

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

## Freeze-busting action to aid old people

# 'PENSION UP' -STRIKE CALL

THE FIGHT for the lowest-paid of all, the old age pensioners, has been carried into the industrial battlefield. All over Britain workers' representatives are beginning to talk of mass industrial action next Wednesday, the day of the TUC lobby of parliament in support of a demand for a £10 pension for single people and £16 for a married couple.

The shift of opinion in favour of strikes to support the lobby has started in South Yorkshire. On the multi-million pound construction site for the Anchor Steel Project at Scunthorpe, shop stewards have proposed a total stoppage for a mass march into the centre of the town.

Already they have been promised support from the stewards at the Drax power station site near Selby, by the Pontefract branch of the constructional section of the AUEW, and by the Kilnhurst branch of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Greg Douglas, chairman of the Joint Sites Committee at Anchor, spoke to Socialist Worker about his committee's reasons for calling the strike.

'After a lot of consideration we thought that this business of lobbying parliament never achieves what is intended,' he said. 'We think that on this issue, on the plight of the old age pensioners, we should all be prepared to get up and do something physical.'

### DEMAND

'We've had a hell of a lot of response from the lads as well as a lot of requests to do something concrete for the OAPs. The demonstration should be an indication to our national union leaders and to the TUC of the type of support that trade unionists and working-class people are prepared to give them if they are prepared to give us a lead and make the demand for a better standard of living for the old age pensioners.'

Greg Douglas is not in the least perturbed that the demonstration will occur in the middle of the government's wage (and pensions) freeze.

'The pensioners' problems,' he said, 'have got to be carried forward by those who can fight the freeze. I feel that the 90 day freeze should prompt us to demand of our national officials that they look after the OAPs and the lower-paid workers.'

'A lot of the full-time officials are hiding instead behind the TUC policy that the lobby of parliament is enough and that is all we should be prepared to give at the moment. Think of the number of times they have gone to conferences and national meetings, speaking behind closed doors about the disgraceful

by PETER INGHAM

situation the OAPs are in, whispering behind locked doors about the problem.

'Some of them can earn more in a day than the pensioners get in a week. They sit in moral judgement on what support can be given, and it leaves me absolutely disillusioned. I personally feel that the time for talking behind locked doors is finished.'

'Let's have the doors thrown open, let's have them shouting and getting out there to the trade unionists and let's have a better leadership. Let's have a policy and say to whatever government is in power: we want for the pensioners £10 a week now, plus rent for widows and £16 per couple.'

There are signs that other workers' representatives, sickened by the cynical £10 bonus promised to the pensioners by Heath, are preparing to act in the same spirit

### SUPPORT

On 9 November 22 shop stewards representing 230 maintenance workers on the escalators and lifts of London Underground voted unanimously to recommend their workers to strike for 24 hours on 22 November in support of the old age pensioners.

Ralph Pinder, the men's convenor, told Socialist Worker: 'Trade unionists should stop making pious resolutions and get on with the action. The pensioners have got to be fought for industrially.'

Vic Swift, the AUEW's North London District Organiser, says that his office, and that of the South London district, have sent out circulars to their stewards calling for maximum support for the lobby.

Vic Swift thinks there is 'every chance' of large-scale walk-outs from some of the big engineering works in North and West London. The AUEW circular makes it plain that such action will have union support.



Picture: MIKE COHEN

'BY the time they've put all the prices up, they won't have given us anything.' That's the opinion of 76-years-old Nelly Barnes on the government's £10 handout.

Mrs Barnes is confined to a wheelchair with osteo-arthritis. Her doctor says she will never walk again.

She lives with her husband in Shoreditch, east London. Mr Barnes is in his eighties. Living on the present pension is hard: 'We need a lot more,' says Mrs Barnes.

Help us  
step up  
anti-Tory  
fight...

IN the last two years, in response to the Tory offensive and the growing wave of working-class militancy, the International Socialists have stretched their limited resources to the full.

Socialist Worker has doubled in size and improved immeasurably in quality and coverage of the vital questions facing the workers' movement.

The organisation, both through Socialist Worker and many special issues, has been active in all the major industrial disputes this year—mines, docks and builders to name but a few.

None of this has been easy and it becomes clearer with every day that passes that we must expand our technical and printing resources to meet and influence the developing struggles.

### Appeal

To do this we urgently need money for new premises and machinery. Once again we are appealing to our members and readers to support our expansion fund.

In IS we have no overpaid and overnourished bureaucrats. Our income is derived totally from our members and sympathisers. Every penny is allocated for developing and expanding the real struggle for socialism.

As a step in the achievement of that objective we urgently need £30,000 for premises and a new press. All our comrades and friends are urged to contribute as much as they can, as soon as they can, to this appeal.

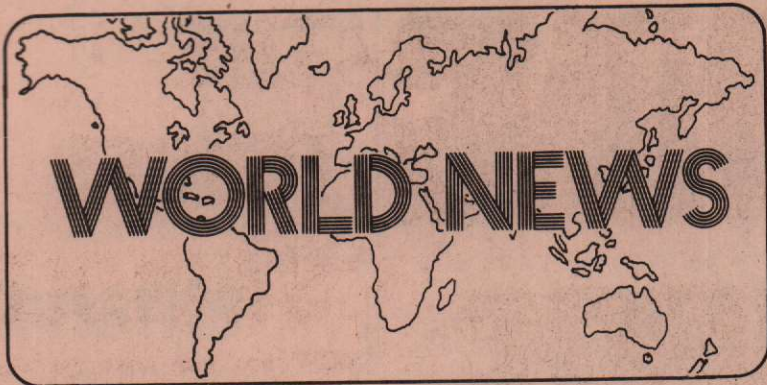
● All donations should be rushed to Jim Nichol, National Treasurer, IS, 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN.

## INSIDE

Engineers and the NIRC  
—see What we think, page 4

PLUS	Clay Cross: rent 'no go' area . . . . .	page 8
Truth about Skelmersdale . . . . .	Police muggers at work . . . . .	page 9
Footprints . . . . .	Miners' ballot . . . . .	page 12
Fight the Tories: Yorkshire . . . . .	Your letters . . . . .	page 13
Labour's record: incomes policy . . . . .	Chrysler militant speaks . . . . .	page 15





# NIXON'S CRACK DOWN AHEAD

THE most obvious reason why Nixon won a second term as president is that he was able to conclude a deal with Russia and China, and to ease off the war in Vietnam, which to most people was a breath of relief after the difficulties of the past.

This gives him a large amount of capital to bank on.

He was able to pull off these deals precisely because the right wing is more or less in his back pocket whereas for a Democrat this would have been more difficult because it would have been attacked as a surrender to 'communism'.

A more fundamental reason for Nixon's victory is that American workers have recently taken a beating they did not expect. Inflation means that it is no longer so easy to win wage increases. The threat of unemployment is high and redundancies are common.

With increased productivity and speed-up, these have made the lives of the working class insecure and frustrated, leading to a certain conservatism among workers compared with the past.

This is different from the conservatism of the prosperous years, in that underneath is a tremendous frustration and anger, but also fear of the new situation, and the sudden realisation that workers are not going to make big gains.

## RISKY

The attitude of most workers seems to be to hold on to what they have, and not let their position get any worse. They have the feeling that Nixon is not a very estimable character, but on the other hand the conservatives won't monkey around too much in a situation which might get very much worse.

McGovern, whom most of the working class would normally support as a Democrat, is viewed as a very risky person, and when people are frightened they are afraid to take such risks.

As far as black people are concerned: underneath the actions of blacks over the past few years—the riots and the support given in black communities to groups like the Black Panthers—was a fairly constant vote

by Sy Landy  
National secretary of the International  
Socialists of the United States

for the Democratic Party. For most black people, workers and unemployed, life is too close to the poverty point to take risks, and in the past that meant they voted for the party which seemed to give them concrete gains, the Democrats.

In the Democratic primaries this year there was among the stable black working class a great deal of support for Humphrey, partly based on what they thought he had done for blacks in the past, but partly also because they felt he was a safer candidate.

Blacks distrust McGovern because they have been promised so much rhetorically, both by the nation's leaders and in a different way by the Black Nationalist leaders, that they have temporarily become much more moderate: they don't believe any of these promises, they're out to hold on to the little they have.

In general, the American working class are willing to take quite a lot before they finally erupt.

The tradition in the United States is that when they do erupt, when they really have their backs to the wall, they erupt very violently. The class struggle in the United States tends to be more violent than in any other country in the world.

This comes almost as a product of the workers' conservatism.

## BRIEFING

CHIEF AWOLOWO, the former Nigerian finance minister, has been awarded £25,000 damages against The Economist, which had published an article implying that he was behind the wave of strikes in Nigeria at the beginning of 1971.

Thousands of workers were involved in these strikes, and the president and general secretary of the Nigerian Trades Union Congress—the most left-wing of the five union organisations in Nigeria—were jailed.

The article discounted the influence of the NTUC and the ability of workers to organise their own strikes, implying that the strikes had been fomented by Awolowo to further his 'lifelong obsession' with becoming prime minister.

Awolowo has in fact been the most successful of the old school politicians in collaborating with General Gowon's military regime, which has outlawed all strikes and jailed trade unionists, and he did not have much difficulty in proving this.

Meanwhile, without Awolowo's help, the Nigerian working class continues to strike for higher wages. On 31 October the postal workers' union went on strike over the non-implementation of their pay award. Women in the Lagos spinning mills, threatened with closure, are demanding



NIXON: He has the right wing securely in his pocket

The detailed election statistics show that just over half of the manual workers and 85 per cent of the blacks who voted chose McGovern. But the overall turnout in the election was low, 55 per cent.

The Democrats' majority of working-class and black votes was much narrower than in the past, and most of those who voted for McGovern probably did so without enthusiasm.

Another reason why McGovern was regarded as risky by both black and white workers was that he changed his policy on just about everything during his campaign. His success in the Democratic primaries was due mainly to the work of people—students and others—who had been active in the anti-war movement.

## DEMANDS

The Democratic Party in the past has always been able to co-opt movements from the left into its membership. Recently it has done this, changing its structure and its demands to some extent in the process, to provide a home for the middle-class leadership of the social movements which have swept the United States.

All these movements—led by the black movement—have failed to break through the walls of capitalism. Their democratic demands just cannot be met by capitalism, and they have retreated for more practical gains.

redundancy payments. Workers in light engineering and shoe-making are also threatening industrial action as their cases go to arbitration.

THE 9000 workers in a cotton mill in Karachi, Pakistan, have taken over the mill after management refused point-blank to grant union demands. The executives of Dawood Cotton Mills walked out when workers refused to obey them, and an operator, who is also general secretary of the Pakistani mills labour union, took over as mill manager.

The workers continued in full production, but the firm refused to pay their wages, saying they had no cash. They have claimed the workers are acting illegally and have called for government intervention.

The workers have announced that the shares of the directors and their families are forfeit, and that they will sell the cloth to pay their own wages.

DELEGATES from the International Socialists recently attended an international conference organised by the French group

Now the black nationalist leaders are politicians inside the Democratic Party and favour 'black capitalism'. The leaders of the women's movement and the anti-war movement too are all inside the party, and expect any gains to be made through it.

In the primaries, the more traditional type of 'machine candidates' were divided, and this enabled those who worked for McGovern to break through.

In one way or another, the Republicans are going to have to maintain the tremendous drive for productivity and speed-up, and to keep clamping down on wages.

A new round of contract negotiations is coming up early next year. If any large union breaks through on the wage-price guidelines—that is, goes above the 5½ per cent allowance for wage increases—this will very probably smash the Pay Board. If this happens, the Republicans will have to try other devices along the same lines, or even harder ones, to crack down on the unions.

One can also expect that the veiled racism of the election campaign will be stepped up, and that the anger of white workers will be increasingly channelled into seeing black workers as the enemy.

The crack-down on the working class will be accelerated as a result of Nixon's victory, especially considering the size of the victory. The right wing will be operating with increased confidence.

Lutte Ouvriere. The conference was attended by 16 groups from 10 countries—Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, USA, West Indies and Japan.

The conference discussed the international political and economic situation with reference to Nixon's visit to China and the extension of the Common Market. They also reported on and discussed the concrete work of revolutionaries in different countries and in particular the work of revolutionary socialists in the trade unions.

Although conditions clearly differ widely from one country to another, there was a useful exchange of views: it is clear that in many places revolutionaries are making slow but real progress in establishing a base in the mass labour movement.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON, author of *The Other America*—the book that drew attention to the massive poverty in the United States under Kennedy—has resigned from the American Socialist Party. He blamed the party's lack of enthusiasm for McGovern, the Democrats' presidential candidate. The Socialist Party no longer

# Germany: the choiceless election

by Ian Birchall

NEXT Sunday's elections in West Germany offer workers a very uninspiring choice. As *Klassenkampf* (Class Struggle), a West German revolutionary paper, puts it: if the Christian Democrats win, it will be a defeat for the working class, but if the Social Democrats win it will not be a victory for them.

The Social Democrats have been in the government for the past six years, and for the past three have been the dominant party. Their campaign is giving much attention to the 'quality of life', with rhetorical flourishes about leisure and environment.

The main object of all this is to avoid making any promises that can be pinned down and to divert attention from the party's rather meagre record of achievements.

The Social Democrats boast in their election programme that over the past three years wages have risen 'as never before'. What they don't say is that these wage increases were won despite them and against them, by the big strike wave in September 1969 and big struggles since then in engineering and chemicals. Last year Germany lost more days in strikes than in any year since the early 1950s.

The Social Democrats also claim that under their rule the total tax burden became lighter. But this was achieved by changes in the taxation system, which shifted the burden to consumers, so that workers are paying MORE taxes.

## Minority

In fact, the main role of the Social Democrats has been to prevent the growth of working-class militancy. They first came into the government when the Christian Democrats were facing economic difficulties, a militant student movement and growing working-class opposition to the repressive Emergency Laws.

But German socialists cannot just ignore the Social Democratic Party. Although only a tiny minority of the party's members are active, it is still closely linked to the trade union movement. There is no organisational or financial link, like that between the British TUC and Labour Party, but almost every office-holder in the trade unions is a card-holding member of the Social Democratic Party.

In May the German trade unions adopted an 'action programme' including such demands as six weeks holiday with pay, and unemployment pay at two-thirds of a worker's previous income.

So far they have done little to try to win these demands. But if they are serious about them, they will have to come into increasing conflict with the Social Democratic Party. Such struggles will be of growing importance in the next few years.

runs its own candidates for the presidency.

The party's general secretary said that Harrington was a 'new politics man' whereas 'the majority of our party believe the main force for change must be the labour movement. This group shares the labour movement's reservations about McGovern.'

The party's executive had voted 18-1 for a resolution 'preferring' McGovern to Nixon.

ACCORDING to official Israeli figures Israel 'earned' £8,820,000 in 1972 from its occupation of the conquered Arab territories. Taxation and other income yielded £21.2 million, and the sales of Sinai's oil raised nearly £10 million.

Israel spent £22.3 million on the territories, but this included 'development' which means the establishment of Jewish settlements, and 'strategic development' which means the building of military roads.

The detailed official figures reveal that the total spent on health services for the conquered territories in 1971 was £810,000. After deducting £135,000 for Israeli hospitals, this leaves 67½p for each of the conquered inhabitants.

**SUBVERSION IN CHILE:**  
a case study in U.S. corporate  
intrigue in the Third World



Price 85p, plus 7p postage  
IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens,  
London E2 8DN.



# COURTAULD SPINNING LIES IN LANCASHIRE

## THE PRICES SWINDLE

JUST two days after the Heath government announced the 90 day wage freeze, the two giant flour monopolies were getting themselves into shape to waltz through the phoney prices standstill in which the Tories have clothed their latest attempt to drive down working-class living standards.

Spillers and Rank-Hovis-MacDougall who (along with all the major bread companies) had yet another price increase in the pipeline, simply announced that they will bring together enough 'facts' to prove that their imported raw materials costs had risen. Their projected price increases on flour and therefore on bread would be 'fully justified', under the terms of the so-called counter-inflation legislation.

It is an argument that the Tories are likely to find acceptable. They repeatedly stress their concern to ensure that the poor have easy access to the cheapest and easiest way of getting protein: bread and milk. Yet free milk has been entirely abolished and the average price of a 1½lb wrapped and sliced white loaf has risen by 9 per cent in the last year alone to 10.3p.

With bread and flour, much of this is due to increases in the world market price of wheat, over which Messrs Heath, Spillers and Rank-Hovis-MacDougall claim they have no control.

But just suppose that the Heath government or a Labour successor, wishing to carry out a propaganda exercise or faced with food riots, did freeze the price of flour and bread. Would the giant milling and bakery firms just stand idly by?

The answer is that they would not. They would simply extend their highly organised activities in reducing quality and production costs in pursuit of that most nourishing of all things, a higher rate of return on capital.

### Scuppered

Their expertise in adulterating flour and bread quality first came to the fore just after the Second World War when the millers successfully scuppered the unattractive but nutritious 'national loaf'. The 'national loaf's' fairly decent standards had been brought in to ensure that people were healthy enough to fight in the war. Afterwards the standards were scrapped and high extraction flour became the norm. High fibre extraction makes the flour easier to store for long periods and extends the shelf life of a loaf. This has been massively adopted throughout the milling and baking industries and has been accompanied by a huge advertising campaign stressing the beauties of soft, pure white Mothers Pride.

