

workers' ACTION

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WE WON'T WAIT TWO YEARS say firemen

THE MOST important thing about the Government's latest offer to the firemen is that it gives no more than 10% in money now.

That's the most important thing for the strikers, who are in dispute to win a decent standard of living now. They need, not another round of promises, but cash now to meet the ever-rising bills.

The increased cost of living isn't postponed for two years; nor are the strings the Government attaches to the offer:

Agreement not to refuse to work with scabs.

Working a three-shift system in place of the current two-shift one.

No extra pay for the extra duties recently introduced, like fire prevention work.

'No more than 10% now' is also the most important thing for the Government. However many promises are made about the future, if the firemen settle for 10% now, then (the Government reckons) a wages explosion can be avoided now.

The offer claims to guarantee that as from 1979 firemen's pay will be pegged to the top quartile of male manual workers' wages; that is, to the dividing-line between the top-paid 25% of adult male manual workers and the bottom 75%. This should apply regardless of any Government pay policies.

But if the firemen can't win money now, with their most militant action ever, how can they be sure these promises will be kept? By 1979 there will have



"We're in this together" — Euston Road Fire Station strikers join militant miners' lobby of NUM Executive
Photo: Newslite

NUM Exec says wait till March

SCORNING BOTH the decisions of the NUM Conference and the results of the recent ballot, the Executive of the miners' union has given areas the go-ahead to negotiate pit-based incentive schemes.

Ignoring Conference's decision to go for a rise in November, the Executive also decided 14-10 to back the '12 month rule', and to postpone the pay claim until March 1st. By 14-9 it voted against industrial action to force the Coal Board to agree to the union's claim on earlier retirement. The only 'victory' for the left wing was a motion donating £5,000 to the firemen's strike fund. But the donation (2½p for each member of the NUM)

does not make up for the blow dealt to the firemen's cause by the NUM's withdrawal from the wages battle until March.

The NUM right wing have been organising in their localities to flood the executive with requests to be allowed to go ahead with local incentive agreements. Standing out against productivity dealing are the major militant areas: Yorkshire, South Wales, and Scotland, as well as the smaller North Derbyshire and Kent fields. Together their representatives mustered 9 votes on the Executive against 15 for the right wing.

A proposal by Arthur Scargill to ballot the membership and call a special NUM conference on the question of area schemes was defeated.

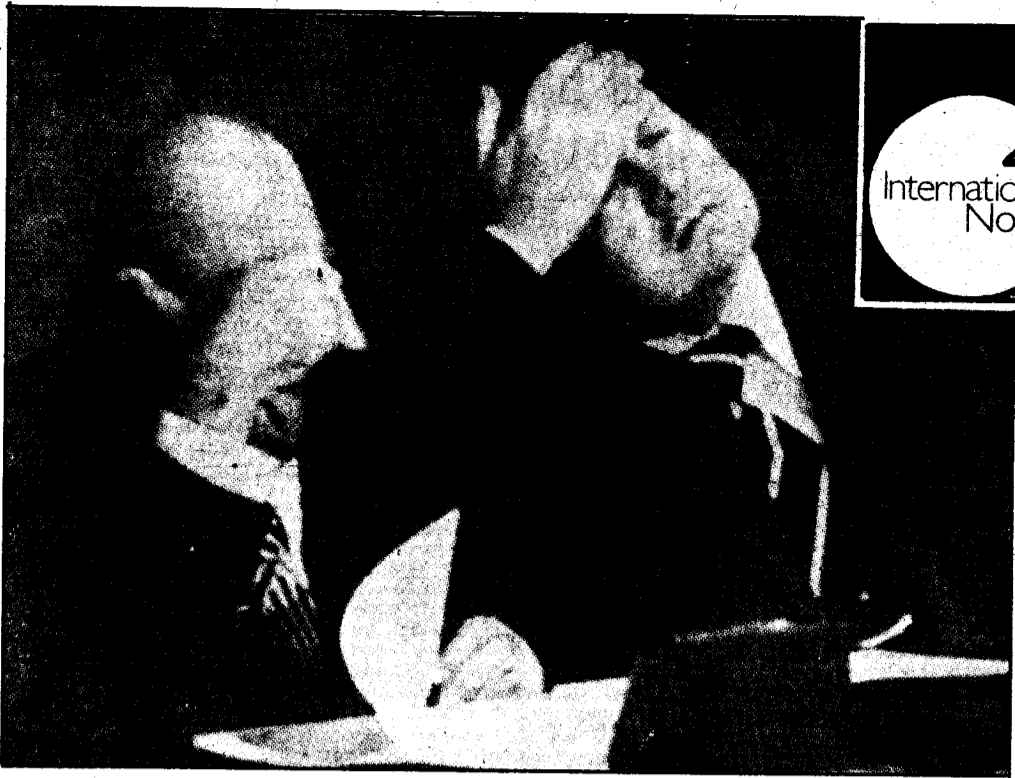
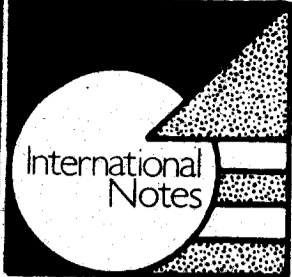
The Executive majority hopes that, surrounded by areas where miners will be getting rises through pit-based incentive schemes, even the militant Yorkshire miners will now be squeezed into productivity negotiations.

The *Financial Times* summed it up accurately a couple of months ago. "The government and the Coal Board both calculate that as well as increasing output and justifying a huge investment in the industry, acceptance of pit-based incentives will defuse the claim for a 90% pay rise from November 1st which is about to be submitted by the union". Not only that. The approval of area bargaining seriously threatens to fragment the NUM into a mere federation of area unions.

The NUM right wing has gained victory by the most brazen undemocratic manipulation. In a pit-head ballot earlier this month the miners voted by 100,634 to 87,901 to reject the Coal Board's productivity scheme. When that ballot was called, on the insistence of right wingers who hoped to gain a mandate to ignore the Conference decision against such schemes, the leaders of the NUM had not even begun negotiating for the £135 demanded by Conference.

These leaders, people like Gormley and Daly, spent the time between the Conference and the meeting that agreed on the ballot working out

PORTUGAL: THE DRIFT TO THE RIGHT CONTINUES



LAST THURSDAY, 8th December, the Portuguese government fell. The surprise was not that it fell, but that it had lasted so long.

Since it took office in July 1976 the Socialist administration of Mario Soares has been a minority government. The Socialist Party has 100-plus deputies; the two rightist parties, the PSD and the CDS, 70-plus and 40-plus; and the Communist Party has 40. For

17 months Soares has balanced delicately, sometimes relying on the votes of the right wing, sometimes (less often) relying on CP support.

Gains

Soares firmly refused — and he still says he refuses — to form a coalition. Only with a 'homogenous' government could he deal with the tricky

task of pushing through a 'social November 25th' — dismantling, in a planned and controlled way, the gains won by the workers and peasants in the tumultuous struggles of 1975.

A SP-CP coalition would not have the confidence of the bourgeoisie, and might rapidly provoke Salazarist reaction. A SP-right wing coalition would risk arousing uncontrollable hostility among the

workers and peasants.

