

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Steel, motor bikes, print—more and more jobs for the axe

OUT OF WORK WITH LABOUR

WE are back to the worst days of the Heath government. That was the message last Friday when Labour's Minister for Industry, Eric Varley, announced that nothing was to be done to prevent wholesale factory closures and sackings in the motorcycle combine Norton Villiers Triumph.

Remember 1971? Unemployment was close to the million mark. The Tory government insisted that it was pursuing a ruthless policy designed to 'modernise' British capitalism.

Firms which were non-competitive, the so-called 'lame ducks', were to go to the wall. It did not matter what the human cost was in terms of lost jobs, whole communities destroyed. This was 'justified' in the search for 'efficiency'.

Lame ducks

Such was the philosophy underlying the bankruptcy of Rolls-Royce, the attempt to sack three-quarters of the workers in the Upper Clyde Shipyards.

In 1971 and 1972 the Labour Party denounced that philosophy day in and day out. Harold Wilson went to Glasgow to praise the UCS workers' resistance to closure. Eventually the storm of popular protests that met the Tory measures forced the government to retreat. All of a sudden crutches were found for some of the lame ducks.

Now we have a Labour government. Unemployment is again at the million mark. A month ago the government abandoned its election pledge not to impose compulsory wage controls. They claimed that a freeze was needed to stop unemployment rising still more.

Now, within weeks, that lie stands exposed. The government itself is topping up the wage freeze with its own measures to increase unemployment. Labour's own actions will force unemployment up to levels unknown since the 1930s.

No wonder Edward Heath was saying the other day that he believed the Labour government deserved a fair degree of support.

The policy of wage freeze and the policy of enforced factory closures and redundancies are two sides of the same coin. They are the price the Labour government is making workers pay in a bid to get ramshackle British big business through the world economic crisis.

Contempt

When the Heath government used these policies for exactly similar purposes, they aroused deep hatred throughout the working class. The Wilson government deserves a similar dosage of contempt and hostility. It is pursuing identical big business policies with the same disregard for the working people who suffer as a result.

But Heath's pay-freezing, lame-duck policies also met practical resistance, spearheaded by the miners.

Wilson's measures should meet the very same resistance—from the workers whose living standards the government is out to reduce and whose jobs it is out to axe.

NVT: Poore man, beggar man, job thief—PAGE TWO



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Ricky Tomlinson speaking to workers at the GLC Juniper Street site in East London. PICTURE: Andrew Wiard (Report)

RICKY TOMLINSON, released from jail a fortnight ago, was on the trek around London's organised building sites this week doing a series of meetings organised by the National Rank and File Organising Committee.

The meetings are an important part of the continuing campaign to secure the release of Des Warren, the last of the Shrewsbury pickets who is still in jail thanks to Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins.

The first in the series of meetings was on the Walter Lawrence site in Lower Thames Street, right next to the Tower of London where previous generations of political prisoners were taken. This was followed by a meeting at GLC Direct Works, Juniper Street.

The well-attended meetings started with a fine speech from Ricky explaining the issues. After

RICKY CAMPAIGNS TO FREE THE ONE

questions and discussions at Lower Thames Street one of the stewards moved that the men should be prepared to take industrial action if Des's parole was again refused. This was carried unanimously.

Site convenor and Transport Workers Union member Frank Westerman told Socialist Worker that the meeting was excellent.

'Our lads have supported the Shrewsbury pickets throughout', he said. 'What was particularly good about the meeting was that the class issues came out clearly. From what Ricky said it was crystal clear that the law is a tool for the employer'.

Asked how he felt, Ricky Tomlinson said: 'I'm glad to be out. But I'll feel a lot better when my mate is out. That's the top priority'.

Other sites where similar meetings were to be held included Stanley Hugh Leach's Mitcham contract, Tarmac Brixton and McInerney's Finsbury Park.

Following the Rank and File Organising Committee's invitation in setting up some site meetings, the Number 1 region of the Transport Union has moved officially. Ricky is now to be their guest on a speaking tour round a whole range of London

sites.

In the past week Des Warren has been subjected to yet another round of prosecution by the prison authorities. After a series of incidents he has again been deprived of remission.

The Parole Board was meeting this week to consider whether Des would get parole. The result of their deliberations was not known when Socialist Worker went to press. But the prospects did not look good.

If parole is refused then the decision of the Lawrence workers must become a rallying call for widespread rank and file action for Des Warren's immediate release.

The National Rank and File Organising Committee's address is 46 Prince George's Road, London N16 PBY. Telephone 01-249 1207.

NVT:

The government's role in this business is disgusting. I've worked hard most of my adult life on all sorts of bodies to get Labour MPs elected. For what? To be thrown out on the street?

—Mike Sampson, ACTSS shop steward.



On the picket line at Wolverhampton: 'We're sick of financial whizz-kids', say the workers

PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

'Bash the blacks' police get a shock

ABOUT 60 people, black and white, demonstrated outside Brixton police station in South London last Saturday against police brutality and harassment.

Since the return to the area of the Special Patrol Group (the armed police involved in the death of Kevin Gately last year), police violence has been widespread and systematic. Early morning raids, random street searches, brutal arrests and intimidation are common.

Attacks on black youths have been combined with attacks on homeless families. Lambeth council has turned a blind eye to the use of police to crack down on squatters.

Alarm

The demonstration was sparked by unsuccessful police attempts to arrest a Brixton black youth, Dennis Wilson, on the 'suspicion' that he may be a runaway from Borstal.

A neighbour raised the alarm and others soon came out to protect the youth. The police were taken aback: why should white families come to the aid of a black youth?

They called for reinforcements, but in the battle that followed, the local people forced the police to retreat.

The police later returned and picked off two white families and two young blacks. They also raided a women's hostel and took away six black women, who were released the next morning. Their excuse was that the women might have been squatters.

The police and press have claimed that the residents who resisted the police attack were just mindless hooligans. This is far from the truth. They were ordinary working class people, who have grown sick and tired of the bully boys from Brixton police station.

The Lambeth Campaign Against Police Repression demands the withdrawal of the SPG from Brixton, an end to police harassment of black people and of the homeless, and an end to police being used for evicting squatters.

Woodall's: Our fight is your fight

MANCHESTER: The screws are tightening as the Woodall Duckhams strike moves into its 15th week. The Woodall's lads had a good reception at the Manchester branch of Construction section of the Engineering union (CEU) last week. But then they discovered that the gasworks at Partington, that they had been converting to North Sea Gas had been laying off workers now that the conversion is at a halt.

In a special strike bulletin aimed at the gas workers, the strikers point out: 'Our fight is now your fight. If we win and get the site reopened then your jobs will be safe. If Woodall wins then not only will some of you be going down the road, but it will be an object lesson to all cowboy employers in the area. A lesson which they will quickly learn, at the cost of organised labour in the Partington area.'

Profit

The bulletin also proposed a joint action committee to fight the sackings.

Again we have to appeal to the readers of Socialist Worker for financial support. A handful of ordinary working lads are taking on one of the nastiest multinational companies around. Babcock and Wilcox, the parent company, have subsidiaries in Spain, Chile and South Africa, employing 26,700 people worldwide. They made more than £8 million gross profit last year, and paid their 12 directors £187,000 between them in wages alone.

Woodall Duckhams made more than £1 million in gross profit last year. Against these amounts the £300 to £400-a-week needed to keep the strike alive seems small, but it is vital.

So send donations to: Woodall Duckhams Strike Committee, 4100539 code number 40.45.06, Midland Bank, Urmston, near Manchester.

Poore man...beggar man...jobs thief

BY PAUL FOOT

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT have decided to throw thousands of motorcycle workers on the dole. There will be no nationalisation of the Norton Villiers Triumph plants at Small Heath and Wolverhampton. No more government money will be available for the firms either.

Mr Dennis Poore, chairman of NVT, told workers' representatives last Monday that one of the factories will have to be closed. Each employs 1500 men. Poore plays one set of workers off against another, saying one moment he will close Small Heath, another that he will close Wolverhampton.

In fact, he has probably decided. The bills for items such as electricity and telephones at Small Heath have been paid on time. The bills at Wolverhampton have been outstanding for three months.

But the workers at Wolverhampton are having none of it. As Mike Sampson, an ACTSS shop steward put it: 'Our people came back from holiday on Monday, and they are reporting for work, whatever Poore says and whatever the government says'.

The Tories and the Press have been quick to blame the Labour government and the workers for the final collapse of Norton Villiers Triumph. As with Court Line, Wedgwood Benn's main mistake was accepting the word of capitalists like Poore that the factories could be kept going under private ownership.

We're sick of financial whizz-kids. And if this one thinks we're just going to walk away after a lifetime in the factory, he's got another think coming.

—Jack Everitt, Transport and General Workers' convenor. We're first on Varley's list. If he can say no to us, then he's beaten all the rest who want to save their jobs.

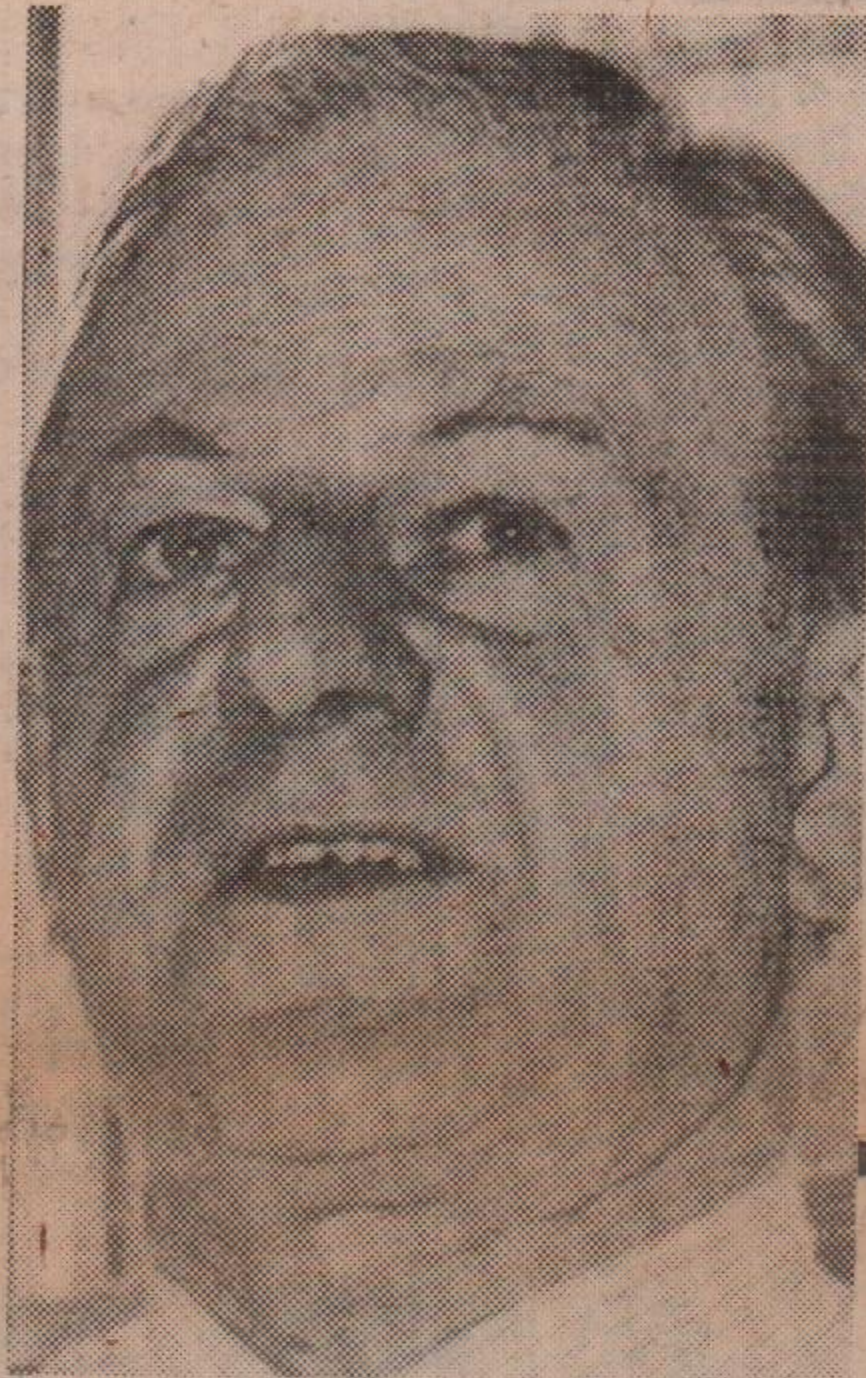
—Bill Bassett, AUEW shop steward.

In fact, the blame for the collapse rests fairly and squarely on the greed and chaos of private ownership and control.

FACT: From 1963 to 1973, Birmingham Small Arms, then owners of the Small Heath factory, made £1,089,823 in after-tax profit. In the same years, they paid out £6,214,409 in dividends.

Year after year, they borrowed money to pay huge dividends. Then they had to pay back interest, which also came from resources which should have gone in better wages and investment.

In all that time, the average wage of BSC workers was £22.69 a week.



ROGER DENNISTOUN POORE

Educated Eton, Cambridge
Wing Commander RAF 1944;
British Hill Climb Motor champion; 1950; director Manganese Bronze, 1951, chairman 1963.

Runs Manganese bronze through two tiny subsidiaries at same address. Owns most of shares himself.

Bankers to Manganese are Federated Trust Finance Corporation (chairman: Dennis Poore).

Money for Manganese Bronze provided by Avenure Overseas Finance Ltd (based in Bermuda—chairman: Dennis Poore).

Plant for Manganese hire by Higher Aid Ltd (director: Dennis Poore).

FACT: From 1964 to 1974, Manganese Bronze, which owned Norton Villiers factory at Wolverhampton, made £1,845,036 in profit after tax. They paid out £2,672,325 in dividends.

What about investment? Listen to last week's government-commissioned management consultant's report on the British motorcycle industry.

QUOTE: 'The loss of market share by the British motorcycle industry over the last 15 years resulted from a concern for short-term profitability.'

Deported - for being good trade unionists

TURKISH catering workers are being kicked out of Britain for being active trade unionists.

Transport Union steward Sabri Genc was jailed last Thursday to await deportation after a big crack-down on workers employed by the London Eating Houses Group, who operate Aberdeen Steak Houses and many Wimpy Bars.

Genc is one of more than 100 Turkish workers whose positions, the Home Office claim, is 'irregular' under the Immigration Act. These workers entered the country legally but then started work without the necessary work permit.

Best

According to the Home Office, it is possible to 'regularise' the position of most of them but seven will be liable to prosecuting and deportation.

It just happens that the first is a militant shop steward representing one of the best organised sections of the catering industry.

Transport and General official John Stevens told Socialist Worker that Brother Genc had broken the

law and was no responsibility of the union.

The T&G had not provided a solicitor and no public statement was expected from general secretary Jack Jones or the union's executive.

The union's main concern was to reduce the work permit system to prevent foreign workers coming into the country.

It is disgusting that the officials of the Transport Union should wash their hands of a worker being prosecuted under racist and anti-working-class legislation.

Sabri Genc's only crime was to flee from slavery and military terror in Turkey and to organise in Britain.

Since the workers of London Eating Houses began to organise they have won massive improvements in wages and conditions.

It was the Turkish Workers of London Eating Houses who came out on May Day to fight for the

freeing of the Shrewsbury Two.

The case demonstrates the class bias in the Immigration Act. Although the individual worker can be hounded, prosecuted and expelled for working without a permit, there is nothing in the law which allows the prosecution of the employer.

The only offence for which an employer can be prosecuted is aiding and abetting a criminal.

Split

The Immigration Act has nothing to do with 'protecting the British'. It is a straightforward piece of class legislation designed to split and allow the state to hound militants.

Trade unionists must not let the line up of bosses, Labour government and tame union officials get away with it.

Resolutions condemning the T&G officials should be sent to Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1.

WHAT WE THINK

THE European security conference ended in Helsinki last weekend in a blaze of publicity. Politicians from all the leading powers came away from it with looks of great satisfaction.

Their happiness has even been shared by some people on the left in this country. The Morning Star on Monday went so far as to give its front page headlines to Harold Wilson's remarks on the outcome: 'Detente is in the common interest of all.'

But no serious socialist can share in such euphoria. The Helsinki conference did nothing to bring the arms race to an end. The great powers are to continue spending ever vaster sums on devising new methods of annihilating one another's populations. There is to be no change in this situation where the amount spent on arms is equal to the entire income of the poorer half of mankind.

The most significant revelations about the conference were made by Wilson and US President Ford. They indicated that the agreement made with Brezhnev meant, for them, that he had to lean on the Portuguese Communist Party and make it follow a 'moderate path'. As Wilson put it: 'We were able to press questions like our anxiety about Portugal not only with the President of Portugal, with whom I had a very tough meeting, but also with the Soviet Union and others.'

Talk

The fine talk at Helsinki about 'non-interference' in the politics of other countries means that the Western powers will leave Russia a free hand in Eastern Europe to put down strikes and insurrections—as in Hungary or Czechoslovakia—while the Russians will leave the Western powers a free hand to move against countries such as Portugal.

Democracy Ford wants to force on Portugal



While US President Ford was talking of 'peace' and 'democracy' in Helsinki last week, his police were attacking the black population of Detroit. Fighting broke out after a white bar owner shot dead an 18-year-old black teenager, Obie Wynn, for allegedly tampering with a car door. The white murderer was released by the police, who hurled tear gas at crowds of black people who protested.

Hands off Portugal!

This was shown straightaway after the conference when Ford publically regretted that because of the investigation into the CIA, the US Secret Service, by the US Senate, the US was not able to intervene in Portugal. His regret can only be skin deep because, as Socialist Worker revealed last week, the CIA has many agents working hard in Portugal.

As for Wilson, he went straight from the conference to a meeting of the leaders of 17 West European social democratic parties to discuss the precise form their intervention in Portugal should take.

Why all the concern about Portugal? When have they ever held such a meeting to discuss overthrowing the Franco dictatorship in Spain?

The sort of 'intervention' they are organising against Portugal is an economic blockade designed to wreak havoc and turn workers and peasants against the revolution.

The Common Market, under pressure from the British Labour government, has already imposed a tariff

of 10 per cent on Portuguese textiles. Besides pushing up the price of clothes in this country, this will create mass unemployment in Portuguese industry. That is what Harold Wilson means by 'supporting democracy'.

Wilson and Foreign Secretary Jim Callaghan have also made it clear that there will be no economic 'aid' to Portugal from either Britain or the Common Market until a Western-type, capitalist regime rules Portugal. 'We are not in the business of supporting dictatorships', said Callaghan.

What fantastic hypocrisy. James Callaghan was the man who led the fight in the Labour Cabinet to send the Chilean Junta the gunboats they had on order.

Sacked

Only in June, Wilson, Callaghan and Co had Judith Hart sacked as Minister of Overseas Development because she kept objecting to aid being sent to the Indonesian military dictatorship, which holds at least 20,000 political prisoners. In Portugal the only political prisoners are 1000 former fascist secret policemen.

What the Helsinki conference was about was not 'peace' or the right of nations to determine their own futures. It was about how the Russians, the Americans and the European powers could carve up the rest of the world between them, regardless of the desires of the peoples of the world.

The workers of Portugal could be the first victims of this carve-up. That is why we have to step up our work to build a solidarity movement with the Portuguese working class, a movement that will fight the efforts of the Fords, the Wilsons, the Callaghans to crush the Portuguese struggle for workers' power.



DO YOU HATE LORD H?

'THE magnificent eighteenth-century mansion stands amid a 9000-acre estate, overlooking elegantly-manicured gardens and a lake... Inside, incongruous among the antique furniture and pottery, the multitude of paintings and huge wall tapestries, are propped cards showing a teddy bear in a Superman outfit and bearing the legend 'Hesketh Superbear'...

'This is Easton Neston, the country home near Towcester, Northants, of Lord Hesketh, the 24-year-old third Baron and creator of Hesketh Racing, the British motor racing team that in the last three years has carried the red, white and blue to the race tracks of the world and is now among the elite.

'Lord Hesketh inherited from his father at the age of five a fortune now estimated to be in the region of £10-£11 million and which is now tied up in trust...

'My available fortune is not very large at the moment,' he admits. (From the Sunday Express, 3 August).

For this, and a number of other reasons, Alexander Hesketh will not be contributing to the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund this week.