The only consequence that millers or bakers thought about was their return on capital, and this has zoomed upwards. The consequences for consumers are entirely another matter.

Writing in the Bulletin of the British Nutritional Foundation for May 1972, Dennis Burkett shows how the fining out of fibres by the UK flour and baking industry is linked to the spread of bowel diseases like appendicitis. In countries where a high fibre diet is the norm, such diseases are virtually non-existent.

It is perfectly possible to use advanced technology to mass produce good high fibre and nutritious bread. But that is not the purpose of Rank-Hovis-MacDougall

There is every indication that in future you will be paying more for your bread and your bowel diseases.

A spokesman for the new government food prices unit told Socialist Worker this week that there would be no special scrutiny to ensure that if the millers were refused a straight price increase, they did not achieve it by hidden means such as still more reductions in quality.

by Steve Emms and Laurie Flynn  
FOUR YEARS ago fanfares of publicity greeted the opening of Courtaulds' £7 million woven textiles plant in Skelmersdale.

This was the biggest factory to be built in this part of Lancashire for 50 years, it was claimed. Here was desperately needed employment in an area renowned for swollen dole queues.

And last week fanfares of publicity surrounded the management's 'final decision' to shut the place down, sacking all 1000 workers. This week while talks go on about a reprieve based on union acceptance of all management instructions without question, Courtaulds' Skelmersdale workers are still on the razor's edge.

They are in a mood of disillusion and bewilderment. For the press has by and large united to inform them that it is all their own fault, brought about by labour unrest and Merseyside militancy.

### CHARGES

But the truth of the situation is that Courtaulds is rather better at spinning lies than weaving cotton. For the charges about industrial unrest bear no relation to reality.

Courtaulds' Northern Weaving Division workers at Skelmersdale could in no sense be described as 'militant'. There has been only one factory-wide strike of six weeks in 1969. Since then there have been two sectional lock outs and in February this year an overtime ban was introduced to prevent lay-offs.

It is only two months since a shop stewards committee was set up in the factory. And because of the shift system, it takes three days to summon a meeting. Management permission is also required.

Construction of the Skelmersdale factory and two other modern cotton weaving plants to compete with cheap imports was announced in 1968. Courtaulds described the decision to spend £20 million as an act of faith in British industry.

But the £20 million did not come solely from Courtaulds' coffers. They were generously assisted from public funds. 45 per cent of the cost was borne by the taxpayer in the form of regional development grants.

### SUBSIDY

And Courtaulds got a further government handout of £1.50 a week as a direct subsidy to the wages of every worker. Courtaulds' chairman Lord Kearton hoped that firm action to protect the British textile industry would soon see his new plants freed of competition and on the road to profitability.

Even before the factory opened there were cries of derision from Courtaulds' competitors. The government would not stop cheap imports. The plant would be a white elephant.

And from day one Skelmersdale went sour. The 198 ultra-modern Sulzer looms were never moved out of the storage sheds, far less unwrapped and installed.



Workers outside the Skelmersdale plant: they get the blame...

Looms brought into production were beset by all sorts of problems from design to maintenance. They broke down repeatedly with the result that workers lost wages.

On each and every occasion that there has been a dispute with management, Courtaulds brought out the closure threat with a view to extracting total submission from trade unions and workers. Working people would pay the price for what other manufacturers described as Courtaulds' monumental error to compete with cheap imports. And as year followed year Courtaulds looked for a higher price.

Even if Courtaulds do shut the place down, it will not be that firm's directors and shareholders who will pay the price. £3 million of the £7 million cost of Skelmersdale was paid by the government. Regulations require only that the firm does not sell or move the machinery for two years after government grants have been paid.

If Courtaulds were to sell the machines tomorrow, then all it would have to do is pay tax on the profits if the machines are sold for more than their depreciated value. The whole sorry saga is the inevitable result of regional employment policies which cannot create extra jobs, and only give handouts to speed rationalisation.

And by juggling with its own accounts Courtaulds has already



... Kearton gets the handouts

ensured that its estimated £1 million losses at Skelmersdale are covered many times over. In the company year ending March 1971, Courtaulds paid £15 million tax on its £41 million pre-tax profits. In the year ending March 1972 only £5.7 million tax was paid on increased pre-tax profits of £45.6 million.

### FAKE

By 'selling' property between one subsidiary company and another, Courtaulds were able to create fake capital losses which reduced their tax bill by around £7 million in 1971-72. Similar tax dodges ensure that the company is well placed to repeat the performance in other fields over the coming years.

The monumental hypocrisy of the Courtaulds' management allowed Lord Kearton to say the day after the Skelmersdale closure was first announced last week: 'We have been faced with people who feel that the whole capitalist system is an outrage, that it is terrible that anyone should work for a firm that is in business to make a profit.'

The 1000 Courtaulds' workers and their families who make up around 10 per cent of the entire new town population have been used and cheated for four years.

With lies and intimidation their employers have sought to destroy their ability to organise. They are doing it again.

Even the most swingeing 'concessions' from unions and men will do nothing to save the plant. For the system and the methods it uses are an outrage.

It is not as if there was too much woven cotton in the world, that millions of workers do not need and want more shirts and other cotton textile products. It is just that the system of production builds some of the factories that could produce more, but if they do not prove profitable they are chopped.

If the men and women at Skelmersdale are to fight for their survival they will have to organise now to stop Courtaulds moving away with plant, machinery and a large bag of publicly-funded swag.

## Equal pay: Newcastle sets the pace

by Sandra Peers

NEWCASTLE TRADES COUNCIL last week voted to launch a campaign on Tyneside for equal opportunities and equal pay for women and to make an interim order under the Equal Pay Act.

The government is obliged by the spirit, if not the letter, of the law to legally entitle women to 90% of men's rates by the end of 1973, but this would plainly conflict with their wage freeze policy. At present women's average hourly rates are only 65% of men's, and it will take 25 years to achieve equal pay at this rate.

All trade union branches, trades councils, women's organisations and other organisations of the labour

movement on Tyneside will be invited to affiliate to the campaign. Activities will include speaking at union meetings on the case for equal opportunities and on the details of the Equal Pay Act, advising workers on the tricks the employers are using to avoid equal pay, persuading women to join trade unions and supporting them in struggles.

It is hoped to set up a special group of parents, students and trade unionists (especially teachers) to work out practical proposals to combat discrimination in education and

training.

A meeting of the Tyneside Socialist Women's Action group, attended by more than 30 women including stewards from the local brewery, the Civil Service and the Ever-Ready factory, enthusiastically received these proposals and agreed that its first contribution to the campaign would be to publish a pamphlet putting the case for equal pay and the details and snags of the Act.

Readers wishing to participate in the campaign should contact Sandra Peers at 106 Holly Avenue, Newcastle 2. (tel. 811728).

## Killing of the week

October 29 to November 4: Shares in Distillers Company Limited, manufacturers of alcohol and chemicals, had slipped due to continuing publicity over the plight of thalidomide children. Thalidomide was made and marketed under licence by DCL who were still refusing compensation.

On Saturday 28 October DCL chairman stated in a letter to one shareholder that unless the Sunday Times stopped its campaign then DCL would not make any compensation payments. On Monday 30 October share dealing in DCL recovered as a result. Shares rose 4p to 160p. Many institutional investors and speculators bought on the prospect of further recovery and on Tuesday shares went up another 4p.

The same day Jack Ashley, Labour MP moved for a debate in the House of Commons, mentioning the DCL chairman's letter. The debate was refused and shares zoomed another 6p to 170p on Wednesday. Speculators who bought on Monday sold on Thursday, with fat profits.





# Socialist Worker

## WHAT WE THINK...

EVERY trade unionist owes a debt of gratitude to the executive of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers for its firm stand in refusing to pay the fine and costs imposed by Sir John Donaldson's infamous National Industrial Relations Court in the Goad case and in refusing to readmit the blackleg into membership.

Whatever criticisms may be made of the AUEW leadership's conduct in the past—and we have made some—there can be no shadow of a doubt that on this occasion it has acted correctly and courageously in the interests of its membership and of the entire working class. The contrast between this action and the wretched surrender of the TGWU leadership in similar circumstances is too plain to need emphasis.

Naturally, press and television have cast James Goad as the new David come to smite the giant Scanlon. However this particular David goes into battle not in a loin-cloth like the original but clad in the whole armour of the law. His weapon is not a sling but the NIRC, the Industrial Relations Act, the police and the entire state machine of British capitalism. Every boss and every supporter of the bosses is on his side. So is every creeper and would-be blackleg in our own class.

What is at stake is a very simple and very vital principle. It is whether the AUEW—and hence every other union—can manage its affairs democratically and in accordance with rules made, in the last resort, by elected representatives of the members or whether the state, through the NIRC, can ride roughshod over the rules and the wishes of the elected leadership and impose its own will in the interests of the employers. What is at stake is no less than the principle that union members, through elected representatives, have the right to manage their own affairs.

James Goad, a former member of the union, was twice lapsed under rule for arrears of dues. He then went on to stab his fellow workers in the back by blacklegging during a dispute—he was very properly refused re-admission.

A society which cannot exclude such a flagrant and persistent offender is not a free trade union. It is a state-regulated organisation and that, of course, is what the Tory government and its NIRC intend the unions shall be.

## ASSIST GOVERNMENT

Some charitably minded persons have suggested that there is a case for showing mercy to repentant sinners, even though their offences have been flagrant. It may be so. But James Goad is not a repentant sinner. He is an exultant one.

He glories in his record and openly admits that his purpose in going to the NIRC was to determine 'whether the law of the land is supreme or the law of the union'. In plain words he is out to assist the government and the employers in shackling the unions and destroying those democratic rights that union members have won by two centuries of sacrifice and struggle.

The sheer effrontery of Goad and Donaldson staggers belief. Sir John Donaldson belongs to a London club, the Atheneum, membership of which is much sought after by senior servants of our ruling class. This club has rules, very strict rules designed among other things to exclude undesirable members such as trade unionists. It levies a subscription, payment of which is strictly enforced.

It is not difficult to imagine what Donaldson's attitude would be to an ex-member who had twice been thrown out for non-payment of his subscription, who had attacked and injured his fellow members at a critical time when they were in need of his solidarity, who had openly proclaimed his opposition to the purposes of the club and then had the insolence to demand to be re-admitted.

But then, of course, for Donaldson and his fellow Tories, there is one law for the rich and another law for trade unionists. They must not be allowed to get away with this deadly attack on trade union rights. Warned by the experience of the Pentonville Five they will no doubt attempt to seize assets rather than imprison officials.

This must be resisted by industrial action, not just by AUEW members but by all trade unionists. If the Tories get away with it this time they will redouble their efforts. A thousand Goads will be produced. They can be beaten. They must be beaten. That is why all trade unionists must give all-out support to the AUEW.

6 COTTONS GDNS, LONDON E2 8DN



## Commons touch

A FEVER of excitement is building up in the House of Commons about the new parliament buildings which are intended to house MPs in the late 1970s.

And no wonder. The architect's report to the Select Committee of MPs who considered the designs last summer gives some ideas of the wonders that are to come.

Not only will each MP have his office and room for his secretary, not only will the number of bars and restaurants be doubled but, according to the report, 'A swimming pool, gymnasiums and changing rooms are provided in a self-contained unit... sauna and massage rooms are also provided. During recess, a sliding wall can partition off a lobby leading to the north western tower, so that access to the swimming pool is possible directly from the podium.'

The architectural merits of the building, which are none, did not bother the MPs much. Julian Amery, a Minister in the Department of the Environment, said in evidence: 'I do not want to push the claims of the environment beyond the comfort of the House or the convenience of the House more than is right and proper.'

Only one thing bothered MPs: security. Mr James Wellbeloved, well beloved Labour MP for Erith and Crayford, asked anxiously: 'Bearing in mind that parliament is often besieged by demonstrators on tense, often emotional occasions, it is possible, is it not, to have several thousand people bursting through on to the podium. What precautions can you suggest to guard against that eventuality?'

The architect replied: 'This is the reason for our idea of the grills which can be dropped between the towers.'

Mr Amery had another idea: 'I think one of the ideas is that there would be a glass portcullis of impenetrable bullet proof glass which could be brought down as necessary.'

The Committee were not satisfied. Their main recommendation for change in the design was: 'Further



AMERY: in need of protection

security precautions are essential.'

Apart from ensuring that the public should not have any 'unauthorised access' to the place where they are represented, the Committee, with only three Tories voting against, approved the design.

## Cooperation

MR GEORGE COOPER, the station superintendent at Britain's least successful power station, Eggborough, near Selby, Yorks, is a man who loves beating records. Last month he put a notice on the station's board under the exhilarating headline: EGGBOROUGH, THE RECORD BREAKER.

No 2 machine, boasted the notice, had beaten the record for 'continuous running of a 500 Mw coal-fired unit. AND the record for continuous running of an oil-fired unit.'

More was to come. 'It is estimated that by 31 October if we continue to run at our present average load the total number of KW hours continuously generated will be above that of the Fawley machine. This then is our next objective, and the next record which we are going to break.'

'I hope that your efforts will prove to be sufficient to obtain the next record—it is within our grasp.'

Poor Mr Cooper was dismayed when he discovered, only a day after his cheerful message appeared on the notice board, that a worker had scribbled over it: 'Who are you trying to impress? It's us the workers who gain your medals. Put your hand in your pocket and give us our due.'

A further message read: BRING UNIT 2 OFF NOW.

What worried the workers about Unit 2 was the continual steam leaks resulting from excessive pressure on

valves. A worker who gets in the way of a steam leak suffers serious injury, if he is lucky.

The Ash and Dust section, singled out for special praise by Cooper, had, in fact, banned work on parts of Unit 2 which had become too dangerous. On Unit 4, three weeks before the notice went up, the oil pressure dropped, a flange opened and hydrogen started to leak out.

The leak lasted for five minutes, and fire brigades were called out from Selby, Goole and Snaith. Fortunately, there was no explosion, and the flange was closed. The slightest spark during those five minutes would have blown many of the workers, and probably even Mr Cooper, sky high.

## National fuzz

OUR Police in South London Department has been informed of the following facts.

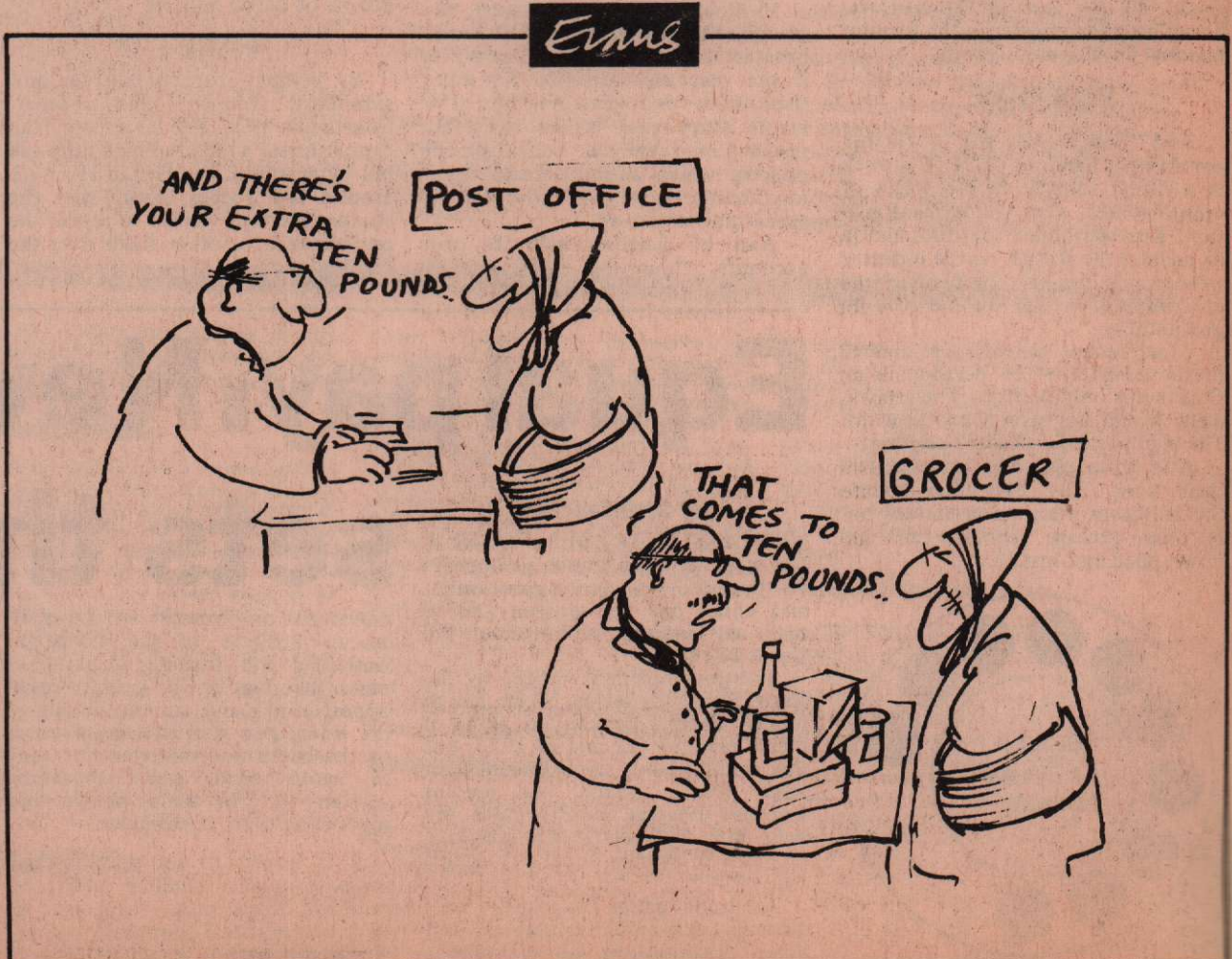
1. Friday 13 October, International Socialists member Europe Singh arrested at 8.50 for putting up a Fight the Tories poster. Taken to Battersea Bridge Road police station, kept for three hours, questioned closely about parentage, immigration etc. Appeared in court next morning. Conditional discharge.

