

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

NO to the Common Market to Wilson's Tory policies

STEP UP THE FIGHT

If there's one
thing our ruling
class can't stand,
it's violence

THE TORY campaign for the Common Market is under full steam. All over the country former Tory ministers are speaking from platforms alongside Roy Jenkins, Shirley Williams, Reg Prentice and other right-wing Labour ministers.

For the likes of Jenkins, the Yes campaign is not just about the Common Market. It's about all those other government policies which depend on the Tory vote for success: higher prices, unemployment, the Budget.

These policies are anti-trade union, anti-worker. And the only way to a majority No Vote is through an organised campaign of workers and trade unionists.

The LABOUR PARTY has voted against the Market. But, after some swift blackmail by Wilson and his hacks in Transport House, the Party executive has decided not to campaign.

The TRADES UNION CONGRESS has voted against the Market. But for ten million affiliated members its leaders have produced 300,000 broadsheets.

The TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS, which has a million and a half members, has published 50,000 leaflets.

This is monstrous. The trade unions have the resources for a mass campaign based on class interests—not on idiotic flag-waving. They should use them.

But it is no use socialists and trade unionists sitting around waiting for their leaders to act. Every Socialist Worker reader can do something to get a No Vote on 5 June. This means:

At least one leaflet for every member in the factory.

Factory meetings against the Market, especially in working hours. These can be arranged. The North London District of the AUEW, for instance, has arranged mass meetings on the Market for most of the big factories in its area.

The campaign has also to be taken into the housing estates. There are leaflets to be distributed, loud-speaker vans to be manned, public meetings and street demonstrations organised.

If every reader of Socialist Worker goes out this week and pushes for factory meetings and campaigns in the community through their trade union bodies, the 'No' campaign can become a winner.



LOOK AT their faces. This is not incitement. Or intimidation. Or even conspiracy. It is cold, vicious violence with a vengeance.

The Daily Telegraph of 2 May caught the flavour of it with these phrases: Into battle—cavalry charge—shouting 'Get them'—kicking lads sitting on the ground—lads picked up and thrown over rails—the crowd also turned on television cameramen and tried to break their equipment.

Now you have read accounts like that before. Surely not those violent Shrewsbury building workers picketing again? Well, no. Miners at Saltley? NO. Dockers at Neap House Wharf? NO. Dustmen in Glasgow? NO.

This, in case the lack of hysterical press editorials hasn't alerted you, is the mob attack on the striking stable lads at Newmarket.

Perhaps we can expect the Director of Public Prosecutions to instigate proceedings under the

By Michael Fenn

Conspiracy Act of 1875. Not a chance.

'It was a spontaneous decision to act,' stated one of the ringleaders, Major General Sir Randle Feilden. Another, a city stockbroker, said: 'Why the hell should we suffer this when we come to the races for a day to enjoy ourselves and get away from this sort of action which we encounter everyday on the railways and elsewhere?'

One elderly woman said 'she would get them with her hatpin'. Carrying offensive weapons, maybe.

And what caused all this emotional violence? The stable lads want a £4.47 increase on wages that start at £23 and go up to the princely maximum of £40. It costs more to keep a race-horse than it does to keep a stable lad.

Major Feilden again: 'People in the stands were angry and they were sparked off seeing the stable lads manhandle and scaring the horses. If it had gone on the whole crowd would have come down and beaten them up. I would do so myself if they were on my land.'

These are the same maggots that preach law and order, that form private armies to scab on trade unionists and have got nothing else to do with their time but write to the Daily Telegraph about violent pickets at Shrewsbury.

Yes, we do have violent people in our midst, as this incident showed, and they will get more violent in defence of their privilege and power. That is what the struggle of the trade unions is all about.

Major General Sir Randle Feilden and his upper class hooligans know it and the stable lads at Newmarket are just learning it.

WHAT WE THINK VIETNAM: VICTORY FOR SOLIDARITY

'WE KNOW that in Cambodia very tragic and inhuman and barbarous things are going on,' said Dr Henry Kissinger on Monday.

Dr Kissinger has spent most of the past five years escalating the American invasion of Cambodia in support of a corrupt, puppet government there. The tragedy, inhumanity and barbarism unleashed by that invasion and the war which followed is indescribable.

Now that the puppet government has been defeated, now that for the first time in five years there is something like peace in Cambodia and Vietnam, Kissinger and his hacks in the CIA are busy inventing 'Communist atrocities', which, even if they were true, would vanish into insignificance beside the slaughters which Kissinger inspired.

At the same time, the Kissinger propaganda machine is busy 'working up sympathy' for refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia. The British press joins in campaigning for at least a thousand of these refugees to be brought to Britain.

Meanwhile, the American government has started a vicious witch-hunt against illegal immigrants from Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. The entire American police force and a large army of spies have been let loose in the slums to hound down these immigrant workers.

And in Britain, more than 50 Asians are in Pentonville prison, detained without trial under the immigration laws. Thousands of women and children in India and Pakistan are denied permission to join their families here by racist bureaucrats in the British High Commissions.

Yet these same authorities in both countries now seek to 'suspend the regulations' to allow access to the wealthy camp-followers of Thieu, Ky and Nixon.

No hypocrisy, no false appeal to shock or sympathy is spared in a desperate attempt to disguise the simple truth about Vietnam and Cambodia: that the armed might of the most powerful nation on earth has been beaten by the defiant people of two of the smallest.

Anti-war movement

How were the Americans beaten? That question is being asked all over the world. A simple comparison of forces pointed to outright American victory.

The North Vietnamese had no airforce at all. On the ground, both in men and equipment, the Americans and their South Vietnamese allies were vastly superior. At sea, once again, they had total control.

How did they lose? Not because they were defeated in open military conflict, but because the spirit and determination of the Vietnamese people, coupled with the skill of their guerrilla tactics, managed to delay the 'quick kill' for which the Americans hoped.

The war was dragged out over two decades. It cost millions more than had been budgeted for. Day by day, it appeared on American television screens. Slowly at first, and with gathering pace, there developed in America a powerful anti-war movement.

The movement against the war in Vietnam spread right across the world. In Europe, especially after the Tet offensive of 1968, there was a huge explosion of protest. In London, two vast demonstrations, one of more than 100,000 people, vented fury at the American atrocity in Vietnam.

These great protest movements, especially the American movement, finished what the Vietnamese had started. The great force of American militarism and imperialism were beaten by Vietnamese courage in the field—and by protest movements in America which worked in solidarity with the Vietcong.

And it is a victory which gives the lie once for all to the pessimists who urged us all these years that it was 'futile to protest'; that Vietnam was a long way away and our government wasn't even fighting there.

What good, they asked us, does all that marching do? Now we can reply: it helped, in just a little way, to throw a line of solidarity to the oppressed people of Vietnam.

AND THEY WON.

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

Threat of ban on Italian socialists

A VICIOUS campaign is being mounted in Italy to outlaw Avanguardia Operaia, the revolutionary socialist organisation in the forefront of the recent anti-fascist campaign.

It began on the same day that AO announced its candidates for next month's regional elections.

Last year the police claimed they found documents

incriminating the group in urban guerrilla preparations. And several months ago, a fascist paper also published papers alleged to be AO's paramilitary plans.

AO has accused the police of planting the evidence. Now the right wing press and the Milan magistrate in charge of the investigations are calling for AO to be banned.

Their campaign, given wide publicity by the press and State-controlled TV, is part of an increasingly violent offensive against the Left.

It follows mass campaigns to outlaw the fascist party—which, under the Italian Constitution, is illegal—and to boycott domestic price rises.

Stopped

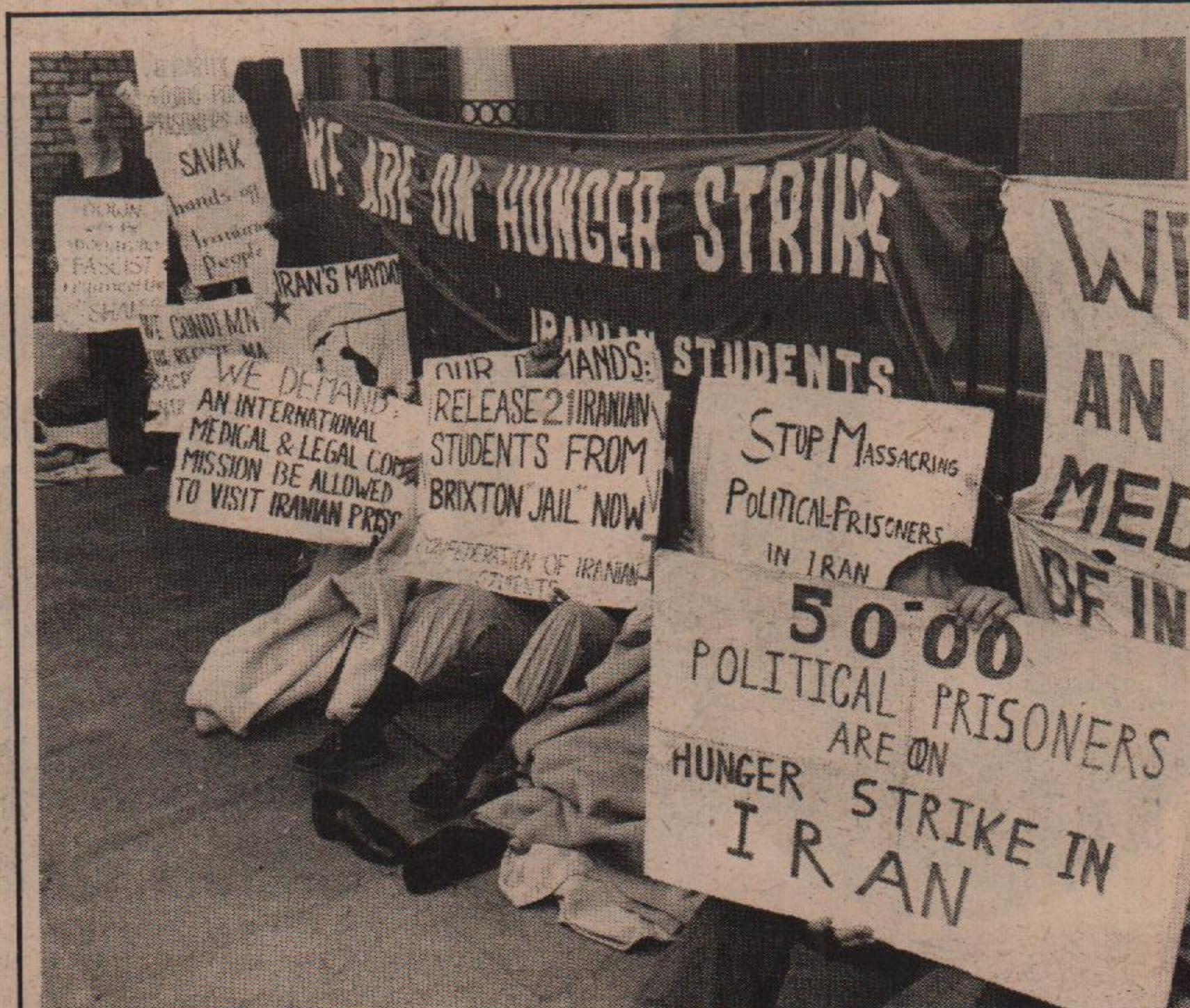
The ruling Christian Democrat Party is calling for more law and order to halt the tide of militancy. New laws have been passed widening police powers to arrest and detain.

The campaign against AO is a crude attempt to crush a vital component of Italy's working-class movement.

Resolutions and messages of support are urgently needed. Send them to: Avanguardia Operaia, Via Ruggero Bonghi 4, Milan 20141, Italy.

All NOISS groups should fight for resolutions of protest from their unions to be sent to the NUS Executive.

Messages of protest from bodies in this country should be sent to the Italian Embassy.



Iranian students picketing in London—they have to hide their faces for fear of reprisals against their families in Iran. PICTURE: Angela Philips (IFL).

LABOUR DOES SHAH'S DIRTY WORK

DENIS HEALEY, architect of the bosses' Budget, was in Iran last weekend to chat up the Shah about that £500 million loan which is keeping the Labour government on its feet.

At the same time, 21 Iranian students were sitting in Brixton prison, charged with conspiracy to trespass in their own embassy.

Bail was refused—because of 'the seriousness of the charge'. The homes of all 21 were raided by the police and searched.

When a top Iranian diplomat in Britain was caught red-handed last year trying to intimidate a British subject into spying for the Shah, the Labour government took no action.

The peaceful sit-in and occupation of the embassy was in protest at the murder under torture of nine political prisoners in Iran.

Among the dead was worker-militant, Mohammad Choupanzede, who had been in prison for eight years.

According to Amnesty International, there are 40,000 political prisoners in Iran, all of them subject to the most barbarous and extensive torture in the world.

Iranians abroad have always felt a special responsibility to act on behalf of the persecuted thousands in their country.

Now they have been stopped by the British police—and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

A mass picket is being mounted outside London's Bow Street Court this Thursday—8 May—when the 21 appear.

All socialists—and London IS Societies in particular—are urged to mobilise for it.

Messages of support to: Confederation of Iranian Students, 58 Old Brompton Road, London, SW6 (01-589 2159).



AFTER ALL, he is completely unbiased. Lord Hailsham is a former Tory MP, Cabinet Minister and Lord Chancellor.

Last week he joined with two other Tory Law Lords to discuss an appeal in a rape case. First, they found the rapists guilty. Then they decided, for no reason at all, to lay down the law on rape for all time.

According to the Three Just Men, a man who rapes a woman is not guilty of anything if he can convince the court that he 'honestly believed' that the woman wanted him.

His 'belief' doesn't have to be reasonable. It just has to be 'honest'. So a man suffering from the honest delusion that every woman in the world is longing for sex with him can rape anyone he likes.

How did their Lordships come to this amazing

Would you consent to sexual intercourse with this man?

conclusion? Because of simple, undiluted masculine prejudice. They believe any woman who complains of rape is probably making it up. So every effort must be made to acquit the poor unfortunate man who raped her.

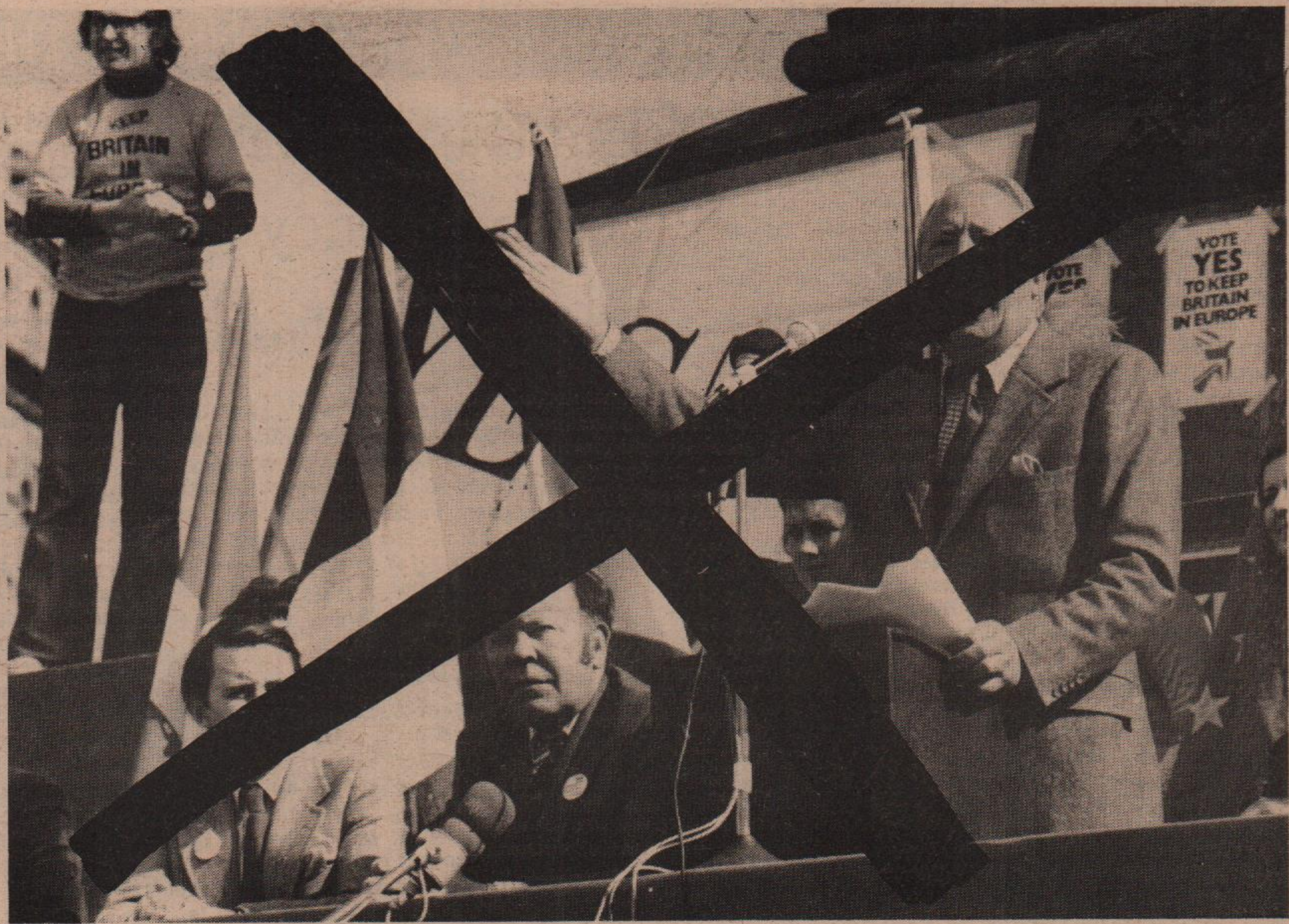
Lord Hailsham cheered loudly in court when Socialist Worker was found guilty last October of naming blackmail witnesses. Like hundreds of other judges, he thought it disgraceful that people should be deterred from alleging blackmail for fear that someone should use their name.

Now he and two other old Tory diehards have made a ruling which will deter thousands of raped women from coming forward with complaints. Two facts may help to explain this hypocrisy:

ONE: People who are blackmailed are usually rich.
TWO: People who are raped are not.

