

# Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# TORIES' ATTACK HOTS UP

THE TORY ATTACK on workers' living standards and their trade unions goes on: that was the harsh message spelt out this week by Prime Minister Heath and his Cabinet colleagues. The government has been rocked badly by the great wages breakthrough of the miners but it is determined to stop any further breach of the pay dam.

And new weapons are being brought into action in the attempt to drive down wages and boost the profits of industry. In his nationwide television appearance on Sunday, Heath set the tone for Tory speeches from now: workers who struggle for a living wage and who use their industrial strength are threatening 'the British way of life' with violence.

Unemployment Secretary Robert Carr has warned that tougher laws may be brought in to deal with picketing.

On Monday his Industrial Relations Act became fully operational and from now on employers can try to outlaw the closed shop and crack down on rank and file activities, including picketing, that are 'unfair industrial practices'.

But the miners have shown that the law is powerless when rank and file determination is backed by massive solidarity action from other workers. Scots miners struck on Monday in defiance of the Act (see back page).

The Tories don't want any more showdowns with strong groups of workers. They hope that those trade union leaders who are willing and anxious to reach some shabby compromise will hold the rank and file in check by refusing to fight the Industrial Relations Act and by giving in to the government's wages 'norm' of 7-8 per cent.

While we were still cheering the miners' victory, leaders of important sections of workers were toeing the



HEATH: attempted witchhunt

Tory line.

The Union of Post Office Workers last week accepted an 8 per cent wage increase.

Nurses asked for 25 per cent. The Tories offered 8 per cent and the union accepted.

Local government manual workers claimed 12 per cent. Government and union leaders settled for 7.4-7.8 per cent.

In the face of a rising cost of living of 10 per cent a year, plus extra taxation

on wage increases, every one of these pay 'increases' amounts to a decrease in real terms.

The miners proved that the Tories can be beaten. They showed that a united fight by the working class could drive them from office.

Trade unionists must step up the campaign against the Tories by fighting for two key demands in their unions:

- No wages settlements less than 20 per cent.

- Total opposition to the anti-union laws and expulsion from the TUC of any unions that register or use the Act's courts and machinery.

And Heath's attempted witchhunt and talk of violence must not be allowed to split or divert the working class. When he attacks 'small groups determined to get their way regardless of the rest of us,' he must be told he is speaking not of trade unionists but of the tiny class that own and control the wealth, who force up rents, prices and welfare charges at the same time as they attack our wages.

They and they alone 'hold the country to ransom'. They must be removed.

life.

The speed with which parliament passed this amendment clearly shows how much contempt they have for the 'law and order' they insist we must all obey without question.

But when they disagree with the law, they don't respect it. When the High Court declares that the Tories and their troops have been acting illegally, they don't obey it. Instead in six short hours they change the law so that once again it serves their interests and those of the ruling class they represent.

## Police seize pamphlet on Bloody Sunday



EAMONN McCANN: threatened and interrogated

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE last Friday, Socialist Worker launched an important pamphlet What Happened in Derry that tears away the official government-army version of events in Northern Ireland on Sunday 30 January. Armed with exclusive facts and eye-witness reports, it shows the Derry massacre to have been a cold, calculated massacre, authorised at the highest levels in Westminster and Stormont.

On Sunday, Eamonn McCann, the author of the pamphlet, was seized by the police when he arrived in Belfast with several hundred copies for sale on the latest Derry demonstration. He was interrogated, threatened with possible action for 'contempt of court' and then released—minus the pamphlets.

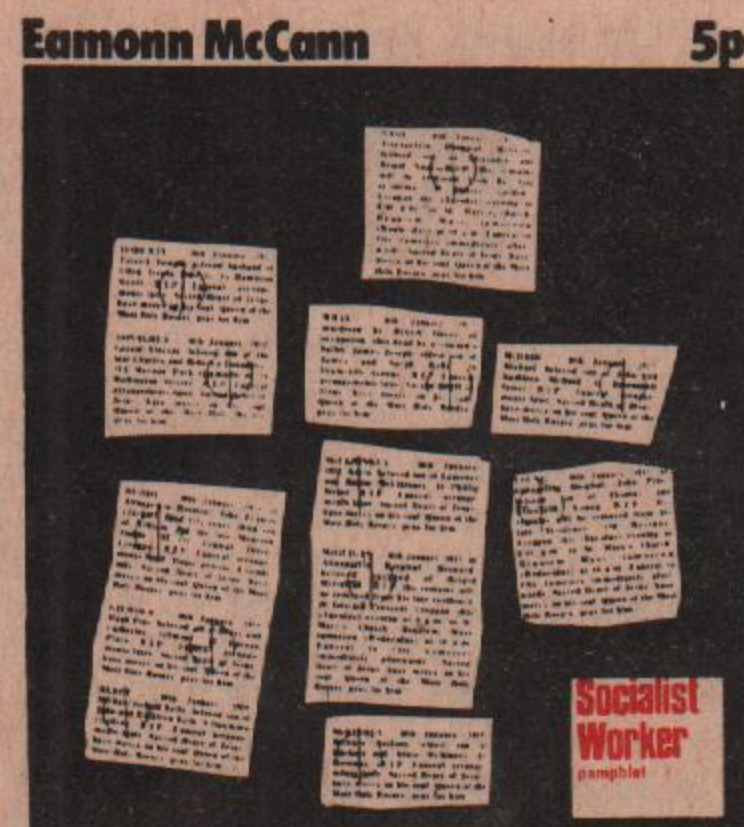
Socialist Worker would like to make it clear that we will not be intimidated from bringing this pamphlet to the attention of working people both in Britain and Ireland. Steps have already been taken to make sure that it can be read in Northern Ireland.

The threats of action for contempt of court arise from the fact that Lord Widgery's tribunal into the Derry massacre is still in session in Northern Ireland. Our pamphlet, it is claimed, infringes on the impartiality of his findings. We do not consider that a High Court judge and former army brigadier, appointed by the British government that is responsible for the terror and slaughter in Northern Ireland, is capable of reaching an 'impartial' verdict.

The British press has allowed itself to be gagged by the Widgery tribunal without a whimper of protest. We do not intend to be silenced. 30 January marks one of the bloodiest crimes ever committed by the British ruling class. We intend to bring the facts to the widest possible audience.

We urge all our readers to order copies now.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN DERRY



Name .....

Address .....

Send . . . . . copies at 5p per copy plus 3p post. 6 copies or more post free.

Send to Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

## Bernadette Devlin, MP, WRITES...

IN PARLIAMENT last week the Tories rushed through a special amendment to the 1920 Government of Ireland Act which now gives Brian Faulkner and the Stormont government more power over the army in Northern Ireland than is possessed even by Lord Carrington, the British Minister of Defence.

Maudling did this because a Belfast High Court had decided that for the last two years the British Army had been acting illegally in their harassment of the civilian population.

Not one Labour MP was prepared to

support me in forcing a vote against the government on this issue. The Act took only six hours to become law. In those six hours the Tories presented it to parliament, had it discussed in committee and finally stamped with the seal of Royal approval.

But when it comes to dealing with housing or unemployment both Labour and Tories explain that you can't achieve results overnight. It is important to learn how both parties can so quickly enact repressive legislation yet do nothing to improve our standards and conditions of

# WORLD NEWS

## BRIEFING

# Facts give the lie to Peru's 'revolution'

by Richard Kirkwood

THE military government of Peru calls itself 'revolutionary'. It has talked a great deal about nationalising foreign companies and has even taken over some American firms. Recently it has started a so-called land reform.

Some alleged socialists in Latin America have even talked about a 'Peruvian model' of revolution. Facts which have started to trickle through to Europe show the junta for what it really is—savagely repressive and anti-working class.

When the copper miners of Cobriza went on strike last November, supported by 15 trade unions, they might have expected government support. After all, one of their demands was the nationalisation of the mines and the expulsion of the American company which owned them.

### Gunned down

In fact, on 10 and 11 November the army and police murdered at least 25 miners. Not content with firing on the crowd, as they had done once before during the strike, they murdered several union leaders in cold blood.

The general secretary of the miners' union, Pablo Inza Basilio, was machine-gunned to death while lying wounded. Members of the security forces got into a union meeting in disguise and simply gunned down the leading militants.

After the security police had dispersed the strikers, with more deaths, those arrested were shot on the spot.

Since then most of the militants have been sacked or deported to the concentration camp at Sepa in the

## MINERS IN PRISON CAMP

Extracts from a letter sent by 61 miners, imprisoned at Sepa by the Peruvian government

### TO OUR BROTHER WORKERS, MINERS AND PEASANTS:

In this letter we want to tell you about our true situation. So far we have kept quiet, so as not to cause more trouble for our families, who are already suffering enough from separation, repression, who are helpless and driven from their homes.

But the days pass and nothing happens. We are compelled to tell our sufferings to our brother workers and miners, for they alone will understand them.

You know the origins of our misfortunes. Now we will tell you what has happened since our arrest. First of all we were imprisoned in Lima, with other miner comrades and with common criminals. We stayed there for three days, in solitary confinement, with nothing to eat or drink, sleeping on freezing cement amid terrible filth. We

were interrogated, insulted and called murderers.

On the morning of Friday, 12 November, we were taken to the airport under heavy escort, handcuffed, and with guns pointed at us. At the airport there was a big array of military force. We were loaded into a freight plane, and made to sit on the floor, heads bowed.

We got threats and blows with rifle butts from the guards who stared at us as if we were mad dogs.

We have no money, and no clothes except the dirty old ones we were wearing a month and a half ago.

We eat separately from the common criminals, but we are given only beans and rice without salt, and to eat them we have to go and hunt for herbs, turtle eggs or anything else to put in the stewpot. Often there is nothing at all to eat. There is no sugar, no salt or pepper.

We have to look for wood in the forest, crossing the river in little canoes. We risk our lives each time, for the canoes often overturn, and the rivers

are full of piranhas.

There are poisonous snakes and giant spiders. Yesterday one of the criminals was bitten by a snake and his life hangs by a thread. There is no medical care, no doctor and no drugs. Therefore there are epidemics of malignant fevers and other diseases.

We have heard that the mine management have turned out the families of the Cobriza miners and that the women and children are on the streets.

We have decided to protest and not let ourselves be humiliated. To show our desire to protest, on Christmas Day we refused to take part in the official ceremony, with distribution of cake and toys for prisoners' children.

We also refused old shirts and trousers sent from Lima for the imprisoned miners. We don't want charity, above all not from those who are keeping us here. Now we don't know what will happen to us—certainly more suffering and reprisals because of our 'rebellious' attitude.

Amazon forest. There they have been joined by miners from another striking mine, Orroya, who were deported at the same time, and L, a doctor whose crime was to tend the wounded after the Cobriza shooting.

At the same time wives and families of miners have been continually harassed. They have no money. They have been driven from their homes, their children kicked out of school. All this has been done by a government calling itself revolutionary.

But the fighting spirit of the Peruvian miners has not been broken. In January 400 miners at Raul Mine

were on strike for higher wages and for the provision of drinking water. At present water is so contaminated that workers have to travel to the next village for it.

As elsewhere in Latin America the lesson is clear—there are no short-cuts, only a real movement of workers and peasants can put an end to the misery and repression which is the lot of the mass of working people in Peru.

The Committee for Solidarity with the Victims of Repression in Peru (120 Holland Road, London W14) is publicising in Britain the facts about Peru.

# Ovambo strikers make contact with freedom fighters

THE magnificent strike of 15,000 Ovambo workers in Namibia against the labour contract system is now more than ten weeks old.

The workers realised that the agreement reached last month between the South African government and their stooge chiefs, without consultation with the strikers' representatives, was phoney. All it did was to put the control of recruiting into the hands of the chiefs instead of the whites.

None of the demands were granted—equal pay with whites for the same work, the right to live outside company-owned compounds and to pay for their own food and accommodation, to have their families with them in town, the abolition of the police border post on the exit from Ovamboland to the white areas.

News from Ovamboland has been suppressed by the government mainly to prevent other Africans in the republic itself from following this example. Bits and pieces of information trickle through.

Sixty miles of the fence, built to divide Namibian Ovambos from their brothers in Angola, have been cut. The strikers are

by W Enda

making contact with the people in Angola, who, according to the liberation organisation, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, rose up in armed struggle on 12 January.

Portuguese and South African troops have been rushed to the borders to try to keep the insurgents apart.

### Weapons

In Ovamboland, the strikers have formed themselves into bands. Armed only with machetes, bows and arrows, they have attacked the white police patrols sent to protect collaborating chiefs.

Their courage is tremendous. The police are armed to the teeth with the most up-to-date automatic weapons.

Twelve Ovambos have so far, officially, been reported shot dead. An unspecified number of white police have been hospitalised. The whites keep quiet about their

own fatalities but the grapevine says six have been killed.

Many chiefs have had their houses burnt down. Execution has been the fate of some, for informing the police about the strikers' activities. Emergency regulations were passed on 4 February, preventing people from moving about without permission, and giving chiefs the power of arrest.

The thousand or so workers who fell for the settlement and returned to the capital city Windhoek are having second thoughts. Finding the same old Katatura compound, same rotten food and same old conditions they rioted on 12 February, driving out the compound guards. Armed police surrounded the compound shakily aware that the workers had not been subdued. News from Katatura has since been nil.

The country is rapidly going bankrupt with industry at a standstill. The whites can only think of sending in more armed forces. The Ovambos have kept up their fight for 10 weeks and will last longer. They all believe in their demands and many have shown they will die for them.

# Political scandals —just a French tradition

FRANCE'S next parliamentary elections are not due until March next year, but already the political parties are engaged in feverish preparations. This is the background to the various scandals involving the Gaullists in general, and some of their ministers in particular.

In themselves such scandals are nothing new. Corruption is a tradition of French parliamentary life. Not long ago a Gaullist MP for Paris was sentenced by a court for using his parliamentary status to cover the fraudulent activities of a building society of which he was a director.

The French Prime Minister, Chaban-Delmas, has paid no taxes for the past four years. Yet he has not done anything 'illegal'.

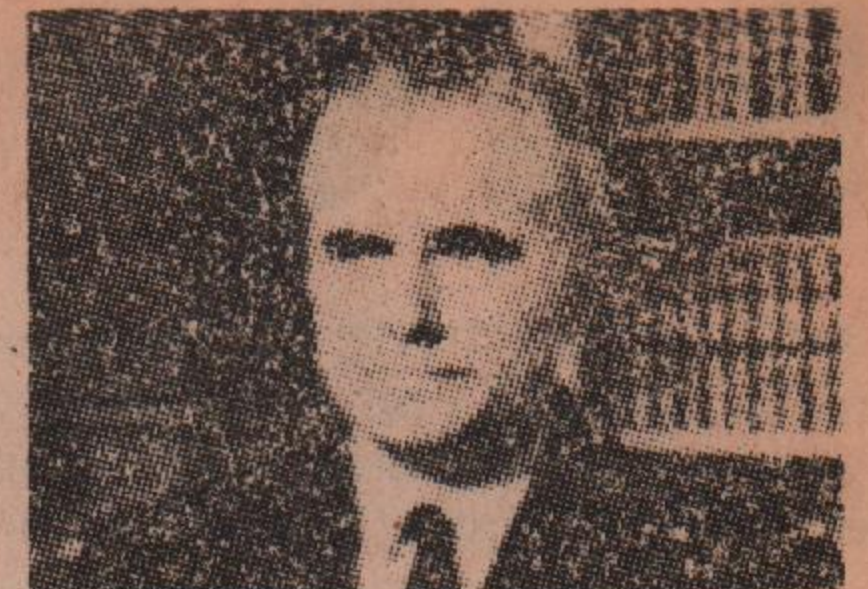
Since 1965 French law, intending to encourage investment, has given anyone who receives profits from an industrial or commercial company the right to deduct from their income tax a sum in proportion to the profits received. The pretext is that the state has already taxed the company.