2. Monday 23 October, IS member Janet Winterbourne arrested for putting up a Fight the Tories poster. Taken to Battersea Bridge Road police station. Woman constable brought from home to search her. Appeared in court the next day. Fined £5.

3. On Wednesday 25 October, 10.46pm two IS members walking down Nightingale Road over the bridge near Wandsworth Common Station see three people and a uniformed police sergeant talking. A bucket of paste stood beside them.

Passing slowly by, the two members notice a poster on the electricity control box near the four men. It advertised the case for voting for the National Front candidate in the following day's local election.

Walking on, they notice another four NF posters on the bridge. They watch as another poster is affixed to the bridge, with the sergeant watching on. A car drives up, picks up the sergeant, and goes off. The poster-stickers continue on their way, unarrested.





# PRINTS

## THE LAUGH MAKERS

MY PICTURE is borrowed from the News of the World November 5 'investigation that has set the whole country talking'—its 'expose' of strife makers.

As the caption makes clear, the tragedy of Bootle is one of a computer centre which has been held up because of a strike.

Nowhere does the half-page article explain that if the building were completed, there would be no use for it. For the government has announced the abandoning of the computerisation programme for PAYE accounts, believed up till now to be the biggest disaster in the history of tax bureaucracy.

The Bootle centre was custom-built for the computer which is now in a building in Victoria Street, Liverpool, doing 'testing work'.

The Inland Revenue is unable to hazard a guess at the cost of the conversion of the centre to some other (unspecified) use, let alone the cost of the conversion of the computer.

The first batch of stationery for the computer cost the taxpayer £50,000 and has been sold for scrap at £1 per ton.

I suppose you could call it a '£5m monument to bloody minded men', but not quite the men that the News of the World Investigation That Has Set The Whole Country Laughing had in mind.

## Men in hard hats

SENIOR members of the British labour movement often have their work cut out to keep up with all their jobs. Take Mr Ewan Carr. Mr Carr is the labour officer for Cubitts at the World's End site, where the workers are on official strike over bonus and victimisation.

As labour officer Mr Carr appeared as a management witness in the regional conciliation panel, three weeks ago, which found in favour of the workers.

Brother Carr, incidentally, is a member of the ABT (technicians) section of UCATT, the building workers' union.

Mr Carr, OBE, is also chairman of the housing committee of Lambeth Borough Council and a Labour candidate for the next Greater London Council elections.

## In the pink

A REPORT in the Nashville Tennessean on 22 October highlights the solution of a serious problem for the American birth control authorities. Dr R T Ravenholt, who is head of AID, which stands for Agency for International Development has authorised the export and sale of 14.4 million coloured condoms to underdeveloped countries.

The grey condoms, it seems, had had a 'lack-lustre reception'. But officials in the Orient had, according to Ravenholt, 'shown much more interest in the coloured condoms than in the grey ones. You should see the interest in their faces when they saw the many colours. The



For 18 months, nobody has worked on this building: It is a £5 million monument to bloody minded men

displays brought smiles and requests for some samples.'

Mr Ravenholt is not disturbed by rumours that officials visiting remote Indian villages have been surprised to find the children playing with clusters of multi-coloured, finger-shaped balloons.

## Biggles?

THERE have been rumours flying around in top circles for several weeks now that a secret committee has been formed of representatives from government, army and police to deal with 'security' in case of strikes.

The rumours were confirmed in Biggleswade by former Foreign Office boss Stephen Hastings, who is Conservative and Rhodesian Front MP for Mid-Bedfordshire.

Speaking at a meeting of local shopkeepers and traders, and without knowing that Socialist Worker's man in Biggleswade was present, Mr Hastings declared: 'I have heard that the government is taking steps against militant workers.'

'Police and government were caught out by the miners and the dockers, they have organised special flying squads to deal with picketing and striking.'

Mr Hastings said that police had to deal with 'quite a brain' behind the strikes. 'It is only a small group of evil men behind the whole thing.'

He also made it clear that soldiers should and would be involved in the operation.

DR CLIFFORD ALLEN, the well-known consultant psychiatrist, has an interesting view on the treatment of muggers. They should, he writes in the Medical magazine, Pulse, be sent to labour camps.

In Russia, the doctor points out, the camps had a 'magic effect' on young people who had indulged in

petty crime. When the men were 'conditioned to work', they gave no further trouble.

'If only we had such camps,' mourned the doctor, 'they might be very useful for those considered unlikely to benefit from borstal.'

## Van men

BRITAIN'S elite officers of the future, on the assembly line at Sandhurst, were visited last week by an officer from the army special investigation bureau. His lecture was on the subject of socialist groups in Britain and how their influence might be contained.

In particular he drew attention to the locations of printing presses which produce left-wing literature. He made it quite clear that the army special branch was kept fully informed of all changes of address and 'would be ready to move when the time came.' He was not referring to the use of a laundry van.

## Jail tails

BUILT-IN obsolescence seems to be the rule in prison work. Matty Lygate, former chairman of the Workers' Party of Scotland, who was sentenced to 24 years in prison last year for alleged involvement in bank robberies, is on hunger strike in Perth prison because the authorities will not allow him to do his work properly.

Matty is a tailor by trade, and refused to make jackets at the rate of six per week which brings in the regular prison pittance of 35p a week. He made four a week, and received 25p.

This was not good enough for the authorities, who told him to make six a week or transfer to the department which makes special protective clothing for germ warfare.

He refused to do either, was confined to his cell, and is now on hunger strike.

## RAYMOND CHALLINOR



ON SUNDAY MORNING, as you lie in bed reading the newspaper, spare a thought for the benefits you, like the rest of the British people, have gained from law breaking. Until comparatively recently, an Act of parliament against recusancy was still on the statute books.

This meant that anyone who did not attend church on a Sunday was liable to be fined. Similarly, there were taxes on knowledge, laws that deliberately increased the price of newspapers because the ruling class thought it would be dangerous if workers had an opportunity to read the news.

Both these laws were persistently broken. It became impossible for the authorities to enforce them.

Just in the same way as the working man owes his trade unions to the early pioneers of the movement who were prepared to break the Combination Act and other legislation, people gained these rights through their own efforts, not those of parliament.

It points to an important lesson. Rights that are won through struggle, wrested from our rulers against their will, are the valuable ones. Rights that the authorities bestow for good behaviour are as worthless as the rulers themselves.

## That lie in was against the law

there are people suffering from serious illness—struggling for their lives—who are placed at distinct disadvantage.

To some of them, another anxiety may be added. In this period of high unemployment, some firms are reluctant to keep ailing individuals in their labour force.

I know the case of a middle-aged man, suffering from cancer of the bladder, who became a patient at Hammersmith hospital. After a five-week course of treatment, a specialist told him to have six months' convalescence.

### The cruelty

But the supermarket chain for which he worked gave an ultimatum: come back to work or you're sacked. He reluctantly returned to the shop... Now he's dead.

The specialist, presumably, knew what he was talking about. For the treatment to be of full benefit, six months' convalescence was required. The fact that the patient had failed to have it may well have meant the difference between life and death.

It would be completely unrealistic to expect the present government to take any action that would curb the cruel conduct of such employers. Yet the government could make provision, quite easily, for the jobs of those people suffering from specific serious illnesses to have their jobs safeguarded while they received treatment and convalesced.

A similar scheme operated in the last war: men who went in the armed forces were guaranteed their jobs back once the fighting was over.

Nevertheless, some might think that the cabinet could be influenced by sordid financial considerations: the waste of public money. The man who had cancer of the bladder had treatment at Hammersmith that cost the taxpayers around £1000 and the supermarket's threat prevented the full benefit from this costly treatment being gained. But even on these grounds the government is unlikely to be stirred into action.

As with some many other things at the present time, militancy is the only answer. A policy of no sackings is necessary not merely to keep unions on the shop floor intact but also to help those of our numbers who are unable to defend themselves.

## THE SCANDAL OF CANCER RESEARCH

TWENTY PER CENT of people in Britain die of cancer. This means that, unless some cure can be found, there are more than 10 million people now walking around who will be killed by this disease.

Yet Sir Solly Zuckermann, scientific adviser to the Prime Minister, recommends that no further money be allocated to research in this field. He makes his proposal despite the paucity of existing provisions.

While Britain spends £2400 million a year on the armed forces, it only devotes £10 million to cancer research. Much more scientific talent is employed devising new diabolical ways of destroying life than goes into discovering new ways of preserving it.

I find it difficult to believe that had the authorities shown the same urgency over cancer research as they have done over nuclear research, then a cure would have been found years ago.

### The suffering

Ponder over the quotes that follow. In my opinion, a hundred years hence such will be used to illustrate how barbarous British society was in the 1970s, just as we look back to the period in which women and children toiled in the mines as one that was hardly civilised:—

*Cancer patient 8517. Poor widow (67) with three motherless grandchildren to care for. Nourishing food particularly needed. Can you help please? Old Jewellery, etc, gladly utilised...*

*Cancer patient 0657. Spinster (37), outlook grim, with elderly father to look after, he needs warmth and extra nourishing foods...*

*Cancer patient 60953. Poor man (68) with wife also suffering from cancer. These unfortunate OAPs are bravely facing their tragic circumstances, but find it very difficult to provide the nourishing diet they so badly need.*

What these quotes from adverts of the National Society for Cancer Relief reveal is that in Britain today

## VICTOR SERGE

Memoirs of a Revolutionary 1901–1941

TRANSLATED BY PETER SEDGWICK

The memoirs of Victor Serge, revolutionary, novelist and poet, are a testimony to the experience of three successive revolutionary generations—the anarchism of pre-1914 France, the syndicalism of Barcelona 1917, finally Russia as Stalin took over. Out of the annihilation Serge himself survived as virtually a lone witness.

70p including postage, from

IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN



# Another big step forward

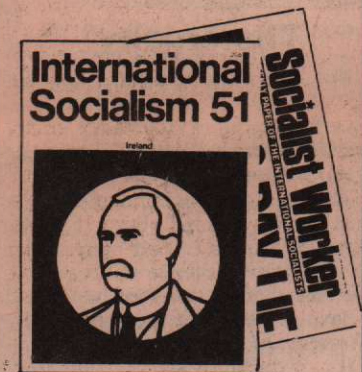
From January International Socialism journal will move from quarterly to monthly publication.

This change marks a significant step forward in the development of the International Socialists and their contribution to Marxist theory.

The new journal, with a new design and format, will reflect the development of the British and international workers' movement. Monthly publication will enable us to write in depth on the contemporary political scene.

Although the journal will remain the theoretical publication of the IS group it will find space for debate, comment and polemic on the important issues of the day.

The price of the monthly journal will be 15p.



## SPECIAL OFFER

Special bargain subscription rates will be available until 31 January 1973:

A six-month subscription to IS journal for 80p, including postage (normal rate £1.05)

OR  
A combination offer of IS journal AND Socialist Worker: a six-month subscription to both for £2.25, including postage (normal rate £3.05).

Please send me

\* IS journal for six months

\* IS journal and Socialist Worker for six months

I enclose cheque/postal order for

\* 80p

£2.25

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Post this form to IS journal special offer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

\* delete as appropriate



# Sinking roots in

1972 has been an exceptionally good year for the International Socialists in Yorkshire. The organisation has been involved in giving practical assistance to dockers in Hull and Goole, miners throughout Yorkshire last winter, building and construction workers at Drax power station, Leeds, York and Huddersfield, engineers in Leeds, Bradford, York and Ossett, technical staff in Leeds (Monkbridge), and Keighley (NSF), plastic workers in Doncaster and glassworkers at Knottingley.

There has also been close involvement in building tenants' movements in York, Leeds, Knottingley, Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Goole. IS has also been in the forefront of the fight against racism in towns like Bradford and Huddersfield.

The tremendous commitment of the members and the relevance of our politics has helped to build the credibility of IS as an alternative organisation for militants. It has resulted in a doubling of the membership and an IS presence in areas where only 12 months ago there was none: Barnsley, Dewsbury, Castleford, Pontefract, Knottingley, Goole, Rotherham, Grimethorpe and Scarborough.



The Battle for Neap House Wharf: one of the crucial battles of the dockers' struggle

# MINERS SET THE PACE

IN YORKSHIRE the fight against the Tories kicked off this year with the miners' strike. All over the region, miners who had been nursing their grievances for years took to the picket lines.

The support they received from other workers in the region was fantastic. In factory after factory workers volunteered to give pounds each week to the miners' funds and the number of TGWU drivers who crossed the picket lines was very low.

The picketing was often tense and, in the face of blatant police provocation, violent. On 3 February a scab lorry driver drove into Fred Matthews on the picket line at Keadby power station.

Fred was 37 years old and worked at Hatfield Colliery. Despite the fact that the police had urged the scab drivers to ram their vehicles at the picket line nobody was blamed for his death. A white-washing verdict of 'accidental death' was recorded.

At a mass miners' rally in Trafalgar Square on 6 February, Joe Holmes, the president of the Kent miners, read out a moving letter from Ellen Matthews, his mother. She said:

'I myself have always been an active member of the labour movement... it is vital that you fight to keep the trade unions free, because if you don't conditions will be returned to the last century. My sons who are left will continue to be actively engaged in the fight just as Freddie would have done.'

### DELAY

With the threat of an official wage ceiling to break through, militants in the country's pits are looking forward to another battle in the new year.

There are few illusions in the national leadership now. The executive, despite its clear mandate from the conference in July, continues to delay presenting the claim, but even if the executive backs down from a full-scale strike there is still likely to be localised struggles.

The miners' fighting spirit seems to have infected broad layers of workers throughout the country. The flying-picket tactics which worked so well in January and February have been

Special reports written by John Charlton (Leeds), Bill Message (Pontefract), Kevin Schirn (Bradford), Sheila McGregor (York)

imitated to great effect by the Humberdockers and by Yorkshire building workers.

Miners' wives have also been on picket lines and have played a key role in organising the fight against the Tory Rent Act.

Since the beginning of October, thousands of tenants have been on partial rent strike in places as large as Sheffield down to small towns like Barnsley and Knottingley. Even now, as the Labour Party's opposition crumbles, more tenants are organising to fight the increases now or the next time round.

In Rotherham and Sheffield, the majority of council tenants have been on rent strike for the last five weeks. In Rotherham, tenants on strike at Canklow, Kimberworth

Park, Rockingham and Wingfield have organised themselves through a trades council tenants association action committee that ran a big demonstration, with speakers from the NUM, two weeks ago.

At Kiveton Park, just outside Rotherham, tenants organised a rent strike in under two weeks which has spread to the neighbouring areas of Anston and Dinnington. Tenants who have been getting intimidating letters from the council are now picketing the council offices and organising for possible evictions.

They have the backing of the Yorkshire NUM, which has committed miners to industrial action in the event of evictions. Kiveton Park, a mining town, may become one of the first towns where united action of

tenants and trade unionists succeeds in beating the council

In Knottingley, tenants organised a daily picket of the rent office on one of the estates in order to make the strike effective.

In York, five tenants' associations have sprung up over the last few months to fight the rent rises and the trades council set up a tenants and trades unionists co-ordinating committee

The movement is still spreading within different towns from estate to estate and from town to town. Tenants in Goole, Dewsbury and Doncaster are now beginning to organise for the next increase, when the movement will be even stronger as people realise the rent spiral has only just begun and the only way to fight it is to organise on the estates and in the work places where the real muscle lies.

## Rent Act rebel tears up party card

THE Labour council in Doncaster decided last week to implement the rent rises. One councillor, Peter Duffield, a member of the Engineering Workers' Union at British Rail Engineering, was so disgusted with the decision that he tore up his Labour Party card.

Before the May elections, the Labour group on the council had only a majority of two. So they campaigned on the issue of the Rent Act and got a sweeping majority, gaining 10 seats out of a possible 11.

Said Councillor Duffield: 'It was so blatantly obvious that they had won the seats because of their stand on the Rent Act, that they had to hold out until the pressure was seen to be on them before they sold out, otherwise they would have lost all credibility to the electors.'

Publicly, the Labour group gave an excuse for implementing the Act that it would be better for them to have control of the council rather than a Tory commissioner.

Said Councillor Duffield: 'Only weeks earlier, when they were still holding out, they themselves dismissed this argument as rubbish.'

