

# WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1972 ● No. 693 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

'This could be breakdown' as miners see Heath

## DEADLOCK OVER PIT PAY

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT DAVID MAUDE

IN A dramatic move after over nearly 11 hours of talks at the Department of Employment last night, the entire executive of the National Union of Mineworkers went to Downing St to see premier Edward Heath.

As he left the Employment Department, general secretary Lawrence Daly said they were insisting on the extra £1 for surfacemen and low-paid underground workers.

Asked if this meant a breakdown, he said: 'This could possibly be so. We will have to see what Mr. Heath says.'

They are the first group of workers ever to see Heath during a strike. The Cabinet was in session when they got their call.

Earlier the union men were encouraged in their push for more pay by a concession from the Coal Board of an extra week's holiday.

The Board also granted adult rate at 18.

These were both aspects of the original claim on which Wilberforce made no specific recommendation.

Besides the position of low-paid workers, many miners are also dissatisfied that Lord Wilberforce and his team have done little more than place them back where they were in the pay league table in the early 1960s.

Department of Employment officials were last night trying to save part of the government's face by warning of a public opinion backlash against

the miners if they pushed their luck too far.

At 10 a.m. yesterday NUM President Joe Gormley and secretary Lawrence went with the TUC secretary Victor Feather to Carr's St James Square headquarters.

Coal Board chairman Derek Ezra arrived there with Confederation of British Industry director-general W. O. Campbell Adamson.

They were all given a copy of the inquiry report drawn up by Lord Wilberforce. He recommends increases of £5 on the surface, £6 underground and £4.50 at the face in a 16-month deal backdated to November 1 last.

But the report contains the clearest warning that the settlement will be paid for in miners' jobs next year.

In the original claim, the miners demanded £8 for surface workers, £9 for underground men and £5 for those at the face. They also wanted better holidays and adult rates for 17,000 under 18 miners—on which the inquiry team makes no recommendation.

The proposed deal would end on February 28, 1973, but the start of negotiations in November would not be ruled out.

While there are no specific productivity schemes,

the report says that the Coal Board and the union should start talks by the end of March on a new productivity scheme.

Talks should be completed by September.

Lord Wilberforce and his team also issue a warning that the future of jobs in the industry will depend on raising productivity.

They throw into the government's court the responsibility of finding the money to pay for the settlement. And they say that the extent to which the added cost will be reflected in price increases will depend on the rate at which productivity rises.

It is here that the threat of pit closures becomes specific.

There is no 'special magic', the report says in the current output level of 130-140 million tons a year.

'Contraction, if it must come, would reflect the closure of the least efficient collieries and greater concentration on those operating at a profit.'

While immediate closures are unlikely because of the Coal Board's desire to rebuild its stocks, these would certainly start again in earnest next year.

● COALFIELD COMMENT p.10. WILBERFORCE AND WAGES TABLE p.12.



Leaving the Department of Employment for Downing St last night, miners' leaders Joe Gormley and Lawrence Daly. Daly said they were still pressing for £6 and £7 for underground and surface workers.

### Miss Devlin faces jail

INDEPENDENT MP for Mid-Ulster Bernadette Devlin was yesterday sentenced—for a second time—to six months' imprisonment. She was appearing in Belfast along with 12 other civil rights marchers for taking part in an illegal march on Christmas Day 1971.

All 13 have been released on £100 bail pending appeal.

Miss Devlin was last in prison in 1970 for throwing stones at troops in Londonderry.

In an unsworn statement, Miss Devlin said: 'I have been tried before heavily armed police and army—the forces of British imperialism.'

She referred to 600 internees and political prisoners and said: 'I contend that the law in this state is itself illegal. Her actions had been legal and justified.'

### Three US jets shot down

US SOURCES admitted yesterday that three supersonic jets had been lost in the raids over N Vietnam intended to destroy 103 mm field guns moving S. All six crewmen are listed as missing.

The jets were hit by surface-to-air missiles. The US command claimed that seven field guns, two surface-to-air missile sites and five AA guns were damaged or destroyed.



THREE OF THE YS MARCHERS LOOK AT A PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE JARROW CRUSADE

## Jarrow's Labour mayor welcomes YS jobs marchers

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE MAYOR of Jarrow, Don Dixon, has given his full support to the Glasgow-London Right-to-Work march which yesterday passed through his town, again hit by disastrous levels of unemployment.

At a public meeting at the South Shields Town Hall, Mayor Dixon attacked the local Labour Party for attempting to sabotage the march.

He apologised to the packed meeting that he had been unable to arrange a reception for the marchers, who are on the 11th day of their long walk to London.

'Apparently if it had been the Young Fascists movement or the Young Tories, I could have had a reception for them, but not the Young Socialists', complained Mayor Dixon.

In 1936 it was the Jarrow jobs crusade which became the focus of world-wide publicity when unemployed men marched to parliament and Downing St. (See Stephen John's diary p.3.)

Today two more marches start from Liverpool and Swansea to converge on London on March 12 for the mass rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley. (See Liverpool and Swansea articles pp.2 & 3 and What we think.) Support continued to pour in for the campaign.

LIVERPOOL  
AND  
SWANSEA  
MARCHES  
START  
THIS  
WEEKEND

Details on  
pages 2 & 3

# workers press

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1972 ● No. 693 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

## 'This could be breakdown' as miners see Heath

# DEADLOCK OVER PIT PAY

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT DAVID MAUDE

IN A dramatic move after over nearly 11 hours of talks at the Department of Employment last night, the entire executive of the National Union of Mineworkers went to Downing St to see premier Edward Heath.

As he left the Employment Department, general secretary Lawrence Daly said they were insisting on the extra £1 for surfacemen and low-paid underground workers.

Asked if this meant a breakdown, he said: 'This could possibly be so. We will have to see what Mr. Heath says.'

They are the first group of workers ever to see Heath during a strike. The Cabinet was in session when they got their call.

Earlier the union men were encouraged in their push for more pay by a concession from the Coal Board of an extra week's holiday.

The Board also granted adult rate at 18.

These were both aspects of the original claim on which Wilberforce made no specific recommendation.

Besides the position of low-paid workers, many miners are also dissatisfied that Lord Wilberforce and his team have done little more than place them back where they were in the pay league table in the early 1960s.

Department of Employment officials were last night trying to save part of the government's face by warning of a public opinion backlash against

the miners if they pushed their luck too far.

At 10 a.m. yesterday NUM President Joe Gormley and secretary Lawrence went with the TUC secretary Victor Feather to Carr's St James Square headquarters.

Coal Board chairman Derek Ezra arrived there with Confederation of British Industry director-general W. O. Campbell Adamson.

They were all given a copy of the inquiry report drawn up by Lord Wilberforce. He recommends increases of £5 on the surface, £6 underground and £4.50 at the face in a 16-month deal backdated to November 1 last.

But the report contains the clearest warning that the settlement will be paid for in miners' jobs next year.

In the original claim, the miners demanded £8 for surface workers, £9 for underground men and £5 for those at the face. They also wanted better holidays and adult rates for 17,000 under 18 miners—on which the inquiry team makes no recommendation.

The proposed deal would end on February 28, 1973, but the start of negotiations in November would not be ruled out.

While there are no specific productivity schemes,

the report says that the Coal Board and the union should start talks by the end of March on a new productivity scheme.

Talks should be completed by September.

Lord Wilberforce and his team also issue a warning that the future of jobs in the industry will depend on raising productivity.

They throw into the government's court the responsibility of finding the money to pay for the settlement. And they say that the extent to which the added cost will be reflected in price increases will depend on the rate at which productivity rises.

It is here that the threat of pit closures becomes specific.

There is no 'special magic', the report says in the current output level of 130-140 million tons a year.

'Contraction, if it must come, would reflect the closure of the least efficient collieries and greater concentration on those operating at a profit.'

