

# Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# MINERS MUST WIN!

THE MINERS' STRIKE is a crucial struggle that affects every working man and woman in Britain. With the Tories and the employers mounting a major attack on working and living conditions—wages, prices, welfare and rents—a victory for the miners is vitally necessary if the labour movement is to defeat the government and the bosses.

The miners are determined to win. Their magnificent solidarity and fighting spirit is an inspiration to the whole trade union movement.

Each new threat from the National Coal Board—32 more pit closures, withdrawal of the final wage offer—has completely boomeranged. Disgust with the Coal Board and the government policy has produced a situation where, in the first week of the strike, the miners are digging in for a long, hard fight against the government.

Miners feel they have been cheated. They know that the wages of those who remain in the coal fields are a scandal. An underground worker at Emley Moor in the Barnsley area takes home £24 a week for lying face down in a one-foot, eleven-inch space, hand shovelling 16 tons of coal a day.

A miner from Newmillerdam Colliery in Yorkshire, married with two children and whose wife was not working, showed a 1971 pay slip for five full shifts—£16.90 net pay before he had paid any rent or mortgage.

While the number of men in the industry has been slashed by nearly two-thirds since nationalisation, productivity per man has shot up. Face-workers have nearly trebled output in the same period.

National Coal Board figures show that production from the mechanised Yorkshire coal faces has increased by up to 60 per cent since 1967. Wages have gone up only 25 per cent in the same period.

The miners are well aware they are taking on the Tory government and that their fight is every worker's fight. The government has made it clear it is determined to inflict a severe defeat on the strikers. The purpose of the operation is to demoralise the whole organised labour movement.

## No help from TUC

Public sector workers are being used to give everybody a lesson. First power workers were isolated and witchhunted in December 1970. Their leaders caved in. Then the postal workers were isolated and defeated due to lack of active support from the organised labour movement.

But the miners can win. Nobody should be fooled by all the talk about 'record coal stocks'. Everything depends on where the stocks are and whether the trade union movement allows them to be moved.

In the face of the Tory attack, the TUC refused on Monday even to call a meeting to discuss the miners' strike and decide what trade unionists should actually be doing in support. Some union leaders have spoken openly of the need to 'keep within the law'. They said they could not instruct their members officially to refuse to handle or move coal because such action might be in defiance of the Industrial Relations Act.

If the union leaders will not act, then the heavy responsibility falls upon rank and file trade unionists—particularly in the transport industry—to take effective action.

● There must be a total ban on the movement of coal.

● There must be a total ban on the movement of alternative fuels and their use in power stations.

● Miners should mount mass pickets at rail depots and power stations and seek active backing from the workers in those industries.

● Miners and power workers must forge links at all levels for a united front against the government. Power workers themselves face a major wages battle.

Rank and file action is the key to victory. If the entire trade union movement builds a mighty campaign of active support for the miners then not only will one key section of the working class score a major victory but the government itself can be brought crashing down.



The Final Shift: miners at Bentley pit near Doncaster leaving work for the last time until the strike ends

## Solid support for strike

### FIFE

Fife miners are backing the strike 100 per cent. R T McMillan of the Seafield Colliery strike committee said the men now see the most important task as winning support from rank and file transport, road haulage and railway workers in Fife.

The miners have called a special conference in the Beveridge Hall, Kirkcaldy, on Saturday for all trade unionists to discuss and organise support sympathy action. Talks with local railwaymen have already taken place, with the result that the NUR has blacked all coal from being moved from the Longannet pit to the Cockenzie power station.

Miners from the pit are to meet Transport Union officials to request that road haulage drivers follow suit. There are also plans for a mass picket of the mining and power station complex.

Coal deliveries from the Westfield open-cast coal works have been stopped as a result of a strike by NUM dispatch workers, although the site is worked by the contractors Costain and not by the Coal Board. Dunfermline railway workers are also refusing to move coal in or out of the site. Once again the Cockenzie power station will be hit.

### NOTTS

The Nottingham coal field has traditionally been one of the less militant areas. But its miners have responded to the challenge of the dispute with 100 per cent solidarity.

### KENT

All three Kent pits are absolutely solid in their backing for the strike. On Monday safety workers at Betteshanger joined their colleagues in refusing to work for the Coal Board. Management had to replace them with surveyors. But even among them feelings of solidarity are not completely lacking—one surveyor at Tilmanstone has refused to do work previously done by strikers.

### YORKSHIRE

Yorkshire miners are absolutely solid. The Manvers S Yorks pit was picketed by miners equipped with pick shafts on Monday to turn away lorries intent on collecting coal. The only lorries the NUM would have anything to do with are those with drivers who can prove the coal is for old-age pensioners.

Consolidation of the strike has been the main task, and while there have been difficulties with some clerical staff, the strike was expected to be rock solid

by the weekend.

John Martin, Brodsworth NUM, Yorkshire, writes: Rank and file miners in various parts of the country have gone further than their union executive in their determination to win by banning NUM safety workers from the pits.

The press and the Coal Board have tried to make out that this makes the miners into irresponsible wreckers. But in fact under normal weekend and holiday conditions there remain in the pits on-setters, windingmen and virtually nobody else—a total of about six men.

Under such circumstances the type of 'fire' that was much publicised last weekend in the Highgate pit near Doncaster is put out by sealing off the air, a job that involves only a dozen or so men divided into three shifts. Even if the fire spreads, only 14 NUM members at most are needed.

The Coal Board and the press are playing up the extent of the dangers to make propaganda against the miners. At present safety work is being done by management officials. The Coal Board wants them released from these tasks so that they can organise the loading of stocks and fight against the strike. And so it is trying to build up pressure to force the NUM members to do all the safety jobs.

## HOLD COLLECTIONS FOR MINERS' STRIKE FUND

Send to your local NUM branch or NUM 222 Euston Road London NW1



# WORLD NEWS

## BRIEFING

## Black strike against racist regime spreads

THE tremendous strike of Ovambo workers against the contract labour system in Namibia (South West Africa) is spreading. Five hundred Ovambos have downed tools at the zinc and tin mines which supply the giant state-owned Iron and Steel Corporation in South Africa and production there will have to be run down.

The rich diamond mines at Oranjemund are crippled by a strike of 4000 Ovambos who refused a 10 per cent wage rise to stay at work. The Consolidated Diamond Mining Company is unlikely to repeat its record profits of £14 million in 1970.

Most of the original strikers from Walvis Bay and Windhoek have been packed back to their so-called homeland in the north, where they face starvation. The Ovambos were unarmed: some weeks before the strike

By W. ENDA

in Windhoek a police raid had cleared out caches of clubs, knives and spears.

The pay-off wages of the 1600 railway strikers have been sent directly to the white apartheid administrative authorities in Ovamboland with lists of names. No doubt the pay out to the starving workers and their families will be selective.

Meanwhile in the white areas scabs are hard to find, and the vacated industries are at a halt. The Herero peoples (40,000) and the coloured (20,000) have promised not to scab, though they haven't yet committed themselves to sympathetic strike action.

White schoolboys are being employed at the railway yards for £60 a month, compared to an Ovambo's wage

of £17. Even the white police are being forced to help.

Some coloured workers have been rushed from South Africa to keep the power stations going, but they are few. A few hundred black scabs have nowhere to stay in Windhoek, since the militant workers of the Katatura compound wrecked the place before they were marched on the trains.

The white bosses have lost nearly 20,000 workers, practically a quarter of the workforce. A complete breakdown is expected within a week and it will take at least two or three months to recruit scabs up to strength.

The situation has caused the South African government to make a few concessions. It has promised to revise the contract labour system by the end of January.

This is a bluff to gain time. In fact the plan is to extend the system of contract labour inside South Africa itself. To have workers migrating to and from the Bantustans, leaving their families in the impoverished reserves is central to the 'separate development' policy.

### Spontaneous

The system works well for white capitalism, by preventing the African worker becoming settled in the white urban areas. The constant to-ing and fro-ing helps to prevent them building up organised collective strength, and limits rebellion to spontaneous outbreaks which can be easily policed.

At the moment the South African government does not know how to move. They hope that, if non-Ovambo scabs are not available, starvation in the reserves, which are dependent on the wages of migrant workers will force broken Ovambos back to work.

But if the Herero and coloured workers join the strike, this could stretch the armed police so much that they could be successfully disarmed.

THE government of Mauritius has banned 13 trade unions, representing 50,000 workers, and has arrested the deputy leader of the left wing Mouvement Militant Mauricien, Mr Dev Virahsawmy. The government proclaimed a state of emergency two weeks ago when a strike in the docks threatened to spread. Emergency legislation was introduced demanding fourteen days' notice of strikes, plus compulsory arbitration.

This action may drive the Mouvement Militant Mauricien underground.

THE BACKWARD countries of Africa, Asia and South America are often referred to as 'developing' countries, to suggest that, however bad things there may be, they are getting better. But figures recently produced by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations show this is not so.

In Iraq, for example, over the past fifteen years agricultural production has increased by 0.2 per cent faster than the population. At this rate it will take 350 years to double the present pitifully inadequate amount of food per head. In Egypt it will take 140 years, in Brasil 100, in some countries, Indonesia, Morocco, Tunisia, and worst of all, Algeria, the amount of food per head is actually getting smaller.

US SOLDIERS in Vietnam seem to be getting more proficient at fighting their own officers than fighting the 'enemy'. The American magazine Saturday Review reports that since January 1970 about 45 officers have been killed by their own men, and there have been at least 363 cases of assault with explosives.

THE 81-year-old widow of former fascist director Mussolini is claiming an increase in her Italian state pension of £25 a week. It would be very ungrateful of the Italian government to refuse this increase. Not only is the legal code of Mussolini's fascist state still in force, but some sections of it have proved very convenient for dealing with left-wing militants.

## Where the Tories are the only choice



Police and protestors battle at the Democratic Convention, Chicago 1968

THE IMPACT of the American presidential election, to be held in November 1972, is already being felt in American political life.

Every action by Richard Nixon, from devaluation of the dollar to clemency in releasing trade union leader Jimmy Hoffa from jail, is judged according to its possible effects on his chances for re-election.

Nixon will of course be Republican candidate. But who will the Democratic Party run against him?

The Democrats traditionally command the allegiance of most American workers, black people and oppressed minorities. In one popular comedy routine, a British gentleman explains to two friends how the American political system works: 'Well, there's the Republican Party, which is the equivalent of our Conservative Party; then there's the Democratic Party, which is the equivalent of our Conservative Party.'

### FURORE

The main difference is that the Democrats are, especially in times of social crisis, the electoral graveyard of all popular protest movements. The major effect of the pre-election furore is to capture all social forces - from the

From DAVE FINKEL  
American International Socialists

working class to students - and bring them back into the Democratic fold.

Several people are fighting for the Democratic nomination, from conservative pro-war Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson to black 'militant' Shirley Chisholm. The leading candidate so far is a bland non-entity from Maine, Senator Edmund Muskie.

New York Mayor John Lindsay and Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy may also join the list and the party candidate in 1968, Hubert Humphrey, will be a strong contender because of his close ties to the labour bureaucracy.

The entire campaign unfolds through an endless succession of absurd rituals and meaningless platitudes. This is a direct result of the tragic feature of American politics - the lack of any organised political party representing the interests of the working class.

Despite their powerful trade union movement, American workers have not got even so much as the bureaucratized, reformist British Labour Party to put forward their interests in the political arena. Nor is it likely that the bureaucrats who control the American labour movement will ever move to form a labour party - much of their power within the establishment rests precisely on their ability to chain the labour movement to the capitalist parties.

The absence of a political party of the working class in the US permits the Democratic Party to keep its political stranglehold over the working class and oppressed minorities, despite its thoroughly anti-labour programme. It was the Democratic liberals who pushed through Congress the legislation authorising the wage freeze and controls which Nixon later imposed.

### REBELLIONS

Their strategy for defeating Nixon will be to blame him for the breakdown of the economy and the resulting inflation and unemployment, accuse him of failing to move to wage and price controls soon enough, and promise that they, the liberals, will manage the economy better by a more efficient and 'equitable' use of these controls.

Probably this package will include new, more streamlined anti-strike legislation.

While various forms of social unrest and upheaval - black ghetto rebellions, the student movement, women's liberation and other important struggles - cause uneasiness within the two-party establishment, only the working class itself holds the potential power to break it. While political consciousness in the factories, shops and offices remains at a primitive level, new voices in the labour movement are beginning to raise the question of independent political action against the Democratic and Republican parties.

## Danish shipyard bosses victimise strike leaders

By RASMUS RASMUSSEN

THE RECENT strike at Aalborg Vaerft shipyard has led to widespread discussion of the role of the shop steward in Denmark, where he is supposed not only to represent the workers who elect him, but also to keep the peace on the job.

If the management say he doesn't cooperate with them, he can be legally fired. Most militants and revolutionaries won't take the job on.

The strike at Aalborg Vaerft shows well the workings of the Danish labour laws. A steward was fired without the required four months' notice; when the firm failed to prove his 'lack of cooperation', they didn't even have to re-employ him.

Anton Kanstrup was the spokesman for the striking shipwrights at Aalborg. When they returned to work, he and other prominent leaders were fired. In a well-publicised report he has explained the reasons for the original sacking of Henning Sorensen, the shipwrights' steward.

### Threaten

Since work-study and a new scale of payments were brought in in 1966 the bonus has increased by only a pittance, and the shipwrights have elected a steward who sees that his duty is to represent the men who elected him.

Last April the shipwrights threw out the old wage agreement and took for granted that the engineering union would threaten a strike against the shipyard when they went down to a flat rate of 67p per hour; but the union didn't, and then the management accused the shipwrights of setting down their tempo unreasonably low.

The shipwrights were offered an average wage of £1.20 per hour, which they refused; but then the union general secretary signed the agreement, against Sorensen's protest.

At the following annual general meeting of the branch, the secretary's

report was voted down, and Sorensen was voted to the branch leadership.

It was after a mass meeting of the shipwrights to discuss improving their conditions, that Sorensen was fired and escorted out of the yard by managers. This led to a strike, first by all 2,000 workers, then by 200 shipwrights who held up all production.

