

# Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

176 20 JUNE 1970 4d

## FIGHT TORIES ALL THE WAY

### Labour policies aided swing to the right

**THE TORIES'** election victory is a set-back for the working-class movement. No trade unionist, no socialist can be pleased at the return of the traditional, hard-faced party of big business. And it is a Tory Party with a difference – a party that has been swung hard to the right under the impact of the ugly racist policies of Enoch Powell.

The reason for the Tory victory is not hard to find. Working-class voters were asked to turn out and support a Labour government that had frozen their wages, attacked their unions, eaten away at the social services, allowed rents, taxes, fares and prices to skyrocket and forced the highest June unemployment figures for 30 years.

Is it any wonder that a substantial number of voters thought that if they were to have Tory policies they might as well have a Tory government to operate them?

It is the Labour Party in office which prepared the ground for the menacing swing to the right in politics.

It has created a climate of opinion in which militant trade unionists are held up as the scapegoats for the chaos and inefficiency of the capitalist big business system.

It is the Labour Party in office which surrendered to the obscene demands of the racials, breaking every pledge in its frenzy to clamp down on black people coming to Britain. It is these black immigrants who provide a convenient scapegoat for Labour's failure to tackle the problems of housing and the social services.

#### Props up

The Labour government abandoned all pretences to being a 'reforming' party, campaigning for social justice and fair shares for all. The party is tied to the capitalist system and when that system is in difficulty it does its best to prop it up.

The experience of the last six years has shown that this propping up operation can only be carried out at the expense of the working class.

It is not surprising then that working class voters showed little enthusiasm for the party this week. In most areas the percentage of voters decreased and this apathy for Labour helped the Tories back to office.

The danger of the Tory victory is that it will have a demoralising effect upon the most militant workers who have been leading the struggle on the shop floor in recent

years. Socialists must step up their industrial activity in an effort to stave off this demoralisation which would open the way for an even bigger offensive by the government on the labour movement.

And a weak and demoralised working class would allow the 'lefts' in the Labour Party and trade unions to regain the leadership of the movement and channel it in safe, parliamentary, 'out with the Tories' campaigns.

Socialists must emphasise that, once the dust of the election has settled, the real fight goes on.

Industrial militants face a tough period of struggle. International competition is getting more cut-throat and, with a recession in the United States, the Tory government will turn the screws on the workers.

The trade union and labour movement must prepare to mobilise to fight any threat to its wages, conditions and legal rights. That mobilisation needs to be based on a clear-cut political programme that challenges not just the Tory government but the whole capitalist system.

#### Set the pace

Part of the strategy needed to fight the coming struggles must be the maximum unity of all workers against the racist threat of Enoch Powell. Powell has set the pace in the election and there is little doubt that he will set the pace for the government.

The labour movement must make it crystal clear that it will fight Powellism and its fascist hangers-on every inch of the way. Again this must be a political challenge, pointing out that only the total

transformation of society can solve the problems of unemployment and slum housing.

In the short-term, white trade unionists and socialists must give full support to black people who organise to prevent the growing attacks on them by the racist right – a trend which Powell's victory will encourage and develop.

The main lesson for the left is the total, disastrous and abysmal failure of 'reformism', of tinkering with the capitalist system by the Labour Party. Parliament is a charade. No real advances for the working class can be won there.

#### Miserable showing

The miserable showing by the Communist Party should force more and more of its members to question the party's allegiance to winning seats in parliament while its industrial base declines.

The Tories must be fought every inch of the way. The best way to do that is to begin to lay the basis for a real socialist party of the working class, battling not for parliamentary 'power' but for the overthrow of the big business system and the profiteers and landlords.

Yes, the election is a defeat. We face serious threats to our rights and civil liberties from a confident anti-union, racist Tory government.

It is vital that the labour movement go on the attack, not the defensive. The fight for workers' power is the only answer to the miserable surrender of the Labour government to the demands of the capitalists which paved the way for the return of the class enemy this week.

### BY THE EDITOR



Powell – his racist, anti-working class policies set the pace in the election aided by the surrender of the Labour Party

## Prepare to fight menace of Powellism

**MR PETE CARTER**, the Communist Party's candidate in Wolverhampton South West, was beaten unconscious by stewards at an Enoch Powell meeting in the constituency on Tuesday night.

Here is the real face of Powellism. Surrounded and protected by skinheads and ultra-Tory thugs, Powell spits out his poison against blacks, Irish Catholics, teachers, nurses, trade unionists and socialists.

His words are violent. His attitude is violent. His less articulate supporters ape him by using physical violence against his opponents.

make-believe enemies who stand for the 'violent overthrow' of the system. But it is Powell and the extreme right-wing who deliberately provoke violence.

Powell has been condemned by all sections of the establishment this week for damaging the election hopes of their traditional political party, the Tories. In particular, The Times launched a tremendous tirade against Powell this week, saying that he would never hold office in this country again.

Perhaps. But let no one be lulled into a false sense of security by the attitude of the ruling class.

This week they condemn Powell. Faced by a severe crisis and a confident and militant working class

an even more extreme right-winger willing and prepared to do a job on the organised labour movement.

We do not know Mr Powell's ambitions. He is unlikely to win the leadership of the Tory Party in parliament, which is more 'moderate' than its constituency rank and file.

#### CLIMATE

He may form a parliamentary rump with the Paisleyites and Unionists from Northern Ireland. But that is speculation.

What is clear is that although Powell himself is not a fascist he is creating a climate of opinion in

which the real fascists and Nazi organisations like the National Front can develop and grow.

Powell could pave the way for the creation of a mass fascist movement in Britain. Such a movement would pose a terrible threat to every working person in this country.

We must not allow Powell to divert us from the main task on hand – the fight against the Tory government and its own more subtle and restrained attacks on the trade union movement.

But we must be on our guard against the growth of the far right and we must combat that growth with all our strength.

Wedgwood Benn is right. Powell does conjure up a vision of Dachau and Belsen.

Unlike Mr Benn, we intend to mobilise working people to stop the merchants of hate from building their concentration camps here.