In July our Fighting Fund was used to produce thousands of copies of a four-page 'Miners' special issue of Socialist Worker calling for a vote against the government's £6 wage rise limit. We also produced the new Socialist Worker Women's Voice factsheet on the James White Back-Street Abortion Bill and two reprints of the Socialist Worker pamphlet The Need for an Engineer's Charter.

Escaped

Thanks to readers such as Thomas Crick we'll be able to do a lot more this month. He sent in £5, the whole of the 'new' money he got in a wage rise that just escaped Wilson's wage controls. Many workers did the same. 'Keep up the fight against the Labour government's betrayals,' was one message with a £10 note.

We've got off to a good start to the £2000 a month fighting fund in August. If you want to help get rid of the Lord Heskeths and their system, then make your contributions now to SW Fighting Fund, 8 Cottons Gardens, London, E2 8DN.

This week we received £352.74.

Our thanks to:

Oxford Sw readers, £10.75, Manchester reader £10, Hackney teacher £5, Glenrothes IS £4.44, Ninewells SW supporters, Dundee £3, Clackmannanshire reader £1, Edinburgh reader £4.0, Spalding reader £5, North Herts £2.60, Collection in 1p and 1/2p £4.60, Newport reader £3, Wandsworth IS £8.40, Anon £20, Manchester IS Health Workers £1.50, East London reader £25, West London Hospital Workers £23.80, SW supporters, Leicester Asians £2, Glasgow Corporation IS £1, Sw reader, London, SW12, £1.50, Preston IS party and auction £31.75, Bristol reader £25, Gloucester SW supporters 40p, Civil Service fraction £1, Reader £1, Glasgow reader £75, Harlow SW readers £20, Croydon Sorting Office £1, Central London Collection £95.

Who's to blame for Court Line?

COURT LINE—BENN RAPPED! was the papers' favourite headline on the publication of two reports about last summer's collapse of Court Line, Britain's biggest holiday operators. The press and the Tories have been having a field day blaming ex-Industry Minister Anthony Wedgwood Benn for giving people the impression last year that their holidays were safe with Court Line.

Benn made a mistake all right. He believed what he was told by some of the greediest capitalists in the business—and passed it on with the authority of a Labour minister. But blaming Benn for the whole of the Court Line fiasco is like blaming a man who covers up for a crime while letting the criminals off scot free.

The first three-quarters of the report of the Department of Trade Inspectors into the Court Line collapse is a sustained attack on the directors

of Court Line, especially its chief boss, John Young, a personal friend of ex-Tory leader Edward Heath.

The report reveals:

- That Young personally masterminded the group's holiday operations in the Caribbean, wandering round island after island buying up hotels and indulging in pipe-dreams for huge tourist operations with 'no formal management structure'.
- That driven on by Young's megalomania, the group borrowed far, far more than it was ever worth.
- That nevertheless the Tory government, led by Young's friend Heath, doled out massive state grants to the company. The loans were welcomed by Sir Timothy Kitson, personal private secretary to Edward Heath and a director of a Court Line subsidiary.
- That by July 1974 the records and accounts of the leisure side of Court Line were in 'an appalling state—a

state which defied any speedy remedy'.

● The Court Line nevertheless wrote letters to all travel agents stating that the company was 'in a positive on-going situation with all its tour companies operating normally'. As a result, the bookings came in at the rate of 8000 a week.

Tory

● That when everything seemed hopeless, Court Line sent Charles Longbottom, one of its directors, former Tory MP for York and a close friend of Heath and Kitson, to plead with the government for money to bale them out.

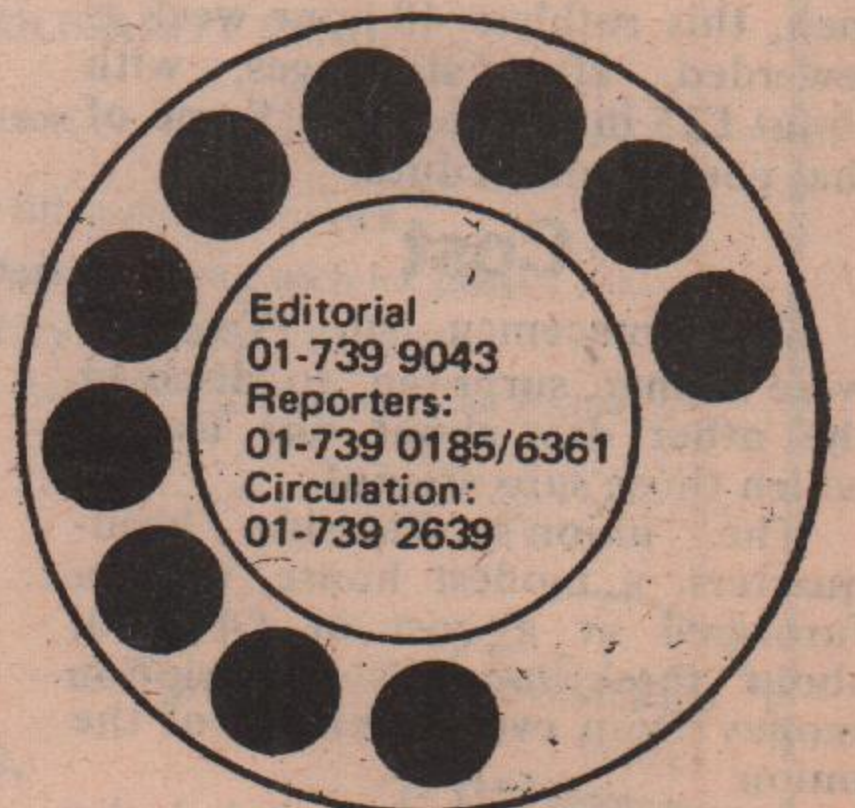
● That when the group went bust six weeks later, hundreds of Court Line workers were done out of most of their salaries while the banks, were able to get most of their money

After this stingy attack, the re-

port comes to the conclusion that Court Line did nothing illegal. What's more, they say, the government should not have done anything about it. In a historic sentence the inspectors state: 'The government's duty to the public at large is in general to refrain from singling out for special treatment the victims, however worthy, of the disaster of a private commercial concern.'

Benn plays only a small part in this appalling story. He was so pleased to nationalise—at vast cost—the shipbuilding operations of Court Line, that he accepted hook line and sinker every worthless assurance doled out to him by John Young.

Benn's reaction to the Court Line crisis was to indulge in one of his favourite half-measures. So he is forced to take the stick from the press and the Tories for the massive rip-offs which that press and those Tories created in the first place.



Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London, E2 8DN

CHARLIE CHERM, DEMOCRAT

CHARLIE Cherm, the Yorkshire NUM pit branch secretary who is always in the news attacking the militancy of the Yorkshire miners' leaders, has just proved what a fine democrat he is.

He has refused to implement the decision of the Yorkshire miners' council to campaign against the £6 limit and for a No vote in the miners' ballot.

Cherm has made it clear that he will not allow the Yorkshire area leaflet a proper circulation in his pit.

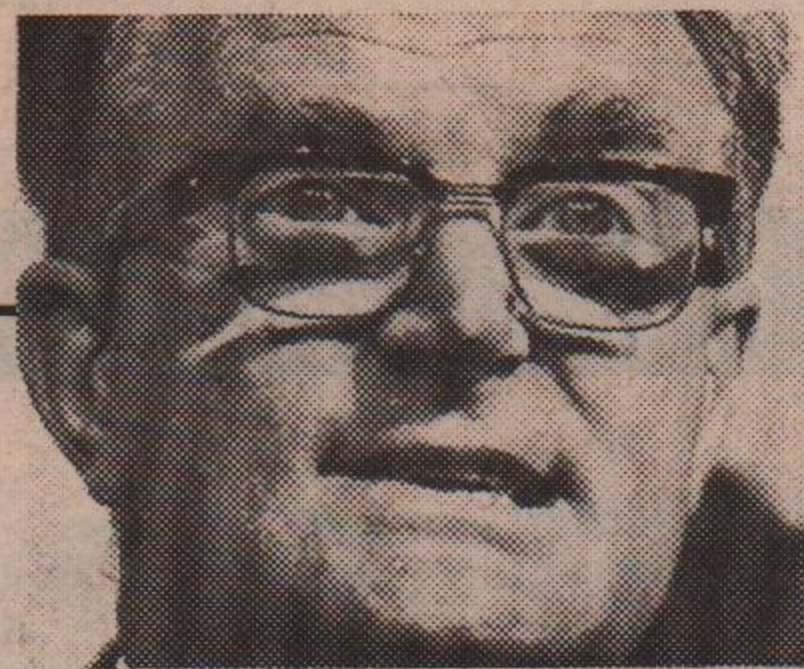
One or two miners in Yorkshire are starting to put down motions for Cherm's removal



THE RULES of the Dyers and Bleachers' Union say that anyone who stands for the executive must have worked in the trade in the year before nomination.

Mrs Ivy Abbson, who has been on the executive for the last three years, stated when she stood this year that she worked in 'drawing' (a textile process) at Paton Baldwin of Wakefield, Yorks.

This is regarded as odd by workers at Paton Baldwin who don't know of a Mrs Abbson working there. They are further mystified because the drawing process was discontinued about four years ago.



Roy Grantham, APEX

The background to an inter-union 'poaching' row



Clive Jenkins, ASTMS

THE 'TRIAL' APEX WANTS TO LOSE

THE UNIONS

By PAUL FOOT

APEX, the clerical union, found itself in court last week because of its love for sweetheart deals with staff associations.

It was being sued by a member it wants to expel. Yet APEX doesn't want to win the case at all...

The background to this apparently strange affair begins in 1972, when the supervisory staffs' union ASTMS sought to recruit in the country's biggest insurance company, General Accident, Fire and Life Assurance Company.

In a staff ballot, ASTMS received 3653 votes,

with 3332 for the existing staff association, SAGA.

In merger negotiations, ASTMS offered SAGA members two years to raise their subscriptions to ASTMS' level, but insisted that the SAGA apparatus be dismantled.

SAGA, instead of putting this offer to ballot, by the staff association, then started merger

negotiations with the less militant APEX. This move had the backing of the General Accident Board.

The sweetheart deal which emerged allowed for five years before SAGA members had to pay the same subs as APEX members, though they immediately became full members.

Worse it allowed the staff association to retain almost complete autonomy. SAGA still called itself a staff association, and kept its own general secretary and his secretarial staff in Perth.

In other words, SAGA would stay in being, and its members would enjoy all the rights of a full trade union membership.

No wonder the rump of the staff association who had not joined ASTMS voted by a huge majority for the APEX deal. As SAGA general secretary M Ward (salary last year, £3270) put it to Socialist Worker:

'They preferred APEX because APEX is a moderate union, while ASTMS is a militant union'.

So the merger took place, and APEX immediately claimed 2811 new members from SAGA, so putting a gloss on its miserable recruitment record.

Membership went up by a mere eight per cent last year, although hundreds of thousands of clerical workers are unorganised.

DEAL

Without SAGA, the increase in membership would have been held to six per cent—a record low in the last five years. In the crucial South East region, membership would have been lower had it not been for the SAGA deal.

ASTMS took the APEX-SAGA deal to the TUC's disputes commission. The commission found a 'clear case' of poaching membership under the Bridlington agreements and ordered APEX to renounce the deal and expel those members it had 'recruited'.

APEX started to comply. Then the chairman of SAGA, C W Rothwell of Croydon, sued APEX seeking a court order to prevent him and all other SAGA members from expulsion.

If he gets his order, the court will be ruling against the TUC disputes commission.

AN APEX IS MEMBER WRITES:

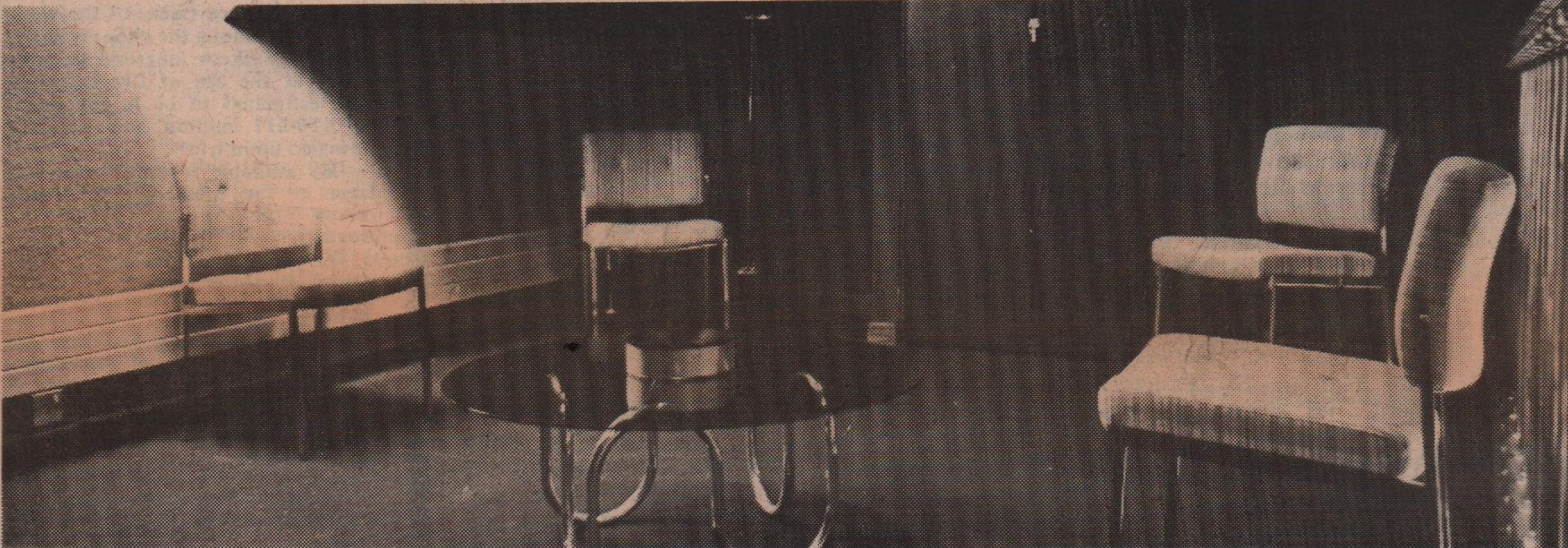
No APEX member should be fooled in this matter by appeals to union loyalty. Our leadership prefer wheeling and dealing and undercutting on subscriptions to open, militant recruiting.

If the union paid more attention to its members, it could rely on recruitment by the members, instead of bringing in blocks of members who never applied for trade union membership in the first place.

We have got the worst possible deal in General Accident. ASTMS have recruited all the best militants. We are left with people who don't want to be trade unionists at all!

We're against staff associations. We're against the bosses' unions. We want democratic unions, run by the rank and file.

That's why we must argue in our branches that APEX repudiates the SAGA deal.



Luxury for leaders, sweat for the members...

THESE three men are members of the National Union of Blastfurnacemen. They work at the Cleveland works in Teesside.

The cinder plant at Cleveland is famous at the Middlesbrough unemployment exchange. If you've spent six months on the dole there, the man behind the counter says: 'Right, if you can't find work in the next two weeks, I'm sending you down to the cinder plant at Cleveland.'

The filth, the noise and the heat are almost unbearable.

In the cinder plant, you work two days from 6am-1pm, two days from 1pm-9pm, two days from 9am-6pm and two days off. Then you start again.

Under the terms negotiated by the National Union of Blastfurnacemen, this ruthless 48-hour week is rewarded, after stoppages, with about £35 in the pocket. Some of that goes in union dues.

Cost

Blastfurnacemen in Teesside were rather surprised to discover the other day about one use to which those subs are put.

The union's Teesside headquarters, a modest house, was refurbished at a cost of £44,000, about three month's subscription money from every member of the union.

The 'refurbishing' included the very latest in Scandinavian fur-

nishings and a special room for meetings international delegations.

This contrast between the living standards of workers and the living standards of the union officials who represent them is not confined to the NUB.

The whole British trade union movement is riddled with it. Last week, for instance, the Guardian asked a lot of union leaders how much they earned.

Pay

Many—including Jack Jones (T&GWU), David Basnett (GMWU), Clive Jenkins (ASTMS) and Bill Kendall (CPSA)—wouldn't say.

Bill Kendall said: 'It is against our policy to tell our members how much officers are earning.' Those who did, indicated that their salaries are two, often three, times the average pay of the people they represent.

Union officials who live like bosses want to keep things that way—and don't want to 'rock the boat' with strikes and sit-ins.

They cease to identify with the needs of their members. They become isolated, easy prey to the smooth talk and bribes of the bosses.

We argue for rank and file control of the unions. That means regular election of officials and payment of officials according to the average earnings of the people they represent.



John Sturrock (Report)



Revolutionary democracy

LAST WEEKEND'S second congress of the movement for revolutionary workers' and soldiers' councils was called under the slogans: Power to those who work, For the dictatorship of the proletariat, and For autonomous organisations of the working class.

It discussed the problems of building revolutionary councils and the relationship of them to the programme of the Armed Forces Movement. But after 14 hours of discussion, all the issues were not resolved, and delegates decided to come back for more discussion next week.

The most important contribution was made by a young woman worker from Setubal, the industrial city south of Lisbon. A member of the

tenants committee which has just won the right to pay about half the previous rent, she told how the local people's assemblies set up by the Armed Forces Movement are joining with local workers' committees and tenants' committees and are beginning to form a real revolutionary council.

At the moment, this is not officially called a 'revolutionary workers and soldiers council' but in all respects resembles one, being democratically elected, with delegates subject to instant recall.

She said the key thing for them was to build the revolutionary workers and soldiers councils by putting demands about solving unemployment, inflation, solving the shortage of food and so on.

Among the messages of support to the conference was one from the International Socialists.

Portugal: Behind the web of lies

PORTUGAL'S fifth provisional government collapsed last week before its first meeting.

Left-wing officers and soldiers in the Armed Forces Movement refused to support it unless Otelo da Carvalho, head of the security force Copcon, was given the post of prime minister, Carvalho had been offered the post of vice prime-minister.

The collapse of the new government—and of the ludicrous plea for strong leadership through a military triumvirate of men with opposed political positions—reflects the economic and political deadlock.

Neither the ruling class nor the working class feels strong enough yet to seize power. A vacuum exists. Meanwhile, without the working class having the power to impose socialist planning on society, economic chaos is developing.

This can only benefit big business as the months pass. Portugal is suffering from unemployment, inflation and a run down of foreign currency reserves.

The multinational firms, with Western governments, are doing their utmost to make things worse in the hope that workers will blame the revolution for the growing difficulties. Already there are food shortages. But the commodity in shortest supply is time.