The real truth of the matter is that they were using the Act to gain popular support, but it has backfired on them now.

'When I stood for election, I stood on the doorsteps and told the many tenants in my ward that I would totally oppose this Act and that the Labour group in Doncaster would not implement Tory unfair rents. Therefore when the council implemented the Act, as a socialist and the elected representative of many council tenants I had no choice but to resign and carry on the struggle as an independent socialist and through the tenants' associations.'

Tenants now have only a limited choice, he said. They could either pay up with a smile, or form tenants' associations and go on rent strike.

'The latter is what I would advise,' said Councillor Duffield. 'They have nothing to lose and a lot to gain.'

'Tenants should mass together and show Doncaster Council how to defeat this pernicious Act.'

## MILITANT

JOHN CARNEY, NUM branch president, Kilmhurst colliery: When I first came into contact with Socialist Worker what impressed me most was that it spoke the truth about the situation in Ireland. The English newspapers give a biased view but in Socialist Worker you find out what actually happens.

On any item you never have to read between the lines. It's a straight-talking paper. What I also like is that it speaks out against permanent officials in my own union, the NUM. Having permanent officials is like being under a dictatorship. Once they are in they are in for life and don't have to work for their position. If we had elections, even if every five years, the right men might get in. Socialist Worker has the right ideas on this.

FRED HODGSON, NUM Yorks council delegate, Prince of Wales colliery, Pontefract: At the pit we were discussing the press as a whole and the lads came to the conclusion that Socialist Worker was the only paper giving factual reports of what is going on in industry. It is the only paper which has really taken up cudgels on the Industrial Relations Act and the tenants' struggles. We are all looking forward to the time when it is daily.



# Yorkshire

## Throwing down the gauntlet to race-hate peddlers

BRADFORD was once one of Britain's major industrial centres, when the local wool textile industry dominated the world market. Today the city clearly shows the effects of the growing crisis of British capitalism.

Side by side with slum housing and rising unemployment, new hotels and office blocks are shooting up in a speculators' bonanza. And black workers are treated as scapegoats for the problems that capitalism is causing for working people.

There are about 30,000 Pakistani, Indian and West Indian immigrants in Bradford. Many Pakistani workers were recruited direct from Pakistan by textile employers looking for cheap, unskilled and unorganised labour.

In the mills they are subjected to low wages and sweatshop conditions, and have been ignored by their own trade union, the Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers Union. Only unofficial action has won any gains for black textile workers.

Now the textile industry is in rapid decline. In the past two years the industry locally has lost more than 2000 jobs.

### Dole queues

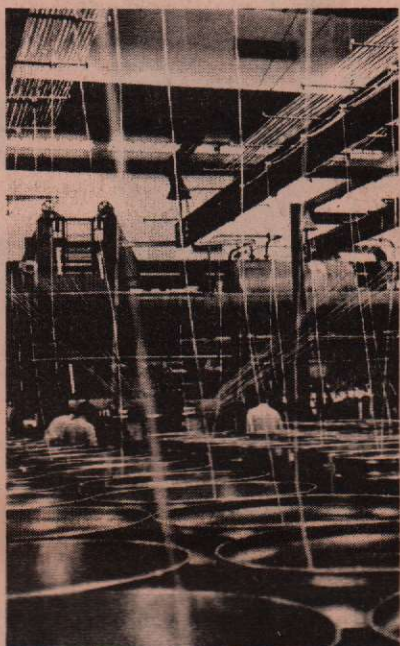
At the same time men have been losing their jobs in the Bradford engineering factories. Last year more than 200 workers were sacked in one afternoon by Hepworth and Grandage, part of the Associated Engineering car components combine. Ever since Arnold Weinstock's reign at GEC-AEI began, the English Electric plant at Bradford has been persistently threatened with closure.

The lengthening dole queues are now being used by racists to turn white worker against black.

Leading the racist campaign has been ex-Tory councillor Jim Merrick, founder of the British Campaign to Stop Immigration who polled 4000 votes in the Rochdale by-election. Merrick blames black workers for the lack of houses and jobs but his own record gives the lie to his hysterical racism.

While he was a Tory councillor he voted to stop council house building and close down the council's direct works department. At one stroke he cut houses and jobs.

What Merrick says is repeated by



Inside a modern textile mill: much machinery, few jobs

the local Tory Party in less lurid terms. His anti-working class policies are closely allied to theirs.

When the Tories voted in 1968 to cut council house building they had in their hands a report by the British Housing Association which said 40,000 houses in Bradford (two-fifths of the city) were either unfit to live in or would be within 10 years.

But the Tories did not resume house building until last year. Meanwhile a new 300-bedroom hotel for visiting businessmen is being built in the city centre. Even more grotesque, a new courthouse has recently been completed and work has begun on what will be the biggest police headquarters outside Scotland Yard.

The Labour Party's opposition to racism has collapsed. They have never driven home the connection between racism and the other Tory attacks on working people. Nor has the local party challenged racism in its own ranks. The so-called Lefts merely congratulate themselves on the election of a token black alderman.

### Leaflets

This failure reflects a failure right across the board to fight the Tories. The Labour council that was elected in May will implement the 'Fair' Rents Act without even the pretence of resistance.

The International Socialists have led the fight against Merrick and the Campaign to Stop Immigration. When racist candidates first stood in local elections in May 1971 Bradford IS called together a united front of socialist organisations against racism which handed out 40,000 anti-Merrick leaflets.

Only the Communist Party refused to hand out the leaflet—on the grounds that it was illegal.

More recently Merrick has seized on the Ugandan Asians issue and held two anti-immigration marches in Bradford. IS organised two counter-demonstrations, the second supported by 600 people.

# Incomes policy fraud

## -Wilson style ...

WAS LABOUR REALLY blown off course? Was the failure of the Labour government to carry through reforms the result of a conspiracy of private interests determined to seal any attempt to alter the distribution of wealth in our society?

Or were there forces at work internationally which set rigid and harsh limits on the radical policy Labour really wanted to pursue—the speculators and the foreign bankers—or simply the pressures from other powerful capitalist countries like America?

While an assessment of any Labour government must take these kinds of influences into consideration, the fact is that the ideas and the intentions of the leaders of the Labour Party, when they were elected to power in 1964, were based upon pursuing those policies which were in the best interests of the system as it stood.

They differed from the Tories only in the sense that they believed they could drive the capitalist machine more efficiently. But it was to be the same machine taking the same route.

Central to Labour's domestic strategy in 1964 was the proposed 'National Plan' with its particular emphasis on a prices and incomes policy. The sheer cynicism of the plan from a socialist point of view was tempered only by the fact that the Labour cabinet for some reason selected a comedian to act as its chief spokesman. Nevertheless the plan's anti-working-class proposals can never be forgotten, or forgiven, by the labour movement.

### Curious

When George Brown told a conference of executives of trades unions in April 1965 that 'we are suggesting not just a wages policy but an incomes policy. Not just an incomes policy but a prices and incomes policy' he was hinting that a Labour incomes policy was likely to be fair because it would be applied to all incomes.

This was a curious point to make because even in the run up to the election Harold Wilson himself had continually pointed favourably to West Germany and Japan, which had faster growth rates than Britain, as examples we should seek to follow.

The success of the German and Japanese growth rates lay with the fact that consumption was held back in favour of investment much more than in Britain. Or to put it another way: wages in those countries lagged behind profits much more than in Britain.

The new Labour government, under the guise of 'modernisation' and 'efficiency', was planning to create a similar set of circumstances here. A far cry from the 'fair shares for all' approach which George Brown hoped to sell to the unions.

The National Plan tried to both forecast economic prospects and co-ordinate the activities of different industries within a total economic perspective. It was based upon consultation with firms and trade associations — organisations not normally noted for their enthusiasm for the working-class cause.

### Pensions

Its priority was 'investment', which lay at the heart of the plan (the National Plan p55). And its statistics optimistically predicted a better rate of investment for the next five years and, at the same time, a worse rate of consumption.

During the 1964 election campaign the Labour leaders had promised that old age pensioners would receive a pension equal to half-pay. The plan, however, stated 'an income guarantee would not contribute toward faster growth . . . it is clear that radical changes in the pension arrangements are bound to take some time to carry out if they are to be soundly based to meet the needs of coming generations and if care is to be taken that the cost can be met without damage to the economy.'

'Although, therefore, work is proceeding on a new pension scheme it will not have any significant effect on expenditure up to 1970.' In other words the non-productive pensioners could be left to rot for at least another six years just in case significant increases would 'damage the economy'.

The plan was drafted on the basis of discussion with the management side of industry on information supplied by business. Not even Labour MPs, let alone the rank and file of the



labour movement, were consulted about it.

Of the nine members of the National Board of Prices and Incomes, which was to play a central role in carrying through the plan, no less than six were company directors. And the board's chairman, Aubrey Jones, had actually been a Tory MP.

Jones was quite clear about the role of the PIB and was not afraid to make it public. On 11 December 1965 he wrote in *The Observer* that the PIB thought that to increase industrial efficiency it would be necessary to obtain a greater deal of inequality.

### Failure

The National Plan quickly turned out to be a fiasco. But its centrepiece, the PIB, lived on into the second period of Labour government and prepared the way, at least ideologically, for the rapid spread of productivity dealing.

It had always been understood that there was one 'legitimate' way of earning higher wages—by producing more. But the PIB was also a failure from the government's point of view because organised workers did not let the projected cut-back in real wages take place.

From October 1964 to October 1968 average hourly earnings, excluding overtime, rose by 27 per cent as against 23 per cent in the preceding four years.

As far as price controls were concerned, the business magazine *The Statist* summed up the position as far back as May 1965 'To most managements an incomes policy (they rarely mention the prices side) means an attempt to discipline the unions.' And in a book on the Labour

government's incomes policy, Joan Mitchell, a former member of the PIB, admits that 'it was impossible to record every price change, let alone examine it. There are several million changes a year.'

But ironically there were some changes in incomes during this period. The gap between the lowest paid and the rest widened—except for groups like the dustmen who used direct action to improve their pay. The Child Poverty Action Group has shown that the number of poor increased and national insurance and supplementary benefits grew at a slower rate than real wages.

Writing in the London Evening Standard three weeks ago, Lord Balogh, economic advisor to the Labour government, spelt out clearly the purpose of incomes policies: 'The achievement of a balanced and steady but more intense expansion depends upon the deliberate creation of national consensus' (his italics).

When Labour returned to power there was no need to 'create consensus'—one already existed, the 'consensus' of expectations among large numbers of ordinary people that Labour was about to give practical expression to their desires for equality and social justice.

Little did they realise that those expectations were about to be manipulated to provide a public relations cover for an (unsuccessful) campaign against their living standards.

Yet this was the true worth of the National Plan and the PIB. And it is also the measure of the party's degeneration.

JOHN ROSE

## VIEWS

HARRY DEVENISH, AUEW (CEU) branch secretary, Goole, shop steward, Drax power station: The photograph of the dead construction worker made a great impact. I would like to see an industrial page which reported on all the disputes in a different area each week. Socialist Worker does a great job. It is the only paper consistently fighting for the working class. It goes down very well in the cabin and provokes a lot of discussion.

GURNAM SINGH, National Secretary, Indian Workers' Association (GB): I see Socialist Worker as a progressive paper which goes along with the line of the IWA on industrial struggles and the battle against racialism. It covers these struggles much better than any other paper including the Morning Star. We will always support a paper which consistently tries to mobilise workers against fascism and for socialism.

DANNY O'DONNELL, TGWU shop steward, Plaxtons, Scarborough, member Regional Committee, TGWU: One of the best aspects of Socialist Worker is the way it conducts an unceasing fight against the increasing bigotry shown towards black workers and the exposure of the lies and half truths that this bigotry feeds on.

An International Socialist pamphlet

### STUDENTS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Susan Buddle Richard Noss Colin Sparks

Price 15p, plus 3p postage, from  
IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

The struggle for socialism can only be won by the working class, but other sections of society are always drawn into the action. The International Socialists believe that students can and must be won into political alliance with the workers, and this pamphlet analyses the role of students and of the 'student movement' in an attempt to show the way forward.





Councillor David Skinner: 'We will go to prison to stop a housing commissioner taking over.'

# CLAY CROSS— RENT 'NO GO' AREA

by NICK HOWARD

**CLAY CROSS** Labour-controlled urban district council may soon be unique. For this small north Derbyshire town is likely to be the last bastion of the Labour Party's unwilling fight against the government's rent increases brought in by the Housing Finance Act.

As Labour councillors in nearby Chesterfield, in Rotherham, Sheffield and Doncaster actively attempt to sabotage the rent strikes being fought by the tenants' associations, Clay Cross councillors have held to their promises.

## PROFIT

1500 tenants in the town pay no increased rent because the council have not raised the rent. No tenants' associations are necessary at this stage, in the view of the councillors, (a view not shared by the local International Socialists because there is no need to organise a rent strike.

But Councillor David Skinner, Secretary of the local Labour Party and brother of left Labour MP Denis Skinner, says that by the method of accounting required by the Tory's Housing Act, the

council owes approximately £4 on each council dwelling.

A month ago the government gave notice of its intention to seek to recover this money which, the councillors rightly argue, is required so that the Tory Chancellor can pocket a profit made at the tenants' expense.

But the 11 councillors say they will risk surcharge and if necessary imprisonment to prevent the government's commissioners from taking over Clay Cross council houses.

'How can I pay a surcharge, when some weeks my take home pay is less than £20?' asks David Skinner.

The councillors are prepared for the arrival of the commissioner. Street committees are being formed after the first one was set up in the street where Arthur Wellon, the leader of the Labour council, lives. Placards to indicate

the 'no-go' areas have been printed and some already distributed.

A stand-by committee of 11 tenant members of the Labour Party has been formed and loud-speaker vans tour the estates from time to time informing the tenants of the progress of the struggle. Support has been pledged by the North East Derbyshire Labour Party and Dronfield Trades and Labour Council.

## DANGER

Tory opposition in Clay Cross takes the form of a ratepayers body, the Residents' Association. David Skinner argues that a tenants' association formed to fight the rent increases would be easily infiltrated by those who would like to weaken the opposition and split the tenants from the councillors.

Active street committees are certainly necessary to organise and involve the tenants in the struggle, for ultimately if the councillors are imprisoned or if the national Labour Party suspends the Clay Cross party—a possibility not unknown in the history of the party—then the tenants will have to go it alone.

Labour's national executive rejected at the recent annual conference a clause which pledged general assistance to those councillors who resisted rent increases.

## ISOLATED

David Skinner argues that a united leadership, in such an eventuality, could not be built by a non-political tenants' association.

But socialist organisations and trade unions would have to be brought into such a struggle to prevent the street committees from becoming isolated if they are required to go it alone.

The real fight has been forestalled by the councillors' magnificent example in refusing to implement the Tory Housing Act. Their deeds shame the collaborating actions of the vast majority of self-seeking Labour leaders who are implementing Tory policies.

But the arrival of the housing commissioner will be the real testing time for Clay Cross. David Skinner thinks he will probably not come, for 1500 Clay Cross tenants, he maintains, will be solid in their resistance.

# The po mugge at w

THE black people of South London are angry. The conviction of four young social workers at the Old Bailey on 7 November has set off a chain reaction of fury.

'What with all this fuss about mugging,' one young black worker told Socialist Worker, 'no one points out that we can't go out at night without the fear of being beaten up by policemen and charged with assault.'

The four men are Winston Trew, George Griffiths, Sterling Christie and Constantine Boucher. They are all members of the Fasimbas, a self-help organisation set up two years ago to assist the education of black children in South East London.

On 16 March this year they went to a meeting in North London and returned by tube. At about 11pm they arrived at Kennington underground station.

What happened then was disputed in the long court case which ended last week. Everyone agreed that the men were intercepted by seven or eight members of the new railway police 'anti-mugging' squad.

## Signed

A fight took place, and the four men were taken to Kennington Lane police station. They were kept there most of the night, and allowed to leave only after all four had signed 'confession statements' confessing to a large number of mugging offences in the area, which the police until that time had been unable to solve.

The men were charged with a total of 17 charges. All were charged with attempting to steal from an elderly man on the station platform and from another man on the escalator.

All were also charged with a series of assaults on Police Constables Clift, Bates, Mooney and Wood and Detective Sergeants North, Chapman and Ridgewell of the railway police.

The police story was that they had seen the men attempting to pick the pockets of a man on the platform and then of another man on the escalator. They had, they said, moved in for arrest. The men, they said, had resisted bitterly, and assaulted the police officers.

## Defend

The only evidence for all this was the word of the police officers. Neither of the 'victims' of the alleged robberies was produced by the police, nor could the police explain to the court why they had not interviewed the man on the escalator whose pocket was so nearly picked.

The men's story was different. They had, they said, just reached the top of the escalator when they were 'jumped' by a gang of white men.

Such 'jumping', they explained, is not uncommon in South London. When one of them asked what was going on, the only reply from the anonymous attackers was 'Fuck off, you black cunt.' So the black men fought to defend themselves.

The four black men were definite that their attackers never

identified themselves as policemen.

To substantiate their story, the defence produced a Mrs O'Connor, a white woman who had gone to their assistance at the top of the escalator. Mrs O'Connor said that there was no doubt in her mind that the black boys had been assaulted.

