

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Nurses say it: Strike with us!

'WE MUST LEARN from the experiences of the miners that the only way we can make the kind of gains needed to raise our wages above the poverty line is by direct action.

'Nurses are now learning that they do have industrial power and are prepared to use it. The only special case is the case that is backed by strike action. Our demonstration was just the first in the campaign.'

—MIKE ATKINSON, NUPE shop steward, Darlington District Hospital.

'The real feeling of the nurses was expressed by the numbers that came pouring into Manchester to attend a meeting called by NUPE. At least 900 packed inside Houldsworth Hall but even more were waiting outside the doors, unable to get in.

'Taken by surprise, what was the union to do?

'All they could do was talk—talk about how badly off we were and talk about how action was needed—talk about talking to the converted.

'The climax of the meeting was hearing of the support from 500 Manchester dockers and a petition from the Engineering workers.

'We were all waiting for something to happen there and then, when a voice came from the floor shouting "Unity is Strength. We must unite with the nurses outside". This was the signal we were waiting for. The meeting collapsed and the nurses couldn't get out fast enough to join their fellows sat in the main road of Deansgate, holding the traffic to ransom.'

—JUDITH JONES, NUPE shop steward, Salford Royal Hospital.

'It is a pity that the higher echelons of the Royal College of Nursing have not come out from behind their starched "pinnies"; and the top brass of the Public Employees' and Health Service Employees Union did not come out from their ivory towers before and give a lead before leaving the nurses to become so fed up they had to put themselves at risk to get something moving.

'Let us hope that when the dust has settled it will be remembered that it was the rank and file of the nurses that led the fight for fair play.

—STAN COX, NUPE branch chairman, Croydon General Hospital.

'Most nurses who work at the Bolingbroke also have worked at other hospitals in the group. We noticed that the food at the Bolingbroke was undoubtedly worse than elsewhere in the group. A petition was organised and was signed by nurses and other hospital workers.

'It was also signed by the nursing administrator who promised to hand it to the hospital secretary. Unfortunately it got forgotten for ten days.

'A canteen boycott was arranged, the cost of food having risen by 16½ per cent and the pay rise of 7 per cent having been held up by the computer. Needless to say the boycott was totally successful.

'For the future we have to set up a committee in the hospital as well as one in the group, to discuss what we should take and to keep things together. If nothing comes from the Whitley Council/Barbara Castle meeting, we will take our own action.

—UNA McDONALD, NUPE steward, Bolingbroke Hospital, Wandsworth, South London.

'There remains only one more barrier to our success. Those nurses among us who consider it beneath their professional dignity to take industrial action and those who are just too damn lazy.

'Just remember this, if you fail us now, then you have failed the nurses who marched on Tuesday and those who marched in Liverpool, London and Cardiff and you will have succeeded in perpetuating the exploitation of nurses.

'The chronic shortages of staff will continue and



The first time we've ever marched. Nurses out on Teesside. PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

the conditions will deteriorate. Old workhouse which are already bursting at the seams with patients just waiting for treatment will collapse into the wreckage of a nursing system with only despair and demoralisation for its future.'

—PETER HOLMES, NUPE, Birmingham.

'Personally I'd like to see the whole movement become aware of the crisis within the Health Service in the form of chronic staff shortages due to low pay and under-financing. At present the press is backing nurses—even strike action—but I wonder how they'll react when the organised trade union movement joins the press campaign and launches sympathy strikes with the nurses in their justified claim?

—ALAN ELLIS, NUPE convenor, St George's Hospital, Hyde Park, London.

What did Harold put in Albert's tea?

THE NURSES are on the move. In city after city, hospital after hospital they are coming out on token strikes, demonstrating in the streets, demanding that the long years of degradation in the hospitals must stop now.

They have moved into genuine trade unions and left their trade union leaders gasping behind them. These leaders have been conducting an obscene competition to win the allegiance of the nurses. Albert Spanswick, general secretary elect of the Confederation of Health Service Employees, pretended to be the most militant of them all.

Then he had a cup of tea with Harold Wilson and called off all strike action 'pending negotiations'.

The nurses want more than that. They want a £12 a week rise now.

Crucial

They realise that they will not get it as long as their union leaders drink tea with Harold Wilson. They are going ahead with strikes and sit-ins.

The nurses need the help of trade unionists all over the country.

In Hertfordshire delegates from five trades councils and five trade unions (GMWU, NUPE, EPTU and COHSE) have answered calls from local hospitals by setting up the Committee for the Prevention of the Breakdown of the National Health Service.

Joint action committees like this are crucial everywhere.

Every worker who reads this article can help to form one. Go down to the next meeting of your union branch, shop stewards' committee or trades council. Demand that joint action committees be set up to help the nurses. Insist that nurses' representatives be asked to speak to union meetings.

Now for the action

THE National Rank and File Organising Committee has backed a call from The Hospital Worker rank and file paper to call a national conference of nurses on Saturday 1 June in Manchester.

The Hospital Worker's demands for nurses will be discussed:

£12 a week across-the-board rise for all grades,

A 35-hour week,

The fixing of canteen prices and rents,

Time-and-a-half on Saturday—double time on Sundays and for nights,

A complete end to the use of agency nurses,

100 per cent trade unionism,

Finance for any increase to come

from outside the existing Health Service budget,

Limitations on overtime, minimum staffing levels, and on-call payments.

The conference will also discuss action that nurses can, and are, taking locally—lightning and all-out strikes, the setting up of local Nurses Action Groups, joint action committees with other hospital workers, seeking the support of other trade unionists, private patient bans, bans on agency nurses, canteen boycotts.

For leaflets, and further details of the conference, contact the Hospital Worker Business Manager at 01-274 2405 or write to 8 Beverstone Road, London SW2.

The quotations above are taken from a four-page special nurses issue of Hospital Worker, the paper which fights for rank and file hospital workers. Use it to argue for support for nurses in the factory, office or hospital and to build a campaign for the nurses' cause. Orders to Hospital Worker, 8 Beverstone Road, London SW2. Price 3p, 3p postage, more than 10 copies post free.

Look who's in the bosses' cabinet

PORTUGAL has a new government, nominated by the real power-holders, the military junta.

The new Prime Minister, Adelino Carlos, a 69-year old Lisbon lawyer said to be 'a liberal establishment figure,' is a known friend of big business interests.

His appointment has been received with some relief by the bankers and industrialists who have effectively dominated Portuguese politics for 48 years.

Defence Minister is General Costa Gomes, former Chief of Staff of the Army, a man regarded as 'sound' by US and European military chiefs.

Carlos and Gomes cannot hope to win much working class support, nor even the support of the more radical soldiers. This is where the Socialist and Communist Parties come in.

The SP has been given five posts. Its leader, Mario Soares, is Foreign Secretary. He is a right-wing social democrat.

The Portuguese Communist Party has ministers in the new government—general secretary Alvaro Cunhal (Minister without Portfolio) and Alvelino Gonsalves (Minister of Labour).

In return for cabinet posts, the Socialists and Communists are providing a left-wing fig leaf to cover the nakedness of a basically right-wing regime.

Urgent

The CP newspaper Avante puts it this way: 'The most urgent tasks at the moment for Portugal are the unity between Communists, Socialists, Catholics, Liberals and others, the unity of all those who oppose the return of fascist tyranny and oppression'.

Since neither the generals nor big business want Caetano back, and since all Portuguese Tories and ex-fascists now call themselves Liberals, this amounts to an appeal to back a basically Tory government—and not to rock the boat.

Cunhal, speaking of the strike at the Lisnave shipyards claimed 'Counter revolutionary forces are intent on creating a rift between the people and the armed forces'. In other words, 8000 strikers were upsetting the honeymoon between the CP and the generals!

Meanwhile the government has moved quickly in its attempt to wind up the colonial wars bleeding the Portuguese economy.

The aim is to get the same sort of relationship that South Africa has with Malawi, black governments subservient to white capitalist interests.

To succeed, Spínola needs both to nobble the liberation movements and to keep the Portuguese working class docile. That is what the Carlos-Cunhal government is all about.

PART-TIME POLWARTH

LORD POLWARTH, who was caught with his name in the shareholders' lists for Scottish oil when he was Minister for Scotland in the last Tory government, is looking for a job. He has joined the board of the Bank of Scotland at £10,000 a year, but that will not keep him busy. 'I must get fully employed again' he told the newspapers.

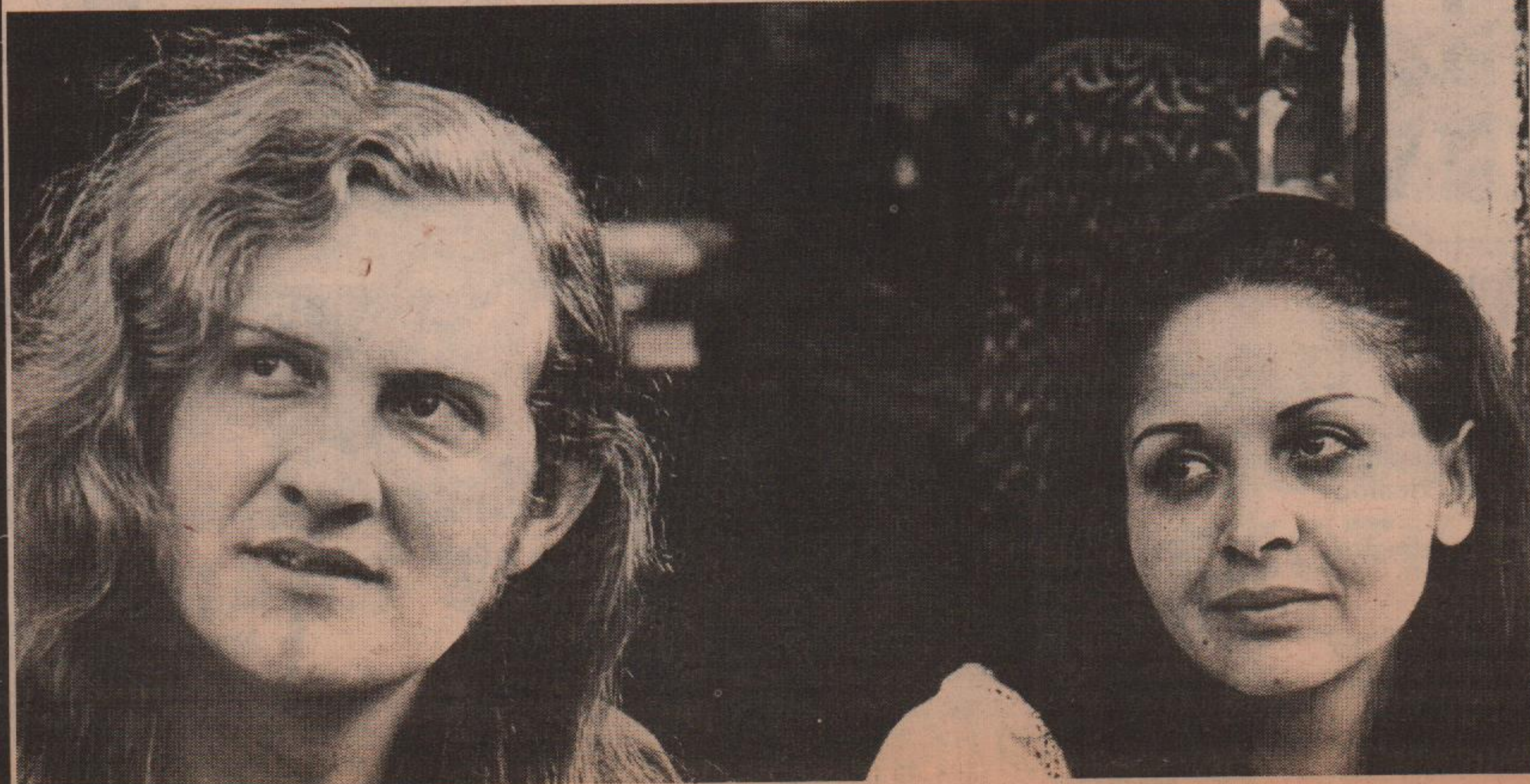
When he was last 'fully employed'—before he became a Tory minister—Polwarth was chairman of General Accident Fire and Life Assurance, a director of ICI and Governor of the Bank of Scotland.

Another Tory who is looking for work is Paul Dean, who was an under-secretary in charge of health in the last Tory government. Dean has slid on to the British advisory board of Anthony Gibbs, the merchant bank which financed the sales of frigates and submarines to the Chilean junta and which last week won the services of Sir Peter Rawlinson—former Tory Attorney-General.

PHASE-FREE

JOHN TALBOT, head of the boiler firm International Combustion, is a strong supporter of the social contract. He has paid himself a rise this year of £102 a week. The company's accounts show his salary up from £7195 last year to £12,500. His share-stake in the company has risen from £3450 to £5275.

The spy who came in—and can stay



Terry and Eli Povey... the spy's target. Picture: Christopher Davies (Report)

IRAN is one of the most savage police states in the world, with thousands of tortured political prisoners.

Political trials are all conducted under military law and, under the constitution, persons merely holding socialist ideas can be sentenced to between three and ten years' solitary confinement.

Trade unions are all run by the state. Strikes are illegal.

Iran's present regime dates from 1953, when the CIA-organised coup overthrew the nationalist government of Dr Mousadegh.

The coup also ended Britain's oil monopoly in Iran—and all political freedoms.

In 1957, under the direction of an ex-SS Brigadier and with American money, the secret police, SAVAK, were set up.

They were given all the powers of the police and of investigating magistrates. People in their hands have no protection and can be

kept for interrogation for ever.

In the last three years, an underground resistance has emerged and there have been many guerrilla attacks and assassinations. Massive reprisals have temporarily forced the guerrillas away from 'military' action towards a much-needed political re-think.

One of the moving forces behind this re-think must be the despicable role of the Soviet Union and China in their relations with Iran.

Both ignore those struggling and dying in Iran for their own 'grand' plans. The Soviet Union is, for example, building a natural gas pipeline so that Iran can sell its gas to the East and the West.

Leading exploiters of other states are also on hand. Britain still plays a leading role through companies such as British Petroleum, Shell,

ON MAY 12, the Sunday Times devoted a page to the attempts of Mr Abdol Ali Johanbin, first secretary of the Iranian consulate in London, to recruit an Iranian-born girl to spy on Iranian students in Britain.

The girl, Eli Povey, contacted the Sunday Times, who took pictures of Mr Johanbin meeting her and tape recorded their conversation.

In this article, Eli Povey and her husband Terry, who is a member of the National Union of Students' Executive, writes about Iran and the links between British companies and Iran's secret police.

Rio Tinto, Zinc and Unilever.

The involvement of some of Britain's leading companies indicates the importance to the boss class of 'stability' in Iran.

To ensure stability, Iran has a large standing army and is one of the world's biggest buyers of high technology armaments. It is Britain's best customer in this field—and the only foreign country to order the Concorde.

All this makes it quite clear why Mr Abdol Ali Johanbin has not been expelled from Britain. If for instance he were East German, he would have been expelled on the day of the publication of the Sunday Times article.

As it is, Savak and the other police agents of 'friendly' states will continue to operate in the UK and the British Government, Labour or Tory, will continue to be more conscious of our trading arrangements than of the nature of the regime they are dealing with.

Conspiracy: it's still going strong

IF YOU believe that a change of government means that laws against trade unions suddenly become inoperative, think again. It's certainly not the case in Britain or in Ireland.

On Thursday this week, Bill Lloyd, a Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians organiser, Le Eaton, UCATT London region secretary, and Sonny McGowan, a UCATT steward in the exhibition industry, put in their third appearance at the High Court.

The three have been named in an application for an injunction from a company called BDI. This little outfit is 'seeking relief' from conspiracy and intimidation on the part of the three men and the union to keep the firm out of the exhibition industry.

Damages

Twice so far the injunction has been granted. And now Gerry Andrews, the 'manager' of BDI, has indicated that he intends to try to get damages from the union for keeping his outfit out of the exhibition industry.

Andrews' company has been blacked by the union and the exhibition management because under another name—Hays Industrial—he went bust owing £1700 wages to UCATT members. Nonetheless, Andrews is going full speed ahead trying to take union members for some more. He is finding the law of the land a considerable assistance.

The most interesting aspect of this case is the attack on the union as a body for alleged conspiracy and intimidation. If the union had resisted the imprisonment at Shrewsbury of its members of conspiracy a bit more forcefully, it might never have happened. The law might have been changed.

Recognition

An even more interesting case is taking place in the Republic of Ireland. AUEW/TASS local government members on strike for recognition at Carrick on Suir and Tipperary were threatened with the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act last week. Their alleged offence is 'disrupting essential supplies.'

And manual workers who have been refusing to cross their picket line were also threatened with prosecution. Their alleged crime under the 1875 Act is refusing to cross a picket line!

The 'independent' Republic of Ireland came into being in 1922. An anti-working class law dreamed up in the days of British empire is going strong to this day.

BSC: British Suffocation Corporation...

by Robin Holland

EVERYONE read in the press about the return to work of striking craftsmen at the Port Talbot works of the British Steel Corporation. Few read of the tragic and totally avoidable death of two fitters' mates last Thursday, 24 hours after their return to work. They were killed in a gassing incident at the number 2 blasting furnace.

The dead men were Alan Bamsey, 29, and William Smith, 31 both married.

According to one of the rescuers, the two men were working on a gas valve which supplies fuel gas to one of the blast heating stoves. They were lying on their backs, asphyxiated.

Gassed

The stove heating gas contains the deadly carbon monoxide which has a barely perceptible smell. In the new BSC plant at the works, a comprehensive carbon monoxide detection and alarm system has been installed, while a partial detection system operates on the large no 5 blast furnace.

There is no such system on numbers one, two and three blast furnaces, which form a single complex.

What makes these killings so poignant and intolerable for me is that a year ago I attended a safety course as a worker at the Port Talbot plant. I spoke up at the course about the inconsistency in

the detection systems and the appalling dangers of failing to install an alarm system on numbers one, two and three blast furnaces.

My arguments were shrugged off by safety officials. At the time, I felt embarrassed by the vehemence of my attack on this dangerous negligence. I do not feel embarrassed now.

Racist gets bloody nose

AFTER powerful protests, including pickets by members of the International Socialists from North West London, the 'colour' ban on the blood of black people at the North London Blood Transfusion Centre has been lifted.

Dr Tom Cleghorn, the centre's director, imposed the ban on the scurrilous grounds that blood from black people might carry a greater threat of infection. This racist drivel was exposed in a leaflet widely circulated in the area by IS members.

Now Dr Cleghorn has been told to drop his colour bar. The ban has been lifted. Remember that, next time someone tells you it 'doesn't do any good' to picket or to issue leaflets against racialism.

I am not bitter against any single member of the safety department. Instead, the blast furnace workers should know that the blame rests squarely with higher management who have always been reluctant to spend money on live-saving equipment.

Waste

A comprehensive alarm system for one, two and three furnaces could have been installed long ago for less than £30,000. All BSC employees are aware of the present cost reduction scheme to prevent waste. It is a pity that a similar scheme to prevent workers' deaths could not be launched with a fraction of the backing and enthusiasm shown by the directors of the anti-waste project.

Still, one man's death on your conscience is not as bad as paying out £15,000, is it?

By
EAMONN McCANN

WHAT IS GOING ON IN IRELAND?



PHOTO: CHRIS DAVIES, REPORT

The Belfast strike seems to have been organised by rank and file workers against the Government and the Union leaders. Shouldn't socialists support it?

No. The leaders of the strike are out for a return to the old-style Stormont regime, with Catholics discriminated against in jobs and houses and the Catholic community in general held in subjection. We no more support this strike than we would support a strike in Britain against black workers.

But the strikers say they merely want a new election for the Northern Ireland Assembly. Surely that is a reasonable, democratic demand? There is nothing democratic about it. The strikers calculate that an election now would return a block of right-wing Protestant politicians who could then arrange the *denial* of democracy to Catholics.

DEMOCRACY

The British government and the troops are against the strike. So are they on the democratic side here?

Not when you look at the roots of the problem. Britain helped create and develop Protestant sectarianism. It was the British Government which set up the sectarian Orange state in the first place, in order to protect British investments there.

In the initial stages Britain armed the Protestant extremists so that they could terrorise the Catholic workers into accepting the state.

As a result Catholics were second class citizens for 50 years. In Derry, for example, the two-thirds Catholic majority was never allowed to elect a Catholic council.

Catholic workers were kept out of jobs in the shipyard and many engineering factories, and so on. When they protested about this Catholics were simply beaten down—often by the notorious B-Specials, who had been established for the purpose by an act of the British parliament.