Power

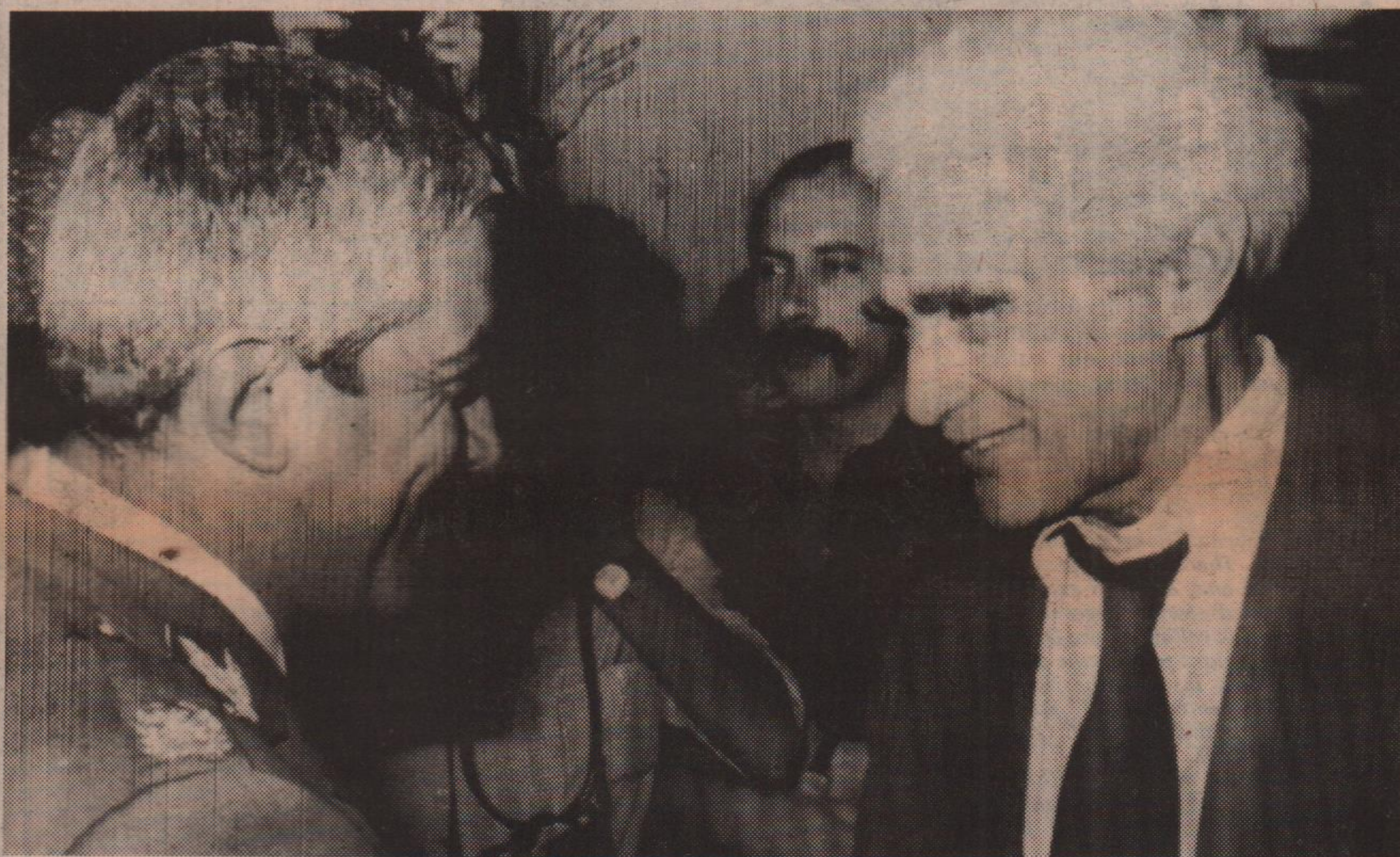
Each day, the ruling class inside and outside Portugal gain strength. They feel more confident, flaunting their wealth in a way they were frightened to do a few months back. And the police are beginning to make their presence felt in the streets of Lisbon.

This could, above all, lead to demoralisation among some sections of workers, unless a power emerges that can solve the crisis from a working class point of view.

Outside the big industrial cities, the right-wing is gaining a new strength and is prepared to fight against the left on the streets. More than 20 offices of left-wing parties, from the Communist Party to the Maoists, have been ransacked in the last fortnight. Personal attacks on Communist Party members and revolutionaries are becoming commonplace.

The right-wing seem to be following the pattern of Mussolini in Italy in 1920 and 1921. Starting in the remote countryside, where modern ideas have hardly penetrated, working hand-in-glove with the elements who ran the small towns and villages before the overthrow of Caetano 15 months ago, they are building up fighting forces that they can later turn against the towns, where the left is strong.

They have used the speeches of Socialist Party leader Mario Soares as an excuse for their demonstrations. But once their movement is under way, they will have no use for



Carvalho and Communist Party leader Cunhal: can they solve the crisis?

Soares and will replace his vague talk of socialist reforms with the hard reality of the jackboot.

In Portugal's second largest city, Oporto, a leader of the MDP, a party linked to the Communist Party, was thrown off a high bridge by a mob last week.

Yet the response of the Communist Party has been extremely timid. While denouncing the 'fascists and reactionaries' in words, it has done next to nothing to defend itself from the attacks. It relies upon the Armed Forces Movement, but in the North many officers and soldiers are influenced by right-wing ideas and stand aside when the attacks take place.

But the right-wing is not having things all its own way. In Sao Joao da Madeira last Friday, the offices of the revolutionary organisation, the Party of the Revolutionary Proletariat, were attacked by 100 right-wingers who demanded entry and screamed for vengeance against workers and revolutionaries.

Attack

They were greeted with warning shots over their heads. When the crowd refused to disperse, militants of the PRP opened fire and wounded three thugs. This allowed time for Copcon to arrive and disperse the crowd, pretending to arrest some PRP members but releasing them a few hours later.

At the moment, these are still isolated incidents. The right-wing does not yet feel sure enough of victory to launch an all-out attack on workers, and to put all its eggs into the basket of civil war.

But, if left unchallenged, its forces could begin to maraud at will through

the small towns of the North, building up an armed base for assaulting the centre of workers' strength.

The present army, based upon binding together into a single organisation right-wingers and left wingers, the middle class and workers, cannot deal with the growing crisis.

Its component members are more and more being pulled in opposite directions by the classes to which they belong. In the industrial cities, whole sections are now absolutely 100 per cent behind the workers. But in the Northern country districts, other sections are being pulled to the right.

Out

This explains rumours of coups last week. The right wing in one military unit were discussing how to organise themselves and, according to some rumours, the West German ambassador was present.

In any case, other members of the unit, with more left-wing leanings moved quickly to bring the meeting to an end and then lock the right-wing officers out of the barracks.

Such clashes within the armed forces are bound to grow.

Under such conditions, the AFM cannot solve the problem of the power vacuum and lead the revolution forward.

Workers' and soldiers' councils are needed, which will bid for power for the working class, and integrate the best elements in the Armed Forces Movement into a new, revolutionary workers' army of armed workers as well as soldiers.



THE POSTER THAT'S ALL OVER LISBON

A 56-STRONG delegation of International Socialists arrived in Portugal on Sunday. Among them were members of eight unions, including AUEW, TGWU, ASTMS, EETPU, ATTI and NUT. They are staying in worker-controlled hotels in the Lisbon area and will be involved in a number of political activities with the PRP and with other revolutionary organisations in Europe.

They took with them thousands of the special IS solidarity poster (above) to flypost throughout Lisbon.

The aim is that when the delegates return to Britain in a fortnight, they will put their knowledge of the Portuguese revolution at work in helping to build the solidarity campaign and the demonstration called for 20 September.

We hope to have a fuller report of their experiences in the next two issues of Socialist Worker. But already they have learnt one thing: it is very useful for industrial workers who read Socialist Worker to visit Portugal and to see what revolution is really about.

THE SOCIALIST WORKER Portuguese Solidarity Fund raised £241.89 this week with the support of:

Equity members £1.50, Glasgow Corporation Central Electrical Works £9.40, Alvis Cars, British Leyland, Coventry £5, TGWU 7/266A Branch Secretary £2, Preston IS Party £31.50, Bradford Film and Jumble Sale £15, Hammersmith Hospital SW Group £11, American comrade £25, J A Ryan £10, Steve Faith, £4, J Eagle £2, Newcastle IS £17.15, Manchester Health Workers £2, plus £128 from the first lot of bankers' orders to go through this month.

Week's good cause?

GET up, work, drink, go to bed. The routine of this society. You don't own or control it.

Just 800 miles South in Portugal changes are being made in that routine. Our brother and sister workers are in revolution. They can build the first workers' democracy.



The poster you are looking at now plasters Lisbon's walls. The Socialist Worker Portuguese Solidarity Fund is selling these three colour posters for 50 pence each, and the badges for 20 pence.

The fund hopes to make a whacking great profit.

Unlike the money sucked out of you every day by your employer, it will go straight to your allies 800 miles away. It isn't the 'week's good cause' but your cause.

And while forking out for the poster and badge get a collection sheet, and use it in your workplace. That way we can start changing all our routines.

SOCIALIST WORKER PORTUGUESE SOLIDARITY FUND,

Amount Workplace.....

Please send me the following items Please fill in number or tick

Posters (50 pence each inc post) Badges (20 pence each inc post)

Collection sheets—use them in your factory, office, or local group

Information on speakers and pamphlets available Bankers order forms

Name

Address

Send your donations to:
Socialist Worker Portuguese Solidarity Fund,
8 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.
I enclose cheque, postal order made payable to

S W Portugal Fund for:



Why nationalised industry makes massive losses...

'POST Office loses £306 million! Electricity down £247 million, Gas £44 million deficit' shout the newspapers. The picture is created of total collapse throughout the public services. The 'only remedy' is mass sackings and heavy price increases for basic services which everyone needs and uses.

In the middle of all this hullaballoo, a minister let out a secret. Wedgwood Benn told a House of Commons Select Committee that Imperial Chemical Industries were paying £20 million for supplies of gas for which the current price was £110 million.

ICI use a twelfth of all the gas in the country. They will go on paying ridiculously low prices for it right up until 1984!

What's more, the secrets

SO THAT OTHERS CAN MAKE MASSIVE PROFITS

tumbled out, there were several other huge industrial combines which had struck fixed-price contracts with the Gas Corporation which gives them cheap gas for ten years and more. Their names are not available. A Gas Corpora-

tion spokesman described them as 'car manufacturers, chemical companies, cement companies, the steel industry, and so on'.

A seventh of all British gas is sold by these long-term contracts. The Gas Corporation was forced to offer them to win the 'right' to supply the big corporations with gas. 'We live in a commercial world' said the spokesman 'and we have to behave commercially.'

If industry paid as much for gas as do old age pensioners, the Gas Corporation revenue would have been up this year by £180 million. That compares with the 'loss' which the papers were shouting about this week of £44 million.

What applies to gas applies to all nationalised industries. Elec-

tricity is also supplied to big industrial users at a cheap rate. If the truth were told about the rip-off of electricity by big industrial concerns, the electricity losses notched last week—and the big electricity prices planned again this year—would look pretty silly.

Rebates

The Post Office provides enormous rebates for big firms' postage. No rebates are available for the letters of old age pensioners, sick, unemployed or homeless people. But firms which post more than a million letters a year get a 30 per cent rebate.

A Post Office spokesman said that 400 firms in Britain get a third off all postage costs. Why?

Not because the business would go elsewhere. There's no other way the hugely rich pools firms, for instance, can do their business. They have to go through the Post Office.

The rebate is given because the main purpose of the Post Office and all nationalised industries is to provide cheap services for private industry.

Many of our nationalised industries were taken out of private ownership by the post-war Labour government. As long as Labour concentrated on nationalising unprofitable public services—railways, coal, gas, electricity—the Tories and private industry didn't put up much of a fight. They ensured such enormous compensation for the private owners, such heavy interest charges and price restrictions that the industries were doomed from the beginning to make losses, or only small profits, and to provide for ever cheap services for industry.

Cement

But when Labour moved against private industry—against sugar and cement, for instance—a mighty propaganda campaign was started by private industry

Ever since, the nationalised industries have been confined to the same grisly cycle. In boom, their prices have been held down and their operations restricted to allow free rein to the freebooters of private industry. In recession and slump, as now, they are marked out as the first in line for mass redundancy and reactionary propaganda. The nationalised industries are not planned, as industry would be in a socialist society. They are the victims of the chaos of competition. When energy has to be supplied to ICI, coal and gas and electricity 'compete' with one another for the contract. Prices come down. The only beneficiary is ICI.

The highly-paid bureaucrats who run the nationalised industries have gone along with the rape of their industries over all these years almost without complaint. They have cheerfully signed agreements subsidising their friends in private boardrooms, and, as cheerfully, sacked their workers to make their industry more competitive.

The heat is on for workers in the nationalised industries. Their managers (who are fighting for £200 pay increases) are looking for mass sackings and cuts. They point to the losses which they themselves have helped to create.

The workers have nothing to do with the secret deals and fraudulent accounting of capitalism society. They must insist on staving off the slump which the bosses of private and nationalised industries are leading us into. They have to campaign relentlessly against secret deals with private industry, against sackings and against all cuts in the services which they provide.

Paul Foot

5 FIFTH COLUMN



IRAN is a country flowing with oil, and saturated with the most advanced military equipment from the USA, France and Britain.

Its ruler the Shah needs it too, for although popular with Western politicians, he is not popular with his own people. Amnesty International estimates there are 40,000 political prisoners in that country.

Iran boasts advanced prison camps, torture chambers, and the SAVAK, a secret police force unsurpassed for ruthlessness

Earlier this year eight of those prisoners joined many more who have died under torture in Iran. Between 23 and 29 April a group of Iranian students picketed the Iranian embassy in London in protest over the murders. On 29 April they occupied the consulate for 20 minutes, and were then evicted by the police.

The police later arrested the 21 occupiers, held them for 24 hours, and charged them with conspiracy to trespass. They were imprisoned for a week and later freed on bail of £250.

Bailey

This autumn they will be tried at the Old Bailey. During the time of their detention their homes were raided and documents taken by the police. 11 of the students have had to go to Germany to complete their examinations. One of them can't get back into England because the Iranian embassy won't renew his passport. Increasingly this is a tactic of the Shah's regime. If the passports expire, then there is a good chance that the students will be deported back to their homeland—and jail, torture and death.

The students were arrested on May Day. Eight days later at the Old Bailey a similar case was completed. Only this time the 'conspirators' were not Iranians, but Ukrainians, protesting over the detention and torture of the Ukrainian writer Valentyn Moraz. The nine Ukrainians received six months suspended sentences.

For the Ukrainians there was no detention in jail, there were no police raids on their homes, and the judge explained that he 'could understand why they did it'. They had entered the USSR's consulate with hammers and nails, and had been involved in a pitched battle with Russian embassy officials.

On May Day Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey was in Iran cadging £500 million off the Shah.

Of course there is no need for the police to raid Ukrainians' homes. The relationship between our rulers and the rulers of the Russian police state aren't sufficiently warm to lead to many exchanges of information.

But Iran is different. It is one of our police states, part of the free world.

There have been demonstrations about the Iranian 21. There will be pickets, a teach-in on Iran and, a photo exhibition is being planned for colleges in the autumn. A petition calling on the Director of Public Prosecutions to drop the charges is being circulated through the National Organisation of International Socialist Societies and is available from 6 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.

A letter to trade unionists on the case is available from The National Rank and File Organising Committee, 46 Prince George Road, London N16 8BY.

CHEERING news from Boston. William Beecher, ex-US Defence department spokesman now working for the Boston Globe newspaper reports that US analysts now believe that Israel has at least 10 A-bombs.

It is believed that Israel decided after the October 1973 war to build nuclear bombs... after concluding that the Mid-East balance of power could shift over the long run to the Arab states.

This isn't known as terrorism, nor the act of 'men of violence' but 'deterrence'. Israel is now the sixth country to have the power to blow a large and unfillable hole in the globe...



The Bay City Rollers

First things first now, boss

MANCHESTER International Socialist Dave Hallsworth has provided a good example of workers' power in action—in a new area.

'The other week in Manchester at a small engineering factory the lasses on the shopfloor sent for their shop steward.

'The Bay City Rollers are on TV tonight at 4.30pm', they told him. 'We want out at 4pm prompt—tell the boss.'

'Feeling a bit of a clown, he went

up to management. "No chance" the boss told him. "Their time is up at 4.30pm."

"Tell the bastard he's got a strike on at 4pm then," said the girls. Hasty consultation then took place and a "compromise was arrived at" as they say. The lasses were let out at 4.10pm.

'The shop steward now reads his TV Times before he goes to work so that he can get his arguments prepared.'

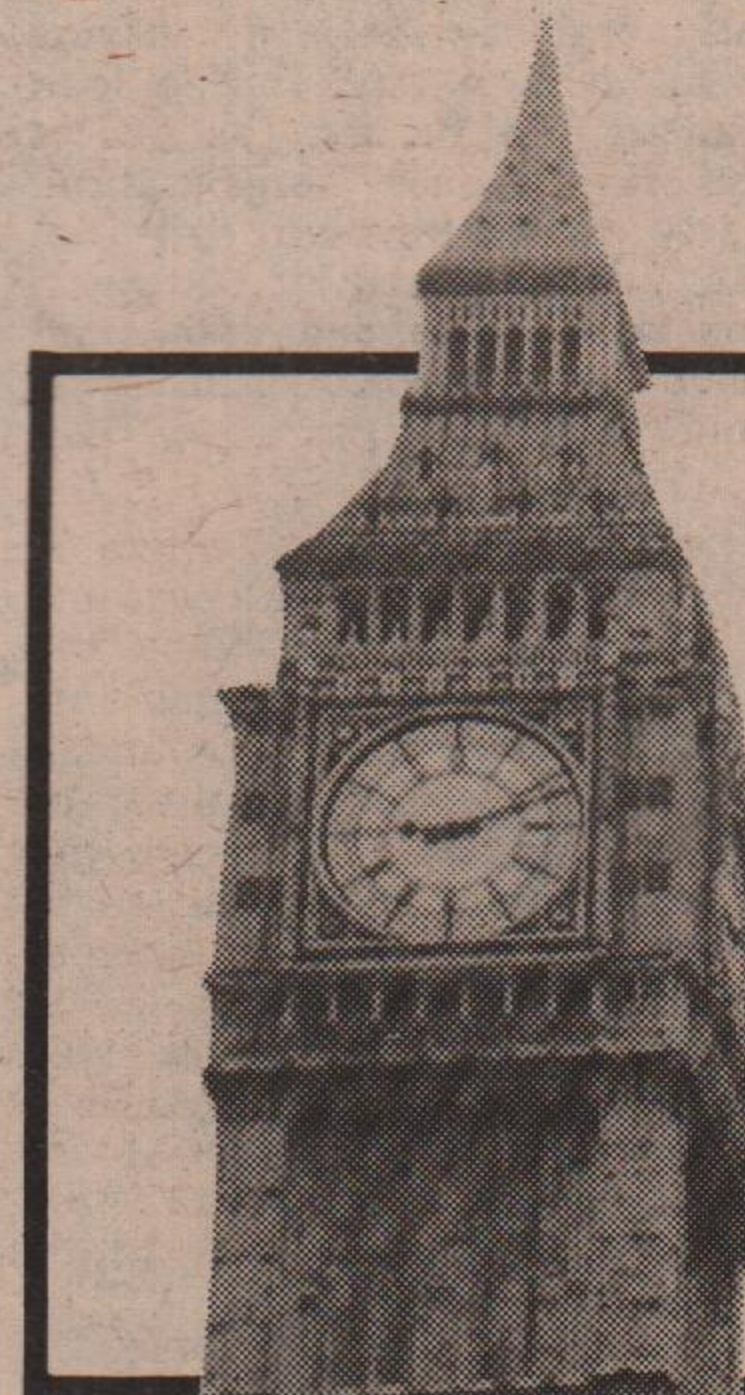
A DARING RESCUE



Seeing his firm in trouble Albert Potter raced to the rescue...



