

Workers' fight

5p

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3,000 faced with the sack at Imperial Typewriters

NEARLY 3,000 redundancies have been announced by the Imperial Typewriter Company, a subsidiary of the multi-national Litton Industries.

This will mean the complete closure of the Leicester and Hull plants where 1800 and 100 workers respectively are employed.

For the left, this announcement has a special

significance: the Leicester factory was the scene last July of a thirteen week long strike of Asian workers.

The strike could not have been defeated without the opposition to it of the white workers, dominated by racism and national chauvinism. Neither could it have been won without the union involved, the Transport and General Workers, being locally a hotbed of racism and reaction, and nationally indifferent and sluggish in its dealings with the strike. The Union's accommodation to the racism of the local officials and the white workers — some of them National Front members — only served to reinforce their backwardness.

That strike didn't spread to Hull. But there the union's record of fighting redundancies is hardly impressive. Only last year they allowed 400 redundancies at Imperial without a fight.

ILLUSIONS

In both cases the Union no doubt thought that being accommodating was the best policy, and the workers thought it might protect what they had. Now those illusions have been blown sky high. The small privileges the whites wanted to protect will vanish with the jobs at Leicester, and at Hull the "sacrifice" has failed to save jobs — it has only made the workforce more discouraged about fighting redundancies.

There are reports of plans to turn the firm into a co-operative and approach Wedgwood Benn for Money. A plan for 'workers control' has been put forward by a working party. These moves suggest the beginning of a struggle against the sackings — not a very clear one, but a struggle nevertheless. But all such approaches are going to be a dead letter if there is no unity of the work force. It may be that unity CAN be forged in a common struggle against a common threat.

The trouble is that the threat of redundancy is MORE not less likely to sow divisions amongst workers — and of course, management have understood this and blamed the strike of the Asian workers at least in part for the claimed £9.5 million loss Litton has made on Imperial.

BLIND

Blind to this, the Communist Party, and quite likely other 'Lefts', have constantly harped on the fact that the parent company is not British (as part of their anti-multinational and anti-Common Market campaign) thus further reinforcing nationalist prejudices. As if a real British capitalist would never think of creating redundancies!

If Imperial gets away with these redundancies — and we must see to it that they don't — the blame must be laid at the door of the T&GWU, whose complacency has strengthened those in the factory least able to wage the necessary struggle. Instead of seizing the chance last July to fight to forge unity in the workforce, they helped those who were doing their level best to create and widen the divisions.

Murray mints a new lie

by JOHN O'MAHONY

LAST TUESDAY the TUC General Secretary spoke at a conference in London organised by the Financial Times. He pledged, this well paid leader of underpaid workers, that the trade unions would not base wage claims on the anticipated rise in the cost of living.

In other words, with prices rising weekly, the unions' approach would be a go-slow approach, allowing prices to outstrip wages.

Murray also pledged that the TUC did not intend to press for higher pay to compensate for the bigger tax bite taken out of increased money wages.

He believed that such a restrained approach was necessary to avoid massive unemployment and was adequate to maintain working class living standards.

That Murray is either a fool or a liar is proven by the following facts:

The previous day, Monday, the Guardian had carried an article by Chris Pond in which he summarised a report produced by the 'Low Pay Unit'.

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Prices, this report showed, have risen fast for all workers, but especially fast for the lower paid. The Retail Price Index produced by the government is a fraud because it is based on averages. An "average" family spends just over 25% of its income on food, and 12% on housing. But lower paid workers spend nearly one third of their budget on food. Non-official figures put the percentage spent by the lower paid on food as 44%, and on housing, 25%.

Between January 1970 and January 1974, all prices rose by 40%. Food prices rose by 60%, housing costs by 50%. That means that whole sections of the working class have been hit especially hard — and official figures hide the fact. So when the Sun commented in a headline last week, "We've never had it so good", many of its readers must have wondered just who "we" were.

Not only that. Taxes now bite harder into the wages of the lower paid than at any time since world war 2. This is because inflation has raised the nominal money wage of many of the lowest paid into the range of taxable income —



even though the real value of their wages hasn't risen. Taxes therefore further gouge at the wages of the lower paid, as of course they do at the wages of the whole working class.

Chris Pond writes: "Just after the war a married man with two children could enjoy tax free income until his earnings were above the national average. Today such families pay tax on earnings which barely reach half the average wage." (Guardian, 20.1.75)

Not only the lower paid are suffering. The ballyhoo about wages rising faster than prices probably means that in real terms wages may just be keeping pace with prices.

But that doesn't satisfy the Tories or the employers. They want drastic cuts in living standards. Dennis Healey agrees, and he has made speeches bluntly putting the blackmailers' options before the working class — let wages and living standards fall, or face massive unemployment.

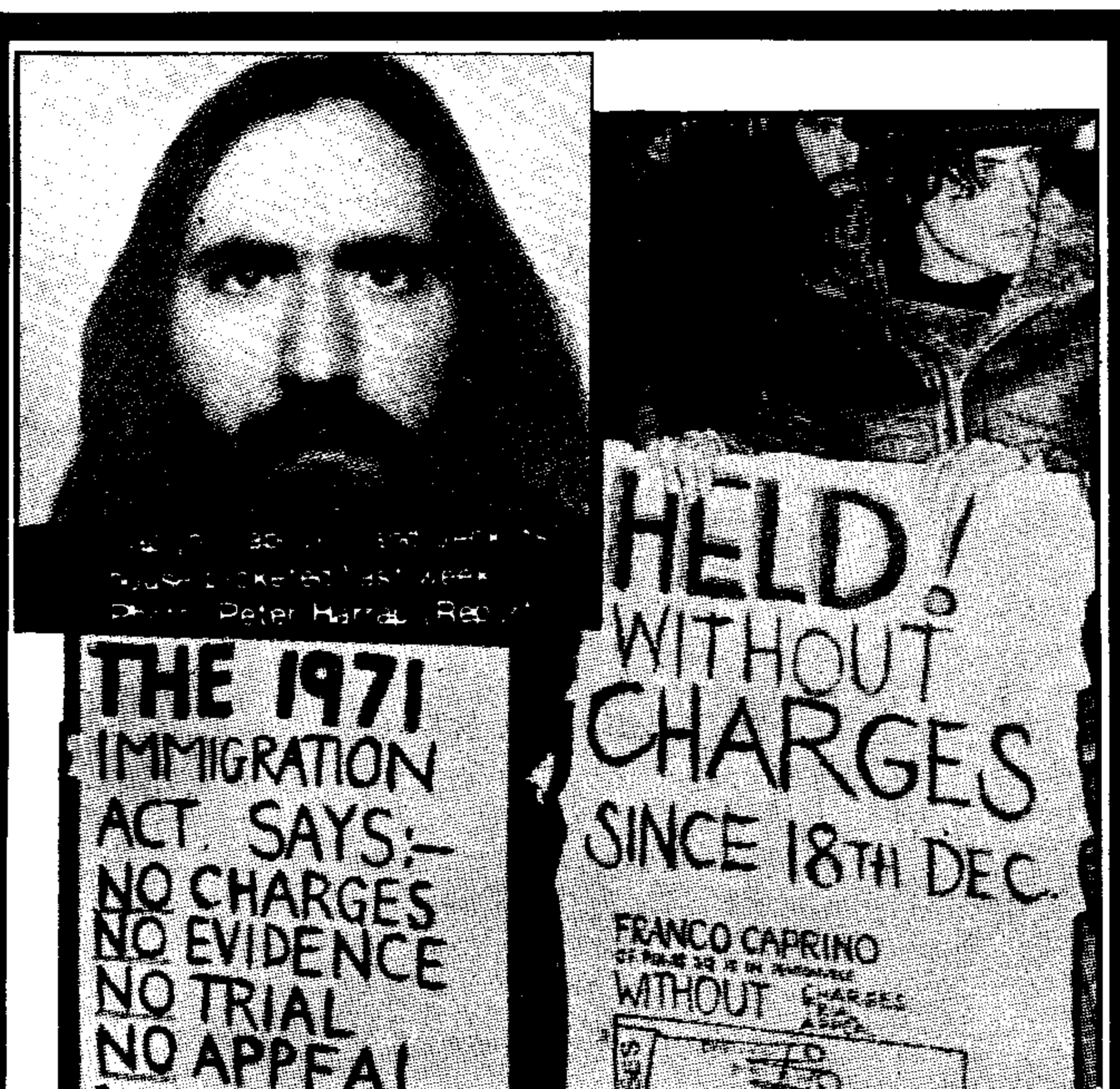
In reality, of course, unemployment is already rising. We face not only cuts in living standards, but also unemployment as well.

RECIPE

Building workers have just accepted a pay offer amounting to about 17 or 18% yearly rate of increase. Will that prevent unemployment in the building industry? No! A forecast published recently says unemployment in that industry will get worse.

Against these facts, Murray's approach is a recipe for disaster for the working class. Without a fight to keep wages ahead of price increases, to make up for the bite of taxes, to have zero thresholds coupled to the cost of living — without that fight, wages won't even stand still.

Murray's open acceptance of the drift towards tax privileges for the rich and penalisation of the working class is a



Monday 27th Join the vigil for Franco Caprino

THE HEARING of the 'case' for the deportation of Italian militant Franco Caprino under the 1971 Immigration Act is to begin on Monday 27th January. It will take place before a panel of 3 'advisers' who will give their opinion on whether the order should be implemented.