So the British ruling class cannot avoid a major share of responsibility for the sectarianism evident in the current strike.

The people's party...

MASSIVE popular support for the governing National Front of East Germany (DDR) was shown in the municipal elections this week. According to Reuters, 99.91 per cent of the valid votes went to NF candidates. There were no other candidates, of course.

However, in addition to the 0.09 per cent of fractious and disloyal elements who actually voted no, some cowardly wretches abstained. Although 98.27 per cent of the electorate voted, this figure 'fell short of the 99.83 per cent in the last municipal elections in March 1970'.

SAFETY TAKES A BACK SEAT

KEITH Neville, a High Wycombe bus driver with London Country Bus Services was fined £10 and had his licence endorsed earlier this month for failing to stop at traffic lights.

He pleaded guilty on union advice but is distressed about the whole case.

At the time of the incident he was driving one of British Leyland's latest coaches, The Leyland National. This bus is now becoming widely known in the trade for one particularly distinguishing feature—its faulty brakes.

Mr Neville says: 'I blame the brakes for this. I applied them gently but

The vital questions -and the answers

But none of this is true now. Surely in recent times the British Government has been trying to bring the two sides together, and the troops have been stopping them killing each other!

That's what the Tory press would like you to believe. It is true that the British government has withdrawn whole-hearted support for the old Orange structure. (Not, incidentally, for democratic reasons but because massive new British investment in the South of Ireland makes it necessary for British capitalism to balance between the two communities now, not back one against the other.)

TERROR

Even then, British strategy in Northern Ireland in the last few years has not really been non-sectarian. For example: almost all the 600 people interned without trial are Catholics, despite the proven existence of right-wing Protestant terror groups.

Indeed, British soldiers, SAS men, have been known to join with these terror groups in their attacks on Catholics.

Or take the deployment of the Army in Belfast. In Catholic areas—Andersonstown, Ballymurphy—the troops are in saturation strength and houses are searched and people detained and roughed up night after night.

In Protestant areas the troops are hardly seen. And that is one of the main reasons the right-wing organisations have been able to build up their strength, get armed and so on. But admitting all that, if the troops

go in now, to protect people defying the strike leaders and clean up these Protestant private armies, won't socialists still have to support them?

Not at all. As we say, Britain created the sectarian monster—and is finding it difficult to get rid of, now that the monster is redundant. We support neither the monster nor the monster-makers. The best thing Britain can do is get out.

Isn't that just a recipe for a blood-bath? If the troops leave won't all hell break out?

Many people in Northern Ireland, mostly Catholic workers, have been living through hell for the past three years anyway—one of the reasons being the troops' presence.

TROUBLE

If the troops left the trouble would not stop immediately, of course. But one thing is certain: as long as they stay there the trouble will go on.

So what is the way forward?

If the troops get out, it will at least create the conditions for the Irish people, North and South, to work out their own future, free from outside interference. Which, of course, they have every right to do.

In that situation it is likely that Protestant sectarianism would fragment if Protestants lost the British backing which they've come to expect as their right.

The basic point is that the development of working class politics in Ireland is desperately difficult while the National Question is still unsolved.

That is, while the right of the Irish people to the independence and unity of their country is denied by a combination of the British ruling class, intent on protecting its investments, and Protestant sectarianism, intent on maintaining the ascendancy of one community over the other.

TRAGEDY

The tragedy of the past week has been that workers in Northern Ireland have demonstrated dramatically their power to change society. They have done it, not in the cause of progress, but of reaction.

That strength, brought to bear in a situation in which Britain's presence and legacy were no more than a memory, could transform Ireland to the betterment of all its workers, Catholic and Protestant.

It is to help speed the time when that strength can be unleashed for that purpose that socialists in Britain must refuse to be diverted from their main job of getting the Army out.

by Leo Duggan,
TGWU Bus Shop Steward

suddenly everything locked on and I went into a front wheel skid . . . There was nothing I could do.

'Any driver who has driven the Leyland National knows they are a death trap in wet weather.'

Brother Neville's conviction is all the more intriguing since all London Country garages operating the Nationals have reported 'bad and dangerous skidding' on them.

WHAT WE THINK

Labour's pay cut

REAL EARNINGS, that is earnings in terms of what they will buy, have been cut as a result of the Tory pay policy, now carried on by Labour. This is proved by government figures released this week.

Average earnings, including bonus and overtime, were up by 14 per cent between March last year and this. Retail prices were up by 13.5 per cent. But, because of the effect of tax and national insurance contributions, earnings have to increase by at least 20 per cent faster than prices to stay the same in real terms.

The effect of tax varies of course. A single man earning £38.50 a week needs an increase of 21.2 per cent a year to stay put, given present rates of inflation. Anything less is a pay cut in real terms.

Hardest hit are the very people that Tory-Labour propaganda claims will benefit from 'incomes policy', the low-paid. A married man with two children earning £25 a week loses 33p of every £1 of pay rise in increased tax. This means that if the rate of inflation is 20 per cent over the next 12 months, a quite likely figure, he needs an increase of 31 per cent just to stand still in real terms.

Compare this with the Phase Three pay norms of 7 per cent on basic rates plus possible threshold agreements giving up to 40p for each 1 per cent rise in prices after prices have risen 7 per cent on last October.

This 'threshold' level was almost certainly reached in April but, since the figures are normally issued about two months late, the threshold agreements will not be triggered off until next month.

Two points need to be made about this. First, the 40p is subject to the same tax problem. The £25-a-week man with a wife and two children loses 13½p of each 40p in tax, his real increase is only 26½p. Second, only 4½ million workers are covered by threshold agreements at present. The majority will not even get these miserable threshold increases.

It all sounds very complicated but the substance of the matter is simple enough.

Phase Three pay norms mean cuts in real pay. The Labour government is trying to enforce the Tory pay law and so to push down working-class living standards. The latest government figures show that it has already succeeded to some extent. The longer it is able to hold the line on pay norms, the worse the cuts will be.

The urgent need is to smash through Phase Three, to get the increases of 20 per cent plus that are needed to maintain living standards. And to get realistic threshold settlements which take into account tax. That means, again, smashing the Phase Three norm of 40p. Any settlement of current claim which fails to do these things is a sell-out.

FREE SPEECH

THE CAUSE of free speech is attracting some unlikely champions these days. Right-wing Tory MPs, some of whom were calling for the banning of the Irish republican movement in Britain not long ago, declare that democracy is in danger because the National Union of Students has called for a ban on fascist and racist speakers at universities and colleges.

Right-wing newspapers which applauded the prosecution of the underground magazine Oz, and which would certainly applaud the prosecution of Socialist Worker, masquerade as the champions of the unrestricted freedom of anyone to say anything, anywhere, anytime.

There is a simple answer to these hypocrites. Let them prove their sincerity by calling for the repeal of the Seditious Libel Act, the Incitement to Disaffection Act and the Public Order Act. All these laws, pushed through by Tory governments, limit free speech—in the interests of the ruling class.

Unfortunately, sections of the soggy left have been taken in by this Tory inspired campaign against the NUS. Let us be clear about the socialist position.

We are not in favour of free speech for fascists for the simple reason that fascism aims to destroy the working-class movement and every kind of civil liberty—including free speech.

We are not in favour of free speech for racists because racism is an incitement to violence against black people (or the Jews or the Irish or whoever) and is, in itself, a violation of the liberties of those people. When Mosley's fascists mounted their Jew-baiting campaign in the 1930s and were defeated by mass working-class action at Cable Street, that defeat of the fascists was a victory for free speech, not a defeat.

'By their deeds shall ye know them.' The soggy left needs to take a close look at the credentials of its 'allies' in the current 'free speech' campaign.

LETTERS

Worried about Portugese police? Look nearer home

THERE ARE EXACT comparisons between the Special Branch in this country and the fascist secret police in Portugal. Both use the services of informers (like Lennon) and infiltrate unions and left wing meetings etc. Most common of all is that both use phone tapping and opening people's letters as a matter of course. Both are armed and ready to use their weapons.

The most striking point of all is that the files kept by both are classified by the press as being *necessary*, and the people contained in the files and dossiers are classed as *dangerous*.

People will have to wake up to the fact that torture and being arrested for allegedly being 'militant' is not something we just read about in other

countries. You can't just shrug it off as 'Oh it can't happen here', it is happening here.

In the North of Ireland torture and internment without trial and assassinations by British agents are commonplace. Workers and their families better organise themselves before it is too late.

In the 5 May issue of the Sunday Times it was reported that during the nation-wide rail strike in India the police were arresting union leaders throughout the country. In Greece the police arrested 36 people alleged to be leaders of the 'revolutionary communist underground' movement who were organising the students and workers to overthrow the 'social order'. The Greek colonels keep the 'social order' with guns and tanks and armed police—as well as soldiers.—JOHN WORTH, Coventry.

When he called them up, the halls engaged ...

Martyrdom pays ~very badly!

THE CONTROVERSY over the salaries and conditions of nurses is concentrated on senior and prospective senior nursing staff. I'd like to say something about lower nursing staff, especially mental nursing assistants (MNAs), who are auxiliaries.

We are in most urgent need of a pay review. On our money inflation is causing a big decline in an already low living standard. The salaries of student nurses are as low as auxiliary staff but unlike trainee nurses we have dependants—and as auxiliaries we can't improve our status. It just deteriorates continuously.

I'm an MNA in a psychiatric ward for acute and chronic patients. The job involves no administrative responsibilities or academic training but isn't 'unskilled'.

The work ranges from cleaning tables to cleaning patients, from washing lockers to preventing patients throwing lockers and themselves out of windows.

Like all workers employed in humanitarian occupations I derive a profound satisfaction from my job. But exploitation produces resentment. For April I was 'given' £57—approximately £14 for a 40 hour work shift.

We're there to preserve life, and we can't strike. I suspect the most articulate sections of the nursing profession will have their demands placated. But will our position



Hugh Scanlon of the AUEW. Should they have stayed out?

NIRC STILL LURKS

THE ARTICLE and editorial in Socialist Worker (18 May) on the Engineering Union strike were quite useful as far as they went, but they seemed to miss the most important point. The payment of the £65,000 meant that the National Industrial Relations Court was recognised by the union. Surely the policy of the AUEW is not to recognise the court at all. The payment by the employers of the fine let Scanlon off the hook and the principle of non-recognition of the NIRC was got round.

The executive action in calling an indefinite strike, as the SW editorial rightly pointed out, shows that if a lead is given the rank and file would respond. But here was the perfect opportunity not only to refuse to pay £65,000 out of the union's funds, but to get the NIRC out of our hair for good.

The failure to do this means that the NIRC is left intact and can strike again. Next time at the Transport and General Workers Union for £2 million over the General Aviation Services action. Workers in our shop feel that this should have been the main point of the SW coverage last week.—BILL SAY (AUEW), MALCOLM ALLAN (ETU), Body Plant, Fords Dagenham.

change?

I'm shortly going to give up the job. Martyrdom no longer sustains people.—JOHN HAMPSON, Rochdale.

IN YOUR issue (11 May) under the heading *Yes, You've Been Had*, you rightly expressed the plight of teachers. But can I point out that a single schoolteacher is far worse off than you stated. His income after deductions is only £23 a week—not £33 (the basic is £1446).—K KUMVAR, Birmingham 20.

Nurses: off with the agencies

NOW IS the time for nurses to unite and defend the National Health Service against the evils of private enterprise making a profit out of sickness and disease. I am of course referring to the use of agency nurses in our hospitals.

As long as we accept and tolerate such a situation we must realise that our wages, conditions and the patients welfare are not going to improve.

Therefore we must take positive action against these activities, if an agency nurse is employed on your ward refuse to work with them, demand that your wages are on parity with the agency nurse the hospital is attempting to employ, we must also refuse to work on pay-bed wings within the hospital.

It's only when we achieve 100 per cent trade unionism that we will be effective in stamping out these practices.

Until then we must organise and continue the struggle with the methods that are available to us in making the NHS into a truly fair service.—STEVE THOMPSON, (NUPE steward), Nottingham.

We must help

THE PRESENT STRUGGLE of the nurses deserves the full and active support of the trade union movement. When nurses were last involved in large scale militant activity, in the early 1960s their demands were eventually conceded because other sections of workers came out in support.

Nurses themselves have no great power—it's only workers' lives at stake, not profits! This doesn't mean that they shouldn't take action but it does mean that all socialists should agitate where they work for industrial action to win the nurses' full claim.

Under the influence of militant action by nurses the trade union movement responded in 1962, and they can respond again.—STEVE CUSHMAN, SUE THOMAS, Birmingham.

They're joining

I WORK in a big general hospital in Norwich and I'm sure we'll sell a lot of SW's to nurses here this week.

Although the boycotts etc are a bit patchy here as yet, but this is only the beginning anyway. A hell of a lot of nursing staff of all grades are beginning to get militant including those I know personally.

A fellow International Socialist sympathiser and myself have between us got about a dozen more nurses to join the National Union of Public Employees this last week, which I think is an achievement!—P STEWART, Norwich.

ON THURSDAY 16 May I rang Middlesbrough District Council to book the Town Hall for a West Indian carnival dance.

'Could we have it for Saturday 3 August or 10 August?' I asked.

'Just a minute. I'll look in the bookings diary,' came the reply ... 'Well it's booked for the 3rd but it's free on the 10th.'

'Good ... can I make a booking by phone?'

'Certainly,' said the official.

'Fine, that's definite for the 20th? What will the total charge be including a bar?'

'Could I ring you tomorrow to let you know about that? By the way what organisation are you representing?'

'The Teeside West Indian Association,' I replied. A stunned silence followed.

'Oh, ummm yes—you are ... yes—I see—West Indian Association. Well ...'

I pressed on, 'Yes well that's definite for the 10th and you'll ring me tomorrow about the charges?'

Next day phone rings, voice, 'Is that Mr Clay? Er urr, I don't quite know how to say this but I made a terrible mistake yesterday. In fact the hall is already booked for the 10 August.'

'But you looked in the diary,' I argued. Yes, but the previous booking 'hadn't been written in the diary.'

'Then surely our booking stands,' I pointed out. It didn't. I asked what other dates in August were free. I was told it was booked for the whole of August. I said, 'Of course this has nothing to do with it being West Indians involved?' The voice was hurt, 'What on earth could make you think that?' end of conversation.

Middlesbrough District Council is 75 per cent Labour.—ROB CLAY, Teeside.

Non parliamo Italiano

I BUY SOCIALIST WORKER every week and am always impressed by your lively style and well-informed contents. My only complaint is your international coverage which seems to get scarcer and more sketchy every week.

Take 18 May. Nothing about Portugal and the article about the French elections was mainly taken up by photos of the candidates—who we could see on TV almost every night.

Also I know it is very unfair of foreigners not to speak English but we still have to make the effort to understand fellow-workers. In your report of the Italian struggle to keep divorce (18 May) you report one of the slogans was 'The Couple Who Will Not Divorce Me'. The poster which shows a priest and a fascist should have been translated as 'The Couple That Will Never Divorce'.

A petty point? No. If internationalism means anything it means understanding and listening. It doesn't mean, like some English holiday-makers, shouting as loud as you can in your own language!

Or perhaps you think, come the revolution everyone else is going to learn English?—JOHN FIELD, Portsmouth.

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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Social Security for Strikers



a Socialist Worker pamphlet

Please keep your letters as short as possible, type them if you can, don't worry if you can't. But write on one side of the paper only, and space them wide so we can read them! Address them to LETTERS, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2. All letters must be signed—but specify if you don't want your name published.

Postal Points

Fred finds the shoes fit

SOME TIME ago Socialist Worker did a profile of the National Union of Textile Workers General Secretary—The Glittering Career of Jack Peel. You might be interested to know the type of character whose stepped into his shoes.

Already there are two versions of the Fred Dyson story. The one by the Carrington Vyella News and the one by the rank and file. I hope you have space for them both!

Fred did not quite carry on where his predecessor

left off. He actually smashed through Phase Three with a 67 per cent pay increase.

Fred expressed his pleasure at the speed at which negotiations had taken place. The employers expressed theirs at the record profits they made last year.

For a textile worker, buying a house is practically impossible. Not only can we not afford the prices, we can not even manage a mortgage on our rates of pay.

Not so for our union officials. The National Union of Dyers, Bleachers, and Textile Workers has purchased out of members' funds, four houses for its full-time officials to use.

It is because of things like these, that workers are leaving the industry for good.

You may wonder why—but the £40 a week increase only applied to himself. Ordinary run of the mill members like myself were fobbed off with £2.25 being told 'sorry there's a pay freeze.'

The textile unions have a unique way of negotiating. They ask the Textile Employers Federation for a substantial increase in wages, the employers tell them what substantial means in money, then they accept.

When I tell you that the Phase Three rise—£2.25 is the largest in the union's history of bargaining, you can see what kind of men we have representing us.

Everybody is fed up with the wages and conditions, and the policies of the union. But some of us are preparing for a big fight.

Workers are finally becoming aware of this. The rank and file have recently launched a national industrial paper. The Textile Worker which is fighting to bring together the rank and file from all the textile unions, for united action against the employers.

—NUDBTW member, (Name and Address Withheld) Yorkshire.

Miners

I TOO, like the correspondent (16 May) am married to a miner but I have no illusions about the miners' leaders.

The mining industry is moving forward, yes, but not because of the militancy of the *leaders* but because of the militancy of the rank and file.

There is no need to sow the seed of discontent amongst the rank and file because it's already there. Until the miner's leaders start fighting for their members instead of themselves and their beloved Labour Party that seed will grow.

If Arthur Scargill wishes to win the right wage for the job then let him be paid the same as the miners and maybe we'll see some action. He might get up off his rear and practice what he preaches. Then we can look forward to the right wage for the job instead of the usual compromise.

So until the leaders really do the job they are paid for—lay off them? Not bloody likely!—JILL HALL, Mansfield.

Housing

WOULD IT BE FEASIBLE to have a big article on the housing crisis? With a clear political perspective on why the solutions won't be found without a socialist revolution? There must be thousands being hit by the housing shortage.

I personally know of at least six people who read Socialist Worker who are living in intolerable housing and are powerless to do anything about it.—D WINCH.



It looks OK from this side of the window, but what's it like behind the counter?

For sale—bug-bears...

THERE'S NOT MUCH in the paper about shop work, so I'll tell you some details of what work is like in Lewis' Ltd in Manchester.

You can see why Lewis' get the profits they do when you look at the rates of pay. A 15 year old sales girl gets £10.65 before tax—at 21 she's up to £18. Better off than she would be as a restaurant waitress where she gets £16.35 at 21. A female assistant sales manager gets £23.90. Of course you get 50p more after five years service!

As the more perceptive of you will realise, this only applies to women. Being a member of the 'gentler sex' myself, this is my particular bug-bear.

The shop-workers union is USDAW (Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers) To put it mildly, the union is weak.

The union's role seems to be one of peace-keeper between management and workers. 'Militancy' and 'strike' must never be mentioned. The only

people who *have* to be in the union are the managers!

So shop workers accept low wages and have an attitude of, 'The union will put in for its yearly pound or so rise, so why should I bother to stand up and shout?' The union doesn't educate its members—some people I have spoken to didn't even know there was a union in Lewis'.

Anyone—except of course managers—can be stopped on their way out at night and have all their shopping bags or handbags searched by store detectives. Very pleasant I assure you, when you are carrying a box of Tampax around with you.

And all in case you are doing the firm out of a 60 pence lip-stick or something.

You can see why Lewis' and other places like it, really need the influence and knowledge of a few strong militants to get the workers organised and united, and the union militant and strong.—A KNOWLES, Manchester.

Struggle + politics

TIM COUSINS (4 May), suggests that militant, political resolutions are 'all too often used to appease worker militants in the face of inactivity'.

This is no reason to appease unpolitical worker militants by leaving out politics completely in the programme of the Rank and File movement.

The fact that paper commitments to nationalisation are dead, so far as the Labour Party are concerned, is precisely the reason that the Rank and File movement must fight for these aims. We have to do it ourselves!

The immediate importance of Shrewsbury, the Industrial Relations Act, Phase Three etc, must be stressed, but we can only do this as *socialists* by relating them in the Rank and File programme to the question of workers taking power—uniting workers' struggles into a clear political programme.

In the 1920s the Minority Movement took up immediate questions, but in the context of its programme's clear commitment to socialism.

'The self activity of workers' is always there—the point is that we need a springboard to take us beyond this point, to a higher level of struggle.—ROB SUGDEN, Beckenham.

