

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1973 ● No 1001 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

AS TORIES

PREPARE

SNAP POLL

THE TUC

SNORES ON

THE TUC's policy document for its special Congress on March 5, published today, contains not an ounce of fight. It delivers the working-class bound and gagged to the Tories.

Even if the Congress tacks on a call for a one-day general protest strike, the trade union movement will be left without an answer to the iniquitous pay laws and the Tories' preparations for the corporate state.

In the face of the most determined onslaught on democratic rights that the ruling class has ever mounted, the TUC leaders are disarming the trade union movement with this politically worthless document.

There is not a word in the whole document about the world-wide crisis of the capitalist system.

Yet even the dullest Tory knows it will shortly be transformed into an all-out trade war between America, Japan and the EEC.

If the working class does not act, this trade war will inevitably end in a third imperialist nuclear war.

Not only do Feather and his friends not warn the working class of these dangers, they pledge their support for a 'British' economic effort, and give approval in advance to the way that British capitalists should survive the trade war—by import quotas!

The theme of the document, in short, is: Let's make capitalism work!

Introducing the document at a Press conference, Feather said: 'There can be no real and lasting answer to inflation until the proposals of the government and the unions come closer together.'

'Let us have a thaw in government thinking. Then

BY ROYSTON BULL
OUR INDUSTRIAL
CORRESPONDENT

there can be a real thaw in our relations with them.'

He went on: 'We are looking for genuine understanding by the government of the need to reach agreement on policies for British industry.'

Feather spelt out the jingoism latent in the document. 'Britain's work-people are as patriotic and responsible as any in the world,' he claimed.

'Given the right approach, it is always ready to make a response.'

The real response the working class is willing to make to Tory deprivations can be seen in its readiness to take up strike action in defence of basic rights.

Nowhere is the workers' fight back mentioned in the document. The only reference to the great struggles now beginning comes in the line:

'The government's lack of flexibility may well lead to specific industrial situations of some gravity.'

Instead of organizing this strike struggle into an irresistible political force

The new battalions in the state pay law fight

THESE hospital workers in Manchester are among the new battalions of workers coming into the fight against the Tories' state pay laws.

On March 1 their unions will be staging selective

strikes, overtime bans and work-to-rule throughout the National Health Service.

The anger against the pay laws is so fierce that these workers at the Manchester Royal Infirmary are not satisfied with the roll-

ing industrial action.

They want an all-out national strike among the 270,000 workers.

The NHS employees join civil servants, gasmen, railwaymen, teachers and lorry drivers who are already challenging the pay laws.

On March 1 the 52,000 hourly-paid workers of the Ford combine are expected to start strike action in support of their pay claim.

● See page 12 for full report of the gasworkers' struggle.



March 1 pay law strike at Ford's

BY DAVID MAUDE

LEADERS of 50,000 Ford workers threw down the gauntlet yesterday to the state pay laws of the Tory government. Shop stewards from every Ford factory in the country voted almost unanimously for all-out strike action from March 1.

And they demanded that the union leaders give immediate official backing to their action.

At a 500-strong meeting in Coventry, the Ford stewards came together with shop-floor leaders of other sections of workers hit by the pay laws and the policy of the Tories.

Those attending included British-Leyland, Vauxhall and Chrysler car workers; teachers; hospital workers; engineering workers from Rolls-Royce; and a delegation from Bryant Colour Printing work-in in London.

The meeting demanded that the union leaders participated in no deals with the Tory government over its state pay laws.

A resolution pledged its full support to a call that the TUC organize a national day of action against the Tories' attack on free collective bargaining from its March 5 recall conference.

Chairman Bernard Passingham refused to accept an amendment calling for a General Strike to remove the Tories from office.

Nevertheless the fight to remove the Tories and the question of what kind of Labour government should replace them,

TURN TO PAGE 11

FEATHER... 'Patriotic, responsible'



and answering Heath's declaration of class war, Feather announces:

'I am sending this report to the Prime Minister sincerely hoping that there will be a positive response.'

Last week, after the TUC General Council went for a talking-to by Heath at Downing Street, Feather said that neither side was seeking a confrontation.

Even this feeble document gives the lie to that rubbish.

It describes the Tory government's initial policies as combining 'confrontation with the unions on major issues with attempting to undermine the strength of trade unions through the Industrial Relations Act'.

The attack on democratic rights has been steadily stepped up as the economic crisis has got worse.

But the document states in the next paragraph that the Chequers talks last autumn 'appeared to rep-

resent a genuine attempt to reach a voluntary agreement on the whole range of issues affecting inflation'.

This confusion being spread by the TUC leaders is Heath's most powerful weapon.

Although inflation has sprung out of capitalism, the document proposes to continue with capitalism in order to cure it.

'Any policy on inflation must ensure that the real growth of the economy is fairly shared. Thus, profits can increase sufficiently to finance new investment without the share of the national income going to profits increasing.'

The analysis of the cause of inflation borders on idiocy.

'Inflation has hitherto been analysed in terms of sources of income—wages, profits, taxation, etc. It is perhaps more valid to see it as a result of competing needs for uses of funds, which determine the use of resources.'

And the world crisis is given just one sentence in a 44-page report!

'There appears to have been, to some degree at least, a transfer of inflation across frontiers, which can in large part be ascribed to the activities of multinational companies and international finance.'

But the idea of doing something about it is not even mentioned!

On the home front, the TUC has finally begun to realize that the pay laws establish 'the framework for a permanent system of statutory wage control'.

The report puts these

words in italics to indicate how sinister it all is.

The TUC's answer?

'The government must ensure the non-operation of the Industrial Relations Act and statutory control of wages must be removed.'

Just like that!

And they add: 'The trade union movement is willing to co-operate in any attempt to find a joint solution to this problem [of inflation].'

But Feather, Jones, Scanton and company, are mistaken.

The working class is NOT willing to have its basic rights and living standards trampled down so that the capitalist system can find a solution to inflation.

And if this offensive does not work, the capitalists are already preparing to unleash a new period of fascism in order to try and forestall revolution.

The betrayals which led to the triumph of fascism and the defeats of the working class in the 1920s and 1930s are being prepared right now with the aid of the reformists and revisionists.

This document is part of such preparations.

The working class must be on its toes to repudiate any treachery from the special Congress, including one-day protest strikes.

Only by building a revolutionary party of the working class—the SLL and the Workers Press—can the trade unions' strength be mobilized to force the Tory government to resign by means of a General Strike.

PRICES
STARTING TODAY
CENTRE PAGES
Stephen Johns three-part investigation into the producers, their profits and why prices are rising so rapidly. Be sure of your Workers Press for these informative articles. Telephone 01-622 7029.

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1973 ● No 1001 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

AS TORIES

PREPARE

SNAP POLL

THE TUC

SNORES ON

THE TUC's policy document for its special Congress on March 5, published today, contains not an ounce of fight. It delivers the working-class bound and gagged to the Tories.

Even if the Congress tacks on a call for a one-day general protest strike, the trade union movement will be left without an answer to the iniquitous pay laws and the Tories' preparations for the corporate state.

In the face of the most determined onslaught on democratic rights that the ruling class has ever mounted, the TUC leaders are disarming the trade union movement with this politically worthless document.

There is not a word in the whole document about the world-wide crisis of the capitalist system.

Yet even the dullest Tory knows it will shortly be transformed into an all-out trade war between America, Japan and the EEC.

If the working class does not act, this trade war will inevitably end in a third imperialist nuclear war.

Not only do Feather and his friends not warn the working class of these dangers, they pledge their support for a 'British' economic effort, and give approval in advance to the way that British capitalists should survive the trade war—by import quotas!

The theme of the document, in short, is: Let's make capitalism work!

Introducing the document at a Press conference, Feather said: 'There can be no real and lasting answer to inflation until the proposals of the government and the unions come closer together.'

'Let us have a thaw in government thinking. Then

BY ROYSTON BULL
OUR INDUSTRIAL
CORRESPONDENT

there can be a real thaw in our relations with them.'

He went on: 'We are looking for genuine understanding by the government of the need to reach agreement on policies for British industry.'

Feather spelt out the jingoism latent in the document. 'Britain's work-people are as patriotic and responsible as any in the world,' he claimed.

'Given the right approach, it is always ready to make a response.'

The real response the working class is willing to make to Tory deprivations can be seen in its readiness to take up strike action in defence of basic rights.

Nowhere is the workers' fight back mentioned in the document. The only reference to the great struggles now beginning comes in the line:

'The government's lack of flexibility may well lead to specific industrial situations of some gravity.'

Instead of organizing this strike struggle into an irresistible political force

The new battalions in the state pay law fight

THESE hospital workers in Manchester are among the new battalions of workers coming into the fight against the Tories' state pay laws.

On March 1 their unions will be staging selective

strikes, overtime bans and work-to-rule throughout the National Health Service.

The anger against the pay laws is so fierce that these workers at the Manchester Royal Infirmary are not satisfied with the roll-

ing industrial action.

They want an all-out national strike among the 270,000 workers.

The NHS employees join civil servants, gasmen, railwaymen, teachers and lorry drivers who are already challenging the pay laws.

On March 1 the 52,000 hourly-paid workers of the Ford combine are expected to start strike action in support of their pay claim.

● See page 12 for full report of the gasworkers' struggle.



March 1 pay law strike at Ford's

BY DAVID MAUDE

LEADERS of 50,000 Ford workers threw down the gauntlet yesterday to the state pay laws of the Tory government. Shop stewards from every Ford factory in the country voted almost unanimously for all-out strike action from March 1.

And they demanded that the union leaders give immediate official backing to their action.

At a 500-strong meeting in Coventry, the Ford stewards came together with shop-floor leaders of other sections of workers hit by the pay laws and the policy of the Tories.

Those attending included British-Leyland, Vauxhall and Chrysler car workers; teachers; hospital workers; engineering workers from Rolls-Royce; and a delegation from Bryant Colour Printing work-in in London.

The meeting demanded that the union leaders participated in no deals with the Tory government over its state pay laws.

A resolution pledged its full support to a call that the TUC organize a national day of action against the Tories' attack on free collective bargaining from its March 5 recall conference.

Chairman Bernard Passingham refused to accept an amendment calling for a General Strike to remove the Tories from office.

Nevertheless the fight to remove the Tories and the question of what kind of Labour government should replace them,

TURN TO PAGE 11

PRICES

STARTING TODAY
CENTRE PAGES

Stephen Johns three-part investigation into the producers, their profits and why prices are rising so rapidly. Be sure of your Workers Press for these informative articles. Telephone 01-622 7029.

FEATHER... 'Patriotic, responsible'



and answering Heath's declaration of class war, Feather announces:

'I am sending this report to the Prime Minister sincerely hoping that there will be a positive response.'

Last week, after the TUC General Council went for a talking-to by Heath at Downing Street, Feather said that neither side was seeking a confrontation.

Even this feeble document gives the lie to that rubbish.

It describes the Tory government's initial policies as combining 'confrontation with the unions on major issues with attempting to undermine the strength of trade unions through the Industrial Relations Act'.

The attack on democratic rights has been steadily stepped up as the economic crisis has got worse.

But the document states in the next paragraph that the Chequers talks last autumn 'appeared to rep-

resent a genuine attempt to reach a voluntary agreement on the whole range of issues affecting inflation'.

This confusion being spread by the TUC leaders is Heath's most powerful weapon.

Although inflation has sprung out of capitalism, the document proposes to continue with capitalism in order to cure it.

'Any policy on inflation must ensure that the real growth of the economy is fairly shared. Thus, profits can increase sufficiently to finance new investment without the share of the national income going to profits increasing.'

The analysis of the cause of inflation borders on idiocy.

'Inflation has hitherto been analysed in terms of sources of income—wages, profits, taxation, etc. It is perhaps more valid to see it as a result of competing needs for uses of funds, which determine the use of resources.'

And the world crisis is given just one sentence in a 44-page report!

'There appears to have been, to some degree at least, a transfer of inflation across frontiers, which can in large part be ascribed to the activities of multinational companies and international finance.'

But the idea of doing something about it is not even mentioned!

On the home front, the TUC has finally begun to realize that the pay laws establish 'the framework for a permanent system of statutory wage control'.

The report puts these

words in italics to indicate how sinister it all is.

The TUC's answer?

'The government must ensure the non-operation of the Industrial Relations Act and statutory control of wages must be removed.'

Just like that!

And they add: 'The trade union movement is willing to co-operate in any attempt to find a joint solution to this problem [of inflation].'

But Feather, Jones, Scanton and company, are mistaken.

The working class is NOT willing to have its basic rights and living standards trampled down so that the capitalist system can find a solution to inflation.

And if this offensive does not work, the capitalists are already preparing to unleash a new period of fascism in order to try and forestall revolution.

The betrayals which led to the triumph of fascism and the defeats of the working class in the 1920s and 1930s are being prepared right now with the aid of the reformists and revisionists.

This document is part of such preparations.

The working class must be on its toes to repudiate any treachery from the special Congress, including one-day protest strikes.

Only by building a revolutionary party of the working class—the SLL and the Workers Press—can the trade unions' strength be mobilized to force the Tory government to resign by means of a General Strike.

AFTER IGNORING almost completely the growing capitalist economic crisis for the last few weeks, the revisionist state-capitalist paper 'Socialist Worker' has at last felt obliged to comment on it.

