

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

No illusions in Labour regime

KEEP YOUR GUARD UP!

by Roger Protz

editor Socialist Worker

THE TORIES are out. Good.

The government that hammered working-class pay, living conditions and trade union rights for 3½ years has been kicked out of office.

Labour is back. That's good, too. We wanted a Labour victory because a vote for the Tories was a vote to carry on union-bashing, rent-rising, wage-freezing and profiteering.

Harold Wilson knows one thing as he prepares his government and his policies in Downing Street: the workers who voted Labour do not want a continuance of Tory policies under a Labour label.

But joy at the defeat of the Tories must not blind trade unionists to the fact that they will still have to fight to defend their pay and conditions under Wilson.

For Labour supports the capitalist system. It believes in minor reforms here and there but—as it showed between 1964 and 1970—it will surrender to the demands of the employers at home and the money-lenders abroad.

REFORMS

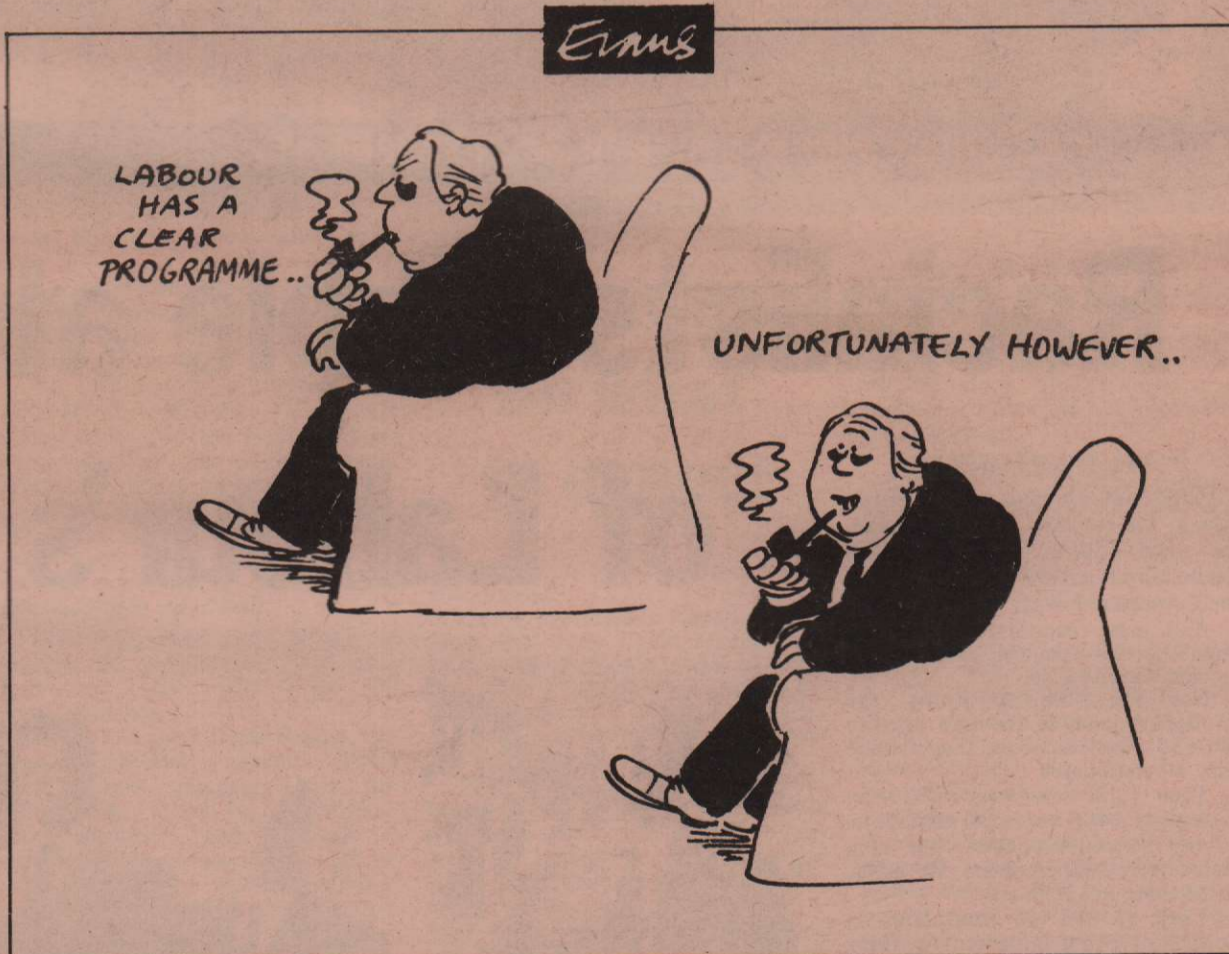
Don't forget, the last Labour government—with a majority in parliament—froze your wages, hoisted your rents, boosted prices and profits and attempted to bring in anti-union laws.

This time the economic crisis is worse. Labour will attempt to shore up the tottering system by once again turning on the organised labour movement.

And this time it will use the excuse of not having an overall majority in parliament.

Of course, there will be a honeymoon period. It will push through a few proposals that it knows the Liberals will support such as repeal of the Industrial Relations Act and the cancellation of the next round of rent increases due in April.

But that will be a thin smattering of sugar on a very bitter pill. As the economic crisis gets worse this autumn, as the government bails out the system with enormous loans from the International Monetary Fund, it will be forced to turn the screw on the workers who voted it into office.



That means wage freeze, scrapping welfare reforms and public spending on schools and hospitals and perhaps even another attempt at curbing the rights of trade unionists.

What must the attitude of trade unionists be to the Wilson government?

We demand that the government implement its full programme, whatever the 'mini-Tories' of the Liberal Party say. If the Liberals bring down the government over such timid proposals, they will reap the whirlwind at the next election.

But we want more than just the election programme.

We want not just the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act but a pledge that no similar laws will be brought in.

We want not just the cancellation of the ten bob rent increases in April but the repeal of the Housing Finance Act, including previous rent increases.

We want no wage freeze or 'incomes policy' fraud that allows prices and profits to rip.

We want a return to free collective bargaining, the ability of organised workers to fight for better pay and conditions.

We want an immediate increase in old-age pensions to £16 for a married couple and £10 for a single person. This must not be put off, as

ORGANISED

it was in 1964, because those famous gnomes in Zurich snap their tiny fingers.

And we want the Shrewsbury building workers released from jail and the Conspiracy laws repealed.

Who can force such demands on the government? Not the union leaders. They will rush to prop up Wilson.

Unofficial strikes will be condemned as 'rocking the boat'. A 'social contract' that will amount

to an incomes policy will be agreed.

No, only the rank and file, organised at the workplace and across industry, can bring the government to heel. That is why this month's rank and file conference is so vital—to hammer out a policy to unite workers to beat back the attacks of employers and politicians.

Remember, it was the rank and file who stopped In Place of Strife when Labour was last in office.

Remember, it was rank and file dockers and other workers who forced the Tories virtually to shelve the Industrial Relations Act after Pentonville.

And remember it was the miners who forced Heath to call an election—and lose.

So let there be no illusions, no honeymoon with Labour. Keep your guard up—and prepare to fight.

**Great
response
to call
for rank
and file
meeting**

'THE RESPONSE has been magnificent,' Roger Cox, organising secretary of this month's conference called by a number of rank and file union papers, told Socialist Worker this week.

The conference—to be held in Birmingham on 30 March—will attempt to hammer out a clear-cut policy of opposition to all attacks on workers' rights. And support is growing.

'It's not just that we now have more than 200 delegates with four weeks still to go,' added Roger Cox, a leading AUEW militant and editorial board member of The Carworker, 'but the delegates have come from the fighting areas of the working-class trade union movement.'

Miners

The delegates include:

Twelve stewards from Dunlop engineering shop stewards' committee, Liverpool.

Michelin joint shop stewards' committee.

Ford, Leamington.

Cannon Industries.

C A Parsons joint office committee.

Burnley AUEW district committee.

ICI combine shop stewards' committee.

Plus many trade union branches, from the miners to the journalists.

Problems

Says Roger Cox: 'This conference will bring together many of the best trade unionists in the country to discuss openly the problems facing us and the ways of solving them.'

'Labour may be in office, but everyone knows that working people everywhere will have to fight to defend their living standards and working conditions.'

'The organising committee calls on every trade unionist who is not yet a delegate to raise the question in his or her branch or shop stewards' committee and to fight to attend what may be one of the most crucial trade union conferences for a very long time.'

Request for delegates' credentials: form back page.

Analysis and comment on election result: 2&3

**Clunk
go all
those lost
deposits**

FORTY FOUR Communist Party candidates entered the electoral lists. 43 of them forfeited their deposits.

With the sole exception of Jimmy Reid's candidacy in Dumbartonshire Central, the election was an unmitigated disaster for the Communists.

Excluding the Reid result, the average vote for party candidates was 624, an even worse result than the previous low result in 1970, when they managed to average 662 with 58 candidates.

Jimmy Reid managed with his 5928 votes to bring the average up to 744. His campaign, basing itself on his reputation at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and his frequent appearances on television, minimised his Communist Party membership. He even managed to avoid having the label 'Communist' put on the ballot



Reid: 'engineer'

paper, contenting himself with the title 'engineering worker'. Even so he came third behind the Tory and well short of the confidently predicted victory.

The Morning Star claims that 200 new members were gained in the constituencies where Communists were standing. That is rather expensive recruiting.

At £6500 in lost deposits and at least the same amount in election expenses, each new member cost £65.

It is abundantly clear that the electorate rejected Heath's 'reds under the beds' election gimmick but when they had the chance rejected the Communist Party as well.

Communist Party—nationalisation of the multi-national corporations in Britain, cutting the arms bill by half, for a Labour government with Communist MPs—indicates the essentially reformist nature of the party and gives added emphasis to the International Socialists' call to vote Labour rather than for the weak unsuccessful, alternative of the Communist Party.



THEY FAILED. Ted Heath and his friends ran as the 'moderate majority', the shield and defender of the British people against union militants, reds under the beds and Harold Wilson who is, so they told us, 'fully in the hands of the extremists.'

The core of the Labour vote stood up remarkably well against this union-bashing, red-baiting nonsense. The mass of working-class voters proved to be too mature to fall for the line that the Conservatives are, as Heath put it, 'the trade union of the nation.' Evidently, millions of people asked themselves: 'Who then, is the employer?'

The defeat of the Tories on the 'Who governs Britain?' issue is a great advance. Had the Tories been returned with a substantial majority then, without any doubt, attacks on the unions, on living standards, on the right to picket, on the right to strike even, and upon free speech, the social services and much else would have been stepped up. These attacks have been stopped in their tracks—for the time being.

But there is another side to the coin. The defeat of the Tories was not the result of a clear-cut swing to working-class politics, even of the reformist variety. The Labour Party actually polled less votes than in 1970 (11,657,461 as compared to 12,110,588). Its proportion of the total poll went down from 43 per cent to 37.2 per cent.

Due allowance must be made for those habitual Labour voters who, in safe Tory seats, switched to the Liberal in the hope of getting the Tory out. Even so, the fact is that the long-run trend is for the Labour vote to decline. In 1951, with a considerably smaller electorate, the party gained 13,948,385 votes—48.7 per cent of the total. At every subsequent election, with the solitary exception of 1966, the vote and the percentage of the poll has gone down.

**Defeat for
the Tory
red baiters**

There can be no doubt about the fundamental cause of this decline. Fewer and fewer workers believe that the Labour Party really stands for what one of its earlier election manifestos called 'A New Social Order'. The majority of working people still put their crosses for the Labour man, but more and more it is an anti-Tory rather than a pro-Labour vote. So why not vote Liberal if the Liberal has the better chance of winning?

In the 1974 election the Labour leaders ran in the moderation stakes. Heath called for the support of all moderates against 'the extremists'. Thorpe proclaimed that he was the most moderate of the moderates. And Wilson claimed that none was more moderate than he. It was the Tories, he said repeatedly, who were 'dividing the nation'.

What in fact does the politics of moderation, espoused by all three parties, really amount to? First, acceptance of the capitalist system. The difference between the parties on this issue amount to disagreements about which cosmetics, and in what quantity, should be applied to the 'unacceptable face of capitalism'.

Second, acceptance that the growing crisis of the economy is unavoidable, is like what

insurance companies call an Act of God, like lightning striking a tree, and not at all the inevitable consequences of the policies pursued to prop up the private profiteers.

Third, acceptance, in fact if not words, that the crisis must be solved within the framework of capitalism and therefore, inevitably, at the expense of the working class.

Harold Wilson said in Wandsworth, near the end of the election campaign, 'We must all get out of the boat and push.' Where to? He was careful not to say. But there cannot be a shadow of a doubt that he meant push British capitalism forward at the expense of French, German, American and Japanese capitalism but, above all, at your own expense.

Socialists reject the philosophy of making capitalism work. They understand that the growing crisis is a direct consequence of the capitalist system and capitalist policies. They know that cuts in working-class living standards will make the crisis worse, not better. And so they fight, and try to persuade their fellow workers to fight against capitalist policies whether these are pressed by Tories or by Labour.

There are, of course, numbers of socialists in the Labour Party. Quite a few of the Labour MPs claim the title. They are now going to be tested.

The fakers will use the excuse that 'Labour cannot implement its policies because it lacks a majority'. The honest ones will fight. We think that Labour's programme, even if implemented in full, is totally inadequate. But we will support all serious efforts to implement its progressive aspects.

In the course of that struggle the sheep will be separated from the goats. We will see what elements in the Labour Party are capable of taking part in that socialist revival and re-groupment that will be born of the crisis of 1974.

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**Racialists nibble at edge
of Labour's votes**

by Nigel Harris

RACIALISM seemed to play little role in the election. But in practice, the main appeal of the Powellite Tories is on the race issue, rather than the Common Market.

And many candidates of all the main parties tolerate elements of racialism in practice.

For the National Front, the immigrant issue is the key one. In the 635 constituencies, they fielded only 54 candidates.

Their total vote was 75,870—an average of 1405 votes per candidate. 43 of the constituencies they contested were working-class city areas, 23 of them in London.

They fielded no candidates in dozens of other important working class areas: Coventry, Croydon, Dagenham, Newcaste, most of Yorkshire. They had no candidates in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Average

The Front is trying to appeal to those working-class areas close to immigrant concentration. 33 of the constituencies they contested were Labour seats.

And the vote there was higher (1545) than the Front's national average. In Conservative seats they polled an average of 1055 votes.

Still the average share of the vote was very small—2.3 per cent but very much more than the vote for non-Labour left candidates. In 20 seats they got more than this and 17 of those are Labour seats.

If we take the six seats where the Front got 4 per cent or more of the vote, they are all Labour held: Hayes and Harlington (4.9 per cent) and Newham South (4.4 per cent) in London; two Leicester seats (5.3 per cent in the east, 4 per cent in the west); and two in West Bromwich (5 per cent in the east, and 5.3 per cent in the west).

In some areas there were other



NF leaders Tyndall and Webster with ex-storm trooper pal Colin Jordan (left)

racialist candidates—for example, Jim Merrick in Bradford West, which the Front did not contest. In Tottenham if we add Coney's votes to the

Front's, the 'racial' vote was 5.4 per cent.

There is no way of estimating the Powell vote in the success of Labour

or Liberal candidates, but it will be larger than the vote for the Front. The Front is not respectable as Powell is, and respectability is very important for the 'deference voter'—working people who vote for posh candidates because they are posh—who supplies an important source of the racist vote.

Voting is a passive ritual. It does not show how men and women will act nor on what issues, only their choice between simple alternatives. Nevertheless, this election shows the Front trying to spread its wings.

If the Front grows, it will threaten Labour. Since Labour cannot but fail politically since it is determined to defend capitalism rather than overturn it, the party will be forced to try and undercut the appeal of the Front with its own brand of racialism.

Loyalist surge blows

by Mike Miller: Belfast

THE RETURN of the Labour government in Britain will make little difference as far as the struggle in Ireland is concerned.

The Labour Party has stood shoulder to shoulder with the Tories in their attempts to stabilise imperialist rule through the Sunningdale agreement. Sunningdale attempts to bring together the middle class Catholic SDLP and Faulkner's Unionists.

But the massive show of strength

by the ultra-right wing loyalists in the British election must throw the Sunningdale agreement into the melting pot. The anti-power-sharing, anti-Council of Ireland Unionists obtained a clear majority (51½ per cent of all votes cast in the six counties) and captured 11 of the 12 seats.

Faulkner's supporters got only one vote in every five and no seats. Gerry Fitt, of the SDLP, held his seat with a narrow majority.

Under these conditions the promises made by the SDLP to their

supporters—to end oppression, bring peace and prosperity and eventually re-unite the country through the Council of Ireland—are all undermined. For Faulkner to retain the little support he has left he must prevent any further concessions to the SDLP. Instead major concessions must be given to the ultra-loyalists.

Already Faulkner's Assembly Unionists have said that the Sunningdale agreement must be shelved for a long time to come. There can be no Council of Ireland.

LABOUR FACES ECONOMIC STORMS

MINORITY: ALIBI FOR UNION CHIEFS

WHEN HAROLD WILSON first became prime minister in October 1964 he was staggered by the balance of payments deficit which had reached £112 million the previous month—an annual rate of £800 million.

Two days before the election last week we learnt that in one month, January, the deficit on the balance of payments reached £383 million. The prospects are for £600 million or more in February and March. How would Wilson react to a deficit of some £4500 million a year?

