

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

VICTORY!

-BUT THE FIGHT GOES ON

THE RELEASE from prison of the five dockers is one of the greatest victories ever won by rank and file trade union action. Despite the pretence of the Tory judge, Sir John Donaldson that he was influenced by the House of Lords' decision in the Heaton case, there can be no doubt what caused the gates of Pentonville Prison to open.

But for the massive wave of solidarity strikes, they would still be shut. The strikes have dealt a shattering blow to the whole Tory strategy of using the law to prevent a fight by workers against the government's policy of low wages and high unemployment.

The Tories attempted to bind with legal fetters one of the strongest sections of the working class. Within days they were forced by the reaction of hundreds of thousands of ordinary rank and file workers to abandon the attempt and beat an ignominious retreat.

But to lose a single battle is not to lose a war. Already the Tories are preparing their counter-attack.

In a significant legal manoeuvre, the hearing of the House of Lords Heaton's appeal case was rearranged so that it took place before the official solicitor put his case to the Industrial Relations Court on Wednesday.

In other words, the Tories were not prepared to let the five out until they had ensured they had another line of attack.

END STRUGGLE

Beneath the legal jargon, the decision in the Heaton case means that instead of the courts taking on the docks stewards themselves, they are pressurising Jack Jones to do it instead.

They have told him that he will face ever increasing fines unless he takes all possible measures necessary to get the dockers to end the struggle for their jobs. They have said that the courts will not imprison the stewards; instead Jones must put an end to the democratic right of his members to elect their own representatives and take the stewards' credentials away.

The changed tactics are not surprising. The representatives of the ruling class have watched closely the behaviour of the official trade union leaders since the Industrial Relations Act was first proposed two years ago.

They remember the way in which fine words about boycotting the court were instantly ignored the moment Donaldson imposed the first fine on the Transport Workers' Union.

They saw the snivelling of the trade union leaders, the begging for interviews with Heath while the action against the dockers was being prepared.

They also noted who took the initiative this week. It was not Jones who organised the sympathy action.

SW Political Correspondent

Feather preserved his strong words against the government until four days of overwhelmingly unofficial sympathy action had already ensured the release of the dockers.

And even then, the decision of the TUC was not for an all-out General Strike to smash the Industrial Relations Act, but for a one-day stoppage only.

The Tories believe that they can save the Industrial Relations Act now by confronting such leaders with fines rather than the rank and file with prison bars. They can be proved wrong. But only by the organised action of that same rank and file.

Dockers must resist any pressure to call off their action against cheap-labour container depots and unregistered ports. This must continue until a real guarantee of their jobs is given.

Any plans by the Transport Workers Union leaders to discuss with the employers while the legal action remains in force must be resisted. There must be no negotiations under duress.

There must be a return to the original TUC decision to boycott the court. The TGWU must be forced to abandon its previous plans to pay fines.

We must reject the idea that the money rank-and-file members pay in subscriptions can be seized whenever shop stewards obey the decisions of their members as opposed to the dictates of general secretaries who are elected for life.

The way to defeat the Industrial Relations Act is not by retreat and compromise. Even the TUC belatedly recognised this when they broke off their talks with Heath and called for a one-day strike.

The way to respond to fines is not to pay them, but to refuse a single penny to Donaldson's Court and to organise a general strike if any



Cornelius Clancy chaired by a triumphant crowd as he was released from jail on Wednesday. Picture: Mike Cohen

attempt is made to seize union funds.

Unfortunately leopards do not change their spots. The fact that in a moment of panic the General Council called for industrial action against a court decision, does not mean that our official leaders have lost their instinctive cowardice when faced with the law.

FINAL LESSON

It is imperative that the rank and file who responded so magnificently this week prepare now for the future. And that means in each locality bringing together genuine representatives of the sections of workers who have taken sympathy action. Councils

of Action that are capable of co-ordinating and leading further moves need to be built.

One final lesson has to be learnt. The urgent need is to build an organisation within the working class to argue for the militant policies needed to overthrow the Tories and, further, to point out how government policies follow from the absurd logic of the system to which Heath and his friends are dedicated.

An organisation is necessary that rejects completely the laws with which big business tried to bind us and the ruses with which it attempts to divide us—in other words, a full-blooded, revolutionary socialist organisation.

The fight is not over. While the Tories continue to employ the Act, trade unionists must not relax.

● The dockers' action to defend their jobs must continue.

● No talks with the Tories or the CBI.

● No payment of fines

● No negotiations under threat of fines

● Only strike action can defeat the law

● The TUC must call a general strike against the fines on the TGWU and to defeat the Industrial Relations Act.

DOCKS REPORT BLUEPRINT FOR REDUNDANCIES: PAGE 2

DOCKS REPORT BLUEPRINT FOR HEAVY REDUNDANCIES

THROUGHOUT the current struggle against the Industrial Relations Act, the government, the docks employers and the leaders of the Transport Workers Union have looked to the Jack Jones-Lord Aldington report to get the industry, the government and the official trade union movement off the hook.

On Monday this week the report was hurried out for the eager and waiting national newspaper journalists who would then have rushed into print with tales of the big handouts to get dockers to leave the industry and the major concessions on the question of container working.

Purpose of the press operation would have been to divert attention from the five dockers languishing in jail, head off solidarity action in other industries and provide the basis to return the docks industry to 'normal working' with its problems kept outside the industrial court. The working class movement owes a great debt to the striking printworkers for putting the skids under this strategy.

While the Jones-Aldington report contains recommendations few thought any such committee would make, it does nothing to tackle even the basic problems that afflict dockers as a section of the British working class.



London dockers unloading a barge: dangerous work done in all weathers

The report does support the abolition of the temporary unattached register, the dockers' limbo on the road to permanent unemployment. Abolition was one of the key planks in the National Port Shop Stewards Committee policy.

It also states that work which has been moved out of the ports into containers and unregistered container work being carried out in the port areas should be the registered dockers' prerogative.

The container industry should be rationalised to get rid of the cowboys and registered dockworkers should have priority of recruitment in container bases and in cold stores and warehouses that have moved their

by Arthur Malone

work out of the Port of London, says the report.

Where non-registered workers are employed side by side they should have parity of wages and conditions with the dockers.

So Jones-Aldington contains some major concessions to the embattled dockers in their fight for survival. There can be little doubt that these are due to the splendid rank and file campaign of blacking and picketing in defiance of the Industrial Relations Act rather than Jack Jones' negotiating abilities.

But Jones has consistently refused

to take the dockers' initiative on their own specific trade union issues and develop them into an official fight to drive forward for really significant gains out of the struggle. And at no time has he considered officially backing the dockers' lead in opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

Jones-Aldington in no way envisages a halt to the massive run down in the ports industry. Far from it. The purpose of boosting the minimum and maximum severance payment for quitting the industry to £2000 and £4000 respectively for the last five months of the year is precisely to continue the run down and make it smoother.

With unemployment on a high level in this country already, and with the dismemberment of the docks industry in particular, it is nothing short of scandalous that Jones continues to trade jobs for bigger golden handshakes.

In contrast to the negotiations-usual approach of the TGWU leadership (suitably camouflaged in pious resolutions about the scandal of unemployment, the plight of the old, the threat of pollution), the National Port Shop Stewards Committee has always put the question of defending the register at the heart of the struggle.

What they mean is that no more jobs on dockland should be sold. Their policy has been that technological progress should not be used to boost profit margins by throwing workers on the scrapheap.

Shelved

Rather technology should be put to social ends by the mass action of the labour movement. This is the thinking behind their demands for retirement on full pay at 60, more holidays, a shorter working week and the reintroduction of nationally fixed manning scales sold under Devlin phase two.

On the container question, the NPSSC holds by the implementation of the Bristowe proposals for a five mile container corridor round London.

This would give the dockers the right to work containers which is why, under pressure from the employers, the last Labour government shelved the report.

And the truth of the matter is that many if not all the Port Shop Stewards' proposals could have been extracted from the present situation if the dockers' struggle had been backed by the might of the TGWU. This would have involved a clear and active defiance of the Industrial Relations Act.

Divert

Where the Jones-Aldington report is at its most dangerous is on the question of containers and the unregistered ports. There is no victory on either question in this report. On containers the only way the dockers will be able to win the decision is by continued vigilance and militancy to police the agreement.

And there is absolutely nothing on the unregistered ports where employers have been diverting work and ships to undermine the dockers' strength. They are simply to be approached to pay levy contributions to the Dock Labour scheme.

At the press conference that launched the report Jack Jones made no reference to the imprisoned dockers and concentrated on the big boost on the golden handshake front. The purpose of their operation is to get back to some ideal normality where human progress can be achieved through employer-union negotiations.

Message

To hold such a position is to learn nothing from the current struggle, those that have preceded it and those that will inevitably follow. The Hays Wharfs of this world have not picked this fight for fun.

Any advance contained in the Jones-Aldington plan is the direct fruit of the dockers' magnificent struggle. The message of its pages is a call for more of that struggle.

And in no sense should the report be allowed to provide yet another excuse to avoid a fight with this corrupt and tottering government. United in action, and armed with an understanding of the potentiality of our society and the working class itself there is nothing that cannot be achieved.

The Industrial Relations Act must go, and hopefully this strike will smash it. As for the government, I'm not sure. The toppling of the Tories must be in the back of every workers mind.

THOSE were the words of Walter Cunningham, of the Hull Port Shop Stewards Committee, yesterday. Cunningham was the man who refused to appear before the Industrial Relations Court back in May over the blacking of containers at Hull docks, and defied the court to jail him.