While immediate closures are unlikely because of the Coal Board's desire to rebuild its stocks, these would certainly start again in earnest next year.

● COALFIELD COMMENT p.10. WILBERFORCE AND WAGES TABLE p.12.



Leaving the Department of Employment for Downing St last night, miners' leaders Joe Gormley and Lawrence Daly. Daly said they were still pressing for £6 and £7 for underground and surface workers.

## Miss Devlin faces jail

INDEPENDENT MP for Mid-Ulster Bernadette Devlin was yesterday sentenced—for a second time—to six months' imprisonment. She was appearing in Belfast along with 12 other civil rights marchers for taking part in an illegal march on Christmas Day 1971.

All 13 have been released on £100 bail pending appeal.

Miss Devlin was last in prison in 1970 for throwing stones at troops in Londonderry.

In an unsworn statement, Miss Devlin said: 'I have been tried before heavily armed police and army—the forces of British imperialism.'

She referred to 600 internees and political prisoners and said: 'I contend that the law in this state is itself illegal. Her actions had been legal and justified.'

## Three US jets shot down

US SOURCES admitted yesterday that three supersonic jets had been lost in the raids over N Vietnam intended to destroy 103 mm field guns moving S. All six crewmen are listed as missing.

The jets were hit by surface-to-air missiles. The US command claimed that seven field guns, two surface-to-air missile sites and five AA guns were damaged or destroyed.



THREE OF THE YS MARCHERS LOOK AT A PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE JARROW CRUSADE

## Jarrow's Labour mayor welcomes YS jobs marchers

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE MAYOR of Jarrow, Don Dixon, has given his full support to the Glasgow-London Right-to-Work march which yesterday passed through his town, again hit by disastrous levels of unemployment.

At a public meeting at the South Shields Town Hall, Mayor Dixon attacked the local Labour Party for attempting to sabotage the march.

He apologised to the packed meeting that he had been unable to arrange a reception for the marchers, who are on the 11th day of their long walk to London.

'Apparently if it had been the Young Fascists movement or the Young Tories, I could have had a reception for them, but not the Young Socialists', complained Mayor Dixon.

In 1936 it was the Jarrow jobs crusade which became the focus of world-wide publicity when unemployed men marched to parliament and Downing St. (See Stephen John's diary p.3.)

Today two more marches start from Liverpool and Swansea to converge on London on March 12 for the mass rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley. (See Liverpool and Swansea articles pp.2 & 3 and What we think.) Support continued to pour in for the campaign.

LIVERPOOL  
AND  
SWANSEA  
MARCHES  
START  
THIS  
WEEKEND

Details on  
pages 2 & 3

AROUND THE WORLD

# HASSAN TIGHTENS GRIP ON CONSTITUTION

IN AN attempt to counter growing opposition to his regime, King Hassan II of Morocco has announced a new constitution which is to be submitted to referendum on March 1.

Under the proposed constitution, the King will retain power to appoint the government and to dismiss parliament. The King is making an attempt to broaden the basis of his regime, which was badly shaken by the attempted military coup last July. To this end, he has been having consultations with some opposition leaders.

University students have been

on strike throughout the country demanding educational reforms and the release of arrested students and professors.

Referring to the strike the King said in a broadcast: 'Demonstrations do not frighten us, we are ready to discuss things, but never under coercion from wherever it may come.'

# EIGHT PARTIES IN CHILE'S 'UNITED LEFT'

EIGHT parties of the Popular Unity coalition which backs President Salvador Allende's government in Chile have supported the call for a United Left Party to fight next year's elections.

The plan is contained in a review of the government's record and proposals for the future which are contained in what is known as the 'Arrayan Document'.

The 'unity' declaration comes after Allende's shift to the right with the broadening of his government. It is strongly supported by the Communist Party which describes it as the most important document after the government programme. It blames faulty government propaganda and not the failure to

rouse the masses, for the recent by-election defeats.

A letter of agreement signed by the Chilean government with US banks sets stiff conditions for re-financing the country's heavy foreign debts. Chile is to receive two \$300m credits, at between 6 and 7 per cent interest, to enable payments on existing debts to be met.

The new credit continues the old policy of contracting new debts to pay off old ones and increases Chile's dependence on US finance.

Allende's 'moderation' policy reflects his ties with world capitalism.

Chile's European creditors have offered a stand-by credit instead of a re-funding of the debt, which the government hoped for.

# MARTIAL LAW STAYS IN PAKISTAN

MARTIAL law in Pakistan will have to continue for some time, says the policy-making body of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's ruling People's Party.

This was announced after a meeting of the party's central committee on February 17 chaired by Bhutto himself. Strong demands had been made in the press and by opposition parties that the state of martial

law should be ended.

Minister of the Interior, Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, said martial law should continue, in view of the continuing threat of aggression, the need for basic reforms and to deal with the aftermath of the war with India.

Bhutto had previously promised to lift martial law and restore democracy before the end of the year.

# ITALY: MINORITY GOVT

A MINORITY Christian Democrat government has been formed in Italy under right-wing Giulio Andreotti as a stage in the preparation for a General Election.

The inability to form a new coalition majority government reflects the growing tension in class relations resulting from the slump which grips the country's industry. It may mean the end of the parliamentary alliances between the Christian Democrats and the socialist parties which have been the basis for government since the formation of the Republic 26 years ago.

If so, it will be a major turning point in Italy's political his-

tory, opening a new period of stormy class struggles with the danger of a fascist revival.

## Ochetto freed

ITALIAN journalist Valerio Ochetto has been released by the Czech authorities and expelled from the country after being held in jail for a month. He said that international pressure led by his journalist colleagues in Italy had played a big part in his release. Documents referring to the Czech opposition had been taken from him and not returned.

# EMPHASIS ON STATE FARMS

INCREASED emphasis on state farms in the Soviet Union reflects the difficulties experienced in maintaining food supplies. The Russian Federation is now to have its own Ministry of State Farms.

The number of state farms doubled during the 1960s and numbered 15,000 in 1970 against 33,600 collective farms. State farms employ hired workers while the collective farms are co-operative undertakings.

Although the bureaucracy exercises control over the collective farms through the farm chairman, it has much tighter

control over the state farms. Many concessions have had to be made to the collective farm peasantry in recent years to counter resentment which has never disappeared since the forced collectivization carried out by Stalin in the most brutal way in the 1930s.

This year's grain harvest is likely to be seriously reduced as a result of frost damage which has affected about one third of the winter wheat crop. A short-fall in the 195 million tons anticipated harvest for 1972 could have a serious effect on the whole Soviet economy.

# WHAT WE THINK



JARROW MEN ON THE MARCH IN THE 1930s

# PROSCRIBING UNEMPLOYMENT

THE MAYOR of Jarrow, shipwright Don Dixon, has publicly rebuked local Labour Party leaders who opposed the Right-to-Work march (see front page). Jarrow is synonymous with unemployment. In 1932, 80 per cent of its population was out of work. Today the NE again lives under the shadow of the dole.

How remote from this is the northern group of Labour MPs, which opposed the march? How aloof is the NE Labour Party agent, Mr Ron Evers, who denounced the march in the Thomson House press?

How detached is Sunderland's Labour MP, Gordon Bagier, who could go junketing in the colonel's Greece in 1969, but who declares in 1972 that he 'wants nothing to do with' the unemployed youth on the march?

And how concerned is the so-called 'Militant' group which combined with the right wing in Carlisle in an attempt to deny the marchers accommodation and a meeting hall? (See p. 12. Two letters for information.)

All over the country support for the march is flooding in. With the Tories just avoiding defeat on the Common Market, with the aggressive mood of the miners revealing the fighting spirit of the whole working class, a powerful campaign linking unemployment to these issues could undoubtedly bring down the government.

