

The Newsletter

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The vast industrial sprawl of the Steel Company of Wales, scene of the bitter Port Talbot dispute



Steel workers will fight on

The Newsletter expresses its solidarity with and support for the tremendous battle being waged by the workers at Port Talbot. The scene is set for one of the major industrial struggles seen in Britain. The SCOW management are setting the pace for the new-type of 'industrial relations'—lock-out and arbitration almost at gun-point. We call upon workers throughout the country to prepare for action in support of their brothers at Port Talbot.

THE attempt of the Steel Company of Wales to break the back of the craft unions in its steel works at Port Talbot received a heavy blow this week.

At a mass meeting last Saturday, the 1,600 members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, who were locked out following the Christmas break, voted unanimously to continue their fight for higher wages and improved holiday arrangements.

At the same time, bricklayers, belonging to the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, who are employed in the steel plant gave notice of their intention to take

By Reg Perry

strike action if their claim receives similar treatment to the AEU maintenance workers.

The bricklayers' claim will be submitted later this month.

The six other craft unions have also voted full support to the stand of the AEU members.

The management are still rigidly insisting that the strike notices must be withdrawn and the dispute submitted to arbitration, whereby wages at Port Talbot would be related to the rates paid in other steel works throughout Britain.

Morale high

The union's claim is for parity with production workers in Port Talbot itself.

With support coming from Corby steelworkers and the Guest, Keen and Nettlefold

factory at Cardiff, morale at Port Talbot is high.

George Seller, an AEU member said, 'I am not prepared to go back to work until I get a substantial increase, not the 8 shillings we have been offered so far.

'I think this is the general opinion of all AEU members in the district.'

Exploit rivalries

The ominous silence of the largest union in the steel industry, the British Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association and the manoeuvres of the other general union, the TGWU, have this week reinforced the point made in last week's Newsletter that the SCOW is trying to exploit inter-union rivalries in order to take advantage of extensive automation by increased speed-up.

● Continued on back page

LABOUR YOUTH PLAN

LOBBY ON JOBS

THE Young Socialists, the Labour Party's militant youth movement, will stage a mass lobby of parliament on February 11.

The lobby will demonstrate their anger at the high level of unemployment amongst young people and at the appalling conditions facing many of those who do have work.

Details of the lobby appeared for the first time in the 'Sunday Telegraph' on January 5.

Despite denials from Transport House, it seems clear that the Labour Party have clamped down on any publicity for the lobby and hope that it will pass off quietly, with little impact on the public.

SILENT

Approval of the lobby was given by the party's executive five weeks ago, but their press department, usually so quick to pump news of party activity to the papers, has remained strangely silent.

The decision to call the lobby is thought to mark a real breakthrough for the left wing in the Young Socialists and their spokesmen on the movement's National Committee.

One year ago this week-end, two Young Socialists' federations organised a 1,200-strong demonstration against unemployment, to the anger of Labour Party officials, who promptly closed down and 'reorganised' the federations.

PRESSED

Since then, ignoring mounting threats from the right-wing bureaucrats, the Young Socialists have been pressing for official action on this problem.

When the left-wing members on their National Committee proposed an official lobby they faced bitter opposition from

the minority right-wing spokesmen, who echo the adult party chiefs in their desire for a small, respectable, middle-class organisation.

When the suggestion went to the party executive, however, it was carried unanimously.

This was no sudden conversion to militancy. With a general election on the horizon, the executive feared yet another violent, public showdown with their youth movement, with another round of investigations and expulsions.

ATTRACT

The Labour Party is trying to attract the votes of young people and any suggestion of intolerance towards their own youth movement would be disastrous.

They preferred to accept the call for a lobby—and then to do everything possible to strangle it.

Coupled with the lack of publicity have been a series of 'do's and don'ts' sent out to Young Socialists designed to ensure that as few as possible come to London.

According to Transport House, the main object of the exercise will be for small groups, at carefully worked-out times, to lobby MPs in committee rooms at the House of Commons.

SPOTLESS

Tory MPs will be the main target. Labour members apparently have a spotless record in the fight for jobs.

If the Labour Party has its way no one will be aware that the lobby is taking place.

But the Young Socialists seem certain to prove once again that they are not the junior yes-men of Wilson and company and will make the whole country well aware of the dreadful plight of thousands of young people on February 11.

