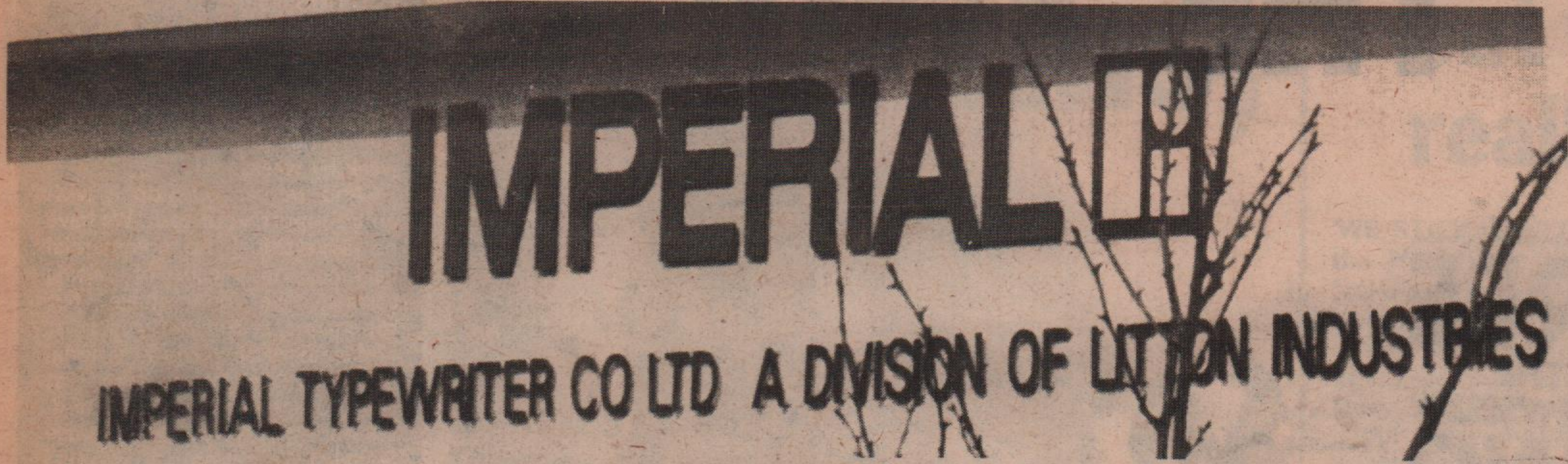


# Socialist Worker

No 414 1 March 1975 Price 7p

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS



AFTER A MONTH of hesitation, workers at Imperial Typewriters, Hull, most of them women, have taken action to stop the closure of their factory—and the loss of more than 1000 jobs. More than 300 workers are holding the factory in two shifts, day and night.

This occupation is the biggest and bravest battle for jobs since mass sackings and lay-offs throughout British industry started more than three months ago.

It must win. It deserves the support—financial, moral and industrial—of every section of the labour movement.

The full story—and how you can help: Page 3

# OCCUPATION!

## Stop the sackings



ON THE NIGHT of the occupation—and the night after—a delegation from the Hull docks bought supper and fags (above) for the Imperial workers.

Sid Sims, secretary of the Hull Docks shop stewards, says: 'Every effort must be made by all trade

unionists in the area to ensure that Imperials stays open. We must take whatever action is called for to support our brothers and sisters at Imperials in the fight to save jobs.

'I hope every docker in every port in Britain will follow the example of Hull in offering to black imported typewriters.'

‘We’ve got the keys to the gates. Nothing comes in and nothing comes out until every job at Imperials is guaranteed.

If this lot get away with it, every boss in the country will feel easier about closing down their factory and throwing the workers out.

We’re not just fighting for our jobs. We’re fighting for the workers at Chrysler, whose bosses are doing the same to their workers as our bosses threaten to do to us.

We’re fighting for all those unemployed workers in Hull—and all unemployed workers all over the country. Don’t let us go down. Help us to win.

—Edie Grossman, former steward at Imperial Typewriters

**Pictures:**  
**Paul Sowdan (I.F.L.)**  
**and Chris Davies**  
**(Report)**



Edie Grossman: Now we've got the keys!

**8 MARCH** All out on Rank and File demonstrations to Free the Two!

**DETAILS**  
**PAGE 3**

# STEP UP THE FIGHT TO FREE THE TWO!

SATURDAY 8 MARCH is going to be a crucial day in the continuing struggle to free the Shrewsbury Two. After the Wigan March and the picket of Prentice's surgery, it is vital that the process of building towards sustained strike action to force the Labour government to release Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson goes on.

This is why the National Rank and File Organising Committee floated the idea that Leicester and Lincoln jails, where the two have now been moved, should be picketed by trade unionists.

Now Leicester Trades Council has called for such a demonstration outside the prison on Saturday 8 March. This call is being fully supported by the Rank and File Organising Committee, which is also sponsoring a picket outside Lincoln jail.

The committee suggested that trade unionists north of Lincoln should put their weight behind the Lincoln demonstration, while trade unionists to the south should turn out on the Leicester demo.

The two jailed men are continuing their protests. These involve the refusal to wear prison clothes. In retaliation, the prison authorities are saying that they can't have any visitors, including their families.

The authorities claim they would have to wear prison clothes to receive them.

## ACTION

This viciousness, typical of the revolting prison system, is cause enough for the most vigorous protest on 8 March.

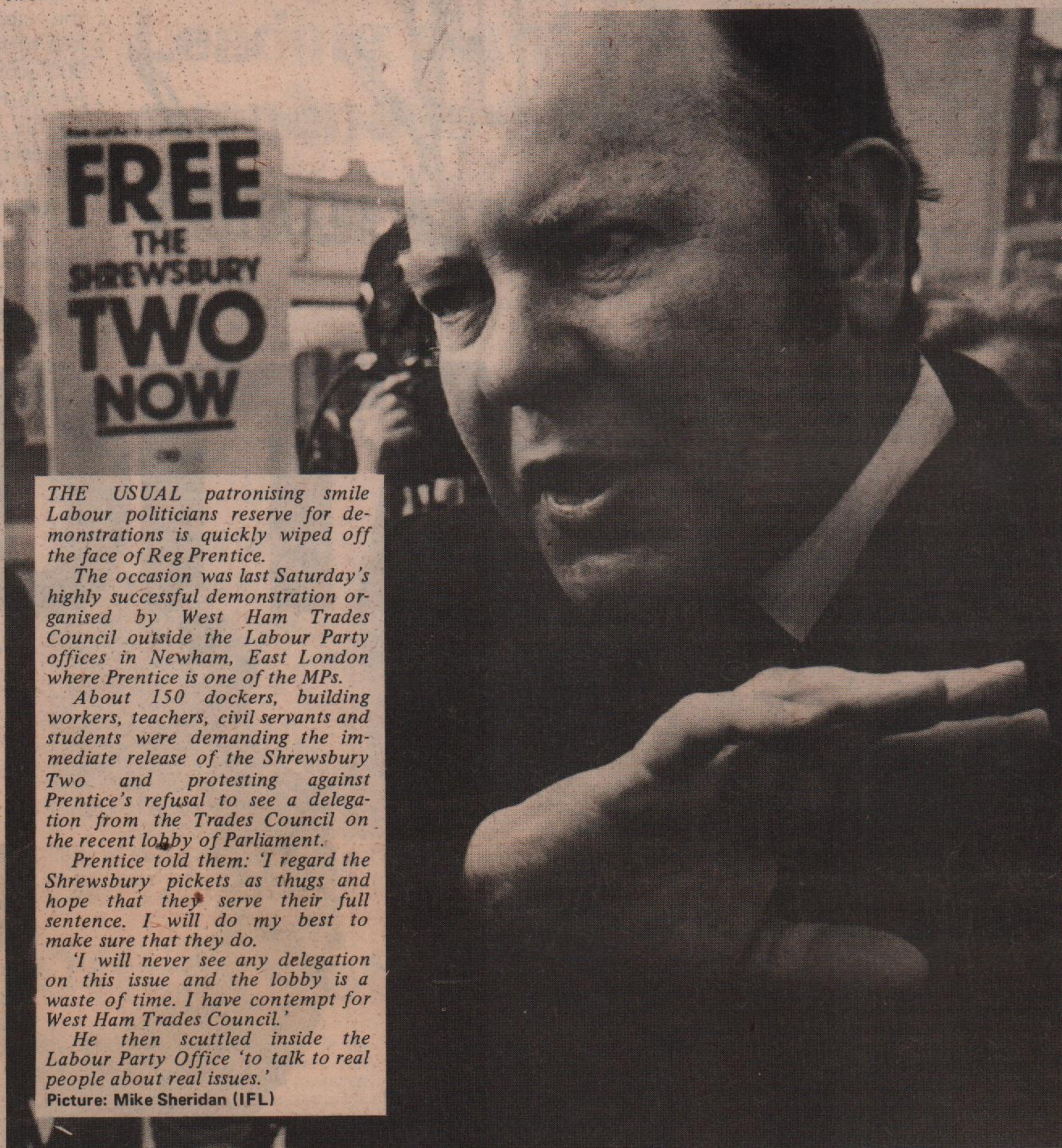
But the real importance of the turn-out is that it is a key part of mobilising for strike action from 1 May.

This is made all the more important because defence lawyers for the Shrewsbury Two who had petitioned for their release have now finally been informed by the Home Office that they will not be released unconditionally.

This information was accompanied by a hint that parole might be forthcoming. But this is by no means certain and, in truth, the release of the Two can only be guaranteed by sustained strike action.

The Rank and File Organising Committee is looking for an official call for strike action from the TUC.

But the TUC may well fail to give this lead which is why the Organising Committee is calling on all its supporters to try and win pledges for strike action from 1 May if the TUC do sell the pass.



THE USUAL patronising smile Labour politicians reserve for demonstrations is quickly wiped off the face of Reg Prentice.

The occasion was last Saturday's highly successful demonstration organised by West Ham Trades Council outside the Labour Party offices in Newham, East London where Prentice is one of the MPs.

About 150 dockers, building workers, teachers, civil servants and students were demanding the immediate release of the Shrewsbury Two and protesting against Prentice's refusal to see a delegation from the Trades Council on the recent lobby of Parliament.

Prentice told them: 'I regard the Shrewsbury pickets as thugs and hope that they serve their full sentence. I will do my best to make sure that they do.'

'I will never see any delegation on this issue and the lobby is a waste of time. I have contempt for West Ham Trades Council.'

He then scuttled inside the Labour Party Office 'to talk to real people about real issues.'

Picture: Mike Sheridan (IFL)

## Would Jenkins have kept his own father in jail?

HOME Secretary Roy Jenkins was met by a 100-strong picket when he spoke in Nottingham last week. Local trade unionists and students carried banners demanding the release of the Shrewsbury Two and an end to anti-terrorism legislation.

In his speech, Jenkins referred to the Two and spoke of how his own father had been jailed for picketing during the 1926 General Strike. The Shrewsbury case, he claimed, was completely different.

DEFENCE MINISTER Roy Mason has been a real fence sitter on the Shrewsbury issue—in public at least. This might explain why, the other week, he was guest of honour at the Barnsley branch of the National Federation of Building Trades Employers. The NFBTE is, of course, the organisation whose lobbying campaign helped to put the Shrewsbury pickets in the clink.

PS. Mr Mason is opposed to violence, which is why he is increasing defence spending and why he personally insisted that the Chilean Junta should get their gunboats.

Roger Cox, secretary of the Rank and File Organising Committee, has written to Kevin Halpin, secretary of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, with proposals for turning the LCDTU's 22 March conference into a joint operation.

The letter—dated 17 February—calls on the LCDTU, given the seriousness of the Shrewsbury issue and the fight against the Social Contract, to promote the maximum unity while allowing for the greatest democratic discussion on all the ideas that come forward.

## What 'no privileges' means

AFTER reading the article on Marlene Tomlinson last week, I thought about what it's like to have no privileges in prison.

Most readers might think it merely means mail not being allowed out to families and vice versa. It really means solitary confinement in the punishment block for 23 hours a day. And as Des and Ricky refuse to wear their prison clothes, they will get no exercise and so they will be in solitary for 24 hours a day.

Tobacco, newspapers and visits by wives and families are all 'privileges'.

By Tommy Healey  
an ex-prisoner

Mattresses are a privilege during the day. So in solitary they are taken out of the cell and put back at night.

Des and Ricky are prisoners of the class war, who have to endure the nightmare of solitary confinement to gain political status.

For a better understanding of prisons, read Victor Serge's Men in Prison, written more than 50 years ago. Prison has changed little since.



Mike Cookson, one of the striking Newcastle scaffolders, speaking in Trafalgar Square on Saturday at the rally called to welcome the Wigan building workers' march in support of the Shrewsbury Two. Picture: Peter Harrap (Report)

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the fight

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THAT'S the target inflation has forced on our Fighting Fund.

We need to raise it in the next six weeks to clear the bills that ever-rising prices make bigger week by week.

And we can only do it with your support, your cash. We have no advertising, no commercial backing, no means of raising capital. We only have our supporters, people like you.

Members of the International Socialists are being asked to find £3 each to swell the Fund. We hope you value the coverage Socialist Worker gives to workers in struggle enough to do the same—or at the very least to send us what you can.

This week's donations have put us well on the way to our target with a total of

**£1473.15**

Our thanks to: Croydon IS £6, Portsmouth IS £16.90, Wandsworth IS £6, Halifax IS £5.50, Central London Printworkers IS £5, SW Supporters Isleworth Poly £5.45, Tower Hamlets Film Show £5.60, Oxford Area IS £14.50, North Herts IS £20.54, Gartons Glucose Battersea SW Readers £2, Iranian Students £50, Jonas Woodheads (Coiled Springs) Ossett Shop Stewards Committee £10, SW England Dist IS £3.88, Collection at IS Factory Branch Conference £34.83, Coventry Radiators SW Readers £5, Thamesmead SW Readers £3, Grimsby IS £9.25, Glossop and Hyde SW Readers £4, Members' Special Levy: London Hospital Workers £35, Leicester Univ Cell £15, Hackney Teachers £26, Reading £9, Wandsworth Teachers £20, Mid-Herts £15, Austin Longbridge £7, Ipswich £6, Glasgow Teachers £155, Leicester Teachers £18, Swansea £31, Dudley £21, Wandsworth £15, Leeds £47.20, Burnley £10, Balham & Tooting £7.50, York £13.50, Aberdeen £12, Leicester £9, Colchester £9, Newham Teachers £40, GLC £16, Birmingham Dist £353.50. Plus individual contributions of £371.

Rush donations to: Mel Norris, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

## WHAT WE THINK

# Imperials: Great, but will Benn really say 'when'?

'WE STAY in 'til Benn says when', runs one of the slogans in the Hull Imperial Typewriters occupation. It sums up the feeling of many workers that only government intervention can save their jobs.

They place their hopes in Wedgwood Benn, specially since he made a speech over the weekend denouncing Litton industries in the strongest terms for 'behaving irresponsibly'.

But if any workers think that the government or Benn will stop redundancies on their own volition, they are making a serious mistake.

Wedgwood Benn emphasised in the House of Commons last week that the government does not intend to force private enterprise to save jobs. His new National Enterprise Board would, he said, 'have no power of compulsory intervention'.

Edmund Dell, the Paymaster General, insisted that this applied to giant international companies, such as Litton Industries. He said: 'These powers do not provide a means by which the government could interfere in the international companies based in this country, where there is no proposal for a change in ownership.'

Unless it is pushed very hard from below, the most that the government will be prepared to offer workers faced with closure is limited assistance in setting up co-operatives. And then only on the most stringent of terms.

The experience of the Scottish Daily Express and Triumph Meriden shows what these terms mean. In both cases, Benn's department has insisted that the workers themselves raise much of the money to buy off the bosses who made them redundant.

## Cooperatives

Then the government will lend them a little extra, on which the workers will have to pay large amounts of interest. And it will not even let them have this until they have proved that they can produce as much as the old owners, but with only half the workforce.

That is why, after many long months of waiting for 'Benn to say when', these workers' co-operatives are still not functioning.

It is not too difficult to see what the application of these principles to Imperials would mean. The Financial Times has announced that a report being prepared by Benn's department 'examines the possibilities of maintaining one production centre at either Leicester or Hull.'

In other words, unless the workers force its hand, the government will not even consider saving all the jobs in both cities. But the **Imperial workers have the power to force its hand.**

Littons are extremely worried about the Hull occupation. Bottled up in the factory are machines and equipment it desperately needs. If the Hull workers step up their action, and use the occupation as a base from which to fight for the whole trade union movement to black Littons' goods, they can become very powerful indeed.

On the basis of such strength they can *force* the government to act. And the action they should demand is not help in paying out cash to Littons, on the sort of punitive terms imposed at Meriden and the Scottish Daily Express.

**Instead, they should demand nationalisation without compensation of both factories, without reduction in either the workforce, manning levels or wages.**

Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS  
Phones 01-739 0185/6361/0511

# IMPERIAL

IMPERIAL TYPEWRITER CO LTD A DIVISION OF LITTON INDUSTRIES

# Knackers to this,

# we're going in!



Helen Charlesworth: 'I was fuming and swearing'

## PAUL FOOT REPORTS FROM HULL

IN THE NICK of time, a small number of angry women militants at Imperial Typewriters, Hull, have turned what looked like a victory for unscrupulous employers into a mighty battle for jobs.

The workers occupied the factory last Friday—the day when all 1000 of them were sacked by the vast American-based multinational company, Litton Industries.

Helen Charlesworth, senior Transport and General Workers Union steward at the factory, tells the story:

'For most of the four weeks since the sackings were announced we were quarrelling among ourselves: should we fight or should we accept the redundancy pay?

'It looked as though the factory would close last Friday—and nothing would happen.

'On Thursday, we held a meeting and discussed the possibility of a sit-in. The management heard of this, and rushed out a letter to all of us by special delivery.

### Rushed

'Each letter cost 45p—which meant that the company spent nearly £500! The letters told us we had a full day's paid holiday on Friday, and we wouldn't have to go to the factory again. We had to collect our cards at the Young People's Institute in the city.

'I sat in my house fuming and swearing, and then I went down to the Bingo and talked to some of the women. We decided to go down to the factory anyway in the morning.

'Outside the factory, there were a few of us milling about, not knowing what to do.

'I said: "Knackers to this! We're going in!"—and we all rushed at the gates. Claire Tate, the convenor, climbed over and got the keys out of the gatehouse. Then we were inside, occupying. I'll tell you this. We won't be out—and no machinery's coming out either—till we get our jobs back.'