The Communist Party is now calling for a coalition government of all the parties, round an agreed programme of 'national salvation'. Both PSD and CDS are calling for a CDS-PSD-SP government.

Deal

Another often-mentioned possibility is for the President,

General Ramalho Eanes, to form a government of 'supporters of the President', 'above parties'.

A new Socialist Party minority government, based on some policy deal with the Right, is also still possible. The one certainty is that the CP will be kept out of the Government. The trend of events in Portugal is very clearly to the right.

Colin Foster

When the censor switches off your t.v.

ON PAGE 5 this week Paul Adams reviews 'Before Hindsight', a film documenting the distortions and bias of cinema news in the 1930s. The film concludes with Jonathan Dimpleby reminding us that news distortion still exists in the media coverage of Northern Ireland.

Most coverage of Northern Ireland simply backs the British Government/British Army view of affairs. The few critical programmes that are shown have been followed by Government ministers declaring that the TV corporations should stop giving such 'aid to the enemy', and in both the BBC and commercial TV all programmes on Northern Ireland have to be referred up to the highest authorities before transmission.

This is the record:

□ **24 Hours**, 1971, prevented from doing an in-depth programme on the IRA.

□ **Interview with Michael Farrell**, just released from detention, banned by BBC: September 1971.

□ **'South of the Border'**, Granada's World in Action film which included speeches by Sean MacStiofain and Rory O'Brady: banned by the ITA.

□ **'This Week': Bloody Sunday, 1972**. Whole rolls of film declared sub judice by Widgery and never shown. Important evidence suppressed.

□ **'A Sense of Loss'**: Made by Marcel Ophuls with BBC assistance. The BBC refused to show it.

□ **'Hang out your Brightest Colours'**, Kenneth Griffith's film about Michael Collins, commissioned by ATV in 1972 and banned by Sir Lew Grade. Still under wraps.

□ **'Article 5'**, a play by Brian Phelan about torture, was produced by the BBC in 1976, but never shown.

And this year:

February 1977: Playwright Sean Connoughton gets his name removed from the credits of LWT's '18 months to Balcombe Street' because the four Irishmen are not presented in historical con-

text.

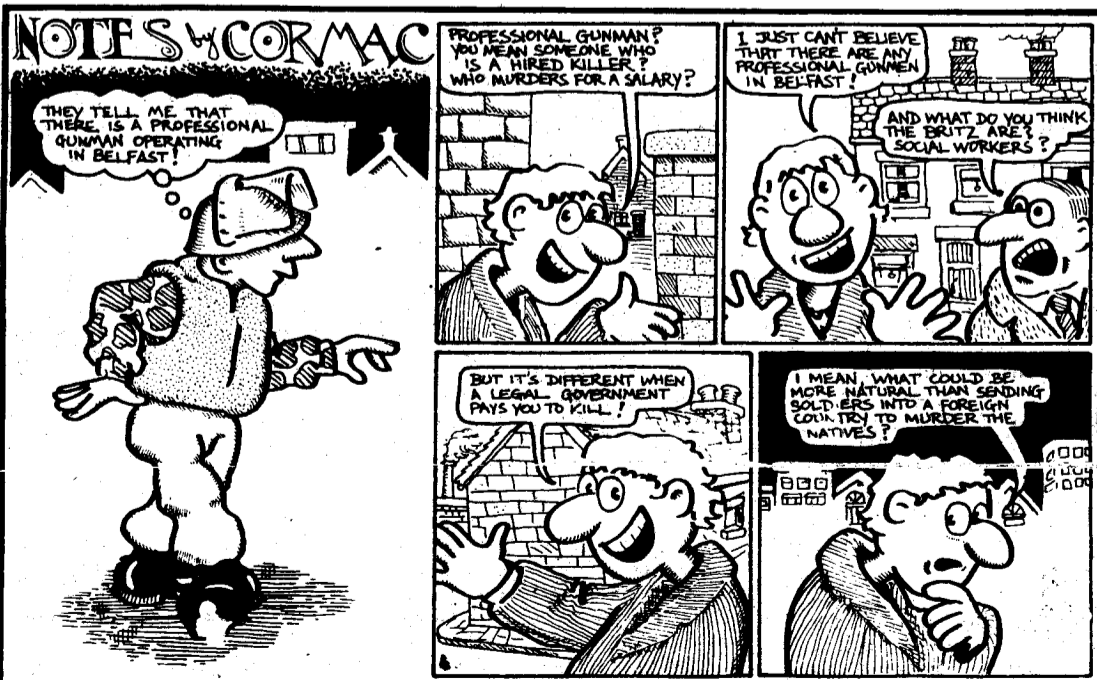
2 March. On BBC's 'Tonight', Keith Kyle interviews Bernard O'Connor, Fermanagh school-teacher who alleges torture by RUC. Programmed transmitted after vetting 'at the highest level' and is attacked by Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason and Opposition spokesman Airey Neave.

18 August. Thames 'This Week' film on Queen's visit to Northern Ireland, 'Ulster... in Friendship and Forgiveness', by reporter Peter Taylor, banned by the IBA. After forceful lobbying by Thames staff and others, it goes out on 26 August.

22 September. 'This Week' film 'The Life Behind the Wire', by Peter Taylor screened after being shown to IBA and Northern Ireland Office. Mason and Neave nevertheless protest.

27 October. 'This Week': Peter Taylor investigates allegations of RUC brutality at Castlereagh interrogation centre, Belfast. RUC and Northern Ireland Office pressure on the IBA results in Thames TV including RUC film of a statement made by Chief Constable Newman. Programme makers fear they have set a dangerous precedent by allowing this. RUC, Mason, and Neave still protest at the programme.

[from The Other Cinema]



A crazy system of elections for the EEC

Editorial

WHILE THE attention of the labour movement in the country is focused on the firemen's dispute, our elected representatives in Parliament are concerned with a different problem: the electoral system for the EEC Parliament.

Other countries in the EEC are using proportional representation for these election. But in Britain many politicians want to have 81 single-member constituencies.

The 81-constituency system would be an absurdity. To see how it would work, suppose an election takes place when Labour Party support is right down to 30% of the vote. According to any rational representative system, Labour should then get about 30% of the representatives.

The Westminster constituency system does give results not too far removed from that, because of the geographical spread of Labour and Tory support. Even if Labour support across the country is down to only 30%, there will still be a proportion of heavily working-class seats which Labour is bound to win.

But with working-class

areas and middle-class areas bundled together in the 81 huge 'Euro-constituencies', the Labour Party could possibly find itself with virtually no-one getting elected. With the current balance of opinion, it seems, the SNP might sweep all the Scottish Euro-constituencies, the Tories all of England, and Labour all of Wales!

Why does anyone support this crazy system? The main motive seems to be that if proportional representation is accepted for EEC elections, then it will be difficult to resist it for Westminster. And proportional representation for Westminster elections, though more democratic, will mean gains for the Liberals at the expense of Tory and Labour.

Some 'left' Labour MPs also oppose EEC Parliament elections altogether. Thus they show that they oppose the EEC, not because it's undemocratic, but because it's foreign; and they defend the 'sovereignty' of Westminster, not because it's democratic, but because it's British. This narrow nationalist attitude is neither socialist nor left-wing in any way.



5 ENQUIRIES
5 PROMISES
5 NO THINGS

from page 1

been a new General Election, probably a Tory Government, and probably a thousand excuses why the promised increases have to be postponed.