The section of the Immigration Act under which Franco Caprino has been held since before Christmas in Pentonville prison is very similar to Labour's Prevention of Terrorism Act. Both allow detention without charge, deportation without a trial, and in-camera hearings in which the accused has no right to know the evidence against him. The Immigration Act can be used to prevent immigrant workers organising themselves, by deporting anybody who gets too far out of line. It hasn't been used that way so far: which is why the Caprino case, the first time they've tried it, is so important.

That Caprino can be deported without trial also shows the hollowness of the EEC regulations, which in fact mean freedom to import cheap labour when needed, and to expel militants and 'surplus' workers.

Despite dark hints from the Home Office that Caprino is a dangerous terrorist (he has been advised to take legal action against the Guardian for printing these false stories) the campaign for his right to stay has already gained very wide support. About 15 MPs are to write to Jenkins, and a House of Commons motion

expresses "concern ... that in quasi judicial proceedings individuals should know previously what charges are being made against them; should have access to all the evidence concerning these charges; that any hearing relating to these charges should be made in public and that adequate rights of representation should be afforded them" and "rejects the procedures" (of the 1971 Act) "as failing to meet any of these criteria".

From Pentonville prison, Caprino has said that "I am appealing because I see my struggle as part of a general working class struggle and of a particular struggle by immigrant workers." This has been realised by many trade unionists: Westminster, Hounslow and Hammer-smith have so far sent messages to Jenkins, and several branches of the T&GWU (including of course the International Workers branch that Franco helped organise) have taken up the campaign on his behalf. Some local Labour Party organisations and LPYS branches have given their support as well.

One black spot among this is that the TUC have used the same excuse as in the Shrewsbury case for doing nothing: that they cannot do anything unless the constituent union concerned has taken up the matter with them. Members of the T&GWU therefore need to

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Education - hung, drawn & quartered

Jan Wilde reports

35 fifth year kids amble into a classroom. The teacher struggles to prepare the damaged and inadequate science equipment while trying to create some semblance of order in the room. There is no science technician to help. Chaos spreads, the students react aggressively, and the teacher becomes emotional and eventually despondent.

Teachers throughout Britain could describe, graphically, similar situations. The typical scene is of course varied with the subject and the age: an art lesson with 12-year olds quickly degenerates into a paint throwing session if every single piece of equipment has to be shared or searched for.

Twisted

There are problems enough already in teaching: the resistance of kids to learning in an authoritarian situation, and the wide class gap between most kids and their teachers; the strains and boredom imposed by a narrow and largely fossilised curriculum; the workload imposed on teachers and the emotional problems of children growing up in a warped and twisted society.

Every shortage, every bit of petty governmental meanness that's added to this situation serves to rub acid in the wounds and push education into a constantly worsening vicious circle of crisis.

Education cuts of £184 million first introduced by the Tory government last January are already having a catastrophic effect in the schools. It is abundantly clear that they have only been achieved at the expense of staff, buildings and the children.

Then last April, when Labour got in, they announced that they were leaving the Tory cuts as they were, and that for the following year ('74/'75) the education budget would go up by no more than 2%: counting inflation, this meant a cut of 18%.

A further £135 million was then slashed from university and college building plans (an 80% cut), and in November, expansion targets for higher education were reduced by a further 15%.

Figures and percentages, though, tell us very little in terms of the daily experience and reality of people in the education system. A recent survey done by the NUT filled out the picture, showing the kind of economies that have been



Kids settling down to a school dinner in a corridor. New building plans have been scrapped.

carried out in order to meet these cuts.

Teachers' salaries: 'Savings' have been made by freezing vacancies and reducing part time teachers provided for remedial subjects and improved staffing; by delaying the appointment of new staff, reducing the number of teachers to be seconded for further training, deleting the provision for expanding courses in further education and not replacing teachers as they retire.

Loss

It needs little imagination to predict the chaos that these savage cutbacks will inevitably cause, and the frustrations of teachers already confronted by continuing large classes. Every child will suffer loss of attention, and none more than those who already have difficulties (such as reading probes) because of the inadequacies of the system. Even the special attention they get now is being removed.

Building programme. Cuts here entail the shelving of replacement plans for schools, delaying indefinitely plans for extra classrooms already under construction, and in some cases leaving schools now being built uncompleted - Nursery building is postponed - which of course affects women imprisoned at home with young kids.

The effects are very widespread: there are very few schools (the majority of which date back to the 1870s) not in need of extensions and/or major improvements. And the improvements being scrapped are not even such as would be thought good enough by teachers and kids, but those deemed necessary by tight fisted upper echelons who don't have to go near a school from one year's end to the next.

Repairs to buildings and grounds are being postponed, and all preventive maintenance abandoned: which will mean damp rooms, loose slates on roofs, unpainted exteriors, and a generally unhealthy, depressive and even unsafe environment.

Fuel, lighting and cleaning. standards have been deliberately lowered, and heating cut to a bare minimum.

Equipment, supplies & furniture will not be improved or replaced, however obsolete. The allowance for furniture is reduced to November 1972 prices. There will be less equipment for laboratories and libraries.

Other salaries & wages: provision for all new appointments of clerical assistants, lab assistants and other auxiliary staff is deleted for secondary schools and colleges.

School dinners: Meat, eggs and fish are cut down and fresh milk replaced with dried milk. Some boroughs have stopped free milk for those who get free dinners (i.e. those who need it most!).

Anyone who remembers, or still has to stomach, the output of a school kitchen, will know that a cutback in this area will come as a nauseating calamity. When the bulk is already one or another form of flour or potatoes, any worsening will be completely indigestible.

Teacher training is to undergo a really drastic cut: by 1981 there will be a 40% cut from the number of new teachers originally envisaged, leaving 511,000 instead of a planned 750,000.

Secret

The reality of Margaret Thatcher's pronouncement of February 1974, that "we cannot insulate the education service from the economic situation" is clear: apathetic, disillusioned teachers and kids who can barely summon up the enthusiasm or energy to participate in the teaching-learning experience (even passively), existing in primitive, overcrowded, unsound, deteriorating premises.

Is this the government's secret plan to solve discipline problems and growing militancy in schools?

finger Prints Game of chance for Jenkins Act's victims

THERE HAS been one, just one, successful appeal against an exclusion order under the 'Jenkins Act', the seven week old Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Mr. Thomas McAllister of Southampton was in Winchester prison due to be deported on January 9th after being detained on Christmas Eve. The exclusion order was served on him on New Year's Eve.

But the grounds for the success of the appeal don't suggest any softening of the way the Act is being applied. It is simply that McAllister has been resident in Britain for more than 20 years.

Even then, if his MP hadn't gone to a lot of trouble to get to see him in face of some difficulty, it is quite likely that he would have been deported anyway.

The criterion for deportation under the Act is that the Home Secretary must be satisfied that the person was involved in the "commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism". The release of Mr. McAllister, even on the residence technicality, shows that the police had not a scrap of

ON THE front page of the Morning Star on January 17th there was a report that both the Manchester and Bolton Trades Councils had called on the TUC for a 'national day of action' as part of the campaign to free the Shrewsbury Two.

The resolution at the Bolton Trades Council, from Bolton 3rd UCATT, was moved by Neil Duffield, of Workers Fight, who tells us that no 'national day of action' was ever mentioned. The resolution in fact was that "The Trades Council reaffirms its support for the campaign to release Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson immediately; and urges the TUC to call for a national strike to get them released."

The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority and a letter has been sent to the TUC.

Once again we find the Communist Party, always so full of self-praise for its "coverage" of the Shrewsbury struggle, watering down its reporting of action.



THE National Coal Board has dismissed its assistant chief stores officer, 54 year-old Mr. Alan Grimshaw, following Mr. Grimshaw's giving evidence to a Commons Select Committee.

The Select Committee, which met 18 months ago, was set up to inquire into overstocking of equipment and the paying of highly inflated prices for plant. There was virtually a blanket of silence covering the case, broken of course by the tirelessly venomous Private Eye, which in reality centred around the fact that the chief beneficiary of the Coal Board's actions was a company called Bonser. Bonser spells Robens in more ways than one. Mr. Bonser's daughter, it appears, was married to the noble Lord's son.

Despite clear evidence that hydraulic pit-props were being sold at a huge profit by Bonser, which had been made sole suppliers, no charges were brought as a result.

£1,339,000 was, however, offered in repayment to the NCB: but as the NCB's losses due to this transaction are calculated to have been £2 million per annum, this sum amounts to less than one year's overpayment.

Mr. Grimshaw's sacking looks suspiciously like another link in the cover-up job for one of the biggest "milking operations" going.



PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES "I came here to escape from the hypocrisies of English politics. I think that many of us have engaged in a game of pretence" (John Stonehouse, 20.1.75)



SCHOOL REPORT 1974/5

Name: **REGINALD PRENTICE**

- BUILDING:** The postponement of the nursery programme, and the shelving of replacement building plans, shows a lack of foresight and an inadequate grasp of the subject. Unless he is careful, his building programme will collapse completely. He has reduced the heating standard to the bare minimum, and abandoned preventive maintenance. If he continues to cut costs (and corners) in this way, let it be on his own head!
- LITERATURE:** The reduction in books and supplies will undoubtedly benefit those children who cannot read or write, but he must try to remember that we are trying to educate the children.
- TRAINING:** We are glad to see that Reginald has cut teacher training places by 40%. He clearly recognises that, with fewer books and less furniture, there will be problems about which teacher is going to use the piece of chalk. With fewer teachers this problem is solved.
- BEHAVIOUR:** Generally irresponsible. He has developed a tendency to bullying, though he likes to curry favour with the headmaster and senior members of staff.
- P.E.:** His eyesight is poor. He tends to see red spots everywhere. **POSTURE:** he leans to the right.
- CLASS POSITION:** Middle; though he seems keen to join the upper class.
- GENERAL COMMENTS:** Reginald has worked poorly this term. He seems unable to do anything right or think clearly at all. We recommend he leave, and suggest he tries for another place. The Housemaster thinks he might do well to try for the soon to be vacant place of Leader of the Opposition.

by J.W.HARDING

Ructions in Portugal as C.P. moves to harness trade unions

THE PASSAGE in principle of the new trade union law in Portugal late on Monday night increased the strains that have been becoming evident in the Portuguese coalition cabinet. The law provides for a compulsory single confederation of trade unions for the country's two million organised workers, using the existing umbrella organisation, the Intersindical, as the framework. This has created a split in the cabinet between the Armed Forces Movement and the Communist Party on the one hand, and the Socialist Party and the Popular Democrats (PPD) on the other. It has also revealed differences within the AFM itself.

The effect of the new law would be to give the CP complete control of the trade union movement through the Intersindical, which it already dominates. The structure of the trade unions would become totally undemocratic — for example, elected shop stewards

would have to be confirmed by the CP hierarchy. The law itself has been prepared by the Ministry of Labour and the Intersindical.

The majority of the AFM support this law because it suits them to have a trade union movement bureaucratically controlled by the CP. Since the overthrow of the dictatorship in April last year, the CP has fought tooth and nail to sabotage the mass movement. They have played this strikebreaking role as an integral part of a government and a state machine which has now brought in a trade union law whose object is to discipline the working class, and which is clearly related to the old labour law making it almost impossible to have a legal strike in Portugal.

This is entirely consistent with the CP's attempt to do away with the main spearhead of the Portuguese workers — the rank and file workers' committees —

and to place the entire emphasis on the official trade union machine.

However, one result of all this is that the CP's base in the working class, though still very strong, is becoming increasingly eroded. Goncalves, their former Minister of Labour, was defeated recently in an election for the leadership of the Oporto Bank Workers' Union, for instance, and the Party is failing to win support at many mass meetings.

Furthermore, the CP is not likely to do well in the forthcoming elections, and has been pushing for them to be deferred — which the AFM refuses to do. The CP strategy has turned towards increasing its control of the official trade union movement, which will put it in a strong position no matter what its electoral performance.

The Opposition have been pushing for different trade union confederations aligned officially or unofficially with different political parties.

This is not to be construed as a fight for democracy in the working class movement. The PPD is a straight bourgeois party, which wants a weak trade union movement (as does the Church, which also opposed the law). The SP has accused its partners in the coalition of seeking "to replace one dictatorship by another". The SP is desperately attempting to retain some working class base, realising the very bad position the new law would put them in.

With this in mind, and an eye on the April elections, the SP has loudly opposed the CP's "steam-rolling"; but, although two SP

ministers and one PPD minister made veiled threats to leave the coalition after the law was approved, the imminence of the general elections should prevent this.

Inside the AFM itself, one section of the powerful Committee of Twenty supported the Opposition, though all the AFM ministers are reported to have voted in favour of the law, along with the CP minister, Cunhal. Significantly, for the first time recently, both the CP and the SP used the tactic of mass rallies to pressurise the AFM over the issue of the trade union law.

These developments are particularly important in relation to the new economic plan, which is still awaiting approval. Portugal's deep economic crisis, reflected in its balance of payments deficit and in rising unemployment, makes a new departure imperative for the coalition.

The strains within it — the SP and PPD ministers all voting against the new law — reflect the deep instability of class relations in Portugal.

COMMON MARKET

Why does Workers Fight say: stay out of the GET OUT campaign

Martin Thomas replies for W.F.

In answer to Comrade Latham's question, two other questions need to be asked: What are the prospects with a capitalist Britain in the EEC? What are the prospects with a capitalist Britain outside the EEC? The answer to both is: inflation, unemployment, wage curbs, capitalist attacks on the working class and on our living standards and working conditions.

The exact nature and form of the capitalist attacks will be different depending on whether Britain is in or out of the EEC. This or that section of workers may find things slightly smoother outside the EEC; another section will face greater difficulties. But when you've done all the sums, worked through the calculations, and considered all the possibilities, there is no basis for any definite statement that workers will find easier conditions with Britain outside the EEC. One per cent here, one per cent there — who can say for certain?

Sums

And in doing all those sums, in all the careful juggling with the plans of the capitalist classes, you will lose sight of one important factor: the activity of the working class. There are real capitalist attacks going on, and a lot of them are linked to Common Market entry. But those attacks can be fought against — as long as we don't get caught up in the empty bluster and fury of the Common Market withdrawal campaign.

The important thing is that an effective fight should be waged — on issues like a sliding scale of wages to cover price rises; for shorter hours with no loss of pay and for less intense working conditions; for Europe-wide trade union unity to tackle common struggles, and so on. The policy of **Workers Fight**, "In or out, the struggle goes on", points towards that fight.

But John Latham accuses WF of 'standing aside from the struggle'. What struggle? In the 'struggle' for Common Market withdrawal currently being waged by a chorus of almost the whole trade union bureaucracy (not to mention various right wing Tories, Enoch Powell, the National Front, etc), we find **not the slightest element** of working class action to advance definite working class interests, but plenty of the most vile chauvinist propaganda.

We will lose our national sovereignty and our democracy, they cry. In other words: Heaven forbid that **foreigners** should meddle with the sacred proceedings of 'our' British state.

This chauvinism is not just surface corruption on a basically healthy class campaign. It is the **substance and life-blood of the campaign**. To 'bring clarity to the confusion' would not be wiping off a little mildew, but draining a river dry. Does WF 'stand aside from the struggle'? No — we take part in this struggle — **on the other side: against the chauvinist campaigners for withdrawal.**

We have no reason to be anything but bitterly hostile to people like Roy Jenkins, who paint up the botched capitalist union of the EEC as 'socialist internationalism', and call on workers to renounce their immediate interests for the sake of that sham 'socialist internationalism'. But we are equally hostile to those whose backward looking "little England" campaign serves only to disarm the working class in face of the Europe-wide and world-wide interlinking of monopoly capitalism. And while Jenkins' talk cuts little ice with workers, the "little England" let's get out campaign is a dangerously popular diversion.

Of course it is true that the most important sections of the British

Comrades - One of the most important questions that will be answered in the coming months is that of Britain's membership of the EEC.

I'd like you to explain WF's position on this. For it seems an entirely bankrupt sectarian approach to stand aside from the struggle, fortified by the empty slogan "In or out, the fight goes on".

This seems to reflect the old failing of the Left to relate the demands of the immediate struggle to those of the longer term struggle for socialism. It betrays moreover an unhistorical approach to the development of capitalism, for although WF might regard entry into the EEC as irrelevant to "the fight", British monopoly capitalism is suffering from no such illusions. The British ruling class obviously considers entry as essential to its survival, as a necessary means of consolidating its power over labour. Yet WF proposes to let it get away with this without a fight, so long as some other, unspecified "fight" goes on.

I would speculate that such a

sectarian position emanates from an obsessive desire to avoid the danger of falling into the type of chauvinism which the CP intermittently stumbles into. However, I believe that a fully rounded class position would condemn the EEC as a monopoly capitalist consortium inimical to working class advance whilst simultaneously regarding defence of parliament as important in terms of defending bourgeois democracy against the trend towards authoritarianism, this time in an institutionalised form, which Hobson and Lenin had exposed as characteristic of capitalism in the imperialist phase.

It is imperative that we defend those gains that our forefathers in bitter struggle have wrung from a stubborn and merciless bourgeoisie in order that we may use them as a springboard to further victories. They must be preserved as an additional weapon in our armoury which must be reinforced, not retrenched, if we are ever to contemplate competing with the bulging arsenals of the

bourgeoisie.

Defend bourgeois democracy against the attacks of monopoly capitalism; and make the transition from bourgeois to proletarian democracy through monopoly capitalism's revolutionary defeat. This, surely, is the only principled position that revolutionaries can adopt which, whilst avoiding — and in the process exposing — the twin pitfalls of chauvinism and sectarianism, guards the class interests of the workers.

In the struggle for such a class line, consciousness can be raised by bringing clarity to the confusion sown by the social democrats and the petty bourgeois "little Englanders", whose talk of "national sovereignty" in a class society means attempting to fight the battle on the enemy's ground, on terms dictated by the enemy. Our task is to take power out of the hands of the bourgeoisie — ruling either from Brussels or London — and put it in the hands of the working class.

