

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER • WEDNESDAY MARCH 7, 1973 • No 1015 • 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

PROGRAMME TO HIT WAGES AND LIVING STANDARDS

CRISIS ELECTION

BUDGET BY TORIES

ONLY 24 HOURS after the TUC capitulated before the government's state pay laws, the Tory Chancellor announced his crash programme to further hit wages and the living standards of millions of workers.

In line with Common Market policy Value Added Tax (VAT) is to be introduced at the end of this month at 10 per cent.

This attack was included in Anthony Barber's early Budget by means of outright deception. On the one hand he shed mock tears about 'consumers' hit by inflation and then tried to blame wage-earners for the rise in prices.

This deliberately ignores the fact that the majority of consumers are wage-earners and that their wage demands are made precisely because they are being impoverished by inflation.

But much more important, it uses a gross lie to stand reality on its head. The greatest immediate single cause of price rises is the floating of the pound since last July, a deliberate act of the Tory

BY WORKERS PRESS REPORTERS

government to try to shore up its tottering system.

The effective devaluation of the pound by more than 10 per cent since last summer has directly put up the cost of living by making all imported foods and raw materials cost from 10 to 15 per cent more on average.

And not once in all his meanderings about the international economic crisis did Barber admit the one simple fact which everyone knows: that inflation is a world-wide phenomenon caused by United States political and economic imperialism.

Overshadowing the whole Budget speech, which was listened to in utter per-



CHANCELLOR BARBER

plexity by both Tory and Labour benches, was the economic crisis which is threatening the very survival of vast areas of the European economy (see page 12).

Barber could hold out not a glimmer of hope for a solution to the crisis which has caused world

money markets to remain closed all week and will be the subject of bitter battles at the international financial conference at the weekend.

Spelling out the need for further attacks on the working class, Barber said:

'As for confidence abroad, there would be no soft options for an economy which allowed itself to become uncompetitive.

'Pressures on sterling would be intensified by lack of confidence and would lead in one way or another to a depreciation of the exchange rate which in turn would exacerbate the inflationary spiral.'

Give-aways

But with the confusion in the international currency situation making it impossible for the Tories to predict how things will turn out, the Chancellor also included in the Budget a row of paltry give-away items in case of the need to call a snap election.

Towards this, Barber said the Budget would be 'broadly neutral' and announced increased prizes

on premium bonds and such items.

(When this was announced the House rocked with laughter).

Also, North Sea oil profits are to be taxed.

There has been a growing clamour against the giant oil corporations being able to offset these profits against losses in the Middle East and elsewhere.

But the danger for the working class in this display of the Tories keeping their options open is the warning from Barber that many 'mini-budgets' could follow this year when the situation demanded it.

The basic Tory taxation strategy remains the same:

To reduce direct taxation on the wealthy by abolition of surtax, plus hefty reductions in taxes on profits and corporations.

This will be replaced by indirect taxation on mass consumer items bought by the working class by imposing Value Added Tax.

VAT is to be levied at 10 per cent from April 1. This will mean an extra 1 to 2 per cent directly onto

prices in addition to the current price inflation of nearly 10 per cent a year.

With an eye to an early election and as a sop to the trade unions, Barber announced a range of VAT exemptions: children's clothing, confectionery, ice cream, crisps and soft drinks plus all food sold in shops.

But this does not mean that there won't be a massive round of price increases on April 1. Housewives must expect a repeat of the experience with decimalization.

Derision

The Chancellor promised the establishment of special surveillance measures—which prompted roars of derisive laughter from Labour benches.

He added £1.60 a week for a married couple for pensions, and £1 for unemployment and sickness benefits and took 4p a week off workers' insurance contributions and added 14p to the employers' share.

But the pension increase will not be paid until October 1 and will not compensate for inflation. Single persons' rates go up £1 for pensions and 60p for unemployment and sickness benefits.

But the real steel of the Tories' intentions came in Barber's closing remarks viciously attacking the trade unions.

Poll scene

It sets the scene for a possible General Election by offering some sweeteners and laying all the blame for continuing uncontrolled inflation onto wage demands.

The squalid manoeuvres of the Tories to attack the unions and court the middle class must be utterly exposed.

Behind this Budget smokescreen lies the profoundest economic crisis which British capitalism has ever faced.

This crisis inevitably compels the Tory government savagely to attack the standard of living of the working class and all its historically won rights.

No amount of Tory propaganda about a 'broadly neutral' Budget can hide these economic and political facts.

ARE YOU BOOKED UP FOR SUNDAY'S PAGEANT?



Next Sunday (March 11) at the Empire Pool, Wembley, the Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists will be presenting the anti-Tory rally and

Pageant 'The Road to Workers' Power'. For several weeks workers and youth in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, Middleton, Manchester, and Jarrow in the

north-east and actors in London have been rehearsing episodes from working-class history. Last Sunday all four casts got together for an inspir-

ing and exciting rehearsal. Be sure you see the whole rally by booking your ticket now. For fuller details and a contact telephone number, see page 4.

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● WEDNESDAY MARCH 7, 1973 ● No 1015 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

PROGRAMME TO HIT WAGES AND LIVING STANDARDS

CRISIS ELECTION

BUDGET BY TORIES

ONLY 24 HOURS after the TUC capitulated before the government's state pay laws, the Tory Chancellor announced his crash programme to further hit wages and the living standards of millions of workers.

In line with Common Market policy Value Added Tax (VAT) is to be introduced at the end of this month at 10 per cent.

This attack was included in Anthony Barber's early Budget by means of outright deception. On the one hand he shed mock tears about 'consumers' hit by inflation and then tried to blame wage-earners for the rise in prices.

This deliberately ignores the fact that the majority of consumers are wage-earners and that their wage demands are made precisely because they are being impoverished by inflation.

But much more important, it uses a gross lie to stand reality on its head. The greatest immediate single cause of price rises is the floating of the pound since last July, a deliberate act of the Tory

BY WORKERS PRESS REPORTERS

government to try to shore up its tottering system.

The effective devaluation of the pound by more than 10 per cent since last summer has directly put up the cost of living by making all imported foods and raw materials cost from 10 to 15 per cent more on average.

And not once in all his meanderings about the international economic crisis did Barber admit the one simple fact which everyone knows: that inflation is a world-wide phenomenon caused by United States political and economic imperialism.

Overshadowing the whole Budget speech, which was listened to in utter per-



CHANCELLOR BARBER

plexity by both Tory and Labour benches, was the economic crisis which is threatening the very survival of vast areas of the European economy (see page 12).

Barber could hold out not a glimmer of hope for a solution to the crisis which has caused world

money markets to remain closed all week and will be the subject of bitter battles at the international financial conference at the weekend.

Spelling out the need for further attacks on the working class, Barber said:

'As for confidence abroad, there would be no soft options for an economy which allowed itself to become uncompetitive.

'Pressures on sterling would be intensified by lack of confidence and would lead in one way or another to a depreciation of the exchange rate which in turn would exacerbate the inflationary spiral.'

Give-aways

But with the confusion in the international currency situation making it impossible for the Tories to predict how things will turn out, the Chancellor also included in the Budget a row of paltry give-away items in case of the need to call a snap election.

Towards this, Barber said the Budget would be 'broadly neutral' and announced increased prizes

on premium bonds and such items.

(When this was announced the House rocked with laughter).

Also, North Sea oil profits are to be taxed.

There has been a growing clamour against the giant oil corporations being able to offset these profits against losses in the Middle East and elsewhere.

But the danger for the working class in this display of the Tories keeping their options open is the warning from Barber that many 'mini-budgets' could follow this year when the situation demanded it.

The basic Tory taxation strategy remains the same:

To reduce direct taxation on the wealthy by abolition of surtax, plus hefty reductions in taxes on profits and corporations.

This will be replaced by indirect taxation on mass consumer items bought by the working class by imposing Value Added Tax.

VAT is to be levied at 10 per cent from April 1. This will mean an extra 1 to 2 per cent directly onto

prices in addition to the current price inflation of nearly 10 per cent a year.

With an eye to an early election and as a sop to the trade unions, Barber announced a range of VAT exemptions: children's clothing, confectionary, ice cream, crisps and soft drinks plus all food sold in shops.

But this does not mean that there won't be a massive round of price increases on April 1. Housewives must expect a repeat of the experience with decimalization.

Derision

The Chancellor promised the establishment of special surveillance measures—which prompted roars of derisive laughter from Labour benches.

He added £1.60 a week for a married couple for pensions, and £1 for unemployment and sickness benefits and took 4p a week off workers' insurance contributions and added 14p to the employers' share.

But the pension increase will not be paid until October 1 and will not compensate for inflation. Single persons' rates go up £1 for pensions and 60p for unemployment and sickness benefits.

But the real steel of the Tories' intentions came in Barber's closing remarks viciously attacking the trade unions.

Poll scene

It sets the scene for a possible General Election by offering some sweeteners and laying all the blame for continuing uncontrolled inflation onto wage demands.

The squalid manoeuvres of the Tories to attack the unions and court the middle class must be utterly exposed.

Behind this Budget smokescreen lies the profoundest economic crisis which British capitalism has ever faced.

This crisis inevitably compels the Tory government savagely to attack the standard of living of the working class and all its historically won rights.

No amount of Tory propaganda about a 'broadly neutral' Budget can hide these economic and political facts.

ARE YOU BOOKED UP FOR SUNDAY'S PAGEANT?



Next Sunday (March 11) at the Empire Pool, Wembley, the Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists will be presenting the anti-Tory rally and

Pageant 'The Road to Workers' Power'. For several weeks workers and youth in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, Middleton, Manchester, and Jarrow in the

north-east and actors in London have been rehearsing episodes from working-class history. Last Sunday all four casts got together for an inspir-

ing and exciting rehearsal. Be sure you see the whole rally by booking your ticket now. For fuller details and a contact telephone number, see page 4.

All Trades Unions Alliance lobby of TUC special Congress

THE MASS anti-Tory rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley, this coming Sunday, March 11, will be a big step towards the transformation of the Socialist Labour League into a revolutionary party and towards the construction of the alternative leadership in the unions.

The vital and urgent nature of this task was demonstrated at Central Hall, Westminster, on Monday when the union leaders tried to ditch the fight against the Tory government and leave the working class defenceless against that government's onslaught on its most basic rights.

Capitalist newspapers, television and radio attempted to portray Monday's lobby of the TUC as just a few 'militants' with some strange ideas and representing nobody. The Communist Party's 'Morning Star' yesterday treated it as a routine protest, reporting only calls for 'a strong stand' and 'some kind of action on May Day'.

