

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

## Tories train 'law and order' squads to attack strikers

# POLICE THREAT TO PICKETS

**THE RIGHT TO SCAB**—the Tories' most cherished freedom—is being upheld by the government and the police in a massive assault on pickets.

A training programme involving several thousand policemen and large quantities of special equipment has been conducted to guard employers, 'their' property and 'their' scabs against the influence of pickets.

In the last two weeks, there have been three examples of large scale thuggery on the picket line.

On 9 March, 800 police from all over Yorkshire were brought in to 'deal with' 2000 dockers from Hull who were picketing a wharf where unloading was being carried out by cheap, unregistered labour. Even this massive force was not large enough to cope with the dockers, however, and the employers backed down.

Ten days later, on Monday, the police launched two huge operations against pickets.

At St Thomas' Hospital, South London, where 40 electricians are on picket after being sacked for demanding a wage increase, the employers, John Laings, forced an armoured personnel carrier loaded with scabs through the picket line.

The 'monster', as it has become known to building workers, would not have got through had it not been supported by gangs of kicking and punching policemen. Two workers had to be taken to hospital. Another two were arrested.

### ORDERS

The tactics of the police showed that they are less interested in arrests than in intimidation by brute force.

They have orders to deter the pickets by punching, kicking, thumb-bending and hair-pulling rather than by expensive court cases, which often expose policemen's lies and lead to acquittals.

These tactics were in evidence the same morning at Fine Tubes, Plymouth, where some 500 police had come together from every part of Devon and Cornwall.

The police seemed keener on wading in with their fists than on making arrests.

These bully-boy tactics have been fully endorsed by the government.

Robert Carr, Home Secretary, has told the House of Commons that the 'existing laws' are strong enough to smash the pickets.

He reminded MPs that parts of the existing laws, which have not been consistently enforced, give the police powers to limit numbers on a picket line, to drive workers away from a picket line if, in the view of the police, 'intimidation or a breach of the peace is threatened'. Any action by police in enforcing such an order will be defended by magistrates everywhere.

He has also spoken of 'special flying squads' trained in the business of defending the employers' right to break up trade union organisation on the shop floor.

The 'flying squads' have been training ever since the Sattley picket in Birmingham during last year's miners' strike, which defeated the police, closed the coke works and helped the miners to victory.

The three-day experience at  
Turn to back page

## Seven arrests at Fine Tubes



PLYMOUTH, Monday:—Battalions of police drafted from all over the West Country waded into the national picket at the Fine Tubes factory. The picket was called in solidarity with the three-years-old strike for union

rights. Seven arrests were made by the police in their get-tough policy to protect employers and blacklegs. REPORT: page 15. St Thomas' Hospital picket picture: back page.

**Printers  
back  
our fund**

AN EDINBURGH printworker who is opposed on principle to overtime was forced to do some last week. So he sent the extra money—£3—to the IS printshop fund.

Readers at the Chrysler Stoke plant in Coventry sent us £6. Our own printshop workers have donated £120 towards their new premises and another group of printworkers in Edinburgh have sent £1.07.

York Rebel group have collected £10 and an anonymous 'London teacher on strike' sent the magnificent sum of £100.

An IS social in Stretford raised £77 and Swansea students collected £7.

Donations from IS branches this week include: Manchester £82.50, Southampton £100, Portsmouth £15.13, Teesside £20, Chelmsford £6, Lancaster £4, Colindale £12, Doncaster £518.18, Loughborough £5, Warley £2.50.

This week's total is £1120.32, bringing the grand total of £25,439. Keep up the good work, readers, and we can hit that £30,000 target.

● Rush donations to: Tony Cliff, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

## WHAT WE THINK

THE call to all trades councils from the TUC to organise demonstrations in support of the striking hospital workers is the first small step of basic solidarity that the 'leadership' of the movement has taken during the great struggles of the lower paid.

It is vitally important that teeth are put into the call by demanding that trades councils, union branches, district committees and steward committees in all parts of the country immediately plan demonstrations of solidarity and organise for strike action by other sections of the labour movement.

Friday's demonstration in Yorkshire called by Sheffield Trades Council shows the way forward, with strike action by miners and other groups in support of the hospital workers.

The special conference of the TUC called for strike action in defence of those fighting the freeze. This has so far been ignored by the General Council.

The situation is urgent. The low-paid workers can beat the government's freeze but only if they are given massive backing by groups such as miners, car workers and engineers.

Already the leaders of some of the unions engaged in battle are looking for cover to abandon the fight. When the Tories' 'Phase Two' policies come into effect on 1 April strikes against the freeze will be illegal.

Rather than organise for a confrontation with the government and its anti-union laws, the officials are attempting to demoralise their members. Both the hospital unions and the civil servants association are talking off the dispute because of lack of cash.

And the GMWU is holding a ballot on the paltry offer to the gas workers which leaves the strikers in limbo for several weeks.

But overall the situation is one of thousands of low-paid workers tightening their belts, determined to battle on for a living wage against a government and employers hell-bent on forcing down workers' living standards.

They must not fight alone. The old tried and trusted slogan of the trade union movement—'an injury to one is an injury to all'—must be recalled. Solidarity strike action, mass pickets and collections can blast a hole through the freeze from which the government could not recover.



# BUILD WORKERS' PARTY:

**IS** The last year has been an exciting one for the International Socialists, national secretary Jim Higgins told delegates from 130 branches when the IS annual conference opened at Camden Town Hall last Saturday. The organisation had made significant recruitment in the working class movement, he went on, was able to attract militants and in some areas recruit direct from the Communist Party and Labour Party.

'The situation is particularly favourable in the mines and docks,' Higgins said, 'and there has been an exceptional response by our members to the health, gas and civil servants' struggles where we have not only intervened but made a genuine contribution to those struggles.'

## HIGHER LEVEL

'Our rank and file papers are becoming a significant force in a number of industries such as docks, mines, teaching and car workers. It is indicative of the growing support for our members that leading militants are being witchhunted by both employers and unions. We need a wider influence in the working class to spread our influence and defend our militants.'

The national secretary reported that IS branches were operating at a much higher level than a year ago. Commitment, activity and enthusiasm were on an upward curve, he said. The organisation was moving forward and should be able to recruit substantially from the many new workers coming into the struggle who can be won to socialism. Socialist Worker discussion groups in workplaces were vitally important in developing this trend.

Jim Higgins told conference that several hundred new members had joined in the last 12 months and due to a new system of registration we now had a much more accurate record of membership. 'There is a far more serious attitude to what constitutes membership of IS,' he said. 'Membership means sacrifice in time, money and energy.'

## ESTABLISHED

'The social composition has improved. We have more manual workers and the number of shop stewards has increased. A high percentage of our branch officials are stewards and convenors.'

Stressing the need to step up recruitment from industrial workers, Higgins said we would not recruit them if branches insisted on taking them through a long course of 'education' first. 'Unity between theory and action is gained through participation in the organisation,' he said.

Despite some inevitable shortcomings, the IS 'Fight the Tories' campaign staged during the autumn and winter had established the organisation in the localities, the national secretary said. National Committee members had been deeply involved in the campaign with the branches to build IS, recruit new members and extend the sales of Socialist Worker.

Higgins said there has been a considerable improvement in the leadership of the organisation at National Committee level, but a closer relationship between the committee and the branches was still needed.

Members had thrown themselves into the battle against the re-emerging fascist organisations but the leadership had yet to grasp the nettle of a real intervention in the black community where the possibility of recruiting several hundred black workers existed.

## MUST SUCCEED

Turning to industry, the most important area of IS work, Jim Higgins said there had been much improvement following the strengthening of the National Committee's industrial sub-committee.

1973, he concluded, will show the urgent need to build a mass-based revolutionary workers' party and he suggested that the theme of the conference and our work in the coming months could be taken from a letter to the conference from veteran revolutionary and IS member Harry Wicks:

'Good luck to the conference. Our members are 10 feet tall compared to previous generations. We must succeed at long last in building the party.'



The International Socialists' conference in session. Pictures by MIKE COHEN

## History is knocking on our door says Cliff

**IS** The present period was one of fantastic fluidity, executive committee member Tony Cliff said, moving the report on political and economic perspectives. 'Last year saw great victories by the working class in the mines, docks and railways. Then came hesitancy after the TUC had agreed to discuss incomes policy with the Tories.'

The qualitative change in the present period, he said, was that the sections involved in struggle was now much bigger. But there was enormous unevenness in demands and strength. Ford workers wanted £10, hospital workers want £4.

'The weak sections agree with the need to generalise the struggle, to set up public sector alliances, but the strong sections, like car workers and engineers, have much narrower horizons.'

'When there is discrepancy between ideas and organisation, one must give way. This is the central reason for the present volatility, when groups like the hospital workers have very little experience of organisation.'

The unevenness of the present situation had made possible the growth of our rank and file papers, Cliff said. They had a specific job to do in uniting militants.

The period of small battles is over, he went on. Shop stewards who were used to small, isolated battles

find themselves in an impasse. They need to be cemented to their membership.

The one crucial quality needed by revolutionaries at the present time is daring, he said. 'You need daring to intervene in a volatile struggle. A revolutionary party is necessary for the class—without IS, individual militants would not have dared to intervene and launch rank and file papers for miners, dockers and other sections.'

## Transform

'The present struggle will continue and rank and file papers will gain from the "second round" struggles in the mines and docks. The struggle will shape leaders and give them confidence. Class confidence is vital to fight the government and the state—that is the crucial role of a revolutionary organisation.'

Cliff asked the conference to set itself a number of important targets in the coming year: 50 workplace Socialist Worker discussion groups, a minimum of 10 IS industrial branches and every branch to increase its

membership by at least 50 per cent.

He said that IS must transform its organisation and root it much more closely in the working class movement. 'Revolutionaries will never change the working class unless they change themselves.'

'History is knocking on the door. We must open that door. 1973 will be the most important year in our organisation's history.'

The political and economic perspectives report that Cliff introduced analysed the instability of the world capitalist system and the intensifying rivalry between the United States, Japan and Europe. The European countries will continue to protest at the invasion of their economies by US capital.

British capitalism remains the weakest sector, with slow growth, only a small drop in unemployment, soaring inflation and falling investment. Massive increases in prices produced unfavourable circumstances for the Tories to introduce wage control and had sparked off great resistance from working people.

The document said that we are in a period of political, economic and

industrial instability. Because of major setbacks suffered by the Tories at the hands of key sections of workers, the Industrial Relations Act has been effectively shelved though the government cannot entirely abandon it for ideological reasons.

## Leadership

Heath's conversion to 'socialist' measures in the form of incomes policy and state handouts to bankrupt industries is a measure of the unmanageability of capitalism. The government's survival has been largely due to the TUC and its willingness to help bail out the Tories by refusing to lead a united struggle of its members. The gap between the rank and file and the union leaders—including the 'left' variety—has broadened.

Leadership is vital and the intervention which the International Socialists make at the present time can have a profound effect on the development of a genuine revolutionary party.

The document was adopted with only a few delegates against.

## DEFEAT FOR 'REFORMIST' DEMANDS

**IS** In a debate on the organisational and political reports, BOBBY NOYES of Southampton moved a motion on the relation of IS to the working class. Our work in all spheres must be carried by a relatively few members which meant a priority should be given to building 'cadres' in each struggle.

The motion said that a policy of broad recruitment could bring in too many new members who did not understand the need for total commitment which could demoralise existing members. 'Members must be recruited who are clear on our politics,' Bobby Noyes said. 'We have had the experience of people joining who are not clear on many aspects of IS policies.'

Countering this, FRANK HENDERSON, a car worker from Wolverhampton, said that he joined IS because it was the only organisation capable of building the revolutionary party. 'I joined on the basis of my relationship with IS. I didn't cross all the 'ts' and dot all the 'is' but because of IS's relations with the class.

'You clarify your ideas in the course of the struggle,' he said. 'Don't be introspective. Workers learn through involvement in the organisation.' The motion was defeated.

KEVIN WHITSTON (Stockport) moved a motion on the trade unions and rising prices that called for a 'rising scale of wages' based on a working-class cost of living index. No wage agreements should be signed without a clause providing for an automatic cost of living increase. The index should be drawn up by housewives' and trade unionists' committees in every area monitoring prices.

TONY CLIFF, opposing for the National Committee, said that such demands were passive and reformist at a time when the working class was on the upsurge. The demand for a rising scale of wages was raised in the 1930s at a time of mass unemployment when the soup kitchen was the only alternative. In countries operating sliding-scale agreements, the workers get really 'screwed'.

KEITH JACKSON (Hull) said that a time of rising prices, a rising scale of wages was the only demand to organise around. He related the

experience of a group of aircraft workers on strike for many weeks who were defeated by their isolation. A rising scale agreement would have stopped that defeat.

ROGER ROSEWELL (Liverpool) asked whether Ford workers demanding £10 a week more were interested in a sliding scale agreement. The answer to isolated factories was to build effective combine committees to help them win substantial increases. A rising scale agreement meant avoiding a fight with the union officials to make strikes official. The motion ignored the need for united, fighting alliances.

## REVOLUTIONARY

Supporting the motion, MICK BERRY (Bristol) said that a rising scale agreement was the way out of the impasse and would help to formulate a revolutionary strategy. Opponents of the motion merely called for more money, £10 this year, £10 next. But miners and Ford workers have not struck this year. Militants needed a revolutionary response.

JIMMY MacCALLUM (Glasgow North and TASS member) said there was no map, no general description of how you change the consciousness of the class. The real situation was one in which a revolutionary socialist organisation intervenes and raises a strategy. The demand for substantial wage increases goes far beyond a cost of living increase. The fight for a wage demand involves workers at the workplace and raises their preparedness to fight and their confidence. We had to mobilise workers to fight for increased wages.


JOHN PALMER (National Committee) said: 'Every conscious section of the ruling class is aware of the significance of the demand for more money. The fight for more takes up the question of the distribution of wealth. A rising scale demand is a cop-out from the present struggle. One struggle by housewives on a council estate in support of a wage struggle is worth two tons of resolutions from 'housewives committees'.

The motion was defeated.



# IS CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

## BIG VOTE FOR FACTORY BRANCHES

 To a roar of applause and cheers, conference carried by an overwhelming majority a motion calling for the establishment of factory and workplace branches of the International Socialists.

John Taylor of Leeds moved the successful motion: 'This conference, recognising that factory branches form a basic unit in a revolutionary combat organisation rooted in the working class, resolves to establish such branches in consultation with the National Committee where appropriate.'

Taylor said that such branches would be an important extension of democracy in IS and would discuss broad issues as well as those affecting workers at their workplace.

John Worth, Coventry, the Chrysler militant victimised by the management, said that IS members in his factory were more or less—'mainly more rather than less'—operating as a factory branch. They had helped to score many successes, including a big wage increase, a mutuality clause in a Measured Day Work agreement and factory support for other groups in struggle such as Fine Tubes.

### STABLE

Jim Singleton, Merseyside Standard-Triumph worker, said: 'Either we move forward or stagnate. The factory is the right place to meet. There is nothing to be frightened of in establishing a working-class base. Factory branches will make worker members more stable and integrate them better into IS. Factory branches are unavoidable in a revolutionary organisation.'

Opposing, Mike McKenna (Enfield) said that we needed factory organisation, but should they be branches or 'cells'? He said it was necessary to break down the divorce between theory and practice, between workers and intellectuals. Area branches must bring together militants and other sections.

Mike McGrath, Holborn, a member of the CPSA at the British Museum—'Karl Marx studied there, we're organising there'—said that a discussion group had been started at the museum a year ago with about 40 attenders. But because of pressure of work—strikes, union meetings, etc.—the group had not functioned properly. He thought more attention should be paid to these problems of workplace organisation.

### RIGHT

Arnie Prout, Stoke, said he was not opposed to factory branches but they were not the right way forward at the present time. 'The class struggle is not just an industrial struggle. There are problems about racism, attitude to women, etc. We need to develop factory workers' experience throughout the organisation with factory groups, district and regional organisations.'

Sheila MacGregor (York) related the experience of her branch working with bus men. 'They now have their own discussion group, they revived their union organisation at the garage and started their own paper.'

She was loudly applauded when she said that such workers who joined IS must have the right to build their own workplace organisation and be represented at conference. They had to raise their problems and experience in the organisation and needed their own branches to do so.

But Hugh Kerr (Harlow) was against what he called the separation of industrial members from the rest of the members. Area branches must have political control over factories, women's work, Irish work and other sectors.

Roger Rosewell (Liverpool) attacked this 'condescending' attitude to our workers. 'Our



John Worth: scored success

organisation is in a transitional stage. It's always workers, we're told, who have to be "integrated", never non-workers. But the threat of dilution comes from non-workers. A revolutionary organisation must be a disciplined one, concerned with power. Power is in the factories and that is why we must have factory branches.'

Frank Henderson (Wolverhampton) said opponents of factory branches had a lack of confidence in the ability of workers to achieve socialism.


Tony Cliff said the opponents of factory branches 'didn't have a clue about industry' and had a patronising attitude to workers. They must have their own representation. The revolutionary organisation is not a debating society.

Moving the National Committee's industrial report, ANDREAS NAGLIATTI said initiative was vital at the present time and IS had used initiative in many of the crucial battles of the last year. Our rank and file papers attempt to rouse the membership, link them to militants and involve them in mass action.

'Socialist Worker groups become the focus of action inside the factories, challenge the established leadership inside the workplace, turn them outside the factories into all areas of working-class life,' he went on.

Factory branches were the logical development of these discussion groups. They would not be just propaganda units but would put militants into action at places of struggle.

## Women: call to end freeze on equal pay

 Moving the report of the women's sub-committee, Anna Paczuska (National Committee) said there had been a considerable development of the work done by the committee in the last year. In particular its paper Women's Voice had been well received and the latest issue had produced 5000 copies.

Women had become far more involved in the working-class struggle, she said, taking part in strikes and occupations. But there was a total lack of political leadership among women, which opened up tremendous possibilities for IS.

Phase Two of the government's incomes policy had frozen pay, she went on, and if the freeze could be broken on this issue it would give an enormous boost to all workers, not just women.

It was important for all IS members to fight discrimination against women workers, Anna Paczuska stressed. Some women get less strike pay than men—the case in the hos-

He said that IS members would be making a major intervention at this month's conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. 'But unless something drastic happens—which is unlikely—we cannot expect our members to continue making a presence there when our ideas are stifled by the Communist Party's bureaucratic methods.'

The LCDTU had made no impact in the docks, the mines or during the government's Phase One and Phase Two. IS needed to organise a conference around our rank and file papers. We were not yet able to offer an alternative to the LCDTU but we can become that alternative organisation over time.

Kevin Whitston (Stockport) spoke of the lessons of the Manchester engineers' struggle last year. He said militants had responded to the union's strike call but many couldn't carry the members with them and some factories were split. He anticipated a revival of the 'broad left' around the Communist Party.


### BRIDGE

John Deason (Wigan), the victimised AUEW steward at GEC's Newton-le-Willows plant, vigorously attacked this attitude. He said it was not true that all AUEW militants had 'loyally' supported the leadership. They had no faith in localised struggles. IS had to build a bridge to members disillusioned with Scanlon.

'There is no revival of the "broad left", Deason said. 'They are being hammered. The danger is that disillusion means retreat.'

In a thoughtful discussion on the role of factory bulletins, a number of militants, including Jock White (Oxford), Chris Davison (London busman) and Alan Watts (Edmonton engineer) reported how factory bulletins had strengthened support for our ideas at the workplace, had taken up broader political issues such as racism, women workers and Ireland, and had fought the hold of right-wing union officials.

'Good year for paper—now build the sales...'

 Socialist Worker editor ROGER PROTZ said the last year had seen the most important growth of the paper in its five-year history. Its improvement was not just in terms of sales but in political quality, its analysis of events and growing intervention in working-class struggles.

Following the sales drive launch in January, 3500 more copies were being printed and the current print order of 28,100 was an all-time record. He was confident that the paper would hit 30,000 in a few weeks' time.

Socialist Worker had made a gratifying impact in the major struggles of the past year—mines, docks, building workers and now the battle of the lower-paid.

'The reasons for the improvement in industrial coverage is a reflection of the growing strength of IS in the unions,' he said. 'It also flows from the paper's conviction that if we are to arm our members and readers, in particular the militants leading struggles, then we must aim to get to the heart of each struggle and not rely on empty rhetoric or mere abuse of the union leaders.'

'In each and every struggle,' he added, 'we attempt to present a strategy for victory. We must not underestimate the vital agitational role of the paper at a time when

tens of thousands of workers are involved in struggles that are overtly political because they are in direct conflict with the government.'

Protz said that the major improvement in the paper was its coverage of those industries where our members have played a leading role. Socialist Worker now has a better informed and sensitive analysis of the vacillating and contradictory role of the trade union leadership.

He called for a major effort to further build the sales of Socialist Worker in the next year and asked the conference to set itself a target of 40,000 copies a week by the end of the year. A real drive was needed to establish bulk sales at the place of work and to encourage industrial members and supporters to use the paper as a weapon to help build readers' discussion groups and industrial branches.


'Extended sales are not about money or figures on a circulation graph. They are about political influence and increased membership,' he said.

Circulation Manager MARGARET RENN, supporting the call for a 40,000 target, said that increased sales could be won by systematic work in factories, council estates, town centres and colleges. She asked all branches to critically assess their sales and potential.



Smiles on the top table: chairman Dave Peers, Jim Higgins and Tony Cliff

## Programme adopted

 Tony Cliff introduced the discussion on the draft programme of the International Socialists which has been prepared over the last year. The aim of the programme, he argued, was to put down in a coherent form our view of the world and to relate to the overall struggle for socialism the tactics and demands we press for in the particular struggles of workers today.

The programme begins by outlining the development of capitalism and imperialism and the nature of the crisis facing British capitalism. It goes on to deal with the experience of the socialist movement over the last 125 years and with the way in which a successful workers' revolution in Russia was destroyed with the rise of Stalin in the 1920s.

It argues that the working class has the ability to control society, but can only do so when it has smashed the existing state, when 'the parliamentary sham is replaced by a union of workers' councils, with the right to recall throughout the process.'

The revolutionary party needed to lead the working class successfully in this struggle can only be built by providing concrete leadership in the day-to-day struggles of workers within existing society.

There was a considerable discussion on the programme, but two resolutions urging that the programme was inadequate received only a handful of votes. The conference agreed that the broad lines of the draft were correct, but that it should be rewritten to take account of many amendments and suggestions put forward from the branches.

'Racism, nation lism and imperialism are the seeds within the minds of workers that rob them of the ability to fight exploitation,' said Nigel Harris, (National Committee), introducing the discussion on the fight against racism. For this reason, this area of work was crucial to revolutionary socialists.

So far most of IS activity has been at the level of propaganda. But our members have done excellent work over the last year in support of the strike of Indian hosiery worker at Loughborough, in countering the activities of fascist groups in Leicester and Nottingham, in beginning to organise Indian workers in Southall sweat shops.

To do this work successfully, Harris said, we need more black members in our ranks at this moment.



# ELECTION WIN FOR PERON'S FRONT MAN



## BRIEFING

THE 80 workers who have been occupying the Zimmerfer factory at Louviers in France for two weeks have been removed by court order but are continuing their strike.

The strike and occupation have been a notable demonstration of unity between French and immigrant workers despite attempts to divide them. Eighteen months ago the factory's Algerian workers were the only militant section, and in January this year the management tried to keep the workers divided by imposing language and literacy tests for participation in the factory committee elections—but now French, Algerian and Portuguese workers at the factory are united in the struggle for better wages and conditions.

The management claims the strikers have been 'manipulated' by left groups. But local support for the occupation is much broader—more than £1800 has been collected for the strike fund from local workers and peasants, together with food for the occupation.

The immigrant workers of Zimmerfer have especially strong grievances. If they return late from holidays, they are demoted, or dismissed and re-employed on new contracts. Many live in a hostel in the factory where they had to agitate to get cookers and tables. (There are still no chairs.)

**AS YOU WERE:** a top-level delegation from the Italian Communist Party has visited Moscow to bring relations with the Russian establishment back to normal. Since the Italian party criticised the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 the only official delegations have been on international occasions.

The joint statement issued after the delegation's conversations with Brezhnev reaffirmed the position that Communist Parties in different countries must 'construct socialism according to the conditions and traditions of their own country'. The Italian Communist Party, under the leadership of Togliatti, was the foremost supporter of this position in the 1950s and 1960s.

The official statement made no reference to either China or Czechoslovakia. The Russians would like to see the Italians take a harder line on China, while the Italians have not withdrawn their criticisms of the 1968 invasion. All is summed up in the statement's recognition of 'the autonomy and equality of each party and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.'

HOW MANY political prisoners are still being held by the South Vietnamese government, and what are their conditions? These apparently simple questions are almost impossible to answer, according to Le Monde, the French newspaper which has probably covered the Vietnamese struggle more thoroughly than any in the world.

It is this question which has led to North Vietnamese threats to hold up the release of American prisoners of war and Nixon's counter-threats to bring in his bombers again.

Since October last year, when peace became a matter of time, many political prisoners have certainly been murdered by Thieu's regime. Others have been released only to be rearrested on 'common law' charges—such as carrying false identity papers or forged currency (in the name of the Provisional Revolutionary Government) or unlicensed arms.

Since October, too, there have been so many transfers between prisons that it is extremely difficult to trace prisoners.

Last week the South Vietnamese government announced that there were 5084 political prisoners, and gave a list of 5081 it intends to release. Previous official estimates have been: 6467 (December), 10,000 (January), and none at all (earlier this month).

THE presidential election result in Argentina is a clear victory for the movement of ex-dictator Peron.

Peron supporter Campora won more than half the votes, and so has been declared president-elect without the need for a second ballot.

The victory came as a surprise, although the Peronists had expected 40 per cent. The large vote for Campora seems to come from the increase in the electorate, especially from young voters, but some has come from middle-class voters who formerly supported the Radical Party.

Most of the ageing politicians, some surviving from the period before Peron's dictatorship, who stood for the presidency with no hope of winning but hoping to gain something for themselves in the

by Vic Richards

horse-trading between the first and second rounds, have been swept away.

The loss for middle and upper-class politicians is not a victory for the working class of Argentina. Although workers provided the backbone of the Peronist vote, they have not figured as a coherent force at any point in the election campaign, and are likely to be cheated of even the smallest gains.

As soon as Campora's victory became known, he gathered a collection of conservatives to form his government, including senior army officers. He has no intention of challenging the powers of the army, as this would mean mobilising workers as a revolutionary force. Campora's choice of future ministers is a gesture of compromise towards the army,

which is enormously powerful despite its almost universal unpopularity and its failure to break the organised working class.

In exchange for an agreement not to challenge the establishment, the army will accept a Peronist government. The Peronist trade union leaders will go along with this for the moment, as they would feel threatened by the growth of any mass working-class movement.

### PUPPET

But an early split between Campora and the working-class Peron supporters seems likely. Peron's return to Argentina will be embarrassing for Campora, for Peron likes room to manoeuvre and a sense of 'historical role' to fulfil. He

withdrew from the presidential race last December because he did not wish to become a puppet of the army, and has now raised the banner of anti-imperialism and supported guerrilla groups—from a safe distance. His aim will be to try to stand above the factions rather than attack the government.

The problem is that Argentinian workers will not be able to fight the coming battles while they still have illusions in Peron. So far only small sections of the left have tried to expose or challenge him, most have tried to use his leftist phrases to shift the Peronist movement to the left. In any case, the left cannot mobilise even a section of the Argentinian working class, though some of the Peronist groupings have the support of young workers.

An important change of direction will be necessary for the left to take the lead in the coming struggle.

## Wounded Knee rebels fight for rights

by Dave Finkel

of the United States International Socialists

MILITANTS of the American Indian Movement have now occupied the town of Wounded Knee in South Dakota for three weeks, and the US government still refuses to consider their demands.

Only the determination and discipline of the well-armed Indians, and the fear of unfavourable popular reaction to a 'second massacre at Wounded Knee'—the first happened in 1890 when 300 unarmed Indians were murdered by Federal troops—have prevented the FBI and more than 100 US marshals at the scene from moving in to crush the occupation with armed force.

Whatever settlement is reached, it is clear that the Indians involved will face arrests, prosecution and massive repression.

The Indians' demands are moderate and should have been met immediately. They include an investigation of the notoriously corrupt and racist Bureau of Indian Affairs, a Senate investigation into the breaking of hundreds of treaties by the government, and the right of Indians to elect their own leaders.

### Genocide

For many years American Indians have been kept outside the mainstream of American politics. They are regarded by most Americans as historical curiosities, an image which the government and press carefully maintain in order to prevent their demands being taken seriously by working people. Their history has been portrayed as that of a race of bloodthirsty savages who were overcome by the heroic efforts of the pioneers and farmers who won the West for democracy and civilisation.

In real life, the destruction of the Indian population was a series of acts of genocide, carried out in the process of capitalist expansion. Most of the tribes were hunted down and subjugated or slaughtered—not by small farmers, but by the US Army and other armed forces supported by the fur companies, railroads and large ranchers. The Indians' culture, history and racial pride became objects of contempt and ridicule as they were forced into degradation and squalor on concentration camps known as reservations.

### 'Moderate'

Not surprisingly, much of the recent Indian revolt has taken the form of a re-discovery and reassertion of the Indians' culture and history of resistance against white oppressors. Many Indians see the struggle at Wounded Knee as a revival of a vital part of their heritage. There are important parallels with the upsurge of black racial pride in the past 10 or 15 years.

These parallels include the division within the community between militants and 'moderate' leaders, whose power depends on maintaining good relations with the oppressor. For example, Richard Wilson, the present tribal chief of the Ojibwa Sioux, has condemned Indian demonstrations and threatened violence against the Wounded Knee militants.

Deeper underlying causes are also driving American Indians to revolt—the same economic forces which are shaking the



Negotiations at the Indian camp. In the foreground can be seen a sandbagged trench and petrol bombs standing ready.



US marshals guard the road outside Wounded Knee

stability of all American society. The historic oppression of Indians as a people is reinforced by the economic offensive against all oppressed and working people.

Even as unemployment worsens, the social welfare, job training and other programmes which have maintained the black community at a bare subsistence level are being destroyed by Nixon's welfare cuts. The same measures will have an even more devastating effect on American Indians, who suffer all the problems of marginal labourers as well as racial discrimination. The effects will be worse for Indians because, unlike black people, they have not had a well-organised movement capable of winning concessions in the past.

These attacks reflect the deepening crisis and instability of American capitalism, and will be followed by full-scale attacks on the more powerful, organised working class.

### Unite

American workers, and especially black workers who are already feeling the razor edge of these attacks, must take the lead in defending the Indian movement and helping to unite it with the struggles of other oppressed peoples. Branches of the International Socialists of the United States in many cities are setting out to collaborate with black, Latin and working-class organisations to build demonstrations and actions of support for the militants at Wounded Knee and the Indian movement.

## Germany: workers suffer from the mark's balancing act

by Colin Gill

THE revaluation of the West German mark against the dollar is the latest in a series of attacks on the living standards of German workers.

Continuous revaluations of the mark and devaluations of other currencies in the past few years have threatened to undermine the strong export performance of German industry. To fight off this threat prices on the home market have had to be kept up and wages down. This policy has so far been successful, thanks to the many years of political inactivity of the workers and the resulting excessive bureaucracy of the unions.

After the May 1971 dollar crisis the government and the employers carried out a 'stability campaign' to keep wages within agreed limits. The government was then a coalition of Social Democrats (SPD) and Liberals (FDP). The union leaders, who are all faithful members of the SPD, came into line with the campaign and were able to keep wages down.

So inflation in Germany last year was only 6.5 per cent, well below that in other countries.

But this has not happened without dissatisfaction growing among workers.

Some hopes for a better deal are placed in the SPD, as was seen in the general election three months ago when the coalition returned to power with both parties gaining an increased share of the poll. But the illusion that an SPD government will somehow not act entirely in the interest of the employers is already taking some blows.

Before the election SPD and union leaders were talking of reforms and of raising the standard of living, and the unions rejected talk from the employers of a new stability campaign.

### Passed on

At the same time, in secret negotiations with the SPD, the leaders of the engineering workers, the strongest German union, agreed to follow a moderate wages policy. The rank and file workers were demanding 15 per cent for the new agreement. The union machine reduced this to a demand of 11 per cent, and by various manipulations

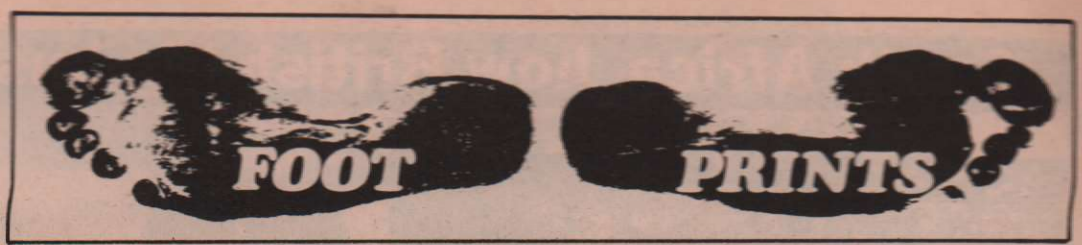
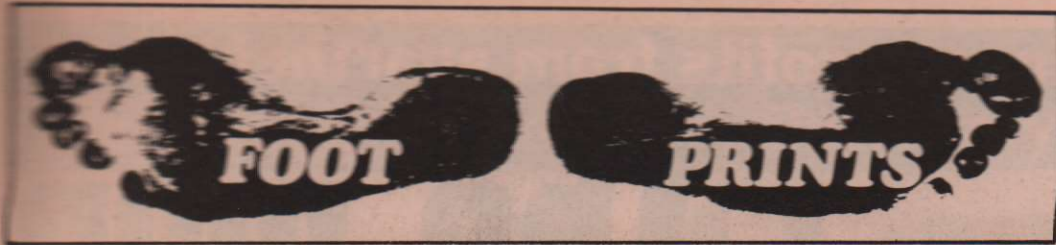
the final settlement came down to between 8 and 8.5 per cent. With price inflation, higher social insurance contributions since January and income tax this means a drop in wages.

The government has now announced measures for reducing inflation, including higher taxes on companies and on petrol. If these are passed on in increased prices—and if the devaluation of the dollar reserves by nearly £1000 million is also passed on, then the effect is more likely to be higher inflation and a drop in employment. The measures are in fact an appeal to the unions to play their part in creating 'stability' by keeping wage claims down.

But with profits soaring and production now expanding workers will not put up much longer with a declining share of the cake.

The union leaders have so far been able more or less to restrict strikes to the stronger factories. In the past six months many militants have been expelled from the more important unions. This indicates, though, a current of dissatisfaction that will become more uncontrollable as economic conditions become severer in 1973.





## DALE OF PLENTY

THE International Socialists branch in Scarborough has been putting bulletins into the Dale Electric Company's factory there, and their third bulletin contained a few sharp words and facts about the recent offer for sale of Dale Electric shares and the consequent enrichment of Dale directors.

The bulletin has provoked a nine-page reply from Mr Leonard Dale MBE, chairman and managing director of Dale Electric, which is marked 'Private and Confidential' and 'Not to be Divulged to a Third Person'. It has been circulated to every worker in the factory. It is, by any standards, a masterpiece.

Dealing with the company's growth, Mr Dale writes: 'Strange as it may seem, the company's growth was made more predominant by two industrial disputes fostered in the electrical industry by people similar to the International Socialists.'

This is a reference to the fact that Dale, which makes electrical generators, made its biggest advances during the electricians' work to rule of December 1970 and the miners' strike of 1972.

Mr Dale tells the workers: 'I would now like to deal very carefully with the paragraph where they state: "Every bit of the cake was created by you." Surely you are sensible people and are not going to swallow this?'

### 'Very small'

Consider profits, for example, Mr Dale agrees with the figure given in the IS bulletin, but complains that it does not take tax into account. Tax, he explains, is 'money to help the country pay for education and all the other services which this country provides.'

After tax, profit was only £360,000. '£238,000 of this,' moans Mr Dale, 'has then to be paid out in dividends to our shareholders, people who have loaned the company money.'

Mr Dale is at his most bitter in answering the fact—again undisputed—that his son Iain now owns nearly £400,000 worth of shares. Half of these, Mr Dale admits, were given to Iain when he was 'very small'. The rest 'he bought with hard-earned cash which he earned with his own two hands.' This manual labour, apparently, was done by Iain in his work as managing director of an advertising agency in London.

### Not obliged

Mr Dale is unrepentant when it comes to his own salary—£7500 a year—and the £2500-a-year rise he got last year. 'I think,' he writes, 'when you take into account the number of hours I put in, income tax and surtax, I think you will agree that in many cases my take-home pay looks proportionately worse than yours.'

(The average 'top line' pay for a skilled electrician is £23 a week.)