What is WF's opinion? - **JOHN LATHAM, Manchester.**

campaign



The real issue as the 'Morning Star' sees it: big business trampling on 'our' flag.

capitalist class want Britain to stay in the EEC (though that could change with an upsurge of protectionism in the trough of a world crisis). But should Marxists always choose our policy according to what is worst for the capitalist class? We might do, if we thought socialism would come through capitalism simply collapsing under the weight of its own crisis. But capitalism will always continue to drag itself through the chaos, heaping the worst miseries on the working class, until that class organises itself and acts, consciously, to replace capitalism with a workers' state.

The growth of monopolies is certainly wanted by the big capitalists. Should socialists

oppose this and demand a return to small scale industry?

Our fundamental task as revolutionary socialists is to "tell what is", to explain and educate and help to make the real struggle more conscious and more effective. We cannot abandon that task for the sake of speculations (speculations, in this case, with a large dose of delusions of grandeur) as to how we can best throw a spanner into the works of the bourgeoisie.

We should "condemn the EEC as a monopoly capitalism consortium" says Comrade Latham. Very well. But what is the **British state**, if not ... another monopoly capitalist consortium!

Lurking under John Latham's concern to defend democratic rights (correct enough, in the

abstract) is a strange misconception of what the EEC is. Somehow the EEC is a "consortium" of a worse sort than individual capitalist states; some sort of foul conspiracy by the sinister bosses of European capital to disrupt the relatively cosy democratic arrangements we have with our own familiar British exploiters.

In fact, the EEC is no sort of conspiracy, but a logical product of the trend to the international concentration and centralisation of capital. Leaving aside **Tribune's** pathetic complaints that EEC regulations would forbid the British parliament voting for social revolution, the main content of the complaints about democratic rights comes down to the assertion that such-and-such a question of economic policy is decided by bureaucrats in Brussels.

Diversion

Certainly we should seek to deny power to those bureaucrats, and to assert the maximum possible scrutiny and control over economic policies for workers. But a campaign for withdrawal from the EEC is no way to pursue that aim.

Most of these matters of economic policy are largely outside bourgeois democratic scrutiny in the individual capitalist state. More generally, the idea that you best defend democratic rights by campaigning to get out of the EEC falls down when you ask the question: does being out of the EEC grant any security of democratic rights? Like Spain, for example?

To the effective struggle to defend democratic rights, as to the struggle to safeguard living standards, the Common Market withdrawal campaign constitutes only diversion and confusion. For the sake of fighting that confusion, it is perhaps worthwhile putting up with the complaints of those who see 'sectarianism' as just once in a while refusing to line up behind either alternative when the capitalist class offers us a referendum.

HOW THE BRITISH ARMY KILLED THE TRUCE

On December 22nd 1974, the Army Council of the IRA issued a special order suspending offensive military action for a period of 11 days. The move was made in the wake of the Feakle talks and it was designed to give the British Government an opportunity to consider and reply to the Peace proposals for an end to the war. It was clearly stated at the time that if a satisfactory reply to the peace proposals was not received by January 2nd 1975, offensive military action would be resumed.

Promise from Rees

The clergymen who conveyed the peace proposals to the British government assured the Republican leadership that a reply would be forthcoming by December 28th. They also conveyed a personal assurance from Mr. Rees that the Crown Forces would respect the Truce. There was to be an end to raids, arrests and harassment of the population; no provocative displays by Crown Forces and no attempt to re-introduce the Royal Ulster Constabulary into areas where they are not acceptable.

Despite the fact that the Truce was not observed except for a few days around Christmas and no reply had been received from the British Government to the peace proposals, the Army Council decided to extend the Truce for a further 14 days, beginning on January 2nd 1975.

The British government were again asked to courageously

STATEMENT MADE BY THE PROVISIONAL REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT ON 16TH JANUARY

examine and eradicate the root causes of the conflict and to show their good faith by observing the Truce and releasing a substantial number of political prisoners.

A request was made to the Northern Ireland Office last Sunday for an advance copy of Mr. Rees' speech which he proposed delivering in the House of Commons on Tuesday. The request was refused. The published text of the speech has been given detailed consideration by the leadership of the Movement and the following facts have been carefully assessed:

(1) There is nothing in Mr. Rees' speech relating to the peace proposals submitted by us for a termination of the war.

(2) The Truce was not observed by the Crown Forces. With the exception of the Christmas period, increased enemy activity



was noted in Ardoyne, Leeson Street, Falls Road, Turf Lodge, and St. James areas of Belfast. Civilians were stopped, searched and photographed in Newry, Jonesboro village was saturated by troops on two occasions and soldiers withdrawn in other areas were replaced by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Defence Regiment. A

Sinn Fein meeting in Derry last Sunday was surrounded by British troops and the pursuit of wanted Republicans continued unabated.

(3) Instead of releasing a substantial number of political prisoners, only three internees, two Republicans and one Loyalist, were freed before

Christmas Last year, when there was no truce, 65 internees were released. The number discharged since is an insult ...

We wonder if the British Government feels it is dealing with cattle rather than human beings. We had been assured that the British Government would show its good faith by particularly releasing a substantial number of people who live in appalling conditions and many of whom are entering their fourth year in concentration camps.

Died in Long Kesh

(4) Volunteer James Moyne died in Long Kesh after being repeatedly refused elementary medical treatment for his illness.

(5) A concerted campaign of brutality against political prisoners in Portlaoise, Crumlin Road and English prisons became very apparent during the Truce.

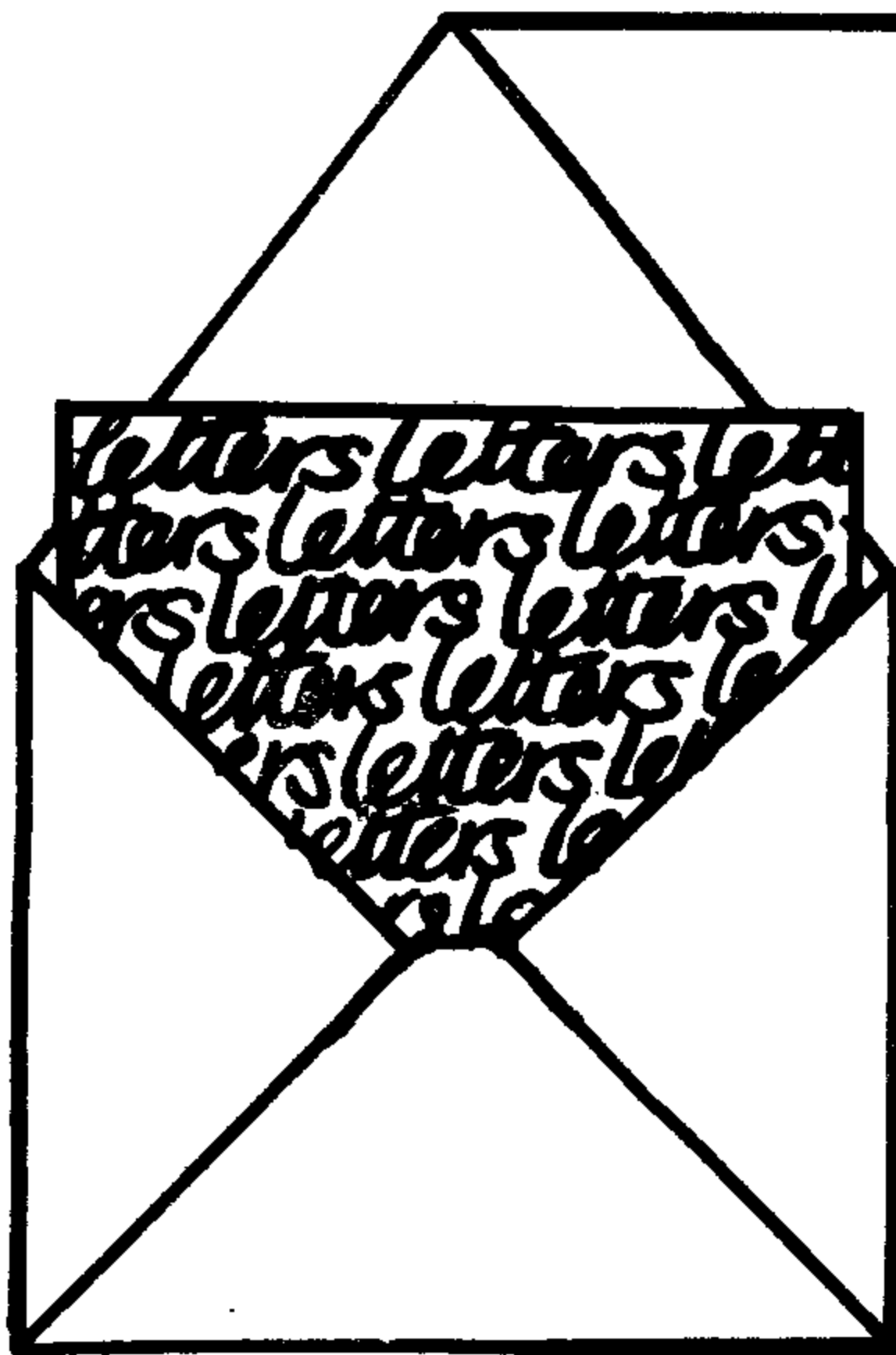
(6) Compassionate parole, a normal procedure at Christmas time, was refused by the authorities in the prisons North and South.

(7) Staff-Captain John Greene, O—C North Armagh, was assassinated in Co. Monaghan by a British execution squad. The funeral cortege on arrival in Portadown was harassed by the RUC.