### Leaks

In Chaban's case the sum to be deducted was higher than what he owed in taxes. Not only had he nothing to pay, but the state now actually owes him money.

Another minister, Chirac, managed to get a country-house he had just bought classified as a 'historic monument'. So not only was he able to deduct from his taxes everything he spent on restoration, but he also received a state grant. So he too paid no taxes.

What is behind the leaks which enabled the Canard Enchaîné, a satirical weekly, to publish confidential documents on the two affairs? For the moment no-one knows, but it is probable that these scandals have been brought into the open by the non-Gaullist right-wing parties.



Chaban-Delmas: a taxing time

Since Pompidou became President in 1969 the government has been based on the alliance of three political parties. The largest is the Gaullist party (UDR), to which Chaban-Delmas and Chirac belong. The others, much smaller, are the Independent Republicans, led by Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing, and the Centrists, led by Duhamel.

The scandals now involving the UDR and the Prime Minister stand a good chance of giving to the other right-wing parties some of the votes of Gaullist supporters disgusted by the corruption of the UDR but by no means inclined to vote for the left.

One could easily be led to believe that Giscard d'Estaing, whose ambition is to become Prime Minister, might have some connection with the revelation of these scandals. This seems all the more likely since most of the documents published came from his Ministry.

As for the workers and other ordinary people, they have above all learnt from these affairs that the rich still have means, legal or otherwise, to avoid paying taxes, while the mass of people continue to bear the burden.

# GERMAN MINERS AHEAD ON PAY

WHEN the miners consider their next pay deal they should look at the conditions of workers in the Common Market. While the British coal industry is much more efficient than that of Europe, conditions and pay are much worse than in the German mines, for example.

The 1970 figures show that while the coal industry in Britain made a profit of 4p per ton, all other coal producers of the Common Market made losses. The losses in Germany were 94p per ton, in Holland £2.13, in France £2.56 and in Belgium £4.20 per ton.

In spite of these losses the German miners have the best system of social benefits and pensions for miners anywhere in the world. Their weekly wages are better than miners anywhere in Europe.

Before the recent strike in Britain, the German miner, though working a shift half an hour longer, got five days a year more holiday, a Christmas bonus of £60, a holiday bonus of £35, and many other social benefits. His take-home pay was about £10 a week more than the British miner's.

### CUT PRICE

In 1970 the Common Market imported about 30 million tons of coal, mainly from Britain and Poland, and such imports seem likely to grow as industry takes advantage of the cheaper labour in the East. The Dutch

and Belgians plan to shut down all coal production, and the French to reduce output to about 25 million tons in 1975, as against the present annual output of about 40 million tons.

The German coal industry has run into financial difficulties, but is hoping to take advantage of the British price increases. The industry hopes it can sell nine million tons of coal to Britain at cut price. The present recession in German industry, especially steel, means it cannot be sold there.

The state government of the North Rhine Westphalia province recently announced an £800 million rescue plan for the privately-owned Ruhrkohle, which produces three-quarters of all German coal.

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# Socialist Worker

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## No substitute for mass action

THE MILLIONAIRE PRESS campaign against 'violence' is hotting up. The Aldershot explosion is grist to their mill and Heath's calculated smear on television, associating the miners' strike with 'violence or the threat of violence', shows clearly enough the aims of the operation.

Part of the government's plan to revenge its defeat by the miners—by smashing another section of workers in a major strike—is the launching of a campaign of hysteria and abuse to create the 'right' atmosphere. Ban the IRA in Britain and stop 'illegal' (that is, effective) picketing: the two go hand in hand. Heath badly needs to create an atmosphere of uncritical support for his vicious and reactionary administration. 'If the government is defeated', the man had the impudence to claim, 'then the country is defeated'.

He hopes to create a witchhunting atmosphere in which all real opponents can be isolated and dealt with by victimisation and police action. He will not succeed. Far too many people are suffering from unemployment, welfare cuts and means testing to fall for the absurd claim that 'the government is just a group of people elected to do what the majority of us want.' All the same, many workers who have few illusions in Heath's big business government are vulnerable to propaganda about 'violence' and 'terrorism' and so it is necessary to restate the socialist position.

Governments, all governments, rely on violence, in the last resort, to maintain the power of the ruling classes they represent. That is why they spend millions on armies, navies and air forces—instruments of organised violence on a large scale. These forces exist as much to deal with threats to the rulers from within—'internal security'—as from without—the threat of other ruling classes.

Anybody who denies this patent fact is a fool or a liar. Any government spokesman who denounces violence is a hypocrite. Any socialist who renounces the use of violence in all circumstances is like a man who goes into a boxing ring with his hands tied behind his back.

What socialists in the marxist tradition do reject is the illusion that by blowing up a Tsar or President or Prime Minister, society can be changed. All that can in fact be changed by these means is the name of the man who holds the office. A real change in society—a social revolution—can be achieved only when the mass of the people 'refuse to go on in the old way', as Lenin put it.

The crux of the marxist case against individual terrorism—the bomb and the revolver as a substitute for politics—is that it does not help but actually hinders the growth of a mass revolutionary organisation that alone can really challenge the social system. That case, developed against the anarchists in Western Europe in the last century and, later, by the Russian marxists against the Narodniks, has been verified time and again by historical experience. No amount of heroism and self-sacrifice by terrorists—and these qualities were displayed in abundance by Russian Narodniks and Spanish anarchists—can act as a substitute for mass working-class action.

The violence used by both wings of the IRA is not, for the most part, terrorism in the proper sense of that term. It is legitimate self defence by the Catholic community in the Six Counties against the terrorism of the police and military forces of the state. The extension of that self defence into assassination of individual politicians and the bombing of buildings cannot be supported by socialists.

This is not a moral question. We would not shed a tear at the death of that violent reactionary Mr Taylor and we have nothing but contempt for those disgusting scoundrels who raise a hullabaloo about the unfortunate deaths of civilians at Aldershot and at the same time support the indiscriminate slaughter of vastly greater numbers of civilians in Vietnam every day.

It is a political question. Indiscriminate terrorism hinders the growth of the mass movement. It is therefore the duty of every socialist to oppose it, irrespective of questions of popularity or unpopularity in Ireland, Britain or anywhere else.

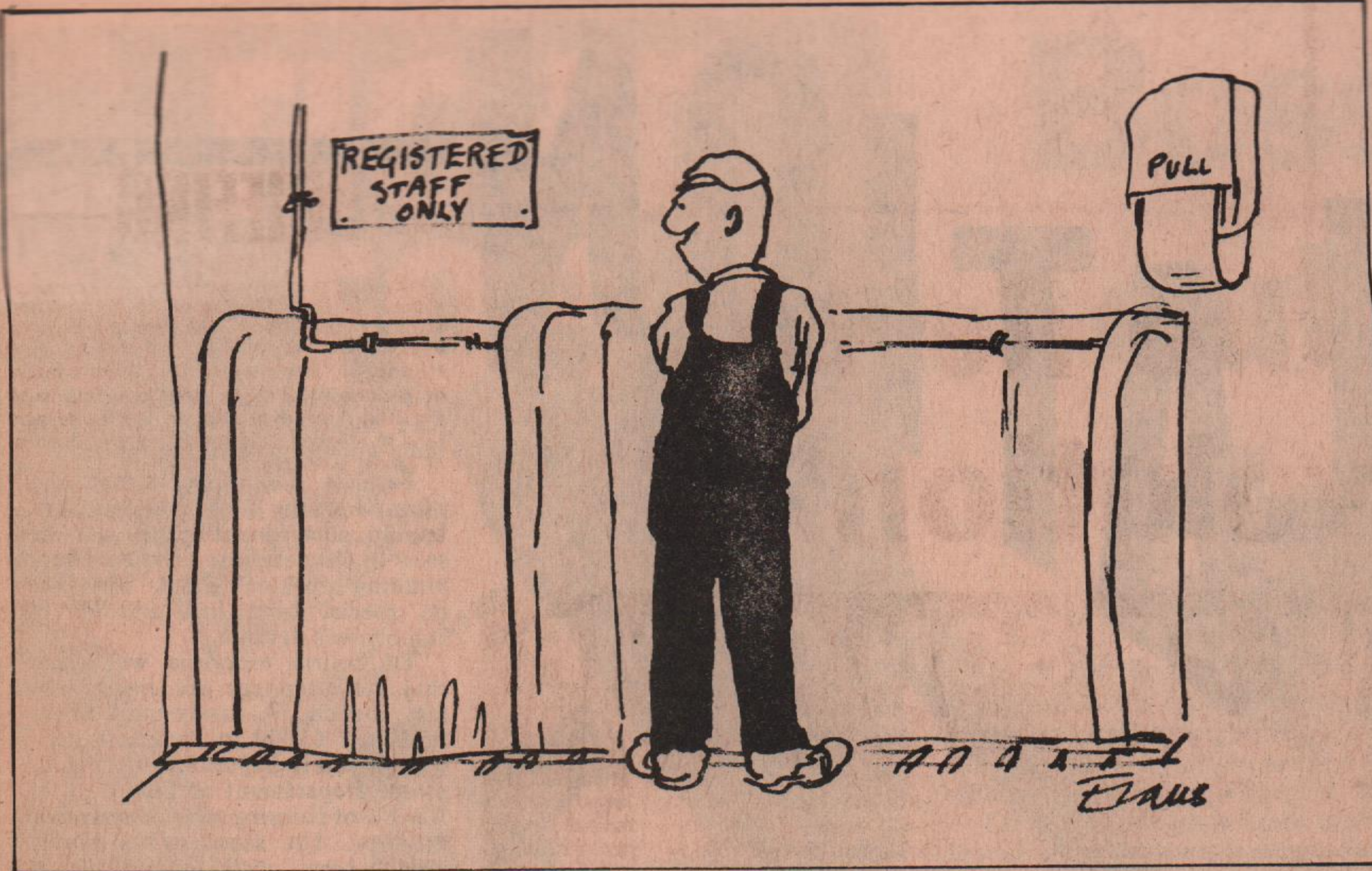
## CHINA JOINS THE CLUB

THE JOINT US-CHINA communique marks the end of an era. For more than two decades 'Red China' has been the bogeyman of international politics. Now the Chinese Peoples' Republic, member of the Security Council of the United Nations, is part of the international status quo.

The Chinese revolution of 1949 was one of the great events of world history. It marked the decisive turn of the tide against Western (and Japanese) imperialism in Asia and the re-emergence of the largest and oldest civilisation in the world as an independent power. For more than a century China had been the helpless prey of foreign (notably British) predators. The revolution achieved the re-unification of the country and the transformation of its archaic economy. Its significance for Asia was comparable to that of the great French revolution of 1789 for Europe.

It was not a socialist revolution. Nor could it have been in an isolated China. The material basis for socialism—developed industry and a large modern working class—did not exist on the necessary scale in the China of the late 1940s. Nor was it a 'capitalist' revolution of the traditional kind that had occurred much earlier in Britain, France and so on. It occurred much too late for that type of development. It was a hybrid 'bureaucratic state capitalist' revolution, immensely progressive in the context of an isolated China, yet a product of the defeat of the workers' revolutionary movement in Europe and Asia in the 1920s.

This dual, two-sided character allowed all kinds of illusions in the real nature of Mao's regime to flourish in the working-class movement. They will be less and less easy to maintain now that the regime has received the accolade of qualified approval by Richard Nixon.



# COTTONS WARMS

## FULLI things

THE MINERS' VICTORY has sent shock waves through the ranks of the establishment and its hangers-on. A demonstration of the power of the majority over the power of the minority has dredged up the usual screams of 'democracy and liberty in danger.'

Mr Harold Soref, Tory MP for Ormskirk, and enthusiastic supporter of such democratic and liberty loving regimes as Rhodesia and South Africa, told a Tory meeting last week that we are living in a 'pre-revolutionary atmosphere.' 'Every new demonstration is just another rehearsal for the revolution,' he added. For the first time in English history, he raved on, there was a sizeable group of people not wanting Britain to be peaceful and prosperous.

The aim of socialists, as is well known, is to make Britain war-like and bankrupt.

Meanwhile, Mr Francis Bennion, the barrister who is still attempting to prosecute Peter Hain for organising the demonstrations against the South African cricket and rugby tours, has launched a group with the grandiose title 'Freedom Under Law International'. It has taken large chunks of space in the posh press at a cost of several thousand pounds.

The advertisement says that demonstrations and picketing are becoming tyranny. FULLI plans to fight this grisly menace (if the cash rolls in) by keeping a close eye on the activities of the conspirators and urging the authorities to prosecute them. But, in an effort to be helpful, FULLI will contact minority groups to 'warn them' of the consequences of their action.

The movement, of course, is 'non-political'—the thin cloak always used for the activities of the far right. The advertisement also contains the information that Bennion and his side-kicks, John Chapman and John Robins, are 'all, incidentally, Oxford graduates'. Doesn't that make you feel better?

ADVERTISED in Germany: 'Sir Winston—the Great Tea from Great



ALEC: preferred to stay Home

Britain'. Do they drink it from Dresden china?

## Dive in

SO you thought Labour was on your side? Former Labour minister George Thomson, an enthusiastic pro-Marketeer, has told a continental audience that Britain's million-plus unemployed would be 'a great asset' when we join the EEC.

The reason, said George, was because it was the 'largest pool of surplus industrial workers in Europe'. In other words, our socialist friend is offering Europe's bosses a group of workers for super-exploitation.

## Crossbarred

LAW'N'ORDER, sunny South Africa style. A Johannesburg woman saw an African man running between two white policemen on bicycles. The woman, film producer Lorette Walder, asked them if the man was running because he wanted to or because he was being forced to.

Not satisfied with their reply, she went to the local police station. Instead of an explanation, she was arrested on a charge of interfering with the police in the course of their duties.

She was held for more than an hour but was acquitted when she appeared in court. We don't know why the police were so uppity—it's clear the coppers on the bikes were helping the African train for the first multi-racial sports in South Africa.

DID YOU picture the commercial television moguls prostrate with grief after their failure to convince the Tories to let them run a new channel? On the contrary, the champagne corks have been popping for weeks as the telly tycoons toast their lamentable failure.

They are secretly delighted with the result, for the Tories have agreed to extend the broadcasting hours of the existing channel, which means that the tycoons will make even bigger profits from advertising with-

out going to the expense of running a new channel. Clever, isn't it?

## Flying ducks

THE TORIES are also busily looking after their chums who run the private airlines. Haters of all things public, even the monstrous bureaucracies called BOAC and BEA, the government has been quietly whittling away their routes and handing them over to the private pirates.

BOAC has been forced to give up its flights to Ghana and Nigeria to British Caledonia and BEA has surrendered part of its London-Paris service. Now BOAC faces a further blow.

British Caledonia has been given permission to start transatlantic flights from Gatwick to New York and Los Angeles. BOAC pointed out the lunacy of the decision by emphasising that 19 scheduled airlines are flying thousands of empty seats between Europe and the US and the government decision will disrupt BOAC's plans to fill their empty seats with cheaper flights.

Even more alarming, with all these planes thundering around dedicated to running services that, first and foremost, must make money, how many safety corners are being cut?

WHILE Richard Nixon was swanning it in Peking, a report from Ceylon shows that China's rulers have picked up a few points from old-style imperialist drum-beating. Ceylon's Prime Minister Mrs Bandaranaike thanked the Chinese government for the gift of five gunboats.

Said the first lady, who has recently put down, with Chinese and British help, a left-wing revolt, that aid given without strings can contribute solidly to permanent friendship. When do the opium wars begin?

PS: Overheard in Peking as Chou feted Nixon, from one Chinese official to another: 'Would you buy a second-hand rickshaw from him?'

## Peerless

ONE REASON that the rich and powerful who really run the country are feeling uneasy about Ted the Teeth is that the jumped-up middle-class twerp actually enjoys being Prime Minister. Your actual bourgeois or aristocrat has considerable distaste for having to do what they consider to be an office boy's appointment.

One peer of the realm told a Fleet Street hound that he just couldn't understand Ted's delight for the job. Unlike 'dear old Alec'. When the dreadful Scots cadaver was pushed into the gap left by Macmillan, he approached our friendly peer at a cocktail party with the deathless words: 'Bad news, old chap, I've got to do PM.'

# INFLATION



THE TORIES, after a desperate attempt to convince people that a decent wage rise for the miners would be disastrous for the country, have changed their minds.

The miners can have their rise. It won't be disastrous after all—but then the miners are a *special case*. Millions of other workers, also exploited and underpaid, will still *hold the country to ransom*.

They're not a special case, say the Tories. Decent wage rises for them would certainly be a disaster.

The Tory argument is that rising wages are the cause of madly rising prices.

But this is not true. The inflationary explosion had started a good year before groups of workers started weighing in with big wage claims—indeed these claims were made because rising prices were cutting into real earnings.

The price explosion started in the wake of the Wilson government's 1967 devaluation of the pound. To make it work, the government raised taxes and interest charges.

## Decline

Ideally the big international monopolies would have stalled their cost increases and passed them on only when they thought the market would take them. But this did not happen.

The growth rate of the world market was slowing, and the return the big companies were getting from their investments went into a sharp decline. So they put up prices.

TUC evidence to the Wilberforce Inquiry into the power workers' claim last year clearly demonstrated that 75 per cent of price rises in the first three months of 1969 were directly caused by higher taxes, interest and import charges and the cost of running machinery below capacity.

Only after this spurt in price rises during those first three months of 1969, were the level of wage claims really increased. The experience of higher living costs forced workers to set their sights higher.

## The idea that wage rises cause the price spiral is just a myth

Since then they have chased one another in a race for survival.

With profits reduced, and investment declining, any businessmen's government is driven to select the real living standards of the ordinary people for restraint. Within the terms this system of society so relentlessly lays down, they have absolutely no choice.

So the working class too has no choice. Workers have to fight harder to maintain and extend their standard of living.

We must see the lies of the Tories and their system in their real context. What this really is can be well illustrated by the recent crisis of the chemical industry where profits have taken a real dip

## Chaotic

This is not due to the massive wage rises won by workers in the industry. It is due to a complete shift in the market situation and the chaotic planning systems of com-

peting giant monopolies.

At this very moment there is £1000 million worth of newly-built PVC plant and equipment built all over Europe by the various competing firms. None has ever been put into production. The massive capital investment is producing no returns whatsoever. And worse still other countries, like Algeria, are planning to build still more.

Who will pay for this disaster? ICI and its shareholders? Perhaps a little, but they will pass the cost on

in a thousand different little ways. And most of all they will drive their workers to produce more.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of the distortions issued to uphold government policy can be seen in the response to the current building workers' claim. They are no special case, just another of tomorrow's devils.

Of course everyone will know that house prices are rising very fast indeed. A newly-built house that cost £5000 in June last year, cost £5260 in September, according to the Department of Environment Review of Housing and Construction Activity. The same source shows that labour costs actually went down in that period.

And the prices of old houses also increased dramatically. These, of course, include no labour costs whatsoever.

## Desperate

Inflation, therefore, is but one aspect of a particular method of organising production, a method which, in the rickety condition of British big business, demands that resources be reallocated from the poor to the rich in a desperate effort to make investment more worthwhile.

Any and every tactic is used to do this. Most of all now, the Tories and their masters are relying on unemployment to drive fear into workers' hearts until such times as they try an incomes policy to deal with the trade union leadership.

And when a group of workers really breaks through them, a new 'special case' is speedily invented.

In the long run that will fail them too. And solutions more vicious still will be canvassed and perhaps adopted.

Sadly for their schemes, there is another factor in the situation, the rising mood of the working-class movement which can confine their rotting system and their shoddy economics to the museums where they belong.

## How the Catholics were tricked

THE assertion that the Labour government was reluctant to send troops to Northern Ireland has not been proved to me in the past, nor in your centre page Wallchart (Socialist Worker 19 February).

Wilson and Callaghan sent British soldiers to Ulster to smooth out the embarrassing 'troubles' and to take control of the streets, as correctly pointed out, but even at that time the troops played a reactionary role.

The B Specials were disbanded, but the Orange-Unionist gunmen were allowed to practise with them in their legal rifle clubs.

The Catholics, on the other hand, were disarmed, their barricades were taken down, and their real protectors, the IRA, were hunted with renewed vigour.

When the Tories came into power the troops began to show their true role more clearly. The Catholic community realised that they had been tricked, and were forced to fight back as the soldiers actively sided with the Orange extremists.

It was not a question, as Socialist Worker makes out, of the troops being unable to dismantle the state machine; in fact their job was to protect that machine.

Two different methods of keeping the Catholics under the thumb of a big business, capitalist state were used by the armed section of that state. Wilson favoured a 'soft' approach in order to maintain a little credibility with the working class; Ted Heath is openly callous to pensioners, unemployed workers, trade unionists, housewives and children, so a few thousand Irish Catholics on the list don't make much difference to him.

Socialists must always remember that the police and armed forces exist to protect, defend and maintain the system and the capitalist state, no matter how much they may seem to be helping workers, except of course on the rare occasions (Britain 1931, Russia 1917) that they revolt against the system which oppresses them as much as the people they are paid to oppress.—STEPHEN KENT, Hartlepool, Co Durham.

## LETTERS

## LAWS THAT PROTECT THE RULING MINORITY

I SEE the press and other ruling powers are attempting to convince the majority of the population that miners' picketing was in many instances illegal.

This ruling minority group realises that all laws protect its economic and political power and can be enforced to control the workers. These laws do not benefit society as a whole. The vast majority of society is made up of workers and to prevent violence legislation should cater for this group.

The miners' action makes one wonder if violence and other so-called illegal activities can, at this point of time, be used to dethrone the ruling class (ie the two per cent of the population that control more than 50 per cent of the nation's wealth). If this is recognised to provide the vast majority of the population with the democratic rights due to them, then it

becomes a necessary evil.

It may well be a realisation of the workers that they have the power to enforce long-awaited reforms that will provide a social structure to benefit, in terms of human fulfilment and helpfulness, not only themselves, but ALL sections of society.

The economy also would be strengthened by virtue of there being no conflicts, no excessive profits and no costly restrictions which at present are administered against the workers.

To simplify, in the short term we could 'go it alone' and the inevitable conflict with capitalist nations would not be lost. In the long term there would be no capitalist nations.—R FORREST, Kings Norton, Birmingham 30.

## Better 'Last in, first out,' than give the boss a free hand

STEVE EVANS' letter (SW 19 February) raises a very important issue. In it he says that he believes that the slogan of 'Last in, first out' is dangerous.

This demand arises of course in a redundancy situation. Evans makes his claim because he thinks that it will help to create a huge pool of workers who will be used as cheap labour and never get any redundancy pay.

This, I believe, is to completely misunderstand the nature of the demand.

If workers are unable to prevent some management-declared redundancies, the problem has to be faced of who goes and on what basis. Should the management select who it wishes to be sacked or shouldn't they?

Clearly if a boss has this power he can select the trade union militants and other workers who he doesn't like.

Against this situation the demand that non-trade unionists are sacked first and thereafter the redundancy be on the basis of 'Last in, first out' is a blow against any victimisation. It defends the trade union organisation and prevents an employer for individually choosing his workforce.

Of course every trade unionist must fight against redundancy by occupations and other forms of action and against the growing increase in unemployment. That, however, is not what the demand of 'Last in, first out' is about.

What Steve Evans must do, if he's going to face up to the actual problems that many trade unionists face, is to pose a concrete alternative to the slogan which equally restricts an employer's right to select who he will sack.

This he hasn't done. Until he does, the demand—with all its faults—remains the only means whereby workers can defend their organisation.—J RYAN, AUEW, London E15.

## Pickets who are fined should just refuse to pay

I AM writing to reply to last week's letter by Patrick Goode (SW, 26 February), who said that Socialist Worker should demand that the National Union of Mineworkers should pay the fines of those pickets arrested during the recent strike.

I do not believe that this is the right demand. Neither do sections of the mine-workers. Only a few weeks ago the Scottish miners threatened to remain on strike unless 13 pickets were released. They were. Now the Scots are threatening at least a one-day stoppage if the charges against the pickets are not withdrawn or substantially reduced.

This is the right example. When 10,000 Birmingham engineers surrounded the Salfley Coke Works and forced its closure the police did not arrest them. According to one policeman all the pickets were, however, acting illegally and

causing an obstruction. Nevertheless nothing was done.

It is the relationships of forces which determined that.

The lesson of Salfley can be applied to the arrested pickets. If the pickets refuse to pay the fines and threaten strikes if anyone is arrested then the law can be beaten.

This is, incidentally, what happened in the past. In the famous Betteshanger case more than 900 miners refused to pay their fines. Industrial action was threatened if they were arrested. The law backed down.

Patrick Goode's letter is also very dangerous. Let us extend the logic of it towards the Industrial Relations Act.

According to him our demand should be that if any worker is fined as a result of this legislation then the union should pay it. This is simply playing into the hands of the Tories.

The recent International Socialist Industrial Conference took a very different attitude towards this. I believe that this was right.

The conference decided that if any worker or union is fined because of this Tory legislation then we should demand that they do not pay it and that strikes and solidarity action should be organised in their support. It is in this way that the fight can be won.

As for Goode's argument about the need to fight capitalist ideas about law and order, I believe that the best way to do this is through struggle and the experiences that it teaches rather than by arguments about who should pay fines. The very discussion about this, incidentally, implies the acceptance of the right of the courts to prosecute pickets and unions.—JOHN SETTERS, Birmingham.

# FIGHT FOR

Industrial Relations  
A Guide to the  
Industrial Relations Act 1971

# UNION RIGHTS

## Act gives freedom to sack militants

LAST WEEK we looked at the threat to shop floor organisation through the attack on the closed shop and the rights given to non-unionists. Those parts of the Act intended to weaken militancy on the shop floor are backed up by the protection the Act gives to employers over 'unfair' dismissal.

An employer can dismiss anybody he wants, however unfairly, and is under no obligation to take them back. The Act gives the bosses a free hand to get rid of key militants—and at a very cheap price.

And there are certain categories of 'fair' dismissal. For example, it is 'fair' for an employer to dismiss a member of a non-registered union for going on strike.

Dismissal on grounds of conduct, or of not having the necessary 'capability' or 'qualifications' is also 'fair'. No doubt, bosses could use the excuse of bad time-keeping or holding shop meetings outside the official times as excuses for 'fairly' dismissing militants.

This has been tried at Ford more than once. In 1957 a steward was sacked for holding a shop meeting and a Court of Inquiry considered he had been 'justifiably' dismissed.

### Defend

And in 1962, another steward at Dagenham, Bill Francis, was sacked for holding a meeting in the dinner break without management permission. This led to an unofficial strike at the end of which 17 men were not taken back. This blow to shop floor organisation led to wholesale speed-up.

Where redundancies are announced, then dismissal is 'fair' if agreed practice is adhered to. Trade unionists should defend their organisation by demanding 'last in—first out'.

Where official practice is broken, then the victim can appeal to an industrial tribunal by claiming that his dismissal is unfair. He can also appeal if dismissed while on strike, or operating some other sanction. It is important to note that it is unfair to dismiss members of registered unions for exercising their trade union rights.

But the right to appeal is limited to employees with at least two years' service. Significantly, this does not apply where the alleged unfairness concerns the right to be a member of a registered trade union, or the right not to be a member of any union.

It has been estimated that this two-year qualification, which favours firms with bad conditions who have a high labour turnover, could cut the case-load on the industrial tribunals by up to 80 per cent.

## THE THIRD OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES

Other sections of workers who are not allowed the right to appeal include those over normal retiring age, those employed in firms with less than four employees and those working less than 21 hours a week.

It goes without saying that these sections are among the most exploited anyway. Part-time workers have no right of appeal, even if they are dismissed for attempting to join a registered union.

It is intended that these workers should have no security of employment at all. It will be very difficult for them to organise to improve their wages.

This will seriously hinder the fight of women cleaners for union recognition. They have received little support from the general unions and are now liable to instant dismissal.

Where an industrial tribunal does decide that an employee has been unfairly dismissed and that he should be re-employed, it will make a 'recommendation' to that effect. But this 'recommendation' cannot be enforced.

Where re-engagement is not recommended, or where the employer refuses to take the worker back, then compensation can be awarded.

### Not difficult

But this compensation can never amount to more than two years' pay or £4,160—whichever is the less. And two years' pay will be the less in the majority of cases. In fact the award will probably be a great deal less than this, as the tribunal will take various factors into account.

For instance if the employer can show that he had some justification for dismissal even though it was 'unfair', the amount can be decreased. This should not prove too difficult for employers intent on getting rid of 'troublemaking' militants. They might well jump to use this service—and with special discount rates available.

If the employer can persuade the industrial tribunal that he had unfairly dismissed the worker because of pressure from a trade union, then the union or its officers become liable to pay part or even full compensation.

Where a worker who had left the union was dismissed due to pressure from the union, then it could be fined to compensate the man for being a scab. Scabbing could theoretically be subsidised by trade unionists.

Trade unionists should refuse to pay any fines or penalties, and officially support any refusal to do so. Any attempt at dismissal on the part of an employer should be met with firm industrial action. If it became factory policy to resist all such dismissals, then the employers would back down.

The Act does allow employers and unions (registered or not) to arrange with the National Industrial Relations Court for their companies or industries to be excluded from the Act's provisions on unfair dismissal if a satisfactory voluntary procedure agreement has been negotiated.

# Bosses' 'union' out to smash closed shop

ONE of the first major battles under the Tories' new Industrial Relations Act is likely to be between the Draughtsmen's Union and the large engineering firm of C A Parsons of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

On 28 February closed shops became illegal and at Parsons a determined effort is now being made to smash an agreement that was won in 1970.

The agreement made trade union membership compulsory and gave the Draughtsmen's Union sole negotiating rights about wages and conditions. Now the United Kingdom Association of Professional Engineers (UKAPE) is trying to smash this.

Although UKAPE is a very small organisation with fewer than 4,000 members it has registered under the Industrial Relations Act and intends to use the legislation in an attempt to break up trade unionism.

### Extreme right-wing

UKAPE is every employer's dream of a trade union. It is not affiliated to the TUC or the Labour Party and has only one full-time official. It does not believe in strikes and has no strike fund.

Employers are allowed to join it and its rules are extremely undemocratic. One of its leaders commented on this: 'You get fairness by telling people what to do. You do not get it by asking them . . .'

UKAPE is supported by several well-known Tory MPs and Lord Nelson, the £777-a-week chairman of GEC. The vice-president of UKAPE is Ralph Clarke, who recently wrote a pamphlet for the extreme right-wing Monday Club.

Clarke is sympathetic to the employers and has said: 'The employer's job is to make money for his shareholders, not to defend the personal interests of his employees, and it is unfair to load him with this extra responsibility.'

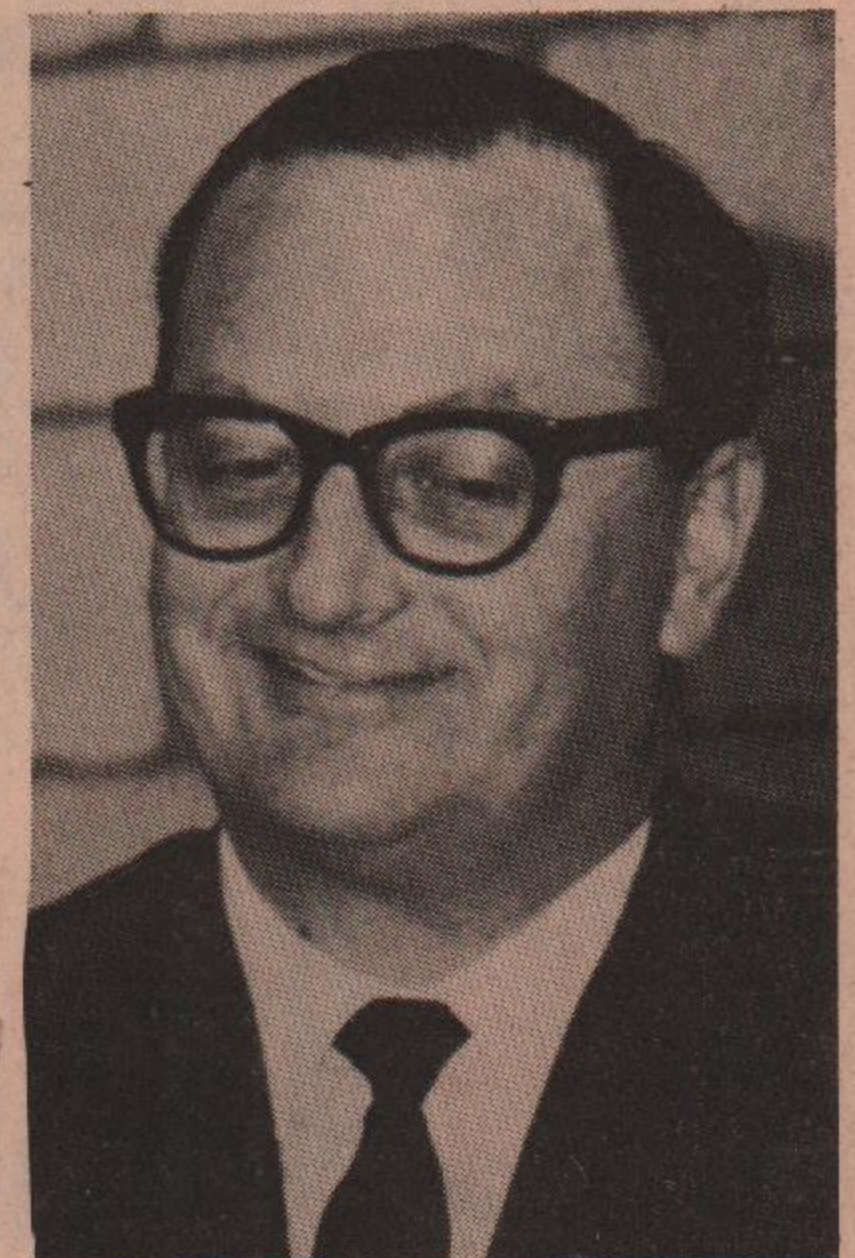
UKAPE is not a trade union. It is an organisation formed by certain employers for the single purpose of wrecking white collar trade unionism.

Nowhere has this been so clearly shown as at Parsons.

When the closed shop agreement was signed at this firm it stated that after one year every staff engineer would have to join the union or be sacked. Last August the management fired 35 members of UKAPE for refusing to abide by this agreement.

UKAPE, supported by anonymously donated funds, protested at this decision and took legal action. In October they succeeded in convincing the anti-trade union judges of the Appeal Court to rule that the sackings were wrong because insufficient notice had been given.

The company, encouraged by this verdict, then gave UKAPE members new notices of dismissal and artfully extended them to six months each so that they would not expire until after 28 February, when closed shops



Clive Jenkins: shabby behaviour

became illegal.

Naturally, of course, the management of Parsons does not normally give such lengthy notice.

The company helped UKAPE because it wanted to smash the closed shop. Just a few weeks ago it confirmed this by writing to the union and announcing its intention to rip up the agreement on 28 February and thereafter ignore it.

### Shabby

The company has also co-operated with UKAPE by trying to refer the case to the National Industrial Relations Court (NIRC) and Robert Carr's Department of Employment and Productivity.

The Draughtsmen's Union—in line with the TUC policy—has refused to give evidence or appear before the court and has told the company that it will fight to defend the agreement.

But another union has not been so principled. Although not really concerned with the case, Clive Jenkins, the general secretary of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS), has been pestering the draughtsmen to go to the NIRC. Fortunately he's not had any success.

There were several reasons for Jenkins' shabby behaviour. The most important was that Jenkins, who himself is occasionally bothered by UKAPE, wanted to try and deal with it through the NIRC rather than by industrial action and a direct challenge to the Tories' anti-trade union laws.

### Resist

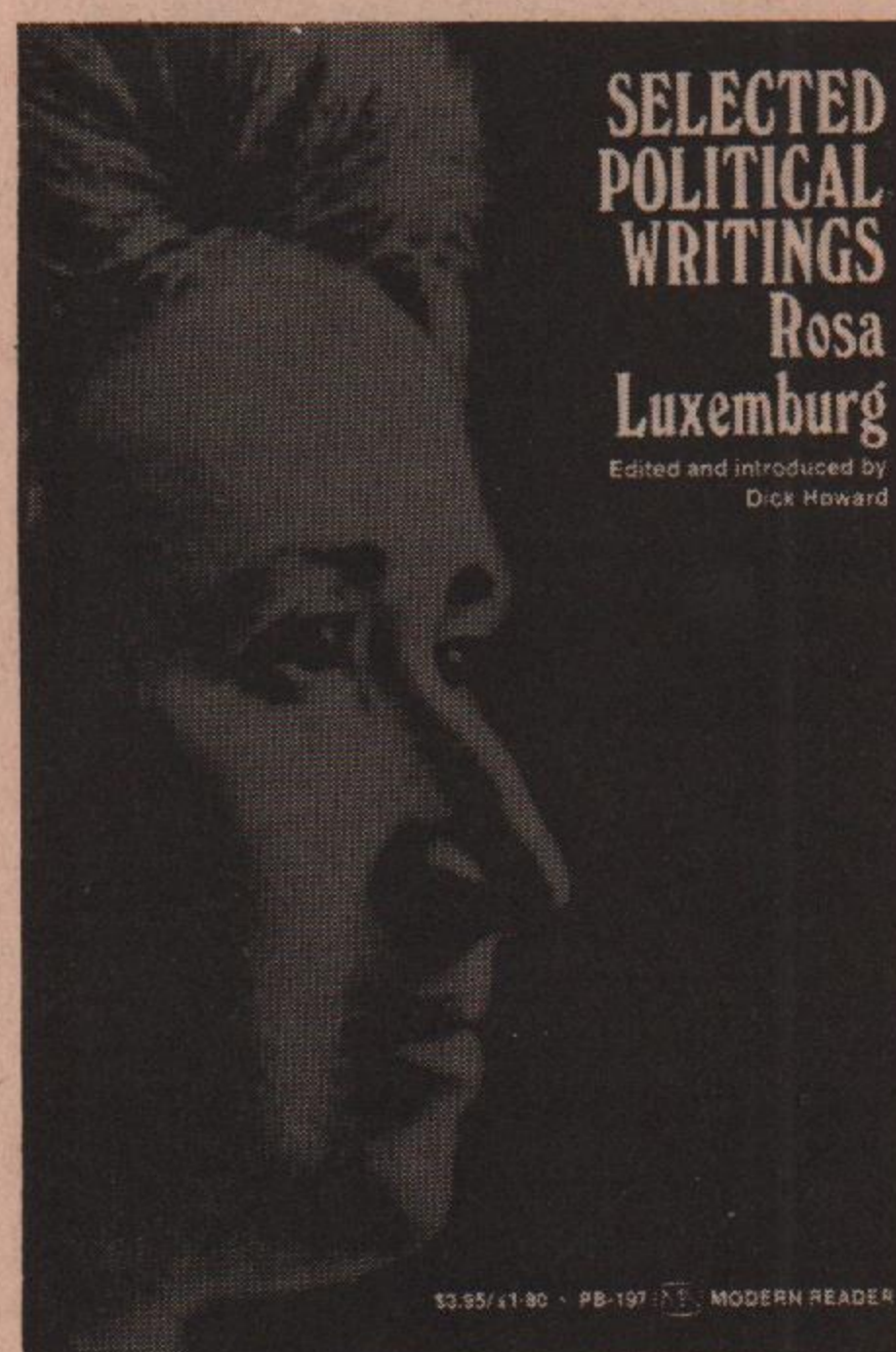
He wanted also to implicate the draughtsmen—who are now part of the powerful Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers—into accepting the Industrial Relations Act and thereby making it easier for him and his union to justify their own desire to co-operate with it.

Despite the current threat of heavy redundancies at Parsons, both the Draughtsmen's Union and its members are determined to resist any attack on their hard-won rights and organisation. Last week Mike Cooley, the Draughtsmen's president, told me that his union would fight against the scrapping of any closed shops.

The struggle at Parsons looks like being a vital test case for the whole movement. If the draughtsmen are defeated the repercussions will be enormous.

Every closed shop will be threatened and every phoney stooge union like UKAPE encouraged.

It is because of their fight to prevent this that the men at Parsons must be supported.



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# 'YOU DID IT TOO'—WHY..

THE TORIES have one argument left. As fifty per cent of the nation's power is cut, as section after section of the workers prepares for open class war, as the unemployment figures surge forward into their second million, the Tory argument reaches an even higher crescendo:

**WHATEVER WE ARE DOING, THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT DID IT BEFORE US.**

It is a devastating, overwhelming argument when it is used, as it almost always is, in parliament or in contrived broadcast discussions in which, through the laws of broadcasting, every Tory MP has to be counterbalanced by a Labour MP.

The working people of Britain, groaning under the continued Tory onslaught, must be wondering how and why it is that the Labour

opposition, so full of witty jibes and heady rhetoric, crumble every time the Tories raise the 'you too' cry. At a stroke, the cry has again and again, and in every sphere of politics, reduced the Labour opposition to a cipher. The main reason is that the argument is absolutely valid.

We consider here three issues which have over the past few months dominated the political scene—the miners, unemployment and Ireland. But the same is true with every issue. When Sir Keith Joseph wants to defend increased dental charges, he refers to the increases imposed by Mr Richard Crossman in 1969.

When Mr Robert Carr wants to justify his Industrial Relations Act, he quotes from the Wilson/Castle document In Place of Strife in 1969. When Mr Peter Walker wants to define 'a fair rent' he refers to the definitions of

Mr Richard Crossman's Rent Act of 1965. When Mr Reginald Maudling seeks precedents for his Immigration Act, he looks up the Labour government's Immigration Act of 1968.

When Sir Alec Douglas Home washes his hands of the continued slavery of the black people of Zimbabwe, he uses the dirty water which Harold Wilson used on HMS Tiger and HMS Fearless.

The cancer of capitalism has entered the very heart of the British Labour Party. After seventy years of promising socialism by reform, it is incapable even of reform. Its leaders have managed capitalism for so long that they have inherited capitalism's values. Its dwindling rank and file can find little solace for their disillusion in increasing the effectiveness of Labour's electoral machine. The importance of creating a new socialist party which is interested not in office but in power cannot be overstated.

# ..LABOUR CAN'T REALLY FIGHT THE TORIES

IN THE WEEK after the strike was declared, the Labour Party National Executive announced that the party supported the miners. They were, according to the statement '100 per cent behind the miners in their struggle'. The language of the document recalled messages of solidarity as far back as 1921.

By some monstrous twist of fate, the Labour Party's Shadow spokesman on 'fuel and power' is Mr Harold Lever, an affable multi-millionaire who made his money by playing the Stock Exchange.

Mr Lever was appointed to this post, presumably, because of his long experience at the Ministry of Technology with what is known in the trade as 'power economics'.

Talk to Mr Lever about the percentage difference in cost per unit between a nuclear and a coal-fired power station and he will dazzle you. Talk to him about working-class solidarity and he will look at you with a shy and puzzled grin.

When Mr Lever led his party's

## MINERS

support for the miners in the House of Commons nine days after the strike started, he was full of praise for all the sterling qualities which everyone knows the miners have.

'We stand,' said Mr Lever, 'solidly behind the miners in their sense of grievance and intend to support them in their efforts to secure justice.'

Mr Eric Varley, who rounded off the debate for Labour, went even further. 'For the miners,' he said, 'it is a fight for the workers of Britain. That is how we on this side of the House see it. Those of us who have had the honour to be sent here to speak for the miners are speaking for

Britain's workers tonight'.

How to measure these abstract principles? How much is justice or the case of the workers' worth? Unfortunately neither Mr Lever nor Mr Varley could tell the House whether Labour supported the miners' full claim.

Indeed they couldn't say how much of the claim should be paid. Both men, especially Lever, criticised the government for the manner of the handling of the dispute, for discriminating against public service workers and the rest.

Lever argued that no one in any country 'has found the key to unlock the doors of the problem of determining wages'. He was as concerned about inflation as anyone.

What worried him and the Labour Party was that the government had not 'got round the table' with Gormley and thrashed out a settlement before the strike.

### Cleared up

On the day the Wilberforce Inquiry was set up, Lever went on television on behalf of the Labour Party and was asked whether he supported the full miners' claim. That, said Lever, was 'a matter for the miners'.

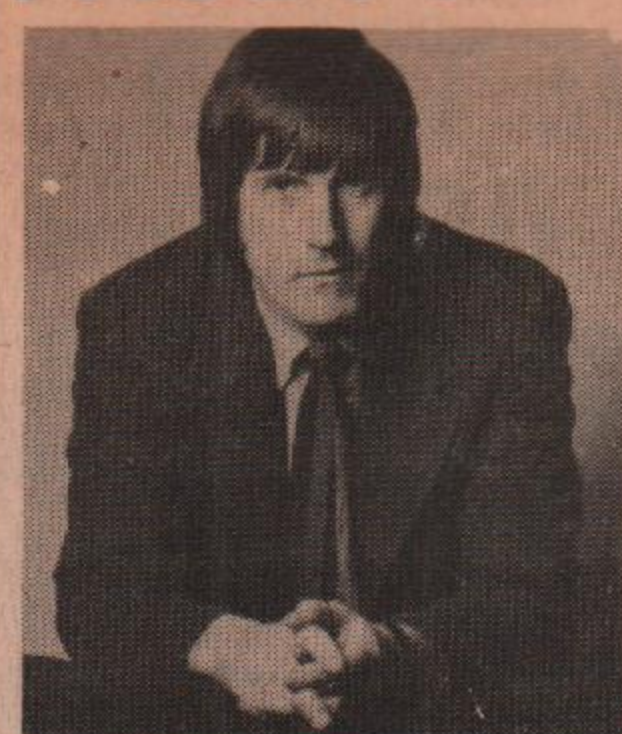
Should the miners return to work pending the inquiry report? That, said Lever, was a matter for the miners. But, said the exasperated interviewer, what is your opinion? 'It would be wrong for me to state an opinion,' said Lever.

