

£5000**crisis
fund**

IN RESPONSE to the crisis the executive committee of the International Socialists is launching a campaign to raise £5000 during January for the organisation's funds.

During the crisis our activity must be doubled and redoubled. For the first time in their working lives, millions of trade unionists will find themselves locked out and on the dole for two days a week. For the first time hundreds of thousands more will question this profiteering system we all have to tolerate.

We would be failing in our duty as socialists and trade unionists if we did not argue and organise the workers' case.

Already we have produced 40,000 wall posters, thousands of leaflets in support of the railwaymen and more than 100,000 leaflets in defence of the Shrewsbury 24.

This will not be enough. In past weeks I have written about the evils of the Tory press. Today they are actively organising on behalf of the employers. In this situation our job is to make Socialist Worker available to many more thousands of workers. To do this we need not only more readers, but more sellers.

Inevitably our work will be restricted by lack of money. We are not asking those people who will only receive three days pay in the New Year or those already heavily committed to the struggle in industry to contribute. But we do hope that those a little better off will dig deep.

Perhaps those on a guaranteed monthly salary whose wages will not be cut by £20-£40 a month when the lockout is introduced can send the money in. Possibly those who have savings would prefer to invest in the workers' cause, rather than the miserable alternative we are offered.

It will not be easy. But we cannot neglect our responsibilities. Please send your donations urgently to Jim Nichol, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

● This month's fighting fund has been exceptionally good. This week alone £286 came in, making a total of £712 with a week to go. Among this week's contributions were Sheffield IS Students £10, Chelmsford £10, Hyde £11, Loughborough £14 and Birmingham £10.

Shrewsbury verdicts

SOCIALIST WORKER had to go to press before the full and final outcome of Shrewsbury trial was known. By Tuesday night two of the six defendants John Carpenter and Ken O'Shea, had been cleared on the conspiracy charge. The jury had not then made up their minds on the other four, John Llywarch, Des Warren, Ricky Tomlinson and John McKinsie Jones.

All six men were found guilty of unlawful assembly. And while three of them were cleared on the affray charges, John McKinsie Jones, Eric Tomlinson and Des Warren were found guilty on this very serious charge.

We urge all our readers to keep their eyes firmly on Shrewsbury and to prepare for industrial action if any prison sentences are imposed.

Information on the final outcome and any sentences can be obtained from IS head office on 01-739 1878.

● London bombings: back page

It's their crisis—we must demand:

NOT A PENNY OFF OUR PAY

THE TORY GOVERNMENT has declared a lock-out of all industrial workers for nearly half the working week. Heath tells us that the cuts are necessary to deal with the national crisis.

Look at the facts:

The lock-outs will cost £400 million a week in lost production. The extra money needed to pay the miners' full claim is £2 million a week.

BY THE EDITOR

Every week of the lock-out, Heath is prepared to sacrifice £398 million of the country's wealth rather than pay the miners what they deserve. He hopes that the miners will be forced back on overtime by the anger of their fellow workers.

Then he plans to attack all other workers

with wage claims in the pipeline. Already his big business paymasters are telling us that Phase Three is 'too generous'.

Make no mistake: if Heath wins his battle against the miners, he will win against us all. That's why the miners and the train drivers need the support of every other worker in the land.

That is why all other workers with pay claims pending—especially the engineers—must press their claim with immediate strike action.

Don't be kidded by Heath's attempts to hold us all responsible for the energy crisis. We didn't cause it.

Big business forced successive governments to close down half the coal industry and half the railway system since the war. Big business wasted hundreds of tons of oil in the interests of quick profits in the motor car industry.

Big business wants to pay a quarter of a million miners a hundred times less than one year's untaxed profits of a handful of property tycoons.

● It's their crisis. Let them pay for it. They can afford to.

● In 1972, the bosses of British industry made £1000 profit for every worker. In the first six months of this year, profits rose by 40 per cent.

The increase in profits in that six months alone would be enough to give all British workers two days' pay a week for 14 weeks.

That's why we insist: FIVE DAYS' WORK OR FIVE DAYS' PAY—NOT A PENNY OFF THE WEEKLY WAGE. No speed-up. All overtime at overtime rates.

MOVEMENT

If the bosses reply by shutting down the factories, OCCUPY THEM. Don't let them complete their orders by shifting machinery or equipment out of factories.

The workers, if they had the power, could solve the power crisis.

They would cut out luxury transport, company cars, executive jets, Royal yachts. They would cut private cars in cities almost to nothing, pay the miners, power engineers and railwaymen decent wages and create a free public transport system.

Before we can do any of these things, we have to remove the wealthy two per cent who control 80 per cent of British industry.

We can start to build a movement strong enough to do that by fighting with everything we've got against the New Year attacks of the Tories and their paymasters on our wages and living standards.

● SOLIDARITY WITH THE MINERS AND LOCOMEN.

● FIVE DAYS' WORK OR FIVE DAYS' PAY

● AGAINST ALL REDUNDANCIES



Workers occupy threatened factory

HERE are some of the 300 workers occupying the Maclaren Controls thermostat factory in Glasgow. The parent company, the giant ITT, has threatened to move out machinery as the first possible step towards complete closure. The workers—two-thirds of them women—are maintaining a round-the-clock occupation. FULL STORY: page 14.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

Socialist Worker will not appear next week. We are conserving our energy—not the Tories'—for the major battles in the New

Year. We wish all our readers a very happy holiday. Get into fighting trim. We will be back with the next issue dated 5 January

It's the eat-and-profit crisis

WHEN anyone mentions the oil crisis in the boardrooms of Esso, BP or Shell, convulsions of laughter are the general result. For the great oil crisis is as much the creation of the oil companies' propaganda machine as anything else.

As the highly respected and influential newspaper *The Economist* noted last week the latest sailings from the Arab oil terminals are 40 per cent up on what they were at this time last year.

And arrivals of fully-loaded tankers at the massive Milford Haven terminal have also shot up. There are in fact queues of tankers waiting to get in.

The tugboat men employed by the Cory Ship Towing company at Milford Haven have never worked harder in their lives. They are turning round 20 per cent more tankers than they were before the oil crisis began. The situation is so acute that the men are now in dispute over a bonus scheme for all the extra work involved.

The *Economist* argues that this situation raises 'the possibility that the Arabs may not have cut production by anything like the amount they say . . . The Arab oil producers have certainly milked the situation for the maximum political capital without so far doing anything to destroy the western economies on whose prosperity the value of their dollars depends.'

The *Economist* also notes that the oil companies have good reasons for going along with this. 'Many in the industry believe that this winter would have seen an oil shortage anyway even without the Middle East crisis. The present situation puts all the blame on the Arabs, and increases oil prices.'

The bit about increasing oil prices undoubtedly holds the key. People will remember that two Sundays ago virtually every garage and petrol station in London was closed down. Then, miraculously, as soon as petrol prices went up last weekend shortage was transformed into abundance.

THE TORIES' emergency measures against floodlit football matches, late evening television and the like have not been accompanied by any similar belt-tightening operation against the pleasures of the rich. Fay Maschler, the London Evening Standard newspaper 'restaurant critic', has already reported that at this time of crisis there is a fantastic boom at the top end of the restaurant market.

The top end of the market are those places like Mirabelles or the Connaught where lunch starts at £6 a head—roughly what a miner earns for a whole shift at the face.

Miss Maschler's explanation for this is quite simple. There are an awful lot of rich people around with an awful lot of pocket money to spend in this time of crisis.

One of these is Bernard Levin, *The Times* newspaper columnist. In *The Times* on Tuesday 11 December Mr Levin penned a most moving plea for everyone to pull in their belts: 'I think that the only way we can save our society in the long run is by the acceptance not merely of inconvenience and hardship, but of nothing less than a totally new attitude to what constitutes a reasonable standard of living,' he wrote. . . . a real decline in the prosperity we already have is inevitable.'

Last Monday night just as *The Times* printworkers were doing the night shift to bring Mr Levin's brave words into print, Mr Levin set out to translate words into deeds. He and his girlfriend went for dinner at the fashionable Caprice restaurant in Arlington Street near London's Piccadilly.

The bill for the gay couple was very much in line with Mr Levin's entreaties to us all to accept a lower standard of living. It was £20.

THE **TORY** government's blatant stage management of the economic crisis came to light in a particularly interesting fashion at the Independent Television Companies' Association press conference last Friday.

The conference was specially summoned to allow the companies to put across their view on the government imposed 10.30pm curfew on all stations.

Among the high powered TV men in attendance were Frank Coppelstone, director of programme planning at the Independent Television Companies' Association, Cyril Bennett, programme controller at London Weekend, and Brian Tesler, his counterpart at Thames TV.

All three repeatedly implied that the companies were very upset at being used as the government's propaganda instrument for bashing the miners. But being discreet men, none of them would actually come out into the open.

The companies have also been pointing out that the television shut down will actually increase electricity consumption. 15 million viewers will immediately put up the lights and plug in their kettles, radiograms and the like as soon as television closes down.

Secret power plan will hit at sick

HIT the old, the sick and ordinary customers—that is the top-secret plan of the Electricity Council. In the event of power cuts, the council's priority is to maintain supplies to industry whatever the effects on homes and hospitals.

As in the last power industry dispute and the

Socialist Worker Reporter

1972 miners' strike, we are being treated to shock warnings of old people dying of cold and of hospitals cut off by power shortages. The press will lay the responsibility for this at the door of the power engineers, the miners and

engine drivers.

But the facts are quite different. Neither the Electricity Council, the people with the responsibility to provide power nor the government, could not care less for the old and the sick. When it comes to the choice of running the bosses' machines or keeping people warm and hospital services operating, they have no difficulty in choosing the industrial machines.

The secret document is dated 17 September 1973. In it the Electricity Council sets out the regulations to guide its regional boards in carrying out power cuts. Copies of the circular were sent to the main beneficiaries—the Confederation of British Industry.

The scheme for disconnections is called 'the Soldier plan'. Cuts, according to the document will be worse than during the 1972 miners' strike.

It stresses that use of the plant 'will present major public relations problems.'

There will be no discrimination for days of the week and disconnections will be as bad on Sundays as week days.

Industry will be shielded as far as possible from cuts. Some continuous process industries will be given separate emergency feeds to maintain power, is this cannot be ensured by switching.

All industrial consumers will be notified of the timing of cuts. Everyone else will just have to wait till the lights go out.

And hospitals will not be regarded as industrial premises. The South Eastern Electricity Board makes this plain in stark official prose: 'Hospital premises are not included in the list of excepted premises [excepted from cuts] are not classed as industrial consumers . . . and this will ensure that Directions [notice of rota cuts] are not sent to these consumers.'

The guilty men are not in the power stations, the mines and the railways but in the Tory government.

Shrewsbury rally: big crowd digs deep



Rally speakers (left to right): Gerry Kelly, chairman Jim Nichol, Tony Cliff and Laurie Flynn



Folk singer Jake Thackray

The Combine: pillorying the bosses' 'law and order'.

MORE THAN 900 trade unionists and socialists crowded into London's Seymour Hall on Monday night for the Socialist Worker rally in support of the Shrewsbury 24—the building workers facing conspiracy trials.

After listening to speeches on the political significance of the trials from Gerry Kelly, one of the Birmingham Five building workers recently acquitted on a similar conspiracy charge, IS executive member Tony Cliff and Socialist Worker reporter Laurie Flynn, the big audience dug deep and raised more than £400 for the families of the builders.

Together with the proceeds from the sale of tickets, the money so far raised for the Shrewsbury

24 by the rally stands at £940—with more donations still coming in. This magnificent response will be a great boost for the builders' families, who have suffered great hardship during the trial.

As well as the speakers, the rally starred socialist entertainers Jake Thackray and The Combine. In a series of tough and funny sketches, The Combine pilloried the 'law and order' gibberish of the building bosses, responsible for thousands of deaths and disasters every year.

It was a memorable occasion, underlining the growing feeling of solidarity in the working-class movement towards all sections in struggle and under attack. Pictures: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Busmen ready for battle

LONDON:—Important bus garages are rejecting London Transport's Phase Three offer, just when management and union officials are hoping to rush a settlement through because workers on the Underground are threatening industrial action in January.

The offer for a Monday-to-Friday week starting after 5am or finishing before 9pm means a meagre rise of £2.04 before tax and deductions. Garages that have rejected it already include Walthamstow, West Ham, Leyton, Wandsworth, Croydon and Fulwell. Upton Park garage rejected it by 160 votes to two and demanded £5 on the basic.

Normally the London Bus Section is a loyal link in a chain of command running down from Larry Smith, TGWU national passenger transport officer, through the Central Bus Committee, the local full-time officials and the delegate conference to the branches. But the committee split 50-50 on the offer, which allows no room for negotiations although it is not payable until April, and the failure of this link has broken the whole chain.

A special conference, called by Larry Smith over the bus section's head, referred the offer back to the branches.

Larry Smith himself recommended acceptance, despite his previous demands—in the management paper—for a £5 rise, a seven hour day and five-hour weekend duties. Platform, the rank-and-file busmen's paper, has issued a leaflet demanding £5 on the rate, 5 hours off the week, and joint action with the Underground.

A lively meeting sponsored by Platform in West Ham on Monday discussed the pay offer, how to unite with other public sector and transport workers, the control of full-time officials by the rank-and-file and the problems of involving young workers and black workers. Sales of Platform have passed the 3000 mark.

Big jobs threat by steel chief

by Rob Clay

DOCTOR MONTY FINNISTONE, chairman of the British Steel Corporation says the steel industry faces a 50 per cent cut in production and huge layoffs.

As Heath, Barber, and other Tory spokesmen direct the blame for every difficulty they face on the miners' overtime ban, the loyal Finnistone has taken up the theme. Around the country at local level BSC management has been busy calling meetings to explain to shop stewards that the calamity they claim is facing BSC is entirely the responsibility of the miners.

But South Teesside works, one of BSC's five major 'heritage' sites, current coal stocks are, if anything, higher than usual. This is due to the diversion of coal from other areas, including the Consett works in North West Durham.

At South Teesside works two weeks ago, 22,000 tons of coal were delivered instead of the usual 14,000. Nevertheless, management is now talking about massive layoffs.

Lies

At the River Don works in Sheffield, coal stocks are higher than usual. This is due to extra stocking prior to the miners' overtime ban.

The national leaders of the steel unions must be well aware of what is going on, but so far they have said nothing to counter BSC and Tory lies.

The BSC bosses have for some years been a willing tool of both Tory and Labour government policies and once again they are helping out.

And Finnistone and his board members have another reason for being willing to assist. Finnistone is dedicated to the elimination of all plants that are not highly profitable.

For the last three years Finnistone has been irritated by the fact that for social and political reasons his programme for butchering most of the industry has to take until 1980. The present situation is being seized as an excellent opportunity.

The closure of works like Hartlepool, Shelton, Shotton, Ebbw Vale, East Moors, and even Corby and Consett could well be announced in the next few weeks, with the present crisis being used as the excuse.

But steel workers are not falling for the Tory 'divide and rule' policy. Tony Hope, AUEW convenor at River Don in Sheffield said: 'I think my members are more in sympathy with the miners than ever before. It is crucial to force BSC to stick to the five-day guaranteed week agreement.'

'Feeling is running high in support of the miners and against Phase Three and the Tories. Personally I believe the TUC should be recalled to prepare for a general strike.'

Threats

Arthur Affleck, chairman of Lackenby joint shop stewards committee, said: 'Once again we notice our spineless leadership doing nothing in this situation. My members have been hammered by Phase Three.'

'They are sick and frustrated. They know that the miners are taking on Phase Three and they want to see it broken. The present layoff threats are blatant political manoeuvres. It is becoming very clear now who the real wreckers are in industry.'

'Now that we are faced with this situation we should through the National Action Committee call together every BSC shop stewards committee and action committee in Britain to organise this fight to maintain the five day guaranteed agreement, to protect the weaker sections against closure and to prepare a counter offensive.'

The South Teesside Steel Works branch of the International Socialists recently organised a public meeting at which a Yorkshire miner explained the miners' claim. This has helped to generate support for the miners in key parts of South Teesside works and leaflets have been produced supporting the miners and exposing BSC lies. Every IS branch, trade union branch, and shop stewards committee in BSC should invite miners to speak on their claim. Where possible mass meetings should be addressed by miners.

SOCIALIST WORKER

WHAT WE THINK

THE IMMEDIATE economic crisis, the threat of massive short-time working and redundancies, is a conscious, deliberate act of policy by the government.

As The Economist put it: 'The Prime Minister's aim on Thursday [in his television speech] was to try to put Joe Gormley on the spot.' In order to try to beat the miners, Heath and his friends are willing to force a catastrophic drop in industrial output. They are prepared, literally, to cripple the economy for a time to gain this end. So much for their accusations of 'wrecking', 'sabotage' and 'blackmail' against militants. The chief wrecker, saboteur and blackmailer is called Edward Heath.