When she intervened in their defence, she was told by the police to 'fuck off and mind her own business' and, when she persisted, she was arrested, charged with being drunk.

The majority of the jury (ten to two) agreed with the police evidence on these points.

All the men were convicted of attempting to rob persons unknown and three were sentenced to two years imprisonment. Griffiths, who is younger, was sent to borstal.

All four men were also convicted of various assault charges on the railway policemen,

Special we  
Johni  
Paul Foo  
David W

and sentenced to  
sentences, usually  
imprisonment.

The police were  
however, with the  
what happened to  
boys, badly bea  
taken to the polic

The boys claim  
made the confess  
in the police stat  
beaten and threat  
police and Metr  
for most of them

All four men  
doctors' reports  
which showed st  
and bruised (the  
the incident.

# One man



Darkus Howe: a brilliant self-defence that exposed the police case

ON 28 JUNE  
'Darkus' Howe, a  
Black Panther M  
defendant in th  
Mangrove trial, wa  
a picket outside  
in solidarity with  
in the Oval Ho  
above).

A member of th  
was later identifi  
Mr O'Hara, (des  
educational consu  
complained to a  
about the behavi  
the pickets, Abd  
Mackintosh : wa  
uniformed polic  
dragged to the  
Bailey.

A crowd of  
surrounded the p  
'What are you  
arrest him for

## International Socialism 53

20p  
Lessons  
of the  
Sit-in  
Decline  
of  
Reformism  
Chile:  
Time  
for  
decision  
'Marxist'  
Left  
in  
India  
The  
Fourth  
International

Sit-Ins: The Experience



October issue now out: 20p, or £1 for a year, from  
IS JOURNAL, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN



# Police: Muggers Work



**NEWS  
IN  
VIEW**

The four blacks (left to right): Sterling Christie, Winston Trew, Constantine Boucher, George Griffiths

port by  
Phillips,  
ot and  
idgery  
obscure  
of two years  
not so lucky,  
eir story about  
after the four  
ten up, were  
station.  
that they had  
statements  
ion after being  
ned by railway  
opolitan police  
ghter  
en produced  
and photographs  
em: badly cut  
morning after

Winston Trew told the court that he had deliberately chosen times for his 'confessions' which fitted in with alibis which he could prove. For instance he had confessed to a mugging offence at 10.30 on a Thursday morning, because he knew that on that day he had collected his unemployment pay.

## Duress

George Griffiths complained that he had been punched in the eye by the policemen at the police station, and his eye had bled profusely. Sergeant Ridgewell admitted hitting Griffiths at the tube station, but no blood was found at the tube station where the fight took place.

The jury acquitted all the men of all the charges arising from their so-called 'confessions' in the police station.

For these acquittals there is only one explanation. The jury thought that the police were lying. If, as the police stated, the confessions were made freely and voluntarily, there were no grounds for acquittal. The acquittals meant that the confessions were not made freely or voluntarily: that they were made under duress.

Judge Cussen told the jury in his summing up: 'You may well come to the conclusion that it seems an incredible coincidence that not one officer on duty at Kennington Lane that night heard these men being beaten, or, if they did, that they did nothing about it.'

What Judge Cussen did not tell the jury was that Kennington Lane had been at the centre of a number of other cases of alleged mugging of black people by policemen.

In August 1970, for instance, scores of Kennington Lane police

with dogs invaded a dance run by the Black Panther Youth League at Oval House, Kennington. They were, they pretended, 'following up' an alleged theft of a watch. (The man who had lost his watch, needless to say, was never produced.)

## Pounced

Scuffles and brawls followed, at the end of which three Black Panther members were taken away, beaten up and charged with assault, convicted and given 18 months suspended sentences.

A year later, on 14 August 1971, Edward Cole, a 33-year-old Trinidadian, was returning home with his wife when he was pounced on near Waterloo by plain-clothes policemen. He was later charged with assault and sentenced in March 1972 to two years in prison.

The police story was that he

had resisted arrest and touched his pouch, which the police thought might have contained a weapon.

Cole's story was that he refused to be searched without an independent witness. His wife went to get help (a Mrs Morgan arrived, and was promptly charged with biting a policeman's finger). Thirty policemen, some from Kennington Lane, arrived on the scene, and one of them, a Detective Sutherland, bent Cole's thumb back until it snapped.

Cole's appeal against conviction and sentence was turned down by the Court of Appeal on 10 October. The court claims that two years was a fair sentence because Cole had a record of violence.

This consisted of one charge of 'insulting behaviour' at a Vietnam demonstration.

These examples are not exceptions. They are part of the everyday lives of black men and

women in South London. The South East London Group of the National Council of Civil Liberties pamphlet, *Race Relations and the Police in South East London*, and the Greenwich and Lewisham Case-Con pamphlet, *Points of Concern: Police and Black Workers*, list scores of cases of police mugging.

The truth is known at least to increasing numbers of black youths in the area: that while the press are terrifying their middle-class readers with tales of terror in the rich streets of London, something more serious and horrifying is going on unreported in the poor streets.

The people responsible are the guardians of law and order.

*The Kennington tube prisoners badly need funds for their appeal and their families. Please send generously c/o John Phillips, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.*

# Who beat frame-up

1971 Radford  
member of the  
movement and a  
notorious  
taking part in  
the Old Bailey  
the defendants  
the trial, (see  
the public, who  
in court as  
described as 'an  
want in Spain',  
police officer  
one of  
Mackintosh.  
seized by  
officers, and  
of the Old  
ickets quickly  
ice, shouting:  
'You can't  
nothing' and

so on.

Darkus Howe gently put his arms around Abdul Mackintosh as though to protect him, and was instantly grabbed, hoisted in an arm lock and, with Mackintosh and another picket called Olive Morris, was arrested and charged with assaulting the police.

Darkus was also charged with the serious offence of causing actual bodily harm.

As the three were dragged away, police officers who were drinking in the pubs around the Old Bailey joined in the fun, punching youths, throwing black girls into the gutter.

The three defendants were kept waiting for 16 months before their case eventually came to the Old Bailey last week.

The prosecution case,

brilliantly exposed by Darkus, who defended himself, was pitiful. A bite on a policeman's finger turned out on examination to have been a bite on a thumb. Olive Morris was wearing boots when arrested, and sandals when she arrived at the police station.

## Serious

A barrister who gave evidence for the defence, Mr Van Veeder, testified that what he saw was the precise opposite of the police account. Howe, he said, had never assaulted anyone.

Olive Morris and Abdul Mackintosh were acquitted as soon as the prosecution case closed. The prosecution's summing up of the case against Darkus Howe consisted of one and a half hours character

assassination, and five minutes summary of the evidence.

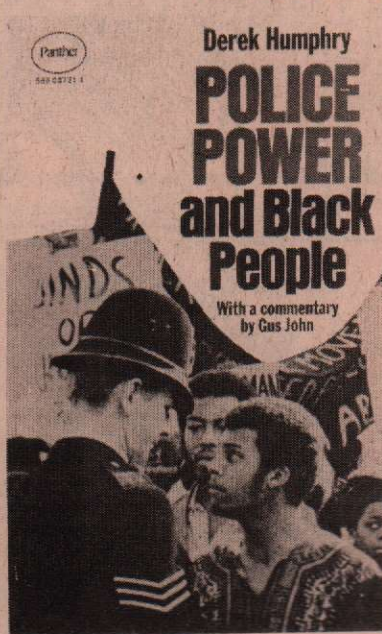
It was alleged against Howe that he was 'intelligent', 'a natural leader who gets people to do what he wants them to' and a man who 'wanted to take charge of the situation.'

Howe claimed in reply that the jury could take two views, and only two. Either he was guilty, or the police had deliberately framed him with very serious charges.

He asked that the jury acquit him 'as a clear social commitment against corrupt policemen'. The jury promptly acquitted him on all charges.

Darkus Howe is now applying for costs. 'If they can afford £10,000 for Gerald Nabarro,' he told Socialist Worker, 'they can afford something for me.'

## RACIALISM IN BRITAIN



Derek Humphry

**POLICE  
POWER  
and Black  
People**

With a commentary  
by Gus John

'To many blacks in our cities, police harassment has become a way of life. The police are viewed as the army of the enemy, which is the immigration-controlling, arms-to-South-Africa-selling, friend-of-Ian-Smith British government.'

Price 40p, plus 5p postage

ALSO  
**The Rise of Enoch Powell**  
BY PAUL FOOT  
Price 20p, plus 5p postage

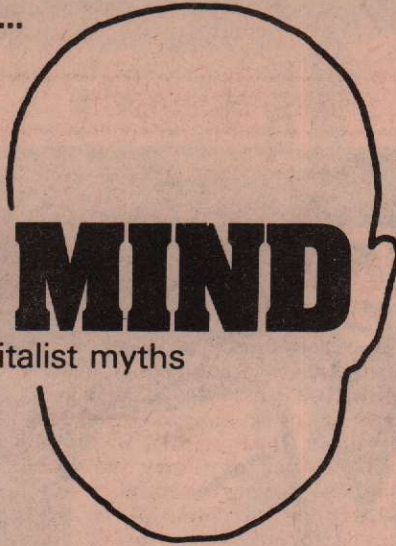
**IS BOOKS** 6 Cottons Gardens  
London E2 8DN



The modern state is essentially a capitalist machine...  
for forcibly keeping the exploited classes  
in conditions of oppression.'

# OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths



'OF POLITICAL parties claiming socialism to be their aim, the Labour Party has always been one of the most dogmatic—not about socialism, but about the parliamentary system. Empirical and flexible above all else, its leaders have always made devotion to that system their fixed point of reference and the conditioning factor of their political behaviour.'

With this apt comment Ralph Milliband introduces his Parliamentary Socialism, a devastating account of the wretched record of political contortions, sell-outs and lost hopes that are the history of the Labour Party.

In law, parliament—which means the Crown, Lords and Commons collectively—is sovereign. That is to say, it and it alone has the power to make laws which are binding on everyone within its jurisdiction.

We know that the real power is not in parliament. But, leaving that aside for the time-being, who decides what is its jurisdiction?

In the last resort it is decided by force. The 26 counties of Eire were once part of the jurisdiction of the British parliament, so were the eastern states of what is now the USA and many, many other places. They ceased to be so as the result of the successful use of force against the forces of the British government.

In the same way the law is enforced by the threat of force always and by the use of force where necessary.

## Powerless

There are times, it is true, when the law can be successfully defied—as the dockers defied it in 1972, or as the Irish Land League did in 1879-82. But these exceptional cases are invariably signs of a social crisis, of a massive challenge to the state from below.

For the state, not parliament, is the fundamental thing. Parliaments come and go, but the state—the civil service, the police and above all the armed forces—remains.

There can be, and are, states without parliaments, but a parliament without a state machine would be nothing, it could be flouted at will.

A conservative American lawyer defines a state by its 'monopoly of the legal use of violence within a defined territory'. This is an accurate definition, as far as it goes, and useful in that it focusses attention on the essential feature of any state, that it

## Organised violence that is the state

is an instrument for organised violence.

No realistic political thinker of any persuasion would dispute that the core of the state consists of 'bodies of armed men' in the service of the rulers.

But, it is argued, this machine of repression is neutral in the social struggle. It will serve whatever set of masters happen to be at its head.

So, where is 'constitutional' provision for a change of masters by an election, it is claimed that any social change for which a parliamentary majority can be won is possible without the destruction of the state machine.

The judges and the police, the argument goes, will enforce socialist laws repressing private ownership of the means of production as readily as they enforce capitalist ones upholding it.

The generals will put down what Marx called 'a pro-slavery rebellion' as readily as they will act against a workers' rising.

The senior civil servants will cooperate as readily in administering the destruction of big business as in administering the big business dominated state.

It is not a very plausible point of view to anyone who knows anything about history or current events. Yet it is the point of view not only of

Labour MPs but also, with some modifications, of some people who believe themselves to be communists.

In fact, the marxist view starts from the proposition that there are no 'neutral' states, that a 'neutral' state is an impossibility.

'The modern state, whatever its form', wrote Engels, 'is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists... an organisation for the purpose of preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production, and therefore especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in conditions of oppression...'

## Machinery

Perhaps this was his view at a time when the workers had no political rights? Not at all. It was written in Britain in 1887 after the workers (or rather the men workers) had been given the vote.

Marx and Engels, writing jointly, said of the possibility of using this 'capitalist machine': 'One thing especially was proved by the [Paris] Commune, namely, that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.'

They took this view for three obvious reasons. First, the bosses of the state hierarchy—the generals, admirals, state secretaries, judges and police chiefs—are not zombies, programmed to carry out any order they are given. They are part of the ruling class, shaping its outlook, its prejudices, its interests.

Second, all experience shows that no ruling class voluntarily abandons its property and privileges without a fight and will break any laws, including its own, in the process. Third, socialism itself is incompatible with a bureaucratic state machine.

Marx and Engels were writing in the last century. Perhaps experience since has refuted them? Or perhaps Britain is an exception? Future articles in this series will study the record.

## BOOKS

# REVIEW

## Wintour of our discontent

PRESSURES ON THE PRESS: an editor looks at Fleet Street, by Charles Wintour, Andre Deutsch, £3.50.

SOME WRITERS, it is said, have one good book in them. Charles Wintour breaks new ground: he has one good chapter in him.

The opening section of his book, 'The pressure of the clock', is a fascinating minute-by-minute account of one day in the life of the London Evening Standard, how he and his editorial staff plan and re-plan the paper to cope with the vast flood of news that pours into the office from staff reporters and agencies.

There is nothing quite like newspaper work: the mind-bending demands of schedules and deadlines, the steam cloud that hangs permanently over the sub-editors' production line, the excitement of a story well done, the total demoralisation when a scoop is missed or muffed.

All this Wintour captures well. It makes interesting reading, regardless of one's attitude to the role and nature of the press in Britain.

But the rest of this grotesquely expensive volume is devoted to a lacklustre whitewash job on the capitalist media. Wintour is aware of the growing credibility gap between newspapers and their readers and is sensitive, from first-hand experience, to the demands from journalists and printers for greater accountability of editors and some degree of democracy in the running of newspapers because of their enormous power to influence and direct affairs.

Wintour sets out to demolish the idea that journalists and printers should have some say in the editorial direction of a paper. His arguments are dishonest: totally ignoring the way in which the British press is owned and controlled by a tiny group of powerful, politically-motivated tycoons, he suggests that the pernicious idea of workers' control stems not out of opposition to that ownership



WINTOUR: Defending editors from workers

but from the subversive minds of the Free Communications Group and the International Socialists.

Editors, he says, must have complete editorial freedom. Mass meetings of the staff would be messy and inconclusive. Far better the small band of elite executives discussing policy while the faceless, nameless hacks blue-pencil away on the copy desk.

What Wintour really means by editorial freedom is the right of the editor to respond only to the board of directors and shareholders. It is a frightening concept of democracy: vast newspaper empires dominated by tiny, self-perpetuating oligarchies with power to distort the news and to malign those whose views run counter to those of Sir Max Aitken or Lord Thomson.

Wintour would say that he does not set out to deliberately distort the news. Of course not: he presents the news through the ideological prism of the directors of Beaverbrook Newspapers, a rather less representative bunch than, say, power workers and dockers, who have suffered under Wintour's lash in recent years.

This authoritarian approach to news-control holds sway not just at the level of ideas but down to recruiting the 'right' people into journalism who will reinforce these elitist ideas through their approach to writing.

He attacks that poor, timid body, the National Union of Journalists, for its policy of allowing only journalists trained in the provinces to take up jobs in Fleet Street: 'Clive Graham, the racing correspondent of the Daily Express, was

taken straight from Eton because he had such a phenomenal knowledge of horses and picked so many winners. Every year the Evening Standard used to give undergraduates a job on the diary [the gossip column] for a few weeks—a practice that produced a number of useful recruits. All that is over now.'

But I understand that the Morning Star has the most successful racing tipster in the national press. There must be a lesson in that somewhere.

Wintour reserves the greater part of his venom for the printing unions and cites as the two most blatant examples of interference with press freedom the industrial action they have taken in support of power workers and Ford workers.

During the power workers' dispute, electricians at the Standard stopped the presses until a statement by them appeared alongside a vicious and slanderous cartoon that blamed the power workers for almost every crime in the western world save for the gassing of six million Jews.

And during the last Ford strike, printers at the Southend Evening Echo stopped the presses until a 'ballot form' that invited Ford workers to say yes or no to returning to work was removed.

Wintour believes these to be dangerous attempts to undermine press freedom. I welcomed them as vital extensions of press freedom: industrial workers using their power to stop lies and distortions, acting in solidarity with other workers in struggle who were denied any access to the mass media.

Mr Wintour may consider that the gulf between us is unbridgeable. He is right.

ROGER PROTZ

## The nature of capitalism

IMPERIALISM AND THE WORLD ECONOMY, by Nicolai Bukharin, Merlin Press.

(Available to 15 members for 60p + 12p postage from Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1.)

THIS book really is a must. The Bolshevik leader Nicolai Bukharin, later executed by Stalin in the Moscow trials, wrote it in 1915 to try to explain why capitalism was driven to the monstrous barbarisms of the First World War.

But the book does more than that. It also deals with many of the arguments about the nature of capitalism that still confront socialists today.