All the workers believe that the firing was a provocation to strike, in order to avoid paying compensation for the late delivery of four ships.

### Pushed

Kanstrup believes that if the workers had known they had been promised support from 500 workplaces, they would not have voted to return to work, as they did by a small majority.

He says management have declared war on the shipwrights. If the workers' leaders will not lead, they will have to be pushed aside to make way for others.

All workers at Aalborg Vaerft have banned overtime against the orders of the union, which has decided to take no militant action to get Sorensen reinstated. Shipbuilding stewards from all over the land met in Copenhagen and called on the union to give financial support to the fired steward and the strikers.

They agreed to this, but refused to agree to a demand to withdraw representatives from the labour court. Workers at other yards are banning overtime in solidarity.

## Railmen in prod deal battle

RAILWAY workers in Japan are struggling against a proposed productivity deal which would mean the loss of 50,000 jobs.

The bosses have run a persistent campaign against the opposition to productivity deals of two of the railway unions - Kokuro and Doro. In this they have broken labour laws made just after the war, illegally sacking workers, placing plain-clothes detectives and riot police in the workshops, and actively favouring the Tetsuro union, which supports productivity deals. Productivity campaigns have been so successful in undermining the unions that 20,000 have resigned from the Kokuro union alone.

The Kakumaru tendency (Revolutionary Communist League) are combatting this with more than propaganda.

Several hundred crash-helmeted workers from various unions have prevented meetings being held by Marusei men in Kagoshima, Osaka and Yokohama.

Until recently productivity deals have not been an issue in Japan. The economy was expanding so fast that nearly all firms were able to provide every year more jobs at higher rates.

But in the public sector, particularly the railways, industry is not expanding and here the struggle has developed, assisted by the Kakumaru group.

The Socialist Party leadership in the

unions is trying to counter the productivity campaign by organising an investigating committee of MPs, lawyers, trade union bureaucrats, and academics, to investigate unlawful practices by the railway management, and press for redress in parliament.

They have had great success in publicising grievances in the press, but they soft-pedal the idea of shop-floor struggles, as it does not suit their respectable parliamentary image.

Indeed the Socialist Party leadership of the Kokuro union looks like being co-opted into a compromise solution based on so-called humane, modern and scientific methods of management. British workers are familiar with this kind of rubbish.

Just out!

### The Power Game

by Colin Barker  
The truth about the power industry, the workers' pay claim and the grim record of productivity dealing.

25p plus 3p post from ADVANCE, 68 Fountains Road, Stratford, Lancs.



## Miners' fight is for the whole union movement

LAST YEAR the postmen, this year the miners. Divide and rule is the oldest maxim in the ruling-class copybook and today the miners are paying for their leaders' refusal to give any real help to the postmen or to agree to a coordinated strategy to fight the Tory offensive against workers in the public sector.

This dispute is of vital importance to every working man and woman. In the 'bad old days' the bosses and their governments used to demand cuts in money wages in times of recession. In these more sophisticated days cuts are disguised as increases. The trick is to keep money wage increases down below the rate of inflation.

The Coal Board is offering, at less than 8 per cent, to make permanent part of the cut in wages the miners have suffered since the winter of 1970. And, of course, the Coal Board is only a cats-paw. The Tory government is directing the offensive against workers in the public sector as part of its general strategy of reducing real wages and shifting the distribution of income in favour of the rich. Each and every one of us is under attack.

It would be impossible for this attack to succeed, under present circumstances, without the lure of 'productivity' increases that pay for themselves, increases that put men and women out of work. The Coal Board's 'final' offer - now withdrawn - contained a productivity swindle. The Board is not satisfied with a cut back in jobs from 550,000 to 280,000 in the last 10 years and an increase in output per man shift of 50 per cent in the same period. It wants to destroy still more jobs and screw still more output out of fewer men. It wants to add its quota to the rising pool of unemployment.

In short, the government and the NCB are pursuing a vicious, anti-working class policy, a policy against the interests of the vast majority of the people. But that is not how it is going to be reported. Our great 'head-fixing industries' - the millionaire press, TV and radio - are being geared up for a massive propaganda campaign to mislead, to confuse, to divide and to demoralise working people.

Propaganda plays a big role in any war but especially in the class war. Remember the last power workers' dispute? As soon as the miners' strike starts to bite we will be bombarded with stories of freezing old age pensioners, of hospitals in dire straits and all the rest of it. The miners, the story will go, have a case perhaps but they are injuring the community and jeopardising their own jobs.

### Key to victory

Exactly the opposite is the case. It is the miners who are fighting for 'the community' - in the sense of the great majority - and defending jobs. It is Heath, and the employing class that he represents, who are doing the injury and destroying jobs. How much they care for the old, the sick and the poor can be seen by looking at their record since 1970. It is not the miners who are forcing up rents, depriving children of milk, increasing health service charges and introducing the 'means test state'. It is not the miners who are responsible for massive and rising unemployment.

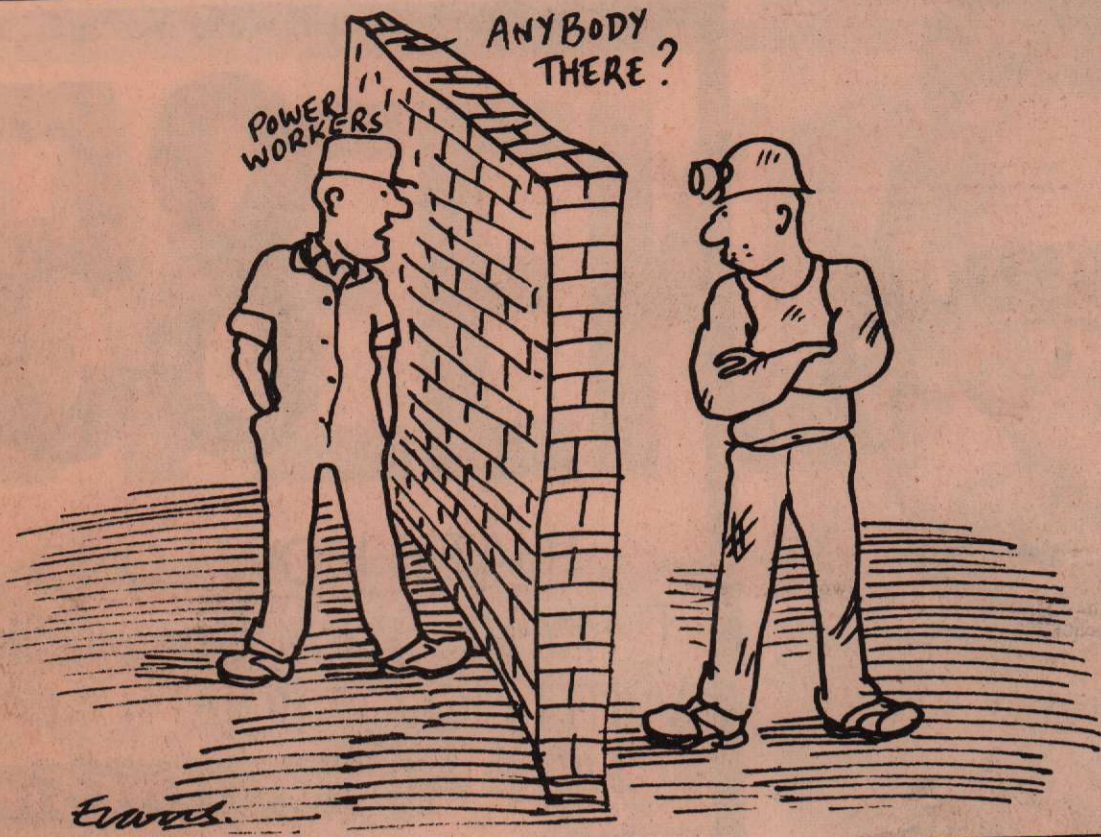
The key to the victory of the miners - and of the working class - is summed up in one word: Solidarity. If all workers refuse to handle coal, or fuels being used to substitute for coal, then the government will be brought to its knees. That solidarity has to be organised.

It would be comic, if it wasn't tragic, to recall that the General Council of the TUC was established on the insistence of the left in the trade union movement and against bitter opposition from the right. It was meant to act as a 'general staff of labour', to plan the struggle against the employing class and to organise solidarity.

Needless to say, not the slightest reliance can be put on Feather and the present General Council to do any such thing. If they are allowed to get away with it, they will sell out the miners as they sold out the postmen, as they sold out the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act. They must not be allowed to get away with it. They must be forced to do the job we pay them to do. So too must the leaders of all the transport unions, of the power workers - themselves facing another dispute - and of all other relevant groups of workers.

Every effort must be made to get official calls for effective blacking, for a total ban on the handling of coal. Where this fails militants have the duty to do their utmost to enforce unofficial blacking. The part of the Industrial Relations Law that makes such action illegal is expected to come into force at the end of February. It is possible that the government will rush through the necessary order at an earlier date. It must be defied.

This is no ordinary dispute. On its outcome will depend whether or not real wages for most workers are cut in 1972. The government and the employers are well aware of its importance and they are determined to win. They must be beaten. The miners' fight is your fight. The last official national miners' strike ended in a defeat that crippled the labour movement for more than a decade. This time the Tories must be crippled.



## COTTINGS WARRIORS

### By Gorm!

WITH JOE GORMLEY on their side, you can't help feeling it's a bit hard that the miners have to fight the Coal Board and the government as well. The NUM president has made it abundantly clear that his heart is not really in the strike - and not just for the usual old flabby 'it will hit the national economy' nonsense.

At a lunch last week with NCB boss Derek Ezra, Gormley put forward as one reason why he hoped the strike would not take place the fact that the miners would get a taste for militant action and might rather like the flavour.

An interesting glimpse into Joe's development as a trade union leader was gained from an interview in the Sunday Times. Down the pit in Bolton, Joe led (tut,tut) a wildcat strike out of sheer boredom.

'We were working on the afternoon shift. I had a wife and two young children and I never saw them. On the afternoon shift you had to work from 1pm until one or two in the morning because of necessary overtime and to get the job done. One day, sitting in the canteen, I said: "To hell with it". I walked out and the lads followed me.'

This spark of militancy was quickly snuffed out. Joe became president of the local NUM branch and there was a strike. 'I had to get up in the canteen and beg the men to go back to work. "It's fantastic, Joe," they said. "A few months ago you brought us out on strike." "I know," I told them, "but now I have a position of responsibility. We have to negotiate." They laughed their bloody heads off but they went back.'

They won't be laughing this time if they put their faith in Gormley.

NEWS of a sensational divorce case in Israel centred round Defence Minister Moshe Dayan recalls the famous Profumo scandal in Britain. While the furor raged around the debagged minister, one British politician asked the then Israeli prime minister what



Dayan to know

he would do if he caught one of his cabinet ministers in a similar position. 'I'd poke his other eye out,' was the laconic reply.

### Doctored

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE hits China. The Anti-Imperialist Hospital in Peking has just been renamed the Capital Hospital. American newsman James Reston recently had his appendix removed there by acupuncture. He seems to have left his mark.

Another hospital, the Anti-Revisionist Hospital, which treats Russian and East European embassy staff, has been renamed the Friendship Hospital, no doubt much to the relief of diplomats forced to sojourn there.

But Anti-Imperialist Street still retains its title, though rumour has it that it will be changed to the Street of the Second-Hand Car Salesman in honour of Nixon's visit.

LIKE ELEPHANTS, nasty right-wing farmers never forget. Farmer Cecil Vine of Willingdon, near Eastbourne, was annoyed by two militant trade union farm workers 30 years ago - and he never forgave them.

Vine died last year and his just-published will leaves £2 for every complete year of service of his employees - provided they have never been members of trade unions.

### Soft landing

THIS FAIR AND PLEASANT LAND: A site of three-fifths of an acre in Hampstead, North London, has changed hands for £215,000 for residential development. This is double the amount paid for it last summer. The land, now carrying an empty

Victorian-style mansion, is likely to be used for eight to 10 homes costing between £60,000 and £80,000 each. The property has been bought by Farncombe Developments from Broad Street Estates, who acquired the site for £107,000 several months ago. The land was sold by auction for £37,500 in 1967.

Hampstead is in the London Borough of Camden. It has 7000 families on its waiting list.

WHILE Plessey workers at Alexandria, Scotland, continue their marathon occupation to stop the factory closing and the machines being moved out, they will be glad to know that the management of the giant electronics combine is more generous with one section of the population than it is with its workers.

In the year ending 30 June 1971, Plessey donated £10,000 to British United Industrialists, a Tory front organisation, and £756 in a direct handout to the Tory Party itself.

### Grocer's bill

FOOD for thought when planning your next wage claim: a survey by The Grocer (magazine, not prime minister) shows that price rises added more than £600,000 to the country's food bill last year.

Butter went up by 48 per cent, cheese prices rose by 38 per cent, fresh fish cost 43 per cent more, fresh fruit increased by 32 per cent and fresh vegetables, canned and powdered milk rose by 15 per cent.

The index shows that food prices rose by 10.6 per cent last year. And The Grocer expects a similar trend for the first half of this year.

This means that, allowing for extra taxes, the absolute minimum wage demand should be 13 per cent.

### Palsied Hans

PLANNING, the social democratic way. Hans Janitschek, gensec of the Socialist International, the umbrella organisation which houses such fiery militants as H Wilson and W Brandt, jumped onto the first available plane to Dacca last week to welcome home Sheik Mujib on his return from imprisonment in Pakistan.

Sadly, as Hans flew East, the Sheik was heading West, arriving in London to see Toothy Ted before going back to Bangladesh. Hans' hoped-for publicity boost for the SI came to nothing and he was left cooling his heels in Dacca. Outraged leaders of the International, embarrassed by Hans' gaffe, are now demanding his resignation.

He flew East but it looks as if he will be going West.





THE STRATEGIC position of the Maltese islands astride the sea lanes of the central Mediterranean, coupled with the main island's superb natural harbours and a terrain favouring the defender, have long made the islands a coveted possession, and during much of their history a pawn in imperialist conflicts.

