

# Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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Secret files reveal big business's grip on higher education

## MILITANTS SPIED ON BY BOSSES AND UNIVERSITY

Socialist Worker Reporters

**POLITICAL FILES ON STAFF AND STUDENTS.** Spies sent by industrialists to labour and socialist meetings. Official university contacts with police about student activities. Soliciting information about the activity of staff and students outside the confines of the university.

All this is going on not just in Fascist Spain or in racist Southern Africa, but here in Britain at the University of Warwick in Coventry.

Copies of some of the documents extracted from the files of the Registry at the university following a student sit-in have been circulating freely since Monday. Feeling is running very high at Warwick where mass staff, student and department meetings have been in almost continual session for many days.

Professor E P Thompson, author of *The Making of the English Working Class*, has been particularly active in calling for investigations into the documents' startling disclosures.

Demands made include the suspension of the Vice-Chancellor, Jack B Butterworth and Mr Gilbert Hunt, member of the University Council and a Director of Rootes, pending a public enquiry to which original documents and photo-copies of the documents in question will be handed.

The staff and students also insist on no victimisation.

The issues being raised affect the whole foundation of the educational system in capitalist Britain, especially its relationship to industry.

The documents include the following:

A letter from the headmaster of William Ellis School in North London, concerning a student's application to Warwick University. The letter informs the university that 'he is now a committee member of the London Schools Action Group, engaged in the organising of protests and demonstrations concerning school government etc'. Handwritten on this letter is the comment 'Reject this man - J B B'.

A reply from the Registrar says, 'The Vice-Chancellor has asked me to say how very much obliged we were to you for writing in this way' and adds that the student would be rejected.

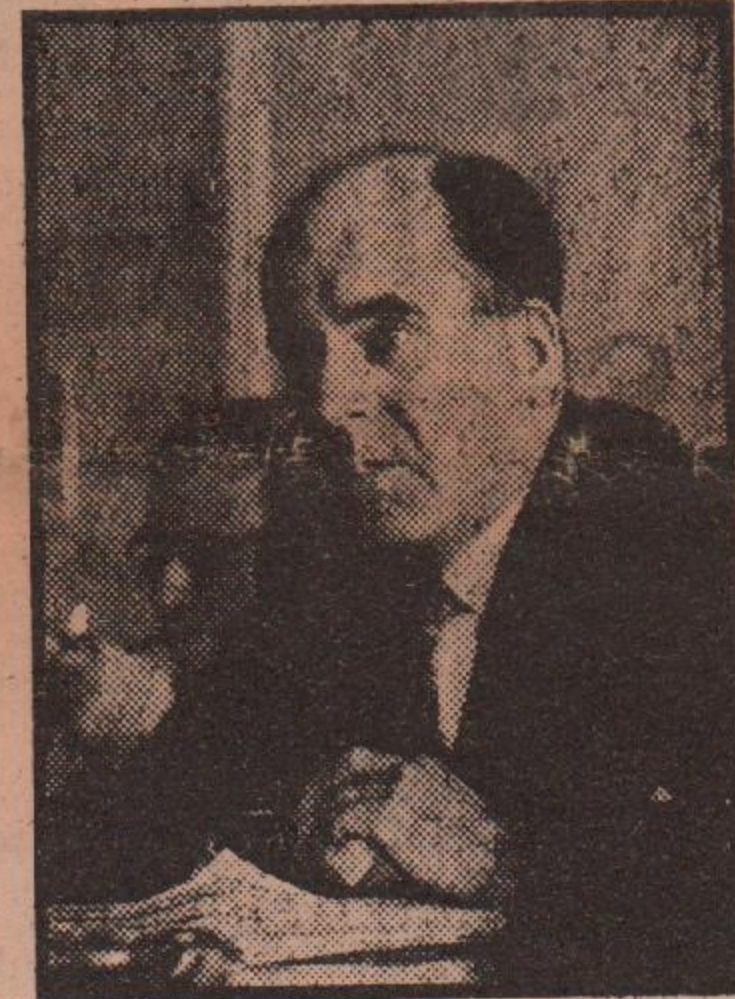
### Lament

Correspondence with the County Education Officer about leaflets given out at the Abbey High School, Kenilworth which includes the sad lament that 'I am afraid a Vice-Chancellor has now by law no further influence over the outside activities of his students than the Managing Director of Rootes has over the outside activities of his employees'.

The letter goes on: 'I would like to be kept informed and if I see an opportunity for taking action you may be sure that I will do so'. This letter is addressed to Alderman Douthy, who is also on the University Council and seems to come from the Vice-Chancellor himself.

Undated minutes of the weekly meetings of Officers of Council about this matter include the note 'AVC (Assistant Vice-Chancellor?) to talk to police about... (an address) Kenilworth' which was on the leaflet and where some students were staying. The minutes also suggest that it might be possible to cancel the registration of one of the students concerned.

A letter starting My Dear Jack, signed Gilbert sent from Bowater House, London SW1. (Bowater House is occupied by Rootes Motors. Gilbert Hunt is a director and co-opted mem-



'Dear Jack,' Warwick Vice-Chancellor J B Butterworth

ber of the University Council). The letter starts:

'At my request, Mr N P Catchpole, our Director of Legal Affairs, attended a meeting of the Coventry Labour Party, which was addressed by Dr D Montgomery (a visiting American lecturer at the University).

Catchpole's notes of the meeting include the point that apart from himself and his agents 'there were no other Rootes staff present'.

The supreme indictment is: 'Montgomery's speech revealed a very definite bias against employers in general. I can only guess from seeing the man that he would be most likely to exhibit a similar bias in his lectures at the University. If this is the case the students would certainly be exposed to a most undesirable indoctrination, as I do not think he would put the other point of view at all'.

The notes also mention that some local trade union militants were present. Their speeches are recorded.

Another letter from Gilbert to Jack sends a copy of a leaflet handed out at 'our' factory gates by students. It says that: 'I am sending this to your house as I don't think it ought to go to the University'. But the letter was found in the University files.

Another letter in similar vein is headed Automotive Products Company Ltd, addressed to the Vice-Chancellor and refers to a document distributed outside 'our' works and to the sending of a representative to (an unspecified) meeting. It continues: 'We are not proposing to send anyone to the next meeting because we do not wish to draw attention to our interest in what is going on.'

The reply deplores the fact that the University has no control over the spare time activity of 'our people', but asks for further information.

A carbon copy of an old letter, dated 1964, suggests that Courtauld's

were more than a little anxious to get the contract for supplying carpets and curtains for the University building programme.

It is a letter to the architects telling them that Kerr-Muir of Courtauld's, who was then also chairman of the University Finance Committee, had 'in the course of our discussions mentioned that Courtauld's now produce a considerable amount of material for carpets.'

It urged the architects to contact Courtauld's, asked for information as to the outcome pointing out that Courtauld's are 'one of our public benefactors'. You scratch our back...

Latest reports have revealed that a file exists on another member of staff, Dr Richard Hyman, who was reported to the Vice-Chancellor by a local firm after he had spoken at a public meeting last February.

It seems that no socialists among the staff or students can move without their activities being spied upon and reported by local industrialists.

This is not the first crisis at Warwick. About a year ago, most of the Senior Registry staff resigned and a revised managerial structure was introduced.

Power now seems to lie firmly in the Vice-Chancellor's hands as the agent of a tiny clique, including a few senior academics who have completely sold any pretensions of being detached, plus the co-opted members of Council.

### Blessing

There are nine co-opted members. All except one (the Bishop of Coventry, perhaps included for spiritual blessing) are big businessmen.

At present they are: Sir Stanley Harley, director of 16 companies, mainly in machine tools. G Hunt, director of Rootes, Chrysler International and the Reed Paper Group. Lord Iliffe, newspaper baron. Sir William Lyons, director of British Leyland. J R Meal, an accountant and holder of many directorships. Lord Rootes himself. A F Tuke, a director of Barclay's Bank. And Sir Richard Young, director of an engineering firm and of Rugby Portland Cement.