Workers know this. And they know that if this is not done, the 1930s will be back again. That is why Labour Party—and Communist Party—members throughout the length and breadth of Britain are ignoring the opposition of their leaders and voting money and support for the marchers.

As the marches head for London from Glasgow, Swansea and Liverpool, hundreds of Labour Party members will join them, will provide food and accommodation, will crowd into their meetings. Thousands more will applaud as they march through the big cities.

And all the right wing and their 'Tame Tom' friends in the renegade 'Trotskyist' 'Militant' group can do is whine that the marches are organized by a 'proscribed organization'. So what?

As Newcastle Trades Council secretary Gordon Steel said: 'You and only you are travelling throughout the country and campaigning. I back it and I am speaking as a member of the Labour Party.'

**GORDON STEEL AND DON DIXON ARE THE REAL VOICE OF THE LABOUR PARTY, OF THE MILLIONS OF WORKING CLASS MEN AND WOMEN WHO BUILT THE PARTY AND VOTE FOR IT. THE LITTLE MEN OF TRANSPORT HOUSE WHO PROSCRIBED THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS DO NOT SPEAK FOR THE WORKING CLASS.**

**SO WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO NOW? PROSCRIBE UNEMPLOYMENT?**

# MERSEY-SIDE RALLIES TODAY

FROM PHILIP WADE IN LIVERPOOL

THE Young Socialists 21-day, 200-mile Liverpool-London Right-to-Work march gets underway today with a big demonstration from the Pier Head led by writers Jim Allen and Neville Smith.

Merseyside trade unionists will join over 60 unemployed youth in a march to St George's Hall for a rally at 3 p.m.

Speakers will be there from Fisher Bendix, Pilkington rank-and-file committee, the dockers, Ford's, the Right-to-Work Committee and the Socialist Labour League. (See details in page 3 advertisement.)

Tory policies have hit Liverpool hard as unemployment has risen 50 per cent in 12 months.

Only yesterday British Rail confirmed the closure of their Liverpool divisional office. Over 800 white-collar workers will lose their jobs.

That is why every leading factory in Merseyside has thrown its weight behind the Young Socialist Right-to-Work march.

Tonight the marchers stay at the Liverpool Free School who have let their premises without charge.

Tomorrow the march proper gets under way at 10 a.m. from the Pier Head. First stop is Kirkby where the Labour Club has given its premises and is laying on a stew for the marchers.

Then it's on to St Helens, where the Pilkington rank-and-file banner and other trade unionists will greet the march.

The NUJ chapel at the 'St Helens Reporter' will also hand over a collection taken in support of the march.

In the evening there will be a chance to see a performance of the play 'The English Revolution'. Produced by Corin Redgrave it had its successful premier in Carlisle on February 13.

# FILM AND TV PEOPLE BEHIND CAMPAIGN

A NUMBER of actors, actresses and television personalities have agreed to give financial and moral support.

They include Billie Whitelaw, star of 'Gumshoe', Valerie Singleton of the BBC series 'Blue Peter', Jane Asher, Kenneth Tynan, Miriam Brickman, Simon Ward and Sian Phillips. Support is also coming from Clive Exton, the television playwright.

The Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians (ACTT) freelance shop has supported the campaign and made a collection towards the march and towards the film of the Glasgow-London section being made by ACTT members.

## Two Trades Councils give cash

The Lambeth Trades Council, which donated £5 early on in the Right-to-Work campaign, has now donated £50.

Hull Trades Council has decided to back the march and made a donation of £2.

Trade unionists entering the fight include the Hull district committee of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

Right-to-Work

# DIARY

By Stephen Johns

WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO WORK



## JARROW'S MAYOR REBUKES LABOURITES

Day 11—South Shields

A STINGING rebuke to local Labour Party leaders who opposed the march was delivered here tonight by the Mayor of Jarrow, Don Dixon.

Speaking to a meeting of marchers, trade unionists and Labour Party members at South Shields Town Hall, Mr Dixon apologised for not laying on a reception when the campaign reached his town.

He said this was because he had not been informed of the march by the Labour Party secretary.

'When I investigated why this was so, I was told that it was because the march was run by a proscribed organization.

'Apparently if it had been the Young Fascists movement or the Young Tories, I could have had a reception for them. But being the Young Socialists this was the position.'

Mr Dixon, a shipwright for Swan Hunters on the Tyne, added that the Labour Party would find it more profitable to examine its rules on bans and proscriptions rather than tamper with Clause 4—the party rule that lays the basis for nationalization.

Dixon's speech marks a big step forward for the campaign. It shows that the battle for the Right-to-Work can win broad support within the Labour Party. It is also more evidence of the increasing isolation of the right-wing in the party.

Our Town Hall meeting was an example of this. With Carlisle, it was the best of the march so far.

The youth stated clearly that unity in action could only be won on the basis of policy and that policy was the fight for the rights of the working class as embodied in the Charter of Basic Rights and the Draft Manifesto of the All Trades Unions Alliance.

The argument stimulated people from all sections of the labour movement to come forward and discuss and even plan for the future with the marchers. This is the aim of the march—a mass mobilization of the working class.

Earlier we went to Jarrow which was a great moment for us all. We reached the town at 2 p.m. after a factory gate meeting at Reyrolles in Hebburn (the workers there have donated £100).

Walking along the Tyne was a grim reminder of the days when four out of every five Jarrow people were on the streets without a job. Today the riverside looks derelict and the cranes along the waterfront idle and rusty.

The Palmer's dock closed recently. This is ironical because it was the closure of the Palmer's shipyard that murdered the town in the early 1930s.

But the response from the Jarrow people was magnificent. When he heard of the march, the mayor quickly laid on a tea for us and all the trades people came forward and gave food.

We thank one butcher in particular. He gave enough sausages and liver to give the marchers a good breakfast the next day.

A two-hour collection in the town raised £20 and we got another £10 from South Shields, plus a donation at our meeting.

South Shields Trades Council escorted us to their town.



THE MARCH LEAVES NEWCASTLE AND CROSSES THE RIVER TYNE

## MIDLANDS SUPPORT GROWING

FROM the Birmingham area comes news of widespread support for the Young Socialists' Right-to-Work campaign.

At the Lucas Shaftsmoor lane plant, the night shift AUEW shop stewards' committee has voted to send a delegation to meet the marchers at the Birmingham boundary and to have a special banner made for the occasion. The engineers' joint shop stewards' committee at Fort Dunlop in Birmingham have donated £8.50.

The AUEW shop stewards' committee at Rover's, Tyseley,

Birmingham, plant have agreed to donate £5.

The Transport and General Workers' Union branch at Rubery Owen, Darlaston, Staffordshire, have donated £10.

The T&GWU branch at Coventry Radiator have donated £5, and the Walsall AUEW constructional section branch has collected £3.

The students' union at Wolverhampton Polytechnic has voted to march and join a demonstration of welcome as the marchers pass through the town.

They have also voted the proceeds of two discotheques to the Right-to-Work campaign.

Students at the London Film School are sending a five-man delegation to the mass rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley, on March 12.

They have already collected £7.21 to help finance the unemployed marchers and hope to make it up to £25 by March 12.

Wolverhampton Trades Council pledged support at its last meeting and made an initial donation of £10 to the campaign.

## NO CHANGE FOR SWANSEA DOLE YOUTH

FROM IAN YEATS IN SWANSEA

AS S WALES Young Socialists set out to march to London today from Swansea, the city faces its grimmest jobs crisis since the war.

And Swansea Corporation's principal careers officer, Mr N. G. Proud, told Workers Press in a special interview that unskilled youth thrown on the dole today stood no chance of a job in the foreseeable future.

Nearly 6 per cent of the city's labour force, 4,342 people, are out of work this month with a further 1,200 redundancies forecast by March 1.

