

## POLICE PROTECT SCABS AND REDUCE PICKET LINES HOSPITAL WORKERS SEEK TUC HELP

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

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The hospital workers' leaders will be asking the TUC economic committee for help in its industrial action for a living wage. But all the signs suggest that this hard-pressed section of the working class will be betrayed and fobbed-off with more fake words and pledges from the union leaders.

The so-called moderates around Victor Feather will argue that the movement is not committed to industrial action to support unions fighting the government. This is because the special TUC Congress on March 5 passed the original policy statement which committed the TUC to nothing, as well as a later more militant amendment.

The right wing will support this treachery. Frank Chapple, electricians' leader and a member of the economic committee, has already said he will ignore the call for a one-day national strike.

The Tories are extremely encouraged by the paralysis that grips the union leaders. Yesterday Employment Secretary Maurice Macmillan openly boasted that isolated stoppages did not impress the government. 'No one will gain a penny from the present industrial action,' he told businessmen at a conference held by the corporatist-style Industrial Society.

The inactivity of the TUC, coupled with the Tories' determination to smash down the hospital workers, gasmen, train drivers, teachers and civil servants underline the gravity of the situation facing the working class.

The TUC chiefs spend their time leisurely planning the one-day strike, making sure its impact is as slight as possible. Meanwhile actions by tens of thousands of workers fighting for basic rights and decent wages are being bled to death before the whole labour and trade union movement. Yet their battle is the battle of every working man in the land.

This is more than cowardice by the TUC—it is downright complicity with the Tory drive towards dictatorship.

The TUC is putting off all action until the great and as yet unnamed day of protest.

Their efforts are applauded by the Stalinists in the Communist Party and revisionists and liberals who gather in the International Socialists.

Both these organizations say the one-day strike is a good thing.

It is time there was some plain speaking about this 'day of protest'.

FIRST everyone knows, including the CP and IS charlatans, that a strike confined to one day will be utterly futile. It will not budge the Tories an inch.

SECONDLY, the Tories welcome such actions. They provide useful fuel to the fire they are lighting among the middle class. As rail leader Ray Buckton said yesterday, the Tories want the unions to be what the Jews were for the Nazis.

THIRDLY, workers can become demoralized by protests that lead to a dead-end. This spreading feeling encourages the right wingers, like Chapple, to come out and openly split the movement.

The battle against the Tories for basic democratic rights is not an abstraction—a painless, effete, protest to be launched on a specified

### but union chiefs' inaction bleed strikes to death



date. The battle is on now, at the hospitals, outside the gasworks and on the railways.

It is also on in the corridors of power where Heath is conspiring with friends in the military to put down the working class by force.

The Socialist Labour League critically supports the one-day strike call and will struggle to make it a success. But we say it must be a starting point of a campaign to create the industrial and political conditions to force this government to resign.

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Police cut the picket at the Whittington Hospital north London yesterday, enabling administrative staff to strike-break. See full story—back page.

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The Department notes the 'strong upward trend' in the price of materials continuing last month with dearer food materials, wool and copper again accounting for the bulk of the change.

The provisional price index for home sales of manufactured products rose by 1/2 per cent in February, again most of the increases being through dearer manufactured foods.

The rise in products other than food, drink and tobacco has risen by 1/2 per cent since November, half the rate of increases in the index for all manufactured products.

### Drugs committal

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# workers press

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DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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**PAGEANT COMMENT AND PICTURES pages 2, 3, 6 & 7**

# Road to Workers' Power

## WHAT WE THINK

THE 10,000 workers and youth who attended Sunday's Pageant of Labour at the Empire Pool, Wembley, did more than witness vital episodes from their own history.

They took an important step towards defending the past gains of the working class in the only way possible today—through building the revolutionary party.

The only purpose of showing workers their own history is to teach them the lessons of that history and to convince them to take on the responsibilities that flow from it.

The Pageant dramatically showed that every single step forward the working class has ever taken has been a result of bitter struggle against the forces of capitalism.

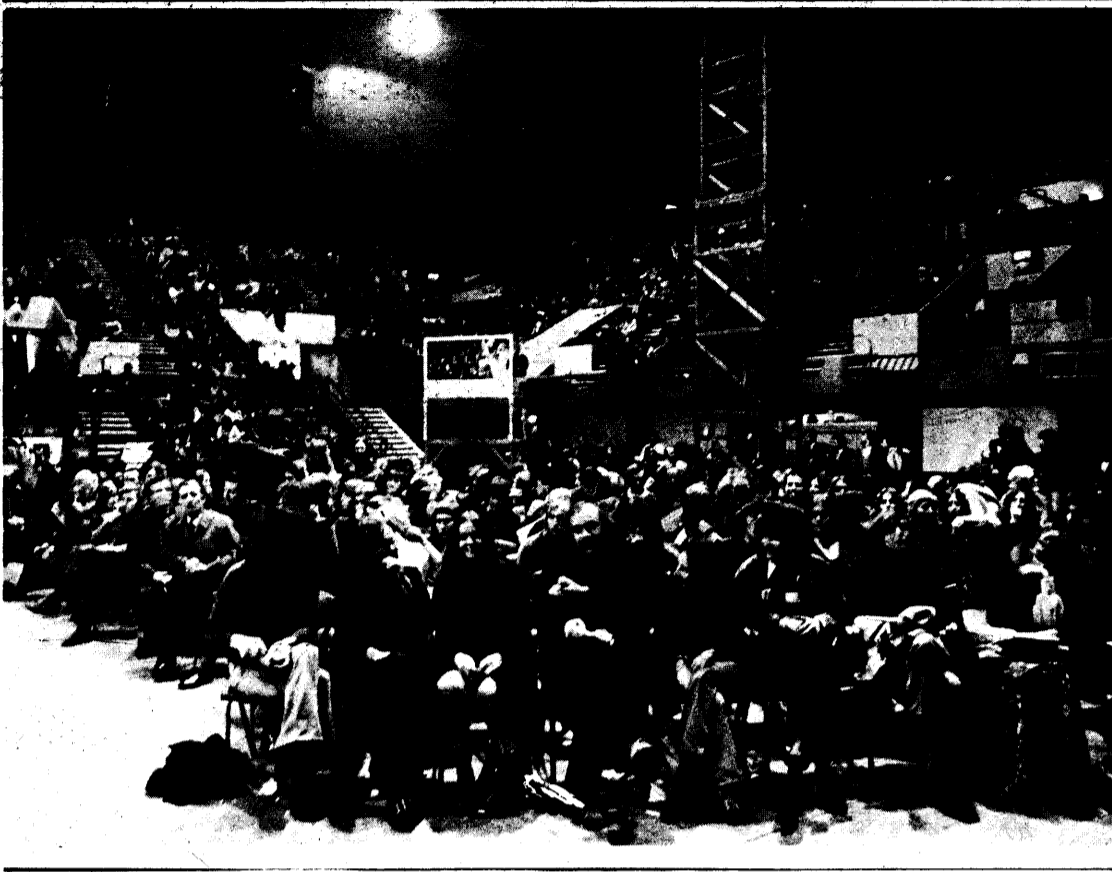
The right to join a union and to strike, the right to vote, the right to a living wage and the right to form a separate party for the working class—all were won by the self-sacrifice and determination of millions of men and women.

Today the Tory government is busy taking away every single one of these basic rights.

- The trade union movement, for which men like Will Jobling died, is being shackled to the Tory state by Heath's corporatist-style measures—the Industrial Relations Act and the state pay laws.

- The right to vote, for which the Chartist fought and the Peterloo martyrs died, is being undermined by the rent Act, which removes the freedom of Labour representatives to carry out the policies on which they were elected.

More and more, important decisions are being taken by people over whom there is no democratic control whatever. Sinister military figures, closely connected with top Tory circles, plan to impose a Bona-



Just one section of Sunday's vast audience.

partist dictatorship on the working class.

- The right to a living wage, for which the gasworkers and Merthyr railwaymen struggled, is now removed by inflation deliberately accelerated by the government and by entry into the capitalist Common Market.

- Above all, the leaders of the Labour Party, the creation of which was an enormous step forward for the working class, refuse to fight the Tories. Harold Wilson openly collaborates with Heath in using the

power of the state to deprive workers of the right to bargain freely through their unions for wages.

The right wingers in the Labour Party are the standard-bearers for coalition government, which means abandoning the gains represented by the formation of the Labour Party following the Taff Vale judgement.

The trade union leaders follow in the footsteps of Richard Bell, the railway union official who tried to hold back the

struggle of the Merthyr railwaymen. Today Feather, Jones, Scanlon, etc., seek to dissipate the strength of the working class in piecemeal, isolated struggles and inadequate one-day stoppages.

Behind all this is the uncontrollable world economic crisis which the capitalist class can seek to solve only by completely crushing the working class and driving it back to 19th century conditions.

If the Tories are allowed to take back all the rights won by the

working class, then living and working conditions will be driven back to what they were before any of these rights were achieved.

But the capitalist class on a world scale is forced to try to do this because of the crisis of the system. This means that in 1973 the democratic gains made in the past can only be defended by revolutionary methods.

This is the way in which the history of the past lives on and must be developed in the present.

The attempts by the state at the beginning of this century to shackle the unions and make it impossible for them to function required the working class to take a giant step forward and form its own party. This arose inexorably out of the struggles portrayed at the Pageant.

Today the step forward that must be taken by the working class is even more decisive than that which followed Taff Vale. Present conditions require the construction of the revolutionary party.

The formation of the First International by Karl Marx and his associates in 1864 posed the central question facing the working class—the building of an international revolutionary organization to lead the fight against capitalism.

Today, after the betrayals of social democracy and Stalinism, this means the building of the Fourth International.

That is why the Pageant of Labour was far more than an impressive display put on by talented people. It was a challenge to every person there and to every reader of the Workers Press to accept the responsibilities that now flow from that history—the responsibility to transform the Socialist Labour League into the revolutionary party which will lead the fight to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism on a world scale.

## The impact of the Pageant

'It's fantastic; unbelievable. It's the biggest indoor political rally we've ever been to.'