#### IS NORTH LONDON MEETING

**Michael Kidron**  
on the US  
financial crisis

Tuesday 23 June

8pm Duke of Edinburgh pub  
Fonthill Road N4  
(off Seven Sisters Rd - 2 mins  
Finsbury Park stn)



# Nigeria: oil profits soar

**A NEW FAMINE is facing the Ibo people in defeated Biafra. Stockpiles of food are running desperately low. The harvest of gari and yam, due in August, is grossly inadequate.**

Even in pre-war years, this harvest was hardly sufficient to stop malnutrition. Added to this, the Ibos are finding it hard to buy food since all 'rebel' currency has been outlawed by the Nigerians.

A high official in East Central State (Iboland) has publicly warned that 'more people could die from starvation in the former rebel enclave than the total number of victims in the 30 month civil war if the present shortage of money for relief work continues.'

To make matters worse, relief organisation is being handed over from the experienced Nigerian Red Cross to a newly formed National Rehabilitation Commission.

Mass starvation is increasing due to the now permanent refugee presence in Iboland. The area has been overcrowded and dependent on the import of foodstuffs since the beginning of the century.

This was the cause of the mass Ibo migration to other parts of Nigeria which ended in pogrom, the flight to the East and secession of Biafra in 1967.

Only a very few favoured ex-Biafrans have resettled in the North and West. Even nearer home, in Port Harcourt, once predominantly manned by militant Ibo workers, the federal-inclined River State government is preventing them from returning to work.

A total ban exists on Ibo migration into the River State, where the big foreign firms, led by Shell-BP, have gleefully rushed to train people whom they expect to be more obedient and naive in their relation to the oil bosses.

The rebellious Ibo, who have a long history of militancy in the docks and who openly attacked oil installations during the war, are being blacklisted. That means starvation.

## UNDERWRITING

The lack of money for relief, so sadly lamented by the hypocritical federal heads, notably that great humanitarian and 'ex-socialist' Finance Minister, Awolowo, is not reflected in his plans for expenditure in 1970-71.

The increase in Nigerian revenue has been made possible by Britain underwriting a great deal of the arms debt incurred in the war.

New oil wells are daily popping out of the sea in the Gulf of Biafra and the old mid-West outside ex-Biafran territory. Shell-BP are going ahead with production from these wells and those in the secessionist area at full speed.

The increase in tax on petroleum profits is expected to net the government £30m in the next year. An extra £8m alone is expected out of excise duties on petrol and diesel oil from the re-opened refinery in the old Biafran territory.

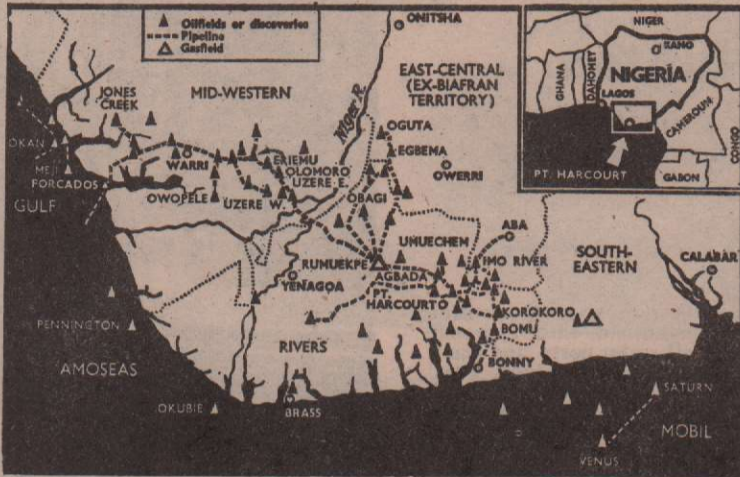
But this money is not being used to help the starving Ibo millions. Neither is it being used to resettle the refugees. They can only starve.

Instead the table of increased expenditure made possible by the oil tax reads:

£2m to universities for training staff to meet national needs.

# while the Ibos starve...

by WENDA CLENAGHEN



£3.6m to the police.  
£1/2m for new diplomatic missions.  
£20m for the ministry of defence.

This increased expenditure reflects the insecurity of the Nigerian ruling class. The money is being used to consolidate its position, which has become shakier in peace time.

The universities train and elevate the elite. Education for the masses is ignored. There are still no free secondary schools except for a pitifully few scholarships.

Money for the police reflects growing civil discontent. Even during the war, strikes in the federal area were frequent until made illegal by General Gowon in 1968.

Trigger-happy police shot and killed demonstrating cocoa farmers in Ibadan in March 1969. Nigerian labour, which in 1964 erupted in a general strike over a minimum wage, remains a constant critic of the gaudy rich living of the Nigerian upper class.

Although the Biafran situation deflected the workers from the class struggle, peace has brought back the old problem of heavy unemployment.

The £20m increase in the defence budget is motivated by the ruling class's attempt to prevent serious civil disorder, which would have revolutionary results. The rulers cannot afford to demobilise the army, even in peace.

If they did, the number of men, many of them armed, flooding back into the grossly overcrowded shanty cities, where before the war unemployment ran at 26 per cent in the

East, 34 per cent in the West and 10 per cent in the North, would produce a situation which the government could not control.

But it would not produce a revolution of the kind that socialists look forward to. Although the Nigerian working class is fairly well organised and has in the past displayed a high level of militancy, it was not the workers who volunteered for the army to crush the rebel Biafrans.

The army absorbed the large numbers of permanently unemployed men who have only recently been forced off the land and know nothing about workers' organisation. Only if the organised working class can contact and enlist these people could chaos be diverted in the event of mass demobilisation.

## INCENTIVE

The Nigerian ruling class is aware of these implications and so increases rather than decreases the defence budget. An added incentive to increase the budget may be the fear of a Biafran resurgence.

Perhaps there is hushed-up guerrilla resistance. Perhaps the war has opened up other sensitive minority wounds.

For example, the Tiv people have complained that they were doing the Federals' dirty work by fighting in the front line. They feel that this was a tactic by their Northern neighbours to weaken them.

Perhaps, even more ominously, the Yoruba elite minority, led by Awolowo, fears that the Northerners represented by Gowon and his clique will do an Ibo on them, since



A relief worker feeds a starving child at Port Harcourt

they are now the strongest rivals to Northern domination.

Even during the war, politicians in the North took time off from Ibo-hating to concentrate their spleen on Yoruba small businessmen and bureaucrats who had taken the places of the murdered or fleeing Easterners.