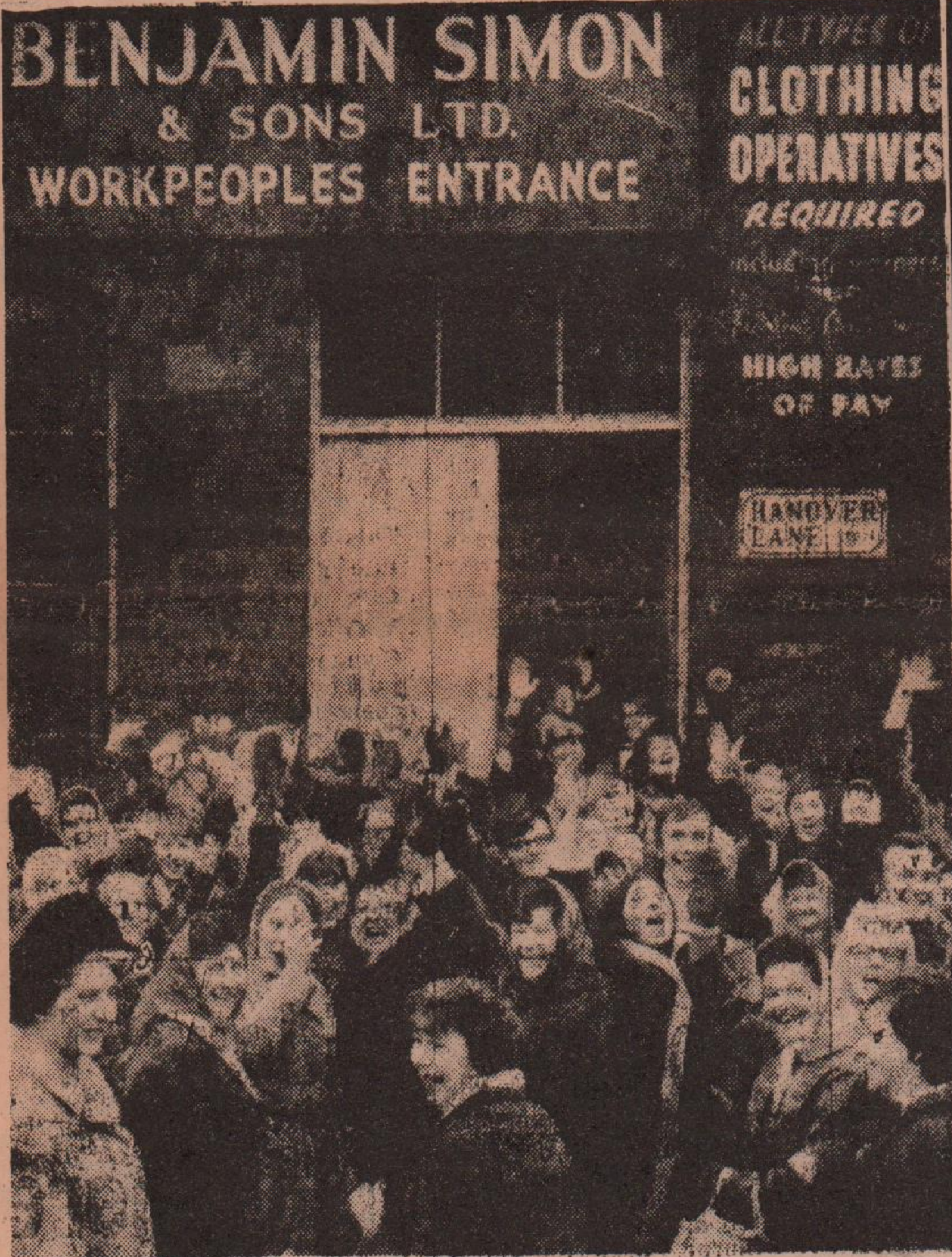
Chairman of Council is Sir Arnold Hall, also chairman of Hawker Siddeley.

Now the lid has been blown. Staff and students are adamant that the situation must be drastically transformed.

Naturally there are differences as to how solutions are seen, ranging from those who merely want to correct the 'excesses', to those who are clear that, with the links now existing between business, the civil service and the educational system, you cannot change the latter in any fundamental way without smashing the backbone of the capitalist state itself.

This isn't the first scandal in a British University or Technical College. It forms part of a pattern in which the subordination of education to business interests is growing more direct.

We wonder what the files of other Registries would reveal...?



John Collier marchers cheers as Simon workers join the strike

## 7000 Leeds clothing workers on strike

A WAVE of militant strikes has hit the Leeds' clothing industry. When workers from the giant Montague Burton combine walked out on Tuesday, the number on strike reached 7000.

Strikers have hired coaches to tour Co Durham, appealing to tailoring workers there to join the strike. Similar attempts may be made in Lancashire.

Walk-outs from three firms early last week in favour of a shilling an hour on the basic hourly rate, set the situation on fire. Workers from John Collier struck after pay negotiations had broken down.

Hundreds of the workers, mainly women, walked to all the nearby factories and brought out their fellow clothing workers. By the weekend 3000 workers were on strike.

The dispute is over the 1970 pay agreement. After no rise for more than two years, the clothing workers were offered 5d for men and 4d for women. This was after the executive of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers had promised to

press for a shilling an hour.

On Monday 700 workers marched to the John Collier factory off Kirkstall Road where the Leeds district committee of NUTGW were meeting the management. They surged round the factory shouting 'We want a shilling'.

A mass meeting was held on an adjoining field where union officials reported back. One official, Mr Yates, recommended a return to work while the union was negotiating. This had happened the previous week and the workers were having no more of it.

He was howled down by the men and women who shouted, 'Traitor, we've been sold up the river again'.

A strike committee has been formed from all the factories on strike. Women workers - 85 per cent of the labour force - are the most militant.

Most Leeds firms have not been out on strike for 30 years. As one manager was heard to say, 'Nothing like this has happened in Leeds before'.

BACKGROUND REPORT: PAGE 5.

Ford parity fight goes on: back page



# Massive strike wave rocks Belgium: police

## attack car men and miners

Socialist Worker Reporter

A MASSIVE WAVE of industrial militancy has hit Belgium. Strikes have affected a number of companies, including the Herstal arms factory. A minor government crisis has been provoked.

The biggest struggles have been among miners at Limbourg, and car workers in the Ford and General Motors factories.

Strikers have met vicious police repression and 50 arrests were made on one day in early February.

The Limbourg miners' strike, involving 18,000 miners, began on 5 January and is still going on. The demand is for 15 per cent wage increase.

The strike has been criticised by both Catholic and Socialist trade unions. About 1500 miners responded by occupying the local headquarters of the Catholic Union.

The Limbourg area has suffered a cut of almost half in the labour force since 1958. Left-wing students have attempted to support the struggle, but have not been wholly successful in linking up with workers.

The right-wing Flemish nationalist Volksunie party has also tried to get its oar in — but its sincerity can be judged by the fact that one of its leaders is a high official of a bank which owns one of the striking pits.

As for the car workers' strikes, the following is a shortened version of an analysis which appeared in the 7 February issue of the Belgian socialist weekly La Gauche.

### American slow-down hits Belgian car trade

AT ANTWERP, General Motors has been on strike since 2 February, after the proposals of the union leaders and stewards had twice been rejected by overwhelming majorities.

The strike was called by the unions and involved some 5000 workers in Plants One and Two.

At Genk, Ford has been on strike since 5 January, after a spontaneous strike of several hundred workers in one section. The strike was immediately recognised by the Catholic Union, and shortly after by the Socialist Union. 9000 workers are involved.

At the Ford tractor works, 2000 workers have shown their discontent in the last few weeks by a

series of spontaneous and unannounced strikes including 24-hour strikes. They were not recognised by the unions, who alleged 'they made negotiations more difficult'.

The basic problem stems from the slowing down of the American car industry and this is liable to grow more serious in the coming months. In the USA, General Motors has already stopped production for some days to prevent excessive growth of stocks.

The fear of a serious recession in other sectors of industry has led car manufacturers to bring out new models earlier than usual, in order to make the best of the present situation.

### Tough position

This development — which is not yet noticeable in Belgium, where order books are still full — accounts for the tough position taken by the Americans, who, in normal circumstances, would not risk a strike over a collective agreement which did not



Police laying into Ford pickets

raise important issues.

Typical of this situation is the remark by the union leader Mage (who is usually very 'reasonable' when he is negotiating with the bosses) that, 'It is no longer possible to talk to the Ford management'.

The Ford strike at Genk leaves Fabrimetal (the engineering employers' organisation) and the Ford management with their backs to the wall.

At the end of 1968, after a long, hard strike, a collective agreement was made through putting pressure on the union leaders. The agreement expires at the end of 1970.

