

# WORKERS FIGHT

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4p.

## MINERS SOLIDARITY ACTION CAN TURN THE TIDE ON THE TORIES

OVER A QUARTER OF A MILLION miners are out in the first official strike since 1926, and the first major official strike since the Industrial Relations Act became law. It is a test case for the whole labour movement.

Mass pickets of miners are appealing for support from Transport workers, power workers and all fuel workers. No strike pay is being paid but the strike is so solid that right-wing NUM President Joe Gormley, has had to rebuke the "excessive militancy" of miners refusing "safe ty-work" duty.

Miners know they face either a long and bitter strike, with the NUM pulling its punches — or else that they must hit as hard as they can, as fast as they can, drawing upon the active support of other workers, to gain a quick victory.

### THE CASE

The miners' case is simply made. In 1951 miners were 20% better off than the average: today, with £28 a week, they average 4P lower than all industries.

88,000 (out of 280,000) miners

have wages so low that on a 5-day week in one of the most dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs in industry, they are entitled to Family Income Supplement! Take-home pay can drop as low as £12.70 a week.

Since 1958 the NCB has closed over 500 pits, and got rid of 400,000 men — while out-put per man shift over the last 6 years alone has risen by over 26%.

The miners have been the victims of two things. Of a sustained sell-out policy by the Union leadership, which let miners' standards slump down and down.

And the fact that too many men fell for the propaganda of the NCB that the mines could only survive if the miners achieved a massive rise in productivity, and simultaneously allowed more and more mining jobs to disappear. In return their relative wage fell — basic rate is £18 — while output bounded upward.

Now the Union is claiming a minimum of £26 for surface workers, £28 for underground workers, and £35 for men on power-loading agreement.

The NCB has offered ... £2!

It isn't that the NCB can honestly plead poverty. Last year it made £34 million operating profit out of the miners.

But, standing behind the NCB, and calling the tune, is the Tory Government intent on restoring the profit-level of British industry by keeping all workers' wages down.

For them the miners' strike is a test case.

And so must it be for all workers. It is in our direct interest that the miners should smash through the ceiling on wage-increases set by the Government.

But there are problems: the half-heartedness of the NUM leaders, and the danger that the miners will remain isolated.

### THE N.U.M.

The record of the NUM leaders gives little cause for confidence in either Right-wing Gormley or Left-wing Daly.

Since November the Union has run an overtime ban to reduce stocks of coal and thus ensure that a strike

would have an immediate impact. Miners are bitter at the unserious way this was applied by the Union leaders.

First, they allowed overtime on "essential safety work", and then on even "associated preventive maintenance" — which allowed the NCB to drive a coach & four through the so-called overtime ban. In local disputes over the ban the Union regularly sided with the NCB. Habit dies slowly.

Such leaders won't fight the sort of strike the militant miners want. Gormley has said an offer of £3 rather than £2 could have bought off the strike. Probably any compromise will involve productivity deals — and with them yet more redundancies.

An unnamed Union leader was quoted by *The Guardian* as saying: "We could always go for 100 pits employing 120 men, earning £80 by 1980, and let the Government sort out the social problems." No name, but the cynicism and short-sightedness were unmistakably genuine.

### SOLIDARITY

Miners' isolation will play into the hands of such leaders. In the last year the power workers and Post Office workers have gone over the top in bitter struggles.

Instead of class-wide action, with the full weight of organised labour swinging into active support of those in the front line — including, where appropriate, strike action — we saw isolated sectional action. Defeat followed defeat: one defeat prepared the way for the other.

All the weight of the employers, their State and their witch-hunting Press and TV (particularly against the power workers) on one side, solid — and only a section of the real strength of labour mobilised on the other side.

The miner's strike may become a test case under the Industrial Relations Act. Yet the TUC — and its left wing — has done pitifully little to back up the miners. Feather announces his readiness to look for a settlement if called in "by either side"! This "general", in a serious conflict, is under the delusion that he is the referee.

A solid front of all workers in any way involved with the transport and distribution of coal, together with workers in other fuel industries, could bring a swift, decisive and shattering victory to the miners.

Power workers have a claim in at the present time. A national strike is brewing up on the docks. If dockers, power workers and miners could be co-ordinated, all acting together at the same time, the tide could be turned against the Tories.

But if we allow the miners to be defeated, that will be one more blow in the Tories' battle to turn the tide on the whole of organised labour in Britain.

BRITISH TROOPS IN ACTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND: THE NEXT ISSUE WILL CARRY A SPECIAL FEATURE ARGUING THAT BRITISH WORKERS MUST FIGHT FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS, AND MUST, SO LONG AS THE WAR GOES ON, ACTIVELY SIDE WITH THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY, SUPPORT ITS FIGHT FOR VICTORY AND ITS JUST STRUGGLE TO DRIVE OUT THE ARMY



## DOCKS: STEWARDS SAY A 30hr WEEK

ON JANUARY 8th THE NATIONAL Docks Shop Stewards Committee met in London to make plans to counter the major attack which the Port Employers are preparing to launch against the National Dock Labour Scheme.

Because of the widespread unemployment in the Ports, pressure is building up to get rid of the N.D.L.B. — and the job-security the dockers have won under it.

Established in 1947, it employs all dockers, and hires them out to the various companies. It is controlled

led on a 50-50 basis by the employers and the Unions.

Under it "surplus" dockers are not automatically made redundant, but are returned by the employers to the NDLB Pool — a sort of leper colony where unwanted labour is condemned to live on the fall-back pay of £20 a week.

The employers find the NDLB inconvenient and expensive, and want the option of simply sacking men altogether. They are already by-passing the old docks industry by organising container packing away

from the Ports — and away from dockers' wage rates and conditions.

Amidst talk of a one-day national strike if any more men are returned to the Pool, the Stewards decided to fight around the following demands:

1. No redundancies.
2. For all Ports, including the new inland container ports, to be in the NDLB.
3. Retirement at 60.
4. A 30-hour week, and longer holidays.
5. Nationalisation of all Ports under workers' control.



# workers fight

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**Why do we publish WORKERS' FIGHT?** There is one very simple answer. The bosses' press lies, distorts and conceals. It says unemployment is due to "excessive wage demands". It says that the IRA are just trigger-happy terrorists. It says that strikes are "ruining the economy".

The working class needs papers which put OUR side of the news — which show that it is LOW wages that go together with unemployment; which show that in many of the stories about "IRA atrocities", there is no firm evidence at all to connect the events with the IRA; which show that the IRA have got every right to fight against troops imposing a police state on Ireland; which shows that strikes are in fact the only way to save OUR economy, i.e., OUR wages and OUR conditions.

But there's more to it than that. Take the post office workers' strike, for example. Very many people were convinced of the justice of the workers' claim. But still they were defeated. SYMPATHY IS NOT ENOUGH.

## ORGANISE

The purpose of our paper is not just to give facts and explanations. It is to be an ORGANISER and a CAMPAIGNER. In the first few issues we will be concentrating on the struggle against unemployment — assessing experiences and trying to point a way forward. Our paper is meant to be a CALL TO ACTION, not just a commentary on the world.

With an ordinary paper, the situation is this: THEY produce the paper, WE pay our money and we take our choice. But if you think this paper is any good, if you think the ideas in it are basically right, then don't JUST decide to buy another one next time you see someone selling it. We don't publish this paper just in order to sell as many copies as we can. We produce it as a weapon in the workers' struggle.

If you agree that we need to start ACTING ON the socialist ideas put forward in this paper, then: take some extra copies of the paper to sell to your workmates. Think how you can apply the ideas in your own workplace. If you have a group of people reading the paper regularly, organise meetings among yourselves to DISCUSS the paper. WRITE to us — letters, comments, reports.

We want our paper to be a workers' paper.

We would prefer a paper which is a bit scrappy, a bit rough-and-ready, but which reflects the real experience of the working class, to a paper which is very fluent, very smooth, very professional — but tasting & smelling of an editorial office.

So, whether we can make WORKERS' FIGHT into a useful working tool, depends on you, the reader. Regard it as YOUR paper. Discuss with us what you think of it and how to act on its ideas. Write for it. Sell it.

Not only a workers' paper but a SOCIALIST workers' paper. Our aim is not just to improve the lot of the working class within the capitalist big business system, but to overthrow the system. So the paper will not simply hold up a mirror to the labour movement as it is at present.

The established labour movement, from Lord Cooper to Vic Feather to Jack Jones, is committed to working WITHIN the capitalist system. Perhaps they prefer Wilson's Tories to Heath's Tories. Perhaps they make a few left wing speeches.

But, basically, what the right wingers are against is "excessive" profits or "excessive" repression. They're not against profits or repression altogether.

And the Left, who in their own minds are against profit and repression, are unable to fight it effectively. They pull their punches, leave workers in the lurch, compromise with the Right, refuse to exploit their chances. They retreat when they should advance and keep silent when they should speak out to mobilise the workers to fight back.

## THE FUTURE

WORKERS' FIGHT will, we hope, represent the FUTURE, as well as the present, of the working class. Capitalism deprives workers of a proper education and feeds us with mindless pap through the Press and TV. We have no intention of bowing down to capitalism on this score. The paper won't just be concerned with bread-and-butter issues.

We believe that it is necessary for the working class to control society. And a class that is going to control society needs to know about more than bread-and-butter matters. It needs to know its own history. It needs to know about the struggles of the working class and oppressed people all over the world. It needs ITS OWN system of ideas — Marxism.

Above all, the paper will be what we, and you, make of it in the coming struggles that face the whole of the working class.

On December 4th, 1971 the International Socialism group expelled a Tendency, the Trotskyist Tendency, which had existed in I.S. since November 1968, when the original Workers' Fight group fused with I.S. No disciplinary charges were laid against the Tendency, nor could they have been. Still hypocritically calling for left unity, and still proclaiming I.S. as a democratic and non-sectarian group, the IS leadership dressed up the expulsion of the Tendency for the membership and or public relations purposes as a "de-fusion". This "de-fusion" "de-fused" a Tendency, five sixths of whose membership were never in any organisation other than IS!

Stripping away the hysteria and the exaggerations which dominated the internal struggle leading up to the December 4th. Conference, the IS leadership's explanation for the expulsion move was that the Trotskyist Tendency called IS centrist (eg vacillating between reformism and revolutionary politics, being revolutionary in words but reneging in the crunch) and that this was intolerable.

But this explains nothing. We never characterised IS otherwise, either before the 1968 fusion or after. We said clearly when we joined that we thought IS would only be changed as a result of a serious internal struggle.



Peter Graham

On October 25th, Peter Graham, a Communist-Republican militant, was assassinated in Dublin. At his death he was a member of the Fourth International. From shortly after he joined the Trotskyist movement in 1967 until his death, he worked closely with the Workers' Fight group.

He lived for 25 years, the last 6 or 7 of them as a revolutionary militant. Amongst socialist militants his dedication and controlled subordination of all else to the revolutionary cause marked him out very clearly. He organised his life, his entire existence, around the political tasks which he had at first perceived almost instinctively as a young Dublin apprentice, and then learned to understand consciously and with sharpening clarity as a young man: he took it as a matter of course that that life was entirely expendable.

In these traits he was remarkable but not unique: many republicans of equal dedication and revolutionary seriousness, and even socialist convictions, have died and are fighting

and dying now in Northern Ireland. But in one respect he was unique. Peter Graham's life, like theirs, was set in the barren half-century that followed the death of James Connolly, and that saw a rupture between Irish revolutionary socialism and Irish Republicanism — and the eclipse of socialism and the sterility of non-socialist Republicanism. His life like all Irish life was dominated by the consequences of these facts.

Politically, Peter Graham is important to us because he was in the vanguard of a struggle to reunite the genuinely revolutionary traditions of the society and nation into which he was born, with the modern equivalent of Connolly's socialism — the internationalist revolutionary tradition summed up throughout the world by the names of Lenin and Trotsky.

Without such a fusion, and the fighting communist-republican revolutionary party that will be built on its basis, the Irish working class cannot fully and finally emancipate itself.

Peter's personal traits, his personal dedication, thus had a more than personal significance. They were part of a drive of the Irish working class to cut a road out of the bloody impasse in which imperialism and its bastard offspring, Irish capitalism, have landed the Irish people. Part of a drive to forge an understanding, a programme, a method of struggle — and a socialism that could offer more than abstract preaching.