The following day, Lever's leader cleared up the last point. The miners, said Harold Wilson, should return to work pending the Wilberforce inquiry result. Wilson knows from the postmen's experience last year that a return to work pending an inquiry report is tantamount to wage suicide.

So Labour 'supported' the miners without ever supporting their full claim. Throughout, the support was synthetic and opportunist.

In terms of practical help,

## PAUL FOOT



writes...

This year, after the strike, the miners have won more in total for every grade than was won in the entire period of the Labour government.

Before the Labour government, miners earned more than the average wage. After the Labour government, they earned less.

In October 1964 there were 540 pits employing 505,000 miners. In June 1970 there were 293 pits employing 283,000.

No wonder that Mr Roy Mason received a rather cool reception from picketing miners when he led the Labour MPs 'solidarity demonstration' during the strike. Mr Mason, who represents Barnsley, was the Minister of Power in the last Labour government.

Wilson: set i

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# DWINDLING

# Policy for jobs means loot for bosses

## UNEMPLOYMENT

THE LABOUR OPPOSITION'S policy on unemployment was set out in detail in a long speech by Harold Wilson on 24 January. In it, he outlined 12 points.

'There is no point,' said Wilson, 'in listening to repeated alibis and excuses. We want a policy. If the Prime Minister cannot do what is necessary, he had better make room for someone who can'.

The 12 points which followed were therefore, presumably, a policy for solving unemployment.

**1 Restore the Prices and Incomes Board and the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation.** The chief effect of the first was to hold down wages and the second to create private enterprise mergers and monopolies with government money.

**2 'Re-Establish the IRC as an indication of a determination to forge a new partnership between government and industry.'**

**3 Establishment of 'investment boards' under the IRC for each industry, like the Shipbuilding Industry Board.** In the period of the SIB under the Labour government, employment in shipbuilding declined by nearly 20 per cent.

**4 'Nationalise the investment responsibility.'** When an Hon Member shouted 'What does that mean?', Wilson promised to explain, but did not. It seems, however, to fall in line with Labour policy at the last election for investment boards (as in point 3) in each industry to supervise investment.

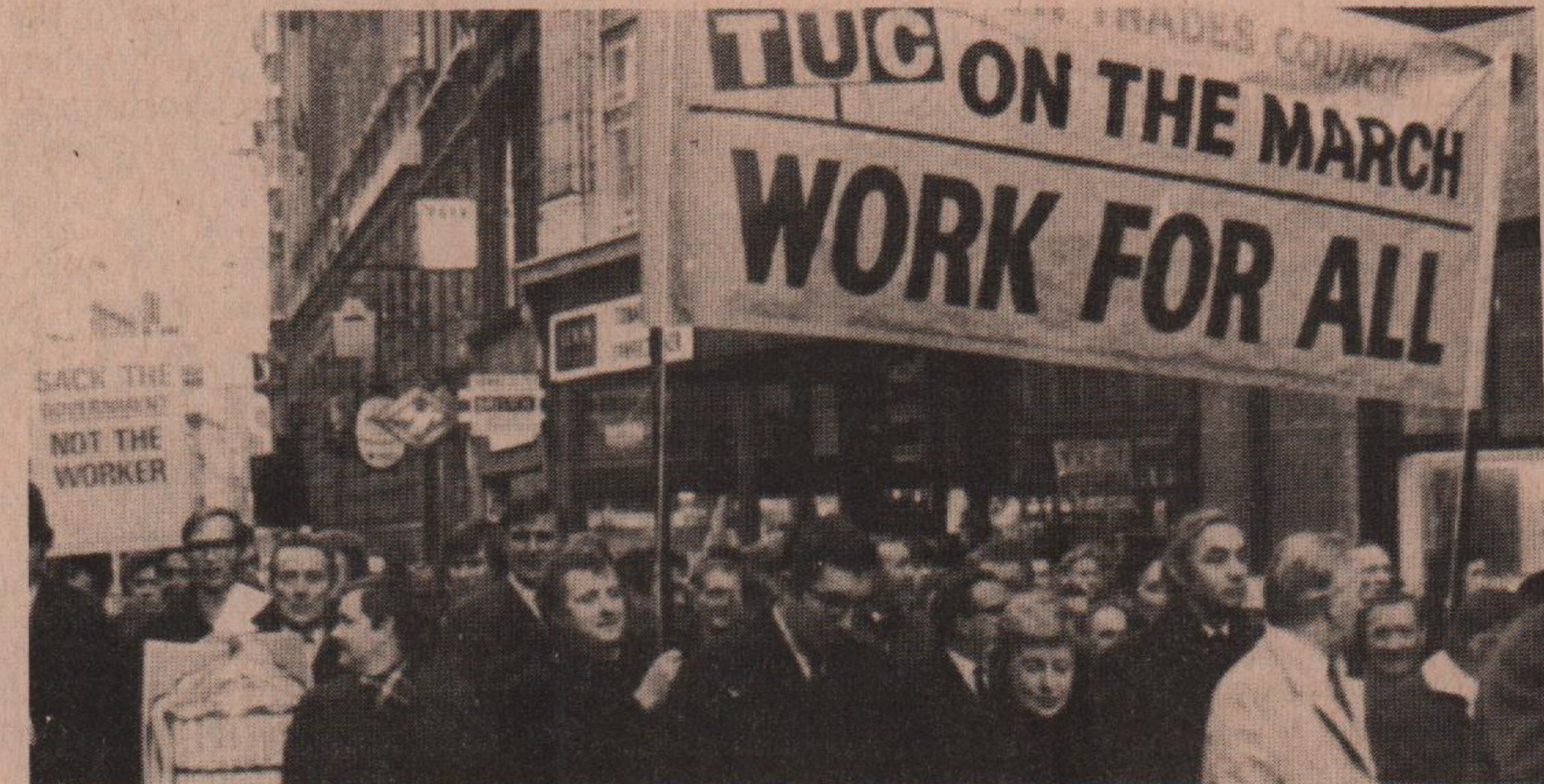
**5 Prepare 'A programme of public and private investment.' The difference between the programme figures and the actual figures should be made up by the government.** This is an extension of point 4, which is an extension of point 3.

**6 Return to investment grants and regional employment premiums, £700m of which were handed to employers by the Labour government with only marginal results in numbers employed.**

These grants and premiums were in existence throughout the period of the Labour government, during which period unemployment in every region increased by (at minimum) 10 per cent, and usually very much more. At the same time, there were countless cases of shameless profiteering through investment grants and other bribes.

**7 An increase in investment, especially for research in the 'machine tool and similar industries' to create a 'buffer stock' of such tools, even if they are not immediately needed by government departments.**

**8 The establishment of regional development authorities for all the areas of Britain 'where employment problems cannot be solved except by combined**



The depths of hypocrisy: Barbara Castle on a TUC march against unemployment

economic and social development'.

These sound suspiciously similar to the complex of local Planning Authorities set up by the last Labour government which, apart from a few desultory reports, solved none of the problems of any of the regions.

They had no power to intervene in the decisions of local industrialists. The new bodies proposed will not, according to Wilson's speech, have any such powers either.

**9 'A new local authority development scheme' whereby the government offers to pay each local authority money for providing 'public works' employment. The money should be based on the cost of paying for unemployed people in the area through social security benefits and so on.**

**10 'Where in the future factory closures are announced or redundancies declared, whether in public or private industry, the government should require prior notification to the department concerned, and before action is taken the department should prescribe a local inquiry, with representatives of union and management, under official, or in very special cases, Ministerial, chairmanship, together with representatives of the appropriate regional development authority and planning council.'**

The inquiry, it appears, will have no power whatever to halt redundancies or closures. Judging from their proposed membership, they would not want to anyway.

**11 A special employment council, under the Prime Minister 'to sit and deal with the problem until the unemployment**

figure is reduced to tolerable levels'.

**12 Discussion with the TUC to establish an incomes policy.**

Such an incomes policy would, presumably, be similar to that enforced by the last Labour government, under which unemployment hit the 500,000 mark in five out of six years, compared with once in the previous 14.

Most of these alleged '12 points' were, as can be seen, extensions of each other. Most of them envisaged the appointment of more and more bureaucratic councils with less and less powers.

Labour activists might notice a few omissions from these proposals. At Brighton last year, the Labour Party conference passed resolutions for the nationalisation of the banks, insurance and other key sections of the economy.

In Wilson's 12 points there is not one suggestion for an increase in public ownership. Bribes to industrialists are to be increased, their investment is to be assisted by government, but their overall power is not to be affected in any way.

Left-wing Labour Party members have got used to the idea that conference decisions have no impact on a Labour government. Mr Wilson's 'important' speech is proof that they have no effect either on a Labour opposition.

And no wonder. For all the weeping and wailing from Labour's front bench, all the yelling at Heath to resign is little more than an exercise in the grossest hypocrisy.

For the truth of the matter is that the unemployment level today

is not simply the result of Tory policies. As far as fiscal measures are concerned, in fact, the Tories have tried desperately since last autumn to reverse the unemployment trend.

Chancellor Barber has cut taxes and hire purchase controls by more than any other Chancellor for 10 years. Tory economic policy has been, essentially, reflationary over the past 18 months.

By contrast, when Labour was in power, Budget after Budget increased taxation and cut public expenditure. From the July 'freeze' in 1966 to the Jenkins Budget of 1970, Labour economic policy was directed towards 'holding down' expenditure and employment.

The high unemployment today is the result of those policies.

The cause of unemployment is not rooted in this or that government's decision to invest more or less in machine tools or to hold inquiries into proposed redundancies.

It is rooted in a chaotic economic system which cuts society into classes and leaves the people who produce the wealth without power and without control.

Such a society plans its resources only to maintain wealth and privileges for its rulers. The chaos of its competition leads inevitably to unemployment.

Harold Wilson and his colleagues have long since abandoned any pretence of trying to change that system. Their speeches and their proposals are miles apart even from the fumbling, half-formed attempts of Labour Party conference delegates to come to grips with capitalist power.



Train the rise in unemployment

REACTION of the nation to the crisis in Ireland has been

July 1970, when they made their real Ireland unmistakable the attack on and Hills Road, Belfast.

er 1970, as they led their campaign of Stormont and minority, Harold Wilson was on holiday, when Heath and Faulkner set up the only concentration camp in Europe. On television, Mr Callaghan described internment as 'a gamble'.

stunned by this deal, the Labour silent. The fall of k, - the shooting Derry and a deaf e, the withdrawal of the Social Labour Party-

## IRELAND

all were greeted by Labour leaders, notably Mr James Callaghan, with renewed tribute to the courage and fair-mindedness of the British troops.

### Scilly silence

The silence continued after internment. Not a word emerged from the Scilly Isles, where Mr Wilson was on holiday, when Heath and Faulkner set up the only concentration camp in Europe. On television, Mr Callaghan described internment as 'a gamble'.

Through the long months of increased army activity, through all the allegations of torture and brutality, the silence continued. The Labour leadership refused to oppose the Tories after the

delayed special debate on Northern Ireland in September.

In November, Mr Wilson went to Northern Ireland. The press bayed their delight with his speech on his return (25 November) when he laid down another 15 points for solving the Irish question.

They repeated word for word his praise for the British army:

'I talked to those of almost every individual rank during my visit, and there can be no stinting of the expression of the debt owed by the House and those whom we represent. I believe the soldiers are superbly generalised.

'There can be no doubt about the military qualifications and qualities of General Tuzo. What impressed me was the wisdom, statesmanship, and political sensitivity he brings to a task... maturity... coolness... fair-minded approach...'



Callaghan: internment 'a gamble'

The 15 points were irrelevant to the beleaguered minority in Northern Ireland. Again and again, Wilson repeated the main principle of Tory policy in Northern Ireland:

'In my view, no political solution can come about, or be put into effect, until what is called the military solution is solved and is seen to be solved.'

Even now, after Derry on 30

January, the Labour Party is not for ending internment. Mr George Thomson, Opposition spokesman, spoke last November of 'the impossibility of releasing onto the streets known gunmen'.

That is still Labour Party policy. They are 'shocked and horrified' by the principle of internment, but, apparently, if they came to power tomorrow they would not open the gates of Long Kesh.

Labour's official reaction to the Derry killings is best summarised from the following extract from a speech in parliament of Mr Robin Chichester-Clark, the Tory Unionist MP for Derry, two days afterwards.

'If all the speeches that are made in this debate from the benches opposite are conducted with such studied moderation as that made by the Hon Member for Leeds (South) [Mr Merlyn

Rees, Labour front-bench spokesman and former Home Office Minister], this debate will do no harm and may do some good.'

Labour's record on Ireland during the past four years has been an accumulated disgrace. Never for a moment have the anguish or the courage of the Falls Road or the Bogside been reflected in a single Labour leader's statement.

### No choice

And last week saw the latest obscene support for Tory policy. The government rushed through parliament an amendment to the Special Powers Act making 'legal' the illegal activities of the British Army in Northern Ireland.

Mr Wilson pledged the full support for the legislation. He had no choice. For he had sent the Army on its illegal campaign of terror.

# IG MEMBERS LOSE HEART

# TENANTS ON RENT STRIKE

THOUSANDS of tenants in Ireland, North and South, are on rent strike. Some have been refusing to pay rent for almost a year.

The reasons for the strikes are different. In the South tenants are opposing a 'means test' system of rents. In the North they are opposing internment.

But the tactic is the same, and the results—successes and failures—are of great importance to British tenants preparing to oppose the Tory 'Fair Rents' Bill.

The Irish local authorities' immediate reaction was to attempt evictions. But the tenants had quickly formed vigilante committees, and human barriers prevented eviction attempts in several towns in Counties Cork, Kerry and Clare.

## DEMANDS

In the South the rent strikes are part of a campaign against the government's 'Differential Rents' legislation. The National Association of Tenants Organisations is running the strikes in selected places.

'Differential rents' means that rents are charged according to the householder's income. Any extra earnings from overtime are taken into account. No allowance is made for travelling, lunch, or for the size of family. The introduction of the scheme, as it stands, could mean rent increases of up to 50 per cent, immediately.

The association has not opposed the principle of differential rents. It has demanded that the scheme be made 'fairer', ie that the assessment be made on net income alone, and that transfers and successions of tenancy be also made at the same rent. (Implementation of the law would mean increases in all such cases.)

On the whole the national leadership has maintained this reformist position, but there has been a curious discrepancy between the ineffectiveness of its politics and the militancy of the tenants themselves.

## INTIMIDATED

When eviction notices were served on 200 tenants in Cork, there was an immediate demonstration to the City Hall, where all the eviction notices were publicly burned. Following this, the Corporation agreed to postpone the issuing of the notices. Eviction notices were also burned in Galway—with similar results.

Several local authorities tried intimidation and strong-arm tactics to break the strikes. In Cork, a corporation official visited the wives of striking tenants who were in the services, as soldiers or seamen, and told them that if they continued to withhold rents their husbands might be court-martialled.

Corporation tenants who were also employees of the local authority were threatened with the sack if they continued their strike. City Hall issued regular statements saying that 250 jobs in the corporation would be



Tenants march in Galway as part of their campaign against the new rents scheme

lost unless the strike ended immediately. Some of the building programme was postponed, and there was a cut in services, but none of this broke the strike.