This was the verdict of two Northern Ireland Republican delegates on the Pageant. And one added: 'The main thing is, they're working-class people.'

'It's only the working-class people who can bring down the Tory government.'

'In Northern Ireland we have been used as guinea-pigs for the likes of Kitson for what is going to happen in Britain.'

'There is no doubt that what happens in Britain has a very great bearing on Northern Ireland. We have been hoping for a strong Labour government to be returned. It would be a great step, perhaps the biggest step forward to solving the Ulster problem.'

EDDIE KIMMINS (23), is a Scottish engineer working in London. Until a year ago he worked at the Govan division of the ex-Upper Clyde Shipbuilders.

'The Pageant was great', he told me at Empire Pool, Wembley. 'It showed how workers have fought for their rights and brought it up to the present day with the fight against Heath.'

Eddie earns £27 a week and out of that he has to keep a wife and two small children.

He said: 'I came down here after I got a trade because I thought I'd have a better chance to make a living. But with this government in, anywhere you go there's no chance.'

'The position is very serious and I think we have got to be prepared for a big struggle. I think Heath will call in the army if he has to.'

'A one-day strike is never any good. It has been proved time and time again. What's needed now is a General Strike.'

'Workers need a new party of their own today. The Labour



The Taff Vale Railway sequence of the Pageant impressed engineers whose own union has been fined by the courts. Above Taff Vale workers in joyous mood after a clash with their employer and his car.

Party has become just another breed of Tory. And a paper like Workers Press is essential, because I think the national papers only give one side of things.'

LONDON hospital worker Mike Bowman said the pageant brought past social changes to life.

He said: 'It came across because it was all built round working-class dissatisfaction and ill-treatment and the violence used by the authorities.'

'All that aggravation went on so that we could have rights and now in this affluent society, a democratically-elected government is trying to take them away.'

'THE PAGEANT seems to be an exact copy of what is about to happen now', said Anthony, a

young hospital worker from Belfast.

'The whole system, Labour and Conservative, is just running headlong towards dictatorship.'

'I definitely think there must be a new revolutionary party. I've only realized recently that the unions can do very little to help.'

'At my hospital we voted 96 per cent for an all-out strike, but the union leaders said we could not.'

'I don't think the hospital workers can win their struggle by themselves. We need other people outside the hospital unions to support us.'

'The TUC should call a General Strike. If they don't we are going to lose. We can't afford to stay out and stay out. Our wages are too small.'

EDWARD O'ROURKE (22) £20 a week as a caretaker in London and he found the Pageant 'very interesting'.

Edward told me he was only just starting to get involved with politics.

'It's the wages', he said. 'They're terrible. Prices keep going up, but wages are frozen.'

Edward is married and his wife is expecting a baby. Food and vegetable prices are a matter of every-day concern.

'As we saw in the Pageant, things were bad in the old days. But if this freeze stays on, I think things will get a lot rougher for the working class today.'

JOHN MCGUINNES, Liverpool docker, said: 'What happened in the era of Taff Vale is happening today. That's what came over so powerfully in this Pageant.'

'I think every worker now can see that the rights are being taken off them by this Tory government. But only a few see that it will need a revolutionary party to defend those rights now. This Pageant has been a big step forward to the revolutionary party.'

SID SMYTH, an engineering worker from Hemel Hempstead, commented:

'For me the Taff Vale incident was the most powerful—I am a member of a union that has been fined £55,000. The whole history of the working class was shown at the Pageant. It was very impressive. It showed how the working class and only the working class built their rights and organizations.'

'I joined the Communist Party in 1936—the year of the Spanish Civil War. I left in 1968 over the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Now I think that all the militant forces are rallying round the

SLL, the making of a revolutionary party is here today. It's a truly historic occasion.'

TONY JONES, an assembly line worker at Standard Triumph, Wood End, Liverpool, thought the section put on by the Jarrow workers about the fight to build the first trade unions in the north east was tremendous.

'A lot of my mates who came down from the factory with me were overwhelmed by the whole thing. It was an impressive spectacle.'

CHARLIE BOYD, from Export Packing Service, Banbury, said: 'Seeing the enormous struggles the workers had in the past in order to survive drove it home about what we are facing today.'

'Knowing how previous generations of workers stood up to terrible military and police repression makes it easier for us to face up to the forces of the state we have against us in the current situation.'

'Apart from that, it was a tremendous presentation. I thought it was not possible to present such a spectacle. I don't usually get emotional about things, but this was really moving.'

PHILIP JAMES, a worker in the publishing industry, felt: 'It was a fantastic achievement to put on such a spectacle. Some of the actual theatrical scenes were difficult to follow for technical and other reasons, but the enormous drama and movement of the struggles came across powerfully.'

'I had no idea that the fight for working-class rights had been such a violent struggle because of all the repression. The military seemed to be turning out every five minutes.'

'I think it will take some time for the full political significance of these historical lessons to sink in. It was very stimulating.'

# PAGEANT DIARY

The Road to Workers Power



Empire Pool

# Greatest day in history of British Trotskyism

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

**OVER 10,000 people at the Empire Pool, Wembley, on Sunday participated in a unique and unforgettable political experience.**

They witnessed the making of the British working class in perhaps the most dramatic way ever presented. The Pageant 'The Road to Workers' Power' was not a play, a film, a meeting or a concert, but a political event that gathered together the representatives of the forces that will build the revolutionary party in Britain.

One thing is certain—no other movement in the country, including the Labour Party with all its resources, could have undertaken such an historic task with such outstanding success.

The scale was enormous. From nothing but the idea, and the determination to carry theory into practice and build the Party, the Pageant was created.

The total cast was 250. The bulk were workers and youth, some new to politics—almost all new to revolutionary politics. They were at the Empire Pool in costumes made by themselves—from the ragged children of the Durham mines to the railway workers of Taff Vale in 1901 in their blue serge uniforms, waistcoats and caps.

At the Empire Pool the teams from Jarrow, Manchester, Merthyr Tydfil and London met for the first time the army of technicians, lighting and sound experts and designers who all came forward and offered their services free to make the Pageant a blow against the hated Tory government.

Technically, the Pageant was one of the most advanced ever staged. Much of it was spectacle—union meetings, clashes with the police and fights with scabs. But there were many detailed scenes that could easily have been lost because of the vast size of the arena.

This is why the acquisition of an Eidophor closed-circuit television process was so important. This is a system of immediate transmission of television pictures onto a screen. The audience, therefore, could look from the floor of the Empire Pool itself to the 30 ft by 20 ft screen at the top of the arena to pick up magnified details of the action as it happened. The Eidophor was also used to carry etchings and other material of the periods depicted in the four Pageant episodes as well as film of Tory leader Heath making one of his many speeches on law and order.

## Funeral hymn

Music played a vital role too. The Boldon colliery prize brass band played in the Jarrow episode, which showed the building of the first miners' union. One tune was a victory march played at a miners' meeting. The other was the Gresford hymn, written after the Gresford pit disaster in Wales. In the Pageant the hymn was played as a funeral

march for Jobling—the miner hanged and gibbeted as an example to all miners who stood by the union.

Both the Boldon colliery band and Music Force, the Manchester musicians' co-operative, got a great reception from the audience.

Vic Brox of Music Force wrote three great songs—one was a celebration of the Peoples' Charter of 1837 which demanded a parliamentary voice for the working class. It captured the joy and power of the first workers' mass movement.

The audience also applauded the props which included colliery

trucks, a gallows and gibbet, a cannon, a small electric car, and an amazing scabs' train used during the Taff Vale incident.

## Stirring scenes

But the final scenes of the Pageant were the most stirring of all. The Eidophor showed film of Lenin and Trotsky and the storming of the Winter Palace during the Russian Revolution.

The four main characters of the Pageant, the miner Jobling, Julian Harney the revolutionary Chartist, Karl Marx and Holmes the railway workers' leader at

Taff Vale came forward and spoke of their fight and sacrifice.

Then Comrade Roger Smith a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League and in overall control of the Pageant came forward to salute these men who struggled in the past. He pledged that the movement would struggle on until the working class had the power.

The Pageant ended with the 'Internationale'—sung by 10,000 people in the hall—the new British revolutionary vanguard.

**Above: National secretary of the Socialist Labour League G. Healy on the platform and closed-circuit TV at the Empire Pool rally. Below left: Sheila Torrance and Producer Roger Smith (SLL Central Committee members) and Corin Redgrave conducting the collection. Below centre: Gary Gurmeet (Editor 'Keep Left', top) and Dave Smart (Whittington Hospital). Below: Delwyn Hopkins (Shotton steelworks action committee, top) and Tom Thomas (Roe-hampton hospital).**



● MORE PICTURES — Centre pages.



# POLICE FEDERATION: IT'S NO TRADE UNION

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT



## IN COMMON?

What do Ray Buckton of ASLEF (above), Sir John Partridge, ex-president of the CBI and Maurice Macmillan (top), the Tory Employment Secretary, have in common?

They were sharing the same platform at a seminar thrown by the Industrial Society yesterday.

It was conducted at the Europa Hotel. For Society members this beanfeast cost £25 and £38 for non-members.

The seminar, entitled 'Facing the Freeze', was open to 'directors, senior executives, managers, trade union officials and convenors'.

The composition of the speakers clearly shows that the whole exercise had nothing whatsoever to do with the interests of the working class.

Macmillan's department is jointly in charge of running the state pay laws, Partridge was in the CBI delegation to the tripartite talks which paved the way for the legislation, Alex Jarratt, another speaker, was also a member of the CBI team, while Professor R. A. Turner, of Cambridge University, was a former member of Labour's Prices and Incomes Board.

So what, might you ask, was Buckton doing at such a corporatist-style affair? His own members are at present fighting tooth and nail for a living wage while he is spending his time with those who want the laws enforced.

From time to time we have followed the rightward course of the leadership of the Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staffs (APEX).

Its latest move was a programme for a corporatist-style joint negotiating body consisting of representatives from the TUC and the Confederation of British Industry to agree on a wages policy.