The offer is a major concession by the Government — no question about that. And where that concession

came from, more can be won! It only depends on the strike holding out through Christmas.

It looks as if it will hold out. The first returns from the regions on the offer show only a few regional committees favouring acceptance. Even 'country' areas like Warwickshire, Lincolnshire, and East

Anglia have been voting to reject.

The pressure on the government must be increasing, or they would not have moved as far as they have done. The latest news on fire damage is that figures are circulating for the first five days of the strike showing a loss equal to the total for the first six months of this year. The big insurance companies must be leaning more and more heavily on the Government, telling it to hurry up and settle.

And the army scabs are a source of worry for the Government. Firemen at Aldershot, who are well placed to know, reckon that many more soldiers have been killed in fire-fighting than the two reported in the press, and that at least one soldier is in military detention for refusing fire-fighting duties.

With solidarity from other workers, the firemen can win. And their victory can mean the end of two and a half years' enforced austerity for the working class.

STRIKE STILL SOLID, SUPPORT STILL GROWING



No holiday
break for
solidarity

POLITICAL and trade union life normally slows to a halt over Christmas and New Year. But that mustn't happen this time. Activity in support of the firemen must be kept going without a break if the strikers' morale is to be kept up.

Brighton Pavilion Constituency Labour Party, Islington and Southwark Trades Councils, and Basingstoke firemen's support committee are all organising Christmas entertainments for firemen's children. The Half Moon Theatre in East London is giving free admission to its Christmas pantomime for firemen's families.

Every Labour Club and Working Men's Club should follow these examples.

SUPPORT is still solid and growing. At Brierley Hill Fire Station, Birmingham, a Workers' Action reporter spoke to Tom Taylor (ISTC Level Street branch), who was there to hand over a collection from Round Oak steel works.

"On the mill section, we've talked about a one day protest strike. We wanted to see what the Government would offer, but I think it could come to a strike now. We want union officials to contact Morgans and Martin Baxters, the two largest companies in the Brierley Hill area, to see if they would support a one day strike to back the firemen. Some people are thinking that if a one day strike in several firms doesn't come off, we might work the day under protest, and give our wages to the strike fund".

Dublin firemen have sent a donation and a message of support to Belfast firemen. In their message they point out that they fought a similar battle nine years ago — and won. Firemen in the South of Ireland are now on £76 for a 40 hour week (though wages there are generally lower than in Britain).

They get an extra £20 a week allowance for overtime, and they get double time for Saturday and Sunday working.

Apart from hundreds of local collections in factories and offices, there has also been a general call from the Manchester district of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions for a 50p levy from every one of the 200,000 engineering workers in the district. Whether the Confed officers will organise this as well as just calling for it is another matter; but the call can be used as a starting point by militants in every Manchester factory.

On the other side of the picture: East Ham Trades Council has just got round to supporting the firemen. When they first got an appeal for help, they responded by asking the request be made again on official union headed paper!

Another proof of the need to clear out the dead wood of bureaucracy from the labour movement.

Days of action and demonstrations have been held in Strathclyde (4000 strong, on the 10th), Birmingham (150, in torrential rain, on the 6th), Newcastle-on-Tyne (2500, on the 10th), Liverpool (3000, on the 9th), and elsewhere.

In London, the area executive of the FBU has called for a mass lobby of the TUC General Council meeting on Wednesday 21st December. Be there from 9am, at Congress House, Great Russell St!

International solidarity... but it's on the other side. We have heard that the USA has agreed to contribute 5000 extra troops to NATO in order to relieve the problems which British military authorities face with their strike breaking.

The army has another scabbing job lined up for it. According to the Daily Mirror, 12th December, the Government has instructed army commanders to put all HGV-trained troops in readiness for action to break a possible strike of fuel tanker drivers.

That's another proof of the foolishness of the Rank and File Fireman Daily Strike

News policy in favour of "better pay and conditions" for troops (in their 5th December bulletin). Better pay and conditions for a job which is half professional scabbing, half hired killing in the bosses' interests? No. What we've got to say to the rank and file soldiers is that they should organise themselves to stand up to their officers, and, finally, to refuse to carry out their wretched job.

Spiting Callaghan
or organising
to fight him

AT STOURBRIDGE fire station they have the slogan, 'The Labour Party is trying to starve us back to work'. In a number of fire stations the question of withholding the 'political levy' (the part of union dues that goes to the Labour Party) has been raised.

At Brierley Hill station, Birmingham, pickets told a Workers' Action reporter that they favoured refusing to pay the political levy as long as Callaghan is leader of the Labour Party. But after discussion, a different suggestion, from our reporter, made more sense: to continue the political levy and to make sure the FBU mandated its full quota of delegates to the

local Labour Party general management committees to campaign against Callaghan and his policies!

Many firemen have found local Labour Parties giving them full support in their battle against the Government's pay curbs. The Labour Party rank and file, and the Labour Party leadership, are two very different things!

Stopping the political levy may express justified anger, but it leads nowhere. An influx of FBU delegates, strengthening the militant left wing in the Labour Party, could give a big boost to the fight against the capitalist policies of Callaghan and Rees.

THE SAVIOUR GEORGE WARD

SINCE the Congress in September, when the TUC was committed to the business of winning the Grunwick strike, many trade unionists have waited to see what action it would take. Then three weeks ago came the outcome of all those weeks of stalling: the TUC top brass let it be known that they would do nothing. They preferred defeat at the hands of George Ward to the spectre of more mass action that they couldn't control, and decided to stop pretending to be in the lead in order to better to enforce a retreat.

The months of waiting for the TUC had reduced the pulse of the dispute to a feeble rate, which allowed the TUC to take the plunge into open treachery without arousing much of an outcry outside the militant left.

In theory, their decision can be revised at the 21st December General Council meeting or after the House of Lords' verdict on the legal battle over ACAS's recognition ruling. But in practice there is no chance that the TUC will take up the dispute again unless it is forced to.

The Morning Star has almost stopped mentioning Grunwicks. The Socialist Workers' Party recently produced a pamphlet saying that the answer was to build a rank and file movement, and the "Rank & File" conference in Manchester on 26th November was crucial for that. At the conference strike committee chairman Kamlesh Gandhi spoke, asking for ideas on how to beat George Ward; and not one of the SWP speakers who came after him said a word on the issue.

The International Marxist Group (in Socialist Challenge, 8th December) says "One solution: Nationalisation". Certainly, nationalisation with no compensation will be the demand to raise if mass action forces Ward to the point of closing down the works rather than concede union rights; but to propose nationalisation as the "one solution" when mass action is at a low ebb is a bit like day-dreaming.

Illegal

The problem is that any new campaign of mass picketing and appeals for blacking (there is no magic other way to beat Ward) would have to be carried out against the determined opposition of the TUC and APEX leaderships.

That's a change from the previous TUC and APEX stand of half-support, half-sabotage: a change which makes it necessary to draw up a political balance sheet of the Grunwick battle so far.

The history of the dispute has a clear pattern. After about 150 workers walked out in August 1976, the official trade union movement gave them support. Surely this was a case where the unions could show the value of the "other side" of the Social Contract: the rights to union recognition and protection against unfair dismissal (the strikers had all been sacked on 2nd September) granted especially by the Employment Protection Act.