An example: for the past 20 years Labour politicians have been claiming that 'modern capitalism is planned' and so no longer dominated by competition and market forces.

Bukharin pointed out long before most of these 'modern theorists' were born that 'there is a very strong tendency towards transforming the entire national economy into one gigantic enterprise under the tutelage of financial kings and the capitalist state', so that 'competition is reduced to a minimum within the confines of the "national economy".'

But because these different 'planned' national economies continue to be capitalist economies, internationally 'competition flares up in colossal proportions, such as would not have been possible in previous epochs.'

Inevitably, this international competition gives rise to threats of war.

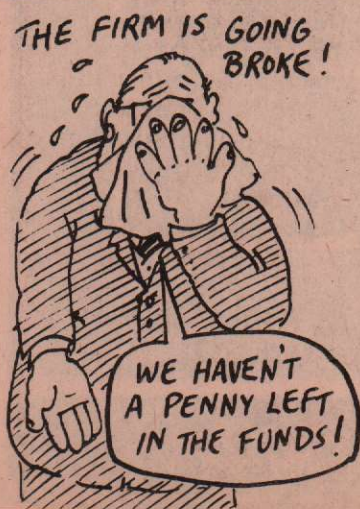
'When competition has finally reached its highest stage, when it becomes competition between state capitalist trusts, then the use of state power and the possibilities connected with it begin to play a very large part... The struggle between the state capitalist trusts is decided by the relation between their military forces...'

And 'there is no difference in principle whatsoever whether the state power is the direct expression of this monopoly of the means of production or whether this monopoly is 'privately' organised.'

The earlier chapters of the book contain a mass of factual material that is dated and of little interest to most modern readers. They can be skimmed without loss. But the later chapters are essential for socialists who want to understand the modern world.

CHRIS HARMAN

## OUR NORMAN



## BOOKWORM'S EYE VIEW

PENGUIN EDUCATION have for two years been bombarding us with left-wing and anarchist attacks on the school as an institution. Some of the books have been unreal and annoying to socialist teachers but two books by the Brazilian writer Paulo Freire are of interest.

CULTURAL ACTION FOR FREEDOM (Penguin Education 40p) is about teaching reading to adults, showing how this can only be done when passive repetition of phrases is reversed and the

adult students use writing and language in an active and frankly political fashion. In PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED (Penguin Education 40p) Freire argues that language itself must be under the control of those who speak, write and use it, not only in the peasant school of Brazil but the ghetto schools of Detroit.

The trouble is that Freire's own writing is over-general, over-lavish and extremely fond of irrelevant citations from Western crypto-marxists.



# Chaplin with a red flag

by Laurie Flynn

CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S film *Modern Times* is once again doing the rounds in British cinemas. It is a welcome and long overdue return. For *Modern Times* bears a marvellous gift. It provokes that most delightful kind of thinking—deep, gurgling laughter in the mind and the belly.

As the film opens Chaplin is a steel worker driven to distraction by the speed up and the production line. He is Our Norman writ large, innocent and talented, but so constricted and oppressed that he cannot stop his body making the required work movements in his meal breaks or his

time off.

He has a terrible tendency to turn his spanner motions in the direction of womens' breasts, particularly when their dresses are decorated with buttons.

The killer punch to Charlie's stability is delivered by a novel productivity deal, an automatic feeding machine which replaces 'time wasting' and 'costly' meal-breaks. This latest extension to capitalist efficiency puts Charlie in a mental hospital.

He is soon released and told to take it easy, rather difficult for one who must work or starve.

A prison stretch as leader of the unemployed and communist agitator follows, occasioned by Charlie being found in possession of a red flag, actually a load marker which fell from the back of a lorry and which Charlie was trying to return.

Later in the film, he is again arrested for an assault on the forces of the state. This time Charlie is in work. His mates and he have read all about 'the return of prosperity' and strike to get a little nearer to it themselves.

The police appear to disperse the strikers from outside the plant. They

push the peaceful if defiant Charlie around. He stumbles on to a plank which catapults another smaller piece of wood on to a policeman's head. He's a real strife-maker—and is again imprisoned.

This hints at the very essence of Chaplin's greatness, the simplicity of his humour and its jousts with established ideas. *Modern Times* is a genuinely popular and democratic film, an attempt to help an audience drawing independent conclusions about their own lives through their tears of joy.

## END PIECE

TENANTS' ASSOCIATION meeting on an estate in a Northern town.

The opposition to the rent rises is only now beginning to swell around here. A partial rent strike (withholding just the increase) has just begun among a scattered minority of tenants across the various council estates, and none of the organisers, or for that matter of the withholders, can be sure where it is going to lead.

Seated around the comfy chairs of a large pub saloon, we are aware of our hesitation as well as the outrage. Perhaps this is to be a campaign to keep people together for the next fight around the rent rise next year?

But we can't be sure even of the uncertainty—the whole thing might snowball, especially if the council tries evictions.

Two things are striking about the meeting: first the large number of experienced trade unionists who have been attracted to this association and the tasks of organising street by street: this, in contrast to many tenants' gatherings, is a roomful of politically tough older male workers.

The International Socialists (whose activists have been principally responsible for starting tenants' work on this estate) would never have got to know any of these stewards if it had relied on 'industrial contacts' and the lists of names from official trade-union publications. We had to organise in the working-class community to find a way through to the factories.

The other address (perhaps it isn't so odd) is to see how very respected the IS-man is who has been doing most of the spadework.

There is this obvious non-tenant, non-working class type, an energetic dropout in early twenties, delivering reports on the situation, consignments of leaflets, and bursts of marxist political analysis. Everybody accepts his place there and what he is doing.

The IS bloke is stood five pints by public subscription and the latest issue of this paper is bought by most present. Some of us can remember the days when we stood outside meetings.

I REMEMBER a good student friend called Geoff Owen who, when I was in the Communist Party at college, used to take Party literature, provide us with the occasional spot cash for political ends, and hob-nob sympathetically with us poor old militant Stalinists. He was a really good radical guy, solidier than almost anybody in that stuffy Right rampart.

We discussed with him whether he should join the CP: but as he was a keen amateur tennis-player in international tournaments, and he needed that US visa, he declined. (He may of course have been too polite to give us other reasons, but we never found out what they were.)

Anyway I see from the college record that he recently became the Personnel Director of British Leyland International. See what happens when you lost touch with somebody.

Peter Sedgwick

# THE WAR THAT CAME IN FROM THE COLD

THE fifth episode of *Colditz* has just tunneled its way off our screens (BBC-1, 9.25pm, Thursdays).

The publicity for the series was extensive. Clearly a few shillings were being thrown around. It's not too difficult to work out when Lime Grove means us to cancel our drinking engagements.

Trailers modelled on real film trailers popped up after the News and stars were parachuted in to lead the attack on the audience ratings.

Two of these animals have been spotted during the past three weeks. David McCullum, late Man from Uncle, has dropped his Russian accent for a slightly maniacal Scots and now seems to pass his time in lonely contemplation on his bunk about how he is going to make it back to the Old Country.

Last week Robert (OK, you've never heard of him but he is married to Natalie Wood) Wagner turned up.

Why is this series on? Re-awakening of interest in the war... young people looking for alternatives to kicking in old ladies... time when we stood together... serious look at what really happened... radical re-assessment... not all Germans liked Adolf...

The Americans have their Wild West, the Russians created a film mythology through the later works of Eisenstein (Alexander Nevsky, Ivan the Terrible), the two super-powers have created their myth worlds to play out their dreams and night-mares.

The British, as many critics have pointed out, got lumbered. We couldn't match Hollywood's money, nor the rest of Europe's greatest movies (the continent was protected by language from the full flood of the American's highly professional but mass-produced movies).

So Britain made documentaries, produced firstly by that cultural hot-bed the GPO and later by the Crown Film Unit. It was this tradition that provided a base for the stream of black-and-white war films about Antony Steele digging holes and doing handstands which dominated the British film industry in the early 1950s.

## BETTER

I spent most of my childhood in the pictures attempting to escape from prisoner-of-war camps. These films played the role of the Wild West for much of the British public and for most of the industry. You could live a decent life in that dream prison camp, or, for variety, dropping billiard balls designed by Michael Redgrave on dams (been over the Moehne lately?).

Now the war did have a very real

## Nigel Fountain on COLDITZ

meaning for a large number of people. It was a time when people really did share, did work together, did even believe that they were somehow going to create a better world out of the mess. Plenty of people are still nostalgic about it.

But the war films of the 1950s insisted on lying about the war. The heroes of those films were all from the same social class, the upper-middle. The worker (whose name was John Mills) played a role similar to that of the black in American films. While the darkies were singin' low in Hollywood, the worker was doing the hokey-cokey in Pinewood.

## ILLICIT

Only in the past five years have I realised that most of the airmen who went to obliterate and be obliterated over Europe came from working and lower-middle class backgrounds. They were flight sergeants, not flight lieutenants, and went to secondary schools, not Eton.

The return to Britain's cinematic dreamland on the small screen was heralded by Granada's *Family at War*, now being re-run on Wednesday afternoons. This was the real war, illicit pigs being sold under counters, a bit of sex on the side, occasional mutterings about socialism, and, best of all, booming overseas sales and big ratings in Baffinland.

The real war has been followed by *Pathfinders*, where real actors imitate Basil Brush imitating classless professionals escaping from smouldering cardboard Lancaster bomber mock-ups.

And now *Colditz*! A return to the centre of the dream.

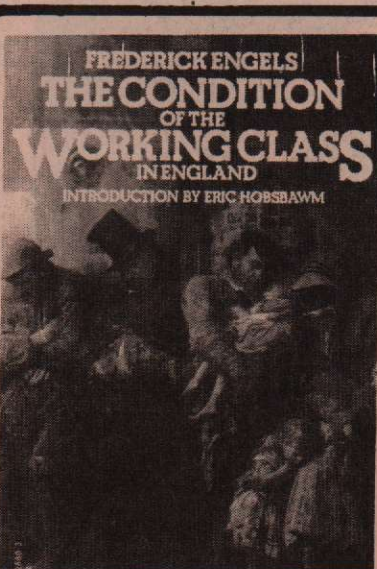


COLDITZ: going down the drain with the BBC

Hints were dropped during the first episode. A discussion on 'politics' lasted about four seconds. 'Politics' don't matter, let's get down to the job at hand burrowing out of the camp (or a balance of payments crisis), we're all decent Brits anyway.

This is actually a contrast with the mood of the 1960s, when politics didn't matter because all politicians were bastards anyway, so make the money and get out.

Characterisation in the 1970s TV *Colditz* has to be different from the 1950s film because we are in a different world now. The film could then be used to create a fantasy about an apparently secure ruling class basking in a new 'Elizabethan Age'. Now, in post-'Backing Britain', *Colditz* covers a wider class range because, stupid as they may be, our rulers no longer believe that Antony Steele can make it on his own—even assisted by Corporal J Mills.



## ENGELS

It is common to think of Friedrich Engels as the shadow and rich benefactor of Marx, and nothing more. He was, however, a man of outstanding ability in his own right—and much of Marx's work was based on Engels' knowledge of 19th century century working conditions.

Price 50p, plus 6p postage

IS BOOKS  
6 Cottons Gardens  
London E2 8DN



# 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'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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 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  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Dunfermline/  
Cowdenbeath  
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Greenock  
Stirling

### NORTH EAST

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

### NORTH

Barnsley  
Bradford  
Dewsbury  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Pontefract/  
Knottingley  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

### EAST

Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Chelmsford  
Colchester  
Harlow  
Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

### NORTH WEST

Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Burnley  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Preston  
Rochdale  
Salford  
St Helens  
Stoke  
Stockport  
Trafford  
Wigan  
Wrexham

### WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Llanelli  
Mid-Devon  
Neath  
Plymouth  
Swansea  
Swansea Valley

### GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon

### Ealing

East London  
Enfield  
Fulham and Hammersmith  
Hackney and Islington  
Harlesden  
Harrow  
Hemel Hempstead  
High Wycombe  
Hornsey  
Houslow  
Ilford  
Kilburn  
Kingston  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton

### MIDLANDS

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

### SOUTH

Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Eastbourne  
Guildford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton

# THE UNIONS

## Curious case of the 350 miners' ballot papers

by a Yorkshire miner

ONE of the heroes of the recent News of the World series, 'The Strife Makers', is Councillor Jack Smart, the 51 years-old ex-mayor of Castleford. Smart, who is also North Yorkshire Agent for the National Union of Mineworkers, has formed an organisation called the Yorkshire Association of Labour Miners—an interesting little band dedicated to stemming 'the tide of militant extremists', which he sees as a threat to NUM democracy.

To a News of the World reporter, Smart said: 'We want miners to take an interest in union activities.'

Noble sentiments. Therefore, following Smart's advice, a number of NUM members have been taking a closer look at the ballot which took place when he himself fought Arthur Scargill a few months ago for the permanent post of Yorkshire NUM Compensation Agent.

Everyone knew from the start that Arthur Scargill would win this election hands down. After all he had played a leading role in organising the flying pickets during the strike earlier this year and was an extremely capable television performer. Hardly a night seemed to go by during the strike without Scargill appearing on the regional news bulletins arguing the miners' case.

### Present

Smart's participation at this time was rather more passive. While Scargill took the pickets to the power stations Jack Smart gave away chickens and saw to it that every miner's family in Castleford received a bird as a present from the Castleford corporation.

It was on their immediate records that these two men were judged. Scargill was declared the clear winner.

The story would have ended there had not an independent body—the Electoral Reform Society—taken a closer look at the papers and recognised that 350 of them were invalid. Many of them were unfolded and clearly not all written in different handwriting.

Three lodges were subsequently shown to have returned false papers—the Barnsley Winders, Glasshoughton Colliery at Castleford, and the Prince of Wales near Pontefract. From Barnsley came a handful of papers, from Pontefract just short of 50, but by far the greatest number came from the Castleford pit. The secretary of the Glasshoughton Colliery is Bill O'Brien.

### Heated

Bill O'Brien and Jack Smart are very close. If Jack is the former mayor of Castleford, Bill could be described as the ex-king of Knottingley. Their manors lie close together, they serve on the same local government committees and not unexpectedly Bill is a leading member of the Labour Miners' Association.

Together they both control the new metropolitan Labour group: Jack is president and Bill is secretary. Wherever Jack is, Bill is there too.

Jack Smart was therefore rather perturbed when Bill O'Brien was called to the Barnsley offices of the NUM two weeks ago and asked to explain why so many papers were false. After a heated discussion the executive disciplinary committee accepted the explanation of the Barnsley men and that given by Dick Cunningham, secretary of the Prince of Wales (another member of the Labour Miners' Association), but they could not take O'Brien's explanation.



Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miners' leader, speaking during the miners' strike

Bill remains on the hook and is likely to stay there for a bit longer.

Which is all very unfortunate for him, since he is himself now after a permanent position with the NUM in Yorkshire. He is standing as a candidate for the position of finance officer, and the voting day is not far off.

How all this affects his chances is anybody's guess, and how it affects the credibility of the Labour Miners' Association is also an open question. It would not be the first snow-white organisation that turned out to have been washed in Brand X.

Whichever way it goes, however, Bill O'Brien should not feel too

worried. If the worst came to the worst he could give up the pits tomorrow because he is an influential man in his local community.

His name has been put forward as a candidate for election to the new super-council due to be formed as a result of local government re-organisation. He is also the owner of a lucrative little garage in Pontefract, and so should not be short of a penny or two.

He is also, by News of the World standards, a right-wing Labour hero, and therefore a very honest man who is playing his role in stemming the tide of militancy that threatens to swamp the NUM.

## DANGER STRINGS IN MDW DEAL

by an Austin worker

FOR the past fortnight British Leyland has been boasting its great success in negotiating the end of piecework at Austin Longbridge in Birmingham. Measured Day Work is to be brought in with all its implications for loss of job control and, eventually, more work for less money.

British Leyland has achieved this success as a result of a premeditated sell-out by the workers' representatives. This began when the Austin Works Committee drew up their own 21-point programme supposedly to counter management's offensive on MDW.

These 21 points were in fact the thin end of the wedge. Our representatives knew this would be the case when they drew up their list and presented them to the Austin joint shop stewards committee. And British Leyland's success in stage one of its MDW drive is mainly thanks to that ineffectual and uninspired leadership.

The deal itself is like any other MDW deal except that it is worse than those signed by other car plants. On the question of mutuality (safeguards to ensure that stewards have negotiating rights on disputed issues) we have gained nothing.

Management did concede mutuality on manning levels and work content but not on standard performance, so the concessions are cancelled out. Track speeds still

remain the domain of the management and so too with labour mobility. You will have to go where management tells you to go.

On lay-off pay, we shall be entitled to 80 per cent of our grade rate for a maximum of 56 hours in each 13 week period. If these 56 hours are not used up in any one 13-week period, then only 40 hours are carried forward into the following period.

There are also massive and dangerous strings attached to the lay-off pay clause. Lay-offs caused by industrial action inside Longbridge or in any other British Leyland plant affecting the supply of electricity, gas coal and other utilities, by planned short time working or refusal to accept 'reasonable' alternative work do not qualify for lay-off pay. It is obvious that management have covered their tracks well and our stewards have been ensnared.