VOTE

NO



Yes, the Market does mean higher prices

THE coalition of the Tory leadership and right-wing Labour ministers who are leading the pro-Market campaign have excelled themselves in illogicality over the past week. They have repeatedly argued that somehow the Common Market does not mean higher food prices.

Yet the whole basis of the Market's agricultural policy is to keep food prices higher than they would otherwise be. This is done in two ways.

First, it is done by buying up and stockpiling food produced within the Common Market, so as to cause artificial shortages. The amounts of food being stockpiled at present are huge:

Beef 320,000 tons
Butter 30-40,000 tons
Skimmed milk 400,000 tons
Cheese 250-300,000 tons
Soft wheat 1.5 million tons
Wine 500 million gallons.

Secondly, the European Commission also forces up prices by banning or taxing imports of food produced elsewhere in the world at a cheaper price. So, imports into the Common Market of cheap beef are forbidden.

The taxes on various foods are: butter £39 per cwt, cheese £31 per cwt, lamb 12 per cent, canned tuna fish 6.9 per cent, canned pineapple 13.2 per cent. Within the original six countries of the Common Market there is also a tax on grain used to make bread—£18.40 a ton for most

kinds of wheat.

Only last week the European agricultural ministers—including our own Marketeer, Fred Peart—agreed to take measures to ensure that fish remains at a high price. Fish caught by non-Market countries such as Norway or Iceland will be subjected to import duties, to force the price up to Common Market levels. If the price within the Common Market itself looks like falling, then the European Commission will buy up fish and hoard it in cold stores.

Need

Put simply, this means that housewives throughout Europe are to be forced to pay more than they need

every time they buy cod or haddock.

However much the pro-Marketees rant and rave about the advantages of this system, for the worker it remains a system designed from start to finish to push up prices.

But this is not, as some of the more right-wing anti-marketees claim, because the Common Market is designed to help 'foreigners' at the expense of 'Britons'. Rather it is because the Common Market is a capitalist institution, based upon the pooling of the forces of the ruling classes in the different countries.

For capitalism food production is for one reason only, to make the maximum profit.

Of course, there are throughout Europe many small scale farmers and fishermen who can hardly survive on the return they get from the sale of their produce. Under a rational organisation of society their problems would be solved by massive state subsidies designed to help them increase their efficiency and to cheapen the price of the food they produce.

But under the present system there are also many large, profitable

capitalist farmers and big fishing monopolies. It is these big business interests that benefit from the Common Market food policy. Using the excuse that small farmers and fishermen need more money to stay alive, they impose policies that lead to ever higher food prices and higher profits for themselves.

Suffer

Those who gain are the likes of former Tory ministers Willie Whitelaw and Lord Carrington, who own thousands of acres. Fred Peart himself used to be on the board of the giant Fat Stock Marketing Corporation—the biggest meat firm in Europe.

Those who suffer are the workers and housewives in each of the European countries.

This is not surprising. The Common Market is an attempt by the ruling classes in Europe to strengthen themselves. Insofar as they are successful in this, they use their increased strength to impose new burdens on their workers.

WHO SAID...

'The Common Market has become a shambles. It has proved itself capable of operating to the disadvantage of the British people for years to come.'

ANSWER: Harold Wilson, election speech, Colne Valley, 1 October 1974.

THIS PICTURE sums up the campaign for a Yes vote in the referendum. Reg Prentice, the Labour minister who has gone out of his way to justify the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury pickets and who is at the moment imposing slashing cuts in education, shares a platform in Trafalgar Square with Edward Heath, whose government imprisoned the pickets and pioneered the cuts.

In a series of such meetings up and down the country over the next three weeks the right wing in the Labour Party and the Tories will be campaigning together for the Yes vote.

The pro-Marketees make it no secret that they will regard a Yes vote as a mandate for continuing the Tory-right wing Labour alliance on other issues. Last week big business's own weekly paper, *The Economist*, stated: 'The referendum has now come to involve the entire future course of British politics.'

The Tories and the Labour right will use a big Yes vote as an excuse for attacking the left all along the line. That is why it is imperative now that in every area socialists take the initiative in organising a labour movement campaign against the bosses' Common Market, mobilising union branches, trade councils, and above all the shop floor organisations of workers to oppose the new alliance of Wilson, Jenkins, Prentice and the Tories.

■ ■

VOTE NO! posters available from Elana Dallas, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Phone 01-739 1878.

VOTE NO! leaflets available from Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Phone 01-739 8600. 15p per 100.

THE BOGUS INTERNATIONALISTS

EDWARD HEATH told Sunday's pro-Common Market 'youth rally': 'Youth have ideals. You are not prepared to accept the injustices of the old world. You are the true internationalists.' He attacked the left for believing that 'brotherhood stops at Margate'.

Under Heath's government the number of black people locked up in jail without being charged in any court was rarely less than 150. Their 'crime'? Being born beyond Margate, being black and of trying to enter Edward Heath's 'internationalist' Britain without the proper documentation.

Another politician prone to preach at length about 'internationalism' is Roy Jenkins. Jenkins is the Home Secretary. His internationalism means that there are still an unknown number of black people locked up in jail without charge, for trying to enter Britain without the proper documentation.

It meant three weeks in prison, without trial, for Franco Caprino at Christmas for the 'crime' of being a

citizen of another Common Market country and carrying out trade union activities in Britain. Finally, of course, 'internationalism' for Jenkins means giving the police powers to hold without trial workers from Ireland—also a member of the Common Market—and to deport them as he so wishes.

BASIC

One might be forgiven for thinking that the 'internationalism' of the Common Market means freedom of movement for profits and restrictions on workers.

Last Saturday Roy Jenkins claimed that the Common Market could not be blamed at all for high prices. Three days earlier a headline in the *Financial Times* told a different story: 'EEC agrees on scheme to bolster fish prices,' it said. The *Economist* summed up what that means: 'This is likely to push up consumer prices for fish, but consumers are not strongly represented at Brussels farm meetings.'

Socialist Worker

VOTE

NO TO

COMMON MARKET
SOCIAL CONTRACT
UNEMPLOYMENT
WILSON'S TORY
POLICIES

Socialist Worker meetings against the Common Market

CENTRAL LONDON: Thursday 8 May, 7.30pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road. Speaker: John Palmer.

BUXTON: Sunday 11 May, 7.30pm, Kings Head Hotel, Market Place.

EAST LONDON: Tuesday 13 May, 8pm, Princess Alice, Romford Road, E7. Speaker: Steve Jefferys (IS industrial organiser).

BEDFORD: Tuesday 13 May, 8pm, Labour Party Rooms, 6a St Mary's Street. Speaker: Ian Birchall.

PETERBOROUGH: Thursday 15 May, 8pm, The Greyhound, Cathedral Square. Speaker: Paul Foot (editor, Socialist Worker).

CUMBERNAULD: Tuesday 20 May, Cumbernauld Town Hall. Sponsored by SOGAT, Thames Case. Speakers: Tony Cliff and an international speaker.

EDINBURGH: Wednesday 21 May, 7.30pm, Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

GLASGOW: Thursday 22 May, AUEW Hall, West Regent Street.

LIVERPOOL: Thursday 22 May, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. Speaker: Duncan Hallas (editor, International Socialism journal).

ALL LONDON: Tuesday 3 June, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. (Holborn tube). Speakers: Tony Cliff and members of European revolutionary socialist organisations.

Introducing a new feature... **QUESTIONS ON THE CRISIS**

THAT WAS the reply, and on the face of it a conclusive one, to a comrade arguing with fellow local government workers against accepting cuts in staffing.

We should refuse to accept, she said, either redundancies or the non-filling of vacancies. We should demand that the service—in this case the child-care service—is fully maintained.

But local government spending is being squeezed by inflation and by government policy, notably Healey's Budget. So what is the answer to that?

It's odd, when you think about it, that what 'we can afford' bears no relation to the resources available. For example, the total output of goods and services in this country has increased by more than three and a half times since 1950.

Yet in those days 'we could afford' free milk for all schoolchildren and nursing mothers. 'We' could also afford a National Health Service without charges for prescriptions, dental treatment, spectacles and so on.

And 'we' could afford big food subsidies. The price of bread, at four old pence a loaf, stayed unchanged between 1940 and 1950 despite a sizable rise in world prices.

Today, when the economy is vastly richer by any measure, we 'can't afford' any of these things. Why?

Because, of course, what can be 'afforded' for social services, wages or whatever is not simply determined by economic laws beyond our control. It is determined largely by politics. And politics, as an unusually candid 'political scientist'

‘But the council has no money to pay for it...’

once said, is about who gets what, when and how.

The reason that 25 years ago 'we' could afford various services that cannot be afforded today—or so they tell us—is simple. At that time, and still more during the years immediately before, our ruling classes were afraid that unless they took steps to do something for ordinary working people, they would be booted out and lose all their power, wealth and privilege.

Truth

'We must give the people reforms or they will give us revolution,' said a Tory MP called Hogg in 1944 (he now calls himself Lord Hailsham).

Faced with that alternative, no end of 'reforms' were forthcoming. Once the fear of radical social change faded, it was discovered that we couldn't afford them any more.

The truth is that there is no 'we'. There is us and them. And between us and them there is a constant struggle about the division of what is produced. Marxists call it the class struggle.

Tories, Liberals and right-wing Labourites all use the 'can't afford it' argument because they are defending the interests of 'them'—the capitalist class and the middle classes—against the interests of working people.

The answer is this. What can be 'afforded' depends on who gets what. They say we can afford a Concorde—a rich man's toy if it ever goes into service—but not decent social services. And they will get away with enforcing their priorities if working people lie down and let themselves be walked over.

They can and will be forced to backtrack if there is active resistance. Active resistance, that is the point. We never had rent controls of any kind in this country until there was a massive and successful rent strike in Glasgow.

So today, with social service cuts. They will be enforced or they will be beaten, depending entirely on whether workers in the public sector accept them or refuse to accept them—refuse to accept sackings or rundown of staffs.

But the council can't afford it? Too bad. The Glasgow landlords couldn't afford it either. But they had to in the end.

The accounting procedure and the whole question of what 'is available' is itself a political question, a question of who gets what. And it is decided, in the last resort, by strength and fear.

There is no fixed-sized 'pot'. The pot shrinks or stretches depending on which side pushes hardest.

DUNCAN HALLAS

LANCASTER:

Now Carter gets his spies out

LANCASTER University's Vice-chancellor, having expelled five students, suspended five and fined 20, put the boot in again this week.

Carter is threatening to refuse to recognise decisions of democratic general meetings, which have been attracting up to 1200 students. Instead he is backing those of a ballot-elected committee.

This move came only days after 4000 students from all over the country had demonstrated at Lancaster.

Carter has also written to every Vice Chancellor asking which political organisations have been calling for support action for those victimised at Lancaster.

We can tell him: the National Organisation of IS Societies proposed such a resolution to the NUS conference.

The IS Society at the University of East Anglia successfully moved a one-day occupation in solidarity with Lancaster.

The IS Societies mobilised about a third of last week's demonstration. And the Scottish IS Societies are organising a speaker's tour for Lancaster students in Scotland.

Though many students face exams in a few weeks, the student movement is beginning to respond to the Lancaster events. But we must step up the pressure.

At Essex University, seven students now face disciplinary charges. At Warwick, students on rent strike are under attack. And Surrey students will be in court answering summonses from the University.

There is only one way to hit back. Sympathy action round the country can force the Vice Chancellors to think again. No talk of petitions from liberals who think Carter has gone a bit far is going to stop these victimisations.

NOISS must go onto the offensive. Every IS Society should propose solidarity actions with Lancaster.

Executive

THE NEWLY-ELECTED NUS executive met for the first time last Sunday. The Broad Left majority were well prepared. The meeting discussed the responsibilities of each executive member. The ritual carve-up took place.

Pete Gillard, from NOISS, and Val Coultas, from the IMG, were excluded from any main responsibilities.

Gillard was also excluded from the International Policy Group.

Every conference for the past few years has rejected the platform's Moscow line. Last November, the conference accepted a report which argued that Soviet dissidence was part of a much-wider repression, that of the working class, and that Russia was a capitalist country.

Pete Gillard is the only member of the executive who supports this position. It is disgraceful that an executive member who represents the views of the membership is excluded from the committee which implements this policy.

Resolutions from Students Unions protesting should be sent to the NUS Executive.

This railman's had enough

LAWRENCE KIMM, a porter at Dumfries Station, is married with three children, two still at school. His gross pay is £25.65 plus threshold payments. And he works with single men who, after tax, take home less than £20.

Lawrence moved to the railways eight months ago. His previous job, as a tyre fitter, gave him a take home pay of £18.50. But it had its advantages.

He explains: 'When I have to work on a rota which puts me on five different shifts over five weeks, the wages are no compensation for the unsocial hours.'

This is how his shifts work. Each lasts a week. At the end of five weeks, he starts again.

- Shift 1: 5.30am-1.30pm
- Shift 2: 8am-4pm
- Shift 3: 1.30pm-9.30pm
- Shift 4: 11pm-7am
- Shift 5: Midnight-8am.

Workplace

As Lawrence says: 'This wrecks any sort of social life.'

Even without these wages and hours the job is hard. Most porters are long-service men who have been injured. They've been transferred to portering as 'light duties'.

These 'light duties' include man-handling four-hundredweight containers from a local boiler factory. The number of porters has been cut from nine to six, two on each shift.

'With this understaffing,' says Lawrence, 'we can't begin to give the public any sort of service.'

'British Rail say: '1975. Let's make it courtesy year.' But every time a train comes in, we have to shift all the parcels first before we can help on anything else. If there's a delay, even of a few seconds, it has to go in the log book.'

'With understaffing and all the uncertainty, morale is low. It's not a happy workplace and we can't give the sort of service we would like.'

'We need a living wage. With the sort of shifts and hours we have to work, the money isn't much. The lower grades should be brought up with the rest.'



John Sturrock (Report)

HOW RAIL WORKERS CAN SHAKE THE CONTRACT

AS THE RAILWAY workers' pay claim went to arbitration this week, all the signs were that the government was lining up for a showdown. Some members of the Cabinet, notably Chancellor Denis Healey, see the claim—for rises of up to 35 per cent—as a make or break issue for the Social Contract.

The three unions—NUR, ASLEF and TSSA—have already rejected an offer of 21.2 per cent, which includes the consolidation of threshold payments. For some NUR members, that offer represents a pay increase of 75p a week.

Railway workers must prepare now to reject the almost certain cut in living standards that will follow

the 'impartial' and 'independent' arbitration. They should:

DELUGE their union executives with telegrams demanding they prepare now for all-out strike action.

WIN support from powerful sections of workers. The railmen played a big part in the miners' victories in 1972 and 1974. Now is the time to get a promise that that solidarity will be repaid.

DRAFT leaflets to hand out to commuters explaining what the offer means—a cut in living standards—and what the government and British Railways Board are up to. Remember: public hostility has been whipped up by the press more than once in recent years to intimidate the train drivers. Don't let them get away with it again.

Ireland:

AS the results of the Northern Ireland Convention election came through last Friday and Saturday, giving the Loyalist Coalition the crushing victory Socialist Worker had predicted, Merlyn Rees must slowly have realised that now at last the conning would have to stop.

For six years British policy has been directed towards the central aim of 'strengthening the centre'. This meant that the first priority of the security forces has been to smash any movement which threatened the status quo or refused to accept the snail's-pace reform programme.

We were told, over and over again, that such movements alienate the 'silent majority' which, so it was assumed, would speak out strongly for moderation and compromise if given a real chance.

To give the moderates a chance, Republicans and suspected Republicans were interned without trial, 'hooligans' and potential hooligans were batoned and gassed; unarmed civil rights marchers were slaughtered on Bloody Sunday . . . and much else besides.

Sectarian

And in the end the moderates were given their chance. They took it last Thursday: and gave out as loud a roar of reaction as has been heard in these islands for many a year. The Loyalist population voted massively for a return to the old Stormont system: for sectarian, one-party rule, a reconstituted B-Specials, an unreformed police force, and Catholics back in their proper place—on the outside looking in.

After six years of blood and anguish—mostly ours—that's how far forward the policy of successive governments has taken us: all the way forward to the early 1960s.

Now the conning has to stop...

BY EAMONN McCANN

The election result should dispel once and for all the illusion that it is possible to reform Northern Ireland. The state and the dominant institutions within it were created and

shaped in order to guarantee the continuation of an anti-democratic, sectarian set-up. Ending sectarianism therefore means ending the state.

Any excuse there ever was for failing to face up to that disappeared with the lost election deposits of 'moderate' candidates last Thursday.

The Irish people as a whole must be allowed to decide their own future and the British troops, the physical guarantors of the sectarian statelet's

continued existence, must be withdrawn.

No government as gutless and ideologically impoverished as Wilson's will do that on its own initiative—which makes it all the more pressing that socialists and socialist organisations support the campaign of the Troops Out Movement and work to ensure that the 24 May conference begins the mobilisation of the entire labour movement.

Statement of the I.S. executive

GOVERNMENT policy has failed in Ireland. The whole strategy of maintaining an Orange state and trying, with the help of troops, to make it into a moderate non-Orange state is in ruins.

There is no solution without a united Ireland. The shortest way to a united Ireland is to remove from Orange sectarianism the support of British troops.

The labour movement in Britain can get the troops out. There is the purpose of the National Labour Movement Delegate Conference on Ireland, which is being organised by the Troops Out Movement.

The conference is on Saturday 24 May—and the response so far has been good. More than 150 delegates have been nominated. This may be the last chance to get delegates elected. Raise the matter at your next union branch or shop stewards' committee.

A limited number of observers' credentials are also available: at 75p per observer. All wishing to apply should write in immediately.

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND IRELAND

National Labour Movement Delegate Conference

Saturday 24 May, 10am-5.30pm, Collegiate Theatre, Gordon Street, London, WC1. Creche available

Speakers include Senator Michael Mullens (General Secretary, ITGWU), Eamonn McCann, Joan Maynard MP, Harry McShane and Michael Knowles (Secretary Hackney Trades Council).