Britain will need up to £10,000 million in international loans in the next two years. The British government presiding over British capitalism will first of all appeal to the International Monetary Fund for aid.

The omens for the terms that will be demanded by the IMF are very bad indeed. The new government will have to give its undertakings in a formal letter of intent to the fund. As the Financial Times puts it: 'The weaker a government is . . . the more stringent are the fund's conditions likely to be; and the weaker the government the more it will need to borrow from the fund.'

What will be the undertakings the government would have to give in its letter of intent to the IMF?

First, 'a large reduction in the public sector's credit demands—and this must largely mean a fierce brake on public spending.'

Secondly, the Financial Times argues, quite rightly, the government will have to act to prevent an excessive rise of wages: 'Statutory controls will have to be maintained until a new policy is agreed, either by prolonging Stage Three, or by substituting a temporary freeze.'

RESIGN

The omens from Italy's loan from the IMF seem not too cheerful for Britain. Two weeks ago Italy borrowed 1200 million dollars—only a third of what Britain wants immediately. Conditions were imposed which the Italian government did not dare publish, as a result of which the Finance Minister was forced to resign by parliament, and the rest of the government followed (see centre pages).

To add to the bleak prospects, one must remember that a general economic recession is threatening world capitalism in the not too distant future. As the Sunday Times of 3 March put it: 'A recession could well develop in the autumn, due partly to a downturn in world trade.'

Under Ted Heath, the leaders of the TUC closeted themselves repeatedly in 10 Downing Street notwithstanding the Industrial Relations Act, notwithstanding Stages One, Two and Three. They did their level best to demobilise the working class.

Now with Wilson in Downing Street the inclination of the union leaders to collaborate with the government and employers will be strengthened.

The first test will be the miners' wage demands. On the morning Wilson came to power, the Guardian reported that members of the

up plans for Ireland

Internment and repression will continue. All shades of Unionism backed by the SDLP are also demanding a massive increase in the repression of anti-imperialists in the 26 counties.

Faulkner used the 'failure' of the south to take a harder line against its political opponents as his excuse for backing down over Sunningdale. But the real reason for his retreat is the need to placate the hardliners on his right and within his own party—

Any failure on the part of the SDLP to fulfill their promises must result in growing disillusionment



Hello, Harold . . . nice to have you back where you belong?

executive of the NUM were putting forward claims going beyond the original wage claim submitted at the start of the strike.

'In response to a question that both Mr Mick McGahey, Communist vice-president of the NUM, and Mr Lawrence Daly, the union's general secretary, would demand that any deal be backdated to 1 November Mr Clarke said that as far as he was concerned, miners would have to receive extra money for the time they had been on strike.'

Let's bet that now Wilson is heading the government, McGahey, Daly and Clarke will forget the above demands.

Again and again Denis Healey, the new Chancellor, argued during the election campaign that the Labour Party stands for 'a voluntary incomes policy', and he made it abundantly clear that there could be no return to the 'free bargaining' the Tories favoured during their first two years in office.

Voluntary incomes policy was tried by Wilson in the years 1964-66, and it worked to some extent. As a part of the bargain between the trade unions and the government, the then general secretary of the Transport Workers Union, Frank Cousins, was brought into the government.

But, this took place under conditions of 3-4 per cent price rises a year. Even then the policy collapsed. Frank Cousins resigned from the government. And in July 1966 a

among their supporters. They have failed to end repression and cannot produce the Irish Council.

And the deepening economic crisis and the coming international recession make all promises of full employment and rising living standards totally unobtainable.

Under these conditions the Sunningdale settlement is in serious trouble. Whether or not it is re-established again depends largely how those opposed to it on the anti-imperialist side act in the coming months.

Tony Cliff on what to expect

complete freeze was imposed by the government.

Under the present Wilson government the trade union leaders will have a much tougher task to carry out such a policy when prices are rising by some 15 per cent annually. But no doubt the trade union leaders will do their best.

And the fact that the Labour government is a minority government will serve them as an excellent alibi to avoid struggle in the interest of their members. The dam of class collaboration—of national unity—built by Wilson, Scanlon and Jones will not hold for long. Workers' pressure is bound to break through.

The Labour 'left' in parliament will take the same line as Jones and Scanlon. It was during the 1964-66 Labour government, when the majority was only four, that the Tribune MPs were most cringing before Wilson.

It was then that Frank Allaun described Harold Wilson as 'the greatest socialist leader since Keir Hardie.' It was then that Michael Foot wrote a sickeningly flattering

biography of Wilson. The story is bound to be repeated.

No doubt the 'left' will make a song and dance of the reforms Wilson will introduce. The abolition of the Industrial Relations Act is of course a step forward.

At present the main impact of the Act is that it is being used by union leaders as an alibi for not fighting for the members. Jack Jones instructs his lorry drivers to take the normal amount of oil into the power stations for fear the TGWU is fined by the NIRC.

A 'voluntary' incomes policy will achieve basically the same.

The miners managed to force Ted Heath to call a general election that he lost. The power of the miners showed itself even in the quite passive strike they led.

There were no mass pickets, no flying pickets, petrol lorries were not stopped from bringing fuel to the power stations. Still the power of the miners, only starting to flex their muscles, was enormous. One can imagine how much more so it would have been if the strike had been an active one, involving not only miners but also other sections of the working class.

CREATED

The fact that the strike was so passive shows one fundamental weakness of the working class at present—the lack of rank and file leadership able to mobilise thousands and thousands of workers.

In the face of the bankruptcy of the trade union leadership that will be accentuated even further with collaboration with employers and government under Wilson, a new leadership, a rank and file leadership, has to be created. The hands of workers have to be clasped across industry.

The struggle to defend our living standards, to oppose any form of incomes policy, whether statutory or 'voluntary', must be directed not only against the individual employer, but, and above all, against the government.

Workers' struggle must be a political struggle. To lead to a successful conclusion, workers have to build, urgently, a strong revolutionary socialist workers party.

'Clean up Labour' MP wins battle

IN THE best result of the whole general election, Eddie Milne, who was kicked out as official Labour candidate for Blyth, Northumberland, because he tried to clean up the Labour Party in the North East, stormed to a 6140 majority over the official Labour candidate, arch-right-winger Ivor Richard.

Milne's often-expressed disgust at local government corruption in the North East earned him the hatred of the Labour establishment there as early as 1971, when a Labour executive inquiry headed by Joe Gormley of the NUM and Labour's national executive, persuaded him to 'shake hands and make up' with Labour agent Peter Mortakis.

But the row flared again when Milne demanded a thorough inquiry into the North East Labour Party after the Poulson bankruptcy hearings of 1972. Corrupt architect John Poulson, now serving five years for paying civil servants for business favours, was active in Blyth in the mid-1960s. Poulson met T Dan Smith, the North East Labour leader who later became his business partner, in Blyth.

A few weeks before the election, the Blyth constituency Labour Party, with the full support of the Labour Party's regional secretary Ron Evers,



EDDIE MILNE

voted by a small majority to sack Eddie Milne. Letters to Transport House complaining about the way the meeting was called were ignored.

Just before the election, an even smaller meeting of the Blyth Labour Party agreed to nominate Ivor Richard, a London barrister who is on the extreme right wing of the Labour Party.

Eddie Milne decided to stand as an independent. His nomination papers were signed by the chairman and secretary of the biggest miners' lodge in the constituency—at Bates Colliery. Shop stewards throughout the constituency flocked to his support.

All the members of Labour's national executive committee signed a full-page advertisement in two local papers, which cost about £300, denouncing Milne and calling for a vote for Ivor Richard. Among the signatories were Joan Maynard, Frank Allaun, Peter Doyle of the Young Socialists, and other well-known left-wing firebrands.

Milne told Socialist Worker: 'During the Chester-Le-Street by-election last year we saw something of the deep loss of morale among loyal Labour voters in the area. There's been the same feeling of unease during this election, even though most Labour voters have voted for the Labour candidate.'

'I think my result shows just how sick people are with the party establishment up here.'

The 'swing' to Labour in the North East was one of the lowest in the country—just over 1 per cent.

Ramshackle state on precipice's edge

by Nigel Harris

FOUR candidates in the recent Dacca council elections were found beheaded in a backstreet. Six days later, two candidates were hacked to pieces and three students injured in a bomb explosion.

Then the Prime Minister's eldest son was shot while helping the police to patrol against bomb attacks on Russian-owned buildings. The following day two political leaders were shot dead, and two others beaten to death in Chittagong.

These are no more than the random fragments of news that get out of Bangladesh, but they give some idea of the terrorism stalking the streets. Gangster-raj rules the world's newest country. But this is no tiny Haiti. With 75 million people, Bangladesh is the eighth largest country in the world.

The condition of Bangladesh is even more tragic because it is the direct result of the failure of the left—in Bengal, Pakistan and India. When East and West Pakistan were united, the left gave critical support to the military regime because it was in alliance with China. In West Pakistan, the left failed to mobilise in opposition to the military action in Bengal—so ensuring its own defeat and the maximum military damage in Bangladesh.

In India, the left supported the attack of Indian troops on East Bengal, so ensuring a weak, corrupt puppet government was installed there—and that the Indian left in West Bengal would be beaten.

So the military remained in power in West Pakistan, with Bhutto as a civilian figurehead, Mrs Gandhi's position in India was immensely strengthened, and the most corrupt groups in Bangladesh were brought to power.

Force

Now, after only three years of independence, it is becoming clear just how catastrophic the failure of the left was. There is nothing except naked force—backed by India—to hold this ramshackle state together.

The economy has still not recovered. Exports are a third down on 1969-70, and although land has been switched from export crops such as jute, tea and sugar to grow food, famine is still a grave threat. Rice production is still 15 per cent below pre-civil war levels, but the number of mouths has increased by seven or eight million.

Inflation has only made a bad situation appalling. In 1972-3 the cost of living increased by 53 per cent—and the price of rice shot up 75 per cent. This in a country where the overwhelming majority exist only just this side of starvation.

Some vital goods—such as kerosene and cloth—have trebled in price since independence.

There is still big money to be made. One method is to smuggle out of Bangladesh high quality raw jute and sell it in India. This year India, which normally has a shortage



Bangladesh

of jute and imports it, has announced an export of half a million tons. The rumour is that members of the Prime Minister's family are tied up in this prosperous exercise that will further impoverish their country.

Other things are good for smuggling out to India too—rice, kerosene, anything that is in short supply in Bangladesh's giant neighbour.

Gangster

But for most people conditions can hardly get worse. Already some small variation in the weather that would hit crops would mean death for thousands. The prospects are that inflation will get worse, that unemployment will climb even higher, and only the petty gangster with a gun will do well. The Biharis—

the 750,000 non-Bengalis, some of whom supported the Pakistani regime—remain an ideal scapegoat for the anger of masses of people with no clear political way out.

Increase

The government's response has been to try and increase spending on the police, to ignore the largely meaningless Assembly, and continue the rhetoric. Hostility towards India is likely to increase rapidly, which will embarrass the Mujibur Rahman regime since it is famous for its servility to Delhi.

But Mujib is not defeated. He has sent emissaries to Hong Kong to discuss matters with China. Just as the military mafia that ran the united Pakistan was able to weaken the left by its alliance with Chairman Mao, so Mujib wants to play the same card.

In turn, China is now supporting so many rotting regimes against the hostility of their people, it will no doubt come to the aid of Mujib, and this has now been made easier by Bhutto's recognition of Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, the terrifying crisis of Bengal continues.



Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman during last year's election campaign

DESPERATE APPEAL BY CHILEAN LEFT

THE military junta in Chile that overthrew the Popular Unity government of President Allende is torturing and murdering not only left-wing militants but anyone who opposed the coup, including doctors and rank-and-file soldiers.

A statement issued recently by the Chilean MIR, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, tells of people being shot and beaten to death simply for being members of left-wing organisations. It appeals for international solidarity and protest to stop the shootings.

It reads in part:

'On 13 December, our comrade Bautista van Schowen, member of our central committee, fell into the hands of the barbarians who rule Chile. Like all the militants and leaders of the MIR, he had not sought refuge abroad, but was carrying on his work in Chile.

'After being brutally beaten and savagely tortured by the military intelligence service, he was taken to a military hospital, where he is still being held.

'The comrade who was arrested with him, Patricio Munita, was subjected to torture for more than 15



Chile

days, and finally shot on 31 December. Two other people who were looking for him, one a woman, were caught and are being held prisoner and tortured.

'Another comrade of ours, 17 years old, who worked in the Vicuna Mackenna industrial area, was detained during January. He was tortured for 10 days by the air force intelligence, who broke both his legs and an arm, burned his body all over, castrated him and then let him bleed to death. His only offence was being a militant of the MIR. This comrade did not say a word to his torturers.

CONDEMNED

'Another member of our central committee, Alejandro Romero, a surgeon in a small town called Los Andes, was detained in November. After prolonged torture, he has been condemned to death and may be shot

at any time.

'Among those detained in the public jails by the leaders of the armed forces are a number of air force officers: General Bachelet (recovering from a heart attack), General Poblete, Commander Galaz, Colonels Miranda and Omani, and Captains Vergara and Carvacho. Not content with torturing Captain Carvacho, they detained his wife and tortured her too.

'In the same jail are 350 members of the ranks and non-commissioned officers. Another 350 policemen and detectives are in another Santiago jail. The only accusation against them is that, being members of the armed forces, they did not participate in the

coup which overthrew the Popular Unity government.

'Twenty left-wing doctors have also been denounced by the president of the medical school. Among them was the elderly Dr Gustavo Molina, a semi-invalid from chronic asthma.

'The renewal of the torturing and eventual shooting of Comrade Van Schowen is imminent. International solidarity has been of enormous help so far, but it is necessary to redouble the effort and demand: stop the shooting of Van Schowen and Romero.

'The tortures, crimes and murders of the barbaric dictatorship in Chile, watchdogs of national and international capital, will not be forgotten.'

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Social Security for Strikers



a Socialist Worker pamphlet

The life of the Party

by Ian Birchall

PARTY LIFE, official journal of the Russian Communist Party, has published a sharp attack on the Spanish Communist Party. Relations between the two have been bad for some time, in particular since the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia six years ago, but this attack brings the dispute to a new level.

The cause for the present attack is an article by a leading Spanish Communist which called for a democratic socialist Europe independent of Russian and Eastern Europe.

After the Solzhenitsyn case and with the growth of opposition inside Russia, the Russian leaders are increasingly touchy about criticism.



Communist Party

They are also worried that other Communist Parties in Western Europe, particularly those trying to work towards joining coalition governments, as in France and Italy, may follow the Spanish example of proclaiming their independence of Russia.

The Spanish Communists seem to

have realised for some time that the link with Russia was not helping them win support inside Spain. If the events in Czechoslovakia were an embarrassment, even more so was the importing of Polish coal during a miners' strike in 1970.

At the same time the Russian accusation that the Spanish Communists are giving in to nationalism has some truth to it. The Spanish Party is aiming, not to become the genuinely revolutionary force that Spain needs, but towards co-operation with more right-wing political forces. Indeed, a few years back the Party leader, Santiago Carrillo, criticised General Franco for not being nationalist enough.

Workers' bathtime

I HAD a conversation last week with E Bitrun, who is a director of ELI Industries, which runs a small metal plating factory at Ashford, Kent.

I asked: 'Mr Bitrun, I saw a report in the Daily Telegraph last week about an accident case in which your firm was involved. I wonder if I could find out a few more facts about it?'

Mr Bitrun: 'Well? I see here that you said in court that "another man" had fallen into a tank of hydrochloric acid. Could you tell me what happened to the man and what

was his name? 'Why should I answer your questions?'

'Because I could then get the facts right about the story.'

'I hope you get the facts wrong.'

'Why is that, Mr Bitrun?'

'Because then I can deal with you.'

'What do you mean, deal with me?'

'I mean, deal with you, that's what.'

'I see. Well, could I find out how many people you employ at ELI?'

'No. I wouldn't answer any of your questions. What good would that do me?'

'Well, thank you very much for being so helpful.'

I had to go elsewhere to discover the following facts.

The case in question concerned John Ferris, a metalworker of Brookfield Road, Ashford, who was suing ELI for damages. Last June John was standing on the narrow rim of a tank containing a caustic solution heated to 180 degrees F. He was using both hands to repair insulation contacts when he lost balance and fell in.

□□

He splashed around in the tank for 'one or two seconds', and when he was pulled out, most of the skin had been burnt off both his legs. He spent two months in hospital and another two months off work.

His journey to the hospital was impeded by the fact that the nearest exit was locked from the inside in such a way as to make it impossible to get out.

The management at ELI didn't think it necessary to tell the Factory Inspectors about this incident, but the inspectors heard about it in due course and the firm was charged with four offences—two of not guarding their machinery properly and so exposing their workers to dangerous situations, one of not reporting an accident and one for the locked exit.

Mr Bitrun and his colleagues pleaded not guilty to the first two charges on the interesting grounds that John Ferris need not have

stood on the edge of the tank. He could have gone round the back, they said.

John Ferris and other workers, however, said in evidence that climbing on the edge of the tank was the usual practice. Gordon Crouch, the foreman in the chrome plating shop, told the court: 'I have stood on the side of the tank, and so did the others. Quite a few people have fallen into a tank in the factory—I have fallen in myself.'

When Mr Bitrun went into the witness box, he admitted that one other worker had fallen into a tank of hydrochloric acid. He did not say what happened to that unfortunate worker.