'I personally feel there should have been a general strike called on Monday,' he said yesterday.

'The Jones-Aldington proposals are simply not good enough . . . but perhaps the jailings have been used to soften up the TUC to accept a wage freeze deal for all workers. The problem is that the average worker still sees a break between union struggles and politics.

'We may have got more in the past if we'd been more political. One thing is certain, if the Labour Party, gets back, repeals the Industrial Relations Act, then tries to bring something similar in we must and will fight them. We won't accept any anti-union legislation.

'Containerisation was supposed to make things more efficient, ease the distribution of goods and reduce the cost to the consumer.

'We can see it has done no such thing. The very people who have lost through containerisation have been workers, both in jobs and prices. The fight against containerisation has been continuing for many years in Hull but only recently has it become newsworthy.

Twisted

'Container work has always been dockers' work. It is only because the mass of dockers throughout the country have only now taken up the fight that the problem has got twisted around. Other workers have been allowed in the past to take these jobs and now everyone sees them as having a right to them.

'This would not have happened if we had insisted on this being dock work from the start. We must stop the cowboys—the people who do a lorry-driving shift and then do some 'stuffing' and 'stripping'.

'In this way the employers are using containerisation simply to get cheap rates. The people they employ are working under conditions we fought against 10 years ago, and, if they are allowed to, the employers will go on to use more such workers in many more unregistered wharfs.

'Saying that all work in container depots must be done by registered dock labour is not necessarily the answer, we still have to get our men off the unemployed register, we still want jobs, all dock work must

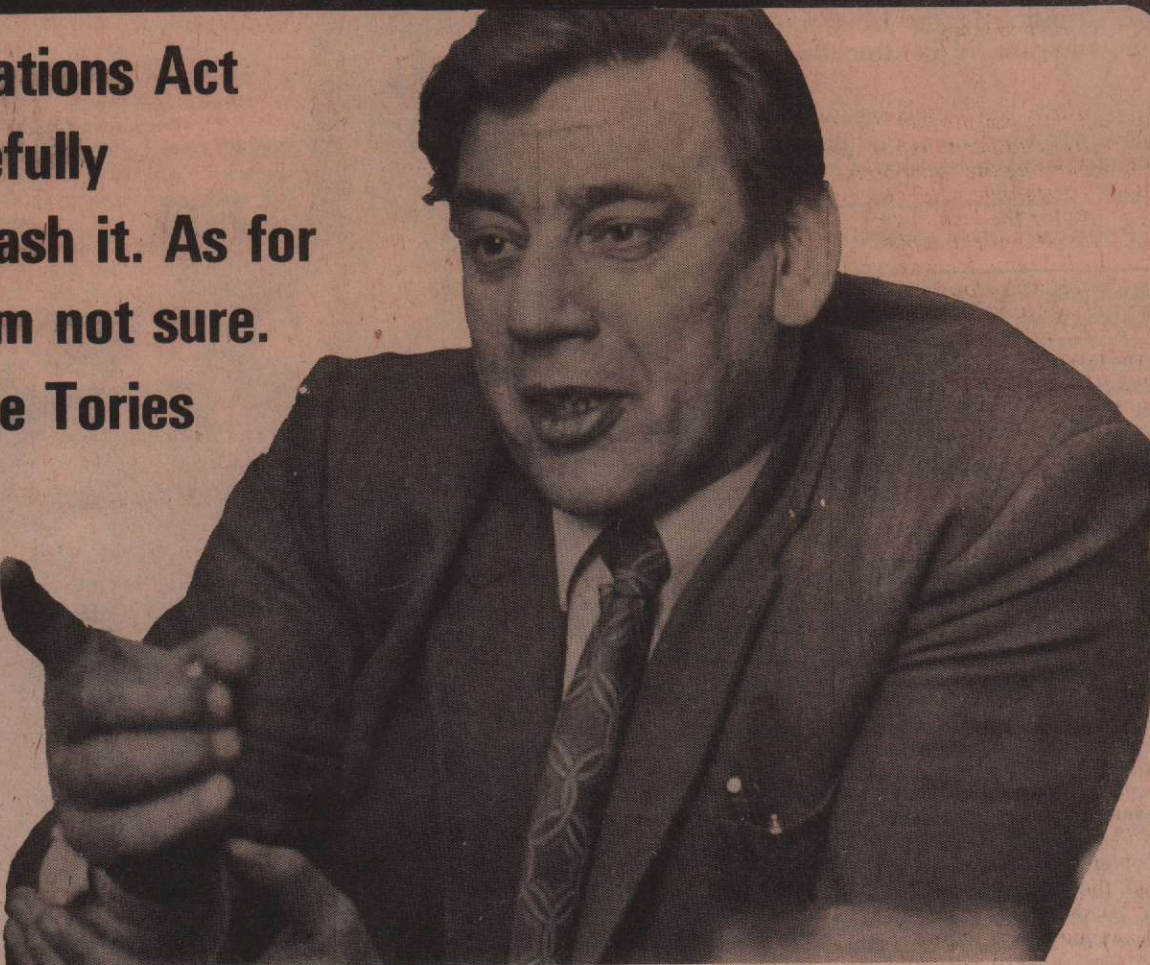
be done in the Hull dock area.

'In saying this, we have no fight against lorry drivers or any section of workers, but, unfortunately there is no short-term solution to the division among workers which is being used by the employers.'

He was asked what his opinion was of the actions of the official union leaders during the dockers' struggle.

'There has been no leadership. That is why an unofficial committee has been necessary. The leadership seems only concerned with getting more members.'

KEITH BELL



Socialist Worker

For Workers Control and International Socialism, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN

The war goes on

THE RELEASE of the five jailed dockers is a milestone in trade union history. The magnificent solidarity strikes that swept the country and paralysed important sections of industry have proved that when the working class stands together and fights together then the power of the government and the law courts can be beaten.

But we must not rest on our laurels. We have won a battle. The war is not yet over. The government will not throw in the towel and abandon its strategy of attacking the living standards and the organisations of the working class. It will try new tactics but the general offensive will go on.

The decision of the law lords on Wednesday underlines this point. They overturned the appeal court's decision in the case of Heaton Transport and the Transport Workers Union. They ruled that the union must pay the original fines and that it is responsible for the actions of its shop stewards.

This is a crucial decision that affects every militant in the union movement. From the day the Tories first published their Industrial Relations Bill, this paper has stressed that the law is aimed not against the Vic Feathers, Lord Coopers, Frank Chapples or even Jack Joneses of our movement. On the contrary, it is devised to cripple the unions at their grass roots by making illegal the basic weapons of the rank and file—the closed shop, blacking, picketing, sympathy action

The union leaderships have a key role to play in this scheme: to act as 'industrial policemen', disciplining their members, counselling them against breaches of the law for fear of the heavy fines which the NIRC can impose. From the outset, the opposition of the union leaders to the Act has been confined to platform windbagging, Sunday rallies and petitions to parliament. They have been anxious to avoid any action that would upset their delicate balancing act between workers and employers

This cosy relationship has been hit by militant pressure from the rank and file against the Act and registration. This did not stop Jack Jones agreeing to pay the original fine on the TGWU—but the timing of the law lords' decision this week will make it much harder for him to wriggle off the hook a second time. In the wake of the mass movement created by the jailing of the dockers, it will be difficult for Jones, with his 'left' image already badly dented, to give in to the courts.

Thanks to the fighting determination of the rank and file this last, historic week, Jones and the rest of the union leaders will have to stand up and be counted. If the dockers decide to maintain their campaign against container depots, Jones will have to choose between taking official responsibility for their action and fighting fines and court action or do the copper's job, expel the shop stewards and knuckle under completely to the Tories' law. It is vitally important that TGWU members demand that Jones refuse to pay the fine and support his stewards' actions.

There must be no let up in rank and file opposition to the Act. Almost without exception, support for the dockers came from below, reluctantly and belatedly forcing the union leaders to call for a one-day strike. There will be no continuing struggle against the law and the Tories unless the mass of ordinary trade unionists force their leaders into action.

But what of the 'political arm of the labour movement'—the Labour Party? Harold Wilson has suggested that the Tories should amend the Act so that only the employment minister could take workers to court. In other words: keep the Act, continue the attack on the unions, but don't let wild-cat employers get out of hand.

Other voices are singing a slightly different tune. Wedgwood Benn has backed the dockers and Barbara Castle wrung out a few tears over the grave of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and condemned the Industrial Relations Act. As the former supported and the latter designed In Place of Strife, Labour's pace-setter for the Industrial Relations Act, their tub-thumping can be dismissed as sheer hypocrisy. Had they been around at the time of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, they would cheerfully have helped clamp the manacles on their legs.

Reg Prentice, with his open condemnation of the dockers, is a more honest representative of the Labour Party. Its aim is to make minor reforms while propping up the capitalist system. But in a time of real crisis it will side openly with the interests of the ruling class and will use just as vicious penal sanctions against the unions as the Tories.

The fight against the Industrial Relations Act is part of a political fight against the Tories and the system they serve. The success of that struggle will lie not in the false friends in the Labour Party, with 70 years of betrayal and surrender, but in forging from the strength and determination of working people shown this last week a genuine socialist party that will organise and spearhead the battle for workers' power.

OH NO - THIS LOOKS LIKE A CASE FOR...



CONTAINERS WARS

Stamped on

FREEDOM, the anarchist weekly paper, has caught the Post Office with its trousers down and added a nice footnote to the Younger Committee's report on privacy.