The occupation has the full support of the Transport and General Workers

### HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THEM

THE RANK and File Organising Committee are issuing a national leaflet, which calls for:

Immediate financial support—donations, collections and, most important, *weekly levies*. Money and messages of support should be sent to Imperial Typewriters Occupation Committee, c/o Transport and General Workers Union, Bevin House, Hull.

Blacking of all Littons Industries goods in Britain. In particular, blacking of imported Imperial and Triumph-Adler typewriters.

Watch out for these companies: Litton Microwave Cooking Products, Westrex electrical equipment.

Triumph Adler, Royal typewriters and office copiers.

Leaflets available at 75p for 500 from 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

Union. Peter Grant, the union's Hull official, says: 'The factory is not going to anyone until all the jobs are filled. There will be no surrender.'

Many workers are so delighted with the union's support that they are happy to leave the organisation of the sit-in to the union.

But Peter Grant was not in Hull when the sit-in started. At no time did he recommend occupation. He and his union officials seem more interested in preparing 'a profound document' than in practical help for workers in the factory.

A word from Grant to his members in the local electricity board, for instance, would secure for the occupation, the warmth and hot water it so badly needs.

The occupation was inspired and put into effect by the workers themselves. The control of the occupation should be kept where it can be most effective—among the workers in the factory.

*But if the occupation becomes isolated from the world outside, it will perish.*

The factory should be used as a base for delegations to visit workers outside to make the case for blacking Littons goods and organising regular levies.

Some workers at Hull look in hope to the report of chartered accountants Urwick Orr on the 'feasibility' of keeping Imperials open.

This week, Jim Marshall, Labour MP for Leicester South, 'leaked' a key recommendation of the report: that

one Imperial factory—either at Leicester or Hull—should be closed down.

Mr Marshall wants to keep the factory at Leicester. He is quite happy that the Hull workers should be thrown on the scrapheap. In a disgusting statement last Monday, he said: 'The Leicester workers would be surprised if the Secretary of State was to be swayed by the action of a small group of workers in another city.'

'Leicester people decided they were going to win by reason and not by action.'

The sacked workers of Imperial Typewriters, whether they live in Leicester or in Hull, should know that as long as they rely on the advice of sycophants such as Marshall they will not win anything. As long as the workforce at Leicester and Hull is divided, both are likely to lose.

There is great hope for the Hull occupation. Littons have left huge stores of spare parts in the factory—not to mention valuable machinery—and an expensive factory.

The machinery, the parts and the factory *must be held in ransom for the workers' jobs.*

If the workers keep control of their own occupation, if they open the gates to fellow-workers who support them, if they refuse to take part in silly attacks on their fellow-workers—they can win a victory which will light a beacon throughout the dark expanse of mass lay-offs and redundancy.

### ADVERTISEMENT

## Demonstrate on Saturday 8 March

LEICESTER PRISON (where Ricky Tomlinson is being held) 12.30pm:

All trade unionists to the south of Lincoln are urged to join the march from Victoria Park to the jail for a picket.

Coaches leave London: 9am, Pancras Road (Kings Cross); Birmingham: 10.30am, back of the Hall of Memory; Coventry: 11am, Pool Meadow; Leamington: 10.30am, Town Hall; Liverpool: 8.30am, Pierhead.

LINCOLN PRISON (where Des Warren is being held) 12.30pm:

All trade unionists in Lincoln and to the north of the city are urged to join a picket of the prison.

Coaches leave Sheffield: 10.30am, Pond Street, Newcastle: 7am, The Haymarket, Bradford: 9.30am, Morley Street (by bus station); Manchester: 10am, St Peters Square; Teesside: contact D Catchpole, Redcar 73979, York: contact P Household, York 51501.

For further details ring Brother K Appleby (01-249 1207).

ORGANISED BY RANK AND FILE ORGANISING COMMITTEE



### SUPPORT THE IMPERIALS OCCUPATION

Public meeting

Speakers: Helen Charlesworth (TGWU senior shop steward, Imperial Typewriters), Paul Foot (editor, Socialist Worker).

Wednesday 5 March, 7.30pm, Stevedores and Dockers Club, Posterngate, Hull.

Organised by Hull International Socialists.

## FACT

**BOWATERS** are Britain's biggest papermakers and the tenth largest of all British companies. Last year they made £67 million profit—that's £3,300 out of each employee.

**REED INTERNATIONAL**, papermakers and printers, are the 24th largest. They made £56 million profit last year—£700 out of each of its 79,000 workers.

Reed and Bowaters are together worth £900 million, equivalent to the lifetime's earnings of 9,000 workers.

## THE LIARS WHO MAKE US PAY

by Allan Beeney, SOGAT

THE FUTURE of thousands of SOGAT members in paper and board mills is, we are told, in the balance. With a fifth of them on short time, the employers have taken the opportunity to throw out SOGAT's 13-point pay claim.

In reply to SOGAT's demand for a £6 increase for Class Three day workers, and shift increment payments on a percentage basis, the employers' federation has offered the insult of £3.08 a week to the lowest paid day workers, and £6.56 to the highest paid skilled men working a four-shift system. They might as well have been honest and offered us a straight wage cut.

They are hoping, of course, that the economic crisis will intimidate the mills into accepting this deal. With mill closures and short time working, surely it would be lunacy to go for a big claim? Anyone thinking this should take a few other

facts into consideration.

How come firms such as Reed International and Bowaters are so hard up so soon after showing record profits? And how come Reeds can still afford to build two big tissue mills in South Africa and expand their holdings in Scandinavia and the Middle East?

If mill workers are intimidated into accepting this disguised wage cut, they will be accepting responsibility for the failure of capitalism to run itself efficiently.

This week's recall conference of the paper and board mills trade section in London was a great opportunity to strike a blow for all mill workers. Last year, the print workers in SOGAT showed

their determination to fight low pay by taking on the British Printing Industries Federation and abolishing the Class Four rate.

It is now up to the mills to follow this example, and do something about their diabolical day work rates, and to get a realistic pay scale for shift workers. You cannot fight an attack on your standard of living by accepting a wage cut!

The employers created the crisis—they should pay for it.

**Fight for the full claim.**

Firms unable to operate without mill closures, redundancies and short time working should be nationalised without compensation.

Multinational companies must be countered by multinational union links.



# How officials allowed this man to be victimised

EDDIE Bennett received verbal warnings in November. Before Christmas they tried to give him a written one. He refused on principle to accept it.

As they stepped up the pressure, he and the shop stewards' committee decided to issue a statement to management clarifying the principle. It was handed in on 24 January. The same day, a representative from Rank's central Personnel Department, who had come down expressly for the purpose, sacked him.

Eddie had suspected the danger and made preparations. The shop stewards were to bring everyone out to the car park to vote on what action to take. But management got the help of an ex-deputy convenor John Draper.

The new deputy was young and inexperienced. Draper advised 'hearing management's side.' The shop stewards were accustomed to seeing him as Eddie's right hand man, and the vote went his way.

Instead of the mass meeting already convened, a meeting was held in the canteen out of Eddie's reach, in the presence of a jubilant management who assured the workers of the necessity of sacking their convenor and announced a new era in industrial relations in Rank's, with management represented at shop stewards' meetings.

## Fighting

The workers got the impression that nothing could be done but 'call in the union to sort it out', and dispersed for the week-end.

But Rank's were not to get rid so easily of the man who had won £10 all round last year and who was now fighting for equal pay for women with no job evaluation.

Loyal shop stewards contacted Eddie over the week-end, and 100 workers were stopped at the gate for a meeting on Monday morning which voted unanimously for strike action.

The strike started about 130 strong, including practically every skilled worker on whom the factory depends.

John Draper and another renegade shop steward, Roy Tebb, though they had voted with the

THE FOUR-WEEK strike at Rank Pullin Controls, Brentford in West London has been broken. The hard core of about 60 strikers went back on Monday. Rank's have got away—though not cheaply—with victimising AUEW convenor Eddie Bennett.

The employers used obvious things: a traitor among the shop stewards, who delayed the strike and undermined its solidarity; lies that it was unofficial; camouflage of the numbers at work, mixing references to shop floor workers with other categories to give the impression that the strikers were too few to win; denials of victimisation, claims that Eddie's work wasn't good enough, and that they'd never take him back though the skies should fall.

The workers were mostly inexperienced. They let management's numbers game worry them, instead of looking at their own numbers and realising that those out were more than enough, specially of men and women in key jobs, to keep the factory at a standstill. They let quibbling about the strike's official status bother them. It was, in fact, endorsed by the District Committee from the start.

They got understandably worried about money. Strike pay for a nine-day strike last September turned up on Friday, 21 February, the last day of this strike. And with some splendid exceptions, including Chiswick Works, promised collections just didn't show up.

None of this mattered. The strike could have been won, if it had been supported in the way you would expect from the AUEW official machine. Why wasn't it?

rest, joined the 50 or so scabs after a couple of days, resigned as shop stewards, and helped spread management rumours that the strike was unofficial and that 'there were as many out as in'.

Members of TASS not only consistently crossed the picket line but urged strikers to return to work, and even worked machines, apparently unrestrained by their own District Secretary, Brother Wolfe.

Such 'trade unionism' makes strikes easier to lose. But the real killer was the ambiguous behaviour of the AUEW District Committee, London North, which has for long

been dominated by the Communist Party and the Broad Left.

It appears that the District Secretary was told by Rank's that Eddie was to be sacked, but did not warn him.

The District Committee did endorse the strike, and after several days of waiting there were three visits from minor members of the Committee, though none from a district or area organiser.

Then, in the third week, an astonishing thing happened.

Brothers Anthony, District President, and Swift, Secretary, went into the factory, refusing to take any shop stewards with them,

## CONVENOR WHO FRIGHTENED RANK'S

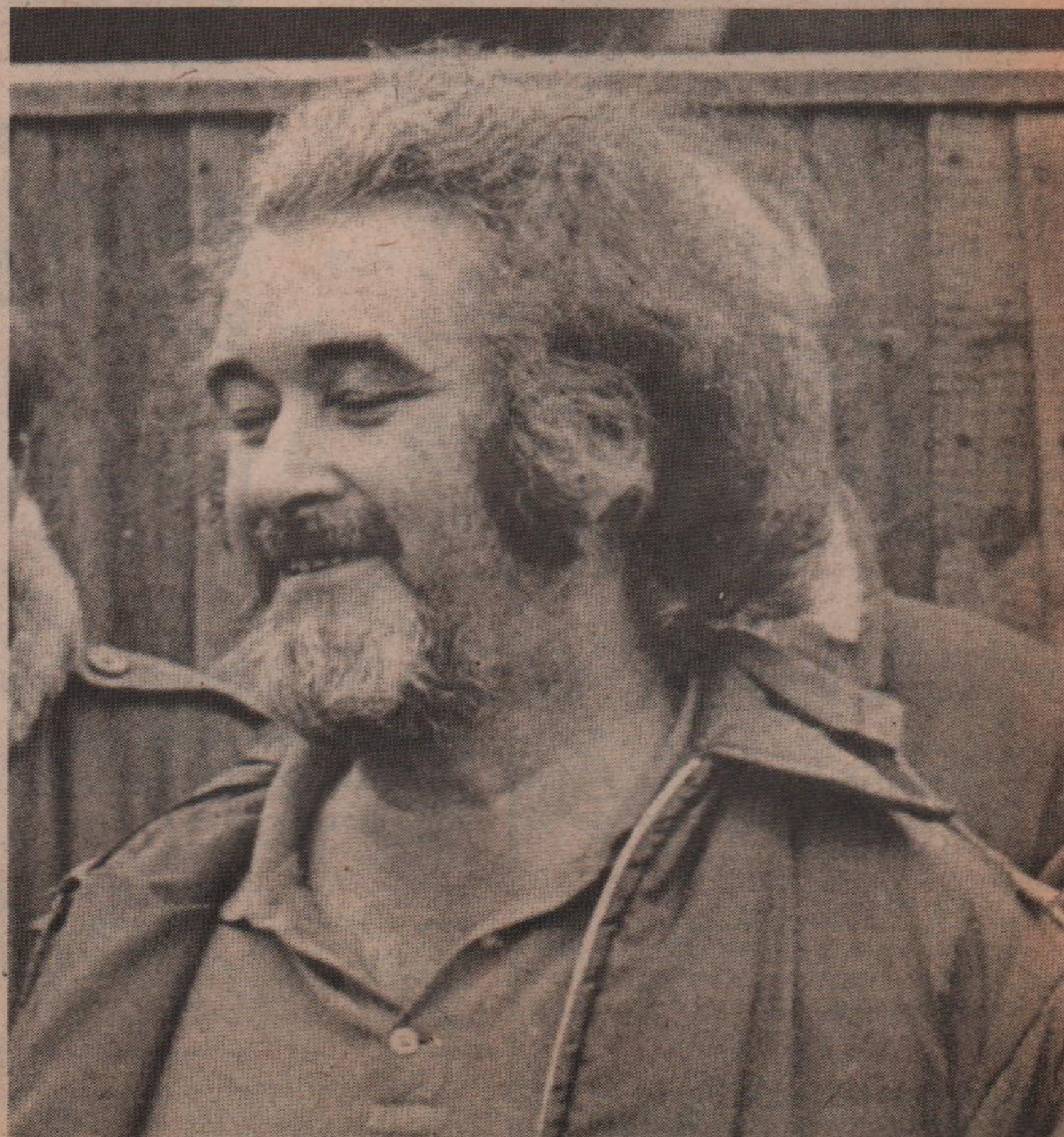
EDDIE BENNETT became convenor two years ago. Union organisation in Rank's was almost nil, with very low AUEW membership, and a couple of dozen of the 200 or so shop floor workers in other unions. The previous convenor, Sid Bull, now a foreman and out of the union, had simply co-operated with management.

In two years, Eddie transformed Rank's. Membership was up to 90 per cent. A productivity deal had expired in May 1971, but the shop floor didn't know,

as management continued to implement it arbitrarily.

Eddie dug out and publicised the fact, and insisted, in face of fierce management opposition, that the timings and warnings in the Productivity Deal could not be accepted by his members for disciplinary purposes.

Even Rank's shop stewards of five years ago had been worried by the possibility of being sacked under the deal, although no-one ever had been . . .



Eddie Bennett: 'I hate him', a union official told workers striking for his reinstatement. Picture: Peter Harrap (Report)

to talk with management and the scabs. They then told the strikers what they'd done.

They'd proposed to management that Eddie, who had been sacked for the principle that management's timings for jobs were unacceptable to the union, should be taken back on probation, that is, allowed a chance to keep to the timings like a good boy in the future.

Astonishingly, Rank's turned down this total sell-out. Rank's would never take him back, the officials assured the workers fighting for his reinstatement.

Anthony and Swift said they had urged the scabs to strike, but now advised the strikers to hold a mass meeting with the scabs to decide whether to continue the strike.

As leadership for strikers fighting the victimisation of their convenor, it leaves one gasping. Oddest of all was Brother Anthony's personal contribution.

He told the strikers, and said he had already told the scabs the same, that he hated the victimised convenor: still, as a good trade unionist, he'd support the strike.

This contribution to workers' solidarity bewildered the strikers, who kept asking Eddie why the President hated him.

Recently, on behalf of his shop stewards' committee, Eddie had started contacting other convenors in the area, regardless of what union they belonged to, with the idea of

setting up a network—a mere exchange of names, addresses and telephone numbers—to speed up financial support between factories in time of strike. Collections normally take time to organise: meanwhile, strikers suffer.

Ironically, he and his money-starved strikers were an immediate illustration of the need for such a local link-up.

Whatever the reason for Brother Anthony's hatred it had its effect on the morale of the strikers, along with their impression now that the District Committee—the all-powerful union they had relied on to lead them to victory—was convinced that they couldn't win, and was as much on the scabs' side as on theirs.

Out of a meeting of 100 on Friday 14 February, only 14 voted for holding the joint meeting with the scabs: but defeat had been smelt, the numbers dwindled to 60 or so the following week.

## Salvaged

On Friday, in the presence of the same two official supporters, Eddie told those still fighting that the time had come to go back, to keep the remaining shop stewards together, and to rebuild the union as a fighting force, not leave the scabs to re-organise it as an instrument of management.

Something of Eddie's two years work will be salvaged. But the fact remains that the AUEW let a convenor go down in defeat, some of their actions contributing positively to this result, in contradiction of their official endorsement of the strike.

If such a thing happened to a victimised convenor in a union, or district, dominated by admitted class collaborators, it might be understandable.

It happened in a district of the AUEW firmly in the hands of the Broad Left, indeed of the Communist Party itself.

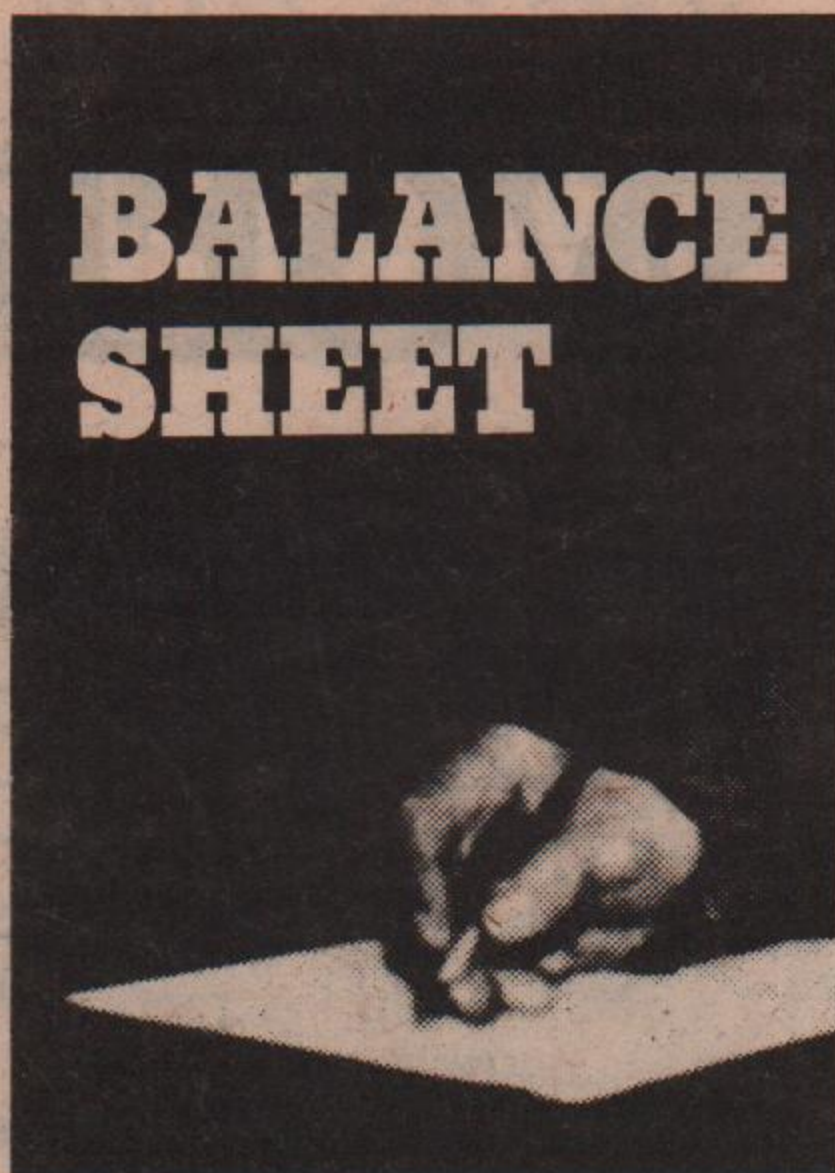
# Tattered, but not yet torn up

A FORTNIGHT ago the miners broke through the Social Contract, without meeting any resistance. But it was not only the National Coal Board and the government that had decided not to fight. The Miners Union negotiators allowed the wages of pit surface workers to fall yet further behind those of men at the coalface.

