

# Socialist Worker

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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

## ACTION TO FREE THE TWO!

This week thousands of building workers came out on strike to demand the freeing of Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson, the two Shrewsbury pickets sent back to jail last week. **WHAT WE MUST DO TO FREE THE TWO**—see page 4.

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### Drivers show power of the rank and file

# LORRY MEN CRASH THROUGH

'THE Scottish drivers have won a breakthrough. Transport drivers everywhere are awaking from a deep sleep.'

That is how Charlie Flemwell, chairman of the National Carriers depot at London's Victoria and Albert Docks, summed up the mood of thousands of lorry drivers all over the country whose action is shaking the employers, the government and the social contract.

Two thousand lorry drivers employed by National Carriers and Freightliners in London, Southampton, Coatbridge and Liverpool came out on strike on Monday for £1 an hour. Len Jackson, lorry drivers' officer for the Transport and General Workers Union, was forced back into negotiations with the nationalised National Freight Corporation which includes BRS, Pickfords and Tartan Arrow, and employs more than 50,000, to get a better deal than the one he recommended only a few weeks ago.

All over England and Wales lorry drivers have taken action against their employers in the wake of the Scottish drivers. In Newcastle the employers have been handed a week's ultimatum to pay the £40 or face an all-out strike. In East Lancashire the hauliers have already surrendered and granted the £40.

In Northern Ireland, spokesmen for 5000 striking lorry drivers said on Monday they would 'stick it out indefinitely' for the same demand. The drivers have had support from the dockers—but none at all from the blustering Unionist politicians.

The success and power of the lorry drivers is due to one thing only: the initiative of the rank and file.

### DEMANDS

In Preston, drivers' shop stewards from all over the country met in October to set up a national shop stewards' committee covering 50,000 workers in the National Freight Corporation. The meeting agreed a series of demands—including £1 an hour minimum wage—and declared war on management and union officials unless they improved their miserable 'agreement' to 'consolidate the threshold' and pay no extra money.

On the delegation of five elected by the meeting to lobby the union leadership was Jim Meldrum, chairman of the West of Scotland NFC unofficial strike committee. He told Socialist Worker:

'One of the key issues is rank and file participation. For 46 years negotiating machinery has precluded rank and file involvement in discussing wage claims, but whatever happens on Tuesday, when we learn the result of the negotiations, we'll be keeping the national committee going.'

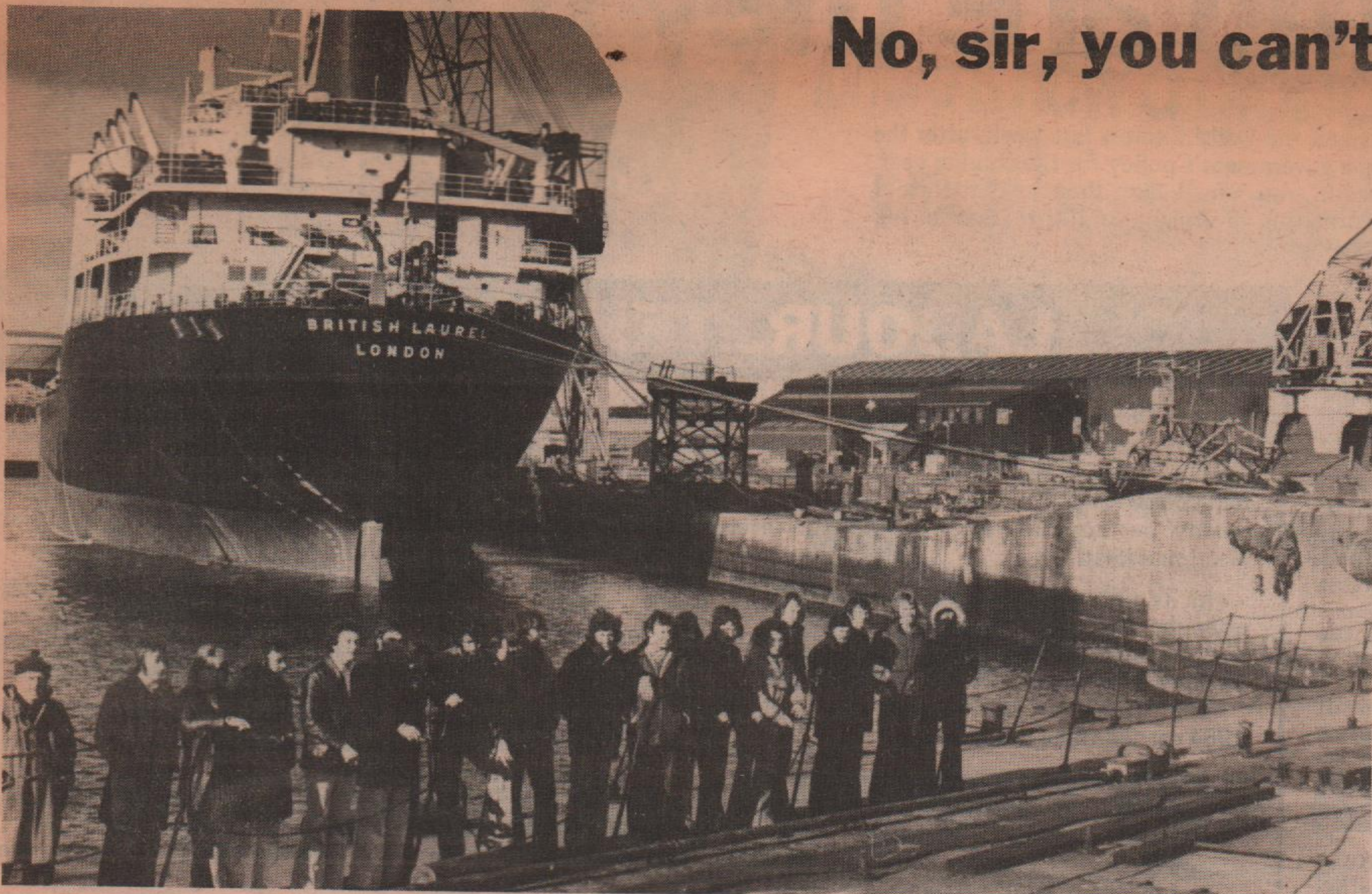
The social contract means wages held down while prices rise.

The union officials tell us to accept it.

Rank and file workers, by acting together can improve their conditions and point the way to a new society.

The lorry drivers' strike, the busmen's pay claim, the great strike wave in Scotland, the strikes at Cammell Laird, IMI Witton, Metal Box, Bairds in Bradford, Thorns in Skelmersdale and scores of others point in one direction: to the need for rank and file workers' organisations across all industry.

## No, sir, you can't have your ship back



For three weeks this BP tanker has been impounded by shipyard workers at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead, who have been on strike and occupying the yard demanding the same wage rates for all craftsmen. Tugs that arrived to tow out the tanker which had been in for repair, withdrew after discussion with the workers. This victory and the solidarity of the strikers has been endangered by union officials who ordered the strikers on Tuesday to allow management back into the yard so that 'negotiations could continue'. The four officials—all members of a local emergency committee set up by the unions—were booed by the men.

PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

## WHY WE MUST DEFEND SOCIALIST WORKER

Fund now £3,409, £1,591 still needed

and organises workers' opposition.

That's why, as the weeks go by, more and more workers, members of the International Socialists and sympathisers are sending us money to meet the £5000 costs imposed on us in the recent High Court case.

Thank you all those from all over the country who have sent money. We received more this week than last. £1650 brings the total to £3409.

But we still need £1591. Keep it up. Make cheques, postal orders out to Socialist Worker Defence Fund, and send them to Socialist Worker Defence Fund, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2.

- Central London Hospital Workers £94
- Camden Trades Council £5
- SW Supporters, Lampeter University £7.50
- UCATT Lowestoft, Bricklayers Section £1
- Central London IS £147.40
- POEU, North Met. International £5
- Sussex University Students Union £25
- Magdalen JCR, Oxford £4.50
- SW Supporters, Glasgow Tech £2.55
- Edinburgh University IS Society £22.80
- Birmingham Community Development Project £6.90
- Royal Free Hospital £2.23
- Hospital Worker supporters £6.50
- Birmingham SW readers £10
- SW Readers, Crossfield Estate, Deptford £2.60
- SW readers, NALGO HQ £3.55
- SW Readers, Cardiff Head Post Office £2
- C.A. Parsons £12
- SW supporters, Leicester £36
- University Leicester, IS Society £54.21
- SW readers, Exeter £2.50
- C.I. Homes, Poole £1
- Medway Towns, Trades Council £1
- AUEW/TASS N.16 Divisional Council £25
- Edgwick Site, Herbert Machine Tools £7.30

- Imperial College SW supporters £30
- SOGAT Warehouse Chapel, Fleetpath £4
- NE London Poly IS Society £9
- NE Manchester IS £10
- Cambridge SW readers and members £18.39
- SW readers, Hangleton Estate, Hove £3
- West Bromwich Teachers £5
- Fulham IS and Penguin SW readers £115.70
- STC New Southgate £3.40
- Houghton Regis UCATT/AUEW £1
- Thames Poly SW supporters £7
- Thos Ryder and Son, Bolton Shop Stewards Cttee £5
- SW supporters, Enfield College and Hendon Annexe £6.70
- Lorrileau and Bolton, Tottenham £7
- Chrysler Coventry, Stoke £10.70
- Kirkby 'Spot the Ball' £4.25
- Tower Hill Estate, Liverpool £5
- High Wycombe Trades Council £9
- SW readers, Lewisham £1.30
- Pontefract IS members and supporters £30
- Gardners, Manchester £4
- GEC, Trafford Park £2.50
- SW supporters, Sheffield £22.50
- Lowestoft IS £13.96
- SW readers, Keighley £20
- Crofts Gear Works, No 1, Bradford £5
- Bradford Defend SW meeting £73.35
- Broome and Wades, High Wycombe £2
- SW supporters, High Wycombe £9.50
- SW supporters, Loughborough £10.35
- SW readers, Dudley £11.76
- Ruston Paxman £4.55
- Parsons Peebles, Edinburgh £7
- Communist Party members, Paisley £1

Turn to back page

To the managing director, Heinz:

DEAR SIR, I have read in Socialist Worker that your company intends to use beans imported from Chile in some of your products.

Our union is affiliated to the Chile Solidarity Campaign and therefore if you do use Chilean goods in any way I shall recommend the members of this branch to 'black' any of your products delivered to this hospital.

This fine letter from Derek Abbey, NUPE branch secretary at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, has set the cat among the pigeons in the boardroom of Heinz. The big beans manufacturers are threatened with action against their decision, exclusively reported by Heinz workers in Socialist Worker some weeks ago, to import beans from Chile.

That's what this paper is about. It gives workers the information they need about the crimes of big business,



Busmen at the First Rank and File Conference: Now the ideas are spreading

# CONFERENCE

## A statement from the Organising Committee

THE response to our call for the 30 November Rank and File Conference has been magnificent. With a month to go, we have received 180 requests for delegates' credentials from 80 trade union organisations, including 15 shop stewards' committees.

As the fight against the Social Contract heats up, it is becoming clear that the Conference is being taken very seriously by significant sectors of the trade union rank and file.

The Organising Committee has been considerably strengthened by representatives from Dunlop Engineering Shop Stewards Committee (Speke), NUPE Shop Stewards Committee (Hammersmith Hospital), and Witton James Joint Shop Stewards Committee (Wembley).

We have sent invitations to all shop stewards committees and work place branches, such as chapels and lodges, who have supported us in the past to similarly send representatives onto the Organising Committee.

The intention is to build a stronger committee of elected representatives from rank and file papers and shop stewards committees with the three officers (Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman) being subject to election at conference.

The Chile campaign has been an overwhelming success. A number of trade union bodies have already begun the process of adopting a

specific prisoner and many more are committed to doing so.

Currently, the Organising Committee have issued calls for immediate solidarity action to force the release of the two imprisoned Shrewsbury pickets.

Pressurising trade union officials, particularly the executives of the TGWU and UCATT, to officially call strikes is part and parcel of organising for the mass strike action necessary to secure Des Warren's and Ricky Tomlinson's release.

The Organising Committee has already distributed 20,000 leaflets on this issue and further copies are available at 75p per 500. An emergency session of the 30 November conference is being set aside to deal solely with the Shrewsbury campaign.

The 30 November Conference should prove to be a focal point, both on the Shrewsbury campaign, and for those trade union bodies determined to resist wage restraint and unemployment.

With three weeks to go, if your trade union body has not yet agreed to send delegates then hurry them along.

Further details, speakers and literature are available from R Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

## Busmen say it: It's up to the rank and file!

DISGUSTED by the antics of their full-time union officials, busmen in Fife have taken matters into their own hands. One of them explained:

'Our organisation started from the Fife Passenger Shop Stewards in June. We drew up a manifesto and decided to send out circulars to all depots in Scotland—88 in all.

'We decided through this circular to call an all-Scotland Shop Stewards meeting for 11 August. 16 depots took part.'

Further meetings resulted in an

overtime ban on 16 September. The management broke this by sending out buses at the weekend so ten depots struck, six of them for a fortnight.

A number of depots are still operating the overtime ban and all the depots are preparing for all-out action on 14 November.

An official meeting of the five district committees covering the central industrial belt on 11 October backed the call for industrial action from 14 November if the men's demands were not met.

The Fife rank and file committee are not complacent, however, and have convened an all-Scotland shop stewards meeting for 10 November in Stirling.

This will be supported by the Glasgow busmen, who have been on strike for a fortnight. The Stirling meeting will, without doubt, call for a national strike.

Already a number of garages have renewed their pledge of strike action.

Plans have been drawn up for flying pickets on sub-contract buses.

But the rank and file committee are aware that this work, although vital, is still not enough.

'We need to roll this action right over the British Isles and involve all busmen north and south of the border'. To do this a national organisation is needed, which can link up the most militant sections and draw others in their wake.

That is why the chairman of the rank and file committee will be going to his own branch this week to argue for support for the rank and file conference on 30 November.

## STUDENTS: NOW FOR ACTION!

THE FIRST conference of the National Organisation of IS Societies, held at Leeds University last Saturday, was a resounding success.

180 students, representing 28 universities, 11 polytechnics, six colleges of education and 13 technical colleges, art colleges and colleges of further education, met to discuss the struggles they had been involved in and to map out perspectives for the future.

Opening the conference, IS executive member Chris Harman spoke on the current crisis in capitalism.

A session was then held on the recent fights against the higher education cuts at Portsmouth, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Hull, Warwick and Sheffield. The involvement of IS Society members in these disputes was evident.

There could have been no better vindication of last year's campaign to build an independent IS presence in the colleges.

During the afternoon, delegates discussed the forthcoming NUS Week of Action and a number of resolutions on the jailing of the Shrewsbury building workers, on women and on Ireland.

The conference closed with the adoption of the NOISS programme.

Students returned to their colleges convinced of the possibility of NOISS being built into a formidable force in student politics over the coming year.

'WILSON'S top speed grab', screamed the Daily Express last week, after the Queen's Speech had announced the government's policy for the coming year. From reading the article underneath, you would have thought that Harold Wilson had undergone a transformation overnight and that British big business was threatened by Red Revolution.

Clearly a message designed to rouse the fury of the middle classes and to rally them behind big business in its hour of need.

But the Express's city page on the same day viewed the Labour Party's proposals in a quite different light.

'No shock speech cheers city', ran the heading to a short account of the reaction of businessmen to the nationalisation plans. 'Shipbuilding shares rose on hopes of favourable nationalisation terms.'

The Financial Times spelt out the details of the share price rise in greater detail:

'The government's intention of taking shipbuilding and ship repairing industry into public ownership activated fresh demand for Vickers, 3½ higher at 92½p, Swan Hunter, a further 3 up at 75p, and Hawthorne Leslie, which improved similarly to 37p. In a narrow market Yarrow rose 7 to 93p.'

The most thorough rundown on Labour's plans, however, was contained in that weekly house organ of big business, The Economist.

This recognises that the Labour government has been forced to appear slightly left wing to justify talk of a 'new social contract'. But it stresses that Labour's policies are much friendlier to big business than they often seem.

'Mr Tony Benn', it notes, 'has been given the go-ahead to nationalise the aircraft and shipbuilding industries as well as to establish a national enterprise board. Yet most of the teeth in his projected industry bill were drawn by the cabinet committee presided over by Mr Wilson before the election... The voluntary nature of the proposals for leading companies was reiterated.

'A bill is to be introduced to bring development land into public ownership. It is presented as a radical measure, but it has been tailored to

# Who are they trying to kid!

## LABOUR...TEN YEARS ON

ON 15 October, 1964, a Labour Government was elected under Harold Wilson. Its overall Parliamentary majority was five—swiftly cut to three after a by-election defeat.

In its first week in Parliament after the election, Labour staked out the main post of its plans: its incomes policy.

The Times on 2 November 1964 carried three headlines:

**ETU pledges support for government**  
**Incomes policy challenge accepted**  
**Partnership to fulfil programme.**

'Les Cannon, the ETU's general president, pledged the support of the 300,000 strong union to the Labour Government... We will do everything in our power to assist the Government to fulfil its programme. We will be in partnership with it.'

George Brown, Minister for Economic Affairs, spoke about the incomes policy in glowing terms: 'We are determined that our policy in the field shall be a fair one...'

Chancellor of the Exchequer, James Callaghan, told City Bankers: 'Let me make it quite clear that we recognise your con-

tribution to the national economy and we recognise that you need to earn your living.'

The Queen's speech sent the Press wild. As the Times editorial put it on 1 November.

'Despite the 15 million votes against his (Wilson's) 12 million he is pushing ahead with his most contentious and doctrinaire plans.'

On 3 November, Harold Wilson made his first major speech as Prime Minister in the House of Commons. He started with this sentence:

'The days of the dynasties are over.'

cause the minimum of disruption, with a long transitional period.

'Mr Healey's wealth tax is now to be referred to the scrutiny of a select committee, which is certain to lead to delay. The target day for introduction is now 1976.'

'The government's threat to cut several hundred million pounds off the defence budget is expected to turn out a lot less savage than the figures make it sound.'

While speaking 'left', Labour has done nothing to curb the power or wealth of private industry. Its nationalisation measures amount to taking over two parts of industry in which the state already has a huge stake—and doing so on terms which make the owners of the shares even wealthier than they have been hitherto.

Why then the screaming headlines in the popular papers?

The reason has little enough to do with any threat to big business from

the government. It has much more to do with the big struggles over wages and employment which industrialists expect in the months ahead.

The millionaires who own a paper like the Express or the Mail know that growing numbers of people are going to turn in anger on a system that cannot provide jobs or decent wages.

### Create

Their headlines are meant to deflect working class anger from the system itself to the 'left wingers' in the government that is administering the system.

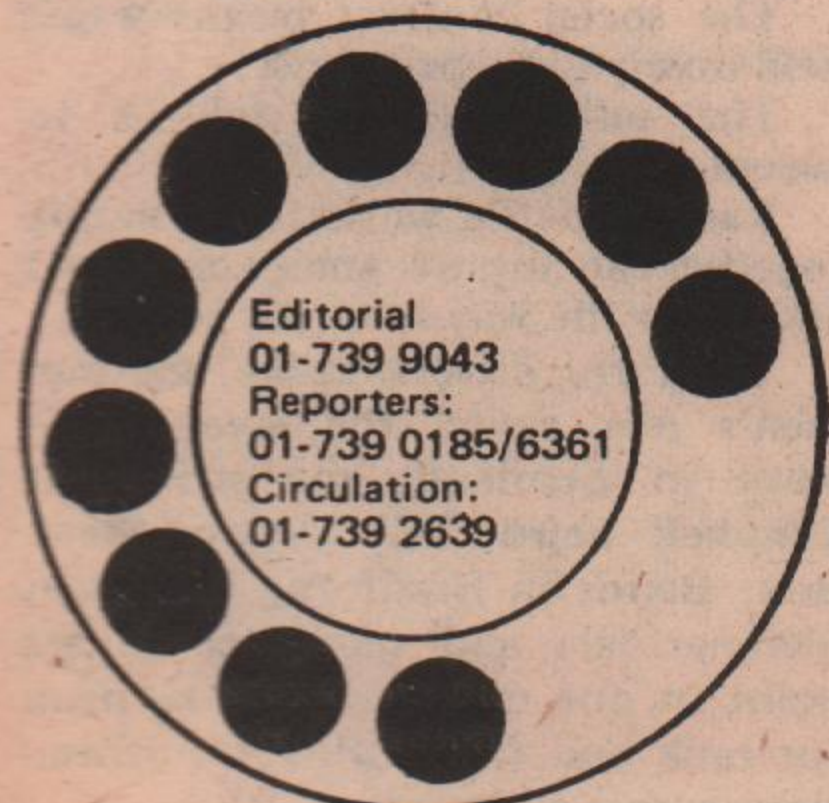
They want to create the impression that somehow the government is responsible for the crisis because the measures it is taking are 'too extreme', even though they know that its measures are exactly what they themselves want.

That big business has no real fears of the 'left wing' in the government or the TUC was revealed quite blatantly in the Express itself on the day of the Queen's Speech.

Campbell Adamson, director general of the Confederation of British Industry asked the question Can Britain Survive? and answered: 'Yes, if the government gives a lead now. Yes, if the words of Jack Jones are heeded.'

The lead Campbell Adamson wants from the government was not to be expected in the Queen's Speech. That, after all, was meant chiefly as a propaganda effort backing Jack Jones' calls of support for the Social Contract.

The real business of the Labour government will be transacted next Tuesday, when Denis Healey produces his budget and tells big business exactly how many millions of pounds he is going to give them as a gift.



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01-739 2639

# COUNTDOWN

## The Morning Star and an 'ultra-left venture': Two replies

THE RANK AND FILE Organising Committee were saddened to read the attack on the Rank and File Movement in the Morning Star (Friday 1 November). Far from being 'ultra left' such a Rank and File Movement bears out the experience of the fight to maintain living standards against the Social Contract.

The fight is not being led from the top by trade union officials, but from below by the rank and file. We need to build rank and file links in each industry and trade union. The Rank and File Conference on 30 November is a step towards this.

We feel it would be better for a newspaper like the Morning Star to support us in this task rather than insulting militant workers just because they happen to be members of IS. We are pleased to include IS members within our ranks. We are also pleased to have CP members, Labour Party members and trade union activists of no political affiliation at all. We all work together because of the urgent need for workers to unite in struggle.

We would like to believe that Friday's report by an unnamed special correspondent was merely a mistake. Unfortunately we cannot bring ourselves to believe this for it is not the first time that the Morning Star has discriminated against us. Advertisements for the 30 November National Rank and File Conference were sent to the three biggest circulating papers on the left—Morning Star, Socialist Worker and Tribune. The Morning Star alone refused to run the weekly advert.

The Rank and File Organising Committee is open to re-election and constant change. The Rank and File Conference is totally democratic and open to delegates from all bona fide trade union bodies. It is not the property of the Communist Party or the International Socialists. The 30 November Rank and File Conference is an important step towards building a genuine democratic Rank and File Movement.

Copies of this statement have been sent to the Morning Star, Tribune, Socialist Worker

DEAR BROTHER,

We are involved in the present disputes that are taking place in the West of Scotland.

One weakness is that none of our strikes has yet received official support from our trade unions. A second is that the strikers so far are all isolated one from another.

We therefore believe that the call for the 30 November National Rank and File Conference is in no way 'ultra left' but actually meets the situation as it faces us.

All activists in the trade union movement who are genuinely concerned with the fight against wage restraint and unemployment, whichever government is responsible for them, should be there.

Yours fraternally,

Lewis Collins, treasurer, Glasgow Corporation Sewage Workers strike committee

John Keenan, senior steward, Rolls Royce, East Kilbride

George Kelly, convenor, Glasgow Corporation Electrical Workshops

Eddie McAvoy, senior steward, Hoover Cambuslang

Jim Meldrum, chairman, National Freight Corporation, West of Scotland strike committee

Ronnie Smith, All Scotland Teachers Action Committee

Brian McKerrow, branch committee, Glasgow Corporation Transport, Gartcraig

A copy of this letter has also been sent to the Morning Star.

ADVERTISEMENT

## FIGHT WAGE RESTRAINT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### Support the Second National Rank and File Conference

Saturday 30 November, Digbeth Hall, Birmingham  
Make sure your shop stewards committee, union branch or district committee is supporting this important conference.  
Delegates' credentials 50p

The Rank and File Conference Organising Committee has compiled verifiable lists of imprisoned Chilean trade unionists in all the main industrial and service sectors for adoption by British trade union bodies. Copies of these and a covering letter can be obtained from the secretary.

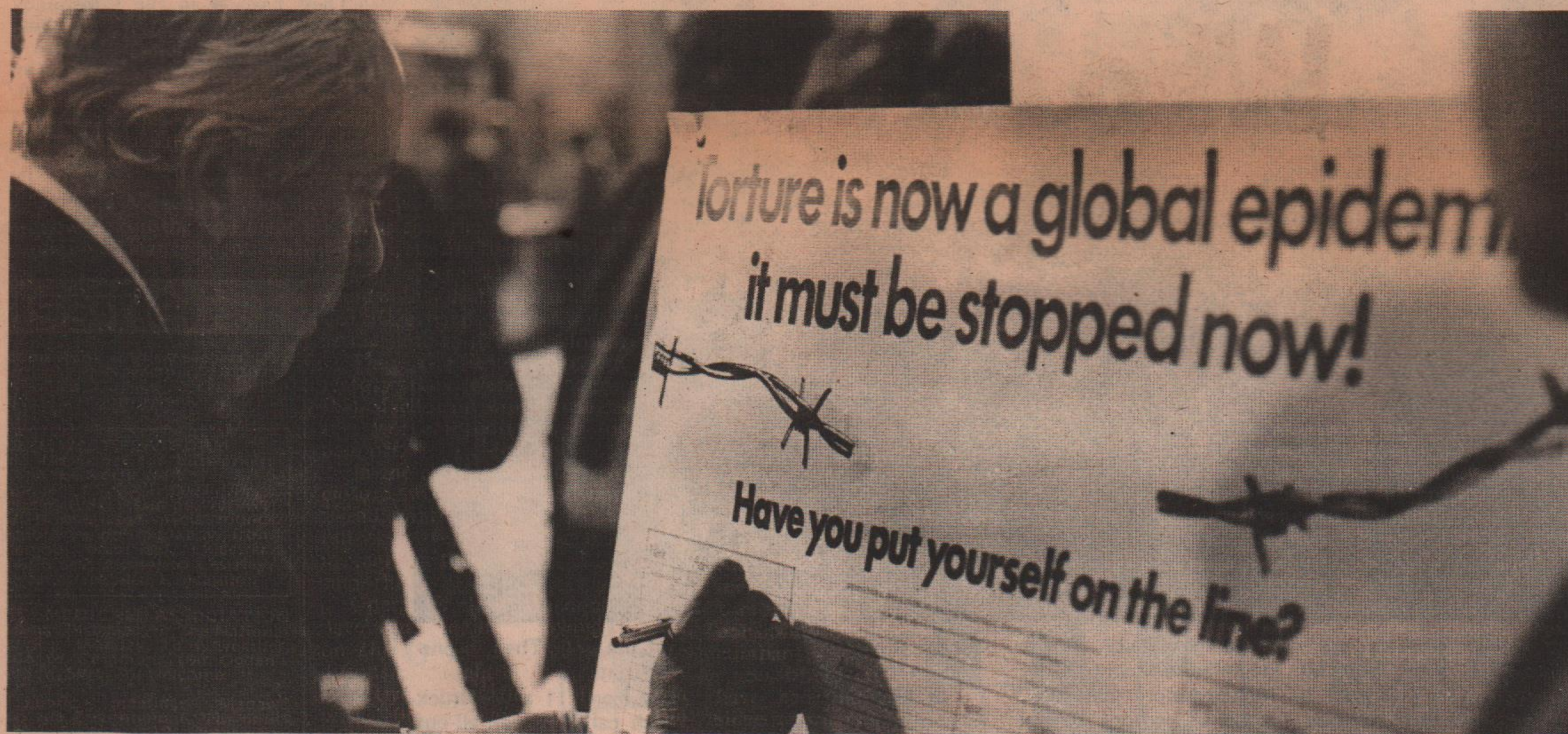
If you want credentials, get your trade union branch or shop stewards' committee to fill in this form and sent it to the Secretary, Rank and File Conference Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

Send us credentials for \_\_\_\_\_ delegates to the Rank and File Conference on November 30.

NAME OF TRADE UNION BODY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TRADE UNION STAMP



HYPOCRITES SIGN HERE... Harold Wilson has put his name to two documents—one allowing low-interest loan terms to Chile, the other ordering his hack in the United Nations to veto the expulsion of South Africa

## SOUTH AFRICA: SUPPORT FOR APARTHEID

RUMOURS that the British government intends to end its military agreement with South Africa over the use of the Simonstown naval base have received enormous publicity. Here, it seems to many people, is a real example of the 'left wingers' in the government visibly influencing its policy.

### Ending

A look below the surface, however, reveals a rather different state of affairs. The rumours about Simonstown came only days after the government had vetoed attempts to expel South Africa from the United Nations.

That was rather embarrassing for the government. Talk of ending the Simonstown agreement provided an easy smokescreen for diverting attention.

It is worth adding that the government's embarrassment is not caused

by its so-called left wing ministers. Its real fears lie elsewhere.

The success of the liberation movements in forcing the Portuguese to promise independence to their colonies means that much of the wealth of Southern Africa will soon lie in territories under the control of black governments.

Much of this wealth is owned by the same British and American com-

panies that operate in South Africa—for instance Lonrho and the Anglo-American Corporation.

The owners of these companies want to enjoy the protection and low wages guaranteed by the racist regime in South Africa, without being so much identified with it as to lose support in the black states.

And so while backing that regime in their deeds, they criticise it with

their words.

The Labour government is trying to follow the same policy. On the one hand it gives practical support to the apartheid regime by using its veto at the United Nations.

On the other hand it talks of withdrawing from a military base that is of little use to it, allowing the French or the Americans to take its place if necessary.

## CHILE: Support for the Junta

THE LABOUR government has just completed one piece of unfinished business left behind by the Tory government in the spring. It has agreed that the Chilean Junta shall be given another nine years to pay off its debts with a very favourable interest rate of 7½ per cent.

A year ago, while in opposition, the Labour Party leadership made clear its complete opposition to any aid or any arms going to the Junta. After coming into office, it has made great play of its cancellation of a small amount of aid to the Junta worth about £250,000 and of any new arms contracts.

And two months ago, while demonstrators against the

Junta were taking place throughout the world, it gave the impression that it was blocking plans to ease the Junta's financial difficulties.

Now, however, it has shown that for a Labour government, the needs of international big business are more important than its own words against a regime that has murdered thousands of workers and keeps many more in jail.

Estimates suggest that the big new loans being negotiated for Chile may eventually be worth £124 million—or 500 times as much as the aid Labour claims it has ended.

## Don't phase them out, kick 'em out!

'I DON'T want pay-beds phased out. I want private practice kicked out of the National Health Service.'

This was the reaction of Bill Geddes, chairman of Hammersmith Hospital's NUPE branch, to the announcement that pay-beds were to be gradually eliminated from NHS hospitals.

Some consultants in Northern hospitals have been threatening a work to rule over the plan.

They are complaining about losing a system which means big money for them, queue-jumping for private patients, and a cancer on the NHS.

Only the consultants benefit from the existence of private beds. The protesting consultants argue that the beds account for only one per cent of the NHS total—they ignore the fact that the time devoted to them by consultants is 15 per cent of the total.

'This one per cent figure is misleading anyway,' pointed out a junior doctor. 'Those 5000 private beds mean the equivalent of ten brand new hospitals. Only three new ones have been built in the last ten years. So to get rid of the private beds would be like having new hospitals built overnight.'

It's not just the beds. Dr Stark Murray, of the Socialist Medical Association, estimates that the NHS subsidises private work by consultants by £25 million a year.

So the fuss is about the rights of some consultants to make a lot of money at the expense of the NHS—and of the sick.

This 27-year scandal is at last being ended—because of the determination of hospital workers to smash it, not because of the enthusiasm of the Labour government.

Next Tuesday's London area NUPE conference has a motion calling for an all-out ban on private patients,' explained Bill Geddes.

'I want to see a total ban on private patient services within the next 12 months, not "during the parliamentary session" as Barbara Castle has planned.'

# Organise to free the two!

by Jeff Shaw  
UCATT convenor, Taylor Woodrow Bradford  
Interchange site

THE sending back to jail of the Shrewsbury pickets came as a bombshell. No one really believed the case would be lost. Letting them out on bail was a compromise to save the faces of the bosses and the Law and Order brigade. With the new builders' claim in, the bosses are squaring for a fight. The judges want to make more examples regardless of the effects on men's lives.

The arrests and fines of the builders at Brixton, South London, during their recent strike shows the desire of the bosses to harass and intimidate trade unionists who organise against them. A press barrage has already begun to undermine the wage claim, while the press have remained silent on the jailings.

We need a paper capable of publicising the truth in the labour movement. That is why Socialist Worker too has been fined so heavily.

The sites on strike in Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester and London show the way forward. In less well-organised areas we must put pressure on union officials, raise the matter in trades councils and with Labour MPs. The Labour government must be made to free these men.

NOBODY could have foreseen two years ago when 24 building workers in North Wales were first put on trumped-up charges that they were to face two years of ruthless harassment by employers, courts and police.

Or that they were to meet cowardice and treachery by the leaders of their two unions, the Transport and General Workers and the construction workers' (UCATT).

Yet the ordeal is far from over. Two, Ricky Tomlinson and Des Warren, are serving two years and three years in jail for conspiracy to carry out the unions' instructions during the 1972 building workers' strike. In other words they organised the flying picket in North Wales and

by Jan Golab (UCATT)  
and Terry Horan (TGWU)

Shrewsbury.

They were not charged with assault or intimidation. In this land of the free, if you meet and talk about something which may not in itself be criminal then you may be liable for a criminal prosecution under the Conspiracy Acts, with no limit on sentences. The sentences given to the pickets were shocking.

How did all this happen?

The bosses attacked a weak link in the working-class movement. They chose the building industry, where trade unionism is weakened by the lump. They chose North Wales and Shrewsbury, an area not noted for militancy. They delayed the trial for

more than a year after the strike, so that solidarity had faded. The pickets were jailed at Christmas time, just as men were going off work—and when the building industry is at a low ebb

It would be wrong to see the prosecution as a huge conspiracy by the ruling classes as a whole. It started as the personal revenge of one set of particularly venomous building employers, McAlpines, in a county, Denbighshire, which they have traditionally controlled.

But by the end of 1973 the Industrial Relations Act had become an embarrassment to the bosses. They were desperate to ditch it, in favour of something equally repressive yet which would not unite the trade union movement in opposition. In the conspiracy laws they found the answer. They convinced many workers that 'violence' had occurred on the flying picket, and the prosecution of the picket organisers arose solely from this.

Today, the ruling class is nervous about workers' reactions to the economic crisis. They need a stick with which to beat those who fight back against redundancies and cuts in the standard of living with strikes and occupations.

## Office

They have it in the Conspiracy laws. That is why these two pickets have been sent back to jail. With a Labour government in office, the ruling-class establishment is demonstrating who really runs the country—and it isn't parliament or the TUC who put these men in jail.

Over the two years since the prosecutions started, heroic efforts have been made by groups of militants to organise action in their defence. But we have worked against a backdrop of either official silence or downright hostility.

The London region of UCATT called a stoppage this week, but the organisation for it by officials was slight. Many refused point-blank to call out sites. No official strike notices have been given out.

The TGWU is no better. It took till Friday to get the emergency committee together.

Yet this battle to free the two pickets, jailed in an attack on our right to picket in defence of our jobs and our living standards, can and must be won.

We must demand an all-out strike on the sites, calling on our fellow trade unionists in other industries to back us up.

We must also strengthen rank and file trade union organisation, so that workers can take over when union officials fail or are intent on sabotage. A step towards this will be the Second National Rank and File Conference on 30 November.



PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

### STREET MEETING AND PICKET OF LABOUR MPs TO DEMAND THE FREEDING OF THE SHREWSBURY PICKETS

Every Saturday until their release, 10.30am-12 noon, Robert Owen House Willesden High Road, London NW10

Come and join us!

Organised by North West London District International Socialists

### HARLESDEN and NORTH WEST LONDON District IS public meeting FREE THE SHREWSBURY PICKETS

Speakers: Building workers and local trades council members. Tuesday 12 November, 8pm, Willesden Junction Hotel, Station Road, NW10.

THE SHREWSBURY 24: The Combine's magnificent history of the building workers' trial, in song, words and theatre, now has a new finale. Use it in the fight to free the two; book the theatre group for your local trade union meeting. Details and bookings: Alan Ives, 24 Cambridge Park, London E11 (phone 01-989 2578).

BUILDING workers are responding already to the jailings of their brothers Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson. In Liverpool on Monday more than 1000 building workers marched through Liverpool. Several sites struck including the Loop Line and the Teaching Hospital. The men stayed out on Tuesday and sent delegations to lobby the UCATT offices for all-out strike action.

In London a rally in Clapham on Tuesday led by 600 strikers heard George Smith, UCATT general secretary,

pledge support for the freeing of the men. The demonstration included a Birmingham delegation.

In Manchester 2000 workers from 11 sites struck and marched to a meeting, which called for an all-out official stoppage, rejecting one-day strikes and arguing for the extension of the campaign to all workers. The men agreed to send flying pickets to the docks.

In Glasgow the Knightswood site and Yarrow's shipyard struck. 100 stewards at a Building Workers Charter meeting called for a mass rally next Wednesday.

## THIS IS WHAT WE MUST DO

SOCIALISTS and militants struggling to get the two Shrewsbury pickets out of jail face a different situation now to when the trials were going on. Then there was a Tory government, and the trial itself held the front of the stage.

Now it is not so easy. The struggle to free Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson is now much more of a political struggle. Looming in the background is the social contract, with Jack Jones, leader of one of the building workers' unions, the TGWU, orchestrating the fight to defend the Labour government's policies.

Over the summer, when the men were on bail, we heard from the trade union leaders how terrible the sentences were. The TUC came out against the sentences and even George Smith of UCATT, who had scabbed on the men all along, got up at

Congress to protest at the sentences.

Now that the men are back in jail and we have a Labour Government, which is easily capable of freeing these men and repealing the Conspiracy laws which sent them down in the first place, we have not heard a whimper from Jack Jones, or the others on the left of the Labour Party.

The appeal against the jail sentences was turned down amid growing attacks on the working-class movement. The police are being strengthened daily with the Special Patrol Group and the new anti-picket squads specially designed to keep the working class in its place. Socialist Worker too has been given heavy penalties by the High Court.

The economic crisis is going to mean more cuts in working-class living standards and there will be

further attacks on working-class organisations to make sure these cuts go deep.

These men are in jail not only because of the treachery of their union leaders, but also because there was no organised response from rank and file trade unionists.

The struggle to free these men may not succeed overnight. A movement has to be built that has the strength to achieve their freedom.

To build this we must be demanding NOW:

- Demonstrations for their release,
- Lobbying of TGWU and UCATT offices,
- Resolutions to TGWU and UCATT branches calling for all-out strikes,
- Resolutions from all trade union branches to union executives, pro-

testing at the sentences and calling for action.

● A lobby of the Labour Party Conference later this month.

In the building industry we should call for strike action immediately. Where strikes are taking place we must attempt to spread them.

We must focus all attention on the building of the Rank and File Movement as the only lever by which these men will be freed. Delegating bodies to the National Rank and File Conference should be starting local action.

This is a struggle which is only beginning. We must ensure that it is successful. We must build a movement to free these men. All avenues must be used. Jack Jones and the social contract must not be allowed to stand in the way.

# Wally Belper's column

## WHO SAYS IT CAN'T WORK?

THE OTHER day there was a documentary on telly about lifeboatmen. It set me thinking about them.

As long as I've been a socialist, there's been one stock argument that I've had spat at me day after day. Socialism is a good idea: but it's like Prohibition—it won't work.

The working class is too selfish, too greedy. All they're interested in is pound notes. You must have heard the arguments as many times as you've had hot flushes.

But how do these philosophers explain lifeboatmen? Men who risk their lives to save complete strangers. Many who only put to sea in the most perilous conditions.

They don't do it for the money: most of the men interviewed said they wouldn't do the job if it was full-time. They don't do it for the glory: you never even hear of their names until there's a 'tragic accident'.

One TV Programme every 150 years doesn't make you a film star. And I'm fairly confident they don't do it for the healthy sea-breezes.

They do it, simply, because they care about the lives of other seamen. Yet when you saw their faces, when you heard them speak, they were just ordinary working men.

It's this kind of shy heroism that only our class is ever capable of. Our 'betters' will never even understand compassion like that. For them charity is buying Oxfam Christmas cards.

The programme set me thinking about something else. Just what kind of world is it when something as life-and-death as a lifeboat service is run as a charity? To my uncertain knowledge mankind has used boats for a million years. Maybe more.

During all of that time boats have had a tendency to sink. And man found out early on that we have a tendency to drown.

That being so, and since opinion polls show conclusively that this country is still an island, I would have thought that a professional well-equipped lifeboat service was an elementary necessity. But no.

We do have a professional fire-fighting service in this country—but then fires burn down PROPERTY. Force 10 gales only drown HUMAN BEINGS.

It won't even be until at least 1980 that all our lifeboats are self-righting. So capitalism can waste millions on the Concorde 001 (it's called that because .001 per cent of the population will ever be able to afford to fly in it).

It can spend untold thousands of millions on new, improved ways of killing. But still we have the obscurity of a lifeboat service which once a year has to punt little paper lifeboat flags on the street to keep afloat.

I look forward to the day when we have a proper lifeboat service, and once a year retired army chaps take to the streets selling little H-bomb flags to pay for the Defence Budget.

*I WAS disappointed to read that Vanessa Redgrave, who just a few weeks ago was standing for parliament for Newham North East in London's East End, sends her eldest girl to a public school (St Pauls, price £435 a year). If Vanessa had got elected she would be just about the only person in the East End with a kid at public school. Vanessa stood, of course, as the workers' candidate.*

Following the arrests in Kensington and Chelsea of 22 dustmen for demanding money with menaces, Scotland Yard have carried out a large scale operation all over London.

Special Squads of armed detectives known as the 'Gang Busters' and led by Chief Inspector Bert Wickstead and Commissioner John Gerrard have so far arrested 10,942 taxi drivers, 9187 barbers, 497 undertakers, 792 gravediggers and 16 small boys, who were carrying offensive weapons, nicknamed 'guys'.

Yesterday, the Squad swooped on a man described as 'Mr Big'. Ex-Regimental Sergeant Major Albert Carruthers was picked up at the Ritz Hotel by 89 armed detectives and 54 dogs.

## Reid between the lies

THE National Front the party that stands for Law and Order, especially the quelling of student disorder, certainly believes in getting first-hand knowledge of the subject.

Their chairman, John Tyndall, an acknowledged expert on law and order from experiences gained during his six months in prison for carrying firearms and organising para-military groups, has been re-

placed by Kingsley Reid, the Front's candidate in Blackburn and an expert on student 'troublemakers'. He was himself expelled from Leeds University for what he describes as 'student capers' which resulted in a policeman ending up in a horse trough.

The Front have denied reports that General Amin has been elected as their expert on race relations and immigration.

## WHEN TO SWITCH ON

THURSDAY  
ITV: (Some Regions) 11pm. WHAT THE PAPERS SAY with Socialist Worker editor Paul Foot.

SATURDAY  
ITV: 8.30pm (most stations) UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS portrayal of the First World War period has been consistently good.

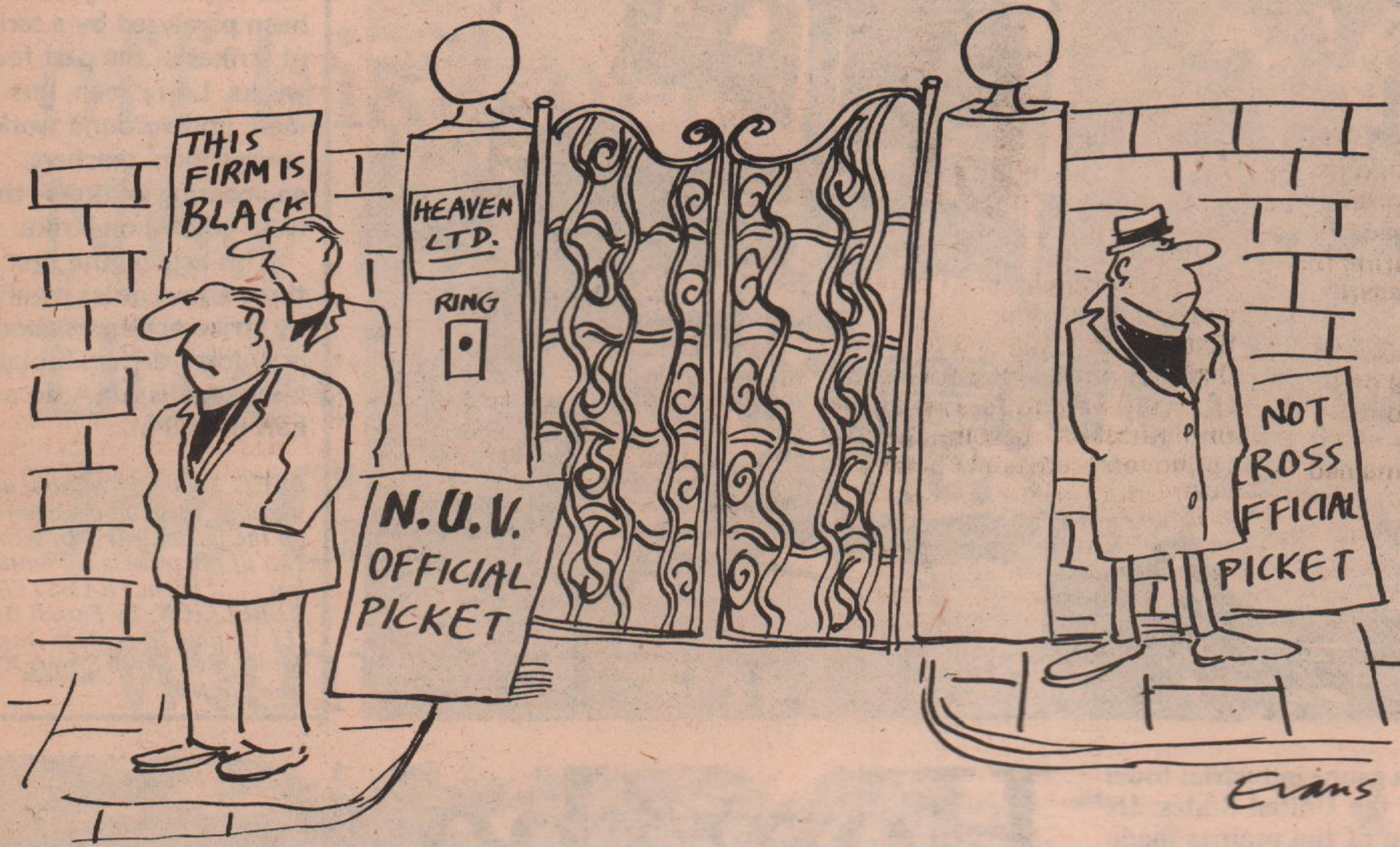
SUNDAY  
RADIO-4: 7.30pm. ACTORS OF FREEDOM looks at the radical thought of the post-English Civil War period, through its publications and debates.

MONDAY  
BBC-1: 11.5pm. Yes he's live at London's Guildhall! See fearless Harold Wilson confronting the assembled

capitalist class at THE LORD MAYOR'S BANQUET. Thrill to his smooth platitudes! Register bewilderment as he tells them what fine fellows they are! Weep as he announces hard times ahead while digesting his Filet Mignon des Gnomes au Zurich! Be sure to pull the plug out before going to bed! Alternatively watch THE CINCINNATI KID (BBC-1) at 9.25pm.

TUESDAY  
BBC-1: 9.35pm. THE MIGHTY CONTINENT is a new documentary series on Twentieth Century Europe.

THURSDAY  
BBC-2: 10pm. THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY is part two of MAN ALIVE's enquiry into housing.



# By Christ, what rubbish

THE social classes of families referred to by Sir Keith and his critics are defined by the Government on the basis of the job of the breadwinner. The classes—and some of their curious applications—are:

**Class I. Professional**, including doctors, judges, architects, vicars, metallurgists.

**Class II. Intermediate**, including teachers, Cabinet Ministers, journalists, managers in industry, pilots, publicans, farmers.

**Class III. Skilled**, including below-ground miners, electricians, carpenters, printing workers, shorthand typists, railway engine drivers, salesmen.

**Class IV. Semi-skilled**, including above-ground miners, electrical assembly workers, machine tool operators, bricklayers, street vendors, barmaids, bus conductors, postmen.

**Class V. Unskilled**, including labourers, ticket collectors, stevedores, window-cleaners, messengers, lorry drivers' mates.

THE rantings of the demented Sir Sheath Joseph have highlighted the 'social classes' held by different occupations in British society.

They are—to say the least—curious. I'd like to point out just one of the more ludicrous scales that Joseph based his 'serious' speech on.

You will note that classed in Social Class 1 are vicars, and in Social Class 5 are stevedores. Now do vicars get to be top of the tree on earnings? Of course not.

As we are often told, vicars are on the point of destitution, while we are led to believe that stevedores and dockers earn fortunes. So it must be usefulness to society that gets vicars this high rating; while unskilled workers like dockers and stevedores are useless, and therefore in the lowest class.

If a vicar didn't do his job properly, he might slosh too much

holy water about, quote the wrong passage from the Bible or even be late for a funeral.

If a stevedore does his job wrong, he could easily get a broken leg or broken neck, or, if he was really careless, kill himself.

Vicars don't have many industrial accidents. A stevedore might even stow cargo with such a lack of skill that the cargo might shift at sea, and overturn the ship.

If dockworkers go on strike the screams are horrible. We are holding the country to ransom, and the whole economy could collapse in five weeks.

If vicars went on strike—nobody would notice it for five years let alone five weeks. Except God maybe. That's how useful vicars are to society.

Which goes to prove these tables are about as logical and 'scientific' as a game of bingo.

Karl Capek's Hungarian play 'R.U.R.'

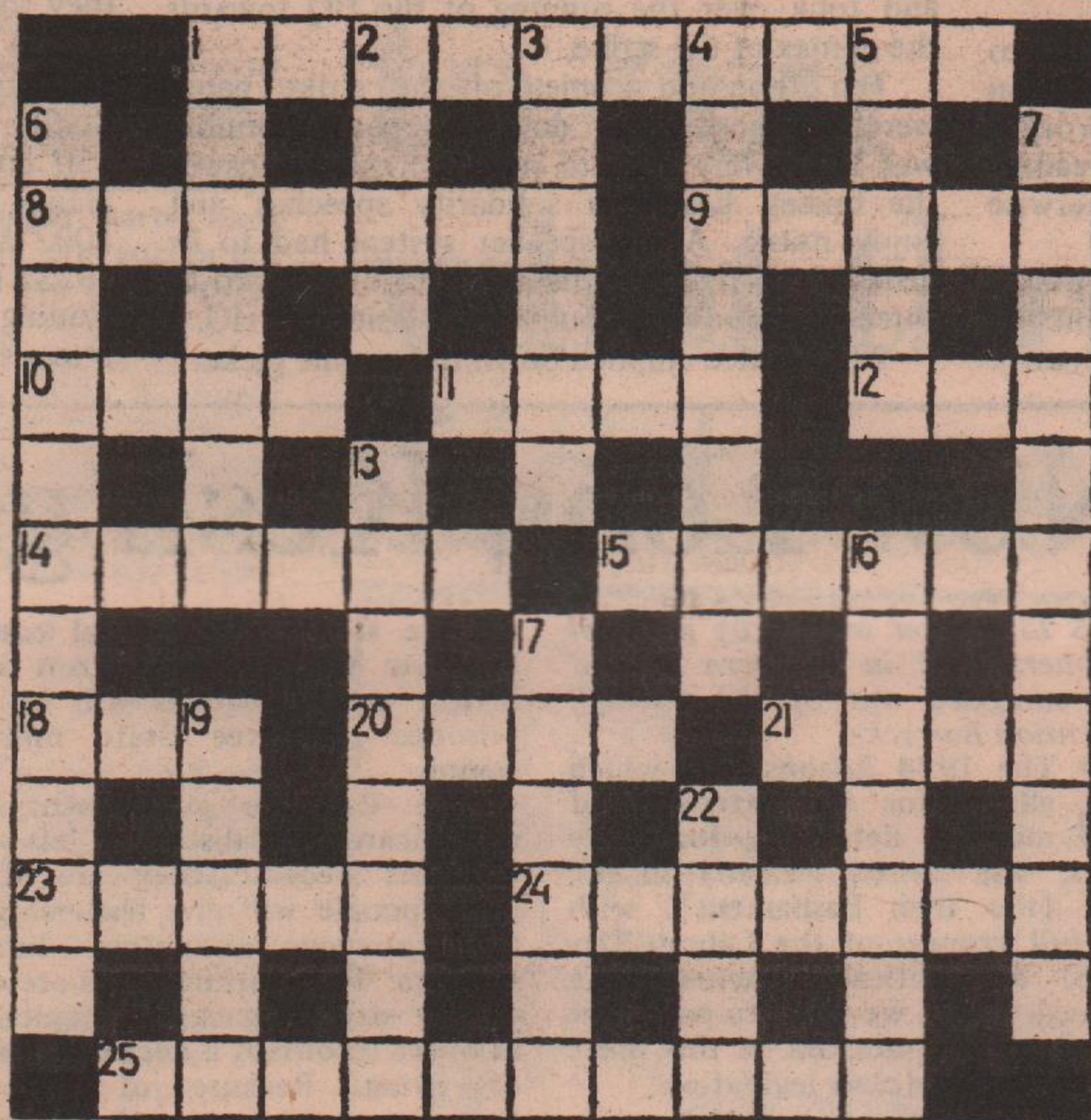
- DOWN**
- 1: Primitive communist and bipedal troglodyte (4, 3)
  - 2: Imperial fiddler (4)
  - 3: They loosen up your movements! (6)
  - 4: Leader of 1381 Peasants' Revolt which seized Tower of London and despatched Archbishop of Canterbury (3, 5)
  - 5: Word meaning 'automaton' popularised by London presentation of

- 6: B.S.A. or I.M.G. headgear (5, 6)
- 7: One-time record-breaking top-scoring Middlesbrough centre-forward (5, 6)
- 13: Notorious Paris dungeon demolished by Parisien workers on 14 July 1789 (8)
- 16: One thing on top of another! (3-4)
- 17: Put money into underwear! (5)
- 19: Cash for a stray dog? (5)
- 22: Falls behind persistent offenders (4)

## Socialist Worker Crossword No 1

### ACROSS

- 1: Powerful anti-Stalinist novel by Solzhenitsyn written around characters in a Russian hospital (6,4)
- 8: R Reeves is back up! (7)
- 9: Underground commuter or potato (6)
- 10: Sylvia . . . , blonde film actress now reduced to advertising margarine (4)
- 11: English chemist who invented famous safety lamp for miners in 1816 (4)
- 12: Beverage thrown into Boston Harbour by 1773 American revolutionaries (3)
- 14: Airy garage? (6)
- 15: Tall redhaired and blue-eyed Scottish footballers (6)
- 18: French scene of lengthy factory occupation against redundancy by watch-factory workers (3)
- 20: Revolutionary founder of United Irishmen who escaped hanging by British by committing suicide in prison in 1789 (4)
- 21: Mauritian dish once popular with British sailors (4)
- 23: 'All animals are . . . but some animals are more . . . than others' (5)
- 24: Greasin' and wiping popular with Nixon (7)
- 25: Person who attempts to promote sales of product by appealing to snobbishness, sentimentality and sexual appetites of potential customers (10)



# AM I A BUILDER -OR A PLASTIC SURGEON?

BEWARE of guard dogs, filthy toilets -if there is a toilet at all-and men wandering around in total confusion. Is this Long Kesh or some other Internment camp in Northern Ireland? No, this is an average building site in this country today.

I am a plastic surgeon by trade-otherwise known as a painter and decorator. My job is to cover up the errors of others.

A bleak picture I've painted, you might think. But let me assure you that the situation is in fact a lot bleaker.

In the area where I live the norm is the small back-street builder with about 20 men of various trades. At one time this was an excellent type of firm to learn one's trade with, but today due to productivity schemes and such like an apprentice is not given the scope of work or the supervision to make him a decent tradesman.

## LUMPIES

The important thing to remember is that these boys are being employed under the pretext of having a trade but end up doing all the donkey work on the cheap for the employer. So it's up to all tradesmen in this country to see that these youngsters are given the opportunity to become decent tradesmen.

In the past 12 months there's been a terrific run on house improvement grant jobs in South Wales and with it the increase in sub-contract lumpies. The work carried out by these characters would make the Monty Python team look like master builders.

One way to end this madness is for our union and local trades councils to pressurise the local authorities who give these grants into writing into these contracts that the work must be done by direct labour only. If this scourge is fought at local level I think we will see a marked improvement in this situation.

**Where do the International Socialists come into all this? Well, IS is the only organisation in this country whose beliefs make any sense in these times of materialism and greed. The road is clear for what is needed:**

Abolish all forms of productivity schemes.

All safety regulations to be adhered to.