As we said last week, the Younger recommendations are of little value to the vast majority of people because the committee was refused permission to include state intrusions of privacy in its terms of reference. And it is the official snooper who poses the gravest threat to workers' and socialists' civil liberties.

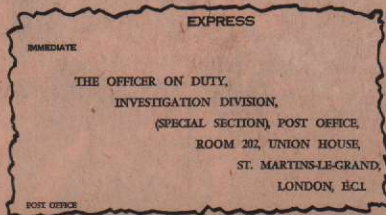
Last week when the Freedom staff opened their mail they found two Post Office forms mixed up with the letters—forms that showed conclusively that there is an 'investigation division' at the Post Office that opens and reads the mail of left-wing papers and organisations. We have always known that this happened—it can't just be inefficiency that causes first-class letters to take three days to reach us—but it's nice to have proof.

The forms carried the imprint of the Investigation Division (Special Section) at St Martins-le-Grand, the main headquarters of the Post Office. With a pleasing irony, 'Special Section' is contracted to 'SS' on one of the forms.

The form reproduced here is an 'express' label for forwarding suspected mail to the SS division. The other form inadvertently sent to Freedom is an 'advice of despatch and form of receipt' which is signed by an executive when the investigation has been completed. A note on the form says: 'This form should be used where acknowledgement of the receipt of items or documents of a special or confidential nature.'

Someone, somewhere wants to read a letter from you...

COLLEAGUE Laurie Flynn is taking bets that he can lay claim to a new world record: the shortest serving member of a union executive. Last Tuesday he was declared elected to the council of the journalists' union—and 36 hours later he was deposed



Freedom to snoop

when a fresh scrutiny showed that the election figures had been incorrectly apportioned among the candidates under the 'transferable vote' system.

But no joy for the lack-lustre leaders of the NUJ at the rapid departure of L Flynn. He was replaced by Eric Winter, who stood with him on a joint platform for 'radical reform' of the union. The word from NUJ headquarters is that officials are preparing for 'the Winter of their discontent'.

Summing up

THE LABOUR PARTY seems to suffer from bad arithmetic as well as bad politics. The latest issue of Labour Weekly carries the headline: 'Common Market the biggest issue for party conference'.

Now how do you define 'biggest issue'? The article under the heading reports nine motions for the conference on the Market, 10 on greater party control of MPs, 61 on housing, 36 on public ownership of land, 52 on the health service, 33 on nationalisation, 31 on pensions, 24 on education and 17 on unemployment.

Even Labour Party hacks can't be that bad at adding up. More likely that Wilson and co are happy to allow the Common Market to dominate discussion to avoid being committed on home policies.

WHO believes the class system is dead? Only Labour politicians and some union bosses—certainly not judges. Agreeing last week to dissolve a marriage between a dental surgeon and the daughter of a miner, Mr Justice Ormrod said it was not surprising the marriage had broken down 'because there was a wide social and cultural gap' between them.

Square peg

ALARM at the rocketing house prices is not shared by the fortunate shareholders of the housebuilding firms. Northern Developments of Blackburn have just recorded pre-tax profits of £2,840,000—a cool 85 per cent increase over the previous year.

Meanwhile, whatever happened

to the CBI's 'price restraint' policy? The bosses' organisation agreed to peg prices at 5 per cent, but scant regard seems to have been given to the pledge.

The official retail prices index rose by 6.8 per cent between December and June and several giants are hiking their prices up: the London Brick company is putting up prices by an average of 7.5 per cent—a move that won't exactly help quell house prices, either—ICI is raising the price of its nylon yarn by 5 to 10 per cent and Allied Breweries are to increase the price of the country's top-selling beer, Double Diamond, by 1p.

Nothing inflationary, you understand.

READERS will be pleased to learn that Harold Wilson's pet Labrador, missing for a week, was found half a mile from home last Friday. The dog's name: Paddy. Perhaps it was not so much missing as showing its displeasure at Master's attitude to Ireland.

Timber!

THE New York Herald Tribune reveals that back in the late 1960s a contingent of foresters from the US Department of Agriculture was hard at work in South Vietnam trying to develop the timber industry which produces fine mahogany and other valuable hardwoods.

Unknown to them at the same time, the Pentagon was using scientists to develop artificial fire storms in South Vietnam to help flush out the NLF from the same forests.

Along with the chemical defoliation and artificial rain-making, the military machine was out to wreck the countryside in its forlorn attempt to defeat the Vietnamese freedom fight.

It is not reported how many members of the Agriculture Department were killed in the process...

Flying high

JOBLESS readers may care to reply to the following add in The Times: 'Personal Assistant required for a 30-year-old single millionaire. Duties include working on overseas family trust, general financial matters and dealing with a string of racehorses. The candidate should be young with a pleasing manner and have an accountancy background whilst in addition should be prepared to work erratic hours. Possession of a driving licence and an enjoyment of all types of flying in planes is also a necessity. Salary is upon experience and ability. Write in first instance to Box 2336K, The Times.'



The council that took 20 years to put in hot water

by Sue Jackson

JUST over 20 years ago, a family of seven moved into a three-bedroom council house in Coventry. They considered themselves lucky, for because of the influx of families into the city looking for work, there was a shortage of houses.

The house had three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and an inside toilet. There was no hot water, only two electrical points, no lighting in the bedrooms, a stone sink and a bath in the kitchen, and the whole house was mice infested.

It took the family six months to get rid of the mice—but it took the council 20 years to modernise the house.

This is probably typical for people living in old council houses. It's not like having a home—more like accommodation.

If you're the owner-occupier of an old house, you can get the money to do improvements on credit, paying it back over several years. But if you're a council tenant, the council when they eventually do the improvements will add about 3p a week to the rent for every extra electrical point, 75p (plus extra rates) for central heating—and you'll go on paying, not just until the cost is paid, but forever.

As the government is pushing for the improvement of old property by giving grants, councils have taken the opportunity to jump into the biggest racket ever.

Take one area at a time, move the tenants to different houses, do the modernisation. Then put the tenants back again with an extra £1.50 added permanently to the rent.

Suffer

You might not think this unfair, but it is expected to take 60 years to pay for a council house, and many are certainly over that age. The average rent of an old council house before modernisation was £2.50 per week, and since the council spends £30 per year on maintenance this means that before modernisation they are making just under £2 a week profit. After modernisation they have a grant to pay for half the work done, and the tenant pays the other half over and over again.

And tenants must suffer arrogant council officialdom.

You may live in a council house for years and never miss a rent payment, then one week you can't pay, for some reason. A letter arrives about 'being behind in the rent, and the council doesn't allow arrears.'

In other words, do it again and the housing committee will have to 'review your tenancy'. Not the sort of treatment an owner-occupier would receive.

In some new areas, councils are allowing 'nice' people in the houses, and herding other people labelled as 'undesirables' into another area, forcing the whole class issue at them, with that 'I'm superior to you' myth.

Perhaps a family doesn't like gardening, so they don't bother with it, but their children play there. The council say they have got to keep it neat and tidy or they will take their home away from them and dump them in a flat.

What can one tenant do against the might of officialdom? Very little. But the time has come for tenants to unite to fight for a better deal. For after October councils that follow the government's housing policy and put up rents will be making big profits out of their tenants.

TORY RENT ROBBERY AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

A pamphlet vital to the tenants' fight

2p a copy, plus postage. 12 or more copies post free. Cash with orders to IS (Rents), 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2-8DN.

£½ MILLION PROFIT THEN 1500 SACKED

by Granville Williams

AS NEARLY 5000 workers marched through Walsall on 8 July in protest against the threatened closure of the town's Tube Investments factory, the chairman of TI, Lord Plowden, was just a few miles down the road receiving an honorary Doctor of Science degree at Aston University, Birmingham.

He then, in turn, presented students with their degrees. One was a student employed at Tube Investments. The chairman gave her a degree with one hand while taking away her job—and those of 1500 others—with the other.

The following Friday, 14 July, workers from the Tube Investments Action Committee met Plowden to argue the case for keeping the factory open. They went armed with the speech Plowden made the Saturday before, in which he said he had great experience at the Treasury of how to achieve full employment.

The Tube Investments workers received no joy. All Plowden offered was

about 290 jobs at other Tube Investments factories spread within a 30-mile radius across the West Midlands. His advice to the stewards was: 'Your members' interest would be best served by co-operating with management in organising the run down of the factory.'

Generous to the end, he said there was a cup of tea waiting for them after the futile meeting.

Once TI had cleared out the factory, he argued, it would be possible for other employers to move in and create some jobs. Workers won't start clapping their hands to hear that Fine Tubes of Plymouth, where a strike for union recognition is now in its third year, had their managers in Walsall the morning after the TI closure announcement to see what was in it for them.

After the meeting the action committee had a lot to think about. The massive TI empire is certainly not going broke—their factories, organised in eight divisions, span the length and breadth of the country and include British Aluminium, machine tools, domestic appliances and the Steel Tubes division.

The Steel Tubes division, of which the Walsall factory is part, grossed a £½ million profit last year.

Four years ago TI decided to concentrate stainless steel tube production in Walsall. They predicted a bonanza in the nuclear field making the long-length stainless steel tubing used in atomic power stations.

£1.6 million was spent on modernising the factory, and another £250,000 on new centralised office facilities.

The trouble was that their forecasts were wrong and three weeks ago the firm announced the total closure of the Green Lane factory.