But why do they go to these lengths? There is, of course, an element of bluff in the government's threats. They are desperately hoping that the NUM executive will cave in rather than face the torrent of lying propaganda and abuse that is being orchestrated from Downing Street.

But behind the bluff is cold calculation. The government knows that the capitalist world economy is heading fast for a real recession and that this recession will be the biggest since the war. The recession will squeeze profits hard. To keep up profits as far as possible they mean to reduce real wages in 1974.

Their calculation takes into account the fact that price inflation, now running at over 10 per cent a year, will speed up in the next six months. This is inevitable because of price increases already conceded to manufacturers and wholesalers. Such increases normally take about three months to work themselves through to shop prices. That is now happening with a vengeance and it will go on happening. If the Stage Three wage norms can be held, real

Ted Heath - saboteur in chief

earnings will go down. To achieve this, the government is willing to sacrifice output in the short term.

It may seem a crazy logic but capitalism is a crazy system. Profit, not production, is its driving force. In fact the government really wants to enforce even tighter wage controls than those planned for in Stage Three. The threats of a new total freeze on wages are not just scaremongering. They would try it if they believed they could enforce it.

They know that there is no chance of that with the miners and they know that they cannot beat a miners' strike in present circumstances. But if the miners can be bluffed and bullied into settling on the government's terms, the way will be open for a much tougher policy with less powerfully placed workers.

The rulers of all the industrial countries are moving towards similar policies but Heath, Barber and company have special problems arising directly from their own past policies. The last two years have seen a tremendous boom all over the world, a boom that is now running out of steam.

The British boom was financed on tick, on the

never-never system. In technical language it was financed by running up a huge balance of payments deficit, by far the biggest in history, which is only another way of saying 'buy now, pay later'.

But now the bills are coming in. Barber's mini-budget and real wage cuts are designed to make the workers pay the price for the huge profits piled up in 1973.

What can workers do in this situation? First of all we need to be absolutely clear that the more successful the government and the employers are in keeping wages down the bigger the coming recession will be, the longer it will last and the harder it will hit working people.

There is, unfortunately, very little we can do about rocketing prices until we control industry and society. Short of that, the fight to defend and improve real wages is more vital than ever. Any let up in that struggle, any falling for the government's 'national interest' claptrap will hit the working class in the long run as well as in the short term. Anyone who says otherwise is lying.

Second, the coming recession is a product of the capitalist system. It was predicted long before the Middle East war, the oil 'shortage' or the miners' overtime ban.

And it is not something beyond human control like an earthquake. It is a consequence of the system that Heath and the Tories profit from and defend. They are not the doctors. They are part of the disease. Our course is clear:

**Support the miners
Smash Stage Three
Work or full pay
Kick out the Tories
Production for use and not for profit.**

CORBRIDGE WORKS, CORBRIDGE CRESCENT, LONDON E2 01-739 9043/0185/6361

WILSON 'PLAN' TO SAVE SYSTEM

by Duncan Hallas

WHAT IS the Labour Party solution to the crisis? According to Harold Wilson's reply to Heath's television broadcast last week: 'It is the duty of the government now to put forward a programme that will unite Britain and ensure that everyone buckles down to working for himself and his family, and working for Britain.'

Not a word about socialism, or capitalism either, for that matter. Any Tory could agree with these empty phrases.

As a matter of fact most of us have no choice at any time but to work for ourselves and our families. How else can we make a living?

The small point that less than 10 per cent of the 'nation' owns more than 80 per cent of the wealth of the country somehow escapes Harold Wilson.

Of course he goes through the routine bashing of 'the moneylenders and speculators', a trick that even Anthony Barber has now borrowed. But no mention of the fortunes that this small minority of the capitalist class piled up under the last Labour government. Above all no suggestion that the whole system of private profiteering is the root cause of our problems.

'NATION'

The Labour Party claims to exist 'to secure for the workers by hand and by brain the full fruits of their labour'. But then you cannot unite the 'nation' on this platform. The 'nation' is divided into those, the big majority, who live by their own labour, and those, the rich minority, who live off the labour of others.

Harold Wilson wants the lion to lie down with the lamb. Worker and capitalist, he is saying, must unite to save this mystical 'nation'. How does this differ from the similar claptrap of Ted Heath?

In this way only. Because Wilson and his party depend on working class votes, he wants a few token gestures to make it easier to sell this



Wilson: empty phrases

programme of saving capitalism to workers. Barber has made a couple. Wilson wants more. And that, at bottom, is the only real difference in their policy.

This is nowhere more obvious than on the decisive industrial front. 'If the miners, the train drivers, and the electricity power staff will resume normal working,' says Wilson, 'then let the new Secretary of State for Employment be authorised to discuss the whole pay and prices situation.'

In other words, let the miners and

the rest give up their industrial leverage and then Willy Whitewash will offer them kind words.

Now Harold Wilson is a trained economist and an experienced politician. He knows as well as anyone that inflation is speeding up, that Phase Three means real wage cuts, and that a slump is coming next year.

DEFEND

Knowing these things, his advice to workers is to give up the only weapon they have at the present moment, the weapon of industrial action to defend living standards. Not a word about the need to fight for work or full pay when the government enforced layoffs begin in January.

I suppose we ought to be grateful that the 'spirit of Dunkirk' was not conjured up yet again, and that Wilson did not suggest reviving the 'I'm backing Britain' movement. Otherwise the verdict must be that Wilson's programme is only the left face of Heath's Tory policy.

Miners' cash goes to money lenders

IF DEREK EZRA, chairman of the National Coal Board, can take a moment off from abusing the miners, he might try to find out how several million pounds of Coal Board workers' money ended up in a fourth-rate finance company which is going bust.

Last Friday, Cedar Holdings, ruthless moneylenders who have made a lot of money for a few people from second mortgages, announced that it had been 'bailed out' by a gang of City bankers and insurance companies.

Like London and County Securities, which went bust two weeks ago, Cedar Holdings had been squeezed by high interest rates and the fall in the price of property.

Anyone with money in Cedar Holdings was in danger of losing it, and that included Coal Board workers, whose pension funds have invested more than generously with the moneylenders.

Retired

Exactly how much is not clear, but in 1969 the National Coal Board Superannuation Fund, under its nominee name—Lloyds Bank (Grosvenor) Nominees—put £2.8 million of their workers' money into Cedar Holdings.

The investment manager of all the Coal Board's superannuation funds at the time was Mr Philip Johnstone. When Mr Johnstone retired soon afterwards he made his way, by strange coincidence, onto the board of Cedar Holdings, where he is now the investment manager.

Also on the board is a Mr C S W Cowton, who used to work for the Electricity Supply Pension Fund, which also put a lot of electricity workers' money in Cedar Holdings as far back as 1967—when Cedar's profits were a paltry £31,000.

How these great pension funds manage to risk workers' money in such unlikely concerns as Cedar Holdings remains a mystery, not to say a scandal.

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Martial law after police kill two at workers' protest

by Francis Day

A STATE of emergency was declared last month in the three southern provinces of Peru by the military government of General Velasco. The crisis had built up from a confrontation between the government and the teachers' union. Towards the end of October 30 of its leaders were arrested.

The solidarity campaign came to a head when teachers in Cuzco—a centre of the Indian population—were dismissed. The entire student body came out on strike, clashed with the police and burned down the headquarters of the government Mobilisation Campaign.

In Arequipa, the second largest town in Peru, police opened fire on a demonstration, killing two people and injuring 17. The response was an immediate general strike and factory occupations. In the traditionally revolutionary town of Puno there were also strikes and occupations involving most of the workers.

The government sent in troops and declared martial law.

When the present government came to power by a military coup in 1968 it proclaimed itself revolutionary, determined to carry out agrarian reform, modernise the economy and stand up to American domination. A week later it sent troops to take over the oil wells of the US-based International Petroleum Company.

Imprisonment

But in the Cuajone copper agreement of December 1969, the government made concessions to the US Southern Peru Company. The turn to the right was marked by the sacking of leftist minister of development and the imprisonment of leading members of the Peruvian MIR, the Revolutionary Left Movement.

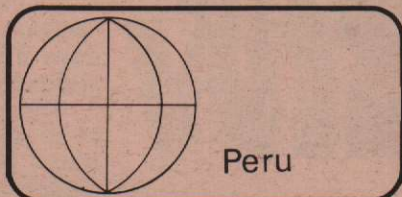
The junta has been handing out share-participation schemes, social security benefits and the like, but the price paid for these by workers is to be a state-run trade union machine, aimed at preventing strikes and other militant action.

The Peruvian Communist Party has thrown itself wholeheartedly behind the government, blaming all shortcomings and even working-class defeats on 'reactionaries' or on the 'ultra-left'.

Peruvian workers have found their gains swallowed up in the rising tide of inflation, while the government's plans for modernisation are grinding to a halt as the cost of imports soars.

A year ago Puno was taken over by striking workers. The government has brutally suppressed all parties and groups of Trotskyist tendency, and during the last six months letters have been smuggled out of jungle prison camps giving details of trade union leaders arrested by the regime.

Students and teachers have played a prominent part in the latest struggles largely because they resent the way the government is trying to transform education. Its preference for technical



Peru's General Velasco



Peruvian riot police attend to a demonstrator

education has gained little support because of the bureaucratic way re-organisation has been carried out. University autonomy has been completely abolished.

Another group moving into alliance with the Peruvian workers against the regime is the Indians. Indians are still nearly half the population of Peru, when in most other Latin American countries they have been slaughtered wholesale.

Oath

After centuries of apathy, a great Indian resurgence is taking place. At Cuzco in 1965 5000 Indians took a solemn oath to get back the land stolen from them, particularly during this century. Their initial suspicion of all white organisations has been largely overcome by the work of revolutionaries such as Hugo Blanco.

Peru is one of several regimes in Latin America which combine internal repression with a nationalism and opposition to the more extortionate aspects of US domination. The Peruvian government recently denounced the very existence of the Organisation of American States, Washington's political pipeline.

It is this 'facing both ways' which has lured Communist Parties and other organisations in Latin America into uncritical support of 'progressive' nationalist governments. Fidel Castro, for example, has had nothing but praise for Velasco in the past year.



Union helps break miners' strike

by Mary Phillips

GOVERNMENT, bosses and unions have combined to break a miners' strike in West Germany which brought out 13,000 men.

The miners at Reden in the Saar started the strike, demanding £48 cost-of-living bonus there and then, and £16 monthly to follow. The German Communist Party circulated a leaflet and by next morning miners were on strike in all the district's six pits.

Thousands marched to Saarbrücken, to the offices of the Saar Mines Company and the provincial government headquarters. The ban on marches within a mile of the government buildings was hurriedly lifted.

The provincial government said it couldn't do anything, but Socialist Party members organised a demonstration in the miners' case, and the Finance Minister made vague promises.

Another mass demonstration the next day drew 5000 miners, their families and coke and water workers striking in solidarity.

After talks between the provincial and state governments, the miners received their answer: No bonus. The mines were said to be losing money hand over fist—no mention of last year's profits being used to build up the company's empire in chemicals and gas, or the loss of millions of marks through the purchase and resale of the Mineral Oil Company of Friesia. It was pointed out that the miners had already had an increase of

9.6 per cent in August—a sum which hardly kept pace with the cost of living.

The miners' union chairman then broadcast a statement on local radio saying irresponsible action was threatening job security. He ordered the miners back to work. He suggested that the strikers were being manipulated by Communist agitators from outside. He even mentioned that the union had not hesitated to organise a strike in support of the miners' demands as recently as 1962.

The Saar miners were isolated, and too weak to take on the combined weight of the government, bosses and unions, all determined to smash the strike. Only 100 to 150 marchers demonstrated on the last march, and everyone went back to work, after false information on the radio that everybody else had gone back. The last to go back were the Reden men, and they had won nothing.

APARTHEID: TUC HAS NOTHING TO OFFER

by Alan Baldwin

THE TUC has just published the report of the visit to South Africa of its delegation led by Vic Feather in October. It contains proposals that the TUC intervene in the setting up of African trade unions, which are not yet officially recognised in South Africa.

The basic mistake the TUC has made is in its fraternal links with the 'whites only' TUC of South Africa, from which Africans are excluded since multi-racial unions are banned.

By advocating the extension of trade unionism to cover the mass of black workers they have failed to see the importance of who controls them. The white unions, management and the state want black workers in unions of some sort, since they all see the need to offset the threat of black militancy.

The TUC delegation rightly concludes that independent black unions are the only answer, but for the wrong reasons—because 'regrettably' that is



all the law will allow. The delegation assumed that white and black workers have a common interest which can be covered by the same organisation.

The white ruling class has been shaken by the strikes of the past year and by the fact that they were not led by the stooge works committees. 'Instead another leadership had arisen which had not apparently been positively identified, and to one employer at least this indicated that there was scope which employers should be aware of for a broader workers' organisation not confined to the plant or factory,' they report.

EXPLOITATION

The delegation's proposals to oppose British investment in South Africa unless firms 'encourage' black trade unions, and to oppose the emigration of white workers to South Africa, would be welcome if there were any assurance that these would be acted upon seriously. In fact they merely serve to make legitimate British capital's role in racist exploitation. Further, the proposal to help 'black unions' 'on a massive scale', though it may embarrass the South African government for a time, will only serve to channel the rising tide of black militancy into the strangle-hold of the white unions' bureaucracy.

LORRY drivers in 10 states of the USA last week used their two-way radios to organise a massive 'stall-in' on major roads, causing traffic jams up to 20 miles and seven hours long. They are complaining at the 50 to 55 mph speed limits imposed by the states, which the drivers say do not save fuel, and which mean an in-avoidable cut in wages for the 90 per cent of long-distance drivers who are paid by the mile.

Restrictions on the amount of diesel available to drivers at garages and illegal price rises are also at the root of their complaints. A survey of petrol stations by the Internal Revenue Service has found 224 violations of price regulations in 833 garages.

Though many of those who actually protested were owner-drivers, drivers paid by the mile also defied the wishes of their union, which advised 'patience and discipline'. The drivers' union, the Teamsters, is the only major union whose leaders still support Nixon. An unofficial lorry drivers' strike last Thursday had widespread support despite the leadership's opposition to it.

NEARLY 5000 coal miners in the Asturias region of Spain who have been on strike for a month now face a two-month lock-out by their bosses, the state-run Hunosa Company. The strike is over basic rates, bonuses for coalface workers, and working conditions. The company is said to be losing £500,000 a week in sales. To keep up supplies Spain is importing more coal from Poland, as it has done in previous miners' strikes and as was done in Britain during the miners' strike in early 1972.

IN DETROIT, a demonstration of 2,500 people, for the most part Arab workers, protested outside a banquet held to support Israeli war bonds. The demonstration was organised by the Detroit Arab-American Co-ordinating Committee, and drew most of its support from Arab carworkers, who were demanding that the carworkers' union, the UAW, should end all purchases of Israeli war bonds.

The dinner party included a presentation to UAW secretary Leonard Woodcock for his outstanding support for the Israeli cause. The giant Dodge Main car plant, where many Arab workers are employed, had to close down for almost an entire shift.

Copies of the following have recently come into stock:
JAMES CONNOLLY: SELECTED WRITINGS, ed. Ellis, 50p
CHILE'S ROAD TO SOCIALISM, Allende, 40p
THE TUPAMAROS, Labrousse, 40p.
DAVID AND GOLIATH, BARNSBURY '73, Power, 25p
TV HANDBOOK, Free Communication Group, 20p.
 Write for our free booklist.
 NOTE: IS Bookshop will be open on Monday 24 December and will be closed from 25 December to 2 January.

IS Bookshop
 265 Seven Sisters Road
 Finsbury Park, London N4



The risks of making a million

CHRISTMAS advice to an aspiring capitalist. Make one of the following: Bic ball-point pens, Tampax, or those flashing warning lights that local authorities use around road works. Because the companies making these are some of the most profitable companies in the land and should be able to weather an economic crisis or two without ending up on the bread line.

Biro Bic is owned by a faceless South American nominee company—a device used to hide the owner's real identity.

Biro Bic was formed in 1944 by a man called Henry George Martin to sell pens under the Biro trade mark—so you thought Biro and Bic pens were different did you? Although Martin has made millions out of the company, he doesn't seem too keen to stay in the country that has helped him to millionairehood, because he was last reported living in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His shareholding in the company—around 44 per cent—is now registered in the name of Hambros Bank Nominees.

The remainder of the shares are held by the Societe Bic, of Clichy, France. As these lucky people—who between them own a company worth more than £7 million—bask in the Argentinian and French sun, the workers are not so lucky. Bic have 353 workers in Britain, paid an average £32 a week.

Last year Bic's pre-tax profits were £1½ million and you don't have to be a mathematical genius to work out that each worker is producing £43 profit each week. In other words, every week the workers of Bic receive less in wages than the company takes in profit from their labour.