Now, however, the rules of the game have changed. The existence of the NATO bloc means that the countries of West Europe can be safely regarded as Britain's allies, and an island base in the Mediterranean becomes irrelevant.

The attitude of British imperialism towards its colonies has always been of a two-faced nature. The present conflict over the Maltese bases has seen a further demonstration of this particular form of hypocrisy. Malta, George Cross, the gallant little outpost of the Empire, valiantly battling the 'German Menace', the fight for 'freedom and democracy' now becomes, in the words of the Sun, 'the Cross we do not have to bear'. In fact the relationship has always been straightforward and clear-cut.

It was in February 1799 that the British moved into Malta as part of the war against the French. The British attitude then, and as it has remained to the present day, was summed up by Wellington: 'It is a fortress, a great military arsenal for our forces, we hold it as an important post, nothing more.'

Certainly, nothing more. Malta achieved 'independence' in 1964 and 165 years of British rule left Malta with a national income per head of about £300 a year, a third lower than Greece's and less than half Italy's.

As is the nature of imperialism, the relationship has cost the Maltese dear. During the Second World War more than 3000 people - over 19 per cent of the population - were killed or seriously wounded and more than 25,000 buildings were destroyed or seriously damaged. The generous return for this was a piece of tin known as the George Cross.

### Dominate

1957 was the turning point in the relationship. Britain's eclipse as an imperialist power was reflected in a cut in the armed forces from 700,000 to 300,000 men. Because of the emphasis on the nuclear deterrent and the means to deliver it, the Royal Navy was to be reorganised, some battleships to be scrapped, and the amount of repair work was expected to decline as a result.

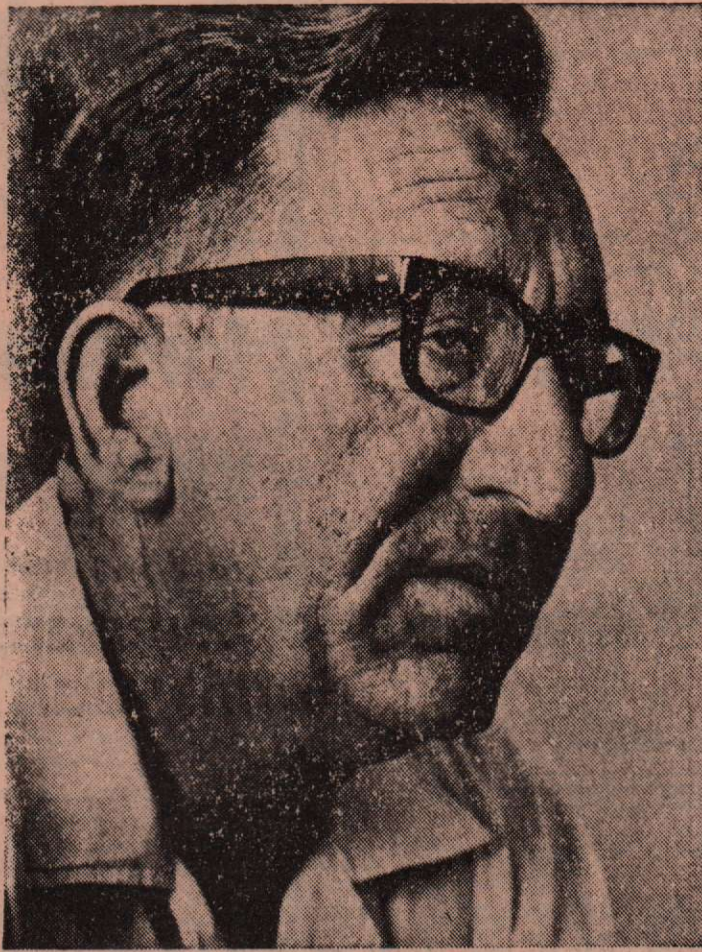
Don Mintoff, Prime Minister at the time, was fighting for 'integration' with Britain, tying Malta even more firmly into the British net. Union with Britain on the basis of three MPs at Westminster with a programme of economic 'equivalence' - raising Malta's standard of living to that of Britain's - was Mintoff's programme.

The cut in the armed forces was seen as directly contradicting this programme. In reaction, the demand for independence came to dominate Maltese politics.

The power of the Roman Catholic Church was always a problem. From a position of dominating power and influence, it has consistently played a role of sabotaging the labour movement and the fight for independence. Even 'integration' threatened a substantial loss of influence for the church in the field of education.

The Labour Party was growing rapidly in strength and popularity. In the urban areas it was supported strongly by skilled and semi-skilled workers, while in the villages support came from the agricultural workers who are among the poorest of the population. The Labour government gained further ground with reforms including the extension of the social services.

Of the six parties fighting the 1962 election, the Labour Party was the only one that refused to declare its loyalty to the church. Until the general election last June it was a 'mortal sin' to vote Labour. The



Mintoff: wants a decent rent

# A tin medal - that's all Britain gave to Malta

attitude of the church is not surprising, as it owns at least a quarter of the island's land. Last year, however, a compromise was reached with the church.

Independence was finally achieved in 1964. It made little difference. The agreement provided that Britain would have 'in peace and war' the right to station armed forces on Malta.

The financial agreement provided for British aid to Malta of £50m over 10 years - but even then 25 per cent of this was in the form of loans. The feeling of the people was somewhat in contradiction to these arrangements.

Demonstrations organised by the Maltese Labour Party and General Workers Union displayed slogans like 'Keep your warheads at home', 'No more dying in war and starving in peace' and 'No foreign bases'.

### Run down

Industry on the island is minimal. The dockyards now employ about 4000 men, 10,000 less than in the 1950s. With the run-down of services the docks were critically over-manned and under-employed.

A 99 year lease, with rich development grants, was offered to any firm willing to convert and manage the docks for civil use. C H Baileys from South Wales agreed to move in in 1959 - with a £7.5m grant - more

than the British ever paid annually for the facilities.

The money was taken, but some £3m was used on Baileys' yards outside Malta and next to nothing was done in the yards. In 1964 Baileys pulled out, and the yard was taken over by Swan-Hunters, who proceeded to run the yards at a loss of £3m a year until the government placed the docks under joint government-union management in 1971.

### Destroys

There is a small textile industry - based on lavish tax holidays for British industrialists - tourism, and a construction industry devoted to building villas for the tax-evaders and hotels for the tourists. The result of this economic situation is, like Ireland, a very high level of emigration - 9000 in the peak year 1964, equal to 8 per cent of the labour force.

Since independence the economic situation has deteriorated, as the National government fell back on loans from Britain at high interest rates. The Labour Party accused the Nationalists of leaving the country dependent on Britain.

The elections last June resulted in a victory for the Labour Party. Mintoff opened negotiations with Britain for an adequate rent for the bases. British imperialism, however, no longer cares, and is certainly not prepared to lay out cash for a now unnecessary base.

But the issue cannot be one of money, and to pose it as such can only indicate a willingness to remain as an imperialist outpost - providing the money is right.

The whole history of the British relationship illustrates how such a relationship destroys any possibility of developing the economy of the islands in the interests of the Maltese people. Not just British bases, but any bases signify continued subservience and oppression for the Maltese people.

Only a clear break with the whole imperialist network can lay the basis for any future for the workers of Malta.

# 85

## THAT'S HOW LONG THEY'VE BEEN ON STRIKE WITH NO OFFICIAL UNION HELP AT FINE TUBES LTD

FORTY-FIVE workers are writing trade union history Plymouth. They are the men and women of Fine Tubes and they have been on strike for the last 85 weeks.

They have suffered enormous hardship. Their standard of living has fallen catastrophically. One has been jailed for non-payment of a fine and others have been assaulted and harassed by the police.

But now a new and more sinister danger has arisen. Trade union officials are attempting to sell them out.

The strike started on 15 June 1970. The management of the American-owned company has a history of anti-trade unionism and the dispute began when they refused to grant a £3 a week pay rise.

Fine Tubes makes precision tubes for many sectors of industry. It supplied tubes for Concorde until blacked by Bristol workers.

The company paid extremely low wages and most workers earned £16.33 a week with no extras. In contrast to this, and no doubt because of it, the company's profits were rising continually.

### FURIOUS

In 1966, it made £43,000, in 1967, £68,000, in 1968, £135,000 and in 1969 an impressive £165,000. These profits were due to the labour of the workers and low wages.

The company's reaction to the strike was furious. After a couple of weeks they curtly ordered the workers to end the strike or be sacked.

149 workers defied this ultimatum and were dismissed. The company then started to employ non-union scabs. It quickly gave them both staff status and a 9 per cent rise as an incentive to cross the picket lines and do the work normally performed by those victimised for demanding better pay and conditions.

The trade unions concerned made repeated offers to meet the management but this was refused. Finally an official Court of Inquiry was set up on 1 September last year.

It reported in November and said that a meeting between the unions - Engineers and Transport Workers - and the management should be held. This meeting, the report added, should discuss the re-employment of the remaining 49 strikers.

### SNATCHED

But it did not call for their reinstatement and went so far as to say that they should be re-employed as and when vacancies occurred and that 'these should not be at the expense of existing employees.'

This meant, quite simply, that the scabs should keep the jobs they had snatched from the original workforce.

The Court of Inquiry also explained that the management had refused to meet the unions while what they called a 'state of duress' continued to exist. The court, anxious as always to please the employers, accepted this and recommended that both picketing and blacking of Fine Tubes products should be removed.

No similar recommendation to the management to end its 'duress' by immediately re-instating the

by ROGER ROSEWELL  
SW Industrial Correspondent

strikers was made. In this way the court revealed its bias. Without the picketing and blacking, the strike would be disarmed. The court knew this and therefore called for an end to the essential activities.

Since then a number of national union officials have intervened in the dispute and sought first to convince and then to threaten the workers into accepting the court terms.

In December, the Engineering Employers' Federation, which represents Fine Tubes, wrote to the unions and said that the company was prepared to meet the unions and have meaningful talks with them on condition that the picketing and blacking were stopped.

The EEF added: 'It should not be construed that the company is committing itself to any particular outcome.'

But this was good enough for the union leaders. Without an guarantee, Tom Crispin, a senior official of the Transport Workers Union, wrote to the strikers and said: 'My view is that... it is important we now remove any barriers to a meeting taking place at the earliest opportunity.'

### SURRENDER

The meaning of this is clear. Crispin is in favour of ending the picketing and blacking. It is a complete surrender to the dictates of the company.

The Fine Tubes strike is of tremendous importance to the struggle in the South West. For years the area has been crippled by unemployment, low wages, poor conditions and weak trade unionism.

But 1969 saw the start of a fight back. First at Centrax in Newton Abbot and then at the Ottermi Switchgear, workers fought long struggles for a decent standard of living.

Fine Tubes was part of the struggle. One of the main reasons for the company's bitter hostility towards the strike is the need to crush this revolt of the lower paid and bully the area back into accepting wages and conditions far below the national average.

Against this background, a massive campaign of support and assistance from the unions was needed. It didn't happen and the Fine Tube strike has lasted more than a year and a half as a result.

What was wanted was a real offensive against the employers. The unions should have campaigned



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# WEEKS



Police shove pickets as they clear a way for scabs. The bosses see the defeat of the strike as vital to the campaign to depress wages in the South West

against the poverty of the South West and led strikes, occupations and demonstrations.

They should have organised trade union recruitment drives and promised full support to any strikers. They should have guaranteed financial aid and arranged for intensified blacking of goods and the stopping of supplies at any factories in dispute.

They should have told the Engineering Employers' Federation that action will be taken against them if they support their member firms. They should also have organised a campaign among the existing trade union members on why they should support strikes and collect money.

## REFUSED

This kind of action could have been successful. None of the national union leaders even bothered to try. On the contrary, they did very little and Crispin's letter is clear proof of this attitude.

A number of unions have failed to give any support to the Fine

Tubes workers. Most treacherous has been the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

This union had the power to win the Fine Tubes strike by forbidding the manufacture of raw materials for the company. It refused to do so and no member of the General Council of the TUC has called for action against it.

Last year, the Engineering Union, which has a left-wing reputation, cut off strike benefit to their members at Fine Tubes on the grounds that they had paid them the maximum under rule.

At the September TUC, several strikers from Fine Tubes lobbied Vic Feather and demanded his active support. Feather told them that because they had once heckled him when he spoke at a Tolpuddle Martyrs rally in Dorset, he 'didn't want anything to do with them'.

At a meeting just before Christmas, Harry Urwin, the assistant general secretary of the Transport Workers Union, told the strikers that unless they accepted Crispin's advice nothing could be done.

When he was told that the unions

should step up their blacking of Fine Tubes' products, Urwin replied that it was impossible to do so as the Industrial Relations Act made it illegal.

In spite of these problems and obstacles, the Fine Tubes workers have braved them and displayed great spirit for 85 weeks. But last week, because of lack of support from the unions, they agreed to lift the ban on blacking and picketing.

## CRITICAL

But unlike the union leaders they are determined to win the dispute and to defeat the anti-unionism of the company.

The strike is now reaching a critical stage. The workers desperately need support.

The union leaders must be compelled to give them that support and the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation instructed to stop supplying steel to Fine Tubes.

Donations to: Fine Tubes Strike Committee, 48 Stuart Road, Pennycomequick, Plymouth, Devon.

## BERNADETTE DEVLIN MP



# That great telly 'bore in' on Ulster

LAST WEEK'S BBC marathon 'bore-in, 'A Question of Ulster', has left people wondering what on earth all the fuss was about. Mr Reginald Maudling, Tory Home Secretary — if it is humanly possible for him to look more foolish than he already does — must be frantically searching for reasons why he didn't give the whole thing his blessing.

Ulster Prime Minister Faulkner probably didn't watch it — there was football on the other side. So he will be blissfully ignorant of its failings.

The real thing, the 'bore-in', however, was that when the programme started, every viewer switched to BBC to watch the 'bore-in' — the only one of its kind. 'People have the right to talk, the public has the right to hear'. Coming from the BBC that would mean!

Like all the rest of the respectable establishment, the BBC does not consider the members of the IRA to be people. They, unlike the Westminster and Stormont representatives, were not given the option of refusing to appear on the programme.

