

# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 10P

## INSIDE ON THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE

'I must destroy you'—what Callaghan told the FBU executive

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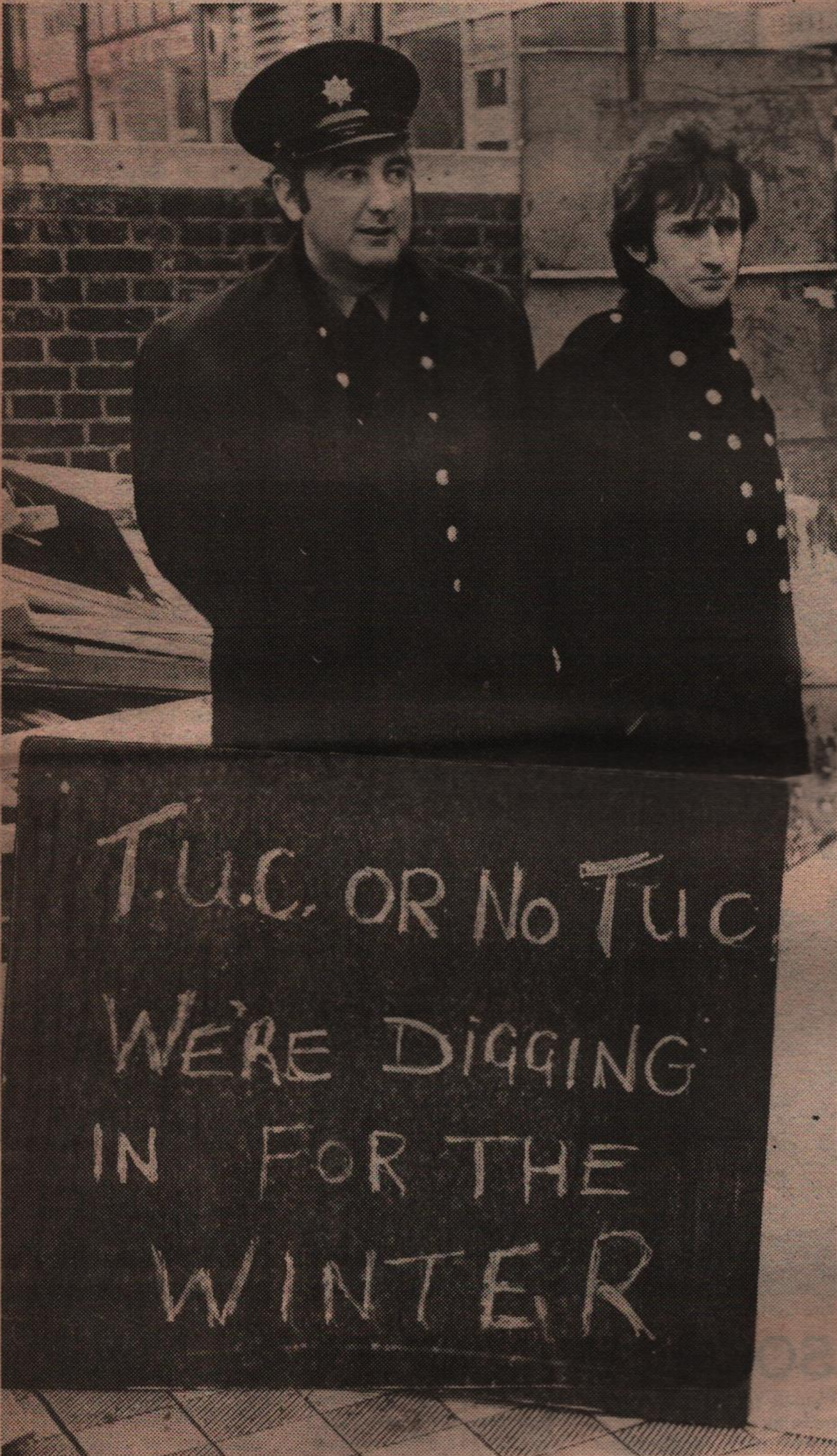
Judas had nothing on these

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They're spending more to break the strike than it would cost to pay the wage claim

—PAGE FOUR

Picture: John Smith (IFU)



# BETRAYED, ABUSED, AND FLAMING ANGRY!

WHEN we heard that the TUC leaders were not supporting us, we were shocked.

We felt, this is it. The strike's had it. But then we came back to the station. We realised how *solid* the strike is, we changed. We grew *more* determined.

We took down the pickets' canvas tent outside the station, and we built a proper wooden hut. A lorry driver we knew dropped us enough wood to keep the pickets warm for the whole winter.

We wrote two new slogans. The first was: 'We're digging in for the winter.'

And the second? Well, we tried to think of the biggest back-stab in history.

Mick Kavanagh remembered about Brutus stabbing Caesar. And he wrote the slogan: Et Tu TUC.

People have stopped and asked us what does the 'et tu' mean? Is it another union? We tell them it means 'What, even you, the TUC?'

### ROBBIE ROBERTS

Watch rep,  
West Hampstead Fire Station,  
North West London

### TALKING TO SOCIALIST WORKER

We're on our own now, but we can't go back to work or the whole fire service is finished. We have got to get round to local unions, local stewards, convenors and officials.

We have to get big factories to guarantee each station £1000 a week.

There's plenty of support from the local people. It's only the leaders who don't support us.

We realise that the TUC means nothing, really. It's the people who count. If we use their support, we can win. We must.

ABOVE: Firemen picketing outside the West Hampstead fire station this week.

RIGHT: Trade unionists marching in support of the strike in Manchester at the weekend.



... AND WITH YOUR HELP THEY CAN WIN



FIREMEN'S STRIKE WEEK FOUR

# Don't work without fire cover

## ...AND YOU'LL HELP THE FIREMEN WIN!

Down at the Strand Road fire station, alongside Liverpool docks, they've been thinking hard about the sort of solidarity action which could win the firemen's strike within a week.

Billy Leatherbarrow, a sub-officer in the station, said: 'I think all the workers in all the factories around here should be thinking about the

danger they're in when they haven't got proper fire cover.

'I was one of the crew which turned out recently when they suspected some sort of fire in the Stanlow oil refinery. There were 60 appliances turned out, and it's not difficult to understand why.

'The whole of that Helsby peninsula is a potential bomb. It's the biggest ammonia dump in Europe.

'They were talking that day about evacuating the whole peninsula.

'Those workers at Stanlow and at Widnes—which is just a collection of chemical firms—and all those sorts of places around the country ought to start thinking how they can help us and help themselves.

'They ought to tell their employers that unless there's proper fire cover, they won't work. They ought to sit in until there's proper fire cover.

### REFUSE

'Lorry-drivers who are carrying inflammable loads should refuse to do so until there's a proper fire service working again.

'There's hundreds of examples. If all workers started thinking and acting like that, we'd soon win the strike.

Tony Boyle, a worker at Massey Ferguson in Liverpool, told a Socialist Workers Party meeting in Kirkby on Thursday night that he had raised exactly these problems with the Masseys management.

'They told us they had what we call a 'Mickey Mouse' fire brigade standing by on 12-hour shifts, and that Eagle Star insurance wouldn't pay unless they had one. But we all know that if that plant goes up, there's no safety at all.

When Paul Foot of Socialist Worker went on Radio Merseyside to pass on some of the firemen's suggestions about strike action at Stanlow, the managing director of the refinery rang back immediately, in a panic.

Fire precautions are well under control,' he said.

But why did they need 60 fire appliances when there was a hint of a fire at Stanlow some weeks ago?



Firemen and fellow trade unionists marching in support of the strike in Manchester last weekend. The demonstration was 2000-strong.



Pickets at Bootle's Strand Road fire station earlier this week.

## In the strikers' own words

'My mother's widowed. She just manages to survive on her pension. I went to see her last weekend. She handed me a £5 note and a huge box of groceries.

'That means weeks of saving to her. I said: 'I can't take it'.

'But she said: That's what a family's for, to help when you're in trouble'. I burst into tears.

'Dave's mother is just the same. She's widowed, and she'll be helping us as much as she can when our money runs out next month.

'It's the poor people who help you. They help you with everything they've got, while the rich ministers sit back and attack you'.

—CHRISTINE DEE, whose husband David Dee is FBU representative at Longmore Lane fire station on Merseyside. Christine organised a firemen's wives' meeting at the station on Sunday.

Terry Parry, our union leader, has got a problem. He wants a knighthood and he wants his wages off us at the same time.

'Six months after he last persuaded us not to go on strike, he got the OBE. He's reckoning on more honours this time if he breaks his own members' strike.

—JOHN MACNAB, station officer, Strand Road, Liverpool.

'Have you noticed how on television Parry always talks of the firemen as "they"—never as "we"?'

—JIMMY GATENBY, Strand Road fireman.

'Instead of worrying about his knighthood, TUC leader Len Murray should get off his bum and help his members'.

—Sub-officer GEORGE THOMSON, Strand Road.

## BACKROOM PAY DEAL FOR THE POLICE?

FIREMEN are often compared in Tory newspapers with the police, but down at the Strand Road fire station in Liverpool there's no sentimentality about the police at all.

'There's never been any unity between the two forces', says John Macnab, station officer. 'The police are doing very well out of the strike—they're getting a lot of overtime for doing very little.

They're coding their messages about fires so no one gets to know about them. They're helping to break our strike.'

The men at the station have

seen a copy of a letter written to a senior council official in Lancashire which suggests that the police pay claim has already been settled—with a fantastic 37½ per cent promised in the spring, on top of the 10 per cent already offered.

These payments, the letter said, will be back-dated to December, and they include additional benefits.

Most police, the firemen believe, know about this rise. But they have been told to keep it quiet, until the award can be published—after other workers have been refused rises half as high.

## London support

SUPPORT for the firemen's strike is growing in North London. Last Friday a delegate meeting was held in Edmonton Fire Station, called by the North London Firemen's Support Committee.

There were delegates from every fire station in J Division and numerous trade union representatives from local factories.

John Ayres, the Edmonton Fire Brigades Union rep, made it clear that the firemen desperately needed the support of local trade unionists.

Alan Watts, an Engineering Union member from MK Electric, said weekly financial collections should be held in all the factories. If the convenors were not sympathetic, the firemen should go to the rank and file by standing on

the gates in the morning with buckets.

Numerous delegates spoke of how they were rallying support for the firemen in their workplaces. Mike Zinaris, convenor of Fords at Ponders End, said his factory was guaranteeing £50 a week to aid the strikers.

The meeting, with over 50 delegates, voted unanimously for a day of action.

□ The North London Firemen's Support Committee is calling for Wednesday 14 December for local factories to show the support for the firemen. A rally has been organised at Edmonton Banqueting Hall at 12 noon, when a fireman from every station in the division will attend.

## 'I must destroy you,' Callaghan told FBU

THE TRUTH about what happened at the meeting between the Fire Brigades Union executive and prime minister James Callaghan has been passed on to Merseyside firemen by someone who was there. It makes a strange story.

'We were led into this

great room and asked to sit down in sumptuous black chairs. At one end of a room was an enormous chair, black like the others but three times as big.

'Eventually Callaghan came in and plonked himself into the big chair. He sat back in it, his arms over his stomach.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'the chairs in which you are sitting are 400 years old. Many famous delegations have sat in these chairs, and you should feel proud to be in them today.'

Callaghan then treated the firemen to a lecture on the history of the chairs

and of 10 Downing Street.

Some executive members began to get drowsy. Suddenly, Callaghan said: 'Well, gentlemen, I control public expenditure in this country, and rest assured that as long as I control it, you cannot win.'

There was a pause.

Then Callaghan started the firemen out of their seats by slapping the table in front of him. 'In short, gentlemen, the position is this' he said. 'I must destroy you.'

Ten minutes later a bewildered FBU executive found themselves in the street.

## DON'T LET SOCIAL SECURITY FOOL YOU!

A CRUCIAL part of the government attempt to defeat the firemen is the policy of the Department of Social Security in making it difficult for firemen to claim benefit.

But after years of paying out taxes and national insurance, firemen have every right to claim social security. No fireman and no fireman's wife should be ashamed to demand this right.

Often, for instance, firemen are being told they cannot get benefit until 16 December. There is nothing in the law which says this. But this is the way some social security officials have been ordered to interpret the law.

Again, single firemen are being told they are not entitled to any benefits. What they are not told is that they have a right to this benefit under

section 4 of the 1976 Supplementary Benefits Act if they can prove urgent need.

It is in the discretion of local social security officials what constitutes 'urgent need'. This discretion is most likely to be exercised if they are faced with a body of angry firemen claiming together.

The same applies to all sorts of 'exceptional' additional payments, over and above the

basic rates families are entitled to.

Because of reports of firemen being denied their rights, the Rank and File Fireman's Daily Strike News last week printed a page-long list of strikers' rights and how to claim. The Rank and File Centre also possesses a pamphlet ★

### EXPERTS

Finally, in most areas there are experts who can give advice—rank and file civil servants who are forced to administer rules they don't agree with. They should be sympathetic to the firemen, because they themselves are in dispute over wages. Phone your local DHSS office and ask to speak to the CPSA representative.

South West London Day of Action in Support of the Firemen.

Wednesday 14 December, Demonstration through Battersea and Wandsworth, Assemble 12 noon, Battersea Fire Station, Este Rd, SW11. Called by FBU, K Division, Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council, St Georges Hospital, NUPE, South London Rank and File Committee.

★ KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, 10p plus 7p postage from R & F Centre, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

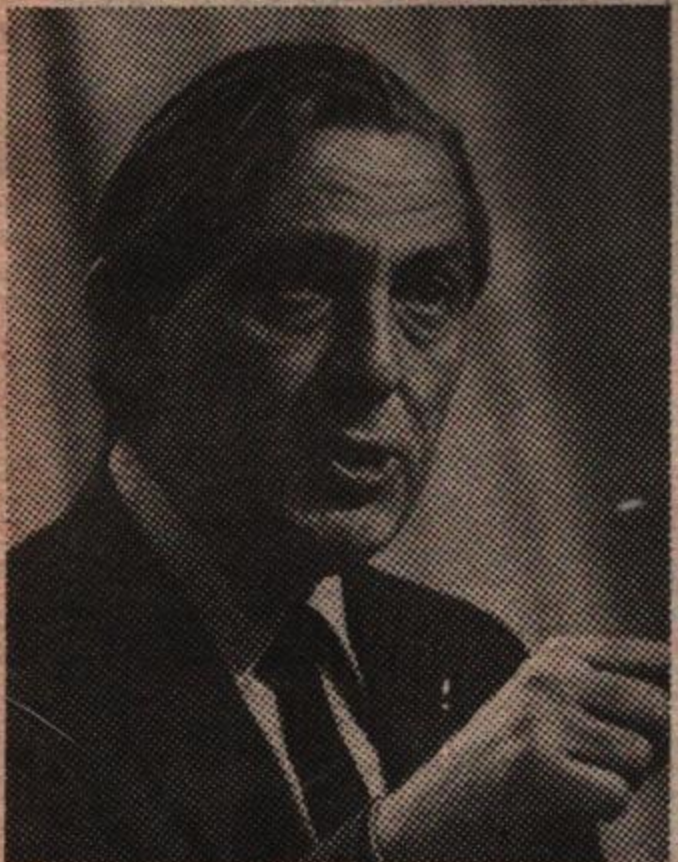


TUC betrays the firemen

# JUDAS HAD NOTHING ON THESE!



Geoffrey Drain (NALGO)



Len Murray (TUC)



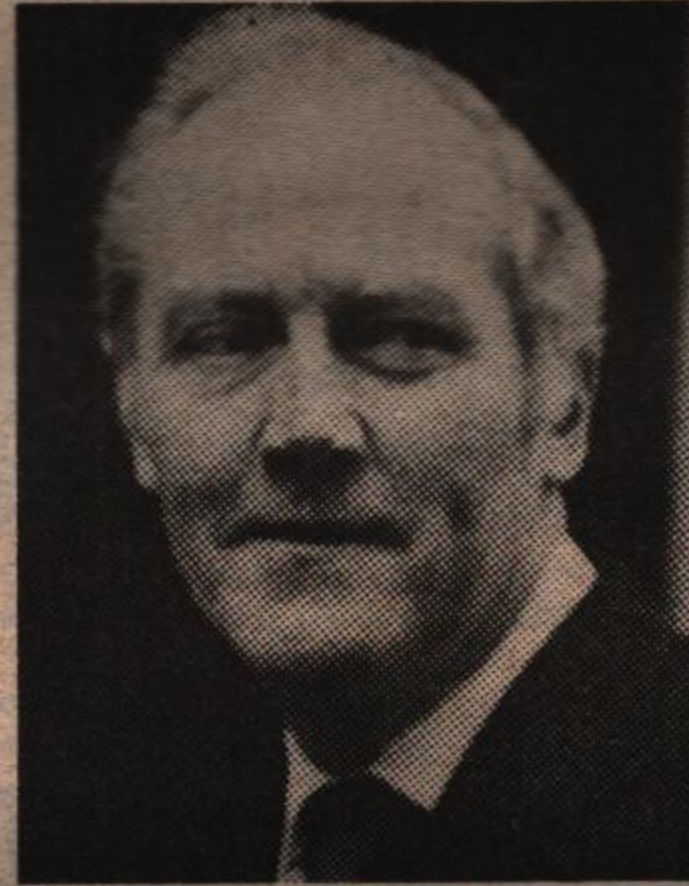
Marie Patterson (TGWU)



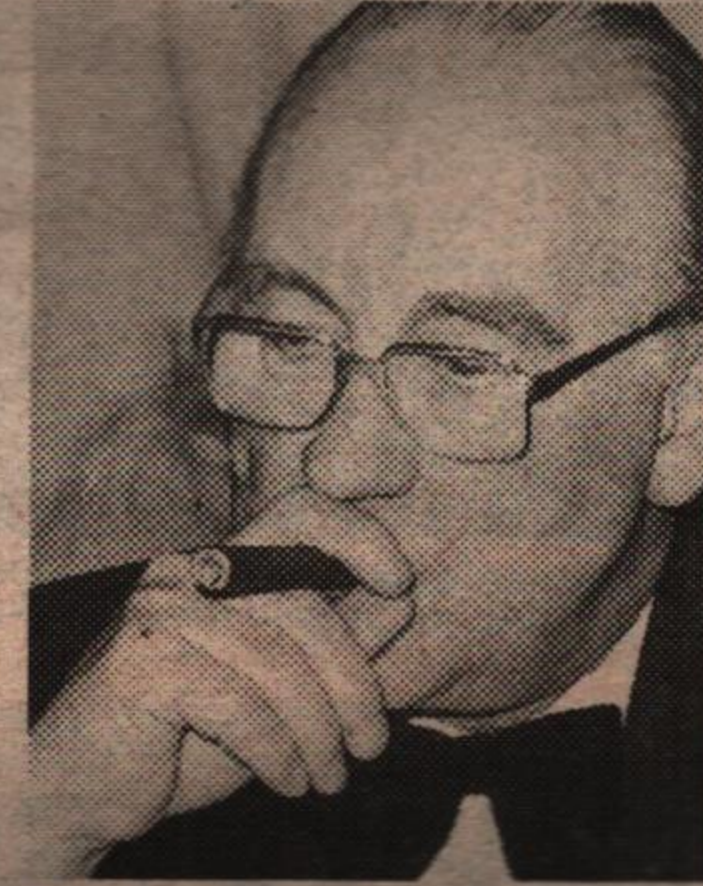
George Smith (UCATT)



Hugh Scanlon (AUEW)



David Basnett (GMWU)



Lord Allen (USDAW)



Lawrence Daly (NUM)

LOOK at these faces.

Everyone of these people has risen to where they are because of the efforts of rank and file trade unionists.

Every one of them leads a safe and comfortable life.

Every one of them gets an income two or three times as high as the fireman gets for leading a dangers and often very uncomfortable life.

And every one of them voted to spit in the face of the firemen

## Socialist Worker

### WHAT WE THINK

last week.

They are the finance and general purposes committee of the TUC. They boast about their commitment to democracy.

The Congress of the TUC in September voted that the TUC should oppose the government's

10 per cent wage limit. These fine democrats said last week that they could not support the firemen's strike because it clashed with the 10 per cent limit.

In the past they have always claimed that they cannot issue calls for action because ordinary shop floor workers would not respond.

The firemen's strike has produced a massive, spontaneous groundswell of support in the factories and the mines.

So these people issued a

statement aimed at destroying this support, isolating the firemen and producing a return-to-work on the government's terms.



Some of these faces have claimed in the past to be on the left of the trade union movement. Some happily acknowledged that they were on the right.

But now one simple word describes them all—traitors.

The only thing open to ques-

tion is whether the mass of rank and file trade unionists who sympathise with the firemen will be able to overcome the betrayal.

Activity in the factories in the next few days will determine whether the firemen risk the fate of the seamen in 1966 and the postal workers in 1971, abandoned by the trade union movement until they were eventually forced back to work.

Or whether it is the TUC traitors who are isolated by a triumphant movement aiding the firemen to victory.

# ...and what rank and file trade unionists say

**MICKY FENN**, London Royal Group of Docks shop steward and secretary of the organising committee of the National Rank and File Movement.

'It's disgusting. It's absolutely disgusting. Our union, the National Amalgamation of Stevedores and Dockers, was expelled from the TUC years ago and I'm almost beginning to think it was a good thing!