Sponsors include: Joan Maynard MP, Jeff Rooker MP, Frank McGuire MP, Maureen Colquhoun MP, Syd Bidwell MP (chairman of Tribune), Jo Richardson MP (secretary Tribune), Dennis Canavan MP, Stan Thorne MP, Leo Abse MP, William Wilson MP, Andrew Bennett MP and Marcus Lipton MP.

Delegates allowed only from trade union branches, Trades Councils, shop stewards' committees, Labour Party and LPYS branches and NUS branches.

Organised by

Troops Out Movement

Credentials from TOM, 103 Hammersmith Road, London, W14. Delegation fee 75p.



REPRESENTATIVES of the Irish Republican Socialist Party have approached the International Socialists and the International Marxist Group to ask for help in holding a series of meetings in Britain to explain the policies and perspectives of their organisation.

Both organisations have agreed to sponsor and assist in organising a speaking tour of England and Scotland by Mick Plunkett, the IRSP national secretary, between 18 and 24 May.

The IS Executive Committee support this tour by the IRSP because they believe that as an Irish socialist and anti-imperialist organisation the IRSP's views deserve a platform. The committee was concerned that these views were not being properly put in the face of unsubstantiated accusations and rumours propounded by the press, the Official Republican and their Communist Party sympathisers in this country.

Irrespective of any disagreements IS might have with the IRSP we welcome their developments as part of the strengthening and clarification of the revolutionary socialist movement in Ireland. We hope they will be able to play a leading part in the development of a revolutionary working class leadership for the national struggle in Ireland which can defeat British imperialism.

We would also hope that they would play their part in unifying all those prepared to fight against Irish capitalism, British imperialism and for a Socialist Workers' Republic.

The following meetings are being arranged:

MANCHESTER Sunday 18 and Monday 19 May, BIRMINGHAM Monday 19 May, GLASGOW Tuesday 20 May, NEWCASTLE Wednesday 21 May, COVENTRY Wednesday 21 May, OXFORD Thursday 22 May, BRISTOL Thursday 22 May, LONDON Friday 23 May.

Further details in next week's Socialist Worker.

SOCIALISM AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK EXPERIENCE 1945-75. Teach-in organised by the Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists. Saturday 10 May, 10am-5pm, North London Polytechnic, Prince of Wales Road, London NW5. Speakers: Eduard Goldstucker, Vladimir Fisera, also Robin Blackburn, Tamara Deutscher, Monty Johnstone, Ken Coates, Chris Goodey, Mike Cooley and Chris Harman (IS).



FREE DESMOND TROTTER!

Part of last Saturday's demonstration in Notting Hill, West London, which continued the campaign to Free Desmond Trotter, the Dominican socialist who has been convicted and sentenced to death on a trumped-up murder charge. The campaign hopes to raise funds to send lawyers to Dominica so that Desmond's appeal can be brought to the Privy Council. They are also anxious for trade union support.

Desmond Trotter was one of the few people in Dominica

prepared to speak out on behalf of the large numbers of the unemployed on the island. He defied the repression, and his life is threatened as a result.

Every resolution through a union branch can help to save his life.

Socialist Worker will see that resolutions and messages of support reach his family and supporters.

Picture: Andrew Wiarad (Report)

The Free Press in the dock

5TH COLUMN by London docker Bob Light



WHY did the press and TV, led by the Daily Mail and Evening News, give so much prominence to the scabs at Purfleet Deep Wharf? After all, it's just one of scores of wharves along the Thames. And it employs only 150 men.

But that wharf just happens to be owned by Associated Newspapers: who just happen to own the Daily Mail and Evening News.

At least four directors of Associated Newspapers, and its parent company Daily Mail & General Limited, sit on the Purfleet Deep Wharf board.

Associated Newspapers also have other companies that would have been directly affected by the dock strike. They own several wharfage companies, and at least four major freight forwarding firms, including C Brocklehursts, a major port user in London.

Associated Newspapers also own several road transport companies. A strange kind of 'freedom', you might well think.

WE HAVE a Free Press in this country. We know that because it says so in the newspapers.

London dockers found out a good deal about that freedom in the recent five-week strike.

We were fighting for the right to work. But the press, aided and abetted by TV, did everything in its power to undermine, demoralise and finally crush that strike.

It must have been one of the filthiest campaigns in the filthy history of the capitalist press. Jack the Ripper probably got a better press than the London docker.

At first, its reaction was simple: ignore it and it will go away. In three weeks, the Daily Mail mentioned the strike three times and The Sun gave it three column inches, about the size of some of the nipples displayed on Page Three every day.

On TV it was the same. A blanket conspiracy of silence. That's how important dockers and their jobs were to the Free Press.

But once the strike began to bite, the blackout lifted. The employers assumed the mass meeting in Tilbury would vote to go back

to work. When the men decided otherwise, the press unleashed the dogs of war.

That night, the headline in the London Evening News was: DOCKS STRIKE VOTE FIDDLE. Next morning, all the papers were full of the same Docks Vote Fiddle Fix Horror Shock Sensation.

It was the lead story in every newspaper. What had been, the day before, worth not a mention, now became a threat to the western way of life.

THE VOTE THEY SAID WAS FIDDLED

STRANGELY enough, every paper was positive that the vote at the 24 March meeting was a fiddle, or a fix at least. Which was surprising since not one journalist was actually inside the meeting.

As the Daily Express said: 'Reporters were kept outside by burly pickets.' And the Evening Standard: 'It was almost impossible to follow the proceedings from outside the ground.'

So how was it that all of our Free Press knew for a fact that the vote was bent?

Worse was to come when the next mass meeting voted 3-1 to stay out. The Evening News banner headline was New Votes Fiddle At Docks.

And the TV did their bit. News At Ten showed a close-up of a handful of men voting to go back, and claimed that was the way 5000 had voted. Every paper said the vote was bent, and that only intimidation by 'burly pickets' had kept the men out. Every paper, that is, on sale to the public.

STORY

It was a different story in some papers not on public sale. For instance, the Freighting World, a weekly free supplement to the Journal of Commerce, the rank and file paper for port and shipping employers, said:

'FW reporters have been at both crucial stay-out strike decision meetings... on both occasions the balance of opinion of dockers and FW reporters was that the strike vote was carried by a substantial—though not overwhelmingly—majority.'

In other words, while in public the press and port employers were foaming at the mouth about fiddles and gangsters, in the comfort of their own boardrooms they admitted the truth: that both votes were carried.

The press was prepared to use any means, no matter how low, to drive us back to work. Naturally, the papers used the old Reds Under the Beds routine.

But they also dredged up another old favourite. Thugs Under the Rugs. The Daily Mail said: 'There has been ruthless intimidation employed during this month-old strike.'

They blamed it all on the 'heavy mob who have a stranglehold on London dockland'.

Now there are a lot of dockers who could do with losing some weight, but as far as I can find out there is no heavy mob.

There was not one outbreak of violence during the strike. For all but a couple of days, there wasn't even a need for pickets. So where exactly could this intimidation have taken place?

But facts do not suit the purposes of the Free Press.

The main line of attack was to exaggerate and whip up divisions in



Vere Harmsworth (extreme left) and his Associated Newspapers friends at the opening of Purfleet Deep Wharf, centre of the alleged 'back to work' movement so exultantly publicised by Harmsworth's Daily Mail and Evening News. Those 'free' newspapers did not, however, publicise the fact that Associated Newspapers also owns Purfleet Deep Wharf...

our ranks. The aim: to demoralise dockers in London and convince them that the strike was all over—and to mislead dockers in other ports, who might have come out in support, that the strike was falling apart in London itself.

Again all the Free Press were unanimous. The strike was in ruins. Scabs were stampeding through the gates. Purfleet Deep Wharf was presented as the hotbed of the back to work movement. ITN cameras were sent there.

As the Evening News said on 27 March: 'There are 10,000 dockers who want to return to work, particularly around Purfleet.'

The whole story was a lie. The strike was remarkably solid till the very end. Even on the day before the meeting that voted to go back, the official figure for the number of men at work was exactly 250, about two per cent of the total labour force in London.

But for the Free Press, the head-

lines weren't that 98 per cent of the men were still out after five weeks. That's not the news they wanted to tell.

Instead, they chose to build up the two per cent of scabs.

The poison pen campaign worked. It checked dockers in Hull from coming out in support and, on 4 April, the London dockers lost their confidence and voted to go back.

JUST AFTER we returned to work, the situation was reversed: there was a walk-out in the Royal Group of Docks.

More than two per cent of the men were involved—but this time they were making a strike, not breaking one.

The reaction of the Free Press? The strike did not make the front page of any newspaper.

In fact, it did not make any page of any newspaper...

Why they always support the bosses

WHY DID the press—supposedly so free—resort to such low means to lie and intimidate dockers back to work?

The answer is simple: the press isn't free. The newspapers and TV stations are owned and controlled by the same class we were fighting: the port employers, the shipping magnates and the road transport barons.

Take the Financial Times. It is part of the S Pearson publishing empire. Which also happens to own a company called Milrayne Ltd, which in turn owns London Merchant Securities, which in turn has a controlling interest in Hays Wharf, the legalised crime syndicate that put 2000 dockers out of their jobs so it could make vast fortunes from property development.

The Thomson Organisation, which owns The Times and Sunday Times, is freer than most. It doesn't have any direct investment in the docks industry.

But it does own a number of transport

firms, three of which were unfortunate enough to find themselves on the dockers' blacklist, the Cherry Blossom.

Take again, The Sun and the News of the World, owned by News International. Which also owns a major London wharf, Convoys, along with at least seven road haulage firms.

The Daily Mirror, the Sunday Mirror and the Sunday People are owned by Reed International, which also owns two shipping lines, at least four cargo forwarding agents in the docks and several road haulage firms, six of which were on the blacklist.

What's true of the newspapers is just as true of TV. ITN, your friendly free news programme, is jointly controlled by four firms. One is Telefusion. Another two are Reed International and News International.

The fourth partner is a firm called the British Electric Traction Company, yet another pillar of freedom, since it owns not only a string of road

transport firms (four of which were on the blacklist) but also Lovells, the dockland consortium, which owns several wharves in London's docks, including Innstones Wharf which was shut down just after the strike with 22 men losing their jobs.

That's how free the press is. As free as a hand-puppet. It is part of the network of capitalism. It has financial interests in every corner of British industry. That is why, not just in the dock strike, but in any dispute, the press will always support the employers.

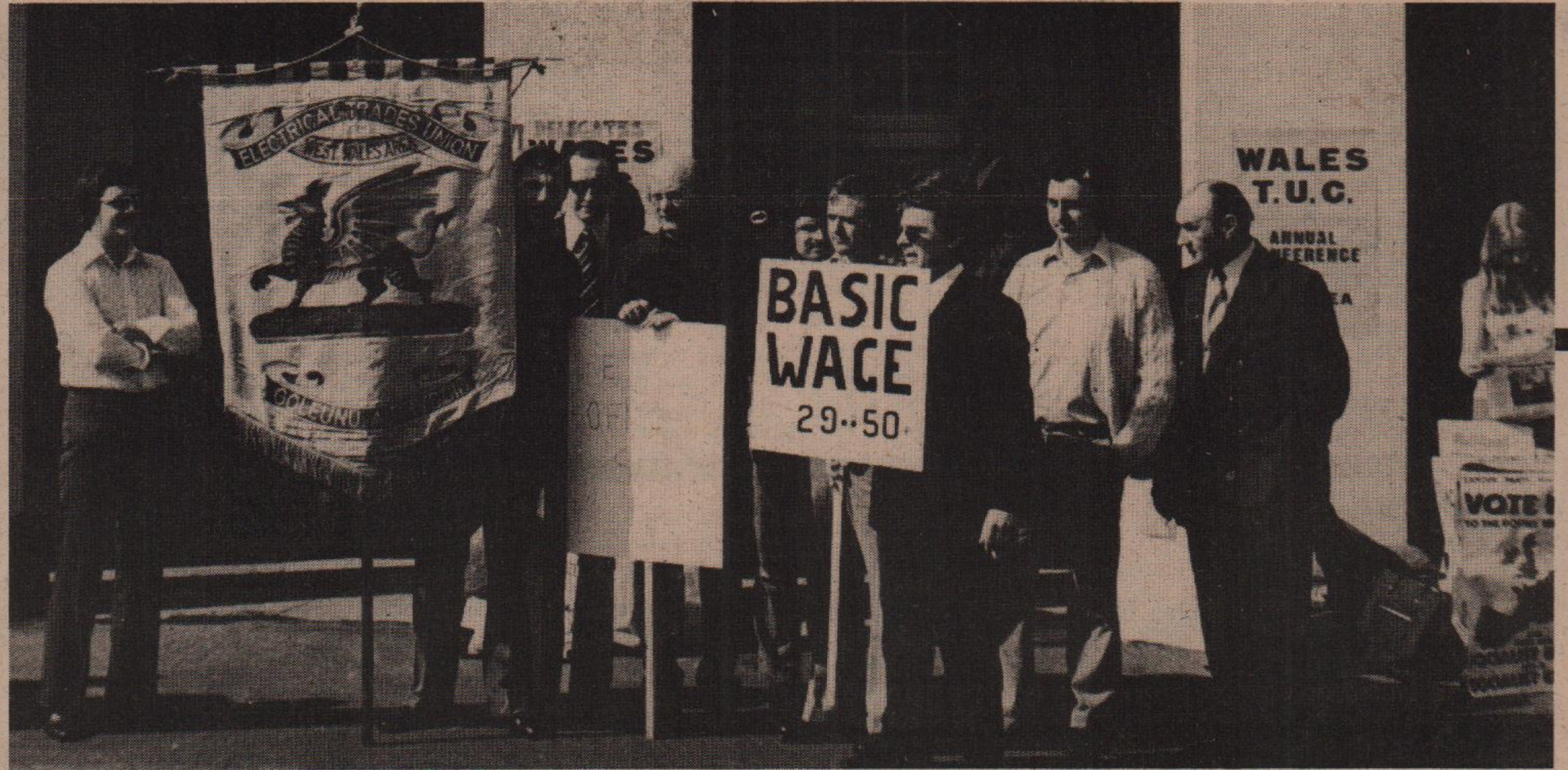
It is part of the same system, sometimes, as in the docks, part of the same industry. The Free Press is just the employers hiding behind a press card.

In those five weeks we found out that it is a press free from the control of the working class, a press free to censor, free to distort, and free to lie in the interests of its class, the capitalist class.



It doesn't matter how many have to go to secure a virile, viable industry.

—Sir Monty Finiston, £27,750-a-year British Steel Corporation boss, quoted in Daily Mail, 2 May.



Electricians picketing the Welsh TUC: inside, a Labour Minister was extolling the Social Contract . . .

JOHN MORRIS, Secretary of State for Wales, delivered a sermon at the recent Welsh TUC on how workers must pull their weight and knuckle under the Social Contract.

The government was doing its bit, he said. Now it was up to trade unionists to save the day. 'The avoidance of inflation and unemployment in the coming months depends on the Social Contract being fulfilled.'

Meanwhile, outside, the Swansea corporation electricians were picketing in support of their strike. Like many corporation workers up and down the country, they are fighting a Labour council which, egged on by the government, is defending the Contract by holding down wages.

'Some of my members wouldn't mind a chance to tell him where to stick his Social Contract', commented a local convenor.

Ignorance, according to Morris, is the reason workers don't accept the Contract. 'Despite the many warnings, there is little understanding among people of the seriousness of the situation.'

But workers in South Wales are not as ignorant as he thinks. We are learning fast—and we are learn-

QUOTE

Benn and Finiston are both after the same thing really—to rationalise the steel industry. To fight redundancies you have to occupy the plant. Then at least you've got some bargaining power and can find out exactly what's going on.

—IVOR WILLIAMS, TASS shop steward, BSC Landore.

QUOTE

The key to fighting redundancies is unity, the weak and the strong standing together. But you won't get this from union leaders. You'll only get it at rank and file level.

—PETE THOMAS, AUEW Convenor, BSC Unit.

QUOTE

The shop stewards here feel that Ford workers in the rest of the country might well consider taking a leaf out of our book after the occupation. And the same applies to workers in South Wales, particularly steel.

—ROB STERN, Convenor, Ford's Swansea.



ing the hard way—what the Social Contract means.

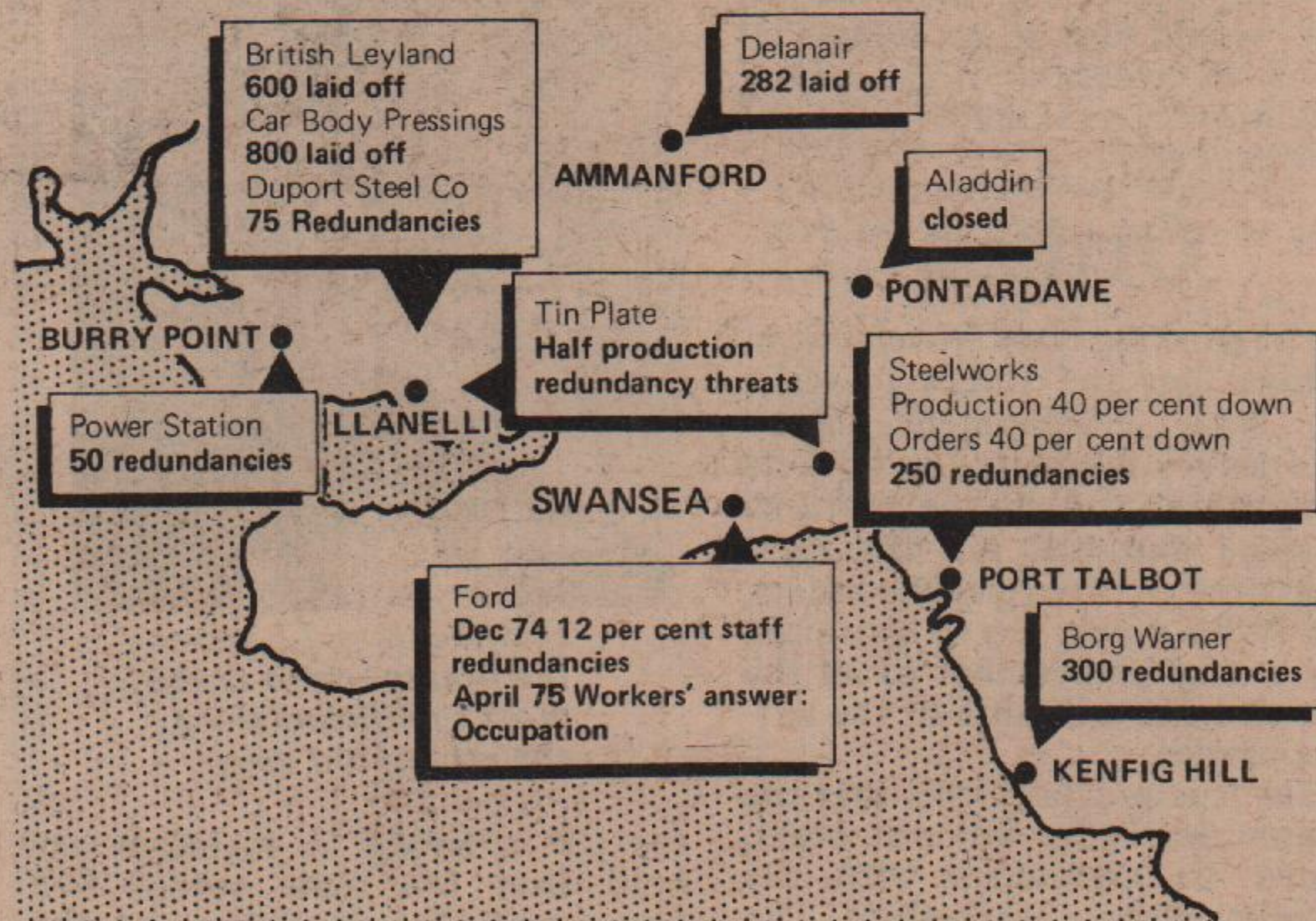
While Mr Morris, who was elected by Port Talbot steelworkers, lectures us on the noble aims of the Social Contract, the steelmen of South Wales are suffering from the worst attack on our jobs any of us can remember.