After the management had broken the agreement in a number of ways, the Catholic unions presented a new set of demands and insisted on an answer within two days.

The urgency of the demand was

a result of the Limbourg miners' strike, which had led to pressure from Ford militants. A spontaneous strike broke out.

The bosses, who are experts at breaking collective agreements, claimed that the unions were threatening 'social peace'. The panic which seized them is shown by the spectacular display of police outside the factory, their brutal attacks and the numerous arrests.

### Basic points

The demands raised by the Genk strikers include a number of basic points which can show the way for General Motors and Ford workers in Antwerp:

- Wages equal to Antwerp.
- Free transport.
- Thirteen months' pay instead of 12.
- Removal of three lower wage grades.
- Equal wages for young workers.
- Control over redundancies.
- No more speed-up; slowing-down of the production line.
- No more changes in the classification of workers without agreement by union representatives.
- Information for workers about working regulations, wage-scales and classification.
- Increase in the number of union stewards and in the time allowed them for union duties.

The workers have again raised demands from 1968 about deplorable working conditions, speed-up and arbitrary decisions by management.

By such demands they are revealing the true meaning of the collective agreement: it must be a truce in the workers' struggle against the bosses' interests, and not a means to disarm the unions.

## LETTERS

# Full support for black organisations

IN THE DISCUSSION from the floor at the meeting in solidarity with the American Black Panthers a fortnight ago, it was clear that many on the left in Britain are still not clear what their attitude should be to developments in the immigrant community in this country.

Some of those in the audience seemed to be almost frightened of any growth of 'Black Power' groups in this country in case these were to lead to a division of the working-class movement.

This attitude is quite wrong. Unfortunately, there is already a fair amount of racialism among workers in this country, not as a result of the activities of militant black groups, but because of the actions of the Enoch Powells and the James Callaghans.

These politicians, with their continual emphasis of the 'race problem', point out a ready scapegoat for all sorts of frustrated and embittered individuals lower down the social scale — from the magistrates who regularly put West



Indians in prison without a shred of evidence for 'assaulting the police' to skin-heads who go 'Pak hunting'.

The aim of the propaganda of Enoch Powell and his like is, of course, to do damage to white workers as well as immigrants. He hopes that white workers will worry about immigrants, instead of about the real problems they face — unemployment, bad housing, attacks on the trade unions, cuts in the welfare state.

But those who suffer immediately

as a result of this encouragement of racialism are the immigrants. It is they who are discriminated against, who get the worse housing and jobs, who face beatings by hooligans and harassment by racist police.

For this reason, it will be these immigrants who will be the first to begin to fight back against racism and the attempt to 'divide and rule' the working class. In doing so, they quite correctly begin by looking to support from those faced with the same problems as themselves — other immigrants.

For socialists to oppose such developments in any way would be fundamentally mistaken. The growth of militant Black Power groups is an expression of a growing determination of black people in this country to stop the system pushing them around.

We should wholeheartedly welcome such attitudes. Even the slogan 'black and white unite and fight' is often misused. If this is meant to mean that white workers should support the struggle of immigrants against racialism, or that immigrants and white workers should fight together against the boss on the shop floor, it is correct.

But if it is used to argue that black people should have to wait until white workers are ready to fight alongside them, before fighting back against racialism, then it is completely wrong.

Of course revolutionary socialists will often disagree with many of the broader political ideas of members of black organisations. It would be wrong not to discuss these

issues in a friendly and fraternal way.

But any such disagreements are minor compared with the need to support any action these groups take to fight back against the racialism bred by capitalism. - CHRIS HARMAN, for the editorial board.

THE REMARKS made by Chris Harman at the meeting on Black Panthers reveal once again an opportunist attitude which is often present in IS thinking.

While the Black Panthers are a new movement in this country, black workers have been active in trade unions for up to 20 years and have considerably more influence in the unions than their counterparts in the USA.

Rather than jumping on the Panther bandwagon, IS would be better off by concentrating their efforts towards the many thousands of black trade unionists in railway, transport and building.

As to the idea that 'The task (Harman) stressed, was not to tell black people what to do...' this is a ludicrous statement. As a steward and a branch official in the building trade I am in close contact with a great many black workers who are active trade unionists. However I have come across stewards who were almost certainly hand in glove with the employers and even a branch official (not in my branch) well to the right of Ray Gunter.

Is Chris Harman suggesting that I refrain from criticising or attacking the above black workers? - J BELL, London SE24.

## PROD DEALS: DON'T SAY NO

AT PRESENT workers must decide whether to accept apparently big pay offers through productivity deals. To those who must answer this question, plain 'No' is no answer at all.

Socialists with nothing more to offer will have no point of contact with the rank and file. Does the present lack of analysis stem from regarding prod deals as the death of workshop independence?

We suggest prod deals, and the resulting fight-back, are an opportunity to put militancy back on the offensive.

The 'negative' opposition to prod deals is based on an over-estimation of traditional bargaining. Past wage demands haven't aimed at redistributing wealth, and workers accept profit as capital's reward. When workers aren't challenging capitalism, how can prod deals be a surrender of principle?

Prod deals reinstate militancy's credibility. They mean changes in working conditions which widen the struggle from market-place haggling over a few bob, into an instinctive revulsion at industrial surroundings.

The partial opposition to capitalism in traditional wage bargaining (which some socialists defend against prod deals) is a type of class activity best forgotten. - Col West (NALGO), Bern Rubinsen, Christine McKenna, George Wright,

London SW16.

SOCIALIST WORKER fundamentally disagrees with this attitude which dangerously opens the door to further attacks on industrial workers.

Productivity deals aim to cut labour costs. This means worsening wages and conditions for the workers.

This type of bargaining is also designed to undermine the shop stewards, the very basis of work shop democracy.

On top of these attacks on the workers, productivity deals mean that further wage increases will be much more difficult to obtain because of the strings attached to the original deal. And even 'substantial' initial increases will soon disappear through inflation.

Of course such deals will 'sharpen the conflict'. If a foreman punches a worker, that also sharpens the conflict. Should we be in favour therefore of widespread managerial assaults on workers?

Socialist Worker does not say 'negatively' no to productivity bargaining. We call for a strategy to fight the introduction of such methods and to go on fighting them even when they are forced through by management, with or without the help of union officials. - EDITOR.

Letters must arrive first post Monday.

# Socialist Worker

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CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world — a tiny minority — subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through a state of workers' councils and workers' control of

# WHERE WE STAND

production.

Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant

struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois. International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper.



## Socialists and the Common Market

# In or out, we must call

# for unity of European workers

Ian Birchall answers a trade unionist's queries

**QUESTION:-** Is it inevitable that Britain will go into the Common Market?

**ANSWER:-** The International Socialists have been saying it was inevitable since 1962. The whole trend of mergers and link-ups in modern capitalism is towards development on an international scale.

In an interview in The Guardian (8 December 1969), Charles Levinson, the secretary-general of the International Federation of Chemical and General Workers' Unions, predicted:

'In a few years, 200 to 300 giant multi-national enterprises will dominate Western production and they will be extensively interlocked at the management level and integrated through numerous joint ventures. This cannot be stopped, because it is impelled by the force of science and technology.'

To take an example, the Italian car firm Fiat, which has already made links with French Citroen, is now trying to join up with German Volkswagen. Only by such links can they compete with the research resources available to the big American firms.

So many factors, political and economic, are involved, that it would be silly to try and forecast when and how Britain will go into Europe. But if what you're asking is whether Britain has a long-term future as an independent power, the answer is clearly no.

**Q:-** But how about the Commonwealth? Isn't that an alternative?

**A:-** Of course, sentimentality about the Commonwealth is sheer hypocrisy from politicians who supported the tightening of immigration restrictions.

## New trade outlets

But in economic terms the Commonwealth is already adapting to Britain's entry and looking for alternative trade outlets. Canada is turning towards the United States, Australia to China and Japan.

**Q:-** And I thought we were in something called EFTA?

**A:-** Yes, but Britain's trade is developing more to the Common Market and less to its EFTA partners. The same applies to Sweden, Switzerland and Austria.

Sweden and Norway have complained at Britain's discrimination against them and there are plans afoot for a Nordic economic union of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. It doesn't look like a long term future for British capitalism.

**Q:-** Do the Common Market countries want us in?

**A:-** Here you have to distinguish between the politicians, the industrialists and the working people, who have no say in the matter. In general, if European industry is to be competitive with the United States, it needs bigger markets, greater research facilities, bigger production units.