A WALKING FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION . . . Humanity is created by reaction with other people, not through blood being circulated in the placenta. (Letters 11 May) . . . The repeal of the abortion act will not stop abortions. Before the 1967 act was tions was 100,000 (leading to 50 women's deaths) and look at the rate for infanticide . . . I recently spent a few days in an abortion ward with six other women. We had all used forms of contraceptives—we were a walking family planning association . . . One woman had to have her coil removed before she could be operated on. She was a nurse with two children under six, both births were difficult and she couldn't face another. Her husband told her it was woman's lot in life . . . I don't think we were an atypical ward . . . A lot of money passed to racketeers, but so did a lot of pain, misery, guilt and relief. If your three anti-abortion correspondents are socialists they would be campaigning for better conditions in which people could choose their, and others' futures and worry a bit less about their 'souls' and other anti-socialist mumbo-jumbo.—G MATTHEWS, London N4.

WE WILL . . . I am a marxist opposed to abortion on moral grounds . . . life begins at conception and it's wrong to take life . . . If the pro-abortion view is readily identifiable with socialism please print an article explaining why.—M DURBRIDGE, Bootle, Merseyside.

BACK TO THE RALLY . . . The coverage of the anti-abortion rally (4 May) was frivolous and prejudicial . . . I and most socialists would support the right of a woman to decide but one would hope that with socialism two of the reasons for abortion—hopeless education about contraception and domestic considerations for large families would be eliminated . . . the 1000s of people on the demonstration can't be dismissed as reactionary, many will be decent working class people with misguided ideas about personal freedom. They need a paper like SW to give them positive socialist ideas about abortion and women's rights, not to have their misconceptions flippantly dismissed as right wing prejudices.—KATHLEEN COTTON, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

THEIR RIGHT—AND OURS . . . Your anti-abortion letters maddened me with their pious sentiments . . . We support men in their demands for better working conditions—what they are doing is asserting their right to dispose of their physical energy (their bodies) as they please . . . What we women are fighting for when we ask for 'abortion on demand'—P MONKS, London, E1

THE BORN CHILD'S RIGHTS . . . The human foetus is part of a women's body and only after birth does it become a separate human entity. True socialists recognise a women's proprietary rights over her own body. To oppose these rights is the 'socialism' of the Nazis . . . Too much attention is being paid to the rights of the unborn child and not enough to the rights of the *born* child to freedom from want, to love and feel secure.—KATHLEEN JONES, Shrewsbury.

WELL THEY ARE . . . Women who are correctly opposed to abortion and at the same time demand that these women who are inefficient at 'women's work', should have just as much right as a man to be trained and work in 'men's work' and to receive equal pay, are usually regarded as being contradictory.—JOAN MARTIN, London, E5.

WE DIDN'T OOOZE PIETY . . . The anti-abortion rally (I was there) was not composed of 'Catholic killjoys' . . . a great many supporters are atheists, agnostics, and a great many more are of other religions. But what they all have in common is an all-consuming awareness of the human right to live. That right belongs to the foetus in the womb. Of course women must 'decide their fate' if they really want to, but under no circumstances should the law of a country allow them to decide the fate of their children, who are separate human beings. Dependent, yes, but so are six month old babies, and you wouldn't think of coldly killing them . . . I am a 20 year old Roman Catholic myself . . . In this case

it isn't necessarily religion we're interested in, it's human life . . . And did we really 'ooze piety' to travel hundreds of miles, giving up normal Sunday activities to stand for something we sincerely believe is right?—ELAINE CRITCHLEY, Wigan.

IT'S HER DECISION . . . A woman's right to choose' is not a question of individual moral choice, the right belongs to women as a social group—the people who actually bear children in this society; it means putting into the hands of a woman as reproducer the decision about her health, suffering and social role . . . To call a foetus a human being is not a scientific decision and the result of it is to 'keep women in their places' . . . In the immediate situation of an unwanted pregnancy a woman must have control over her own body.—NICK GORROD, London, SW14.

ON AND ON AND ON . . . Week after week I read turgid cliché-ridden articles in Socialist Worker about Northern Ireland. These seem to concentrate on the military situation, or the Sunningdale agreement, which is irrelevant to the ordinary people here . . . The paper should write about the deplorably low wages which are far worse than in England . . . I came across an instance of a trained dental nurse who was earning £9 per week! There is currently an advertisement appearing in English newspapers, extolling the virtues of industry here. In particular, it says that potential investors should look at the good industrial relations record here. The reason for this is not hard to find: people are afraid to strike when there are so many unemployed people around willing to accept a badly-paid job. So let's have more on these kind of issues.—GERALD KENNEDY, Coleraine.

TRY BEING A WORKER IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND . . . I'm a socialist and a trade unionist, you ask me to believe that the Irish terrorists are much like myself (13 May). For Christ's sake grow up! . . . The Irish are damn lucky not to be up against the forces of any other country . . . According to your juvenile bleatings its alright for these heroes to use children to plant incendiary devices or force people to drive car bombs into city centres . . . but downright wicked for the other side to resort to what you call 'dirty tricks' . . . this kind of thing alienates the ordinary working class man from your otherwise sane and tenable arguments.—T HAGUE, Sheffield.

SO WATCH IT . . . As a socialist I found the letter (A Soldier? Yes But a Worker 11 May) in bad taste . . . I know you didn't write the letter but at least an editorial reply should have been made . . . People who have suffered at the hands of such 'workers' would think otherwise. In the 1950s these were the very people who murdered 15,000 black people in Kenya . . . Some time you will be judged for condoning and fraternising with enemies of the working class.—A FELLOW WORKER, London E8.

We don't condone, we don't fraternise.

FORCE FEEDING . . . (Letters 11 May) I assisted in carrying it out in a psychiatric hospital in the distant past. The practice was abandoned because a person on hunger strike can and does vomit up immediately they are left . . . If it is properly done it shouldn't cause injury . . . How does the prison service manage it? Lack of practice?—G MORRISON, Essex.

IT CAN HAPPEN . . . Duncan Hallas should be given more space to clear away the silly notions that have been put in people's heads by the enemies of socialism . . . If the many advantages of socialism were put before your readers many more would be attracted to it . . . A great many people worry because they believe they are not 'getting on' . . . they strive, driven by materialist greed which never satisfies, and long for a fulfillment which never comes . . . Under socialism they would strive for different values which would make people proud and give them status and respect amongst others . . . having their needs satisfied they would do the jobs not for gain, but for the sympathy and appreciation of the community . . . Since no-one would be judged by his or her wealth they would seek achievement by service to the community . . . Everybody from the very humblest could do it because opportunity is endless.—D PARKES, Cardiff.

TALKING ABOUT SOCIALISM



SOME readers may have felt that I was not really getting to grips with the problem of racism by writing about the racism of some Europeans towards others in the past. Our modern racists are obsessed with skin colour. Other differences are not important to them. All 'white' Europeans will pass.

This is because the political requirements have changed. The cause of the European aristocracies is dead beyond recall and with Isreal as a pillar of western capitalism, anti-semitism is no longer convenient for our reactionaries.

But these very facts show the lack of connection between race as a scientific fact and racism as a weapon of the reactionaries. Anyone who thinks that discussion of 'inter-European' racism was a red herring should remember that only 30 years ago the gas ovens of Auschwitz were working full blast.

What are the scientific facts about race? First, there is only one kind of man alive today, only one species as biologists say. Second, this has not always been true, other 'human' species have existed in the past but they either died out, were absorbed or changed into modern man. And this happened a long time ago by our standards, many thousands of years ago.

Trivial

Third, the present 'races', though old (and some older than others), are much more recent than that. Furthermore, the racial differences that exist are trivial and have no relevance at all to life under modern conditions.

Why do they exist? A leading authority, Professor W W Howells of Harvard University, summed it up as follows: 'Racial differences, then, taken altogether, seem to result from a mixture of things. Part of them are surely moments of our evolutionary journey . . . Part are almost certainly adaptive, reflecting the demands of different climates and habitats. Part of them could be, and probably are, due to chance.'

'Momento'

For example, European and Australian aboriginal men tend to have fairly heavy body hair. African and Chinese men tend to have practically none. This is a 'momento'. We and the Australians are more 'primitive' in this respect since the original human condition was almost certainly hairy.

Europeans and Chinese have lost most of their skin pigment. Africans and Australians are much darker. This is almost certainly an adaption to different climates. And so on with other differences.

None of these differences have much biological significance today. Evolution can operate only on men living as part of nature, living under very primitive social conditions. It does not operate to any extent when men live in artificial

Racism: The fake divide

surroundings, in complex societies.

Thus Eskimos and Siberian aborigines developed into short flat-faced people, well padded with fat. Canadians and Russians working in the same extreme cold show no such trends, nor will they however long they stay there because technology has replaced evolution as the means of adapting to different conditions.

Twentieth century racists have tried to show that different races differ in 'intelligence', Professor Eysenck and others are trying to revive this nonsense. It is a political operation pure and simple. There is not a grain of scientific evidence for the idea. It is instructive to see how 'evidence' of a sort is manufactured.

Study

A well-known case is the US Army study carried out at the end of the First World War.

Recruits were all given intelligence tests. The results showed that, although there was an overlap, white men scored, on average, higher than blacks. The white supremacists seized on the result as proving that blacks were inferior.

Then the figures were looked at more critically. They showed that northerners, black and white alike, scored, on average, higher than southerners of both colours—although again there was an overlap. For example, blacks from Chicago scored higher than whites from the rural counties of Alabama but lower than Chicago whites.

What was really being tested, of course, was education not heredity. The then largely rural south had a poorer schooling system than the more urban north, and blacks in north and south, alike, got—and still get—worse schooling.

Race, then, is biologically irrelevant. Its sole importance is political. And as I said last week, racism is invariably a ruling class weapon to divide and rule.

Duncan Hallas

What's all this nonsense about safety?

THE HAZARDS of asbestos have been known to the employers in the industry in considerable detail since the turn of the century.

But it was a long time before the men on the receiving end of the dust and disease started to suspect what was being done to them.

As soon as they did suspect, the activists of 7/162 Glasgow lagers' branch of the Transport Union started to try to get something done about it. And since then they have accumulated a rich experience in the reality behind the rhetoric of British society.

During the Second World War some members of 7/162 called for an investigation into health conditions in the insulation industry. They got nowhere with the then group secretary of the Transport Union, Tom Oswald, now a Labour MP.

No right

So they wrote to Ernest Bevin, boss of the union and wartime Minister of Labour. He told them they had no right to raise the matter at national level. There was a war on. He didn't want any nonsense about safety at work.

Over the years this incident has been repeated in one shape or another many times.

In 1967 the men of 7/162 raised their fate with members of parliament. In turn the members of parliament raised it with government ministers, who raised it with their civil servants. They raised it with the Factory Inspectorate—who provided the information to write a

THE ASBESTOS MURDERS

Laurie Flynn's fifth article

reply containing a few facts about asbestos which the men of 7/162 already knew.

The same happened when they wrote to the Scottish TUC. James Jack, general secretary, sent back a letter tabulating the different kinds of asbestos and informing the men that the General Council had agreed to 'indicate . . . interest and concern.' They'd have been better to have a whip-round for a wreath.

This path and the parliamentary road having led precisely nowhere, the activists of 7/162 turned elsewhere. An article in the Scots 'Sunday Mail' on 28 January 1968 gave them another idea.

In the article, Professor Alexander Mair of the Scottish Occupational Health Laboratory Service insisted that unlike employers, Scots workers didn't care about occupational health. He pleaded for workers to inform him of dust and health hazards and stated that his unit would act quickly. The men of 7/162 took him at his word and wrote explaining the terrible hazards they

faced at work.

The Professor was too busy to write back. So one of his assistants had to write for him. He wrote: 'Many factories do handle asbestos in a most hazardous fashion and there is a need to pinpoint these particular firms and get the environmental position rectified . . . We can only enter a factory . . . at the invitation of the management who must of course pay us a fee for the investigation.'

'We have already tried writing to all registered handlers of asbestos to try to persuade them to let us investigate their environments. But with few exceptions, the replies have been quite firmly negative.'

A year later, in June 1969, the men of 7/162 wrote to Scotland's fearless paper, the Daily Record, with a view to getting an article written on their terrible situation. They got a reply from industrial correspondent Douglas Malone.

He wrote: 'As you probably know we have had numerous stories on asbestosis over the past year or so but, I gather, it is not a very fashionable subject. It appears that the medical evidence is somewhat "hazy" . . . So much for the press as guardian of the people's rights.'

In this way the story of this one union branch, a story of neglect, of brutality, of contempt for life, goes on and on. It reaches into one aspect of our society after another. It shows up the very parts that are supposed to protect workers as decayed and corrupted by the pressures and priorities of big business.

The big asbestos monopolies spend considerable resources painting a different picture of themselves and of the society they and their associates in other fields so effectively dominate.

Just this week Turner and Newall, who have stolen many lives and caused great grief in Glasgow and beyond, published a code of business practice.

Deceit

This new exercise in deceit is to be issued to all employees. It supposedly sets out standards of behaviour to which the firm is committed.

Turner Brothers Asbestos, forerunner of Turner and Newall, did much the same in 1918 when workers were on the move over pay conditions and control.

As Sir Samuel Turner himself put it in his company magazine for July 1918: 'Let us not be deluded by specious promises of a speedy millenium. But let us rather look to the next commonsense step to take which is without doubt to attempt to achieve real co-operation and sympathy between those who are now directing and working our industries and agriculture.'

Indeed. Let us not be deluded by the honeyed words of those who only want to maintain their power and preserve their right to profit.

Today they claim they never knew about asbestos and its hazards. Today they say they have put it behind them, that they use asbestos-free insulation and everything is fine.

None of it is true. There's plenty of asbestos about. It is hidden away in India and Africa where working-class organisation is not so strong. At home it has merely changed its name.



Nigerian workers cutting asbestos-cement sheeting without any protection from the asbestos dust. The photograph proudly appears in Turner and Newall's 1973 publicity brochure.

THIS IS WHAT I CALL REALLY OBSCENE

THE WORD 'obscenity' means, according to the dictionary, indecent, impure offensive to morale or modesty, disgusting and offensive.

I have just finished reading the colour supplement of the Sunday Times for 12 May. Covering about four pages of this magazine aimed at A1 and A2 people—as they are termed in the advertising world—or, if you like, posh people, was an account of a weekend party given by the Bolivian tin millionaire Antenor Patino.

This took place at his newly-opened £16 million resort in Las Hades, Mexico. Patino had invited 350 of his friends, or, as they were termed in the Sunday Times 'titled' and 'beautiful' people. He had paid all their expenses, including flying them in from Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles at an estimated cost of £180,000. I'll come to who really paid for this later.

Since reading the article I am waiting for an outcry from Mrs Mary Whitehouse or Lord Longford on the obscenity of this little do. Because to me that's what it was.

There were no pictures of tits or bums or of Marlon Brando doing funny things with butter. Just beautiful people enjoying themselves. So what's obscene about that?

Maggots

What I found obscene about this little do (if that's what it can be called) was who paid the bill. I could not look upon the guests as being beautiful people, more like maggots eating off a corpse—the corpse of the dead tin miners and workers of Bolivia, the workers who died in Colonel Banzer's recent military takeover in Bolivia, a takeover to protect the investment and property of one Patino and his kind. Yes, the money spent on that little party came from the exploitation and death of the miners of Bolivia. THAT IS OBSCENITY.

No, we will not read nor hear of any protest from Mary Whitehouse, Lord Longford or Malcolm Muggeridge about this party. For they are part of the system that relies on true obscenity and thrives on it—capitalism.

The obscenity of British pensioners dying each winter of hypothermia and workers dying of asbestosis, of miners dying of pneumoconiosis and of nurses whose wages are so low they cannot afford to eat.

What does Mary Whitehouse know or care about true obscenity—of working on a production line, or on stinking animal skin in a ship's hold, or in a 2ft high coal seam or any of the other degrading, arduous, dirty and dangerous jobs that workers have to do every day

Yes, not only the tin mines of Bolivia are paying the bill, but you and I. We pay it every day of the week at work and we'll go on paying until we get rid of the real obscenity in our lives—capitalism.

MICHAEL FENN

FOOT

PRINTS

I don't know how much this is costing daddy...

BAD NEWS for anyone who's thinking of bringing their daughter out as a debutante this year. The Daily Express William Hickey gossip column reports that costs of everything are going up. Hiring a marquee, for instance, costs £500 compared with a mere £350 last year.

I gather it's absolutely impossible to stage a decent deb dance nowadays without allowing £10 a head for the night for food and drink—a bit more if you insist on champagne. Flowers are also damned expensive. In 1972, apparently, Lady Hardie, wife of Sir Charles, one of the richest men in England, threw a dance for her daughter at the London West End Cafe Royal, and spent a mere £3000 on flowers. I gather you couldn't do that nowadays.

The Express calculates that the total cost for one dance is bound to be £10,000 at the least, but it reports that this year there will be as many, if not more, deb dances than ever.

Michael Williams is a property developer who has three houses, including one in Surrey with 80 acres of parkland and three lakes. His daughter Mandie is having a dance and Mr Williams has ordered three marquees, one for each lake. Says Mandie: 'I don't know how much this is costing Daddy. I just wrote out the guest list.'

The deb season is renowned for its success as a marriage market for well-brought-up boys and girls. Another kind of social contract, in other words.

Tass Rallies Behind Nixon

MOSCOW, May 16 (NYT).—The press agency Tass today rose to the defense of President Nixon by contending that his Watergate troubles were "being fanned by the President's political adversaries."

From the International Herald-Tribune

Showing Knightly

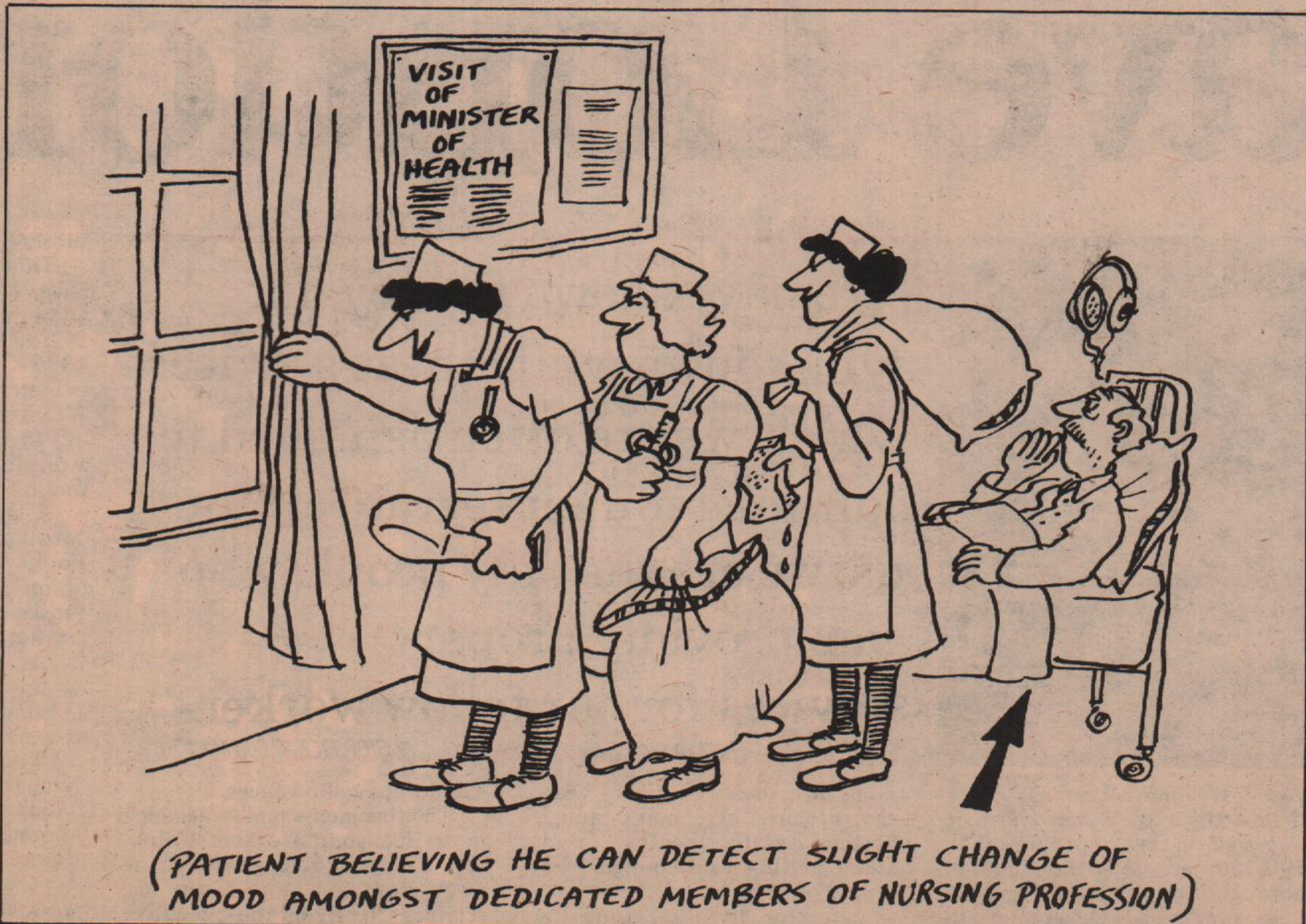
MRS Betty Knightly, 54, stood for parliament for the Tories in the election at Salford East. During the election she described herself modestly as 'God's gift to the people of Salford'.

