

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● THURSDAY FEBRUARY 8, 1973 ● No 992 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

'A collision course with Tories'--says AUEW chief. The answer

AUEW secretary Jim Conway



'UNITED WE WIN DIVIDED WE FALL'

BY JACK GALE

THE ENGINEERING union's general secretary is absolutely right about the working class being on a 'collision course' with the Tory government. Writing in the February issue of the AUEW journal, he adds '... and this time it could be really nasty'.

He is right, too, when he says:

● The trade union movement has been under sustained and bitter attack in the interests of finance and property.

● The economic crisis is the fault of the profiteers and financiers and not of the workers who have only their labour to sell.

● The history of Germany in the 1920s carries grave warnings for British workers today.

But it is inadequate to conclude merely that the AUEW will not co-operate with a Tory government which attacks the unions.

The question is: will the working class be united now to end Tory rule or will the leaders be permitted to fritter away the strength of the class in isolated piece-meal battles? Do we fight now, or permit our enemies to weaken us section by section and fight later on their terms?

Last year the miners brought the Tories to their knees in a seven-week strike. Yet they were left to fight alone. While the miners were locked in struggle with the government, the leaders of the power workers, gas workers and water workers all accepted pay rises within the Tory norm.

This government must be brought down. It can be brought down—but only by the united action of the working class fighting on wages, jobs, rents, prices and democratic rights.

And Mr Conway, together with his 'left' colleague Mr Hugh Scanlon, refused to fight on a national wage claim for engineers, dividing and weakening their members by a series of isolated, local disputes.

It was this, together with the treachery of the Labour right wing over the Common Market, which permitted the Tory government to survive into 1973 and to intensify its attacks on basic working-class rights.

These rights are not abstractions, but real achievements of the working class won in bitter struggle over many generations. What are they and how are the Tories seeking to destroy them?

THE RIGHT to trade union organization has been undermined by the Industrial Relations Act which uses

the force of the state and its National Industrial Relations Court against the closed shop, the right of unions to exclude scabs and the right to picket.

THE RIGHT to strike for a decent wage has been taken away by the Tory state pay law, now in its Phase Two. These measures tie the unions to the bourgeois state and deny them any right to independent action.

THE RIGHT to a home at a reasonable rent has been denied by the Tories' Housing Finance Act which also permits elected representatives to be surcharged and jailed for carrying out the policies on which they were elected.

THE RIGHT to a job. Over 800,000 working-class men and women are unemployed. 50,000 steelworkers and 30,000 engineers employed on Concorde live under the shadow of the dole. Every week more factories close down and more workers are flung onto the streets.

THE RIGHT to health and welfare benefits is being systematically undermined by Tory cuts.

THE RIGHT to free expression is under organized attack from sinister forces of the right who, under the guise of 'morality' and 'decency', seek to repress all views in the arts and communications media with which they disagree.

AND, as we pointed out in Monday's Workers Press, the Phase Two legislation can close down entire sections of the Press by imposing unlimited fines.

Today 26 trade unions representing 4 million workers in the public sector are meeting to discuss concerted action against the government's pay policies. This is a step in the right direction.

But the powerful leaders of the labour movement are allowing such actions to be taken in isolation. Steelworkers are left to fight the carve-up of their industry by themselves. Gasworkers and Civil Servants are allowed to go it alone.

Workers like those involved in the Briant Colour struggle for jobs and the Fine Tubes battle do not have the strength of the entire movement brought in behind them.

Instead, as the basic rights of workers come under increasing

TURN TO BACK PAGE

Shopworkers in giant pay rally



ABOUT 2,000 militant shopworkers from all over Britain marched to parliament yesterday to protest against the government decision to hold down their wages under its pay control laws. Among the lowest-paid workers in the country, the shopworkers bitterly attacked the laws and demanded all-out opposition to them, both from Labour MPs and their own union leaders.

Boisterous chants of 'Heath out!' and 'No Tory law!' came from the marchers, many of whom were young girl workers who had travelled hundreds of miles to take part. Frances Andrews (17), an assistant from a Liverpool chainstore, explained:

'Most girls my age take home less than £10 a week,' she said. 'And the pay's just as bad till you're 18 or 19. How do we manage? We don't, that's why me and my friends are here. It's up to the union to make them pay—we want Heath out as well!'

Delegations on yesterday's march came from as far afield as Glasgow, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, South Wales and Plymouth. There were also banners from the north-west, Yorkshire, the Midlands and London.

Royston Bull joins Workers Press

ROYSTON BULL today takes over as Industrial Correspondent of the Workers Press. He formerly worked as Industrial Correspondent in London for the 'Scotsman', the Thomson-owned daily newspaper in Scotland.

Royston Bull in a well known and experienced journalist in the industrial field. His appointment to the editorial board will strengthen the paper's coverage of trade union affairs at a time when it is clear there is going to be enormous working-class resistance to the Tories' dictatorial policies.



In the National Union of Journalists he has played a leading role in the fight for trade union principles: opposition to the Industrial Relations Act, against Tory censorship and for better wages and conditions. For the past two years he has been chairman of the Central London branch of the NUJ which represents all of Fleet Street's journalists.

In our enlarged industrial department Royston Bull will join David Maude who becomes Labour Correspondent.

Socialist Labour League
Public Meeting

UNITE IN ACTION TO DEFEND
BASIC RIGHTS

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11,
7.30 p.m.

Govan South Town Hall
Langland Road
(nearest station Govan Cross)

GLASGOW

Speaker:
G. HEALY

(SLL national secretary)

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What we think

FULL SUPPORT FOR BRIANT PRINTERS

NEXT TUESDAY'S mass picket and lobby of parliament by Briant Colour Printing workers will either spell the end of their campaign or the beginning of a real fight. When the seven-man work-in committee fails to appear at the Chancery Division of the High Court on Tuesday, a judgement will almost certainly be given against them. In legal language they are accused of conspiring unlawfully to seize and maintain control of the Old Kent Road works. Once judgement is given a sheriff will be dispatched to the factory with an order to take possession.

It is at that point that the fight for the right to work at Briant's will end or begin in earnest. The work-in has continued for seven long months only because the liquidator Mr P. Granville White allowed it. Now he has decided to get tough and in doing so is going to test the quality of the Briant workers' leadership.

There can be no doubt about the determination of the men and women at the factory to win their struggle. After seven months only 25 workers have abandoned the fight and the remainder have been limping along on less than half pay.

Since June 21, 1972, they have been deluded into believing that a buyer could be found for the works and the business maintained as a going concern with no loss of jobs.

But owner Derek Syder got out of the factory because it was a loss-maker and his action was consistent with the trend throughout the trade for small print shops to close down.

Modern printing is carried on in large premises with giant new machines needing relatively little labour. The only serious buyer for Briant's, Mr David Brockdorff, says he must slash the workforce by two-thirds consistent with the current low turnover of the business and he has offered a price for the factory below even the market value of the assets.

For any potential buyer to try to run the works as a printing business would be very much a gamble. From the outset last June, the only way to save the jobs at Briant's lay and still lies in mobilizing the print industry in industrial action. That was not done and to this day the work-in committee has not raised such a demand.

Instead they quote the Stalinist-led Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' work-in approvingly and, in effect, urge the world to give them more time to prove that the print factory can be made viable.

Now the liquidator has told them there is no more time and the Briant committee has called for the mass picket and demonstration to thwart his bid to regain control of the factory.

Printers, students, engineers, miners and dockers are all said to have promised to take part in the day of protest. But once it is over and everyone has gone home, the 105 workers in the Old Kent Road will once again face the sheriff and eventually the police.

As at the beginning, so at the end, the issue remains whether the work-in committee will call for industrial action by the print unions in defence of the right to work. The Tories will not guarantee that right, but mass action could force them to resign and pave the way for a Labour government.

Only the nationalization of the printing industry without compensation and under workers' control can guarantee the jobs of print workers at Briant's and throughout the trade.

Pleas from the work-in committee for the 'law to be changed' and for 'parliament to act in the interest of the ordinary man' will achieve nothing.

And the continued isolation of the Briant workers, however heroic their determination to win, can only end in defeat. The Briant workers will only save their jobs if the work-in is turned into an occupation and the print unions, together with all sections of the working class, back them with industrial and political action.

Police in battledress roam streets

Durban strike on the brink of a Sharpeville?

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

POLICE used tear gas on strikers in Durban district of Hammarsdale, South Africa, yesterday as all the municipal council's 16,000 black workers joined a city-wide stoppage. The tear gas was fired into a crowd of 7,000 Africans gathered at a local bus terminal.

A group of about 200 broke away from the main body of strikers and began marching towards the factory gates. Police threw a cordon across the road and ordered the men to disperse. When they refused, police fired tear gas canisters at them.

The tear gas dispersed the marchers, but a second group then tried to approach the gates. There were angry exchanges with police on the cordon, but no more tear gas was fired. The incident followed the

arrest of more than 200 strikers on Tuesday after a police baton charge against a demonstration.

The toughening attitude of the police could foreshadow another massacre of African workers, along the lines of the Sharpeville shootings 13 years ago. As the strikes continue to escalate and the militancy and daring of the workers increase, the police and the government are becoming increasingly nervous.

Already a number of employers—including several municipal councils—have made wage offers to try and head off their workers' demands. But the strikers have indicated they will not be satisfied with 15 per cent increases and are sticking to their call for rises of up to 100 per cent.

In Durban, the centre of the strike movement, the entire municipal council and an estimated 100 firms

have been hit by strikes—which are outlawed for black workers in South Africa.

Police in battledress are patrolling the main ports of the city. They were called into the dock area yesterday to break up a group of strikers throwing bottles. The effects of the municipal strike can be seen in overflowing litter bins and abandoned road works.

The pampered white minority are being forced to undertake menial tasks normally carried out by the despised black labourers. Housewives have had to arrange their own milk deliveries and to act as porters in the fresh produce market.

● The bodies of 23 African miners who died in a fire at a goldmine near Johannesburg were brought out yesterday. Two more men are missing. The fire was in the West Driefontein mine at Carletonville, said to be one of the richest goldmines in the world.

Milan students' leader held by police

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

GIUSEPPE LIVERANI, a leader of Milan students, has been arrested and charged with attacking the rector of the Milan state university. The police are hunting for three other student militants.

The rector, Giuseppe Schiavinato, reported on the supposed January 25 attack on Monday to the general prosecutor of Milan, Colonel Petrini, and Colonel Santoro of the local carabinieri.

Until then complete silence had been maintained in order to avoid further rousing the anger of Milan students and workers after the shooting of student Roberto Franceschi.

Schiavinato launched a tirade against an 'illegal minority' which was constantly 'disturbing the peace on the campus'.

He complained of 'five years of violence' and 'barbaric society'.

The students' union in the state university has issued a statement denying that there was any physical violence.

A group of students visited the rector at the end of a demonstration against the murder of Franceschi in order to discuss the political situation with him.

While the violence of the right against left-wing opposition increases daily in Milan, the Communist Party is pursuing its call for a 'government of the centre-left'.

Leading Stalinist Amendola has said that the CP would not be averse to supporting a government formed by Fanfani.