REFUSAL

But management documents shown me by the action committee reveal that TI is not going out of the stainless steel tubes business. A letter to major customers, dated 30 June, tells them not to worry about the Green Lane closure:

'You will have noticed that only the long-length stainless tube facility is directly affected by this announcement. . . . We intend that in the remainder of the stainless tube area we will emerge with greater strength in the future.'

TI's intentions are obvious—to close down the factory, sell unwanted plant, machinery and raw materials and move what they need to other factories.

Lord Plowden's refusal to discuss keeping the Walsall factory open leaves the action committee with only one course: to say firmly that there will be no redundancies and fight the closure.

Six unions are involved—the Engineers, TASS, their technical section, the Transport Workers, their clerical and technical section, the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, and the Association of Professional and Executive staffs.

BANNED

The action committee has started a massive campaign to inform workers at other TI factories, and the trade union movement generally, why they are fighting the closure, for they are adamant that no machinery or raw materials will leave the site, and this means getting the support of unions outside the Walsall factory.

They will control the factory whether there is work there or not. Trade union officials have been told that their job is not to negotiate redundancies but to organise to prevent them.

ASTMS members in 48 TI factories have banned overtime and imposed a 10p per worker weekly levy. Support has also come from local rank-and-file trade union action committees in Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

Miners from the Midlands, who picketed Walsall power station during their strike and received finance and hospitality from the TI workers, have also offered help.

The outcome of this struggle will be crucial for workers in Walsall and the West Midlands, where unemployment is already high. The action committee see that the way to win is by widening their fight to involve other TI plants so that action can be taken to block the transfer of work or machinery.



Tube Investment workers marching through Walsall: they will control the factory—with or without work

...as Lord Plowden prates about 'the affront of unemployment'

EDWIN NOEL, Baron PLOWDEN, KCB, KBE, has devoted his life to the service of British capitalism.

Groomed from his youth in the values and ideas of the ruling class, he has slid easily from merchant banking to such public posts as chief planning officer to the government's Economic Planning Board and vice-chairman of a NATO committee.

He is at present chairman of the Tube Investments group, a huge multi-national company with assets of £340 million. In this position he has laid great emphasis on the education and training of managers.

He is also chairman of the governing body of the London Graduate School of Business Studies. This institution specially trains bright young men just out



Plowden: crocodile tears

liberal economist, weeps crocodile tears about this. The very day 5000 workers were demonstrating in Walsall against the closure plan, he was blandly saying:

'Only those with long memories can now recall the misery, the affront to human dignity, which was caused by mass unemployment in the inter-war period.'

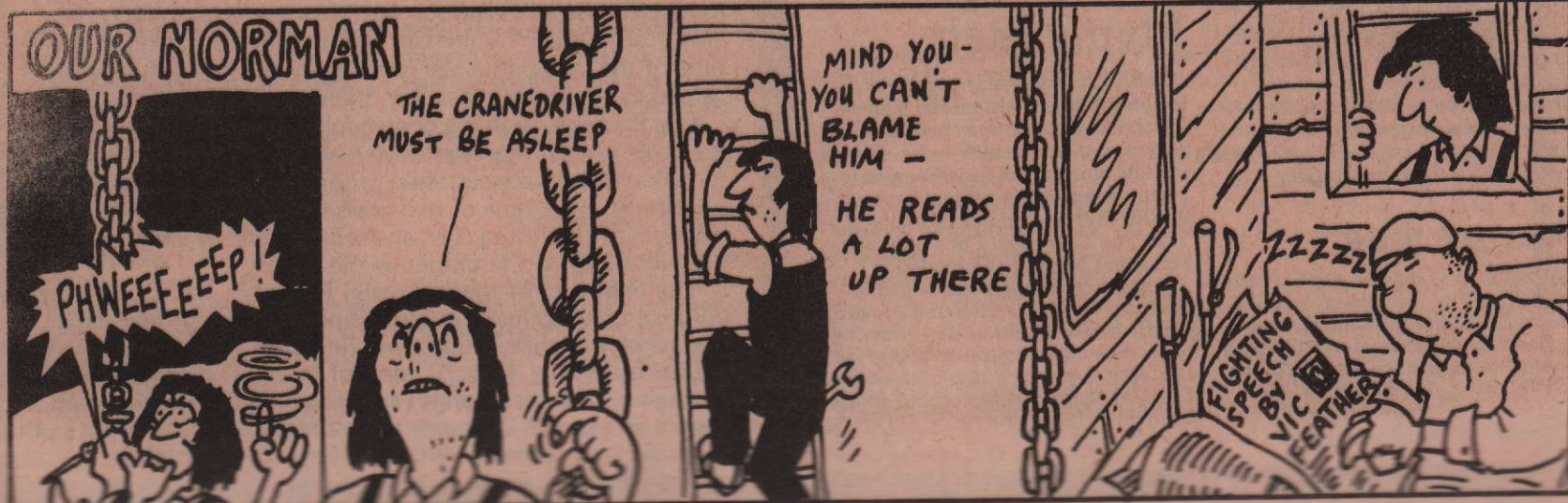
'We have today much too much unemployment—to which my own company has unfortunately been forced by the circumstances to contribute—but we know how to get to full employment if we choose and that in fact we are now moving in this direction.'

These hypocritical words besit Lord Plowden, director of the National Westminster Bank and of the Commercial Union insurance company.

of university to make British capitalism more efficient and productive.

The workers at Tube Investments, Walsall, have found out what this means in real terms—higher profits and more sackings.

Lord Plowden, as a so-called



LIVELIEST LETTERS ON THE LEFT

LABOUR LEADERSHIP SHOWS ITS COLOURS

AS THE employers and their government carry out an ever-escalating offensive against organised workers, socialists must recognise that the most important aspect of this struggle is the unwillingness of the established leadership of the labour movement to counter these attacks.

The Labour and trade union leaders are constantly collaborating with both government and employers. The Labour Party's chief spokes-

man on the matter, Reg Prentice, denounced the five London dockers as they were dragged off to Pentonville Prison. He said: 'I have no support for them... Trade unionists should not rally round these men as though they are Tolpuddle martyrs. They just are not worth it.'

Meanwhile Vic Feather can only seek to suspend the Industrial Relations Act, and, along with Jack Jones, hopes that the government will produce a convenient compromise in the

Jones-Aldington Report to be produced later this week.

However, the government has other qualms about the situation. The day after the arrest of the five dockers, the Financial Times editorial considered the present situation to be 'the most damaging confrontation between government and organised labour since the General Strike of 1926' and called for a quick return 'to conditions in which the wider national interest may get a hearing.'

The ruling class must urgently paper over the vast chasm—now clearly visible to millions—that separates them from the majority class of workers.

Today, the task for socialists is obvious. As more and more workers learn the lessons spelt out to them by the miners, railwaymen and dockers and move into open conflict with the government and employers, the need for a genuine alternative for workers must be provided.

It is with this in mind that an otherwise excellent Socialist Worker Dockers' Special must be criticised.

The demand 'that the TUC organise general industrial action to set the dockers free' is vague enough to be confusing. IS must make the specific demand that the TUC call a General Strike to defeat the Industrial Relations Act.—CHRIS RUSSELL, Kirkby, Lancashire.

Ireland: our duty is to criticise

TO SPEAK of the statement of the IS executive committee on Ireland as 'without a shred of internationalism' as did the letter from S McSweeney and others in last week's Socialist Worker, is a grotesque distortion of the truth. Their own position represents an abdication of socialist internationalism.

It is precisely because of our duty to support, without conditions, the anti-imperialist struggle of oppressed people, that we should denounce tactics which can only consolidate the hold of imperialism in Ireland. Acts of indiscriminate terrorism by the Provos not only drive 40 per cent of the Irish working class (the Protestant workers) still closer to Orange bigots, but also demoralise and confuse the Catholic majority of the working class.

This contempt for the leading role which working people must play in the liberation movement if it is to be successful, may appeal to armchair romantics, but in truth leads to the appeasing middle-class politics which enabled the Provo leaders to parley in secret with Whitelaw.

The duty of revolutionary socialists to the Irish working class and to the socialist alternative which comrades in Ireland are striving to develop demands of us both consistent opposition to imperialism and its armed thugs (an opposition which IS has never failed to advocate) and the sharpest criticism of the Provisional republicans.—SEAN TREACY, London SW19.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive not later than first post Monday. Write or type on one side of the paper only. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

Graphic with 'EQUAL PAY' in large letters and '... we want it NOW!' below. Includes small text about a militant campaign for equal pay for women.

Part of last week's centre spread article

Call for equal work

THE centre page in last week's Socialist Worker, although welcome, didn't raise issues crucial in the fight for equal pay.

The article fell into the trap of seeing the struggle for equal pay in isolation, without recognising that it needs to be linked to the fight for equal work and the wider aspects of women's situation.

The real problem is that women aren't allowed to do equal work.

This means getting more apprenticeships for girls and tackling the problems of education and the way girls are brought up in the family, which gives rise to ideas about 'women's work' and the notion that this is less valuable than men's.

On the question of value of work, Margaret Renn didn't make clear what she meant by 'equal work of equal value'. Who is to decide what the value of work is? Not the bosses, nor, following from her analysis, can the unions be trusted.

What about industries where men and women don't work together so can't have their work compared? Furthermore, many women wouldn't want equal pay with men earning low rates. The demand for a minimum wage of £25 for men and women overcomes many of these problems.

How are women to fight for these things? Pat Sturdy's experience has shown that women's caucuses in trade unions may be the way to do it. Yet this was relegated to a side issue in the interview with her!