In an article 'US move to export inflation and unemployment', John Palmer seeks to explain the latest convulsions in the world's money centres.

Palmer is the man who, for the past ten years, has been assuring the middle-class circles which his group inhabits that capitalist slump was a thing of the past.

Spending by the state on arms had given modern capitalism a more-or-less everlasting stability. Not that there was anything new in such a 'theory'. It was taken over by the Cliff group, usually unacknowledged, from the American Schachtmanite revisionist T. N. Vance, who came to similar conclusions in the early 1950s. This was the group which rejected the defence of the Soviet Union in 1939 and split from the Trotskyist movement.

For the state capitalists the theory was but a thin disguise for their complete confidence in the permanent existence not of the 'arms economy', but of capitalism. Capitalism was powerful and would go on lasting for a very, very long time was what their politics amounted to. Just as they wrote off and slandered the Soviet working class who had allowed the Russian Revolution to be lost, they said, so they wrote off the working class of the major capitalist countries.

Given Palmer's political record as a self-styled 'expert' on 'economic questions' the more perceptive 'Socialist Worker' reader will be somewhat surprised to hear him pronounce: 'For 20 years after World War II the giant American

MUDDLED 'EXPERT'

WHAT WE THINK

economy was able to reconcile full employment, economic growth and relative price stability through massive dependence on production for waste—the permanent arms economy. But this stability could never last.' (Our emphasis.) Palmer now has the impudence to tell his readers that the 'permanent arms economy'—on which he and the leadership of his group based their entire rejection of revolutionary Marxism and the fight for a revolutionary party—'could never last'. The 'permanent arms economy', we now learn at this late hour, was not 'permanent' after all! Even on its own level, Palmer's 'analysis' is the most utter rubbish. In what sense did arms spending constitute 'production for waste'? Here, Palmer only reveals his complete ignorance of Marx's theory of productive and unproductive labour. In analysing productive labour, Marx shows that whether a commodity was 'useful' or not was absolutely beside the point. 'Productive labour' was that labour which, when exchanged directly against capital, produces a surplus value. This was quite independent of what type of article was produced, or whether an article was produced at all. In this sense, arms production always involves the expenditure of unproduc-

ive labour. The finance for such production comes either out of taxes, which are levied on wages and profits, or else it is financed out of budget deficits which in turn have to be met by future taxation. To the extent that arms are financed out of current taxes, this merely eats into the available surplus value and thus slows down the rate of capital accumulation.

If out of future taxation, by means of a budget deficit, this only adds to inflationary pressures which have now reached explosion point in this crisis. The 'expert' Palmer also reveals that his analysis is a million miles away from the realities of this crisis when he writes: 'A dollar devaluation was forced on the United States in 1971, but it has not produced an improvement in the US payments gap.'

Here Palmer manages to stand reality on its head! For the Americans deliberately devalued the dollar as part of their trade war against Europe and Japan. By devaluing, Nixon lowered the price of all US exports at one blow, raised the price of all foreign goods entering the US and at the same time slashed the value of the billions of dollars held by European government and industrial and financial institutions.

Of course, Palmer's half-baked 'analysis' is directly in line with the entire politics of the Cliff group. What such a middle-class group positively hates is that capitalism is driven forward through its internal contradictions. Marxism, with which Palmer has not the remotest connection, has always seen these objective contradictions as providing the basis for the struggle for socialism.

The root cause of the present crisis is that the productive forces, of which the working class is by far the most powerful, are now set on a violent collision course with the restriction imposed on their development by capitalist social relations of production. It is for this reason that the working class, led by the revolutionary party, is called upon to put an end to capitalist anarchy.

For Palmer and his middle-class friends, capitalism is merely irrational: 'Socialists will point to last week's money panic as further evidence that capitalism is no longer capable of operating with the minimum of rationality.' This is how he ends his pathetic article.

Capitalism, Mr Palmer, is in no way behaving 'irrationally'. In a crisis, as a matter of fact, it behaves more rationally than ever. For in such periods its hidden laws of motion break surface and are there for all to see.

This is precisely what the present crisis is doing, in a way which Palmer and his group no doubt find most unpleasant. For the last 20 years, he and his political mentors have been telling us that capitalist contradictions were a thing of the past. The fraudulent nature of such claims is now being brilliantly demonstrated in practice. It is a demonstration which can only intensify the political crisis of all the revisionist groups.

Devaluation of dollar only the beginning Nixon lays down his new trade war laws

THE TERMS which the American government intends to impose on its capitalist competitors have emerged with stark clarity from President Nixon's statements since the 10 per cent dollar devaluation.

He and his lieutenants have made clear that the devaluation is only the beginning of a programme of measures designed to force both Europe

and Japan to open their markets to American goods and liquidate their ability to compete.

Europe and Japan are to be bludgeoned into accepting American goods through the imposition of tariffs and through enforced revaluations which will price their own products out of the world markets.

The US wants to force other

countries to accept a 'reform' of the monetary system which would make such revaluations automatic as soon as a country moved into surplus on its payments balance.

America is also demanding that the Europeans put an end to their common agricultural policy, which protects European farming by keeping prices inside the Common Market artificially high.

The agricultural system inside the EEC is protected by high tariff walls which have for a number of years prevented American farmers from exporting their surplus produce to Europe.

At present the American government pays farmers not to produce certain categories of foodstuffs, notably grain. But this arrangement, which in effect dovetailed with the EEC farm policy, is to be brought to a very abrupt end.

Investments

To add to these hammer-blows against their competitors, the American employers are about to launch a new era of dollar imperialism, when Nixon removes all the existing barriers to the export of capital from the US.

The Trade Bill now on its way through Congress will empower the government to impose all forms of tariffs against goods from abroad. The Bill could be used to impose a general tariff against imports, as demanded by the powerful House Ways and Means chairman Wilbur Mills.

The Bill also gives the President powers to set discriminatory duties on goods from particular countries, notably Japan, which are considered to be exporting too much to the US.

It will open a new era of tariff war around the world as country after country retaliates not only against the US, but also against goods being dumped on their markets by other victims of US policy.

Simultaneously Nixon plans to pulverize his opponents' barriers to US goods. To destroy the common agricultural policy in the EEC, Nixon has authorized farmers to plant an additional

40 million acres with cereal crops.

When this grain comes on the market in 1973 it will be available for 'dumping' at far below the present world price. This in turn will force the EEC to raise taxes to punitive levels in order to maintain its farm subsidies.

Nixon has offered the EEC a deal. In return for their dismantling the common agricultural policy, he is prepared to spare them the worst effects of the Trade Bill.

Worthless

This is a worthless offer, but it is an offer the Common Market will find hard to refuse. Nixon's promise has little value because it will only change slightly the form which the trade war will take in its early stages, not its effects on Europe.

In the unlikely event that Europe is spared the direct effect of surcharges and tariffs on its exports to the US, it will still face the full impact of the Japanese trade offensive which will follow the imposition of tariffs on Japan's exports to America.

In other words there is no way out by negotiation or agreement, but only a ruthless conflict between the main capitalist countries. The final prong of Nixon's attack is in the field of capital exports.

The US employers correctly anticipate that the planned measures will result in wholesale commercial crashes and the liquidation of whole branches of the economy in Europe and Japan.

Discriminate

To take full advantage of this situation by buying up bankrupt industries overseas the Nixon administration is planning to remove all the existing controls on investments of US capital abroad.

Not only will this mean a new wave of dollar imperialism as US investors take advantage of bargain-basement prices.

It will also destroy much of the remaining financial role of London and other European money markets and wipe out a considerable slice of British 'invisible' earnings at a stroke.

Kissinger sees Mao for two hours' talks

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

ACCORDING to diplomats in Peking an even closer stage in Sino-American cooperation has opened following two hours of late night talks between Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Nixon's envoy Dr Henry Kissinger.

One western envoy was quoted as saying: 'Chairman Mao has given his blessing to a higher stage in Sino-American relations and this reception is a signal to this effect both to the outside world and to the people of China.'

Another diplomat said it was now 'extremely likely' that there would be an American diplomatic presence in Peking before the end of this year and that the possibility of full-scale diplomatic relations sooner than expected could not be ruled out.

Diplomats said Dr Kissinger's reception by Mao was a completely different thing from Mao's meeting with Nixon during the latter's visit a year ago. 'There was no reason of protocol why the chairman should see Dr Kissinger. It was completely unexpected,' one said.

The text of the communiqué issued after the visit said Mao had asked Kissinger to convey his regards to Nixon. This was also regarded as significant:

'For this to be published by New China News Agency and to appear in Chinese news media is another clear indication that relations between China and America have reached a new stage,' said one envoy.

It makes clear that having left the Vietnamese liberation fighters to struggle on under the phoney 'ceasefire' terms the Chinese Stalinists are now giving the green light for even closer collaboration with imperialism.

COUNSEL defending 11 Greek students charged with insulting the authorities claimed in court yesterday the trial was being held in a climate of terror and accused police of persecuting defence witnesses. After defence protests, witnesses, relatives and members of the public were allowed into court.

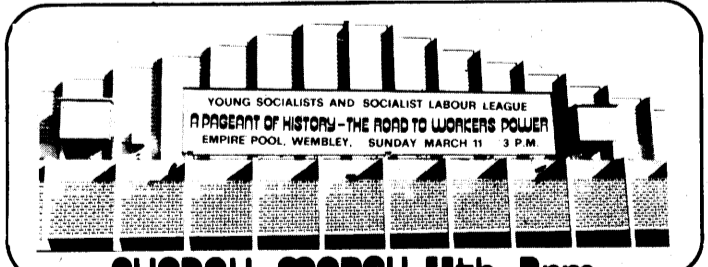
BOOK YOUR TICKET FOR EMPIRE POOL NOW

DEFEND ALL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

Defend trade unionism and basic living standards

Unite in action to make this Tory government resign

The road to power is through the building of the revolutionary party



SUNDAY MARCH 11th 3pm

PAGEANT • RALLY • CONCERT

I would like to take part in the Pageant/come to Empire Pool. Please send me further details.

NAME

ADDRESS

No. of tickets required Amount enclosed (£1 each £.....)

Complete form and return to:
Pageant Office, 34 Hamilton Gardens, London, NW8

ROCKWARE AND JIM SLATER

Behind the closure of the Rockware Group factory at Greenford in Middlesex lies the long arm of City financial tycoon, Jim Slater.

During last year it was announced in the City pages of the capitalist Press that his giant Slater Walker Securities was buying Rockware shares.

The behind-the-scenes transaction made little sense to those who turned to the books of the family-owned Rockware Group.

What interest could Slater have in making jars and bottles?

But his intervention into Rockware was not based on glass containers, but, inevitably, on real estate.

Rockware's Greenford factory is situated on a 35-acre site in the west Middlesex area. And nearby is another land acquisition by Slater—the former premises of the Westland helicopter company. A year ago Slater took over this group, sacked the work force and is now preparing to develop the site.

And he also has the largest single financial slice of Barclay Securities, the asset-stripping group headed by John Bentley. Bentley is currently preparing to 'rationalize' film production at the Shepperton Studios in Middlesex and use about 40 acres of the film lot for housing development.

The Rockware deal, therefore, must be seen against the background of two other Slater property manoeuvres in the same locality.

Rockware controls 33 per cent of the market in glass containers and apart from Greenford, it has factories at Wheatley, near Doncaster, Irvine in Ayrshire, St Helens in Lancashire and Knottingly in Yorkshire.

Its subsidiaries are listed as Blewis and Shaw (Plastics), Blewis and Shaw (PVC), Burwell, Reed and Kinghorn and the Birtall Foundry Company.

From these enterprises the company made a trading profit in 1971 of £4.8m, an increase of almost £1.8m on the previous year.

The Rockware group has close links with the Tory Party. The 1970 annual accounts show that £1,000 was given to British United Industrialists, a fund-raising front for the Tory Party, £300 to the right-wing Economic League and £100 to Goole Conservative Association.

In 1971 the same contributions were made to BUI and the Economic League, though the company waived its donation to the Goole Tories.

The directors pay themselves in handsome style. The chairman, Mr P. Parker, received £17,000, which comes to about £350 a week!

Another four receive more than £10,000 a year, while a staggering £16,000 was paid to directors simply as compensation for leaving the board. Not a bad golden handshake!

For the Rockware workers, salaries are not nearly so magnificent. There are 7,753 workers employed by the company and their average pay is £1,565. For unskilled and semi-skilled, of course, wages are much lower.

This is some of the background to the financial carve-up which looks like throwing 900 glass workers onto the dole.

For further information, one of the key demands of the work force must be a complete examination of the company's books.



FORD INSIST ON SHUT DOWN

Union chiefs will make a last-ditch bid within the next two weeks to persuade the Ford Motor Company not to close its Dagenham blastfurnaces, destroying 450 jobs.

The company has said that the furnaces are uneconomical and must be shut down.

But the union leaders, who believe the proposed closures are part of Ford's strategy for shifting production into the Common Market, insist that they will not accept them. Industrial action has been threatened.

With all eyes on the Ford pay struggle, attention has shifted somewhat from the threat to jobs implied by the company's European plans.

The spiralling world capitalist crisis, however, must once again place the jobs issue right at the centre of the stage.

William Batty, Ford of Britain chief, recently made much of a planned £130m investment in this country.