The firm was found guilty on all four counts, fined £115 each on the first two, £25 for failing to report the accident and £50 for the locked door. It was also ordered to pay £23 costs.

I hope I've got nothing wrong because I wouldn't like to be 'dealt with' by Mr Bitrun, I've read too much about acid baths.

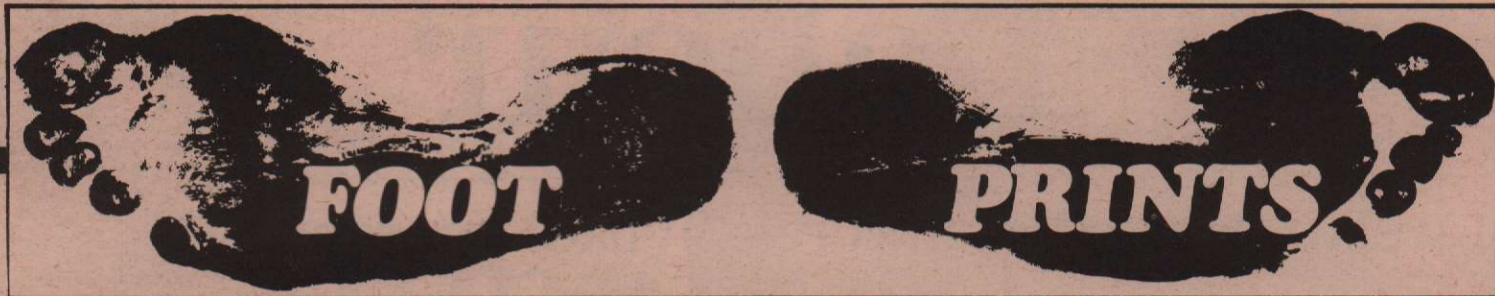
I COULDN'T help comparing the fines imposed on ELI with the treatment meted out to Barry Payne, of Brookman's Road, Stock, near Chelmsford, who appealed last week to Chelmsford Crown Court against a decision of the town's magistrates.

Barry had been charged with defrauding the Social Security authorities by 'refusing to work' after being interviewed for 39 separate jobs. Barry's defence was that all the jobs offered to him were at less than £20 a week. He and his family could make more from the subsistence payments of the Social Security if he stayed at home and did no work at all.

This argument did not impress the magistrates. They found him guilty and immediately imposed a six months suspended sentence previously given him for a burglary offence.

They imposed a FURTHER THREE MONTHS SENTENCE for the social security offence.

Barry's appeal to the Crown Court was dismissed, so he is now serving nine months in prison because he exercised his right not to work for—on Department of Social Security terms—starvation wages.



Never mind the quality....

SOME DISMAY has been expressed by East Anglia Labour supporters about the quality of Labour candidates in the region. Michael Ferris, for instance, described himself at his adoption meeting in Ely as a 'working member of the agricultural industry'. Somehow he went through his whole speech without mentioning the fact that he is a director of his wife's agricultural machinery firm.

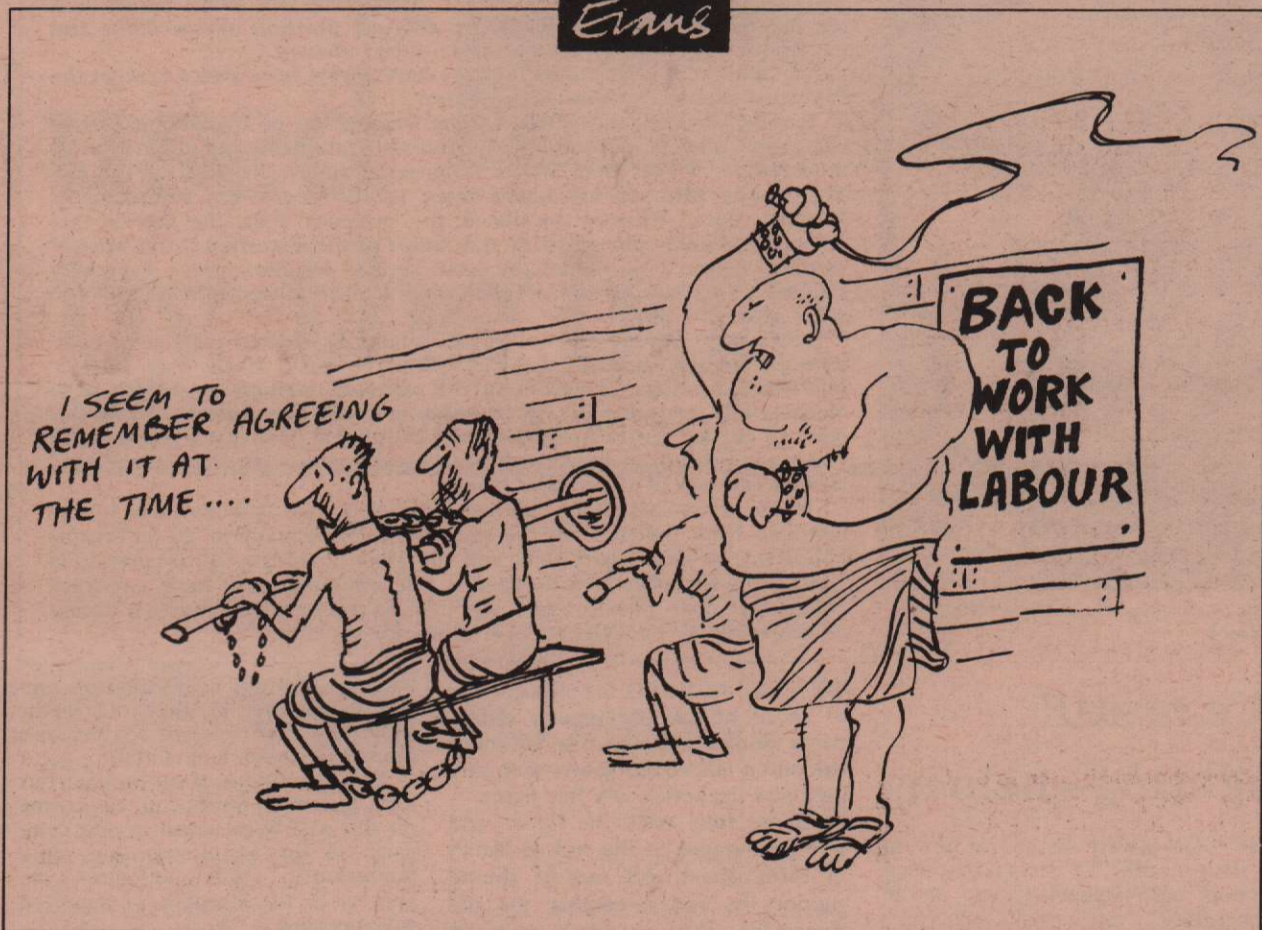
Ferris can claim in his defence that he is not quite as reactionary as Pat Hollis, Labour's standard-bearer at Yarmouth, or her fellow university lecturer Douglas Baker at Lowestoft. 'A socialist government would attempt to evaluate work fairly... We were moving in the right direction with In Place of Strife', said Baker at his adoption meeting.

North Norfolk Labour Party members had an even worse experience with their first adopted candidate, Andrew Phillips, a solicitor. Phillips was no sooner adopted than he was writing to the newspapers criticising Labour Party Conference decisions for being too left-wing. Phillips really had to go, and North Norfolk was fought by a Methodist minister instead.

But perhaps the most surprising election meeting in all East Anglia was in Norwich on 18 February, when Labour candidates John Garrett and David Ennals were supported on the platform by a local solicitor, Noel Armstrong.

Armstrong is a close friend and political associate of renegade Labour MP Desmond Donnelly, who is now a Tory. Armstrong announced in 1970 that he was prepared to stand for Donnelly's party.

A week before the Labour meeting, Armstrong told the local press he intended to help the Labour campaign in Norwich and the campaign of extreme right-wing demagogue Air Marshall Donald Bennett, who was contesting Edward Heath's seat at Sidcup. At the last election, Armstrong spoke at National Front meetings. The tragedy was not only that Armstrong could support the Labour candidates without any official complaint, but that nobody at the meeting could tell the difference between his views and those of Garrett and Ennals.



Distortion special

THERE is no newspaper in the country which can keep up reactionary hysteria for as long as the London Evening News. The attempt to keep the Tory bandwagon moving long after it had ground to halt pushed the Evening News into even greater acts of contortion than those performed by its stablemate in Associated Newspapers, the Daily Mail.

Both were assisted throughout by the National Opinion Poll, which cheerfully gave the Tories substantial leads when they did not exist.

The most astonishing performance came on polling day itself. The 'night special' edition of the Evening News—on the bookstalls soon after midday—carried the following good news for Tories:



The story retailed the 'findings' of the National Opinion Poll which gave the Tories a 12.4 per cent lead

in the South East. The bare 'facts' were not enough for the News. Their 'Closing Prices' edition had a new headline, which purported to 'explain' the figures.



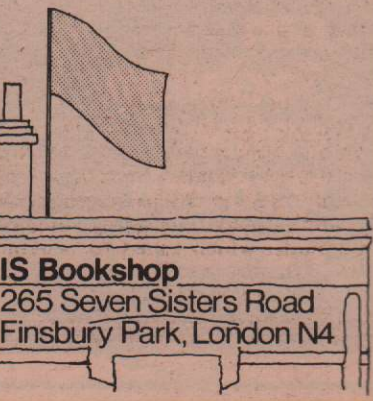
The story below was exactly the same. The 'interpretation'—that the 'swing' was due to commuters' rage with ASLEF—was supplied entirely by the Evening News. The swing in London and the South East, as it turned out, was just under two per cent—to Labour.

The margin of error in opinion polls is, I understand, at maximum three per cent. Tory polls in newspapers are allowed a margin of error of anything up to 15 per cent, provided the 'error' puts the Tories in the lead it seems.

The following books are now in stock

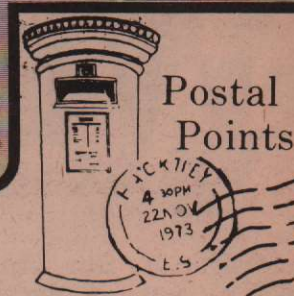
- THE UNACCEPTABLE FACE, CIS report on the Tory government 1970-4, 15p
- YEARS OF CHANGE—AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A HACKNEY SHOEMAKER, Newton, 35p
- THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE, Margaret Morris, 36p
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Please add 7p per book and 4p per pamphlet to cover postage and packing



The Editor,
Socialist Worker,
Coventry Works,
Coventry B2 9DS

LETTERS



It should have been a landslide for Labour

HOW IS IT that Labour was not returned with a massive majority? Right from the start the Labour leaders had chance after chance to hammer the Tories.

Did Labour take up the challenge and call upon its supporters to bring all possible help to the miners? Did Labour throw back the 'who rules Britain?' cry and expose the rich and all powerful 'knights' of industry, finance and property who have dictated the policies of every government? Did they hell!

Even the pale pink policies of the Labour manifesto were clearly an embarrassment to Wilson, Callaghan, Prentice and the rest.

When the Tories accused Labour of wanting to nationalise the banks, Callaghan called it a joke and a lie—on the very day that bank profits amounting to hundreds of millions were announced, enough to pay the miners' claim several times over.

When the North Sea oil carve up was exposed—profits to the oil companies of over £3000 million a year—Labour didn't call for an immediate take over of our assets under the sea.

When the government's own figures were published showing that prices are rising nearly twice as fast as take home pay, Labour's answer was that they could control wages better than the Tories.

For the future it is clear that we must have a socialist party that can build workers' confidence so that the Tories will want to forget the 'who rules Britain?' taunt for the fear that millions of workers will reply—*Now you do—tomorrow we will.*—CHRIS DAVISON, London N17.

We're worried

I AM A MEMBER of the Newquay branch of the building workers' union and many members of our branch are extremely worried about our union's silence over the Shrewsbury trials.

On several occasions we've made enquiries through our branch as to UCATT's executive's position. We haven't had any satisfactory explanations.

Are Shrewsbury defendants and the rest of us to be abandoned to the anti-union Tory monster called 'conspiracy'?

If the working man attempts to increase his income he doesn't get a knighthood. He must be a 'red', 'attempting to destroy democracy'. As Ricky Tomlinson said at Shrewsbury 'If you repeat a lie often enough it becomes the truth.'

If we are to survive everyone of us must fight, our rulers have all the wealth and media, but there are millions of us against thousands of them. They need us—but we don't need them.—K BUTLERS, Newquay.

Lies, damned lies, and relativities boards...



Sir Frank Figgures, of the 'Relativities' Board.

THE ATTEMPTS to make capital out of the 'mistake' in the figures used for determining the miners' relative earnings position obscured the real issue. That the relativity hearings were totally phoney.

As employees of Incomes Data we have always been aware of what the Pay Board claimed suddenly to discover.

Earnings figures in general, and the Department of Employment earnings league table in particular, are notoriously unreliable and no-one can be more aware of that than Derek Robinson, deputy chairman of the Pay Board, who prior to his appointment to the Board was a director of Incomes Data. Whoever produced the evidence first, the fact is that Robinson should, and probably did, know of the distortion to the miners' earnings figures long before the issue became headline news. Especially as Ruskin College's Trade Union Research Unit produced these figures two years ago.

What is more worrying is that the totally discredited practice of comparing earnings figures, which formed the basis of the Pay Board's relativities hearings, is becoming the standard method of arguing wage claims, fully endorsed by trade union research departments. While this goes on all the figures floating around to support relativity arguments will give no indication of how much overtime is required to reach the alleged average earnings of a particular group.

In the arguments about 'relative earnings' a wage claim becomes totally divorced from the men on the shop floor. While 'experts' go on arguing about this or that figure rank and file trade unionists will be prevented from going for what is really needed: the achievement of basic rates high enough to allow men to work less than 55 hours to take home a decent wage packet.—B GUNNELL, D SHONFIELD, London.

We're still fighting—help us

THE CON-MECH dispute is now in its fifth month. We desperately need support both financially and in the picket line.

The strike started in support of two basic principles: that every worker has the right to belong to a trade union and that no representative of the workers shall be victimised.

The workers at Con-Mech asked for union recognition and the two shop stewards who put forward the request were immediately sacked.

We are determined to win this dispute. The effects of a defeat will be the weakening of a trade union movement in an area which has only

with no heating, no ventilation, unsafe machinery, in dirty old sheds, simply to earn enough to feed and house their wives and children.

Pass resolutions of support in your local branches, trades councils calling on the AUEW to mount a new campaign so that employers, but more importantly trade unionists, can appreciate the strength of a united working class.

Hold collections in factories and branches. Organise delegates to be sent from your factory and branches to the Con-Mech picket line to show your solidarity and find out first hand what is happening here.

Organise factory meetings and public meetings where the strikers' case can be put and collections made. Circulate the names of those companies dealing with Con-Mech.

The slogan of the AUEW is UNITY IS STRENGTH and we must work to create that unity, we must use that strength.—L GREIG, Secretary, Con-Mech Strike Committee.

All donations, queries and messages of support to above at Coxhill House, Chobham, Surrey (Tel: Chobham 8926).

Wigg dispels all our illusions

AT A BRIXTON public meeting I heard the Labour Lord Wigg express profound admiration for Enoch Powell. Here are some examples of Wigg's mindless opportunism:

'When it comes to choose between party and country, I hope you will choose country and vote Labour . . . I share the same traditions as Mr Powell . . . and stand beside him,' said Lord Wigg.

In this election anyway the International Socialists did not have to work overtime to dispel illusions in the Labour Party—they did it for us.—ROBERT LUMLEY, Lambeth.

THREE PROTESTS AGAINST SOCIALIST WORKER'S ARTICLE ON NORMA LEVY (23 February) . . . Women and prostitution are exploited enough in our society . . . Surely there are better ways of attacking the ruling class than concentrating on their sexual activities? . . . Why don't you talk about how capitalism forces women into becoming prostitutes? We need more articles on women, but not that kind of exploitation . . . which is best left to the News of the World, which makes its fortunes from exploiting people's repressed sexual fantasies. Where are the revolutionary sexual politics in Socialist Worker?—ELAINE KOWALSKY, RACHEL GOLDRICK, ANGELA McHUGH, NOEL HALIFAX, London . . .

I STRONGLY disagree with your method of quoting extensively from Norma Levy's book . . . This served only to set them up as objects of pity. The really despicable aspect of the scandal is that people like Lambton subordinate women and sex to cash while talking about the morals of Christianity and 'family life'—this was only given a brief mention . . . What was largely an irrelevant and sensationalist article should have been a thorough ruthless attack on the debasement of women in this society.—STEPHANIE WHITE, Leeds . . .

WAS IT too much to hope that you would publish an analysis of prostitution in capitalist society rather than grovelling around in the gutter? . . . Prostitution occurs in all social classes. It is not only the ruling class who buy sex and have a double standard of sexual morality . . . For the majority of women the rewards from prostitution are not Mercedes, mink coats and huge cash fees—but police harassment, syphilis, assaults from customers and pimps . . . Socialist Worker appeals to women in the same terms as the ruling class press and political parties. There are more forces at work which affect the lives of women than rising prices. You have consistently failed to deal with the problems of women's liberation, sexual, psychological, social as well as economic. Women will not take your paper seriously until this fact is recognised.—KAREN MARGOLIS, SUSAN BRULEY, London SW17.