And what was the price for this sell out? From November this year we will be on the princely sum of £46. In May 1973 this goes up to £46.50 and in November 1973 we attain the dizzy heights of £48. Holiday pay starts at £36.40 in November this year and rises to £43.20 in November 1973.

British Leyland has in fact bought its increase in control over the shop floor with very little outlay. The struggle to preserve shop floor organisation against the implications of this deal will be an uphill one but the fight must go on.







# The man who was sacked by a kangaroo court...

PART of the window-dressing of the Industrial Relations Act that has given it an appeal for some workers is the protection it seems to offer against the tyranny of undemocratic organisations.

In particular, it has had an attraction for victims of the bureaucracy of the General and Municipal Workers Union.

But the case of John Carling shows just how misplaced such hopes are.

An industrial tribunal last week dismissed the appeal of John Carling, a South Shields docker, that he had been unfairly barred from holding office of GMWU branch secretary. John was twice elected secretary of the docks branch, and on both occasions his election was declared invalid by regional secretary Andrew Cunningham.

He would have been elected a third time if regional organiser John Derrick had not persuaded a section of the membership that their votes would be wasted if they again voted for him.

John Carling's case was based on section 65 of the Act, which states: 'No member of the organisation, or of any branch or section of the organisation shall, by way of any arbitrary or unreasonable discrimination, be excluded from being a candidate for, or holding any office in the organisation or in a branch or section of it.'

## Tried

Five years ago John Carling was dismissed from his post as regional organiser for the union for alleged incompetence.

The circumstances of his dismissal—the subject of a pending legal action—would not be out of place in 'The Godfather'. On an outing to the Lake District, he was unexpectedly summoned into the lounge of the Royal Oak Hotel, Keswick, where he

by Dave Peers

was tried and sacked by a kangaroo court of the district committee.

Three days earlier a special meeting of the 'organisation sub-committee' had attempted to involve Carling in a charge of financial irregularity by putting pressure on David Morton, a branch secretary.

Morton, who suffered from a heart complaint, was reduced to a state of virtual collapse by this inquisition. Cunningham refused to allow him his bus fares home and he had to walk several miles in a distressed physical state.

## Refuse

The tribunal admitted that Carling was wrongly debarred from office the first time he was elected as docks branch secretary in 1970, but the regional committee were quick to cover this loophole in the rulebook. Rule 37 was amended at the following congress, on a resolution from Andrew Cunningham, to give a regional committee power to bar sacked organisers from any other union office.

Rule 37 (12) now enables a regional committee to remove from union office and disqualify from further office any official for any reason which it deems good and sufficient. In addition, the regional committee may refuse at its discretion to state any reason for its action.

In other words, if a regional committee wishes to 'arbitrarily and unreasonably discriminate' against a member of the union, they can do so within the rulebook.

John Carling contended that there was a conflict between rule 37 (12) and section 65 of the Act, and a minority of the tribunal agreed with him.

It was obvious that the tribunal had a problem on their hands. It would not have helped the govern-

ment's talks with the TUC if the Act was used to alter the rulebook of a major union. Their dilemma is reflected in the fact that it took a fortnight for the tribunal to announce their verdict.

Somehow the circle had to be squared, and this is how it was done. The tribunal shut its eyes and declared: 'The rule in question appears to the majority to be a perfectly reasonable rule when the structure of this particular union is taken into account. (my emphasis) . . . like many another rule this rule will work in an acceptable way if, and only if, those who operate it behave reasonably and honestly.'

Or in plain English, it is perfectly OK to have undemocratic rules

providing that the structure of the union is also undemocratic.

Workers in the GMWU who want to restore control in the union back to the members face a long uphill struggle. They will find no assistance from the Industrial Relations Act and its courts.

## Corrupt

When I spoke to John Carling and his workmates on the quayside at South Shields they were bitterly angry that the corrupt bureaucrats who run their union had chalked up another victory against the rank and file. Their opinions of Andy Cunningham and his docks organiser were hardly suitable for a family newspaper.

But if another battle has been lost, the war goes on.

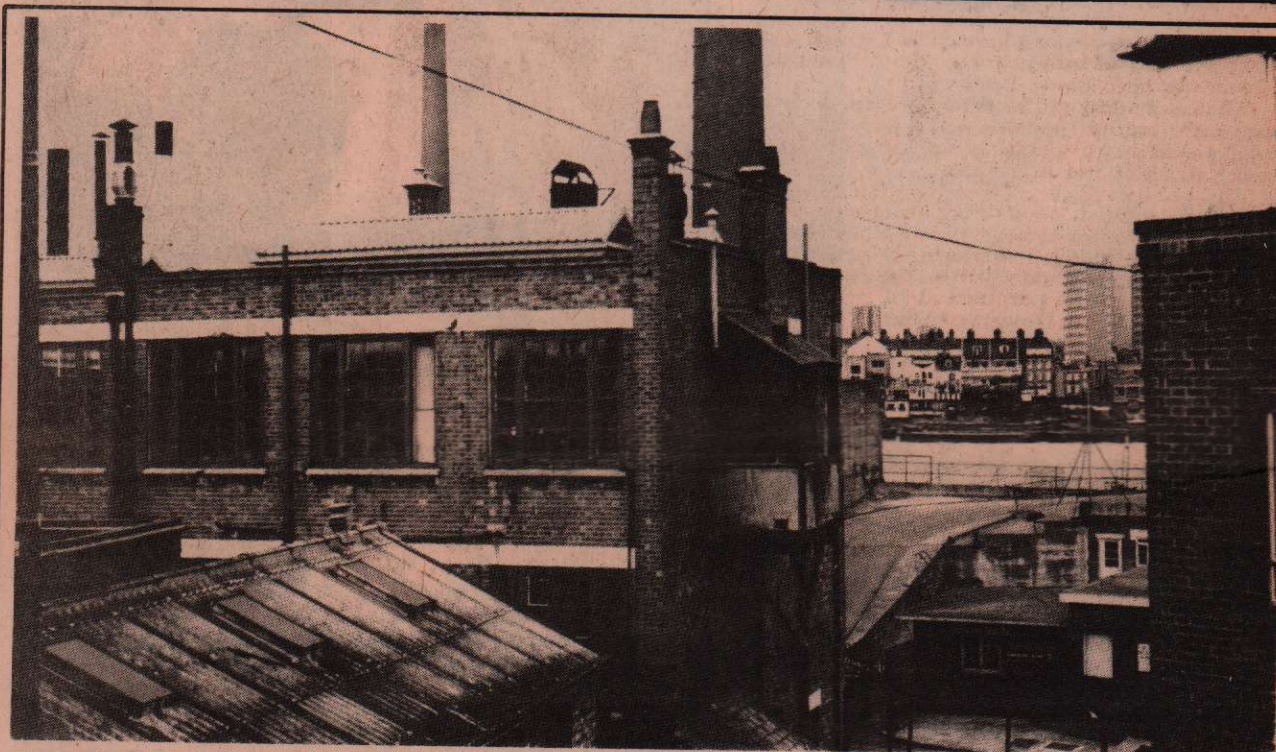
## Fine Tubes blacked

THE GKN-Sankey factory at Bilston in Staffordshire is to stop dealing with Fine Tubes, Plymouth. This management decision is the result of pressure from workers to black all work going to the Plymouth firm, scene of a 2½-year struggle for trade union rights.

And Faulkland Transport, of Sheffield, has written to the Fine Tubes Strike Committee saying that it will cease to have dealings with the firm.

The crucial decisions result from a tour of the North by two members of the Fine Tubes Strike Committee, Frank Clark and Brian Perry. They have visited 52 factories and six union district committees as well as speaking at a score of public meetings to urge fellow trade unionists to back their call for blacking of work to and from the Plymouth factory.

Frank Clark told Socialist Worker: 'The Birmingham Fine Tubes Conference has clearly made a big difference. Everywhere Brian and I have been in the past week, workers have said they had been to the conference or heard reports and were more determined than ever to get the black put on.'



The lead factory, seen from one of the council flats —how near can you get?

# 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.

## IS MEETINGS

**BUILDING WORKERS FRACTION:** meeting Saturday 25 Nov, 1pm, Milton Hall, Deansgate, Manchester. Important that all IS building workers attend.

**POST OFFICE WORKERS FRACTION:** meeting Sunday 19 Nov, 2pm, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. All IS members in the post office should attend.

**LLANELLI IS:** Harry Wicks, active in the marxist movement since the 1920s, speaks on its early years and its lessons for us now. Tues 21 Nov, 8pm, Dynevor Castle Hotel, Llanelli. All welcome.

**SWANSEA IS:** Harry Wicks, an active marxist since the 1920s, speaks on the early movement and its lessons today. Thurs 23 Nov, 8pm, AEU House, Orchard Street, Swansea.

**CARDIFF IS public meeting:** The General Strike. Speaker: Harry Wicks, Monday 20 Nov, 8pm, The Blue Anchor, St Mary Street, Cardiff.

**LONDON IS TEACHERS MEETING:** Sunday 26 Nov, 10.45am at 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

**TOTTENHAM INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS public meeting VIOLENCE AND CAPITALISM** Speakers: Laurie Flynn on industrial accidents and a speaker from PROP Thurs 23 Nov, 8pm Lord Morrison Hall, Chesnut Grove, N17

## IS HEALTH WORKERS FRACTION

Founding meeting for all IS health workers Discussion of NUPE claim and a projected rank-and-file journal All IS health workers welcome Friday 17 Nov, 6pm 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 for details phone 01-837 0737

## OTHER MEETINGS

**IRISH PRISONERS' AID COMMITTEE** Dance and Social: Thurs 30 Nov, 8pm, Finsbury Town Hall, London. Admission: 50p. Proceeds to Irish Political Prisoners' Defence Fund.

**CAMBRIDGE TENANTS:** Protest meeting outside Guildhall about rent rises, called by Cambridge Joint Tenants Associations. Thurs 23 Nov, 5.30pm.

**STOKE NEWINGTON EIGHT DEFENCE GROUP** Join the lunchtime picket in solidarity with the defendants outside the Old Bailey 10am-2pm on Thurs 16 and Fri 17 Nov. Protest march to Holloway Jail Sat 18 Nov, leaving Holloway Odeon, 2pm

**RANK AND FILE TEACHERS The Crisis in the Schools** Speakers: Kelly Beadle (R&F), Irene Lane (parent) and representatives of SAU and NUSS Fri 17 Nov, 7.45pm NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Fields, London WC1 (near Holborn tube station)

Stop the Bombing, end the blockade, US out now! End British support for US aggression! Self-determination for the peoples of Indochina! **INTERNATIONAL VIETNAM PROTEST** Sat 18 November **GLASGOW DEMONSTRATION** 2.15pm Blythswood Square Donations urgently to P Fryd, Glasgow Indochina Committee, 52 Belmont St, Glasgow, G12 8EY

## FIGHT THE TORY RENT RISES:

Demonstrate Saturday 18 Nov, 10.30am, BLYTHSWOOD SQUARE, GLASGOW. After the rally hear Hugh Kerr (Harlow Tenants' Association) and other tenants' speakers at IS and SW BOOKS, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow C1.

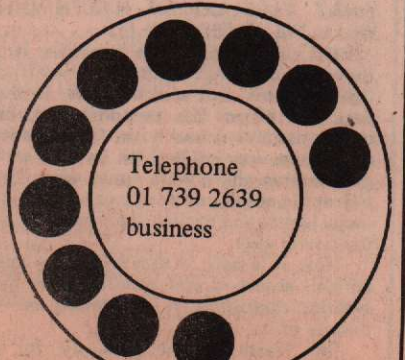
## NOTICES

**ROOM FOR TWO:** N E London flat, share expenses. 01-531 4804 Friday evenings or Sunday pm.

**GREATER LONDON COUNCIL STAFF ASSOCIATION** The outgoing assistant secretary sends fraternal greetings to all progressive GLCSA members

**UNIQUE CHRISTMAS GIFTS?** Chinese woven-in-silk portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and others (7in x 4in) 22p each. Karl Marx: The Civil War in France, Lenin: The State and Revolution, 33p each. At once delivery—D Volpe, 16 Belmont Court, London N16 5QD.

WHEN writing to Socialist Worker please mark envelopes clearly either EDITORIAL or BUSINESS.



## Lead poisoning plant belches on

by Mary Phillips

**ROTHERHITHE, South East London:**—Thick dust covers the outside walls of the flats near H J Enthoven's lead factory. The Lunn and the Jordan families, who live on Acorn Estate, fight a losing battle against the dust which settles everywhere—inside their veins as well.

For four of their children, including 2½-year-old Barry, are among the nine already found to have dangerously high levels of lead in their blood.

Enthoven's declined to pay fares to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital for parents and affected children because that would be admitting liability.

All the other children in the area are now being tested, and Southwark Council is serving an abatement notice on the firm, to be followed by further action if necessary.

Meanwhile, the factory is still operating. How long can this go on?

The director can stand it. He doesn't live in this grim area of old dockland,

where the air can be polluted for years before it becomes a 'statutory nuisance'. The local residents know about how factory inspectors give warning before visiting, giving time for the smoke-producing processes to be shut down and the premises cleaned up.

Tenants from four council estates are meeting this week with Robert Mellish, Southwark's Medical Officer of Health Dr Epsom, and other official representatives to discuss what action can be taken.

And who is responsible for it all? Enthoven's will not comment now and do not know when they will. Southwark Council pin the responsibility on the Factory Inspectorate, who in turn say they are only responsible for the workers inside the factory. Apparently a body called the Alkali Inspectorate is responsible. But usually the local health department would deal with the matter.

And next door to Enthoven's is a gate labelled 'Greater London Council—Department of Public Health Engineering'.

## MILITANT STRIKE ENDS

**KEIGHLEY:**—Technical staff at NSF, a Lucas subsidiary, have ended their 12-week strike and accepted the latest management offer of £5 to £7.50.

The workers, members of the technicians' section of the Engineering Union (TASS), were reluctant to accept an offer short of their claim for parity, by felt forced to accept by the government pay freeze.

Nevertheless this was the highest increase that anyone can ever remember in an area notorious for low pay and weak trade unionism.

It should therefore serve as an example for other workers in the area, showing the value of determined militant action.

Before giving strike notice the workers had imposed sanctions which included imprisoning the manager in his office until he was rescued by the police, holding shop floor meetings in production areas, a mass leafleting campaign, and the flying of a party flag over the factory.

They also used a new tactic called the 'jump in' which consists of mass rhythmic jumping on the ceiling of the manager's office at regular intervals through the day.

Since the strike started, equal determination has been applied to picketing. The company has relied entirely on scab drivers and several pickets have been arrested following incidents. One has already been fined £75 and other cases are pending.



analysis of the struggle against the Tories and the bosses

# CHRYSLER 4000 WIN SACKING REVERSAL

COVENTRY:—John Worth is the man at the centre of the Chrysler Stoke dispute.

He is 36 years old, 11 of them spent at Stoke, eight as a steward. He is a fitter in the engine-testing department, and is one of four stewards on the section. For the last 12 months he has been AUEW deputy-convenor.

On Monday 6 November 4000 men walked out in protest against his sacking by the company.

I spoke to John Worth on Monday, 12 November, and asked what was the background to the sacking.

'It was all rather sudden,' he said. 'On Thursday 2 November, the day and night stewards on the section were called in to the management. Their terms of reference, which they wanted to discuss with us, were "remethodisation"—that is, they wanted to take men off the job without any real changes in means and methods.

'They really just wanted us to work harder.

'After this first stage of negotiations there was a failure to agree. They then turned to us, and demanded that we proceed to the second stage after 15 minutes. It really was not on. It was 10.45 by then and the night stewards had been up all night.

'After some discussion the production manager said that he would have liked an earlier meeting, but it looked like it would have to be on the following Tuesday.

'We thought that was it. When we were on the point of leaving, the industrial relations officer (who had been taking notes) butted in, and said that he was not satisfied, and that the meeting should be held on the Friday.

'This had been discussed already, and not found convenient for the night stewards. We informed him that an agreement had been reached, and that we would stick by it. We then left.'

The next day, Friday, John Worth and the other day steward were again called in to take part in stage two of negotiation. They refused to go. They explained that the men had voted that no negotiations should take place without the presence of all stewards.

The next we heard, was that the industrial relations officer was instructing us to go to his office, or we would be taken off the clock. By then the lads had had enough. They called a meeting and instructed us to inform the company that if anyone was taken off the clock, the whole section would walk off.

'We gave the company time to reconsider, informed the senior stewards, and since no change of attitude was forthcoming, we all walked off.

## INCREDIBLE

'On Monday we had just resumed work normally, when I was called into the industrial relations office. Just me. To be on the safe side I took with me the other day steward. We were joined by the two convenors (TGWU and AUEW). I was then notified that I was dismissed forthwith.

'After this, it was quite incredible. I was not allowed into the plant again. I was kept in the office by the chief of security and his sergeant. A few of my effects were sent for. Of course I got very upset, but I then calmed myself down, and started writing notes on what had happened.

'When I got my things, I was driven off. I asked to be taken to the AUEW offices in the town.'

I asked John how the strike started.

'The other stewards soon spread the news through the plant,' he said. 'Starting with my own section the lads started a spontaneous stoppage. By nine o'clock, when the joint shop stewards meeting was held, many sections were already at a standstill.