... silly sod



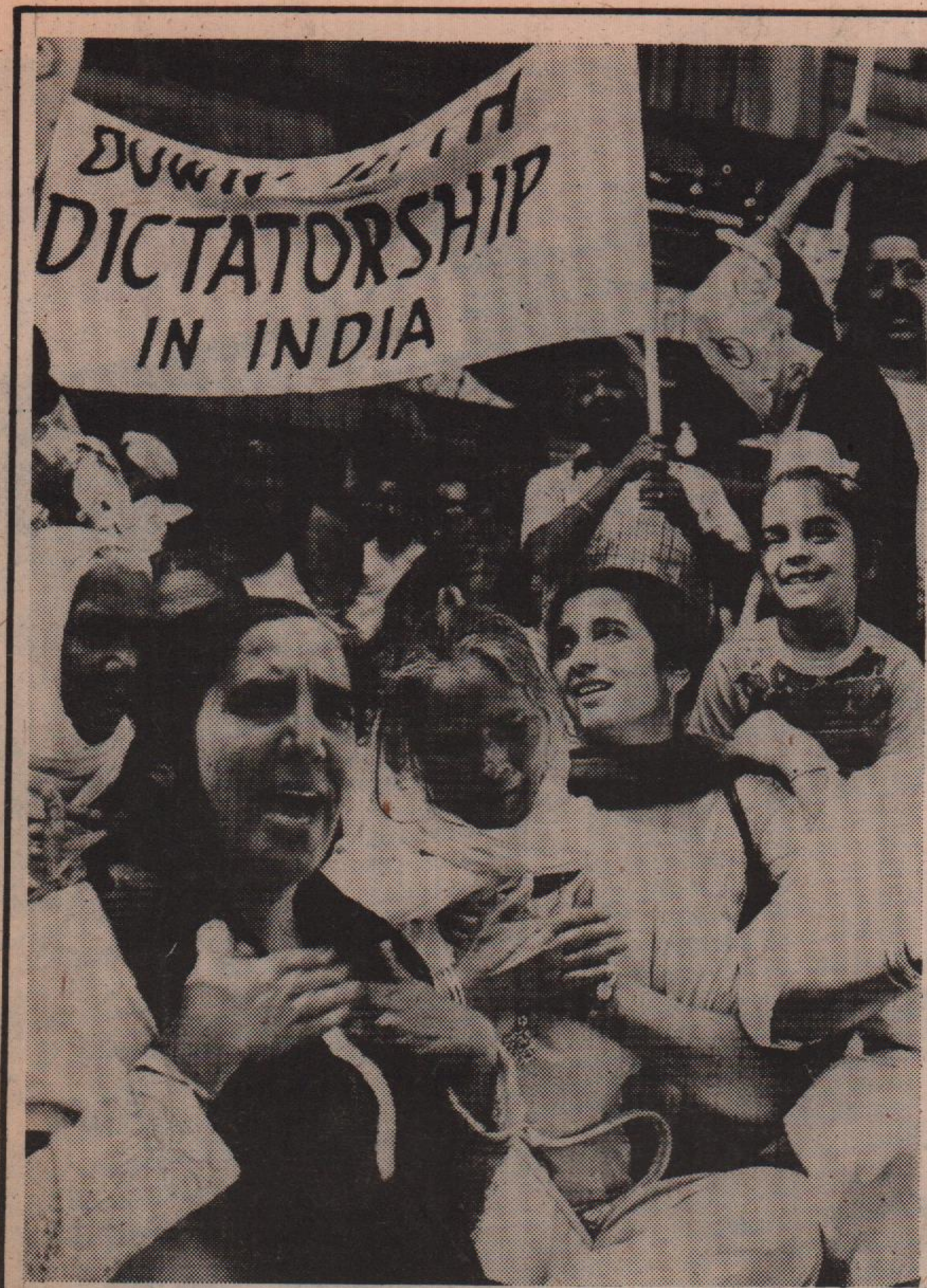
CAN SOCIALISM COME THROUGH PARLIAMENT?

by Roger Kline

An International Socialists' pamphlet on the Labour Party and why 'the parliamentary road to socialism' is a dead end. 10p plus 7p postage from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4.

2000 demonstrate against Mrs Gandhi

PICTURES: Chris Davies (Report)



Two thousand demonstrators marched from Trafalgar Square to the Indian High Commission last Sunday to protest at Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship in India. The marchers, from the Communist Party of India (M), various Indian Workers Association branches and the International Socialists (above), carried placards opposing the imprisonment of thousands of socialists and Communists in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Speakers at a rally beforehand included Mota Singh (right) and Mel Collins, both of the International Socialists.



THE military regime in Nigeria went through a minor revamp last week. Brigadier Mutala Mohammed took over from General Gowon, with, it seems, the full agreement of the departing general.

The British press had a familiar explanation for the change. Like the turmoil in Angola it was due to the supposed 'backwardness' of black Africans.

The Economist, Britain's top big business magazine, summarised the racist 'explanation' perfectly. 'The fall of Nigeria's General Gowon is one more sign that Africa is unprepared for the politics of nationhood.'

In reality the departure of Gowon had to do with rocketing inflation and the growth of an economy under the power of the multi-national oil industry.

Gowon is not, of course, retiring to a poverty-stricken old age. His investment advisers have been silting away his funds in various European capitals for several years.

Gowon is one of 18 Nigerian military men who have become millionaires in the past nine years since the military seized power in 1966. They became millionaires as agents for multinational capitalism, for they control import and export licences and their consent is needed for all industrial development. Naturally they levy the appropriate price.

In Nigeria as elsewhere, fabulous wealth for the few is achieved by the systematic degradation of the many. While businessmen import Rolls-Royces and pay £20,000 import duty for their playthings, the

NIGERIA: OILMEN CHANGE PARTNERS

by Martha Osamor and Laurie Flynn

people starve.

Unemployment is rife. The poor peasants are worse off because of the 'green revolution'. They cannot afford to buy the food produced; which increasingly goes for export. The world economic crisis is making things even worse.

Crumbs

Organised workers were expected to wait month after month for government reports to give them a few extra crumbs. But they found after publication of the report that many employers were simply unwilling to cough up. They struck and worked to rule in March this year, but the army was turned against them.

At the Lagos waterworks the army arrested 100 pickets and put them into detention. But they didn't get everyone. Those who remained turned off the water in the city.

The priority in the national bud-

get is repression, a scandal which meets no protests from the British press, or from the Lagos Daily Times, which (surprise, surprise) is part of the Thomson newspaper empire that owns the Times and a string of local papers here in Britain. Defence expenditure in the 1974 budget was a massive 336 million naira (£168 million). Expenditure on health and education combined didn't come to a third of that.

Expenditure on the police, at 67.4 million naira—£33 million—was the second biggest item in the budget.

This massive spending on repression benefits no one other than the multi-nationals that sell Nigeria defence equipment or rely on this weaponry to protect their profits.

At the centre of the multi-national devaluation of the economy is the oil industry. 92 per cent of Nigeria's exports are in oil. 17 per cent of this goes to Britain. But development of the oil industry has been of little or no benefit to the working masses. Oil is not a labour-intensive industry.

While Nigeria's balance of payments has improved, the economy as a whole is at the mercy of the multinational oil companies.

The impact on Nigerian society is truly terrible. Nigeria exports crude oil but she has only one small refinery, at Alasa-Elene.

This produces 60,000 barrels a day—when it is working. But it stops working when it suits the multi-nationals to sell Nigeria more refined petroleum. As a result of this operation, 'oil rich' Nigeria is entirely dependent on the multinationals for refined petroleum.

Right now, three-quarters of the lorries in East Central and Midwest states of Nigeria are off the road thanks to the fuel crisis.

Waste

The most scandalous waste is organised by the oil giants. They have combined to prevent development of Nigerian gas, and 2200 million cubic feet of it is flared off daily. This is equivalent to one third of the country's total energy production. Then Nigeria has to import gas.

While 18 army men have become millionaires, the real spoils of the Nigerian mining, manufacturing and construction industries don't go to rich Nigerians. They go into the coffers of the multinationals, led by the British multinationals.

These firms are offered the most magnificent conditions for enrichment, including tax holidays, depreciation clauses and a whole range of other little extras. No wonder that total British investment is now 500 million naira, £250 million.

It is these operations which benefit from the repression in Nigeria, and who are probably behind the latest government changes. That repression is fierce. A trade disputes' decree forbids strikes.

All public meetings 'likely to lead to a breach of the peace' are banned. A public meeting is defined as a gathering of three or more people in a public or private place.

Breaches of this law are punishable one year in jail or a 200 naira fine (£100), equal to five months wages

for an industrial worker. Penalties for stealing have been stepped up to execution by firing squad.

There are some regional and tribal tensions in Nigeria, tensions which the millionaire press in Britain is always happy to fasten on.

It was the process of colonialisation in the 19th century which really ranged different sections one against the other. But today those tensions are disappearing in the trade union movement.

But real development will never come as long as Nigeria, like the rest of the so-called underdeveloped world, is ruled by the likes of Lonrho, Unilever, Gulf, Philips and Mobil. Their power will have to be broken, at home in Nigeria and here in Britain, by the power of the organised working class.

The 'happy Japanese' myth — rubbish!

A FEW weeks ago we published a letter from Swansea steelworkers which said: 'Every day the happy Japanese worker is being used as a threat to get us to work harder'.

If Japanese workers are happy, they have little to be happy about. The recession began to bite in Japan last autumn, and many firms eliminated overtime and introduced short-time working. The big camera company Yashica cut its 2200 workforce by 900.

Workers who fight back face tough conditions, as this report of a struggle at the Nissan Automobile Company shows:

'In January 1971 the management of the Kyoto factory suddenly, and without notice, announced changes in the terms and conditions of work of seasonal workers employed there. The changes amounted to an effective loss

on wages of 4000 to 6000 yen (£5-£6) per month...

'While unrest at the factory was at its peak, a "goon squad" of company and union men was got together to beat up the dissidents and intimidate them from further action.'

War

Nonetheless, Japanese workers have a long tradition of militant action. In 1966, for example, the SOHYO union called a strike of four million workers against the war in Vietnam, which was linked to unemployment and low wages at home. Although strikes in the public sector are illegal, there have been many public sector strikes in the past four years.

This militancy reached a peak in spring last year. The growing pressure

of inflation led railwaymen, postal workers and others to take strike action, and disregard threats of legal sanctions. Finally in April 1974 a four-day general strike involving six million workers led to rapid victory, with 30 per cent pay increases all round. So maybe British workers could learn something from their 'happy' Japanese brothers.

This followed settlements of between 15 per cent and 20 per cent in the three years previously.

Even this did not satisfy the 'happy' workers. By last autumn unions were demanding an extra month's pay at the end of the year to make up for inflation.

So don't be fobbed off with the myth of docile Japanese workers. They face the same problems we do—and they are learning the same lessons as us.

CHINGARI

The International Socialists' paper in Punjabi and Urdu by and for Asian workers in Britain.

The new issue highlights the crisis in India, giving the facts and information behind Indira Gandhi's declaration of a state of emergency. Other articles are on wage restraint and unemployment, racialism, Pakistan, and General Amin.

Order copies from:



PUNJABI EDITION: Europe Singh



URDU EDITION: J Engineer

Both at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

So they call this Equal Britain

THE publication of the government's report on the Distribution of Income and Wealth gave the bosses' press the chance for a bit of lying and distortion.

Despite all the evidence, headline after headline proclaimed that we live today in an equal society. Differences of wealth and income are disappearing fast, we all get more or less the same—according to the press.

They are doubly lying. In the first place the report does not prove that. In the second place, what the report does say is a distortion itself.

You might have thought it does not need a Royal Commission to tell us just how unequal this society is. Borrow a car, drive around London or almost any other big town. Just look at the houses.

Look at the houses in Brixton and look at the houses in Knightsbridge. They don't look particularly equal.

We live in a society which has fantastic inequalities. What is more, they are systematic inequalities. They are the inequalities of class; of boss and worker.

Just look at some of the facts from the report:

30,000 people in this country hold more than a third of all property giving an income.

The same 30,000 people hold one third of government securities, more than one third of all privately-owned government securities. That is, a third of private industry, commerce and rented property is owned by one thousandth of the population.

The same 30,000 people have an average wealth of £600,000—each. It would take a worker with take-home pay of £40 a week more than 300 years to save up that amount—providing, of course, he never spent a penny.

Pile of loot

The same people who have this huge wealth have the high incomes too. Even after tax, the richest 400,000 people—the top 1 per cent—get 4 per cent of total income. That's four times what they'd get if we *did* live in an equal society—and it means that for every one of these rich people, four others must live on a *quarter* of what is their due.

The top 10 per cent get nearly a quarter of the total income.

It will come as no surprise that most of the vast mountain of loot did not pile

REPORT: COLIN SPARKS

PICTURE: Report



This is what equality means in Britain: The freedom of one man to own an £800,000 manor

up as the result of the hard grind of the dedicated men and women who own it. The best way to get into that tiny 30,000 is to be born into it. In 1965, the last year for which figures are given, six out of ten of the very rich had fathers who were very rich. Many more had fathers who were just rich.

The chances of that happening by accident are so small as to be laughable. It was no accident, it is the class system at work. The rich stay rich.

Of course, it is true that some of the very rich are self-made men. But that does not make them any nicer than those who had it handed to them by Pater.

These vast concentrations of wealth are not just figures. They are power

over our lives. They were piled up by our sweat and our toil. They are the result of exploitation.

There is another side to the picture. The bottom 20 per cent of tax payers—the old, the sick, the disabled and the unemployed—got a grand total of 5.4 per cent of the total income. Their wealth is so small that it is not even included in the tables.

The reality is not wealth, but pensioners starving and freezing. Hungry kids wanting to know when dad will get a job. Slums and rats and industrial accident.

The lives of the people whose labour piled up those vast fortunes.

It is there in cold, official figures. There are two nations in Britain.

THE PRESS make it look as though we were getting more equal in Britain by using all sorts of tricks.

You wouldn't expect a Royal Commission, particularly one which included Sir John Gifford, ex-Chief of the Civil Service, and Sir John Tootals, a board member of the National Westminster Bank, to get about £500 a week to come up with their conclusions—but you expect them to be clear.

Their conclusions are confused. They disagree with about as much as a Victorian clergyman would talk about prostitution.

The government's statistics on almost everything are wrong. If you want to know how many people died through the stairs, there it is in black and white. If you want to know how many people die through the stairs, then the facts are there. The one thing the government has facts on is wealth. They share it with other governments: the United States, the European countries in the end. They publish any statistics they can get. They have to try and guess.

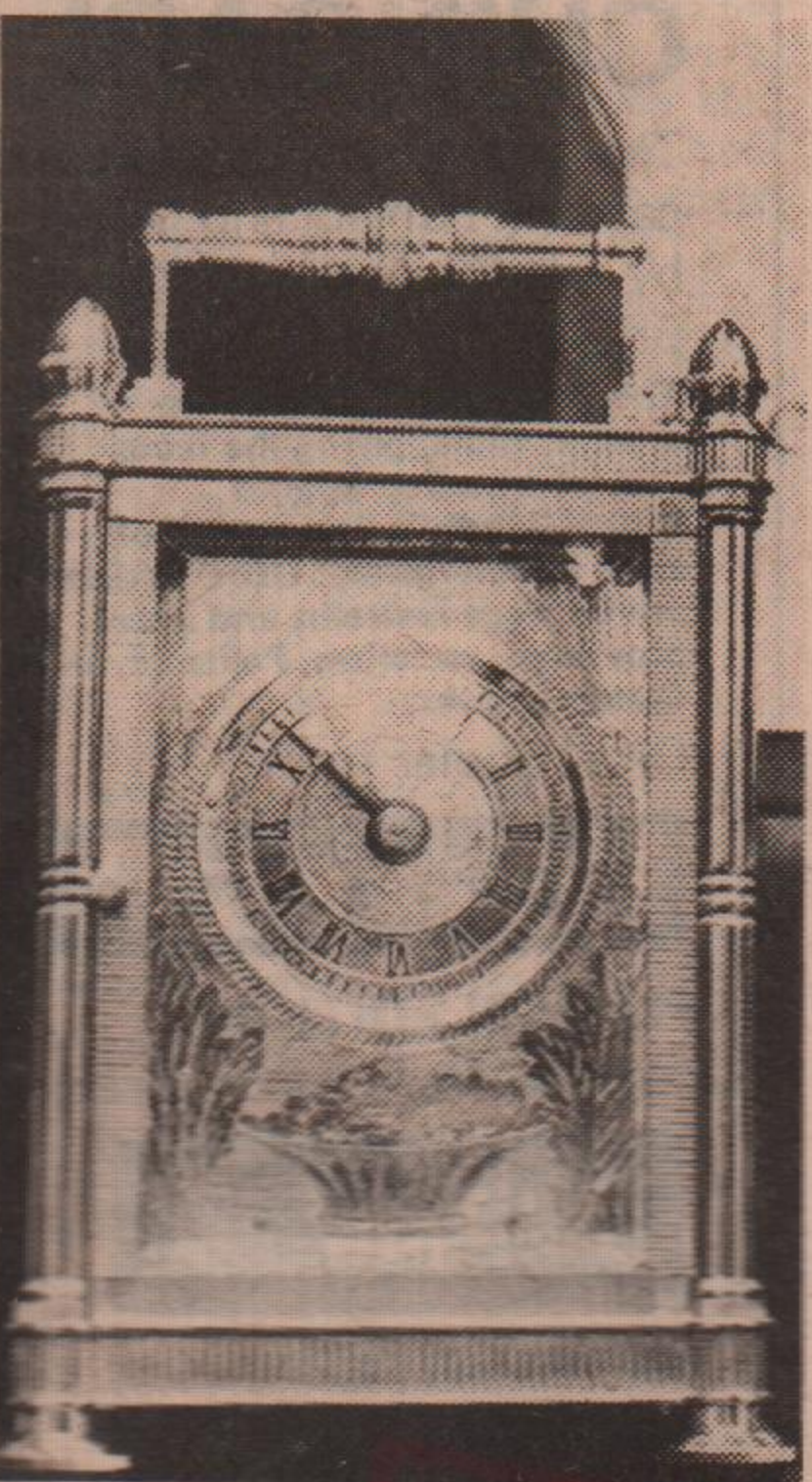
Tax

One of the most interesting things in the whole report is the statement that tax evaders place at all levels of income. Picture the group of old-age pensioners huddled round a car in the depths of winter. The pensioner opens and in walks the pensioner Harry Hyams—to ask their advice on tax evasion.

It may be possible to pay your tax on a pension PAYE, but the result is like as good as dead money retained through dummy companies in the Cayman Islands.

The major tricks of the press have picked up that things are becoming

WHAT THE RICH ARE BUYING NOW



Silver clock, one of only 200 —or £190,000 the lot

£950



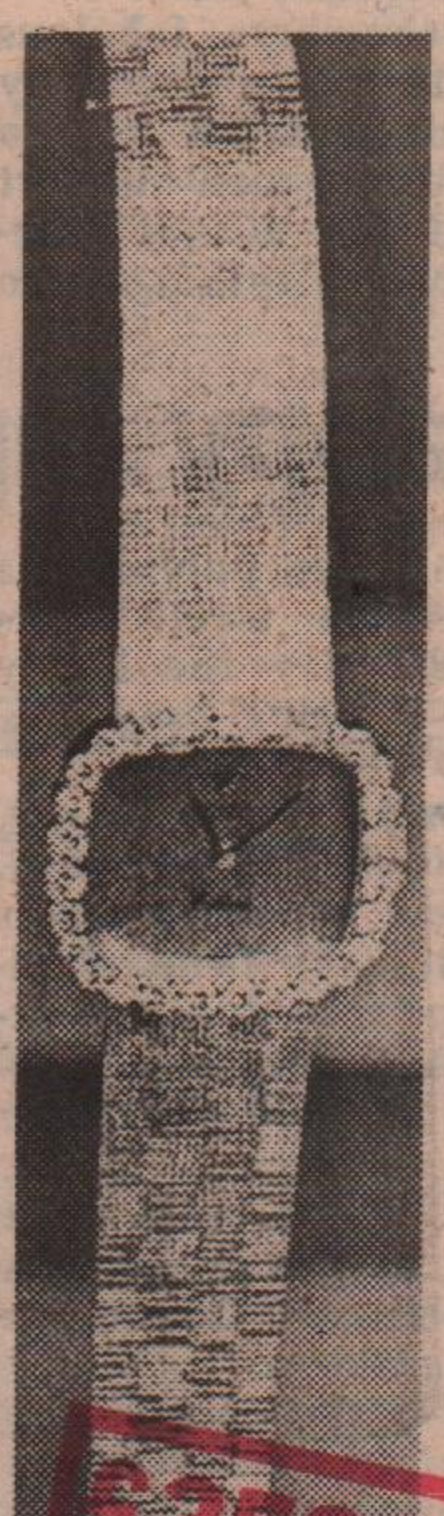
A 25-piece dinner service at £27.50 per plate

£687



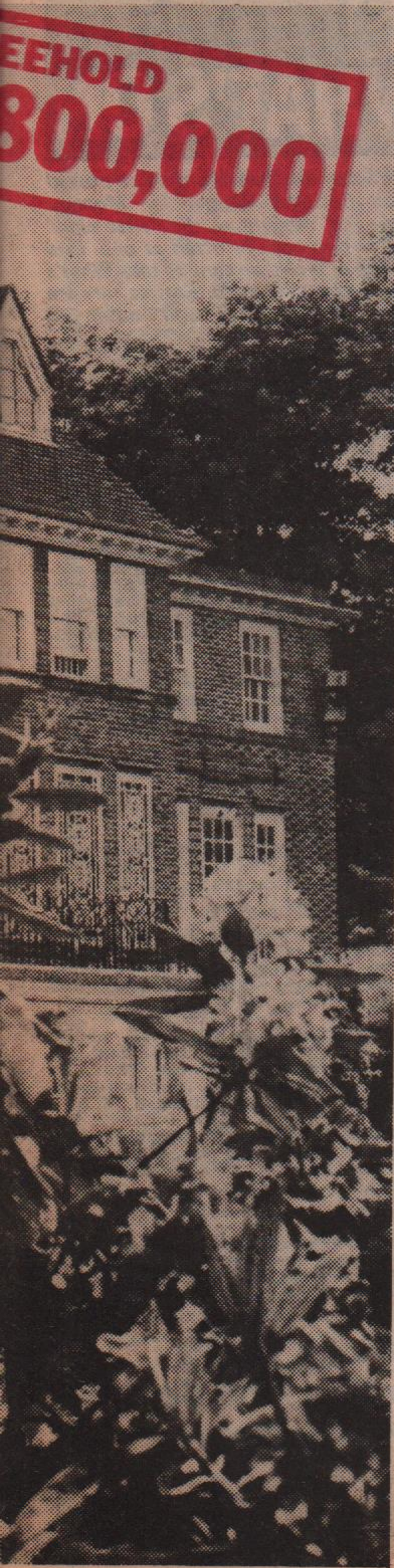
An antique silver camel for the mantelpiece

£7450



Time for diamonds?