New editor appointed

THE National Committee of the Socialist Labour League has appointed Michael Banda as editor of the enlarged Newsletter which is to appear on February 8.

He is also to hold the position of Assistant Secretary of the Socialist Labour League and in both capacities he will be

team of professional journalists who will assist in the production of what we hope will be a first-class socialist weekly newspaper.

The new press at our printers is now gradually coming into full production, which it is hoped will be reached when the enlarged Newsletter gets under way.

Money is very urgently needed for this great new socialist venture. Hundreds of appeals have gone out and we look forward to our readers giving us all the support they can in the next few weeks.



Michael Banda

responsible for the development of the League's propaganda and agitation.

The National Committee also endorsed the appointments of a

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ARISE, LORD TED!

By PETER JEFFRIES

TED WILLIS, £60,000 a year television and film writer, has hit the headlines in recent weeks.

First he was made a life peer, one of a number proposed by Harold Wilson to the prime minister, then he revealed himself as one of the 'faceless ones' behind the proposed take-over of the British Lion Film Corporation.

Not content with getting into the aristocracy—a well-known aspiration of British 'socialists'—he seems determined to become one of the capitalists at the same time and to help deliver state-owned British Lion, responsible for the few worthwhile films made in recent years, into the arms of one or other of the giant film monopolies, Rank and ABC, who effectively shelve any film with a trace of social criticism in favour of such money-making epics as 'Carry On, Lavatory Attendant' and 'A Stitch in Time'.

GREAT USE

The post-war career of Mr. Willis is well-known. His work on the television series 'Dixon of Dock Green' has been of great use to the Establishment.

At a time of growing disenchantment with the police, of rhino whips and unexplained deaths while 'in custody', Willis has faithfully epitomised dear, kindly old Dixon as the typical British bobby.

Writing apart, Willis is no newcomer to Labour Party politics. Just before the Second World War, when the Labour League of Youth (predecessor of the Young Socialists) was a growing movement, Willis was very prominent in the leadership.

He was also the leader of a group which eventually handed

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over the LLY to the Stalinists, himself finally entering the Young Communist League.

The 'Daily Worker', reporting his elevation to the peerage, was surprisingly brief about this period of his life, merely stating that he had been a leading member of the YCL.

Instead of quips about 'Lord Willis of Dock Green', perhaps they will explain the circumstances in which Willis first joined, then left them.

While in the Labour League of Youth, Willis defined his attitude to Trotskyists very clearly. Writing in the paper 'Advance' in March 1937, he said:

'There is no place for Trotskyists in a live movement, just as there is no place for boils on a healthy human.'

Here the later chronicler of the beaming bobby on the beat was himself acting as a policeman for the right wing, while at the same time working as an undercover Stalinist.

This was the period of the Moscow trials, when Trotskyists and other opponents of Stalin were tortured and 'liquidated'. This oppression helped the right-wing bureaucracy in the Labour Party as much as it helped Stalin and his clique.

Let the 'Daily Worker' explain how the role played by Willis in 1936-39 developed into his love for the police and his present exalted position.

Just like dear old Dixon, we will end this little tale with a moral: if a revolutionary movement is to be built in Britain, it is vitally necessary for socialists to examine and understand the real role of the Stalinists as well as the right-wing in the labour movement.

French Left prepare timid challenge to de Gaulle

IN the autumn de Gaulle's four years' term as President of the Fifth Republic will come to an end.

While it is still uncertain whether he will stand for re-election, Gaston Defferre, Mayor of Marseille and one of the leaders of the nearly defunct Socialist Party, seems a likely candidate for the opposition.

The Fifth Republic, which gives wide powers to the president and reduces parliament to a rubber stamp, has been highly satisfactory for French capitalism.

The running-sore in Algeria has been healed, while the main investment stake has remained intact.

BRIDGED

Strength has been restored to the state itself and some of the main divisions within the ruling class have been bridged over.

Threats from the working class, especially the big miners' strike of last year, have been parried with the help of labour leaders who accept, with little protest, their integration into the machinery of government.

The existing constitutional

THE Vatican must have a first-class public relations officer.

