

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

WAGES: FOLLOW THE MINERS

HARRY PORTER has worked 25 years on the railways. As a skilled signalman, he has reached one of the highest possible grades. His basic rate of pay is £36.95—of which he takes home just over £26.

Tens of thousands of Harry's mates on the railways don't earn anything like as much. Ticket collectors and porters have less than £25 in their pocket for 44 hours work.

Says Harry: 'My standard of living has fallen tremendously in the past year. I used to have a few quid left over after necessities. Now, I can't even afford necessities.'

Massive price rises announced this week will drive down his standard of living further still.

Harry and his mates are told every day by the press and the government that the militancy of the workers is the main cause of their plight. The frenzied chorus shouts: 'The miners' huge pay increases will only cause higher prices. If you get big wage rises, that

too will cause higher prices. So don't fight for a bigger claim.'

But Harry's union hasn't organised a national strike for 13 years. They've tightened their belts, made national sacrifices and been super-loyal to Labour governments. They're on the poverty line.

Exactly the same happened to the Miners' Union. They were losing members, dignity and money until they went on strike. Then they started to get something back.

When Sidney Weighell, the railwaymen's general secretary, says he will fight for similar wages to the miners, his members must hold him to his word. We can't control price levels until we control the entire society. But we can use our strength to keep our wages up.

Now's the time to get tough.

Miners shake the Social Contract—but surface men left in the cold—page 14.

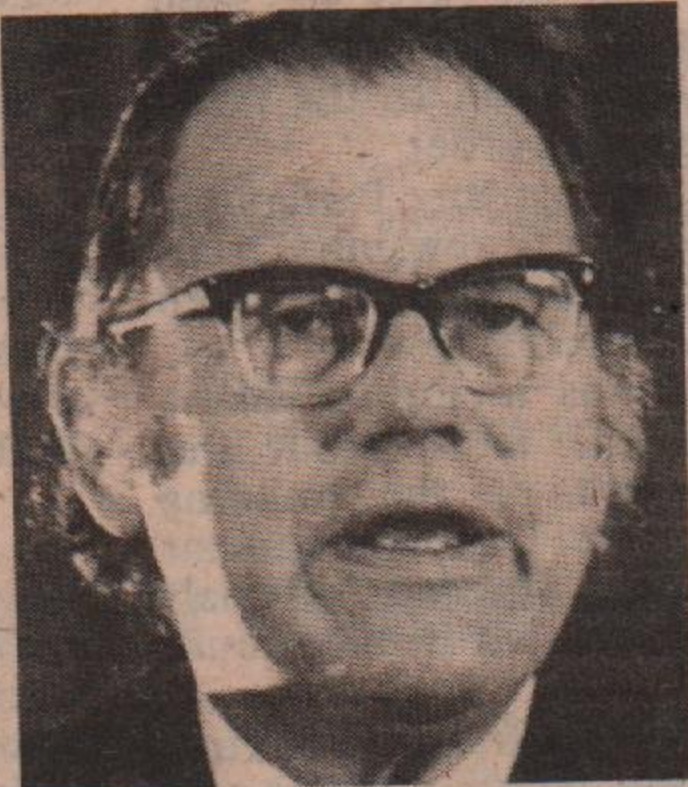
Do wage rises cause price rises? Editorial—page 3.

Oh no, not that man again!

MARGARET Thatcher, the new leader of the Tory Party, needs men of experience by her side as she strives to create a new Britain fit for workers, not for shirkers.

So she has appointed Reginald Maudling Tory spokesman on Foreign Affairs. He's a man with first class knowledge of everything that makes Britain great—the fast buck, the offshore property swindle, the corrupt construction firm, everything we hold so dear.

When Reggie was last Shadow Foreign Secretary he joined up with John Poulson (jailed for corruption), a crooked architect, and Dan Smith (jailed for corruption)



a crooked council leader. He travelled far and wide for Poulson—arranging for the building of an empty hospital in Malta and a sheikh's palace in the middle of the Abu

Dhabi desert.

A little later, he was persuaded by Jerome Hoffman (jailed for corruption) to become First President of the Real Estate Fund of America, a swindle which went bankrupt and couldn't even pay Maudling the £30,000 which Hoffman had promised him.

Mrs Thatcher, it is rumoured, is longing for Poulson, Smith and Hoffman to come out of jail so they can take their places in the upper ranks of the Tory Party alongside their fellow-shirker and defend to the death the inalienable right of rich and lazy politicians to make money for nothing from other people's labour.

Scabs out!



This scab needs protection. He couldn't get past the picket line without the help of a police sergeant—and 40 other coppers in a van parked nearby—and the agent for Stanley Hugh Leach, building contractors. The agent was described on the picket line as 'living proof of the theory of evolution'.



Four more scabs keep together for company. Note the polite gesture from the scab in front. More than 20 hired scabs, escorted by specially selected thugs acting as 'security officers' (pay: £20 a day) are trying to break an official building strike at a council site in South London. Full story: Back page.

Pictures: Chris Davies (Report)

INSIDE THEY'VE SAVED THEIR JOBS—SO CAN YOU—pages 8-9

MILLIONAIRE BACKS AUEW RIGHT WING— back page

MARCH FOR THE TWO! —page two

LABOUR'S INHUMANITY TO MAN—page 3

BEGINNING OF THE END FOR FRANCO?—page 6

THIS IS LABOUR'S COUNTER-TERROR —page seven

MARCH FOR THE TWO!



SUPPORT is growing from trade union bodies for the Wigan Builders March, which is due in London this weekend.

The 23-day march has been winning support and publicity for the two jailed Shrewsbury pickets, Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson.

Backing for it has come in the last week from Wokingham and Bracknell Trades Council, UCATT members at Ivy Bridge Site in Isleworth, a TGWU Branch at Vauxhall, Luton, Lucas Aerospace night shift Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, an EETPU Branch at Port Talbot, the Hull Docks, and Huddersfield Polytechnic.

The march reaches London this Saturday. All trade unionists should try to support the rally at 3pm in Trafalgar Square and raise

support for the march in their trade union branch.

March details:

FRIDAY: 6.30pm: Shepherds Bush Green: 7.00pm: Hammersmith: 8.30pm: Kensington Town Hall.

SATURDAY: 12.30pm: Hyde Park (Speakers Corner): 1.30pm: West End: 3pm: Trafalgar Square.

The picket outside Newham MP Reg Prentice's 'surgery' on Saturday is at 9.30am and will finish in time for everyone to reach Central London to welcome the march.

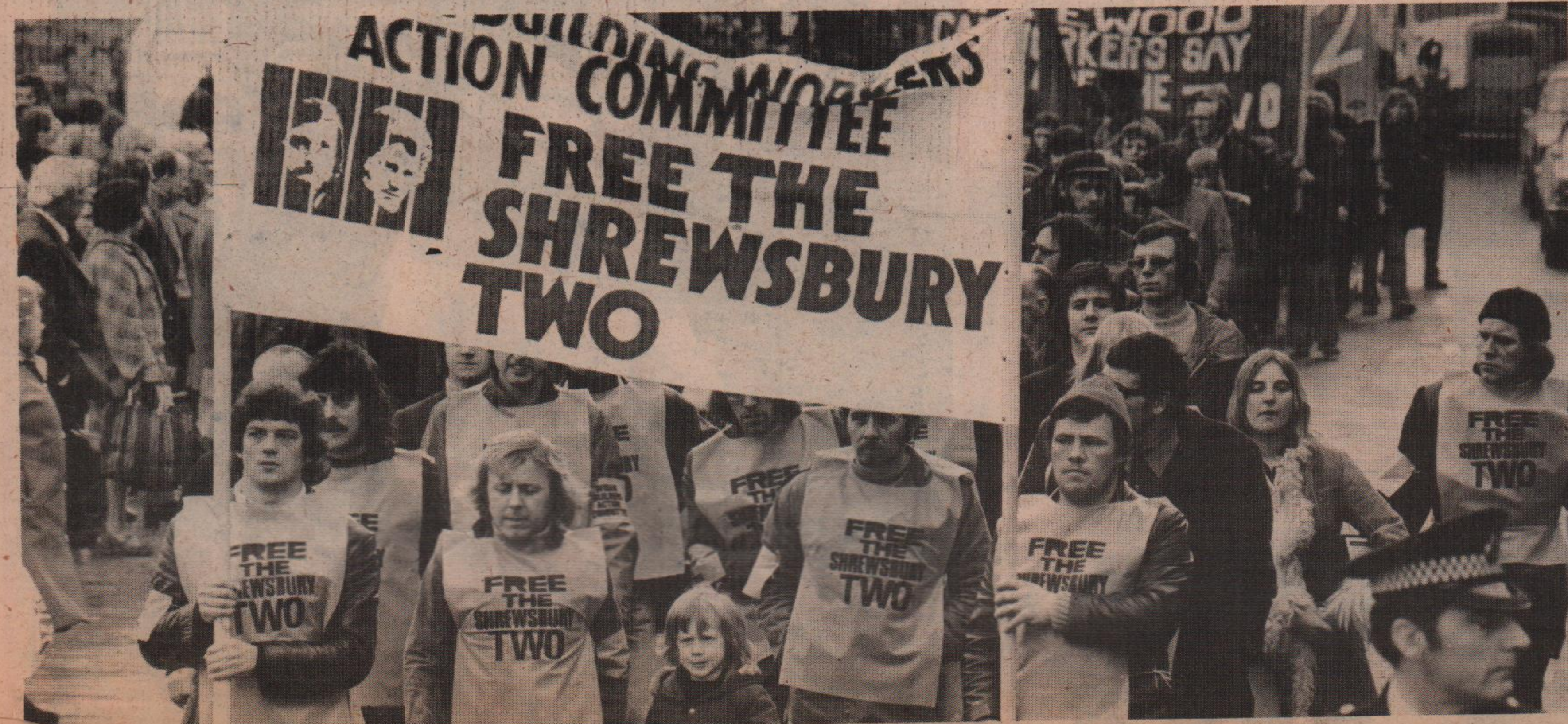
● IS national secretary Jim Nichol tried unsuccessfully to join the Wigan march between Birmingham and Coventry last week.

At the time, there were 27 people on it. He was immediately approached by stewards who asked who he was and what he was doing. He replied that he was Jim Nichol of IS and was immediately told that under no circumstances would he be allowed to march. If he did, there would be trouble.

The International Socialists regret this contemptible sectarianism on the part of some of the organisers of the march.

However, the International Socialists support all initiatives which publicise the cause of the jailed pickets.

We therefore call on all militants and socialists to do everything they can to support and welcome the march as it comes into London.



The march leaving Wigan three weeks ago. It arrives in London on Saturday—and it needs the support of every trade unionist. Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

FREE THE TWO!

Demonstrate against Reg Prentice and for the release of the Shrewsbury Two. Newham North East Labour Party Offices (just up from Boleyn Pub, by Upton Park Tube) 87 Barking Rd, London E16. Saturday 22 February, 9.30 am.

We've planted the seed—now we must make it grow



**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)

WHEN the International Socialists set up factory branches 20 months ago, it was an innovation for revolutionary socialists in this country.

For more than a generation, the revolutionary movement had too tiny a foothold in the working class to build branches in work-places. Now we can do it.

The second IS Factory and Workplace Branch Conference is an opportunity to assess the experience of the last 20 months and to plan the next steps forward.

Workers' power lies mainly in the factories, docks, building sites, and other places of work. Therefore a revolutionary socialist organisation must be built not as a collection of geographical local branches, but as a union of factory and workplace branches.

Awareness

We can lead the decisive sections of the working class if we have strong party branches in the factories, especially the big ones.

The workplace branch needs to be a driving force inside the workplace, developing the organisation, initiative, enthusiasm, fighting ability and political ideas of the workers around the branch.

The aim must be to strengthen both the fighting ability inside and the awareness of the world outside. The branch needs to work to draw the factory or workplace into the struggles of the working class as a whole.

by Tony Cliff

It provides the best place to organise not just the workers in the workplace on issues there, but also the area around the workplace. The presence of a well-organised factory with an IS branch inside can transform a tenants strike on a local housing estate.

With organised strength inside the workplaces we can break from 50 years' tradition of waiting for leadership from above.

Saturday's Conference should be attended by delegates not just from established branches, but delegates from places where there are a few IS members not yet strong enough to be a branch.

This should include not just factories, docks and sites but schools and offices. The Conference will be concerned not just with the successes and failures of the last 20 months, but with preparing the ground for the next growth of our workplace organisation.

Shrewsbury: 'Now let's fight together'

AT ITS MEETING last weekend, the Rank and File Organising Committee decided on several important initiatives over the Shrewsbury pickets.

It agreed to write to the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions and suggest that the conference called by the LCDTU on 22 March should be a joint conference with all costs and responsibilities by the two committees.

The Organising Committee felt that with the grave problems facing the Labour Movement today it was imperative to overcome any divisions while at the same time allowing for the greatest possible democratic dis-

ussion on all the ideas that came forward. The conference should be clearly seen as a united expression of trade unionists' feelings on the important issues of Shrewsbury and the Social Contract.

The committee also discussed the need for demonstrations outside Leicester and Lincoln jails, where the two pickets have been moved. Leicester Trades Council are to discuss at their next meeting a resolution calling for such a demonstration on 8 March. A date for Lincoln will be announced. The Organising Committee call on all trade unionists to support the demonstrations in both Lincoln and Leicester.

JENKINS SINKS TO NEW DEPTHS...

HOME Secretary Roy Jenkins plumbed new depths last week in his campaign to love up to the law and order brigade and keep the Shrewsbury pickets in jail.

Jenkins has the power to order the immediate release of the two jailed men. But he has been visited by any number of deputations from the Confederation of British Industry, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the like. And he has agreed to keep them inside.

Nonetheless, he told a Parliamentary Labour Party meeting last week that he wanted to see the Two released. But this, he claimed, was a matter not for him, but for a parole board. This doesn't meet until the

middle of May and would only release the men on very tough conditions.

But Jenkins' long speech to the Parliamentary Labour Party was even more revealing of the Labour Government's total dedication to the fraud of capitalist law and order.

He argued against any Parliamentary debate on the Shrewsbury trials for fear that it would reveal deep splits in the Labour Party.

In fact, he was trying to ensure that none of the facts about the close involvement of the building employers and the Tory government in setting up the Shrewsbury trials could even be debated in the House of Commons.

And—surprise, surprise—Jenkins' line won the day. Labour MPs voted overwhelmingly not to allow themselves even to debate this crucial issue.

The Scottish Executive of the Miners' Union has voted to call on the TUC to call a 24-hour general strike to free the Two. The Number Two divisional council of TASS and a number of other trade union bodies, including the Ellesmere Port Trades Council, have taken the same position.

REMEMBER THE SHREWSBURY TWO!

Des Warren, serving three years in Lincoln Prison.
Ricky Tomlinson, two years in Leicester Prison.

The Rank and File Organising Committee has asked that socialists and trade unionists show the two jailed building workers that they have not been forgotten. Send messages of support direct to them at the prisons.

The families are facing severe pressures and hardships. Financial support is therefore urgently needed. Send to Shrewsbury Dependents Fund, c/o Roger Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10. Receipts will be issued promptly for all money sent.



WHAT WE THINK

WHO CAN STOP INFLATION?

WHAT is the point of getting higher wages if it only means still more price increases? Wouldn't it be better, if workers accepted 'Social Contract' settlements?

That would mean rises falling short of cost of living increases when you allow for tax and time-lags. But isn't that a reasonable sacrifice to make if the result is stable prices?

The TV and press are running a well-orchestrated campaign along these lines. It seems a pretty plausible line of argument. Why do we say that it is wrong and that it would be disastrous if it became generally accepted?

The short answer is that wage restraint will not stop inflation. It did not do so in the past and it will not do so in the future. Do you remember when inflation really took off in Britain? It was in 1973, the very year when Heath's statutory pay restraint policy was being successfully enforced. Wages were held where the government thought they should be held, yet inflation steadily increased.

Now this is an embarrassing fact for the bosses and their propaganda brigade. It is a fact that some Labour politicians—Denis Healey for example—used to point to when they were in opposition. Now they have taken over the management of Great Britain Ltd they are doing their best to make people forget it.

There is no mystery about why prices can soar while wages are held back. Wage costs are only part of the costs of production and in some cases quite a small part. Even in a 'labour intensive' industry like coal mining wage costs as a proportion of total costs have been falling over the past few years in spite of three allegedly 'inflationary' pay rises. In 'capital intensive' industries, like oil and chemicals, wage costs are only a small fraction of total costs. Yet their prices go up and up.

As to this week's food price rises, the explanation has nothing whatever to do with wages. As the Guardian noted (18 February): 'Food prices in British shops will rise by almost 2 per cent as a result of the latest European farm price review.'—In other words the Common Market Commission's decision.

Not true

But of course the press blames the workers. Think about it. Agricultural workers are wretchedly paid. Put up go food prices yet again.

The argument that inflation is mainly due to 'greedy workers' getting big pay rises will not stand a moment's critical examination. It is simply not true. The real causes of inflation are complicated but they have much more to do with the activities of governments than of workers. The increasing size of pay demands is largely a defensive reaction to the never-ending upward price spiral.

So why all the lies? In its 'Memo for the Budget' this week The Economist says that what is needed is a shift of another 10 per cent from 'consumption'—in other words, wages—to company profits. Two per cent was shifted to the profiteers by Healey's last budget but big business wants much more. In the 1930s Tory prime minister Stanley Baldwin said: 'All the workers in this country have got to accept wage reductions.' That is exactly what Denis Healey, indeed the whole Labour government, is trying to achieve now. Lower real wages and higher real profits, a 'massive redistribution' away from working people in favour of the rich. That is the reality behind the Social Contract.

That is why the employers' kept press and TV hammer away day by day on the 'greedy workers cause inflation' theme. It is a weapon in the class war, a weapon of the employing class and its Labour agents.

All right, but what would we do about inflation? What is the answer? The brutal truth is that inflation is now built into world capitalism and cannot be halted short of a slump of 1930s proportions, if then. There is no other solution under capitalism.

Inflation will vanish when we have a planned economy democratically controlled by the producers. The struggle for this, for socialism, cannot be separated from the defence of workers' interests in the here and now. We say fight for rises that maintain and improve living standards, fight closures by occupations. There is no other way forward.

Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS
Phones 01-739 0185/6361

Another loophole for the rich

UNDER Tory pressure the government has opened another big loophole in its new tax on transfers of wealth from one generation to the next, the 'gifts tax'. They have reduced by more than a third the tax to be charged when a business is passed on from father to son.

On a business valued at up to £250,000 the government originally said the tax rate would be 46 per cent. Now the rate to be charged is 31 per cent—less than standard income tax. 'This means a substantial reduction in the burden of the tax', was the happy comment of the Confederation of British Industry.

The government has swallowed the Tory argument that a lower rate of wealth tax is necessary to keep family businesses within the family. By this decision

the government has severely undermined the effectiveness of the new capital tax. Any rich person can turn himself into a business for a small fee. So the capital value of all forms of wealth will continue, as at present, to be charged at a lower rate of tax than wages.

Another substantial concession to the Tories has been the cancellation of the proposed tax for so-called 'discretionary trusts' which, like businesses, can be easily formed for tax avoidance.

The Tories, who are leading a 'life and death' battle against the gifts tax, were claiming six substantial concessions from the government this week. If the pattern is repeated for the rest of the Finance Bill's progress, we could end up with no gift tax at all.