February's issue of its journal, 'The Clerk', now has an article on the Police Federation—part of a series on 'Other People's Unions', it is written by Tony Judge, editor of the Police Federation magazine.

It begins with the startling sentence: 'Trade unionism and the police looks like an oil and water combination.' You can say that again!

Judge goes on to assure his readers that this is far from the splendid job being done by the Federation as 'an enlightened and influential representative body concerned to improve the lot of the serving policeman' and claims that 'it was in the forefront of those who called for improved understanding between the police and immigrants and has done much to improve relationships with the public'.

To be fair, he does give a potted history of the setting up of the first police union in 1919, following two strikes, which was affiliated to the TUC and the Labour Party.

Within a few months the Lloyd George government had brought in a Bill making it illegal for policemen to belong to a trade union or have anything to do with politics. When 2,000 men struck in defence of their union, they were sacked.

The article also points out that the Police Federation was established by the same piece of legislation as 'a wholly internal body, forbidden to have any outside association'.

All its meetings are held



in working time with the approval of Scotland Yard and public money pays all the costs of meetings and their annual conference.

In other words, the Police Federation is virtually a 'company union' set up after the 1919 policemen's strike was broken to prevent the police force having any connections with working-class organizations which might interfere with its being an effective strike-breaking instrument.

The main role of the police

is to defend private property and the 'law and order' of the capitalist state against workers fighting to defend their rights.

Hundreds of picketing workers, youth and immigrants have already learnt some very hard lessons about the relationship of the police to 'the public'.

Many of them have a few bruises to prove it.

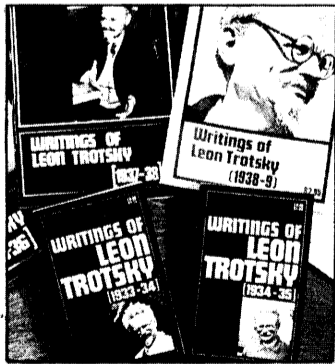
And that was before policemen were officially armed and given powers to shoot-

to-kill and ask questions afterwards!

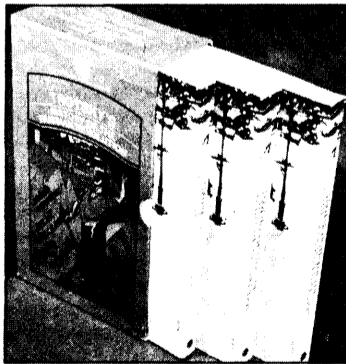
Today, as the Tory government prepares for all-out war with the working class, it needs a force it can rely on to do its 'strong-arm' work—breaking up picket lines, terrorizing potential 'trouble-makers' and arresting, or even shooting militants.

The impression given that the Police Federation is some sort of bona-fide trade union is dashed every time a picket line is mounted.

## ANNOUNCING...



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## FARMWORKERS' PLIGHT

Mr and Mrs R. Graves used to live at 2 Mexborough Cottages, Buckland, Hertfordshire. But when their fourth child was born, Mrs Graves was very ill and her husband took two days off work to look after her.

His employer, Mr David Hodge, sacked him claiming he was inefficient at his job.

But that wasn't all. For Mr Graves was a farm labourer and he lived in a 'tied cottage'. That is, his house was 'tied' to his job. When he lost his job, his employers obtained a possession order in the Hitchin County Court.

A similar fate befell Percy Billings (51), who had been employed as a gardener at Runnymede House. When he lost his job for no reason he and his wife lost their home at Old Windsor, Surrey.

After interventions on his behalf by the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, the bailiffs allowed Mr Billings' furniture to stay in the house for an extra 48 hours.

'We've done what we can to help them', said Lady Loder, daughter of the estate owner.

Another NUAAW member, Mr G. Krueger had been employed as a tractor driver at Chiddingfold from 1968 until June 1972, when his employer decided that he would prefer to employ a younger man.

The Krueger family were evicted on January 8, 1973.

Mr Samuel Huggins was dismissed following a bout of sickness after three years' employment as manager of a turkey-rearing farm at Attleborough.

He and his wife and their two daughters, aged seven and five, were evicted on October 31.

They spent the first few nights after being turned out of their home sleeping in the family car parked in a gateway.

The legal department of the NUAAW deals with an average of 500 'tied' cottage cases annually.

\* Details from 'The Landworker', March 1973, journal of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers.

# IN PRAISE OF STALIN

Effusive articles in praise of Stalin appeared in the Albanian Press to mark the 20th anniversary of his death on March 5, 1953. Meetings were organized in factories and other places of work and exhibitions arranged.

The official party daily 'Zeri i Popullit' published an article headed 'J. V. Stalin—great revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist'.

It said: 'All revolutionaries and freedom-loving people remember Stalin as a great revolutionary and as an outstanding Marxist-Leninist who devoted all his life to the defence of the victories of the revolution and the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, to the cause of the liberation of the proletariat and all oppressed peoples.'

The article recited the familiar Maoist litany, attacking the modern revisionists of the Soviet Union for turning it into 'a centre of world counter-revolution, into an imperialist state enemy of socialism and the freedom of the people'.

The Albanians accuse the Soviet Union of having undermined the Liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people by aiding the US aggressors to withdraw 'with honour' from Indo China. They keep quiet about the Chinese, who were no less enthusiastic about the Paris 'peace' agreement than the Russians.

Apparently in China the 20th anniversary of the blood-thirsty dictator was allowed to pass by without notice. Enver Hoxha (below), carrying



out a caricature of the building of socialism in small, backward and isolated Albania, obviously models himself on Stalin.

The cult of the personality is going full blast as in North Korea, where the building up of Kim Il-song (below) would have made Stalin envious. The North Korean Party daily described Stalin as 'an outstanding figure of the international communist and working-class movement'.

In the Soviet Union and the east European countries a studied silence has been preserved on the anniversary. The bureaucracy which came to power in the Stalin era still lives in dread of its old boss, as is shown by its mortal fear that the truth about the past should be revealed.



## JAPAN: ONCE AGAIN ON THE MILITARY ROAD

Under the guise of insuring against attack from the USSR or China, the Japanese government is preparing for a war in Asia to further the ambitions of the big monopolies.

These companies which have been hit hard by the up-valuation of the now-floating yen and by restrictions on their exports to the United States, are turning more and more towards the violent resolution of their economic crisis.

Their dream of resurrecting the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere must bring them into direct collision with the USSR and China, both of which have rich reserves of minerals and oil coveted by the Japanese monopolies.

Militarization, technically forbidden under the post-war constitution, but in reality encouraged by the United States, is going ahead at an extremely rapid rate. The armed forces, euphemistically described as the 'self-defence' forces, are being given the

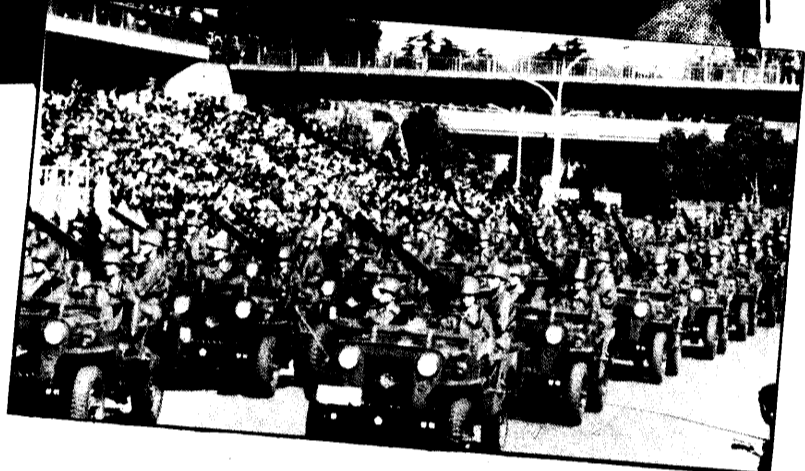
latest in all branches of military equipment.

The military budget this year is twice that of 1972, which was itself a post-war record. The government is making overtures to other states in the area hoping to give its troops training experience outside Japan.

The latest move in this carefully-gearred plan is the release through an anonymous government source of documents which it is claimed contain the military's fundamental plan for defending the nation from attack by the USSR or China.

The excuse for putting forward this plan at the present time is that the government's confidence in support from America is declining and that the United States can no longer be relied on to 'defend' the country.

Officials in Tokyo claim that the plan is a reaction to Asian policy proclaimed by President Nixon. This policy called for Asian countries to shoulder the primary responsibility for military expenditure and rely on the US only for air, sea and logistical support.



Japanese military build-up: A parade in 1971. Above: Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka with US President Nixon.

The Tokyo officials claim this is an uncertain commitment and assumed the 'worst case'—minimum military support from the US—in drawing up their plans.

The strategy expressed in the document has been accepted in the senior levels of Japan's armed forces, according to Tokyo sources. It has yet to be applied in planning and training, they said.

According to Tokyo sources it has no provision for sending troops abroad, unless there are secret provisions which were not revealed. Nor has it any provision for nuclear arms, relying instead on the US nuclear 'umbrella'.

It makes no provision for expanding military forces beyond those projected in the fourth five-year military plan currently on its way through the Diet (parliament). But this, of course, in no way rules out a further escalation of military expenditure in the future.

Everything indicates that the Japanese militarists have become a bit more canny than their pre-war ancestors. The latter circulated a detailed memorandum over the signature of Count Tanaka in the mid-1920s which fell into the hands of the Soviet general staff.

This incautious document frankly and openly stated the predatory war aims of Japanese imperialism which required to expand and win colonies and subject territories from its established rivals, particularly British, United States, Dutch and French imperialism.

The same economic laws which drove Japan to attack the Chinese mainland in 1931 are today driving Japanese imperialism to attempt another 'solution' in the same spirit. The vaunted plan is not preparation for defence, but for attack.

According to the official spokesmen, the doctrine assumed that a conventional attack would be undertaken with speed and surprise. It

would be aimed at Japan's cities, with enemy paratroopers and soldiers, borne by helicopters from ships, assigned to seize key centres.

In one fell swoop this glib 'assumption' is used to 'justify' a 900-strong air force which, the document claims, would be pulverized by bombing of airfields in a few hours under combat conditions.