£3534



... and the 'freedom' of another to be rack-rented by slum landlords.

How the press plays tricks with figures

...aged to
...ugh things
...equal in
...few simple

equal are two sets of tables about the changing distribution of wealth. The one they are really playing up is the set of figures that include state pension rights as part of your wealth. The other set is that which excludes pension rights but includes everything else.

On these definitions, wealth can be almost anything: factories, gold coins, private airliners, and most importantly, houses—which amount for more than one third of their estimate of personal wealth. The rotting semi that you might have been paying for on mortgage for that past 15 years is suddenly transformed into wealth.

In the past 15 years there has been a big increase in house-owning, and the prices of houses has rocketed. These two together make it look as though things have become more equal.

Coins

The exploitation of the statistical trick which adds the absolute necessity of an old-age pension and the absolute necessity of a roof over your head to the ownership of stocks, shares, factories, and half a dozen Old Masters is one of the most disgusting frauds the press has worked in years.

If you plough through the press lies and the official balancing act it is still possible to dig out two things:

The report says: 'When

trends over the past 15 years in these pre-and post-tax (income) distributions are compared, the extent to which direct taxes have affected the distribution of income has not changed significantly. If the rich still get a lot more than the rest of us in their pay packet, then how the hell are we becoming more equal?

Those figures also prove that taxes are not making things more equal: they get more than us after tax as well. Even under a Labour government.

The report says: 'In 1973 more than a quarter of all personal wealth was owned by the richest one per cent of the adult population; about half of all the wealth was owned by the richest five per cent; and two-thirds by the richest ten per cent.' Even on their ideas of wealth, that is nothing like equality.

There's one law for the IRA, another for the UVF

BILLY MITCHELL, 35, was kept busy in his office in Belfast over the weekend explaining to journalists how men under his command murdered pop-singer Fran O'Toole and two members of his backing group, The Miami, early on Thursday.

The dead men were all Catholics. Mitchell is chief spokesman for the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).

Meanwhile in Catholic areas plans are being finalised for protest demonstrations to mark the fourth anniversary of internment. There are still 240 Republicans held without charge or trial—but no members of the UVF or of any other Protestant paramilitary group.

Some reaction to the triple killing was entirely predictable. Northern Ireland Secretary Merlyn Rees described it as 'senseless'.

In fact, as Socialist Worker has repeatedly explained, such killing, far from being 'senseless', is carefully calculated to impress on the British government that all hell will break loose if sectarian Protestant rule is not restored in Northern Ireland, and to impress on Catholics that it is they who will experience this hell. So far the Catholic community in Northern Ireland seems to be standing up to the threat rather better than the Labour government.

Less than 24 hours before the murders three other Catholic young men had been involved in an event which caused much greater outrage among loyalist politicians. They were released from Long Kesh.

Rule

Loyalist leader Ian Paisley denounced this as 'a betrayal'. The more 'moderate' Brian Faulkner wondered whether Merlyn Rees had taken leave of his senses.

They want Republicans locked up at all costs. But none of them was rushing into print next day to suggest that the UVF should be treated similarly, or even that the ban on the organisation, lifted by Rees last year, should now be reimposed.

Instead they tried to 'even things up' by promoting a phoney story that a second fatal attack on a mini-bus carrying Catholics in the same area—this time pensioners returning from bingo—was the work of short-sighted IRA men who had been waiting in ambush for the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

Criticism of UVF activity by loyalist leaders—from Paisley through Powell to Brian Faulkner—is muted because these men fully support the aims of the organisation. They are at one with Billy Mitchell in seeking a return to sectarian one-party rule. In private they may well agree that the only way to get it is to terrorise Catholics into tame acceptance.

In pursuing this objective the

Ambushed pop group become the 'victim' of Loyalist plot to get bomb across border

Express Staff Reporter

ULSTER Protestants, who gunned down four young Irish pop stars early yesterday, planned to force the group to deliver a bomb in Eire.

This is the police theory behind the border bloodbath in which three members of the chart-topping Miami Showband died after an explosion killed two ambushers.

But the Ulster Volunteer Force, which yesterday accepted responsibility for the musicians' deaths, claimed that its patrol opened fire after coming under attack.

Raised alarm

And a UVF spokesman denied that the bomb which tore apart the group's mini-bus was put there by the gunmen.

The three musicians shot and killed after the explosion were lead-singer Francis O'Toole, trumpeter Brian McCoy, 33, and Anthony Geraghty, 23.

Last night, as surgeons fought to save 24-year-old Stephen Travers, the other survivor from the group gave police a graphic description of the ambush.

Saxophonist Des McAlea, 22, was left for dead after being hurled into a hedge by the bomb blast. But he regained consciousness an hour later and staggered to raise the alarm.

He told the police the minibus was flagged down on the main Belfast-Dublin road, four miles from Newry, by uniformed men who looked like British soldiers.

The five musicians, who were on their way home to Dublin after an engagement at Banbridge in Co. Down, were ordered out at gunpoint.

Survivor tells how blast saved him

intended to force the group to take the bomb across the border, but panicked when it exploded prematurely.

According to the UVF, a patrol led by Major Harris Boyle and "London



Miami Showband (left to right): Brian McCoy (dead), Francis O'Toole (dead), Stephen Travers, Tony Geraghty (dead) and (foreground) Des McAlea.



THE murder of the Miami Showband members got big coverage in the British press. The discovery of an arm amid the wreckage tattooed 'Portadown UVF' made it difficult to avoid the conclusion drawn by the Daily Telegraph: 'Protestant extremists in the hard-line Ulster Volunteer Force, legalised only last year by the government, are the prime suspects.'

But just look at the way the Daily Express handled the story on Friday, and how the Sunday Express went back to it. Extensive quotations from 'a UVF spokesman' completely cloud the brutal fact that Protestant neo-fascists are conducting an assassination campaign against Catholics north and south of the border.

On Sunday another attack on a mini-bus was deliberately used to suggest a 'tit-for-tat' battle without a single shred of evidence. Before two short paragraphs on the Miami Showband funerals and one on their assassins, the Sunday Express simply asserts: 'Police... are convinced the ambush was carried out by Republican terrorists.'

by EAMONN McCANN

UVF sees itself, correctly, as standing four-square with reactionaries everywhere. The UVF magazine *Combat*, edited by Mitchell, carries as much anti-communist as anti-Republican rhetoric. It has had a long flirtation and an overlapping membership with the National Front.

Rhodesia's Ian Smith, another defender of Protestant Anglo-Saxon values against the hordes of darkness, ranks high in its lists of heroes.

Soft

One of the reasons Rees does not end internment is that he is afraid to alienate the many in Northern Ireland who share such attitudes. He allows the internees out in threes and fours each week, a tactic which has heightened tension inside Long Kesh almost to breaking point.

Each man is encouraged to hope, while trying not to dare to hope, that his name will come up in next week's lottery.

So the agony of the internees and their relatives is drawn out to coax the Catholics into accepting the perpetuation of the state and their own unequal position within it—and to demonstrate to the murders and the supporters of the murderers of the Miami Showband that Labour is not soft on terrorism...

Marches, pickets and other

anti-internment activities this weekend will show that, despite all, the Catholic ghettos have not been coaxed or cowed into accepting a return to second-class citizenship.

While recognising this, British socialists should note too that in a city in what it pleases Westminster to regard as part of the 'United Kingdom' an organisation with strong fascist connections operates openly from a publicly-listed address, proclaiming that it is armed and preparing for war. Note too that it regularly kills Catholics and would be pleased to kill revolutionary socialists. Note too that a Minister in a Labour government turns a blind eye to this and gets on with the job of holding innocent men as political hostages.

Socialists should be using every means at their disposal to expose this state of affairs and to compel Labour to bring it speedily to an end.

March against internment in Northern Ireland

Sunday 10 August, 3pm, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.

Organised by the London Committee, Provisional Sinn Fein.



August issue out now

The Crisis: how it's biting and why

The national abortion campaign: which way forward?

plus articles on Joann Little, the family and the state, wages for housework, how to organise a factory gate meeting, and more.

Orders to Womens Voice, 8 Cottons Gardens, London, E2 8DN.

HOW WE CAN GET OUR IDEAS ACROSS

WHAT'S ON

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

Solidarity with the Portuguese Revolution
 Demonstrate Saturday 20 September, 2pm, Charing Cross Embankment. Called by Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee and supported by Socialist Worker and the International Socialists.
 The demonstration and rally originally called for 30 August is cancelled in support of the above united demonstration.

SOCIALISTS must have the correct political analysis, but it's of little use if we cannot communicate it to others.
 So we need to be able to speak in public, to run public meetings, to have the technical skills to produce newspapers, posters, leaflets... and so on.
 The aim of the IS Handbook is to pass on such skills and to show how they can be used politically. It is being produced in sections. Those completed include Working as a socialist on the shop floor; Public speaking; Writing for Socialist Worker; Working as a socialist in your trade union branch.
 In process are Films for socialists;

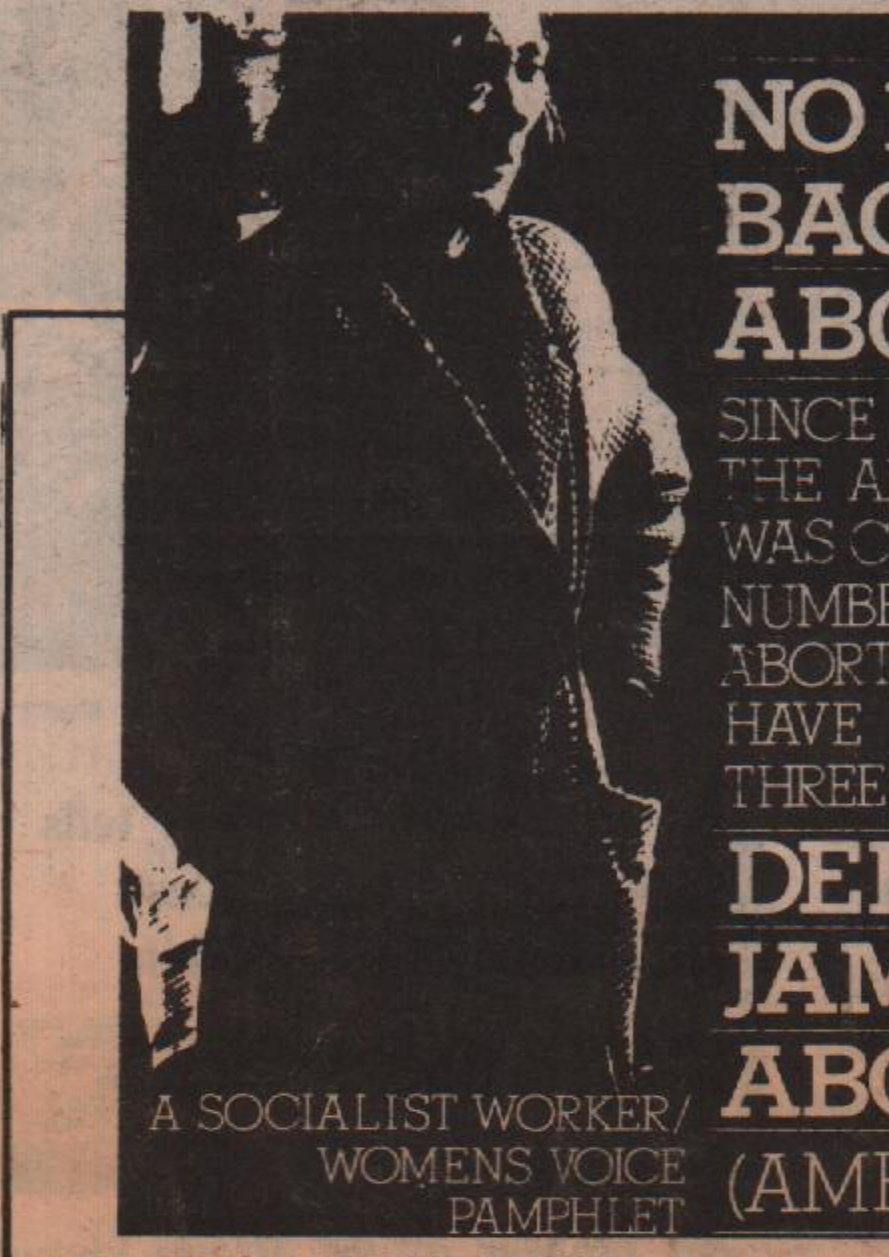
Running a political social; International solidarity work.
 In two fields, handbooks already exist. The Investigators Handbook produced by Community Action, and Print, by Interaction. Below are reviews of both.
 For copies of the Investigators and Print Handbooks, send £1 to Pete Marsden, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Postage is included.
 For the IS Handbook, send £2 to the same address. For this you will get a ring binder containing the 12 sections so far, and will continue to receive new sections as they are produced.
DIGGING up the dirt on companies, organisations and individuals we are fighting in the industrial and political struggle is

an important but daunting job for socialists.
 Where do you start? Have you got to go down to London to Companies House to get the information? How do you get hold of local authority finance figures so you can mount a campaign against the cuts?
 Where do you check the facts and figures we've been told and make sure they are correct before we put them in a factory bulletin so management can't issue a quick reply showing we got it all wrong and damaging our impact.
MPs
 Arm yourself with a copy of THE INVESTIGATORS' HANDBOOK and the work of getting the information begins to get easier and less time-consuming.
 This handbook lists and details hundreds of sources of information about the local and national power structure. It explains where to find the information and how to use it. There are sections on investigating companies, organisations such as employers associations, local authorities, and individuals like councillors, MPs and directors.
 With a bit of planning and a copy of this handbook the teachers and students in your IS branch or district could follow the lead of our branch and spend a couple of weeks of their summer holiday getting the detailed information necessary for political intervention in your area.
 As the book says: 'Accurate information used well increases the political power of your group and adds to its credibility.'
SIMON MADDISON.

IS public meetings
BIRMINGHAM SOCIALIST WORKER/CHINGARI public meeting: NVT—what next? Trade union speakers. Thursday 14 August, 8pm, Malborough pub, corner of Sydenham Road and Montgomery Street Small Heath.
LOUGHBOROUGH IS public meeting—Portugal—workers' power, military dictatorship or return to fascism? Speaker: Russ Bowman (ASTMS) just returned from Portugal, Charnwood Pub, The Rushes, Thursday 12 August, 7.45pm, All welcome.
CAMBRIDGE IS public meeting: Socialism and human nature. Speaker: Duncan Hallas. Monday 18 August, 8pm, Duke of Argyle, Argyle Street, off Mill Road.
RHYL IS public meeting: The myth of Welsh nationalism. Speaker: B Williams. Friday 7 August, 7.30pm, Rhyl Football Club, Grange Road. All welcome.
SOUTHEAST LONDON CHINGARI public meeting: Crisis in India. Wednesday 13 August, 8pm, Committee Room, Erith Town Hall, Bexley Road, Erith.
GLC COUNCIL WORKERS IS public meeting: Portugal—where next? Speaker Colin Sparks. Thursday 7 August, 12.30pm. The Pillbox (opposite the Island Block) County Hall, SE1.
GLC COUNCIL WORKERS IS public meeting: No to the wage freeze and the cuts! Speakers to be announced. Thursday 28 August, 12.30pm, The Pillbox (opposite the Island Block) County Hall, SE1.
S W LONDON DISTRICT IS public meeting: Fight Labour's wage freeze! Speakers: to be announced. Thursday 21 August, 8pm, Lower Assembly Hall, Lambeth Town Hall.
SOUTHAMPTON Chingari public meeting: Crisis in India. Speaker: Farooq Newaz. Saturday 9 August, 6.45pm. St Matthews Hall, St Mary's Road.

The way to make an impact

By Jimmy McCallum
 ONE OF THE BEST ways for IS District Committees to establish a local identity is to put Socialist Worker on the map by selling it consistently in public.
 In Glasgow, we have established a tradition of regular weekend sales in the city centre. The main sale starts on Friday afternoon when we organise a rota of sellers at both the main railway stations from 3pm to 6pm.
 On Saturday, a rota covers these stations all day, and sellers cover all the main shopping streets in the town centre. Because we have been able to cover these spots consistently, the sales now amount to more than 300 a week.



NO RETURN TO BACK STREET ABORTION
 SINCE 1967 WHEN THE ABORTION LAW WAS CHANGED THE NUMBER OF BACKSTREET ABORTIONS HAVE FALLEN BY THREE QUARTERS
DEFEAT THE JAMES WHITE ABORTION (AMENDMENT) BILL
 A SOCIALIST WORKER/WOMENS VOICE PAMPHLET

PRINT—How You Can Do It Yourself takes the lid off all the mysterious varieties of printing now available. It has a good section on getting the best out of duplicating and a full description of how to make a silkscreen press and how to use it for leaflets and posters.
 This covers simple hand-cut stencils, blocking the screen with painted fillers or photo stencils for the more ambitious!
 It not only covers printing, but has a useful section on how to produce artwork for photostencils and litho printing. Printers' terms and paper sizes are fully explained.
 Written for impoverished small groups, it seems the answer to all the needs of IS branches.
EVE BARKER

Meetings for IS members and Socialist Worker supporters
YORKSHIRE Regional IS summer school: weekend 30-31 August (starts 11am Saturday), Trades Club, Saville Mount, off Chapeltown Road, Leeds 7.
IS AGITPROP CONFERENCE: sessions on photography for socialists, designing and producing posters, using slides and tapes, socialist films, socialist theatre, organising a political social—everything to do using art to help build a socialist workers' movement. Weekend 27/28 September in Manchester. Registration £1 to Roland Muldoon, 11c Cabbell Street, London, NW1.
IS TEACHERS fraction school! Thursday and Friday 28/29 August, starting 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Sessions on The Crisis in Capitalism: economic background, Portugal and the Education Cuts; Building the Party; the Role of teachers. For accommodation/creche, contact Jeanie Holbrow, 9 Crosby Road, London E3 (01-634 1980).

Regular
 Most buyers are regulars who get the paper on the way home from work or while they're out shopping. Through these regular sales we have attracted a considerable number of workers, some have joined IS, others have become part of our growing number of supporters. Street sales can help build the organisation.
 The sales are also a good training ground, particularly for the younger members of the organisation. Selling the paper in the streets means talking and arguing with people about politics. Younger comrades have to develop self-confidence and an ability to relate to people who may be interested in our politics.
 Street sellers are now a regular site in Glasgow's city centre at weekends. Along with the already established pub sales, the street sales are extending the readership of Socialist Worker in this area.
 It is something that every district can organise. If done consistently it will spread our influence in every locality.