From that drive came Peter Graham's death. After 1969 the attempt to re-fuse communism and republicanism demanded more than theorising. Peter was prepared to search actively, in practical action, for the way forward. He entered the cross-currents of Irish republican politics. And in those cross-currents he lost his life.

His friends will long grieve for the loss of an unbreakable militant, totally dedicated to the socialist revolution.

S. Matgamna

## WHY WE WERE EXPELLED FROM I.S.

The real explanation is that the IS leaders have created — often through good and useful work — a largish organisation, most of whose members are young and politically inexperienced, and consequently there is an absence of a serious and stable political basis for their political domination of the Group. They rely increasingly on demagogic manipulation of the members, and on a bureaucratic machine which has qualitatively changed and worsened the internal life of the I.S. Group.

With increasing reliance for their control on a machine and on demagoguery, real democracy becomes a threat. Orrather, the existence of an organised Tendency whose politics challenge the machine is a threat.

In such an organisation, most of whose members weren't even political 2 years ago, even the real political history of the IS Group becomes a threat to the leadership. Thus the incontestable truth that IS gave de facto support to the use of British troops in Ireland in 1969 and justified this then openly in Socialist Worker, has to be denounced to these members as lies and slanders. Those who, like Workers' Fight, fought that line, have to be witch-hunted and expelled as "disloyal".

Politically the expulsion indicates a qualitative bureaucratic hardening of IS. Now the leadership openly proclaims its right, when faced with an opposition tendency, which has fundamental political

differences, to resort to pre-emptive expulsions, even when such a tendency is a disciplined part of the organisation. Thus they claim and proclaim their right to sterilise the organisation politically.

The expulsion had the trappings of democracy, and no liberal could object. But Leninist democracy has nothing in common with the bare empty forms, filled by the demagoguery and witch-hunting and machine manipulation with which the IS leadership fill such forms.

The expulsion of Workers' Fight is a disruptive and sectarian blow to left unity. Instead of practical concentration on the constructive work we can do, and have done, together with the majority of IS, and the creation of a Bolshevik internal democracy, we have one more split on the left.

The IS leadership relied on the imposing size of IS and on political faint-heartedness to make the TT members "capitulate" and stay in IS with no democratic rights of tendency: Workers' Fight, with which we will continue the positive work we did in IS, is the best answer we can give them on that score.

The real tragedy, though, is that the opportunities for the revolutionary left which existed in 1968, should have led only to the consolidation of a tightly controlled left-centrist sect, which is most certainly what IS now is.



The Old Bailey trial of the Mangrove Nine took the fight of Notting Hill's black community against police harassment right into the nerve-centre of the British legal system, challenging the Judge, the Police and the Court procedures, and disrupting the smooth routine of Police repression. With the unexpected help of a mainly white, working class jury, the Nine won at least a partial victory: they were cleared of 25 out of 31 charges, including the most serious ones. 5 were acquitted, and 4 got suspended sentences.

The jury simply decided that the Police were liars. And, indeed, the evidence in support of this view was overpowering.

The charges were of Riot, Causing an Affray, and Causing Grievous Bodily Harm. The Police brought these charges in order to hit back at the Notting Hill Black Community, which had dared to stand up to them.

### RAID

In June and July 1970 the Mangrove Restaurant was raided 9 times by Police supposedly looking for drugs, which they never found, and its licence to stay open after 11pm was revoked when the Police lodged an objection. Thereafter, those who ran it were repeatedly dragged into Court, accused of serving food after hours.

On August 9th, 1970 the local black people marched in protest at this Police harassment. Without any 'provocation' — other than the outrageous sight of Blacks daring to protest — Police baton-charged the march. The marchers naturally fought back.

The charges against the Nine arose from this battle. The first time the Police brought the charges they were thrown out by a local magistrate, and it is pretty certain that it was on the initiative of Scotland Yard, backed up by the Director of Public Prosecutions, that other charges were then substituted and a decision to press ahead with prosecutions taken. Later by a legal trick the original, more serious, charges were re-introduced at the Old Bailey.

Neither the harassment by local Police bully-boys, nor the intervention of the higher Police authorities in pressing the charges, as accidental. The Police must protect the private property system of the wealthy against its victims. To forestall trouble they tend to pick most on those who stand out, who have the rawest deal, and try to terrorise them into submission. Their first targets are the homeless, the unemployed, the Irish labourers, the black People. And when such people fight back, it worries them.

The Mangrove was and is a community Restaurant, one of a network of community organisations. The Nine included men and women, youths and adults, workers and students, the highly political and the politically inarticulate: the restaurant and its clientele were harassed so as to stamp out a centre of Black consciousness.

This sort of insolent thuggey and racialist provocation is a



Rhodan Gordon

Darkus Howe

**"THE JUDGE SAYS HE HAS 35 YEARS OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE. WELL, I HAVE HAD 400 YEARS OF COLONIAL EXPERIENCE."**

**"WE COMPLAINED TO THE POLICE ABOUT THE POLICE AND NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE; WE COMPLAINED TO THE COUNCIL ABOUT THE COUNCIL AND NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE; WE COMPLAINED TO THE POLITICIANS ABOUT THE POLITICIANS AND NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE; WE HAVE GOT TO TAKE THE MATTER INTO OUR OWN HANDS." Darkus Howe**

## Mangrove Nine by Constance Lever

regular part of the sporting life enjoyed by the honest-copper-on-the-beat in all the cities of England. When the Mangrove Blacks responded militantly, refusing to be cowed, the Police countered first with a baton charge and then by mobilising all the power the Police and Judicial Establishment could muster.

Because the police threw all they had at the Nine, the result of the ten-week trial is a serious smack in the face for the Police.

The trial itself was not quite what the Police had bargained for. The accused did not act like frightened and malleable pawns of the Court, silent and kow-towing.

Instead, they turned the trial into an indictment of the Police and the system. Three of them, Darkus Howe, Rhodan Gordon and Althea Lecointe, conducted their own Defence. They all refused to shut up when told to, rejected the Judge's rulings that Statements about Police brutality in Notting Hill were irrelevant, and even provoked 'His Honour' on several occasions into walking out of his own Court.

### RITUAL

With these tactics they broke

through the hidebound ritual of Court procedure and managed to actually talk about their lives and experiences, and about their conflict with the Police, to the ordinary men and women of the Jury.

Normally the Jury is segregated in its box, silent and forbidden to ask questions. The accused are in the prisoners' dock, silent and forbidden to explain themselves or address the Jury directly: they answer only when spoken to, and only to the point of questions put to them. Both Jury and accused are in the hands of the Judge, the lawyers and the Police, who understand each other well and are accustomed to the rituals of the courtroom — rituals strange and inhibiting to the laymen involved.

The officials and Police are members or servants of the ruling class, either hostile to, or without real understanding of, the lives and experiences of most accused and also of most jurors, the majority of whom are from the working class. The mumbo-jumbo and ancient ritual of the courts serves to block direct contact or real communication between the accused and the Jury.

The Mangrove Nine cut through the barriers of courtroom procedure.

They refused to behave as individuals charged with crimes, unsure and apologetic, but acted instead as representatives of a militant Black community challenging Police and Court intimidation.

And their community backed them up: every day of the 49-day trial they packed the public gallery to give solidarity.

The acquittals prove that it is possible — sometimes — to beat the Police frame-up system, and to disrupt the rusty machinery of the courts. But not only that.

A majority of the Mangrove Jury were workers, and only two of the 11 were black. It is known that the Jury divided along class lines, with the middle class members inclined to believe the Police and favouring conviction. It seems that some of the workers knew better. Eventually they compromised on the basis of agreement on acquittal on the most serious charges.

And when the trial ended, 7 jurors joined the Nine to spend 3 hours chatting and drinking, like old friends long kept apart. The Nine themselves were surprised to learn of the extent of hostility to the Police amongst the Jurors.

### SOLIDARITY

Whatever element of accident there may have been in the Mangrove verdict and in the composition of the Jury, the trial does show that the Jury System can be a weak link in the chain of boss-class control, which can sometimes be used to their own advantage by militants.

Nor is this new: in 1794 a London jury acquitted Hardy, the Republican, of Treason — and the London crowd carried them in triumph through the streets. And in 1833 a jury of Clerkenwell tradesmen took over the conduct of a trial, insisted on asking their own questions, and brought in a verdict of JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE on the killers of a Policeman who had taken part in an attack on a demonstration. They were themselves feted as popular heroes.

That is why in times of social crisis the Rulers can no longer use the Jury system and must substitute the blatant repression of internment without trial or martial law.

Meanwhile the courts are their courts, the law is their law. And OUR strength — the strength of the working class and of the oppressed minority groups — is in the factories and on the streets. But when we are forced onto THEIR ground, we must know how to fight there too.

That's the lesson of the Mangrove Trial for all workers. At a time when bosses are hitting workers everywhere, when the Industrial Relations Act aims to bring the Police and Lawcourts directly into the everyday struggles of ordinary workers, the Blacks of Notting Hill have given a lead to the whole labour movement. They have shown that militancy pays — even in Court.

continued p.4



AT THE END OF 1971, AFTER YET ANOTHER DIZZY PERFORMANCE ON THE ECONOMIC HIGH WIRE, THE LEADING CAPITALIST POWERS STAGGERED TO AN AGREEMENT ON NEW CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES, AND RESTORED AN APPEARANCE OF EQUILIBRIUM TO THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY AND TRADING SYSTEM.



## \$ DOLLAR CRISIS \$

THE CRISIS HAD BEEN A long time coming. The late Labour Government's reactionary and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to maintain the old exchange rate of the Pound was widely regarded at the time as the first line of defence of the Dollar.

After the devaluation of the Pound in 1967 the Dollar rapidly became the sick man of world capitalism. In selling its products, US business was losing ground to strong foreign competition, notably from West Germany and Japan.

At the same time European firms began to compete more successfully in the export of capital (overseas investment), which had for long been a sphere dominated by the great US corporations. Confidence in the Dollar as the international reserve currency — 'as good as gold' — was gradually undermined as the US continued to run a huge balance of payments deficit.

US gold reserves were depleted as countries which had previously been only too happy to accept and hold Dollars, and thus had enabled the US to finance its payments deficits by running up overseas debt, now began to exchange their Dollar holdings for the greater safety of gold.

The official explanation for the crisis, vigorously propagated by US spokesmen, was that the Dollar had become "overvalued". Nixon spoke of "unfair competition" and when the panic broke and "hot money" started to pour out of Dollars into Marks, Yen and even Pounds, he suspended the convertibility of Dollars into gold, imposed a 10% surcharge on imports into the USA and instituted a 90-day wage and price freeze.

By thus throwing into the melting pot the entire international monetary system established at the end of World War Two by the Bretton Woods Agreement, and by threatening a prospect of permanent protection for US industry against foreign competition, the US Government

aimed to force other powers to yield to its demand that the "overvalued" dollar be devalued, by way of an upward revaluation of its Yen and D-Mark competitors.

### IMPERIALISM

The USA's overall payments deficit was cited as irrefutable proof of the commercial overvaluation of the Dollar. But in fact the deficit was overwhelmingly a manifestation of American imperialist expansion.

For the past few years the USA's current balance of payments has been in surplus (to the tune of \$3.8 billion in 1970). This has been due to a small surplus in the balance of trade (export of goods, less imports) and a large additional surplus stemming principally from a huge net inflow of interest and dividends on private foreign investments owned by US business (over \$6 Billion in 1970).

The source of the overall deficit was military expenditure abroad (\$4 Billion in 1970) and direct overseas investment by US firms (\$4.4 Billion). In addition the US Government paid out \$4.5 Billion in so-called "foreign aid", the bulk of which serves to protect American military and political interests abroad.

In short, the deficit represented a major cost item in the balance sheet of American imperialism.

Nevertheless it is true that the USA's strictly commercial position has been deteriorating. The US share of world exports of manufactures fell from 27.5% in 1950 to 18% in the first half of 1971. A flagging domestic growth rate, persistent price inflation and the intensified challenge of foreign competition have combined to erode the USA's former supremacy in world trade, not just in old established industries such as textiles and footwear, but increasingly in cars and the new science-based industries.