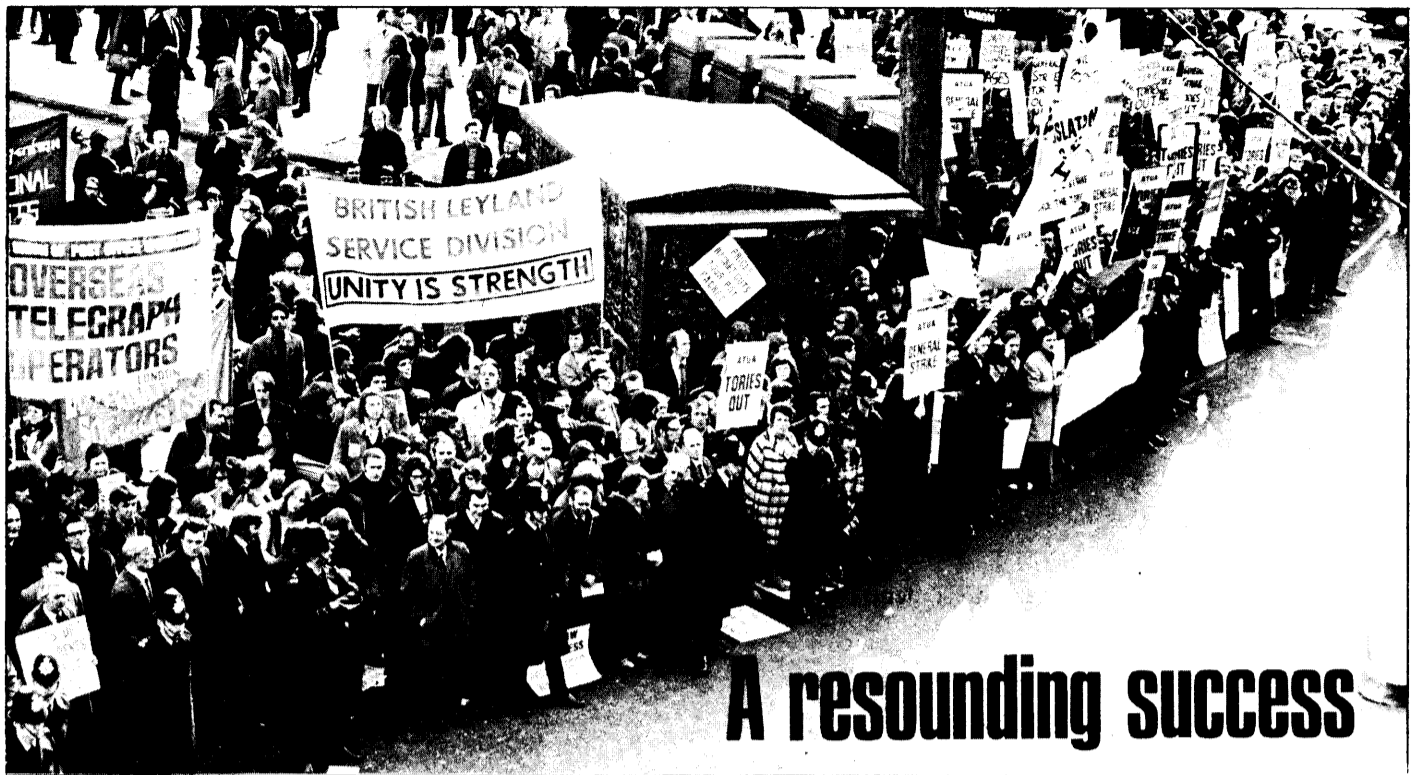
In fact 1,500 workers—comprising representatives of most of the key sections in struggle with the Tories—kept up a constant, chanted demand of 'General Strike! Tories Out!' throughout the most important stages of the Congress.

This, of course, is the only demand which meets the needs of the working-class movement today. Fleet Street and the CP Stalinists played the lobby down because they are united on two things: helping the union chiefs avoid the issues of the hour, and diverting workers' attention from the retreat of their so-called leaders.

A majority of those taking part in the lobby, and certainly its most effective sections, were members and supporters of the All Trades Unions Alliance.

The Alliance, the industrial arm of the SLL, called for the lobby as part of its work to build the alternative, revolutionary leadership in the unions. In this sense the lobby was absolutely in line with the preparation of next Sunday's mass anti-Tory rally at the Empire Pool.

The Stalinist-led Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, whose March 31 conference promises to be an even bigger fraud than the special TUC itself, clearly made no attempt to mobilize its forces for the lobby. And the slogans its few supporters attempted to foist on



A resounding success

the workers present constituted no challenge to the betrayal inside.

'United action now', urged one placard. Others read: 'Legal stop on prices now', 'Prices racket cuts your pay packet', 'Tory law what a mess prices soar wages less'.

Such reformist claptrap is indistinguishable from the TUC General Council's own worthless and outdated document on 'Economic Policy and Collective Bargaining in 1973'. But there is a very good reason why fake 'lefts', Stalinists and their supporters should be carrying such placards outside Monday's TUC.

The reason is that inside Central Hall their friends in influential positions among the union delegations were busy propping up the General Council and its policy.

Following the defeat, early on Monday morning, of the platform's ruling that

no resolutions or amendments to the policy document would be taken, Workers Press reporters questioned leading 'lefts' and Stalinists about their attitude to the document.

About the strongest comment they could elicit was: 'It doesn't go far enough'. But all of those questioned said they would, in the final analysis, vote in favour.

With the significant exception of the miners' union, not a single delegation in the Congress so much as voiced the demand for an indefinite General Strike to defeat the Tories. In fact at one pre-conference policy-making meeting, that of the cinema technicians' union, the Stalinists united with the right wing to vote down a General Strike call and ensure support for the General Council policy. So the miners' resolution had to be withdrawn for lack of support.

A section of the All Trades Unions Alliance-organized lobby outside the Central Hall, Westminster, on Monday.

These were the politics of the Stalinists on Monday's lobby. And they will be the politics of the March 31 conference.

The ATUA mobilized successfully for the lobby, on quite the opposite basis, because it is now the only organization within the trade union movement fighting to meet the needs of the hour as far as the working class is concerned.

The lobby was a resounding political success. Let this coming Sunday's mass anti-Tory rally at the Empire Pool decisively answer the union leaders and their hangers-on. All those who want to force the Tories out of office for good—join us at Wembley, join the ATUA and the SLL, join the fight to build the revolutionary party in Britain.

LETTER

DEAR EDITOR,

I WOULD like to inform your readers about a meeting of the London Joint Sites Committee which took place on Thursday, February 22. Present was Lew Lewis, the secretary and leading member of the Communist Party in the building trade.

Under pressure from All Trades Unions Alliance (ATUA) members at the meeting he put forward a call to building workers to support a Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions lobby of the TUC special Congress on March 5 to demand a General Strike to force the Tories to resign and to return a Labour government pledged to socialist policies. He said this was the Liaison Committee policy. (See Workers Press, Saturday, February 24, 1973.)

Of course, in saying this, Lewis wasn't telling the truth. As everyone knows, the Liaison Committee policy is for a one-day national protest stoppage which could never remove the Tory

government and is not intended to.

In putting forward this call Lewis was cynically adapting to the growing anti-Tory feeling of the workers in the building trade in order to stab it in the back.

The depth of this cynicism was shown on the lobby itself. Not only was his Committee not fighting for a General Strike, but they were not even there. Not even a banner.

Usually keen for publicity, they did not put in an appearance so far as I know. They were content to let the TUC betray because the outcome of the Congress, the national one-day of protest, is all that they want.

The Stalinists today march arm in arm with the right wing. We must warn every worker of their treachery.

Every class-conscious worker must join the ATUA and the SLL in the fight to transform the League into a party. This is the way to defeat the Stalinists.

London building worker.

Asset-strippers attack Leyland's Lord Stokes

LORD STOKES, the chairman of British-Leyland is expected to receive a rough reception when he greets shareholders at today's annual meeting.

The man behind the anti-Stokes group is Mr Redvers Veale. He says that although asset-strippers are being condemned, 'it should be remembered from the shareholders' point of view, they at least provide some protection against managements who are unable to provide shareholders with a realistic return on their investments'.

In other words, Veale wants more asset-stripping throughout the combine like the hiving off of Thornycroft's at Basingstoke. One of Veale's questions to the chairman asks:

'Will the chairman assure us

that if better results are not achieved in the current year he will consider the possible breaking up of the company?'

Veale, a partner in Pim, Vaughan and Company, has told the City editors that he intends to put four other questions to Stokes.

Another asks: 'Will he reassure us that the current policy to sharply increase the already substantial expenditure on research and development will not be undertaken unless the management can ensure a more real-

istic return to shareholders?'

Veale and his followers are angry with the Stokes management because of the declining returns in recent years. The share price yesterday was only 30p despite Stokes's much-publicized reports that the company was now set for 'big profits'.

Veale says: 'Over the past ten years shareholders have seen the value of their investment reduced by at least 50 per cent and the income reduced by the same amount'.

VAT will hit hard

VALUE-ADDED TAX will hit small shopkeepers much more than many of them realize. Customs and Excise officials announced yesterday that shopkeepers with a taxable turnover

of £5,000 a year must register for VAT.

Many shopkeepers had thought they only had to register if they made a profit of £5,000 a year.

Spanish police arrest 'guerrillas' as Castro signs deal

SPANISH Foreign Ministry official Eduardo Pena Bizanda has renewed a commercial treaty in Havana with Fidel Castro's Cuban government.

There was talk, in a 'cordial climate', of a rapid increase in Cuban sales to Spain: a target was fixed at \$50m.

Spain will buy an extra 20,000 tons of Cuban sugar at a price which was officially described as 'very favourable to Spain, considering the world market price'.

In Spain, Franco's police have been busy rounding up oppositionists—many of whom base themselves on the 'guerrilla' tactics of Comandante Fidel.

Police headquarters in Oviedo,

the capital of Asturias, has issued a note on the arrest of seven members of the Maoist International Communist Party (PCI).

The Maoists were active in the Philosophy and Science Faculties of the University of Oviedo and the Uninsa and Ensidesa factories.

Full-time Maoist?

Fascist police claim that one of the arrested, Manuel Armenta Espejo, is a full-time Maoist organizer 'who had conducted clandestine activity in Seville, Barcelona and Tarrasa and was now intensifying subversive action in Asturias'.

The Civil Guard in Bilbao has imprisoned 40 people connected with the Basque national-

BY JUAN GARCIA

ist movement in Bilbao, Amora-bieto, Marquina and Ondarroa.

Twenty-five arrests were made in Ondarroa, thus breaking up a group which concentrated on collecting funds for the Basque movement.

The Civil Guard requisitioned three duplicators and an archive containing illegal newspapers like 'Workers' Guipuzcoa' and 'Batuzuna' and the pamphlets 'Reformism and Revolution' and an 'Inquiry into Basque nationalism'.

The Basques were also caught with illegal posters bearing the portraits of Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro . . .

In spite of police repression, the Spanish working class has not relented in its struggle against the Franco regime.

According to management figures only 1,800 of the 6,000 miners in the 13 pits in the mining valley of Nalon (Asturias) are working.

Some 1,700 miners in the private mine of Figaredo in Turón are on strike following the death of miner José Jesus Díaz (25), crushed under a fall of coal.

Shipyard lock-out

In Bilbao, 3,000 shipyard workers are still locked out after six weeks of stoppages for higher wages.

And 140 workers in 'Cadenas and Forjados' have been locked out for a week following a one-day strike last Friday.

In San Sebastian, 800 extras working on the film 'Papillon'

won a wage increase and the reinstatement of 12 militants who had been sacked by the producer.

Cordoba buses are being boycotted following a 25-per-cent fares rise.

A member of the Civil Guard is riding in each bus and armed police are guarding the bus stops.

On most routes, the boycott is total—the only passenger is a policeman.