THE SOCIALIST Worker/Womens Voice fact sheet on abortion is now ready. Price 1p, it should be used by every District to spread the campaign against the Abortion (Amendment) Bill, and the reappointment of the Select Committee.
 Each District and branch committee should detail plans for selling the fact sheet from now until the autumn.
Organise:
 1 sales inside and outside factories. Every member should take copies to sell at work.
 2 union branches: sell at the meetings, and get your union branch to take a bulk order.
 3 hospitals—get the union branches to take orders, sell copies to every nurse and doctor.
 4 estates—take round copies to sell, and persuade people who buy one to take several more for their friends.

section); Grimsthorpe NUM, Houghton Main NUM; Barnsley Health Service NALGO.
 Order fact sheets from: Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. 1p a copy. Bulk orders, 50p for 75.
Resolutions against the Bill have been passed in the following branches: Rotherham branch, AJEW (construction

SCHOOL STUDENTS
 TWENTY school students attended a recent day school and heard a report on the situation in Portugal which gave a clear run-down of the different political organisations.
 Policy towards the National Union of School Students was also discussed. The possibilities of working within it seem good.
 The last topic, Education and Socialism was useful. The differences between the education available to the working class and the ruling class were made very clear, with the working class, of course, coming off by far the worst.
 Unfortunately, the IS school students

Part-time clerical assistant wanted for IS work at Cottons Gardens. Office experience preferred. Apply Mel Norris, 01-739 1878.
SPECIAL OFFER: Issues 66-73 of International Socialism journal, including articles on The Rank and File Movement, The Communist International, Lenin's Pravda, Ireland, the Miners' Strike, Women, Portugal, Asia, the Ulster Workers' Council strike, the Detroit car workers' struggle, Fascism in Britain, the Industrial Relations Act, White-collar workers, Redundancies, closures and the sit-in tactic. Eight issues (original price £1.20) for 70p, postage included. Orders to International Socialism Journal, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.
MANCHESTER IS needs all sorts of books, political and non-political, for a used book sale to raise funds. Will comrades please bring any books to the bookshop as soon as possible.
SCOTLAND: Any IS member or sympathiser with political knowledge of the Fort William/Kinlochleven/Lochaber area of Western Scotland please contact IS national office, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 (phone 01-739 1878) for contact with member in Ross-shire.
Updated Speakers' notes on THE REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL: Send 2p plus stamped addressed envelope to Eiana Dallas, 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.
WOMEN'S VOICE needs someone to work unpaid at least half a day a week, to look after the subscriptions and bookshop orders. Ring Barbara 01-739 2639.
WILL IS members attending the Trades Union Congress in September either as delegates or observers please contact Industrial Department: 01-739 6273
NORTH LONDON IS are organising a fund-raising jumble sale in early September. We need all the jumble we can get. It should be brought to IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4—or phone 01-802 6145 to arrange for collection.

IS BULLETIN out 27 August, 10p. Orders from branch secretaries (with money) to Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.



What we stand for

THE International Socialists are a revolutionary socialist organisation open to all who accept our main principles and who are willing to work to achieve them. These principles are:
Independent working-class action
 We believe that socialism can only be achieved by the independent action of the working class.
Revolution not reformism
 We believe in overthrowing capitalism, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it. We therefore support all struggles of workers against capitalism and fight to break the hold of reformist ideas and leaders.
The smashing of the capitalist state
 The state machine is a

weapon of capitalist class rule and therefore must be smashed. The present parliament, army, police and judges cannot simply be taken over and used by the working class. There is, therefore, no parliamentary road to socialism. The working-class revolution needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state, based on councils of workplace delegates.
Work in the mass organisations of the working class
 We believe in working in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly the trade unions, and fighting for rank and file control of them.
Internationalism
 We are internationalists. We practise and campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries, oppose racialism and imperialism, and fully support the struggles of all oppressed peoples. We are opposed to all immigration controls. The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation. Russia, China and Eastern Europe are not socialist but state capitalist. We support the workers' struggle in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

The revolutionary party
 To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party, and all the activity of the International Socialists is directed to the building of such a party by fighting for a programme of political and industrial demands that can strengthen the self-confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.
WE ARE
 For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials. No secret negotiations. All settlements to be voted on by mass meetings.
 For 100 per cent trade unionism. Against all victimisations and blacklisting. Against anti-trade union laws or curbs on the right to strike and on effective picketing.
 Against productivity or efficiency deals. Against any form of incomes policy under capitalism.
 Against unemployment, redundancies and lay-offs. Instead we demand five days work or five days pay, and the 35-hour week.
 For nationalisation without compensation under workers' control.

For militant trade union unity, joint shop stewards committees at plant and combine level.
 For the building of a national rank and file movement which will fight for these policies in the trade union movement.
 Against racialism and police victimisation of black people. Against all immigration controls. For the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.
 For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Against all forms of imperialism, including Russian imperialism.
 For unconditional support to all genuine national liberation movements.
 For the building of a mass workers' revolutionary party, organised in the workplace, which can lead the working class to power, and for the building of a revolutionary socialist international.

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

Name _____

Address _____

Trade Union _____

By ROGER KLINE

A shop steward at Massey Ferguson, Coventry, the scene of a recent factory occupation.

PRICES of 'goods of basic need' leap 30 per cent in nine months. The currency is constantly devaluing. 200,000 engineering workers demand a wage increase. After four months of talks, the industrialists' spokesman dismisses the trade unions' case:

'All discussion is useless. The industrialists will not grant any increase at all. Since the end of the war they've done nothing but drop their pants. We've had enough. Now we're going to start on you.'

This was Italy, 1920. The speaker, Rotigliano, later a fascist. The main union involved, FIOM, responded with a militant work-to-rule.

Out of a simple wages claim and a work-to-rule at a time of crisis emerged one of the greatest periods of working-class struggle Europe has seen this century. A struggle whose greatest heights still have lessons for us, and whose ultimate defeat was to lead to fascism.

The work-to-rule inevitably led to a lock-out. Within four days, 400,000 metal workers had occupied their factories and the wave was still spreading to small towns and other industries.

The movement was most advanced in Turin. Here the occupations were led by the factory councils for which revolutionaries had been campaigning. Absenteeism was under ten per cent, production was maintained at many factories while committees organised provisioning, subsidies, kitchens, internal discipline, defence and propaganda.

The ruling class were terrified. With hardly a shot fired, the workers were taking control. Industrialists demanded action from the middle of the road Prime Minister Giolitti.

Fool

He replied: 'How could I stop the occupation? (Simply) to occupy the factories I would have had to use all forces at my disposal! And who would exercise surveillance over the 500,000 workers outside the factories?'

But Giolitti was no fool. A prototype Harold Wilson, he knew the occupations could develop out of hand. But he also knew the weak point of the workers.

Within five days, FIOM was ready to accept a compromise wage rise. Buoizzi, the FIOM leader, was worried about the movement getting out of hand. He wanted a 'return to negotiations'. But the employers stood firm.

Growing rumours (largely unfounded) about the arming of the workers, together with increasing support from the railwaymen, escalated the situation.

After three weeks without wages, workers were looking for a lead, for a way forward. And the occupations, begun as a defensive measure transformed their thinking.

There were plans to sell the goods produced. In the area round Genoa, Italy's greatest port, moves were afoot for a general sit-in. The workers held back, waiting for the CGL (TUC) emergency congress.

On 11 September, the CGL, having shouted about socialism for many months, had the power at its elbow. A massive and still growing factory occupation faced an hyster-



1920—and Italian workers seize their factories: but the revolutionary upsurge was lost

The price of defeat

IN 'TWO RED YEARS', ITALY'S TRADE UNION LEADERS SNATCHED DEFEAT FROM THE BRINK OF VICTORY. THE RESULT WAS MUSSOLINI—AND FASCISM.

ical but paralysed employing class.

Giolitti allowed the Congress to take place. His faith was justified. No preparations had been made.

By a three to two majority, the GCL decided the time was not ripe for revolution. The smaller reformist areas and the huge agricultural workers' union (totally bypassed by land seizures taking place in the South) held a majority. And the railwaymen were not represented, neither was the large and militant USI union.

Chance

The unions wanted an urgent solution, short of revolution but without defeat. Giolitti saw his chance.

A formula in principle for some union 'control' over production was reached.

To the factory councils was counterposed the drawing of the trade unions into a more 'intense collaboration and a wider vision of

the national interest', to 'awaken once more in the worker the lost zest for intensely and joyfully productive labour', as a leader of the massive Socialist Party put it.

In return for this, and a moderate wage increase, the strikers were balloted on a return to work. In the weaker factories, weary and confused, the workers concentrated on getting some payment for the time lost.

The best-organised areas were hostile but disillusioned. As a leading worker in Florence put it:

'Boys, we have to have a referendum. If we say yes we move out of the factory; If we say no, they boot us out.'

They voted to return. Half a million workers, barricaded in factories with arms at their disposal, had acted almost without a single violent incident. The leaders of the unions considered the settlement a triumph.

But higher stakes were being played for. The workers were getting

weary. The wage increase would be wiped out by inflation. And growing unemployment was soon to make meaningless the 'control' so painfully gained.

Far from being yet another step towards the socialist revolution, as many saw it, within weeks and months the occupations became seen as the final climax of the post-war crisis.

In his excellent book* Paolo Spriano explains how such a remarkable situation was reached—and how, like sand, it slipped through the fingers of the workers' movement.

Too late, the Italian revolutionaries drew their own conclusions. In the wake of defeat and with unemployment rising, they formed a Communist Party.

Mussolini

Had such a party existed to prevent the isolation of the best-organised factories and cities, to make sure factory councils were formed to lead the strike everywhere, to overcome sectarianism between different unions, to link up with the land seizure movement led by ex-soldiers at the other end of Italy and, above all, to turn the slogans about socialism into practical plans—had all this occurred, the trade union 'victory' might not have turned into political massacre by Mussolini.

The book brilliantly describes and explains this remarkable period. At a time of growing crisis in this country, it is a must for every revolutionary shop steward and trade unionist—short on waffle but full of relevant politics.

**The Occupation of the Factories: Italy 1920* by Paolo Spriano, (Pluto Press, £2 paperback, £5.50 hardback). Available from Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1. 8LH. Add 25p for post and packing.



The businessmen who financed fascism: from the top, Giovanni Agnello (Fiat), Alberto Pirelli (tyre magnate), Mario and Pio Ferrone (of the armaments firm Ansaldo), Antonio Benni (employers' federation chairman) and Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata (tycoon)

SATURDAY
BBC-2: 9.40pm. REMEMBER HIROSHIMA? . . . AND NAGASKI on 2ND HOUSE is an interview with professor Philip Morrison who helped build the A-Bomb and now wonders if it was a good idea . . .

SUNDAY
BBC-2: 7.25pm. THE WORLD ABOUT US IN DEEPEST BRITAIN examines what wildlife there is sitting out there in the countryside. MASTER AND MARGARITA (BBC-2, 9.55pm) is, says the BBC, 'a surrealist fantasy which tells the story of a momentous visit paid by Lucifer himself to Moscow in the 1920's'.

MONDAY
BBC-2: 9pm. Scotch will make you drunk and fags will kill you, but dope will put you inside. The ruling class have spent the last 15 years failing to prove that cannabis is more harmful than alcohol. Some paranoid drug-crazed hippies and long hairs think it is

ON THE BOX

part of a ruling class plot against them. They are probably right. HORIZON examines history of the drug and its use.

TUESDAY
BBC-2: 8.15pm. THE TIME DETECTIVES: THE HOUSES THE PICTS BUILT on the 'oldest standing houses in North-West Europe the 4500 year old Pict settlement in the Orkneys. Hitler's favourite film was, it is said, Fritz Lang's METROPOLIS, he was, presumably rooting for the baddies. This early 1930s science fiction film about a revolt in a city based on industrial serfdom. The final scene of the film cops out, but it is an eerily trailer for the regime to be established in Germany about two years later (BBC-2, 9pm).

WEDNESDAY
BBC-1: 10.20pm. SUCCESS STORY: PUNCH AND JUDY on the 2000 year

old history of the puppet show. THE ASCENT OF MAN: KNOWLEDGE OR CERTAINTY? about the 'moral dilemma' says the BBC blurb ominously, of the 'scientist in our time' (BBC-2, 8.10pm). British food is probably the worst in Europe because of the early, and total destruction of the peasantry in this country. As we were marched into the industrial slums we were greeted by an ancestor of Cap'n Birds Eye, and it's been all down hill ever since . . . TASTE OF BRITAIN (BBC-2, 7.45pm) is a new series on the remains of British regional food.

THURSDAY
BBC-2: 9.30pm. TEN YEARS OF MAN ALIVE continues with their film OF THE LATE SIXTIES IN AMERICA. A group of monkeys on a Puerto Rican island in THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE RHESUS MACAQUE (BBC-1, 6.25pm).

On RADIO-4 at 8.45pm is a documentary on football, 48 HOURS TO KICK-OFF.

NIGEL FOUNTAIN

LETTERS

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.

Volunteers we can do without...

VOLUNTARY redundancy is one of the most dangerous weapons being used against the unity of the working class by the Wilson-Tory alliance.

Shop stewards often find it hard to argue that their individual members have no right to bargain away their jobs in exchange for personal gain. The money paid to the individual is gained at the expense of the class as a whole, which finds itself with fewer jobs.

If your boss offered you, say, £1000 in cash to do two people's work instead of one, you'd tell him to get stuffed. But that's just what's happening with voluntary redundancy.

Dole

You agree to leave a job, so it can't be filled by anyone else, and you occupy a second job, with a different employer. Effectively you're taking on two people's jobs for one wage—in exchange for 30 pieces of silver.

Our task is to sort what needs to be done, and then share the load equally among everyone capable of working. If that means working 32 or even 24 hours a week, without reducing earnings, then that's fine!

It's going to take a revolution to reach the age of common sense, but in the meantime, let's at least share the work, and the leisure, and tell them we don't want the dole queue.

Voluntary redundancy is a sophisticated form of blacklegging.—JULIAN GOSS, TGWU, Stelrad.

A sad case

MANY of the million workers now out of a job will be sorry to hear that their members are being swelled by some of those who previously earned more than £8,500 a year.

Is this a case of excessive wage claims leading directly to unemployment?

No, because the next day they get the same job back at a higher rate of pay, thus neatly side-stepping the government's freeze on incomes.

Perhaps this could be the basis of a strategy for local authority and hospital workers when our claims come up later this year? On second thoughts, perhaps we'd better stick to more traditional methods.—TIM SOUTH, NUPE steward, St James Hospital, Leeds.

ROY JENKINS and Shirley Williams are to speak at Newham Town hall next month in defence of the wretched Prentice. What a good idea if trade union members affiliated to the Labour Party, disgruntled Labour Party members, and anyone else nauseated by these people, turned up to put their point of view... a splendid opportunity.—JULIAN HARBER, London, SW19.

PORTUGAL: OUR RESPONSIBILITY

SOCIALIST Worker repeatedly refers to the 'Revolution in Portugal', meaning the revolutionary process going on there at this time.

Let us be clear, though, that the workers do not hold state power but are in a pre-revolutionary period, building their own organs of power, the revolutionary workers' and soldiers' councils.

The state of confusion between Socialists and Communists, both of whom want to win control over the workers, at this time forestalls the opportunity for a successful armed

workers' uprising. Such opportunities do not come often and they can only be grasped by an experienced workers' party. The Bolsheviks had to wait 12 years for their second chance.

Insurrection is the art of choosing the correct moment to strike, and knowing the sum total of resources. The PRP-BR of Portugal has grown very fast in size and influence in the past year and is better placed than any other party to lead the revolution.

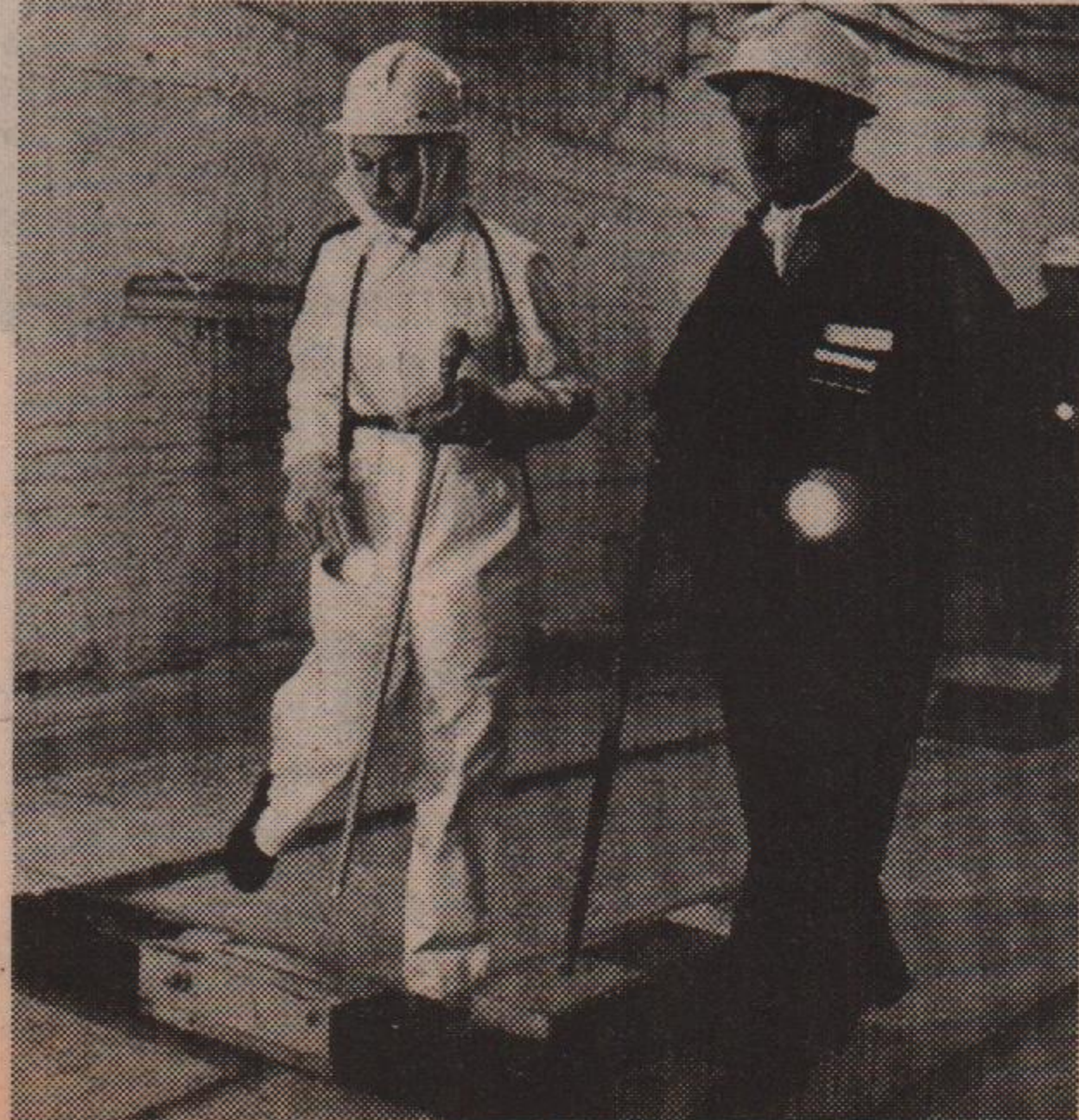
Their military experience under

fascism has taught them the art of guerilla action. The question revolutionary socialist in Britain must be asking is—can they lead the Portuguese revolution?

The PRP-BR has only recently formed a mass legal organisation. This may be their main disadvantage when it comes to the crunch.

What a responsibility is on our own shoulders to ensure that a strong revolutionary party is built in Britain by the time a similar situation occurs here.—ANDY WISTREICH, Partington.

AN EXERCISE IN WHITEWASH



The myth and the reality of life down the pit: for the Queen, it's gleaming white walls and a carefree journey to the coalface, for miners, it's a black cage.

AN ARMY of men were sent down a pit in Rotherham Yorkshire last week to make it look clean and safe for the Queen's visit. It's easy, with plenty of whitewash. In the same week, another three miners were killed in Yorkshire pits; one in Dodworth, one in Kilnhurst and one in Lofthouse. That brings the total number killed this year to 14. Another record for safety.

We don't know how much it cost the Coal Board to paint over the dirt in the pits, but it cost the local council £1000 to pay for a stainless steel screen to hide the nearest ladies and gents, when the Queen went to open the new County Council offices.—DAVE GIBSON, Barinsley.

So this is justice, is it?

