish shop stewards meeting the stewards unanimously rejected the union leaders' instructions.

At a mass meeting the following day the recommendation by the shop stewards to continue the strike was agreed unanimously.

Dundee's 90 corporation electricians are solidly supporting the strike. Money is desperately needed. Send to John Reilly, 10b Ancrum Court, Dundee.

Sheet metal men join Rank strike

BRETFORD:-Engineering Union members striking against the victimisation of convenor Eddie Bennett at Rank Pullin Controls have been joined in their second week by the sheet metal workers. Ranks Debden factory and the large factory in Micheldene are blacking the Brentford works. Uxbridge is being contacted.

Strong support is coming from the AUEW district and North and West London factories such as Associated Automation, whose convenor Abdul Wagu, and three shop stewards visited the picket line on Monday. There are proposals for one-day strikes and mass pickets. Eddie's sacking is an attack on all trade unionists, and the strike must have solid support.

Contributions to: G Hustquist, Strike Committee, 35 Fairlawn Avenue, London W4.

McAlpines on the rampage

From page one.

full of blacklegs hired through Foremost Scaffolding Supply, of Brixton, London.

Brian Alderson, another member of the strike committee, said: 'We went on the site and asked to see the cowboys' cards. They hadn't got any. The Foremost manager on site then produced a bundle of union cards in an elastic band. None of them had anything written in them.'

The scabs have been treated royally. Nine of them were put up in the County Hotel, Newcastle - (bed and breakfast: £7). The rest are at the Rex Hotel, Whitley Bay (£6.67).

But the scaffolders kept a mass picket on the site all through every day. The new scaffolders' branch brought out all the scaffolders in the city: out of the other big McAlpines site in the city, out of three other big building sites, out of the shipyards.

In the past two weeks, the strikers have organised flying pickets. At Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, the pickets were well-received: They got £400 for the strike fund, 400 men for their mass picket on Wednesday - and a total black on the supplies of beer to the hotels which had housed the strikebreakers.

On Monday, the solidarity of the scaffolders scored its first big success. At a mass meeting the other Eldon Square workers, led by the joiners, voted to walk out.

Onejoiner told Socialist Worker:



Brian Alderson: 'Up to now scaffolders have been treated like shit... Those days are over.'