'I couldn't give a carrot for the TUC. We're better off without the TUC after what they've done to the firemen.

'During the struggles against the Industrial Relations Act the late and unlamented general secretary of the TUC, Vic Feather, suddenly tried to contact our general secretary when the dockers were locked up in Pentonville. He rang up three times and pleaded with him

to accept the Industrial Relations Court.

'The dirty creep even hinted that we might be allowed back into the TUC. Big bloody deal!



'Our union took no notice. The end result was that we finished off the Industrial Relations Act with no thanks at all to the TUC. If we'd listened to them then the unions would all be shackled up with laws by now.

'The TUC is now part of the established order of this country. It is virtually indistinguishable from the Labour government, the Tory Party, the CBI, even the National Association for Freedom.

**TREVOR BROWN**, a miner at Houghton Main Colliery, near Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

'When I heard that Lawrence Daly, general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers,

had played a part in the general purposes committee of the TUC in telling the firemen to go to hell I was really angry.

'Because my brother is a fireman I felt ashamed, and because our own wage claim depends so much on what the firemen are able to achieve I took the insult personally.

'All I can say is firemen shouldn't take what Daly says as reflecting the attitude of rank and file NUM members. In Yorkshire at least we are committed to supporting the firemen. The Yorkshire area of the NUM is donating £1000 to the FBU and collections are taking place at the pits on Friday.

'Personally I think we should do more than just donate money. The recent history of the miners shows that it is solidarity in action that produces results.

'When we were on strike in 1972 we won not just because of the flying pickets, but because thousands of Birmingham

engineering workers went on strike for a day and marched to join us in closing the gates of Saltley Coke Depot.

'Rank and file militants in Yorkshire are now pressing for a one-day stoppage in support of the firemen so that we can pay back to one section of the working class the debt that we owe to another section as a result of Saltley.

'Firemen should not be shy of asking for active support from other workers. We won in 1972 because we didn't trust our national leaders but organised ourselves, took our case to other trade unionists



'Before 1972 there had not been a national miners' strike since 1926. The victory we gained in 1972 enabled us to hold our heads high again. I only hope the firemen will be able to say the same about 1977.'

**MICKIE BOULTER**, Transport and General Workers' Union shop steward at British Oxygen, Hackney, East London. The recent strike by British Oxygen workers broke right through the government's pay norm.

'They've sold them out. Murray's just standing in front of the government.

'After our strike we feel proud, we feel bigger, we notice other people's con-

cerns. There isn't one person at work who doesn't support the firemen. Even our manager supports them.

'Everyone has given them money. Just about everyone has visited his local fire station. We're going to march with the East End firemen tomorrow. There will be a delegation from BOC.

'The firemen are going to have to bypass the TUC.'

## PAY: YOU'RE WORSE OFF THAN IN 1970

DO YOU often think you are harder up now than you can remember before?

Figures released in parliament last week show what has happened to the wages of the average worker as a result of successive pay controls in 1971-77.

The buying power of the average pay packet is now worth less than when Edward Heath first became prime minister back in 1970. The wage packet of the average man with two children today contains £60.35 after deductions. Back in 1970 it was £60.70—in today's money.

## £200m MISSING? IT HAPPENS EVERY DAY

ONE REVEALING sidelight on the Crown Agents affair, in which through fiddling in high places, £200 million has disappeared from the government's coffers—more than enough to pay for the whole fire service for a year.

When senior civil servants were first questioned about the disappearance of this money, they retorted: 'What's wrong? This happens in the city all the time'.

So if you want to know how to pay the firemen, there's an easy answer—the money's there in the City of London.



# SCANDAL OF ARMY'S HOSPITAL TAKEOVER

**SWP**  
**WHERE**  
**WE**  
**STAND**

**INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION**

The workers create all the wealth under capitalism. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

**REVOLUTION NOT REFORM**

The present system cannot be patched up, or reformed, as the established Labour and trade union leaders say. It has to be overthrown.

**THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD**

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers. The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia. At most, parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system. Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

**INTERNATIONALISM**

The struggle for socialism is part of a world-wide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

■ We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

■ We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

■ We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

Russia, China and Eastern Europe are not socialist, but state capitalist.

■ We support the struggles of workers in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

■ We are for real, social, economic and political equality of women.

■ We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against homosexuals.

**THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**

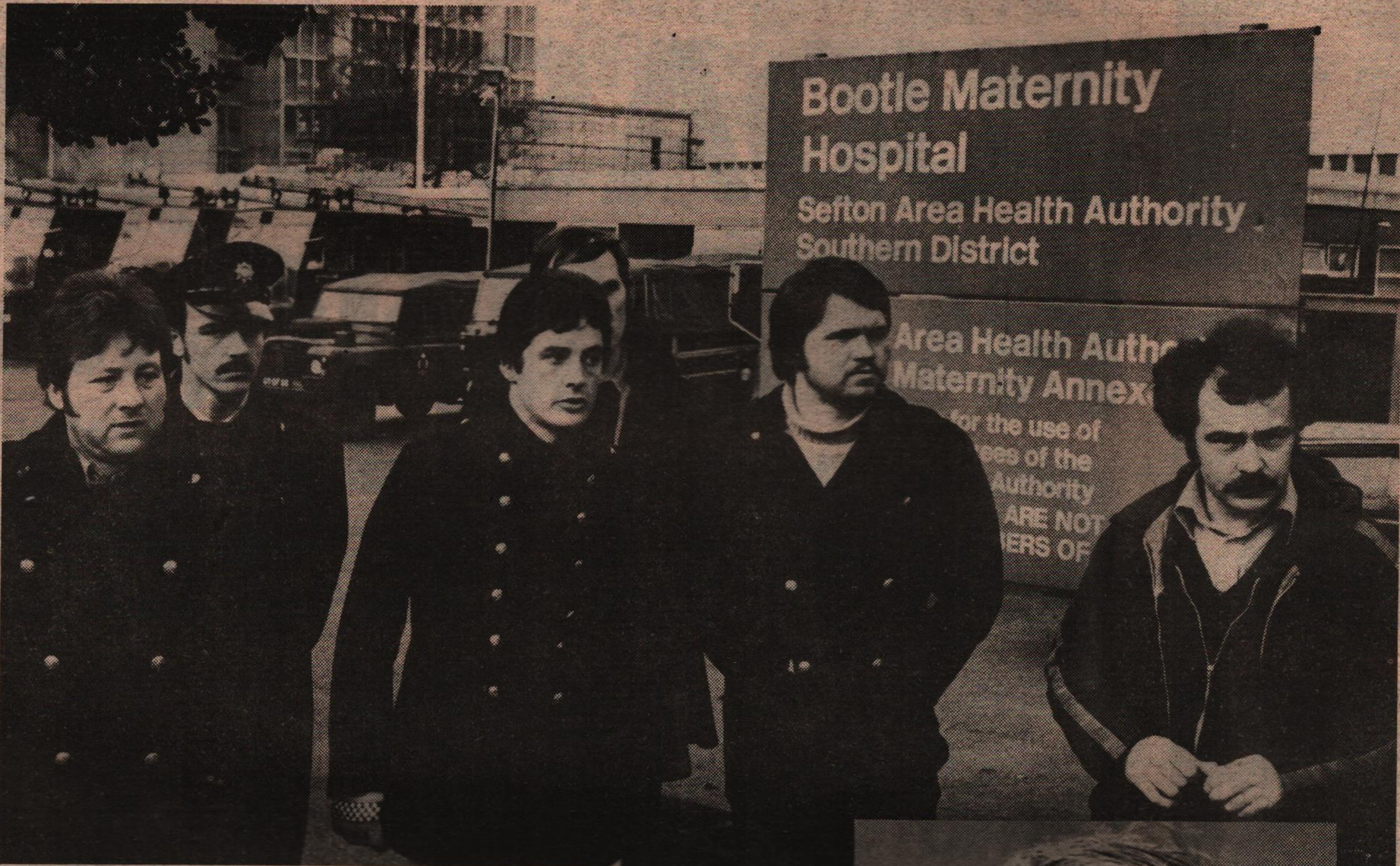
To achieve socialism, the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

■ We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

■ We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

■ We urge all those who agree with our policies to join with us in the struggle to build the revolutionary party.

If you want to know more about Socialist Worker and the Socialist Workers Party, fill in the form on page 15.



Firemen's pickets outside the maternity hospital annexe: When it came to pregnant mothers, or the mentally ill, the authorities said the money wasn't there. But when there's a strike to be broken... that's different.

## They're spending more to break the firemen's strike than it would cost to pay their claim IF YOU DOUBT THAT, READ ON...

**YOU PROBABLY won't find a finer man than Bob Roxburgh, Bootle area branch secretary of the Fire Brigade Union.**

He's been a fireman for 18 years.

He's delighted that his union is at last taking action in defence of his fellow-workers and the fire service. But last Thursday he was bitter.

Report: Paul Foot  
Pictures: John Sturrock (Report)

*'Steaming angry, that's what I am,' he said.*

'Not at the public. Not even at the army. But at his own union for sabotaging one of the best initiatives yet taken in the firemen's strike.

The Trinity Street Maternity Hospital annexe is only a few hundred yards from the Strand Road Fire Station, where Bob Roxburgh is union secretary. The annexe has been empty for some months since the

maternity patients in it were moved to Fazakerley District Hospital.

The local branch of the hospital workers' union NUPE did not oppose the move. But they demanded that the authority use the empty annexe to accommodate mental patients.

*The authority refused. 'There just isn't the money to convert the building', they moaned.*

Yet early last week, telephone engineers, plumbers, joiners and tradesmen of every description flooded into the annexe. Last Wednesday the firemen at Strand Road found out why.

The men were converting the annexe, but not for mental patients, but for more comfortable quarters for troops fighting fires!

After a quick meeting, the firemen put pickets on the annexe.

'We weren't picketing the army,' Bob Roxburgh explains. 'We were picketing the trade union tradesmen who were making the army's job easier—and ours more difficult.'

The picket worked wonders. The

flow of tradesmen dried up.

The few workers who were prepared to cross the picket lines had to be taken in by police cars.

The following morning, the story appeared in the newspapers.

The Liverpool Fire Brigade Committee met to discuss the Trinity Road picket. After listening to a speech from Bob Roxburgh, they agreed unanimously to keep the picket on.

Half an hour later an 'urgent' phone call came to Liverpool from the London FBU headquarters.

'That picket!' shrieked a responsible voice on the other end. 'It has got to come off! It's ruining our image with the public!'

The Liverpool Brigade Committee meekly succumbed. They ordered the picket withdrawn.

'I was the only one who spoke against it,' says Bob Roxburgh. 'And I don't have a vote on the committee.'

It shocks me, it really does. The only time we ever hear from the executive is when they want to stop

some action.

'I feel badly now about going to other trade unionists and asking for support for the strike. *We can't even support ourselves.*'

Bob Roxburgh told a Socialist Workers Party meeting in Kirkby last Thursday night that he was so angry about the union leadership that he was tempted to resign. But he accepted a unanimous call from the meeting to 'stay in there and fight'.

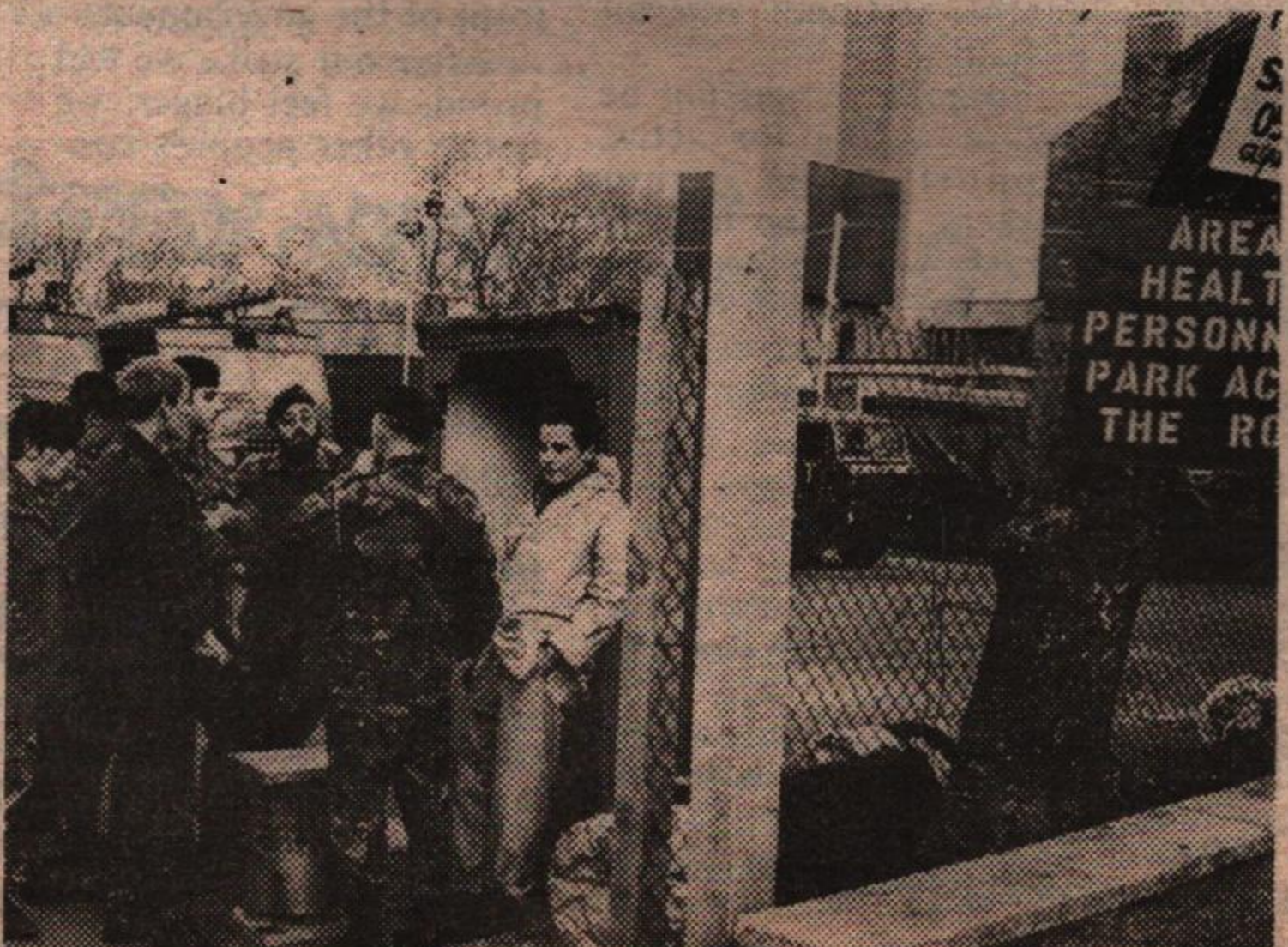
At the meeting was Kevin Earley, Merseyside district committee chairman of NUPE. Kevin said: 'The whole union membership is disgusted by what happened at Trinity Road.'

'The authorities haven't got the money for alterations to help mentally ill patients. But when it comes to breaking a fire strike, they've got the money for anything they want.'

'We'd arranged a big firemen's meeting in Walton Hospital, where I work, but the firemen who came to speak were thrown out by the administrator. We had a whip-round and collected £29.'



BOB ROXBURGH: 'Steaming angry, that's what I am'



No room for health services—strike-breaking soldiers at the annexe.

## THEIR MONEY . . . AND OURS!

**RICHIE MUCH**, a fireman at Longmore Lane fire station, in Liverpool, lives in Sefton.

'I read the other day that in the first three weeks of the strike Sefton Council spent £37,000 on "special measures" during the firemen's strike: mainly on janitors and other

caretakers to "keep a watch on property". The same council employs 300 firemen.

'That works out at £40 per week extra spending for every fireman in the area. And they're the same employers who can't afford £20 a week per fireman.

**WHAT DOES** a 10 per cent rise mean to firemen? Frank Brennan has been a fireman at Strand Road, Bootle, for three years. A 10 per cent rise will pay him an extra £5.70 on the top line.

He has two children. He qualifies for free school meals for one child—

£1.25. He gets free milk worth £1 a week, and rates subsidies worth 32p.

All these benefits would vanish with a 10 per cent rise. So when he's taken his tax and superannuation payments off his £5.70 and lost £2.57 worth of benefits, he will get 48p more in his pocket!



# BLACKMAIL!

## But Tyne shipyard workers refuse to bow to the government

**NORMAN LAFFEY**, Engineering Union convenor, Swan Hunter consortium:

'There has been government collusion with Swan Hunter to use the Polish order to break the overtime ban. The press reporting of what is happening is rubbish.'

'The Polish order isn't the main issue. It's being used as a stick to bash the workforce.'

'The real problem for the employer is the overtime ban, because it means that the yards are blocked up. There are four ships awaiting sea trials. These trials cannot take place unless the overtime ban is lifted.'

'This puts the fitters in a far stronger position than is realised. They will not be blackmailed by the loss of the Polish order.'

'The press have also played up the division between ourselves and the boilermakers. I don't blame the boilermakers. They are out for what they can get.'

'We need to find a way of

SHIPYARD workers in Tyneside, taking home less wages than the firemen, are bearing the brunt of government blackmail.

This is the only conclusion to be drawn from the way the Polish ships contract had been withdrawn from Swan Hunters after the outfitters there refused to lift their overtime ban.

But it is not just the overtime ban. The government are using the Polish contract to try to shatter trade union organisation in Britain's shipyards.

Unbelievably they now find one of the leaders of the great Upper Clyde Shipbuilders sit-in of 1971, Jimmy Airlie, ranged against the Tyne. In an act of unprecedented treachery, he and the shop stewards at Govan Shipbuilders have agreed to take one of the Polish ships destined for Swan Hunter.

Below, workers from Swan Hunter tell how the blend of dreadful working conditions and pathetic wages provoked them to take action.

achieving unity with the boilermakers. We need agreement with them on a basic wage and then allowances for the different types of jobs.'

'In the past week I've had my fill of the full-time officials. They're just acting for the government and not the men.'

'However I think we can win. Of course the other yards must black the ships. I'll go down to Smiths Dock on Teeside if necessary to try to stop them agreeing to work on the ships.'

**DAVE HANSON**, chairman

of the outfitters' shop stewards committee, Swan Hunter:

'Parity with the boiler-makers was agreed in 1975 but was then held up by government pay restrictions. When the yards were nationalised a few months ago the men thought they could get a fair deal. That is why they are so determined.'

'There will be no giving in, whatever happens to the Polish orders. There is a major principle at stake. If we give in then every time the government wants a contract it will try and impose conditions.'

'It's not just lifting the overtime ban. There are the four points—stick to the 10 per cent pay rules, stick to the 12 month rule, agree to a committee to watch hours worked on ships, no industrial troubles.'

'If the government gets away with this it is setting a precedent for wrecking the whole trade union movement.'

'There is much talk of redundancies because of the loss of the Polish order. There will be redundancies anyway. Casey, British Shipbuilders' chief executive, told me that himself.'

**JOHN JOHNSON**, of TASS, the white-collar engineering union, representative at Neptune Yard, Swan Hunter:

'We have all the design work orders for the Polish ships. We have had a meeting and have decided that under no circumstances will the design be moved.'

'We are contacting our members on the Tees and at Govan. The TASS members who should be designing for the Tees yard that has claimed part of the order have followed our lead. They will not be designing the ships either.'

**ROB NEWTON**, a labourer at Swan Hunters:

'I work with the coppersmiths, laying pipes. The work is so dirty that when I take my boilersuit off it stands up by itself!'

'I am always black-covered in oil. There are hardly any basins to wash and there is no hot water.'

'But the worst part is the job itself. It's just horrible. We lay pipes right at the bottom of the ships. There is no proper ventilations, which means coughing and spluttering are just part of the job.'

'The pipes are welded in an enclosed space. When Joe starts welding we all start choking. I dive out as fast as I can. I'm diving in and out like this all day every day.'

**BRYAN PRINGLE**, an electrician who used to work at Swan Hunters:

'It's the worst place I've ever worked. I took home £40 a week, which included Sunday morning working.'

'The trouble round here is that it's either the shipyards or the dole. And at the moment I'm on the dole.'

'You can't imagine how bad it is. In the winter it's freezing—there's no protecting from the icy winds. If it rains and you're wet, well you stay wet all day. There are no drying rooms.'



Welding and riveting inside a ship's hull: 'When the welding starts we all start choking.'



Shipyard workers crawl out from under the 'guillotine'—Swan Hunter's way of releasing its workforce after a day's work.

### STATE CONTROL: A LESSON FROM POLAND

by **HARRY McSHANE**, one-time secretary, Scottish Unemployed Workers Movement, in the 1930s

WHAT would the shipyard workers in Poland think if permitted to know the facts about what is happening here over the order for ships placed by the Polish government?

They know more than we do about state control of the conditions of labour, but we are beginning to learn.

The efforts of the British government, helped by trade union leaders, to defeat the shipyard workers went almost without a hitch until they went to Tyneside. What happened there must have stirred every worker

The government did not send out troops to defeat the workers, as happened in Poland seven years ago this very month when the shipyard workers there went on strike over prices. Instead, fear of redundancy was used to make the workers toe the line.