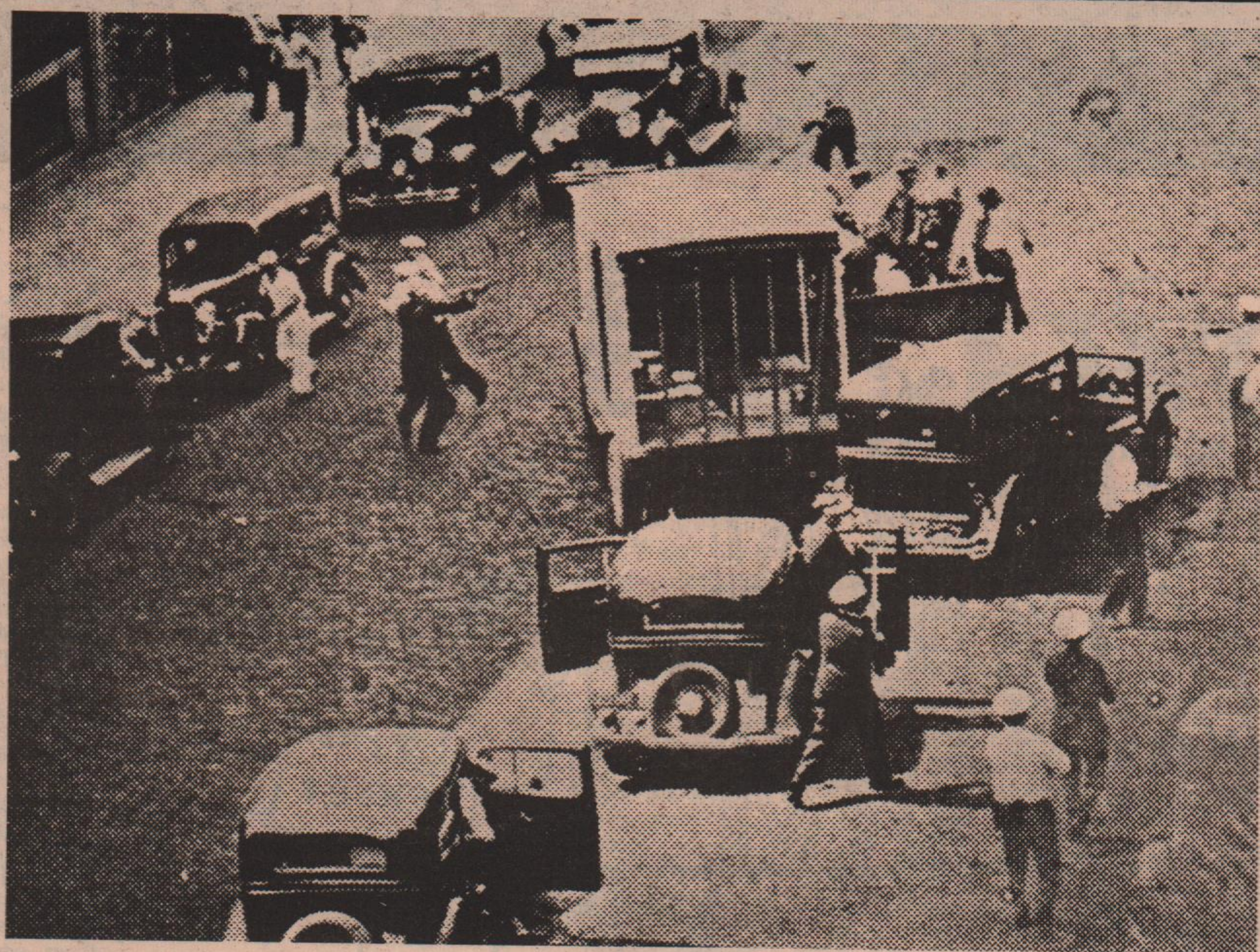
A national shop stewards' movement for the building industry.

An end to Lump working.

Workers' control of the building industry.

I appeal to you, for the sake of all our brothers killed making vast fortunes for the building barons, to join the International Socialists, build a socialist workers' party and let's build a world fit for humans, not rats as we are treated now.

JOHN POWELL (UCATT)



## City on strike

The city of Glasgow has been paralysed by a series of strikes in the past few weeks. Lorry men, busmen, underground workers, sewage men, teachers, engineering workers-there were 15,000 on strike.

This article, the first of three about cities paralysed by strike action, is about how lorry drivers brought Minneapolis, USA, to a halt in 1934.

LEFT: Suddenly without any warning, the cops opened fire on the picket truck. In seconds two of the pickets lay motionless... From TEAMSTER REBELLION, by Farrell Dobbs (£1.05 plus 7p postage from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4).

MINNEAPOLIS is a gaunt industrial town in the Mid-West of the United States. Its position on the edge of the prairies made it a centre of lumber milling, mining and foundries, freight and railways. It became a centre for immigrants, many of them socialists, from Scandinavia and the Baltic Coast.

The pioneers of industrial militancy in Minneapolis had been the railwaymen and the migrant workers but in the 1930s it was the lorry drivers, or teamsters as they are called in America, who took the lead and beat the town's entire establishment, the Citizens Alliance, the police, the state troopers and the employers in a stand up battle which made Minneapolis a union town.

The lorry drivers' strike in May 1934 was the climax of two years organising by Local 574 who had used their members' mobility to get garage, warehouse, market and delivery dock workers joined into the Teamsters Union.

That May the strikers' first objective was to take complete control of transport in the town. A fleet of cruising picket vans flagged down any scab lorry on the street. Radio-controlled reinforcements were on hand and operations which refused to close down had their lorries and contents escorted to strike headquarters.

Teenagers on motorbikes ran a courier and reconnaissance service. Employers' secretaries used to slip the strikers carbon copies of the bosses' plans to get round the strike.

### Mobile

A special committee issued union permits to vital transport services. They gave permission for new lorry models to be moved to the World's Fair through the town, carrying large signs reading 'Moved with Local 574's permission'. Otherwise nothing moved on wheels.

The strikers' headquarters was a rented garage complex. It was the control centre of the mobile pickets and housed legal assistance, a security

# How the lorry-drivers stopped a city

by David Widgery

force, a small medical centre and offices of the strike committee.

Volunteer car mechanics kept the strikers' cars in working order. Union carpenters built in sinks, stoves and counters and the Cooks and Waiters Union sent experts on mass cooking to provide a 24-hour meal service. A women's auxiliary of strikers, wives, girl friends and mothers were in the thick of the organisation and took over the running of the HQ towards the climax of the strike.

Ten thousand copies of the strike paper were produced every day. A general assembly was held every day to report progress, answer the bosses' lies, hear solidarity speeches and enjoy music. A loudspeaker system had to be installed to transmit the speeches to the two or three thousand who couldn't get inside the HQ.

When police clubbed down the mobile pickets,

700 members of the women's auxiliary marched in protest to the town hall, the building workers called a solidarity strike and the electrical workers marched in a body to the strike HQ to put themselves at the disposal of the lorry drivers.

In cinemas across America workers applauded newsreel film of pickets clubbing the cops for a change, instead of the other way round. But by the time the strike ended in August, the forces of law and order had captured the strike headquarters by a bayonet assault, shot a striker dead in an ambush and put Minneapolis under martial law.

But the strike and the Teamsters won, because they too raised their strength and their organisation at every point that the struggle intensified. The strikers' radio station signed off: 'This is Station 574 broadcasting, with 7,500 pickets, 450 cruiser cars, 16 motorcycles and two airplanes, by authority of the strike committee of 100.' And Local 574, which had 75 members in 1933, had now more than 6,000 members, including sections for milk drivers, gas station attendants, taxi drivers and unemployed workers.

## Now Long Kesh goes south

THIS IS a letter written by political prisoners held in southern Ireland and smuggled out of the Curragh Detention Barracks.

The 1974 Prisons Bill, which allows for the extension of military detention for three years, was passed recently in the Dail [the Irish Parliament], with the full support of the Labour TDs (MPs). As political prisoners in the Curragh camp, we want to point out the dangers contained in this piece of anti-working class legislation.

The extension of military detention for a three-year period is part of the repressive legislation that the Cosgrave government has in store for the Irish people. British imperialism is in a profound crisis. It uses its military might to crush the resistance of the workers in Northern Ireland. It looks to Cosgrave to force the workers in the south into submission.

Cosgrave willingly complies and among the measures he seeks to

enforce are extra-territorial courts. Freedom fighters on the run from British murder squads will be imprisoned in Free State military camps.

The Cosgrave government fear republicans, socialists and left-wing militants because they are afraid these people will give leadership to the growing discontent among workers. The working class are constantly struggling against capitalism in order to obtain a decent standard of living. Because of this the Cosgrave government seek to destroy any working-class leadership to protect the interests of big business.

### Evidence

Top level meetings concerning the large scale arrests of militants have been held and blueprints for such operations have been drawn up.

Militants will be dragged before Special Courts, convicted on little or no evidence and thrown into military prison camps which are ready to

accommodate large numbers. This is the real reason for the Prisons Bill that allows civilians to be imprisoned in military camps.

We appeal to all republicans, socialists and all class-conscious workers to recognise this threat and act immediately. These attacks on the working class both North and south, must be defeated and firm action taken against Cosgrave and show the workers in the North and south that they have a common cause because they are both struggling against capitalism to obtain a better standard of living.

Only a 32-county Workers Republic, by nationalising all sections of industry, will be capable of satisfying the needs of the working class.

The first step towards this is to make the Southern Labour leaders withdraw from the coalition and along with the trade union leaders they must be forced to fight against all repressive legislation.

The Black Worker in Britain

বৃহৎ বার্মালা অসিক

Anwodudu To Wa Ni Iru Oyibo

O Trabalhador Português em Inglaterra

பிசாயுத மா யுசரத்தி மசுரூ

O Κύπριος Εργάτης στην Αγγλία

ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ

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# Two strikes picked him off his knees. Now the Coal Board—and Joe Gormley

# THE UNIONS

THE left-wing on the executive of the miners' union won a vital victory last week. The vote to recommend the members to reject the National Coal Board's productivity scheme demands massive support.

The NCB's proposals are designed to split the unity born out of the great strikes in 1972 and 1974.

That unity, which took years to achieve, was made possible by the industry's national wages structure.

The NCB's proposals would mean face-workers at the same pit earning the same wages and bonus. But there are huge differences in the output and richness of the seams from face to face.

A miner could earn vastly more than his fellow worker on a less productive seam at a face just a few miles away.

The scheme would also introduce method study, which should be opposed by every miner.

Over the years, the workforce has been decimated yet productivity is higher than ever. This has particularly affected areas such as Scotland.

Miners are now working with less manpower than they need. Increased productivity will only make matters worse.

Real increases on the basic rates are the answer and this can only be achieved by unity, not by pits trying to go it on their own.

Gormley has already begun his left-baiting against the Communist Party to divert attention from the real enemies in the union—men like himself and Len Clarke of Nottingham. They would love to see the miners split up to avoid any more struggles like the last two strikes.

The left wing on the executive must be supported if we are not to see

the miners weakened and the union rent apart by local and sectional negotiations.

**NO TO THE NCB'S PROPOSALS.  
FOR A NATIONAL WAGES  
STRUCTURE.**

**KEEP THE UNITY AND  
SOLIDARITY OF THE MINERS.**

The Government's policy is to "divide and rule"—to divide the NUM politically over the productivity issue and to divide it industrially by concentrating a considerable amount of a miners' wage packet, and therefore his potential militancy in the pits and individual coalfields. In this way the national solidarity of the NUM would be broken and the chance of it once again being able to challenge, and defeat a Government would be considerably reduced.

From the Financial Times.

## —want this man to crawl again...



# Don't let them do to you what they did to us

by Michael Fenn, NASD

IF THE miners fall for productivity dealing and different rates for different areas, the consequences—if the dock industry is anything to go by—will be appalling.

In 1967, after a government report carried out by Lord Devlin, the dockers in the main ports were allocated to permanent employers. The new golden era for dockers had begun, or so we were told by the press and trade union officials.

But the next phase of Devlin, Phase Two, was to bring about the real aim of these plans—to divide the ports into different wage deals. Manning scales, too, would be different. So would work practices, with London abolishing piecework and Liverpool keeping it.

The wages were different, but there was something else really shrewd. The agreements were carefully timed so they did not expire at the same time.

Liverpool started in September, Hull in October, Southampton and London in January. The employers had effectively split the dockers port by port, just as they are now scheming to split the miners.

By trying to set Nottingham miners against Scotland they are trying to push through a procedure already successful in the docks. Men in the container operations at Tilbury now get more money than men in the same dock working less profitable conventional cargo.

The result of all this is that dockers' wages are slipping down the wages league.

When London dockers struck last year over the wage review they were isolated and defeated. Dockers in other ports can't identify with them. The same applies if a wage dispute breaks out in Hull or Liverpool.

The only national agreement men can return to is a £25 minimum. Any stewards' committee asking men to go back to those levels would stand no chance. The only national strike the dockers have staged recently was in 1972. Then the issue was jobs being lost in every port through containerisation.

Dockers were united in that struggle by a common bond. The miners have such a bond—a national wage agreement.

To lose it would severely weaken any future fight in the mines. The employers would have succeeded once again in using their oldest tactic—divide and rule.

## NEW LINES ON OLD KING COAL

Dear Socialist Worker,

Please dedicate these lines to the rank and file of the NUM. I am a miner's wife, who until the recently won pay awards, spent 20 years on the poverty line. I urge all miners not to accept any divisive productivity scheme, which is aimed primarily at splitting the solidarity of the miners. Their strength is in solidarity.

*Now old King Coal was a cruel old soul,  
Private enterprise coal was he.  
And he said to his men, you must dig the coal,  
And dig it all for free.  
And your wages will be sweat and tears,  
Hardship and pain and blood,  
But you'll dig the coal, the Company coal,  
And all for the Company's good.*

*Now the new King Coal is a crafty old soul,  
And his name is NCB.  
And he said to his men, you must dig more coal,  
To boost productivity  
And we'll close each pit as the Board thinks fit,  
And we'll split you decisively,  
Oh, our incentive scheme, the NCB dream,  
Will be good for the NCB.*

*But there's another King Coal, with a living soul,  
And his name is NUM.  
Who remembers past days, and the bad old ways,  
And the exploitation of men.  
Who remembers the Board, that stern overlord,  
When the energy God was oil,  
Whilst the man beneath, for his toil received,  
A wage that was merely 'dole',  
And who'll speak of the price, and of the lives sacrificed,  
And who'll answer that unity's strength,  
And when 'Bosses' forget, will remind of the debt,  
That they owe, to the man beneath.*

Christina Rzerzuchowski

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# Food: There is a crime here that is beyond denunc

TENS of thousands of people have starved to death in Bangladesh in the past few weeks. In India the government refuses to keep count, but newspapers carry routine reports of the dead and dying. A quarter of a million are starving in Mozambique.

In Tanzania there is a government crisis over food supplies. In Sahel and Ethiopia, scarcely free of seven years of drought, the terror of famine has begun again.

In Bengal, most people fear a repeat of the terrible famine of 1943, when three million died. Most, but not all. Great family fortunes were made out of the grain trade in 1943, and some would like to repeat the trick.

The rich farmers complain the government price of grain is too low to cover their costs. An independent estimate suggests that if the price is increased, profits for the rich farmers will double or even treble.

British newspapers make out that the deaths are purely the result of harvest failure. They are not. The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation argued recently that the shortage of grain in Bangladesh is slight. The starvation comes because rich farmers and merchants hoard the grain in the hope the price will rise, or smuggle it out of the country to where prices are higher.

## Cash

For ten years the governments of these countries have been bribing the rich farmers to grow more grain. The result has been a marked increase in the number of peasants who have no land and are forced to work for the rich farmers to live.

Farm labourers used to be paid in grain. Now increasing grain prices mean the farmers pay in cash—and the labourer cannot afford to buy grain.

The price increases are staggering. Bangladeshi leader Mujib campaigned in 1970 on the demand that rice prices be cut from 40 takas to 20. The price is now 400.

The government response is to use the police to preserve

## A SCENE LIKE BELSEN

Feeding time in Kurigram, Bangladesh, at 3pm every day, is a scene from Belsen as the starving stream in from all directions to receive a roti [a thin flat piece of bread] or perhaps two if they are lucky, to keep them alive for the next 24 hours. Women and small children predominate.

Many of the children, especially, some carried by their mothers, others walking alone, are in a condition of ghastly emaciation, their grotesquely huge heads lolling on bodies like sticks...

The shortage of food was caused at

least as much by the large-scale smuggling of grain to India either for sale against rupees, which can be exchanged for takas at a handsome premium on the black market, or in exchange for goods in short supply at Bangladesh, such as salt.

Unless the government can stop the smuggling and control the black market trade in rice by compulsory procurement of the big farmers' marketable surplus, the excellent crop now in the fields may be unable to prevent a repetition of the tragedy...

Michael Hornsby, The Times.

## FACT

'If the arable land of our planet were cultivated as efficiently as farms in Holland, the planet could feed 67 billion people, 17 times as many people as are now alive.'—Edgar Owens, of the US Agency for International Development, quoted in The Guardian, 1 November.

appearances. In Poona the dead and dying were cleared off the railway station so that the President of India, on his way to open the Davis Cup tennis tournament, would not be offended.

But the situation in India is only the tip of the iceberg.

A grain crisis certainly increases the profits of rich farmers, but it also drives the governments of these famine-stricken countries to seek grain on the world market. This increased demand pushes prices and profits up. It is the dealers in Chicago and London make the real killing out of starvation.

Next year the famine will be worse. The landless who survive will be weaker and even more hopelessly in debt.

Meanwhile the government of India moves majestically forward from a nuclear explosion this year to the possible launching of its first satellite in 1975. The Indian parliament took time off from its troubles to congratulate an MP on his modest performance in the Asian Olympics rifle contest.



As hungry peasants (left) to celebrate

## How

WORLD food shortage is the main reason for the famine. The fall in production since 1972 has been small—a drop of 10 million on a total production of 1.5 billion. What's more, it is chiefly because of government policy. In 1968-70 governments, led by the US, deliberately cut production to keep up the price of grain. These cuts another 100 million of grain would be produced.

In other words, the government action that would have brought a grain surplus would have brought no benefit to the business corporations that dominate the world.

The shortage of food is made worse by the Russian economy. It has enough food to feed its own people. For years Russia has cut back on agriculture to

Men have transformed the world with their knowledge. The short lean wheat has been made big and productive. Little sour apples have grown large and sweet, and that old grape that grew among the trees and fed the birds has mothered a thousand varieties, red and black, green and pale pink, purple and yellow; and each variety with its own flavour.

The men who work in the experimental farms have made new fruits; nectarines and forty kinds of plums, walnuts with paper shells, and always they work, selecting, grafting, changing, driving themselves, driving the earth to produce... but men who can graft the trees, and make the seeds fertile and big, can find no way to let the hungry people eat their produce.

Men who have created new fruits in the world cannot create a system whereby their fruits may be eaten... Carloads of oranges dumped on the ground. The people came for miles to take the fruit, but this could not be. How would they buy oranges at 20 cents a dozen, if they could drive out and pick them up for nothing?

## BECAUSE THERE IS NO PE

And men with hoses spray oranges, and they are among the people who have control.

A million people hungry, kerosene sprayed over them.

And the smell of rot fills the air.

Burn coffee for fuel in the winter, it makes a hot fire. Rivers and place guards the hungry people from the slaughter.

Slaughter the pigs and the putrescence drip down in



# CAUSE RE IS PROFIT...

squirt kerosene on the  
ry at the crime, angry at  
e to take the fruit.  
y, needing the fruit—and  
golden mountains.  
ls the country.  
ships. Burn corn to keep  
e. Dump potatoes in the  
long the banks to keep  
shing them out.  
bury them, and let the  
to the earth.

There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here, that weeping cannot symbolise. There is a failure here that topples all our success.

The fertile earth, the straight tree rows, the sturdy trunks and the ripe fruit. And children dying of pellagra must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange.

And coroners must fill in the certificates—died of malnutrition—because the food must rot, must be forced to rot.