This crawling to right-wing politicians is matched by the Stalinists' go-slow tactics in the engineers' struggle for higher wages.

Assault frame-up

Israeli smear on young anti-Zionists

THE ISRAELI government claims to have uncovered a Syrian-controlled 'spy ring' in which a number of young Jewish anti-Zionists are said to be involved.

The Press is making determined efforts to use the allegations as a smear against the left wing and the workers' movement inside Israel.

Israel's leaders fear that once broken from the reactionary Zionist ideology the youth will become implacable enemies of the regime.

Particular Press agitation is aimed at preventing any growth of unity and common action between Jewish and Arab groups.

Well over 100 'suspects', including Jews, Arabs and Druzes have been rounded up since the investigations began. Over 60 are still detained. Six—including two Jewish activists—have been indicted.

They could be imprisoned for life if they are convicted of the main charge 'committing an act with the intention of aiding the enemy in its war against Israel' and 'passing information to the enemy with the intention of injuring the security of the state'.

The six are charged with having gone to Syria to pass on information and undergo intensive training in espionage and the use of arms and explosives.

Torture has been used on all the arrested men and women.



Giuseppe Liverani, student leader under arrest

A four-hour General Strike has been called for February 27 by the three main union federations. It will involve 16 million workers.

Just to make sure that there is as little disruption as possible, workers in the

public sector—on the railways, and in the power industry—will stop work only for half an hour.

The trade union leaders have made it clear that they want to settle the negotiations before February 27.

Spanish teachers join pay strikes

BILBAO employers in northern Spain have now locked out 10,000 workers for striking in support of wage demands and for the release of imprisoned leaders of the illegal Workers' Commission.

They were joined in action against the Franco regime yesterday by teachers in schools and universities on strike for wage increases.

In Madrid province, 19 out of 39 secondary schools were closed down and teachers in faculties in both universities refused to lecture.

Many faculties were already closed by student strikes.

In Barcelona, where 100 secondary schools and the university were halted, 2,000 teachers joined a mass rally on the university campus.

On Monday, the university rector closed down the Faculty of Economic Sciences in Barcelona for an indefinite period.

At a meeting of assistant teachers who are in dispute

with the authorities, there were clashes with the police who arrived in force.

● Barcelona police have arrested four student members of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC—the Stalinist party in Catalonia).

They have also discovered five duplicators two electric typewriters and a stock of CP newspapers and publications.

The PSUC students' headquarters were discovered after the arrest of a student in Madrid who was carrying details of their organization with her.

CP fears allies' manoeuvres

THE FRENCH Communist Party is going all out to get a bigger vote than its coalition allies in the first ballot of the General Election on March 4.

This was the theme of a Political Bureau declaration on Monday which was taken up by Party secretary Georges Marchais at an election meeting in the Palais des Sports in Paris on Tuesday.

Another speaker, Paul Laurent, attacked those whose 'manoeuvres and combinations were trying to revive the illusions in a new force which would ally a part of the left with a

part of the right, in order to continue a right-wing policy'.

The public opinion polls show that support is growing faster for the Socialist Party and the 'left' Radicals than for the CP itself.

Marchais fears that if the election results show a big vote for these parties, they will be tempted to manoeuvre with the Radical supporters of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber and those of Jean Lecanuet of the Democratic Centre.

In the event of a close-fought election in which the Socialist Party and the 'left' Radicals increased

their deputies, the CP might find itself left out of a new government built around one of the centre parties.

A big CP vote at the first ballot will give Marchais a strong bargaining counter to keep his coalition allies in line, secure a big parliamentary representation and make it difficult for them to manoeuvre.

A note of desperation is mingled with the appeals to 'democracy' and 'the greatness and independence of France' as Marchais faces the possibility of being cheated by his 'allies'.

PAGEANT DIARY

The Road to Workers Power



JARROW

The fight for Trade Unions

1831 Pitmen from Jarrow and nearby were the first to form a miners' union. In the struggle to improve their conditions they were hounded, pilloried and tortured. One pitman, called Jobling, was hanged and gibbeted for a murder he never committed. His body was hung in chains for three weeks as a warning to other miners not to join a union. The miners, undeterred, rescued his body. Nothing could halt the fight to establish trade unionism.



Gibbeting of Jobling

Miners, steel and shipyard workers on north-east committee

WORK HAS begun in Jarrow and South Shields on the first scenes of the north-east coast's contribution (see left) to the pageant 'The Road to Workers' Power', to be presented at the Empire Pool on March 11.

Last night miners, steelworkers, shipyard workers, unemployed, students and youth from the twin towns got together in a Jarrow primary school to begin going through scripts and songs for their section of the pageant.

Already a number of promising actors have emerged from among the workers involved to take the leading roles in the in-

cident from working-class history they will present.

Meanwhile support for the pageant in the area is growing daily.

Last Saturday the mechanics' association lodge at Westoe colliery admitted a member of the pageant committee to address them on the campaign for Empire Pool. Backing is also hoped for from the pit's miners' union lodge.

The pageant committee—15 of those most closely involved in the campaign from the two towns—last night laid detailed plans for its intervention in the labour movement locally to win support.

Elected from among the workers taking part in the rehearsals and the campaign, the committee is already taking its job extremely seriously: financial appeals, meetings at factories and social activities for the youth have been planned.

The north-east's contribution to the pageant concerns the formation of the first miners' union in the area in 1831—and the hanging and gibbeting of one of its leaders, William Jobling, in a desperate and unsuccessful bid by the employers to stamp out working-class organizations.

For all those taking part, the implications of this history for today, when working-class organization and democratic rights are under increasingly frenzied attack by the Tories, are extremely clear. The history of the struggle for the miners' union is history that lives.

Backing for the campaign has been given by Jarrow and South Shields Trades Councils and by the Jarrow Labour Party.

Feather: Union Eurocrat

BY A WORKERS PRESS REPORTER

VICTOR FEATHER, general secretary of the TUC, may be elected the first president of the new European Trades Union Confederation which meets today in Brussels.

The TUC will have two seats on the organization's 19-man executive committee. By participating in today's talks the TUC leaders are openly collaborating with the Common Market and its institutions.

This is despite the fact that the last TUC Congress voted overwhelmingly against the Common Market.

Feather and the right-wing bureaucrats are trampling on the democratic decisions reached by the membership.

The Labour Editor of the 'Financial Times', who is in Brussels with Feather and company, said in yesterday's paper: 'TUC leaders are expected to relax their total boycott of the Common Market and to agree to take part in some EEC business.'

'It is hoped here that this will lead gradually to a softening of the Labour Party's total boycott of EEC institutions.'

Already leaders of the mine-workers and the agricultural workers have attended meetings of EEC industrial consultative committees.

Mr Lawrence Daly and Mr Joe Gormley, leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers, travelled to their Luxemburg meeting along with Coal Board chairman Mr Derek Ezra.

Tories pay a return visit



Michael Dean at Congress House yesterday.

THE TUC has been spending so much time at No 10 Downing Street that we now have the spectacle of reciprocal visits.

A couple of weeks ago Employment Secretary Mr Maurice Macmillan was at Congress House to talk about equal pay for women—the Tories, by the way, have just abandoned it.

Yesterday it was the turn of Mr Paul Dean, Junior Minister at the Department of Health and Social Security.

He shared the platform

with Mr Walter Anderson, right-wing secretary of the National and Local Government Officers' Association and a General Council member.

They conducted a morning-long seminar on the new Social Security Bill which the Tories have placed before parliament.

This astonishing piece of legislation calls for a flat-rate basic pension and an earnings related pension ... in 1975!

The Bill also incorporates recognition for the private pension schemes.

Their visit to the EEC coal committee violates decisions which the mineworkers have taken at conference for many years. No union is more hostile to the Market than the mine-workers.

It has also emerged in the past few days that the man steering the unions into the Market conspiracy is none other than 'left' Mr Jack Jones.

As chairman of the TUC's

international committee, he has been playing a major part in talks with the newly-formed confederation which meets today.

Jones and fellow 'left', Mr Hugh Scanlon, are held to be responsible for the swift agreement reached with the Tories over the EEC legislation on industrial democracy.

This provides for worker-directors on the boards of all public companies which employ more than 500 employees.

Briant mass picket wins wide support

PLANS for a mass picket at the Briant Colour print factory at noon next Tuesday are going ahead.

Right-wing Labour leader Robert Mellish has pledged his support and printers, dockers, miners and students have promised to consider delegations.

A coach load of workers is being sent from the Tube Investments factory, Walsall, and students at Goldsmiths' College, London, have sent the work-in a copy of a resolution backing the demonstration.

There is no hope of a reprieve for the seven-man work-in committee due to appear before the High Court next week.

Hopes that the liquidator might be induced

to withdraw his application to the court were dashed yesterday when a spokesman, Mr H. B. Blandford Baker, revealed that even the latest offer from buyer Mr David Brockdorff was too low.

I understand that Mr Peter Bentley who negotiated for Brockdorff has offered a sum



The Briant Colour workers on a previous, well-supported demonstration. See What We Think p. 2.

very considerably below the figure of £300,000 mentioned as a starting point for serious discussions.

Mr Blandford Baker denied the liquidator might be using a court order to precipitate a settlement and he added that they had been very patient with all parties.

Mr Bentley told me exclusively yesterday: 'We have an offer in and it has been acknowledged by the liquidator. It has neither been accepted nor rejected, but we have gone pretty well to the limit.'

'The liquidator may be trying to force my pace, but my pace can't be forced.'

BOOK YOUR TICKET FOR EMPIRE POOL NOW

DEFEND ALL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS
 Defend trade unionism and basic living standards
 Unite in action to make this Tory government resign
 The road to power is through the building of the revolutionary party

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CAR WORKERS SPEAK ON THE PAY FIGHT

The Ford Motor Company is due to reply tomorrow to a big pay-and-hours claim by its 50,000 workers. Ford's current pay agreement with the unions runs out at the end of this month and a new deal is supposed to be implemented from March 1. At Vauxhall's, subsidiary of the US giant General Motors, a similar claim by 30,000 carworkers is to be lodged for implementation from the beginning of April. Both claims are certain to clash with the Tories' statutory pay control—and the mood in the factories is militant. Workers Press has been talking to the men in both companies about their coming struggles.

'ITS A FIGHT AGAINST TORY PAY LAWS'

Danny Antoine, a young torch-solderer from Ford's Dagenham body plant, told me of a revealing conversation with one of the least militant of his fellow-workers—a man who works all the overtime the company and its sales figures send.

'Do you want a strike?' Danny asked him. 'No!' came the reply. 'But what happens if the pay offer's no good?' 'I'll go with the majority.' 'Have you got £400, in case Heath uses the law against you for striking?' 'No.' 'What would you do if they tried to use the law against you?' 'Ignore them.'

This conversation, among others, has convinced Danny that an all-out fight against the Tory pay laws is certain at Ford's.

'They're not worried by the idea of fighting the government', he says of the body-plant workforce. 'They just want what they think they're entitled to.'

'The minimum we need, even to keep pace with the cost of living, is £7—and we want a 35-hour week, better pensions and another week's holiday.'