It's not our job as revolutionaries to tail after trade unions, who after all raised the equal pay demand in the first place. It's feminism to treat men and women in the same way, so we must recognise women's place in the family makes their problems different, then we can raise the real problems and pose real solutions.—EVE BROOK and ANNIE BRIDGWOOD, Wyke, Bradford, Yorkshire.

BOMBING AND THE PROVOS

SOCIALIST WORKER is quite correct when it points out the danger of sectarian civil war in Northern Ireland in which the only losers would be the Protestant and Catholic working class, and the only victors the bosses of sectarianism and bigotry. All genuine socialists must share this fear.

But at the same time the paper seems to misunderstand completely the nature of the situation that has produced this danger.

The provisional IRA originally came into being in order to defend Catholic areas against attack by Orange mobs and the British Army and to the extent that it still does this, we must support it.

Today, however, we have to recognise that the Provos exist primarily in order to conduct a campaign of bombing and shooting intended to force the Protestant population of the North and many of the Catholics as well into a united Ireland against their will.

This campaign is not, as Socialist Worker seems to think, unfortunately marred by isolated sectarian attacks on the Protestant working class. It is a sectarian campaign and it will inevitably lead to a sectarian civil war and should be unreservedly condemned by Socialists because of this.

To call for working-class unity in the North and yet not to condemn the Provos' campaign of terror against the Protestant working class is sheer hypocrisy. Working-class unity cannot be achieved at the point of a gun.

The only way for socialists to avoid contributing to the rising tide of sectarianism and bigotry is for them to support and fight for the democratic rights of both the Protestant and Catholic communities in the North and these rights include the right of the majority to determine freely their own national loyalty.

This is the only basis for working class unity.—Keith Dantrey (NALGO), John Newsinger (NSMM), Stuart Riches (NSMM), J Riches (NUPE), London E11.

Indiscriminate violence not the way to socialism

SOME comrades who have been writing to Socialist Worker on Ireland appear to fail to see the problem in its wider political context.

Of course as revolutionaries we should support the IRA, who are protecting the oppressed minority against the imperialist British Army and the para-military forces of the so-called loyalists. We also support those who wish to free Ireland from the grasp of capitalism whether foreign or the home-grown variety represented by Lynch and company.

However, the history of class struggle has surely shown us that policies which amount to indiscriminate bombing produce results which are counter-productive to the cause of national liberation and socialism. Furthermore, one of the best

How socialist is the IRA?

THE CRITICISMS I made of the republican movement are not answered by Des O'Hagan's letter (8 July). Rather, some of them are confirmed.

It is tragic how much energy good republicans put into sniping at the other wing of the movement, rather than trying seriously to see whether Des O'Hagan's equation Republicans = Socialists is true.

If the equation is valid, then presumably, according to the same arithmetic, the Provisionals are not Republicans. But the Provos do echo many traditional republican attitudes. They came on the scene playing a traditional republican role, defending the Catholics of the North against sectarian attack and state repression.

'Green Tory' money and influence were certainly involved in the setting up of the Provos, but, as I said in the original article, this does not explain all their actions or their popular support. Even less does it explain the repression directed against them by the Southern regime.

Des O'Hagan is worried about the 'overt sympathy' which Socialist Worker shows towards the Provos. Let it be made clear that supporting them as an anti-imperialist force, and recognising the right to use armed force against an occupying army, does not mean approving every action. It most certainly does not mean political support.

Many of the Provos' actions have been sectarian. Their idea that by bombing enough property they could damage the economic system is mad. Their idea that the state could be overthrown by enough disruption even more so.

But Fianna Fail gold does not account for this. Strands of the same ideas survive in the 'socialist' Official IRA.

There are important differences between the two movements, but from the point of view of constructing a movement based on marxism they are perhaps less significant than the similarities. Both, for instance, have a view of the revolution in 'stages'.

With the Officials this is more formal. It seems that one reason why they criticise the Provos is that they (the Provos) brought the national question on to the scene too soon. We are now in the 'democratic stage', the Officials maintain. Hence, they emphasise the civil rights demands in the North, calling for a democratic administration, and, most recently, they have called for the setting up of a civil rights movement in the South.

The organisation adopting a 'stages' theory is likely to find itself out of key with what people are fighting for. Thus, when the majority of the anti-Unionist movement thought they were fighting for the abolition of Stormont, the Officials still stuck out for a utopian democratic administration with powers to decide for or against entry into the Common Market and to control movement of capital.

I do not wish to misrepresent the republican movement. I do not underestimate, I hope, the difficulties facing comrades in the North. But I am convinced that if the republican movement ever becomes socialist it will no longer be the republican movement. At the present time, the socialist organisation which must be built in Ireland will be built mainly outside the republican movement.

Recently Des O'Hagan signed a statement from internees which called upon people in the North to reject Catholic power and Protestant power, and to organise to achieve workers' power.

That is a very unfamiliar term in republican vocabulary. But if comrades in that movement are serious about 'workers' power', then let us see them put forward an alternative programme for working-class action for the republican movement. Then, perhaps, the socialist claims can be taken seriously.—BRIAN TRENCH, Dublin.

Honourable Reggie and the untold Tales of Hoffman...

HONOUR — Sympathy — Integrity. These were the words that flavoured Fleet Street's grovelling reception to the resignation of the abject 'Moneybags' Maudling.

Sorrow oozed from every sweaty pore of the editors and political pundits as they strained their vocabularies to tell their millions of readers what an honourable, upright man the departing Home Secretary was.

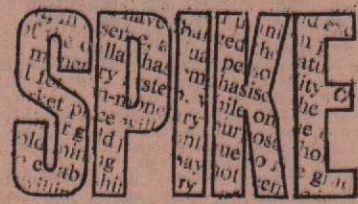
Marginally pipping the rest for the gold medal in the sycophancy stakes was the Daily Express editor, Derek Marks, who, apart from proudly announcing how he and Reggie 'were having a drink together one evening', expressed 'bewilderment' that the man in charge of the nation's police force should resign over the mere principle that it would be incongruous for him to hold office while matters with which he was concerned were investigated by the police.

Stupidity

Marks actually wrote: 'The Home Secretary has no more to do with the conduct of a police inquiry than the man in the moon.'

Cynics should not be too hard on Marks. His judgment has been impaired because he has been in the lily-white incorruptible environment of Fleet Street for so long that he cannot bring himself to believe that crookedness exists anywhere.

The stupidity of the Marks article was emphasised the following day by the Daily Mail's front page lead, which reported that Maudling might be quizzed by the police investigating the Real Estate Fund of America collapse.



RON KNOWLES' EYE ON THE PRESS

Maudling, as any Private Eye reader knows, was the fund's first president.

As I have mentioned before in this column, there has been only scant reference in the national newspapers to the New York court hearings about the collapse of the fraudulent Real Estate Fund of America and Maudling's involvement with it and its crooked frontman, Jerry Hoffman.

Now, of course, they are full of it. The very papers who bewail Maudling's fall from grace are only too happy to wring every ounce of drama from it.

But it was the resignation story itself and not the REFA ramifications that brought forth Fleet Street's genuine 24-carat cant.

The Express opinion column was headed A MATTER OF HONOUR. The Mirror weighed in with THE PRICE OF INTEGRITY.

MAUDLING MAN OF HONOUR, intoned the Sun. The rest joined the shabby chorus.

But all these experts on integrity and

honour were too mealy-mouthed to give any hint to their readers that the great national newspapers, with all their vast resources of staff, money and influence, would never have brought the Poulson affair to public attention were it not for the persistence of a few journalists on other publications.

For many months Ray Fitzwalter (Bradford Telegraph and Argus), Alex Mitchell (Workers' Press) and Paul Foot (Socialist Worker and Private Eye) have worked tirelessly to expose the Poulson Affair. It was only when their sensational findings became impossible to ignore that Fleet Street, once again trailing in the wake of genuine exposé journalism, turned its sordid spotlight on the matter.

Swindle

In their efforts to whitewash Maudling the commentators made much of his 'amiability', his 'tolerance', the 'liberal' spirit he brought to the harsher Tory policies.

So now you know how to win a reputation as an amiable, tolerant liberal. Find a sick German student, put him through a Star Chamber system, then kick him out of the country. Or, if you prefer, you can imprison thousands of Irishmen without bringing a shred of evidence against them.

Perhaps, if you sincerely want to be liberal, you could help an American con man swindle millions of people out of their savings.

Take your choice. Fleet Street is waiting to glorify you. The price of integrity is not affected by inflation—not even when it is your bank balance that is inflating.

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 racialism 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 man'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
Dumfries
Dundee
Edinburgh
Fife: Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glenrothes
Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling
St Andrews

NORTH EAST

Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W

NORTH

Barnsley
Bradford
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Ossett
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

NORTH WEST

Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
The Potteries
Preston
Salford
St Helens
Stockport
Wigan
Widnes

MIDLANDS

Birmingham NE
Birmingham S
Coventry
Dudley
Leamington and
Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Redditch
Rugby
Telford
Warley
Wolverhampton

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

EAST

Basilston
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

Acton
Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon
East London
Enfield
Fulham and
Hammersmith
Greenford
Hackney and
Islington
Harlesden
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
Hornsey
Hounslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
South Ealing
Tottenham
Wandsworth
Wandsworth
Wandsworth
Wandsworth

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
SOUTH
Ashford
Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Eastbourne
Folkestone
Guildford
Plymouth
Southampton

TRUTH ABOUT THE DOCK COWBOYS

IT WAS moving to read last week of the big container firms' concern for the public and for non-registered container workers.