Average

For the workers at Tampax these figures look like charity. Every week their employers take nearly five times as much in profits per worker as they pay in wages.

In 1972 Tampax Ltd—the British subsidiary of the American parent company which owns 81 per cent of the shares—made a profit of £4 million. The company paid the 719 workers who produced this an average weekly wage of £22. The average pre-tax profit per worker per week was slightly under £80.

The people who benefit are few—it costs more than £60, or almost three weeks of the average Tampax worker's wages, to buy one share in the company.

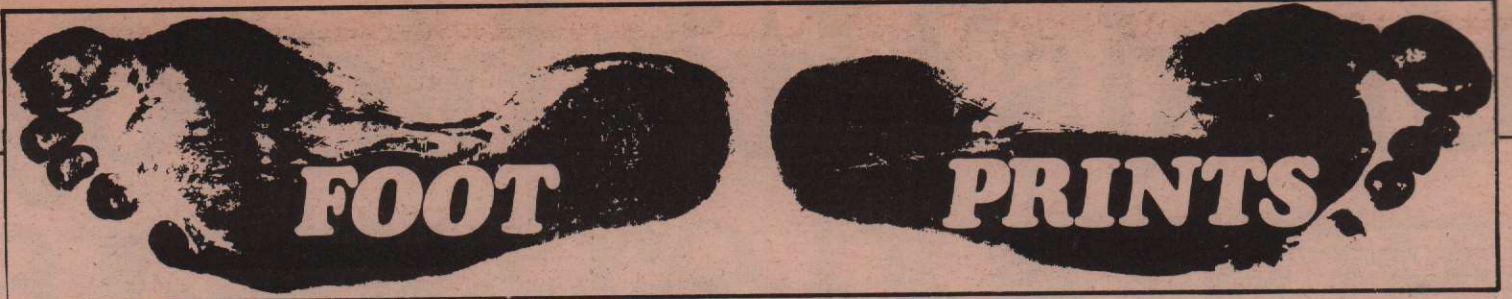
But if you are interested, bankers M J H Nightingale will be willing to send you a circular extolling the virtues of the company's shares as an investment. This document admits that the company is using its international nature to redistribute profits between countries, by clever use of its internal company pricing policy. For example, if the company is operating in a country with low taxation, it will sell products from the country with high tax to the country with low tax at very low prices, so that its subsidiary in the low tax area has higher profits than the company in the high tax country.

But if all this seems too exotic, you can make comfortable profits dealing with Britain's local authorities, selling them flashing traffic lamps. Dorman Smith Traffic Products makes those orange lights that flash continually around many road works. The company owns plant and machinery worth £11,500. Last year it made pre-tax profits of £105,000 on sales of £368,000, which means that profit margins were 28 per cent and return on capital a fantastic 900 per cent.

Over the past few months many companies have been announcing massive profit increases while wages have been frozen. Apologists for such profiteering have explained that it is a reward for risk taking and initiative. These three examples show what rubbish this is.

The manufacture of traffic lamps is so risky that two months profits are sufficient to buy all the machinery needed. The owners of Biro Bic are busy risking a lot in the Argentine while benefitting from an original investment of less than £200,000 now worth more than £7 million. And the shareholders of Tampax profit from the absolutely essential needs of millions of women by employing people at subsistence wages and shuffling funds around the world.

T H Rogmorton



NO, NO NAZI...

A MEMBER of the long-established Arab community of Tyneside rang me last week to complain about the activities of the National Front in the area, in particular their poisonous posters. For her, and for others who want to know about the Front's politics, I am happy to print this informal photograph of the National Front activities organiser for Tyneside, Gordon Stridiron (right) and a friend.

The photo was taken some years ago when Stridiron was a leading member of Britain's Nazi (National Socialist) Movement.

On 23 November this year, Stridiron wrote a letter to the Newcastle Journal protesting that the National Front is not interested in violence but 'accepts free speech as one of the basic rights in a well-run democracy.'

Explained Mr Stridiron: 'We are a party of law and order and object to the rigours of communist and fascist ideologies which now seem acceptable to some students.'



One law for the company director

THE following two cases were heard in London courts on 7 December.

ONE: Peter Spanton, described as a 'company director' from Enfield, pleaded guilty at North London Court to dishonesty handling a large quantity of turkeys worth £2000.

After Spanton had been found guilty, it was revealed that he had four previous convictions, one of them for stealing meat. He told the court: 'I really mean it when I say I'll never do it again.'

He was fined £400 and given a suspended six-month prison sentence.

TWO: Franklin Allen, 26, unemployed, and Frank Dee, 17, unemployed, were found guilty at Marlborough Street Magistrates Court of attempted pickpocketing. Police officers (and no one else) said the lads had been 'loitering with intent' to steal from a woman's handbag in Oxford Street. They had not stolen anything but had 'behaved suspiciously'.

Allen had six previous convictions. Dee had three.

After the usual bombastic lecture from the magistrate, Allen was sent to prison for three months, and Dee to a detention centre for three months.

WHILE on the subject of law and order, many readers will be delighted to hear that the law has at last caught up with Stickle and Kent, the estate agents, whose name is almost as hated in North London as that of Prebble, also estate agents.

On 2 December George Derek Stevens, the man behind Stickle and Kent, was found guilty of not repairing rotten flooring, damp plaster and dry rot which had combined to make tenants' lives intolerable in a Stickle and Kent 'house' in Elaine Grove, Gospel Oak.

The council had served notice on Stevens to do the work in May, but it was still not done in November. He was fined £20, with £10 costs.

Dick off the Boyle.

REGRETFULLY I have to report on a savage faction fight among the staff of the magazine Konkset, which is described in the current issue of the ad-man's bible Campaign as a 'left-wing German magazine that combines marxism with erotica.'

Staff members of the paper complained that its Communist politics clashed awkwardly with the blatant sexism of the 'portriats'. Publisher Klaus Rohl, a member of the German Communist Party, disagreed. He maintained: 'Sex is the best way to sell Marx.'

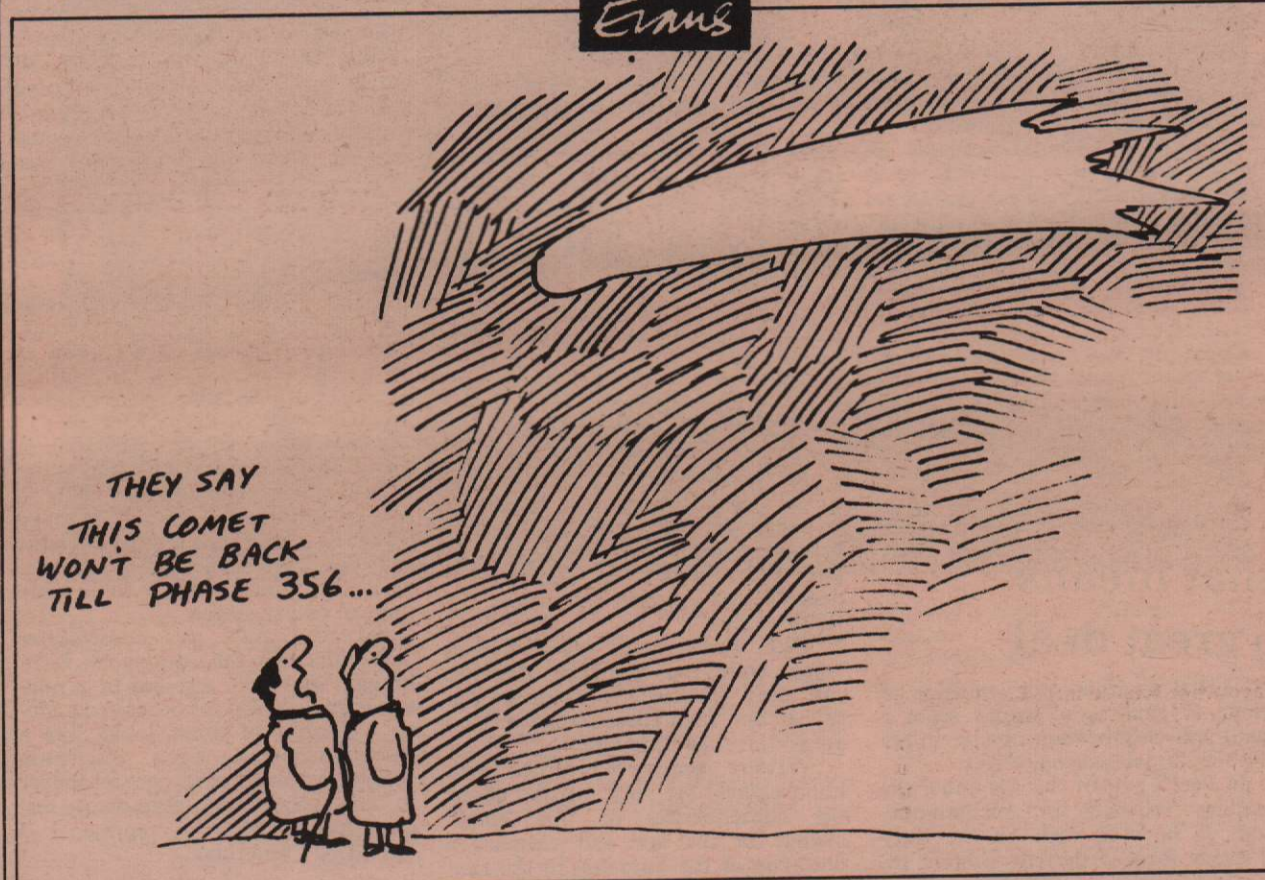
Rohl was forced to resign, and the magazine closed with debts of £400,000.

Still, all is not lost. The magazine's financier, Herr Klaus Kubotter, plans to relaunch the magazine next year with Communist Party funds. Kubotter is described by Campaign as a 'Communist property dealer from Bremen.'

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

'AMERICANS place more confidence in garbage collectors than in the police, press, church, Congress or the White House.'

—International Herald Tribune, 24 November, reporting the result of a 25,000-dollar opinion poll.



£7 an hour to hear Hughie

IF 'YOU'VE nothing to do on 30 and 31 January, you could always pop along to the London Hilton to hear Labour Party and trade union leaders talking about incomes policy. Hugh Scanlon of the Engineers will be talking about 'Can Stage Four gain acceptance', and Tom Jackson of the Postal Workers on 'Pay policy under Stage Three'—a union assessment'.

Vic Feather, former TUC general secretary, will be one of the joint chairmen, and another main speaker will be the Rt Hon Dennis Healey.

The whole thing is organised by the Financial Times and the Institution of Works Managers, though there are more speakers from the unions and the Labour Party than from the other two put together.

Oh, I nearly forgot. The two days will cost you £71.50 but that covers 'all refreshments, cocktails, lunch evening reception and conference documentation.'

A woman engineer who wanted to hear her leader would have to save up four weeks wages.

FIREFIBBER

THERE has been a lot of laughter in fire stations up and down the country at the editorial in the Firefighter, official journal of the Fire Brigades Union, for November.

Before the recent victory of the Glasgow firemen over their employers, the government and the union, the Firefighter published a leading article under an 'official paid' seal, explaining how £1 plus 4 per cent was the maximum they could get under government policy.

This continued to be the union's policy throughout the Glasgow firemen's dispute and especially at the special delegate conference which the executive called to discuss the Glasgow claim.

At the special conference the executive begged the firemen to put away any thoughts of an immediate increase in their wages, and concentrate instead on the claim for a reduction in the working week, which they hoped to negotiate for next spring. The conference reluctantly agreed.

In spite of executive opposition, however, the Glasgow strike went on. It spread. And suddenly the employers called an emergency

meeting at which they recommended huge increases for firemen's pay. Everyone knows that if the Glasgow men had obeyed their executive and opted for 'responsible' action, the firemen all over Britain would still be getting their £1 plus 4 per cent.

The November Firefighter summarised this story as follows: 'In a unique negotiating coup, the union's officials twisted the tail of the government's pay policy until it squealed. The Stage Two pay deal of October 1st was abandoned.

'This meant continuing with no increase for a further month, but the reward was a vastly improved agreement which wrung every drop out of the new terms of Stage Three. Simple, but brilliant.'

Modest, too. And a strong contender for the Terry Ramsay Dishonesty of the Decade award.

Crisis? It's bloody murder!

I AM a 19 year old colliery apprentice, training to be a colliery engineer. I enclose my wage packet slip showing that I earned £19.50 all told. Normally I have £5 deducted for savings—holidays etc which leaves £14.50.

When I'm working on the face I get 50 pence face money a week. When I work in water I get £1 water money—also subject to tax deductions. I do very much the same work as a skilled engineer, but without the responsibility.

I work 600 feet underground, at a height of three feet. If you've got to crawl 600 feet on your belly, can you imagine that? It's bloody murder! It's no job for anybody, it's no life. Nobody but miners really understand, they can only try to imagine it.

Often we are working in feet of water, when you've three feet height to work in you've no room to manoeuvre. If anything goes wrong you've just got to get on with it.

The normal worker can at least stand up and work. But we have to crawl, bent 600 feet. At the pay-rate miners are getting it's no wonder that men—and particularly young ones are leaving the pits everyday.

You get up for a shift in the dark at six in the morning and you go down in the dark. By the time you get up it is almost dark again. You have to work shifts and that doesn't make life any easier. Most of the miners have to work overtime to get them half a decent wage. That's all wrong.

No money is high enough for the kind of work we have to do, and the conditions we have to work in.

We are accused of holding the country to ransom, by demanding a decent standard of living. No ransom money could ever replace the lost lives in the pits, the dangers we have to face and the amount the miners have given to the wealth of the earth.

Then the bosses wonder why we're prepared to fight. How many of them have died of dust in their lungs? How many of them work in water and get paid a measly £1 a week for it?

You get so fed up with what you're doing every day that at the weekend you just go out and drink a lot. It is no life. All we can do is fight.—JIM HUNTER, Midlothian.

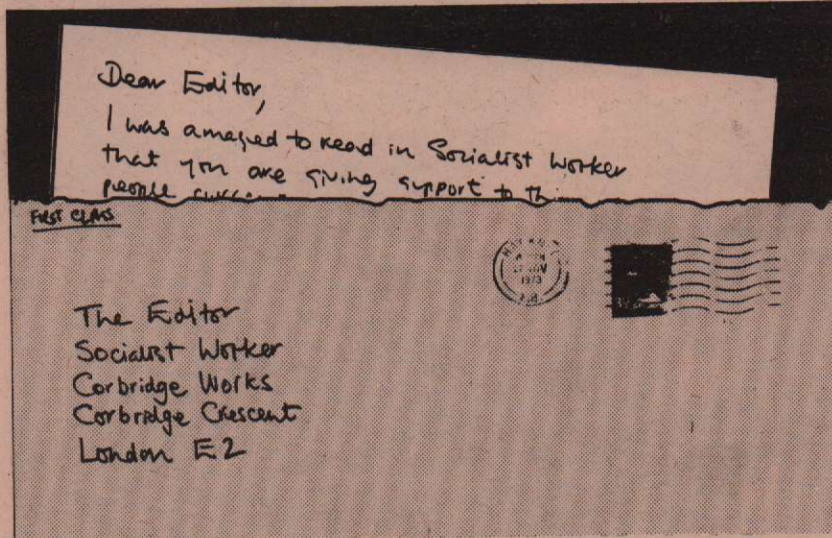
MY HUSBAND is a miner and I wish to state that I, and I'm sure most of the other wives are 100 per cent behind the miners in their struggle.

I wonder if people realise what it is to lie awake at night, wondering every time a car door slams if it is someone calling to tell you that your husband has been injured or worse.

Mr Heath is in cloud-cuckoo land when he talks about colour TVs, cars and foreign holidays. We have no cars, black and white TV and could not even afford a holiday in Britain this year.

My husband is a face worker and as such is on the highest rate of pay. We have two children and he brings home £30 a week for doing a dirty, dangerous and important job.

When Heath talks about patriotism he should go to the top first and ask the Royal Family why they can't manage on their very considerable



Ambulancemen: The rank and file are doing the work

I'M A Perth ambulance driver, and I'm writing to tell you about the fight up here in Scotland.

Here, unlike the rest of the country the ambulance service is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Scotland—wages are negotiated nationally. The wages are low and so the staff are short—and operate almost entirely on overtime.

Most Scottish ambulancemen are Transport union members while the Public Employees and Health Service employees Unions take the rest. Before the ban on all services, apart from accidents and emergencies, the service operated an overtime ban—made official by NUPE, there was no action by the TGWU or COHSE. It was the rank and file who took the step to operate accident and emergency cover only.—DEREK KEITH, Perth.

personal wealth.

Come on Ted, put your money where your mouth is and give the miners the wages they so richly deserve.—CHRISTINE PARKER, Barnsley.