'We definitely need the hours cut, and to get rid of overtime. The unemployment situation can't be allowed to continue.'

'I'm sure that if Ford's go with the government policy, there'll be a reaction.'

'There may be some hesitation at first, if Ford's decided to box clever. But that won't last long—the militant ones will pull the others out.'

The Dagenham torch-solderers are already involved in a battle with the company over clean-up time. They want half an hour extra for this because of the conditions under which they have to work.

Danny sees this struggle as bound up with the fight against the Tories.

'As far as Ford's are concerned you're just a number', he explains. 'They're not interested in your name or your conditions. All they want to know about is how much profit they're making out of you.'

'I'd like to see Heath come and try my job; I'd go and sail on his yacht.'

Like most Ford workers, Danny was disgusted with the outcome of the 1971 strike.

He says of the coming struggle: 'It mustn't turn out like the last one. That was

terrible. Jones should never have had that secret ballot.

'Perhaps if we'd had the money over a year, it wouldn't have been so bad.'

'But over two years £6 meant nothing. My rent's gone up 90p already under the Housing Finance Act and there's more on the way.'

'We've definitely got to have a General Strike to show the Tories who's boss.'

'We must put the workers in power, not a Labour government like the last one.'



'DANGER IN THE LACK OF LEADERSHIP'

Lack of leadership is the biggest danger facing Ford workers at the moment, warns John Dillon, a former paint-shop steward at Ford's Halewood factory.

He told Workers Press: 'The situation is confused on the shop floor because of this lack of leadership.'

'Despite numerous attempts to get mass meetings called, no such meetings have taken place.'

'This means we're in the unprecedented situation at Halewood of lagging behind Dagenham—where they at least took a policy decision just after Christmas to proceed regardless of the pay laws. Normally it's us who're in the forefront.'

But if there was hesitation in the factory leadership, John Dillon went on, the situation on the shop floor was polarizing rapidly.

'Everyone's being badly hit by the prices, rents and everything else', he said, 'but funnily enough it's as if this wasn't the main question.'

'What you have is a situation where on the one hand there are people who'd accept £1 plus 4 per cent if it were



Workers from Ford's, Dagenham at a mass meeting on February 15th, 1970.

offered tomorrow, just so they wouldn't have to get involved in a struggle. Then on the other hand there are the men who know a struggle with the government's inevitable, want to prepare seriously for this and would reject anything in order to get to grips with the Tories.'

Dillon—threatened with the sack in a disciplinary crackdown following the 1971 Ford strike—is fighting in his union branch for the policy that the full claim must be won in defiance of the pay laws.

'But the real issue', he says, 'is the fight to get the Tories out altogether.'

'The danger with the stewards putting forward no policy is that all sorts of confusion and illusions creep in—like the idea that we can wangle and increase through arguing productivity.'

'This is rubbish. There's only one policy we can pursue: all out for the full claim, get the Tories out and put in a Labour government that will nationalize Ford's and all the other car firms.'

'ITS TIME TO TAKE ON THE GOVERNMENT'

Dave Thompson, an engineers' union shop steward at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port factory, has been closely involved both in the fight against the legal attack on his union and the formulation of the Vauxhall claim.

He insisted at the Birmingham meeting of shop stewards which drew up the claim last year that it should include a clause specifying no redundancies. Now he faces a move by union officials to ditch this basic, unarguable principle.

'Really our leaders are doing absolutely nothing about this claim,' he says. 'They've made no attempt to make people aware of the situation at all. You'd think we didn't have a rise due on April 1.'

'This might tend to give the impression people are hanging back, but I think what's really happening is that we're coming to the big one.'

'I mean, since the miners pushed Heath back and won their increase, the Tories haven't had any really serious trouble over pay.'

'The miners could have got the Tories out, but their leaders let them down. Once Heath and his sidekicks saw those engineers marching on Saltley coke depot in support of the miners they were desperate to wrap the thing up. And the union leaders were only too happy to let them do it.'

'Everyone saw that, and even the most backward worker knows that this time we've really got to take on the government to get anything.'

'So if there's any hesitation, it's hesitation before a big fight. But the fight's certainly going to take place.'

The Vauxhall workers want a 12-month deal giving them parity with the highest rates in the motor industry, a 35-hour week plus improvements

in holidays, pensions and sickness and accident benefits.

'We won't get that this side of a Tory government,' Dave Thompson says.

'STAND TOGETHER AGAINST ATTACK ON RIGHTS'

The Tory pay laws are 'a vicious attack on our rights as trade unionists', says Alan Gadsby, a Transport and General Workers' Union steward at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port factory. 'They must be defeated.'

What is at stake in the current pay claims at Vauxhall's and Ford's, Alan says, is the right to bargain freely for a living wage.

Therefore workers in the two companies must stand together on this issue, and not allow themselves to be split by any of the propaganda attacks launched by the employers and the government.

He told Workers Press: 'Locally, we've already had a number of newspaper articles which had attempted to do this—to drive a wedge between the two biggest sections of carworkers in struggle on Merseyside.'

'A united fight is essential. But not only that. If we are to defeat the Tory attack, we must also support the newspapers that are behind the workers' cause.'

SINISTER RISE OF THE GERMAN BANK CARTELS

BY OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

Recent reports from the Federal Cartel Office in West Germany indicate that the pace of mergers in the country's industry—and more particularly in banking—is accelerating.

Last year there were 269 mergers registered with the office, compared with 220 in 1971, 305 in 1970 and 168 in 1969. More striking, however, was the number of really large mergers, which is rising even more rapidly.

Of last year's mergers, 171 involved companies with a turnover of more than 1,000 million marks. The comparable figures for the two previous years were 158 in 1971 and 221 in 1970.

At the other end of the scale the number of small companies involved in mergers declined, indicating that the proportion of mergers involving large companies is on the increase. Only 78 mergers last year involved companies with sales of less than 50 million marks, compared with 94 in 1971 and 145 in 1970.

The significance of this trend is strengthened even further by an analysis of the main industries involved in the mergers and take-overs. Nearly a fifth of the mergers last year were in the banking sector which plays a very prominent role in German industry.

Other industries where there was heavy merger activity included chemicals, with engineering and electro-technical companies also high on the list.

The concentration of German capital in fewer and fewer hands recalls the events leading to the accession to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party 40 years ago.

Particularly sinister is the role of the banks which dominate German industry to an extent unknown in any other developed capitalist country. It was the decision of the Big Three—Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank and Commerzbank—to throw their weight behind Hitler in 1931 that clinched the Nazi Party's success.

The Big Three are still there,

and they retain all their power. Rembart van Delden, a Christian Democrat MP, says: 'The banks can influence development in the economy far more than the Economics Minister can.'

Andrew Schonfield, in his book on German banks, says the 33 directors of the Big Three know more about the state of industry than the other 61 million Germans put together. Walter Koch, head of the Investment-Verbond, says: 'More national power it is impossible to have.'

West German banks control 70 per cent of the capital of all the country's limited companies. They spread their control into almost all the key industries—chemicals, mining, supermarkets, breweries. Their real wealth is hard to establish exactly.

The Deutsche Bank claims to be worth 1,500 million marks, but its 25 per cent in Daimler-Benz alone was worth 1,350 million marks at 1971 share values. And, as the table shows, Daimler-Benz is only one of many companies in the Deutsche Bank empire.

The banks' power is based on the so-called Universal Bank System, which grew up with the rapid industrialization of Germany in the second half of the 19th century. This allows the banks to act as financiers, owners of production firms and speculators.

The system is controlled by a handful of banks at the summit of the country's banking structure. Most of the 10,000 credit institutions in West Germany are small co-operatives. Above them stand 172 private banks with an aggregate capital of some 17,000 million marks.

But this sum is less than the capital of the smallest of the big three, the Commerzbank. This bank, with a capital of 17,400 million marks, the Deutsche Bank with 27,700 million and the Dresdner with 21,100 million are the only banks to really benefit from the Universal system.

It has brought them a yearly rate of expansion of over 13 per cent through the last ten years and enabled them to accumulate share portfolios

totalling 3,800 million marks.

The Big Three banks have at least a quarter of the share of 156 companies; in many cases this means the bank has virtual control. The Deutsche Bank controls 55 firms in this way; the Dresdner 62 and the Commerz 39.

Many of these big shareholdings were obtained after war when the banks loaned money to struggling capitalists. Ulrich, the head of the Deutsche Bank, claims that the banks own only 4 per cent of German industry.

But this figure is distinctly misleading. The net of control is widened enormously by a system under which the banks can acquire the proxy votes of shareholders whose securities are deposited with them.

So they can gather many small blocs of shares and acquire a controlling voice, becoming the main force in the firm. A 1961 survey revealed the banks controlling 60 per cent of all shares. The figure is higher today.

The Big Three have a majority voice in Hoescht, BASF (chemicals) Rheinstahl, Hoescht (steel) AEG and Demag. It is futile for other businessmen to try and outsmart the banks—the Big Three have a total of 1,650 seats on various company boards.

In fact there are only four major companies outside bank control: Robert Bosch, the third largest electrical firm; Ruhrkohle AG (which is, however, controlled by a number of bank-dominated companies), the US-owned Opel motor company and the Flick group.

Deutsche Bank chief Hermann Joseph Abs even sits on the board of nationalized concerns like Lufthansa and the state railway corporation. The major banks virtually direct industry, deciding among themselves what mergers and new investments are to take place.

For example, the Hapag-Lloyd merger in 1970, which created the second largest shipping line in the world, was organized between the Deutsche and the Dresdner Banks. The big boys can also manipulate the markets when they choose.

In January 1969 the Deutsche and Dresdner offered 43 per cent of shares in the Gelsenberg power plant to the publicly-owned Rhine-Westfalen Electricity Works at 240 marks each—ten marks above the market rate.

Both banks are represented on the Rhine-Westfalen board, the Deutsche Bank by its chairman Joseph Abs. Soon after the deal was concluded the Gelsenberg shares plummeted to 150 marks a share. Between them the public and the shareholders lost 60 million marks through this crude coup.

It is particularly worth noting that though the law allows shareholders to entrust their votes to a bank, it allows no redress to the shareholder if he loses on a deal.

As might be expected the banks also have a stranglehold on the stock exchange which has little pretence to independence from the Big Three. The European Commission has made several futile attempts to challenge the banks' power on the German Stock Exchange in the interests of putting all investors on an equal footing.

Increasingly the banks are in a position to by-pass the Stock Exchange altogether, offering shares for private sale and taking share transactions out of any semblance of outside control.

Between 1967 and 1970 the number of firms whose share were publicly quoted fell from 505 to 460. Over this same period the number of shares not on the market rose by nearly 10 per cent to reach almost 40 per cent of the total number of shares.

Naturally the banks enjoy enormous political power. They can literally cause the market to drop at will if they want to bring a government or a Minister to heel. Abs hinted to Ludwig Erhardt in 1965 that he had better stay on the right side of the Big Three. 'Give me a good government and we will have a healthy stock market,' he said.

During the local elections in the Ruhr district in May 1970 shares in Daimler-Benz suddenly fell by 28 million marks. 'That is part of the election fight,' one of the Stock Exchange directors commented.