Yet, as company clerical workers point out, the most important question is in what ratio this figure lies to investment elsewhere. According to their own estimates, investment in Germany is five times as great, while Ford is also spending £90m in Spain.

The broad lines of Ford's strategy seem to be to make the jobs of its 50,000 British workers almost entirely dependent on the British market.

Employment, particularly in the car body and paint, trim and assembly factories, would inevitably be hard hit under

present conditions.

The company can itself be counted as a major contributor to the present crisis.

Like all the multinational companies, it has a team whose only function is currency manipulation to protect Ford interests. The annual report and accounts for 1971 showed a net gain of more than £2m as a result of devaluations.

Ford of Europe Inc—one of the five continental divisions which handle Ford's interests world-wide—must have been among the big international speculators in recent weeks.

This is only a small part of the problem facing Ford workers fighting the threat of unemployment.

But it indicates enough of the scale to demonstrate that the problem of the blastfurnaces cannot be answered by

Above: Ford blastfurnacemen. The company has said that the furnaces are uneconomical and must be shut down.

the Dagenham blastfurnacemen alone.

At a meeting last week with top union men, including Hector Smith of the Middlesbrough-based National Union of Blastfurnacemen, the company remained adamant.

It insisted that the blastfurnaces, which produce 300,000 tons of pig iron a year and serve all Ford plants, would have to be shut by 1975.

● All production of Ford Transit vans is to be transferred from Langley, Buckinghamshire, to Southampton next month. A new £5.5m Transit assembly plant at Southampton will increase its capacity from 230 to 260 vehicles a day.

3,000 MAY DIE

While the Tories are trying to whip up a campaign against the gasworkers, emphasizing the suffering to the public, a report out last week revealed that nearly 3,000 old people could die of cold this winter.

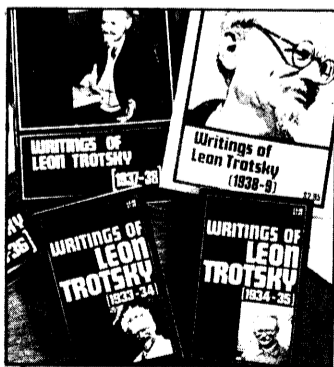
But it will not be anything to do with gas. The 3,000 could die in Slough, a town where old people often live in homes in which the temperature is no higher than in the street.

Secretary of Slough Council of Social Services, Mr Norman Nicholson, said that old people only get 50p a week heating allowance in their supplementary benefits.

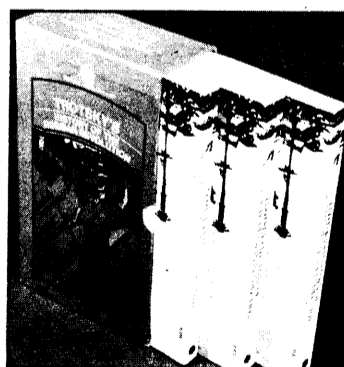
'That is £1 short of what is needed to heat just one room a week.'

A recent 'British Medical Journal' report revealed that one in ten old people could die of cold this winter simply because they haven't enough money to keep themselves warm.

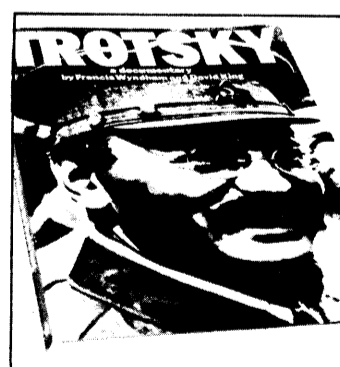
ANNOUNCING...



Six volumes of Trotsky's writings during the years 1933-1940
£8.00 including postage



History of Russian Revolution—special gift pack of three volumes
£1.70 including postage



Trotsky—a documentary by Francis Wyndham and David King
£1.65 including postage

Please tick those you require. Amount enclosed £.....

Name

Address

Complete form and post to:

New Park Publications, 186a Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UG

A New Park Publications Booklist is available, free, on request.

WALES JOBS FALL

A document drawn up by the Welsh region of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU) reveals that the Principality's population grew at half the rate in England and Northern Ireland over the last decade.

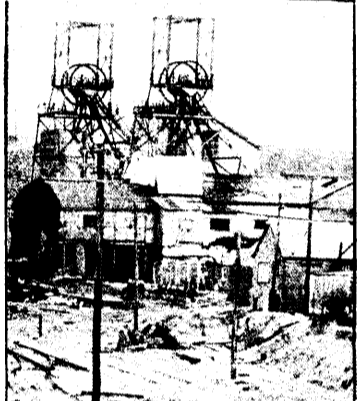
In these areas it grew by about 6 per cent, but in Wales by only 3.7 per cent.

Much of the loss is accounted for by migration not only from rural areas, but from the once populous south-east districts.

And much of this has been caused by redundancies which over the last two years alone have totalled 20,000—over twice the average rate for the 1960s.

Wales' eastern and central valleys have lost over 20,000 people to migration since 1961.

Since the war 145 collieries have closed, slashing the labour force from 120,000 to 45,000. Over 60,000 of these jobs disappeared in the 1960s.



Between 1964 and 1971 numbers employed in metal manufacture dropped from 95,000 to 86,000 and steel is to lose a further 18,000 jobs in the next seven years.

The total number of men in employment has contracted steadily. In 1964 the figure was 672,000, but by 1971 it had fallen to 603,000.

Some 10,000 jobs have disappeared in the construction industry since 1966, 7,000 in transport and communications and 11,000 in the distributive trades.

In the 1960s some new but small, light industries, mainly in food, chemicals and electrical engineering, moved in, pushing up female employment from 305,000 in 1964 to 327,000 in 1971.

There are 12 men chasing every vacancy in Wales and four women after every female vacancy.

Over 35,000 men and 7,000 women face 3,000 and 2,000 job opportunities respectively.



NEW STEEL CLOSURE THREAT IN GLASGOW

The Glasgow Parkhead steel plant of William Beardmore could be closed down with the loss of 1,100 jobs if Dunford and Elliot's bid for Thomas Firth and John Brown goes through.

Beardmore's is owned by John Brown and it is the lone survivor of a company which once employed 30,000 men throughout Britain, 20,000 of them in Scotland.

It is generally accepted that the Glasgow works would not have survived but for the Firth-Brown takeover.

A £1.7m modernization scheme is planned for the Park-

head works which is located in one of Glasgow's jobs black-spots on the east side of the city close to Cambuslang, where thousands of jobs are to be lost as a result of the British Steel Corporation's rationalization.

But work at Parkhead is duplicated at the Dunford and Elliot works in Sheffield and a successful takeover of Firth-Brown would almost certainly mean the end of the Glasgow plant.

Mr Arthur Bell, Scottish divisional officer of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation said:

'If the takeover bid is successful, then the future of Parkhead is in jeopardy with a strong possibility that all the

River Don workers protest against jobs losses after Firth-Brown bought the heavy forgings section from the British Steel Corporation as part of their Sheffield modernization plans.

workers will lose their jobs.

'If the works close, then the effect on other industries could be considerable with redundancies reaching as high as five times the number of persons employed by Beardmore.'

Firth-Brown has two heavy forges, one in Scotland and the other in Sheffield. Significantly, for the future of the Parkhead works, the firm recently modernized its Sheffield plant and transferred equipment from the recently-acquired BSC River Don works.

PRIVATE SHARES IN A DEATHLY BUSINESS

Sir Raymond Streat is one of Manchester's 'elder statesmen'—a toff who has belonged to all the major local bodies and the right Tory clubs.

He was former chairman of the Manchester Cotton Board and today remains a member of the council of Manchester University. One of his other titles is Commander of the Order of Orange Nassau (Netherlands).

Profitable

Little is known, however, about one of Streat's private investments. It isn't listed in his entry in 'Who's Who', for instance.

But it has emerged that he is chairman of a private company called Manchester Crematorium.

And a very profitable sideline it is too. The company has 49,328 shares issued, of which the largest holder is one Mrs M. J. C. Piggott, who has 4,444.

This obscure little outfit has become the centre of a share-grabbing operation. The man who wants to get into Manchester Crematorium is Mr W. K. Cottrill, a former local stockbroker who now runs a company called Norbreck Investments of Blackpool.

Assets

Is Cottrill interested in the burial industry? Not at all. In a letter to the private owners of the crematorium's shares, Cottrill reveals that it is the company's assets which interest him. He has written to the 64 shareholders asking them to part with approximately 2,000 shares in the 83-year-old company.

Cottrill said the crematorium profits were probably not much more than those made by 'a good grocer's shop'. In 1971 it was £17,842 before allowing £8,921 for depreciation and £3,867 for tax.

'Much more'

The attraction is the asset backing. Take the superintendent's house. In 1947 the company's books showed that its value was £2,200. But in 1971 it was valued at only £440. Writing in the finance pages of the 'Manchester Evening News', Michael Rimmer said tersely: 'Obviously this is worth much more.'

Then there is the 4½-acre site. There could be no question of building on it, said Rimmer, because 'this is forbidden in the company's deeds'.

Whether the shareholders will sell to Cottrill remains to be seen. But his interest has already had an invigorating effect on the share price. From 65p to 75p in recent months, they have shot up to 105p.

Someone, somewhere is clearly about to make a killing in the crematorium. Share-wise, that is.

STUDENT RALLY IN MANCHESTER

About 15,000 students are expected to join a massive march and rally in Manchester on Wednesday as part of their fight for higher student grants.

The students have called for support from local trade union branches.

Wednesday's rally is the second stage of their campaign for better grants. Last month most of the student body joined in a rent strike at their halls of residence.

The £80 which should have been paid in hall fees for the term has been paid into the students' union fund. At Manchester University the central

fund now stands at £13,000, with a further £2,000 in individual hall funds.

Those taking part in Wednesday's protest action will include students from further education colleges, polytechnics and other colleges of adult education in the north-west and north Wales, from Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Lancaster, Keele and Bangor Universities.

Twin marches will set out from Manchester and Salford Universities at 1 p.m. converging on land behind the Manchester University Institute of Science and Technology.

Leaders of the National Union of Students are to meet the Tory government for further talks about grants on February 27.

POLITICAL PROFILES

By LEON TROTSKY
Paperback. £1.00 Illustrated



Sharp pen-portraits of leading figures of the Second International in Russia and Europe, for the first time published in an English edition. The translations were first commissioned by the Young Socialists' paper 'Keep Left' Their enormous success has led to the completion of the translation of the whole book, which is the first part of Volume 8 of Leon Trotsky's 'Works' published in the Soviet Union in 1926. It provides the most vivid picture available of the historic figures of the Second International, their strengths and weaknesses, written by an observer who was also a participant in the daily struggle of the European and Russian working class.

Now available from New Park Publications
186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG

EUROPEAN COAL AND STEEL UNDER ATTACK

The crisis of the capitalist system is causing rapid changes in the shape of European industry.

Under the auspices of the corporatist Common Market, plans are being laid for a massive rationalization of basic industries which will mean the loss of thousands of jobs.

Particularly hard hit will be the workers in the coal and steel industries.

As Workers Press has already revealed, certain monopolist groups are proposing to increase their profitability by a division of labour between German steel and British coal.

The plan would be to develop Germany's steel, but virtually close its coal industry, and in Britain close down steel and concentrate on coal.

Further evidence of these dark plans have come to light with an announcement from the continent's biggest steel producer August - Thyssen-Hutte AG.

The Thyssen monopolists have made it clear to the Brandt government that they cannot make satisfactory profits if they are obliged to use expensive German coking coal any longer.

In future, the company wants to import cheaper coke from abroad. This would mean the closure of a majority of the mines in the giant Ruhr and Saar coal basin, causing huge redundancies among miners.



Above: Brandt who announced that he will offer a 'long-term and solid solution'. But what does this mean for the miners?

In recent letters to the Federal Minister of Economics and the Federal Finance Minister, Thyssen manager-in-chief, Hans-Guenther Sohl, demanded decontrol for the importation of coke. With this he speaks as representative for the whole German steel industry.

Thyssen's steel empire belonged to those firms which supported Hitler's seizure of power in the 1930s. Now it is the biggest steel-producer on the continent.

DOMESTIC COAL

Sohl justified this demand by claiming inability to pay the price for German coal, which in 1972 was DM78.59 a ton, that is DM10 higher than the price on the world-market, which the foreign steel-competitors pay for their supply of energy.

Up to now the German steel industry was forced to buy domestic coal to keep the mines on the Ruhr and Saar going.



Above: Workers on strike at Hoesch, the second biggest steel producer in Germany.

During the past three years the crisis of the world monetary system and the DM revaluations rapidly worsened the competitiveness of the Ruhrkohle, as well as the steel industry.

It is no accident that the steel barons' call for cheaper coal and stronger rationalization comes the very moment when Britain, and with it the British Steel Corporation, entered the Common Market on January 1.

Unless Thyssen gets a quick government decision, the monopoly is threatening to shift production of raw-materials and semi-manufactured goods into foreign countries.

Thus Sohl confronts the government with the ultimatum to either destroy jobs in the mines or in the steel industry.

State-subsidies for the support of the Ruhrkohle AG, which produces more than 60 per cent of the whole German coal output is regarded by Thyssen as impossible, because 'nobody can finance them for any length of time'.

Ruhrkohle's losses in 1972 alone already amounted to DM600-700m. The Federal government holds a special reserve for subsidies amounting to DM1,000m to cover them. But to subsidize the company in the coming years would go far beyond this amount.

