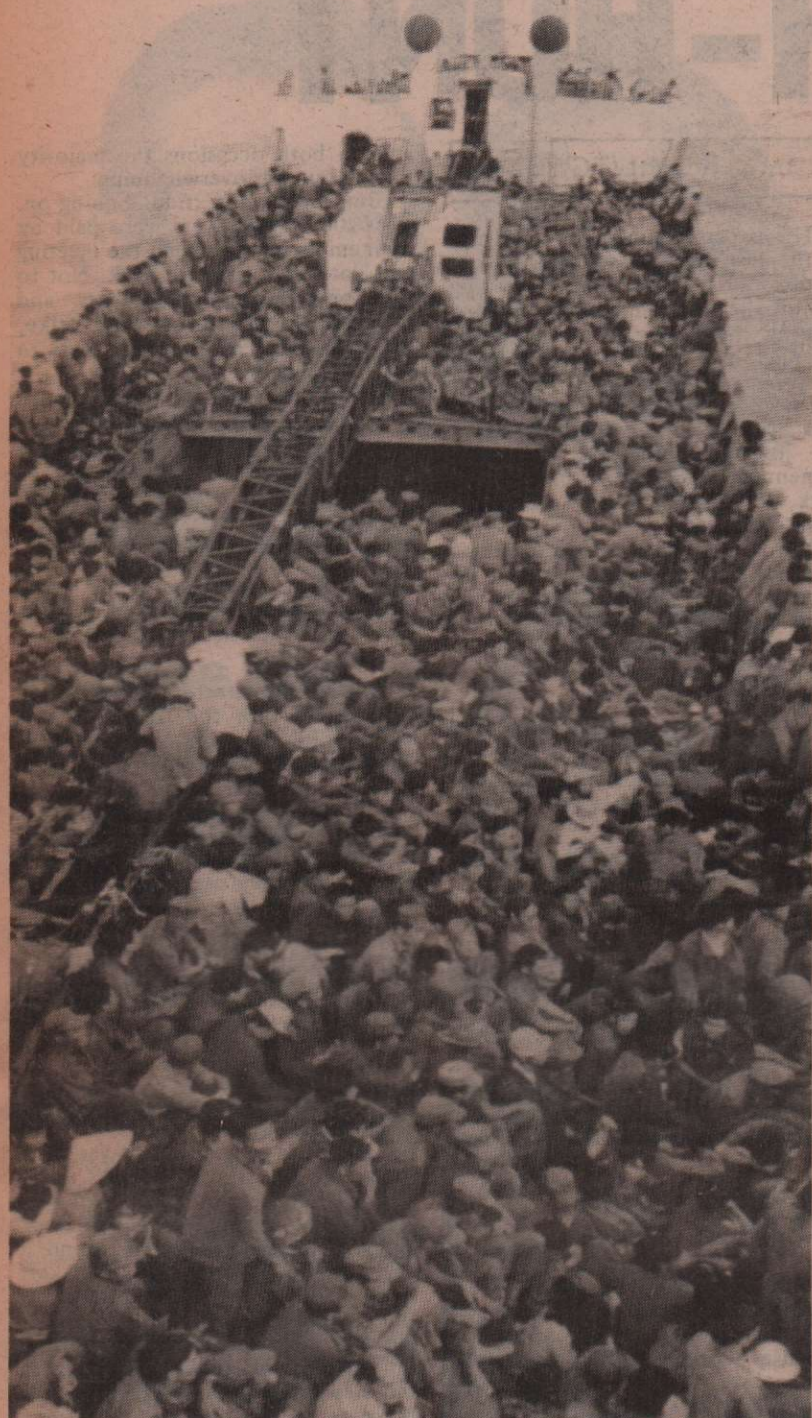


Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS



Victory in Vietnam

THESE are the 'defenders of freedom', the 'crack troops' of the Saigon regime, occupying the only territory they can control, a troopship off Hue. They threw away their guns after an orgy of murder, pillage, and rape along the coastal strip they have been driven from by the soldiers of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

Saigon's army, trained and equipped by the United States government, spent years driving the South Vietnamese peasantry into the coastal cities to avoid the 'contamination' of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, and the bombs of the US Air Force. Now those peasants have died at the hands of their self-professed defenders.

After 30 years the war is nearly over—with the just victory of the PRG.

It was fought because the US felt its power and money threatened by the people of a small Asian country. Guns and money were poured into the hands of the landlords, drug-pushers and gangsters that Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon nominated as defenders of freedom.

The wounds festered, spread. Vietnam was consumed by the fire of the US Air Force and Army, by Vietnamese the US paid to kill each other. The US government crucified a country for profit—and to avoid the 'agony' of defeat. Cambodia too was thrown on to the bonfire, courtesy of the US Central Intelligence Agency.

Now only a narrow coastal strip

remains occupied by Washington's servants. The US nominee in Cambodia, Lon Nol, has fled to rot in air-conditioned exile in America.

Ex-US Army Captain Edward Miles lost both legs, one eye and the partial use of his right arm in Vietnam, reported Tuesday's Daily Mail. 'This week we can see what a farce the whole thing was,' he commented.

It is a black farce that has cost millions of lives, and has devastated a poor country. But it is ending, as it was bound to end, with the victory of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of Vietnam.

The real tragedy of Vietnam—page 11

Tell them where to put their Social Contract!

PRICES SCANDAL

by Paul Foot
LOOK carefully at the headline on the right. It is from Labour Weekly, the Labour Party's newspaper, on 22 February last year—the week before the general election.

'Labour has only one week to demonstrate that it has the policies to bring prices under control,' says the story below it.

After outlining the policies to control prices, the article explained about Labour's Social Contract. 'Trade unions and employees,' it drooled, 'will not expect the same cost-of-living increases *once they know that Labour has got prices under control.*'

Now look at the second headline. It comes from the Financial Times last week. The article below that headline showed that there has been an incredible 21 per cent rise in food prices since last year. The rise in food prices between February and March was 3.4 per cent: that's an annual rate of 41 per cent a year!

All the policies for controlling prices outlined in the Labour Weekly article have been ignored or scrapped. 'Shopkeepers will be forced to keep within the government's maximum fair retail prices,' promised Labour. This 'forcing' turned into a 'voluntary agreement' last summer between Labour Prices Minister Shirley Williams and the Tories who run the British retail trade. They promised not to overcharge, and Mrs Williams agreed to break her election promises.

Mrs Williams' year in office has been one long surrender to the manufacturers and retailers.

LABOUR FIGHTS ON FAIR PRICES

Big trade deficit stunner for Heath

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN has taken ten days to move on to the really important issue — prices. And Labour now has one week to demonstrate that it has the policies to bring prices under control.

Food and pensions—Labour's

—from Labour Weekly, 22 February 1974.

The Financial Times Monday March 24 1975
FT GROCERY INDEX

Prices show 21% increase over levels last March

BY ELINOR GOODMAN

THE Financial Times Grocery showed further rises this month. Some biscuits...

—from The Financial Times, 24 March 1975.

And the big firms are still asking for more! 'A more lenient price code' is confidently expected soon by the food and drink industry.

Not content with allowing firms to jack their prices up, the government has given permission for fantastic price increases in publicly-owned industry.

This week comes another 33 per cent increase in electricity charges—which means that, in the year of Labour government, electricity has gone up by 84 per cent.

As Age Concern points out this week, this is particularly hard on old people. For most, the 16 per cent increase in pensions this month

will be wiped out at once by the increase in electricity costs alone.

And now comes the news that Labour have broken another crucial promise. Remember this, from last October's Labour manifesto? 'The Labour government will attack family poverty by increasing family allowances and extending them to the first child through a new scheme...'

No, the Labour government will not. This week, the Chancellor Dennis Healey lets it be known that he will not tolerate family allowances for Britain's five million first children.

So what was that in Labour Weekly about the Social Contract? 'Trade unions and employees will not expect the same cost-of-living increases *once they know that Labour has got prices under control.*'

They know nothing of the kind. They know that Labour has abandoned all pretence at price control, has shelved its subsidies and is shouting now, just like the Tories were before they were thrown out, about wage control.

Those hundreds of thousands of trade unionists with big wage claims in the pipeline can tell the government in the sharpest possible tones that they can throw their Social Contract and their wage controls where they threw their promised price controls: ON THE RUBBISH HEAP.

Do high wages cause high prices?—page 3

TROOPS OUT NOW! DEMONSTRATION



ALL OUT SUNDAY 6th APRIL

Assemble at Clerkenwell Green, London EC1 (nearest Tube, Farringdon)

1.30pm, Sunday 6 April.

Speakers invited include: Dennis Canavan MP, Siobhan McKenna (actress), Mike Cooley, Duncan Hallas, Brian Grogan and, in a personal capacity, Bill Freeman (NATSOPA), Terry Povey (NUS Executive) and John Glen (EETPU, Glasgow Corporation Strike Committee, in a personal capacity).

Organised by the Troops Out Movement.

All IS members to attend.

TROOPS OUT OF GLASGOW TOO!

'It has now developed into a political struggle, with the city's Labour administration backed by the government on the one side and the strikers urged on by the extremist International Socialists on the other.'

Thus wrote the Sunday Times last week, on the dustcart drivers' and electricians' strikes in Glasgow. It is a political struggle and International Socialists do support the strikers. So do a lot of other dustcart drivers and electricians all over Scotland who are coming out on strike in sympathy. STORY: page 15.



PICTURE Chris Davies (Report)

Tilbury dockers leaving last week's mass meeting after voting for the strike to go on

DOCKERS FACE VICIOUS PRESS WITCH-HUNT

THE decision of Hull dockers to reject the recommendations of their shop stewards on Tuesday and vote decisively not to come out on strike in solidarity with London dockers, brought great delight to the scribblers of the millionaire press.

This result was exactly what they set out to achieve with their increasingly high pitched campaign against London dockers.

Exactly because the strike was biting, and spreading, the press and TV unleashed one of the most vicious and filthy propaganda campaigns in living memory. Dockers were called 'waterfront bullies', 'gangsters' and 'vicious thugs'.

Special Branch moves in

MORE evidence of the growing interest of state secret services in industrial struggles filtered out this week. On Monday the Daily Express, which has been leading the press witch-hunt of London dockers, disclosed that Special Branch detectives had been formed into a 'Docks Squad' to investigate the strike of London dockers. This, the paper reported, was on the direct orders of the Labour government.

Norman Luck, the journalist who wrote the story, told Socialist Worker that this was now a matter of routine in industrial disputes.

The precise purpose behind these moves is not clear. But it may be that Harold Wilson and Co are moving towards a real 'red-baiting' witch-hunt similar to the operation against the striking seamen in 1966. This culminated in Harold Wilson's 'small group of politically motivated men' speech. The 'research' for this McCarthyite speech was carried out by the Special Branch, who tapped phones and observed union executive members' houses.

Doubtless similar tactics are being used against the dockers. The purpose of the operation will also be the same—to blame the problems of the system on its victims and to give the capitalist press a field day.

by Bob Light (TGWU)

The papers claimed that the vote at the last two mass meetings was 'fiddled'. Now the press is trying to split the London dockers by exaggerating the moves by a few scabs to crawl back to work. The whole campaign is one big lie.

Dockers are not bullies, or gangsters: we are workers fighting to save our jobs. Fighting for the most elementary right of all—the right to work. 35,000 jobs lost in seven years tells its own story.

The votes at the London meetings have not been bent: at least not by dockers. Independent tellers nominated from the floor judged the vote,

and on both occasions the majority to stay out was overwhelming.

But there was a 'fiddle' going on. The 200 lorry drivers were paid by their employers to attend the meeting and vote to return to work. Not to mention the superintendents and foremen who are not even on strike, but were sent by the employers to vote to go back.

As to the much-publicised exodus back to work: it is all a work of fiction.

Naturally after five weeks on strike men are restless. And naturally some try to stir up trouble. Every industry has got its share of scabs. But the strike in London is remarkably solid. Every dock, every container base, every riverside wharf is at a standstill. Not one picket has been needed on one gate.

It is the greatest show of unity in London since the freeing of the Pentonville Five. And this the press can never take away. It is a fact that Tilbury, the West India, the Royals and the Riverside are united in this strike.

Those are the facts the press and TV ignore. They are only interested in telling lies to divide and demoralise dockers. Like the ITN cameras that focused on a tiny section of the mass meeting, and claimed it represented an overall vote to return to work.

SCABS

Most sickening of all has been the attitude of so-called 'left-winger' Jack Jones. He has allowed himself to be used by the press to attack men who are standing up and fighting for their industrial lives. Jones has found a new role for himself: strikebreaker. He is openly siding with all the scabs and yellowbellies in the docks against the very men who keep trade unionism alive in the docks, the delegates and stewards who are organising this strike.

For too long dockers have relied on 'left-wingers' like Jones and his minder Michael Foot. For too long we have sold ourselves for paper promises. We want the guarantee of our jobs, we want it now.

In London, it has been announced that the biggest port employer, Scruttons-Maltby, is going into liquidation. 2,000 jobs will go out the window. All Jones and Foot offer us in return is a vague promise of some kind of legislation next January at the earliest.

One of the biggest problems dockers face in their campaign is lack of money. It costs plenty to send pickets up and down the country. Money is now desperately needed. Dockers have a fine record of supporting other trade unionists. Royal Group dockers gave more than £1,500 to the miners last year. Now we need help in return. Send money as soon as you can to Royal Group Shop Stewards Committee, 51 Creighton Ave, East Ham, London E6.

Shrewsbury: Forward to May Day!