In the post-war years Abs and Robert Pferdmenges of the Oppenheim and Co private bank were close confidants of Konrad Adenauer and in effect determined the government's economic policy.

The first ten years of the Adenauer government saw an unprecedented tax-law bonanza for big business. Naturally, the workers and small businessmen were required to foot the bill.

During these years, the Big Three banks regained their pre-war power, which had been taken away from them by the allied military government after the war. By 1957 they were fully back in business.

Later they began to expand their influence not only inside Germany, but also abroad. The Deutsche Bank has part control of 31 foreign companies, Dresdner of 27 and Commerz of 25. The latest step, in line with Common Market enlargement, is to open branches in London.

Deutsche Bank recently opened a prestigious City office with a considerable fanfare. From this base, the men at the top in German banking hope to extend their tentacles of power into British industry.

SAN MARINO PACT: THE KREMLIN STRIKES A BLOW FOR PEACE

Another great 'triumph' for the principles of peaceful co-existence has been recorded. In Moscow the Foreign Minister of San Marino has solemnly signed the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological and toxic weapons and their destruction.

This great blow for peace was struck after discussion between Giancarlo Chironzi and his Soviet opposite number, Andrei Gromyko, which took place, Moscow Radio reported, in a friendly atmosphere.



Gromyko: signed the treaty

For those who may have forgotten about the existence of San Marino, it is a pocket-handkerchief survival from the Middle Ages entirely surrounded by Italian territory.

Its capacity to produce bacteriological or any other weapons is limited by the fact that its population is only 17,000. As for military forces, it boasts a ceremonial guard of 180 men—hardly enough to cause sleepless nights in the Kremlin.

Of course, Moscow may want to get its own back on Peking. When one of San Marino's Heads of State (it has two) visited China, he was accorded the same honours bestowed on President Nixon.

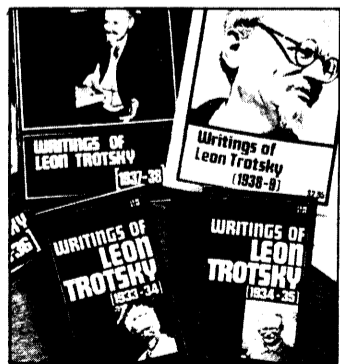
CHINA BUYS AMERICAN COTTON

It has now been confirmed that China will buy a large quantity of cotton from the United States. The deal will involve up to 500,000 bales worth about \$80m.

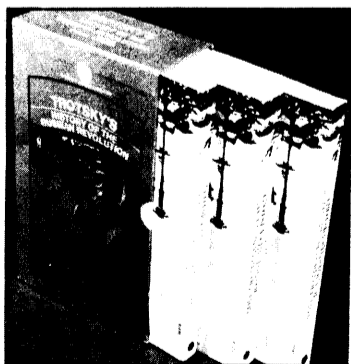
It is being negotiated through the London firm, Ralli and Coney. In the last six months of 1972 total US exports to China were worth only \$12.7m.

Besides giving a big boost to Sino-American trade, the deal is expected to push up the price of cotton on the world market. The Chinese are the world's biggest consumers of cotton, but bad harvests have cut domestic production.

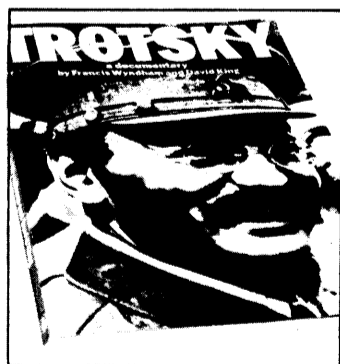
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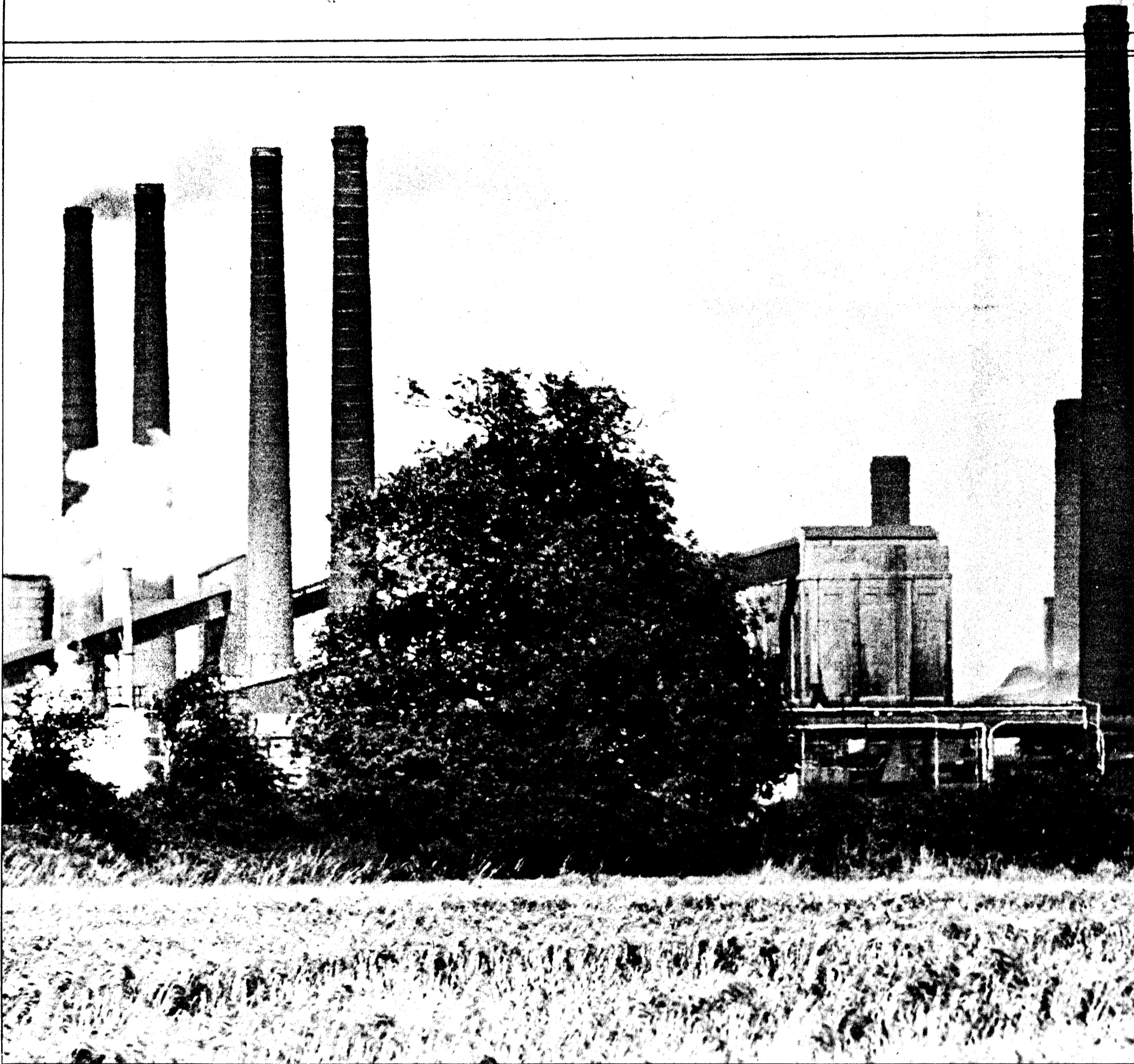
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STEEL

Part six. Scunthorpe: Output up, workforce down

BY IAN YEATS

The British Steel Corporation's Anchor Steelworks is one of the most modern in the world.

Yet by the time it goes into full production later this year, it will employ at least 3,500 men fewer than it does today and 5,000 fewer than when the project was first conceived. Both the BSC and the works'

convenor, Mr Peter Hansell, claim the labour run down has and will be achieved by natural wastage.

Nevertheless it is not merely the fate of 3,500 individuals that is at stake at Scunthorpe.

More important in a smallish town hemmed in by the dense wasteland of Lincolnshire's agricultural worlds, the reduction means job opportunities destroyed for all time.

Since 1967, the steelworks'

labour force has been cut back from 21,000 to 18,800, leaving another 3,500 jobs to go as the new plant is brought into production.

There is already 3.3-per-cent unemployment in the town and 3.6-per-cent in the region, which includes Doncaster, Goole, Grimsby, Gainsborough and Lincoln.

Twenty-five per cent is among young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

Once again, under capitalism, the application of the most advanced technology to industrial techniques results not in any new enhancement in the conditions of human existence, but in hardship and misery.

And it is not a misery confined to redundancy alone.

Despite BSC claims to the contrary, because of the half-hearted or downright non-application of plant environment control techniques, some of the new equipment is actually worse to work with than the machinery it replaces.

The new LD Converters involve a generous perpetual shower of red dust and the speed of some mills has now reached such levels in the quest for profit that fatal accidents can only be prevented by flashing lights and wailing sirens which disorientate and deafen.

COMPUTERS

The mile-long rolling mills on the 1,000-acre Anchor site are designed for fully com-

puterized operations and all movement and manipulation of material is mechanized.

Redundancies in the three adjacent but older works at Redbourn, Appleby-Frodingham and Normandy Park will be from the mills replaced by the new installation and from the open-hearth furnace shops.

Existing blast furnaces will provide the iron for all present and future development at the site.

This will be in a new building housing three 600,000-ton capacity stock-beds, with foreign ores imported through the new fully-mechanized terminal at Immingham.

A new basic oxygen BOS plant with three 300-ton converters will produce up to 4.4 million tons of steel a year increasing Scunthorpe's steel-making capacity by 1.8 million tons.

The rationalization at Scunthorpe in a £200m development was the first major project undertaken by the BSC after the re-nationalization of the industry by the Labour government.

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The Scunthorpe site has been favoured by steelmakers since the beginning of the century because of the abundance of cheap local iron ore.

Conesly, Warren and Yarborough open-cast mines and the Santon underground mine still provide two thirds of the ore used each year at Scunthorpe.

Of the 12 million tons used, 8 million are mined locally and 4 million are imported, putting Scunthorpe's steel-making costs among the lowest in Britain.

Everything possible has been done, from the moment ore leaves the pit or tanker to the time it finally emerges from the rolling mills, to give Scunthorpe what BSC calls 'manpower productivity which compares with best world practice'.

The effect will be the axing of three melting shops at Redbourne and Appleby-Frodingham together with five rolling mills.

All of these mills are labour-intensive and when they close there will be a heavy

influx of largely unskilled men onto the local dole queues where even the prospect of work in Lincolnshire's other major industry—farming—will be absent.

Ten open-hearth furnaces will also shut once the BOS plant swings into action and further redundancies are likely.

Almost all expert opinion agrees that the shake-out of men as a result of rationalization throughout the industry will almost certainly be greater than the BSC has been able to forecast.

And even when, throughout Britain, the process is complete, the BSC will still be producing a third less steel with a third more men than the Japanese Nippon Steel.

Although steel capacity at Scunthorpe will shoot up, the fact that manpower will be slashed is a lesson to all those reformists in the trade union and labour movement who say jobs can be saved merely by expanding output. They cannot.