ADOLF ON THE TELLY? . . . I listened to the National Front's election broadcast and was shocked to hear how similar the speech was to some of Hitler's . . . I would like to see all sections of the Labour and trade union movement clamp down on such organisations. They should be banned from trade unions . . . I am all for free speech, but not for fascists.—N McLAREN, Glenrothes.

ADOLF IN SOCIALIST WORKER . . . In the light of the National Front's vote at the election I think a large article is needed to point out the fascist origins of that, and other organisations. You seem to imagine everyone is aware of the details.—W SMITH, NEWMAN SMITH, Manchester 13

COMMUNITY PRESSED . . . Community Press (formerly Birmingham Socialist Press) has run into financial difficulties . . . The Press doesn't intend to collapse without a fight . . . with just a little extra effort and luck the press can survive. It needs £450 for its immediate needs plus £50 a month after that. Readers of Socialist Worker could help by cash contributions, by filling in bankers' order forms or by using our printing service.—GEOFF WADE, Community Press, 364 Stratford Road, Birmingham 11.

THANKS . . . Please accept this small contribution to your fund—I only wish it could be more. However appreciating the urgency of the situation, every sacrifice will be made to ensure as large and regular contribution as possible. I appreciate your continued support of the working class.—DAVE GIBBONS, Bolton.

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.

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Interview by Judith Condon

SATNUM SINGH is one of the 8 workers who have been on official strike for three months at Coventry Art Castings, Nuneaton, in the A L Dunne group.

Early on in the strike he had his finger broken when a scab lorry driver slammed his door on Satnam's hand. Last week Satnam was arrested along with Gurmail Singh and Major Singh and charged with breach of the peace and using threatening behaviour. These three were also charged under the 1875 Conspiracy Act for following lorries.

The strike has resulted in 13 arrests at the time of writing.

Satnum Singh explained to Socialist Worker what has been going on.

'Management point out people to the police and the police duly oblige by making arrests. The six leaders of the pickets have all been arrested, the leaders being the ones who have been up the front talking to drivers.

'There is always a van load of policemen on the corner with about eight or ten inside. As soon as we stop any lorry they come out with the big numbers in three or four vans and cars.

The company is really after the union now. They are trying to smash us and they are using every dirty trick to frighten people.

'There have been 13 arrests up to now. The police always go inside and drink tea with the managers.

Lies

'When I first came here six years ago there was no union at all. We brought in the union in 1969. There was a lot of trouble. One time they sacked a bloke on nights when the rest walked out they sacked the whole night shift. It took a week's strike to get them all back.

'This present strike started when they sacked the man who was the steward on that night shift at the time of the week's strike. You have already written in Socialist Worker about the terrible conditions here, about the lack of ventilation and the accidents.

'I've written some poems in Punjabi about what it's like to work here. And I'm going to send them to Chingari, the socialist Punjabi paper.

'We know that the scab workers are not getting out much production. But they're being paid the full rate. Every one of the scabs is white except for one charge-hand. The management advertised in the local paper for scabs. They said you could get up to £60—all lies.

'The reason I came here in the first place was because it was a semi-skilled job. I used to work in Jaguar-Daimler as a labourer, but I wanted to be an operator.

'It was always turned down by the foreman, though I knew I could

Race is a thing used

by the boss to split us

NOT 83 ASIANS ON STRIKE - BUT 83 TRADE UNIONISTS

do the job. There aren't many black operators in the car factories.

'But they didn't give me any training here. You go straight on to the job and the other blokes have to show you what to do. There's no training school or anything like that. They give you four weeks to prove that you can keep up to the rate—then if you can't they sack you.

'Most of the Asian workers are knockers out, furnace men and labourers. The white workers are on assembly inspection or in the core chop and there's a lot more money on these jobs.

'But we don't think this is the

key issue. The union officials shouldn't say 83 Asians are on strike but 83 trade unionists. The convenor and two stewards and four or five other men are out with us and they are white.

Support

'The race element is a thing used by the boss to split us. But we don't fall for that.

'Support could be coming through a lot quicker. The Transport and General Workers Union officials and the convenors in the car factories

have been very slow in getting Dunne's products blacked.

'There are eight factories in the Dunne group and we need to get support in all of them. But we've had to push the officials every inch of the way.

'If they had given a really strong lead, we could have shut down this factory very quickly. We've had to do everything ourselves. But we're standing firm together. For instance the management taunted every striker with an individual letter saying if we wanted to restart then we should come and apply to the personnel officer. No one went.

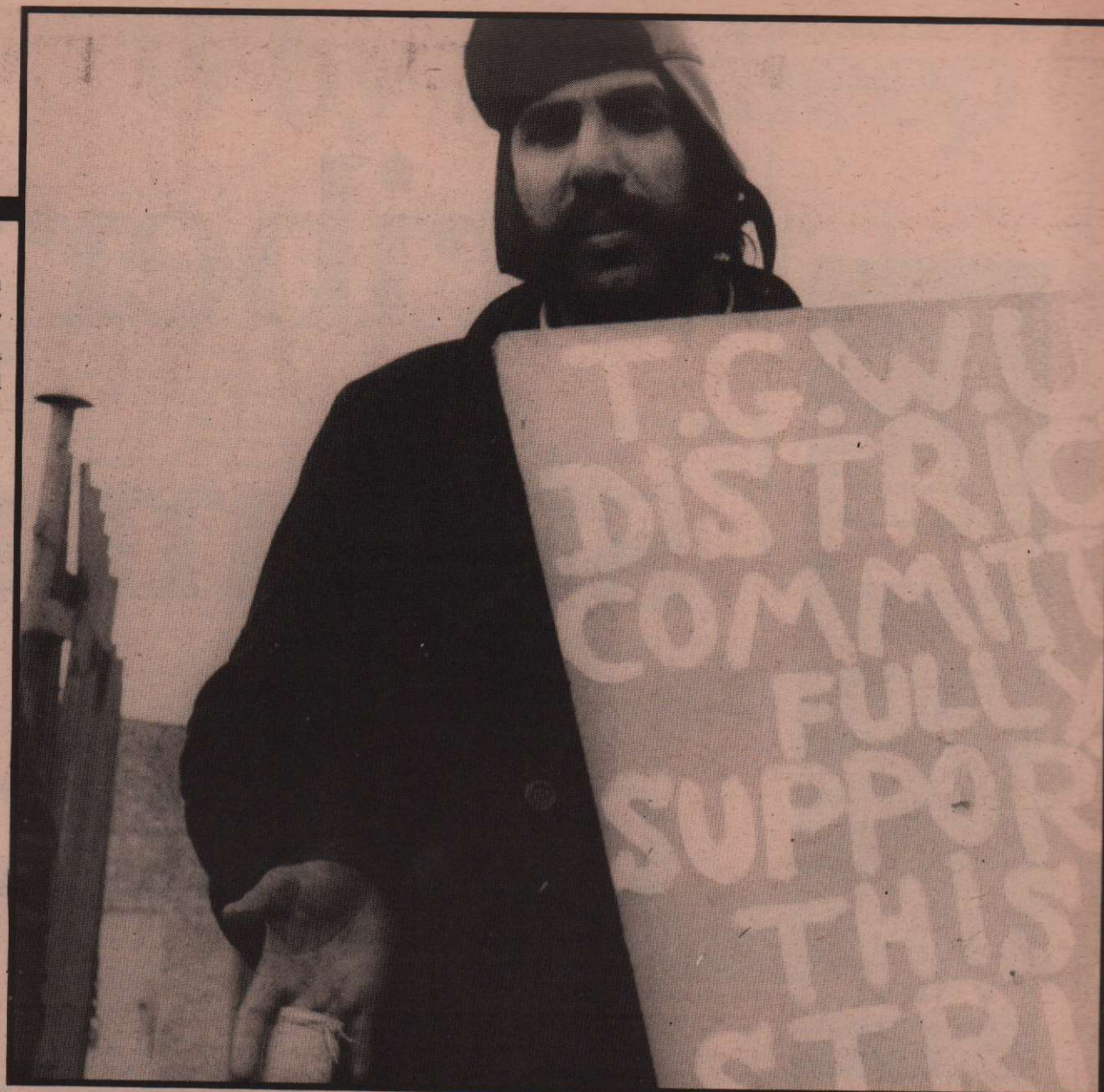
'We have said we'll only go back

together. Also my wife is not working because we have an 18-month-old daughter. But we live on a joint family system. If my brother is working then he will help me.

'The pickets here have given a few pounds to the Shrewsbury fighting fund. We're unlucky because we can't support them at the moment. We have no money so it can only be a small collection for them at this stage.

'We need help ourselves. We need help to win and to go back with the union strong.'

Please send donations and messages of support to Satnam Singh, 72 Churchill Avenue, Foleshill, Coventry.



Satnam Singh on the picket line: the two broken fingers were caused by a scab driver



Strikers on the Coventry Art Castings picket line

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Top-level corruption, tottering government and an 'energy

Bribery storm as coalition collapses

Backhanders by oil bosses



THE ITALIAN government has collapsed in the midst of policy disagreements, political scandal and mass working-class protest.

The coalition split over the terms of a loan which the Republican treasury minister La Malfa negotiated with the International Monetary Fund.

The IMF demanded a complete freeze on public spending and increased taxation on top of the already severe crisis measures the government has taken. Two days before the government broke up, 13 million workers took part in a one-day general strike in opposition to the attacks on working-class living standards.

Private

The fraudulent arguments used by the government to justify these measures have been exposed by the scandal, which concerns relations between the political parties and the state-owned petrol and electricity boards.

Leading members of the Unione Petrolifera, the private oil companies association, are to be charged with regularly bribing the political parties of successive coalition governments in order to win government decrees favourable to them, including subsidies and tax rebates.



Two men in search of a government: Heath seen last year with Italian premier Rumor

According to the secretary of the former President of the UP, the petrol companies gave out £5½ million in bribes divided between the political parties in proportion to their power, and reaped through government decrees over the years up to £1000 million.

They are also accused of lying about the volume of their oil reserves in order to jack up the price of petrol and oil products.

In the name of the energy crisis the government has twice

raised the price of petrol and oil products—while the oil companies were stockpiling supplies of petrol, kerosene and oil.

The third accusation relates to their successful bid to bribe leading politicians and government administrators so that the State Electricity Board could build thermal power stations—to the enormous benefit of the petrol companies.

Also accused of receiving and giving bribes are the administrators of the state boards who are

nominated from the parties in the coalition government. The State Oil Company, ENI, is alleged regularly to have bribed the government parties in order to advance its interests.

De Mita, the present Minister of Industry, is said to have received a regular salary from ENI.

Denied

La Malfa has admitted receiving bribes on behalf of his party, the Republicans, though he lamely denied they had done anything in return.

At least five past or present ministers are implicated in the scandal. Such is its political significance that the allegations are to be investigated by a special parliamentary committee drawn proportionately from the different parties in parliament.

Some of the big national papers have splashed the scandal over their front pages. The two big dailies owned by the boss of Fiat, Agnelli, have denounced the oil bosses.

Others have passed over the scandal virtually in silence. This is no coincidence.

A number of national and provincial papers are owned by the top oil magnates. The different reactions reveal the deep splits within the ruling class over who is to get the lion's share of the wealth produced by Italian workers.

The 19 petrol companies

wield enormous power. Their annual turnover is to approximately £100 million, more than that of Fiat, while the most one tenth of the workers.

The leading sectors of the economy also happen to be the right wing of the ruling class and several allied to the fascist.

In the business and corruption are no exceptions. This has exposed the relationship between political parties,

Mas

The Mafia is a class itself. One of Esso Italiana, Vincenzo Cazzaro, has exposed the scandal of the UP, said he was arrested at being arrested as 'normal industry'.

The cost has been Italian workers' families. The crisis has been a massive price rise on a slaughter on job standards.

Last Thursday's strike marks a turning point in the counter-revolution in the country. The Italian workers

Special report by MIKE BALFOUR

crisis'—no, it's Italy not Britain



ses

power in Italy. mover amounts ly £225,000 an twice that ey employ al- the number of

oil millionaires arrests in other economy. They on the extreme e Italian ruling al are closely ts.

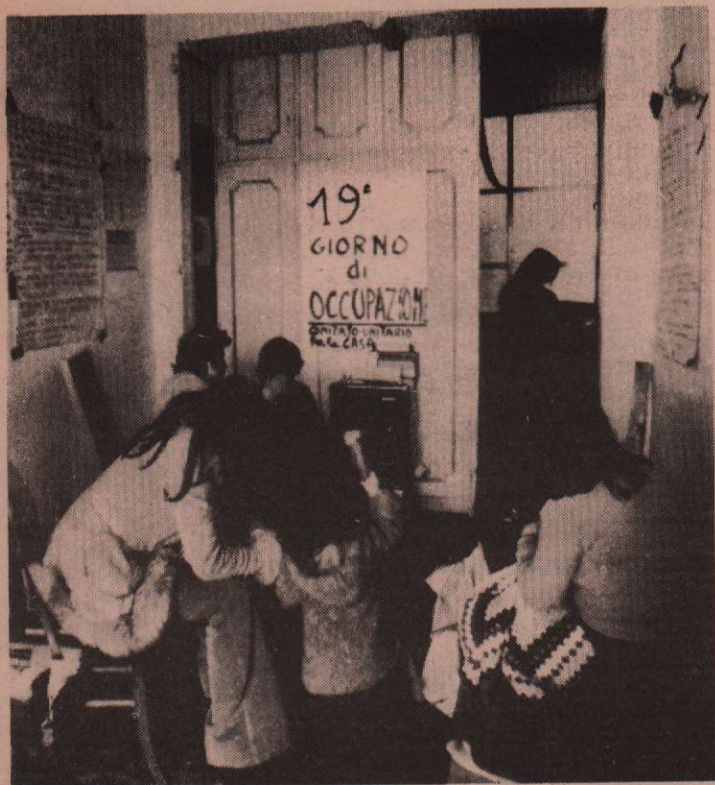
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the Italian ruling of the accused, ga, ex-chairman and ex-president was astounded since bribery trial practice'.

been borne by and their tificial energy used to justify es and an on- s and living

ay's general he first shot offensive by king class.



**HOMELESS MAN
THE BARRICADES**

BARRICADES in Rome . . . on top of the bribery scandal, the government has faced a long-running battle with slum dwellers. Amid the ancient splendours of the Italian capital 'instant slums' have been jerrybuilt by property speculators as homes for workers. Even these are not enough to home the homeless. Armies of workers have been squatting in unfinished apartment blocks for the wealthy. 47 buildings have been seized so far this year. Top picture shows squatters manning a barricade in front of an occupied block. Picture above shows the inside of an apartment. The sign says '19th day of occupation'.

Why fat sheep

safely graze...

'GIVEN five fat sheep and 95 thin, how to induce the 95 to resign to the five the richest pasture and the shadiest corners?'

The socialist writer who asked this, 40-odd years ago, gave as his answer, 'By convincing them, obviously, that if they do not, they will die of rot, be eaten by wolves and be deprived in the meantime of such pastures as they have . . .'

'Measures—so the argument runs—which have as their object the diminution of inequality, have as their effect the depletion of capital and the discouragement of enterprise and this in turn leads to lower wages and increased unemployment. Thus the wealth of the few is the indispensable safeguard of the modest comfort of the many . . .'

This argument is still heard. But today many of the thin sheep are rather less gullible and so we also have a new argument, a new diversion for lean sheep.

It is called 'relativities'. All thin sheep are skinny, but some are skinnier than others. If they can be induced to cast envious eyes on one another's meagre fodder, then the fat sheep can continue to graze undisturbed in the lush pastures.

It is a variant of the age-old ruling-class technique of divide and rule. It has had a considerable measure of success.

Miners are persuaded to compare themselves with car workers, not capitalists. Locomotivemen are persuaded to compare themselves with engineers, not landlords.

The permutations of the relativities debate are endless. What weighting for skill, for scarcity, for social importance, for danger and disease? The more complex and the more heated the arguments, the better the fat sheep are pleased.

So let us drop for the moment the relativities debate, as defined by the Pay Board and the establishment and look at a more important relativity—the allocation of the pasture.

In a useful little book 'Wealth, Income and Inequality,' published by Penguin last year, we find the following facts:

The top 1 per cent of the population own 43 per cent of the privately owned wealth in Britain, the top 5 per cent own 68 per cent and the top 10 per cent own 79 per cent.

Unequal

It follows that the other 90 per cent own nearly 21 per cent of the wealth. Wealth is broadly defined.

It includes the market value of the house or flat that most middle-class and many working-class families buy or are compelled to buy, by borrowing at crippling rates of interest from mortgage banks—misleadingly called 'building societies' though they build nothing.

If we take the most important single kind of income generating wealth, shares in companies of all kinds, we find a still more unequal distribution. The top 1 per cent own 81 per cent, the top 5 per cent own 96 per cent and the top 10 per cent own 98 per cent.

It is worth noting that the economists who produced this date, H F Lydall and D G Tipping, believe 'that the existing sources of data on personal wealth in Britain are quite inadequate for a serious study of the problem.'

Why? Because they may overestimate the fortunes of the rich?

Not at all. The opposite is true. The calculations depend essentially on the payment of death duties as reported by the Inland Revenue.

And death duties are notoriously evaded, quite legally, by the very rich by means of gifts, trusts and other devices. Indeed, a whole profession of tax experts—or tax evasion experts—has grown up to service the fat sheep.

These facts are fairly well known. But most people are not too impressed by statistics.