Firemen are in their fifth day of strike in Seville—the town council has refused to grant a proper wage increase. Sevillian workers are embittered further by the threat of the Peyre textile plant that it will have to close.

That would add 500 unemployed to the already large number of permanent unemployed in southern Spain.



PAGEANT DIARY

The Road to Workers Power

MERTHYR

INTERVIEW BY STEPHEN JOHNS

'TAFF VALE is us. People need reminding it happened in these valleys. It's their history.'

THIS is why Margaret Cronin (19) and her twin sister, Joan, say they are taking part in the Pageant.

They come from Merthyr Tydfil, the northern terminus of the Taff Vale railway which successfully sued and threatened the rail unions with destruction in 1901.

The Taff Vale incident made workers realize that they needed a voice in parliament to defend their basic rights.

Now, over 70 years later, Margaret and Joan both say that only a revolutionary party can secure the rights gained in 200 years of struggle.

Says Margaret: 'I think this is essential now. There wouldn't be much point in this Pageant without this aim.'

'If we want to go forward and fight for our rights, we will have to build a party to do it.'

'We have to go back into our history and show that ordinary workers built their organizations and it will have to be ordinary workers fighting it out now. No one will help us to do it.'

Margaret is taking a course at a local tech mainly because she can't get a job.

First hand

'I started work in a local factory. We had seen struggle at home, but this is the first time I'd seen it at first hand. It was an eye-opener the way the girls were treated and the pittance we were paid.'

'I used to speak up, but when we got into the manager's office I often found myself on my own. The others sometimes sided with management, but only because they were young and afraid.'

Joan, who works in a local chemist shop, thinks the working class has the power



to defend its historic gains.

'The Tories are strong, but the working class is stronger than them. That is why they are planning to take our basic rights away—to make us weak.'

'It's already happened with the National Industrial Relations Court and the prices laws. I really think we are moving towards fascism. People don't realize this, but we have to show them.'

We need a party to fight for our rights—
Merthyr twins



Twin sisters Margaret (left) and Joan Cronin from Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, are enthusiastic supporters of the Pageant 'The Road to Workers' Power', to be presented at the Empire Pool, Wembley, anti-Tory rally next Sunday (March 11). They will be helping re-enact the Taff Vale incident—the 1901 legal onslaught on the rail union. The sisters feel that historical lessons will strengthen the working class's present-day struggle to defend basic rights.

'They have made about 25 million people criminals under the Phase Two laws. This is how serious it is.'

Says Margaret: 'Neither of us have really been involved in anything political before. You grow up in Merthyr, you go to school and you're expecting a good life. But when you leave it hits you, there's nothing decent for you to do. You can only fight.'

Greek students back rally

AN EXTRAORDINARY general meeting of the Union of Greek Students in London has voted to participate in and support the mass rally against the Tory government at the Empire Pool, Wembley, this Sunday.

The meeting declared its wholehearted solidarity with the struggle and the strike of fellow-students in Greece for their democratic demands.

The meeting also 'denounced the trials, the call-up to the army and all the other terrorist measures employed by the dictatorial regime to break the militant mood of the students and the working masses'.

'In this common struggle, the students must not remain alone. The working class, as the most important fighting force, must stand on their side. For this reason, we salute the slogan which shook the streets of Athens: "People solidarize with us!"'

'This, in essence, was a call to the Communist Party to mobilize the power of the working class in solidarity with the students and against the junta. The CP has all the possibilities to materialize this mobilization. The Union of Greek Students in London repeats this call: Break from the bourgeoisie. Mobilize the working class against the junta, on a socialist programme.'

'The Greek students in London are only typically far from the field of the struggle taking place in Greece. Not essentially. Because the enemy is present in every country. It is imperialism, which is represented in Britain by the Tory government.'

'The Greek students in London can fight the enemy of the students and the workers in Greece by fighting against the Tory government. It is in this sense that the Union decides to participate and support the mass rally against the Tory government organized by the Socialist Labour League at the Empire Pool on Sunday March 11.'

Only all-out action can win: hospital staff

ANCILLARY workers at the Whittingham Hospital, Preston, Lancs, are among those who believe that all-out strike action is needed to defeat the state pay laws.

Thirty workers from the laundry are already out as part of a selective strike policy. This is leaving about 220 workers on a work to rule.

Ted Firestone, National Union of Public Employees' branch secretary at Whittingham, told Workers Press that the workers on strike were getting tremendous financial support from other employees in the hospital.

One of the official NUPE pickets, Mr Michael Chambers, has a wife and three-year-old son to keep on his miserably low wage.

With the rising prices and rents it means that his wife has to go out to work.

The hospital's management

threatened last week to bring in outside labour to work the laundries. This provoked an angry response from other hospital workers like cooks, boilermakers and porters. They threatened to strike immediately.

The management has retreated, but is now saying that the fouled laundry is a health hazard. If anyone dies as a result of contamination, the union will be held responsible, according to management.

The NUPE area organizer said he didn't think the present strike action alone would get the hospital workers their £4 wage increase. But it would give the ancillary workers a sense of their strength.



Preston pickets discuss tactics.

THE NATIONAL Union of Public Employees yesterday accused some senior hospital consultants of stepping outside agreed procedure in making Press statements claiming patients were being put in danger. 'This has caused considerable ill-feeling among ancillary workers who know that some senior consultants earn almost as much from treating private patients in a week, as an

ancillary worker in the same hospital can earn in a year,' claimed NUPE.

'If any senior consultant is seriously concerned about the situation in his hospital, he would be well advised to discuss the matter with his hospital administration so that the matter may be raised directly with the Department of Health.'

Liverpool rejects selective strikes

THE CENTRAL Liverpool branch of the National Union of Public Employees has thrown out a union recommendation for selective strikes and replaced it with a call for all-out strike action.

After being rebuffed by the angry meeting, the official had a hasty consultation with the stewards present.

He eventually agreed that the strike action could start this week, but it could not be made official until after consultations with the three other unions involved.

One young laundry worker told Workers Press:

'A total strike is the only way to get what we want. The gasworkers have had selective strikes and now they are going for total strike action. I think that now a General Strike is on the cards.'

A POLICY TO MEET THE CRISIS



THE TORY government is relentlessly pursuing its plan for a confrontation with the working class. Each day new sections of workers are forced to become criminals—under Tory law—to defend their standard of living against government-inspired soaring cost of living.

Large sections of these workers openly acknowledge that the only answer to their fight to maintain a decent standard of living is a General Strike. That is, the creation of the industrial and political conditions which will force the government to resign.

In its place must be elected a Labour government which is pledged by the mass action of the working class to implement socialist policies.

We say 'pledged to socialist policies' knowing that the present leaders of the Labour movement have no intention of introducing such policies. Indeed, in the last analysis some of them will be prepared to join a coalition government with the Tories to head off the working class.

But if the working class is strong enough to force the Tories out, it is strong enough to deal with the traitors in its own midst. This can only be achieved by exposing them in the fight for an alternative socialist policy.

The Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League calls upon the working class to support the following policies to unite the working class against the Tories and the present Wilson-Feather leadership of the labour movement:

Here is the policy which the next Labour government must be forced to carry out.

1) A Labour government must immediately repeal the Industrial Relations Act, Housing Finance Act, Immigration Acts, Fair Trading Act and all wage control. After the repeal of all Tory anti-working class measures, there must be legislation to implement the Charter of Basic Rights, along the following lines.

2) The right to work! Capitalism demands mass unemployment. The right to a job must

be guaranteed. This can only be done by breaking the grip of capitalist ownership on the economy. Employed and unemployed must unite to insist on a Labour government nationalizing the main industries and banks, under workers' control and without compensation.

The struggle must begin now. No closures, no sackings, must be the policy of the trade unions. Occupation of factories threatened with closure, as part of the fight to bring down the Tories.

3) The democratic right to strike and to organize in trade unions. Only the organized working class can lead mankind out of the historical crisis. Every right and every gain won by the working class, every democratic right in Britain, has been won because of the organized strength of the unions and the strike weapon.

A Labour government must immediately repeal the Industrial Relations Act. This fight must begin now by forcing the TUC to break off all relations with the government and mobilize the working class to destroy state control of wages.

4) The right to defend rights won in the past and change the system. All the changes in legal procedures made by the Tory government must be repealed. All secret police and MI5 organizations must be dis-

banded and fully exposed. The secrets of the Tory administration in this sphere must be published. All rights to assembly, free speech and the Press must be guaranteed.

5) The right to a higher standard of living. It is not the living standards of trade unionists, but the profit system, which causes the crisis. The first step must be to expropriate all the great fortunes of the rich, close down the Stock Exchange, place a state control over all movements of capital in and out of the country.

Nationalization of the basic industries and of all large companies, banks, building and insurance societies will provide the resources for a unified plan to improve the living standards of the whole people. Workers' control of these, as well as the present nationalized industries, will run them in the interests of the workers and consumers.

Again, the fight must begin now. State control of wages must be answered by the most widespread fight for wage increases to meet price rises and improve standards. This means a fight to remove the Tory government and change the union leadership.

6) The right to health and welfare benefits. Every Tory government cut in welfare benefits, in the health service and in all public spending must

be revoked. On the basis of nationalization, a crash programme of expansion of services to the unemployed, the low-paid, the sick and the aged must be undertaken as an absolute priority. The working class and the Labour government must take immediate and absolute responsibility for these victims of the capitalist system.

7) The right to decent housing. Decent housing is not a luxury; it is a necessity. People have the basic right to decent accommodation at rents they can afford. Nationalization of the handful of building monopolies and building societies will provide the basis for a massive programme of new house building. The disgraceful problem of the homeless in the cities must be immediately solved by census and taking-over of all unoccupied property.

8) The international responsibilities of the working class. The working class is international. We fight for the unrestricted right of any worker of any nationality to move freely through the world.

Withdraw the troops from Ireland. Unite the Irish and British working class to throw out the Lynch and Heath governments.

Unite in the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe, the only alternative to

the Common Market plans for dictatorship.

Withdraw all British troops from abroad and disband the present standing army.

Sign treaties with all colonial countries for programmes of equal trade and mutual assistance.

Break from NATO and all imperialist alliances.

For the carrying out of such policies the SLL fights for the setting up of Councils of Action to lead the struggle against the Tory government in every area. These Councils unite trade unionists, tenants, unemployed, all political parties and tendencies of the working class (Labour Party, Communist Party, SLL, IS, IMG, etc.) to fight against the main enemy, the Tory government.

The SLL calls upon every socialist and class-conscious worker to consider this programme and manifesto very carefully, and to decide now to take up their inescapable responsibilities. The building of the revolutionary party is the burning question now, not in some remote future. The SLL is determined to carry through its transformation into a revolutionary party.

We appeal to all readers of the Workers Press and our supporters to join the SLL and help transform it into a revolutionary party.

I would like information about

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Fill in the form below and send to NATIONAL SECRETARY, SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, 186a CLAPHAM HIGH ST, LONDON SW4 7UG.

Name.....

Address.....