Sohl referred to the second biggest steel-producer, Hoesch, which has already decided, following the fusion with the Dutch steel-trust Hoogovens, to leave the whole purchase of raw materials, including coal, to the Dutch firm which owns US coal mines.

Thyssen has offered to take back his own former mining property from Ruhrkohle, which means that he would shut down the mines himself, if this could ease 'the political decisions concerning coal and energy'.

The Sohl letter is the declaration of war by the German capitalists, strengthened by the extended Common Market, on the working class.

By destroying more than 100,000 jobs on the Ruhr with the consent of the government, they want to demoralize and weaken the working class, in order to create the conditions for a new attack on its living standards and thus reduce labour costs.

Already in the first days of January the Federal Minister of Economics proposed to reduce the yearly output of pit coal by 40 per cent to 60 million tons.

In an interview with the employers' journal 'Wirtschaftswoche' (January 5, 1973), he declared: 'I am not ready to support the dubious advantages of local industry with resources of the state.'

This means that if the steel industry finds better conditions in foreign countries, it will go.

The coalition government is clearly turning against the workers when its ministers can remark that one has 'to use the advantage that there are no elections in the coming two years'.

Brandt announced that he will offer a 'long-term and solid solution' in his declaration of government on January 18. But what can a 'solid solution' mean for the miners when he bases himself on the

defence of the 'social market economy'?

The jobs in the mining industry cannot be defended under capitalist conditions, as is proved by the Sohl letter. Brandt will go further to the right and attack the miners, because he believes that capitalism can be reformed.

In a statement on the new development, the chairman of the IG Bergbau und Energie (Trade Union of Mining and Energy), Adolf Schmidt said one should not talk of a crisis of the Ruhr area; it was 'an industrial centre with outstanding local advantages'.

This right-wing union leader leaves the miners unprepared for the impending sackings.

It was Schmidt, who at the foundation of Ruhrkohle in 1969, agreed to the adjustment plan that has destroyed 25,000 jobs up to now.

SACKING 30,000 MINERS

On January 5 he declared that the union considers a yearly output of 85 million tons as about right, a drop of 15 per cent. This output should be maintained for five years, when the situation could be examined again. This drop will mean the sacking of another 30,000 miners.

The redundancies are already being announced. About 2,000 miners will lose their jobs when the two coal-pits 'Mevisen' and 'Rumeln' in Rheinhausen close down. In accordance with Ruhrkohle's original 'adjustment plan', the pits should be extended.

The greater part of the employees will have to look for new jobs themselves if they don't want to put up with travelling for hours to other pits.

In Essen on December 20, employment director Heinz Kegel talked of another 20,000 redundancies in 1973. This will hit 12 per cent of the miners in the Ruhr area.

For a long time now miners have been kept waiting by promises. After a phase of 'shrinking itself healthy' Ruhrkohle was supposed to be profitable again. This meant large-scale sackings in the past.

This fraud was ended by a speech of Ruhrkohle boss Kuhnke on December 20, 1972. He revealed: 'The illusions about "shrinking itself healthy" are gone forever.' Kuhnke demanded more state subsidies.

The German League of Socialist Workers (LSW) was against the Ruhrkohle adjustment plan from the beginning. It was the only party which fought for the expropriation without compensation of the mining and steel industries and for the continuation of production under workers control, and against all sackings.

In talks with the Federal Minister of Economics, on January 11, the managing committee of the miners' union submitted their 'policies on energy'.

The LSW is calling on miners not to allow further closures to take place and to force the union leaders to break off all collaboration with the capitalists and their ministers, and to defend unconditionally every job in the mining industry.

PRICES: HOW THE TORIES ARE 'MUGGING' THE HIGH ST SHOPPER

BY STEPHEN JOHNS—PART ONE

A decent standard of living is the most basic aim of the working-class movement. The history of class struggle is essentially a record of the fight to achieve this important goal.

The democratic rights built up by the labour movement are the foundations on which today's living standards are based—the right to work, the right to strike, the right to welfare, the right to shelter and, above all, the right to wages large enough to provide the breadwinner and his family with good food to stay alive and healthy.

Only in very recent times have these rights, especially the last one, been secured by the working class of Britain. Now, once more, they are in grave jeopardy.

Apart from legally stripping the working class of the rights which come from strong trade unions, the Tory government has launched a direct assault on the freedom to fight for higher wages.

Pay is kept down by law. Those who struggle for increases are considered law-breakers and face fines and imprisonment. But prices, particularly food prices, are allowed to rise. In other words the Tories are attempting to drive down living standards.

This series is an investigation of the cost of living and prices. The focus is on groceries—the wide range of goods the housewife can buy in a modern supermarket—still the biggest item of expenditure in the working-class budget, accounting for about a third of total expenditure.

These articles aim to explode some of the myths about prices and the so-called 'free market' the Tories say is impossible to control. They will show who produces the food, who controls its distribution and sale, and where the millions spent by the working class on food end up. Finally the question, 'how can we organize production for the benefit of the majority?' will be answered.

The capitalist class, represented by the Tory government, always like people to view a 'decent standard of living' as an abstraction. They present it as an isolated category—a kind of exchange, handed down to the working class for services rendered.

In fact the living standards of today have only been won through bitter class struggle.

The standard of living is a social thing. Embodied in it are all the antagonisms between the working class, which wants to keep the greatest possible

proportion of the value it creates in the form of wages, and the capitalist class, which correspondingly seeks to rob workers of as much surplus value as possible in the form of profit.

This struggle is never-ending and only recently have workers won the right to even minimum standards (to say nothing of the millions who still live below the poverty line).

It is indeed a popular misconception that the horrors of starvation and malnutrition were left far behind in the darkest days of the 19th century. This is not the case.

Only the advent of the welfare state after World War II freed the bulk of the working class from the threat of death or deformity through lack of proper food.

Half the nation ill-fed

In his famous study of the late 1930s, Sir John (now Lord) Boyd Orr found that 4.5 million people (10 per cent of the nation and 20 per cent of children) had a diet insufficient to keep them healthy. They all lacked the necessary amounts of proteins, fats, calories, calcium, phosphorus, iron and vitamins A and C to prevent death or serious illness. A further 9 million were inadequate in all but protein and fat, a further 9 million did not eat enough minerals and vitamins and another 9 million were inadequate in calcium.

Adding the totals, Boyd Orr found that over half the nation, and the majority of the working class, were ill-fed, judged against even the most minimum standards.

Another survey by Dr McGonigle showed that the extra expenditure incurred by workers moving from a slum area in Stockton to a modern housing estate contributed directly to an increase in the death rate from 18.75 to 26.71 per 1,000. People spent less on food so they died more rapidly in greater numbers.

How close this is to today! Youth raised on free orange juice and rationed food under the post-war Labour government are but one generation from rickets, malnutrition and sheer starvation of the 1930s.

It is essential that the standard of living is viewed in this social-historical context of struggle. Only this way can the true evil of the Tory attack be grasped.

The government is not just attempting to snatch a few shillings from the purses, but is trying to throw working-class progress into reverse. Already, for the first time since the days of Boyd Orr and



'I am confident,' drawled Rippon, 'that our food prices will not reach the exceptionally high levels which occur in some EEC countries.'

McGonigle, the living standards of the working class are beginning to drop.

The offensive rests on two pillars—the so-called anti-inflationary laws and the deliberate Tory policy of driving food prices up to levels in the capitalist European Economic Community. Allied to this is the switch to Value-Added Tax from April 1, which will throw the bulk of the tax burden directly onto the shoulders of the working-class shopper.

Characteristically the Tories christen their policy a 'price freeze'. But of course there was, and is, no intention of curbing price rises.

Even profits will be allowed to increase

All fresh foods are exempt from controls and imported foods are allowed to rise freely in price. Since processed foods are manufactured from fresh home-grown food or imported supplies, and since increases in costs can be reflected in increased prices, there are no controls on processed groceries either.

In other words, fresh food, imported food and processed food can rise in price—this is what the Tories call a 'freeze'.

Under Phase Two even profits will be allowed to increase. Margins can go up to the rate achieved in the

best two of the previous five years. In addition the Tories have promised to view profit increases to meet 'particular situations' with 'some latitude'.

The working class will not enjoy such benefits. If the miners, for example, go on strike for their present wage claim, which is less than the best two increases achieved over the last five years, they will find themselves threatened with fines or imprisonment under the Phase Two regulations.

The result of this policy has been a dramatic fall in living standards.

The most comprehensive guide to food prices is published by 'The Grocer' magazine each week.

This shows that since the 'freeze' was imposed in early November, prices have risen from an index level of 133.72 points to 142.41 points (about 7 per cent) in the week ending February 3. In the final week, price increases were the steepest of the whole period, fresh foods rose 2.28 points and processed foods 1.27 points.

Not only did prices rise during the first 'freeze' months, the increases—comparing the level of one month in 1972 and the level in the same month for 1971—were the highest of the whole of 1972.

For example, prices in June last year were 4.3 points

higher than in June 1971, in October they were 7.4 points higher, in November, after the freeze, 9.5 points higher and in January 11.5 points higher.

The cost of almost every food has rocketed—meat, eggs, fish, vegetables, fruit, coffee, sausages, cooked meats, jams, honey, frozen fish, frozen meat, hamburgers, canned meat, biscuits, pasta—they all escaped the rigours of the 'freeze'.

The kind of price hike suffered by housewives is laid out in February 3 'Grocer'. Compared with February 1972 fresh meat is 41 per cent dearer, fish is 41 per cent dearer, fruit is 18.5 per cent dearer, coffee is 11.6 per cent dearer, with another rise on the way, flour is 10 per cent dearer, processed meats are 10.8 per cent dearer, vegetables 17.5 per cent dearer and eggs 9.6 per cent dearer.

The magazine's final comment on this orgy of rises is: 'The outlook for food prices is not favourable. Much depends on government action.'

They were referring to the dam of requests for increases now building up at the Ministry of Agriculture. The major manufacturers have got 1,000 claims in following increased raw material costs—the first is expected to be bread, up 14p a loaf.

Many housewives will remember the promise made by Tory leader Edward Heath—

'We price The perfo depts cynic rule. blata mick drive into A may than was the Mar hous 'I Rippon will high some A had putt Briti were to e and shift your the ber, Ti wive Com the the Ti food Agri quite keep



CARNI

04331

150

100

300

200

200

200

300

150

380

48

200

'I am confident,' drawled Rippon, 'that our food prices will not reach the exceptionally high levels which occur in some EEC countries'. A few weeks later beef had leaped up to EEC levels. Above: Italian meat stall.

McGivern, the lion's share of the... higher than in June 1971... 'We will reduce the rate of... then necessary... to safeguard... to eat instead of beef!'



occur in some EEC countries'. A few weeks later beef had leaped up to EEC levels. Above: Italian meat stall.

'We will reduce the rate of price increases at a stroke'. The government's subsequent performance has revealed the depths of arrogance and cynicism with which the Tories rule. Behind a battery of blatant lies and publicity gimmicks, they are seeking to drive the working class back into the 1930s.

Another Tory boast, which may yet achieve more notoriety than Heath's election pledge, was made by Geoffrey Rippon, the Tory in charge of Common Market negotiations, to Cardiff housewives last November.

'I am confident,' drawled Rippon, 'that our food prices will not reach the exceptionally high levels which occur in some EEC countries.'

A few weeks later after beef had leaped up to EEC levels, putting over 20 per cent on British prices, Tory Ministers were asking the working class to eat chicken. 'Prices are high and they will stay high—so shift yourselves and change your diet.' This was basically the message from Joseph Godber, Minister of Agriculture.

This meat scare gave housewives the first taste of the Common Market. Entry into the EEC was the last nail in the coffin of cheap food.

The fulcrum of the Market's food system is the Common Agricultural Policy. This is quite simply a mechanism for keeping food prices far higher

than necessary, to safeguard the farmers' profits, the manufacturers and ultimately the food wholesalers and retailers.

Before February 1 British farmers were subsidized. But at least the revenue was collected via taxes and therefore had a progressive character (since under income tax the rich pay more). The subsidy in Europe is paid by an artificially higher price and therefore falls directly onto the shopper. The poorer you are the more you suffer—always the way in the Common Market.

The system works this way. The capitalist authorities of the EEC take the highest proposed price of a food commodity and fix the level there.

The European price of wheat, barley and oats, for example, is equal to the price in Duisberg, where levels are the highest. Prices are geared to production in the most inefficient areas.

The burden will be enormous

Meanwhile all cheap imports from outside the EEC are choked off with a common tariff and, if this is not high enough, an extra levy.

British food production is being forced into this system now—already higher bacon and pork prices are forecast (these are the meats Tories advise us

to eat instead of beef!).

At present a special levy has been introduced. This is paid to exporters who sell say high-priced French wheat in the low-priced British market—the government will make up the loss from the public purse. Gradually the full high-price system will come in and the working class will bear the full burden as prices rise to EEC levels.

And the burden will be enormous. The latest study on the Common Market showed butter 179 per cent dearer in the EEC, cheese 62 per cent and bread 10 per cent. There are, as many workers who travel abroad have found out to their cost, very few foods cheaper in Europe than in Britain.