## Victimised militant now faces union 'charges'

LONDON:—On Monday charges under union rules will be heard against John Lawrence, the victimised father of the chapel (shop steward), and 12 other members of the Press Association chapel committee for calling a stoppage of work without the sanction of the union executive. The charges could lead to the 13 being expelled from the union, NATSOPA.

The charges arise from the recent strike at PA, where NATSOPA clerical staff stopped work in pursuit of the same wage increase already conceded to PA journalists.

This quickly turned into a strike against

the victimisation of John Lawrence, who was sacked by the management 'for being on strike'. NATSOPA officials insisted that the chapel return to work without John Lawrence being reinstated. This was effected after union officials threatened to supply new labour to PA management.

In last week's issue of Socialist Worker it was stated that John Lawrence was suspended on full pay pending negotiations over his reinstatement. This is incorrect. In fact John Lawrence has been sacked and ordered off the premises for industrial misconduct. This disqualifies him from unemployment pay.

## Stalling

Representatives from Lawrence's union branch, which supports his reinstatement, have twice been stopped by NATSOPA head office from meeting PA management to discuss his reinstatement.

The union executive first declined to handle negotiations over his reinstatement and then assumed responsibility for the matter. Nothing at all has been done, and the purpose of the operation seems to be to stall the matter until Lawrence has been dealt with under union rules.



JOHN WORTH: His position as steward still in the balance

by Andrew Sayers

'After a meeting which lasted no more than six or seven minutes, the stewards decided for a stoppage, until reinstatement. The proposal was put at a mass meeting. All but about 10 voted for strike action. It was also decided not to meet again until the following Monday.'

Was the strike spread?

'No, not at all. The senior stewards decided to wait for the company to make a move. On the Tuesday, the lads in a subsidiary, Auto-machinery, walked out in support. They were talked back by the Stoke senior stewards.'

## VICTORY

The factory is now back at work, while you are here at home, suspended. How did it happen?

'I understand that the senior stewards had a four-hour meeting with the company on Thursday. They agreed three things: That I had my job back, that on Tuesday there would be a works conference, (since the management wants my credentials withdrawn) and that I would be suspended on full pay until Tuesday. This package was then presented to the lads as a victory, and of course, they voted to go back.'

Do you think that it is a victory?

'I think that it was a victory for the lads on the floor. They have backed me with all they had. I think their response has been quite magnificent.

'But the issue has been deliberately clouded. The company never sacked me for being a poor fitter. So how can it be a victory just to get my job back? I was sacked because I represented my lads properly. To go back and discuss my credentials is a defeat. The lads have elected me. They are the only ones entitled to decide I am not fit for the job.'

'So I do not really think that it is a victory yet. At the meeting people like McClusky, the secretary of the stewards' committee, and a prominent member of the Communist Party, claimed that it was a 95 per cent victory. How were the lads to see the real issue with this kind of soft sell? They meant only the best, but were taken in.'

Why do you think the company sacked you?

'I do not think that it really had anything to do with the issue. It was pre-meditated. Since the introduction of Measured Day Work in 1970, the company has had little joy from it. They even attempted to re-introduce a new incentive scheme to improve things for them. We slung it out though.'

'My section has been at the forefront of this attempt to maintain, and in fact improve, our wages and conditions. I was sacked because my section has been too good an example, trade union wise. The company is really trying to get at the whole of the union organisation—they just think it convenient to start with me.'

Some papers have called you a militant, an extremist. Do you think this is a definition which applies to yourself?

## WOMEN MACHINISTS STRIKE ON FOR SACKED CONVENOR

SHEFFIELD:—'We're not going back without Sylvia' was the mood of women machinists who make up half the work force in Easterbrook and Allcard's Presto small tools factory. Six hundred workers are now in their second week on strike in support of convenor Mrs Sylvia Greenwood who was sacked for 'bad time-keeping' as she arrived at work.

A mass meeting of strikers last Friday threw out a management offer to keep her on full pay but refuse her admission to the factory. On Monday Mrs Greenwood addressed a combined meeting of student societies at the university who gathered to support her.

Mrs Greenwood's victimisation came a day after the start of a work-to-rule at the factory. The Transport and Engineering Unions were negotiating for increases on the typical Presto take-home pay of £24 for a 51-hour week.

The stewards have the support of the Sheffield Small Tools Committee of the Confederation Unions. The strike is official and all Presto tools, taps, dies, drills, sinkers and reamers are blacked.

Messages of support and contributions to Easterbrook and Allcard Strike Fund, Transport House, Hartshead, Sheffield 1.

'I really do not understand what people mean by that. How can one be an extremist for wanting better conditions and a better future for the lads and their families? It is really quite funny, when you think about it.

'Last Monday, some men sacked me on the spot for doing what my lads wanted. I had never seen any of these managers stand for elections. Have you? I have to account for my actions to the shop. To which democratic body are these people accountable to?

'Yet it is me that gets called an extremist. No, to my mind the extremists are others, those who will stop at nothing to attack our living standards, those that throw men on the scrapheap, and use courts, prisons and all their other weapons to get at you, if you even dare to complain. These are the real extremists.'

## 'DANGERS'

The local press has reported that you are a member of the International Socialists. Do you think this influenced the company?

'Oh yes, I think so. You see with all these attacks on workers, socialist ideas are influencing more and more people. At Stoke this certainly worries the company. I have heard that lower management has actually been lectured on the dangers of IS.'

'But it is something else too, you know. Management never understands working people. All the lads know of my politics. It really cannot be otherwise. If I kept them hidden, it would be a real betrayal of both the lads and my ideas.

'They still vote for me. Some in spite of my politics, others because of them. But management, they always think that if they can get a red scare going they are home and dry. Well it misfired this time.

What do you think will happen now?

'It is hard to say really. As I have said, I do not think that we should concede to management that they have any right to discuss who represents us. But this works conference is going to take place on Tuesday. I do not know what will happen there.

'One thing I do know. The lads are going to realise that the issue is not me as an individual, or just my job. The issue is who chooses our stewards—us or the management?

'When they realise this, and they will, they will back me the way they have done up to now. I know that they will not let me, or our trade union organisation, down.

'In any case, I will continue as usual, as a steward, or just on the floor, to press for better conditions. We just cannot afford to do less than our very best.'

## Fight for union rights

LIVERPOOL:—Workers at Robinson Willey are fighting for trade union recognition. Three weeks ago the management sacked two shop stewards who tried to organise the union on the shop floor and since then the workers have been fighting for their reinstatement.

The intervention of union officials has achieved nothing. They urged the men to return to work pending arbitration with an independent tribunal and the reinstatement of the sacked men, but not as shop stewards.

The rank and file rejected these proposals completely and are continuing their fight

## Big picket keeps car plant closed

DUBLIN:—A general meeting of workers of the Brittain Group car assembly plant voted last Saturday to continue their eight-week strike. They rejected the terms for a return to work by a majority of 60 out of nearly 400.

Last week 300 workers from the Fiat assembly plant joined the Brittain's workers' picket attempting to stop sales staff entering the spare parts division.

Before the Fiat workers arrived there were scuffles with the police and one man was seriously injured. When the workers' ranks were strengthened both scabs and police withdrew. Many people compare this victory to that at Saltley, in the miners' strike in Britain.

The demonstration of solidarity with the 750 men battling against reactionary Brittain management showed that there is support for the strikers if they wish to call for it. In the coming weeks it will be essential for them to do so.

Without social security payments and with only £5 strike pay from their union many workers' families are feeling the pinch.

Last month a representative of the strike committee visited car plants in England seeking support. But so far his appeal has only brought in £150. This must be multiplied by 10 if the Brittain strikers are to be helped effectively.

Donations please to: Brittain's Strike Committee, c/o 112 Marlborough Street, Dublin 7.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

## FIGHT THE TORIES campaign

YORK

Monday 20 November, 8pm  
The Lowther Hotel, King's Staith  
Speaker: Duncan Hallas

BRADFORD

Monday 20 November, 8pm  
55 Godwin Street  
Speaker: Tony Cliff

LAMBETH AND WANDSWORTH

Tuesday 21 November, 7.30pm  
Chatham Hall, Northcote Road, SW11  
Speakers: Roger Rosewell, John Palmer  
Chairman: Fred Scott (NUT)  
Performance by Mr Oligarchy's Circus

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

Tuesday 21 November, 8pm  
Friends Meeting House, off Old High St

KINGSTON

Friday 24 November, 8pm  
Assembly Rooms, Surbiton  
Speakers: Roger Protz (editor, Socialist Worker) and Duncan Hallas  
Chairman: Mike Teague (ASTMS)

SCARBOROUGH

Friday 24 November, 7.30pm  
Scarborough Public Library  
Vernon Road  
Speaker: Tony Cliff



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name

Address

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

CONFERENCE on workers' control in the mass media and education: London College of Printing, Elephant and Castle, London SE1, Saturday 25 November, 10.30am-5.30pm. Speakers include: Alan Sapper, general secretary of ACTT, Bill Booroff, secretary, London region NGA, Reg Brady, chairman, London Joint Branches NATSOPA, and Bryn Jones, executive member, NUJ. Credentials, 50p per person, from Ron Taylor, 100 Ashley Drive, Whitton, Middlesex.



## Tenants sent eviction notices

KIRKBY:—The authorities have made their first attempt to beat resistance to the rent increases on Merseyside, where four areas, Fazakerley, Over the Bridge, Birkenhead and Tower Hill, are on total rent strike, and the rest are refusing to pay the increase.

On Monday the Labour council in Kirkby served eviction notices on seven tenants on the Tower Hill estate. Six of the notices had four weeks to run. But one, to the secretary of the tenants' association, Tony Boyle, who works on the production line at Massey Ferguson, expired at 4.30 on Monday afternoon.

There could hardly be a clearer case of deliberate victimisation.

### Blocked

The tenants responded with an immediate protest demonstration. Hundreds blocked the main road past the estate for more than an hour at the time the notice was due to expire.

Massive support has been promised to ensure that Tony, his wife and his four-year-old daughter are protected from eviction. A dozen or so tenants are staying in nearby houses.

On Monday, stewards from the Birds Eye cold store in Kirkby offered support and building workers from a nearby site joined in the demonstration.

All the local trades councils and the docks stewards' committee, have agreed a policy of taking industrial action the moment any attempt is made to evict any tenants because of the rent strikes.



SOME of the 2000 marchers who took part in the Anti-Internment League protest in London last weekend. The rally called for the release of all Irish political prisoners and the removal of all British troops from Ireland.

## Four-hour sit-in protests against the wage freeze

by Mike Balfour

WEST LONDON:—In the first political strike against the Tory government's wage freeze, workers at the Hoover plant in Perivale staged a four-hour sit-in last week when management broke off negotiations over an annual pay rise.

The shop stewards' negotiating committee were told there was no point continuing the talks over a rise due on 1 January because of the wage freeze. The week before, stewards had turned down a meagre £3 offer from management with no concessions on hours or holidays.

An angry mass meeting of 2000 workers decided to sit in at the machines until management came up with a positive statement about money, which they said should be paid up on 1 December.

After four hours management caved in and talks were resumed. Shop stewards have set a deadline this week and unless Hoover comes up with an acceptable offer, further militant action is certain.

The action occurred just as Hoover announced that its pre-tax profits for the nine months up to 9 September were £12.3 million. During the same period last year Hoover profits were £7½ million, making a big increase this year.

The sit-in and the direct action threatened in the immediate future is a dramatic political challenge to the government's wage freeze. But

militants in Hoover feel there is more chance getting the mass backing for further action to enforce the claim by exploiting loop-holes in the wage freeze Act rather than by openly defying the law.

There is a fighting mood on the shop floor at Hoover today. But it must be matched by an understanding that only by challenging the Tory government and its laws, and this means the State itself, can workers defend their living standards.

### Anchor worker killed

CONSTRUCTION WORKER W Leonards was killed on the Scunthorpe Anchor site on Monday. Mr Leonards, aged 17, was employed by sub-contractor MVM Scaffolding. He was working 40 feet above the ground when he lifted a board covering a hole and plunged to his death.

British Steel's Anchor site was featured in Socialist Worker on 28 October as having inadequate safety precautions for its workers. Under the Factories Act, the hole that ended Mr Leonards' life should have been fenced round and the board firmly fixed.

## Textile strike in third week

LOUGHBOROUGH:—Indian strikers at Mansfield Hosiery decided this week to continue their three-week-old strike until management ensures that they have equal opportunity to work in skilled knitters' jobs when vacancies arise.

Management agreed two of the strikers' demands, a £5-a-week rise and no victimisation, but stalled on equal job opportunity. This was put to a vote of the knitters, who decided by 75 to 25 to strike if the Indian workers won equal rights.

Mansfield Hosiery is part of the immensely wealthy Nottingham Manufact-

# HOSPITAL WORKERS IN REVOLT

by Gerry Dawson

HOSPITAL manual workers, the invisible porters, technicians, cleaners, cooks and telephonists who keep the National Health Service going, are in revolt.

These underpaid and under-appreciated health workers have been muttering and complaining for years—and quietly organising.

This winter they look like being in the front line of the fight against the freeze.

And last weekend, under the shadow of government threats to fine any anti-freeze strikers, the most militant and representative gathering yet of rank-and-file hospital trade unionists called on their unions to organise the first national strike in hospital history. They gave advance warning to their union negotiators that they would reject any compromise short of the full claim for an £8 increase, a 35-hour week, four weeks holiday, and equal pay and opportunity for the many women hospital workers.

### WALK-OUT

The conference, called by the London Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers, (LASH), was attended by branch secretaries and stewards from more than 60 hospitals, including delegations from Liverpool, Manchester, Canterbury, Bristol, Gloucester, Bournemouth and the Isle of Thanet.

It had been called to keep up the momentum started by the spontaneous walk-out by Bristol hospital workers and buoyed up by the London one-day stoppage and demonstrations on 27 November.

The hospital workers' mood is bitter. For years their claim has followed the lines of the settlements between local authorities and the municipal workers. This has kept them in the very bottom of the wages league. But now they are nipped by the freeze and don't even get this increase.

Mark Palmer, secretary of LASH and a hospital telephonist, told Socialist Worker: 'People who work in hospitals do so because they can take responsibility and enjoy the contact with people. But our loyalty to the sick is used by management to keep us on low pay. And our own unions use the same sop.'

### UNOFFICIAL

A woman worker in a sterile supply depot, responsible for packing and sterilising dressings and equipment, is on a basic wage of £18. A hospital catering assistant gets £14.40 and a ward maid £15.08. An incinerator operator who burns infected dressings, used scalpels, needles and syringes, often with scanty protection, gets £17.40.

The hospital stewards hear the reply of the management side of the hospital services negotiating body, the Whitley Council, on Friday this week. If, as LASH suspects, it is simply the promise of £2.40 after January, then there could be a national unofficial hospital workers' strike by Christmas.

LASH are planning another national delegate conference for health trade unionists in London on 3 December.

Details of the conference from and messages of support to Mark Palmer, 122 Sinclair Road, London W14.

## PICKET LINES

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS:—Workers at the GEC factory downed tools last week in protest at the instant dismissal of a worker who clocked his workmate's card. A narrow majority voted for action against the severity of the sentence.

The worker involved had had to search for his own card, because it had been displaced from its usual place. He found his friend's card with it, and clocked it as well, intending to save his friend the trouble of having to repeat the search himself.

The Warrington district official of the Engineering Union pledged union support for the strike.

It soon became clear that management itself was split in the face of the workers' reaction. Higher management were willing to concede, while representatives of foremen were threatening to resign if the man was kept on.

On the Friday, a mass meeting decided to return to work pending negotiations. It seems the company made a partial concession, suspending the man for three weeks.

OXFORD:—A 24-hour picket has now been established at St Anne's college, where the cleaners came out on strike more than a week ago.

The strike started when the shop steward, Frank Keen, was victimised for being an active trade unionist, but the strikers are fighting for more than his reinstatement: this is a struggle for recognition for the Public Employers' Union (NUPE).

The workers in the college have realised that without a union they will not be able to improve their present abysmal pay and conditions. The present hourly rate is 28p an hour.

There are reports that the college has been using patients from the Littlemore Mental Hospital as cleaners to break the strike, paying them the princely sum of 8p an hour.

SOUTHAMPTON:—1700 lorry drivers decided to return to work on Tuesday after hearing that a sacked steward had been fully reinstated. Norman Phillips had been sacked for refusing to move a load which the men regarded as inadequately secured.

Management has now agreed that in future drivers will have the right not to handle such loads.

The real importance of the dispute is that it has proved the strength of trade union organisation among lorry drivers in an area where it had before been weak.

Management seems to have picked on Norman Phillips in the belief that by sacking a militant they would break growing militancy. Quite the opposite has happened.

## FIGHT THE TORIES BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE LONDON REGION RALLY

Friday 1 December, 7.30pm  
Camden Town Hall, Euston Road  
Musical Entertainment by The Combine  
Speakers: Tony Cliff, Paul Foot and Chris Davison (TGWU)  
Entrance 10p

## Subscribe Now!

I enclose £ \_\_\_\_\_ for one year's/six months

Socialist Worker

(£4 for a year, £2 for six months)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

→ Socialist Worker 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN