

WORKERS FIGHT

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Tory murder

IRISH AND BRITISH WORKERS STRIKE IN PROTEST

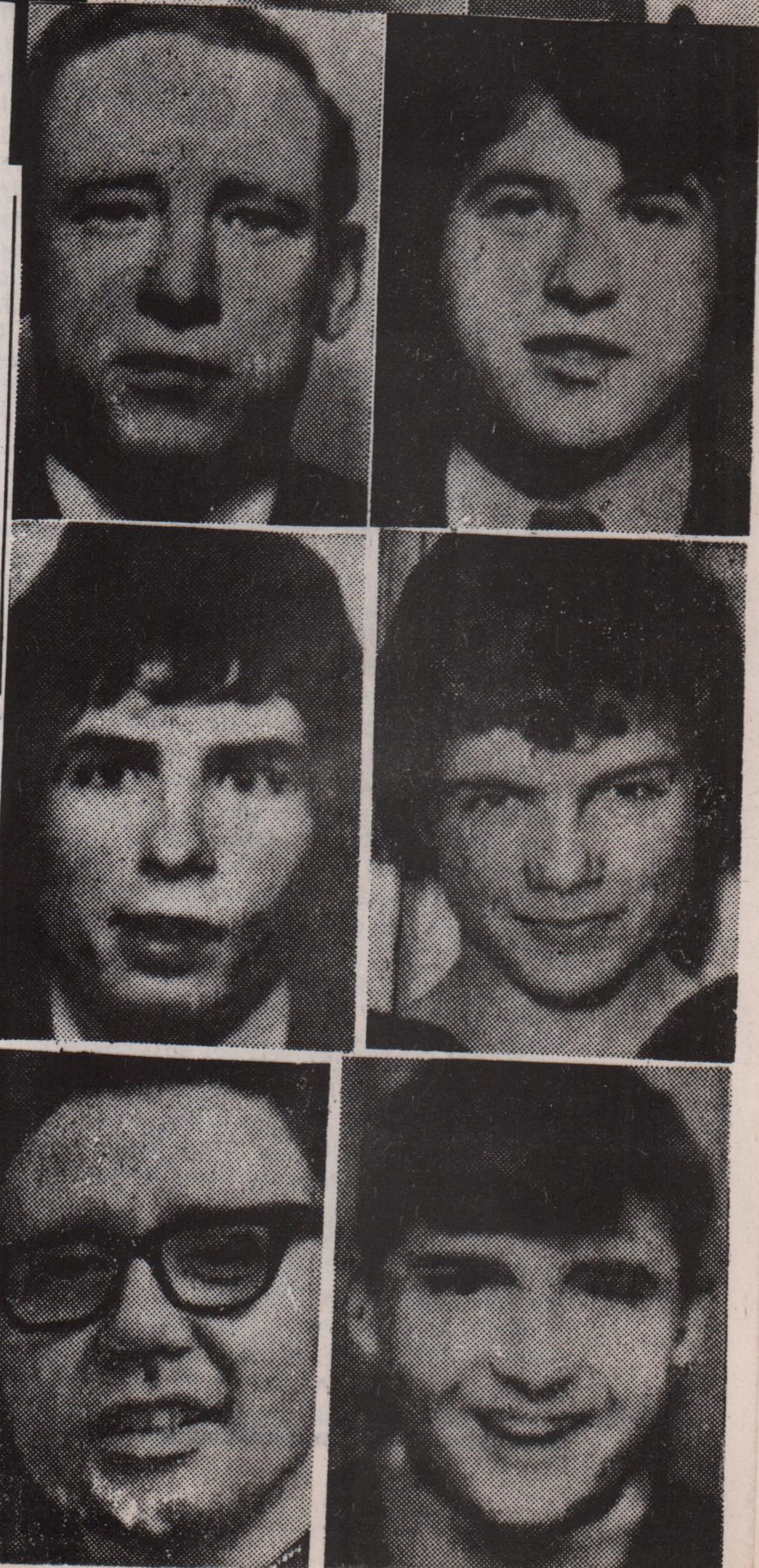
see pages 4-5



left to right,
top row:
Michael
Kelly
William Nash
Patrick
Doherty
James Wray
Gerald
Donaghy
Michael
McDaid
Bernard
McGuigan

Gerald
McKinney
John Young
Kelvin
McEllhiney
Jack Duddy
William
McKinney
Hugh Gilmore

left:
Help in the
street for one
of the
wounded



The Bosses Know The Score

Ever larger sections of the labour movement know that the miners' struggle is decisive, as far as the working class is concerned.

But let's not forget that the Tories are as keen to smash it as we in the labour movement are to defend it and aid it to win.

The Tories need a miners' defeat as much as we need a miners' victory.

A confidential document produced by the Confederation of British Industries states:

1) That the NUM is in the forefront of the trade unions' struggle at this critical time and must be beaten, particularly if the Industrial Relations Act is to have any effect in keeping up the rate of exploitation.

2) That the CBI's price restraint (bet you hadn't noticed that, brothers and sisters!) will be lifted in about October, allowing prices to rise by 10%: so they want us weak so that they'll reap the full benefits of their schemes.

We don't believe in a conspiracy theory of history, but the boss class sometimes makes us wonder!

At the very least they know which side they are on — and they mobilise their resources:

The tragedy is that the "leaders" of our side — the TUC — haven't a clue which side they are on, with the result that those in the front line, in this case the miners, are left to fight on their own.

Dockers paper calls for solidarity

We reprint an extract from a special broadsheet put out by THE HOOK, rank and file portworkers' paper.

OVER A QUARTER OF A MILLION miners are out on the first official strike since 1926. In 1926 the whole labour movement came out, in a general strike, in solidarity with the miners. The issue then was could the employers force a wage cut on the miners? That is the issue now. With the cost of living rising the way it is, the Coal Board's offer of £2 amounts to a cut in wages. The £2 works out at an increase of 7% — the maximum that the Tory government is allowing any worker to get. According to the official government figures, prices rose by 10.4% last year. If you take increased tax payments into account, the miners are facing a cut in wages of over £2.

But there is more to it than that. Prices rise at the same rate for every worker in the country, whether they be miner, docker or candlestick-maker. The Tory maximum of 7% applies to every worker in the country.

It is therefore in the interests of every worker in the country that the miners win.

It is essential for the whole working class that the Tory policy of slashing the standard of living of the mass of people in this country is defeated.

The government and the employers see the miners' strike as a test case — so must it be for us.

The miners will not win if they are isolated. At the beginning of last year the Tories defeated the postmen. Not because the postmen didn't fight hard — they stayed out for 10 weeks without strike pay.

They were defeated because there was no solidarity action from the other unions, who only made token donations to the strike fund.

The miners are in the same position. They are receiving no strike pay. If they are to win then all trade unionists must organise in their support. If not then it will not be just the miners who are defeated.

On the docks this means that all coal and fuel oil for power stations must be blacked. The TUC has said only black out-of-the-ordinary movements of coal. This is a cowardly retreat.

If any coal movements at all are allowed the strike will not begin to bite for another month.

Coal is not a normal cargo at Manchester Docks, BUT WATCH OUT FOR IT. Dockers in Wales and Tilbury have already blacked

supplies, and there is every possibility that imported coal will be diverted to other ports.

Also we must demand that the TGWU puts a total ban on coal movements — not just on the docks but everywhere. It is mainly TGWU lorry drivers that shift the coal.

Many power workers belong to the TGWU. The TGWU is the most important union as far as blacking is concerned. It is up to Jack Jones to give a lead and make sure that no TGWU member handles coal until the miners have won.

But more than blacking will be needed if the Tories are to be defeated. It is vital that the Tories are not allowed to take on the working class one industry at a time.

Other industries who have wage claims in the pipeline must bring forward action they are planning in order to create a united front, with the miners, against the Tories.

This applies particularly to the power workers who are due to start their ban on overtime on February 1st.

But it also applies to dockworkers. Dockworkers and miners are in the same boat in one very important matter — in the mines the employers' drive for more productivity has meant that the labour force has been cut by more than half in ten years. It is exactly the same story we know so well in the ports.

The National Shop Stewards Committee is meeting to discuss what should be done about the latest threat to jobs concealed in the employers' plans to put up to 2,000 men on the unattached register.

They must speed up their plan of action against this threat and join with the struggle of the miners. ...



RATTING ON THE MINERS

NERO fiddled — so they say — while Rome burned. Nero was mad — stark, raving mad.

Vic Feather and the TUC have no such excuse for the criminal indifference (at best) with which they placidly watch the dogged, magnificent battle of the miners — and do nothing whatsoever to help.

The miners' strike is a confrontation with the Government and its wage policy, and therefore every worker has a clear stake, a clear bread and butter stake, in seeing that the miners and not the Tories come off best.

The miners have given a lead — and are now isolated and in danger of being slowly starved into submission. There is maximum public sympathy — and a minimum of effective solidarity action.

For the other unions it is business as usual: keep your heads down boys, avoid straight scabbing, but go on with your routine work even when that work is helping to break the miners' strike — that's their line. So far the transport Union and the power workers' Union have withheld the active support for the miners which could hit home hard at the NCB and the Government and would face the Government with the choice of either abandoning its 7% ceiling on wage-claims or else taking on the whole strength of organised labour.

SCABS

Scabbing — downright and blatant — is the only word for the cowardly decision of the EPTU leaders not to link up the power workers' pay claim with

that of the miners in a joint strike. It is scabbing on the miners and scabbing on the power workers. Such a combined strike would smash the 7% norm in a matter of days — and would also strike at the Industrial Relations Act: how would the Government, at this stage, enforce its laws, if miners and power workers decided to defy them?

It is only a year since the Press and TV withhunted the power workers into surrendering to the Government: it can happen again, particularly if the miners go down in defeat. But the EPTU leaders are shortsighted men. The miserable Chappel, a bureaucratic bully-boy within the ETU, even tried to ingratiate himself by thinking out loud about the possibility of waiting for the miners' strike to end before beginning an overtime ban!

The reactionary gang which runs the EPTU like a military dictatorship, having been put in control by a High Court judge to defend 'democracy', make a profession and a good living by scabbing and strike-breaking, usually against the unfortunate members of their own Union.

T.U.C.

The refusal of the TUC to give active support to the miners only escapes the stigma of strike breaking because that term is usually applied to those who cross picket lines. But there is more than one way to scab on a strike.

The scab driver who breaks a picket line is an open and visible enemy. We can see which side he is on. The TUC leaders parade about as leaders of labour. Yet they do immensely more damage than any group of

scab drivers. They could end the strike in a miners' victory in 3 days flat - if they would only exert themselves. In refusing to use its strength to make the miners' strike as effective as possible, the TUC's attitude is nothing short of strike-breaking.

'LEFTS'

Worst of all is the refusal of active support by the Left trade union leaders, Jones and Scanlon. It is the worst because they are left. Because many workers look to them for a lead. Because the responsibility is theirs to mobilise, organise and lead the labour movement in the fight back against the biggest bosses' offensive against working class wages and conditions for more than 30 years, an offensive backed up by all the power of the Tory Government and the state machine.

All of them talk against the Tory pay policy - and all of them regard the miners' strike, which is militantly challenging that policy, as an embarrassment. They act as if they want nothing so much as its end - almost on any terms.

They are acting like men desperately trying to pretend they are in an entirely different situation from that facing the working class now.

But the Tories are attacking the workers. Unemployment is galloping. Reactionary anti-union legislation is on the Statute Books, and they will attempt to use it. There is an effective wage ceiling which is lower than the present annual rise in the cost of living. And that situation won't be changed by pretending it doesn't exist. It will be changed by the flexed strength of the working class, against fierce resistance from the bosses - or not at all.

The head-in-the-sand, do-nothing policy of the TUC leadership is criminal because it is so totally out of touch with the reality of the situation facing the class today.

SOLIDARITY

It is also out of touch with the feelings of growing numbers of workers. The massive popular support for the miners stands in stark and accusing contrast to the inactivity of the official movement. Dockers, the vast majority of T&G drivers and some power workers have taken solidarity action. (For example in Rugeley, Staffordshire, power men have banned the movement of coal inside the power station.) The enthusiastic mass picketing which includes pickets by miners' wives, has had a big effect. Publicity has been given to clashes between pickets and scabs, particularly NCB clerks, but not to the support for the mine strike among NCB clerks in places like Newcastle on Tyne.

But not enough rank and file solidarity has been given. And not in the places where it would be most effective.

So the miners fight on alone. And they fight with everything they have. The report from every area is - 100% solid support for the strike. Areas which voted against strike action in the recent ballot are now amongst the most determined in the country. As the strike continues the attitudes of the miners harden, their will to win growing as inflexible as the flint-faced Toryism of Edward Heath's Government.

DANGER

The danger to the miners now is that their own drawn-out struggle, the widespread public sympathy and the growing talk of making the miners' wage-claim "a special case" (to which Government policy will not apply), will all combine to produce a pay rise - with strings.

Productivity strings - including the closure of certain pits.

The whole recent history of the NUM leadership shows that this is more than a mere possibility, and that they will bear watching on that score. If the miners win a wage increase together with strings which before long put many of them on the dole, it will be a hollow mockery of the great effort miners - and their families - are now making.

HELP THE STRIKE!

Workers must demand that the TUC should instruct all its members to stop all movement of coal (not just 'abnormal' movements). Dockers and transport workers must black all coal. The NUM should call on power workers to refuse to move coal stocks inside power stations. And all movements of oil should be blacked.

And there must be no sell out on productivity bargaining or pit closures! If the NCB wants to use the strike or 'safety' as an excuse to close pits and throw men onto the scrapheap, the response must be that it is their responsibility and their fault. It was their responsibility to end the strike quickly by paying up a decent wage - and it is their responsibility to provide work or full pay for the men at those pits.

RANK & FILE MOVEMENT

The urgent lesson of the strike must be understood: that the Labour and trade union leaders will not lead a real fight; that the vital need is for a rank and file organisation to link up the militants in the different industries and to plan class action, an across-the-class response to the Tory onslaught on the whole class.

In areas like Manchester such links exist, as yet in a weak form, in the Councils of Action which have survived from the high point of the opposition to the Industrial Relations Bill. Similar militant Councils can be created everywhere and must be strengthened wherever they exist.

Naomi Wimbourne reports on: Students And The Strike

THESE DAYS, it is no longer a leftist cliché to talk about student/worker solidarity. We must not forget that students, like trade unionists, are at present involved in defending their own organisations.

At Essex, students and miners are learning the lessons of struggle together.

Students got together and formed a "United Front for the Defence of the Miners' Strike", which helped local trade union militants in tracking down scab coal being shipped into south-East ports on the quiet, and informed the miners' National Executive.

By Wednesday January 18th. 200 miners from Barnsley were sharing picket duty at Routledge docks - and sharing occupation of a University building with the students, who donated £200 to the strike fund.

On the first day a ship from Rotterdam was turned away unloaded.

SOLIDARITY

The University Authorities appealed to the NUM to get their men off the campus, but it was left to the miners, now 250 in number, to decide what to do. Backed by the Students "United Front", they remained in occupation, leaving the Vice-Chancellor no alternative but to let them stay.

In the next few days, police and press men tried to persuade the miners that the students were a bad lot, and the NUM Executive decided it didn't want its lads getting "bad publicity". As it happened the miners refused to go home one day early just because their Union got cold feet. 100 remained in occupation with their student allies who had by now been threatened with legal action.

"REVOLUTION"

The bosses were obviously in a bit of a flap about all this. Local Tory MP Mr. John Stokes called on the Home Secretary to stop the "act of near revolution by the miners and a large number of students".

Even the bosses' private army got confused. In a TV confrontation on Thursday 19th. between a high-ranking police officer and Yorkshire delegate to the NUM, Skargill, the representative of the boys in blue was cornered into admitting that the police would avoid injuries and illegalities if they helped pickets in stopping lorries carrying coal. So the next day that's just what they did!

"UNIQUE EVENTS"

After withdrawing the pickets the NUM suddenly changed its mind and sent 1000 men to the South East on Sunday. Speaking at the University on Sunday 23rd Skargill praised the students for their solid support, and promised similar help with their fight against milk-snatcher-Thatcher, once the miners had won their claim. The meeting agreed that the events of the preceding few days were "unique historically" in Britain.

They are certainly very significant events. Students are still accomodating NUM pickets in Essex, but the men have been forced off the campus by a High Court possession Order granted to the University authorities.

According to the latest report we have, over 100 students are now on call 24 hours a day to assist pickets where needed.

Together with local trade unionists these students have helped miners in achieving the blacking of fuel supplies in an area very badly organised from a trade union point of view.

The students have learnt a lot about how to conduct a political fight in a disciplined way. And the miners say they've gained a new respect for the young people who were prepared to fight with them.

Miners from Daw Mill colliery picket the giant Hams Hall Power Station, Coleshill. The picket hut was built by students from Warwick University.



AT YORK UNIVERSITY students are going through all kinds of manoeuvres in order to contribute £250 to the miners' fund and £100 to the workers at Fisher-Bendix.

In fact, a large part of the fight that students are engaged in at the present time concerns gaining, not just defending - as the National Union of Students pretends - certain elementary rights like the right to use their Union funds as they wish.

In order to get round all kinds of legal hog-wash, the Union General Meeting has put through a resolution that 5 rank and file members of the NUM should come separately to the University to give lectures on the strike, for which they would be paid £50 each. This way, they claim that they can legally get the money from the Local Authority.

The students also voted to give £100 to Fisher-Bendix, again by inviting a worker from the sit-in to the University as a visiting lecturer!

FULL SUPPORT FOR THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY!

The 13 dead men shot down in cold blood on January 30th. in Derry City will have as powerful a posthumous effect on Irish politics as did the '16 dead men' killed in cold blood after the 1916 Rising.

Already the upsurge of the people of the whole of Ireland has reached a level not seen since 1920/21.

Already the final layers of indifference in the people of the 26 County 'Republic' have been penetrated by the shock and horror of the mass murder in Derry.

Strikes and demonstrations have mushroomed all over the 32 Counties of Ireland, and even in London, involving both British and Irish workers.

Peaceful men attending a 'legal' meeting were picked off like toy figures in a shooting gallery. Many were shot in the back. Even the wounded, and those who tried to tend to them, were shot at — some died going to the aid of the wounded.

Eye witness reports all contradict the Army version that they were returning fire, and so do the circumstances. Even those few who say they remember hearing gunfire other than that of the Army, say it was 10 minutes or so later that the Paratroopers, without any provocation, loosed their bullets at the Civil Rights meeting.

One of the Paisleyite leaders the Rev. James McClelland, speaking before the march, said: "We were approached by the Government and given assurance that the Civil Rights march will be halted — by force if necessary."

That promise was kept — with a vengeance.

The war against the IRA requires the support of the Protestant section of the population — and that is dependent on the Army being seen to control the Republican population.

That is the plain truth about the massacre, this latest bloody atrocity against the harassed and terrorised

but still unbeaten Catholic people of Britain's Northern Ireland puppet backyard State.

The Civil Rights demonstration was seen as the 'peaceful' wing of the general Republican mobilisation. The butchering of the demonstrators is the measure of the desperate panic of both Army and Government in face of the strength of the Republican movement.

The extreme violence used on peaceful demonstrators against the newly-opened internment camp at Magilligan a week previously was only a foretaste. Somewhere along the line between Magilligan and Derry the death sentence, on a lottery basis, was imposed for breaches of the ban on demonstrations.

That must have been a political decision. Any Army indiscipline or excess of zeal occurred within the confines of Government policy.

The Government is responsible. Heath and his Cabinet are war criminals in Northern Ireland, as they are



“ Mr. Tony Martin, a ship rigger from Manchester who now lives in Derry, said soldiers had fired on himself and a group of about 15 other men who had gone to tend the wounded near Abbey Park. “We saw four wounded people lying at the end of a patch of waste ground,” he said. “We put our hands in the air to show we were unarmed and waved white handkerchiefs. We managed to walk as far as where the people were lying. Then a soldier opened up with a machinegun. One man was shot in the leg, and another had a scalp wound. We had to lie on top of the bodies of the wounded.”
The Guardian

Father Daley, a Derry parish priest, describes how he saw three people who had been shot down in Rossville Street: “Two of them have since died, one a young boy. I saw his father try to get to him but he was shot down, too. The father is still in hospital, injured. “It was impossible to step out. They were lying behind the barricade. I could only get about 10 yards towards them but I administered the last rites from there. “Then the paratroopers arrived — about 10 or 20 of them — and they pushed about 10 of us against the wall. We couldn't move one way or another. Bullets were ricocheting near us. “The paratroopers pulled us away pretty roughly into a courtyard. There was a paratrooper beside me. People were fleeing away but he aimed at least eight shots indiscriminately at them. I grabbed him and shouted, ‘For God's sake stop!’ But he shrugged me off.”
Father Daley went on: “What really frightened me was that some of the troops seemed to enjoy it — I heard men laughing and making crude jokes as I saw people falling. God Almighty — it's only really now getting home to me.”

The Guardian

Joe Docherty of Derry describes how Barney McGuigan died: “The passageway cleared and I saw two soldiers. This brought them into sight of the people huddling in the high flats. I saw a soldier taking aim at Barney McGuigan who was walking over to shelter. He fired and Barney fell .. I came out and went over to Barney. He was lying in a pool of blood with his right eye and face shot away.”

Morning Star

City-of-London hatchet men against the British working class.

Clearest testimony of all is the brass-faced front of the Government in face of the outcry. Another Parachute Regiment, notorious as the paras are for brutality in Northern Ireland, is going to Ireland.

And Maudling in the House of Commons came close to threatening a repeat performance of the Derry massacre at the planned Newry demonstration next Sunday: "If Mr. Gerry Fitt is saying that he intends deliberately to organise further marches, or participate, or support other marches which are in defiance of the law of his country, if he is doing that, the consequences are very grave."

TWO ALTERNATIVES

In all the liberal and humanitarian outrage at the slaughter there is a danger that the main point will be missed.

The point is that there are only two possible alternatives in Northern Ireland now.

Either the Republicans will win, and Ireland be reunited according to the wishes of the vast majority of her people, with as much autonomy for the Orange people as is compatible with the rights of the majority.

Or the British Government will be allowed to bludgeon the Northern Irish Catholics into submission to Westminster and Stormont.

The first is the only conceivable solution: the other would be a reactionary holding-operation. It would be followed in due time, after a period of recuperation, by another rising of the republican people.

Ireland's centuries-long struggle for freedom is a series of wars of revolt, each one being crushed by 'force and fraud': but only for a while.

Each defeat was followed by a new beginning — and a new revolt. 'We shall rise again' became — and remains — the way in which Republicanism summed its history and asserted its determination that (in the words of the great republican Pearce) 'Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.'

Let no one be under any illusions about that. Let no one, horror-stricken at Derry, mumble about peace. Those who would bring real peace to Ireland must aid the Republicans to victory.

There can be neither peace nor freedom while the puppet Stormont State exists. That state imprisons against their will a Catholic minority bigger as a proportion of the 6 Co. population than would be all the Protestants in a united Ireland.

The Northern Ireland state is totally artificial, the result of manipulation by Britain of divisions amongst the Irish people, for her own ends. The argument that Northern Ireland must remain in existence until a majority of its people want otherwise is cod-'democracy'.

It is preposterous because the State is artificial and the majority completely arbitrary.

Ireland, 32 counties, is the unit for majorities and minorities, not an artificially chosen 6 counties set up and protected as a British puppet state.

BUILD A SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN!

British and international support for Ireland is impressive — but grossly inadequate. And it is vital.