Awolowo is canvassing for a stronger army, even in peace time over which Yoruba officers would

have a good degree of control. This is a factor in the old balancing act of North versus South ruling groups.

However strong the Nigerian army remains, the seeds of conflict in Nigeria have not been removed by crushing the Biafran rebellion. The conflict will only be resolved by the determined opposition of a united and strong Nigerian working class.

# Serge's 'shining example'

Memoirs of a Revolutionary, by Victor Serge (translated by Peter Sedgwick) Oxford, 12s 6d.

SINCE the days of hope of the Russian revolution in 1917, politics is littered with men who have turned their backs on the struggle for human emancipation.

Many good socialists joined the very enemies they had fought against for years. Others relapsed into one of the many blind alleys that capitalism so thoughtfully provides — apathy and cynicism or alcohol and the mental home.

One of the few who resisted all these diversions was Victor Serge. Born in Belgium in 1890 of Russian parents, Serge played a leading role in the revolutionary movements of Belgium, France, Spain and Russia and has left a vivid record of all of these and much more in his Memoirs.

For those of us who view history as the record of mass movements, and not of self-appointed leaders, there can be no better political history of the first 40 years of the 20th century than that contained in

Serge's book. Often reading like a novel, the Memoirs give an unparalleled picture of what it actually felt like to be alive in those days when the impossible seemed easy and socialism seemed just around the corner.

Serge evocatively guides the reader through the Paris of Sorel and the Bonnot gang, on to the Barcelona insurrection of 1917 and then post-haste on to besieged Petrograd. Lightly skipping over his four years in prison, Serge concentrates particularly on giving us a picture of the struggles that occurred in Russia from 1919 up to Lenin's death and after.

## Defeat, betrayal

This testimony is unmatched in the literature of any language and is essential for an understanding of the degeneration of the Russian revolution.

One of the few to come out of the experience of Stalin's prison camps alive, Serge was pulled inevitably to the struggle of the Spanish people to witness one more defeat, one more betrayal of the world revolution by the so-called

'heirs of Lenin'.

In addition to these years of almost constant activity, Serge somehow found time to write volumes of poetry and seven novels (two of which Birth of Our Power and The Case of Comrade Tulayev are justly famous). Thus in just over 50 years, Serge managed to cram more into his life than five normal men.

In the final analysis, Memoirs of a Revolutionary stands as an unbeatable monument to the human potential present in all men. We cannot all live the kind of life that Serge did but we can and must take heart from his achievement for our own struggles.

His fight against betrayal and disappointment serves as a shining example to us when we feel downhearted at our own weakness or the apathy of others. If only because of this immense shot in the arm of hope and renewed courage that it gives us, Memoirs of a Revolutionary should be on the bookshelves of every single reader of this paper.

MARTIN TOMKINSON

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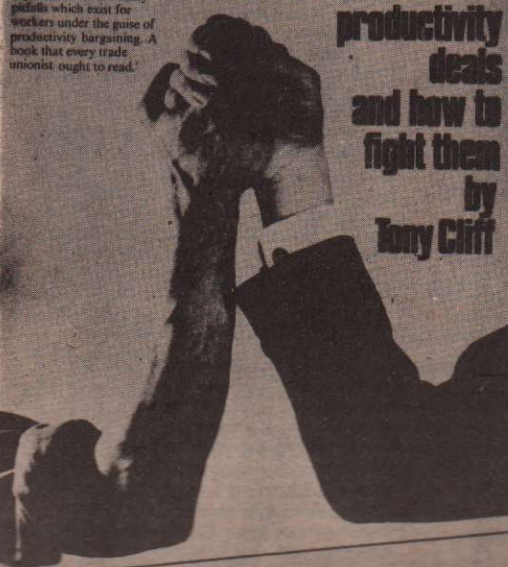
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MOVES TO FORM NATIONAL RANK AND FILE COMMITTEE — BUT BLUE-WHITE UNITY STILL MISSING

# Dockers forge militant policy as union leaders haggle with bosses

by Harold Youd TGWU shop steward, Manchester

A NATIONAL docks strike has been called to start on 29 June unless the docks employers open negotiations with the Transport Workers Union on an increase in the dockers' national basic wage rate from £11 1s 8d to £20 a week. It would be the first national docks strike — in fact the first official docks strike — since 1926.

IF it happens. But the press is openly sceptical of the seriousness of the union leadership in this affair, and with reason.

When union secretary Jack Jones made the strike threat on behalf of the TGWU executive, he anxiously soft-pedalled: 'We want a peaceful settlement and we think there is plenty of room for negotiations.'

Jones wants the employers to abandon their point-blank refusal to increase the basic rate. They have even refused to consider it 'except in small ports where productivity agreements do not exist'.

The employers are complaining that they haven't yet had full value for the wage increases granted as a 'down payment' in Stage one of the national productivity deal known as the Devlin Scheme, which was introduced in 1967.

## Fought back

The reason? The dockers have been too militant and in many cases have fought back effectively against the changes the bosses want.

They are now demanding the £20 basic rate. An officially-convened National Delegates Conference in April unanimously called for it and for a national strike to get it, unless 'considerable progress' is made soon.

Jones says that if the employers haven't started negotiations before 29 June there will be trouble. Of course, if the employers agree to meet the union the strike will be called off and the haggling ('we think there is considerable room for negotiations') will begin. Without direct action it will not result in the £20 basic.

But the unusually rough approach



JONES: room for negotiations

of the TGWU executive is significant. It reflects the pressure of a long movement among the portworkers faced with the need to defend themselves as Phase Two of Devlin begins. And it is not only the pressure of the delegate conference. In recent months a number of important steps forward have been taken and more will follow.

An unofficially convened Nation-

al Docks Shop Stewards Committee has been organised, with representatives of all major ports and many minor ones already involved. This is on a much bigger scale and more solidly based than any of the pre-Devlin attempts at creating a national rank and file organisation to fight the scheme at the outset.

Three national meetings have been held in Manchester, London and Liverpool.

The London meeting issued a call for the nationalisation of all ports. The Labour government, in a Bill dropped when parliament was dissolved, planned only to nationalise the large and medium ports.