Neither side wanted to fight. For the ruling class the reasons are clear. Twice in two years the last Tory government took on the miners as the central part of their attempts to control wages. Twice the miners, followed by thousands of other workers, broke the government.

Eric Varley, the Labour Minister for Energy, summed up the government's fear of the miners when he said in parliament: 'Anyone who is critical of this settlement should tell us whether it is more costly than the hundreds of millions of pounds which last winter's strike cost . . . We all know that it left the Conservative Party with an incomes policy shattered beyond repair.'

Not only the miners, but the railwaymen and then the power workers are capable of enlarging the holes in the Contract, if they choose. Any plans the government is making have to recognise the weakness of the ruling class against any well-organised section of



## Peter Clark on THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

workers. But because the miners did not have to involve themselves in a struggle, it means that fewer groups will follow them through.

Not that the trade union leaders are out to break the Contract, and this indeed is the strength of the arrangement. Nearly all, left or

right, accept and support it. It means that most strikes since Labour's return a year ago have been unofficial. The signalmen, the Scottish local authority electricians and the Glasgow dustmen are simply following the bakers, the lorry drivers and the Shell workers. Nearly all wage battles are now unofficial: There is no national wages battle, rather isolated actions in particular industries, and some national claims which will not be resisted.

### Wages

Even when struggles reach quite a pitch, such as in Glasgow and the West of Scotland just before Christmas, the trade union leaders play a waiting game. They try to keep each struggle separate, to prevent links and generalisation developing. They manoeuvre and play for time, hoping that the situation will get defused.

But there is another side of the Social Contract. It may not be exactly effective on the wages front. But it has been successful in ensuring that the trade union leaders mount no serious resistance to redundancies, closures and short-time working.

This has softened up resistance on the shop floor, though this is now beginning to grow.

The contract's success can be seen in the traditionally militant

engineering and motor industries where redundancies and short time working have so far been accepted without much resistance.

But even this 'success' fore-shadows new problems which the contract will not be able to answer, even when it is topped up with Bennery and the like.

In these plants the old established leaderships who took to Labour and Benn to shelter the working class from the storm are under pressure from militants and socialists who want to use their own strengths and energies to fight back against the bosses.

The truth of the matter is that the contract in one sense underlines the strength of the working class. The employers and the Labour government want to do as much as they possibly can to avoid any head on confrontation. But such is the seriousness of British capitalism's crisis, that they may be compelled to change their tactics.

### Drastic

Already there is major argument in the City, the Treasury, and the Cabinet. All the options before the government mean intensifying the pressure on the shop floor. The Financial Times, for example, says that the only realistic way of making large and immediate savings in government spending 'would be to make drastic inroads on social

security payments of all kinds or on housing subsidies'.

In the same article the Financial Times says of unemployment: 'It has been clear for some time that the government's chief instrument in keeping wage inflation under control is to be good old-fashioned unemployment.' It asks: 'How is it to be dressed up? The Chancellor cannot be seen to be deliberately allowing further unemployment or reducing working-class living standards.'

Other newspapers are urging a legally enforced incomes policy of some variety. The heads of the Civil Service already have all the necessary legislation drawn up should the government decide to risk a return to a policy which both the 1966-70 Labour government and the last Tory government were quite unable to enforce against working-class resistance.

Whatever policy changes are made to deal with the aftermath of the miners' settlement, the best preparation will be the strengthening of shop floor organisation and the building of organised links between groups of workers through rank and file organisation.

Rank and file organisation is no longer just a 'good idea'. Its strength and success will determine whether the confused and isolated conflicts of the past six months can in future be linked, and just how far the government can be resisted.

# 5 FIFTH COLUMN



## As unsafe as reasonably practicable..

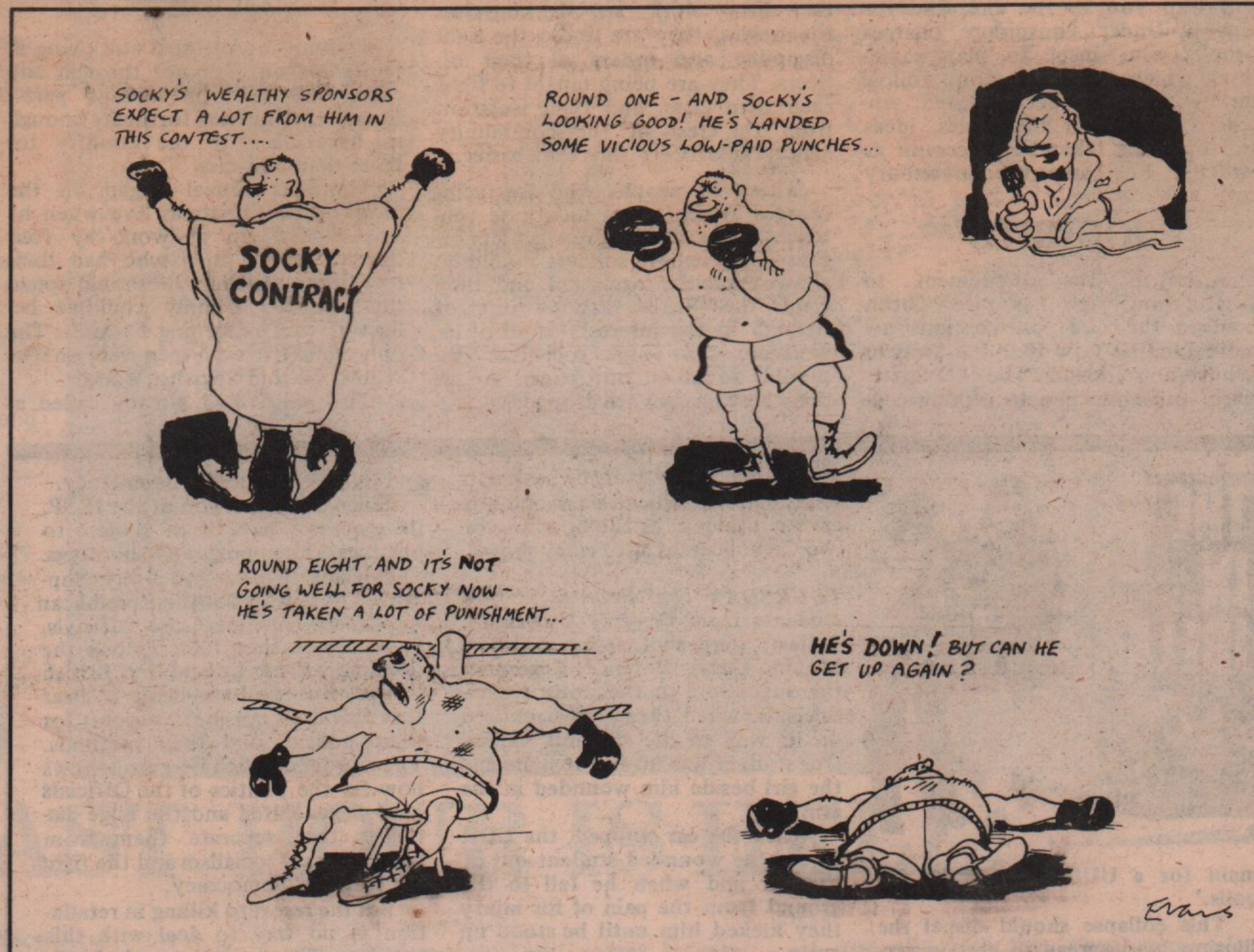
THE LATEST chapter in the sordid saga of the Labour government's Health and Safety at Work Act was played out in the House of Commons on Friday.

Labour MP Bob Cryer once again moved an amending bill designed to plug one of the most serious of the many gaping holes in this legislation.

The particular hole Mr Cryer is trying to plug is the move away from the old position where there were absolute duties on employers to provide safe working conditions. All such obligations have been deleted from the new legislation on the insistence of the Civil Service top brass who are, as ever, determined that British business should be allowed to operate on the most economic (ie profitable) lines and not be subjected to restrictive legislation about such non-priorities as industrial safety.

Mr Cryer's efforts have met a solid wall of resistance from the government, which is endeavouring not to upset the Confederation of British Industry and poverty stricken factory owners everywhere. So it isn't surprising that his efforts are so fruitless.

Last May Bob Cryer tried to attack the legislation while it was still a parliamentary Bill. He moved to delete all the clauses in the Bill which said that the employers should provide safe working conditions 'as far



as is reasonably practicable'. That phrase, if applied to the law of property, would immediately solve the poverty problem. Just think about it, the mothers who have hungry children only have to refrain from

taking food from supermarkets without paying 'as far as is reasonably practicable.' Rents could be paid 'if reasonably practicable'.

But of course the law only works 'reasonably practicably' on behalf of the rich. The supporters of law and order, who felt so strongly about the unreasonable Clay Cross councillors, the Shrewsbury Two and the collapse of authority, are appalled by Cryer's efforts.

If successful they would be an intolerable interference in factory owners' freedom to make profits. They would be obliged by law to provide safe working conditions. So Mr Cryer's amendment was smashed, getting no support from the Tories, and little from the workers' friends on the Labour benches.

LET NO ONE argue that the Royal Family are doing nothing to justify their £420,000 wage rise. At present the Queen and Prince Philip are touring the Caribbean, where the Bermudan population had the bad taste to stage a general strike to coincide with their arrival.

Before leaving, Prince Philip, President of the World Wildlife Fund, did his bit to boost royal productivity. His shooting parties accounted for no less than 12,000 pheasants at Sandringham. On one day they accounted for 1,325 pheasants.

This was the biggest Royal mass execution since 1961-2 when 14,000 pheasants and 4,000 partridges were shot.

They just happen to like pheasant sandwiches...

LORD CHALFONT was appointed Minister for Disarmament in the 1964 Labour government. To take the post he obligingly left the Liberal Party and The Times, where he worked as defence correspondent, took a life peerage and settled in to do nothing for disarmament over the next six years.

After Labour's fall from office he set about enriching himself with such companies as Spey Investments. And around this time he began to see the real danger to Britain. By last year he had swung into a vigorous Reds Under The Bed routine. He left the Labour Party, appealing for 'moderates' to save the country

Now he has found one. Not in Britain but in St Moritz, Switzerland. None other than the Shah of Iran with whom he conducted a long and sympathetic interview for The Times. The Shah, he wrote, still saw hope for Britain.

He didn't get round to discussing Dr Simian Salehi. She was arrested by the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, last summer. She was pregnant; by the end of the year she had died under torture. Amnesty International were reported in the Sunday Times as saying that Iran would head any league table of oppression, 'whether of torture, of executions after sham trials, or extensive political imprisonment.'

But for the Sunday Express Chalfont had other aspects of the Royal murderers to comment on. 'The Shah and the Empress both ski well—she rather better than he.'

'She wears the most ravishing powder blue outfit. He favours the more traditional style of tight trouser going in to the top of the boot.'

'He is just like any other skier when he is on the slopes. He queues for the tow bars and so forth. No pomp and circumstance. In the afternoon he sees various ministers who travel to St Moritz. And as he always points out he can be back in Teheran within four hours.'

'He is also constantly in touch with things. There is a formidable communications set up of telephones and telex at St Moritz.'

How ravishing for the Shah. How unfortunate for Dr Salehi. How obscene is Lord Chalfont.

## HARDLY PLAIN SAILING

SIR JOHN DONALDSON's former employment with the British Shipping Federation wasn't his only qualification for that short lived little number at the National Industrial Relations Court.

It appears that the late Edward Heath knew him intimately. They shared the same hobby, sailing, and both are former chairmen of the Federation of University Conservative

and Unionist Associations, Ted in 1938 and John in 1940.

Despite this startling array of qualifications, Sir John wasn't the first judge to be offered the job. Lord Donovan was asked, but refused on the grounds that it was too blatantly political an appointment. The NIRC would, he thought, rebound on all capitalist law and order and bring it into disrepute.

# Labour keeps the lawmen



The 14 pickets outside the court after being charged last November. PICTURE: Peter Harrap (Report)

FOURTEEN pacifists are being brought to trial by the government next week under an Act of Parliament that the Labour Party fought vigorously when it was first introduced.

They are being charged with 'conspiracy to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act.' They had handed out leaflets titled 'Some Information for Discontented Soldiers'. The leaflet was not an incitement to desert—it just explained the loopholes through which people could leave the army if they wished.

There are several interesting points about the case. As pacifists, these 14 people are obviously not the 'violent troublemakers' the press usually attacks. They are all supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, but they oppose all violence, no matter who it comes from.

The definition of the 'incitement' part of the Act is left to the arbitrary decision of the judge. The Act has been held in disrepute by many lawyers and jurists since it was passed in 1934, in the face of much opposition, especially from the Labour MPs of the time. Yet it is the successors of these Labour politicians

## THE FOURTEEN WHO WANTED SOLDIERS TO KNOW THEIR RIGHTS

who see fit to implement the Act now.

The tacking of the increasingly familiar conspiracy law onto an already legally dubious Act is another interesting point. As with so many cases, if a specific offence can't be proved against you, 'conspiracy' will trap you in the end, and for longer. Under conspiracy charges people who meet to plan something which they later don't follow through can be accused and sentenced, and their life styles, ideas and opinions taken into account as evidence. Remember the Shrewsbury case.

### PROHIBITS

Although the Incitement to Disaffection Act has rarely been used in the past, prosecutions are more familiar now that the army is involved in Ireland. The Act effectively prohibits people making con-

tact with soldiers, or prohibits soldiers from having any real rights to organise independently as other workers can.

The army is receiving an excellent training in Northern Ireland in how to control working-class people, and even though the soldiers carrying out the dirty work are working-class themselves, they are under the tight discipline and orders of their officers. They are being taught to fight their own class, and their isolation from the rest of the community makes the officers' jobs even easier.

These 14 people, who are facing charges which carry indefinite sentences, were handing out leaflets because they believe soldiers should be allowed such information and they want the British troops out of Ireland. In the interests of all of us, working class and socialists, we should do all in our power to see that these charges are dropped.

## working

### THE FITTER'S MATE WHO SOLD HIS CAR TO THE WRONG MAN

by a Socialist Worker reporter, Southampton  
WHY Roy Jenkins, the Home Secretary, took a dislike to a 45-year-old fitter's mate in Southampton has never been fully explained.

But there seems little prospect that Tommy McAlister, who works at the Vosper Thornycroft shipyard, will ever figure on the guest list for one of those elegant dinner parties that Jenkins is fond of holding at his London home. Jenkins can't even stand the thought of Tommy being in the country. He even sent him a letter telling him so.

It began: 'Whereas I am satisfied that Thomas Malachy McAlister, a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies is concerned in the commission, preparation and instigation of acts of terrorism...

The letter finished with an instruction that Tommy should be kicked out of Britain.

Jenkins never proved his outrageous claim. He doesn't need to. Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, you don't even know what accusations are being made against you. So there's no opportunity to defend yourself.

### GUNS

Tommy McAlister is still living in Southampton. But not through any change of heart on Jenkins' part—simply that he was fortunate enough to have been in the country for more than 20 years.

Tommy's ordeal began on the morning of Christmas Eve when he was picked up at work by four Special Branch men who had their own ideas of where he should spend the holiday. Tommy couldn't believe it was happening to him: 'The only guns I've even seen were on television,' he told Socialist Worker.

The police had already called at

his flat to give his wife Rita a taste of what police terrorism is all about. She was forced to stand against a wall for long periods and watch her flat being systematically ransacked.

This was not the last time they called. They arrived later in the day on the pretext that there had been an anonymous phone call to say she was hiding someone, and again combed the flat.

Despite frequent visits and phone calls to the police station she was not allowed to visit Tommy until eight days later. By then he had been served with a deportation order. While Rita struggled on social security, Tommy was faced with Roy Jenkins' contribution to British 'justice'.

### SIMPLE

When Tommy was arrested he was heavy with the grime from work in the shipyard. Yet for five days he was not allowed a bath. On Christmas Day his main meal consisted of bread and jam. And when he was finally brought to Winchester Prison he was allowed only 3½ hours exercise in ten days, and his right to use the prison shop was withdrawn.

The police argument against Tommy was simple: he was Irish, a Catholic, so he must be an IRA man. They had not a shred of evidence that he was engaged in any illegal activities. What fired their imagination was the fact that a man he once sold a car to at an auction was later charged with handling explosives.

But for the fact that Tommy was eventually able to prove that he had been in the country for more than 20 years—so was outside the scope of the new law—he would have been deported to Belfast and probably ended up in an internment camp.

Tommy and Rita have been shattered by their experience. Rita told Socialist Worker: 'All the time Tommy was inside I felt completely stunned by it all. Several times I blacked out and I was treated for shock. I'm still seeing the doctor now.'

Even now, police watch their every move and they live in fear of further harassment.

Roy Jenkins' law descended on Tommy McAlister because he is Irish, is a well-known figure in the Irish community in Southampton, and frequents Irish pubs.

### LUCKY

In the hysteria which followed the shooting of a Southampton policeman—supposedly by the IRA—the police were determined that someone Irish should pay. The Prevention of Terrorism Act gave them the perfect means to do it without the awkward problem of having to prove anything.

Tommy McAlister was 'lucky'. Five other Irishmen picked up at the same time—and probably just as innocent—were deported. All the same Tommy spent 28 days in prison and at no time was he charged with anything.

The law must be repealed. It presents a direct threat to every Irish person in this country. Every trade unionist who values his skull should be raising opposition to the law in his trade union branch or shop stewards' committee. Now.