The message put over by their new organisation TWIG (Transport and Warehouse Industry Group) was simple. Container workers had to defend their right to work against the dockers, even though by so doing they would defend their employers' right to pay them £12 a week less than registered dockers for doing dock work. If they did not mount counter pickets then the country, civilisation itself, would go to the dogs.

The main firm behind TWIG, Hays Wharf and its subsidiaries, went to the dogs some time ago. It bought up the Dagenham dog track in 1969, shut down its upper Thames wharves with the loss of 700 jobs and transferred the work to Dagenham, where it now employs 73 men.

Boosted

With so much to lose, it is not surprising that Hays Wharf should be keen to cheat its frightened workers into counter picketing the depots where the dockers had won their victories already. Hays Wharf paid them for their services, of course.

But Hays Wharf's choice of allies for the operation 'Say no to no go' is most interesting. All the non Hays Wharf firms associated with TWIG are what the dockers charitably describe as container cowboys.

This scheme of things is similar to the 'lump' in the construction industry. The firms are generally tiny and almost without share capital. But these 'subcontractors' are boosted by the anti-union needs of the big firms who employ them.

Illegal

One firm stated to be associated with TWIG is A C Lloyd. It is actually rather difficult to establish precisely which branch of this operation is involved. While one side went into voluntary liquidation in March 1972, the other (A C Lloyd Ltd) has submitted no accounts to Companies House since 1967. This is of course quite illegal, but then who's bothered?

Lloyd's is one of five TWIG firms which operate out of the old Regents Canal Dock. This puts the lie to all their pretensions about doing non-dock work. They even do their container stuffing and stripping in a dock that was closed down two years ago. Regents Canal is busier now than for many a long year.

by Laurie Flynn



Chobham Farm: dangerous victory

The profitability of the cowboy container operation is substantial. Another TWIG firm, F J Robertson, trebled its profits between 1969 and 1971 to more than £80,000 before tax.

But Hays Wharf has been the driving force behind TWIG and has been picking up all the bills. For several days it looked very much as if their strategy of setting worker against worker was paying handsome dividends. This was not due to any truthfulness on their part. The whole thing was a take-on.

Pulped

The thanks for any success they looked like having must undoubtedly go to those passionate advocates of truth, the capitalist press. Acres of forests were ripped down and pulped to print stories about the great fight to stand up against the dockers. But not one of those great investigating journalists bothered to ask themselves who was behind it and how they got workers to do the counter picketing.

The answer is childishly simple.

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday or be phoned Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

MEETINGS

SUPPORT THE DOCKERS

public meeting
WALTHAMSTOW IS
Speaker: Tony Cliff
Thurs 3 Aug, 8pm
Ross Wyld Hall, Church Hill,
Walthamstow, London E17

KINGSTON IS: 'Solidarity with the dockers' meeting. Speakers: Harry Wicks and Chris Davison (TGWU), Fri 28 July, 8pm, The Union Hotel, Penrhyn Road, Kingston.

NEWCASTLE IS public meeting: Free the Dockers. Fri 28 July, 8pm, Bridge Hotel, near High Level Bridge, Newcastle. Speaker: Terry Rodgers (TASS).

WANDSWORTH IS: Public meeting: Solidarity with the Dockers—TU speakers. 3 August, 8pm, The Fountain, Garrett Lane (Tooting Bdwly end).

THE FIFTH of eight meetings by the Workers' Association for the Democratic Settlement of the National Conflict in Ireland: 4 August, 8pm, The Laurel Tree, Bayham Street, Camden Town: What is the IRA?

SWANSEA: Union top brass—friend or foe? A shop steward talks of the struggle for rank and file control of the unions. Thurs 3 Aug, 7.30pm, Railmen's Club, Wind St.

SEAN O'TOOLE DEFENCE COMMITTEE Benefit Concert: (Sean was until recently held in custody on a battery of charges arising out of the 5 Feb Anti-Internment League demo in London. He is on £6000 bail and faces massive legal charges for his coming Old Bailey trial.) Fri 28 July, 7.45pm, West London Folk Club, King St, Hammersmith (nearest tube Stamford Brook). Tickets 40p on the door. Irish and English folk music, art exhibition on the Irish struggle, and the Combine Theatre Group.

MARXISM AND MODERN BRITAIN: 10 meetings at the City University, London, on Tuesdays, 6.30-8pm, starting 3 October. Fee £1. Write to Adult Education courses, Room A343, The City University, St John Street, London EC1V 4PB.

NOTICES

BRITISH MUSEUM SOCIALISTS GROUP gives full support to the struggle of Briant Colour Printers against redundancies and calls upon all workers to support them in their fight

Woman's Voice, No 1. Copies still available from Margaret Renn, 80 Mountview Road, London N4. 5p a copy, post free.

BOOKS announce that the full range of books and pamphlets from the French left-wing publishing house of MASPERO is now available in England. Orders can be quickly dealt with by post. Write for 'Maspero catalogue' to BOOKS, 84 WOODHOUSE LANE, LEEDS 2. Phone Leeds 42483

IS BOOKSHOP is now closed to retail sales until the opening of our new bookshop, but we will continue to expand the mail order side of the business, and a new expanded booklist is available on request. IS branches can still arrange for the collection of bulk orders. IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

They paid the pickets. Midland Cold Storage and Dagenham Cold Storage were shelling out for their men to man the counter pickets at Chobham Farm. One firm was actually booking its men on and off work on the line. For Chobham was a victory that provided the basis for uniting all dock and container workers. The agreement that lifted the blacking and picketing saw no-one sacked to make way for the dockers.

Here is where TWIG and the capitalist press came in. The object was to stir it for the dockers to prevent them cracking the biggest jewel in the London container bonanza—the London International Freight Terminal.

Delicious

But the jailing of the five dockers was enough to deflate the attempt to split TGWU members. Counter picketers lifted their pickets when the news came through that the state was to jail five trade unionists on Midland Cold Storage's behalf.

But intriguers always have a smiling public face. It is this that makes TWIG's printed propaganda so delicious.

It is dressed in concern for rising food prices. If dockers were to win container work, then food prices would soar. Maybe Sir David Burnett, Hays Wharf Chairman, does not know it but they have already risen more than a little.

In any case food prices bear no relation to workers' wage costs. If they did, then perhaps the pitiful wages paid to agricultural workers would be reflected in the local supermarket.

In fact if Hays Wharf and its fellows were chased off the map and the docks run under workers' control then certain dubious practices would disappear for a start. These would include the common practice of selling and reselling one side of beef up to 15 times between different arms of one company, each time at a higher price.

Twig it?, as the employers tried to put it last week.

NALGO ACTION GROUP

PAMPHLET
Job Evaluation and NALGO
Available from 1 Lupton St,
London NW5
10p per copy (5p for orders of 50
or more)

PORTUGUESE T&GWU BRANCH announces to all its supporters that it now has well over 200 members. But we are still only scratching the surface! Socialists and trade unionists can help us in our fight against low wages and discrimination. Tell all and any foreign workers in hotel canteens and hospitals of our existence and we will be able to grow faster still. Contact 21 Theobalds Road, London WC1.

NATIONAL TENANTS CONFERENCE. All IS delegates must attend pre-conference meeting, 8pm, Friday 28 July, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.



'Make or break' for Fine Tubes

PLYMOUTH:—The Fine Tubes strike, now in its 26th month, seems to be nearing 'make or break' time. Talks with the bosses earlier this month proved fruitless. The initiative now clearly lies with the engineers' and the transport workers' unions. The strikers had put forward a nine-point plan for a mass union campaign if talks broke down. This had been reduced to three points by national officials.

The AUEW executive has so far made no move. TGWU general secretary Jack Jones has written to the strikers saying 'full dispute activity' is to be resumed—but strike pay is to be reviewed soon.

The strikers have been instructed to picket the factory every day, and a record of attendance is to be kept, but no official letter has been sent out reimposing blacking.

The picketing move means that all strikers must be on picket every day. Such a move would kill the strike stone dead, for 42 strikers cannot stop the whole of Fine Tubes—and the strike committee has written to Jones demanding nationwide blacking of Fine Tubes.

But rank-and-file support is more encouraging. Blacking is going on at Rolls-Royce Coventry and Centrax, Newton Abbot. In South Wales a magnificent campaign of financial support is under way and workers are calling for a one-day strike.

The strike committee is intensively active. More than 2000 letters calling for blacking have gone out in the past few days, delegations are touring the country, and plans are being made for a national rank-and-file conference to win support.

The Fine Tubes strike, vital to trade unionism in the South West, can be won. The firm must be blacked to a full stop with union support.

Donations, inquiries, to Brother Williams, Fine Tubes Strike Committee, TGWU, 65 Bretonside, Plymouth.

Rolls move

COVENTRY:—Workers at Rolls-Royce Parkside are due to take action next Monday for the national engineering claim, now being negotiated at local level. The employers are offering an increase of £2.50 on basic rates, although at the Coventry Jaguar works an increase of £3 and an extra day's holiday have already been won.

ARMY ON OFFENSIVE AFTER BIG BOMBING

BELFAST:—The same Tory politicians who organised the murder of 13 unarmed civilians in Derry on 30 January have reacted with hypocritical moralising and outrage to the bombings in Belfast last Friday in which 11 people died.

They used the explosions as an excuse to put into effect a long-planned renewal of the military offensive against republicans.