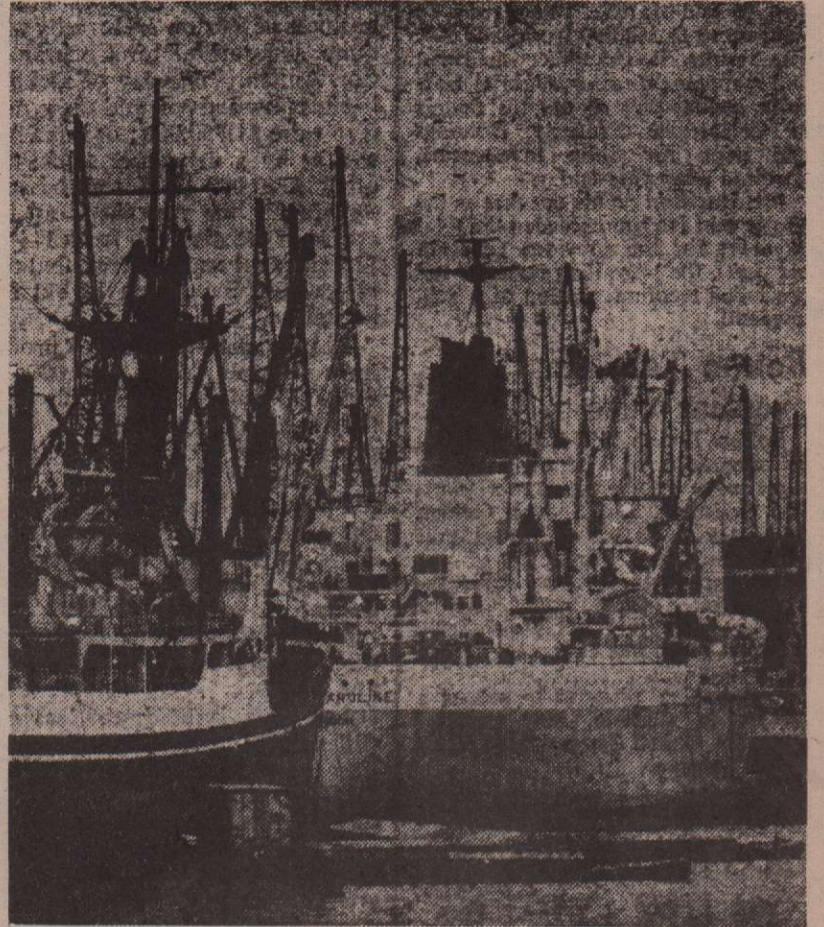
The meeting's resolution also said: 'We demand at least 50 per cent say in the running of the industry as a right and not as a concession. We demand that our rights be written into the Bill.'

## Black spot

A meeting in Liverpool last month decided to produce a national Dockers' Charter and various proposals will be considered in June.

The only black spot in this picture is the failure to build rank and file unity between members of the 'Blue' union (the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers) and the TGWU. The stewards at the first meeting (some of them Blue Union stewards from London) refused to allow representatives of this militant minority union to participate.

Delegates of the Blue union from Manchester and Liverpool, where it is not recognised and therefore can not have stewards, have not attended the last two meetings.



A series of strikes may hit the docks in the coming months

From the TGWU stewards in Liverpool (where the NASD has been traditionally the most militant and advanced section) has come a tough policy for fighting redundancy and gaining some of the benefits of automation for the present docks labour force.

This serious attempt at a dockers' programme of self defence calls for:

A basic wage of £60.

A 20 hour week on days.

Six weeks holidays plus an extra 13 single days.

And retirement at 60 with a further 10 years on full basic pay.

On the big issue of productivity deals, the Liverpool stewards say they are 'prepared to accept the principle of productivity bargaining, but we are not prepared to accept productivity bargaining if it leads to redundancy'. They 'reject measured day work and work study'.

This is a policy which the National Stewards meeting was due to discuss in Southampton this week as the Dockers' Charter is hammered out.

The Charter is going to be crucial as dockers fight back in face of mechanisation, a planned large

fall in the docks labour force and the introduction of shift-work conditions.

And there is still the question of nationalisation. There have been one-day stoppages already to demand full nationalisation.

There is general support for nationalisation with a high degree of workers' control. There is a lot of support for the demand for full workers' control in a nationalised port industry — with control by the workers of hiring, discipline, work organisation, of the accounts and on issues such as how much compensation — if any — to pay the employers.

## Strong possibility

All these developments mean that there is a strong possibility that the next months will see a national docks strike (or a series of co-ordinated one-day strikes) to force full nationalisation on the next government.

This will take place with or — almost certainly — without the support of Jack Jones and the TGWU executive.

# For Leeds busmen OMO doesn't wash at all

by Sue Buckle

BUSMEN at the Leeds depot of the West Yorkshire Road Car Company have staged three strikes in a series of one-day stoppages in support of their claim for a basic wage of £20 for a 40 hour week. Bradford and Otley depots came out as well.

The present basic wage is £15 2s for drivers and £14 3s for conductors. Last week one driver worked 60 hours and took home £18.

As a result of the first strike, the management offered a consolidated wage of £19 10s. For 'consolidation' read 'productivity deal' since the acceptance of these terms would mean, among other things, forfeit of holiday bonus and an extension of one-man-operated (OMO) buses.

## Heavy strain

Leeds has been foremost among the West Yorks depots in resisting OMO services. These usually result in cut services, increased fares and cuts in earnings for some busmen.

They also produce heavy strain. Several drivers at Harrogate have had to be withdrawn from OMO services because of the strain on their health.

So far only six OMO buses operate from Leeds and the busmen are unanimous that these are six too many.

'OMO in Leeds would mean 150 conductors redundant,' said one driver.

'It's an extra £2 to do a man out of a job,' said another.

Their fears are being borne out

by the fact that conductors at smaller depots are being squeezed out by OMO. It was introduced at Scarborough and conductors transferred to nearby Morton. Then Morton went over to OMO.

There has been determined solidarity on this issue for a long time. But what has brought busmen's complaints to a head is the 72 hours per fortnight limitation on a driver's hours.

'Look at it this way,' said a Bradford driver. 'If you could make £40 a week you forget that you'd done two weeks' work in one. Now we're realising that we had no time to spend with our families, and now that we have more time we can see just how low the basic rate is.'