Duty— one word that means a great deal

I'D LIKE to draw your attention to what, at first sight would seem a small and unimportant change in the 1948 National Assistance Act.

In Part Three of this act under the heading 'Provision of Accommodation' it says 'it shall be the duty of every local authority, subject to, and in accordance with the provision of this act to provide residential accommodation for persons who, by reason of age, infirmity or any other circumstances are in need of care and attention. Temporary accommodation for persons who are in urgent need thereof—'

In April 1974 this act is to be altered. One word is changed, that word is 'duty'. No longer will coun-

cils have a duty to house homeless people.

The new wording is councils *may* house homeless people.

I think this is blatant Tory class bashing.

At the moment if a council says it can't help and you are homeless, you can threaten them with court action to house you. From April this last resort won't be available. It doesn't need a crystal ball to see the result of this.

With fewer and fewer houses being built the homeless statistics can only increase. If councils can refuse 'aid' then these statistics (who are people) can only climb.

Various agencies concerned with homelessness are very worried about the consequences of this 'small' change in the law and visualise a doubling of the homeless in the first year of the change.

This law is an attack on the very weakest—the poorest of us. What I, and others want is maximum publicity for this act. Make sure town halls are made aware of this attack on us. Make them do a 'Clay Cross' and refuse to implement this iniquitous act.

Back to the Good Old Workhouse Days.—VIC PLATT, Walthamstow.

Communists' congress— 'Come off it Jim!'

JIM HIGGINS' report on the Communist Party's Congress (24 November) was useful but marred by a tendency towards blanket condemnation. This concealed certain particular tensions within the party.

He tells us that there wasn't a single word about Chile, and not a whisper of how 'advanced democracy' was to be instituted. On the very next line we read: 'The only lesson for Britain was a call for full rights for soldiers, so that they can be won... for socialist ideas.'

He completely misses the point of this in commenting on the absurdity of how giving the vote to General Pinochet would have pre-empted the coup.

Come off it Jim! The call for full political rights for the armed forces obviously means more than the right to vote, it means the right to *unionise*. Perhaps the conference didn't make this explicit—well it should have done.

The very occurrence of this call indicates at least a whisper going round the Party (so soft Jim didn't hear it?) acknowledging the relevance of Marx and Lenin's insistence that if the existing machinery of the state—especially the armed forces, isn't smashed or neutralised it will be a stumbling block to any marxist party that comes to power.

Further if the proceedings were as stage-managed as Higgins makes out, then these stage whispers suggest at least 'a word of analysis' and conflict behind the scenes, amongst the higher echelons of the Party.

Unionisation of the Forces is at least a feasible means of winning the mainly working class rank and file to the revolutionary cause. The strategy is needed if the International Socialist insistence on arming the workers when the crunch comes is to be more than an empty slogan.

So why isn't this *constructive* development in the Communist Party brought out and assessed in a non-sectarian way? On the other hand why no exposure of what looks like a clamp-down on open discussion symptomatic of a more general failure to come clean to the class whose real interests it claims to represent?—J MINSON, Cambridge.

■ ■ ■
The next Socialist Worker will be the issue for 5 January. Letters to the paper have to arrive by 31 December to have any chance of publication in that issue. Please try not to write over 250 words, on one side of writing paper.

Harry Selby: You stayed silent

HARRY SELBY's hysterical letter in Socialist Worker 8 December accused an International Socialist of lying about Selby's performance at a by-election meeting in Govan.

I was at the meeting, when Jim Sillars MP shared a platform with Selby, the Labour Party candidate. I asked Sillars (ex-Fire Brigades Union member) why he attacked the striking Glasgow firemen in the Scottish Sunday Express. In his reply Sillars pulled out the stops, accusing the firemen of callousness and cold-blooded selfishness. They were, he said 'willing to turn the hoses off burning people.' He, Sillars, was not.

During this Selby remained silent and throughout the rest of the meeting he never called Sillars to account over this disgusting attack. Unity of the platform was maintained. When I asked Selby at the end of the meeting what he had to say about Sillars' rantings he declined to comment.

These are the facts. The Labour Party sometimes feels the need to present a left face in places like Govan. The only condition on left-wingers is that they do not effectively challenge the dominance of the Labour right. That is why they are fake lefts.—MICK NAPIER, Glasgow C1.



LABOUR LEFTS OUT... What We Think (8 Dec) gave too much credibility to the Labour 'lefts'... Foot, Benn etc are committed to the parliamentary road and to reformism... All reformist leaders are inevitably traitors to the working class. A government of Tribunitaries would, like Allende's Popular Unity, use the bourgeois army, police and civil service against the working class. No party which fails to lead the working class to develop independent defence organisations can do anything else.

The effectiveness of the fight depends on the leadership of a revolutionary party, which the International Socialists are committed to building. This party must provide the leadership necessary to enable the working class to smash the capitalist state and establish workers' power.

To say anything less makes us traitors—even more than the right and left Labourites since we, as marxists, should know better. — M SWAMINATHAN, JIM SMITH, RON TUCK, Edinburgh 9.



MORE THEORY?... Remember Engels when he said that the socialist movement's strength lies in three 'co-ordinated inter-connected sides; the theoretical, the political and the practical economic. Over the year coverage in Socialist Worker of the 'practical economic' has outweighed that of the first two categories. While the situation is one of increasing economic activity we mustn't lose sight of the importance of 'ideological' explanation. It would give readers a better knowledge of the economic situation and a closer identification with the International Socialists' policies. — ROB SILVERSTONE, Portsmouth.



MORE OF THE ALTERNATIVE?... Only if minds are fertilised with socialist conceptions are we going to get a better society... I am amazed that the brilliant propagandists that serve IS so effectively in other respects fail so manifestly in this vital respect. Do we have to rely entirely on Marx and Trotsky?... The basic principles of equality, common ownership and workers' democratic control must pervade our pre-revolutionary thinking.—FRANK VINEY, Bromley.



MORE ON SCOTLAND AND WALES... I too agree with the International Socialists—apart from your line on the national question... we are told to think only of the revolutionary socialist struggle in Britain and not separate struggles in Wales and Scotland... You support the anti-colonial struggle, except here on imperialism's own doorstep—you stop short at Offa's dyke...

In Wales the language question is of vital importance yet none of the IS groups in Wales have to my knowledge produced anything in Welsh. Nor has Socialist Worker given any coverage to the struggle apart from Paul Foot accusing people in a small community of racialism because they wanted a local doctor who spoke their own language. The rapid growth of socialist groups such as Cymru Goch suggests IS won't make headway till it thinks again on the national question.—DAVID ap SION, Caerffili.



FREE TO RANGE... Socialist Worker 8 December says farmers' prices for eggs are now three times that of January. I've just bought six large free range eggs for 23 pence. Large battery eggs at the local supermarket are 26 pence! It is a good time to change to free-range, which are more nutritional. Make sure they are free-range, you should be able to get them at a health food shop. Factory farming is an obscenity.—K HARDING, London NW3.

an International Socialists pamphlet 10p

ROGER KLINE

can
Socialism
come
through
Parliament?

Roger Kline's CAN SOCIALISM COME THROUGH PARLIAMENT? draws the lessons from the antics of the Labour Party, in government and in opposition, as reformers of capitalism, and argues what we can do to bring socialism.

10p plus 3p postage (10 or more copies post free) from IS BOOKS, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

A letter to a Durham miner

'I hear you're holding the country to ransom...again'

Dear Reuben,

Two months out of Durham and I'm longing to return. Warmth and sincerity, knowing people care, are hard to come by in London (not to say good ale). I suppose it's that thing they call 'community'.

I see even the papers write nostalgically about the lack of community in the city, but I take little notice of what they say. They never mention that it began and endures in the villages because of the brutality of mining. They forget that the pit-folk had to stick together because nothing came from the owners when the men and boys were mashed down pit to leave invalids, widows, wives and children to starve.

Aye, it was only the unselfish solidarity of the people that led to survival against Londonderry and his aristocratic friends. They wanted nothing to do with miners once the pit had exhausted their health. That's our 'community' the press envy so much.

But there are other reasons I want to be home. I've been hearing a lot about you holding the country to ransom—again. You're even threatening the constitution—again.

□□

The way the papers read I've been thinking maybe we're all back in the 1920s. It is the same old cry isn't it? Greedy miners jeopardising the country. If you'll only shelve the pay claim and keep hewing you'll get the rewards when the economy booms again.

And by the way, one of today's papers says you get £42 a week. The 'offer' will mean you get near £50. In that case you'd better tell me why they're making such a fuss about the miners asking for a scale of £35—£40—£45. I know they wouldn't mislead though, 'cos you know, Reuben, they're only interested in the general good. I mean, the press aren't on the side of the Tories, are they?

Anyway, to get back to the news. Come to think of it, it's not just the same as the 1920s. More like it's the older story that's never been far away: pitmen have asked for more money. Those lords that made so many fortunes out of Durham's pits in the 19th century were always saying they'd be bankrupt if they gave you a rise. Of course, they always wanted to, but it was in your own interests to take a short-term reduction for a better tomorrow.

Look around Durham for fulfilment of their promises.

Oh, now I know what you'll be saying Reuben. You'll be asking when have the capitalists made 'sacrifices'?

Now I know they've always

the country to ransom...again'

Picture: Massimo Vitali (Report)



been rich—even when the miners' kids were eating bread and dripping and smiling through their shoes, but after all you and I don't understand these things do we? I mean you're only an ignorant pitman. It's your job to dig coal and leave the experts to run the stock exchange.

Surely you believe they'll look after you if only the miners stop causing industrial unrest. It's so bad for thriving investment.

But of course you don't trust the Tories. I admit I've seen none go hungry. And surely there's something wrong when in the same breath they tell miners to tighten their belts and announce record profits in 1972 with the top 800 companies averaging more than 30 per cent increases?

To tell you the truth I'm starting to think the papers aren't so unbiased. They've always had

the same line on the miners, giving sympathy, but never supporting your claims.

I see nothing in Durham that has radically altered the condition of the working class. You pitmen are still struggling, still coughing up dust, still dying prematurely, there's still terrible depression.

□□

To tell you the truth I agree with that miner from Bearpark who reckons Durham's finished. Capitalism has had about all it can grab out of it and now to hell with all the people who have to remain. I'm thinking the owners didn't really have your interests at heart.

But the question is what are we going to do about this mess? They've battered us so often that we don't know which way to turn.

Labour's been no different: they started the mad spate of redundancies.

Labour is no good. They sometimes talk about socialism, but nationalisation was no change. It was only meant to make capitalism work more efficiently. What we need most is a rebirth of real socialism. That'll mean workers' power and an attack on the ruling class instead of incorporating union bureaucrats into the NCB machine.

The first step towards that must be to smash this phoney Phase Three. With the present crisis the only answer the Tories have is that the workers must make sacrifices.

That's why the miners are fighting. They're in struggle because they know that asking people who take home less than £30 a week to keep quiet when

rents and food prices are rocketing is bloody nonsense. The pitmen know that Phase Three won't be followed by 'fair shares for all', but a leap in profits and advance to the next phase.

And the other unions must get behind the miners because if the pitmen go down it'll mean a defeat for all other workers. It'll be a repeat of 1926 with the workers, led by the miners, having to bail out capitalism.

Yes, Reuben, I realise what I'm asking. I know too many socialists talk glibly about striking and forget how hard the day-to-day struggle is. It is rough to exist with no pay and a family to feed, rent and hire purchase to meet, to face the humiliation of welfare, to confront vicious opposition on the picket line.

□□

But what else is there? The miners have to fight or go down. It's as simple as that.

The only way forward for Durham is a victory over the Tories. What we need is another A J Cook because he was right when he said a fight was inevitable, and someone has got to win.

The miners lost in 1926, but won a marvellous victory in 1972. By now they've come to realise that wage gains are only the first round in the campaign. They enter this dispute fully aware that it is a political battle. That is, they will have to stand firm for socialism. Whatever the press and television profess, have they changed that much from the 'Miners' Lifeguard'?

'Union miners, stand together,
Do not heed the bosses' tale,
Keep your hands upon your wages,
And your eyes upon the scale'.

Yours

Frank Webster

'And they call us greedy..'

MARION SPENCE, age 29, lives in Edinburgh and for the greater part of the week is a housewife, looking after her 3 years-old son Gary. Her husband is a building worker.

Because of the cost of living, I have to take a part time job to supplement my husband's income as a joiner. My food bill has gone up £3 since August. We started buying the cheapest meat to try and save a bit but there was far more waste in the cheap cut and we got fed up with the same old rotten taste.

When I started my job in Marks and Spencer, part time, last April I thought I'd be able to get a few extras for the

house out of my pay, but now every penny goes on essentials and to pay the bills.

When we were married seven years ago I could keep the house on £5 a week—that was including the papers and money for a night out—and I used to go to a good butcher. But then chops were 4s 6d (22½p) a pound. We could even afford the odd piece of steak.

Rubbish

Now I'm lucky to keep the house on £15 a week. That's a threefold increase and I'm damn sure our wages haven't increased by three times. Any increases there have been haven't been given to us on a plate.

My husband was involved in the building workers strike last year and it was a long struggle. We still haven't really recovered from that yet. So much for all this rubbish about greedy workers.

We knew when we bought our own house that we were letting ourselves in for an extra expense but we couldn't foresee the spiral in mortgage rates. Since last August our mortgage payments have increased monthly by £10.

I came across an old newspaper in the bottom of a suitcase yesterday dated exactly one year ago and eggs were advertised as 13p a dozen. Today I paid 25p for half a dozen. That's four times the price.

I used to eat a lot of fruit but now I'd never think of buying it—it's too

expensive. That means that my wee boy is growing up without all the things he really needs: fruit, good meat, all the things we're told are in abundance all over the world. Home made soup used to be cheap to make but now lentils and split peas cost 25p a pound and adding a bit of meat is really expensive.

Fancy

We haven't seen a chocolate biscuit or a cake in the house for ages either.

It's easy for the bosses to say that all the workers are greedy and demanding too much money but I'll bet that there's no shortage of all the fancy foods and good fruit and meat in their mansions.



The Crisis: a veteran fighter looks at how the well-off are tightening their belts in the 'na



Margaret Ryan: going 'up West' to keep warm

Pensioner Margaret goes window shopping

NOW that the nation is 'tightening its belt', Socialist Worker took Margaret Ryan, a 71 years-old pensioner down to Oxford Street and Bond Street in London's West End to see how the upper classes were adjusting to the 'national crisis'.

Margaret moved to North London in the late 1940s. Born in Lancashire she has been fighting against this system all her life.

Now she, like thousands of others, lives on the government's idea of a decent pension.

In fact she's 'lucky' compared to many others. She gets £12 a week, which includes a special allowance for her arthritis.

She lives in a new council flat in Islington.

'I went on the housing list back in 1954. In 1970 I was living in a room in North London, with no heat or light. I was rehoused in 1971, in a rat-infested room in Highbury.'

She is a fighter, and went on fighting. She pitched a tent on

the steps of the town hall until she got a decent flat.

For the flat she pays a rent of £3.95. It is centrally heated—or was.

'When I got the first bill for £27 I turned it off, and it hasn't been on since. I use an ordinary electric fire now.

Jumble

'I can use a kettle for my hot water bottle and that's it. There are no open grates so I can't go and collect any wood for a fire.

'After bills I'm left with about £7 for food and clothes. Once a week I go to a supermarket.

'I don't have any money for luxuries, and "concessions" for old people like small tins are no

use. Most pensioners do what I do—buy a larger tin and make it last over two days.'

For Margaret the luxuries of the West End are just items on display, not to be bought. Her shopping expeditions take her no further than the local Tesco or jumble sales.

Her experiences of the West End are limited to when she worked there. 'I was in Selfridges back in 1964, when I was demonstrating pressure cookers.'

As she points out old people do go to the big stores, but not to shop.

'They go to walk round and keep warm, to take advantage of the heating. But of course those who are inactive can't even do that.'