Here is how Mr Dale deals with another charge against his management in the IS bulletin: 'They make a point that meals are taken amongst the dirt of the workplace. Our



DAVID SKINNER  
Letter from the top

## Labour executive backs the rent Act blacklegs

LABOUR'S left-wing National Executive has struck another blow for freedom in the party's grass roots. On 1 March, David Skinner, who is secretary of the North East Derbyshire Constituency Labour Party, got a letter from Reg Underhill, the party's national agent.

Underhill's letter gave the results of the party's inquiry into the constituency party's decision to remove 12 sitting councillors in Derbyshire from the panel of candidates for next month's council

elections. All 12 had 'implemented' the Tory rent Act, and had put up rents in their areas.

The constituency party was, under the Labour Party constitution, perfectly within its rights in not nominating the 'implementers' for the panel. Nevertheless, the executive set up a sub-committee to 'investigate'.

The sub-committee, wrote Underhill, decreed that 'in the interests of natural justice the 12 councillors be reinstated on the list

of candidates from which local parties will select their candidates for the district elections.'

'I was asked,' wrote Underhill, 'to emphasise the point that councillors should not be penalised for whatever position they may have taken up on the Act, and that this is the general view of the committee, and not one which is applicable only in your case.'

Not content with rubbing the noses of the Clay Cross councillors in the dirt, not content with refusing them the protection from Tory fines as promised by Labour's last conference, the executive is now refusing the councillors the right by majority vote to ban blacklegs from sitting as Labour councillors.

The letter has had the unintended effect of snuffing out any dwindling loyalty to the Labour Party leadership which existed in Clay Cross.

## On guard!

CONGRATULATIONS to Adam Raphael of *The Guardian* for his brilliant exposure of the starvation wages paid to African workers by British companies in South Africa.

All the companies concerned are sustained by the large funds which pour into them from City institutions and pension funds. Among the most generous of these is *The Guardian* and Manchester Evening News Pension Fund, which has £200,000 invested directly in South Africa and £500,000 in British firms which have an interest in South Africa.

The National Union of Journalists chapel at *The Guardian* has asked the management to withdraw these funds, and the matter is being considered. A *Guardian* leader on the subject is not expected.

## Caviare Mr Reid?

THE entire staff of Socialist Worker has been moved to tears by the following passage from the Morning Star, Monday 5 February.

The audience thundered a welcome to Communist Councillor Jimmy Reid—one of three Communist councillors in Clydebank—when he said: "We are answerable to no courts—only the courts of the working class of Clydebank."

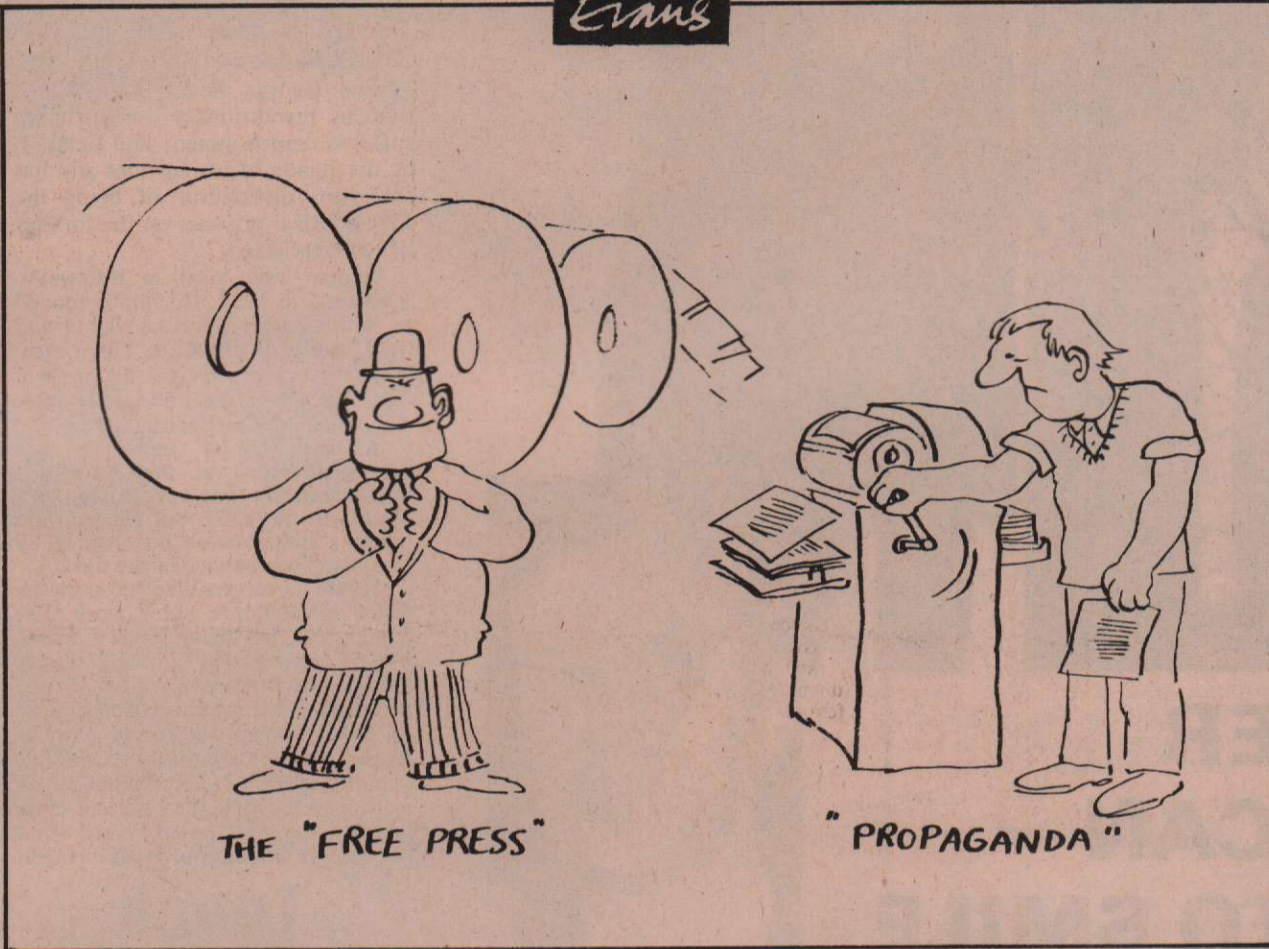
"We are issuing this call today that in no circumstances will we implement this Tory Rent Act, whatever the consequences."

"This battle has only just begun. I hope Clydebank will be the spark that will ignite the people of Scotland to fight and defeat the Act and that if a hair on the head of any councillor is touched, then the whole working class of Scotland will be behind them in action."

Referring to the threat of councillors being imprisoned, Mr. Reid said a friend had asked him: "How do you fancy supping porridge?"

He said: "I told him I would rather sup porridge with my principles than dine on smoked salmon and caviare without them."

Mr Reid has now voted for the implementation of the Tory Rent Act.



## Parliament Puffs

company is not obliged to provide canteen facilities; we prepared a small building some years ago to see how the feeling was, but this place was not used. We find that most people preferred to eat at their benches.'

But there is hope yet for the majority of Dale workers.

Mr Dale spends two paragraphs talking about his lowly upbringing and his rise to fortune. 'It's not a dream,' he writes. 'Have a go. It's reasonably easy—provided you are prepared to work.'

Mr Dale is very unhappy about the effect of his document.

Whenever he appears on the factory floor, a large number of workers suddenly bring out their handkerchiefs and sniff. One grief-stricken electrician was heard to explain to his mate in a broken sob that he could not help bursting into tears every time he recalled the plight of Mr Dale.

Mr Dale does not see anything funny in this, and is very angry indeed that the interest in the next IS bulletin has risen, as a direct result of his document, by an even greater percentage than his own salary.

GARDEN PARTY time is not all that far away, and already there is a fever of excitement among MPs of all parties, especially the Labour Party, who not only can go themselves to meet Her Majesty, but may also nominate 'party supporters' for this very special privilege.

This year a new rule has been laid down, owing to pressure of demand. You can't go to the Garden Party at Holyrood, Edinburgh, and the Buckingham Palace Garden Party in the same year. This rationing of royal handshakes has irritated a number of MPs, but has hardened their determination to get an invitation to one or other of the parties.

Any Scottish MP who wants to go to Holyrood must apply early. 'He may', according to the instruction from the Labour whips' office, 'be accompanied by his wife and any unmarried daughters born in 1955 or before.'

Applications should be made to James Hamilton, the Scottish Labour whip, who was President of the Constructional Engineering Union from 1968 to 1970.

Meanwhile, members who want to submit the names of Labour Party supporters for consideration to attend the Royal Garden Party can get the necessary forms from the whips' office, and should submit them to Walter Harrison, Labour Whip, not later than 2 April.

The friends of Russia and Eastern Europe had a busy time last week. There was tea to be drunk with the

Bulgarian Minister of Transport on Wednesday and more tea with the Soviet parliamentary delegation on Thursday. Both tea parties were held in rooms which open out on the terrace in case the spring weather held up (which it didn't).

The hosts of the Bulgarian Minister were Mr James Johnson, Labour MP for Hull West, and Mr Ray Mawby, Tory pyramid seller from Totnes. The Russian delegation was greeted by Mrs Renee Short (Labour, Wolverhampton North East) and Sir Malcolm Stoddart-Scott (Tory, Ripon), who is a wool manufacturer.

There are still some places left on the plane for the Anglo-Italian Group's weekend trip to Rome on 6-8 April. The whole trip will only cost MPs £25 (plus £1 if they want a room to themselves). The organiser is Carol Johnson, Labour and Common Market MP for Lewisham South.

Judging from some of the jaunts organised by Mr Johnson on behalf of the European Movement and the Labour Committee for Europe, this weekend should be really worthwhile. There is, however, no significance in the fact that Sunday 8 April is Passion Sunday.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

'The City of London is probably the most heavily policed square mile in the world. If the whole of England was policed to the same standard, it would need 42 million police officers.'

James Page, Commissioner, City of London police, 13 March.

## SHOCKING COPPERS

IN YORKSHIRE they've been beating up the police again. A shocking business. Especially when the people responsible are policemen.

It's all been happening at special 'crowd-control' courses at RAF Finningley, near Doncaster. The sessions are organised like this.

Half the officers are detailed to behave like pickets. Their instructions are to 'be as realistic as possible'. The other half behave like policemen, and

try to 'drive a wedge' into the pickets and arrest the militants.

It seems that the 'pickets' are behaving rather more realistically than necessary. According to the Yorkshire Post (10 March): 'A number of their opponents received injuries, including the fracture of ribs.'

'At one stage,' said the report, 'three men from Barnsley were off duty because of injuries.'

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# South Africa: how British big business profits from apartheid...and

# The man

The apartheid police state has never had an easy ride. Countless thousands of brave and dedicated people have challenged the regime and organised for its downfall. This is the two-part story of one such man, jailed, beaten and finally exiled who is now a member of the International Socialists and still fighting for workers' power.



## WHY PETER WALKER CAN AFFORD TO SMILE

THIS IS PETER WALKER, (inset) always smiling, always smug. He's the Secretary for Trade and Industry. He's the one who tells us how to pull in the belt and make sacrifices in the country's hour of need.

Fifteen years ago, Walker was an office

boy. Now he's a multi-millionaire. He made his money by cashing in on the shipping and insurance boom in the City.

He joined up with Jim Slater, the City's top whizz-kid. Together they built Slater Walker Securities into one of the most profitable financial enterprises in the world.

Long before Mr Walker became a minister and resigned from the Slater

Walker board, the firm had opened up operations in South Africa. Since then, it has become the eleventh largest industrial and finance group in South Africa.

Hardly a month goes by without another Slater Walker bid. Profits have doubled twice during the last four years.

Last week, the Guardian disclosed that at least two Slater Walker subsidiaries in Natal paid their workers less than starvation wages.

Mr Slater said he was 'shocked'. He explained that he had only 'regarded' the subsidiaries 'as an investment'.

Mr Walker said nothing at all. He just went on trying to get better terms for South African capitalism from the Common Market.

Smile on, Walker. While you have the chance.



IT IS SCHOOL BREAK-TIME in the Natal, in Slater Walker country. The little boy on the left of the top picture is one of the luckiest children in the province.

Children in Natal, if they are black, do not get any breakfast. Sometimes, the day after pay day, their parents give the children a penny to buy a slice of bread in the break. They get nothing else to eat until they get home in the evening, and the meal then is usually miserable.

The little girl on the right is more typical. Her parents can't afford a penny. She is already half-starved and is lucky not to be suffering from kwashiorkor, the starvation disease which has smitten down one in five of black South African children.

She is watching her friend, hoping he can spare a mouthful.

She will eat less this month than Mr Walker and Mr Slater will eat for lunch today.

Her parents, however, will be helping Messrs Slater, Walker and their kind with their £86 million in dividends shipped out of South Africa into the pockets of rich men in England every year.

Starve on, children. At least Mr Walker is still smiling.

The bricklayers' shop steward on a hospital building site in Ealing, West London, is a small, cheerful man called George Peake. His workmates respect him as a tough negotiator but few of them realise that their steward is more than just the usual union activist.

For George Peake is a South African revolutionary who has suffered imprisonment and beatings at the hands of his enemies and has the grim distinction of being the first political prisoner on the fortress of Robben Island.

George was born in Bulawayo, Rhodesia, in 1911. His family moved to South Africa when he was 11 and lived mainly in the Cape Town area. His father was British, his mother from St Helena and the family were duly labelled 'Cape coloureds'.

At high school George became deeply involved in the Trotskyist movement. He was apprenticed as a bricklayer in 1937 but his job and union activities were interrupted by five years' war service in the navy.

When he returned to his trade he threw himself into union work. The Trotskyists had little interest in the unions and George worked closely with the Communist Party.

Because of his political background he never joined the party but its working-class orientation and its commitment to organising black workers into the unions led to a close liaison for five years, until that orientation and commitment changed.

## Tough

South Africa was a racist society but until 1948 the United Party was in power and the full trappings of the apartheid police state were not imposed until the Nationalists took over under leaders imprisoned during the war for their undisguised Nazi sympathies.

But even before 1948 union work was tough. Blacks were not allowed to hold office in the unions, there were substantial pay differentials for white and black workers and the white leadership of the building union was deeply reactionary and conservative.

George was at the heart of the struggle to both organise building workers and transform the union into a fighting force. The employers blacklisted him but such was his support that he became the first-ever coloured organiser for the union in the Cape Town area.

By 1955 substantial changes had been made in the union. Black workers were elected to the executive, the secretary was black and there was no longer a colour bar on officials.

When the old white reactionaries were finally routed from the union hierarchy they sought and won government support in forming a whites-only breakaway organisation.

But George's activities were not confined to the union field. In 1953 he was elected first national chairman of the South African Coloured People's Association.

The Nationalist government was

busily perfecting the machinery of apartheid to clamp down on any opposition to its rule. In 1955 the Ministry of 'Justice' slapped a five-year ban on George Peake, the first such ban imposed under the Suppression of Communism Act.

George was ordered to resign from 35 organisations—'I didn't belong to 33 of them!'—and was restricted to meetings of not more than two people.

Undeterred, George continued his political activities clandestinely. It was a time of political ferment, with the black movement challenging the hideous apartheid regime.

In 1955 the new and powerful African People's Congress held a 'congress of the people' in Johannesburg to rouse and organise a massive opposition to the regime.

The Nationalists responded with a wave of arrests and 156 Congress members were charged with high treason. George, a member of the national consultative committee of Congress, was among them.

The trials dragged on for four years. George was forced to appear in court daily throughout that wearying period but in 1960 he was among those acquitted of the treason charges.

With the detention order lifted, George attempted to return to bricklaying. But the union was now firmly right wing. The leaders were frightened of the government and openly co-operated with it and George was not allowed to re-join.

Then came March 1960, and Sharpeville, that terrible, bloody watershed in South African politics when blacks demonstrating peacefully against the pass laws were slaughtered by the security forces.

The regime went on to a full offensive. Every opponent was subject to harassment and arrest. The raid in the night became a commonplace. George was arrested and held without trial for six months.

He had broken off his relationship with the Communist Party, convinced that its politics were wrong and opposed to the interests of the black working class. But he was still classified as a communist—a definition he did not seek to deny. He was often in jail with party members and relations were strained.

## Romped

After his release from prison George stood in the Cape Town municipal elections and romped home against a right-wing union official.

He threw himself into the fight against the government's new Group Areas Act that sought to drive black and coloured people out of the residential areas into the country. George refused to allow an inspector to value his house and was charged with incitement to break the Act.

He was given 12 months' hard labour but appealed and was allowed out on bail. He went straight back to the council to continue his campaign but the press was not allowed to report him as he was a 'statutory communist' and little was known of his fight.

The black movement has reached the crossroads. Subject to continual



'The language of the civilised nations has clearly marked off two epochs in the development of Russia. Where the aristocratic culture introduced into world parlance such barbarisms as czar, pogrom, knout, October has internationalised such words as Bolshevik, soviet... This alone justifies the proletarian revolution, if you imagine it needs justification'—Trotsky.