The EEC's economic philosophy was revealed in an agreement signed in May 1970 to reduce wheat production. People still wanted more bread, but, in the words of 'socialist' Dr Sicco Mansholt, 'the Ministers recognized that the major exporters had a common responsibility to regulate their production in a manner which would bring supplies into balance with opportunities in the international market [i.e. profit opportunities].'

Mansholt continued: 'The government should exercise care in implementing the new or existing programme of support and avoid measures which

would have the effect of stimulating production.'

It's back, once more, to the 1930s—plough the wheat under, dump the fruit and burn the coffee, but never, never allow profit to fall. It's bad for the market.

Lord Watkinson, the head of the Cadbury Schweppes food empire never said a truer word when he reminded an audience of executives recently: 'The British food industry is in for a very rough and stormy time in 1973. Britain's entry into the Common Market may heighten the waves . . . the era of cheap food is over.'

VAT: improves the wealth of the rich

On April Fool's Day, the Tories have one more blow to deal to the working class—Value Added Tax. This again is an EEC invention and, like everything to come out of the Common Market, is specifically designed to improve the wealth of the rich at the expense of the poor. (The tax was introduced by the French government after the Poujade rebellion when the middle class revolted and refused to pay more direct taxes.)

The Tories admit that VAT will put up to 2.5 per cent on prices. All evidence suggests the increase will be much higher. In Denmark prices rose 6.5 per cent in six months as a result of VAT and in Norway 6.25 per cent, despite a price freeze.

VAT is levied throughout the system of production. At each stage of a commodity's journey to the shop the tax will be levied at 10 per cent of the value added to the product. Hence the supplier of goods worth £100 he sells the manufacturer. But the price charged to the manufacturer will be £110, allowing the supplier to recover the tax.

The manufacturer then adds £50 value to the raw materials, making the 'price' £160. With 10 per cent VAT he sells the goods to the wholesaler at £176. The wholesaler adds £24 on the 'price' making it £200, this with 10 per cent VAT means he sells it to the retailer at £220. The retailer adds £30 to the goods making their 'price' £250. This, with 10 per cent VAT, means he sells to the consumer at £275. Here the buck stops, the consumer cannot pass on the prices he foots the whole £25 tax bill.

The Tories make great play of the fact that food is 'zero-rated'. But this means that it is not levied yet. Food is

highly likely to be taxed as we move up from the 10 per cent VAT rate to the higher EEC levels.

The tax is highly regressive since it falls equally on the rich and the poor. It is part of the Tory plan to shift the tax burden away from the wealthy (they have already slashed surtax and corporation tax on firms) and make the working class foot the bill for state expenditure.

It has the added bonus of allowing the Chancellor to increase taxes when he wants. No budget is necessary. It is possible therefore for the Tories to recover wage increases by bumping up the VAT rate.

In addition VAT will have an important indirect effect on prices. All businessmen must calculate their turnovers in the various items carrying VAT if they are not to fall foul of the Inland Revenue. This massive administrative task is beyond the resources of many small shopkeepers. VAT will drive them out of business. But it is also a headache for the multiples.

One Irish retailer with a staff of 600 in 15 supermarkets has calculated that the overtime caused by VAT calculations costs him as much as £2,000 a week. This, he says, will be passed on to the shopper. SPA, the association of independent grocers, has estimated that even the prices of zero-rated food goods will increase at least by 1.5 per cent as a result of VAT.

VAT, the Common Market and the general Tory policy of higher prices all add up to a massive drop in living standards for the working class. This will happen during 1973 if the Tories are not removed from office.

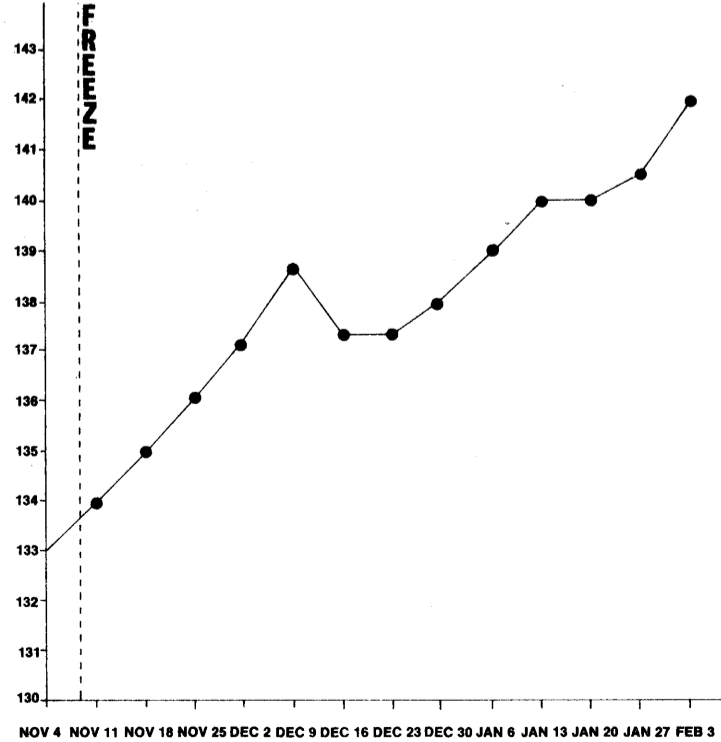
It is not merely a question of paying more, but the rapid erosion of a most fundamental right.

It would be extremely foolish to believe that as the economic crisis gets worse the same conditions of widespread poverty and misery, like those experienced by most of the working class in the 1930s, will not reappear.

Already there are reports of the poorest and most vulnerable sections of the working class suffering a steep decline in living standards—the old, the unemployed, the homeless and the children from broken homes have little defence against this offensive. Now it is the turn of the wage-earner to suffer.

CONTINUED TOMORROW

Food Prices since the 'Freeze'



November up: canned vegetables, coffee, fresh fish, meat, bacon, ham, eggs and fresh fruit.
 December up: eggs, fresh fish, fresh fruit, fresh meat, sausages, pies, cooked meats, processed meats, vegetables.
 January up: fresh meat, fresh fruit, eggs, vegetables, canned meat, processed meats, sausages.

Figures from 'The Grocer'



Left: Alfredo Stroessner, who has been in power in Paraguay since the military coup in 1954. Stroessner's rivals have either been jailed or expelled.

STROESSNER'S PARAGUAY

Part one of a series on Paraguay. By Jack Gale

Paraguay is the smallest country in south America. Recent official figures give the income per head as \$236 a year. But the figure for the agricultural sector, where 70 per cent of the population lives, was only \$81 a head in 1970.

Some 2.6 per cent of all landowners own over 75 per cent of the land. At the other extreme, 36 per cent of all farmers have no titles at all to their land. There is no income tax.

At least 50 per cent of the 1970 budget expenditure (\$82.8m) went on military and police expenditure, compared with 2 per cent on agriculture. The peasants (campesinos) live in abject poverty—a fact

highlighted by the decline in the number of cattle from 5.5 million in 1956 to 4.3 million in 1970.

The main exports are meat, wood, vegetable oils, tobacco and cotton, but there is a chronic deficit in the balance of payments, especially over the last ten years, which has been covered by huge inflows of US capital. The foreign debt on June 30, 1970, was \$150m.

Outside the capital city of Asuncion, medical attention is practically non-existent. Only one in six children receive six years of primary education. Piped water and electricity are confined to the central zone of Asuncion, a city which still lacks sewers.

The two parties of the ruling class—the Liberal Party and the Colorado Party—emerged after 1870. In 1932 the conflict between Standard

Oil and Royal Dutch over the Chaco oil reserves forced Paraguay and Bolivia into a war which Paraguay 'won' at the cost of 30,000 dead.

These gave her control of the oil bearing lands—which were promptly sold back to Bolivia (and Standard Oil) by her corrupt negotiators at the peace conference.

During World War II, Paraguay was ruled by the pro-Nazi Morinigo dictatorship. After the war there was a short-lived coalition of Liberals, 'Febreristas' and Stalinists, which was replaced in 1947 by the Colorado Party. A succession of Colorado Presidents followed until the military coup of General Alfredo Stroessner in 1954.

The Colorado Party, like the Liberals, based on the small upper class of Asuncion, is now the tool of the ruling military élite. Stroessner's

military coup was made with the support of a group of high-ranking Colorados. In 1958 Stroessner's rivals in the party were expelled or jailed and formed the Movimiento Popular Colorado (MOPOCO) in exile.

Since 1954 Stroessner has ruled with absolute power derived from Article 52 of the 1940 Constitution (now embodied in Article 79 of the 1967 Constitution) which gives him power to declare a state of emergency and suspend the *habeas corpus*.

In 1958 he was re-elected to the presidency in an 'election' in which he was the only candidate.

In 1963 he was again 're-elected', in contravention of the constitution. In 1967 the constitution was amended in order to allow him to stand again.

He was again re-elected

under conditions where even the bourgeois Liberal Party was denied the right of assembly or any Press or radio coverage and in which enrolment of Liberal supporters on the register was severely restricted.

In 1971 he was again proposed as Colorado presidential candidate for the elections of 1973.

Colorado Party membership among the middle class (which is about 8 per cent of the population) is ensured by a regulation which makes it compulsory for all public employees, including teachers and state doctors, to join.

Even the Liberal Party went underground from 1954 to 1962. During this time the Liberal élite became worried at revolutionary agitation among the campesinos who had previously supported them.

Then, the United States persuaded Stroessner to create a façade of democracy for the 1963 elections, in an effort to divert this revolutionary feeling back behind a safe, bourgeois 'opposition'.

A Liberal Party group, led by Dr Carlos Levi Ruffinelli, was persuaded to take part in the elections and was given 20 out of a total of 60 parliamentary seats, plus high salaries and tax-free imported cars.

By 1968 the main body of the Liberal Party had seen the advantages of such democracy and participated in the election on these terms.

There is also the Febrerista Party in Paraguay. This arose out of social discontent following the Chaco War of the 1930s.

Its ideological orientation today is broadly similar to that of the West German Social Democrat Party, from which it receives assistance.

The Christian Democrat Party, founded in 1960, is also without legal recognition and so is not permitted to contest elections, hold a conference, or publish a newspaper.

Five of its leaders were expelled from Paraguay in December 1969.

The Febrerista and Christian Democrats get their support from a section of the urban middle class.

In September 1971 a group of dissidents from the Febrerista, Liberal Radical and Christian Democrat Parties joined together and founded the Paraguayan Socialist Movement.

There is no autonomous body representing the working class and campesinos.

The Communist Party of Paraguay was founded in 1928 and grew significantly when it opposed the imperialist war over the Chaco oil resources in the 1930s.

The Partido Comunista Paraguaya (PCP) grew in strength until 1947. In 1943 it began publishing its newspaper 'Adelante' ('Forward').

Between August 1946 and January 1947 the PCP was legalized for the only time in its history, apart from a couple of weeks during the Febrerista regime of 1937.

It hastened to hold back the masses by entering a coalition government with the Liberals and Febreristas.

This alliance with the bourgeoisie contributed to the Colorado's victory of 1947.

In 1953 Oscar Credyt became PCP leader. In the 1950s and 1960s the organization was almost destroyed by massive police infiltration.

Months before the 1958 General Strike three leading PCP members were arrested—Antonio Maidana, Julio Rojas and Alfredo Alcorta—and the strike was severely repressed.

Maidana, Rojas and Alcorta are still in jail. **CONTINUED TOMORROW**

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

STARS

The Chester-le-Street by-election will present voters in that north-eastern constituency with a mind boggling choice.

The clear favourite to win in a seat which has returned Labour since the Labour Party was founded in 1906, is Giles Radice, research officer of the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

The Liberals have 'Geordie' Suggett, described in the Press as 'a gentle little antique dealer'.

But the most bizarre candidate is Neil Balfour, an Oxford-educated lawyer-cum-merchant banker, for the Tories. Helping Balfour is a veritable gala of 'star performers'. These include Mrs Balfour, who is the former Princess Elizabeth of Yugoslavia, a cousin of the Duke of Kent.

BAN



Above: Libyan leader Gaddafi.

The eccentric Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, has announced a ban on the display of portraits of leaders.

He told the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), the only recognized political party, that he had personally intervened to stop the erection of a statue for the late Egyptian leader, President Nasser. The aim of the ban was to forestall those who wanted to put up portraits 'of such atheists as Lenin and Marx', he added.

GOOD WILL

The Lincoln area of the Road Haulage Association is still patting itself on the back over a unique public-relations coup earlier this week.

At a cosy little gathering of friends, this powerful employers' pressure group brought together the local Women's Institute, the Society for the Preservation of Rural England and . . . the Transport and General Workers' Union.

They all got together to hear speeches about improving the road system and watch films called 'The Third Age of Transport' and 'The Town that Nearly Died of Traffic'.

No doubt the conservationists lapped it up, although what the Women's Institute thought of it all is difficult to estimate.

But the interesting question is: what was the T&GWU doing in the middle of all this employers' good will? Members who joined the union to fight the employers please note.

SHEEP FARM

Dockers who are slaving away for millionaire Lord Vestey might like to know how his lordship is getting along. He has just purchased a 500-acre cattle and sheep farm in the Cotswolds at some fabulous—undisclosed—price.

ASBESTEOSIS

In March last year the Central Electricity Generating Board closed its power station in Lombard Road, Battersea, south London.

Alfred Williams, who had spent 26 years lagging pipes with asbestos, was made redundant.