LABOUR'S BETRAYALS

Labour's inhumanity to man

A UGANDAN woman, almost dead with various nervous illnesses, was admitted to Britain on a 'short entry permit' last month. It was the fourth time she had arrived at London Airport seeking entry. Each time in the past she had been shipped back to Tanzania, where she camped out on the airport tarmac, terrified of being deported to political persecution in Uganda.

Soon she will be forced to leave Britain again. When Lord Avebury wrote to the Home Office protesting at this 'inhumanity', he got a reply from the under-secretary Alec Lyons. 'You know very well', wrote Mr Lyons 'that the woman intends to bring her family with her. Frankly, I see no reason why this country should take them.'

Mary Dines, who works for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, says that Lyons' reply was the 'most brutal' she has ever read. 'It was even worse than what we expected from the Tories.'

The case proves that immigration controls under Labour are just as savage as ever. Which is not surprising since some of the worse controls were brought in by the Labour government of 1964 to 1970.

Mary Dines says she receives between 12 and 20 telephone calls a day from black workers in this country who are being frustrated or pestered by the immigration authorities. Most of the complaints are about immigration controls on their families.

Vast

The last Labour government insisted on a 'special entry certificate' for each wife, husband or child who wanted to join a worker in Britain. A vast bureaucracy of 'entry certificate officers' was established in the Embassies and High Commissions of the 'country of origin'—chiefly Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and the countries of East Africa.

These officers investigate the claims of workers' dependants. They assume that the prospective immigrants are not the wives, husbands or children of workers in Britain. So the applicants are cross-examined. If their stories differ in one small detail from the stories of the workers they are seeking to join, their applications are refused.

Millions were horrified last Sunday by a TV programme in the Inside Story series which told of the agony of Mohammad Akram, a bus conductor in Bradford who applied for his wife and baby daughter to join him from a Pakistani village.

When the entry certificate officer in Islamabad interviewed his wife, she refused to tell him the details of her medical treatment for infertility—details which had been supplied by her husband in Bradford. This, said the immigration officer, was a discrepancy. It proved that she was



Mr Shah, pictured here with two of his children, works for a laundry in Acton, West London, and has lived in Britain all his life. In 1972, his wife, who was pregnant, went for a holiday to relations in Pakistan. Her baby was born prematurely, and, when she tried to return to Britain, the entry certificate officer in Islamabad refused to accept that the baby was hers. She was accused of trying to smuggle someone else's baby into Britain! It took two and a half years to convince the authorities that the baby was theirs and could join her father—which she did last October.

not Mohammad Akram's wife, he said. She was refused entry. Mohammad Akram appealed, and eventually got his certificate—two and a half years after he applied for it. But by this time his little girl was dead—of a fever which she would not have caught if she had come to Britain.

In a way Mohammad Akram was lucky. At least his wife joined him. Last year 1,713 workers in this country appealed against the decision of racist immigration officers abroad. Four out of five appeals were turned down.

Mary Dines says: 'The most com-

mon complaint we get is about delay. Interviews are being fixed up now for 1977—and every month the gap between interview times seems to grow.

'A disturbing aspect is the new attitude of the High Commission in Kenya, which is now insisting on all original documents proving birth. Some of these certificates were issued in India as long ago as 1899—others were never issued at all.



The entry certificate system must go. So must the Immigration Act of 1971 with which the Tories cashed in on Labour's past racist policies. A demonstration is being organised for the Sunday after next by the Indian Workers Association (GB). Coaches will be coming from most major towns and cities—Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Preston.

IS branches are urged to arrange delegations on these buses, with branch banners.

RALLY, Sunday 2 March: NO ENTRY CERTIFICATES. REPEAL THE IMMIGRATION ACT. SPEAKERS' CORNER RALLY 12.30PM. MARCH TO DOWNING STREET 2PM.

Red bogeyman rides again

THE entire bosses' class is terrified that the well-known Bolshevik Sir Don Ryder, late boss of IPC, and his new National Enterprise Board is going to strangle private initiative and introduce the red revolution by the back door.

The facts are a bit different. 'Much of the Bill merely perpetuated and enlarged the provision of financial aid to industry started in the Tories own Industry Act of 1972' Industry Minister Wedgwood Benn argued in the House of Commons.

That's right. The Bill is a device to channel public money into private hands, to prop up bankrupt firms without nationalisation, to bring big business and the state even closer together.

Tory MPs and Tory newspapers are raising the red bogey on this issue because they can find little to criticise in the government's right-wing economic policies. It is a pure stunt, to keep people's attention away from the pro-capitalist policies shared by Labour and Tory front benches alike.



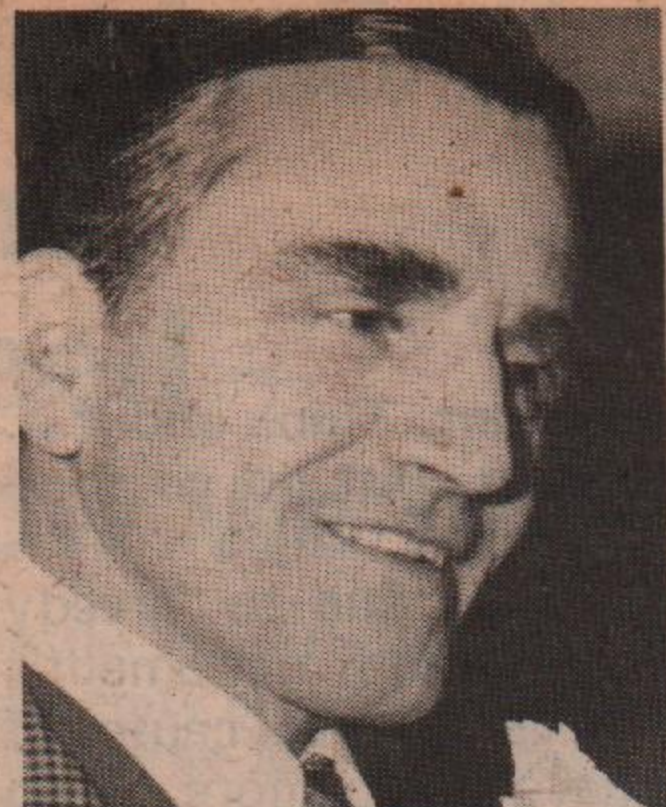
Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

THE UNIONS

Why the signalmen are so angry

LAST WEEK Sidney Weighell barged his way into the headlines with promises of a new, militant regime in the National Union of Railwaymen. The news was greeted with contemptuous laughter by the 7,000 signalmen he so militantly misrepresents.

The same week those signalmen organised—in the face of mounting abuse from Weighell, the rest of the



Sidney Weighell: whose side is he on?

NUR leadership and the Press—their most successful one-day strike so far.

Purely on rank and file initiative, they have organised a series of 24-hour stoppages which have involved more and more signalmen each time.

Their demands are modest. Having been spat on by the NUR leadership for years, they are simply saying: 'Enough's enough.'

Not only are they fighting the British Railways Board, whose attitude was recently summed up by a chief staff officer with the words: 'Signalmen can strike till the cows come home, they will get nothing.'

Hierarchy

They are also fighting their own union hierarchy. To say that Weighell—and the appalling Sidney Greene before him—have misrepresented the signalmen is like saying the Nazis mistreated the Jews.

As the signalmen become more and more determined to dispense with the 'services' of their 'militant' general secretary, so Weighell pours on the abuse.

Editorials in the NUR journal, the Railway Review, have attacked them in terms that trade unionists normally expect from the leader



The rank and file strike committee: In the face of mounting abuse from the Press and their own union leadership, they have organised simply and effectively.

columns of the Daily Telegraph.

Those editorials, sanctioned if not written by Weighell, have described the men as 'anarchists' and 'pests'.

And the 10 January issue, so eagerly seized upon by Fleet Street, demanded: 'Are we expected to go along with an irresponsible handful of dissidents who think they are

right and the NUR is wrong: that union officials are to be treated as fools or knaves?'

It went on to ask if the 'public should be grossly inconvenienced because a handful of big-heads appear to be able to say and do what they like?'

Signalmen know the answer to that. They have found out to their

cost that, over the years, 'a handful of big-heads' HAVE been 'able to say and do what they like.'

Big-heads such as Sidney Weighell, who 'grossly inconveniences' men who earn as little as £29 a week but who, with other NUR members, pay him £160 a week for the privilege of being betrayed and vilified.

Now, out of the resourcefulness

they have shown in organising a national strike, the signalmen can begin to forge the rank and file links that will bring democracy back into the NUR.

A democracy that will insist that the union belongs to the members—and that Weighell and his kind are their servants, not their masters.

HONEST INJUN



"Didn't I WARN you not to let on you was an off-duty Signalman, Mate?"

The 'impartial' Press: a cartoon in last Thursday's London Evening News

WEIGHELL LINES UP WITH PRESS HYSTERIA

ABOUT 7000 of Britain's 8000 signalmen are in the National Union of Railwaymen. Only 800 are in the Union of Railway Signalmen, a small declining and largely irrelevant museum piece. Many URS signalmen also hold membership of the NUR.

Why then has the press so eagerly portrayed the dispute as being led by the URS, when its role is minimal? Why, for instance, did the London Evening News last Thursday—the day of the signalmen's latest strike—carry a front page picture of the unofficial rank and file committee naming them as members of the URS, even though the committee had told the News reporter that most of them were in the NUR?

Why? Because the Press want to hammer the signalmen, as they want to hammer any trade unionists who take action to defend their

living standards or to demand justice.

And so how much easier it is to do it when the blame can be pinned on an organisation which can be presented as a small but intransigent bunch of rebels defying all and sundry.

The facts—as usual when the 'Free Press' pokes its nose into strikes—are rather different. The URS has played little part in the dispute. By far the majority of the strikers, and the strike leaders, are in the NUR.

So why then hasn't NUR general secretary Sidney Weighell pointed out this elementary truth to the Press?

Could it be that he has an interest—just like Fleet Street—in portraying them as 'irresponsible dissidents' (his journal's own words) the better able to smash them?

WHAT THEY ARE DEMANDING

WHAT ARE the signalmen demanding? Basically, an end to the carve-ups they have been subjected to for years by the NUR leadership.

They want a ten per cent responsibility payment, which was won for all NUR grades last year. Only the signalmen were left out—for no reason other than their leaders' traditional indifference to them.

They want a signing-on allowance. When one signalman finishes his shift and his mate takes over, he must—by the rules of the Department of the Environment—stay on to explain fully any delays or trouble on the line. If, for example, a signalman refused to work this UNPAID overtime and, as a result, there was a fatal accident on the line, he could then face a manslaughter charge.

The men are also seeking a five per cent differential over other NUR grades.

The outrageous neglect of the signalmen by

the NUR can be measured by the way they have fallen behind since the early Sixties.

Then the Guillebaud Report put top-grade signalmen on a par with top-grade drivers. Today they are £8 a week worse off. Astonishingly, a new recruit would be £10 worse off.

A clue to the NUR's treatment of the signalmen lies in the way, in 1972, they negotiated the re-classification of signal box grades.

Downgraded

No fewer than 85 per cent of signal boxes were downgraded. Who needs bosses when you've got union leaders like that?

Last week Sidney Weighell made some small amends for this magnificent piece of negotiation.

Some boxes were re-graded—and a few signalmen will now receive up to £5 a week more. But this has cleared up only part of the mess the

NUR created in 1972. As one signalman told Socialist Worker last week: 'They realised they dropped a clanger—and it's taken them all this time to do something about it.'

Weighell, however, presented this slight purging of past sins as a victory for the signalmen's demands—when it had nothing to do with those demands.

And so he was able to allow the press to present signalmen as greedy rebels who have all been given a fiver and are still not satisfied.

The NUR leadership have for years traded on the signalmen's pride in what is a vital and highly responsible job so as to leave them time and again out in the cold.

Only once before—in 1967—have signalmen struck. It will take more than verbal broadsides and physical manoeuvring by the likes of Weighell to stop them, once and for all, fighting their way out of the backwater the NUR have been so happy to cast them into.

The Tories go back to Square One

SINCE their savage defeat at the hands of the miners last year the Tories have been unable to mount any serious opposition to Labour. They have been drifting without policy or effective leadership.

This accounts for the viciousness of the faction fight within their parliamentary party. Now that it is over and Margaret Thatcher has won so decisively, they hope to emerge with something resembling a distinctive policy.

It will be a tougher policy than Heath's. It will involve attacks on collectivism, avowals of the wonders of individual enterprise, and calls to stop shoring up bankrupt companies. It will involve more attacks, and more vicious attacks, on so called shirkers, scroungers and on blacks. It will mean that the drum of law and order is beaten really loud.

The Thatcher takeover does, in short, represent a significant swing to the right in Tory politics, which is not surprising given the intensification of the economic and political crisis of the capitalist world.

Every militant and socialist should take serious note of this

BALANCE SHEET



A new weekly column which will give an in-depth analysis of events in the news. This week: Laurie Flynn on the Thatcher gang.

development. Every militant and socialist should do their homework so they can forcefully reply to the arguments the Thatcher gang will bring to the centre of our political life. But we shouldn't get the wind up. For there are very definite limits to which Mrs Thatcher can do particularly if she and her crew

were actually to get back into office.

One major problem for Thatcher and Co is that while they may rant and rave about companies standing on their own two feet, if they were in office themselves they would have to continue handing out public money to shore up

crisis-ridden British companies.

British capitalism cannot afford to watch British Leyland or the shipbuilding industry go down the road. They may not like Benn but they need Bennery.

This leads to another little problem for the Thatcher gang. They can scream like hell about the miners' pay settlement. But there is one thing they could not afford to do and that is to take the miners on.

This is, you will recall with joy, the very rock on which the Heath regime foundered. He started out a Thatcherite with all the talk about Lane Ducks, Selsdon Man, and confrontation with the unions. The result was the Heath regime completely alienated the trade union bureaucracy and left them with little or no room for manoeuvre.

On the day of the second ballot for the Tory leadership the Financial Times, the employers' main daily newspaper, spelt this out.

In its editorial 'The choice is Thatchlaw' the paper outlined the trimming of sails that would have to take place on both sides. The new Tory leadership would, it

argued, place more reliance on market forces than Mr Whitelaw had previously supported. (This means more unemployment). But there would have to be more concern for how this was packaged than the Thatcher gang have previously shown.

Financial Times columnist Joe Rogaly spelt it out even more forcefully. His argument is that a Labour government can get away with many of the same policies as the Tories without a fight. This is because, he argues, they dress them up a little differently and do not antagonise the trade union bureaucracy. Rogaly's clear if unstated conclusion is that Labour deserves the full support of every devout counter-revolutionary.

Mr Rogaly is absolutely right. For the while British capitalism relies on right-wing social democracy with a dose of Foot and Benn to improve the level of counter-sales.

Only when the crisis deepens—and if we fail to win people to the socialist alternative—will the right wing of the Tory Party and the far right as a whole come into their own. When people are bewildered is the time for them.

5 FIFTH COLUMN



Violence? Oh yes, every day for the good of the country

THE National Federation of Building Trades Employers, the Engineering Employers Federation and the Confederation of British Industry may have been working overtime to ensure that the Shrewsbury Two remain in jail. But, you will be glad to know, this hasn't stopped their usual interest in the whole field of law and order.

Their representatives have, for example, been doing everything in their power to keep up the usual standards of safety and health at work.

Their concern recently has been over one of the more useful powers given to factory inspectors in the new Health and Safety at Work Act.

Section 21 gives an inspector the power to shut down a machine when and if he feels that continued use might cause 'risk of serious personal injury'.

Hardly strong stuff. The inspector is only to consider a prohibition notice if there is risk of serious personal injury. Presumably the odd finger here and there doesn't matter. And even then the inspector isn't obliged to issue such a notice.

But this indulgence to grasping employers isn't enough for the CBI. It has drafted in its lobbyists to interview the new Chief Inspector of Factories, James Hammer, about what attitude to prohibition notices he is going to foster among his inspectors.

Fifth Column can report that the employers have had notable success. The CBI members' bulletin of 24

January reports that they have secured an agreement from the top men in the Factory Inspectorate and the Health and Safety Executive that they will require inspectors 'to act reasonably both in making their intentions perfectly clear to the employers and in ensuring that unnecessary disruption is not caused by the issuing of notices'.

In ordinary language, this means

POLAND RESTORED

NEWCASTLE-upon-Tyne should organise an exchange arrangement with Sandomierz in Poland. The former mayors of both places are currently on corruption charges.

Sandomierz, a picturesque historical town had £6,500,000 allocated for 'restoration' 10 years ago. Unfortunately the 'restoration' turned out to be the construction of villas for the local officials. The pleasant new suburb that sprung up became known as the 'district of thieves' among the rest of the local population.

The Mayor also set up a building enterprise to help with the restoration. Most of the restoration took place on his friends' villas. But not all their time was taken up in this way: the enterprise's vans were also used to flog off home-grown tomatoes. It is rumoured that national and regional Communist Party officials were also involved in the Mayor's ventures. Sounds a great place to retire to after a career in the North East...

GOOD ARGUMENTS AGAINST SOCIALISM No. 1.

UNDER SOCIALISM, IF YOU HAD TWO HOUSES - ONE WOULD BE TAKEN OFF YOU

OR SUPPOSE YOU HAD A FEW HUNDRED THOUSAND IN THE BANK - THEY'D HAVE THAT AND ALL...



the top brass will ensure employers' profits are not jeopardised by enthusiastic inspectors worried about such trivial considerations as safety.

To underline the point, the CBI has got the top brass to agree that prohibition notices will not under any circumstances be used as soon as a hazardous machine is discovered. The inspectors will first have to go through the usual motions of 'requesting' and 'urging' employers to put an end to their profitable malpractices.

The CBI bulletin summarises the situation neatly: 'The new powers are regarded by the Inspectorate as appropriate for a relatively late stage in enforcement activities.'

This is rather like the police agreeing only to arrest drunken drivers after each individual drunk has proved unresponsive to public information films, prayer or the entreaties of Jimmy Savile.

All this has gone on under a Labour government. But then a Labour government, with a worthy trade union bureaucrat as chairman

of the Health and Safety Executive, makes no difference. As usual big business simply sends its representatives to lobby the men at the head of the state bureaucracy, who need little convincing about the need for British industry to conduct its business along the most 'economic' (profitable) lines and swiftly agree to go easy.

● FREE ESTIMATES
Interior, Exterior Decorating,
Plumbing, Carpentry; No job too small.
If you want to be over charged fiddled or done. All work is carried out in a slap-hazard manner.
J.T. BUILDERS, DECORATORS, ETC.
Tel.: 803 4654

HERE at least is one small capitalist not afraid to promote himself in an honest and open fashion. 'Well he's always had a weird sense of humour' his wife explained. It appeared in the North London paper the Edmonton Weekly Herald last week.

AS 5000 ARE SACKED, DIRECTORS PAID £27,269 TO LEAVE

THE LONDON Evening Standard gave a beautiful insight into the workings of the big business mind the other week. 'Drastic Surgery To Give Debenhams A New Lease Of Life'

The surgeon is Robert Thornton, late of Marks and Spencers. Last year Debenhams, who own a department store chain saw their profits fall from £12,946,000 to £10,226,000. 'I've discovered some enormous skeletons' Thornton told the Standard, 'it will take another two years to do all that needs doing'.