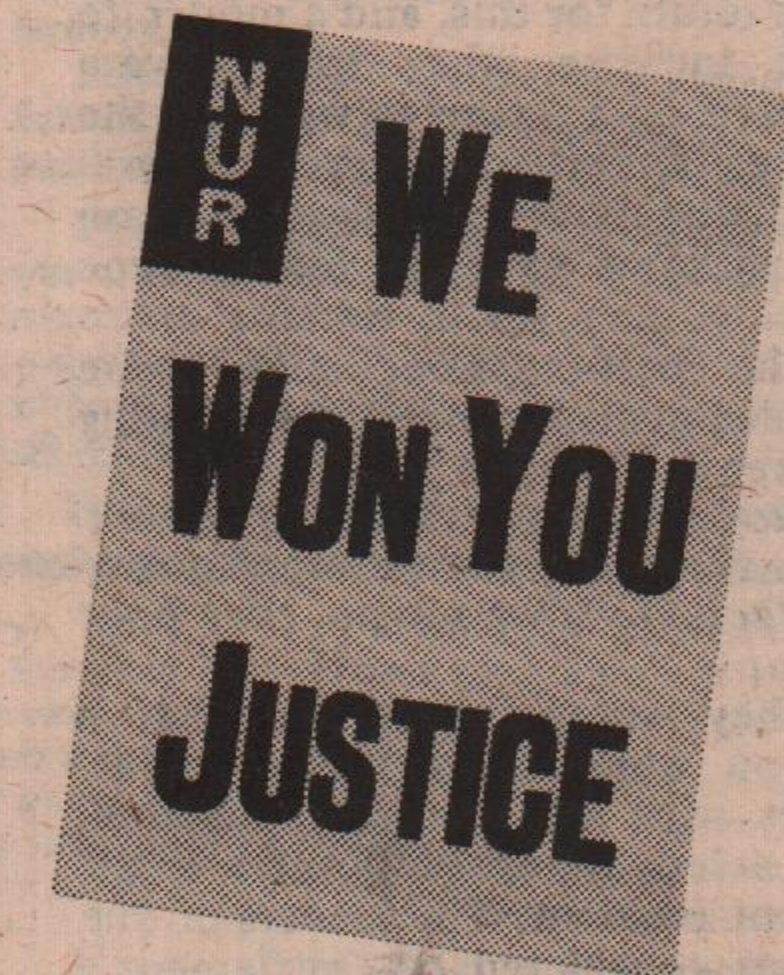
SOME justice! We have now received our first pay packets at the new rate of pay. Before, as a leading railman, I could expect to take home £25 on a flat week.

Our 'social contract busting' pay awards puts me on a new basic of £26.60, and last week's take-home pay amounted to £26.

But worse is to come. The strike threat won us an extra two and a half per cent on our basic from August, a miserable 72p. And in all probability this will be deducted from the £6 maximum allowed under the new pay laws.

And still the National Union of Railwaymen's conference overwhelmingly accepted the government's pay freeze. Once again the NUR has shown it is prepared to put loyalty to our so-called socialist government before its members' interests.

As government attacks on workers' living standards increase, with the connivance of most



union leaders, only a strong rank and file movement of workers in all the rail unions can turn the unions into servants of the membership, rather than cheer-leaders for the most vicious anti-working class government since the war.—DECLAN O'NEILL, Altrincham NUR, Manchester.

Why we should support Scargill

FEW READERS would argue against the need for constant criticism of the so-called left-wing trade union leaders who, in reality, sell their members and the working class down the river.

However, before launching into these attacks, Socialist Worker should examine the facts of each individual very carefully.

The attack on Arthur Scargill (front page 12 July) was totally unwarranted. Dave Gibson pointed out the real facts in the 19 July issue. It was all the more unfortunate that the attack should coincide with the assault against him on the television and in the papers.

Arthur Scargill needs to be defended most vigorously by militants everywhere. As a national trade union leader, he stands head and shoulders above all the others.

Defence

He is the only one to date who at every opportunity injects the class element into debate in the press and on TV. Seeing him on TV immediately after the miners' conference decision left no doubt in my mind that every inch of tactical retreat had been forced upon him by his so-called friends on the left.

This retreat, which must have been accepted by him in some measure as a personal defeat as well as a defeat for the whole labour movement, did not leave him cowed and wilting (as it might have lesser leaders).

It drove him on courageously arguing our argument—that those who create the crisis must pay for the crisis.—B KELLY, AUEW, Doncaster.

TWO YEARS OF TORTURE, JAIL AND DEATH

DURING a general strike against the Fascist dictatorship in Uruguay, in July 1973, several railwaymen, including Raul Olivera, Luis Ramundo, Lucas Pena and Nayda Sosa, all of whom were members of the Railway Resistance Committee, were arrested, tortured and then sent to the prison camp at Penarol.

They are still there; and like 6000 other political prisoners they have had no charges brought against them.

In December of the same year, Gilberto Goghlan, a chemical worker and an anarchist member of the Worker-Student Resistance (ROE) was arrested and died under torture.

Another libertarian communist, Luis Vega, was also tortured by the police, but he was sent to the Britanco Hospital where comrades of the Federation of Health Workers saved his life.

In December, 1974, members of the ROE and other revolutionary socialists started a campaign, mainly through the paper La Viz de las Resistencia Popular, for the release of all political prisoners.

They are appealing to all libertarian communists and socialists to help them on the international level. Would readers of Socialist Worker bring this matter up in their rank and file groups, union branches, etc, and make certain that the Uruguayan Embassy is more than aware of the issue?—PETER NEWELL, Anarchist Workers' Association, Colchester.

It's called Christian morality...

THIRTY squatters were forced from a row of empty houses in Portsmouth recently by the Sheriff and police and demolition men.

The squatters' possessions were thrown out on the street. One guy wouldn't leave. So he was assisted by a big, friendly policeman who threw him out, banging his head on the pavement.

The council men smashed the sinks and toilets, and disconnected all electrical fittings. So that the squatters wouldn't come back, even the floor boards were removed.

Yet these places aren't going to be demolished for five years. Many of the people were on Social Security. One woman had a five-month-old baby. Now they have nowhere to go.

Here in the South there are many holiday homes for the rich. The students have not got proper houses to live in, either in Portsmouth or Southampton.

John Cordle, MP for Bournemouth West, thinks squatting is a breakdown of Christian morality. I suppose a system which relies on money and exploitation of people for gain is Christian!

It is not Christian to refuse people shelter when there are 800,000 houses which could be used.—SW READER, Poole, Dorset.

CAN YOU enlighten me about Ethiopia? There seems to be a complete news blackout, other than a news item several months ago about nationalists fighting with government troops for an independent Eritrea. A statement by the new military junta heard on the TV soon after the overthrow of the emperor was that the Junta was in the process of building a modern socialist state.—N BREWARD, Stoke.

IS IT NOT bizarre how the Russian 'socialist' government is joining the capitalist EEC is not granting aid to Portugal's ailing economy at such a crucial time? It can, however, send spacemen up into the sky, at the cost of millions, to shake hands with Americans. Perhaps this is what Lenin really meant about internationalism!—BILL McDONELL, Manchester.

The fight against sackings

MASS STRIKES SET TO BACK JOURNALISTS

NATIONWIDE strikes in support of the 245 sacked Birmingham journalists were expected this week—more than a month after the dispute began. They should be supported by every journalist.

The 245, all members of the National Union of Journalists, are fighting one of the most important and bitter battles in provincial journalism for years.

The dispute, over a pay claim submitted a year ago, is between one of the most powerful provincial newspaper employers and the largest union chapel (office branch).

A victory is essential. Next month talks start in a new pay deal for 9000 provincial journalists, and the fate of the union's claim largely depends on the outcome of the Birmingham dispute.

After a month of fierce intimidation by their bosses, the Birmingham Post and Mail Ltd, the journalists met on Friday to consider the latest management ploy—a 'return to work' formula which, if accepted, would have meant a humiliating defeat for the union.

They threw it out, and in doing so declared their intention to fight on harder than ever.

The overwhelming decision at Friday's meeting will now force the union's reluctant national officers to start calling provincial strikes in support of the dispute, which was the unanimous decision of a special union one-day conference ten days ago.

CUTS

The Birmingham Post and Mail Ltd are a rich company. They are part of a local group which owns strings of weekly papers in the Midlands and London. Their profits over the past six years have amounted to about £12 million.

But all they have been prepared to offer the journalists on the Birmingham Post and Evening Mail (their high-prestige and money-spinning papers) is £1 a week. Even the chairman, J L Brown, has described the offer as 'bloody paltry'.

Mr Brown, who is next year's president of the employers' federation, the Newspaper Society, has said there is no more cash available.

The journalists are having great difficulty understanding this especially as the company is preparing to launch a new evening paper at great expense in the Black Country.

Soon after the lock-out, the company announced redundancies and also the cutback of production of the Birmingham Post from six to five

Aidan White reports from Birmingham



NUJ members at last Friday's meeting: now solidarity strikes may be called

PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

days. They also used their influence with the Newspaper Society to call off talks on a national pay claim until the journalists gave up the fight.

This sparked a wave of disruptive meetings throughout the country as outraged journalists protested at the cynical blackmail being used by the employers. Within a week the talks were on again.

The final and most blatant attempt to undermine the morale of the locked-out journalists was made in the 'return to work' statement by chairman Brown.

In it, the journalists were 'offered' the original £1 a week (a £13,500 offer in total) plus £50 cash loans to 'ease hardship'.

In return, the journalists were to go back to work accepting redundancies and a host of other conditions which would have had the effect of rendering the union impotent within the company.

The angry chapel would have none of it, but the next day Mr Brown would withdraw only one of the conditions he had laid down.

The attitude of the union leadership in the dispute has been, pre-

dictably, unhelpful, General Secretary Ken Morgan went to Birmingham last week for further negotiations.

He was met at the station by Mr Brown's uniformed chauffeur who whistled Morgan into the company's offices. Preliminary arrangements by chapel officers to meet Morgan at the station were not taken up.

ALERT

Morgan and other NUJ leaders have had repeated requests for the action to be escalated, especially from militant newspaper chapels in the London area. They have not been taken up.

But now further action will have to be taken. The stringent 24-hour picketing which has been in force since the dispute began has stopped newsprint and ink supplies to the company, and the chapel expect their blockade of the works to stop publication within a few days.

The other unions at the company, with the exception of SLADE—the picture block makers—have told their chapels to 'work normally'. But now the journalists believe they can bring the works to a halt themselves.

Their effectiveness will be multiplied with the extension of the action to other newspapers.

As Peter Deeley, chapel member, told the meeting on Friday: 'The management have given us their terms; in a short while we will be giving them ours—and they'll be the ones who will have to agree.'

Cash, messages of support to: Disputes Committee, Birmingham Press Club, Corporation Street, Birmingham.

Observer men fight to stop the rot

The men intend to report for work, hand back the notices and—if management refuse to take everyone on—picket the plant.

What has happened in the chapel is that more and more workers are beginning to feel that jobs in the trade must at all costs be preserved.

Fact

Management is determined to destroy 75 jobs in the machine chapel, out of the present total of 180. These moves are unquestionably the spearhead of an operation which the Newspaper Proprietors Association hopes to carry throughout Fleet Street.

This is yet another reason why The Observer NATSOPA chapel have decided to stand firm. They feel that if they accept any redundancies the floodgates will open throughout the trade.

NATSOPA Observer workers are also very sceptical of the idea that workers should pay the price for the present crisis.

They have seen the Astor Trust borrow vast amounts of money to buy property from Lord Tomson only for the deal to go wrong as a result of the collapse of the property market.

They feel that if they agree to pay the price for that operation, then it will not be very long before management comes along and asks them to pay for a whole lot more.

Ban

They also feel the newspaper employers as a whole should be forced to guarantee job security in the industry. They don't accept the dog-eat-dog logic of some papers folding while other papers and proprietors prosper.

They see no reason why the profitable empires like Pearson Longman and Associated Newspapers should not be compelled to put some of their printing into The Observer to overcome the present ludicrous situation.

At the moment the machinery stands idle all week—a situation which arose because of management's inability to come to some sort of agreement with The Guardian—and could be solved in a whole number of ways, including socially useful printing.

To defend their jobs, Observer workers need support from printworkers throughout Fleet Street and whose jobs are also under threat.

Many of those workers are also confused by the barrage of propaganda about 'overmanning' in Fleet Street.

Order

Observer workers have a ready answer to this allegation. They point to where the real overmanning in industry lies—the shareholders and proprietors who have been kept in wealth and luxury over the last 50 years, the many new profitable enterprises which have grown on the basis of fortunes made in and around Fleet Street, the teams of managers and consultants who are copping tens of thousands a year for doing no productive work at all.

Another problem is that some workers might still think that they could benefit from selling jobs.

In fact, it looks as if the employers are now determined to destroy those jobs without even token payment. Furthermore, such comprehensive scheme payments are now according to the White Paper to be deducted from the miserable £6 government pay limit.

In any case, as The Observer workers are insisting, no trade unionist has the right to sell another man or woman's job.

Steel: Now let's hit back!

By a steelworker from Cleveland works, Teesside.

and unions will draw up a list of 'surplus jobs' on every plant, and then make men redundant.

Work-sharing is to be introduced. Management can move men from job to job and even from plant to plant as they wish.

On top of all this, 'natural wastage' is to continue. The Corporation claim to have saved £60 million since the union agreed to accept natural wastage. This means at least 12,000 jobs have already been lost.

As a militant in the steel industry, now facing redundancy, this latest sell-out by the steel union leaders comes as no surprise to me. The steel unions are undemocratic, right-wing, and completely unrepresentative of their members' interests.

They have sold us down the river time and time again. The union

leaders, Bill Sirs and Hector Smith, are having a cosy time—they have their jobs for life. The idea of leading their unions into a fight with the Corporation probably never even occurs to them.

Shop-floor steelworkers have to tell the bosses—and the unions—where to stick redundancy schemes. We have to fight on two fronts: against the British Steel Corporation, to protect our jobs, and inside our unions for union democracy and full-time officials who are elected by the membership and recallable if the people they represent don't like their policies.

No redundancies! Let's tell the steel corporation that we are not going to let them get out of their difficulties at the expense of our jobs, and build the rank and file movement that can carry this fight.

LAST WEDNESDAY was a great day for the bosses in the steel industry. They reached an agreement with the leaders of the steel unions which will lead to the loss of 10,000 jobs in the next few weeks. The unions also signed away the guaranteed working week.

On a selective works-to-works basis, employees with less than 12 months service will be made redundant. The British Steel Corporation won't even have to pay our redundancy money, as it only pays out to workers with more than two year's service.

Employees over 60 will be offered voluntary redundancy.

The guaranteed working week will be suspended. A large number of steelworkers will only get work for three weeks out of four. On the fourth week, they will have to sign on the dole.

On a local level, management

WEEK ONE OF WAGE CONTROLS

The boot goes in on the low-paid

by Steve Jefferys

IN a scramble of union officials hurrying to sell their members out for miserable wage rises, Labour's new wage laws came into force last Friday.

The squeals of acceptance from most union officials sound strangely like the protests against Heath's wage controls of 1972-4. As with the Tory wage laws, the weakest and worst paid are again the worst casualties.

The shabby treatment given to Avonmouth dockers by their employers and the government's Conciliation and Arbitration Service is just one example. Hundreds of employers followed suit and denied their workers any interim wage rise before 1 August, knowing well they could now tear up all their earlier promises.

Many of Britain's lowest-paid workers stand to gain only a tiny wage rise within 18 or 24 months unless the laws can be smashed. Similarly, workers who thought they could get protection against 25 per cent inflation by winning a cost-of-living agreement have discovered that any payments after 1 August will be deducted from the £6 maximum.

So postmen, the first major victims of Heath's confrontation tactics of 1971, now stand to get no real wage increases at all this year.

Claim veto- Avon dockers walk out

AVONMOUTH: Dockers staged a 36-hour walk-out after their claim for a £10 interim pay award to keep up with the soaring cost of living was thrown out by the government Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

In January the arbitration board agreed to an interim award if there was a 'substantial rise in the cost of living. When the Port of Bristol Authority management, refused to make any offer, the port stewards organised a series of section strikes in support of the claim.

When the claim was taken to the 'unbiased' Conciliation and Arbitration Service, the dockers' case was put by the local Transport Union full-time official, who convinced himself that the employers' arguments had all been exposed. When the report came out, it recommended that no interim award was justified.

The dockers were taken by surprise. They had been confident that a just claim would be met. They relied on their negotiators to argue their case and represent their interests. They relied on the national negotiators of the Transport Union to vote for their claim.

Unprepared for a long fight, the dockers were forced to accept the claim, but the 36-hour walk-out registered their anger. The meeting also endorsed the stewards' recommendation to carry out disruptive action until the employers agree to pay a £6 rise next January.

It is clear that with the Labour government and the trade union leadership hand in glove with the employers over pay, the dockers will have to rely on their own rank and file strength.

Avonmouth dockers are the worst paid in the country. Avonmouth is part of one of the strongest organised industries in the country. If the rank and file in the ports link up, they can smash the government's £6 limit and win a decent wage rise.

Transport Union leader Jack Jones' original proposal for £10 a week flat rate rises for everyone can now be seen for what it was: a cover to allow Labour Ministers Denis Healey and Michael Foot the room to ensure that low-paid workers don't get the regular big rises they need to fight inflation.

Don't be taken in. The government isn't saying every low-paid worker can have £6. It's saying that the better-organised may get as much as £6 while the badly organised will get less.

No

That's why a massive No in the miners' ballot on the £6 limit is essential. If the best-organised workers forge ahead then there's a chance that the low-paid can too. That's also why every trade unionist should support those workers, such as the Commercial Cable strikers in London and the Tipton steel workers in the Midlands, who are continuing their struggle for rises of £15 or £12.50 a week—which is what you need now to keep up with inflation.

This is why we must redouble our efforts in every union and every industry to create rank-and-file organisations and build the National Rank and File Movement, creating the links that will bring the low-paid, weaker sections of workers the support of the strong.

Workers fighting the £6 limit

STEELWORKERS OUT FOR £12.50

TIPTON, Staffs: 500 members of the Iron and Steel Workers Union at the London Steel Works are staging a series of 24-hour strikes in support of their claim for £12.50 across the board.

The claim, which is right outside the £6 limit, is the shop floor's response to years of derisory awards from the Midlands Wages Council—a cosy talking shop for employers and full time union officials.

Management and union officials have lined up against the workers. Jack Gavin, the union's Midland's divisional organiser attacked his members' actions as 'totally unconstitutional' and claims that they are endangering their own jobs by acting outside the normal negotiating procedure.

The management have been quick to use the tools that the Labour government and TUC have handed them to try to break the unity of workers. They have sent every worker a letter pleading poverty and stating: 'Your action is in defiance of the Social Contract endorsed and supported by the TUC.'

They also quote from the government's White Paper to prove that cost of living rises agreed under the last agreement will have to be deducted from their £6 maximum offer.

The president of the works union branch has attacked this unholy alliance. He told Socialist Worker: 'For years the wages board has accepted moderate wage offers from employers who can well afford to pay. Only rank and file shop-floor action is going to protect our wages and conditions. Friendly get-togethers between management and local full-time officials will get us nothing.'

STRIKE AT RHM

CHESHIRE: 22 production workers at the Rank-Hovis-McDougall factory at Middlewich have taken strike action over their annual pay award. Management have refused to go beyond the £6 limit.

LEYLAND 800 HOLDING OUT

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: When the 800 workers at the British Leyland Alford and Alder factory came out on strike eight weeks ago, they thought they would get backing from their unions. They were originally claiming £10 as an interim wage award. But the Engineering Union (AUEW) refused to back them, saying they were not going through procedure.

With the government's wage controls, the strikers felt forced to change their demand to £6 in October at the annual wage review, no loss of holiday credits, and for a lump sum to guarantee co-operation on return to work. Management refuses to commit itself in advance to any specific sum in October, and has point blank rejected the idea of a lump sum.

Last Thursday a mass meeting voted narrowly by seven votes to continue the strike.

On the Friday management circulated a letter to all the strikers 'inviting' them to report for work on Monday. Only six scabs showed their faces on Monday day shift and only one at night. This demonstration of strength, despite the earlier vote, gave new confidence to the strikers.

Ted Mitchell, AUEW convenor, told Socialist Worker: 'Scanlon has said he's against the £6 limit, but there's no physical evidence of that here. Our resolve is to win.'

Messages of support and financial donations to the strike committee, c/o Eric Cambridge, 417 Barnacres Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

The Socialist Worker Guide to Workplace Survival No 4



WHEN YOU THINK
YOU NEED HIM TAKE
YOUR FULL-TIME UNION
OFFICIAL WITH YOU
TO MEET MANAGEMENT...

Cables workers: 'We strike on'

EAST LONDON: Members of the white-collar union ASTMS at Commercial Cables have voted to continue their strike. Commercial Cables is owned by ITT, the multinational company which set out to remove Allende from Chile. It is the headquarters in Britain for cablegrams.