At the same time, the argument also justifies possession of a navy of over 250,000 tons, which the government acknowledged would only function for three or four days if the scenario went into operation.

One might well ask why bother having an army at all, if it can only stand up to its nearest neighbours for at most a matter of days? Then the document reveals what the real purpose of the exercise is about. The second purpose of this force is to protect against 'internal insurgency inspired from China'.

This plan is more to the point: it envisages the use of the army to crush insurrection from inside the country—in other words to crush the working class of Japan.

The subtlety of the document can now be seen: on the one hand it enables the government to prepare for counter-revolution behind a smokescreen of 'national defence' and on the other it serves to prove how 'inadequate' the country's 'defences' would be in the event of an attack in earnest.

On either count, it can only fuel the military appetites of the big monopolies which are thrashing desperately around for a 'solution' to their immense economic problem.

In line with their counter-revolutionary politics, both the Soviet and the Chinese bureaucracy are competing for the attentions of these monopolies by signing away mineral rights and offering preferential trading terms—each hoping to turn the Japanese threat against the other.

### POLITICAL PROFILES

By LEON TROTSKY  
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Sharp pen-portraits of leading figures of the Second International in Russia and Europe, for the first time published in an English edition. The translations were first commissioned by the Young Socialists' paper 'Keep Left'. Their enormous success has led to the completion of the translation of the whole book, which is the first part of Volume 8 of Leon Trotsky's 'Works' published in the Soviet Union in 1926. It provides the most vivid picture available of the historic figures of the Second International, their strengths and weaknesses, written by an observer who was also a participant in the daily struggle of the European and Russian working class.

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# THE WEMBLEY TRIUMPH

The great success of the Pageant, 'The Road to Workers' Power', is a tribute to the strength and determination of the working class to defend its basic democratic rights.

The enthusiastic audience of more than 10,000 trade unionists and their families who attended the anti-Tory rally at the Empire Pool showed their readiness to fight the class enemy and build an alternative revolutionary leadership. They cheered the Pageant performances and gave a deafening response to the speakers' demand that the Tory government be forced out of office. In the collection more than £1,039 was raised to continue the work of the Pageant and to build the revolutionary party in the immediate weeks in front.

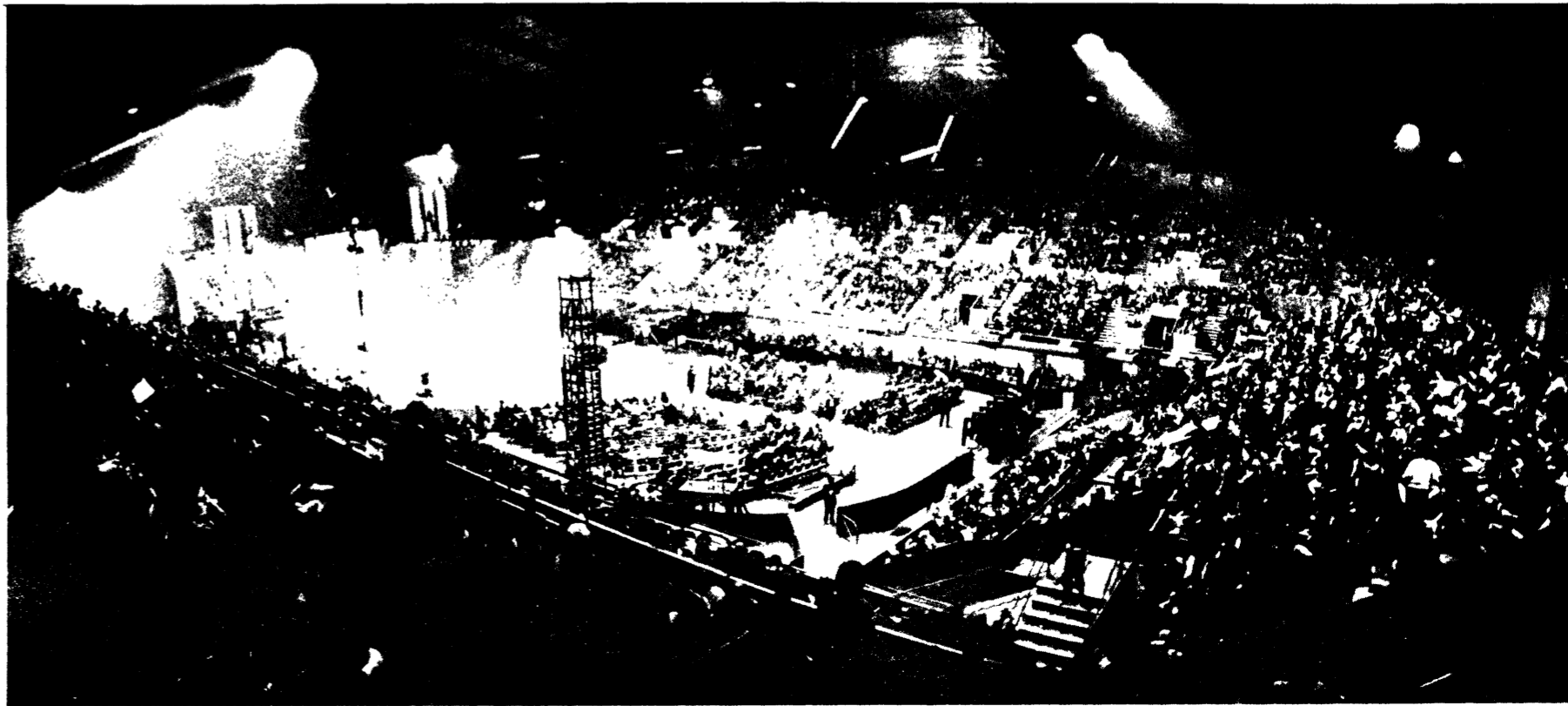
Top left: Peter Sproule plays Ammon Beasley, general manager of the Taff Vale Railway Company. His face is projected onto a giant Eidephor screen which hung at the back of the stage. Four TV cameras tracked the performances and simultaneously projected the action

onto the screen. This was the first time this sophisticated Eidephor equipment has been used in pageant presentation in Britain.

Top right: In the finale the combined cast of 250, the majority of whom were trade unionists and youth who had never appeared before an audience in their lives, marched around the arena singing the Pageant song, 'Road to Workers' Powers'. The scene climaxed with the singing of the 'Internationale'.

Bottom left to right: Marx, played by Tom Kempinski, and Engels, Terry Wilton, discuss the developments in the British working class in a scene shortly after the formation of the First International in London in 1864.

A panoramic view of the vast Wembley auditorium. In yesterday's Workers Press we carried a photograph which showed only the audience that had taken up their seats by shortly after 3 o'clock. This later picture showing three sides of the auditorium has the seating filled to capacity.





Jacques Doriot, leader of the fascist 'Parti Populaire Français', speaks at a rally. In 1937 the party had only just been formed and, contrary to what the Stalinists say, it presented no danger until after the ending of the strikes.

the working class and preventing revolution. But it outlived its usefulness during 1937.

The aim of the capitalist class then was to take back all the concessions which had been made to get the workers out of the factories in June 1936, especially the 40-hour week, which proved to be the most costly of all. Various breaches in the 40-hour week were authorized by law in 1937. Then, in 1938, the Daladier government used national defence as a basis for a more general attack on the principle.

The working class fought back against the employers' offensive with a series of wild-cat strikes carried out without union support and often against the opposition of the CP-controlled CGT. After the Clichy massacre, strikes broke out in a number of plants and, to keep the movement in check, the CGT called a half-day protest strike against the fascists.

## ARBITRATION

A significant strike took place at the Goodrich rubber factory in December 1937 over various grievances, including the introduction of the Bedeaux system of time-and-motion study. The workers occupied the factory, which was then surrounded by the 'gardes mobiles' (armed police). The factory hooters were sounded as a signal to workers in neighbouring plant who poured out into the streets. Under the pressure of thousands of workers the government withdrew the police units.

But the workers were persuaded to refer the dispute to arbitration and to give up the occupation in the meantime. A settlement was proposed which rejected most of the workers' demands, but which the communist-led union supported.

The management proceeded to sack 52 workers who had been prominent in the strike. Three mass meetings were necessary before the Stalinist officials could get the men back to work amid cries of 'sell-out' and 'traitors'.

Episodes of this kind produced demoralization and cynicism among sections of workers. Backed by the Communist Party, the CGT did everything it could to prevent strikes, or to confine them to short protests which wore down the workers without bringing any results. There were more strikes in 1937 than in any year since 1920, but they mostly had a local and short-lived character.

CONTINUED TOMORROW

# THE FRENCH POPULAR FRONT

## 1937: The role of the Radical Party

BY TOM KEMP

In the coalition of parties which made up the Popular Front in France in 1936-1937, a decisive role was played by the Radical Party. The alliance of the reformists and the Stalinists of the Communist Party with this party of the imperialist ruling class chained the working class to the defence of the capitalist social order.

The alliance with the Radicals was represented as an alliance with the middle class. As CP secretary Maurice Thorez put it: we must win the middle classes before the fascists do. But the Radical Party, as Leon Trotsky pointed out many times in his writings on the events in France, represented not the petty bourgeoisie, but their exploiters.

'To realize a genuine alliance between the workers and the peasants,' he wrote in 1938, 'is not possible except by teaching the petty bourgeoisie how to emancipate themselves from the Radical Party, how to cast off once and for all its yoke from their necks. Meanwhile the Popular Front acts in a directly opposite manner; entering into this "front", Socialists and Communists take upon themselves the responsibility for the Radical Party and thus help it in this way to exploit and betray the masses.'

In the elections of May 1936, many seats were won by the Radical Party because its

electoral allies of the Popular Front stood down on the second ballot.

When the strike movement raised the spectre of revolution, Socialist Party leader Leon Blum and Thorez vied with each other in demonstrating to these capitalist allies that they had no intention of leading the working class to power, but were upholders of the existing social order.