Clearly these are no ordinary skeletons since he intends to 'lop off enough fat' to save the company £10,000,000.

So who are these fatty skeletons? You guessed it. 'So far the axe has fallen hardest on the staff. One in six of the effectively 30,000 strong pay-roll is being shed. The 5000 who are already leaving are mainly those already over retirement age, and part-timers are getting short shrift too.'

The last Debenhams accounts showed the company employed 35,511 employees. So clearly another 5000 have got lost on the way to work recently.

The directors haven't suffered any major belt-tightenings. They paid themselves a total of £222,836 last year—£373 each a week. Mind you, five directors have left—and were paid £27,269 each to do so.

To afford this economies have to be made elsewhere. Which explains why the average weekly wage at Debenhams was £20.70 last year. No economies however, with dividends, which Thornton assured shareholders will be maintained. Wonderful thing the Social Contract...

AN EVENING OF MARXIST ENTERTAINMENT

The Black and White Miners Show, The Miners, documentary film from Cinema Action, West London Theatre Workshop's 'The Pensioners' Play, plus singers

Friday 21 February, 7.30pm
The Holborn Assembly Rooms, John's Mews, near John Street, London WC1.

Admission 60p on the door. Proceeds to Socialist Worker Fighting Fund. Come early to avoid disappointment.

BEGINNING OF THE END FOR FRANCO'S SPAIN?



The Franco regime has been forced to cut the sentences on the Carabanchel Ten, but other militants are still on trial for their lives. Demonstrators picketing the Spanish Embassy in London last week to protest at the rigged trial of two for allegedly being involved in the assassination of Prime Minister Carrero Blanco last year.
Picture: Mike Sheridan (IFL)

by Manuel Fernandez
FRANCO'S Spain has been facing its most serious crisis ever in the past few weeks. So precarious is the position of the regime that even the Conservative-Monarchist daily paper, ABC, was driven to note that 'Spanish society is exuding a smell of decomposition.'

The Spanish ruling class has been hit by the international economic crisis over the past year. Several big companies have collapsed, leaving debts of millions of pounds. The cost of living has risen by 20 per cent and unemployment is on the increase. The result has been a massive upsurge of working class struggle.

All this has happened while the ruling class has, in any case, been deeply divided over how to deal with its problems.

One section would like a limited 'liberalisation' of the regime. This would make it easier for Spain to join with the Common Market and would enable the different groups within big business to promote their interests politically, while leaving the state intact to crush any real organisation on the part of the workers.

A year ago the government of Premier Arias Navarro announced a 'law of associations' which would allow the formation of certain political groups. But when the law came into force, it allowed organisations only for those who accepted the principles of the fascist movement.

CONTROL

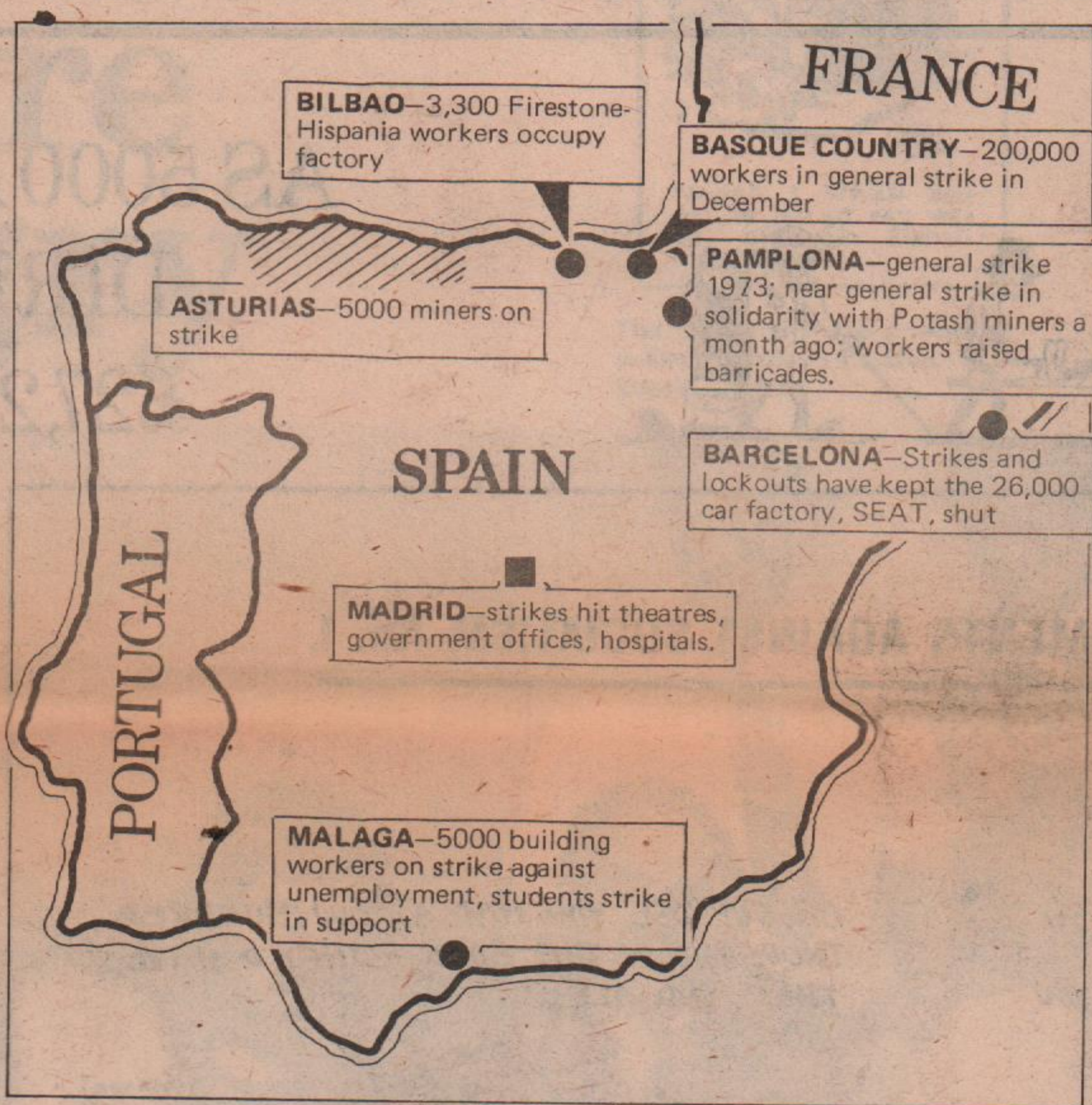
The problem for the 'liberals' within the ruling class is that most of the state machine is still firmly in the hands of the most right-wing elements. These are again shouting the slogans of the civil war and demanding the most brutal methods for crushing the working class. They do not have any real popular support—only 200 people turned up for one of their recent demonstrations—but do effectively control the police and much of the army.

The 'liberals' do not dare break completely with them, for fear of a collapse of police power and a really massive development of working-class organisation.

The government has balanced between these groups, first making the occasional move towards 'liberalisation', and then taking the most blatantly repressive measures to placate the right. The prime minister has kept his position by hitting out fast at 'liberal' supporters of Francoism, and now at the 'hardliners'.

That is why, despite the talk of 'liberalisation', last year saw the garroting of the anarchist Puig Antich despite an international outcry, and at present several socialists are on trial for their lives, including four members of the underground Maoist group, the FRAP, and those charged, despite the lack of evidence, with assassinating the former prime minister, Carrero Blanco.

The portion of the national budget devoted to the political police



and the civil guards shot up by 35 per cent last year, and is greater than that of other ministries such as housing.

The overall effect of the crisis within the government and the ruling class has been to make large numbers of people believe that the regime cannot survive much longer. There are reports of even the most ardent supporters of Franco preparing to survive his overthrow by smuggling money out of the country. Others are trying to insure themselves in a different way, by forming links with the reformist parties of the left, such as the Communist Party, so that whatever happens there will be forces

around committed to defending their interests.

A recent speech by Communist Party leader Carrillo made it clear that he did not foresee a *revolutionary* overthrow of Franco. 'If we are moderate, it is because it is the only way for Spain today', he said.

He criticised Portuguese Communist Party leader, Cunhal for 'extremism'. 'Cunhal has spent too long in prison isolation,' he said.

The result of the struggle between the different factions within the ruling class is undecided. What will finally determine its outcome is not so much the arguments in the corridors of power in Madrid, as the growing radicalisation in the factories and streets.

— and 100,000 strike against his regime

MORE than 100,000 Spanish workers defied the police and went on strike last week. Their action showed how the Spanish working class has overcome the immense demoralisation produced by its defeat in the Civil War and has rediscovered its strength. It has found that unity and militancy can be more powerful than one of the strongest and most vicious repressive state machines in the world.

There were some struggles in 1970, but they were confined to isolated factories. Within a couple of years, however, general strikes began to occur—in the cities of Ferrol and Vigo in 1972, in Pamplona, the largest industrial zone in Spain, in 1973.

The hunger strike of political prisoners in the Basque area of Northern Spain before Christmas brought 200,000 out on strike. At the same time massive struggles developed around the giant car plant SEAT and other factories in Barcelona, with workers rejecting the fascist *syndicatos*, which are fake unions and demanding the right to be represented by delegates elected at their own meetings.

Spreading

Since last summer more than a million workers have taken part in strikes, from all sections of the working class from construction workers to actors.

The strike wave has been spreading over the past few weeks, with 500 Asturian mines on strike, 700 workers out in Vizcaya province, strikes of civil servants in several Madrid government ministries, 10,000 workers out on strike or locked-out in Bilbao.

When the audience in a Madrid theatre was told there would be no performance because of a strike, they rose to their feet and applauded.

Unrest has shut universities all over the country, including the naval colleges and the technical colleges which give priority to students recommended by the fascist movement.

Last week more than 100,000 workers struck in solidarity with the Carabanchel Ten, workers' representatives who had been sentenced to 15-year prison sentences for 'illegal' union activities.

Splits

The government has responded to the strikes with mass arrests, but at the same time has been forced to recognise the power of the workers by releasing the majority of those arrested and by cutting the sentences of the Carabanchel Ten.

Clearly the militancy of workers has pushed the government on to the defensive and has opened further the splits within the ruling class. If this militancy was organised and directed on a national scale, it could lead quickly to the collapse of the Franco regime.

Most Spanish workers are not yet revolutionary socialists and most of their strikes have been for economic, not political reasons. But they do see the need to break the power of the police and to establish proper unions.

That is why the different sections of the revolutionary left in Spain agree on the need to convert the local strikes into a general strike. The problem is that there is not yet the unified, national organisation that can ensure this happens.

Crisis—so Bhutto hits opposition

by Nigel Harris

PRESIDENT Bhutto of Pakistan is trying to destroy the leading opposition party, the National Awami Party (NAP). Without any evidence, he accused the party of complicity in the murder of a provincial minister. Then, with a speed that suggests planning, he ordered the arrest of at least 300 of the party's leaders, the seizure of the party's property, press and funds, and the banning of the organisation.

Why? Since Bhutto came to power, the country has been moving towards crisis. Inflation and now slump are hitting the already low living standards of the majority. Any spark could set ablaze such tinder, and one of the provinces has been throwing up a cascade of sparks.

In Baluchistan, a civil war is raging

Bhutto's party did poorly in the 1971 election there, and NAP formed a coalition government.

Bhutto dismissed the government and imposed his own men. He tried to manipulate the tribal frictions of this backward province to secure his own control, while pouring in three or four divisions of troops to colonise it for the first time. Roads were driven into the remotest areas, administrative points and permanent garrisons set up.

Swallowed

The more Bhutto invaded, the more civil war was the result, with heavy losses on both sides. Twice in 1974 Bhutto declared the war was over, and twice he has had to increase his military attacks. Some 4000

guerillas are now defending the province against Bhutto and his business backers, who are eager to resume control of the quarries and mines of Baluchistan.

Some Pakistani socialists have swallowed the argument, that the Baluchis are in the pay of India and Afghanistan, just as in 1971 they promoted the argument that the movement for an independent Bangladesh was financed by India and the American CIA. On the contrary, the right of national self-determination is at stake.

No country can achieve freedom while oppressing a national minority within its own borders. It is now the duty of socialists everywhere to support the right of Baluchis to decide their own future, whether this is in collaboration with the other people

of Pakistan or not.

For Bhutto, the Baluchi struggle has become the key opposition to the increasing stranglehold of his personal dictatorship. That struggle can be fused with the growing discontent in the majority province, Punjab. Then the lid will blow off.

Whatever the policies of NAP, they need all our support now. Defence of the NAP is defence of the Left.

More information on the situation in Pakistan can be found in the coming issue of Democratic Pakistan, now the only NAP publication still appearing. Copies from: M K Janjua, P O Box 769, London W2 1YA.

CHINGARI organisers are requested to send in the money for Urdu No 8 issue without further delay.

TWO MONTHS IN PRISON ON MURDER AND CONSPIRACY CHARGES - WITHOUT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM

STORY: Paul Foot

DRAWING: Phil Evans



This
is

Labour's Terror Act

THREE young workers from North London—Brian Anderson, Sean Mullen and John McGuinness—have just found out how the Prevention of Terrorism Act protects innocent workers.

They have spent the last two months in prison on charges of murder and conspiracy. They have been bullied by the Special Branch, humiliated by the newspapers.

They have been forced out of their flat and two of them have lost their jobs.

Now the police admit they have committed no offence and have set them free.

The three would never have been

touched had it not been for the passing of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. On the morning the Act became law—30 November—they were arrested in their Cricklewood home on the unchecked tittle-tattle of a paranoid police informer.

For seven days, they were not allowed to contact families or lawyers. Their parents and friends heard about their arrest on television.

The three were 'interrogated' by the Special Branch about the bombings in Guildford pubs several months earlier.

John McGuinness and Brian Anderson were then charged with the mass murder of the Guildford pub victims. Sean Mullen was charged with conspiracy to cause explosives.

They were told that another man had made a statement implicating them in the bombings.

Within a few days of the charge the police had established:

- That tests on clothes and furniture and crockery in their flat had all proved negative.
- That none of the three men had been to Guildford in their lives.

None

● That none of them had ever been a member of a political organisation.

Yet the men remained in prison for six more weeks.

Last week, the case against them was dismissed. The police admitted they had no evidence.

These shocking events would not have taken place without the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which allows the police to make random arrests on the gossip of mischievous informers.

Already there are stories of prisoners being surprised by armed police 'following up information received'.

The Act intimidates workers of Irish origin. It operates directly against trade unionists.

Socialist Worker has information about Irishmen refusing to become shop stewards for fear of 'coming to the attention' of the Act and its hated exclusion orders.

But there are signs in the trade union movement of a fight-back against the Act.

After Mrs Annie McGuinness, mother of one of those arrested, had spoken to Brent Trades Council last week, it decided unanimously to set up a defence committee for anyone arrested in Brent under the Act.

Similarly, Bletchley Trades Council has protested bitterly about the arrest of Joe Gallacher, a UCATT shop steward and delegate to the trades council, who is in Brixton prison under a deportation order.

The lead from Bletchley and from Brent must be followed.

Thrown

In two months since the Act was passed, 18 people, two a week, have been thrown out of the country under its provisions. Three more, including Joe Gallacher, are in prison.

No less than 57 applications for holding people without access to a lawyer for seven days have been granted. Most have not resulted in any charge.

The Act has another three and a half months before it is renewed. We must start now to make a noise about it in shop stewards' committees and trade union branches.

If we use our muscle, all the Special Branch bullies and informers in the world won't be able to keep it on the statute book.

National Front in on the act too

INCREASING harassment against Irish trade unionists in the West Country has followed the recent bombings there. The notorious Anti-Terrorism Act is being used to its fullest indiscriminate extent. Numerous instances of 'counter-terror' by the forces of law and order have been overlooked by the press—local and national.

The case most interesting to committed trade unionists concerns George Anderson. He is a young member of Clann na hEireann, the counterpart in this country of the Official Sinn Fein.

George used to work as a £40-a-week press setter at Spillers Mill, Avonmouth, near Bristol. He lost his job as a result of being seen on a peaceful picket outside Horfield Prison protesting against the detention

of Jim Flynn, an executive member of the Clann who has since been deported.

Due to pressure mounted in his factory, George was suspended on full pay pending an inquiry by the local Conciliation and Arbitration Service. Charles Horton, the leading Transport Union Workers shop steward, represented George at the hearing. A statement issued afterwards from all three parties concerned—the TGWU, management, and the Conciliation Board—said they found themselves 'in complete agreement on the individual's right to work.'

Sacked

Three days later George was sacked with a 'golden handshake' of £1000.

The next union meeting after George was effectively thrown out of his job, Charles Horton was asked for his resignation as shop steward by half a dozen mill workers. Horton, on hearing this, was afraid that his position as branch chairman of the whole Bristol Mill Branch was being undermined with the continuing flouting of basic trade union principles by a minute section of his membership, led by fascist elements within the factory.

But when a full Bristol Mill meeting was held he won back his shop stewardship after a massive vote of confidence. A motion prepared by National Front members of the TGWU was thrown out by a heavy majority.

After this defeat the National Front tried another tack. Peter

Saulsby, a Front member, has called for a ballot of no confidence in the steward on the grounds that Spillers' night shift workers were unrepresented at the last full branch meeting.

So the battle for basic trade union principles of the right to work and the right to free speech continues.

Messages of support to Charles Horton, shop steward, Spillers Mill Avonmouth, Bristol.