In Galway, the local MP, who is also Minister of Local Government, 'got tough' on the strikers, and the County Manager made wild suggestions that there were 'manipulators' behind the strike. Unhappily, there is hardly any radical force in the leadership, although members of the republican movement and of the labour movement are active in the local committees.

Some of these local committees have produced regular news-sheets, keeping the strikers in touch with developments elsewhere.

The Galway strikers have now reached a settlement with the local authority. They have agreed on a revised differential scheme limiting rent assessed on overtime earnings to eight per cent of those earnings. But the strike continues in other places, and has recently spread to Dublin. There are still about 30,000 tenants on strike.

Workers in Ireland, as in Britain, face rapidly rising prices. There are

many prepared to strike to resist drastic rent increases, but unless the struggle on the rents front is linked to the wages struggle, there may be disillusionment.

The background to the rents and rates strike in the Six Counties is well known. The strike was called immediately after the introduction of internment in August last year, and is the main part of a civil resistance campaign against the Stormont administration.

## RESISTANCE

Several organisations claim credit for beginning and organising the campaign, but the continuation and the conduct of the strike is mainly in the hands of local resistance committees, some of which are quite spontaneous creations of the situation. These committees have ensured that the strike remains solid.

In some places, where the local authority has been crippled by the withdrawal of anti-Unionist councillors, they have organised some of the public services.

There have been two conferences of local committees to co-ordinate

the campaign throughout the Six Counties, and at a recent joint meeting with various political groups plans were drawn up to link demonstrations and marches with the tenants' strikes.

About 30,000 local authority tenants are on strike. Thousands of house-holders and rate-payers will refuse to pay rates when those are due in April.

The combination of the rents strike, and of the withdrawal of anti-Unionist councillors, has closed several councils. Strabane and Newry have been taken over by government commissioners. Others, where Nationalist councillors were still sitting, have been closed down by political pressure from resistance committees.

In December, Stormont introduced legislation—formulated and passed in a matter of days—designed to crush the strike. This empowered the authorities to deduct rents and arrears from any state payments. It was described by Peter Townsend, of the Child Poverty Action Group, as 'the most repressive piece of social legislation this century'.

Deductions can be made from social security payments, unemployment benefit, and even from grants



to encourage people to move from Belfast to the new town of Craigavon. The state also has powers to deduct rents and arrears from wages at source.

The wide powers which the government has given itself have not broken the will to resist.

The campaign of non-co-operation with the public authorities remains solid. In whole areas the Unionist state has no jurisdiction, and people are getting a first taste of popular control. For example, if a house or flat becomes empty the local committees allocate it to a new tenant.

## CONTROL

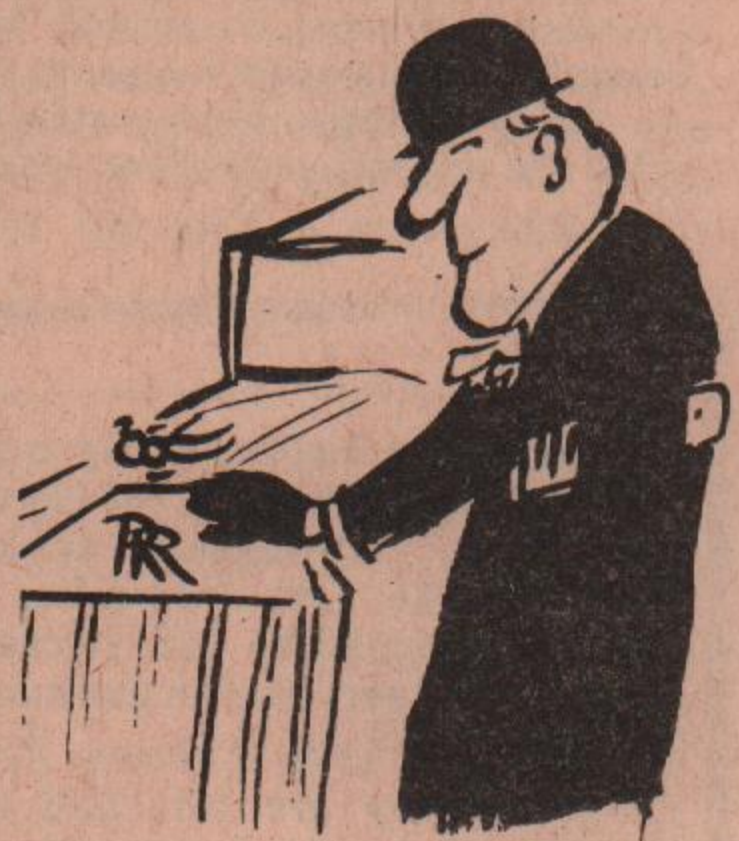
The moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party has advised tenants to hold on to their arrears until the demand is met for an end to internment. But large numbers of tenants pay no heed to this call. Perhaps their experience will tell them that in any future state it is necessary and possible to abolish the rents system and to give tenants control of housing estates, of services and allocations.

In spite of the Galway settlement the rent strike in the South is likely to show that this kind of action can be successful in defeating the plans of local authorities and of the government. But it needs a much more radical political edge to it.

The Northern rent strike is politically motivated, and, linked to other actions, has shown itself a useful political weapon. It also points a way for tenants' action on demands specifically related to the control of public sector housing.

## IN THE CITY

# BSA, the hit-and-run bosses



with T.H. Rogmorton

THIS is the story of Birmingham Small Arms (BSA), a company that nearly went bankrupt due to bad management, solved its problems by sacking its workers even though there was no shortage of orders for the company's product, and in the end gave the city the wonderful chance to make a fortune.

During summer 1971 the directors of BSA, manufacturers of motorbikes, sensed that something was going wrong and eventually appointed the leading firm of accountants Cooper Bros, to report on the situation.

In the middle of this investigation that maverick of the record-player world, Dr Daniel McDonald, tried to buy half of the company: he is well known to readers of Socialist Worker for his profitable use of the government's regional grants and refusal to pay a decent wage.

But even he was frightened away by the Cooper Bros report last August, which showed a loss of £3 million was

likely for 1971. According to the Times Business News: 'Without going into any details the summary of the report implied stern criticism of the company's management.'

Conveniently, the chairman resigned five days before he had to make his annual statement on these affairs on 1 November. Even more conveniently, he was retained in an advisory capacity, though quite what good advice he was expected to give, in view of the company's record, is unclear.

The new chairman referred again in his report to the brilliant management: 'As I have said before, I do not for a moment deny that errors in management contributed to the sad story. But I see no advantage in holding an inquest now.'

So what did the company propose to do? At the beginning of October it had intended to sack 3000 of the 4700 workers at the Small Heath factory.

This was proposed in the Cooper Bros

report, received more than two months before, but the October announcement was the first the workers knew of the plan. While the management was asking the workers to give up their jobs so that the shareholders could be saved, they never once consulted them on the redundancy proposals themselves.

At the last minute, the unions tried to produce a scheme to save some jobs, but the management reaction was 'cool', as the Financial Times said.

During the two silent months the company no doubt was busier talking to all the rumoured buyers who descended like vultures, anxious for a cheap buy: Guest Keen and Nettlefolds, Tube Investments, the Americans and the Japanese were all widely mentioned in the papers.

Barclays Bank was approached by the local MP who asked them to lend a further £8 million to support production for the American market—where orders were high—and thus ensure some of the jobs would be kept.

Barclays refused: a few weeks ago they announced pre-tax profits of more than £90 million for 1971.

The workers considered an occupation, but were intimidated not to go ahead with it by threats from one of the directors, ex-Labour MP Lord Shawcross, the man who is on record as condemning militant unionists who ask for more money and doesn't think the government should help firms in difficulty.

So that is the story. There is a moral. The workers at Small Heath had not had a strike for seven years. When the company came into difficulties it ignored the workers, let the guilty management creep away or stay on consultancy retainers, and then sacked the workers.

There is also a footnote: when McDonald's bid fell through, shares in BSA fell to an all time low of 17p. They are now 45p. While workers have been losing their jobs, clever City speculators, often doubtless in the know, have been able to more than double their money.





## REVIEW

## MARTIN SHAW looks at the unique paintings of the Ashington miners

The power of the miners that we all know at this moment is the strength of their collective action on the wages front. Their gigantic solidarity has shown itself in victory in 1972, as it did in defeat in 1926, as one of the greatest achievements of the whole working class.

Some may see a need for explanation if at this moment we turn our attention to, of all things, the paintings produced by a group of Northumberland miners. And yet these paintings, the work of The Ashington Group (on show at the DLI Museum & Art Centre, Durham), also have their power. It will not shift governments, but it may move men.

They reflect in their own way the conditions which produce the solidarity of the strike. And they are important if they show, even in a small way, that miners are not only victims of their conditions but are able to master them.

The Ashington Group was formed out of a Workers' Educational Association tutorial class in the pit town of Ashington, way back in 1934. Its origins were 'accidental': a class existed, was looking for something to do, and turned to painting. All the participants had next to no knowledge of 'art'. But they were forced to fall back on their own resources. William Feaver, who has organised the present exhibition, writes:

'Every Monday night they would meet to discuss and criticise each other's work. Then a fresh subject would be picked to be painted at home during off-shift hours. Many of them were prepared to make copies from the masters or to do lupins at sunset as Christmas presents; but to paint their everyday activities, to lay open memories and feelings normally held in strict reserve, was a far more demanding matter.'

But it worked. The idea of 'seeing by doing', which the original tutor, Robert Lyon, set going, led the group to work out their own experience in their own way.

The paintings in the Durham exhibition all depict life in the mines, in the mining communities and their surrounds. It is not true that they have no technique; but what they have is self-taught, developed out of the conditions of their own existence, not imposed mechanically on the subjects of their paintings.

Some of the painters seem to borrow from more conventional artists. Many would however be described, conventionally, as 'primitives' in their attempt to fashion their work from their own roots.

James Floyd's *The Miner* opens the exhibition: its qualities are those of deep-seated strength and dignity, well brought out in dark oils. The strength and dignity are not of the romantic kind found in the muscley monuments of socialist realism. The miner is small, not a brawny giant but a man of quiet and steadfast determination.

### Way of life

The miner has not got the passionate facial expression of the figure of liberty in struggle. But he expresses an intelligence and feeling which bears all the marks of a daily lesson of life against the odds. It is none the less real for being muted.

Neither physical effort in the pit, nor the vital energy of the miners' trade union struggle is to the fore. The Ashington painters do not see themselves and their fellows as heroes, as might a painter or any observer from the outside. For them it is a way of life.

Fresh with the memory of the strike, I am reminded of the quiet and efficient determination of the Durham miners I have met in those six weeks. Their struggle was no dramatic protest, no desire to create a public image, but a strictly effective effort to win demands upon which they had democratically decided to be necessary to their lives.

In none of these paintings are the mining people heroes. Their bodies are stooped in labour, typically kneeling. Their faces are not the focal point, for doing overrides feeling.

These paintings are concerned above all with the weary and monotonous labour of the pits and other workplaces, with movement in the streets, with scenes of the club and brass band parade.

Mining men are busy men, little prone to public feeling even when the time is there. This is certainly the impression of these pictures.

It is borne out by the absence of still lifes, bar a couple of pit scenes (with heaps behind) some portraits and a couple of unsuccessful tool-boxes. What the Ashington painter is concerned with is not contemplation, but life.

Many of these paintings are not so remarkable in an abstract scene,



Coalface, 1940 by Oliver Kilbourn

# SHEDDING LIGHT ON BLACKEST OF JOBS

but have a validity nonetheless as records of mining life made by men who belonged to it. Their meaning is there for those who were or are involved.

What I, who have never been down a pit still less worked in one, glossed over, was a source of fascination to two old miners I overheard as I walked round. The very fact that the men were young in Fred Laidler's *Hauler Foundations* aroused their comment; I had forgotten that men age young in the pits.

The same painter's *Clocking In* also produced a note of surprise. 'When did they start clocking in?' asked one old man. 'They were clocking in at Esh Winning when I was there 18 years ago,' came the reply. The small things that so much dominate a miner's life are very much there in the work of the Ashington Group. The miner-painter notices them in the way that the outside artist, or even the camera, might not.

The Ashington Group painted chiefly in the 1930s and 1940s, although they are still going today. Some things have already changed: mechanisation has ousted most pit ponies (and much else, for all I

know), and the open sewers of Harry Wilson's *House Drain* have (I hope the programme is right!) been vanquished.

Apparently the Group itself has slackened a little in its production. And William Cleaver doubts whether another Ashington Group could be started today.

### Bitter comments

'Increased leisure', we are told, has resulted in self-indulgence not greater cultural self-expression. Of course that 'increased leisure' is largely an illusion. The miners themselves commented bitterly and often in the strike on the amounts of overtime which are worked. But much of the impetus for many voluntary local activities does seem to have been lost.

Why? And does it matter?

Harry Wilson of the Ashington Group says: 'I was a very disturbed person about the time I took up art: cheesed off with religion, and I was very upset about the way Britain was being run, and the conditions of the working class, and the exploitation that was going on.'

It is not that the impetus to

change has been lost since then. It is just that the channels of the last generation have been blocked off—

The Ashington Group, in its time, was radical in opting for 'the subject rather than the technique of the thing.' It was radical in opting for its own aims rather than any imposed on it, by worthy middle-class attempts to bring culture to the workers.

In this sense it went beyond the WEA and similar bodies, and if it has faded a little with them, this matters little. Workers' creativity cannot steadily accumulate until the transition to socialism is reached.

As long as capitalism lasts, the working class will constantly change its mode of life as well as work in response to conditions beyond its control. No island of 'culture', any more than of workers' control, can survive for ever in the hostile environment of the system.

The changing problems of the very everyday existence, which is central to the concerns of the Ashington Group, may produce their own decline and that of similar enterprises. Indeed the whole of previous culture may be eclipsed, as William Morris envisaged, including the outgrowths of workers' art,

organisation and social life. We must learn what we can from them while they last, but constantly look to new developments.

What we can learn from the Ashington painters is the lesson of so much of mining life in the pit towns and villages around the country. The miners show that, despite their rough conditions, shift work and the like, working men can create the means to achieve full lives.

If men can do this when they labour 40, 50 or 60 hours for an employer's profit, what will they do when they labour much less but produce for themselves? Perhaps then they will not paint the hard lives which have inspired the Ashington Group, because that need no longer be the miner's lot.

Indeed, whatever the need for coal (and who now gainsays that?) no man will spend a working life down a pit. But in the freer times which we can achieve, men will still look with pride at the creative achievements of their ancestors in harder days.

The paintings of the Ashington miners, like the communities of the miners, will be a part, a modest part perhaps, of their heritage.

## Whatever happened to the politics?

ULSTER, by the Sunday Times Insight team: Penguin 40p.

ONE OF THE TROUBLES with most books and articles on Northern Ireland is that they are written by people who don't know the facts. The trouble with this book is that it is written by people who know too many facts. It is over-researched.

The Insight Team have dug up and raked over thousands of incidents in recent Irish history and from them put together a story as racy and gripping as a good thriller. It is informative and enjoyable to read—and good value at 40p.

It will tell you what happened, but not why. What it lacks is politics. Events are explained by reference to the machinations of this or that group or said to result from the mistakes and decisions of various individuals. The crucial turn in military

policy—from a 'neutralist' to an anti-Catholic attitude—is largely attributed to Cabinet ministers' misunderstandings and undiplomatic military blunders.

The inevitable conflict between the overall British strategy and the Catholics' impulse towards anti-imperialism is nowhere mentioned. There is no analysis of why in 1969 both Labour and the Tories backed the moves towards 'democracy'. There isn't a sentence about the pattern of British investment in Ireland.