Not that Mrs Knightly lives in slum-ridden Salford. On the contrary she lives in the New Forest, Hampshire, where she is getting very cross because a former head-keeper of the forest, Jack Humby, has got permission to build a house within shouting distance of her secluded, five-bedroom converted farmhouse.

Mrs Knightly told the Sunday Express: 'Jack is a nice enough old boy, but I don't want his washing spoiling my view and his windows overlooking me.'

'I will take this all the way to the House of Lords if necessary. If he is allowed to build he would be only about 40 yards from my swimming pool.'

This, according to the Sunday Express, is especially distressing for Mrs Knightly as she often enjoys bathing in the nude.



(PATIENT BELIEVING HE CAN DETECT SLIGHT CHANGE OF MOOD AMONGST DEDICATED MEMBERS OF NURSING PROFESSION)



Flashback to the demolition—a year ago—of the blast furnace the British Steel chairman said might be brought back into operation.

MONTY FINISHED?

THE chairman of the British Steel Corporation, Dr Monty Finniston, needs a rest. A long one. Steelworkers on Teesside, a thousand of whom face the sack as a result of Dr Finniston's proposals for BSC, are inclined to think that he should go away and never come back.

At a meeting of North East MPs last week, Dr Finniston announced that a blast furnace at Cargo Fleet, Teesside, might be 'brought back into production to overcome present production problems.'

The MPs considered this carefully. After a lot of research, they uncovered a little difficulty.

The blast furnace of which he

spoke was demolished last year. The picture above shows it being demolished. As Arthur Affleck, shop steward at BSC Lackenby, wrote in this paper several weeks ago, the blast furnaces at Cargo Fleet were both destroyed in spite of heavy investment in them. It was, he wrote, all part of the crazy anarchy of the Steel Corporation's behaviour on Teesside.

As Frank Routledge, electricians' shop steward put it to the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette: 'Finniston is apparently not even aware of the plant available. When you get the boss of the steel industry saying something like this it is very disturbing indeed.'

Rolling Sid gathers moss

LAST AUTUMN I happened to mention, in the course of an article about evictions in the village of New Hartley, Northumberland, that the clerk to the Seaton Valley Urban Council, Mr P W Ferry, was having his house built by the Chester-le-Street building company of S McCulough. Mr Ferry's solicitors wrote saying that the article suggested corrupt practices, and I wrote back saying that I hadn't mentioned corruption at all. That was the last I heard of the matter.

What a surprise, then, to discover that a former engineer to the Seaton Valley Urban Council, Arthur Moss, once received a new car from McCuloughs, and that local police are investigating a receipt which proves it.

Mr Moss is now engineer at Blyth. The growth of S McCulough, incidentally, was one of the many 'miracles' of the T Dan Smith era in the North East. From lowly beginnings as small plasterers, McCulough and his associates moved into the big time. As planning permission flowed in from the councils, more and more building work became available, and by 1965 the company had shed its 'plasterers' image, set up offices in Whitley Bay and Blyth and bought into several going clubs and hotels in the area, including the Top Hat Club, Spennymoor, the Spartan Hotel Blyth, and the Garden Farm Hotel, Chester-le-Street near where Andy Cunningham used to live.

I understand that Mr McCulough has been feeling rather uncomfortable in recent weeks. I can't imagine why.

DIRTY DEEDS REWARDED

THIS report appeared in the West Country's Sunday Independent newspaper two weeks ago:

£20,000 payout

The Environment Department have authorised a special £20,000 payment to the Newquay firm of G. T. Tetsill and Son for losses they have incurred on the building of the Berryfields Estate at Bodmin.

Tetsill is an anti-union 'Lump' firm, which, around 1971, was involved in a scandal when it was revealed that the employers' share

of the National Insurance contribution, plus the employers' SET payment was being deducted from the workers' paypackets!

The firm was unable to get enough local workers for its big council housing contracts in the Bodmin area of Cornwall, and advertised in the Midlands for building tradesmen. An added inducement in the advertisements was the promise of council houses to any worker who wished to work for the firm in Cornwall. This inducement was NOT included in the firm's local newspaper advertisements.

The firm's bad treatment of its

workers over site conditions, 'fiddling' the bonus payments and illegal deductions from wages, led some of the men to join the construction union UCATT and form a branch of the union in Bodmin.

FAILED

The men then attempted industrial action against the firm, but, with union organisation so pathetically weak in Cornwall, they were easily defeated by their ruthless employer. Tetsill tried to evict men from the council houses they had been allocated, but failed in this.

Although UCATT was said at the time to have lodged a complaint with the Ministry about the illegal deductions from pay and to be claiming several thousand pounds compensation on behalf of members, the claim seems to have died a natural death.

Now it seems that this infamous employer, working his dirty deeds in the middle of a reactionary county, is to be paid £20,000 from the taxpayer. Is it any wonder the Bodmin branch of the union no longer exists?

Terry Tull

(UCATT, Newquay Branch)

Stop London to save London

A FEW years ago, it was the dream of every ambitious white-collar worker to work in London. Now they have to force us to stay there!

The local government authorities have set up a 'ring fence' around London which stops us from applying for jobs in the rest of England, Wales or Scotland.

Working in London is becoming impossible, especially for so-called 'public service' workers. At the same time, the services, which we're running are collapsing—and all for the same reason. Thousands of school kids are on part time—because there are not enough teachers, because the teachers aren't paid enough. Bus and tube services are slashed because there aren't enough drivers or conductors, because they're not paid enough.

The postal service is cracking up, because there aren't enough postmen, because they're not paid enough.

Many workers take it for granted that they must spend an hour and a half squeezing their way to work across London, that unless they earn £4000 a year they'll never get a mortgage for a house, that houses don't get cheaper outside London unless

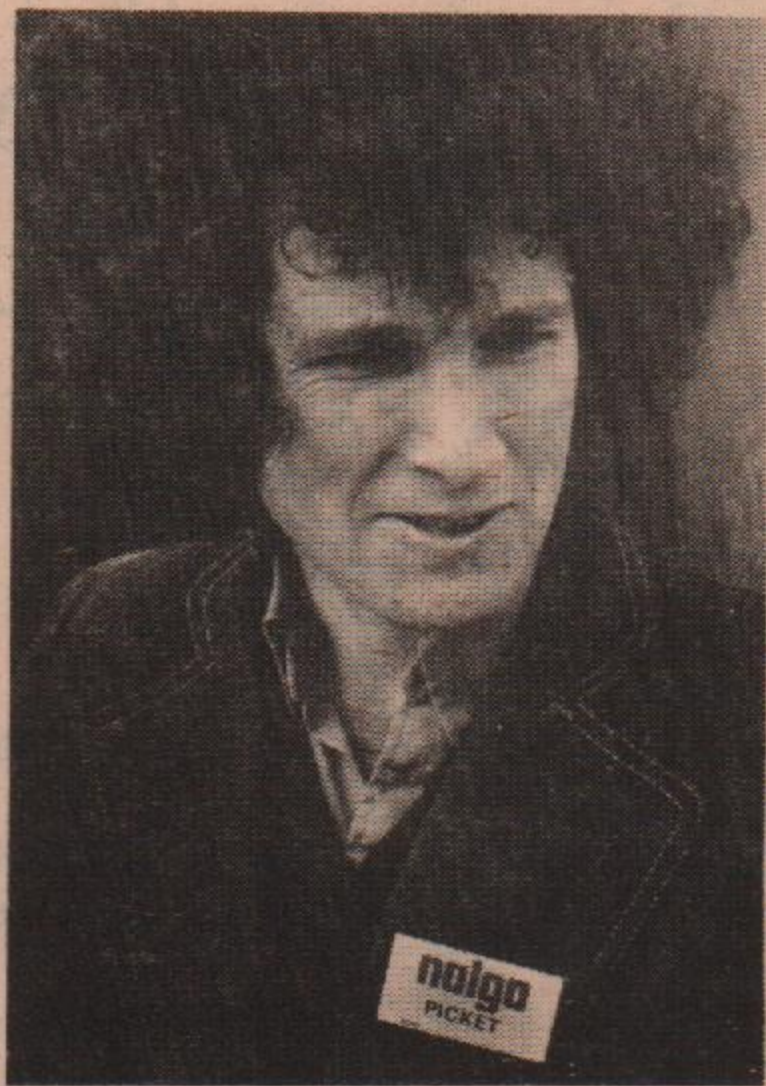


Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

'We have shown that by not lying down while these services which we are often ashamed to administer disintegrate around us, we are the only people who can provide proper services for our fellow workers'

GORDON PETERS—NALGO STRIKE COMMITTEE

you travel more than 80 miles, that a third to a half of their wages go on rent, that more than 190,000 are on the London boroughs' housing waiting lists, that they may never get to know their neighbours...

The nervous strain? Well, you might not think it's too great till you end up in 'the bin', that's if they can find a bed for you by kicking an old lady out into the street.

Because there are many fewer places in London's mental hos-

pitals now than a couple of years ago. Because there aren't enough hospital staff, because they aren't getting paid enough. Yes, it goes on forever.

Now for the first time the workers are beginning to fight back. Workers on the underground and the buses are threatening strike action. So are teachers. So are hospital workers.

Their trade union leaders are horrified. The executive of the National Union of Teachers is holding back strike action over

London pay allowances.

The busmen's union leaders, in the Transport Workers' Union, are always doing deals giving away more and more of the bus services. Nearly all the executive members of my union—the government officers, NALGO—are remote, high-salaried officials on first class travelling expenses. They have more in common with employers than with the mass of clerks, typists, rent-collectors, librarians and 'junior officers' who make up the union.

These officials are holding us back. They would like to send back to work the 1500 of us who are on strike in Islington, although they have gained not a penny more of the £400-a-year allowances we are claiming for working in London.

The silent majority in NALGO Britain's fourth-biggest union—have packed meetings, become trade unionists in a seemingly sudden awakening and demanded the most militant action on the agenda. Frustrations caused by years of poor pay—day nursery nurses take home less than £20 a week, rationalisation, computerisation, speed-up—known in the 'service' as 'target planning', office overcrowding and understaffing—often up to 20 per cent, have smashed the traditions of

subservience.

Those worried about status have found that they've none left to lose.

The solidarity among the 1500 NALGO strikers in Islington has been tremendous. We have been continually piling on the pressure to extend the struggle and democratise the union from below.

After six weeks, in spite of the constant 'No's' from Michael Foot, the Pay Board and the union leaders, we are more enthusiastic than we were when we started. Our strike has shown us our potential strength, woken us up to the realities of life in London, brought us all together as workers for the first time.

We have shown that by not lying down while these services which we are often ashamed to administer disintegrate around us, we are the only people who can improve the quality of our work and provide proper services for our fellow-workers.

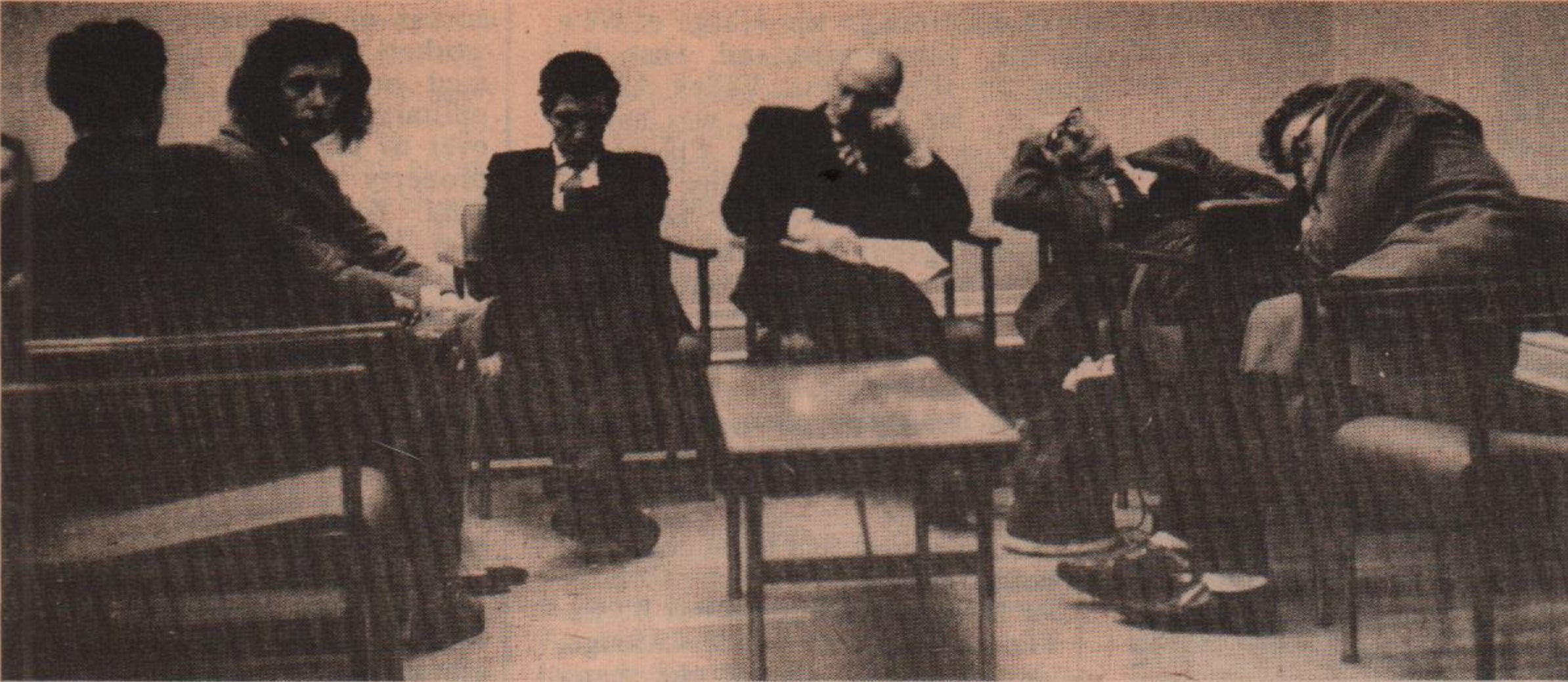
Recognition

Repeated across London, this level of organisation could stop London. It is the only way to win, not just for us but for all the other workers who provide the services of the city and use them. We, the rank and file workers, must extend the links between workers in London, from the council offices to the schools, to the buses and tubes, to the hospitals, to the post offices.

All the services and all the workers are suffering from the same disease, and we can only solve them together. We want public sector unity, and joint shop stewards committees.

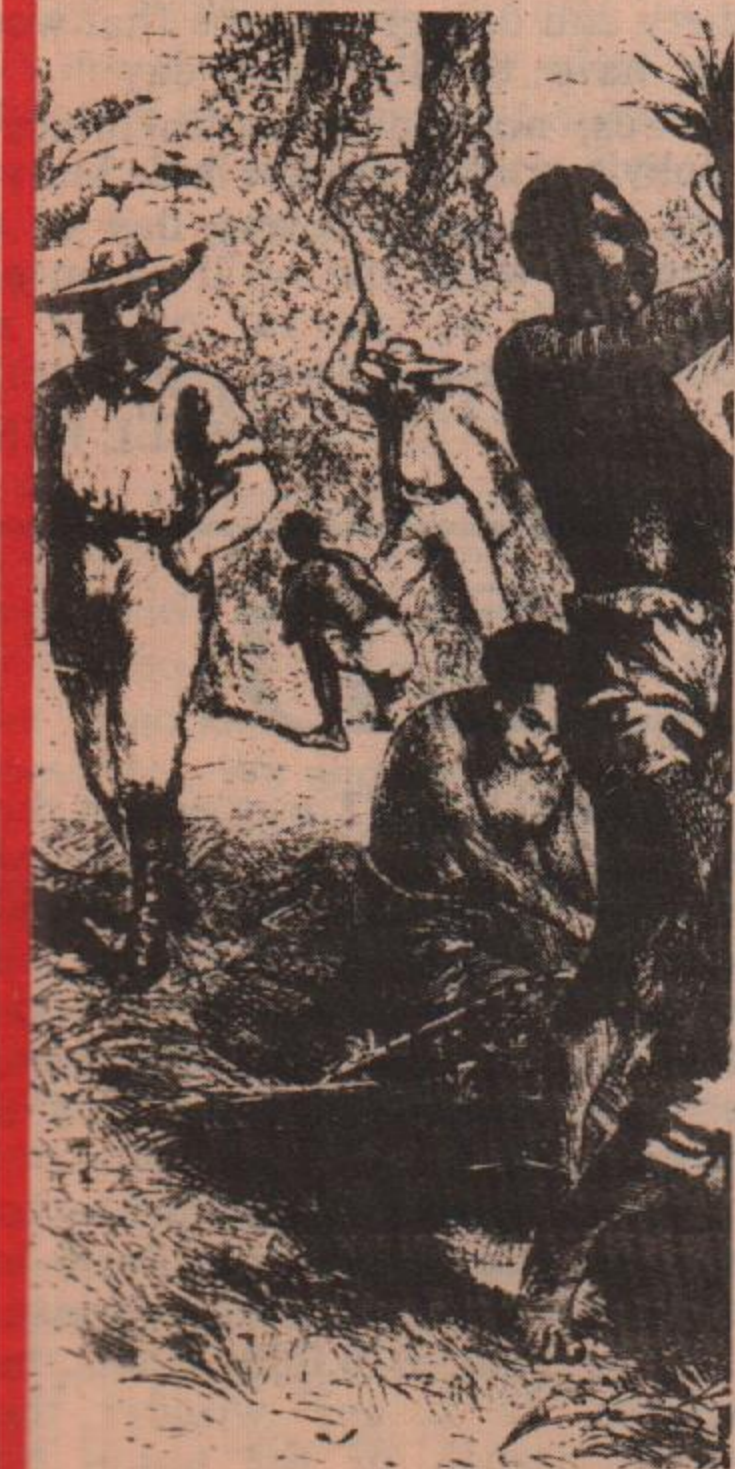
And we want to take our fight outside London. Now our bosses are refusing to negotiate the national claim until we give up in London.

Now we see how 'special' our case is. The employers see the connection between all these cases. They act together to harm us. We must act together too.



London at night—the other side to the bright lights. Workers at Kings Cross Station, 4.30am, waiting for the first train home. PICTURE: Romano Cagnoni (Report)

Solidarity—even in starvation



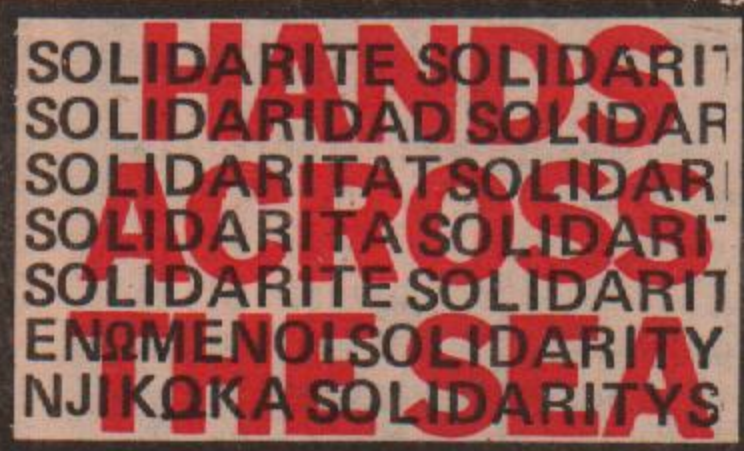
A white master whips a slave—why the British workers backed the Northern States

THE UNEMPLOYED ran into thousands and then into the hundreds of thousands. When the poor relief, roughly two shillings a man, had been spent, they took themselves and their few possessions off to the pawnbroker. And then they besieged the soup kitchens.

This was Lancashire in the early 1860s, a county where workers lived on bread if they were lucky and hoped it would protect them from the scurvy and typhus which preyed on starvation.

And they endured this suffering in the knowledge that other workers, thousands of miles away in a continent they had never seen, were suffering even more. They supported their brothers' struggles, despite the taunts of their 'betters' that those workers—black workers—were the cause of their misery.

The outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 divided no European country so sharply as it did Britain. The working class supported the emancipation of the American slaves, the ruling class opposed it.



Those who argued that the slaves were 'none of our business' and that the Northern States were harming our own prosperity did not have to look too far to find support for their case.

For the war had drastic economic consequences for Britain. In 1860, more than three-quarters of the cotton for Lancashire's textile industries, which then employed half a million people, was imported from the United States.

When the Southern States broke away, the North blockaded their ports. The result, for Lancashire's cotton mills, was catastrophe. By November 1861, 49 mills had closed and 119 were on short time. By 1862, thousands were out of work—

THE DECISION of the engineering union executive to order the blacking of all work on armaments for the military dictatorship in Chile has raised the standard of international working-class solidarity. As the employers unite in bigger and bigger multi-national corporations, the need for workers to unite across national boundaries becomes more obvious, more crucial. The new giants can only be challenged when workers of different countries join together and strengthen their trade

36,000 in Blackburn, 20,000 in Ashton, 23,000 in Stockport.

Cotton operatives, paid between 12 shillings and £2 before the war, now had to exist on poor relief.

Faced with bankruptcy and the wholesale movement of skilled workers away from Lancashire, the mill-owners called on the British government to intervene in support of the South.

Ready Echo

Such demands found a ready echo among many sections of the middle class and aristocracy. While The Times trumpeted the call for war against the North, British and French capitalists raised £3,000,000 to aid the South.

The leadership of the working class was divided on the issue. Many had no sympathy for what they regarded as the expansionism of the capitalist, industrialised North and so championed the South. They did not support slavery but merely 'hated wage slavery more.'

Others, such as Ernest Jones, an active supporter of the North and a friend of Marx and Engels, took a more historical view. He argued that Northern capitalism was an 'advance' on slavery. Many trade union leaders disagreed with Jones' political views but resolutely opposed the slave system.

Most rank and file workers were solidly behind the North, organising more than 50 meetings in 1863 in its support.

SEAN DOCHERTY teaches English Boys' Comprehensives writes:

"I taught it two and a half years ago. We didn't have sympathy for the dance of the slave for an increased chance."

All schools and under-financed have similar problems teachers in them. So why should I get the benefit allowance especially always argued against payments and for a job? Surely a slave in London was a

union and social This is the first came to the American countries—and the Lancashire the American C and the same re about Chile.

When, at a pro in Blackburn, a Mortimer Grims workers to support the secret weavers' association the platform. In followed, he def by more than 400

'Address

In London, the newly-formed Ne staged the biggest support of the N of trade union James' Hall in M adopted an 'Add affirmed British of slavery:

'We indignately



Photo: Epi (Report)

Buses: Not on time but on overtime

PETE GLATTER, who is 25, drives a 73 bus from Tottenham to Hammersmith through the centre of London. He writes:

“There should be 25,000 busmen in London, but there are less than 20,000 and people are leaving every day. At basic wages of £32.25 for 40 hours, the only way to survive is by working more and more overtime. One in every eight buses is run by workers on overtime. Even the basic week means four working Saturdays out of five and several Sundays.

If the 73 bus ran properly, there should be 96 trips a day. We're running 80. That means longer waiting for buses and fuller buses when they arrive. It means more misery for people who travel—and more misery for conductors and drivers.

Schedule

We don't have a timetable on the London buses any more. It's been scrapped for years. I was amazed on a recent visit to Blackburn to find that people still talked about 'catching the 10.30 bus'. You can't do that in London, because no one can keep to any sort of schedule.

Another menace is the bonus system. It's calculated by the amount of money you take. So all the useful things which conductors are meant to do—like helping old people on and off buses, and telling people where they are—have to be sacrificed for collecting the money. The fuller the bus, the less time we can spend helping people. The shorter the staff, the fuller the bus.

The union hardly helps us. Just now they've agreed to a 'summer service' which will mean more staff cuts, more overtime. We argue that the only solution to the problem is more pay for the bus service, but the union is always handing more service cuts to the bosses on a plate.

The Platform

Bus crews are split up. They desperately need rank and file organisation. Since we started The Platform for rank and file busmen a few months ago, we've had a lot of success in showing that busmen can help themselves and the passengers if they organise and put some beef into the union. Until we link up the problems of all these London workers, we'll never win.

The address to contact The Platform is 403 Higham Hill Road, London, E17.

hadn't been able to prey on the generosity of some friends for a while, I would be pitching my tent on Islington Green.

I thought that paying £6 a week rent for a flat in Liverpool was extortion. But I find people down here paying twice that and thinking themselves lucky.

Yet the London allowance is a laughable £113 a year. It hasn't been increased since 1970. Should there be any need to argue for effective action to put things right? There is no doubt that there is an unparalleled level of militancy among the rank and file of all public sector unions.

This is particularly the case in the National Union of Teachers. What is lacking is leadership. The executive flies in the face of a fight trying to head off the anger and frustration of the membership with characteristic indecision.

No action has been taken on the results of this month's strike ballot which, however badly it was organised, showed hundreds of schools with the two-thirds majority required for strike action. The need for an effective public sector alliance has never been more apparent. But the initiative will only come from the rank and file. And time is running out . . .

I'm a teacher, not a jailer

a national campaign?

I've been teaching in North London for three weeks now and already I'm seeing things in a different light. London's problems certainly are not all that different from anywhere else. It's just that they are so much more acute.

Workers, particularly those in the low-paid public sector, simply cannot afford to live here. Many move out, so that the public services are faced with staff shortages. In turn this makes the job more difficult for those who remain. And because they are

under greater strain the job doesn't get done properly. The whole community suffers as a result.

Undertrained

Technically my school is not understaffed. It survives only because of the high number of untrained supply teachers. The kids can't do the subjects they like, only those that are available.

If the young are not able to choose things that interest them, they become even more bored

with schools. The teacher becomes more like a jailer and less like someone to learn with.

One of the most important conditions of learning is stability. But in London the staff turnover averaged a fantastic 35 per cent last year. This year it's going to be even higher.

If kids are getting four or five teachers a year, then of course there is no consistency in the way they learn.

The problems at school are very bad. But they're as nothing compared with the problem of finding somewhere to live. If I

TY, aged 25, at Holloway Prison School. He

Liverpool for half years and have too much the annual song London teachers London allow-

re understaffed ed. All big cities problems and all are under strain. London teachers of an extra ally since we'd inst above-scale r a rate for the parate struggle diversion from

n and poverty

ist links.

rst in a series of articles about how workers d of fellow workers in struggle in different helped to win that struggle. It shows how textile workers supported the North during ivil War—and had to face enormous hardships ling-class arguments that are now being used

-South meeting worker called aw called for rt British inter-ary of the local ion took over the vote which ated Grimshaw 0 votes to 12!

SS'

leaders of the y Model unions st meeting in orth. Hundreds ts packed St arch 1863 and 'ness' which re-workers' hatred

protest against

the assertion that the people of England wish for the success of the Southern States in their diabolical attempt to establish a separate government on the basis of human slavery. However much a liberty-hating aristocracy and an unscrupulous moneyocracy may desire the consummation of such a crime, we, the working men of London, view it with abhorrence.

The war promoted a sense of internationalism among British workers which contributed to the involvement of trade unionists in the First International when it was formed in 1864.

Alan Campbell

PUBLIC SALE!

AS TRUSTEE FOR JAMES VANMETER, I WILL SELL ALL OF THE property of James Vanmeter at his residence, known as the Wright place, the Horseback Mill Road, on Friday the 11th day of September 1863.

CONSISTING OF
THREE SLAVES

Charles, Mary and her child, the man is about 34 years old, a good farm hand the woman is an excellent cook and washer.

HORSES, MULES, CATTLE, SHEEP, HOGS
AND CROP. CORN IN THE FIELDS.

OATS, WHEAT, TOBACCO

Wagon Furniture, &c., Farm Implements of every kind. Terms of Sale Slaves for sale—to stop this, Lancashire cotton workers put up with starvation

It's long overdue...

RACHEL GOLDITCH, aged 21, is a library assistant—take-home pay £21 a week—for the Borough of Islington. She writes:

When I first moved to London nearly four years ago I lived on a student grant of £9 a week. Now my wages are more than double that and my standard of living is much lower now than it was then. I have just enough money for food, rent and fares. Nothing more.

My salary is about the top of the scale for unqualified library assistants. Most of the girls I work with get much less than I do. It's not just the higher cost of living that makes a realistic London allowance so important: London workers should be compensated for the sheer misery, sweat and inconvenience that's involved in working in Inner London. In my job I have to work five evenings a fortnight and by the time I've made the one-hour journey home I'm too tired and bad tempered to bother to maintain any kind of social life.

Unless I get the full £400 soon I'm going to have to leave London. There is no way I can keep pace with the cost of living in London unless I get the increase.

Whats on

ENTRIES for this column must be posted to reach *Socialist Worker* by Monday morning—and remember the 'first class' post takes two days as often as one. Due to pressure of work we cannot take What's On entries over the phone. Entries here are free for IS branches and other IS organisations.

WEST LONDON International Socialists Disco: Saturday 25 May, 8pm, Kings Head, Fulham Broadway (next to tube). Admission 40p.

WARLEY IS Spring Party: CAST Theatre Group present Come in Hilda Muggins, plus a rock band, Le'argo, disco and bar extension. Friday 24 May, 8pm-midnight. The Bear Hotel, Bearwood Road, Bearwood. Tickets 50p in advance (60p on door). Inquiries: phone 021-426 1350. Proceeds to Birmingham IS Centre and Fighting Fund.

IMPERIAL COLLEGE IS public meeting: Labour Government—Socialism or social contract? Speaker: Paul Foot (Socialist Worker). Friday 24 May, 12.45pm. Civil Eng. 201, Exhibition Rd, London SW7.

TEESSIDE DISTRICT IS RALLY The Politics of Corruption. Speaker: Paul Foot. Labour and the trade unions. Speaker: Mike Atkinson (NUPE Chairman, Darlington District Hospital Shop Stewards Committee). Thursday 30 May, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Borough Road, Middlesbrough.

WIGAN District IS public meeting: Socialist Worker and the struggle for socialism. Speakers: John Llywarch and Margaret Renn. Thursday 23 May, 8pm, The Market Hotel, Wigan. All welcome. Admission 10p.

NORWICH IS Public Meeting: Building the socialist alternative. Speakers: Steve Cherry (ASTMS), Ian Gibson (ASTMS NEC), Derek Calvet (ETU). Thursday 23 May, 8pm, Norwich Central Library. All welcome.

TWICKENHAM IS open meeting: Chile. Speaker: Ian Birchall. Thursday 23 May, 8.45pm. The Red Lion, Heath Road, Twickenham.

IS Training and Publications Committee: Meeting for IS members interested in political economy in Leeds, 22-23 June. Aims: to discuss current economic perspectives and to set up working economics group to service IS. Details from Jim Kincaid, 11 Moseley Wood View, Leeds 16.

IS AUEW Fraction: Saturday 1 June, 11.30am. Milton Hall, Deansgate, Manchester. Details, agenda etc from Ind Dept. 01-739 6273

IS TASS Fraction: Weekend School. 1-2 June. Milton Hall, Deansgate, Manchester. Starts 11.30am. Afternoon includes joint session with engineers. Details from Ind Dept. 01-739 6273.

IS NEWS, which usually appears on page 13 with What's On, has been held over this week to make room for the special Chile guide.

LUTTE OUVRIERE fete: Festival for revolutionaries near Paris. Stalls, music, theatre, film, etc. in revolutionary socialist setting. Saturday-Monday 1-3 June. Discounts for IS members and Socialist Worker readers. Write now for details to Box F, IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

SHEFFIELD IS public meeting: Towards the 50th anniversary of the General Strike. Speaker Harry Wicks. Thursday 30 May, 8pm, The Prince of Wales, Division Street.

YORKSHIRE IS miners' fraction meeting: Subjects: Incomes policy, fraction organisation. Saturday 25 May, 12 noon, Mason's Arms, Market Place, Doncaster. All IS miners in Yorkshire and North Derbyshire to attend.

SOUTHAMPTON IS public meeting: The Labour Party or Socialism? Speaker Paul Foot. Wednesday 5 June, 8pm, UCATT Hall, Henstead Road (off Bedford Place).

EXETER IS public meeting: Racism and Facism. Speaker Granville Williams. Thursday 30 May, 8pm, Devonport Inn, Fore Street, Exeter.

WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: What's left in Ireland? Speaker Eamonn McCann. Wednesday 29 May, 8pm. The Foresters Arms, Mitcham Road, (5 mins from Tooting Broadway tube. Buses 77, 220, 44).

TWICKENHAM IS open meeting: Southern Africa after the Lisbon coup. Speaker: Carl Brecker (Unity Movement of South Africa). Thursday 30 May, 8pm, Kingston Hotel (opposite railway station).

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION of Lenin available for IS meetings. Phone Eve Barker 01-485 0476.

IS ADMIN OFFICE urgently needs voluntary help one day a week. Phone Judith 01-739 1878, or write to 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

SOCIALIST WORKER EAST ANGLIAN RALLY: Sunday 9 June, The Lamb Inn, Haymarket, Norwich. Discussion starts 3.30pm. Evening session: bar, music, buffet.

TOTTENHAM IS March: Defend Brother Cecil Sampson, black victim of police harassment. Saturday 1 June, assemble Ducketts Common (near Turnpike Lane tube) 2pm.

IS INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT needs comrades to help part-time with research work into particular industries, strikes, etc and also help in office. Enthusiasm not experience essential. Ring 01-739 6273.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT IS public meeting: The fight for safety at work. Speakers: Tommy Riley (shop steward and TGWU district committee member) and Laurie Flynn (SW reporter). Thursday 30 May 8pm, AUEW Hall, The Crescent, Salford. All welcome.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT IS textile workers meeting: Sunday 26 May, 7pm, The Dyers Arms, Oldham Road, Rochdale.

WAKEFIELD AND DEWSBURY DISTRICT IS public meeting: Why Labour won't bring socialism. Speaker Tony Cliff. Sunday 2 June 8pm, Queen Street Hall, Wakefield.

FARMHOUSE HOLIDAYS in North Wales: within easy reach of the station, fishing, friendly pubs, pony trekking, frequent transport to the coast, bring your wellies... Six-berth self-contained caravan, all mod cons. £10 per week. Bed, breakfast, evening meal and packed lunch, £10.50 per week—reductions for children. Phone Chirk (069186) 2272.

200 DAYS ON HUNGER STRIKE: 2 June Demonstration. Assemble Speakers Corner, 2.30pm, March to Whitehall. 'It is the pressure of the voices of the people that will bring them home', Albert Price. Organised by Joint Action Committee, 40 Colebrooke Row, London N1. Sponsored by National Union of Students.

STEPHEN MORRIS reading poetry from his new book *The Kingfisher Catcher* at Pentameters, Three Horseshoes, Hampstead. Monday 27 May, 8pm.

HALDANE SOCIETY: Jobs and the Law. Speaker: David Turner-Samuels QC. Tuesday 28 May, 6.45pm, Room 510, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, Aldwych.

HELENE MIDDLEWEEK-Labour parliamentary candidate for Wolverhampton South-West at the last election, will speak on The tasks facing the Labour government. On Sunday 26 May, at Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6. (near Finchley Road tube), at 8pm.

GULF COMMITTEE AND INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS: Britain's colonial war in Oman: public meeting. Thursday 23 May, 6.30pm, Institute of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Road, London W1. Film to be shown.

CORRECTION: The address of *Worm's Eye View* magazine, advertised here a few weeks ago, was misprinted. Our apologies to readers whose letters went astray as a result. The advert should have read: *Worm's Eye View* magazine—a new magazine containing articles, features, information etc, plus cartoons and satire. Annual subscription (6 issues) 60p from UM Publications, Box 787, 70 Pembroke Road, London W8.

SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: Health Service in China. Speaker: Mrs Joan Sohn-Rethel, SMA (Recently returned from a visit to China). Chairman Mr Julius Silverman, MP. House of Commons, Room 7, Thursday 13 June 1974, 7pm. (Meeting open to non-members).

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.

MEN ARE JUST NATURALLY TOUGHER, FOTHERINGAY...



'A little slice of history'

AT THE NATIONAL SWITCH FACTORY in Keighley a strike with a difference has just ended. It was a strike started by women—where the men joined in later. 'This struggle has proved that women can fight for men. It's proved that men on the whole can't fight for themselves in a factory where more than half the labour force is women', pointed out one of the women involved.

'And apart from all that we women have gained more unity than there's ever been before.'

The women are assembly line finishers. Their basic pay was £9.13—although bonuses brought it up to £17. 400 women struck—and stayed out for eight days. The dispute was over management welshing on the national wages agreement which was for £3.75 rise for women, £3.50 for skilled men and £3.10 for unskilled men.

Ourselves

Winifred Allen, spokeswoman for the women strikers, Irene Chilton a shop steward and other strikers explained how it had begun.

'We came in on the Monday and heard that the new rise wouldn't apply to us. We spontaneously held a meeting of all the women and the area manager tried to explain that unless we sorted it out ourselves there

400 WOMEN PROVE THEY AREN'T 'CABBAGES'

was no way he would help get round it.

'We were to get nothing at all. The men were to get nothing. So that all the over-time ban they'd put in was to be of no avail at all.

'So we decided to do something about it. It was us women who gave the first instance of the strike. We held a mass meeting on the Tuesday and all of us decided to come out unanimously. After our decision the men agreed not to cross our picket lines, and then after a few hours decided to join us.

'When we first came out the men were amused. They thought we didn't really know what we were doing or what we wanted. The management as well treated us with amusement. This was the first time it had happened in the factory.

Normally they just think we're fit for bingo. Because we do repetitious work they think we're just cabbages. When the management talk to us the

A battle starts in East Anglia

COLCHESTER: More than 60 people, mainly women, met at the beginning of the month for a regional conference on equal pay. It was organised by the local women's liberation group and sponsored by the trades council and various union branches.

The speakers included Linda Smith of the printing union NATSOPA, and local women trade unionists. Women from a local factory spoke to the conference asking for support in a fight to start a union branch and in exposing appalling working conditions.

East Anglia is a notorious low wage area. It became clear that the equal pay issue had to be tackled directly.

The Red Ladder Theatre per-

first thing they say is: "Alright, lassies, eyes down on the red number five", as if that's all we're interested in. They just hold us to ridicule, we didn't go into this with all the tambourines going. We were all afraid. It was unknown ground to us, trying to breach the gap between the men and the women.'

By the Thursday management had agreed to £1.70 immediately for the women and £2.25 in August—but nothing for the men.

'We women decided that without the men the whole cause was lost so at another meeting we all came out again. This was the first time there'd been unification, the very first time. But we led it. When even non-union labour comes out it shows what dissatisfaction there is in the factory.'

'This will definitely mean that more women will join the union (TASS). At the moment we only have one woman shop-steward and now we've got at least two names of women who are willing to be shop-stewards.'

It's no wonder only 30 per cent of the women were in the union before, though.

Strikers

'We had no respect from the union. We were treated as though we were of no account and manipulated. Although we had the support of the men in the factory the union never made it official. From now onwards they're going to have to take us seriously, our action has also proved to the men that we have to be fully represented and our voices heard or we'll act spontaneously anyway.'

The final agreement to an offer by the management was £2.62 for the women with £1.70 in the autumn towards equal pay, £3.25 for skilled men and £3.10 for unskilled men.

'We lost out in the end. But it'll stand us in good stead in the autumn. If there's another dispute over our equality money then we can turn to the men for support, and remind them that we came out for them now, when they weren't going to get anything of the national agreement.'

One of the men strikers pointed out that for some of the male strikers the penny hadn't still dropped. They said 'they stirred it up—but we won it' at the mass meeting held to accept management's final offer.

Before the battle at Keighley women there fought over minor issues on conditions. Now they've been out over a big issue, they've created unity for the future. Winifred Allen summed it up.

'This,' she said, 'is a little slice of history.'

JULIET ASH

Fascism on the retreat

THE REGIME of Marcelo Caetano, fascist dictator of Portugal, wasn't ended in Lisbon, but in the liberated areas of Mozambique. The organisation which steadily drove the Portuguese Army back was Frelimo, the national liberation movement.

Lennart Malmer, a Swedish film director has made a documentary on that struggle, FRELIMO.