### DEFICIT

In the first half of 1971 the US balance of trade was in deficit for the first time since 1893. If the balance of trade was now to worsen rather than, as in the past, to make up for the deficit

arising from the overseas military expenditure, overseas private investment and "foreign aid", then something just had to give. The pull out from Vietnam, cuts in the aid programme and demands that America's NATO partners bear a greater share of the expense of defending world capitalism, had now to be complemented by a devaluation of the Dollar in order to improve the competitiveness of US capital.

The eventual reluctant agreement of the other capitalist powers to this 'solution' of the crisis represents for them a choice of the lesser evil. There can be no doubt that Japan, for example, with 30% of its exports going to the US market, will be severely hit by the upward revaluation of the Yen.

West Germany's industrialists had already been voicing loud complaints about the effects on their exports of the previous revaluation of the Mark in 1969.

Other countries, including the UK, will also suffer marginally. (In Britain's case the revaluation of Sterling in terms of the dollar is compensated by the devaluation of Sterling in terms of the Mark, the Yen and certain other currencies.)

But the countries with most to lose are also best placed to stand losses, since for the most part their overseas payments positions are strong. Moreover, minor trade losses are preferable to the uncertainty of floating exchange rates and an indefinite continuation of the 10% import surcharge.

### 1930's

The last 4 months have brought an unpleasant echo of the disorganised economic conditions of the 1930s when the capitalist powers manipulated their currencies and raised protective tariff barriers in attempts to gain a competitive edge over their rivals. In addition the devaluation of the Dollar has been taken as the occasion for all-round currency re-adjustments of varying amounts, and this has enabled governments to manoeuvre for minor advantages.

It is important to be clear, however, that the re-alignment of currencies is essentially a stop-gap solution to the crisis.

THE DEVALUATION OF THE DOLLAR AND THE ASSOCIATED RE-ADJUSTMENTS OF OTHER CURRENCIES HAVE BROUGHT TO A TEMPORARY END THE CRISIS SPARKED OFF LAST AUGUST BY MASSIVE SPECULATION AGAINST THE DOLLAR AND BY NIXON'S EMERGENCY PACKAGE OF A 10% SURCHARGE AGAINST THE USA'S COMPETITORS AND A 90 DAY FREEZE AGAINST THE US WORKING CLASS.

**David Lewis** ARGUES THAT THE "SOLUTION" IS NO MORE THAN A STOP-GAP, AND THAT WORLD CAPITALISM IS FACING A CREEPING STAGNATION AND NEW — AND BIGGER — PROBLEMS.

Although the role of that barbarous relic, gold, in international payments is officially to be phased out, it is by no means certain that this will in fact happen, and any agreement on a fundamental reform of the international monetary system remains as far away as ever.

The basic conditions which gave rise to the crisis will remain. The requirements of the world capitalist system place limits on any substantial contraction of America's overseas military effort and on any attempt to limit the free movement of capital across state frontiers.

The European and Japanese challenge to American business supremacy has received a minor, but hardly decisive, setback. In particular the interpenetration of national markets by means of direct investment abroad by the giant corporations of different countries is likely to be extended. This development will intensify the inter-imperialist rivalry of which the recent crisis was an expression.

### CLASS STRUGGLE

On the domestic front neither the US Government nor any other can contain inflation without either creating and maintaining high levels of unemployment or attempts at wage restraint and associated curbs on the unions.

Either way the class struggle in each individual country will be sharpened.

Moreover, different degrees of inflation in different countries will continually disrupt any temporarily achieved world trading equilibrium by altering the balance of competitive strength.

Even more serious in the long term is the steady slowing down in the rate of expansion of the leading capitalist economies. Profit rates are falling, more steeply in some countries than others, and there is no sign of any decisive new industrial development of the type which sustained previous booms in capitalist history like railways, motor vehicles, nuclear energy etc.

In conditions of long-run creeping stagnation, measures such as the devaluation of the Dollar will become increasingly in demand, but decreasingly effective in stabilising the system.

### MANGROVE 9 (from p3) RE-ARRESTED

But still only partial victories can be won. There can be no solution in the courts: it is a continuing running battle.

The Police and the State retaliate. Within 24 hours of his acquittal, RHODAN GORDON was rearrested on charges of obstructing and assaulting the Police. He was one of those given a 15-month suspended sen-



tence — and the Police evidently didn't want it to remain suspended for long.

The liberal Press has commented widely on the obvious frame-ups of the case, and a Labour MP has called on Maudling for a special Inquiry into the case.

But what is needed is not liberal heartburnings by MPs, nor even genuine expressions of

sympathy by socialists.

What is needed is a drive to mobilise the active support of the labour movement for the struggle of the Blacks. It would be pointless and stupid to deny the widespread racist attitudes within the labour movement. It is the job of socialists to fight to break this down — not to pretend working class racism doesn't exist.



# FIGHT BACK OR WE GO UNDER

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST OFFICIAL FIGURES unemployment now stands at 950,000. In many areas the situation is much worse than average: Birmingham has 6% unemployment; Coventry has 9%, Teesside 7%. And in fact very many more than the official number are out of work.

The Government's system of calculating the numbers unemployed is close to falsification. A drop of 500,000 in the number of workers with jobs between October 1970 and October 1971 produced a rise of only 289,000 in the official unemployment figures.

And the figures themselves completely ignore the fact that very many people, such as women who are now reluctant 'housewives', would work if they had a chance. If Britain's unemployment figures were calculated as are those of the USA there would be closer to 1½ million than to the one million registered unemployed in Britain today.

Whole families are being plunged deep into unexpected, unaccustomed yet inescapable poverty. The effects on family life are corrosive. With rising prices and little money coming in, yet food, HP and rent to pay out, tensions develop and fierce rows break out.

Unemployment is being used to discipline the working class. At The Labour, unemployed workers are deliberately humiliated and treated like scroungers or people with an obnoxious disease which is, moreover, entirely their own fault.

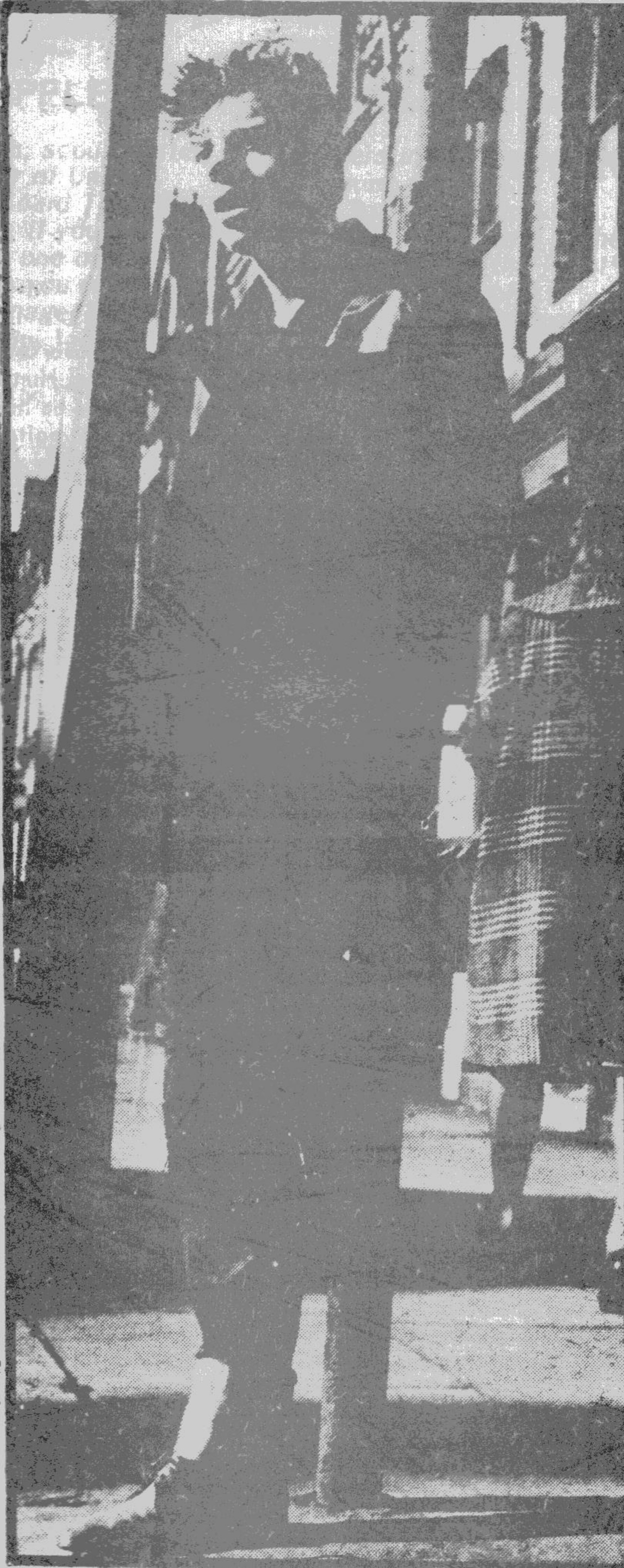
There is no doubt that very many Tories believe that a dose of unemployment, like 2 years in the Army, "teaches a working man a thing or two" about his position in life, and to tip his cap to the right people.

But the unemployed are more than just so many workers and their families victimised and condemned to hardship. They are also a potential weapon for the bosses against those who do have jobs: "This is our offer — you can take it, or you can try your luck at the Labour Exchange". In every major struggle today unemployment and redundancy is a central issue.

The bosses' Press says that unemployment is due to "high wages". This is a plain lie. It has not particularly been the higher-paid industries that have had the biggest redundancies. The construction industry has had an increase of only 9% in earnings over 12 months — less than the increase in the cost of living, and 5% less than the average rise in wages. Yet 53,000 have been made redundant in the construction industry. Another example is textiles — 8½% increase in earnings, and 50,000 redundancies over 12 months.

In fact, it is the workplaces with STRONG organisation which can keep up HIGHER wages

WORKERS' FIGHT  
SPECIAL FOUR PAGE FEATURE  
ON UNEMPLOYMENT



and resist redundancies.

The myth about high wages causing unemployment has a quite definite purpose. It is to put over the idea that bosses employ workers out of the goodness of their hearts and that redundancies happen when workers get employers annoyed by being too militant. The lesson we're supposed to learn is that the way to keep your job is to work hard and keep your nose clean.

The best argument against this rubbish has been provided by the workers of UCS, Plesseys and Fisher Bendix, in their resolve to fight redundancies. In reality bosses give workers jobs not out of charity but in order to screw profits out of them. As soon as the flow of profit slows down they will want to get rid of workers, and no amount of servility will stop them.

But the sad fact is that the "be nice to the bosses and they'll be nice to you" idea has caught on among some workers. Production per worker in 1971 has been 8% higher than in 1970. Where you had 108 workers employed in 1970, in 1971 you had 100 workers slaving away 8% harder and 8 workers on the dole.

This is a crazy situation. It is vital for militant workers to get across the idea that "responsibility" and "co-operation" are no answer to the employers' offensive.

And it is vital to fight back. The T.U.C. demonstrations showed half-heartedness and a refusal to face up to the seriousness of the situation.

But what can you expect? How can the TUC leaders who have never stood up against productivity deals which reduce jobs, or seriously fought redundancies, propose any way of combating unemployment?

It is necessary for us to organise a militant rank and file campaign against unemployment. Part of its job will be to fight to get the organised labour movement to take unemployment seriously. — in action!

We start with the massive advantage that the working class is today not demoralised, defeated or lacking in confidence. 30 years of full employment means that workers won't just peacefully go out the door on the bosses' say-so.

The minor wave of factory occupations and threatened occupations are only the beginning of the fight-back, as the working class shapes up to fight again a battle that most workers thought had already been won decades ago.

But until that fight is taken right to the root cause of unemployment, until the working class takes on the capitalist system as such in a contest for the power to control our own lives and the society we live in, the battle against unemployment is a battle we will have to fight again and again and again.

## OPPOSE THE NEW CONSCRIPTION

Wherever there is a threat of factory closure or redundancies, the Army recruiting trailers move in like scavengers, knowing that the employers have already done the economic press-gang work for them. When the Upper Clyde redundancies were announced, they straight away set up a booth outside the ship yards and waited.