On 7th October Len Murray sent out a circular calling on all TUC-affiliated unions to give "all possible assistance" to the strikers.

This official support evoked rank and file mobilisation. On 1st November the Cricklewood postmen started blacking Grunwicks mail. Immediately Grunwicks responded by agreeing to take the dispute to ACAS — which they had adamantly refused before. That concession was used by the Union of Post Office Workers (UPW) to end the blacking, which had been official.

On 10th February 1977 ACAS made its preliminary report — in favour of the strikers. Ward said he would challenge the report in court. The official labour movement increased the pressure on Ward. On 13th June mass picketing began; the savage police attacks heightened workers' feelings about the dispute, which took off onto a new scale and a new momentum. Thus encouraged, the Cricklewood postmen re-imposed their blacking, this time unofficially, from 15th June. Other blacking actions followed fast.

This mass trade union action produced results. On 30th June, in a near-crisis atmosphere, the Government set up the Scarman

Inquiry to head off the mass picketing; on 12th July, after the biggest of the mass pickets, the High Court ruled in favour of ACAS.

For the trade union bureaucracy, the time had come to back-pedal. They wanted to beat Ward; but they wanted, much more, to stop the rank and file mobilisation against Ward from escalating out of their control. The postal blacking had been declared illegal by the courts; the mass picketing had been denounced by the yellow press as violent and thuggish.

On 13th July APEX and the strike committee announced that mass picketing would cease



niton. The state gave them no redress. Ward and his right wing allies complained of blacking and mass picketing. The law courts declared the former illegal and the police came in their thousands to ensure that the latter did not succeed. And the trade union bureaucrats acted effectively as extra "policemen" for the state in putting an end to the mass action.

Whatever the official theories of British democracy, the role of the state had little to do with the elected Parliament. The courts played their part, and the police theirs (Willesden police acting as a company force, with their Chief Inspector Johnson joining

focused on rank and file mobilisation to confront the bosses' state and be prepared to smash and replace it, are the only realistic politics for the working class.

How have the lessons of Grunwick been drawn from the bosses' point of view? The only

winning obstacle compared with the working class? If be, the in the



until the Scarman Inquiry reported. On 29th July the strike committee was pressurised by APEX into calling off a Day of Action scheduled for August 8th, and the Cricklewood postmen were forced back to normal working by the UPW executive.

On the same day the Appeal Court overturned the 12th July High Court decision in favour of ACAS.

Official trade union support had led to mass action, which had led to some concessions from the state; but then the official trade union leaderships, using those concessions, set about choking the mass action.

With the mass action stifled, the concessions proved empty.

The Scarman Inquiry reported (on 28th August) in favour of union recognition and reinstatement of the strikers "if at all practicable"; but Ward refused, and that was that.

Neither of the two mass pickets since then — 17th October and 7th November — have had official support. The state

stepped up its attack: on 7th November 113 pickets were arrested and 250 needed medical attention.

The phased demobilisation in the summer, the withdrawal of official support and the state's intimidation helped pave the way for the TUC's decision, on 23rd November, to drop the dispute.

Broken

In hindsight, perhaps the crucial date was 13th July, when the momentum built up over a month of mass picketing was broken with the excuse of waiting for Scarman.

The pattern of events shows very clearly how the bosses, even mavericks like George Ward, benefit from massive state backing in their conflicts with workers.

The workers complained that they'd been sacked for joining a union and fighting for its recog-

ognition as a manager after retiring; and Ward has a private "hot" telephone link with Scotland Yard. And what they did was decided not by Parliament, but by the interests, attitudes and connections of the bosses' servants who sit on Judges' Benches and command the police force.

The official trade union movement showed its tremendous mobilising power. It also showed that when it comes to a sharp conflict, the trade union bureaucrats opt for propping up the bosses' state — and are incapable of winning even the slightest real gains for the working class by their reformist methods.

The dispute has been an object lesson to prove that revolutionary socialist politics,

serious analysis so far has been that of Joe Rogaly's Penguin Special "Grunwick".

Rogaly's key answer is: trade union power must be curbed: "...When their (the unions') power is made manifest on the streets many are quick to announce that the whole of our democracy is threatened" he writes (p.128); and elsewhere he lines up with those "many". The trade union movement "was willing to use to excess the power at its disposal"; "It was at its most reprehensible when the unions took to the streets" (pp.114, 163).

Rogaly distances himself from the crude union-bashers and declares that APEX was morally right to take up the Grunwick dispute (though wrong to use tactics that might

capitalist... constitute... "bring... main... model... German... unions... ion... curb... The... in Rog... If... exam... of the... trade... the... union... Labour... George... and... approv... sober... after...

WORD

He deplores Ward's... "One can have the... and, after tax, the... but the power, the un... obedience of the... is no longer avail... people insist that it must... will be another weapon... hands of the anti-

GRUNWICK OFF NOW



THE Grunwicks emergency conference called for 14th December by the South East Region TUC and Region no. 1 of the TGWU was 'postponed until further notice'. The reason given was that APEX had refused to participate.

But as things are now APEX will oppose any initiative to back the Grunwick strikers. The conference organisers' decision therefore means giving up on Grunwicks and using APEX's betrayal as a cover. Yet the organising bodies [bodies where the dominant political line is that of the Communist Party] had the strength at least to begin a real campaign against the TUC-APEX betrayal.

Meanwhile the High Court ruling giving the final legal verdict on the validity of ACAS's recommendation for union recognition is expected within the next few days.

"excessively powerful" trade unions have not won one single thing?

The truth is that the official trade union movement is as weak as a kitten in a situation where it would have to go beyond the legal norms to win. Tory demagogues like to talk of the Unions as a great power in society; yet modest aims of the TUC like adequate old-age pensions have been outside its grasp.

Choked

The "trade union power" that frightened the ruling class at Grunwicks was in fact the power of rank-and-file mass action — unleashed by official backing, and then successfully choked off short of victory by the trade union bureaucrats themselves. Because of their subservience to the bourgeois state, the union leaders' potential power to win the strike turned into their actual power to demobilise the mass action.

Rogaly himself defines "trade union power" as lack of strict legal control over trade union actions — the fact that class conflict is regulated by informal compromise between the state, bosses and union officials, rather than by strictly-applied laws.

He complains, for example, that the Attorney General did not prosecute the Cricklewood postmen for blacking Grunwicks mail. That "High Noon" "we're the bosses, this is our law and we're in command" stance would, it seems, have been far more satisfying to him than the fact that the UPW bureaucracy could be solidly relied on to put a stop to the illegal blacking.

Rogaly gives some acknowledgement to the class issues in the Grunwick battle: "The gulf remained unbridgeable... why? ...The answer is that Britain is still two nations" (p.110-111); but he does not recognise that the street power which worries him so much was not a result of insufficient pages in the statute book, but of the inexorable class hostilities endemic to capitalism.

These class hostilities can be sidetracked with the help of treacherous workers' leaders, or suppressed by force for a while — but they can't be defined out of existence by laws. The USA, with lots of laws controlling trade unionism, has seen very violent tactics in industrial disputes. France has a strict labour law, but that didn't stop the 1968 general strike!

And in this country the Industrial Relations Act was not the answer to the mass action and "lawlessness" of 'Pentonville Week', but its cause.

Rogaly has things upside down.



Movietone's Dr. Goebbels: 'Statesman, sportsman, art collector'

PAUL ADAMS reviews the film 'Before Hindsight', currently showing at the Other Cinema in London.

CINEMA NEWS in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s had a multi-million audience. Private ownership of the means of production and distribution gave great power to the tiny handful of right-wingers who ran it. They used it to trivialise the news, to divert attention from issues of immense importance, to preach a policy which eventually even the right wing had to admit was imbecilic, and to sustain the traditional values of racism, chauvinism, sexism, snobbery, and philistinism.

Today the popular papers like the Sun and the Express continue this policy while television news has a more sophisticated front, appearing to many to be for the first time unbiased.

'BEFORE HINDSIGHT' assembles scores of excerpts from British Movietone News weekly newsreels, interspersing them with short interviews with some of those closely connected with the news-film industry in the '30s, 40s, and 50s.

British Movietone, jointly owned by the Daily Mail and Twentieth Century Fox, was the main moving picture news service.

The values which British Movietone propagated were clear from the first few seconds of the title shots that introduced its weekly bulletins. On the screen there appeared sportsmen, kangaroos, the Victoria Falls, herds of zebra and wildebeest, and troops on a royal march-past; finally, with martial music ringing out, there came the Union Jack. This 15-second symphony of imperial images set the tone for what was to follow.

Those brought up on television news will be surprised at the extreme triviality and flippancy of these newsreels. The selection methods of the gutter press dominated throughout... and were given a sharp right wing twist by the Daily Mail's pro-fascist views.

Thus we are shown Goebbels donating to a charity: he is described as "Dr Goebbels [his name is quaintly mis-pronounced], statesman, sportsman, art collector". Oswald Mosley is given a platform "not because we agree or disagree with what he has to say but because we are sure there will be widespread interest in the personality of one of the most fascinating of our younger statesmen".

British Movietone also introduced its audiences to "a very intelligent gentleman called Adolf Hitler" and to Signor Mussolini — "the only two men in Europe who can solve the problem of Austria, which is the great problem of the day".

Let the audience (always treated as imbeciles) should be alarmed, the ann-

ouncer's voice is there to sooth all worries: "There is no reason to think the great German action [of the invasion of Czechoslovakia] implies any German hostilities".

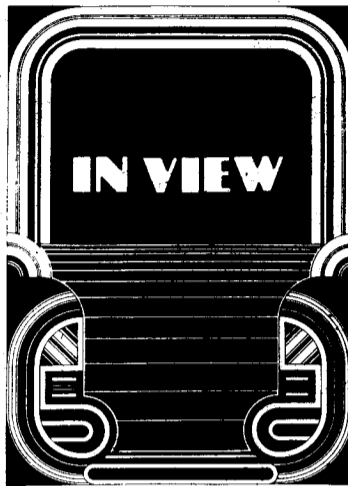
Of course not! And in case anyone doubted, the pro-fascist Movietone always had the thinking heads of prostituted Labourism to fall back on. "So take my word for it", instructs a crusty George Bernard Shaw, "don't be frightened any more about the Germans".

Further to allay worry, Mosley's steely squint is followed by the heading flashed on the screen: "Fashion Show — a symphony in black and white"; Il Duce's ravings are followed by "Balmy weather as Paris greets the spring".

Chirpy or martial music, rapid cross-cutting, jovial commentaries and ludicrous juxtapositions all helped create an atmosphere which said "all right-thinking Britons know how to enjoy themselves and not take these foreign capers seriously". An outstanding example of this technique is a newsreel dealing with Chamberlain's visit to Mussolini. We know — despite Movietone — that Chamberlain was trying to convince Mussolini that it would be suicidal for Italy to ally with Germany, and that it should support Britain in exchange for economic and military aid.

The newsreel shows Chamberlain and Mussolini in an opera box at La Scala. This two-second shot is followed by about half a minute of the opera, a clown scene from Falstaff. As this piece of visual knock-about ends we hear the 'sensible' tones of the commentator: "This happy note is characteristic of the premier's visit to Signor Mussolini".

The invasion of Czechoslovakia is treated similarly, with sexism added. "Quite apart from the political



aspect, the return of the troops means more business for the shopkeepers" — the camera flashes to the face of a woman watching the marching column — "... and the girls aren't sorry either!"

British Movietone did not report on the crimes committed by the Nazis against trade unionists, against Jews and against socialists. That was not 'news'. As the boss of Movietone quaintly puts it "We asked ourselves: did the people ought to know?" His answer was a clear no — at least until Hitler actually attacked the British Empire.

The moment that happened the 'sea girl land' stuff came pouring out along with the foulest chauvinist ravings which portrayed the Germans as a pack of crazed animals.

Documentary production was made difficult by the censors if it was at all left wing. Ivor Montagu, the CP film-maker and cinema historian, relates how his short film, 'Free Thaelmann', on the imprisonment without trial of the then leader of the German CP (which is also showing at the Other Cinema) was held up. The censor insisted that the film could not be shown as it was contrary to law to "exploit the lives of notorious criminals" in the cinema. Montagu explained to the censor that Thaelmann was not a "notorious criminal", indeed he had never been tried and could not be considered a criminal at all. "But he's in jail, isn't he?", retorted the censor, and that was that.

Few people will fail to be outraged at the mixture of myopia and mendacity that was fed to the public every week.

But what about today's 'news' productions? Not so crude — but isn't their pretence of 'balance' also a deceptive bromide? Jonathan Dimbleby raises the question at the end of the film: how will today's reporting of Northern Ireland [or, we could add, the Zimbabwe war, the National Front, Israeli aggression, the Grunwick dispute] look, with hindsight, in ten or twenty years' time?

OVER the past five years increasing pressure has been brought to bear on major British companies to terminate their operations in South Africa's apartheid system. But British companies and institutions still have a £4,000 million stake in apartheid: half of all foreign investment in South Africa.

A significant proportion is invested by Britain's universities. Manchester University alone has £25 million invested, and the Cambridge colleges anything up to £200 million.

At the University of Warwick eighteen months ago, a campaign was begun to sever the University's links with companies heavily involved in South Africa. The first major success of this campaign last month is an important stage in the fight in this country against Apartheid.

Although investing in Apartheid is as attractive to both the giants and the minnows of British industry and commerce, some are of greater importance to South Africa's industrial and economic base than others. At the forefront of the giants come British banks, providing South Africa's lifeline to international finance, loan capital and essential business contacts worldwide. And of these giants, one stands alone above the others.

After fifty years of involvement, with over 980



Demonstrators after Steve Biko's death

How the £12 million apartheid link was broken

offices controlling over £2,500m (which represents about 20% of South Africa's national income) Barclays Bank are not only the largest bank operating in South Africa but in terms of assets are now also the largest

single company there.

Barclays National of South Africa is directly owned, through a 64% shareholding, by the parent company Barclays International of London. This link has been of vital importance to the South

African government and corporations. For instance, in January 1976 Barclays lent the Electrical Supply Commission £113m.

Recent years have seen an onslaught of searching questions from shareholder campaigners during Barclays International's AGMs. The resulting adverse publicity has mounted each year, and with it the Bank's sensitivity over its SA involvement. But giants are not brought to their knees easily.