Redundancy could be postponed for a year now that Poland wanted 24 ships built in Britain, but orders would only be placed in yards where

the workers accepted the government 'guideline' on wages and made other concessions never before given—even in the two world wars.

It seems unbelievable that the pace of retreat was set by the Govan yard on the Clyde where James Airlie is convenor of the shop stewards.

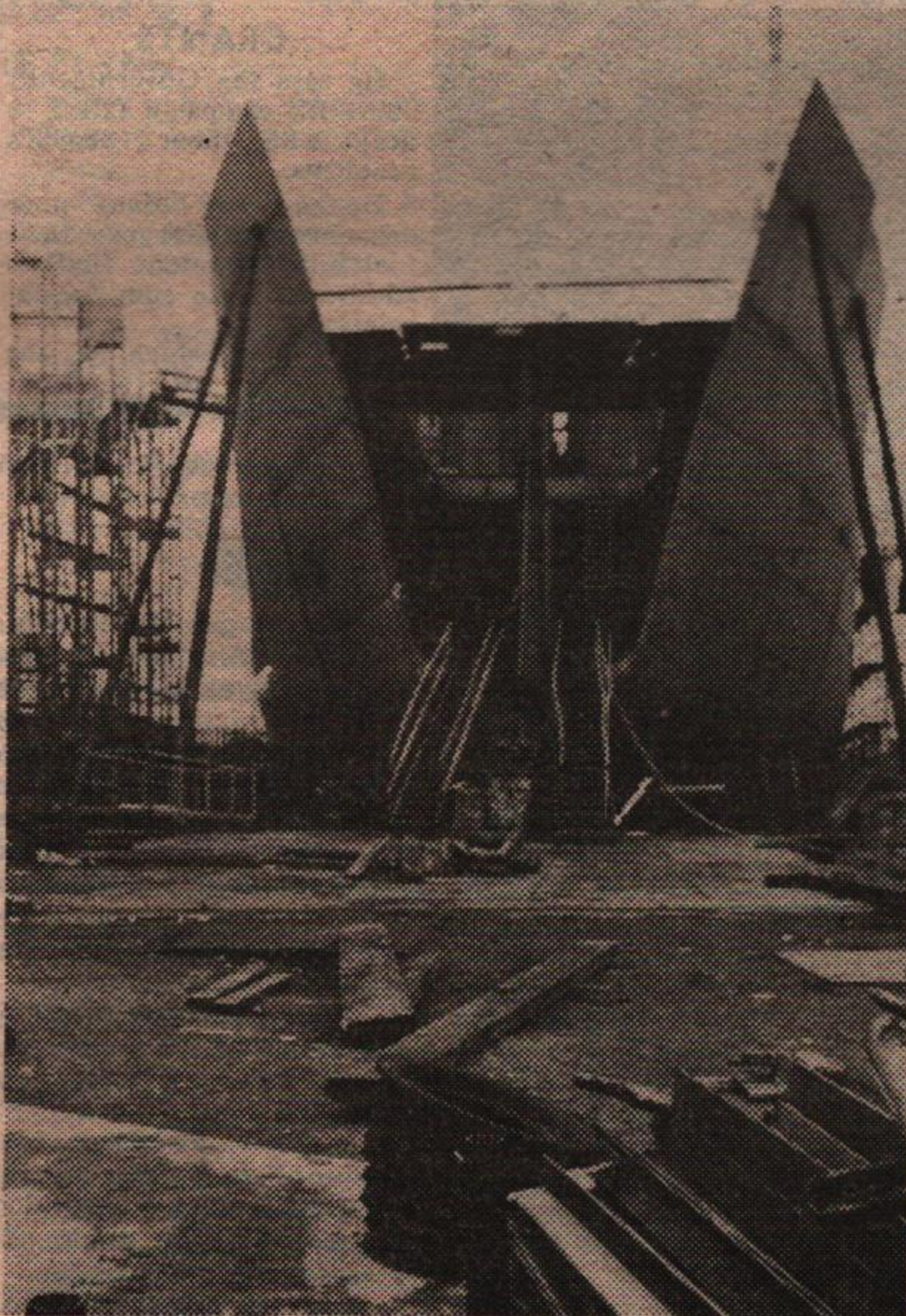
The Tyneside workers involved have taken a courageous stand and deserve all the support we can give



There is another matter that should be probed. Would it not be good if we know what the Polish shipyard workers think about it?

They have been on strike for the reinstatement of workers who took part in the 1970 strike.

Meantime, the ships that should have been placed on Tyneside should be blacked. We must not allow overtime to be compulsory or a condition of work.



### BLACK THESE SHIP ORDERS NOW!

by **PETER PORTEOUS**, EETPU shop steward, Yarrows shipyard Clyde (in a personal capacity).

**HALF-TIME Score:** Shipyard workers 0, Government Redundancy Team 1 (own goal Jimmy Airlie).

This could be the final result if the rumours circulating are true. The trade union leaders have lined up with the Labour government and British shipbuilding employers to blackmail shipyard workers everywhere.

What is at stake? The latest Common Market report says that the labour force in the British shipbuilding industry will be reduced by between 10,000 and 15,000.

An attempt is being made to break up the normally militant and well-organised workers and sap their self-confidence by a series of attacks on their work practices.

Govan yard has already shown itself capable of bending to government whims. It was the first yard to accept only 10 per cent pay award. They have also accepted a

31-point 'work practices' deal and a promise to meet all future productivity targets.

There is an obvious danger of shipyard workers losing hope of any fight back if a yard like Govan succumbs to the principle of 'I'm all right Jack'. The government could carry on picking off one yard after the other.



What we need  
 Swan Hunter shop stewards must tour the country now, calling for all the Polish ships to be blacked.

We need a conference of all shipyard workers' representatives to pull together a fight for parity within yards and then a fight for parity within the industry, plus a fight against all forms of redundancies.

A call for the nationalisation of the shipowners and home fleets, whose massive profits could revitalise the shipbuilding industry.





**MARXISM  
made EASY**  
by CHRIS HARMAN

**LOOKING BACK**, people often assume that revolutions began in the past because of an already existing revolutionary consciousness.

But that was not the way with the great revolutions that shaped modern society, dealing a death blow to feudalism and establishing the capitalist patterns of behaviour and thought that persist to this day.

The first successful such revolution was the English Revolution of the 1640s.

It grew out of attempts by the parliamentary majority to force the King to heed their wishes. But that parliament was not elected on the basis of democratic suffrage. It was in fact little more than an assembly of the old ruling class itself.

It had no intention, in the beginning, of abolishing the monarchy, but merely wanted to force the King to compromise with it.

It was this alone that led the parliamentarians to abolish the King's private police system and courts—the Star Chamber system, to lift censorship, to print appeals to the people

# THE FIRST ENGLISH REVOLUTION

and to raise an army of their own in opposition to the King's troops.

Yet these actions led them almost inadvertently, into a civil war, with themselves controlling half England from London and the King the other half from a rival government in Oxford.

## Preach

They unleashed forces they could no longer control. The collapse of the old repression allowed a thousand and one opinions to raise their heads. All the frustrations of the mass of people now gushed out.

Pamphleteers known as 'Levellers'

called not for a modified monarchy but for an end to all monarchs and all privileges. They gained great popularity among the poor of town and countryside as they preached heaven on earth in the here and now.

Such demands threw many of the early leaders of the parliamentary cause into panic. Some reacted by going straight over to the Royalist side.

Others, however, saw the defeat of the arbitrary power of the King as all important. These were the newer capitalist elements in the parliamentary opposition, those least integrated into the old order of society, those who lived by trade, the ownership of workshops

or by farming with hired labour to sell goods on the market.

As a Royalist bishop complained after the Civil War: 'Tis notorious that there is not any sort of people so inclinable to seditious practices as the trading part of the nation.'

## Build

The ablest leader of these elements, Oliver Cromwell, saw that he needed to make a temporary alliance with the extreme revolutionaries in order to destroy the power of the King. He used them to build a revolutionary army, the New Model Army, which defeated the royalist forces.

The army was notable for its discipline and fighting spirit. These were based on revolutionary fervour. The rank and file of the army elected their own representatives, known as agitators.

For a brief period Cromwell and the other generals were even forced to accept that these rank and file delegates should sit beside them in a council to run the army and, at a famous meeting in Putney, to discuss with them the future of the revolution.

Through what was effectively a soldiers' council, the poorer classes were briefly able to articulate their own political interests, for the first time in English history.

## Based

The rich who dominated parliament were horrified. They tried to make an alliance with the defeated King against the revolution.

But Cromwell and his fellow generals were determined to ensure the success of a new order of society, based on their class interests. They marched the army into London, threw the conciliators out of parliament, and insisted that the remainder support the execution of the King.

They knew that determined action, not parliamentary majorities, decided the success or failure of revolutions.

Thus they used the enthusiasm of the poorer section of the population to destroy the remnants of feudalism.

## Shot

But the enthusiasm was short-lived. Two months after executing the King in January 1649, Cromwell turned on the Levellers, imprisoned their leaders and shot four of their supporters in the army.

He told the council of state: 'There is no other way to deal with these men but to break them, or they will break you.'

The wealthy classes concurred. But their concurrence led many of them to turn against Cromwell too. They felt that with the King's head, he had also cut off many of the age-old superstitions that kept the poor in their place.

Even today the British ruling class prefer a mythology of monarchy, which sanctifies privilege, to the memory of the middle-class revolution that gave them power.

## Salisbury, Rhodesia: 'The white man's burden'



'We have the happiest Africans in the world.' Ian Smith, Rhodesian Prime Minister.

## Will your name be in the computer?

THE Home Office is giving the Special Branch some £935,000 to spend on a new computer. Into this machine they will feed the names of political activists.

According to research carried out by State Research, they have some 600,000 people on file. The computer has a capacity of 1,300,000.

In the late 1940s there

were between 100 and 150 Special Branch officers. In 1968 there were 300. Today there are 550 in London alone, and another 500 plus outside London, says State Research.

The ordinary local police are obliged under police standing orders to inform the Special Branch of all known political and industrial meetings and demonstrations. Local councils are excluded but not much else.

The Special Branch provides shorthand writers

for some of these meetings and gets reports on what is said of others. Local police are expected to report on meetings and demonstrations not covered by the Special Branch.

If anyone is arrested on a political demonstration, picket line or similar activity, local police are expected to check with Special Branch whether the individual concerned is on file. These files do not refer to past criminal charges, but to political activities.

□ IN AMERICA a computer can tell bosses which are the 'high risk' militant states.

Information—including results of trade union elections—is fed into the computer in Chicago and is used by companies deciding on the best area for expansion, where unions can be avoided.

The most anti-union states are Florida and North Carolina.

Shortly the break down will be available county by county.



ANOTHER attempt has been made to charge school children who bring sandwiches to eat at school instead of the ever more expensive school dinners. This time the attempt was made at a primary school in Cambridge, the Fawcett School.

The idea was finally rejected because the measure was found to be illegal.

The same governors' board meeting, however, did introduce another saving. Windows are now to be cleaned at the school just twice a year. This applies to outside only. The inside won't be cleaned at all. M HIGNELL

## WITHOUT COMMENT: 'Freeze or starve' choice for poor

HIGH fuel prices are forcing many low-income families to choose between fuel and food, according to a report published today by the National Consumer Council.

The report, compiled by David Green, project coordinator of the Durham Energy Advice Service, says the Government should do more to tackle "fuel poverty."

### GRANTS

He says the Government's "Save-It" campaign failed to deal with poor people's problems.

He says — "Many poor consumers cannot pay their fuel bills, let alone find an additional lump sum for insulation."

His report, which has the full backing of the Con-

sumer Council, recommends a major insulation programme by the Government with cash grants to householders and the establishment of local insulation schemes for the elderly.

Mr Green says the Government scheme to help poor families pay their electricity bills had a take-up rate of only 57 per cent last year.

He blames this on the complexity of the scheme and of the publicity leaflets.

The report speaks of the "massive" increase in fuel prices since the winter of 1973-74 and comments — "Many families were taken by surprise by the sudden increase in their fuel costs and got into difficulties with their bills."

"High fuel costs imposed the greatest hardship on the poorest consumers, who typically spend a much higher proportion of their income on fuel."

—Sunday World, Dublin, 27 November.

—Daily Record, Glasgow, 28 November.

'HIS (singer Demis Roussos) fare at Sutton House was quite modest by his usual standards: prawns to start followed by smoked Westphalian ham, a fish soup and then a special three and a half pound plaice... followed by strawberry pie... he wasn't very hungry that night.'

'On Thursday night he ordered two dozen oysters and a dozen steak...'

'On Friday he demolished five dozen oysters twelve pound of lobster, three ducks, 15 different vegetables, a massive dessert, two bottles of champagne and other wines.'

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## TROOPS SENT AGAINST MINERS IN RUMANIA

MANY PEOPLE on the left have been stunned by the spectacle of the Polish government conniving with our own Labour government in blackmailing the Tyneside shipyard workers over the contract for new ships.

But it's not only British workers who find themselves screwed by East European governments.

In recent weeks news filtering out of Rumania tells how the mining region of the Jiu Valley has been occupied by armed troops in an attempt to smash a strike movement by workers.

Ninety thousand miners went on strike at the beginning of August in protest at a new law which could have cut living standards.

A letter smuggled out of the country to a western radio station from 22 of the miners tells how: 'All the miners of the Jiu Valley rushed to the town of Lupeni, because that's where everything was happening. On Wednesday 3 August, when President Ceaucescu arrived, there were no less than 35,000 miners in the yard of the Lupeni mine.'

'The miners had had a lot of clashes with the security police, the regular police and men from the party.'

### GRAB

'The miners were dressed for work, with lamp and axe. Not only could they not disperse the strikers by means of firemen's hoses, but the miners grabbed two ministers, Verdets and Pana, and arrested them saying they would not be freed until Ceaucescu came himself.'

Ceaucescu finally turned up—only to be jeered, whistled at and abused. The miners chanted: 'Down with the proletarian bourgeoisie!'

Ceaucescu told the miners: 'Be reasonable and get back to work, otherwise you'll be crushed'. But he made certain concessions at first—only to withdraw them a fortnight later.

A miner recently told a New York Times reporter: 'For two weeks things did improve. There was more and better food and clothing. Then the troops came.'

Thousands of troops occupied the valley, large numbers of plain-clothes police were taken on in the pits as 'miners', and 4000 miners were sacked.

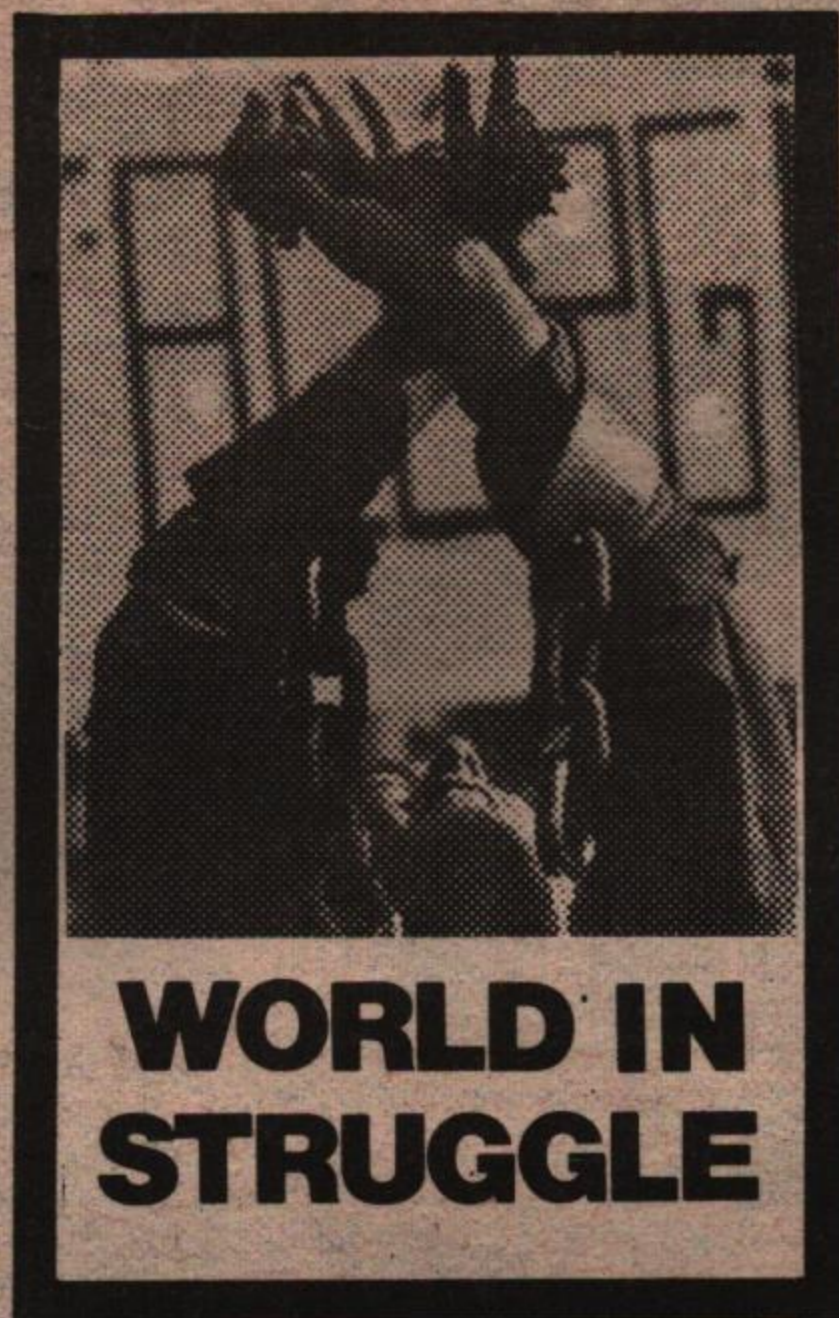
Many were forcibly moved from the valleys with their families and dumped hundreds of miles away. For instance, Dobrei, the miner who presented the workers' demands to Ceaucescu was seized with his wife and children by the police in the middle of the night and forcibly moved to Craiova, 200 miles away.

### HUGE

Not only the miners are angry. According to the New York Times: 'Rumanian officials have privately expressed serious concern that contacts between workers across the country could spread these disturbances far beyond the Jiu Valley. In September worker protests apparently erupted in the textile mills of Brasov and even in a huge heavy machinery plant in Bucharest.'

A Western diplomat told a reporter the nub of the Rumanian government's difficulty: 'The basic transformation as a result of sudden, enforced industrialisation of a docile, agrarian population into a real urban proletariat.'

□ Ceaucescu recently tried to speak in a mining centre. But before he could start, a worker shouted: 'How much do you earn, Comrade Ceaucescu? Because we have seen your wife, Elena, on television and on five occasions she wore a different fur coat.'



**WORLD IN STRUGGLE**

# Bermuda behind the backlash

by TONY BOGUES

**BRITISH colonialism is far from dead. Over the weekend the Labour government sent troops to the island of Bermuda to uphold the powers of the colonial governor.**

Bermuda is an island in the Atlantic on the fringes of the Caribbean. The island has a population of 60,000, two-thirds black. It has been a colony, ruled from outside, for 300 years.

The ruling party in the island, the United Bermuda Party, is an all-white party. At the last elections, three years ago, it brought in foreign whites and housed them in local black areas to break up the black vote.

Before the fall of fascism in Portugal, the government used to import white Portuguese labour to do agricultural work, while unemployment is over 20 per cent among the black population.

There are over 400 policemen in Bermuda, 80 per cent of them contracted ex-policemen from Britain. 98 per cent of Bermuda's judiciary is white.

Although the island has internal self-government, Britain maintains control over diplomatic affairs, police and army, and the civil service is 75 per cent British.

### Haven

But it is not only the British ruling class that maintains an interest in Bermuda. The island's main source of income is from tourism. The Americans own, lock, stock and barrel, the beaches and the hotels.

American and British multi-nationals pay 200 dollars a year each to operate in this tax haven where they often have their head offices. It is said that many companies there have links with the racist regime of South Africa.

In this colony, there is no unemployment insurance system and there is no white unemployment. Is it any wonder then that the young blacks rioted when two blacks were hanged by the colonial government?

The two that were hanged are said to be just plain criminals. Nothing could be further from the truth.

### Killed

They were supporters of the Black Beret Cadre group, a group formed under the impact of the Cuban revolution. At the moment they are underground. They stand for independence and socialism.

The two blacks who were hanged had killed the colonial governor and a supermarket owner who was at the same time the Commissioner of Police.

They were hanged by the government to teach the black population a lesson. The riots that came as a result of the hangings show that it is the white colonial government that will be taught a lesson.



## STEVE BIKO: ONE OF MANY

by LAURIE FLYNN

I CAN STILL remember as if it was yesterday the day they shot and murdered the black American revolutionary George Jackson.

I remember too when they 'excused' his murder by announcing that he was 'shot while trying to escape'.

I remember the shooting of the young students at Kent State, Ohio, the anger and the sorrow that I felt. And I can remember the thought forming in my mind: 'Of course they'll announce that "No-one was to blame".'

I knew in my heart when a left-wing Polish student 'fell down the stairs' in a police station earlier this year that the whole thing was a 'regrettable accident' and that once again no-one was to blame.

So it came as no surprise to me when the inquest on Steve Biko the South African black leader came to an end last week that the powers-that-be announced no one was to blame.

No one was to blame for arresting him.

