

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

GET RID OF THE TORIES

THE TORIES are trying to scare us all with the prospect of a general election on a single issue: WHO RUNS THE COUNTRY?

Edward Heath, merchant banker and yachtsman, asks: Who Runs the Country?

Peter Walker, multi-millionaire share dealer asks: Who Runs the Country?

Lord Carrington, aristocrat and landowner, asks: Who Runs the Country?

William Whitelaw, landowner and part-time property speculator, asks: Who Runs the Country?

Geoffrey Rippon, building contractor and fun-lover, asks: Who Runs the Country?

Robert Carr, metal manufacturer, export salesman and former director of Securicor, asks: Who Runs the Country?

The answer? THEY run the country. They and all the landlords, speculators and swindlers.

WEAKEN

They run it for themselves and nobody else. They run it to ensure that the rich get richer at the expense of the workers.

That's why in budget after budget they've handed out millions in tax concessions to the rich.

That's why they've tried for 3½ years to weaken the organisations of the workers. That's why they introduced the Industrial Relations Act. That's why when the Act failed in its attempt to stop pickets, they prosecuted the builders at Shrewsbury.

That's why they've pushed the rents of council houses up and up while building fewer council houses than in any other period

Why we say vote Labour: editorial page 3

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The threat to pickets: centre pages

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Rail drivers hit out: page 15

TUC surrenders: back page

for 20 years.

That's why they've allowed prices to jump higher than ever before in British history. That's why they've created the shilling fish finger and three bob loaf.

That's why they've locked out millions of workers for almost half the week. That's how they've run the country. And that's why we're not frightened of an election.

It shows that the workers' resistance against all these policies, especially the resistance of the miners, has pushed their backs to the wall.

It gives us a marvellous chance to drive the Tories out of office.

If the Tories lose an election, they will be forced, for the moment at any rate, to lay down the truncheons which they are wielding so viciously against workers' organisations.

But if we are to beat the Tories we have to fight.

Faint-hearts in the labour movement can already be heard pleading for 'restraint' and 'moderation' at election time. The miners' overtime ban, they plead, should be lifted, the railmen's action called off, other workers' efforts abandoned.

What rubbish! The fight against the Tories will only be won if the

full force of workers' strength is turned against them.

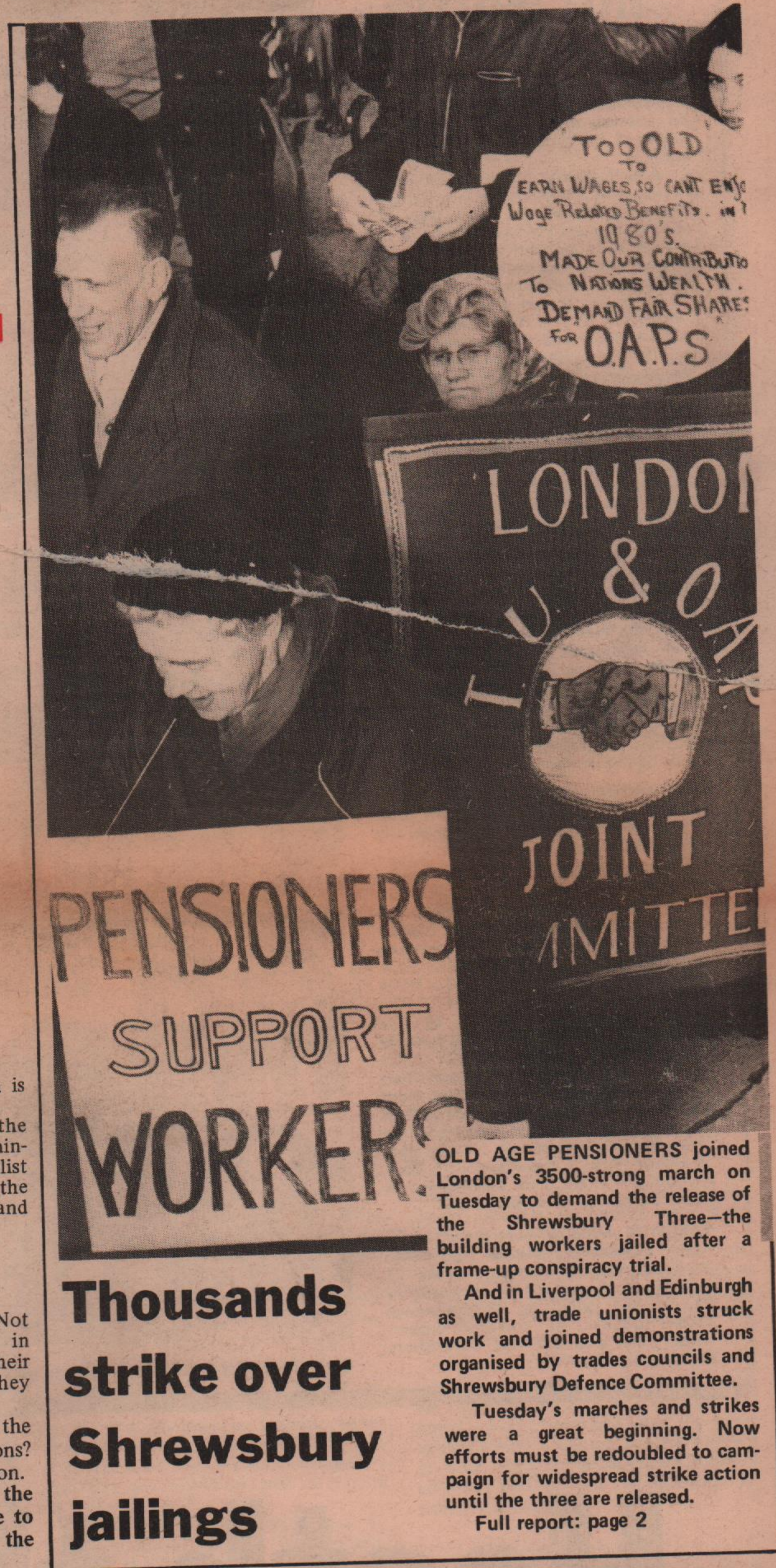
This means stepping up the miners' fight, winning the train-drivers' claim, backing socialist argument, and exposure of the Tory record with real fight and muscle.

RESISTANCE

We argue—Vote Labour. Not because we have any faith in Labour politicians and their words. We remember what they did last time.

But Heath has posed the question: The Tories or the unions? And we know which side we're on.

A massive vote against the Tories will be a massive vote to continue the struggle which the miners have pioneered.



OLD AGE PENSIONERS joined London's 3500-strong march on Tuesday to demand the release of the Shrewsbury Three—the building workers jailed after a frame-up conspiracy trial.

And in Liverpool and Edinburgh as well, trade unionists struck work and joined demonstrations organised by trades councils and Shrewsbury Defence Committee.

Tuesday's marches and strikes were a great beginning. Now efforts must be redoubled to campaign for widespread strike action until the three are released.

Full report: page 2

Thousands strike over Shrewsbury jailings

£5000 – an urgent appeal to you

Dear Readers,
TWO WEEKS AGO the International Socialists' executive committee launched a special appeal for £5000 to supplement the monthly Socialist Worker Fighting Fund.

The response from IS members and readers of the paper has been excellent. £2140 has been sent so far.

But the demands on the resources of the organisation and our print shop continue to increase.

And the imminent prospect of

a general election campaign will stretch these resources to breaking point.

At the same time the possibilities for building IS into a revolutionary party have never been greater than at present.

The £5000 special fund is absolutely essential to enable us to seize these opportunities, and the money is needed NOW.

We appeal to every IS member to make a personal contribution and for branches to organise collections among Socialist Worker readers in the factories and on the housing estates.

Yours fraternally,

The IS Executive Committee
15 January 1974

Rush donations to: Jim Nichol, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

Rank and file conference: vital call on page 14

3500 march to 'Free the 3'

We need action—not words

by Margaret Renn

AN IMPRESSIVE demonstration of 3500 trade unionists marched through London on Tuesday to demonstrate against the jailing of the three Shrewsbury building workers.

John Carpenter, one of the defendants in the trial, addressed the meeting at Tower Hill before the march began. He said that pious resolutions against the jailings were not sufficient. What was needed was a real campaign among the rank and file of the unions.

Every area should organise a defence committee, he said. What had happened in Shrewsbury and the new trial that has now started, could not be divorced from the attacks on the whole working class.

The government was frightened of the threat of the miners' flying pickets, not the builders' pickets.

On the demonstration were builders from the Cubitts sites at Mondial House and Brick Lane, McInernies, Finsbury Park, the Royal and National Hotel Site, the Barbican, Beckton Joint Sites, and Thamesmead. There were also delegations and banners from the docks, all the print unions including the EPTU London Press Branch, NALGO, several London trades councils, Hackney IVU, CPSA, the NUR and the AUEW.

A contingent of 40 engineers and building workers came all the way from Cornwall, and carried the Cornwall UCATT banner. Branches of the International Socialists, the Communist Party and the International Marxist Group made up the demonstration.

LIVERPOOL:—2000 trade unionists took part in Tuesday's demonstration organised by the trades council over the Shrewsbury issue.

EDINBURGH:—More than 300 people marched to a rally in Leith Town Hall on Tuesday to demonstrate over the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury Three.

Speakers were John Henry, secretary of Edinburgh and District Trades Council, Jimmy Young, Scottish executive NUM and Frankie Drain of UCATT. The demonstration was organised by the Edinburgh Shrewsbury Co-ordinating Committee.

The march was led by Bilston Glen NUM and supported by miners from Fife and Midlothian. The office staff at the NUM walked out in support of the rally. Several sites struck for the day, including Mytons Commonwealth Pool, Mytons Car Park and MacAlpines St James Sq, plus some smaller sites.

TEESSIDE:—Middlesbrough branch of the AUEW construction section have called on its members to strike on Monday 21 January in support of the Shrewsbury 24. It has called on Middlesbrough Trades Council to mobilise support within the area for the Shrewsbury building workers.



The head of the London march, organised by London Trades Council and Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee



Camborne International Socialists who drove 400 miles to join the IS contingent on the march

PICTURES: Chris Davies (Report)

Second trial is under way

THE TRIAL of the next eight North Wales building workers being prosecuted for picketing during the 1972 building strike started at Shrewsbury Crown Court on Tuesday.

As prosecuting counsel Maurice Drake opened his speech, solidarity pickets from Blackpool Trades Council demonstrated outside the

Originally this second trial was to be directed against nine men. But when all remaining 18 defendants surrendered bail yesterday, Dennis Morris, one of the nine changed his not guilty plea. He pleaded guilty to two charges of unlawful assembly.

The eight whose trial is now going ahead, John Clee, John Davies, Derrick Hughes, Alfred James, Arthur Murray, William Pierce, Samuel Warburton and Thomas Williams, are being done on specially selected charges.

The prosecution is proceeding only on the unlawful assembly and affray charges with which they had the maximum success in the first trial. These charges have also been narrowed down to relate only to the one site, McAlpine's Brookside contract at Telford.

This second show trial is expected to last five weeks. Over the next three weeks the prosecution will once again be introducing dozens of men on the lump and small employers to talk about how terrorised they were by the Shrewsbury picketing.

And once again the truth about the Shrewsbury prosecution and about the violence and intimidation of the building employers will be ruled 'legally irrelevant'.

The three jailed defendants in the first Shrewsbury trial are now being moved again. And their wives are not being informed.

Elsa Warren, wife of Des Warren who is now serving three years for being an active trade unionist said this week:

'This secrecy is because they are political prisoners and because the government wants to try and stop news of the movement's support reaching the men and to stop demonstrations at the jails.

'I have not had a wink of sleep since Friday. When I couldn't see Des at Bedford on Friday, I rang the Home Office to ask them where he was. They refused to tell me.

Heath threat to hit at the left

'REDS under the bed!'—that is Heath's main election slogan. All the signs are that he and his colleagues will be trying to divert attention away from their own class policies with an old-fashioned witchhunt.

On Saturday, Heath issued a clarion call to Tory constituency party workers. 'We all know,' he said, 'that there are forces working in our society to undermine and destroy it. These groups rely on a false appeal to class loyalties.'

The following day, a remarkable article appeared in the Sunday Express. It was headlined: CARR READY TO ACT ON RED LIST WRECKERS.

The article declared: 'A top secret list of individuals and organisations whose activities would discount life

in Britain has been drawn up by government security officials. It contains more than 100 names of men who may attempt to interfere with any government plans to safeguard public services during a major crisis.

'They represent the hard core of industrial and political troublemakers and have left security men in no doubt of their plans to foment industrial strife . . .

'Home Secretary Carr has been fully briefed of the dangers. Action against "the wreckers" would be supervised by a special division in the Home Office police department controlled by a senior civil servant responsible for the compilation of reports about subversive activity.'

The list is known as the 'red list' and the 'action' will not be taken without 'the specific authority of the Home Secretary. He in turn will

consult with the Prime Minister, Attorney-General and other Cabinet Ministers'.

The Home Office pooh-poohed the story. 'The basic fallacy in the Sunday Express story,' a spokesman told Socialist Worker, 'is the assumption that the Home Secretary or the police can "take action" against anyone who has not committed a criminal offence.'

But it would be surprising if the

Sunday Express published a story in conflict with the Home Office official view, especially as John Junor, the Express' editor, is a close personal friend of Home Secretary Robert Carr.



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Insurance: your money and your life....

by Brian Vasher

MOST PEOPLE feel insecure. To be ill, old, widowed or orphaned means poverty and hardship. Yet the basic insecurity in our society is also a source of vast profits and investment funds.

Life assurance companies controlled assets of up to £20,000 million in 1972. They also provide 25 per cent of all new investment and 30 per cent of national savings.

Pension funds are not far behind, with £11,000 million, and will grow still further under new legislation. Together they represent the most powerful financial force in British economy.

Who controls this power and how it is used is revealed in the seventh 'Anti-Report' published this week by Counter Information Services, called Your Money and Your Life.

The new investment of life funds in 1972 was enough to finance a new ICI and the Prudential Insurance Company alone has £3 million of new money to invest every week.

Millions of working people contribute weekly or monthly to these funds.

Challenge

The insurance companies invest the money where profits are biggest and quickest. Something like £400 million has been diverted into the property market. To property developers this is real ammunition for the game called 'speculation'.

The end result is the soaring costs of housing in the cities. You don't have to be a genius to know which class is hit the most.

CIS reveals the remarkable link between Harry Hyam's Oldham Estates and the Co-operative Insurance Company, the one time labour movement challenge to private finance capitol. They estimate that the Co-op 'advanced some £27 million to Oldham Estates, and on that Harry Hyams has made a cool profit of £400 million'. The most infamous result of this partnership is the empty Centre Point.

Another area where big profits are made is in South Africa. Insurance companies and pension funds invest heavily in apartheid and the report shows the extent to which the companies support Vorster's regime, and the British companies that profit from it.

All this is hardly surprising when you look at the people who sit on the boards of insurance companies. 'Insurance is still the haven for ancient peers, baronets and dreadnoughts, fortified by a few merchant bankers', the report says. Extraordinary backwoodsmen emerge for the monthly meetings from country seats, and retreat back to the shadows.

Control

'General Accident has seven peers and two baronets among its directors. The Eagle Star has a marquis, an earl, a viscount, a major-general and three baronets as well as Emile Littler (the link with the showbiz octopus) and three Mountains from the family that controls it.'

The most useful part of the report for trade unionists in its examination of the Tories' Social Security Act its pension provisions. By this law, everyone must belong to a pension fund, either state or private.

As the report shows, the state scheme is deliberately made unfavourable to drive contributions into the private sector. As these funds are invested on the Stock Exchange, the scheme taps workers' wages to provide more investment capital for private industry.

CIS says this report is part of a bi-monthly programme, to which readers can subscribe at £2 for six reports.

*Your Money and Your Life—insurance Companies and Pension Funds; CIS Anti-Report number seven (32pp) available price 30p from Counter Information Service, 52 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1. Special rates available for bulk orders.

SOCIALIST WORKER

WE ARE FOR the return of a Labour government. To kick out the Tories is the immediate and vital need. That means to return Labour to power. There is no other choice at this time.

We do not say this because we believe in the Labour Party's programme or, for that matter, because we believe that Labour in power would effectively carry out that programme. We do not believe either of these things.

Our support for the return of a Labour government is unconditional. It does not depend on the particular policies advanced by the Labour leaders. That is why we believe that workers should vote for all Labour candidates, whether they be right, left or centre. Unpleasant as it may be, it is essential to support even the Roy Jenkins or Reg Prentice type of Labour politician against the Tories.

Why? First because the return of the Tories in the present situation would mark a real swing to the right in Britain. It would mean a hardening of the attitude of the employers, a savage attack on living standards and on the already threatened rights that have been won by the working-class movement in the past.

It would mean more politically-motivated trials of trade unionists like Shrewsbury. It would mean increased police harassment and legal attacks against militant trade unionists and the left.

It would encourage all the reactionary forces in our society. Above all, it would increase the chances of a 'solution' of the developing crisis at the expense of the mass of working people.

Second, just because we face accelerating inflation, the return of massive unemployment and cuts in real wages and the social services, it is all the more important to test the words, the promises of the Labour Party leaders

Why we say 'Vote Labour'

The Labour Party manifesto, issued last week, contains a number of proposals which all socialists must wholeheartedly support: Repeal of the Housing Finance Act, repeal of the Industrial Relations Act 'as a matter of extreme urgency', abolition of 'the Pay Board apparatus set up by the Tories', 'strict price controls on key services and commodities' and a number of others.

The manifesto is, of course, based on a pro-capitalist 'national interest' strategy. 'Britain needs a new government,' it states, 'and the Labour Party is ready with the policies essential to rescue the nation from the most serious political and economic crisis since 1945... The sooner Labour gets the chance to heal the savage wounds inflicted upon our society in recent years, and to turn the hopes and exertions of our people in a new direction, the better for the nation as a whole.'

The manifesto is in no sense a socialist platform, not even of the gradual, parliamentary road variety. After all the excitement and controversy last autumn about nationalising the 25 biggest companies, all that appears about public ownership is the pledge 'to ensure not only that North Sea and Celtic Sea oil and gas resources are in full public ownership but that the operating of getting and distributing are

under full government control with majority public participation.'

That plus the meaningless promise 'to socialise existing nationalised industries... to make the management of existing nationalised industries more responsible to the workers in the industry and more responsive to their customer's needs.'

This is a reformist programme. But in the growing crisis of British and world capitalism even these moderate, reformist proposals **cannot** be implemented without making real inroads into the power of the capitalist class. Though it will be very hard for a Labour government to refuse to fulfil some of its promises, the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act is an obvious case in point, it will also be very, very hard for it to proceed far with its programme.

There will be tremendous pressure from the employers, the civil service, press, television and all the other weapons at the disposal of the ruling classes to force a Labour government to adopt Tory policies. Certainly there is no possibility of 'uniting the nation'. The basic interests of the working class and the capitalist class will get further and further apart as the crisis deepens.

We do not believe that the Labour Party is capable of resisting capitalist pressure or that many of its leaders even want to. We believe that the socialist alternatives must be built. But part of the process of building it is resistance to any swing to the right and the testing, in practice, of the limits of reformist politics.

Every militant should therefore give unconditional support to the Labour Party against the Tories, but support without any illusions. The return of a Labour government will create the most favourable circumstances for carrying forward the struggle. It cannot replace the struggle in any way.

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IT'S GRIM ON THREE DAYS PAY

by Kath Ennis
CHERRY PITMAN'S husband is one of Coventry's £50 a week car workers. She has two children aged six and four. Last week she talked about the effect of the three-day working on herself and her family.

'Although Denis has been on a three-day week since before Christmas, things are only just beginning to hit us. The first three-day wage packet this week was £26 and no dole has come through yet.

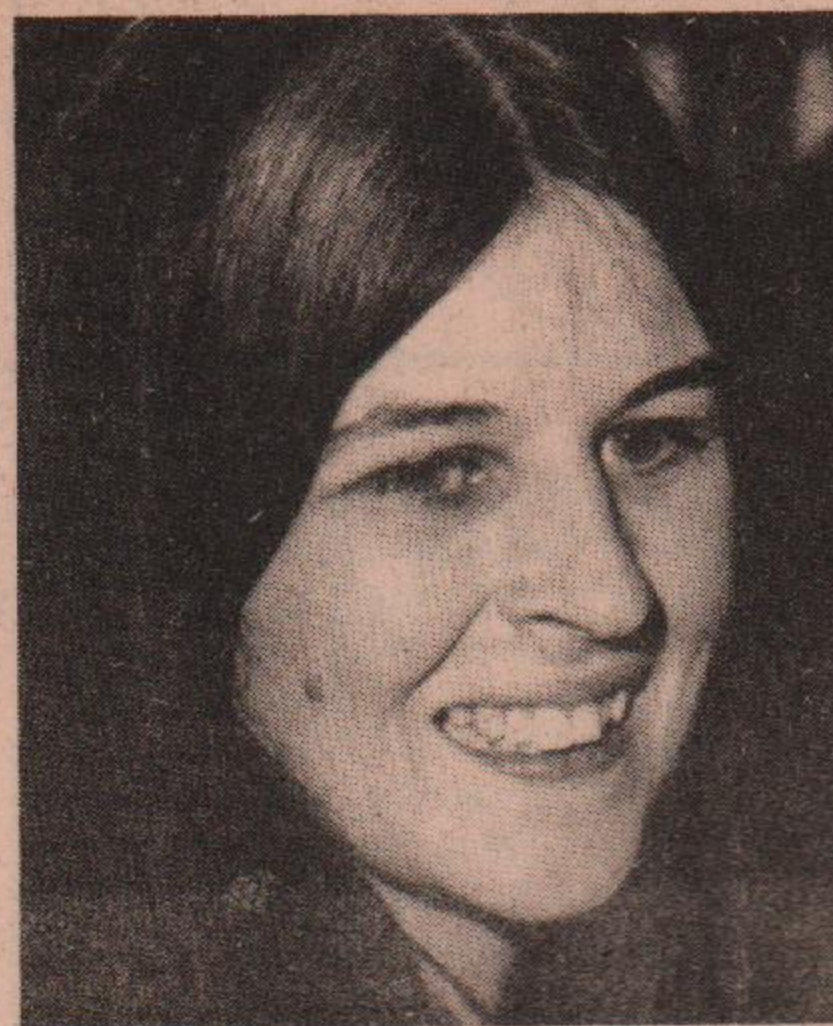
'Out of this we have to pay £12 mortgage every week, £1.20 rates, 75p insurance, 54p compulsory life insurance (with the mortgage) and 60p on school dinners.

'I'm having to cut right down on the food bills. We haven't been able to afford beef for ages anyway.

'And for a long time I've just been buying mince and liver and off-cuts of bacon. This Sunday we had chops for dinner.

'Before Christmas I got myself an evening job to help buy presents. It was only meant to be temporary. But now with the three-day working I'm having to carry on with it.