ON 14 JANUARY, the day of the TUC lobby of Parliament over the Shrewsbury pickets, NUPE members at Hammersmith Hospital in London came out on unofficial strike to demonstrate how strongly they felt on the issue.

Bill Geddes, chairman of the hospital's NUPE branch and the joint shop stewards committee, was instrumental in helping to build for that strike action.

That was nearly four months ago. And still the Shrewsbury pickets rot in jail thanks to the Labour government and its Home Secretary Roy Jenkins.

Still the TUC general council stalls and does nothing when a call from them would, as Bill puts it, guarantee massive industrial action to secure the immediate release of Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson.

Lead

Bill is fed up waiting, looking, hoping for a lead. He and his fellow stewards are determined to have another bash at winning strike action in support of the Shrewsbury pickets.

The day they have in mind is 1 May, international workers' day and the date named by the Rank and File Organising Committee and the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions for action in support of the Two if, as looks likely, the TUC stalls yet again and does precisely nothing.

Bill says: 'Our shop stewards committee is affiliated to the Rank and File Organising Committee and we intend to do everything we can to take up the call.'

'It's not easy, of course. Some members say "why is it us again?", reflecting the isolation you can feel

TRADE UNIONISTS IN JAIL

**ALL OUT ON
MAY DAY
FREE THE
TWO**

Thousands of these posters have been distributed to trade union branches, districts and shop stewards committees by the Rank and File Conference Organising Committee. Copies are free to trade unionists to use in the campaign from the committee at 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

when you see the official movement doing nothing, or reflecting the fact that the lump building workers on the site next door do nothing.

'Nevertheless this is a cause vital to the future of trade unionism and we will be doing everything in our power to win a commitment from our members.

'We've taken a close interest in Shrewsbury from the start. At the beginning it was just the stewards. But once it became clear that the lads were going to be put back in jail, then we really started to push the issue among the members.

'I say this quite genuinely: the

most useful piece of propaganda was the Rank and File fact sheet on Shrewsbury. This helped to clear up a lot of the misunderstandings and downright lies propagated by the press.

'I'll give you an example of what you have to overcome. When we first raised the Shrewsbury issue, workers would say to us why were we helping these criminals. One lad said they were in jail for manslaughter.

'This is the impression created by the press and its talk about 'apache hordes', 'thugs' and 'criminals'.

'We had fortnightly branch

meetings at the time where we raised the issues and argued against people's doubts. We produced Socialist Worker leaflets on the case.

'We had five pickets arrested during the ancillary workers' strike in 1973. They were done for obstruction. But it could very easily have been conspiracy!

'If you're going to win people, this is what you have to do—to inform them, argue out the issues. We even showed a short film loaned to us by the Rank and File Organising Committee.

'As a result of all this activity, our members are really clued up on Shrewsbury. All this makes it slightly easier to win our members for 1 May.'

And that's what has got to be done in as many workplaces as possible!

THE SHREWSBURY FACT-SHEET is produced by the Rank and File Conference Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10, and gives in brief the facts about the Shrewsbury trials and the fight to free the jailed pickets. 50 copies for 60p, including postage.



Marlene Tomlinson (left) and Elsa Warren on the January lobby of parliament

The families who suffer

Two families are suffering hardship because Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson are in jail for picketing, victims of an attack on trade union organisation, an attack on the rights of all working people. Elsa Warren has five children. Marlene Tomlinson has two.

The Rank and File Organising Committee runs the SHREWSBURY DEPENDANTS FUND to help support these families. Please send donations to the fund, c/o Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10. Receipts will be issued promptly for all money sent.



LACK OF ACTION ENDANGERS IMPERIALS OCCUPATION

HULL—A serious situation is building up at the Imperial Typewriter factory in Hull, which was occupied by its workers four weeks ago. Unless the occupying workers change their tactics radically and immediately, the whole occupation which was started with such enthusiasm and hope could collapse.

The responsibility for this rests fairly and squarely on the shoulders of those members of the occupation

committee who have followed without question the advice of the Transport and General Workers Union officials in Hull, Peter Grant and David Cairns.

Grant and Cairns have striven at all times to keep the occupation under their thumb. They have advised against receiving any trade union delegations and have strictly controlled all delegations leaving the factory.

As a result, only a handful of trades councils have been visited by Imperial workers, and only relatively small sums collected. Not a single public meeting has been called by the union to rally support for the occupation.

Little or nothing has been done to maintain the morale of the occupation. The workers have spent a lot of time huddled in the canteen with little to do except clean out the factory. Even the slogans outside—including the Queen's Award for Industry flag—are unchanged.

Attempts by International Socialists and others to arrange delegations to shop stewards' committees and trades councils in other cities were always frustrated. When Helen Charlesworth, senior steward at the factory, spoke at an IS rally in Hull—attended by 150 people, which raised £30 for the occupation, she was viciously and publicly rebuked by Cairns for 'associating with extremists'.

When the management sent out a circular asking workers to state their role in the occupation, Cairns advised his members to fill them in.

STAFF

Many of the original occupiers have left the factory. The action committee now consists almost entirely of ASTMS members on the staff. When the occupation started, most were manual workers. Some of these have tried to get back into the occupation, but have been told by the committee that they are not welcome!

It would be shameful if this important occupation was allowed to die. The chief beneficiaries would be Litton Industries, parent company of Imperial Typewriters and one of the most unscrupulous employers in the world. Other workers occupying their factories in protest at redundancy or lay-offs would feel let down and demoralised.

The occupation can be saved—but only by the workers themselves. The occupation needs new leadership which finds itself on the collective strength and abilities of the shop floor workers, and which turns the factory into a base for spreading the cause of the occupation across the length and breadth of the British working class. If enough of those Imperial workers who are sickened by the inactivity of their officials act now, they can replace the existing leadership and lead the occupation to success.

Meanwhile, the other occupation committees—at Harrison Crossfields in North London, for instance, or at BAC Weybridge—will need to understand what has gone wrong so far at Imperials, and act accordingly.



Nine lies that expose the anti-abortion campaign

By Margaret Renn

BABIES for Burning, the book that provides most of the evidence and arguments for the anti-abortion campaigners, is a tissue of lies.

James White and Leo Abse are the MPs responsible, Susan Kentish and Michael Litchfield the journalists. But this week the Sunday Times has torn the book and its 'evidence' to pieces. LIE No 1—Tory candidate Litchfield's claim that he won the Pulitzer Prize for exposing the Mafia in the Bahamas.

LIE No 2—Kentish's claim that seven pregnancy agencies found urine samples positive although she wasn't pregnant.

LIE No 3—Litchfield's claim that six out of seven pregnancy testing agencies found his urine samples positive.

LIE No 4—the book's allegation that a London chemist, who also runs a pregnancy testing service, had shelves of literature on fascism, selective breeding and killing.

LIE No 5—the book's claim that Dr Malcolm Ridley, the American doctor, has dropped babies about to be born into the incinerator.

LIE No 6—the allegation that another doctor carried out abortions so late that the foetuses were, in law, premature babies.

LIE No 7—the claim that an unnamed gynaecologist was prepared to sell foetuses to Litchfield, posing as a soap manufacturer.

LIE No 8—the same doctor had Nazi sympathies. He turned out to be an old, deaf, Jewish doctor, who lost his wife in Auschwitz, and who said he would have 'thrown Litchfield out of the window if any such thing had been mentioned'.

LIE No 9—the claim that the interview with this doctor was on tape and the tapes have been made available.

Convince

So how do they do it? How did Litchfield and Kentish manage to write a book which is lies from start to finish, and still convince some that it was reality?

One of the major arguments put forward by the amenders of the Act is that, within the private sector, the Act is being seriously abused by referral and pregnancy testing agencies and clinics.

To add lurid detail to these allegations, Litchfield and Kentish put together a story in which not only did they have positive tests—they were both then offered abortions!

According to Litchfield, the sample was passed and sealed under super-



From the top: Journalists Michael Litchfield and Susan Kentish, whose book on abortion is false from start to finish, and MPs Leo Abse and James White, who have used the book in their campaign to tighten the Abortion Act.

vision and under the watchful eye of a Dr McCormick.

A photographer was on hand to witness the posting of the samples to the seven agencies, and the covering letter asked for the results to be forwarded to a Mrs Duffy, in a London hotel.

They were all posted on a Saturday. The records of the clinics show they all arrived three days before they were posted! And that they were all positive.

A nice piece of honest, unbiased investigative journalism!

If Leo Abse and James White, the two Labour MPs who are leading the campaign to toughen the Abortion Act, really have a case against the present Act they will now have to come clean on their evidence.

When the debate took place in parliament, Renee Short was driven to say that MPs should 'not be taken in and deluded by this kind of disgusting, ill-founded and unscientific propaganda'.

They have been taken in—and now they will have to admit it.

Socialists in the South of England are urged to support a counter-demonstration in Southampton on Saturday 12 April against the anti-abortion lobby, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child. The counter-demonstrators, who will be supported by Southampton IS, will assemble at the green on The Avenue, one mile from the city centre, at 2pm.

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5 APRIL 1975

NUMBER 419

WHAT WE THINK

Do high wages cause high prices?

THE government's Social Contract policy will soon be put sharply to the test. Union leaders representing railwaymen, power workers and hundreds of thousands of council workers will be negotiating pay claims which, on the face of it, break the guidelines of the Social Contract: that is, they seek higher wage increases than the increases in prices since their last claim was won.

The government argument against these claims is simple. Higher wages, they say, cause higher prices and unemployment. If we 'control ourselves' on wages, we can cure inflation and stay in work. Trade union leaders will be using these arguments to persuade their members not to fight for their full claim. So it's necessary again and again to state the arguments against.

Of course, high wages are part of the explanation for high prices. If lorry drivers get big pay increases, their bosses will increase the haulage rates. If railwaymen win pay rises, British Rail slaps it on to fares—and so on. But there are plenty of other reasons for price increases—none of which are affected in the least by wage restraint.

The first and most important is the inability of capitalism to plan. Capitalists prefer to spend the resources of society on areas where there is 'quick return on capital'—their language for a faster buck—than in industrial investment.

While the economy is booming, the resources at the disposal of the capitalists are withheld from investment. Before long, there aren't enough machines to make the goods to meet the boom in demand. So prices zoom.

Bonanza

That's what happened in 1973: the biggest—and shortest—boom in post-war British capitalism. The capitalists had a marvellous bonanza. Restrictions were lifted off bank lending. Huge sums of extra cash were distributed.

The money didn't go into investment: investment was hardly higher than in 1972, itself a bad year. It didn't go into housebuilding: fewer houses were built than in 1972. Most of these huge resources went, literally, on a spree in fringe banking and property speculating. So the boom ran out almost at once for lack of investment.

Prices soared—but not because of wages.

In that 'glorious summer', while the fringe bankers and property speculators were laying up tax-free fortunes for themselves, not a single worker got a wage rise above the Tories' rigid Phase Three guidelines, which were enforced by law.

There is a second reason for price increases which has even less to do with wages: the increasing power of the multinational companies. In the past, prices have gone down as unemployment goes up. This year, prices and unemployment are going up together.

Why? Because the huge, international companies are strong enough to keep their prices rising even though demand for their goods is failing.

Strengthens

Again, wage restraint makes no difference. Sacrifices by workers on wages doesn't weaken the corporations' desire or ability to keep prices up. It strengthens them.

Wage restraint does not cure unemployment. On the contrary, low wages and high prices means less money around to buy more expensive goods. That means fewer goods produced.

Wage restraint means still-rising prices, rising unemployment, and increasing economic chaos and inequality.

Wage militancy on its own cannot solve any of these problems. Wage militancy on its own ensures, at best, that workers keep their heads above price inflation. But the best argument for wage militancy is that it builds workers' confidence in their own strength. It demonstrates the indispensability of workers to society—and the dispensability of employers, fringe bankers and property speculators.

Wage militancy means decision and action on the shop floor. It forces more and more workers to ask the question: why don't we push the speculators out and run the show ourselves?

Wage militancy is necessary to protect workers from the ravages of inflation—and to nurture a rank and file workers' movement dedicated to end the system which causes inflation.

WOMEN'S VOICE

WOMEN'S PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

BRITAIN'S BRER O' BRANCHES BY LANCASHIRE THREE DOLLAR SOME JONES

THAN WORKS

WE WOB WOB SIMPA

Defend your Jobs
Fight for equal pay

SUPPORT THE WOMEN'S BANK & FILE CONFERENCE in Manchester April 26th

April issue now out.

Articles on the women workers' fight against redundancies in Hull and Glasgow, women in the Portuguese revolution, the right to abortion, the Women's TUC, the nurseries campaign, among others.

6p, plus 6p postage, (£1.50 for a year) from Women's Voice, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

Chris Harman reports from Lisbon

ON the surface Lisbon is like any other Western European city. The 'reign of terror' which the capitalist press was screaming about two weeks ago is nowhere to be seen. The only troops on the streets are conscripts enjoying a few hours' leave.

The television runs a series of adverts—one for those with money 'Invest in Portugal', one for those who earn a wage 'Everyone must work harder and better', and one for all sections of the population 'Votes are the arms of the people.'

There are only two immediately visible reminders of the excitement of the attempted coup three weeks ago—the slogans and placards which cover every conceivable surface, and the fact that the police, who were implicated in the coup, seem afraid to make their presence felt.

But when you talk to workers or read the press closely, you discover that the most significant developments in the workers' movement for many years are continuing.

Before the failed coup of 11 March there was a wave of factory occupations. Now there is a deluge. The immediate response of workers when they hear rumours that their employers are about to sack workers or move funds abroad is to take over the firm's offices themselves, lock out the managers and demand government intervention to protect jobs and living standards.