No one was to blame for beating him.

No one was to blame for

taking him on a 700-mile car journey while he was in a coma.

No one was to blame for keeping him naked in some filthy cell in handcuffs and leg irons.

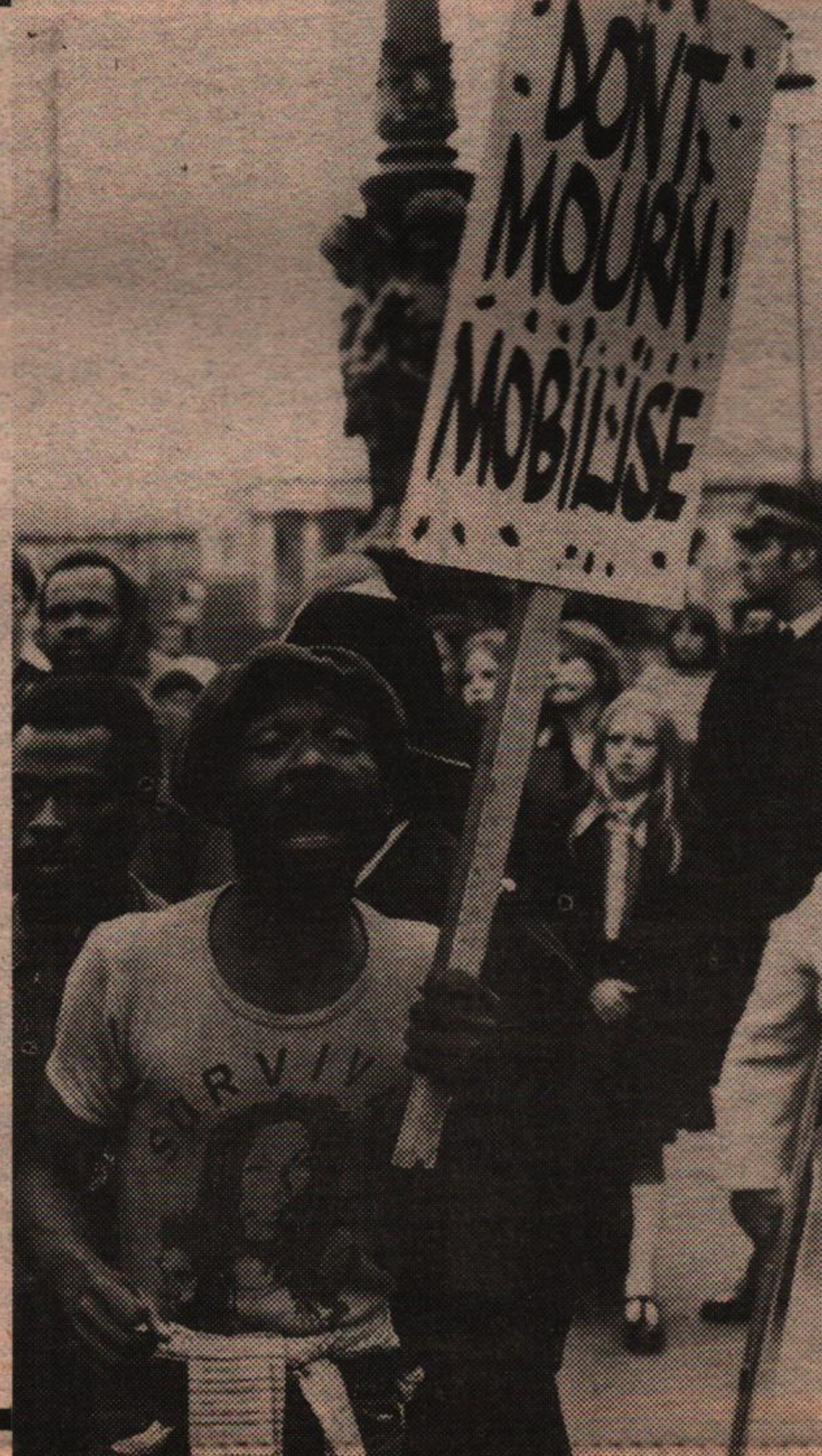
And when the whole vile process inevitably resulted in his death, again no one was to blame.

Yet despite the mountain of official lies about Steve Biko, ordinary people like myself know who is to blame. It's not some individual police thug, some South African version of Lieutenant Calley of My Lai.

Steve Biko was killed by a system of society that raises the wealth and power of a tiny minority above the needs and dignity of human beings.

Steve Biko was murdered by a system that decorates its villainy in sick fantasies about white racial supremacy.

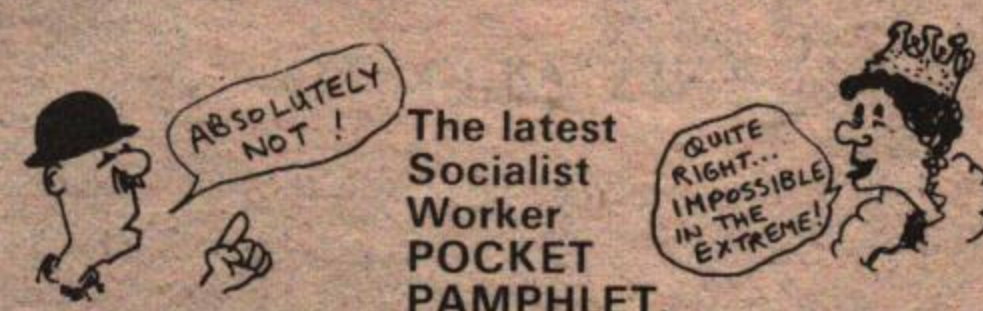
Watching the television a few weeks ago, I saw some film of Biko's funeral. There among the thousands of black workers and students who had come to bury this man there was a placard which said it all: 'Don't mourn. Mobilise.'



ABOVE: Blacks protest in Pretoria last Friday after the white magistrate found 'No one was to blame' for the death of Steve Biko while in police custody. His murder will not be forgotten.

LEFT: A London demonstrator with the placard that says it all.

## IS SOCIALISM POSSIBLE?



The latest Socialist Worker POKET PAMPHLET. 5p a copy, plus 7p postage, or 30 copies for £1, post free.

FROM SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.



# GRUNWICKS: A reply to Police

POLICE, the journal of the Police Federation, carried a slanderous attack last July on the Socialist Workers Party. It was headed 'Foot, the Face in the Crowd', and ringed a picture of a demonstrator at Grunwicks who was not Paul Foot at all!

Police have since apologised for their mistake, and, this month, they print in full a reply from Paul Foot. Here it is:

IN THE July issue of *Police* you printed a ridiculous attack on the Socialist Workers Party and on myself.

You pretend that the Socialist Workers Party tactics are 'a blend of intimidation, provocation, incitement and plain thuggery.'

'That is just silly abuse. I have been a member of the SWP and its forerunner, the International Socialists, for 16 years. I have been to hundreds of demonstrations, and meetings in which there was no intimidation, provocation, incitement or thuggery.'

The vast bulk of our members' time is taken up in argument and organisation — against anti-union employers, against racials, for better living standards and for a society where the productive resources are owned and controlled by the working people.

Of course it's true that a lot of our members supported and still support the call of the strikers at Grunwicks for a mass picket if possible to prevent strikebreakers from going into the factory.

## Useless

What would your members have done in such a situation?

You are trying, quite rightly, to free your union from government regulations which make you hopelessly weak. You want a free trade union and the right to strike for policemen. Why?

Because you know that any trade union organisation is useless unless it has the right to strike, and to



The article — but it's not Paul Foot

make that strike effective. That's just what the Grunwicks pickets were trying to do.

Your union apparently supports the Grunwicks strikers. Yet you don't discuss the rights and wrongs of the dispute in your paper.

You just attack those who organise to support the workers whom you support!

Why? Because at Grunwicks, and in hundreds of other instances, ordinary policemen are placed in a dilemma.

They think they are just enforcing some laws, while other laws are broken without any police activity at all.

Thousands of police are ordered to protect a few scabs at Grunwicks, yet every day the law on safety in factories is wifully broken. No police are ordered in to stop the killing and maiming of hundreds and thousands of workers through the unlawful negligence of employers.

Thousands of police are used up every day to fight against petty street crime, while a small and hopelessly overworked fraud squad try to track down hundreds of millions of pounds a year which is stolen by fraudsmen or tax evaders.

The more you look at the laws which police are ordered by their officers to enforce, the more you see that they are the laws which protect property, and not the laws which protect ordinary people, from whose ranks most policemen and policewomen are drawn.

So don't just hunt for a witch to explain the violence at Grunwicks or at Lewisham. Ask yourselves instead why the police are so often used as pawns in the defense of racials or the few with property.

You might discover then why the government, which is always so full of praise for the police, obstinately refuses to allow you the basic rights afforded to millions of other trade unionists.

# £11,194

## Give now—you'll be skint after Christmas!

IN CASE you have forgotten, we in Socialist Worker face the grim prospect at Christmas and the New Year of being chucked out of our premises.

The landlord's solicitors are to serve the eviction notice in the next few days. From that date we will have about one month to find new premises.

It is not easy: not many landlords are willing to let to us. So far we have tried to rent, buy

or let a dozen places, each to no avail.

Of necessity we have been forced to spend some of our fund on the campaign against the Nazis, in Hyde and Stockport. More recently we have spent funds in support of the firemen's campaign.

This, added to the repair work carried out at Cottons Gardens, means that we have to reach our £12,000 target by Christmas if we are to have any chance of finding a new home.

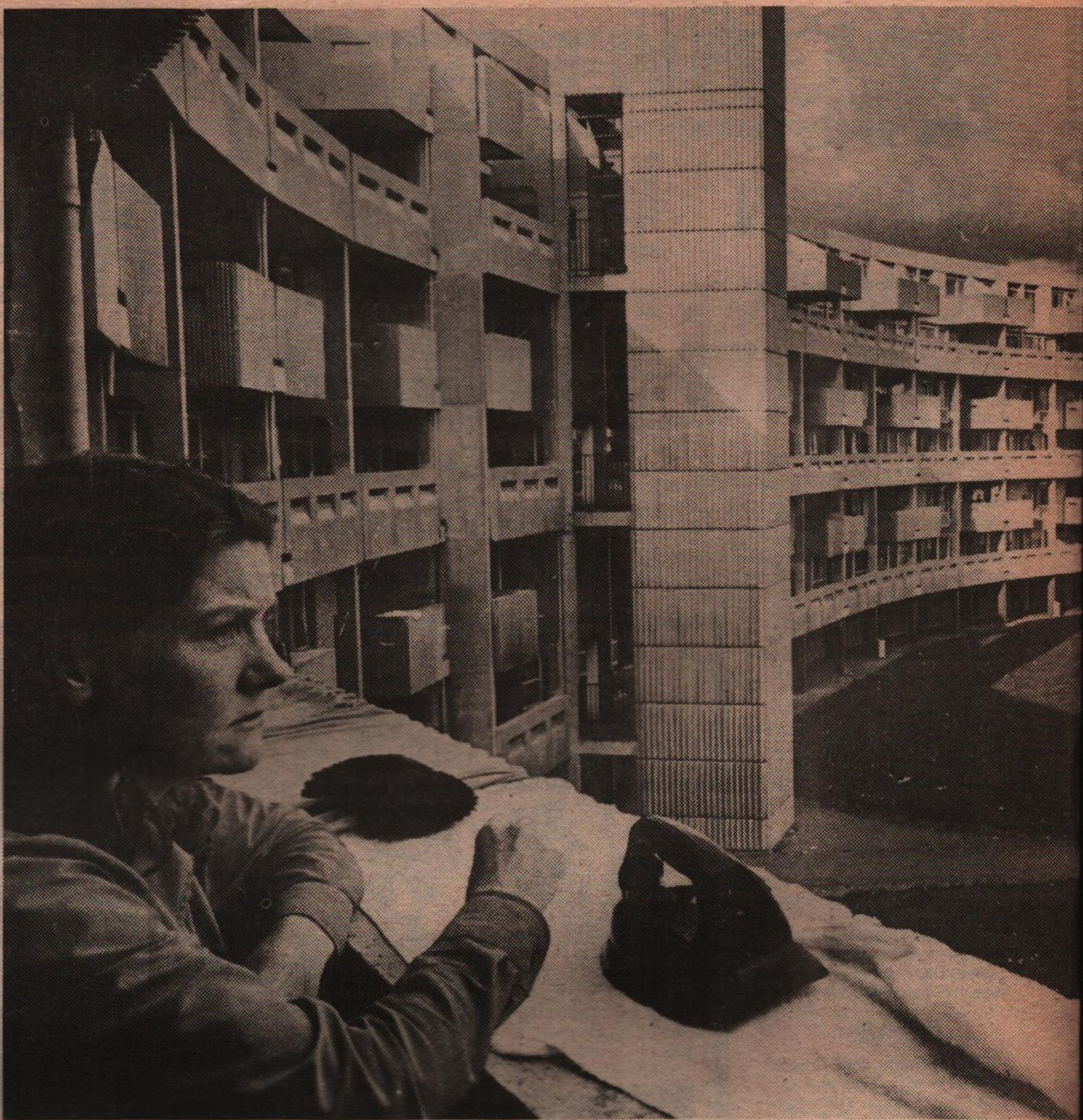
Christmas is a good time for fund-raising. Raffles, jumble sales, bazaars, parties are all good places to raise money.

We need to raise this money before Christmas because we all know what happens after—we're skint!

Donations and collections please to SW Fund, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

### THANKS THIS WEEK TO:

- Anon, Bournemouth
- Anon, Birmingham
- Bettershanger Colliery, Kent
- Gloucester SWP
- Anon Crawley
- Stockport SWP
- Bradford SWP
- West Yorkshire SWP
- Hammersmith SWP
- Glasgow Central SWP
- Asian workers and shopkeepers, Dewsbury
- Hammersmith Town Hall
- Leeds SWP
- South East London SWP
- Harlow SWP
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- Central London SWP
- O Lewis
- York SWP
- Plymouth SWP
- A. local, Sheffield



The only human thing to do to save our sanity, before we throw ourselves off the balcony, is to get us out of here—anonymous

# To ease the depression I've full ... I take three a day. Without them, I don't know

SPEAK to the people of Hulme and the anger and frustration of their lives rings out clear.

FLORENCE STEPNEY, a shop assistant lives in Otterburn Close. She has been on the transfer list for three years. Her husband recently died of cancer.

'He died waiting to get out. Week after week I went round to the Town Hall. I saw the MP Frank Hatton, councillors, the lot, but was refused a transfer because they said the medical grounds were not sufficient.

'Even the consultants wrote to the council, but my husband was still not regarded as a 'medical priority'. 'Two weeks after he died, I was told the case was under review, but I've heard nothing. 'My daughter's 15 and has a heart complaint but still I'm not considered for a move.

'Everybody wants to get out of here. There's no community spirit. The woman next door but one died of a heart attack and it was a day and a half before anybody noticed.

'To ease the depression I've got pills .... a cupboard full .... I take three a day. Without them, I don't know what would happen.'



Florence Stepney

GLENVILLE CAMPBELL is a boilermaker. He lives in the Crescents. He told us why he wants to move away from Hulme.

'Kids have nowhere to play. They climb on the balconies and you never know when another is going to fall over.

'Living here has had a bad effect on them. They don't get proper schooling, some of their parents have lost hope and some of them just run wild.



Anita Lawrence (right) and her daughter Della

'The heating is hopeless. I've hardly used it at all for the last quarter but my bill is £64.

'If it goes wrong you complain to the electricity board and the housing department. Both tell you they can't do anything about it.

## Once

'I want to move somewhere nicer and have asked to do so. But if you ask once and twice and have to keep on asking you

get fed up. The conditions he make people give up.'

BRITUS YOHANNA is Nigerian student who lives with relatives in Hulme. He told us of the noise problem.

'I can hear the lift and rough motor—when works—from four doors away. Traffic noise is even worse because the bedrooms here are adjacent to the road. 'My relations' previous house was demolished and they were glad to be

# THE HULME CRISIS REPORT

THE HULME Crisis Report was written by the Hulme People's Rights Centre coordinator, Peter Thompson. Visit his small office in a ground-floor flat and you see the enormous amount of work undertaken by the centre: files of casework, questionnaires, documentation of complaints taken up with the authorities, the council, police, health service.

Peter Thompson described the methods of his team of co-workers, how the centre

tried to restore people's confidence by treating them as human beings rather than statistics.

Now, perhaps as a tribute to its success, the centre has been told by the government Manpower Services Commission that it's to get no more cash. It has also been served with an eviction notice by the council.

For many, the centre is the only source of direct help, the only place their problems will be dealt with sympathetically.

ly. Peter Thompson showed us some comments sent to him anonymously by three different tenants. 'These say more than I ever could,' he said.

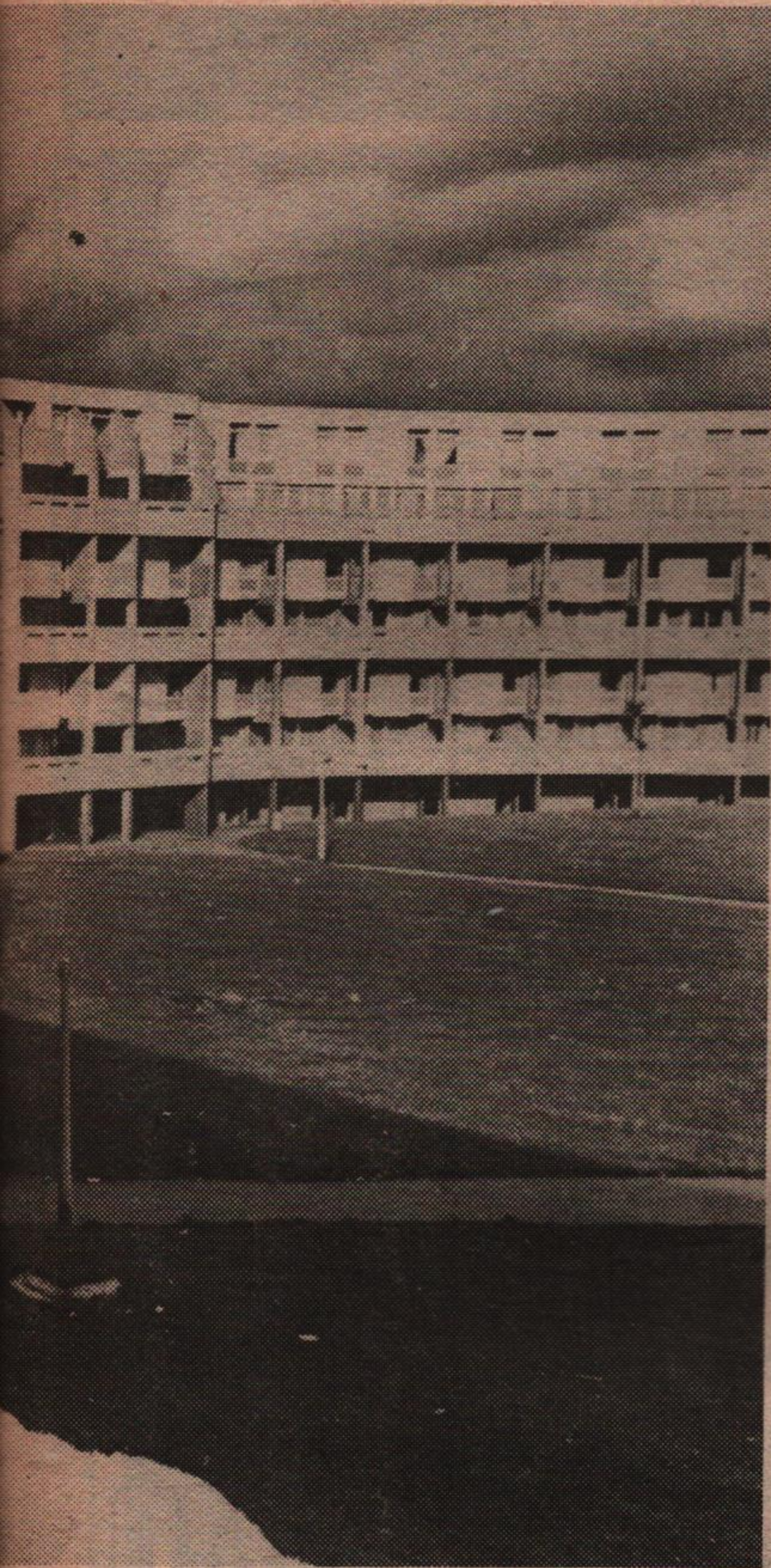
'The only human thing to do to save our sanity, before we throw ourselves off the balcony, is to get us out of here.'

'In my opinion, councillors who do spouting should be made to do 12 months penance in Hulme.'

'I feel the whole area is a prison... who wants kids growing up in prison.'



# This is Hulme: Where children grow up in prison



ter to the People's Rights Centre

**PRISON.....** that's what Hulme is to the people who exist there, trapped like battery hens in high density maisonettes and flats.

Here, people have no privacy because the walls are paper thin.

If you are old, disabled or have young children, you have to struggle up and down staircases because the lifts don't work. You have to walk along rubbish-strewn decks, because the refuse chutes don't work either.

Your children have nowhere to play, except on the above ground paths; risking a fall of up to six storeys ..... or near Manchester's urban motorway, where they face even greater dangers.