TROTSKY'S HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

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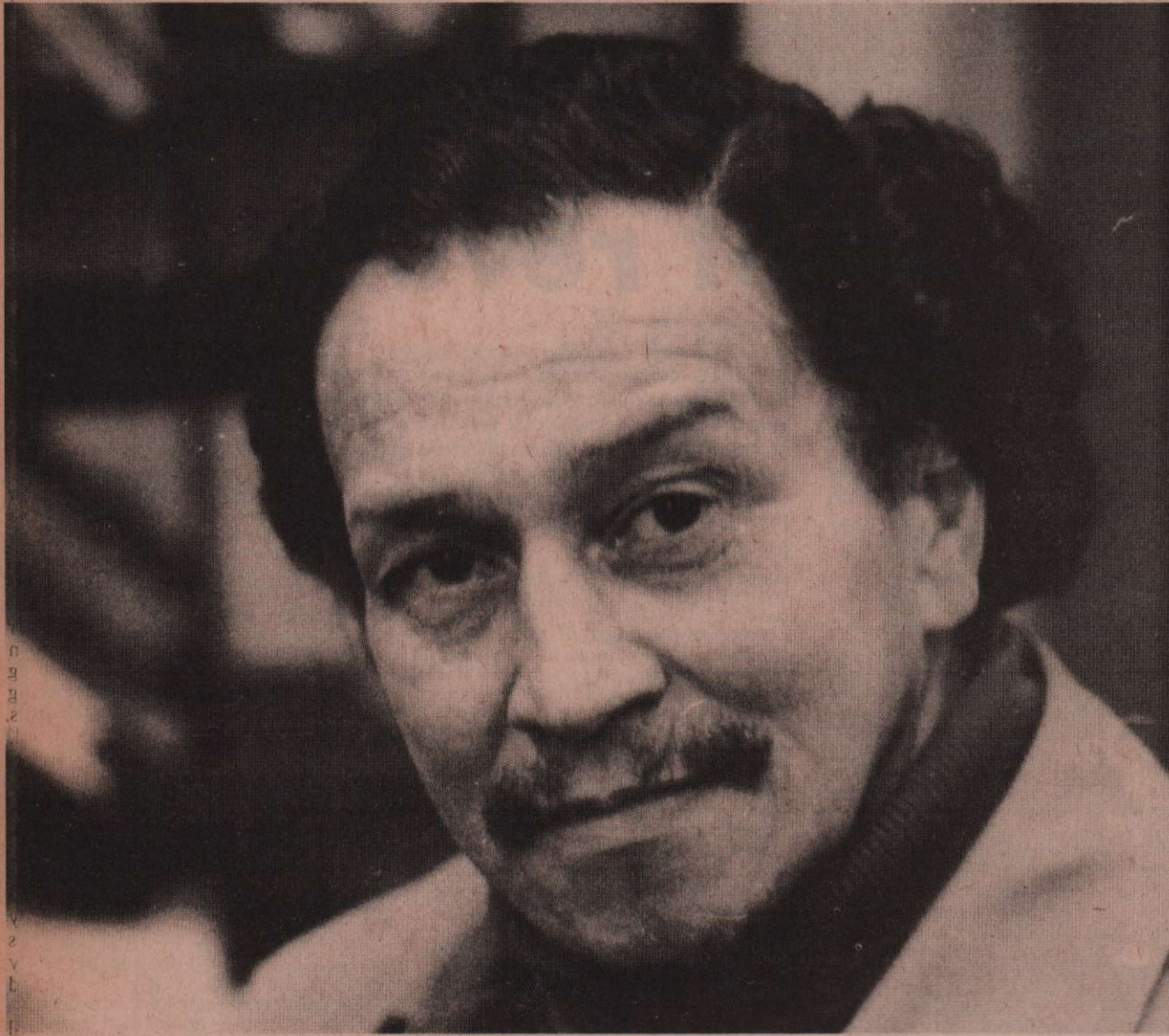
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# 'Two officers put towels on



the struggle of one revolutionary

# from Robben Island...



Picture of George Peake by Mike Cohen

police raids, bans and arrests, the Congress movement decided to go on an armed offensive and to set up a special military wing.

It formed a group known as Umkontu We Sizwe—Spear of the Nation. Its object was terrorism against state property—government buildings, prisons, railway stations. Although he still had a one-year prison sentence hanging over him, George joined Spear of the Nation.

In May 1961 he was assigned to plant a bomb at the Roeland Street jail in Cape Town. The group had a complete plan of the prison and chose an area where no prisoners would be harmed by an explosion—at most a door would be blown open and prisoners might escape.

With a carefully prepared alibi that said he was staying with friends 36 miles away, George made his way to the prison late at night and placed the detonator behind a gate.

Then a spotlight snapped on and an Afrikaans voice rapped out: 'George Peake—stand still!' It was the security police.

Vans blocked off every exit and the elaborate police precautions convinced George that he had been betrayed.

'All right, George,' an officer said, 'make the bomb safe.'

'I thought it was the end of me,' George says. 'I'd been taught how to prepare a bomb but not how to dismantle it. It was a cold night but

the sweat poured off me as I attempted to make the bomb safe. But finally I got the detonator out.'

He was taken to interrogation headquarters and beaten up while the officers waited for the arrival of the Chief of Police.

'He told me that worse would happen to me unless I made a complete confession and named everyone in my organisation. If I did I would be free to go.

'He left me with a sheet of paper and went away for an hour. When he came back the paper was blank and he flew into a rage. Two policemen came into the room with a big lamp.

## Crushed

*'They put towels on their hands and punched me and demanded to know names. They opened the door, put my fingers in the jamb and repeatedly crushed them by opening and closing the door. I screamed but didn't talk.'*

One of the policemen produced a list with 13 names.

'Just tick off three names,' he suggested.

'I won't talk—I want a lawyer,' George said. The police laughed and beat him up again.

Forty-eight hours later he was taken to court and charged under the Explosives Act. Bail was refused. He was taken, ironically, to Roeland Street prison where he was beaten up

by the warders and locked away in the dirtiest, vermin-infested cell they could find.

He was not allowed to bath and had no contact with his wife and family. 'I got a bit demoralised.'

At his third court hearing, against court protests, he was awarded bail of £1000. The money was collected in the black community that day and George was released.

His release coincided with the introduction of the Sabotage Act in parliament, with a minimum penalty of five years and a maximum penalty of death.

'I was terrified the law would be retrospective and that I would be hanged for the explosives charge. I told my comrades I wouldn't stand trial and would escape.

'The Communist Party members insisted I should stand trial and turn it into a political trial. They said it would be another "Reichstag Fire" trial! But I went on insisting and eventually it was agreed that I should escape.'

The escape was carefully planned with decoy cars and walkie-talkie contact between the cars. They drove through the night to the border with Botswana but the police, somehow, had been tipped off and they ran into a road block outside Kimberley.

A police officer pulled open the car door. 'Which one is George Peake?' he demanded. No one spoke.

The officer tore back the sleeves of all the occupants, looking for the distinctive tattoo on George's arm—a legacy from his navy days.

He was driven back to the interrogation headquarters at Cape Town and was met by a beaming Chief of Police.

'George!' he greeted him. 'I brought you back because you didn't say goodbye to me.'

# Stop this killer road say women



Police attempt to move the blockade while a city councillor watches beneath his umbrella

'THIS ROAD is a killer' . . . 'Save our children' . . . 'We want a crossing' proclaimed banners displayed by a group of angry Leeds housewives last week.

The 40 women and children from the Little London and Carlton estates were protesting against the accidents involving their children on Camp Road that divides the two estates.

The mother whose two children had been the latest victims of speeding vehicles was part of the group that blocked the road with prams and kids. As the traffic piled up, the women stood there determined that they would get a crossing to protect their children and stop number 11 of the 10 accidents in the last year.

The decision to block the road where they wanted a crossing was the latest stage of a long campaign. Previously two petitions had been sent in to the city engineers but only a letter of acknowledgement had been received.

## Direct action

This time, the women from the two estates had decided that direct action must accompany their third petition. They are determined to get some action to get a zebra crossing on this major feeder road from the centre of Leeds.

Children have to cross the road to get to the two local schools. Old age pensioners have to get to the shops and post office on the other side.

But the police were determined that the road should not be stopped for long. At one time up to six

by  
**NANCY HALL**

Panda cars were on the scene. The women and children were pushed off the road as the traffic was diverted. One woman had her coat torn and her arm was bruised.

But the Little Londoners hadn't finished. The housewives and children crossed and re-crossed the road as the police pleaded with them.

Eventually an inspector was called up to try and soft-soap the group. He promised to bring a radar trap down the following day. He also kept asking the women to take up their grievances with the two councillors who stood on the pavement sheltering from the rain.

Afterwards one of the spokeswomen said that they will be lobbying the Civic Hall but if they don't get any satisfaction they will repeat the protest again, this time at rush hour.

And, she added, the building workers on a nearby site have promised to help too.

*Christopher Columbus landed first in the New World . . . and after praising God enquired urgently for gold. The natives, Red Indians, were peacable and friendly and directed him to Haiti . . . He sailed to Haiti. The Spaniards, the most advanced Europeans of their day introduced Christianity, forced labour in mines, murder, rape, bloodhounds, strange diseases, and artificial famine. There was also slave labour. The pillage of Africa.*

*In 1791 the slaves of San Domingo revolted, the struggle lasted 12 years. The slaves defeated in turn the local armed forces, a British force of about 60,000 men and a French expedition of similar size.*

*The revolt is the only successful slave revolt in history. It is this revolt that C L R James deals with in his magnificent book, The Black Jacobins.*

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# came in and their hands'

Continued next week.



# STALIN

The twentieth anniversary of the death of Joseph Stalin has been recorded with discreet silence by most of the left press. Socialist Worker believes that such an important anniversary should not pass without comment . . .

THE SIXTH OF MARCH was not treated as a great anniversary anywhere this year. There were no ceremonial parades in Moscow. Thousands of French Communists did not throng to commemoration meetings.

In Britain the Morning Star had no special article. Its only reference to the anniversary was a single column, one inch advertisement paid for by two of the paper's readers.

There could hardly be a greater contrast with the reaction exactly 20 years before, when the ruler of Russia, Joseph Stalin, died.

Stalin, wrote leading British Communist R Palme Dutt in Labour Monthly for April 1953, was 'The symbol of the champion of the oppressed and exploited over the whole earth, the main target of the hatred of imperialist oppressors and exploiters, the tireless fighter for peace, the shield and bulwark of humanity from the horrors of a third world war . . .

'The whole world—with the exception of a handful of evil maniacs—mourned the loss of Stalin . . . The genius and will of Stalin, the architect of the rising world of free humanity, lives on forever . . .

Doubtless, Palme Dutt knew that the 'architect of the rising world of free humanity' was in fact the architect of some rather gruesome happenings inside Russia. But for thousands of rank and file communists his words seemed to epitomise their own feelings.

## Shatter

Yet less than three years later, Stalin's successors delivered a shattering blow to such beliefs. At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956, Nikita Khrushchev revealed that the 'champion of the oppressed and exploited' had been responsible for killing 'many thousands of honest and innocent communists.'

Stalin had 'organised the mass deportation from their native places of whole nations, together with all Communists and Komsomols (Young Communists) without exception.'

He had organised the imprisonment of more than half the delegates to the Communist Party congress of 1934 and the shooting of 70 per cent of the members of the central committee elected at that congress.

Furthermore, said Khrushchev, the man who had been extolled as 'the greatest leader, sublime strategist of all times and nations, responsible for winning the war had, in fact, made mistakes resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers, had tried



The 'great leader of humanity' with two other leading humanitarians, Truman and Roosevelt



# Gravedigger of revolution

to follow the course of battles on a school globe, and had shown utter cowardice in the first days of the war.

THE WORLD communist movement has never been the same since Khrushchev's speech. Not that the official Communist parties of the West have dealt adequately with the question of Stalin, or for that matter of the regimes set up by him in Russia and Eastern Europe. Rather they prefer to say nothing, to act as if he had never existed.

Even today there are many people on the left who believe that Stalin was somehow closer to socialist policies than his successors such as Khrushchev and Brezhnev. It is often said that although Stalin was 'hard', even brutal, he at least stood for a crude form of social equality inside Russia and for a struggle against capitalism internationally.

By contrast, his successors are blamed for a policy that has produced blatant inequality inside Russia and a 'softness' towards the institutions of the capitalist system in the west.

But it was under Stalin that vast differences of income opened up between different groups in Russian society. In 1936, for instance, the top officials in the government had salaries of 300,000 roubles—more than a hundred times the average wage for workers at the time.

Nor was it true that Stalin's policies led to any improvement in workers' living standards. The buying power of the average worker's wage fell by about 50 per cent between 1928—when Stalin took complete power into his own hands—and 1935.

Stalin was not any more 'socialistic'



Khrushchev shattered Stalin's image than his heirs in his international policy, either. It was Stalin himself who pioneered the parliamentary approach that now dominates the orthodox Communist parties.

In the mid-1930s he ordered Communist parties throughout the world to do their utmost to form coalitions with pro-capitalist parties.

In France this meant that the Communists supported a coalition between the Socialist Party and the main capitalist party, the Radicals.

And when a mass uprising of workers prevented an instant victory for Franco's fascist coup in Spain in 1936, Stalin ordered the Spanish Communist Party to oppose any attempt to use the success of the uprising to establish a workers' state.

THE SAME POLICY was imposed on the Communist parties of France, Italy and Greece at the end of the Second World War. In France, Thorez entered the government of General de Gaulle. In Italy Togliatti supported the government

of the former fascist, General Badoglio and Winston Churchill was able to tell Greek people that British troops propping up the monarchy against a popular revolt were doing so with the 'full support of President Truman and Marshal Stalin.'

Far from representing some sort of continuation of the policies of the Russian revolution, Stalin was diametrically opposed to them. Where the Russian revolution had preached international struggle for working class power, Stalin preached coalition with bourgeois parties.

Where the revolution had spoken of genuine working-class democracy inside Russia, Stalin imposed his own dictatorship and the destruction of even the most minimal rights of workers.

Some people, recognising this, have argued that Stalin's rise to power shows that every revolution inevitably degenerates. But that is to ignore the concrete circumstances that alone enabled Stalin to dominate Russia.

The workers' councils that had constituted the working-class power in 1917 rapidly withered away in the years after. Not because of any 'Bolshevik conspiracy', but because the ravages of civil war and invasion by more than a dozen foreign armies led to the closing down of more than 80 per cent of industry.

For almost four years the revolution survived while the working class that had made the revolution disintegrated. The Bolsheviks found they had to hold on to power in the absence of a real working class.

In the chaos and devastation, many elements completely opposed in attitude and approach to the revolutionaries of 1917 were able to creep into positions of influence in the state machine and even the Bolshevik Party. As Lenin was dying in 1923, he warned of this.

## Feared

But Stalin was already organising these elements into a force to back his own bid for power. Gradually he took over the key positions within the Bolshevik Party and the state, driving out the leaders of 1917: first the 'left' opposition of Trotsky, then the Leningrad opposition of Zinoviev and Kamenev, then the 'right opposition' of Bukharin and Tomsky.

The ranks of bureaucrats who supported Stalin would tolerate no dissent. They insisted with increasing vehemence that nationalised industry belonged to them, not to workers, that there was no room for workers' control in the factories or for discussion over policies being pursued in the state.

AS THEY CRYSTALLISED out as a layer in society with privileges undreamt of by any worker, they more and more feared the contagious effects of any revolutions abroad on workers in Russia. For the Bolshevik slogan of 'world revolution' they substituted 'socialism in one country'.

The western powers were able to build up massive armies through

continual growth of heavy industry based on the exploitation of workers and peasants, reasoned Stalin. Why not defend Russia by similarly exploiting the population to build heavy industry?

Wages were cut, the last element of workers' control in the factories was done away with the right to go on strike disappeared, the unions were merged completely into the state, the peasants were driven from their land into 'collectives'. The real gains of 1917 were demolished to provide the wherewithal for military competition with the west.

The result was a massive growth of industry in Russia. But this in no way benefited the workers or peasants. While heavy industry grew, living standards fell.

## Vicious

Stalin always feared that workers, remembering the lessons of 1917, would turn in bitterness on their new oppressors. He resorted to ever more vicious methods of repression in order to forestall this.

In 1928 there were 30,000 people in labour camps; in 1930 600,000; by the late 1930s five million.

His fear was not only directed against workers. Those Bolshevik leaders surviving from 1917 were a living symbol of everything he hated, however much they were cowed by his power. In the Moscow trials of the mid-1930s he slaughtered old Bolshevik leaders such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Rykov, Bukharin, Rakovsky. And he sent assassins to Mexico to murder Leon Trotsky.

Even those of his own supporters with Bolshevik pasts were not immune—by the thousand they were carted off to the execution chamber, the prison cell and the labour camp.

Stalin's successors, having lived in fear of the murder machine for so long, put a stop to it with his death. Within months the secret police chief Beria was ousted from power and summarily executed.

In the years that followed, the majority (although not all) of those in the labour camps were released. Steps were taken to improve workers' living standards a little. The denunciation of Stalin was used to blame him alone for the horrors of the past.

But the ruling class in Russia that had formed under Stalin's tutelage has been completely incapable of jettisoning all of his heritage. It continues to engage in global rivalry with the western powers, and increasingly also with China.

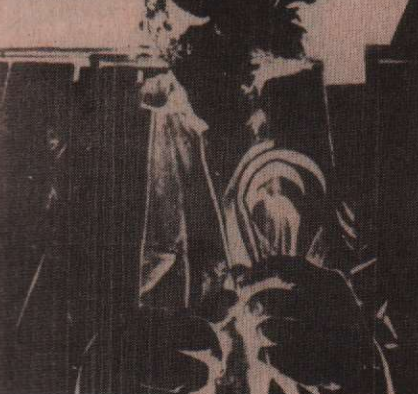
It continues to hold back the consumption of the mass of the population in order to develop the industry needed to sustain this rivalry. And because of that, it continues to use the crudest police techniques to deny the most basic freedoms to Russia's workers.

That is why it cannot settle accounts with Stalin: he still haunts it. But so too does the ghost of the revolution murdered by Stalin. Russia's rulers still have very real fears of the working class—and in that lies the hope for the future of humanity.

Special article  
by CHRIS HARMAN

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# Union leaders backed down from fight with car bosses and Tories

## What went wrong at Ford?

IT WAS TO BE the first big test of the Tory government's new wage freeze and anti-strike laws. At Ford the unions had never been in a better position to secure payment of a substantial wage claim and demands for longer holidays, a shorter working week, better pensions and the right to bargain over speeds and manning on the line.

Ford UK had record profits. It was the only one of the British car firms that increased its share of the home market last year. Even better was expected in 1973. In addition the company could expect to make an extra killing from Britain's entry into the Common Market.

But the forces needed to win the fight at Ford got no official call for action to blast a hole through the freeze. And they were not drilled for the independent action that the convenors and shop stewards called for when Ford management discovered that they were a law abiding firm and could offer no more than £2.40 a week.

There was a swift and deep crisis of confidence in the rank and file when the official call to battle did not materialise. Ford convenors and many leading militants themselves had been expecting it to do so, despite the lessons of the past. They too were encumbered by official union rhetoric about the state pay laws and the need to fight them—preferably with someone somewhere else doing the fighting.

Right from the start of the negotiations for the 1973 agreement, the official union leaders opted for low-key negotiations. This time the matter would be settled or disputed across the negotiating table.

There would be no trips to see Heath at Chequers or Henry Ford in Manilla, as Reg Birch, secretary of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee, was to put it at the 14 December 1972 meeting with Ford management.

### Struck deal

Formally, the 14 December meeting was to table the claim. But after Moss Evans had finished reading through his prepared script the company and the unions struck a deal which forbade use of the press and tightly restricted propaganda. As far as the chairman and secretary of the trade union side, Moss Evans and Reg Birch, were concerned, the purpose was twofold.

Neither the Transport Workers nor the Engineering Union leaderships wanted the negotiations to break down, leading to a long official strike. The AUEW leaders in particular were very concerned at the shortage of funds at the union's disposal. For this reason alone they were not keen on going for a real fight.