(8) The arrest of Kevin Mallon by the Dublin authorities was a severe blow because of the vital role he played in the whole peace initiative. The increased harassment by the Special Branch on both sides of the Border has made it extremely difficult for Republicans to promote the peace initiative along realistic lines.

No Response

In view of the above facts, but principally due to a total lack of response to our peace proposals by the British Government, the Army Council cannot in conscience renew the order suspending offensive military action first issued on December 21st last, reaffirmed on January 2nd, and due to expire at midnight tonight, January 16th



KEEP IT UP!

Comrades - Congratulations on the new enlarged Workers Fight. As a new reader, it is good to see a workers' paper which has freed itself from the need to discuss meaningless trivialities like the grubby commercial exploits of Labour ministers, when we know that the only difference between them and the Tory barons is that they try to conceal their cynical contempt for the working class. Nor do we need attempts to ape the capitalist gutter press by naming names in sordid court cases.

Events outside this country must be described and explained, for we must learn to see ourselves as members of a world working class movement acting in concert. Unlike other so-called socialist papers, WF does not restrict itself solely to the narrow parochial politics of the factory floor — however important they may seem to be at the moment. Keep it up! - Peter Alyson, Warley.

Thanks for your kind words. Of course, though, if the international working class is to act in concert, we do have to pay a special attention to workers' struggles in this country, where we are; but not to the exclusion of our brothers overseas. Ed.

DON'T 'CONDEMN' BUT 'DON'T CONDONE' THE BIRMINGHAM BOMBS

Comrades - As occasional writers for Workers Fight, we would like to contribute to the debate on the Birmingham bombings. In WF78 you begin by assuming that the bombings were perpetrated by Irish republicans, then in the same issue you continue by condemning the bombings and mystifying that condemnation on the grounds that you solidarise with the the IRA! Comrades, we condemn your condemnation.

Of course, WF was absolutely correct to say that revolutionary socialists must defend the right of the IRA to liberate their country from the terror regime imposed on it by British imperialism and its armed forces. But you say, not by any means necessary. You imply that the struggle for liberation must not include killing British workers. Why not?

WE REPLY

Comrades Rose and Haines "condemn our condemnation" of the Birmingham bombings. Yet they say they don't "condone" those bombings.

The whole point of our stand on Birmingham was that if the action was not politically or militarily necessary, it was wrong. Cdes. Rose and Haines seem to agree. We went on to say that if it was wrong, it should be condemned, both morally and for being a political liability which would strengthen the nationalism of the British workers and make it more difficult to win them to view the republican struggle as a just struggle. Here Cdes. Rose and Haines part company with us: they imply that we may think the action wrong, but should keep quiet about it, or talk about it in neutral language, and instead of saying "we condemn" say "we don't condone".

We are not in favour of being mealy mouthed. Either in our support for the republican forces, their right to fight the British Army in Ireland or in Britain and to attack military targets (even if civilians accidentally get killed, as at Aldershot, Guildford or the M6

coach); or in our condemnation of the killing of 20 workers for no reason at all, an action which drove millions of workers into further support for the Government and the British Army, and some towards the right wing and the National Front.

Either such an action is justifiable or else it is very, very wrong. Either it is necessary, or it is criminal. (And an understanding of desperation doesn't change it: a man may batter his wife because of the pressures of capitalism — it's still a crime.)

The letter is not merely mealy mouthed, but confused and contradictory too. Maybe the two go together. They advocate "a principled" though critical stand in solidarity with the freedom fighters" and say that, until Birmingham, WF had taken such a stand. We think we still have such a position; and the article they attack, which they imply panders to the chauvinism of British workers, reiterates again and again that "we maintain and fight for a position of continued solidarity with the IRA".

Such a stand, far from being weakened by our attack on the bombing (which of course the Provisionals also condemned — and didn't mince their words about it either) was strengthened by it.

After all, the IRA had declared war on the British Army, and spokesmen of both Tory and Labour governments have proclaimed "We are at war with the IRA". Unfortunately for the politicians and the military, wars are not conducted in a vacuum. They would no doubt like to be able to wage war against the Catholic population and its defenders without anyone in Britain hearing of dead and maimed soldiers or hearing of British brutalities, harassment and torture. However, people in Britain do hear about them even if, most of the time, it is in a biased and distorted way.

The workers in the Catholic ghettos of the North also know about the brutalities, and many give active support to the Provos; that's why 13 of them were murdered on Bloody Sunday. In this country the working class gives passive support to the occupation of the Six Counties, witness for example the lack of trade union involvement in the Troops Out Movement, so it's hardly surprising if workers in this country become a target after nearly 7 years of repression and violence in the North.

This is not to say that we condone the action at Birmingham, it was a politically impotent and stupid act, demonstrating a bitterness and frustration that could only be felt by people who are desperate and sickened by the plight of their kinfolk in the Nationalist areas.

British workers, through reasons too complicated to expand here, are very chauvinistic and no matter how patiently revolutionary militants explain their views, very little will change, except through their own experience and that will

Finally, the letter contains a completely non-communist, and basically nationalist, attitude to civilians in a war, where it is a question of nation against nation. Comrades Rose and Haines very strongly imply that because of the British working class's support for the British government, lack of interest in the war and the lack of trade union support for the Troops Out Movement, British workers deserve to be bombed.

By that logic all civilians are "fair game"; and if the ordinary workers of Birmingham are fair game when they go into a pub for a drink, how much more so would be the people shot on Bloody Sunday, who were actively participating in an anti-British demonstration... They accuse us of "equating" Bloody Sunday with Birmingham: yet by their own logic, they do far worse.

They of course make the qualification that it's a matter of differentiating between oppressed and oppressor nations. Marxists do that. We do that. But there is no such distinction to be made in relation to indiscriminate slaughter of civilians. Logically, they should advocate wholesale slaughter of the British working class in revenge for its indifference to the Irish struggle and other anti-British

take time. That doesn't stop us explaining to workers the truth about the situation in Ireland; neither does it stop us explaining to republicans that despite all the evidence, the working class in this country is their potential ally.

In the process, events will take place that lead to the persecution and hounding of militants who have taken a principled stand by the very people they are struggling for.

Our task is not to pander to the chauvinism of the British workers but to take a principled though critical stand in solidarity with the freedom fighters. This WF had done and done well until Birmingham.

By condemning the IRA for Birmingham and using such terms as "callous slaughter" and barbarism, WF has managed to put it on the same plane as the imperialist slaughter of Bloody Sunday. You seem incapable of differentiating between the violence of the oppressed and the violence of the oppressor in this particular instance. - J. Rose, David Haines.

struggles of the past. This fits nothing so much as the caricature picture of the nihilistic terrorist, lashing out in hopeless desperation against an indifference on the part of the working class which he cannot understand and therefore can't deal with politically. Indeed, from their letter, it seems that Cdes. Haines and Rose can't even bear to talk to the British working class on the issue without a mealy mouthed and hypocritical evasion.

They talk not as communist internationalists but as bloodthirsty Irish chauvinists (and both are English!). Thank god the Provisional Republican movement is not composed of bloodthirsty Irish chauvinists.

British socialists should not attempt to play this role for them. Ed.

(We'd like to close this discussion here, as it has now been going on for nearly two months. We have in fact received a couple of other contributions; one of these was from Comrade Lawrie White, in reply to our reply to his letter on the same article in WF78. It came in duplicated form, and if readers would like to see it, we suggest they write in and we will try to obtain some more copies from Cde. White for those interested.)

WOMEN IN MEDIA TO FIGHT SEXISM

THE subordinate position of women in the communications industry and its unions was a major theme of a conference on Women in the Communications Industry held last Saturday (Jan.18th). And this was highlighted by the attendance: out of 300 women, most were in the NUJ, the male domination of the print industry being reflected by the fact that just one woman NGA member, and two from SOGAT, attended.

In all areas of the media, the conference was told, women were faced with similar problems. Women found that they were nearly always at the bottom of the job hierarchy — making equal pay in the industry virtually meaningless.

EQUITY members spoke of the difficulty of getting jobs, because there were so few parts for women in an industry reflecting a heavily male dominated society. Publishing houses, too, discriminate against women — none as heads of departments, but all the secretarial type of jobs done by women.

Things were perhaps worst in the printing industry, with many jobs completely barred to women, often because of the conservative attitudes of the unions: for instance the NGA, as a matter of policy, reserves all printing jobs for men.

Women find it almost impossible to break down the craft barriers of some of the unions. The NUJ will not consider recruiting secretaries who in many cases are doing research and writing work.

Many women engaging in part time journalism were barred from the NUJ because they couldn't meet the earnings rule. Thus women with family commitments are effectively kept from taking an active part in the NUJ. It was proposed that a fight should be waged to scrap the NUJ's minimum earnings regulation.

Little wonder, then, that when it came to questions of maternity leave and nursery facilities, the unions concerned were also found

dissenting at the Conference was over the suggestion that women's committees should be formed across trade unions to fight for greater female union membership, and for women's demands. Some of the women thought that such committees meant that women would become split off and isolated within the union.