Insight have a taste for the clandestine. The book is studded with accounts of meetings in hotel rooms and kitchens and cloak and dagger phone calls from one semi-secret agent to another. Some of this is ludicrous.

There is a story of a Fianna Fail intelligence agent successfully impersonating a 'well known'

Dublin TV personality at an IRA meeting in Belfast. One suspects that somewhere along the line the Insight team were the victims of the traditional Irish sport of pulling British journalists' legs.

There is a detailed account of an Irish army contingency plan to cross the border 'take Craigavon bridge and enter Derry'. Which is all very dramatic—except that Craigavon bridge is on the other side of Derry, away from the Border.

The account of August 1969, especially that of events in Derry, is inaccurate in some details. Still it is the best recent book I have read on Ulster. What it needs is a companion volume on the politics which underpin and explain the events described.

Eamonn McCann

# WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

## THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

**SCOTLAND**  
Aberdeen  
Cumbernauld  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Fife  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Stirling  
St Andrews

**NORTH EAST**  
Durham  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
Spennymoor  
Sunderland  
Teesside (Middlesbrough & Redcar)

**NORTH**  
Barnsley  
Bradford  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Mid-Derbyshire  
Ossett  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

**NORTH WEST**  
Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Potteries  
Preston  
St Helens  
Wigan  
Wrexham

**MIDLANDS**  
Birmingham  
Coventry  
Leamington  
Leicester  
Northampton  
Nottingham  
Oxford  
Redditch  
Rugby  
Telford  
Wolverhampton

**WALES and SOUTH WEST**  
Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Mid-Devon

Plymouth  
Swansea

**SOUTH**  
Ashford  
Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Folkestone  
Gurdford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton

**EAST**  
Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Colchester  
Harlow

Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

**GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES**  
Acton  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon

Dagenham  
East London  
Enfield  
Erith  
Fulham  
Greenford  
Hackney & Islington  
Havering  
Harrow  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hornsey  
Hounslow  
Ilford  
Kilburn  
Kingston  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
Newham  
Paddington  
Reading  
St Albans  
Slough  
South Ealing  
Tottenham  
Walthamstow  
Wandsworth  
Watford  
Woolwich

# No praise for Mail man who told truth

NEWSPAPERS are quick to promote their own heroes. Merely being on the spot for a news event—such a rarity for a national news reporter—is normally enough to get a journalist the star treatment.

'Our Mailman on-the-scene' or 'another exclusive from Express reporter, Phil Mindbender' are shrieked at us with boring regularity.

Which all makes it rather strange that the Daily Mail, even in these squat, compact days, should treat so modestly the evidence one of its photographers gave to the Widgery inquiry into the army's slaughter of 13 civilians in Derry.

The Mail is not noted for hiding its journalistic lights under bushels, but in the case of Mr Jeff Morris, a photographer on the Mail staff who was in Derry at the scene of the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre, the paper played his evidence down, preferring to give much more space and headlines to another witness whose story was less damaging to the Army.

The whole trouble with Morris—and this is where he missed his opportunity for star treatment—was



that he personally suffered at the hands of the troops that day, and he described in unshakeable terms the brutal tactics they dished out. Not quite the stuff the Mail wants its readers to hear.

The Guardian was far less shy about headlining its man-on-the-spot, Simon Winchester. We got a full column of Winchester's evidence, a portrait picture, and cross-examination from Brian Gibbens, the Ministry of Defence counsel who is

strenuously trying to whitewash the paras.

In the same edition of the Guardian, the famous upholder of journalistic liberalism failed to turn a hair in its leader column about the scurry of legal and political activity that had gone on to legitimise the literally criminal actions of the army in Northern Ireland.

Its editorial, ARMY, LAW, AND IRELAND was a goulash of whaffle, conjecture and confusion, which described internment as 'extraordinary and obnoxious' but failed to call for it to be abandoned.

By a neat juxtaposition of its titlepiece and a front page pointer, the Sun managed to give us the apt slogan THE SUN THE CESSPIT OF PORN. Who's arguing?

On the same front page the Sun carried another pointer, GIRL SLEEPS WITH ARSENAL. Those readers who thought they were in for some salacious sporting details of a groupie getting her kicks from an entire football team were disappointed.

It turned out to be a story of a girl accused of handling a different kind of weapon, guns, pistols etc.

## IS NEWS

*SOCIALIST WORKER has a healthy tradition of ignoring the sectarian attacks made upon the International Socialists by other organisations. But in view of the fact that Tribune, the Morning Star and the New Statesman, papers always anxious to discredit the revolutionary movement, have published extracts from correspondence between IS and the Socialist Labour League, we think it necessary to print the letters.*

Dear Comrade Healy,

### UNEMPLOYMENT MARCH

We have noted with some pleasure the Socialist Labour League's initiative in organising the unemployed march. We find ourselves in general agreement with the points in the programme and would be pleased to assist in ensuring the successful outcome of the venture.

We would propose as follows:

- 1) That we join the march at convenient points, under our own banners.
- 2) that we notify our branches on the route, to assist and accommodate the marchers (this may be particularly useful in towns that do not have SLL branches).
- 3) that we be allowed a speaker or speakers at the Wembley Rally, speaking of course within the terms of reference of the march.

We hope that your Committee can agree to such a useful, and possibly fruitful, joint activity of this sort.

Yours fraternally,

Jim Higgins,

National Secretary, IS.

REPLY BY THE SLL  
POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Mr Higgins,

By what impudent authority do you invite the Socialist Labour League to engage with you in political fraud?

You know as well as we do that the political differences between IS and the SLL are irreconcilable. The Right-to-Work marches have been organised for the purpose of building the Young Socialists and the SLL as the centre of the national campaign to make the Tory government resign. In our opinion such a campaign is an integral part of the fight against unemployment.

You disagree with building the SLL and the YS. This is your right.

You have disagreed, so far, with the campaign to make the Tory government resign. This is also your right.

But what is impermissible, utterly outrageous, is your request to join our march under conditions which amount to nothing more than transforming a campaign based on Marxist principles into a middle-class protest stunt.

You want to join it in the same middle-headed revisionist way you jump around the British and Irish political scene.

Since the Tory government was elected you have repeatedly joined with the British Communist Party in its various campaigns. You have actively co-operated and assisted the Stalinists on each and every occasion in slandering the SLL and the Workers Press. We also have fully-documented cases of your members actively opposing the Right-to-Work campaign at trade union branches and student

meetings.

We see no problem in dealing with this kind of opposition. In fact, your letter describes perfectly the sort of Trojan Horse operation to which you are accustomed.

A genuine United Front as conceived by Lenin and Trotsky is only possible between organisations with a mass base. Neither you nor we have as yet such a base. It would be tantamount to fraud to use the principle of the United Front as a cover for some shabby factionalism by either the SLL or IS.

G. Healy  
for the Political Committee  
of the Socialist Labour League.

Replying to the SLL's letter, Jim Higgins points out that although IS is excluded from the march, Workers Press has printed pictures of Communist Party members of the march under their own banners. 'Is this because you are labouring under the delusion that the Communist Party has a 'mass base' or are you perhaps a little unclear on the Leninist conception of the United Front?'

He adds: 'Your rejection of our support is unfortunate. Our intention was not to turn the march into a 'middle-class protest stunt', as you so delicately put it, but, within your own terms of reference, to attempt to make a success of your venture, through the participation of the many workers, employed and unemployed, young and old, who are now attempting to build within IS the revolutionary party with a mass base that your sectarian antics clearly preclude you from achieving.'

# WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive first post Monday or phoned Monday morning. Notices are charged at 5p per line. Semi-display 10p per line. Cash with copy. No insertions without payment—invoices cannot be sent.

## MEETINGS

**MANCHESTER DISTRICT IS public meeting:** Revolutionary Socialism And The Battle In Industry. Speaker Tony Cliff. Thurs 16 March 7.30pm, Milton Hall, Deansgate.

**BRITISH and IRISH Communist Organisation debate with International Socialists:** The Situation in Ireland; Ireland—Two Nations or One? Speakers: Brendan Clifford for B&ICO, John Palmer for IS. Friday 10 March, 8pm, Co-Op Hall, Seven Sisters Rd, London N7 (nearest tube Finsbury Park).

**ENGINEERS' MEETING:** for all IS AUEW members in the London area. 7.45pm, Thurs 9 March at 6 Cottons Gardens, E2.

**GLASGOW 'REBEL' MEETING postponed.**  
**VALE OF LEVEN public meeting:** Workers Fight Back Against The Tories. Speakers Eddie McLafferty, AUEW convener Alexandria industrial estate, Jim McDonald, AUEW shop steward Albion Motors. 6 March 7.30pm, RNTF Club, Alexandria.

**UNEMPLOYMENT—A TORY DISEASE:** Socialist Medical Association meeting, Tues 14 March, 7.30pm, room 15, House of Commons. Spkrs Ernie Roberts, assistant general secretary AUEW, and Dr J. Dunwoody.

**ALL GRADES POSTAL WORKERS mtng** at 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2, 10.30am Sun 5 March. IS members only. Details from branch secretaries.

**GLASGOW AREA IS:** Mon 13 March, Patrick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm. End Internment, Withdraw British Troops. Main spkr Eamonn McCann. Tickets 10p from Glasgow IS or write to 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

**WIGAN IS public meeting on Ireland:** Speakers Brian Trench and Tony Swift. Thurs 9 March 8pm, Raven Hotel, Wellgate, Wigan.

**ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE CONFERENCE for trade unionists:** Sun 5 March, NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Field, London WC1. Open to delegates from trade union branches, shop stewards committees, etc. also individual trade unionists as observers. Speakers from British and Irish labour movements.

**IS CONFERENCE ON IRELAND**  
Saturday 4 March  
starting at 11am  
at 6 Cottons Gardens  
London E2

**LAMBETH IS public meeting**  
Towards a public employees' alliance  
Speakers include  
Peter Cain, NUPE  
Chris Davison, TGWU  
Kevin Sims, POEU  
Thurs 9 March 8pm  
Room 119, Lambeth Town Hall

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS YOUTH CONFERENCE**  
Saturday 4 March 10am  
New Merlin's Cave  
Margery Street, London WC1  
Sessions on:  
Apprentices and young workers  
Rebel  
Building a youth movement  
Social at same venue  
8pm onwards. 10p admission

**DAGENHAM IS public meeting.** Speaker Tony Cliff on Unemployment and How to Fight It. Thurs 9 March, 8pm, Wantz Hall, Rainham Road, Dagenham.

## NOTICES

**IS WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER** no 6 now available. Articles on women workers, women's lib, the welfare state. Price 5p. Money with orders please to: M Renn, c/o 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

**IS BOOKS opening hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 2-5pm, Thursday 2-7pm.

ALSO open 11 March 11am-5pm.

**THE Anti-Internment League** wishes to contact all those arrested and charged on the 5 Feb demo; witnesses to arrests and beatings; all those beaten up in police stations—write or phone John Gray, basement flat, 139 Holland Rd, London W14. Tel: 01-603-3085.

**ACCOMMODATION NEEDED** in London area on night of Sat 11 March for Fine Tubes strikers and their families coming up to London for Benefit Concert on 12 March. Please phone Joyce Rosser, 01-340-5911, if you can help.



## Miners' fight is now for safety

COAL BOARD chairman Derek Ezra said last week the mines face a long haul in restoring public confidence and getting back to normal. He was speaking after an underground inspection at the Daw Mill Colliery near Coventry where two coalfaces have been sealed off with the loss of some £600,000 worth of equipment. Chairman Ezra was much moved by the fate of his expensive machinery.

The very day he made his remarks, the mining industry was indeed getting back to normal—though in a particularly tragic way.

At Cynheidre Colliery near Llanelli, Emrys Thomas and Howard Jones fell to their deaths. They were working more than 2000ft below the surface changing a balancing rope below the pit cage in preparation for the return to work.

Emrys Thomas and Howard Jones were killed while doing the safety duties the National Coal Board was so anxious should be done right through the strike. The National Coal Board is conducting an inquiry.

The inquiry into last year's disaster at Cynheidre Colliery has yet to report. Then six miners suffocated to death when there was an outburst of fine coal.

### Temptation

Such outbursts are confined to the anthracite pits of South Wales. They are unexpected—shots in the dark, in the words of Dai Francis, South Wales area secretary of the National Union of Miners. Nonetheless there are reasons for them: they are caused by long test boring.

During the pit strike the National Union of Miners stated repeatedly that for every week miners were out of the pits, two men would be walking around alive who otherwise would be dead and mourned. Another 1250 would be uninjured thanks to the strike.

With victory won, ballot taken and life getting back to normal, there is considerable temptation for the other side of this equation to be quietly shelved. And yet it is the other side which is the important one.

Next week and every week under 'normal' conditions two more miners will die, and 1250 will be injured. There is every indication that the situation will be worse than 'normal' in the early weeks of the return to work.

The NUM's engineering advisers are seriously concerned that the situation underground will be full of unexpected dangers which have arisen as a result of one of the tactics necessary to win the strike—the withdrawal of expert safety supervision by NUM members. Since the NCB will drive hard to reach maximum output over the next few weeks, all sorts of risks will be condoned if the local NUM is not very watchful.

### Bartered

For years the matter of safety, dust control, of what techniques and machines should be used, of how each job should be handled, has been in the contemptuous hands of the Coal Board.

Even where the union has some element of control, it has been mostly a one-man effort. Many NUM safety representatives have done fine and honest jobs. Others have bartered the miners' bodies and lungs in a vain attempt to win respite from redundancy and pit closures. Not only has productivity bargaining taken away local bargaining but it has increased (and, if extended, will continue to increase) the many hazards.

The miners' victory on the wages front this year was secured by a departure from normal methods of settlement. Change was wrested from the government and the Coal Board by united action and mass involvement.

If the talk about death, disease and injury is to be more than rhetoric voiced for the purpose of winning the strike, the NUM must be forced to break with its past practices on working conditions.

For many years the concerns and expert knowledge of the mineworker have been set aside in favour of cheap and speedy production. In the wake of this magnificent strike it is possible for militants to force the pace on dealing with this situation.

Ranged beside the miners are millions of other workers suffering from a variation of the same disease. Hopefully, the 1970s will be the period of the common cure.

# MILITANTS UNDER UNION ATTACK

EDINBURGH:—Electricity board officials and right-wing trade union officials have been working to victimise two militants who organised solidarity action with the miners.

Three weeks ago, after the seven per cent settlement for the power workers' pay claim had been announced, Councillor Ron Brown, chairman of the power workers' Edinburgh works committee, and Rab Jeffrey, secretary of the power workers unofficial combine in the area, issued a leaflet calling for token strike action to show opposition to the sell-out and continued

support for the miners.

A meeting of delegates from every power station in the south of Scotland endorsed this statement the following Saturday and decided on a 24-hour stoppage on Tuesday 15 February.

The full-time officials of the engineering and electricians' unions in the area immediately denounced the stoppage, reducing its effect.

The day after the stoppage the district committee of the engineering union received a letter from the electricity board's area personnel manager complaining of Ron Brown's activities.

A resolution was then put to the committee that they should 'recommend to the executive

committee that Ron Brown be expelled from the union'.

According to the minutes of the meeting, prepared by the district secretary, the resolution was carried 'unanimously'—but the delegate from Ron Brown's branch, Pilton, says that at no time was it put to the vote.