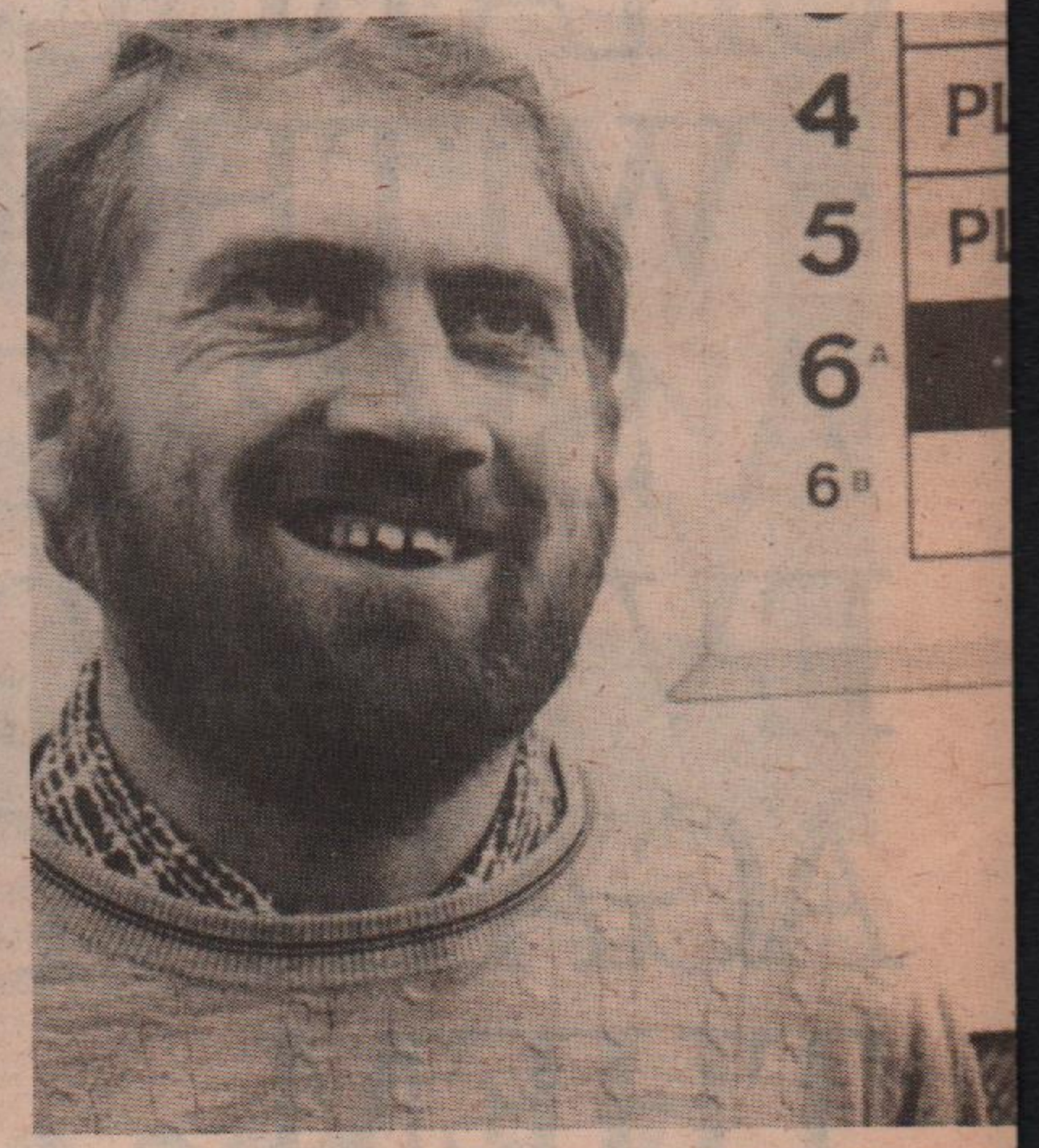


WORKERS AGAINST THE LAW

The Truth about the Shrewsbury Trials

'This pamphlet is indispensable for every trade unionist. It blows away the lies of the press about the jailed Shrewsbury pickets. It exposes the conspiracy which put them behind bars. It points the way towards militant action to get the men out of jail.'—KEN O'SHEA, one of the six tried at Shrewsbury for conspiracy. A Socialist Worker Pamphlet. 15p including postage from Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

They saved their



No redundancies here! Workers at Automotive Products, Leamington prepare to give their answer to management's plans. Rodney Case, Janet Boulton and John Hackett.

AP

Automotive Products, LEAMINGTON

THE STAFF at Automotive Products in Leamington Spa are showing the way in the fight against redundancy and short-time working.

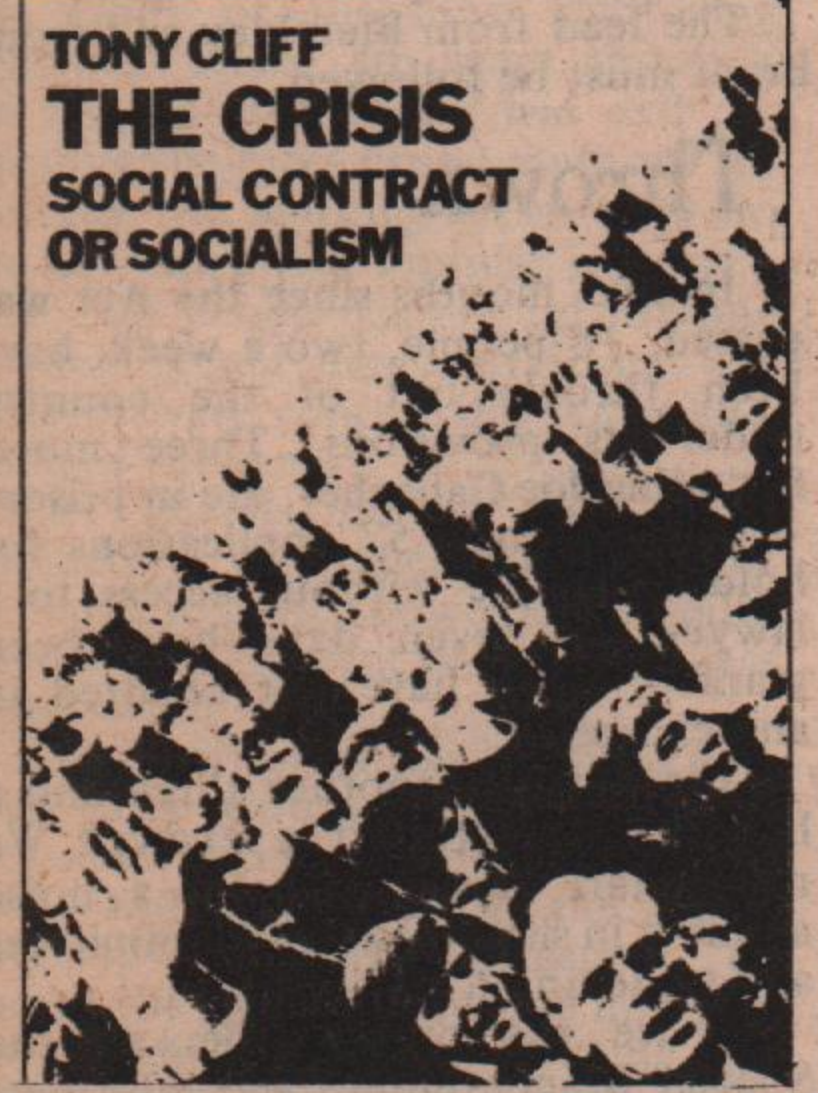
They have rejected management attempts to get rid of 400 indirect workers (300 staff and 100 shop floor) by forming a joint staff committee of TASS, ASTMS, and ACTSS, and have extended the fight to all plants in the AP Combine by forming a joint union combine committee.

The joint committee (which includes APEX at the other plants) has brought together staff workers from Liverpool, Manchester, Bolton, Banbury and Birmingham as well as Leamington.

Although redundancies have been threatened only at Leamington so far, all of the plants have agreed to the following policy:

- All overtime to be banned;

A Socialist Worker publication



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

Also available from Pluto Press, Unit 10 Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH, and bookshops. Bulk reductions for trade union branches, shop stewards committees, etc

By MURRAY ARMSTRONG

- Sub-contract work to be blacked;
- All agency staff to be removed;
- Work to rule and weekly one-day strikes until the company withdraws the redundancy threats;
- No covering of jobs for voluntary redundancy, sickness or any other absence;
- Occupation of the plants in the event of the company declaring any member redundant.

The combine committee has been set up on the basis of one delegate from each of the staff unions in each plant. It has told management there will be no negotiations at any plant except through the whole of the committee.

Management, of course, refused at first, but they caved in as the sanctions bit deep at the Leamington and Banbury plants.

The fight began on Wednesday 5 February when the Leamington management announced that 'as a costing exercise' either 400 workers would have to go or the plant would be put on a four-day week.

Meetings

Immediately, a joint office committee meeting was called, and a policy for fighting the redundancy and short-time was hammered out.

On Thursday this policy was agreed at a delegate meeting of all the other plants in Coventry.

All last week, mass meetings were held up and down the country to explain the situation to members and have the decisions ratified. 1800 members attended the Leamington meeting and gave the joint committee their overwhelming support.

The Leamington committee travelled to Banbury on Monday and addressed a mass meeting, where, again, the policy of resistance was given overwhelming support.

The leading members of the committee see this as being the key behind the success of the fight

So can you!

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

—constant report back to the members, mass meetings at every opportunity. In this way, every member knows exactly what he is doing and why.

On Wednesday, the company tried the 'tough bluff'—those on work to rule would have their money stopped for not doing 'a fair day's work', and certain employees must be 'off the premises' by night time.

When these threats failed to impress the stewards, the company collapsed and agreed that the combine committee would be present at all negotiations, that the company's statements on enforced redundancy would be withdrawn, and that the apprentices' hostel they intended to close as part of the cost cutting would, meantime, remain open.

The sanctions have since been lifted in the plants, but the company has not yet backed down on voluntary redundancy and the fight is still continuing.

Automotive Products has a vast empire in the car components field. It includes Lockheed brakes, Borg and Beck clutches, automatic gearboxes (mainly used in Minis), Autella exhaust systems. Air filters

are made in Bolton and aircraft landing gear is produced at Speke.

In the last 12 months, they have opened more than 50 retail outlets for their products, and now they claim that a vast increase in costs, half of which is to fall on Leamington (and obviously the other half will have to fall somewhere else) means that 400 workers must be thrown on the dole queue.

Lesson

Last year the company made £4.5 million profit and in 1973, £6 million. The stewards' argument against savings and short-time is very simple: 'If the company has problems, we're not going to pay for them.'

Workers everywhere have a lesson to learn from the staff at APs. Only united action on a combine wide basis, only the determined policy of occupying the plant, can win.

If bosses don't back down on that then the responsibility lies with the Labour government.

Nationalisation with shop stewards' control of production, no cuts and no redundancies!

Plessey Interconnect, SWINDON

PLESSEYS is one of the biggest international companies in the world. Plessey Interconnect at Swindon is one of their smallest factories. Yet in a ten week factory occupation the Swindon workers saved the factory from immediate closure.

Last November, without warning, the company announced the closure and the transfer of work to a similar Plessey factory in Northampton. Thirty jobs were offered to those of the 180 workers prepared to move 100 miles away.

John Hackett, chairman of the shop stewards' committee, says it was the way the company was breaking all the previous agreements about work that started the anger on the shop floor and among the office staff.

'We weren't prepared to be steamrollered just like that after getting guarantees. The company were handing out brochures about Northampton, housing, schools and so on. But we wanted jobs for everyone, not just 30.'

Succeed

'We decided in a mass meeting to confiscate the plant and equipment to protect our jobs.'

Strike action alone was not enough. As John Hackett explained: 'A strike is effective for normal day to day events. But when they threaten closure, the most effective thing is to confiscate the area they want, take over the plant.'

That way the equipment, worth between £1 million and £2 million, that Plesseys needed to move to Northampton couldn't be touched.

'Being on a picket line in a strike causes problems,' says John Hackett. 'The gaffer can just get the law down to get you out of the way. You have the law trying to break the picket up. Look at the Shrewsbury Two.'

Awful

The jobs situation in Swindon, according to shop steward Rodney Case, is 'terrible, just awful. In the last three or four years they've put up offices for Burmah Oil, warehouses, other office blocks . . . that

Jobs...

ESSEY Interconnect
ESSEY Transport Services
TERMINAL INSULATORS LTD



They all played a leading role in saving the jobs at Plesseys.



Picture: Chris Davies (Report).



has Day for Plessey workers. The factory was continuously manned

ETE CLARK

employ anyone. Garretts engineering last year got rid of 1600, now put 1800 on a two and a half day

the Plessey workers planned a co-operative. They went to Hawker, who use Interconnect parts for a fighter plane. 'We were prepared,' John Hackett, 'to get paid at the current cost the labour cost.' Hawker Siddeley friendly. The suppliers were prepared to supply raw material with 90 days' credit.

Problems

Wood Benn 'wished us luck and'. The local MP said he was impressed with the plan. But there were problems. The workers wouldn't sell the site or any equipment and there was no way of raising the stock sufficient to make a go of it. The plans came to nothing. The workers manage the factory without management. Management still controlled the world.

The occupation continued. More than 100 leaflets went out in the first days for assistance, particularly from other workers. The Plessey Joint Co-ordinating Committee, representing more

than 40 plants, organised blacking of all components.

The crucial help, which wrecked the company's plans, came from the Northampton plant. They blacked all equipment, plant, stocks, anything at all from Swindon. The amalgamation of the two plants became impossible.

Crucial

From Plessey workers in Portugal came a message of support and a £10 donation. 'Quite fantastic,' said John Hackett, 'when you think what they've had to put up with at the hands of Plesseys in Portugal—they'll be trying to get out to move somewhere else now that democracy is restored... we are keeping up our links with the Portuguese Plessey workers.' The support from Portugal was one of the great boosts to the occupation.

Only about half the original workforce stuck it out. Some accepted redundancy and went off at once. Although four-fifths of the workforce is in the Engineering Union, the Swindon District of the AUEW rejected a 5p weekly levy on each member.

Last week all those who stuck out the occupation were guaranteed their jobs for at least six months. They received 17½ weeks' pay, redundancy money was doubled, and the company undertook not to close the plant without ensuring everyone had alternative employment.

The six-month period could be longer. John Hackett says: 'I think we'll succeed in six months. We'll keep our jobs.'



THE WEEK IN IRELAND

NEWS THE BRITISH PRESS DOESN'T PRINT

SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY: In a statement, the official Sinn Fein claimed that abductions of children in Belfast were being carried out by the British Special Branch.

They referred to an incident that week in which a 14-year-old boy on his way to school was forced into a car by two men, one of them armed. The boy's screams brought women out of their houses. They attacked the men and freed the boy.

When the police at Springfield Road were told of the incident and given the number of the car involved, they admitted the men were Special Branch 'investigating stone-throwing at Corry's timber yard wall'.

Grabbed

Two days later, some children were coming home from school when a car drew up and three men got out, one of them armed. They grabbed an 11-year-old girl and forced her into the back of a car.

She fell on a rifle butt and started to scream. The children attacked the men and managed to free the girl.

The car drove off, and the children later saw it stopped by an army check-point in Ballymurphy Road. Its inmates were chatting to soldiers there.

'We can only conclude', said the Sinn Fein statement, 'that these men were engaged in abducting persons for assassination bids'.

MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY: The Official Unionist candidate for North Down, Mr Neil Oliver, laid down the line on what can be expected from the Official Unionists by way of 'compro-

A boy, 14 was forced into a car by two men, one of them armed. The police later admitted it was the work of Special Branch...

mise' at the forthcoming convention:

'What we want is peace through victory—and a return in large measure to the pre-1968 era of peace, progress and prosperity.'

THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY:

Samuel Rogers, a 60-year-old ultra-right wing Strabane councillor was up on a charge of 'careless driving'. The court was told how Rogers had driven his car through an anti-internment demonstration, picking up a demonstrator, Ivan Barr, carrying him some way on the bonnet and throwing him off.

Barr suffered a fractured pelvis, a broken collar bone and severe burns on his back. Mr Rogers was given an 'absolute discharge'.

SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY:

Henry Higgins of Collin Gardens, Belfast claimed in the High Court that he had been wrongly arrested and savagely beaten up in a Saracen tank by the British army in February 1973. Three of his ribs had been broken. He was then taken to Fort Monagh Army post where he was again attacked and thrown to the ground.

Admitted

The Ministry of Defence admitted responsibility. Higgins was awarded £1250 compensation.

Another Belfast man, Thomas Macquire, claimed he was arrested by British soldiers in February 1972 and taken to the Woodburn Hotel where he was systematically beaten. His injuries were so complex that he needed prolonged treatment in three different hospitals.

The Ministry of Defence admitted responsibility, and Macquire was awarded £700 compensation.

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.

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.

Is it enough to vote No?

CHRIS HARMAN's article on the Common Market (1 February) is correct at least on one point, the debate on the Common Market is confused. But his article does nothing to help clear the confusion.

He states twice that going into the market will strengthen European capitalism, so accepting part of the pro-European case. Socialist Worker then finds itself in the position of saying to people—'we think that going into Europe will strengthen capitalism, we say Vote No', to bring about a weaker economic system in Britain.

The subtlety of that position will however be lost amongst the general clamour of anti-European drivel which is already coming from the likes of Enoch Powell and Clive Jenkins (on the same platform last week).

It is only by saying something radically different from all those who will leap enthusiastically into the campaign that a principled socialist position can be argued and a case made for the building of a 'united workers struggle throughout Europe for a Socialist Europe.' Harman claims that this can be done as part of a 'No' campaign. It can't.

The whole referendum issue is a sham designed for several important reasons. It is to avoid a major split in the Labour government, to con us into believing that working people get a say in crucial issues. Most importantly it is to allow left Labour MPs and trade union leaders to use the campaign to divert the struggle from the real threat to our living standards—the social contract.

An abstentionist campaign by the International Socialists wouldn't crucially affect the outcome of the referendum, but it would both expose the Labour government's big con trick, and establish the basis to argue a principled socialist position on Europe. And this, at a time when millions of workers will be listening. No to the bosses' Europe. No to the sham referendum. Yes to international working class links.—BARBARA KERR, HUGH KERR, Harlow.



A reactionary, nationalist demonstration in London last week. Socialists must oppose the Common Market—AND right-wing arguments against it.

on the Common Market

CHRIS HARMAN REPLIES...

OF COURSE, the Communist Party and the Labour lefts are wrong when they argue that an 'independent' Britain would be less capitalist than a Britain which is part of the Common Market.

That is why socialists have to wage a campaign against the Common Market on class grounds, pointing out that the real alternative to the Market is to build links with workers elsewhere in Europe and to fight for a Socialist United States of Europe.

However, there is no doubt that the Common Market is designed to strengthen capitalism throughout Europe. That is why almost the whole of big business supports the Market and regards the referendum with apprehension.

It knows capitalism will survive a defeat in the referendum. But it also

knows it will be slightly weaker as a result. It sees its interests rather more clearly than Mike Kidron and Barbara and Hugh Kerr do.

The referendum is not some clever ploy designed to distract attention from more important domestic issues. It was in the first place, actually designed for a rather different reason—to enable the Labour party leaders to avoid splits in their own ranks over the issue of the Market.

The right wing in the party, around Roy Jenkins, understand that the Market is central to the future of British capitalism. The left wing would like to express verbal opposition as a way of gaining support in the working class movement, without having to commit themselves over issues such as the Social Contract.

The government wants the referen-

dum to produce a 'Yes' vote, without a split within the party taking place.

For the International Socialists to abstain on this issue would be not only to refuse to hinder British capitalism's plans to strengthen itself, it would also be to line up with the extreme right within the working class movement.

This would play into the hands of the Tribune left and the Communist Party leaders, who would be able to pretend that their own disgusting chauvinism and alliances with Powell were the only alternative to the Jenkinites and the Market.

That is why the National Committee of the International Socialists unanimously decided in January to campaign for a No vote around the slogans No to the Common Market, No to national chauvinism, Yes to the United Socialist States of Europe.

DON'T OVERLOOK THE REAL ENEMY

MANY PEOPLE in Britain already dislike the Common Market for good reasons or bad. Rocketing food prices is one, but this is only a half-truth. Entry into the Common Market with its high food prices gave the capitalist class an excellent excuse to increase prices still more.

Inflation is an endemic disease of capitalism—it is not the EEC which has (directly) caused price rises, but the capitalists that control it. In this sense, it is a diversion to pay too much attention to the EEC—if we are not careful we will endow it with too much importance.

A NO vote is a vote to defend the interests of British workers, not Britain or 'the State'. The vote is a No to international capital and in no way must be looked upon as a Yes to British sovereignty.

The British capitalist class would sooner dump Britain than its own capital and this means dumping British workers. The only way workers anywhere will not be dumped by the system is if they organise to fight back and if they understand the enemy they are fighting.

The enemy is capitalism. International capital is in control, national capital is slowly being eaten up. The capitalists already have an international economic system, now they want a political system to match.