The solution to the 'Irish problem' is not repressive legislation. It can only begin with an end to British domination in Northern Ireland and the withdrawal of troops.

NORTHERN IRELAND'S unemployment figures continue to rise and are still about double the British figures. The February figures give an official total of 34,691 unemployed, 6.8 per cent.

But the official figures underestimate the situation, Professor Gibson of the New University of Ulster argued last week. The real figures should be about 10,000 higher to be comparable with British figures, he said.

TWO weeks ago a 20-strong group of Protestant paramilitary leaders forced their way into a meeting of the United Ulster Unionist Council—the coalition led by middle-class politicians Paisley, Craig and West—and demanded a say in the selection of UUUC candidates in the coming convention elections. The UUUC threw them out.

Enraged, the paramilitary spokesman, Ken Gibson, declared on television that Paisley, Craig and West 'had 48 hours to come to their senses'. Failing that, he said, the paramilitary group would call another general strike and set up a 'provisional government'.

By the 48-hour deadline there was no reaction from the three politicians. The paramilitary groupings, UDA and UVF, held a joint meeting—and issued a statement which amounted to abject surrender. They promised to do nothing to 'split the Protestant people' and 'to work might and



main for a UUUC victory at the polls.'

This collapse should dispel the illusion, widespread in certain sections of the Left, that the working-class background of the paramilitary bodies and their occasional talent for radical rhetoric heralds any genuine change in the politics of Loyalism.

EARLY this month the press reported that Merlyn Rees, Minister for Northern Ireland, had signed his last Interim Custody Order. Two days later he signed four such orders for the detention of four Catholics in Long Kesh prison.

In the same week he released four Loyalists from Long Kesh and, according to David McKitterick of the Irish Times, he had released shortly before the man chiefly

responsible for organising sectarian assassinations. Such assassinations have continued, as the bombing of two Catholic pubs last Friday shows.

**THURSDAY 13 February:** Two students from Queen's University, Belfast, were shot at by members of the Ulster Defence Regiment, the successors to the notorious B-Specials, when their car backfired on its way to the students' union. One student was hit in the spine and the girl beside him wounded in the arm.

When the car stopped, the UDR forced the wounded student out of the car and when he fell to the ground from the pain of his injury they kicked him until he stood up again.

**THURSDAY 20 February:** Hugh Ferguson, chairman of the White-rock branch of the recently-formed Irish Socialist Republican Party, was shot dead. The IRSP issued a statement pinning the responsibility for his murder on the Official wing of the Republican movement, which Hugh left to join the new party.

On Tuesday a prominent Official Republican, Sean Fox, was shot, probably in retaliation by Belfast members of the IRSP.

The IRSP was formed by people who split from the Official Republican movement over its failure to pursue the military struggle against the British, its refusal to get more involved in working-class struggle

and its lack of internal democracy.

Since the formation of the IRSP, its members have been subject to beatings, kidnappings and shootings.

Socialist Worker has always supported both wings of the Republican movement, including the Officials, in so far as they fight against the domination of Ireland by British troops. But we have made it clear that this does not mean support for their politics and their methods. The murder of Hugh Ferguson shows how far the politics of the Officials have degenerated and the huge distances that separate them from revolutionary socialism and the fight for workers' democracy.

But the resort to killing in retaliation is no way to deal with this problem. The result can only be to strengthen the hand of the thugs within the Officials and to weaken the struggle for free and open discussion over the future of the Republican movement.

**TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND! Demonstration.** Sunday 6 April, in London. All socialists and trade unionists should make a major effort for this demonstration. More details next week.



**IRISH DAY SCHOOL: Saturday 8 March, Room S 101A, St Clements Building, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, WC2.**

11 am: The situation in Ireland, the truce, arguments around civil war, 2pm: Perspectives. Each IS branch to send two delegates. Entry by IS membership card only. Details: 01-739 2639.

International Socialists say:  
**STOP THE CUTS!**  
**STOP THE SACKINGS!**

The government's spending cuts have hit the already decaying Health Service hardest of all. Low pay means lack of staff—and scandals such as . . .

# Battery-hen mothers

## I WAS SICK TWICE WITH FEAR...

Joan Mallinson,  
mother:

I HAVE just had my third baby—and what a terrible experience. My confinement took place on 4 January at 1.30pm. There were several other mothers in the Labour Ward.

I was told on Thursday that I had to go into hospital the next day and that I was going to be induced. Nobody told me what this meant.

I was terrified. I had no idea what was going to happen. On Friday night I couldn't sleep and I was sick twice with fear.

On Saturday morning, I was taken into the Labour Ward at 8.30am and was put on a bed. Nobody came in until 9.15am. All this time my fear built up—what were they going to do?

Someone stuck a needle into my arm, but I was too frightened to look. My husband came at 10am and that made me feel a little better.

The needle was attached by a long tube to a bottle of liquid which went into my arm all the time I was having the baby.

When they quickened the drips my pains got worse. There was no lapse in pain as there is with a normal labour, it was just one long pain.

Every day in hospitals, babies are born like this with the drip. They make you have your baby when there's a full staff on duty in the day time. If anyone starts in labour during the night they give you something to stop it.

Everyone lined up in rows, all with drips on their arms, and all giving birth within minutes of each other. Just like battery hens . . .



## THE LAST HOUR IS HELL...

A family doctor:

AS A GENERAL Practitioner, the current position in most maternity hospitals horrifies me. Most of the women are put on a drip at 9.15am and delivered about 2pm.

My patients tell me the last hour is hell. They push while they feel a continual pain which never lets up. They are then cut because they are told that since they are on a drip the babies must be got out fast.

Even more horrific are the stories told by some patients that they have hallucinations during the next night when they continue pushing because they feel they are still having the baby.

The fathers are also involved. They are asked to be present, not for any emotional reasons, but because there are not enough staff to deal with 15 women on drips.

To cap it all, the women are told that 25 per cent of the babies born on this 'production line'

end up in a special care unit.

I attended a post-graduate course recently where I objected strongly to the use of women in this way, since, in my experience, it made them frightened tense and depressed. I was told, in a very polite way, by a lot of learned gentlemen, that I was talking rubbish and that because of the state of the health service and the shortage of staff the babies had to be born during the double shift period—that is between 2pm and 4pm. No one questioned why there was a shortage of staff.

I was also told that all women are given a choice. At the first consultation they were told that they would be induced, they could refuse if they wanted. But what frightened women in a hospital faced with someone in a white coat would dare to doubt that the doctor knows best—after all, aren't we all indoctrinated to believe

this?

I was also told that since many of these women's husbands work shifts they would prefer to know exactly when they were going to have their babies.

But no one tells them the dangers of induction—that the force of the contractions could rupture the womb; that more babies are born prematurely and that they are more floppy and slow to feed.

I believe all women should question the way they are treated in maternity hospitals. They should demand to know why they are being induced. In some cases induction is necessary—when a woman is several days late, when there is distress to the baby or when the woman has high blood pressure.

But if there is no valid reason apart from making it easier to starve the health service of money and nursing staff then every woman should question, object and involve every other woman in the hospital.

### WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR HEALTH SERVICE?

A pamphlet written by members of the International Socialists who work in the National Health Service.



10p (plus 4p postage) from Industrial Department, International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

# THIS IS PORTUGAL: The policemen...raised their fist salute and shouted 'Long live the workers'

# Where the bosses are losing their heads...

By  
**LAURIE FLYNN**

LAST FRIDAY, Henri di Nizchorreia, convener of the Plessey workers' council in Portugal, and Fernanda Fortunato, workers' council delegate of the telecommunications production workers, arrived in Britain to attend their first meeting of the Plessey shop stewards' combine committee.

But even as they were preparing for their historic meeting, Plessey management were hard at work trying to frighten off UK Plessey workers from developing their links with their Portuguese brothers and sisters.

They warned one member of the committee that it could mean management dropping plans to bring back work to Britain.

*What accounts for this swift reaction from Plessey management? Naturally they are hostile to any sort of organisation which can effectively challenge their own centralised operations. But their concern goes deeper.*

It springs from a deep fear of the struggle and determination of the whole Portuguese working class. It is the fear that Plessey share with the men in charge of other multinationals and with their friends in high finance and the armed forces of the western world.

## Magnificent awakening

In the words of Henri di Nizchorreia Portugal under fascism was 'a true paradise for the multinationals'. He added: 'It is difficult for workers in Britain to understand what fascism means.'

'It means that you have no information about what is going on in other factories or the world at large. You cannot speak freely. You have no right to meet. There are no such things as unions. There are spies everywhere. It is terrible. It imposes on you a complete isolation where you cannot even talk to other workers freely.'

Since the overthrow of Caetano on 25 April last year, however, a massive and magnificent awakening of the working class has taken place.

As an almost natural response of the fascism that fragmented them, prevented them from organising in the most elementary sense, they have become highly organised.

And they have created a real living democracy which is an immensely powerful weapon as the struggles shift from issue to issue, from the battle for higher wages, to the struggle for the right to work and edges towards the battle for an end to capitalist exploitation itself.

## SPECIAL OFFER

In this first volume of his three-volume study Tony Cliff traces Lenin's life from political obscurity to prominence as the leader of a mass working-class party. It shows him instilling into that organisation the insights gained from every contact no matter how fleeting—with workers. Above all it shows Lenin maturing as a practitioner of revolution in the pre-revolutionary period.

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**TONY CLIFF:  
LENIN**  
Volume 1: Building the Party



In Plessey, this democracy takes the form of an elected workers' council for all three factories. Delegates to the Council are elected department by department irrespective of skill, grades or union affiliation.

The workers' council acts as an executive in between mass



Henri di Nizchorreia

meetings, which decide all serious policy. In the Empresa plant, for example, there were three mass meetings last week alone.

The workers' council also publishes its own information bulletin to ensure all workers are informed of every detail of their work.

All correspondence with management and government officials is published in the bulletin and it functions as yet another way of forging a unity as tough as steel.

This amazing unity has been created in the course of many battles. Since the downfall of Caetano, Portuguese workers' organisations have secured major wage increases.

They have revolutionised working conditions so that far fewer workers are blinded, twisted and maimed by the work systems of the bosses.

They have moved into action against the demonstrations of the so-called silent majority, the fascists in a different guise. They have purged the political police spies and informers from the factories and led massive strikes and

## 'We are determined to hold onto our new world'

What is happening in Portugal now is of the utmost importance. Since 25 April we workers have had a chance to think and to organise. We are finding out things about ourselves we never knew before.

I am young, so I had a very short experience of fascism, and had no direct involvement in politics. Nevertheless, I remember very well the reaction of my friends in the cafe. I speak loudly by nature and they would always tell me to quieten down.

Immediately after the fall of Caetano, it was like a new world. Since then we have begun to speak to each other, to our workmates, to all workers. There are no barriers any more. It has been an amazing experience. So we are determined to hold on to and consolidate our new world.

—Fernanda Fortunato, delegate to Plessey workers' council for telecommunications production workers.



The graffiti reads: 'Now the regime is capitalism itself'

demonstrations against the provisional government's trade union law, which outlawed sympathetic and political strikes.

And now these organisations are being tried and tested on another front.

As the economy goes into recession and the political crisis continues to unfold, the multinationals are in the forefront of employers who hope to throw some workers on the scrapheap of unemployment and browbeat others with the threat of redundancy and short time working.

But as the employers change tack, so the workers' organisations take new initiatives which challenge the whole nature of a society, just like our own, where profit is god and property is king.

Plessey's have come up against this sort of fighting spirit in their plans to shut down matrix making

capacity in Portugal, a move which would immediately affect some 400 of Plessey's 4500 workers in the three Portuguese plants.

Mass meetings refused to accept any redundancies and sanctions were immediately imposed. These included denying British personnel access to the plants.

## Struggle

As a result British management conceded the principle of no redundancy. And then, just as negotiations were about to be resumed, the Plessey workers struck to show their determination.

The Plessey workers' struggle is only one of many. And it is not a separate struggle of one group of workers isolated from others.

The Plessey workers participate in an organisation called the Inter Empresa or joint factories com-

mittee. It meets fortnightly and is composed of delegates from 43 different factories in and around Lisbon. At these meetings class-wide issues are discussed.

It was to this committee that the workers of EFACEC-INEL lift makers, who are badly hit by the slump in the construction industry, addressed their call for a demonstration against unemployment.

The Inter Empresa endorsed their call and set up a sub-committee which worked day and night to organise the demonstration.

It won support at factory level and sent flying brigades to the community centres. It was acting in defiance of the law.

For the Civil Governor of Lisbon had banned all demonstrations for seven days while NATO sailors did some training and got

## Forging the first links

THE FIRST meeting of the newly expanded Plessey combine committee was of great value, Plessey Portugal workers' council convener Henri di Nizchorreia told a press conference in London last Sunday.

Comrade di Nizchorreia explained to the press conference, called by the London based Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee, that Plessey Portugal workers were determined to resist redundancies all the way.

He added: 'Our links with one another are so very important because management tries by all means to

divide workers, one against the other. They say one thing in Portugal about British workers and then say another in Britain about us. This co-operation enables us to exchange vital information and to prevent the management splitting us one from the other.'

Portuguese workers get no unemployment pay or social security when they are sacked. And the matrix workers Plessey were proposing to make redundant—while shifting their work to Malta—have had their eyesight damaged if not completely ruined by the work system imposed by Plessey.

A future issue of SW will report more fully on the Plessey workers' struggle.

some shore leave.

But the demonstration ahead, despite the spite increasing pro-lovers of bureaucracy, such as the Communist Party or Syndicale, the Political of the TUC.

Their interventionist demonstration did, considerable confusion became more tense. But the Inter's nerve.

On 7 February, people turned out Ministry of Labour the right to work.

## Troop

The marchers to say about NATO 'NATO out', the marching past Embassy.

Initially they were blocked by armoured their stewards appeared and after a pulled his troops.

The demonstration passing a mat Throughout com reigned, though the rear were quietly Internationale.

The demonstration the Ministry of massive meeting. mood that it infected men on duty outside their backs on the



# Arms in the clenched working class'



Assassin . . . filthy dog. The statue is of the dead fascist dictator Salazar. He built, like his statue, is decapitated and Portuguese workers threaten

stration went ban and des- sion from the promise and as the Com- the Inter- Portuguese equi-

on against the however, cause on as the pres- and more in- Empresa kept

up to 60,000 o march to the ar, demanding

had something O too. Crying y insisted on the American

and their route red cars. But roached a ser- exchange he side.

on moved on, unity home. plete silence se away at the wistling the

of ended at labour, with a Sach was the ed the police- e. They turned crowd, raised

**The political manoeuvring now going on . . . could give way to some more direct form of intervention by the NATO powers. When and if that happens the response . . . of British working class organisations will be of paramount importance.**

their arms in the clenched fist salute and shouted 'Long live the working class'.

This mood of resistance and determination never to be cheated again, has spread far outside the industrial areas. As the Sunday Times journalist Peter Pringle alone has reported, farmworkers in the Alentejo in the South who have been kicked around by the latifundists—the large landowners—for centuries, started taking over

large tracts of the vast estates.

It began in Beja—where 4000 men and 10,000 women are unemployed—quickly spread to Evora and even to outlying villages.

Tractor drivers, frustrated after years of not being allowed to plough fallow land, moved in and started work; others began turning the soil by hand to plant vegetables.

This picture of the poor and the downtrodden on the march as a class drives fear into the hearts of the Plesseys of this world.

They and their kind are moving against the Portuguese even now. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have already deprived Portugal of desperately needed loans and credit.

This form of economic warfare has also been adopted by several British banks, who have withdrawn credit to Portugal even as they are renewing it for the butchers of the Chilean Junta.

There could soon be other moves. The political manoeuvring going on via the visits of Messrs Callaghan, Soames and others could give way to some more direct form of intervention by the NATO powers.

When and if that happens, the response of the Plessey Sites Coordinating Committee and other British working class organisations will be of paramount importance.

They could well help to thwart the schemes of Westinghouse, Plessey and ITT.



A bidonville in Nanterre, France: immigrant workers are forced to live in this sort of squalor—and we're told they're to blame for the lack of houses

# Racism: A weapon for bosses the world over

By **NIGEL HARRIS**

IN WEST GERMANY, where more than a million workers are now jobless, the government has for some time been seeking to pin the blame for unemployment on the country's 2,500,000 immigrant workers. It banned new immigration 16 months ago—and then ordered firms to discriminate against foreign workers.

German-born workers had to be given first preference for jobs. Employers were encouraged to make immigrants redundant—and the authorities would then withdraw work and residence permits to expel them from the country. Immigrants were offered the miserable bribe of between £180 and £230 to get out for good.

Turkish, Yugoslav or Greek workers foolish enough to go home for Christmas were likely to return to find their services no longer needed.

Areas were designated where no more immigrants would be allowed. And now the government is seeking to limit the immigrant population in the cities to 12 per cent of the population.

It has revised child allowance provisions so that immigrants with children abroad will get an allowance 'appropriate' to the foreign standard of living and not, as previously, the German.

## Expelled

Finally, as in Britain, more and more hysterical attention is devoted to the most victimised of all, the 'illegal' immigrants.

The government has successfully pointed the finger at workers born abroad. About half a million of them have been expelled and the unemployment rate for Turkish and Greek workers has been pushed up to seven per cent, against four per cent for all workers.

The more foreign workers lack jobs, the louder the complaints that they are 'living off the social services'. A public opinion poll recently claimed that more than half of all Germans believed unemployment was so high because there were too many foreign workers in the country.

The picture is the same in every capitalist country.

In the United States—with seven and a half million workers without jobs—the government has suddenly discovered between six and 12 million 'illegal' immigrants, mainly Mexican and West Indian.

## Illegal

The police spent much time and trouble finding and arresting 800,000 of them last year. A bill was put to Congress to fine employers of 'illegal' workers, but the American farmers blocked it, arguing that without workers on their scandalous pay rates, food prices would soar.

Canada is supposedly the easiest country for foreign workers to enter because there are so many unfilled vacancies. But the first breeze of crisis has begun to change all this.

A recent report to the government argues that, with threatening unemployment, immigration should be tightly limited.

It is a very odd argument. There are 200,000 immigrants each year, but Alberta farmers say they need 100,000 new

workers; the construction industry employers say they need another 100,000 and the mine owners the same.

The report let the cat out of the bag. Immigrants were not the problem at all. As the MP for Toronto put it: 'The government is cutting back because we are being swamped by applications from non-white countries.'

In most cases, trade union leaders—who are supposed to defend workers—have hailed the attack on workers born abroad. The old trade union principle that the defeat of one group of workers—wherever they were born—will result ultimately in the defeat of all workers is conveniently scrapped.