ANTI-TORY RALLY

AND PAGEANT OF HISTORY "ROAD TO WORKERS POWER"

DEFEND ALL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

Unite in action to make this Tory government resign
Defend trade unionism and basic living standards

The road to power is through the building of the revolutionary party

SUNDAY MARCH 11, 3 p.m. AT EMPIRE POOL, WEMBLEY

Speakers:

gasmen, hospital workers, car workers.
Gary Gurmeet, Editor Keep Left.
G. Healy, National Secretary, SLL.

Cabaret in the evening featuring:

ALAN PRICE JACK BRUCE ELLIS

TICKETS £1. AVAILABLE FROM:

Pageant Office, 34 Hamilton Gardens, London, NW8 Phone: 286 3332

COACHES AND TRAINS LEAVING FROM ALL AREAS

BY JACK GALE

A law of May 15, 1971, extended the competence of the courts martial in martial law areas to try civil offences and some arrested journalists have been brought before such courts. The civil courts have themselves been acting with much greater severity since then.

Under the 1961 Constitution, Articles 141/2 of the Penal Code (which Ataturk adapted from Mussolini's Criminal Code in 1926) Communist propaganda was banned.

The terms of these articles were vague—the actual offence being 'to seek to establish the domination of one particular social class over other social classes, to eliminate a social class or to overthrow the social and economic order established in the country in any of its particulars'—and have thus enabled prosecutors to harru writers, journalists and publishers almost at will.

Articles 158/9 of the Penal Code forbade defamation of the Press, the republic, the nation and institutions, and Article 146 makes it a capital offence to seek to overthrow the constitution by force. An additional Law of Measures passed in 1962 provided penalties of imprisonment for criticizing the 1960 revolution (even by implication) or defending the view that the Republic would not survive as a democracy. This law has also been used to prosecute irreverent journalists and cartoonists.

In November 1971 parliament unanimously voted to strengthen approximately one-third of the clauses of the 1961 Constitution, which the Prime Minister declared a 'luxury' that Turkey could no longer afford.

Clauses have been added to most of the Articles guaranteeing rights and liberties to the effect that these are only to be upheld provided the 'integrity of the nation and country' is not threatened. The autonomy of universities, associations and of the radio and TV association is also restricted. New Bills are being drafted to restrict Press freedom and the rights of association.

Trial by jury is unknown and criminal cases are usually decided by a bench consisting of one presiding judge and two assessors, civil cases by a judge sitting alone. The courts martial at present operating in martial law areas appear to work on a similar principle, the bench consisting of a senior serving officer (who, however, is not generally a lawyer) and two serving officers who are graduates with legal training.

In theory his assistants are entitled to overrule the President on legal questions—though in practice they rarely do so. Military courts of appeal consist of military judges, all of whom have legal training.

Legal process takes years

The workings of the legal system are extremely complex. Cases are initially brought before a civilian (or military) Court of First Instance. The jurisdiction of these courts is subject to the courts of appeal, but should a defendant appeal successfully against the decision of a Court of First Instance, his case will then be returned by the appeal court to the same court for re-trial. Public prosecutors have, in addition, an unlimited right of appeal against acquittals.

These two facts mean that the legal process in any particular case may be prolonged for months and even years. Even if acquitted a defendant

TURKEY: MILITARY COURTS AND MASS TRIALS



Students appearing before a military court in Ankara. Trial by jury is unknown. Above: Three of Turkey's ruling Generals.

can never be certain that the charges against him have been finally dropped by the prosecution.

Criticism of the procedure of the courts martial has emphasized particularly the restriction of rights accorded to defence counsel. A number of the lawyers concerned in the defence of those involved in the TPLA and Dev Genc (a left-wing student organization) trials have complained of having been hampered in their legal activities. At least 20 such defence lawyers were arrested in 1972 and charged with 'aiding communism' or contempt of court.

Ill-treatment of prisoners was routine during the arrests which took place in the summer of 1971 and in subsequent arrests. In June 1971 the cartoonist Turhan Selcuk published his account of police assault in the daily paper 'Aksam'.

Defendants involved in the terrorist trials have also produced detailed depositions alleging systematic torture, prolonged beatings, etc, to extract information and confessions during interrogations.

These repressions intensified after February 1969 when de-

monstrations against United States imperialism caused the cancellation of the Sixth Fleet's planned visit to Istanbul.

The Turkish rulers have been particularly alarmed by the movement of the working class. There is at least 15-per cent unemployment among the industrial labour force, amounting to some 1.83 million people—and this does not include the chronic unemployment outside the cities. About 500,000 Turkish workers have been forced to emigrate to western Europe to search for jobs.

In June 1970, the workers of Istanbul and the nearby industrial centre of Izmir downed tools and marched through the streets shouting 'Down with capitalism! Down with imperialism!'

In February 1972 the semi-official Anatolian news agency said that 3,759 people had been arrested under martial law provisions. Some 441 were under arrest in Ankara and Istanbul and a further 900 had previously been dealt with by military law tribunals.

Recent mass trials include 142 members of the banned

Turkish Teachers' Association accused under articles 141/2 of the Penal Code with disseminating communist propaganda. Last December the union's president, Fakir Baykurt, its general secretary Dursun Akcam and 50 other members of the union were jailed for up to eight years ten months.

Another 225 people were also accused of a 'communist conspiracy' in Ankara. In October the 60-year-old chairman of the banned Turkish Labour Party, Behice Boran, and seven other members of its executive were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment plus five years' exile. Eight other members were jailed for between six and 12 years.

Unions disbanded

In November the Turkish student unions were dissolved by Act of parliament as part of the continuing drive against the Revolutionary Youth Union, banned in 1971.

On January 10 this year, 267 defendants were hauled before three army officers in a special courtroom at Ankara

barracks.

They were accused of being members of the underground Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Party.

Over 200 students and 400 other prisoners were also awaiting trial at the beginning of this year, accused of organizing youth demonstrations against the regime.

The total number of political arrests between May 1971 and December 1972 was over 12,000.

In that time many trade unions have been disbanded and strikes, union meetings and collective-bargaining are all subject to permission from the martial law authorities.

The Secretary of the Turkish Teachers' Association, Adni Aytan, was arrested for holding a union meeting without permission.

Left-wing publisher Suleyman Ege was sentenced to 22 years' imprisonment followed by 12 years' exile for publishing the 'Communist Manifesto' and Lenin's 'State and Revolution'.

Pictures of Ege chained to his bed in a military prison have been smuggled out of Turkey.

CONTINUED TOMORROW



THE LONDON PAGEANT

On September 28, 1864, the St. Martin's Hall, just off Covent Garden, filled with a curious gathering of men.

The meeting had been called by George Odger, secretary of the London Trades Council.

Poles, Germans, Frenchmen and Italians mingled with groups of British trade unionists among the 2,000 present.

Great deference was shown to a large, angry looking man with a shock of whiskers. He was Karl Marx, the German émigré who had lived in England since 1849. He was well known to the Chartist leaders, particularly Ernest Jones and George Julian Harney.

The meeting that day was a turning point in the revolutionary history of the international working class: it was the day they founded the First International.

Marx, a fraternal delegate from Germany, was co-opted

onto the General Council and assumed almost unchallenged intellectual ascendancy. When he attended the meeting in St. Martin's Lane, Marx was making a relatively rare public appearance. He had published nothing since December 4, 1862, and his unusually prolific private correspondence was also sparse.

It was the period Marx was living a hand-to-mouth existence while he poured over books at the British Museum. It is generally reckoned to have been the period when he was working with his greatest intensity on 'Capital'.

In a letter to his life-long friend and collaborator Friederich Engels, Marx said he had attended because 'this time real "powers" were involved' and 'therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule to decline any such invitations'.

The history of Marx's role in the labour movement is the subject of one of the episodes in the Pageant at Empire Pool, Wembley, on Sunday, March

11. The necessity to reassert Marx's position in the political development of the working class can be swiftly explained.

It is absolutely necessary to reassert Marx's important political relationship with the development of the British working class, if for no other reason than it has been horribly distorted and suppressed.

In 1925, for example, only 61 years after the founding of the International, Labour historian Herbert Tracey prepared an enormous, three-volume history entitled 'The Book of the Labour Party—Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders'.

In the index Marx receives one solitary mention. The section dealing with the 'Work of the Marxian Socialists' ends with these remarks:

'The insistence upon Marxian doctrine brought them [members of the Social Democratic Federation] into direct opposition to the character and sentiment of the English people—a people practical, un-

philosophic and, at bottom, religious. Economic theories divorced from ethics are repellent to them. The class struggle, presented in an exaggerated and misleading phrase as the "class war", was given a hard and repulsive aspect.'

More recently, in 1965, two more objective historians, Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, granted a little more credit where it was due:

'The foundation of the International in London on September 28, 1864, was a turning point in the history of the European labour movement. The International was the first working-class organization to make a decisive impact on European politics. If it helped actively in shaping and moulding the early labour organizations of Europe, this was largely the achievement of one man—Karl Marx.'

Scenes from the founding meetings of the General Council are being recreated by a group of actors in a warehouse only a few hundred yards

from where the International first met and where Marx had a room in Frith Street, Soho.

An arrow in the foyer shows you the way to the Pageant. Down half a dozen dark stairs and into a cold basement. Just some muffled voices coming from behind a partition made of tarpaulin.

It's like a badly cut and made army tent. You pull back the flap and step inside the warmth.

Matthew Robertson, the director, is in the chair. Script on his knee, both hands gesticulating. 'We've got to make some improvisations here. We've got to have some interjections, more discussion. It must be like a trade union meeting with everyone putting his point of view. Any suggestions?'

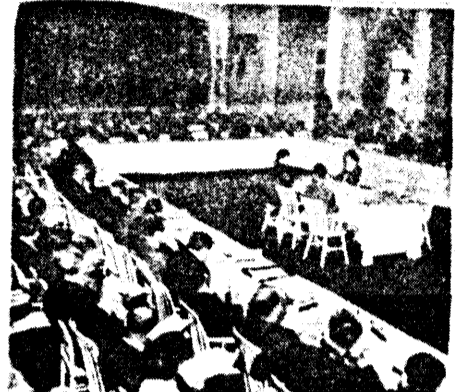
When new patches of dialogue were agreed, it was back to the beginning of the scene for another run-through.

Marx is being played by Tom Kempinski. It is a courageous undertaking and he plays the part splendidly

Matthew Robertson was chairman, Mike O'Sullivan and who wrote



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POSTWAR
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS**



THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POSTWAR ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS



Matthew Roberton, the director. Above left: George Odger (centre) and associates. Odger was chairman of the General Council of the First International. Above right: Mike O'Sullivan who plays Bakunin in rehearsal with Tom Kempinski who plays Marx and who wrote the script.

with the wit, the sarcasm and the sagacity.

Marx's most vociferous opponent at the early meeting was the anarchist, Bakunin, played by Mick O'Sullivan. He growls and complains at Marx's policies to bring the working class towards parliament, politics and, ultimately, power.

Like his middle-class followers in the anarchist movement today, Bakunin wanted an immediate uprising to seize power.

In one of their confrontations on the General Council, the following exchange takes place:

Marx: On a point of information, may I say through the chairman, Comrade Bakunin, that you are a fool.

Odger: I must ask you to withdraw that last remark, Brother Marx.

Marx: I bow to the authority of the chair, and withdraw what I said . . . but I still said it.