However, it was argued that forming women's caucuses would help us to fight more effectively within the trade unions. Women's

THE N.U.J., a couple of days after the Women in the Communications Industry conference, published its report on sexual equality for its members. It found that women, almost a quarter of the NUJ membership, suffer discrimination in the allocation of jobs, a large number of which are advertised as "for men". It was only three years ago that members working for RTE, the Irish broadcasting service, were sacked if they got married.

The report also comments on the sexist job advertising in the UK Press Gazette.

Its main recommendation is for the introduction of paid maternity leave and paternity leave too will be looked into. Already there is paid maternity leave at Pan and Penguin books, and paternity leave on the magazine New Civil Engineer.

to have a bad record. Natsopa (London Clerical Branch) had apparently just dropped the demand for maternity leave from

its annual claim; and women working at IPC have been fighting for the last 3 years for this union to take up the question of nursery facilities.

One of the biggest points of

committees incorporating all of the printing unions, for instance, would be a big step forward.

The very important question of redundancies came up, with the warning that women are likely to be worse hit because they are worse organised. It will be easier for employers to sack a girl typist, with the union unlikely to take up the case, than to sack a printer — which would meet with stiff union resistance.

The Conference was concerned, too, with the presentation of women by the media, and a

suggested guideline for a non-sexist code of practice was presented. This document gave many instances of the false portrayal of women which concentrates on their personal appearance and exploitation as sex objects rather than treating them as creative social beings, 60% of whom work. ("Redhead took on honey blonde yesterday" — a Daily Mirror account of a debate between Barbara Castle and Margaret Thatcher — was among the nicely chosen examples.)

The media also grossly underestimates the part that women play in trade union struggles, and of course plays up "anti strike housewives" and totally ignores women who do actively support strikes (such as the wives of miners).

But this in itself pointed to the fact that the media is not only sexist, but also racist and anti working class, being controlled by the same capitalist class which lives off the backs of the working class as well as oppressing and super exploiting women and black workers. It was stressed that women were not alone in the distortion they suffer at the hands of the media, and that we shouldn't narrow our fight to the question of sexism.

The problem was, how to present this quite wide ranging non sexist code of practice, and how to wage a struggle around it in the face of employers hostile to such intervention.

The Working Women's Charter, which covers many of the points brought out in discussion — equal pay, opportunities, training, nursery facilities, maternity leave — was given general support.

And delegates were convinced that the Code of Practice, which sets out to fight the ideological influences that help to oppress all women, should be used in conjunction with the Working

Women Charter, which attempts to fight the effects of that oppression.

An adhoc committee has been formed, and for further information contact Penny Brown, 44a Abingdon Road, London W.8. Tel: 937-7414.)

Pat Longman

LEARNING ABOUT IRELAND'S HISTORY

OVER 70 people attended a WORKERS FIGHT school on the Irish republican movement held in a Midlands city last weekend.

Comrades from the Liverpool RMC also attended; among the speakers was a comrade from the former Left Opposition of IS, and another from the London Peoples Democracy.

The school was designed as an intensive educational drive and consisted of 11 short lectures, with time for questions and discussion. The subjects ranged from the United Irishmen the French Revolution to the impending threat of Civil War in 1975; there was an outline history of the IRA, aspects of Ireland's economic evolution, and a talk on the Irish working class and its relationship to the struggle for national independence.

The school was a major success as an event in itself. Its use in the class struggle is still to be determined. That will depend on the knowledge and understanding of the struggle for Irish independence and of the Republican movement being disseminated to broader circles by those who attended.

Unless those who participated see that as the objective, it will have been an educational event but not a contribution to the struggle against anti-Irish and anti-Republican feeling in the British working class. It is up to the participants now to make sure it is the latter and not the former.

S.M.

OPEN LETTER FOR A REVOLUTIONARY REGROUPMENT. The Open Letter calls for a revolutionary regroupment, lays down 12 points as political guidelines and maps out practical steps towards unity. Copies from Workers' Fight, 98 Gifford Street, London N1 CDF. Please enclose a 4½p stamp.

WINTER OF THEIR DISCONTENT

by JOHN BRYANT

ALL the peasants for miles around are gathered in the Lord of the manor's private chapel to celebrate the harvest festival. After the service they go into the main hall and have a splendid feast. It'll be the first time and probably the only time in the year that a lot of them will eat meat ... normally they can't afford it. The feast cost hundreds of pounds — next to nothing for the lord and lady of the manor, but more than some of the peasants earn in a year.

A scene from the Middle Ages? An underdeveloped country? No, it is Britain today. But if you hadn't seen the documentary film called "Too long a Winter", you perhaps will not believe that such backwardness still exists in an advanced capitalist society.

And yet the point is exactly that: within a

society based on the tiny minority of profiteers living off the labour of the vast majority, anything goes as long as it conforms to that pattern.

The programme showed a section of our society that seems hardly to have changed since the Middle Ages: small tenant farmers who not only have to look after their own sheep but also, as a form of rent payment, several hundred sheep belonging to the master. At the end of the season they have to return the sheep and any lambs to the master. The tenant farmer's own animals come second.

LOST

The film showed one tenant farmer who had lost all the sheep in his care during the exceptionally hard winter of 1972-3. Bankrupt and broken, he had to leave the district.

For some, the system is slightly different. One woman owned a couple of cows, but looked after hundreds belonging to wealthier farmers, who paid her the pittance she somehow managed to live on. A couple of hundred pounds is all she got in a year.

Here was a woman working to provide meat for the shops, and herself never able to afford it. A scene of the landowners, plush Rolls Royce cars in attendance, chatting about new yachts contrasted harshly with the kind of decisions this woman was faced with: whether to have bread and jam or bread and butter.

'Too long a Winter' showed us a section of society we often forget about — in any case, one whose way of life we can hardly imagine even when we remember.

JOHN BRYANT

DISCUSSION

Pat Longman writes

ROS GAINS, in her article in WF 82, is quite right to state that 'we must address ourselves to the real situation, not to some utopia'. Unfortunately this is exactly what she fails to do.

She writes about the home and the family and yet fails to spell out its role in present day capitalist society or to put it into any kind of overall historical analysis.

At the present time the nuclear family is one of capitalism's most oppressive institutions, especially for women and children. It is a place where women are completely isolated and at the mercy of the capitalist media and other reactionary forces in society, where they are in many cases completely dependent on their husbands, both economically and emotionally; where housework is completely mystified — becoming a labour of love and a duty — instead of what it really is, a dull and very laborious job which services tomorrow's labour force free of charge for the ruling class, and where children are not seen as young adults but as the possessions of their parents.

However, we not only want to relate to and understand this situation, we want to change it. To change it radically we need to alter the whole of society — because the family cannot be abstracted from the type of society in which it exists.

Therefore, we must understand that the family in its nuclear or in its old extended form cannot be anything other than an unhealthy, unstimulating and positively unsatisfying place for the working class to be.

Neither do I believe that communes, existing in the middle of capitalist society, can be anything more than the utopian dreams of the petty bourgeoisie. Only once does Ros Gains relate to the real situation, when she states that 'for many women homes are either sweat shops or concentration camps where they can expect a battering'.

Although we should discuss and examine all aspects of the family and the position of women in

Wages for housework

No power in the Home

capitalist society and how the real liberation of women will take place, we must always be clear that the family will only be changed radically during the period of socialist transformation.

The question therefore becomes not how to make the family a more rewarding place in capitalist society, but how can we best involve women in the collective struggle of the working class to improve their working conditions and ultimately to gain control of the whole of society. Where do they actually have the economic strength and power to enable them to do this? Where can they best raise their consciousness and play a vital role in the struggles of the working class?

The answer is definitely not to be found in the home, and this is where we must have one of our most serious criticisms of the demand for wages for housework. For we don't want women — or men for that matter — in the home, but taking part in the collective struggles of the working class. Wages for housework would help to institutionalise housework instead of agitating for all of its most laborious aspects to be socialised outside of the home, where both men and women are paid to carry it out.

I agree with Ros Gains that many jobs will be difficult to socialise, especially looking after very young children. This can at the beginning be done by one person who the child can relate to. However, after this stage the establishment of nurseries becomes one of the most important aspects of the socialisation of housework.

Ros makes the point that community and tenants' struggles are also important. But the crucial fact here is that campaigns that seek to revolve around the community — tenants associations, nursery campaigns etc. — have been notable failures unless they have been taken up by the trade union movement. For example, if you take the nurseries campaign. Why is the Working Women's Charter so important in this respect? Precisely because it takes the issue of nurseries into the organised labour movement, and

campaigns for it to take up the demand to free women from the home.

It also links the demands of women for more nursery services to the demands of nursery workers for better pay and conditions and therefore forges a link between the two groups. The fact is that this collective strength can only be gained on the shop floor in the factories and offices. And quite frankly the larger they are, the better.

Ros Gains states 'Surely we recognise the alienating effect of large units and wish to keep the more manageable work place'.

The working class does recognise the alienating effect of large work units — they are foul places to work, but excellent places in which to organise, bringing together as they do many thousands of workers under the same roof, with a vast potential power.

The smaller units on the other hand are far more likely to be little sweat shops — and are extremely manageable if you happen to be a capitalist. They are places where the boss can easily victimise his workers and generally hold back their struggles for better pay and conditions because they have such weak bargaining power and are extremely difficult to organise. (And the extreme case of this, that of homeworkers, proves the point: they are completely isolated, bullied and non-unionised, work in foul, unsafe and unstable conditions and can be paid as little as £2 or £3 for a long week's work. [See P.L.'s article in WF83.Ed.]