The decision to send Pope Paul to the Holy Land (sic) was a master stroke which enabled the press and television of the world to turn the thoughts of their readers and viewers from the cruel reality of this year of our Lord 1964 to the homely picture of the simple pontiff being mobbed by the masses.

The 'Daily Worker' clambered eagerly on to the holy bandwagon, faithfully reporting every move and gesture of the Catholic High Priest as he embraced Jew, Moslem and Eastern Orthodox and followed in Father's footsteps.

It all seemed very innocent, a happy reunion between the religious factions who have been warring for centuries, a sort of symbolic clinking of fonts.

Hob-nob

But why, after hundreds of years of carefully cultivated aloofness and isolation, should the Pope, dressed in an Irishman's overcoat and a hat clearly borrowed from the Queen Mother, descend in his jet-propelled chariot to hob-nob with his sworn enemies?

Silence from the Stalinist camp. They decided, on good authority some time ago, that the Catholic Church was really well-meaning and peace-loving and communists and Catholics

framework provides an excellent basis for the safeguard of the property and profits of the French ruling class.

The clever diplomatic footwork of de Gaulle has made France a force to be reckoned with in the jockeying for position which constantly goes on within the 'Western Alliance'. At present he is out of favour in Washington, which, to emphasise the fact, treats Bonn Chancellor Erhard to a Texan bingle and barbecue.

BARRIER

Whatever the hard knocks he has been able to administer to Britain, notably by vetoing her entry to the Common Market, the Tories recognise his worth, not only as a barrier to revolution in Europe, but also as a counterweight to their German rivals.

The working-class parties in France have been living with the regime and adapting themselves to it.

It is practically certain now that the Communist Party will support Defferre's candidature whether or not they have a voice in determining his programme. The only alternative

Why the Pope made that trip

by

Alan West

could, after all, work together.

The good authority was the late Pope John. No doubt you remember seeing his rotting corpse being dragged around St. Peter's Square last year.

Unlike the Stalinists, we don't accept people at face value and imagine every word they say to be gospel. We know the history of the church and the Catholic Church in particular to be a long, bloody and reactionary one.

Exploited

The once progressive views of Christianity have been taken up and ruthlessly used and exploited to further the interests of profit and greed throughout the world.

Realizing many centuries ago that it was on to a profitable thing, the church has acquiesced in rape, pillage and plunder ever since, skilfully adapting itself as feudal society brought forth capitalism, henceforth preaching that only the humble, the hard-working and the meek would find their way to heaven.

Its message to the world's beleaguered masses is: accept the misery and deprivation that is your daily lot, don't fight against it, for everything is fine in that far-off Hilton Hotel beyond the sky.

In recent times, the Catholic Church, which, more than any other brand draws its succour and support from the simplest and most ignorant of poor people (and is therefore anxious to keep them simple and ignorant) has supported such excellent Christian gentlemen as Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Generalissimo Franco.

Aided and abetted by big business, it maintains a highly efficient trade union faction in countless countries, whose message is that strikes and the class struggle are evil and ungodly and that workers should endeavour to live in peace with the employing class.

But this century has seen a growing struggle to cast off ignorance and poverty and to try to construct a better, equitable form of society. There has been growing disillusionment with religion and a steady emptying of the churches.

Desperate

Alarmed at the international battle against war and poverty, the church is desperately attempting to regain control of its errant flock. Past differences between protestants and Catholics must be forgotten. It's sink or swim now.

The church remains a pillar of reaction and more and more people are beginning to realise it in spite of its aura of sweetness and light fostered by the press and abetted by the Stalinist movement

to the present set-up put forward by the CP consists of a plea for a return to the discredited parliamentarianism of the pre-1958 era.

They yearn for a part in a coalition government and have no intention of preparing the working class for a serious struggle for power.

For the French left the role of loyal opposition is now accepted without question. They are busily working out how to put forward a candidate with a chance of success against de Gaulle.

PROGRAMME

The programme of the opposition is likely to differ from that of the Gaullists (with or without de Gaulle himself) by about as much as the programme of the American Republicans differs from that of the Democrats.

The leaders of the working-class parties, spurred on by the 'left' press, are refusing to offer any real alternatives to de Gaulle. Even if, on these conditions, Defferre were to be elected, it would be on terms set by the French ruling class.