Playing a member of the General Council is Mike Kellan, a young actor recently graduated from drama school.

He is one of the many talented actors who has come forward to help in the production of the London Pageant episode.

'The background to our play is history, it's politics. But it's the politics of today. I can't think of any theatre or drama as relevant as the Pageant. It is the only statement that is worthwhile in today's situation. There's nothing I'd rather be doing.'

If Mike wasn't working with the Pageant group, he'd be hunting for work in the commercial field.

His profession is ridden with chronic unemployment and miserable wages, unless you happen to be among the handful of top stars.

Some of his contemporaries are now involved in 'fringe theatre' or 'street theatre' which is involved in experimental drama.

Mike doesn't have a great deal of time for these activities. 'Some of it is very heavy drama — the Theatre of Cruelty, etc. But when it's all said and done, these shows are simply theatrical events. They are usually watched by other actors and actresses. They are not involved like us in the reality of today.'

Another young member of the team is Jack Balchin.

His background is perhaps the most distinctive. He was road manager for the pop group Henry Cow. His links

with the group are fragile at present because Jack is stage manager for the London Pageant and his group are trying to get it together in the pop world.

'I come from nowhere,' Jack says, talking about politics. 'I had no political alignment whatsoever—to the point of trying to avoid it. I always played it as they wanted me to.'

He joined the Pageant following the tour of political cabarets which were held during January in Lancashire, Tyneside and South Wales.

As an able and imaginative 'roadie', Jack is working hard to make Empire Pool a great success. 'It's going to be the best show in town on the day—it's got to be. We'll be asking people to open their eyes and see what's going on—and then to do something about it.'

The rehearsal ended with a final run-through of the General Council meeting. An announcement followed. One of the actors was so broke he needed fare money to get to and from rehearsals.

A hat went around; everyone else was broke too. Just over £1 was raised to keep the cast together until Sunday. Until Sunday!



Provisions are hoisted up to strikers occupying a factory in Paris. The strikers got massive support from the rest of the population.

between the employers and the strikers. It was relieved, therefore, when Blum proposed that the two sides should be brought together with the government as a mediator.

A meeting took place between the trade unions and the employers' national organization the CGPF* at a government building, the Hotel Matignon on the evening of June 7. A leading part in the negotiations was taken by Benoit Franchon, acting for the Communist Party.

Blum took this step following a call from an old friend, Lambert-Ribot, who represented the 'Comité des forges', the powerful and sinister trade association of heavy industry. When on trial before a Vichy court, Blum explained the circumstances and said that the initiative for the meeting had come from the big employers who were ready to grant a wage increase if he could succeed in getting the workers out of the factories.

INCREASES

That was the purpose of the famous Matignon Agreement signed in the early hours of June 8. The only question was how much the employers were prepared to concede to get the strikes called off. They knew they had to offer something in order to prevent the movement developing into a revolution. In this they made common cause with Blum and CP secretary Maurice Thorez.

At Matignon the employers agreed to an all-round wage increase of between 7 and 15 per cent which should not increase the wage bill of any firm by more than 12 per cent. They also agreed in principle to accept wage contracts arrived at by trade union bargaining. In return the unions agreed to call off the strikes.

The trade union leaders refused to agree to end all the strikes by a given date because they knew that they couldn't guarantee that the workers would accept the terms and they needed time to get them out of the factories. So the strike in each factory would not end until an agreement had been concluded.

The Communist Party, together with Blum's own Socialist Party, hailed the Matignon agreement as a great victory for the working class. The reformist leader, Léon Jouhaux, declared that it opened a new era and showed that gains could be obtained by negotiation and bargaining.

The working class did not see it that way. In fact the strikes began to take on a new form, reflecting the feeling of strength which it had gained in the previous week or so. The strikes were still gathering momentum and sweeping in new sections of workers such as shop assistants, clerical workers, clothing workers and others not previously noted for their militancy.

The trade union leaders could come to an agreement with the bosses in the course of an evening's discussion at Matignon. To get the workers out of the factories, to sell them the agreement which they had brought back with Blum's blessing, proved to be another matter.

Even with the government's undertaking to legislate for the 40-hour week and holidays-with-pay, the working class looked the package in the mouth. The workers were still in the factories, obeying the discipline of their strike committees with the red flag flying.

CONTINUED TOMORROW

*Confédération Générale de la Production Française, later to change its name, and its policy, but at this time in favour of negotiation.

THE FRENCH POPULAR FRONT

1936: The Popular Front strangles the revolution

BY TOM KEMP

A giant strike wave confronted Socialist Party leader Leon Blum when he took office as head of a Popular Front government on June 4, 1936.

By this time most of the factories which had gone back from initial strikes after the victory of the Popular Front at the polls, were out again. That day Renault joined in again and the workers took over the factory. Citroën followed the next day.

By June 5 most of the big stores and chain stores had closed their doors. Newspaper sellers joined the strike and only papers favourable to the Popular Front were obtainable.

Many sections of workers not actually on strike threatened to come out if their demands were not met immediately. They included most workers in the public sector—gas, electricity, water, the Post Office, railways and buses.

In the occupied factories and other places of work, strike committees were elected which undertook the task of organizing security and discipline—protection of machinery, fire precautions, security guards and supplies for the strikers. Social activities were organized and the strikers enjoyed terrific support from the rest of the population.

There was no doubt at all about the illegality of the occupations, which were a

challenge to the bosses' property rights and authority. One reason for them, of course, was to prevent the introduction of strike-breakers from among the unemployed. There was no attempt to run the factories nor to turn them into armed fortresses against the government.

But, beginning in a defensive way to win rights of bargaining which few bosses conceded at this time, and to use them to improve wages and conditions, the strikes with occupation took on a more offensive character. On the other hand they suffered from lack of leadership and policy. No General Strike call was issued and it was more a case of 12,000 more or less separate strikes in the factories and other workplaces affected.

With thousands of firms closed and the economy virtually paralysed, by late May or early June the whole country was in a ferment. The employers and the bourgeoisie were badly shaken and many believed that the revolution had come. The strike had become the dominating fact in the lives of working people and solidarity with the strikers occupying the factories was organized in every area.

It is important to stress that the strikes were not called by the trade unions or by the Communist Party. They were very much a spontaneous response of the working class and evidence of a powerful striving for power which, although not taking conscious form, had

been developing ever since the threat of a fascist dictatorship had loomed on the horizon in February 1934.

As Trotsky put it: 'The French Revolution has begun.' But it could only be carried through to completion if a revolutionary leadership came to the fore. The Communist Party did everything it could to block and limit the movement, although its members were necessarily often in the lead.

The party had a strong position in the leadership of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) which had been reunified in March under conditions where communist officials held a decisive position in the unions concerned with large-scale and mass production industry.

MILITANTS

However, the CGT was still dominated by confirmed reformists at the head of whom stood Léon Jouhaux, who had given his full backing to the government during World War I. The Stalinists' leading figure in the CGT was Benoit Franchon who remained in complete solidarity with the right wingers during the strikes.

Most of the leading militants on the factory floor belonged to or were influenced by the Communist Party, which they saw as a revolutionary organ-

ization. They played a leading part in the strike committees.

No doubt many of these communists saw the strikes as a step towards revolution. Others, closer to the apparatus, only put themselves in the leadership of the strikes in order to keep them under control and because otherwise they would lose all influence over their fellow workers.

Moreover, Party members were generally the most experienced and best trained in dealing with the organizational problems which arose out of the strike. They were able to impose the discipline so necessary for the success of the movement, but also capable of stifling it on orders from the Party leadership.

The journalist Alexander Worth, who was on the spot, wrote that the Communist Party leaders 'were becoming greatly alarmed by the extent of the strikes. Communist deputies could be heard complaining "Nous sommes débordés" [we have been outflanked]. Others blamed the Trotskyists for it—though as a Socialist deputy from Marseilles remarked, in attacking the communists a few days later: "There aren't ten Trotskyists in the whole of Marseilles".'

Meanwhile the Blum government had concentrated units of the militarized police units, the 'Gardes Mobiles' in the Paris region and the other main strike centres. The Communist Party called for negotiations

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

EEC

The betrayal of the working-class's opposition to the Common Market by Victor Feather, Jack Jones and the rest is giving the extreme right wing of the labour movement enormous comfort.

Both Feather and Jones have recently returned from fraternizing visits to the Common Market.

Feather was there to become elected president of the brand new European TUC. The overwhelming majority of the trade unions taking part in the founding Congress were pro-Market.

Introducing Feather, Heinz Vetter, German TUC president.



Frank Chapple: wanted to know why Feather wasn't right inside the EEC institutions.

said in his speech that all the ETUC unions should participate in the work of the Common Market.

Having identified himself so thoroughly with these corporatist tendencies, Feather was a sitting target for electricians' and plumbers' union leader Frank Chapple at the last General Council meeting of the TUC.

Since Mr Feather was willing to serve with the pro-Marketeters on the ETUC, why, Mr Chapple wanted to know, would the general secretary not serve with the same European

union leaders on bodies inside the EEC?

The taunt drew giggles from around the table.

With some difficulty, Feather kept his cool.

No, he replied, he would not. The two situations were just not the same.

TANGLE

Another stronghold of Labour 'lefts' and their Communist Party allies, the National Union of Mineworkers' executive committee, has also got itself into a complete tangle over the flirtation with the Common Market institutions.

Because a really principled opposition to the Market has never been put up on the NEC, the right wing pushed through, by the narrowest of majorities, a proposal for the NUM to start finding out directly what the experiences of other mining unions were inside the EEC now that Britain was a member.

To do this, they decided to join the Coal and Steel Community bodies on which unions had representation.

Because of the corporatist nature of the EEC, they discovered that they would have to be members of far more organizations and committees than they could possibly cope with, having only a 27-man executive council.

The NUM discovered a staggering bureaucracy awaiting them in Europe. If they played a full role, they would have to send delegations off nearly every fortnight to one European capital city or another throughout the year.

One of their earliest experiences was in Luxembourg and Brussels recently where it took two full days merely to decide that now the member countries were nine instead of six, it would be better to re-write the policy document on trade union Common Market relations.

At such a rate of decision-making, it might take about five years to actually write a new policy.



Above: Maria McGuire. Left: Sean MacStiofain.

received from Whitelaw the promise that in return for a cease-fire, which the British would reciprocate, there would be a place for the IRA at any conference on the future of Ireland.

The discussions and the alleged deal followed the visit to Ulster of Labour leader Harold Wilson, who had talks with O'Connell, Joe Cahill and John Kelly.

But then came the Twomey bombshell and the announcement that shooting had started again in the north.

With no solutions to the old problem of votes, jobs and houses in sight, and with the need to defend ghetto areas from attack greater than ever, the predominance of the bomb and the bullet—and with them MacStiofain's wing of the IRA—was inevitable.

The political solution Miss McGuire and her friends sought was always a possibility in theory. But at no time could it be brought about by the essential sectarian nationalism of the IRA and Sinn Fein.

In the light of Miss McGuire's disclosures, the 1972 Ard Ffeis (Sinn Fein Conference) must be seen as a desperate last-ditch bid by the political wing to recover the position by holding out olive branches to the Protestants. Inevitably they failed.