The students at the University of Warwick recognised that more pressure was necessary: pressure aimed at terminating the University's account with Barclays, worth £12 million.

Students also looked into the University's investment portfolio, among which were RTZ, GEC and Shell — all with vast S.African operations.

A full scale disinvestment campaign began in October 1976, when a student motion called on the University to move its money from Barclays and sell its shares in Shell, GEC and RTZ.

In January 1977 the motion went to the University's Finance and General Purposes Committee; when it scraped through by 5 votes to 4, expectations of success began to rise. Could it really be done so easily?

Two months later the same motion reached the University Council, Warwick's supreme decision making body. With Barclays Midland area director and four other Coventry businessmen present, Council ruled 11-4 against the motion. Clearly, there was more work to do.

In October 1977 a staff-student disinvestment campaign group was formed. A new motion was now put to the Staff Assembly, representing the Academic staff at Warwick.

While the motion was still being debated, it was learned that the University's shares in RTZ, Shell and GEC had all been sold ... for "financial reasons". The motion was amended, calling on the University to make a clear public statement "to

ALUN ROBERTS, a freelance researcher on issues concerning Southern Africa and a member of the Haslemere Group [a Third World research and action group], describes why Warwick University withdrew its £12 million account from Barclays Bank

register in a practical way its condemnation of the support provided for South Africa's apartheid regime" by these companies.

The Staff Assembly agreed the amended motion by 57-17. The campaign now focused on ending the Barclays account.

From here, back to the students, where the motion was endorsed at a meeting of the union. At the same time the AUT (Association of University Teachers) branch added their support.



The next stage in the motion's new route to the University Council had to be the Senate, a body of senior lecturers and professors. With its backing, there was more chance of success at the Council.

To back up the motion, a 13-page detailed submission was prepared, which set out the level and nature of Barclays' involvement in South Africa. A staff-student briefing team was sent out to discuss the issue with members of Senate.

On November 2nd, by a narrow 14-12 majority, Senate approved the motion.

The Staff Assembly, the AUT, the Students' Union and the Senate — all sections of the University — now stood behind the motion. In the three weeks before the Council meeting, the campaign was stepped up with a barrage of meetings, briefings and articles in the University paper.

On November 15th, after two hours of debate, the Council voted by 10-8 for "Steps to withdraw its account from Barclays Bank".



They hoped to keep the matter quiet, in the same way the sale of the shares had been camouflaged. They resolved to postpone any public statement to indicate why the decision had been taken.

But the press was left in no doubt: the Staff-Student Disinvestment Campaign put out an immediate statement, stressing that "the decision was taken in recognition of Barclays extensive financial involvement in the apartheid system of South Africa". It pointed out that "the account of £12m annually represents the largest University account with Barclays in Britain" and asserted — "This decision represents a major victory in the continuing pressure upon Barclays International to end its operations in South Africa's apartheid system".

If Warwick University, a stronghold of big Midlands industrialists, can be conquered, it is only a matter of time, hard work and resolute struggle before other major chunks of investment are removed from South Africa.

Union move to boycott S.Africa

AT ITS 12th Biennial conference the American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organisations is expected to endorse a recommendation from its executive council urging the US government "to demand that US corporation with investments in South Africa immediately recognise bona fide trade union organisation regardless of their racial composition, and begin treating their employees on an equal basis commencing with such fundamental issues as wages and working conditions". The executive council would also be given power to initiate action to back this up, most likely a selective boycott on South African goods.

This move comes as opinion

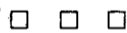
hostile to the apartheid regime is strengthened by the publicity on the inquest on Steve Biko, leader of the 'black consciousness' movement.

It is probable that any action will be tied in with the week of action in March 1978 called by the international trade union body ICFTU. As yet, however, the British TUC has not discussed plans for action in March at all!

It seems likely that the General Council will recommend a passive week of token gestures, almost certainly not including blacking of goods and services or one-day solidarity strikers.

The initiation of this kind of effective solidarity action lies in the hands of rank and file militants. We must begin to plan

now for boycotts, blacking and demonstrations.



The Anti-Apartheid Movement has called an Emergency Action Conference for 11th February 1978: 10am to 4pm at Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd, London NW1. It will be open to delegates from all organisations supporting the aims of the AAM. Workers' Action urges all our readers to take up the question of solidarity action in the unions now and to get delegates appointed from your union branches, Trades Councils, and Labour Parties to this conference. Credentials available from AAM, 89 Charlotte St, London SIP 2DQ.

Labour brands the fascists

THOSE IN the labour movement who said "ignore the fascists and they'll go away" are rapidly realising that approach doesn't work. Last week's Labour Party Political Broadcast openly branded the National Front as FASCISTS, out to crush the working class movement and all democratic rights, and condemned the NF's scapegoating of black people.

The Broadcast concluded by calling on those who agree to join the Labour Party. Together with the previous Labour Party broadcast, even more controversial, which focused on the continuing class divisions in British society, it shows that the fact is sinking in that progress for the Labour Party is possible not through halting the miserable record of the Wilson-Callaghan government, but only through recapturing some

campaigning militancy.

Denouncing the NF is a start. But the ugly truth is that plenty of NF supporters will not be put off by being told that the Front is fascist, anti-democratic, and viciously racist. They support the NF precisely because it is 'extremist' and seems to propose action to deal with pressing problems about which all Parliamentary politicians only talk.

The Broadcast said that the examples of Newcastle, Liverpool, and Glasgow showed that inner city decay isn't caused by blacks. True. But people will still believe the irrational racist answer, unless we give a different, socialist, answer, in militant campaigning against the cuts, for expropriating the slum landlords and the building industry bosses, and for a crash house-building programme.

And our anti-racism should not come in half-measures. We will convince no-one in condemning the NF's racism unless we also campaign against the racism of the Immigration controls operated by the Government. Denouncing the NF's violence against its opponents will be weak and empty unless we are prepared to go into action to counter that violence — to stop the NF attacking people and attacking meetings, to stop them parading, to stop them organising.

The NEC has announced nothing more than a new pamphlet to follow up the broadcast. But local Labour Parties can plan their own follow-up, using the broadcast as a starting point for active anti-fascist campaigns in each constituency.



'Joy in your work' isn't the answer

Comrades, Neal Statham's review of 'A Worker in a Workers' State', by Miklos Harazti [WA 83] paints a grim picture of life on the production line in Stalinist Hungary, a picture the accuracy of which I have no wish to dispute.

The politics of the review do, however, raise questions. It isn't good enough to sink and dissolve a whole range of serious political questions down into the syndicalist lowest common denominator of strong words against 'the boss'.

On this level any distinction between capitalism and the degenerated and deformed workers' states is simply not visible. It is especially in face of experiences such as those Harazti reports that these distinctions need to be asserted (or reassessed).

By comparing the subjective experiences of the working class in the factories of Hungary with those of Britain you do not get (in the existing conditions of all the degenerated and deformed workers' states you cannot get) an overview of the differences between capitalism and those societies where capitalism has been overthrown. I suggest that those differences are that the economy in Hungary is not capitalist; neither the market nor the capitalist drive for profit governs the economy, which is centrally planned.