They prefer particular facts and since statistics are easily



A pensioner looks at a Rolls-Royce? Why should it be a pipe-dream?

manipulated this may be a healthy preference. So let us look at one or two particular facts.

A Rolls-Royce car, basic model without trimmings, costs about £17,000. But you just can't walk into your local dealer with the £17,000 you have saved from your wages and drive away your Silver Ghost or whatever the current model is called.

Accused

There is a long waiting list. Too many people, in this time of economic belt-tightening, are chasing too few Rolls. How many of them are putting their case before the Relativities Board or the Pay Board?

Or take the following advertisements which appeared in last week's Sunday Times: 'Under the J S and P plan an investment of £35,000 would give you a tax free income of £3500 per annum or could in 15 years grow to £152,526 to give a tax free income of £15,306 per annum'.

Or again: 'View Today. St Johns Wood. Easy to manage family home . . . Leasehold £180,000.'

People who point to such inconvenient facts are often accused

by Tory, Liberal and sometimes even Labour Party spokesmen of appealing to envy, jealousy and class hatred. It is an accusation that does not come well from defenders of an economic system that makes accumulation of private profit the highest social virtue.

But, of course, socialists do want a society free from class hatred. They want a society without classes.

The question is: does acceptance of the ideology of 'relativities', 'fairness', 'moderation' and the acceptance of 'incomes policy' lead in a socialist direction?

It does not. It leads in the opposite direction. It leads to arguments about the redistribution of income within the working-class.

It takes for granted that what the economists we have quoted call the 'exceptionally unequal distribution of wealth' remains basically unchanged.

To return to the parable of the fat sheep and the thin sheep, a 'relativities board' is concerned to ensure that the thin sheep share out more 'fairly' the inferior pastures.

Duncan Hallas

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A Socialist Worker pamphlet 3p



Here's a vital pamphlet for ALL readers of Socialist Worker—a pamphlet to read, re-read and keep handy every time there is a new 'money crisis'. It is required reading for every worker and housewife who wonders why their money is being eaten away.

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Minority Movement burns its bridges...



The reluctance of the left wing of the General Council to come out openly and fight the right wing on every possible occasion, for there could be no doubt that the right wing leaders, as represented by Messrs Thomas, Clynes and Cramp, had very effectively marshalled their forces and were organised to take up the battle wherever an opportunity presented itself... —Harry Pollitt, Secretary, National Minority Movement, Labour Monthly October, 1925.

Top: Harry Pollitt (in waistcoat), secretary of the Minority Movement with other MM officials. Above: A J Cook, one of the movement's most brilliant spokesmen.

THE DEVELOPMENT of the Minority Movement in the 1920s as a militant rank and file organisation operating within the trade unions and the workshops and factories was connected with three vital factors.

First, the economic difficulties of British capitalism after the post-1918 'replacement' boom.

Second, the failure of the official trade union machine to defend, let alone extend, workers' pay and conditions through a united front of organised workers, regardless of trade, industry or trade union organisation.

Third, the existence of a Communist Party with political and industrial militants schooled in the previous struggles for trade union reform and socialism from below. The impetus for the Minority Movement came from Communists who grouped around them a much wider circle of militants sharing with them past struggles and experience.

There was also a fourth factor, one that came to be of decisive importance in the eventual failure of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement—the Russian influence exerted through the Communist International.

The Communist International formed in 1919 was founded on the idea that international social democracy—represented in Britain by the Labour Party—had gone over to the camp of capitalism. It argued that revolution was on the order of the day in the developed countries.

Fighting

To make the revolution succeed, Communist Parties, entirely independent of the old socialist parties, should be formed, working within existing workers' organisations but fighting as communists with revolutionary socialist objectives.

Britain as a leading capitalist power was the subject of much attention from the CI. The Communist Party

Second of two articles by Jim Higgins

was weak in numbers but there existed mass trade unions with traditions of rank and file organisation, industrial unionism and direct action.

The problem was to connect the communist forces and politics to this rank and file, to build the bridge from trade union militancy to revolutionary politics. The Minority Movement was to be that bridge.

The founding conference of the Minority Movement was held in 1924. Already the movement had a strong hold in major industries including mines, engineering and transport.

But at the same time a significant change had taken place within the Russian party and the CI. Lenin had died, the German revolution had

failed and Stalin came to the fore as the prophet of 'socialism in one country'.

Diplomacy and negotiation with non-communist forces would have to replace the development of the revolutionary movement.

In 1924 a number of prominent right-wing trade union leaders had been given ministerial office in Ramsay MacDonald's first minority Labour government, leaving vacancies on the General Council of the TUC which were taken by left-wingers.

An Anglo-Russian Committee was formed of members of the TUC and the Russian unions. The British contingent contained a number of 'left' members of the TUC—Purcell, Hicks, Williams and Bramley.

The effect of this Anglo-Russian understanding was to mute the criticisms of the trade union leadership.

The communists within the Minority Movement operated as if the movement were an end in itself, of more relevance than the building of the party. The old ideas of the pre-war period of turning the TUC General Council into the 'general staff' of the working class assumed greater and greater prominence.

Jailed

The TUC did not see things at all in those terms. After the defeat of the Labour government in another 'reds under the beds' election, the right wing returned to the General Council. The TUC 'left' contented themselves with radical speeches and no preparation.

The big testing time came with the 1926 General Strike.

The Minority Movement played little part, although they did more than the TUC 'lefts', who disappeared without trace. The Communist Party, whose leaders had been jailed the previous year, was ill prepared.

Their slogan 'All power to the General Council' rebounded when the General Council took the power and sold out.

The aftermath of the General Strike saw the defeat of the trade unions as a whole. The Minority Movement continued but it was broken. No militant movement, let alone one with revolutionary pretensions, can succeed with the workers in full-scale retreat.

What are the lessons for today? The essential conditions for the re-birth of a national rank and file movement exist.

Capitalism is in a greater crisis than at any time since the war. It is unable to govern in the old way.

Increased attacks on living standards and trade union organisation are inevitable. The trade union leadership, from right to left, is uniformly incapable of developing the class-wide strategy that can win even modest trade union demands.

In the last period, whole sections of workers have entered direct strike actions and greater numbers of workers have struck in defence of their conditions.

There exists a wide circle of militants and shop stewards, disillusioned with the 'left' trade union leaders and finding no answer in the Communist-dominated Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. The Communist Party and the Liaison Committee see their task as pressuring the Labour Party and the left of the trade union leadership by token stoppages and rally style conferences that have no local organisation or rank and file control.

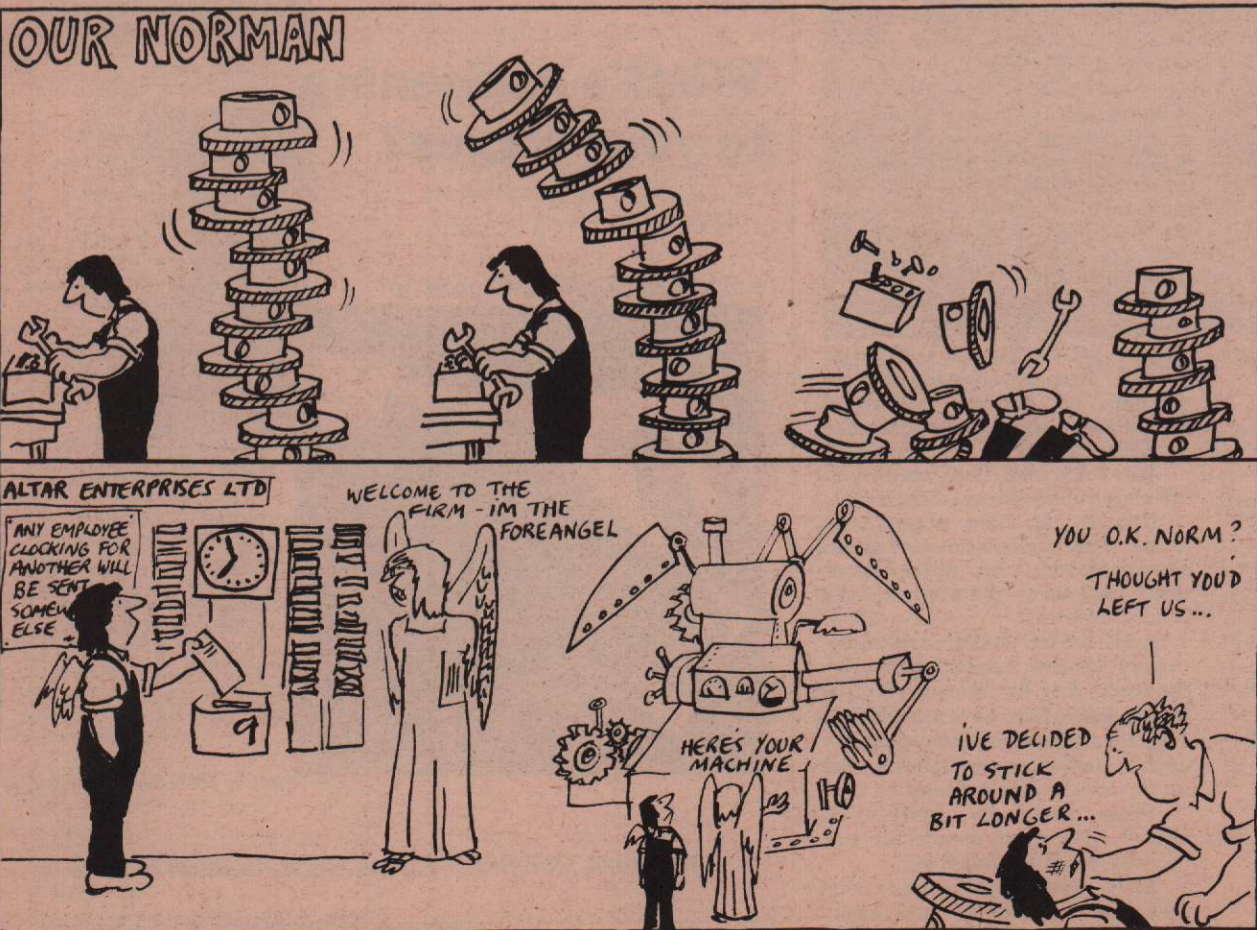
The revolutionary movement is stronger than it has been for 50 years. In particular, the International Socialists have begun to build an important base in the unions and the factories.

The conference to be held in Birmingham on 30 March is the initiative of a number of rank and file papers, most of them born out of strikes and struggles within their own unions.

They see the need to go beyond their own unions and to develop a structure that will unite all workers in their common fight for control over their own union and for a militant policy of advance.

Revolutionaries will and must be active in that movement, but they cannot turn it into a simple recruiting ground or a front. The rank and file movement is not a substitute for a revolutionary party, for there are no substitutes.

30 March is the first step for workers to discuss the construction of a movement that will avoid the errors of the past and build on the incomparably stronger potential of the working class in 1974.



How to get equal pay, divorced and out of jug...

Women's Rights: A Practical Guide, by Anna Coote and Tessa Gill, Penguin, 60p.

WOMEN'S BATTLE for equal pay is the starting point for this excellent book.

The authors demolish the old arguments of opponents of the women's movement—that women earn less than men because they work shorter hours, or are less skilled. The Equal Pay Act won't change things that much, they argue.

It won't provide for equal job opport-

unities. Further it doesn't ensure that jobs will no longer be classified as 'women's' work—and there are no men in similar occupations.

The book's best feature is its practical suggestions for solving these problems. Get into a union, and fight alongside other women trade unionists. The odds will still be against you—most union leaderships are men, even where the rank and file is mainly women.

The problems are often demoralising, and

so the struggle isn't taken seriously. But it is up to the women members, organised in their unions, to force their officials to take the equal pay and opportunities issues past resolutions and into action. The TUC passed its first resolution on equal pay in 1888 and we've still got nothing but promises!

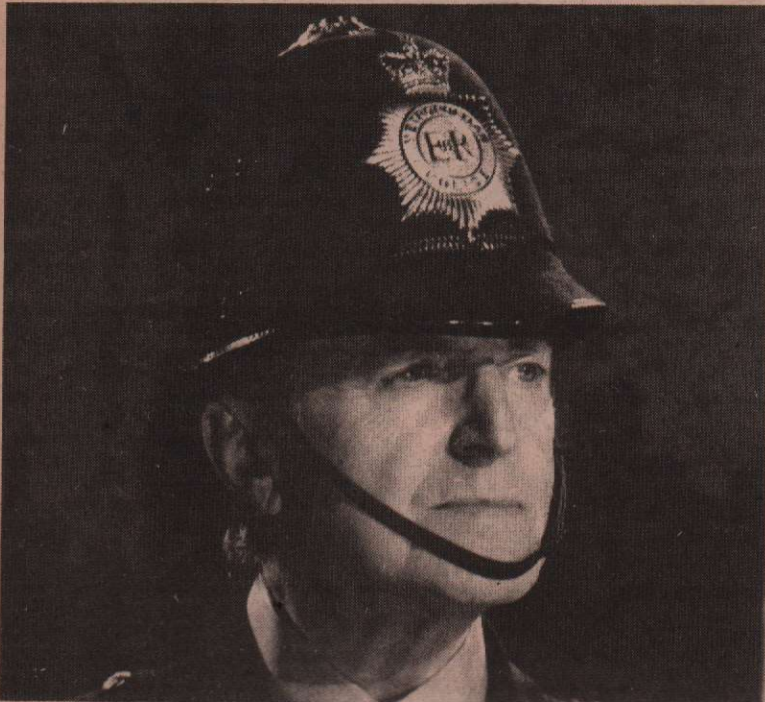
The book is about a lot more than equal pay. It gives a run down on everything women need to know about fighting the legal and bureaucratic machine.

The rights of single women, marriage (and whether you'd be better off unmarried), children, education, mother's rights, divorce, prisons, pensions—Anna Coote and Tessa Gill have got it all summed up.

The authors point out how the law can be used in favour of women—and how it can be improved. As a guide to basic rights, as a source of information on all women's struggles, this book should be invaluable.

JANET DRUKER

The arrested development of Barlow's bobbies



Bandaged any dog's paws lately? Jack Warner as Dixon.



Jumped on any dog's paws lately? Stratford Johns as Barlow.

The big cop out

by Roger Protz

MOST NIGHTS of the week you can be sure of seeing large bodies of uniformed men planting their big boots all over your friendly television screen, muttering 'evenin' all', 'now then, now then, now then', and 'anything you say will be taken down and totally distorted in court'.

The cop opera is the staple diet of British television. Wednesday night viewers who are fast enough on the switch can watch two hours of PC Plod disguised first as Barlow and then as Special Branch.

And waiting in the wings, batons ready, new scripts chattering from the typewriters, are Softly, Softly and New Scotland Yard. Z-Cars livens up Monday tea time and the old daddy of them all, Dixon, is still touching his helmet in time for the Saturday night kipper.



The sum total of all these hours of police drama is a massive propaganda exercise in favour of law and order and the basic decency and necessity of all those heavy men with big plates and bristly necks.

It wasn't always like that. The recent history of police series is a revealing insight into the power of the telly moguls to degut any programme with a mass audience that speaks—however vaguely—about the problems of working people.

Twelve years ago old Dixon was still plodding around Dock Green, giving his little homilies at the end of each episode of Ted Willis' tired, lumpy scripts. Anybody in the real Dock Greens of Britain who had had any connection with the police knew that Dixon was as true to life as those commercials that suggest that the Army is all sun and sport with never a hint of violence.

Dock Green was a working-class community, but the people were crude caricatures of Victorian England, drawing from the sides of their mouths, muttering about 'Old Bill', drinking beer straight from the bottle and holding their Woodies between thumb and forefinger.

As for Dixon and his pals from the nick, they were a sort of uniformed branch of the Samaritans, dispensing warm justice and raising a hand only to swat flies from old ladies' heads.

Life wasn't like that. It had never been, but Dixon had become a joke in the rough, tough and increasingly brutal modern world—a world that had bred a new brand of rough, tough and increasingly brutal policemen.

Socialists would decry that reality. Ruling-class apologists, on the other hand, would argue that we got the police force we deserved. As a result, the BBC governors were suitably impressed by a scheme in 1962 to run a series that would show the police in a modern light.

And so Z-Cars was born. In one sense it was more dangerous than George Dixon. Its portrait of the police was a long way from the truth but the air of reality was sufficiently powerful to suggest that the series was more fact than fiction.

But in another sense, it was a major breakthrough. A team of fine writers, including two convinced socialists, John McGrath and Alan Plater, realised that humdrum police work was an ideal way of looking at the tensions and problems in a northern working-class area—'Newtown' (Kirkby) on Merseyside.

For the first—and probably last—time, a television police series went behind stock, plastic characterisation and probed into the rotten housing, low wages and tedious jobs that give rise to petty crime.

The coppers, particularly those in the patrol cars, were shown as men with their own human frailties who stemmed from the same background as the working-class people they were dealing with.

Z-Cars was an enormous popular success. And success spelt its downfall. The BBC may not have those tedious little interruptions every 20 minutes like ITV, but it is nevertheless a vast commercial enterprise, competing for the top 20 programmes, attempting to sell its goods overseas and to cash in on its programmes with books and records.

Z-Cars had to be carefully processed to fit such a mould. It needed heroes and 'stars', not a changing mosaic of working-class people week after week. And so Barlow and, to a lesser extent, Watt were given the publicity build-up and the series narrowed around them, losing contact with the half-real world outside the police station.