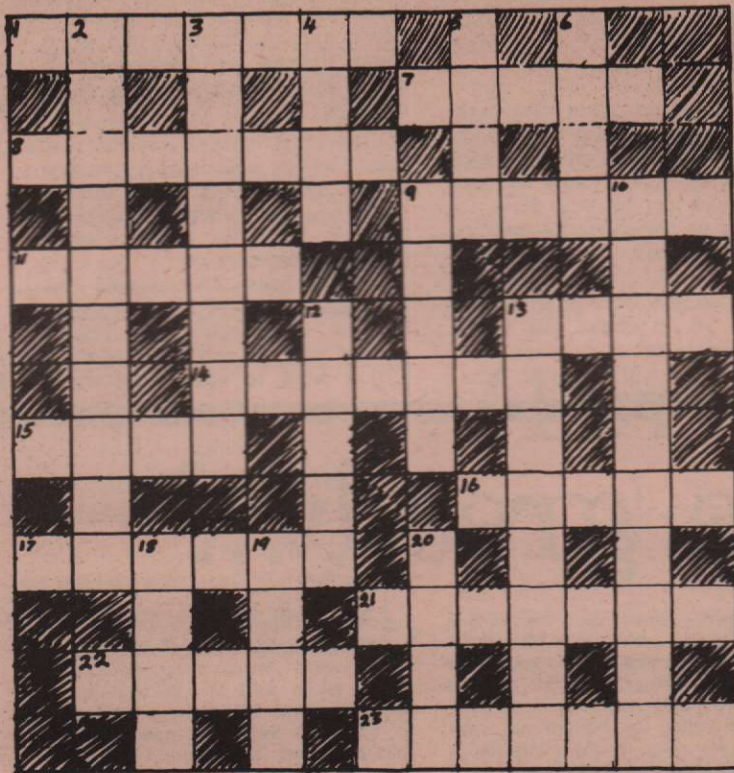


ARNOLD'S XWORD



ACROSS

1. Rat pies for a change, at the celebrations.
7. See Korky the Cat here.
8. Better than Sanatogen for instant energy.
9. Camels fear the last of these.
11. To dote upon.
13. Inventor of revolver misnamed the 'Peacemaker'.
14. Al and Maria are diseased!
- 15 and 23. Soul singer who sat on the dock of the bay.
16. You have one—like a book.
17. Hollywood film actress—a real bitch.
21. What Mussolini did.
22. One has pointed ears, the other tells you what to do if your kid has.
23. See 15. Across



Solution page 13

DOWN

2. 'Keep the Flying' (novel by George Orwell).
3. Little children must rant.
4. To use acid to cut a metal plate.
5. Cromwell had one.

6. That's a thought!
9. Leading member of Zionist terrorist gang.
10. Old boot put in charge of government defence against the great Chartist demonstrations.
12. Uncle Tom, for instance.
13. Getting told off in comfort.
18. Puss eats.
19. 25.4mm.
20. 'Of and Men' (novel by John Steinbeck).

Walking down Bond Street we took a look at some of the jewellers. 'I don't have any jewellery, apart from this brooch I wear on my coat—that cost five bob at Woolworths years ago, I don't know how much it would cost now. And I don't have a watch, although I used to have one years ago.'

She won't be buying one at this shop, where the watches she's looking at start at £24. There are clocks of course. Those on the lower shelf start at around £42.

Nice pair of shoes? You can have them made to measure at this Bond Street Store. Margaret's were cheaper.

'I bought mine at a jumble sale for a shilling. Although I do have a pair of suedette boots. You have to have some warm footwear for the winter.'

We look at some men's shoes, there are some 'cheap' ones for £24. 'I reckon these must be the ones that Heath buys—measured of course.'

We pass a furrier with a good line in fur coats at £190. Margaret likes her coat too. 'It's well made and has lasted—I bought it for five bob in 1967—once again at a jumble sale.'

In a lot of the shops there are no prices at all. 'They don't stoop to pricing things, money is no object round here,' she pointed out. 'There are two worlds in this country. One is what we all know, where we live, and the other you find down here, in the West End of London.'



Story: Nigel Fountain

...ion's' hour of need... and we examine the double standards of a sleazy Tory politician



The fish counter looks beautiful, but the prices don't. 'Cod used to be a cheap fish didn't it?' At Selfridges it is 75p a pound. 'How much is hake?' she asks. We find a beautiful piece. The price? £1.30. The Scotch Salmon looks good too, with a price tag of £4 a pound. 'I worked in a hotel once. I saw rich people eating salmon all the time. But I've never had it except out of a tin.'

'A cod steak at these prices would be about seven bob—then you would need vegetables, a sweet and a cup of coffee. It's out of the question . . .' And at £3 a pound Margaret doesn't need to worry about lobster . . .



Margaret doesn't eat much wood pigeon, and these Turkeys, at just under £5, are not in her Christmas plans.

REGGIE CALLS FOR TEAM SPIRIT...

LAST SUNDAY, the BBC radio programme The World This Weekend invited Mr Reginald Maudling, former Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer, to comment on the crisis.

For five dreary minutes, Mr Maudling abused the miners for their 'ruthless' and 'vicious' ban on overtime. He went on to say that all of us could get round the crisis if we showed the necessary team spirit.

No reference was made to the court case currently being heard in Leeds, in which Mr Maudling's former employer, John Poulson, is standing trial on a number of corruption charges.

Last week a statement made by Poulson about his architectural practice, which is now bankrupt, was read out in court.

In it, Poulson described how Maudling and his layabout son joined the board of two Poulson companies in 1966 and 1967. Martin Maudling, the son, was paid £4500 a year for doing next to nothing. Reggie got rather more.



The statement described a visit which Poulson made to Saudi Arabia to see the country's chief medical director, who happened by chance to be a brother-in-law of King Faisal. Poulson—helped by Maudling—eventually got the contract to design a special £7 million hospital for the King of Saudi Arabia.

The hospital was to be used exclusively by the King, his family, his harem and his very close friends. It was, the King had discovered, cheaper to build a new hospital than to keep flying his wives and relations for treatment at the London Clinic, London's most expensive private hospital.

Before Poulson left for his trip, according to his statement, Maudling asked him to take with him three brown parcels.

According to Poulson, Maudling said: 'These will make me not a millionaire, but a billionaire.'



The leaflets, Poulson disclosed in his statement were brochures for the Real Estate Fund of America, an 'offshore property fund' which had been founded by one of the world's leading swindlers, Jerome Hoffman. Hoffman is at the moment in an American prison finishing his sentence for a mortgage fraud.

The only reason the Real Estate Fund of America got off the ground was the association with it of various 'famous' politicians who wanted to become billionaires. Among these was Maudling, who became the Fund's first president.

He was forced to resign as president after a couple of months, but he clung on to 50,000 shares which had been given him by Hoffman, and which Hoffman valued at more than £350,000.

After the statement was read out in court, Maudling said through his solicitors that he was



Maudling: weighed down by ambition . . . and brown paper parcels

powerless to reply to allegations made in open court. So he would be doing nothing.

In the meantime, radio and television producers who want a man to speak up for the decent,

sacrificing spirit of the ordinary British worker can always call on Reginald Maudling, the man who wanted to be as rich as his Tory Cabinet colleagues, but never made it.

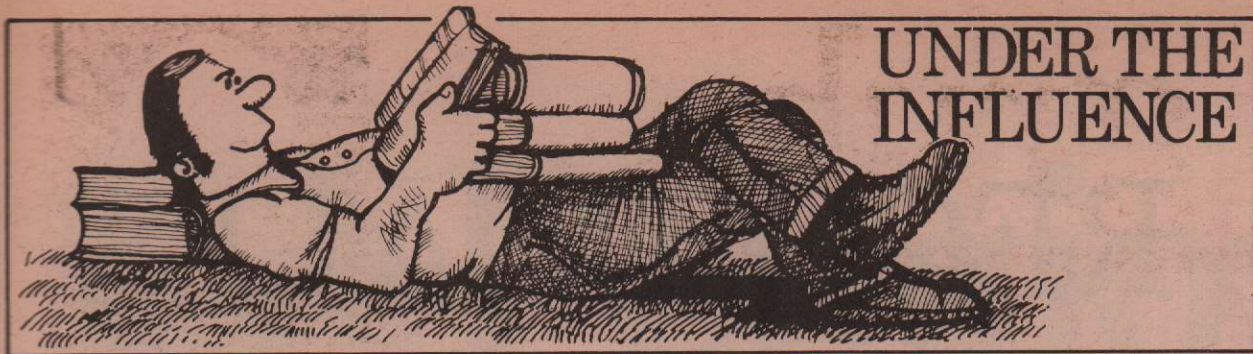


FROM SOCIALIST WORKER

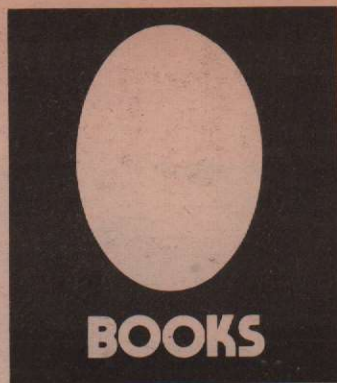
Two important pamphlets describing the life and political struggles of two great revolutionaries—Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

Written by Jim Higgins and Duncan Hallas, the pamphlets rescue Lenin and Trotsky from their political enemies and false friends and underscore the modern relevance of what they fought for: workers' revolution.

5p each plus 3p post. 12 copies or more post free: IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road London N4.



Harry Wicks has been a revolutionary socialist for as long as he can remember. A founder member of the Communist Party in 1920 and, with the Stalinist degeneration of the CP, a founder member of the British Left Trotskyist Opposition. Now a member of the International Socialists, Harry is still enthusiastically dedicated to building a party that can achieve socialism. He writes on Sean O'Casey's JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK.



Days on Battersea's Irish Island— and a West End night out

Nine of the best

OVER the hump of Dogs Home Bridge, Battersea, towards Nine Elms there was an area known as Irish Island. There, nudging against the river wharves, railway engine sheds, gasworks, stone-cutting yards and refuse tipping docks, were tenements and rows of houses where Battersea's Irish population lived and worked.

This area was one of the strongest bastions of militancy in London. It was these people that made possible the election of Saklatvala, the Indian Parsee Communist, to parliament as early as 1922.

At the time of the Black and Tan terror, I learned from an old railway signalman, Harry Manning, of the aspirations and struggles of the Irish workers for an Irish Republic. He told the story of that socialist woman, Charlotte Despard, who way back in 1910 had established on Irish Island a settlement that became the source of aid for the distressed, a meeting place for Irish social evenings, a centre where the St Joseph's boys band could play their Irish music.

From that centre flowed the ideas of class solidarity. Irish independence and the socialist message.

At the height of the civil war in Ireland, when the Black and Tan terror was at its peak, the idea of the solidarity of the Irish and British trade union movement found its clearest expression. An unofficial strike by the North Wall Dublin branch by the National Union of Railwaymen, refused to unload munitions and supplies for the army and Black and Tans. This resulted in the NUR executive urging the calling of a special conference by the TUC to consider the Irish question.

The conference, when it met, went on record for a truce in Ireland and the withdrawal of the British army. That sense of solidarity against the British government policy was echoed all through the labour movement in a way that swept aside sectarian barriers.



At that time Sinn Fein in this country was able to stage formidable and imposing demonstrations. I remember one such demo. It was connected with the hunger strike in Brixton Prison of Terence Mac Swinney, a republican militant and Mayor of Cork.

His hunger strike lasted 74 days and was to end only with his murder by the government. Those weeks of Mac Swinney's martyrdom evoked a passionate protest from the working people. From the tenements of Irish land, from the trade union branches of South London, the workers poured on to the assembly ground of Clapham Common for a great protest meeting and march to Brixton Prison.

Outside the prison a vast crowd stood silent and tense: Irish women and girls clutching their rosaries, big brawny trade unionists holding steady the poles of their framed banners, Catholics and Protestants, socialists and trade unionists, working men and women, their hearts beating in unison for that indomitable Irish republican on the other side of the prison wall determined, if need be, to die for the ideal of an Irish Republic.

Some four or five years later, after the Free State was established and the battle of the Four Courts a bad memory, I made my first trip to a West End theatre with those memories still buzzing in my head.

The occasion was the staging of Sean O'Casey's play Juno and the Paycock, set in the grim twilight following the birth of the Free State



HARRY WICKS

when its police was hounding down die-hard republicans. As the gates of Mountjoy Prison opened to release one section of the intrepid Irish fighters they closed to incarcerate another.

The whole play was set within the four walls of the living room of the Boyle family. Each detail was easily recognisable: the dingy room, a bed curtained off in one corner, the scrubbed table, the teapot on the hob, the clock on the mantelpiece that only worked lying on its face.

Within that room the characters revealed their grief or their jollity: pouring out their opinions on poverty, on soft republicans, the church, trade union principles, work, worry and the least reputable of their neighbours who attended all the republican funerals day by day and sat up all night making suits for the civic guards.

Mr and Mrs Boyle and their two children lived in just two rooms in their Dublin tenement. Mr Boyle or the Captain, as he was known, always had a song on his lips. He was

Sorry, Norman fans, but his latest adventure has fallen foul of the Christmas post.

a builder's labourer and had a healthy dislike for work—always sceptical of those promises that a job would be a cushy number once you get out of the footings.

He held the most far-ranging opinions on the subject of the 'world in chassis'. In his expansive moments, after a jar or two in Foley's snug with his buddy Joxer Daly, he talked of the trials of his sea-faring days when he had voyaged from the Gulf of Mexico to the Antarctic. This pleasurable fantasy was usually chopped down by his wife Juno, with the unwelcome reminder that his seafaring was limited to the collier run between Dublin and Liverpool.

Juno was the real backbone of the Boyle household. She often said of her husband: 'He wore out the Health Insurance long ago, he's after wearing out the unemployed dole, an' now, he's thryin' to wear me out.' Her life was spent trying to provide the food for the family's survival, frequently scouring the neighbourhood for a shop that would allow still more tick by paying a little off what you already owed.



The daughter, Mary, was on strike over the issue of victimisation, 'a principle's a principle', she would say. The son Johnny, who had received a bullet in the hip in Easter week 1915 and whose arm had been shattered by a bomb in O'Connell Street, was now a weed of a man, haunted by his disloyalty to a buddy also an irregular, whose bullet-ridden body had just been found.

Juno had more than a fair share of life's burdens, yet her spirit shone through all the discussions in that dingy room. Sometimes with bitter irony, often with cold logic, she would make her point, but she never

descended to mere denunciation.

Other visitors to the Boyle's living room added to the pathos of the play. Joxer Daly, the Captain's drinking buddy, almost his echo, never seemed to say something profound yet had a delightful, almost musical warmth and spontaneity.

Then there was Jerry, he was Mary's first lover. We have all met chaps like him. He was young, eager, a 'do-gooder', determined to make a way for himself, to get on in the union, to get a good job. Yet when the crunch came, despite all his declarations of undying love for Mary, when she told him she was pregnant he couldn't get out of the door fast enough.

On one occasion Juno met old Mrs Tancred on her way out of the tenement and offered her a shawl to protect her from the cold. At the door of the Boyles' she not only spoke of her grief, but of the agonising dilemma of life at the moment of the birth of the Free State.



Her son, Johnny's old buddy, had been the leader in the ambush that had killed her neighbour's son, who had been a soldier of the Free State forces. 'An, now here's the two of us out' women, standin' one on each side of the scales o' sorra, balanced be the bodies of our two dead darlin' sons.'

Coming out of the theatre that evening, impressed by the acting and the finely drawn characterisation, I observed the wealthy theatre patrons, hailing their own cars, taxis and even the odd 'growler', I wondered what they had made of such a play.

To me it reinforced my already formed socialist opinion that in the struggle for Connolly's Irish Republic, or social change in this or any other country, it is the workers of the tenements who are the motive force.

Only too often in history, when victory had been within grasp, it has been turned to some rotten compromise that has served the interest of the ruling class. To win the decisive victory we need not only the inflexible will of the Republican fighters, but even more, the scientific programme of the socialist revolution.

Me an' all me mates in a book

The best of the first two years

The adventures of OUR NORMAN by Evans

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All IS branches should take bulk orders and sell copies to Socialist Worker readers at work, on the estates, friends and relatives.

ASK YOUR SW SELLER TO GET YOU A COPY



FOR your Christmas buying, your January borrowing and your New Year's reading, here are some of the books Socialist Worker's reviewers enjoyed, were inspired by . . . and hated during 1973.

WORKING FOR FORD: Huw Benyon Penguin, 90p. 'A book to be read by all revolutionary socialists and certainly by all Ford workers. I can guarantee it will, in parts, bring tears to the eye, a lump to the throat, and anger to the breast. It will provoke laughter in places and a fierce pride in a struggling emergent trade unionism, that fights for its life against appalling odds—and slowly wins'. Tony Barrow.

ROSA LUXEMBURG: Paul Frolich Pluto Press £1.50. 'If you are one of the many people with not much time for reading, and not much money for books—buy this one. It is crammed full of the history, traditions and inspirations of our movement. And it is a joy to read.' Valerie Clark

THE UNKNOWN MAYHEW: Edited by E P Thompson and Eileen Yeo Penguin £1. 'Henry Mayhew who died in 1887 was one of our greatest social journalists. To read Mayhew is to experience, almost at first hand, the living reality behind the theories of Marx and Engels and the fiction of Dickens, Mrs Gaskell and Kingsley.' Robert Giddings.

ALL BULL edited by B S Johnson Quartet 50p. 'National Service . . . Well it turned me from a soggy social democrat into a fully fledged revolutionary. It also taught me to fire a rifle. It's an ill wind . . . ' Roger Protz.