Output at Scunthorpe will

have expanded from up to 300 tons of steel every six to eight hours using the open-hearth method to 300 tons every 40 minutes using only two BOS converters and a handful of men.

As a spokesman for the now Tory-controlled BSC put it: 'All the low-paid labouring jobs will disappear. The town will be better off.'

Until recently labour has been in short supply in Scunthorpe and local employment officers say this is the reason why next to no industry other than the steelworks has gone to the town.

TURNOVER

Apart from the ore fields on which it is built and from being a market centre for farm produce, it is hard to see what other advantages it has.

The population of the local employment area, which includes Barton, is only 52,000 and major markets are either well to the west, the north or on the east coast around Hull.

The steelworks has ensured that labour is not particularly cheap and there is, therefore, little good reason why industry should settle there.

One or two small textile firms and a chemical plant employing mainly women have moved in, but that is all.

The steelworks experiences labour turnover of between 2,000 and 3,000 men a year. The vast majority of this movement derives from necessarily seasonal employment on the land.

This winter option will not now be available and the next 12 months must see a doubling or even trebling of local unemployment.

Not all of it will be felt directly in Scunthorpe since busloads of workers travel in every day from the surrounding villages which are likely to be even harder hit than the town itself.

Works convenor, electricians' union member Mr Peter Hazell, believes the works redundancies will be coped with by natural wastage. The employment prospects in the area

BSC's Anchor Steelworks at Scunthorpe. Surrounded by agricultural land of Lincolnshire, the steelworks is the area's only heavy industry. It employs 18,800 men.

as a whole are not his concern.

Nevertheless he explains that Scunthorpe is a steel town and that as a result of the loss in job opportunities 'the young people particularly will have problems'.

Mr Hazell pursues an argument common to men as apparently different as Tory Industry Minister Peter Walker and Scottish TUC deputy general secretary Mr James Milne.

He told me the trade unions could not oppose modernization, but had to press for the creation of new alternative jobs and retraining.

'We are thankful for Anchor', he said.

Walker said much the same thing when he unveiled his plans to the House of Commons, playing on fears of unemployment to argue that only by sacking 30,000 men could the jobs of the 180,000 be made safe.

WHY DID THE CORPORATION PULL DOWN THE COAL EXCHANGE?

The saga of the London Coal Exchange is entering its final stages. The historic building was torn down 11 years ago and now, in 1973, moves are afoot for a hugely lucrative property development.

The site, which is on Lower Thames Street on the riverside of the City of London, is regarded as one of the country's prime pieces of real estate.

It was opened in 1848 by Prince Albert during the period when the coal industry was in private hands and Britain was the centre of world coal trading. Like today's London metal market, it functioned as the arbiter on the world price of coal.

Following nationalization the Coal Exchange ceased to carry out this function. In 1960 it was proposed that the building be demolished. This raised a storm of protest among conservationists. One of their most powerful arguments was the simple question—what are you going to put in its place?

To this, however, no answer was given. It seemed that the owners, the City Corporation, wanted the building torn down—and that was that.

LAST-DITCH STAND

Protests were made in both houses of parliament which resulted in the demolition being delayed for two years.

A last-ditch stand was made by the Victorian Society, a body dedicated to the preservation of Victoriana. A Society spokesman accused the Corporation of failing to recognize 'that this building is of outstanding importance, not only as a landmark, but also as an industrial building'.

The Common Council of the Corporation did not agree. When the matter came up for discussion Mr Chester Barratt, a chief commoner, said: 'We cannot spend time on the preservation of a Victorian building.'

His colleague, Mr Dudley Mills, then chairman of the streets committee, declared that the building could be of some use as a 'public lavatory'.

In defending their decision to go ahead with the demolition, the Tories at Westminster and the Guild Hall said the scheme was 'urgent' as part of a road-widening project.

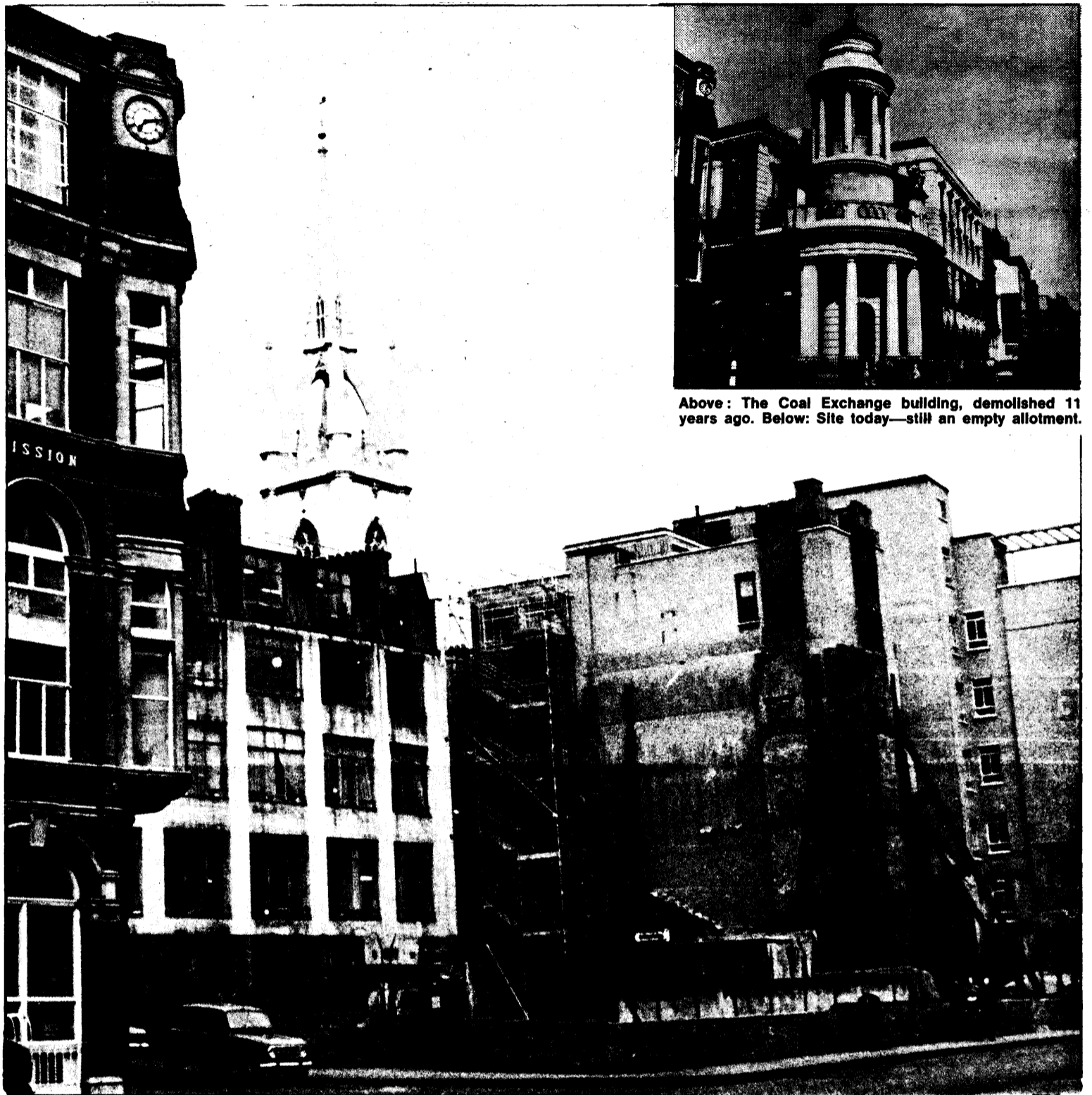
This urgency hasn't been realized. Although the exchange was reduced to rubble 11 years ago, no road widening has taken place.

And now, in its place, is to be a massive property development which has the backing of the Corporation's planning committee.

The company masterminding the development is Town and Commercial Properties, a banking, insurance and land group with assets of almost £100m.

Town and Commercial is one of the newer property octopuses to come onto the scene in recent years.

It now has more than 70 subsidiaries and in the past couple of years has taken over such firms as Roy King Properties, Simo Securities Trust, Grosvenor Land Company, PIC (Property Investments) Con-



Above: The Coal Exchange building, demolished 11 years ago. Below: Site today—still an empty allotment.

solidated and St Mary Abbots Company.

The largest single shareholder with one million shares (2 per cent of the total) is Mr A. J. Hines, who also acts as principal agent and surveyor to Town and Commercial.

The other directors are Messrs K. A. Jones, W. R. Brackett, E. H. Doubleday, F. W. Collier and P. H. M. Stevens.

In its 1970 annual report the company showed a property portfolio valued at £51m, but in March 1971 this was dramatically revalued by another £31m.

Town and Commercial enjoys influential backing from the big insurance companies. The Legal and General Assurance Society holds 1 million shares and there is important support from the Phoenix Assurance.

FAVOURABLE VIEW

Details of the planned office complex haven't been made public. But the Planning Committee has viewed the project favourably and will make a recommendation for acceptance at an early meeting of the Court of Common Council. It then must be approved by the Greater London Council (GLC) as the site is within the

Greater London Development Plan.

The designers of the project are Fitzroy Robinson and Partners who have also won another important and valuable design job in nearby Throgmorton Street.

Fitzroy Robinson are planning a multi-million pound development on the site of Nos 30 to 34 Throgmorton Street, near the Stock Exchange.

Under the scheme the present buildings are to be pulled down and replaced by a 20-storey tower block. Those buildings to be bulldozed include Cophall Court and Angel Court.

The applicants for the development are the Clothworkers Company, one of the wealthiest guilds in the City of London.

This organization has powerful connections in the Tory Party. The Clothworkers have already indicated who will take tenancy of some of the office space in the proposed building—nearly 300,000 square feet will be occupied by merchant bankers, Samuel Montague and Company and Keyser Ullmann.

The chairman of Keyser Ullmann is Mr Edward du Cann, former chairman of the Tory Party and now chairman of the 1922 Committee, the opinion-forming body of Tory backbenchers.

LONDON'S HOUSING PRICES UP 50 PER CENT

Prices of new houses rose by almost 50 per cent in 1972, according to the Nationwide Building Society.

The highest increases were in London and the south-east. Over the past five years the price of new houses has gone up by 132 per cent and modern existing houses by 118 per cent.

The average new house in the London area at the end of last year cost well over £13,000.

The rise in the north-west was slower than in the rest of the country. But the increases were still staggering.

The price of new homes in the north-west in 1972 rose by an average of 41 per cent, compared with 47 per cent for Britain as a whole.

The average price of new houses in the north-west mort-

gaged to the Nationwide Society in the last quarter of 1972 was £7,878 compared with an average of £8,725 for the UK. The average price on modern existing houses was £7,109 (£9,733 for UK) while older houses cost on average £4,972 (£8,089 for UK).

At the same time, house-building in south-east Lancashire—an area which includes Manchester—has slumped by almost 30 per cent of the national average figure.

The Department of the Environment has just revealed that more than 2,000 fewer council houses were built in the area in 1972 than in 1971. And only 36 more private homes were built in 1972 than in 1971.