They were simply not invited, no doubt for the same reasons that when charges of brutality were made against the British army, the BBC refused to use interviews with relatives and doctors who could have verified them. With such a sense of duty, who needs censorship?

## LITTLE DANGER

Why then did the BBC stick to its guns on this programme? I believe that knowing the programme's format, they also knew it would be safe.

With the odds stacked 7 to 1 in favour of the system (with a reform here and there) there was little danger of the 'wrong' propaganda receiving prominence.

The BBC fought a battle in order to concede a war. Watch out for ultra-responsibility, self-imposed censorship and completely biased coverage of Northern Ireland. 'After all,' they will cry, 'are we not the people who produced 'A Question of Ulster'?'

I would ask those of you who persevered to the end: are you any the wiser? Hardly a relevant question was asked. The future of Ulster will not depend on whether or not I believe my Reverend Mother was, is or will be a bigot.

Again, the few of us who spoke of the IRA failed even to provoke a

response. Nobody asked: why are 30,000 tenants withholding all payments to the state? Why do the IRA command the support of the people? Who are the IRA? Why are the people opposed to internment?

The question of the judiciary didn't arise. Nor did the 10 per cent unemployment problem.

The whole thing was a futile exercise in appealing to reasonable and honourable men. It offered no opportunity for dialogue and politics were kept at bay.

Not that there's much talking to be done. As I've said before, the problem is simple: it's not the way British imperialism exploits us we object to, it's the very fact that it exists.

There will be no peace until imperialism is smashed. If they are prepared to discuss that, we might have a basis for talking. But as the Tory MP Sir John Foster said: 'We are not prepared to yield our framework.' That leaves us no option but to organise and smash his framework for him.

In the best of all possible worlds, what we say would be: 'The mass of workers, Catholic and Protestant, united in the revolutionary struggle against all capitalists.' And this is what we will continue to work towards.

That however is not how the present fight is taking place. And what is important in this present fight is to know which side you are on.

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# WOMEN: THE LONG, UNFINISHED

## SECOND CLASS

ARE WOMEN INFERIOR to men? It is obvious that society thinks so. All the rules about equal pay, all the laws against discrimination won't make much difference until there is a revolution in the attitudes of men and women towards the opposite sex and until the facilities for welfare and child-care are provided which will free women to take advantage of their opportunities.

There are a lot of myths about women. 'Women can't make intelligent conversation', 'women love an excuse to dress up'. There is some truth in these sayings. But it isn't because women *have* to be like this.

They are made like it by their upbringing. The emphasis for little girls is to be pretty, not too bright ('too full of herself') and to learn all the little tricks that please Daddy and Uncle Fred and Grandad (and which will later help her to get a husband without too much difficulty).

### DUTY

For all the talk of a permissive society, many women are still subservient to their husbands. The man may be kind, the woman may feel reasonably happy, but nevertheless her life is not her own.

The dinner must be on the table when he comes in from work. There must always be clean shirts and socks. Fair enough, some say, if the wife is at home 'doing nothing' all day while the husband is working.

But it is not done this way because it is the fairest way to organise things — it is done because *it is a woman's duty to do it*. This is proved by the fact that millions of women who themselves go out to work all day are still expected to have a dinner ready in the evening, and the housework done. There is nothing fair about it.

A woman receives housekeeping money from her husband. But this is not a wage for her work in the home. It is to pay for food, children's clothes, gas, rent.

*Anything she needs for herself has to be squeezed out of the little that might be left over. Most husbands, if they can afford it, are generous. If the wife wants a new dress all she's got to do is ask. But how would men feel if all they had to do was ask every time they wanted something for themselves?*

Then there's the matter of women going out in the evenings without their husbands. Round to her mother's or her sister's, yes, that's OK.

## STATUS STILL THE RULE

by Valerie Clark

But how many men would be willing to look after the children while the wife went to a political meeting, her trade union, or a women's liberation group?

It isn't necessary to do a full-scale survey. Just looking around at friends and relatives shows that it is true what Women's Liberation says — women live in a men's world, and they have a very inferior place in it.

The housewife cannot see a way out of this. To save her marriage and her sanity, she glorifies her prison. She devotes herself to the home. She sacrifices herself for her children.

And she makes herself happy in this way. Everyone knows of the woman who 'only lives for her family'.

But what happens when the family is grown up, when the house has everything it needs — no more cushions to make or appliances to save up for?

Middle-aged women often wonder where their lives have gone to. They have given everything for their family, and in the process have had no life themselves.

*It cannot be right that some people exist just to be servants to others. Everyone is entitled to a real life of their own. That is not to say that women can't enjoy cooking or sewing, of course they can. But this should not be seen as their only reason for being alive.*

Some women say they are contented with things as they are. They are not

willing to give up the few courtesies they get from men, being paid for when they're taken out, having heavy parcels carried for them and so on.

But to put up with being a second-rate person, just to get a few perks, is like staying in a rotten job just because there's a good bonus at Christmas. In the long run, it just is not worth it.

It suits the ruling class very well for men and women to blame each other for the miseries of life, which in fact stem from the inhumanity of the capitalist system.

### EXTEND

It is no wonder that men like to feel they have some authority over their wives and children. But this attitude must be fought. Men should not carry on the same system in their own families. They must try to break it.

And at the same time, women must understand *why* men treat women as inferiors. Women too should see that the enemy is capitalism, not men.

Women are fighting for the few rights they do have, and to extend them: the right to work, the right to a good education, the right to free contraception and abortion, if necessary, to enable them to decide when they will have children.

But to fight for 'equality with men' means nothing, unless we also mean that men should have a better life. Women do not want equality with men whose lives are distorted and ruined by tedious jobs and daily aggravations.

We don't only want equality. We want things to be better — for everyone. A society that is not fit for women and children, is not one in which men can be happy and free either.



1880s: the match girls

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## 1888 — match girls that's burning

IF YOU TRAVEL by train from Liverpool Street station, past the dingy back streets of Bethnal Green, out to Stratford, you will pass a grimy, desolate, Victorian structure, every bit as imposing and bleak today as it was in 1888.

Bryant & May's match-making factory and the year 1888 are significant because here was a victorious breakthrough for trade union militancy. The matchgirls of the East End struck for better wages and conditions.

They were unorganised — but full of indignation at the way management exploited them. They had a highly developed awareness of why they were being exploited.

Before their famous strike, they had complained bitterly that one of Bryant & May's directors, a great admirer of Gladstone, had erected a statue to him in the forecourt. The money had been taken from the girls' wages. They had been given a 'holiday' without pay on the day of the unveiling.

Many of them went to the ceremony armed with bricks and stones, prepared to hurl them at the offending piece of granite. But instead they leapt, kicking and screaming, at the statue.

The matchgirls were organised by a woman who immediately saw the

potential inherent in their anger. She was Annie Besant, a name still remembered in London's East End. With her experience and knowledge and the matchgirls' fierce determination, they abolished the illegal docking of wages.

They also won a canteen in which to eat their sandwiches, thereby reducing the risk of phosporous poisoning, and were given barrows to wheel the boxes of matches in, no longer having to carry them on their heads (a practice which had led to premature baldness).

### Inspired

The most important outcome of the strike was the formation of a trade union. The historical significance of the matchgirls' triumph can be summed up by Ben Tillett, dockers' leader, who said their strike was 'the beginning of the social convulsions which produced the "New" Unionism, the new Dockers' Union, the great Dockers' Strike of 1889 ...'

The victory of the matchgirls inspired all manner of weak and

downtrodden workers to demand better conditions and to form unions.

The matchgirls' action is only one example in the history of women's struggle for rights. At every dress rehearsal for the workers' revolution, women were among the first on the stage.

In the Paris Commune of 1871, the prostitutes, the most degraded and poorest women of Paris, fought and died on the barricades alongside the men.

In Russia in 1905 the starving women of Petrograd left the bread queues to march to the Winter Palace to ask the Tsar for bread. The outcome was bloodshed and the setting of the stage for the 1917 Revolution.

This greatest of all social upheavals began on International Women's Day. Women textile workers were the first to strike, sending a delegation to the metalworkers asking for support. The metalworkers reluctantly agreed to support them.

Many workers believed that the time was not right to take to the streets. But the women had given the

lead and the eve written on the history.

There is a militancy linking the past to their matchgirls' struggle for another

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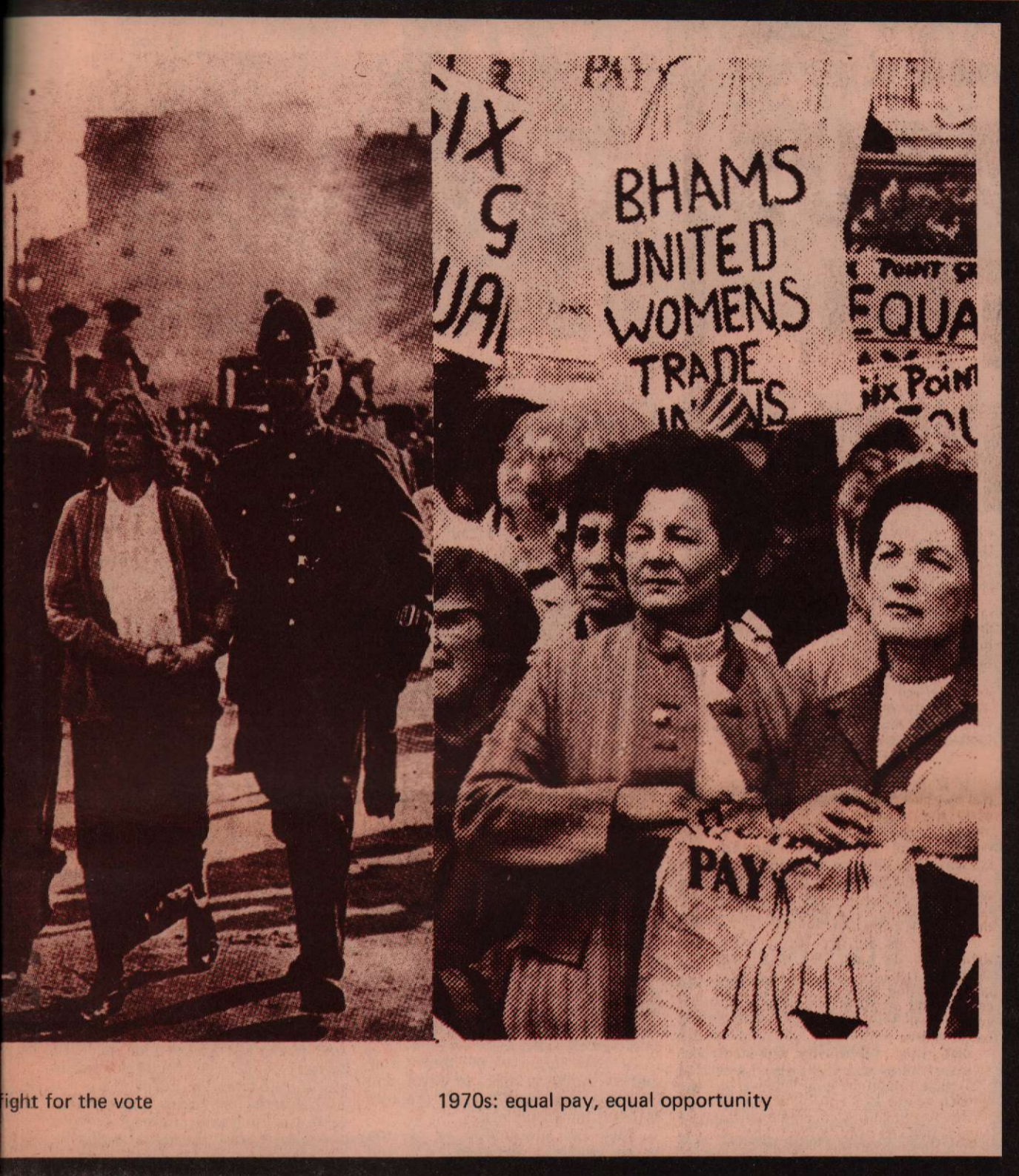
The strike also into the male the management tragic defeat of

How is it t usually humble suddenly burst



# WASHED STRUGGLE

## Low pay or the dole: the choice for women at work



1970s: equal pay, equal opportunity

FROM BIRTH women are taught that they belong to the home, that cooking, cleaning, shopping, washing and raising children are naturally women's work and that real women find this more satisfying than employment outside the home which is man's natural domain.

The majority of women then go out to work only when the family income has been stretched to breaking point. The latest available figures clearly show this:

WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT		
1965	December	8,928,000
1968	"	8,936,000
1970	"	8,973,000

WOMEN REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED		
1965		76,400
1968		88,800
1971	May	106,500

by Sara Carver

The number of women unemployed increased by 30,100 but the number of women in employment decreased by only 9,000. So more are looking for a job. (The figures probably underestimate the facts since many women don't bother to register as unemployed).

### Forced to look

The reason why more women are seeking work is simple: with rising prices, with stagnating real wages, with an unemployment figure of getting on for a million, more and more women are being forced to look for work in order to supplement the family income.

That women are paid less for their labours is a well known fact. In October 1970, the average pay for full-time manual workers in industry was —

MEN: £28.05 per week, 61p per hour  
WOMEN: £13.99 per week, 37p per hour

Women on average earn little more than half what men earn. The advantage for the employer is obvious.

When it comes to redundancies women are particularly vulnerable. The bosses think they have a free hand in the hiring and firing of women workers.

When there are more jobs than workers available women are enticed out of the home into the factory. When conditions change thousands of women are thrown back into the kitchen, and forced to rely on their husbands' pay packets.

Women provide a source of cheap, reserve labour, which is maintained out of other workers' wages — men's wages — at no expense to the employers.

In both world wars everything

was done to get women to work. Hundreds of day-care centres for workers' children were set up, and women were assured that bottle-feeding was better for babies than breast-feeding.

At the end of the war, however, when the returning men needed jobs, the nurseries were closed down, and the government provided figures to 'prove' that 'women at work caused juvenile delinquents at home, and that they were competing with men, and that eight out of ten infants who died of stomach ailments in the first year of birth were bottle-fed'.