Ferment

The Lisbon water company, the supermarket chain Pao a Acucar, engineering factory Mecano-Elctrica, the transport firm Mercurio, the optical firm Lusitana de Optica, the Firestone tyre factory, were just a few of the factories controlled by workers' pickets last week.

The banks have been nationalised. But that has not stopped the ferment there. Now workers in many banks are arguing that control over the working of the banks should be exercised by them, not by administrative boards over which they have no influence.

For instance, the workers' delegates in the Portuguese International Bank have criticised 'the anti-democratic way in which the leadership of the union [which is controlled by the Communist Party in Lisbon] conducted the process of nationalisation' and 'the elimination of the existing delegates from the process of defining forms of action'.

The workers' committee of the Angola Bank, which accepted the union's line, has been voted out of office and replaced by one much more to the left.

Groups of workers and revolutionary organisations have begun to deal directly with the appalling housing conditions and the lack of welfare facilities. There has been a rush of occupations of luxury houses, to turn them into workers' homes, clinics or creches, despite denunciation of the movement



The unity forged between workers and rank and file soldiers when they defeated the attempted coup on 11 March. Now the struggle to extend this unity continues in the barracks.



by both the Communist Party and Socialist Party leaders.

Perhaps more significant is what is happening in the barracks. A report in the Lisbon evening paper A Capital told last week how democratisation of the army was taking place in the strategically important Almada barracks. Rank and file soldiers, working together with the most left-wing of the officers, have succeeded in abolishing separate messes for officers, sergeants and men. Now all ranks eat together and enjoy the same rations. Plans are afoot to set up an elected disciplinary committee.

Football

What is more, over the past few months, the soldiers have established direct links, outside the normal military chain of command, with left-wing units elsewhere. Initially, they did so under the cover of organising football matches, with intensive political discussions before and after.

It is said that in RAL1, the regiment that was attacked during the attempted coup of 11 March, the power of the rank and file is such that they now decide which officers they want promoted and force the authorities to comply.

But many soldiers are aware that the process of democratising the army and aligning it with the working class is only just beginning. As one

revolutionary officer in RAL1 told the paper *Revolucao*: 'At all levels, and above all at the command level, there are many reactionaries . . .'

Soldiers in his unit had certainly learnt the lessons of Chile. They were prepared to die in defence of the working class on 11 March because 'it was better to die fighting in the barracks than later to be shot in the bullring.'

Shooting

It was because of this understanding that the most militant units of the army passed resolutions after 11 March calling for the shooting of officers implicated in the coup and for the disbandment of the paramilitary police, the GNR and the PSP.

But the government parties seem to believe the crisis is over. Only those officers directly implicated in 11 March have been purged from their positions, and the police units have barely been touched. The Communist Party even went so far as to issue a statement praising 'many grades' in the paramilitary forces.

The result is that after keeping off the streets for a few days after 11 March, the police are beginning to re-emerge, hoping gradually to build up their authority again.

The Communist Party leaders argue that if only the workers behave

in an orderly way, society can continue as it is at present, with the Party gradually increasing its power.

But that prospect just is not on. The economic crisis means that unemployment, already affecting more than one in ten of the adult population, will continue to grow. It means that prices, already higher than in Britain—although wages are much less—will soar still higher.

Under such conditions, workers will either fight and win battles to improve their conditions, or they will lose their faith in the power of collective struggle and get demoralised. Then the coup-makers will strike.

Anyone who tries to hold back the struggle of the workers is merely aiding this effort at demoralisation.

That is why the revolutionary left in Portugal is absolutely correct when it tells workers to ignore the coaxing of Communist Party and trade union leaders, and to step up the struggle.

The revolutionary left in Portugal is now bigger, and more influential, than anywhere else in the world. Thousands of ordinary workers read its press, study its statements, attend its meetings, searching to see if it can provide an answer.

The Communist Party accuses the left of 'working with the right wing'. But as the revolutionaries point out, they were among the first on the streets on 11 March, manning barricades, guarding factories, arguing with soldiers.

Spinola

They also point out that until September the Communist Party leaders would brook no criticism of Spinola, and even organised a demonstration of support for him outside the presidential palace at the end of July. Many of the strikes criticised by the Communist Party were, like a long strike at the daily paper *Jornal do Comercio*, aimed at sacking managers who were later involved in the attempted coups.

There can be no question of Portugal's workers merely standing still now. They have the power to end capitalism in Portugal once and for all.

They are learning that the division between rank and file soldiers and the rest of the working class can be broken down, as soldiers challenge the power of the officers and began

to establish direct links with factories near their barracks.

These are lessons, not only for Portuguese workers, but for workers everywhere.

For the revolutionary left in Portugal, the situation offers immense possibilities. With proper determined leadership, the Portuguese working class can extend its power over the whole of Portuguese society before big business and the extreme right have a chance to reorganise.

Stalin

The danger is, however, that the revolutionary left will fail in this task because of its own condition. The biggest revolutionary organisations have broken from the Communist Party, but not from the attitudes in which it has trained its members. They regard the Communist Party members in the same way that Stalin taught Communists in the early 1930s to regard Labour Party members—as 'social fascists'.

Thousands of militant workers, bitter at the betrayal of the last year, accept such language. But it increases the difficulty of winning rank and file Communist Party members away from their non-revolutionary leaders.

At the same time, the Maoists often accept the line that what is needed is 'popular democracy' not socialism and so do not see the need to link workers' and soldiers' committees as the basis for working-class power. So they do not provide ordinary workers, not yet won over to the revolution, with a conception of how their fight for the defence of their jobs and conditions can be part of a process of total social change.

Yet only a bid for working-class power, organised along these lines, can solve the economic crisis in Portugal and defeat once and for all those forces that look back to fascism.

NO REIGN OF TERROR, BUT REVOLUTION

International Socialists day school on PORTUGAL

Speakers: From the Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee, Chris Harman (now in Portugal), and from the Rank and File Organising Committee, Saturday 5 April, 10.30am-5pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

Entrance by IS membership card only—non-members must be accompanied by a member.

Registration 25p (including speakers' notes on Portugal and the Revolution).

SPEAKERS ON PORTUGAL: The IS Portugal Group can organise speakers for meetings on the Revolution in Portugal. Contact Joanna Rollo, flat 12, 45 Broadwick Street, London W1. (Phone 01-437 3978).

The Russians call it trade unionism...

WHICH MEANS MAKING THE MAN WHO FILLED THE LABOUR CAMPS



The labour camps as portrayed in the film version of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. LEFT: Alexander Shelepin, KGB chief turned 'trade union leader'



INTO THE TRADE UNIONS' BOSS

'FRIENDS' of trade unionism like the Daily Mail, the Daily Telegraph and the leaders of the Tory Party making a hullabaloo about the Shelepin visit is a pretty obscene spectacle.

They were all involved in that attempt to shackle the British unions, the Industrial Relations Act. All of them supported the imprisonment of the five dockers for resisting it. All of them denounced the miners for 'holding the country to ransom'. All support the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury Two. All support the use of troops to try to break the Glasgow Council drivers' strike.

So apologists for 'Soviet trade union chief' Shelepin have an easy job exposing the pretended concern

of this unsavoury crew about 'free trade unionism' for the fraud it is. Len Murray is correct when he speaks of 'a concerted right wing press campaign'.

We have absolutely nothing in common with these hypocritical rogues. But that is not to justify the fake trade union set-up in the USSR.

Fraud

It is a fake. The fact that a man can switch from being chief of the secret police to becoming boss of the 'trade unions'—just like that—is only a symptom of the total state control of these fake unions.

The basic job any real union does is to bargain over pay and hours. Of course we know that our unions are bureaucratic, often collaborate closely with the employers, are sometimes corrupt and so on. But they do

bargain, well or badly, with management over pay etc. A body that does not do this is no union at all.

Trade unions in the USSR do not bargain about wages and hours. They do not even pretend to do so. Here is the official description of their functions, as outlined by the Central Council of the All-Union Congress of Trade Unions in 1968:

'To participate in the elaboration of the national economic plan, to submit to legislative organs, draft laws and decrees, to exercise the direction of the state insurance system.' (Quoted from Lane, *Politics and Society in the USSR*, p.307)

Nothing whatever about collective bargaining. As to strikes, they are never called by these 'unions' under any circumstances.

Now there is a difference in kind between the most bureaucratized, right wing and reactionary union in

Britain and these organisations. Frank Chapple is a union leader, a right winger but a union leader nonetheless. Shelepin is not a union leader, not in any sense.

The organisation Shelepin runs is not without functions of course. It carries out, on behalf of the government, some of the jobs done here by the Department of Health and Social Security and the Department of Employment. It is, for all practical purposes, part of the government machine.

Alright, say some of the more sophisticated defenders of the Russian system, what you describe is true but it is completely one-sided. You are leaving out the most important thing. Russian unions help to decide on the economic plans and these, in turn, determine overall wage levels. But even if this is correct (and it is correct, on paper at least) it only means that people like Shelepin are part of the planning machinery.

The total lack of democratic control in the unions—as in the rest of society in the USSR—means that the members of the 'unions' have no way at all, of influencing the proposals of their 'leaders'.

To summarise, the AUCTU carries out a combination of personnel management duties and social security administration. To call it a trade union federation is an abuse of language; to call ex-secret police chief Shelepin a trade union leader is a bad joke.

But socialists will not join in the Tory-inspired clamour against his visit. That is directed against the left in the British working class movement—and it is directed by people who would like nothing better than to destroy the independence of our trade union movement and install a British Shelepin to keep us all in order.

Duncan Hallas

IT'S an old socialist adage that in times of crisis every working-class organisation is put to the test.

Few people would consider that the most important question in current struggles is the ability of trades councils to lead masses of workers into battle. Yet trades councils, with representation from every local union and industry, can play a role in mobilising support for particular struggles, and taking up questions of wider concern to the working-class movement. Notwithstanding the fact that delegates are elected from branches and very rarely from workplaces, trades councils still have access to every organised establishment in their area.

Glasgow Trades Council has been in the limelight in the last few weeks. It has 100,000 trade-unionists affiliated. The council has a reputation for being a militant body, and the leadership is firmly in the hands of the Communist Party. The Party dominates the Executive Committee and can usually pass whatever they want at the monthly council meetings.

So in the current situation, with an outbreak of strikes in the area, raging inflation and unemployment soaring, many people might expect that the Glasgow Trades Council would be conducting a militant, fighting campaign on these issues. A brief look at recent Council meetings soon dispels any such notion.

At the January meeting (154 delegates in attendance) the Council considered resolutions for submission to the annual congress on the Scottish TUC. A resolution from a Transport union branch calling for an active campaign on the question was opposed by the EC. The grounds on which CP members attacked the resolution included the argument that it was 'divisive' to demand that the Labour Government should nationalise without paying compensation.

GLASGOW TRADES COUNCIL FAILS THE TEST

Another claimed that in opposing productivity deals, the resolution sought to 'usurp the right of individual unions to negotiate productivity deals'. With the black mark of the EC's disapproval against it, the resolution received 54 votes which was insufficient to get submitted.

Struggle

At the March meeting (188 delegates present) a resolution from an Engineering union branch called on the Council to declare its opposition to the Social Contract and to mobilise support for workers involved in struggles against it. This too was opposed by the EC who moved an amendment (in reality another motion) which stated that 'the Council expresses its concern at the effects of the Social Contract and calls upon unions to reconsider their policy.'

This cleverly-worded amendment was given a fighting slant by the EC spokesman. But read it again. It's a typical TUC-type resolution which everybody could support. Right-wingers could happily vote for it since they are concerned at the effects of the Social Contract—it's not being successful enough in restraining wages.

The Right also want unions to reconsider their policy—they want the Contract guidelines tightened up! But by waiting until just before the vote was taken before reading out the EC amendment and so giving delegates no time to think about it, the AUEW resolution was defeated.

The reality of the situation is that those in control of the Trades Council see this control as something which enables them to snuggle up to the leaders of the unions and Labour Party. Any suggestion that the Council, despite its limitations should mobilise support for workers involved in struggle, or actually campaign amongst rank-and-file workers on wider issues, is usually guaranteed to draw the fire of the EC on the delegate rash enough to suggest it.

On 4 February this year, the day of the Trades Council Annual General Meeting, the Morning Star welcomed the fact that the meeting was being held in the City Chambers. This, said the Star was further evidence of the increasing co-operation between Glasgow Corporation and the trade union movement.

Also, on that date, three major industrial disputes were taking place in Glasgow. The engineers, electricians, and heavy goods vehicle drivers employed by Glasgow Corporation were on strike.

Nothing could more clearly express the attitudes and priorities on the leadership of Glasgow Trades Council than the Morning Star's statement.

The success of the 1917 Russian Revolution raised socialist hopes all over the world. What went wrong? Read Tony Cliff's **STATE CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA** £1 plus 8p postage from Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1.



How to keep prices up - officially

THE Common Market authorities provided a subsidy—at the expense of the consumer as always—to distil 460 million litres of wine into industrial alcohol last month.

The wine lake is the latest 'surplus' problem of the Common Agricultural Policy. In spite of the destruction of stocks so far, this 'lake' is still brimming over and late in April another distillation subsidy is proposed to destroy another 400 million litres or so.

They could give the stuff away of course, but they won't. It would be cheaper than distillation, not to mention the pleasure it would give some people, but capitalism abhors free gifts so they are turning it into methylated spirits.

Butter

Apart, that is, from what can be sold at heavily subsidised prices outside the Common Market. The USSR, which helped to melt the last butter mountain by buying a lot of Common Market butter at a price below production costs, is going to

International Socialists say:

NO to bosses' common market

YES to workers' unity all over Europe

get 27.5 million litres of wine on a similar basis.