The vastly inflated values for property are a sign of the crisis in value which is afflicting capitalism on a world scale.

The situation is being fuelled by building societies pouring money into property investment at extortionate interest rates.

In the event of a recession, they are banking on the inability of thousands of young householders failing to make good their mortgage debts. They can then seize the properties in a full-scale, cleaning-up operation.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

EXPENSIVE

The average price for a building plot last year was £5,000 and the average price for an acre was over £25,000.

There was a wide variation between areas—in Surrey an acre cost over £100,000, while in parts of Yorkshire the price was under £10,000.

A plot of 4,027 square yards at Mere, in Cheshire, brought £12,500. A plot of land big enough for four houses in Altrincham, Cheshire, sold for £26,000 and two plots at Southport cost £31,345 and £25,320.

Transactions in house-building land last year totalled more than £70m.

The figures are contained in the first issue of the Digest of Building Land Prices sponsored jointly by the House-builders' Federation and the 'Estates Gazette'.

DENIED

Intense speculation surrounds the appointment of a new deputy assistant commissioner at Scotland Yard.

Normally such posts are filled by promotion from the ranks. Sir Robert Mark, the new Police Commissioner (below), is advertising outside the 'Old Bill' industry.

Rumours that Lord Alf Robens, Cecil King, Lord Shawcross, Lord George-Brown and Ray Gunter are applying are strenuously denied!



CYNTHIA



Somebody up there still likes him . . . John Poulson, that is. It has been revealed that Mrs Cynthia Poulson has been appointed to a teaching job at the All Saints Infants' School at Pontefract, birthplace of the Poulson empire.

According to ex-Cllr Archie Quinn, Mrs Poulson has not taught for more than 15 years. And three other women teachers on the short list were under 40.

Mr Quinn is demanding to know how the other teachers were passed over for Mrs Poulson.

BACKING

The Jesus freaks are organizing a gala thrash at Oldham on May 26.

Among those participating will be devout groups like the Glorylanders, Millstone Grit, the Movement Banned and Pete Lewis and the Raiders.

Provincial influential backing for the Jesus Festival will be Lord Rhodes of Saddleworth, Canon Harold Kirkman, the rural dean of Oldham, the Bishop of Manchester, local MPs and the Clergy Fraternal.

Rhodes was a former Labour MP for Ashton-under-Lyne from 1945 to 1964. Before that he led a successful and profitable career as a woollen manufacturer.

A LITTLE BIT OF SCHMALZ

BY JOE HARPER

In 'Minnie and Moskovitz', John Cassavetes examines some of the problems created for human behaviour by inhibitions and stereotype expectations.

Minnie is an attractive city art museum employee who is having a hopeless, unhappy love affair with a married man with three children.

Moskovitz is a manic, extrovert, near-hippy, New York Jewish, car park attendant who comes to California for no reason after borrowing the air fare from his manic, extrovert, New York Jewish mum.

Moskovitz is very tolerant, talks to everybody—usually in a very loud voice—goes up to complete strangers in pubs and jollies them up a bit; in fact he's a real pain in the arse.

Minnie, on the other hand, is adorable, kind and intelligent. And early in the film she is released from the clutches of the married man she dotes on and leaves him with a punch on the nose.

Min and Mos meet when he rescues her from Zelmo, a completely insane person who has taken her to lunch on a blind date.

Although they don't know

it, Min and Mos have something in common—a liking for Humphrey Bogart's screen heroes.

Minnie complains to an older friend that the movie-instilled notion of the ideal romance has ruined her for the very ordinary types she meets in reality.

Moskovitz, on the other hand, presumably imagines that his 'easy going' ways are pure Bogart.

Minnie does not find them so. In fact, she thinks Moskovitz is as insane as Zelmo and has to escape for the second time in one lunch hour.

But her own general misery, and Moskovitz's incorrigible thick skin, eventually wear her down and she dates the car-parking ace.

But every date causes her some new excruciating embarrassment because of his unconventional behaviour.

Moskovitz's irrepressible manic outwardgoingness, however, proves to be the stronger life force, we are led to believe, and Minnie persuades herself, without much conviction, to marry him.

And it works, Cassavetes tells us in the final scene of their first child's first birthday party Min, Moss, baby, all the kids in the neighbourhood, and the two formerly

doubting mums-in-law are seen blissfully happy due to the triumph of simplicity and honesty over sophistication and hypocrisy.

The film deals some good blows at the sad little fears which lie behind most of our prejudices at 'unconventional' behaviour. If we find Moskovitz irritating and embarrassing, the fault is our own.

He is not afraid to be himself, and though it doesn't amount to very much, it puts him way ahead of all the others, who are afraid to be themselves, (i.e. they try to act with sophistication) but amount to even less in the end.

The trouble with the film is that too little of the real world penetrates into the psychological hang-ups of the people in it, as far as they are revealed to us.

All the inhibitions and manic behaviour are seen as entirely personal problems which are to be resolved or understood by looking deeper inside people's heads.

If you think about things differently and let yourself go, then things can be different. And in the film, nothing ever does enter in from the outside world to change or challenge people's behaviour.

As in other Cassavetes' movies, life seems to be being viewed through a cushioning veil or an alcoholic haze which softens all of the blows.

A lot of Moskovitz's escapades are likely to have been really painful to himself and to others—but they don't seem to be. Life with Cassavetes is just a little unbelievable.

Faults apart, the film still just holds the interest. Excellently acted all round.

FELLINI'S TRAVELOGUE OF ROME

By a guest reviewer

Rome could be the subject of a very interesting film. It is a city in the midst of upheaval epitomizing the profound crisis of Italian society.

But Fellini's 'Roma' is devoid of all suggestion of conflict. This is deliberate. Fellini explains, of course, that there are many serious social problems in the city—but, he sighs, I can't even solve my own personal troubles, how can I be expected to tackle other people's?

So as a substitute for a film he offers a kind of Italian 'Look at Life'. 'Roma' is an appalling mixture of travelogue and sentimental flashback to Rome under the fascists. The recipe is garnished with 'characters', fat ladies, prostitutes and so on.

Fellini's penchant for physical extremes seems to grow more pronounced as his films get worse. Of course many great directors have used the fantastic, and indeed fantasy, with great effect—to deepen understanding of reality. Louis Bunuel is the outstanding example.

But I suspect Fellini's obsession is rooted in his apparent inability to explore life as it exists—a substitution therefore of empty fantasy for reality, designed also to confuse the audience.

Even Fellini's technique is deteriorating. 'Roma' is essentially documentary in style (at least the sections on modern Rome are), but most of the scenes are contrived.

We start with a drive into the city via the motorway (Fellini says this is the 'diamond ring that embraces the city', or similar words).

The journey just happens to take place in a torrential downpour.

As the traffic, and sup-



posedly the drama, builds up, thunder and lightning is added for effect. Enter a group of (phoney) demonstrators intent on blocking the traffic, the jam builds up, the thunder crashes. The camera pans away from the scene revealing a cardboard model of the Colosseum suitably illuminated by stage lighting. It's really very bad.

Another ludicrous episode takes place underground. The Romans are building a subway. The camera team goes down, which is very fortunate because their first visit exactly coincides with the most exciting discovery of all. The workers drill their way into a perfect Roman palace and the film crew are first inside.

'Ah just look at those frescoes,' breathes the continuity girl. She points to a group of Romans painted rather in the style of Boots 1972. 'Oh,' wails the girl, 'the air is destroying them.' And before our very eyes the 'priceless' wall paintings disintegrate (and very glad I was to see them vanish).

The flashbacks are little better. Fellini has a brilliant eye for period. But his recreation of the 1930s in Rome is spoiled by an over-senti-

mental approach to the 'ordinary' people. Even fascism and the fascists are passed off as some rather endearing lapse in the Italian psyche—all part of the happy-go-lucky scene.

There is just one outstanding passage. Rome is bombed. After the raid the people come out from shelter to return home. Through the empty streets runs a woman. Her house is destroyed and her children probably dead.

With great economy and use of light and shadow Fellini captures the agony and drama of such a tragedy—no fat ladies, fantastic faces or exaggerated gestures—just life itself.

Fellini's concession to political comment comes in a send-up of the church—a fashion show put on for a cardinal. Nuns, priests, bishops and even the Pope model the costly garments of their calling. But it is poor, second-hand stuff.

It is sad to see Fellini, who has directed many great films, turning out such bad work. The remark about his troubles indicates he has abandoned any attempt to reflect or portray the issues that most affect people today. Now even his technique is crumbling.

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TODAY'S TV

BBC 1

9.42-12.10 Schools. 12.25 Disc a dawn. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 Trumpton. 1.45 High street. 2.05-2.25 Schools. 2.50-3.15 Workers at risk. 3.20 Parents and children. 3.45 Countryman. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Blue Peter. 5.15 John Craven's newsround. 5.20 Brady kids. 5.45 News. Weather.

6.00 **NATIONWIDE**. 6.45 **TOP OF THE POPS**.
7.15 **Z CARS**. Jack the Dodger.
8.00 **COMEDY PLAYHOUSE: 'HOME FROM HOME'**. Michael Robbins, Yootha Joyce, Carmel McSharry, Tony Selby.
8.30 **HOLIDAY 73**. The Winter Sports Boom.
9.00 **NEWS**. Weather. 9.25 **LORD PETER WIMSEY**. Mr Oliver.
10.10 **FRANKIE HOWERD IN WHOOPS BAGHDAD**. 10.45 **MIDWEEK**.
11.30 **LATE NIGHT NEWS**. 11.35 **TAKE ANOTHER LOOK**. Animal Logic 11.55 **Weather**.

ITV

9.30 Schools. 10.30 All our yesterdays (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Mr. Trimble. 12.25 Witches brew. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Jokers wild. 1.30 Crown court. 2.00 General hospital. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Generation three. 3.25 Mjstft. 4.25 Voyage to the bottom of the sea. 5.20 Pebbles and Bamm Bamm. 5.50 News.

6.00 **TODAY**. 6.30 **CROSSROADS**.
6.55 **FILM: 'COAST OF SKELETONS'**. Richard Todd, Dale Robertson, Marianne Koch, Derek Nimmo. An insurance agent investigates the loss of a diamond dredger.
8.30 **THIS WEEK**. 9.00 **LONGSTREET**. I See, Said the Blind Man.
10.00 **NEWS AT TEN**. 10.30 **CINEMA**.
11.00 **COOKING WITHOUT TEARS**. Unexpected Guests.
11.30 **EUROPEAN FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS**. Men's Championships.
12.30 **A CHANGE OF COURSE**.

BBC 2

11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University.
6.40 **SIXTEEN PLUS**. Getting across.
7.05 **OPEN UNIVERSITY**. 7.30 **NEWS**. Weather.
7.35 **WEB OF LIFE**. The Living Lakes.
8.05 **EUROPA**. Paradise with Mistakes.
8.30 **WAR AND PEACE**. An Epilogue.
9.15 **THEIR WORLD**. Animal behaviour.
9.25 **HORIZON**. When the Breeding Has to Stop. Population.
10.10 **PLAY: 'A TOUCH OF EASTERN PROMISE'**. By Tara Prem. Third season of short plays from Birmingham.
10.40 **THE MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA**. In concert.
11.10 **NEWS EXTRA**. Weather. 11.40 **REAL TIME**.