If Britain joins the Common Market, and Ireland, Denmark and Norway join with us, an expanded Com-

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Pompidou: no obstruction to British entry in the long run.

demands for equality with the best of what European workers get. Third, try to develop unity with European workers.

**Q:-** What sort of demand can we make? Equal wages with European workers?

**A:-** Comparability with European workers may be a good lever in negotiations. But the problem is complicated and will require a lot of study.

First of all, wages are very difficult to compare. Currency exchange rates are variable, and often unrealistic. The cost of living varies from country to country, and so do the prices of different items.

In the Common Market, food is cheapest in France and Holland, clothes in Holland, electrical goods in Germany. Workers obviously have to relate their wage demands to the cost of living.

Even among managers, where transfer from one country to another is quite common, they're only just getting down to working out what is a comparable salary.

## Better around fringes

More important, the struggle for wages mustn't be seen in isolation. You will often find that British workers seem to have better wages than their Continental comrades, but are worse off as far as holidays and various fringe benefits are concerned.

British workers will probably do best, in most cases, to concentrate on demands for extension of European holidays and fringe benefits.

**Q:-** Is it realistic to call for link-up of European workers, or just a slogan?

**A:-** In recent months there have been meetings of British and Continental dockers and a meeting of Ford workers from four countries.

Such meetings will become more and more essential for workers in international firms. With developments like that of Ford, where the same model is being produced in Britain and Germany, the possibility of switching production from one country to another in case of strikes becomes a grave threat.

It looks as though initiatives of this sort will come first from car workers — who have led recent big strikes in France and Italy — and workers in international transport, but all workers should be exploring the possibilities now.

Obviously there are great complications. No European country has a system of shop stewards quite like the British pattern.

Workers may have to use official and unofficial channels, or a mixture of both. But all the more reason for getting down to it straight away.



mon Market of 10 will come into being. This will have a population 50 million greater than the US. Its annual output of cars will be within a million of US output.

Britain, in particular, will be an asset to Europe as far as research is concerned. On 1963 figures, Britain's expenditure on research and development was \$2160 million, again \$3440 million for the whole Common Market. Britain has 59,400 scientists, against 100,000 for the Six.

**Q:-** But what about France?

**A:-** France has two problems. Firstly agriculture. France will have to solve this (at the expense of the poor peasants) within a few years.

This isn't fundamental. It's haggling over who pays for it. Then there's the political problem. De Gaulle's nationalism was the price he had to pay for the political support of the small shopkeepers and traders.

Pompidou has decided to ditch these in the interests of the big capitalists. But he can't do it too quickly or he may split his own party. So he'll zigzag a lot, but there'll be no obstruction to British entry in the long run.

**Q:-** Do British bosses want to go in?

The recent Confederation of British Industries' report seemed rather half-hearted.

**A:-** John Davies, former head of the CBI, said if the world was going to end in 1980, he'd be against entry. The point is, that in real terms big industry in Britain is already in Europe.

They sell in Europe, invest in it, have subsidiaries there. The political questions are less relevant than they were a few years back.

## Some would thrive

The recent Institute of Directors report said that Common Market entry might hurt such industries as paper, footwear, food and brewing. But electrical and mechanical engineering, electronics, drugs and chemicals would thrive on it. Clearly the balance of force is with the latter.

Take one example. ICI has £174 million sales a year in Europe. It has £48 million sales of products of its subsidiaries in Europe.

After the explosion at Wilton last year, ICI had to import polythene made by its own factory in the Neth-

# The bomb men get trigger happy

IT'S QUITE EASY to make an H-bomb. Basically you need two special kinds of hydrogen (called deuterium and tritium) which can be 'set off' by ramming together two chunks of very pure uranium.

This raises the temperature so high that the hydrogen atoms will fuse together, producing enormous amounts of energy. It is the release of this energy that causes such huge destruction.

There are two problems however. First, the explosion of the bomb produces lots of radioactive material which effects disastrous changes on all living things.

## 'CLEANER'

Secondly, it costs a lot of money to purify the uranium. Most of the deadly radioactive material does in fact come from the uranium so a solution to both of these problems would be to replace the uranium 'trigger' with something cheaper and 'cleaner'.

After all, there's nothing wrong with dropping H-bombs as long as the deadly radioactive material does not blow back on us, is there?

## SCIENCE



by KEN GREEN

such a trigger has just been invented. It uses a very intense beam of light (a laser) generated from a dye solution by an 'argon bomb'.

It seems that the components of the dye laser and of the argon bomb can be reduced in size to the point where they can be fitted into a small casing that can be delivered as easily as a conventional bomb.

Even the smallest and poorest of nations might be able to make a 'laser H-bomb'. These bombs will be 'cleaner' than ordinary H-bombs but still 500 times 'dirtier' than the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima. But there are much more immed-

iate problems regarding the spread of nuclear weapons. The number of nuclear power plants producing electricity has increased rapidly since 1956 when the first such plant was opened.

These plants can produce, as a side line, a material which can be used as an alternative to uranium in H-bombs, namely plutonium. Israel produces five kilograms of plutonium per year — enough to make one Nagasaki-type bomb every year.

## PROMISE

It has been predicted that by 1980 enough plutonium will have been produced in the world to make over 10,000 warheads of the Nagasaki type. Of course, it is not certain that those countries possessing the necessary plutonium will actually produce any such bombs (although 20 could) but with the world as it is who can say for sure?

And it is certain that the signing of a bit of paper like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Pact, saying you promise not to develop an H-bomb, is no guarantee that such a promise will be carried out.

In fact a number of countries

have not signed the Pact (in particular China, France, Israel, South Africa and India).

But the story gets even darker. A way has now been found to make pure uranium for the 'trigger' much more cheaply. Britain, West Germany and Holland have signed an agreement to set up a plant to make pure uranium by the new method.

Needless to say, these three countries and the others who are also developing the method have protested their own innocence as regards sinister purposes — they only want the pure uranium for civil electricity production.

Can such protestations of innocence be believed? If the raw materials for H-bomb production and their triggering devices are becoming increasingly available, then the danger of their use also increases.

So far all attempts to solve the problems of nuclear proliferation have merely been pinpricks on the surface of the situation.

As socialists we must go deeper and question not the morality of nuclear weapons but the social systems in which such monstrosities can be conceived and



# The grab motive that devastates our lives...

by LAURIE FLYNN

ON HIS RECENT American trip, Harold Wilson offered his old buddy Richard Nixon a 'special relationship' so that their nations could get together on the two great problems of our time: race relations and pollution, the destruction of our natural environment.

The Labour government's racialist ban on immigration effectively cleared the way for the ranting of the Powellites. Now our Harold has served notice that he intends to repeat this success in pastures new.

As we all know, when he moves, he moves swiftly. As a result, since his return, the pollution problem has been debated in parliament and the personnel for a permanent Royal Commission on the matter will be announced shortly.

All of a sudden our masters have hit upon the despoliation of our lives. We must be very careful not to dismiss the discussion just because we do not trust those who started it.

Roughly the background is this. Some years ago, Rachel Carson published a little book called *The Silent Spring*.

She said that the use of chemical pest-killers in farming was finishing off man's natural allies along with the pests. Birds and beasts were being exterminated and soon spring would indeed be silent.

DDT prevents the formation of calcium. One of the results of its use in farming is that eggshells become dramatically weaker.

## Hammering

Food, too, is taking a hammering, with god knows what getting into it in the pursuit of high yields for high profit. Some commentators even suggested that there would soon be no one around to hear the silence of that silent spring.

A clear cut example of the human implications of the techniques of big business farming lies in the use of anti-biotics to fatten up meat and poultry. As a result, people develop resistances to the anti-biotics in their food.

If hospitalised, from a quite unrelated illness, they are found to have a mysterious immunity to the healing power of those self-same anti-biotics. Sometimes they meet an equally mysterious death.

Perhaps the most dramatic case of the moment is the strike of the Californian grape workers. Mainly



California grape pickers: they lose hair, fingernails and lives through the use of pesticides

Mexican immigrants, their five-year old strike demands a ban on the use of such pesticides.

After five years — including four of government financed strike-breaking by buying up all the boycotted grapes — the bosses thought they might agree to some sort of increase in the basic wage, even union recognition. But talks broke down on the question of pesticides.