The trouble with these schemes is that they generate more surpluses. The Sunday Times, which publicised these facts, notes that 'when the February grant [for meths making] was announced, initially for 400 million litres, no less than 2300 million litres were offered. And no wonder—the subsidy made it as profitable for growers to sell for distillation as to blend and bottle for drinking.'

All these operations are paid for

by fixing the price you and I have to pay at a high level and heavily taxing imports so that they are as dear as the (price-fixed) Common Market product. Wine is a luxury, for us at any rate. But exactly the same plan is operated with all foodstuffs, including the basic necessities. Dear food inside the Common Market, plus subsidised food exports to non-Market countries, is the whole object of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The surpluses which embarrass the Common Market Commission

every year are only the by-product of the dear food policy. But they serve to show how irrational and reactionary the system is. The CAP is not concerned with producing food. It is concerned with producing profits. And no matter how much the consumer suffers, that is what the Commission is in business for. That is what the Treaty of Rome lays down.

There is an easy solution—reduce prices so that people can buy more. But that is the one solution absolutely excluded by Common Market rules.

Duncan Hallas

Just what is the EEC and why do the big employers want to stay in? What were the reasons behind its development? What is the connection between 'mobility of labour', the misery of millions of guest workers and super exploitation?

For the answers, see the April issue of *International Socialism*, out now, price 20p (plus postage) from 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

NO TO THE COMMON MARKET: Posters and leaflets available for local propaganda. Send orders to Sue Baytell, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN. Leaflets—25p per 100, posters—75p per 100. Money with orders please.

Mountain

'The Commission is still striving to stave off a cheese war with the United States (Common Market cheese is being exported there at prices way below the 'home' price)' the Sunday Times reports, '... seeking outlets for a growing mini-mountain of skimmed milk powder, looking for ways of disposing of 1.5 million tons of grain from last year's bumper harvest (a good harvest is almost a disaster for the CAP) ... while at the same time glancing uneasily over its shoulder at the way butter is piling up following the mild winter and premature spring.'

5 FIFTH COLUMN



ON 23 FEBRUARY at Conway Hall in Central London, a showing of the film 'To Live In Freedom' was organised through the Middle East Research and Action Group. The film analyses Israel from a socialist and anti-Zionist position. About 70 people attended.

The meeting was broken up by about 25 demonstrators, who pelted the screen, knocked over the projector, assaulted the projectionist and the audience.

On 8 March the film was shown at the Co-operative Hall in North London.

DEATH OF A SANDMAN

THE DEATH OF MR RON FAISAL, the popular East Coast estate agent and property developer, has caused much distress among the local community and among world leaders. The discovery in 1952 of the world's largest oil deposit on land Mr Faisal had 'reclaimed' in the 1920s made him a popular figure in the area and wherever people of taste and discrimination gathered.

'Mind you he wasn't popular with everyone', said a neighbour, 'some of the tenants on his estate were a bit upset when they had their hands cut off for rent arrears—but you can't please everybody can you?'

There were also knockers who argued that Mr Faisal's oil had done little to improve the lot of the locals, who have chosen to live in beach-huts on the nearby sands. 'They were just a bunch of slackers if you ask me,' said a member of Mr Faisal's family.

Mr Faisal was murdered by his nephew, who had been upset by his father's death some five years ago. His father had been dissatisfied with the size of his holdings in the family firm and had attempted to decapitate Mr Faisal. Soon after the uncle had had an unfortunate accident with a vat of boiling oil.

Actress

'The nephew was never the same after that,' commented the neighbour, 'he grew his hair and listened to loud music all the time, took up with an actress while he was at the Technical College. He smoked very funny cigarettes too.'

A wave of horror has swept through the world community since Mr Faisal's death. Stressing his love for domesticity, the Italian prime minister said that his death represented 'an extremely grave loss for the entire international family.'

Jim Callaghan, whose friends have long been interested in land reclamation talked of the country's 'good and valued friend.' While French president Giscard said that Mr Faisal was assured of 'a great place in history.'

The tenants at the beach-huts were 'too shocked' to make any comment.

Film show - bring your own bottle...

The same happened. One of MERAG's organisers, Uri David, an anti-Zionist Israeli, needed four stitches in his face.

On 19 March an Arab students' meeting took place at the Polytechnic of Central London, to discuss Israeli-South African links. About 40 demonstrators arrived, some armed with broken bottles and clubs, and assaulted the audience. Four people were arrested, two taken to hospital.

The right wing party in Israel is Herut. In the late 1940s the Labour Zionist movement labelled it as fascist. It was responsible for a series of

attacks, bombings, and murders on Arabs, the British occupying forces and Jews. It is now the largest opposition party in Israel.

And it is from Herut's British supporters that the violence has come, according to David and to the Arabs. David alleges that two groups, the Committee for a Secure Israel and the Israel Action Committee have been responsible—and have drawn the bulk of their support from Herut.

The leader of Herut in Britain is George Evanine and he is also an organiser of the CSI. 'We are in the process of formation,' he told Socialist Worker. 'The CSI exists to do a public relations job for Israel.' It is a PR job based on the views of Herut. He denies that it broke up the meetings.

'I felt impelled to go along to Conway Hall. I heckled—there was a flare-up. I don't know who started it—it was quite spontaneous.'

Attacking

David saw it differently. 'After five minutes a group got up and started attacking the audience, they threw eggs and tomatoes at the screen—they left just before the police arrived.'

On the other group, the Israel Action Committee, Mr Evanine was less forthcoming. He knew of them, and would contact them and ask them to ring SW. They haven't. He denied knowledge of a Martin Lubowski, who David has had ample opportunity to meet.

'He told me after Conway Hall that the attack had been a mistake. "Next time they will go for you in person", and next time they did.'

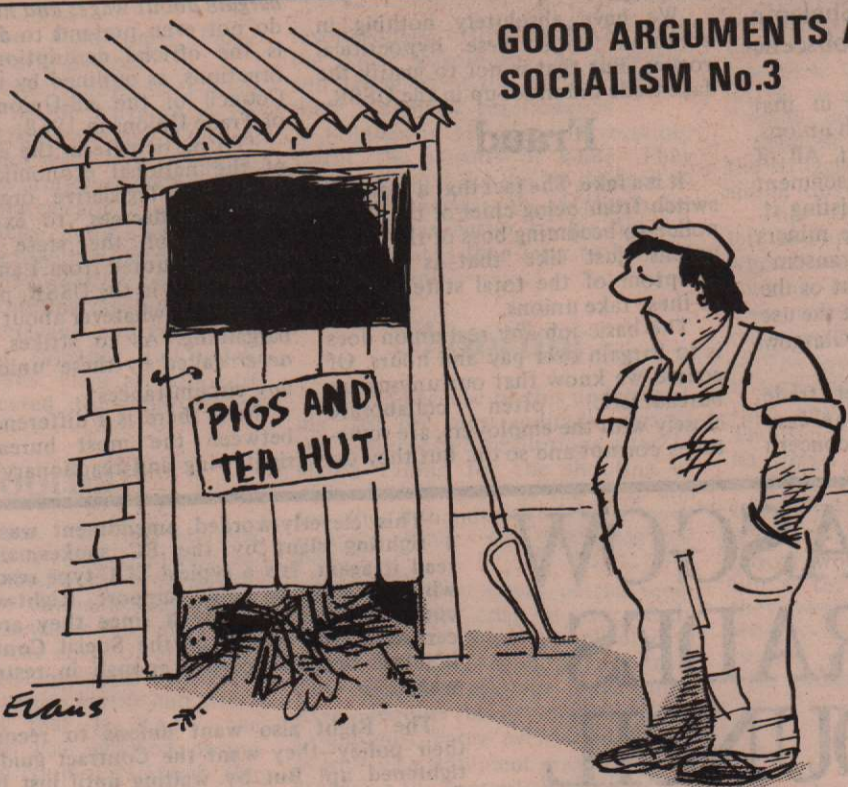
At the Co-op Hall, Lubowski announced that 'I want to make it absolutely clear that the Jewish community will not tolerate Uri David's activities, and will take every measure to put an end to it.'

The four stitches were presumably a down payment. Messages have also been left for Lubowski by SW, but like the IAC he seems shy of publicity.

This group of what David calls 'Zionist storm troopers' remain an elusive body—except when it comes to beating up their opponents. Other Zionists have condemned their activities, socialists should consider using MERAG's film.

MERAG can be contacted at Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London.

GOOD ARGUMENTS AGAINST SOCIALISM No.3



"If you give people new things they don't look after them"

OF HATRED AND A UNION JACK

LAST WEEK, in the London borough of Islington, the National Front held a march. After some prevarication, and pressure from trade unionists, the local Labour council had banned the use of the Town Hall for an NF meeting. The march was to protest at this decision.

Up at Highbury Fields the 300 fascists assembled. 250 police had been waiting in their green buses for two hours for the privilege of escorting them through Islington.

'Line up in groups of four, now,' said one of the NF stewards, the marchers dutifully shuffled into position. At the back the heavy mob gathered in a scrum to receive their instructions.

At the front a grey-haired man in a donkey jacket, a relic from Mosley, addressed the marchers. 'YOU are

patriots,' he said, 'YOU are British. YOU are representing all the British nation.'

Near the front were drummers, making preliminary patters. 'Drums?' said grey-hair, 'keep it nice, steady and nice—and slow, and keep it nice and LOUD.'

Reds

The street-lights shone down on the steel-tipped union jacks, the drum beat, and the marchers started chanting. 'The reds, the reds, we gotta get rid of the reds.'

Just like 40 years ago their predecessors in Mosley's British Union of Fascists had chanted. Only then 'Yids' had been the key word—but old habits die hard.

Anyone with doubts that the NF

is fascist need only have looked at the march, with its echoes from earlier, more successful, more horrific days. But alongside this was another impression—of the peculiar ordinariness of it. It was the politics of people who had never escaped from the authority figures of their adolescence, from nasty schoolteachers, empire days, speech days. Daily Express editorials, rotten comics, Biggles and Enid Blyton. It was hatred distilled from trivia.

The left outnumbered the NF that night. But defeating them is more than confrontation on the streets—it is propaganda, explanation and work in the areas where they operate—as the Communists did in London's East End in the 1930s. It is the politics of changing the world—not a desperate retreat.

WHY EVERY TRADE UNIONIST SHOULD DEMAND:

EVENTS in Northern Ireland are now moving rapidly towards a new and potentially even more dangerous climax. The elections to the Constitutional Convention are likely to result in the election of a large number of supporters of the United Ulster Unionist Council. The Government will then be faced with a choice between handing over power to Messrs Paisley, Craig and West or continuing with Direct Rule. Either way means continued violence and repression.

A change in policy is essential. The Government must break with the traditional approach

of Britain to Ireland. Military repression and repressive legislation will not work. There can be no more British-made 'solutions'; the people of Ireland must decide their own future.

The National Conference of Labour Movement delegates on 24 May called by the Troops Out Movement is an important opportunity for all sections of the Labour Movement to discuss the role of the British Army in Ireland, and the way forward to a just and lasting peace based on the right of the Irish people to self-determination.

We therefore urge the Labour Movement to

support this Conference.

—William Wilson MP (Coventry SE); Joan Maynard MP (Sheffield Brightside); Sydney Bidwell MP (Ealing, Southall); Jeff Rooker (Birmingham Perry Barr); Stan Thorne MP (Preston S.); Maureen Colquhoun MP (Northampton North); Jo Richardson MP (Barking).

Dennis Canavan MP (Stirlingshire West); Frank McGuire MP (Fermanagh & S. Tyrone); Andrew Bennett (Stockport N.); Marcus Lipton MP (Lambeth Central).

TROOPS OUT NOW!
DEMONSTRATION



Troops Out of Ireland!

SINCE 1169, when Henry II invaded Ireland, troops have been in that country against the wishes of the majority of the Irish people, as they are there against the wishes of the majority of the Irish people today.

Throughout those 800 years, every generation has produced Irishmen and women who have been prepared to assert the right of their nation to their national freedom.

And every time they have done that they have been met with the brute force of British Imperialism.

The irony is Ireland was Britain's first colony and is Britain's last colony, while the institutions which were built up to hold Ireland in submission were institutions that have been systematically used against the working class of this country.

Suppress

The reality is the working class of this country can never be free whilst it holds others in subjection. The institutions which were built up to suppress the Irish people, the Indian people and all those in the British colonies have been used systematically against the British people themselves.

The fact that a system of ideas has been created in Britain which gives large sections of the British working class the conviction that there are people throughout the world who are incapable of looking after themselves, and that this gives the predominant industrialised nations the right to tell them what to do.

That same philosophy is applied at home, too. When it's used here it means that there is a class in Britain which is incapable of looking after itself. That is the working class.

We must free ourselves from this kind of ideology. If we do not, we will not be able to begin to deal in a fundamental way with the issues that confront us in this country.

Even more important than the ideas are the physical institutions that were established to be used against us—a standing army, a police force and a secret police force. And let there be no doubt in the mind of anyone in the British trade union movement that the moment, we as a class, stand up in this country and attempt to assert our ownership over all the wealth and we alone create, those forces will be used against us with the same brutality as they have been used in the colonies and in Northern Ireland.

Bobby

They've always asserted, of course, that these are a peace-keeping force, that really what is going on in Northern Ireland is that you've sort of got a Friendly London bobby in a Saracen.