'Compared to other young couples



Cherry: having to cut down

I know we're pretty well off. But most of our neighbours on the same wages as before are finding it impossible to make ends meet. Several of my friends have started looking for evening jobs.

'Six years ago when we were first married we had to live on £10 a week with a baby. But we seemed better able to manage then than we do now. For one thing we've never

been in debt until recently.

'Last Friday we went into town to the shops. The precinct which is usually packed was half-empty. People are cutting out buying clothes and shoes, and are beginning to count every penny—a bus fare into town is becoming an extravagance.

'To my mind the three-day week is completely unnecessary. The government is trying to turn workers and housewives against the miners.

'Unfortunately, the majority of housewives I know are being taken in by the Tories. No wonder when they never hear the true facts but only the lies and biased propaganda you get on television and in papers like the Mirror.

'I think Socialist Worker has to be made more readable for women. This is the kind of thing we need to be reading.

'The men should put up a bigger fight over this three-day working. Coventry is a town where strikes are going on all the time.

'But now when the government and the bosses are really hitting out at working-class families, no one seems to be fighting back at all. Women workers shouldn't be standing for this Saturday working either.'

BRIXTON POLICE BEAT WEST INDIAN

HENRY YOUNG CHIN is a West Indian businessman and on 5 January he stopped off at one of his client's shops near Brixton Market in South London. Leaving his car for 15 minutes, he found on his return that it was being moved down the road.

Having pointed out that it was his car, the police demanded his name and address, which he refused to give.

He was driven to a back street and was beaten. 'If you won't tell me your name, you bastard I will have you.' Later he was called a 'black

bastard' by the same, bearded, policeman.

The local police have announced that 'investigations are under way'.

APOLOGY

But the local police aren't the only people to take an interest. Last week 150 people attended a Brixton meeting to protest over the incident.

A motion was passed demanding that criminal action should be taken against the police and that there

should be a public apology to Mr Chin.

The most important point made at the meeting was that Mr Chin was a well-off businessman, and publicity had been correctly centred on his case. 'But if he gets beaten what about all the black teenagers and young people who are subject to harassment and beating and whose cases go unnoticed?' one speaker remarked.

At the meeting the Black People's Defence Committee collected £101.

Strikers under siege from Tory scab army

THE DEPARTMENT of Employment has directed that scabs should be sent 'as a matter of priority' to break the solidarity of locked out workers at Perivale Gutermans thread factory in Ealing, West London.

The men were locked out eight weeks ago after the factory boss, HP Vogel, had deliberately provoked a dispute by deliberately doubling the bonus norms.

Transport Workers Union official Frank Cosgrove immediately contacted the local Department of Employment, who promised not to send unemployed workers to the factory at least until the local social security tribunal had settled the question of unfair dismissal.

Instructed

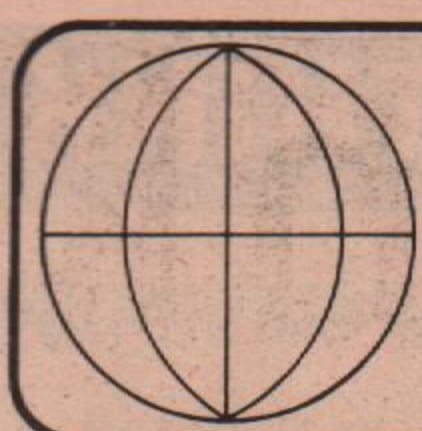
But last week, Frank Cosgrove was told by local department officials, that they were sending workers to the factory. Perivale Gutermans, they admitted, had been put top of their list.

Questioned by Cosgrove, they admitted that they had been instructed to do this by the Regional Controller of the Department of Employment.

This means that the government is deliberately provoking trouble on the picket lines by sending scabs to report for work. The police, who pass by the factory every 15 minutes in their cars, are expected to do the rest.

But the locked-out workers remain solid. Many of them are beginning to abandon their former illusions that they will be assisted by their case going in front of their local industrial tribunal, where they are suing for unfair dismissal under the Industrial Relations Act.

No case has yet been set down for the hearing, but a tribunal hearing would lessen the chances of solidarity action from local trade unionists.



Hungary

'What the workers said' author is convicted

by Peter Hitchcock

A YOUNG Hungarian was given an eight-month suspended jail sentence last week for trying to publicise the fact that workers in Budapest face labour conditions no better than those in a Western factory. Miklos Haraszti's crime was spending a year alongside production workers in the Red Star tractor factory and then writing a book from what they told him.

His book was called Piece Rate and described in vivid detail the alienation felt by workers confronted by an indifferent management and a wage system that was clearly unfair. The Party authorities refused to allow the book to appear and prosecuted Haraszti.

The case is rare for Hungary, which has preserved a facade of quiet for almost a decade. But it has brought to the surface the growing unrest and militancy simmering beneath the surface of Hungary's so-called New Economic Mechanism.

The NEM began in 1968 and has often been touted in Eastern Europe as a kind of liberal alternative to Stalin-style planning. In fact it has produced a system almost as bad as the one it tried to replace.

Hungarian workers have seen differences of income increase, and Western-style inflation grow. To push up profits from exports Hungarian planners have been trying to force a series of productivity deals on industry which effectively hold down wages. By the beginning of 1971 industrial workers found themselves earning less than peasants, a unique phenomenon in Eastern Europe. The planners were pressing for 'unprofitable' enterprises to be shut down.

Surplus

The situation reached the point where even the Party began to act.

Last year it allowed a special wage increase for industrial workers, allegedly to restore their position, but much of it was eaten away by inflation—5.4 per cent in 1973. This year the planned increase in real wages for industrial workers is 3.7 per cent while that of productivity is 5 per cent, giving the planners a tidy surplus.

Behind this overall picture the situation in individual factories appears much starker. The Red Star tractor factory is a case in point. Since Haraszti's book was written the factory has ceased to exist.

It has fallen victim to bureaucratic planning based on Russia's ultimate control of the Hungarian economy. Red Star used to make tractors, and sent nearly half its output to Russia. Then the Russians decided to make their own models at lower cost—in other words lower wages.

The bottom fell out for the Red Star works and it was merged last year with the Hungarian Wagon and Machine Enterprise in Gyor, western Hungary. Now it produces spare parts for buses, and a quarter of the workforce of 4000 lost their jobs. According to a report in Nepszabadsag, the main Party paper, last July some of the men were forced to retire early, a few left voluntarily and there were 'sporadic dismissals'.

The fate of this factory is not an isolated case. Discontent among Hungarian workers is rising to such an extent that even the official trade union movement in Hungary is beginning to talk in vaguely militant terms to the government about the threat of inflation.

But so far all this activity is meant mainly as a safety valve and is safely channelled through the controlled press. When militants like Haraszti go outside and try to publish workers' views directly, then official repression strikes.

BRIEFING

DURING a 24-hour general strike in the state of Maharashtra, western India, police shot dead at least six people, and Mrs Indira Gandhi, the Indian prime minister, was forced to abandon a public meeting after being pelted with shoes.

Police opened fire at Wani on a crowd demanding the release of a member of the Legislative Assembly and others who had been arrested for trying to stop buses in support of the strike. Mrs Gandhi was driven from the platform at Nagpur, at the point when she began to speak about food shortages, the general economic situation and the oil crisis.

IN view of the traditional political importance of international football matches in Latin America, the Russian gesture in refusing to play a World Cup match in

Chile was important. But it is now alleged that the Russians have agreed to pay nearly £90,000 compensation to the Chilean Football Federation. They deny this.

THE big United Aircraft of Canada plant at Longueuil, Quebec, has been closed by a dispute over wages, cost-of-living adjustments, union rights, working hours and compulsory overtime.

After workers occupied four United Aircraft plants in protest at a breakdown in negotiations, 20 men at Longueuil were suspended indefinitely, and many more were told to turn up later than normal to attend interviews with company officials before starting work. Rumours, later denied by the management, claimed that at these interviews workers would be asked to resign from the union as proof of their wish to return to work.

A meeting of 900 workers in a church basement nearby decided to picket the plant and to regard the situation as a lock-out by the management. A photographer sent out to the picket line by the company wounded one of the pickets with an axe when they tried to stop him.

THE Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation is sponsoring a second Bertrand Russell Tribunal, on repression in Brazil, Chile and Latin America in general. Like the first tribunal, set up in 1966 to investigate, denounce and publicise US war crimes in Vietnam, the second will consist of investigation committees of academics and experts and a Grand Jury of internationally prominent people.

The tribunal was originally planned to deal with Brazil, but its scope has been

extended since the military coup in Chile. Its stated aim is not merely to denounce torture and repression on humanitarian grounds, but to analyse the causes of the rise of repressive regimes in Latin America. These causes are defined as imperialist domination and the spread of fascism.

The Foundation has sought and obtained the support of both Christian and Communist Party organisations. In Italy, both the Communist and Socialist Parties' youth sections are supporting it.

The tribunal's national support committees are aiming at grass-roots local organisation and fund-raising by popular subscription. The first three issues of the Tribunal Bulletin, which contain much useful descriptive material on Brazil, can be obtained from The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble St, Nottingham, price 10p.

ENERGY CRISIS USED TO HIT AT WORKERS

by Norah Carlin

IN TERMS of barrels of oil and gallons of petrol, Italy's energy crisis is mild, but the government's crisis measures are among the harshest in Europe. A ban on Sunday motoring, reduced street lighting, early closing for television and restaurants, and colder public buildings are only the tip of the iceberg.

These are the much-publicised measures to 'make the consumer pay', but those who will pay most for the government's policies are the working class.

The real sting of the Italian crisis measures lies in the sharp increase in the price of petrol—already 65p a gallon—and the licence this gives to raging inflation. It is this that will hit the workers really hard.

Since the ending in November of the 100 day 'freeze' on prices—during which prices rose by more than 1 per cent a month—new increases have to be 'justifiable' if there are increased costs involved. This means that the soaring petrol and oil prices will be passed on in the price of food another basic necessities of life.

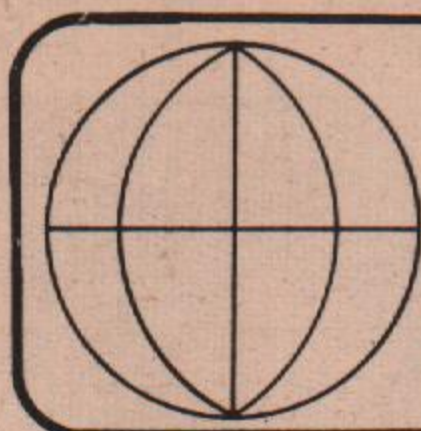
Already, increased transport costs and the difficulty of obtaining petrol have led to shortages of spaghetti and other pasta, sugar and paraffin in Italy's major cities, with the accompanying black market. In the South, hardship reached near-disaster proportions last month when there was an unusual spell of cold weather.

The price of petrol will go on soaring. When rationing is introduced in the spring, there are going to be two prices, rationed, about 75p a gallon, and unrationed, about £1.30 a gallon. The individual allowance will be about 16 gallons a month, forcing many users to buy at the higher price.

While inflation is allowed to continue, the government has announced a freeze on public spending, possibly for as long as three years. The proposed reform of the law on pensions and social security will be shelved, and those most in need can hope for no increases in their income to offset rising prices.

Short-time working is already wide-spread and, with the collapse of many small firms expected as a result from the crisis measures, unemployment will rise steeply. Hardest hit already are the service industries, including tourism, which provides jobs for a large number of Italian workers, especially in the less industrial areas.

All this amounts to a fierce attack on working class standards



Italy

of living and a severe 'shake out' of smaller and less efficient firms in industry, in the interests of Italy's big bosses. With the increasing stagnation of Italian industry since the mid-1960s, big business has been pressing for such policies in a milder form for years. The energy crisis has provided a good excuse for giving way to big business pressure.

Strangely enough, Italy is not short of oil. It is a major centre of the refining industry, consuming only two-thirds of the crude oil it imports, and the big refinery companies are known to have huge stocks of crude oil at the moment.

But except for 12 per cent con-



Women assault a lorry carrying paraffin in Turin. Spaghetti and sugar are also in short supply.

trolled by the state firm ENI, the refining industry is controlled by multinational companies such as Shell and Exxon or by big Italian consortiums such as the one dominated by the neo-fascist newspaper tycoon Monti.

Last July the companies had already created an artificial shortage of petrol by reducing supplies to Italian distributors in order to export more. By raising the price of petrol now, the Italian government is trying to induce the companies, by higher profits, to sell more Italian-refined petrol in Italy.

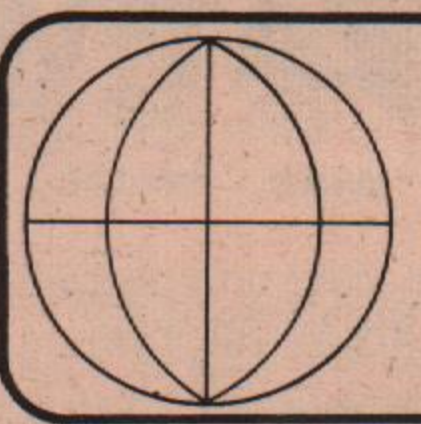
Politicians' speeches and the newspapers and television in Italy are presenting the crisis as an inevitable hardship in which all Italians are in the same boat—aided, of course, by the Pope, who has stressed how good austerity is for the soul. The reality is that Italy's energy crisis could be largely solved by controls on the refining industry, but for the government this is out of the question, and the chance of stepping up anti-working class policies is too good to miss.

Another country, the same attack

A DOCUMENT sent out of Spain by a group of radical lawyers shows how alike is the attack on trade unionists in Spain to British 'justice' for pickets as demonstrated recently by the jailing of the Shrewsbury Three.

The Carabachel Ten, a group of Spanish trade unionists, recently received savage jail sentences of between 10 and 20 years each for 'unlawful assembly', one of the charges used against the Shrewsbury pickets.

Both trials ended just before Christmas, to make solidarity action by other workers as difficult as possible.



Spain

The Carabachel Ten, like the Shrewsbury pickets, were accused of 'violence', for which there was no evidence. 'The only type of violence was the repression that denied the Ten and all other trade unionists, the right of assembly, say the lawyers.

Evidence in the courts that tried the Ten is given by a group of 'special investigators' who give evidence on the basis that it comes from 'reliable sources'—the secret police. The parallel with the special courts of Northern Ireland is interesting.

The Spanish lawyers say the right of free assembly and association—that is, the right to meet and form political and trade union organisations—is the basis of democracy. In 'democratic' countries, never mind fascist Spain, these rights are under attack from a ruling class out to use the law as a system of repression.

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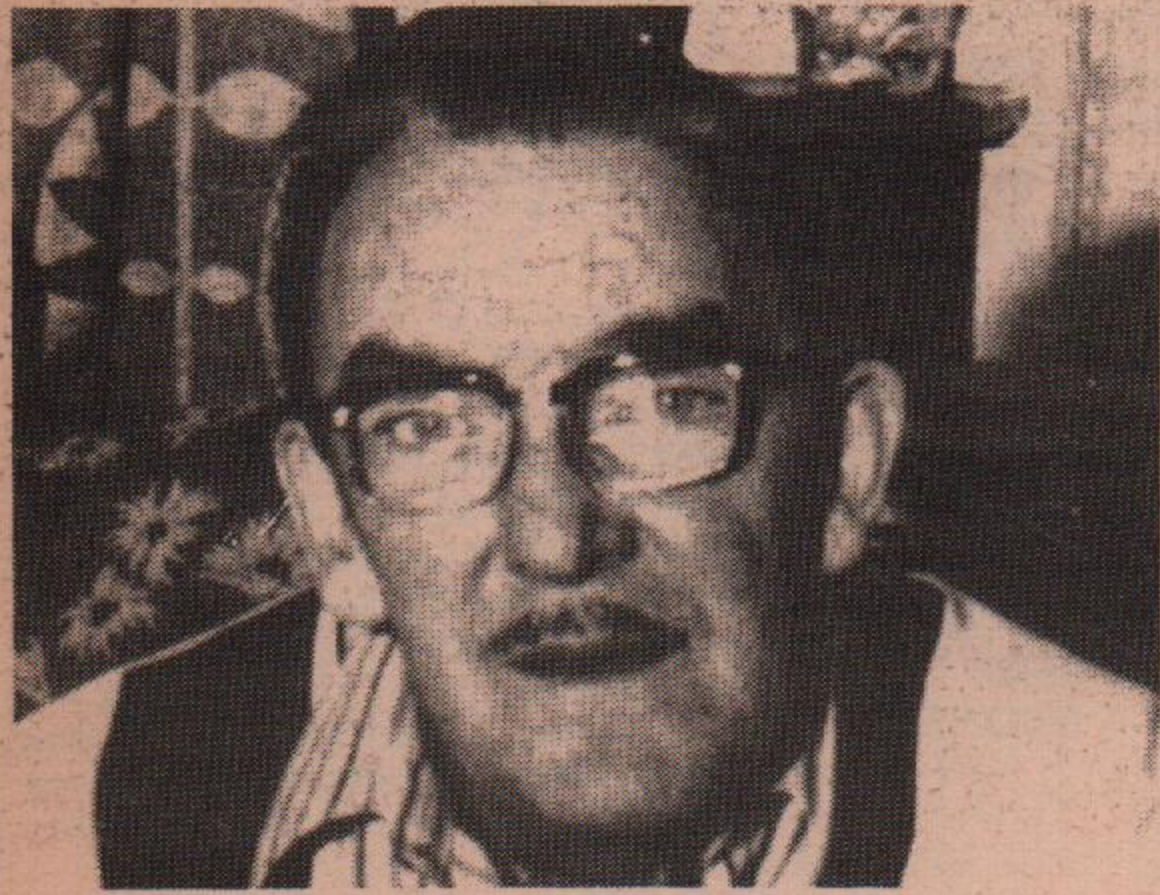
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A little less than Frank



Frank Smith, right-wing 'moderate'

FRANK SMITH, 'moderate' secretary of the Leicestershire miners, who has been so much in the news lately, believes, above all else, in freedom. Since the savaging he got from the Leicester miners for speaking in support of the Tory government, the freedom he especially cherishes is his right to communicate with the press.

On this matter the Leicester miners have been extremely kind with him. After the vote of no confidence at the area council last week, Jack Jones, president of the Leicester miners, stated that while Mr Smith would have to be more careful with his public statements there was 'no intention to interfere with Mr Smith's right of free

speech.'

Strangely enough this attitude is in stark contrast to what Frank Smith and his fellow 'moderates' practised in the not so distant past when they totally dominated the Leicester coalfield.

On 6 July 1960, during the week of the Miners Union national conference, Martin Ryan, a Leicester miner and then secretary of the Desford Lodge, wrote a letter in The Guardian. It was headed 'Who speaks for the miners?' and pointed to an appalling situation in the Leicester coalfield where rank and file miners were prevented from playing any part in shaping national union policy.

Martin Ryan's letter stated that if any delegates to the national conference claimed to speak on behalf of Leicester's 6000 miners their claims were false. He pointed

out that in not one of the previous seven years had the Leicester pit branches been permitted even to discuss the national conference agenda.

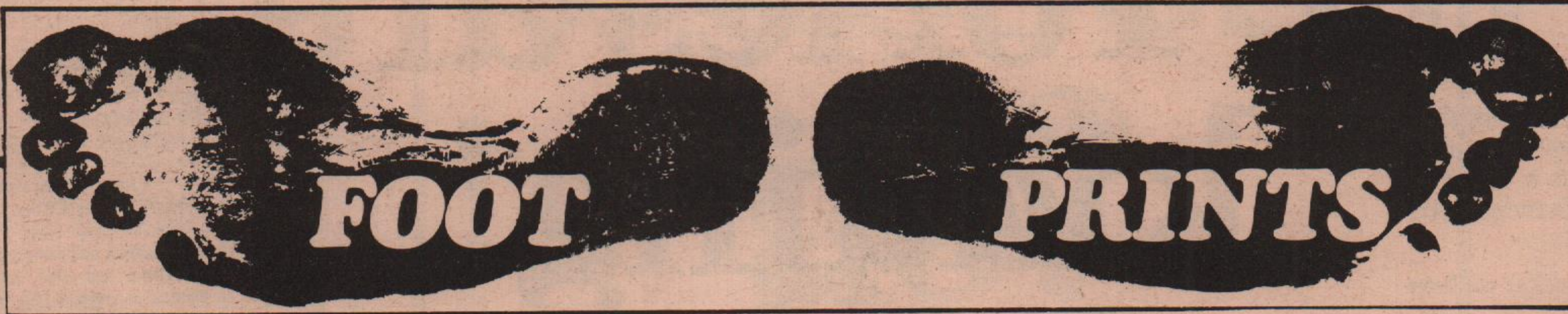
He added that the situation was virtually the same with the area council meetings. At these delegates were allowed to speak, but they were not permitted to vote. This meant that they could not decide the attitude their own delegates to national conference would take on even one single issue.

At the time Martin Ryan wrote his letter to The Guardian, Frank Smith had been Leicester miners' secretary for 15 years. He got the post in 1945, four years after he left the Communist Party.

While Smith did not vote at area executive meetings, he was allowed to speak and was very influential in all decision making. In fact even before 1960 he was unchallenged boss of the Leicester coalfield.

As soon as Frank Smith and his friends got back from the 1960 conference, action was speedily taken against Martin Ryan for the dreadful crime of communicating with the press. Martin was charged with bringing the union into disrepute and the executive decided to suspend him from holding office.

Martin appealed to the area council. But this body decided to uphold the executive's totalitarian decision. Martin then appealed to the union's national executive. Freedom-loving moderates in Leicestershire had their decision to prevent Martin Ryan communicating with the press overturned, and Martin was reinstated as lodge secretary.