The people come with nets to fish for potatoes in the river, and the guards hold them back. They come in rattling cars to get the dumped oranges but the kerosene is sprayed. And they stand still and watch the potatoes flow by, listen to the screaming pigs being killed in a ditch and covered with quicklime, watch the mountains of oranges slop down to a putrefying ooze; and in the eyes of the people there is a failure and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath.

California in the 1930s, from John Steinbeck's novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*.



Indian workers voting to strike for higher wages earlier this summer

CONFRONTED with the sheer size of the famine, many workers are inclined to throw up their hands in despair. What can be done to stop the profiteers and feed the hungry?

This week Fred Peart, Labour's Minister of Agriculture, leads the British deputation to the United Nations World Food Conference in Rome. He and countless other agriculture ministers will make sombre speeches about how much they plan to do to 'improve the situation'.

The delegates will argue for 12 days about what to do about the grain shortage. No one will put forward a single proposal to deal with the farmers, hoarders and speculators who create a shortage of food for the masses even when there is plenty to go round.

There will be no solution from the well-fed experts in Rome. But there is a solution to the fury of the starving people of the

## One world, one struggle

world, who are moving with increasing urgency to revolt.

Last year the masses of the Gujerat and Bihar states in India rose in food riots against the wealthy. The government immediately showed which side it was on. Police shot 137 people while putting down the revolt.

These murders have not decreased the protests. All through this year the landless peasants of the subcontinent have risen in a series of rebellions. That is why the Indian government is devoting so much time and money

to building up its police force.

But, for the first time in the history of the world's starving people, the revolt is not confined to the landless peasants. For the first time the urban poor, the industrial workers, themselves smitten by the food shortages, have started to wield their massive strength in protest.

### Corrupt

1974 has heralded some of the greatest industrial strikes in Asia's history. This summer 250,000 railwaymen fought a mighty battle with the Indian government. In June a massive strike by textile workers in Thailand forced the government to raise the minimum wage and, for the first time, to introduce redundancy payments. In South Korea a series of mass strikes have terrified the country's corrupt dictatorship.

This is the power which can shake the world capitalist class, their speculators, their hoarders, their policemen and their politicians.

Workers in Britain can act against the famine—not by cutting further their standard of living (which will only help the capitalists) but by fighting in solidarity with their brothers and sisters across the sea. The same capitalism which demands wage cuts and price increases in Britain causes the famine in Bangladesh, Africa, South America.

There is one world—and one struggle.

# ... goes ...iation



and workers eat their rations from paper cartons (above) British big businessmen sit down at a £7 million order at a banquet given by the Sheik of Bahrein.

## Where the money goes

INDIA needs another five to ten million tons of grain this year. The extra will cost 1,250 million dollars, a third of India's export earnings. Already a quarter of these go to pay interest and profits on past loans. Increased oil prices are likely to take another third. This leaves little to pay for machinery needed for development and fertilisers for next year's crop.

The Indian government's spending on DEFENCE increased five times over in the 1960s. Spending on POLICE increased 52 times over in the past 24 years. The riot police (CRP) had 16 battalions in 1968-69. It now has 60. The Central Industrial Security Force, for strike-breaking, which was formed in 1970, has doubled its size. The Indian Home Minister says it is still too small.

There are at least 35,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS held in India. 30,000 people are held permanently in jail in the state of West Bengal, subject to torture, many permanently in leg irons, and rarely brought to trial.

## ... the system turned surplus into shortage

### THE SPECULATORS

'Our reasoning is that the crop was planted late and there's still a chance of a frost scare, and further damage to the crop.'

'We tend to believe that three dollars is the bottom for corn and there's still a good chance, with any further damage, that corn can go up to 4.50 dollars. Similarly

we tend to believe that the meat complex will rally in the event that there is any further damage to the corn crop.'

—A tip that speculators should buy corn, from the *Bulletin of the big Wall Street brokers Rosenthal*, 11 September, 1974.

the US in the arms race. The result is that Russia is buying scarce food on the world market—30 million tons of grain in 1972

Again, during the brief world boom of 1972-3, farmers throughout the West thought quick profits could be made from producing beef. They bought up grain to feed their cattle, depleting world grain stocks and forcing up prices.

Overall, what could have been a world surplus of cheap food has been turned, by the very anarchy of the capitalist system itself, into a world shortage of expensive food.

But that is not the end of the story. The drive to raise food output in the poor countries of the world has depended heavily on fertilisers. That wasn't necessarily the best way to raise output—but it was the way that suited the big multinational firms that produce fertiliser. Western aid to Third World countries was often conditional on its being spent to buy Western fertiliser.

Fertiliser prices have risen in the past two years, adding heavily to the profits of the multinational oil and chemical firms, but making the poorer countries less and less

able to afford the fertiliser they now desperately need.

Besides, the rich countries take the lion's share again. With only a third of the world's population, these countries use more than three-quarters of the world supply of fertilisers. In the US two million tons is used on the golf courses, parks and lawns of the rich. Those two million tons could produce miracles for the agriculture of Asia or Africa.

The starvation threatening Asia and Africa is not a natural catastrophe. It is man-made. With a tiny redistribution of the world's wealth there would be no grain problem. There are vast areas waiting for cultivation.

### Untilled

More money spent on medical and insecticide research to conquer the disease-carrying tse-tse fly would open for cultivation an area of Africa larger than the US. In South America land owned by big foreign companies and landowners is kept untilled. In Asia a fraction of the money spent by the US and Russia on arms could provide the irrigation needed to prevent

drought and floods, ensuring no one would die of hunger.

Some people argue that everyone who lives in the West, rich or poor, is somehow to blame for the poverty and starvation of the Third World. The argument is false.

The workers of America and Europe have in no way benefitted from the cuts in grain production, the speculation in foodstuffs and the wastage of fertiliser on golf courses. In fact these actions, by pushing up food prices, have hit the living standards of Western workers—though we are not in the same desperate plight as our fellow workers on the other side of the world.

The real blame for famine lies with the world's ruling classes and the capitalist system they run. Starving people cannot afford to buy food. Rather than give it to them, big business finds it more profitable to hoard grain and cut output so that prices stay high. They prefer to waste enormous sums on arms production than spend it on agriculture.

And if anyone challenges their power they will resort, as they have done in Chile, to bloody repression to protect it.

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# LETTERS

## LAW AND BLACKS — THE NORMAL SERVICE

THE REPORT on police harassment on Teesside and at the Carib Club in Cricklewood in North London (2 November) doesn't make the point that for many of us this is part of normal life. It is part of a pattern which includes attacks on Asians earlier this year and the witchhunt of illegal immigrants started by the passing of the Immigration acts.

Attacks such as these have led to an increase in the black prison population, many of whom are in for assault arising out of commercial or domestic disputes for which no charges were brought. The point also has to be made that police harassment is state harassment of black people. It can't just be put down to the racism of the police force.

Since the introduction of the immigration acts when the Labour Party turned its back on the fight of the black workers, racism has increased. The labour movement has tended to ignore the conditions of black workers and the police have been left to go almost unchallenged.

Community defence groups, pickets and demonstrations are important but we must see this as part of a bigger fight. We have to organise at work where we have most power as part of a political movement.—LEE KANE, Camden Town.

## All fixed up by Mr Benn

I'VE JUST been through an example of Wedgwood Benn's industrial democracy. I work for the George Kent Group of which the government owns a quarter. The group has recently had takeover bids from GEC and a Swiss firm Brown Boveri. Kent were backing BB and to get Benn's support decided to let the workers participate in the decision.

Surprise, surprise. Their consultation came out in favour of BB. Then red faces. The Leeds District Secretary said his members had *not* been consulted.

The Industrial Society was hastily called in at Luton to carry out a ballot, after similar complaints. And in my works in Cambridge there was no vote at all. Still Benn used the result in his decision to back BB.

The whole thing was a fix. If you were told so and so would guarantee you a job who would you back? You can't tell unless you can see and understand the books. But there is a more important reason for avoiding these mock consultations.

There is talk of GEC Scientific Apparatus in Manchester and Cambridge Scientific Instruments merging. Jobs lost. There's talk of the GEC plant in London in Industrial Process Control merging with George Kent Instruments Luton. Jobs lost.

In other words if you did understand the books and backed the right bidder you'd only be doing some other poor sod out of a job.

The truth is that all over the world capitalism in crisis cries 'Rationalise to stay competitive.' That's their way of saying chop the workers. Benn's talk of industrial democracy is no answer to this problem.

Talking of nationalisation under workers' control is nearer the mark, but it can only be achieved by using our industrial power. A fighting combine committee in the instrument industry would be the first step towards this.—DON BLACK, Cambridge.

## Strike? It'll cost you £5000

OVER HERE in Denmark on the 17 October the Labour-Court has pronounced its judgement in the first of a series of cases against 40,000 of the 300,000 workers who took part in the unofficial general-strike last May against the economic policies of the Liberal government. 400 shipyard workers from Svendborg were fined £5000 collectively for taking part in a political strike.

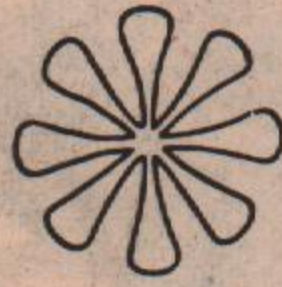
The Svendborg workers were chosen for the first case because of their present weakness caused by a series of political victimisations and defeats over the last few years.

Tens of thousands of workers at shipyards and factories struck in protest on 18 October, and solidarity meetings were held over all the land. There was an angry, and militant reaction from workers.

The reaction from the ruling class after the protest strikes was one of panic, and there is talk of arranging a compromise in the cases of the other 39,000 or so workers.

The tragedy is that the revolutionary left is too weak to decisively intervene in this situation, and the Communist Party is not seriously committed to smashing the Anti-Strike and Class-Collaboration laws.

Since the Party got back into parliament recently they have become even more moderate, and in the unofficial general-strike in May did their best to restrict the strike movement to a one day affair, and opposed the calls from the workplaces—including from their own militants—for an all out general strike to topple the Liberal Government.—EVA KOCK, Odense, Denmark.



Please send us your letters. 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.

## How Batley lost its colour bar

IN AUTUMN 1968 the Batley Trades and Friendly Club moved to new premises. The committee decided to impose a colour bar and exclude all Africans and Asians from the club.

As in the Preston Dockers Club case various Christian and socialist groups passed resolutions and even picketed the club a few times. In a short time the storm died down and the club and its colour bar was forgotten.

However the members began to realise the problems and general nastiness of a colour bar. Various

unpleasant scenes occurred when black people were turned away. A visiting darts and dominoes team left because one of their number who was black was refused admission. The Sunday lunchtime drinkers were deprived of their stripper because she was black. But the colour bar continued till January 1974.

Then Eddie Margagh, a committee member and local socialist, moved a motion to end the bar and it was passed. It took six years but finally common sense prevailed.

Now a local pop group called Jandil play regularly at the club. Previously they would have been barred as the two leaders are Jan and Dilbur Shah who were born in Batley of an Indian father and an English mother.

We think by rational argument and persuasion and *not* victimisation, and black listing the Preston colour bar could be ended. We feel that to prevent Preston club members from using other CIU facilities will merely isolate them and harden their attitude. The moral is less hysteria and more debate.—SPUD & JILL, Birstall, West Yorks.

## We'll win in the end!

FOR OVER TWO years I worked in a fairly big general hospital in Eastern England, as a male nursing auxiliary.

On one occasion I and another nurse were asked to help out at a geriatric hospital for eight days. We agreed and the hospital hired a taxi to take us there and back every day. One of the drivers told us that it cost the National Health Service about £4 a day for this service—£23 for eight return journeys!

Because of the class distinction that exists in all hospitals there was an unpleasant atmosphere among the staff. Our local National Union of Public Employees branch used to meet every three months and only a few people ever bothered to turn up, although the branch secretary boasted she had over 800 members. She did nothing.

Another International Socialist sympathiser and myself did in the end get some of the staff to start fighting back, we made headway but it was a struggle. I think hospital workers have a long hard fight ahead of them, but its going to be worth it when they eventually win.

Take Hospital Worker and Socialist Worker into the hospitals with you. Help convert your sisters and brothers to revolutionary socialism. You'll soon have the bureaucrats on their knees. And when that happens sling them out!—IS SYMPATHISER, Address supplied.



The AEC strikers on the march in Southall, West London, last week. Solidarity, despite the attitudes of some trade union officials, is vital. PICTURE: Peter Harrap (Report).

## Sympathy came cheap, money didn't

WORKERS AT BRITISH LEYLAND AEC Bus and Truck plant in Southall have been locked out by management in dispute over their pay claim. The Dispute Committee set up by the shop stewards has been sending workers to other factories to appeal for support.

As a trade unionist I only hope that our brothers in AEC get a better reception than they did at last branch meeting of Transport union members at Heinz Harlesden.

The convenor reported the visit to the AEC workers

and seemed very sympathetic yet he failed to offer any suggestion for practical support. A motion was then put from the floor proposing a donation of £10 from branch funds and a factory gate collection.

A discussion followed and the district official who always sits in on branch meetings opposed the idea of a collection saying that 'People get fed up with collections... Next week you might want to collect for Hoovers.'

The fact is that we have never had a factory gate collection! The motion was defeated and the convenor who sympathetically received the AEC workers abstained from the vote.

Yet again workers in struggle have been let down by brother trade unionists and sold out by a trade union bureaucrat who on his own admission doesn't know much about Heinz 'because he doesn't work there'.

There is substantial support for the AEC workers on the shopfloor, no doubt a message of support will come from them.

This shows the very real need for a genuine rank and file movement to unite workers fighting for a decent wage in the face of trade union officials waving the stick of the Social Contract.

A step in the right direction will be taken on by the calling of the Second National Rank and File Conference on Saturday 30 November at the Digbeth Hall Birmingham. Be there!—STEVE FOREY, (TGWU 1/77), Harlesden.

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written in a Polish prison

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Available from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, N4. Price 25p, 75 pages.

# Postal Points

**PUPIL, PARENT, TEACHERS POWER...**  
The caption for the front page picture (26 October) of the Tulse Hill School picket was misleading. The Parent Teacher Association didn't support the picket. They were very slow to call a meeting on the situation of having National Front member Richard Edmonds as a teacher. They finally decided to ask the Inner London Education Authority to move Edmonds to another—mainly white school. This would have shifted the problem to another school. A fascist shouldn't teach in any school. The picket wasn't demanding Edmonds' sacking. He must be removed from the school by pressure from parents, pupils and teachers. The teachers have sent him to Coventry. When he sits down in the staff-room everyone moves away. The pupils have put up posters of him in Nazi uniform, walked out of classes etc. Continued activity will make it impossible for him to stay. The school governors and the ILEA have decided to do nothing. The pupils, parents and teachers are the people with the power.—JENNY HAWKE, Hackney.

**WRONG BATTLEGROUND...** The comments on Sir Keith Joseph's speech (26 October) missed out the arguments which socialists should use... To compare 'theirs and ours' attitudes to the family to children, to sex, as was done by Michael Fenn, makes it look as if the reason we oppose Sir Keith is because of ruling class hypocrisy—they're able to get away with it more than us because they've got money. We say all women should be able to control their own bodies and decide how many, if any, children they want and when. We fight for this principle because it's a necessity if we are ever going to achieve the basic human right of controlling our own lives. Joseph's 'remoralisation' just means doing out a few contraceptives to stop the workers breeding too quickly... Capitalism has only one morality—that of profit. All the ruling classes phoney cant about 'family life' and 'the nation's moral fibre' comes from their need to exploit the working class. The struggle for socialism involves working out for ourselves ways of living together and bringing up children based on principles of humanity and justice. We don't argue with the ruling classes' ideas of morality, we sweep them aside. Their views of what is 'decent', 'respectable', 'right and wrong' have no place in the socialist society we want to build.—PATRICIA OWEN, Crawley.

Michael Fenn's sneer about 'perverted, convicted Lords' (26 October) represents a new low in rabble-rousing and prejudice-mongering... most homosexuals are working class. In common with many working class non-homosexual women, my working class gay sisters and brothers are savagely oppressed by working class heterosexist male chauvinism... Of course these obscene warpings of the human spirit are engendered, fostered, and perpetuated by the mindless irrationalities of capitalism. Of course only revolution will free us of them... Surely it is folly to appeal to those very aspects of working class consciousness most vital to capitalism—man as worker and woman as reproducer and consumer—and most hostile to genuine revolutionary liberation from it?—JIM SCOTT, London SW2.

**PORTUGAL AND THE COMMUNISTS...**  
J R Willman's letter on Portugal (26 October) deserves a reply. He talks about recent successes for the workers but surely the key point is that the power of the Generals let alone the bosses remains undiminished. The road to socialism is not a matter of swapping one General for another. The Portuguese workers are being used as an off-stage army by the Communist Party whilst it wheels and deals within the 'corridors of power'. The radical officers are prepared to go along with the CP when it comes to removing obstacles to their sole aim of ending the disastrous colonial wars... But when their aims have been achieved, they'll turn on the workers as surely as the Chilean Generals did. The CP is doing nothing to prepare for that eventuality... It is the workers' movement that is being kept fragmented and demobilised. Comrade Willman seriously misunderstands the nature of the Portuguese CP when he writes about its 'mistake' in taking posts in a government alongside former fascists. On the contrary, this was the logical conclusion of the whole history of all the Communist Parties since Stalin's time. He should study the period of the 'Popular Fronts' in the 30s. Or the immediate post-war period when, for example, our own British CP was wanting a continued National Government with Churchill and the Italian CP backed

the monarchy and the regime of the fascist General Badoglio... I'd criticise Socialist Worker for its inadequate treatment of the British CP. When the Morning Star runs a major feature article on 'The Portuguese Armed Forces—A Force For Progress' (whilst having a front page editorial in the same issue on the treachery of the Chilean Armed Forces), it's clear they would play exactly the same role in Britain if given the chance, despite the excellent nature of many of its rank and file members. Only if we subject such disastrous ideas to continued and serious criticism can we hope to win the best elements in the CP to a real socialist organisation, the International Socialists.—SANDY IRVINE, Newcastle.

**FOR MEN?** As a housewife and mother of four children it seems to me your paper is more for men than women, especially 'non-employed' women. What about individual struggles, bad housing for example?... We lived in Scotland and my husband was out of work for 18 months. He heard of the Employment Transfer Scheme by chance and two years ago came down to the North of England. He got lodgings and found a job through the Labour Exchange (the scheme doesn't apply otherwise). He received £5.58 lodgings allowance and £400 which was put as a deposit on our house and our furniture was moved free (cost was over £100), solicitors fees and my and our children's fares were paid when we joined him... Do homeless people know of this scheme?... Think of women and children for a change... I like your paper but it still leaves grass roots problems to get along on their own... It's the children I care about most I think, could you think of them a bit more in the paper? After all they are the workers of tomorrow.—MS J L HOPE, Nelson.

**AN IRONY...** I was a member of the Communist Party but realised that they were turning out voting fodder for the Labour Party. When a Communist leader says 'Support the left' he means the left of the Labour Party... I'm thinking of joining the International Socialists... If only the smallest part of the heroism of the working class that has been employed existing under capitalism had been directed towards the revolution we would have had it a hundred times over. It is a bitter irony that the Labour and Communist parties have held the workers back.—G B SAWYER, Willenhall.

## TWO LEEDS CLOTHING WORKERS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE 1970 STRIKE WRITE ABOUT THE TV FILM 'LEEDS—UNITED!'