Married women who are made redundant, but whose husbands are working are denied full employment benefits.

More than 80 per cent of women workers are not in any trade union. This is partly due to the fact that women tend to work as waitresses, cleaners, nurses, typists, shop assistants, jobs in which it is difficult to obtain any degree of unionisation.

But this is only half the story. Lack of unionisation among women can be directly attributed to the indifferent attitude of trade unions and male trade unionists. Women are not encouraged to join the unions, and even if they do they are treated as 'second-class' citizens and are discouraged from taking an active part in the running of the union.

### Refuses to fight

This attitude was amply demonstrated when May Hobbs, who is running a campaign to unionise night-cleaners, went to her union, the TGWU, to ask for help in this task. She received no help and was actually advised to go and join another union as the TGWU could not assist. This was at a time when the union was running a recruitment campaign!

Now that May has been sacked and blacklisted for her union activities the TGWU refuses to fight on her behalf against the victimisation which is preventing her from getting another job.

By failing to take up and fight for women's demands like job security, 24 hour child-care centres and equal pay the trade unions are weakening all workers' struggles. The bosses know only too well the advantages for them in a divided working class.

In some companies work is defined as "men's work" or "women's work" when it could be done equally well by both.

This is a practice that is bound to increase after the Equal Pay Act becomes law. After all, how can you have equal pay for a job when no men are actually doing the same job? This also closes the job opportunities to women. In strikes the bosses will always use the old tactic of urging strikers' wives to get their men back to work.

As long as women workers are not fighting alongside men then the trade unions cannot wage an effective battle against attacks on workers' living standards, against rising unemployment and against anti-working class measures like the Tory Industrial Relations Act.

As long as men and women workers are divided against each other the only victories will be those chalked up to the bosses.

## Strike a light still...

nts that followed are pages of working-class

strong thread of working women in comrades today. The gle connects with that nothing workers, who 70 took the city by suddenly went on shilling an hour. industry had seen for 30 years. The turned.

### ected

July, 1968, women at Ford's Dagenham, demanding equal en machinists. Their ed to Barbara Castle e equal pay by 1975. injected confidence work force to face onca more after the 1962e

at working women, docile creatures, out of their apathy

working women hold the key to changing society.

They are united in a common workplace and can learn that 'unity is strength'. Because they are directly involved in day-to-day issues they have a better chance of developing politically than women who spend their days isolated in the home.

Working-class women can give confidence to women's liberation movements — pressure groups who can gain important reforms for women as a whole. The women's liberation movement can fan the flames of revolt, but without the vast conflagration of women organised at their places of work, society cannot be changed for good and all.

The courage and confidence to fight for this change can be built up if lessons are learned from the generations of women who have fought in strikes and revolutions all over the world.

The women embattled in Northern Ireland, the thousands of women socialists imprisoned in Ceylon for their political beliefs, show that women's militancy and determination are very much alive today.

Looking back at history, women see that they have much to be proud of — and much to live up to.

Kathy Sims

## EQUAL RIGHTS WILL STRENGTHEN THE UNIONS

A THIRD of the workers in this country are female — nine million women. Two-thirds of them are married. But 'woman's place is in the home' still rings true for most of them.

Although they work, they also usually have the full responsibility for housework, shopping and children. Many thousands of women are on the go from 6.30 in the morning until late in the evenings, seven days a week.

Right from the start, girls are discriminated against. Compared with boys, they are badly educated and leave school earlier. The main reason for this is that girls are expected to get married a few years after leaving school, and it is still foolishly assumed that they won't work any more and that education would only be wasted on them.

Girls from working-class homes are hardly ever offered training for work, except those who do a secretarial course. 40 per cent of boys are apprenticed. Only 7 per cent of girls are, and they are mostly in the hairdressing trade.

So girls start work unskilled, with little chance of being trained. Nobody thinks it worthwhile because 'she'll only get married'. Most girls in their teens don't care anyway because they too have been led to believe their troubles will all be over when they get married.

But the truth is that, after marriage, they probably continue working. And when their children have started school, they'll probably need to go back to work again.

They are still unskilled, and the boss won't train them now — he's got a new excuse. 'They'll only have time off when the kids are ill.'

The fact that woman's place is still felt to be in the home gives the employers a whole bundle of easy excuses for paying women less than men, and gives the unions the same excuses not to bother to organise them.

The employers are quick to use women as cheap labour, to under-cut men's wages, or to take the place of well-paid male workers.

Women want a better deal now. But the unions and working men should see that it is not only for the sake of our exploited sisters that we call for equal pay and equal rights.

It is for the sake of a strong, united labour movement. The present differentials between the wages of men and women make it far too easy for the employers to manipulate workers of both sexes.



# Wild talk on school violence



Dark, dingy Victorian schools—this is real violence against children

FROM time to time disturbing reports of incidents of violence in schools break through into the columns of the national dailies. Even though such reports are relatively rare, if a union of teachers actually holds a special conference to discuss the problem, can it be that these isolated instances conceal a much more serious situation pervading the whole school system?

It is necessary first to examine the credentials of this teachers' union—the National Association of Schoolmasters. The NAS was founded in the early 1920s by a group of men who broke away from the major union, the National Union of Teachers, as they could not stomach the acceptance by that body of equal pay for women teachers.

With the final achievement of equal pay in 1961 the need for the existence of the NAS disappeared. However, largely due to the NUT's right-wing sluggishness the NAS managed to continue to attract members by a display of 'militancy', too often on basically reactionary causes.

## Hysterical

Reports from the NAS Birmingham conference are remarkable for the apparent lack of hard evidence which could be produced to justify the hysterical outcries.

General Secretary Terence Casey, after producing such flimsy examples as a middle-class grandmother who had complained to him that her grandson had organised a gang in his primary school and of a young woman teacher who had been threatened with assault and rape by a father (!), made a serious tactical error in lashing out at his greatest potential allies—the head teachers.

His accusation of their 'moral cowardice' clearly means in his mind that corporal punishment was not administered neither often nor severely enough.

Here is the nub of the matter. The fact is that violence has always been common in the schools—actual physical assaults by

teachers—more often head teachers—upon the child often for quite trivial 'offences'.

The concealed violence of streaming, vicious divisions between teacher and child, the intensive competitiveness, the examination system, the unscrupulous attempts to brainwash the kids to submit to a permanent inferior position in society—all these have their effects.

Can we be surprised, like those self-appointed press guardians of public morals, that a deeply divided education system on occasions results in boys from 'comprehensives' and 'grammar' schools fighting each other?

Is it really surprising, however distressing, when, very rarely, some teenagers have so well absorbed the inherent violence of capitalist society continually displayed vividly before their eyes every evening on the television screen, as to attempt to solve a problem by stabbing a schoolmate?

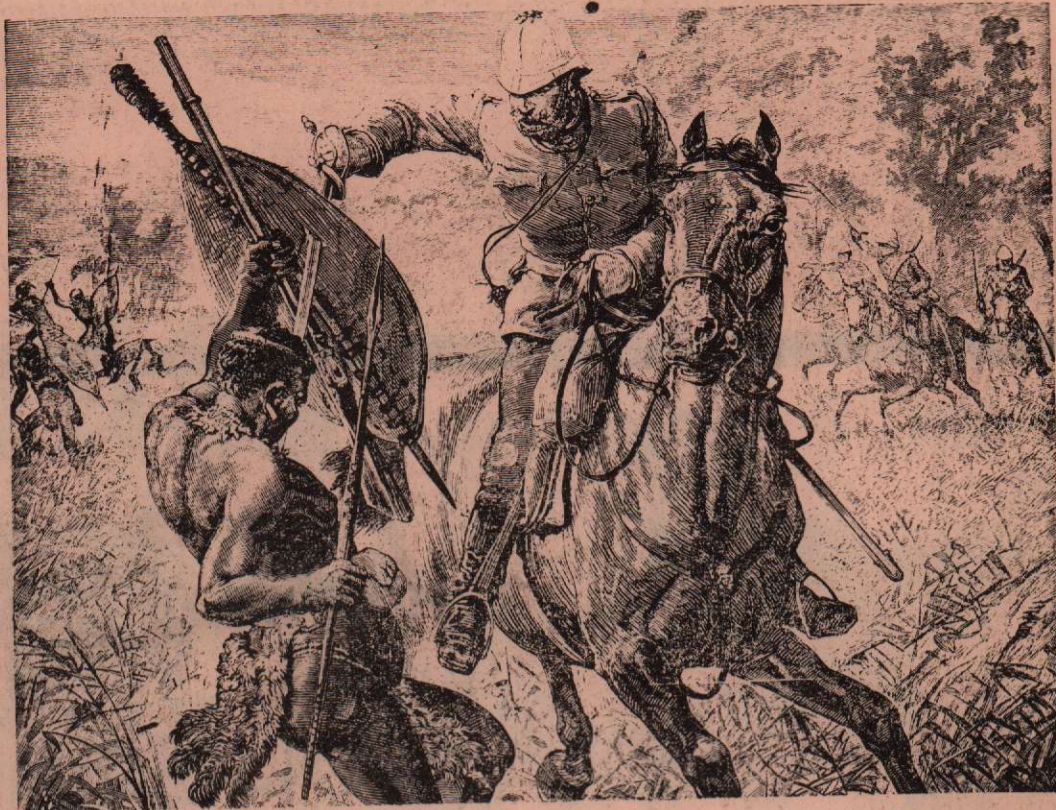
In so far as there is any solution while capitalism continues, Ashley Bramall, leader of the Inner London Education Authority, indicates one direction in which some improvement can be found. In *The Teacher*, the NUT journal, he said he knew the answer: 'It is more teachers, smaller classes and better resources.'

He has undoubtedly got a point as he has in his other well-known and commendable support for the abolition of physical punishment.

But this is still not enough. Rank and File, the left wing journal widely circulated among NUT members, puts its finger unerringly on the essence of the problem in its current number: 'Only by allowing children and teachers their individual rights to their identity as participating governing members of a democratic school society, can they adopt the fundamentals of respect and thought for each other as thinking people.'

**Eric Porter**

*Eric Porter is Secretary of a large London branch of the NUT and Editor of Rank and File.*



Up to the outbreak of the First World War most of Africa and Asia fell to the European power. Picture shows British troops dealing with the 'natives'.

By 1914 there was hardly a part of Asia and Africa that was not a colony of some European power. At the Congress of Berlin in the 1880s the great powers divided Africa up between them and only Liberia and Ethiopia remained outside colonial rule.

In Asia, only China and Thailand kept paper independence and they were divided into spheres of influence.

The exception was Japan, which had kept out the Europeans by a policy of isolation and then industrialised just in time, before the great carve-up was completed. And she could only survive by becoming an imperialist power herself.

What was behind this sudden expansion of empire to near-total control of the world? In the mid-nineteenth century, Britain was the 'workshop of the world'. Her industrial lead made it possible for British business to dominate the markets of the world on the basis of free trade.

## Massive

The export of British goods led to overseas investments. British industrialists and engineers built ports, railways, roads and bridges throughout the world. By 1847 British investors owned £80 million worth of railway stocks and shares in the United States.

A massive boom in railway building in India in the same period was guaranteed a return of 5 per cent by the British administration. This followed the period of the great railway-building boom in Britain. Overseas investment made up for falling opportunities for profitable investment at home.

By 1870 total British foreign investment was about £700 million, a quarter of it in the USA and a third in the Empire. Foreign investment stimulated the development of industry in Europe. Industrialisation went forward in Germany and the USA, and also in France.

The 'development' which occurred in the exploited countries did not lead to industrialisation however. Foreign investment was mainly in the growing of crops for export.

Indian exports of raw cotton, jute, hides, oil and wool mushroomed

# Scramble for power led to world war

**WHAT IS IMPERIALISM?**  
by STEPHEN MARKS



## PART FIVE

in the second half of the century, as did tea, coffee and rubber from other colonial possessions. But the profits went abroad, instead of being used to build up the native economies.

Foreign investment followed foreign trade. This was due not so much to Empire as to free trade, and Britain's ability, as industrial leader, to sell her goods anywhere in the world. But with the emergence of new industrial rivals in France, Germany, America and Japan, the situation changed.

A few figures can show how quickly industry began to develop in Germany and the USA, to threaten Britain's industrial lead.

Take the production of pig-iron as an example. Between 1870 and 1903, British works increased their production by only 50 per cent, while the USA did so by 966 per cent and Germany by 690 per cent.

In 1903 both Germany and the US had surpassed Britain.

As other countries began to industrialise, they too, like Britain, turned to overseas investment as well, and sought to protect their markets and investments by colonial empires.

Capital export was especially important to British imperialism. By 1913 as much as was being invested abroad as at home, and a tenth of the national income, equal to a quarter of all property incomes, came from overseas investment.

Thus when the later developers, Germany and France, began to catch

up with Britain, the overseas investments of the past helped protect Britain from the impact of the new competition.

These changes coincided with a new technological revolution, which laid the basis of modern mass production. In steel, electricity, industrial chemistry and oil, discoveries were made which increased the scale of industry, speeded up transport and thus increased the size of markets, and led to growing concentration of capital and the growth of large monopolies, raiding the world in their search for raw materials.

World steel production grew 27-fold in the last 30 years of the 19th century. Modern electricity generating plants date from the 1880s.

Industrial chemistry and modern oil prospecting and refining date from the same period. In each country a small number of big firms came to dominate the economy.

## Weapon

First in importance to the mammoth enterprises was control of the crucial sources of raw materials: tin, oil, rubber, coal, copper and so on. The reason behind this was not only as an insurance against being left without.

Control over raw materials is a weapon in competition. So potential sources of raw materials are as important as ones currently in use, depriving ones' competitors as good a reason as needing the materials oneself.

Export markets were also essential to cushion firms against fluctuations at home and to increase sales. And the export of capital helped avert economic crisis at home by providing new profitable outlets for investments.

Increasingly the struggle for markets between the superpowers came to determine the course of politics. The imposition of tariffs, use of military and political threats to open markets to your goods, exclude those of a competitor, secure the triumph of a group favourable to your interests, all the way to outright annexation—those instruments of power politics in the service of ever-bigger capital reached increasing intensity in the period of inter-imperialist rivalry leading up to the first world war.