ROTHERHAM ROLLS OUT THE ROLLS

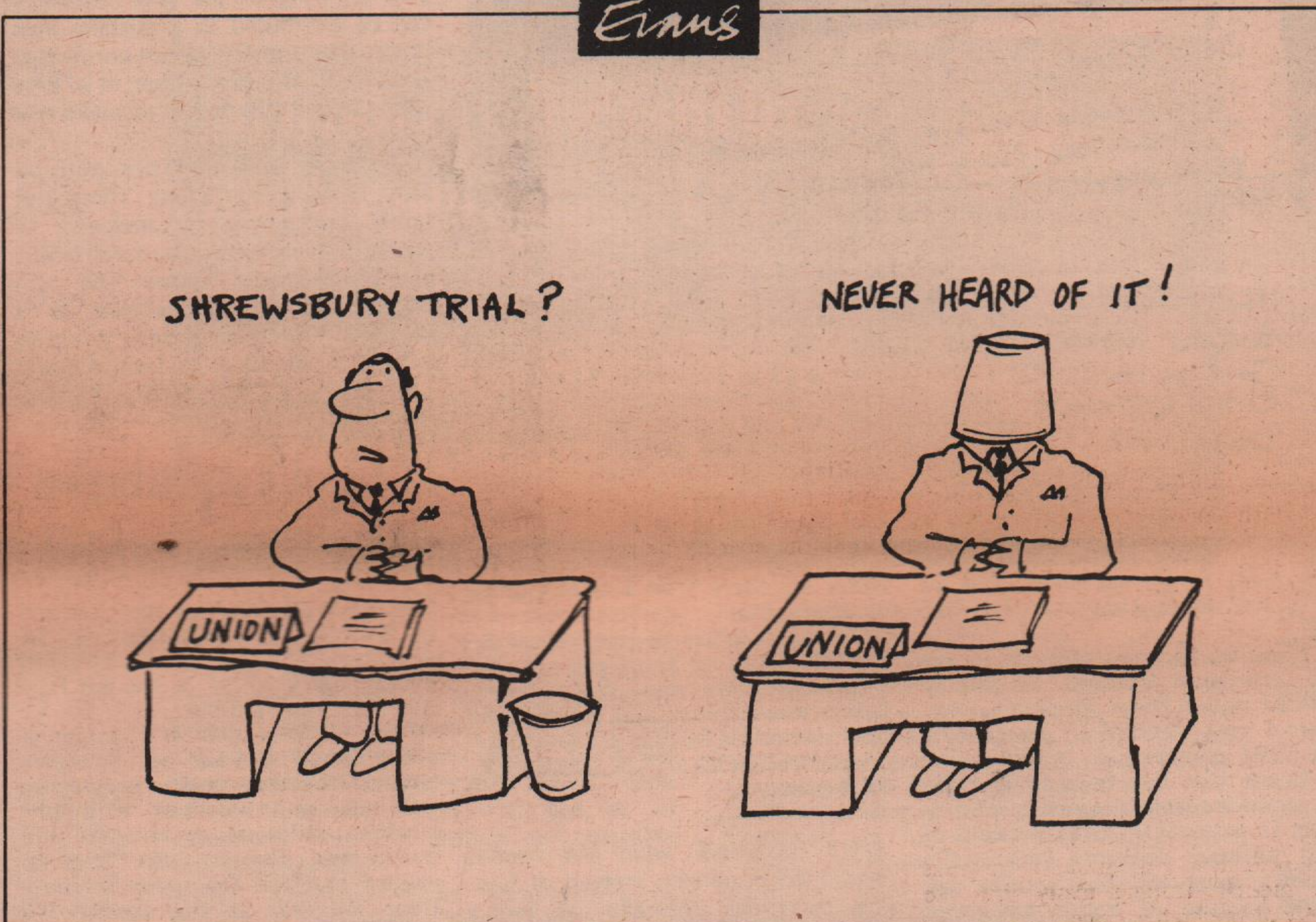
A DEEP split has emerged in the Labour-controlled council at Rotherham. The chairman of the new Rotherham District Authority needs a new car—paid for by the rate-payers. The problem: should the council buy him a new Daimler limousine for £6000 or a Rolls-Royce for £12,000?

The chairman himself, Councillor Jack Layden JP has no doubt on the matter. 'The £12,000 Rolls would prove a more economical buy than the £6000 Daimler because it would last seven years as to the cheaper car's three years,' he said.

Councillor Eric Cook supports this view. He says: 'The chairman of this authority should have transport available in keeping with the dignity of the office.'

The council has resolved the dispute. They've decided on the Rolls-Royce, though the cost has risen to £14,000. They have delayed the purchase until 'after the immediate crisis'.

NOTE: Councillor Layden sits on the Rotherham and Mexborough Hospital Management Committee which last week advertised in the press for a full-time workman, at a starting wage of £20.96 a week.



Interest

Another interesting sidelight on our hero Smith's activities is that while he pretends to deplore the politically motivated activities of left-wing factions in trade unions, he is himself a member of a highly politically motivated right-wing organisation which goes to great lengths to organise in the trade unions.

Smith is a supporter of that virulently anti-socialist and anti-communist outfit called Moral Re-Armament (MRA). On Friday last week one of MRA's press officers, Joe Hodgson, admitted to Laurie Flynn. 'Frank Smith is a man who has worked with us for many years,' he said.

'Many trade union leaders, from time to time, have shown great interest in our organisation,' he added. 'It's when bitterness is directed against the government that things go astray. Our people are moderate in their ideas and militant in their conviction.'

No blacks please, we're British

THE London Accountancy Bureau is an employment agency which supplies book-keepers, cashiers, accountants and the like to British firms. On the direct instructions of their clients, the bureau carries out a policy of blatant racial discrimination.

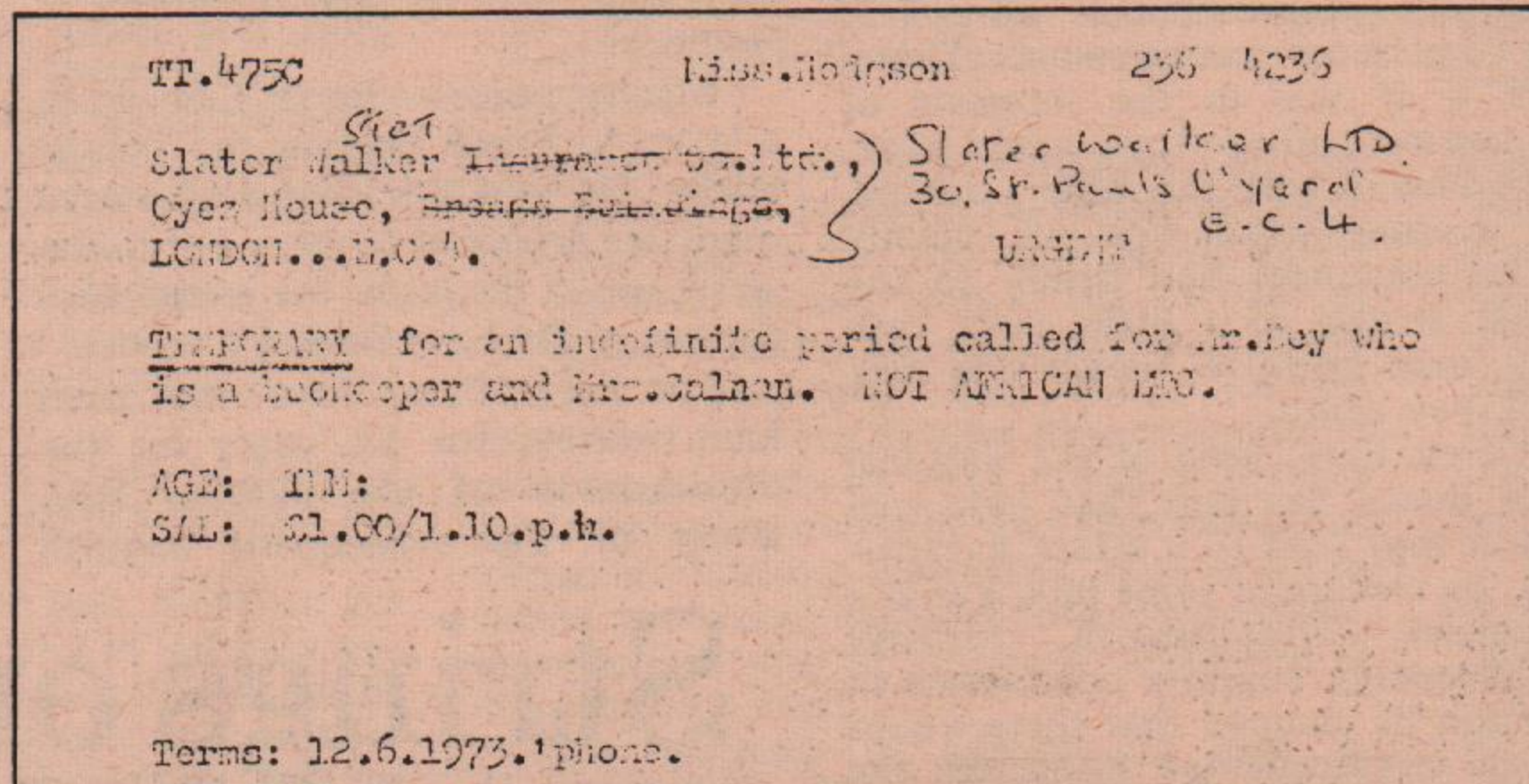
When a firm wants a worker from an agency, a representative rings up and describes the job which is vacant and the type of person he wants to fill it. Almost invariably the phoned instructions carry some kind of racial proviso, such as 'GB only', which is the most common, or 'must be educated in the UK'. This means that black people must not apply.

If the bureau does send along any of the highly-qualified black people on its books, then applicants are greeted with abuse, and the agency gets a black mark.

Susan Bruley, who worked at the agency for three months last year, tells me: 'I refused to put down the racist stuff to start with, and black people were sent along for jobs. They came back deeply upset at their treatment, and we always got a phone call from the firm the next day saying "Stop bothering us with those coloureds".'

'So we had to put the qualifications on the job cards to save embarrassing the black people we sent along.'

But it was really sickening



A vacancy card for Slater Walker: 'NOT AFRICAN ETC', it says

answering all those calls. Lonrho was one of the worst companies. One bloke from Lonrho told me he couldn't employ the Bangla Deshi I suggested because it might cause racial friction with a Pakistani in the office!

'I remember a conversation with a lady from Bowaters after I suggested one of our highest-qualified Indian people for a job there. "Oh, you know," she kept saying, "you know why we can't have him."

"No," I said, "I don't know", and eventually she admitted that she couldn't take him because he was black.

The cards filled in by London

Accountancy Bureau staff after the phone calls from employers are grim evidence of rampant discrimination. The following firms definitely stated that they did not want black people to apply:

Slater Walker, Taylor Woodrow, the Royal Opera House, Total Accounting Service of Wittering, Sussex, Borg Warner Controls of Swindon, Abex of West Drayton, Canal and Waterway Development Company of London W1 (whose card stated: Jewish co. so English only), ICS Integrated Container Service ('MUST BE GB'), Quality Shoes of Richmond Road, London E8, Merit Motors of Gadleigh, Essex, Butlers

Warehousing and Distribution, Frys Diecasting of Merton Abbey, the National Theatre Board, Procon, Oxoid, Raymond Cen, Percy Bilton, CJB Projects, Glaxo, Anderman and Co, Savoy Hotel Laundry, Interkiln, Brown, Jenkinson and Co, Barnett Cristie Securities, Shannon Southern Instruments, Sperry Univac and the Metal Box Company.

'I had an interesting experience with the Northwood Mills of Canada company in St Martins Lane,' said Susan. 'They rang asking for a temporary book-keeper, and I sent along a Mr M Saraw Choudeharry who came from Luton. He had the ICMA 3—a very high accountants' qualification. After a day, they sacked him, and asked for someone else. They took a girl with no qualifications at all.'

Sue tells me that the normal practise when a poorly qualified black person came into the agency was to interview him or her very politely, fill up a form with particulars, promise to get in touch, and then throw the application form in the waste paper basket. If highly qualified, he might be put 'on the books'.

'I got one black woman a job once,' says Susan. 'She got sacked the next day. And in all the three months I was there, when the agency was placing people every day, I only remember only one black man getting a job and holding it. It made me sick.'

THE BLACK EXPLOSION IN SCHOOLS

'... The behaviour of Black youths in reaction to the discipline machine can be called nothing less than a crisis in schooling...' FARRUKH DHONDY

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Forgotten farm workers

DURING THIS present period of unrest one's attention is constantly drawn to the plight of lower paid workers. People like the miners, teachers, hospital workers, train-drivers in their efforts to improve their wages and living standards.

But isn't it time someone spoke up and highlighted the case of our very lowest paid workers, the farm labourers?

Isn't it time for all trade unionists to support these unfortunate people who are practically unable to take strike action themselves?

Farm labourers often have to work under disgusting conditions. They have to work outdoors in all weathers. They have to work overtime when required (eg during lambing or har-

vesting seasons).

The number of farm labourers has been, and still is, being forcibly reduced owing to mechanised methods and larger (hence fewer) farms. This means that every farm labourer is threatened with redundancy.

The labourer has to be at least semi-skilled in a variety of trades—driving vehicles of all types, medicine, building, drainage and even book-keeping. But still he is the lowest paid worker.

Surely it is time for his case to be brought out into the open. Cannot his fellow workers help? Cannot Socialist Worker help? We can all try.—**DAVID STONES**, London SE24.



Farm labourers—whose back is turned?

Coal: the Tories are kidding!

BATTERSEA Power Station is a fine big station and capable of generating 4-500 megawatts if all plant was available. But the sad fact is it never is. So we have to make do with 3-320 megawatts rated at winter loading.

Since before Christmas (at least two weeks) we have had no load. On phoning around to other stations in the London area they too have suffered the same fate and on further inquiries about their coal stocks I find that all are up and Battersea in particular.

This time last year coal stocks at Battersea were 5-8000 tons. This year, 12 January, coal stocks are at least 50-55,000 tons and we are asking why! Why, when the government tells us that we must conserve our fuel, and save power, owing to the miners' ban on overtime, when in 1972 the miners *did* strike and coal stocks were low the same government did not implement a three day working week?

It is becoming very clear to us at Battersea and other power workers that the government is tricking the public. We at Battersea want it known that we have boilers and turbines ready to work and once again ask why we can't? As a final twist did you know that we import American coal to Battersea to burn? Ironical but true.—**R HOPKINS**, TGWU Shop Steward, Battersea Power Station.

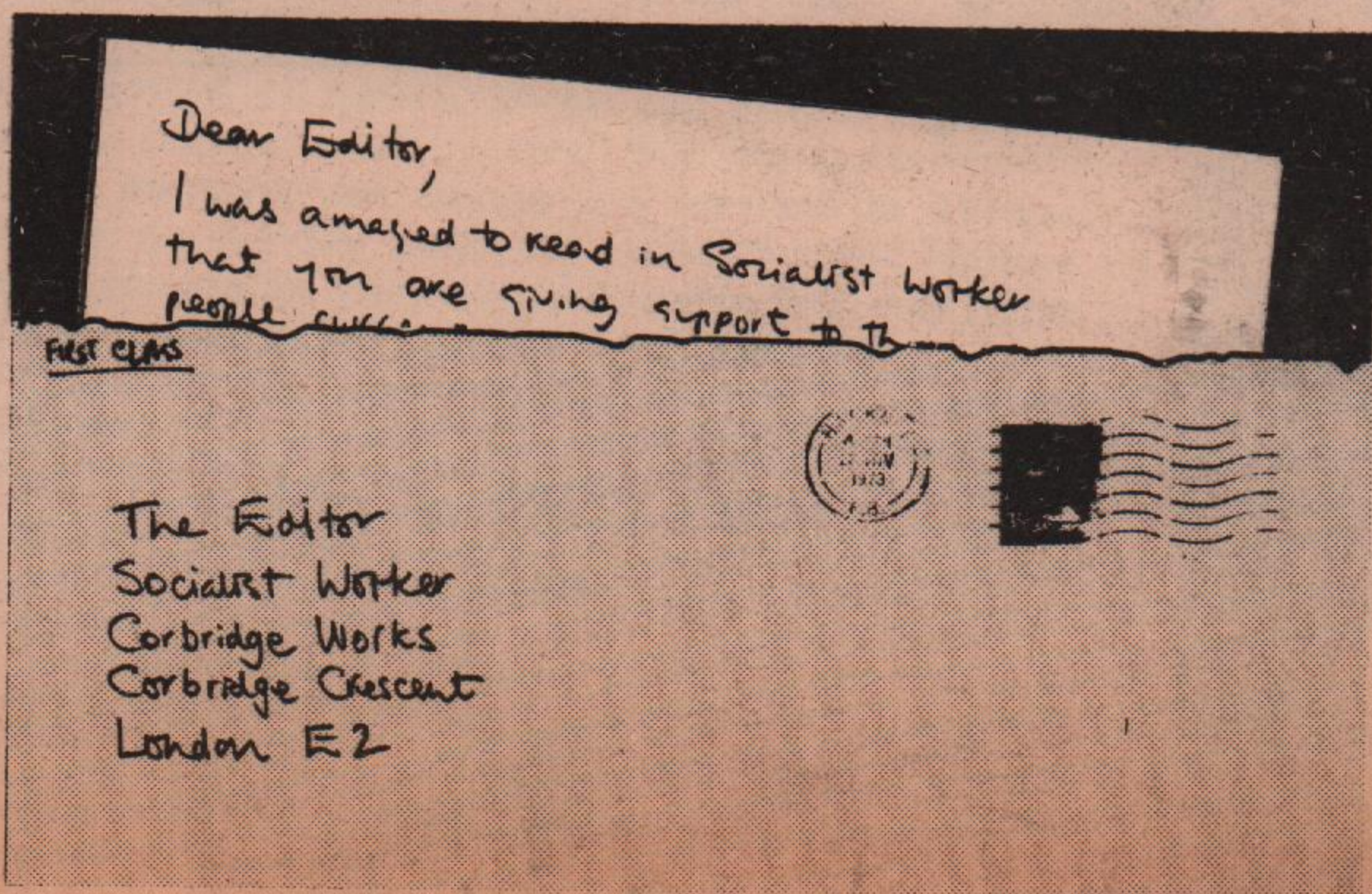
I AM an electrician at Maltby colliery in Yorkshire and I'd like to give a warning to the government. We will not accept their tactics of putting one worker against another.

It must peeve Mr Heath to think that we in the miners' union will be amongst those few allowed to work a five day week in order to get what coal we can for the industrialists to burn up. I'm sure he is hoping other sections of the working class will resent us for this and so direct the blame for the crisis on to our shoulders.

Well I say to Heath, don't be so naive as to underestimate the working class intelligence. We may not have gone to Eton, Harrow or the like, but I feel better having little formal education and knowing *something*, than to have had an expensive education and know bugger all.

Here we have a 1926 style government implementing 1926 style anti trade union laws trying to destroy individual freedom by 1926 style repression.

Some of my comrades working 'in the shaft' have only a hammer and a metal plate on the end of a chain on which to beat out a series of signals to inform the engineman



they want to go up, down, fast or slow. Ask them what year it is Ted lad!

Consider the pay offer, it means the maximum amount of money offered under Phase Three will only (dare I say) 'benefit' 15 per cent of the NUM membership.

Heath says that even though the oil producing states are raising delivery from 75 per cent up to 85 per cent of the normal delivery quota, the country must still face a three day week because of action taken by the miners etc. Well let's have a look at the 'dastardly trick' the miners are playing.

We have said we will work a normal five day week and no more. It is worth noting that the majority of NUM members work very little overtime and all overtime is worked at the request of management. Therefore if it was in the interests of management all overtime would cease, regardless of what the miners wanted. By keeping some workers (mainly in maintenance) tied firmly to the apron strings of a little extra cash they may hope to silence the rest. Well they won't.

Derek Ezra, head of the National Coal Board has said that industrial action may lead to a safety hazard—and the closure of some pits. Yet at a Financial Times/British Airways world energy supplies conference in London he claimed that there would be an unprecedented boom for the industry, with massive investment.

Never has there been a more blatant contradiction.

While Ezra lies to the colliers he tells the truth to his friends on the Financial Times side of the fence. Ezra's true colours, and those of his predecessor Alf Robens are showing—mucky whitewash.—**MICK OSBORNE**, Rotherham.

JUST IMAGINE what the impact would be if miners, instead of banning overtime, normally worked a six-hour day! Yet believe it or not, had government promises been kept, this is what would have happened.

In 1919, Mr Justice Sankey produced his report. It proposed the immediate introduction of the seven-hour day, with its later reduction to six hours.

Cabinet minister Bonar Law wrote a letter to Frank Hodges, the miners' leader. He told him 'that the Government are prepared to carry out in the spirit and in the letter the recommendations of Sir John Sankey's report.'

The liar! Miners have now been kept waiting for 54 years for the introduction of the six-hour day. Much of the subsequent acquish

and suffering in the coal industry can be attributed to a mistake then made. The miners' union contended itself with mere promises at a time when it had the power to make real gains.

So now, when a Tory minister says settle within Phase Three and holds out glittering prospects of future improvements, the miners must give him a dusty answer. The most fragile of all commodities is a politician's promise. It is as stupid to trust a Whitelaw as to trust a Bonar Law.—**RAY CHALLINOR**, Whitley Bay.

Conway's abuse We must reply!

I WOULD like to draw the attention of Socialist Worker readers to the disgraceful editorial written by right-winger Jim Conway in the last Engineering Union journal.

The whole article is a stream of abuse aimed at what our informed General Secretary calls 'progressive militants'. Not content with just labelling militants as arrogant and destructive, Conway also tries to suggest that the emergence of shop-floor militants in this country is connected with the growth of a Hitler-like personality cult.

As if this were not enough, we are then told that the 'militant progressive' policy of the Labour Party was responsible for the defeat at Lincoln. What nonsense.

Enough of Conway's cowardly attacks on the men and women who fight for better wages and conditions in everyday struggle on the shop floor. I hope that all AUEW Socialist Worker readers will pass resolutions through their branches demanding that Conway be banned by the Executive from printing any more scurrilous attacks on his own union's hardest workers.—**S SMITH** (Treasurer, Sheffield Number 10 AUEW)

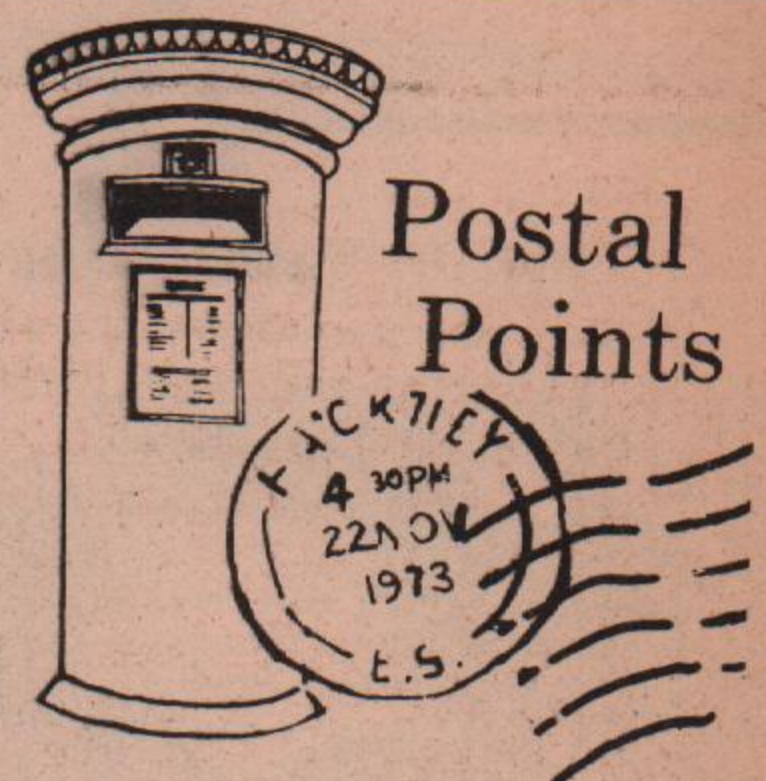
Strings on fiddle...