The meanness of the West Yorkshire management shows itself in many ways. Despite the strike, it was decided that volunteers would run buses to the several hospitals on the outskirts of Leeds without pay and not collecting fares.

The men wanted to do this as a gesture of goodwill to the public. When the question of insurance was raised, the men said they would accept pay for the sake of insurance, but would give the money to charity.

The management refused, although they had agreed to this arrangement on service buses during a strike three years ago. So the hospital patients got no visitors.

Facilities in Leeds Vicar Lane depot are really bad. The canteen (which is run by a private company)

has to double as a rest room.

In these luxurious surroundings the men have the choice of one meal (eg potatoes, veg and gravy) for 2s.

'And it takes about four to fill you,' said one conductor.

There are two toilets and one wash basin for 170 men. A new sweets kiosk was built in space which could have been used for toilet extensions. But then sweets and papers make more profit.

A new recruit may have to wait 18 months for a full uniform. Meantime, he has to make do with two linen jackets and an overcoat. Late, he will be allowed one pair of trousers per year, and a jacket every two years. Even so, the old one has to be handed in before a new one is issued.

## Penny pinching

The company's sick pay scheme may provide as much as 5s per week and if you survive until retirement, there is the choice of £100 lump sum, or £1 per week for life. Plus, of course, a gold watch for more than 35 years with the company.

According to reports from many drivers, the buses themselves are the best (or worst) example of penny-pinching.

'Some of them aren't fit to be on the road,' said one driver. 'Leeds drivers are the best in Yorkshire,' he went on. 'They bloody well have to be!'

Some of these are the buses which have to negotiate the Pennines on the long distance routes. If a driver tries to complain about the state of his vehicle, he's marked as a trouble maker.

In the last two months, 72 drivers have left the West Yorks for jobs with other companies, often for the same wage but with better conditions. So far, the Yorkshire Regional Branch of the Transport Workers Union has refused to make the strike official.

Mr Green, the secretary, says that in five years Leeds will have all OMO buses. Apparently he said that five years ago.

The Leeds secretary of the West Yorkshire branch of the TGWU is an exception to some of the 'brothers' elsewhere in Yorkshire. At Otley, the only man to report for work was the union secretary. And although

Harrogate depot had agreed that their buses would turn back at the Leeds boundary, the Harrogate secretary just kept right on.

Earlier in the week, Leeds busmen had addressed union meetings at Bradford and Keighley, but only after opposition from union officials.

Mr Green says he'll declare the strikes official when all the major depots in West Yorks agree to come out. When this happens, and it seems likely with the support which has been shown so far, it will be no thanks to him.

One driver summed up the busmen's whole case when he said: 'What we want is a basic wage which will allow us to work a five day week, run a second hand car, and have a fortnight in Scarborough once a year. That's only reasonable, isn't it?'

## IS BOOK SERVICE

Antonio Gramsci  
SOVIETS IN ITALY

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# 'Troops came to protect profits, not lives...'



EAMONN McCANN, socialist candidate in Derry, along with Bernadette Devlin in Mid-Ulster, were the only Northern Ireland candidates to offer a real alternative to the Six Counties' police state. We are reproducing the section of McCann's election manifesto which dealt with the role of the British troops stationed in Northern Ireland.

**THERE is confusion about the British troops and what ought to be our attitude towards them.**

It is said that they came here to stop Catholics and Protestants killing each other and that, since no-one wants this to happen, we should be grateful for the army's presence and should hope that it stays. I disagree with this.

The British troops did not come here to stop innocent people being slaughtered: armies don't intervene for reasons like that. They intervened to protect British big business.

That is what the British Army is for — to protect big business no matter what part of the world it is in.

It has filled this role throughout the world — and inside Britain as well. Troops shot striking miners in the Welsh valleys in 1911; they were used to smash the general strike of 1926; they broke the docks strike of 1945 — acting at all times for big business and against the working class, even their "own" working-class.

Last August, British investment in Ireland, North and South, was threatened. The Army came to end the threat.

Up to the late fifties there was little large-scale British investment in the Twenty-six counties. The accession of the Lemass and the beginning of the 'Lemass miracle' changed all that. Fianna Fail went in search of British investment and, from their own point of view, it was a relatively successful operation.

## Grew closer

Investment came in. The economies of Britain and the Twenty-six Counties grew steadily closer — a trend formalised by the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of 1965 — until last year, the Free State was Britain's third biggest trading partner.

This development changed completely the relationship between Britain and this island.

When British investment was concentrated in the Six Counties, and almost non-existent in the Twenty-six, Britain was content with the policies and methods of

## McCANN: root cause of our problem is exploitation

Green Toryism in the South. Now, because of her investments and trading interests, she cannot disregard the South.

The events of last year sent a traumatic shock-wave through Free State politics. Quasi-republican rhetoric had been Fianna Fail's stock-in-trade for many years.

Last August as people in the South saw it, 'their' people, the Northern Catholics, were under attack; and they felt that their 'Republican' government could be expected to do something about it.

However, if Fianna Fail had done anything but bluster, if they had intervened physically, they would, in that situation, have come immediately into conflict with Britain.

Neither the British government nor the Free State government could allow that to happen, the two, and the classes they represent, having become active and enthusiastic commercial partners.

If the savagery in the North had not been stopped, the government in the South, paralysed by opposing pressures, would not have been able to 'hold the line'; might well have fallen; would have been quite powerless to guarantee the continued protection of British investment.

The British Army is not just imposing a kind of order in the North; it is propping up in the South a government which can be depended upon to protect and preserve the

interests of British big business.

That is why the Army came. The fact that incidentally they stopped a spreading pogrom does not alter their basic motivation.

The Army is preserving a Tory system. They came to save Ireland, North and South, for Toryism and to protect British business interests. Those against the Tory system must demand that the Army withdraw.

The immediate and understandable objection to this is that if the Army leaves, all hell will break loose.

However, we are not urging the withdrawal of the Army as an isolated demand. We do not demand — and we do not want — the present situation with the army plucked out of it.