Californian grape workers lose their hair, their fingernails and their lives as a result of their continual contact with these pesticides. Needless to say, such crimes are not classified as the logical product of capitalist farming.

It may be that if and when there is some temporary conclusion to this five-year struggle, these crimes will be officially camouflaged as 'accidents'.

Some workers will receive a few pennies compensation if they lose the required number of fingernails. America's moneysharks will thump their chests in reforming pride and other workers will continue to lose their hair and their lives.

In some of its sectors, agriculture is consumed by a need for vast yields to satisfy the grab-motive. When it is not, big business agriculture is concerned to avoid American or British overproduction which would sadly upset the market price.

In Britain, the Milk Marketing Board pours millions of gallons of milk it has purchased down disused Cornish tin mines. One theory is that this cuts down the freight charges for not giving aid to the world's hungry.

America has a more advanced form of disorganisation. Vast government grants — financed by the poor, the hungry and the various other sections of the American working class — are doled out to the big farmers to make it worth their while not to grow anything.

But side by side with an agriculture consumed with profit-hunger and other forms of madness, there operates another monster: industry.

It is this that the press and the TV see as the final threat. Industrial waste is consuming us, we have 10 years to live.

The machine has taken charge and it's all Bond Street to a packet of Woodbines that we've had it. Our cities are being made into gas chambers by exhaust and industrial fumes. Our technology is out of control.

## Miserable

First we must register surprise at this sudden discovery of the filthy conditions of our lives.

Vast sections of the world's population have long been aware of the miserable conditions of their lives, have known slums and shanties, have been maimed by industrial 'accidents', struck down by industrial diseases, slaughtered by poverty, starvation and war.

They have struggled relentlessly over the last 150 years to get themselves out of just such conditions, although they have not yet successfully concluded their fight.

Of course, it's not our technology which is out of control. We produce it and so can change it.

It is not production itself which is killing us but its social goals, the method and style of production which inevitably accompany the relentless pursuit of private profit and the endless accumulation of capital, the prime purposes of capitalism.



one stage revolutionising man's relationship with nature, proceeds without any concern for social production. It is an anachronism, overripe for replacement by communism, the superior and truly human form of society which will issue from a workers' state.

Since it has no concern for production for use and need, the normal state of capitalism is a highly organised form of chaos. Contemptuous of man, it is no surprise that it should be contemptuous of nature.

It can never be reformed. An economy cannot just switch production for war to production to combat poverty and scarcity. The society itself must be reconstructed and revolutionised.

Capitalism must waste in its mad quest for the accumulation of capital through private profit. It must tax the working class to pay for its vast indulgence in permanent terror and violence. It can never reconstruct itself in a fundamentally different fashion.

Capitalist production does not reign unchallenged, the mole of revolution digs deep. When, after many years, the readers and writers of *Socialist Worker* (and other papers like it) have succeeded in their struggle to build a mass revolutionary party — that vital excavator which will enable us to reach the daylight and bury the stinking system of capitalist production relations forever — there will be no pause for self-congratulation.

Even the morrow of a successful revolution will be an occasion of renewed activity. We will need to begin to move towards a total alteration of our relationship with nature.

## Humanise

For the first time in history there will be a human nature, neither above nor beneath man. We will humanise nature in our journey to humanise ourselves.

As Leon Trotsky wrote in 1924: 'The present location of mountains and rivers, fields and greens, steppe, forest and maritime coasts, should by no means be considered as final. Man has already carried out some far from negligible changes in nature's map. But these are only school-boyish essays in comparison with what is to come.'

'If faith could only promise to move mountains, technology, which takes nothing on faith, will really pull them down and shift them. Hitherto it has done this only for industrial commercial purposes (mines and tunnels).'

'In the future it will do it on an incomparably wider scale, in accordance with comprehensive productive-artistic plans. Man will make a new inventory of mountains and rivers. He will seriously and more than once amend nature.'

'He will eventually reshape the earth to his taste. . . and we have no reason to fear that his taste will be poor.'

The story goes that we are killing ourselves by our industry and our technology. It is not ours. It can be, and we can lay down different social goals as soon as workers seize the power.

'Our' rivers are indeed poisoned, 'our' countryside raped and ravaged. So too are our people, the victims of terrible mental illnesses, industrial diseases and injuries in our artificially shortened lives.

Capitalist industry and agriculture are no longer progressive. At every level the possibility exists to eliminate every 'accident' whether it be to a hillside or to a human limb.

If we rack our memories we will remember an accident to a man-made mountain of waste. A gigantic coal-tip above the village of Aberfan slid into the valley below, engulfing the village school and killing 116 children and 28 adults.

A 'disaster'? Even the word is politically loaded. No, no disaster, but rather the inevitable result of our system of production.

Men had put the tip where it was, many dying to dig it from the bowels of the earth. Other men knew it was likely to collapse, for they had studied its structure.

After the slaughter men are now flattening it, a construction firm got an unexpected and profitable contract and doubtless building workers could be maimed and injured in ending the monument to private profit that is Aberfan.

Aberfan was 'pollution', Aberfan was 'industrial damage' or any other of the obscene veils for the systematic rape of man in nature.

Aberfan and other so-called disasters are just one aspect of the devastation of our lives which — through the social revolution — will become boundlessly lovely, capable of raising vast sculptures of mental and physical delight out of a landscape which sometimes seems able only to stifle and to kill.

Capitalist production, while at

COMING SOON!  
**The Employers' Offensive-**  
**productivity deals**  
**and how to fight them**  
 by TONY CLIFF

All trade union militants and socialists will need this important study. Watch for special pre-publication offer

PLUTO PRESS

# GEC axe chops Kent factory in big dole queue area

SW Reporter

1400 PRODUCTION WORKERS, many of them women, at the Morphy Richards plant at St Mary Cray, Kent, face a bleak summer if plans for the spring closures are pushed through by the board of the General Electric Company, the monopoly that owns Morphy Richards.

There are also plans to close another Morphy Richards factory at Sittingbourne, near Canterbury.

The unexpected announcement of the lay-off, which was made by Mr David Wright, works manager of British Domestic Appliances, GEC's household goods division, has been attacked by the Morphy Richards shop stewards and by other local trade unionists.

The official reason for the closures is an 'excess manufacturing capacity' of the Kent factories coupled with the

more than 3000 men are on the dole.

Morphy Richards has promised that a third, smaller factory at Ruxley, near Swanley, will remain open at full production. But as this plant relies on St Mary Cray for all its jigs, design work and road-haulage facilities, this is seen by many employees as an empty promise.

## APPEALED

An action committee has been formed of Morphy Richards' stewards and of workers from various small local firms who rely on Morphy Richards for sub-contract work. They have appealed to all sections of the local labour movement for help in the coming fight and have produced a leaflet setting out the full implications of the redundancies for the area.

of closures that have become a permanent feature of the industrial scene in North Kent.

Since AEI Woolwich laid off their 4000 workers in 1967, more than 75 factories have closed and moved. In many cases these redundancies have been dictated by 'rationalisation schemes' operated by large companies such as AEI-GEC, Unilever and Reed Paper.

The need for the formation of strong combine committees to form a united front against redundancies and share-outs must be fought for in union branches, districts and shop committees.

All donations to the Morphy Richards shop stewards should be sent to Mr W. G. Staples, Morphy Richards, St Mary Cray, Kent.





# Rag trade revolts against bad pay

by Vince Hall

LEEDS HAS SEEN almost as many strikes and walkouts in its tailoring firms in the last three weeks as there have been since the war.

The first major strike was at the giant firm of Montague Burton. Later ones occurred at John Collier, who were supported by the John Peters group, and there were walkouts at several other groups.

The strikes were over money, but behind them lies a great amount of discontent, both with the employers and with the union. Like the rest of the lower-paid workers, the tailoring and clothing workers have had just about enough.

The strikes arose directly out of the recent wage negotiations in the industry. These came into force on 1 January.

The last rise had been awarded in November 1967 and had given men 3d and women 2d on the basic rate. Two years have elapsed since that small increase and tailoring wages have steadily declined in relation to the wages of other workers and compared to increases in the cost of living.

To combat this, members of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers at last year's union conference called for negotiations for a shilling rise on the hourly rate. The executive avoided a vote on the issue but agreed to back the call.

The delegates also made it clear that they were in favour of strike action if the managements refused to pay the shilling increase.

When the negotiated increase was published at the end of last year, for implementation on 1 January, workers found they had got only a 5d increase for the men and 4d for the women. There was no mention of whether the union had demanded the shilling.