The new get tough policy began earlier in the

by Mike Miller

week. The Catholic ghettos of Belfast filled with massive Saladin tanks, each with a 76 mm cannon and two Browning submachine guns. Military experts had insisted in the past that these tanks would never be used in urban areas.

The repression has been reserved for one side only, although Loyalist gunmen continue to operate openly. In the past few weeks they have

killed at least twice as many people as died on Friday. Yet not one Loyalist house has been searched. Arms continue to pour into Protestant areas and Ulster Defence Association men found with guns are usually able to produce licences for them and so go free.

The Provos' blitz on Belfast was undoubtedly a response to the renewed military build-up. The IRA claim to have given sufficient warning for all areas to be cleared and it is unlikely that they intended to kill and maim on this scale.

But 20 bombs going off in one afternoon, even without killing anybody, could only have been intended to provoke an immediate response from the Loyalist camp. It seems that the Provos wish to take on the UDA themselves, now that the Tories have made it clear that they do not intend to.

The Loyalist response was predictable. Craig has called for full-scale mobilisation of his private army, to be backed up by a Protestant rent and rate strike.

This weekend brings the UDA's two weeks holiday to an end and the organisation can be expected to step up its activity, but the full-scale massacre threatened by Craig is unlikely now that the British Army is back on the offensive against the IRA.

WRECKED

The Army assault on the Catholic ghettos has not so far been on as brutal a scale as the attacks in the initial days of internment last August. Whitelaw has learnt that such tactics only serve to weld the mass of the Catholic population closer together. Something of the 'low profile' tactic adopted with direct rule remains intact. But in several areas all the men in selected streets have been pulled in for questioning.

The number of men actually facing charges is small for these parts, and the army are not claiming many IRA men in the haul. But the number of ordinary working-class homes being wrecked by marauding troops grows daily.

One notable feature so far in all the army raids has been the lack of popular response in the ghetto areas. Many of these districts have not been entered by the army for many months, and in the past any attempt to go in was met by immediate and massive resistance from the local inhabitants. Now the people have been merely standing and watching.

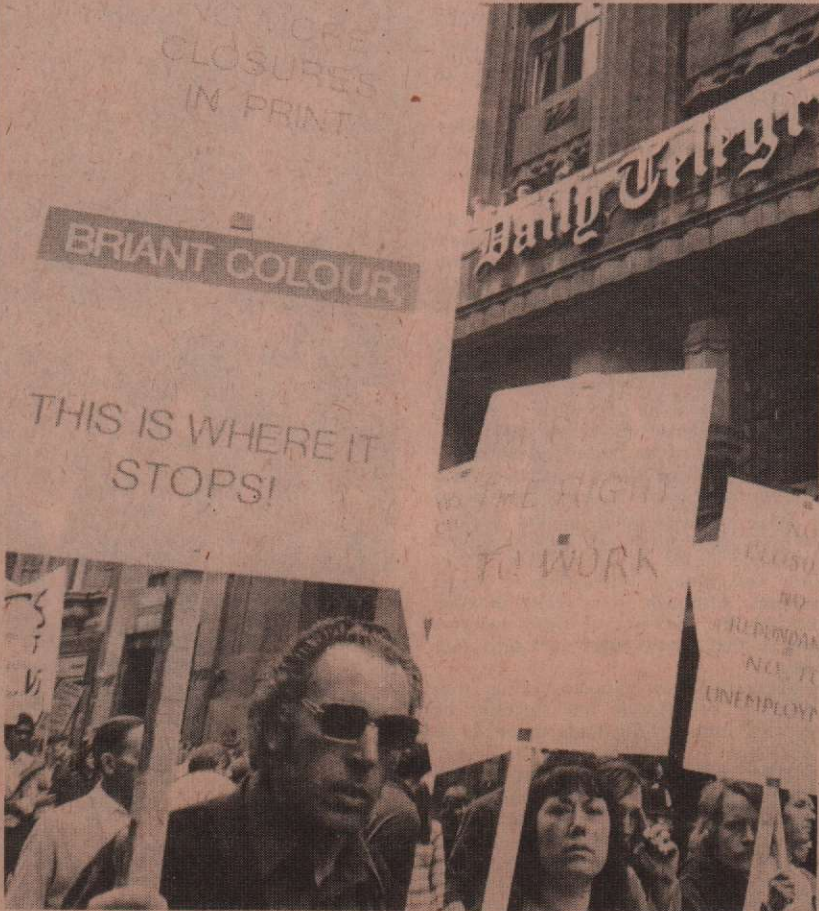
TACTICS

Even when the army shot a suspect in the Markets area there was no rioting—the crowds just melted away as the man's body was taken off in an army vehicle.

The reason for this attitude may partly be revulsion at Friday's deaths, but it also reflects the long-term falling away of the IRA's popular base. Provisional IRA tactics no longer make sense to many people, and although they still depend on the IRA for protection against the UDA and its offshoots, the civilian bombing campaign has few supporters outside those deeply committed to the Provos.

Ordinary Catholic families would have to bear the brunt of a civil war, and although they want the internees released and the UDA threat removed, they have no desire to die 'for Ireland'.

The need for clear socialist politics has never been greater, and the Provos' understanding of this has never been poorer. Their insistence on a showdown with the Loyalist working class is disastrous in a period in which these workers too are crying out for a meaningful alternative to the bloodbath politics of Craig and company.



PRINTWORKERS marched through London last Saturday in support of workers at the South East London firm of Briant Colour Printers, who have occupied their factory to prevent it being closed. After marching through Fleet Street they held a

meeting at Clerkenwell Green, where they heard speeches by officials of the print unions supplying the work-in. The demonstration then went up to Pentonville Prison to express solidarity with the jailed dockers.

College attacks ATTI chairman

LONDON:—The staff and students of the North London Polytechnic are yet again under attack. The director, Terence Miller, ex-principal of University College, Rhodesia has suspended, with a view to sacking, W J P Jenkins, head of the Business Studies Department.

The ludicrous charges, 12 in all, range from failure to ensure payment of students' fees on time, to 'pliability' in the face of student opinion. It is no coincidence, however, that Jenkins was active as chairman of the technical teachers' union, ATTI. Jenkins has been a consistent critic of Miller's appointment and his reactionary policies since taking office.

ATTI has demanded his reinstatement.

Story 'distorted'

WEST LONDON:—Transport Union members at Manbre Sugars are considering approaching the National Union of Journalists over press distortion of their case in a recent issue of the Daily Express.

After a highly pro-employer article in the local paper, Manbre TGWU branch secretary Jim Butt spent a whole day giving the Express the true and documented facts of their battle against redundancies and wage cuts.

What later appeared in the Express was a grotesque distortion putting responsibility for the situation on the 'fact' that the lorry drivers' 'rich pickings' had priced them out of a job.

Tenants must go it alone

THIS WEEKEND the national conference of tenants and trade unionists will discuss the fight against the Housing Finance Bill, which will raise rents throughout the country.

The conference, called by the National Association of Tenants and Residents at Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday, will have delegates from many tenants' associations, trade union branches and shop stewards committees.

The crucial question for the conference will be how to fight the rent rises of up to £1 a week which millions of tenants will face in October. Those who have argued that we should rely on Labour councils and the Labour Party to fight the Bill for us have been proved wrong. It is now certain that the majority of Labour councils will put up rents in October, claiming that it is 'the law of the land'.

Now only militant action by tenants and trade unionists can force the Tories to retreat on their attempts to double tenants' rents. The conference must call for every rent rise to be answered by a rent strike. It must prepare for a national rents and rates strike if action is taken against tenants by councils or Tory Housing Commissioners. It should also appeal to trade unionists to back the tenants with industrial action.

BOOTLE:—The local Labour Party has called on tenants to go on rent strike if the Tories send in a Housing Commissioner to put up rents. The Labour council is ready to resign en masse if sanctions are threaten-

THE RENTS BATTLE

LABOUR SUPPORT FADES

ed against them for refusing to put the rents up.

CUMBERNAULD, Scotland:—The New Town Development Corporation has retaliated against tenants' eight-week-old campaign against the rent rises. The tenants' action committee estimates that 3000-4000 people are on part or full rent strike.

Now the corporation has sent threatening letters to 1200 tenants and there has been a direct attempt to intimidate the committee. Members of the corporation legal department tried to photograph

pickets outside the rent office who were persuading more tenants to join the strike. They were told they might be prosecuted for 'inciting tenants to take part in an illegal activity'.

The trades council is to discuss possible industrial action to back the tenants.

LONG EATON, Derbyshire:—Tenants organised a petition to their council against the rents Bill. Under pressure from the tenants the council agreed not to implement the rent rises.

COUNCIL HOUSES: £100,000

THE absurdity of trying to provide housing for people under the anarchy of capitalism is shown by the decision this week of Brent Council in North London, faced with a desperate housing shortage, to buy 47 houses being built in Elms Lane, Wembley.

Because of the rules of the property game (worked out by Tory and

Labour governments) to protect the property profiteers) the council will have to pay market price for the houses. Market price for these three and four-bedroom mock-Georgian houses will be about £25,000. The houses will cost the council a cool £1,150,000!

The 60-year interest charges the council will have to pay on the loan they need to pay for the houses will put the cost up to £100,000 for each house! Initial rents to be charged by the council will be between £5 and £9.75 a week, plus more than £2 a week rates. 'Fair rents' for these houses should be about £20-£25 a week.

BIRMINGHAM TRADE UNION ACTION COMMITTEE: 'Support the Dockers' public meeting, Digbeth Civic Hall, lecture room 2, Sat 29 July, 3pm. Speakers: local trade unionists and dockers' representatives.