It was a familiar experience. ITV's The Planemakers was a similar success and the action was swiftly booted upstairs from the shopfloor to the directors' suite and was renamed The Power Game.



Z-Cars quickly lost some of its best writers, notably McGrath and Troy Kennedy Martin, who disagreed passionately with the direction the series was expected to take. The programme spawned offshoots like sex-mad rabbits.

Barlow and Watt left Merseyside for 'Wyvern' to set up a Task Force, a new-style police crime squad. The area was rather too rural to maintain much drama and the scene was shifted to 'Thamesford', a London overspill area. Finally, as the complete negation of the original Z-Cars' 'no-stars' formula, Barlow was given his own series.

As the programmes have become more divorced from their roots so they have become a crude mouthpiece for official police propaganda and ruling-class ideas. The last Softly, Softly series showed an hysterical preoccupation with socialists, anarchists and terrorists, all drawn as crude stereotypes mouthing the BBC's laughable idea of left-wing clichés. The series ended with John Watt escaping with singed eyebrows from a cricket pavilion lifted several feet from its natural position by a public school 'revolutionary'.

Once in a while, Alan Plater still drops in with a script that tries to drag the series back to basic, but the contradictions are now too glaring.

With Plater, we have the Welsh Sergeant Evans condemning property speculators and profiteers while John Watt cries into his third double Johnny Walker that he's really a progressive at heart. Then next week it's back to the Scotland Yard handouts of Elwyn Jones and Allan Prior, with justifications for strong-arm methods and false evidence.

Writing, characterisation and acting have all turned full circle. Most weeks, you would do just as well watching Dixon as Softly, Softly or Barlow. In fact, by a strange twist of irony, Dixon, in spite of its awful writing and acting, has more to say about working-class life because it has stayed in the same 'manor'.

But dreadful, blatant and reactionary as nearly all the British cop series are, they have yet to descend to the level of absurdity of their American counterparts. We have old Iron Jelloids performing miraculous acts from the safety of his wheel chair every week and one series even produced a blind, yes blind, insurance investigator.

Impressed by this trend for physical deformity, I am working on a series in which crimes are solved by a super cop without a brain. It's about time we got back to reality...

PREVIEW

*Times not known at time of going to press
SATURDAY, BBC-2. An echo of more recently military massacres is THE ANDERSONVILLE TRIAL, an American play dealing with the death of 15,000 Northern prisoners in a Southern prison camp in Georgia. A different aspect of America in the nineteenth century comes from Saturday Cinema's YOUNG MR LINCOLN*. It stars Henry Fonda as Abraham Lincoln and is directed by one of the finest directors of Westerns, John Ford. Ford made films when the American movie industry didn't worry about dead red Indians... It's on BBC-2 as is the Midnight Movie LIVE NOW—PAY LATER. This was one of the early 1960s films about the sordid side of 'You've never had it so good'. Thought 'daring' at the time, it's dated over the years. In the London area on ITV at 10.30pm is WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLFE? a film about married life with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. It's well acted, but so what? You don't have to turn on the TV to hear people slagging each other off, when you can do it in the privacy of your home...

SUNDAY: ITV. What could be an interesting series of three plays is DEATH OR GLORY BOY* written by Charles Wood, about an ambitious schoolboy who joins the Army in 1950 and spends his time fighting it, rather than Koreans, Chinese etc... Having failed to mention the excellent first play in the Bedtime Stories series it can only be said that the second is THE WATER MAIDEN* about a bloke working in a garage by a canal and a girl in a canal barge. It's on BBC-2. On BBC-1 the Sunday Film which is about the French Army during the Algerian War stars Anthony Quinn and Alain Delon THE LOST COMMAND*.

MONDAY: BBC-1, 8pm. Panorama deals with the Arab oil producing countries in OVER A BARREL. Another aspect of energy is FUSION: THE ENERGY PROMISE which is tentatively scheduled on BBC-2 at 9.25 in the Horizon series. It is on the use of sea-water, which is inexhaustible, free, world-wide and non-polluting, as an energy source.

TUESDAY: ITV, 10.30pm. There are about eight million people living in 'retirement' in this country at the moment. RETIREMENT—END OR BEGINNING? deals with this question. Since in this lunatic society people are exploited steadily from 15 to 65 it comes as little surprise that when believed 'ready for the scrapheap' they should be ignored, and left with starvation pensions. There should be no work, play, or retirement, there should be life. (NB that was a commercial for socialism—not necessarily the content of the programme...).

WEDNESDAY: BBC-2. Late last year Socialist Worker enthusiastically reviewed SIZWE BANZI IS DEAD*, which was a play about to go on nation-wide tour. It is now on TV. Devised by Athol Fugard and featuring John Kani and Winston Ntshona it is set in the black quarter of Port Elizabeth, South Africa. It is probably the best thing on TV this week. The same channel has West Indian Reggae artist Jimmy Cliff IN CONCERT. Cliff was the star of the excellent West Indian film, The Harder They Come.

THURSDAY: BBC-1. A Man Alive special is EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW* on the working of the legal system and its effects. The Shrewsbury Trials are unlikely to feature. On ITV at 10.30pm Cinema covers CANADA'S 5,300 MILES OF FILM, which is the amount shot each year by that country's National Film Board. The Board has bored quite a lot, but also produced some good movies, inspired and created by the great Scottish documentary film maker John Grierson.

FRIDAY: BBC-1. After the Forsythe Saga, The Pallisers and Colditz the BBC now brings you the crowned heads of Europe! FALL OF EAGLES is a new 13 part series on the collapse of the European monarchies from 1848 to 1918. The first episode, Death Walks is about the revolutions of 1848. Script not by K Marx.

The forgotten millions

EVERYONE claims to recognise the miners as a 'special case'. Politicians, both Tory and Labour, have admitted it.

The violence of the miners' job is well known. The pit disasters, the death from dust, the dirt, the heat and the filth—all this makes even the union's claim for face-workers of £45 look much too low.

But the politicians who claim that the miners are a special case do so for a 'special' reason. They don't want to admit that other workers have hard, dirty and wretchedly low-paid jobs that any just society would reward much better than ours.

Take the farmworkers, for instance. They work in all weathers and with a high rate for industrial accidents and disease. Their Phase Three deal, which Heath says is 'fair', gives the men basic pay of £21.80 and the women £17.44.

To be able to live you have to

work overtime. Last year they averaged 49 hours a week for £27.58. Nearly half the 320,000 people who produce our food get an average of £34.90 before stoppages. One in three got less than £30.

This is pretty lousy money. But you won't think it's so bad if you work in a hospital. After the latest princely increase, the 'ordinary' worker in our hospitals gets around £22, with a 'guarantee' of £25.80 for men. In 1973 a fifth of hospital workers got less than £16. The average was £18.90 and £23.80 for nurses. One in every three men got less than £25—for an average 45-hour week.

But it's not very special, is it, curing the sick, cooking meals and occasionally having to wait on private patients who pay £100 a week? Half our nurses have to work five weeks to earn £100.

Even curing the sick is well-paid compared to working in a laundry.



by David Beecham

This is an interesting job—particularly as the minimum pay is fixed by a Government Wages Council. As the Tories are especially keen to help the low-paid they fixed the women's rate of £14.36 on the 10 December last year.

Of course the girls got another 50p on Christmas Eve as a step towards equal pay, but before you all throw your towels in the air—the rate for men is £15.86. Last year about 60,000 laundry workers got less than £16 a week. Average pay was £14.70.

The million workers who get paid for cleaning the streets, clearing the rubbish and treating the sewage have a pretty raw deal as well. Dustmen are now on a new basic wage of £24.12 following their magnificent increase of £2.32 on 7 November. Last year half the men who work for the councils got less than £30. Seven out of every 10 women got less than £20.

Deaths

If you've ever run down the street with a dustbin on your back and seen a dead rat in a tin, you'll know there's nothing special about this job. It's the spice of life.

Lastly what about those who sell food in our shops? There are 350,000 of them. Seeing as how the farmworkers get so little, they must be highly paid—otherwise why does food cost so much?

Not a bit of it. Half the men get less than £30. Eight out of ten women get less than £20. Half the women scrape by on less than £14.

When it comes to special cases, we are millions. The total of workers mentioned in this article so far is about 2,300,000. They are not unique. There are the dress-makers—three-fifths of them get less than £18; the trawlermen who



Hospital workers demonstrating recently in London: their average pay is £18.90 a week—a fifth get less than £16.

risk their lives every winter for the profits of a few, the building workers—nearly half earn less than £35. In three months of last year 61 building workers were killed and there were 9000 accidents reported. Chemical workers, textile workers, firemen and engineering workers, they are all special cases.

Of course a society of equals would reward people according to their real worth—need. In which case the bevvies of senior civil servants, ministers, judges, speculators, company directors and the rest would get very short shrift indeed.

But while society stays divided

into rich and poor, rulers and ruled, the idea that these parasites should decide who is worth what is total hypocrisy.

Behind such things as the 'Relativities' report and the 'special case' argument is that the workers should pay. If the miners win more, then the government and the employers will try to ensure that postmen and local government workers, nurses and teachers will get less.

While this racket goes on we are all special cases. And the miners doubly special—they have the power to smash a hole through which the rest of us can follow.

Pay fight hits the town halls

MEMBERS of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) in London kicked off their first round of industrial action in support of a Phase Three-busting £400-a-year London weighting claim last week.

This includes overtime bans by staff employed in six London boroughs, in all the Electricity Boards covering the city, in the Electricity Council and in the London Boroughs Joint Computers branch in Greenwich.

Last week's industrial action also includes a refusal to work with agency staff employed in local government at rates much higher than directly employed union members. In the first few days of the battle at least three London boroughs—Islington, Camden and Havering—agreed to stop using agency staff and replace them with directly employed workers.

On Tuesday the union intends to step up its official action. All-out strikes are to be launched in the Greenwich computers branch and by three sections of Camden Council staff.

Then on 25 March there is to be a strike of all NALGO members in Islington and Tower Hamlets and in three sections of Kensington and Chelsea including traffic control and public health inspectors and their

office staff. In all cases emergency cover will still be provided.

The dispute is a historic one for NALGO, a union which has no tradition of official strikes. Indeed this battle with 15,000 workers in the firing line is the first to involve more than one branch of the union on the same issue.

Resentment

The union's claim for a £400 increase on top of the existing £105-£144 weighting was lodged last June. It naturally fell foul of the Tories' Phase Three, which insisted on strict control of London weighting claims.

It adopted the previous Labour government's Prices and Incomes Board method of calculating the maximum and came up with £24 to £51.

This has caused intense resentment among London NALGO members. They see their London weighting claim as a short-term method of redressing some of the fall in their living standards aside from the national wage claim.

But there are problems with the battle, as the rank and file group NALGO Action has been pointing out.

The Pay Board is to issue a report on London weightings in June. And if more London NALGO members are not brought into the firing line and the struggle brought to a head quickly, it could peter out. A settlement on the Pay Board's terms in June would then be almost inevitable.

NALGO Action is also trying to link the London fight to the concerns of all NALGO members by campaigning for a national pay claim for all local government workers. The union executive has now adopted this principle.

But the union's claim for its members in electricity has been settled far short of the demands and within Phase Three. The local government claim is constructed on the basis of local government workers' pay relative to manual workers and civil servants. This could indicate that the union might let the Pay Board's 'Relativities' experts and their slide rules decide the outcome of the claim.

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.

FOR THE ADDRESS OF YOUR LOCAL BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS, WRITE TO THE NATIONAL SECRETARY 8 COTTONS GARDENS, LONDON E2 8DN.



INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST NEWS

WHAT'S ON

ONE WAY TO MAKE MORE SOCIALISTS

MORE AND BETTER socialist education for all IS members—that was the slogan which emerged from last weekend's meeting of the Training and Publications Committee.

The committee noted that, in the hectic activity of recent weeks, education has been given a low priority. If IS is to build on its expansion, the new recruits and the members of longer standing need a much firmer grounding in socialist politics.

The committee therefore encourages all IS branches to engage in a series of public meetings whose purpose is not so much to attract large numbers as to educate members and close supporters of IS.

Wally Preston, AUEW, of the National Committee, has suggested a list of possible education meetings. It has 21 titles of meetings, with sub-headings. Examples are: 'Socialism in our Time', 'Advertising in modern life', 'The Marriage Institution', 'A socialist in his trade union', 'Murder in the Factories', 'A Worker looks at the socialist Classics' and so on.

HANDFUL

Branches are encouraged to attract speakers to these meetings from their own districts. It is extremely important to develop more capable speakers at every level in IS, instead of relying on a handful of old trustees, as has been the case so far.

In the next few weeks, the committee decided, it is especially

important to discuss the 'parliamentary road to socialism'.

As a Labour government takes office, all sorts of illusions will be peddled inside the working-class movement. These must be resisted not by slogans, but by argument.

Roger Kline's pamphlet, *Can Socialism Come Through Parliament?* should be compulsory reading for all IS members and contacts and meetings should be organised to discuss the subject. All IS members should feel competent to get up and speak to a meeting, and the only way to achieve that competence is to practise. The committee will soon be publishing a pamphlet on public speaking, chairmanship and organising a meeting.

To assist the education drive, the following pamphlets will be published in the next two months:

The Struggle for Socialism (revised version)

The Struggle for Workers Power (reprint)

How the Revolution was Lost (reprint)

A new pamphlet on Russia today by Duncan Hallas

Imperialism by Ian Birchall

All the pamphlets must be used as material for branch discussion.

Bookshops opened

LAST SUNDAY fulltimers from IS BOOKS in London met the organisers of the local bookshops in Coventry, Glasgow and Birmingham. They discussed the role of the bookshops in developing the organisation.

The discussion covered ways of making the distribution of books and IS pamphlets more effective, and how IS Books could best help local centres.

Any area which means to set up a similar local centre should get in touch with Fergus Nicol (at IS Books—01-802 6145) at an early stage.

The addresses of the bookshops already operating are:

Glasgow: 64 Queen Street, Glasgow C1.

Coventry: Left Centre, 65 Victoria Road, Coventry.

London: 265 Seven Sisters Road, N4.

BARNET:—IS held a public meeting on the eve of the election last week, and about 50 people came to hear the arguments for voting Labour. Another four people joined the branch at the meeting, bringing the total membership to more than 30.

This means that the branch has now almost doubled its membership this year. Paid sales of the paper have doubled in the same period.

The branch was first formed in the summer of last year and is just beginning to make its impact on the area.

NORTH WEST LONDON:—The IS district committee is calling a half-day conference for black workers on Racism and Imperialism. The conference will start at 2.30pm in the Devon Room, Anson Hall, Anson Road, Cricklewood on Saturday 23 March.

The circular announcing the school, signed by Ken Montague of Harlesden branch, states: 'There is a need for a militant black leadership who will organise the fight of the black working class. Only through such a struggle can a real unity be forged, generating a united movement which will prove the irrelevance of racism and confront the common enemy.'

CHINGARI No 4 has now been published in Urdu. Price 5p per copy (including postage) from Chingari, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

BLACKBURN:—The National Front general election candidate at Blackburn, Kingsley Read, third in the National Front hierarchy, was bitterly disappointed by his miserable 1778 votes. 'I would have got 8000 votes if it had not been for the smear campaign of the International Socialists', he said.

On the eve of poll, Blackburn IS distributed 5000 leaflets exposing the Nazi background of NF leaders. On the day of the poll, they toured the council estates with a loudspeaker urging people not to vote for a party led by former fascists.

On the day before the poll the chairman of Blackburn Liberals was beaten up by NF members while pulling down NF posters. His watch was broken, and he was bruised in the face and body. 'I think I was mistaken as a member of the International Socialists,' he told the local paper.

GLASGOW:—A meeting of more than 40 IS members in the Glasgow district agreed to launch a 'crisis campaign' in towns, especially mining towns, around the city with a view to strengthening the organisation, and, especially Socialist Worker. The meetings will build up to a climax on Wednesday 20 March when the editor of Socialist Worker, Roger Protz, will speak to a mass rally in Glasgow.

Pluto Press
Workers' Handbook No.1

The Hazards of Work: How to Fight Them.

400 pages. 90p plus 7p postage
From IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.
Bulk orders: 60p for more than 10 copies

Meetings

TEESSIDE District IS public meeting: After the election—the way forward. Speakers: Greg Douglas (CEU, ex-chairman Anchor site shop stewards), Dennis Brooks (NUM Kellingley) and Laurie Flynn (Socialist Worker industrial reporter). Friday 8 March, 8pm, AUEW Hall, Borough Road, Middlesbrough.

IS PARTY TRAINING COMMITTEE: Meeting for IS members interested in the use of tapes and slides for training within IS and propaganda outside it. Sunday 10 March, 2pm, 76 Gillespie Road, London N5 (near Arsenal tube).

PADDINGTON IS public meeting: After the election—the way forward. Thursday 7 March, 8pm, Labour Party Rooms, 51 Church Street, Edgware Road, London NW8.

WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: The Way Forward. Speaker: Dave Peers, IS National Secretary. Thursday 14 March, 8pm, St Michael's Hall, Merton Road, Southfields, (cnr Brathway Rd and Merton Rd, Buses: 39 and 77)

WYTHENSHAW IS public meeting: Support the miners—build the revolutionary party. Speakers: Mick Osborne (NUM) and Gerry Walsh (AUEW). Wednesday 13 March, 8pm, Woodhouse Park, Community Centre, Portway, Woodhouse Park.