After the strike movement had been brought to an end with the help of the Communist Party the employers began to recover their confidence. As Trotsky put it: 'The Popular Front, having fulfilled its role as a brake, now represents nothing more for the bourgeoisie than a useless hindrance.'

Apologists for the Communist Party speak of the period as one of great gains for the working class and claim that the Popular Front averted the danger of fascism in France. This is false.

## RESPECTABLE

A recent Stalinist historian dealing with the period makes a tell-tale claim. Jean Bruhat writes in 'Le Front Populaire' (Editions Sociales, 1972):

'Emerging from a long and difficult period of preparation and formation, with the Popular Front the Communist Party became—and that definitively—a fundamental part of French political life. It became the testamentary executor of a certain number of progressive national traditions.'

It is on these grounds that

the Communist Party presents itself today as a responsible party, opposed to adventures, a respectable part of the left coalition with Mitterand's Socialist Party—which stands to the right of Blum—and the rump of so-called 'left' Radicals, who, even less than their forebears in 1936, can be claimed to represent the middle class.

The claim that the Popular Front put paid to the fascist danger in France is equally spurious, though Bruhat makes it an important part of his apology. In fact, there was no fascist danger in 1936, or not until after the ending of the strikes. The fascist leagues had been dissolved and new parties, Jacques Doriot's Parti Populaire Français and De La Rocque's Parti Social Français, had only just been formed.

It is true, of course, that considerable subsidies were received by these parties after May-June 1936. More dangerous was the notorious Cagouard plot revealed in November 1937, based on an underground organization which had close contact with the administration and the army, including the secret service, called CSAR (Secret Committee for Revolutionary Action).

Preparations had been carefully laid for the taking of power by armed force. Dozens of arms caches were discovered, as well as underground cells for prisoners and lists of those who were to be rounded up. In September 1937 it organized an explosion at the headquarters of the French employers' confederation, CGPF. The right-wing Press blamed the Communist Party.

Although the Cagouard plot was discovered, details of the police findings were soon stifled. Many of those concerned later turned up in the ranks of Vichy. It was after the defeat and during the Nazi occupation that the fascists came into their own. They provided the forces for the dreaded 'milices' which did the Gestapo's dirty work in tracking down underground workers and murdering many of them.

To claim that the Popular Front enabled France to avoid fascism is a travesty. It is only true in so far as the bourgeoisie did not need to take the gamble of a resort to fascism while the Popular Front itself was holding back

## BOOKS BY TROTSKY

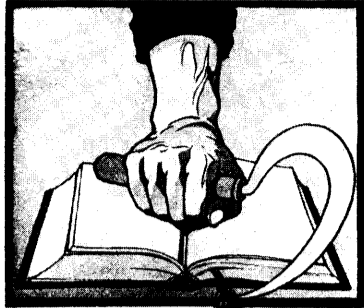
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## WORKERS NOTEBOOK

## BOOK REVIEW



'The Spanish Revolution' By Leon Trotsky. Pathfinder Press (New York). Price £4.75 cloth. £1.65 paperback.

Leon Trotsky's writings on the Spanish Revolution make an imperishable contribution to the theoretical heritage of Marxism. It is timely that they should be made available in English when their lessons again become directly applicable.

As Trotsky wrote to the Spanish youth supporters of the Left Opposition in 1932: 'The strength of Marxism is in the unity of scientific theory with revolutionary struggle. On these two rails, the education of the communist youth should progress.'

'The study of Marxism outside the revolutionary struggle can create bookworms, but not revolutionaries. Participation in the revolutionary struggle without the study of Marxism is unavoidably full of danger, uncertainty, half-blindness.'

'To study Marxism as a Marxist is possible only by participating in the life and struggle of the class; revolutionary theory is verified by practice, and practice is clarified by theory. Only the truths of Marxism that are conquered in struggle enter the mind and the blood.'

It is only from this standpoint that it is possible to grasp and understand what Trotsky was trying to get over to the Spanish, and other, revolutionaries of the 1930s and apply the lessons to the tasks of today.

Failure to heed his warnings resulted in the bitter and complete defeat of the Spanish working class, which has lived ever since under the scourge of the Franco dictatorship, and consumed the revolutionary cadres that he was seeking to shape into a party of the Bolshevik type.

From his exile in Turkey, Trotsky closely followed the unfolding events as the revolutionary crisis opened in Spain in 1930 with the fall of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. In correspondence, articles and pamphlets he sought to rally the forces for the building of such a party.

The supporters of the Left Opposition were, until 1934, working as a faction inside the Communist Parties to bring them back to a Leninist course. A principal task was, therefore, to oppose the disastrous ultra-left policies of the 'third period' which defined all reformist and other trends in the labour movement as 'social fascist'.

In any case, the Communist Party of Spain was small, with less than 1,000 members in 1931. Subject to a rigorous repression under the regime of Primo de Rivera, it was also being torn apart, perhaps more than any other section of the Third International, by the divisions in the Russian Party.

While some of the leaders followed Bukharin and the right, notably Joaquin Maurin and Julian Gorkin, another group around Andres Nin supported the struggles of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. It was upon Nin, in particular, that Trotsky placed his hopes for the revolutionary party in Spain and his struggle against

# TROTSKY ON SPAIN



Militia women fighting against Franco in the Spanish Civil War.

Nin's unwillingness to accept these responsibilities, and alter his slide into the morass of centrism, makes up the most important part of this volume.

It was not until the eve of the Civil War that a hand-picked leadership, devoted to Stalin, came to the fore in the Spanish Communist Party, such as Jesus Hernandez, Jose Diaz and Dolores Ibaruri ('La Pasionaria'). With the exception of the latter, this Stalinist leadership had played no part in the workers' movement and was virtually unknown.

Both Maurin and Nin, on the other hand, were experienced leaders with a background in the trade union movement as well as in the Communist International. Maurin went on to establish a 'Workers' and Peasants' Bloc', based mainly in Catalonia—the most highly industrialized part of Spain and the cradle of the working class.

This group had moved to the right in opposition to the left turn of the Communist International. Until 1934 Nin was the leading figure in the Left Opposition in Spain, carrying on theoretical work around the review 'Communismo' and in constant correspondence with Trotsky.

Although Trotsky's writings were directed mainly at the Nin group in 1931, he did not despair of the possibility of rallying all the tendencies claiming allegiance to communism into a single party.

In April 1931 he wrote to this effect to the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in a letter which remained without reply. It began:

'The fate of the Spanish revolution depends completely upon whether an authoritative and combative Communist Party will be constituted in Spain in the coming months.' The building of the revolutionary party was always the key question for Trotsky.

It was complicated by a number of factors specific to Spain which are dealt with in the pamphlet which Trotsky wrote early in 1931 before the downfall of the monarchy and the crisis which accompanied the establishment of the Republic. Trotsky's experience, derived from the three Russian revolutions, enabled him to get to the heart of the Spanish problem in this work.

He discerned the making of a revolutionary situation before even the Marxists on the spot were aware of it.

The accumulating contradictions of the regime and the

pressures which the world economic crisis threw on a backward and mainly agrarian economy, but one in which the proletariat occupied a key position, made Spain the weakest link in the capitalist chain, in the same way as Russia in 1917.

Spain's peculiar history and her backwardness 'inevitably weakened the centralist tendencies inherent in capitalism'. Hence the political importance of nationalist and separatist movements, especially in Catalonia and the Basque country. These tendencies posed special problems for the revolutionaries and a correct approach to the aspirations of these peoples had to be worked out.

The role of the army as a centralizing force and at the same time as a source of instability arose also from the backwardness of Spain and the weakness of the ruling classes from which the officer corps was recruited.

Primo de Rivera's dictatorship was based on the army, but it had failed utterly to solve any of the historic problems of the country. 'It fell,' writes Trotsky, 'even without a new military coup; he was simply deflated, like a tyre that runs over a nail.'

What followed could only be a deep convulsion out of which could come either the victory of the working class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat or a new dictatorship of the property owners, brought to power by the military and resorting this time to the methods of fascism.

In essence this was the struggle into which Spain was plunged in 1930 and which ended in Franco's victory.

Spanish politics, as Trotsky saw, were ripe for revolution. In a few lines he summed up all its main constituent elements which we find time and again throughout the story:

'... the perfidious monarchy; the splinter factions of the conservatives and liberals who despise the king and crawl on their bellies before him; the right-wing republicans always ready to betray, and the left-wing republicans, always ready for adventure; the conspiratorial officers, of whom some want a republic and others a promotion; the restless students, whose fathers view them with alarm; finally the striking workers, scattered among the different organizations; and the peasants reaching out for pitchforks and guns.'

Meanwhile the industrialization brought about during and

after World War I, in which Spain remained neutral, brought new contradictions. High tariffs were imposed to give industry command of the home market, but only by raising prices and limiting consumption. The new industrial capitalists remained too weak to play the same historical role as their counterparts in Britain and France. They remained part of a reactionary bloc with the landlords, the generals, the state officials, the church hierarchy and the bankers.

The growth of industry strengthened the ranks of the working class—but, as Trotsky explains, it did more than that: 'Social life in Spain was condemned to revolve in a vicious circle so long as there was no class capable of taking the solution of the revolutionary problem into its own hands. The appearance of the Spanish proletariat on the historic arena radically changes the situation and opens up new prospects...

'The question of whether the present revolutionary convulsions can produce a genuine revolution, capable of reconstructing the very basis of national life, is consequently reduced to whether the Spanish proletariat is capable of taking the leadership of the national life into its hands. There is no other claimant to this role in the Spanish nation.'

This made a decisive question whether a leadership could be built to take this—the only fully revolutionary and progressive class—to power.

The revolutionaries had to operate in concrete conditions where it was necessary to carry out the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This meant not only support for a republic, but also for other democratic slogans intended to purge society of all feudal vestiges—landlordism, the domination of the church, the oppression of nationalities. But these had to be combined with other slogans of a transitional character—nationalization of the banks and industry, workers' control of industry, state planning of the economy.

'The more courageously, resolutely and implacably the proletarian vanguard fights for democratic slogans,' Trotsky insisted, 'the sooner it will win over the masses and undermine the support for the bourgeois republicans and socialist reformists. The more quickly their best elements join us, the sooner the democratic republic will be identified in the mind of the masses with the workers' republic.'