The maisonettes and flats are all-electric. Bills are astronomical and cut-offs a part of everyday life because tenants can't pay the bills of as much as £100 a quarter.

Damp is rife. Vermin, too, are common. By building inner walls of 'Stramit', a compressed straw material, bugs have been given ample and luxurious accommodation by the council, which is more than can be said for the tenants.

Repairs are constantly needed.

*The annual cost of maintenance in these cardboard boxes that masquerade as homes is one and a half times the original building cost!*

**REPORT** by Debbie Gott, Chris Gray and Elizabeth Lawson

**PICTURES** by John Smith (IFL) and John Sturrock (Report)

Social amenities are appalling. If you want to get out for an hour or two, you have a few pubs, two clubs, about nine churches, two betting shops, a large bingo hall and a cinema to choose from.

There is a library, but moves have been made to take that away. There is no community centre.

In the words of a report, recently published by the Hulme People's Rights Centre, it represents the worst example of modern inner city deprivation and inner city development.

## Public attention

The report has brought to public attention issues which have concerned local people since the estate was built seven years ago.

It has also brought the vultures of the Tory press on flying visits to the area. But after they have gone, life will still be a nightmare in this 20th century slum.

Thanks to the way Manchester City Council has actually built a ghetto here, Hulme has the highest incidence of broken homes, mental breakdowns, children in care, vandalism, vermin and violent crime in Greater Manchester.

Unemployment is very high. So is poverty.

In the Crescents there are more than 900 dwellings . . . over half the tenants are on the dole or social security and over a third are single parent families.

*Hulme is a social disaster area, a teeming monument to the sheer incompetence of the faceless men who 'plan' the lives of working people.*

Living there you are: Seven times more likely to commit suicide and 41 times more



The rubbish chutes don't work either...

likely to be murdered than anywhere else in Britain, excluding army-occupied Northern Ireland. This year alone there have been five murders on the Hulme Estate.

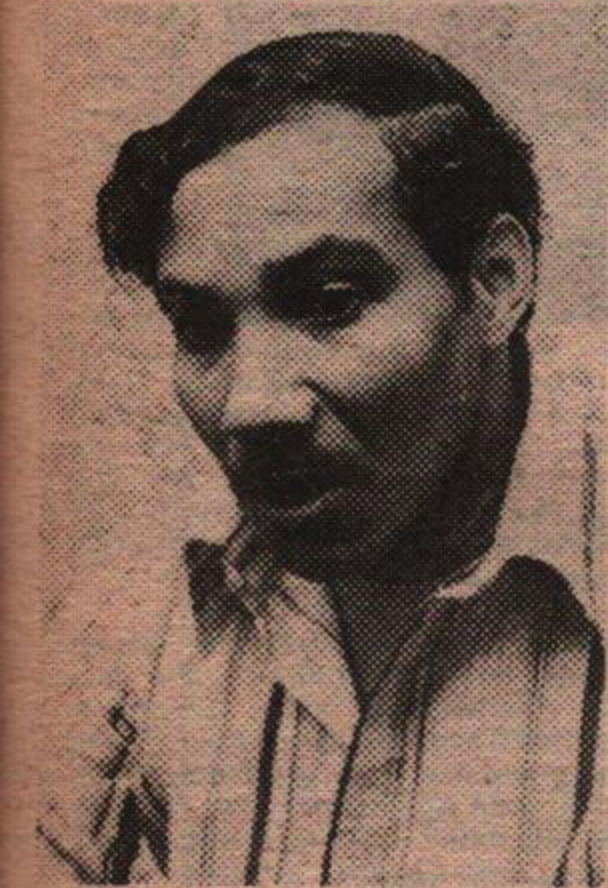
No wonder the tenants regard Hulme as a prison.

No wonder 9000 people want to get out immediately.

No wonder local doctors prescribe 250,000 tranquillisers a month.... and no wonder one person in two on the estate is having to swallow them!

got pills... a cupboard

what would happen.



Grenville Campbell

few months. 'We went for a telly last week, but when we told them we live in Hulme they checked our address to see if it was blacklisted or not.

'It seemed OK on Thursday night, but on Friday they did not send the television because our address is blacklisted. The shop is local. If they won't serve us who else do they expect to use the shop?

Lloyd said he thought the estate was built wrong: 'People are too clustered up, but I'd rather live here than in the Crescents.'

'If you moved toffee-nosed people here would be the same. The buildings cause it.'

Linda added: 'Even if the whole place was knocked down, Hulme would still have a bad name.'

*She is expecting a baby and 'praying that it's a girl so that we can be rehoused. There's Clifton here and they can't make us bring up a boy and a girl in the same room.'*

## Blame

**ANITA LAWRENCE** told us: 'I've lost all sense of purpose. I felt like a dead person, in a tunnel with no way out. I ended up spending five weeks in a psychiatric unit.

'The doctors blamed this place and wouldn't allow me to come back here. I had to go and stay with a relative because the doctors didn't want their work undone.

'I still have treatment for depression.

'People take it different ways. Quite a number become aggressive and violent when they've lived up here for a longish period. Men who aren't basically violent end up taking it out on the women

and children.

'You even find women getting aggressive to each other. You go out shopping and someone cuts you, so you feel bad and wonder what you've done to deserve it.

'Somebody will jump over the top one day and if that happens there will be no use the Town Hall saying afterwards: 'We had it in mind. We were going to rehouse you next week.'

## Climb

Anita did get rehoused, but her daughter, **DELLA**, is less fortunate. She has a 12-year-old son, **KIRK**, who is separated from her because he has a muscular disorder in his legs and can't always climb the stairs.

*The strain of life in the Crescents has led her to attempt suicide twice.*

She told us: 'Life gets unbearable. You cannot get anything done. I've complained for a year about Kirk's room being damp. The bathroom ceiling is black with damp.

'I've asked the council to deal with it.... I'm still waiting. But no wonder, when they cut the services all the time.'

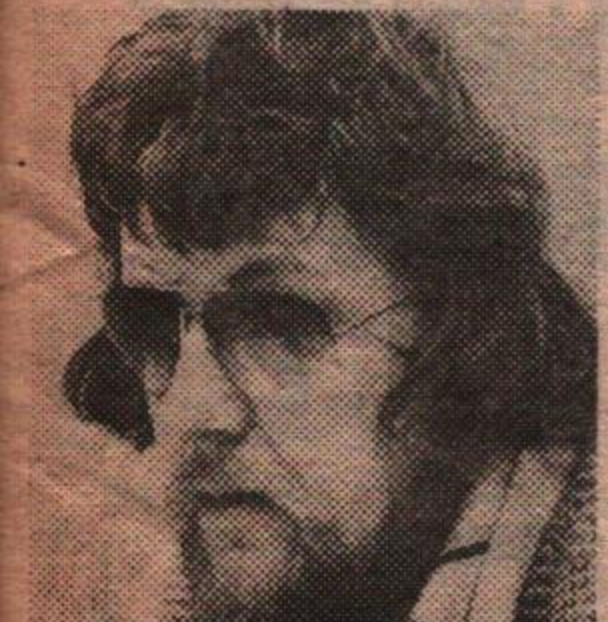
## Answer

**LEWIS WOMERSLEY** doesn't live in Hulme. He lives in an elegant house overlooking Lake Windermere. He designed Hulme.

His answer to what is happening at Hulme is this: 'The development was planned with a better class of person in mind.... it could even now become a showpiece if only the tenants were determined to look after it.'



When lifts don't work, there's only the stairs...



Peter Thompson



# BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE!

## Scotland

**PAISLEY Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: The case for revolutionary socialism. Speaker: Jimmy Rose (ETS National Council). Tuesday 20 December. All welcome. Questions and discussion. For further details contact SW Books, 64 Queen Street (top floor), Glasgow C1, phone 041-221 3426.

## Yorkshire

**DONCASTER Socialist Workers Party** Miners Branch inaugural public meeting: Do wages cause inflation? Speaker: Duncan Hallas. Sunday 11 December, 7.30pm, Masons Arms, Market Place, Doncaster. Miners and non-miners welcome.

**BRADFORD Socialist Workers Party** Christmas Bazaar: Saturday 10 December, 11am onwards, Textile Hall, Bradford. Books, records, toys, crockery, knick-knacks, hand-crafts, foods and jumble (good stuff only) urgently required. It is intended to last a few hours and food and drink will be available. We need your help, please contact your SW seller.

**SHEFFIELD Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: Build the Socialist Workers Party. Speakers: Stuart Wright (local fireman) and Paul Foot. Thursday 15 December, 7pm prompt, AUEW House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield.

**GOOLE:** Anyone interested in helping to form a branch of the Socialist Workers Party in the Goole area, or interested in attending discussion meetings please contact Goole SWP c/o Socialist Books, 238 Springbank, Hull (phone 0482 25925).

**MOORTOWN LEEDS Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: The Nazis and how to fight them. Speaker: John Charlton. Thursday 15 December, 8pm, Moortown County Primary School, Shadwell Lane, Leeds 17 (opposite Chained Bull, on Harrogate Road).

**HUYTON Socialist Workers Party** meets every Thursday, 8pm, details from your SW seller.  
8 December: The USSR.  
15 December: The revolutionary party.

## North East

**MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Workers Party** public meetings: Thursdays, details from your SW seller.  
8 December: Fascism.

**SOUTH TYNESIDE Socialist Workers Party:** For details of all meetings please contact the Socialist Worker sellers in the following places:  
**GATESHEAD:** SW sales Gateshead High Street (outside Littlewoods) every Saturday 10.30 to 1pm.  
**HEBBURN:** SW sales Hebburn shopping centre, every Saturday 10.30 to 12 noon.  
**JARROW:** SW sales Bede Shopping Precinct, every Saturday 11 to 1pm.  
**SOUTH SHIELDS:** SW sales, King Street (near Marks and Spencers), every Saturday 11 to 12 noon.

**SUNDERLAND Socialist Workers Party** meets every Thursday, 8pm. All welcome. Details from your SW seller.

## North West

**WARRINGTON Socialist Workers Party** discussion meetings: Alternate Thursdays, 8pm. Next meeting 8 December. Details from your SW seller. All welcome.

**WARRINGTON Socialist Workers Party** discussion meetings: Next meeting Thursday 15 December, 8pm. Details from your SW seller. All welcome.

**ORMSKIRK Socialist Workers Party** meet every Thursday, 8pm, details from your SW seller.  
8 December: Rank and File Movement.  
15 December: Can socialism come through parliament?

**BIRKENHEAD Socialist Workers Party** meets every Thursday 8pm. All welcome. Details from your SW seller.  
8 December: Women in capitalist society.

**MANCHESTER Socialist Workers Party** Christmas Party top Manchester club—ours for the night. Free buffet, prizes, competitions and one of Manchester's top DJ's. Sunday 18 December. Tickets £1 in advance only, from Rank and File Books, 260 Deansgate, Manchester.

## Wales

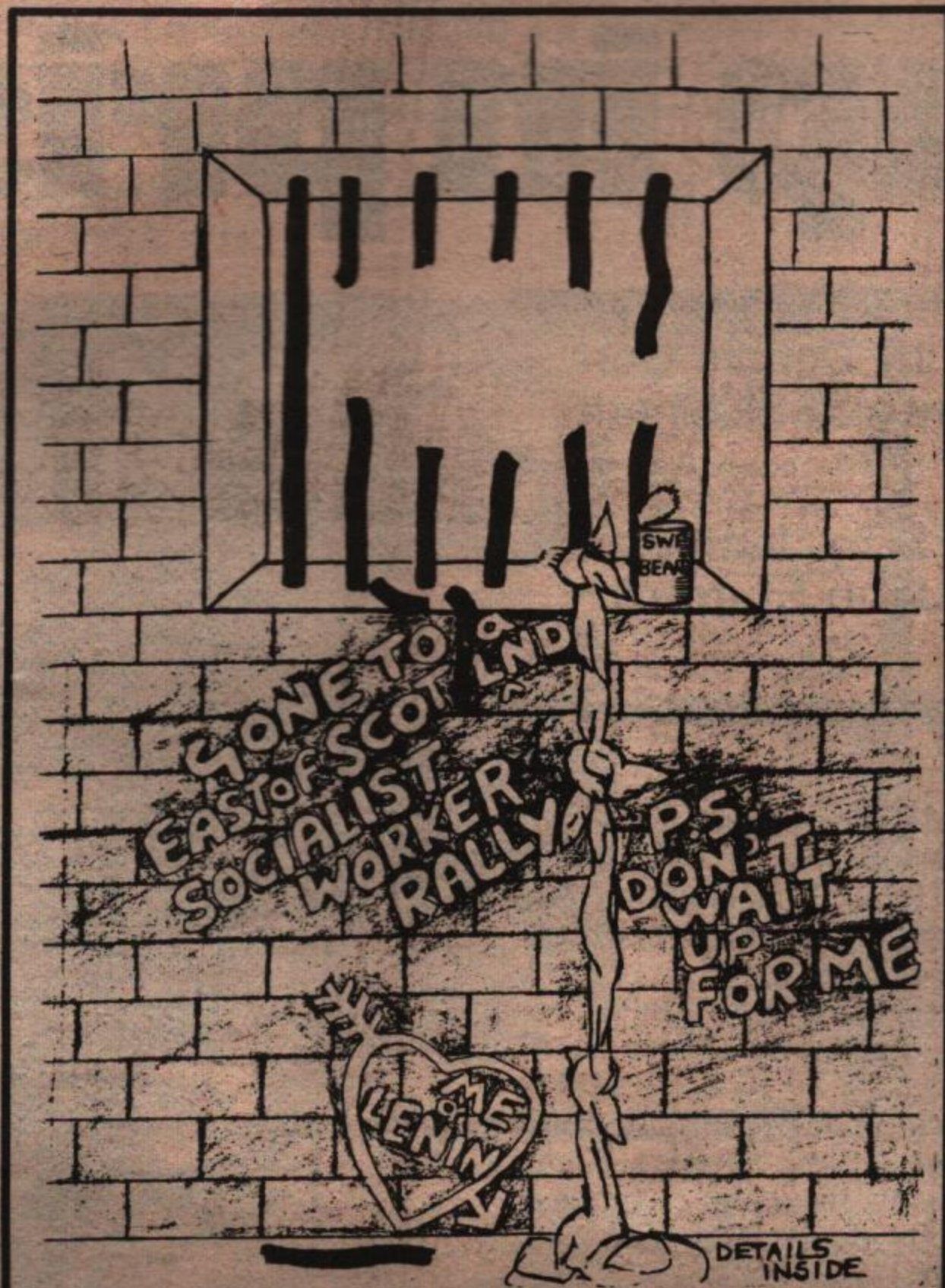
**ABERYSTWYTH Socialist Workers Party** meeting for members and supporters every other Wednesday. For meeting places for above see your SW seller.

**WHY RUSSIA ISN'T SOCIALIST**—Duncan Hallas exposes the myth that repressive dictatorship is the inevitable consequence of the removal of capitalism, a myth that blocks the road to socialism in both East and West.

A recorded cassette, 42 minutes, followed by 34 minutes of questions and answers.  
£1.50 including postage, from SW Recordings, PO Box 82, London E2 9DS.

## Public meetings and events organised by the Socialist Workers' Party and its fraternal organisations.

Send details of meetings and notices to reach us by first post Monday at the latest, to Whats On, Socialist Worker, PO Box 82, London E2 9DS.



**EAST OF SCOTLAND SOCIALIST WORKER RALLY** 10 and 11 December, Societies Centre, Hill Place, Edinburgh.  
Weekend of films, debate, entertainment, including CAST in Goodbye Union Jack. Creche, coffee, tea, snacks. Tickets £2 (£1 unemployed) from Andrew McGeever, phone Edinburgh 554-6310.



**FASCIST MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN** by Robert Benwick. Most complete record of pre-war Fascism. Price £2.50 available from Bookmarks for £1 including postage (75p to callers at the shop). Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. 01-802 6145.

**ABERYSTWYTH Socialist Workers Party** and NOISS public meetings Tuesdays 8pm.  
8 December: International meeting. Speaker: Tim Potter.  
13 December: Joint debate with the Labour Party: Roads to Socialism.

**SWANSEA Socialist Workers Party** sell Socialist Worker in College Street every Saturday, 11.30am to 1pm. Pamphlets, IS Journals and Rank and File papers also on sale. Come along for a chat and help us to sell SW.

## South East

**LOWESTOFT Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: Sexual politics. With gay speaker. Thursday 15 December, 8pm, Norfolk Hotel (upstairs room), Denmark Road.

**WEST MIDDLESEX Women's Voice** Grand Social (also fund-raising for firemen). Rock band and disco. Friday 16 December, 8pm, to 1am, Lady Margaret pub, Lady Margaret Road, Southall.

**STEVENAGE Socialist Workers Party:** Women and the Russian Revolution, 60th anniversary meeting. Speaker: Anna Paczuska. Wednesday 14 December, 8pm. Details from SW sellers.

**SOUTH EAST ESSEX Socialist Workers Party** meetings: Every fortnight, on Tuesdays 8pm. See your SW seller for details.  
13 December: What the Socialist Workers Party stands for. Speaker: Duncan Hallas.



**ASHFORD Socialist Workers Party** sell SW at the entrance to the Tufton Centre every Saturday 11am to 12.30pm. Come along for a chat and help us sell SW.

**CRAWLEY Socialist Workers Party** discussion meetings fortnightly on Fridays. Next meeting: 16 December, 8pm. Place from SW seller.

## Midlands

**LEICESTER Socialist Workers Party** meetings: Thursday 8 December: Is Israel racist? Monday 12 December: How the revolution was lost. Friday 16 December: Leicester Anti-Racist Committee Social in aid of arrested comrades. Thursday 22 December: Leicester SWP Christmas Party. Details from SW sellers.

**BLACK COUNTRY Socialist Workers Party** Social: Friday 9 December, 8pm to 11.30pm. Late bar. For place, ask SW sellers. Rock band plus local artists. One £1, two £1.50, unemployed 50p.

**BIRMINGHAM Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: Socialism can work. Speaker: Duncan Hallas. Thursday 15 December, 8pm, Digbeth Civic Hall. All welcome.

## London

**LAMBETH Socialist Workers Party** New Year's Eve Party: The last great party at Alphonso's Road. West Indian food, draught beer, 11pm till dawn. New Year's Day. Full details to follow. Numbers limited, so book now. Phone 01-720 4701.

**CENTRAL LONDON Socialist Workers Party** Civil and Public Services Branch public meetings: Alternate Wednesdays, ask your paper seller for time and places of meetings.  
14 December: Terrorism—a solution or diversion?  
21 December: Pre-Christmas booze-up—an exercise in real ale tasting.

**ISLINGTON Socialist Workers Party** meetings: Thursdays, 8pm, Hemingford Arms, Offord Road, London N7.  
8 December: Sexual Politics.  
15 December: Revolutionary left in Britain.

**ISLINGTON Socialist Workers Party** public meeting: Support the firemen, smash the 10 per cent. Tuesday 13 December, 7.30pm, North London Polytechnic, Holloway Road, London N7.

**SOUTHWARK SWYM and Socialist Workers Party** Party: Saturday 10 December, 9pm, Right to Work Centre, 21 Mayall Road, Brixton. Live band, food, booze, entrance 40p. All welcome.

**CAMDEN Socialist Workers Party** branch, speakers every fortnight.  
Wednesday 7 December: Southern Africa—what's at stake? 7.30pm. For venue see your SW seller.

**INNER EAST LONDON Socialist Workers Party** Christmas bob: Saturday 10 December, St Hilda's East, Club Row, London, E1 (Bethnal Green or Liverpool Street tubes). Band, disco, bar, 8pm to 12 midnight. £1, or 50p claimants.

**BERMONDSEY Branch Socialist Workers Party** meets every Thursday 8pm at Bede House, Southwark Park Road (Nr John Bull Arch).

**TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Workers Party** branch meetings every Wednesday 8pm, Oxford House, Devonshire Street, Bethnal Green. All SW readers welcome.

**CENTRAL LONDON Socialist Workers Party** District meeting: 7.30pm, Wednesday 7 December, details from branch secretaries.

## South West

**SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Workers Party** discussion meetings on our politics: Fridays, 8pm, October Books, 4 Onslow Road, Soton.

11 December: Internationalism and the experience of Russia.  
18 December: The origins of the SWP. Trotskyism today—how relevant is it?

**BRISTOL Socialist Workers Party** discussion meetings on Marxist Economics: alternate Thursdays, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.  
8 December: World capitalism today.

**NOISS National Organisation of Student International Socialist Societies**

**AGITATOR**  
SOUTH AFRICAN SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN REPORT Pages 10 & 11  
  
New AGITATOR out now. Branches will receive copies with this week's paper. Orders from NOISS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London, E2 8DN. 10p each plus 7p postage.

mythology that has been built around the man who played a leading role in building the Bolshevik Party and in the Russian workers' revolution of 1917. 43 minutes. £1.40.

**WHAT HAPPENED TO BLACK POWER?** Fred Hooper, a former member of the Black Panthers, on why the Black Power movement of the 1960s failed to find a way out of racism and oppression for the black people of the US. 50 minutes. £1.40.

**WORLD CRISIS:** Nigel Harris shows how the famines and upheavals of the poor countries of the

## Action in the Unions

**COHSE:** Health and Service members and supporters of Socialist Workers Party contact P Duffy concerning work in the union and setting up national meeting. Write c/o Morrison Street, Edinburgh.