In the Swansea and Amman Valleys the figure is even higher at 7.3 per cent.

Big sackings at BP's Baglan Bay site, from Gorseinon Press works and Swansea Vale works have forced the figures upwards dramatically.

Now the works council at the nearby Margam Abbey steel complex at Port Talbot has

warned that steel prospects could lead to stagnation at the works with severe consequences for towns within a 20-mile radius.

The plight of young people between 15 and 18 is extremely grave. Three per cent, or 303 of the city's youth, are on the dole living on £3.60 a week.

Mr Proud said: 'Labouring jobs are ceasing to exist. A few years ago a boy could always get a job labouring in the factories, on the railways or on building sites.'

'There were quite a lot of pushing or carrying jobs. But automation has swept this sort of job away and for these boys the prospect is very grim. The longer a boy is out of work, the less chance he's got.'

'Employers are suspicious of someone who hasn't worked for six months or more because they think his attitude to work will have deteriorated.'

Slump is being written in large

letters across the face of Swansea and its catchment-areas with 'For Sale' signs, shuttered factories and lengthening dole queues daily.

Eighty per cent of Welsh business employs under 50 and those small firms which haven't shut down have led a ruthless rationalization which has extended throughout Welsh industry, jacking up productivity and sacking mostly unskilled labour.

Until recently new factories employed mainly women while more and more men lost their jobs. But Swansea unemployed youth are for the first time divided equally between the sexes.

Support for today's Right-to-Work march has come from the Transport and General Workers' Union, National Union of Railwaymen and Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers throughout the area.

The 40 marchers will be the centre of a jobs rally in the city today before going on to University College where they will stay the night ready for the first full day's march to Neath, on Sunday morning.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-WORK CAMPAIGN

RALLIES to launch SWANSEA and LIVERPOOL marches

THIS SATURDAY FEB 19 St Georges Hall opp. Lime St Stn Liverpool 3 p.m.

Speakers:

- Gerry Caughey (Pilkington rank-and-file committee)
- Bill Measures (Pilkington rank-and-file committee)
- Larry Cavanagh (T&GWU dock steward)
- Bernard Bradley (Ford's convenor)
- Jack Spriggs (Convenor Fisher Bendix)
- Cliff Slaughter (SLL Central Committee)
- Christine Smith (YS leader of Liverpool march)

YMCA

SWANSEA 3 p.m. SLL, YS and trade union speakers

Liverpool march arrives in

ST HELENS

for a rally on

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20 Town Hall, 7 p.m.

see our documentary play

'THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION'

Directed by Corin Redgrave Written by Tom Kempinski followed by a meeting

Speakers:

- Gerry Caughey, Christine Smith and Gerry Healy, (National Secretary of the Socialist Labour League)

LONDON YOUNG SOCIALISTS'

Right-to-Work Meetings

Tuesday February 22, 8 p.m. T&GWU Offices, 173, Clapham Road, SW9

Wednesday February 23, 8 p.m. Woolwich Town Hall (public hall) Market St, SE 18

Thursday February 24, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Rd, S Croydon

Thursday February 24 8 p.m. Recreation Centre, Old Bedford Rd, Luton.

# WORKERS RIGHTS

BY BERNARD FRANKS

## YOUR RIGHTS IN A DISPUTE

Employers who introduce measures which give workers no alternative but to take industrial action to defend rights and conditions, get powerful strike-breaking support from the state.

Directly, through the law as laid down in the Tory Industrial Relations Act. Indirectly, through vindictive bias and discrimination against strikers by the social security system.

### WEAKEN

The dispute may result entirely from deliberate provocation by the employer to weaken workplace organization and hold down pay, or to create opportunities for sacking workers and closing down factories, but the social security officials are not concerned with this side of the situation. Their job is to penalize the worker and help break the strike.

Workers involved in a trade dispute are disqualified from drawing unemployment benefit. They are also disqualified from receiving supplementary benefit for their own requirements, but can claim for a wife, children and other dependants.

The 1966 Social Security Act says that, 'his requirements for that period shall be disregarded for the purpose of benefit except so far as they include the requirement to provide for any other person'. (Section 10.)

A man on strike with a wife not working and three children aged 14, 11, four, paying rent of £2.50 a week is credited with the following, before deductions:

For the husband .....	nothing
For the wife .....	£4.60
(She is treated as a dependant non-householder, in this case over 21.)	
For child aged 14 .....	£3
aged 11 .....	£2.45
aged 4 .....	£1.70
Rent .....	£2.50
Assistance grant total ...	£14.25

Since new legislation in November 1971, this benefit is cut by any amount over £1 the striker receives from strike pay or tax refund.

The new Tory Social Security Act states that this shall be treated as income and taken into account as such: 'tax deducted from his emoluments' and 'any payment he receives or is entitled to obtain [whether from a trade union or any other source] by reason of being without employment for any period during a stoppage of work due to a trade dispute at his place of employment'.

Deductions from benefit for the wife's earnings, savings, family allowances, etc. are made in the same way as for the sick and unemployed on supplementary benefit as previously.

If, in the above example the family had the following income—husband's strike pay £4 a week, family allowance £1.90 a week—then the resulting deductions from the supplementary benefit paid would be:

For husband's strike pay ...	£3
(The amount of strike pay or tax refund over £1.)	
For family allowance .....	£1.90
Total deductions .....	£4.90

In the above case the actual supplementary benefit payment to the family would be £9.35 (£14.25 minus £4.90). Before the new law they would have received £12.35.

Family payments are made to the striker if he is the applicant, even though he himself is disqualified. Rent allowance is pay-



able, but in general a tough line is taken with workers involved in a dispute.

Payments may be withheld or reduced during the first few weeks, on the basis that there should be enough money left from previous earnings to cover this period—a ludicrous view, as in many cases the workers concerned are on strike precisely because wages do not provide enough, even to sustain a weekly budget, never mind saving.

### MERITS

Workers on strike also have more difficulty than most in discovering what their rights are. Official leaflets are available covering most reasons for claiming, but not for being involved in a dispute. On inquiry, one official explained: 'There is no special material of this kind published to explain what is due to strikers . . . every case is dealt with on its individual

merits . . . there is no general application.'

On the other hand, officialdom turns up all manner of regulations and conditions which bar strikers from benefit. But the 1966 Act does not entirely close the door to workers involved in a dispute, though use of undefined terms like payment in case of 'urgent requirement' leaves even wider 'powers of discretion' for officials to make or withhold payment.

Payments to strikers without dependants—by far the worst-off as they are totally without income—are technically available.

The 'Supplementary Benefits Handbook' states: 'Although a person involved in a trade dispute is disqualified from receiving supplementary benefit to meet his own requirements, the Commission are empowered under the Act [Section 13 (1)] to pay benefit if it is urgently required. In making such a payment the Commission are not bound by the normal rules of assessment and any benefit that is paid is limited to what is strictly neces-

sary to meet urgent requirements.'

The secret document which controls the operation of the social security system—the 'A' Code—makes the same point as follows:

'Section 9 (3) [of the 1966 Social Security Act] disqualifies a striker for assistance to meet his own needs. But notwithstanding the disqualification, Section 11 (1) permits the Board to grant assistance in an urgent case [which is not recoverable] . . . assistance must accordingly be granted if the need is urgent, but in the light of the disqualifying provision, it should be limited to the sum necessary to remove the urgent need.' (Clause 4879.)

Rent payments are said to be available to a striker with no dependants only where, without them, the claimant would come under a notice to quit, or where a landlord or landlady would face 'distinct hardship to await payment of arrears until the applicant resumes work'. (Clause 4880 'A' Code.)

The fact is that any single

worker with no dependants who is on strike is immediately forced into straightened circumstances in which payment of a living allowance and rent is required from the first day.

For example, many telephonists involved in last year's postal strike found themselves in just this desperate situation and there is tremendous anger among the mining communities about single men scraping an existence during the strike.