And the attack is coming from the same men who tell us to tighten our belts and work for national unity.

Perhaps to a politician like Mr Morris, the Social Contract seems a pretty idea.

To us, it means a disaster area devastated by redundancies, layoffs, short-time working and unemployment.

A Social Contract Disaster Area



Even before Sir Monty Finiston described his nightmare scheme of 22,000 lost jobs now and 150,000 later, the situation was already grave . . .

VELINDRE & TROSTRE: Production halved. Orders for June and July completed. Overtime eliminated. 1000 redundancies in the offing.

PORT TALBOT: Down to 60 per cent capacity. 250 voluntary redundancies. Promised development money yet to materialise.

BSC LANDORE: Working two weeks out of three. Redundancies and complete closure likely.

The rot quickly spreads to steel-using industries . . .

DELANAIRS, Ammanford, car components: 282 laid off indefinitely

BORG WARNER, Kenfig Hill: 300 redundant

BLMC, Llanelli: Short-time working, 500 jobs under the axe.

DUPORT STEEL, Llanelli: 75 redundancies so far.

BURRY PORT POWER STATION: Production cut by a third, 50 redundancies

ALADDIN, Pontardawe: Closed

FORD'S, Swansea: After 12 per cent staff redundancies and threat of similar shop-floor redundancies, 2000 occupy plant and win promise of better industrial relations.

In Swansea, where unemployment went up by a third last month, the South Wales CBI has announced:

'Hundreds of small companies here face extinction and thousands of people will be thrown out of their jobs because of the complete collapse of their order books following the massive cutbacks in the steel industry in the next four months.'

HOW WE CAN FIGHT BACK

HOW CAN WE fight to save our jobs? Even in our own ranks there is tremendous confusion. Some people accept government propaganda about unions being to blame for the crisis. Others talk about 'overmanning' and 'natural wastage', without realising that every job closed down is a job lost to a lad out of school.

The unions are in disarray. Mr Stan Biddlescombe, South Wales Divisional Officer of BISAKTA, talks like a spokesman for BSC. His answer to the threat? 'Each of the three major and eight smaller steel plants will have to work out their own salvation according to their order books.'

This is the kind of lead that the Works Council at Port Talbot are following by campaigning for development money to be channelled in their direction at the expense of Shotton.

The AUEW shop stewards at Velindre, on the other hand, have taken a principled stand against trying to save jobs at one plant by selling workers at other plants down the river. They have told the Port Talbot Works Council: 'We will not support the closure of Shotton. We are socialists and are not prepared to put fellow trade unionists out of work.'

It's mainly a matter of attitude and confidence. Most stewards we come across don't know what to do when redundancies are announced. In the

crucial days after the announcements, they are paralysed. No-one gives them a lead.

We have to change that attitude. We have to show that jobs can be saved if stewards refuse to accept announcements of redundancies and make plans to resist.

Resistance can take many different forms, from action in strong sections to help the weak, all the way through to occupations. But it's not the tactics which present the problem. It's the attitude.

And that's why we need more socialist organisation on the shop floor. That's why IS, although so small, plays such an important part in the fight to save jobs.

By I.S. STEELWORKERS, SWANSEA DISTRICT

THE 'SOVIETS' TAKE ROOT

THE MOVEMENT for the building of revolutionary councils among the rank and file in the factories and barracks is growing. The call came three weeks ago from a congress of militants from more than 150 factories and a number of military units.

The idea has been pushed by only one of the revolutionary organisations, the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat. But militants from other parties, including the Communist Party, are backing the idea of councils in the localities. This week meetings are being called to discuss building

councils in the shipyards of Lisnave and the glass industry centre of Marinha Grande.

One of the MFA leaders, Otelo de Carvalho acknowledged the existence of the revolutionary councils in a press conference last week, although he said he thought they would die out. But his statement was important, insofar as it makes it easier to claim that councils in army units are legal.

On 1 May, the organising committee for the councils called a 3000 strong demonstration to the palace where the national assembly meets. The assembly was surrounded

by armed soldiers, but they made no attempt to stop the demonstration.

A meeting was addressed by a worker and a young soldier. 'The bourgeoisie are preparing to seize power. Now, more than ever, we must build the unity of workers, soldiers and sailors.'

'We must take this palace away from the bourgeois parliament and put revolutionary councils there instead.' The meeting closed with the singing of the Internationale—and many of the soldiers on guard joined in.

Portugal: A new crisis

PORTUGAL is in the throes of a new political crisis, the most significant since the defeat of the attempted right wing coup of 11 March.

May Day demonstrations were marked by bitter clashes between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. The next day the Socialist Party organised a huge protest rally in Lisbon, which was joined by large sections of the middle class.

The slogans were directed against the Communist Party and its influence on the state machine and the media: 'If this isn't the people, where are the people?'—'Socialism yes, dictatorship no'—'Down with social fascism'.

Twice

In the recent elections, the Socialist Party won twice as many votes as the CP, gaining the support of much of the middle class as well as about half the workers. Now it is claiming that it is entitled to a decisive influence over the state.

Although many of the rank and file of the Socialist Party are committed socialists, who voted for the slogan 'socialism and democracy', the leadership is deeply pro-NATO and pro-capitalist.

Its friends in the British and German governments are keen to see it reduce the power of the Communist Party, which they view as a threat to NATO.

But the Communist Party leaders do not want to budge. They have used the gaining of key positions in certain ministries, in the nationalised industries and the press as an excuse for not supporting many workers' struggles over the last year.

Coup

If they are removed from these positions now, they will have gained nothing out of actions which lost them much working class support.

The danger is that the campaign of the Socialist Party against the CP and the government could provide the excuse for a right wing coup and NATO intervention.

Although such a coup would no doubt claim it was to 'preserve

democracy', its driving force could only be those right wing, formerly pro-fascist, officers who tried to regain power in the attempted coup of 11 March.

With power in their hands, they would use it to attack all forms of workers' organisation, including the rank and file of the Socialist Party.

Orders

The working class movement in Portugal has the forces to resist any such development. Many factories are dominated by workers committees, and in the barracks the rank and file, not the right wing officers, often give the orders.

But this power has to be united into a single movement of all the rank and file militants of the left-wing parties.

Yet it is precisely this that the Communist Party will not build, despite its arguments with the Socialist Party leadership. The speeches it supported at the May Day rally urged workers merely to 'work harder' and 'wait patiently' in the hope that one day unemployment would disappear.

Instead of encouraging the formation of rank-and-file workers' and soldiers' committees,



Flashback to 11 March: the present crisis is the most significant since the attempted coup

the CP is trying to maintain its hold over the trade unions by bureaucratic manipulation and by deals with the leaders of the Armed Forces Movement. This can only drive more workers to fall for the Socialist Party's talk of favouring 'liberty'.

But this crisis threatens not only the Communist Party and the Armed Forces Movement. A shift in the government and the armed forces to the right, even if under 'socialist' tutelage, would lead to rapid attacks upon the gains made by workers in the factories and by rank-and-file soldiers in the barracks.

Talk

In Chile, talk of 'democracy' was used by Western big business to justify a vicious bloodletting at the expense of the working class. Any coup or foreign intervention in Portugal would have the same effect.

That is why revolutionaries in Portugal are campaigning for rank

and file revolutionary councils, uniting militants of all the left parties, to fight this threat.

That is also why socialists in Britain and elsewhere must oppose any talk of foreign intervention and fight for solidarity with Portuguese workers.

Last week, Sir Michael Carver, head of the British Defence Staff, was visiting Portugal. No doubt in the back of his mind were contingency plans for intervention by NATO troops or warships.

We have to make sure those plans never come to fruition.

JOANNA ROLLO

But the fig

WHILE the political parties row, there is a continuing offensive by workers on the factory floor.

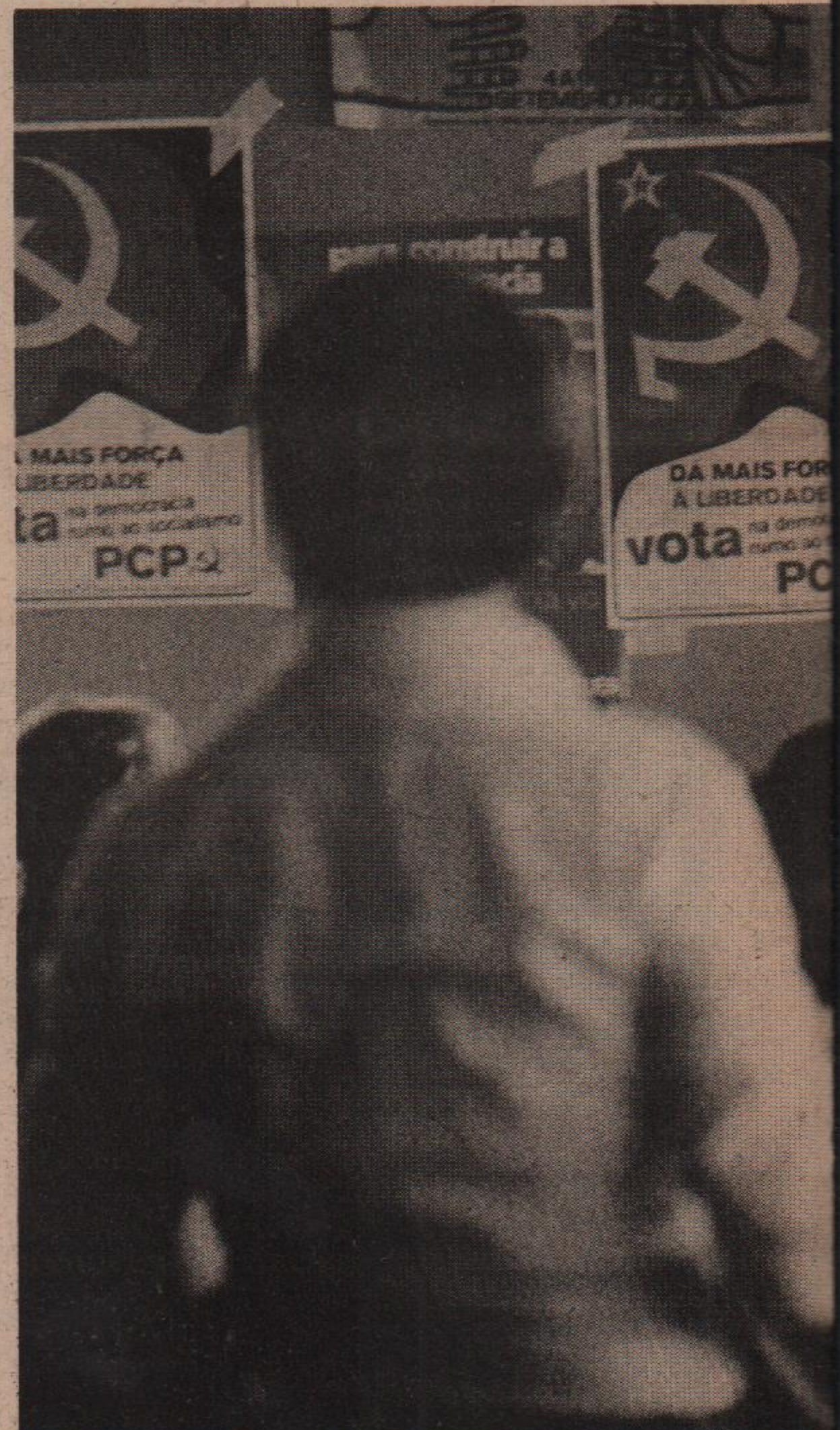
This week hotel workers in the privately owned hotels will be on strike because of management delays in negotiating a new collective contract. The workers will be picketing the hotels and distributing a communique in several languages.

Workers in a cake factory in Pombal have occupied it and locked out the management, while in Oporto 2500 council workers struck on Monday.

On Wednesday last week we visited the 300 Corame workers who had just occupied their factory, which makes metalequipment for heavy industry. They had voted unanimously at a mass meeting to take over the factory because



Socialist Worker going down well in a Lisbon barracks: political literature—a fact that makes the Western press



Politics on the shop floor: a meeting inside the occupie

they had evidence of consistent sabotage by their boss, ex-air force commander Dos Santos Nogueira.

Simoa, a member of the workers' committee, explained how they organised the take over: 'After the decision in the mass meeting, we telephoned the workers' committee in the bank and explained why we wanted them to freeze the accounts of the firm. They agreed to do this.'

Occupy

'We then telephoned Copcon, [the section of the armed forces responsible for security] and told them we had taken over the factory and that we were going to occupy the parent company SAPREL. Copcon said: "OK, it's

your problem—

tionary legality". The laws here because in a rev laws are those ma tionary process.'

Saf

The workers They hadn't sleep thing for 48 hour ed us round the plained how the run it. They we on safety—all th very old and very

When we aske tions, they said were irrelevant that had been factory.

'The results d will of the peo

PORTUGAL Factsheet No 1 is the first of a series to be produced by the IS Portugal Group on the struggle of Portuguese workers, the links between British and Portuguese companies, and the developing links between workers in the two countries. It is on textile workers, who provide a third of Portugal's exports, many working for British companies such as ICI, Coats Paton, Courtaulds, Singers, Smith and Nephew and K O Boardman.

The factsheet is intended to help socialists win solidarity among British textile workers. For copies, send a stamped addressed envelope to Pete Marsden, 8 Cottons Gardens, London EC 8DN.



By JOHN DEASON

MOST FACTORY occupations have been led by shop stewards, Not one has ever been started by a call from a full-time union official: such people have at best supported them passively, at a safe distance—and invariably after the event.

Striking from within, as it is often called, challenges managerial property rights. The control of plant and machinery becomes negotiable, rather than a management proclaimed 'right'.

At HOWARD ROTAVATORS in Halesworth, Suffolk, workers acted after being threatened with a three-day week. Three-quarters of the work is outside contracting and could not be done within a three-day process. The 500 workers see these moves as a softening-up before full-scale redundancies. So all Howard's work is being picketed from the inside.

1: KEEP CONTROL

AUEW convenor Roy Collet summed up what everyone thought. 'The working class in this area has been kicked about for too long. If this place goes it will be a hammer blow for the whole community. The company are trying to kid us, anyone can use figures on charts to prove anything. The shareholders have invested their money in the company—they want us to subsidise them. But we have invested our lives.'

Now the pickets decide what goes in and out of the plant. The stewards are in control of management's normal work. And the threatened three-day week has not been implemented. The entire work force is on five days' pay.

The stewards are in touch with other Howard's plants through a joint committee. Soon they may have to organise formal links with the plants they do the contract work for.

2: FORCE THE PACE

When fighting for jobs, it's crucial to force the pace and not allow management the time to dictate the events. At FORD'S Swansea, company plans to reduce manning levels were knocked back last week after a two-day occupation of the plant.

Management had to concede regular joint meetings to vet any proposed changes that could affect manning levels or work rates. The action was swift and united, the suspension of an operative failing to achieve arbitrary work schedules was the catalyst.

This occupation—militantly barricading the gates, involving all shifts, and denying all access to management—shook Ford's rigid. They no doubt only expected a sectional response.

But at Ford's Dagenham the company retains the upper hand.

The company are still fighting the door-hangers and fender-fitters' strike against similar attempts to reduce manning levels. This is in spite of the magnificent attempt by some Body Plant workers to barricade themselves into the plant rather than accept lay-offs.

An occupation by the whole plant, uniting those laid off, the strikers, and those still obliged to work, could still transform the situation.

3: USE IT AS A BASE

At Swansea the rank and file seized the initiative, fought as a united plant from the inside—and won.

At Dagenham, the company set the pace, lay-offs continue and the workforce risk demoralisation and division. The lesson is obvious.

No management likes challenges to its property. But, especially when planning total closure, can afford to play the waiting game. Hoping that boredom will kill the occupiers' militancy, such developments are often encouraged by full-time union officials.

In the cause of 'official support', the occupiers are urged to restrict their action to the sit-in itself. At Imperial Typewriters, Hull, sympathetic trade union delegations were considered outsiders and refused admission to the sit-in on the instruction of the local TGWU official.

Other trade unionists offering solidarity are never 'outsiders'.



the officers are powerless to stop rank and file soldiers reading hysterical



Corame factory

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prove that there is massive support for the MFA. The people turned out to vote because the MFA asked them to. We are so far satisfied with the council of the revolution [of the MFA], but we are vigilant. It should be the people who run the country. No revolution is made with votes.'