In conclusion, I definitely don't think that the women's liberation movement should be fighting for the extension of the family (as one section of the Communist Party used to do, seeing it as 'the heart of a heartless world', something to be protected against the capitalist class). Nor should be long to go back 100 years to small-unit production. We should be fighting for the liberation of women from the family and for their complete integration into the organised working class, and for the labour movement to use its strength to begin to achieve this.

from p 1

Murray's lie

criing scandal. Taxes don't just go to pay for essential social services. In fact, those are being heavily cut back. Taxes also pay for arms spending, to subsidise decrepit employers, and so on.

The TUC hopes by this "cooperation" to avoid unemployment, economic cut backs, and so on. In reality, such docility, if workers do listen to Murray and trade union leaders such as Jack Jones, can lead to marking time while unemployment undermines our bargaining power and our strength.

The TUC approach of sweet reason may con some workers, but the ruling class and the Tory party — and Labour Chancellor Dennis Healey — they know better. Robert Carr, speaking on the same day as Murray, predicted one million jobless. Other people predict, by mid summer, a coalition government 'of national unity' to ride out the effects on British capitalism of its own weakness and of the international capitalist crisis.

The TUC attempt to bargain wages against jobs is a foregone failure. The employers can't guarantee full employment even if they wanted to. And government policy certainly is to push wages down, knowing unemployment will rise.

Murray's answer goes down well in the 'Financial Times' conference: it is no answer to workers faced with massive inflation and the large section of workers faced with a fall in their real living standards.

What should our answer be?

Our answer should be: no concessions; no bargains. We are not going to sacrifice our living standards to help prop up capitalism. We will fight to push wage levels up as high as possible.

We cannot rely on the Government price index — we need a working class cost of living index, calculated by committees of trade unionists and housewives. We need a sliding scale of wages — zero thresholds, adjusted to take account of tax deductions; but no bargaining off the right to straight wage increases in return for 'thresholds'!

We cannot afford to do anything but refuse to accept redundancies; to occupy plants proposing closure or redundancies, and demand work or full pay. If order books are low, then cut hours, not jobs — but with no loss of pay.

from p 1 CAPRINO

push their leaders into action over this and urge them to take it straight to the TUC.

Civil liberties organisations and lawyers have also added their voices, as have the Indian Workers' Association and groups representing Italian immigrants.

Clearly, the deportation bears no relation to the reasons given about "national security". As Race Today has written in an open letter to Roy Jenkins, "No one can convince us that he is a threat to national security... The only security Caprino threatens is the security of hotel owners and other employers...". The Sunday Times, after a lengthy examination of the facts of the

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TEACHERS KEEP UP FIGHT FOR BETTER PAY AFTER HOUGHTON

At the Holland Park Conference last Saturday (19th) of teachers fighting against the Houghton pay settlement, delegates reported that over 317 teachers from 26 London schools would be taking unofficial action on Thursday 23rd, in protest at the Houghton Award on teachers' pay, which gives £40 a week rise to top heads and only £4.40 rise to young teachers starting work.

Dick North (Rank & File and NUT Exec.) revealed that of the 30% annual teacher turnover currently normal in London, 18% could be put down to teachers moving school in order to get a higher paid job.

Escalate

Two major resolutions were put to the floor. The first, presented by the International Socialism Group (IS) who dominate Rank & File, called for strike action on 23rd and a mass picket of the NUT Salaries Conference at Central Hall, Westminster on Saturday 25th — the last chance teachers have of stopping Houghton.

Meanwhile the Conference committed itself to take the issue back to the schools and local NUT branches in an attempt to escalate the action. Reports coming in suggest that this is having some measure of success as teachers gain confidence from the number already committed to strike action.

The second resolution, presented by members of the International Marxist Group (who urged rejection of strike action on 23rd), called for the rejection of Houghton, support for the mass picket on 25th, and afterwards an immediate swing into a campaign aimed at the annual Pay Award in April, demanding a starting salary of £2,500, automatic compensation for all teachers against monthly rises in the cost of living, and for the amalgamation of new scales 1 and 2.

Workers Fight had already two weeks previously called for a campaign around the April settlement in the event

of Houghton being accepted. Certainly, no-one can have many illusions about the Salaries Conference: at the 1972 Annual Conference, for instance, rural branches had 1 delegate for every 74 members, while branches from the big cities, where problems are the greatest, had only one delegate for every 241 members. Union democracy? Pull the other one.

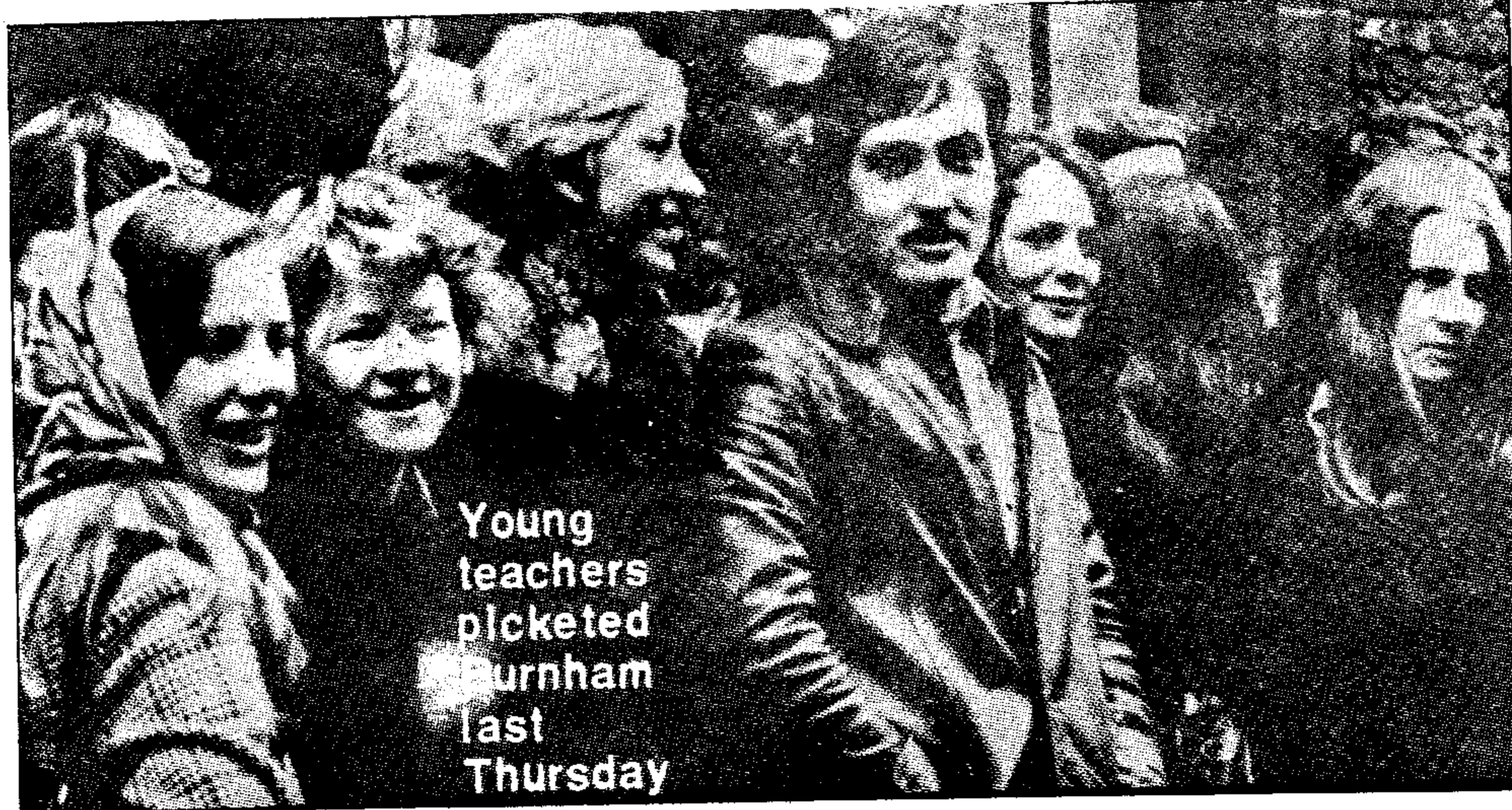
But the IMG were very wrong to oppose unofficial action on the 23rd.

Fortunately, the conference adopted both resolutions.