However, even where a sum is paid to alleviate hardship, no permanent arrangement is made to cover the recurrence of the emergency. The 'A' Code states:

'Only a single immediate payment should be issued on any application, the applicant being left to make further representation himself if he is again in need of assistance. Where no payment seems justified, the applicant should be told orally. If he makes any complaint, Form B/O.3A, giving right of appeal should be issued.'

### ADDITION

It should be stressed here that additions are continually being made to the 'A' and 'AX' Codes by means of special 'circulars' containing new instructions. In this way operation of the payment system and the means test can be tightened up drastically, without anyone outside the service knowing about it.

Workers laid off as a result of a dispute, but not directly involved in it, can claim unemployment or supplementary benefits for themselves and their families in the normal way. However, the Act expects them to prove that they are not participating in, financing or directly interested in the trade dispute and that they do not belong to the involved grade or class of workers in the company which is in dispute.

According to the 'A' Code, officials do check on the proof given. Clause 4832 states:

'If there is a trade dispute, particulars of the classes of persons involved should be obtained from the local insurance office. The information will be passed to the receptionist [at the Social Security office], who will be given instructions, if necessary, in regard to any classes of persons who are unemployed in consequence of, but are not held to be involved in, the dispute.'

Under the new Act, workers who are unable to prove that they are not participating in the dispute that has caused them to be laid off, will now lose benefit when tax refund is paid, in the same way as the worker who is on strike.

On November 3, 1971, the new Tory strike-breaking Act came into force. Previously, a worker drawing benefit for wife and family had tax rebate and strike pay of up to £4.85 ignored when calculating benefit. This has been reduced to a maximum of £1. According to a report in the 'Financial Times' on October 26, 1971, had the provision been in force during the Ford strike early last year, the amount paid out at that time 'would have been reduced by two-thirds'.

Social Security officials check with the Income Tax people on tax refunds. Under the heading 'Interview', Clause 4858 of the 'A' Code states:

'Particulars of the arrangements for repayment of income tax and the possibility of the employers participating in the arrangements should be obtained from the Inland Revenue Office, the interviewing officer being advised accordingly.'

The new Act is a blatant attempt to win strikes for employers by starving out women and children of strikers. The use made by the Tory government of the social security system to defeat workers must be fought by the unions, and full benefit paid to workers in dispute.

The fact that in most cases strikes remain unofficial and union leaders totally abdicate all responsibilities, precisely when their members are in the sharpest conflict with the employers and the state, shows the correctness of the All Trades Unions Alliance struggle for a totally new revolutionary socialist leadership in the trade union movement, one that is completely involved with aspects of the defence of workers' rights and conditions.

The remaining articles in this series will deal with pensioners' rights.

# BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

## DISCUSSION ON THE ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE DRAFT MANIFESTO

On November 6 last year a national conference of the All Trades Unions Alliance decided to adopt a draft manifesto to transform the Socialist Labour League into a revolutionary party. Since the conference a country-wide discussion has been initiated in League branches, in the ATUA, in the Young Socialists and among Workers Press supporters. Until the Right-to-Work rally at Empire Pool, Wembley on March 12, we intend to carry a full page each day devoted to your comments on the Draft Manifesto. We have received more than 100 contributions to this vital discussion. Now we want at least another 100.

Workers and their families, youth, students and the unemployed are all invited to join in this discussion. If you haven't got a copy of the Draft Manifesto write to Workers Press or contact your local ATUA branch.

**RON PERCY**  
T&GWU shop steward, Export Packing Services, Banbury

I see the economic crisis as the end of capitalism.

They have got to a point where they can't go any further. Capitalism sees the solution as having more people on the dole so that it can frighten those that are working.

In the Common Market they will be able to get cheaper labour the same as they are doing in Germany. It's their last solution to keep capitalism going, to combine in one big monopoly.

The most important action is to get the TUC behind the miners, not just to get their money, but to force this government to resign, which could have been done in 1926.

Up to the moment the TUC leaders have talked and done nothing. I think they will try to get the miners back through a mediator, whom the miners don't want and who will sell them down the river, as were the postmen, previous miners' strikes, the dockers, etc.

The mediator is supposedly neutral, but always on the government's side—Sir or Lord somebody.

This situation calls for new leaders, because the TUC, as it is and always has been, is on the side of the system.

I would see our recent successful nine-day strike at EPS, for alteration of a bad agreement and for a wage increase to offset the rising cost of living, as a big move in what used to be a backward area.

This was the fight for the right to a decent living wage. I saw our fight as part of the fight of the miners, who are leading the

working class, and I wanted to see other factories on strike as well.

Our factory joint shop stewards' committee and the union branch have supported the Right-to-Work march because it is the fight for the basic right. The only way it can be defended goes back to what could have been done in 1926, the forcing out of the Tory government and the return of a Labour government pledged to legislate this Manifesto. But I think none of the present Labour MPs would carry through a socialist policy.

**GEOFFREY HOWELL**  
Building worker, EPTU member, Oxford

I was a delegate to the ATUA conference and I did vote for the Manifesto, because I have been forced either to try and ignore what's going on, or face up to it.

In 1964 the capitalist press screamed that the 1970s would bring a four-day week, six-hour-day and lots of leisure. The problem would be what people would spend their money on.

It was brought to my notice in the 1964 General Election, by the Young Socialists that nothing like that was going to happen, that automation under capitalism would mean speed-up, redundancies and poverty for the working class.

They also warned me of the treachery of the Labour Party at that time and of the sell-out. I didn't choose to believe them.

Wherever I went the 'Newsletter' was there, in pubs and on the street.

During the 1971 Ford strike again the Workers Press was in the lead of the struggle against the sell-out by Evans and the leadership.

For the majority of workers there was now a vacuum in leadership throughout the labour movement. The hostility towards the Common Market and this Heath government was and is creating a frustrated working class all round. The majority believe that this Tory government has to come down—the question is with what are we going to replace it? Which brings us to the Manifesto which is of course as relevant today as in November.

It's the only Manifesto worth building on. I am prepared to give it to somebody to read; this, to me, is committing myself.

The Tories have shown their teeth in Ulster. The difficulty for the working class is that, apart from us, nobody else is telling people that it will happen in this country tomorrow.

I think that the working class is not going to capitulate and go back to the 1930s at a time when the Tories are asking us to go back even further, to the conditions of Hong Kong and other colonial countries, in order for British big business to compete with world trade.

The Right-to-Work march is a sound footing for the beginning of the revolutionary party. It comes at the time of the miners' struggle. This is a real struggle, in which the capitalist press is determined to divide the miners from the rest of the working class.

But for instance workers at Morris's and at Ford's, and generally, think that the miners should earn twice as much as they are earning, regardless of the press.

But the miners' leaders and the TUC have accepted that this Tory government should continue

to stay in for its full term of office despite the damage it is doing. This situation shows the need for revolutionary leadership posed by the Right-to-Work march.

**PETER DOD**  
Russian Studies student, Portsmouth Polytechnic

I agree wholeheartedly with the manifesto.

It provides the only real basis for the struggle to mobilize the working class. The fight is not simply for the right to a decent standard of living, but to seize the revolutionary opportunity, which the crisis in the capitalist system offers, to destroy once and for all the Tory party and to set the working class firmly on the road to building a socialist Britain.

I think it should be stressed that bringing down the Tory government and re-electing a Labour government is only the first step (albeit a most vital step) towards socialism.

Having achieved this initial goal the revolutionary party must not be allowed to relax. It must be prepared to continue the struggle with renewed strength to ensure that every one of the basic rights in the Charter is carried through. Nationalization under workers' control must be a success. We must fight for revolutionary socialism throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

The first thing is to increase the circulation of Workers Press and to fight to turn the miners' strike into a General Strike to defeat the Tories. I think section six of the Manifesto, about building a revolutionary party on the basis of Marxist theory through the Socialist Labour

League, is important here.