A sergeant in the parachute regiment security force at Belem Palace told us that a week earlier the 240-strong Assembly of the Armed Forces Movement had been attended for the first time by some soldiers and sergeants, as opposed to merely officers. He said there was still a strong right wing in the armed forces, but democratisation was going ahead. In several barracks mass meetings of all ranks had been held to elect representatives.

He said that the people should be armed and needed to be prepared in case the right wing attempted a coup. But he felt it was dangerous to hand out arms now because of 'disunity of leftist groups'.

Right

The continuing strength of the right wing in sections of the armed forces was shown last week when an officer belonging to the left socialist party, the MES, was arrested for organising inside his barracks. And the two paramilitary police forces remain strongly right-wing. Last week they arrested 20 Maoists at the instigation of the Communist Party in the town of Barriero and held them overnight.



Picture: Angela Phillips (IFL)

Frank Gore, convenor at Crosfields in North London: an occupation should never become like Custer's Last Stand...

Occupations: Three ways to victory

They should be welcomed as part of the same struggle. This is the key to transforming a defensive sit-in into an offensive struggle that will save jobs.

A well-organised occupation, secure against any attempt to move plant, parts or spares, should be the ideal base from which to organise effective solidarity. With the full participation of the rank and file, it is possible to guard the plant and send out delegations, speakers and flying pickets.

Seizure

The seizure of the employers' property is a powerful tactic, but it is doubly powerful if that occupation becomes the springboard for more extensive action—further picketing, blacking, organising combine links or even sympathy stoppages.

The victory of the first Fisher Bendix occupation owed as much to the organising of the Thorne Combine Committee and

the solidarity blacking of Thornes products by the dockers as to the organisation of the sit-in itself.

Socialist Worker constantly and correctly, stresses the need for all-out occupation of factories threatened with closure to force their nationalisation without compensation.

But there's a lot else we can do before that ultimate threat. Striking from within should be part of militants' daily armour.

Occupations should never become an industrial equivalent of Custer's Last Stand. To win, they must be both the centre for sympathy action and the focus for militant control of management attempts to force us out on the street.

The full potential of such actions has yet to be realised. Speed the day.

Donations and messages of support for Howard Rotavators to R Collet, 61 Castle Hill, Beccles, Suffolk.

LEADING REVOLUTIONARY TOASTS LEADING REACTIONARY

Daily Mail boss Vere Harmsworth, fresh from his triumph over the London dockers, arrived in Red China last week to a warm greeting from the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

'Mr Chiao Kuan-Hua expressed his admiration and friendship for Britain', the Daily Mail reported. And the editor of the People's Daily 'proposed toasts to the development of friendship between the people and journalists of China and Britain.'

This is the country many believe to be an inspiration for revolutionaries, a citadel of socialism...

Is China socialist? What happened in the Cultural Revolution? Was China's support for those who slaughtered the people of Bangladesh merely an honest mistake? Or was it a revealing comment on the nature of Mao's regime?

For the answers—and for the background on China before, during and since the revolution—read Nigel Harris' major article in

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM 78

Available, price 27p (inc. postage) from 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.



IS members on the London Day Day march last week, where we marched with placards calling for the freeing of the Shrewsbury Two. PICTURE: Chris Davies (Report)

WE MUST DEFEAT BACK STREET ABORTION BILL

By Sheila McGregor

THE INTERNATIONAL Socialists are backing the National Abortion Campaign, which is trying to organise as widely as possible against James White's Back Street Abortion Bill.

We should help to build the local NAC groups, or set them up where they don't exist. The groups have already attracted large number of women to political discussion, often for the first time.

The groups should organise public meetings, publicity and information, which means writing to the papers and getting on to local radio—not letting the anti-abortion lobby get it all their own way.

Pickets of MPs and local doctors who support the Bill should also be arranged.

Every effort should be made to get as many people along as possible to the NAC national demonstration on 21 June. We have to show in this demonstration that our voice is as loud as that of the anti-abortion lobby.

Above all, IS members should seek to raise the abortion issue in the trade unions. Last week, Liverpool Trades Council passed a resolution deploring the new Bill.

The ASTMS Conference this weekend is debating abortion. IS members will have to take the lead in organising initiatives in the trade



unions. No one else will. This is a crucial opportunity to raise women's issues at trade union level—and members of IS must not miss it. It is especially important that trade union banners are on the 21 June demonstration.

CAST away

SOCIALIST theatre group CAST ask us to point out that they are unable to put on their play Sam the Man until late summer, when a new play for the Troops Out Movement should also be ready.

Meanwhile, their new film Planet of the Mugs is expected to be released soon.

£25 fine for 'obstructing' 30ft space

A MAN sitting in an armchair frying sausages in the middle of a pavement would be causing an obstruction. This remarkable and interesting observation was made by Judge Edie at the Appeals Court last Thursday.

It helped him make up his mind to uphold the conviction of a Socialist Worker seller fined £25 and bound over to keep the peace for 'wilful obstruction.'

The fact that the seller was on a 30ft wide pavement standing next to the doorway of a public meeting did not deter the learned judge.

'I have often wondered', he told the court, 'whether a man selling the Evening Standard at an underground station could similarly be prosecuted.'

Reminded that the police do not arrest Evening Standard sellers, he replied: 'Ah, but you must remember the law is sometimes more severe.'

No one could accuse the judge of not being fair. While he agreed with the fine, he lifted the binding over order. Minutes later however he agreed that the defendant should pay an extra £15 costs for the pleasure of spending the day in the Appeal Court.

The cost of a cup of tea

FIFTY Asian students heard Nigel Harris talk at Leicester Polytechnic last week on the exploitation of workers in the Third World. He spoke about increasing starvation, especially in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The meeting also watched the recent television film The Cost of a Cup of Tea, which told of the terrible exploitation of plantation workers in Ceylon.

Nigel ended the meeting by stressing the common ground between the starving black people of the Third World and the exploited black immigrants and white workers in Britain. He called on people who shared his views to join a real socialist organisation.

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.

WHAT'S ON

IS public meetings

BRISTOL IS public meeting: The workers' struggle in Portugal. Speaker: Chris Harman. Thursday 22 May, 8pm, Shepherds Hall, Old Market.

IPSWICH IS public meeting: Health and Safety at Work. Speakers: Laurie Flynn and Ivan Crane. Monday 12 May, 8pm. Town Hall.

OLDHAM District IS public meeting: The Crisis and Redundancies—how we fight back. Speaker: Tony Cliff. Friday 9 May, 8pm, Abbey Hotel, Middleton Road, Oldham (opposite Oldham Tech).

DARLINGTON IS public meeting: Abortion—a woman's right to choose. Saturday 10 May, 2.30pm, Public Library, Crown Street, Darlington (gallery entrance). Crèche facilities available—2 Blackwell Lane (phone 56728).

CAMBRIDGE IS public meeting: Social Contract or Socialism? Speakers: Mike Kidron (IS) and Jim Curran (former Labour Party candidate). Monday 12 May, 8pm, Duke of Argyle, Argyle Street (off Mill Road).

NORTH LOWESTOFT Socialist Worker readers' meeting: The Crisis—social contract or socialism? Speaker: Robin Doughty. Friday 16 May, 8pm, Northfield Junior School, St Margaret's Road, Lowestoft.

IS NORTH AMERICA GROUP public meeting: Revolutionary Prospects in North America. Speakers: Gay Semel (editor, Workers' Power, newspaper of ISUS) and Don Lake (executive committee member of IS Canada). Friday 23 May, 7.30pm, The Plough Pub, 27 Museum Street, London WC1 (corner of Little Russell Street, between Tottenham Court Road and Holborn tube stations). All welcome.

Meetings for IS members

MANCHESTER IS discussion meeting: Lenin and IS today. Discussion led by Tony Cliff. Friday 9 May, 2.30pm-5pm, Manchester Polytechnic, Aytoun Street. All IS members and sympathisers welcome.

IS TGWU members' national fraction meeting: Saturday 7 June. Keep this date free.

COVENTRY District IS members' aggregate: Monday 12 May, 7.30pm, Lancaster Library, John Deason on Industrial perspectives.

CENTRAL MANCHESTER District IS training session: The Revolutionary Party and Marxism, introduced by Brian Rose. Sunday 11 May, details from IS Books, Manchester.

CENTRAL MANCHESTER District IS aggregate: Thursday 15 May, 8pm, prompt, details from IS Books, Manchester.

IS YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE (for IS members and close contacts only). Weekend 7-8 June. UMIST Students Union. Granby Row, Manchester (five minutes from Manchester Piccadilly Station). Saturday 2pm-6pm. Debate on draft IS young workers pamphlet. Saturday evening: Social at The Maypole, Ford Lane, Salford. Disco and socialist theatre group. (Conference fee of 60p will cover entrance to social and food). Sunday 2pm-5pm: Which way forward for IS among young workers?

All districts and branches should make sure that young worker members and close contacts can attend by paying their fares and conference fee. Accommodation in Manchester is being arranged by the IS District and can be booked by writing to Laurie Flynn, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

WEST MANCHESTER IS education meeting: The General Strike. Speaker: Fred Ford, Wednesday 14 May, 8pm, Further details from IS Books.

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.

IS STUDENT CONFERENCE: Weekend 17-18 May. Small Assembly Room, Students Union, UMIST, Manchester. Registrations as soon as possible to Pete Gates, 20 St Mary's Hall Road, Crumpsall, Manchester. Motions and nominations to the NSC by 14 May. There will be a social on the Saturday night.

HULL District IS day school: Saturday 10 May—NOTE CHANGED DATE. 11am-1pm: The early development of IS. 2pm-4pm: Building a workers' organisation. Speaker: Duncan Hallas. Hull University Students Union, Cottingham Road.

IS SUMMER WEEKEND SCHOOLS: Eight schools for IS members are to be held in July and August. Sessions on Revolutionary prospects in south Europe, What's happening to the Labour Party?, The capitalist crisis: what next? and Building IS, NORTH LONDON 12/13 July, SOUTH LONDON 19/20 July, SOUTH WALES (Cardiff) 2/3 August, SCOTLAND (Glasgow) 9/10 August, NORTH WEST (Manchester) 16/17 August. Dates not yet fixed for YORKSHIRE, MIDLANDS and the NORTH EAST. Attendance at each limited to 30, so book your place now by sending 50p registration fee (to cover cost of duplicated notes and of room) to Pete Marsden, training organiser, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

WEST MANCHESTER IS training meeting: Sunday 11 May, 2pm. Sessions on Socialist Worker, Intervention, District organisation. Further details from IS Books.

IS ITALY GROUP Day School: Saturday 14 June, 11am-5pm, North London Polytechnic. Further details from Mike Balfour phone 06284 2671.

SOUTH EAST LONDON District IS aggregate: Sunday 11 May, 3pm, Lee Centre, Aislie Road, Lee. (Buses 122 or 75 from Woolwich Arsenal or Lewisham to Lee Crossroads.) On district organisation and delegates to conference.

WEST YORKSHIRE District IS aggregate: Saturday 17 May, 2pm, Central Library, Bradford. Pre-conference discussion meeting on The Class Struggle, Building the rank and file movement, anti-race work and the election of delegates.

IS notices

PORTUGAL: Draft resolution of solidarity with the workers of Portugal, and lists of British companies and their Portuguese subsidiaries—send stamped addressed envelope to IS Portugal Group, c/o Pete Marsden, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

PORTUGAL FACTSHEET no 1: On the struggle of textile workers in Portugal, many of who work for British firms—Coats Paton, ICI, Singers, Smith and Nephew, Courtaulds, K O Boardman. Use the factsheet to win solidarity among British textile workers. For copies, send stamped addressed envelope to IS Portugal Group, c/o Pete Marsden, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

PLEASE HELP OUR CANADIAN COMRADES by sending details of any contacts you have in Canada, especially contacts who are former members of IS, to Jeff Jackson, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN as soon as possible.

WORKERS' ACTION: monthly paper of the Canadian IS. March 15 issue sold out, but April 15 issue now available for 10p in stamps, from Jeff Jackson, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

ACADEMIC STAFF IS members: Please send your address to Dept B, IS Books, 65 Queen Victoria Road, Coventry, with a view to forming a working IS fraction.

BRADFORD IS jumble sale: Jumble, old books, clothes, records, furniture, anything you have for a jumble sale to raise money for the SW Fighting Fund. Phone Bradford 55913 to get it collected.

IS needs a fast, accurate typist for an administrative position. IS members only. Phone Mel Norris, 01-739 1870/8.

SHEFFIELD IS Day Out to Bridlington on Sunday 1 June. Phone Steve Smith (Sheffield 303211) for details.

COVENTRY DISTRICT IS social: Sunday 11 May, 7.30pm, Hand and Heart, Gosford Street. The General Will pub show, late bar. 50p.

RANK AND FILE REBELLION: IS (Canada) pamphlet on class struggle and trade unionism in Canada. Copies 25p (post paid) from Box C, IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

Speakers' notes on THE REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL: Send 2p plus stamped addressed envelope to Pete Marsden, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN. Now includes list of British companies with factories in Portugal, and draft resolution of solidarity for trade union branches, trades councils, etc.

SOCIALIST WORKER BENEFIT Evening at Theatre Royal, Stratford, East London. Cartoon Klowns' new full-length play: Socialism or Barbarism, Sunday 15 June, 7.30pm, tickets 60p. Bar. A great night out in the East End. Organised by East London District IS.

NORTH LAMBETH IS Social: Saturday 10 May, The Swan Pub, Clapham Road (opposite Stockwell tube). Stepey Sisters, all-women rock band. Disco. Bar extension to 1am. 40p in advance, 50p at the door. Proceeds to the SW Fighting Fund.

IS HANDBOOK: First sections to be printed are on Public speaking, How to chair a meeting, Writing for Socialist Worker, and How to be a Socialist Worker organiser in your branch. Now ready. IS branches, districts, cells, fractions that have not already ordered copies should send £1 per copy to IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Further sections of the handbook—to be supplied at no extra cost—include an index to IS Journal and Socialist Worker, How to layout a small newspaper, Producing a leaflet, Building a Socialist Worker Discussion Group, and several others.



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

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 _____



Postal points on the abortion issue

I RESENT the suggestion that the 'irresponsible' woman should be punished by being forced to have a baby she doesn't want. Thousands of girls and women are still ignorant about contraception because schools don't provide enough information.

Most of all, though, not all women use the 100 per cent foolproof method, the pill. I certainly can't, for medical reasons. I tried the next best method, the coil, but that nearly crippled me, and I was having two-week-long periods. No woman should have to put up with that, and it is time socialist men understood the pain and worry we have to go through.

I am now stuck with methods I know could fail me. If capitalism spent as much money on contraceptive research as on armaments, maybe we would be OK. But we're not. Thousands of women die every year and many more are damaged for life by back-street abortions all over the world. I think that is something every socialist should get worried about.

Every month I have this worry, and I've got a good 25 years to go! Socialism is about freedom, don't forget.—MARY DONNELLY, Friern Barnet, London.

THE BRIGHTON group of the National Abortion Campaign is working for maximum publicity and support to fight the bill, via public meetings, signing of petitions, raising the question at union branches and trades councils meetings and collecting evidence to send to the Select Committee.

All socialists should support the fundamental political right of women to control their own bodies. The 1967 Abortion Act is a small step towards this end. We must protect it and fight for more...

I have worked many years as a trained nurse, and am now training to be a Health Visitor, I don't think abortion is an alternative to contraception, but I've mopped up enough messes to know that abortion won't go away. All women should have the right to safe and legal abortions on the NHS.—JEAN SPRAY, SRN, Brighton.

YOU STATE (20 March) that three million illegal abortions take place annually in Italy. At this rate every woman

in Italy (including all the nuns) would average eight abortions during her reproductive life.

You also claim that 1500 Italian women die from illegal abortions each year. Since 9,749 Italian women aged 15-44 died in 1971, this would leave 8,249 deaths from other causes. If this were so, Italy, with no NHS and more extreme poverty than England and Wales, would have a lower non-abortion death rate than us among women in this age group!

I suggest your enthusiasm for abortion on demand has led you to retail uncritically some dubious statistics.—PAUL CAVADINO, Pudsey, Yorks.

The figures came from two national Italian papers, L'Espresso and Lotta Continua, both of which are involved in the present campaign in Italy to make abortion legal. It is unlikely that they would publish unsubstantiated facts as it would undermine their own case. Three

million illegal abortions a year is precisely the lengths to which women who cannot get legal abortions and good contraceptions will go. Abortion is one of the few methods of contraception.

WHETHER the Litchfield-Kentish allegations in Babies for Burning are true or false, no socialist surely doubts that the Abortion Act has lined the pockets of the rich.

The Lane Report states that, since the Act, commercial entrepreneurs have increasingly moved into the management of abortion clinics and referral agencies, and that 'a small number of doctors and their financial backers, have used the Act to make large sums of money.'

Recent letters to SW show that revolutionary socialists are split over abortion... but all socialists must object to the exploitation of women for profit by (male) private sector abor-

tionists.—JENNY KING, Leeds.

Yes, we are against the exploitation of women for profit, which is why we think it's so disgusting that when women are driven to need an abortion they can't get one on the National Health.

The proposals in James White's Bill will destroy what rights women do have under the existing law. But those to suffer most will be working class women who won't be able to afford private clinics, which will continue to line their own pockets. Back-street abortions will be the only alternative.

Every socialist and trade unionist should support the campaign to defeat the Bill because the issue at stake is whether or not women have the right to control their lives, a right we argue for all the time, in the unions, factories, schools, wherever.

The International Socialists are affiliated to the National Abortion Campaign, and are sponsoring the demonstration on 21 June.

LETTERS



The cuts are forcing councils to become slum landlords: They have taken slum housing from private landlords who refuse to do repairs—now they have no money to do repairs themselves.

Labour's cuts mean slums

FRANK Drain's article on the Budget (26 April) hit the nail on the head. Some months ago, the Department of the Environment announced that housing grants to local councils were to be cut by two thirds. The Budget extends this

Taunton need £1 million and are getting a third of that. In this area, ten local councils need £6 million, and are getting £2 million.