Young men join the army because of a desire to travel or for adventure, to escape the boredom of lousy jobs, or to learn a trade — all the reasons which the adverts know well how to exploit. But they also in large numbers from the depressed areas or wherever prospects look bad and jobs are hard to find.

As unemployment gets worse, the proportion of the Army forced in by this economic conscription will become greater.

Once in, they will be trained, deliberate-

ly brutalised, and set up as licenced terrorists and used as the Government thinks fit. Young men from the slums of Clydeside and Liverpool will be sent to repress men, women and children in the slums of Derry.

The bitter hatred which the Northern Ireland Catholics have come to feel for the Army is a measure of the work the Army has done there. They wreck houses and terrorise their owners. CS gas, rubber bullets and now 'live' bullets are their weapons, and they use them freely. The Army savagely ill-treats and helps to torture and brainwash internees.

Whatever the individual soldier may feel at the beginning, before he gets used to the 'work' he must act as a mindless, will-less tool of the boss state. He would have no choice if ordered into action against strikers — as indeed he may well be in Britain before long.

Unlike the IRA, which is a semi-democratic volunteer army, a militia defending its community,

with ideas its members have freely chosen, the British Army is a mercenary army where discipline under the undemocratic ruling class officer-system is everything.

The campaign against unemployment must actively oppose the recruiting drive of the Army. We cannot afford to have the large numbers of working class youth which the Army now needs, called up by economic conscription and employed against the just struggles of the Irish Catholics against Stormont and Westminster. Pickets and anti-recruiting demonstrations must be organised to counter the recruiting campaign.

Meanwhile, while doing all in our power to keep young British workers from joining the bosses' army, we must be clear where we stand when that Army, and those already brutalised by doing its dirty work, clashes with the IRA: four-square with the IRA militia of the victims of the Tory Government and its Army.





# Marching Alone....

THE ORGANISED UNEMPLOYED - 1920-1939

by Pam Shanks

DURING WORLD WAR 1 LLOYD GEORGE'S GOVERNMENT promised that there would be "a land fit for heroes", with prosperity and full employment, after the war was won - and many workers believed them.

But by May 1919 the illusions had vanished and there were over a million workers unemployed. And the numbers continued to rise steadily. The next 20 years were bitter years of mass unemployment and deep economic slump.

Unemployed ex-servicemen immediately organised themselves into groups. But these had no policy against unemployment, and concentrated on appeals for charity for their members. Charity, however, could not deal with unemployment, and as the number of unemployed workers grew, it became clear that there was a real need for united action to compel the Government to take action to provide either employment or adequate standards of maintenance.

The mass of the unemployed had to rely on Poor Law Relief. To get this they had to be destitute and have no means of support. Officials inspected the homes of claimants, anything of value had to be sold, and any member of the household who was working was expected to support the rest of the family. Relief when granted was often in kind, and was barely sufficient to keep the claimant and his dependents alive.

## T.U.C. COLD-SHOULDER

The leaders of the working class, the TUC and the Labour Party, failed to organise a militant campaign against unemployment and cold-shouldered the unemployed and their organisations.

Left to organise themselves, the Unemployed, led mainly by Communist Party members, set out to build their own militant organisation.

A large demonstration against unemployment on October 18th, 1920 was savagely attacked by the police, and the unemployed realised that they must unite to fight for their rights. A London District Council of Unemployed was formed immediately after the demonstration, based on local committees which had sprung up with the onset of unemployment.

This body asked the TUC Conference of February 25th, to hear a speaker. This was refused on the arrogant grounds that the delegates assembled represented the unemployed through their Unions! Amid uproar, the Council's organiser Wal Hannington made a brief speech of protest, and after this proof of the official movement's indifference the separate organisation of the unemployed developed.

National conferences of the Unemployed were held in the Spring and Autumn of 1921 and a NATIONAL UNEMPLOYED WORKERS COMMITTEE MOVEMENT was formed.

This movement was able to maintain between 300 and 400 local branches and carry out a militant campaign for the rights of the unemployed and for the forging of unity of employed and unemployed workers, by assisting striking workers to picket in a number of disputes. The movement also produced an official fortnightly paper called OUT OF WORK, which stressed the need for a united working class policy, and urged the unemployed to resist any attempt of the employers to use unemployed workers as blackleg labour during strikes. A united unemployed movement, on a national basis and with a consistent programme of working class demands had thus been organised by the unemployed themselves, without any help from most of the 'official' labour movement.

For the next 18 years the N.U.W.C. organised a militant campaign against unemployment, with mass demonstrations in the streets of all large cities and towns against the Government's Poor Law Relief "starvation policy".

## HUNGER MARCHES

Aiming to awaken the majority of the workers to the plight of the unemployed, the first National Hunger March was organised in 1922, and many more were to be held in the following years. These marches were of great agitational value, a dramatic way of reaching out to the whole working class.

The N.U.W.C. demanded that the Government provide either employment or adequate benefit for the unemployed and they did succeed in preventing the Government from introducing some of its more repressive legislation.

When a Labour Government was elected in 1929, a 12 point charter was drawn up. But the Government of the "workers' party" refused to even meet a deputation of the unemployed who came to London to present the charter.

Mass unemployment got much worse in the "hungry thirties". The unemployed suffered degradation and poverty. Still they marched on protest demonstrations, and savage battles were fought against the police who attempted to suppress them, battles that make the recent 'battle of Westminster' look like the warming up session that it was.

And still there was no assistance from the TUC or Labour Party.

In 1934, against the opposition of the TUC General Council and the Labour Party NEC, the N.U.W.C. organised a National Conference of Employed and Unemployed workers. A joint committee was formed to develop working class unity calling for a plan of public works schemes at trade union rates, for a shorter working week in industry, and for a training scheme for youth, whom mass unemployment had deprived of the chance to learn a trade.

By 1939 the movement found it necessary to change its tactics. As Britain began to prepare for war, the number of unemployed gradually fell. Many firms, in line with their usual practice, started overtime rather than employ more workers. Thus even as unemployment fell, the Unemployed Movement had to go on fighting. It attacked firms that introduced overtime working, by entering the factories, talking to workers and demanding from managers an assurance that overtime would not be worked. The campaign was very successful, and many firms were forced to take on more workers and stop overtime.

With the onset of war, unemployment rapidly diminished, and the N.U.W.C. became redundant. The monstrous waste of the Great Slump had given way to the monstrous waste of World War 2.

The N.U.W.C., founded and run by the unemployed themselves, had led the struggle of the unemployed in Britain for the right to live. It organised 5 National Hunger Marches, many local demonstrations, advised on benefit rights and defended those rights. It published a national paper and many leaflets explaining the implications of Acts affecting unemployment and "Poor Law Benefit". It achieved many victories against a vicious Tory government and its local agents. By persistent and militant action it compelled the granting of concessions which ameliorated the conditions of the unemployed and at times forced the government to abandon plans for worsening these conditions.

Its great failure was in not succeeding in forging unity of employed and unemployed for a full scale assault on the system that causes unemployment. But that was a failure of the whole organised labour movement, which was then in a state of deep demoralisation and confusion.

Today there is no demoralisation - yet. This time it can be different. We must make it different.

# A Strategy the Dole

THE VITAL THING ABOUT THE BATTLE is to start fighting before it's too late. deprived of the working class's main labour. There is important work to be done by Unemployed Workers' Unions, and in line with the labour movement. But the DECISION is with the workers.

The first demand must be: NO MORE overtime. Whatever the complete deal, its basic message is very simple: more work by less workers, and in return is 'given' as a wage increase. Sometimes it involves redundancies. Even then we must demand the possibility of increased productivity with the possibility of extra workers being employed.

Secondly we must demand A SHORTER WORKING WEEK. It's crazy to have 100 million hours worked in industry when instead you could have all 108 million hours worked in industry have gone down to 20 years. Through years of struggle the day to 14 hours, to 12 hours, to 10 hours stuck there. It's time we set our sights.

Thirdly; NO OVERTIME. Despite the figures show 13.5 million hours of overtime worked in industry. Reduce that, and you've got the basis of a 35-hour week.

This is, of course, not a popular demand. The bosses rely on overtime to bring them up to the situation doesn't only contribute to unemployment for better wages by giving workers the overtime instead of pressing for a straight wage increase also necessary to demand A NATIONAL SHORTER WORKING WEEK. THE COST OF LIVING.

The minimum wage must apply to all workers. The bosses' responsibility if their system must be: WORK OR FULL PAY. The basic minimum of £20 a week. Earlier demands of the T.&G.W.U. and the TUC were just for AUEW ACTS to put its good intention in.

In some workplaces, for example the docks, control over hiring and firing is ended and extended. On the docks it has back redundancies since the Devlin Plan.

The bosses' ultimate deterrent is "keep wages down or to push up productivity of the factory. Nine times out of ten it is about the tenth time, though? When it comes to bosses announce large-scale redundancies in production - what then?

OCCUPY FACTORIES THREATENED. demand NATIONALISATION UNDER WORKERS' CONTROL. If employers are closing down a factory, they are very out. They are not very likely to be hit. valuable property is under the control of the workers.

The idea of nationalisation under workers' control, this: we place responsibility for keeping the workers' agent, the State, accepting no extra demands and the like. But we fight to extend workers the power to determine wages and conditions.

When we talk about a national minimum wage, workers' control, we're not talking about a single factory acting on behalf of the working class represented by unemployment. It demands a response from the workers.

On the most basic level, this means militant left wing rank and file factories to fight the right wing and organise workers' councils of Action in the local areas.

But more than that is needed.

A serious battle against unemployment movement in all sections of the working class of the working class as a whole. The Labour Party double the unemployment figures during that party. The Communist Party, which mobilise its forces in an aggressive campaign not that party. We must build a revolution.

# to Beat Queue

**FILE AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT**  
Once you're unemployed you're  
over of power — the withdrawal of  
one in organising Claimants' and  
egrating these with the main body  
VE role rests with the employed

**PRODUCTIVITY DEALS.** We  
cated details of a productivity  
- tighter control for the bosses;  
a small part of the money saved  
es the deal may not directly in-  
reject it. Because if there is a  
hout redundancies, then there is  
employed.

**ER WORKING WEEK WITH NO**  
en working and 8 men unemployed  
oyed and an 8% shorter working  
hology, the average weekly  
by only 12 MINUTES in the last  
working class reduced the working  
s, then to 8 hours — and it has  
on the 6-hour working day.

**he unemployment rate, the latest**  
me a week worked in manufactur-  
t jobs for almost 400,000 workers,

**mand.** The fact is that many work-  
a minimum living wage. But this  
ployment. It holds back the fight  
on of doing a few hours more  
nt increase all round. So it is  
**MINIMUM WAGE RELATED TO**

**everyone, employed or not — it is**  
can't provide jobs. Our slogan  
U.E.W. has already called for a  
mands for a minimum wage from  
show. We must demand that the  
o effect.

**docks, a degree of UNION**  
has been won. This must be def-  
been the main factor in holding  
was introduced.

**ve'll shut the place down'. To**  
ity, they will threaten closure  
a fake, a piece of bluff. What  
es to the crunch — when the  
s, or that they intend to cease

**ED WITH REDUNDANCY, and**  
**RKERS' CONTROL.** When emp-  
will usually want to move machin-  
ppy with a situation where their  
militant workers.

**rkers' control basically means**  
the factory open with the emp-  
uses that "it's not competitive"  
ers' control. We do not grant  
nditions, hiring and firing.

**um wage or nationalisation under**  
something that can be achieved  
their own. The attack on the  
nt is a generalised, class-wide  
nole of the working class.

**shop stewards' combine commit-**  
**co-ordinated action; and trade**  
**ities.**

**nt requires the building of a**  
lass, standing for the interests  
our Party, which managed to  
s last period in office, is not  
as made no concerted effort to  
align against unemployment, is  
ary workers' party.