BRISTOL IS Miners and Shrewsbury Benefit Concert with Alex Glasgow and Staverton Bridge folk group. Saturday 16 March, 7.30pm, Bristol Polytechnic, Unity Street. Tickets 35p.

ADVANCE NOTICE: North London IS half-day school for black members of IS and readers of Socialist Worker in North London. Saturday 23 March, 2.30pm, Anson Hall, Cricklewood, London NW2 (buses 266, 226, 32, 16 and 260).

PORTSMOUTH IS public meeting: The Struggle for Socialism past and present. Speaker Harry Wicks. Thursday 14 March, 7.45pm, The Wiltshire Lamb, Hampshire Terrace, Southsea. All welcome.

NORTH LONDON Poly and MIDDLESEX Poly IS Societies Afternoon School: Saturday 9 March, 2pm, Holloway Road Precinct. Speakers: John Ure on The Labour Party and Socialism, and Mike McKenna on The Relevance of Marxism.

LONDON IS Irish Forum: Larkin and the Irish trade unions. Speaker: Paul O'Brien. Friday 29 March, 8pm, The Metropolitan, Farringdon Road, London WC2 (nearest tube Farringdon).

SOUTH EAST LONDON IS Social: Saturday 9 March, 7.30-11pm, The Shakespeare pub, Powis Street, Woolwich (near Woolwich Arsenal station). Music, dancing, bar. All welcome. Admission 35p. Proceeds to the Socialist Worker Fighting Fund.

CHELTENHAM and GLOUCESTER IS public meeting: The General Election and the Way Forward. Speaker Duncan Hallas. Friday 15 March, 7.30pm, Co-op Hall, Lower High Street, Cheltenham. All trade unionists and socialists welcome.

HULL District IS public meeting: Defend the Unions—militants unite! Speakers: Micky Fenn (NASD, member of editorial board of Dockworker rank and file paper) and Roger Rosewell (Merseyside IS organiser, author of *The Struggle for Workers Power*). Monday 11 March, 8pm, Stevedores and Dockers Club, Posterngate, Hull. All trade unionists welcome.

GLASGOW area IS dance and buffet: Friday 15 March, 8pm-1am, AUEW Halls, 145 West Regent Street, Glasgow. Late bar. Tickets 60p from IS Bookshop, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow C1.

STOKE IS public meeting: After the election—which way forward for the working class. Speaker: Granville Williams (Birmingham IS organiser). Sunday 10 March, 8pm, Victoria Hotel (opposite Stoke City football ground).

MANCHESTER DISTRICT IS public meeting: The struggle goes on. Speakers: Roger Rosewell and a miner (member of the editorial board of *The Collier*). Friday 15 March, 8pm, AUEW Building, The Crescent, Salford. All trade unionists and socialists welcome. Admission 10p.

Notices

LATEST ISSUE of the Socialist Worker special for members of the Electricians and Plumbers Union now out. 3p, plus 3p postage from EEUPTU Special, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

BOUND VOLUMES of International Socialist journal: A limited number of bound volumes of issues 36-55 have been produced for those who did not take advantage of our pre-publication offer. Price, including postage, £7.30. Orders, now please to IS Journal, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS. Delivery will take a couple of weeks.

ELECTROSTENCILS: IS Books can cut your stencils for 75p. Send art work (black and white only please) and money in advance to IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Excellent for all typing, and printing. Half-tones not guaranteed. State whether for Roneo or Gestetner duplicator.

SOCIALIST WORKER needs help from IS students in London. If you have mornings or afternoons free and/or a driving licence, please phone Margaret Renn immediately—01-739 2639.

HOTEL WORKERS: Any readers and supporters of Socialist Worker who work in hotels and are interested in exchanging information on wage rates, conditions, etc, and in building long-term links within the hotel industry, please contact the IS industrial department, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN (phone 01-739 6273).

SOUTHWARK IS jumble sale in aid of Fighting Fund. Bring and buy on Saturday 9 March, 2.30pm, Penrose Hall (off Walworth Road). Everything from washing machines to homemade sweets.

WIGSTON (Leics) IS Jumble/Nearly New Sale: Saturday 9 March, 2.30pm, Holmden Avenue Youth Centre. All welcome.

THE POLITICAL CRISIS—THE WAY FORWARD FOR SOCIALISTS

Socialist Worker
West of Scotland meetings

CLYDEBANK: Monday 11 March, 7.30pm, Clydebank Town Hall. Chairman: Donny McLeod (chairman, AUEW Glasgow Junior Workers). Speakers: Kenny Anderson (Castlehill NUM lodge committee) and Peter Bain (TGWU, Chrysler).

SHotts: Tuesday 12 March, 7.30pm, Shotts Miners Welfare Club, Dyfrig Street. Chairman: NUM lodge committee member. Speakers: Jimmy McCallum (TASS/AUEW convener, John Brown Engineering, Clydebank) and Steve Jefferys (Socialist Worker reporter).

PAISLEY: Tuesday 12 March, 7.30pm, Paisley Town Hall. Chairman: Ronnie Green (TGWU works committee, Chrysler). Speakers: Mick Napier (member of the editorial board of Rank and File Scottish Teacher) and Willie Lee (AUEW works committee, Chrysler).

EAST KILBRIDE: Thursday 14 March, 7.30pm, Forum Bar. Chairman: Jack McKenna (EEPTU shop steward, STC). Speakers: NUM lodge committee member and Jimmy McCallum (TASS/AUEW convener, John Brown Engineering, Clydebank).

MOTHERWELL: Thursday 14 March, 7.30pm, AUEW Halls, Hamilton Road. Chairman: Willie Johnstone (AUEW shop steward, Albion Motors). Speakers include Steve Jefferys (Socialist Worker reporter).

CUMBERNAULD: Thursday 14 March, 7.30pm, Community Room, 96 Glenhove Road, Carbrain. Chairman: Kenny Anderson (Castlehill NUM lodge committee). Speakers: Peter Bain (TGWU, Chrysler) and Murray Armstrong (EIS).

KILMARNOCK: Tuesday 19 March, 7.30pm, Community Hall, Titchfield Street. Chairman: NUM lodge committee member. Speakers: Peter Bain (TGWU, Chrysler) and Steve Jefferys (Socialist Worker reporter).

GLASGOW Wednesday 20 March, 7.30pm, Typographical Halls, Clyde Street. Chairman: Jimmy McCallum (TASS/AUEW convener, John Brown Engineering, Clydebank). Speaker: Roger Protz (editor, Socialist Worker).

COATBRIDGE: Tuesday 19 March, 7.30pm, Birkenshaw Public Hall, Larkhall. Speaker Murray Armstrong, (EIS).

Fleet Street militancy growing

THE CRISIS in Fleet Street was one of the main subjects for discussion at a packed Socialist Worker meeting arranged by the expanding Fleet Street branch of IS last week.

As more than 100 people crowded into the meeting, journalists at the Daily Telegraph, the most violently Tory paper in Fleet Street, were voting to strike in support of their pay demands.

Bill Freeman, veteran Fleet Street militant, told the meeting he was a member of the Communist Party, and was glad to be speaking at an IS meeting or any other meeting where people were prepared to fight the system.

He spoke of the responsibility of printworkers and other workers in Fleet Street to take notice of the lies and rubbish which they were being asked to print. Bill has been prominent in the movement among

trade unionists in Fleet Street to stop the printing of anti-trade unionist advertisements, or at least to insist on printed items stating the printworkers' objections to them.

One of the main problems for militants and trade unionists was the cautious approach of their leaders on such questions, he said. 'I will not stand to be dictated to by employers or union officials'—'because I want you young people here to realise that this is your world for the taking.'

The meeting heard a fine speech from Peter Ford, a member of the National Union of Mineworkers at Betteshanger Colliery, who said he was a member of the Labour Party. Peter said that much of the wage increase which miners had won in the 1972 strike had been lost in increased prices and increased rents. 'My rent's gone up by more than

£2, which means I have to work more than half a shift in the dust and dark just to make up the increase in my rent.'

Peter ended on a resounding note. Arthur Horner had once said miners should be paid in diamonds. 'I'm not asking for that. I'll settle for a living wage,' said Peter.

Pinch

Paul Foot, from Socialist Worker, said IS speakers were always glad to join Communist Party members in defending workers from attack.

He said the fat years for Fleet Street were at an end. The increase in the price of paper and the cuts in advertising revenue meant that the Fleet Street bosses were feeling the pinch of their system sooner than anyone. Rather

than lose some of their enormous accumulated profits in past years, they would try to make the workers pay. They would start by attacking the journalists, whose union was traditionally the weakest. They would hope to divide and rule.

There was an urgent need for solidarity between Fleet Street workers in different unions and the best way to ensure this was by building a political movement whose purpose was not merely to resist the combined offensives of employers, but to remove employers altogether and create a society run by people—like Peter Ford and Bill Freeman.

Albert Luck, SOGAT Editor of the Chapel at the Radio Times, who was chairing the meeting in his personal capacity, called on printworkers at the meeting to join the IS Fleet Street branch. Three people joined.

It's a dog's life for the Hickeys

by Mary Phillips

DEIDRE AND BRENDAN HICKEY and their seven children are living under a 28-day possession order issued by the City of London Corporation, their landlords for the past 14 years.

A tenants' association was started last June on the Avondale Square estate in New Cross Road, South London and Deidre has been the secretary since then.

In September the Hickeys got notice to quit—for possessing a dog. They told the corporation it belonged to Deidre's brother.

The housing manager replied: 'I am sure you will appreciate that it is in the undertaking which the corporation requires, that you will not permit an animal to be brought to your home or on to the estate by one of your visitors'. This rule is not on the rent card.

Strength

Many other tenants on the estate have dogs and pets. Deidre's brother's dog has been there for almost four years.

Other dog owners have been given notice to quit but they have not been taken to court. But then they've not been secretary of the tenants' association.

The corporation took Brendan to court earlier this month on the strength of Regulation No 8—which allows them to amend the rules when they wish—saying that



The Hickey family—eviction threat for joining a tenants' group

their letter constituted a special new rule applying only to the Hickeys.

Although no neighbours have complained about the dog, the corporation insisted at the first hearing that there had been complaints about the dog fouling the grassed areas on the estate reserved for toddlers and organised games.

This surprised the tenants present, many of whose toddlers

have been chased off the grass by corporation officials for having so much as a beach ball.

And as for organised games, such a thing has never been heard of, not even on the so-called football pitch.

The assistant housing manager, Kenneth Consitt, appeared for the corporation, saying somewhat unconvincingly that they did not want to put the family on the street.

A fortnight later, when the case had been adjourned for the Hickeys to produce their receipts since the notice to quit, the corporation admitted that they had no evidence of the presence of a dog and it could be discounted. They just wanted a possession order for 14 days.

The judge made it 28 days and Deidre and her family have to pay £30 for the privilege.

Many tenants cannot believe it has happened. Some of them have got up a petition which reads:

'We the undersigned tenants of Avondale Square estate and others protest against the victimisation of the Hickeys and their seven children. The City Corporation have been given possession of their flat without giving any reason in court.

'We further protest that this is a glaring example of council tenants' lack of protection against eviction by their landlords who need give no reason for getting a tenant out.'

Terry Norman, aged 14, was so incensed he rang Capital Radio's phone-in programme at five in the morning to tell them about Deidre's case.

But at least Brendan still has a job to go to. He has been in the same job for the past 18 years—earning £31 a week as a dustman.

His boss? The City Corporation.

Airport workers fight over the crumbs

by John Rose

AIRPORT SHIFT WORKERS in the European division at London Heathrow grounded planes last week in protest against full-time union officials who accepted a Phase Three package deal in defiance of a mass meeting's vote.

But the strike aimed to force redistribution of the package rather than go beyond it. If it had been successful it would have meant redistribution at the expense of the night shift workers.

It was a fight over crumbs with disturbing anti-trade union overtones.

The campaign to unite all sections at all airports to defeat Phase Three collapsed a few weeks ago. Only the engineering base at Heathrow refused to settle.

Advantage

As it became clear there would be a Phase Three union settlement, there was a scramble by different sections to gain the best advantage. Two weeks ago a demonstration at a shop stewards' committee meeting by some 100 men from the general workshop demanded 7 per cent on their basic rates instead of an across the board settlement.

And there have been repeated demands for the skilled sections to break away in all future negotiations.

The responsibility for this breakdown of trade union unity lies firmly on the shoulders of the full-time officials. They have fallen over each other in their rush to accept Phase Three while at the same time building up hopes that the airport workers could win through.

Confidence

Their original claim demanded £10 across the board plus vastly improved shift premiums.

The executives of the shop stewards' committees must take some blame too. A resolution moved at the BEA joint shop stewards' committee last Wednesday asked for a vote of no confidence in the full officials and the executives of the shop stewards committees. It was only just defeated.

Last week's strike was a minor tragedy. While its aim was against the best interests of trade unionism, it indicated what enormous power airport workers have.

In a few days nearly £1 million worth of business was lost by the European division.

Militants are going to have to make sure that next year's pay claim is firmly harnessed to this power.

Classified

Copy for the Classified section must arrive by first post Monday morning. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 1p per word, semi-display 2p per word. CASH WITH COPY to Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS.

HOSPITAL WORKER No 7 NOW OUT! Important article on Poplar Hospital closure, facts on agency staff, ambulance-men and canteen boycotts. Lots of articles on nurses—an ideal opportunity to involve nurses in the Hospital Worker. Rush orders to Business Manager, 8 Beverstone Road, London SW2.

BLACKPOOL TRADES COUNCIL present a concert and dance in aid of the Shrewsbury 24. Guest of honour John Carpenter. Plus N W Spanner Theatre, Bar extension. Admission 15p. Blackpool Trades Club, Chadwick Street (off Central Drive), Blackpool.

BENEFIT PARTY for Shrewsbury 24: Friday 15 March, 8pm-midnight, Sois Arms (near Warren Street tube). Organised by NUJ.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: Film 'The Salt of the Earth'—about a miners' strike in Mexico—followed by discussion of issues it raises, of vital concern to men and women involved in any strike in Britain today. Friday 8 March, 8pm, Old People's Day Centre, Half Moon Yard. Admission 10p. Organised by Hemel Women's Voice Group.

THE WORKER: This month's issue of the paper of the Socialist Workers Movement (Ireland). Articles include the National Wage Agreement, Chrysler Ireland, The Irish Left in the 1970s, the Provos, etc. Bulk orders 4p per copy through Irish Sub-committee, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Debtors please pay.

FARMHOUSE HOLIDAYS in North Wales: within easy reach of the station, fishing, friendly pubs, pony trekking, frequent transport to the coast, bring your wellies... Six-berth self-contained caravan, all mod cons, £10 per week. Bed, breakfast, evening meal and packed lunch, £10.50 a week—reductions for children. Phone Chirk (069186) 2272.

POST OFFICE WORKER: latest issue now out. Articles on action in the UPW, POEU, CPSA and SCS. 3p per copy (plus 3p postage) from 1 North Place, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

CINEMA ACTION and **EALING No 1 BRANCH AUEW** presents the films *Arise ye workers*, *Fighting the bill*, and *The UCS struggle*, Friday 8 March, 7pm, Hanwell Library, Ealing, West London. Admission by trade union card only—all trade unionists welcome. Proceeds to North Wales Defence Committee.

WORKERS' FIGHT public meeting: After the elections. Speaker: Clive Bane, Sunday 10 March, 8pm, Golden Lion, Kings Cross Road, London N1.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH: Saturday 9 March, 1.30pm, Charing Cross Embankment, London, for march to Hyde Park followed by meeting at Central Hall, Westminster, 4pm.

ASIAN WORKERS IN STRUGGLE: Indian and Pakistani workers fight back in the shop floor struggle. Five pages of interviews make essential reading in this month's *RACE TODAY*. Single copies 15p. Annual subscription £2. From 184 Kings Cross Rd, London WC1.

BIRMINGHAM: A 'Men against sexism' group is being formed to study the role of sexual oppression in capitalist society and to fight its manifestations in daily life and politics. Phone 021-427 7433 or 021-454 7787 for details.

SOCIALIST GAY GROUP has speakers throughout the country on the gay question and sexism. Inquiries from IS branches especially welcomed. Details from 18 Dickenson Road, London N8.

CARTOONS: From £1 for IS branches and rank and file papers. Send details to Phil Evans, 18 Windsor Road, St Andrews, Bristol. Phone 421956.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY aims at building a moneyless world community without frontiers based on common ownership—with production solely for use—not profit. It opposes all other political parties, all leadership, all racism, all war. Write for specimen socialist literature to 'One World (SW), The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London, SW4.



I would like information/join the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

Trade Union _____

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Unions back strikers

THE STRIKE by ASTMS post-graduates at Swansea University College continues. The strike is over the raising of teaching rates and the recognition of ASTMS for negotiating these rates with the university authorities.

Support from the local trade union movement is excellent. Picket lines have stopped all deliveries to the university and an independent trade union commission has been set up to investigate the dispute. This is headed by Emlyn Williams, president of the South Wales Miners.

It is unfortunate that such support did not come from the National Union of Students. At its meeting on Sunday the Communist Party-dominated executive refused to give any support to the recognition fight.

The two IS members of the executive were alone in arguing that the National Union of Students should support the ASTMS members.

The executive's decision is most surprising, for the Welsh region of NUS last week pledged full support with the promise of solidarity action by students if requested.