What does this mean to workers living in council houses? For months in Bristol, there has been a waiting list of four weeks for people who want their roofs repaired. Decorations are completely out.

But the biggest scandal is the effect on houses bought from private landlords under 'municipalisation' programmes. Many are in poor

condition and the councils are becoming the slum landlords. The government cuts mean these conditions will remain for years to come.

Meanwhile, there are threats of sackings in the direct labour building departments and maintenance depots; manual and white-collar workers are threatened alike.

It's crucial that rank and file in the building trade get together with council workers to start campaigns against the cuts.—GEOFF WOLFE, Bristol NALGO.

a typical Tory cuts 'savage'. In asked for £2.7 million, £726,000. £1.5 million asked for £4000.

Links worth lost day

WHEN we went to Cardiff a couple of weeks ago for our National Union of Journalists conference, we found the hall was being picketed by electricians on strike. This led to some rather curious trade union attitudes.

Our general secretary Ken Morgan, for instance, told the strike committee (according to Billy Williams, the convenor): 'Your union is trying to strangle ours.'

Billy Williams replied that the NUJ should have had plenty of notice that the hall was being picketed. The strike had been on for ten weeks, and strikers had been pursued everywhere by Cardiff journalists.

Another Williams stressed that rail workers have no depots to stop production lines to stop. He believed their picket of the hall was crucial. If this was so, our duty was to support them to browbeat them into crossing their picket line. They didn't. The conference was held somewhere else. And the file organisation,

Journalists Charter, held a joint meeting with the electricians on strike.

Money was collected for the pickets, and Billy Williams and the electricians were given a great hearing. I think they had a rather different idea of journalists after the meeting.

The links between rank and file journalists and electricians which the meeting established were well worth a day's conference lost.—STEVE MARKS, NUJ.

Support the Untouchables!

AS THE CRISIS in India grows, many sections of the upper crust have increased their vicious attacks on the lower castes. Nearly 100 people gathered in Letchworth on Sunday to hear speakers tell of the burning alive of a family in a Punjab village in January and the beating of share croppers in many states.

A mass demonstration of untouchables in Bombay was openly attacked by the police with many hundreds of injuries. One cannot be honest about anti-racism in Britain without supporting the struggle of untouchables in India and their treatment by political organisations of Indians in this country.—JAMSHEED MEHTA, Fulham.

DIRTY TRICKS BEHIND CHRYSLER 'POVERTY'

ANOTHER multi-national giant is crying poverty. Chrysler UK is so poor, or so they claim, that they cannot even put any money on the table for this year's negotiations.

This was revealed at a recent Stoke Joint Shop Stewards Committee meeting. Several other bits of valuable information were also divulged.

Like the fact that Chrysler UK borrowed £18 million from Chrysler US this year—and paid it back along with £6 million interest. Like the fact that Bel-Air, the electrical subsidiary of Chrysler, loaned their £600,000 profit to the parent company and therefore didn't pay any profit tax last year.

Not surprisingly, a select committee in Parliament is now investigating Chrysler's UK financial operations.

But it was also revealed that Riccardo, one of the American directors, has written to Wedgwood Benn explaining that the UK company's future will be geared to production for the home market only, and that much of the manufacturing capacity will have to go and the main operation switched to assembly only.

Plans are being made by the Stoke stewards to counter the latest moves from the international dirty tricks giant.

Any action which follows the mass meeting this week will only be about wages, not only about the secretive operations of the company and its withholding of information, but also the protection of jobs and the future of the ownership of the plants.—GERRY JONES, TGWU steward, Chrysler Stoke.

CAR WORKERS MUST UNITE

IT WAS good to read (3 May) the real story behind our occupation of the Swansea Ford plant.

We have won an important victory for ourselves and for other workers in Swansea. But this is only the beginning of the fight to protect jobs.

In the lull after the occupation, it is important that we shouldn't become complacent. Management will be ready and waiting next time. When the next threat comes we must be prepared.

This means building rank and file unity throughout Fords and the rest of the car industry. A national combine committee for the motor industry is now more important than ever if we are not to be played off against each other.

And it is vital that we should begin to be about imposing our own solution—nationalisation without compensation under shop floor control.—ALAN MORGAN, AUEW, Fords, Swansea.

2000 men occupied, not 1000, as stated in last week's SW; a correction we are delighted to make—Editor.

Send your letters to LETTERS, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS. Let us have your name and address, but specify if you don't want your name published. Please try to keep letters to not more than 250 words.

Dear comrades,
Can you find out about a firm called

Introducing the Socialist Worker Information Service...

MAYBE you need to know more about your firm, its profits, its directors. PERHAPS you need to know the chem...

WIN
stand for

THE International Socialists 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.

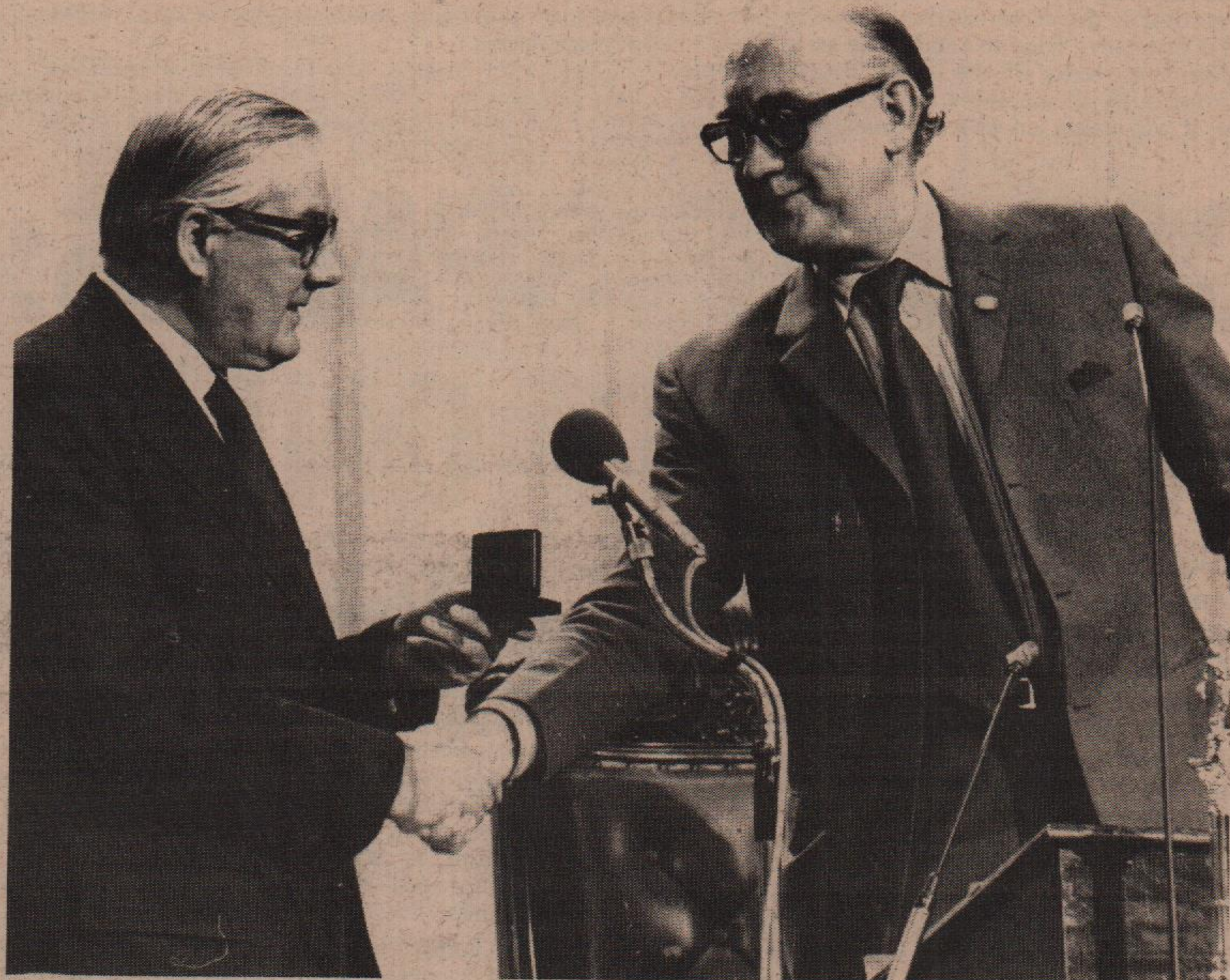
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We believe in overthrowing capitalism, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it. We therefore support all struggles of workers against capitalism and fight to break the hold of reformist ideas and leaders.

The smashing of the capitalist state
The state machine is a

SCOTTLAND: A. J. ...
Wales: ...
Yorkshire: ...
London: ...
Birmingham: ...
Manchester: ...
Liverpool: ...
Cardiff: ...
Bristol: ...
Sheffield: ...
Newcastle: ...
Glasgow: ...
Edinburgh: ...
Belfast: ...
Dublin: ...
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Dublin: ...
Belfast: ...
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THE UNIONS

Shopworkers reject the Market and their leaders



AT the Labour Party's special Conference on the Common Market, Lord Allen, general secretary of the shop workers' union (USDAW), cast the 293,000 votes of his members affiliated to the Labour Party in favour of the Tories' Common Market.

The vote of this, the sixth largest trade union in the country, was crucial to Wilson and the other Labour traitors who are trying to keep Britain in the Market. If the USDAW vote had gone the other way, the total Labour Party vote against the Market would have been four million to one and a half million.

With this more than 2-1 majority, the Labour Party electoral machine could have been committed to campaigning for a NO vote.

The USDAW's pro-Market vote was cast without the slightest appeal to the membership. It was the instinctive reaction of a reactionary leadership almost completely

by Martin Larkham, senior shop steward, London Co-op branch, USDAW

dominated by appointed full-time officials.

This leadership has held the union in its grip for so long that it is accustomed to cast all our votes for the right wing on every occasion.

By bad luck for Allen and Co, however, the Labour Party conference was followed immediately by the annual conference of USDAW at Eastbourne. Here Allen and his time-servers got the shock of their lives.

HOGGED

The executive brought before conference an emergency motion calling on conference to vote to stay in the Market. As in all the other debates at the conference, none of the lay members on the executive were allowed to reply. The platform was hogged by the officials.

But the executive motion and the Market were thrown out by 103,084 votes to 93,504.

This was a wonderful victory for the rank and file. It shows shop workers everywhere that the USDAW leadership can be beaten by the membership, even when they've made up our minds for us beforehand.

Even in the debate on the Social Contract, the new strength of the rank and file was evident. A motion rejecting the Contract and demanding nationalisation without compensation of any company threatening closure was defeated—but certainly not as overwhelmingly as the national press pretended. And many speakers for the motion were well received.

The message of the conference is that there is potential in USDAW, if we in the rank and file organise to make it our union. For the first time there were present as delegates a few socialists who organised to fight for militant policies. This changed the whole tone of the union. We can do even better next year.

Lord Alf Allen, general secretary of the shopworkers' union (USDAW) and chairman of last year's TUC, getting a medal from Labour Party Treasurer James Callaghan. Now Callaghan is the Labour Party's chief supporter of the Market, and he has had Allen's help with 293,000 votes *against* the decision of his union.

Lord Allen does not give a damn for the decisions of his union.

Immediately after his union voted against the Market, he told the Financial Times: 'Personally I intend to stomp the country to explain my view that we can stay in the Common Market in the interests of Socialist Europe.'

USDAW members should make it clear that if Lord Allen stumps the country proclaiming policies opposite to those of his union, he can stomp out of his highly-paid job.

PICTURE: Chris Davies (Report)

White workers were defeated by their racism

MANAGEMENT at a Courtaulds plant near Preston tried in 1965 to impose a new bonus system on the night shift, Pakistani immigrants. The day shift were white workers.

The Pakistanis walked out. The local union official told them to get back to work and persuaded the whites not to support them.

The Pakistanis stayed out for nine weeks. The whites stayed in. Finally the strike broke and a bitter

and demoralised night shift returned to the factory.

The next week management imposed the new bonus system on the day shift.

This case is a clear example of something that happens all the time on a smaller scale.

Some factories and workplaces are divided by rivalry between different unions, others by arguments between skilled and other workers,

others by right-wing organisations. Other factories are divided by racialism. In all these cases the effect is the same. Management is strengthened, shop floor organisation weakened.

Racialism is the worst splitter. No TGWU member refuses to drink in a pub because AUEW members are there. No one worries about a Tory voter living down the end of the road. Racialist ideas go deeper than craft loyalties.

This is why the Rank and File Organising Committee has decided to organise a conference on The Fight against Racialism and Discrimination. It will be held in Birmingham next month.

STRENGTH

Ken Appleby, Rank and File organiser, told Socialist Worker: 'We want delegates from well organised factories and trade union branches, whether they are black or white, because of their experience, and we need to use their strength in the movement to fight racialism. We need the big battalions. It's not good enough to say "There's no problem in my factory because

there are no blacks there.'" This cancer is weakening the whole movement.

'But we also want delegates from groups of workers who are in the position of those Courtaulds workers. If you can't get delegated from an official trade union body like a shop stewards' committee, a trade union branch or a trades council, then contact us anyway.'

'Anyone who wants to come should raise it first of all in their union branch or stewards' committee if they have one. We must try to raise the conference as widely as possible in the trade unions.'

'Of course there are workers who aren't yet in trade unions. If you're in this position, hold a meeting with other workers in your factory and try to get the meeting to agree to send someone to represent you all.'

'We want to be realistic about this conference. Fighting racialism means a lot of basic things—like getting people into the union, discussing getting shop stewards elected. We want the conference to do some real things and that means getting every sort of experience and problem.'

APEX COLD SHOULDERS CHILE WORKERS

MY branch of APEX, the office workers' union, was anxious that this year's annual conference should discuss the plight of trade unionists in Chile. We sent in the following resolution:

'That this conference, mindful of the overthrow of the Allende government by fascists in Chile and the struggle by workers to survive mass murders and a vast erosion in their living standards, calls for assistance to be given to the Chilean liberation movement by recommending that all branches, when and wherever possible, adopt a Chilean refugee worker and resist all pressures from employers who seek to ignore our request.'

We were also willing to accept an amendment from Holborn TUPS which asked conference to add 'That the union affiliate to the Chile Solidarity Campaign and urge branches to affiliate to local Chile Solidarity Campaign Committees.'

As early as Saturday it was obvious that our motion would not be discussed. As more and more delegates mentioned Chile, I sent in a written request to the Standing Orders Committee asking them to treat our motion with the utmost urgency. The reply was that conference had now agreed the method of proceeding.

We may have agreed the method, but certainly not the subjects.—DAVID SOATON, branch secretary, APEX, Horbury.

THE APEX conference was yet again a series of victories for the reactionary policies of the executive—though there are signs that the rank and file is stirring.

The conference voted:

- In favour of the Social Contract—by about 70 to 30.
- In favour of the Common Market, described by Prices Minister Shirley Williams as a 'socialist club'.
- In favour of our union suing the membership in the General Accident insurance company—a really scandalous decision.
- In favour of the Ryder Report on British Leyland, described by the executive as 'a complete vindication of trade union proposals and evidence.'

These policies will not help the membership. They will disarm them. It's up to members of the International Socialists and other militants to change them.

AUEW branch protests at ban

STEVENAGE No 1 Branch of the Engineering Workers' Union has sent a resolution to the union's national committee objecting to the banning of Socialist Worker from reporting the National Committee Conference.

Against racialism and discrimination in the workplace, the union and the community.

The Rank and File Conference Organising Committee invites all trade unionists to a conference on racialism. Saturday 14 June, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

Credentials and details from Roger Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London, NW10.

PAGE 14:
Building Workers Charter Conference
Speke Trade Union Action Committee
Council electricians: Glasgow and Cardiff
Telecommunications electricians, Belfast
Stewart Plastics, Croydon
London Rubber
IN BRIEF:
UCATT Northampton; International Computers, Manchester; Southwark Dustmen; Dunlop, Coventry; Heinz; West London; Norwich meter readers; Garton, Battersea; Lesneys, Hackney.
PAGE 15:
Chrysler, Coventry
Ford; Dagenham, Swansea and Leamington
NATSOPA, Daily Mirror, London
Levi Strauss, Whitburn, Scotland
OCCUPATIONS: Crossfields, North London; Magnesium Elektron, Manchester; Peggs, Leicester; Mabbott and Johnson, London.

IN BRIEF

HENRY BOOTS, NORTHAMPTON

THE CID visited this official UCATT strike on Tuesday, searched one shop steward for offensive weapons and warned about obstruction. They commented: 'I hope you're not going to behave like those silly pratts from Shropshire', a reference to the Shrewsbury Two.

All the intimidation has come from management. Orders were given to drive under police escort straight through the pickets when the men tried to stop plant being moved off the site.

The men, who have had little support from union officials, have been out for three weeks for a workable bonus scheme and against attempts by building employers to lower local wages.

Financial assistance and messages of support should be sent to: Martin Dunkley, UCATT shop steward, 51 Holly Road, Northampton. Local trade unionists must take up the question of police intimidation and organise support for the strikers. We cannot afford another Shrewsbury 2.

LONDON RUBBER, WALTHAMSTOW

ASIAN, West Indian and white strikers marched from the T&G district office to the factory on May Day and, in full view of management, defiantly voted 100 per cent to continue the strike.

Earlier, an Industrial Tribunal had found London Rubber guilty of unfair dismissal of 24 workers. The strikers have won an assurance of blacking from the London Rubber factory in Lydney.

Alan Watts, AUEW convenor from the nearby MK factory, told the marchers: 'This is a fight for all of us in North London. At a time when sackings threaten, we need a strong union organisation to defend our jobs. So this is a battle which must be won.'

The strikers are calling on all trade unionists to support their next march: Assemble 3pm, Friday 9 May, at Broad House, 205 Fore Street, Edmonton, N18.

SOUTHWARK DUSTMEN

By John Bryant, strike committee
WE ARE ON strike again after going back to work last Monday and Tuesday, as recommended by the Greater London Council Disputes Committee, so the 400 locked out for refusing to cross official picket lines could receive the 80 per cent payment promised.

The dustmen asked for £252 to clear the 16 days' backlog but were offered £70. They rejected it and voted 347-3 to strike. The strike is official and the council grave-diggers are now out in support.