D

The bureaucrats are not a ruling class which owns the means of production as the capitalist class does, but a privileged social layer which, in Hungary, was installed in control by the Russian Army. In Russia itself a bureaucracy arose in the conditions of material backwardness and isolation, and usurped from the Russian working class direct control of the post-capitalist economic system established as a result of the October Revolution — without overturning that system, which remains progressive compared to capitalism.

Of course the fact that the situation of factory workers in Hungary is often worse than in Britain (because in Hungary there are no real trade unions to defend workers' interests) is of great importance. It is part of the situation which has led the Trotskyist movement to work out a programme for a political revolution against the bureaucracy in Russia and in Hungary — that is, a revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy and to put the working class in direct power.

Neal Statham informs us that the book isn't "a dreary sociological tract", that it captures "the sardonic humour in response to the grinding labour", and so on. It would be better to have had from him a balanced — and politically responsible — assessment

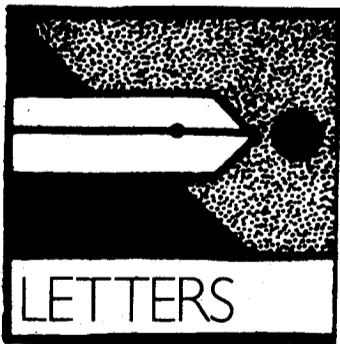
of the conclusions and implications of the book, from the viewpoint of Trotskyism. Instead, in reply to his own question, "Can this be socialism?" Statham quotes a lyrical passage from Harazti on the joys of using factory machinery to make 'homers' (items that workers make in their spare time for their own use) — as if this showed the answer or the alternative to the situation of the workers in the bureaucratised workers' state.

Even from the most general Marxist point of view, this section of the article is sheer nonsense.

Under socialism, 'work' will differ from 'work' under capitalism or in the degenerated and deformed workers' states now in that there will be overall democratic control of society and a high degree of direct local self-control in relation to work pace and so on, in the workplaces. People will be educated to do more than one job in a lifetime. With large-scale automation the work-week can probably be cut drastically.

But work will remain work — that is, something serving material needs, which is governed by necessity grounded in the relationship between man and nature. Work will lose what today is added to it by the social relations between capitalists and workers, or between the bureaucratised state and the workers in Hungary.

By radically reducing labour time, socialism will give time for free creative activity — but it will not and cannot transform labour like that of making tractors into free creative activity. To think



it can only leads to romanticising labour, passing off petty bourgeois artisan labour for free creative activity.

The solution to the situation the Hungarian workers find themselves in is for the working class to win overall social control by overthrowing the political power of the bureaucracy. The business of making 'homers' is at best harmless here. It certainly does not point towards socialism. Socialism lies through the road of the conquest of political power by the working class in society as a whole.

BERNARD JAY

LEFT PRESS

About six weeks ago *Socialist Challenge* gave its assessment of its first eighteen issues. The main thing they were pleased with was "the wide-ranging debates the paper had initiated and conducted with virtually all currents in the workers' movement... we have rejected — in an extremely determined fashion — the sectarian notions within the far left about what a Leninist paper should be like".

It's the same thought as appeared in their earlier self-assessment, on 11th August: "the only far-left paper where real debates and discussion on a wide range of issues are possible".

Being open to debate is not, of course, the only virtue of a revolutionary paper needs. *Tribune's* claim to have the liveliest letters page on the left is true, and *Tribune* is still miserably reformist. Nevertheless, lively letters pages and open debates are to be welcomed.

Three

But where are these "wide-ranging debates"? Looking through the file of *Socialist Challenge*, only three actual debates are to be found. On 30 June the IMG and Big Flame express their views on UTOM (in fact it's just two statements of position rather than a debate); on 14th July extracts are reprinted from a meeting where Robin Blackburn of the IMG debated with Monty Johnson of the CP; and in the issues of 22 June and 30 June, there is a sort of de-

Everyman's paper?

bate between the SWP and the IMG on left unity ("sort of debate", because the SWP 'contribution' is in fact only an extract from the SWP internal bulletin, which the IMG then argue against).

On top of that there have been a few arguments in the letters column, and a few critical letters printed within reply on issues such as state bans on fascists; but nothing else you could really call a debate. When the 'Socialist Unity' conference was reported (SC 24 November) mention of the debate that took place there was reduced to unintelligible allusions.

Workers Action doesn't claim to be the journal of revolutionary unity, as SC does. But in the last few months, we have carried debates on terrorism and the workers' movement, on nuclear power, on the 'West Bank State', and on revolutionary unity.

Where *Socialist Challenge* does outdo us is in its outside contributors. All to their credit: except that their practice seems to be simply to hand over their pages to other political views, without debate and without counterposing the IMG's views. Arthur Scargill has had two speeches reprinted without comment, and a long uncritical interview (27th October). Ernie Roberts received another uncritical — indeed, almost grovelling — interview. Geoff Hodgson (described quite generously in a subsequent *Socialist Challenge* as a "left social democrat") was given the job of writing SC's analysis of the Labour Party Conference. Big Flame was given a page for their criticisms of Trotskyism, and a group of Ford workers around Big Flame were given a four-page supplement on Ford

(no comment printed from the IMG's own comrades in Fords). Neil Duffield, from a tiny Bolton grouping called 'Marxist Worker', was given a page for his views on the Labour Party.

None of this is debate; but doesn't it show how open SC is? It shows that SC is "open" to left reformists from whom it hopes to catch some reflected glory, and to grouplets which it hopes to have play the supporting roles in its 'left unity' scenario. Apart from that it is not particularly open.

Humbug

A month ago the International Communist League sent SC a contribution to an open discussion SC had announced on revolutionary unity. The I-CL comrades got no reply, and on 'phoning SC recently were just told that "no decision had been taken" yet. The *Workers' Power* grouping have also sent letters which SC hasn't published (without even a note to say they were not printing the letters for such-and-such reason). There was one letter stating WP's general attitude to SC, and two letters on the Working Womens Charter.

It's SC's own paper, and they have the right to choose what they print: that's incontestable (though minimum democracy would require that they at least acknowledge receipt of the letters). But let's have an end to this humbug about *Socialist Challenge* being the paper for the revolutionary Everyman.

WHICH WAY FOR CPSA MILITANTS

Dear comrades,

In his letter last week (WA 83) Chris Whythead is right to say that CPSA militants must start working out their proposals for the debate on the rulebook at the 1978 Annual Conference. When he talks about "the left... putting forward its own draft rules", however, there is a false assumption that all the forces which united to defeat the right wing's proposals will or can agree on positive policies.

In reality there is far from universal agreement in the "left" on recallability of officials. There are also, for example, those in the left who support election of officials only for senior positions.

D

I agree with Chris that we should work in the CPSA Broad Left. Contrary to the situation in most unions, it is possible for revolutionaries to do so while retaining the freedom to dissociate from the Broad Left when necessary.

But we can't agree with those comrades, like the IMG,

who have totally immersed themselves in the Broad Left. At NEC level the Broad Left is riddled with rightward-leaning careerists and with electoralism. For that reason, the most militant and revolutionary-minded CPSA members still look to Redder Tape; and we must work in Redder Tape as well as the Broad Left.