FROM 6 APRIL 1975 every employee *must* either join a company pension plan which meets government standards or be a member of the new contributory state reserve scheme. It isn't yet envisaged that membership of the company plan will be a *condition* of employment for hourly paid employees although companies may consider making it a condition of employment for new employees later.

Platt International have sent out a leaflet to employees on the question of pension schemes. It compared the company scheme favourably with the state pension scheme and points out that if you don't go into the company scheme you automatically go into the state reserve scheme—which is worse.

So there is no real choice—either go into the state scheme or help prop up capitalist enterprises through contribution to the company pension scheme. If a pension scheme is to be introduced it should be a government sponsored scheme, a better scheme, and non-contributory. I've already stated my objections to the schemes to my shop-steward (who thought the company scheme a good one) and to many other employees. They can now see that it's really a big fiddle by the employers, insurance companies and government to rake in some more money from the workers to invest in 'lame duck' industries.

Socialist Worker should look deeply into these schemes, and give a lead to workers on the matter.—**C V WALING**, Accrington.



Postal Points

THEY'VE GOT TO WIN... Selling Socialist Worker in Kings Lynn a woman OAP approaches and asks: 'Is that paper like Labour Weekly?' 'Yes but much stronger.' She smiles, 'Good, I'll have one.' Brief conversation, she walks away cheerfully determined saying, 'I'd go without a fire all winter to see the miners win.'—**T HAWKE**, Fakenham.

WHAT ABOUT THE 10 PER CENT? ... It is estimated that 10 per cent of the adults in this country are homosexuals yet in my two years of reading the paper I've seen very few articles on the subject. I'm not in International Socialism but I do a lot of work for the group in my city. I'm male and love my sisters socially just as much as my brothers on the left. Just because I prefer a person of my own sex for a loving relationship shouldn't make me a creep! Socialist Worker sells over 30,000 so at least 3000 gay people must read it... Let's have a clearer position with articles on the oppression of gays so that more can be pulled into IS.—**STUART**, Norwich.

YOU AREN'T KNOCKERS... I find Socialist Worker improving all the time. After the lessons of Chile all socialists, whether in the Labour Party, the Communist Party or the International Socialists realise we have far more in common than we have differences... Once upon a time Trotskyist journals spent more time clobbering other socialists than they did attacking the Tory Party and the United States. I hope these days are over for ever: County Councillor **DAVE PARRY**, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian.

YES YOU ARE—AND WHOSE CRISIS? ... Recently the Economist stated that the Prices and Incomes Board would review the price of oil, after the big oil companies asked to increase it. Have the big companies held back oil to wait for a price increase—and bigger profits? ... In journeys with a large articulated lorry down South I've found the small garages could only give me 30 gallons of diesel fuel, while the big ones would give me as much as I could pay for. Are the giants trying to squeeze out the smaller competitors? Is the crisis not an attempt by the oil companies (not the Arabs or miners) to hold this nation to ransom amassing ever larger profits? ... Why do you heavily criticise the Communist Party? Our industrial organiser, Bert Ramelson has already said that he doesn't think the left groups are his enemy in the fight against the Tories. Why don't you close ranks with us?—**HARRY CUNNINGHAM**, Glasgow E3.

The International Socialists will close ranks with all other socialists, militants, communists in the fight against this government and this system—as we prove every day. But this doesn't mean we don't criticise, healthy criticism is vital for the success of the movement, and we believe that the Communist Party leadership is wrong, on many issues, and in its general belief in 'the parliamentary road to socialism'.

YOU'RE TOO KIND... Are you still justifying the actions of Arab terrorists? Look what they have achieved: Tight security control throughout Europe. Checks on identity papers. Armed searches at airports. Their actions provide the establishment with the justification for the introduction of a system of surveillance of every person. Next we'll have identity cards and police registration and fingerprinting for all. It is the freedom-loving terrorists (of all description) who are bringing this intrusion into personal liberty about. Congratulations!—**W P JASPERT**, LONDON NW3.

The following books have recently come into stock:

WOMAN'S CONSCIOUSNESS, MAN'S WORLD, Rowbotham, 60p
REVOLUTIONARY EUROPE 1783-1815, Rude, 50p
CONSCIOUSNESS AND ACTION AMONG THE WESTERN WORKING CLASS, Mann, 60p
POLITICS AND WAR: THE WORLD AND US FOREIGN POLICY 1943-45, Kolko, £1.50

Still available: **BIG RED DIARY 1974**, 75p



ONE of the inevitable results of the Tories' two-day-a-week lockout—however it ends—will be an effort by the employers to tamper with Phase Three.

The meagre wage increases allowed under Phase Three look to many employers 'unrealistically' generous after the enforced production cutbacks. As the Financial Times puts it: 'The 3½ per cent growth rate on which Stage 3 was originally based is quite irrelevant to our new circumstances.'

The bosses' weekly newspaper, The Economist, in an article entitled 'The choice is Stage Four or 20 per cent inflation,' wrote: 'The government is making an issue of defending Stage Three limits to the death against the miners, while hinting that once the miners have settled the other unions will get less. Stage Four is on its way... There is no longer the growth available to pay both for oil costing four times what it did last summer, and wage settlements as generous as Stage Three's, without price inflation at a rate close to 20 per cent a year.'

And the Financial Times declared that what can be expected is: '... a government decision to abandon Stage Three of its prices and incomes policy and replace it with a temporary but very stringent freeze.'

Even before the miners' dispute broke out, the engineering employers had replied to the unions' wage claim with an offer less than Phase Three allowed (£2.50 for skilled men, £2 for unskilled men and £1.80 for women).

If The Economist says 'The choice is Stage 4 or 20 per cent inflation', we can expect Stage Four and 20 per cent inflation.

Why the threshold deal will go

WHEN Heath announced Phase Three he tried to sweeten the pill by promising a threshold clause: once the cost of living index has risen by more than 7 per cent for every further one per cent rise workers will get an extra 40p per week.

Now, of course, this is not good enough. A one per cent increase in wages does not mean a one per cent increase in the money in your pocket because about a third of any wage increase goes in income tax and higher national insurance. For lower-paid workers the situation is even worse. Every pay increase means the loss of entitlement to rent and rate rebates, free school meals for the children and Family Income Supplement.

To keep up, wages would have to rise by at least 1.3 per cent for each 1 per cent increase in the official cost of living index—and the threshold clause cheated the workers anyway by allowing months of rising prices before workers are compensated.

But even this miserable carrot is going to be taken away by the government.

When Phase Three was announced at the beginning of November the government expected the 7 per cent threshold to be crossed probably in September 1974. Now the most common forecast is April or May, which means that the government accepts that price inflation over the first six months of Stage Three is running at 15 per cent a year.

The Economist said on 5 January: 'It is now likely to accelerate further.' The Guardian of 17 December informed us: 'HM Treasury—and some ministers outside it—fear that if the pure doctrine of Stage Three continues for more than a few weeks or months into the New Year the now inevitable rise in prices will trigger off the threshold clause and bring about a further increase in wages—and therefore in the rate of inflation—which will be automatic, disastrous, and the product of government policy.'

If the 7 per cent threshold is reached in March then inflation will be roaring ahead and the government is bound to cancel this miserable threshold clause.

On 3 November I wrote in Socialist Worker: 'The rigidity of Heath's Phase Three... is not accidental: the area of manoeuvre open to the employers and the government is very narrow and will continue to be so because British capitalism is resting on a time bomb—the increasing balance of payments deficit and the abysmally low level of capital investment in industry.'

The crisis of British capitalism has been accelerating far quicker than could have been expected even two months ago.

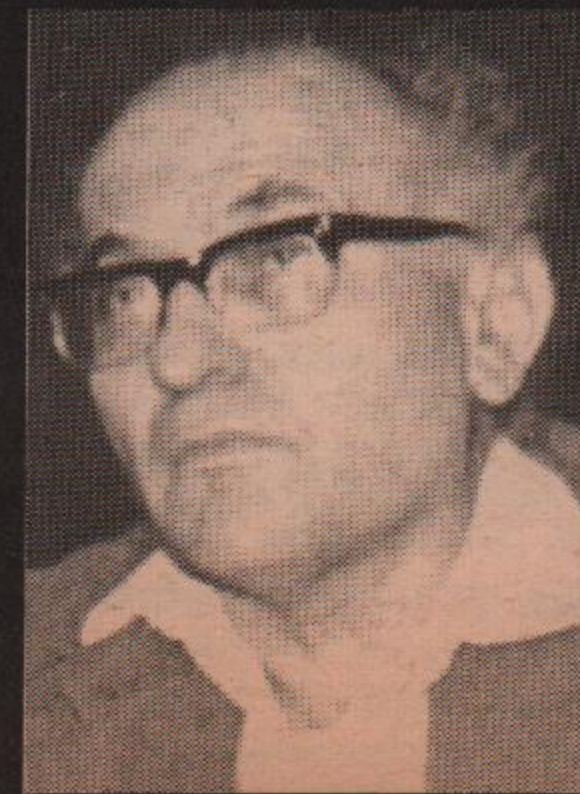
The national lockout, by cutting industrial output by some £500 million a week, will worsen the balance of payments further. As output is cut by at least 40 per cent, the employers will try to protect their profits by raising prices even further. This will certainly not help slow down inflation. And the decline in production will deliver a further blow to investment.

The employers' offensive must become harsher and harsher.

How far will the bosses go?

'British capitalism in its deepening crisis will inevitably lead to the choice: Socialism or barbarism'

by TONY CLIFF



THERE have been some interesting reactions to the crisis facing British capitalism. Professor Alan Day of the London School of Economics, describing the long and deep crisis of British capitalism, says: 'It's worse than any of our post-war crises. There has been a rational, tolerable way through each of our post-war crises. I'm not at all convinced there is a rational and tolerable way through this.'

He continues: 'The combination of accelerating inflation, the real risk of rising unemployment, the probability of stagnation of output, the serious possibility that output will fall, and a very serious balance of payments problem are all happening simultaneously.' (The Observer, 16 December).

The Financial Times uses phrases like 'if capitalism will survive'. The capitalists will find it necessary to use more and more vicious weapons to defend their system.

In face of the accumulating difficulties in the path of capitalism the bosses' organisation the Confederation of British Industry and the Tory government are ready to close practically half of British industry, all in order to teach the workers a lesson, to oppose their demands for an improvement in their standard of living.

The present lockout is a turning point in the strategy of the employers against the working class.

In the 1940s, 1950s and most of the 1960s the pattern of battles in industry was small, short strikes. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s it changed to much more massive and prolonged strikes. The future will see mass strikes and mass lockouts.

Balancing between unions and state

THE trade union bureaucracy is failing, and will continue to fail, to give a fighting lead to the workers.

The pressure from rank and file workers is already great and will continue to grow in the coming months. The union leaders will be forced to respond not only with militant speeches but with a partial mobilisation of the members for industrial action. But they will try to limit any industrial action as much

as possible. Unwillingly, too little and too late, they will be pushed along.

If the wavering of the trade union bureaucracy will not satisfy the workers it will not satisfy in the long run the employers either. In the final analysis a capitalism that suffers from permanent and deepening crisis is incompatible with trade unionism.

This does not mean to say that Heath and Company are for all-out smashing of the unions. Of course not. But it means that more and more use will be made of state violence against the workers.

The government will use the law to soften up the trade union bureaucracy. Using the alibi of the law the trade union leaders will fight to discipline the rank and file. But even if the law and the trade union bureaucracy can be compatible for a time with the deepening crisis, the employing class will find it necessary to use the naked power of the police, courts and army more and more.

Hence the vicious sentences on the Shrewsbury Three, hence the House of Lords' decision that makes the stopping of lorries by pickets illegal, hence the words of Peregrine Worsthorpe, assistant editor of the Sunday Telegraph, who wrote on 30 December that the Special Branch would be working overtime in 1974 and that 'militant trade unionists may well find themselves less often in Downing Street and more often in other less comfortable Crown properties'. Who knows who in authority whispered in Worsthorpe's ears!

The methods of suppression used in Northern Ireland by British troops will be brought home. The prescription of Major-General Frank Kitson, in his book Low Intensity Operations, will be used.

Kitson argues that the army should set up Special Methods Groups, subdivided into cells, whose members should be specially trained to intervene at any level, down to street committees and tenants' associations, and challenge the revolutionaries for leadership. His book is a plea to the British army and ruling class to learn the lessons of Kenya, Cyprus, Ireland, Vietnam and America's black ghettos, so that they can deal successfully with the danger of socialist revolution in Britain and Western Europe in the late 1970s. Kitson takes the strike-breaking role of the forces for granted, and says the army

continues to train its men for such action.

Ostensibly directed against Arab terrorists, the show of force at London's Heathrow Airport last week was really a field day for Kitson.

For a time the ruling class can use two different weapons—the trade union bureaucracy on the one hand, and the police, army and courts on the other. But with the deepening crisis they will more and more use the second.

After a few years of deepening crisis the stark alternative will be either the employers will break the back of the workers' organisations in the factories or the workers will get rid of the employers.

One employers' representative, Ronald Walton, director of Nottingham Chamber of Commerce, told the Sunday Times that 'with Britain in the desperate situation of an economic civil war, workers should be conscripted under military law to do their jobs at fixed rates of pay.' Ronald Walton may be a member of the lunatic fringe but his views are a pointer for the future policies of the employers.

The bosses are raising the stakes

THE present lockout is not merely a conflict between the Tory government and the miners. It is not a conflict between the government and a section of the working class. It is a conflict with the whole of the working class.

So what happens during the lockout and in the period following—how many positions workers gain or lose, how their organisations fare in the factories, how labour conditions are defended—is of vital importance. A shift in the balance of class forces in the present battles can help or hinder us in winning the final war.

It is necessary for all militants, all socialists, to do the most they can for the defeat of the government's present attack. The answer to the lockout must be mass strikes, occupations and mass demonstrations.

The dream of Mr Ronald Walton could come true only if the workers have suffered a long series of bitter and terrible defeats. More than 100 years ago Marx said capitalism would force humanity to face one of two alternatives: socialism or barbarism. Since Hitler we are clear what capitalist barbarism means.

British capitalism in its deepening crisis will inevitably lead, in the final analysis, to the same choice. That is why the present struggle of workers has not only immediate impact on our lives now but can shape the future.

The crisis of leadership

AS CAPITALISM is in crisis, so is the leadership of the ruling class. The employers are split deeply: some of the biggest employers—men like Lord Kearton of Courtaulds and Sir Raymond Brookes of GKN, are squealing about lost profits and demanding concessions to the miners.

The Tories waver and change course from week to week. The number of U-turns Ted Heath has done surpass those of Sir Gerald Nabarro.

But unfortunately the crisis of leadership also faces the working class. I need only mention the 'lead' given by Scanlon and Jones over the engineers' wage claim: they decided to 'postpone' any industrial action until 'after the crisis'. Even then they have limited their action to an overtime ban. An overtime ban after several weeks on half-time—that is all Scanlon and Jones offer to the two million engineers.

In the face of the bankruptcy of the trade union leadership in the present crisis a new leadership—a rank and file leadership—has to be created. Across industry the hands of workers have to be clasped. The initiative taken by a number of rank and file papers—The Collier, Nalco Action News, Carworker, Steelworker, Post Office Worker—to call a conference in Birmingham on 30 March is a step in the right direction.

Above all, one must draw the correct political lesson. The struggle to defend our living standards, to defend our right to picket, our workplace organisation, is directed not only against the individual employer but—and above all—against the government.

Workers' struggle must be a political struggle. To lead to a successful conclusion workers have to build—and urgently—a strong revolutionary socialist workers' party.

Threat

A top-level plot to hit at workers' rights

ASIAN WORKERS on strike at Coventry Art Castings at Nuneaton last week got one of the first doses of a new medicine specially devised by the Tory government in concert with the big employers' federations and the police.

It was a new version of a familiar poison designed to weaken workers' ability to win the struggle forced upon them by the employers.

One of the Art Castings shop stewards was arrested and held on suspicion of being an illegal immigrant. And the police had something extra for the rest of the strikers.

They were told that if more than four workers manned the picket line at any one time then the pickets would be arrested for unlawful assembly.

Pursuit

With this unlawful assembly ploy the government and police authorities believe they have fashioned an effective new weapon for weakening the odds still further against organised workers.

Not only are you and your family to go short when you go on strike. From now on the uniformed guardians of 'public peace' are to scrutinise every step you take in pursuit of your struggle.

And if your pickets are not in accord with anti-working class legislation drawn up when people could not cross picket lines by motor car, since there were no motor cars, you stand a good chance of being arrested.

The final development of this antidote to pickets was undertaken in the Shrewsbury Crown Court. There, just before Christmas, Des Warren, Ricky Tomlinson and

John McKinsie Jones were given jail sentences for helping to win the 1972 building workers' strike by organising and being part of flying pickets.

The three men were each found guilty of conspiracy, a catch-all charge which is wheeled out when those in high places want something stopped. And, in addition, all six defendants at Shrewsbury were prosecuted on charges of affray and unlawful assembly.

The incredible cost of this prosecution, believed to be in the region of £500,000, is not unconnected with the fact that there is nothing the Tories and their friends in the powerful employers' organisations fear more than effective working-class action.

And whatever else 1972 was, it was certainly a year for that. It was the year of the picket.

THE MINERS BLAZED the trail for that. When they launched their strike, the rank and file miners were determined to win.

Their leaders were determined

men then, too. The picketing instructions they issued spelt it out that mass flying pickets were to be deployed in a bid to make the strike as hard-hitting as possible as quickly as possible.

This was done with devastating effect. So devastating that the government determined to do all in its power to ensure that it was never so savagely defeated again.

The Tories canvassed the prospect of widespread prosecutions of miners on criminal charges. The charges arose out of the toughest battles in the strike when miners put short stretches of railway lines out of action or when they stood

giving workers new rights like the right to scab, this legislation was designed to make picketing and other tactics like blacking or sympathy action illegal.

But the dockers did not grovel before the law. They faced it and fought it until mass strike forced the government to release the dockers jailed in Pentonville.

The dockers and the masses of workers who supported them laid waste that particular attempt to cripple working-class organisation.

And since that date the Tories have been shifting their tack, consulting the history books and taking steps back in time towards a situation where the very existence of independent working-class organisation could be threatened.

Towards the end of their struggle in 1972, the dockers got the first tastes of the new approach, one that went far beyond even the Industrial Relations Act.

Formal

On picket lines in solidarity with the printers of Briant Colour in London and at Neap House Wharf they received the attentions of the Special Patrol Group.

This new arm of the police force was set up with mass pickets specifically in mind. They are armed, militarily-trained snatch squads. The founding of the SPGs gave formal recognition to the re-entry of the army into domestic British affairs.

AND AT SHREWSBURY the state employed the conspiracy charge, the crudest weapon in their legal arsenal. Since this charge allows gossip, hearsay and insinuation as evidence, it is only a polite term to make a frame-up both respectable and certain to succeed.

But this in turn is just one legal dinosaur into which the Tories have breathed new life. There are others.

In their decision in the case of John Broome, a Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians' official arrested in 1972 for obstruction, the Tories spelt it out that there is no legal right to picket in any way that stands even an outside chance of

success.

John Broome had been arrested on an obstruction charge after he had dared to spend nine minutes in front of a lorry trying peacefully to persuade the driver not to break the picket line.

Stockport magistrates found him not guilty on the grounds that his right to picket was meaningless unless trade unionists could stop lorries or strikebreaking workers to explain their case.