**Dave Brodie** DESCRIBES WHAT HE CALLS

# "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WALKING APOLOGY"

*It's hard to drag yourself out of bed on these cold, grey mornings. I suppose most of us will agree on that point. It takes even me to resolve to rise at 6.30, have a cup of tea and a Park Drive, and then continue the seemingly endless search for work.*

*The start of another exciting day. Count the coppers. Seventeen and a half new pence. I won't get far on that. The Gas Works. That's where I'll go first. I can walk that.*

## "ROTTEN APPLE"

*Mr. Abel Hallworth, scout master, church organist, hater of Unions, Manager of the Gas Board Technical Planning Department. If you are desirous of becoming one of Mr. Hallworth's minions, then you must see that illustrious personage, himself.*

*"What trade are you, lad?"  
"I'm a rigger."  
"You're in the Union?"  
"Yes"*

*"Then I don't need you here lad. I've got rid of all the rotten apples in my barrel."  
If nothing else, Mr. Abel Hallworth is a man who comes straight to the point. Perhaps I should have said I wasn't in the Union. But a Manager of the Gas Board Technical Planning Department is omnipotent and all seeing. No mere mortal could pull the wool over the eyes of Mr. Abel Hallworth.*

*A two and a half mile walk to Baily & Foster Constructional Engineering. Mr. Michael Astley, Freemason, special constable, church church warden, personnel manager of Baily & Foster. All good Christians, these captains of industry.*

*Knock on the door.  
"Come in."  
Enter. I wish I had a cloth cap, I could sort of wring it around in my hands.*

*"What can I do for you?"  
I can see a hint of recognition.  
"Are there any vacancies for riggers?"*

*"Have you worked for us before?"  
"No!"  
"I think you have."*

*The game, as they say, is up.  
Where do I go now? I'll try Labour Force. I'm not walking that. I'll have to spend some of my seventeen and a half new pence.*

*A bit of class this Labour Force. Fitted carpets. A genuine plastic chandelier. Loads of veneer & frosted glass. A glass window marked Enquiries, where presumably one may enquire.*

*"Can I help you?"  
"Are there any vacancies for riggers?"*

*"Are you a member?"  
"A member?"  
"A member of Labour Force."  
Obviously she isn't joking.*

*"NO!"  
"You must first apply for membership. If you are accepted, then you will be considered for employment."*

*The mind boggles.  
"I'm a member of the Casino Club. Is that any good?"*

*Obviously she isn't amused.  
These interviews are getting shorter. Not even time to touch my forelock.*

*Where to now. I'll walk towards town. You never know your luck in the big city.*

*What's this place? Laurence Stotts, Electrical Engineers. Wanted, men for semi-skilled work. Might as well give it a try.*

## V.I.P.

*I am led to the office of the Production Manager. How many V.I.P.s will I see, before this day is done?*

*He has a face like a robber's dog.  
"Good morning."*

*"Good morning". As humbly as I possibly can.*

*"You're seeking employment?"  
"That's right."  
Perhaps I should say sir.*

*"Have you done any work of this kind before?"  
"I don't know what kind of work it is."*

*He peers at me suspiciously.  
"Armature winding."  
"No! But I can learn."*

*We haven't got round to the most important aspect of the job. I'd better broach the subject.*

*"What's the rate of pay?"  
He stiffens slightly.  
"The rate?"  
"How much."*

*I think he's one of those people who think that to discuss money is rather vulgar.*

*"The basic rate for forty two hours is thirteen pounds, forty eight new pence."*

*I don't remember seeing this character on The Comedians.  
I try to pull myself together.*

*"How much did you say?"  
"Thirteen pounds, forty eight new pence for forty two hours."  
"Do you get paid three times a week?"*

*Thus endeth another interview.  
I continue my trek towards the city. Having been beset upon by thieves four times already today, it comes as no great surprise when a good Samaritan, having heard my tale of woe, supplies me with a pound note.*

*He tells me of his journey to the dreaded Carey Springs works. Even the strongest souls feel a chill of fear at the mention of Carey's. Times are hard, not to say desparate. But Carey Springs!*

## GESTAPO COURSE

*The owner is a Manchester Member of Parliament who once took a business management course run by the Gestapo. The choice is not easy.*

*The furnaces of Carey's or the pangs of hunger on the dole. I decide to starve, for the time being.*

*I'm wondering if I've made a wise decision. My good Samaritan tells me that he knew a man who drew almost twenty pounds from Carey's and only worked fifty four hours to get it....*

*What would a simple soul like me do with all that money?*

*Thanking my benefactor I continue my journey.*

*I come to the potato warehouse in Ancoats. "Men Wanted" — with muscles in their urine. I don't have any muscles at all that I know of, but here goes....*

*He'll send me for a week to be going on with, report at four o'clock in the morning. (Is there really such a time as four in the morning?)*

*Anyway, it must be better than dole money, and it's very interesting work, stacking potatoes.*

*So now I will celebrate my good fortune by spending my newly acquired wealth on a couple of pints and a packet of Park Drive.*

*The last of the big spenders is back in business.*

## Dead Weight on YOUTH

**AS 1972 OPENS, THOUSANDS OF** young people who left school six months ago find themselves out of work, with no prospects of getting a job. All they have been taught in their schools about being "hard-working, industrious, responsible citizens", all the dreams and illusions which the schools inculcate about 'getting on in the world' have been shattered.

Particularly hard hit are areas like Kirby and towns in the north-east like Sunderland, where dole queues stretch right out of the Youth Employment office down along the pavement.

In London and the south, the problem is not so much that there are no jobs for young people, but that the jobs there are, are dead-end jobs, pushing brooms and menial, pointless tasks. In a situation where hundreds of thousands of skilled workers are out of work, the employers do not need to embark on training schemes to meet their requirements for skilled labour. They cut back on the intake of apprentices — and to hell with any future prospects.

What this means for many young people is that they are being denied forever the right to make their living in a skilled trade. Once past the age of sixteen or seventeen, they become ineligible to start an apprenticeship.

Unemployed youth under eighteen don't even get full dole and have to fall back on their parents, who are themselves feeling the full brunt of the Tories' attacks on living standards. This situation creates many conflicts between the youngsters and their families, and intensifies the pressures on them to accept virtually any job and for any wage. Those who have left school and have no stamps cannot even claim the few shillings allowed to youth in unemployment pay.

Young people today have grown up in a period when living standards and wages have been forced up by the strength of the trade union movement. They have grown up believing that this is the natural way of things and that they could look forward to a future. Now the Tories are saying to the youth that they can have no future!

Young workers stand largely outside the Trade Union movement. Their interests have been neglected by the union leaders for too long!

Today's youth is tomorrow's working class. The organised workers' movement must demand a future for youth. We must not allow young workers to be used as cheap labour and demoralised on the dole. 'Left' trade union leaders must put their fine words about the rights of youth into action by fighting for those rights, drawing young workers into the trade union movement, and giving young workers full democratic rights within the trade unions.

Ken Stratford.



THE RE-APPEARANCE OF HIGH UN-employment after 30 years of "full" employment is a mystery to workers who have grown up in the belief that the 'bad old days' of the 1920s and '30s could never return.

Yet only a generation ago permanent high unemployment was generally regarded as an unpleasant but inevitable fact of life, to be suffered patiently by the working class.

Apologists for the boss-class system found all sorts of explanations to show it as a natural part of the social order, and more often than not they blamed it on the workers themselves, whose greed for wages and refusal to work very long hours was supposed to have priced the goods they produced right out of the market.

Karl Marx had, a hundreds years earlier, already cut through these fairy tales used by the bosses to con the workers. Hammering out a working class way of understanding the world he proved that, given the system of private property and market competition (capitalism), unemployment was not only inevitable, but necessary for capitalism's survival.

His analysis holds as true today as it did then, and any strategy for the fight against unemployment demands an understanding of this analysis.

The government economists are talking again about "acceptable" and "normal" levels of unemployment, but for us the right to work is basic. We reject their 'economics'. The working class does not want apologies for the failures of capitalism, but an understanding of it and a strategy for changing it.

### OWNERSHIP

Let us look at how the capitalist system operates.

The total capital of the owners of the means of production can be separated into two parts: Fixed capital (machines, raw materials, buildings, etc.) and variable capital (wages). In the process of production the value of the finished goods which have been produced becomes greater than the value of the total capital outlay. If he sells these finished goods on the market, the capitalist receives the difference between his total outlay and the new value of the goods.

Now where did this "extra" or surplus that has been created come from? Fixed capital cannot "create" income. A machine standing idle can no more produce value than a block of wood.

It is only through the activity of living labour (the worker operating the machine) that additional value can be created.

So we see that, if it is only living labour that increases the value of the raw materials, then the worker must not only produce enough to cover his own wages, but also works over and above this to produce the surplus for the capitalist.

This surplus value is used to maintain the capitalist (on a very luxurious standard); but by far the largest proportion of surplus value is re-invested in more machinery and wages. Competition between firms forces the continual expansion of the firm (or its elimination) and the accumulation of more capital. Expansion allows the bigger and richer firm to rationalise and cut costs and hence produce goods more cheaply than its competitors. Other firms must follow suit, or their goods will be too expensive in comparison, and they will be unable to sell.

### EXPLOITATION

Starting from these basic facts we can now begin to explain a few things about the capitalist system. Because human labour is the only thing which creates value the capitalist seeks to make the workers' labour more productive. This means greater use of machinery to enable less workers to produce more goods.

Early capitalism needs workers and recruits them from the land and later the colonies. When labour is in demand workers can force wages up: competition by bosses for workers to exploit leads to a general increase in wages - which cuts into profits. High wage rates spur the capitalist to introduce labour-saving - that is, wage-saving - machinery.

But competition between capitalists leads to bigger and better machinery being introduced, and larger masses of capital being invested, to compete effectively demands bigger and bigger initial concentrations of wealth. The proportion of fixed capital increases, while that of variable capital decreases.

# The BENEFITS of UNEMPLOYMENT -for the bosses by Phil Lewis

### PRESSURE

This has the effect of putting greater pressure on the capitalist to hold on to every last piece of the surplus possible, if he is to accumulate and grow and survive in competition.

He struggles to keep the rate of profit up. If he invests £100 and has £110 at the end of a period, then the rate of profit is 10%. If the investment is £200 and he winds up with only £215 at the end of the time, the rate is only 7½%.

*It is only if the added productivity of labour made possible by the increased investment is proportionate or high that the rate of profit can be kept up. And if the capitalist can hold on to as much of it as possible.*

Here too the struggle with the workers intensifies. There is no escape from the struggle for the surplus.

The effect of the permanent revolution in production technique is a tendency towards shaking more and more workers out of production in technological redundancies. However, in an expanding and dynamic economy most are absorbed again before long into the economy.

### CYCLES

Superimposed on this tendency to technological redundancies are the effects of the boom-slump cycle which, though its pulse-time has varied from period to period, has been a permanent feature of capitalism.

The capitalist system is divided against itself. It produces goods for consumption - all economic activity, even the production of machines, ultimately produces goods that must be consumed. The rich are limited in number. No matter how much waste and luxury they indulge in, their consumption is limited. The masses must consume the main part of society's product.

To consume in a market economy they must buy. What they can buy depends on their income. Workers have only their wages.

As organiser of one side of the capitalist system the capitalist must, as explained above, fight to keep wages as low as possible.

But as the seller of what is produced, he is crippled by the resulting limited buying power of the masses.

What prevents the system from sinking into a permanent slump of overproduction? The fact that for a period of time a large part of economic activity is not directly concerned with mass consumption goods: the production of means of production, machines, etc. There is a time-lag between investment in equipment for production and the point at which most of it starts producing goods that depend for sale on the buying power of the masses.

This has meant that capitalism has developed in a lurching, irregular way, in boom-slump cycles.

The cycles begin with new investment, producing employment and effective demand in the consumer goods sector. As the investment in means of production matures there is both an added flow of goods and less demand, as workers employed on the finished goods (for example builders) are laid off or go on short time.

Other aspects of capitalism, such as imbalances and disproportions, combine with these cycles to cause slumps. The slump produces waste, destruction of capital (as in the '30s), thus eventually creating the precondition for a new upward cycle - in the way that a war creates the need for new building.

In the boom-slump cycle unemployment is a vital necessity for capitalism's continued existence. The boss need to treat workers like other raw material, and to be able to either use them or leave them unused as his interests dictate.