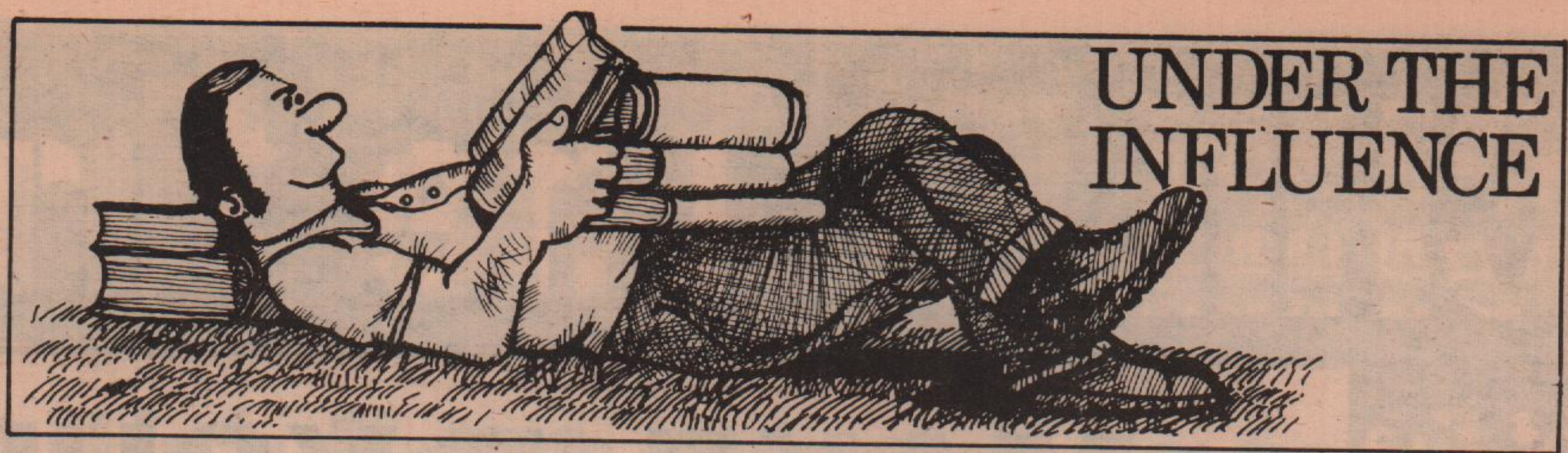
It lasts 50 minutes, costs £10 to hire is in colour and on 16mm. Since it has only just been dubbed into English, its distribution is only just being finalised.

It is available from the Other Cinema, as are two other films on Africa, WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY and MAU-MAU, which deal with Britain's role on Kenya, from the arrival of white settlers to, in the second film, the creation of the myth of the Mau-Mau terror.

Plenty of people died—but 15,000 were Africans and 32 were white settlers...

A STRUGGLE rather nearer home was that of the Mangrove Nine. The Mangrove is a West Indian restaurant in Notting Hill Gate, London. Over a long period the restaurant was a centre for black activists—and for police harassment. The battle eventually found its way to the Old Bailey, and was won by the people, not the police. The story is told in MANGROVE NINE, a short 16mm film also available from The Other Cinema.

The Other Cinema is at 12/13 Little Newport Street, London, WC2H 7JJ (01-734 8508/9).



Clearing the jungle for socialism...

CONTINUING the second series of Under the Influence, in which socialists write about the books and plays which first made them think about politics. London printworker ROSS PRITCHARD, a member of the IS executive committee, tells how Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle*, a study of the bestial conditions in the Chicago slaughterhouses in the early part of this century, helped him understand conditions in Glasgow, where he grew up. The book, unfortunately out of print can be obtained from most libraries.

DURING the 1959 printers' dispute, which lasted six weeks, the unions involved followed their usual practice of not calling out apprentices.

This was not as important as it seemed to some of us apprentices at the time but, nevertheless, whether the overall effect was minimal or not, the personal effect on us was immense. Some of us felt that to cross the picket line, under any circumstances, was scabbing.

After one stormy branch meeting, where a handful of us had unsuccessfully called for apprentices to strike (we didn't have a vote, so we could only call) we retired to the pub to lick our wounds.

As the arguments raged, two non-printers lurking around the boozier joined us. They told us they were Communists.

Convince

Armed with irrefutable facts supplied by the *Scottish Daily Express*, we soon demolished them. Communism was 'a good theory but didn't work in practice', or it was 'against human nature'. Better still: 'What about Hungary?'

On reflection, they must have dealt with the first two objections reasonably well, although I can clearly remember being totally unconvinced about Hungary. One of them did, however, convince me I should read a book called *The Jungle*, by Upton Sinclair.

It would be wrong to say I was immediately converted to Marxism by it. What is certainly true is that it made all sorts of connections with my own experiences.

ALL those who have promised to write for *Under the Influence* or who have ideas about people who would, please contact Dave Widgey at Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

The succession of immigrants searching for a living in the Chicago stockyards echoed my own family, one from a Northern Ireland background, one from the South.

Their only supposed solace from poverty, the Christian Church, raged against them for daring to marry each other. Bringing up six children in two rooms with an outside toilet shared with three other families compared well with the Chicago slums.

The stories of my old man searching for work in the Thirties duplicated the plight of the Lithuanians and other poor immigrants portrayed in *The Jungle*.

There was, of course, nothing extraordinary about my family. Glasgow was full of many similar, driven from Ireland or the Highland Clearances or whatever.

Expose

Sure, some of us had escaped. Glasgow Corporation had built huge housing estates miles from the slums. Housing estates without pubs, clubs, cafes, playgrounds, football pitches, cinemas but with Co-op shops. But we had baths where you could



pile up your old bus tickets back to the slums.

Unfortunately, Sinclair would have loved the Glasgow Housing Schemes, as they are called. After his brilliant expose of rapacious capitalism at its worst, he degenerated to believing socialism equalled the Tennessee Valley Authority.

In his last books he was convinced that we in Britain under Clement Attlee were living under socialism. A situation, even as a child, I think I would have noticed. Nevertheless, this book is still a

powerful call for a socialist alternative and convinced me to join the socialist movement and fight for such an alternative.

Our job as IS members is to point out that although to many *The Jungle* has changed, the snakes are still there. Their fangs are starting to come out so let's organise the de-poisoning.

Sinclair ends this book with a cry from a socialist orator: 'Chicago will be ours.' We will need to substitute 'The World'.

Nationwide—a local anaesthetic

IT'S HARD to say exactly why NATIONWIDE (BBC-1) is so repugnant. Perhaps it is because it reminds me of school, or rather what I imagine a co-educational minor public school is like.

Michael Barrett is the headmaster, Bob Wellings and Sue Lawley are the head boy and girl, Jolly Jimmy Hill is the sports master and Suzanne Hall is the English mistress who could turn pretty nasty if you step out of line.

The rest of the staff are in their classrooms around the country and we, the long-suffering viewer, are the pupils to be filled with large dollops of random, useless information.

Golf Club

Fixed in its middle-class outlook (strikes are bad, pay claims greedy, militants delinquent) the programme has the air of smug self-congratulations that come with stepping out of this year's Jaguar at the golf club. Barrett is particularly good at this, probably because he gets plenty of practice.

When any real issues get to be discussed the programme is 'fair' by allowing 'both sides' of an argument to be heard. In other words one person says what he would do about something and then another person says what he would do, and they both talk comfortably around the subject—

without doing anything.

The purpose of these discussions seems to be to avoid disturbing viewers from their sleep. If bad feeling or controversy does occur, Barrett is quick to smooth it over with some commonplace, sorry remark. He pretends he and the programme are politically neutral, but he is a Tory and the programme upholds the conservative idea that all problems are 'isolated', that they can be dealt with where and when they

occur, not removed or prevented by any large-scale social change.

I once saw Barrett embarrassed in a discussion about pay rises under Phase Three. Someone asked him how much his pay had gone up recently. He mumbled that he was sure the viewers wouldn't be interested in that.

But we are. That is the point, and that is what it's all about.

JOHN PRANCE

THE LOYAL WIVES OF COWLEY

*I once had a vision of a paradise
Where the management always paid a good price
And Trade Unions were no longer required
To fight for the pay and conditions desired.*

*And inscribed in gold letters above the gate
Was 'Enter the working man's paradise, mate'
Then 'neath this inscription for all to see
'This plant is Cowley, BLMC'.*

*In the Labour Relations Department I saw
Three hundred tea cups and saucers or more
And the Personnel feller said 'Hear me, my brothers
The only Union recognised here is named 'Mothers'.*

*'We've suffered no loss through industrial strife
Since ignoring the man to talk to his wife,
And we never allow these poor women to fret
Just because they're head over heels in debt.*

*'We feel that these husbands their duties are shirking
When these debts can be settled by over-time working.
So we tell these poor wives who are right up that creek,
That their husbands can work here for seven days a week.*

*'Now seven days of toil, we fully agree,
Must have an effect on a man's energy,
And all the directors, they think it's a sin—
They're sobbing their hearts out as the profits roll in!*

*So here's to the 'men', or should that read 'squirts'?
Who take refuge behind their women folks' skirts,
And the 'loyal' wives of Cowley, who make militants
shiver,
And sell themselves and their class straight down the
river.*

EX-SAPPER

PREVIEW

○ SATURDAY, BBC-2. No times are available for any BBC programme, but the late night film, *THE RULING CLASS* is a rambling but often savagely funny attack on—the ruling class...

○ SUNDAY, BBC-1. The evening film is *THE BIG SLEEP* with Humphrey Bogart. The career of excellent Geordie rock musician Allen Price is covered in *OMNIBUS*.

○ MONDAY, ITV, 10.15 ANTONIONI'S CHUNG KUO (CHINA) is a massive documentary by one of Italy's finest directors. The result of five weeks filming in China and it should be the best programme of the week.

○ TUESDAY, BBC-1. Documentary on the assassination of Italian socialist, *THE MATTEOTTI AFFAIR*, in 1942, might be relevant to today...

○ THURSDAY, BBC-1. The life of a working class family is the subject of Tony Garnett produced play *HARD LABOUR*.

CHILE: The firms who

MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS TO STOP THEIRS

Some of the men who won't be holding the country to ransom

AT LEAST 10,000 socialists and trade unionists have been executed since the Junta seized power. Many more have been jailed. Those slaughtered include:

Luis Rojas
Secretary General, CUT (Chilean TUC) Department of Arrica.

Luis Almonacid
Secretary General, CUT, Province of O'higgins

Carlos Torres
Alejandro Flores
Counsellors, CUT, Province of Cautin: Leaders, health workers.

Santiago Alvarez
Counsellor, CUT, Province of Coquimbo

Daniel Mateluna
Counsellor, CUT, Department of Temuco

David Miranda
General Secretary, Miners Federation

Hector Rojo
Guillermo Alvarez
Samuel Nunez
Armando Jimenez
National leaders, stevedores' union

"The first step for Chileans is to learn the new rules of the game . . . Those who won't obey we will have to deal with 'the military way'."
Fernando Leniz, the Junta's Minister of Economics.

by **JIMMY McCALLUM**
TASS office convenor,
John Brown Engineering,
Clydebank

FOLLOWING the AUEW executive's official support for the blacking of arms for the Chile, groups of workers have stopped work on military contracts for the Junta.

At Rolls Royce, East Kilbride, the stand of the shop stewards to black work on engine repairs for Chilean fighter aircraft has been strengthened by the official support.

Work on the engines had, in fact, stopped about eight weeks ago.

Engineers in Yarrow shipyard on Clydeside walked off the frigate Lynch, which the yard is about to hand over to the Junta. The engineers followed the instructions of the Glasgow AUEW District Committee to black work on it.

When the AUEW instruction passes down to the district committees and the 2000 branches, the blacking of the work for the Junta would obviously gain support. Every militant must make certain the instruction is carried out and the blacking spread.

At the same time many workers are confused about the issues involved. Although they have no sympathy for General Pinochet's thugs and are angry at the murder of thousands of trade unionists, they see the blacking as a threat to their jobs.

At Scott-Lithgow on the Lower Clyde, the instruction was rejected despite statements by the regional officer, Gavin Laird, and the district secretary Ian McKee.

The workers obviously thought blacking the two submarines being built there would lead to redundancies. As a similar decision on Tyneside proved, many workers share this fear.

In fact the fear is groundless. If shipyard workers stop building frigates and subs, it doesn't mean there will then be no work.

Development of the North Sea Oil field means that supply and support ships, not to mention tankers, must be built on

Once the decision to act was taken, all was accomplished with commendable restraint and superb timing. The official figure of casualties to date (15 October, 1973) does not exceed 500, surely a modest price to pay for the overthrow of what had become a thoroughly corrupt Marxist dictatorship.

Even the city streets are notably cleaner and the Public Works Office seems to have come to life again. Office and factory hours have been lengthened and the momentum of work accelerated. But all now seem to feel that labour is rewarding.

Revel Dick, OBE president of the British-Chilean Chamber of Commerce, Santiago, in his newsletter sent to all British government departments and interested businessmen.

Dick, press attache at the British Embassy in Santiago during the Second World War, is now a director of the Liverpool-based Pacific Steam Navigation Company which handles the lucrative Chilean copper importing trade. He is also a British Leyland agent in Chile.

the Clyde—more than enough to employ Clydeside shipyard workers.

The employers will always put about the idea of redundancies when workers' action threatens their profits and power. And that is what is involved in Chile.

The Junta came to power to push back the trade union movement. When Allende was president, the trade unions had been growing in strength and numbers.

In a land dominated by giant international companies the working class had been making gains. The big US copper companies like Kennecott Anaconda, and other firms like IIT, were taken over. Wages had begun to make inroads into inflation and conditions had improved.

That is what annoys the international bosses—and what makes them support the Junta. The Chilean generals protect their

interests. That is why they arm them.

The Junta have only ever used frigates and Hunter fighters for what they call 'Internal Security'. The first time the aircraft were used was when the presidential palace and factories in Santiago were bombed.

The only time frigates have been used was when they bombarded the port of Valparaiso.

The ships have been used since then as prisons and floating torture chambers for trade unionists. That is why the blacking will affect the junta.

When Liverpool dockers refused to unload Chilean copper, the generals were shaken. All the newspapers in Chile screamed hysterically about the international trade union conspiracy. Now their supply of arms has been threatened, the

These pages of Socialist Worker are being reprinted as a broadsheet. Help spread the blacking of trade with Chile by taking copies to factories listed here, to trades councils, to union branch meetings and conferences. Copies 2p each (postage 5p for any number of copies) from IS BOOKS, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Money with orders please.

junta will suffer a greater shock. Blacking impairs their ability to stifle working-class opposition to the regime. Already there have been strikes in Concepcion and Santiago and at the Lota mine.

Despite the threats of the junta, despite the murder of thousands of rank and file trade unionists, workers in Chile are still prepared to defend their rights.

If they are to continue to do so they need our support. It is a question of trade union solidarity.

The blacking has to be extended. There are other products the junta depends on. The blacking of Chilean copper, for example, would frighten the generals.

Many companies in Britain handle Chilean copper, many are involved in contracts for Chile. If action is taken to make the AUEW decision bite in those factories, it won't be the jobs that are threatened but the future of the junta.

The junta can be affected if trade unionists in this country support the stand made at Rolls Royce and Yarrow.

FIGHT to extend the blacking decision to every factory involved with work to Chile. Where possible build Action Committees from the stewards committees involved in blacking.

SUPPORT the Chilean Solidarity campaign through stewards' committees, trade union branches and district committees.

The AUEW decision has to be built on. It is a challenge to the Labour government which would like to sell arms to anti-working class regimes like Chile, South Africa and Greece.

Callaghan and Wilson are all too ready to set aside the trade union movement protest and continue to back up the junta.

UPW: Back in business?

LAST WEEK'S Post Office Workers' union conference in Bournemouth was a great step forward. Time and again, members showed their general dissatisfaction at the attitude of the executive.

The executive was censured for general secretary Tom Jackson's disgraceful television interview attacking the miners during the pit strike. On many other issues this mood continued. Amendment after amendment was carried against the executive's recommendations.

In the telephonists section, conference delegates from London North Central Tels No 1 Branch carried a motion stopping the diversion of telephonists' work into other areas to offset staffing shortages.

Joan Kaye, moving, said: 'Only the Post Office stands to gain, both financially and operationally and at our expense.'

Delegates made it clear to the EC that the only way to solve recruitment problems was by getting the rate for the job and by improving conditions.

Again, the uniformed grades sectional conference made it clear on many issues that they would have their say.

Saturday deliveries are to be stopped and drivers of heavy goods vehicles are to demand an increased allowance to bring their wages into line with the transport industry.

out into the labour movement and win support to see if Labour would keep their side of the bargain.

Again, an amendment moved by Jimmy Johnson of Glasgow and District Amalgamated Branch, for a ballot of members on industrial action if necessary, met with the same response.

In his opening speech Jackson made great play of the fact that 'the UPW are back in business'. It has become apparent that this is true so far as the mood of delegates is concerned.

But the executive is prepared to go no further than brave words. Norman Stagg, deputy general secretary, hysterically attacked an amendment on Bank Holiday working which suggested the mildest form of industrial action.

Lurking

We have a negotiating job to do. And it is to those negotiations we must direct our minds. 'Demonstrate your faith in the skill of your negotiators,' he said. 'We must not go into battle with this threat [of industrial action] lurking in the background.'

But, in reply, Bob Berriman (London District Council Telecomms) said this would do a power of good. 'When we say we are back in business we must show we mean business.'

The amendment was carried overwhelmingly.

Obviously, the executive council recognised the new spirit of enthusiasm and traded on it to get applause. But when the opportunity presented itself to put fine words into action, they were against the prospect. When a lead was needed, it was not given.

If they cannot be relied upon to carry out the policies that many members want we need to forge rank and file links within our union. Those members who are really prepared to put these words into action must band together to achieve the union's aims.

A leaflet arguing this case was handed out on the last day of conference and was well received.

Contract

Another important advance was made on the issue of the shorter working week. Jackson opposed this, saying: 'If we carry this it will be to the detriment of pay.'

His remarks were torn to pieces by delegates.

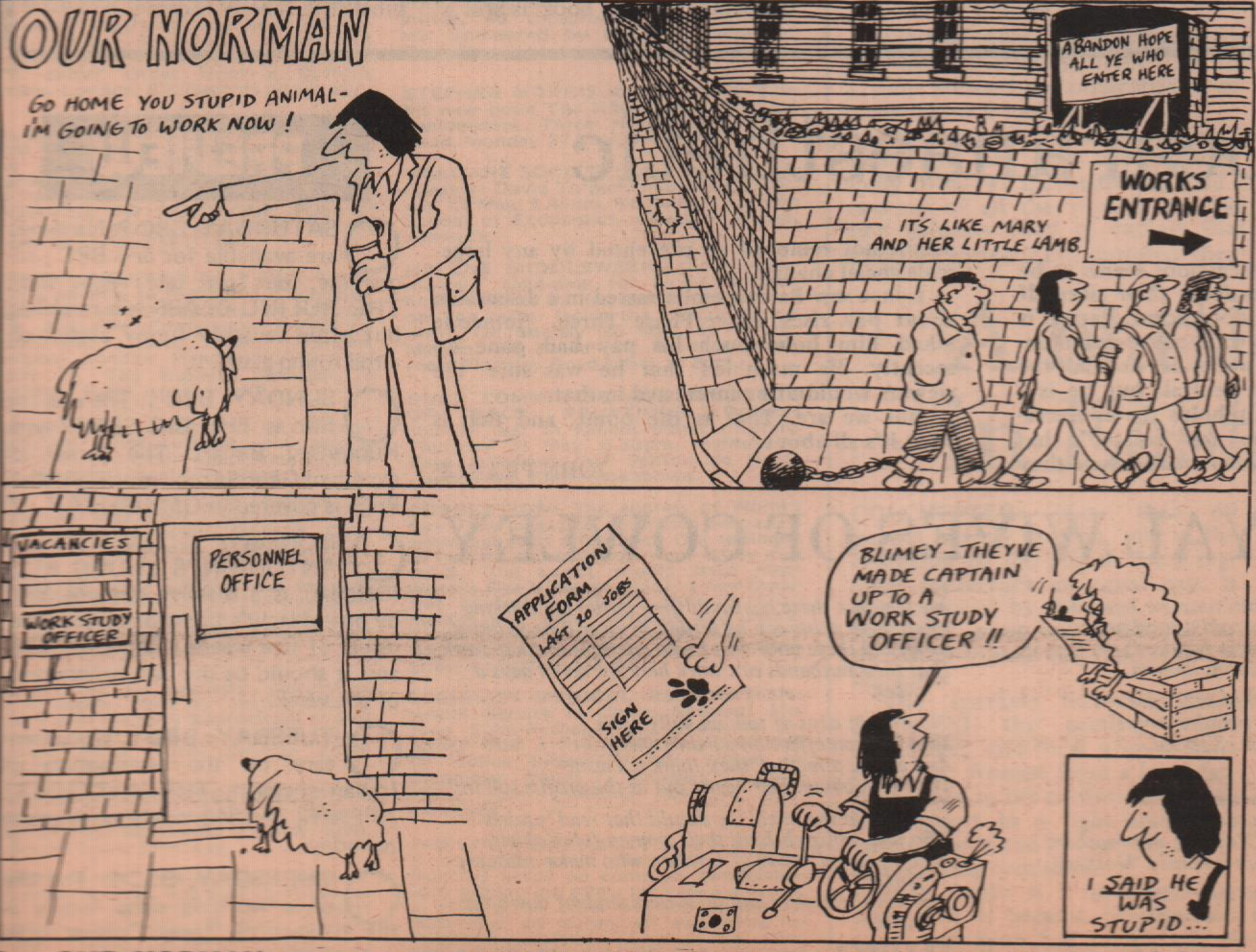
On wages, unfortunately, the executive were allowed to convey the impression that the Labour-TUC social contract was unchallengeable.