## Disposable

Immigration stops when there is high unemployment, and many foreign-born workers move on in search of work. Unemployment is the result of employers sacking workers to save their profits, not of the number of workers looking for jobs.

When there is a boom, employers round the world are desperate for cheap labour. They prefer 'disposable' workers who can be thrown away when no longer needed—without having to pay unemployment benefit.

The high wages in Britain depend upon there being enough workers, so that sacking foreign-born workers will ultimately produce the sacking of the British-born.

The Swiss discovered this. Their National Campaign Against Foreign Infiltration of People and Homeland agitated to expel half the foreign-born in the country. They might have succeeded if Swiss workers had not come to see that their own jobs depended entirely on the foreign-born workers continuing to work. To have expelled them would have been suicidal.

Governments claim to be worried about unemployment. They are not. They are worried about profits. They need to divide workers to protect profits

in a slump. So they attack the foreign born.

They try to export their own unemployment to poorer countries where unemployment is even higher.

Meanwhile, the police have manhunts to capture a few half-starved workers arriving at Dover. 140 are held without trial in Pentonville Jail. Wives and children are kept in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, exiled from their husbands in Britain.

All this, so that the British government can also blame the foreign-born worker for the failures of British capitalism.

The arguments about 'immigration' on the shop floor are insidious. But they cannot be ignored. Militants have to be ruthless in smashing every attempt to divide workers, whether through pay rates, idle jokes or the casual remarks of racists.

It is also important that we support every attempt by black workers in this country to fight back, to build the unity of all workers in a common struggle against the one enemy, capitalism.

**March against the government's refusal to allow the families of Asian workers to join them in this country.**

Assemble Hyde Park, 12.30pm, Sunday 2 March for march to Downing Street

**Abolish Entry Permits Repeal the 1971 Immigration Act**

Indian Workers' Association coaches will be leaving from Glasgow, Bradford, Huddersfield, Derby, Nottingham, Leamington, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley and parts of London.

# LETTERS

## GREENE GROWS THE PROFITS, OH!

### Miners: The truth about our rise

IN YOUR article on the miners' pay offer (15 February) you should have mentioned what it will really mean for miners, in take-home pay. We in Dunfermline calculate that allowing for tax, the new superannuation scheme due to start in April, graduated national insurance, plus other deductions, the new take home rates will be about £5 for face workers, £2.50 for on cost (other underground workers), £1.50 for surface workers.

That's hardly a 30 per cent rise! What strikes me is the way we have been kept waiting this year. Negotiations should be completed by November so that if we have to take action to secure a decent increase we have the whole winter to do it in.

The National Coal Board knows this, the NUM Executive knows it, everyone knows it—so why the delay? It must be that the Executive along with their NCB pals don't want us to get a decent rise.

Incidentally, it is noticeable how none of the lefts on the Executive let us into the secret over this period.—MARK DOUGAL, Castlehill.

Send your letters to LETTERS, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2. Please try to keep them to not more than 250 words. Let us have your name and address but specify if you don't want your name published.

#### A good idea

I WAS PLEASED to read that the National Committee of the International Socialists voted in favour of issuing Socialist Worker supporters' cards. We sell 70 SWs in our factory and we feel confident that a minimum of 20 of these readers will take out the cards. This will certainly help our factory branch in bringing our supporters closer and also a much larger sense of identification.

We must make sure however that this doesn't become an obstacle to these supporters eventually becoming members of IS. Instead their role has to be one of strengthening the building of our factory and workplace branches.—AUEW member, Scotland.

HAVE YOU ever wondered what happens to trade union leaders when they retire? Many of them continue the class struggle in the House of Lords. Lord Greene, recently retired general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, is one of these.

His Lordship has never been one for half measures. Always willing to take the battle into the enemy's camp, he managed to combine his union position with being a governor of the Bank of England.

Now he has retired he's become a director of Rio Tinto Zinc. According to the Daily Mail RTZ's chairman Sir Val Duncan was impressed with his grasp of economic affairs.

Talking of economic affairs reminds one of the Social Contract. This is policed on the union side by the TUC's economic committee. The chairman until September is a retired union leader and company director...

Yes you've guessed it! It's his lordship again. Has anyone still got any illusions about what the social con-trick means?—DAVE LING, London N2.



Sidney—now Lord—Greene: carrying on the class struggle...

## THE QUESTIONS SW DOESN'T ASK POSTAL POINTS

WHY doesn't Socialist Worker ask or demand that readers send in questions about socialism, politics, the International Socialists etc, which could then be answered in a regular weekly column?

Anyone selling SW on the shop floor finds that he gets asked questions, often very fundamental questions, 'do socialists believe in a fair day's work for a fair day's wage?' Or, 'why is inflation so much higher than in the past, and why is this happening now?' It would be good for both SW and its readers to try and answer these.

Now we are selling Tony Cliff's book, The Crisis, the problem is even worse. For example, on page 16 Cliff says the amount of profit is increasing while the rate is declining. Why is the rate important? To begin

the series by asking questions arising out of the book would advertise and help sell it.

The present ill-named Controversy column rising out of Pete Marsden's series of articles makes the mistake of not asking for readers' questions with any enthusiasm. Surely it is necessary to clearly stress that SW wants readers' queries and questions about these articles; tell readers in large capital letters that we need them.

The main source, however, should be the factory branches. It is our members in these branches who get asked the questions and it is they who can supply a steady stream.

Again this will not happen without some effort. The idea will have to be explained and 'sold' to factory branches and branch secretaries will have to be encouraged and cajoled in to sending them in.

Finally we think that such a column would improve SW, making it more relevant to its readers, in that it would reflect the questions they are asking and would make SW more of a workers' paper.—MARTIN JONES, Dagenham.

#### Get it right!

THE ARTICLE on Ward and Goldstones of Manchester (22 February) had various discrepancies and the whole article was given the wrong slant.

The headline 'we fought together and we won!' was totally erroneous. It was not a joint fight initially, it was a unilateral action by the EETPU and then AUEW members followed suit. The person we took action over was a plumber not an electrician.

The gross pay is £45 for 37 hours, not take-home pay. This gives the impression that the basic rate is in the region of £50 a week. The home workers are not all pensioners, they are housewives and people who cannot follow full employment. The plumber who was sacked was sent his notice through the post. Management never consulted the stewards or officials.

We are trying to recruit members to the International Socialists and increase Socialist Worker sales, but mistakes enable factions to use our own paper against us.

We were trying to get over that it should be a joint fight with skilled, unskilled, male and female who should have taken strike action because 300 women have been made redundant. Not one union official from the District Offices has done anything about it.

I hope you accept this as fair comment and criticism and keep up the good work that Socialist Worker is doing.—GERRY DAVIDSON, (Shop Steward, EETPU), BRIAN JONES (former TGWU Shop Steward), Manchester.

IRRELEVANT... Whether there is an increase in the number of abortions or not is absolutely irrelevant to the central argument that women must have the right to choose for themselves without interference from the Church or State if they are to have children or not. We live in a society where the mass of women do not have that choice... The trade union and labour movement have been particularly confused and inadequate in relation to the question of abortion in the past... The Working Women's Charter Campaign is attempting to bring the issue into the trade unions by demanding that the labour movement brings its weight to bear on the so-called 'social' issues which affect working women just as much as pay and conditions. Brent Trades Council has made a step in the right direction by writing to local MPs, after an appeal by the Charter Group, protesting about James White's Bill; they have also supported the activity that the Charter Campaign is engaged in locally.—INGRID FALCONER, (on behalf of the Brent Working Women's Charter Group)

WHY THE CRISIS?... Your correspondent David Paenson (Controversy 15 February) seems to have little understanding of how capitalism works... The cause of recession is the gap between the total purchasing power of the masses and the total price of goods on the market—the gap caused by profit. The Labour leaders war cry is 'more investment' since they're soaked in Keynesian theory. The liberal economist Keynes argues that purchasing power could only be stepped up, and full employment maintained if capitalists invested more... But more investment means more productive capacity—even more goods are poured on the market and investment can't go up indefinitely. Capitalists don't build new factories one year and scrap them the next... Neither wage cuts or wage increases can solve all the problems, only socialism can do that... In the meantime workers must fight for wage increases to mitigate the crisis's effects and to get the bigger slice of the national cake they're entitled to.—J PARKE, Walsall.

LIES, DAMNED LIES AND... When, oh when, is the editor going to check his facts?... I have just read that 'Jack Evans voted against the Hackney teachers on the NUT EC.' I am afraid that Beth Stone must need glasses because this, again, was not true.—JACK EVANS, Bristol.

CIA... I was glad to see the article about the Central Intelligence Agency (16 February) but it merits a longer study. What got me was the information column. To say the CIA was ever 'little known' is a bit hard. It planned an invasion during the Korean War, was involved in every sort of trick in South America from 1947... It was the organisation that set up and ran the coup in Iran, South Vietnam and Guatemala... It's unsocialist to dismiss the most formidable anti-socialist force there is and it's somewhat unsocialist to dismiss it like that.—MIKE DIXON, London E7.

NO TO NATIONAL... Mary Pickergill asking for support for the National Theatre (8 February) confuses the issue. In the Association of Community Theatres we think that as trade unionists, we must defend the jobs of ALL fellow workers, including members of the National Theatre. As socialists, we must criticise the content and ideology of what the National Theatre's actors convey, and the audience they play for... How many redundancies do the enormous overheads of the National theatre BUILDING create, not only for the Arts Council's under-subsidised clients, like community theatre companies, but in the National Theatre company itself? To suggest that there can be such a thing as a 'National' Theatre is to follow the same ruling class logic that suggests there is such a thing as National Interest. There are two nations, and it is clear which the South Bank serves. Socialists should be demanding the setting up of mobile theatre companies, playing to working-class audiences, with relevant plays. The £3,000,000 the Arts Council is being asked to give the National Theatre, could run 100 such mobile companies on £30,000 each, reach much wider audiences and begin to solve Equity's 80 per cent unemployment problem.—BRUCE BIRCHALL, West London, Theatre Workshop.

ACE OR JOKER?... There are slanderous and unjustified attacks on the socialist world in Socialist Worker... As an honoured visitor to the USSR I can say that despite set-backs and mistakes, socialism is a proven and flourishing fact, a propaganda ace we can't afford to ignore.—GEORGE OWEN, Barnsley.

### Vote Yes - if you want a wage freeze

WHEN Michael Kidron writes (22 February) that the choice for British capitalism is to be a partner for European capitalism or a junior partner for US capitalism, he is right—in the long run.

In the short run the majority faction in British capitalism wants to stay in Europe. A massive 'No' vote will be a serious setback, though not a deathblow to them. A 'no' vote will

also be a setback for the rightward moving Labour government. As The Economist put it last week: 'In every discussion under Labour ministers these days it becomes more apparent that the referendum is the watershed that all of them are waiting for.'

'Only after then can the moderate men who back Mr Wilson in cabinet expect to assert their authority.' In plain English, a 'Yes' vote would make it that much easier to push through a wage-freeze.

If in trade union branches, trades councils, students unions etc the International Socialists argue against participation in the 'No' campaign, then we disqualify ourselves from demanding that any meetings that are held are on a class basis, not a nationalist basis.

The ranks of the 'No' campaign contain many scoundrels and nationalists; they also contain many militants who must talk and argue with. To abstain is to stay at home and not vote along with the dead, the drunk, the drugged and the demoralised.—IAN BIRCHALL, London

#### NO TO THE COMMON MARKET

Posters and leaflets available for local propaganda. Send orders to Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN. Leaflets—25p per 100, posters—75p per 100. Money with orders please.



The army: What will they do when they are really rattled?

# THE FACTS YOU NEED ABOUT 'OUR BOYS'

**NEIL DAVIES**

reviews the Troops Out Movement pamphlet *Alternative White Paper on Ireland* (15p, available in bulk from TOM, 103 Hammersmith Road, London W14, or IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4.

I'M NOT A GREAT theoretician on Irish politics. But I know something about the army, having served in it for four years. I've seen how it twists young workers' minds and turns them into nothing more than physical weapons to be directed against any movement which tries to overthrow British rule. That's why I'm opposed to the use of troops in any British colony.

But as this excellent and clear pamphlet shows, the troops in Ireland affect us in the Labour movement. The set up in Northern Ireland, with its carefully in-built religious conflict, was arranged for economic, not religious reasons.

The North was artificially hived off because it was profitable. A divided working class was encouraged with the Protestants getting just that little bit extra. But working class members of both religions are still suffering for the ills of the system.

The North affects us because it has been a training and testing ground for the Army, the secret police, the prison system and the torturers. I'm not being hysterical. If the army shot 13 people dead on an unarmed demonstration for civil rights in 1972, what will they do when they are seriously rattled?

Chile has shown what the 'free world' boils down to when the gloves are off, the freedom to do as they choose at the workers' expense, trade unionists shot, trade unions wiped out, living conditions destroyed.

Obviously we support the working class across the globe but Ireland is on our own back door. It is a place where we, as a class, can directly affect the course of events. It's about time we did so.

We fully support the work of the Troops Out Movement and aim especially at winning the support of organised trade unionists who, so far, have steered clear of the Irish Question. A basic part of that work is to explain the issues and the history of British domination of Ireland.

This pamphlet deserves to be sold in thousands. I think it's bloody great. I don't care if it's weak on this point or on that point, because it's strong on the arguments we need to know, on events we never hear about.

## Point

It's well laid out and simple and easy to read. This isn't just a review, it's an appeal that we, the working class, get off our arses about Ireland.

Just consider one point. The kids who were just entering secondary school in 1969 have now left school. They have grown up knowing nothing but the army, violence, bombs, shootings and internment.

Their development has been twisted more violently than just by slum conditions alone. They have left school to face inevitable unemployment, poverty and living conditions that would make your hair stand on end.

The cruel reality is that the British army is making sure they accept it ... or else.

## WHEN TO SWITCH ON

OPEN UNIVERSITY programmes have interesting stuff on RADIO 3's VHF transmissions and on BBC-2. On Saturday (Radio 3, 2.40pm) is RACIAL ATTITUDES IN BRITAIN, and at 5.45pm WHO WERE THE POOR IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY?, while at 12.40pm on Sunday on BBC-2 is BEING BLACK.

SUNDAY  
BBC-1: 10.5pm. OMNIBUS: CHARLIE CHAPLIN, a 'tribute' could be interesting but clashes with BBC-2's consistently good film series MURDER AT THE MOVIES at 10.5pm. Italy's Secret Police chief has been arrested on charges of plotting to set up a dictatorship. It underlines the relevance of tonight's late 1960s film, INVESTIGATION OF A CITIZEN ABOVE SUSPICION, about a fascist policeman put in charge of investigating a murder he committed.

MONDAY  
BBC-1: 10.10pm. CHURCHILL'S PEOPLE continues its odd fluctuations of writers with this weeks written by John Prebble who wrote an excellent book on the Battle of Culloden. THE WALLACE is on William Wallace's fight against the English. THE OUTING on BBC-2 at 7.45pm features the New Brancepeth Workmen's Club's annual trip for old people to the seaside.

TUESDAY  
BBC-1: 9.25pm. Richard West is a good journalist, author of Victory in Vietnam, looks at the reality of that war, and of THE WAR THAT NEVER ENDED, examining the people of Vietnam now the Americans send guns rather than men to their puppets in Saigon. On BBC-2 at 9pm is Charlie Chaplin's THE GREAT DICTATOR.

WEDNESDAY  
BBC-2: 9.35. Back to the War for THE EVACUEES, a 'semi-autobiographical' story of two small Jewish boys' unhappy evacuation to Blackpool. Same channel's ALLAH BROUGHT OIL AND TV examines TV in the Arab Oil states, at 8.10pm, with a 'religious slot' from Kuwait which requires the viewers to turn from their TV sets towards Mecca for three minutes. It's called the Miss World contest over here and lasts a bloody sight longer than three minutes ...

FRIDAY  
BBC-1: 8.30pm. PORRIDGE is that rare thing in comedy series, funny. Germaine Greer is on FACE YOUR IMAGE at 10.45pm.

# This is our day!

INTERNATIONAL Women's Year has so far brought us a dinner at Lancaster House for top women, Margaret Thatcher to power and a rather strange emblem resembling a deformed duck balancing a billiard ball on its back.

But International Women's Day, celebrated on 8 March since 1910, is a different sort of a celebration. It has always been a socialist, working class festival aimed not at confirming an elite of women but making ordinary mothers, housewives and women workers more conscious of the need to fight for a new society.

In the words of Alexandra Kollontai, 'It is a day of international solidarity and a day for reviewing the strength and the organisation of proletarian women'.

The first Women's Day was called by North American women socialists, who organised nationwide demonstrations and meetings in 1907 demanding political and electoral rights. This initiative was taken up by the Socialist Working Women's international conference organised by the Second International, which decided to choose one day every year in every country to demand suffrage for women, who along with the insane, were still not allowed to vote.

The demonstrations were not just about the vote but a defiant assertion of women's rights to be involved in politics.

Kollontai wrote: 'It turned out above all to be an excellent method of agitation amongst the less political of our proletarian sisters. They could not help but turn their attention to the meetings, demonstrations, posters, pamphlets and newspapers that were devoted to International Women's Day. Even the politically backward working woman thought to herself: "This is our day, the festival for working women" and she hurried off to the meetings and the demonstrations. After each International Women's Day, more women joined the socialist parties and the trade unions grew.'



In Russia the legal paper of the Bolsheviks, *Pravda*, and the Mensheviks' *Looch*, carried special articles, portraits of women leaders and messages from European men and women socialists. In 1913, Petrograd women workers organised a secret Teaching on the Women Question at the Kalashaikovsky Exchange, which was packed out. The police broke it up and arrested several women speakers, who were sent to prison.

But the Russian women held firm when many European socialists conveniently forgot about Women's Day during the First World War. In 1917, the wives of soldiers and workers in Petrograd, defying the Bolsheviks' orders, surged onto the streets on 8 March demanding Bread for Our Children and The Return of Our Husbands from the Trenches.

They were so angry and so determined, that the security forces just looked on in confusion. This demonstration, more than any other, set the

1917 revolution in progress.

In Russia, at least, far from pressing for equality with men, the women were in advance of them in defiance of Czarism.

THIS YEAR's London march will no longer wander through Oxford Street but is marching through a working class area,

The march assembles in St Mary's Church (Itchy Park) in Whitechapel High Street at 1.30pm on Saturday 8 March (nearest tube Aldgate East). It leaves at 2.30pm to march to Victoria Park for a meeting.

In the evening there will be an East London showing of the film *Blow for Blow* and a performance of the Red Ladder Mobile Workers' Theatre's play *Strike While the Iron is Hot*. Venue to be announced.