## SW Notices

**ISRAEL: A RACIST STATE?** Socialist Worker Pocket Pamphlet number 3. 5p a copy, plus 7p postage (3p a copy post free for pre-paid bulk orders). From SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

**BUSINESS MANAGER** needed for INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM and other SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLICATIONS. Applications to National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party, PO Box 82, London E2 9DS.

**BIRMINGHAM Socialist Workers Party** have two Gestetner duplicators, an IBM electric typewriter and a Sterling platemaker, which all need repairing. If any comrades can help please ring Jerry, 021-643 5717.

**ANTI-FASCIST** greetings card for Christmas or the New Year. Celebrate the victory at Lewisham. Proceeds to Rock Against Racism, Coventry Socialist Workers Party and the Lewisham Defence Fund. Price 17p each including postage, five cards for 60p including post, 10 cards for £1 post free. From Box A, 65 Queen Victoria Road, Coventry. Cheques/POs to Trade Union and Socialist Books.

**THE 1978 BLACK and White Calendar** with 12 superb photographs by Robert Golden produced by N W London Socialist Workers Party for the right against racism and fascism. Only 50p from Bookmarks and other bookshops soon or direct from Black & White Calendar, c/o 214 Roundwood Road, London, NW10. Cash with order. Postage and packing 10p each. 10 or more post free. Cheques payable to Black and White Calendar.

**LABOUR HISTORY CALENDARS 1978:** printed and published by Sheffield Socialist Workers Party. Each month highlights an event in working class history. Sheffield Outrages 1850-58, Suffragettes 1900-1914, Shop Stewards Movement. 1915-20, General Strike 1926, River Don Work In 1971, Kill the Bill 1972, and others. Limited edition of this fine calendar. Not just useful but a marvellous catalogue of our traditions. Rush order to Simon Ogden, 1 Fortessa Road, Sheffield 6, 0742 34674. Price including postage £1.80.

**CHEAP accommodation** urgently needed in London for Soviet refugees. Phone Joanna 01-739 1878.

**Socialist Worker needs REGULAR HELP** on Wednesday mornings. Anyone able to do this work should phone John Larkham on 01-739 2639.

**FOR SALE:** back copies of Socialist Worker 1968-74 very nearly complete. Would make a wonderful Christmas present—offers, phone Jackie on 01-249 6777 evenings before 13 December, or write to R&F Films, c/o 265A Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Proceeds to Right to Work film.

**ROOM WANTED** by SWP COMRADE in East North or Central London. Phone Ian, (01) 807-6291, after 7pm.

**LEA VALLEY:** The Women's Voice meeting due for Monday 12 December is cancelled. Sorry!

**RENTAMOB STRIKES AGAIN!** Second issue of Rentamob, agitprop bulletin of the SWP and supporters, out next week. Includes: Consumer's Guide to Demos/Pickets/Trials, report of the Right to Work Film, 'Throwing some light on boring meeting', Parties for the party, and many other things. 10p a copy plus 7p postage (10 for £1, post free) from Dave Simmonds, Counter Act, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1.

world are the result of the biggest biggest world economic crisis since the 1930s, and examines the implications for socialists. 58 minutes. £1.40.

**RACISM AND THE BLUES:** David Widger on the roots of blues singing, particularly that of Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, in the slavery and oppression of blacks in the US. 55 minutes. £1.40.

**SHELLEY AND REVOLUTION:** Paul Foot on the work of a poet who was a revolutionary, republican and feminist, but whose work and life has been vastly misrepresented for 150 years. 87 minutes. £1.50.

December issue  
**Womens Voice**  
out now!  
Childrens books, reviewed by children, our first short story; the Virgin birth; news; reviews; and much more.  
Copies available from Womens Voice, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2, 20p including postage, or from your Socialist Worker seller.  
SWP branches should collect their copies from the stations this week.

**RANK AND FILE DIARY**  
  
Right to Work CHRISTMAS CARDS: six designs—postcard type—two colours. 8p each or £1 for 20 plus 10p postage. Rush your money and orders to CARDS, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London, N4.

December issue of **THE COLLIER** out now. Paper of rank and file miners. Articles on the ballot, Armthorpe's three shovels, 'Yes, they can afford to pay us', the firemen's strike, the Grimthorpe Grand National, COSA, the jailing of US miners—and others. 10p plus 11p postage (10 copies for £1 post free from The Collier, 38 Abbey Lane, Cundy Cross, Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

**FORDWORKERS** invite you out to a night with:

**5210**  
A  
**5310**  
SHIFT  
Xmas Dance  
10 December 7.30 to Midnight  
Three Blackbirds  
640 High Road Leyton  
Hill  
Arambee Disco  
Dance for The Limitations  
(from the floor £1.25)

**Rank and File Open Education Conference: TOWARDS A SOCIALIST EDUCATION.** Speakers: Ken Workpole and Hackney Writers Workshop. Saturday 10 December, 10am to 5pm, Central London Polytechnic, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1. 8pm till late. Disco at Kilt and Celt pub, Glasshouse Street, London W1 (60p).

## Notices and meetings

Notices for this column must be posted to arrive by first post Monday before publication. We cannot take details over the phone. CASH WITH COPY ONLY to Classified, Socialist Worker, PO Box 82, London E2 9DS.

**ITALY:** What's happening? Meeting with speakers from Workers' Autonomy (Autonomia Operaia), Monday 12 December, 7pm, South Island Library, South Island Place (Oval Tube), London.

**ZIMBABWE IN STRUGGLE:** Films, posters and books, exhibitions, Zimbabwe sculpture, music, photo exhibition, concert and cultural evening. Sunday 11 December, 2pm to 10pm, Africa Centre, 38 King Street, London WC2. Speakers from the Patriotic Front. Discussion. Tickets £1. The Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2QD, phone 01-580 5311.

**MANCHESTER Rock Against Racism** Christmas concert: Friday 23 December in Stretford Civic Theatre. Bands are: The Fall, The Worst and poet John Cooper-Clarke. Tickets available beginning of December.

**ROCK AGAINST RACISM CONCERT:** Friday 9 December, 7.30pm till late. Admission 75p. Starring: XTC, Misty, Decorators, Black Enchanters. Southall Community Centre, Bridge Road, Southall (beside Railway Street).

**Demonstration against racism on TEESIDE:** Saturday 10 December, assemble 12.30, Albert Park, Linthorpe Road. March to AUEW Halls, and rally. Organised by Cleveland Anti-Fascist Committee.

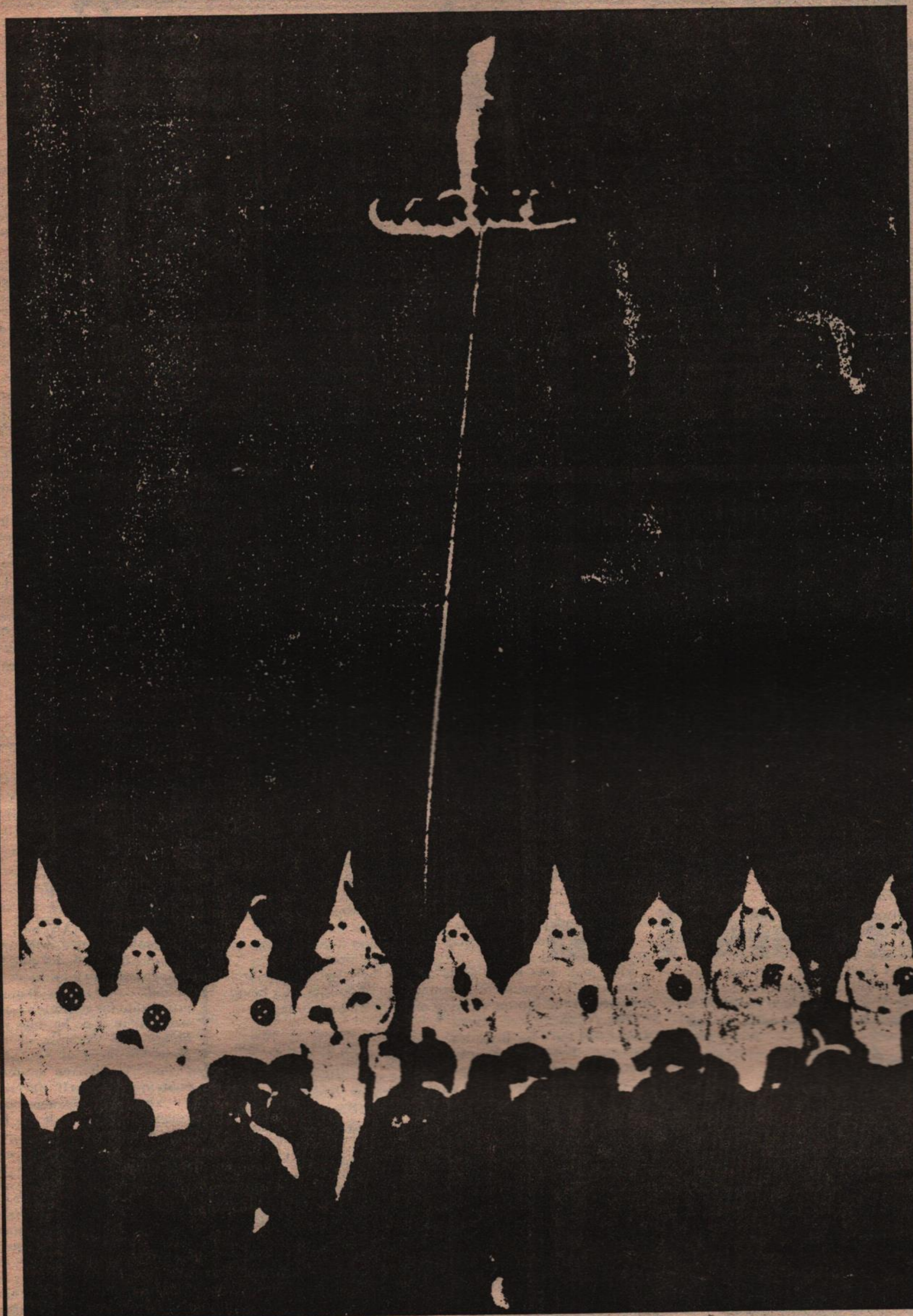
**THE RED FLAG:** Illustrated poster (24" x 18") of Socialism's Song (five verses). £1 from Glossoprint (SW), 62 Spire Hollin, Glossop, Derbyshire.

**Revolutionary Communist Group** public meeting: Ireland—The law and the working class. Speakers: Jennifer Tait (RCG), Brian Rose-Smith and a speaker from the Trade Union Committee Against the PTA. Tuesday 13 December, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Admission 20p.

**Forward to a Socialist Health Service**  
FORWARD TO A SOCIALIST HEALTH SERVICE! A summary of the Socialist Medical Association's evidence to the Royal Commission on the National Health Service. Price 37p including postage, 30p each for orders over 10 copies, from the Socialist Medical Association, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG.

**OUTNOW! TEMPORARY HOARDING**  
TOM ROBINSON BAND  
INTERVIEW • STEVE BIKO • POLY STYRENE • RASTA LETTERS  
POSTER  
LOVE WAR  
NO 4 AND BEST YET!  
Single copy 29p, (inc pos) Bulk £1 for 10 + 20p post  
New Address:  
Rock Against Racism, Box M, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1





## THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

*In sixteen forty nine to St George's Hill  
A ragged band they called the Diggers came to show the  
people's will.  
They defied the landlords, they defied the laws,  
They were the dispossessed re-claiming what was theirs.  
We come in peace, they said, to dig and sow.  
We come to work the land in common and  
To make the waste ground grow  
This earth divided, we will make whole  
So it will be a common treasury for all.  
The sin of property we do disdain.  
No man has any right to buy and*

*Sell the earth for private gain.  
By theft and murder they took the land  
Now every where the walls spring up  
at their command.  
They make the laws to chain us well.  
The clergy dazzle us with heaven or they damn us into  
hell.  
We will not worship the God they serve  
The God of greed who feeds the rich while poor men  
starve.  
We work, we eat together, we need no swords.  
We will not bow to masters or pay rent to the lords.*

## STRANGE FRUIT

*Southern trees bear a strange fruit;  
Blood on the leaves, blood at the root.  
Black body swinging in the Southern breeze,  
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees,  
Oh..... Oh.....  
Pastoral scenes of the gallant South,  
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth.  
Scent of magnolia sweet and fresh,  
And the sudden smell of burning flesh.  
Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck,  
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck.  
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop  
Oh..... Here is a strange and bitter crop.  
Oh..... Here is a strange and bitter crop.*

# Big Red Songbook

IS THERE someone in your area who turns up at political socials, even meetings, with a guitar and sings the same few folk songs over and over again?

The Big Red Songbook is the answer. It contains 43 socialist songs, with music, ranging from the traditional 'Blackleg Miner' to the bang-up-to-date 'McAlpine's Fusiliers'.

Yes, be embarrassed no longer, here too is a full version of the International!

Here we print the words of two songs, jazz singer Billie Holiday's 'Strange Fruit' and Leon Rosselson's 'The World Turned Upside Down'.

The second is about the Diggers, a group of early communists, who in March 1949 occupied St George's Hill in Surrey and proclaimed it a classless society. After a year of heroic struggle and near starvation they were finally forced off the land by local landed interests and Fairfax's troops.

The song can be heard on Leon Rosselson's LP titled 'That's Not The Way It's Got To Be' (Acorn Records CG251).

'Strange Fruit' was first recorded by Billie Holiday in 1939, and relates to the lynching of blacks in the racist American South. It was a courageous thing to do at the time when jazz was becoming safe for white audiences and every middle-class socialite wanted to dance to Ellington or Count Basie.

The song can be heard on Billie Holiday's 'The Commodore Days' (AHC 184).

THE BIG RED SONGBOOK, compiled by Mal Collins, Dave Harker and Geoff White, is published by Pluto Press. It's available by post from Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4, price £1 plus 12p postage.

*We are free men, though we are poor,  
You Diggers all stand up for Glory, stand up now.  
From the men of property the orders came.  
They sent the hired men and troopers to wipe  
out the Diggers' claim.  
Tear down their cottage, destroy their corn.  
They were dispersed—only the vision lingers on.  
You poor take courage, you rich take care.  
This earth was made a common treasury  
for everyone to share;  
All things in common, all people one  
We come in peace—the orders came to cut them down.*

## Socialist Workers talking



ALAN GIBBONS

PUBLIC OPINION has been very influential just lately.

This mysterious figure has been lurking behind the blackmailing of the power workers back to work. It also dislikes miners, thinks football hooligans should be horsewhipped and believes that sex is all right in small doses with the lights out.

So I set out to discover the whereabouts of Public Opinion.

My friends and workmates couldn't help. They think Public Opinion talks out of its right buttock.

Nor could the Citizens Advice Bureau help. They thought whoever held such strange views must have a personality problem.

### Shabby

I finally tracked down my quarry in a backroom of Madame Tussauds next to the Average Housewife, the Man in the Street, and Enoch Powell (who takes any notice of him these days?).

Shabbily dressed, features distorted with frustration and despair, body bent by work. One of life's unfortunates.

I was impressed. All those opinion polls in the press were genuine. People really thought that their neighbours, like the miners and the firemen, ought to be broken by the troops and subjected to the contempt of their fellows.

I began to feel anxious. How could I argue for anything that flew in the face of Public Opinion? Surely we ought to accept the 10 per cent and abide by the decision of the majority?

### Sleeve

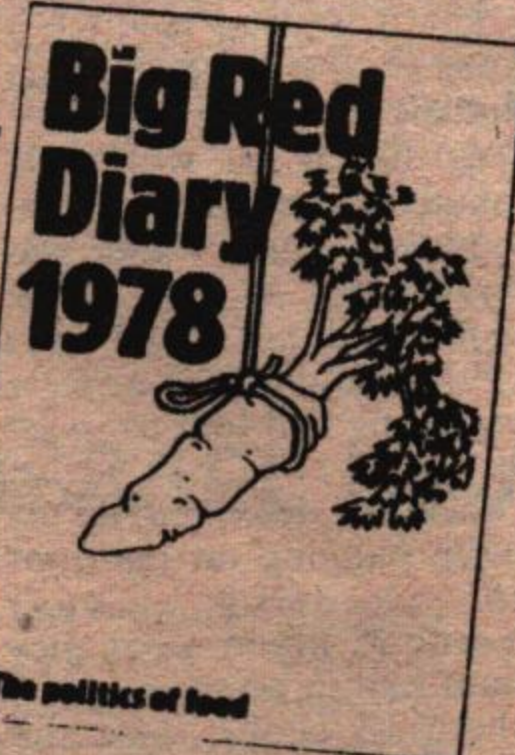
I took a last look at the voice of the people. But what did I see? Strings jerked its arms, moved its eyes, opened and closed its mouth.

And above me in the darkness I could make out a manicured hand, a pinstriped sleeve, and hear the click of typewriters and the roar of printing presses.

As ever, the exploited and dispossessed are used by their own worst enemies against those who could be their finest allies. There is hope though. There's talk of a strike by the National Union of Puppets, Dummies, and Allied Wax-works.

So who knows? If we're there to put our argument, even Public Opinion may turn in our favour.

# Conspiracy? No, it's only Official Secrets



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IN SOME respects the operation of the Official Secrets Act is a dead letter because every day some thousands of civil servants must tell their families where they are working and what they are engaged upon.

Indeed there are some who, like myself, despite having signed the undertaking relating to the Act, quite deliberately disclose certain confidential information to the press and no action is taken against them.

(Was that a knock at the door? — I don't think so, it is over two years ago now.)  
But the Man Alive Report **On Her Majesty's Secretive Service** (BBC2) showed that the Official Secrets Act 'is tailored to affect anything the

## TELEVISION by Ossie Lewis

government wants it to'. It might be pertinent to ask: 'Which government?' in the case of journalists Aubrey and Campbell and ex-soldier Berry. Could it be the US government, in view of the fact that the CIA personnel are said to oversee some operations at GHQ Communications centre.

Patricia Hewitt, secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties, made the point: 'One can find out things about Britain in the US, that you can't find out here.' All the

world can know about something going on around us, but breathe a word of it in our own country and you could be hauled up before a court.

She added that in today's Data bank Society 'we don't know what is on our records or how that information will be used. We know the police are collecting a great deal of information on people's political views'.

Well, there is only six years to go before 1984.  
Ex-Labour minister Richard Crossman, reaching out from the grave to pay off some old scores, was thoroughly corroborated when it was clearly shown that parliamentary democracy is a hollow sham. In fact we are

governed by a small clique of upper-class senior civil servants, who, more often than not, are in cahoots with leaders of the government of the day.

### Embitter

If the Shrewbury pickets, who were jailed for conspiracy saw the programme, they must have been embittered to learn that really 'Official secrecy is a conspiracy between certain senior civil servants and ministers.'

Despite the weaving and ducking of Lord Allen, the retired prototype of a senior civil servant, even he was forced to admit: 'There is scope for some relaxation, for more open government.'

That's a laugh. Ted Heath dangled this bait before the 1970 election. Labour did the same in 1974. But the six-year-old report of the Franks Committee is still gathering dust on the shelf.

A really horrifying story was told by Tom Griffiths.

Working at the Biological Centre at Porton Down in Cornwall, he was conscientious enough to obey the rule forbidding him to discuss with others, even his doctor, what he worked at. Had he done so he would have received earlier treatment for a disease he contracted which has left him half blind and suffering from vascular trouble.

For his devotion to duty he was offered as compensation the generous sum of £1.70.



# RUSSIA A SIMPLE FACT

RUSSIA IS a capitalist country. This simple fact seems to have completely escaped the writers of last week's letter.

In Russia the working class has no control over the means of production. It is reduced to wage slavery in order to produce surplus value just as in the so-called western democracies.

The difference is that in Russia production is controlled by a state bureaucracy rather than by individual capitalists.

There are massive wage differentials in Russia. The highest paid jobs in the bureaucracy only go to Party members. The party itself is a closed organisation.

The fundamental contradiction of capitalism between order givers and order takers is perpetuated in Russia.

Russia is all in all a stark warning to those who equate state planning with socialism. Socialism can only be built by the conscious activity of the working class themselves.

□ Jim Gregory, Middlesbrough.



# Hardly a working class vision

LET ME advise, 'Two Perplexed Readers', (SW 26 November), reality is apprehended through the senses. If something is out of focus—depend upon it—it is your senses that require adjusting, and not reality.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking you are being anti-Communist because you make criticisms of Soviet society. Neither imagine that such criticisms imply your support for Capitalism. Be as objective as you possibly can. As a former Communist Party

member, I am well aware how difficult this can be.

What you say about the social services in the Soviet Union is true, but only on the surface.

## Afford

Dig below the surface, and what do you find? There are those who have higher earnings.

They are able to afford better housing, in nicer districts. These districts all have their own schools. Since the

parents have influence in Soviet society, they ensure that only the most highly qualified teachers get positions in these local schools. This ensures that their children get the best teaching.

Thus, the schools for certain sections of Soviet society give a better education than those for other sections of Soviet society. So, class divisions are perpetuated—just like in the West—by the schooling you receive.

Pensions are given out at age 55 for women, and 60 for men. But when you divide 20,000 million roubles of pension money by 43 million pensioners, it only works out at about 40 roubles per month on average.