Boycott it!

AN 'INDEPENDENT' Britain cannot avoid being a junior partner of US capitalism. A Common Market Britain will be a small-to-medium-size partner in a European capitalism.

There's no reason for us to favour one configuration of capital as against the other. There's no reason for us to accept responsibility for one or the other. Nobody's forcing us to vote in the coming referendum. I can't understand how Chris Harman's analysis leads to his conclusion to vote 'No' (1 February).

Don't vote. Boycott the referendum.—MICHAEL KIDRON, London NW3.

The EEC is the beginning of an international capitalist state and will acquire, without our protest, the necessary paraphernalia of Government, Law, Army and Police.

They need an international apparatus to match their already existent international market. For Common Market substitute Common State.

To compete with the USA and USSR requires organisation across state boundaries (these must go if European capital is to win) and the EEC is just the beginning.

The motto of the capitalist class at the moment is 'unity is strength'. We must smash that strength by smashing that unity. Vote No, but the struggle for socialism continues.—ROB GOUGH, London NW10.

Your friendly neighbourhood coppers...

I'M A CHIPPIE working nights in a high-class establishment in Knightsbridge. Me and my mate were trying to get in to start work but we couldn't get the key.

A couple of cops came and gave us a hand so we took them upstairs and gave them a cup of tea. While getting themselves comfortable they unbuttoned their jackets revealing holster straps. We said: 'Are you carrying guns?'

They said: 'Yes, you'd be surprised how many of us are carrying guns in London. All the embassy and bank cops carry guns. Most cops not on the beat carry guns some of the time.'

I asked them if they used the new dum dum bullets, which became legal three months ago. They said: 'Yes, we do; they make a small hole one side and come out the other ripping a hole the size of a dinner plate'.—SW READER, ISLINGTON.

LESS WORSE THAN YOU THINK... Our local Tory rag, the Bristol Evening Post had the following in it last week. 'Good News For Workers At Europe's Largest Shoe Factory—Instead of going on a three day week as first thought, a four day week will be introduced.' No comment... M MILSON, Bristol.

AUT IN TUC?... As ASTMS members in a university branch we oppose Eric Cameron's suggestion (8 February) that we should oppose the Association of University Teachers affiliation to the TUC. We must fight side by side with all workers in higher education against government cuts...

A vote by the AUT for TUC affiliation would be a step towards genuine trade unionism... Meanwhile ASTMS recruitment among academic staff remains a key priority.—JIM KINCAID, PETER SEDGWICK, Leeds.

MORE THOUGHT?... Maria Jastrzebska and Eileen Fairweather (1 February) have a cheek splitting hairs about Anne Wilson's comments on the right to picket... As a working class woman myself I thought it was good. Maria and Eileen need to think more. Most working class women have the right feelings but can't express them.—PAULINE LONG, Kirbyby.

POSTAL POINTS

BRASS BANNED?... The role of the revolutionary socialist press is crucial... I must protest at meaningless front page headlines like 'McAlpines on The Rampage' (9 February). Also increasing costs are threatening the existence of Socialist Worker... So why are funds being raised for an IS marching band??—STEVE BERRY, Tottenham.

SHEEP IN WOLF'S CLOTHING?... I'm compelled to query your socialism... You advocate nationalisation which merely replaces private with state capitalism... Only common ownership will bring socialism... Socialism is equality, yet you support Bradford bus drivers who're striking because cleaners have overtaken their wages. Only with the monetary system's abolition will we achieve socialism—not by encouraging every strike which comes along... These examples illustrate your views which support the Labour Party despite your acknowledgment that the government is anti-working class. You are merely propping up capitalism.—M JONES, York.

SCANDAL AS BUNNIES ROCK SPURS IN MIDDLE CLASS THRILLER!... Your paper must have the sort of things in it that working people buy papers for, football news, racing results, scandal, gossip (you do this but not enough), strip cartoons... If you really can't bring yourself to put pin-ups in, leave them out. But you are just hiding from reality in this. Most men in the world want to see pretty girls and if they don't they are either lying or dishonest with themselves. Furthermore women like being admired by men, so why not put them in your paper?... If you are genuinely interested in changing the socio-economic basis of this country you have got to appeal to a broader class of people. If you don't you will never succeed in weaning the bourgeoisie away from capitalism. When it comes to the crunch you know that the majority of them will go over to the right, and it will be partly your own fault.—FRANCIS RADICE, London N5.

ABORTION... I can't understand Margaret Renn (8 February) demanding

abortion as 'a woman's right to control her own body' and then quoting abortion as the way to secure this right... Surely if a woman had controlled her own body in the first place she wouldn't have ended up pregnant... More education about sex and family planning is what's needed for everyone. It makes my blood boil when abortion is quoted as the answer for 'working class women'. Are we too stupid to be told about ways to avoid unwanted pregnancies?—PATRICIA RYAN, Leeds.

THE short article (15 February) on the tour of the film Ireland Behind The Wire seemed to imply that we, the Berwick St Film Collective believed that the International Socialists were the only political organisation that could undertake such a tour. This could be interpreted that we are IS members, or that we will work only with IS.

We want to make it clear that although the tour of the film was an important breakthrough in political film distribution we aren't IS members and that will work with any political organisation which supports the self-determination of the Irish people, and for that matter any organisation whose aim is to get rid of the capitalist system. We would like to thank the IS branches for organising the tour.—BERWICK STREET FILM COLLECTIVE, London.

LENIN



LENIN died 50 years ago. Yet no socialist living today can operate effectively without an understanding of Lenin's ideas and his life's work. For Lenin was the main builder of the only revolutionary party ever to lead the working-class to take power and hold it for any length of time.

But anyone who wants to learn the lessons of this achievement faces one immense difficulty. Virtually everything written about Lenin in the past has completely distorted what he did and said. The main exceptions—biographies by Leon Trotsky and Isaac Deutscher—were not finished and deal only with the earliest years of his life.

Right-wing writers in the west present Lenin as a power-crazed politician bent on building an organisation that would give him and then Stalin dictatorial powers. Books written from the pro-Russian point of view see Lenin as 'good' rather than 'bad', but the message is much the same. Lenin, it said, was important because he built the party which now enables Brezhnev to rule Russia.

'Eastern' and 'Western' versions agree on one thing: the Bolshevik Party, they say, was simply a machine made up from professional revolutionaries detached from the working class, and in Lenin's hands, run autocratically from on high like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is today. Suitable quotations from Lenin's writings are torn out of context to back this up.

Argue

Yet neither Lenin nor the Bolshevik Party were like that. Lenin was not an autocrat, whose dictates were always obeyed. He had to argue with hundreds of thousands of ordinary members of the party before his views were accepted. The Bolshevik Party was not an organisation of puppets obeying Lenin's every word, but of hundreds and thousands of working-class militants who had devoted their lives to the revolution and were quite prepared to disagree with Lenin when they thought he was wrong.

What Lenin did was to work to build this body of militants into a fighting party, able to lead Russia's workers to take power into their own hands.

Tony Cliff's new biography of Lenin, the first volume of which is to be published by Pluto Press next month, provides the first readily accessible account of how Lenin accomplished it. That is why it is indispensable reading for all revolutionary socialists.

Three main themes run through this volume.

First, the way Lenin saw the

Chris Harman reviews the new biography by Tony Cliff

working-class as the key to changing society, and would accept no substitute.

When he entered political activity in the 1890s, most Russian socialists still believed that some force other than the working class would overthrow Tsarism—whether the vast mass of peasants or small conspiratorial groups that carried out assassinations or hated public figures. Similarly some revolutionaries today who look to Third World peasants or guerrilla warfare as an alternative to the workers' movement.

Lenin respected the immense courage of such people. But he rejected their ideas uncompromisingly. They did not understand the economic and political power that can be wielded by workers and the enormous creativity they can display when they began to intervene in great social struggles.

Impels

As he put it in 1905: 'The very condition of their lives makes the workers capable of struggle and impels them to struggle. Capital collects the masses together in great cities, uniting them, teaching them to act in unison. At every step they come face to face with their enemy, the capitalist class. In combat with his enemy, the worker becomes a socialist, comes to realise the necessity of a complete abolition of all poverty and all oppression'.

It was this understanding that made Lenin turn to the working class movement in Russia when it was minute, in the 1890s, and to stick with it through thick and thin until his death.

Cliff's second theme is the way Lenin's commitment to the working class led him to devote himself to building the Bolshevik Party.

Now to some people this might seem a contradiction. If the working class is going to create socialism, they argue, what is the role of the revolutionary party separated from the rest of the class?

Needs

But Lenin had recognised that the majority of workers, despite the immense creative role they play in a revolutionary situation, most of the time accept most of the ideas propagated by the existing system. At first only a small minority of workers, together with a few individual intellectuals, understand the need for a revolution. In the course of every struggle, even the most militant and violent, this minority is of necessity involved in endless arguments with other less far-sighted workers.

What mattered to Lenin was that the minority of committed socialists, the 'vanguard', should be organised in the most effective manner possible to get their ideas across and lead workers' struggles. It might be a matter, as in the 1890s, of getting out leaflets about factory conditions before the Tsarist police threw you in jail? It might be, as in 1905, organising an armed insurrection.

But the third point stressed by Cliff is that for Lenin there could be no finalised formula for building the party. Lenin chopped and changed his tactics depending on the situation. At each stage the party needed to be changed to make it meet the needs of the class struggle.

That was why, time and again, Lenin was forced to argue with his

oldest colleagues. Some could not understand, as he did, that the small party established in 1902-03 had to be expanded many times over to take in the tens of thousands of new militants thrown up by the revolutionary events of 1905-06. Others could not make the further adaption from the revolutionary years to the period of downturn after 1907.

Such slowness of adaption is inevitable in any organisation. People get accustomed to working under certain conditions and do not take easily to change. As Cliff shows, Lenin's greatest merit was that he was not held back in this way. His eyes were set firmly on the goal of working-class revolution, and regarded everything else, including the internal organisation of the party, as subordinate.

This is reflected in all his writings. His articles and books are nearly all concerned with how the party should behave in particular circumstances at a particular point in time. Unlike Marx or Trotsky, Lenin rarely speaks generalities.

This creates a great problem for people wanting to read Lenin. If you take anything he says out of the context in which he says it, it is all too easy to misunderstand.

That, finally, is why Cliff's book is so useful. He quotes extensively from dozens of Lenin's writings, making sense of each by putting it into its historical context. As such, this is not so much a biography of Lenin as a statement of his views from which revolutionaries today can learn.

So if you really want to understand Lenin, buy this book—available for the next few weeks at the special pre-publication price of £2—and look forward to the publication of two further volumes on the rest of Lenin's life.

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.

Published price £3.00 paperback, £6.60 hardback. NOW until 21 March £2.00 paperback, £4.50 hardback (post inclusive) Copies will be sent out (before publication) in March.

Cash with orders to:
PLUTO PRESS Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH

TONY CLIFF:
LENIN
Volume 1: Building the Party



WHEN TO SWITCH ON

NEXT week's TV programmes include the usual torrent of police propaganda. BBC leads the way with Dixon of Dock Green, Kojak, Barlow and Z Cars. Granada covers the afternoon shift with Crown Court's three-day trial this week of an industrial chemist who didn't want to break a strike and ended up on a charge of sabotage.

Horizon (Monday, BBC2) is on dogs. Six million are running the country at the moment, with more spent on pet foods than baby foods and the whale damn nearly extinct to feed the production lines at Bonus, Tender Morsels and the like.

One million unwanted dogs are destroyed each year apparently and dogs carry 40 diseases. Might be worth watching though Sir

Keith Joseph has asked the BBC to withdraw his interview calling for tough action against non-pedigree puppy births.

Stay away from Churchill's People (BBC1, Monday) unless you want proof that they're just as good at telling lies about the class struggle a thousand years ago as they are at telling lies about it today.

Magnus Pyke's Food for Thought (ITV all stations, Tuesday) is on food and the average British family. Apparently it's all our fault the balance of payments is up the creek, for eating the wrong stuff. Tell that to the old age pensioners.

Pyke hasn't too much to say about the crap that the food companies are pouring down our

throats. Anyway ITV has its advertisers to think about. His line is that Britain should cut itself adrift from the rest of the world and make itself self-sufficient. Unilever won't like that at all, and they're just a little bit more influential than Dr Pyke. Some good points though.

The Artisan (BBC2, Wednesday) is by John Prebble who wrote an interesting if superficial book on the Highland Clearances. His play is about William Morris. It looks as if it will be Willie the romantic again, rather than the man who was on the move towards revolutionary socialism.

The repeats of the fine series, Country Matters, continue late on Sunday nights. This week it's H E Bates' The Mill. Looks interesting.

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

YORK: Friday 21 February, 8pm, De Grey Rooms, Exhibition Square. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

AVONMOUTH: Wednesday 27 February, 7.30pm, Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road. Speakers: Wally Preston (AUEW) and local trade unionists.

WOKING: Wednesday 26 February, Sheerwater Community Centre, Speaker: Nigel Harris.

HARLOW: Thursday 27 February, 8pm, Tye Green Community Association, Bush Fair. Speaker: Ian Gibson (former member of ASTMS national executive).

IS public meetings

ESSEX UNIVERSITY IS public meeting: The Permanent Arms Economy and the Crisis. Speaker: Mike Kidron. Wednesday 5 March, 8pm, Room LTB3, Essex University, Colchester.

BRISTOL IS open meeting for students: The Crisis. Speaker: Granville Williams. Thursday 27 February, 1.10pm, University Union, Bristol University.

ABERDEEN IS public meeting: The Common Market as a Socialist Europe? Speaker: Jim Nichol (IS national secretary). Wednesday 5 March, 8pm, 24 Adelphi, Aberdeen.

ABERDEEN IS Students open meeting: The Revolutionary Tradition in Britain. Speaker: Jim Nichol (IS national secretary). Wednesday 5 March, 2pm, Students Union, Aberdeen University.

BRISTOL IS open educational meetings: Every first and third Wednesday of the month, 8pm. The George Hotel, Newfoundland Street, Bristol. All welcome.

IS PORTUGAL GROUP Forum: Portugal—socialism or barbarism? Speaker from Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee. Friday 21 February, 7pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, WC1.

Meetings for IS members

INNER WEST LONDON district aggregate for formation of new district: Wednesday 26 February, 7.30pm, Lime Grove Baths, Lime Grove (near Shepards Bush tube). IS executive and district representatives, and election of district committee.

CENTRAL MANCHESTER District IS basic education school: series of six meetings over 12 weeks. No 1: Our Fight in the Unions, introduced by Tony Richardson (TGWU). New members especially welcome. Sunday 23 February, 2.30pm, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST).

IS HEALTH FRACTION executive meeting: Saturday 1 March, 1.30pm to 5.30pm, The Prince Albert, Wharfedale Road, London N1 (near Kings Cross Station). Open to any fraction member to attend.

IS DAY SCHOOL: The Economics of the Crisis. Speakers: John Palmer on the Crisis, Peter Bain on Incomes Policy and Redundancies. Saturday 1 March, 2pm-6pm, Meeting room 2, Manchester University Students Union, Oxford Road, Manchester. For all IS members in the North. Phone 061-792-5780 for accommodation.

MANCHESTER Follow-up School on the Communist Party: How to argue at every level. Small group discussions. Sunday 9 March, 2.30pm, Socialist Worker Bookshop, Deansgate, Manchester. Organised by Central Manchester District IS. All comrades welcome. Creche provided—properly run.

IS BRANCH EDUCATION ORGANISERS' national meeting: Saturday 1 March, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. 11.30 to 5.30pm.

IS notices

NORTH WEST LONDON District IS Social: Saturday 22 February, 20 Greenhill Park (off Acton Lane), NW10. Bus routes 12, 187, 260, 266. Close to Harlesden Station. Booze and music. Admission 20p.

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

AMERICAN AND CANADIAN members of IS should write as soon as possible to Jeff Jackson, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2, for information about the IS North America Group and recent developments in the US and Canada.

CAST are looking for audiences for their latest play on the Left of the Labour Party, The Recurring Tragedy of Sam the Man in London and the Home Counties. Contact CAST, 11c Cabell Street, London NW1 (phone 01-402 6087).

ENTERTAINMENT UNIONS IS fraction bulletin no 1: For all members of Equity, ACTT, ABS, the Musicians' Union, NATTKE and EPTU. All interested in receiving a copy or contributing, please contact Andy Reilly, 120 Horn Lane, Acton, London W3 6NY.

CORSHAM: Thursday 27 February, 8pm, Royal Oak, High Street, Corsham. Speaker: Granville Williams (IS Birmingham organiser).

IPSWICH: Friday 7 March, 8pm, Room 3, Town Hall. Speaker: Nigel Harris.

ST ALBANS: Tuesday 4 March, 8pm, Co-op Hall, Victoria Street. Speaker to be announced.

LEEDS: Thursday 13 March, 8pm, Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, off Chapeltown Road, Leeds 8. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

MERSEYSIDE: Thursday 27 February, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

OXFORD: Monday 3 March, 7.30pm, Blackfriars, St Giles. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

HIGH WYCOMBE IS Film Night: Ireland—Behind the Wire. Wednesday 26 February 8pm, The Nag's Head, London Road, High Wycombe. Tickets 40p in advance, 50p on the door. All welcome.

CENTRAL MANCHESTER IS public meeting: The Common Market—Why we say NO! Speaker: Laurie Flynn (Socialist Worker reporter and author of Workers against the Law). Friday 28 February, 7.30pm, Milton Hall, Deansgate (near Guardian office), Manchester.

HINCKLEY IS Hosiery Workers public meeting: The Crisis and the Hosiery Industry. Speaker: Pete Webster (Leicester hosiery worker). Friday 21 February, 7pm-9pm, Holywell Inn, London Road, Hinckley.

SOUTHWARK IS Teachers public meeting: The Need for a Rank and File Movement. Speaker: Steve Ludlam (NUPE), Tuesday 25 February, 6pm, Artichoke, Camberwell Church Street, London SE5. All welcome.

BARNSELY IS film night: The Miners, a film made by Cinema Action, Saturday 22 February, 1.30pm, The Red Lion Hotel, Worsborough Bridge, Barnsley. Plus rank and file speakers from the NUM.

MEETING for IS members in the Union of Post Office Workers: Sunday 2 March, in London. Phone IS industrial dept (01-739 6273) for details.

IS ITALIAN GROUP: The Revolutionary Left in Italy, Saturday 1 March, 2 to 5pm, 20 Durlston Road, London E5. For details phone Mike Balfour 06284-2671.

LONDON NALGO Fraction meeting: Tuesday 25 February, 7.30pm, Enterprise Pub, Chalk Farm (opposite Chalk Farm tube). All London NALGO comrades to attend.

IS IRISH DAY SCHOOL: Saturday 8 March, Room S101a, St Clements Building, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2. 11am-1pm: The situation in Ireland—Jimmy Greely on the truce, Paddy Prenderville on the arguments around the civil war. 2pm-5pm: Chris Harman on perspectives, mobilisation for the Troops Out demo and the Labour Conference. Each IS branch to send two delegates—accommodation being arranged. Entry by IS membership card only. Further details from Sue Baytell, phone 01-739 2639.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

THE political perspectives put to the last IS Conference in September had telescoped events, Chris Harman told the IS National Committee on Saturday, opening the discussion on political perspectives for the next annual conference.