An amendment moved by Don Failes (Croydon Amalgamated) opposing all voluntary and statutory wage policies, received few votes.

He said: 'If we agree to voluntary wage restraint, the result will be restrained wages and business as usual for price rises.'

The executive urged delegates not to rock the boat. Jackson said we must keep our side of the bargain between the TUC and the Labour government.

The executive was not prepared to go



Past OUR NORMAN cartoons are published in The Our Norman Book, price 40p from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

trade in torture

WHERE THEY ARE,
HOW TO HIT THEM:
A GUIDE FOR EVERY
TRADE UNIONIST

Companies involved in arms trade

Babcock & Wilcox: (boilers for two Chilean 'Almirante' class destroyers [completed 1960]. Also, boilers for two US-built cruisers)

Anthony Gibbs Ltd: ('Anthony Gibbs Ltd has made a speciality over the years of financing arms sales to Peru and Chile. At the present time, the house of Gibbs is providing the Chilean navy with the wherewithal to build and refit a number of vessels in British shipyards.' [Time Out article, 9-15 November, 1973])

Hawkers: (up to 39 Hawker Hunter aircraft, of which the last 7 or 8 have been delivered, or have been planned to be delivered, in the last few months)

Parsons: Pametrade engines for *Williams* and *Riveros* (ships completed 1960)

Plessey: (AWSI and Target Indication radar for *Williams* and *Riveros*—probably equipped during refit 71-74 period)

Rolls Royce: East Kilbride. (aero-engines for Hawker Hunters)

Scott's Shipbuilding & Engineering: Greenock. (building two 'Oberon' class submarines for Chilean Navy)

Short Bros & Harland: Belfast. (Seacat missiles fitted on *Williams* and *Riveros* and new frigates *Condell* and *Lynch*)

Swan Hunters: Tyneside. (extensive refits of *Williams* and *Riveros*)

Vickers-Armstrongs: Barrow. (*Williams* and *Riveros* built and commissioned into Chilean Navy 1960; fire control systems installed 1971-74 period)

Weirs: Cathcart. (pumps, possibly for frigates or submarines)

Yarrow & Co: Scotstoun. (building two 'Leander' class submarines for Chilean Navy)

Copper importing firms

British Insulated Callender's Cables: 21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1. (factory using copper probably in Warrington)

Dunlop Pirelli: Dunlop House, 25 Ryder Street, St James's Street, London SW1. (factory using copper, possibly in Southampton and Gateshead)

London Electric Wire Co: Church Road, London E10. (factory using copper probably in Salford)

Enfield Rolling Mills: Millmarsh Lane, Brimsdown, Enfield.

Johnson & Nephew: Forge Lane, Manchester. (factory using copper probably in Sheffield)

Imperial Metal Industries: PO Box 216, Witton, Birmingham.

British firms exporting to Chile

Agfa-Gevaert: Great West Road, Brentford, Middx. (providing photographic film for hospital laboratories and also for technical laboratories in mining enterprises; probably also for hospitals generally in Chile)

Air Shields (UK): 1 Towerfields Close, Shoeburyness, Essex.

Amoco (UK): International Life House, Olympic Way, Wembley, Middx. (supplier of chemicals—floculants, chemical product used in the flotation of copper)

Aeroquip (UK): Studley Road, Redditch, Worcester.

Armco: 76 Grosvenor Street, London W1.

Asea (Great Britain): Villiers House, 41 Strand, London, WC2. (pumps, hoses and electrical items—important for Andina Mine; part of order fulfilled in Sweden, part in Britain)

Atlas Copco (Great Britain): Maylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. (have commercial [sales and service] office in Chile. Parent company is Swedish [Atlas Copco MCT AB]. Drilling machines, fork-lift trucks for mines)

Attwater & Sons: PO Box 39, Preston, Lancs. (machine tools, pumps, for mines)

A & V Engineering: Awel House, Millenhall Lane, Bloxwich, Staffs.

Babcock & Wilcox: Oil and Gas Firing Sales Dept, Babcock House, 209 Euston Road, London, NW1. Manufacturing Division, Renfrew, Scotland. (supplies wide range of items)

Balfour Darwins: Export Division, PO Box 117, Capital Steel Works, Sheffield. (exports machine tools; extremely important)

John Bedford & Sons: Lion Works, Mowbray Street, Sheffield. (manufactures quarry drilling machinery)

Berec International: High Road, Whetstone, London N20. (manufactures batteries)

T W Bark: 81 Fountain Street, Manchester 2. (exports items for hospitals)

BICC: Wiring and General Cables Division, Helsby, Warrington. (copper importing firm, also supplies wires, cables for electrical conductors may be involved with CODELCO in factory in Chile for wire manufacture, or a refinery)

Black & Decker: Cannon Lane, Maidenhead, Bucks. (important supplier of drilling machines—much used in mines)

Blundell Harling: Lynch Lane, Weymouth Dorset.

Blundell, Spence & Co: Sculcoates Lane, Hull, Yorks.

James Blundell & Sons: Lancashire File Works, Prescott.

Bosch Ltd: Watford. (a minor supplier for mines—spark plugs, coils, etc. [electrical accessories], but important exporter to Chile. Not known if Watford factory is supplier for Chile)

Bowmaker (Plant) Ltd: Watling Street, Cannock, Staffs.

British & General Tube: Trading Estate, Slough, Bucks.

British Aqua-Chem: Box 4, Motherwell. (subsidiary of American company)

British Crane & Excavator Corp: Crown Works, Sunderland.

British Pins: Pedigree Works, Bearwood Road, Smethwick.

British Ropes: Anchor and Hope Lane, Charlton and Warmsworth Hall, Warmsworth, Doncaster.

Buck & Hickman: 2 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 (also possibly Watford)

Burroughs Wellcome & Co: The Wellcome Building, 183 Euston Road, London NW1.

Union Carbide (UK): PO Box 55, Manchester M17. (supplies electrical products, spare parts)

Castrol: Burmah-Castrol House, Marybone Road, London, NW1. (supplier of oils)

Caterpillar Tractor: Desford, Leicester. (supplies spares and parts for tractors and other vehicles)

Dunlop: Fort Dunlop, Erdington, Birmingham 24, (important, but declining due to Japanese competition: tyres)

Duncan Fox: London import-export, food distribution in Chile.

Eaton Corporation: Materials Handling Dept, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton. (subsidiary of American firm)

Eimco: Gateshead. (owned by Ogdon Corp of America; exports mining machinery)

Enfield Castles, Enfield Rolling Mills, Enfield Standard Power: Millmarsh Lane, Brimsdown, Middx. (Important trader: importing copper)

Fairey Engineering: (nuclear power station contractors)

Falnr Bearing: Upper Villiers Street, Wolverhampton, Staffs. (agents, supplies bearings and some steel products)

Fag Bearing: Heath Mill Road, Wolverhampton, (supplies ball bearings: important supplier)

Fisher & Porter: Salterbeck Trading Estate, Workington. (supplies electrical and laboratory equipment; more important in USA)

Ford Motor Tractor: Cranes Farm Road, Basildon, Essex. (important for other areas: transport, agriculture, factory in Chile now reopened)

A Gallenkamp & Co: 6 Christopher Street, London EC2. (important supplier of electrical equipment, probably only as agent)

General Electric: Various addresses, not very important in Britain, though is in USA

Guest, Keen & Nettlefold: Several divisions.—could be important (rumoured recently obtained £15 million contract in Chile)

Hartman & Braun (UK): Northampton. (probably fairly important supplier for copper mines)

Hewitt-Robins: 8 Cavendish Place, London. (engines, spares, rubber products—could be important)

ICI: (supplies pneumatic tools; could be important supplier)

Ingersoll Rand: PO Box 2, Chorley New Road, Bolton. (supplies pumps, spare parts: American owned firm)

Joy Manufacturing: Greenock, Scotland. (spares for cranes; pumps: more important in USA)

Kodak: Hemel Hempstead, Manchester and elsewhere—American owned.

Leeds & Northrup: Wharfedale Road, Tyseley, Birmingham 11. (probably important as supplier to copper mines)

Martindale Electric: Neasden Lane, London NW19.

Mike Safety Appliances: Glasgow E3. (safety equipment for miners: important)

3M UK: 3M House, Wigmore Street, London W1. (many types of supplies: stationary, machines, electronics)

Minnesota, Mining & Manufacturing: Harlow, Essex. (American owned: laboratories: makes industrial tapes)

Monsanto Chemicals: Monsanto House, 10-18 Victoria Street, London SW1. (important as supplier of chemical products)

Ransomes Chilena SA

Reckitt & Colman: PO Box 26, Burlington Lane, Chiswick, London (Industrias Atlantis SA)

Rendel, Palmer & Tritton: Southwark Bridge House, 61 Southwark Street, London SE1. (Rendel, Palmer and Tritton (Chile) Ltda)

Rio-Tinto Zinc: 6 St James's Square, London SW1. (Ireco Chile Ltda, (subsidiary/associate or Ireco Chemicals, USA)

Royal Insurance: 1 North John Street, Liverpool L69. (Cia Nacional de Seguros 'La Britanica', Cia Nacional de Seguros 'La Reina')

'Shell' Transport & Trading Co: Shell Centre, London SE1. (Shell Chile SA Industrial Chimica, Shell Chile SA Distribuidora)

Rapid American: New York, 10022/NY (US parent). (Seagers de Chile SAIC)

Morganite Carbon: Swansea. (some important electrical supplies)

Nordberg Manufacturing: Clifton House, 83 Uxbridge Road, London W3. (spares for belts: more important in USA)

Norton Abrasives: Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. (based in Welwyn Garden City, owned by Norton Company of America)

Ozalid: 15 Bonhill St, London EC2. (possibly electronic equipment)

Pacific Steam Navigation Co: Liverpool. Important seaborne trade with Chile. Has been subject to blacking action by Liverpool dockers. Chilean chairman of PMSA is Mr Revel Dick OBE who is also president of British-Chilean Chamber of Commerce and a leading British supporter of Junta.

Perkins Engines: Peterborough, (could be important especially to Codelco)

Power Gas: London W1. (part of Davey Ashmore. Based at Stockton. Manufacturing refineries)

RCA: Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx. (could be important—electrical parts etc)

RCF Holdings: Hockley Abbey Works, Whitmore St, Birmingham B18 5BD. (several subsidiaries in Sheffield, Crawley—exporting hand-tools)

Rustenlung Platinum Mines: PO Box 590, Johannesburg, South Africa.

STS Holdings: PQ Box 62 Allied House, St John Street, London EC1. (owned by Allied Breweries)

Saunders Valve: Cwmbran, Monmouthshire. (pumps and valves—could be important)

Scandura: P O Box 18, Cleckheaton, Yorks. (owned by the BBA Group and making industrial belts, asbestos and glass and textiles)

Scottish Wire Rope: Crowhill Works, Bishopriggs, Lanarkshire. (could be important—wires)

Shell Chemicals: 41/47 Strand, WC2. (oil and chemicals—important)

Shell International: Shell Centre, SE1. (Royal-Dutch Shell group of companies)

Shell Mex & BP: Shell Mex House, Strand, London (important)

Silvers: Great West House, Great West Road, Brentford, Middx. (engines, could be important)

Simplex: PO Box 2, Blythe Bridge, Stoke. (electric equipment and spares, important)

Swap On Tools: Trafalgar Road, Kettering, Northants. (tools—important)

Square D: Cheyney Manor, Swindon, Wilts. (important, electronic equipment)

L S Starrett Co: Jedburgh, Roxburghshire. (important, electrical parts, owned by L S Starrett in US)

Tucker Products: Bedwas, Monmouthshire. (important)

Turner & Newall: 77 Fountain St, Manchester M2 ZEA. (owns Ferodo, holding company with branches throughout UK: asbestos mines in Canada, Africa, US)

TBA Industrial Products: Rochdale, PO Box 40, Lancs. (important—tools and machinery)

W A Tyzack & Co: Stella Works, Hereford St, Sheffield. (chemical products, more important in US and Canada)

Union Carbide UK: 8 Grafton St, London W1. (chemical products, more important in US and Canada)

Unilever Export: Unilever House, Blackfriars, EC4. (factory in Chile)

Victanliz: 46 Wilbury Way, Hitchin, Herts. (important)

Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co: 82 York Way, Kings Cross, N1. (electrical and spare parts, more important in US)

Wilson Pipe Fittings: 12 Heatherhouse Road, Irvine, Scotland. (owned by industrial and Commercian Finance Organisation, which is owned by Bank of England, Scottish Banks and London drawing banks)

Yale Materials Handling Equipment: Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, Staffs. (handling trunks and lifts, pneumatic equipment. More important in US)

G H Zeal: Lombard Rd, Merton, London SW19. (based in London, making industrial heat-measuring instruments)

RALPH Melton Bateman is the new president of the Confederation of British Industry, the employers' lobby. Last week he and his fellow CBI officers were lobbying the government in protest against 'criticisms' of regimes like Chile, South Africa and Greece.

The idea is to put on pressure to end the ban on arms deals with these countries.

The only thing the CBI is interested in is profits. And very considerable profits are to be made in the arms trade. It doesn't matter in the slightest that the hardware sold is used against workers in Chile and elsewhere.

In any case Mr Bateman is no stranger to violence against workers. He is chairman of Turner and Newall, the asbestos giant who have been killing British workers in the pursuit of profit for years.

Firms with subsidiaries in Chile

Antofagasta (Chile) & Bolivia Railway: 1 Broad Street Place, Finsbury Circus, London EC2. (Andes Trust, Chilean Northern Railway, Cia Ferro-Cerril de Aguas Blancas)

British-American Tobacco: 7 Millbank, London SW1. (Chilena de Tabacco SA Cia)

Babcock & Wilcox: Cleveland House, St James's Square, London SW1. (SA de Construcciones Metalicas)

British Leyland: Berkeley Square House, Berkeley Square, London W1. (British Leyland Automotores de Chile SA)

British Ropes: Warmsworth Hall, Doncaster, Yorks. (Productos de Acero SA)

This provisional list of British firms trading with Chile was supplied by the Chile Solidarity Campaign. For more information contact CSC, 129 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London (01-272 4299)

Cable & Wireless: Mercury House, Theobald's Road, London WC1. (Transradio Chilena Cia de Telecomunicaciones SA)

Coats Patons: 155 St Vincent Street, Glasgow C2. (Cia Industrial Hilos Cadena SA)

Commercial Union Assurance: St Helens, 1 Undershaft, London EC3. ('La Aconcagua' Cia Nacional de Seguros)

EMI: Hayes, Middx. (Sociedad Chilena de Ediciones Musicales, Industrias Electricas y-Musicales Odeon SA)

Anthony Gibbs: 22 Bishopsgate, London EC2. (Compania Comercial de Inversiones Anton Ltda, Gibbs and Cia SAC, Pintura Blundell, Spence y Cia (Chile) SA)

Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance: Royal Exchange, London EC3. (Compania Nacional de Seguros La Minerva)

Head Wrightson & Co: The Friarage,

Yard, Yorkshire. (United Consortium (Chile) Ltd)

ICI: Imperial Chemical House, Millbank, London SW1. (Cia Imperial de Industrias Quimicas de Chile, SA)

Lloyds & Bolsa International Bank: 40-66 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4. (Importadora Industrial 'Bulnes' SAC, Importadora Industrial 'Bulnes' Ltda, Cia Inversiones Ltda, Sociedad Comercial Cominsa Ltda, Cia de Seguros 'La Republica' Ltda, Inmobiliaria San Antonio-Huerfanos Ltda, Representaciones y Servicios Londres Ltda, Savasta y Cia Ltda)

Norwich Union Life Insurance Society: Surrey Street, Norwich, Norfolk. (Compania de Seguros 'La Nacion', Compania de Seguros 'La Victoria',—both subsidiaries of Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society)

Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies: Hacton Works, Ipswich, Suffolk. (Implementos Agricolas Ransomes Chilena Ltda,

Consulting us-then down the Drain!

by Martin Williamson

Member of Islington NALGO strike committee

NORTH LONDON:—The executive of the government officers' union NALGO, is determined the total strike at Islington will not be spread.

This is despite demands by Tower Hamlets and Hackney Borough branches that they too be brought out on strike.

Islington's 1500 NALGO members have now been on strike for seven weeks. The executive badly want us back to work so they can substitute selective strikes 'in strategic areas.'

The executive's emergency committee met on Friday last week. But rather than sell out Islington openly, they hoped to be able to persuade us 'by consultation' to return to work voluntarily.

'Strategy'

On Monday a packed Islington branch meeting heard NALGO general secretary Geoffrey Drain and regional organiser Alan Jenkinson outline the 'new strategy'.

It soon became clear that they want Islington back to work quickly and that increasing action by key sections elsewhere was more of a long-term proposition.

The Islington rank and file members were not slow to see through Drain's patronising smokescreen and left him in no doubt about their attitude. By an overwhelming majority they demanded that Islington be kept out on total strike until key sections were brought out throughout London.

As Islington NALGO Action, the rank and file group in the union, said: 'The lesson that must be learned from this strike is the need for a strong shop stewards' movement, a rank and file group in every department and branch of NALGO.'

'Those who take office in NALGO must be forced to heed the wishes of those they are supposed to represent.'

New tactic -blackmail!

by Peter Household

CRUDE blackmail is the latest tactic used by the employers on the National Joint Council for Local Government.

Last week they met NALGO and NUPE representatives to discuss the union's 20 per cent national pay claim. At the meeting they had just one thing to say. There would be no discussion until NALGO called off its strike action over the London wage allowance.

The aim of the local government employers is clearly to split our London members from the rest of us outside London. If their scheme was to work, the employers would have killed two birds with one stone. They would have sabotaged the London claim and the national one.

NALGO has never before been involved in action on as large a scale as that in London. This makes it essential for the morale of the members outside London that the campaign is successful. If it is then we can stage a real fight for the national claim.

All NALGO members outside London must act against this blackmail. They should get their branches to support London, with overtime bans, non-co-operation with management techniques and the like.

JEAN BACKED IN COVENTRY AND HULL

HULL:—At two meetings last week Jean Jepson, victimised transport union convenor at the Armstrong Patents factory Beverley near Hull spoke on her case. She and Pat Lloyd, former deputy convenor spoke in Coventry at the 74 Engineering union branch covering the Chrysler Stoke and Ryton plants.

Pat Lloyd explained developments since Jean's sacking. Resolutions in support of her struggle and asking for her to be invited to speak to the shop stewards' committees were passed. A collection was taken.

Earlier in the week back in Hull she spoke on the same subject with other platform speakers including Sid Simms, secretary of the unofficial docks shop stewards committee, John Nolan, secretary, British Brothers Transport Union branch, and Stan Soddaby, a member of the TGWU Region 10 committee was chairman.

THE BREAKING OF THE STRANGLEHOLD

THE right-wing stranglehold on the 215,000-member Civil and Public Services Association has been broken.

For 23 years the union has been dominated by a right-wing group based on Catholic Action—until last week the left gained 16 of the 26 seats in the elections for the national executive during the annual conference.

In all other elected positions the right was virtually annihilated. As a result there is a good deal more chance the conference decisions will be acted on rather than thrown in the waste basket.

by Mike McGrath

The tone of the conference was set on the Monday morning. In an incident without precedent in the union the traditional first motion congratulating the executive on the latest pay settlement was replaced. Another motion was introduced, bitterly critical of the professional negotiators.

This was overwhelmingly carried. It was the

first of many bitter defeats suffered by the outgoing executive. So many in fact that by the fourth day of conference platform speakers opposing censure motions realised they were guaranteeing support for the censure.