From beginning to end the missing link was the party and programme of revolutionary Marxism which could alone unite both sections of the Ulster working class together and with their fellow workers in Britain against the common enemy—the Tory government.

The remainder of Miss McGuire's largely anecdotal account of her year in the IRA does at least perform the invaluable service of stripping bare the political opportunism and military amateurism of the organization she served.

McGUIRE AND THE IRA

BY IAN YEATS

'To Take Arms'. By Maria McGuire. Macmillan £1.95.

Maria McGuire is not, as her confessions confirm, of any special intrinsic interest.

And her book is, in many ways, politically naive—especially her ceaseless blaming of ex-IRA Chief-of-Staff Sean MacStiofain, as an individual, for the movement's major failures.

It may be true, as she describes him in 'To Take Arms', that he is a narrow-minded, ruthless, Catholic—with a capital C.

But if he was always ready to 'go with the movement' in the north, it was not merely because he 'knew nothing' but the bomb and the bullet.

There was more to it than that. In the Six Counties, IRA militarism was a direct consequence of the character of its political programme.

Miss McGuire's book makes it plain that the short-lived truce of June 1972 was the beginning of the end for the Provisionals in the north.

The southern leadership thought violence could be used to force the British government to agree to a political solution in the Six Counties which would favour them.

Until the June truce the northern command believed

the same thing. But everything was changed by Belfast leader Seamus Twomey's historic statement in the middle of the lull that the British had nothing to give.

MacStiofain, Twomey, and Sean Keenan in Derry, saw that they could either settle for what they had (which was broadly what they began with) or fight. They chose to fight.

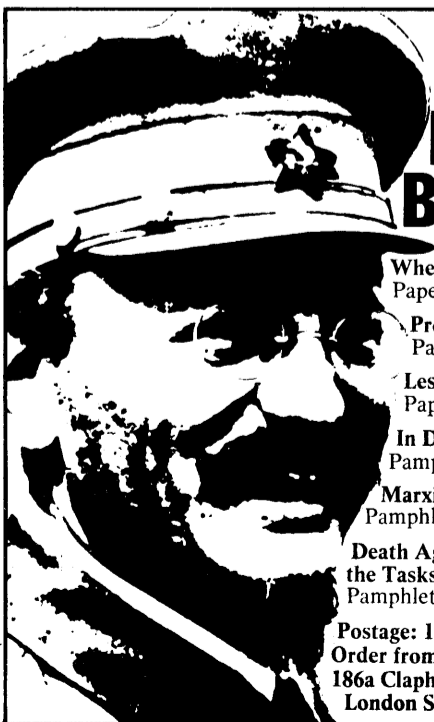
But in doing so, their tactics increasingly achieved what the political wing in Dublin had feared all along—the erosion of their power base by the alienation of moderate Catholics.

Ultimately Miss McGuire took sides with those who were prepared to see violence used in the defence of their homes but not as an instrument of mass terror.

She discloses that one of the key factors behind the Provisionals' frantic seeking after the political deal which was supposed to follow the June truce was the perpetual fear that terror alone would lose the IRA more supporters than it won.

On the eve of the truce, brought about by visits and most of all telephone conversations between David O'Connell and Tory Ulster chief William Whitelaw, the political wing looked poised for a coup.

O'Connell claimed to have



BOOKS BY TROTSKY

Where is Britain Going? Paperback 37½p

Problems of the British Revolution. Paperback 35p

Lessons of October Paperback 60p

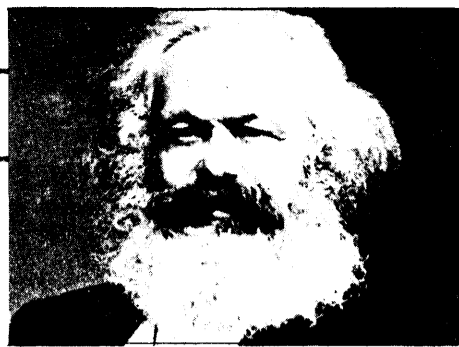
In Defence of the October Revolution Pamphlet 15p

Marxism and the Trade Unions Pamphlet 25p

Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International Pamphlet 10p

Postage: 10p per book, 5p per pamphlet.
Order from: NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS
186a Clapham High Street,
London SW4 7UG

Karl Marx was the first to understand gold's real role in capitalist society



Behind the increase in the price of gold

BY ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT PETER JEFFRIES

IT IS very necessary to grasp the significance of the present run on gold in the light of the 1944 Bretton Woods conference.

Bretton Woods was inspired, above all, by political considerations. The capitalist class was not able to deal with the working class as it had done in the years following 1918. It was obliged to retreat before the working class.

The form taken by this retreat, as we have insisted many times, was inflation. The European economy was rebuilt by means of the inflationary dollar.

The essence of Bretton Woods was the attempt to create a 'managed' currency. The dollar was to be tied at a fixed rate to gold. (The price was established at \$35 to an ounce of gold, the level first set in 1934.) In turn every other currency was to be fixed in terms of the dollar and currency values could only move within narrowly defined limits. This was the system of 'fixed parities'.

But in this attempt at a 'managed' currency lay an inescapable contradiction, a contradiction which is now breaking surface in the most violent manner. Money and commodities are bound together. This we have shown. There can be no 'managed' money system without a 'managed' commodity system.

BLIND AVERAGE

But, as Marx stressed against all his opponents, commodity production cannot be consciously regulated. It operates only through the blind laws of the market. As Marx says in connection with the law of value, it appears 'as a blindly working average.'

Marx always treated with amusement and derision all those 19th century Utopian schemes which wanted to abolish the anarchy of the money system while maintaining capitalism intact. They were as naive as attempts to abolish the Pope while keeping the Catholic Church.

In other words, gold is the essential and only regulator of the process of social production under capitalism. Every commodity has to be accountable to this 'universal equivalent'.

What were the consequences of the 1944 Bretton Woods attempts at a system of 'managed' currencies?

Basically this: while the dollar price of gold was pegged, in temporary defiance of the laws of the capitalist market, at \$35 an ounce, all other commodities were allowed to obey these market forces.

So from 1934 to August 15, 1971 prices rose within the capi-



The Bretton Woods conference of 1944.

alist system by an average of five or six times. Meanwhile the gold price was established as the only means of inducing the rest of the capitalist world to hold dollars.

A direct result of this was felt upon the quantity of gold entering the world money system. By the late 1960s well under 20 per cent of newly-mined gold found its way into world money reserves. The rest was privately hoarded by speculators.

GENERAL LAWS

For the inescapable fact is that gold production must obey the general laws of commodity production, even though Bretton Woods tried to ignore them for a long period. As the price of gold fell steadily as against the prices of all other commodities, so producers switched from gold mining to other more profitable lines of business.

The very attempt at a 'managed' currency thus reduced the supply of gold which forms the

necessary base for all trade and credit operations.

An ever-growing volume of credit was erected upon an ever narrower gold base.

What are the immediate implications of the gold crisis? In 'Capital', Marx showed that the supply of money (gold) depended upon the total prices of all commodities which it supported. Of course 'economies' are possible in the use of gold as a means of payment—the withdrawal of the gold backing for domestic currencies in the capitalist economies is one example. But the room for these economies is strictly limited and in any case gold can never be removed from its pre-eminent place in world trade and finance.

If we take the increase in world trade which has occurred since 1945 and compare it with the increase of gold production, we can see that the two have moved completely out of line.

While prices, stimulated by government inflationary policies, have risen, as we have pointed

out, five or six times on their pre-war level, gold was held down in price for 37 years.

It is in this crisis that gold is enacting its revenge for all these years in which the Keynesians tried to tamper with the law of value as a means of keeping their decaying system intact for a little longer.

Without gold, products cannot enter circulation and become commodities. The rush into gold and the flight from all forms of paper—the feature which now overshadows everything in the crisis—means a collapse of commodity production for the world market which has immediate implications for every economy, especially the British.

CREDIT DISRUPTED

The law of value can only be restored through both huge increase in the gold price and a collapse of commodity prices. But a collapse of the magnitude which the law of value now demands means a total disruption of all those institutions of credit which have sustained the expansion of world trade since 1945.

This is no passing crisis. Only the International Committee of the Fourth International has insisted, against all brands of revision, that imperialism is capitalism's highest stage, the epoch of wars and revolutions.

Many middle-class sceptics doubted the truth of this characterization during the boom. But now the crisis is here, openly for all to see. The theoretical struggle of Marxism, that is Trotskyism, is being vindicated in the great objective developments gripping the capitalist system.

Now is the time to go boldly and resolutely forward to build the revolutionary party, which alone can lead the working class to power and put an end to capitalist chaos and anarchy.

ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

Fight rising rents and prices
Defend basic democratic rights
Force the Tories to resign

WATFORD: Wednesday March 7, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall, Woodford Hall, near Watford junction station.

SOUTHALL: Wednesday, March 7, 8 p.m. Southall Library, Osterley Park Road. 'The Road to Workers' Power'.

WOOLWICH: Wednesday March 7, 8 p.m. 'The Castle', Powis Street, SE18. 'Support the gasmen and hospital workers'.

WEMBLEY: Wednesday March 7, 8 p.m. Copland Secondary School, High Road.

HACKNEY: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall, opposite Town Hall, Mare Street. 'Support hospital workers'.

SLOUGH: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. Community Centre, Farnham Road. 'Support the gasmen and hospital workers'.

STEVENAGE: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. 'Red Lion', Stevenage Old Town. 'Forward to the Pageant'.

LEWISHAM: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers' Club, opp New Cross Station. 'Marxism and the trade unions'.

WILLESDEN: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road, NW10. 'Support gasmen and civil servants'.

HACKNEY: Thursday March 8, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall, opp. Town Hall, Mare Street. 'Support gasmen and civil servants'.

WANDSWORTH: Monday March 12, 8 p.m. 'King's Arms', High Street, S.W.18. 'Forward to the revolutionary party'.

HARROW: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. Labour Hall, Harrow and Wealdstone. 'The fight against Stalinism'.

TOOTING: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. Selkirk Hotel, Selkirk Road, Tooting Broadway. 'Forward to the Revolutionary Party'.

CLAPHAM: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor Street, S.W.4.

CAMDEN: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. 'Prince Albert', Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross.

ACTON: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, High Road, W.3.

PADDINGTON: Tuesday March 13, 8 p.m. 'Prince of Wales', corner of Harrow Road and Great Western Road. 'Forward to the revolutionary party'.

KINGSTON: Thursday March 15, 8 p.m. 'Liverpool Arms', corner of Cambridge Road and London Road.

HOLLOWAY: Thursday March 15, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road.

WALTHAMSTOW: Thursday March 15, 8 p.m. Royston Arms, Chingford Road, E.4.

BBC 1

9.15 Schools. 12.30 Nai zindagi nava jeevan. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 In the town. 1.45 Made in Britain. 2.05-2.50 Schools. 3.00 Sunday debate. 3.35 Television top of the form. 4.00 Deputy dawg. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Right Charlie. 5.15 Val meets the VIPs. Rt Hon Mrs. Margaret Thatcher. 5.40 Sir Prancelot. 5.45 News. Weather.