The other, more personal, concern for Evans and Birch was to avoid a situation where negotiations would simply be taken out of the hands of the NJNC. This is what was done to settle the 1971 strike. Then Henry Ford, Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon imposed a deal on the NJNC and the Ford membership.

This whole low-key approach was invalidated by the new twist the Tories had given to the offensive against organised labour. But the trade union side carried on exactly as if they were in the 'normal' situation. No preparations for a struggle were made. The top level union leaders felt that the best way to defend free collective bargaining was just to carry on doing it. It was just a sham.

by  
**Laurie Flynn**

Ford delayed its detailed reply to the claim until the 9 February meeting of the NJNC. Before coming down to the nitty gritty, Ford labour relations boss Bob Ramsey stated that the company would not concede anything of substance on the questions of a shorter working week and the fourth week's holiday.

Ford plants had to be used to capacity and management would concede nothing that would interfere with production.

Then Ramsey stated that the government formula of £1 plus 4 per cent was as far as Ford would go. There would be no readjustments of the package except within the Tory guidelines.

The response of the trade union side was pitiful if predictable. After Ramsey had laid it on the line, Moss Evans said: 'I don't want to be technical, I want to be factual. You only disobey the law of the land when in fact you do something contrary to the law.'

'I said this to you the last time we met and we went into a lot of discussion about it. But if you offered us a £55 a week increase, or something like that, you would not be breaking the law in making the offer.'

Ramsey replied that management were not willing to make an offer in the full knowledge that they could not pay it. 'We would be saying something which we could not do,' he added. Moss Evans replied: 'We are getting technical.'

At this key point the trade union side simply requested another meeting. Ramsey agreed to the request to go away and cost the wage freeze offer. The trade union side felt that once costing figures were available, then this would show Ford was not replying to the claim on its merits.

And that is all they wanted from management—a reply on the merits of the claim, nothing more. They should all pretend the freeze did not exist.

Ramsey understood that to make an offer and have it blocked by the government was an open incitement to Ford trade unionists to take the company and the government to the cleaners. But he was beginning to get the feel of the situation on the official trade union side and to think that Ford could really exploit the freeze. Wage increases already budgeted for would not have to be paid.

If the official unions had been serious

## Lack of contact between stewards and rank and file



The Ford convenors' conference in Coventry: a call for strike action without grass roots' support



Harraway: ticked off by Birch

about the struggle, then they would have gone away from the 9 February meeting and given a clear lead. They did not.

And the matter was left up to convenors. They had delivered the goods before and could presumably do so again.

The convenors called for an all-out national strike. They summoned a meeting of all of their numbers at Coventry on 18 February. In addition they tried to unify their forces with other embattled sections of the working class—inviting teachers, miners, gas workers, hospital workers and civil servants to attend.

### Worst features

But by the time the Coventry meeting took place and issued its unanimous call for all-out national unofficial action, several mass meetings had voted against such action. Ramsey judged he could exploit the situation, and exploit he did.

When some of the convenors were not relying on the official unions to give the lead, they relied on bureaucratic methods to get the rank and file behind the strike call. Some of the mass meetings at Dagenham were appallingly conducted, showing the worst features of the manipulative politics of the Communist Party.

Between success and the Ford convenors and militants who wanted to fight stood two things—lack of organisation and lack of propaganda. There were no proper joint shop stewards' committees at either Dagenham or Halewood.

Meetings on the crucial issue of the freeze were held section by section with no clear and united lead. In addition the convenors were themselves party to the agreement that the whole 1973 Ford claim should be conducted in a low key.

At the October 1972 convenors' meeting, Sid Harraway from Dagenham moved that they should put out their own

propaganda, in bulk. He was defeated. And little or no propaganda went out to expose the freeze fraud or to deal with the crucial question of taking on the law of the land.

And the trade union side of the NJNC were very insistent about policing their part of the low key 'business-like negotiations' deal with Ford. The day after the unions formally tabled the 1973 claim on 14 December, Sid Harraway wrote an article in the Morning Star.

### Personal capacity

It was a very restrained and uncontroversial piece written in his personal capacity. It contained a lot of facts about the Ford profit bonanza but little analysis about the real nature of the fight.

Following publication, Harraway received a letter from Reg Birch, secretary of the trade union side of the NJNC, criticising the appearance of the article and stating that it was in breach of the agreement with Ford. Harraway replied that he had written in his personal capacity and has heard nothing more of the matter.

Ford management's offer of £2.40 also had more than a little attraction for those who wanted to avoid a fight and were given no lead in an alternative direction. £4 is the maximum rise extracted at Ford in one instalment.

In addition the Ford management had cleverly conceded the union's claim for a

12 month agreement 'in view of the freeze'. This was very attractive to the union bureaucrats who wanted at all costs to avoid an expensive fight.

Ford would presumably reply to the 1974 claim on its merits. And there was a chance the company by then would be free of the freeze laws. Except of course for the not insignificant fact that there is to be a Phase Three, and others after that if the Tories can get away with it.

The situation now is that parts of Halewood and sections of Dagenham are courageously trying to carry on the fight. But other plants and sections are not implementing the selective strikes and overtime bans that the official unions have sanctioned if not supported.

A further meeting with Ford management is now scheduled and some sort of deal will doubtless be struck—in all probability within the freeze norms which the unions are supposed to be opposing.

But no one should lose heart from this situation. It has its logic. But it was in no sense inevitable. Nor is it unchangeable.

Groups of active socialist militants in every plant and every section fighting to build the confidence of the rank and file, fighting to challenge the company and the government at the level of ideas, will transform the situation. They will prepare the way for success in the new battles that will inevitably come.

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# REVIEW

## BOOKS

# WOUNDED KNEE ~ THE FIRST MY LAI



The body of Big Foot after the massacre at Wounded Knee. Where then is the warpaint?

# The men they tried to gag

LEWD, BLASPHEMOUS AND OBSCENE, by Arthur Calder-Marshall, Hutchinson, £2.75.

THIS BOOK is an account of trials by which the state tried to imprison and gag radicals and dissenters in the 19th century. It is dedicated to Richard Neville, Jim Anderson and Felix Dennis, the defendants of the Oz trial, 'with whose views I disagree and whose right to express those views I will always defend', writes the author, who describes himself as a Christian liberal.

In many ways the book is unsatisfactory. It is badly organised and repetitive, and its style reeks of musty old law books and dusty library shelves. Nevertheless it is essential reading for anybody with more than a passing interest in civil liberties, the freedom of the press and the operation of the courts by the state.

Calder-Marshall repeatedly shows how each of the trials he describes was a political trial. Although the charges were ostensibly concerned with blasphemy and obscenity, the motive of every trial was political.

## Corrupt

He is at his best when he is dealing with post-war repression after 1815 and the reform agitation of the 1820s. He characterises the government of the day as reactionary, manipulative and corrupt, and describes the activities of agents provocateurs in some detail. Harassment of the accused seemed standard practice. Arrests were made at times of maximum inconvenience and vulnerability, bail was hard to obtain and discovering the nature of the charge equally difficult.

In 1817 William Hone, editor of the Reformist's Register, was accused of blasphemy. The prosecution continually emphasised how offensive his parodies were in the eyes of God but omitted to mention how offensive they were to the government.

During this period the administration was busily inciting abortive risings in order to justify further repression. Hone was cheeky enough to suggest that the leaders of the government, as instigators of sedition, should be arraigned for high treason.

While in prison he met Wooler, Yorkshire-born editor of the rival Black Dwarf. In those days it was still possible to edit an 'underground' paper from jail.

## Ignoble

Just as Black Dwarf, Twopenny Trash and the Reformist's Register were the honourable antecedents of Inside Story, Private Eye and Socialist Worker, so the Whitehouses, McWhirters and Freedom Under Law groups have been ignobly preceded by William Wilberforce and the Society for the Suppression of Vice. The 'Vice Society' is described as 'the only ginger group for instituting prosecutions to the greater glory of God and the greater profit of [their solicitor] Mr Pritchard.'

The book tends to fizzle out as it draws toward the end of the 19th century. Those appearing in the dock become increasingly eccentric, self-appointed martyrs and devout atheists with little sense of humour and few ties with the working class. The faithless lover of Marx's daughter makes a brief appearance in the wings, but the basic struggle had taken different forms and was being fought in other places than the courts.

The message of Calder-Marshall's book is that the state will use whatever weapons seem easiest and nearest to hand. The increasing use of the vague word 'conspiracy', the use of obscenity charges to harass papers as in the Oz trial, the jailing of the dockers, and the Stoke Newington Eight trial verdict, indicate that today's battles may have to be fought over old ground.

The successful defendants in Lewd, Blaspheinous and Obscene employed wit, research, a working knowledge of the law and the expression of external solidarity to win over their juries and the people at large. We have to be prepared to do the same.

Bogon Lewis

BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE, by Dee Brown, to be published later this year in paperback by Pan Books, hardback: Barrie and Jenkins, £3.25.

JUST OVER 100 years ago, at the start of the Civil War, the American West was peopled by a peaceful race of migratory hunters—the 'Red' Indians. Thirty years later, in 1890, there were scarcely any bands of Indians left on the plains.

Tens of thousands had died—either in battle or through disease and deliberate starvation. The remainder were herded together, publicly humiliated and confined to small, infertile areas—insultingly known as 'reservations'.

Since that time, one of the greatest propaganda feats of all time has been perpetrated. In systematic fashion, the publicists, historians, writers and Hollywood film moguls have created the myth of the 'savage' Red Indian. Generation after generation in America and Europe were raised on a cultural diet of cowboys and Indians.

## RELICS

The myth bore no relation to the reality of American history but it was almost universally accepted. The few Indians who remain as the remnants of this once proud race were treated as historical relics of the pioneering age, the golden age of America's birth.

In this way is history re-written. But in the past few years a different

## by Martin Tomkinson

story has emerged. Spurred on by the Vietnam debacle, a small group of radical historians dug down into the records, re-examined some of the myths and started to re-interpret the shameful beginnings of American nationhood. The sight of John Wayne in the film The Green Berets must have prompted thousands of viewers to begin to question the version of their own history that men like Wayne had so carefully propagated for decades.

Perhaps the most impressive result of this re-appraisal of American history is Dee Brown's Bury My

Heart at Wounded Knee, an account of the 'Wild West' from the Indian point of view. Brown's book has been at the top of the American best-seller lists for months and is shortly to be published in paperback in Britain.

The title is taken from a poem by Stephen Vincent Bener and refers to the final grisly episode in the Indian wars, the massacre at Wounded Knee. This was the climax of 40 years of broken promises and bloody warfare as the expanding American nation responded to the initially peaceful gestures of the Indians.

When Christopher Columbus landed in America, he wrote to the king and queen of Spain: 'So tractable, so peaceable are these people that I swear to your majesties there is not in the world a better nation. They love their neighbour as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle and accompanied with a smile.'

The Indians continued to treat white men in this manner right up until the 1860s when tribe after tribe was forced to defend its lands and its traditional hunting-grounds against the depredations of rapacious white men.

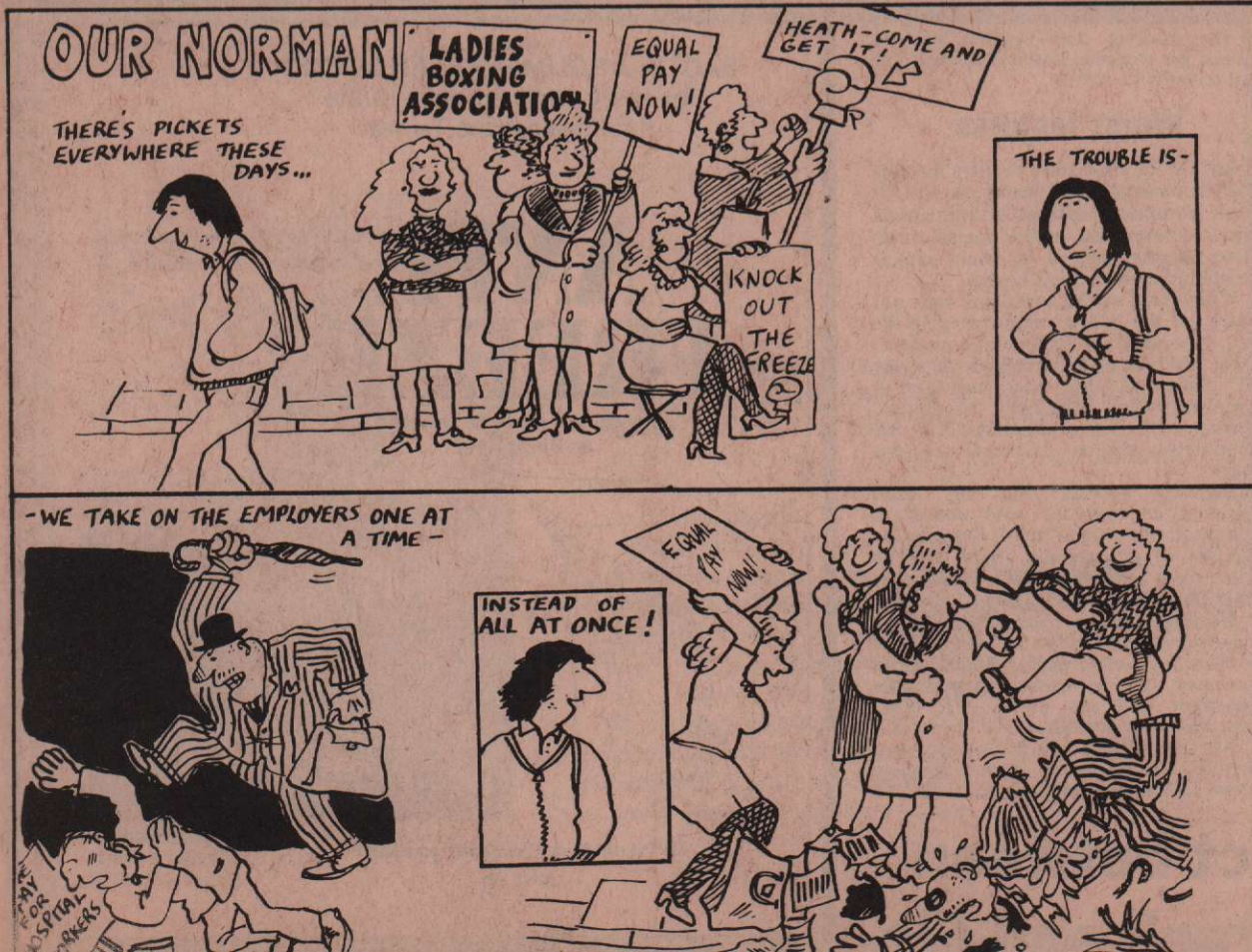
Brown tells the whole grisly story in detail, backed up with the tragic words of the Indians themselves as they were confronted by the treachery of the men they had taken to be their friends. Brown notes that among many tribes, scalping of their enemies was unknown until it was introduced by the Europeans. So does one of the favourite proofs of Indian savagery prove unfounded.

## IRONIC

He shows too how whole Indian communities were decimated, the survivors rounded up and forced to march for hundreds of miles to new, infertile lands, where they were shot if they attempted to leave.

The book is a worthy one and deserves its success, but it is ironic that at the very time when right-thinking Americans are applauding the sentiments expressed in the book and collectively expressing their guilt about the past, the Indian problem should rise up again. For it is precisely at Wounded Knee that several hundred Indians have barricaded themselves to draw attention to their grievances and to demand improvements in their condition.

The reactions of American government officials show that perhaps not so much has changed since 1890. In any event, what happens at Wounded Knee in 1973 will prove an acid test of just how much has been learned from the





# No, it won't make the Tory bastards sit up

A COUPLE of weeks ago I told you all that the government wanted to freeze broadcasting until 1981. Now they've published a White Paper saying that BBC and IBA Charters are being 'unreservedly extended until 1981.'

To quote The Times: 'The government considers that no significant technical developments affecting the structure of radio and television will take place before the 1980s. The government feels it would be more sensible to take any necessary decisions then and to avoid meanwhile diverting to any prolonged inquiry the attentions of those engaged in broadcasting.'

In other words the government has ignored the recommendations of its own select committee, which suggested that a full inquiry was needed, proposed that the



IBA should sponsor experimental network programmes, and also that the system of fixed IBA contracts needed looking into.

Also, as I said a couple of weeks back, no one's going to get their hands on any local cable TV.

I'VE ALSO had a letter from a BBC producer about what I said the week

previously about writing in and letting them know what you think about their programmes. It seems they do take your letters to heart.

'Our big bosses get into flaps about all the right-wing letters and phone calls,' he writes. 'These are tabulated monthly and circularised as "public opinion". They're then discussed at Review Boards.'

## Scratch

So do start writing. It's not much, but it's a step in the right direction.

I'VE BEEN wondering whether we can't get something going in another sense, too.

Mary Whitehouse has her Listeners and Viewers Association. Eavesdroppers and Peepers, I've heard it called.

I don't think we want another of those

National Committees. I remember serving on one of those once. Richard Hoggart got it going. It was called Scratch or something like that and it held a lot of meetings and did a lot of talking.

But what we might do is canalise a lot of the talk which takes place about TV in the meal breaks and in the pubs anyway. If any of you find yourselves with a bunch of mates chatting about the way the hospital workers are being given the rough edge of the news why not sit down at the end of it all and write in a letter of complaint?

You might even get the habit, every Wednesday dinner time, say, of having a natter about the week's TV and every Wednesday evening one of you write down what you've all decided and post it off.

If we're ever going to get television in which we all take part we've got to get ourselves into the habit of being able to

criticise it. The way you do that is simply by talking about it, taking it apart with each other.

People are always saying that television is a 'passive' medium. What they usually mean by that is that you lot sit there gaping at it with your mouths open.

What doesn't occur to them is that they're sitting there behind the cameras gaping at you with their mouths open to just about the same extent.

The fact is that 'they' don't know who you are any more than you know who 'they' are. And this is what leads to what I call 'passive' television.

## Deprived

AND BY THAT I mean programmes like the Tony Garnett production *Hard Labour* for example.

I said I wasn't going to criticise individual programmes and I'm not. But *Hard Labour*, like so many 'working class' telly plays, is an example of the mistaken notion that if you depict deprived people living bored, sad lives you've projected some kind of active message to the viewing millions. Far from doing anything of the sort you've actually reinforced the passivity with which we all, very naturally, tend to dismiss what we don't want to know about. Merely by watching programmes like this we're given a false sense of participation.

'Bloody disgusting,' we say. 'That'll make the Tory bastards sit up.' Well, you can take it from me, it won't. The fact is that television as a medium for stirring up controversy makes Hyde Park Corner look like the Red Terror.