And with the application of modern technology to the 'improvement' of armaments, military competition and the mutual pressure of the arms race began to impose their own logic.

## OUR NORMAN

SEND THESE WOGS BACK I SAY





## REVIEW

## ORIGINAL BOND, ERSATZ BOGART

EVEN nostalgia has become a marketable commodity under capitalism. The current interest in the popular music and literature of America in the 1930s and 1940s has not been lost on the show business tycoons.

A British band that plays passable imitations of Glenn Miller has been carefully groomed into an extraordinary box office success and Benny Goodman has been brought out of retirement to make a short tour.

Now it is the turn of the hard-boiled private eye thriller to undergo something of a re-birth in visual form. The books to which a film like *Gumshoe* and a television series like *The View from Daniel Pike* pay their homage are the works of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, of which the most famous are *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Big Sleep*.

Though written primarily as entertainment, they offer an unromantic glimpse of some aspects of American society in the turbulent Thirties and Forties — the corruption and depravity of the wealthy, the utter ruthlessness of the crime syndicates and their close relationship with big business, and a police force composed of either good guys who have grown world-weary and cynical or, more frequently, of uniformed gangsters who failed the entrance exam for the Mafia.

Of course, the private detective in literature is nothing new but it took writers of the quality of Hammett and Chandler to turn them into believable people, helped by memorable film portrayals by Humphrey Bogart.

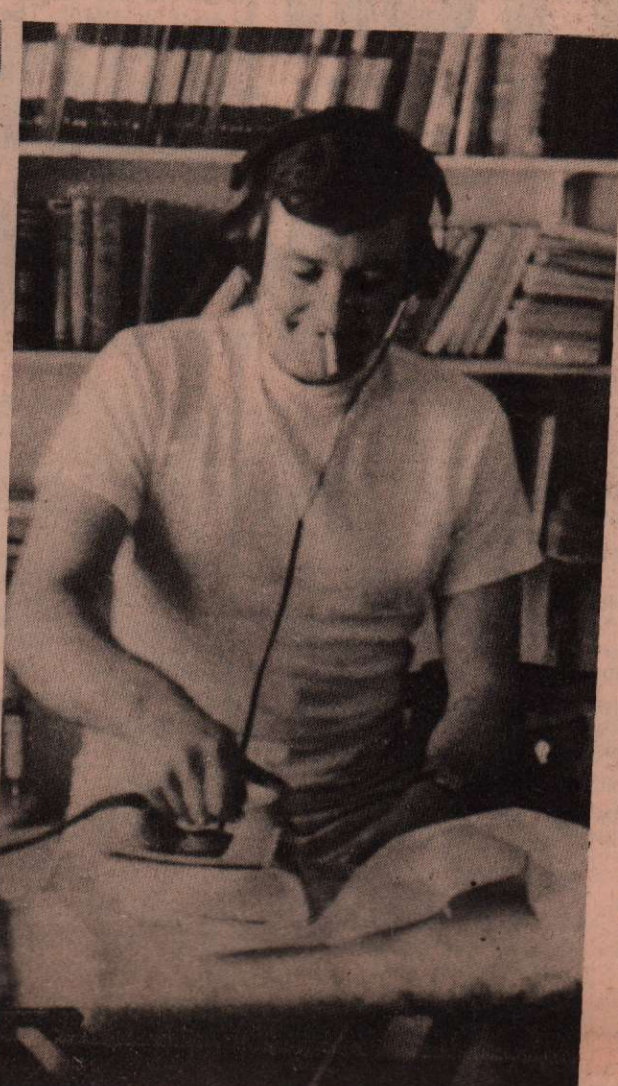
## Class fiction

Their 'heroes', Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe, are the lonely rearguard fighting to stop the American dream turning into a nightmare, the last of the rugged individualists, down-at-heel but incorruptible, knights in rusty armour coming to the aid of the 'ordinary folk'.

For ordinary folk read middle class. Spade and Marlowe were not working-class heroes, though a sharp distinction has to be made between their creators: Hammett was for a time a member of the American Communist Party and was viciously witchhunted and blacklisted, while Chandler was not politically committed.

But their books are concerned primarily with the middle and upper classes because you needed cash to hire a private eye if you had wrongs that needed righting but didn't want your social status undermined by official police publicity. Lack of cash and social status rule out the working class as far as most detective fiction is concerned.

This school of literature is so deeply-rooted in the America of the thirties and forties that its attempted transition to Britain in the seventies is bound to be uneasy. BBC2's *Pike* was great fun (the Chandler-style wisecracks were particularly good: 'A boutique? — that's a junk shop that went to college') but



The Man in the White Suit and the Man in the Off-White Vest—Connery as Bond and Albert Finney as Gumshoe

you have totally to suspend belief to accept a private eye in Glasgow.

*Gumshoe* (Warner, AA) is quite different. Writer Neville Smith is not attempting to graft a 30-years-old style on to a modern setting but is deliberately setting out to present an affectionate, semi-parody of the style itself.

Eddie Ginley (Albert Finney) is a Liverpool bingo caller who lives in a semi-dream world created by his voracious reading of Hammett-style thrillers. He puts an ad in the local paper, canvassing for work as a private eye or gumshoe (he even calls himself Sam Spade).

The results are immediate. He is summonsed to a plush hotel and presented with a gun and cash to shoot a girl. His client is a grotesque fat man, son of Sidney Greenstreet in *The Maltese Falcon*.

Style and dialogue are exact, with Eddie 'telling' the story over the action: 'So I went to the Plaza, where the Axminster tickles your kneecaps and you

need a black tie to take a bath.'

The plot is dense and hard to follow. That, too, is all part of the parody. Towards the end of the filming of *The Big Sleep* the cast cabled Chandler to explain the plot and who, so to speak, had dunnit. He cabled back that he would like to know, too.

## Gun-running

In *Gumshoe* we are enmeshed in a story where Eddie's brother is a dubious business man who pinched his girl and gets him the sack from his bingo job.

The girl the fat man wants murdered is the daughter of an African revolutionary who is going to expose Eddie's brother's illegal gun-running to Rhodesia. There is plenty of action, dead bodies and a final come-uppance for the baddies. There is even another private eye competing with Eddie who looks like Dashiell Hammett.

It is great fun, but scarcely, as one critic has suggested, a film about 'the

crisis of capitalism'. All films are about capitalism because they are about people in society but *Gumshoe* is basically about a bingo caller who wants to be Sam Spade, and it would be absurd to approach it any other level.

It is vaguely 'left wing' in its attitude to Africa (actor-turned-writer Neville Smith has matured in the Loach-Garnett school of social realism) and perhaps it suggests that society has nothing to offer unemployed bingo callers except day dreams. But I feel that Smith simply wanted to pay homage to Hammett, Chandler and Bogart, found a producer astute enough to back him and provide us with 90 minutes of first-class entertainment. So you wanna complain, huh?

Even James Bond has gone all nostalgic. Sean Connery, the original 007, is back, shaken but undeterred by the unfortunate break with tradition when the luckless George Lazenby took over the role. But Bond is very different now and *Diamonds are Forever* (Leicester Square Odeon, A) is a long way from

Ian Fleming's stiff-upper-lipped creation.

So successful is the formula that producers Saltzman and Broccoli (who sound like a salad dressing and certainly know how to spread themselves over the lettuce) can allow a little gentle parody without damaging the profits.

In fact, parody is essential if Bond films are to remain acceptable. Ian Fleming, a deeply reactionary writer who firmly believed in the Red and Yellow Perils and thought British Railways a malignant form of communism, produced Bond, the upper-class super-spy, at a time when the Iron Curtain and the Cold War were still fashionable clichés.

The Bond books are political tracts: in between the thrills are explicit plugs for the Western way of life, competition, the necessity of violence to quell 'evil', the superiority of the white race, the virtues of the class system and an educated elite and the need for women to be submissive and have big breasts and a double bed.

## Sailor Heath

Fleming is dead and many of his attitudes are unfashionable for a modern mass audience, particularly for young people who see the world menaced not by 'communism' but by twin imperialisms: 'You smash the Vietnamese and we'll clobber the Czechs, OK?' Only Sir Alec Douglas-Home and Sailor Heath perpetuate the Fleming tradition and they are hardly the stuff of which Bonds are made.

So in *Diamonds*, although the gratuitous violence and shoulder-shrugging disregard for human life are still there, they are more muted and Bond's upper lip has softened into a cynical grin, even in moments of high tension. There are even almost Chandlerish wisecracks, as when he is introduced to the amply proportioned Miss Plenty O'Toole: 'Named after your father, I presume?'

For complexity, the plot makes *Gumshoe* read like *Winnie the Pooh*. Starting with illicit diamond smuggling in South Africa, we move to Holland, then to America and into a straight-forward world-domination-attempt by the suave but sinister Blofeld, who puts a laser beam into earth orbit that can destroy any city in the world.

Bond triumphs in the end, of course, but the juvenile nature of the story is strengthened by a brilliantly filmed car chase in Las Vegas and a very funny escape from a space station in a lunar landing craft. Its two-hour length is a bit daunting but it is an immensely professional movie and worth seeing if only to record that Bond's nasty right-wing sting seems to have been drawn. And that, considering the immense damage which the mass media can do, is no mean achievement.

What remains, of course, with all spy and private eye films, is the dangerous illusion that the world's problems, big and small, can be solved by brave, self-sacrificing individuals while the rest of us look on. To shatter that illusion requires action in the real world, not on the silver screen.

DAVID EAST

## Talk shows: The Frost sets in

SOMEWHERE in the North of England an ex-public schoolboy called Simon Dee is looking for a way to earn a living. As his public image fades into the last whirl of two-year-old soap flake commercials so his publicity value dwindles.

From dramatic 'I will return' stories in the popular press he has fallen down the page into the obscurity of less newsworthy vicarage scandals and oil-strikes in Baffin Land. When last heard of he was planning a series of live talk shows before invited audiences and non-existent TV cameras; rather like making a movie of *Gone With the Wind* and failing to put film in the camera.

The unfortunate Mr Dee had an illusion, shared by many working in TV and radio, that he *mattered*. He was a symbol, eternally driving his (doubtless borrowed) Jaguar out of a multi-storey car park with mini-skirted dalek to show the rest of us what we were missing. The trip may have begun in an E-type but ended, as it has for a million others, in a dole queue.

David Frost returned to our screens last Sunday. The Daily Express's 'Hate Maker' of 1963, now a nationally-loved symbol, curiously like Tony Blackburn, but

cordially loathed by everyone I have ever mentioned him to.

Money plus TV has had a curious effect on Frost. Never really in either England or the US, he has hovered intellectually in a jet over mid-Atlantic.

There are a lot of fish there, some businessmen, some rock groups bringing home a fresh supply of dollars, but not many human beings.

One remembers only his face and outstretched hand, fading like the smile of the face of the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland, and little else.

## BEANS MEANS BRADEN

Only occasionally do real memories remain, like power workers being physically and mentally assaulted by his 'decent man in the street' audience and his impartial 'man of science' expert, or Abbie Hoffman, yippie, happily reducing the show to a shambles.

We are now entering the second post-Christmas wave of talk shows, Michael Parkinson is taking a well-earned rest on Radio Two; Bernard Braden is presumably sampling sub-standard baked beans ready for a new series of fresh frozen consumer outrage.

Meanwhile a collection of veterans are assembled for *serious* discussion of certain things on Ad-Lib late night on Sundays. Presumably the BBC feel that Frost will clean up the audience ratings and therefore they might as well clean up the 'meaningful', deeply responsible end of the audience.

On page five Bernadette Devlin deals with her personal response to the BBC's Ulster Show. What is interesting is not so much the programme but the media's treatment of it.

As with the great Vietnam marches, the press went to town over the programme. Disaster, earthquake and outrage were predicted. The Tories, in their efforts to defend free speech, earnestly set about

destroying it. Before the programme came on, one felt one should clap this triumph of the human spirit.

On a talk show, the audience clap as compere comes down stairs to inherit his electronic kingdom, or shout his name in controlled abandon as the APPLAUSE light flickers on. Not here, this is the real thing.

Dead silence in a big studio with plenty of room to intercept outraged speakers before they assault the three wise men. Just a big backdrop with THE QUESTION of ULSTER looking as if it will fall on the guests if they speak too loudly.

## CLASSICAL MONTY PYTHON

So we sit, and watch.

The speakers put their truncated cases, the Lords Devlin and Caradon and Sir John Foster ask their questions. Issues are laid out like fillets of plaice on a slab.

Miss Devlin is talking about the solution

to the problem of Ulster, the rest about political equivalents of the Simon Dee show, talks, inquiries, commissions. But Lord Devlin is not Simon Dee, don't forget, but the Houses of Parliament and the Old Bailey miraculously contained on two legs. The result is the classic Monty Python ending, 'too soon to say', 'something should be done about it'.

It is important for socialists to fight for a free system of communications, but we aren't going to get freedom this side of socialism. The authorities are good at providing the right mix for the suppression of information.

Are you outraged and living in Bexley? Tune in to Any Questions and listen to four who know, explaining why they are just as ignorant as you are but will tell you, what to think anyway. Do you want to see the *human* side of George Brown/Heath/Wilson? Watch David Frost conjure blood from living plastic. Do you want to see truth? Wait for Lord Devlin's next show.

Do you want to see the real Simon Dee? Examine your dole queue more closely next week. . .