He would be a prisoner of the

constitution and of all the conditions established in the course of the election campaign, not to speak of the strengthened state machine which is de Gaulle's main legacy to French capitalism.

COMPATIBLE

The so-called 'socialist alternative' proposed by the Unified Socialist Party (PSU) boils down to a mild programme of economic planning and social reform quite compatible with the interests of the more far-seeing elements in French capitalism.

As for the Communist leaders, they do not want to be committed to a 'socialist alternative' at all, which they fear will frighten away the middle-class electors from the opposition candidate.

Although we are unlikely to see the Communists openly supporting de Gaulle, the needs of 'peaceful co-existence' mean that they have to keep in check any tendency for the working class to strike out on its own course.

Tom Kemp

SEGREGATION IN SOUTHALL?

SOUTHALL, Middlesex, on the outskirts of London, is in the news following angry scenes during discussions on the education of the children of Indian immigrants living in the locality.

Most of the 6,000 Indians have been resident in the area for several years. There was no trouble; Southall was peaceful, until a number of national newspapers, the 'Daily Mirror' in particular, decided the immigrants were newsworthy.

There was a sudden rash of stories last year about the 'Kashmir Pass in West London' and similar headlines. Ignorance and prejudice were pandered to and the few who felt strongly about the presence of 'coloureds' in their respectable community were given great prominence.

The question of education is causing most trouble; Southall now has plenty of trouble, thanks to the vigilant eye of the gutter press. Last November, the Minister of Education, Sir Edward Boyle, opposed segregation in the schools.

He told a meeting of parents that there must be integration in the schools with a maximum

of 33 per cent of Indian pupils. His ruling was accepted peaceably.

But since then other forces have been at work. The Labour MP for the area, Mr. George Pargiter, is somewhat less radical than Tory Sir Edward.

At a meeting this week called by a residents' association to demand a two-years' segregation of Indian schoolchildren, Mr. Pargiter said there should be a complete ban on immigration to Southall.

He told the audience, 'I want to see the coloured population here dispersed. In an orderly fashion they should be reduced.'

The seeds of racialism in Southall have been skilfully placed. Now the BBC sends out reporters to return with interviews containing such gems as 'Indians—and West Indians, they're all the same—use my yard as a lavatory' and 'All the Indians live on National Assistance'.

Yes, the press has done its work well and Mr. George Pargiter is not noticeably doing much to counteract that work. But then he has been given a good lead by his colleagues in the parliamentary Labour Party with their disgraceful backsliding on the Immigration Act.

Will Britain bring back the call-up?

By DAVE HARRIS

IN spite of rumblings in the right-wing press about falling recruitment figures and the need to strengthen 'conventional' armed forces in view of the troubles in South-east Asia, Aden and Cyprus, the Tories are as unlikely to introduce conscription into their programme at this time as they are nationalization.

Their policy is quite clear: rather than risk losing millions of much-needed votes at the general election, they are prepared to move Rhine Army troops out of West Germany and to deploy them in other 'trouble-spots'.

The British employers are confident that Harold Wilson

will be ready and willing to provide the necessary increases in a few months' time. As a city column headline in the London 'Evening Standard' put it: 'Who's afraid of Big Bad Wilson?'

The urgency of the situation in South-east Asia is shown by Premier Abdul Rahman's plans to double Malaysia's armed forces and to bring Australian and New Zealand troops into North Borneo.

CALL FOR MORE

But this will hardly be sufficient to defend big business's huge oil and other interests in the area and is likely to result in a call for yet more forces from Britain.

Another headache for the Tories (and for a Labour government) is the worsening position of imperialism in South Vietnam. As a South-east Asia Treaty signatory, Britain is likely to have more and more commitments in that field as the situation deteriorates.

Throughout its history, British big business has a record of brutality, rape and plunder carried on by its armed forces in its overseas 'possessions'. This record was shamelessly continued by Attlee's government from 1945 to 1951.

HEADS CUT OFF

In Malaya, British workers, called up by the Labour government, were dehumanised by the conditions of service. The heads of Malayan rebels, whether men, women or youths, were cut off in order to collect bounties. A common 'sport' was to use army vehicles to run over Malaysians in the roads and streets.

Today MPs are asking questions about atrocities against working-class leaders in Aden.