**Socialist Worker**  
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**WAGES REVOLT SNOWBALLS**  
Thousands do this to bosses and government  
by Chris Harman

**Falling**  
The new year has seen a continuation of the downward spiral of the economy...

**Severe**  
The new year has seen a continuation of the downward spiral of the economy...

**Surplus**  
The new year has seen a continuation of the downward spiral of the economy...

**Leeds rag trade strikers stop 50 factories**  
by Vince Hill

**REPRESSION GROWS AGAINST AMERICAN LEFT**

**March in Solidarity**  
The Socialist Workers Party will be holding a demonstration...

TWO leading characters in Colin Welland's TV version of the Leeds clothing strike which blew the Northern rag trade wide open for two weeks in 1970 were Joe and Maggie Pike.

The Pikes are closely based on real people, Leeds trade unionists who left the Communist Party in 1956, served on the 1970 unofficial strike committee and helped Welland write his play.

Here the real Joe and Maggie Pike talk to Gloden Dallas about the strike and the play:

**'JOE':** I think the play is politically valuable. Women watching it will get the same feeling they had during the strike and the essence is that it shows that it can be done—if it has been done once it can be done again. In fact the thing that frightened the employers into giving the full increase is that they thought it could be done easier than it can be done.

The film showed the way the strike flared up very well. It was true that everyone trucked around singing "Come out you bums, come out", and about the mobile pickets, that was done off the cuff.

### BULLETINS

'We asked Dennis to ask some girls to go up to the North East clothing factories. Before we knew what had happened, half a dozen girls had got together, whizzed around, collected money, booked a coach and took 30 girls up to try and get the people of the North East out.'

**'MAGGIE':** Yes, it did feel right. We used to have a meeting every morning in the Trades Hall and the strike committee would issue bulletins about the next day's events. But the strike committee, I don't think they stuck hard and fast to who was going to do what—it was so fluid it was absolutely magnificent.

'Each morning at the Trades Council we'd call 'Who's going to Middlesbrough?' and that day they went. And it was shutting down with snow.'

The play was generally quite accurate except for a cheap and nasty ending. You know that blonde who gave him the smack across the face, who was she supposed to be? I can't remember such a character. (Maggie moved an amendment at the final strike committee meeting of the real strike that a return to work should be put to another mass meeting, an incident omitted from the play).

'As it was all hell was let loose when people went back to their individual factory meetings—they went potty, didn't go back to work, they just thought they had been let down.'

For the first six months after the strike there were big attendances at union branch meetings, about 100 at each of the three branches. Then in August, when Colliers men cutters tried to get a separate deal, the women started drifting off.

### DEFEND

'I don't really know how the film will affect the union and the girls. Some people have already said it makes the trade look unattractive and others have said it didn't put women's problems as trade unionists enough in the fore. My experience of the women in this industry is that they are as good as they come, they work a full day, feed, clothe and wash their families.

'But the future of the union depends on how far you can get people involved. This lack of democracy is the union's biggest problem.'

Last week 'Maggie Pike' got the sack from the firm where she was a shop stewardess through the 1970 strike. She had refused because of ill health to change from a sewing job for which she was contracted to a pressing job which would keep her standing all day. The union has tried to defend her.

She knows that the girls on her bench would come out to support her, but she is over 60 and, being barred from the factory, can't get them out herself.

Nevertheless last week the BBC paid her £20 to comment for half an hour on 'Leeds—United' This is at least £5 more than her normal weekly wage.

Socialist Worker's front page the week of the strike

# How to reduce a boss to panic

by Sheila Parkin, ex-machinist, Hirst and Sandler's

LIKE most working-class girls in the 1960s I started work at 15, 'in a good trade'. Within two weeks I was transferred from the relative calm of the classroom to the noisy, dusty unbearable (hot in summer, cold in winter) environment of a typical Leeds tailoring sweat-shop.

The discomfort, the low pay, the long hours and above all the comradeship of the girls has continually reminded me of what the working class not only suffers but is capable of overcoming.

Colin Welland's play, Leeds—United! was dynamite, not because of its conclusion, but because it showed what a handful of working-class girls can do.

It showed how girls who are subjected to the confidence-destroying experience of childhood, the classroom, the family and the sweat-shop are capable of reducing their well-educated, well-dressed and over-

paid parasite bosses to a state of panic and confusion. Somewhere in that play it showed how the workers who produce the wealth of the world are capable of taking control of that world.

It showed how the trade union officials continually hide behind their corrupt positions, unaccountable to the members and unaffected by their working conditions, promoting 'good industrial relations'.

It showed how black and white women workers ignored racist ideas and stood shoulder to shoulder at the mass meetings and on the picket-lines. Above all, it showed the democracy and the energy that lies at the heart of any real workers' movement.

What the play did not show is the result of what was a disgusting sell-out by the union officials and, regrettably, some of the unofficial strike committee.

The film did not put over clearly enough the role of the Communist Party who eventually cropped up with a golden oldie of 'enough is enough, lads and lassies'. After the strike there was a disastrous run-down in membership of the union, a natural result of the disgust rank and file workers felt after the sell-out. The terms of the settlement allowed management to engage in wholesale sackings.

Since the strike those 'poverty-stricken' employers have never had it so good. Hepworth Tailoring have moved into a multi-storey, multi-million-pound sky-scraper. Burtons Tailoring have expanded their mail-order and ready-made markets and have also, by the way, dispensed with 2500 jobs. They now prepare their garments in the sweatshops of Formosa and Korea.

As for the other firms, they are still the same noisy, hell-holes they were in 1970 and probably 1870 too.

## COMRADE DIARY...

THE 1975 Big Red Diary takes the year 1945 for its theme. Thirty years ago World War Two ground to a halt. Out of the wreckage, armed workers in France, Italy, Greece and the colonies reached out to make a life of their own. The Diary chronicles the year in which the super-powers disarmed and crushed revolt.

It's useful political education but depressing and doesn't quite have the inspiring spirit of the first Red Diary. But it contains a wealth of facts, information and advice on Britain 1975 crisply set out and ready for action. IS branches, bookshops and student societies should order 20 copies at the reduced price of £10 for sale as New Year's gifts. Single copies 75p from Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1.

**The struggle in Ireland**



### Chris Harman

The aim of this pamphlet is to give a brief history of British domination, to show its effects on Ireland today, to show that the problems of the people of Ireland will not be solved until the domination is ended, and to indicate the way this can be done.



**An International Socialists pamphlet 15p**

Available from IS books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, N4.





**NEWS**

MY FATHER joined the IRA after the First World War and was finally forced to leave Ireland because of his political activity. My uncle, Jack Jones, was the miners' agent for the Rhondda and Pontypridd area. He was a founder member of the Communist Party.

So I was brought up in a trade union atmosphere and it was natural that I should veer to left-wing politics. It was also inevitable that I would join the Communist Party through my association with them to the exclusion of all other parties in the Rhondda.

I always believed that the Communist Party was a revolutionary organisation. It was when it started, but now it has degenerated into a reformist party. The differences in policy between the Communist Party and the Labour Party are almost unnoticeable today.

The tragic events of Chile caused me to examine my own politics and ideas. They made me realise that the Parliamentary Road to Socialism will never work. Only through revolutionary means will we change society.

I also thought the Communist Party was supposed to be a disciplined organisation. The Communist Party verbally opposes the Social Contract. Yet at the TUC two of its leading figures, Ken Gill and Eddie Marsden, eventually voted for the Social Contract. The Morning Star did put forward some measure of criticism, but they have not been disciplined—they certainly haven't been expelled from the Communist Party.

So I have left the Party to join the International Socialists. I want to stress that I still have a great regard for very many fine comrades in the Communist Party. But I reject the myth that I should remain in the Party to assist in changing it. Anyone who has ever tried has been disciplined and expelled.

For me Socialist Worker and IS literature in general is so much more lively and readable than the Star, probably because Socialist Worker is written predominantly by workers. Workers can much easier understand, and identify with it.

I first met the IS comrades in Swansea during the recent nurses' dispute. The nurses' flying picket to the pits arose from the ideas and the hard work of the IS comrades. It was an innovation for nurses to go out and ask for the support of other trade unionists. The Swansea nurses showed the way forward for everybody and strengthened their own trade union organisation by their action.

The Communist Party is wildly



# Why I joined International Socialists

by **JUNE MORRIS**  
**NUPE full-time nursing officer**

enthusiastic about capturing leading positions in the unions. My experience as an appointed full-time official has shown me that I am more removed from the workers I should represent.

It is more or less impossible for appointed full-time officers to influence the membership. They are under the authority of the general secretary and the executive com-

mittee, nor are they subject to the wishes and desires of the membership. We are often expected to suppress the actions of the members.

All full-time officials ought to be elected and immediately accountable to the membership.

I hope to play my part in building the Rank and File Movement, particularly among health workers, where the rank and file paper Hospital Worker already has some influence. But I joined IS, most of all, to build a revolutionary party that is capable of leading the working class to power by smashing capitalism forever.

## Film tour success—thanks to oil and Swarfega

THE International Socialists' first national film tour was a great success. *Blow For Blow*, the story of French women workers striking and occupying their textile factory, was shown in 11 industrial centres and raised more than £200 for the Socialist Worker Defence Fund after paying all its costs. Expenses included new piston rods, track rods and a gear box bought for £6 in a Bristol scrapyards, all needed to keep the van carrying the film and projector going for more than 2,000 miles.

Alan Marsden, who showed the film, reports: 'My confidence in IS has grown considerably as a result of the trip and I feel that while there is no room for complacency the organisation is alive and well and on the move. I also enjoyed the job even though I spent 90 per cent of the time coated with oil and got miles from a tin of Swarfega.'

**Packed**

The most exciting showing was that arranged by Manchester IS for the strikers at SEI in Heywood when their occupation was still in progress. Alan writes: 'Here the film really came home. It was shown in a packed ambulance hall devoid of the respectful hush found in middle-class film theatres, with mothers and kids from the picket line coming in and out.

'As the film progressed the women obviously recognised in it themselves,

their leaders, their enemy and the situations they have lived through in the Times Mill.

'Riotous laughter greeted the moments when the workers got their own back on the time and motion woman or dragged the boss out of his Mercedes, kicking and squealing into the 20th Century. The women rocked at the plight of a harassed husband trying to manage the kids while his wife was on strike. And their faces had concern written right across them when the French police move in.

**Regular**

'At Manchester *Blow for Blow* was them and their situation. It made perfect sense. Only one worker wasn't satisfied, she came up and said: "What we want is a film of workers running factories all the time. I know they can do it!"

The IS Agit-Prop Committee will be running national film tours on a regular basis, with the next tour immediately after Christmas.

In the meantime, *Blow for Blow* can be hired by individual branches or districts direct from Patsy Nightingale, The Other Cinema, 12/13 Little Newport Street, London WC2 (phone 01-734 8508).

The cost of the film is £20 + VAT and postage, but rates are negotiable, particularly for more than one screening.

**WALTHAMSTOW IS Socialist Worker Benefit Disco.** The best in soul and rock. Saturday 9 November, 8pm-midnight, Rose and Crown, Hoe Street. Bar extension. Come along, have a good time and help SW—all for 30p.

**PARTINGTON AND SALE IS public meeting:** The Lessons of the Stanlow Dispute. Speaker: John Deason (IS Industrial Organiser). Thursday 14 November, 8pm, Partington Community Centre.

**NEWHAM IS public meeting:** Portugal—What chance socialism? Speaker: Bob Light (TGWU) Wednesday 13 November, 8pm, Princess Alice, Romford Road, Forest Gate.

**ROCHDALE IS public meeting:** The economic crisis yet again? Speaker: Geoff Brown. Thursday 14 Nov, 8pm, Brunswick Hotel, Baillie Street.

**TOWER HAMLETS IS Socialist Worker Disco.** Saturday 9 November, 7.30pm-11pm, Knave of Clubs, Club Row, E2 (nearest tube Liverpool St or Old St). Admission 40p. All welcome.

**SALFORD WEST IS public meeting:** The social contract. Speaker: John Deason. Tuesday, 12 Nov, 8pm, Ye Olde Nelson, Chapel Street.

**CRICKLEWOOD AND FRIGIDAIRE IS public meeting:** Fight Racism! Defend the Cricklewood 10! Speakers: Martha Osamor, Lee Kane and a member of the Cricklewood 10 Defence Committee. Thursday 14 Nov, 8pm, Devon Room, Anson Hall, Walm Lane, NW10.

**CROYDON IS public meeting:** Racism and fascism in Britain. Who are the National Front? Why they must be fought. Thursday 14 November, 8pm, Ruskin House (corner of Coombe Road and Park Lane).

**AUSTIN (LONGBRIDGE BIRMINGHAM) IS factory branch meeting:** Inflation—How to fight it. Speaker: John Palmer. Sat 9 Nov, 12.30pm. Dog and Partridge, Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham 29. All Longbridge workers welcome.

MEETINGS FOR IS MEMBERS

**WEST YORKSHIRE district aggregate** for all IS members in Bradford, Huddersfield, Halifax, Keighley. Ian Birchall on 'Revolution and the Communist Parties since 1945' and 'Current perspectives for international revolution.' Sat 16 Nov, 2pm, University, Great Horton Road, Bradford.

**LONDON NALGO IS fraction meeting:** Tues 19 Nov, 7.30pm, Earl Russell pub, 2 Pancras Way, NW1 (near King Cross Station). All London NALGO IS members to attend.

**IS Building Workers' Weekend School:** Starting 1pm, 16 November, ending at 1pm, 17 November, at IS Books, Birmingham. Details from Flat 6b, 37 Cornfield Gardens, London E2.

**NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF IS STUDENT SOCIETIES Rally and disco** Friday 15 November, 7pm, London School of Economics. Speakers: Paul Foot (editor,

Socialist Worker), Dick North (chairman, Rank and File Organising Committee) and a student speaker. Tickets 10p from 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IS NOTICES

**LABOURER/DRIVER** required for IS administrative centre. A clean licence and IS membership essential. Apply to Judith Cohen, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN (phone 01-739 1878).

**WOMEN'S VOICE No 13** now out. Articles on night work, equal pay, SEI, prices. 5p per copy (plus 4p postage) from 85 Mealdens, Harlow, Essex. (IS branches please phone orders to Harlow 37205).

**BRADFORD and District IS social:** Disco, food, performance by CAST. Sat 16 Nov, 7pm, Star Hotel, Westgate.

**SW LITHO** apprentice, boot from parents imminent, needs accommodation (permanent or temporary). Prefer own room within easy reach of Bethnal Green. Contact Ian, SW Litho, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London, E2. (Phone 01-739 1870)

**IS Admin Office** needs a full-time assistant, IS member only, with shorthand and typing, some experience of office work preferred. Apply Judith Cohen, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

**IS JOURNAL** needs business manager. Apply Duncan Hallas, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. IS members only.



**WHAT'S ON**

## ENGINEERS PLAN FOR ACTION

by **Roger Griffiths**  
(AUEW shop steward)

LAST WEEKEND 25 Engineering Union members of the International Socialists met in Blackpool. Mick Rice, shop steward and the IS AUEW fraction secretary, opened the discussion on the next national wage claim. The meeting agreed that the only way to relate the claim to all engineering workers was to call for a 35-hour week and 30 per cent across the board, because in most parts of the country the average wage is well above the national minimum time rate.

Joe Roles, a steward from Wolverhampton, said the most progressive districts should call for a sponsored conference of

shop stewards to generate interest in the claim at rank and file level.

The afternoon session was opened by Harry Wicks, a socialist revolutionary for 50 years, who said the next two or three years could see developments unseen since the 1920s and it was important that we learn from the mistakes of the past.

Sunday's session was marked by an eloquent speech from Wally Preston on Marxism and the Trade Unions. He gave a

fascinating description of the activities of 'Fred' Engels in Manchester, and the strong socialist traditions he inspired there. It was usually the independent and unorthodox tactics that won in the constant battle against the employers.

Arthur Harper, convenor at Tractors and Transmissions, Birmingham, agreed, telling of how Tractors' management had imposed restrictions on shop stewards moving off the section without permission. So every member in the shop queued up to ask the chairman for a pass to go to the toilet. Management withdrew the restriction within half an hour.

# Read it, learn it! It may save your lives

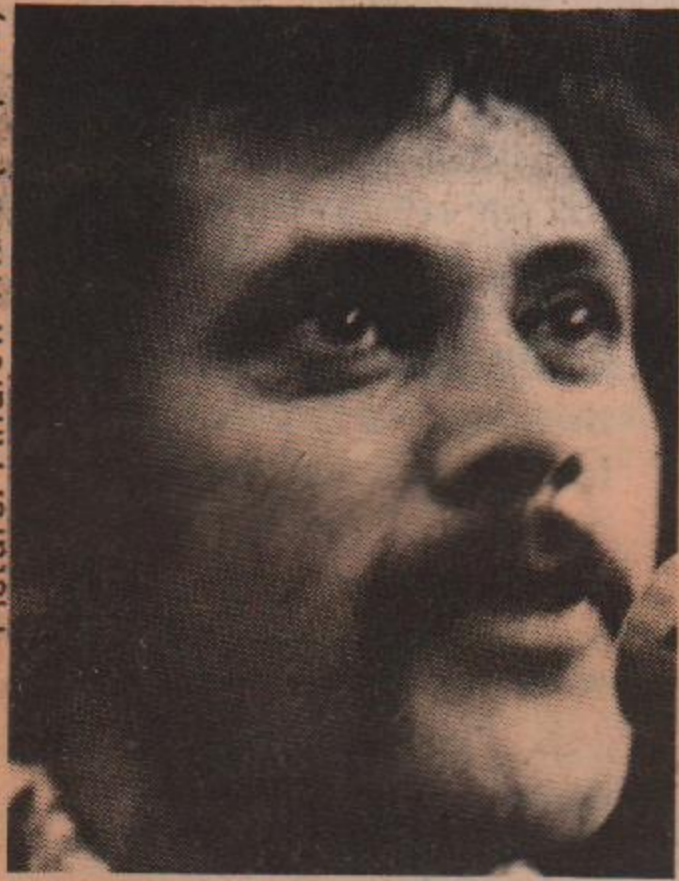
JEFF ALI, a busworker from North East Lancashire, reviews **BLACK WORKERS IN BRITAIN**, a new Chingari/International Socialists' pamphlet\*.

THIS pamphlet must be read by black and white workers alike. Showing us all that our struggles in society are one, irrespective of our colours, it proves that the system of capitalism and its power-hungry ambitionists are the sole cause of splitting one worker from another, using race or colour or creed or religion to do it.

It proves that we cannot possibly win any struggle divided. Because, when it suits the capitalists, black and white workers alike can stand side by side and fight together, as they have done in the many wars caused by these people. Then when their usefulness is finished the capitalists discard them like slaves.

Capitalists in totally black countries, where they cannot use colour, quickly turn to other forms of tactics, such as religion, to split the workers and to rule and profiteer from them.

Black people must realise that they cannot fight for better conditions and wages in their place of work on their own. They must prove



Picture: Andrew Wliard (Report)

JEFF ALI, speaking at the recent IS Conference.

to their fellow white workers that their struggle in society is every worker's struggle.

To do that black workers must learn the basics of trade unionism, winning the confidence of their fellow workers and attaining positions within the unions.

But in the process black workers must not take the insults and abuse without a fight. Religion will not protect us from landlords, high rent, low pay, dirty jobs and police harassment.