ANEURIN BEVAN 1945-1960: Michael Foot, Davis-Poynter £6.50 'He sought power so that he could give it to the workers . . . But you will not find it in councils and parliaments and you cannot grasp it and give it away.' Jim Higgins.

BIRD LIVES: Ross Russell, Quartet £1.75 'The tragedy of Charlie Parker was that his burning desire for change, musically, economically and politically was ahead of his time . . . the best political book I have read this year.' Roger Protz.

BURY MY HEART AT WOUND-ED KNEE: Dee Brown Pan Books. 'Just over 100 years ago the American West was peopled by a peaceful race of migratory hunters—the 'Red' Indians. 30 years later there were scarley 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.' Martin Tomkinson.

UNEMPLOYED STRUGGLES 1919-1936: Wal Hannington E P Publishers £3.50. 'Join me in raising your next pint to the memory of that generation of unemployed leaders.' Harry Wicks.

THE GENERAL STRIKE: Christopher Farman Hart-Davis £3.50. 'The trade union leaders of 1926 were as left wing, if not more so, than any of today's trade union leaders. But like today's leaders, they did not see any real connection between the activities of their unions within capitalist society and the smashing of that society to bring socialism. Instead they saw the essential task of trade unionism as to build their strength gradually, forcing more and more concessions from the system and in the meantime to enable themselves to become more powerful and get more prestige'. Chris Harman.

All books reviewed in Socialist Worker can be obtained by post from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. When ordering, please add 7p for postage and packing.

Stuff the grub, stuff the mayor



THE YEAR OF THE TORTURER
World in Action ITV 10.30pm
Tuesday 11 December.

IT IS said one school of Russian anarchists used always to remove mattress and blankets from any bed, so as to prepare their bodies for the inevitable bare boards of a Tzarist prison cot.

Today socialists in a growing number of countries must face the fact that if arrested they will face a torturer. Preparation now consists of learning to face electrodes, body beatings, days without sleep, and nights spent in motionless positions which become impossible to bear.

The victims of torture filmed by World In Action were terrified by their own weakness, the terror that they might give in, name names just to have the pain stop.

After two days of torture in a Brazilian torture centre, a Dominican priest began to sharpen a tin lid in order to kill himself. He continued to sharpen it even after the pleas of the prisoner next door who had been worse treated and had his testicles crushed.

He wanted to kill himself in case he might betray people—who would then be tortured too.

General Massu, brought into Algiers as head of the French paratroopers, specifically to use torture to smash Algerian freedom fighters, was interviewed in his government office. His enthusiasm for physical interrogation had been 'exaggerated', he insisted.

Right-wing 'counter-insurgency' expert Richard Clutterbuck was very English. We don't really like torture very much here old man, he said. Messy and doesn't work half the time. Gives the army chappies a bad name if you don't look out.



Massu—Algeria's torturer

The question World in Action couldn't begin to answer although it appeared by the end to have asked every expert in existence is why is it happening? The new extremism of the centre is very hard for liberals. They still want to believe in what someone on the programme called 'the liberal humanist tradition' but apparently to defend that tradition it is now necessary to encase people in black felt hoods, stand them against a wall with their feet apart and deafen them with constant meaningless noise.

If only one of the experts had said simply, 'Torture, like inflation, is one aspect of the capitalist system's general instability. It is inevitable as long as a ruling class exists and will get worse as they feel more threatened.'

Instead we had retired psychiatrists explaining the Moscow Trials by Pavlov's dog experiments and a lot of 'balanced' lies about alleged torture in North Vietnam (why the North Vietnamese don't immediately lynch any napalm bomber who parachutes down has always been a mystery to me).

World in Action's attempt to revive liberal feeling on torture is a curious mixture of hard, unfoiled, journalism and the most feeble politics. Are we really supposed to switch off the TV and appeal to world public opinion, as the programme advocated?

There seems rather a low chance of the operatives in police academies of Latin America packing away their electrodes if we write to our MPs. What's needed is a frank taking up of sides and an understanding of quite what the dimensions of the struggle actually are.

DAVID WIDGERY

ALL TRUE and loyal Britons will be greatly relieved to know that the 'national' belt tightening exercise has not spread to those who keep making the speeches calling for the belt to be pulled tighter still.

Over the past fortnight there have been hundreds upon hundreds of Christmas beans for those with wealth, power and position. At these great feasts have been laid on accompanied by much wine and not a little speechifying.

The other week at London's magnificent Savoy Hotel respected medical gentlemen had a beano. 500 of them met to give the loyal toast and to raise their glasses high to the



assorted merchant bankers on the top table. The bankers who give the odd endowment to the hospitals, the better to preen their feathers of respectability.

The audience were doctors in the main 'nice' men with useful jobs. Just part of the professional elite who feel that all the world should be a family, with genteel merchant bankers at the top, healthy, respectful slaves at the bottom—and themselves, the ministering angels, in between.

Lord Thomson of Fleet, owner of dozens of newspapers and many millions of pounds, is the after-dinner speaker. He is introduced with his full flush of honorary degrees—bought by dropping the odd few bob into the coffers of educational charities. Having eaten like a pig, he spoke like a businessman.

He spoke mainly of the merits of

Mao's China with the passion he normally reserves for balance sheets: 'I'm no communist, you understand.' (Knowing laughter) 'But I sure liked the way they had things organised over there. Everything was very clean, people very hard working, no trouble with strikes or anything like that.'

In the wake of Lord Thomson's offering, the Mayor of Camden, a Labour man, rose to speak. He told some lousy jokes and blustered a little about the state of the health service.

Then, not a little confused, he started talking. He asked what the hell had happened that people should be sitting in the Savoy stuffing themselves when the Council, through lack of funds, was unable to keep school dinners up to standard, when old people were once again being brought in dead because they could not afford the food and heat to keep themselves alive. 'What's gone wrong?' he said. 'What's gone wrong?'



As he spoke, some of the well brought up concerned doctors, the tenders of the sick, started drumming their silver knives on the tables to drown what he was saying. The mayor—and reality—was 'out of order'. One woman, neck choked with anger shrieked out: 'Somebody stop that man.'

Nothing was out of order at the Dorchester last week at Sir Edwin McAlpine's annual Christmas lunch. The food as ever was magnificent. It had to be—the McAlpine's built and own the Dorchester.

The great crisis did not prevent a bevy of government ministers being among the 700 men in attendance, though sadly the Prime Minister was unable to make it. He had to cry off at the last minute and fit in a lunch with Dr Kissinger, the man who won a Nobel Peace Prize and helped to set up the Watergate Plumbers gang.



There were plenty of fine important men there at this glittering occasion, the highpoint of the big businessman's calendar. Here were the McAlpine's 'useful people', lords, knights, chairmen of nationalised industries, newspaper proprietors. Together they ate and drank to celebrate another successful year of operations and make unspoken vows that they will meet 1974 with the same singular unity and sense of unity and determination.

Regrettably it has proved impossible to obtain a copy of this year's menu or this year's guest list. Security has been especially tight these last two years since a little newspaper published a report of how the 700 swallowed La Friande de Perdreaux 'True Love' washed down with many bottles of Chateau Rancan Gassies (fizzy stuff at £50 a bottle).

Even more appalling as far as McAlpine's were concerned was the fact that the paper published a list of some of those worthies who did the swallowing. A wry comment was added: 'Anyone who can hold a private party and make it virtually impossible to get a Cabinet quorum cannot be without influence or friends.'

If the Mayor of Camden really wants to find out what's gone wrong and why, the waiters or the charladies at the Dorchester might just be able to tell him.

LAURIE FLYNN



'Z' is a political thriller, set on a 'Mediterranean island' (in fact Greece). Based on the 1964 assassination of Lambrakis, a left wing Greek MP (Yves Montand). On BBC-2, 28 December, and worth seeing.

PREVIEW

SUNDAY: BBC-1. Film matinee is John Huston's RED BADGE OF COURAGE, set in US civil war.* RADIO-4 has excerpts from HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR.*

CHRISTMAS EVE: BBC-2. Laurence Olivier stars as Heathcliff in Hollywood's version of Emily Bronte's classic WUTHERING HEIGHTS.* While the Marx Brothers' NIGHT IN CASABLANCA is on BBC-1.* CHRISTMAS DAY: BBC-2. As a post-script to the Hardy series the film FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD, from Thomas Hardy's novel, with Julie Christie.*

BOXING DAY: BBC-2. Rod Steiger stars in comedy NO WAY TO TREAT A LADY.*

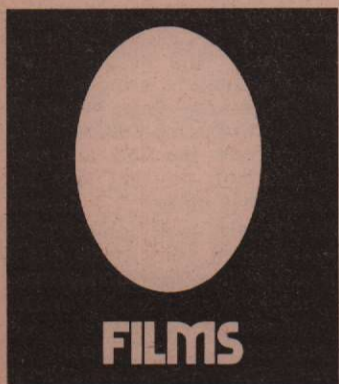
THURSDAY: BBC-1. Charlie Chaplin stars in MODERN TIMES, a film made 30 years ago, man against the machine, and as up to date as ever.*

FRIDAY: BBC-2. 9.05pm. The music of Jake Thackery is featured in film, about THE YORKSHIRE DALES. Also on BBC-2 'Z' (see above). Marxist critic John Berger is on ART AND THE REVOLUTION on Radio-3.*

IF you want the remains of your Christmas spirit firmly evaporated then a look at the TV advance publicity material will do the trick. 'Glories of music, literature and the Nativity with a sensational star cast headed by the lovely PRINCESS GRACE to be networked immediately before Her Majesty the Queen's Christmas Day speech... ideal mood setter for the holiday... crazy collection of gag-cracking comics... joyous setting embodying the true meaning of the festival... melody and mirth show... crazy gagsters... time for the young in heart... Birth of God's Son... Dickensian Christmas surely the very epitome of the traditional British Yuletide... enough artificial snow to cover the studio floor area to a depth of several inches... live animals including a Bacterian camel, sheep, dogs, horses, cows, donkey, dogs... delightful Dora Bryan...'

CHRISTMAS HORROR AS GAGSTERS, ANIMALS, PRINCESS GRACE AND HM THE QUEEN BURIED IN ARTIFICIAL SNOW DRIFT would be a headline the previewer would dearly like to see...

Meanwhile back at the Workhouse (the very epitome of a Dickensian Yuletide)—a selection of some of the material, mainly the films and relying on pre-'crisis' TV and radio schedules...



WOMEN are discriminated against. This applies to industry, the home—and television and films.

The London based Women's Film Collective is an attempt to get past this. On one level it is active in trying to bring about change within the film-makers union—the ACTT. They have met with some success, with the support of women outside the collective.

The union has set up an enquiry to investigate discrimination within the industry. 'The fact is that women can't learn the basic technical skills because of discrimination,' said a member of the Collective. 'The old excuse was that things like cameras were too heavy for women to handle—with the equipment made nowadays that alibi, which was always weak has disappeared.'

Apart from fighting within the union the group have also been making their own films. 'We rotate the work' they pointed out. 'One week a person may be the director, or operate the camera, next they will be an assistant, it has worked very well.'

The films the group have produced up to now have all been shorts, and have been mainly concerned with working women. They are currently finishing a colour feature film on equal pay based on a production written for the Technicians union TASS by the Women's Street Theatre Group.

The films listed below are available from the Other Cinema (12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2). The collective prefer to send a representative with the film when they are shown.

MINERS STRIKE—BETTESHANGER 1972 (12 minutes). About the organisation of wives in support of the strike at the Kent colliery.

MISS/MRS (6 minutes). Uses music and images to show the differences between women's aspirations—and the reality... WOMEN OF RHONDDA (20 minutes). Is a discussion among various women talking about their experiences and organisation in the working class battles of the 1920s and 1930s.

SERVE AND OBEY (3 minutes). Schoolgirls comparing their education with the one that boys get.

FAKENHAM OCCUPATION (10 minutes). Deals with the 1972 factory occupation by women in Norfolk.

THE UNIONS

Airport workers turn off the GAS

by DAVID BEECHAM

'MY ATTITUDE to politics is much like that of a monk towards sex', says Tory judge John Donaldson of the Industrial Relations Court. In that case working people can only shout 'Stop the mad rapist'.

From Pentonville to James Goad, from the railwaymen to Con-Mech, the NIRC has acted consistently in support of the Tories and the employing class. The latest case, General Aviation Services versus the Transport Union, is just the same.

The story goes back to August 1969, when the British Airports Authority, gave GAS a baggage handling concession at London Airport. GAS, a Canadian company, intended to set up in competition with the state-owned companies at the airport.

London Airport baggage-handlers and their shop stewards on the joint liaison committee were immediately worried about the safety of their jobs. The redundancies from the closure of British Eagle in 1968 were still fresh in their minds. From the start airport workers took action against GAS in an attempt to protect their jobs.

The union officials involved—among them John Cousins of the Transport Workers and Mark Young of the Electricians—tried to cool things down. They reached an 'understanding' with GAS and the airports authority. This was condemned by the stewards on the joint liaison committee, who decided to 'black' GAS indefinitely.

The employers reacted by taking out an injunction against Ian Stuart, chairman of the liaison committee. Eleven thousand airport workers met on 16 March 1970 at Brentford football stadium and decided to continue blacking GAS.

A committee of inquiry was then appointed. It whitewashed the employers.

All through 1970 and 1971 the workers and their stewards held firm and called for the nationalisation of the baggage-handling service. But on 1 November 1971, GAS took a contract with Iberia Airlines of Spain. The stewards called a mass meeting.

The employers sent in their own police force, with dogs, to break up the 2000-strong meeting. The men struck for three days and despite



DONALDSON: Sex and politics

legal threats against the stewards the employers did not win.

The employers were especially annoyed by the pickets put on refuelling Iberia Airlines planes. All it needed was for one or two men to demonstrate to the tanker drivers there was a picket and the plane was blacked. A picket on the office of the manager meant a picket on the planes.

The employers were worn down. Iberia gave in. So did the Saudi Arabian airline, which was on the verge of employing GAS services.

A long struggle by the rank and file in defence of jobs and against the carve-up of baggage-handling at Heathrow ended with the defeat of GAS and the British Airports Authority. As with the dockers' fight to protect their livelihoods, the TGWU officials stood on the sidelines.

Defence

The next move from GAS was to go to the NIRC for damages. And when the TGWU was summoned to appear on 20 November, the union's defence was marked by their lawyer's attempts to show that really the union had nothing to do with the blacking. The TGWU officials might call this a defence—airport workers

will have other words for it.

Now the NIRC is doing its worst on behalf of the employers. The blacking has been described as a breach of contract and an 'unfair industrial practice'. Compensation is to be assessed on the basis of GAS going out of business. It is unlikely to be less than £100,000 and could be as high as £250,000. The 'non-political' NIRC certainly chooses who to be non-political to, and how much it costs.

It is clear that the TGWU intends to pay the compensation. The union lawyer even tried to bargain about the amount of money and claimed that other unions should pay their whack. This is what 'defending yourself at the NIRC' really means: 'Please don't just cut our throat, Sir. Get the Electricians Union as well'.

Reject

But though the full-time officials may be prepared to knuckle under at the NIRC, the rank and file are not. Airport stewards have continually said that they are opposed to the union appearing at the NIRC. This case once again indicates their stand.

The NIRC and its masters have said they intend to bring the unions to heel over the issue. The Tories intend to force the union bureaucracy to attack the rank and file. If they will not do that then more fines will be coming.

The answer must come loud and clear from every trade unionist, not just those in the TGWU.

TGWU, AUEW and other union branches must demand that their union executives go on the offensive against the Industrial Relations Act and give an official lead for a real fight against the fines.

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.

Why Hull dockers settled in Phase 3

by CHRIS RUSSELL

LATE last month Hull dockers became the first group of dockers to accept a pay deal within the Tory government's Phase Three.

The employers' revised offer was a meagre extra 1 per cent, giving dockers only £3.35 more a week before tax and deductions, never mind the rising cost of living, take their cut. Also included in the deal is an agreement to negotiate a productivity deal early in the New Year.

The deal marks a sad retreat by the shop stewards' committee and can only weaken the campaign for a national minimum increase of 20 per cent for all dockers.

Until the acceptance of the offer Hull dockers had been at the forefront of the fight for a 20 per cent rise, a demand later taken up nationally by the National Port Shop Stewards Committee. One day a week throughout November the Hull docks were at a standstill as dockers launched lightning strikes to back up their claim.

But now some dockers feel that it was all a waste of time since the present rise could have been won at the start. Now there is frustration and confusion in the Hull docks, though the men, to their great credit, supported the unofficial one-day strike on 3 December.

The vote for acceptance of the wage offer at the stewards' meeting was 13 votes to five. At the mass meeting the margin was much narrower—with 40 men voting against for every 60 in favour.