On Friday, 7 March *Womens Voice* is holding a fund-raising benefit for the paper at the Holborn Assembly Rooms, John's Mews, John Street near Grays Inn Road, 8-11.30pm.

‘We are surrounded by the world we have inherited from the dark and repressive past. The shackles of the family, of housework, of prostitution, still weigh heavily upon the working woman. Working women and peasant women can only rid themselves of this situation and achieve equality in life itself and not just in law if they put all their energies into making Soviet Russia a truly communist society.’

—Alexandra Kollontai, woman member of the Bolshevik Party at the time of the October Revolution.

## The price of his soul

ALAN PRICE has become quite a working class hero. His Jarrow Song, with that line about 'Burning London down', was one of those superficially socialist records like Part of the Union which makes a real success.

But what annoys me about this LP is that here is a local South Shields boy who has made considerable amounts of money in his time, actually moaning and weeping about people who, he says, are 'living on dreams and hoping on hopes.'

This is a real insult. I think those people, specially the ones who took part in the Jarrow march, learned their lesson.

### Jam jars

And the lesson is that to hope that the trade union leaders are ever going to bring your dreams to reality is as crazy as believing we will get socialism through parliament.

I also object to the sentimentality in lines such as 'When the money doesn't go far, we drink out of jam jars.' I lived on an estate in North Shields where, far from being an exception in hard times, it was normal practice to drink out of jam jars daily.

On a recent TV documentary about Price,

### STEVE WALDIE

reviews the new LP *Between Today and Yesterday* (Warner Bros., £2.70)

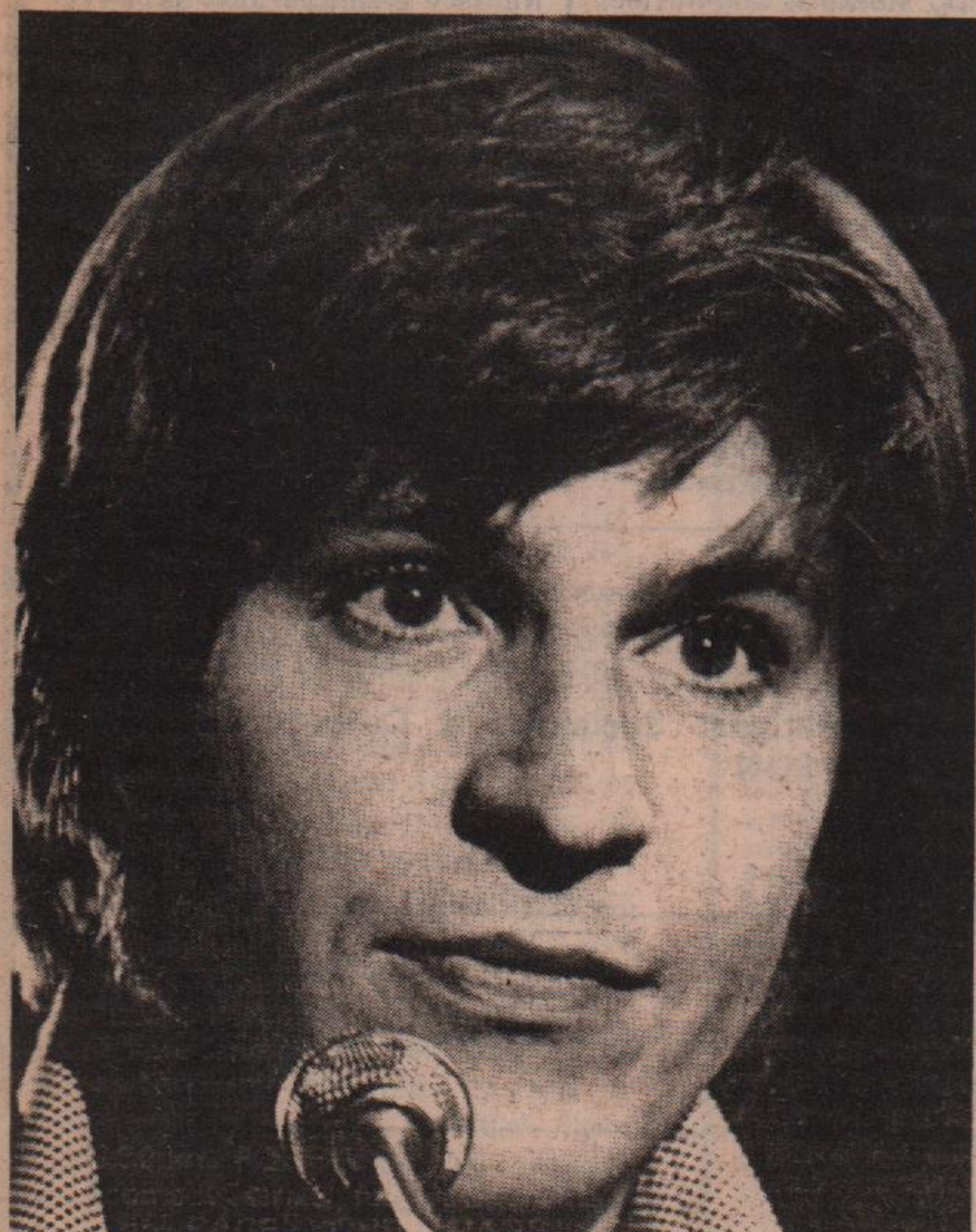
the headmaster of his school in Jarrow announced that he had obtained a good education as well as a lot of personality and he was therefore welcome back.

I wonder how many bricklayers or labourers have been asked back to give praise to their particular trade. Or maybe they didn't get a 'good education' and therefore have no personality?

Did I feel remorse that Price has to struggle to raise enough nerve to go into a posh London restaurant? Did I hell. Problems like that he will have to live with.

I remember some years ago seeing a Newcastle group called the Alan Price Rhythm and Blues Combo, later The Animals. It was a great group. While Eric Burdon often changed his shirt during performances, he wore the same old shirts each week.

Price, however, showed his new values talking about his six foot high heap of once worn, stinking pile of shirts. He may have made it to a world where his laundry is done and his bed is made but now his music stinks.



ALAN PRICE: Showing his new values...



## WHAT'S ON

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

### THE CRISIS—SOCIAL CONTRACT OR SOCIALISM Public meetings around the new book by Tony Cliff

**IPSWICH:** Friday 7 March, 8pm, Room 3, Town Hall. Speaker: Nigel Harris.

**ST ALBANS:** Tuesday 4 March, 8pm, Co-op Hall, Victoria Street. Speaker to be announced.

**LEEDS:** Thursday 13 March, 8pm, Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, off Chapeltown Road, Leeds 8. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

**TYNESIDE:** Thursday 13 March, 8pm, Bridge Hotel, Castle Square, Newcastle (end of High Level Bridge). Speaker: Duncan Hallas (editor, *International Socialism* journal).

**BRADFORD:** Thursday 13 March, 7.30pm, Star Hotel, Westgate (opposite Morrisons). Speakers: Chris Harman (political editor, *Socialist Worker*) and Frank Logan (Manchester AUEW).

### IS public meetings

**ESSEX UNIVERSITY IS public meeting:** The Permanent Arms Economy and the Crisis. Speaker: Mike Kidron. Wednesday 5 March, 1pm, Room LTB3, Essex University, Colchester.

**ABERDEEN IS public meeting:** The Common Market as a Socialist Europe? Speaker: John Deason (IS industrial dept). Wednesday 5 March, 8pm, 24 Adelphi, Aberdeen.

**ABERDEEN IS Students open meeting:** The Revolutionary Tradition in Britain. Speaker: John Deason (IS industrial dept). Wednesday 5 March, 2pm, Students Union, Aberdeen University.

**BRISTOL IS open educational meetings:** Every first and third Wednesday of the month, 8pm. The George Hotel, Newfoundland Street, Bristol. All welcome.

**CENTRAL MANCHESTER IS public meeting:** The Common Market—Why we say NO! Speaker: Laurie Flynn (Socialist Worker reporter and author of *Workers against the Law*). Friday 28 February, 7.30pm, Milton Hall, Deansgate (near Guardian office), Manchester.

**NEWHAM IS day school:** Can socialism work in Britain? Discussion introduced by Chris Harman (political editor, *Socialist Worker*). Saturday 1 March, 1.30pm, Railway Tavern, opposite Forest Gate station. All socialists welcome.

**National Organisation of IS Societies THIRD WORLD SCHOOL:** Saturday 1 March, The Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London WC1. 11am-1pm: The Crisis and Imperialism. 2-3.30pm: Discussion groups on South Asia, Southern Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. 3.30-4pm: Report back from groups. 4-5.30pm: Black workers in Britain. All welcome.

### Meetings for IS members

**IS TEACHERS London aggregate meeting:** Friday 28 February, 6pm, Earl Russell, Pancras Road, near Kings Cross.

**WEST YORKSHIRE IS district school:** Tony Cliff on The Bolshevik Party and Lessons for IS. Andreas Nagliati on Building IS into a revolutionary party. Saturday 8 March, 2-5.30pm, Central Library, Bradford. For all members of Bradford, Keithley, Huddersfield and Halifax IS branches.

**IS IRISH DAY SCHOOL:** Saturday 8 March, Room S101a, St Clements Building, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2. 11am-1pm: The situation in Ireland—Jimmy Greely on the truce, Paddy Prenderville on the arguments around the civil war. 2pm-5pm: Chris Harman on perspectives, mobilisation for the Troops Out demo and the Labour Conference. Each IS branch to send two delegates—accommodation being arranged. Entry by IS membership card only. Further details from Sue Baytell, phone 01-739 2639.

**IS DAY SCHOOL: The Economics of the Crisis.** Speakers: John Palmer on the Crisis, Peter Bain on Incomes Policy and Redundancies. Saturday 1 March, 2pm-6pm, Meeting room 2, Manchester University Students Union, Oxford Road, Manchester. For all IS members in the North. Phone 061-792 5780 for accommodation.

**MANCHESTER Follow-up School on the Communist Party:** How to argue at every level. Small group discussions. Sunday 9 March, 2.30pm, Socialist Worker Bookshop, Deansgate, Manchester. Organised by Central Manchester District IS. All comrades welcome. Creche provided—properly run.

**SOUTH WEST LONDON IS DISTRICT Aggregate:** This Saturday 1 March, 2pm. Student Union Common Room, Furze-down College, Welham Road, SW17. Speaker: Gordon Peters, NALGO. Apologies to district sec (673 6500). Social will be announced at aggregate.

### IS notices

**INNER WEST LONDON IS's first disco:** Saturday 8 March, 8pm, The Swan, Hammersmith Broadway (Hammersmith tube). Bar extension. Tickets 40p from branch secretaries.

**WEST YORKSHIRE IS district social:** All *Socialist Worker* readers welcome. Food, disco, bar extension. Saturday 8 March, starts 8pm, The Albion, Leeds Road, Bradford.

**ISSCIENCE GROUP:** Would all interested contact John Moner, 12 Barras Court, Heath Road, Coventry. Information, perspectives for the first meeting will be sent. The first meeting will be on Saturday 5 April in Coventry.

**OXFORD:** Monday 3 March, 7.30pm, Blackfriars, St Giles. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

**BRIGHTON:** Thursday 6 March, 8pm, The Stratford Arms, Preston Circus. Speaker: Chris Harman (political editor, *Socialist Worker*).

**MANSFIELD:** Tuesday 4 March, 7.30pm, Ye Olde Ramme, Church Street. Speaker: Jim Nichol (IS national secretary).

**CLAY CROSS:** Wednesday 5 March, 7.30pm, Gardeners Inn, Market Street. Speaker: Jim Nichol (IS national secretary).

**CHESTERFIELD:** Thursday 6 March, 7.30pm, County Hotel, Saltergate. Speaker: Jim Nichol (IS national secretary).

**LEICESTER:** Wednesday 5 March, 8pm, AUEW House, Vaughan Way. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

**WEST MANCHESTER IS public meeting:** Reform or Revolution? Chile and Portugal. Speakers from Chile and Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee. Friday 7 March, 7.30pm, Hulme Labour Club, Bonsall Street, Hulme.

**CAMBRIDGE IS public meeting:** The Workers' struggle in Portugal. Speaker: Joanna Rolfe. Monday 3 March, 8pm, The Duke of Argyle, Argyle Street.

**CENTRAL LONDON Workers' Branch IS public meeting:** The cuts in the social services and how to fight them. Speakers: Gordon Peters (NALGO), Dave Ling (NUPE) and Shaun Doherty (NUT). Thursday 6 March, 6.15pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road.

**SOUTH LONDON IS public meeting:** Unemployment in the building trade. Wednesday 5 March, 8pm, Durning Public Library, corner of Kennington Road and Kennington Lane, South London.

**DUNDEE IS public meeting:** The Fight against Lay-offs. Speaker: John Deason (IS industrial organiser). Tuesday 4 March, 7.30pm, Trades Council Hall, Allan Street, (off The Seagate), Dundee.

**DUNDEE UNIVERSITY IS Society:** The Common Market—why we say NO. Speaker: John Deason (IS industrial organiser). Thursday 6 March, 1pm, Dundee Union, Stage 1.

**GLENROTHES IS public meeting:** The Fight against lay-offs. Speaker: John Deason (IS industrial organiser). Thursday 6 March, 7.30pm, meeting place to be announced.

**CHELMSFORD IS Film night on Chile:** Chilean September and Chile: The Reckoning; two films shot just after the coup. Thursday 6 March, 8pm, Shire Hall.

**LONDON IS NALGO day school:** Building a shop stewards' organisation. Sunday 9 March, 10.30am, meeting place to be announced.

**DISTRICT IS Day Schools:** The Theory of Rank and File Movements/The Fight against Redundancies, Short time and Victimisation. **GLASGOW:** Saturday 8 March. **EDINBURGH:** Sunday 9 March. **DUNDEE:** Friday 7 March. **EAST LONDON:** Saturday 1 March. **COVENTRY:** Saturday 8 March. **NORTH WEST LONDON:** Saturday 1 March. Dates not yet fixed for Teesside, Newcastle, Yorkshire, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, the South West, East Anglia, North, West, South West and South East London, South Wales. Details from IS branch and district secretaries.

# When IS goes to work

MORE than 120 delegates attended the conference of workplace branches of the International Socialists in Manchester last Saturday.

The morning was about how to build independent rank and file organisations within the trade unions. John Deason, of the IS Industrial Department, said that though IS members would often be the most insistent in pushing for the creation of such bodies, their success depended on the involvement of large numbers of other workers and trade union bodies and we should avoid any temptation to treat them as somehow 'fronts' for IS.

Rank and file organisations had to have a life of their own, reflecting the needs of the class struggle. Within them IS members would of course argue for our ideas.

Delegates from branches in the engineering, car, textile and print industries, local government and teachers joined the discussion.

### Disputes

Dave Holdsworth, recently victimised at Intex, in Lancashire, pointed out that two different sorts of rank and file organisations were being built as workers reacted to the crisis. The first were combine committees, confined to particular firms and concerned chiefly with mutual help between the factory organisations within those firms. The second was the sort of committee formed around the Intex struggle, bringing together militants from many industries in an area around a single important struggle.

Peter Bain, of Chrysler Linwood, argued that the question of rank and file organisation beyond the single workplace was not yet thrown into prominence by all disputes. In the strike wave in Glasgow the strongest groups of workers had been able to win without such organisation. It was groups of workers who were waging defensive struggles and who were themselves weak that really needed rank and file organisation. It was needed so that the strong could aid the weak.

The afternoon was on building work-



## NEWS

place IS branches. Steve Jefferys, introducing the discussion, stressed the role that the workplace branches and groups played in preparing IS for the acute political changes that the crisis would inevitably bring.

Ian Morris, of London Heathrow Airport, underlined how the way revolutionaries act in a workplace differs from the way stewards who belong to reformist organisations such as the Communist and Labour Parties act. 'Our basic politics is involving the working class in struggle. This is the opposite of the approach of Communist Party stewards, who promise to do things for the workers by negotiating behind closed doors. Our emphasis has to be on building up organisation by getting workers to fight together, even if it is only over small issues,' he told the conference.

The same point was underlined by NALGO member Gordon Peters, who said the task of IS members was to build shop floor organisations, and not to fall into the trap of substituting for the activity of the rank and file, as many Communist Party militants had done.

Many of the 24 delegates stressed the key role of *Socialist Worker* in building factory organisation. A delegate from Heinz stressed that '*Socialist Worker* is our main weapon for attracting the middle ground within the factory.' A car accessory worker from Birmingham repeated the point: '*Socialist Worker* is our main inroad into the working class. Worker members must write for the paper.'

A busman said *Socialist Worker* supporters' cards would be useful to hold together those in his garage who agreed with *Socialist Worker* but would not yet join IS. Some delegates argued that such cards would be a hindrance rather than a help. Steve Jefferys, summing up, said there was no mechanical formula for every situation.

## Sixty Asians at meeting

SIXTY Asian mill workers attended an IS meeting in Oldham last week on the Struggle of black workers in Britain. Sheber Ahmed, a shop steward from the Intex factory, and Nigel Harris spoke at the meeting. After an enthusiastic meeting six people joined IS and many others put their names down to go to London for Sunday's demonstration against restrictions on immigrants' dependants.



## 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. 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 workplace, which can lead the working class to power, and for the building of a revolutionary socialist international.

## Socialist Worker NEWS

by Julian Goss (Steel Radiators, Monmouth)

WE'VE now been selling *Socialist Worker* in our factory for two years. I was a regular reader, and when I became a shop steward I took half-a-dozen papers instead of one a week, and introduced it to some of my mates.

At first I was worried about how they would react to an honest socialist newspaper, but I've always regarded *Socialist Worker* as the paper that agreed with me, and that's why I had to encourage them to read it.

The number employed at our place rose to 400, and paper sales rose to 50 at election time. Readers on other sections distributed the paper and found new readers, in spite of management's claim that it was 'illegal' to sell it. More people paid to read *Socialist Worker* than took a free copy of *Record*, the union paper!

A small group met regularly in a pub to discuss the politics of the paper, and the ways in which we could implement those politics to win improvements in wages, conditions and union organisation at work. To us the paper was a source of education.

The workforce is now about 300, and 25-30 papers are bought regularly. Many readers contribute small but regular sums of money to the Fighting Fund each week, because they know that the paper might well wither without it.

Our discussion group has started up again. The meetings are better attended, the people more dedicated, the talk more practical. After all, there's a crisis on!

## Send your delegates!

IT IS vital that every IS branch and district sends one or two delegates to the National Day School on Ireland on Saturday 8 March. The school will play an important part in the IS mobilisation for the Troops Out demonstration on 6 April and the trade union delegate conference on 24 May.