The tragedy is that the refusal of NUS to co-operate with ASTMS can only weaken the position of the post-graduates at Swansea and strengthen the hand of the university authorities.

IS members in the colleges, particularly postgraduates, should urge their students unions to support the Swansea postgraduates and urge post-graduates who teach and demonstrate in colleges to join ASTMS as the relevant trade union.

Steward hits at press lies over crash

LONDON:—A British Airways shop steward lashed out on Monday at the 'shocking lies' in the press, especially the Sun, about the Turkish Airlines DC10 air crash last Sunday in which 344 people died.

Almost all the press and television reports of the disaster hinted that not so many people would have died if there had not been an engineers' and electricians' strike at London Heathrow airport. The Daily Telegraph—the Paper You Can Trust—led the mob with a heading on its front page: PASSENGERS SWITCHED TO DOOMED

JET BECAUSE OF HEATHROW STRIKE.

The London Evening Standard commented about the death on the plane of AUEW general secretary Jim Conway: 'By a grim twist of irony it was members of Mr Conway's union whose strike caused many of the passengers to switch to the Turkish Airlines flight instead of flying to London from Paris by British Airways.'

Ian Morris, a welder and AUEW steward at Heathrow, told Socialist Worker: 'The facts are rather different.'

'The lads were out on a shift pay dispute. At a

mass meeting on Saturday afternoon they decided to go back to work. But the management, just to teach them a lesson, told them they would have to stay out for another day. They weren't allowed back, although they wanted to work, until 2.30pm on Sunday.

'If the management had allowed the men back to work, the British Airways flight in question would have got to Paris to take its passengers.'

'There was plenty of work to be done that Saturday. The decision to hold the men out was sheer management obstinacy.'

Three more pickets on trial

SHREWSBURY:—Despite tremendous pressure, the three building workers now on trial at Shrewsbury Crown Court for picketing are still pleading not guilty to the charges of affray and unlawful assembly.

The three are Terry Renshaw, Lennie Williams and John Seaburg. Their trial started last Wednesday, just 24 hours after five other defendants changed their pleas to guilty and got suspended jail sentences for affray or threatening behaviour.

The men are aware of the considerable risks attached to their stand. Defendants who lodge guilty pleas in a deal with the prosecution greatly reduced their chances of going to jail. Those who stand firm increase their chances of a jail sentence.

Ken O'Shea, one of the six defendants in the first Shrewsbury trial, explained the situation to Socialist Worker: 'These lads have taken a courageous stand, sticking firm to the not guilty plea. But what you've got to understand is why they're doing it. They don't see how they can honestly plead guilty to something they've never done.'

The trial of the three lads opened with a familiar performance from Maurice Drake, the prosecuting council. He repeated yet again the fiction that the prosecution involved no attack on workers' rights.

Then the prosecution started producing witnesses to testify to the menacing nature of the picketing. In this third trial, a familiar figure put in a second appearance as a prosecution witness. Terence Parry, the son of the main contractor on part of the Kingswood site in Shrewsbury, told the court how he had been hit by a cloud of earth and had seen damage. Parry is the man who met the pickets with a loaded shotgun and threatened to fire it at them.

Appeal

The Shrewsbury picketing was also under consideration in another court this week. The three men jailed after the first trial, Des Warren, John McKinsie Jones and Ricky Tomlinson, returned for the third hearing of their appeal against conviction and sentence.

The appeal judges, headed by Bloody Sunday Widgery, upheld the conspiracy conviction against John McKinsie Jones and indicated they would do the same with Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson. The affray conviction was quashed on technical grounds.

Ken O'Shea, whose appeal against his conviction and nine-month suspended sentence for unlawful assembly were also dismissed, commented: 'This is a disgrace. The decisions were all cut and dried before anyone came into court. They have upheld the conspiracy conviction against us. That they did so shows once again that there is one conspiracy in this case—between police, employers and courts.'

'The working class movement has got to keep up the campaign to free the lads and defend those who are now on trial. If the Labour government is worth a pinch of salt then they will repeal the conspiracy laws and free the pickets.'

Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson have been on hunger strike since last Wednesday in protest against their appalling conditions in Stafford prison. They have been taking only tea. The two men are demanding transfer to an open prison.

2000 votes for Ian

WINNER of the election for vice-president of the ATTI, the technical college teachers' union, was Derek Weitzel, a member of the union's executive. Ian Birchall, candidate of the Rank and File Technical Teachers group, received more than 2000 votes.

Nine-week strike by 800 at GEC plant

BILSTON, Staffs:—The strike by over 800 workers at Cannon Industries has now entered its ninth week. The company is part of the GEC empire and the dispute began over job re-grading.

At a mass meeting last Friday an offer put to the workers was rejected as unacceptable and it was decided to meet again in a fortnights time.

Jack Collingwood, engineering union convenor commented on the behaviour of management. 'At meetings called to try and get a settlement management had seemed willing to talk about increases, and then hid behind the Tory Phase Three limits' he said.

A letter distributed to the strikers last Friday by Cannon management threatened if the strike continued the company might have to declare redundancies. This tactic on the part of management has been used before, in a previous letter management tried to railroad a settlement.

Standstill

The letter said: 'The government may step in and cancel stage three and this could result in a complete standstill on wages—the management's letter urged workers to accept the offer.'

During the past nine weeks the solidarity and fighting spirit of the strikers has been magnificent. In the face of management threats, three day working and the general election the strikers have stood firm and maintained regular pickets. This dispute deserves the support of all trade unionists.

Donations and messages of support to: Jack Collingwood, 3 Foster Avenue, Coseley, near Bilston, Staffs.

Protest at police search

HARLOW, Essex:—Protests are growing at the harassment and illegal police search of the home of Harlow International Socialists' secretary Sue Lambert and her husband. Harlow and Bishop's Stortford district committee of the AUEW have written to the Chief Constable complaining at police repression and demanding an apology. The ASTMS No 5 district council has also passed a resolution condemning police harassment of socialists and trade unionists and offering any necessary help to the Lamberts.

Stan Newens, the newly-elected Labour MP for Harlow, has said he will raise the issue with the new Home Secretary. Considerable local press coverage is helping to keep the issue alive.

Unless an adequate apology and compensation is received the Lamberts will be taking legal action.

More walk out to join Art Castings

NUNEATON:—The strike at Coventry Art Castings is in its tenth week. It is a vitally important dispute.

The strikers remain solid. More than 130 men are now out. Everybody knows that blacking is the key to victory and yet it is ineffectual, because only Coventry Art Castings goods are being blacked. Coventry Art Castings is part of the A L Dunne Group.

Further, a Coventry Transport union official gave permission for A L Dunne drivers to deliver goods to Burbage

CLAY CROSS:—In one of the highest polls ever recorded in a local government election—71.4 per cent, the workers of Clay Cross have again rallied to their 'law-breaking' council.

Ten of the eleven Labour candidates pledged to continue opposition to the Housing Finance Act and refuse to put up rents were elected. The election followed the disqualification of the original eleven

by Socialist Worker reporter

Labour councillors by Lord Denning in the High Court last month.

The Labour victory came after a vicious press campaign against the Labour councillors. On the day before the election the right-wing Derbyshire Times gave a full page to the 'Residents' Association' opposition (Tories).

The one defeated Labour candi-

date—miner Dick Cowham—failed to be elected by two votes. There were more than 100 spoiled papers caused by voters voting more than eleven times on the complicated ballot form. The elected 'Residents Association' candidate—Bill Blowen—is a former Labour Party member.

The new council has acted at once over rents. New rent books increasing council house rents had been drawn up by the Housing Commissioner Patrick Skillington in the hope that Labour would be defeated.

Esmond Barnes, one of the victorious councillors, told Socialist Worker: 'We went up the next day and stopped the rent books. As long as we're in charge here, the tenants pay the old rents.'

David Skinner, former Labour councillor, reckons that Commissioner Skillington is redundant. 'He was only brought in to deal with the old councillors. He's got no power here. He's better get out.'

Picket put on university

COLCHESTER:—Students have put a picket on Essex University in protest at the victimisation of a student for his part in the official National Union of Students strike and occupation last year.

The 24-hour picket line is turning back all supplies to the university. Already the bar and most catering facilities have closed down and oil supplies are expected to run out soon.

The majority of lorry drivers—trade unionists and non-union—are respecting the picket, which is receiving support from miners who are staying at the university while they operate a picket line of their own at Ipswich docks.

The victimised student, who was given a 'suspended expulsion', is only the first of 37 charged with similar offences after the strike and occupation. A meeting in the students' union building voted unanimously for the picket. The students feel this is the only way to fight the unprecedented victimisation for following official union policies.

The Right's most capable operator

THE tragic death of Engineering Union general secretary James Conway in last weekend's plane crash near Paris deprives the right wing in the union of its most capable operator.

Conway, 58, started his life in the trade union movement on the far left. As a shop steward in Metro Vickers, the giant Manchester engineering works, he became a member of the powerful Manchester district committee and of the Communist Party.

But even before he became a national organiser in 1959 he had joined the Labour Party and was emerging as a leading right winger in the union.

He became general secretary in 1964 while the notorious Bill Carron was still president and boss of the union.

In 1968 Hugh Scanlon was elected to succeed Carron in the post of president, beating John Boyd, the candidate supported by the right wing's powerful machine, and Reg Birch. After this Conway became progressively more vicious and reactionary in his editorials in the union journal, which he totally controlled.

The December 1973 issue of the journal contained a typical example of his style. Its editorial concentrated its fire on claiming that left wingers and militants in the trade union movement had started a new personality cult.

'The growth of the personality cult is foreign to the British Labour Movement,' wrote Conway. 'Blind thinking of the people of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy was the product of this



Jim Conway—killed in crash

kind of specious thinking,' he added in a typical, disgraceful smear.

While he pontificated regularly on the menace of the left in the journal, he did every thing in his power to ensure it was never used as a campaigning weapon. Before and during the 1972 engineering wages battle his journal contained not one article against the employers and in support of the union.

Conway's undoubted ability to organise the right wing, made easier by the fact that as general secretary he controlled the union machine, was recognised right up to the top levels of the trade union movement. He chaired the Trades Union Congress standing orders committee which so ruthlessly runs Congress.

Mr Conway is survived by his widow and his one son.

Engineering and so cross the picket line. Nut Burbage Engineering is also a financial fiction. It is the toolroom of the A L Dunne Group.

Three strikers have now been charged for harassment under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1875. Two men had followed a delivery truck out of the plant into Dunlops. They then went to BLMC Triumph to see if it turned up there.

After an hour they returned to the picket—where they were arrested and

charged.

Meanwhile four other trade unionists helping out on the picket were found guilty of several charges last week and fined.

The strikers are angry with the TGWU—which has tried to evade supporting the strike and the Coventry branch of the Engineering which has been worse.

Socialists at Chrysler, Triumph, Morris, Perkins and Ford motor factories must fight for the blacking of A L Dunne's goods now.

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Industrial news inside

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Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Danger in Fleet Street deals

LONDON:—After a week involving industrial action on the Daily Telegraph and the threat of it on other papers, the Newspaper Proprietors Association has agreed to allow separate wage negotiations up to the Phase Three maximum on national newspapers.

This decision only gave formal recognition to what was already happening.

First IPC, owners of the Daily Mirror, left the NPA to bargain with its journalists. Then Rupert Murdoch and the Sun management, while deciding to stay in the NPA for the time being, were telling the journalists that they would pay—and a deal has now been agreed.

On Tuesday the Telegraph journalists started negotiations. It is expected that they too will receive an offer in reply to their claim for a Phase Three wage increase.

But Daily Express management got an unprecedented agreement from their journalists, who did a deal which ties the payment of their meagre pay claim to management obtaining a price rise for the paper.

Checked

This is a dangerous development since it introduces another bridle to wages on top of the incomes policy. It insists that any wage agreements will be paid only if the newspaper's accounts, as checked by the union, show it can pay.

This formula was immediately seized upon by the NPA. At the meeting with NUJ negotiators on Friday the NPA agreed that separate agreements could go ahead if the 'ability to pay' condition was built in. This was turned down by the NUJ but at the Express it has already got a foothold.

NUJ negotiators have been striving to keep a national agreement so that weaker groups of journalists are not isolated and abandoned.

This is the main danger in the whole drift of NUJ policy in Fleet Street with the newspaper industry pressed hard by reductions in advertising and increased newsprint costs, there are moves in Associated Newspapers, for example, to axe the Daily Mail. Jobs are being threatened.



Bert Golding, an NUM pickets organiser at Deal, directing Kent miners' pickets to power stations and coal depots throughout the South East

NOT A PENNY OFF THE CLAIM

by Jim Higgins

THE fall of Ted Heath and the Tories and the return of Labour to power is a direct result of the miners' strike action.

Labour's position as a minority government must not be allowed to deny the miners the just reward their position and struggle demand.

Every pressure will be brought to bear to keep the settlement down. Political loyalty to Labour, national economic crisis, the Relativities Report, beer and butties in 10 Downing Street will all be called in.

The first hurdle will be the Relativities Report. Inspired leaks suggest it will call for a much wider gap between underground and surface workers. An extra £5 for underground workers—on top of the Phase Three offer—has been mentioned, with nothing for the men at the pit top.

Miners, unlike higher civil servants, company directors, asset-strippers, commodity speculators and other overpaid riff-raff, can earn most while they are young. Increasing age, industrial injuries and ill health caused by the job condemn the miner to lower-paid work on the surface. The overwhelming majority of surface workers are men unable to

continue with work underground.

Anything on the suggested lines of the Relativities Report would be a complete denial of the policy of successive NUM conferences and a betrayal of tens of thousands of underpaid disabled and older miners.

The NUM conference at Inverness last year called for backdating of the claim to November. Lawrence Daly has recently resurrected this decision.

MODESTY

In 1972 the NUM agreed to alter the date on miners' contracts from November to March. The idea was to ensure that miners taking industrial action would be doing so at a time when coal was in least demand.

A return to November will ensure that the next round starts in November this year, not at all too soon considering the modesty of the existing claim and the rate of inflation. It will also give miners back

the tactical advantage—which will be needed even if Labour is still in government then.

Every report from the coalfields indicates that miners are willing to settle for nothing less than the full claim across-the-board.

The miners will have no truck with a shoddy compromise but the union leaders' failure to involve the members in the fight for the claim, the restriction of pickets to the point of no pickets at all, and the slackness about oil deliveries and coal depots raise doubts about the leadership. The wheeling and dealing of Joe Gormley and the NUM right wing, coupled with the failure of the left to take the initiative and develop solidarity within and outside the ranks of the NUM do not give grounds for confidence.

All the conditions are ripe for a breakthrough. Only the miners' leaders can snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

Television unions turn tail after NIRC move

BOTH UNIONS involved in the regrading dispute at the BBC have turned tail after last Friday's National Industrial Relations Court decision to issue an injunction against a strike.

The injunction was issued last Friday just 72 hours before 90 members of the Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians and the Association of Broadcasting Staffs were due to strike over a regrading claim.

The BBC went to the NIRC last Thursday claiming that due strike notice had not been given and in addition that the production claim breached Phase Three of the Tory Incomes Policy.

Sir John Donaldson naturally obliged and gave the BBC their injunction. After this full time officials in both unions speedily turned tail. At a joint meeting national officials of the two unions

issued advice against striking.

At the mass meeting of the ABS and ACTT members concerned, many officials argued against a strike and attempted to frighten the rank and file. Celia Croasdell of ABS came up with the thought that strikers would be imprisoned if they defied the NIRC. Bob Hamilton of ACTT weighed in with the notion that a strike would lead to fines on the unions.

After a long discussion the meeting decided to postpone strike action, accept conciliation if it was made available and to seek assistance from other unions in the BBC.

Militant trade unionists in the BBC have been pushing hard for strike action to go ahead on the clear grounds that trade union organisation in the Corporation will lose its credibility if the strike is called off.

A decisive victory now will prepare the way for the larger, more realistic claims to be made later this year. It will encourage militants in other industries and unions to set their sights higher and take action to win for themselves.

This is the formula for victory, or even the top brick off the Downing Street chimney.

A WEAPON WORTH A THOUSAND LIES

LAST MONTH we asked for £2000—and got over £3000. Thanks to you, our readers.

But we still need more, another £2000 by the end of March.

Heath's gone—now it's Wilson. What's the difference? The bosses are still around. How do we fight them? Who is doing the fighting? From Socialist Worker you'll get the answers.

From TV and newspapers you're going to hear pleas, begging, commands, and demands, from our 'rulers.'

From Socialist Worker you'll get the facts. Weapons worth more than a thousand lies from Heath—or Wilson.

But facts cost money—and we need £2000 this month.

Edinburgh IS Branch have already sent £150, Stockport £15, North Herts £13, Lambeth £50, Harlesden £9, Fulham £8, Coventry £50, Wakefield £3, Barnet £20.

We've already got a total of £381.84. But we need money from YOU, send us five bob, or £50. You're giving money to YOUR cause—and we're grateful.

Send donations and collections to National Treasurer, IS, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

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Fight the employers' offensive! For united trade union action

National Rank and File Conference of delegates from trade union bodies to be held on 30 March at 11.30am at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

This Conference is sponsored by the following rank and file papers: GEC Rank 'N' File, The Hospital Worker, The Carworker, The Steelworker, London Transport Platform, The Collier, NALGO Action News, Post Office Worker, Rank and File Teacher, Tech Teacher, Case Con, Redder Tape.

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