Well, the British troops didn't go to India, they didn't go to Kenya, Malaya, Borneo or Aden to keep the peace. They went there to terrorise and intimidate the populace into accepting British rule. And that's exactly what they're doing in Northern Ireland.

It was in Northern Ireland that our masters devised the techniques of 'divide and rule', which subsequently set Muslim against Hindu, Greek against Turk, Jew against Arab.

It was in Northern Ireland that the system of partition, later used in India, Korea and Vietnam, was devised.

Today Northern Ireland is being

used for something else. It is being used as a testing ground for the so-called 'urban control' of population.

And, as sure as day follows night, those techniques will be used in Britain. They will be used because the system in this country and beyond is in dire crisis.

Our masters will seek to solve the problems of their system—at the expense of the working class. The first thing they will have to do is to smash the mass organisations of the working class, the trade union movement.

So we have the continued frantic campaign against our trade union movement.

And as the judicial means fail to enforce these measures, so they will resort to direct military force as they have always done in their colonies. During the miners' 1972 dispute, there was already the suggestion among leading army officers that the troops should be used against the miners.

Then during the last miners' dispute, the MP for South Oxfordshire, Mr Hurd, said in his view the miners should be treated in the

same manner as the IRA. We know that outside Derby there was a special depot set up with elite troops using the kind of equipment they had in Northern Ireland, equipment which would have been used against the miners if it had come to that. Fortunately the miners were not intimidated by this.

All the techniques that were used in Northern Ireland are now being built up for the police forces and the army in this country. We know that CS gas masks have been issued to the territorial army.

Visors

Initially, there was an order for 14,000 visors for the troops in Northern Ireland. There has subsequently been an order for 24,000 and this is for metropolitan police forces in this country, and it's not because they're expecting an invasion from Northern Ireland. It's because they know the working class in this country will have no alternative but to stand and fight.

Gradually the public is being conditioned to accept the idea of

police activity and army manoeuvres, and that was the basis of the campaign around London Airport.

And more dangerous still is the activity of the Special Branch. We've seen what they have been doing in the case of Lennon... but what also was Lennon doing among the shop stewards' committee down at Vauxhalls... and what was he doing at the trade union branches where he was in attendance.

What were the Special Branch agents doing at the sit-in down at Strachans? The fact is the same methods being used against the IRA are being used against the trade union movement in this country.

In fact, what we see is a complete circle gradually being wound round the working class of this country in a very systematic movement towards the corporate state. Part of the way this is being done is to use Northern Ireland as a springboard for these forces.

For these reasons we all have a profound responsibility to demand the withdrawal of British troops, not in any patronising manner, just along the lines that it would be nice if the



Soldiers and policemen on one of their many joint exercises at Heathrow Airport last year: we have been warned...

This article is taken from an outstanding speech made at last year's Troops Out conference by MIKE COOLEY (right), former president of TASS, the white-collar section of the Engineering Union.



Irish people got a fair deal. We must demand the withdrawal of the troops in the interests of the working class of this country itself.

There is another important aspect to the situation. Any blow against British imperialism in Ireland is very much greater than in some more distant colony.

A blow delivered against British capitalist rule in Ireland is of a hundred times greater political significance than a blow of equal weight in Asia or in Africa.

Our trade union movement has repeatedly supported the campaign in respect of Vietnam. It has supported the campaign in support of those fighting in Chile, Greece and Mozambique and it's about time that we began to support the campaign against what is going on right here on our own doorstep.

Wealth

What is being done in Northern Ireland is being done in the name of the British people, in the name of the millions who go day in, day out, to factories, who create the real wealth that we see about us.

While there are troops in Northern Ireland and while there is a system in this country which supports them there, the working class will never be free.

The campaign to get the troops out of Ireland is a blow against British imperialism, is a blow against the British ruling class in this country, is a blow for the Irish working class, and is a blow for their natural ally, the British working class.

The trail

THIS is Ian North. He is 25 years old, and worked until recently as a docker. He used to weigh 16 stone. Now he weighs 12 stone, coughs badly and walks with difficulty. He cannot work.

He unloaded beryllium powder in the course of his job in London's India and Millwall docks. He got beryllium poisoning.

There is no treatment for this industrial disease which kills a third of all those who contract it and permanently invalids another third.

The chances are that some of the beryllium Ian unloaded was destined for Johnson Matthey of Harlow, Essex.



The safest bet - do it yourself!

by Laurie Flynn

THE National Rank and File Organising Committee has taken two important initiatives on health and safety at work.

Its first pamphlet, published this week, focuses on Labour's new legislation.

Called A Cause for Concern, the pamphlet points out the many faults and dangers in the Health and Safety at Work Act—and suggests some remedies.

The Flixborough TGWU shop stewards committee, Holman's Camborne AUEW shop stewards committee and the Rotherham CEU branch have sponsored the pamphlet.

Flixborough TGWU and Rotherham CEU have also joined with the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science and Pat Kinnersly, author of the best-selling book *The Hazards of Work: How to Fight Them*, to sponsor a Rank and File day school on Safety in London on Saturday 3 May.

Practical

The organisers stress that the school will be more down to earth and practical than most orthodox trade union schools on this crucial matter.

Considerable emphasis will be put on teaching workers how to take measurements of pollution in the working environment and how to improve shop floor safety organisation. Subjects covered will include noise, dust, chemicals and shiftwork.

A full list of speakers at the school is to be announced later.

Credentials can be obtained, price 50p, from Roger Cox, the Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

The new Health and Safety at Work Act



Sponsored by: Flixborough TGWU shop stewards committee, Holman's Camborne AUEW shop stewards committee, Rotherham CEU shop stewards committee.

5p (plus postage) from Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

HOW ONE TOWN FOUGHT AND WON

By Malcolm Hughes

THE PEOPLE of Sutton, part of the industrial town of St Helens, Lancashire, have got a giant international corporation on the run.

As a result of residents' and trade union action, in the form of marches, pickets and demonstrations over a period of three years, the Labour Council have been forced to pass a closure motion on a notorious local sulphuric acid plant of Leathers Chemicals owned by the giant Occidental Corporation, one of the Rockefeller corporations.

This factory was placed, five years ago, right in the middle of an area of housing and schools, 600 yards from St Helens Hospital. It has been a menace to local people since then.

Acid

Not only has car paintwork bubbled and women's tights started to disintegrate, but people, including young children, have been enveloped in acid clouds resulting in a burning sensation on exposed skin, skin irritation and peeling, difficulty in breathing and considerable alarm.

Perhaps worst of all have been reports by teachers of school-children suffering from the effects of these leaks. Workers at local factories have also been affected. One woman has been taken to hospital.



Instead of leaving it to the council or to so-called experts, the people of Sutton organised. They enlisted the support of the Trades Councils in St Helens and nearby Newton-le-Willows and won considerable help from packaging and building workers.

On several occasions they picketed the works, giving a foretaste of what could happen, and led the Labour group on the council a merry dance with lobbies and demonstrations.

In March 1973 John Potter, an independent socialist councillor, proposed a closure motion. The Labour group crushed him. Now, two years later, working-class action

has forced them to change their minds completely.

A tremendous victory has been won, but the war isn't over. The opposition are the immensely powerful Occidental Petroleum, whose wealth is based on oil and trade with the USSR.

With Labour kow-towing to the big corporations left, right and centre, Secretary of State Anthony Crosland might block the closure order.

If he does, the fight will go on—and Occidental will find out what determined, organised working-class opposition is. The people of Sutton are showing how to take on pollution and beat it.

The driver died when he opened the cap on the acid-carrying tank. The employers, Leathers Chemicals, have refused to close the plant and moved to St Helens where they are rather more difficult to get away with.

of death leading...

Certainly beryllium has left its mark there. At least five workers at the plant are known to have contracted beryllium poisoning.

But the trail of avoidable injury, death and disease doesn't stop at Harlow. Once Johnson Matthey are through refining some precious metal, they are left with highly toxic and dangerous waste.

What do they do with it? Do they take it to a scientific waste-processing plant where poisons can be burnt off into smoke? Not at all.

They bring in Redland Purle waste disposal to haul it away to the firm's private dump in Essex.

To get it there, Redland Purle run their tankers through built-up areas threatening still more workers' lives.

When they get it to Pitsea, they tip it rather than burn it off. They run it into the ground, and once again threaten human life in a particularly appalling way.

Local residents suspect the poisonous waste can get through into the local water supply.

None of this is inevitable. The whole operation, all the carelessness, the neglect, the cost and corner-cutting is born of the pursuit of profit.



A slag heap cap

by Terry Segars,
Fire Brigades Union

THE TERRIBLE potential hazards of the common methods of dumping toxic industrial waste were highlighted by the death of Redland driver Tom Carroll on 12 March.

The dangers arise not only from the dumping of the poisonous waste but also from the practice of transporting it hundreds of miles across country, through towns and villages whose residents know nothing of the perils on their roads.

The off-hand, but criminally dangerous, attitude of firms such

as Redland Purle have been illustrated in many incidents.

On 13 February, firemen were called to a Redland lorry at Chelmsford, Essex, on its way to the Pitsea tip. The lorry was exuding clouds of bright orange smoke. The load manifest simply stated that the charge was

'dichromate'. The lorry's driver, Johnson Matthey, whose cast-iron helped to kill him. When the firm they admitted there could be so per in the dichromate.

What we think

THERE are many ways in which the present organisation of society threatens our lives.

There are wars because competing national economies or rival empires periodically resort to arms to win supremacy. There is even the awful possibility that war might give way to nuclear holocaust.

Even in more normal, so-called peaceful, times death takes its toll. Hunger slaughters millions in a world where there is the potential to produce in such abundance that none need go hungry.

Even in those places where ordinary people are not faced with starvation, there is want and insecurity enough to stunt, cripple and shorten life.

But this is not the full range of horrors that production for profit inflicts upon us.

Menace

Industrial pollution is a grave and growing menace to us all. The particularly insidious aspect of this form of poison and decay is that it takes its toll secretly, accumulating in your lungs or some other part of the body.

This menace reaches out not just from factories but from the land itself. In the pursuit of more profitable pastures, land under cultivation is being exploited in such ruthless ways that the soil is being denuded and threatened with erosion.

Chemical upon chemical is rained down upon it to improve yield per acre, until it is tired and can produce no more. Laughably this is referred to as 'scientific farming'.

Poor

At the same time whole tracts of land are kept uncultivated because the poor cannot afford to buy what that land could produce, or because government grants go to farmers to keep land fallow and prices high.

In industry, the major source of pollution, things are going to get still worse. As the economic crisis worsens and competition becomes tougher, managers will engage in more profitable malpractices which endanger thousands of lives.

More noxious dusts will be pumped into the atmosphere. More hazardous chemicals will be put onto the market without proper testing. More effluent will be pumped into rivers in a bid to reduce costs.

Life

All this will go on because the law is specifically designed *not* to penalise offenders. British bosses must be free to compete, you see, even if it costs you your hand, your lungs—or your life.

And even if the new regulations are implemented, they are unlikely to be rigorously applied.

The only future for mankind lies in doing away with a system of society where unit costs are god and broken bodies and broken lives are accepted and acceptable.

The fight for safety at work and around work is crucial.

And in the course of such struggles, it is possible not only to build up the organisation and self confidence of working people.

It is possible to win them for socialist ideas—to persuade them that the whole system of society will have to be recast to meet *their* needs, *not* those of the market, the stockholder and the profiteer.

...to this man

One man who typifies the profit sharks who put our lives at risk is Lord Robens.

He was chairman of the Coal Board at the time of Aberfan but is now on the board of the Bank of England, Times Newspapers and Trust Houses Forte. He is chairman of Vickers Ltd... and of Johnson Matthey.

The crowning obscenity is that the last Labour government put Lord Robens in charge of changing the health and safety at work act.

He changed it alright and made things even easier on himself and his kind.

So from now on your life is in your hands. It depends on what you do about it. The articles by Terry Segars and Malcolm Hughes show the way.

ap called italism

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mate.

A chemist told the firemen that the smoke suggested to him the presence of sulphuric acid.

So Johnson Matthey were 'phoned again. Incredibly, the firm agreed that a weak solution of the acid could well be present.

Two 'phone calls to discover the exact nature of a highly dangerous load!

The lorry was eventually escorted to Pitsea tip, where it was found that the dichromatic-acid mixture had completely destroyed the rubber lining of its container and had eaten three-quarters of the way through the outer metal shell.

Firemen who were at the scene later discovered that the fumes given off, if inhaled in the volume of two parts to a million, could kill in seven days.

Just one more example of lives being put at risk, through ineptitude, indifference and in the pursuit of profit and bungling. So what's being done about it?

The Labour government, during a pause from shovelling money into big business, decided to postpone for 12 months the 1974 Anti-Pollution Act, as part of the cut in public spending.

This Act would have controlled the transport of deadly waste by allowing local authorities to open up their own tips.

Hedged

Local and county councils who met to decide what 'action' to take after the death at Pitsea tip, marked the occasion by launching a rambling, bureaucratic statement promising to 'tighten up' the rules at the tip and to cut down on the amount of non-toxic waste dumped there.

Even this ineffectual statement was hedged around with worries about not disrupting industrial production.

Firemen and ambulancemen in Basildon are pressing for more safety equipment and more comprehensive information about this aspect of their jobs, they are sponsoring a meeting on the hazards

of work, and combining to safeguard themselves.

Ambulancemen who were sent to the dead driver at Pitsea tip found the coins in his pocket had been scoured clean by acid fumes.

Withdrawn

A few hours later when they returned from the tip, their uniforms were withdrawn.

These are the dangers faced by every worker involved in the waste disposal industry.