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Socialist Worker

Sites strike hots up after paltry offer

THE STRUGGLE of Britain's building workers for a basic wage of £30 for a 35-hour week is beginning to hot up in the fifth week of selected strike action. The employers' latest offer was a mere £28—and not until 1974. The unions' joint national action committee decided that because of the ridiculous nature of the offer the strikes would have to be extended.

The employers' offer was scarcely an improvement on the one rejected by the unions before the strikes began. The reason for the building bosses refusal to move is that their profits have not been hit so far because of the strategy adopted by the unions.

While production has been hit at certain sites, it is forging ahead at others. And there have been difficulties with enforcing the unions' national overtime ban in some regions.

If the demands are to be won, then drastic escalation of the struggle is needed.

Birmingham is giving a lead. The regional action committee has decided to attempt to close all sites in the area. Six Bryant sites were called out on Tuesday and other sites on Wednesday and Thursday. It is planned to close all sites in and around the city centre by this weekend.

Full demand

Mass picketing of sites that do not come out has been organised. The aim is to get a regional agreement for the full union demands of £30 for 35-hours, an extra week's paid holiday, a guaranteed minimum wage over and above the £30 basic, and a cost of living regulator.

Both the rank and file and the regional secretary, Ken Barlow, have made it clear that no settlement will be made until all the demands are met in full.

In other regions the rank and file and some regional officials are now demanding that similar action be taken. The latest offer shows clearly that a total struggle with the employers is now necessary if victory is to be won.

In London the action committee was planning to pull out three more sites this week, with a mass picket of organised building workers to back up the union organisers.

The overtime ban on sites that have not been selected for strike action has continued, with all

by Gerry Kelly, UCATT

sites that have been approached going on to a 40-hour week.

The employers know that the highly organised jobs can still be stopped. At the moment these are providing most of the men for the mass pickets which have helped to bring sites operating mainly on 'lump' labour to a halt.

There is a levy of 50p a man on all those still working, and some exhibition workers are contributing £1 a week.

Collections are going well, with financial support pledged by railwaymen, Kent miners and the London Trades Council among others.

Meanwhile the work of organising the non-union sites has continued. 500 men on Laing's Haygate Development site were unionised last week

Initiative

BRISTOL:—A mass meeting of striking building workers called for a total stoppage in the area and on Monday 300 pickets closed seven sites. Among those who came out were many non-union workers and sub-contracted labourers.

The local Transport Union have agreed to pay immediate strike benefit to anyone signing on with the union. All the initiative for the strike has come from the men. The union officials have refused to take a hard line on members of other unions—the Electricians' Union for instance—crossing picket lines.

By the end of the week it is expected that the stoppage will be total. The huge Parkway development has been stopped and the response to the call for an all-out strike has been good. Many workers completely new to trade unionism have jumped at the prospect of an end to the poor conditions and low pay on Bristol's big sites.

SOLIDARITY

Fleet Street workers spark militant stoppages all over Britain

THE FREEING of the five dockers is a tribute most of all to the tremendous movement of solidarity that grew up within hours of their arrests.

The first response came Friday afternoon when other dockers struck, first in London, and rapidly all over the country. By Monday morning every port in the country was shut, including small ports not noted for militancy in the past.

The closing of the national newspapers printed in Fleet Street was probably decisive in giving a lead to solidarity actions.

The evening immediately after the jailings electricians working in Fleet Street met to decide whether to strike or not. Eventually they returned to work—but by that time some papers had lost a lot of copies.

By the following night, Saturday, action by NATSOPA machine shop workers had closed all papers apart from the Sunday Times. Even so, at this stage it seemed that the strike might be for one day only.

The next night there was intensive picketing in Fleet Street, as dockers and militant printworkers marched from paper to paper, leafletting and using a loud-speaker system to call for sympathy action. Meanwhile inside the newspaper offices there was intensive discussion at chapel meetings. Although some voted to keep working, the decision of other workers ensured that every paper was shut that night.

There could now be no concealing from the mass of people the hostility of organised rank-and-file trade unionists to the jailings.

It is worth remembering that the five dockers were in prison for five days before the official leaders of the TUC made any move on their behalf. Few national leaders were prepared to encourage their members to take action before this. Jack Jones of the Transport Workers Union said nothing, not even at the press conference when he presented the Jones-Aldington Report, made jointly with the docks employers on the question of containerisation.

What caused the TUC leaders' change of heart was the continuing spread of the rank-and-file movement.

On Sunday, the main London food markets decided to come out, and the next day the decision of the electricians in Fleet Street to strike until the five men were released shut the London-based national press indefinitely.

That morning, although many of the key militant industrial areas were heavily affected by the annual holidays, the movement began to affect industry after industry all over the country.

LONDON:—On Monday lorry drivers, warehousemen, ship repair workers and container workers joined the printers and market workers who were already out.

On Tuesday all ink factories and Chiswick bus repair depot stopped for 24 hours. Some building sites stopped—both in solidarity with the dockers and to step up pressure for their own pay claim. Estimates of how many joined the demonstration from Tower Hill to Pentonville Prison range between 15,000 and 30,000.

On Wednesday London Transport buses were stopped by a unanimous decision of the bus delegates' conference—although the occasional hardy scab was to be seen on the roads. Heathrow Airport was strike-bound for the day. Some planes were able to land, but take-offs were paralysed. Train drivers and ticket collectors on Southern Region at Waterloo voted to strike

SHEFFIELD:—A meeting of stewards from all unions in the engineering confederation on Tuesday called for a one-day stoppage throughout the industry the next day. This closed all the major firms—including Bone Craven, Firth Brown Tools, Davie United, Balfour Darwin and also the British Steel Corporation plant at River Don—which had already given a lead by stopping for half a day on Monday. Three thousand workers joined a demonstration through the city and voted for a resolution from the trades council calling for official action from the TUC.

SCOTLAND:—Weekend rumours deliberately spread by the employers that Scottish dockers would be working normally on

Bob Light (TGWU, London Royal group of docks)
SOLIDARITY WITH THE DOCKERS
Friday 28 July, 7.30pm
AUEW Hall, Borough Road,
Middlesbrough



Section of Tuesday's giant crowd at Tower Hill before the march to Pentonville

Monday were exploded within minutes of starting time. The 100 dockers at the Greenock container terminal were the first to strike. Minutes later came another unanimous decision from 1200 Glasgow dockers meeting separately at the Shieldhall and Yorkhill docks.

Aberdeen and Edinburgh dockers followed, and the 500 Grangemouth dockers also agreed to picket the small Scottish ports outside the dock labour scheme.

Some sections of workers responded quickly to the solidarity call. In Irving, Ayrshire, 300 building workers staged an anti-Industrial Relations Act demonstration and telegraphed Jack Jones demanding he call for a general strike.

At Moncktonhall Colliery, Midlothian, one of the only six Scottish pits not on annual holiday, 1700 men immediately staged a 24-hour strike in support of the dockers. A delegate conference of Scottish miners was planned for Monday to decide on Scotland-wide action.

Elsewhere the Glasgow annual holiday made solidarity action difficult. On Tuesday, Glasgow Corporation electricians stopped for 24 hours to picket the Glasgow office of the Registrar of Trade Unions and the industrial tribunals. Printworkers on the three main Scottish daily papers, the Scottish Daily Express and the Daily Record in Glasgow and The Scotsman in Edinburgh, walked out on Monday night.

Aberdeen fishmarket porters stopped work, and were joined on Tuesday by trawlermen. The workers at John Browns, the Clydebank division of UCS—the only one not on holiday—had not held a meeting to discuss strike action by Wednesday, although many people expected Jimmy Reid and the other Clydebank shop stewards to recommend strike action. It is almost exactly a year since John Brown's workers voted to take over the gates and begin the work-in.

BERNADETTE'S LONE VOICE

BERNADETTE DEVLIN, MP for Mid-Ulster, took the following motion to the House of Commons on Tuesday: 'This House congratulates the five dockers in their courageous stand in defence of trade unionism. The House regrets the failure of the TUC to react to the jailing by calling a General Strike and urges this council of action without delay.'

She showed the motion to a number of Labour 'left' MPs in the hope that they would second and support the motion. Not

Workers in TASS, the technical and supervisory section of the Engineering Union, were told on Tuesday evening to come out and members at John Brown Engineering, next door to the UCS yard, agreed to stop work.

MANCHESTER:—All the dockers came out on strike and decided not to meet again to even consider a return to work until the release of the five men. Solidarity action was taken by workers at Shell (Carrington), one of the country's biggest construction sites, and printworkers, who shut down all the Northern editions of the national newspapers printed in Manchester. The biggest factory in Oldham, Platt International, stopped work for half a day on Monday.

LIVERPOOL:—Virtually all factories are on holiday. But some of those working quickly took action. Fisher Bendix in Kirkby, recently occupied in a struggle against closure, came out until the release of the five men. 1500 Shell-Star construction workers, 1100 building workers on the teaching hospital site and the men on the big Inland Revenue Office site at Bootle also walked out.

Printers struck on the Liverpool Post and Echo, and lorry drivers voted to stop.

SCUNTHORPE:—Five thousand workers from all the construction trades closed down the giant British Steel corporation site.

TEESSIDE:—The docks on Teesside and at Hartlepool both shut down. Tommy Smith, GMWU steward at Hartlepool, said: 'It is not a question of how long we can stop out. It's a question of how long Heath can stop in.'

Solidarity with the dockers was shown by all the main construction sites, which stopped on Monday morning.

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