Our economic analysis had been by and large correct, although unemployment had risen slightly more slowly than we had predicted, he said. Our real mistake had been political—in thinking that political consciousness among workers would rise completely in time with the economic crisis.

We had not recognised sufficiently that the defeat which the ruling class suffered at the hands of the miners last February would make it give way to the demands of many workers, despite the economic crisis.

There had been a rising tempo of fragmented economic struggle with far more strikes than in 1973. At the same time there has been no political focus to force workers to become political out of their economic struggles.

So, although the impact of IS within the broader working-class movement had been able to grow there had not been the numerical growth in the revolutionary left that we had predicted.

Dangers

There are two dangers for IS members, said Chris Harman. One was that we might blame our comrades for IS's lack of growth. This would be ridiculous. Of course we have made mistakes, but the real cause of our lack of growth is not our mistakes but the political situation.

The second danger was passivity: slackening our activity in the belief that there is nothing we can do to change the situation.

The main feature of the political situation was its volatility: fantastic differences emerge in different parts of the country at different times. On the one hand there is rising redundancy and short-time working, which demoralises some sections of workers. On the other hand the relentless rise in prices is forcing workers in other sections to take militant action.

The volatile situation increases the importance of IS intervention at all levels.

In the wages fight, and more important in the battle against redundancies or victimisation, large numbers of workers are ready to fight. The lead they get can be crucial. The existence of one or two politically conscious workers in such a situation can make the difference between defeat and victory. IS members in the factories have to relate to these possibilities

NEWS

by strengthening the links between IS and those workers who agree with many of our views, but are not yet prepared to join a revolutionary organisation. This is crucial if we are to make the necessary interventions and extend our influence in the months ahead.

Almost all disputes nowadays face the opposition of trade union officials. This is uniting workers against their officials. In the last ten months of 1974, 88 per cent of strikes were unofficial, compared with 10 per cent in 1973. This makes the building of a rank and file trade union organisation both possible and necessary.

The perspectives were endorsed by the National Committee and the IS executive was instructed to re-write them in the light of the discussion and send them to IS branches for amendment and discussion before conference.

There was also discussion on a resolution from Scotland calling for Socialist Worker supporters' cards to be issued where workers in factories needed them and could make use of them. Many National Committee members welcomed the resolution on the grounds that it would strengthen the supporters around the organisation and make recruitment easier. They saw it as a valuable addition to the resolution passed at the last National Committee calling for efforts to be made to build up links with workers who read Socialist Worker.

The motion was carried by 22 votes to 11.

FINANCE

THE building of IS locally is of the greatest urgency if we are to take advantage of the political situation. To do this we need a big increase in income. After a long discussion, the National Committee agreed to a reorganisation of the finances.

Besides the special appeal that has gone to all members this month, every effort must be made to increase the efficiency of subs collection. This will mean many comrades paying more than the minimum sub, more comrades paying by Banker's Orders, more systematic use of collections among supporters. Every effort must be made by all members.

TRAINING

DATES are already fixed for six IS day schools in different parts of the country on The Theory of Rank and File Move-

ments and The Fight against Redundancies. This is but the first of several schools being prepared which are to be available for IS branches and districts in the next few months. Two others are on Inflation, the Arms Economy and Wage Controls; and Reformism, the Revolutionary Party and the Struggle in the Trade Unions.

These schools are one of several new moves within IS towards the training of members as socialist revolutionaries. The IS training committee, which met on Sunday, has agreed to produce notes on working as a socialist on the shop floor, in your trade union branch, and during a strike.

Tommy Douras told the meeting that IS branches needed to take training seriously. It was the job of the training officer in each branch to see that new members were integrated into the organisation, not just by filling the gaps in their knowledge of IS politics, but by drawing them into IS activity and by putting them in contact with members in the same trade union.

WOMEN

THE anti-working class nature of the proposed changes to the abortion law was discussed by the IS women's sub-committee on Sunday. IS branches must hold meetings on the issue, and speaker's notes will be sent to branches this week. Members should take up the question in their workplaces and union branches and campaign for support for a London protest demonstration which IS is organising on the Saturday before the issue comes back to parliament from the select committee. Printed fact sheets will be made available for use in trade union branches and workplaces.

The committee also urged the greatest possible support for the Rank and File Women's Conference on Equal Pay and Redundancy in April. Members of the committee will be visiting IS branches in all districts to discuss the work around this important conference.

IRELAND

THE success of the proposed 'Troops out of Ireland' demonstration on Saturday 6 April depends not on the number of committed socialists who march but on the number of other trade unionists who join them. Work beforehand is therefore as important as the turn-out on the day. Posters and leaflets will be available as soon as the final details are known. In the weeks before the march, Socialist Worker will carry articles explaining why all trade unionists should work for the withdrawal of troops from Northern Ireland.

The IS Irish sub-committee is willing and anxious to supply speakers to IS branches and Socialist Worker discussion groups. Branch secretaries should write to the National Secretary, 8 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.



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 racialism 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. 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 racialism 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 workplace, which can lead the working class to power, and for the building of a revolutionary socialist international.

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 _____





Paulette: Her first baby was adopted and she desperately wanted another

Two years in jail for desperation

by Mary Larner

PAULETTE Whitfield was longing desperately for a baby after she was married two years ago, wondering why it hadn't happened. When all the signs were that she was going to have one, she gave the good news to all her family. Unfortunately for her she was wrong.

When she found out, she was so disappointed and upset that she never told anyone. She kept up the pretence of being pregnant. As the months went by she wrapped more and more towels around herself—and when the time came for her to have a baby or tell the truth, she stole one from an unmarried mother's home, went home to bed, put the baby in a cot, and told her husband when he came in from work that she had given birth.

But Paulette was found out. In the court where she was jailed for two years for baby-snatching, Mr Justice May told her that she was at the time in full command of all her senses and knew what she was doing.

Paulette Whitfield is not alone, wanting desperately to have a baby.

Working-class girl children are taught from a very early age that to be mothers and take care of babies is their role in life, that without a child their lives are incomplete. In school they are taught to read by books that revolve around family life, with mother at home in the kitchen cooking father's dinner and looking after the children, like a good mother.

We also see it every day on the television, where mother dresses her children up in the whitest of white clothes, or she 'has two men in her life, to one she is a mother and the other she's a wife' and always gives them the best—just to get it across that two men in her life is her life and without being a wife and a mother she doesn't have much of a life at all.

Life

So the brain-washing goes on. Girls are channelled in this direction and are supposed to stay within these strict laws. If you step out there is something wrong with you—and if women believe this is the way their lives are supposed to go, and they get married, and no children arrive, they feel they have failed in some way. Because television and the books they read have made them see themselves only as full women when they have a husband and children.

Paulette Whitfield's longing for a child went beyond what many women suffer. For months she fooled her husband into believing she was pregnant. She must have gone through agony knowing he could find out

and must have hid herself from him, making sure he never came anywhere near her in case he did.

So, for her terrible crime of being desperate for a baby and stealing one, she was given two years locked up in prison, away from the people she needs to stand by her now, her husband and family, away from anyone who can give her any sympathy and understanding.

Right now the last thing that Paulette needs is to be locked up in a cage like an animal. She needs help, understanding and a lot of love. All these she can never get in prison, where you go for punishment dished out by the great men of the capitalist class like Mr Justice May.

Mr Justice May, in sentencing Paulette, has shown no understanding or sympathy for her at all—but then the capitalist class has never given the working class any kind of sympathy and never will.

LOW WAGES TRICKERY BY RANKS

by Margaret Renn

WEST LONDON: The reason the women at Rank Pullin Controls are on strike in defence of their convenor, Eddie Bennett, is simple. They know that if the management succeed in victimising him the union organisation in Ranks will be in ruins, and their hopes of getting equal pay this year will be in ruins too. So 135 men and women are outside the gate.

Marie Frost, the women's shop steward, knows exactly what has happened. Until Eddie became convenor two years ago the union organisation in the factory was weak. Since then their organisation and strength has improved, and so have the wages. The women were already talking of negotiating equal pay this summer.

Then the management sacked Eddie. In this factory the involvement of the women in the union has been a conscious effort. 'Eddie always came to the women to explain what was going on, and that was what strengthened them', said Marie.

She works in a shop making wire coil components, yet the women in her section get paid less than the men who do the same work. It was said that the men were brought on to the section to help the women out, but they do just the same job.

The management argues that the men do heavy work, the lifting that the women cannot do, and that this

entitles them to more. Marie says this is nonsense.

So the negotiations when the equal pay negotiations start. They have two ways of avoiding payment. Either they use job evaluation and scientifically prove that the men doing the same work are actually doing something different, on the grounds that they, or some of them, can lift heavier weights than the women.

Or, they can move the men off these women's sections altogether, even though, for example, some men on the wiring section have been there for 30 years.

Definition

Another get-out they can use is job definition. 'Viewing' is a semi-skilled job, and pays less than 'inspection', which is skilled. So the women who are on inspection get the viewing rate. When this was taken up with management they got round it by calling the women either grade A or grade B viewers—but on no account inspectors.

Every conceivable trick is used to prevent women becoming skilled workers, in order to keep their wages down.

To win any battles on equal pay the women know they have to win this battle first.

Without good union organisation, and the strength to fight, Equal Pay Year comes to nothing. That's why the women at Rank Pullin are determined to win

Time to liaise again

It is a long time now since much has been heard from the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trades Unions. So long that many in the trade union movement have assumed the committee was being quietly buried.

In the past year the National Rank and File Conference Organising Committee has taken over the struggle for the defence of militant trade unionism with two conferences open to delegates from all bona fide trade union bodies and with initiatives over the Shrewsbury Two, solidarity with Chilean workers, industrial safety and so on.

Now it appears that the LCDTU was not dead, merely sleeping. It has called a conference in London for 22 March on the themes of 'Reject the Social Contract, Free the Shrewsbury Two'.

Socialist Worker welcomes and supports all attempts to mobilise the movement around these vital issues. We urge all our readers to support the sending of delegates

when the matter comes up in their trade union organisations. The bigger the conference the better it will be for the fight against the TUC's sell-out policies and what the LCDTU letter calls the government's 'retreating all along the line' on its election pledges.

It would be pleasant if the matter could be left at that. Unfortunately past experience with the LCDTU suggests that its leaders will be none too keen to see any action decided on 22 March. The Rank and File Organising Committee, which has proposed a joint conference to the LCDTU, is calling for a campaign for a national strike, official if possible, unofficial if need be, starting on May Day to Free the Two. This should be fought for at the conference, whether it is held jointly or not.

Applications for credentials should be sent to Mr Jim Hiles, Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, 137 Wanstead Park Road, Ilford, Essex.

A QUESTION OF SOCIALISM

'I AGREE with the idea of socialism but we will never get it. People are too greedy to let socialism work. It's human nature.' Such views are frequently put forward by even the most militant and active trade unionists. How can they be answered?

'You can't change human nature', they say, but socialists believe the opposite. We say human nature is influenced and moulded by the circumstances in which people live. People in different circumstances will think and act in different ways.

This is known as the materialist view of history—that the material conditions in which men live will in general determine their attitudes and behaviour.

For example, most of us would regard cannibalism as unnatural or going against human nature, yet only recently passengers who survived a plane crash in the mountains of South America ate the flesh of those who had been killed—because otherwise death by starvation was staring them in the face. Their desperate circumstances had forced them to change their most basic attitudes.

It doesn't need desperate circumstances either. Eskimo tribes in the past killed their old folk when they became incapable of hunting and providing for themselves. Food was so scarce during the winter that it was natural to behave in this way.

Changed

Society's attitudes towards women, religion, slavery and a multitude of other things have changed as circumstances have changed—even though at the time such changes have been denounced as going against human nature.

So it is clear that we cannot speak of a human nature which has always been and will continue to be the same.

Nor can we say it is human nature to be greedy. It depends on circumstances. The recent sugar shortage illustrates this.

Before the sugar shortage, people would only buy as much sugar as they needed. You wouldn't buy more because you knew you could easily get some if necessary. It would not make sense, either, to hoard as much sugar as possible.

But during the shortage people wanted to buy as much sugar as they could get their hands on. Basically people were greedy when there was a sugar shortage and not greedy when there was enough to go round for everybody.

Basic

Our attitude towards two basic things in life—milk and air—brings out the same point. In Britain it is usual for milkmen to leave the milk on the doorstep. But in Cairo milkmen do not exist. Why? Because if milk was left on the doorstep for any length of time it would be stolen. When people are undernourished they are forced to keep alive by any means possible—stealing milk included. Circumstances produce greed, not human nature.

Take the air we breathe. Since there is enough for everybody, nobody thinks of storing it in bottles or canisters. We recognise that people with larger lungs need more air than people with smaller ones. But because there is enough air to go round, we accept that everyone should take as much air as they need.

And this is what the struggle for socialism is all about. It is the struggle to create a society where there is an abundance of things that people need—not a shortage as now.

Is this just a pipe dream or can we really achieve a situation where we can produce enough for everybody's needs? There exists now enough resources in the world to feed, clothe and house everybody.

NO, IT ISN'T HUMAN NATURE

Yet these resources are not used because they are still controlled by the employing classes the world over. When control is taken from them and the resources released, the effects could be startling.

We already know, for instance, that if the value of everything produced in Britain in 1973 was shared out equally, every family of four would have an income of £80 a week. The huge resources wasted on arms, the space race, motor cars designed to fall to pieces, the vast sums spent on advertising, wheat being poured into the sea, and many other things besides—they all show there is an enormous reservoir of wealth, knowledge and ingenuity which could be put to much better use for the benefit of millions of people alive in the world today.

Throughout much of the Third World, there is starvation and unemployment because there are not enough farms producing food nor enough factories to work in. Yet relatively small amounts of investment would not only enable millions of people to work, but would also substantially increase the resources available in the world.

In the battle for socialism and plenty for all, we are seeking to create the conditions where people do not need to be greedy.

Paul Holborow

Socialist Worker Crossword no13

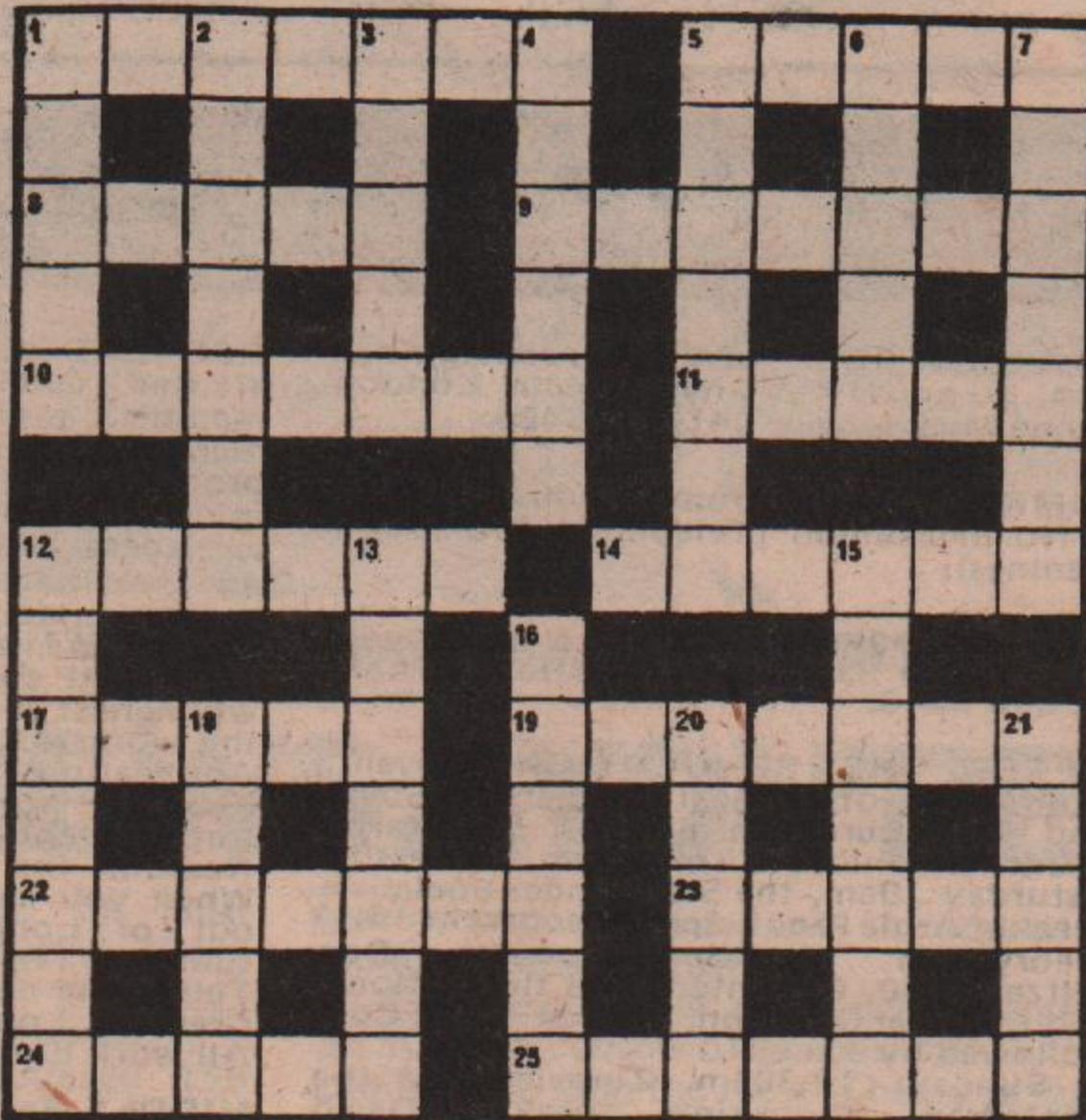
by Roger Cooper

ACROSS

- 1 British Leyland gets you home at night (7)
- 5 It's cold, we hear, in S America (5)
- 8 One-time Mohammedan ruler in 6 Down (5)
- 9 Russian Mrs Toad met her end in 1917 (7)
- 10 IRA man—and you, we hear—are in Eastern Europe (7)
- 11 Get fit on tracks! (5)
- 12 Republican found in a fen? (6)
- 14 Cut out the Red punt! (6)
- 17 African capital's Civil Rights Association (5)
- 19 African conflict where the first concentration camps were used (4, 3)
- 22 Tory found on the moors? (7)
- 23 A vision of socialism—or tinned milk (5)
- 24 Puts in order, like files (5)
- 25 What an arbitrator sometimes does to disputes (7)

DOWN

- 1 Black worker beat the Tories! (5)
- 2 SW men an example of good reporting? (7)
- 3 High heels, like Castro! (5)
- 4 What the labour leaders do—as in the 1926 General Strike (6)
- 5 Paper organisation for building workers! (7)
- 6 Once had an Empress, now has poverty and nuclear bombs (5)



- 7 Covered in fur, like Briginshaw (7)
- 12 What TUC leader did with his nest? (7)
- 13 American Indians who resisted white land seizures fiercely (7)
- 15 Roosevelt's policy was way of getting your cards (3, 4)
- 16 Space shot mis-carries! (6)
- 18 Workers need strong links—but not this one (5)
- 20 Be it sex? (5)
- 21 Not a worker's car—he hasn't got the bread! (5)

Last week's solution:

ZEPPO SCABS
KLEIN GALISH
ELGIN ENGLISH
IATKENGOD
TERRAPIN SHOT
HAGAAATD
JOHNSON CRUYFE
OYENZLC
SPEERBUKHARIN
EPREYNWINT
PHENSICAVANTS
HRAHYSH
HENRY ASHES

Yarnolds: 'We cannot win alone'

WOLVERHAMPTON: The women at Yarnolds curtain factory are hoping that one last effort will be made by other local trade unionists after Thursday's trades council meeting to help them win their strike. If the Transport Workers Union and local factories were really serious in securing a victory then they could do it easily. Yarnolds is not a big factory, and the owners must be feeling the pinch after 11 weeks without some supplies and with some of their most skilled women on strike.