Confronted with the couldn't-care-less attitude of officialdom and companies such as Redland Purle, the way forward is clear—rank and file organisation and pressure to force better production and conditions.



Pluto Press
Workers' Handbook No.1

The Hazards of Work: How to Fight Them.

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SUBJECTS COVERED:
Noise—Dust—Chemicals—Shift work

Saturday 3 May, 10am
Stephenson Room, Euston Station, North London

Credentials, 50p each, from R Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

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LETTERS

Send your letters to LETTERS, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2. Please try to keep them to not more than 250 words. Let us have your name and address but specify if you don't want your name published.

Boom... slump... and the workers always pay

THE fundamental cause of the problems in the textiles industry is imports. We have an obligation to accept our share, but only our share.

The industry is not a hangover from the Industrial Revolution, but an industry employing about a million people, 12 per cent of the British manufacturing labour force, and not very far from the top of the league with export performance.

Looking back to 1949-51, the trading profits of the publicly-quoted cotton companies averaged a third of their net assets. In 1951, profits were a staggering 39 per cent of net assets, nearly twice the average of all quoted companies. But what did the employers do with the money? They did not plough it back into buildings and machinery.

At the time, the Board of Trade pointed to the need for new equipment, more modern production techniques and radical changes in the industry's structure. But the warning went unheeded, and in 1952 the bubble burst. The mill-owners were busy making money while they could—so the industry sacrificed long-term stability for short-term gain.

It is not, therefore, surprising that the government at the time was sceptical about the industry's intentions, and evaded its demands for protection.

Sales and profits for the huge textile companies have gone up and up, while the number of people employed has gone down and down.

More

The government tell us we must accept more imports—but what is our share? The textile giants go on investing large profits overseas and are producing all over Europe.

Are these companies fighting the government over imports, or just watching their own highly profitable imports?

The unions should know well by now of the almost regular boom and then slump—shut-downs and closures. They should begin to fight immediately for lay off pay, equal pay for men and women and a nationalised industry.

BILL HUGHES, Wigan District President, Amalgamated Textile Trades Union.

DARWEN TEXTILE WORKERS ACTION WANTED NOW 60,000 ON SHORT TIME



Textile workers marching two weeks ago: their placard speaks for itself

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)

'HUMANITY' OF TWO ANTI-ABORTIONISTS

AMANDA Binns and Kate Barrow (Letters, 22 March) oppose abortion as members of a new group called Women for Life. They claim to be feminists and yet oppose abortion.

They are also members of the Catholic Church, one of the most reactionary, exploitative, male-dominated institutions in the world.

It has opposed tooth and nail the advance of contraception. It has placed at the centre of its beliefs adulation of the Virgin Mary, while upholding celibacy among its all male priesthood, who in turn advise their female flock to go on being obedient wives and bearing all the children God sends them.

The Church has lived off the backs of workers throughout history capitulating with all forms of state barbarism—as at present in Chile—to preserve itself.

Women for Life opposes abortion on all grounds, medical and social. The so-called humanity of those ideas loses credibility when we realise what soil they are rooted in.—**JUDITH CONDON**, N London.

At our last meeting, more than 20 young industrial workers attended and drew up a programme of building and working around workshop committees, youth sections of local Trades Councils and the AUEW Junior Workers' Committee.

We would be interested to hear from anyone else active around the issue and hope to see more reports in *Socialist Worker* from young workers in the future.

S FERGUSON, Barr and Strouds Junior Workers Committee, **W TAYLOR**, apprentices steward, McDonald's, East Kilbride, **J GLEN**, Glasgow Corporation Electrical Works apprentices steward.

Neglected... 2

SOCIALIST Worker should take more care with the 'When to Turn On' column. TV is more than a 7pm to 11pm activity. There are excellent day-time programmes.

And couldn't we have some attention given to radio?

There's also the Stock Market trends, that nightly glimpse of how they see our affairs. Quote: 'The market rallied on reports of the miners' pay settlement but flagged again on news of a ballot'.

Lastly, why couldn't you say just a little more about why socialists might, for example, enjoy Jane Eyre, instead of just giving the time of transmission as though to say: 'It'll do you good'—**P F WINTER-GREEN**.

Neglected... 1

ONE ISSUE sadly neglected in *Socialist Worker* is the struggle for young workers' rights. Perhaps this is because young workers are not pushing their case strongly enough.

In Glasgow, we are busy setting up a Young Workers' Charter to fight for apprentices and young workers rights in the factory, office and dole queue.

Irish film 'can only do harm to IS'

THE FILM *Ireland Behind the Wire* has been given considerable publicity and backing in *Socialist Worker*. As a result, our branch booked it for a showing.

Having seen the film, we are now writing to *Socialist Worker* to warn other branches against making the same error. The film is badly made, badly edited, far too long and politically so vague as to be meaningless.

As a statement about the very real struggle being waged in Ireland it is an insult to those involved and those who have lost their lives: what good points there are in the film are totally submerged by the editing (or rather lack of it) and the failure of the commentary to

make sense of the pictures and the discussions.

As an IS-backed film it can only do harm to the organisation: it attracts large audiences and sends them away bored and none the wiser.

We welcome the policy of encouraging branches to show films and of promoting film tours. In this way we should be able to attract more people and have more interesting and varied meetings. However this sort of film has exactly the opposite effect.

We look for an assurance that in future *Socialist Worker* will be more discriminating in its recommendations as we look to it for a lead.—**BRANCH COMMITTEE**, Derby IS.

THE HOUNDING of Benn in *Socialist Worker* saddens me... he is one of the few sane voices in this so-called socialist government. Let's see you concentrating on attacking those traitors of the socialist movement rather than those who are trying desperately hard to achieve some sort of modification in what is a pro-capitalist government.—**TONY BENN APPRECIATION SOCIETY**, Manchester.

A BABY in the womb is hardly at all different from a baby out of the womb

except that it is smaller and weaker. Nobody is forced to bring up a child they do not want when so many childless couples would be glad to take it. I'm getting very alienated by the way you insist that socialists should support abortion.—**M WILLIAMS**, Oxford

WELL DONE, Philip Constantine, Amanda Binns and Kate Barrow. Not only are you wrong on this issue, but you appear to be going through some mild form of mental trauma. You still appear not to recognise a woman's basic right to choose if she wants an abortion or not, and still cling to the reactionary view that the unborn child, not the mother, is the only consideration.—**TONY BARROW**, Leamington.

I WATCHED the TV programme about the dreadful conditions of the tea workers in India and Ceylon... The companies named were Brooke Bond, Harrisons and Crossfields, and Anglo Ceylon and General Estates. The Labour government has done nothing... Trade unionists who work for the companies should protest.—**J PARKE**, Stow-on-the-Wold.

This is no way to fight the Common Market!

THE anti-Common Market campaign has begun in Dundee. Forty trade unionists attended a meeting called on the initiative of the TGWU.

The main speaker was Harry McLevy, AUEW convenor and Communist Party member. The most important point in his speech was the prospect of the loss of sovereignty of our Parliament to faceless bureaucrats in Brussels—as if workers in Britain could better their lot by putting pressure on Parliament.

He went on to call for the broadest possible campaign, including Tories, Church organisations and the reactionary SNP.

Another speaker, also a CP member, outlined his alternative to the Common Market, correctly stating that through price rises and wage freezes the bosses would attempt to cut workers' living standards.

He then went on to contrast this with the situation he had observed in Russia. There, he said, the workers had such a high standard of living that they have to queue outside the shops to spend it all.

In the campaign against the Common Market, socialists and militants must argue against any such unholy alliances as preached by the Communist Party.

We must have no truck with false arguments about national sovereignty and the chauvinistic arguments of the nationalists. We must argue for an anti-Common Market campaign based on the principles of internationalism and workers' unity across Europe.—**ALAN BARCLAY**, Dundee.

TOUCHING THE DEPTHS...

THE PARTISANS of the 'No' vote in *Socialist Worker* seem to be scraping the bottom of a never very deep well for inspiration.

Ian Birchall's letter (1 March) suggests that if we abstain on the Common Market referendum we will be excluded from the discussion in the broad movement. Surely, the ability to participate in the discussion is on having a presence in the movement, and a coherent political position.

IS has the base in the workers' movement to be listened to. If we adopt a principled position, an abstentionist position, we will have none of the difficulty in distancing ourselves from the National Front, Enoch Powell and the 'patriots' of the Labour Party and CP.

We would not be recommending some merit in capitalism in or out of the Common Market.—**JIM HIGGINS**, Wembley.

POSTAL POINTS

AS THE economic crisis of capitalism worsens, the capitalist-controlled state is becoming increasingly repressive against the working class... It is obviously necessary for the left groups to unite. A multitude of revolutionary groups only confuses.—**MARTYN HANDLEY**, Peckham.

THE WORKERS at Imperials and Triumph Meriden face a choice—either they continue to make their existing range of goods, which implies import controls to protect them from better and cheaper alternatives from Japan and Italy... or, there will have to be massive investment in developing up-to-date lines. Foreign goods will have to be restricted, at least for a period, to allow time for them to find their feet.—**JULIAN WELLS**, Leighton Buzzard.

IN JANUARY some 203 firms of various sizes from ICI downwards published their profit and loss results... over 90 per cent showed a profit; 16 more than doubled their profits, 43 had increases in excess of rises in average earnings, 58 had increases which beat price rises.—**PAUL STONIER**, Oldham.

Vietnam: The misery

WHEN I FIRST went to Can Tho in the Sixties, I was both amused and depressed by the US economic advisers, who wanted to make this region 'the goddam richest region in Asia'.

'I want to see the day,' one adviser informed me, 'when every peasant is saving up for a second Honda. I want to make this a real, get-up-and-go, greedy society.' And for a few years in the Sixties there really was some prosperity in the Delta.

Even in Saigon during the Sixties, the lack of productive industries was in part concealed by the false boom of America's war economy. The construction companies spent more than a million dollars a day on roads, airports, barracks and houses, electrical installations, and harbours.

More thousands of Vietnamese were employed on the communications network, now run by a subsidiary of ITT. There were hundreds of thousands of jobs for clerks, secretaries, interpreters, mess orderlies, laundresses, drivers and mechanics. On the fringe of America's war economy there were black marketeers, pedlars of stolen goods and equipment, bar girls, prostitutes and pimps.

Imported

Perhaps two or three million Vietnamese were directly or indirectly employed in the service of 600,000 Americans. Yet almost none of the goods and equipment used in the US war effort were actually manufactured or grown in Vietnam. Everything from the planes, tanks and ammunition down to the tinned turkey, soft drinks and cigarettes were imported from the United States.

As late as the Seventies there were still Americans who declared that when peace came, South Vietnam was 'ready for economic take-off'. A peace agreement was signed early in 1973 but there has been no sign of the take off.

The American withdrawal meant that about 300,000 Vietnamese lost their jobs in a few days, followed by gradual dismissals later in the year. Both the United States and Japan cut down government aid, which was in no way replaced by private investment.

As the cost of living rose by about five per cent a month, so earnings fell, causing poverty and starvation. A Saigon car dealer reported in August 1973 that sales were coming at one a month, compared with 100 a month in August the previous year.

Professional and executive men who had earned 100,000 P a month when working for the Americans were reduced to jobs at only a tenth of that salary.

One morning I looked from my hotel in Saigon at a huge crowd of young women assembled outside the offices of the National TV company of Japan, which had made so much profit during the boom.

Each month this company interviewed 400 applicants for about 20 jobs, paying 7000 P (about £5 a month). Most of these applicants had held clerical jobs with the Americans at about 15,000 P, when the piastre had double the purchasing power.

Swift

The Vietnamese can accept the loss of luxuries like TV, Hondas cigarettes and sweets, but they can barely stand the swift and amazing increase in the price of rice, which doubled in 1973.

Rice is not only their staple diet but almost part of their civilisation, a food with ritual and magic importance. The very word rice is the same as that for food. By late 1973 the cost of rice was an inescapable part of any conversation, quite replacing the other question of when the fighting would stop.

The magnitude of the problem was explained to me in stark terms by a hotel porter: 'I have a salary of 8,000 P a month. The rice I need for my wife and eight children costs 20,000 P.'

To get even a half ration of rice, poor Vietnamese have had to stop buying clothes, medicine, meat, fish or vegetables, other than seasoning such as pimento. The Vietnamese newspapers carry dozens of stories of heads of families who have killed themselves because they could no longer provide.



'I want to make this a real, get-up-and-go, greedy society.' And so the Americans gave children such as these the 'benefits' of Western civilisation: Playboy magazines, Tootsie Rolls—and starvation.

the Americans left behind

THE RICH are weeping about the 'tragedy' in Vietnam. They plead for charity for the 'poor people' fleeing the Communist menace.

These gentlefolk have studiously ignored the real tragedy of Vietnam: 12 years of murder and plunder by a 600,000-strong army from the world's most powerful country, the United States.

When the US army pulled out in 1973, many people felt that meant the end of American atrocities in Vietnam.

In a fine book, recently published, VICTORY IN

The Saigon press, egged on by the government, attempted to blame the Communists for the rice problem. They accused the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of buying up rice (presumably with outside funds) and then selling it cheap for a propaganda effect. It was whispered around town that people who got into PRG territory could buy rice at 50P a kilo compared to the 200P then current in Saigon.

One must doubt that this traffic existed in any significant quantity since its cost to the PRG would have been stupendous; but it was much discussed in Saigon, with results quite different from those wished by the newspapers. Far from blaming the Communists for the price of rice in Saigon, people admired them for keeping the price down in PRG territory.