Messages of support and donations to: The Chairman, Strike Committee, Room 57, Municipal Buildings, Walworth Road, London SE17.

DUNLOP CLERICAL WORKERS, COVENTRY

By Chris Benton, ACTSS branch secretary, Dunlop's, Coventry

THE STRIKE by 700 clerical workers for £15 across the board is now in its third week. Management offered £5.25 for women and £6.35 to £7.50 for men, which was stepped up to £6.25 and £7-£8 respectively but was overwhelmingly rejected by a mass meeting.

It was decided to hold no more meetings until at least £10 across the board had been offered. Production is at a halt and more than 2000 shop-floor workers are laid off. Nothing is entering or leaving the factory.

7000 men are laid off at Longbridge. The numbers laid off will rise dramatically this week with Leyland workers on short time returning to find no work for them. Other car firms will soon be affected.

ICL, MANCHESTER

PICKETS formed a barricade to keep scabs from crossing the picket line. 40 women blocked the entrance to keep charge hands in the AUEW from crossing into the factory.

All the other AUEW and EETPU members at the West Gorton and Dukinfield plants are out on strike after attempts by management to lock out 100 wiremen in a dispute over supervision. Management are now threatening to withdraw recognition of the two unions.

Management are trying to use ASTMS to break the shop floor manual worker organisation built up over the years. These two plants are the strongest in the group. Before this latest dispute management tried to get ASTMS to take over part of the job of testers in the EETPU.

ASTMS members voted 33-8 not to support the strike, which shows that some of them are prepared to resist being used by management and are standing up for trade union principles.

Glasgow electricians: How we won

THE MAIN benefit was in the co-ordination of the various areas. Most of the local authorities employ electricians but there hadn't been a representative meeting for years.

During the dispute we had a weekly meeting of Scottish stewards and a daily stewards' meeting in each area. And we elected a Scottish steering committee.

The steering committee was essential to get information on the effect of the dispute in case the EETPU Executive tried to send some areas back.

After two weeks of the strike, Frank Chapple sent a letter to all members involved in the strike saying it was being led by extremists and that 'our

JOHN GLENN, a Glasgow local authority electrician, on the lessons of the 14-week strike by Scottish local authority sparks which ended in victory last week with an increase of £9.20 a week and parity with sparks in private contracting.

members are being used as a pawn in a vicious political game.'

The letter argued for 'intelligent alternatives' like taking our case to court. Judgement would only take one to two years. On the back of the

letter was a photocopy of an article from Socialist Worker.

Brother Chapple ended up eating his words. After six weeks, the Executive was forced to make the strike official.

Even after the troops were brought in against the dustmen and used to do our job on the incinerators, we stayed solid. Despite the behaviour of the union executive, no-one moved for a return to work at any of the weekly mass meetings throughout the 14 weeks.

The local press were active attacking us. A local Labour MP, Frank McElhone, said he would put pressure on the government to bring troops in to do our job in lifts in high-rise flats.

In the face of this, the strike hardened. We set up picket organisers and strike hardship committees. We made links with English and Welsh sparks and held meetings with stewards from Hull, Leeds, Sheffield Cardiff and elsewhere.

The attempts to call off the electricians' strike in England and Wales and send it to arbitration makes it all the more vital to strengthen links between rank and file groups of electricians.

The executive are consistently undermining any action. Groups of local authority sparks who decide to stay out and fight, like those in Cardiff, will need all our support.

Stewards must campaign on their committees for support for the next meeting of the National Local Authority Electricians Combine Committee.

We need to get as many stewards' committees as possible to sponsor the committee. Then the rank and file will be able to operate as a united body inside our union and overcome the shackling effect of the Executive.

CARDIFF SPARKS: WE FIGHT ON!

EETPU STEWARDS from local authorities throughout England and Wales voted last Friday against national strike action to win parity—£1.23 an hour—with electricians in private contracting.

Stewards from areas already on strike were in a minority and were unhappy with the uneven representation. There were, for example, just seven stewards covering the whole of Wales. The meeting accepted the executive's plan of going to arbitration.

But meetings in Cardiff and Liverpool have voted to defy the executive's line and stay out. In CARDIFF, the council immediately opened negotiations and offered a £5 a week increase, which was rejected by the men. The 13-week strike continues while further local nego-

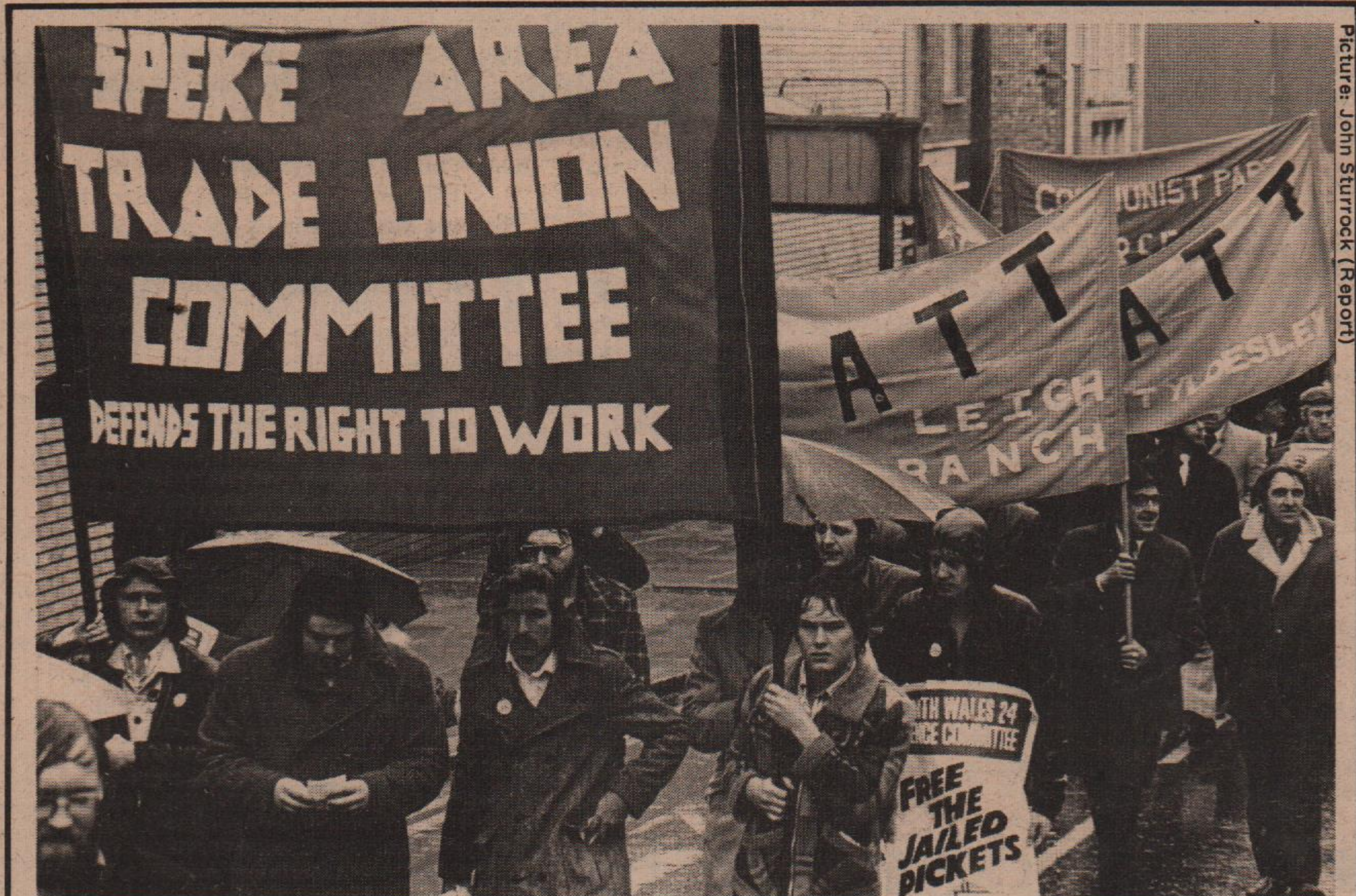
tiations take place.

In LEEDS, the men went back two weeks after winning a £12 interim increase. They had stayed out in solidarity with areas still on strike.

The decision of Friday's national meeting was a setback. Clearly strike action CAN force local councils to negotiate.

It's better to put faith in rank and file strike pressure on local authorities than to rely on the deliberations of Conciliation and Arbitration Service and the manoeuvrings of EETPU officials. As we go to press, the national situation is still unclear, but obviously those still striking need urgently to strengthen existing rank and file links.

The Cardiff sparks desperately need financial support. Send donations to: 12 Coburn Street, Cathays, Cardiff.



By Tommy Healey, committee secretary
THE BANNER of the Speke Trade Union Committee on the May Day march in Liverpool. The committee met for the third time last Sunday. A previous meeting passed a resolution from Dunlops that no worker who accepted voluntary redundancy money should ever be employed in our factories. This was now shop stewards' policy in Evans Medical, Merseyside

Passenger Transport and Hunt Engineers. Delegates from Synthetic Resins said they would take up the resolution in their work-place.

As a result of a strike report over victimisation from Synthetic Resins, the committee discussed various ways of blacking their products and any company who does their work.

A delegate from Blackwells Metallurgical, Garston talked about the closure of his factory last September and

the transfer of the workforce to Widnes. At the same time as the transfer, redundancies were declared at the Widnes plant.

It was agreed that the secretary of the committee should contact the stewards at Widnes and report back. Speke Community Council has given the committee the centre pages of their new paper for articles about it. We meet again in six weeks, but will convene immediately if necessary.

Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

Belfast: War on two fronts

TWO hundred private sector Telecomms EETPU members in Northern Ireland have been on strike for five weeks in pursuit of a 36 per cent wage claim. A member of the strike committee writes:

OUR CLAIM is easily justified. Our pay is so low that several members have to rely on family income supplements. The three major companies involved, Plessey, STC and GEC are highly profitable.

Post Office workers doing exactly the same job already receive 40 per cent more than us. Nationalisation cannot come soon enough for us!

Support from the Executive of the EETPU has been extracted rather than given. They have managed to 'water down' industrial action throughout the rest of the UK. Members will be well aware of Frank Chapple's aversion to shop steward participation in union policy. This aversion extends to the executive and full-time officers.

The shop stewards in Northern Ireland have called for a mass meeting of all shop stewards in the UK to decide industrial action, but at the time of writing, this has not materialised.

While members in Northern Ireland and on some selected sites throughout the UK are on all-out strike, 90 per cent of the members are working normally under a 'work to rule'. It seems we have, as usual, two fights on our hands—the employers and the union executive.

Messages of support and donations should be sent to John Moors, Strike Committee Chairman, 16 Kane Street, Belfast 13.

CULTURE AND REVOLUTION

10-11 May: Art and African Revolution; Sale/Exhibition incl. Makonde carvings from FRELIMO. 11am-6pm admission 25p. Sun 11 May: poetry and music 4-6pm Hampstead Town Hall (Belsize Park tube)
Sat 10 May: Popular Culture in Chile: 10am-10pm Exhibition of popular art 10-12 films, 12-2 poetry and music 2-5 workshop, 5-7 theatre, 8-10 concert. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. 65p.

BUILDING WORKERS CHARTER: WHAT ABOUT JOBS?

THE ANNUAL conference of the Building Workers Charter in Liverpool saw 320 credentials applied for—and only 200 delegates turn up.

Each speaker emphasised wages and the lump, but no real plan of action was formulated. The policy statement was woolly, presenting Charter's role as a pressure group for official trade union action rather than building a rank and file movement capable of initiating and co-ordinating action to force the leadership to carry Charter policy, as it did in 1972.

200,000 builders are unemployed, a figure rising fast after the latest government cutbacks. Charter policy hardly mentions how to fight back.

Links must be made with other

workers affected by the cutbacks. That means a fight for higher wages, elimination of overtime and a determined struggle for a 35-hour week.

Charter policy is for £1.50 an hour—but by 1976 that will be inadequate. Site negotiations will be important for fighting for £1.50 now and moving to £2 an hour.

HANDS

Check-off, union deductions at source, is still strongly favoured by both UCATT and TGWU. It allows lump employers to buy their way onto sites by a down payment for lump labour. This short-term, easy financial gain for the unions plays into the hands of the right wing by

destroying branch life.

Branches should be made stronger for the effectiveness of Charter activity in the union. But no clear opposition to check-off was formulated at the conference.

It was agreed to move the responsibility of Charter to Birmingham under the editorship of Pete Carter. But the falling sales of the paper and the poor turnout at conference show the Communist Party is by no means committed to building the Charter.

This is in line with their now general reluctance to sustain any 'unofficial' activity that might embarrass their full-time trade union organisers and their supporters in the Labour Party and TUC.

Although the demands of the Charter are substantially correct, many leading

Party members do not fight for them at their sites and places of work. This leads to cynicism and demoralisation among many militants.

So Pete Carter's commitment to produce an issue every six weeks must be fully supported by all Charter supporters, beginning with a campaign to ensure articles and finance.

Organised sites should become a base from which sales are spread to other jobs in the district, so linking the Charter with the fight for union organisation and the fight against the Lump.

In many areas, conditions won during and since the 1972 dispute are being rapidly eroded. If rank and file builders don't act now, even Charter's existence will be threatened.

Chrysler: 'Seven days then we're out'

By Gerry Jones, (TGWU shop steward, Chrysler Stoke)

COVENTRY:—At our meeting last Monday workers at Chrysler Stoke voted to give seven days' notice of strike action for a wage claim of £15 plus consolidation of the £1.20 threshold. Only six voted against.

The determination of the men was underlined by TGWU convenor Bob Morris. He made it clear that the company's cries of poverty were unacceptable, that the recommendation from the stewards' committee meant a fight for a decent living wage, and that if the company was unable to pay then 'that bridge will have to be crossed when the time comes.'

To head off attempts at witch-hunting or red-baiting, he said 'let no one say that we were led into this by irresponsible shop stewards or left-wing factions, because that is not true.'

There is now total disbelief at any statement the company issues. After refusing to discuss wages last week, claiming that they had no money to offer, management were prepared to give assurances this week on the future of the Stoke plant.

We have been trying to get these assurances from them for over a year now. They offered to fly any of the convenors out to Iran just to prove that the plant there was only for assembly. They offered to bring over Ricardo, the American director, who last week told Benn that Chrysler was all but finished in Britain except for home production. Rumours suddenly began circulating about a possible £31 million loan from the government to produce a new model, if the wage negotiations were 'satisfactory'.

Everyone saw through it all. The experience of the Chrysler management over the last 12 months—their policy of 'attrition' and their financial fiddling now being investigated by a House of Commons Select Committee, has finally given the workforce the willingness to fight.

The task now is to ensure that the tactics used are the best possible—a passive strike will fail. Everyone must be involved in the picketing. If necessary the tactic must be changed from strike to occupation to ensure success. We should attempt to link the fight with the other plants. Ryton has just submitted a claim for 30 per cent, a 35-hour week and indefinite layoff pay.

We must be prepared, if the company refused to respond, to take the responsibility to the door of the government and demand nationalisation, no compensation shop stewards control of hiring and firing, manning and track speeds. This is the only way we will win.

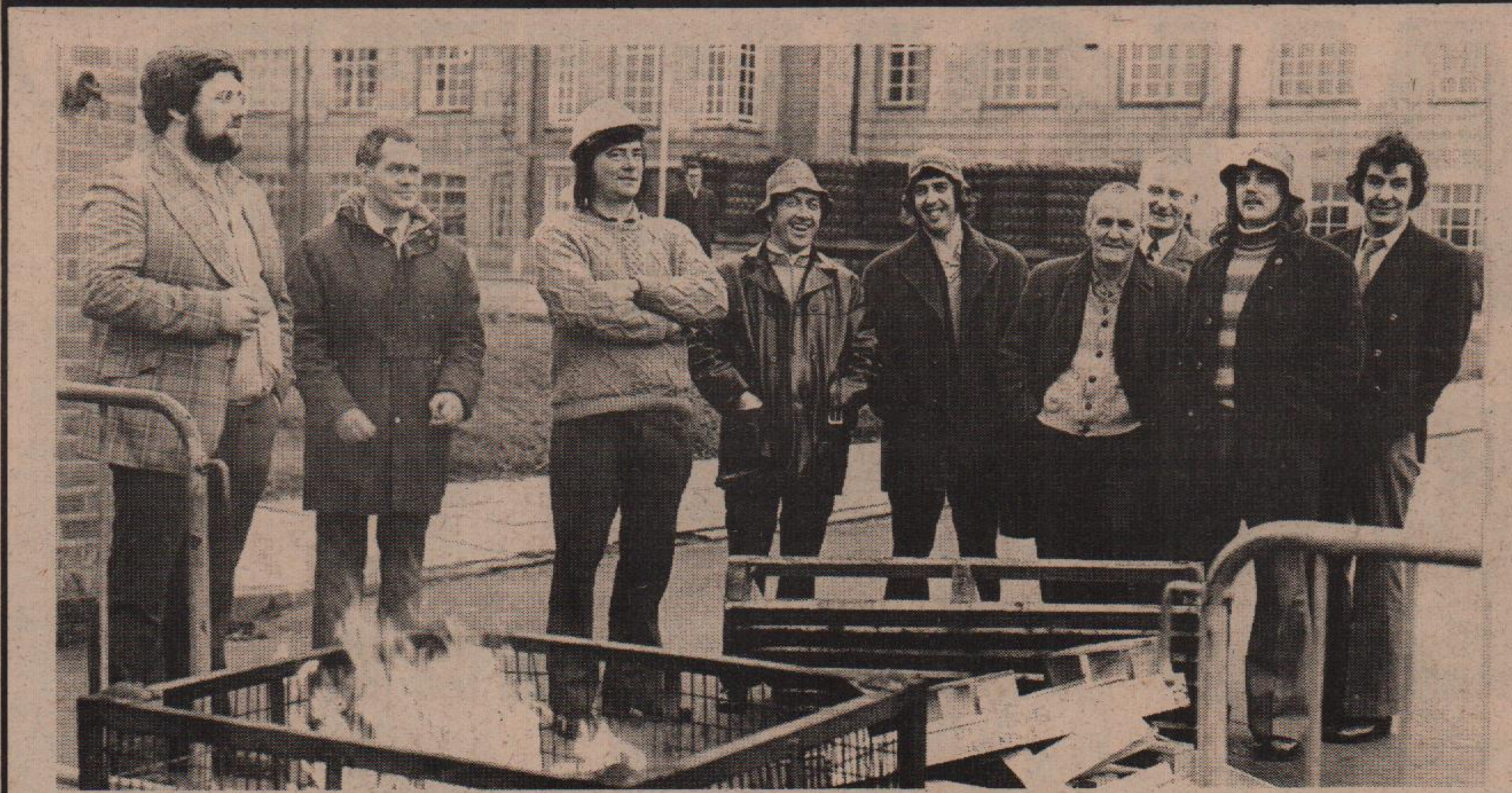
Peggs withdraw 40 redundancies

LEICESTER:—Workers at Samuel Pegg and Sons have carried through the first occupation ever seen in the East Midlands to force management to withdraw 40 redundancy notices issued four days before, at the end of April. Management has now withdrawn the redundancy notices, but the workers have agreed to voluntary redundancies and flexibility between parts of the Pegg group.