If it didn't, the government would start Commissions of Inquiry in less time than it takes to scream 'Commercial break.'

WHAT I'm saying is that we need a new kind of television altogether.

There are signs, here and there, that some of the people working in the medium realise this too. Some of them are actually beginning to realise that the 'formats' and the 'techniques' which are supposed to be an integral part of the knowledge you have to have at your fingertips to put on TV are just so much bull of the kind that all experts everywhere use to keep the layman where they want him. On the outside.

## Monopoly

It's time we started breaking that down. It's time we started breaking down the passivity, the self-satisfaction which informs almost everyone working in the medium.

And what I'm suggesting is that you form small informal groups, at work, or in the pubs or meeting in your homes to start laying the foundations for an attack on the biggest monopoly society has ever known—the monopoly on information, on conditioning, on value-forming which is represented by TV.

The object of each of these groups should be, firstly, to develop the habit of criticising programmes, secondly to communicate that criticism to the programme makers, and, lastly, to put forward demands that you yourselves should be allowed to produce and present items on television with the technical facilities of the broadcasting organisations.

Please write and tell me what you think about this idea. Anyone who wants help will get it from me, as far as I'm able, anyway.

Cheers!

Tom Clarke

# The tango you won't see in Come Dancing contests

DAVID WILD  
REVIEWS  
LAST TANGO  
IN PARIS



*The Tango: Paul and Jeanne disrupt a 'Come Dancing' competition and are told: 'There's no place for love here, if you want love, go to the cinema.'*

ONE THING is certain about *Last Tango in Paris* (Prince Charles Cinema, Leicester Square). Whatever I or any other reviewer may say about the film, most people are going to see it anyway, if they get the chance—such has been the aura of publicity that has surrounded this particular production.

Another certainty is that a lot of self-appointed guardians of public taste are going to be telling you what you should think about it.

There's no doubt that the film industry is desperate to get audiences back into the cinema, and is therefore prepared to push into more controversial territory. Quite a few films recently have illustrated the contradiction between the official capitalist and protestant morality and the desire to make a profit.

Also, I'm sure certain sections of the puritan left will simply say that the film illustrates the state of depravity of capitalist society in decline, and leave it at that.

I think Bernardo Bertolucci, with Marlon Brando as his star, has exploited this situation to produce a complex and disturbing reflection of an area that is still regarded as taboo.

## FASCIST

First of all, I think the film needs to be seen in the context of Bertolucci's work. His four previous films all dealt with directly political themes, from the first, *Before the Revolution*, to the recent *The Conformist*, which was set in Mussolini's Italy. At one level this was simply an attempt to trace the emergence of a fascist character structure in the central character, and owed more than a little to the ideas of Wilhelm Reich. Any radical film or play, however, presents a picture of complexity and contradiction, rather than handing out neatly digested conclusions, and Bertolucci's films do this.

With *Last Tango in Paris* another level is added by the presence of Marlon Brando, who dominates throughout and obviously had a great deal to do with the shaping of the film. Sometimes it seems like a personal statement of Brando's and it seems impossible to disentangle



*The morning after the night before for Brando*

reality from fantasy.

What becomes extremely disconcerting—which can only be good for an audience that are to be more than passive spectators—is the sensation that the film is spying on two people. This is accentuated by the way some of the shots are set up in the bare apartment where Paul (Brando) and Jeanne (Maria Schneider) act out their fantasies. It's as if we were looking through a hole in the floorboards.

Now some people may find such voyeurism titillating—all I can say is

that if you can get excited watching an image of two people pretending to be two people who have never existed, having imaginary sex, you've got problems. (There's a sequence in Godard's *Les Carabiniers* where the hero keeps trying to see into the bath where the girl has been filmed, until he finally tears the screen to reveal the real, material, brick wall behind the image.)

This discomfort is juxtaposed with a sort of self-deprecating humour that comes out in Brando's lines, and a feeling of honesty and directness that gives the dialogue its bite.

## EMOTION

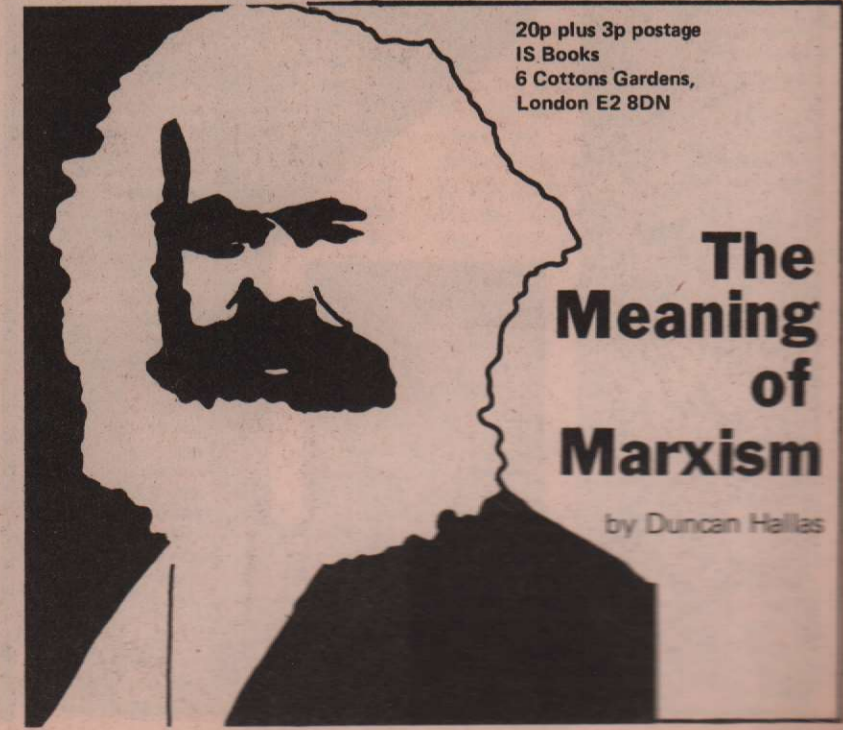
On one level, you could say it's about age and ageing—the girl, Jeanne, is half Paul's age—about the fantasy of middle age starting afresh and coinciding with the girl's fantasy of the experienced super stud, the heavy, coarse, almost animal masculinity that Brando conveyed so well in *The Nightcomers*, and how that turns into disgust.

Or it's about the juxtaposition of spontaneity and emotion with 'reason' and 'normality'—brilliantly conveyed in the last tango sequence of the title, where Paul and Jeanne disrupt the French equivalent of *Come Dancing*. The president of the tango jury, desperately trying to get them off the floor, says: 'This is a competition. There's no place for love here. If you want love, go to the cinema.'

Or as the synopsis says, about the impossibility of constructing a rapport based on emotional and physical response, beyond social

conventions.

Add to that a wealth of detail observation, Jeanne's mother lovingly holding the dead colonel's boots, their dog that he had trained to find Arabs by their smell and never bark at anyone well-dressed, Bertolucci's usual superb colour photography, and music by Oliver Nelson and Gato Berberi (of Liberation Music Orchestra fame) and you have a rich and many-dimensional film on any level.





# 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'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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 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.

# THE UNIONS

## GORMLEY SPOTS HAVE NOT CHANGED

by Bill Message

JOE GORMLEY, president of the National Union of Mineworkers, is a man who can always be relied upon to surprise people.

Usually this surprise takes the form of astonishment that such a militant membership, as the rank and file of the NUM proved to be last year, can be led by such a right-wing president.

So militants received a totally different type of surprise the other week when Gormley appeared to be advocating a general strike to defeat the government wage freeze and when he led a successful revolt against the retreat by the TUC General Council.

Some voices can now be heard asking whether Joe Gormley has changed, whether he has thrown off his old shabby cloak of subservience to the National Coal Board and unswerving loyalty to the Labour Party executive to don the dazzling robes of SuperJoe, saviour of the working class and fearless fighter of the Tory villains.

### WAGE CUTS

Unfortunately this is not the case. The leopard has not changed his spots, he is simply reflecting pressures that are upon him.

Gormley was elected president for life a couple of years ago when he defeated Michael MacGahey, president of the Scottish area of the NUM and prominent Communist Party member. Since then no voice on the executive has been louder than Gormley's in advocating 'co-operation' with the NCB and the ruthless pursuit of the productivity bargaining which led to actual wage cuts, and the loss of thousands of jobs between 1965 and 1970.

Between 1965-9 pits were being closed at the rate of one a week. In 1959 the number of men employed in coal mining was 700,000. By 1970 this had plummeted to just 287,200, with most redundancies between 1965-1970.

Joe Gormley shares NCB chairman Derek Ezra's worship of the great god productivity. Only last month Gormley said: 'As a former faceworker I know that the machines and equipment on faces are capable of higher productivity. All we have to do is make sure that everything else at the pit is working efficiently. If they are, there's scope for continuing productivity increases.'

### CONFUSION

'It's 20 years since tha' worked at face, Joe,' was the contemptuous comment of one Yorkshire miner.

Coal News, the monthly paper published by the NCB to convince miners that they and the management are getting along splendidly together, thrives on such quotations from Joe Gormley. This month's issue contains almost identical statements from him and Derek Ezra. If the editors of the paper had not told their readers who said which, miners would be forgiven a certain amount of confusion.

'Since last year's strike both sides of the industry have worked together more effectively than ever before, and it would be tragic to jeopardise the results of such co-operation'—Derek Ezra.

'We don't want to destroy the closer relations that have been built up within the industry'—Joe Gormley.



GORMLEY: suffering from split personality?

This was said by Gormley on 15 February, the same day that he issued his famous appeal to the trade union movement for united action to defeat the Tory government.

At the NUM conference in Morecambe last July, Gormley issued several warnings to the delegates about the dangers of militancy, coupled with the assertion that the only place to defeat the Tories was on the floor of the House of Commons.

Yet only a few weeks ago Gormley said: 'If the trade union movement wants it, they can cause a general election in the next few months. If that's what they want, let's do it. We shall not do it by being namby-pamby. Government policy can only be changed by the revolt of united trade union action. That calls for all unions to be involved in a general stoppage and for the government to call a general election.'

Was this the same Gormley? Has he changed, or is he suffering from an acute case of split-personality?

At last year's conference he felt safe in putting forward such a right-wing line. The militants had been subdued after the strike and the right wing reigned unchallenged on the national executive committee.

In February the situation was different. The executive had postponed action on this year's claim for so long that the rank and file were getting very impatient. Gormley was fast running short of excuses for further delays, and so he hit upon the perfect solution. If he were to advocate the line that the miners could not win on their own, but that the fight had to be led and co-ordinated by the TUC, he hoped to kill two birds with one stone.

Firstly he hoped to cut the ground from under the feet of the traditional left in the union, which had failed to mobilise

among the rank and file for a fight, and secondly he hoped to scare the faint-hearted by talk of a fight by the miners alone being 'suicidal'.

He knew that the policy of the right-wing General Council of the TUC was completely against any such fight, and he was hoping that he could come away from the Special Trades Union Congress having proved that there was no support for a fight.

Gormley won the vote against the General Council's 'do nothing' policy, but the shock proved too much for him. When the various resolutions from the different unions were drawn together, Gormley promptly withdrew the NUM resolution supporting a general strike against the Tories and calling on affiliated unions to test their members' feelings for such a move.

### SAFEGUARD

Joe Gormley is like so many other union leaders who cannot be held accountable to their members. Their prime concern is in continuing 'good relations' with the employers, but when there is real unrest among their members they are forced to make verbal concessions in order to head off militancy and safeguard their own positions.

There is of course a large measure of truth in what Gormley says about the necessity of a general offensive against the Tory laws. What he does not add though, is that it is his responsibility to lead one of the most powerful unions in this country into action which can then be spread and supported by other trade unionists who are also engaged in a fight against the freeze to win their claims.

### THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

**SCOTLAND**  
Aberdeen  
Cumbernauld  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Dunfermline/  
Cowdenbeath  
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Greenock  
Stirling

**NORTH EAST**  
Bishop Auckland  
Durham  
Hartlepool  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
South Shields  
Spennymoor  
Sunderland  
Teesside E  
Teesside W

**NORTH**  
Barnsley  
Bradford  
Dewsbury  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Pontefract/  
Knottingley  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

**EAST**  
Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Chelmsford  
Colchester  
Harlow  
Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

### NORTH WEST

Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Burnley  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Preston  
Rochdale  
Salford  
St Helens  
Stoke  
Stockport  
Trafford  
Wigan  
Wrexham

### WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Llanelli  
Mid-Devon  
Neath  
Plymouth  
Swansea  
Swansea Valley

### GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon  
Ealing  
East London  
Enfield  
Fulham and Hammersmith  
Hackney and Islington  
Harlesden  
Harrow  
Hemel Hempstead  
High Wycombe  
Hornsey  
Houslow  
Ilford  
Kilburn  
Kingston  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
North Herts  
Paddington  
Reading  
St Albans  
Slough  
Tottenham  
Walthamstow  
Wandsworth  
Watford  
Woolwich

### MIDLANDS

Birmingham NE  
Birmingham S  
Coventry  
Derby  
Dudley  
Leamington and Warwick  
Leicester  
Loughborough  
Mid-Derbyshire  
Milton Keynes  
Northampton  
Nottingham  
Oxford  
Rugby  
Warley  
Wolverhampton

### SOUTH

Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Eastbourne  
Guildford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton

## Challenge to right in engineers' poll

KEY ELECTIONS in the engineering union's Division 16—which includes Birmingham and the Black country—could overthrow the right wing that has dominated the division for years.

The right wing's strength has been based upon a well-oiled electoral machine and is backed by groups of about 30 members in Birmingham—misnamed the Labour Group—who published a scurrilous magazine called Datum Line. The group acts like a deadweight against any militant moves in the area. The sell-out of the Sudbury CAV workers by the Birmingham Lucas stewards meeting just before Christmas, for example, was actively organised by the right wing and the officials.

Now two left-wingers are standing for positions in the division. Fred Griffiths, Wolverhampton district secretary, is standing for the vacant post of divisional organiser against two right-wingers, Terry Duffy and Ted Williams, while the Birmingham West district secretaryship is being contested by Brian Chambers, a Communist Party member.

Members of the International Socialists in the engineering union in the area consider the elections important, but also recognise that winning elections is not enough in itself and that the only way to control officials once they are elected is to create a militant socialist organisation at the rank and file level.

**Rosa Luxemburg**

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# Don't give the unions

# this excuse

# LETTERS

SOCIALIST WORKER has been correctly pointing out the powers that the Tories have taken under the freeze to make strikes illegal. This is an obvious attack on our rights.

But we must be careful not to go along with those who are saying 'strikes are illegal under the freeze'. In fact to say so is to provide a much-needed excuse to the right wing in the unions to knuckle under.

The Tories' powers are intended to intimidate, in the same way as the extreme powers they have under the Industrial Relations Act to imprison people for 'incitement' to strike.

That the Tories are taking these powers is a measure of the strength of the working class. They will only use them on trade unions in a much weaker and divided state than they are now.

Socialist Worker must always emphasise that a strong political offensive is the best form of defence against the Tories. They intend to weaken trade unionism by getting the leadership to police the members.

United action in support of workers fighting the freeze will smash through this employers' law as surely as the Pentonville strikes did.-D BEECHAM, London NW10.

## Men of too much faith

On Saturday 10 March the fascist section of our society were on the streets in Huddersfield while I was in a top-class hotel in Scarborough, at a trade union school.

My fellow comrades were on the streets in retaliation to the fascists, and how I envied them. My decision to go to Scarborough was not an easy one, but as a fellow worker put it, 'There'll be many Huddersfields, but for a person with your record, not many Scarboroughs.' So I went.

The school was centred around the forthcoming AUEW amalgamation and multi-national companies. The pupils were divided into three groups to discuss certain aspects and then they re-united to discuss the three groups' findings.

The groups had leaders, pre-appointed by the Divisional Organiser, who chaired the discussion. In my group, the leader, a right-winger, came up with an amazing proposal 'to buy time on TV to express the union point of view to the masses, so as to counteract the ultra-right wing propaganda that the mass media throw at the public.'

The second group came up with a remarkable solution: 'A government sympathetic to the trade union movement could control the multi-national companies.'

The third group, as far as I could make out, never came up with a solution (it must have been the best group), but one of the members gave his own view: 'An international blacking of their goods, as in the case of Distillers Co, would bring the multi-national companies down.'

One can see the faith our brothers have in governments, TV companies and union leadership (as in Fine Tubes). The cost of sending 45 pupils to Scarborough for a weekend must have cost around £225 and the time spent on education was five hours.

I read Socialist Worker in four hours, received more education, and it only cost 5p.-GRAHAM SPINK, Hunslet, Yorks.

## CAST goes on

FOR the record there is still a group called CAST. The Cartoon Klowns (17 March) are an independent acting group started by two old members of CAST who left last year, who as Jacky Garkin correctly stated, are carrying on with the old CAST play Mr Oligarchy's Circus.

We hasten to add that there is no rivalry to our knowledge between the two groups. CAST is now in the process of completing its first film 'Planet of The Mugs' and a new play 'Come in Hilda'.-CAST, 11c Cabbell St, London NW1.

**BARLOW  
FOLLOWS,  
NOT LEADS,  
BUILDING  
WORKERS**

## Freedom from racism

A MAJOR SLOGAN contained in The Communist Manifesto is 'workers of all countries unite'. This is not just an empty phrase, but is the very essence of internationalism.

We stand by it. The confusion of Mervyn Hughes (17 March) is that somehow when it comes to the struggle for socialism, Britain is isolated from the rest of the world.

We fight against all immigration control because by its very nature it fosters racism and by doing so weakens working class solidarity. Internationalism is relegated to an empty phrase.

The disorientation and insecurity, by which Mervyn Hughes attempts to justify immigration control, is a problem all workers face while struggling to 'make ends meet' in capitalist society. Our modern nation state, being inherently racist, intensifies these problems if the worker happens to be black.

I WAS surprised to read the article 'Barlow's Task Force on the sites' in Socialist Worker (10 March).

Surprised because anyone reading the article who was not acquainted with the struggle of Birmingham building workers would have gathered that the leadership and inspiration of that struggle had come from Ken Barlow. This is far from the truth. The building workers' movement in Birmingham has been built mainly by the magnificent efforts of the rank and file militants there.

While we are now in a position where full-time officials in our region are giving support to militant policies, it has to be explained that this has come about due to pressure exerted

by the rank and file. The article in no way explained this; instead allowing Barlow to tell us how he decided to use the militants to build the union.

Further, the preamble to the article told how Barlow had 'harnessed the power of the militants'. Surely we do not praise anyone on these grounds? We do not wish to see the power of the militant rank and file 'harnessed' but wielded to smash the employers.