The two white women shop stewards whose sacking sparked off the strike have now accepted the findings of the Conciliation Board, but the management in the factory have twice refused to see the officials from the board about their reinstatement. Another attempt was to be made on Thursday.

But it is no use hoping an official government board will win the strike. Only other trade unionists in the area can do that. Even now further plans should be made to help with the picketing and blacking, and the TGWU must commit their members in the area to help win trade union recognition for the Yarnolds women. They cannot do it on their own.

Donations are still important—although the strike is official the women have received no strike pay. Send messages of support and donations to: Yarnolds Strike Committee, TGWU Offices, 33 Bury Street Wolverhampton.

WOMEN PICKETS OUT 14 WEEKS

GLASGOW: For the past 14 weeks 18 women at Progressive Metals have been on strike and picketing every day for 12 hours. The women, all Engineering Union members, walked out for a day in protest at being offered an extra 5p a week for working in the extreme cold. On returning to work the next day they were given the sack.

Progressive Metals is a small factory employing about 20 people making parts for Chrysler and British Leyland. The women believe their being sacked has nothing to do with their walk-out. Mrs Betty McCann, the convenor said: 'A few months ago Mr Price, the factory owner, told us that Chrysler would be going on short time. He knew that even before the men at Chrysler knew it. 95 per cent of our work is for Chrysler, so with orders bound to fall, he has made our walking out an excuse to get rid of us without paying us redundancy money.'

Since the women were sacked Price has taken on scab labour. The determination and courage that these women are showing in their fight for the right to work shows the way forward for thousands of workers throughout the country who are on short time and facing redundancies. The strike was made official in the first week and work is supposed to be blacked, but what these women need to win is more help on the picket line and for the unions to make sure that the work is not getting into Chrysler.

The National Rank and File Organising Committee has called a Conference on Equal Pay and Redundancies for women trade unionists. The conference will be on 20 April in Manchester. Details from the Secretary, RFOC, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

MINERS SHAKE THE CONTRACT

—but surface men are left in the cold

AFTER a month of silence this year's miners' wage negotiations have been settled in a week.

Until a fortnight ago the rank and file in the industry could not find out a thing about the talks—now they are virtually over.

The left wing in the Miners' Union and the Tory press claim the deal breaks the Social Contract. Joe Gormley and Michael Foot flatly deny it. But what does the settlement mean for the miner?

Workers need a 30 per cent wage rise just to keep pace with price increases. 30 per cent on miners' present rates would mean a faceworker earning £64.50, other underground workers £52.50 and surface men £47.50. The offer is £61, £47, £41. In other words the deal accepted by the miners' executive is up to £6 behind. Surface men get a measly £4.60 a week extra.

The deal further widens differentials. Presumably we are to applaud the big rise for faceworkers as breaking the Social Contract, while the low-paid surface men fall even further behind.

Far more significant is the comment by the NCB's Norman Siddall that the miners have shown restraint in negotiations.

Now it is the turn of the Scargill and McGaheys, left-wingers on the NUM executive, to demand restraint from the miners. The major militant areas—Yorkshire, South Wales and Scotland—are all recommending acceptance of the deal even though the left voted against it on the executive. They always argue that the executive is undemocratic, yet when the crunch comes they are prepared to abide by its decisions.

The alternative—an appeal to the members, over half of them in militant areas, to campaign against this deal—and for a real inflation-beating settlement—is condemned as irresponsible and dangerous to the unity of the union. But the fantastic unity that the miners have brought off in recent years owes nothing to the right wing in the union. Only last November they were keen to push through a damaging productivity deal.

Militants are now campaigning for as large a vote as possible against the deal when it comes to the ballot. Surface men at Woolley Colliery, near Barnsley, showed the way last week with a one-day protest strike and, more than that, militants are fighting to build a rank and file movement which will be strong enough to control its leaders.

Socialist Worker is running a coalfields tour of Cinema Action's new film on the battle of Saltley, The Miners. It will be shown at Chesterfield on Thursday 6 March; Pontefract, Friday 7 March; and Wakefield, Sunday 9 March. Showings also planned for Doncaster, Sheffield and Nottingham. For more information, phone Dave Widgery, 01-837 0737.

DUSTMEN'S STRIKE BEGINS TO BITE

GLASGOW: With the dustmen's strike to keep pace with inflation now in its sixth week, the huge heaps of rubbish are becoming a serious health hazard. The Labour-controlled council denies that there is any threat to health—but has started spraying the larger heaps just in case.

The local press predictably blames the dustmen and has called the strike irresponsible.

Archie Hood, spokesman for the strike

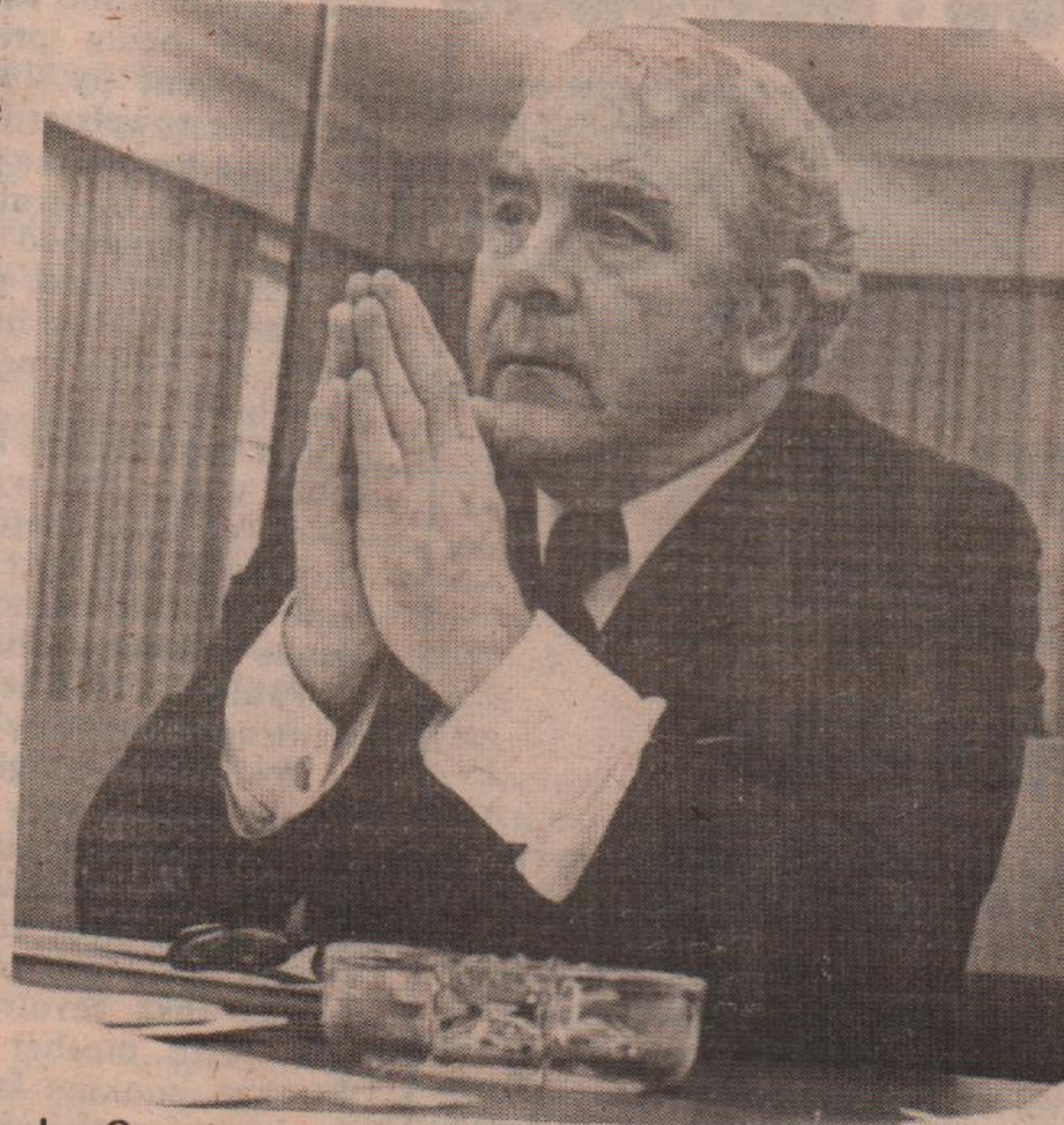
committee, says: 'What concerns me is where the council are putting the rubbish. They are collecting it from the posh areas like Hillhead and Eastwood and dumping it in working-class areas like Partick and Govan. The rubbish is piled 9ft high in the dump there. Obviously they think we will put up with their rubbish.'

Councillor Cannell—a charitable man who runs old folk's homes—is prepared to pay private hauliers to take the middle-

class rubbish and throw it in working-class areas, but not prepared to keep the promise he made late in 1974 to pay the dustmen the same as HGV drivers in private industry.

The dustmen know where the responsibility rests for the threat of the health of workers in Partick and Govan.

Donations and messages of support to: Archie Hood, Trade Union Centre, Carlton Place, Glasgow.



Joe Gormley praying for the Social Contract.

Plumbers will back sparks

SCOTLAND: Council electricians here have now been on strike for five weeks in their battle to make the councils meet their agreement to pay Scottish Joint Industry Board wage rates. The sparks have picketed the City Chambers in Glasgow and have held three demonstrations, but the Labour-controlled council there remains entrenched.

When the electricians first hit the streets there were promises from their union officials that the EPEU executive would make the strike official. It is still unofficial. The executive thought they could win the fight in the courts by taking up an issue of breach of contract. The councils intend to defend this, so the union officials' method of fighting will take years.

Bill Blairford, EPEU executive councillor for Scotland, is now saying he will ask the executive this week to make the strike official.

Whether official or not, the sparks intend to step up their fight. A demonstration was called in Glasgow for Thursday and 600 plumbers who work for the council have promised to stop work in support.

The strike committee feel they need to extend the strike to other areas and involve other council electricians. There are signs that moves are being made to get the council electricians in England and Wales moving. The local authorities in England won't pay JIB rates, so most of the electricians are on £37 a week.

The Scottish sparks in council jobs get £1 an hour just now, but are demanding that the councils pay the new SJIB rate of £1.23. The councils have always followed the SJIB agreements in the past.

Donations and messages of support to: Hugh Higgins, 2 Primrose Street, Glasgow.

Police threat to ban big student march

THE Metropolitan Police are threatening to ban the National Union of Students national demonstration against the education cuts next Friday unless the NUS agrees to split the march into three contingents. The NUS Executive intend the march to go ahead as planned.

It is important that the march is well disciplined. International Socialist Societies should elect at least one steward and follow instructions from the IS National Student Committee.

There are already 25 rent strikes taking place throughout the country. Students are showing that they will not accept the massive increases in rents the authorities are trying to force through.

In STIRLING an increase of £1.07 per week in hall rents led a general meeting of 500 university students to vote almost unanimously for a rent strike.

In EXETER more than 400 students are withholding all or part of their hall fees as part of a campaign to force the university to withdraw proposed rent increases.

At the London School of Economics students have voted against any action in support of their campaign against the cuts, for a nursery, and for a higher grant to the union. The IS motion calling for direct action was defeated. The night before the meeting the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left and the IMG met secretly to agree plans to defeat the IS motion.

150 delegates from 60 colleges travelled to Leeds last weekend to attend the second two-day conference of the National Organisation of IS Societies, NOISS.

A 25 strong NOISS national committee was elected. The following candidates are being supported in elections to the NUS Executive this Easter. Terry Povey for president, Carolyn Clark for deputy president, Pete Gillard for national secretary, Tim Whitfield for national treasurer, Anne Netherwood, Andy Durgan, Dick Mungen and Howard Tunber for vice-presidents, Pete Gillard and Howard Tunber for executive officer and executive committee member.

The previous Saturday 200 students attended the NOISS Women's Conference in Leicester. The two conferences reflect the growing impact of NOISS on the student movement in Britain.

SECOND FACTORY FACES £8 CUT

HINCKLEY: A second hosiery factory here faces a wage cut. First Bennetts tried to impose a £10 a week cut on their 40 workers. Now Iway Hosiery Company, at Burbage, is trying to force a £8-a-week cut on more than 300 workers. A mass meeting on Thursday will decide how to answer the company's demand.

At Bennetts resistance is growing. The company, in discussion with the Hosiery and Knitwear Union, has agreed that £10 is too great a cut. They've offered to reduce it to £8 a week!

They also offered a lump sum if the cut was accepted—but a mass meeting last Friday refused this and rejected any cut.

What happens at Bennetts is being carefully watched by other hosiery workers. If Bennetts successfully resists, the attack on the other factories will be more difficult for the Hosiery Manufacturers Association.

It will also be more difficult for the Hosiery and Knitwear Workers Union to play such a passive role. Officials advised workers on the first day to accept the wage cuts as 'Nothing can be done.'

Classified

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.

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; Creche and accommodation available. Registration, including discussion papers, 50p (postal orders etc payable to T. Pamplin) from 18 Corporation Oaks, Nottingham.

DEMONSTRATE against the consultants' work to rule and all private patients. Mass rally and picket, 2pm, Saturday 22 February, Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Field (Holborn tube). London WC1.

ADICAL ALTERNATIVES TO PRISON: General meeting on Sunday 2 March, pm, New Horizons, 1 Macklin Street, London, WC2. Speaking will be Maureen on Recent trends in police organisation.

MASH the National Front! Public meeting. Hornsey Town Hall, Crouch End Roadway, London N8. Thursday 27 February, 8pm. Speakers: Brian Cholson (TGWU), John Kotz (London Co-op Political Committee). Organised by Hornsey LPYS.

NATIONAL ANTI-APARTHEID DEMONSTRATION: Durham, Saturday 22 February, 1pm, from Palace Green to Racecourse. Rally with speakers. Information from R Good, Durham Students Union.

WEST LONDON THEATRE WORKSHOP (touring but London-based) needs full-time performers, to join permanent company, consisting of two teams of six, one working for pensioners' movement, the other for techs and trade unionists with play on 1926 General Strike. Plays followed by discussions. Work needs commitment. Musical ability preferred. £30 per week. Work starts March 17, but meet us now. 11 Acklam Road, London, W10. 01-969 9348.

BRISTOL Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting: Tuesday 25 February, 7.30pm, Shepherds Hall, Old Market. Britain and the Irish Revolution. National speaker.

REVOLUTIONARIES, sympathisers support the Shrewsbury Two demo. Saturday 22 February, Assemble-Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, 12.30. March 1.30pm. Rally in Trafalgar Square, 3pm.

IS MEMBERS moving into unfurnished house urgently require your unwanted junk. Carpets, curtains, furniture. We will pay what it's worth. 01-590 5846.

INVESTMENT in Ireland and who profits from it? A study of the Industrial Development Authority and multinational corporations in the North and South. If you have information or would like to help in a working group, write to Dave Tague, Hot News, 9 Sutherland Avenue, London, W9.

GLASGOW COMRADE seeks accommodation in house/flat anywhere in London. Phone Mick Harper 041-221 3426.

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

EMPTY Room for two in a house with all modern conveniences, Ilford. Phone 01-590 5846.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION? Seventh Conference of Radical Scholars of Soviet and East European Studies. 8/9 March. Saturday 10am, the State under Socialism, speaker Arnie Prout; 2pm, Preobrazhensky's theory of transition, speaker: Don Filtzer; 7.30, Comintern and the National and Colonial Question, speaker: Mike Cox. Followed by a social.

Sunday: 10.30am, Zinoviev and the Leningrad Opposition, speaker: David Hughes; 2pm, Emergence of a Managerial Technical Elite, speaker, Nick Lampert. All welcome. Buses 61, 62, 63, to the university from New Street Station. Conference fee, £1.75 (students 75p). Accommodation (bring a sleeping bag); advance notice to CRSEES, 26 Lonsdale Road, Birmingham 17.

NEW EDINBURGH REVIEW edition on working-class culture and consciousness available now. 15p from EUSPB, 1 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh 8. Contributors include James D Young, Raymond Challinor, Fred Reid.

PAC Bulletin for information on Irish Political Prisoners in British jails. From Prisoners Aid Committee, Box 100, 119 Raiton Road, London, SE24.

RED LADDER THEATRE is expanding. Wanted. One: Actors/Actresses (Equity members preferable for work in a non-hierarchical collective touring company, producing its own material and performing for predominantly labour movement audiences. Ability to play an instrument(s) an advantage. Two: Administrator/Organiser: labour movement experience, ability to negotiate bookings in labour movement context, all helpful, but also a willingness to participate in other areas of the work (except performance) important. Applications in writing by the end of February stating (i) Theatrical administrative, and political experience, (ii) Reasons for interest in this work, (iii) When you can start, (iv) Ability to move out of London to the North by the summer, (v) Where advert was read, (vi) Telephone number if possible; to 58 Wray Crescent, London, N4. (Tel: 01263 1053). All work Equity rates £30 p.w.

MIDDLE East Research and Action Group will be showing the film 'To Live in Freedom' at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, on Sunday 23 February, 3pm.

FOURTH International public meeting: International Women's Day. Friday 28 February, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1. Speakers include women from France, Ireland, Belgium, Italy, Spain, etc.

WORKERS Fight forum: The Class Nature of the Soviet Union. Sunday 23 February, 8.30pm, at The George, Liverpool Road, London, N1. Speaker: Alan Haslan.

DRUMMER required for Cheap and Nasty -IS Rock Band. Contact Jeff Wells 607 6767.

WOMEN health workers and students: meeting Tuesday 25 February, 7.30pm. Westminster Hospital Medical School. For further information phone Anna Livingstone, 01-274 4460.

RANK AND FILE teachers social. Red Little Riding Hood—a play with songs and music; a send-up of the education system. Disco. Bar til midnight. Friday 21 February, 8pm, The Swan, Stratford. All welcome.

DEMONSTRATION against imprisonment in Czechoslovak jails. Saturday 22 February in front of Czechoslovak and Russian Embassies, Kensington Palace Gardens, nr Notting Hill Tube, London. Protest at continued imprisonment of Czechoslovak socialists, such as Ivan Dejmal, Jiri Muller, Jaroslav Sabata, Jan Tesar. Also protest at attempts to deport Kurdish students from Czechoslovakia to Iraqi jails.

THE LABOUR PARTY and the struggle for socialism. David Coates sets out to find the Labour Party road to socialism, but concludes that it has none (£2). Internationalism or Russification?—a Ukrainian documents the oppression of non-Russian nationalities in the USSR (£1.25). The Gates: a novel by two Stepney boys written to explain why they couldn't face going to school (65p). Please add 10p postage per order, EOA Books, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford.

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.

As unemployment soars, the fight against redundancies steps up...