## End injustice

We are saying that the root cause of our ills is economic injustice and exploitation; that it was the discontent accruing from this social circumstance — albeit expressing itself in perverted sectarian form — which created the 'necessity' for the Army's presence; that therefore, the only way to eliminate this 'necessity' is to end economic injustice and exploitation by fighting for a programme such as is outlined in our manifesto; and that while carrying on this struggle, we must recognise that the social role of the British Army is and will be to suppress any challenge to exploitation as soon as such a challenge seems likely to be successful.

'Success' therefore, involves the withdrawal of the British Army, and the demand that it be withdrawn must be included with and understood in the context of the economic measures which we want implemented.

to permanent support for Labour for the next century at least, no matter what they do when in office.

You have to keep them in office because they will talk left in opposition; that danger is going to be present in 1975, 1980, 1985, etc etc. Equally, the ogre of the 'Left MP alternative' is going to always be present. The argument (common on the marxist left) that we have to vote Labour so that Heffer and Foot will not rally the Labour Party in opposition means: in order to stop another Wilson, vote for the Wilson we have got.

3. 'A credible mass revolutionary alternative' is absent. Yes, and it is not going to be there as a political monopoly in 1975, 1980, etc. either. The small revolutionary forces will, we hope, be somewhat stronger by the time the next election comes.

Even if they could attract a quarter of the working class (an optimistic estimate), we should still have to argue 'Vote Labour to Keep the Tories Out' because of the danger of a Tory victory with a split working-class electorate, and the likelihood of the left being blamed for it.

Your position amounts to this. Either we have hundreds of socialist candidates standing with a practically certain chance of defeating both Labour and Tory — or we have to vote Labour despite the capitalist nature of the Labour Party. Yet this argument ensures that the building of a real alternative to fight elections can never be begun.

Keep your editorial safely on file comrades. You will be bringing it out again at the next election, and the next, and the next after that. You might change the headline, though to 'LABOUR UNTIL DOOMSDAY'. - PETER SEDGWICK, York

## Do we say 'vote Labour' until doomsday?

IT WAS probably inevitable that the revolutionary left would decide to vote Labour as the lesser evil against Powellism — even though they have had ample time to mount an alternative socialist campaign to the capitalist parties.

But do they have to use, in support of their position, such bloody daft arguments as appeared in your editorial before polling day?

1. 'A Tory defeat would be a blow to the self-confidence of the ruling class', we are told, and 'a Tory defeat (ie a Labour victory) will divide and demoralise the establishment'. What world are your editorialists living in?

The Tory weekly press like the Economist accepts that Harold will win, without showing the slightest anxiety, let alone demoralisation. Why should British capitalism be demoralised by the prospect of the wage freeze which Labour will impose?

The Tories themselves of course discredit Heath as leader. Their division will strengthen Powell and Powellism against the inglorious Heath. (So if you are using the argument that we should vote Labour to weaken Powell, the answer is: no, reduce the Labour majority to the smallest possible — by abstaining and spoiling ballot papers.)

Big business has not been in the least worried by the chances of a Labour victory, for at least four elections now. Labour has a number of prominent industrialist supporters like Kearton and the technocrat weekly New Scientist has recommended support for Labour on the grounds that it is rationalising industry and commercialising science.

2. 'A Tory victory would give Labour leaders a new lease of life' by enabling them to pose as Lefts in opposition. This sounds fine until you realise that it commits us

# Cottons Column.

HORDES of journalists flocked to Mexico for the World Cup. But they told us little about the Mexican people.

Mexico has had rapid industrial advance recently but this has done little for the people. Despite token distributions of land to the peasants, 3 per cent of landowners own 87 per cent of privately-owned arable land.

Now there is no more land for distribution, with two million peasants still landless. The illiteracy rate is 38 per cent and 42 per cent of the population are said to live in poverty.

Though the ruling party, PRI, still claims to be 'revolutionary', its revolutionary sentiments are confined to ceremonial aspects. For example Mexico refuses diplomatic recognition to Franco's Spain — but carries on flourishing trade with it. The PRI has held power for over 40 years and habitually gets 99 per cent majorities.

Since the massacre of 2 October 1968, when 273 demonstrators, including 26 children were killed, repression has continued. Many so-called agitators are still imprisoned.

Last January political prisoners in Lecumberri jail went on hunger strike in protest at being detained without trial for over a year (the constitutional maximum). The prison authorities incited other prisoners in the jail to attack them, leaving many injured.

In February the editor of the liberal opposition paper Por Que? was arrested. Such is the sordid reality behind the World Cup glitter.

light in the IWC, Tony Topham, was summoned to Transport House by his old mate Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union. To draw up plans for workers' control?

Nothing of the sort. Jones, in unceremonious fashion, told Topham to keep his nose out of the docks — or else. But then the TGWU bureaucracy (in a pact with the Communist Party!) had already supported an extreme right winger who was also a full-time official for a seat on the national executive against left-winger Brian Nicholson who works in the London docks and has been pushing the workers' control movement for all he is worth.

We've always held that the IWC is attracting lots of good militants and then leads them up a blind alley. It seems to be being proved in practice.

Come on, Tony Topham, just where do you stand on the issue of Jack Jones and other so-called 'left' union leaders?

**A BUS conductor retired after 42 years' service with the West Yorkshire Road Car Company at Bradford. A conductor's basic wage is £14 3s.**

The company hired a back room in a pub and presented their faithful employee with an inscribed gold watch as a token of their gratitude. But their generosity didn't stretch as far as a watch chain.

So the poor bloke had to wear his watch on a piece of string until he'd bought himself a chain.

## It's the finnish for them

IN FINLAND there are nine political parties in the election and political game. Following the collapse of the social democrat coalition which the Finnish Communist Party at one time participated in, a caretaker government was appointed by and under the leadership of the Mayor of Helsinki.

The deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister is the managing director of the Finnish Employers' Federation. The Foreign Secretary is the chairman of the state-owned travel agency. The Minister of Defence is the personnel manager of one of Finland's largest engineering firms and the Social Affairs Minister is managing director of the national airline, Finnair.

In office for a month, the government is due to bow out this week as the politicians appear to have settled their differences.

Once again the state machine will become the referee. It's much more discreet than having 12 players on your side.

## Stop enjoying yourself

WEST MERSEA, Essex, urban district council has banned the erection of colour television aerials on all council houses.

In a statement this week, one of the councillors explained the basis of this decision. 'Anyone who can afford a colour television can afford to buy a house,' he said.