Reading Workers Press every day is vital but people should also be prepared to study Marxist theory in greater depth so as to enable the working class to carry out its role in building socialism.

The analysis of the Common Market issue is absolutely right. A Socialist United States of Europe is the real answer. To this end there should be more contact between the activities of the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists and the other Trotskyist groups in Europe. This would strengthen the individual groups and would emphasize their international character.

As a student I should say that students as a whole must become more aware of the importance of the Draft Manifesto. The government is not only attacking the autonomy of students' unions but perhaps, more important, it is taking away their right to a job once they've got their degrees.

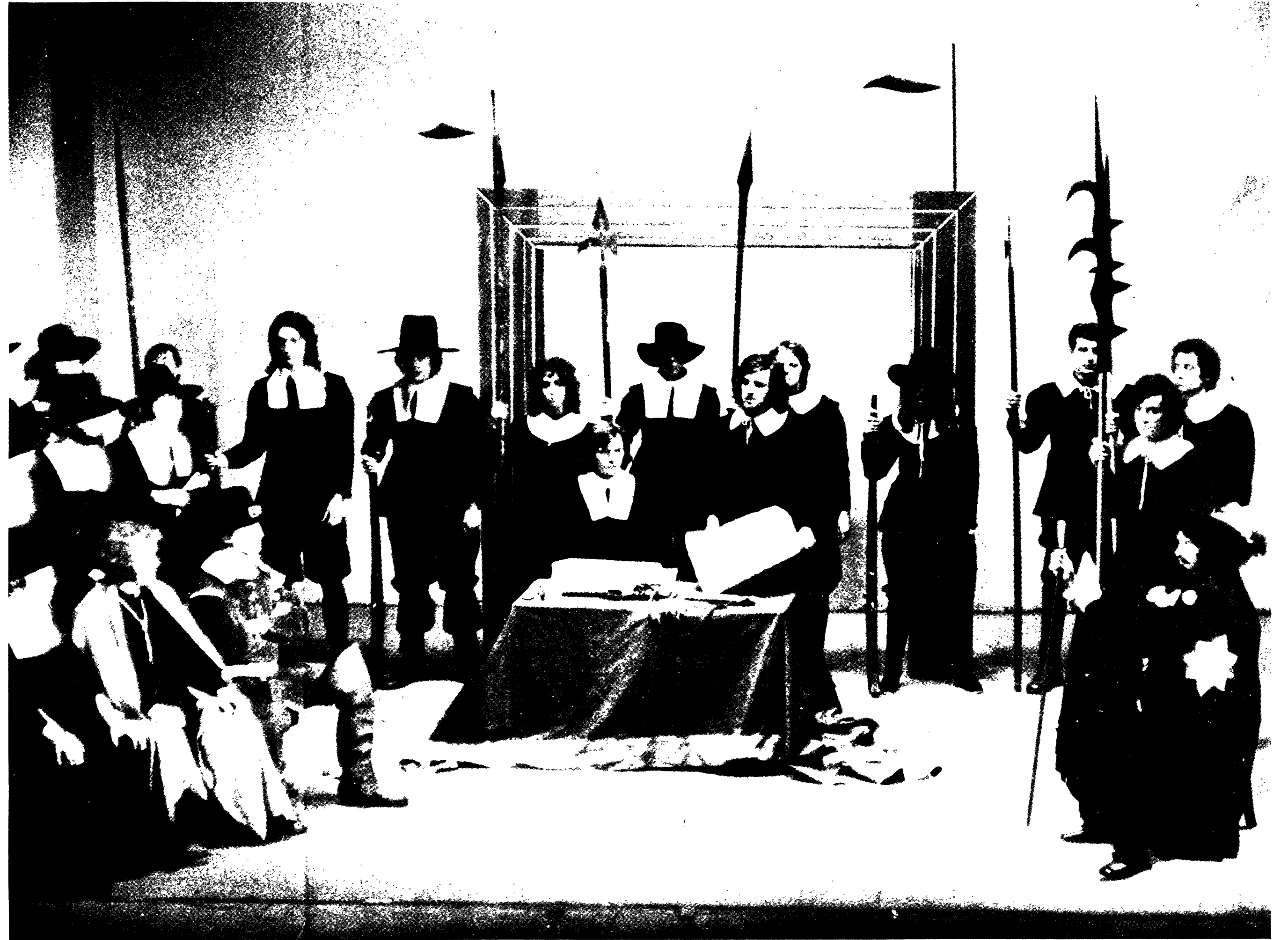
Graduate unemployment is increasing as in every other section of industry. And those who do get jobs have to sell themselves to the capitalist machine and end up in, for example, jobs like advertising, devising ways of making people buy worthless products they don't need.

For many, this is intolerable and working in the Young Socialists to fight for socialism provides them with an opportunity to use their specialized knowledge for something worthwhile and vitally important.

Students have a big role to play in selling Workers Press, organizing meetings and studying Marxist theory.

Young Socialists hold an anti-Tory rally in September 1964, during the period of their expulsion from the Labour party





# THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

## OUR NEW DOCUMENTARY

Tom Kempinski's play 'The English Revolution' had a tremendous reception from an audience of Right-to-Work marchers and local workers in Carlisle on Sunday, February 13.

The production, which was directed by Corin Redgrave will be played in St Helens this weekend at the Town Hall on Sunday, February 20. All those taking part are professional actors who have given their time to present the play during the course of the three Right-to-Work marches.

The play traces the development of the English bourgeoisie in the reigns of Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and Richard II and the class confrontation between Charles I (representing the old feudal order) and Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army.

Scenes here show—Above: An arrogant Charles I defies his government. Top right: His trial by an outraged Parliament. Far right: The tyrant is beheaded. Near right: Cromwell kneels at the head of a united army after ruthlessly dealing with the leftist section of the army—the Levellers.



# PRAGUE PREPARES SHOW TRIALS

BY JOHN SPENCER

At least 100 Czech intellectuals, including relatives of the 1952 Slansky frame-up trial, are being held in prison by the Czechoslovak authorities.

It seems likely that the government of Gustav Husak is planning to bring them to trial in an attempt to crush the persistent opposition to the Soviet invasion of August 1968.

The Soviet Stalinists are themselves carrying out a vicious campaign against the opposition at home, many of whom opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia and demonstrated publicly against it.

They are believed to have put pressure on their Czechoslovak puppets to take similar action against the anti-Stalinists there.

The international character of this campaign is a clear indication that the Czech events of 1968 were only the symptoms of a far deeper crisis which springs from the contradictions between the rule of the bureaucracy and the development of the working class.

The more acute the economic crisis of the capitalist world, the sharper the class struggles in the West, the more unstable and crisis-ridden the bureaucrats become. The Czech workers were solidly opposed to the 1968 invasion and despite the thorough-going purge carried through by the CP leadership, they have not changed their minds.

More and more, both in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy must turn to naked repression to maintain its rule. In Czechoslovakia the leadership enjoys no support beyond a narrow stratum of corrupted bureaucrats. Its main strength is the backing it receives direct from Moscow.

Having purged the centrist leaders of the Prague Spring, Alexander Dubcek, Smrkovsky, Kriegel and their co-thinkers, the bureaucrats, are now turning the full weight of the state against the young militants who were on the movement's left wing.

Rudolf Slansky, whose father was executed 20 years ago as head of the mythical 'anti-state conspiratorial centre', is on record as demanding the restoration of working-class democracy and the formation of workers' councils. With his friend Jan Sling, he organized a protest



Top: Russian tanks set alight in Prague, August 1968. Above: Husak and Brezhnev at Moscow airport.



Dubcek and Smrkovsky

demonstration against the trial of Peter Uhl last year.