How is it that the same leaders on the Hull docks who organised the militant flying pickets which closed the blackleg wharves on the Trent and the Ouse, who fought every inch of the way against the attentions of the police and the National Industrial Relations Court,

backed off on the wages issue?

Roy Garmston, a member of National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers and Hull organiser for The Dockworker, the dockers' rank and file paper, was the only man at Hull mass meeting to speak out against the deal.

'It's a reflection of the sort of leadership that both the local and national officers offer. They do not wish to get involved in politics,' said Roy.

'When Dave Shenton, the TGWU district organiser, called for acceptance of the deal he said we were facing an impossible task in the present political situation. He referred to the fight against the Industrial Relations Bill and the Housing Finance Act as proof of the hopeless situation that now faces workers. Shenton was a prophet of doom and despair and offered no hope.

Unofficial

Instead he managed to congratulate the negotiators on the case they had built up. He had given similar flowery tributes to the negotiators of Devlin Phase Two—which set up the temporary unattached register, and later had to be fought by the unofficial port shop stewards committee.

'The present leadership is not prepared to fight but instead promises that once the next Labour government has removed the Tory wage laws and the Industrial Relations Act all will be rosy again.

The part of the new deal which includes more scope for productivity dealing wasn't spelt out at the mass

meeting. Shenton only referred to "giving more scope for better use of manpower."

'In the past 12 months, productivity in the Hull docks has gone up by a third. On the stevedoring side of the industry it would be impossible to bring in more mechanisation, so talk of increasing productivity means cutting back on manning still further.

Initiative

'The biggest threat to the unofficial National Port Shop Stewards Committee is the union bureaucracy itself. After its success in summer 1972 in the campaign against the unregistered depots and wharves, Jones and O'Leary took fright.

'But in the anti-climax following these battles the union bureaucrats have regained the initiative. After the Jones-Aldington report came out not one of the members of the committee wanted to accept it. But it was very difficult to win back the leadership in a dispute once the officials are intent on selling out.

'It was after this that several militants, mainly from the London Royal group of docks, launched The Dockworker. If we had had it earlier during our unofficial action, we could have countered the lies of the millionaire press. If the Hull Port Shop Stewards Committee became more involved in the paper, sent in regular reports and helped distribute it, it could only benefit our struggle.

'In any fight to defend jobs dockers must call on the support of all workers affected in the industry, including crane drivers and the lorry-drivers who until now have stood apart.

'We have proved in the past that mass unofficial action can win major break-throughs for all sections.



NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION!

DAVE PEERS, national secretary of IS, issued the following call to all IS members on Monday:

During the next few weeks millions of workers will be involved in struggles against two-day lock-outs and redundancies, and the miners and railwaymen are approaching the crunch in their battle with the government. No section of the working class will be immune from the effects of the crisis.

This is a situation which presents IS with unparalleled opportunities and which demands a maximum response from our organisation at every level. Every IS branch and every individual member will have to gear up their level of activity and turn this into a period of mass recruitment.

Meetings should be organised at factory gates, on the housing estates, at the dole queues where there are mass lock-outs—

anywhere where there are workers gathered together.

Socialist Worker should be the spearhead of this drive. Every branch should increase their order for the paper, every member—no matter how long he or she has been in IS—must take extra copies to sell in their place of work, and sympathisers should be asked to take extra copies.

As a matter of urgency, branches and districts should call special meetings to organise these activities.

Above all, we should attempt to win workers in struggle to IS on the basis that we are a fighting organisation who can give a lead in this situation. The offensive by the Tories needs to be answered by a counter-offensive by the workers, and an effective counter-offensive requires the political leadership of a revolutionary party.

Building the party is now the central issue and there has never been a time when the circumstances were so favourable for us to accomplish this task.

WALTHAM FOREST IS public meeting: Whose crisis? Workers v government. Speakers: A member of NUM and Bob Light (TGWU). Thursday 10 January, 8pm, Rose and Crown, Hoe Street, Walthamstow, London E17.

WALTHAM FOREST IS demonstration: 3 days work for 5 days pay. Saturday 12 January, assemble Leyton Green, 2.30pm. Rally and speakers.

WALTHAM FOREST IS party day: Saturday 26 January. Watch this space for details.

CENTRAL LONDON IS district social: Saturday 22 December, 8pm onwards, Mother Red Cap pub (opposite Camden Town tube station). Bar extension to midnight, dancing—admission 40p.

LONDON IS EPTU Fraction School: Duncan Hallas on the history of the union. Sunday 13 January, 12 noon, at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. All IS EPTU members invited.

NORTH LONDON IS New Year Social: Saturday 5 January, 7pm-1am, The Nightingale, 349 High Road, Wood Green (Wood Green tube) 123 and 29 buses). Admission 50p.

IS CIVIL SERVANTS: There will be a national fraction meeting in London on Saturday 5 January. More details later.

NOTICES

DEWSBURY IS Christmas Raffle: Winning numbers—4612 first prize, 0129 second prize, 4730 third prize. Proceeds to Fighting Fund.

ECONOMISTS WANTED, budding or in bloom. The IS Party Training and Publications Committee (formerly EPCS) wishes to recreate an Economists Group to service IS with educational material, perspectives, propaganda and research. Interested IS members should contact the committee through Jim Kincaid, 11 Moseley Wood View, Leeds 16 (phone Leeds 671820). Willingness to work seriously on economic questions more important than formal qualification or extensive knowledge.

IS BOOKSHOP will be open on Monday 24 December, and will close from 25 December to 2 January.

POSTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS of Lenin urgently needed for exhibition on his life and work. Anyone able to help please contact Eve Barker at 01-485 0476.

SW (LITHO) PRINTERS need studio assistants. Neat, clean working essential, and some experience of printing and/or graphics an advantage. Please apply in writing to Jim Nichol, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

LATEST ISSUE of Building Worker, paper of IS building workers, now out. Articles on the North Wales 24, the blacklist, and reports from the sites. 3p plus 3p postage (12 or more copies post free) from Building Worker, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

1974 membership registration. All IS members should re-register their membership as of 1 January. Contact branch secretaries for details and 1974 membership cards.

XWORD ANSWERS

Word search grid with answers: PARTIES, WINDY, SPINACH, REE, ITH, STRAWS, ADORE, TEE, IUS, ESCOLT, SMALARIAL, OTIS, ANRI, RVS, SPINE, LASSIE, MEEG, UN, DICTATE, SPOCK, CEOD, SH, REDDING

International Socialists start crisis campaign

EVEN before IS national secretary Dave Peers issued his call, IS branches all over the country had swung into action.

In BIRMINGHAM, a special emergency meeting was called for all members in the district. In spite of the short notice, 70 people attended. Chris Harman, from the IS executive, spoke on the crisis, and Granville Williams, IS Birmingham organiser, outlined the tasks for the organisation in the area.

Teams were picked for plastering

IN BRIEF

MERSEYSIDE:-More than 100 people attended a Support the Miners meeting in the Strand Hotel, Liverpool, to hear Terry Bristow, lodge committee member at Dodsworth Colliery.

Last Friday the Merseyside District of IS held a district social, attended by more than 200 members and friends. Brian Owen, from the Tower Hill Tenants Committee, who was released from prison that day, was the guest of honour.

IPSWICH:-More than 60 people attended a public meeting organised by Ipswich IS and heard Paul Foot speak about Heath's crisis and how to solve it. Six people joined IS at the meeting.

SOUTH WALES:-Sales of Socialist Worker in the pits were heavily boosted by last week's feature on the miners at Morlais Colliery. The lodge committee at Morlais ordered and sold 100 copies, 65 were sold at Cynheidir and 75 in three other pits—Graig Merthyr, Cwm Gwilli and Brinlliw.

SHEFFIELD:-IS members are maintaining pit sales of more than 200 copies of Socialist Worker a week. The branch is carrying out a poster campaign and increasing paper sales on estates, at factories and steelworks. After the Christmas holidays a series of public meetings are planned.

TEESSIDE:-A successful day school, attended by 25 IS members, heard Duncan Hallas speak on the present crisis. On Thursday, the branch held a public meeting on 'Whose Crisis?' Arthur Affleck, a leading Teesside steelworker, was the main speaker.

LEEDS:-The IS district committee sponsored a bazaar last Saturday to raise funds for IS organisation in the city. The bazaar, which was organised by Sheila Parkin and Linda Burgon, was attended by more than 1000 people during the day, and raised £175 after all expenses had been paid.

the city with the special Socialist Worker 'Blame the Bosses' poster, and a meeting was fixed for next Thursday at which Vic Tambling and Granville Williams will speak on 'What the crisis is really about'.

The meeting resolved to carry out a big campaign in the New Year, leading up to a mass Socialist Worker rally on 20 January.

'Heath is trying to do with the national crisis what he could not do with the National Industrial Relations Court,' says a leaflet being widely

distributed by MANCHESTER IS members.

The leaflet is the first shot in a massive campaign planned by Manchester IS district committee. A series of bulletins explaining the case for 'Work or Full Pay' will be distributed in textile and engineering factories and a day of action is planned for this Saturday, with leafleting, public meetings and Socialist Worker sales in the crowded streets.

All 15 Manchester IS branches have increased their orders for

Socialist Worker.

The GLASGOW area political committee issued a written statement to all members calling them to an emergency meeting on 28 December at 12 noon. Within hours of the special poster arriving, 1000 were pasted up in factories and on selected sites in the city. The latest issue of Socialist Worker was completely sold out, and all Glasgow branches are increasing their order.

Said Steve Jeffreys, Scottish IS organiser: 'We intend to launch an offensive inside the factories to beat the Tory lock-out.'

Likewise, the MERSEYSIDE IS district committee has summoned an emergency meeting of all members early in the New Year. Leaflets have already gone out for a special meeting—'Whose Crisis?'—to be addressed by Roger Rosewell, IS district organiser. 'We will be arranging day schools and meetings for any members and close contacts who are locked out,' he said.

In COVENTRY, a special meeting of the IS district committee met to discuss a campaign to involve every IS member to the maximum to bang home the politics of the organisation. Regular street meetings will be held every Saturday, and 1000 posters will be posted in Coventry factories. 1000 copies of Socialist Worker were quickly sold out last week, and orders from city and factory branches have been substantially increased.

Labour chairman joins IS

THE chairman of Twickenham East Ward Labour Party, Elmo Eustace, has resigned and joined IS. In a statement published by local papers, he accuses the Labour Party of being ready to sacrifice its socialist image and working-class supporters to middle-class trends and professional politicians capable, he suspects, of doing a deal with the Liberals, but

incapable of backing socialist phrases with necessary action, such as land nationalisation to defeat property speculators.

In IS, he says, he is joining an organisation pledged to socialist planning under workers' control, internationalism, and struggle against all Tory attacks on trade unions and workers' living standards.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

CRISIS: BLAME THE BOSSES!

Who caused fuel shortage?

The oil companies. They knew that cheap Middle East oil couldn't last forever. But the oil brought quicker, bigger profits than coal or nuclear power. They forced governments to close down the pits. In the last 25 years, half a million miners lost their jobs. They forced governments to close down factories. In the last 25 years, 400,000 workers lost their jobs. They insisted on low wages for the miners and the railwaymen who remained. Now we need coal. We need railways. We need nuclear and solar power. But the oil companies and their puppet governments have sabotaged them all.



Miner in a coal-mining district. Seeing his face at work, Tony Matthews was shocked.

Who caused economic crisis?

The Tory government. They told us that Phase One of wage freeze would stop prices rising. It didn't. They told us that Phase Two of wage freeze would stop prices rising. It didn't. 'We've had a year of wage freeze. We've got the biggest price rises and the biggest balance of payments deficit since the war. While workers sacrificed their wage increases Duncan Sandys, former Tory Minister, was making millions in the Cayman Islands. Lord Lambton, Tory Minister, was buying up at £50 a time. Harry Hyams, empty London office blocks now in value by hundreds of millions pounds.

Why the three day week?

Because the government want us, the workers, to pay for their crisis. They will not touch the profits of oil companies or property tycoons. At the same time, they want to stay in power. So they are trying to turn us against each other.

What is to be done?

1. STRIKE HARD—STRIKE TOGETHER. The best method of defence is attack. The miners have done it since 1926. If you won't pay a full week's wages, we won't work at all. Demand: WORK OR FULL PAY!

2. DON'T BE AFRAID OF VICTORY! Don't give them a penny, but their crisis. Tell them straight: If you won't pay a full week's wages, we won't work at all. Demand: WORK OR FULL PAY!

3. DON'T BE AFRAID OF VICTORY! Don't give them a penny, but their crisis. Tell them straight: If you won't pay a full week's wages, we won't work at all. Demand: WORK OR FULL PAY!

The Socialist Worker poster that explains who is behind the crisis

MORNING STAR REFUSES RALLY ADVERT

THE Morning Star is forever complaining about the refusal of government departments to give it advertisements, so Socialist Worker is surprised to report that the Star has turned down £24 of good advertisement money—especially when the advert, if published, would have brought some comfort over Christmas to the families of the defendants at the Shrewsbury pickets trial.

Early in December, Jim Nichol, who arranged this week's concert for the Shrewsbury 24 families, went to

the Star with a cheque for £24 to pay for an advert for the concert. It was to go into 10 issues.

On 6 December he had a letter from Peter Pink, the Star's advertising manager, asking for the names of the speakers at the meeting. Jim replied with the names. On 10 December, Pink wrote again, asking what response Jim had had from the Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee to his request for speakers. The advert had not yet appeared.

Eventually, Paul Foot rang George Matthews, editor of the Morning Star,

who explained his reluctance to print the advert: 'I gather you have not yet approached the Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee about your concert, and we owe a responsibility to our readers.'

So Laurie Flynn rang William Regan, secretary of the defence committee meeting last Wednesday. On Thursday he told Laurie that his committee would not be sponsoring the concert—we never asked them to— or sending speakers.

'But what is put in the Morning Star is a matter between yourselves

and the Morning Star,' he said.

The same day Paul Foot rang George Matthews again to tell him of the committee's reaction. George promised to look into the matter sympathetically.

Last Friday Paul Foot had a letter from him enclosing the cheque. He had again discussed the advert with colleagues, he wrote.

'We feel that in the light of what you told me it would be inadvisable for us to publish the advertisements, and I am enclosing your cheque herewith.'

The Tory Crisis: countrywide reports on the growing fight

600 MARCHERS BACK MINERS AND RAILMEN

GLASGOW:—More than 600 trade unionists and socialists braved a snowstorm on Saturday to demonstrate against Phase Three and the Industrial Relations Act and show solidarity with the miners, powerworkers, railwaymen and ambulancemen now fighting it.

Mike McGahey, Scottish miners' president warned Heath at the meeting that ended the march: 'You can have no coal and Phase Three, or you can have coal and no Phase Three—but you can't have both.'

But the unity of the demonstrators was marred by an ugly piece of witch-hunting conducted in the name of the Scottish TUC by two Communist Party members, James Milne, assistant general secretary of the Scottish TUC, and John Reidford, secretary of Glasgow Trades Council. As the demonstration was assembling Reidford moved to the rear of the march where nearly 100 marchers were behind the banners of the International Marxist Group and

by Steve Jefferys

International Socialists, and told the police there were to be no political banners on the march.

This was the first time since May Day 1968 that any attempt to enforce bans and proscriptions on a labour movement demonstration has been attempted in Glasgow. Then Reidford had pointed out several IS and the Young-Communist League to the police as being 'undesirables' who should be arrested.

When Reidford was asked on Sat-

urday who was responsible for the decision he first replied that it was the Scottish TUC and then said it was Jimmy Milne. Several members of the general council of the Scottish TUC denied that any such decision had been taken by them, and Milne refused to confirm or deny that he had taken the decision himself.

But he did say: 'You revolutionary socialists are a bigger threat to the working class than you are to the capitalists.' Reidford said: 'You give trade unionists a bad image. We know who causes all the trouble—you shouldn't be on the demonstration at all.'

Many socialists on the demonstration were surprised that no Communist Party banners were even brought to the assembly point. One of the leaflets calling for support for the demonstration indicated that political banners would be banned. The revolutionary contingent refused to accept this arbitrary and undemocratic decision and kept their banners up.

DISGUST

When the march moved off the police under Reidford's instructions moved a van between them and the trade union banners and produced the absurd situation where one sixth of the demonstration marched 150 yards behind the rest.

Many Communist Party members expressed their disgust at the behaviour of two of their members and said they would raise the issue within the Party. Many other trade unionists also expressed their concern at this reintroduction of bans and proscriptions, and will be sending their protests to the Glasgow Trades Council and the Scottish TUC.

Firemen back ITT factory occupation

GLASGOW:—Every fire station in the city has given financial support to the 300 workers occupying the Maclaren Controls factory in Kingston, now in their ninth week in dispute.