This in practice means that a pensioner can only afford meat in her diet about two or three times per month. This may cut down on queues for food. But it is hardly what Communists envisioned would be the result of the working-class taking power.

□ H.C. Mullin, Glasgow.

## Russia ripe for change?

SOVIET workers have no say in what is produced, how production takes place or over how the fruits of production are distributed.

Real wages are very much lower than in Britain. There is no right to strike.

The costs of housing and fuel are relatively cheap but this has to be countered by the scandalous cost of clothes and food and consumer goods.

The average family flat is two rooms and a shared kitchen—hardly what I consider reasonable.

Schools in rural areas receive far less resources than do their urban counterparts, while in the big cities special schools exist for the children of the Soviet elite.

The restrictions on literature and publishing are greater than under Khrushchev.

On some things the capitalist newspapers are right. The Guardian recently concluded 'if Lenin were alive today in Switzerland and in an objective frame of mind he might well conclude that once again Russia is ripe for Revolution.'

□ Terry Ward, Brentwood.

IS THE SWP prepared to campaign for Mary Bell's freedom? The Home Office don't want the responsibility for her freedom so why don't you the SWP strike a blow for the freedom of the mind.

□ D L Thornton, Sunderland.

LENA Calvert in her article letter on terrorism doesn't ever ask herself what it is that makes people terrorists.

I wonder where her pen was when the British Paratroopers picked out the youngsters in their teens and murdered them on Bloody Sunday 1972.

□ P Cassidy Birmingham

# Letters

Send your letters to:  
Letters Page,  
Socialist Worker,  
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## THE STRIKE BREAKERS



Merlyn Rees

STRIKEBREAKING fire officers are members of an organisation called NAFO. But these officers weren't always in a separate union.

Before and during the early days of the Second World War every officer was a member of the Fire Brigades Union.

But when the Fire Brigades became the National Fire Service the man who was then Home Secretary, the Labour politician Herbert (later Lord) Morrison decided to set up a

breakaway organisation for all officer ranks.

To assist him in this he called on a top civil servant called Sir Arthur Dixon, a man who had earlier played his part in smashing the policemen's strike for better wages and the right to join an independent trade union.

Morrison also put in a man called Ralph Reader Harris as pro tem general secretary of the organisation.

This man was for a while a Tory MP for Heston and Isleworth. He subsequently dropped out of politics after being involved in the Bloom washing machine empire collapse.

Many of the officers stayed with us in the Fire Brigades Union despite Home Secretary Morrison's attempt to set up his seab breakaway union.

Now, of course, we see the outcome of the breakaway—officers acting as assistants to strikebreaking troops against their own firemen comrades.

### Support

Morrison didn't break the spirit of the firemen then, despite all his threats. Neither will his product and successor Merlyn Rees.

The firemen must win this fight for a living wage which they so completely deserve. They have never deserted the public and the public are not deserting them.

Here in Hackney there has been magnificent support. The tenants, trade unionists

and the old folks are right behind them.

The only silent voices are 64 Labour councillors, 3 Labour MPs and 2 who sit on the Greater London Council.

The working class of Hackney will not forget. But sad to relate they still see no alternative to Labour but the hated Tories. But by uniting the support of the working class movement in the factories, the shipyards and even the old age pensioners who I'm sure love their firemen rather more than the Home Secretary.

Home Secretaries come and go. But the firemen are with us day and night.

□ Bob Darke, Hackney member of the FBU executive 1941 to 1945.

## 10p for a Convert

TODAY I attended a meeting concerning the 'run down' and eventual closure of a local hospital.

Although well intentioned the speakers from the platform were firmly of the opinion that 'they' could be persuaded to keep the hospital open by discussion petitions and public meetings.

Despite the expression of militant views from the floor, I came away from the meetings disappointed and disillusioned.

Not so much was it the result of the refusal of militant action. It was the constant reference from the platform to 'them' and 'they'.

These people were generally accepted as the power through which 'We' should be subjected to more deprivations affecting our health.

'They' apparently have all the control over the wealth which 'we' the workers create.

An attempt to swing the meeting along the 'we' lines was made by a Socialist Worker Annie Besant character.

She reminded the audience that if the government could spend £250,000 protecting a Nazi called Martin Webster, money could and should be made available not only to maintain our already depleted health services but to extend and improve them.

### Accept

This statement met with some approval. But having waited a lifetime for at least the implementation of Clause Four of the Labour Party Constitution which talks of workers control over society, it saddened me that it wasn't unanimously accepted.

We as workers do have the power to become the 'they' and shape our own destiny. It was to help achieve this aim that I after a lifetime in the

political wilderness joined the SWP hoping I could spread the gospel.

One method that might be useful is to make a note at any works meeting of anyone voicing, perhaps even inadvertently, a socialist viewpoint.

Make contact with them and offer them for free the first time an issue of Socialist Worker. 10p is cheap for a convert!

Not only can a reader be gained, perhaps permanently, but maybe even a new member.

□ R Adams, Sidcup.

I WOULD like to inform readers of the harassment and intimidation currently being practiced against Republican prisoners in British jails.

One example is Patrick Guilfoyle who was moved from Gartree prison to Withington Hospital Manchester where his mother lay dying following a fire accident.

Patrick was prevented from speaking to his father in the corridor. And unfortunately Mrs Guilfoyle died.

When a prisoner is visited by friends and relatives he has to undergo the degradation of strip searching. The prisoner is forced to lie on a table, while warders hold the ankles apart another warder investigates the prisoner's rectum.

Any objection and the visit is immediately cancelled. All this is an attempt to break the prisoners morale. But the political commitment of the prisoners is such that this time and time again proves to be a failure.

□ R Hogan, Manchester.

## So this is Christian?

AT THE end of August my wife and I arrived in Bath and went to the Prior Park College which is a public school owned by the 'Congregation of Christian Brothers' (It is a Roman Catholic order). We were interviewed by a Mrs R. Peel-Hobson for jobs on the catering staff.

We were given a very small squalid room with a small skylight. We were promised a key but we never got one until after 13 days I got one from the maintenance man.

We did our work and there were no complaints.

After a few weeks I became ill and was advised by my doctor to stay in bed. Within a few hours Mrs P.H. came and asked us to leave! We refused.

When it came to pay day Mrs PH held our wage packets in her hand and said

we could not have them until we left. I warned her that I would get a solicitor—which I did the following day.

We stayed on whilst we looked for alternative accommodation. Loud music was played next to our room. People I did not know came to visit us and told us we were trespassing and told us to get out.

This was followed up by people banging on the door and shouting sexual obscenities about what they would like to do to my wife. Othertimes people came and yelled, 'You are chicken shit get out of college you London fuckers.'

Some of the people doing all this were members of the staff. Other tactics they tried included pouring buckets of water under our door. We finally went to the police.

□ W. Whitehead, Bath.

## 100 years ago or now?

'THE WORKMAN may be ignorant of science or the arts; ... but he is not blind, and his thoughts do not take the shape of daily and hourly thanksgiving that his condition is no worse than it is; he does not imitate the example of the pious shepherd of Salisbury Plain, who derived supreme contentment from the fact that a kind Providence had vouchsafed him salt to eat with his potatoes.

He sees the lavish and growing class enjoying inherited abundance. He sees miles of costly residences, each occupied by fewer people than are crowded into single rooms of the tenement in which he lives.

He cannot fail to reason that there must be something wrong in a system which effects such unequal distribution of the wealth created by labour.'

This could have been a speech at any Trade Union conference this year. It could be a rally call in any socialist newspaper.

It is in fact part of an article by Robert Knight in the Boilermakers Annual Report in 1886. It has taken us a hundred years to get nowhere. Let's make sure that we do a hell of a lot more in the very near future.

□ Steve Burgess Dagenham.

Please allow a few words as regards the issue of 'terrorism'.

Allowing as a fact that the state always has superior force, and that confrontation will only mean a bloody good hiding from policemen, could an exception be made for me in a Belfast situation where I may have been in one of the army forts and been kicked from pillar to post by people like Paratroops or the Black Watch in one of the RUC Nazi dungeons being given the true Waffen SS treatment.

I am sure that after overcoming any one of those treatments, all I would want to do anytime afterwards, is have the bollocks of either a soldier of an RUC Nazi.

□ Bill Conner, London E8.

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TOWARDS the end of the last century, my grandparents fled from Russia and Poland.

They were among the millions of Jewish workers being forced into exile by the terrible repression that was being conducted by the Tsarist government.

Although many Jews were able to stay and fight against the Tsar often as revolutionary socialists, millions took the long road towards America or Western Europe.

At the same time, a few thousand of those fleeing from Poland and Russia, together with a handful of Jewish people from the West, were heading towards another country: Palestine.

These refugees believed they had a solution to the tragedies that had befallen the Jews. They wanted to set up a state where they thought anti-semitism would be impossible. They wanted a country where everyone would be Jewish. They called themselves Zionists.

**IGNORED WARNING**

It was an understandable reaction by some of the frightened Jewish poor. But they ignored the warnings from socialists.

Socialists said that the anti-Jewish attacks, like all racist attacks, divided worker from worker. The employers supported—and often even manufactured—this anti-semitism in order to weaken the labour movement.

The socialists warned the Zionists that fleeing to an all-Jewish state permanently divided off the Jewish workers from non-Jewish workers in the rest of the world.

Moreover the Jewish state was not to be a workers' state. It was to be financed and run by Jewish bankers and financiers such as Rothschild. The Jewish working class was making a pact with its own ruling class.

That ruling class was to exploit them.

**PROVEN CORRECT**

These predictions have been proven correct in the State of Israel, which was set up in 1948. Since that date, workers in Israel have been hammered. Unofficial strikers—of which there are many—face prison sentences. Wages are held down.

Meanwhile prices are constantly forced up by huge devaluations of the Israeli pound. This month alone saw another devaluation by 33 per cent.

There's a joke in Israel that every time a soldier dies in the desert, there's a new millionaire in Tel Aviv. Such is the extent of war-profiteering.

But it wasn't only their own ruling class that Israeli workers

# THE MAKING OF ISRAEL



An Israeli soldier drags away an Arab girl demonstrating for the freedom of the occupied West Bank

Israel have been repressed. They mostly live under military control—for 14 years under night curfew, unable to move home, unable to travel.

They are barred from higher education and many skilled jobs. They are forbidden from forming their own independent political organisation.

Repression breeds yet more repression because there are always those who will fight back. The penalties for Arabs opposing the Zionist state are enormous. They will be blacklisted from jobs, they may be moved away from home or just simply thrown over the border, their homes or their whole village may be bulldozed to the ground.

At worst, dissenting Arabs will be jailed and tortured. The cases of torture are too many and too well-documented to be questioned.

**ULTIMATE WEAPON**

In the end, Zionism has to resort to its ultimate weapon to maintain itself—indiscriminate mass murder. When Israel does not carry out these murderous attacks with its own weapons, as in Lebanon this month with 68 dead, it backs others.

It is the ultimate irony for Zionism that Israel backs Lebanese fascists to destroy Palestinian refugee camps.

There is one question from all this for socialists—Jewish or non-Jewish. Why should the Israeli regime be treated any differently to any other of the murderous regimes in the world? In action, Israel behaves with a brutality comparable with Chile or South Africa.

Do we have to treat Israel differently because the oppressors were once the oppressed?

My answer is no.

At the same time socialists should do what the Zionists can never do—fight anti-semitism in every form . . . whether it's racist jokes on the shopfloor or racist scum in the fascist organisations.

STEVE FAITH

## Destruction of Palestine

sold themselves to: They also made a deal with the world's main imperialist powers. The pawning of the Jewish state was a simple story: the Zionist settlers claimed land for themselves, but they needed powerful allies to get that land from the Arabs.

At the beginning of this century they turned to Britain, just as today they depend on America to ensure the existence of their state.

Yet these Powers were not going to give the Jews a state out of the goodness of their hearts, or guilt over anti-semitism. The Jewish state had got to offer something to the imperialists—it had to act as their agent in the Middle East.

Time and again since 1948, Israel has acted for the imperialists. They have threatened war and even gone to war, in order to protect imperialist interests in Arab countries.

The Suez war in 1956 is just one example. Israel, with Britain and France, invaded Egypt in an attempt to reclaim Western control of the Suez canal.

**SIMPLY EMOTIONAL**

Jewish socialists, such as myself, are often accused of being anti-semitic. Most of the time this is simply emotional blackmail. However, the point is that socialists are not only dedicated anti-racists but are also against the belief that just living with your own kind is a solution to anything. In fact, this racial exclusiveness has terrible consequences.

In Israel, non-Jews do not

have any place. This is because if people believe that in the Jewish state everyone has to be Jewish, then non-Jews have to be ignored.

Since the time of the first settlers in the last century, attempts were made to ignore completely the non-Jews, especially the native Arabs. Exclusively Jewish communities were set up, social services and an administration only for Jews were established, even a trade

union uniquely for Hebrew workers was formed.

All this went on in the Jewish community without much reference to the much larger Arab community which surrounded it.

But it is difficult to treat neighbours as ghosts. So the settlers said that if they couldn't ignore them, then they had to remove them.

Theodor Herzl, who wrote one of the first books on Zionism, planned to 'gently'

remove the Arab peasants from their land. Arab land was to be bought over the heads of the occupiers. The landless peasants were then denied work by the settlers and they were forced into exile.

But 'gentle' expulsion had its limits: millions of Arabs remained.

By the end of the war which followed the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionist policy had changed to forced expulsion. Over one million Palestinian Arabs found themselves outside Israel's borders and in refugee camps.

And still the settlers were not free of the Arabs—there were hundreds of thousands who remained. The Zionists turned to repression.

For almost 30 years, Arabs in



Arab demonstrators in Nablus, inside the occupied area.

### CAN ISRAEL BE A RACIST STATE?

WHAT attitude should socialists take towards Israel?

Many of the left in Britain are sympathetic towards Israel, even if they pay lip service to the needs of the two million Palestinian refugees driven out of their homes by the Israelis.

The latest Socialist Worker Pocket Pamphlet—titled Israel: a racist state?—takes up all these questions. It explains how Zionism came about and how the Zionists organised immigration into Palestine. The pamphlet deals with the foundation of the

state of Israel, the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, then discusses what it means to be an Arab in Israel today, and why the very idea of Israel as a Jewish state is racist. Like all the pocket pamphlet series, this is easy to read and divided into short sections. It

costs just 5p and is the best short introduction to the socialist position towards Israel that there is.  Copies 5p each plus 7p each (bulk orders, pre-paid, 3p a copy) from SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.

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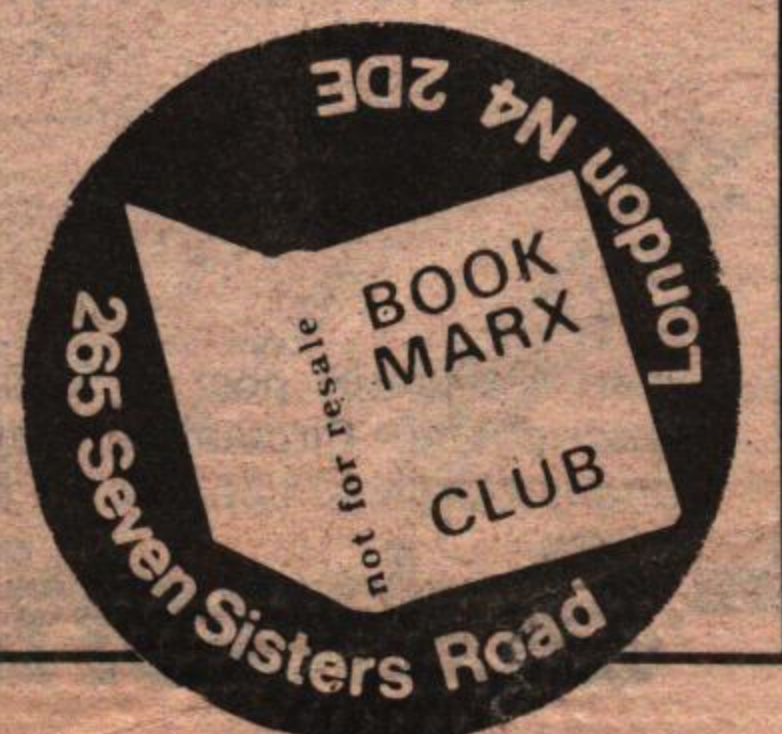
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CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM WITH SOCIALIST WORKER, CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM WITH

### THREAT TO DEPORT WOMAN AND SON

ROSEMARIE DELIA has been in London's Holloway Prison since last Thursday night under threat of extradition. Rosemarie works in the Photoflash section of Thorns, Enfield.

Five years ago Rosemarie lived with her husband and son in Malta, a desperate woman trapped in a violent marriage. In Malta there's no way out of such a marriage. Divorce is not recognised.

Her health was suffering from the constant threats and fear of her husband. Under this stress she was forced to take the only way out that was open to her: she faked documents to escape from this misery and joined her relatives in Britain.

She did not conceal anything on coming to Britain - and after examining the facts, the Home Office cleared her and granted her the right to live and work as a British citizen.

She settled down to what she thought was a secure, settled family life with her small son and relatives. She got a divorce which her husband didn't contest, then started working at Thorns.

This was shattered in September 1976 with the start of legal proceedings from Malta demanding her extradition.

#### Courts

Her solicitors kept assuring Rosemarie of their confidence in the strength of her case. But as time went on her case was dragged up to the top levels of the courts. Last Thursday she reached the High Court where the judges decided she should be driven back to Malta.

Return to Malta means for Rosemarie the sentence of anything from seven months to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

Her son who has been brought up in Britain, and settled in a local school, will face being torn from his family and friends to a country he does not know, to be put in custody of a father he can't remember—who has already said he'd put the boy into care.

Why is Home Secretary Merlyn Rees allowing this to happen? Is it for the sake of diplomatic relations with Malta?



### Police protect Nazi slogans

ANTI-RACISTS who gathered on Sunday near Brick Lane in East London to paint over some particularly potent Nazi slogans were amazed to find they were accompanied by eight policemen, plus a Chief Superintendent.

The police agreed that the wall was defaced, but said that any attempt to paint it, even with paint of the same colour, would lead to arrests for defacing the wall.

The police insisted that they were there to protect property.

# KILLED-BECAUSE OF RACIST LAWS

**BRITAIN's racist immigration laws claimed another victim on Sunday: Edmund Asibey, from Chingford in East London.**

Like thousands of other poor and desperate people, Edmund was an illegal immigrant to Britain.

That is, he came to this country from Ghana because that was the only way to get enough food for himself and his wife and children.

But the powers-that-be hunted him for coming, despite the fact that they had mercilessly plundered his homeland and caused its under-development.

So on Sunday they made one of their beloved 'routine checks'. They moved in to arrest Edmund at his home.

At first he hid under the bed. But then as the three immigration officials persisted, he pushed open the window of his sixth-floor flat and jumped out. He was killed.

## Police go missing as Nazis attack socialists

by TED PARKER

ARE THE police in Lewisham in direct collusion with the Nazi National Front?

This kind of assertion is sometimes lightly made by socialists. But evidence of police activity in Lewisham during the past fortnight

gives the question a chilling urgency.

The National Front have not been active in Lewisham since their humiliation on 13 August. But a small group of them gathered with their local leader two Saturdays ago to sell their racist propaganda at the spot by Lewisham Clock Tower where Socialist

Worker has been sold for the past seven years.

Both groups of paper sellers shouted abuse at each other. After several minutes it became clear that plain-clothes police officers were nearby.

But last Saturday, when the NF viciously attacked us, the police were missing.

Ten NF sellers were at the Clock Tower from soon after 10am.

At 11am nine SW sellers arrived. They were savagely set on by 15 NF heavies who had been hiding in an alley. Two of our comrades were taken to hospital and another badly hurt.

There were no police to be

seen during the whole of this incident.

Even the absence of the police on this occasion could have been a coincidence. But a conversation on Tuesday this week between myself and Chief Superintendent Priest of Lewisham Police Station was totally unambiguous. I related what had occurred and he said: 'That's not what I was told by the other side.'

Asked if the police intended to press charges against those identified as assailants, he said no. He said we could go to a local court for a private summons.

Join us to sell Socialist Worker this Saturday, 11am Lewisham

### Bid to burn bookshop

AN ATTEMPT was made last Sunday night to set fire to Trade Union and Socialist Books, the Coventry socialist bookshop. Slates were taken off the outbuilding at the rear of this shop, and paper and timber stuck in and set

fire. Fortunately no one was in the shop to be hurt and no wholesale destruction resulted. Damage is estimated at £250, a hefty sum for a bookshop run on a shoestring.

# Bitterest NUS Conference: Broad Left turns right

by GIL BROWN  
SWP student organiser

THE most bitter conference of the National Union of Students for ten years saw the union executive force through right-wing policies that will bring a glow to the Daily Express and the Tory Party.

An alliance of Tories, in the Federation of Conservative Students, and some supporters of the Broad Left, including many executive members, narrowly defeated policies that have long been denounced by Margaret Thatcher and her friends.

After two years the NUS policy of not allowing fascist and racist speakers in colleges was defeated in the most bitter debate of conference. The NUS president, Sue Slipman, a member of the Communist Party executive, said: 'I'd rather ally myself with Conservative and Liberal students than the sort of people in the Socialist Workers Party.'