Also being printed as it was on the eve of the rank and file Building Workers Charter conference, it gave undue credibility to a man who has refused to give consistent public support to the Charter movement. For the second year running Barlow was asked by the Charter's editorial board to attend the conference and speak there and for the second year running he failed to attend.

Finally, we in the International Socialists have consistently argued that the trade union bureaucracy are vacillatory and are driven to adopt militant postures by mass pressure while at the same time being prepared to sell out to the employers. We therefore aim at building genuine rank and file organisations in all the trade unions.

I feel that giving cover to 'left-wing' bureaucrats such as Barlow and writing uncritical profiles of people with whom we have major differences does little to serve the building of such rank and file bodies. After all, we criticised the Morning Star for doing the same with George Smith during the strike.

Can someone tell me what is the difference between what we have done with Barlow and what the Star did with Smith, notwithstanding Barlow's position to the left of Smith?-GERRY KELLY, Moseley, Birmingham 13.

For socialists to hedge on this issue is to turn our backs on the international working class and all oppressed peoples.

On his second point about the environment, when two-thirds of the world's population is living far below a mere subsistence level, side by side with fantastic wealth and technology, then it is a major task, not only to destroy the class that creates this situation, but to rid the world of poverty.

This quite simply means utilising the world's resources for need instead of profit, to place men over nature. Capitalism destroys. A society based on human solidarity will have a totally different concept of the earth's beauties and miseries.-ARTHUR MITCHELL, London E11.

## Keep off the election bandwagon

DAVE PEERS (10 March) seems sadly out of touch with reality when he advocates standing IS candidates in by-elections.

I think we are all aware that the working class knows what sort of Labour Party Harold Wilson represents. While what Dave Peers says about political crisis being usually contained within traditional channels is true, I do not think that it is time for IS to jump on the parliamentary bandwagon, just to keep up with a handful of Labour rebels, fascists campaigning on local racial tensions, and trendy Liberals in the parliamentary stakes.

While I am not against standing IS candidates for parliament in principle I feel that at the present time it is a tactic that we can do without. The spectre of the Communist Party's lost deposits in elections, while partly being due to their reformist stance, should serve as a warning to revolutionaries wishing to participate in such elections.

To my mind the impression given by IS members to the working class, while engaged in genuine struggles with employers, landlords etc, is the one which will gain them most support and popularity for their ideas.

I would ask your readers one question: a pensioner from Aspull sent 25p to the IS printshop fund.

Do you think it right that money collected in future from people of such a low income level should be used as a lost deposit for an IS candidate in a parliamentary election?—DAVE SOUTHERN, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

## Hospitals' plight

THE International Socialists are to be congratulated on bringing out a 'Special' on the hospital workers' fight.

I am however disappointed that the national press propaganda was not exposed. We have seen in the past few days the disgusting spectacle of newspapers accusing the hospital workers of endangering lives.

It is vitally necessary that we state WHO is responsible for endangering lives. NOT hospital workers driven in desperation to strike action by low pay, but the government that refuses them their more than just demands.

THEY are the ones responsible for the criminal state of the health service, not the low-paid workers.—MIKE McGRATH, London N16.

## The Telegraph's incitement to riot

THE 'REVOLTING CANT' of the Daily Telegraph, which preaches sanctimoniously about violence the moment a group of pickets gather at a factory gate, was in evidence more than ever last week as its vicious campaign against the train drivers reached its peak.

The Telegraph presented the army of commuters who buy it every day with barely disguised incitement to terrorise railway workers and run riot on trains and stations. There can be no other interpretation of the comprehensive coverage it gave on its front page during the ASLEF work-to-rule to a railway riot by commuters in Tokyo.

It was an item that would normally be given little more than a paragraph on the foreign news page. Japanese travellers went on the rampage when their trains failed to show up and attacked railway staff and wrecked a station.

In loving detail over about half-a-column the Telegraph described the Tokyo incident. The story was neatly run on to the lead, which was the usually one-sided and coloured coverage of the 'chaos and misery' caused to the suburbanites by the dispute. The main headlines

reminded viewers pointedly: 'That is Tokyo, I hasten to add—not London.'

Again we must remind ourselves, that in isolation the Tokyo incident would not—even on a slow news day, which this was not—have normally been considered for inclusion in a national BBC news bulletin at prime television time.

**Cowardly**

Naturally, the Telegraph and the BBC had their rewards. Attacks on London railway porters and ticket collectors began to occur—with at least one tragic result. The Mirror reported later in the week on its front page the death of one porter who suffered a heart attack two days after a mob of enraged passengers turned on him.

These mindless and cowardly attacks on workers who were not involved in the dispute—indeed, whose union has done its best to end it—were not, of course, condemned by the anti-violent Daily Telegraph. After all, it would not be right to remind the bowler-and-brolly bully-boys what disgusting thugs they are—particularly when you put them up to it in the first

**Mongoose**

The Telegraph was not alone in this disgusting news juggling operation. The BBC could not resist the temptation either, and viewers of the main television news bulletin were treated to an expensive and extensive newsreel coverage of the Tokyo riot.

And at the end of the bulletin newscaster Robert Dougal, with the smile of a well-fed mongoose,

had to present two sets of consolidated accounts. Thus last year the consolidated net profits for the merged company to buy were £70.27 million for the French and only £72.7 million for the British.

This arises because of a different treatment of certain items. French directors, for instance, are usually entitled to a proportion of the dividend attributable to share holders on acquisition before the end of the year. No one else gets this kind of bonus as to what directors will diversify into, on interest-bearing assets, or what means an acquisition will be made. But would we not be off?

Finally, the document gives details of the company's financial operations which are accounted for in the balance sheet.

were TWO BLANK RAIL DAYS NEXT WEEK — DISRUPTION TACTICS TO CONTINUE.

And just to ram the Tokyo message home to the more slow-thinking readers, the foreign story was headed GO-SLOW IS A RIOT IN TOKYO.

place. It would be wrong to assume naively that the concentration of the Telegraph and the BBC on the Tokyo riot was a coincidence, which was the view expressed by one of my more innocent journalist colleagues.

Rail disputes, particularly those that hit London more severely than elsewhere, strike at the middle-class core of those who are the closest allies of our ruling clique. In many ways the coverage of 'commuter misery' that the papers have devoted to the dispute is out of proportion, for the rest of the country has not been anywhere near so inconvenienced by it.

What the bastions of the media, such as the Daily Telegraph and the BBC, have to do is to convince suburbia and its lumpen middle-class ranks that the influential organs of opinion are on their side.

And if they can suggest a little retaliatory mass action themselves, like beating up harmless porters, they can give the infuriated commuters added encouragement to stick it out and fight the union.

**Ron Knowles**



# POLICE ATTACK WORKERS

## Court bid to break power of pickets

by Mike Flood Page  
**'IT'S NOT just me or the other lads here, it's not even just the 300,000 building workers who came out on strike last summer, it's the whole working-class movement that's on trial here today.'**

'That's why these lads are not afraid. We're not frightened about being put away for five years. We wouldn't be inside for five weeks.'

The words are those of John Carpenter, Transport and General Workers Union shop steward from Wrexham and one of the 24 building workers who appeared in Shrewsbury's Shirehall Court last Thursday to face a battery of criminal charges for picketing during the building workers' strike.

The action has been brought by the Director of Public Prosecutions, a government department acting as usual directly on behalf of the employers. The DPP has charged the 24 with offences ranging from intimidation and assault to causing an affray, demanding money with menaces and causing damage to property. Six of the 24 are also accused of 'conspiracy to compel people to abstain from their legal work.'

### 'Damage'

The 'crime' of the 24 building workers is that following a call from the local strike action committee in Shrewsbury during the national strike last year, they brought in a flying picket from Chester.

They picketed sites—for which they are charged with 'intimidation', 'causing damage to property' and 'causing an affray'. And they held



Building workers from the World's End site in Chelsea, London, marching in Shrewsbury last week.

collections for the strike funds—for which they are charged with 'demanding money with menaces'.

Was it a particularly violent picket? The police did not think so at the time. Up to 100 policemen followed the picket round Telford and Shrewsbury that day. When they had finished the chief constable came over to shake their hands and congratulate them on the peaceful manner in which they had conducted themselves.

The trouble did not begin until six weeks later. By then the building employers' federation was making a lot of noise about the flying pickets and compiling its dossier on trade union 'violence' during the strike.

### Arrested

Throughout October and November, North Wales and Chester police carried out 800 'interviews'. Men were dragged from their homes and taken to police stations for 'questioning'.

Nothing further happened until early this year. On 14 February, the first six men were arrested and taken to Telford police station in 'personnel carriers'. They were held overnight and then charged. By the time they left the court the next morning a picket of more than 400 building workers had arrived.

In the weeks that followed 18 more were arrested.

The Union of Construction and Allied Trades, the main building workers' union, refused the men backing until just one week before the trial—when it was discovered that the conspiracy charges implicated the union. This refusal was despite the fact that all 24 men were follow-

ing an official call from the union when on the picket. The day before the flying picket, UCATT district organiser Albert Prest had demanded that the strike be intensified.

In the run up to the trial Prest changed his line—calling the men 'a bunch of hooligans'.

On Friday 9 March, just six days before the trial, Eric Hughes, UCATT north west regional secretary called the six on conspiracy charges to a meeting in a pub in Flint. There he promised support on condition that the men sign over all right to legal representation and conduct of the defence case to the union's advisers.

The men refused, suspecting that the union might well try to get itself off the hook by doing a deal with the prosecution. In the event another sympathetic lawyer has stepped in to defend the 24.

On arrest the first thing the men were told was 'You must realise that this is not a political trial.' They know otherwise.

For the building employers the law is a tool. It protects their property and reinforces their power. When it does not, it can simply be flouted, as with the Factories Act and the construction safety regulations.

The construction bosses have decided to put the boot into trade unionism in the industry and are using every means at their disposal.

Shrewsbury on the day of the trial looked like a cross between a ghost town and a police state. 800 police drafted in from six counties lined the mile-long route to the court in the Shirehall from the park where solidarity pickets left their coaches. Despite repeated friskings and

roadblocks, several hundred trade unionists joined the demonstration and marched through the town.

Building workers from Birmingham, Telford, North Wales, Manchester, London and Stafford were there. Liverpool dockers came—the docks had shut for the day in solidarity.

After the lightning ten-minute hearing, speakers outside the court laid it on the line that the law was not neutral. It was being used to shore up the power of the employing class and to attack rights won by workers in struggle.

The fight to free the 24 is a fight for trade unionism and the right to strike and picket. It is a fight that must be won. The men again appear in court for committal proceedings on 25 April. The Building Workers Charter has called for a national stoppage in solidarity.

## Constable's evidence collapses

**BIRMINGHAM:**—The trial of the Whitehall Road 12—victims of a savage police raid on a West Indian Boxing Night party last December—is now the case of the Whitehall Road 11.

The trial of the 12 West Indian youths, who are charged with causing an affray, possessing offensive weapons and assaulting police officers, began in Birmingham Crown Court on Thursday 8 March. Eight barristers, four of them black, are acting for the defence. They provide a battery of cross-examination which has got the prosecution witnesses—almost all of them police officers—visibly worried.

Already this has led to one acquittal. Last Tuesday Police Constable Baines gave evidence on his reasons for arresting one 16-year-old youth. Baines said he had made the arrest because he had seen the boy throwing a stone at a police officer.

At the request of defence counsel, Constable Baines read out the charge sheet, only to discover that it made no reference whatsoever to the youth throwing a stone at a policeman. At this, the constable was visibly disconcerted. He asked to be allowed to sit down and then collapsed into the chair to hold his head between his knees.

From the public gallery, which was filled with relatives, friends and supporters of the accused, it looked as if Constable Baines had either fainted or was crying. Mr Justice Crichton then had no option but to direct the jury to find the 16-year-old not guilty. He walked out of the court a free man.

Every day of the trial, sympathisers have picketed the court protesting against police brutality in Handsworth. The picket has carried on in the face of frequent police harassment.

## Councillors stand by as tenants beaten up

by Peter Clark

KIRKBY Labour Party has just given £50 to the Clay Cross councillors who are refusing to implement the Housing Finance Act—but on their home ground, its members on Kirkby Council behave very differently.

There are 2200 tenants on the town's largest housing estate, Tower Hill. 1000 are still on total rent strike against any rent increases. Hundreds of others are only paying a small part of the total rent. The Labour-controlled council is determined to break their resistance.

The council decided last Monday to evict selected tenants taking part in the rent strike. They had police protection at the council office last Monday. And they stood aside and let the police viciously beat up tenants who were protesting against the council's decision.

Two hundred tenants were outside the meeting as the councillors arrived. All councillors refused to speak to them. The tenants decided to go in. 'It was us they were discussing, so we thought we ought to be there,' said one woman. 'Our money built the place,' she added.

About 12 got in by following a councillor. Immediately, a number of large gentlemen in raincoats who claimed they were housing officers moved towards them. Angela Gibson, obviously pregnant, was quickly manhandled towards the door.

### Kicked

When the others asked to speak to the meeting, uniformed police moved in.

Tony Boyle, secretary of the Tower Hill Rent Action Group and a member of the International Socialists, was grabbed and dragged head first down four flights of stairs. Bruce Scott, a building worker and member of the transport workers' union, was knocked to the ground and held while police jumped on his ankle and kicked the side of his face.

Andy McGowan was held by the throat by one policeman while another kicked him in the groin. Then he too was dragged down the stairs. One woman was dragged down by the hair. 'This isn't a woman, this is an animal,' said one officer. He was left holding hair he had pulled out of her head.

Billy Fleetwood was grabbed upstairs. He was sitting on a bench outside the

meeting room at the time. His shoe came off and a policeman threw it down the stairs. Billy was thrown after it.

As he lay at the bottom, Police Constable 806 took out his truncheon and started beating him. Two other officers of the law joined in. Between them they caused severe bruising to his left side, his back and his right leg.

Outside, the rest of the tenants saw what was happening to Billy. Police on the door drew their truncheons to protect their colleagues. Billy Fleetwood is an epileptic. He was left to face the attentions of the police thugs on his own until Labour councillor Jim Wiley appeared in the foyer.

Without hesitation Councillor Wiley made it absolutely clear where he stood. He stepped over Billy while police continued to beat him and found a back way out of the building.

Police officers ensured the beatings were highly selective. One councillor had been grabbed. But a sergeant identified the man's standing in the community and the police went for tenant Ray Long instead. Ray Long had been trying to talk to the councillor.

Afterwards the Liverpool Post and Echo reporter approached the inspector in charge of the police. The reporter had seen everything that happened. He asked if it would be all right to say that there had been a brief scuffle. The inspector agreed. The following morning the report appeared:

'Several police officers grappled with about five members of the Tower Hill Rent Action Group. . . . Officers had to eject men down four flights of stairs after they refused to leave the second floor. Outside a crowd of 100 grappled with other policemen and eventually batons had to be drawn to keep them out. . . . A senior policeman said there had been no arrests and no injuries.'

Tower Hill's strength lies in organisation and the willingness of its people to fight. 'We can't be battered into accepting this,' said Tony Boyle.

Organisation against the evictions is already under way. Flying pickets of tenants supported by local building sites are at the ready. Several local factories have promised support. One Liverpool Corporation Works Department depot has stated that it will black Kirkby if there are any evictions.

# WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

### IS MEETINGS

**NEWCASTLE IS public meeting:** Women and Socialism. Speaker Kath Ennis, Sunday 25 March, 8pm. Bridge Hotel (next to High Level Bridge).

**WALTHAMSTOW IS**  
 Support printshop fund  
**FOLK NIGHT**  
 Saturday 31 March, 8pm  
 William IV, Leyton High Road, E10  
 (Near Bakers Arms)  
 Admission 30p  
 Come in your hundreds

**DARLINGTON IS DAY SCHOOL:** Sunday 25 March, am/pm, College of Education, Vane Terrace. Main speaker Colwyn Williamson. British capitalism since the war. The need for a revolutionary party.

**LONDON REGION IS lectures:** Fridays at 7.30-9.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (three minutes walk from Holborn tube). Friday 23 March: The nature of imperialism and the anti-imperialist struggle today. Speaker Steven Marks. Friday 30 March: The struggle for the British revolution. Speaker Jim Higgins.

**IS IRISH FORUM**  
**REPUBLICANISM**  
 Speaker George Johnson (Coventry IS)  
 The Plough, Museum Street  
 London WC1 (near Tottenham  
 Court Road tube)  
 Sunday 25 March, 7.30pm

**HORNSEY IS BRANCH**  
**SOCIAL**  
 for printshop fund  
 Friday 23 March, 8pm  
 Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove,  
 London N5  
 General Will Theatre Group  
 Frankie Armstrong, folk singer  
 Disco—food—late bar  
 Tickets 40p at the door

### OTHER MEETINGS

**RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL**  
**TEACHER meeting:** discussions on work in and effect of public sector alliances—various union rank and file speakers; our strategy in the union; strategy on our salary claim. Sunday 25 March, 7pm, Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road (just below Warren St tube), London WC1.

**NORTHERN IRELAND—The Way Forward.** Public meeting Monday 26 March, 7.45pm, St Pancras Library, 100 Euston Rd, London NW1. Organised by London Group of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

**SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**  
 Day Seminar: Health Care, Social Needs, and Educational Requirements for Children. Sunday 25 March, 10am-5pm. Assembly Hall, Unity House, Euston Road, London NW1.

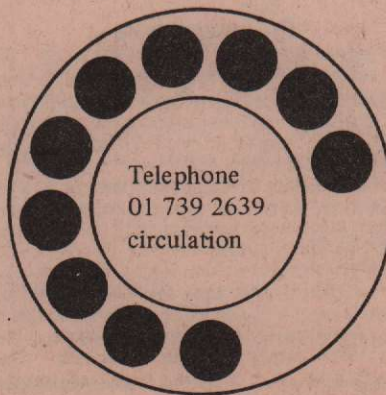
**LIFE IN A CHOCOLATE FACTORY**  
 York Shoestring Theatre's show  
 about Rowntrees  
 (remember the SW article last month?)  
 'Brisk, funny, deeply felt'—S.T.  
 Until Saturday 31 March, at 9.30pm  
 Bush Theatre, phone 743 5050

**JUMBLE SALE** at St Joseph's Hall, Highgate Hill, London N19, Saturday 31 March, 2.30pm. All kinds of jumble wanted—we will collect. Please telephone A. Coyle, 35 Despard Road, N19, at 272 5815 after 6pm. Proceeds in aid of the oppressed people of Northern Ireland.