6.00 NATIONWIDE. 6.45 ASK THE FAMILY.

7.05 TOMORROW'S WORLD.

7.30 NOW LOOK HERE.

8.00 BARLOW AT LARGE. Wheelbarrows.

8.50 WEEK BY WEEK. March 1956.

9.00 NEWS. Weather.

9.25 BUDGET. Opposition view.

9.35 SPORTSNIGHT. Jockey's show jumping championship of Great Britain.

10.45 MIDWEEK. 11.30 NEWS. 11.35 Weather.

BBC 2

11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University.

7.05 MAN AT WORK.

7.30 NEWS SUMMARY. Weather.

7.35 JOHNNY MORRIS IN MEXICO. Mexico City, Popocatepetl.

ITV

9.30 Schools. 10.35 Yoga (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Mr. Trimble. 12.25 Rupert Bear. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Sing out with the Settlers. 1.30 Crown court. 2.00 Harriet's back in town. 2.30 Good afternoon! 3.00 Whose baby? 3.25 Saint. 4.20 Get this. 4.50 Jensen code. 5.20 University challenge. 5.50 News.

6.00 TODAY. 6.35 CROSSROADS.

7.00 THIS IS YOUR LIFE.

7.30 CORONATION STREET.

8.00 THE FIRST OF LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR.

8.30 ALL OUR SATURDAYS. The Ref is Always Right.

9.00 LOVE STORY. 10.00 NEWS.

10.30 BUDGET. 10.40 FOOTBALL.

11.35 THEATRE: 'Click'. With John Paul, Ray Brooks, Martin Black.

12.05 FILM: 'The Auction.' Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Adrienne Corri, William Hartnell.

12.30 TIME TO SPEAK.

8.00 MAN ALIVE. Pop Into Your Local—Before it Disappears.

8.50 FILM: 'Lilith'. Warren Beatty, Jean Seberg. A trainee therapist comes under the spell of a beautiful patient.

10.40 EDITION. 11.10 BUDGET.

11.20 NEWS EXTRA. Weather.

REGIONAL TV

CHANNEL: 9.30-11.55 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Gourmet. 3.00 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Hogan's heroes. 6.35 London. 7.00 Treasure hunt. 7.30 London. 10.30 Life in France. 10.40 London. 12.05 Epilogue. News. weather.

WESTWARD. As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.25 Hammy Hamster. 12.37 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 10.30 London. 12.05 News. 12.08 Faith for life.

SOUTHERN: 9.30 London. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Danger man. 4.25 London. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.30 Whicker. 7.00 London. 8.00 Hawaii five-o. 9.00 London. 12.05 News. 12.15 Weather. Guideline.

HARLECH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 5.20 Chuckleheads. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Report West. 6.15 Report Wales. 6.30 Jimmy Stewart. 7.00 London. 12.05 Weather.

HTV Cymru/Wales as above except: 4.20-4.35 Miri mawr. 4.35-4.50 Cantamil. 6.01-6.15 Y dydd. HTV West as above except: 6.15-6.30 Report West.

ANGLIA: 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Odd couple. 3.55 Romper room. 4.19 News. 4.20 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 London. 8.00 Protectors. 8.30 London. 12.05 Reflection.

TODAY'S TV

ATV MIDLANDS: 9.30 London. 12.00 Programme guide. 12.05 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 8.00 Miss ATV. 8.30 All our yesterdays. 9.00 London.

ULSTER: 11.00 London. 1.32 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.45 Romper room. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet. 4.23 News. 4.25 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.35 London. 8.00 Protectors. 8.30 London.

YORKSHIRE: 9.30 London. 3.30 Jason King. 4.25 London. 6.00 Calendar. weather. 6.35 London. 8.00 Anna and the king. 8.30 London. 11.35 Spyforce. 12.30 Weather.

GRANADA: 9.30 London. 12.00 Songs. 12.05 London. 3.25 Yoga. 3.50 Cartoon. 4.00 Crossroads. 4.20 London. 6.00 News. What's on? 6.30 Lucy. 7.00 London. 8.00 Lovers. 8.30 London.

TYNE TEES: 9.25 Just one word. 9.30 London. 2.30 News. 2.31 London. 3.00 Champions. 4.20 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 8.00 Anna and the king. 8.30 London. 11.35 News. 11.45 Edgar Wallace. 12.40 Lectern.

SCOTTISH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 London. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 University challenge. 7.00 London. 12.05 Late call.

GRAMPIAN: 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 2.45 Cartoon. 2.52 News. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women today. 3.55 Harriet. 4.20 London. 5.20 Survival. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Thompson. 6.35 London. 8.00 Adventurer. 8.30 London. 10.45 Untouchables. 11.40 London. 12.05 Kind of living. 12.25 Meditation.

Third wave of selective strikes

London teachers to march on parliament

OVER 2,000 London teachers are expected to take part today in a march from Lincoln's Inn Fields to Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park.

They will then lobby parliament and deliver a petition to Downing Street in support of their claim for a £182-a-year increase in the London allowance.

The government's state control of wages has limited the managements' offer to £15, although the union claims they were prepared to give £82.

The London teachers are campaigning to separate the London allowance from the global sum for increases in all teachers' salaries due in April, and to secure free negotiation on the allowance within the Burnham negotiating committee.

Third wave

Some 2,470 teachers working in 212 schools in the greater London area yesterday began the third wave of the National Union of Teachers' three-day strikes.

As estimated 75,000 children have been affected.

Twenty-one areas in greater London have been hit. They are: Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, East Herts, Hillingdon, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, east London, north London, west London, Merton, Newham, Southwark, Wandsworth and Westminster.

SLL PUBLIC MEETINGS

BASINGSTOKE
WEDNESDAY MARCH 7,
8 p.m.
Public Library
Speaker: M. BANDA
(SLL Central Committee)

CIRCULATION

01-622 7029

NEWS DESK

01-720 2000

JP for trial in corruption case

A BUTCHER and ship's provision merchant, who is also a magistrate, is one of four men who have been sent for trial in a corruption case in the north west. The case concerns the supply of provisions for British Rail ferries.

Allegations have been made that falsified accounts for meat and other items were used to defraud British Rail of sums of money, and that the Morecambe firm of Mrs J. C. Altham and Sons obtained favours as a result of gifts given corruptly to British Rail employees.

The four, who appeared at Morecambe magistrates court last week, are Ernest Leslie Ashby, of Warton, Lancashire; Thomas William Akroyd, of Halifax; Maurice Raymond Woodward, of



Students have taken over the entrance lodge at Woolwich

GRANTS SIT-INS WINNING MORE SUPPORT

TEESSIDE students have occupied their administrative building in support of the Thames Polytechnic, Woolwich, students sitting in since last week.

Last Friday an emergency general meeting of part of the 1,200 students voted to continue

their action for another week.

Members of Woolwich Labour Party have joined the students on picket duty and the local tenants' association is also giving active backing.

Other colleges in

London and the provinces are expected to meet this week to decide whether they will mount sit-ins in support of their colleagues at Woolwich.

A spokesman for the publicity committee said: 'We decided to press for another week

in occupation here because with all the strikes last week we did not get as much publicity as we would have liked.'

The students are hoping to push the NUS leadership into a more militant line with their policy of sit-ins.

TUC wants corporatist 'worker participation'

IN A memorandum to the Secretary of State for the Environment, TUC leaders have called on the Tory government to legislate Common Market-style 'worker-participation' in the water industry.

The memorandum sets out the views of the TUC Local Government Committee on the Tories' Water Bill.

Proposals for the metering of water supplies are criticized by the union chiefs in the mildest possible terms, despite the horrifying implications that families will have to pay for the volume of water they use.

In a letter to the then Secretary of State, Peter Walker, last year, the TUC pointed out that 'pricing could discourage the use of water for domestic purposes, and that this could prove harmful on health grounds'. Now they tell Walker's suc-

cessor, Geoffrey Rippon: 'We are disappointed that the government intend to continue with its proposals for metering.'

More sinister, however, is the TUC's complaint that the Bill does not provide for regional negotiation machinery on the lines of that already existing in gas, electricity supply and local government.

The local government committee calls for 'urgent consideration' of this omission. 'We think that our case on participation is strengthened by the recent proposals from the European Commission on company law harmonization, which suggests that workers' representatives should have a statutory right to sit on the supervisory boards of companies.'

No doubt the Tories, in their turn, will welcome the TUC leaders' full-hearted acceptance of this dangerous, corporatist proposal despite their verbal opposition to the Common Market.

Awsorth, Nottingham; and John Carr Altham, of Norton Road, Heysham. Each of them has been remanded on bail of £1,000, to go for trial at the Crown Court.

It is alleged that Ashby and Akroyd faked an account for crew meals so that it read £1,250 instead of £1,089; and that Woodward and Akroyd falsified another account for crew meals as £1,583, which should have been for £1,358.

Both Ashby and Woodward are alleged to have enabled Mrs J. C. Altham and Sons to have obtained sums of money from British Rail by falsely representing an account for meat as accurate.

Further allegations concern curtains supplied to the 'Duke of Argyll' and catering stock on the 'Duke of Lancaster', both

British Rail ships on the Heysham-Belfast service.

John Carr Altham, of Mrs J. C. Altham and Sons Ltd, the firm named in the meat account allegation, is a local magistrate.

It is alleged that in September 1970, and again about Christmas that year, he corruptly gave money and bottles of spirits to Woodward, as inducement for favours.

Proceedings are to be taken under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

This case follows similar cases recently involving provisions supplied to ships of the Royal Navy. During the proceedings in the Royal Navy case it was claimed that arrangements of this sort with ship's suppliers had been going on in the Navy since 'the days of Queen Anne' and were accepted as normal.

Union orders storemen back

STRIKING storemen at the tractor plant at Massey Ferguson's, Coventry, will return to work today. They took the decision yesterday after hearing instructions from Transport and General Workers' Union officials that the strike must end.

The men are to accept the additional work which had been the cause of the dispute pending negotiations with management.

'We're going back with promises—but no money,' one of the men said bitterly.

Local official Norman Evans has told the 180 storemen that the Tory government's state pay legislation does not allow the company to meet their claim. He recommended the men should return and accept the extra work.

The storemen's strike caused the lay-off of 1,200 assembly workers in the giant tractor plant and machine-shop work was also interrupted.

THE WORK force at ICI, Huddersfield, is expected to return to work tomorrow following a week-long stoppage. Workers have been on strike for the duration of suspensions against three of their colleagues for alleged 'time-wasting'.

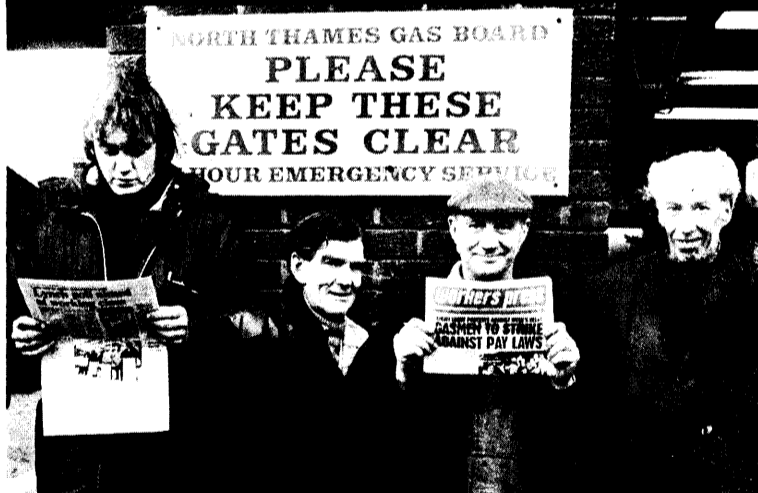
In imposing the suspensions the management ignored the unions' conciliation procedure. In addition the management said that one of the men, a shop steward, must be transferred to another department. This would mean the automatic loss of his shop steward's status.