#### Funds

With her new allies she is allowing the National Front and similar fascist groups to spread their hatred in colleges.

The enthusiasm of the Federation of Conservative Students for Sue Slipman went so far that they issued stickers with her picture and the slogan, 'I've always been a Tory.' Another sticker said 'Broad Left policies. FCS Tunes.'

The most serious defeat for students everywhere, though, came on the debate about control over student union funds. For ten years the left has campaigned for student unions to control their own funds without interference from college administrations.

Student unions are already under attack for paying out money to send coaches to the Grunwicks picket line, to support groups of strikers such as the firemen, to organise big turn-outs against the National Front such as at Lewisham.

Instead of standing up against this, the Broad Left executive is arguing that these sort of payments will involve the law courts in student unions and this would be 'irresponsible.'

They shoved through a motion which means that student unions that make

these payments and came under attack would get no support at all from the national union.

This is the policy that Margaret Thatcher and the Tories have been demanding ever since Thatcher failed to get student unions policed by outsiders appointed by the government. The Labour government don't need to put in these outsiders. They have the NUS executive to do it for them. The resolution was carried by just 13 votes.

#### Shift

There was one major defeat for the executive from the floor of conference, later reversed a card vote. In the first vote Conference called overwhelmingly for a campaign of direct action to stop the continuing rise in tuition fees. In some colleges they rose by 500 per cent last year.

After several years of wobbling and shifting much of the Broad Left including many of its supporters in the Communist Party, have finally shifted well to the right. Rather than take on the Tory resurgence among students, they have pushed through policies that no-one would have dreamt were possible five years ago.

#### Slogan

Sue Slipman declared two conferences ago that she welcomed the growth of the Tories in the NUS. The rest of us are now paying the price for that.

But on vote after vote supporters of the Broad Left failed to agree. In every college there are supporters of the Broad Left who will join a campaign to reverse the decision to allow a platform for fascists and to fight for student union control over what we do with our funds.

### Picket wins PTA release

ONE delegate to the NUS Conference, from the Irish delegation, was stopped by police and held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. He was released only after 150 students mounted a mass picket outside the police station.

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## Can Airlie really be a communist?

THE PAST WEEK must have been rather bewildering for many members and supporters of the Communist Party. Whatever their other doubts about party policy, they've always assumed it was in the forefront of the fight against the government's wage controls.

But on Monday a leading member of the party, Jimmy Airlie, argued for shipyard workers in Govan, Glasgow to accept work moved away from shipyard workers in Newcastle who are on an overtime ban against the 10 per cent limit.

'Any barriers which jeopardise the Polish orders must be removed,' he said on Radio 4. The fitting trades at Swan Hunter should call off their action.

Airlie justified this threat to scab on a group of workers fighting the pay policy by reference to the need to 're-establish the fact that the British shipbuilding industry is second to none.'

His statement came only three days after the daily paper of his party, the Morning Star, had supported the fight of the Swan Hunter workers in an editorial, insisting that 'if the workers at Swan Hunters or the Fire Service lose, the big stick will land on everyone else with ever greater and

### Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

greater ferocity.

'No one in shipbuilding will gain if British Shipbuilders are allowed to play one yard off against another. The response to the call from the Swan Hunter shop stewards should be in the best traditions of British working-class solidarity.'

It seems that leading members of the party can ignore such calls with impunity.

If Airlie's actions were an isolated instance, party members could shrug them off. But they aren't.

Another Communist Party member, Sue Slipman, a member of the party's executive and president of the National Union of Students, was receiving much praise in this right-wing press last weekend. This came after she had attacked 'mindless sloganising' and the 'imposition of narrow ideological policies' in language which could have come from the Daily Telegraph.

The union executive over which she presides had just informed individual student unions that they

should not make donations from union funds to strike funds, nor pay the cost of coaches to pickets such as Grunwicks.

At the conference itself her greatest boast was the success of Communist students in working with Tory and Labour students to remove the ban on racist or fascist speakers from student unions, against the opposition of almost half the conference.

A central theme at the Communist Party's own Congress a month ago was the need to fight the control of the right wing over the Labour movement. But the policies pushed by Slipman were to the right of many right-wing Labour policies of a few years ago.

#### Far to the right

How could they be otherwise when they were policies based on an agreement with the Tories?

A sizeable section of the Communist Party, including many leading members, are following policies far to the right of those nominally agreed at the Congress last month.

That this is so is shown by a remarkable discussion that has opened up in the letters column of the Morning Star since the Congress. Letter after letter argues that

to put the stress on the fight against the wage controls is to be 'economistic'

Instead, they say, the party should put all its effort into argument for 'an alternative economic policy' based on investment in British industry. The demand voiced by Jimmy Airlie, to build 'British ships in British yards is seen as part of that policy.'

Leading party members such as Ken Gill of the white-collar engineering union TASS and Mick Costello, industrial editor of the Star, have argued against this downgrading of the industrial struggle. But they can hardly argue very strongly, since the 'Broad Left' union leaders they support, such as Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, have been in the forefront of the defence of the government's wage controls.

The example of Airlie and Slipman shows that a growing element in the party have moved from defending 'left-wing' union leaders who push right-wing policies, to pushing right-wing policies themselves.

The many good militants inside the Communist Party should ask themselves whether it is worth having a spurious unity inside the same party with such right-wingers, or whether it would not be better to join with members of the Socialist Workers Party in building a real socialist party.



## Hospital battle at Bethnal Green

EAST LONDON: Hundreds of hospital beds will be axed in the East End if the Area Health Authority gets its way.

The authority plans to turn the Bethnal Green Hospital into a geriatric-only unit, with a view to its eventual closure.

Over the past ten years the hospital has been gradually run down and has lost six major departments—from ear, nose and throat in 1966 to gynaecology in 1973.

The so-called 'public consultation' period—to see whether the plans are approved—has already been proved to be a farce.

A Public Employees Union shop steward discovered pathology equipment being sneaked out of the hospital, and claims that other equipment has been taken out at night.

'We're not having anything taken out of this hospital,' said John Todd, NUPE shop steward. 'The equipment's staying on the loading bay until this affair has been sorted out.'

### Collected

Hospital staff and other trade unionists have set up the 'Keep the Bethnal Green Open' campaign and have already had a public meeting to get support—and collected £190 from the floor.

But the fight to save the East End's health service must spread—for the health authority says that it will close beds in other hospitals if the Bethnal Green stays open. The authority plans to reduce the number of beds in the area from 1,025 to 665.

## NUPE: Vote No to 10%

by JOHN BLAKE

THE government makes its final pay offer to hospital ancillary workers this Friday.

We claimed £20 a week extra, but the government will be offering us only about 10 per cent or about £2 a week more take-home pay.

NUPE is balloting all its branches on the offer from Tuesday onwards. We have no real choice but to refuse the 10 per cent.

But that alone won't make NUPE general secretary Alan Fisher fight. The other unions—GMWU, COHSE, and TGWU—will settle without a ballot. Even though NUPE is the majority union it is still outnumbered on the Whittleby Council. Fisher will use this as an excuse to settle.

But we can stop Fisher selling out the claim. We can follow the firemen.

They tied their executive hand and foot by insisting any final settlement be taken to a recall conference. We can tie Fisher up by passing resolutions at every NUPE branch and district committee saying that Fisher has to take any final settlement back to a branch vote.

□ A special Hospital Worker leaflet comes out this week on the ancillary workers' pay claim. It needs to go into every hospital before the ballot starts on 13 December. 200 leaflets for £1 post free. Phone 01-737 9806.



Birds Eye maintenance workers on strike in Kirkby, Merseyside, for a £13 wage rise. Management have offered £2.70 and want ten redundancies. They have laid off 1000 production workers. Maintenance workers at Lowestoft and Yarmouth are on strike for parity.



## ONE-DAY PROTEST BY GOLDSMITHS

BIRMINGHAM: 'Next year there'll be big trouble if nothing is sorted out.' That was the comment of one of the goldsmiths on the picket line at Payton Pepper in the city's jewellery quarter.

250 goldsmiths, members of the National Union of Gold, Silver and Allied Trades, came out on strike on Wednesday last week in a one-day protest

at their employers trying to change their lay-off agreement.

They have a claim for a 15 per cent wage rise in, but the British Jewellers Association offered a package deal on wages which included a change in the lay-off agreement.

The union locally organised a ballot for a one-day strike. The vote was 8-1 to come out—the

first strike ever of all the goldsmiths in Birmingham.

The goldsmiths are refusing to trade an existing agreement for a wage increase. Not only would this be a worsening of their conditions, it would set a precedent for all employers in the jewellery trade. The silver trade employers would then try the same trick.



CPSA strikers at Garston on Merseyside

## CIVIL SERVANTS WALK OUT

THOUSANDS of civil servants went on strike last week for at least one day during the 'week of action' called by the executive of their union, the CPSA.

The week of action was intended to press the government to reintroduce the civil service pay agreement.

The agreement calls for civil servants pay to be 'fairly' compared to outside industry. It would mean pay increases estimated at between 20 and 25 per cent.

Strikes were not includ-

ed in the executive's intentions for the week of action. However, local feeling is so strong that many area committees felt that 24 hour strikes were the least they should be doing.

In London alone 24,000 civil servants went on strike for a day. 500 of them attended a rally and among other things gave rank and file fireman Jim Fitzpatrick a standing ova-

tion. The rally called for all-out strike action for the beginning of the year.

Department of Health and Social Security offices were closed down all over the country for at least one day. In South Wales the Driving Licence Vehicle Centre had to close when 3300 out of 3500 walked out.

Area committees in London are going to call a conference to discuss all-out strike action. We can no longer wait for the national leadership.

# Sandersons: 30 weeks for union rights

**SKEGNESS: Sandersons forklift works has been the scene of a long and bitter fight for trade union recognition.**

It is now 30 weeks since the Transport and General Workers Union militant, Phil Gillatt, was dismissed and 43 workers walked out in sympathy.

One week later they were all sacked.

The boss, Ray Sanderson, whose mansion—where he proposed to build a hangar for a private plane—overlooks the works, is a true reactionary in the George Ward of Grunwicks mould.

He has consistently put two fingers up to the Employment Protection Act and the Arbitration Conciliation and Advisory Service Report, which came out in favour of recognition.

The strikers at Sandersons have shown a magnificent display of solidarity, backed up with financial assistance from trade unionists up and down the country.

### Practical

Between 300 and 400 trade unionists, many travelling some considerable distance, arrived in Skegness last Saturday for a conference which they hoped would help organise practical support for the strikers.

Unfortunately, the organisers did their utmost to prevent this happening. The only meaningful action taken was a collection for the strike fund, taken late in the day when many had gone home.

Before that we had been treated to a seemingly endless parade of boring speeches from 'left' MPs, Labour Party hacks and trade union officials. John Ellis, MP for Scunthorpe, spoke for a long time and said nothing at all.

But Joe Ashton, MP for Bassetlaw, had some concrete suggestions to make. He suggested putting pressure on the Tory MP for Skegness! He said he thought he could collect 80 or 90 signatures of Labour MPs!

One could almost see Ray Sanderson trembling in his boots, as these devastating proposals were made!

### Allowed

An entire 15 minutes was allowed at the end and then only for questions—no discussion was allowed. One trade unionist attempted to criticise the 'leave it to the experts' strategy, and was immediately silenced.

Like the Grunwicks workers, the men at Sandersons must put their trust in the rank and file and only in the rank and file. There must be effective blacking, collections in the workplace, assistance with picketing, demonstrations and so on.

If such actions are not taken, the Sandersons workers will still be on the picket line 30 weeks from now.

□ Donations and messages of support to the Strike Committee, c/o Phil Gillatt, 27 Lady Matilda's Drive, Skegness. Cheques payable to Sandersons Strike Fund.

## BUILDING WORKERS' UNION TO VOTE

MEMBERS of the building workers union, UCATT, vote this month for a candidate to fill a vacant post on the union executive.

At the moment there are three left and three right-wing members on the executive.

But the national committee of the rank and file paper, Building Worker, has issued a statement saying: 'The labels left and right can be misleading and often only indicate which group helped you in furthering your career.'

There are four serious candidates. One, McTurk, is a former member of the Communist Party, but as he has the backing of the present general secretary, George Smith, he is the official candidate and not on the left.

Another candidate, Graves, 'made legal history' by taking the union to court this year when he thought there would be an attempt to disqualify him from standing,' says the

Building Worker.

The Building Worker statement recommends support for the regional organiser in Aberdeen, Kelly He 'would appear to be in the best interests of the members of UCATT.'

'However anyone who suggests that the election of one or even seven "left of centre" members to the UCATT executive is all that is necessary will be seriously misleading building workers.'

The statement says: 'If George Smith passes on to the House of Lords sometime next year there will be an election for general secretary.'

Certainly an election for general secretary will not be allowed to go by without putting up a candidate for the left.'

□ BUILDING WORKER, latest issue, some copies still available. For order and details of meetings contact Building Worker, 19 Red Post Hill, London SE24.

## Sexpol conference

by PENNY OLD

A HUNDRED and twenty delegates attended a national conference on sexual politics organised by the Socialist Workers Party last weekend in East London.

On Saturday, delegates heard John Lindsay speak on how our ideas about sex are distorted under capitalism. Joan Smith on the family and the oppression of women, and Lionel Starling on the history and experience of the gay movement in Britain.

On Sunday the delegates split up into workshops, elected a national organiser Paul Graham, and unanimously approved the setting up of a national newsletter and local SWP gay groups.

The most immediate practical struggle was seen to be the defence of Gay News, one of the victims of the current backlash against gays in Britain and the USA. A resolution was passed urging all members to raise the following motion in their union

branches:

'This branch deplores the erosion of civil liberties evidenced by the recent use of the antiquated blasphemy law to convict Gay News and its editor Denis Lemon. This branch calls for the repeal of the blasphemy law and the quashing of the conviction of Gay News and its editor and urges its members to support the forthcoming national demonstration in London.'

□ More information on the SWP Gay Group, phone 01-790 2454.

## Hotel picket knocked down—no charges

CENTRAL LONDON: One of the strikers at the Metropole Hotel who was knocked down by a member of the management driving through the picket line has now been told that the police have dropped all charges against the driver.

The Metropole strikers are still holding out for a £50

minimum wage after nine long weeks.

Some of the strikers have returned to work because of the refusal of full-time officials of their union, the General and Municipal, to support the strike.

Another problem has come from workers in other hotel groups in London accepting

offers well below the £50 minimum.

But inside the Metropole the management are now willing to make many minor concessions. More important, the strike has provided a focus for other hotel and catering workers fed up with the utterly appalling wages.

Only recently have hotel

and catering workers begun to join trade unions. But the Metropole strike has shown that joining the union is only the first step.

With no official support they have had to rely totally on support from rank and file unionists. That support needs to be extended into national rank and file organisation.

**JOIN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**  
Please send me more information

Name .....

Address .....

Trade union .....

Send to: National Secretary,  
Socialist Workers Party, 6 Coronet  
Gardens, London E2 8DN



# Socialist Worker

## Protest against army torture grows

by EAMONN McCANN  
THE VITAL part that torture plays in British government operations in Ireland became even clearer last week.

On Saturday the leaders of the four main churches in Northern Ireland became the latest group to speak publicly about the savagery regularly meted out to people detained in Royal Ulster Constabulary barracks.

Choosing their words carefully, the Catholic Church of Ireland archbishops, the moderator of the Presbyterian Church and the president of the Methodist Council issued a joint statement—in itself a rare event—saying that they were 'concerned' about the allegations.

Also last week a County Tyrone solicitor, Patrick Fahy, announced that he will no longer appear for the defence in 'terrorist' cases,

saying that his clients were regularly being found guilty and sentenced to massive prison terms on the basis of 'confessions' obtained through torture.

By appearing in court he was, he said, simply helping to create the illusion that defendants in such cases are being given a fair trial.

This week a group of 20 solicitors—Catholic and Protestant—will hold a second meeting in Belfast to decide whether to follow the same line.

And among those who last weekend gave evidence of torture to a three-person team from Amnesty International investigating the allegations was an actual member of the Northern Ireland police authority!

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 10P

### GRUNWICKS:

# CONSPIRACY PROVED!

**ANGRY Post Office engineering workers have discovered startling new evidence of the close links between the strike breaking Grunwicks management and the police.**

'Close links' is exactly the correct description.

The engineers have come across evidence of a private telephone link connecting Grunwicks boss George Ward's office to Scotland Yard!

According to members of the Post Office Engineers Union, Scotland Yard have paid for and are

### Ward's direct phone link to Scotland Yard

installing the private circuit. The advice note ordering the circuit has gone through the relevant Post Office control centre.

A private telephone link of this kind is an extremely expensive

operation. Post Office engineers point out that every penny spent will come from the taxpayer.

It means that George Ward can pick up his phone any time day and night and speak to Scotland Yard immediately.

This information confirms the steady impression that has built up over the months that Grunwicks' stand against the trade union movement was backed four-square by top London police chiefs.

Ward's links with the National Association for Freedom made this highly likely anyway. But few believed that Ward was ever in a position to discuss his tactics day by day with his allies.

Now we know that he can.

## Bribery attempt by Special Branch

THE Special Branch, Britain's political police, tried to bribe a student at the Paisley College of Technology last week into becoming a police spy and reporting on the political activities of his fellow students.

Robert McNeill is a first-year student. On 22 November he was asked to see the college secretary, John Oswald.

He went, but instead he was sent to another room, where a man aged about 50 to 55, wearing glasses, civilian suit and tie, was seated behind a desk.

'He showed me a police identity card,' said Robert.

Robert was then asked to help provide the police with confidential information. 'I asked him what he meant—he asked me about my political allegiance and I refused to answer.'

Robert was then asked about his views on Grunwicks.

'He told me that he'd got my name by way of my father's job as a civilian driver with Edinburgh City Police. He offered me financial incentives which would be tax free and told me that I would not be seen publicly with him and that any information I was to give would be treated in the strictest confidence.'

'He asked me to sign a copy of the Official Secrets Act, which he produced, so that the conversation would be treated in the strictest confidence. I refused.'

Robert has raised the issue with the Paisley Tech Students Association. Brian Peoples, their president, said that the college secretary had told them that the policeman's name is Mackie, and that he has visited the college on a number of occasions.



A Socialist Worker pamphlet on the strike and the role of the NAFF and the police. 10p, plus 8p postage from SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

## NEWSREEL SHOWS POLICE ATTACKED PICKETS

MEMBERS of the film and television workers' union, ACTT, have incontrovertible proof of police thuggery on the Grunwicks picket line.

They have on film a sequence of shots showing the Metropolitan Police Special Patrol Group making totally unprovoked attacks from the rear on trade union delegates talking with strike leader Jayaben Desai.

Frames from the film are printed as illustrations to an exclusive article on Grunwicks in the new issue of Film and Television Technician, the ACTT journal.

The film was made on the picket line at Grunwicks on 7 November by members of the Newsreel Collective, after the



A section from the film of the attack

completion of their new film on Grunwicks, Stand Together.

The attack came at 9.30am after a march from Willesden Trades Hall. A crowd of trade union delegates were busy chatting with strike committee treasurer Jayaben Desai when suddenly from the rear came 300 SPG thugs.

Says ACTT member Chris Thomas: 'We filmed the entire event. For three minutes you can see them

wading in, chasing people through gardens, pulling them out of the crowd by their hair, thrusting them against walls with such force that the walls come down.'

ACTT are to show the film to the TUC General Council and are demanding a Home Office inquiry into the SPG.

□ The Newsreel Collective's film on Grunwicks is available from The Other Cinema, phone 01-734 8508.

### Beaten

Jack Hassard, a Protestant and an ex-B Special, detailed the case of Tyrone man Jim Rafferty who was beaten to a pulp in an RUC station last year.

In truth, it is no longer proper to talk about 'allegations' of RUC torture. The fact that it happens day in and day out is as solidly established as a fact can be.

Yet the British media say nothing. Secretary of State Roy Mason, speaking for the Labour government, constantly reiterates that he is 'fully satisfied' with the RUC's behaviour.

Every battered body that comes out of an RUC station is an offering to placate the Orange ultra-right. If the ultra-right can eventually be fully placated and the Catholics by the same token cowed and demoralised, Mason hopes he will be able to get agreement for a return to old-style Orange rule and emerge as the man who 'ended' the Northern Ireland troubles.

### Machine

One problem—he probably doesn't see it as a big one—is that the methods he is using are now so obviously appalling that outside the Orange machine even some of the most conservative elements in the North are beginning to get worried.

Now that church dignitaries, solicitors, police surgeons and former B-Specials have all expressed concern, is it too much to hope that one 'left-wing' Labour MP—just one, might summon up from somewhere the half ounce of principle it would take to raise the issue in Parliament?

## Terror Act: Nurse held

STUDENT nurse Mairead Mulholland, aged 19, who works at Dudley Road Hospital in Birmingham, was arrested on Sunday night by the Special Branch under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. She was boarding a plane to spend a few days holiday with her mother, who lives near Dublin.

By Tuesday afternoon—as Socialist Worker went to press—Mairead was still in prison.

Keith Cargill, of the Birmingham district committee of NUPE, Mairead's union, insisted at the District committee on Tuesday that the union take up this harassment at national level.

LEGALISED TERROR—a pamphlet on the Prevention of Terrorism Act. 10p a copy plus 8p postage, from SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.