### NOTICES

**INTERNATIONALE**  
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 33 James St, Blackburn  
 Opening Saturday 24 March  
 Marx—Lenin—Mao—Trotsky

**FEMALE COMRADE,** 23-year-old teacher, seeks own room in mixed flat or house in South West London. Ring 01-684 8339.





# WITCH-HUNTS CANNOT BEAT HEALTH FIGHT



Hospital workers picketing in Birmingham

HOSPITAL workers throughout Britain continue their wave of stoppages for their £4-a-week wage claim, despite fever-pitched witch-hunting on television and in the press and the refusal of the TUC to give concrete supporting action.

In MANCHESTER the majority of hospital workers are still absolutely solid. At the Royal Infirmary, St Mary's, the Eye Hospital and the Dental Hospital, workers are continuing their all-out stoppage despite great harassment of pickets by management and police.

Pickets' daily meetings have now grown to about 200. An all-Salford shop stewards' committee has begun meeting and is linking up with Manchester stewards.

Last Saturday 100 hospital strikers led a demonstration against the freeze through Manchester city centre. This was very well attended considering the lack of support from the union officials, who are still looking to selective strikes to win the claim.

by SW reporters

in his car.

After this incredible performance, he tried to disappear from the meeting via a nearby staircase, only to be dragged back by furious workers, mainly women. He was forced to hand out strike pay. After the meeting all COHSE members resigned and joined the TGWU.

## DEMONSTRATE

Last Wednesday the hospital workers' demonstration against the freeze at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital was supported by car workers from British Leyland and Lucas, students and technical workers. On Friday last week 30,000 Birmingham hospital workers supported a two-hour stoppage.

In PORTSMOUTH, 90 porters at St Mary's Hospital staged a three-day strike last week. This is on top of the full overtime ban by all hospital workers and an indefinite stoppage at the laundry serving most hospitals in the city. Many of the nurses are refusing to do any extra work at St Mary's to demonstrate their support

but TGWU members in the only other major hospital laundry in the area are working as normal despite NUPE requests for a go-slow.

Sid Parkinson, NUPE branch secretary at St Mary's, told Socialist Worker that one possible reason for the TGWU's pussyfooting in the area was that one of its officials was on the hospital management committee.

In WALES NUPE workers in the Morriston branch stayed out on a three-day strike until the end of last week. Pickets were well organised and morale was high. Attempts have been made to exchange pickets and speakers with striking civil servants, but this was defeated by a NUPE official who was afraid of any action not sanctioned by the union executive.

In LANCASTER local hospital workers' leader Bob Calder, speaking at an International Socialists' Fight the Wage Freeze meeting last week, called for much more positive support for the hospital workers from other unions.

● Socialist Worker apologises to all Manchester hospital workers for the inaccuracies in last week's report.

## Sparks call for day of action

BOOTLE:-Contracting electricians on the Inland Revenue site, who have been on strike for more than two years for better wages and conditions, are calling on all other contracting electricians to strike for the day on 30 March in support of their struggle and to protest against the Joint Industry Board agreement.

The men have returned to work three times to allow a settlement, but each time the JIB has refused to negotiate. The board is a kind of guild organisation whereby the employers and the right-wing leadership of the electricians' union lay down a pitiful national scale of wages and dole out iron discipline to any workers who try to better their position.

The agreement has only been modified thanks to the struggle of the Bootle men and workers on other big sites who have held out in long strikes. A lobby of the JIB headquarters in Sidcup, Kent, is planned for the same day as the strike. Electricians from all industries are invited and should assemble at 2.30pm at Sidcup Green.

## BEA computer staff strike

LONDON:-More than 100 computer staff at the West London Air Terminal struck against a threat to their jobs on Tuesday.

The merger being carried through between BEA and BOAC puts the future of BEA computer workers in doubt. Before Christmas, when industrial action was first discussed, the negotiator for their union, APEX, admitted that the union had in no way been consulted about the way the new management board had been set up. But management promises and propaganda succeeded in persuading the workers to back down.

Now it has been made clear that all work at the BEA computer installation will stop in 3½ years and the staff are again angry. They have leafleted other workers and have received a guarantee of support from the joint shop stewards' co-ordinating committee if anyone is victimised.

BEA and BOAC workers at the airport are also threatened by the re-organisation.



VIOLET TAYLOR: £13 a week

## The starvation wages in the hospitals

THREE YEARS ago, Violet Taylor lost her job as a cleaner at the Dunlop factory in Manchester in a 'large-scale redundancy'. Under a piece-work scheme, she had been able to rely on a take-home pay from Dunlop of between £18 and £19 a week.

After some weeks looking for work, Violet started at Manchester Royal Infirmary. She has been there three years. Her take-home pay is £13 a week.

She lives in a rented flat, alone except for her 14-year-old son. The rent is £5.50 a week. Electricity and gas cost £1.05 a week. She now has to spend at least £4 a week on basic food for herself and her son.

After fares, insurance, hospital and union dues she has precisely nothing left. Nothing for clothes. Nothing for anything else. On strike, she has to make do on £5 a week. The Social Security official whom she approached last week told her to go back to work.

But she won't. Because she knows that she is spending nearly £2 a week more on food than six months ago; and that if she accepts the £2 offered by the government, she and her son will starve.

## PICKET

At the meeting held after the march organised by the Manchester Trade Union Alliance against the Freeze, speaker after speaker emphasised the need to build a rank and file alliance of workers to smash the freeze.

In HUDDERSFIELD last week hospital workers launched a three-day strike without emergency cover. Despite the attentions of the press, only a handful of workers crossed the picket lines at the Royal Infirmary.

Rob Whittam, secretary of the NUPE branch at the hospital, told Socialist Worker: 'The management wanted us to keep some emergency services on. They have turned away some patients from the hospital. But as is always the case if you are prepared to pay for your treatment you can always be accommodated.'

After the return to work, Huddersfield Royal Infirmary workers are continuing their fight with a series of lightning strikes.

## ALL-OUT

In BIRMINGHAM strikers at Queen Elizabeth's and the General Hospitals were due to return to work last Thursday. Queen Elizabeth's were first to decide against a return—250 workers walked out without arranging emergency cover. Workers at the General then decided to follow Queen Elizabeth's lead and the all-out strike was kept going for a further week.

Hospital workers' militancy has received a consistent challenge from reactionary union leaders in the city. At a meeting last week at the East Birmingham hospital, a Confederation of Health Service Employees official criticised the members for coming out on a 14-day strike, claiming that he had only sanctioned a one-day stoppage. He said there would be no strike pay and kept the money locked

## JOURNALISTS OUT OVER PAY

EDINBURGH:-Journalists on the Thomson-owned Evening News came out on unofficial strike last Friday, and on Monday voted to stay out at least three more days despite instructions from National Union of Journalists general secretary Kenneth Morgan to return to work.

The 68 journalists are demanding that a pay deal negotiated in the shadow of the freeze be ended four months earlier than agreed in November. A spokesman for the

chapel told Socialist Worker that Thomson management had used the freeze to impose a differential between journalists in Edinburgh and their colleagues in Glasgow. The Edinburgh deal gave less money and lasted longer.

Since the freeze and the new agreement that management forced on the chapel, the Evening News has expanded in size enormously. Advertising space is in great demand and Thomson revenue and profits have shot up during the so-called Freeze. Journalists are, of course, expected to do the extra work on frozen wages.

The NUJ chapel has told the management that the agreement must be shortened by four months or the size of the paper must be limited. Management refuses to reduce the number of pages and says it will not shorten the agreement. Thomson executives have suggested that they are willing to negotiate over extra staffing. But the chapel says that this is not the issue.

The paper has continued to appear during the strike, though much reduced in size and quality. It is being produced by editorial executives.

## Mass picket boost for Fine Tubes strikers

PLYMOUTH:-The hopes of the 32 heroic strikers at Fine Tubes still holding out after two years and nine months of official strike for basic trade union rights were given a sharp boost last Monday by a mass picket attended by workers from all over the country.

Strong contingents from the London docks, London printworkers, Birmingham engineering factories, the Dunlop factory in Liverpool and many other factories gathered outside the Fine Tubes gates at 6.30 in the morning to hound the scabs. Most of them stayed away.

More than 600 workers then packed into the ABC Cinema, Plymouth, for a two-hour long rally.

John Blackley, a shop steward at Rolls-Royce, Patchway, Bristol, told the meeting that Rolls-Royce stewards had decided to 'put pressure on Derby', where the Rolls-Royce factories were still handling Fine Tubes material.

'We have decided to black all the engine work at Derby until they stop handling these products. As far as we're concerned, there will be no transportation of any work in or out of Derby,' he said, to loud cheers.

This remarkable decision plugs one of the vital holes through which the Fine Tubes management were operating.

Hermann Welch, the strike committee secretary, who chaired the meeting, said that yet another hole had been plugged that very morning with a mass picket across the gate of Low Moor Steels,

Bradford, one of the main suppliers of Fine Tubes material.

The meeting, which raised more than £1000 for the strikers, was notable for the hostility shown towards Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, the leaders of the two unions involved in the strike. Ron Nethercott, south west district secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, and Alderman Ron King, Plymouth district secretary of the engineering union (AUEW) were heckled and booed as they spoke of their union's determination to win the strike for the 32.

## Energy

Paul Foot, of the International Socialists, was the third platform speaker. He quoted from a book in which Hugh Scanlon had written about the smashing of an anti-union employer at Roberts Arundel in Stockport, in 1967 and 1968.

'If Hugh Scanlon had brought to Fine Tubes one twentieth of the energy which he deployed in his union to smash Roberts Arundel, these men and women would have been back at work with a strong union organisation long ago.'

Foot also criticised Jack Jones' comment in a television programme about Fine Tubes that 'a union is like a chain: it is as strong as its weakest link.'

'That is the language,' said Foot, 'of the Duke of Plazatoro, who led his regiment from behind. The regiment was smashed. And any union leader who pitches his aspirations at the level of his weakest member will allow his union to be smashed also.'



I would like more information about the International Socialists

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# MINERS TO Socialist Worker

## JOIN FREEZE BATTLE?

A QUARTER of a million miners could soon be adding their muscle to the struggle against phase two of the wage freeze.

They will vote in a union ballot over the question of industrial action early next week and in several major coalfields delegates have called upon the members for a resounding 'yes' vote.

Delegates in traditionally militant areas of Yorkshire, South Wales and Scotland have been joined in the call for strike action by areas that are usually much more conservative, such as Lancashire.

But there is still the danger that the union's national executive will do its utmost to avoid a conflict with the government. Last Friday it rejected a Coal Board offer of £2.29 in reply to

by S W reporter

the union's demand for £5.50 to £7. But it did so only because the board withdrew the extra week's holiday that had been promised.

The union executive has also rejected calls from the left for a special conference that would have tied it down to industrial action for the full claim.

The question the union has put to ballot merely asks members to give 'the national executive authority to call a national strike or other action as necessary to support our efforts to obtain a satisfactory response to our claim.' This form of words leaves the executive free to avoid all-out strike action or to settle for much less than the full

Until now the executive has refused to campaign among the members over the claim. Instead it has directed attention to the question of the extra week's holiday. The union's president, Joe Gormley, is manoeuvring to make this the central issue in the ballot, rather than the miserable offer of £2.29. But the 'extra week' would only mean that the extra five individual rest days granted by Wilberforce last year would be consolidated so that they can be taken as one week's holiday.

If the Coal Board now revives the offer on holidays, Gormley will proclaim it as a great victory for the executive and call off any plans for further strike action, although last year's union conference firmly stated that the question of more money was central to the claim.

A massive vote in support of industrial action is needed to prevent the executive backing out in this way. Mass pithead meetings should be held to reaffirm the decision of last year's conference to put the wages demand in the centre of the struggle and, where possible, to begin strike action without waiting for the executive go-ahead.

Miners in every area must prepare now to co-ordinate their action with that of other groups of public sector workers fighting the government freeze. The call for a one-day stoppage in Yorkshire this Friday to support the hospital workers is an important step forward. It must be reinforced with the creation of joint action committees, between the local organisations of miners, health workers, civil servants and other groups pressing claims.

Last year the miners smashed right through the government's policy of limiting wage increases to less than the increase in the cost of living. This year the miners can smash right through the government's freeze.

But that will require all-out strike action, the immediate formation of flying pickets, and united action with the other groups of workers.

## BALLOT WILL TIE GASMEN

THE manoeuvres of the General and Municipal Workers' and Transport and General Workers' Union leaderships have been almost entirely successful in getting gas workers to reduce the scale of their industrial action.

Throughout the most militant regions—Scotland and North East England—hundreds of gasmen went back to work last week. Action is now confined entirely to the officially sanctioned overtime ban, non-co-operation and work to rule.

The unions have mounted a national ballot on the excuse of a miserable so-called concession from the Gas Corporation which means that workers will pay less into the pension funds and have their take-home pay slightly boosted. The union leaders, after refusing to mount an all-out stoppage, calculate that the rank and file will now be demoralised enough to accept this 'new' offer.

The results of the gas ballot will not be known for another fortnight. By that time it will formally be illegal to strike in support of wage claims and against the Tories, freeze. This was very much in the union leaders' minds when they called the ballot. They are extremely unwilling to defy the law practically and have manoeuvred to get off the hook as soon as possible.

## Ulster: army gets the go-ahead

by Mike Miller and Brian Trench

AFTER months of secret negotiations, and five days after Heath's meeting with the leaders of the new coalition government in Dublin, the Tory government has published its 'constitutional proposals' for Northern Ireland in a White Paper. It contains few surprises.

Alongside the expected sops to the Catholic middle class—proportional representation, 'power sharing' in the new government and a 'charter of human rights'—goes a package for continuing repression against the opponents of the British presence in Ireland.

The Special Powers Act, the last resort of any Unionist government in maintaining one-party rule, is to be replaced by new legislation based on the recommendations of the Diplock Commission. The Diplock report, of which former TUC general secretary George Woodcock was one of the authors, proposed powers of arrest for the army, courts without juries, and continuing internment. In this report everything will be as before.

The British army will maintain its massive presence, the workers and the unemployed of the Catholic ghettos will continue to bear the brunt of British repression, but Loyalists too will be harassed.

## Threaten

The White Paper spells out the British intention for several years now—to bring the Catholic middle class into the running of the Northern Ireland state, without conceding anything to those who have struggled in the past four years for civil rights and an end to the military occupation.

For the ultra-loyalists like Ian Paisley and William Craig, the White Paper is the 'worst of all worlds' and 'a great disappointment'. Both realise that to maintain a Unionist control there must be a strong locally-based state machine. The White Paper proposal means that security and 'law and order' will be controlled by the British government.

Craig continues to threaten to block these changes, while Paisley advocates using the so-called 'democratic process' to reverse them. Whether or not the Loyalists can build the much talked of new extremist political organisation to resist British plans depends on the response from Protestant workers in the right-wing para-military groups during the next few days and weeks.

The response of the republicans is not yet known. But whether they take part in the forthcoming elections or not, there is little sign that they can at this stage present a real alternative for the workers, Catholic and Protestant, who stand to gain nothing from the Tories' plan.

The republican movement will still have a vital role to play in defence of the Catholics against military repression. But, more than ever before, the Irish workers need an alternative to its mere militarism and reformism, that can show a way forward to free Ireland from oppression and exploitation.



Police attack the building workers' picket at St Thomas' Hospital to let the armoured truck (left) through.

## Bosses use armoured truck to break picket

LONDON:—A specially designed armoured personnel truck containing hired scabs and owned by the giant building firm John Laing crashed through the mass picket of electricians and building workers at the St Thomas' Hospital site on Monday.

Electricians on the site have been on strike for seven weeks in support of their £1 an hour wage claim. Their employers refuse to negotiate and their union refuses to support the strike because of the

freeze.

The truck could never have got through the human wall of pickets without the help of the police anti-picket squad which was brought down to do the employers' dirty work. They waded in and punched and kicked a way through for the truck.

Norman MacLean, one of the electricians' union members who joined the solidarity picket, told Socialist Worker: 'Police battalions attacked the picket.

Individuals were picked off for the treatment. There was kicking, hair pulling and thumb bending. Two arrests were made.

'This battle is against a boss ably backed by the state's law and order thugs,' he added. 'And it is against this bosses' government and its so-called freeze.'

Police repeated the performance on a smaller picket on Tuesday and the truck went through again.

## POLICE THREAT TO PICKETS

From page one

Saltley provides trade unionists with the only reply to this campaign of police violence which has been launched by the government and the employers.

On the first day, outside the

depot, there were a few hundred pickets and a few hundred police. The pickets were held, and the depot kept open.

On the second day there were 1000 pickets and 800 police. Still, the depot stayed open and the pickets were held.

A call went out to all sections of

the organised labour movement in Birmingham. On the third day, there were nearly 1500 policemen. But 15,000 workers were there to overwhelm them and lock the depot gates.

Only massive solidarity could beat the police. Such solidarity is even more crucial now that the police are better trained and better equipped.

The need for constant organisation and mobilisation of rank and file trade unionists becomes all the more important following the police and government attack on pickets.

The strikers at Fine Tubes, at St Thomas and in increasing numbers in similar situations throughout the country desperately need the support of other organised workers on the picket line to defend their basic trade union rights.

After the fascist bomb attack on Asian-owned shops in Streatham and Tooting and the Black Power bookshop in Brixton

**DEMONSTRATE AGAINST RACIALISM AND FASCIST THUGGERY**  
Meet for march at Brixton Oval  
3pm this Saturday, 24 March  
Rally, Brixton Oval 5pm  
Organised by South London IS and various black groups

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## Racist bombers strike bookshop

SOUTH LONDON:—The bombing of black people's homes, shops and workplaces in Brixton, Balham and Tooting by racists last week was only the latest in a wave of attacks. Previous targets had been a Brixton pub which had a black landlord, grocery shops and tobacconists.

Last week one of the bombs was thrown into a community bookshop, which was completely burnt out. A man living in an upper-floor flat managed to escape.

The bookshop had been open for a couple of months, and had been labelled a 'Black Power' bookshop by local Tories and by the Daily Telegraph. It contained

political material, and was used by Black Panthers, and a lot of other people as well.

John Pritchard, a local Tory politician, has launched a bitter attack on the bookshop, and on a grant it had received from the local Community Relations Council.

'It was popular with the community,' said a spokesman for the shop. 'It wasn't a business, more of an involvement. As far as I'm concerned the Conservative Party tends to rally and give sanction to racist political attacks. We saw it with Powell, and we see it in South London with Mr Pritchard.'

It is clear that sections of the extreme right in South London have tired of words and have now settled down to a policy of terrorism.