Problem

I feel permitted to give my own opinion: that there will always be a rice problem in South Vietnam until the wealth of the paddy fields belongs to the peasants who farm them and not to foreigners, landlord, merchants and military gangsters.

Those Americans in Can Tho who once wanted to make the Mekong Delta a 'get-up-and-go, greedy society' have never returned to see the result of their labours.

Certainly greed, or at least hunger, stares from the eyes of scores of tattered, whining beggars,

many of them with missing limbs and all of them thin and sick.

Rice, in the heart of the rice country, costs almost as much as in Saigon to those who do not live on their own farms. Some of the Chinese are fat but there are few fat Vietnamese under the rank of major, a fact I have established from careful observation.

Nastiness

I cannot record as fact but as a definite impression the overwhelming nastiness of Can Tho: the filth, stench, waste, ugliness and the misery of the faces. It is a town where you start each morning in certainty that not one single enjoyable thing will happen during the day.

After one horrible afternoon I locked myself in my hotel bedroom and tried to read but dropped off to sleep with the light on. I woke from a nightmare to find that the hag who collected the laundry had brought in a girl whom she was forcibly pressing upon me, the girl's body on mine and the girl's mouth (with ulcerous gums) on my mouth.

After explaining that I was not in the mood, I went for a much-needed drink to a riverside cafe, remarkable for the fact that its staff occasionally smiled.

There was a very loud tape of rock music from the United States, which I had heard the night before but could bear again.

After some twenty minutes a commotion took place with the

VIETNAM, the journalist Richard West tells a different story. He shows how the atrocities committed by the American troops in Vietnam linger on, and in many ways intensify, after the withdrawal.

These extracts from West's book—reproduced here—remind us of the full horrors of American imperialism in Vietnam.

VICTORY IN VIETNAM is available from IS Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. (£3.25, add 15p for postage).

arrival of a young woman and two soldiers. All three were drugged and the girl promptly fell into unconsciousness.

A legless beggar pushed himself to their table and started to tug at the trouser leg of one of the soldiers, who shouted a bit and stared round the cafe.

The manager of the cafe told them to go, and then turning to me, whispered 'Heroin'. As this was going on, the tape started to play the rock version of Beethoven's finale to the Choral Symphony, with words roughly adapted from Schiller.

While the two men staggered out of the cafe, holding their woman friend by the arms and legs, still followed by the legless beggar, the music rose into the blood-stirring magnificent theme which was Beethoven's message of joy to all mankind.



Keeping the world safe for American 'freedom': a soldier, aged 11

ON THE BOX

SUNDAY

BBC-2: 7.25pm. THE WORLD ABOUT US is on a Sikh family's return to the Punjab in India after nine years in Britain. At 10.10pm the Peter Cook and Dudley Moore version of the story of Dr Faustus, BEDAZZLED, with Cook as the devil and Moore as the sucker. Extremely funny, it bombed at the box office in the late 1960s. On BBC-1 at 10.10 a documentary of the great dancer, NIJINSKY in the OMNIBUS series.

MONDAY

BBC-2: 9.30pm HORIZON's THE LONG WALKABOUT is about the origins of the

Australian aborigines, who were, apparently, the first mariners 50,000 years ago with a two stage journey from China to Australia.

TUESDAY

BBC-1: 9.25pm. The TUESDAY DOCUMENTARY is 1956—THE YEAR THE ILLUSION ENDED, on the year of Hungary, Suez, angry young men (now sour old Tories) and Elvis (before he got fat and took up karate). DISAPPEARING WORLD on ITV at 10.30pm is MASAI MANHOOD, on the 'growing up period' of the Kenyan tribe.

THE FIGHT AGAINST REDUNDANCIES

LONGBRIDGE: LEYLAND TO AXE 3,000

THREE thousand redundancies have been demanded by British Leyland at Longbridge.

Meanwhile, more than 25,000 Leyland workers in the Midlands are now on short time and in Cowley 4500 Marina workers laid off for Easter week will return to face four days, three nights working.

Cowley management say that what happens next 'depends on the budget' but 'more severe measures are likely' if it is 'unfavourable'. This is a way of saying that redundancies are round the corner.

Workers interested in voluntary redundancy have been asked by the management to come forward. In Longbridge, a special 'voluntary redundancy advisory bureau' has been set up.

At British Leyland's Tractors and Transmissions Plant, the company wants between 600 and 700 redundancies. Across the combine, Leyland are putting demands on groups inside various factories.

CLOSURE

The government has now received a copy of the Ryder Report into Leyland's future. The contents are being kept secret (from the workforce, that is), but the main recommendation is for massive government aid on condition of a 'rationalisation' programme.

That will mean the loss of thousands of jobs and the closure of some plants.

While the government and the company prepare a joint strategy, Leyland workers need to prepare their own plans to safeguard jobs and conditions. We need to fight for: NO increase in track speeds and no reduction in manning levels.

NO redundancies.

CUT the working week to 35 hours without loss of pay.

NATIONALISE British Leyland, without compensation.

WORKERS' control over jobs, safety and manning levels.

PLANS organised nationally to occupy factories threatened with redundancies or closure.



IS MOTOR FRACTION Executive Committee Meeting: Sunday 6 April, 10.30am, IS Books, Birmingham.

Picture: Chris Davies (Report)



WORKERS occupying Crosfields Electronics in North London put the finishing touches to banners for their picket line. Their occupation began two weeks ago, after 80 engineers were made redundant.

The workers have barricaded all entrances to the fitter and wiring shops, computer room, general stores and office. They control the entire building. Management succeeded in chopping 250 workers, but those remaining are determined to stay inside indefinitely.

Other shops are hit by short-time working and, like the North London district of the Engineering Union, are giving full support.

Management have plans to ship work to a Peterborough subsidiary. Stewards have emphasised that the fight is against management, not fellow workers in the Midlands.

All the official channels have been explored by the Joint Shop Stewards Committee. But visits to local

Labour MPs and the Trade and Industry department have produced nothing. 'It was a waste of time,' said convenor Frank Gore. 'We got lots of sympathy, that's all.'

'Under the system we live under they can do nothing. If we left it up to them we'd all be out of work.'

Shop steward Jack Tapson stressed the key factor. 'It depends on the lads in the factory. What we do will decide it. We are determined to stay in till we win.'

More than 1500 workers have recently been made redundant in North London with little fight. Now the Crosfields workers have changed that. The JSSC want maximum support from all workers, but especially in North London.

Send resolutions to the AUEW executive and district committees. Join the picket on Elthorne Road (just off the Holloway Road). Resolutions and messages of support to Crosfield Joint Shop Stewards Fund, c/o W Hayward, 34 Dresden Road, Upper Holloway, London N19 3BD.

THE FRAUD BEHIND 450 SACKINGS

THE HEYSHAM-BELFAST ferry is scheduled to close on Sunday—and with it will go 450 jobs. A two-day strike called by the Seamen's Union has ended with no guarantees by the government.

Heysham workers are particularly enraged by the projected transfer of the ferry work to a private port at Fleetwood.

Local union officials believe the British Railway Transport Board, owners of Heysham Docks, financed the jetty at Fleetwood at a cost of

£800,000. BRTB's alibi for closing Heysham? Last year it lost £800,000.

There's one way to beat the closures. The unions should call an indefinite stoppage at other ports to force Heysham's nationalisation and prevent redundancies.

In DUNDEE, 40 workers at Smith Hutton ship fitters yard are in their fourth week of occupation. Convenor Bert McNally said: 'We are determined to occupy this yard until all our jobs are guaranteed.'

The workers—members of the Engineering, Transport and General,

Why this conference is so important

By Sylvia Greenwood, T&GWU convenor, Easterbrook and Allcards, Sheffield

I'VE BEEN to many conferences about women and equal pay over the years—and I've always been disappointed. They were mainly for intellectuals who have got equal pay but want equality, like the problems of women journalists who can't be editors.

I'm hoping the Rank and File conference will be able to show women how to fight to achieve equal pay, expose job evaluation with points weighted against women, and overcome all the dangers like redundancies and management tricks of changing jobs from female to male so as to stop equal pay for work of equal value.

We've got to squash women's fears that they will be made redundant because they're women doing 'men's jobs'.

We've got to encourage them to believe in themselves, that they're worth equal pay and that they shouldn't just allow themselves to be cheap labour and exploited by management.

It's also important to point out the tricks and dangers to men on shop stewards' committees.

Men are always encouraged to look only at what's in it for them and then sell the women down. Management often try to satisfy only the men because they know women don't fight that easily.

Common cause

Here education is the biggest part of the problem. If men spend the time educating the women, they won't have the problem with the workforce they say they do. They've got to take the time to show the women what they mean.

We need a conference like this because it is for blue-collar workers. It can educate every shop steward that attends, every woman and man who attends, about the intentions of management and how to deal with them.

It could unite us in one common cause. It could stop one factory from being on its own. It could be a liaison for all women in trouble, gathering the support to take the fight on.

It could help us support one another. We could start to rock any stubborn official just by sheer pressure.

That's what I'll be looking for at this conference, and why I'll be going and trying to get other women to go along with me.

ADVERTISEMENT

NATIONAL RANK AND FILE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Women workers are first in line to suffer under the current economic situation. 'Twilight' shifts are always first to go. Many men militants still feel that women aren't the main breadwinners and so their jobs aren't so important.

1975 is a key year for all workers, be they men or women. But it is important that we give special consideration to the problems of women workers. That is why the Rank and File Organising Committee has called this conference.

The shop floor fight—Equal Pay, No redundancies. Saturday 26 April 1975 University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology

Jointly sponsored by: SEI shop stewards' committee ASTMS Leicester General branch NUPE Withington Hospital, Manchester NUPE United Manchester Hospitals

For further details of the conference and for forms for credentials write to Roger Cox, Secretary, Rank and File Organising Committee, 214 Roundwood Road, London NW10.

Classified

Entries for the Classified column must arrive by first post Monday. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 3p a word. CASH WITH COPY to Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS. Adverts that arrive without payment will be charged at double the rate.

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND IRELAND Conference, Saturday 24 May. Get your trade union branch delegated to this vital conference. Sponsoring letters signed by ten Labour MPs from: Troops Out Movement, 103 Hammersmith Road, London W14. Trades councils have already been invited.

Radical Alternatives to Prison meeting: Lessons from Stephen Smith. Speaker: Meg Howarth, who was teaching in Workmenod Scrubs at time of Stephen's death. Sunday 6 April, 2.30pm, New Horizons, 1 Macklin Street, London WC1.

SCOTTISH Rank and File Busmen's meeting: Sunday 6 April, 2.30pm, Room 3, Edinburgh Trades Council, 12 Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

DISCUSSION/FOOD/DISCO organised by Women in Case Con (organisation for socialist social workers) to support National Abortion Campaign and examine implications of Abortion (amendment) Bill. For Welfare State workers and clients (most of whom are women). 40p, Euston Tavern, 7.30pm—midnight, Friday 11 April.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain says there is no physical reason why there should be wars, poverty, starvation etc on this earth today. The reasons are political and economic. Any reasonable person would pursue further enquiry. Write to Dept SW, The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UN.

JOHN AND MARGARET LLYWARCH invite you to enjoy a North Wales farmhouse holiday. Clean air, mountain streams, country rambles, fishing, wild-life galore. A children's paradise and only two miles from a mainline railway station. Room to put up weekend schools of up to 20 people. For terms ring 069-186 2272, or write to Bryn Iddon, Bron y Garth, Oswestry, Salop.

DRUMMER required for 'Cheap n' Nasty' IS rock band. Urgent, phone 01-802 6572.

IS MEMBER requires a room in South London, flat or house. Contact Margaret via IS Books (01-802 6145).

URGENT. Flat needed for couple pref two rooms and kitchen, North or East London, anything considered. E King/D Campbell, 130 Norwood Rd, Tulse Hill, London SE24.

DEFEND THE 14 CAMPAIGN: Public meeting for solidarity with pacifists charged on Incitement to Disaffection Act. 2pm, Saturday 3 May, NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields, Holborn, London WC1.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE. April 4-6 Manchester. I'd like to get together with other IS sisters a bookstall and other activities. Please contact Sherril Yanowitz at either 41 Holmdene Ave, London SE24 (home) or at Art Dept, Dillons Bookshop, 1 Malet St, London WC1, or leave notice at conference on Friday night.

KARTOON KLOWNS new play. MUGGINS NO LONGER—SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM. A play—a weapon. Confront the gorillas and smash cultural oppression. Unity theatre, Camden Town, 4-6 April, 7.45pm, 50p. For later bookings ring 01-734 9883 or contact Tamara at IS bookshop (01-802 6145).

Dundee dustcart drivers walk out

DUNDEE DRIVERS met the striking Glasgow dustcart men last Thursday—and then decided to strike from Monday. A steward said: 'The men feel their Glasgow colleagues deserve the extra cash. We now want the same.'

Another driver, who said he completely supported the Glasgow men, added: 'The strike could easily have been avoided by paying the men what is only their due. The use of troops is nothing but blatant strike breaking.'

There was no reason why the strike should not be made official, but he felt this was un-

likely. 'The union is so completely tied up with the Social Contract. We pay our dues and the union invests the money. But when we are out, they don't want to know.'

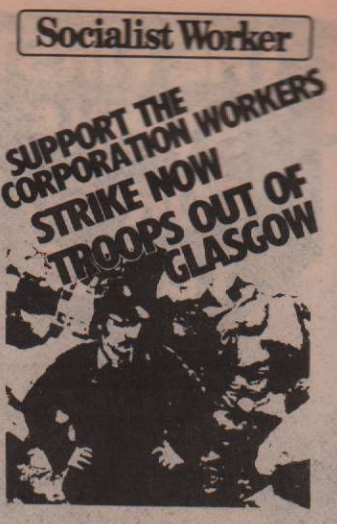
The drivers came out despite attacks from Labour councillors. City boss Tom Moore claimed there was no need for them to strike. 'They can achieve nothing,' he said. 'We in Dundee are not prepared to betray our colleagues in Glasgow or elsewhere.'