The past record of the 'tommies' in Cyprus was notorious. Will it be any different with the troops being moved there now?

NO OPPRESSION

A Labour government must go into power not with a programme of oppression in the colonies but with one of nationalizing all those industries needed to develop a socialist society in Britain which could in turn help the real growth of the economically backward countries.

Let us leave the last word on service in the forces to the American socialist writer Jack London, who wrote in 1913: '... The good soldier... never tried to distinguish right from wrong and if ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor were clamouring for bread, he obeys and sees the grey hairs of age stained with red and the life tide gushing from the breasts of women, feeling neither remorse nor sympathy...'

'No man can fall lower than a soldier—it is a depth beneath which he cannot go.'

Torture and death alleged in S. African police station

THE death of a 22-year-old African, Izak Magaise, has led to four policemen, a court clerk and a wealthy farmer, all whites, appearing before a Bloemfontein magistrate to answer an allegation of murder.

Magaise died at the Bultfontein police station, some 50 miles from Bloemfontein (Orange Free State) on December 3. He had been arrested with three other workmates after the theft of £6 15s. from a cafe where they were employed.

Earlier the district surgeon who conducted a post-mortem on the dead African, told the court that Izak had multiple bruises on the body, face and head, and a brain hemorrhage. His eyes were swollen.

Another African, Johannes Motlahotsoi, had bruises and abrasions on his body. On one little finger he had blisters, possibly caused by electric shock.

BROOMSTICK

Philemon Makhetla told the court in evidence how, after they were arrested, he was made to sit and his hands were handcuffed in front of his knees which were pulled back against his chest. A broomstick was forced past the back of his knees and over his elbows.

Constable Maree hit him on the hands with a three-and-a-half feet long sjambok (hide whip) and told him to start talking.

Another constable, van Wyk, came into the room and blindfolded the witness. Two pieces of wire were placed behind his ears. He felt a shock and almost suffocated.

While this was happening Maree sjambokked the witness

From Our Special Correspondent

about the body, head legs and arms. He periodically received the shocks and suffocation torture while being whipped.

After his blindfold was removed, Philemon said he was taken into the washroom where he was rabbit-punched on the neck by the station commander, Roussouw. He was also kicked, punched, choked and pushed against the wall by van Wyk.

A photograph was handed to the court showing 23 weals on Philemon's back.

While in the washroom Philemon heard Izak Magaise begging for mercy as he was being whipped.

GROAN

The witness heard Izak groan. There was silence and then Izak's name was repeatedly called. He heard slapping sounds.

Roussouw came into the washroom and told Philemon that Izak was dead. He took him to see Izak's body and told him to feel it to see whether it felt like that of a living man.

Philemon touched Izak's forehead. It was cold.

Continuing his evidence, Philemon told the court that he was present when van Wyk and Maree and the court clerk, de Bruin, handcuffed Izak's hands in front of his knees and forced a broomstick through his elbows and under his knees.

De Bruin stood on Izak's feet while constable Coetzee placed a plastic bag over his head pulling it tight under the chin. When the bag was removed Izak was unconscious, the witness said.

Another witness, Mr. Duminy, told the court that he was at the

police station all the time and saw Izak being beaten up. He said the bag was placed on Izak's head after he was hit.

When the bag was removed he walked out of the room because 'it was too much for him'. While outside with Roussouw he heard the assault go on and Izak begging for mercy.

The beating up of Izak and Philemon was also seen by another witness, Mr. Viljoen, from a room opposite the police station.

Johannes Motlahotsoi told the court how, between the times he was assaulted on December 3, he was ordered to prepare barbecued meat for some of the constables who had assaulted him.

Motlahotsoi was whipped and heard his workmates screaming under interrogation.

LASHED

Later Coetzee called him into a washroom and lashed him across the back with a sjambok. He was ordered to take all his clothes off and wash without soap. As he did so, Coetzee whipped him on the back and buttocks.

He was told to sit on the wet cement floor while his feet were still wet. A stick was put under his knees and he was gagged and blindfolded.

Coetzee attached something that felt like wires to his fingers and asked him where the money was. He heard something winding and his body began to jerk painfully.

He cried out and fell on his side. He could not get up.