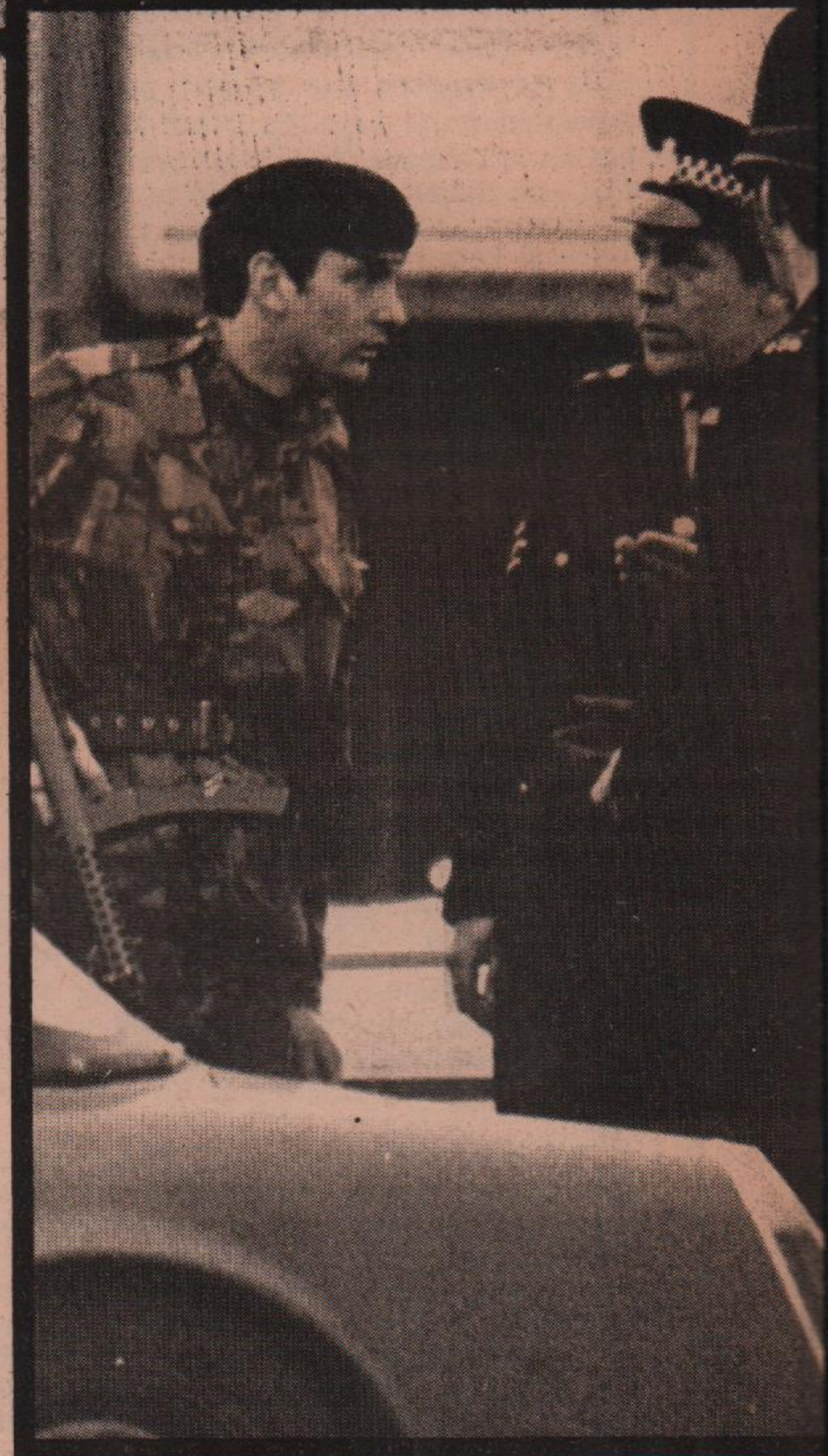
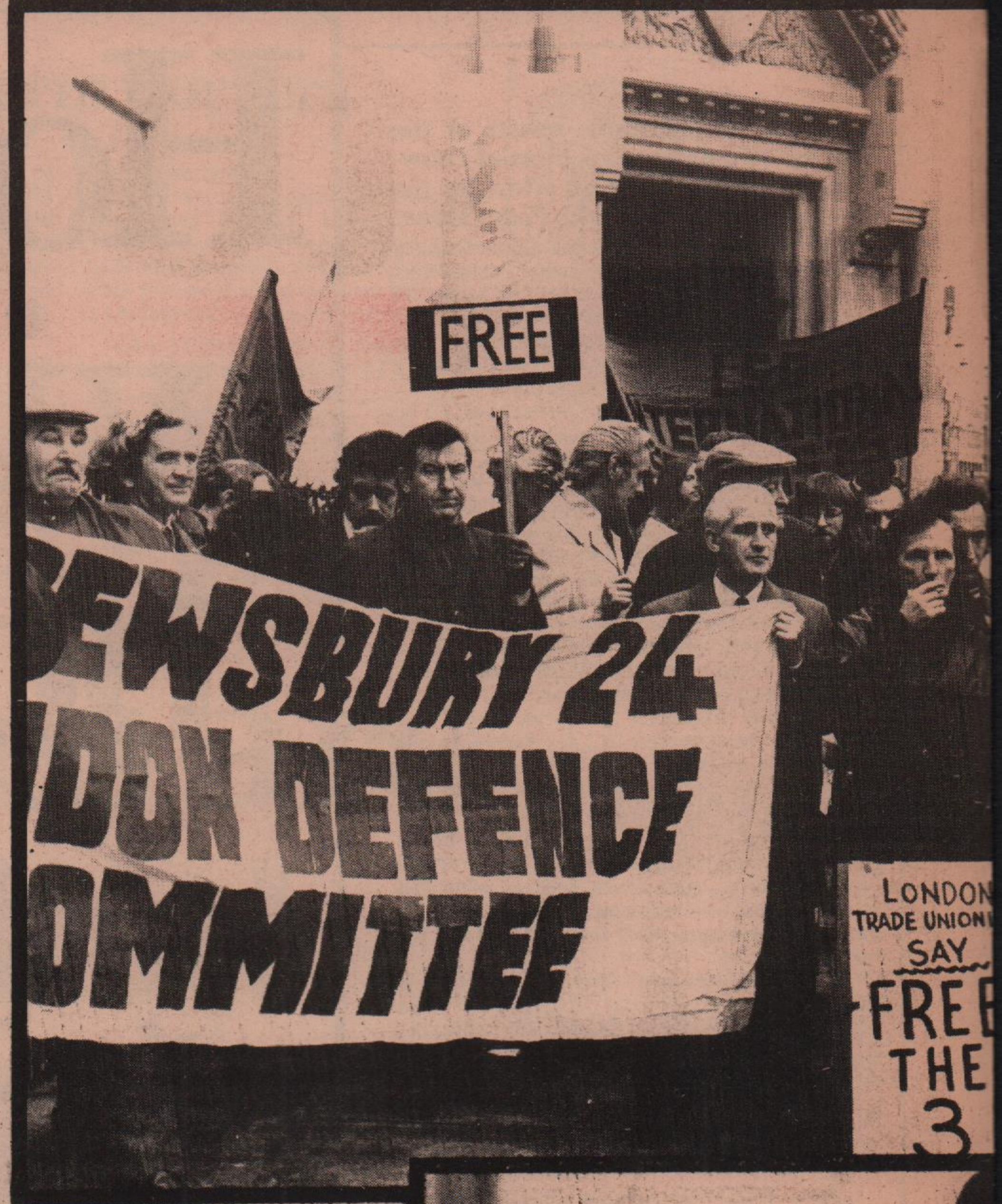
But the Home Office ordered the Lancashire police to appeal against the not guilty verdict. Lord Chief Justice Widgery personally handled the appeal and ordered

the Stockport

reverse their decision. John Broome a House of Lords. his appeal just be spelling out that rights beyond the outside a factory an

The Tory go reached this conclusion a year earlier. In House of Commons 1973, Tory Attorney Peter Rawlinson

to picket does not right to stop vehicles from their lawful business



Top: pickets outside London's Law Courts last week in Shrewsbury Three who were seeking leave to appeal against sentences. Above: the sinister line-up of army and police at Airport. Next time they could be on your picket line.



Rawlinson: pickets can't stop lorries

firm against the massed ranks of the police.

A prosecution was launched under 14th century laws in Fife in Scotland. It failed.

And the police in areas like Derbyshire where there was hard evidence of just how determined and inventive the miners were, simply declined to make the recommended investigations and bring the suggested charges. The miners just were not a suitable target.

But the Heath's nightmares about effective picketing did not come to an end when they had to give in to the miners.

Another powerful group of workers took up the struggle this time against unemployment and the loss of jobs to cheap, unregistered labour. The Tories resolved to attack their ability to win their struggle with all their power.

They hit them with their specially designed Industrial Relations Act. In the guise of

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Special report by LAURIE FLYNN

to pickets

'Law designed to cripple us'

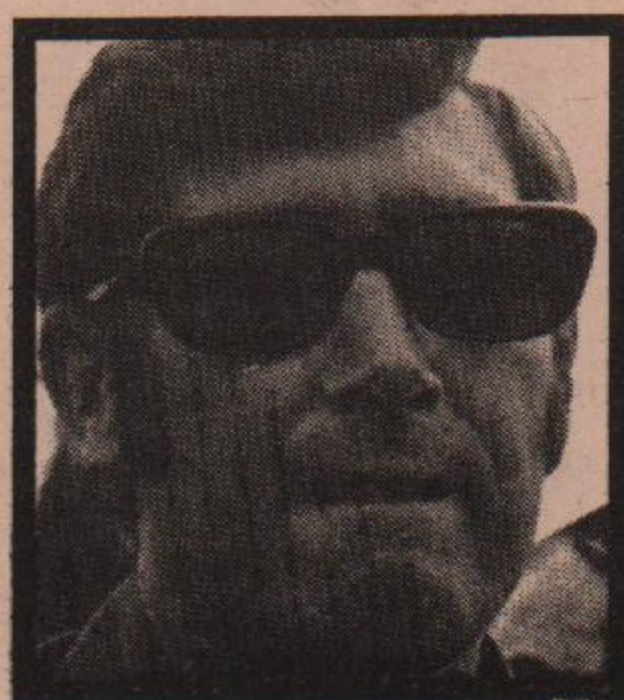
IT'S A
VITAL
TACTIC

DEREK WATKINS is a man highly qualified to speak about the Tory government's attacks on picketing. A National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers acting shop steward at Erith on London's riverside, Derek was one of the five dockers the Tories put in Pentonville in their first dramatic bit to break effective picketing.

Struggle

'The main basis for our struggle in 1972 was the loss of our work that had been going on for so long. We didn't first of all go out and put up effective pickets. We went through all the procedure, the so-called responsible channels.

'We got absolutely nowhere and frustration crept in. Once the leadership came from the London Port Shop Stewards Committee,



Watkins: last resort

the 1972 struggle was almost spontaneous.

'I myself worked in Bowaters at Northfleet until 1969 when we

lost our work there. By tradition dockers had done this work since about 1910. Then Bowaters brought new barges to the quay and put their own men on them at worse pay and conditions.

'We claimed this work. And the request of the unions, the National Dock Labour Board conducted an investigation. They said it was dock work. They took it to court and won.

'Bowaters appealed and it went to the House of Lords. Once it went there it was a lost cause as far as we were concerned. Bowaters' won and 36 of our men lost their jobs.

'This sort of thing had happened to most of the men in London.

TREVOR BALL is a miner at Lea Hall colliery in Staffordshire, one of the many pits which sent coachloads of men to Saltley in the 1972 miners' strike. That mass picket was undoubtedly the turning point of the strike.

'The reasons our men went for Saltley are interesting,' he said. 'The newspapers were conducting their usual propaganda about how miners were preventing old age pensioners getting coal to keep warm.

'In fact what was happening with the coal stocks like the one at Saltley was that they were going to the highest bidder—industry, not the people we wanted to see them go to.

'The miners used the mass, flying picket tactic to hit the economy and hit it hard. We had to become powerful and we had to do it in the shortest possible time.

'We used it to hit the people we wanted to hit and we used it so that it helped others. It is the only tactic which gives you the effectiveness you need as a worker to defeat the schemes of the employers and the government.

'Ever since the strike we have seen the Tories going on about pickets. At the Tory Party conference there were plenty of demands for tough new laws against pickets. Robert Carr got up and said that they didn't need new laws for they'd got them already.

'What the government wants to do is intimidate us all, to make us be our own policemen. We cannot allow this to go unchallenged.'

Stacked

'We tried dozens of times through the courts to get the situation righted and got precisely nowhere. So as a last resort we launched the pickets.

'Our stewards took the decision that we would have no truck with the Industrial Relations Act, an Act specially designed to cripple us and others like us. The law is 100 per cent stacked in favour of the employers.

'They decided to try and break our pickets with the Industrial Relations Act. But they came unstuck. Still if they can't get you on one thing they'll try another or try and do someone else who is weaker.

'This is what they have done in Shrewsbury. And people like me have a real job to do to explain to the men exactly what this government is up to.'



Tony Bilton (left) in the cab at his lorry hired to break the journalists' picket at Sheffield. It was Bilton who was also hired to break the Chrysler picket in Coventry last summer.

Why the weak mustn't go to the wall

MINERS and dockers are two of the most powerful groups of workers in Britain. But there are many weak sections in the movement who will feel much more threatened by the decisions the Tory government has been coming up with on picketing.

Among these weaker sections are the journalists, 9000 of whose members were recently involved in industrial action against the millionaire press barons' organisation, the Newspaper Society.

Ron Knowles is a long-standing militant in the National Union of Journalists. He is now an elected full-time official of the union, editing the union's journal.

'With an industry like ours where the members are not all that used to militant industrial action, picketing plays a particularly vital role,' he said.

Support

'The picket line forms a focal point which brings the members involved in action much closer together. It also brings them right into the mainstream of the working-class movement and its traditions. For it's on the picket line you learn about solidarity.

'But effective picketing is vital to all workers because it is clearly one of the only ways you can relate to fellow workers in any other part of your industry and

win some much-needed support to stop production and make your strike effective.

'Our pickets in the Newspaper Society dispute were always peaceful. But no one ever hears about the real intimidation that goes when the employers get to work. At Middlesbrough one manager asked the van drivers to "rev up and ram the bastards". He's never been charged. I somehow think he never will be.

'Our pickets were effective because they turned away commodities which were vital to the production of the papers. If the law says that you cannot even talk to lorry drivers, then the law is only designed to break down solidarity and weaken your chances of winning.

'The most concerted and best organised picketing of my generation was undoubtedly the 1972 miners' strike. I believe the miners' tactics scared the wits out of the Tories.

'And I believe that the more anyone thinks about what has happened since then the more like a government conspiracy it becomes.'



Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

'This means that pickets have no right to link arms or to try to stop access. If by sheer numbers pickets try to stop people from going to work or from delivering goods, they are not protected by the law.'

Throughout 1973 the Tories pressed the police and the top men in the legal system to make the words of the law books a reality. They have now achieved that, to an almost deafening silence from the top levels of the trade union movement.

Harassed

With the current crisis in the big business system the Tory government has led us all straight back into a situation directly comparable to the turn of the century.

They hypocritically mouth that trade union organisation, the right to strike is not threatened. Then with the legal machine they do all in their power to ensure that working-class action is hamstrung, frustrated and harassed.

But the law has its weaknesses. The 1972 miners' strike was the start of it all.

The Tories did not dare prosecute the miners' national executive for conspiracy though they had more evidence against them than against Des Warren, John McKinsie Jones and Ricky Tomlinson.

And all their scheming with the army and the police force could be halted by the mass action of the miners and other workers. With their newly-sharpened legal weapons they can and will pick off the weaker sections.

But they cannot yet beat the strong sections. They certainly cannot beat the weak fortified by the strong.

Our time does reek of repression. But fear is not a justified response.

The united force of the working-class movement doing battle for its demands, protecting its own weaker sections and continuing to adopt the tactics which bring victory will do the trick.

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Oil's troubled waters

OIL is big business and big profits. It is that feverish drive for profits that is threatening wages and union organisation in the far north of Scotland.

And the threat comes courtesy of the last Labour government, which sold the North Sea exploration rights to the private oil giants.

One key firm in the black gold frenzy is the oil rig firm Brown and Root (UK), subsidiary of the massive Halliburton Company of Texas.

Brown and Root chose Nigg Bay on the Cromarty Firth, north of Inverness, to build its rig to start oil exploration. The bay had deep water close to shore and local unemployment of about 600—the same number as Brown and Root claimed it had jobs for. Few specialists would need to be brought into the area and local men and even women would be trained as welders and steel riggers, said the firm.

Brown and Root joined up with Wimpey to form an operating company called—with unconscious humour—Highlands Fabricators to start the work. Wimpey had special responsibility for building and maintaining the giant engraving dock in which the flotation tanks and production 'jackets' would be built.

Brown and Root's claim that 600 workers were sufficient to build the rig was totally misleading and blinded the local authorities to the dreadful strain on local housing and amenities that was to come.

And the firm knew that if the leaders of the relevant trade unions could be tricked into thinking that the site would employ only local men, then in exchange for a small degree of trade union recognition conceded without a fight, the union leaders might agree to wage rates and conditions of work considerably worse than on any other major construction site in the country.

That is what happened. In August 1972, when the company was already reckoning on more than 1500 jobs, the 'White Book', officially called the 'Works Handbook of Terms and Conditions of Employment' was published, with the signatures of Eddie Marsden and Len Dixon of the Construction and Engineering Section of the AUEW, both members of the Communist Party, and Dan McGarvey of the Boilermakers.

Agreed

The White Book is a classic of its kind drawn up before any steelworkers, engineers or boilermakers were working on the site. When they agreed that Nigg was 'a new industrial development which is outside the confines of traditionally-established industry in the United Kingdom' and that the terms of employment should be drawn up 'with special reference to requirements of this new industry', the union leaders knew they would not have to work under the conditions they had agreed to.

The basic agreement is nothing new: high productivity at any cost, iron discipline and low pay rates. The only new item in the handbook is the inclusion of the scab's charter—the Industrial Relations Act requirement that each worker 'has the right to join a union or if he so desires to be a member of no trade union'.

Shop stewards on the site are still having to battle now, a year and a half later, to win 100 per cent trade

union membership.

The very first page of the 28-page handbook shows what it's about. 'All men employed at Nigg Works,' it states, 'are engaged on the understanding that they will co-operate to the full in achieving the high levels of productivity upon which the continued existence of Nigg Works all depends, including the adaption of all measures necessary to achieve maximum efficiency.'

Brothers Marsden, Dixon and McGarvey clearly felt that the introduction of phrases like 'after consultation with the shop stewards' or 'by mutual agreement' to be irrelevant in a 21st-century industry. It took two difficult and bitter strikes in May and September last year before the management even conceded that it was possible to consult the shop stewards before making dramatic changes.

Paul Stafford, the AUEW convenor,

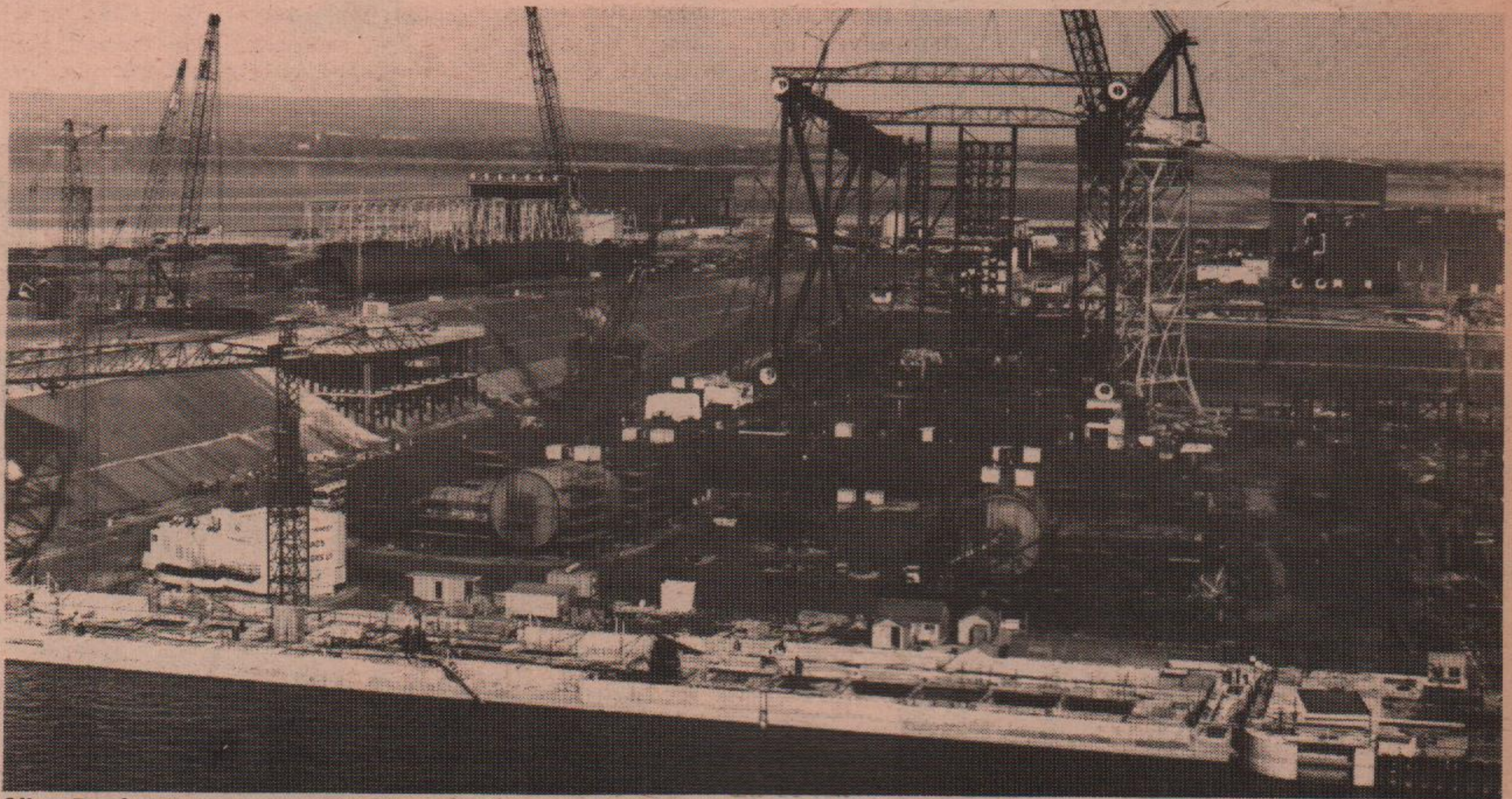
says: 'The only reason they put up with us was out of sufferance.'

The men's safety and good health are two of the casualties of Brown and Root's approach. Tommy Lafferty, AUEW construction section shop steward, complained: 'They don't take the bloody mud out.'

Not only on the floor of the giant deck, but also all over the site there is nothing but mud.

Bits of scrap pipe that could easily slip off and kill a man were left for months lying on top of the flotation chambers, some 50 feet high, while men worked down below.

Brown and Root's disregard for the men's health is even more scandalous. Only when 'experienced travelling men'—steel construction men from the lowlands of Scotland, Liverpool, and South Wales—began to be recruited from February last year were even minimum health safeguards taken. At first the locally-trained



Nigg Bay's oil platform: profiteers' ugly construction, with a little Labour help

Profits drive hits at men's pay and safety



B&R boss Sir Philip Southwell: misleading figures

welders worked inside a 30 foot diameter flotation chamber without breaks, and without any masks or fume extractors.

A ban on the vital but dangerous process of arc-gouging on the site had to last a week before minimum measures like working half an hour in, half an hour out, rubber masks and air ventilation were brought in. The pressures of the men, as more experienced trade unionists started work at Nigg, forced Brown and Root to bring in the Scottish Occupational Health Laboratory Service from Dundee.

Their report, described as 'highly confidential to client,' was published in June. It referred to a survey carried out on 21 and 22 May.

Excessive

One conclusion was: 'Arc-air gouging in the locations tested present a possible risk of excessive accumulation of iron oxide in the lungs; lung damage from oxide of nitrogen; metal fume fever from copper; excessive exposure to carbon oxide.'

'Acute irritation of the eyes and upper respiratory tracts would also be caused by oxides of nitrogen at the concentration found. Personnel working in close proximity, working in confined spaces welding or otherwise engaged would also be at risk.'

Brown and Root only partly satisfied the specific recommendations made, pleading shortages of equipment and technical problems as excuses. The general recommendations for biological tests involving blood and urine samples and medical examinations have been totally ignored. The report's proposal that the welders should be X-rayed was

only acted upon four days before Christmas—a delay of four months.

Paul Stafford said: 'The union could have settled for £1 an hour or more when the job started but these blokes didn't know where the place was let alone what it looked like. So Brown and Root got away with paying skilled men 70p an hour, only about 8p more than the local skilled rate at the time.'

Wages today are: for skilled workers 91p, semi-skilled 69p and unskilled 57p an hour.

Forced

From the start Brown and Root knew that building an oil rig 'jacket' some 600 feet high would involve a big labour force. Last month more than 2000 men were employed—rather more than the original 600.

Local housing and accommodation is incapable of dealing with more than half this number but Brown and Root was not at all concerned about the consequences for the men they employ or for the local area.