Without the intervention of a mass movement in Britain in favour of the Republicans there will be a war of attrition in Ireland. In Britain we need a real solidarity campaign and a genuine solidarity policy. At the present time, apart from the small

Irish Solidarity Campaign, there is neither.

The Anti-Internment League is politically crippled by an ambiguity regarding the struggle.

logically it should take sides, understanding that to call for the withdrawal of troops is either 'advice' to the Government to oblige and pull them out, or an understanding that they will have to be driven out — and therefore that the job of solidarity demands an explicit endorsement of those who are fighting to get them out — that is, the IRA.

It demands a propaganda drive in favour of their case — to counter the propaganda of the bosses' press in Britain.

To oppose internment also demands more than mere liberal and pacifist protest. Most workers know that there is an IRA campaign of violence, know that it is impossible, given its support in the Catholic community, to suppress the IRA according to normal peacetime laws (even those of Northern Ireland).

Such workers will only be won against internment, and against the British Army, if they are convinced of the justice of the IRA case. They will only be convinced by an argument that unambiguously takes sides.

The 'case' that a bigger movement can be built on a broader, vaguer basis is shortsighted. There is bound to be an upsurge of feeling over the Derry massacre. But unless it is organised and clarified to understand the issues then it will not last long or lead anywhere.

The Vietnam Solidarity movement, which mobilised over a hundred thousand people, was based on explicit support for a revolutionary fight against imperialism, on the slogan Victory to the NLF.

Our solidarity movement must take the same stand, in support of those fighting. The fact that it is 'our own' imperialism which we oppose is an argument for, not against, doing so.

Open and active support for the IRA must form the basis of the solid-

arity movement in Britain. Anything less is a betrayal of the Irish struggle. The chronic muddleheads who supported the British troops in '69 and who today refuse to call for the victory of the IRA — the clique of little Englanders who mislead the "International" Socialism Group, should be treated with the contempt they deserve.

While endeavouring to mobilise the British workers in industrial and political action in support of the IRA, we must not use this as an evasion of the primary, immediate and urgent task of backing up the armed resistance of the Catholic people, led by the IRA, with all the practical aid we can muster.

Money is urgently needed, and should be sent to:

United Irishman 13 Gardiner Place, Dublin. (Officials)

An Poblacht, 24, Lower Kevin Street, Dublin. (Provisionals)

Sean Matgamna

MAIRIN LYNCH reports from Dublin

Shaky ride for Dublin's Green Tories

THE ARMED RESISTANCE OF the Catholic population in the North to the forces of British imperialism has overshadowed the struggles taking place in the rest of the country. But this does not mean these struggles are not taking place — indeed, the government there has been in continual crisis for over a year.

The governing party, Fianna Fail, is threatened with a split right down the middle. This came into the open in 1970 with the trial of former Finance Minister Charlie Haughey for allegedly trying to import arms. Since then another ex-minister, Neil Blaney, has founded a party called Aontacht Eireann, which alleges that Fianna Fail has abandoned its Republican heritage.

Aontacht Eireann has not been able to challenge Fianna Fail openly in an election, but several Fianna Fail TDs (Irish MPs) are waiting for the opportune moment to split.

The existence and activity of an armed opposition in the form of the IRA and its offshoots is seen as a grave threat by the government. If he had the political strength, Jack Lynch would not hesitate to open the Curragh internment camp, which could then be used for the silencing of all dissidents including trade union militants. But a change in the balance of forces, and a new political line-up, will be necessary before this can be done.

If the situation in the north was the only one that Lynch had to contend with, he would probably survive. But this is combined with an economic crisis which grows increasingly severe. Unemployment is growing steadily, swelled by the drying up of employment in Britain and by increasing redundancies. In the spring of last year the government announced that it was withdrawing the dole from single men. The ensuing uproar forced him to back down and declare it a "mistake". But this threat caused more Fianna Fail TDs to dissent openly

from their party's policies than the whole of the Northern crisis so far.

But that was only the beginning. Throughout 1971 the boom brought about by the influx of foreign investment in the 60s slowed to a halt. One by one factories closed down, the redundant workers finding it impossible either to get new jobs or to emigrate. Young people leaving school found themselves faced with unemployment and, as they had not been insured, the meagre unemployment benefit was denied to them.

This situation, of nearly 80,000 insured unemployed, has forced even the treacherous Irish Labour Party to protest. An emergency debate, however, solved nothing, and only resulted in a few pious promises.

COMMON MARKET

But Fianna Fail are pinning their hopes on a solution in the Common Market. They are promising an economic boom resulting from increased farm prices.

The economy of the big ranchers will boom all right, but the small farms will go to the wall. Not only that, but Irish industry, which is weak and vulnerable, will not be able to withstand the winds of competition in the EEC.

The promise of employment in Germany or northern Italy is of small comfort to the workers threatened with large scale redundancies.

This picture of gloom for the ruling class is matched, however, by one of hope for socialists. The working class has shown its determination not to take the attacks on jobs and living standards lying down. Even the trade union bureaucrats are forced to make anti-EEC noises, and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions has pledged its opposition to it.

The union leaders did a deal last year with the Government about what was in effect a wage freeze, but this is now being challenged at rank and file level by the membership.

SINN FEIN

The coming months will see a great change in the political situation in southern Ireland. But the outcome of this change depends on the strategy of socialists there.

Ireland is an oppressed nation, many of whose problems arise from the lack of real independence.

Opposition to the Common Market in such a situation ties in with the burning issue, underlying the Northern war, of national independence, and with the anti-imperialist attitudes of broad sections of the people.

In contrast to Britain, where opposition to the EEC is a diversion from the real fight of the working class, in Ireland such opposition can play a role in mobilising an anti-capitalist movement.

Thus in Ireland the EEC must be opposed. But it must be opposed on a principled, internationalist socialist basis.

So far the campaign against the EEC, led by a Sinn Fein (Official) and Communist Party coalition, has posed an independent capitalist Ireland as an alternative. The strategy for this alternative has been one of an all-class alliance against the EEC, even using such 'issues' as the "moral corruption" which would sweep Ireland on entry!

But the problems of redundancies and unemployment, the obliteration of the small farmers and of a rising cost of living are not going to be solved in some small capitalist Republic with trade agreements with the Common Market. There is no future for Ireland as a capitalist entity.

Anyone who does not make this clear to the working class is misleading them.

Similarly unemployment and the Wage Agreement must be fought on a socialist basis. Socialists in Ireland will therefore be mounting a campaign around transitional demands to fight for full employment and a living wage for all.

As bosses move to dismantle Docks Industry:

BATTLE LINES DRAWN OVER N.D.L.S.

The Dock Labour Scheme was set up by Act of Parliament in 1947, when the docks were still worked by casual labour. It sought to give the docker some security by controlling who could work on the docks. Only dockers registered under the scheme could go in for the degrading business of fighting for the available jobs, and once registered they were given guarantee against redundancies. The National Dock Labour Board employs all registered dockers and 'hires' them out to the various companies. If they are not hired out they end up in the pool with £20 a week.

If a docker is attached to a company which has no work available for a particular day then he is paid the fall-back pay which is about £25 a week, but varies from port to port.

It is the National Dock Labour Board which hires and fires dockers. Changes in the terms of employment, sackings or changes of employer, have to be referred to the Board. The Board consists of 50% employers' and 50% union representatives. Thus the unions can always veto redundancies and control the employment of new labour.

The scheme challenges the right of employers to hire and fire as they wish and for this reason they have always resented it. For 20 years they have been trying to get rid of it, but have always been met face to face with the united opposition of the mass of dockworkers.

In 1967 the docks were decasualised, men being hired out to employers by the NDLB on a long-term basis, rather than by the half-day as previously. Since then, the Port employers have redoubled their efforts to scrap the Scheme.

The last attempt was in 1969 under the Labour Government. The 1966 Labour election manifesto pledged the Party to nationalisation of the docks and the extension of the elements of workers' control contained in the Dock Labour Scheme. When three years later they finally published their Ports Bill it was clear that far from extending the principle of union control over the register, it was left sufficiently vague to enable the Government to water it down even further in the future. Also, the Bill only provided for the nationalisation of the major Ports.

CONTAINERS

The small but highly profitable and quickly-expanding container ports were to remain in private hands. The hidden intentions behind the Bill were brought out quite clearly by George Cattell, chairman of the National Ports Modernisation Committee: "So why a system of registration for dockworkers in the new age?" he asked "After all they were registered because they were casual. And now they are not only permanent employees, but most of them are about to become permanent employees of the State itself."

The dockworkers replied with a one-day national strike which closed nearly all the major ports. Under this pressure the Labour Government declared that it had never been their intention to tamper with the scheme.

The Tory election victory scotched Labour's plans for nationalisation of the Ports. But the employers' lobby for junking the Dock Labour Scheme soon found attentive ears in the new government — with the added advantage that unlike the Labour Party the Tories are not given to making empty noises about

workers' control.

Besides trying to get the Scheme scrapped by playing the parliamentary pressure game, the employers have had a policy of getting round it by expanding ports which come outside the Dock Labour Scheme.

For the most part these Ports are inland container ports. They present the greatest threat to the dockers' job security. Besides these inland Ports, there are those ports at which containers are filled by non-registered labour and loaded onto ships by registered dockers.

Take for example a port like Preston which employs about 200 non-registered dockers filling the containers and 100 registered dockers loading them.

Yet Preston shifts more cargo than Manchester, a port employing 1,200 registered dockworkers.

The employers have had a deliberate policy of making sure that the bulk of work on containers does not go to registered dockers.

Dockworkers have launched a series of strikes and Court actions against this policy, but in the absence of any national leadership it is the employers who have got the upper hand.

The responsibility for this lies entirely with the Union leadership who 'sold' the container-stuffing bases to the employers to be worked by non-registered dockers, provided that they were worked by T&GWU members.

There has been no sign of an official, nationally organised, fight against this threat to dockers' jobs, indeed it was only at the end of 1970 that the T&GWU held a docks Lay Delegates Conference to discuss the problem. Otherwise the only sign of resistance is an Appeal by the National Dock Labour Board which is presently debated in the House of Lords!

PRODUCTIVITY

The other threat to dockers' jobs is the productivity deals which the employers have managed to get through in the major ports themselves. The Devlin Scheme has resulted in reduction in the size of gangs, shift work and greatly increased mobility of labour. In other words, the loss of thousands of jobs. The result of the employers' policies is a 'crisis' in the ports.

Nationally there are 45,000 registered dockworkers and at the moment it is estimated that 7,000 are being sent home every day without work. This crisis is entirely of the employers' making and has been quite deliberately planned by them. The barrier that prevents the surplus men being sacked and the employers reaping the full fruits of their rationalisations is the Dock Labour Scheme.

At the moment the only way that they can reduce the labour force is by offering severance pay, which can only be done on a voluntary basis — then only with the app-

roval of the Dock Labour Board.

Such severance payments, which are usually from £1,600 to £1,800, used to be an effective carrot to get men to leave the industry.

But with one million workers already in the dole queues, it has ceased to be so attractive. Now several T&GWU branches in London are advising their members not to accept severances until the terms are re-negotiated — £5,000 is the figure they want for any future payments.

In Hull, where the National Dock Labour Board have made provision for 185 voluntary redundancies, they admit that they will have difficulties in finding enough willing takers.

All of which leaves the employers with one option — their long cherished aim: to rid themselves of the restrictions imposed by the Dock Labour Scheme.

And only the Dock Labour Scheme stands between employment and the dole queues for the thousands of dockers who are now 'stamping'.

Into the phoney crisis which they themselves have created step the employers with their threats of returning men to the unattached register.

Their strategy is crystal clear.

BOSSSES' STRATEGY

At the moment there are only about 600 men on the unattached register nationally. If the employers succeed in putting the London B-men in the pool, then before long the figure will rise to 4,000.