In addition, the deal was linked with a productivity scheme for many workers.

## Complex

The first workers to protest were those at Montague Burton (which is not in the employers' federation) who received an extra 4d after a short strike. Other workers who have struck have been told that their management cannot go against the employers' organisation and the union.

Wage negotiations in tailoring are complex because of the different rates and the large number of firms not covered by the employers' federations. There are 10 Wage Councils covering the different parts of the industry and each contains its own employers' federation.

The firms in Leeds are part of the Ready-made and Wholesale Bespoke Tailoring Council. In this council, about half the workers are employed by members of the Clothing Manufacturers' Federation.

Traditionally, the first wage increases are agreed between the CMF and the NUTGW and this sets the tone for the rest of the industry. The union is strongest in ready-mades, where its strength is about

40 per cent and it should force the hardest bargain in theory in this sector.

It has never done this and the usual scapegoats have been the 'housewives who only work for pin-money and don't care about wages'.

A good insight into pay and conditions in the clothing industry was given by the Prices and Incomes Board Report No 110, published in April last year. It was especially revealing on the problems of female labour.

The report said that the workforce, which totalled 440,000, was mainly female, comprising 85 per cent women and 15 per cent men. Nearly half the women worked less than 32 hours, which puts them in the part-time category.

## Rethink

One of the recommendations of the PIB was that the employers should rethink on 'working conditions, greater flexibility in working hours, particularly in relation to shopping, the provision of day nurseries and help with transport to and from work'. Most clothing managements have ignored this aspect of 'labour relations'.

Conditions and pay are so bad at the moment that the turnover in work people is nearly 50 per cent every year. One shop steward told me:

'Most young girls stop here less than a month. We had a couple a few weeks back that were set on on the Monday and went for their cards on the Wednesday. The longest they've usually stopped is three months. They won't put up with it these days.'

The Department of Employment and Productivity (successor to the Ministry of Labour) commented that stoppages were 'very much less than average for manufacturing industries as a whole but 'In a weakly organised industry, poor industrial relations may manifest themselves in a high labour turnover rather than in trade disputes'. The message should be obvious to most workers.

Pay in the clothing industry is among the lowest in the country. For the ready-made council the pay and working hours for full-time men and women in 1969 were:

	men	women
hours worked	42.6	38.6
weekly pay	£20 5 7d	£11 4 9d
hourly rate	9 7d	5 10d

(PIB report)

The figures include supervisors as well. It can be seen that the average full-time male earned £9 per week more than the average full-time female but only worked four hours more.

It has been estimated that it will cost the industry well over £40 million to bridge this gap. Most of the smaller firms have said that they would rather go out of business than give equal pay.

Low pay is very common in clothing. For instance:

22 per cent of male operatives earn less than £17.  
57 per cent of ancillary workers earn less than £17.

63 per cent of female operatives (full-time) earn less than £12.

Though very low at the moment, tailoring wages are steadily declining. If 1960 is taken as 100 for the levels of wages in tailoring and other manufacturing firms, then for the two years from 1966-68, tailoring rose by only 13.5 points, while other workers got 16.8.

This differential has grown worse over the last years because there has been no major increase in pay. In 1969 men in clothing were paid £4 less than their fellow workers.

	Clothing	Others
Av hrs worked	43.1	45.8
Av wkly wage	£19 12 8d	£23 12 4d
Av hrly rate	9 1d	10 4d

(PIB report)

The employers have been trying to get round a lot of their difficulties by introducing productivity deals. Over the past 10 years the process of 'sectionalising' jobs has been pushed through quite rapidly.

At one time, many workers would 'make-through' any piece of work. In the larger firms, jobs have been broken down into the simplest operations so that a skilled cutter need only do the absolute minimum and semiskilled women machinists can do the rest.

In some firms flow work methods have been introduced with conveyor

belts and all the paraphernalia of a car factory. But this has accomplished little, since productivity only increased 17 per cent between 1961 and 1967 - well below the national average.

When productivity is mentioned many workers in clothing become cynical. They point out that they have no so-called restrictive practices to hold onto or hard-earned conditions to sell.

Payment in the industry is mainly centred around timework. Only 33 per cent of the workers are on piecework. 18 per cent are on timework with incentives and 49 per cent on straight timework.

There is very little wage 'drift' in clothing and so wages are kept down.

## Concept

In the 1970 agreement, a new concept of work based on standard times was ratified. Workers on this system of job evaluation are given a straight 20 per cent increase on the hourly rate.

It applies mainly to operatives on flow production methods. There is an increasing tendency to demote skilled men and make the whole labour force semi-skilled.

Semi-skilled women are being used to replace the traditionally skilled males. With their present low wages they also considerably dilute pay.

The new agreement helped this along by lowering the training period for women to two years. Along with this women come onto full pay as machinists at 18 while men have to wait until 21.

But even these measures have done little for productivity except altering it marginally. The Montague Burton group carried out a study on ways of saving money but found very little to save so they sacked a lot of the old management.

In the big rush of low-paid workers to get increases, the clothing workers will be at the front. The textile industry, which is very similar to tailoring, has just been staggered by a 50s claim, the biggest in 40 years.

This will make tailors fight even harder for their full £2. The strikes in some factories have been the first for more than 30 years, but the most surprising factor has been the militancy of the women. One astonished shop steward in Leeds remarked:

'I've worked in this factory for nearly 15 years and the women have never bothered about a thing. Last week they were the ones that told me that if I didn't come out of the manager's office with a definite offer then there would be trouble.'

Now that the industry has at last woken up the workers should push for full demands:

1. A full shilling or an all-out strike.
2. Equal pay for equal work for all women workers.
3. Smash the outdated Wages Councils and push for collective bargaining.
4. Set up combine committees across the industry.
5. If the union won't act, change the union.
6. Increase facilities for full and part-time women workers.
7. Oppose the productivity deal and campaign for a straight increase without strings.

## JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

ABERDEEN Pete Drummond  
19 High Street Aberdeen  
ACTON Bob Cartwright  
27 Bath Road W4  
ANGEL Barry Huggill  
154 Downham Road N1  
ASHFORD Roger Crossley  
The Schoolhouse, Crossstreet  
nr Ashford Kent  
BARNESLEY Joe Kenyon  
120 Standhill Crescent  
BATH Richard Newby  
17 Burlington Street Bath  
BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster  
128 Yardley Wood Rd B'ham 13  
BRADFORD Neil Patterson  
25 Fernhill Grove off Park Rd  
BRIGHTON Andrew Moir  
29 College Road  
BRISTOL B R Horlock  
26 Elmdale Road Bristol 8  
CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham  
12a Metcalfe Road  
CAMDEN EAST Richard Kuper  
45 Falkland Rd NW5  
CAMDEN WEST Robert MacGibbon  
22 Estell Rd NW8  
CARDIFF Nigel Walby  
35 de Burgh Street  
CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell  
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Eastworth Rd Chertsey Surrey  
CLYDEBANK Eric Duncan  
1221 Dumbarton Rd Glasgow W4  
COVENTRY Dave Edwards  
53 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon  
CRAWLEY T K O'Halloran  
42 Haroldlea Drive Horley Surrey  
CROYDON Jenny Woodhams  
26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon  
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172a Deptford High Rd SE8  
DERBY Trevor Cave  
30 Prospect St Alfreton Derbyshire  
DONCASTER Vaughan Harrington  
28 Rockingham Rd Wheatley Doncaster  
DURHAM Jane Mackay  
15 Wanless Toe Durham City  
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2 Oster Toe Southcoate Rd E17  
EDINBURGH Brian Lavery  
41 East London Street