Shortly after, Mr Williams began complaining about pains in his chest. He became short of breath and could not walk far.

He had two spells in hospital and was sent home bedridden. On November 26 last he was found dead in his bed.

The Battersea coroner last week found that Mr Williams had died from lung cancer caused by asbestosis.



CASTRO COMES IN FROM THE COLD

BY JOHN SPENCER

President Nixon has indicated that agreement has been reached with Cuba to put an end to the island's use as a sanctuary for hi-jackers.

Secret talks on the question have been under way through Swiss intermediaries since December last year.

The talks began after the spectacular seizure of an Eastern Airways jet over the United States. Like so many previous planes, it was diverted to Havana.

But the hi-jackers were definitely not welcome in the Cuban capital. Fidel Castro personally assured the plane's pilot that they would be jailed for life.

Washington sent a message of thanks to the Cubans for the way they had handled the situation. The talks began shortly afterwards.

No doubt Castro's indignation at the Eastern hi-jack was largely synthetic, designed as a signal to Washington rather than as an expression of his feelings about the particular incident.

Ever since June last year both sides have been looking for a convenient pretext to get together for negotiations . . . and hi-jacking is a better pretext than most.

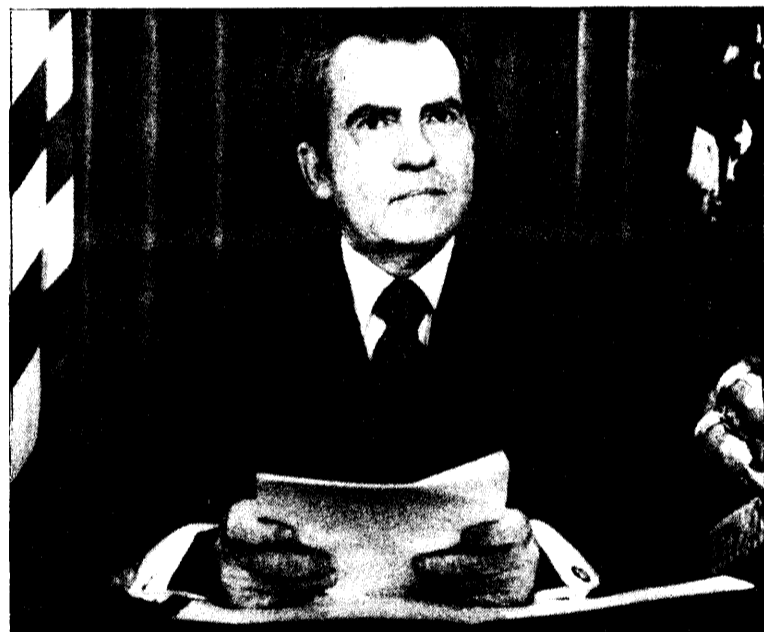
It is clear that having reached this agreement, the two sides can now make rapid progress to 'normalization' of commercial and diplomatic ties ruptured since 1960.

The question of ending the blockade of Cuba and improving relations in the Caribbean was almost certainly raised during Castro's visit to the Soviet Union last year.

He toured eastern Europe in President Nixon's wake and received an exceptionally warm welcome from the Kremlin leaders. Both sides affirmed their total solidarity on all major questions.

On his return the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party passed a resolution affirming that an improvement in relations with the United States was impossible while US policies remained unchanged.

The statement, published in full in the Party newspaper 'Granma', was generally taken



Top: Castro. Above: Nixon. Rapid progress to 'normalization'.

as an indication of Castro's willingness to talk seriously with Washington.

The first tentative feelers were put out in June last year, shortly after Nixon's visit to Moscow. The White House Press office announced that an official US delegation had visited the island for the first time since the blockade was imposed.

The delegation, consisting of four experts on oceanography, attended a United Nations conference on the ecology of the Caribbean. Harris B. Stewart, the delegation leader, said they had received a VIP reception from the Cubans, who held a special party for them on Varadero beach.

Evidently the visit was a success, because it was not long before the Cuban government's attitude of grudging acceptance of hi-jackers underwent an abrupt change.

The Cuban leader has gone out of his way to reassure the Americans and remove any fears they may have that he still harbours 'revolutionary' ambitions.

Visiting Chile and Peru last year, he endorsed President Salvador Allende's Fabian 'peaceful road to socialism' and entered into very friendly relations with the Peruvian military junta.

Castro pointedly moderated his rantings against Nixon while on this tour, though his newspapers in Havana—in a burst of outdated ultra-leftism

—still insist on printing the US leader's name with a swastika instead of the 'x'.

(Establishing relations with fascism would be nothing new, of course, for Castro, who has excellent relations with General Franco's Spanish dictatorship.)

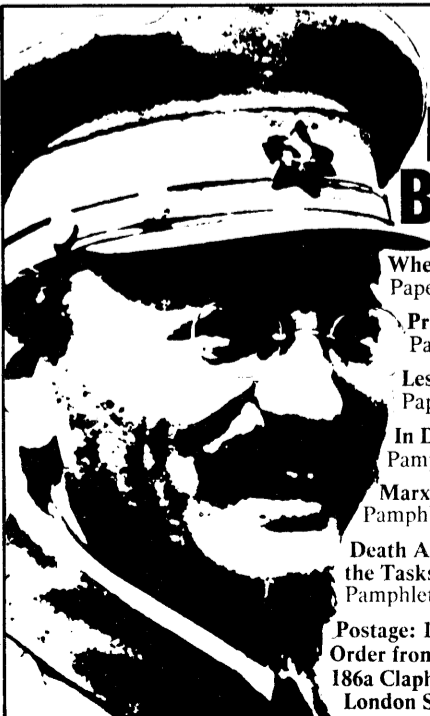
Castro is well on the way back to respectability. Nixon's report that the anti-hi-jack treaty is almost ready for signing is an indication of the new stage in Washington-Havana relations.

It is the first diplomatic treaty since relations were ruptured 12 years ago. These years saw the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the Cuban missiles crisis and the attempt, notably the Bolivian fiasco under Che Guevara, to promote rural uprisings on the Cuban 'model'.

These things led the leaders of the United States Socialist Workers' Party to revise the basis of Marxism and acclaim Cuba as a workers' state.

In reality Castro is a nationalist leader who was driven by US hostility into the arms of the Soviet Stalinists. His regime is a bourgeois-nationalist one, closely dependent on the Soviet Union.

Cuba, however, is a major economic burden on the USSR which that country can ill afford. Now that relations with Washington are improved, it cannot be long before the Cuban regime reveals its true character in an abrupt turn towards imperialism.



BOOKS BY TROTSKY

Where is Britain Going? Paperback 37½p

Problems of the British Revolution. Paperback 35p

Lessons of October Paperback 60p

In Defence of the October Revolution Pamphlet 15p

Marxism and the Trade Unions Pamphlet 25p

Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International Pamphlet 10p

Postage: 10p per book, 5p per pamphlet. Order from: NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS 186a Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UG

ANGER OVER POLICE ACTION

Three homeless families—two of them of Asian origin—recently moved into empty flats in Effra Road, Brixton, in south London.

It was a desperate act to get a roof over their heads in these wintry months. By accident, or design, they chose rather inhospitable places to squat. The flats were in the process of being redecorated ... for police families.

Within days of their take-over an abnormally large group of police officers arrived on the scene. The families and their belongings were peremptorily bundled onto the street outside.

A few days later the police made another show of strength. They went to Railton Road on Herne Hill where two coloured girls had moved into an empty flat above a shop. The lease of the shop had been bought by a laundry firm which wanted the flat vacant.

The girls, Olive Morris (20), a student of the London College of Printing, and Liz Turnbull (18) were at home when Mr N. Defries, acting for the new leaseholders, arrived with a squad of police.

Miss Turnbull was taken away by the police and subsequently charged with having an axe handle as an offensive weapon. She is now on bail.

Miss Morris, who was dragged screaming from the flat, managed to climb onto the roof where she stayed three hours until Defries and the police went away.

Both girls later reoccupied the flat. Last week the agent

arrived with a removal van. He was accompanied by a group of burly men. They moved out the girls belongings and carted them away.

Bystanders swear they saw pick-axe handles in the front of the van, although they were not used.

About two dozen police were on the scene throughout the operation. They 'kept observation', but did become involved in scuffles with members of the crowd that gathered. One member of the public was arrested and charged with obstruction. He was later acquitted.

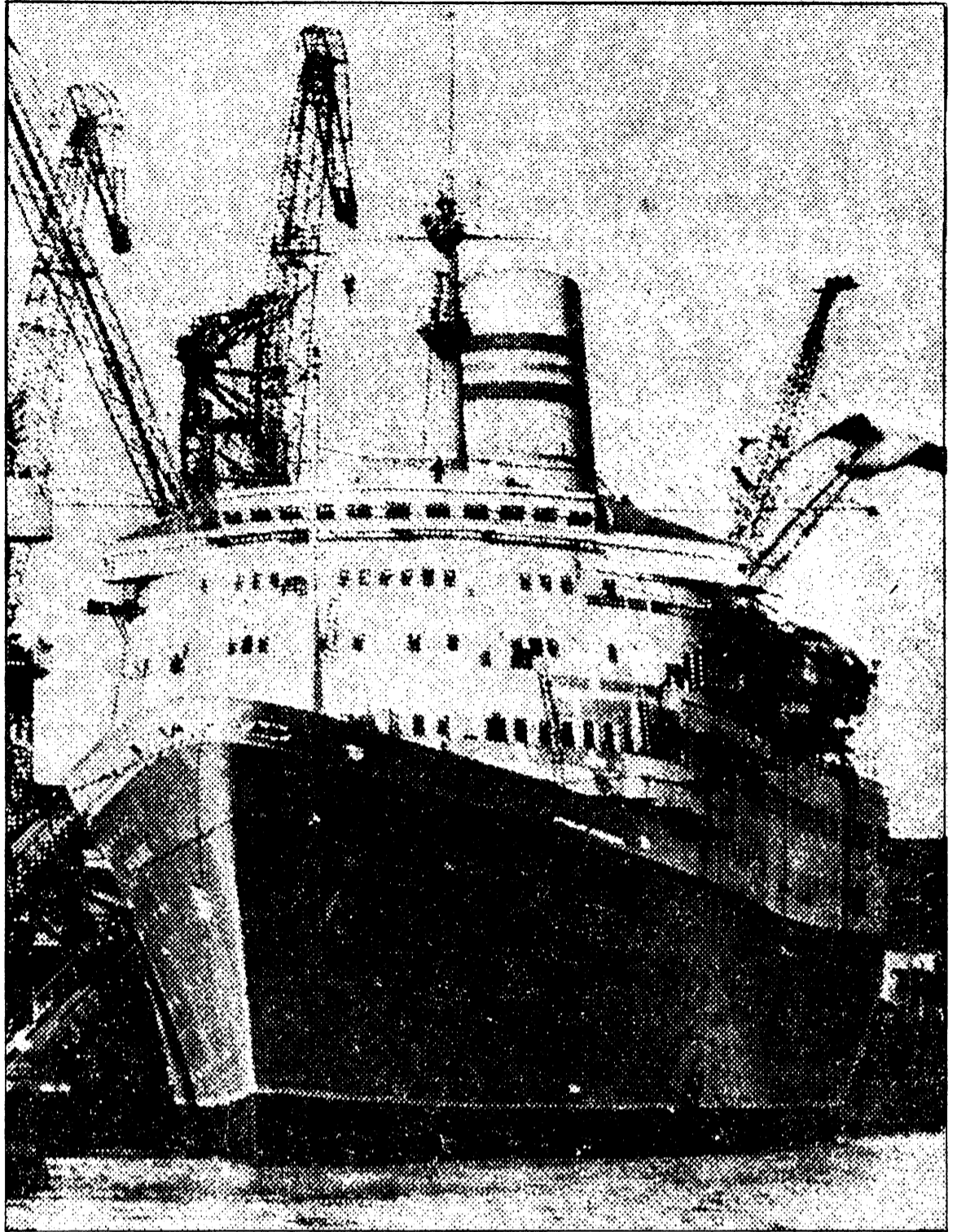
The two girls are still living in the premises.

In the window they have a slogan: 'The property has been occupied by squatters. We intend to stay here. If you try to evict us we will prosecute. You must deal with us through the courts.'

It seems that Defries is going to take their advice. There have already been consultations to get the squatters kicked out by the use of a High Court writ for trespass. These laws were recently tightened by the Tory government and are now generally regarded as foolproof in favour of the owner.

The activities of the police in both these cases have drawn angry complaints from the local Council for Community Relations. They want urgent talks with the police.

● Meanwhile the National Front in south London has launched a petition-signing campaign against 'mugging'. It claims to have 1,200 signatures to a petition demanding heavier sentences.



Above: the luxury liner 'Vistafjord' tied up at Wallsend.

TORY PRESS HALF-TRUTHS

Dear Editor,
One of the 'four freedoms' much-vaunted by our Tory rulers—for which the working-class fought over the past two centuries—is the 'freedom of the Press'.

To the Tory owners of this country's Press this, of course, meant the freedom of the newspaper publishers to write the news in their own way, to push Tory policy and to distort in their favour anything that could possibly be so twisted as to influence the reading public against the trade unions, the Labour Party or any person or group of persons daring to oppose their Tory policies.