Cleansing committee convenor Jack Martin told the men that there would never be any local

settlements of the dispute and asked them to await the outcome of national negotiations.

This is the same argument being used against Dundee electricians by the Corporation. It is only a smoke-screen to hide the real reason—the Social Contract.

Every attempt must now be made to link the struggles of the electricians and the dustcart drivers. Both are fighting the same boss, and the Social Contract. Together they can find the strength to win.



Labour MP attacks sparks action

THE LOCAL authority electricians' strike against attempts to break the 30-year-old agreement with Scottish corporations to pay SJIB rates is still solid. And electricians in Leeds, Cardiff, Sheffield and Hull are still out demanding JIB rates.

In Dundee, corporation electricians held a public meeting last week to explain to tenants affected by their strike exactly why they were out.

Brodie Angles, full-time official of the EETPU, told an audience of about 150 that, in the name of the Social Contract, the Labour-controlled corporation had failed to uphold the 30-year-old agreement which gave local authority electricians the same pay as privately-employed electricians.

Lifts

Peter Doig, the Labour MP, seemed more concerned with the inconveniences of his constituents, through heating and lifts breaking down. 'Ten weeks is a long time to go without heating,' he said, to shouts of 'what about wages?' from the audience.

Doig admitted the electricians had a 'cast-iron case' but attacked their action. He suggested that, if the corporation was guilty of breach of contract, the electricians should take the case to court.

The strike has lasted for ten weeks and, although it is now official, the strikers still need money. Dundee IS has helped by printing more than 20,000 leaflets and collection sheets for the sparks.

All donations and messages of support to John Reilly, 10b Ancrum Court, Dundee.

GREAT-NOW SPREAD THE STRIKES!

COUNCIL drivers in Dundee, Port Glasgow, Gourrock, Greenock and Bellshill last week stopped work in solidarity with the Glasgow dustcart drivers.

Now drivers in several other areas are considering sympathy strike action.

More and more local authority workers are realising that the use of troops as strike-breakers directly threatens their rights as trade unionists.

Though the soldiers have improved their rubbish-shifting techniques, the authorities have brought in a private contract firm under a heavy police escort. The firm—J & R Young of Consett, County Durham—should be blacked by trade unionists wherever it appears.

The government are using the troops to show thousands of other public sector workers with pay claims coming up that they will go to enormous lengths to defend the Social Contract.

Bash

The strikers now need to take the lead. The decision of the Liverpool Council to pay their drivers shows what can be done. As a result all 20,000 council manual workers in Liverpool are now demanding local increases outside the nationally-negotiated rates to bring them into line with the Liverpool drivers.

Almost every district and local union official has found ways to head off any help to the Glasgow strikers.

Most have claimed that large numbers of workers are influenced by the health hazard argument, and that it was difficult to enlist their support. Yet few, if any, have bothered to call mass meetings or stewards' meetings to argue the drivers' case.

Men such as Bro Sharpe of the General and Municipal Workers Union have instructed their members to work alongside the troops.

Others, such as Raymond Macdonald—top man in the Transport and General in Scotland—have given verbal support to the drivers but have done nothing to stop other TGWU workers co-operating with the troops.

Meanwhile, many militants have been shocked by the Glasgow Trades Council leadership, whose two dominant figures, John Reidford and Hugh Wyper, are both members of the Communist Party.

Bro Wyper, regional officer of the



The solidarity march—for shop stewards only

Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

TGWU, told a mass picket outside Polmadie incinerator that the way to sort out the dispute and the Labour council was in the May elections.

When pressed to explain the position of Jack Jones and give assurances that he would push Jones to recognise the dispute, he chose to remonstrate with an isolated heckler and ignore the question.

Bro Reidford was involved in the eleventh-hour discussions with the Labour councillors which resulted in a back-to-work bonus proposal being put to the men, just before the troops were brought in.

While ejecting a Socialist Worker reporter from the Trades Council club where the corporation strikers meet, he said: 'I have enough trouble

with workers in dispute—getting them back to work—without IS agitators interfering.'

The Trades Council leadership have spent the past two weeks making absolutely certain that the solidarity movement doesn't get out of their grip. They made certain that the first demonstration was small by restricting it to shop stewards only.

Genuine

The only way to counter the officials' defence of the Social Contract is to build a genuine rank and file movement. This movement is not separate from the trade unions. It is a question of linking up and strengthening those elements of trade

union organisation responsive to and controlled by the rank and file.

That is why the demand for the West of Scotland shop stewards' meeting is so important. Rab Reid, a senior steward at Chrysler, Linwood, told Socialist Worker:

'Support for the Corporation strikers is there on the shop floor. But it is dwindling the longer the troops are in, and the longer the press and TV have to play up the health hazard cover up.'

'We need a West of Scotland stewards meeting. Give us that and we can go back to our members and put the true facts before them. That's the way to build action against the strike-breakers.'

IN BRIEF

Girling, Lockheed and Massey Fergusons. Caravans International, also in Poole, have proposed more than 200 selective redundancies among shop floor and staff workers.

WORSELY, Bolton: The strike at Eaton's Transmission is over. The shop stewards' committee and the Bolton AUEW District Committee backed the strike after nine men, including three shop stewards, were sacked.

But the AUEW Executive failed to give official backing because too few of them attended last week's meeting. That sabotaged the strike by giving the waverers and scabs the excuse they needed.

PRESTON:—The four-week strike of 200 maintenance workers at Courtauld's Red Scar plant is over. The men voted 92 to 90 last week in favour of continuing, but officials, urged them to return.

The men won an increase of just over £8 a week on their basic, but only £3 was new money. The rest was consolidation of the threshold and an efficiency bonus in return for the loss of 30 jobs.

Though this was the first strike by

maintenance men for 17 years, the strikers were solid. Peter Lingard, pipefitters' shop steward, said: 'We were a bit slow at first but, when we started picketing, management came up with an offer after three days.'

The strikers were supported by many local factories, but not by the 2000-strong TGWU branch within the plant.

WORKERS battling to save jobs in the communications industry are planning a national conference in support of rank and file action against natural wastage, redundancies and closures. The conference, to be held at the London College of Printing on Saturday 31 May, will be attended by delegates and observers from chapels and branches of all the unions involved. Activists from eight unions have formed an Organising Committee to fight the sackings. Its next meeting is on Wednesday 9 April, 7.30pm, at the Institute of Race Relations, Pentonville Road, London N1. Further details from Conference Convenor, Aidan White, 61a Farley Road, London N16.

KARTOON KLOWNS present their new play *Muggins No Longer*—subtitled *Socialism or Barbarism*—at the Unity Theatre, Goldington Street, London, NW1 on 4, 5 and 6 April at 7.45pm.

DUNDEE:—The country's lowest-paid boilermakers have been locked out at the Caledon shipyards after putting in for a £56 basic claim. The bosses offered £4.40 in exchange for a bigger ratio of apprentices to journeymen, full flexibility between all the different sections and interchangeability throughout the time trades. The final insult was a demand for a cut in the tea break.

The shop stewards stopped all overtime and organised a go-slow. The bosses locked them out. The apprentices took the initiative, striking last Friday after being made to do the work of the boilermakers. A mass meeting is planned for this week.

WOLVERHAMPTON:—The Yarnolds women, still out after more than three months for union recognition and against the victimisation of their stewards, now have no money left in their strike fund. TGWU branches in particular should make every effort to send them money. Write to the Yarnolds Strike Committee, TGWU Offices, Berry Street, Wolverhampton.

POOLE, Dorset:—150 AUEW foundry workers at Hamworthy Engineering took unofficial action last week in support of their claim for 15 per cent and guaranteed cost of living payments. Workers on the maintenance section are strike-breaking. The factory supplies casting to Chrysler,

Socialist Worker MAY DAY GREETINGS

Socialist Worker is including a special four-page supplement for the many trade union bodies, shop stewards committees and other labour organisations who wish to send May Day greetings.

The rates for advertisements will be:

'Special' Classified insertion (up to 20 words)	50p
Semi-display, per single column inch (size 1in x 2in)	£1
Display, per single column inch	£2

Advance space may be booked now by telephone. Ring 01-739 2639. All copy or art work must be received by Friday, 18 April.

Send to Socialist Worker (May Day), 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

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THE FIRST STRIKE FOR 50 YEARS

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Teachers throw out 'divisive' scheme



Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

TRAFFORD PARK, Manchester: Workers leaving a mass meeting at Rubber Regenerating after agreeing to take strike action for the first time in 50 years. The work force, which includes

Turkish Cypriots, Indians, Pakistanis and West Indians, has recently been organised into the TGWU. The workers struck against a management attempt to cut in on their bank holiday time.

They returned to work on Tuesday but are prepared to come out again unless they are paid for all of the bank holiday. This is the first step in a long battle.

SOGAT: IF WE LOSE, WATCH OUT!

LONDON: Warehousemen working for Britain's biggest publishing firm—the staggeringly rich Daily Mirror group—are standing alone in a vital defence of manning agreements.

The 1750 members of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades have refused to take what amounts to a bribe for selling jobs—and so set Fleet Street's millionaires, who know that this is a test case, squawking like vultures deprived of the kill.

Such an anti-trade union response from papers like the Daily Express and Daily Mail was, of course, to be expected. But the SOGAT strikers are also under fire from many fellow trade unionists employed by the International Publishing Corporation, which owns the Mirror and also the Sunday People, Sunday Mirror, Reveille and Sporting Life.

IPC have, in the last year, taken on the journalists, the NATSOPA

members and now the SOGAT men. Their aim is to crush anyone in their path. If any IPC trade unionist thinks it will end there, he is going to learn a painful lesson.

Look at the facts...
IPC broke away from the Newspaper Proprietors Association last year supposedly to settle with the NUJ.

It has since sought to buy the right to destroy jobs. It offered each union wage increases slightly larger than those contained in the recent NPA deal.

But there was one crucial condition. IPC workers would have to give up the clause on automatic job replacement contained in the NPA agreements. This clause means that when a worker retires or leaves, his

job is automatically filled. Other unions have accepted or are in the process of accepting this package, which will be but the first step in a concerted campaign to destroy jobs throughout Fleet Street.

But the SOGAT members stood firm, saying they would rather have the straight NPA pay package. This would allow them to retain their automatic job replacement agreement.

IPC management countered this move by saying that the SOGAT members had to accept their offer or get nothing. At this the SOGAT members withdrew their labour. For this 'crime', they were all sacked.

Some IPC trade unionists say the firm's demands are 'reasonable' and will not lead to the loss of any present jobs, only future ones.

But why shouldn't workers who have put their whole lives into an industry be the ones to benefit from technical change rather than shareholders who have put in nothing but their money.

In any case, it is every trade unionist's duty to look to the future and preserve job opportunities for the young. If previous generations of trade unionists had adopted these short-sighted attitudes, there would be many fewer jobs today, and no manning agreements.

Another agreement is that a fair number of SOGAT men are said to be past retirement age and so should retire and make way for younger men.

But they can only do that if the job replacement agreement is maintained.

The truth is that these quibbles are nothing more than excuses. The SOGAT members are fighting against IPC's unemployment schemes and they deserve the full support of every decent trade unionist.

Our fund: A letter that says it all

'DEAR COMRADE,
Sorry this isn't more. But as an old age pensioner, expenditures that seem trifling to the employed are enormous obstacles. Socialist Worker is, however, doing a vital and splendid job, and must be supported.'

We got this letter—and £3—this week from a pensioner in Norton-sub-Hamdon, Somerset. It was part of a total of £868.75 which pushes our emergency Fighting Fund up to £5993, well over half the £10,000 we appealed for.

But we've still got slightly more than £4000 to go, and we need it desperately if we're to continue the 'vital and splendid job' the pensioner refers to.

That pensioner is right. A lot of workers can afford to give us more than he did. So keep the money rolling in. We must have that £10,000 as soon as possible.

■ ■

Our thanks to: CA Parsons SW Readers £7.35, Heinz IS £2, Coventry North IS £5, Preston IS £5, Cricklewood IS £15, NW London District £5, from comrades in Malta £2, Nottingham IS £50, Gloucester IS, £2.50, Smiths MA1 Tool Room Cricklewood £4.40, Oxford IS Students' Cell £18, A Reader,

Pontefract, £5, SW Readers, Garton's Glucose, Battersea £1, Colchester Reader £2, Hounslow IS £3, W London Hospital Workers £8.50, 2 comrades from London £50.

Members' special levy: Heinz £3, Chelmsford £7, Harlesden £4, Swansea £3, Ipswich £10, Blackburn £15, Stelrad £25, Glenrothes £9, Liverpool £32, Birmingham Teachers £100, Harlow £60, individual contributions £415.

Rush donations and collections to Mel Norris, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

GLASGOW IS public meeting: The strikes, the troops and the fight for socialism.
Speakers: Alan Wilson, Corporation Electricians Strike Committee (in a personal capacity) and Paul Foot. Wednesday 9 April, 7.30pm, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street.

International Socialists

AUEW

NATIONAL FRACTION MEETING

All IS AUEW (Engineering Section) members to attend. Admission by IS membership card only.

Saturday 5 April, 11am
Digbeth Civic Hall, Deritend High Street, Birmingham.

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