### "RESERVE ARMY"

And in 'normal' times the opening up of new markets, the creation of new industries, the reconstruction of old ones, all involve variations in conditions which are best served by a system with a pool of unemployed that can be either immediately drawn into the production process during a boom or thrown back in during a slump.

The capitalist must seize the chance when business is brisk, thus compensating for times

when business is slack. He must increase his operations in period of boom and be able to slacken off in slumps if he is to stay in the race. Thus he needs a "reserve army" of unemployed ready at hand - like just so many pawns without lives, personalities or rights of their own.

There used to be a 'normal' level of unemployment of something around - usually above - the present level in Britain. The unemployed, like the poor, were 'always with us'.

The catastrophic levels of the Great Depression, and the very low level of unemployment since the War, are both exceptional. There are signs that capitalism is now returning to normal here.

The massive economic expansion of the last 25 years was a virtual new industrial revolution (based on the electronics industry, atomic power, aircraft etc). It is coming to an end. There is a general, world-wide slowing down of the economy. Some of the classical slump conditions are present, such as a recession in the machine tools industry. International competition is becoming fiercer, and the struggle between the bosses is getting sharper. As they seek to be more competitive they strive more than ever to keep wages down and push up productivity. The Industrial Relations Act is one weapon in this tug of war. Unemployment is another.

It is Tory policy - as it was also Labour Government policy - to raise unemployment and keep it at such a level that it can be used to create a downward pressure on wages and put a damper on workers' militancy.

### PRODUCTIVITY

The capitalist aims to keep the number of workers employed, and his wage bill, at a minimum. At the same time, he expands production in three ways:

1. By increasing the hours of work put in while keeping the same or less workers, i.e., overtime and shift-working.
2. By extracting more labour from workers through use of more efficient machinery and productivity deals.
3. By employing less skilled labour.

Increasing the work done by those employed creates unemployed. Through overtime, increased productivity and the use of less skilled labour, the capitalists swell the ranks of the Reserve Army.

Workers are faced with a vicious circle. Because of high unemployment, competition for jobs keeps wages low. Because of low wages, those employed are forced to do more overtime and are more likely to accept the immediate attractions of productivity payments.

The more work the employed put in for the boss, the more they create the conditions for their own defeat in the fight for better wages and conditions, and the more they help increase the numbers of unemployed.

### UNITY

Thus we see that the fight against unemployment is not only the fight of those already out of work, because the existence of a large number of unemployed threatens the wages and conditions of all workers.

If the unemployed are unorganised, they will be used to compete for jobs and hence lower the wage rate.

*The trade union movement must link up both the employed and unemployed workers in the one struggle.*

The demand for the right to work is a serious challenge to the system which relies for its very existence on the human wastage of permanent unemployment. The bosses will say the demand is unrealisable.

But, as Leon Trotsky put it in 1938, "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. 'realisability' or 'unrealisability' is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery."



# IN BRIEF

## BUILDING BOOM, 1972-STYLE

Not so long ago a would-be joker commented that we might soon be seeing some imaginative new proposals from the Government to create jobs: a crash programme to build new... Labour Exchanges.

But it isn't safe to joke about this government. In the week before Christmas it did come up with bright new plans for new-style jobhunting.

Labour Exchanges will be made brighter. Some of the 'lower depths' atmosphere may disappear — the hard benches, bad ventilation, the long waits for bad service.

In the future, unemployed industrial workers may even be given some of the amenities which have always been available to the better class of unemployed person, the genteel unfortunates on the Professional & Executive Register — who get comfy chairs, good ventilation, potted plants and even magazines to read.

No doubt it's all part of the preparations for the next election. Think of the slogans: "Unemployment's Better With The Conservatives!"

## I.R.A. BRAINWASHES KIDS...

The IRA really is becoming an all-time bogey. A Colchester stamp dealer, finding that among a recent batch he had bought were some British 2½ and 3p stamps overprinted "DAIL ULADH 1971" and "SUPPORT SINN FEIN", commented in horror: "A lot of children come into my shop at this time of year to buy stamps."

One shudders to think what might happen to an innocent British child who unknowingly bought such a stamp...

## DRUNK AND DANGEROUS

Poor Dennis Healey. The other week he got the full Press treatment when it was reported that he'd been given a breathalyser test after a minor road accident. They wanted to make sure he wasn't a danger to the public.

Good! I hold no brief for drunken drivers and have no sympathy with the 'rights of the motorist' lobby.

But did anyone ever think of giving Healey a breathalyser test during all his days as "Defence" Minister when, as a particular favourite of the power drunk militarists in the Pentagon he was in control of weapons of mass destruction and clearly befuddled by his position.

During that six-year binge Healey dished out lethal weapons to fellow imperialists and their stooges around the world to maim and kill innocent people. Their cost in unpaid pension rises and unbuilt schools, hospitals and houses means many thousands of other lives still being warped, maimed and impoverished.

Isn't it time that someone invented a political breathalyser.

## PIG PRODUCTION UP

Pickets, strikers, black people, Irish militants and unemployed youngsters — BEWARE!

In the last year the bosses' state recruited 3,000 new members into its police force.

After due processing, they will have developed all the endearing characteristics of their species.

## MURDERING SCAPEGOAT

When William Calley was convicted of murdering at least 22 civilians at My Lai and sentenced to life imprisonment, few felt entirely happy about it. The Great Society's 'silent majority' found its voice and made a hero out of him. Critics of US policy throughout the world, with less than tender feelings for this cold-blooded murderer of women and babies, could nonetheless see that he had been set up as a scapegoat for the whole US Army, for the Pentagon and for the Political Administration — on whose orders, or as a result of whose policies, such massacres occur daily throughout the war and sometimes, as with the bombing, on a much larger scale.

It will be some time before accounts are settled with those ultimately responsible. But what of the others who, along with Calley, faced charges in specific connection with My Lai?

They have all been acquitted! Every one of them. The final acquittal has been that of the Colonel charged with hushing things up in the first place.

Despite evidence by members of the helicopter Scout Company, who stated that they had informed him that there had been indiscriminate killings, the Colonel was found free of all guilt — thanks to the evidence of none other than Captain Medina: who was himself only recently cleared of all responsibility!

## Red Biddie

scientific research, which is supported by 'society', and which can have big effects on society, for good or bad. "Pure" research is by its nature open-ended and can't be planned precisely — but when it comes to 'applied' science, social control is necessary.

The trouble is that no-one has asked "society". The question is one of control of science by the Government, which is not quite the same thing. We can see how competent the Government is to control science if we look at the figures.

£230 million out of £580 million spent by the Government on research goes to military purposes. At the same time, very little is done on cleaning up the pollution poisoning our environment or on developing agricultural techniques to help the starving two thirds of the world. (Not, of course, that lack of research is the main problem in attacking pollution or starvation — a lot could be done just by applying existing scientific discoveries.)

It is certainly true that a lot of scientific research could be redirected in a more socially responsible fashion. But no socialist can put any trust in a big business government's ability or willingness to implement social responsibility.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

The main motive behind the Rothschild proposals is probably that the Government, caught by the cold wind of economic crisis, is making a money-saving drive in the field of scientific research. In the USA, already, research and development spending in industry went down 8% in real terms between 1969

and 1970. In Britain, the prospect is that even less money will be spent in 1975 than in the present year.

A rise of 4-5% in spending on science is necessary each year just to keep up with the increasing complexity and cost of scientific equipment. So what happens when spending is cut?

In the USA, 12.8% of new graduates in chemical engineering fail to get a job. 10.3% of new graduates in chemistry are unemployed. A survey of graduating engineers showed that 10% had no job.

In Britain, at least 5,000 graduates — roughly 10% of British universities' 1971 output — are unemployed, or in temporary jobs not using their qualifications.

These 5,000 include many scientists. According to the secretary of Oxford University Appointments Committee, "post-doctoral scientists" (i.e. students who have done an extra course of research after their degree) "are almost unemployable."

Thus we have the absurd situation of people being given elaborate and expensive advanced training — and then not being able to use that training!

It was the capitalist private profit system that first harnessed the potentialities of science on any large scale. But today that system is showing itself increasingly incapable of using the resources of science.

Only a socialist system which does away with the absurdities of capitalist economic crisis can do that.

and in fact it so happens that these days in Vietnam officers have as much to fear from their 'own' men as from the Vietnamese. In the last year 45 of them (at least) have been blown up.

As a cynical Prussian king once remarked — "When the bayonets begin to think, then we are lost".

# SCIENCE

IN ALL THE TURMOIL OF recent years, nothing shook academic professordom quite so much as a threat to their money. A couple of years ago there was a proposal that lecturers' pay should depend on their teaching ability, as assessed by students. Now there is a new threat, to funds for research, and the academics' response, though a good deal less vigorous and dramatic, has been almost equally united.

The Government has published a report (the Rothschild Report), which recommends that part of the money at present going to scientific Research Councils should go to government departments instead.

Although the report is meant to be a suggestion for discussion, not a definite Government decision, the Government has stated that it approves of the basic principle of the report.

£1200 MILLION

At present about £1200 million a

year is spent on scientific research in Britain. £580 million of this comes from the Government. Of that £94 million is distributed through five independent Research Councils mainly for "pure" research which has no definite immediate practical application. The Rothschild Report proposes that £28 million of the money of three of the Councils — the Agricultural Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Natural Environment Research Council — should go instead to Government departments. Those departments will then use that money to finance research on particular projects, perhaps through the Research Councils, perhaps not.

The argument is that much of the research sponsored by those three Councils is in fact research with definite practical applications in view. This 'applied' research is at present directed in whatever fields the Research Council chooses. The Rothschild Report claims that the principle ought to be "the customer (i.e. the Government Department) says what he wants, the contractor (i.e. the Research Council or other establishment) does it (if he can) and the customer pays."

## SOCIAL CONTROL

On the face of it there is some value in this argument. Why should scientists be considered as some sort of supermen who can dispose of millions of pounds in whatever direction they fancy? Surely 'society' has a right to control over

**Martin Thomas.**



# BANGLA DESH: Roots of the conflict

THE INDIAN VICTORY IN EAST BENGAL HAS DESTROYED PAKISTAN AS IT WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN ITS RETREAT FROM THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT 25 YEARS AGO. THE INDIANS HAVE CLEARED OUT THE MURDEROUS PAKISTANI ARMY WHOSE SLAUGHTER OF THE EAST BENGALIS DROVE 12 MILLION REFUGEES INTO INDIA.

EAST PAKISTAN HAS BECOME THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF BANGLADESH. BUT HOW INDEPENDENT IS IT? AND WHAT SORT OF LIBERATION HAS, SO FAR, BEEN ACHIEVED BY THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH?

**Jim Webb** EXPLAINS WHAT HAS HAPPENED — AND WHY.

DURING the days of British rule in India it was in Bengal that the terrorist and revolutionary movements against it were born. Bengal, East and West, has always been in the forefront of anti-imperialist and anti-boss class struggle. Today, in spite of the years of partition with East Bengal in Pakistan and West Bengal in India, the Bengali tradition of militancy lives on.

It's no accident that revolutionary ferment has erupted in both the East and West. It's this revolutionary struggle of the Bengali masses, a struggle which has threatened to light the spark of workers' revolution throughout the Indian subcontinent, that is so much feared by both the Indian and Pakistani ruling classes, by their imperialist backers, and by the bureaucrats of both Russia and China. (The Chinese have consistently backed the ultra-reactionary military dictatorship of Yahya Khan and denounced the Bangladesh freedom fighters as "fascist provocateurs".)

## "PAKISTAN"

For years East Pakistan lived under the almost colonial yoke of the West, though separated from it by 1,000 miles of Indian territory. Over the past ten years the standard of living of the East has fallen steadily, while unemployment has swelled massively.

In fact, even according to an official report by the Pakistan Government Planning Commission, there has been a net transfer of resources of £1,000 million from the East to the West in the 20-year period since Independence.

In the last 12 years during the period of military dictatorship, the situation worsened and the East Bengali workers and peasants frequently took to the streets. In this situation the AWAMI LEAGUE built up its support with a very mild and non-militant nationalism. It was able to gain the support of the masses only because the pro-Moscow left tail-ended behind the Awami League, while the pro-Peking left opted out of any serious struggle due to Peking's long-standing friendship with the dictator Ayub and then with Yahya Khan.