The workers were negotiating parity with Western Union workers, who get £15 more a week for the same work, and the company threatened to sack 40 workers before negotiating. It is now offering no increase at all and threatens to sack all involved in the strike.

Cries of poverty from ITT are a joke. This action is just part of ITT's strategy

of wage-cutting and redundancy around the world.

Now they're saying that the Labour government's policy doesn't allow them to pay the wages the workers need. What they don't say is how the workers are going to pay the ever-increasing bills.

To spread the fight when a dispute like this breaks out, we need to build rank and file committees with delegates from all the local workplaces. This committee can then organise solidarity, getting speakers from the dispute to factories and trade union branches, getting collection sheets out, pushing trades councils, leafletting and picketing. Mass picketing and support

for occupations must be quick to be effective. Blacking across union boundaries can be crucial.

Links have to be developed on a combine basis, to involve all ITT workers, nationally and internationally. Commercial Cables sent a letter of support and solidarity with Portuguese ITT workers. That's the way to beat the ITT bosses and the Labour government that acts on their behalf.

Collections and messages of support to: Ron Dave, Branch chairman, Commercial Cables Branch, c/o Hat and Feathers, Goswell Road, London E1.

IN BRIEF

MANCHESTER: TENANTS FIGHT BACK!

THEY call it 'Colditz' but 40 inmates were on the march last week to the Electricity Board Offices. They are tenants from Hulme Council Estate where many families have had their electricity cut off.

'We have to pay £5 to £10 a week for fuel—not for leaving fires and water heaters on 24 hours a day—but because the council have given us the most expensive and inefficient central heating system in Manchester,' explained one tenant.

Do YOU or your tenants group want to contact the Hulme Electricity Action Group? They are at 525 William Kent Hulme, Manchester.

SHEFFIELD ASIAN WORKERS

'WHEN a black man makes a move it is like a trap for a mouse', that was a shrewd representative's description of the situation at London-Scandinavia Moulding here. Behind his words lie two sackings the last a fortnight ago, a backcloth of racialist abuse and supervisors who treat the job as if 'they were running a prison camp'.

For eight years Mr Lal has worked with 70 mainly Asian workers, members of the General and Municipal Workers Union in the electric melting department. Then he was accused in a supervisors' report of working too slowly and being abusive. Lal took the report to the white shop steward—who didn't take it to the bosses but took it straight back to the supervisor. At the end of the clash Lal found himself sacked for 'threatening behaviour'.

Mr Lal's sacking was preceded in March by the same treatment for an Asian shop steward. Lal is, unfortunately for the bosses, a witness in a case where supervisors are accused of accepting bribes to give overtime.

Last Tuesday the GMWU arranged for the case to be heard in London by the Conciliation Tribunal. This isn't the answer. The 70 are prepared to take industrial action—and need to build support from other workers. 'We have supported English workers in the firm when they have struck', pointed out one of the Asians.

LONDON SPARKS

MORE than 30 electricians have been striking for 10 days against a blacklist from electrical contractors James Scott. The union committee men at the YMCA site in central London were fired after leading the struggle for decent conditions on the site.

Scotts had agreed to move the entire Electricians Union shop to the St George's Hospital site in Tooting, South London. Clearly the bosses didn't want to export militancy south of the river and out went the committee members—which triggered the strike. The response of EETPU full timers? 'Get back to work—and negotiate'.

The 30 aren't having it. They've appealed to the St George's workers for support.

GLASGOW ENGINEERS

THE 14 Engineering union members picketing the Abbotsinch Services food depot in Paisley are still fighting the bosses—and the Transport union members.

After a year of negotiations the 14 struck over differential payments for Engineers holding Heavy Goods Vehicle licenses. The TGWU officials instructed their members to work normally, drive blacked vehicles and do AUEW members' work!

'This action is a betrayal of every trade union principle I've ever known,' said Abbotsinch AUEW convenor Jimmy Allison.

Twice the AUEW stewards have taken the issue to the regional TGWU office and to the Scottish TUC. The message has come back to the TGWU. 'No more blacklegging.'

'Despite these decisions local TGWU officials have still advised their members in the plant to work normally,' explained Jimmy.

Donations and support to Jimmy Allison, AUEW House, 25 Ingle St, Paisley.

ISLINGTON NALGO

LAST week Socialist Worker reported the battle over a 'frozen social workers' post here. 'Freezing' means that no-one is recruited to fill vacancies.

Well, the one-day strike on 21 July has thawed the job out! 'This was a significant victory,' said Eric Hill of the Islington branch of the government officers' union, NALGO.

WEST LONDON RANK

Now at RANK AUDIO VISUAL a strike is in its second week. 'Management gave a 10 per cent cost of living increase to all its employees except those of us under negotiated agreement,' explained camera and hi-fi technicians' APEX shop steward Mike Coker. 'In other words they discriminated against our union.'

Now five employers reject the claim

by Ronnie Robertson (member of Strathclyde FBU Committee)

THE latest sorry chapter in the three-month old Fire Brigades Union (FBU) dispute with local authority employers was written last week. The employers totally rejected the new watered-down three-point programme put forward from the recall conference.

The employers were clearly tremendously encouraged in their determination to hold out by the FBU executive's decision to expel the nine members of the Strathclyde Brigade Committee three weeks ago. The nine had accepted a rank and file decision to hold a straight ballot on the full claim. The vicious reaction of Enoch Humphries and his executive was thus seen as a retreat from the claim for a 40-hour week and was used to boot the claim out.

The reaction of the FBU leadership to the employers' decision has been to call on the rank and file to stiffen the work-to-rule. In the circular sent out by the executive they say the action is necessary because of 'the attitude of the majority of the employers' side of the National Joint Council towards the Fire Brigades Union.'

Tear

Right from the beginning of the dispute the Strathclyde Brigades Committee and the membership in the area told the executive that it was impossible to escape a fight with the employers. It now appears that the penny has dropped.

But the fact that the FBU executive has weakened the union by the arbitrary expulsion of the nine has left the 2500 membership in the Strathclyde Brigade leaderless and powerless. A big reaction to our expulsion was for members to tear up their union cards. We have only been able to prevent a mass exodus from the union by arguing the case for more rank and file control of the union and a change in the present FBU leadership.

The issue of democracy in the union is therefore central. Only with real democracy and a genuinely united union can the kind of fight be put up that will win the wages and conditions that firemen need.

All firemen who see the need to lay the basis of a real struggle for shorter hours and better conditions in every fire station should work to build a campaign for the reinstatement of the Strathclyde Brigade Committee. Resolutions condemning the executive and calling for the reinstatement of the committee should be sent to the executive with copies to us.

For further information contact: Ronnie Robertson, Parkhead Fire Station, Glasgow G31.

SWAN HUNTERS: WE STRIKE ON

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE: 5000 workers at Swan Hunters shipyard voted almost unanimously at a mass meeting on Monday to reject the latest offer and to continue the four-week strike.

The offer the management made was £3.50 now and £2 in January. Union officials provisionally accepted this last week, during the yard's holiday. But the men are in a united and militant mood, and threw it out despite the trade union officials.

The men came out originally in support of an £8.30 claim, which was in line with the recent boiler-makers' settlement. The strikers are members of the electricians, plumbers, engineers, construction and General and Municipal unions. This is the first time that they have come out on strike together.

Classified

Adverts for this column must arrive by first post Friday, eight days before publication date. We cannot, unfortunately, take them over the phone. Send cash (3p a word) with copy to: Classified, Socialist Worker, Cambridge Works, Cambridge Crescent, London, E2 9DS.

NORTH WALES FARMHOUSE HOLIDAYS: John and Margaret Llywarch invite you to a North Wales farmhouse holiday. Clean air, mountain streams, country rambles, fishing, wildlife galore, barbecues. A children's paradise and only two miles from a mainline station. For terms phone 069-186 2272 or write Bryn Iddon, Bron y Garth, Oswestry, Salop.

PICKET RHODESIA HOUSE (on the Strand, opposite Charing, Cross railway station, Central London). Friday 8 August, 12.2pm. Free political prisoners—support the struggle of the Zimbabwe people. For further details of campaigning activities on Zimbabwe, contact AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, London, W1P 2DQ. Tel: 580 5311.



Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

DRIVERS OUT OVER VICTIMISATION

LIVERPOOL: 18 drivers and one porter in the Speke warehouse of the snob store George Henry Lee are on strike over the victimisation of one of their brothers. The strike has been made official by their union, the Transport Workers.

They are being backed to the hilt in the battle to get union recognition by the workers of Thomson and Capper across the road.

Last Saturday the strikers and 15 members of the International Socialists spent an enjoyable afternoon picketing the store itself in Church Street, Liverpool. They succeeded in turning away a large number of customers. On Monday the management offered talks to the strike committee.

PORT BOSSES PLAN TO AXE 1100 MORE JOBS

LONDON: Every day 2000 of the 10,000 London dockers are sent home without work. 700 have already left the industry, taking voluntary severance payments of up to £5000.

Now the London Dock Labour Board has asked the government for a £5 million loan to get rid of another 1100 men. They are offering up to £5250 to men over 51. It won't go far towards 15 years on the dole.

The dock industry has been under attack from ship owners, dock employers, the CBI and the national press for years. Everyone knows that dockers are lazy, arrogant, overpaid troublemakers.

So when a crisis develops in the docks, the national press, which has

by London docker Michael Fenn

the gall to call itself the free press but which is owned by the same companies that employ dockers, start their campaign of poisonous garbage.

On Friday 25 July, the London Evening News screamed: LONDON DOCKERS PAID TO DO NOTHING. The Daily Mail on Monday, the Daily Express on Tuesday, the Telegraph on Wednesday, the local papers on Thursday, and the Sun on Friday all carried large articles with the same message.

Now why all this sudden concern about unemployed dockers? One reason is that productivity has been rising rapidly, up 30 or 40 per cent thanks to a new bonus system. So they don't need as many men. But the major reason for any labour surplus in British ports is that ship-owners and stevedoring companies that for years employed dockers have hived off the work in a bid to put it outside the reach of registered dockers and their scheme which gives job security and job control.

Employers found a way round the scheme by the use of containers and

small unregistered ports, where they could hire and fire at will.

The Labour government's most recent manifesto included a pledge (or was it a promise?) to extend the National Dock Labour Board. In other words to give back to dockers some of the work that had been stolen.

But now it seems they are turning tail again and getting ready to help destroy more jobs.

One thing the free press will never tell about our industry: the truth. You only have to look at the profit figures of shipping companies to get that. Furness Withy in London recently stated that they had gone out of business, and returned 200 dockers to the National Dock Labour Board. Three weeks later Furness Withy announced that yearly profits had increased from £13,900,000 to £24,700,000.

The answer for dockers is not to take severance payments to sell jobs, but to take over such firms as Furness Withy. Dockers, clerks and staff could run the docks far more efficiently than the people at present in control. One thing is certain. No one could run them any worse.

PRINT PICKETS IN COURT

PETERBOROUGH: When two Sharman printworker pickets appeared in court on Tuesday, last week, the police tried to clobber them for conspiracy. A fellow-picket had pleaded guilty to impulsively stealing a distributor cap during the strike.

The prosecution claimed that they were 'unofficial' pickets who 'trespassed' to act as 'organised look-out'. They offered as evidence a blackleg's eye-witness account—he claimed to have seen them from a half-open, frosty-glassed toilet window!

Fortunately, the defence produced enough witnesses and other evidence to throw out the trumped up charge. The six hour trial hints at the Crown tactics in the next major case on 19 September. 26 pickets, members of the National Graphical Association, will appear on charges arising out of a peaceful sit-down protest.

The local International Socialist branch (phone Peterborough 68678) are mounting a major demonstration on that day. Militants—especially NGA workers and IS members from Cambridge and Leicester—are asked to attend in force.

Union sham over Decca's 400 sackings

SOUTH LONDON: Two weeks ago the management of Decca TV in Battersea were offering double time to workers prepared to go in during the annual holiday, so that an order could be completed. Now they want all but 80 of the workforce of 480 out by the end of the month. The first may get the boot next week.

Promises of jobs in other Decca plants have resulted in just 30 interviews for the supervisors' blue-eyed boys and girls. Probably only ten will be offered jobs. Redundancy payments, too, are going to be smaller than expected. Management have been selling off televisions on hire purchase to the workforce, and the outstanding payments will be deducted in a lump sum from any redundancy payment!

For the vast majority of workers at the plant, who are Asian women, a grim job situation awaits. In Wandsworth unemployment stands at 5700. Black unemployment has doubled in the past year and Decca redundancies will increase unemployment by a further 6 per cent, and black unemployment by at least 25 per cent.

Show

Decca workers are also beginning to criticise the lack of activity of local trade union officials. As one worker put it: 'The union seem to be part of management.' The Electricians Union officials have never had any intention of fighting back. They put up a lengthy show of sham bargaining which ended less than two weeks before the first workers are supposed to leave with a 'demand' to open the books. To this Decca management have 'yielded'.

Lou Britz, local EETPU official who is not losing his job, said: 'The unions are satisfied there is no alternative to closing the factory.' The stewards have gone along with this.

But a small group of rank and file workers in the plant are planning to hold a meeting of all workers to discuss a fight back on the closure. The meeting is on Friday 15 August.

Parsons go back

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE: Shop floor workers at C A Parsons returned to work this week after voting to accept an offer of £6 now across-the-board and £5 in December. It was clear the rank and file were in a militant mood and wanted to fight. But pressure from trade union officials made them decide to cut their losses and agree to the offer.

Pit vote: Robens says Yes – two million times

THE HUGE Dowty Engineering complex announced last week that it had paid out £399,704 as the last in a series of five payments to a little-known Nottingham company called Bonser Engineering.

What has that got to do with the miners' pay claim? A lot.

The payment was 'arranged' after discussions with the Coal Board and their chief suppliers of profitable pit props in 1969. The deal was one of the great rip-offs of modern times.

Until 1969, the Coal Board had farmed out its contracts to a large number of firms, the luckiest of which was Bonser.

Bonser had no experience of making pit props until the Coal Board suddenly handed it one of its most lucrative contracts.

Everyone on the Bonser board was happy, specially the daughter of the company chairman, Patricia who was married in 1967 to the Hon Alf Robens, the only son of the chairman of the National Coal Board, Lord Robens.

In 1969, the pit prop contracts were doled out to three firms, Dowty, Anderson Mavor, and Fletcher Sutcliffe Wild.

Bonser's mining machinery interests were taken over by Dowty, who paid £500,000 for 'assets' which hardly existed and agreed to pay another five yearly payments for 'good will'.

Loot

The payments, it was promised at the time, would not exceed £150,000. In fact, they have exceeded £1 million and the total amount of loot taken from Dowty to Lord Robens' son's company is £2 million.

That's enough to pay a thousand miners £40 a week extra for a year.

It has been paid for absolutely nothing, by way of an arrangement masterminded by a former Coal Board chairman to a company of which his son is a director.

Lord Robens is in favour of a Yes vote in the miners' ballot.

The Hon Alfred Robens is in favour of a Yes vote in the miners' ballot.

The directors of Dowty, Anderson Mavor, Fletcher Sutcliffe Wilde are in favour of a Yes vote in the miners' ballot.

Everyone who can make money out of the hard work done by the miners is in favour of a strict limit on miners' wages.

If the miners want their lives and their industry to go on being dictated to by the Dowtys and the Bonselers and the Robens, they also should vote Yes.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

ABORTION: MPs DECLARE WAR

THE SELECT Committee on the James White Abortion Bill this week came up with a 'compromise' which, for millions of women, will be a step backwards to the days of back-street abortion.

Its interim report makes recommendations to the Department of Health a move, which will bypass the need for legislation.

Cosy

Labour MPs on the parliamentary committee who believed a cosy discussion could produce progressive improvements to the 1967 Act have been caught out by their own manoeuvring. These are the compromises:

All pregnancy agencies and advice centres that

by Margaret Renn

refer women to clinics or hospitals for abortions will have to be registered. Non-approved agencies will be 'blacklisted'. Because a few agencies are abusing the present system by charging excessive prices, everyone who gives advice will have to be registered.

This will allow anti-abortionist authorities to cut down on the number of agencies and so cause pregnant women still more time-consuming delays when they can least afford them.

Special reports will be kept of foreign women having abortions, with steps to prevent foreign women 'being a majority of the women so treated in any one place'.

Every black or Irish woman will therefore be harassed to prove she is living in Britain. Still

more delays for many women . . .

A ban on almost all abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Having spent five months crossing one hurdle after another, women will come up against a brick wall. There will, however, be one grisly exception.

Deformed

Abortions will be allowed after five months if the hospital or clinic can keep the foetus alive.

Nothing could be more disgusting. If a woman finds, when five months pregnant, that she cannot see the pregnancy through, especially if she knows that the baby would be deformed in some way, she would be forced now to make an intolerable choice: either have the baby she doesn't want, or have an abortion knowing that they are then going to attempt to keep the five-month-old foetus alive.

The reality is obvious: the committee wants to cut the number of abortions and to restrict still further the woman's right to choose what she does with her body. It is using talk of 'abuse' as an excuse.

At a press conference on Tuesday, committee chairman Fred Willey MP gave not one fact to substantiate the allegations against the pregnancy advice agencies. The committee has no figures about the number of agencies that operate any financial racket. It does not even know how many agencies there are.

Yet members of the committee think 'abuse' is the most important issue facing it—perhaps because the only non-medical evidence it has accepted is the much discredited book *Babies for Burning*.

Abuse

There is only one way to do away with abuse, and that is to make abortion freely available on the National Health Service. The private sector would then cater for no-one and would have no-one to exploit.

Anti-abortion MPs refuse to see this. They prefer to introduce restrictions that will increase the real and dangerous abuse, back-street abortion.

Worse is still to come. Willey has indicated that the committee also wants the White Bill to be reintroduced in an amended form.

New legislation will impose much worse restraints on the right to abortion. And the anti-abortionists will expect to get away with it, backed by and encouraged by a right wing lobby led by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

A massive counter-campaign is what counts now. The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child already have underway their campaign for restriction on abortion.

We have to campaign against all restrictive legislation and against the reappointment of the Select Committee at the start of the new parliamentary session in November.

HOW WE CAN FIGHT BACK

ORGANISE for a national demonstration on 1 November before the Select Committee is re-appointed.

ORGANISE in the local trade union movement, with factory gate meetings, and leafletting.

ORGANISE a local week of action at the end of October.

ORGANISE pickets of hospitals and MP's surgeries, local demonstrations, hold meetings, through September and October.

Strike over 'abortion sacking'



Striking ASTMS officers at a press conference in London: the strike is solid

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

NEARLY 100 full-time officers of the supervisory staffs' union, ASTMS are on strike in protest against the arbitrary sacking of Judy Cotter, a probationary full-timer.

She was sacked last month by ASTMS general secretary Clive Jenkins, who had received an adverse report on her 'performance' from Terry Comerford, an ASTMS divisional officer.

Jenkins wrote to the chairman and secretary of the union officers' committee, detailing 15 cases of Judy's 'unreliability', such as turning up late for meetings.

The letter complained that, on one occasion, she had been ill and had misled her senior officer about the nature of the illness.

These are the facts about this incident:

On 20 May, Judy Cotter was admitted to a nursing home for an abortion. She did not tell her superior officer, Terry Comerford,

assuming she would be back at work in a few days.

The operation was followed by complications, and Judy was advised by her doctor not to go back to work for a month. She returned, however, on 2 June, and told the whole story to Terry Comerford.

Comerford, a Roman Catholic, made it clear he was opposed to the operation.

Judy's illness continued through June, and made it difficult for her to carry out an exhausting programme of duties.

In a letter dated 23 July, Alf Stubbs and Don Groves chairman and secretary of the officers' committee, defended Judy Cotter

'We have formed the opinion that far from exhibiting unreliability, Miss Cotter has conscientiously undertaken a workload significantly in excess of that which is expected of a probationary trainee.

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FIGHTING CAPITALISM IN AMERICA

CENTRAL LONDON Friday 8 August, 8pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road.

BIRMINGHAM Sunday 10 August, Noon, The Weld, New Trinity School, Wilson Road, off Heathfield Road, Handsworth.

SPEAKERS: Joel Geier (national chairman, US IS) and Fred Hooper (chairman, Black Workers for Collective Progress, Louisville).