The employers can then declare the Dock Labour Scheme 'unworkable' and appeal to Parliament to repeal it.

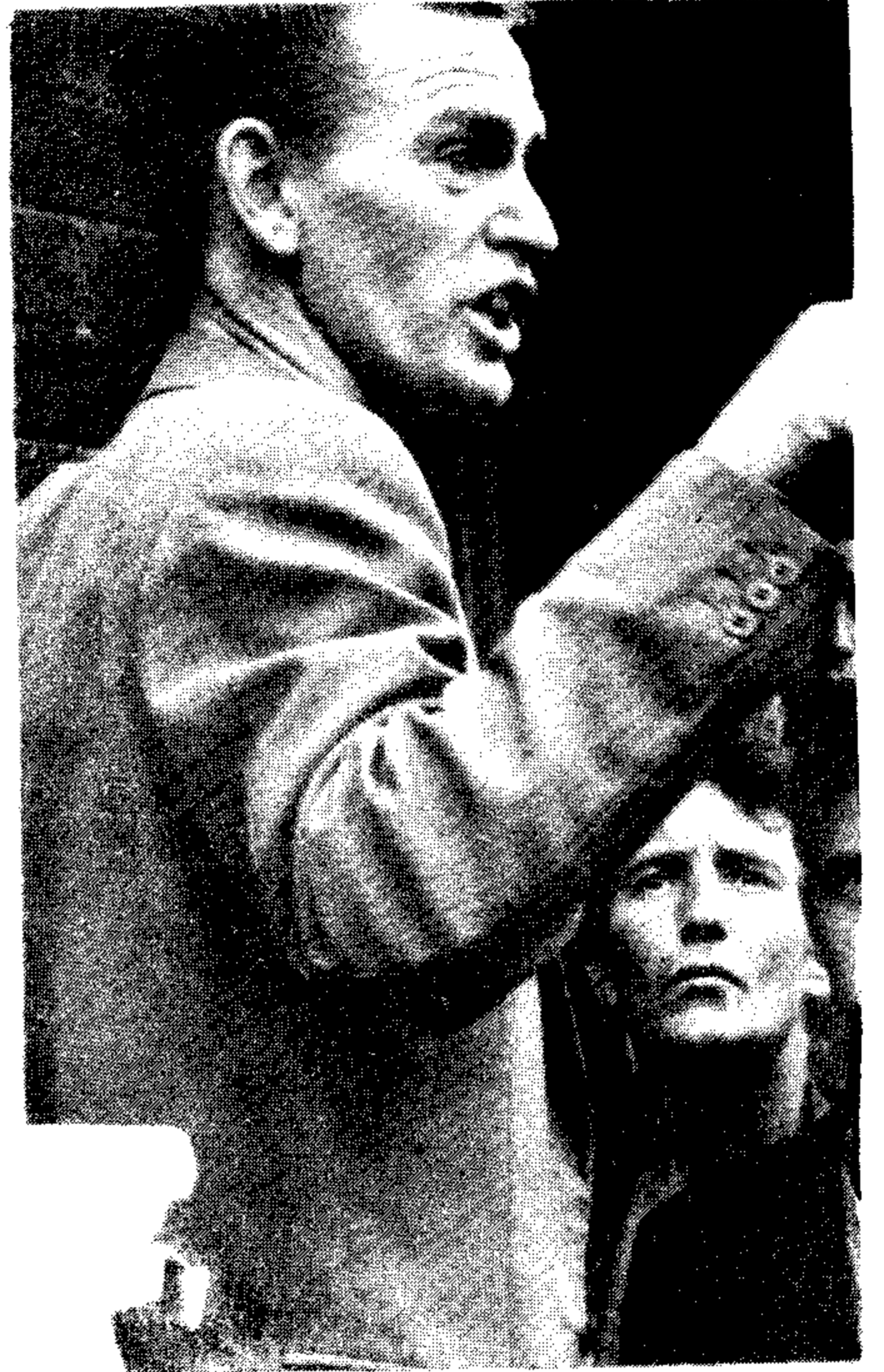
Besides the London employers who have made clear their intentions, the Liverpool employers have said that they expect a 'surplus' of 400 men this year.

In Hull 500 dockworkers are 'surplus to requirements', and the pool has swelled to 53.

In Manchester and Southampton there are as yet only rumours flying about, that the pool is returning. But clearly the employers are united on a policy of creating a swamp of surplus labour as the first step to making a direct attack on the Dock Labour Scheme.

The great weakness of the dockworkers is the way they have allowed themselves to become divided one port from the other. The Devlin scheme has, as was its aim, chopped up the dockers — each Port has a different agreement which expires at a different time, with different rates of pay and different reviews.

The result has been a total lack of co-ordination at the shop steward level. So that when a clearly national issue, such as defending the Dock Labour Scheme comes up there is no ready machinery to lead the fight.



NORMAN WRIGHT ADDRESS

The National Ports Shop Stewards' Committee which seemed such a big step forward 18 months ago has been allowed to lie dormant, mainly because the Communist Party Docks faction who lead it want to avoid antagonising the T&GWU officials and Jack Jones.

However, last month the National Shop Stewards Committee was hastily re-convened to meet the London employers' challenge, after it had not met for over a year.

The one-day strike of January 26th. is a start.

But if it isn't followed up seriously, if the sinews of a really effective national organisation are not created and placed on a war footing with a **DOCKERS' STRATEGY** to meet the **EMPLOYERS' STRATEGY**, then very little will come of it.

If the employers persist with their plans for putting the London men on the unattached register, and at the moment no other conclusion is possible, then a national dock strike is the only weapon that will deter them.

This will have to go ahead regardless of the Union leadership, who in the past have gained themselves a well-deserved reputation for vacillation and failing to support dockworkers in vital strikes such as the 1967 strike against Devlin.

IF THERE IS A NATIONAL DOCK STRIKE, THEN IT WILL CLEARLY BE A STRIKE AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT. AS SUCH IT MUST HAVE THE SUPPORT OF ALL OF BRITAIN'S TEN MILLION TRADE UNIONISTS.

The dockworkers have won guarantees against redundancies which should be an example to the rest of the working class.

If the employers can take away these rights which have been won, then how much harder will it be for workers in other industries to win them, and to fight back effectively against the lengthening dole queues.

Joe Wright



THE HOOK
rank and file dockers' paper
available from:

H. Youd
Editor,
26, Langton Street,
Salford 6.

Dave Brodie**Manna to Havana**

Recently, having nothing better to do, I picked up a Church magazine (that's my excuse, and I'm stuck with it). I felt so humble when reading about the missions to the poor made by the Christian ladies of the Parish. (The poor are always with us. The good Lord has willed it so.)

Imagine my amazement when I read about this fella who fed half of Stockport with a couple of sliced loaves and a tin of sardines.

But what really held my interest was an article about a character by the name of Brother Ambrose. It seems that the said Brother Ambrose has dedicated his life to bringing the Cubans back to God.

He is quick to explain that in pre-Castro Cuba, the Churches were always full. Now the Cubans have lost their sense of priority. They prefer full stomachs to full churches.

Did you know that the same dreadful man, Fidel Castro, actually took the landlords' properties and gave them to the peasants. Now! Beforehand, the peasants had quite happily given seventy five percent of their crop to the landlords and moneylenders. One can imagine how gleefully the poor Cuban used to send out his twelve-year old daughter to satisfy the lust of fat American tourists, so that the family might eat each day.

I'm sure the same poor Cuban would agree that he would prefer his daughter to be a good Christian prostitute, rather than a well fed and educated Communist.

I am equally certain, Brother Ambrose would agree with him.

There is worse to come. Not only have the aforementioned landlords and moneylenders been made to work (I said work. Repeat. Work) but Brother Ambrose has had cause to complain about being relieved of his begging bowl. He informs us that he was actually requested to toil in the cane fields with ordinary mortals.

I'm sure that you will join with me in wishing Brother Ambrose every success in his endeavours to bring prostitution and exploitation back to Cuba.

Any suggestions may be sent to the Rev. Warner, St. Mary's Church, Droylsden, Manchester.

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S DOCKERS' MEETING

Preston militant calls for Action

NORMAN WRIGHT is a member of the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee, the T&GWU National Lay delegate for Preston, and a member of the 1969 Preston Strike Committee.

He was interviewed on January 24th. by Steve Corbishley.

S.C. — Recently, in Preston, there was a dispute between the NDLB and some local container employers over whether container men should be registered, and the decision went against the NDLB. How do you view the situation?

N.W. — It was a set-back for registered dockers, but in the long run it was a bigger set back for the unregistered men, unless they unite with the registered dockers. This is for the simple reason that the unregistered men would not come under the National Dock Labour Scheme, and therefore have no security of employment, as the employers have full right of hiring and firing.

The NDLB have decided not to appeal against the decision, and it would have been foolish for Preston to take direct action on their own. But now with the National Shop Stewards Committee taking action it is hoped that it will help Preston.

S.C. — Could you explain why dockers want to keep the National Dock Labour Scheme? What would the employers like to do with it?

N.W. — Under the NDLS dockers have 50% control of registered workers, and employers would like it scrapped for the one reason that it takes the sole right of hiring and firing out of the employers' hands.

S.C. — Until 1968 Preston was the first port to use containers on a large scale. Since then it has been overtaken by London and the larger ports. Now containerisation is expanding at a

fast rate, e.g. in London in 1970 it increased by 104%. What do you think of the situation ahead for dockers with the increase in containerisation?

N.W. — At the rate it is going now, the dockers will be as extinct as the buffaloes, unless action is taken along the lines of the 9 demands of the NPSSC.

S.C. — How was Preston affected by the first phase of Devlin?

N.W. — The effect of acceptance of Devlin Phase 1 was that it helped to cause the 10½ week strike in 1969.

The main effects were: 1) a cutting down in manning scales; 2) to make pieceworkers and weekly workers put in overtime, while pieceworkers had to work more piece-work to make the £16 guarantee; 3) it meant that men were returned to the pool more often on a day-to-day basis.

Liverpool and London went on strike in 1967 and got rid of parts of Devlin 1. But in Preston no action was taken then, and 90% of the employers implemented Devlin as planned.

One good result that came out of Devlin through the 1969 Preston strike, was that members of the strike committee became the shop stewards committee, the branch committee, the local joint committee, the NDLB representatives, the 'appeals for the NDLB' representatives, and one became the National Lay delegate. This is probably unique in the docks.

NATIONALISATION

S.C. — Is nationalisation the solution to the dockers' problems?

N.W. — Not as under the Labour Government; they wanted to nationalise only part of the docks. Their policy was to nationalise ports doing 5 million tons a year and over. Therefore it would not have been 100% nationalisation.

It is hoped by dockers that nationalisation will put an end to the employers playing port to port, and dockers to dockers.

S.C. — In London the Port of London Authority announced that they would return 2,000 men to the unattached register, and the same has happened in Hull. Also, the employers want to scrap the voluntary redundancy scheme. Why has this happened, and what sort of action can be taken?

N.W. — This is happening for the simple reason that containerisation, palletisation and pre-slung pulp and timber are increasing output by 400-500%, and maybe much more. In London the employers are moving out of the enclosed ports to new container berths, which need fewer men and less time to unload containers, and it is the registered dockers who are being returned to the unattached register.

The reason they want to finish the voluntary severance scheme is that they claim modernisation is increasing faster than the employers anticipated. But this I don't agree with, because the McKinsey Report in 1967 already stated that it would be possible to reduce the labour force by 80% in the next decade, during which 90% of cargoes, or future cargoes, would be containerised.

The 9 DEMANDS of the NPSSC are the way to fight these attacks.

S.C. — On Wednesday 26th. January there will be a one-day strike and a march in Liverpool by dockers and miners for their pay claims, in unity with the Fisher-Bendix workers, as a demonstration against unemployment and the Tory policies. With this in the background, how do you view the fight against unemployment?

N.W. — It is the first round of the fight to come, and it will be a set back if every trade unionist in the country does not fight for the same demands at the same time.