Anyone expecting a verbatim report of his speech or that his letter will not be carved up and quoted out of context is in for a shock, unless of course he's a true blue supporter condemning the 'great unwashed', as Churchill once called the working class.

We in the north-east, with a monopoly local Press, are familiar with the practice of the 'Newcastle Evening Chronicle' and the 'Journal' issued by the famous Thomson House.

The issue of the 'Journal' of Saturday February 10, 1973, is a glaring example of the methods to which they resort in an attempt to put over half-truths in the guise of news with the intention of misleading the public and, more important, to attempt to split the trade unions in the area.

Under a photograph of the liner at present being completed at the Neptune yard of Swan's shipbuilders (Sir John Hunter) on the river Tyne, they have a headline '£25,000 bonus splits shipyard'.

The article said that the men had been promised a £25,000 bonus if they completed the luxury liner 'Vistafjord' by April. The imaginative writer said: 'But the smiles have turned to glares in a "who-gets-how-much" row sweeping the company.'

But the truth of the matter is that Mr Parker, the Neptune boss, insisted that he would allocate the money and intended giving £7,500 to one trade and sharing the rest as he wished among the other trades.

The trade he was favouring was of course in dispute with the firm over a production bonus! Which gave rise to the question—was this an offer from the shipping line or an attempt by Swan Hunter to pay this disputed production bonus?

The shop stewards of all trades involved agreed by

majority decision that Mr Parker would do no such thing!

And suddenly, out of the blue, the trade in dispute have settled their claim with the management!

The £25,000 will be shared between the trades to distribute as they wish, among the members of their sections! Hardly the outcome envisaged by the 'Journal'.

May we end by asking the management to explain through the Thomson Press what happened to the £100,000 given back by the Tory government on the completion of the last ship in this yard 'HMS Bristol' which sailed on December 16, 1972?

There has been no 'split' on this one because the workers have not been offered a brass farthing.

John West,
shipyard worker.

Subscribe now!



Do you get **WORKERS PRESS** regularly? If not, why not take out a subscription now?

£20.28 for 12 months (312 issues)
£10.14 for 6 months (156 issues)
£5.07 for 3 months (78 issues)

If you want to take Workers Press twice a week the rates are:

£1.56 for 3 months (24 issues)
£6.24 for 12 months (96 issues)

Fill in the form below **NOW** and send to:
Circulation Dept., Workers Press, 186a Clapham High St., London SW4 7UG.

I would like to take out a subscription to Workers Press.

Days required	MONDAY	THURSDAY
(Please tick)	TUESDAY	FRIDAY
Or	WEDNESDAY	SATURDAY

Full subscription (six days) for months.

Name

Address

.....

.....

.....

Amount enclosed £

I would like information about

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Fill in the form below and send to NATIONAL SECRETARY, SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, 186a CLAPHAM HIGH ST, LONDON SW4 7UG.

Name.....

Address.....

March 1 pay law strike at Ford's

FROM PAGE ONE

formed the centre of the three-hour discussion.

There was obvious general agreement when Jock Gibson, Chrysler UK convener from Coventry, warned that if the Tory government succeeded in its present plans to destroy the trade union movement in Britain the outcome would be a dictatorship worse than that of Adolf Hitler.

Alan Thornett, Transport and General Workers' deputy senior steward from Morris Motors, Cowley, Oxford, reported that a point of confrontation was close in his factory as well as in Ford's.

Unity on the straight wages issue was not possible between the two sections of workers, he said, because the Ford workers were fighting for parity with Midlands pay rates.

But the real unity had to be on the question of the government.

There was a danger of betrayal by the TUC on March 5.

Therefore the fight to force the government to resign and re-elect a Labour government pledged to socialist policies was the central question facing every section of workers in struggle.

There were those who were hesitant on the political questions facing the working class, said Mick Murphy, a Ford con-

venor from Dagenham.

But people had been hesitant at first when the question of a £10 pay claim in Ford's had been raised. Now the idea was generally accepted.

Hesitancy was natural when the issue of fighting the government was posed, but workers were going to get used to it—'politics will grow on you', he said.

CORRECTIONS: The article 'Recession seems to have ended, says Mandel' on page 5 in Saturday's Workers Press was by Peter Jeffries.

In our page 12 statement on Monty Johnstone on Saturday the dates of his membership of the Revolutionary Communist Party were given as 1945-1946. This should have read 1943-1946.

Workers Press MONTHLY APPEAL FUND

FEBRUARY FUND NOW £649.84 - TEN DAYS LEFT

THESE ARE the most decisive ten days for raising our £1,750 target. Let's not waste a moment of them and complete our total in good time.

Now railwaymen, Ford workers, teachers, hospital workers, gasmen, civil servants—the numbers are growing—are all joining the fight for wages. United action by the working class today would force the Tory government to resign.

But, it is just at this time that the trade union leaders do everything possible to avoid such a confrontation.

Workers Press must be used to build an alternative revolutionary leadership. We will not allow the 1926 defeat to be repeated.

Only Workers Press fights for this leadership today. Help us therefore to press ahead with the

campaign to complete our monthly Appeal Fund. We still are not yet half way. Raise extra amounts. Rush these immediately to:

Workers Press
February Appeal Fund
186a Clapham High Street
London, SW4 7UG

CAMBRIDGE
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25
Mawson Hall
Mawson Rd
SPECIAL SHOWING OF
'RIGHT TO WORK' FILM
RALLY, 3 p.m.
Speaker: Maureen Bambrick
(YS Nat. Cttee)

Unite in action to defend basic rights

SLL PUBLIC MEETINGS	NORTH KENT MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm The Shakespeare, Powis Street, Woolwich Speaker: G HEALY (SLL National Sec)	WATFORD MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm Trades Union Hall near Watford Junction stn Speaker: MIKE BANDA (SLL Central Cttee)	ACTON TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 8 p.m. Woodlands Hall, Crown Street Speaker: G HEALY (SLL National Sec)
----------------------------	--	---	--

Socialist Labour League Public Meetings UNITE IN ACTION TO DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| WANDSWORTH
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22, 8pm
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
speaker: MIKE BANDA (SLL Central Cttee) | SOUTHAMPTON
MONDAY FEBRUARY 26, 8 p.m.
Marlands Hall
Havelock Road
opp. Civic Centre
Speaker: ALAN THORNETT (Deputy Senior Steward Morris Motors in a personal capacity) | HULL
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8 p.m.
'Windmill Hotel'
Witham
Speaker: CLIFF SLAUGHTER (SLL Central Cttee) |
| BRADFORD
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22, 7.30 p.m.
Central Library
Top of Hall Ings.
Speaker: Cliff Slaughter (SLL Central Committee) | MEDWAY
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 8pm
Aurora Hotel
Brompton Road
Gillingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA (SLL Central Cttee) | WEST LONDON
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8 p.m.
Lyndhurst Hall
Grafton Road, NW3
Speaker: M. BANDA (SLL Central Committee) |
| CASTLEFORD
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25, 6.30 p.m.
Castleford Civic Hall
Ferry Bridge Road
Speaker: C. SLAUGHTER (SLL Central Committee) | SLOUGH
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28 8pm
Britwell Community Centre
Long Furlong Drive
Britwell Estate
speaker: G HEALY (SLL National Sec) | LUTON
FRIDAY MARCH 2, 8 p.m.
Assembly Hall
Town Hall
Speaker: M. BANDA (SLL Central Committee) |
| BIRMINGHAM
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25, 7pm
Digbeth, Civic Hall
Digbeth, Birmingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA (SLL Central Cttee) | DAGENHAM
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8pm
Manor Park Library
Romford Rd/Rabbits Road
opp Rabbits Pub
speaker: G HEALY (SLL National Sec) | TOTTENHAM
TUESDAY MARCH 6, 8 p.m.
Lord Morrison Hall
Chesnut Grove
Speaker: G. HEALY (SLL National Secretary) |

ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

- Fight rising rents and prices
Defend basic democratic rights
Force the Tories to resign
- SOUTH EMSALL:** Monday February 19, 7.30 p.m. Westfield Social Centre, Westfield Recreation Ground.
- BRIXTON:** Tuesday February 20, 8 p.m. Brixton Training Centre, Control Room. 'No state control of wages'.
- LIVERPOOL:** Tuesday February 20, 7.30 p.m. AEU House, Mount Pleasant.
- DAGENHAM:** Tuesday February 20, 8 p.m. Barking Co-op Hall, Fanshawe Avenue. 'Defend basic rights'.
- SKELMERSDALE:** Tuesday February 20, 7.30 p.m. Quarry Bank. 'Forward to the Pageant'.
- EAST LONDON:** Tuesday February 20, 8 p.m. 'Festival Inn', Crisp Street, E.14. 'Common Market Conspiracy'.
- LANCASTER:** Wednesday February 21, 8 p.m. Trades Hall, Fenton Street (near GPO). 'Stop the retreat on Rents. Defend basic rights.'
- WINSFORD:** Wednesday February 21, 8 p.m. 'Wheatshaf Hotel'.
- LANGLEY:** Wednesday February 21, 8 p.m. 'Cardinal's Hat', Wood Street. 'Defend Democratic Rights. Forward to the Pageant'.
- PRESTON:** Wednesday February 21, 7.30 p.m. 'Waterloo Hotel', Friargate. 'The Road to Workers' Power'.
- WOOLWICH:** Wednesday February 21, 8 p.m. 'The Castle', Powis Street, S.E.18. 'The Crisis of leadership'.
- TOTTENHAM:** Wednesday February 21, 8 p.m. 'Bricklayers Arms', High Road, near White Hart Lane. 'The case for a Labour government pledged to socialist policies'.
- STEVENAGE:** Thursday February 22, 8 p.m. 'Red Lion', Stevenage Old Town. 'Support the gasmen'.
- LEWISHAM:** Thursday February 22, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club. (opposite New Cross station).
- HACKNEY:** Thursday February 22, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall, opposite Town Hall, Mare Street.
- WILLESDEN:** Thursday February 22, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road, N.W.10. 'Road to Workers' Power'.
- SCUNTHORPE:** Sunday February 25, 7.30 p.m. The Kingsley Hall, Cole Street.
- BASILDON:** Sunday February 25, 5.20 p.m. Barnstable Community Centre. 'Road to Workers' Power'.
- WANDSWORTH:** Monday February 26, 8 p.m. 'King's Arms', High Street, S.W.18. 'Defend the right to work'.
- WATFORD:** Monday February 26, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall, Woodford Road, near Watford Junction Station. 'Rise of fascism in Italy'.
- ACTON:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, High Road, W3. 'Forward to the Pageant—The Road to Workers' Power'.
- CLAPHAM:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor Street, S.W.4. 'Defend Democratic Rights'.
- PADDINGTON:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. 'Artesian', corner Chepstow / Westbourne Park Road.
- CAMDEN:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. 'Prince Albert', Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross. 'Lessons of fighting the Housing Finance Act'.
- HARROW:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. Labour Hall, Wealdstone. 'All out for Wembley Pageant'.
- TOOTING:** Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. 'Selkirk Hotel', Selkirk Road, Tooting Broadway. 'The rise of Italian Fascism'.
- DERBY:** Thursday, March 1, 7.30 p.m. Metal Mechanics' Premises, Charnwood Street.
- CROYDON:** Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road. 'Support the gasmen'.
- HOLLOWAY:** Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road (near Finsbury Park Station). 'Marxism and the trade unions'.
- KINGSTON:** Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. 'Liverpool Arms', Cambridge Road. 'Support the gasmen and hospital workers'.
- NEWCASTLE:** Monday February 19, 8 p.m. FORD ARMS, Shields Road. 1933-1938—From the German defeat to the founding of Fourth International
- SHEFFIELD:** Monday February 19, 8 p.m. YS PREMISES, Portobello (near Jessops hospital) 'The economic crisis and the socialist answer'.
- SHEFFIELD:** Monday March 5, 8 p.m. YS PREMISES, Portobello (near Jessops hospital). 'The Revolutionary Party in Britain'.

Socialist Labour League Lectures

Portobello (near Jessops hospital) 'The economic crisis and the socialist answer'.

SHEFFIELD: Monday March 5, 8 p.m. YS PREMISES, Portobello (near Jessops hospital). 'The Revolutionary Party in Britain'.

TODAY'S TV

BBC 1

- 9.38 Schools. 12.25 Cywain. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 Woodenstops. 1.45 Pets and vets. 2.05 Schools. 4.00 Pixie and Dixie. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Blue Peter. 5.15 Yao. 5.40 Wombles. 5.45 News. Weather.
- 6.00 NATIONWIDE. 6.45 TELEVISION TOP OF THE FORM. South-East.
- 7.10 STAR TREK. Ultimate Computer. 8.00 PANORAMA.
- 9.00 NINE O'CLOCK NEWS. Weather.
- 9.25 PLAY FOR TODAY: 'FOR SYLVIA'. Written and performed by John Burrows and John Harding.
- 10.20 ONE DAY IN THE LIFE. Of Campbell Adamson, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry.
- 10.55 COME DANCING. 11.30 LATE NIGHT NEWS.
- 11.35 OPERA IN REHEARSAL. Act 2 of Mozart's 'Marriage of Figaro'. 12.00 Weather.