But the workers and peasants of the East would not lie down. A general strike in 1969 which engulfed both wings of Pakistan brought down Ayub Khan and

ushered in Yahya Khan, who survived only because he promised elections and a swift transfer to civilian rule. When the elections came in December 1970 they dealt a hammer blow to Yahya.

In the West, Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party won a majority on a programme of sweeping nationalisation (and poisonous anti-Indian nationalism). In the East, the years of frustration of both Hindus and Moslems gave the Awami League a 90% majority.

## AWAMI LEAGUE

The programme of the Awami League, expressed in its Six-point Charter, was for a Pakistani federation, not for independence from the West.

Nevertheless, the ruling West Pakistan military clique was unable to tolerate the new situation. Apart from the crippling effects on the West Pakistan economy, the control by the East of its own military forces posed a possible threat, especially as the masses were taking seriously the Awami League's left talk and were daily clamouring louder for secession.

The character of the Awami League's leadership (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Co.) was further made abundantly clear by its reactions to Yahya Khan's veto and the advance of the West Pakistan troops onto Eastern soil. Because they feared the masses, they made no effort to arm them. Instead, Mujib feverishly looked for a compromise in negotiations with Yahya, while the latter quietly moved his troops in for the kill.

The tragic results are well enough known. Bangla Desh was declared after tens of thousands had been massacred, Mujib taken prisoner, and the Awami League leadership had skipped to India. After the invasion the Awami League in exile appealed to everyone but the masses to solve the problem for them — the Indian capitalist, the United Nations and even the British Tories!

## MUKTI BAHINI

But the Bangla Desh masses fought on. They had no safe place to go; they had to fight. The Mukti Bahini was set up, at first led by sections of the rebel East Pakistan Rifles. Workers, peasants, unemployed graduates, students and even schoolchildren flocked to the newly formed Mukti Bahini. This brave force fought on for national self-determination with few weapons against tremendous odds.

Until the outbreak of the war between India and Pakistan they received few weapons, and only light ones at that, from their "friends" Russia and India, who feared that a well armed guerilla force, outside the control of the capitalist politicians, would be a threat to private property in East Bengal. And that could be infectious. So, the Mukti's actions were confined to isolated acts of sabotage, of destroying the jute trade (which they did very effectively) and disrupting lines of communication.

## REFUGEES

As the fighting continued the refugees poured over the border into India. Since 1947 something like 5 million East Bengalis had crossed into West Bengal, adding to the ferment created by the mass unemployment and under-employment there and, since the mid-sixties, by the militant labour struggles of the workers of Calcutta, and agitation on the land.

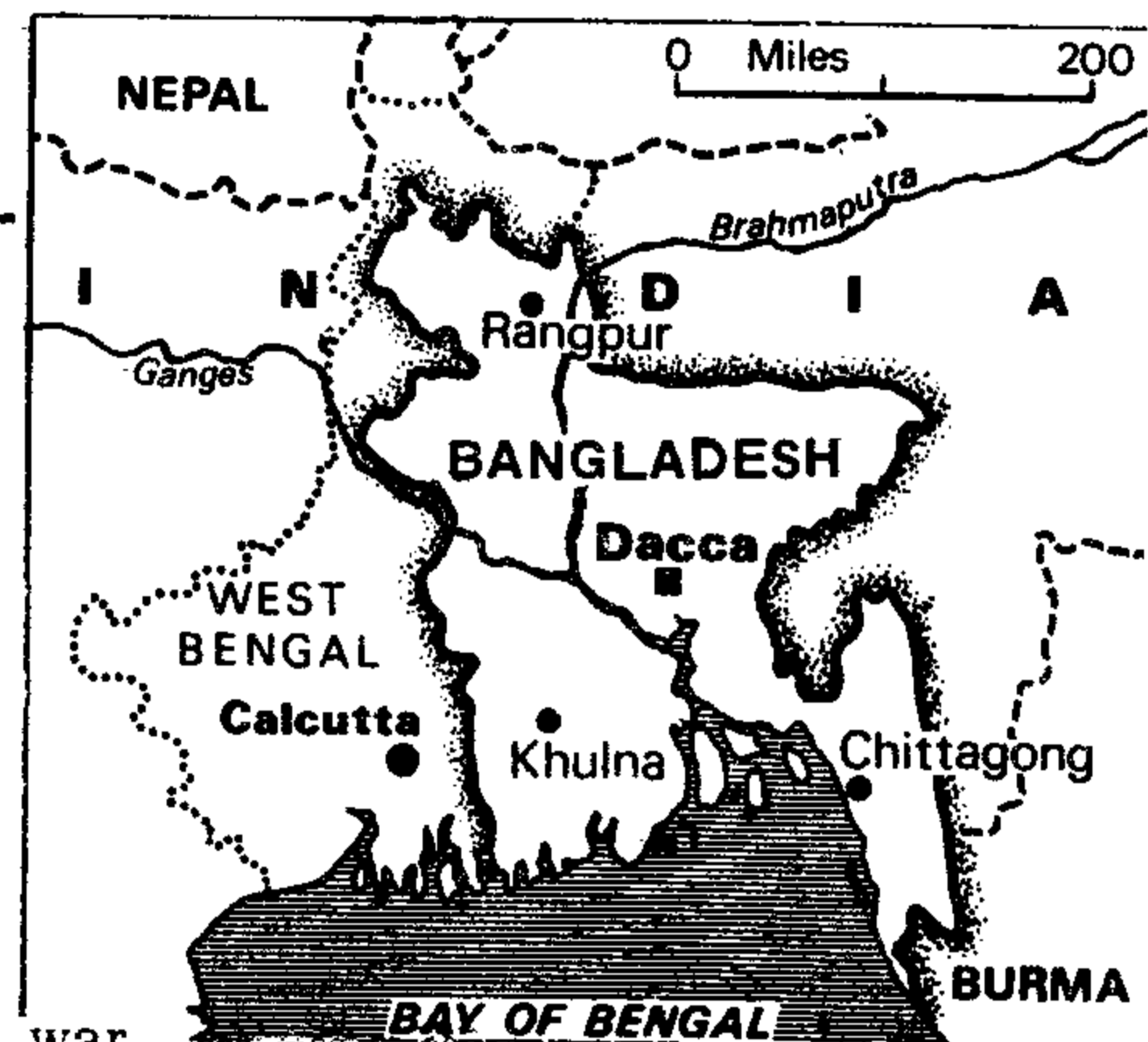
These mass strikes, demonstrations and land occupations in West Bengal have so far been controlled and diverted by the two "communist" parties and the capitalist Congress Party working in tandem. Elections in 1967, 1969 and '71 saw massive support for the Communist Parties — who canalised the revolutionary drive of the masses into coalition government with the capitalist parties. When the situation started to look threatening for the 'democrat' Gandhi, she disbanded governments and placed West Bengal under President's Rule — as it remains to this moment.

If the refugees had been allowed onto the streets of Calcutta and into the surrounding countryside, the situation would have become uncontrollable. The refugee camps became, then, the only solution — for the time being. No doubt Gandhi also required them as a lever to intervene in East Bengal, taking the chance to strike decisively at Pakistan.

## WAR

The preparations for war and the war itself momentarily de-fused the social crisis in India by engulfing it in a wave of nationalist hysteria and bogus national unity. On October 24th, Gandhi made a speech to the nation appealing for unity and maximum production, i.e. no strikes. She was openly supported by both "Communist" parties including the West Bengal CPI (M).

The swift Indian victory fur-



ther enhanced the prestige of Gandhi and the Congress Party. But this can only be temporary. The basic problems of the Indian workers and peasants remain unsolved.

For the Pakistan ruling class the situation is black. Pakistan is reduced to half its former territory and less than half its former population. They have been humiliated by their arch-enemy and they are facing bankruptcy. Even prior to the war, given the disruption in the East, the economy was in ruins. Now that a large source of their wealth has been removed, the Pakistan capitalists are driven to a frenzy. Bhutto has replaced Yahya and mouths promises of a thousand years' war with India and sweeping nationalisations.

## BANGLA DESH

The Indian Army justifies its continuing presence in Bangla Desh by posing as a simple peace-keeping force, preventing the Bengalis from massacring collaborators. Though the very wide publicity given to certain revenge incidents might seem to justify it, this is largely a sham.

Indian bureaucrats and police were already moving into Bangla Desh prior to the victory of the Indian forces. This was done quite openly, with the blessing of the Awami League leadership. The Indian Government wants to help the Awami League leaders to get back in the saddle because the guerillas are not going to be satisfied after all their hardships by the brand of "socialism" offered by the Awami League.

Thus the "law and order" line of the Indian Army conceals definite anti-revolutionary aims. The Indian ruling class must have stability in Bangla Desh if they are to have any hope of keeping control in West Bengal. It needs a pliant regime in Bangladesh, and despite the window-dressing this has in fact been acknowledged among the Indian top brass.

Although Aurora, Commander on India's Eastern Front, said "I imagine it will be a matter of weeks not months" before the Indian forces get out of Bangla Desh, other military leaders were more blunt. A high placed Brigadier in the Indian Army told Nicholas Tomalin of the Sunday Times — "We are taking territory and we are not ashamed of it. Bangla Desh must simply be ours if it is to remain stable. Some semblance of democracy can be created but no one of any

Continued p.11



## New Plant, Less Jobs

The Tory offensive on jobs has really hammered the Steel industry. Dozens of figures can be quoted to show how steel works are being 'rationalised', with thousands of workers being paid off, prematurely 'retired' or put on short time. Productivity deals have been introduced to give some workers higher rates of pay, at the expense of losing traditional rights which were won to safeguard their jobs.

Nationalisation of steel is being used to push through a savage Rationalisation and re-equipping of the industry at the expense of the working class through taxes and price rises. Thus they hope to make British Steel profitable enough to compete with foreign steel combines such as U.S. Steel and Nippon Steel.

The Tories will push Rationalisation to the limit, bringing about even more cutbacks, redundancies and the building of new concentrated steel complexes which can be run with a minimum number of men.

### TEESSIDE

On Teesside a lot of workers are pinning their hopes on the building of a new steel complex at Redcar. But the experiences with the recently built Basic Oxygen Steel plant show that the few hundred jobs created were at the expense of thousands lost, as small local works closed down or cut back.

The new ore terminal and blast furnaces which could come to Teesside would create some jobs: but nearly all the other steel works in the area would close down, so that job opportunities would again be far less than redundancies.

During the 1930s an efficiency expert paid by the bankers and insurance brokers who owned the local steel plants had the power to sack men on the spot and was later nicknamed "the Hangman", because everywhere he went there were mass redundancies, cutbacks, and closures.

Today the Tory hangmen are butchering not only steel but all major industries. They plan to make Steel super-efficient, then sell it back to their financial backers on the cheap. Steel workers must fight all attempts to enforce further re-

dundancies, to step up rationalisation or to denationalise the industry.

Stanley Lee, AUEW

### AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS WORKERS FIGHT PROD DEAL CON

Merseyside, Jan. 10th.

180 clerical workers (CAWU) are on official strike here over a 15% (£4) cost of living claim.

In December 1969 the workers signed a productivity deal. They were told that a joint committee to work out savings would be set up and that there would be a pay review in 12 months' time.

The committee very rarely met, and in May 1970 they were told that there would be no pay review. As a 'consolation prize' though, the clerical labour force was cut by one third - mostly by "natural wastage".

In June the workers formally submitted a 15% cost of living claim. The management refused to offer more than £2 (7%).

Last year the workers refused to do overtime in the annual stocktaking. The management then said they would lay off all the manual workers for the time the stocktaking took up.

They also threatened to bring in the executive 'monthly' staff to do the stocktaking.

The workers had meanwhile arranged for national officials to meet the Management. At first the Management agreed, but then refused - unless the stocktaking was done.

In December 6 clerical workers were told that they would work in another department for the time of the stocktaking - or else ...

There was an immediate walkout. The strike was made official on January 3rd.

## MACHINE TOOLS

### "no good news"

JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS, A delegation of convenors and shop stewards from the Coventry area machine tools industry went with two Coventry Labour MPs to see Nicholas Ridley, Tory junior Minister responsible for the machine tool industry. They told him of the "desperate situation of an industry threatened with disaster."