There is only one way to win — through workers' unity. If one industry takes on the Government one at a time it will not be a fight, it will be a massacre.

S.C. — What do you think of the future of the NPSSC, now that a number of demands have been brought forward? Especially now that the NPSSC has come to life after a period of quiet following the first few meetings more than a year ago?

N.W. — It has come alive because of the 2,000 men at London being returned to the unattached register. It is hoped that the NPSSC can get the backing of the National Lay Delegates. If this is not possible, the NPSSC will have to take unofficial action on their own. The NPSSC is more prepared to take action than the National Lay delegates. It is also hoped that at the same time the NPSSC will be recognised officially, by the Union and the employers.

Action is taken quicker by dockers in response to the NPSSC than to the Lay Delegates. The NPSSC was formed because the official side of the Union was not doing enough for the dockers quick enough.

(The 9 demands of the NPSSC include :

- No redundancies
- For all Ports, including the new inland container ports, to be in the NDLB.
- Retirement at 60
- A 30-hour week and longer holidays.

Nationalisation of all Ports under workers' control.)

REVIEW

The Jews In History *myth and reality*

IN 1944 ABRAM LEON WAS MURDERED IN the gas chambers of Auschwitz. But unlike most of the millions who died there too, he understood the force that destroyed him, and he had devoted himself, up to his arrest a few months before, to the fight against it.

A leading Belgian Trotskyist, Leon had directed his party's socialist propaganda work amongst the working class conscript soldiers of the occupying German army, helped organise meetings of underground factory committees in the metal plants of Liege and travelled secretly to occupied France to reestablish the international links of the revolutionary workers' movement.

These actions were not only those of a Socialist internationalist, but of a Jew who understood that decaying capitalism had no place in it for the Jews whom it had evicted from their traditional class position as feudal middlemen; who understood that it could only use them as a scapegoat for its own crimes. Capitalism was a world system from which there could be no escape – and the only salvation for the Jews as for the working class lay in destroying it.

Abram Leon came to these conclusions on the basis of a historical analysis (**), which he had worked out while a leader of the Belgian Zionist Socialist youth movement (Hashomer Hatsair). He had argued for his explanation within the Zionist movement, and had then left on the basis of it to join the Trotskyists in 1939.

ZIONIST MYTH

Zionist ideas centred round the Jewish myth – that the root of the tragic history of the 'Jewish people' lay in the action of the Roman soldiers, 2,000 years ago, who drove the Jews from their land dispersing them over the earth; that their spiritual greatness lay in their holding together despite dispersal and persecution, united by a belief in one god and in their national destiny; and the myth that their problem could be solved and their destiny realised by a return to 'their' land, of 2,000 years ago.

Leon argued that the Jews were a "people-class": a historically and culturally distinct people, bound together by a common class position. They were mainly involved in trade, beginning in the ancient world in which their land straddled the crosspoints of the trade routes between the centres of the ancient civilisations. It was not the Roman soldiers, but their own jobs as traders which scattered them through the ancient world: the mass dispersal of Jews outside Palestine had already become a fact before the final fall of Jerusalem. It was not despite the dispersal but because of it and of the common class position that accompanied it, that they survived as a distinct people.

And now, in the modern world, it was not essentially as a national minority, but as an unpopular, increasingly irrelevant and therefore powerless CLASS that they faced anti-semitism. It was, argued Leon, by the destruction of capitalism, not by the establishment of a client state of imperialism – Israel – that the survival and freedom of 18 million Jews around the world could be assured.

DIASPORA

Centuries before the Romans destroyed the Temple more than three quarters of the Jews lived outside Palestine scattered around the ancient world.

With the decline of Roman society, the eclipse of towns and the shrinking of trade and their replacement by a local rural economy producing use values, ruled by local landowners, the Jews remained as more or less the only traders and, after the coming of Islam, the only links between east and west. On the other hand, in time those Jews not engaged in trade and finance stopped being Jews, assimilating by conversion to Christianity or Islam. The job of trading shaped Judaism and led to its survival. Being born a Jew prepared and destined a child to the commercial class.

Again and again throughout its history, the unity of the Jewish people-class was selectively strengthened by the conversion and assimilation of those of its members who did not carry on the economic jobs of the majority. No trace remains, as distinct groups, of the pre-Islamic Jewish farmers of North Africa, of the Jewish landed proprietors of 4th. Century Germany, or of the Jewish warrior tribes of Arabia.

It is probable, ironically, that there are more physical descendants of the Palestine Jews of Bar Cochbar's time in the Arab refugee camps than amongst the 'returning' Jews of Israel.



ARAB GUERRILLAS, VICTIMS OF ISRAEL – " ... It is probable, ironically, that there are more physical descendants of the Palestine Jews of Bar Cochbar's time in the Arab refugee camps than amongst the 'returning' Jews of Israel.."

The Jewish Question (Merit Publishers)

FEUDALISM

The natural economy of early feudalism is one where goods are produced to be used directly, by the peasant & his lord, and not with markets in mind. Money plays little part in daily life. Yet such a society, especially its ruling class, has need of traders and money-lenders for exceptional purposes – for rare essentials and for luxuries from distant countries, for celebrations and for war. The kings learned early to buy mercenaries against disobedient vassals.

Yet the performance of these essential commercial and financial tasks goes against the grain of the values and structure of natural economy society. It was the Jews who performed them, and who were for a time well rewarded and respected for it.

Yet this independent Jewish merchant capital was in no sense a germ of modern capitalism. The Jewish merchant did not invest money in production, he was merely the link between points of production far apart, over which he had no influence. The development of early bourgeois merchant capital, growing up organically out of society and gradually achieving power over raw materials and local processes of production, had first to overcome the obstacle of the commercial monopoly of the Jews – who belonged to feudal society and depended on it, though they were a foreign body within it.

MONEY-LENDING

As money economy spread, cities grew and trade developed as part of normal life, the Jews were evicted from commerce and left with money-lending alone. As various sources of money developed, this too lost its essential relevance. Hostility to the money-lender, held in check by the need of him, broke bounds when this need disappeared. From the 12th. century to the 14th. century Jews were hounded and burned, accused of ritual murder and of poisoning wells. (In 1190 for example hundreds of Jews besieged in York castle committed mass suicide rather than surrender to the excesses of the crusader knights outside.)

EAST EUROPE

In country after country Jews were expropriated and driven out, most taking refuge in east Europe and Russia, where a more backward society still had a place for them as go-betweens. But in eastern Europe by the 18th. and 19th. centuries history began to repeat itself. Feudal economy decayed, money and exchange relationships seeped through the cracks. Jews made redundant in their old tasks moved from villages and small towns into the cities.

They started to diversify their economic activity and to become involved in production – but they went into workshops, not factories, as craftsmen. They took up, for market production, those consumer goods skills that some had always practised for their own communities. But their new economic base soon shrank. The march of industrialisation eastwards drove them out of this refuge, just as it had ruined craftsmen such as handloom weavers everywhere else.

Everywhere it developed capitalism ruined both feudal middlemen and artisans. In the west it eventually found new jobs for these displaced people. But it developed in the East only after it began to rot and become parasitic in the West. Western capitalism at one and the same time both stimulated and stifled the development of the East, so that it was unable to reabsorb those ruined by the disruption of the old order. The competition of the Jews – and also their weakness – now led to an explosion of the traditional hatred for the Jews often, as in Russia, organised by Governments, Christian Churches and Police forces. Artisans, shopkeepers and many workers remembered how their peasant fathers had hated the Jewish moneylender and landlord's agent. There followed pogroms, persecutions and witch trials on the model of the Middle Ages – as, for example, the Bayliss trial in Russia in 1911.

A second mass migratory wave reversed the movement of the 13th. and 14th. centuries. By the 1920s millions had left, most to Germany and America.

THE JEWS AND CAPITALISM

Unlike feudalism, capitalism has no special place for the people-class. Early capitalism finds them an obstacle. Established advancing capitalism diversifies their economic tasks and assimilates them. In the countries of the West, before the mass migrations from Eastern Europe, those who remained or had returned earlier were well on the road to assimilation, intermarriage was high, conversion common.

The new wave of migration to the West was soon followed by the post-World War I crisis of capitalism, bringing mass unemployment, ruined small middle classes and a decaying society. Having set the Jews in motion capitalism could not now find room for them. Seeking to enter the petty bourgeois and craftsmen jobs to which they were accustomed, they found themselves facing the competition and hatred of similar elements, themselves being ruined.

Fascism directed popular hatred of capitalism

REVIEW

and terror in face of social collapse onto the traditional 'money men', vulnerable precisely because they were, as a people, no longer major money-men or leading capitalists.

FASCISM

The septic stream of anti-semitism which had always oozed along the sewers of society – the preoccupation of cranks, misfits and those who see visions of the 'who-killed-Christ' variety – now became a central element in a fascist myth erected to defend the rulers of society by deflecting the wrath of their victims against a scapegoat. The Jew had long personified money in folklore. He now became the cause of all the catastrophes which capitalism was inflicting on the mass of the people.

Thus it was not Capitalism as such which ruined and starved the people – but an undefinable section of it, "Jewish Capital", which also, mysteriously, in its other guise of "Jewish Bolshevism", was the all-malevolent force behind the Workers' Parties and the Labour Unions which were rousing the ire and the jealousy of the terrified shopkeepers, and could offer little or nothing to the semi-worker, the lumpen-proletarian. All ills could be traced to their source in the many-headed, anti-National "Jewish Conspiracy". All who were aggrieved, sore, bruised by the system or disappointed by the failures and betrayals of the Socialist and Communist parties and who could see no way out of their own misery, found a scapegoat.

In Europe, mass armies of ruined small shopkeepers, clerks, lumpen-workers and demoralised unemployed were organised by the fascist agents of the big bosses to beat down the "anti-national" "Jewish Conspiracy" – and first and foremost that expression of it to be found in the Workers' Parties and the Trade Unions. Drunk with despair and demagoguery, many of the fascist rank and file sincerely thought they were striking at the root cause of their problems, though in fact they were only the deluded soldier-squads,

controlled from a safe distance, of the real cause of their misery: the real – rather than the apocryphal – capitalist class.

And the Jews, having figured in history for centuries as a People-Class associated above all with trade and money, now had no special role left except as a scapegoat for the masters of money, of trade, of production and of the lives of the masses. Together with Communists, Socialists and trade union militants of the working class – including the German working class – millions of Jews vanished into the extermination camps of a lunatic society trapped in a blind alley of crisis and war. As Leon expressed it, "Historically the success of racism means that capitalism has managed to canalise the anti-capitalist consciousness of the masses into a form that antedates capitalism and which no longer exists except in a vestigial state."

ZIONISM

In this situation Zionism, beginning as a small movement at the end of the last century, gained mass influence amongst Jews. It wanted to escape from the now-redundant people-class position and from crisis-ridden capitalism by a simple physical removal to Palestine. It remained a minority outlook amongst Jews until the Nazi holocaust. Its predominance amongst Jews today is one of the results of that most tragic defeat in the history of the People-Class – a defeat it was powerless to prevent, and which could only have been prevented by the revolutionary victory of the International working class which was prevented or betrayed by the Socialist and stalinist political organisations (and, incidentally, to a minor degree, by the Zionist diversion from the class struggle).

Living in Nazi Europe and fighting for the socialist revolution, Abram Leon dismissed Zionism as a utopian and reactionary diversion from the real struggle which would liberate humanity, including the Jews. He did not live to see modern Israel become a major client state of American Imperialism and its partner in repressing the attempts of the Arabs to escape from backwardness and from the imperialist exploitation which keeps them backward.

WORKERS' FIGHT 9

Leon also could not have foreseen the post-war temporary revival and stability which gave a new lease of life both to Zionism and particularly to the process of Jewish assimilation. Russia is a peculiar and, in many ways, a special case, but in the two other major Jewish centres, the USA and Israel, the Jews are well on their way to losing their old identity.