Anthony Hopkins as Pierre, Morag Hood as Natasha, Faith Brook as Countess Rostova and Sylvester Morand as Nikolai in 'An Epilogue' to the 20 episodes of BBC 2's 'War and Peace'

REGIONAL TV

CHANNEL: 9.30-12.00 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Women today. 3.00 London. 4.20 Lottery. 4.25 Follyfoot. 4.55 Jackson five. 5.20 Doctor in charge. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Maverick. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'The Prince Who Was A Thief'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawaii five-o. 10.00 London. 10.30 Odd couple. 11.00 Cinema. 11.30 London. 12.30 News. weather.

WESTWARD. As Channel except: 2.05 London. 12.37 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 10.30 Report. 10.57 News. 12.30 Faith for life.

SOUTHERN: 9.30 London. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Women only. 3.00 London. 4.25 Land of the giants. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.40 Film: 'Armoured Command'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Doctor in charge. 9.30 Nearest and dearest. 10.00 London. 11.00 News. 11.05 Dick Van Dyke. 11.35 London. 12.30 Weather. Guideline.

HARLECH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 London. 5.20 Chuckleheads. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.18 Report Wales. 6.35 Sky's the limit. 7.05 Film: 'Elope-ment'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawaii five-o. 10.00 London. 10.03 You can't eat scenery. 11.30 London. 12.30 Weather.

HTV Cymru/Wales as above except: 2.30-3.00 Hamdden. 4.25 Miri mawr. 4.35-4.50 Cantamil. 4.50-5.20 Rovers. 6.01-6.18 Y dydd.

HTV West as above except: 6.18-6.35 Sport West.

ANGLIA: 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Katie Stewart. 3.00 London. 4.25 News. 4.30 Land of the giants. Cartoons. 5.35 Wind in the willows. 5.50 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Sally's Irish Rogue'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Pathfinders. 10.00 London. 10.30 Bygones. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 London. 12.30 Living and growing. 1.00 Epilogue.

ATV MIDLANDS: 9.30 London. 12.00 Today. 12.05 London. 2.30 Women. 3.00 London. 4.25 Land of the giants. 5.20 Julia. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'The High Window'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 11.00 Gardening. 11.30 London.

ULSTER: 11.00 London. 1.31 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet's back in town. 4.23 News. 4.25 Elephant boy. 4.55 Phoenix five. 5.20 General hospital. 5.50 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Escape From East Berlin'. 9.30 London. 9.00 O'Hara. 10.00 London. 11.00 What's it all about. 11.30 London.

YORKSHIRE: 9.30 London. 4.25 Funky phantom. 4.50 Rovers. 5.20 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Mask of the Avenger'. 8.30 London. 9.30 Persuaders. 10.00

London. 10.30 Sport. 11.00 Cinema. 11.30 London. 12.30 Weather.

GRANADA: 9.30 London. 12.00 Felix. 12.05 London. 5.15 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. Put it in writing. 6.30 Sky's the limit. 7.00 Film: 'Saskatchewan'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawk. 10.00 London. 11.00 On the line. 11.35 London.

TYNE TEES: 9.25 Prologue. 9.30 London. 2.30 News. 2.33 Place in the country. 3.00 London. 4.25 Funky phantom. 4.50 Stingray. 5.20 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Pirates of Blood River'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 10.30 Sport. 10.55 Police call. 11.00 Cinema. 11.30 London. 12.30 News. 12.40 Lectern.

SCOTTISH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 London. 4.25 Lost in space. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 Scotch corner. 7.00 Cimarron strip. 8.30 London. 9.00 Pathfinders. 10.00 London. 11.00 Gardening. 11.30 Late call. 11.35 London.

GRAMPIAN: 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 2.40 Cartoon. 2.53 News. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet's back in town. 4.25 Skippy. 4.50 Merrie melodies. 5.20 General hospital. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Try for ten. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'One of Our Spies is Missing'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 11.05 A kind of living. 11.30 London. 12.25 Meditation.

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ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

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

STEVENAGE: Thursday February 8, 8 p.m. 'Red Lion', Old Town.

HACKNEY: Thursday February 8, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall (opposite Town Hall). 'Build Councils of Action.'

WILLESDEN: Thursday February 8, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road NW10. 'Victory to the NLF. Down with Stalinism and imperialism.'

BASILDON: Sunday February 11, 5.30 p.m. Barnstable Community Centre. 'Defend basic rights'.

WANDSWORTH: Monday February 12, 8 p.m. 'King's Arms', Wandsworth High Street. 'Fight rising rents and prices'.

WATFORD: Monday February 12, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall (downstairs), opposite Watford Junction station.

TODMORDEN: Monday February 12, 7.30 p.m. 'Woodpecker Inn'. 'Defend Basic Rights'.

CLAY CROSS: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. Social Centre, Derby Road. 'Fight rising rents and prices. Defend basic democratic rights'.

COVENTRY: Tuesday February 13, 7.30 p.m. Wood End Community Building.

CLAPHAM: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor Street, SW4. 'Defend basic rights'.

CAMDEN: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. 'Prince Albert', Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross. 'Lessons of the rents fight'.

HARROW: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. Labour Hall. 'Defend basic rights'.

TOOTING: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. 'Selkirk Hotel, Selkirk Road. 'Defend basic rights'.

OLDBURY: Wednesday February 14, 7.30 p.m. 'The Bulls Head'.

SLOUGH: Wednesday, February 14, 7.30 p.m. Slough Community Centre, Farnham Road.

WOLVERHAMPTON: Wednesday February 14, 7.30 p.m. 'Little Swan', Horseley Fields.

SLOUGH: Thursday February 15, 8 p.m. Community Centre, Farnham Road. 'How to defeat Phase Two'.

HOLLOWAY: Thursday February 15, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road. 'Build Councils of Action'.

KINGSTON: Thursday February 15, 8 p.m. 'Liverpool Arms', corner of Cambridge Road/London Road. 'Build Councils of Action'.

SOUTH EAST LONDON: Thursday February 15, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club, opposite New Cross station. 'No state control of wages'.

LEEDS: Thursday February 15, 7.30 p.m. (please note date change). Peel Hotel, Boar Lane.

SWANSEA: Thursday February 15, 7.30 p.m. Council of Social Services, Mount Pleasant Hill, (near fire station). 'Defend democratic rights'.

LIVERPOOL: Tuesday February 20, 7.30 p.m. AEU House, Mount Pleasant.

BRIXTON: Tuesday February 20, 8 p.m. Brixton Training Centre, Control Room. 'No state control of wages'.

DAGENHAM: Tuesday February 20, 8 p.m. Barking Co-op Hall, Fanshawe Avenue. 'Defend basic rights'.

ACTON: Tuesday February 27, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, High Road, W3. 'Forward to the Pageant - The Road to Workers' Power'.

CROYDON: Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road. 'Defend democratic rights'.

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Belfast a 'ghost town' as Protestants strike

BELFAST became a ghost town yesterday as thousands of Protestant workers joined in the one-day protest strike called by extreme right-wing Loyalist groups.

The stoppages, which affected transport, engineering and shipyards, were against the arrest of two loyalist militants by the British army.

Trade union estimates put

the total on strike at 120,000 out of the 600,000 civilian population in the north of Ireland.

Power supplies and milk deliveries were affected and all bus services in Belfast came to a halt. Belfast was a silent city as traders put up their shutters for the day.

A spokesman for the North-

ern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, who have strongly condemned the stoppage, said: 'Many people who wanted to work have been prevented by fear and intimidation.'

There were reports of threats to bus crews who turned up for work and the hijacking of a bus.

The giant Harland and Wolff shipyard was shut down when the bulk of its 10,000 workers failed to turn up.

The stoppages were called after two Protestants were held under the Detention of Terrorists Order and to back demands for the restoration of Northern Ireland's parliament.

Seven-union link-up with Philips' boardroom

SEVEN trade unions in the Philips Industries group have signed a corporatist-style agreement with management. It establishes for the first time both manual worker and staff representation on joint consultative committees.

Under the agreement a joint council of trade unionists and management will be set up covering Philips' 23 factories in Britain.

Discussions on the council will cover such subjects as conditions of employment, holiday entitlement, sickness benefits, overtime and severance payments and pension schemes. It also outlines a new internal procedure for settling disputes.

Unions party to the agreement are the engineering and the technical and supervisory section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the General and Municipal Workers' Union, the Electrical and Plumbing Trades Union, the Association of Professional, Executive and Clerical and Computer Staff (APEX) and the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS).

In 'The Times' company league table, Philips is Britain's 46th largest company with an annual turnover of £291m. Its profit last year was £14m, a £1m increase on the previous year.

The trade union bureaucrats are joining with the Philips board room at a critical hour—in preparation for the trade war with Japan. Philips is planning a massive rationalization programme.

Rugby rents fight being diverted by 'leaders'

NEARLY 100 tenants on two Rugby housing estates—Bilton and Rokeby—face rent rises of between 100 and 200 per cent. But local 'leaders', including councillors, are leading the tenants' opposition into dead-end judicial channels, avoiding a fight with the Tories.

The houses were built in 1947 by English Electric and offered to workers at low rents as an incentive to work for the company.

After the firm's merger with GEC-AEI, Sir Arnold Weinstock sold the houses to Sutton Dwelling Trust, a body controlled by the Charity Commissioners.

Tenants were told that Sutton Trust was a non-profit making organization and the change of ownership would not affect them very much.

Now Sutton's regional manager, Mr George Leeming, has told the local Press that 'under the terms of the new rent Act we are forced to charge a fair rent'.

The Trust, which already owns 10,000 houses in other parts of the country, says the extra

BY OUR HOUSING CORRESPONDENT

revenue is to build more houses elsewhere.

Rents will rise by 75p—the maximum allowed under the Act—each year until the new rents are reached. This will take about five years, says Sutton Trust.

Normally Trust houses are intended for people on low salaries who, under the new legislation, would be eligible for rebates.

Trust officials say they are raising the rents so drastically in Rugby because their tenants are on quite high incomes and could easily afford to buy their own homes.

Three hundred tenants attended a protest meeting in the Bilton Social Club last Sunday and decided to fight the increases.

Opening speaker Tommy Lindon told tenants that they were already paying a fair rent. 'Let us see Sutton Trust's books. Then we will see if we are paying a fair rent.'

Miners' backing for Clay Cross rebels



Mr Bunting . . . pleased with talks.

FOURTEEN thousand Derbyshire miners have promised support for Clay Cross councillors campaigning against the Housing Finance Act.

Councillors had a private meeting with officials of the Derbyshire area of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Mr Herbert Parkin, secretary of the Derbyshire NUM, said: 'I cannot reveal all the requests made to us, but they will be sent to our executive for fuller consideration. I have been able to promise the council that, should they run into heavy legal expenses, the NUM would be sympathetic towards any request for financial help.'

Council chairman Mr Charles Bunting described the meeting as very constructive.

The councillors were ordered to pay a surcharge of £6,985 accumulated rent to meet arrears.