The council is believed to be considering action against working-class cigarette smokers on similar grounds.

**THE DREADFUL pop record made by England's World Cup flops has been riding high in the charts for several weeks. But only south of the border. In Glasgow just 12 copies have been sold.**

## Who needs enemies?

THE Labour 'lefts' in parliament may be Tired Tims and Wearie Willies to us but there is no love for them from the party bosses.

When High Peak MP Peter Jackson complained that the 18 June election didn't give him much time to launch a campaign and that he was frightened of losing his seat, lovable Cockney gauleiter and chief whip Bob Mellish said: 'If I hear on 18 June that we've lost High Peak, I'll chalk it up as one Labour gain. And if that something something bitch in Rochester and Chatham (Anne Kerr) loses as well, that'll be two Labour gains.'

## Whoops, you've dropped your figleaf

THE Institute for Workers' Control has always had a touching faith in so-called left trade union leaders who, they think, will be the spearhead for the movement for workers' control.

We have often accused the IWC of acting as a fig leaf on their behalf — and been bitterly attacked as 'sectarians' for holding this position.

Rumour now has it that a leading

# Join the International Socialists

There are branches in the following areas

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Aberdeen; Clydebank; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; East Kilbride.

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Durham; Newcastle upon Tyne; Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

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Barnsley; Bradford; Derby; Doncaster; Hull; Leeds; York; Selby; Sheffield.

### NORTH WEST

Lancaster; Manchester; Merseyside; Preston; St Helens; Stockport; Wigan.

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Birmingham; Coventry; Northampton; Leicester; Oxford; Potters.

### WALES and SOUTH WEST

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.



# Socialist Worker

## Rootes fight for job control

LINWOOD:- 1500 men voted on Tuesday to strike against Chrysler's determination to hire and place workers inside the Scottish car plant when and where they please. Members of the National Union of Vehicle Builders, the men had seen their senior shop stewards tricked time and time again by the company - the former Rootes group now owned and renamed by the American Chrysler corporation. On Tuesday NUVB convenor Jimmy Livingstone told a mass meeting: 'They're treating us like

clowns.' The company refuse to accept that when off-track jobs become available inside the factory they should be offered first to men with years of insecurity and sweat on moving lines. The principle of seniority and the advertising of vacancies conflicts with what the bosses call their 'right to manage'. The workers want a fair employment system under their control. Engineering Union workers in the car assembly block struck with the NUVB and a mass meeting of Trans-

port Workers Union members throughout the factory also decided to back them. This unity means that those areas of the plant still at work are rapidly grinding to a halt. A further mass meeting was called for Friday. If the men hold firm for control over Chrysler's manning policy at Linwood they will win an important principle. The fight won't be a walk-over and the workers must watch out for the union sell-out merchants. But the struggle can and must be won.

## Hussein hangs on in pact with El Fatah

SW Correspondent

AFTER BLOODY CLASHES in Amman, the Jordan capital, last week in which 1000 were killed or wounded, 'order' now seems to have been restored by the combined efforts of King Hussein, El Fatah, and the 'progressive' Arab governments.

The clashes were sparked off when left-wing guerrillas kidnapped an American Embassy official on Sunday 7 June to demand the release of arrested militants. On Tuesday the Jordan army retaliated, attacking guerrilla camps and killing hundreds of civilians.

The next day a pact was signed between the Jordan government and Arafat, leader of the nationalist El Fatah guerrillas, who support the existing Arab governments and refuse to link the national struggle against Zionism with the class struggle in the Arab countries.

The 10-point pact included 'struggle against subversive elements who try to provoke



ARAFAT: attacks the left

dissent' and left it to King Hussein's government to punish 'the elements responsible for the clashes'.

The agreement was rejected by the left-wing Popular Front and Democratic Front. The left forces occupied two hotels and held 67 Western newsmen as hostages.

Attacks on the guerrillas continued and the rank and file of El Fatah fought alongside the left. By Friday, Hussein backtracked a little and dismissed his uncle, the unpopular army commander. The left released their hostages.

Ultra-right sections of the army moved against the king, but a new agreement was reached on Saturday which provided for the disarming of troops and guerrillas inside Amman, and joint patrols to keep 'order'.

The situation is still unstable. This is the second attempt by the King's government this year to smash the left-wing guerrillas' threat to his regime.

The present clash clearly shows the nature of the so-called 'progressive' Arab governments - Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Egypt and Iraq - who all supported Hussein and the Fatah leader Arafat. In last February's clashes these 'progressives' supported the guerrillas.

All these states want to strengthen their regular armies in order to weaken and replace the guerrilla 'extremists' and to prevent the Palestinian resistance from turning to the left and threatening not just Israel but all the existing Arab governments.

And the Palestinian and Arab masses grow ever more impatient with their middle-class nationalist leaders, who cannot offer any real fight against the threat of Israel and the rule of the American oil companies.

# TORY PRICE-FIXERS BEHIND DEVON PAY DISPUTE

THE STRIKE at Otter Mill Switchgear in Devon is now entering its seventh week. The company, unable to pay a living wage, can afford full page advertisements for scabs in the local press.

The General and Municipal Workers' Union is collaborating fully with the bosses.

Otter Mill Switchgear is a subsidiary of Drake and Gorham Scull. This firm should soon come into the public eye.

One of its subsidiaries, Drake and Gorham (Contractors) of Highgate, London, is one of six firms being investigated by the police for price-fixing activities in electrical contracting on public building projects.

The Registrar of Restrictive Trading Practices has already documented the tricks this firm and the five others got up to on the North Middlesex Hospital job.

After the price ring was exposed, the hospital board placed a new contract and saved hundreds of thousands of pounds on the price it had previously accepted from one of the groups.

At present the Registrar is preparing a dossier on at least 2000 other cases in the same field - the heating, ventilating and general electrical aspects of hospital, school and council house building.

The ring is so vast that the investigation is expected to take another two or three years to complete.

Who knows what other examples of Drake and Gorham Scull's business integrity may yet come to light?

In addition to having extensive interests in South Africa, Drake and Gorham Scull merged last year with the construction firm Holland Hannen and Cubitts, paying £3.4 million for the pleasure.