In America the Yiddish language is lost, sermons and choirs bring Jewish religious ceremony towards a Christian pattern, ritual restrictions are dropped and Judaism becomes a marginally distinctive version of the American way of life. Jews have been absorbed into every level of the US class structure and economy, though particularly into the bourgeoisie, and they have been in a position to offer massive aid to Israel, motivated by memories of the gas chambers and the congruent interests of American imperialism.

In Israel too most of the traditional culture and way of life of the people-class (including their traditional radicalism and their internationalism) have also disappeared. The "Jewish Question" here has been transformed into the problem of the Zionist State of Israel, Imperialism's ally against the Arab people. The twisted logic of a capitalist world has resulted in some of the remnants of one of Imperialism's most tragic victims becoming its best defender in this area, where Imperialism has helped create a Zionist State complete with all the normal features of capitalism, including even racial discrimination against dark-skinned Jews, as well as against the conquered Arabs.

This has been the fate of the utopian Zionist attempt to escape from the situation of the Jewish people under capitalism. Like every other utopian colony known to history, the Zionist one too has turned out to be a reproduction of the world outside. Almost everything the original colonists sought to escape has reemerged within Israel itself.

It proves the truth which Abram Leon so clearly understood and which led him to a sharp break with Zionism – that there is no escape from the problems of the capitalist world except its total transformation by the revolutionary socialist struggle, and the victory of the working class.

Constance Lever

Liam Dalton

On January 21st, 1972 Liam Dalton died in London. He was one of a small group of militants who had taken part in the 1956/62 I.R.A. campaign against British Imperialist domination of Ireland, and had thereafter become Trotskyists. In recent months he had worked to aid the fight for freedom in Northern Ireland, against British Army repression. Liam was a fine comrade, cast in a mould larger than most of us, and because of this he suffered grievously the years of exile and small group emigre politics in London in the '60s. We publish here a short excerpt summing up the world situation at the beginning of the year 1968, from his contribution to a document called IN DEFENCE OF TROTSKYISM, published in March 1968.

The sentiments expressed here say more about Liam Dalton than anything we could write. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Nan and his son Owen.

AT the present time the whole of society is made increasingly aware of the real nature and inherent instability of capitalism. The barbarous and genocidal war of the American Imperialists on the Vietnamese people, the recent brutal and sadistic murder of African patriots by a handful of white colonialists who have been guaranteed by the racist government of Harold Wilson and by the trade- and profit-hungry capitalists of the world, show what the ruling classes will do to defend their decrepit system. On the other hand, the financial crisis which besets the system and which threatens to bring the whole international commercial edifice crashing down into a resounding slump like that of 40 years ago, is an augury of the great period of confrontation and clash of the classes which lies ahead.

In the world of the Stalinist bureaucracies too, from China to Czechoslovakia and Poland, there is tension, ferment and great dangers for the ruling cliques. Thus the whole world, both of the western imperialists and of the stalinist bureaucrats, is a patchwork of regimes of crisis. The imbalance, the strains and stresses between them become increasingly holding the whole together are fast can say where the weakest thread ed up regimes will succumb first.

In the chancelleries, cabinets, and in the scores of thousands of ruling parasites admit that "we" star They would have us, the workers, that it is "our" crisis too; that we accompanying them over "the edge

The Stalinist bureaucracies in the workers of the world. In fact all the al enclaves is repression of the v and for elementary rights of expr Czechoslovakia, they are forced to

built in Worcester: this will be run "economically", that is, with a minimum staff and high productivity and is not expected to create many new jobs for Worcester workers.

The War Industry, like other industries – whether controlled by the Tory State or by "free enterprise" big businessmen, is being rationalised in order to make it more efficient, more economical, more profitable.

ility of the bureaucracy with real democracy will force them once more to seek to tighten their grip. In turn they will provoke resistance from the workers, which may blow all the bureaucrats away.

Colossal struggles impend. A fine cliché that – or such would more than likely have been the reaction until only recently of numerous citizens. Not so now. Not so now, comrades! The simple statement of fact which seemed to many to have become a worn out cliché is suddenly and strikingly rejuvenated. The high-priests and astrologers of bourgeois economy are overnight discredited. The rising tide of crisis in their "crisis-proof" Keynesian world belies them more than any argument of the Marxists. As the London TIMES pointed out recently, if the rulers wanted to give a propaganda bonanza to the Marxists they could not have done better than to "allow" the present crisis to develop!

The heroic, the dogged and indomitable millions of Vietnamese have shown and daily demonstrate that the alleged invincibility of the slaughter machine of the richest and most powerful of the imperialist predators is a great bluff, a pathetic bit of psychological poker. The Vietnamese are in the front line, unrelieved but victory-sure; thirteen-year-old boys and girls have become veteran soldiers innured to war, determined to vanquish, disdainful of danger and death.

The encrusted bureaucracies of the world working class movement have done their best to isolate Vietnam and its sturdy fighters. The privileged caste of the "socialist" states are more concerned with preserving their status and private swimming pools, their limousines and dachas, than with aiding the Vietnamese and administering the coup de grace to Imperialism. Need we speak at all of the Wilsons, Gunters, Woodcocks, Paynters, Corishes, Desmonds, Conroys, Palme Dutts, et al? Wilson trots between the wheels of Johnson's battered war-chariot like an obedient and well-trained cur. The Dutts send a boatful of bandages and iodine on a trip round the planet to the accompaniment of polite clapping from priests, parsons and pacifists. Instead of class struggle and militant internationalism they invoke the platitudes of U Thant and the prayerful "prises de position" of the Bishop of Rome.

They do their poor best, all of them, to obfuscate the reality. They wish to avoid the inevitable. They would have the workers believe that there can be a polite transition to socialism: "Excuse us, please, your excellencies, mon general, Messrs. Moneybags, may we pass over your prostrated forms to the Socialist future?". Thus they disarm the working class with the idea that talk of peace will end war, when war is an integral part of capitalism and will end only when the system that generates conflict is smashed.

The Vietnamese are in the front line. Around the world other forces are mustering. In Ireland the radicalisation of the working class grows also, in response to this crisis of capitalism. The electoral 'reform' is only the latest response of the ruling class to head off even a social democratic reflection of this radicalisation. For our part we must ensure that this growing awareness on the part of the working class is not corralled into a social democratic cul-de-sac, that it is not deflected and de-routed by the local stooges of the Russian or Chinese bureaucracies, that it is not led up the garden path once again by the bankrupt petit-bourgeois "defenders of the Nation."

The Facts About Britain's Freelance Marauders

The 'Secret Army' of the British ruling class recently hit the news when two of its soldiers were killed in Oman fighting against a revolutionary guerilla force, and it was revealed that a group of SPECIAL AIR SERVICE soldiers had been operating there secretly. It is widely believed by Irish Republicans that the S.A.S. is responsible for many incidents in Northern Ireland.

"Eric Travers" is an AUEW militant who served 9 years in the British Army, the last few years as an engineer attached to the Special Air Service. Here he talks to WORKERS' FIGHT reporter Jim Webb about the role of the S.A.S.

J.W. — Can you tell us what the SAS is?

E.T. — The SAS operate as a secret commando force, either backing up the Regular Army or acting as free-lance marauders. It is made up of people who volunteer from the regular Army, who then go through special physical and mental tests before being finally selected for special training.

J.W. — What is the nature of this special training?

E.T. — The "art of self-defence" — efficient killing. They also learn about explosives and various technical matters so that they can sabotage or blow up complicated installations, if necessary.

J.W. — In what way does their 'tour of duty' depart from that which is expected from the normal regular soldier?

E.T. — Well, the missions they carry out are sometimes done without the knowledge of the government of the country in which the missions are taking place, especially if the British Army is not officially supposed to be there.

They do the cloak and dagger work, including sabotage and assassinations, which the British Government often finds necessary but can't do openly. In fact, in the Far East they are sometimes loaned out to a government, often they are training a local puppet army to take over.

J.W. — I believe the SAS has its own special chain of command. Is that right?

E.T. — Yes. Somebody coming into the SAS with a definite rank from the regular Army, say corporal, loses this rank and comes under the SAS's own chain of command, gaining rank within SAS to get promoted. They don't have regiments and battalions like the regulars. The SAS work in very small combat groups. They will help out the regular army officers, but they still remain under the special SAS command.

J.W. — What do you see as the role of the SAS?

E.T. — It takes over when the normal methods of British imperialism don't work; for instance, when a puppet regime breaks down, or the British Army, for diplomatic reasons, can't intervene, or when the popular movement against British imperialism is so strong that the usual force of the Army isn't enough. This is likely to happen more and more, so the SAS will be a very important factor in propping up British imperialism.

J.W. — Can you give some examples of how the SAS has been used?

E.T. — In the Yemen and in the Radfan area they were used extensively to find out what the guerillas were doing, as they were also used in Malaya. In the Middle East at the moment they are being used to train local troops to fight against revolutionary forces there. I believe these missions are at present being led by the SAS, in spite of — or because of — there being no official British involvement. So they are killers on loan, shoring up British interests there.

IRELAND

J.W. — Coming nearer home, in British Imperialism's own war in Ireland, how are the SAS being used?

E.T. — There is growing evidence about SAS activities in Ireland. You want to know what would they be doing there?

They would be used to infiltrate the IRA's ranks. The particular individuals would be of Irish origin to be credible. As well as obtaining information about the activities of the IRA, the SAS would be causing explosions and organising killings which would then be attributed to the IRA to attempt to discredit them and justify the Government's repressions.

Obviously they would also do all they could to stir up trouble between the different IRA groups, particularly between the Provisional and Official IRAs.

As for concrete evidence of their presence there, recently two priests published statements by detainees now on remand in Armagh Prison (where one of the priests is Chaplain). Francis Maguire, of Belfast, described an encounter with an SAS man at Girdwood Park barracks. "They made him stand against the wall and take off his jumper, which they used as a hood over his head. During interrogation, they punched him in the stomach and kicked him in the testicles. At one stage the SAS man pressed the prisoner's eyeball and said: "I have no Compton or anything to answer for. I could kill you and there wouldn't be a word. I have the right to do this." He spat and continued: "That is what I think of you. It would not worry me in the least to kill you, as I am a sadist and I enjoy hurting people." Later, they kicked and punched the prisoner for a long time."

J.W. — Why is there so little known about the SAS?

E.T. — Obviously, much of the strength of any secret force lies in the fact that it is secret, and that the general public know little or nothing of it. The SAS don't go on parades or show their battle honours!

If the SAS drop a clanger, get caught or killed, they are either not acknowledged to be connected with the Army in any way, or else they are dubbed as regular soldiers who just happened to wander "over the border" by accident.

J.W. — What connection does the SAS have with the general Secret Service apparatus?

E.T. — It is part of it, but it's obviously difficult to pinpoint the exact chain of command. It's only once in a while that the SAS ever find their way into the papers, when it's difficult to do a cover up job, like in Oman now. Even then it's not broadcast very widely.

After all, if the man in the street got to hear too much about the SAS, it might undermine his faith in the so-called British democratic tradition. Because what the operations of the SAS reveal is that the British ruling class will use any means to maintain its wealth and power. When it comes down to it, Marquess of Queensbury rules of "democracy" and Geneva Convention warfare, are not for them. We can expect that they'll attempt to use the SAS and other 'unofficial' thugs if the British workers decide to put the bosses on the scrapheap.

And of course, it's only when we've actually succeeded in doing that, that the labour movement will be able to unearth all the facts about the secret, underhand apparatus for thuggery and terrorism that the British rulers have developed over their years of home and colonial rule.