ENFIELD Ian Birchall  
109 Croyland Rd N9  
ERITH Paul Wildish  
30 Poplar Mount Belvedere Kent  
EXETER Granville Williams  
Town Tenement Farm  
Clyst Hydon Cullompton Devon  
FOLKESTONE Helen McConnell  
Flat 3 54 Radnor Park Road  
FULHAM Brian Rose  
49 Schubert Road SW15  
GLASGOW North - Ian Mooney  
4 Dalross Passage W1  
South - S Morris 4 Elphinstone  
Street Glasgow SW1  
GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters  
1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex  
HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker  
36 Golden Road NW5  
HARLOW Hugh Kerr  
70 Joiners Field Harlow Essex  
HARROW Kevin Simms  
56 Salisbury Road  
HAVERING Terry Ward  
91 Heath Park Rd Gidea Pk  
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD  
John Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane  
HORNSEY Chris Russell  
131 Alexandra Park Rd N22  
HULL Dave Gate 90 Bristol Rd  
ILFORD Roger Richards  
181 Richmond Road Ilford  
IPSWICH Brian Mulvey  
104 Westbourne Road  
KILBURN John Sullivan  
270 Elgin Avenue W9  
KINGSTON John Owen  
4 Sandown Court Esher  
LAMBETH Dick North  
35 Downton Avenue SW2  
LANCASTER Don Milligan  
56 Norfolk Street  
LEICESTER Barry Thomas  
39 Lower Hastings Street  
LEEDS Vince Hall  
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LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss  
82 Blackheath Road  
MANCHESTER - J Sutton  
11a Rowan Ave Walley Range M16:  
Brian White 49b Crescent Park  
Heaton Norris Stockport  
MERSEYSIDE Janice Humphrey  
96 Princess Rd Liverpool 8

MERTON Pam Kelsey  
47 Richmond Avenue SW20  
NEWCASTLE Tony Corcoran  
26 Lesbury Rd Newcastle 6  
NORTHAMPTON Mick Bunting  
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NORWICH Miss J Clarke  
81 Drayton Rd  
OXFORD Steve Bolchover  
181 Ifley Road  
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PRESTON Pauline Hill  
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RICHMOND Nicky Landau  
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SELBY John Charlton  
12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks  
SHEFFIELD Rick Osborn  
159a Rustlings Rd Sheffield S11 7AD  
SOUTHAMPTON Nigel Curry  
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SWANSEA Rose Bussey  
11 Alexandra Terrace Brynhill  
TEESSIDE Phil Semp  
72 Mersey Rd Redcar:  
Rob Clay 33 Pasture Lane  
Lazenby Teesside  
TOTTENHAM Mel Norris  
30 Buller Road N17  
WANDSWORTH Mark Hutton  
87 Broderick Road  
Wandsworth Common SW17  
WATFORD Paul Russell  
61 Carpenders Avenue  
Carpenders Park  
WIGAN Ray Challinor  
34 Whiteside Ave Hindley  
YORK Bill Kaye  
20 Newton Terrace York  
VICTORIA Tony Dunne  
14 Carlisle Mansions  
Carlisle Place SW1

## SLL backs down on debate

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS have received the following letter from the Socialist Labour League:

We have considered your letter of February 12, in which you invite the Socialist Labour League to debate with your organisation on productivity bargaining.

We consider this to be a major question of principle, as are the other differences between our organisations. To clarify them is a question of urgency for the workers' movement. We have therefore decided to press forward immediately our

debate in London is entirely inadequate for this purpose.

We shall in fact devote a series of articles in the Workers' Press in the next few weeks to a criticism of your theories, programme and policy. This will help you to see the importance we attach to these questions.

You will of course be quite at liberty to reproduce in your own paper the material in these articles, some of which you will no doubt find familiar. - Yours sincerely, M. Banda, Assistant National Secretary.

Strip away the absurd threats and



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



# Socialist Worker

## SWANSEA KEEPS FORD PARITY FIGHT ON BOIL

by Sabby Sagall and Les Pick

**THE FIGHT** for parity at Ford goes on! The determination of the Swansea workers and the support for them in Dagenham and Halewood has wiped the smug smiles from the faces of the bosses and their press.

The fight for equal rates with Midlands car workers has been led all along the line by the militant stewards. Although the stewards have made mistakes, their leadership remains the most vital element in the struggle.

The union situation has dramatically changed at Ford. Now the full-time officials tail behind the stewards. It is the shop-floor leaders who set the pace.

What a contrast to the shilly-shallying of the TGWU's Moss Evans, anxious to get the Swansea men back to work.

What a contrast to the disgraceful behaviour of AEF President Scanlon, who vetoed his union supporting the Swansea strike.



Hugh Wallace (left), Swansea chief convenor, at talks on Tuesday

### Threat

The company's offer of £4 without strings was the biggest it had ever made and the largest in the history of engineering.

It was only because £10 had been demanded and backed by the threat of indefinite strike action that the company conceded the rise.

And the stoppages at Halewood and Dagenham this week in solidarity with the Swansea Ford strikers shows that basic trade union attitudes were not swamped on Sunday, as the millionaire press has gleefully tried to suggest.

The Swansea workers are adamant that they will not return unless they receive definite guarantees that talks on the full £10 increase will be resumed.

One Swansea militant pointed out that workers at his plant will not receive the full £4, which is to be based on a 40 hour week. The basic week at Swansea is 37½ hours.

The company has claimed that some production workers will get an increase of £5 15s — but a 60 hour week will have to be worked.

### Worried

The management were distinctly worried by the campaign for parity started at last November's Ford shop stewards' conference in Coventry.

It is clear that had the militancy of the stewards and the members been built and sustained, the £10 could have been won. The Swansea workers have given a lead to the rest of the combine in carrying out the resolutions for strike action in support of the demand for parity.

But from the reports of a number of militants at Dagenham, there has been a failure in many sections to develop real communication on a consistent basis between stewards and rank and file. There are certainly hard working, dedicated militants who hold regular shop meetings where they report back on the latest developments and attempt to stimulate discussion.

They appear, however, to be relatively few. Far too many stewards

make only token attempts to mobilise the shop floor. They see the rank and file merely as apathetic and narrow-minded. They fail to see them as also having a potential awareness and militancy which it is their task to draw out and develop.

While they may have good intentions towards their members, their conception of struggle is that of enlightened leaders guiding the ignorant masses, acting on behalf of the workers rather than getting the workers to act for themselves.

During the year since last year's strike, only four leaflets on parity were issued by the Dagenham shop stewards' committee. Apart from the two mass meetings called to vote on the strike, there was only one mass meeting of the membership, at which most of the platform speeches were from a number of full-time union officials and a Labour MP.

### Fear

Only one convenor spoke from the platform, no time was allowed for contributions from the floor and only 10 minutes for questions.

This attitude to the rank and file leads to mistrust of them. This is expressed in the fear some leading stewards have of calling 'too many' mass meetings.

The workers develop a half-expressed resentment at the relative lack of consultation and discussion and a sense that they are being manipulated.

This attitude reflected the extent to which many stewards are out of touch with their members. This would seem to be borne out by the shop stewards' meeting at Dagenham last Thursday, when the vote for strike action was 117-21. Many stewards are reported to have said that their men were solidly behind them.

We must remember, of course, that the problem of rank and file confidence is greater at a firm like Ford, which has always been on Measured Day Work and where wage negotiations, until a year ago, were exclusively in the hands of full-time national officials. After last year's strike, five out of 21 trade union places on the national negotiating committee were allocated to convenors.

In contrast, at firms like British Leyland, which has a piecework system of payment, stewards have been able through local bargaining to push up their members' wage-rates over the years to well above the nationally negotiated levels.

With stewards having the power to negotiate wage rates, much closer contact was developed between

them and the rank and file.

The lesson of this for Ford militants is to move even further beyond the present, re-organised NJNC and agitate for the creation of negotiating machinery consisting entirely of direct rank and file representatives. Trade union officials should be on the body only in an advisory capacity, without voting rights.

There is a danger that Ford's management will be encouraged by the rejection of the strike call by two-thirds of the workers at Dagenham and Halewood to try to introduce speed-up and to enforce the penalty clauses in a more serious fashion.

Sunday's votes were a set-back but the issue of parity is clearly alive. What is needed is for Ford militants in the coming months to establish links with militants throughout the motor industry so the battle for parity becomes a wider one.

The aim should be the creation of a strong industry-wide combine committee. With this as the basis of the strategy, the mobilisation of Ford workers should be undertaken around those demands necessary to make parity a real and sustained victory against the bosses:

- Mutuality on all work standards.
- No reduction in the labour force.
- Five days' work or five days' pay.
- Abolition of penalty clauses.
- Equal pay for women without strings.

## Palestine guerrillas battle for power with feudal Hussein

by Chris Harman

THE MIDDLE EAST has been in the headlines for the last week in two ways. Firstly, with the bombing of civilian targets near Cairo by the Israeli airforce. Secondly, with the confrontation in Jordan between the guerrillas and the government.