'It took just two hours to occupy,' one of the workers told Socialist Worker, while the dispute was going on. 'All the doors were screwed and a heavy picket was placed on the front gate.'

A full shop meeting later endorsed the shop stewards' action unanimously and morale at the factory is very high. We split into three groups and ran the occupation on a three-shift system.'

Where the occupations are...



A picket line outside the occupied Massey Ferguson factory. PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

Key departments seized at Masseys

COVENTRY:—5000 workers at Massey Ferguson have occupied the key parts of the factory as part of their strike for a decent wage rise.

After talks since January and a 'final' offer of a pathetic £4.13 across the board, the shop stewards recommended strike action to a mass meeting. This was overwhelmingly carried.

At the eleventh hour management offered 'further meaningful talks'. The shop stewards' committee voted heavily to call for a three-day strike to be followed by talks and a further strike if no big increase was offered.

The mass meeting called to ratify this move, however, decided they had had enough. By a heavy majority the shop

floor voted for an all-out strike.

Most workers are picketing on a 24-hour rota basis. Strong picket lines on the gates have been strengthened by an occupation of the central offices block, the print room and the radio room. A proper internal transport and walkie talkie system has been established.

Massey Fergusons is a piecework factory and this is the first factory-wide pay strike. The demand is modest—the maximum within the Social Contract. But the tactics used—occupation and flying pickets to tractor car parks—reflect the determination of the men to settle the strike as soon as possible.

The Canadian tractor combine has made by far the highest profits in the history of the firm. There are to be no mass meetings until a substantial cash offer is on the table.

Messages of support to the Secretary, Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, Massey Ferguson, Banner Lane, Coventry.

Elektron barricaded

CLIFTON, near Manchester: The strike at Magnesium Elektron took a dramatic turn on Monday evening. After a week of light picketing, 30 of the strikers occupied the works, barricading the gates and taking over key services. Within hours another 60 of the 450 workers had joined them and the others are now giving their full support.

'We have occupied because the management refused to negotiate', explained Paul Dickenson, the AUEW convenor. 'They laughed at us in talks last week and since then have ignored us. Well, they can't ignore us now, can they?'

Workers

The workers have been claiming a 30 per cent pay rise, but all the company has been prepared to offer is 12 per cent. The firm is party to the Heavy Chemicals CIA/NJIC national agreements and pays out only the basic minimum for the heavy chemical industry. The shop stewards committee believes they should be able to have full negotiations at local level.

This is the first strike for 30 years in the factory and management were dumbfounded at the efficient way the occupation was carried out. Tony Tyrrel, the GMWU convenor said: 'Top management were amazed how smoothly we carried out our plan. They were saying ridiculous things, like that we had outside help, but in the next few weeks they will learn how efficient we can be.'

Another GMWU member, who escorted management who entered the factory with police help on Tuesday to 'check fire hazards', commented: 'They were visibly shaken at what we had done'.

Peter Noon, GMWU steward said: 'Feelings are high. The men are now really determined to hold out for a decent and realistic wage.'

The strike reflects the mood of workers under the pressure of inflation all over the country. Their answer to the bosses is what workers everywhere should do—strike, occupy and put the bosses themselves under pressure.

Urgently needed donations and messages of support to: A Tyrell, 113 Falcon Crescent, Clifton, near Manchester.

Scab security firm hits Mabbuts

CENTRAL LONDON:—The print processing firm Mabbut and Johnston have sacked all 37 of their staff. Their turnover last year was £500,000.

Last Friday the owners decided to improve their employee's wages. In the past 18 months they have only had a £5 wage increase, so John Alexander, also an executive member of merchant bankers Hill Samuel, offered them £3 each—and 12 redundancies. Said John Foster, Father of the Chapel (shop steward): 'We are not going to trade jobs for money.'

The following Saturday the 37 members

CROSFIELDS CALL FOR MASS PICKET

NORTH LONDON:—The workers at Crosfields engineering factory, part of the De La Rue group, are now in their sixth week of occupation in their fight against 350 sackings. The North London AUEW District have called for a mass picket on Monday morning (13 May, 9.30am) and are asking all trade unionists in the area for support.

The workers at Crosfields should go round the area with members of the district committee campaigning for support for the mass picket. The success of the occupation depends on local trade unionists taking it up at work. This has already started with a collection of £150 on May Day marches and meetings.

Messages of support and donations should be sent c/o Bill Hayward, 34 Dresden Road, London N17.

of print unions SLADE, NGA and SOGAT got their dismissal notices through the post. When they arrived at work the following Monday, the well-known scab security firm Burns International had control of the building and the men were locked out.

After a full chapel meeting the men managed to gain access to the building and turn the tables on the security guards—only to find it had been stripped of all their work and vital equipment. They are now occupying a virtually empty building. The moral: Never trust your employer.

FLYING PICKETS IN LEVI STRIKE

WHITBURN, Scotland:—The 400 women at Levi Strauss are now in their fifth week of strike action to win the reinstatement of a victimised shop steward, Flora Flynn. Flora had previously been the factory convenor during a period since the factory opened six years ago when earnings rose to be among the highest in the area.

A dispute over shoddy work came to a climax in a management threat to sack six girls. Last month there was a sit-in in the factory for one day by the women, members of the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers, showing the support of the whole factory for the six girls.

When the women reported for work as usual the following day, the management was still unmovable. They produced a ballot box and insisted that the workers take a vote—on management-worded ballot papers and under management supervision.

When a supervisor, a management plant, insisted on voting, Flora Flynn removed the ballot box. A scuffle followed and Flora was asked to go upstairs where, lo and behold, her books and wages were already made up, plus a form for her to sign agreeing to go. The whole workforce struck at this clear case of victimisation and are still out almost five weeks later.

During this whole time only about three or four women have crossed the picket lines—and those were in management cars driven at dangerously high speeds. During this time the flying picket has been used to some effect. Nothing has been going in at the Whitburn factory and two busloads of pickets to Glasgow and a busload to Dundee turned away several lorries.

This strike is beginning to hurt the management. It is an example of their backwardness that they even offered a donation to the strike fund if the pickets were removed.

Flora Flynn told Socialist Worker: 'This is a frame-up from start to finish, but we are determined to win. We have not lost any disputes here in the past and we won't lose this one.'

Motions of support and donations are urgently needed since this strike is unofficial and no support has been received from the union although support from local trade unionists has been good. Send to: Mary Porter, 132 Fallas Place, Fauldhouse, West Lothian.

Women strike at the Mirror

'For the Mirror's money, working mothers are indisputably the women of the year.' THAT'S the sort of thing the Daily Mirror is proud to print. But they don't mean it in practice.

On Monday 20 women members of the print union NATSOPA came out on strike after they discovered that management had stopped the holidays and pay of one of their members who had taken time off when it was thought her child had leukaemia, and later when the child had an ear operation.

The NATSOPA clerical workers don't have any agreements for domestic or maternity leave, which is, as Gloria Murphy, the women's Mother of the Chapel (shop steward), pointed out, just one way in which management discriminate against women workers.

'All the talk about International Women's Year is just cosmetics—the only thing the employers understand is a frontal attack, whatever the issue,' she told Socialist Worker. 'Not only had they taken her wages and holidays away, but they had the other girls in the office making up her work. You wouldn't take food away from a dog, and that's what taking wages away amounts to.'

Eventually the management gave in. And set themselves a precedent. Now all the women in the print should demand domestic leave agreements, so that they are not penalised for having to do two jobs.

Ford: Battle against short time nationwide

by a Ford worker

DAGENHAM:—'We've got to hand it to the lads in the occupation', it was said to last Thursday's Body Plant meeting. 'Their determination has shown the Ford Motor Company that they can't just lay off us like putting cattle out to graze. Things will never be the same again.'

But the original dispute remains unresolved. The door-hangers refuse to allow their manning levels to be cut. The company says that the manning levels have got to be cut.

The convenors suggested 'compromise' is that the door-hangers should submit themselves to the company's time and motion man.

All-workers in the Dagenham square mile have got to support the door-hangers. If they go down, what will it be like for the rest of us in the future?

SWANSEA showed us what is possible. There, a united, well-organised occupation forced the company to back down. At present the company are happy to have us laid off and out of the way. If the Body Plant blockade had continued the Engine Plant would have been paralysed through lack of sumps and KD could only have continued for a few days.

But the central weakness at the Dagenham occupation was the lack of involvement of the majority of workers. The situation could not be more different at Swansea where there had been continuous discussion among the stewards and

all their members for several weeks. When it finally came to the crunch, everybody was united and confident about the need to occupy the plant to resist the company.

At Dagenham there were no leaflets from the shop stewards' committee arguing the case for the occupation, no meetings on the sections and no serious attempt to involve the PTA workers.

We must learn from our mistakes this time and be ready to make the next occupation a success. We have to strengthen our union organisation in Dagenham. We have to build links between the rank and file workers on different sections, on different shifts and in different plants. Stewards should hold

regular report back meetings.

Ford workers at LEAMINGTON too have shown how militant direct action can defend trade union organisation. Workers on the shipping deck have booted out a scab who worked during a strike against the company's 'efficiency drive'.

Convenor Tony Barrow said: 'While it is a pity that the lads in the plant had to lose a day's pay it was worth it. We told the management: "This is where the trade union flag is planted and we are not retreating. You will have to rip it from our hands."

'We have rapped the company's knuckles, which is another blow against the company's continuing search for improved efficiency at our expense.'

ADVERTISEMENT

NATIONAL RANK AND FILE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The shop floor fight—Equal Pay, No redundancies.
Saturday 21 June 1975
University of Manchester
Institute of Science and Technology

For further details of the conference and for forms for credentials write to Roger Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

THE SLAUGHTER GOES ON...

And here's
how to—
fight
back

By Marian Townshend

THE RANK and File safety school last Saturday was attended by 58 trade unionists from all parts of the country.

Pat Kinnersly, author of *The Hazards of Work*, attacked the cynical attitude of employers towards safety conditions and the paltry fines imposed on them for breaking the law.

He pointed to the lack of a serious fight-back from the unions and stressed the need for us to take up the fight. This was echoed throughout the day.

Discussions were led off by specialists on the dangers from dust, noise, vibration and chemicals.

Problems were discussed and found to be commonplace in many workshops, with killer diseases such as pneumoconiosis, asbestosis, and cancer as well as deafness and other debilitating illnesses.

Movement

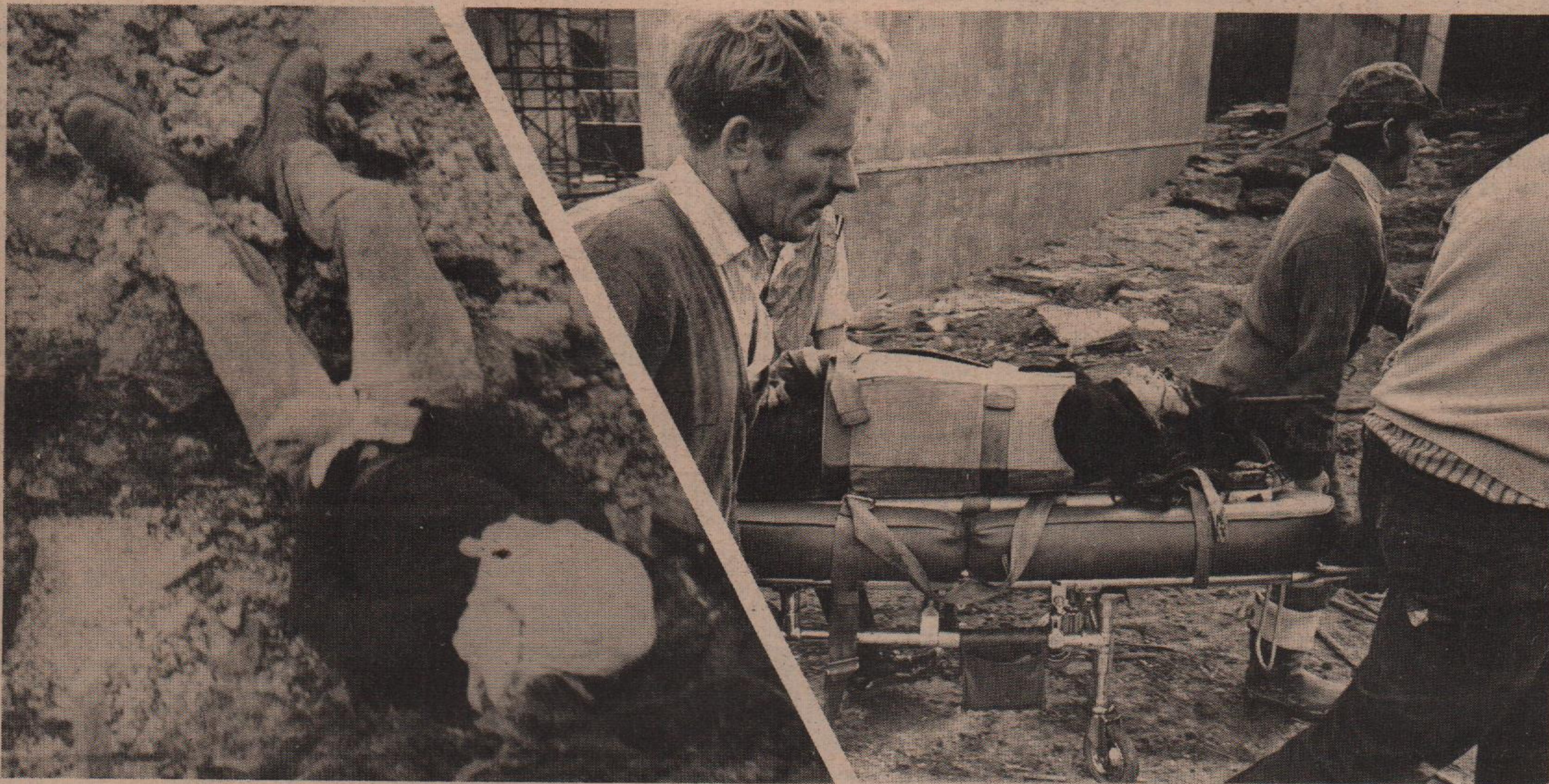
We were shown how to measure dust and noise levels and present the findings to the factory inspectorate, though all agreed that only shop-floor pressure would force the bosses to make changes.

A socialist lawyer spoke on the new Health and Safety At Work Act and showed that it had no teeth.

The afternoon session again emphasised the need to act directly. As John Todd from Insulating Engineers, Glasgow said: 'The factory inspectors and employers won't get rid of hazards, it'll cost them too much money.'

The delegates accepted a plan of campaign outlined by Rank and File organiser Ken Appleby, who argued for a massive sale of the safety pamphlet *Cause for Concern* and for those present to ask their own Stewards' Committees and branches to sponsor local safety schools.

For copies of the pamphlet Cause for Concern (5p each + postage) and for details about how the Organising Committee can help your SSC/branch run a local safety school, contact them at 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.



APRIL 1975. This is Martin Everitt, 21, building labourer. He was killed last week while building a motorway bridge across the Tipnor Tidal Lake, Portsmouth. A beam on which he was standing collapsed after a cable failed.

Martin's body was six hours in the sea. The rowing boat 'on hand in case of accidents' had no oars.

The Contractor: MARPLES RIDGWAY

After the killing, Marples Ridgway strengthened the supports to a similar beam on the other side of the bridge. 'Inquiries' are continuing.

AUGUST 1972. This is Bernard Ford, 21, building labourer. He was killed while building a motorway bridge across the Loddon River, Berkshire. The bridge collapsed. A steel spike smashed through his head.

The Contractor: MARPLES RIDGWAY

After the killing, Marples Ridgway issued all workers with safety helmets.

Marples Ridgway were prosecuted and found guilty under the Factory Acts. They were fined £150.

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Don't forget these Two

ELSA WARREN and Marlene Tomlinson are as much martyrs of the Labour movement as their husbands.

They have had to sit through the long trial, to attend endless meetings, to go on long visits to different prisons—and at the same time to try to keep their children fed and clothed.

For nearly two years, they have suffered all this hardship without for a moment deviating from total support for their husbands and the right to picket.

Their presence at innumerable meetings has enormously strengthened their impact—to the benefit of the whole trade union movement.

Yet today the financial situation for both families is serious. Both are finding it more and more difficult to maintain their standard of living—

and their endless commitments to the campaign to release their husbands.

That we cannot get the two men out of prison is bad enough. That we cannot keep their families in reasonable comfort is a disgrace.

Shrewsbury
Dependants Fund

**FREE
THE TWO**

Rank & File Organising
Committee

There has been some response to the Rank and File Organising Committee's appeal for funds for the Shrewsbury dependants.

Last week, for instance, a Free the Two rally in Manchester collected £74. But there are still hundreds of thousands of trade unionists up and down the country who would like to help the Shrewsbury Two, but up to now have done nothing about it.

Do something this week. Get a collection going in your workplace or union branch. At the very least, dig in your pocket and send some money, however little, every week. ● Shrewsbury Dependants Fund, 214, Roundwood Road, London NW10.