Workers firmly believe that the steward is being victimized. He was instrumental in securing acceptable working arrangements both in his own area and in the factory as a whole.

This, along with other benefits he has negotiated, has inevitably brought him into conflict with management.

A bulletin put out by the craft shop stewards' committee said sarcastically: 'This is the price of being a good steward for the men.'

Subscribe now!



Do you get **WORKERS PRESS** regularly? If not, why not take out a subscription now?

£20.28 for 12 months (312 issues)
£10.14 for 6 months (156 issues)
£5.07 for 3 months (78 issues)

If you want to take Workers Press twice a week the rates are:

£1.56 for 3 months (24 issues)
£6.24 for 12 months (96 issues)

Fill in the form below **NOW** and send to:
Circulation Dept., Workers Press, 186a Clapham High St., London SW4 7UG.

I would like to take out a subscription to Workers Press.

Days required (Please tick) MONDAY THURSDAY
TUESDAY FRIDAY
WEDNESDAY SATURDAY

Or Full subscription (six days) for months.

Name

Address

Amount enclosed £

**Workers
Press
MONTHLY
APPEAL
FUND**

**MARCH FUND
REACHES
£105.44**

IT IS EARLY yet, but we are determined not to leave this month to a last-minute spurt. Keep up a steady pace and we know you will raise a record amount.

More than ever, Workers Press must provide an alternative, revolutionary leadership. Last Monday, the special conference of the TUC decided not to challenge this government. A one-day, national strike is not enough to defeat the Tories.

But defeat the Tories we must. They have even greater attacks in store for the working class. Our paper must be used, therefore, to prepare for the struggles ahead.

Help us therefore immediately with a very special effort to raise our March Fund. Our target is £1,750. Let's go all out now and see what we can collect. Post all your donations to:

**Workers Press
March Appeal Fund
186a Clapham High Street,
London, SW4 7UG**

Worse situation the longer markets stay closed

Crash panic hits money system

THE DANGER of a commercial crash which would rebound through the entire system of international credit and trading relations is creating panic among the capitalists.

BY JOHN SPENCER

It is already clear, however, that even with the Americans and the Japanese represented at the talks, they can produce at best only temporary stop-gap measures to put off the evil hour. There is no possibility of stabilizing the capitalist monetary system by international agreement or by the actions of individual groups of countries.

Confidence in paper currency has evaporated following the third devaluation of the dollar in less than 15 months. The attempt in mid-February to fix new parities against the dollar collapsed within three weeks.

Since August 15, 1971, the international monetary system has been maintained entirely by its own inertia, by a confidence in paper money which no longer had the slightest real justification. This remaining confidence has been undermined by the demonstrable inability of the various governments and institutions involved to find any solution to the crisis.

Trust in paper money, in credit, has now been replaced by a frantic scramble to acquire gold, the universal standard of value under capitalism. Where gold-hoarding is illegal, as in Britain and the US, there is

also a rush to buy silver, copper, base metals, commodity futures, landed property and any other form of wealth which might conceivably retain some value.

The high-point of the inflationary crisis finds its expression in the Euro-currency markets which handle some \$90,000m in paper currency held by international companies, banks and institutions outside its countries of origin.

The biggest slice of this money is dollars held by the big US multi-national corporations. It was from the Euro-dollar market that the flood of dollar-selling came last week which forced the German government to close the foreign exchanges.

The 'Financial Times' (March 5) refers quite openly to the prospect of 'a substantial default in either the medium-term bank market or the long-term bond sector'. It quotes Euro-currency expert Professor A. A. Walters as saying it is remarkable there have been no large-scale failures so far.

The paper quotes him as saying that 'one large collapse could hit confidence a severe blow, falling on the US commercial banks and in practice being transmitted back into the Federal Reserve system'.

In other words, the US banks are so deeply implicated that a major bankruptcy on the Euro-currency markets would threaten a string of bank failures in the most powerful imperialist country.

No wonder US officials are talking in terms of another 1929. They know that trade on an international scale cannot long endure having the foreign exchange markets closed, that the Euro-currency market is completely unstable and that economic and political questions are inextricably tied together.

The uncertainty of the French election, the mounting class struggle in Britain, the effects of the Tory budget on the working class all have a direct bearing on the outcome of the international monetary talks and on the development of the crisis itself.

The TUC decision to stage a day of protest against the Tory government will undoubtedly fuel the panic on the market.

Behind the phoney poses of the 'lefts' and the Stalinists, the Finance Ministers and money-market operators will detect correctly the inexorable trend towards the General Strike.

These crucial political questions are merged into a single knot with the economic crisis, posing before the workers' movement the urgent and unpostponable necessity for alternative revolutionary leadership with a policy and programme to meet the crisis.

Their currency system is now so unstable and so deeply undermined by inflation that it can no longer be controlled even by the most powerful capitalist countries.

The fear of a commercial collapse is being fuelled by the indefinite closure of the world's foreign exchange markets. The markets will remain closed at least until Monday.

The terms on which they will then reopen depend on the outcome of a series of top-level meetings culminating in the Group of Ten meeting in Brussels on Friday.

The Group was convened by the Common Market Finance Ministers who failed to reach agreement on what they should do in seven hours of talks on Sunday.

Gasmen want all-out strike

BY ROYSTON BULL

THE GASMEN'S union has finally given in to mounting pressure from workers to escalate the campaign of strikes and other industrial action. But it has still refused to call an all-out strike as demanded by several areas.

The Gas Corporation will be told this week that either it cuts off a whole new number of industrial users from natural gas supplies, or else further restrictions will be imposed on town gas production from next Monday.

The town gas cuts would mainly affect domestic consumers and thousands of households throughout the country would have no more gas indefinitely. The shut-downs will be carried out with all due safety precautions.

Spokesman for the General and Municipal Workers' Union, John Edmonds, said the union wanted to stick to its original intention and hit industry and commerce rather than households.

If the Corporation agrees to

GASWORKERS in the north-east yesterday stepped up their strike action which will almost certainly mean the cutting off of home supplies in some areas.

Pressure at the main town gas station at Hartlepool was slashed by 15 million cubic feet to 90 million after a call for national strike action by shop stewards.

Gasworkers delegate Joe Scollins told a

mass meeting of 200 strikers at Walker Gate, Newcastle, that they were determined to cut off all town gas.

'We want gas to stop throughout the whole area. We want Hartlepool and Blaydon completely shut down. We have told this to management and we have told our officials.

The militant action follows a stormy meet-

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

ing of shop stewards on Monday where G&MWU officials were severely criticized.

Yesterday's meeting expressed a universal determination to press ahead for a national strike. All eyes were on the talks at national level in London.

The national joint council meets today and all gas delegates meet again on Friday.

cut off natural gas supplies to industry, the union will give guarantees about maintaining domestic gas supplies for the duration.

Most industrial and commercial consumers using town gas have already been cut off, but they are not numerous. Most industrial users are on natural gas, used either for heating factories or directly in production. Few of these have been affected so far.

Major cut-offs in this area

would have a considerable effect on industrial production, but the union has not yet announced officially how large a cut in supplies it is demanding, or by how much they will cut town gas supplies as an alternative.

Any town gas plants closed down will be kept in a 'warm' condition, ready to be reopened quickly.

A national delegate conference will consider the proposals on Friday.

Asked why the executive had turned down an all-out strike, Edmonds said: 'We think we can achieve sufficient effects safely within the bounds of present policy.'

'We would not necessarily achieve much more with an all-out strike.'

Several hundred manual workers in the Essex area of the North Thames Gas Board will begin a one-week strike from today.

Hospital campaign strong in north

ANCILLARY workers at 263 hospitals up and down the country were on total or partial strike yesterday against the Tory pay laws. The campaign built up particularly strongly in the north, and in Northern Ireland.

Hospital workers in Manchester told Workers Press: 'It should be all out.'

Workers at eight Liverpool hospitals walked out, although not scheduled to do so by their union.

Late yesterday afternoon a sit-in was still going on at Bradford Royal Infirmary over attempts to bring in volunteers and contract labour to carry out laundry work. Earlier workers at seven Yorkshire hospitals had sat-in.

One hundred men and women

at Hope Hospital, Manchester, have been out on selective strike since last Thursday.

Arthur Oliver, a transport driver, said: 'We drivers are out indefinitely. We can't pussyfoot around. I agree with Joe Gormley.'

'A one-day stoppage is not much good, but it's better than nothing. We should be all out like the gasmen should be.'

Bill Memory, a porter, said: 'All the other Press is a load of propaganda. All our patients aren't dying. With £14 a week take-home pay, some of us are. 'We should have a national stoppage.'

The workers had believed that the porters would be out on strike next Thursday but Eddie Lawson, NUPE district secretary, sent a letter yesterday telling them not to take unilateral action 'as at the best it could only be a failure'.

● The Council of the Socialist Medical Association has voted to support in full the wages struggle of the hospital ancillary workers and has written accordingly to all the unions involved.

● More hospital news, page 3.

STEEL cutbacks planned for Shotton, north Wales, will mean the closure of the whole works—which employs 13,000—the government task force studying Shotton's problems was warned yesterday. 'No one believes that the finishing processes will be kept going indefinitely if the steel-making and hot-rolling plants are closed', stated the works branch of the Steel Industry Management Association. Almost 2,000 off-duty steelmen will leave Flint by train today to lobby a meeting of the TUC Steel Committee in Sheffield. They want delegates to support a national steel workers' conference on March 13.

Greenwich tenants stage weekend rally

TENANTS in the Greenwich area of south-east London will stage a march and rally on Saturday against the Tories' Housing Finance Act.

Students from the now-occupied Thames Polytechnic at Woolwich and delegates from Clay Cross, Liverpool and Manchester will take part.

The demonstration has the support of local tenants' associations, political groups, the Trades Council, Kent miners and trade union branches. It is being organized by the Greenwich Tenants' and Residents' Campaign Committee.

A spokesman for the campaign said: 'Our ultimate aim is to destroy the Tories' Housing Finance Act. We see this Saturday's demonstration as a warning to all tenants that the Act is still very much in business—rents

are going to go up again.'

He said that many people did not realize that it was the Tory-appointed Rent Scrutiny Board which was now setting rents. 'In the next three years rents can go up by as much as £2 or £3,' he added.

● Left-wing Labour councillors in Camden, north London, have joined Camden Action Committee and tenants' associations in urging tenants to withhold the 85p rent rise introduced when the Labour-controlled Camden Council capitulated to the Tory rent Act.

Pickets were out at rent offices in the borough this week and the Camden Action Committee has distributed 20,000 leaflets calling for withholding of the rise.

A deputation is to attend the council meeting on March 28 to demand that no tenants be evicted for refusing to pay the increase.