There will be two sessions: The Present situation in Ireland, with discussion on The Truce and The Dangers of Civil War; and in the afternoon Chris Harman will speak on IS Perspectives and Irish work in the Trade Union Movement.

After the school the job of delegates will be to organise further discussions and meetings in IS branches and districts, explaining the importance of our commitment to build massive trade union support for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and for the repeal of the repressive Anti-Terrorism Law.

Delegates to the school will be expected to pay £2 into a fares pool to reduce travel costs for out-of-London delegates. The school will be at the London School of Economics, (St Clements Building) Houghton Street, London, WC1, 11am-5pm.

THE IS Italian Group can provide speakers on Italy for IS branches, district and student society meetings. Contact Mike Balfour 06284-2671.

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 \_\_\_\_\_





# SPARKS ARE STILL FLYING

**GLASGOW:**The strike of council electricians moved into its sixth week with no sign of weakening.

At a meeting at Glasgow's Kingston Hall last Thursday 500 electricians from all over Scotland voted with only one against to continue the dispute.

The demonstration that followed was joined by about 200 plumbers from Glasgow District Works Department, electricians and plumbers from shipyards and factories on the Clyde, and a delegation from Newcastle's Eldon Square scaffolders. The demonstration was one of the most impressive mounted by EPTU members in years and indicated the widespread support for the sparks.

The sparks are demanding the continuation of a years-old procedure that gives them the same rate of pay as electricians working for private companies.

They heard committee members report on a lobby of Scottish EPTU executive councillor Bill Blairford. The Scottish MPs promised to ask ministers to push for an early settlement. But what effect will this have on Glasgow's Labour-controlled council, who have fought harder than most private employers to keep down council workers' wages? Glasgow sewage workers, who fought an isolated seven-week battle, and dustcart drivers at present on strike can testify to that.

## LITTLE HELP

The strikers have had little help from Labour group leader Dick Dynes, an ex-gas fitter and EPTU member, and James Cannell a city councillor and one of the top men on the National Joint Council for electrical contracting. Cannell, who has an election campaign running in Glasgow at the moment has a leaflet out that says he will 'fight for higher wages'. Who for? Certainly not his council employees.

With the general cut-back in council and government spending the council seems determined to cut costs particularly at the expense of their workers. Dynes has recently attacked Direct Works Section performance, no doubt as a prelude to cuts in work and a reduction in the labour force.

The Electricians Union has been less than helpful. From the start local officials have agreed that the lads have a cast-iron case, have attended meetings and promised support. But these are still only promises. Frank Chapple and the rest of the union executive have used a court action taken out by an Edinburgh spark as an excuse to withhold official support. The case could take up to two years to go through court. Bill Blairford has now promised to fight to get the executive to change its position.

Important as it undoubtedly is, official support is not the real strength of the strikers—this is their determination to stick together to make sure once and for all that councils will pay no less than private employers.

Whatever happens, links have been made that will not be broken. Before the dispute Scottish local authority sparks shop stewards had met once in eight years. Since the strike four meetings have been held and the stewards are determined that the meetings will continue.

Links are also being forged with striking council electricians in England and Wales. This is a real step forward.

These disputes show that far from being backward, council workers are prepared to stand up and fight to maintain and improve their wages and conditions. Other low-paid council workers should follow the sparks' example.

Donations and messages of support to Hugh Higgins, 2 Primrose St, Glasgow.



Glasgow Corporation electricians marching last week

Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

## ...and the action is country-wide

by D Jones

**Cardiff Council electrician**  
AS the strike by sparks working for local authorities goes on I feel the time has come for sparks to voice their opinions and show their disgust at the reluctance of the union, the EPTU, to make our strike official.

When Cardiff sparks decided to come out we were continuously side-tracked by union officials and by our shop convenor—who has since been replaced.

The area executive member, Bernard Clarke, spoke to us in a meeting. He did his best to divide the men and make them reverse their decision and go back to work. This man, a member of the executive council, even denied all knowledge of the strikes in Scotland and Leeds, which everyone knew were happening.

We are now in the third week of our strike. Management have instructed lorry drivers to go straight through picket lines with little regard for the pickets' safety. The result was one spark being carried down the road on the bonnet of a council vehicle. He was lucky to escape serious injury. The police have been brought in and one shop steward has been arrested for a trivial offence.

The strike has already begun to bite, with schools closing through lack of heating all over Cardiff.

Council sparks are getting take-home pay of £24. People will find it hard to believe we are on such a low wage, but there are no perks, no bonus scheme. We are demanding parity with JIB electricians. The local Labour councillors are also slack in helping us but even they

are puzzled by the union's position and the mysterious ways it operates.

We need your support to help our strike. The address of the strike committee is 12 Coburn Street, Cardiff.

LEEDS:—The local authority electricians are still solid in the fourth week of their strike. 150 electricians and 20 lift engineers are picketing the Civic Hall each dinner time to publicise their case. On Monday a demonstration was held through Leeds.

Leeds Council now say they support the electricians and are demanding that the National Joint Council be reconvened. The pressure is working in spite of the hostility of the local press.

Links have been formed with strikes Hull and Sheffield. On Friday delegates from Leeds were to meet in Manchester with delegates from Glasgow and South Wales to discuss joint action.

Financial help is needed in this dispute particularly from trade unionists in Yorkshire. Messages and donations to Dave Shillinglaw, 14 Kingsley Gardens, Outwood, near Wakefield.

DUNDEE: Council electricians have been on strike for five weeks, demanding the Scottish Joint Industries Board wage rate. The council is refusing to pay council sparks the same as private ones.

The union's response to this breach of contract has been to tell the men to

return to work. Delegates from Dundee lobbied the executive committee of the EPTU in London last week to demand the strike be made official.

The men are getting better support from fellow trade unionists in the town. There have been collections at all the major factories and a meeting of all corporation workers last Friday agreed that every man should pay £1 a week from his wages to the sparks strike fund.

But the strikers still need your support. Donations to John Reilly, 10b Ancrum Court, Dundee.

## Students ready for action

THROUGHOUT the country, this week, students have been mobilising for the NUS Week of Action in defence of their conditions, for higher and for less discriminating grants.

The cuts have hit academic standards—courses have been cut, staff-student ratios reduced, maximum class sizes raised and library facilities deteriorated. Meanwhile canteen prices and hall fees have risen by as much as 30 per cent.

Not only students are affected. Campus workers, manual, clerical and academic, are also hit by redundancies and 'natural wastage'.

Last term saw a magnificent fight against these cuts. In 140 colleges there were disputes involving thousands of students.

Friday's march must be big—a demonstration to the government and NUS executive of the students' willingness to fight: All International Socialist societies should attend, with banners. They should elect stewards and be ready to respond to the National Student Committee's instructions.

Tight discipline is essential because of possible police attempts to split, or ban the march.

Meanwhile at SURREY UNIVERSITY authorities have issued a seven day warning of summonses. Students there have been on rent strike since the beginning of term, over 400 have paid their rent into the union strike fund. They are protesting over a 25 per cent food and price rise.

The authorities have unsuccessfully tried similar tactics before. They're more

## Teachers are carpeted for protest

LIVERPOOL:—Twelve teachers face disciplinary action and possible expulsion from the NUT after protests at Liverpool NUT Association about lack of democracy in the meetings.

At three meetings in succession the chairman refused to allow the suspending standing orders to be put to the meeting, even though the necessary number of signatures had been obtained each time. At a fourth meeting in November the chairman again refused to suspend standing orders on the grounds that the motion was not an emergency.

The motion was on the then vital issue of the Scottish teachers strike and a one-day official strike in Liverpool by Halewood Grange School against the Houghton recommendations. The strike was that very day. The motions would all have been out of date by the next meeting.

Half the meeting rose spontaneously to challenge the chair in an effort to restore democracy to the meeting. The chairman abandoned the meeting and took down names.

Now 12 NUT members face possible expulsion from the union. This is not an isolated incident. Of the past five emergency meetings called with the correct number of signatures, four have not been held, because of manoeuvring.

Trade union branches especially NUT branches, are asked to send motions of condemnation to the secretary of Liverpool LTA, through Rob Pooley, Liverpool 12 Defence Committee, 160 North Hill Street, Liverpool 8.

## 14 STRIKE AT SLAUGHTERHOUSE

NORWICH:—Fourteen slaughtermen at Pointers Abattoir, members of the Transport and General Workers Union, struck on Monday. They've been union members for six weeks and were striking against the sacking of their shop steward, Roy Box, and for union recognition.

The employer refuses to speak to the men or the union official. TGWU drivers are supporting the strike, and observing the picket line but the boss has his own non-union lorries.

Production has been cut by two-thirds but non-union workers are still getting through. The strike is official and the TGWU district officer is trying to arrange blacking of Pointers' meat at London's Smithfield market. This, plus effective picketing, could mean victory.

Donations to Ray Box, 1 Speke St, Norwich.

## TYRE STEWARDS DO MANAGEMENT'S JOB

DUMFRIES:—Sixty-eight Uniroyal workers employed as fitters, builders and electricians, have been on unofficial strike for the past three weeks to gain parity with production workers. The 68 are in the Electricians union, the Engineering union and the building workers union, UCATT.

Uniroyal management have offered the national minimum hourly rate of £1.23. Members working with outside contractors being paid 70p per hour more than the Uniroyal strikers.

The strikers are receiving no support from the 950 General and Municipal Workers union members at the factory. The GMWU shop stewards are actually handing out anti-strike letters produced by management and signed by the personnel manager. Lorry drivers are being actively encouraged to cross the picket line.

Messages of support and donations are urgently needed in this struggle. Write to Bob Shaw, EPTU, 190 Lochside Road, Dumfries, Scotland.

## SOAPWORKERS ACTION CLEANS UP

MANCHESTER:—Cussons Soap has until recently been able to maintain the old 'Family Business' philosophy of paternalism. They have succeeded in complying strictly with the terms of that outdated, restrictive machinery under the title of the Soap, Candle and Edible Fats National Joint Council.

After years of attempts to obtain effective trade union-organisation a breakthrough was achieved when a substantial number of employees took industrial action in support of a wage claim on Monday, 10 February—the claim having been initially rejected.

Despite the fact that it was not 100 per cent supported, and the Transport

union could not declare it as an official dispute, it was nevertheless completely successful.

After a lengthy meeting with management on Thursday, 13 February an agreement was reached which provides for immediate increases of £3.50 on all adult rates with consolidation of the £4.40 threshold payments on 7 April. Further improvements were included which will provide for a guarantee of a minimum of £2 on all rates from June and equal shift allowances with the skilled grades.

The agreement will apply to all Cussons' Limited Lancashire production areas and the sister company Gerard's Limited of Nottingham.

## Classified

Entries for the Classified column 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 Works, Corbridge Crescent, London, E2 9DS. Adverts that arrive without payment will be charged at double the rate.

**NORTH LONDON Troops Out Movement** public meeting: 7.45pm, Tuesday 4 March, Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road, N7 (Finsbury Park tube). Film 'IRELAND BEHIND THE WIRE'. Speaker: Mike Knowles, Sec. Hackney Trades Council.

**SOUTH LONDON Chile Solidarity Committee** regret to announce that the teaching and concert on March 1 and 2 have had to be postponed until May. Further details to be announced.

**HOMELESS comrade** requires room in London. Phone 986 8485, ask for Jim or leave message.

Demonstrate against the British and Iranian military occupation of Oman. 2pm, Horse Guards Parade, near Trafalgar Square, Sunday 9 March. End the Labour government's collaboration in this brutal war.

**INVESTMENT** in Ireland and who profits from it? A study of the Industrial Development Authority and multinational corporations in the North and South. If you have information or would like to help in a working group, write to Dave Tague, Hot News, 9 Sutherland Avenue, London, W9.

**LEAGUE for Socialist Action** public meeting. Tony Roberts on Socialists and the tasks ahead. Friday 7 March, 8pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London (Warren Street tube). New pamphlet just off the press: League for Socialist Action—what we stand for. Price 10p and post from 103 Glencairn Road, London SW16.

**PUERTO RICO: Demand Unconditional Amnesty** for the five Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners held in US jails for over 20 years. Support picket Saturday 1 March, 11am to 1pm, US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London W1. Called by Caribbean Peoples' Solidarity Campaign (272 0594). Committee for Puerto Rican Independence (402 6894) and supported by the Free Desmond Trotter Campaign.

**PUERTO RICO: Colony of the United States.** Speaker from Puerto Rico... Slides... 'Young Lords' film. Sunday 2 March, 3.30pm, Oval House, Harleyford Street, Brixton (across from Oval Cricket Ground, Oval Tube station. Buses 36, 133, 95, 109 and 3.)

**PUERTO RICO: Colony of the US:** Slides and speaker from Puerto Rico. Monday 3 March, 7.30pm, St Clements Building, room S075, London School of Economics, Clare Market, off Kingsway, London WC1. (Holborn tube).

**PICKET** to get charges dropped against 14 pacifists who are being done under the Incident to Disaffection Act. Monday 3 March from 10am onwards, outside Lambeth Magistrates Court, South London.

**MANCHESTER Rank and File Teachers Disco** plus light show. Friday 28 February, 8pm, UMIST Students Union, off Sackville Street, Manchester. Bar extension applied for. Everyone welcome.

**ONE OR TWO COMRADES** urgently needed for flat in Seven Sisters, North London. Phone Wendy 985 4637 daytime.

**RADICAL ALTERNATIVES TO PRISON:** General meeting on Sunday 2 March, 3pm, New Horizons, 1 Macklin Street, London, WC2. Speaking will be Maureen Kane on recent trends in police organisation.

**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.

**COMRADE** seeks room in house or flat in North London (Telephone 452-1958 evenings).

**DRUMMER** required for Cheap and Nasty —IS Rock Band. Contact Jeff Wells 607 6767.

**JOHN AND MARGARET LLYWARCH** invite you to enjoy a North Wales farmhouse holiday. Clean air, mountain streams, country rambles, fishing, wildlife galore, barbecues. A children's paradise and only two miles from a main line railway station. For terms ring 069-186 2272 or write to Bryn Iddon, Bron y Garth, Oswestry, Salop.

## Ford put 11,000 on short time

by Gareth Williams  
AUEW shop steward, Body Plant, Dagenham.

'IN 30 years I have never felt so uncertain and troubled about the future of my company.' The words come from Henry Ford Junior, boss of the Ford empire. The reality hit 11,000 workers at the company's Dagenham, Southampton and Halewood plants last week. They are to go on alternating three and four-day weeks from Monday.

There was no prior consultation with the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee, and the first many of the 11,000 heard of it was on the TV news.

Under the terms of Ford's lay-off scheme the laid-off production workers are supposed to get 80 per cent of their hourly basic rates. At Dagenham, there is widespread feeling that short-time working won't be too bad—with lay-off pay.

But Fords seem to be trying to provoke a dispute with the maintenance men to avoid paying out the lay-off money. The men are being asked to work on a three instead of a five-shift basis. They are refusing.

There are attempts in the PTA plant to link this with a breakaway Joint Works Committee for skilled men. This will simply divide us and play into management's hands.

The lay-offs are the thin edge of the wedge. Redundancies are clearly in the pipeline. Already the company is applying pressure to get rid of men. Short-time working is designed to wear down resistance to future unemployment.

To these challenges the NJNC's reaction has been completely inadequate. Bill Cleary, secretary of the trade union side of the NJNC, said that an approach should be made to the company for a generous scheme for voluntary redundancies!

The future for Ford workers will be decided not by appeals to the company or to the government, but by strengthening and co-ordinating shop floor organisation.



**Dagenham meeting for Ford workers:** The Crisis hits Fords. Speaker: Tony Cliff. Tuesday 4 March, 5.15pm. Fred's Cafe (up from Princess Bowling Alley).

## LEYLAND: CALL FOR WORKERS' PAPER

**BRITISH LEYLAND:**—The shop stewards committee at Tractors and Transmissions in Drew Lane, Birmingham, have called for the setting up of a paper for British Leyland workers. A letter from the convenor, Arthur Harper, has been sent to shop stewards' committees and trade union branches.

The letter says: 'It should not be left up to the management rag Leyland Mirror to tell British Leyland workers what is happening in other plants. We need a paper which gives an exchange of information—regular reports, information such as wages and conditions—in order to provide real liaison between plants.' There is a meeting this Saturday 1 March in Birmingham to get such a paper under way.

Standard Triumph's Speke plants have been told by management they are to work a four-day week next month. The new TR7 will also be on short time if the number of TR7 car bodies lying around the plant reaches a certain number. More than 1000 car bodies are stored at the moment.

## Coventry: Sackings and lay-offs

**COVENTRY:**—Of a total population of 300,000, 8000 workers are now registered as unemployed. Official estimates reckon about 16,000 are on short time, but the powerful Coventry Engineering Employers Federation calculate the figure to be well over 20,000.

The list of firms on short time, grows daily. Morris Engines have been on short time since before Christmas, Chrysler Ryton is working only two days and management are having a field-day trying to re-deploy labour inside the factory. Whole sections in Chrysler Stoke are laid off or on short time for different periods.

At the Chrysler Design Plant in Whitley the management are hanging out for 20 per cent voluntary redundancy. In Jaguar the sudden announcement of 1000 redundancies last week brought immediate

# CARWORKERS' STEWARDS START THE FIGHT BACK

**SHOP STEWARDS** at Chrysler Linwood have called for a national meeting of car industry shop stewards to discuss plans to deal with the crisis in the industry. On Tuesday the Linwood joint shop stewards committee issued a call to all other shop stewards committees to send delegates to a meeting to be convened as soon as possible to organise joint action.

On Friday Transport and Engineering Unions' shop stewards were to travel to Liverpool and Birmingham to meet convenors there to win agreement for the meeting and to arrange details.

Every combine and nearly every plant in the industry is either on short time or threatened with it soon. The meeting is the most hopeful sign yet that the strength of shop floor organisation in the industry

can be brought to bear on employers and government to fight for a decent standard of living and protect the jobs of all carworkers.

The meeting will need to discuss plans to enforce throughout the industry:

- No redundancies and no concessions on working conditions.
- Five days work or five days pay.
- Immediate factory occupations as the reply to redundancies.
- Nationalisation of the entire motor industry, without compensation, as the only way to safeguard jobs.
- Shop stewards' control over manning, track speeds and working conditions.
- International links with carworkers in other countries.

## ...and here's a strike they could win



Some of the 18 women picketing Progressive Metals, Port Glasgow. PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)

'WE'RE not going to leave this road until we win. It's not just our fight, it's about time the other women in engineering realised that this could happen all over the place.' That's how determined the women strikers at Progressive Metals in Port Glasgow are. The 18 women AUEW members have been out for 15 weeks now, and they are quite prepared to stay there another 15 if that is what it takes to win.