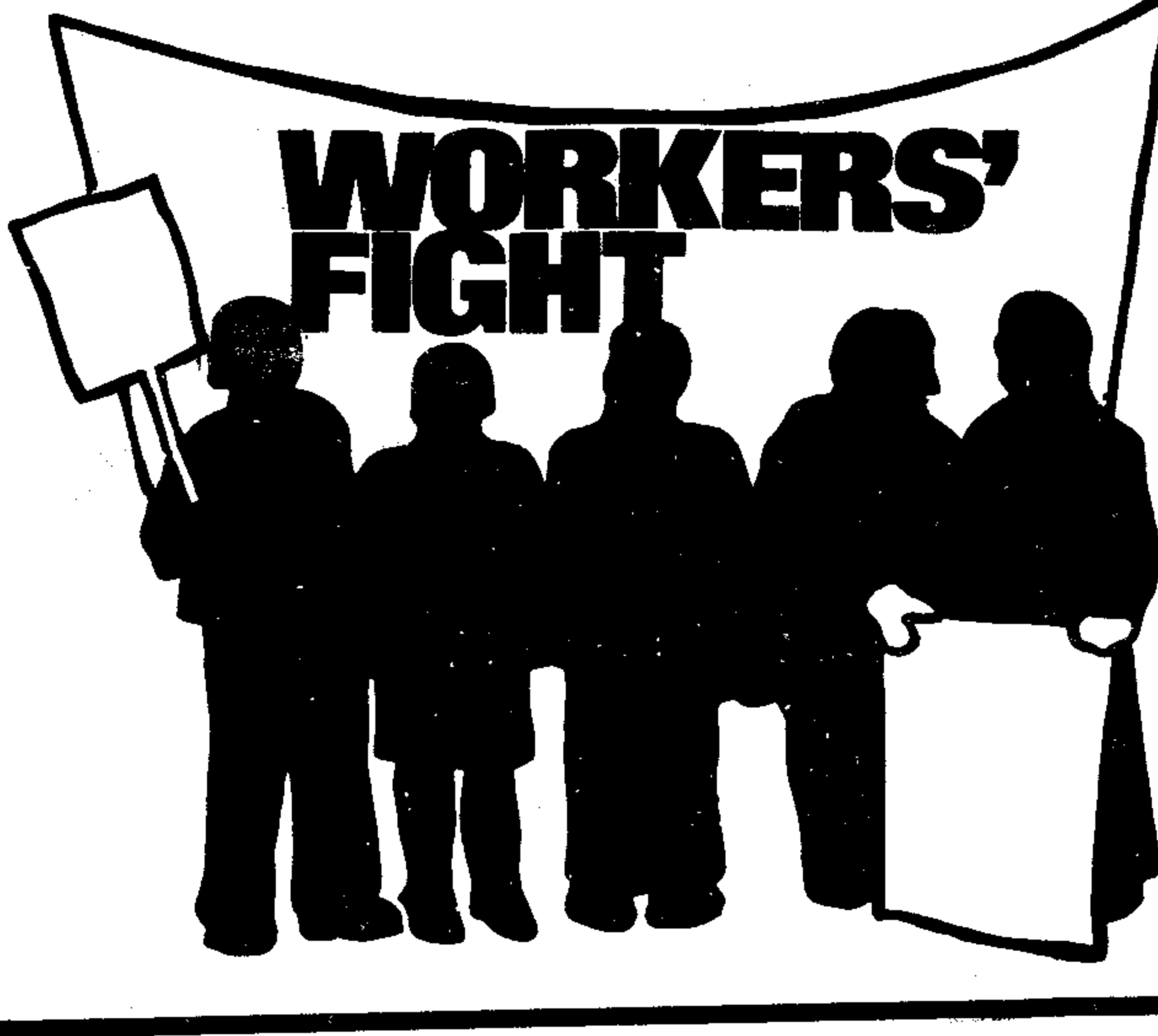
Other reports of action for the 23rd have come from Liverpool, where 8 schools are due to strike and hold a meeting in school time, at which delegates from yet more schools are expected. One school from Liverpool was sending a delegation to lobby Burnham in London that day, and delegations from several Liverpool schools will lobby the NUT salaries conference on 25th.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

WORKERS FIGHT
Teachers Salaries pamphlet, including a detailed breakdown of the Houghton Report, is available at 5p plus post from 98 Gifford Street, London N.1



Young teachers picketed Burnham last Thursday



Raw deal for Special Schools

THERE is now a chronic staff shortage in London's Special schools, with 80% permanently understaffed.

To draw attention to this situation, a Greater London Council Maladjusted Schools Committee, from 27 schools, lobbied Burnham last Thursday.

The main demands are for a £500 special schools allowance and a revision of the points system. These are seen as short term measures, in order to recruit experienced teachers to this difficult field of teaching.

At the moment, children are being educated on the cheap, with inexperienced teachers pushed into positions of responsibility, not being paid enough, and working in bad conditions.

Under the Houghton settlement, a new "stress" allowance can be awarded to metropolitan schools, but this excludes special schools. This means special schools will be competing for staff with many other schools, but offering the same basic salary.

However, since

maladjusted schools are restricted in numbers to 50, their points allocation is lower, and the opportunity for scale posts to staff are restricted. So Houghton will mean an even higher turnover of staff.

The National Union of Teachers have only mentioned a raising of the special schools allowance from the present £119 to £278, but Burnham are now mentioning a sum in the region of £380.

The teachers' demand for £500 has to be explained to teachers in mainstream schools, who have no idea of the tasks involved in the education of those kids referred, expelled, or rejected from ordinary schools. It is not divisive. Special school teachers increasingly support the demand for an extra £15 per week on basic pay, and Rank and File has to recognise particular additional needs in special schools while these schools exist (whether or not we think such ghettos into which 'maladjusted' kids are herded).

Jane Lindsay

FREE THE PICKETS CAMPAIGN GAINING GROUND

THE GREAT march to Parliament to free the Shrewsbury 2 on January 14 was not expected to bring about the immediate release of the jailed pickets. But it seems to have done one thing: it's given a real boost to the campaign to get Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson out of jail as soon as possible. Up and down the country calls are going out now for strike action to free the two.

Within a few days of the march and lobby, Nottingham Trades Council sent a telegram to the TUC calling on them to call a one day strike for the release of the two pickets. Bolton Trades Council has reaffirmed its support for strike action to free the two, as has Manchester and Salford Trades Council. Liverpool Trades Council is planning a conference to discuss further action (see below).

At a public meeting called by the South West London Shrewsbury Defence Committee on 20th January, even right wing local Labour MP Marcus Lipton was urging strikes: "A wave of industrial action" he pointed out "on the same sort of lines that got the release of the five dockers on trial (sic) under the Industrial Relations Act" was needed. "If we don't step up this campaign" he concluded "we are betraying our two comrades in jail".

Ted Knight, chairman of Norwood CLP, then urged that "Reg Prentice (who has referred to the pickets as criminals) should be removed from the T & G WU parliamentary panel and from the PLP".

The next stage in the campaign, the meeting decided, was a one-day general strike, and a resolution was adopted calling on the TUC "to organise a one-day stoppage of work in protest against the continued imprisonment of Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson."

These resolutions all recognise that what happened on the 14th wasn't the most the TUC could do. IT WAS THE LEAST. The TUC is committed to campaign for the release of the 2 "by all means necessary" and implicitly that means WITH ALL HASTE. The fact is that the march and lobby were forced on them, and were half-heartedly organised.

Reliance on the TUC would therefore be a gross disservice to Warren and Tomlinson, and to the whole trade union movement. Unofficial action got them to move on the 14th. Unofficial and local action must continue at all levels. Without it there will be no more official action — however many resolutions are passed.

LIVERPOOL. Trades Council, meeting on 16th January, voted to call a Conference of Shop Stewards to discuss further action to free the Shrewsbury Two. The conference will be held on Sunday February 9th and a notice convening it will be issued soon by the Executive. It is not planned to be on the same scale as the two previous national conferences called by LTC, but if the response is big enough it could prove to be the focus for the next step in the campaign.

Trade unionists wanting further information, credentials etc should contact the Trades Council secretary Simon Fraser at 33 Hatton Garden, Liverpool 3.

Pacifists face jail threat

AMONG the thousands who will demonstrate next weekend calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, will be some of the 14 people facing heavy terms of imprisonment for their part in the campaign.

The 14 are members of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, and they have been charged with conspiracy and with possession of a leaflet addressed to British soldiers which apparently contravenes the Incitement to Disaffection Act.

The BWNIC points out that this Act virtually forbids pacifist literature, as it might make a soldier change his mind about being a soldier. At the time it was passed a leading lawyer called it "the most daring encroachment on the liberty of the subject... yet attempted", and until very recently there have been very few prosecutions under it.

However, last May Pat Arrowsmith was sentenced to 18 months under the Act, and released two months ago on a

technicality. But despite the clamour against its use, the 14 people now charged were arrested for possession of a similar leaflet, which is addressed to soldiers already having doubts about the role they are playing in Ireland, and gives information on ways of leaving the army.

The 14 face up to two years for possession of the leaflet and a possible life imprisonment for conspiracy to contravene the Incitement Act. The case involves the issues of the right of people to communicate with each other and with soldiers, the right of soldiers to communicate with people outside the Forces, and the right to get out of their jobs. And the use of conspiracy charges, at a time when even Law & Order Home Secretary Jenkins is "disturbed" about its wide use.

And of course it involves the whole question of the encroachment on civil liberties and repression of the political opposition to the troops' presence in Ireland.

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND! REMEMBER BLOODY SUNDAY!

Saturday February 1st
1.30pm Troops Out Movement rally at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (Holborn Tube). Speakers include Mike Cooley, Bernadette McAliskey.
5pm: Torchlight march from Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.

A defence campaign has now been formed. It meets regularly on Friday nights at 8pm at 6 Endleigh Street London WC1, and there will be a specially enlarged campaign meeting there on February 14th at 7. And on Monday 3rd February they are holding a public meeting in Committee Room 6 at the House of Commons starting at 7pm, demanding that the charges be dropped.