The round-the-clock occupation started on Tuesday last week when it became clear that parent company, the giant International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT), was trying to shift vital machinery out of the factory. Maclaren Controls have a near-monopoly on gas thermostats in Britain. ITT seems out to weaken or destroy shop-floor organisation there in preparation for closing down, and moving production to a bigger plant, possibly in Germany.

The strike began over the refusal of the company to offer wage rises allowed under Phase Three. The workers, all Engineering Union members, demanded rises of £2.25 and £2.50 for semi-skilled and skilled men and £5.27 for women. Two-thirds of the workers in the factory are women, and since 1970 the only move ITT has made towards equal pay is a 25p a week rise in October. The women's basic rate is only £20.29 a week.

On Monday the entire workforce received a letter from the managing director telling them they were sacked and demanding that 'the premises must be vacated immediately.'

The threat of the sack is a very common ITT tactic. As one shop steward told me as we stood by the warmth of a furnace, drinking tea brewed in the improvised canteen: 'Most of the girls have used their letters to light cigarettes.'

Since the occupation began financial and moral support as well as deliveries of supplies to the workers have begun rolling in. Continued support is vital to the winning of the battle. So too is the building of links with the other 70,000 ITT workers in Britain, which has already started with the STC factory in East Kilbride.

Donations and messages of support to: V Kennedy, 45 Hollybrook Street, Glasgow G42 7EJ.

How 'lefts' sold out the rent strikers

LIVERPOOL:—Rent striker Brian Owen, after more than a week in Walton Prison, said when he was released last week that it had only strengthened his opposition to the Tory government's vicious Housing Finance Act.

For more than 14 months hundreds of tenants on Tower Hill Estate, Kirkby, have been on total rent strike in protest at £2-a-week rent increases, but on Sunday they reluctantly called it off.

Tony Boyle, secretary of the Tower Hill Action Committee, told Socialist Worker: 'Two weeks ago two tenants—Larry Doyle and Brian Owen—were arrested and jailed in Walton Prison. They were sent there by the Liverpool County Court for refusing to allow an Attachment of Earnings Order to be made. This order would have compulsorily deducted their rent and arrears from their wages.'

'The judge accused them and 12 other tenants of 'contempt' but in the event only two of us were jailed.'

'As soon as Larry and Brian were grabbed we toured all over Merseyside appealing for industrial support to force their release. With one exception—Anglia Papers in Kirkby—we got knocked back everywhere we went.'

'Sometimes we were told that it was too near Christmas to do anything and on other occasions that we would get support only if we were on a partial rent strike instead of a total one. The most important reason for the lack of support, however, was not excuses like these but the deliberate opposition of the Labour Party and the Communist Party. Neither gave us any help at all.'

Jailed

'Throughout the time that Brian Owen was jailed we got no help from the local Labour Party or any of the so-called "left-wingers" in it. Local supporters of the paper Militant attacked us and neither Tribune or Labour Weekly ever mentioned that tenants were being jailed for upholding Labour Party Conference policy.'

'We sent a telegram to Harold Wilson, who is our local MP, and never got a reply.'

'The Communist Party was just as bad,' said Tony Boyle.

'During the crisis we never saw or heard from the Communist Party. Whenever we had demonstrations they were always absent. We never received any messages of support from them or offers of help. We asked one of their leading members, Sam Watts, if we could borrow his loudspeaker equipment and although he said yes, we never saw or heard from him again.'

'More than a year ago Liverpool Trades Council promised us their full support, but when the crunch came they never got in touch with us. I've now heard that they proposed to meet us two and a half weeks after Brian was jailed. This just wasn't good enough.'

Support

'Finally we decided to call a special meeting on the night exactly a week after Brian and Larry had been arrested. Larry had already purged his contempt but Brian was still in there. We sent out invitations to the trades councils, the Labour Party, trade union officials, various MPs, shop stewards' committees, left-wing groups and Jimmy Reid.'

'Unfortunately, only shop stewards from Anglia Papers and the docks turned up. We were, of course, grateful for this support but we also had to face up to the fact that we alone were not strong enough to force the release of Brian or any other jailed tenant. Under these circumstances we had no choice but to call off the rent strike.'

But Tony Boyle said this doesn't mean that the struggle is over. 'We shall continue to oppose the Housing Finance Act and strengthen our own organisation to prevent any victimisation or evictions,' he said.

The Tower Hill tenants have fought the longest total rent strike in history. 'We've shown what can be done, and if others had done the same, and if the trades councils, the TUC, the Labour Party and the Communist Party had given us the support that we needed, when we needed it, then we might even have won.'

'Our final failure to win was because of this lack of support. If they had had their way Brian Owen would have rotted in jail. They have a lot to answer for.'



Some of the strikers picketing in Russell Square

CHARITY TAKES BOSS'S LINE

LONDON:—The Educational Interchange Council, a registered charity, with connections with the TUC, has taken a boss's line with its employees in ASTMS who are now in their second week of a strike for recognition.

General-secretary Trevor Rendall-Davies has totally refused to recognise the union even though the Department of Employment Conciliation Officer, Phil Dyer, fresh from his efforts at the Con-Mech dispute, thinks the union should get what it wants.

Rendall-Davies has brought his wife and sister-in-law into the office in Russell Square in a vain attempt to keep it

working. The rubbish collection has been blacked, the Post Office engineers won't cross the pickets and the mail is not being delivered.

The staff of the publishers next door, who only recently failed in their recognition battle, have been providing coffee and support for the pickets.

The union members were not told when the decision about recognition was held over from the October meeting of the Council until March, but they intend to stay out until they get what they are asking for.

Black workers fight for union

COVENTRY:—83 black workers, members of the Transport Union, are in the thick of a fierce fight to establish a strong trade union at Coventry Art Castings. They have been sacked following a strike in protest against the victimisation of a fellow worker.

This follows an overtime ban in support of a claim for an improved shift allowance for furnace workers and an increase in basic pay. The furnace workers have been used to doing a 66-hour working week for £60. Labourers have been getting £44 for 57½ hours.

Three-quarters of the workforce is trade union organised, including all the die-casting, furnacemen, and foundry labourers—yet the works committee is not backing the strike and 170 workers are breaking picket lines. The firm is recruiting scabs and has used racist tactics to weaken trade unionism.

RALLY DEMANDS MORE TEACHERS

GLASGOW:—4000 teachers at a mass meeting agreed to strike on 9 January and work to rule from then on. They will refuse to teach primary school classes above 30 and secondary school classes above 25.

Executive amendments to forestall rank and file militancy were overwhelmingly defeated.

These decisions followed last month's meeting called by the Glasgow executive of the Scottish teachers union to protest over the fantastic 600 teacher shortage in the city.

1500 teachers made it clear that they were not content with the platform's militant declaration. Speaker after speaker attacked the executive and demanded action

instead of words. A motion calling for strike action and a militant work to rule easily gathered enough signatures to force a meeting to agree on a fighting programme.

Last week the Glasgow executive, against its will called the meeting. Despite repeated warnings they held it in the same place as the previous one—where there has been a massive overflow meeting—and then used the ensuing chaos as a pretext for calling the meeting off.

Amid scenes of great confusion they quit the platform. Despite the attempts of the executive members to pull out microphone plugs, Rank and File teacher speakers successfully moved votes of no confidence in the executive and demanded the next meeting should be accompanied by a stoppage of work.

After most teachers had dispersed it was discovered that the executive was holding an unpublicised press conference. Within 10 minutes almost all of the 160 teachers remaining mounted a militant picket to stress that the executive did not speak for them. They demanded a lead in a real fight for decent conditions and a big wage increase.

The office holders refused to either open the headquarters' doors or to address the meeting in the street.

The Glasgow teachers willingness to fight surprises even the militants among them. The local executive has since called a stoppage.

Every trade unionist in the area should send a resolution through their branch supporting the real fight by teachers to defend their conditions and at the same time the standard of their kids' education.

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HOSPITAL WORKER No 6 now out. Double issue at only 5p. Up-to-the-minute articles on ambulancemen, agencies, bonus schemes, the pay claims. Orders (with money sent) to 8 Beverstone Road, Luton, Beds.

HOSPITAL WORKER Conference: Saturday 12 January, 2.30pm, in London (place to be arranged). Sessions on Lessons of the past year and Building the Hospital Worker. Write for details to: 8 Beverstone Road, Luton, Beds. (0458) 523333. Tickets 10p.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

MINES:

ONE BIG HEAVE

Militants speak out

HAYDON THOMAS, committee member Morlais Lodge NUM: 'I don't believe all this talk about crisis. I think they are putting industries on short time to make working people turn against the miners. If there is a fuel crisis why are the NCB still exporting coal from Swansea docks? More than 15,000 tons went out last week.'

MICKEY BOULTER, shop steward British Oxygen, Hackney. 'The men will either get their pay or the whole works will close. The whole thing about a national crisis is a big con. It is a Tory mess which they will solve at our expense.'

RENA HARKNESS, APEX member at NCB offices, Midlothian: 'The Tories say that the general public is against the miners, but who are the general public? Miners' families, engineers, ambulance-men, firemen, railwaymen, bus drivers and teachers. This is the general public and they are all fighting the Tories.'

SID LAMPITT, TGWU convener, Fafnir Bearings, Wolverhampton: 'I think the government is trying to pull a fast one on us. What they are really saying is that because the miners are refusing to work overtime, the rest of the workers must go on short time. This shows what a ridiculous and inefficient government we have. The time has come to make way for people who can run the country for need not profit.'

RY WALSH, AUEW shop steward, Anti, Hollinwood, Manchester: 'The Tories are trying to split the miners off from the rest of the working class. Given the strength of the miners and the real support of other workers the Tories will be ready to make concessions to them. But they are desperate to make sure that the rest of the labour movement doesn't make the same gains. That's why it's vital for us not to just give support to the miners, but to fight for ourselves as well. In engineering we have to defend our guaranteed week, force the bosses to pay for five days and just as vital carry on with our claim of £35 for 35 hours. Smashing Phase Three is the best way to support the miners.'

TONY RICHARDSON, chairman, Hexagon joint shop stewards, ICI Blackley, Manchester: 'This latest crisis of capitalism must surely have produced Heath's last gamble. He has gambled away a balance of payments and the value of the pound and put everything into Europe. Now in desperation he's gambling that he can alienate us from the miners and train drivers. But this is one gamble he musn't win.'

PETE WALLIS, FOC SOGAT, Thames Case, Purfleet: 'My answer to any suggestion from management that my members should go on a three-day week is: five days' work or five days' pay. This is a deliberate attack by the government. It is a manoeuvre to get public feeling against the miners. I wholeheartedly support calls from the Ford and John Brown shipyard workers for a general strike.'

THE MINERS are in the forefront of working-class struggle. The future pattern of workers' wages, conditions and lives will be determined by the outcome of the miners' struggle.

The miners have the traditions, the solidarity

SW Political Correspondent

and the determination to win. The big question is the willingness of their leaders to set out the policy that will bring speedy victory.

The Tory three-day week lockout policy is an attempt to deprive the miners of the sympathy of workers losing wages and in particular to put pressure on the leaders of the TUC and the major trade unions. If the TUC can be frightened by the prospect of massive unemployment they will pressurise and strengthen the right wing on the NUM executive.

It is in this light that the tactic of the overtime ban has to be judged. A sensible leadership varies its tactics to meet the challenge of their opponents.

The Economist, the magazine of big business, says: '... if the miners keep on working much as they are now and if the railways some way move the coal they dig, the country will get through the winter... A coal strike at the present time could bring the country to a standstill in five weeks time.'

The Economist pinpoints the weakness of the overtime ban strategy.

NUM president Joe Gormley makes it clear on every possible occasion that the overtime ban is enough. And Frank Gormill, 'left-wing' general secretary of the colliery engineers' union, told miners in Dalkeith to stick to the overtime ban and not to be 'bloody minded and super militant'.

The certain victory of a New Year strike is rejected for the uncertainties of the overtime ban. And as time passes Gormley and the right wing will come under great pressure from the TUC and government for a settlement.

When governments are weak they play for time. Workers cannot afford to give them that time to prepare their counter-stroke.

RESPOND

Polish and American coal is already coming into the country. The NUM executive's response was not a campaign of pickets to keep it out, but a letter to the American and Polish miners' unions. The difficulty of excluding foreign coal is another weakness of the overtime ban strategy.

At the Dalkeith rally John Walker, Scottish organiser of ASLEF, gave a promise to black coal and oil at the miners' request. He went on: 'I am proud to be walking with the miners. We are walking tall. The TUC should organise maximum support to avoid government attempts to divide trade unionists through the imposition of a three-day working week.'

Support for a stepping up of the miners' fight has come from a number of pit militants. Johnny Harkness of the Bilston Glen Colliery in Midlothian says: 'A strike is definitely needed to win the full claim. If the miners are beaten then we are all beaten—that includes sections like the ambulance-men who are looking to us for help and a lead.'

Griff Rees, vice-chairman of the Morlais NUM Lodge in South Wales, says: 'The government are trying to turn workers against the miners. It's about time we called their bluff and had an all-out strike. Even if the Labour Party were there, it's the same bloody players in different jerseys.'

There is an urgent need for unity. The miners' leaders can play a vital role in forging that unity. The Tories have raised the stakes and the NUM leaders, particularly the left, must respond to this challenge.

They should issue a call for all-out strike action, bringing together miners, engineers, railwaymen, dockers and other sections into the fight.

Too often in the past the miners have been left to fight alone. Today victory will be assured by a united strike movement.

EEPTU right trounced

ELECTRICIANS and Plumbers Union president Frank Chapple and the right-wing got a drubbing last week in three elections to the union executive. In the North East, Broad Left candidate Phil Ranshawe got 2027 votes to 1702 for Chapple's nominee. In Leeds Chapple's man mustered 1870 votes and was beaten by Harold Best, the candidate of the left, who got 2031. And the best result of all was the victory of Hector Barlow, a rank and file shop steward in Dundee, who trounced the right-wing candidate for the Scottish plumbers' seat.



ON SUNDAY demonstrators marched in London demanding the release of Irish republicans held in British jails. A picket has been maintained outside Brixton Prison, South London, where the Price sisters, Dolours and Marian, are on hunger strike. The picket supports the sisters' demand to be returned to Ireland as political prisoners. They were jailed following the Winchester bomb trial. PICTURE: Peter Harrap (Report).

Budget: flea-bite for the rich, time-bomb for the poor

THE PRESS has greeted the budget as a 'neutral' budget. It seems to hurt people as little as possible and fits in neatly with any plans for an early election.

But this should not blind people to certain savage features.

The cutback in public spending is going to hit many working people hard in the middle of next year. The building industry in particular will be severely hit. Hundreds of thousands of workers will be thrown back on to the dole queues next summer.

Meanwhile spending on essential services, such as hospitals and schools, will be slashed. Health service spending is being cut by £111 million and education by £182 million. The government boasts that

public housing will not be affected—but that is only because it was already cutting this figure back and the number of council houses being built is virtually at an all-time low.

The sum taken off the arms budget, £178 million might seem fairly large, but a massive increase of £523 million was announced only eight months ago and this 'cut' still leaves an overall increase of £345 million.

One item hardly affected is government subsidies to private industry: this remains at a massive £1645 million.

While slashing back on essential services, the government has tried to give the impression that it is taxing the rich. But its 10 per cent increase in surtax—for one year only—will be less than a flea-bite. The Tory government has given away more than £670 million in tax concessions to

the very rich over the past two years, and is now taking back a mere £35 million.

Or, to put it another way, after giving each rich person an average £34 a week, it is now taking back £1.70 a week. And the tax increase will not bite until next June.

That is what the Tories mean when they say we all have to make sacrifices. Even the Financial Times was driven to comment that the measures were 'largely cosmetic'.

The property tax proposals are equally fraudulent. Speculators such as Harry Hyams—who makes millions by keeping property empty, will not be hit at all. The government calculates that it will get £80 million a year in tax from property—yet in one week after the introduction of Phase Three, 10 property companies increased their value by £200 million.

THE LONDON BOMB EXPLOSIONS

WE DO NOT KNOW as we go to press who is responsible for the series of bomb explosions in London on Tuesday. But one thing is certain: they have given the Tories, press and television an opportunity to divert attention from the economic and political crisis and the government's vicious onslaught on working people.

The bombings will not stop the Tories' bloody repression in the north of Ireland or Britain's economic stranglehold on the whole island. On the contrary: such tactics cause confusion in the working-class movement and thus strengthen the Tories' policies. And in maiming and injuring

working people in the indiscriminate explosions, those responsible are hitting at the very people with the power to help stop Tory repression in Ireland.

If any section of the Irish republican movement is responsible for the bombings, then their tactics must be condemned. The result is no different than if the bombs were planted by the British secret service.

But socialists must speak up against the press hysteria and defend to the hilt the right of the Irish people to control their own country and drive out British big business and its troops.

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