Others arrested in the last month include Karel Kosik, a communist since before the war, who was elected to the Party's central committee at the clandestine 14th congress. Also awaiting trial is the editorial board of the journal 'Reporter', which was suppressed in 1969. 'Reporter' published a biography of Trotsky and articles by Isaac Deutscher.

The bureaucracy lives in mortal fear of the truth about its history and the independent organization of workers. Above all it fears Trotskyism as the scientific expression of the workers against their bureaucratic rulers.

The fact that many of those arrested in the current purge are relatives of the Slansky trial

defendants is especially significant.

Like the sons and daughters of the Soviet communists murdered by Stalin, these youth have learnt through bitter experience a burning hatred of bureaucracy and privilege. They will not be silenced by threats and purges, so the Kremlin has set out to put them behind bars, hoping in this way to exorcise the consequences of its past and present crimes.

The general shape of the frame-up being prepared against the opposition is already clear from the recent denunciations of British journalist Nicholas Bethell, broadcast over Slovak television. The broadcast accused him of working for the British secret service. Bethell has a number of contacts with dissidents and it is clear that the next step in the amalgam is to label them 'British spies' too.

The Prague leaders have invited delegates from the most influential W European Communist Parties—the French and the Italian—to see some of the 'evidence' allegedly linking the leaders of the Reform Movement to western intelligence services.

The French Stalinist representative who visited Prague, veteran politburo member

Roland Leroy, was reported to have been somewhat upset by the Husak government's hard line. If he was, he kept it to himself, because the French Communist Party has not condemned the arrests.

The Italian CP has yet to send a delegate as requested, but their paper 'Rinascita' has attacked the arrests of 'those who we consider communists because of their training and their long experience as militants'. The Italian Stalinists are particularly upset because the Czech leaders seem to be on the point of breaking their guarantee that there would be no show-trials.

The fact that a number of western Communist Parties have chosen, for their own opportunist reasons, to oppose the Soviet occupation is a source of some embarrassment to both the Czech and the Soviet Stalinists, and they are clearly applying pressure to bring their 'fraternal' parties into line.

The Czech leadership's attitude—which undoubtedly mirrors that of the Kremlin—was frankly expressed at a secret session of the Party's central committee held on October 21, 1971.

Extracts from a report at this meeting given by Vasil Bilak, a member of both the presidium and the Party secretariat, have

been published in the French newspaper 'Le Monde'.

Bilak is a notorious creature of the Kremlin. He replaced Alexander Dubcek at the head of the Slovak CP when the latter became overall first secretary.

He was accused after the invasion of collaborating with the Russians and was replaced by Gustav Husak. When Dubcek was removed from his Party posts, Bilak was rehabilitated.

He was one of the leaders who organized the puppet 'congress' which reversed the Party's official stance on the Soviet invasion. He even claimed that the Soviet troops had entered Czechoslovakia in response to a mythical 'appeal' from Czech militants. He is nothing more than a Czech mouthpiece for the Soviet Stalinist leaders.

Bilak referred in his speech to the fact that the majority of Communist Parties have supported the present policies of the Czech CP, adding that 'our experience in the fight against opportunism has been of great assistance to them in the fight against opportunism in their own ranks'.

But he added that certain CPs 'believed that they could not revise their incorrect stance

on the Czechoslovak events of 1968 without endangering their unity and weakening their authority among the population'. This is a frank statement of the reasons why some of the Stalinist parties—notably the Italian, British, Spanish and Australian CPs—opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

They want to retain the last tatters of credibility in order the more completely to betray the working class at home. Bilak has a certain sympathy with their problems. 'We must,' he says, 'be patient until life itself with the passage of time shows that right is on our side.'

Bilak's assessment of the 'opposition' from the British and other Communist Parties is quite accurate. Though he speaks of 'differing opinions on a number of questions concerning the programme, strategy and tactics of the international communist movement', he makes it clear that the Czech Stalinists still regard the foreign Stalinists as 'fraternal parties'.

He knows that the British CP leaders and their other Stalinist counterparts are far too deeply implicated in the crimes of the past ever to campaign seriously against the crimes of the present.

CONTINUED ON MONDAY



## U.S. ROUND-UP

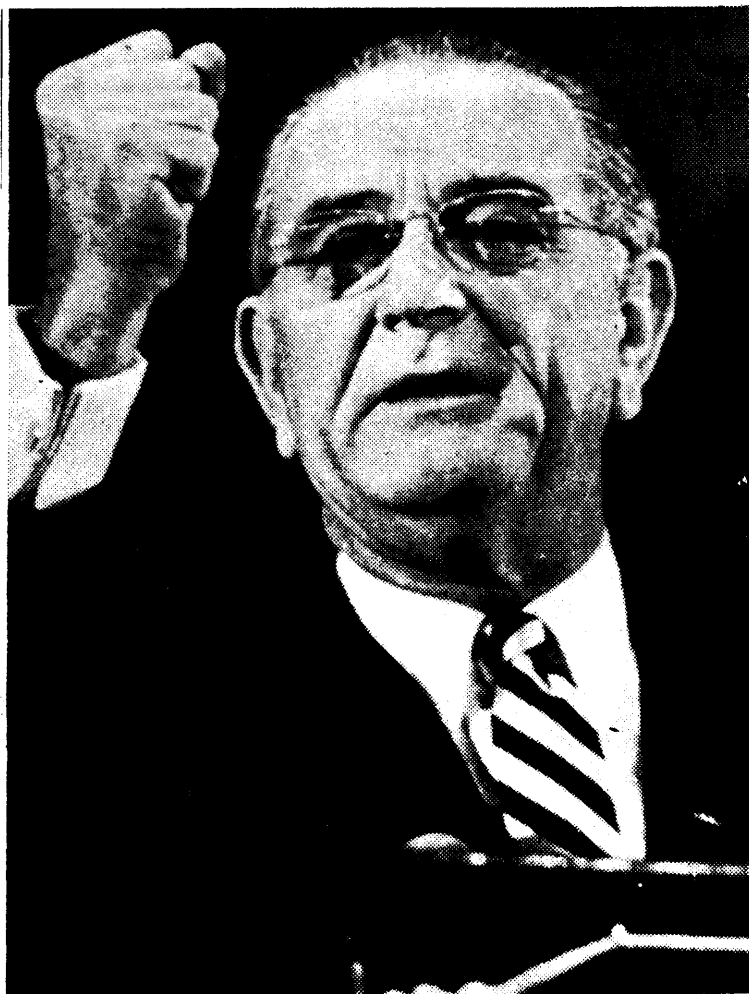
# OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT MOVE BY NIXON

The US ruling class is taking steps to ensure the right to publish freely in newspapers and journals does not reach beyond the point where the government is, so to speak, stripped to its underwear and suffers from indecent exposure.

Six months ago Daniel Ellsberg's Pentagon papers began appearing in the press. They laid bare the long-term preparations by the American bourgeoisie for the Vietnam war and the lies the public had been told about episodes like Tonkin Gulf.

Ellsberg is now on a grand jury indictment in Los Angeles, despite the 'New York Times's' right to publish being upheld by the supreme court.

More recently another journalist, Jack Anderson, syndicated reports from meetings of the national security council on the Indo-Pakistan war, Cambodia and



Johnson, president at the time of the Tonkin Gulf Incident.

other aspects of US foreign policy.

Enough is enough. The right to publish can go too far, especially when the government is involved. And last week the national security council moved to make sure only 'relevant' information got into the hands of the public. Regulations proposed suggest that President Nixon may want to go as far as the British Official Secrets Act which would impose stiff criminal penalties on those who receive classified information, as well as on those who disclose it.

Unfortunately, however, the draft regulations, submitted last month to the Departments of State, Defence and Justice and the Atomic Energy Commission, also found their way into the hands of the 'Washington Post'. Not a good start, then!