LONDON WORKERS' FIGHT FORUM

on

"Trotskyism in Britain"

Speaker: Sean Matgamna
at the General Picton pub,
Caledonian Road, near
Kings Cross

On Sunday February 13th. at 7.30

was besieged in York
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the crusader knights

OPE

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CHILE: Parliamentary Road Allende

"PREFERS THE CAPITALIST
SYSTEM TO BE SAVED
EVEN IF HIS REGIME FALLS"

The experiment with 'peaceful revolution' in Chile continues, despite recent electoral disappointments for Allende's Popular Front, and growing economic difficulties. It has been a barren 'revolution' which co-exists uneasily with the Chilean bourgeoisie. HUGO BLANCO, the Peruvian Trotskyist leader, explains why, in this excerpt from an interview published in Intercontinental Press.

Q — The government of Allende is now just over one year old. Many said when he was elected that his regime represented the road to socialism in the particular conditions of Chile. What do you think about this claim and what do you believe his government represent?

H.B. — Allende rose to power as the result of an election. But, as we all know, this election could have been thrown out by the legislature. In order to win in the congress he needed support outside his own grouping. Concretely, this meant from the Christian Democrats. But in order to get this backing, Allende had to promise that he would preserve inviolate the main bulwarks of the bourgeois system — the judiciary and the army — pledging that they would not be replaced by organs arising out of the people, such as people's courts in the case of the judiciary, and popular militias in the case of the armed forces.

Besides this, Allende also made a lot of promises about maintaining respect for the church. We defend freedom of religion. But all Allende's long-winded avowals showed a complete capitulation to the bourgeois system.

We must understand that if the army is left untouched, then the main defensive force of the whole bourgeois apparatus remains intact. We see this now. Allende cannot nationalise the basic industries. He has nationalised some mines, he has expropriated some ranches, all of course with compensation. But he has not touched the manufacturing sector. And naturally he cannot do it, because if he did, the army would topple him immediately.

Of course, this might turn into a civil war; it might open up risks for the bourgeoisie of a real revolution that would really destroy the bulwarks of the bourgeois system and really open the way for a socialist government.

But what I wanted to show was that in promising at the start of his administration to respect the basic pillars of the bourgeois system, Allende committed himself to respect the bourgeois system as a whole.

I am not saying that whatever nationalisations he carries out are not progressive steps. I do not mean that they represent what the nationalisations in Peru generally represent, since the latter are completely bourgeois measures to improve the functioning of the Peruvian capitalist system.

Unquestionably, in Chile many of these measures are the result of great pressure from the popular masses. But one swallow doesn't make a summer, that is, these measures do not mean that there is socialism in Chile.

For all these reasons, I do not believe that the Allende government represents the road toward socialism, at least not in the sense that Allende, by his actions, is leading Chile toward socialism.

His government may be a step toward socialism in another sense, in the sense that it will give the masses their final experience with a bourgeois reformist government and that, as a result of this lesson, they will come to understand that they themselves must take power, destroying all the foundations of the bourgeois system.

That is, for what it is teaching the masses, the Allende government can be, and unquestionably is, a step towards the socialist revolution. But not in the sense that it is on the way to becoming a socialist government.

Q — In recent weeks there have been signs on several occasions of a powerful right wing mobilisation against the Allende government. What measures do you think the Allende government should take in order to respond effectively to this threat?

H.B. — The government should explain to the people what is happening and call on them to act. The only way to halt the resurgence of the right in Chile is to mobilise the popular masses to block this mobilisation. The task of stemming the rightist tide cannot be left to the bourgeois army, because it is only lying low, waiting for its chance to strike at the government, a chance that may be created precisely by such right-wing demonstrations.

It is quite likely, moreover, that these demonstrations are being fomented by elements in the army itself.

I said that the army is lying in wait for the right moment to move, to overthrow Allende. It is calculating the relationship of forces, estimating whether or not the popular masses have been sufficiently weakened to permit a coup. Thus, the only way to block these intentions effectively is to mobilise the masses.

Clearly Allende is not doing this. He is afraid to do it. For if the masses did mobilise actively against these right-wing manoeuvres the mobilisation would burst beyond the limits Allende, or the leaders of his Unidad Popular, want to impose.

Therefore, I think it is the duty of the revolutionary left in Chile to organise the popular masses themselves to resist these rightist schemes, even though Allende opposes such a mobilisation.

Allende's attitude is like Peron's at the time of the 1955 coup in Argentina. Demonstrations began against the regime, and afterward the army took charge of the offensive. But Peron held back mass action and blocked all attempts to mobilise the masses.

Allende is taking this same suicidal attitude, suicidal for him, perhaps, and for his regime. But I firmly believe that Allende is one of the capitalist system's last cards in Chile, that is, the fundamental reason Allende is failing to mobilise the masses is that he prefers the capitalist system to be saved, even if his regime falls.

The Fight Against Redundancies

G.E.C.

THERE'S NO section of the employing class that has failed to do its bit in pushing the unemployment figure beyond the million mark. But there's one employer who really stands out in this field — Arnold Weinstock, multi-millionaire and emperor of the General Electric Company.

Since the GEC — AEI — EE merger in 1967/68, the workforce has been cut from 265,000 to below 225,000. Meanwhile profit per employee went up from £456 in 1969/70 to £489 in 1970/71.

The GEC complex in Stafford has suffered a full share of these cuts. Over the last three years, the total number of workers has gone down from 11,000 to around 7,000. This loss of jobs has taken place mainly through re-deployment and "natural wastage", with relatively few forced redundancies, and the unions have mounted very little resistance.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

But now, at last, GEC workers are calling a halt to this carve-up. On January 12th, the bosses announced that they proposed to make 453 workers redundant between now and September. The proposals include both manual and staff workers, though no detailed breakdown has been given.

A meeting of the Stafford Engineering Joint Committee on 18th. January resolved to "resist physically and with every means at its disposal any proposed redundancies by the GEC Stafford."

It decided on a programme of action, including an overtime ban, work-sharing, and a public demonstration on 3rd. February, when GEC hatchet man Jack Scamp is visiting Stafford.

A meeting of all GEC Stafford shop stewards on 25th. January endorsed this decision by 74 votes to 15, and the overtime ban went into operation the next day.

The feeling is that if the bosses take matters to the point of a confrontation then they will be answered by a work-in. Already workers at GEC's Nelson Research Laboratories have returned redundancy notices issued to them and are continuing to work.

STRIKE-IN

Full support must be put behind this programme of action. But there are problems. If the GEC workers decide on a work-in, then of course every effort must be made to make the work-in absolutely 100% solid. But GEC workers should remember that a work-in fundamentally means that workers are producing for the benefit of the bosses without even being paid for it.

They should learn from Jack Spriggs of Fisher Bendix when he says "A work-in involves problems of supply to keep production going, sales of products and payment of workers ... a strike-in .. is a more effective weapon."

A sit-in strike as at Plesseys, Fisher-Bendix or Alis-Chalmers is what GEC militants must set their sights on.

The success of the overtime ban and the work-sharing depend mainly on the sections not immediately threatened with redundancies, the sections where there is plenty of work — principally the Generator Machines Division.

There has been a tendency for these sections to adopt a complacent "it's nothing to do with us" attitude. Hence the 15 votes against the programme of action.

But every time the GEC bosses get away with one lot of redundancies they put themselves in a stronger position to get the next lot through. Those who hold back from a united stand against the current redundancy proposals should think of the future.

NATIONWIDE SOLIDARITY

This need to combat a narrow, short-sighted view on the part of some sections of GEC at Stafford is only part of the need for nationwide unity in the fight against Weinstock's strategy.

The Stafford committee are organising for a national GEC lobby of Parliament. This lobby could be a springboard for a revitalisation of the national Combine Joint Shop Stewards Committee, around a programme of:

- A national ban on overtime
- No productivity bargaining: productivity means fewer workers for the same production.
- No redundancies
- No loss of jobs through natural wastage or voluntary redundancies.

Martin Thomas

Urlay Nook

The Tory Government recently shocked local workers when it declared its intention to make North Yorkshire's unemployment situation even worse than it is now.

On January 15th, the Ministry of Defence announced its decision to close the Urlay Nook Naval Spare Parts Distribution Centre at Eaglescliffe, and another Naval depot in Wiltshire.

The Urlay Nook depot is the largest of its kind in Europe, and employs 1,000 workers whose jobs are now in danger. Stores are to be transferred to a new depot being built in Worcester: this will be run "economically", that is, with a minimum staff and high productivity, and is not expected to create many new jobs for Worcester workers.

The War Industry, like other industries — whether controlled by the Tory State or by "free enterprise" big businessmen, is being rationalised in order to make it more efficient, more economical, more profitable.

It has been estimated that the new Worcester depot will save the government £4 million in the short term, and more in the long term.

OUTCRY

After the announcement of the planned closure there was an immediate outcry from local trade unionists and MPs — Labour and Tory alike.

With 16,000 already on the dole in nearby Teesside, every job in the area must be hung-on to, every redundancy fought all the way, every new productivity con-trick rejected and all further attempts to rationalise industry resisted.

As socialists, however, we must remember that the depot supplies an armed section of imperialism, and that it is a total waste of workers' skills as well as of the money extorted from us through taxation.

Ideally we would like to see the depot closed, and the talents of the men there applied to creative, constructive work. But we know this

is impossible within the present system.

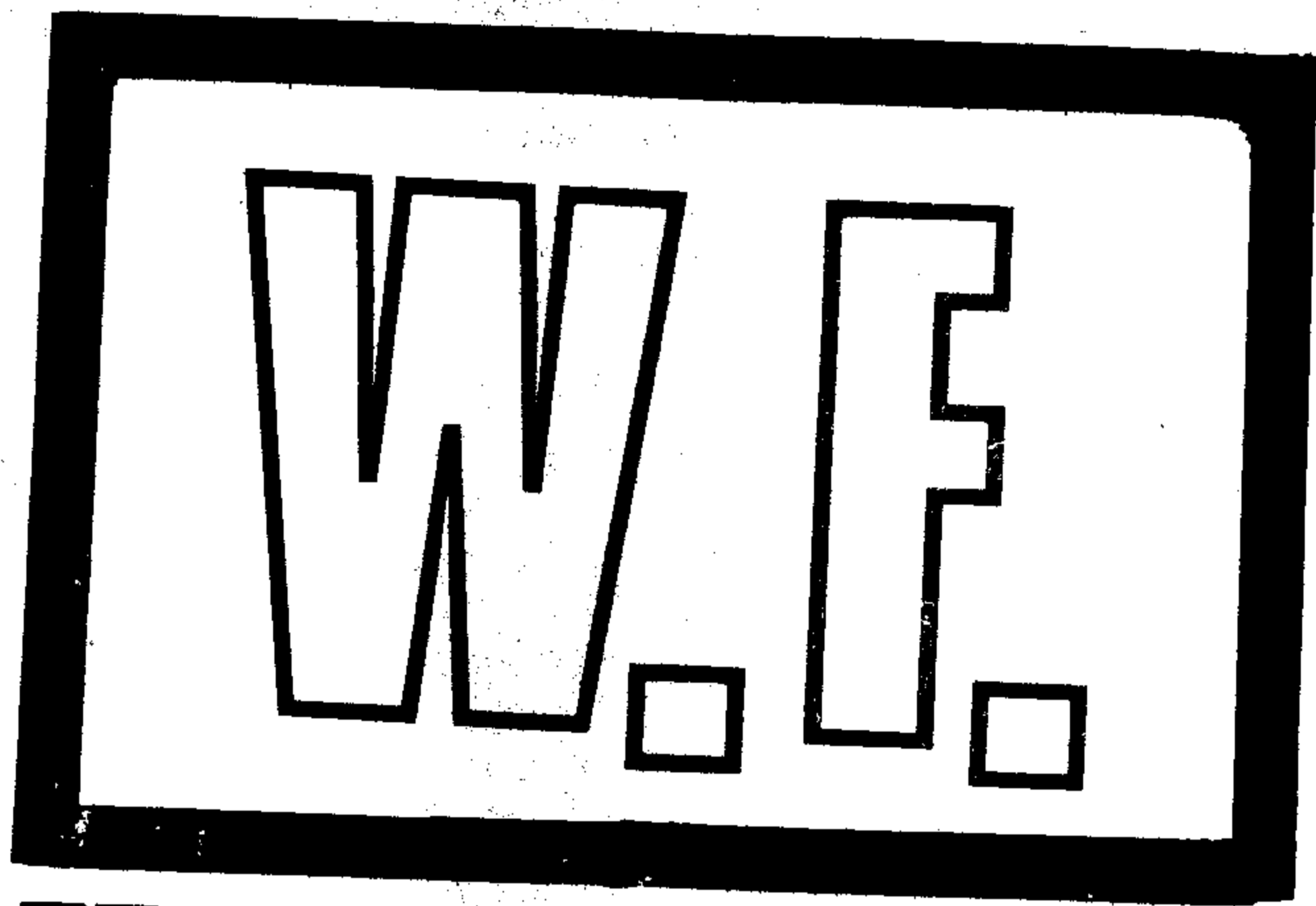
Therefore we must support the men all the way, fight for their right to a job, fight the transfer of a "lucky" few to Worcester, and fight redundancies disguised as "natural wastage".