Giving evidence, constable Wilson, an African, told how

Police, scabs and alsatians used in Bradford dye strike

But Denby workers stand firm

AS the lock-out at William Denby's, commission dyers, near Bradford, enters its 11th week, the 250 sacked workers are remaining completely solid in their bitter struggle against the management.

The dispute started when the workers struck following the operation of a machine in a tea-break by a foreman and a member of the staff. The following day the workers were sacked and told that in future the management intended to operate an 'open shop'.

Since then a round-the-clock picket has been maintained at Denby's, but it has been impossible to prevent blacklegs entering the works. The management used cars and vans to break the picket line and the union officials' reluctance to allow the men to stop the vehicles did little to help.

Walk the line

On December 30, the pickets learned that there would be no more transport for the scabs and they would be forced to walk the picket line.

The following night over 40 of the strikers waited for them to emerge. As they formed up behind the directors in the works yard the pickets blocked the end of the lane.

When they were 10 yards from the pickets, realising that they would have to fight their way out, they turned tail and fled back to the works where they telephoned for police reinforcements.

A further 15 police were soon on the scene, and a passage was forced through the pickets with vans and cars.

On Wednesday over 200 were manning the picket line by 5.30 p.m., waiting for the scabs to come out. A low wall was built across the entry to the works to prevent vehicles entering or leaving.

Pelted with stones

A car, which had been used to take girl employees home, sped up the lane to the works, scattering the pickets in all directions but was forced to a halt at the wall. The car was immediately pelted with stones, the windows smashed, and attempts made to overturn it.

Mr. Philip Wright, the managing director, called in the police and soon a squad of about 30 arrived and were greeted with jeers and cat-calls. They quickly went into action and cleared a way for the strike-breakers to leave.

The following day private

Newsletter Reporter

handlers with alsatians were called in to protect the 'black' labour and one of the directors, Mr. Gerald Wright, decided it was necessary to arm himself. Claiming that a gang of men had threatened to attack him near his lane, he carried a shotgun and sent for police help.

Early Saturday morning a number of men braved fierce guard dogs to enter the works and smash windows and pierce drums of chemicals used in one of the dying processes.

Good spirits

As the fierce battle for trade unionism continues, police dogs as well as the private handlers have been brought in on a 24-hour per day patrol of the works, but the sacked workers are still in good spirits and confident of victory.

Massive support continues to flow in, not only from this area but from the whole country. Already over £3,000 has been donated to the funds. Three benefit concerts have been held at which all the artists appeared free of charge.

After a delegation from the Denby workers lobbied a meeting of the union executive the strike pay has been raised from £5 to £6 per week.

At its quarterly meeting held in Bradford last Saturday, the Yorkshire Federation of Trades Councils passed unanimously a resolution condemning the Denby management's action and pledging its full support to the locked-out workers.

The role of the leaders of the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers needs careful examination. When the strike began, the union instructed the men to return to work and only came out in full support of them

when they had been dismissed. Throughout the lock-out the union officials have called for the men to 'act with dignity and restraint'.

'Blessed are the Peacemakers', quoted Leonard Sharpe, General Secretary of the union at a public meeting in Shipley. He has stated categorically that all that is expected from other trade unionists is 'moral and financial support'.

This is tantamount to saying that they do not want Denby's to be 'blackened'. At the time of writing AEU and ETU members, together with joiners and stockers, are still helping to keep the Denby works open.

As far back as mid-November workers from other big dye shops in the area, Listers, Wm. Norths, Oakroyds and BDA, told us that they were convinced that the way to bring Denby's to their knees was to call a general strike throughout the dyeworks. But, they added, 'the union officials will not hear of us coming out in support'.

Must be won

This battle for trade unionism must be won if workers in the industry are to prevent their trade union structure from being smashed. Questions must be raised in every branch of the union about the way in which the leaders are conducting this fight.

Members must demand immediate, positive action from the officials. They must insist on a call being put out for the 'blackening' of Denby's—at least to cover all commission dye shops.

If the union leaders refuse to act in the only possible way to force a speedy and successful conclusion to the fight, then their members must be prepared to make plans to replace them with others who will.

Steel workers will fight on from page 1

The craft unions are very much concerned about their future existence as a viable union force in Port Talbot. The case of the bricklayers is an important example.