RIPPON: comfortably placed

## COSTS

This firm is building London's new town, Thamesmead, where costs are already 'sky rocketing' according to our source.

'You can expect a claim for payments over and above the tender price or I'm another instance of progressive collapse,' he told Socialist Worker.

It is not known who has the electrical sub-contract on Thamesmead where there was a short, bitter and successful battle last year to keep the site 100 per cent unionised and free of labour-only sub-contractors - the lump.

Geoffrey Rippon, Tory Shadow Minister for Defence, was chairman of Holland Hannen and Cubitts at the time of the merger. He is now comfortably placed on the board of Drake and Gorham Scull.

It was Rippon who prompted S M Smith, chief executive of Holland Hannen and Cubitts to make one of the understatements of the current year: 'Many MPs outside their parliamentary activities are prominent figures in industry and commerce, and because of their contact with national and world affairs are an asset to the firms with whom they are associated.' (Construction News, 16 April.)

## OLD PAL

When Rippon was Minister of Works, he brought in his old pal Albert Costain to be his private secretary. Costain held directorships in four subsidiaries of the family Costain construction business at the time he got the call for higher things.

Among his other qualifications for high position in a British building firm, Mr Rippon is a member of the extreme right wing Monday Club and he is a lawyer.

## NOTICES

LAMBETH IS public meeting: Michael Kidron on modern capitalism, Monday 22 June, 8pm at The Library, Jeffreys Rd, SW4 (nr Stockwell tube).

WHICH WAY FOR INDUSTRY? IS industrial conference, Birmingham 28 June to discuss policy and strategy. Credentials 3s from 6 Cottons Gardens E2. Transport from London available.

IMPORTANT: all queries concerning industrial conference should be made to IS national secretary at Cottons Gardens. The industrial secretary is on holiday.

Published by the International Socialists 6 Cottons Gdns London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd. (TU all departments). Registered with the Post Office. Annual subscription £2 10s.

When the Tories moved into opposition in 1964, Geoffrey moved closer to the real seat of power in this society.

He didn't just ration his talents to a big construction firm, but put his two years of experience under Julian Amery at the Ministry of Aviation to the service of the aviation industry. Geoffrey Rippon became a director of both the Fairey and Bristol aircraft firms.

It is clear that the courageous strikers at Ottery St Mary are fighting not just one small provincial firm but the big business system itself.

That system is interlocking and controlled by a handful of all-powerful men like Geoffrey Rippon. Their only interest is in making bigger and bigger profits.

The long-term question for the Otter Mill engineers and all workers is not just how much wages can they get from the system but do they need the system itself?

## FIGHT ON

OTTERY ST MARY:- The Otter Mill strikers are staying out and fighting on. That was made clear at a mass meeting on Monday following talks between union executives and the management at York last week.

The management put forward proposals for a return to work which the officials said they would consider. But Otter Mill immediately wrote to the strikers informing them that the unions had accepted their terms.

This double-dealing made the workers even more determined to win.

GLASGOW:- More than 2000 plumbers and electricians from Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, the Grangemouth petrochemical site, British Railways, local authorities and contracting firms, downed tools for a half day last Wednesday in protest against the Scottish Joint Industry Board and its threatened introduction to the plumbing section of the building industry.

The strikers were joined by a busload of unemployed electricians from the Edinburgh area. In the afternoon 1000 of the strikers overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling for the removal of the JIB agreement from the plumbing section, automatic approved status for time-served electricians in the contracting industry, £1 an hour, and four weeks' paid holiday for contracting sparks.

## Few scuffles

The meeting was followed by a march to the local office of the Electricians and Plumbers Union where a deputation handed in the resolution. When they were told that only one branch full-time official was in the office (the executive councillor Blairford and other officials were in Edinburgh at a SJIB meeting) the demonstrators pressed in on the doors.

They were held back by a contingent of police, and a few scuffles took place. But after appeals by the stewards, the strikers dispersed.

The meeting and demonstration is a significant step forward in the fight to bring some democracy to the union. For the first time since amalgamation, plumbers and electricians have joined together on a large

scale to fight the vicious JIB

The initiative in the recent activity was taken by Flashlight, the new national paper for sparks and plumbers\* and the original meetings were called under its name. But now rank and file plumbers and electricians are in command and further meetings and marches are planned.

All this adds strength to the left's attack on the electrical section's executive in this year's elections.

This magnificent display in Glasgow must not be allowed to sag. Other areas should follow their lead. It isn't enough for plumbers and electricians to fight on their own any more. They are going to have to join together on all issues if a real change is to be made in the union.

The necessity for joint action was shown last week. On Rochs Chemical factory site at Dalry in Ayrshire, four plumbers' helpers were dismissed for attending Wednesday's march. But all trades on the site immediately downed tools and, faced with 700 determined workers, the management reinstated the men.

At the Grangemouth petrochemical site, the plumbers' convenor of stewards has had his credentials withdrawn by the EETU/PTU. All stewards on the site are pledged to action if the credentials are not restored. UCS and other stewards involved in the original stoppage are meeting to discuss support

\* Available from L Hurworth, 194 Torrington Drive, Loughton, Essex, 3d a copy plus postage.

# Clerks in wages battle with AEF headquarters

SW Reporter

CLERICAL WORKERS at the London headquarters of the Engineering Union have been on strike since Tuesday 9 June over pay negotiations. The 250 workers asked for a £9 increase in 1969 and accepted job evaluation conditions.

Their branch of the Clerical Workers Union has not been told of the state of negotiations nor of the findings of the job evaluation team. They are now demanding a £5

interim payment backdated to 27 April and a £4 consolidation payment.

Conditions at AEF headquarters are very bad. A grade three worker, the highest grade, is paid only £21 15s basic.

The branch secretary Mr W F Jones, says that, 'In view of the fact that we have not been able to get negotiations going on the £5 interim claim, CAWU members in provincial offices of the AEF must join the strike. We also call on the salaried staff members to join us.'

CAWU have not made the strike official and are trying to get their members back to work. The strikers themselves are demanding that the strike be made official and that strike allowance be paid to all members.

The AEF are trying to impose working conditions on another trade union with the attitude of 'take it or leave it, we are the bosses'.

Messages of support and donations to: The treasurer, Mr J A Kent, 44 Traherne Road, Brixton, London SW9.