CONTINUED TOMORROW

## DESTINATION

Storm in the Bay of Biscay. A Soviet bulk-carrier, 'Des-hava', recently returned to the port of Bilbao in northern Spain, only a few hours after leaving the harbour with a load of ten Spanish lorries and 27 vans. The cargo was destroyed by fierce gales. The destination?—Havana, Cuba.

## CASH AND JESUS

American folk singer Johnny Cash has got 'religion' in a big way. He has recently put a reputed \$1m of his own money into the making of a film about Jesus entitled 'The Gospel Road'.

It starts with a shot of Cash, bible in hand, walking along the banks of the Jordan inviting the audience to 'come along with me in the footsteps of Jesus'. Most of the rest of the film is said to be dominated by Cash singing songs and giving all the narration.

It sets out to show the Christ story in modern-day Jerusalem. Jesus is played by blond Robert Englestrom in sandals and plain robes. His disciples are described as 'an assortment of ragged, unkempt men... from a ghetto area'. There does not seem to be an Arab in sight.

A special preview given to an audience of priests and



Johnny Cash

ministers of religion in Atlanta, Georgia, got a mixed reception. Most of the men of God gave their stamp of approval, but some complained that there was 'a little too much guitar'. Others said Jesus and the apostles looked 'like hippies', to which Cash replied: 'I guess that's because Christ was a sort of hippie in his day.'

Cash says the picture is his 'personal witness to Christ' and adds that he feels its production is the reason why he was born into this world.

**BBC 1**

9.38 Schools. 12.30 Croeso'n ol. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 Andy Pandy. 1.45 Ask the family. 2.05 Schools. 2.25 Racing from Cheltenham. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Lizzie dripping. 5.10 John Craven's news-round. 5.15 Vision on. 5.40 Sir Prancelot. 5.45 News. Weather.

**6.00 NATIONWIDE.**

**6.45 LAUREL AND HARDY.** Men o' war.

**7.05 FILM: 'NURSE ON WHEELS'.** Juliet Mills, Ronald Lewis, Joan Sims, Noel Purcell, Esma Cannon. British comedy.

**8.30 WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE LIKELY LADS?** The Old Magic.

**9.00 NEWS.** Weather.

**9.25 THE QUESTION OF ULSTER.** The Way Forward. Including Rev. Ian Paisley, Frank McManus, Oliver Napier, William Craig, Erskine Holmes, Gerry Fitt, Brian Faulkner, John Cole, Keith Kyle, David Wood.

**11.40 NEWS.** 11.45 VIEWPOINT. 12.05 Weather.

**BBC 2**

11.00-11.25 Play school. 4.10 Play school. 5.25 Open University.

**6.40 OFFICE.** A Place to Work.

**7.05 OPEN UNIVERSITY.**

**7.30 NEWS SUMMARY.** Weather.

**7.35 COLLECTOR'S WORLD.**

**8.05 WATERLINE.** Inland Waterways.

**ITV**

9.30 Schools. 10.30 This week (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Hickory house. 12.25 Pinky and Perky. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Lunchtime with Wogan. 1.30 Emmerdale farm. 2.00 Harriet's back in town. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 About Britain. 3.25 Kate. 4.25 Junior showtime. 4.50 Magpie. 5.20 I dream of Jeannie. 5.50 News.

**6.00 TODAY.** 6.40 CROSSROADS.

**7.05 WHICKER'S SOUTH SEAS.** People like me go native . . .

**7.35 McMILLAN AND WIFE.** No Hearts, No Flowers.

**9.00 SO IT GOES.** Coming Home. First of three plays by Ray Jenkins. With Scott Antony, Faith Brook, Anouska Hempel.

**10.00 NEWS AT TEN.**

**10.30 DOCUMENTARY: 'ENCLOSED'.** Inside a convent.

**11.15 PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING.**

**12.00 WE SHALL OVERCOME.**

**9.00 POT BLACK.**

**9.25 W O R L D TELEVISION THEATRE: 'The Typists' and 'Birdbath'.** Two one-act plays from America. With Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson, Patti Duke and James Farentino.

**11.05 NEWS EXTRA.** Weather.

**11.35 OLD GREY WHISTLE TEST.**

**TODAY'S TV**

**REGIONAL TV**

**CHANNEL:** 9.30-12.00 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Women. 3.00 London. 5.20 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Look-around. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Film: '20 Million Miles to Earth'. 9.00 London. 12.00 News, weather.

**WESTWARD.** As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.20 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 11.57 News. 12.00 Faith for life.

**SOUTHERN:** 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.35 Junkin. 7.05 Doctor in charge. 7.35 Hec Ramsey. 9.00 London. 12.00 News. 12.10 Weather. Guideline.

**HARLECH:** 9.30 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 5.20 Chuckleheads. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.15 Report Wales. 6.30 Try to ten. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Film: 'Showdown at Abilene'. 9.00 London. 12.00 Looking at. 12.30 Weather.

**HTV Cymru/Wales** as above except: 4.25-4.35 Miri mawr. 4.25-4.50 Canta-

mil. 6.01-6.15 Y dydd. 10.30-11.15 Bro. 11.15 Wrestling. 12.00 World in action. 12.30 Weather.

**HTV West** as above except: 6.15-6.30 Report West.

**ANGLIA:** 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 About women. 3.00 London. 4.20 News. 4.25 London. 5.20 Cartoons. 5.35 Wind in the willows. 5.50 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Madigan. 9.00 London. 12.00 Reflection.

**ATV MIDLANDS:** 9.30 London. 2.30 Women today. 3.00 London. 5.20 Osmonds. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Cartoon. 7.35 McMillan and wife. 9.00 London. 12.00 Sue Jay reports. Weather.

**ULSTER:** 11.00 London. 1.32 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 London. 4.23 News. 4.25 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Cartoon. 7.10 McMillan and wife. 8.30 Whicker. 9.00 London.

**YORKSHIRE:** 9.30 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 5.20 Here's Lucy. 5.50 London. 6.00 Calendar.

Weather. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Cartoon. 7.35 Madigan. 9.00 London. 12.00 Scotland Yard mysteries. 12.30 Weather.

**GRANADA:** 9.30 London. 2.30 Collecting on a shoestring. 3.00 London. 5.15 Primus. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. Police file. 6.35 Smith family. 7.05 London. 7.35 Film: 'Savage'. 9.00 London.

**TYNE TEES:** 9.25 Only a dream. 9.30 London. 2.30 News. 2.31 Kreskin. 3.00 London. 5.20 Jackson five. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Cartoon. 7.35 Madigan. 9.00 London. 12.00 News. 12.15 Scotland Yard mysteries. 12.40 Lectern.

**SCOTTISH:** 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 London. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Adam Smith. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 McCloud. 9.00 London. 12.00 Late call.

**GRAMPIAN:** 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 2.35 Cartoon. 2.52 News. 3.00 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Country focus. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Whicker. 7.30 Cartoon. 7.35 Madigan. 9.00 London. 12.00 Meditation.

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**Meat canners want lump sum price rise**

**MEAT - PROCESSING** companies are pressing the Tory government to be allowed to increase their prices by up to 25 per cent.

The producers want solid packs of cooked meats—silver-side, brisket, cooked and chopped ham and pork—to be counted, like bacon, as fresh rather than processed foods for price control purposes.

This would mean that prices could be raised without government permission in line with fresh meat, fruit and vegetables.

Mr Bill Newton-Clare, chairman of Scott-Bowyers, one of the industry's largest groups, said: 'We have been holding our hand on cutting down on production for a few days because we expect to hear from Mr Godber, the Minister for Agriculture. We have an enormous backlog of increases to make up. We have to get at least another 10p

to 15p a pound on cooked brisket, for example, to break even.'

Newton-Clare, who is also chairman of the Sausage and Meat Pie Manufacturers' Association, said beef prices had gone up 50 per cent since the beginning of December. He realized the political difficulties for Mr Godber, but if these meats had originally been classified as fresh foods, the prices would have gone up 1p and 2p a time and would not have been noticed.

In other words, Newton-Clare is admitting that the huge round of price increases have been organized by stealth. The Tory government granted extensive price increases to the meat producers only two weeks ago.

The all-round increases were the highest that have been granted since the state pay and prices laws came into effect.

The firms in the industry are now pleading further poverty. They are threatening to cut back

on production of some lines if the Tories don't allow further price rises.

'We are making very severe losses,' said Newton-Clare 'and are absolutely on the verge of curtailing production of open solid beef packs at our Bletchley (Bucks) factory.'

Canners of stewed steak and stews also wanted the go-ahead for price hikes. 'I know a number of canners who are about to close or stop production lines.'

In spite of all their pleadings to be treated as 'a special case' it is a fact that the profits of meat-processing firms have never been healthier.

Newton-Clare's firm, Scott-Bowyers, has been spending a veritable fortune advertising its productions on television and the Press.

The cost of this extravagance is passed onto the consumers who are largely working-class families unable to afford fresh meat.

**Briant Colour decision this week**

**BRIANT** Colour liquidator Mr P. Granville White will give a decision on the latest offer for the Old Kent Road factory this week.

Buyer Mr Peter Bentley said yesterday that he had received a letter from the liquidator suggesting a meeting between the two sides 'early this week'.

Workers at the print factory, which has been occupied for nine months, have been told nothing of the progress of the negotiations and they have been manning a 24-hour picket to thwart attempts to evict them.

**Hull back to normal**

**DOCKERS** were working normally at Hull yesterday following a protest stoppage on Friday. Thirty ships being manned included the timber carrier 'Tower Conquest' over which the dispute began.

About 1,000 dockers were in a confrontation with 250 police when they picketed a riverside wharf which was said to be using non-registered labour to handle cargo.

The cargo was being handled by dockers yesterday.

**ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS**

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

**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'.

**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.

**CROYDON:** Thursday March 15, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road.

**BASILDON:** Sunday March 18, 5.30 p.m. Barnstaple Community Centre.

**DAGENHAM:** Tuesday March 20, 8 p.m. Barking Co-op Hall, Fanshawe Avenue.

**BRIXTON:** Tuesday March 20, 8 p.m. Control Room, Brixton Training Centre. 'Forward to the Revolutionary Party'.

**EAST LONDON:** Tuesday March 20, 8 p.m. Festival Inn, Crisp Street Market, E14.

**TOTTENHAM:** Wednesday March 21, 8 p.m. Bricklayers Arms, Tottenham High Road, nr. White Hart Lane.

**WATFORD:** Wednesday March 21, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall, Woodford Road, nr. Watford Junction Station.

**WOOLWICH:** Wednesday March 21, 8 p.m. Castle, Powis Street, SE18.

**WEMBLEY:** Thursday March 21, 8 p.m. Copeland School, High Road, Wembley.

**HACKNEY:** Thursday March 22, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall, opp. Town Hall, Mare Street.

**LEWISHAM:** Thursday March 22, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club, New Cross Road.

**SLOUGH:** Thursday March 22, 8 p.m. Community Centre, Farnham Road, Slough.

**STEVENAGE:** Thursday March 22, 8 p.m. 'Red Lion', Stevenage Old Town.

**WILLESDEN:** Thursday March 22, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road, NW10.

**WANDSWORTH:** Monday March 26, 8 p.m. Kings Arms, High Road, SW18. 'The Fight against Stalinism'.

**I would like information about THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE**

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## Bilsborrow Hall—a sequel

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

AS a sequel to our story of the controversial Bilsborrow Hall transaction in yesterday's Workers Press (page 10), there has been a comment from the Hall's one-time owner, Sir John Barton-Townley.

In a letter to Saturday's 'Lancashire Evening Post' Sir John, a former leading Tory Party member in Preston, complained of the public criticism over the deal and said that the £100,000 paid by the government was fair.

He explained that he had not commented sooner because he keeps 'popping in and out of Malta' and was too busy. His address was given as The Lodge, Bilsborrow Hall, near Preston.

The hall has been bought as lodgings for two judges when they attend the Lancashire Crown Court at Preston.

The price paid is more than twice the original valuation.

# Gas stewards push for action



Sunderland gas-fitter Billy Breck

SUNDERLAND gasworker Billy Beck cannot afford to let his union leaders back down to the Tories over pay.

Married with four children, he will be watching particularly closely the outcome of today's General and Municipal Workers' executive meeting.

His take-home pay for 40 hours is just £19.50, and as a skilled gas fitter he is one of the higher-paid men in the industry. When asked how he and the rest of the 47,000-strong labour force manage at today's prices he just laughs bitterly.

Billy's verdict on the prospect of a ballot on the Gas Corporation's 'new' pay offer is succinct.

'The government's bluffing the union leadership, and they're backing down', he says. 'They've been cutting us down to size all the time and now I think they want to pack in.'

'What they're offering now is no different to what they offered to start with.'

But the union leaders' activities have not prevented the 2,300 north-east gas-

workers striking for the last four weeks against the state pay laws, under which the Tories are stopping the Gas Corporation offering a rise of more than £2.24 a week.

And despite last Saturday's shop stewards' vote to call off this action in a week's time, a sizeable minority of stewards are still pressing for an all-out strike.

'We need much more militant action. To get any break in the situation we'll just have to turn everything off.'

'So far 120 firms and 90 schools in the north-east have been shut down. Distribution, consumer service and one of the town gas production plants are closed—but when we wanted to take out the other two production plants, the union wouldn't let us.'

'The impression the union leaders give is that they just want to drag it out until the end of the month, when the pay White Paper becomes law, and then they can just fold their hands and say "Nothing we can do now, lads".'

'Union officers keep stressing to us we've only a limited time to take action.'

A G&MWU shop steward for commercial service workers in Sunderland, Billy is particularly critical of the union leaders for implying that only a few pennies separate the gasworkers from the Gas Corporation in negotiations.

The differences in wage rates with workers in the electricity supply industry, he points out, are now £4.50 for labourers and £6.50 for craftsmen.

From the statements of the union leadership it would appear that if the Tories would allow an offer of £3.05—the sell-out settlement made in electricity supply just before the Tory pay clamp-down last November—all would be well.

Billy explains: 'This makes it look to some people as if we're greedy bastards, holding the country to ransom for 80p.'

'But what we really want is parity with the power stations. We're not asking for the same rise, but the same rate.'

'There's no difference in digging a hole for cables and digging a hole for pipes—there should be no difference in the pay.'

# 'You have to grovel to earn a living'

THE COOKS at Queen's Hospital, Croydon, — all NUPE members—who struck work for three days last week, gave a joint statement to our reporter:

Our basic wage, including shift pay and Sundays, is £20.22. The management criticizes us for striking, but we are willing to let any of them try living on our basic wages.

One of us recently worked a six-day week, including his rest day and overtime, and took home £28.30.

## TRAINING

You can train for four years to gain a City and Guilds qualification—then you get a 55p a week allowance for it.

You've got to grovel to earn a living. We are losing our respectability. That's why we want a living wage and that's why we went on strike 100 per cent.

## Croydon hospital cooks' joint statement

Inflation is running away with our wages. Ten years ago we could save up and buy a house. Now there's no chance. One of us—with a wife and two children—is paying £43.50 a month in mortgage. That's more than a fortnight's basic pay.

Another of us pays £7.50 a week rent. Food for his family costs £10 to £12 a week and he spends £2 in fares to and from work. That's his basic wage gone.

Most of us are married with children. Ten years ago our wives worked for pin money or for some little extra. Now they have to go out to work for necessities and we have to take extra odd-jobs to make our pay eke out.

It used to be eight hours' work, eight hours' sleep and eight hours' relaxation. Now it's 16 hours' work. The average length of service among us is

ten years. In that time we've never had a Christmas Day at home.

The management gives us the Tory manifesto stuff about dedication. They are the ones who are least dedicated. We are the dedicated ones. The management are here Monday to Friday. They have big wages, big cars and big houses. They don't know what happens here at the weekend.

## COVERED

We keep this job covered 24 hours a day. If anyone is ill, we make sure it's covered. On Sundays and Bank Holidays some of us have set off at 4 a.m. and walked seven to eight miles to get to work. And it's been known for us to be stopped money if we are a few minutes late.

There are men here who have

paid over £1 taxi fare to get to work on Sundays. In the past there's been talk of taxis to get us here on Christmas Day, but it kept falling through. Last Christmas the management said they would lay buses on. Then they said there would be no buses before 8 a.m. and taxis should have been booked but hadn't been.

So those of us with cars chased round and got everybody in so the Christmas Day work could be done. We got no money for that and we didn't even ask for petrol money.

Those who are attacking us for striking don't say anything about that.

The union called us out for three days and we voted unanimously to come out because we are union men.

But we are not happy at what the union did. We told our

union official, in the presence of the catering manager, that we would come out. Then he came to us later and said he didn't want us to come out, he wanted to hold us in reserve and that we could be called out at short notice.

## NOT WEAK

But we didn't want that because we didn't want to hurt the patients.

Also, we wanted to show the management we weren't weak. They would have laughed at us if we had not come out after we said we would.

We didn't want to back down, so we held the strike we had agreed on. The next thing we heard was that the union official had apologized to the management saying that the union hadn't wanted us to come out!

We are working men and we do a good job. We want a respectable wage for it.

## TUC to discuss a special body for Wales

BY A WORKERS PRESS REPORTER

THE TUC is calling a special meeting to discuss demands for a separate TUC for Wales. General secretary Victor Feather said in a circular yesterday that a special meeting of the general council on April 13 would discuss the TUC's regional arrangements in Wales.

Representatives of all unions with members in Wales would be invited.

Feather said that even if the TUC's general structure remained unchanged, there might be a case for changes in Wales, or even an all-Wales trade union body.

A conference of Welsh union delegates was held last month—though Feather asked unions not to send representatives—and decided to form a TUC for Wales.

George Wright, acting secretary of the TUC for Wales, said yesterday:

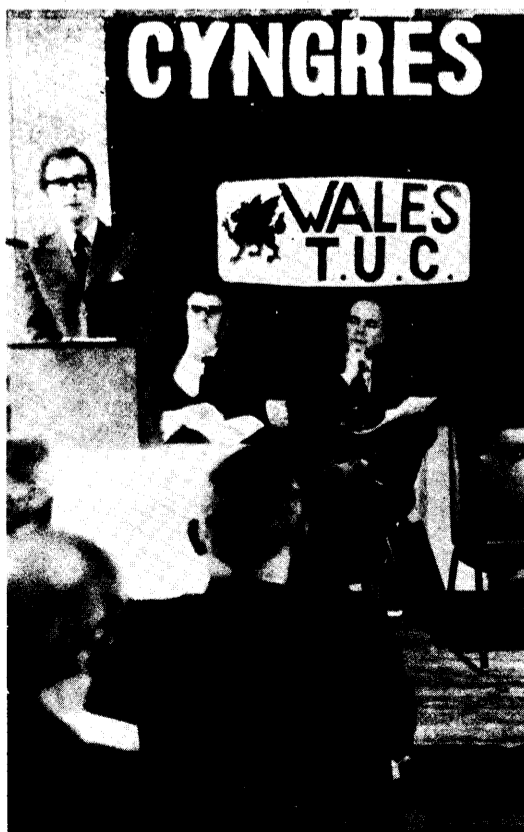
'We are delighted that the TUC is holding a joint conference to discuss the future role of the Wales TUC.'

'It is the first indication of the TUC's acceptance of the special needs of Wales. There can be no doubt that this is a step forward for the Wales TUC.'

If Feather's announcement means in any way an acceptance of the Welsh TUC, then it is a step to be condemned.

Workers Press covered the inaugural meeting of this body and it turned out to be a hodge-podge of trade union bureaucrats, Stalinists, right-wing nationalists and other careerists of one type or another.

At the point when there is a need for the greatest unity by all British workers against the common enemy—the Tory government—this body can only serve to divide workers along national lines.