JOHN TELFAIR



# WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:  
For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of men's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

## THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

**SCOTLAND**  
Aberdeen  
Cumbernauld  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Fife  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Stirling  
St Andrews

**NORTH EAST**  
Durham  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
Spennymoor  
Sunderland  
Teesside  
(Middlesbrough & Redcar)

**NORTH**  
Barnsley  
Bradford  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Mid-Derbyshire  
Ossett  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

**NORTH WEST**  
Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Potters  
Preston  
St Helens  
Wigan  
Wrexham

**MIDLANDS**  
Birmingham  
Coventry  
Leamington  
Leicester  
Northampton  
Nottingham  
Oxford  
Redditch  
Rugby  
Telford  
Wolverhampton

**WALES and SOUTH WEST**  
Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Mid-Devon

**Plymouth**  
Swansea

**SOUTH**  
Ashford  
Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Folkestone  
Gurdford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton

**EAST**  
Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Colchester  
Harlow

Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

**GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES**  
Acton  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon

Dagenham  
East London  
Enfield  
Erith  
Fulham  
Greenford  
Hackney & Islington  
Havering  
Harrow  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hornsey  
Hounslow  
Ilford  
Kilburn  
Kingston  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
Newham  
Paddington  
Reading  
St Albans  
Slough  
South Ealing  
Tottenham  
Walthamstow  
Wandsworth  
Watford  
Woolwich

# Missing lessons of People's War

AS YOU generously gave Martin Tomkinson a whole page to review Angus Calder's magnificent study of the Second World War (The People's War: 8 January) it seems a pity that he did not draw out some of the book's main political lessons.

One of the greatest myths that still grips the British labour movement is the one that runs 'The Labour Party may be lousy now, but it was bloody great in 1945'. The dangerous illusion that develops from this particular myth is that one must fight to return the party to its 'great traditions' of 1945 instead of breaking with reformism and building an independent working-class force.

The fact is that most of the highly-praised planning policies of the post-war Labour government were not innovations at all but were the continuance of the war-time coalition

The amazing degree of planning in the war-time economy had nothing to do with socialism. On the contrary, it was forced upon the government in their frenzy to save British capitalism and its Empire from their Nazi competitors.

But in order to galvanise the whole nation, many cherished attitudes of the ruling class had to be put in cold storage for the duration of the war. The economy had to be planned and labour bureaucrats like Ernie Bevin, the champion of class collaboration, were called into master-mind the job.

And the working class could not be left to rot in hunger and misery as it had during the bitter 1930s. The war effort demanded fit and healthy workers able to work long hours for up to seven days a week.

That meant better food and clothing. Rationing was never 'egalitarian'—the rich could always get their goodies on the black market



—but it did mean that workers for the first time had a basic, nutritional diet and access to welfare and nursery services.

The Beveridge Report, which marshalled in the welfare state, was a war-time product. It was not introduced, as current Labour leaders like to suggest, by the Attlee government. In fact, the post-war Labour government watered down some of Beveridge's proposals.

None of this—welfare, planning centralisation, strict factory discipline—had anything to do with socialism, although it is significant that such measures were found necessary to force the economy to work in a more efficient manner. And the Attlee government's policies were designed equally to manage capitalism more efficiently and, through some welfare provisions, to paper over the more glaring inequalities in society.

—ALAN WEST, London N17.

# THAT LAME DUCK IS MY JOB

THE front page article in Socialist Worker for 18 December on the '£900m Lame Duck' Concorde was a good example of how not to deal with a problem.

It was written in a frivolous and abstract manner. It gave the impression that matters are quite simple, with money being wasted on projects like Concorde — because of the stupidity and ignorance of a few wealthy businessmen — which could otherwise be spent on education or slum clearance.

But such an approach creates the impression that such reforms are possible and fails to explain the true economic significance of Concorde, which is more to do with the need to hold the British aerospace industry together.

The article also completely ignores the problems of the workers building the aircraft. The Concorde project employs many thousands of people.

Recently at BAC there were many redundancies. If Concorde were cancelled there is no doubt that the effect on employment in Bristol would be catastrophic.

Concorde does represent the lunacy of modern capitalism — not only in terms of wasted money, but also in terms of wasted and misused human skills. If the workers themselves controlled what they produced it would certainly not be Concorde. But while we have to show that capitalism does not base production on social needs, we have to relate this to concrete situations.

We supported the men in their fight against redundancy because this is the key problem facing workers today. However, the front page article did not relate the wastefulness of Concorde to the very real threat of unemployment. The whole system of capitalism is built on waste and it is no solution to constantly expose the nasty areas. KEITH ELLIOTT, SHEILA MELOT, Bristol.

## IS NEWS

THE PRESENT INDUSTRIAL situation is one of crisis. For the first time since 1926 there is a national miners' strike and important struggles are likely in the power industry, engineering and the docks.

The Fisher Bendix factory in Kirkby has been occupied, Scottish car workers have struck for parity with the Midlands and in such a situation it is essential that IS branches:

- 1 Hold public meetings to Support the Miners. Speakers can be arranged through this office.
- 2 Hold street corner meetings, distribute solidarity leaflets attacking the Tory government and its policies of rising prices, higher rents, unemployment and anti-union laws and calling for money to be sent to the miners.
- 3 Leaflet railway stations and depots and coal-fired power stations. These should urge support for the miners, demand the

defeat of the Tory attack on public sector workers and call for the blacking of deliveries, transport and use of coal.

- 4 Send regular written reports of this activity to this office.
- 5 Trade union members should campaign for factory collections and resolutions of support which stress the need for the TUC to both give the miners money and ensure that the strike is won. These resolutions should demand a total ban on the handling of coal and for effective blacking. Copies should be sent to this office.
- 6 Order copies of the forthcoming ADVANCE, the rank and file power workers' paper. This can be obtained from 68 Fountains Road, Stretford, Lancs.
- 7 Order copies of the new power workers' pamphlet The Power Game from the ADVANCE address.
- 8 Campaign for a public sector alliance of trade unions to both co-ordinate pay

claims and strike action. It is vital that rank and file alliances of miners, power workers and postmen be built.

- 9 Urgently collect money for the Fisher Bendix occupation and leaflet all Thorn Industry factories urging support. A full list of these factories will be sent to local branches. Messages of support should be sent to the Fisher Bendix workers.
- 10 Contact this office and let us know how many of their members are prepared to work for the organisation during this period by travelling to other areas and giving assistance.
- 11 Campaign for the maximum attendance at the IS Industrial Conference due to be held in Manchester on 30 January. Coaches should be arranged from every area and any queries referred to this office — 01-739 1878.
- 12 Statements on the engineering and docks disputes will be issued shortly. Industrial Sub-Committee 10 January 1972

# WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive or be phoned first post Monday morning. Notices are charged at 5p per line, six words per line. Semi-display 10p per line. Cash with copy or, if phoned, by first post Tuesday. No insertions without payment—invoices cannot be sent.

## MEETINGS

**END INTERNMENT!** Withdraw the troops! Bernadette Devlin MP speaks at Fulham Town Hall, Friday 14 January 8pm.

**SWANSEA IS public meeting:** Wales—which way to socialism? Dr Phil Williams, chairman Plaid Cymru and Merfyn Jones, Swansea IS. Friday 21 January. 7.30pm, Dynevor School Hall, Swansea.

**BASILDON IS public meeting:** Frank Campbell on Unemployment and How to Fight it. Tuesday 18 January, Basildon Arts Centre, 7.30pm.

**BLACKBURN IS public meeting:** Mike Caffoor on Racism. Duke of York, Darwin Street Bridge, Blackburn. Wednesday 19 January 8pm.

**WANDSWORTH IS public meeting:** Stephen Marks on Russia: How the Revolution was Lost. Thursday 20 January 8pm, Upstairs Bar, The Spotted Dog, 72 Garrett Lane (nr Wandsworth Town Hall).

**LEWISHAM IS public meeting:** Symposium on Workers' Control. Spkrs: John Jennings (IWC and Tribune), Roy Tease (ex-Industrial organiser of the RCP) and Duncan Hallas (IS). Thursday 27 January 7.30pm sharp, Ladywell Baths, Lewisham High Street SW13.

**READING IS public meeting:** Unemployment and How to Fight it. Spkr Lionel Sims. Monday 17 January, 8pm. Trade Union Club, Minster Street, Reading.

**ERITH IS public meeting:** Tony Cliff on Unemployment. Thursday 20 January 7.45pm, Dartford Co-Op, Westgate Road, Dartford.

**WATFORD IS public meeting:** Chris Davison on Unemployment and How to Fight it. Wednesday 19 January, 8pm, Leviathan pub, 151 St Albans Rd, Watford.

**FALKIRK IS public meeting:** Duncan Hallas on The Tory Offensive. Friday 21 January 7.30pm, Temperance Cafe.

**LEEDS IS public meeting:** John Palmer on Why Capitalism Does Not Work. Thursday 20 January. 7.30pm, Room C, Leeds Trades Council Club, Upper Fountain St.

**ABERDEEN IS public meeting:** Duncan Hallas on The Case for Revolutionary Politics. Tuesday 18 January 7.30pm, Aberdeen Trades Council, 21 The Adelphi.

**DUNDEE IS public meeting:** Duncan Hallas on The Tory Offensive. Wed 19 January 7.30pm, AUEW Halls, South Ward Road.

**GLASGOW IS public meeting:** Duncan Hallas on Unity of the Left. Thursday 20 January 7.30pm. Woodside Halls, St Georges Cross (off Maryhill Road).

**IS BUSMEN'S GROUP meeting** on Sat 29th January in Manchester. Details from John Broadbent, 42 Hankey St, Peterborough or Chris Davison 01-977.4662.

**EAST LONDON IS Public meeting.** Mike Cooley, president of DATA, on The Struggle in Industry Wednesday 26 January, The Boleyn, Barking Road, Upton Park, 8pm.

**WOMEN IN ACTION Conference on claimants, tenants and industrial work with women.** Open to all IS members and supporters Saturday 26 February 10am-6pm in London Details from branch secretaries or IS Women, 18 Dickinson Rd, London N8

**IS ECONOMISTS GROUP Weekend conference in Coventry** 15-16 January, Grey Room, Rootes Hall, Warwick University Programme: Saturday 1.30pm: State expenditure and the marxian theory of crisis. A critique of the permanent arms economy by David Yaffe. Sunday 10am: Agrarian Reform, accumulation and the role of the state. The case of Peru by Chris Scott. Discussion on IS theory of the Third World. 2pm: agitational work and political economy by Hugo Radice. Contact David Yaffe 01-267 3894 for details and Hugo Radice for details, accommodation at 0203 58005 (Coventry).

**PRINTWORKER meeting:** Tuesday 18 Jan 8pm at The Metropolitan, cnr. Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road.

## NOTICES

**ALL IS branches please note:** changes in orders for Socialist Worker must be telephoned to the Business Manager or 01-739 2639 by 5pm Monday or to arrive by first post Monday.

**SHREW—Women's Liberation Workshop** Issue on Night Cleaners, price 7½p. Available early February. IS Women's Newsletter 6. Includes interviews with a Leeds textile worker and factory worker. Price 5p. Ad 3p for post and packing. From IS Book 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

**UNEMPLOYMENT PAMPHLET:** Urgent payment plus unsold copies must be sent to IS Books immediately.

**FOUND:** Fountain pen left at 6 Cottons Gardens. Apply D. Wheeler.

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# Factory sit-in fight goes on

## Welshmen in battle to save jobs

THE OCCUPATION of the Allis-Chalmers factory in Mold, North Wales, continues into its second week. The 120 workers have taken over the plant in an attempt to put off its planned closure at the end of January, when machinery and production is to be moved to Uttoxeter. At a meeting with management on 6 January Hughie Hughes, AUEW convenor, was offered a paltry £25 per man if he called off the sit-in. To call this an insult is an understatement; the workers have over 2000 years service between them. 'We have no social responsibility toward these workers,' said the management. 'Our only reason for being in business is to make a profit.'

This blatant attitude has only hardened the men's resolve to continue the fight for their jobs. The site of the factory has itself been the centre of working-class struggle more than once. Some 70 years ago a coal mine stood on the spot. Police and militia were called out to break a strike and two miners were killed in the riot that followed. Today the workers at Allis-Chalmers still fight the same battle, the same problems, the same system as those miners 70 years ago. The mine is now closed, but Allis-Chalmers must remain open. Messages of support and finance to Hughie Hughes, AUEW office, 17 Ash Grove, Shotton, Deeside.

# Engineers' wages claim sold out

by Roger Rosewell

'IT'S SIMPLY a sell-out. If we had taken action and linked up with the miners we could have defeated this government.'

That's how one engineering shop steward described Monday's decision of the engineering union's national committee not to organise any national action in support of their wage claim.

This claim was overwhelmingly rejected by the employers in November. It demanded a £6-a-week all round increase, a 35-hour week, equal pay, improved minimum rates—£25 instead of £19-a-week for a skilled man, longer holidays, more lay-off pay and all without any productivity strings.

The employers responded by immediately declaring their opposition to the claim and, after discussing it with the government, offered a mere £1.50-a-week increase in the skilled rate, with less for lower grades. They refused to offer any general pay increase at all, even though the cost of living had sharply risen during the past year. They also refused to offer any improvement in conditions.

### Settlement

The employers did, however, suggest that if the unions wanted to negotiate pay increases then they should try and do it on a factory to factory basis.

The engineering unions national committee has effectively decided to do this and passed a resolution stating:

'The executive council are instructed to initiate negotiations through district committees and shop stewards with individual employers on the understanding that settlement may be concluded on all or part of the claim which is acceptable to district committees and the members concerned.'

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions—which co-ordinates the action of the engineering unions—is meeting on 13 January and because the engineering union is by far the largest it is likely that this policy will be adopted. It is a policy which will be welcomed by the employers and the Tories.

Not only does it avoid a national struggle which, if combined with that of the miners, could have decisively challenged the government's policy of holding wages down. It is also a sell-out on the claim itself.

### Outlaw

The employers hope that workers will fight for less than the full claim and be prepared to accept productivity strings. They believe that the fact that there is no longer a procedure agreement operating in the industry will create confusion, while the present appalling level of unemployment and the introduction of those parts of the Industrial Relations Act which outlaw unofficial strikes will successfully frighten sections of workers into accepting less than the full claim.

This is even partly recognised by the national committee's resolution where it states 'settlement may be concluded on all or part of the claim'.

The policy of factory-to-factory bargaining is enthusiastically supported by Hugh Scanlon—the so-called left-wing president of the engineering workers union. At the summer 1971 conference of the national committee the claim was drawn up against his advice.

On Monday both he and the 'left' members of both the executive council and national committee adopted this new policy.

Engineering workers should oppose this decision and fight for a real struggle against the employers and the linking up of their claim with the national miners strike.