Six days later Ron Brown was called to see the area personnel manager. He was then questioned about his activities in organising the unofficial stoppage—but refused to discuss these issues because he had not been properly notified of them in advance.

The next day he was told he had been sacked.

Rab Jeffrey received similar notification two days later, alleging that he had a record of 'unauthorised absences', including the one-day strike. The electricians' union steward who represents him immediately announced that he would be appealing.

Ron Brown has also lodged an appeal against his sacking, and local stewards are backing him.

But the divisional organiser of the union has told the Glasgow Herald that Ron Brown will get no support whatsoever from the union over the sacking issue.

### HEARSAY

The district secretary, Jack Kedie, claims that the disciplinary action was taken on instruction from the executive, in a letter signed by Jim Conway and initialled RWW. Militants believe that these are the initials of Bob Wright, chief AUEW negotiator for the engineering industry and a man often presented as a leading left-wing figure in the union.

Ron Brown has written to the AUEW executive arguing that the resolution from the Edinburgh district is not valid. It was based on hearsay evidence from the employers, he was given no chance to defend himself against the allegations, and no proper vote was taken.

There could be few clearer examples of the way the right wing inside the trade union movement acts against the interests of workers in struggle.

No one in the trade union movement was prepared to speak out against the miners while they were on strike. Many officials made fine speeches about the need for solidarity. But it was left in the main to rank and file militants to organise that solidarity.

Now an attempt is being made to victimise two of these. And involved in the attempt is not only an employer, but one of the largest unions in Britain. Militants in the AUEW and EPTU must demand that the executives overturn the recommendation and provide Ron Brown and Rab Jeffrey with full support in their fight to keep their jobs.

## Jim's Journal

by Alan Watts AUEW

THE AUEW is probably the most democratic union in the country. Its rules and structure make it possible for the individual member to take an active part in running it, through branches and district committees.

But a disturbing feature of the union's practice is that its monthly publication, The Journal, is the sole responsibility of Jim Conway, the general secretary. He is answerable to no one and so long as he does not too openly abuse this power, he can virtually do and say what he likes.

Besides being one of the most boring publications ever to come off a printing press, The Journal is not slow to print articles by people whose job has been to attack the trade union movement. Barbara Castle was given two pages to try to sell us In Place of Strife, while the whole trade union movement was fighting tooth and nail against it. And in December 1970 Robert Carr was also allowed to give us two pages of Tory Party policy on the Industrial Relations Bill.

### Record

One could of course say that free speech should allow this sort of thing within our journal but both Castle and Carr got all the free speech they needed in the press and on television.

Neither is the general secretary slow to get his own free publicity via the journal. Every AUEW member knows that he can rely on seeing the general secretary's picture several times in each issue. But in the last year the record was seven pictures of the smiling general secretary in the first five pages and nine in the whole journal (May 1971).



Jim Conway: not just a pretty face

It is also the job of the general secretary to publicise the union in order to gain more members. To this end our money is spent on trinkets like beer mats, ballpoint pens, book markers and book matches. That's where the money goes while they complain about how much is spent on strikes.

If they used the journal to inform the membership of issues around the country, to generalise their experience and give them ammunition to fight the bosses, we

wouldn't need all this rubbish to get engineers to join us.

Being the main weapon of our union to 'educate, organise and control,' what was The Journal doing when we were pursuing the claim that the press said would cost £700 million? You guessed it—nothing.

Not one word to attempt to inform the membership of the issues, no use of our research department to find out just how many people are earning appallingly low wages in the engineering industry.

What we did get though, while the employers were thinking up how they were going to say no to our claim, was the general secretary getting himself into the London Evening News on 18 October 1971 bemoaning the fact that the union was losing more than £2000 a week in interest on arrears owed by the membership. That must have made the employers' job a lot easier.

### Demand

One could go on at length berating the handling of The Journal and the attitude of the general secretary. But what should be done to change it? Just putting in a different general secretary is no answer, though it would be a big step forward.

What we need in fact is a change of rule. But the next rules revision conference is more than three years away. There is provision within the rules to recall the rules revision committee and demand an editorial board. General Office can expect to get resolutions from branches demanding one now.

This article is being reproduced as a leaflet and will be available for shop stewards from 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

### WORKERS' ACTION WINS REPRIEVE FOR FACTORY

ALTRINCHAM:—Churchill's machine tool factory, which was due to close, is now to be kept open for another six months as a result of the workers' actions in fighting the closure.

The decision was hailed as an interim victory by a member of the factory's liaison committee, but he said the committee was under no illusions and would spend the time strengthening their organisation and building their fighting.

This victory has come despite attempts by the management to smash the solidarity shown by workers at Coventry factories which are also part of the same group. They have been on short time for a considerable period and were told that when work was transferred from the Altrincham factory they would be back on a five-day week.

But despite this they refused to cooperate with the management in putting another 1100 workers on the dole.

The liaison committee at Churchills have shown how to organise against threatened closures. They refused to dismantle machinery to be moved out of the factory.

They confiscated all drawings despite management threats, and refused to allow any completed orders to leave the factory.

### Farmworkers' pay appallingly low

BRITAIN'S 320,000 farmworkers, despite earning £10-a-week less than industrial workers and being employed in the third most dangerous industry in the country, have just had their claim for an £18-a-week minimum wage turned down.

Their present wage is only £16.20 for a 42-hour week and this appalling low amount was only conceded six weeks ago. Before then it was a scandalous £14.80.

The Agricultural Workers Union is claiming a new pay rise because the last settlement didn't even keep up with the increased cost of living and because the lowest paid group of miners will now receive at least £23 a week.

The rejection of the claim by the employers, of whom the son of the former Tory politician RAB Butler is a leading member, has further exposed the real truth about the Wilberforce Court of Inquiry into the miners' strike. Faced with a strike of 280,000 workers and blackouts everywhere the court decided that the miners were a 'special case' and therefore should get more.

Reg Bottini, general secretary of the Farmworkers, has recently said that his

members have been a 'special case' for years. Nevertheless they've got nothing. The Wilberforce inquiry only decided to give more money to the miners because of their militancy. That was what was so 'special'.

The underpaid farmworkers work longer hours than most, earn less, work in terrible conditions and live in tied cottages. Nevertheless their bosses refuse to give them a decent increase and have been helped in this by the so-called independent members of the Agricultural Wages Board. These men are, of course, government-appointed.

The farmworkers are a special case. But it will need militancy and not words to prove it.

### Strike fails —20 sacked

CHESTERFIELD:—The strike at Bingham's factory in Clay Cross has been lost after 16 weeks of struggle. The engineers' union failed to give effective leadership and organise proper blacking, and other unions, in particular the transport men's union, refused to black goods effectively.

Effective shop-floor organisation is smashed. Now there are only three card-holding members in the factory, with no shop steward, and the local officials are not even bothering to collect the dues.

The only 'concession' from the management is that now workers get £17 for a 40-hour week. The union has accepted the sacking of 20 men.

### Trade unionists against racialism

THE activities in Southern Africa of big international companies such as GKN, RTZ, British Leyland, GEC-AEI, and Dunlop not only support racialist regimes but also result in the closing of factories and the loss of jobs in this country, when production is moved to where labour is cheap and strikes banned.

A conference of trade unionists to discuss how unionists can help the struggling peoples of Southern Africa is to be held by the Anti-Apartheid Movement on 18-19 March at Plaw Hatch Trade Union Country Club, East Grinstead, Sussex.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

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# Socialist Worker

## Car strikers vote to stay out

SCOTLAND:-A mass meeting of British Leyland Bathgate workers decided on Tuesday to continue their nine-week-old strike by a massive vote of 3000, with only about 100 against.

Despite a background of rising press hysteria, they rejected a slightly improved management offer of £3—against £2 and £1.50 previously—and continued with their demand of parity with those British Leyland factories on measured day work

by Steve Jefferys

south of the border.

The meeting had earlier boomed when it was announced that E Leslie would not be attending. Leslie, the engineering union divisional organiser, had issued statements to the press, with local Labour MP Tom Dalyell, attacking the stewards.

The chairman of the joint shop stewards committee, McKeown, was cheered when he attacked the local provost, Hardy, a

draper, for being more concerned about his takings than about the men's jobs. He also demanded that 'Hardy, Dalyell and Leslie stop repeating Lord Stokes' threats to shut this factory'.

The Bathgate stewards are asking British Leyland workers at other factories to commit themselves to industrial action in support of the Bathgate struggle at some future date. To this end they travelled south to attend a meeting of the British Leyland Combine Committee on Wednesday.

# TORIES RETREAT BUT UCS FIGHT GOES ON

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to pump a further £35 million into the Govan, Scotstoun and Linthouse division of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders is a partial retreat in the face of a determined fight by the workers to stop Clydeside becoming a jobs disaster area.

But there is still a long, hard struggle ahead if the workers are to achieve their original aim of keeping open all four yards at UCS without loss of jobs. It is clear from the statement of Trade and Industry Secretary John Davies on Monday that some further redundancies and increased productivity will be the orders of the day for the Govan bosses.

When a government liquidator was appointed for the yards last summer 8500 jobs were at risk—with a further 15,000 workers in industries supplying the yards who also faced the dole queue.

The latest Tory plan says that 4300 jobs will be assured at the three yards, now called Govan Shipbuilders. Clydebank is left to the mercy of any visiting capitalist who may wish to buy it up and Davies' remark that it was hoped to retain 2500 jobs there has no substance.

### Tough action needed

The bleak fact is that 4200 of the original workforce have either lost their jobs or stand to lose them unless tough action is taken to force the government to make further retreats.

Davies told the Commons on Monday that 'management at Govan has engaged in progressively more intense discussions with the unions involved to iron out working arrangements and is satisfied that acceptable arrangements can be made and will be implemented.'

Behind these smooth words lies the menace of speed-up, shift-working and productivity concessions that add up to only one thing: further redundancies.

£18m of government money is earmarked for working capital and new investment, of which £12m will go towards new machinery. With Davies gloomily unable to say whether the Govan group will become viable, it is clear that

by SW Reporter

the aim must be to drastically reduce the workforce in order to boost profits.

Davies added that the cash offer is conditional on the unions signing an agreement on new working arrangements.

The American firm of Marathon is still interested in buying the Clydebank yard, but it is demanding some financial help from the government. There is no guarantee on jobs yet. Marathon president Wayne Harbin says he hopes to sign a four-year agreement with the unions.

If the workers are left to the mercy of Tories,

American freebooters and trade union officials they could end up with their numbers severely reduced. The fight at UCS must still be an uncompromising one for the guaranteed retention of all four yards, nationalised under workers' control, without a single job lost.

The determination of the UCS workers to fight for their jobs inspired the entire labour movement. But their struggle was weakened by their stewards' refusal to occupy the yards and confiscate the key bargaining weapon—the ships.

Compromise and a 'reasonable' approach to management and government must be abandoned in favour of all-out militant action to stop several thousand more Scots workers joining the ranks of those refused the right to work.

## Miners defend closed shop

SCOTLAND:-1400 miners at Polkammer Colliery, West Lothian, refused to return to work on Monday in direct challenge to the Industrial Relations Act. They have declared that they will not work with a man who was expelled from the union.

Mr David Bolton, vice-president of the Scottish NUM and branch chairman at Polkammer, stated bluntly that: 'We have a closed shop and do not recognise the Industrial Relations Bill'.

A spokesman for the coal board had said that the Act was now in force and they could not dismiss the man as the closed shop was now illegal.

Meetings were held at the pit head as the men arrived to work. It was explained that the union refused to recognise the Act and it was put to the miners that they should defy it and maintain the closed shop. The men agreed and all stayed out.

Later in the day Michael McGahey, president of the Scottish miners and a member of the Communist Party, called on the men to return to work. They refused and on Tuesday a further 370 men came out on strike over the coal board's refusal to sack another non-union man.

The two men had been expelled from the union because of their behaviour during the national mines strike. Three days after it began they went to work with a firm of industrial cleaners at Whitburn. When six other workers at the firm walked out in protest, they were dismissed.

Miners picketed the firm for six days, but the two scabs refused to leave and so were expelled from the union.

### Bernadette packs them in

SWANSEA:-Nearly 1000 people heard Bernadette Devlin speaking on How To Fight The Tories at a meeting organised by Swansea International Socialists last Friday.

The reception she received made nonsense of half a dozen right-wing demonstrators outside the meeting. Trevor James, retired South Wales miners' agent, said that he had not seen such a large political meeting since the time of Aneurin Bevan.



Laggers protest at union move

Insulation workers protesting at the regional General and Municipal Workers' Union office in Newcastle against the refusal of the full-time

officials, led by regional union boss Andrew Cunningham, to make their 14-week-long strike for parity official.

## WOMEN: EQUAL PAY NOW!

THREE HUNDRED people crowded into a highly successful International Socialists Women's Conference last weekend to discuss the struggle of women in industry, work in the claimants unions and among tenants, and worked out a strategy for activity in relation to the Women's Liberation Movement.

Discussion on women in industry centred on the fight for equal pay now rather than in 1975, when the Equal Pay Act comes into force. Speaker after speaker warned of the danger of agreeing to trade

job evaluation and shift working in return for equal pay.

Conference resolved that nightwork, shiftwork, redundancies and job evaluation should not be prerequisites for wage equality.

A draft demand that women workers should only be represented by women trade union officials was deleted on the grounds that the centre of concern should be democracy in the unions and the fight for equal women's status.

Decisions in favour of a £25 minimum wage, paid maternity leave and job security before and after pregnancy were also taken.

The conference finished with a discussion on perspectives for the Women's Liberation Movement. It provoked the liveliest session of the day.

In the end a resolution was carried that IS women would still continue to work within the broader movement, but that their activity should be directly through IS in relation to working-class women.

## Lynch acts in south to back Heath

FOR several weeks the press has been prophesying that Heath will come up with a 'new initiative' on Northern Ireland.

But a key factor in determining Heath's attitude is what happens in the Irish

Republic, where the government accepts British economic domination, and would like to co-operate with Heath in smashing those opposed to British control in the North.

The problem facing Irish Premier Jack Lynch is that large sections of the Irish people support those fighting in the North. In the aftermath of the Derry massacre, there were massive and militant demonstrations that Lynch did not dare repress.

But that mood was bound to abate, as there was no organisation connecting the struggle in the North with the day-to-day issues—redundancy, wages, rising prices—affecting workers and small farmers in the South.

The explosion at Aldershot is unlikely to do anything to take the movement against British imperialism in Ireland forward. Apart from anything else, it has given the Southern government the opportunity to crackdown on the Official republican movement, which claimed credit for the bombing.

Eighteen members of the movement were arrested, and four of these have been charged under the Offences Against The State Act. Southern legislation in many ways mirrors the Special Powers Act in the North.

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### Don't forget our fund

OUR Fighting Fund has reached the half-way mark this week and the original deadline for £5000 has run out.

Many International Socialist branches have reported that they made large contributions and collections for the miners' strike to help lessen the hardship for the thousands who received no strike pay or social security. For this reason we are extending the appeal by a month.

If we are to be effective, if we are to be rid of this Tory government, then we need your support. Please send donations and collections to: Jim Nichol, IS national treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

### Fine Tubes Benefit

A concert to aid the families of strikers at Fine Tubes, Plymouth, out for more than 90 weeks.

Starring Alex Glasgow, Jake Thackray, East of Eden, Bobby Campbell, Gordon McCulloch, The Critics Group, and compered by Bernadette Devlin MP.

Sunday 12 March, 7.30pm  
Camden Town Hall

Tickets 75p each from Joyce Rosser  
6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd (TU all depts). Registered with the Post Office.