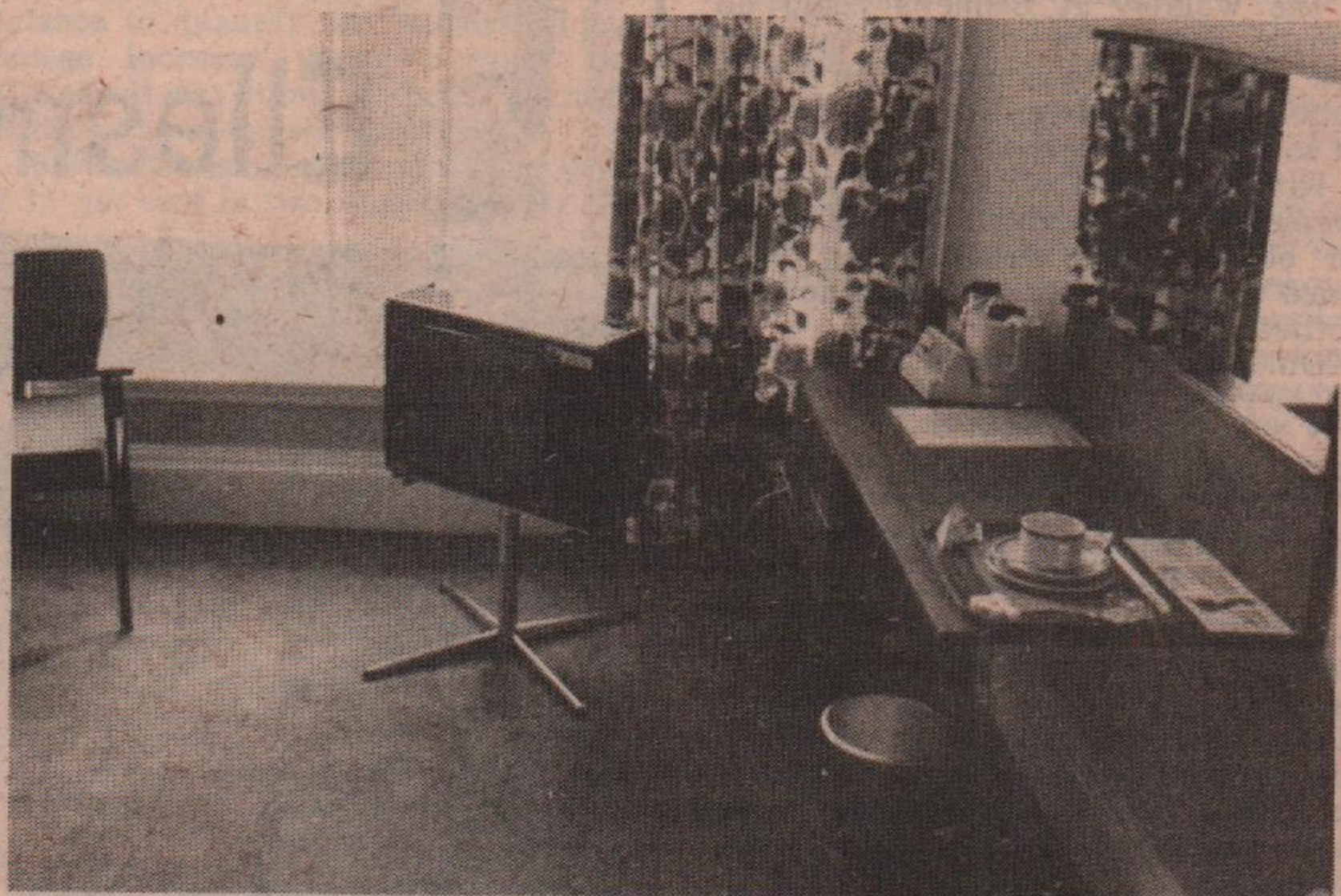
'We came out because we couldn't go on walking past the pickets.'

If the scaffolders get widespread support in the working-class movement, if they organise their collective strength, lay on daily report-back meetings, plan out their flying pickets and extend their solidarity across union boundaries, they could beat McAlpines and put heart into every building worker in the country.

Messages of support and donations to Eddie Brady, 86 Benwell Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne (phone 32365).



Davie Dean: 'If we win here, we'll help every building worker in the country - and then we can go get the Shrewsbury lads out.'



FIT for a building worker - if he's a scab. One of the rooms booked at the County Hotel, Newcastle, by McAlpines for their scabs at £7.50 a night.

Cold comfort for AUEW 18

PORT GLASGOW:-12 weeks ago 18 Engineering Union members walked out of Progressive Metals because of the cold. All 18 are still picketing this week. Since the management claim they are sacked, the strike has been made official by the AUEW executive council.

But that is all the executive have done. The pickets have had frequent social calls from the police, once accompanied by dogs. The firm supplies small components to Chrysler and British Leyland.

Elizabeth McCann, the shop stewards convenor, told Socialist Worker: 'We have been here in all weather. One of the women was away from the picket with pneumonia for a while, but she's back again. A few of us have been off at one

time or another with illnesses but we are determined not to let the management win.

'It's hard for us. Six of the women have no men to support them. They are the breadwinners. And two have men on the sick. But if we don't win it'll be because we haven't had enough support from the union.'

'It's not just money we want. We want more members up here to help us. Taylor, the manager, told a lorry driver to drive through the picket and when he refused Taylor took the wheel himself and drove right through, forcing me to jump aside.'

Send donations and messages of support to Elizabeth McCann, 7 Selkirk Road, Port Glasgow, Scotland.

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