# STRIKERS CLOSE SCOTS CAR PLANTS

by Steve Jefferys

AUEW shop steward and Chrysler strike committee member

TWO strikes have virtually closed down the Scottish motor industry.

Workers at Chrysler's Linwood plant and at British Leyland's Bathgate plant both came out last Friday over their demand for a substantial wage rise, across the board, to bring the basic rates into line with the top rates paid in the Midlands.

At Bathgate the men had demanded lay-off pay and parity of wages with the British Leyland workers at Cowley, Oxford. In reply the management offered a maximum of ten days lay-off pay a year—not to be paid if the lay-off was caused by strikes at British Leyland plants—and wage increases of a mere £2 for skilled and £1.50 for unskilled workers.

As Tommy Reston, secretary of the joint shop stewards, put it: 'The men saw the £2 offer as an insult, when they are paid £10 a week less than workers in the South.' So 3,500 workers, with only four votes against, committed themselves to strike action.

### OBJECTIONS

At Linwood Chrysler made three alternative offers to their 6,500 manual workers: £5 if last year's agreement was continued, £4 if the men accepted four new productivity strings, and £3.60 now, with phased moves to 'parity' over 4½ years, if they accepted a Chrysler joint negotiating committee (as already exist at Ford and Massey Ferguson).

The objections to the company's interpretation of 'parity' were that it would take a long time to overcome the £10 difference between the Coventry and Linwood rates, and that it would widen the differentials between the top and bottom rates at Linwood—at present quite narrow.

It would also move negotiating power away from the shop floor to full-time officials. Experience elsewhere shows that this works to the benefit of the company and the disadvantage of the men.

The vote for strike action was unanimous. John Carty, the AUEW convenor and chairman of the joint shop stewards, described the first meeting of the strike committee as 'historic'.

This is the first time that all manual workers at Linwood have come out on



An Avenger being inspected before leaving the Chrysler production line.

strike on wages since the factory was built nine years ago.

But there are some signs that the executive officers of the unions involved have got cold feet. Bob Wright of the AUEW was reported as believing that negotiations could have gone on longer.

The NUVB executive had to be told very firmly by convenor Jimmy Livingstone that 'under no circumstances would the stewards recognise union-Chrysler negotiations from which the shop floor representatives were excluded'.

All the stewards are conscious of the need to avoid the sort of sell-out situation produced by Jones and Scanlon at Ford last year.

These two strikes show that workers in Scotland are still prepared to make heavy sacrifices in their struggle for improved living standards, despite the heavy unemployment and the Industrial Relations Act. If they can force the big car firms to stop treating them as a cheap labour market, then all workers in Scotland and other depressed areas will benefit.

## How to fix the jobless figures

THE British Steel Corporation and the main steel workers union, BISAKTA, have become so arrogant in their dealings with the workers that they have now taken to 'fixing' the unemployment figures.

They are doing this by asking 1900 of the men redundant at the Irlam plant to accept what is claimed to be 'average' pay until 31 March. The men will, however, have to pay their own national insurance contributions out of this at the self-employed rate.

Under this scheme many of the workers will find themselves worse off than they would on the dole. They also fear that their entitlement for unemployed benefit after March will be endangered.

But the management and the union are not concerned with such considerations—they have found an easy fiddle for preventing 1900 unemployed from appearing in the official statistics.

## Socialists on trial for their lives

TWO militant socialist republicans face trial for their lives in Dublin next week. Joseph Dillon and Sean Morrisey, alleged members of the Saor Eire group, are charged with the murder of a policeman in the course of a bank robbery two years ago.

Joe Dillon's brother, Patrick, was sentenced to six years imprisonment for a bank robbery which he is supposed to have done four years ago.

Sentences for political activists are increasing sharply in the Republic of Ireland.

Saor Eire members have been subject to particular harassment by the state authorities. Only last week another alleged member of the group was 'picked up'.

The repercussions of the Northern Ireland crisis are likely to be felt more sharply than ever in the south in 1972. The most likely effect is harsher repression.

## WHITE COLLAR UNION BANS LEFT-WINGER

LAST Saturday Clive Jenkins' union—ASTMS—removed left-wing Ian Gibson from the national executive and banned him from holding any office until mid-1973. Gibson was found 'guilty' of telling another union member of why the union hadn't made a strike official.

# BACKING FOR THE MINERS

### Power men

MILITANT power workers are making strenuous efforts to ensure that the miners get the full backing of other workers. Advance, the rank and file power workers' paper, has put out a leaflet which says:

'In December both power workers and miners were offered a seven per cent pay rise by the Tory employers. The offer is an insult. The cost of living has risen by over 10 per cent in the last year.'

'Miners and supply workers are employed by the same bosses—the Tory government. Last year the power workers stood in the front line in the battle to win a decent living wage for organised workers generally. This year the miner stands where we stood—ALONE. We must support the miners.'

'All senior shop stewards should contact

their local mineworkers' lodges to invite them to send a speaker to the station or depot to state their case.

'All members of the four unions in the supply industry should attend their branches and put in resolutions in support of the miners.'

'Union members employed on coal plants should ensure that not one lump of fresh coal is delivered. Coal must be BLACK in more sense than one!'

### Journalists

JOURNALISTS have been urged not to party to any press witchhunt against striking mineworkers in a statement put out last week by the committee of the National Union of Journalists' largest branch, Magazine and Book.

The statement was issued to all national

newspapers and the London offices of all regionals, but was not reported in any of these.

It expressed grave concern that the government and newspaper proprietors would use the press to convince readers that miners were responsible for lack of heat and power for old people and hospitals.

It notes that the plight of the old is always with us in this kind of society because even when coal and power are in abundant supply the old simply cannot afford to pay for them.

That is why 10,000 old age pensioners freeze to death each month of the winter.

The branch statement warns that the government and newspaper proprietors, with ready control over the media, may well try to launch a smear campaign against the miners.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

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# Socialist Worker

## BENDIX-THE INSIDE STORY

**KIRKBY:** 'It's far better to occupy, to control from within rather than stand out in the rain and cold, the fog and the wind, trying to stop scab vehicles.'

This was the message that Jack Spriggs, AUEW convenor of Fisher-Bendix the washing-machine firm, gave a mass meeting of nearly 800 Lancashire workers last week when they voted unanimously to take over the factory, rejecting management's plans to close the plant and throw them on the dole. The workers are now occupying the works 24 hours a day on a four-shift basis.

Decision-day, 5 January, began with 50 workers, led by Jack Spriggs, meeting management representatives led by Sydney Carne.

Jack Spriggs gave the management 15 minutes to withdraw the notice of closure and their orders to start dismantling machines. When management refused and said their closure decision must go ahead, the workers gave them 10 minutes to leave the factory.

Jack Spriggs was given a tumultuous reception in the works canteen. He introduced Ian Levin, the deputy mayor of Liverpool, who had written to Sir Jules Thorn, head of the Thorn Group that owns Fisher-Bendix, asking him to keep the factory open.

### REJECTED

Councillor Levin had arrived at the factory gates just as the management were leaving. He persuaded them to come back for further talks.

But all they would offer was a 'stay of execution' for 28 days when the closure would go ahead. The mass meeting rejected this offer, along with a promise of a 'parliamentary inquiry' into the whole affair.

Jack Spriggs told the workers: 'We cannot be sure who will get the advantage if we accept this offer. But if you continue with the occupation we will win.'

He added: 'We have a golden opportunity

### by Malcolm Marks

AUEW Radiator Department

to lead Merseyside in a fight against big business. Their whole aim is to make money at the expense of the working class.'

The convenor said that if Thorn were prepared to maintain them on full wages until every worker retired at 65 then they would willingly leave the factory. But if not, the millions of pounds' worth of stores and equipment in the plant would be held by the workers.

'Merseyside is waiting for a lead. We have got to have the responsibility to take it,' he went on. He called on trade unionists and housewives everywhere to black Thorn products.

He stressed the need for unity inside the factory and called on the massive support already promised by Merseyside trade unionists.

After the unanimous vote was taken—with hands held up long enough for even the most doubting TV camera—the workers streamed back into the factory to start organising the occupation.

'Brothers and sisters, we are on our way to victory,' were the parting words from Jack Spriggs.

Messages and donations to: Fisher-Bendix Factory, South Boundary Road, Kirkby, Lancs.

## Dockers plan counter attack

by Bob Light

SHOP STEWARDS from all the major docks in Britain met in London on Saturday to discuss a counter attack to the latest moves by port employers.

The employers have declared their intention to get rid of as many as 3000 men by returning them to the unattached register—a pool of dockers who are denied regular employment.

All that stands between men on the unattached register and the dole queue is the National Dock Labour Scheme. This is a unique agreement that guarantees the trade unions a 50 per cent voice

on the board that controls the employment of dock labour.

If the employers are successful in placing the 3000 men on the register, then the days of the NDLS will be strictly numbered.

Saturday's meeting produced a nine-point programme: no redundancies, no interference with the NDLS, implementation of the Bristow recommendations on work on containers, full pay for men

temporarily on the unattached register, recall of the union's dock delegate conference, reduced working week, more holidays and retirement at 60 on full pay, re-introduction of national fixing manning scales and nationalisation.

But the programme has at least one glaring omission—it makes no reference to the Phase Two productivity deal.

But the meeting and the programme mark an important step forward. As a sign of their determination the shop stewards have called a one-day national strike for 26 January.



Scene in the Fisher-Bendix canteen as convenor Jack Spriggs called for an occupation

## Sit-ins are threat to the Tories

by Jack Spriggs

SERIOUS TROUBLE started some six months ago when Thorn Electrical took over the factory from Parkinson-Gowan. Thorn wanted to shift the washing machine business to Spain.

This meant 500 redundancies. We opposed the plans by withdrawing labour. After nine weeks' strike we won completely. The management withdrew their plans for redundancy.

But most of us knew that the matter would not end there. We had to look for new ways of fighting redundancy. The strike, however, made all the difference. The men and women in the factory could see that redundancies were not inevitable and could be fought, and fought successfully.

The management soon made it clear that they intended closing the whole factory by May 1972. We organised a shop stewards' combine committee throughout the Thorn group, ensured no plant left the factory, maintained contact with local factories and building sites, planned future blacking operations and raised a fighting fund by collecting 50p weekly from each member of the workforce.

### Took possession

The management issued 60 redundancy notices for the end of January. On Monday 3 January they announced plans for the removal of plant. We simply reiterated our intention not to accept any redundancies, any closure, any removal of plant.

On Wednesday management offered a 26 day stay of execution, but would not withdraw the 60 redundancy notices. A mass meeting rejected this so-called offer and unanimously voted for an occupation strike.

We immediately detailed men to the gatehouse and administration block. We also took possession of the spares and service depot a mile from the main factory.

The workforce, or rather the occupiers, were divided into four six-hour shifts to ensure 24-hour control of the premises. On Thursday the shop stewards' committee, with representatives of the staff workers and co-opted members where necessary, formed committees for safety, security, propaganda, discipline, welfare, finances and press.

We have had telegrams of support from

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JACK SPRIGGS

UCS, Allis-Chalmers and Plessey Alexandria. Within 24 hours local factories had offered assistance with picketing.

We need financial support and telegrams of support to keep our morale up. We have also called for a boycott on all Thorn goods. Support for solidarity actions will certainly be forthcoming on Merseyside.

But it is not just a case of helping us. Any other factory, building site or workplace faced with redundancy should seriously consider occupation. The trade union movement as a whole must start

fighting back against redundancies.

We have much greater control in the factory by occupying rather than staging a work-in. We have use of all management facilities.

And we have the tremendous bargaining power of the stock. There are £200,000 worth of finished radiators in the factory, £50,000 in storage heaters, a dozen new articulated waggons and stacker trucks as well as £2 million in plant.

The occupation has clearly demonstrated the responsibility of the workers and their ability to control the factory. We can see quite clearly that we ourselves are capable of running the place.

Workers can control things themselves. I am not being utopian about this. I do not think that we could run this factory in isolation without other developments elsewhere. But it has shown us the possibilities.

Think for instance what would happen if the miners occupied instead of going on strike. A rash of occupation strikes against redundancy would be a direct challenge to the Tories and their friends like Julian Thorn. Workers would become aware of their potential power and their ability to run industry.

Jack Spriggs was talking to John Deason.

## Big Tyneside battle over sack for 950

by Terry Rodgers

Chairman,  
Parson's Joint Office Committee

NEWCASTLE: 1300 members of the Draughtsman's union at C A Parson's engineering factory refused to attend for work on Monday. They are imposing a four-day week in their fight against management's plans for 950 redundancies, to be followed by a further 600 next year.

Representatives of all the unions in the company have announced that they reject the philosophy of redundancy and have refused to meet the management to discuss its financial and trading problems until the threat of redundancy is withdrawn.

The management have complained about our reaction and have told the local Labour MP, Geoffrey Rhodes, that they did not have the same trouble at their subsidiary Reyrolles when a similar

exercise was carried out there last year. Mr Krause, managing director of Parson's, considers that he has been badly treated by the union representatives. He expected them to co-operate by preparing lists of those to be sacked so that the operation could be carried out smoothly.

The technical staff are implementing the four-day week to impose sanctions on the company. Clerical workers are preparing to follow a similar policy—in their case bringing out different sections on different days to maximise harassment.

These actions are in addition to a general ban on overtime, a work to rule, 'working without enthusiasm', and a refusal to do sub-contract work.

Trade unionists in Parson's are united as never before in this common fight. If this unity can be maintained at least one company on Tyneside may find it not so easy to sack workers when the will to resist is clear.

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## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS' INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE

The Struggles Ahead for the Working Class Movement in 1972

All trade union members who support the policies fought for by the International Socialists are urged to attend this Conference. Topics for discussion are:

- 1 The fight against unemployment and factory occupation.
- 2 The fight against the Industrial Relations Act.

In the coming year both these questions will be of vital importance for the working class in its fight against the Tory Government.

Write now for credentials to:

Industrial Sub Committee (Conference)  
6 Cottons Gardens

London E2 8DN

The Conference will be held in Manchester on Sunday 30 January.