It shouldn't, because their factory makes almost nothing but small components for Chrysler's plants in Linwood and Coventry. If the goods were blacked Progressive could grind to a halt. But the recession in the car industry has put Chrysler on short time, and the stewards

seemed reluctant to help.

The short time also means Progressive are not under pressure to fulfil their orders. But they have taken on scabs, and are doing their best to keep up production, even though the only workers with any experience in spot welding and working with acids are the ones standing in the road outside.

The women have withstood the worst of the winter. The men from the shipyards helped by bringing up pallets for a shelter, and the miners supply coal, but this and the occasional few supporters on the picket line is not enough to win the strike. The women have the determination, but not the power, to win on their own.

'We need 400 to stand here and frighten them. I sympathise with the men and women on short time, but we're dependent on them,' said Betty McCann, the convenor.

The winning of this strike is important, not just because of the jobs involved but because it gives the lie to the myth that women can't possibly be militant.

Like Eleanor Murphy, who has worked for 26 years, with a break for marriage in the middle, and never thought the day would come when she would have to go on strike.

The women at Progressive Metals know how to fight, and given the help, they know how to win.

## VAUXHALL: 2000 MUST GO

**MERSEYSIDE:**—At Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant, management have demanded 2000 voluntary redundancies, from a total workforce of 9000. In return management will restore five day working to the plant.

At the Vauxhall joint negotiating committee, union representatives suggested instead that the workforce give up their pay rise of up to £8 and there be a reduction to a 35 hour week without any reduction in pay. The company has rejected this, saying that even with the 2000 redundancies there will have to be 40 hour working.

At Luton there is no short time, and a few sections are actually working overtime. Early retirement is being offered to 300 skilled men. A co-ordinated policy is needed between stewards in the two plants.

## US: Rank and file moves grow

from Douglas Wolfe in Detroit, USA.

TEN THOUSAND car workers came to Washington last week for a union sponsored rally against the mass unemployment in the industry, more than 300,000, a quarter of the industry's workforce, are unemployed—most since early December.

The rally was a long-awaited sign that something was going to be done to stop the big auto bosses having it all their own way. But it is still only a sign. The leadership of the United Auto Workers called the rally only because of rank and file pressure, and once they got people there they used it as a platform to push the Democratic Party in Congress as the solution to the problems.

The sight of millionaire Senator Kennedy getting a standing ovation from 'out-of-work' union members was revolting.

The American working class is facing its biggest challenge since the Great Depression. Yet the UAW bureaucrats are about to lead them to the slaughter. It is a point of pride for them never to attack the employers and their right to large profits.

### Rally

But at shop floor level the rank and file organisation is growing, both in the plants and among unemployed members in the union branches. The turnout for the Washington rally was almost totally due to the work of the rank and file committees.

Many workers travelled thousands of miles to take part in the rally and to lay the foundation for a real fight around the rank and file opposition programme. Although most unemployed car workers will still be getting 95 per cent of their usual wage for a few months yet, there is already the beginnings of a movement which could defeat both the bosses and their tame union leaders.

Such a movement will, by its example, affect workers in every other industry. Unemployment is at almost ten million already—one in every nine workers is laid off.

There is nothing in the history of the American labour movement to suggest that workers will accept this lying down. In the 1930s the battle against unemployment involved continuous street fighting in major cities for several days and factory occupations. It created a new trade union movement of millions in the mass-production industries.

The American working class lacks the long trade union traditions and shop floor militancy of its British counterpart. But when it moves, it moves harder and faster.

## ULTIMATUM TO CHRYSLER

by Peter Bain  
TGWU shop steward

**CHRYSLER LINWOOD:** 6500 manual workers at Chrysler's Linwood plant voted overwhelmingly last Wednesday to refuse to accept any further reductions in vehicle production unless everyone is put back on a five-day week or the company agrees to continue paying lay-off pay. Lay-off pay for most workers ends this week.

Management have already told senior stewards that from the beginning of March they intend to cut production from 45 to 33 cars an hour. Most of the workforce have been laid off for ten days, until next Wednesday. So in effect we are in a confrontation situation as soon as we start back.

After the last meeting the management went on the rampage, provoking section after section in the most blatant manner with the aim of getting us out the door without lay-off pay or unemployment payment before the ten-day lay-off. To prevent this happening the workers tolerated conditions that would be otherwise unacceptable—but we have no intention of standing idly by when we get back.

Despite assurances from senior Chrysler UK executives that they intend to remain in Britain, the vast majority of Linwood workers believe that the company want to pull out.

Chrysler are not here to make cars, they're here to make profits.

Despite the recession, car sales in Britain will probably reach a million in 1975. We have to make sure that the government's priority in that situation is our jobs and not Chrysler's profits.

### Politics

The list includes Carbodies, Cov Rad, manual workers at Automotive Products in Leamington, Stirling Metals, Art Castings, Interlock and Abbey Panels—all component firms.

Throughout all of this, the official union machine has made no response. The AUEW district committee still has its head buried in the sand of toolroom politics. The TGWU district has had little or no discussion that means anything. This is a

marked contrast to the reaction to the Tory three-day week a year ago, when the officials gave at least a verbal commitment to five days' work for five days' pay, when the situation was actually discussed—but now, under the Social Contract, nothing.

The immediate task is obviously to develop a strenuous opposition to short time and redundancy on the shop floor, by outright opposition and by working out tactics to control production speeds, manning levels etc, and by the use of sit-in strikes and the call for nationalisation to defend jobs and wages. But the official union machine can't be ignored. It is now more important than ever before that pressure is put on the officials to call shop stewards' aggregates in the different unions and through the Confed and the trades council.

# AUEW

# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# EXPENSES SCANDAL

by Jimmy McCallum

**JOHN BYRNE**, AUEW national committee member and close associate of leading AUEW right-winger John Boyd, has been chucked out as a shop steward by the members in the Rolls-Royce East Kilbride development department who elected him.

His own union branch, Wishaw Number Three, is demanding an immediate executive council investigation into certain aspects of Byrne's behaviour during the recent Rolls-Royce strike.

These remarkable developments in the heart of the territory where the Boyd machine operates and where Byrne is district

## Leading right-winger is suspended by workmates

committee president follow important revelations about Byrne's expense account claims on the union for attending the union's final appeal court and national committee meetings last year.

For attending the final appeal court as a delegate from 16 to 30 October and for three days at the national committee from 5 November, Byrne claimed and was paid a total of

£365 in expenses. £170 of this was for lost wages.

There is one massive irregularity in the claim. While he claimed and was paid £170 in lost wages, Byrne was not losing wages. For from 16 October until 18 November 1974 Rolls-Royce, where Byrne works as a fitter, was on strike. He therefore suffered no loss of earnings whatsoever by attending the final

appeals court and national committee, duties for which in any case his fares were paid and for which he was entitled to, and obtained a £7 a day expenses.

The truly disgraceful thing about this operation which is in clear breach of Rule 19 is that Byrne said not a word and hung on to the whole sum. Not a penny went into the strike fund, though his fellow members and workmates were out on strike without a penny. Byrne simply pocketed the lot. He is now pocketing the £9.20-a-week rise which the strike achieved.

It is this which has particularly enraged workers in Byrne's shop and union branch. They are looking for tough action against him from the executive.

They remember with particular disgust that this man, in tune with the rest of the right wing, mouthed slogans about 'the serious financial plight of the union'. They remember too that Byrne was the man who fell over himself to help the police put two fellow AUEW members behind bars for their involvement in foolish and reactionary schemes to rig ballots.

### EXPOSE

Byrne even went on the TV programme This Week to parade his supposed virtues. But then his co-workers hardly expect This Week to return and tell the other side of the story.

This is the second article Socialist Worker has run recently designed to expose the nature of the right wing in the AUEW. Last week we revealed that millionaire printing employer Robert Maxwell was secretly financing irregular election leaflets for Luton and Herts assistant divisional organiser Jack Whyman, another close associate of John Boyd.

We feel that it would be less than honest to refrain from drawing the conclusions. We therefore urge our readers to support to the full the Broad Left candidates in the second ballot. They are: R W Wright for general secretary, K Brett for assistant general secretary, J Foster, B Panter, R Walmsley and L Smith for national organisers.

## Register these depots, say dockers

**LONDON:**—Dockers fighting to get the docks work that has been spirited away to unregistered cold stores and container depots back on the register are fighting a growing threat to jobs.

In the Port of London two of the three major employers, T Wallis and Scruttons, have moved to get rid of dockers. Scruttons recently applied to return 180 men to the unregistered pool. They were granted permission to return 100, though as yet they have taken no action.

At Wallis 130 dockers—a quarter of the labour force—are threatened. A meeting agreed that if one single docker was returned to the unattached pool, the dockers would close the company down completely and black every ship they had handled in the past three years.

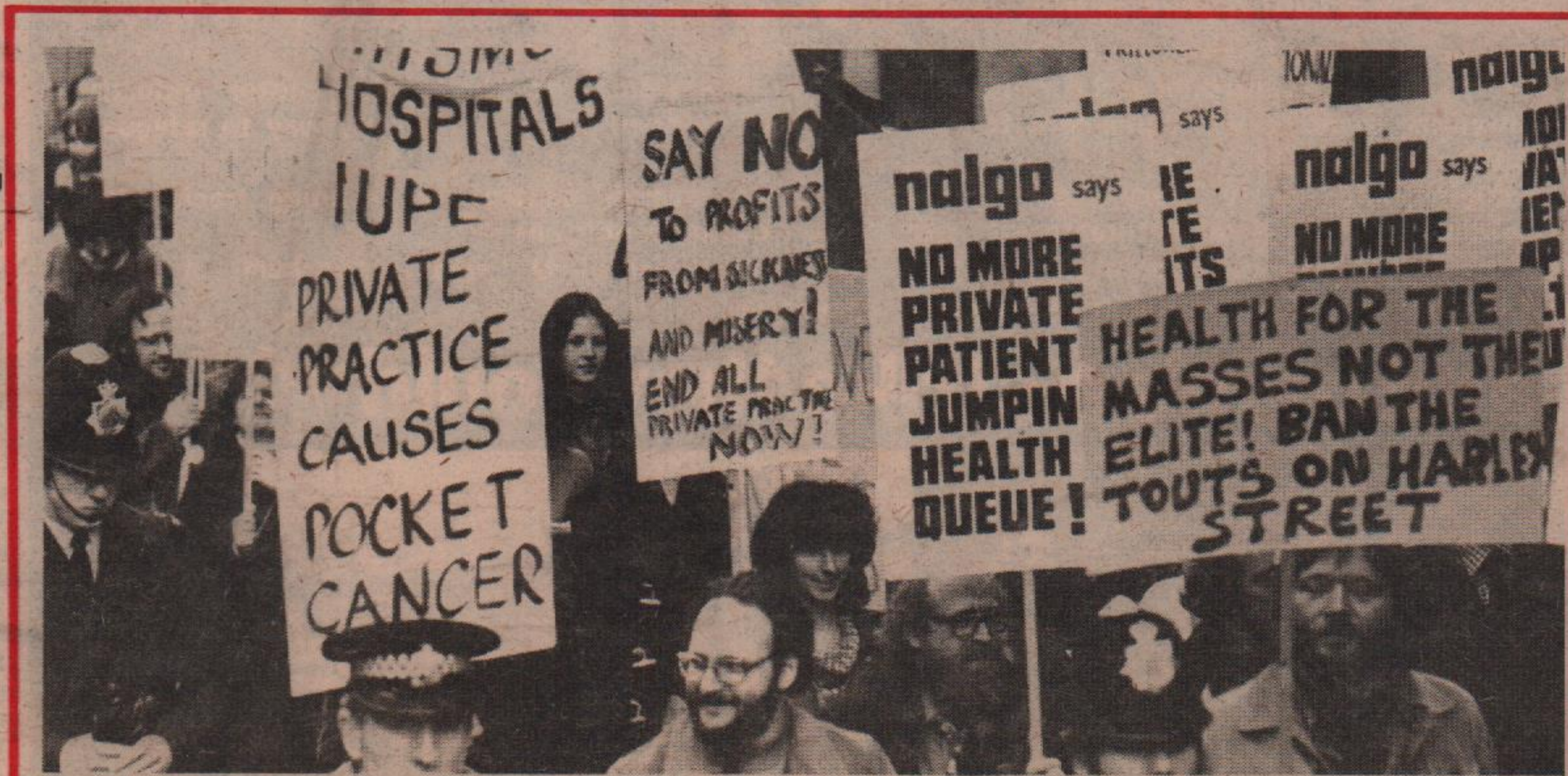
Phoenix Timber is threatened with closure too.

At Innstones Wharf the men have replied to a closure threat by refusing to discuss the terminal payments that would allow the boss to buy out their jobs. The 22 men are currently on strike and are getting cargo blacked.

At Tilbury the port is virtually paralysed with dockers blacking lorries and picketing unregistered depots in co-operation with the Port of London dockers. Sadly Transport Union lorry drivers are again counter-picketing on the grounds that the dockers are threatening their work.

This is untrue. The dockers are seeking to maintain the registration scheme and their traditional work against the scheming of the employers. The employers are only too anxious to escape from the provisions of registration which prevent them from throwing workers on to the scrapheap.

Jack Jones, TGWU general secretary, is playing his usual reactionary role. He has called on the Conciliation and Arbitration Service to arbitrate and is trying to revive the Jones-Aldington fraud to sort out problems fostered by years of pussy-footing by the TGWU.



Some of the 120 health workers and doctors who picketed the Royal College of Surgeons in London on Saturday in protest against the consultants' work-to-rule and to demand the abolition of all private medicine in Britain.

Picture: Mike Sheridan (IFL)

## Officials attacks scaffolders

**TYNESIDE:**—The Regional officer of the TGWU, A D Shenton, has sent a confidential circular to his union members about the scaffolders' strike in Newcastle. He says: 'I have to advise that all branches of the union should not be misled by the publicity and action of the people presently engaged in the unofficial dispute, and should under no circumstances provide assistance either direct or financial to the members involved.'

There has been since the dispute commenced a history of intimidation and violence... the union can under no circumstances tolerate this form of action and it must not be supported in any way whatsoever by the branches of the union.'

This circular is a dangerous misrepresentation of a crucial dispute for trade unionism both in the building industry and in the Newcastle area.

Scaffolders at the Eldon Square site have been on strike for 14 weeks against the sacking of 14 men by McAlpines.

Scaffolders from all over Newcastle have come out in sympathy. McAlpines have brought in scab labour from London, from a firm called Foremost Scaffolding.

This dispute is about the rights of building workers to organise and against one of the worst employers in the building industry. Support has come from all over Britain. In London the Royal Group of Docks shop stewards committee has sent a donation and blacked all Godfrey Davis hire vehicles, as McAlpines have used these to ferry scabs into the Newcastle site.

At C A Parsons, a Newcastle factory, the management brought in scab scaffolders to do the work of others who struck in support of the Eldon Square workers. Electricians and millwrights successfully forced the management to remove the scabs.

Ten scaffolders face charges of assault and possessing offensive weapons after incidents on the picket line provoked by police. A mass picket is being arranged outside the magistrates court on March 10 for the next hearing. Delegations from all over the North East are expected, including one from Hull docks.

More help is needed. Support should be raised at every union branch, particularly TGWU and UCATT. TGWU members should fight for Shenton to be

censured and call for the union executive to make the dispute official. Messages of support and donations to: Brian Alderson, 13 Banburgh Towers, Killingworth, Newcastle 12.

### HELP US FIGHT NATIONAL FRONT

THE National Front have launched a major campaign in Preston aimed at driving Socialist Worker and other left-wing papers off the streets, to leave them clear for their own fascist propaganda.

Last Saturday a force of about 25 Front members, drafted in from as far as Manchester and led by Kingsley Reid, their national chairman, threatened and assaulted members of the International Socialists and the IMG.



The East Lancs District of IS have called for a demonstration in Preston this Saturday demanding 'Fascists out of Preston'. It is essential that all readers of Socialist Worker, socialists and trade unionists in the area support this demonstration... The demonstration starts at 2.30pm, from the carpark, St Peters Square, Plungington Road, Preston.

## NEWSMEN WALK OUT

**MANCHESTER:**—103 journalists on the Manchester Evening News are on strike. They are seeking the continuation of a threshold agreement.

There should be 105 strikers, but two journalists are scabbing on the strike. They are executive editor William Pepper and managing editor Douglas Emett, who are working with editor Brian Redhead in producing the paper.

'Without those two management wouldn't have got the paper out—and they'd have settled the dispute,' said a spokesman for the strikers. 'We've passed a motion saying that we will accept neither copy or instructions from them for two months after the end of the strike.'

Meanwhile at Educational Audio

Visual in NORTH LONDON, the journalists' occupation was continuing on Tuesday. With the dispute now official, management have begun back-tracking.

EAV vice-president Nick Puner flew back from New York to announce that the redundancy notices have been withdrawn. He has offered to return to the agreed 28-day negotiation.

On Monday he stressed that this depended on the five journalists involved ending their occupation. The five are the first NUJ members to have used the occupation weapon in the fight against redundancies.

They are waiting for action from the print union SOGAT over their request that EAV products be blacked at E J Arnolds in Leeds, the distribution centre for EAV's educational film strips.

## SIGNALMEN CONSIDER BIG STRIKE

**SIGNALMEN** from all over the country were meeting in London on Friday after their latest one-day strike produced more hysteria from the press and the leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen.

The meeting, organised entirely by the rank and file, was due to consider a three-day strike and a possible stop on all freight traffic.

Last week's strike—the best supported so far—produced a flurry of activity from the NUR leadership. Officials are calling meetings throughout the country to try to con the signalmen into halting the action.

They succeeded in Sheffield, where the men were told how wonderful their pay was. One signalman stood up and said: 'I earn as much as a leading driver'. The astonished meeting fell silent—until he added: 'If I work a 90-hour week.'

But despite the machinations of the union bureaucracy, support for the claim—a 15 per cent pay rise—is still growing. Signalmen in Newcastle were planning to join this week's strike.

### DEFEND CHILEAN TRADE UNIONISTS

Not a penny, not a gun for the junta!

Demonstration: Saturday 15 March in Liverpool

IS members and Socialist Worker readers in the North West and West Yorkshire should work to make this a big turn-out. A poster with the above slogans and details of the demonstration is available, £1 for 50, including postage, for local Chile Solidarity Committees and trade union bodies, from Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 (phone 01-739 2639).

The Chile Solidarity Campaign is organising a special train from London for the demonstration. Details from CSC, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

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