He replied: "I am afraid I have no good news for you. Nothing more can be done for the stimulation of engineering as a whole and of investment in particular."

This contemptuous kick in the teeth means the Tory Government will apply its lame duck, rat-race policy to the Machine Tools industry in spite of the loss of men's jobs and the waste of lives, training, skill and experience this means.

The machine tools industry is a barometer of the economy, the first to be affected by new trends and conditions.

During expansion, industry needs to re-equip and re-tool. In times of depression, it holds back from spending in this field.

### DISASTER

To say that last year was disastrous for the Machine Tool industry is to put it mildly. Most firms reported substantial losses for 1971 and the Machine Tools Trade Association stated that new orders are 28% down. The result has been large scale sackings of highly skilled men who have spent a lifetime in the

industry.

For example, Alfred Herberts the largest machine tool manufacturers in Europe, have sacked between 3,000 and 4,000 workers, over 30% of their whole labour force.

Whole plants have been closed down, as the large firms cut back and rationalise. Many small firms have gone to the wall, while others have been taken over by the big boys. John Browns closed the famous Coventry firm of Samuel Gill; Tube Investments took over Coventry Gauge and Tool, then closed one of the Coventry factories in spite of promises to the contrary; and Alfred Herberts, after taking-over, closed Holbrooks and Lockwood.

In some instances, craft apprentices were laid off part way through their training, and certainly there were far fewer Machine Tool apprenticeships offered to 1971 school leavers than for many years.

Obviously machine tool workers are in for a hard fight, and need to combine on a national as well as a local level to fight every redundancy and closure as it arises. Every small firm, and there are many of them, must be organised. No productivity deals should be signed, and no overtime worked, while sacked workers are still on the stones! Cut the basic working week to 35 hours without loss of pay.

And work to get rid of this Tory Government which puts the profits of the few before the livelihoods of the many.

Dave Spencer

### BANGLADESH (from p.10)

honesty in Delhi or elsewhere pretends that it is the real reason that we are here. Bangla Desh will be like Calcutta, which we keep firmly under our thumb from Delhi, with no nonsense of local autonomy." (My Emphasis J.W.)

In this venture India may well be aided by ... the Pakistan Government! The generals and the politicians will unite against revolutionary threats. Mujib is released by Bhutto in the hope that he can help keep control. The Pakistan ruling class must try to cut its losses!

In India, the euphoria over the victory will quickly disappear. Social relations will become increasingly unstable. Especially in West Bengal, where the struggle of the Bangla Desh people will set an example.

Given the importance of West Bengal in the Indian economy and in Indian politics, and given the militancy of the workers, poor peasants and landless agricultural labourers, Bengal holds the key to the future of India. But the problem in Bengal, as in India as a whole, is still the absence of a revolutionary marxist leadership to lead the struggle to a victorious conclusion.

### BOLTON ROADWAYS

#### DRIVERS FIGHT ANTI-UNION VICTIMISATION

ALL THE DRIVERS WORKING FOR Bolton Roadways Ltd. are paid on a percentage basis - that is, they get a percentage of what their 'lorry' earns in a week. Apart from forcing the men to forget about their safety, under this system it's virtually impossible to work out what you should be paid.

Last month all the men joined the Transport & General Workers Union and elected three stewards. Over Christmas five men, including two of the stewards, were suspended. The reason given was lack of orders, but in the same week as the suspension two extra drivers were taken on.

An official strike was declared with only four drivers out of 21 still working. The pickets at the Bolton depot have turned away several lorries, but their main success is with blacking. The firm has been blacked by workers in the steel industry (where most of its business is), at Dunlops and at Esso among others.

## RR - Retreat on prod deals

BRISTOL. 6800 manual workers at Rolls-Royce aircraft factories returned to work on January 3rd. They have gained little from their 9 week strike for a £5 a week cost of living increase.

Management took a hard line from the start, offering only £1.50 with 50p offset against any national engineering increase, and demanding immediate progress on a proposed productivity deal. 6 weeks of limited action (a complete ban on overtime and a reduction of the working week to 37 hours) did not produce any new offer from management.

Having provoked the strike they stood firm and waited for the workers' determination to crumble. This did not happen despite a hysterical campaign in the local press, and a month's delay before the unions, chiefly the AUEW and the TGWU, decided to make the strike official.

Management's determination to win was in line with government policy to keep down wages, especially as Rolls-Royce pays among the highest wages in the area and a big increase there could have sparked off similar demands at other firms. Also, Bristol is the only part of the Combine not to have accepted productivity deals.

### SETTLEMENT

The final settlement was negotiated by national officials, and narrowly accepted at a stormy shop

stewards' meeting. It gave £1.50, backdated to October, with "further negotiations" on the offset clause.

This agreement will allow management to push ahead with the introduction of activity sampling and job grading. The firm has reduced its manual workforce in Bristol from 17,000 to under 7,000 in 10 years, and further cuts - possibly up to 2,000 jobs - are bound to result from the introduction of a productivity deal.

This is not an isolated attack by the Government-appointed management, brought in after the Company's stage-managed 'bankruptcy' last year. In Coventry 1,200 men were locked out during the recent tool-room strike, making a big contribution to its defeat; while vicious redundancies have been put through at the East Kilbride factory.

In the face of this onslaught the Rolls-Royce Combine Committee must be made into an effective fighting body to lead national action to defend workers' living standards and jobs.

Simon Temple TGWU



# WORKERS' FIGHT.

## Bosses get their Cards from Fisher Bendix workers

THE KIRKBY FISHER-BENDIX WORKERS ARE THE LATEST TO remind the Tories forcefully that this is 1972 and not 1931. This time round the fight against the dole queues begins *inside* the factories, not after the workers are out in the cold.

The workers at Fisher-Bendix have refused to allow the factory to close. On 5th. January they took over, marched to the Directors' offices, and TOLD THE MANAGEMENT TO GET OUT.

The management offered to postpone dismantling the machinery — for 26 days! A mass meeting of the workers rejected this generous concession, and told the management they must leave.

The workers have since controlled the factory. No machinery or goods will be allowed to leave until the owners agree to re-open the factory — with no redundancies. (Last year a 9-week strike defeated a plan for large scale redundancies.)

Workers patrol the factory and grounds to make sure they keep control. Mass meetings are being held weekly — and the families of the strikers are now being involved in the meetings. This is a real occupation, not a half-way house like UCS.

The Thorn Combine Committee (Thorns own Fisher-Bendix) have exposed the real reason behind the bosses' plans to shut up shop in Kirkby: in South Wales women working for the Thorns combine are on £14 a week, as against £24 in Kirkby.

The Committee has decided to fight for parity of wages throughout the combine, and meanwhile to fight redundancy by keeping control of the machinery.

The strikers are being backed up by the local labour movement: the Huyton, Prescott and Kirkby Trades Councils have called for a total stoppage and mass picket in support of the workers at Fisher-Bendix — on Friday January 14th.

Money is urgently needed. Send donations to Tom Staples at Northwood, Kirkby, Lancs.

Paul Barker

## Student Unions: more battles to come

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF students boycotted lectures on December 8th. and demonstrated against the Tory Government's proposal to hamstring Student Unions.

January 23rd. is the next NUS Day of Action. It is still essential for it to be a success, despite the fact that the Tories have now been forced to shelve the proposals for one year.

Student militancy, together with a degree of middle class dissatisfaction with the proposals, forced this retreat. Now we must turn retreat into a rout and force a complete withdrawal of the rest of Thatcher's plans.

The Government is determined to cut spending on education. First no free milk for children over 7, higher prices for school dinners and cut-backs on the building of secondary schools — and now, the attempt at Student Union "reforms".

The Department of Education and Science also proposes to replace student maintenance grants by loans at a competitive rate of interest to be paid back within 10 years.

The proposals on Student Union reform are part of the Tory attack on education, an attack which hits hardest at the working class.

The children in most need of milk and school dinners are from the working class. The schools in most need of repair and replacement are in working class areas. And the students who would have to rely on the largest loans would be from working class homes.

In addition, the Tory proposal to make membership of Student Unions optional is seen by students as part of the general attack on Trade Unions.

### ACTION

We need action now to show that students are determined to fight the "Consultative Document"'s plans to take control of finance out of the hands of the students themselves, and make membership of Unions optional.

January 23rd. is a Sunday. This is a good day to choose if you want to cause the least possible inconvenience to the Tories, and the University and college administrations.

It is not a good day if you want to stop the Tories' plans. Nonetheless, it must be supported.

But students must also boycott all lectures on Monday 24th. Jan.

### RYDER'S — STEWARDS STRESS UNITY

AT RYDER'S IN BOLTON THE stewards have claimed an across-the-board wage rise of £3 for all grades. But this time the bosses' regular response, the tearful routine of "nothing-in-the-kitty-lads", is close to the truth. Despite a serious cut-back in the labour force, some Ryder's workers have been on part-time since June.

But the stewards are asking: why should the workers pay the price?

The struggle against the Tories, however, will not be won in isolated 'days of action'. We must call for solidarity from the Trade Unions and work to build an alliance with the labour movement to defeat the Tories. If the Tories succeed against the Student Unions it will be one up for them in their battle to tame the Trade Unions through the Industrial Relations Act.

### UNITY

If the Tory Government is to be defeated, it cannot be done by students acting alone. The decisive front against the Tories is in the labour movement's battle against the Industrial Relations Act and unemployment. These also affect students.

In their own interest, if for no other reason, students must support all working class struggles. Because, when all is said and done, the attack on students is part of the Tory offensive against the working class.

Students should approach local Trades Councils and shop stewards committees for discussions on how best the struggles of workers and students can be linked.

The stewards have decided to reject any scheme which does not offer the same increase to all grades, men and women and, proportionately, part-time workers too. This is an important step forward, and is the least that could be done for workers like the canteen staff who supported all the one-day stoppages against the Industrial Relations Bill.

While the work-force stresses its unity, Ryder's management has opened its order book to the stewards in order to back up the tear-jerk routine. But it hasn't opened up Whitecroft's books!!

TO ENSURE SUCCESS workers at Ryder's must organise. They must get together with workers from other Whitecroft firms. Also they must fight for a clause in the agreement

guaranteeing either a full week's work or a full week's wages. Also vital is a no redundancies clause: cut the working week, with no loss of wages — not the work force!! Otherwise the gains of any wage rise will — like the last one — be whittled away by short-time and redundancies.

## Tenants take action

A VOTE OF THANKS TO WORKERS' FIGHT MEMBERS FOR THE ASSISTANCE they had given, was the conclusion of a successful first meeting of the tenants on the Brightmet council estate in Bolton, Lancashire.

Tenants had gathered at the local Church Hall in answer to a leaflet by a member who lives on the Estate. Their anger had been sparked off by the local council's contemptible scheme for repainting the houses on one part of this large estate.

The houses on the bus routes have been painted, whilst all the others have not! Thus if you passed through you would get the impression that the Council kept the whole Estate in good order. But you would be wrong!

These are just some of the things you get for £4 a week in Bolton: Large gaps in your windows and doors. Damp in your bedrooms. Leaking overflows. Doors and gates missing. Cracked steps and paths front and back. Cracked and broken toilets.

These are just six out of a list of over 40 complaints that the Council have failed to attend to after, in some cases 3 YEARS of complaints and reminders.

THE COUNCIL HAS EVEN IGNORED A DOCTOR'S NOTE WARNING OF THE DANGER TO A CHILD'S HEALTH.

A petition was passed round, and the meeting went on to discuss the coming Fair Rents Act and its implications. A Committee was elected to guide and organise the fight for the rights of council tenants.

The point was repeatedly made that to rely on Councillors to put things right would be a mistake as nothing had been done in the past, whichever political Party had controlled the Council. Only the organised strength of the tenants themselves could have any lasting success. Or, as one tenant put it: "If they won't put things right we'll have to make them."

Those present at the meeting agreed to contribute 5p per week to a fighting fund, and to ask all other tenants on the Estate to do the same.

Enquiries and messages of support should be sent to Howard Sweeney at 30 Moberly Road, Brightmet, Bolton Lancs. Letters from other Tenants Committees locally and nationally would be particularly welcome.