The reason for the bombing of Arab civilians by the Israelis is clear. They are determined to show that they are the major power in the Middle East and that if there is going to be any peace settlement, it has to be on their terms.

They want to force the Arab governments to accept Israeli domination of the Palestine area, with no possibility of refugees of 1948 or 1967 ever returning to their traditional homeland.

But at the same time the very success of the Israelis continues to undermine the old Arab governments.

Among the mass of the population there seems to be growing resentment with both the old feudal regimes, such as that of Hussein in Jordan, and with the newer middle-class ones, such as that of Nasser, as neither proves capable of either defending its own population or securing any hope of the Palestinian refugees returning home.

The interests of the ruling classes in both cases produce inefficient and corrupt armies, more concerned with keeping their own population in order than with fighting the enemy. The successes of the Palestinian guerrillas have served to underline the faults of the various Arab governments.

In Jordan, particularly around Amman, the capital, the strength and popularity of the guerrilla organisations has grown to such an extent that they virtually seem to constitute a 'state within a state', almost completely outside the jurisdiction of Hussein's government.

For a period, Hussein has been able to tolerate this situation. On the one hand the guerrillas did provide him with some sort of weapon to use against the Israelis, who have, after all, taken half 'his' kingdom.

### Pressure from US

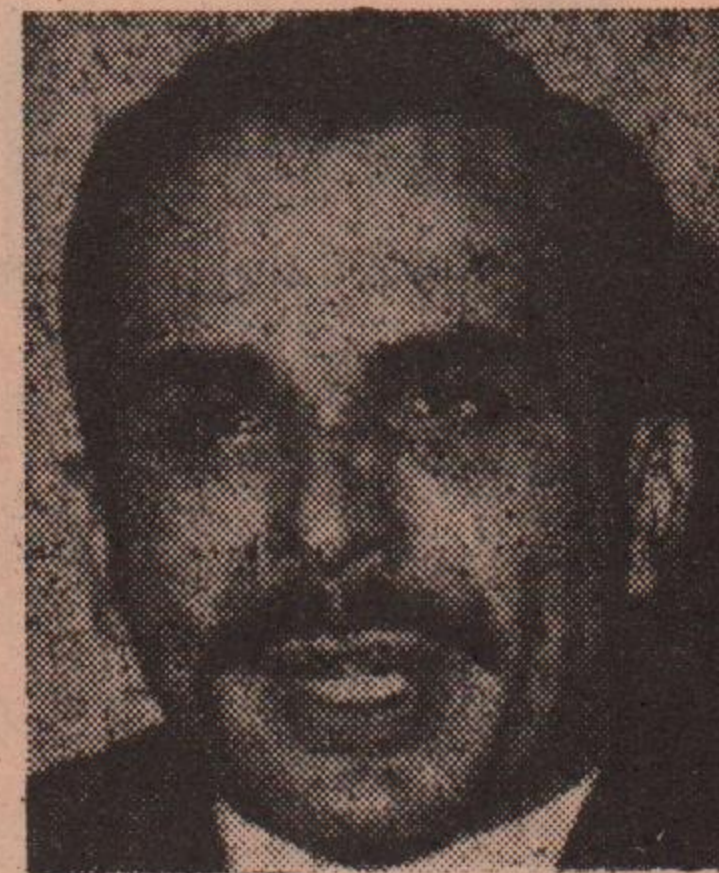
On the other hand, the most important guerrilla organisations, such as Fatah, based as they are upon money from middle-class and even feudal supporters of the Palestinians throughout the Middle East, have made it clear that they are not opposed to any of the existing Arab regimes.

They only hold that these regimes cannot liberate Palestine. But things force Hussein to try to bring this situation to an end.

Firstly, the increasing pressure from the US (and probably also Russia) for a 'peaceful solution' by which Israel and the Arab governments would come to an agreement at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs.

Before he could accept this, Hussein would have to destroy the power of the guerrillas in Jordan.

Secondly, the fact that among the guerrillas themselves are those who stand for revolution throughout the Middle East. In particular, the Marxist group, the Democratic Popular Front, argues that Palestine will



HUSSEIN: miscalculated

never be liberated by guerrilla warfare alone, but only after the revolutionary establishment of popular, genuinely socialist, regimes elsewhere in the Arab world.

Only in this way could those imperialist interests that back Israel be weakened.

So the liberation of Palestine only makes sense as part of the establishment of a united socialist Middle East, where the minority rights of Jews and Kurds would be guaranteed. This leads the PFLP to put the main emphasis on propaganda and arms training among the mass of refugee Palestinian workers and peasants, to enable them to protect themselves against the Arab regimes as well as Israel.

The fighting in Amman last week seems to have begun with an attempt by Hussein to put an end to these 'subversive' activities of left-wing guerrillas. He seems to have had the support at first of the Egyptian leaders.

He may also have hoped that the 'non-political' guerrilla organisations — especially Fatah, whose leader Arafat had just gone to Moscow — would aid him by taking no action.

According to the Financial Times (11 February): 'Security forces were called out on Monday in a show of force with tanks, armoured cars and road blocks after swooping on guerrillas of the left wing Popular Democratic Front.'

But Hussein miscalculated. The mass of the guerrillas would not tolerate such actions.

By the end of last week they controlled five of the seven hills that constitute Amman. If Hussein survives, it can only be by permission of the leaders of the main guerrilla organisations like Fatah.

Such a situation can only strengthen the forces which see socialist revolution as the only solution for the Middle East.

## Dockers' union turns down new prod deal pay offer

Alf Waters (NASD)  
Alan Sutton (TGWU)

ON 13 FEBRUARY the Transport and General Workers' Union officially rejected the most recent productivity deal proposals of the London port employers.

The proposals were a re-hash of last November's deal which was clearly rejected by a substantial majority of dockers in a secret ballot.

November 1969 Offer		
	Category	
	'A'	'B'
Minimum Pay	£33 10	£25 0
Contingency Payment	£2 10	£2 10

February 1970 Offer		
	Category	
	'A'	'B'
Minimum Pay	£29 0 10	£25 0
Possible Bonus	£7 11	£7 11

('C' men on non-productive jobs. would only get the minimum basic.)

The latest proposal offers a working week of 31¼ hours, on a two-shift basis: 7am to 2pm and 2pm to 9pm alternating weekly. Both deals carry work study, flexibility and mobility to the utmost limits.

The maximum gang strength on conventional work would be 10 men, to replace the basic unit of 12 (according to the job, this varies between 12 and 17 men at present). The minimum gang strength on mechanical operations using a fork-lift truck would be three men.

### Rejected

The TGWU officially rejected this new offer without even taking it back to the rank and file — presumably even the officials who are sometimes ready to accept deals which the rank and file resent, were disgusted with this 'all purpose' package.

Perhaps the employers have made this new offer in order to make the November offer seem more attractive — they have said they will revert to the November offer if the February one is rejected.

The union's original demand stands: for £37 10 for 31¼ hours, plus 5 per cent incentive bonus. If any of the proposals — including the union's — were implemented,

they would drastically reduce the labour force in a few months.

It is vital that the rank and file demands:

- All gang strengths to be maintained.
- No increase in the present system of flexibility.
- 30-hour working week.
- No shift work.
- No penalty clauses.

Widespread mechanisation in the docks over the last two years has meant that on some operations a complete ship with 4000 tons of cargo can be discharged in eight hours instead of five and a half days by conventional working.

Dockers do not want to stop progress: all they want as producers of the wealth is to determine the rate of progress and the allocation of the benefits.

### IRISHMEN JAILED

Eamonn Smullen (45) and Thomas Gerald Doherty (27) were found guilty at Leeds Assizes last week for conspiring together and with persons unknown to buy firearms in contravention of the Firearms Act. Smullen got eight years' jail and Doherty four years. They are appealing. Socialist Worker expresses its solidarity with the two comrades.

## NOTICES

MERTON IS lecture series. Sun 22 Feb 8pm William Morris Hall, Wimbledon Broadway. Spkr Steve Marks on The Labour Theory of Value.

SATURDAY evening 28 March: large pub hall required for IS conference social to hold approx 250. Must have jukebox. Phone 739 1878.

CONFED of shipbuilding and engineering unions: meeting on equal pay for women. Friends House, Euston Rd, 7.30 pm, 25 Feb.

IS and Northern Ireland: debate between Sean Matganna and John Palmer. Tues 24 Feb 8pm, Town Hall, Dyne Rd NW6. (nr K1/turn tube). Admission free.