However, we cannot merely echo the pathetic wailings of local MPs and trade union officials — the feeble "Postpone the decision" and the reactionary "Build a new Naval depot here". Socialists must stand out against this swamp of militarism, regional chauvinism and illusions that licking Teddy Teeth's boots will turn him into a generous, warm-hearted person.

We must oppose the building of new, concentrated and more economic Naval Supply Centres.

At the same time we must give all support to the Eaglescliffe and Wiltshire men in any action they take to protect their jobs.

Alan Theasby



Hospital workers oppose NUPE prod dealing policy

"WE WON'T BE FOBBED OFF with coppers" said Alan Fisher, NUPE's General Secretary, at last year's national Conference. Fine words, but that's all they were.

By any standards the recent pay rises for Hospital ancillary staff - porters, domestics, etc - were pretty meagre. Increases in basic pay of between £1.24 and £1.48 were accepted for men while women received 90 to 94 per cent of the men's increase.

Other items agreed in the deal were - 3 weeks holiday for all after 12 months service, a five day week, immediate talks on a minimum earnings guarantee and a commitment on lead in payments for workers not receiving bonus of productivity payments.

The last item in the deal is a particularly disturbing one. Many NUPE members are worried about the Union's policy of pressing for the introduction of productivity agreements when we have such a catastrophically high level of unemployment in the country. They fear that whilst bonus schemes will give higher earnings they can lead to fewer workers being employed with a consequent loss of job opportunities.

The leadership of NUPE uses an argument to counter this view which at first glance looks perfectly reasonable - "...that wherever a bonus scheme comes in we must insist that any savings that are made should be used to extend or improve service so that jobs are not lost."

But let's face it, the bosses are not mugs. Whatever the complicated details of a bonus scheme, and whatever Alan Fisher may say, if the NHS employers can get away with a smaller wage bill they will not hesitate to do so.

The lead in payment should be rejected by any group of workers to whom it is offered. It is nothing but a form of blackmail. It will only be offered to "full-time workers to whom it would be feasible to apply incentive bonus schemes or productivity agreements but who have not been offered such schemes", and almost certainly on the understanding that if they subsequently reject a bonus scheme they also lose the lead in payment. In the present situation we should have nothing to do with productivity schemes. We should certainly not do anything to encourage the employers to introduce them.

If NUPE and the rest of the NHS unions are really determined to win

better pay and conditions for their members - and to join in the fight against unemployment - it's time they stopped sitting about waiting for "opportunities to present themselves", and got on with the job.

Jack Sutton
(Secretary, South Manchester
Hospitals Branch NUPE).

N.B. Women domestic staff employed in the Manchester Royal Infirmary recently rejected by 157 votes to 34 the idea of a work study-based bonus scheme. The South Manchester Hospitals branch of NUPE, in view of the present unemployment situation, have banned the introduction of any productivity schemes.

J.S.

Kraft workers win strike over sacking

AFTER 11 WEEKS OF STRUGGLE, 150 maintenance workers at the Kraft Foods plant, Kirkby, have won reinstatement for a man dismissed on November 16th. in blatant breach of an agreement.

The AUEW district Committee immediately endorsed the action of the 150 in stopping work. But it took three lobbies by a dozen men, and one for which 51 militants travelled to London, to squeeze recognition for the dispute out of Hugh Scanlon's so-called "left wing" National Executive!

The maintenance men's convenor Eric Stanniford pointed out how disastrous this delay was, since the plant is manned chiefly by 1500 USDAW members who were threatened with lay-off and a cut in the numbers employed, unless they scabbed along with the supervisors. So it wasn't until the second Tuesday in January, when Scanlon finally gave grudging recognition to the Kraft maintenance men's strike, that the USDAW workers came out in support of their AUEW brothers.

Within two weeks, the struggle ended with a victory for the workers.

Fresh from this experience, and recognising the importance of solidarity, workers from Kraft were on the massive Trades Council demonstration in Liverpool last Wednesday and are giving active support to the Fisher Bendix occupation.

Naomi Wimbourne

warning from Merseyside

COACHLOADS of building workers are being transported from areas such as Stoke and Blackpool to Merseyside - at a time when there are over 53,000 people out of work on Merseyside.

Construction employers are using cheap labour from distant areas in a bid to keep wages low and break any union organisation. This threat to the livelihood of building workers is spreading, and now exists on a large number of sites on Merseyside.

Only 25% of the 200 workers on the Dare construction site at Halton Lodge, Runcord New Town, are local labour. The majority arrive every morning at 8 am on buses paid for by the company from Stoke, Blackpool, Manchester and Wigan. This means some are having to travel over 120 miles a day.

About 400 corporation dwellings are being built on the site.

Just recently Dares have been taken over by the Freshwater Company - Britain's biggest private landlord, who are notorious for the way they are using loopholes in the Rent Act to charge exorbitant rents.

Again in Runcorn over 60 workers at the Bass Charrington brewery site, which is being built by the Warrington firm A. Monks, come each day from Stoke.

The low level of wages which building firms are paying to the workers who come from areas outside Merseyside can be seen from the situation at the Chester telephone exchange site.

Here Stoke workers are only being paid wages of between £17 and £22 a week. Now they have united with all the workers on the site to end the employers' use of lump labour and to demand a reasonable wage.

Most shop stewards are quick to point out that they are not against the building workers from areas outside Merseyside. They know there is little construction work in these areas.

But there is a fear that employers are using the workers to break the success of the Merseyside men who by their militancy have gained the best rates outside London.

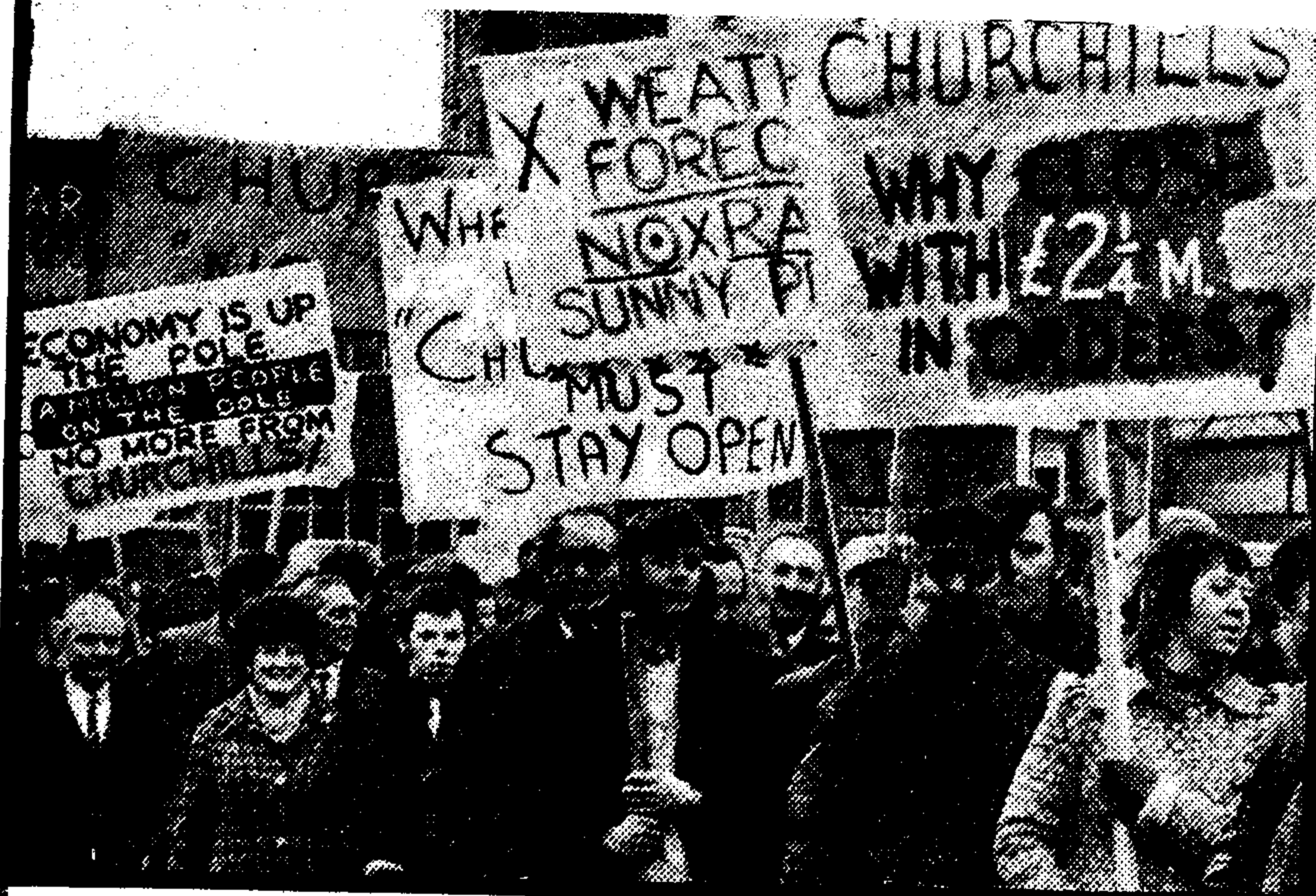
The Building Workers' Charter (the rank and file building workers' union newspaper) believe that one way to tackle the problem is to organise nationally to get equal rates of £35 for a 35-hour week.

At the moment workers from other areas are being used and exploited. Some do gain high wages, but only after working long hours and sometimes seven days a week after hours of travelling.

from Liverpool Free Press

Churchills on the march

Stockport AUEW is all set to follow the Union's 33,000 Manchester members in banning overtime, in an effort to combat rising unemployment. And on January 25th, 1,000 workers from Churchills Machine Tools marched through Altrincham in protest against the threat of closure. A few days earlier they had given Robert Carr a rough ride when he visited the factory.



AS HULL DOCKERS LAUNCH ONE DAY STRIKES -

N.P.S.S.C. HOLDS BACK FROM ACTION

At least 25,000 dockers struck on January 26th. But this hasn't stopped the employers' plans for chucking more and more dockers on the 'unattached' scrapheap. A great deal more than a token action will be needed for that - the bosses have too much at stake to give in so easily.

The London Dock Labour Board has approved plans by the Port Employers to return 123 men to the unattached pool. And in Hull 274 dockers are due to be declared unattached.

The Hull men have already held the first of a series of one day weekly strikes in protest.

In London stewards plan a one-day strike when the appeal of the 123 is being heard.

Many dockers feel a bitter disappointment that the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee, meeting on January 29th did not declare or plan firm and decisive action against this most serious threat to the dockers in years. Many, particularly the London stewards, wanted a national strike and a full confrontation on the redundancies issue.

If we don't prepare such a counter attack there will be massive redundancies in the ports before we are very much older.

Harold Youd
Manchester Portworkers Cttee