ITV

- 9.30 Schools. 10.33 World War I (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Mr. Trimble. 12.25 Alice through the looking glass. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Mr. and Mrs. 1.30 Emmerdale farm. 2.00 Schools. 2.20 Cartoon. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Film: 'Who's Minding the Store?'. Jerry Lewis. 4.25 Pardon my genie. 4.55 Clapperboard. 5.20 My good woman. 5.50 News.
- 6.00 TODAY. 6.40 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS ALL WINNERS.
- 7.30 CORONATION STREET. 8.00 WORLD IN ACTION.
- 8.30 BLESS THIS HOUSE.
- 9.00 THE RIVALS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. The Secret of the Magnifique.
- 10.00 NEWS AT TEN.
- 10.30 THE WILD, WILD WEST. The Night of the Tycoons.
- 11.30 DRIVE-IN. 12.00 WORLD WAR I. 12.20 ANYTHING TO SAY?

BBC 2

- 11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University.
- 7.05 PARENTS AND CHILDREN. What do you know about the National Health Service?
- 7.30 NEWS SUMMARY. Weather.
- 7.35 LOOK, STRANGER. Moving House.
- 8.00 ALIAS SMITH AND JONES. Dreadful Sorry, Clementine.
- 8.55 CALL MY BLUFF.
- 9.25 SHOW OF THE WEEK: NANA MOUSKOURI. With Guests Tom Paxton, Vicky Leandros, Calchakis.
- 10.10 ONE PAIR OF EYES. If you've got a pair of eyes, use them says Spike Milligan.
- 10.55 OPINION. John John Theocharis introduces a conversation between Helen Vlachos, Greek newspaper editor, and Mikis Theodorakis, expatriate composer.
- 11.15 NEWS EXTRA. Weather.

REGIONAL TV

- CHANNEL:** 9.30-11.52 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.25 Film: 'But Not For Me'. 4.20 Puffin. 4.25 London. 6.00 News. 6.15 Maverick. 6.45 London. 10.30 Theatre. 11.20 News, weather.
- WESTWARD:** As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 4.20 Gus Honeybun. 6.00 Diary. 6.35 Date with Danton. 10.30 News. 11.55 Faith for life.
- SOUTHERN:** 9.30 London. 10.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.10 Training the family dog. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 Film: 'Charley's Big-Hearted Aunt'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.45 London. 10.30 Southern scene. 11.05 Theatre. 12.00 Farm progress. 12.25 News. Guideline.
- HARLECH:** 9.30 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 Women only. 3.00 Film: 'But I Don't Want to Get Married'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Report West. 6.22 Report Wales. 6.45 London. 10.30 Film: 'The Third Secret'. 12.15 Weather.
- HTV Cymru/Wales** as above except: 6.01-6.22 Y dydd. 8.00-8.30 Yr wythnos.
- HTV West** as above except: 6.22-6.45 This is the West this week.
- ANGLIA:** 9.30 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 Marcus Welby MD. 3.55 Romper room. 4.22 News. 4.25 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.45 London. 10.30 Russell Harty. 11.30 London.
- ATV MIDLANDS:** 9.30 London. 12.00 Today. 12.05 London. 3.00 Film: 'The Lady Takes a Flyer'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Today. 6.45 London. 10.30 Name of the game. 11.55 Stories worth telling. Weather.
- ULSTER:** 11.00 London. 1.33 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 Film: 'Man on the Run'. 4.22 News. 4.25 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.15 Dick Van Dyke. 6.45 London. 10.30 Monday night. 10.40 Film: 'The Chapman Report'.
- YORKSHIRE:** 9.30 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 London. 3.00 Film: 'The Girl Rush'. 4.25 London. 4.50 Skippy. 5.20 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.45 London. 10.30 Name of the game. 11.50 Yoga. 12.15 Ugliest girl in town. 12.45 Weather.
- GRANADA:** 9.30 London. 12.00 Handful of songs. 12.05 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 Film: 'Sea Devils'. 4.00 Crossroads. 4.20 London. 6.00 News. 6.25 This is your right. 6.40 London. 10.30 Kirkby. 11.00 Film: 'When Michael Calls'.
- TYNE TEES:** 9.25 Our total well being. 9.30 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 News. 2.33 Galloping gourmet. 3.00 Film: 'Three on a Spree'. 4.25 London. 4.50 Skippy. 5.20 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Cartoon. 6.45 London. 10.30 Face the Press. 11.00 Name of the game. 12.25 News. 12.40 Lectern.
- SCOTTISH:** 9.30 London. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 Dateline. 3.00 Film: 'Watch it Sailor'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 Cartoon. 6.45 London. 10.30 Late call. 10.35 Lion and dragon. 11.20 Quentin Durgens.
- GRAMPIAN:** 10.58 London. 12.13 Cartoon. 12.25 London. 1.38 Schools. 3.05 News. 3.08 Film: 'Rock Around the Clock'. 4.25 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Royal clansmen. 6.40 London. 10.30 Name of the game. 11.55 Meditation.

Maintenance engineers refuse to cross picket line Key north gas plant slows down

MAINTENANCE WORK at a key Manchester gas plant is almost certain to halt today when engineers refuse to cross picket lines.

This latest extension of the gas workers' dispute will threaten industry and consumers in the north and central city areas supplied by the giant Bradford Road plant.

Engineers took their decision as a gesture of solidarity with service gasworkers who have been out on strike since national action began almost two weeks ago.

One told me that the oil-fuelled plant would only operate two or three days without essential repairs.

The service gas workers at Bradford Road have also launched action to halt the plant. Many are angry at the General and Municipal Workers' Union for not calling out production workers. Others told me that the work-to-rule was not being applied as strictly as it could.

A 24-hour picket has been mounted at the Bradford Road gates. So far all lorries bringing in oil have been turned away.

But the men are still not happy with the situation. Service shop steward Terry Foster explained that even if the Bradford works was shut down, supplies could be diverted through the national grid from the gas complex at Partington, near Manchester.

'We are sitting it out for the rest of the workers because nothing can happen to anyone's pay until Ted Heath decides something. I think we want more action from the TUC. I don't think we will win this struggle until Victor Feather decides to do something big.'

Craftsman George Sedgewick who had just finished a 4 a.m. start in the bitter cold was more blunt:

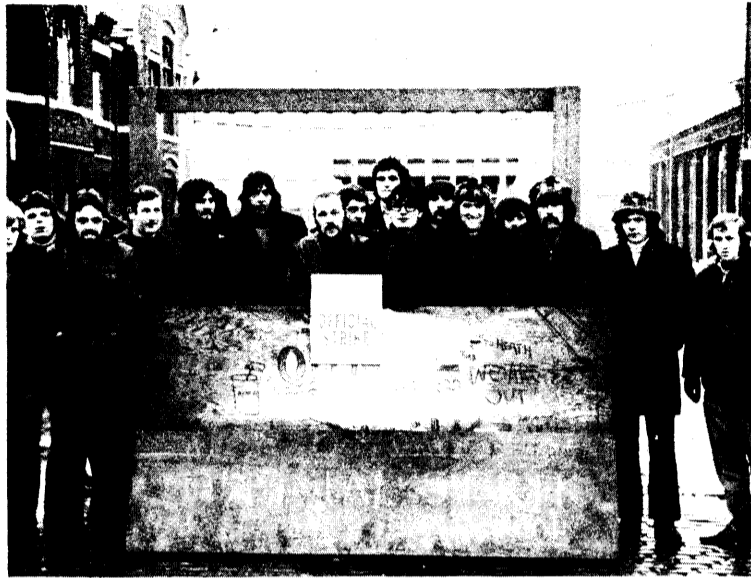
'The way the strike is being run now, it will take months. They should all come out then it could be decided in days,' he said.

'I think a lot of the lads here are a bit cheesed off by the union and especially the way the G&MWU is going about it.'

'Instead of calling an all-out strike, the union is creeping into this one.'

'Meanwhile the Tories are just watching to see what happens

BY WORKERS PRESS INDUSTRIAL STAFF



The Bradford Road, Manchester, picket line is now operating on a 24 hours basis. Above left: TERRY FOSTER . . . Need more action from the TUC. Left: George Sedgewick . . . Union creeping into this one.

with this one. They may fetch the troops in, but if they did I think that would be it—everyone would come out.

'For 11 years men have been docile in this industry. Now they are just sick and tired of the situation.'

'In the past we would be in for 15 per cent and the leaders would come out and say they had accepted 5 per cent.'

'But they can't do this now because of Heath. This has led to the explosion.'

In the Midlands too, feelings are running high.

Harry Thompson, based at the Lord Street depot, Birmingham, said:

'It's all lies what the Tories are saying about the gas men. I went to Erdington to a 70-year-old lady who was very frightened. She said that she couldn't turn the gas off, so I checked the gas tap and it took all my strength to move it.'

'So I went straight back to the depot and reported that a

new tap was required or a new meter. I went back to see the old lady and I've told her that I will check it again and if nothing's been done I'll be raising merry hell.

'Our fight is not against the public, it's against the Tory government. All we want is a living wage.'

'My top line is £22 for 40 hours and I can't live on that.'

His mate, Douglas Tompkins, from the same depot told Workers Press that he is paid a bonus for delivering and fitting cookers and to get a good day's work in he has to deliver and fit ten cookers.

Last Friday, for various reasons, he couldn't fit four of them.

This meant a reduction in his normal wage.

'Heath should freeze rising prices,' he said, 'not our wages.'

He went on: 'I have not come across a single worker or member of the public who is opposed to what we are doing. All workers are in this fight.'

BLACKPOOL gasworkers are on their fifth day of all-out strike action

A top fitter we spoke to was on £20 a week. And his tax allowance was the highest in the works.

One fitter said he was on £16.99. An average paid fitter married with one child would get £20 a week.

'We've been trying to get a fight like this for years. But the G&MWU has always held us back, saying that a shop stewards' meeting would be too hard to arrange.'

The first three weeks of the gas workers' strike was unofficial until the union recognized it.

'The government will set up a right-wing Pay Board and expect us to go back to work as soon as it starts. But we won't go back until we get a substantial increase.'

'We want a decent day's pay for a decent day's work.'

'And we'll have to get the Tories out first.'

BRS drivers fight on for bonus

BY DAVID MAUDE
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

WE FIGHT on. This was the message of a series of weekend depot meetings following the breakdown of talks between British Road Services and its drivers in the Midlands.

To the consternation of BRS and its masters in the Tory government, shop stewards' representing the 1,000 drivers in the region have rejected proposals for ending the dispute.

After seven hours of talks between management and union officials on Friday the stewards voted to continue their fight for a £2.50 bonus for holding heavy goods vehicle (HGV) licences, which they are now required to possess by law.

Three weeks ago the drivers handed in their licences to the Transport and General Workers' Union—making it impossible for them to be sent out on the road in the heavy vehicles which serve the motor industry.

The number of carworkers laid off as a result has steadied at around 13,000. Millions of pounds have already been lost by the big motor manufacturers.

As BRS manager Kenneth Cook commented plaintively on Friday night: 'My friends at British-Leyland aren't going to like this one little bit.'

BRS refuses to pay the drivers their bonus because of the Tory government's pay control law.

Several times during Friday's negotiations they were pressed by union officials to pay up and face the possibility of having the increase frozen by law.

'At least that'll get you off the hook', Transport and General Workers' Union district official Alan Law is believed to have told Cook.

The company's reply was a detailed productivity scheme, covering 11 pages, which it claimed would yield increases of between £1.50 and £4.85

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Workers Press, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG. Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), 180b Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG. Newsdesk: 01-720 2000. Circulation: 01-622 7029.

History brought into knife-edge fight in Wales

BY ALEX MITCHELL

MERTHYR TYDFIL town centre on a Saturday morning is a bustle of activity. It's weekend shopping, a look at the shops and perhaps a drink in the club.

The community is almost solidly working class. The big local factories are Hoover's, Triang Toys, Thomas's Pies and Ansell's brewery. They are the relatively new workplaces for men who once worked the local coalfield.

But these plants do not compensate for the pit closures. Unemployment is still more than 12 per cent—people walking the streets haven't had a steady job for six years or more.

Now the nearby Ebbw Vale steelworks is threatened with massive 'rationalization' which will cost 4,500 jobs.

It is into this knife-edged

class situation that the organizers of the Pageant, 'The Road to Workers' Power,' have thrown themselves.

Last Saturday morning they campaigned in the shopping centre selling Workers Press, 'Keep Left' and tickets for Thursday night's public meeting.

Papers were sold out by early afternoon—there's scarcely a soul in these parts who doesn't think that the economic and political situation has reached crisis point.

They may not like what we are saying to them in our campaign, but they are taking notice.

The Merthyr contingent is preparing to re-enact



The Pageant team in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, campaign for Thursday night's meeting in the town.

the history of the Taff Vale railway fight.

The privately-owned railway company sued the railway union and, in an historic and infamous judgement, the union was fined £23,000.

It was this legal attack which forced the trade

unions to take the political road and form the Labour Party in 1906.

Robert Bevan (20), an apprentice electrician at the Ebbw Vale steelworks and a member of the Pageant committee, said:

'I've always been interested in politics. We'd

stand around in the bar arguing about it all the time.'

'When I saw the cabaret, I decided that it was time to stop the pub talk and do something about it.'

'They asked for people to come forward and help, so I did. I knew about the

Taff Vale story—everyone's heard of it around here. But I didn't understand everything about it.'

'It means much more to me now because I see what the working class has fought for.'

● FORM FOR TICKETS: See page 2.