Black people must not get into the attitude that once they are all in their homes they are safe from all these attacks. The Jews in Nazi Germany had the same attitude against rising racialist and fascist parties. The 'Leave them alone, ignore them' type of attitude. The 'They will die a natural death' attitude. We all know that many millions of Jews died a very unnatural death, slaughtered by their fellow working-class people because they allowed the Nazi Party to recruit and grow unchallenged.

In this country now there is a Nazi party called the National Front doing the same thing. Black people must realise the dangers and unite together to smash parties such as these. Many millions of white people are with you. By reading this excellent pamphlet, black people will have something to argue with when confronted with all the blame which is thrown at us. Read it, learn it. It may save your lives.

\*BLACK WORKERS IN BRITAIN has been produced jointly by the International Socialists and Chingari, the paper produced in Britain by Pakistani IS members. It contains 30 pages of facts, arguments, cartoons and politics dealing with immigration, the legal system, the unions and rank and file trade unionists. Copies 15p from IS Bookshop and branches, or 19p by post from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4.



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

THE International Socialists are a revolutionary socialist organisation open to all who accept our main principles and who are willing to work to achieve them. These principles are:

### INDEPENDENT WORKING-CLASS ACTION

We believe that socialism can only be achieved by the independent action of the working class.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORMISM

We believe in overthrowing capitalism, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it. We therefore support all struggles of workers against capitalism and fight to break the hold of reformist ideas and leaders.

### THE SMASHING OF THE CAPITALIST STATE

The state machine is a weapon of capitalist class rule and therefore must be smashed. The present parliament, army, police and judges cannot simply be taken over and used by the working class. There is, therefore, no parliamentary road to socialism. The working-class revolution needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state, based on councils of workplace delegates.

### WORK IN THE MASS ORGANISATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

We believe in working in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly the trade unions, and fighting for rank and file control of them.

### INTERNATIONALISM

We are internationalists. We practise and campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries, oppose racialism and imperialism, and fully support the struggles of all oppressed peoples. We are opposed to all immigration controls.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country. Revolution is defeated by isolation. Russia, China and Eastern Europe are not socialist but state capitalist. We support the workers' struggle in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party, and all the activity of the International Socialists is directed to the building of such a party by fighting for a programme of political and industrial demands that can strengthen the self-confidence, organisation and socialist consciousness of the working class.

## WE ARE

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials. No secret negotiations. All settlements to be voted on by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism. Against all victimisations and blacklisting. Against anti-trade union laws or curbs on the right to strike and on effective picketing.

Against productivity or efficiency deals. Against any form of incomes policy under capitalism.

Against unemployment, redundancies and lay-offs. Instead we demand five days work or five days pay, and the 35-hour week. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' control.

For militant trade union unity, joint shop stewards committees at plant and combine level.

For the building of a national rank and file movement which will fight for these policies in the trade union movement.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black people. Against all immigration controls. For the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Against all forms of imperialism, including Russian imperialism.

For unconditional support to all genuine national liberation movements.

For the building of a mass workers' revolutionary party, organised in the workplaces, which can lead the working class to power, and for the building of a revolutionary socialist international.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## INDUSTRIAL NEWS STARTS HERE...

# The battle to keep wages up

### THORN ELECTRIC

BRADFORD:—A mass meeting of over 1200 Engineering union members from Bairds Colour TV last week voted overwhelmingly to continue the fight for the full claim of £7 across the board and a cut in the working week to 35 hours.

The handful of votes against effectively put paid to local reports that the strike was collapsing.

A delegation from the Bradford strike was warmly received at SKELMERSDALE where another part of the Thorn's Empire—making colour TV tubes is on strike. 100 maintenance men, members of the Electricians union and the AUEW have struck over Thorn's attempts to tighten up on work discipline.

### LEEDS SPARKS

by Dave Shillinglaw

LEEDS:—The Public Works Department Committee Electrical section staged a one day token strike on Monday in support of a wage claim to give parity with hospital and contracting electricians. The present rate of pay is 73½p, and the contractors are on £1 an hour. The contractors rate is going up to £1.23 in January.

This will create a gap of nearly £20 for a forty hour week.

This unofficial action by the members in Leeds will show once and for all that we are not willing to be used as cheap labour.

Other council electricians throughout the country should take up the lead given by the workers in Leeds. Write to 'Spark' c/o Socialist Worker.

### BRITISH STEEL

NEWPORT, Wales:—1600 craftsmen from the BSC Spencer Works in Llanwern, are now on strike over a bonus agreement. The strike, involving AUEW, EETPU, Boilermakers and UCATT members, started last Sunday and has had an immediate effect. The company have now had to close the plant and lay off the rest of the 4000 strong workforce.

If the craftsmen of Llanwern are beaten this will effect every steelworker in the country. Support from other steelworkers is vital and has to be organised immediately.

Messages of support and donations: Rolly Davies, 56 Anthony Drive, Caerleon, GWENT.

Meanwhile a strike of over 100 TASS members in the plant, over grading and pay, is entering its fourth week without any signs of a settlement.

If the craftsmen return leaving them still out this would be a real blow to their morale. They feel that although the issues are separate they would gain immensely from linking their fight to the craftsmen's.

### METAL BOX

WEST HOUGHTON, Yorks:—The Metal Box engineers dispute is continuing. A meeting with the Conciliation and Arbitration Board offered no more than before.

The TGWU members in the factory have now been put on a day to day employment basis and the shop stewards have pledged to call a branch meeting as soon as anyone is laid off. Militant TGWU steward Tommy Riley will be pushing for a joint occupation should this happen.

One thing that the engineers have found disturbing is the lack of help nationally from the AUEW. There's been no strike pay.



Picture: Peter Harrap (Report)

by George Lambor (GMWU)

LONDON:—Our pickets carried this placard outside the swanky Grosvenor House Hotel in Park Lane last week as 700 workers in the Trust Houses Forte hotels empire took up the struggle against some of the lowest wages in Britain.

The 24-hour strike at seven hotels was called by shop stewards after THF refused the threshold payments they had agreed in March.

Among the pickets: A young chef, just passed his City and Guilds examination after five years training (no day release), take-home pay £24.72 for 40 hours. A deputy chef, married, six years in the hotel, take-home pay £29 for 40 hours.

Inside the Grosvenor House: Mrs Parker, wife of the man who started the Parker pen company. She has rented one of the flats at Grosvenor House for as long as anyone can remember. Annual rent: £20,000 (£500 a week).

THF has kept up its anti-union reputation by offering to pay 'loyals' who didn't strike. So far the union, the General and Municipal, has again refused to give any support—with industrial officer Bobby Smith claiming it hasn't the resources to come out fighting. It is Britain's second largest union.

So THF hotels are being isolated and knocked off one by one without so much as a protest from the union. Unless the GMWU starts standing by its members there will be mass resignations, or, as is the feeling, the formation of a breakaway union, which would be potentially disastrous.

The paper produced by rank and file catering workers, Hotel and Catering Worker, had just produced its third issue. Copies 2p each, plus postage from 345 Hangleton Road, Hove, Sussex.

## Court attack on dustmen

LONDON:—27 dustmen in Kensington and Chelsea have been charged with blackmail, demanding money with menaces and stealing council property after allegations by a local restaurant owner made on a TV programme. The court case is due in 1975 and there are more charges to come. The 27 have been suspended on half pay.

Dustmen in Chelsea, South Kensington and Earls Court have banned collections from restaurants and other commercial premises in protest. Their convenor, Tony Sweeney, pointed out that the council had never operated the 1936 Public Health Act, so the men feel that collections from commercial premises are an extra workload and therefore they are completely justified in taking tips.

The suspension is tantamount to finding the men guilty before their trial. The dustmen have always been the most militant workers in this part of London and the convenor sees these charges as an attack on this militancy.

Messages of support to Tony Sweeney, NUPE convenor, Flat 7, 25 Bomore Road, London W10.

# Mass sackings: Does Benn have the answer?

## THE DAY WE MET THE RAVING RED

### 'Tearful' bosses axe 1250

by Alan Watts  
AUEW steward

MANAGEMENT from Alfred Herbert went to London last Friday to seek the help of Anthony Wedgwood Benn. Their company, like Ferranti, was short of cash and they needed a large government handout. They went to get it by chauffeur-driven limousine.

Trade unionists in Herberts also went to the meeting—by rail. MICK TEW, secretary of the AUEW TASS office committee in Coventry, was among them. He met the raving red Benn face to face and watched his performance. Mick wrote this article so other workers would know what to expect when and if their company is hit by the storm.

MR BENN said Alfred Herbert represented an important 'national asset', and has a problem which the Government was concerned about. It was important, he stated, that the problem was solved to the satisfaction of all parties—the government, the workers, and those with other interests in the company.

By the latter, he presumably meant the shareholders. Share prices have fallen from above £3 in 1965 to 9p. And the company has reported losses of more than £11 million in the last three years, and a loss of more than £2 million in the half-year before April 1974.

The company makes machine tools and, in times of economic crisis, feels the squeeze first. Mind you, through all the recent times of trouble, Herbert's have continued forking out massive interest charges to banks and bankers and they even increased the dividend last year.

Of course, it would be most unreasonable to ask for

assistance from such lovers of free enterprise as Sir Halford Reddish, a Herbert director who bailed out just as the going got rough. Meantime the workforce has been practically halved, down to 6,250, and the general level of pay, in Coventry particularly, is well below the that for comparable work elsewhere.

Mr Benn said the government had acted to alleviate the severe difficulties which might be caused if the company were to become bankrupt (remember the Rolls Royce collapse).

Mr Raine, the current managing director and boss of the hardline Coventry Engineering Employers, announced that management were 'delighted' by the way in which the problem was being handled.

He promised full disclosure of the company's proposed financial and marketing policies and urged the meeting to look to the future and not at the past.

Bob Wright, of the AUEW, reminded the meeting of the company's past record, and explained that the policy of the unions was to move towards the nationalisation of the machine tool industry.

However, he told everyone with a smile, the unions realised that this was not on at the present time.

Another feeling was that the government should be able to see a return for its help. A question concerning fears about the 'hiving off' of certain profitable sectors found no reassurances from Mr Benn, other than that all sites would have representation in deciding the company's future.

### LICENCE

The morning papers were full of speculation over Mr Benn's reprimand for his criticism of the government attitude on the naval exercises with South Africa.

When a question was raised about the company's policy of having machines built abroad under licence (including a deal with the Metal Box Company for machines to be built in South Africa) all Mr Benn could say was that he already knew about this, and that now the full facts could be disclosed.

He added that in terms of new markets there were advantages to be gained from this practice.

During a discussion after Benn's departure from the meeting, Mr Raine made it clear that in his estimation the present Board of Directors would keep overall responsibility for the operation of the company.

So where are the policies which have had the ruling class shaking since February? How can it be that this firebrand has not taken their industry and put it firmly in the hands of the workers and the state?

It is because the Labour government is as committed to the support of capitalism as was the previous Tory government.

## Mac the Knife is back

IN FOUR DAYS a Birmingham factory has been shut down and the 1300 workers made redundant. Another factory in Stourbridge got the same treatment with 250 more workers going down the road.

Workers at Glenburn Engineering received a letter, telling them of the closure on 30 October. It told them they would be paid off and the factory closed two days later.

The letter ended with the sickening sentence: 'The management takes this opportunity of expressing its appreciation of the co-operation received from you during your service with the company and wishes you a successful future.'

The factory belongs to one of the most brutal operators of the decade, Dr Daniel Macdonald.

In 1951 he set up two factories in Derry with grants and subsidies from Northern Ireland and Derry Corporation. By 1960 the grants had run out so Macdonald closed down and moved on, only to appear with a new name for the same old company to qualify for new grants. This time workers organised to get the union

established and Macdonald conceded that 'a fair balance of men and women would join unions'.

When Macdonald took on four rigid anti-trade unionists the membership walked out in protest. So Macdonald closed the factory.

The machinery and management moved to East Kilbride in Scotland and again Macdonald got grants favourably.

In October 1969, most of the 1500 workers walked out demanding recognition of trade unions. After 13 weeks' bitter strike in which scabs were promoted by employers and police, the workers won recognition.

Macdonald was so angry at having to deal with unions that he sold his shares in the firm, British Sound Recordings, for £16.25 million, and started out on his own again—this time with Glenburn Engineering.

All seemed set for a very profitable future until Monday 28 October when workers were shocked to hear on the late night TV news that the factory was closing. Management confirmed the closure the next day.

Out of the whole nasty episode stands the glaring failure of the GMWU officials to give any kind of serious lead to fight the closure.

The GMWU 'organised' the factory—they were the only union that Macdonald would recognise. To the workers' cost his choice has paid off.

In the chaos and bitterness of the closure, workers who had hoped for a lead from their union officials now felt they were helping management in making the closure go through smoothly.

Operators like Macdonald will have a harder time throwing workers on the dole if the following conditions are fought for:

Effective shop floor organisation with 100 per cent trade unionism. Effective links between factories in the same company so that united action can be taken on a combine basis.

Militant action, including occupying factories, if redundancies are threatened.

## A MILLIONAIRE'S TRIUMPH

KIRKBY:—Fisher Bendix/IPD will not be nationalised. It is to become a workers co-operative.

This was the message announced last week by Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Labour Minister for Industry.

Benn's £4.9 million injection of public money for the factory was greeted with a fanfare of publicity in the millionaire press, which saw it as another triumph for workers' control.

### BROUGHT

Nothing could be further from the truth. Nearly half the money is to pay off the debts left behind by millionaire property speculator Harold King.

This is the man Harold Wilson, the local MP, brought in to take the heat out of the situation when the Fisher Bendix workers were sitting in

they think they can get rid of with the least fuss.

But International Socialists at MK are arguing that there should be plenty of fuss.

MK workers are among the first to be faced with this threat.

Dozens of firms will be thinking just like the MK bosses—as the economic crisis gets worse, make the workers pay. The published facts suggest that MK can well afford to pay—a full week's work or a full week's wage.

There is little doubt that they can. They've been rolling the profits in year after year. In any case the directors of MK are in a fine position to fill any gap that arises.

Mr F D O'Brian Newman, the chairman, is also a director of the phenomenally rich National and Grindley's Bank and of merchant bankers Samuel Montagu.

Another director, Mr D L M Robertson has a seat on Kleinwort Benson's board. They are bankers and financiers, too.

But as good, sound members of the employing class they intend to make the workers pay the price. And they'll succeed if the MK workers let them.

### PRIME

Just to round off this cynical story of the betrayal of workers' hopes and aspirations by Anthony Wedgwood Benn and his kind, the deal leaves millionaire Harold King laughing all the way to the bank.

He got his hands on some prime development land when he bought Fisher Bendix. He has now eased himself out of any responsibility for the factory and is making a bomb out of the redevelopment across the

will.

## Classified

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

EDINBURGH CONFERENCE OF THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT 1974—a dossier of papers, resolutions, reports of workshops. Canterbury Radical Women's Group is compiling a dossier from the conference, expected price 25p. Groups and individuals please send workshop reports and papers, etc. from the conference to Radical Women's Group, c/o Students Union, University of Kent, Canterbury.

MRA: Documents from and about Arab women. Includes Leila Khaled on Women's Liberation and the Palestinian Revolution. 23p (inc postage) from Funny Farm Publications, Dept SW, 66 York Way, London N1.

VERY MANY out-of-print, unobtainable books & pamphlets on Marxism, socialism, left-wing economics, sociology, politics can be obtained from D Volpe, 16 Belmont Court, London N16 5QD. State what you want—details and price—and quote will be sent.

MILITARY involvement on your campus: sponsored research, MoD-financed lectures, Military Education Committees. Full information in new pamphlet Study War No More (20p + 5p postage) and latest issue of Sanity (10p + 3½p postage). Quantity discounts. CND, 14 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1. 01-242 3872/3.

MONTHLY BULLETIN on Portugal and the Portuguese workers' struggles published by the Portuguese Workers' Committee. Subscribe now. 18 Fleet Road, Romford, London, E3. Annual Sub: 70p.

CONFERENCE of all who support original NUS motion of no platform for racists or fascists by any means necessary. Middlesex Polytechnic, Enfield Branch, Queensway, Enfield. Saturday 9 November 10.30am. Delegates invited to contact Middlesex Polytechnic.

SHEFFIELD: AIR POLLUTION AT WORK. Wednesday 13 November, 8pm, Prince of Wales, Division Street. Discussion with Charlie Clutterbuck of BSSRS on his work with shop stewards on health hazards, demonstration of personal monitoring equipment. For copies of leaflet advertising meeting contact Science for People, 14 Goodwin Road, Sheffield 8. Phone 53270 57945.

STREET RESEARCH BULLETIN No 4 now out. Featuring a research guide for building workers into their industry and an analysis of the developing property lobby. Only 15p plus 6p postage from SRB 365 Kennington Road, London SE11.

South London Rank & File Teachers' Day School: Saturday 9 November, 10.30am-5pm, Goldsmiths College. Tickets 15p from South London Rank & File convenors.

NORTH WEST PLATFORM Rank and file paper for busworkers in the North West Issue number 2 NOW OUT. Price 5p. Articles include: Asian busworkers: victory at Burnley and special round-up of countrywide militancy from Fife, Glasgow, Mansfield, Leicester. Orders (with cash please) to Les Kay, 18 Pitt Street, Blackburn, Lancashire.

SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION public meeting: Pharmacy in the National Health Service. Monday 18 November, 7pm, House of Commons (Mr Ogden's room), London, SW1. All welcome.

B&ICO public meeting: Madawc Williams on the Environment. 'No limits to growth'. Tuesday 19 November, 7.30pm, Conway Hall.

Jumble Sale: Saturday 9 November, St Matthias Church Hall, Wordsworth Road, N16. 2.30pm. Organised by Welfare Committee, Stoke Newington 5. Support, help, jumble, donations needed.

Lewisham IMG public meeting: Film Blow for Blow and speaker Dodie Weppeler. Tuesday 12 November, 7.15pm (film 7.45) Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, New Cross.

Brent Working Women's Charter Campaign CONFERENCE: Trades Council Hall, 375 Willesden High Road, Sunday 10 November, 2pm-6pm. Further details from Ingrid Falconer 278-9526 (day) or Christine Coates 450-7751 (evening).

WORKERS FIGHT Social: Sat 9 Nov, The George, Liverpool Rd (near Angel tube). Folk singing, etc. Starts 8pm, bar extension to midnight. Entrance 25p.

URGENT Red Ladder Mobile Workers Theatre wants 'actress/musician' (Equity member preferable) for touring company performing for predominantly labour movement audiences, producing its own material, collectively run. Long-term commitment important. Applications in writing by 9 November stating (i) experience (ii) reasons for interest in this work (iii) where ad read (iv) telephone number if possible; to 58 Wray Crescent, London N4 (tel: 01-263 1053).

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.



HARRY McSHANE

# We must make this a fight to change society

Before going into the Glasgow Royal Infirmary this week for a minor operation, 83-year-old veteran Clydeside revolutionary Harry McShane spoke to Socialist Worker about the present strike wave.

We boast about the strikes we used to have in the First World War. We could get as many as 17,000, mainly engineering and shipyard workers in Glasgow. But now the strikes are involving more workers and they extend far beyond Glasgow. And transport and Corporation workers are involved, as well as engineers. The other remarkable thing about the

strikes is that in each case the official leaders had nothing to do with them. The lorry drivers' strike is an amazing bit of solidarity—organised from below. These have been the most effective strikes, without the blessing of Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon.

I knew Jack Jones in the 1930s when he was involved with the National Hunger Marches. But now I think he's following in the footsteps of his two predecessors, Ernest Bevan and Frank Cousins, both of whom went into the government. No one else, you know, from any other union,

has gone directly from union office into the cabinet.