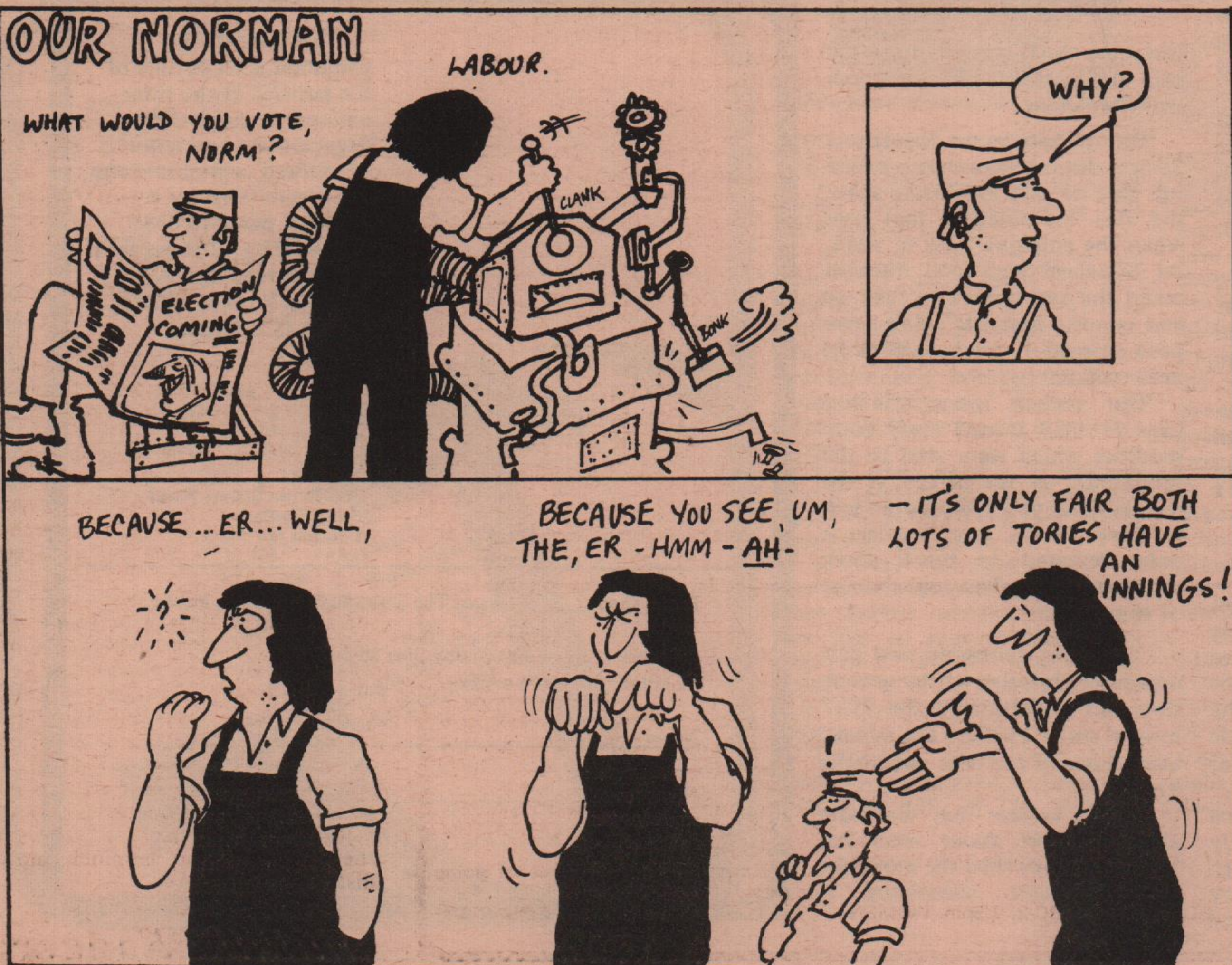
Seven hundred men are forced to stay on board two old ships that Brown and Root has moored next to the site. The conditions are deplorable.

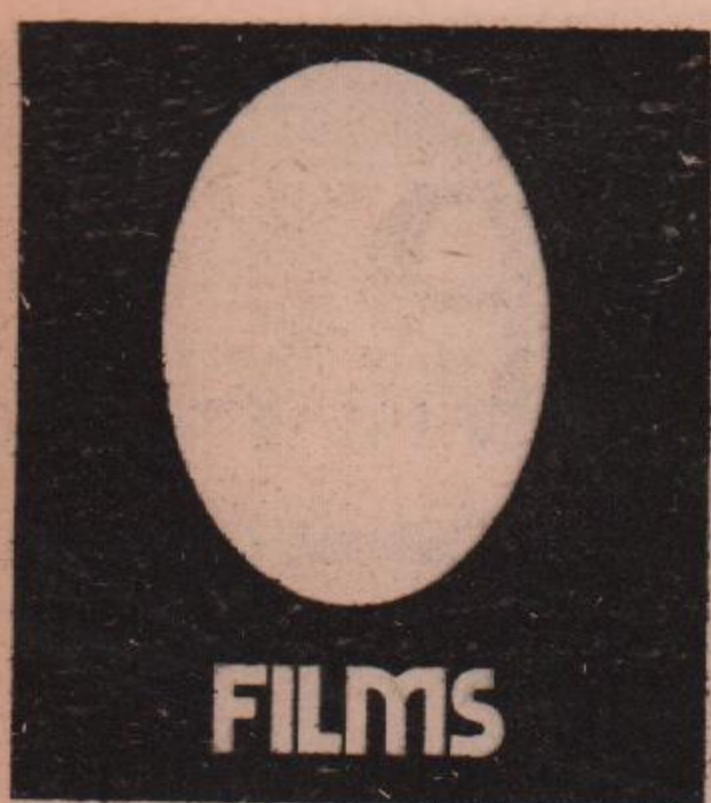
Most of the toilets do not flush. The men stay in tiny cabins, six feet square with two bunks separated by a narrow alleyway. There is only one public phone on each ship and no privacy for the calls, with a queue of 15 men to use it. Two policemen are permanently stationed on one ship, the Highland Queen.

150 Socialist Workers are now being sold on site. Shop stewards are pressing for an Invergordon Trades Council to be set up to involve stewards at British Aluminium Smelter and other new local industries. Slowly the workers are starting the long haul at building an organisation to challenge the bosses.

Nigg Bay is a glaring example of the total irresponsibility of such uncontrolled giants as Brown and Root—and the even greater irresponsibility of a 'left wing' government that gave it a blank cheque to chase profits regardless of social consequences.

Report by Steve Jefferys





Rough ride on lonesome road

IN 1884, in *The Origins of the Family*, Engels wrote of 'a generation of men who never in their lives have known what it is to buy a woman's surrender with money or power, a generation of women who have never known what it is to give themselves to a man from any other consideration than real love.'

Joseph Strick's outstanding film *Janice* is about why, in our society, such a generation has not lived and why such a 'real love' is almost impossible to imagine.

Janice was once a beautician. Now she's a truck girl who lives by selling her sex. The film is about the ride she takes with two non-

union truckers through the sprawling factories, loading bays and motorway cafes of industrial America.

To start with their relationship is simple: she wants 100 dollars, the drivers give her 50 and take turns to go with her in the rest cabin that American lorries have behind the cab. One guy beats her up a little,

'to get her excited' he says. She excites the other with home-made dirty pictures of herself done in a passport photo booth.

The young drivers have saved for their entire lives to make the payment on their truck and are now desperately hustling for loads. The truck girl renews her capital every time she repaints her face and hides her cash under her wig. They have their desperation in common.

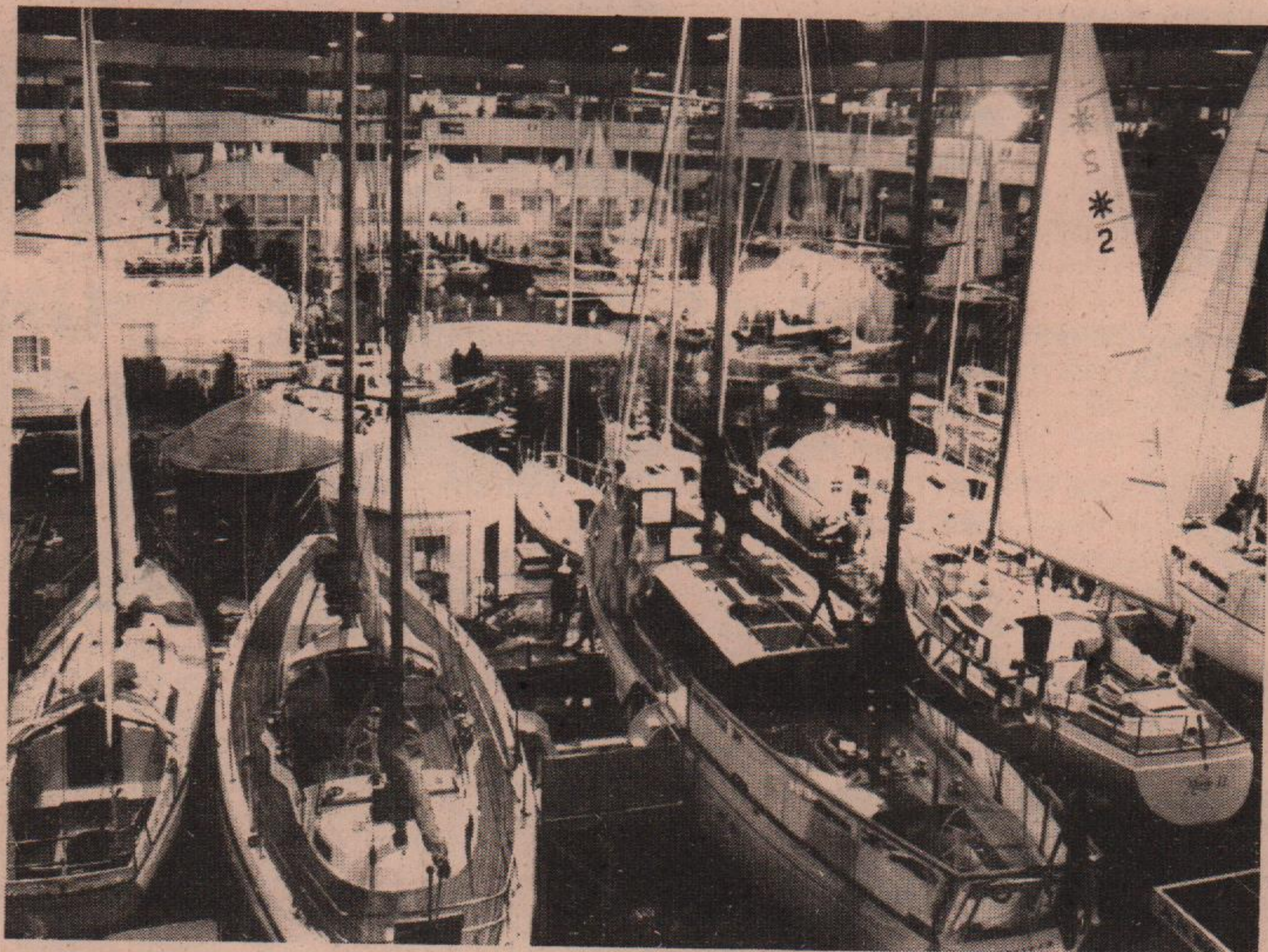
The juggernaut cowboys are trying to buck the system, beat the syndicates, fend for themselves. They snarl when older guys tell them to join the union—that's a mug's game, all pension schemes and security and people looking after you.

Janice's act of rebellion is deeper and even more hopeless. Her freedom is simply having nothing left to lose, nothing but her own pride left to believe in. If asked why she did not become an honest woman, she would answer like the servant girl in a popular novel quoted by Karl Marx: 'Honest! My God, what do you want me to be honest with?'

The truckers have to plead for loads from the transport companies. Janice has to plead for her cut of their cut. All three are trapped in the knot which twines together sex and money and work in capitalism and tightens it till it cuts.

In its grim, utterly unsentimental way the film shows how the guys are hurt and distorted by the re-

Crisis? Better get the wind up...



Today's pirates live on dry land and the £50,000 boats above are just for holidays ...

'THE ROUGH CORK LIFEBELT was biting into my naked flesh. I trod the Caribbean water and watched my home and all I cared about in the world fade away.'

Pretty hot stuff eh? The words come from *Children of the Cape*, written by a Mrs Rosie Swales.

'Meet the Swales Family, they made sailing history by rounding Cape Horn in a 30 feet Catamaran. The greatest family adventure of all time.' So said the advertising in front of a stall selling Mrs Swales' reminiscences of life on the high seas at the entrance to the Boat Show.

Illuminated by all the electricity that isn't available for football, dogs and human beings, the Daily Express sponsored Boat Show was back at Earls Court last week.

It is a commonly-held illusion, particularly among the rich, and Daily Express readers that you 'can get away from it all' by getting in a boat, plane, climbing boots, hovercraft, space capsule and sailing away from the nastiness of unpleasant strikes, petrol queues, sordid political manoeuvres and red wreckers.

In fact the world of make-believe peddled by the show, the boating industry, and the totally barmy Express is very political. The dream world is one of happy families on blue seas, storm tossed waters, sailing round Cape Horn, or down the Norfolk Broads or into a tasteful new yachting marina.

'Sail away those winter blues'—Brighton Marina News.

'Be the captain of your own Holiday Cruise Ship. Crew your boat through grand old father Thames. See new things meet new people. Explore your way into a new life'—Thames Explorer Boats.

To do so you are going to need some of the money that it, according to the Express, in such short supply at the moment.

Nigel Fountain wades in at the Boat Show

£8000 should see you into a motor boat. For an odd £30,000-£40,000 you can pick up a small ocean going yacht. So if you are getting bored by that coal mine, kitchen sink or car factory you may have to save your small change for some time before you get to where Men are Men and Mrs Swales writes her memoirs.

The illusion of sailing away from your troubles is a common one. We would all be happy to do it, and the rich can afford to try. A blue lagoon where you can lead a natural life away from the sordidness of making money.

The consequence of turning escapist fantasies into reality is to create a world even more unreal. The theme of the show this year was the Bahamas. 'Not just out of the way. Just out of this world.' So runs the publicity brochures. '700 friendly tropical islands, where the people are friendlier and unspoiled.'

Translation: the people are poor, live in rotten huts and can't go on strike. They haven't got a job, and have never, unlike the people who flock out to take photographs of them and allow them to caddy on one of the 15 golf courses featured in the brochure, had the chance to get 'spoilt'.

The Bahamian theme at the Show was expressed through the universal language of the public relations agent. Around a unspoilt plastic pool unspoilt £30,000 boats stuffed full of bored salesmen and photographic models, floated by plastic palm trees. The authentic tropical Guinness bar did a roaring trade.

In the middle of the pool was an idyllic tropical island constructed of plastic and tar-

paulins. An authentic Bahamian bongo-drummer in a leopard skin shirt was poised in frozen splendour awaiting the instructions of a photographer and another authentic PR man as they moved a model to take another 'BRITAIN CAN TAKE IT' picture for the Express.

Round them two sailors floated in a inflatable dingy. Join the navy and see Earls Court ...

Through the air wafts the vague sound of a 1950s sax playing 'They Try To Tell Us We're Too Young'. It gave one the feeling that there must be some kind of party going on on a plastic coral strand on some distant shore of Earls Court. The music ended and was replaced by the sound of tape-recorded sea-gulls.

The people in attendance were composed partly of the what one might call 'normal' human beings, who like me would be leaving the show with little save a stack of press handouts. The rest were an assortment of potential extras from Italian Westerns, over for the show, upper class girls who seemed to be awaiting the chance to deny they were engaged to Prince Charles, salty dogs left over from 1950s British naval war films and people dressed in full nautical rig out. This last group, with their anoraks and heavy-knit seamen's sweaters seemed to be waiting for a force nine gale and assorted tidal waves to sweep over the exhibition.

The entire show stank of phoniness. The only genuine thing was the price tags on the yachts and motor boats. People want freedom, they want to change their lives, they want to be happy. Since the Daily Express and the industry behind the nautical trade cannot provide this they provide their own predictable alternative: Fake patriotism, advertising agents, plastic palm trees and the GALWAY BLAZER II which has a large blob on the side saying AREA OF DAMAGE CAUSED BY A SHARK.

I was only surprised that the shark wasn't sitting at a nearby stall signing autographs ...



Janice played by Regina Baff

lationship even more than Janice herself. As Engels says: 'Prostitution demoralises men far more than women. Among women prostitution degrades only the unfortunate ones who become its victims. But it degrades the entire male world.'

Escape from the situation is not possible. Nor is love or tenderness. All three are so bruised by the system there is no surface left to feel with. The men will not even acknowledge Janice's existence most of the time.

'You're shaping up well,' one of the drivers eventually says. 'I don't need to be shaped up,' she snaps back.

Finally she lets herself be taken in turn by two traffic cops to save the drivers a 100 dollar fine. With a twisted double morality the truckers whose wages she has saved with her body just insult her ... you get all the gravy, they say ... and the film ends in a final terrible fight among muddy dollar bills alongside the motorway.

At present this film is only showing in London, at the Bloomsbury Cinema, but socialists should do anything to get it a general release. Most radical films are about how workers become socialists. This film is about why they do not and is much more disturbing.

PREVIEW

Thomas Middleton. At 9.10 on BBC-2 a play on a Rugby team in a declining pit village in South Wales—UP AND UNDER. On the same channel Edition profiles the French newspaper CANARD ENCHAINE which combines humour with good expose journalism.*

MONDAY: BBC-2, 3.00pm. A useful and important series is WOMEN AND WORK. Dealing with conditions of women in industry, a repeat of last Wednesday's episode. BBC-1, 8.00pm. A SUITABLE CASE FOR TREATMENT is Panorama's postponed feature on the treatment of adolescent 'law-breakers'.

TUESDAY: RADIO-4, 7.30pm. Harold Wilson is on phone-in IT'S YOUR LINE.

WEDNESDAY: BBC-2, 7.5pm. WOMEN

AND WORK. On BBC-1 BARLOW, who has changed over the years from a few grunts on the early (and good) Z-Cars to the Stalin of crime-fighters returns.* On BBC-2 Man Alive's IMPOSSIBLE DREAM examines the doubling of house prices.*

THURSDAY: BBC-1. Alan Plater's play on life in Hull, LAND OF GREEN GINGER is repeated.*

*Times unknown at time of going to press.

NIGEL FOUNTAIN

SATURDAY: BBC-2, 8.50pm. THE PALLISERS is a 26 part dramatisation of some of the political novels of Anthony Trollope, a mid-second division Victorian novelist much loved by Tories. A BBC attempt to follow up the appalling Forsyte Saga? At 9.20pm London Weekend's UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS ends its current series with a day at the seaside just before the start of the Great War.

SUNDAY: BBC-1, 8.15pm. THE CHANGELING, a Jacobean tragedy by

David Widgery

The pickets' 'terror squad' that never was



Wrexham district secretary of the TGWU Henry Williams

ONE member of the Transport and General Workers' Union who must be feeling pretty sick about the union's toughly worded official statement last week condemning the Shrewsbury trials and demanding the immediate release of the Three is Ted Hughes, full-time Wrexham district officer of the union.

Hughes was one of only two trade unionists in the whole country publicly quoted in support of newspaper denunciations of Des Warren, who is now doing three years in prison for conspiracy to picket.

His statement appeared in that well-known working-class paper the Daily Mirror on Thursday 20 December last. It appeared under the entirely impartial headline ' "Godfather" behind the campaign of violence'. The article was illustrated with a picture of Des.

Hughes told the Mirror that his office had been stormed by a gang of Warren's pickets. This had 'terrorised' the staff. He was then quoted:

He added: "They were the Flying Pickets, a small private army. We could never condone the things they did. No real union man could. That was the trouble—the pickets were not union men. In fact, they frightened good union men."

Mr. Hughes went on: "It all smacked of paid agitators—strikes were used as a tool to fight the Government."

Political

"This business has driven men out of the union, caused fear, and has destroyed understanding between men and management. We could have done without the Flying Pickets."

After this report John Carpenter, one of the three men who got suspended sentences in the Shrewsbury conspiracy trial and who is chairman of the Wrexham TGWU branch, immediately challenged Hughes.

The unhappy Hughes stated that he had the interview with the Daily Mirror reporter in October—an interesting fact since the Daily Mirror dressed up the statement to look as if it had been made after the verdicts and sentences.

Hughes also indicated that he had been misquoted by the Mirror. But when it was suggested that he contact

UNION OFFICIAL'S TALE TO NEWSMAN

the Mirror office and set the record straight he said he could see no reason to contact the Mirror office again.

In fact there are many reasons why someone, not least Ted Hughes, should contact the Daily Mirror and set the record straight. The most interesting thing about the 'terror storming' of the Transport Union offices in Wrexham is that the whole 'terror' business is a fairy story.

Even the prosecution at Shrewsbury, which spun many a tale, recognised that it was just too sub-standard to use.

The truth is this.

In the fifth week of the 1972 national official builders' strike it was reported to the Wrexham Action Committee that all the big jobs in the North Wales and Wrexham area were on strike with the exception of the NSM Contractors' multi-million-pound civil engineering contract five miles outside Wrexham.

Lobby

It was also reported to the action committee, which had been set up officially by the Transport and Construction unions to spread the strike, that full-time officers in the TGWU Wrexham office were telling union members and employers that the strike was not official. This, it was reported, was the reason why Ted Hughes, district organiser, and his superior Henry Williams, the district secretary, had not put in any appearances at strike meetings.

To ginger up the officials the action committee decided to lobby the Wrexham TGWU office.

The lads on the lobby were invited into the office. Members of the action committee were invited into Williams' private office. They then asked Brother Williams to help

get a withdrawal of labour on the NSM site.

At first Williams refused to do this. He made it clear that he did not accept that the action committee had any official standing in the union.

Then one of the action committee members invited him to telephone the union's regional office in Cardiff so he could ask for a summary of the official position.

This Williams did. The advice given to him by the regional office resulted in both officials going with the pickets to the NSM site. There they addressed a meeting of the workers, who then withdrew their labour.

Ransom

So much for Hughes' Daily Mirror statement about the union office being stormed and the staff terrorised.

One other aspect of this statement is extremely interesting.

The Mirror article refers throughout to 'Warren's gang of pickets' holding the nation to ransom and terrorising the TGWU staff. In fact Des Warren wasn't even among the lads who lobbied their pussy-footing officials that day.

About four weeks before Hughes had his interview with the Mirror reporter, he made a signed statement to defence lawyers for the six men on conspiracy charges. This statement concerned the running of the strike, the official standing of the action committee and the conduct of John Carpenter and Eric Tomlinson.

It is a great pity Ted Hughes didn't simply hand the Daily Mirror reporter a copy of this statement.

The sort of message trade union activists in and around Wrexham are sending out to Ted Hughes (and others besides) reads:

'Brother. Isn't it about time you came down off your fence and stood up to be counted? The men that stood in the dock at Shrewsbury are the men you should have represented, led and assisted.

'But they tried to do the job for which you receive your salary, run your car and enjoy the honour of trade union office. Meeting the press as you did has only one title—acting against the interests of the trade union movement.'

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 racism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

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

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

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

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of 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.

FOR THE ADDRESS OF YOUR LOCAL BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS, WRITE TO THE NATIONAL SECRETARY, 8 COTTONS GARDENS, LONDON E2 8DN.

Whats on

Their crisis- our answer

HOUNSLOW IS public meeting: The crisis—a Tory con-trick. Speaker Ted Crawford. Friday 18 January, 8pm, 77 Waldegrave Road, Teddington.