His resolution demanded that tenants declare their opposition to the proposed rent increases and give notice of appeal to the appropriate body under the 'fair rent' Act.

Labour MP for Rugby, Mr Bill Price, supported the resolution and told the meeting that Sutton Dwelling Trust was not compelled to register under the Act.

The tenants' best line of attack, he said, would be not to challenge the assessments, as they are fixed on today's prices, but to fight on the basis that if a Trust can balance its books it does not need to increase the rents.

Labour councillor Mrs E. Turner's advice was to protest on an individual basis, not in a block, as this had much more impact.

A Tory councillor told the meeting 'beggars cannot be choosers'. If the rent Act allowed

registration then it would be in the tenants' best interests to negotiate.

In sowing the illusion that the rent increase could be fought by protesting to the rent officers, the platform disarmed the tenants. They make no attempt to link the rises with the Tory attack on all living standards.

But one tenant, Mr T. McGowan, chairman of the Rugby and District Trades Council, said:

'My rent will increase from £2.40 a week plus rates to £6.15 plus rates. I hope this will make people realize what this government's up to.'

'You can't get a wage increase to match up with these increases. I don't think there's much we can do about it as long as the Tories are in power.'

'Weinstock sold the houses to make his balance sheet look good. Now we have to remove the Tories to make our balance sheet look good.'

Sparks picket site

ELECTRICIANS from three contractors on the Barbican site in the City of London are out on strike. The men are employed by Electrical Installations, Key Electrics and Lee Beasley. They walked out on Monday following the suspension of a member of their trade union. They are now picketing the site.

NEWS DESK

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SLL LECTURES

DONCASTER

Sunday February 11
The revolutionary party in Britain.

Lectures given by Cliff Slaughter.

SPREAD EAGLE HOTEL
Westlithgate
7.30 p.m.

SHEFFIELD

Monday February 19
The economic crisis and the socialist answer.

Monday March 5
The revolutionary party in Britain.

Young Socialist Premises
Portobello
(near Jessops Hospital)
8 p.m.

Lecture 2
1924-1933—The Left Opposition's struggle against Stalin

Lecture 3
1933-1938—From the German defeat to the founding of Fourth International
given by TOM KEMP
(SLL Central Committee)

ACTON

Wednesday February 7 Lecture 2

Wednesday February 14 Lecture 3

Woodlands Hall
Crown Street, W.3. 8 p.m.

EAST LONDON

Thursday February 8 Lecture 2

Thursday February 15 Lecture 3

Old Town Offices
Poplar High Street
E.14. 8 p.m.

NEWCASTLE

Monday February 12 Lecture 2

Monday February 19 Lecture 3

Ford Arms
Shields Road, 8 p.m.

Socialist Labour League Public Meetings UNITE IN ACTION TO DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS

CLAPHAM
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14, 8pm
South Island Library
South Island Place
Stockwell, SW9
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

WATFORD
MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm
Trades Union Hall
near Watford Junction stn
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

NORTH KENT
MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm
The Shakespeare,
Powis Street
Woolwich
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

NORTH EAST COAST
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18, 7 p.m.
Civic Centre
Jarrow
Speaker:
G. HEALY (SLL National Sec)

London

ACTON
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 8pm
Woodlands Hall,
Crown Street
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

WANDSWORTH
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22, 8pm
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

MIDDLETON
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14, 8pm
Middleton Baths,
Middleton, Manchester
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

MEDWAY
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 8pm
Aurora Hotel
Brompton Road
Gillingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

SLOUGH
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28, 8pm
Britwell Community Centre
Long Furlong Drive
Britwell Estate
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

DAGENHAM
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8pm
Manor Park Library
Romford Rd/Rabbits Road
opp Rabbits Pub
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

BIRMINGHAM
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25, 7pm
Digbeth, Civic Hall
Digbeth, Birmingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

London colleges in grants march

Students from Imperial College and other London Colleges yesterday joined in a march and demonstration in support of higher grants for students. The rally culminated in a lobby outside the Department of Education and Science at Waterloo.



Though official stoppage not due for six days

Gas depots continue pay action

BY ROYSTON BULL OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

MORE THAN half of the gas depots in the North Thames Board area voted yesterday to continue with their unofficial strikes and work to rules.

Mass meetings held at each yard were enthusiastic for continuing the industrial action despite the lack of an immediate call for a national strike by the union's executive.

The depots will continue with their own action until next Wednesday, by which time the national campaign of official stoppages, work-to-rule and withdrawal of co-operation will have been worked out.

Yards which decided to continue their strikes were: Westminster, Goswell Road, Abingdon Road, Mill Hill, Battersea, Camden Town, Seven Sisters, Kilburn, Harlesden, Pinner, Stanmore, Hackney, Stoke Newington, Barking, Dagenham, Mare Street, Ilford, Grays, Pound Lane, Finchley, Hornsey and South Harrow.

Other depots, such as Wembley, Southend, Haggerston, were working to rule unofficially.

The shop stewards' meeting at the Stepney depot yesterday decided to allow action to continue on a yard-by-yard basis, but formed a special committee of stewards to visit those depots which were still working normally to try to get them to start industrial action.

There was some disappointment from the more militant stewards that a proposal was not put to the meeting for all-out unofficial action on an area-wide basis.

Some of the most determined gasmen are from the Westminster fitters' depot and David Shoemsmith, Wally Sirett, Bob Wright, Ken Smith and Andrew Downey lobbied the stewards' meeting.

Their views were that the union had to be fought as much as the government and the Gas Corporation. David Shoemsmith said: 'We want a massive strike of all unions to stop the oppression of the working class.'

Ken Smith said he had to work 88 hours last week and took £40.82. 'And with two kids I don't pay much tax. Working these hours for a decent wage, I only get to see my kids once a week. I often work from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m.'

IN WAKEFIELD yesterday 300 gasworkers met outside the strike-bound gas plant to hear a report of the national executive's decision.

The almost unanimous view was that the sanctions imposed by the executive weren't enough. The men are firmly in favour of national strike action.

The meeting decided to return

to work next Monday and immediately start imposing the work to rule. The executive wants the sanctions to start next Wednesday.

There were workers at the meeting from all the surrounding areas: Batley, Dewsbury, Castleford and Pontefract.

The Wakefield men have been on unofficial strike for three weeks. There will be a further mass meeting at Wakefield next Tuesday.

LONDON TEACHERS will stage a series of three-day strikes starting on February 20 in support of a special London allowance which the government is refusing to pay because of the state pay laws. They now join 290,000 civil servants who have called a one-day strike against the pay legislation on February 27. This is the first national industrial action ever taken by the civil service in defiance of the government.

MINERS' leaders yesterday rejected for the second time a £2.28 Phase Two pay offer—but asked the National Coal Board to reply next week to proposals for improving fringe benefits. The miners, who want increases of £5.50 to £7, hope for a 'final offer' next Wednesday. A special executive meeting will take place the following day to decide its attitude to the offer. If the executive decides to ballot its members on the offer, the result could be known within a week.



Some of the gas pickets outside the Mare Street depot, London

US forces devaluation pace

BY FOREIGN EDITOR JOHN SPENCER

THE ONCE-mighty dollar was again on the floor in Europe and Japan yesterday and it is clear that devaluation can only be a matter of time.

The Nixon administration has indicated this must be accepted by its main trade rivals to allow the US to liquidate its overseas debts and gain advantages on foreign markets.

Heavy selling of dollars on the Tokyo market aggravated the international currency situation amid rumours that the yen might be revalued or allowed to float upward.

Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka had to make a public denial of the rumours, which were responsible for a major fall in share prices.

There was a similar run on the dollar when the Frankfurt foreign exchange opened yesterday morning. But there was a lull later in the day and the dollar was slightly above its parity 'floor' without support from the Bundesbank.

The West German central bank has bought over \$2,500m since

Monday to prevent the dollar sinking through its parity 'floor'. Rigid currency controls have been introduced to prevent foreign investors buying marks and West German shares.

But no capitalist country in Europe can stand up to the concentrated economic power of the so-called Euro-dollar pool—the \$70,000m invested on the European money markets and now inconvertible into gold.

The dollar enjoys not the slightest confidence in Europe. The West German measures are

simply a stop-gap and cannot maintain the mark at its present parity for any length of time.

The Americans are well aware of this and are doing all they can to inflame the crisis in West Germany and incite dollar-holders to sell.

All basis for international monetary agreement was swept away by the Nixon measures of August 15, 1971.

The international talks and gatherings held under various auspices—the IMF, GATT, Group of 20—since that time have only served to lay the basis for a giant trade war now developing rapidly between the capitalist powers.

LEADERS of the London docks tally clerks yesterday rejected a £2.80 pay offer, made in line with Phase Two of the Tories' statutory pay control. The 1,000 clerks, whose work is vital to the running of the docks, are claiming £10. Originally both the clerks and the 7,700 registered men in London's enclosed docks were offered £2.56. The dockers' negotiators rejected this offer on Tuesday. They want £5.

THE LONG-awaited Top White Paper on the steel industry will be published at 3.30 p.m. today. See STEEL: centre pages.

REPRESENTATIVES of Clydebank council have been summoned to appear at the bar of the Court of Sessions in Edinburgh next Tuesday to explain why they have disobeyed a court order to implement the Tory rent Act.

UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL

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attack, the union leaders cling closer than ever to the international organizations of monopoly capitalism.

The TUC is being drawn into Common Market institutions. Mr Victor Feather, its general secretary, is expected to accept the presidency of the new European Trade Union Confederation (see page 3).

'Left-wingers' Mr Lawrence Daly (NUM) and Mr Jack Jones (T&GWU) have already participated in the activities of this organization — from which the communist unions in Europe are to be excluded.

The Stalinists, of course, are demanding to be admitted into this Confederation, whose sole

purpose is to lend credibility to the monopoly conspiracy of the Common Market.

The deep unwillingness of these leaders to fight the Tories means that the campaign to defend democratic rights must be intensified. That is the purpose of the Pageant of History launched by the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists.

This Pageant will culminate in a mass rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley, on Sunday, March 11.

Over the next six weeks the preparation of the Pageant—now launched in Lancashire, South Wales, the north-east and London—will give political focus to the anger mounting throughout the working class at the Tory attacks.

Not only professional actors but hundreds of local workers will be in the forefront of the work for this Pageant.

In addition to illustrating the history of the Chartists, the early miners' struggles, the conflicts of the unions with the state and Marx's political activities in London, the Pageant will be the starting point of the campaign to forge working-class unity to force the Tories to resign.

The defence of democratic rights now requires this important step forward. All the struggles of the working class, flowing from its past history, must be brought together and the trade union leaders made to call a General Strike which will force the Tories to resign

and place in office a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Central to this is the forming and building of the Revolutionary Party, a task which the Socialist Labour League has pledged itself to carry out in 1973.

The resolution 'Perspectives for the Transformation of the SL into a Revolutionary Party' (published in Saturday's Workers Press) is now being widely circulated.

We urge all workers to give this statement their urgent consideration, to participate wherever possible in the Pageant and to come to Wembley on March 11.

The Tories can, and will, be defeated.