For any Marxist, a 'social contract' between workers, the ruling class and the state is impossible. Jack Jones if he believes what he says, has forgotten a lot.

The social contract is directed against unofficial strikes. That's what makes the present situation so important. But there are two weaknesses in these strikes.

The shop stewards haven't built connections between the different strikes. And the workers don't yet see it as a class issue. The BRS drivers are still fighting separately from the Rolls-Royce workers, the sewage men are separate from the busmen.

They're anti-boss, anti-employer. But the second weakness is there's no politics in it. They aren't fighting with any vision of changing society. The fight is as yet confined to the price of a commodity, the price of labour power. It still needs to be extended to bring into question society itself.

Many of those in dispute are corporation workers, but the Labour Party councillors, who have a large majority on Glasgow Corporation, have done nothing to help them. They are sitting there and they are allowing the Clyde to get polluted again.

## Spend

With the exception of three or four, none of the 100-odd councillors have said or done anything to identify themselves with the Labour movement. They're going to spend £8 million on extending the corporation buildings... They can build flyovers and things like that. But anything of any use to human beings—nothing.

Glasgow Corporation has a bad history of corruption. Between the wars there were 11 councillors sent to jail and there's been a few since.

The main racket has been with the pubs: selling off licences and so on. The suspicions about corruption now are widespread.

The councillors won't pay up to the strikers but not mainly because of the social contract. They see themselves as bosses. They don't want to pay out more money on wages. It's the most useless corporation we've ever had.

To really move ahead, what's needed is to call rank and file conferences of the workers in the various industries and trades together. When Wilson says: 'You can't have any wage rises at all', then the fight for wages can be transformed into the struggle to transform society.

## HOOVER SWEEP ON

CAMBUSLANG:-At Hoover pickets are still out after 10 weeks of their strike.

On Monday another formal meeting took place at the Glasgow HQ of the Conciliation and Arbitration Service. But this came to nothing.

It is clear that the reactionary postures of John Boyd, Scottish EC member of the AUEW, have strengthened the determination of the Hoover management to hold out. Fortunately the workers are standing firm.

Hoover have been out 10 weeks without support. Send donations to Eddie Crow, shop stewards committee chairman, 57 Wheatlands Avenue, Blantyre.

## Glasgow District IS meeting. SHOP STEWARDS AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Speaker: Tony Cliff (IS national committee member), chairman Willy Lee (AUEW works committee, Chrysler). Sunday 17 November, 3pm, Kenilworth Hotel, Queen Street. All welcome.

## Busworkers: 'No deal'

THREE HUNDRED Glasgow bus and underground workers are continuing the strike after eight out of twelve depots rejected an offer patched up between the Greater Glasgow Passenger Executive and the district committee of the TGWU passenger group last week.

The rejection was a blow to officials who had called the terms of the deal 'a fair agreement'. The workers at the eight depots voted against the recommendations of their own stewards.

This was hardly surprising since the original claim was, at the very least, for £5 on the basic without strings—while the offer meant £4.66 for one-man operators, £1.78 for crew drivers, and £1.66 for conductors.

The district committee of the union have now exhausted procedure but the strike remains unofficial. Since it began the union officials have done everything in their power to get the crews back to work.

On Monday, Larry Smith, secretary of the TGWU passenger group, will be coming uninvited to discuss with the district committee whether there is any 'ulterior motive' behind the men's decision to reject the deal. The Communist Party and Scottish National Party have been mentioned in passing, but the real target of the attacks if the Platform group of TGWU militants in the garages who argued for the rejection of the deal and the stepping up of strike activity.

The strike is approaching crisis point. Early on management declared a lock-out, but this policy has now changed. Depots have been instructed to accept back those workers who want to return.

This open encouragement to scab looks as though it may soon get the tacit support of the TGWU officials.

The way to win the strike is not to give in to a miserable sell-out but to step up the action and link it with those of other busmen, especially those in the Scottish Bus Group, who are preparing for a strike for the national claim on 14 November.

## ROLLS-ROYCE

'WE'LL HAVE to see this one through,' summed up the attitude of the Rolls Royce pickets on duty on Tuesday.

Now in their third week of strike at Blantyre, East Kilbride and Hillingdon for an interim £10 wage rise, the 6500 Rolls Royce workers have come up against the social contract head on.

The nationalised Rolls Royce 1971 management have so far made no moves at all to answer the workers demands and the AUEW executive have so far still refused to make the strike official.

## THREAT BY HONEYWELL

A MASS MEETING of 4000 workers at the three Scottish plants of the American computer giant Honeywell voted overwhelmingly to fight the redundancies announced suddenly this week. Honeywell plans to sack 1100 workers, 800 from one section of 1200 in the Newhouse factory, in the management's drive for greater 'efficiency'. The effect on Uddingston, Pellshill and Newhouse, small towns outside Glasgow, if the company is successful would be disastrous.

After the mass meeting Honeywell announced 'suspension' of the redundancies. Hugh Clark, electricians convenor in the factory told Socialist Worker: 'We have contingency plans to fight this all the way through. We simply refuse to accept any redundancies.'

# 40,000 STRIKE AS CAMPAIGN SPREADS

by Ronnie Smith (EIS council and All Scotland Teachers Action Committee)

THE strike campaign of Scottish teachers continued to spread. Last Monday, 28 October thousands of teachers picketed a crucial meeting of the Scottish Teachers Salaries Committee.

It was expected that this meeting would produce a cosy agreement on a 10 per cent increase pending the report of the Houghton Committee on Teachers Pay.

But Secretary of State for Scotland Willie Ross eventually spurned even the Education Institute of Scotland's 'militantly moderate' demands. The EIS was thus forced to call out its 40,000 members on an official one day strike last Thursday. But the unofficial West of Scotland Teachers Action Committee which has been leading the fight for an immediate £15 a week failed to give its supporters a clear lead and call them out on that day.

The parallel East of Scotland committee did call its supporters out and the response was fantastic. Over 4000 teachers marched the length of Princes Street in Edinburgh and rallied at the Usher Hall, solid for £15 and not a 10 per cent anywhere.

An all-Scotland Liaison Committee has

been now established with the job of co-ordinating the action. At the moment this consists of a series of rotating one day strikes in different areas. If after three weeks this does not produce the cash, the action committee is committed to an indefinite strike.

In the East the move is to a pattern of three day strikes. There's a danger that the West's three week campaign of one day strikes could lead to demoralisation instead of the intended build up of confidence.

And at times the West of Scotland Committee is confused about its objectives. A recent delegate meeting voted in favour of submitting evidence to Houghton—a complete contradiction to the whole basis of the campaign.

The committees sprang up to fight for £15 now. Houghton should be an irrelevance.

On Monday the midget Scottish Schoolmasters Association heaved itself on to the bandwagon with a claim for £15 or 20 per cent and a campaign of strike action which would coincide exactly with that of the action committees.

## Demand

The top brass of the main union, the EIS, which less than a month ago smugly threw out the demand of the major local associations for £15 are now thrashing about in search of a new policy. They must pitch their new demand high enough to win back the support of the thousands of members who have been taking their lead from the action committees.

But they can't afford to pitch it too high, for that would kill their sacred cow Houghton stone dead.

Aside from the automatic sell-out factor built into the EIS, it is obvious that the three day selective strikes planned for November can never win the award most teachers know they must have.

The EIS executive are claiming what sounds like £10 a week to be paid from the end of December, backdated to May and supplemented by whatever extra Houghton recommends.

The action committee cannot afford to waver. £15 is a necessary minimum.

We must step up the militancy in our action committees and within the EIS so that our union leaders are forced to back our full demands and give official backing to the strike.

If we want to win our demands the only way is for an all-out indefinite strike and serious attempts to link up with parents' organisations and other groups of workers.

For teachers in England and Wales the logic is inescapable. Look what can be done if the initiative is taken. Organise now in your schools and local associations. Take up the £15 demand. Form area action committees. Come out unofficially. Start the fight back now.

Messages of support and donations to Ronnie Smith, 15 Dunearn St, Glasgow G4. (041-332 3825).

## Sewage men solid

DESPITE pleas by union officials, Glasgow's 120 sewage workers voted to continue their four-week strike on Monday. Only six voted against.

GMWU officials reported that national negotiations had broken down after the employers had offered £3.50 and refused to consolidate the threshold.

The strikers will not meet again for two weeks, but as a member of the strike committee, Davie Elliot, said at the meeting: 'We have sat back too long. We must spread the strike to other sewage workers.'

The Labour-controlled Corporation are still sitting back, turning a blind eye to the rising health hazards and so far have made no attempt to meet the strikers. Meanwhile the Clyde Purification Board is still pouring £500 worth of liquid oxygen into the Clyde each day—a sum which would more than cover the sewage workers' claim.

The strikers are determined to stay out till a decent offer is made. But they don't underestimate the fight on their hands. Shop steward Rab Stevens told Socialist Worker: 'Management were pouring millions of tons of sewage into the Clyde a week before the decision to strike was taken to make sure that when we went out the tanks would be empty.'

The strike committee are now seeking help from all trade unionists. If they are to stay out they need cash support—with sewage workers' wages there is no chance of saving for a rainy day.

Donations and message of support to Lewis Collins, 68 Perth Close, Dalmeir, Glasgow.

# IMI: Biggest-ever strike wins £6 wage increase

N BIRMINGHAM:-The last few weeks has seen the largest strike in the history of IMI Witton. The skilled indirect workers put in a claim for £15. And rank and file mandated the shop stewards not to hold any more mass meetings until the money was on the table. They got £6.

One shop steward told Socialist Worker that, 'The strike in my opinion was fundamental. Over the years the national officers have sold us out, like in 1970 when they settled for £1.50 and introduced local bargaining. This meant that all seven divisions had to negotiate their own wages.'

'There has been very little trade union organisation at Witton in the past. The Works Council was a farce. It included non-union members.'

'The best thing we did was to get 100 per cent trade unionism. We know now we've got them by the short and curlies. The skilled indirects have now smashed through a barrier. They have smashed the myth that the company would not negotiate under duress.'

The last time we had talks with Swainson, the assistant managing director, was when six brothers and sisters were killed in an explosion. His only remark was 'This is an absolute tragedy. It will

take us months to get back into production.'

'Last Monday we had the first meeting since the strike of the National Joint Shop Stewards Committee. The Committee said they were not prepared to see Witton fight again on its own. The way is now clear for the rest of the production workers on the site. The differential has been increased and the management will only respond if we, instead of using a toffee hammer, use a 28 pound sledge hammer!'

## PEN MAKERS OUT

SMETHWICK:-22 workers at British Pens are on strike for recognition of their union, the AUEW. Until now a scab union, the Pen Workers Federation, had claimed to represent all the workers in the firm. Each worker paid it 40p a year and it claimed sole negotiating rights.

Average basic pay in the factory is around £25, but nobody is paid the same and the chairman of this 'federation' lives in a house owned by the firm, next to the factory. British Pens is part of the Twinlock group that has other-unorganised factories in Kidsgrove, Beckenham and Sheerness.

Of the 350 employees at the factory, 84 have joined the union.

## This is why we need your cash

FOUR comrades appeared at Clerkenwell Magistrates Court in London last Wednesday charged with various offences from 'obstruction' to 'threatening behaviour and assault'. They were arrested on 7 September during the anti-fascist demonstration.

All were found guilty and given heavy fines, ranging from £40 to £90 inflicted on a miner from Chesterfield because, as the magistrate said, 'we all know that miners do plenty of overtime.'

At the time of that demonstration we pledged that we would raise whatever amount was necessary to defend those arrested. No member of IS or reader of Socialist Worker should have to carry the burden of a heavy fine alone. We need to meet out monthly fighting fund target of £2000 to meet these costs, on top of the special fund we need to meet our other court case costs.

Keep the regular collections coming in. Help us pay these fines and show yet another magistrate that we have no time for his attacks.

So far this month we have raised £321.

Send donations to: Jim Nichol, National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

## 5000 WALK OUT

MORE THAN 5000 workers at the Austin Longbridge East works are on strike. At mass meetings on the day and night shifts on Monday and Tuesday morning only five people voted against strike action.

A leading steward said: 'This is the first time labourers, inspectors, track workers and the machine shop have acted in unison against management provocation. We feel the dispute has been engineered by management and we are not having men laid off at their whim.'

Last Friday, 18 men on the track were laid off without pay. Management said a dispute elsewhere in the plant meant the men forfeited their lay-off money. In fact the dispute was over but management refused to pay the £90 to the 18 men even though they knew the East works has a policy of fighting against men or women being laid off without pay.

The strikers are not just restricting their action to the East works. Pickets are on every gate of the giant plant, stopping materials entering. A determination to fight the management's attack is clear.

March against the turban ban  
Kick racialism out of Leeds  
Saturday 16 November, noon. Start from the Sikh Temple, Chapeltown Rd.

# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

**Chile Solidarity Campaign**  
Stop the Torture! Protest against the torture of Jorge Montes and Bautista Van Schowen and the arrest of Madame Allende's sister.  
Chilean Embassy, Devonshire St, London, W1. 12.30pm-2pm, Friday 8 Nov.

# Busmen battle on

**WHILE bus workers as far apart as Brighton and Fife are preparing to fight, their national claim is being watered down behind their backs.**

The original claim was set out by a bus delegate conference and was composed of a precise eight point programme, to which the negotiators were supposedly pledged.

But the claim which has now been submitted by Larry 'The Lamb' Smith, national passenger group secretary of the TGWU, is entirely different.

No longer is there a demand for a £30 basic wage. Instead there is yet another request for a 'substantial increase'. Larry Smith's claims are always for a substantial rise and every year the management and union full-timers take a sub-

stantial rise out of the busmen.

But the £30 basic isn't the only thing our Larry has been mucking around with. The demand for a 35-hour week has been dropped. The demand for four weeks holiday has become a demand for five additional days.

Demands for a seven-hour guaranteed day, a 12-hour maximum on spreadovers and a four-hour maximum spell of duty have also gone.

The Glasgow strikers are standing firm. And Brighton busmen staged their first one day strike last Friday, sending out pickets.

At the heart of the strike in the Conway Whitehawk garages, there is strong feeling that support must be won elsewhere. They are aiming for industrial action by the whole Southdown fleet.

In Fife, John Foster, chairman of the local bus workers' committee, said: 'The antics of Larry Smith and his cronies have convinced us that if we rely on full time officials we'll end up with next to nothing.'

'We have been accused of prostituting our union constitution. If a group of bona fide shop stewards getting together to decide how best to fight for their claim is "a prostitution", then the constitution leaves a lot to be desired.'

Bus workers all over the country could have no better lead than this. Every bus worker who reads this should fight to commit his or her garage and fleet to similar action.



Sing-song time at Hoover's: Rose Aldridge, Maureen Wise and Glenda Pask, like everyone else sitting in, want management to hit the right notes . . . pound notes.

## TUNING UP FOR A SHOWDOWN

information concerning entitlements and lay-offs has been provided by shop stewards.'

Management's hopes that the toolroom and the Cambuslang strikers would be blamed for the lay-offs have been dashed.

For at Hoover's Perivale plant the factory-wide sit-in forced management to come up with a fresh offer to toolroom workers who have been on strike for parity for three weeks.

Well over 1200 laid off workers crammed

into the canteen to hear works convenor Nobby Clarke explain: 'We must go on the attack. Last year this company made £21 million. They are not going to shut us out after years of prosperity. Unless we take action now we'll be out of the door for a long, long time.'

Six hours later, shop stewards returned and announced that a fresh offer would be put to the toolroom. The sit-in was called off.

Mrs Margaret Haerne, a shop steward, told Socialist Worker: 'The women here are disgusted at the way management have put us out of work. We don't blame the craftsmen. They were promised a rise and they should get it.'

Socialist Worker Benefit Evening, next Thursday, 14 November, 8pm, Ealing Town Hall. All welcome.

**IS branches must establish contact by selling this issue of SW at their local garage. This is extremely urgent. We could be on the brink of a national strike organised and led by the rank and file.**

## Bomber or victim?

THE PRESS has gone to town on Judith Ward, who got life plus 30 years for the M62 and other bomb blasts.

Profiles and pictures of her swamped the popular dailies. And now, her moment of grisly glory over, she will be forgotten and left to rot in some high-security prison.

But she ought not to be forgotten, because her trial raised more questions than it answered.

During its closing stages, the Provos issued a statement denying she had ever been a member of their organisation and saying 'the girl is obviously in need of medical attention.'

And so she might be. At various times she admitted planting the M62 bomb—whereas police investigation proved she was 200 miles away at the time.

She then changed her story and said she had merely helped to deliver bomb to someone else for planting.

She admitted having married IRA leader Michael McVerry. This was not challenged in court. But a check of the records in Ireland shows that no such marriage ever took place.

In fact Ms Ward gave the impression that she would have admitted almost anything put to her. She must have been a real 'find' for the police, under pressure to 'solve' bombing cases.

But her confessions, on the strength of which she was convicted, do not stand up to analysis.

The police and the court may have railroaded into prison a demented little girl who lived in a world of her own and who, perhaps even now, does not know quite what is happening around her.

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York 'Busworker' SW supporters £9.38  
Industrial Relations Review and Report, NUJ £4  
SW readers Bradford College £21.50  
Newham Teachers £15  
UCATT, Milton Keynes £1.30  
Borg Warner, Letchworth £1.25  
Herts/Beds Rank and File Tech teachers £7  
SW readers, Portsmouth Poly £6.50  
Haringey Claimants and Squatters assoc £1  
Tyburn Branch, POEU £4.01  
African National Congress S. Africa £1  
R Montefiore School, Whitechapel £4.31  
SW readers, Maidenhead £28  
Thompsons, Sarjeants Inn £18  
Fircroft College £5.80  
Birmingham University £9  
GKN Hardy Spicer £4  
Birmingham IS City Branch £85  
Halesowen Communist Party £3.42  
UCATT City Centre Site, Birmingham £7.50  
Birmingham IS teachers £75.55  
Lucas, Formans Road £1.17  
Electricians, Carriers Rover Site, Solihull £10.50  
Austin East Works, Birmingham £3.40  
Burnape Estate, Stockport, £2  
Warley Trades Council £4  
Lucas, Great King Street Birmingham £8

Workers Mutual Aid, Wolverhampton £8.80  
Lucas BW3 Shaftmoor Lane £14  
AUEW 145/NE North Walsham Norfolk £2  
Essex University IS Soc £4.70  
Benwell Community Project, Newcastle £10  
SW readers Harlow £48.70  
Huddersfield IS £42.03  
David Brown Tractors, Huddersfield £6  
SW readers Huddersfield £2  
Codsall Crown Pub, Wolverhampton £2.75  
SW readers, Glossop and Hyde £9.93  
Dundee College of Technology Soc. Soc. £5  
Neath SW supporters £1.50  
Branches of the International Socialists  
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NW London £12  
Dundee £10  
Middleton £33  
Guildford £13  
Newcastle £19  
Portsmouth £47  
Crawley £23  
Kirkby £6.75  
Hackney £33  
Hounslow £20.10  
Paddington £54  
Wigan £10  
Frigidaire £5  
Warley £11  
Cambridge £10  
York Buses £5  
Tottenham £47  
Bristol £78  
Stockport £18

**Chile Solidarity Campaign Committee Meeting**  
Leeds Trades Hall, Savile Mount, Leeds.  
Saturday 9 November 12 noon to 5pm  
All IS delegates to meet in Leeds Hall at 11am.