KINGS LYNN Socialist Worker public meeting: The Tories' crisis and the socialist alternative. Monday 21 January, 8pm, Kings Lynn Workers Club, Church Street. All trade unionists welcome.

GUILDFORD IS public meeting: Wages, Prices and the Crisis. Speaker Dave Peers, IS national secretary. Tuesday 22 January, 8pm, Foxburrows Hall, Foxburrows Avenue, Westborough Estate, Guildford.

CHELMSFORD IS public meeting: Their crisis—our answer. Speaker Laurie Flynn. Monday 21 January, 8pm, The Cricketers, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford. All welcome.

SOUTH WEST LONDON IS public meeting: Their crisis—fight the Tories! Speaker Paul Foot. Tuesday 29 January, 8pm, Lambeth Town Hall (lower hall) (near Brixton tube). All welcome.

SOUTH EAST LONDON District IS public meeting: It's their Crisis—not a penny off our pay. Speakers: John Fontaine (UCATT), Pete Lyle (AUEW convenor) and a member of the Mineworkers' Union. Tuesday 22 January, Charlton House, Charlton Village, London SE7.

DARTFORD and District IS public meeting: The Tory Crisis—the working-class answer. Speakers Roger Cox (AUEW and member of IS national committee) and Dave Bush (ASLEF branch secretary, Slade Green British Rail depot). Wednesday 23 January, 8pm, SOGAT Hall, Essex Street, Dartford, Kent (near Scala bingo hall).

BRISTOL IS public meeting: Their crisis—our answer. Speakers include Dave Edwards (former member of Fine Tubes strike committee). Friday 25 January, 8pm, Crown and Dove, Bridgewell Street. All welcome.

HOUNSLOW IS public meeting: The Tory Crisis and the socialist answer. Speakers: Duncan Hallas and Elmo Eustace. Tuesday 22 January, 8pm, The Fox, Church Street, Twickenham.

PRESTON IS public meeting: Tory Crisis—why should the workers pay? Speaker Glyn Carver (IS Manchester organiser). Thursday 24 January, 8pm, George Hotel, Church Street, Preston.

NORTH HERTS IS public meeting: Whose Crisis? Blame the bosses, make them pay. Speaker Chris Harman, Tuesday 22 January, 8pm, Bedwell Centre, Stevenage.

More meetings on page 13



WORKERS AND CRISIS: THE GAP WE MUST FILL

A UNANIMOUS, urgent call to build the International Socialists and IS influence in the working-class movement went out from the IS National Committee last Saturday.

A new membership campaign has been launched as a central part of IS' response to the crisis.

The discussion about the general political situation, the miners' dispute and the jailing of the Shrewsbury Three lasted for more than six hours. Every speaker emphasised the unprecedented opportunities for International Socialists, and the desperate need for a socialist organisation to be built among rank and file trade unionists to resolve the crisis of leadership in the working-class movement.

As Tony Cliff put it: 'There is very little room for manoeuvre for the ruling classes, and very little room for manoeuvre for the trade union leadership. The trade union bureaucracy can't discipline the workers, and the government is resorting more and more to the state machine, to the Special Branch, the police and the tanks.'

'There is a great abyss between the crisis in society and the consciousness of the workers. We are the only people capable of straddling the abyss, but we are just not big enough. An all-out drive to recruit hundreds of new members is the first priority for our branches.'

Turning to the possibility of an early election, Cliff said: 'There must be no question about it. We must work very,

hard for a Labour victory. We must vote Labour, and demand of the new Labour government that they carry out their pledges and free the Shrewsbury Three and pay the Clay Cross councillors.'

Reports from all over the country confirmed that there has never been such political interest in the working-class movement as today. Rob Clay from Teesside and Rab Jeffrey from Southampton reported an astonishing rise in interest in Socialist Worker, in IS and in socialist politics generally.

ACTIVITY

Steve Jefferys said that Scottish experience showed greater resistance to the three-day week than reported from other areas in the country. 'We have to resist the lockout wherever it appears,' he said. 'In one big Scottish factory of 9000 workers, they are working several hours in the dark. We must urge full earnings for all hours worked, and that includes premium payments for Saturdays.'

Each speaker agreed with the conclusion voiced by John Palmer: 'The government is preparing for a real wage cut. We have to oppose it. We have to raise the question of mass recruitment right at the centre of our activity and in all IS meetings.'

Paul Holborow, of IS Industrial Department, reported on the Shrewsbury jailings. He congratulated IS members all over the country for their response. 50 branches had issued separate leaflets on the question entirely on their own initiative. Only IS had initiated some form of organised action

to the jailings, in a situation where organised leadership in defence of the three was woefully lacking.

Dave Peers, IS national secretary, outlined his experiences while accompanying two of the defendants round factories and building sites to win support. Sites which had been organised and where previous meetings had been held on Shrewsbury men were much more responsive, but little groundwork had been done so far.

On the other hand, he said, the defendants would be heard anywhere. They had access to almost every workplace in the country, and it was up to IS organisations throughout the country to help them get around as many sites as possible. The fight to free the Shrewsbury Three was just beginning and the campaign would not end with the Liverpool Trades Council recall conference on 2 February.

The committee heard a report on the miners' dispute from an IS miner in Yorkshire. He said that the mood of the miners had shifted sharply during the past week.

INCREASE

After Christmas, feeling had hardened for tougher action and for a strike, but as soon as the news of the TUC initiative came through, they felt that the overtime ban had won. There was a lot of disillusionment and despondency about the failure of the left-wing leaders even to raise the question of the strike on the miners' union executive.

John Charlton reported that 600 copies of Socialist Worker were sold to miners in Yorkshire last week. The paper was being sold at more than a third of all the pits in the country. The plan was to increase that to two-thirds.

Jim Higgins said that from his experience in writing articles about the mines dispute in Socialist Worker, there were enormous opportunities for IS in the mining industry.

'We want a campaign throughout the coalfields such as we mounted in 1972—only stronger. There is a real chance to build a strong miners' group within IS. We should aim for 10 pit branches of the organisation at the least, over the next 2-3 months. The membership campaign should start with the miners,' he said.

The National Committee recognised five new branches of IS—at Glenrothes in Fife, Evans Medical (Liverpool), Southwark, Deptford and Wakefield.

Copies, price 2p each plus 30 postage, can be obtained from Chingari, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

BURNLEY: More than 70 trade unionists, mainly shop stewards from the AUEW, UCATT, TGWU, UPW, TASS and the NUM attended a public meeting called by the East Lancashire District of IS at the Burnley Miners Club. Main speakers were John Riley, lodge delegate of NUM Burnley, Wally Preston, convenor at Allied Chemicals, Manchester and a member of IS, and Jim Deacon of the NUM Dodsworth Colliery, Barnsley.

Pledges of solidarity with the miners were received from the AUEW shop stewards committees at Mullard Simonstone and Rolls-Royce Barnoldswick. Miners speaking from the floor made it clear that no matter what Ted Heath or the TUC did they would never give in. Collections were taken for the families of the Shrewsbury Three and a strike fund was set up in defence of a miners strike.

Two people joined IS at the meeting.

**More meetings
on opposite page**

Free the Shrewsbury Three!

SOCIALIST WORKER RALLIES

Speakers: John Carpenter, John Llywarch and Ken O'Shea, the three of the six building workers pickets accused at Shrewsbury who were not jailed

BIRMINGHAM: Sunday 20 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: John Carpenter, John Llywarch and Paul Foot (IS national committee member)
Assembly Room, Digbeth Civic Hall

NORTH WEST LONDON: Monday 21 January, 8pm
Speakers: John Carpenter and Tony Cliff and Trevor Ball (NUM Lea Hall Colliery, Staffs)
Songs and sketches by The Combine
Cricklewood Hotel, Cricklewood Broadway, London NW2

EAST LONDON: Tuesday 22 January, 8pm
Speakers: John Carpenter, Laurie Flynn, Lew Adams (secretary, ASLEF London District Council) and Trevor Ball (NUM, Lea Hall Colliery, Staffs)
The Swan, Stratford Broadway

SHEFFIELD: Monday 28 January, 8pm
Speakers: John Carpenter, Tony Cliff, Wally Preston and a miner
Chairman Greg Douglas (AUEW Construction Section)
Songs by Alex Glasgow and other entertainment
Tickets 50p from 98 Malton Street, Sheffield 4 (phone 381417)

HULL: Tuesday 29 January, 8pm
Speakers: John Carpenter and Dave Peers (IS national secretary)
Stevedores and Dockers Club, Posterngate
Meeting sponsored by TGWU 10/64 branch

TEESSIDE: Thursday 31 January, 8pm
Speakers: John Llywarch and Tony Cliff
James Finegan Hall, Eston

TYNESIDE: Friday 1 February, 7.30pm
Speakers: John Llywarch and Tony Cliff
Nixon Hall, New YMCA, Ellison Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW: Wednesday 23 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: John Llywarch and Paul Foot. Chairman George Kelly (electricians' convenor, Glasgow direct labour dept)
Kingston Hall, Paisley Road Toll

EDINBURGH: Thursday 24 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: John Llywarch and Paul Foot
Leith Town Hall

SOUTH WALES:

CWM AND LLANTWIT: Tuesday 22 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: Ken O'Shea and Jim Nichol
Chairman Arthur Davis (NUM Cwm Lodge Committee)
Cwm and Llantwit Welfare Hall

PONTARDULAIS: Wednesday 23 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: Ken O'Shea and Jim Nichol
Chairman Gareth Williams (NUM secretary, Morlais Lodge)
Pontardulais Mechanics Institute

MAESTEG: Thursday 24 January, 7.30pm
Speakers: Ken O'Shea and Jim Nichol
Chairman Kinsey Gough (NUM Caerau Lodge committee)
Coytrahene Arms, Maesteg

This conference is vital

THE conference held by Liverpool Trades Council in November on the trials of building workers' pickets at Shrewsbury has been recalled for Saturday 2 February, starting at 2pm. All members of the International Socialists should call as soon as possible for their union branches and any other trade union bodies to send delegates to this conference. The IS National Committee last Saturday decided this should be regarded as 'top priority'.

Delegates' credentials are obtainable from Simon Fraser, secretary, Liverpool Trades Council, 33 Hatton Garden, Liverpool 3. All IS members attending this conference should also attend an IS meeting that morning in Liverpool—details next week.

IN BRIEF

THE IS Industrial Department is arranging day schools for members on three-day working. So far schools have been arranged in Coventry for Friday 25 January, and Birmingham for Tuesday 29 January. Speaking at both schools will be Tony Cliff and Andreas Nagliati.

Other day schools are being planned. Please ring the industrial department—01-739 6273 with ideas. This is an opportunity to discuss in some detail the present crisis and our work during it.

SOCIALIST WORKER sales are booming. Last week 35,250 copies were printed—a rise of more than 4000 over the previous week, the highest rise in the paper's history. There are signs that the order might rise again this week as reports come in from everywhere of an enormous interest in the paper. The figure for sales at York for the past three weeks, for example, are 270, 450, 525.

BARNESLEY: The Labour-controlled council at nearby Dodworth has complained to IS about the number of IS posters appearing in the village. The councillors include leading figures in Dodworth NUM. The slogans on the posters have been 'Victory to the Miners', 'Kick out the Tories' and 'Smash Phase Three'.

Several weeks ago The Campaign for a More Prosperous Britain, an organisation backed by the millionaire Oldham indus-

tralist Tom Keen, organised a mass poster campaign in Barnsley. Keen has since done the same at TUC headquarters. The campaign was designed to blame the miners' overtime ban on Communist Party members in the union and the posters urged miners to reject militant action 'for the good of the country'.

There was not a word of protest from local Labour councillors. It was left to local IS members to rip down the posters.

COVENTRY: More than 150 people gave an ovation to John Carpenter and John Llywarch after they had spoken about the jailings of the Shrewsbury Three at an IS rally last Friday. More than £70 was put into the collection box at the door held by Charles Llywarch, who is five years old.

THE latest Urdu issue of Chingari, the IS paper for Pakistani workers in Britain, is just out. The main story is the strike by 100 Asian workers at Perivale Gutermann, the thread-making firm in West London who are fighting a boss out to humiliate them and smash their union organisation.

The leading article is about racism and the crisis, and other articles include a report on immigrants and strikes in Europe, an interview with John Worth of Chrysler Coventry, reports on the arrests and deportation of 'illegal' immigrants, and reports from Bradford, Manchester, Derby, Dartford and Mansfield.

TOTTENHAM AND WOOD GREEN IS public meeting: Solidarity with the miners—end the three-day week. Speakers: Paul Holborow, Alan Watts and a miner. Thursday 24 January, 8pm, YWCA, 628 Tottenham High Road, London N17. All welcome.

GRAND MANCHESTER IS District Social: Saturday 26 January, Kings Arms, Bloom Street (off Chapel Street), Salford. Disco, songs, bar extension. 30p single, 50p double. All welcome.

YORK District IS public meeting: The 1926 General Strike—its lessons for the present crisis. Speaker Harry Wicks. Thursday 24 January, 8pm, De Gray Rooms, Exhibition Square.

IS AUEW Fraction meeting: Would IS members in the AUEW please note the change of date and place—now SUNDAY 27 January, 12.30pm-4.30pm, at the AUEW offices, The Crescent, Salford, Manchester. All districts to send delegates. For further details phone IS industrial department 01-739 6273.

SOUTH EAST LONDON IS District aggregate meeting: Saturday 19 January, 2.30pm-5.30pm, Charlton House, Charlton Village, London SE7. Speakers: John Palmer on IS political perspectives, Alan Watts on industrial perspectives. Discussion of work in the district. IS members only—all should attend.

MANCHESTER District IS training committee: Don't waste your time when you're locked out, come to marxist discussion meetings—every Tuesday at 12.15 pm in Ye Olde Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford.

LENIN MEMORIAL LECTURE (50 years: 1924-1974): Speaker Tony Cliff. Wednesday 23 January, 7pm, Old Theatre, LSE, Houghton Street, London WC2. Admission 10p. Organised by LSE IS Society.

IS POST OFFICE WORKERS meeting: The role of IS trade union fractions. Sunday 20 January, 2.15pm, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS UPW members meeting: Perspectives for 1974. Sunday 20 January, 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS POEU members meeting: Perspectives for 1974. Friday 18 January, 7pm, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS ANTI-RACE sub-committee: Saturday 19 January, 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Branches please send written reports of anti-racist activity.

IS BUSES fraction meeting: Sunday 20 January, 12 noon, Room 5, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. At least one bus worker from each district to attend. Further details from fraction secretary at 0904-56316.

THE IS BUILDING WORKERS Fraction meeting, due to be held in Manchester on Sunday 3 February, has been cancelled. Instead there will be a meeting for IS building workers who are delegates to the Liverpool Trades Council recall conference on the Shrewsbury jailings on Saturday 2 February. Details in this column next week.

NATIONAL IS PRINTWORKERS meeting: Sunday 27 January, 11am, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

DOCKERS REFUSE 'FREE THE THREE' STRIKE

by Bob Light

LONDON:—A mass meeting on Monday at the Royal Docks voted down a recommendation from their stewards to support the following day's strike against the Shrewsbury pickets and to free the Three. The majority was clear but far from overwhelming.

The Royal Group is the largest dock in London and traditionally the most militant. The Royals have been in the front rank of all protest strikes in recent years, on many occasions standing virtually alone. This time there was a feeling that they had done their bit.

Had the campaign started to move immediately the three were imprisoned the vote might have been very different. As it was, it seemed as if dockers in the Royals were being asked to stand alone again. The Royals men would surely have added their weight to a movement to free the three. They voted against starting one themselves from scratch.

The stewards argued against this, pointing out that this was one issue that threatened not just the builders but every trade unionist.

EXPLAIN

The vote might have been different again if the speaker from the London Shrewsbury Defence Committee had been there to explain the case in full. But he didn't bother to show up.

The stewards were not helped either by the knowledge that both the Transport Union docks group committee and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers had side-stepped resolutions calling for action in support of the Shrewsbury Three.

They were helped still less by the news that in Liverpool shop stewards had recommended to a mass meeting of their men to work normally on Tuesday.

But when all is said and done there are no excuses to be made. The port shop stewards emerge from this with credit. They put the right recommendation at the right time—but it was rejected.

This is a body blow to the movement to free the three. But it need not be fatal. This time the movement can't rely on the usual beachhead in the docks. This places an even greater responsibility on the people who did come out on Tuesday and particularly on the building workers.

They are the only ones who can take events by the scruff of the neck and build up the momentum that the dockers did during the five days at Pentonville.

'I firmly believe the Shrewsbury trial was designed as

Ballot may remove Smith

COALVILLE:—The first mass meeting of Leicestershire miners since the 1926 General Strike was held here last Saturday to discuss the antics of Frank Smith, the local NUM secretary and member of the union's national executive.

Smith, whose call a week ago for a return to normal working was met by strike action in five Leicestershire pits, apologised for misrepresenting the members' views but maintained his view that the action should be called off. Miner after miner at the meeting condemned his action and he was variously described as a

'gutless right-winger' and a 'wooly-back'.

Among those who spoke was Derek Burford, who described himself as 'a moderate and a lay preacher'. He drew considerable applause when he said: 'Miners are worth £70 a week.' He was followed by Jim Campbell who announced that he was 'a militant and a member of the International Socialists'.

The chairman, Jack Jones, banned any resolutions of no confidence. Leicestershire NUM branches and the local Miners Council will be considering a ballot to remove

Smith.

Feeling is strong among the 3000 members that Smith should be removed. The only argument heard last Saturday in his favour was that his sacking would mean the union would have to pay his wages for the two years until he reaches retiring age. A small price, others said, for getting rid of a man who has consistently proved his unsuitability to represent miners anywhere.

About 50 people attended a public meeting hastily organised in Coalville by the International Socialists at which Tony Cliff spoke on the miners' claim, the crisis and the need to build a socialist alternative.



Miners at the Coalville mass meeting, first since the 1926 General Strike. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)



Frank Smith: Apologised

LINK-UP URGED TO FIGHT THE BOSSES

A CALL was made this week for support for a rank and file conference of trade unionists to co-ordinate action against the government-employer offensive.

A press release from the organising committee of the conference set up by 12 rank and file trade union papers, includes the text of a letter being sent to trade union branches, shop stewards committees, trades councils and other union bodies.

Signed by Roger Cox, the committee's secretary and a member of the editorial board of The Carworker, the letter, headed 'Fight the

employers' offensive—for united trade union action', says:

I am writing to inform you of a delegate conference of trade unionists being held on Saturday, 30 March at 11.30am in the Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

There can hardly be a trade unionist in Britain today who is not worried about the future of our movement and the living standards of our families. The government imposed three-day working has drastically reduced wages and introduced a new and likely threat of heavy unemployment.

Three Shrewsbury building workers have been viciously jailed for organising successful picketing. Price rises have become a permanent feature of our lives. Inflation, speculation in land and house prices, rising

rents and savage attacks on the Welfare State have all undermined our quality of life.

At the same time the government is attempting to prevent us from effectively fighting back. Legally binding wage freezes and restraints have become the norm rather than the exception. The notorious Industrial Relations Act is aimed at our very right to organise while new immigration laws have been introduced to discriminate against black workers and help split our ranks.

Now, because the miners have banned overtime the Tories have seized the opportunity to launch the biggest employers' offensive since the 1926 General Strike. They must be defeated.

If the entire union movement had stood united and fought the government not only would many of these attacks never have been made, but the Tories themselves would no longer be in office. Sadly the TUC, who could have led such a united movement, have proved unwilling to fight.

It was the rank and file in the trade union movement who took the initiative against the Industrial Relations Act and forced the release of the five dockers jailed at Pentonville. It was rank and file miners that led the way in 1972 with their flying pickets. It was the rank and file that adopted factory occupations and sit-ins to save jobs and win wage demands.

We have increasingly felt, however, that this fragmented response is no longer, if ever it was, sufficient. The depth and viciousness of the attack upon us needs the unity of all our forces. To this end we have called this delegate conference.

To ensure that this conference is not simply a talking shop, but that meaningful decisions are reached, this conference is open only to delegates from trade union branches, district committees, stewards committees, national executives, trades councils, and other bona fide trade union bodies.

ORGANISE

Such a conference is not an alternative or substitute for existing trade union bodies. On the contrary. By co-ordinating and discussing, for example, the work which in many areas is being organised in support of the Shrewsbury lads, a powerful aid can be given to the movement for their release. The conference can strengthen the ability of all trade union bodies to organise such work.

Again and again in recent months and years groups of workers have been allowed to go down to defeat because they were isolated and left to fight alone. The conference can take steps to ensure that unity is forged where it counts most at the grass roots.

Already support has come in from a significant number of trade union bodies who have agreed to send delegates. Details of the final agenda, a draft resolution drawn up by the organising committee and standing orders will be sent to all delegating organisations for their discussion and possible amendments. In the meantime I would greatly appreciate it if you could discuss this invitation and write back to me for delegate credentials.

The rank and file papers sponsoring the conference are: GEC Rank 'N' File, The Hospital Worker, The Carworker, The Steelworker, The London Platform, The Collier, Nalco Action News, Post Office Worker, Rank and File Teacher, Tech Teacher, Case Con and Redder Tape.

Further details of the conference are available from: Roger Cox, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

Classified

Copy for the Classified section must arrive by first post Monday morning. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 1p per word, semi-display 2p per word. CASH WITH COPY to Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

WANDSWORTH IS SOCIAL
Saturday 19 January, 8.00pm. The Fountain, 862 Garrat Lane, SW17 (5-10 minutes from Tooting Broadway tube). Music, dancing, booze, extension. 40p.

COMRADE requires room in North West/West London. Phone Kevin at 01-602 0851 (work).

COMRADE SOON REQUIRES ROOM in large flat, Islington, Camden area of London. Please write Box AP, Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

TOTTENHAM branch UCATT Benefit Social for the Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee: Disco and bar (extension to 1am), plus live entertainers, Friday 18 January, 8pm, The Nightingale, Wood Green High Road, London N22 (nearest tube Wood Green). Tickets 50p from K Dobbie, 355 Lordship Lane, London N17, phone 808 9285.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM
(Kingston-Richmond-Twickenham area)
Public meeting: Speakers: Mike Cooley (TASS), Steven Rose, Jake Bharier and Steve Lynch (GMWU), Surbiton Assembly Rooms (5 minutes from Surbiton Station), Friday 18 January, 7.45pm.

SOCIAL in aid of Perivale Gutermann strikers: Friday 18 January, 6.30pm, Dominion Hall Room. The Green, Southall. Indian film music, Gazalf, Bhanga, Garba-Ras, films. Organised by TGWU Perivale Gutermann branch. Admission 50p.

THE POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT: The second of a series of meetings on Law and Class. Tuesday 22 January, 6.45pm, London School of Economics (Room 510), Houghton Street, Aldwych, London WC2. Speaker Ian Macdonald. Admission free. Organised by the Haldane Society.

RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS (London) special meeting for all militants in the ATTI. Sunday 20 January, 7pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London WC1. The three-day crisis—the implications for the ATTI. Speaker Ian Birchall.

BARKING AND DAGENHAM Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee public meeting: Free the Three! Wednesday 23 January 8pm, Barking Town Hall (small hall). Speakers: Vic Turner (TGWU), Gerry Kelly (UCATT) and D Jackson (North Wales 24 Defence Committee).

FIGHT THE THREE-DAY WEEK: Meeting Monday 21 January, 8pm, Westway Lunch Club, London W10 (next door to Ladbroke Grove station); Speakers from NUM, ASLEF, UCATT and Hammersmith and Kensington Trades Council.

International Marxist Group CAPITALIST CRISIS OR WORKERS' POWER?
Ernest Mandel, leading member of the Fourth International, speaking on the European crisis. Also a speaker from the IMG political committee on Tasks within the present crisis in Britain. Wednesday 23 January, 7.30pm, St Pancras Assembly Rooms, Camden Town Hall (opposite St Pancras station), London N1.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY aims at building a moneyless world community without frontiers based on common ownership—with production solely for use—not profit. It opposes all other political parties, all leadership, all racism, all war. Write for specimen socialist literature to 'One World' (SW), The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4.

a means of intimidating miners' - Jack Collins NUM

NUM leader hits out at show trial

JACK COLLINS, Miners Union national executive member for the Kent coalfield, told Socialist Worker last week:

'I do not believe that the timing of the Shrewsbury show trial was just an accident. It came just as our own ban was beginning to bite. I firmly believe that the Shrewsbury trial was designed as a means of intimidating miners with regard to the action we might take.'

'The people in the government might look like a load of clowns, particularly the front men. But that's all they are—front men for the back-room boys who do not move without careful calculations.'

'I think their desire for such a prosecution and such a conviction arose out of the miners' strike in 1972. At Longannet they started to move against our men.'

'But they decided to back down and drop the proceedings. Their reasons are obvious. Miners are very closely knit. We have a very special sort of solidarity which is not so highly developed in other sections of the working class.'

'It is for this reason that they picked on the lads at Shrewsbury. They were a different sort of meat, men in a weak area of a badly organised industry. To illustrate just how weak they were you just have to remember that these men were



Jack Collins (right) talking to two of the convicted Shrewsbury pickets—John Llywarch (left) and Ken O'Shea. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)

arrested as a result of trying to organise other workers.

'The Shrewsbury 24 and the other builders' pickets were doing a job which the rest of the trade union movement should be doing. So the movement must support them.'

'These sinister legal decisions must be coupled with other events, like the show of force at Heathrow. In my view this had nothing to do with Arab guerrillas or the IRA. It was designed to intimidate another brand of so-called terrorists, to deal with our kind of militancy.'

'You can see it again with the letter Heath sent to all Tory constituency parties this week. He's on about people who want to "under-

mine society", who make "false appeals to class loyalties". He's saying that these people must be exposed and dealt with.'

'Clearly, the Tories are attempting to disarm the working-class movement and isolate the fighting leadership. They want to do this to shore up their system of society.'

'On Shrewsbury, what I'd say in conclusion is that if they had dared to arrest myself or any other miner, then there is no doubt about what would happen. If any proof of the solidarity and loyalty of mineworkers is needed, the events of the past week provide it. The big thing is to get that solidarity extended to assist other sections of the working class.'

YET MORE MINERS CALL FOR ACTION

INCREASING militancy among miners is showing in the demands of NUM area conferences for action, and in a growing disillusion with right-wing leadership.

Eighty-two delegates at the Scottish area conference, representing every pit in Scotland have called for no retreat on the claim. They rejected the Coal Board's offer and demanded no further talks with the Tory government unless additional money was offered.

The conference agreed to hold pithead meetings to discuss three possible methods of stepping up the fight: a three-day week, one day a week light-

ning strikes and all-out strike action.

But any action is postponed until after the NUM Executive meeting on 14 February. Said Scottish miners' president Mick McGahey: 'The executive may be required to discuss strike action.'

When asked about the miners being a 'special case', McGahey said 'The miners will not crawl to prosperity at the expense of other trade unionists.'

In the Midlands there are moves to bring Jack Lally, the NUM area president, to task for his attack on the Midlands miners who struck in sympathy with victimised miners at Cannock Chase. Lea Hall Lodge has condemned Lally's attacks 'on the very men he is paid to defend,' says the resolution.

'It is obvious that he is out of touch with the members and we call on him to do the honourable thing and resign immediately,' says.

NUM executive member, Joe McKie, speaking to the Lea Hall Lodge last Thursday, replied to a question on a possible election: 'Miners should fight hard to elect a Labour government to bring about the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act, Phase Three and the Housing Finance Act.' He said miners had been too soft with Labour governments and would be prepared to fight such a government to win justice.

PROTEST

The Scottish miners also decided to produce a 'Miners Charter' that would set out, ready for the NUM conference later this year, a policy for higher wages, shorter hours and improved conditions.

Mick McGahey also said that all Scottish branches of the union will be represented at the protest rallies in Glasgow and Edinburgh against the jailing of the Shrewsbury Three.

Solidarity and support for the miners' case was expressed by shop stewards and workers from Woodhead Coil Springs at Ossett, Yorkshire, who picketed Houghton Main Colliery, near Barnsley, on Monday carrying placards calling for 'Victory for the Miners' and 'Miners and Engineers Unite'.

Another powerful boost for the miners comes with the decision of the Scottish train drivers to ban the moving of coal and oil.

The militant moves in the NUM are a real advance. But the third enemy, after the Tories and the Coal Board, is time. Decisive militant action now will win. Delay allows the government to make the coal stocks last and gives the NUM right wing the chance to manoeuvre for a sell-out.

Victory is within the miners' grasp—strike action now will bring it to hand. In the process, every other worker will gain and Ted Heath and his backers lose, perhaps forever.

BLACKMAIL BY BRITISH RAIL

LEADERS of the train drivers' union ASLEF were due to meet on Thursday to consider suspending industrial action in return for more talks with British Rail.

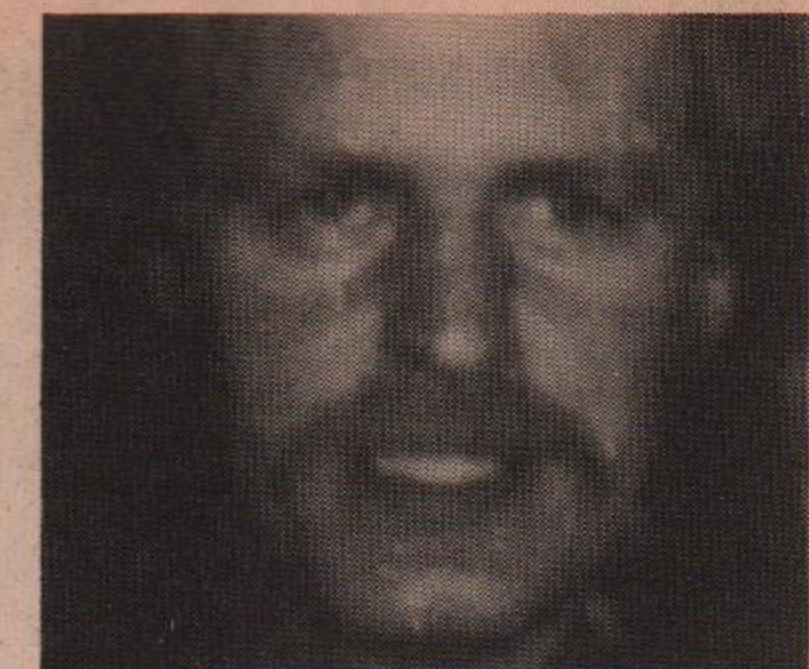
While the drivers have been taking action, British Rail has continually stated that it will not engage in new talks on pay restructuring until the action is suspended. Early this week ASLEF general secretary Ray Buckton was hinting that he would go along with this sort of blackmail and help get the action suspended.

But ASLEF activists insist that British Rail's blackmail is strengthening not weakening the members' resolve. This was demonstrated by the 100 per cent support for the 24 hour strike on Tuesday.

Tony West, ASLEF local departmental committee secretary at BR's Stratford depot, told Socialist Worker: 'The lockout has united ASLEF members. Over the past three years the cost of living has gone up by 41 per cent. Our wages have only gone up 28 per cent. If we accept this current offer we will still be 17 per cent behind the cost of living.'

'We need a proper restructuring because over the past four years the trains we drive have got a lot heavier. We drive much faster and there are 15 different forms of traction.'

'For all this we have received no extra pay in recognition of additional work



Tony West: 'We will win'

and responsibilities. We have had promises and promises. None of them were ever fulfilled. And this time we're going to win.'

'This crisis is like all the ones the Tories create. It only affects working people, never the people with money. It's always the working class that suffers.'

'Richard Marsh's statement that there should be "no work—no pay" should be applied to management. Then half of them would be on the dole.'

'I have no faith in the politics of any of the major parties. Recently Harold Wilson admitted that Labour started the run-down of the railways and the mines that caused our problems now. We have no alternative but to fight to maintain our living standards,' he said.

Train drivers in York have started calling for strike action to intensify the campaign. Arthur Brown, a York ASLEF member interviewed by Socialist Worker, said: 'It will have to be an all-out strike to hit them.'

His doubts that non-co-operation was enough to win were echoed by York branch secretary Alan Carlton. And neither sees the fight in narrow terms, insisting that a united working-class offensive is the way to win. As Arthur said quite simply: 'We want this government out.'

ITT sit-in goes on

GLASGOW:—The occupation of ITT's Maclaren Controls division by 300 workers, mainly women, is in its fifth week. Despite the length of the dispute few have deserted the struggle. The sit-in workers will discuss their struggle with shop stewards of other factories in the ITT group at the first national ITT Shop Stewards Combine meeting in Manchester on Saturday 26 January.

Further details of this meeting can be obtained from John Morrison, AUEW convenor, Maclaren Controls, c/o 81-83 Carlton Place, Glasgow.

Ambulance men accept

SCOTLAND:—A combination of 200 'volunteers'—in other words blacklegs and a hysterical witchunt in the press forced Scottish ambulancemen back to work last week after a week on strike for higher wages.

350 ambulancemen voted by a majority of only 40 to accept an offer within Phase Three.

Typical of the press campaign was a huge photograph in the Glasgow Evening Times last Wednesday showing an ambulance smashed against a street lamp. A massive headline over the picture read: 'PICKETS K O AMBULANCE'.

Close reading of the story revealed that the ambulance had been driven into the street lamp by two of the 'volunteers', and that there were no pickets within miles. In tiny type over the headline the words 'Pickets deny' could just be detected.

Health workers meet

LONDON:—80 hospital workers from all over the country met in London last weekend for the second conference of their rank and file paper Hospital Worker. The conference heard reports of the growing success of the paper, especially in exposing the bonus scheme fiddle, and discussed ways of strengthening union organisation in the hospitals.

Gwen Evans, NUPE shop steward from Poplar Hospital, East London, spoke to the conference on the coming closure.

900 out on strike at GEC firm

BILSTON Staffs:—900 workers at Cannon Industries have been on strike for nearly a fortnight in a dispute over regrading of jobs. The company is part of the GEC empire.

Jack Collingswood, the AUEW convenor, said the strikers wanted the regrading, which should have been done before the freeze. Management is saying the Pay Board will not allow increases beyond the Phase Three limits—the company is hiding behind the crisis to railroad through a low pay offer.

In a letter sent to all the workers, the works director tried to use scare tactics, saying: 'You are not fighting Cannon, but the law of the land.' The letter continues: 'The government may step in and cancel Stage Three, bringing in Stage Four which could result in a complete standstill on wage increases. As the saying goes, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush".'

The strikers feel strongly about the letter. After months of negotiations they can see clearly that management is stalling. One picket said: 'We've had enough talking. We're outside the gates till they pay up.'

FIRM USES TRICK TO SACK 18 MEN

ROSSENDALE, Lancashire:—The sacking of 18 men, several near retirement age, at Bury and Masco Industries created a wave of anger in the factory. They had been given an ultimatum. Either they took lower-paid jobs on a three-day week—many of them seven miles away at Bury—or the dole until the end of the crisis.

The men chose temporary unemployment, as financially they would be better off. The next day they were sacked. One worker, Kenny Gibson, wasn't even allowed into the factory to collect a pair of his shoes.

Last November the planned introduction of new machines led to meetings

between General and Municipal Workers Union representatives and the management—with a guarantee of no redundancies. It is now revealed that the union regional organiser knew of the redundancies—but hadn't wanted 'to spoil their Christmas'. He hasn't been seen since.

A request from local union official Phillip Clay and sacked steward Tommy Flynn for a withdrawal of the notices until there was consultation was refused. The three-day week was used as an excuse for sackings without notice or redundancy pay.

Many of the sacked men are near retirement age. 64-year-old Bert Howley said: 'I've worked for this firm for 36 years and in the last year of my working life I've been tossed away like a piece of old rubbish.'



I would like to join the International Socialists

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TUC SURRENDERS

Scramble in bid to do deal with Tories

THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS's top-level negotiating team surrendered totally to the Tory government on Monday.

They offered Heath and Whitelaw an 'unprecedented' deal. If only the miners were allowed to get a little more than Phase Three, the TUC leaders whined, then no other unions would use a miners' victory to advance their own claims.

And so the TUC lamb has finally lain down with the Tory tiger. The one little problem is that the tiger is insisting on still tougher terms for such a deal.

Yet there is no danger of the top TUC leaders changing track and putting up a fight against the government. They are willing to squirm and twist and turn in yet further attempts to strike a deal with the Tories.

The TUC leaders' main complaint about the Tories' policy of locking out all workers for two days a week in order to attack the miners is their usual response to a savage attack: 'It was done without any consultation' is their pathetic cry.

The trade union leaders are perfectly willing for the miners to fight on alone. Indeed they would probably prefer the miners not to be fighting at all.

GROVEL

After all, there's a general election on the horizon and if the working-class movement doesn't keep its head down, they reason, the Tories might actually win. Anything, but anything, to avoid a struggle.

By their grovelling, the TUC leaders are greatly encouraging the Tories to hold out for more concessions.

This was exactly Employment Secretary William Whitelaw's reaction to Monday's meeting with the TUC leaders. He indicated that the government was hoping to get the TUC leaders to settle all other wage claims within Phase Three.

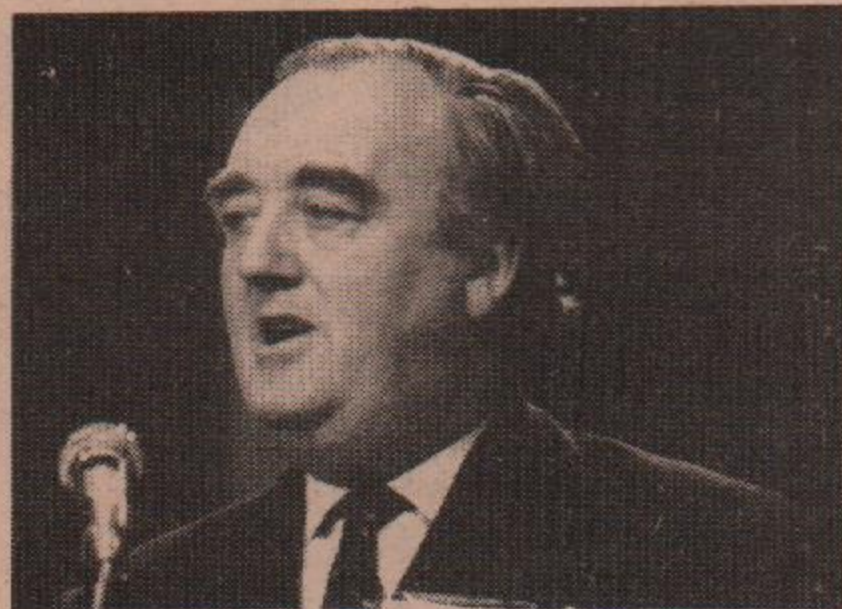
In return for any such shameful agreement, the government would stop doing what it started doing three weeks ago—banging the working class movement's head against the wall

WHERE THE OIL GOES

OIL FOR Britain's power stations is in short supply. The shortage has been given as one of the main reasons for the government's national lockout.

That the oil companies are not supplying sufficient oil is a matter of public record. That they could supply a great deal more is less well known. Oil imports were reduced by eight per cent in November and 15 per cent in December. The oil companies have actually reduced their supplies to the Electricity Board by 25 per cent.

The reasons are quite simple and consistent with the bandit mentality of the oil barons. It is more profitable to make petrol for cars than to provide fuel oil for



WHITELAW: Settle or else

with the three day week.

The TUC's desire to go along with the government even extends to the special summoning of Wednesday's conference of the general secretaries of TUC affiliated unions.

At this meeting even larger numbers of trade union leaders were invited to sign away their members' wage claims, living standards and trade union freedom.

And right at the front, leading the stampede, are two old friends—Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones. Just how 'left wing' they are can be seen from the end product of the operation. The TUC will be co-operating in wage cutting, boosting unemployment and wholesale reductions of working-class living standards. For that is the real meaning of all the chatter about national unity.

There is another way. Thousands of miners in Leicestershire have shown what a militant, well-organised and determined group of workers can do.

Other workers in every industry in the country will have to follow those miners' inspiration and build the beginnings of a rank and file movement which will fight and which will refuse to pay the price for the system's crisis.

power stations.

In 1970 of every barrel of crude oil imported 45 per cent went for fuel oil, today only 40 per cent is left for the power stations. The remainder goes for the more highly profitable light fuels, unsuitable for the generation of electricity.

The difference between 1970 and 1974 rates of fuel oil extraction is the difference between the three day week and the five day week. The government does nothing to compel the oil companies to produce the oil the power stations can use. To do so would be to interfere with the sacred right to make a quick profit and further expose the national lockout as the fraud most people are beginning to recognise it is.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

... as Scanlon betrays engineers £10 claim

by SW reporter

HUGH SCANLON, president of the giant Engineering Union, has betrayed the £10 a-week-more engineering pay claim and abandoned what little remains of his 'left-wing image'.

Speaking on the television programme Weekend World, on Sunday he stated that his problem as far as national settlement of the claim is concerned is to 'get an offer to the limit of Phase Three, not to break it'.

Asked to repeat his astonishing remark, Scanlon made a 'categorical statement' which underlined that at national level his union executive was not concerned to break through Phase Three. He added only one phoney qualification: that shop steward's should still be free to supplement any national deal at plant level.

This stab-in-the-back statement came just after the three big businessmen on the programme, Lord Stokes of British Leyland, Peter Parker of Rockware, and Monty Finiston of British Steel, made repeated entreaties for the TUC to do a deal with the government.

Neither Scanlon or Jack Jones, the other top TUC man on the programme, viewed this poison even with suspicion.

Indeed they seemed to relish it.

Scanlon actually appealed to the big businessmen for help in his struggle to preserve national bargaining in engineering. He asked them what their attitude would be if the Engineering Employers were unreasonable.

Scanlon's statement directly contravenes the union's policy of opposition to incomes' policy. But Scanlon indicated on television that he was reflecting executive policy.

The executive was given total power to prosecute the claim by the last AUEW engineering section national committee. And it seems the executive then struck some deal over a national settlement within Phase Three.

The AUEW press officer was unable to give any facts or information which would establish the truth about this situation.

Scanlon's performance and the manoeuvring which must underly it must increase the growing disquiet in the union

concerning the behaviour of its supposedly left leadership.

Alan Watts, a member of the Enfield district committee of the AUEW, commented: 'It is astounding how Hugh Scanlon can openly go on television and openly talk about selling the members' claim right down the river.'

He says of the national agreement that it will be settled within Phase Three and that the engineers will not use any advance the miners win for bargaining purposes. If he were serious about winning the claim then the first thing to do would be to join up with the miners.

Hotch-potch

'Right from the beginning of the national claim, everyone knew that it was a patch-up job which resulted from the battles between left and right. With this hotch-potch policy it was clearly going to be difficult to unite the members on it. We had no clear and simple claim like the miners.'

'Scanlon has been wavering like mad throughout. And there has been no campaign—just two leaflets.'

'What is clear is that Scanlon is prepared to sell us down the river. What we need to do is get branches to pour in resolutions condemning these goings-on and demanding that the national committee repudiate the president's position.'

'We ought to be thinking about forcing new elections and getting rid of some of the horse-traders,' he said.

Billy Fay, a member of the Glasgow district committee, hit out too. 'When Scanlon says he's calculated that the £10 claim can be settled within Phase Three it means he's jettisoned the 35-hour working week, equal pay for women and the extra week's holiday. No-one has the authority to do this. None of these things can be settled at local level.'

'The whole thing is absolutely appalling and obviously tied up with the TUC's attempts to do a deal with the government.'

'Even if, as some suggested, Scanlon was just playing with words and being clever, his statement has had the effect of shattering the prospects for any real struggle. Now it's in everybody's minds that £2 to £3 is all that's possible. It's a disgrace.'



Engineers' leader Hugh Scanlon approaching No 10 Downing Street

Lockout begins to bite

THE three-day week is beginning to bite. While workers in well-organised firms are still pulling through with lay-off agreements and heavy overtime rates there are signs that large numbers of unorganised and poorly organised workers are being more heavily exploited than ever before.

The 'managing director of a West Bromwich firm' was quoted—no names—in the Sunday Times as saying: 'The good old British workman is certainly coming up trumps and achieving fabulous results.'

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has issued a statement congratulating British workers on their response to the crisis.

The CBI has been collecting reports from hundreds of small businesses throughout the country, where the workers are producing four days' normal production, sometimes even four and a half, for only three days work and pay.

The clothing, hosiery and textile trade is, as so often, the quickest to fleece its workers. In North East

Lancashire, 3000 members of the Amalgamated Textile Workers Union have been forced to strike against their employers' attempt to make them work Saturdays without overtime pay.

All over the country workers are accepting conditions in the factories which they would not normally contemplate.

Overtime

At Albion Motors, Glasgow, for instance, where high rates of overtime have been negotiated, compulsory overtime is worked in the gloom without any form of heating. Similarly, workers at Scott Lithgow shipyard have accepted compulsory overtime.

By contrast, at Chrysler Linwood, Scotland, the shop stewards have refused a management demand for compulsory overtime. The workers are being 'punished' for this decision with wage cuts of up to 40 per cent.

Organised workers, who have been inclined to treat the three-day week

as an enforced holiday, will be severely hit over the next two weeks as the Heath government persists with its class war against the miners. Acceptance of increased productivity, lower safety standards and worse conditions will only bring more trouble and misery in the future.

The man with the stop watch is measuring what the workers can do in a crisis—and, when the crisis is over, the boss will demand the same rate of effort.

The example set at the Austin factory of British Leyland, Birmingham, where workers have threatened to occupy the factory if they are not paid five days' pay must be followed by workers all over the country.

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