The recent Welsh TUC meeting

## Ford plants hit by sporadic strike action

ABOUT 2,500 Ford workers were laid off at Dagenham yesterday afternoon after 120 men on the framing area of the body plant struck against the company's £2.40, government-controlled pay offer.

At the Swansea axle plant, the 2,400 workers were continuing their month-long overtime ban. There was evidence at Halewood, however, that toolroom workers were carrying out the decision of a weekend meeting to call off an overtime ban and work to rule.

Trade union side leaders of the Ford national joint negotiating committee would give no indication yesterday when the planned meeting of all 15 unions involved might be convened.

Yesterday's Dagenham stoppage was in support of the Ford convenors' policy, decided last week, of sporadic strikes plant by plant 'to force the company back to the negotiating table'.

It cut off supplies to the assembly plant, where 2,000

workers were laid off. Some 450 men on the body-in-white section were also sent home.

The continuation of the Swansea overtime ban was confirmed at a mass meeting on Sunday, but no further strike action at the plant was discussed.

Following Sunday's meeting of Halewood toolroom and press-shop workers and assembly plant shop stewards, a senior steward claimed the Merseyside felt 'let down by Dagenham'.

Shop-floor opposition to the sporadic strikes policy is growing. The predominant feeling appears to be that the union leaders and convenors should either call decisive, all out action against the Tories—or come out openly and abandon their £10 claim.

Rank-and-file Ford workers, however, cannot afford to abandon the claim. Behind their frustration with sporadic strikes the conditions are building up which will prove wrong the calculation of leading company executives that the threat of a major strike is finished.

**Workers Press MONTHLY APPEAL FUND**

**MARCH FUND REACHES £297.01**

AFTER a magnificent Pageant last Sunday, we are more determined than ever to press ahead with our Fund this month.

More and more, Workers Press must be used to reach out to thousands of workers in every district to prepare them for the battle against the Tories.

The huge response from the audience at the Empire Pool to its history shows the great changes taking place amongst the working class. The struggles and determination of the past re-lives again in the struggles today to defend all basic rights.

Our paper must be used to mobilize this great strength and build a revolutionary party to lead the working class. We need everything you can raise for our March Fund. Make a really special effort. Add extra amounts wherever possible. Post all donations immediately to:

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

# Floating down the river of no return

BY FOREIGN EDITOR JOHN SPENCER

THE JOINT float of six Common Market currencies decided in Brussels late on Sunday night is a further giant step towards the disintegration of the postwar capitalist monetary system.

It means that the currencies of almost all the major capitalist powers will be floating, either alone or in a bloc, when the foreign exchange markets re-open on March 19 after a shut-down of over two weeks.

The German mark, the Danish crown, the Florin, the Belgian franc, the Luxemburg and the French franc, will float together under the arrangement agreed by EEC Finance Ministers and central bankers meeting in Brussels.

## PARITIES

The mark will be revalued by 3 per cent against the other Common Market currencies involved in the joint float and from next Monday onwards the six countries will try once again to keep their parities in a fixed relationship while floating against the dollar.

The float against the dollar will not be a 'clean' one however: there were definite indications from the Brussels meeting

that the central banks will intervene to prevent the six currencies becoming too greatly revalued against the US currency.

Sterling, the Irish pound and the Italian lira will be left to float alone as they have already been doing for some months. The Brussels meeting extended an open invitation to on-EEC countries in Europe, notably the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland, to join in their jointly floating regime.

## TARGET

Some, at least, are likely to accept because they know that any country which now remains on a fixed rate will be a certain target for 'speculation'. With the Brussels decision, every member country of the International Monetary Fund's group of ten, apart from the United States and possibly Sweden, will be floating.

This is the end of the system of 'fixed but adjustable parities'. From now on there is no saying from week to week or even from day to day what the parity relations between currencies will be.

The ramshackle Brussels arrangement follows a week of crisis meetings between the capi-

alist world's Finance Ministers and central bankers. It marks the final stage of the disintegration of the Bretton Woods system established in 1944.

Since March 1968, when the US inaugurated the two-tier gold price system to protect its dwindling gold reserves, the monetary system has reeled from crisis to crisis. Each successive crisis has weakened and undermined the Bretton Woods system still further.

The two-tier system effectively ended on August 15, 1971, when the Nixon administration refused to sell any more gold to central bank dollar-holders. With the aid of a 10 per cent imports surcharge, the Americans forced other countries to accept their terms for a dollar devaluation at a meeting in Washington's Smithsonian Institute on December 16, 1971.

The Smithsonian agreement lasted less than 14 months. The first breach was the sterling float of June last year. This not only breached the Smithsonian terms, but also the EEC's own 'snake in the tunnel' arrangement intended to maintain the relationship between member-countries' currencies.

The Smithsonian terms were finally buried on February 12

this year, when a big wave of dollar-selling precipitated another revaluation of world currencies against the dollar. The Japanese yen was forced to float and the German mark and other European currencies up-valued against the dollar.

This arrangement broke down within eight days. A new wave of selling finally forced the closure of the markets and they have remained closed since. The general float which has emerged from the Brussels meeting is simply an acknowledgement of break-down.

The advent of a generalized floating regime must have severe effects on all forms of international commerce. It may well increase the rush to buy gold and further undermine any remaining confidence in paper money.

## GOLD RUSH

Furthermore it will lay the basis for big commercial crashes in the immediate future caused by the disruption of commerce resulting from the closure of the exchanges and the lack of stability in currency exchange.

At the same time the breakdown of currency relations will fuel an even more ruthless trade war characterized by the extension of protective tariff barriers, the lumping of cut-price goods and the restriction of commercial relations to exclusive bilateral agreements—in short the worst trade recession in the history of capitalism.

# Police help laundry over picket line

BY DAVID MAUDE

PICKETS at London's Whittington hospital yesterday accused clerical staff and doctors of strike-breaking under police protection.

In what union officials believed to be the first action of its kind during the hospital workers' industrial action, police moved in yesterday morning and ordered pickets to cut their numbers from 40 to two.

Later private cars loaded to the rooftops with laundry crossed the picket lines.

'They are breaking our strike,' shouted one orderly helplessly. 'How can we stop them if the police keep moving us on?'

A police constable told pickets that the police had the power to decide what constituted a 'reasonable' number of pickets, unlikely to 'intimidate vehicles entering or leaving the hospital'.

Although working-to-rule against the Tory pay laws, laundry workers at the Whittington hospital have ignored union advice to strike.

But the hospital is divided by a major road and laundry normally has to be driven into the hospital by transport drivers, who are on strike. Yesterday's police action protecting scab drivers must therefore have been a deliberate attempt to break the strike.

If anything this action made the Whittington strikers, members of the General and Muni-

cipal Workers' Union, more determined than ever. A 400-strong mass meeting voted to fight to the bitter end the hospital employers' £1.88, government-controlled pay offer.

Mike Taylor, regional officer of the National Union of Public Employees, said he would be at the hospital today to discuss the situation with his laundry members.

Last Friday, militant ancillary workers at the hospital voted to continue their strike for a second week. Committee member John Wainwright said: 'I've never seen such a passionate meeting.'

A hospital orderly on picket duty yesterday said: 'If it was two days, it would be different, but after two weeks and losing all our money we won't go back so easily.'

She added: 'The conditions we work in are rotten, and the wages are disgusting. We have to make beds that would turn your stomach over.'

'We take home £18 with £6 rent out of that. When you've bought food and shoes there's not enough left to pay your fare back to the hospital.'

'The TUC should be asked to back us. Everybody should be out on strike—all the unions together. That is the way to beat this government.'

Nationally the number of hospital hit by strike action rose yesterday—from 272 at the end of last week to 287.

Backing for the 'underpaid' hospital workers came yesterday from 11 doctors at Birmingham accident hospital, who called for settlement of their demands. Hospital managers in the Bangor and West Lothian group issued a similar call.

A shop stewards' meeting at the British-Leyland truck plant at Bathgate, near Glasgow, tomorrow, is to discuss industrial action by their 6,000 members in support of the hospital strikers.



Hospital workers from St James' hospital, south London, marched to Balham tube station yesterday to give out leaflets, then marched back to join their picket line.

# Civil servants start their selective strikes campaign

CIVIL SERVANTS leader Bill Kendall Civil and Public Servants' Association (CPSA) has called on the TUC to move quickly to follow up the special Congress call for a one-day General Strike.

In a letter to Victor Feather, Kendall drew attention to the other TUC commitment to support individual unions fighting the pay laws.

The civil servants particularly needed help and solidarity because of threats of disciplinary action against them by management.

Civil service workers who are starting a week of selective strike action around the country yesterday stepped up their campaign following a threat by the head of the Customs and Excise Sir Louis Petch.

If any civil servants not on strike refused to carry out the work of strikers when ordered to do so, he said, they would be suspended without pay.

When this news was reported to a strikers' meeting in Glasgow, the civil servants took instant action.

'Immediately we heard this threat, we decided to leave the meeting and picket Customs House,' said Cliff Bush, CPSA vice-president, who was addressing the meeting.

'This is only the start in Scotland,' he added.

Half the staff of the Glasgow Customs House were on strike. Over 300 computer punched-card operators started a week's strike at the National Savings Bank headquarters at Cowglen, Glasgow.

In the north east, two groups of civil servants, including export

documentation staff, went on a fortnight's strike in the Newcastle area.

At the Southend headquarters of Customs and Excise, 50 women and girls who work on balance of payments statistics went on strike. Also in Southend, computer staff working on Value-Added Tax registrations came out for a week.

Freight customs men went on strike at London's Heathrow airport.

A total of 5,000 civil servants were on strike. A CPSA spokesman said more would be brought out at key points if disciplinary action was tried.

Social Security offices, customs points and taxation departments were the main areas affected. Towns covered included London, Manchester, Liverpool, Hull, Newcastle, Aberdeen, Swansea and Southend.

PEKING'S 'People's Daily' has published a brief article on Spain, the latest country to establish diplomatic ties with China. It does not mention the 1936-1939 Civil War, simply stating that a Popular Front united government was formed in 1936 and three years later General Franco came to power.

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