For many years the steel companies have been arguing that with the introduction of dolomite blocks and new furnace lining materials, skilled bricklayers are no longer required.

Reduced rates

Attempts have been made to introduce unskilled labourers belonging to BISAKTA on to this work at reduced rates of pay and at the same time destroy many of the agreements connected with this work which the bricklayers have won over the years.

The stand of the SCOW in this dispute is a stand on behalf of the whole employing class. In breaking with their usual custom of negotiating with the unions independently of the Steel Employers' Federation (of which they are not members) the management are lining up with the central strategy of the big monopolies and the Tories.

This strategy is designed to break the resistance of the working class to speed-up and rationalisation of production, in order that greater profits can be made from the new machinery and techniques which they are introducing on a vast scale.

Already large numbers of workers have been dismissed at Port Talbot and workers there believe more lay-offs are inevitable.



Union officials hold back Sheffield girls

THE Tailor and Garment Workers' Union officials continue to hold back the struggle to reinstate the 13 girls sacked from Truline Bras, Sheffield.

The girls were dismissed a week after a union was formed at the firm. 22 other girls walked out in support.

They returned to work on orders from union officials, who said they would take no further part in the dispute unless they went back in.

Negotiations have continued since then. The management have taken back four of the sacked girls and say they now consider the dispute ended.

The girls think it is far from finished. Last week all the girls at work sent a resolution to the union saying they would strike on Monday.

Officials rushed to Sheffield from Leeds and called a meeting of their members. They again

threatened to 'wash their hands' of the dispute unless the girls changed their minds.

The officials still refuse to allow the Transport Workers' Union to 'black' Truline products. They also refused to approach the Co-op, the firm's main customer.

They have done everything possible to bring the dispute to an end without achieving any of the objects of the strike, namely, the right to join the union and for basic rates of pay.

Financial support from firms and trade unions in the area has been good; £231 has been collected so far. This is entirely due to the efforts of the girls, who have sent a circular to every trade union branch and shop stewards' committee in Sheffield.

Donations are still urgently needed. Send them to: Mrs. D. Bland, 43 Hartley Brook Road, Sheffield, 5.

LOCK-OUT AT ENV

On Monday, December 16, the grinders at ENV, Willesden, began working to time rates instead of the piece-rate system normally worked, in support of their wage claim. All previous negotiations on the claim with the management had proved unsuccessful.

On Friday, December 20, the management gave notice that it intended to lay off workers from Monday 23rd due to the shortage of work caused by the grinders go-slow.

Because of the nearness of Christmas, the stewards asked the grinders to resume normal work-

ing to avoid the loss to Christmas pay packets. When work was resumed on December 30 after the Christmas break, the grinders also resumed their go-slow.

On the following day the entire factory agreed to work to time rates to avoid any sackings. This was done to offset the lack of work caused by the grinders.

On the advice of Mr. W. McLaughlin, AEU Assistant Divisional Organiser and Communist Party member, they returned to normal working in order that negotiations could take place with the management the following day.

These negotiations achieved no progress. When they returned on Monday, January 6 the grinders resumed their go-slow. The rest of the factory continued to work on piece work schedules.

On Wednesday this week the grinders were told that they must either resume normal working to piece-work schedules or they would be clocked off as from 10.30 a.m. the next day. This happened. There was a meeting of the whole factory at which it was decided that time-rate working should be resumed.

The management reacted by clocking out all workers at 4.30 p.m. The response by all the workers was to ignore the clocking out and continue to go slow. On the advice of the shop stewards the night shift were requested to go on with normal piece work.

On Thursday morning a joint meeting of the day and night shift decided overwhelmingly to re-enter the factory and resume the go-slow despite the lock-out. This means they will be working without pay.

Tremendous pressure is being exerted to break the splendid solidarity which has been displayed.

Rumours spread

The Ministry of Labour has refused to pay dole money to those out of work, thus allowing the rumour to be spread that the craft workers are causing suffering to other workers in South Wales.

The churches have stepped in with sermons and prayers at chapels through the valleys last Sunday for 'moderation, wisdom and understanding'.

In the face of the intransigence of the SCOW, such pious humbug, designed to intimidate the maintenance men and all their supporters, will undoubtedly be ignored.