D

It's true that Redder Tape made a poor showing at the Rules Revision Conference. Generally Redder Tape suffers from the SWP disease of only wanting to emphasise economic struggle, and underplaying everything else. Many extreme "rank-and-file"-ists in the SWP took the ultra-left attitude that the conference was basically irrelevant.

But Hedder Tape has a history of six years' militant struggle against the bureaucracy, whereas the Broad Left, despite becoming more open in the last year, has a not-yet-ended history of manoeuvring in the bureaucracy.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

And still the cuts go on

ACCORDING to a recent official report, one half of all secondary schools are overcrowded. Over 25% are more than 10% above capacity. And the secondary school population is still rising.

The report ('A study of school building', published last month) also shows that 37% of primary schools are overcrowded. 20% of primary schools was built before 1903 and has not been brought up to modern standards.

90% of secondary schools lack adequate practical accommodation like libraries. One in five are on two or more sites.

A quarter of primary schools have grossly inadequate sites. about a quarter of schools still have outdoor toilets. There is insufficient staff space in 75% of schools.

Over 900,000 prefabs and other temporary premises are in use, dating back to world war 2.

According to the report, it would cost £1,500 million to put things right properly. But this, it says, "is far more than the country can afford". Present government policy is for 40% cuts in school building budgets up to 1981.

But apparently 'the country' can still afford the profiteers, the speculators, the moneylenders, and the bankers....

WORKERS IN ACTION

from page 1

just the kind of deal the NUM members had rejected.

After the ballot the two-faced Gormley announced, "We shall not be pushing for productivity bonuses — the members have rejected them on two occasions". Instead he saw to it that local leaders did the pushing, letting the right wing of the Executive "innocently" rubber-stamp their requests.

It would be foolish to think that the requests made by different area leaders necessarily represent the rank and file feeling. As **Workers Action** reported recently, for instance, Midlands area leader Jack Lally was one of those seeking permission to negotiate a local product-

NUM right wing tramples on democracy

ivity bonus with the NCB — although the area council had voted against it, last August!

The response of the Yorkshire and Kent miners' leaders has been to try to

take the union to court. This is what the Kent leaders did when the Executive decided on the last ballot — they lost the court action (predictably) and won the ballot!

Every class-conscious worker will sympathise with those who feel betrayed and cheated by the abuse of NUM democracy. Whatever pettyfogging lawyers may say, it is clear that the Executive is acting against Rule 8 of the Union, which gives Conference supreme authority.

Nevertheless, what the Yorkshire and Kent leaders propose is wrong. Trade unionists have fought many battles against state interference in unions. Usually this means court interference. If indeed the union members at Conference or through the ballot are the supreme authority then it is wrong to appeal to the courts as the supreme authority.

The only authority the courts represent is the authority of the capitalist state. Against that we must assert the authority of the rank and file membership, expressed through the most democratic means.

PAUL ADAMS

**Leyland:
starting
the
fight
back**

LAST SATURDAY, 10th, militants in the car industry in Birmingham met to discuss the way forward for Leyland workers after the latest ballot results.

Present were IMG members from Rover Solihull and Longbridge, **WORKERS' ACTION** supporters together with a number of militants not affiliated to any political tendency. Alan Thornett (shop steward at Cowley, and a leading member of the Workers' Socialist League) was unable to attend, although invited.

Despite different nuances of emphasis, all present agreed on one cardinal fact: a strategy going beyond traditional plant-by-plant struggle is now needed if management's attacks on manning levels, shop floor rights, and wages are to be resisted.

At present elections are taking place to the trade union side of the 'Joint Negotiating Committee' which is discussing the concrete details of the 'corporate bargaining' scheme voted on 'in principle' in October. The elections, however, do not involve the least direct accountability to, consultation of, or even information for, the shop floor: the TGWU representatives are chosen by an 'electoral college' which is in turn elected by stewards' committees. In face of this, all those at the meeting agreed that the fight for democratic shop-floor control of negotiations was central. The policy outlined in WA 83 for such rank-and-file control met with general agreement.

The Rover comrades explained the call they had put through the 'Rover Confed' (shop stewards' committee) for a delegate conference of Leyland shop stewards in the New Year. They said that they had no confidence in the Communist Party/'Militant' leadership of the Rover Confed to campaign for this conference, and that independent unofficial campaigning would be necessary. It was agreed to try to get the 'Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement' cars committee to take up the call.

All those present, especially the non-affiliated militants, found the afternoon's discussion useful. If the comrades of the Socialist Workers' Party and the WSL can be drawn into further discussions of this sort, the basis can be laid for far more concerted action by revolutionaries in the car industry.

JIM DENHAM

BACK TO WORK, BUT NOT CRUSHED

THE TREACHERY of the top leaders of the GMWU and the NUM: that is what has sabotaged our strike for higher wages at BSC Stanton Ironworks.

On 9th December, after five weeks, we decided by the narrow majority of 316 to 284 to return to work. The GMWU regional official, Geoff Soames, had reported that the EC refused to make the dispute official, in spite of Soames' recommendation. The EC's excuse was that we had not fully exhausted procedure, though, as strike committee chairman Geordie Barclay

said: "The real reason for our dispute not being made official is that they agree with management's policy on the 7% limit".

BSC interprets the Government's 10% norm as a 7% limit on pay rises.

The EC's refusal to make the dispute official made workers doubt the possibility of ever surmounting the problems of our strike: the failure to bring out the Central Melting Plant at Stanton, and slow progress in getting support from other steelworks. Another factor which sapped the morale of the

militants was the miners' Executive decision the day before to approve area productivity dealing and postpone the £135 claim.

On return to work there is a danger that management will force a job-cutting productivity deal on us. But we are not going back crushed. Management's 5% offer has not been accepted, we are just re-entering official procedure. And we are setting about organising a branch disputes fund and a branch bulletin.

PETE RADCLIFF (GMWU)



Swan Hunter men leaving work

Swan Hunter's dishonesty

TYNESIDE Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering since chairman George Arnold last Monday (12th) underlined the dishonesty of the British Shipbuilders' blackmail against the outfitters at Swan Hunter. British Shipbuilders have said that seven ships from a Polish order, originally allocated to Swan Hunter, will be built elsewhere, because the outfitters refuse to end an overtime ban. But, said Arnold, the out-

fitters would not be involved in production work on the seven ships for at least five months! It's unlikely that the present overtime ban will continue for five months; and very likely that other industrial disputes will emerge in those five months. Does Swan Hunter want a guarantee of no industrial action, ever, from its workers? Or is it just indulging in dishonest browbeating? Shipyard workers' stand against the blackmail, sabotaged

by Govan convenor Jimmy Airlie's refusal to black a ship to be transferred from Swan Hunter to Govan, has been further weakened by a statement from TASS draughtsmen that they will agree to work on the two ships due to be transferred from Swan Hunter to Smiths Dock, Teesside. The TASS workers made it a condition that four of the seven ships stay at Swan Hunter; but those four have not been reallocated yet,

and it may well be that British Shipbuilders have no real intention of reallocating them.

Meanwhile the outfitters are standing firm. On Friday 16th the Central Arbitration Committee will begin hearing their claim for an increase; but they would be ill-advised to rely on the CAC. On Monday 12th the CAC reported that it did not find Grunwicks wages specially low.

Workers' Action is taking a two-week break over Christmas and New Year. WA85 will be dated January 7th, 1978.

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