Conference also saw a strong move against the pay research system of wage negotiation and in favour of free collective bargaining where you got what you fight for rather than what someone else's slide rule says.

Conference also passed a resolution supporting the introduction of the closed shop and an end to the use of agency typists. Given the clear conference decision and the massive swing to the left, we can now plan industrial action on these two problems.

This year's conference also considered rules revision. In this Redder Tape, the rank and file group, made the running with a call for the repeal of the rule forbidding canvassing and banning so-called unofficial bodies. This received the support of about 350 delegates, not quite enough.

IMMEDIATE

The conference also called for the immediate release of the Shrewsbury building workers and for the repeal of the Conspiracy Laws. Ministry of Defence delegates—now popularly known as Merchants of Death—spoke against this and referred to 'thugs and hooligans'. But they were denounced in turn and the motion was overwhelmingly carried.

Throughout, the base of the militancy was the members in the Department of Health and Social Security. But even the Ministry of Defence delegates, for so long the base of the right, were split on many issues.

Militants in the union now have the difficult task of going back to the branches and putting into action the decisions at conference.

Solid support must be given to the new executive majority as long as they carry these out.

HOLIDAY FIDDLE

COVENTRY:—Management at the Jaguar plant got an unpleasant shock this week after they told white-collar staff to take a day of their holidays next Wednesday. 350 members of ACTSS, the clerical section of the Transport Union, went on strike.

Management's idea is to shut down the plant completely on that day. The manual workers will be out and Jaguar management do not want to be 'bothered' with the staff. So they are to be forced to use up a day of their holiday to suit the bosses. TASS and ASTMS members at the plant were due to discuss the matter later this week.



DEMONSTRATORS on the march in Bradford on Saturday against the cancer of racism. In Birmingham too, that same day, socialists and militants were on the streets against the racists.

Finnegan is National Front parliamentary candidate for Erdington. He is also works manager for GKN Salisbury Transmissions and doubtless has a licence from the management for his right-wing extremist politics.

After a great deal of pressure from the local labour movement, the Labour group on Birmingham City Corporation refused to let the Front use the hall. They staged a protest demonstration but their 70-strong group was met with a counter-demonstration of 350 mobilised at three days notice.

Conspiracy Act out! say printers

A DEMAND for the repeal of the 1875 Conspiracy Act was carried overwhelmingly by the two-yearly conference of the print union SOGAT at Great Yarmouth last week. The union's executive has previously gone on record for the release of the six jailed building workers—at Shrewsbury.

The main theme throughout the conference was membership control and consultation. This came to the fore in the debate about reorganisation of branches who was to be involved in deciding which branches would be merged.

The basis of the union's trade conference was altered to allow the smaller branches to take part. Failure of full-time

officers to follow the decisions of these conferences led to a bid to set up a working party to look into the restructuring of the national wage agreements.

A resolution calling for election rather than appointment of national officials was carried, though a resolution for the election of organisers fell when linked to a ballot of the members in the relevant areas.

The conference went on record against any income policy and the executive was instructed not to recommend any national agreements in line with government legislation.

Conference also passed a resolution supporting the nurses and opposing the Labour government's decisions to send frigates to the Chilean junta.

Leyland: The plot thickens

OXFORD:—The battle at British Leyland over the right of workers to elect their own union representatives and have them accepted by management took another disturbing turn this week.

The Transport Union Region no 5 agreed to hold an inquiry into Leyland management's trumped-up allegations against Alan Thornett, the transport drivers' steward and deputy senior steward Leyland are victimising.

But when members of the 5/55 branch went to give evidence they found that they were not asked about the company's allegations at all but about the way the branch is run. Alan Thornett is chairman

case situation is that British Leyland

management have now told the union there is to be reduced production. 1000 workers are to be taken off the tracks and put on the labour pool.

It doesn't take a lot of imagination to see that a pool of 1000 workers in a factory of 10,000 means redundancies are on the way.

This indicates yet again that the victimisation of Alan Thornett was part of a broader plan to carve up union organisation and speed up production.

The Transport Union executive is to consider the Leyland situation at its meeting early in June. It is vital that all branches send in resolutions calling for the re-instatement of Alan Thornett as steward and deputy senior steward.

FIVE SITES OUT OVER SACKED 32

BIRMINGHAM:—Bryants, the building employers, are up to their dirty tricks again. On the Perry Barr Polytechnic site they sacked 32 men last Thursday, including three on the sick and some leading militants.

The sackings came after Bryants refused to pay the men for work done even though the architect had passed it. The men had only returned to work on the Monday after a national conciliation panel had instructed them to. They found the time-clock was locked, the hooter didn't blow and the foremen didn't call them out.

On the Wednesday Bryants locked up the job and, to show they meant business, brought alsation dogs and security men on to the site.

It is clear to Construction Union militants on other Bryants sites that these provocative actions are the thin end of the wedge. Bryants have plenty of work in the pipeline but are talking about sacking 500 directly-employed workers during the summer and changing to self-employed lump labour. They have already disguised the hoarding around new jobs to look as if they are being done by other firms, so they can bring on the Lump.

In this way they hope to cripple the trade union organisation on the site. The action at Perry Barr is seen as part of the softening-up operation.

But Bryants are not having it all their own way. Solidarity strike action involving several hundred men has spread to other Bryant sites: those at Woodgate Valley, City Centre, Bristol Street Motors, Talk of the Town and Priory Ringway have come out.

The politics of Lenin

Paul Ginsborg



International Socialists pamphlet 20p

OUT NOW

Paul Ginsborg's Introduction deals with the main political arguments which Lenin used in his work in the Russian and World Revolutionary movement. There are many sections, including Lenin's Life, Building the Party, Workers' Power, and Tactics and Methods.

Available from IS Bookshop, 265 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London N4.

Rally is warning for Chapple

BIRMINGHAM:—More than 600 plumbers and electricians attended a 'Reform the Union' Rally and demonstration last Saturday. The rally, sponsored by the Reform, Plumbers Action, and Flashlight groups, was an attempt to join the three organisations in action to democratise the Electricians and Plumbers Union.

The link-up was a complete success and a minimum programme for reform in the union was carried unanimously. But most of the discussion was low key and little concerning real activity was discussed. One delegate from Wales did stir the meeting with a demand that the rally should not easily support ex-right wing EEPFU official Mark Young, who appeared to have had a change of heart and now supported the reform group platform.

Change

The rally was certainly a great step forward in the fight to put the EEPFU in the hands of the membership, but a lot of work needs to be done. It is not sufficient just to change the union's leadership. The rank and file must be convinced of the need for change.

Reform groups should be built in each area uniting plumbers and electricians in the campaign. So far left-wing groups in the union have to keep low because of repression by the executive. Now is the time to throw off the mask and build a really strong organisation that will sweep out the present executive and replace them with plumbers and electricians who really represent the members.

Pay claims start at home

by Mary Phillips

MORE than 500 office workers employed by the Engineers Union are threatening to strike next week after their demands for a substantial wage increase and a London allowance of £200 met with a 'first and final' offer of £2.25 or 8 per cent from the union.

This was rejected by a three-to-one majority of the APEX members involved. Their request for a further meeting has been turned down flat by AUEW president Hugh Scanlon.

The workers are paid between £21.89 and £32.94, before stoppages, with only £1 a week extra for working in London. Many take home less than £25 a week. The offer is well within Phase Three, but Scanlon says he sees 'no purpose' in a further meeting.

When the elected APEX negotiating team met in London last weekend they heard calls for strike action to force a meeting and an improved offer from the Engineers. Telegrams were immediately sent to the general secretaries of the four AUEW sections demanding further negotiations before Friday this week.

The APEX negotiators have been empowered to call strike action should no positive response come from the AUEW.

£1 in our pockets

TEESSIDE:—Plant operators at British Steel's Cleveland Sinter Plant scored a short sharp victory last week.

The plant is in the dirtiest and dustiest part of the setworks. When the machine supposed to deal with the dust exploded and ground to a halt the plant operators, members of the National Union of Blast-furnacemen, demanded an extra £1 a shift to compensate for the appalling conditions. Management offered 25p.

Our response to this was an immediate strike. Within 24 hours we'd got the £1. Probably if we had gone through the tedious procedure recommended by many right-wing union officials we would have negotiated for six-months and finished with 10p a shift.

Happy to report

KETTERING:—Ian Reinecke, chairman of the journalists' union branch at the Evening Telegraph, has been reinstated without conditions after being sacked for writing an article to his union journal. Prompt and militant action by his 70 NUJ colleagues who immediately walked out on strike, helped win him his job back.



CENTRE POINT, MARK II

COVENTRY:—Last Saturday 40 people moved in and occupied Hillman House, one of several new buildings which have been built for speculative purposes. Hillman House is a block of flats and has been empty for several years. This is all the more scandalous because there is homelessness and profiteering in Coventry and a very long waiting list for council houses.

Later 250 people marched to the Council Chambers to present a petition to Councillor Tom McLatchie. His main comment was on what a big sacrifice he was making by giving up his Saturday afternoon . . .

DRIVERS TRICKED INTO DEFEAT-AND SACKINGS

by Eddie Madden

Road Transport Union Steward

STOCKPORT:—After two and a half weeks solid but unofficial strike by drivers at Peake Trailers, the men were got back to work through management tricks and lack of support from the Road Transport Union (RTU). I and two others got the sack.

The strength of the strike had the management scared. They had already

been forced to withdraw redundancy plans for the night shift, and had even gone to the length of having a picket trailed to the pub. At the key time we were all sent letters threatening dismissal if we didn't clock on the following morning.

The men returned, led by a non-union man—who has since applied to join. I stayed on picket at the gate. One driver, Bill McShannon, and a loader, Ron Green, refused to drive out past my picket. So at

the end of the day we were all three sacked.

No less despicable has been the inactivity of the union. With the exception of one regional official, John Stevenson, who has manned the picket line throughout, they didn't want to know. They refused to intervene and agreed with the personnel officer that the firm was not in dispute with the union, only with some of its members!

As a result of a visit to union offices by management, John Stevenson has been instructed not to attend the picket. However, a mass picket has now been arranged by the regional shop stewards committee. So we are not completely on our own.

Aircraft strike takes off

PRESTON:—A long standing dispute between British Aircraft Corporation and about 500 progress workers at Preston Samlesbury and Warton has finally resulted in strike action. At a mass meeting last Monday the strike was made official by their union, APEX.

Pickets have been stopping some deliveries, and held up the new Jaguar plane which has come all the way from Toulouse. This had to be brought in under police escort.

This strike has already stopped some overtime working in all three plants. Bernard McCarthy, chief staff representative, said on Saturday that the company will start feeling the pinch early this week. The importance of the progress department is that it supplies parts and

transfers work from one part of the factory to another.

The only trouble is the company has seen this dispute coming for some time, and certain sections have work lined up for weeks ahead. Members of other unions at BAC don't seem to be taking the staff strike very seriously on the lame excuse that APEX members haven't supported them in the past.

APEX members can still call out members in the telex and estimating departments, and the computer room, but unfortunately the union officials see this as a tactic to be used later, and then only bit by bit.

They used the not very convincing argument that it will hurt BAC to have to keep paying them wages.

STRACHANS' RENT-A-SPY

EASTLEIGH, HANTS:—The Special Branch are keeping close watch on the 11-week old dispute at Strachans Engineering. Pickets have remarked on the constant presence outside the factory of a Godfrey Davis rent-a-van parked with the driver sitting all day in the cab—for no apparent reason.

Strachans' steward Andy Nangle got a magnificent reception from Redpath Dorman Long construction workers working on the new blast furnace at Llanwern steelworks, Peter Jones the Engineering union construction section convenor urged support for Strachans. £150 was collected and the site agreed to levy 50p per head per week. Electricians' union members on the Royal Mint donated £20.

BUILDERS NAIL '£120 A WEEK' LIES

LIVERPOOL:—The stewards' committee on the Merseyside Loop Line, where 300 building workers are on strike, issued a statement last week in reply to lies and smears in the Liverpool Echo. Part of the statement follows:

'The Liverpool Echo has reported that we, the workers building the Liverpool underground loop line, are earning between £100 and £120 per week. The figures quoted in the Echo are totally inaccurate as our wages are rather less.

REFUSAL

'Basic rate is 57½p an hour. One man, for working 52¾ hours, including Sunday, got £45.46 GROSS. These long hours are necessary because of the nature of the work. Once the cement is mixed we must stay until it has reached a condition in which it can be left until the next morning. This means that we can be working from 8am until 10pm.

'Our strike is not only about money, but, more important, the company we work for refuses to recognise our elected shop-steward.

'The company, although recognising the union, refuse to recognise the steward on the grounds that

they have had no official notification from union headquarters. On checking this we find this not to be true, it appears that management use this as an excuse to harass our stewards in carrying out their duties.

'The company has refused to negotiate in a reasonable manner. This firm, Edmund Nuttall who are the contractors on the job has current assets standing at £3,400,000, and last years turnover was £10 million and more. Our representative has been to the local press in an attempt to get a correct report in the Liverpool Echo of the real picture regarding wages and conditions. Needless to say no such report has come from this "democratic press".

Messages of support and donations should immediately be sent to: Nuttall Shop Stewards Committee, Transport and General Workers Union, 37, Islington, Liverpool. L3 8EQ.

Ideal way to beat bosses

HULL:—Last week more than 1000 workers at Ideal Standards factory walked out when the company reduced the wages of 10 foundrymen. They said that a mistake was made when their job was timed, two and a half years ago, which means a cut of £4 a week.

The dispute flared when Ideal paid the reduced rate without consulting the men's union.

The foundry section refused to start work until the old rate was restored and demanded that management respect procedure. After waiting three hours without a reply the men walked out.

A meeting of the plant's joint shop stewards committee again asked management to restore the rate pending talks. The management refused, so the JSSC called out the members of unions and stopped the plant.

This is the first time the whole plant has acted together. Faced with such unity, management backed down and agreed to restore the rate.

Strength in numbers

COMPUTER OPERATORS in Scottish Universities, members of ASTMS, have now been on strike for three weeks over regrading. In Glasgow, picketing is effective, while at Strathclyde the operators are occupying the computer rooms. Technicians are also striking in support.

International Socialists



If you agree with the views expressed in this paper and would like more information, or would like to join the International Socialists, then send this form to: The International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Name _____

Address _____

Trade Union _____

Violence they call 'the law'

LONDON:-Pat Arrowsmith, a pacifist who tried to put her ideas to British troops, this week got our rulers' views on the subject—an 18 month jail sentence.

Rhodesian-born Judge Abdela, the man who handed out three-year sentences to the Brockwell Three, the three black Brixton teenagers, dismissed the idea that her Old Bailey trial was 'political'.

Pat Arrowsmith was charged under the 1934 Incitement to Disaffection Act. She had distributed leaflets to troops at Warminster.

The leaflets, produced by the pacifist British Withdrawal From Northern Ireland campaign, explained ways soldiers could get out of the Army, and countries they could go to if they decided to desert.

'CRIMES'

During the trial the defence said that Pat Arrowsmith had talked to members of the two wings of the IRA urging them to use non-violent methods to affect a British withdrawal.

For 'non-political' Judge Abdela, this was just more evidence of her 'crimes'.

He said: 'Apparently with some ease contact has been made with the IRA. It gives an idea of the politics that sits like an umbrella over this case.'

'You have talked a lot about brutality,' Abdela said. 'If only you knew what these troops have to undergo you wouldn't go round undermining their morale.'

Telling soldiers the truth about Ireland, demanding withdrawal from Ireland, will be treated as crimes if the authorities feel they can get away with it.

WANTED: £500 IN A HURRY

WE ARE getting more and more collections from Socialist Worker Readers, so why not organise one in your workplace? This week we received collections from SW readers in Cannon Industries, Dudley, £2.64, at the UPW conference, £8, the ASTMS conference, £9, and York buses, who now send in a regular collection, £2.15.

IS branches also rallied round: MK Electric £25, Colindale £6.16, Northampton £6, Hackney £10, Llanelli £9.35, Keighley £10, Southampton £13, Kirkby £14, Wandsworth £6, Paddington £37.38, Darlington £5, Oxford District £15, Bradford £20 and N E London Poly IS Society, £3.50.

The total for the week was £632.00, bringing the total for May so far to £1486.14. There is still another week to go to make our monthly target of £2000.

Can you help with the last £500? Why not organise a collection among your SW readers at work or on your estate. Or send us whatever you can afford.

Address it to: Jim Nichol, National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS



ASIANS SHOW THEIR STRENGTH

PART OF the huge crowd which turned out last Sunday to demonstrate their support for the 400 strikers at Imperial Typewriters, Leicester. The meeting heard a number of speakers, including International Socialist Darshana Tomkinson (right) who spoke in English and Gujarati.

Darshana spoke about the great spirit of the strikers and the massive repression of trade unionists in India. She urged the strikers to build their own leadership.

The 400 strikers, meanwhile, have been laid open to victimisation by the Transport and General Workers' Union district secretary, George Bromley. In a statement, Bromley said:

'I can say in my opinion that the vast majority will be allowed to return when I make representations to the company. But . . . there must be a considerable number who will not be engaged under any circumstances.' PICTURES: John Sturrock (Report).

A GIANT STIRS

INDIA is one of the poorest countries in the world. It is also one of the hardest hit by the present inflation.

The jump in oil and food prices over the last year has practically wiped out the foreign currency reserves. Domestic inflation is running at 25 per cent a year. The economy has reached crisis point.

Not all Indians are poor. Some are multi-millionaires. Some are comfortable businessmen and bureaucrats living in air-conditioned luxury in the midst of squalor and starvation. Some are prosperous farmers who have benefitted from the American-financed 'green revolution', the introduction of high yield maize and other plants.

This well-to-do minority controls Mrs Indira Gandhi's Congress party government. Mrs Gandhi and her rich associates are determined to make the town workers and the poorer peasants, together the great majority of the people, bear the whole burden of the crisis.

India's workers find out about militancy - and police brutality

The railway workers, who work a 12-hour day and have not had their £3.50 a week pay increased for two years, have been singled out as an 'example' by the Congress Party bosses.

To smash their strike in support of a modest pay rise, the army, police and bureaucracy have been mobilised in an all-out anti-working class offensive.

There have been mass arrests—well over 20,000. The police have run amok in working-class areas. There are beatings and shootings on a massive scale every day.

The government has moved troops into the key junctions; sacked many thousands of railwaymen;

put others on summary trial, and issued mass eviction notices to strikers in railway quarters.

Without leadership, the railwaymen have waged a magnificent struggle, staging a one-day general strike, the first in India's history. On the result of their battle hangs the claim of the central government employees, the post and telegraph workers and the electricity and generating workers.

So the workers must be 'taught a lesson', they must learn to tighten their belts still further 'in the national interest'. Economies must be made.

In the midst of Mrs Gandhi's drive to force railwaymen to accept starvation wages, her government proudly announced that India has joined 'the nuclear club'.

At a cost of £1000 million to £1500 million, India has exploded her first nuclear bomb.

Workers and peasants may starve but no expense is spared to put India on a par with the great powers in possession of the means of mass destruction.

THE CHOICES

Whoever else goes hungry, the appetite of the generals for more sophisticated and costly equipment must be satisfied.

It may not be long before those same generals elbow aside the hopelessly corrupt Gandhi government and try to seize power directly, meanwhile, the working class in one of the world's largest countries, has begun to move.

It is quite certain that the 'parliamentary' regime has no long-run future.

Revolution or military dictatorship, these are the choices for India. The day of decision is not far off.

Overtime ban: Where engineers fight on

WEST CORNWALL:—Engineering workers in West Cornwall are carrying on with their overtime ban, even though it has been called off nationally.

The settlement of the engineering wage claim is regarded here as a complete sell-out. Not only is the £3.50 figure much too low, but workers already above the national minimum will have to wait till September to get it.

The West Cornwall AUEW District Committee moved to keep up the overtime ban as soon as news of the sell-out reached them.

They also called on local engineering workers to step up their fight with other forms of action. Workers at shop floor level have responded with their own ideas.

At Holman's, the largest factory

in the district, shop stewards have withdrawn a productivity deal which allowed mobility and versatility of labour. They have also brought in an extra tea break in the afternoon.

Holman workers made their feelings on the national settlement clear at a mass meeting last Thursday. It was no good having operated an overtime ban since April just for vague promises about the future.

Labour's 'social contract' was turning out the same as a Tory wage-freeze.

Management and union officials have responded with behind-the-scenes moves to get the restrictions lifted. At Holman's, a letter went out with every pay packet arguing the management case, and trying to undermine solidarity.

Jimmy Ruie, AUEW

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