WE FOUGHT TOGETHER - AND WE WON!

MANCHESTER: 'Jobs? You look at section six in the Manchester Evening News classified—the bit which advertises for toolmakers and fitters—there aren't any. If you want a job round here now you have to go to bleeding Woolworths.'

That comment from a semi-skilled worker at Ward and Goldstone, the cable and electrical equipment group, summed up why engineering and electricians' union members fought and won a battle against redundancies there last week.

On 11 February, management told the EETPU they were faced 'with a surplus of labour'—and that one skilled electrician's job would be going. The sacking was considered by the EETPU Works Committee—and rejected.

The electricians demanded the electrician's reinstatement, five-day working and no redundancies. They gave the bosses until midday on Thursday 13 February before taking strike action.

The management tried a delaying tactic. 'They told us that if we took the strike action off they'd delay his notice for a week,' an electrician explained. 'But then he'd still go over the road—and we weren't having it.'

Hundreds

Worse for management was that they had also got themselves into a battle with the AUEW at the group. Four fitters had been made redundant and the union was planning strike action from 14 February.

The result was that both unions co-ordinated their action and came out on strike together on Thursday 13 February. Hundreds of workers gave Ward and Goldstones a shock they haven't recovered from, and by Friday

THE 'PEASANTS' REVOLT

OLDHAM:—The strike at Ferranti's Cairo Mill factory is now in its fourth week. The claim is for an £8.70 rise. The strikers are skilled workers, members of the engineering and electricians' unions.

They are being supported by a levy within the factory from the rest of the workforce, and their claim incorporates wage rises for the remainder of the workers at the factory.

Other Ferranti factories in the area are awaiting a decision from

the regional officials on whether they, too, should go for strike action.

'The management here talk and talk—and give buggers all,' said a picket outside the factory. 'They've had plenty of chance to discuss the claim but they couldn't condescend to lower themselves. They think of us as bloody peasants.'

There is some suspicion that work is being transferred to a Preston factory. The strikers have

THE CRISIS AND REDUNDANCIES

Speakers: Gerry Davidson (EETPU steward, Ward and Goldstones) in a personal capacity, and Peter Bain (Chrysler Linwood).

Friday 28 February, 8pm, The Carders Arms, Tyldesley Road, Atherton.

All workers welcome. Organised by Manchester District IS.

mass pickets had appeared outside the works.

Suddenly, there was 'no problem' regarding the redundant electrician and the four AUEW members also had their jobs back. 'But there wasn't enough—as far as I was concerned—to recommend a return to work,' explained an EETPU steward. 'We didn't and don't trust the management.'

The strike wasn't helped by a story in last Saturday's Manchester Evening News which quoted EETPU officials as saying the strike was effectively over. Following a mass picket on Monday there was a narrow majority for a return to work, and by Tuesday morning the AUEW and EETPU members were back inside the factory.

'The trouble with this place is that nobody gets any

been stopping work from leaving but are allowing the factory to operate.

There has been some criticism from other Ferranti stewards that the battle should be linked with the factories and that the entire Cairo works should have been stopped.

'It does help some convenors in the other places to say it's just a sectional dispute—which it isn't,' explained an AUEW member from another Ferranti factory.

information on redundancies until the fellows get their cards. There's just not the information from management—and there isn't enough information between the unions,' argued an AUEW member.

Ward and Goldstones have been a 'family' firm for years. Their factories are scattered over the Manchester area, their work force are divided between AUEW, EETPU, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the building workers' union UCATT and the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

Pay differentials can be huge—so that a skilled worker takes home £45 for a 37-hour week while semi-skilled workers can take home no more than £28.50 for a 40-hour week.

Cheap labour

To add to the complications there are pensioners taking work home. Some factories are on short time, while plastics workers at the Eccles factory and cable workers in Salford are working seven days, 12 hours a day.

'The over-60s are the ones who have gone—and they seem to be getting rid of the people who take work home with them,' another worker said. 'But they've still got plenty of cheap labour—why they've got prisoners at Strangeways working on Ward and Goldstones jobs—it's supposed to be "therapeutic", as long as they've got those people there shouldn't be one redundancy in the factories.'

But there have been redundancies and no-one seems sure how many, but they have come from the semi-skilled mainly in the GMWU. 'Management talks about 200 jobs going,' pointed out an EETPU steward.

Because of the low wages, Ward and Goldstones have always had a rapid labour turn-over and the result has been bad union organisation. But now the musical chairs are over. As the job situation tightens so the need for effective union organisation—particularly among the semi-skilled—becomes paramount.

The victory this week was important, but sectional hostility, bad communications and the gaps between the skilled and the rest have to be overcome if in this factory, as in many others, the battle against redundancies is to be won.

'They didn't know what a strike meant at Ward and Goldstones,' said an EETPU steward. 'The reaction from our lads astonished even me. There's nothing like life on the dole to let us know how welcome a job is.'

Journalists' occupation now official

N. LONDON:—Official backing is being given to members of the National Union of Journalists at Educational Audio Visual who are occupying their office to prevent closure.

The union's National Executive made the decision after the chapel (office branch) had mounted a vigorous campaign for official support with the help of rank and file members.

The NUJ executive was told that SOGAT members in the Leeds EJ Arnold warehouse used by EAV, were prepared to black all EAV material, mainly educational film strips, once official endorsement was given.

Despite being told this four days earlier, the union's five national officers, who deputise for the executive between meetings and who include the general secretary Kenneth Morgan, refused to take a prompt decision and passed the buck to the executive.

This was despite a clear resolution moved by Morgan himself and passed at the Union's conference last year pledging the NUJ's full support for action against redundancies 'by any means, including industrial action'.

'Sit-in our only answer'

N. LONDON:—John Dales gave 71 of its 500 workers three weeks' notice last Friday. The New Southgate factory is part of the Metal Closures Group, which made more than £4 million profit last year.

In January, 70 part-time workers were sacked from the twilight shift. There are now rumours that the company is planning to close the plant in a three-day week management are moving work to Bury and Skelmersdale.

At the same time, other departments are working overtime. Management is splitting the work force and getting maximum production while preparing for closure.

One shop steward said: 'We must have a mass meeting as soon as possible. We also need better redundancy pay as the company are only committed to paying the legal minimum of half a week's wages for every year worked.'

'Above all we must get across to our fellow workmates that redundancy money is no good with 20 per cent inflation and a growing dole queue. The odds are the whole factory will close. We should have a sit-in strike now to show management we have had enough and that they had better start talking about saving our jobs.'

TUTORS STRIKE

WORKERS Educational Association tutors and organisers went on strike on Tuesday for linkage with the Houghton report on teachers' pay.

The strikers' union, the Association of Teachers in Adult Education (now part of ASTMS), had originally secured an agreement with the WEA to give them linkage and the substantial pay rise that goes with it. But this was vetoed by the Department of Education and Science, who went on about the beloved Social Contract.

This strike, the first in the WEA's 90-year history, results from a situation where WEA teachers are now getting 30 to 40 per cent less than other Further Education teachers for the same work.

CORRECTION

IN last week's Socialist Worker an article about Nickeloid Ltd said that it was threatened with closure by the Exchange Telegraph Group. Nickeloid is in fact part of the British-Printing Corporation, which is shutting it. Exchange Telegraph are going to shut Burrup Mathieson's, which has a sister firm in Clapham. 250 will lose their jobs.

The reason for the mistake was the large number of printing firms being shut down in Southwark.

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.

Sackings—to keep workers in line

WALTHAMSTOW:—London Rubber Industries, who have a virtual monopoly in sheath contraceptives and have recently been told to reduce their prices by 40 per cent by the Monopolies Commission, have just made 32 workers in their Walthamstow factory redundant.

The workers, all members of the EETPTU, were sacked with a day's notice and received just one week's pay. The reason for the sacking was given as reorganisation. But, according to a TGWU shop steward, the management have a history of periodic sackings to keep the union organisation under control. Already they are advertising for workers in the electronic testing station, and the shop stewards have insisted that no new workers replace those sacked.

The factory employs about 1000 people, mostly Asian and West Indian men on the night shift and women on days and twilights. The membership of the TGWU has increased in six months from 100 to 500 and militancy is growing. The workers have put in (with union backing) a £10 a week claim. Their present basic is between £25 and £27 a week.

The company have offered ten per cent now and one per cent in July. The workers called a mass meeting between shifts to discuss the offer. The management threatened a day's suspension to those who attended. The workers held their meeting outside, called a 24-hour strike for last Monday and banned overtime.

The strike, which like the claim has official backing, was successful. In the words of one shop steward: 'This is a bad management, the workers are fed up with them and if they don't improve their offer then militant action from the membership is very likely.'



On the picket line at Ward and Goldstone: the strike beat off the threat of redundancies.

Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

THIS IS THE NEWS...YOU'RE FIRED

COVENTRY: Plans for more than 1000 redundancies at Jaguar (Leyland) were announced to the workforce on the 10pm BBC news last Sunday. The convenors and deputies had been told two days before but had not seen fit to report back to the membership.

The convenors were told the management would ask for volunteers, but would then select from those volunteers.

IS members in Leyland Coventry responded quickly, issuing a bulletin on Monday morning. We are calling for an immediate mass meeting between the two Jaguar plants and for nationalisation without compensation of Leylands to guarantee five days' work or five days' pay.

To force such demands we must organise for a militant occupation of the two plants.

IN BIRMINGHAM, SU Carburetters, a British Leyland plant, announced 150 sackings last week. Mainly women machinists are involved, with 45 women leaving the factory last Friday and 75 more in a week's time, management would not consider either short-time working or work-sharing as an alternative.

This acceptance of redundancies is tragic. SU Carburetters had a good reputation for the unity of men and women in the fight for higher wages, as well as being in the fore in strikes against the Industrial Relations Act and in support of the miners at Saltley.

In the last two years, however, management has created divisions between men

and women workers and introduced a modified pay structure.

The danger now that trade unionists at SU have conceded redundancies is that the fight to stop the rot will be more difficult. All British Leyland trade unionists should fight for No redundancies. The dole queue is already long enough.

Five days' work or five days' pay. 35-hour week without loss of pay.

BIRMINGHAM:—Workers in the toolroom at Pressed Steel Fisher are involved in a pay struggle against top British Leyland management. The toolroom have a domestic pay agreement which allows a three-month negotiating period. The three months were up on 9 February and in that time management obstructed discussions with the toolroom.

Now management are saying the toolroom settlement has to be delayed until other groups in the factory have settled. Letters were sent out to the striking toolroom workers threatening that unless the men returned by Wednesday the toolroom contract with an outside firm would be lost.

The men's present wage is £54.05 and they are claiming £66.70. According to one toolroom worker, the resistance of plant management to the claim can only be explained by orders from top management. Pat Lowery, Director of Industrial Relations for British Leyland, has said there are too many claims by British Leyland workers.

It is clear that he sees this dispute in that light and wants to force the toolroom into plant negotiations.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

FIGHTING FUND: THE MONEY YOU GIVE HELPS WIN STRIKES

LAST WEEK you, our readers, sent £366.74 to the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund. This week we want you to dig deeper still. Why?

Because the money you send us week after week doesn't merely help us in the crucial tasks of bringing socialist ideas and arguments to an ever wider audience.

It also, in a modest but important way, helps workers when they need it most. Take an example.

For 15 weeks, scaffolders on the Eldon Square site in Newcastle have been on strike against McAlpines, the building industry's most ruthless employer. If they win, it will be an enormous step forward for every building worker.

Socialist Worker has helped to bring the facts of this dispute to the attention of thousands of workers. And our full-time organisers throughout the country have taken striking scaffolders from Newcastle to site after site, in city after city, collecting cash and winning support for their case.

That is vital work—and, hopefully, it will help the lads to victory. But it all costs money. Money we can only get from you.

That is why we make no excuses for asking you to shell out. Send your donations to Mel Norris, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

Our thanks this week to:

Maidstone IS £5, CA Parsons SW Readers Group £21.89, Collyhurst SW Readers Group £1.50 and £1.45, Woolwich IS £27, Kirkley High School Lowestoft SW Readers £1.20, London Printworkers IS £5, North East London Poly £5, Cricklewood IS £112.35, Balham & Tooting IS £6.80, Lewisham IS £10, N.W. London District IS £5, Aberdeen IS £2, UCATT/AUEW/TGWU IS Readers, Ipswich £1.50, Birmingham IS £4, Portsmouth IS £20.80, Lowestoft IS £18, Southampton IS £24.25, Keighley IS £2.

Millionaire backs AUEW right wing

by Laurie Flynn

ROBERT MAXWELL, millionaire publisher and former Labour MP, has been secretly involved in the right-wing campaign to secure the victory of their candidates in the AUEW Engineering Section elections.

Maxwell arranged for the printing of 10,000 copies of an irregular leaflet supporting one of

the right-wing candidates in the first ballot for a successor to Jim Conway as general secretary of the union.

The candidate Maxwell and his Pergamon Press weighed in behind was Jack Whyman, an assistant district official in the Luton and Hertfordshire area who fancies himself as a coming man in the union and let his name go forward in the first ballot to get himself better known.

Maxwell, with Whyman's consent, arranged for his election address to be dressed up as a special leaflet. This was then run off free of charge at Pergamon Press.

The leaflets, predictably, had no printer's imprint as required by law, so they could not be traced back. (Maxwell and Whyman are both lovers of 'law and order'.)

This sort of intrigue is of course second nature to the so-called democrats of the right wing of the AUEW. They publish a whole range of irregular electioneering material, either without an imprint or under a false name and address.

The union rules, to which the right-wing pretend to be so utterly devoted, explicitly forbid candidates 'to issue or cause to be issued' any electioneering material other than the official election addresses.

MORE than 200 workers, shouting and carrying posters, many of them calling for nationalisation, marched through London last Tuesday to protest against the proposed closure of Imperial Typewriters, Hull. A delegation went to see Industry Minister Wedgwood Benn, who said he was worried about the situation and had set up a committee to look into it.

Many Imperial workers at Leicester and in Hull are looking for stronger remedies.

Helen Charlesworth, deputy convenor at the Hull factory, told *Socialist Worker*: 'The workers bitter end. There will be enough of us interested and willing to take the factory over even if there is no immediate help from Wedgwood Benn. If we hold the factory we can force the government to nationalise it.'

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)



'We stay out' vote by 200 scaffolders

NEWCASTLE upon Tyne:—The 15-week strike by 200 scaffolders at Eldon Square is solid. At a mass meeting on Saturday the other workers on the site voted unanimously to stay out until the dispute is settled.

The strikers are out in support of 14 scaffolders victimised by the builders McAlpines in November.

The role of the union officials in the dispute has been scandalous. Not only have both UCATT and TGWU officials refused to give any support but they have issued a joint statement with McAlpines condemning the strikers and making accusations of intimidation.

McAlpines have said they will not

reinstate the 14 under any circumstances. The Newcastle Council Eldon Square Development Committee met Capital and Counties, the developers, on Monday. They have issued a joint statement giving full backing to McAlpines.

Davie Deans, a member of the strike committee, told *Socialist Worker*: 'We intend to stay out until the 14 are reinstated. This is a fight for all building workers and trade unionists. If McAlpines get away with this here they'll do the same all over the country.'

'The Shrewsbury lads were sent down and McAlpines played a large part in that. We intend to make sure that none of our ten arrested pickets

goes to jail and ask all trade unionists to give us support.'

Donations and messages of support are flowing in from all over the country. There have been many donations from individuals including pensioners and many *Socialist Worker* readers. The list of contributing workers includes Dunlop (Speke), Swan-Hunter Shipyards, Clark-Chapman, Churchill Gears, Hebburn Trades Council, Bovis (Warrington), Wandsworth

busmen, Cubbitts (Thamesmead), McAlpine Teaching Hospital Site (Liverpool), Taylor Woodrow (Bradford), Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, Higgs and Hill (Uxbridge Civic Centre), Press Engineering, Ronson, Jarrow Shipyards, Brixton UCATT Branch, Blackburn NUR Branch, Southampton Tubular Scaffolders. Donations and messages of support to: Eddie Brady, 86 Benwell Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne (phone 32365).

Mass picket at site

SOUTH LONDON:—The employers are using the recession in our industry to smash trade unionism on the sites. That's why we can't afford to lose this dispute.' So Terry Heath, from the London Regional Committee of UCATT, summed up the importance of the dispute at Leach's council house site, Mitcham, speaking to a meeting of more than 100 pickets last Monday morning.

Pickets have been out in force since the strike was called last week in protest at Leach's continued use of lump labour.

Since the strike started, scabs have been employed by Leach's. They do no work for high pay. The police, who are always present in large numbers, have told pickets that some of the hired scabs are known local criminals and thugs.

At least one has been seen with a National Front badge, and the site is covered with 'Smash the Unions' slogans. The site convenor, Carl Cooper, has been told that he will be 'done' after the strike is over. Sand has been put in his petrol.

Shortly before the strike started another union member was viciously assaulted by a site manager. He had to go to hospital for three stitches in his lip.

The UCATT Regional Council have called for the maximum support for morning picketing. Leach's four sites in London and at London Airport have been declared black. Letters have been written to Frank Chapple, general secretary of the Electricians Union, whose members, including a steward, alone among trade unionists on the site, are still crossing the picket line.

The strike is a climax to a magnificent battle by Carl Cooper and the stewards on the site to build trade unionism in disgusting working conditions and against constant intimidation.

Donations and messages of support to: M Taylor, UCATT Co-ordinating Secretary, 68 Pendle Road, London SW16.

STEWARDS VICTIMISED

BRIXWORTH, near Northampton:—Mabbotts Timber Mill and Yard have sacked the GMWU collecting steward for trying to promote the union within the firm after he had some success in recruiting to the union. Management are also threatening short-time working and the selling up of the mill if the workers join the union.

John Wannop, the steward, was given a week's notice after putting up bulletins attacking the bonus and wages system—at the moment everyone is on a different scale of wages, afraid to let their weekly wage be known. The mill workers protested.

There was no reply from management, so some of the workers decided to put out bulletins explaining the position. The reasons for the sacking of the steward were said to be for issuing these bulletins.

Members of the GMWU, NUPE and NALGO staged a token picket last Saturday. Another picket is being discussed. The case is now being taken to a tribunal.

Basic

But the right wing finds it vital to defy this rule. They prevent socialists and militants engaging in open democratic campaigning for left candidates, then weigh in with glossy leaflets produced and paid for by millionaires. They also get extensive publicity for their candidates from such well-known engineering workers as millionaire Woodrow Wyatt, in his column in the *Sunday Mirror*.

The Maxwell involvement in the ballot also puts the lie to another favourite right-wing sermon about the union—sinister outside interference by militants and communists.

In fact it is as clear as a bell that the most extensive outside interference comes from millionaires Maxwell and Wyatt and from their friends who control the millionaire press.

These people are now putting all their resources behind the electoral machine of leading right-wing candidate John Boyd to ensure victory on the second ballot. The reason for the 'interest' these men take in the union is simple. They want a union leadership which will do less than nothing to improve wages and conditions and which will accept that a one-way ticket to the redundancy scrapheap is an inevitable fact of life for AUEW members. Don't be fooled.

Socialist Worker DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

I enclose £_____ for one year/six months Socialist Worker

(£5 for a year, £2.50 for six months)

Name _____

Address _____

Socialist Worker, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2

For bulk orders phone 01-739 2639