Nevertheless, the committee, after one year's work, proposes to abolish special categories of

highly-sensitive material and introduce a '30-year rule', setting the time limit for declassification of all future secret documents. Then the committee goes on to suggest a neat way round that one as well. 'Classified information or material no longer needed in current working files' may be 'promptly destroyed, transferred or retired' to reduce stockpiles of classified documents and cut the costs of handling them.

The committee also lists several ways of tightening up security. One suggests a check is made each year to see that what they had at the beginning of the year corresponds to what they have at the end!

Well, it is obvious the recent leaks have come from high-up sources, some say they include the national security council itself. We may soon expect the Nixon administration to start arresting itself.



David Ellsberg

# SLIT CAR SEATS IN OHIO

General Motors, the world's largest industrial concern, with a turnover higher than the gross national income of Holland, is facing a crisis point in its most automated factory in Ohio.

Workers in the plant are fighting back against the fantastic speed of the line, the fastest in the United States, which is capable of producing 100 cars an hour.

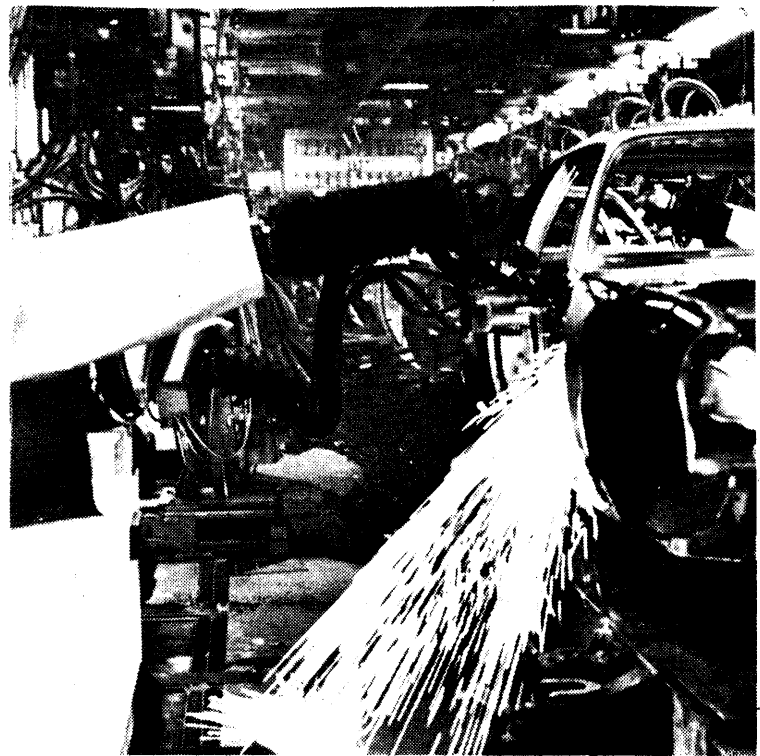
The American press has launched a vilification campaign against the carworkers, accusing them of sabotage and wilful damage to cars. The local United Auto Workers' branch has threatened a strike in retaliation.

Millions of dollars have been invested in the plant by General Motors to a point where the line is virtually 100-per-cent automated.

The assembly line is fitted out with 26 bellows-like armed robots that can bend around corners and that makes some 520 welds in each car.

The workers are the youngest of any GM plant, with an average age of 24 to 25. But now the plant, the only one in the US that turns out subcompact Vegas, has the industry's worst labour problem, and so far it has cost GM about \$40m in lost production.

Cars regularly roll off the line with slit upholstery, scratched paint, dented bodies, bent gear-shift levers, cut ignition wires, and loose or missing bolts. In some cases, keys have broken themselves off right in the lock, apparently jamming it.



Robot 'workers' on the assembly line at General Motors.

And last October an assembly-line control box shed caught fire, causing the line to shut down, much to the relief of the workers.

The plant's repair lot has room for 2,000 cars, but often becomes too crowded to accept more. When that happens the lines stop again and the workers are laid off without pay.

GM's trouble began in mid-1971, about a year after the automated plant was put into operation. When the bugs had been ironed out of the system and the assembly plant consolidated with an adjacent body plant, the firm paid off 800 workers. Those still with jobs then complained about the speed-up, doing extra jobs and the killing pace. GM turned a deaf ear. The number of dam-

aged cars rose.

Last month the local union struck back in a way which made use of the bourgeoisie's own newspapers to turn the tables on GM. They leaked a story that the company was shipping defective Vegas to its dealers, a charge vehemently denied by GM! Gary Bryner, president of UAW Local 1112, said: 'We warned them that we were going to get our story out if they wouldn't work with us.'

The Local has threatened to take a strike vote unless the firm concedes. What the union wants is a redefinition of the work rules that will result in some rehiring and elimination of extra chores, which workers say rush them as the cars move by at an average of one every 36 seconds.

# WORKERS NOTEBOOK

## LIAISON!

There was not a little embarrassment at the London conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions last Saturday.

Frank Clark, convenor of Fine Tubes, where engineers have been on official strike for 88 weeks, made a sharp attack on bureaucratic union leaders who have failed to support the strike.

One particular target of his attack was the Sheffield district of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, which has a 100 per cent membership at a firm called Osborne Steels.

Osborne is supplying the high-quality steel which enables Fine Tubes to continue operating with scab labour.

'We've been ten times to plead with the stewards at this factory, but they still haven't stopped the steel,' Frank Clark said. These comments stung Sheffield district committee member Eddie Keys to an indignant denial. He blamed the Transport and General Workers' Union for the continued supplies of steel at Fine Tubes. 'We have done what we can regarding our own union,' he said.

## NICE

Joe Kenyon, secretary of the Claimants' and Unemployed Workers' Union has been granted £26.15 from the Department of Social Security for himself and his wife.

'I can't understand why they're so nice to me,' said Kenyon in a statement to that forthright, fighting journal of the proletariat the 'News of the World'.

'When a man from the Department came to see me, I told him the clothes I was wearing were not befitting a union boss.'

He got £16. When the visitor called again, Joe told him his wife needed some new clothes. 'Really, she's got to look smart, too.'

There are 1,023,583 people out of work. I wonder if the Social Security is as generous to all of them?

## MATCH

Dodie Burton was getting married. At 23 she had made a 'good' match. She was marrying millionaire Pasco Watson.

Pasco gave Dodie 'an unusual, if slightly ostentatious, wedding present' ('Daily Mail', January 31, 1972).

A £10,000 pair of... wait for it... golden roller skates, with a diamond fitted in each wheel.

During the first week of the strike I met a young miner from the Warwickshire coalfield who was due to get married that weekend.

He told me that even if he had been able to take time off from his picketing duties, he wouldn't be able to afford to get married. 'It's a good thing she supports us all the way,' was his comment.

## TALK

The other day a Workers Press seller met a character wearing a badge proclaiming 'Solidarity with the Miners'.

Intrigued, our seller enquired of the wearer what sort of 'solidarity' he envisaged.

He was told... 'Look, I'm a student of politics. I talk about politics all day so I don't want to talk about them now... Anyway, I'm a member of the Communist Party.' No comment!

## GIFT

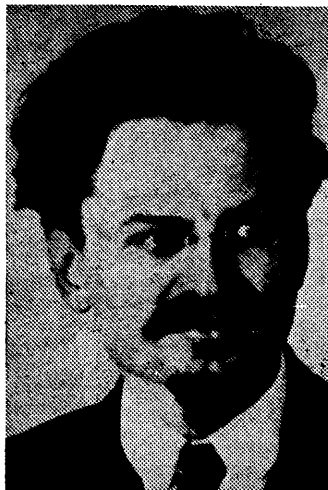
The present Tory government's links with the racist apartheid regime in S Africa are well known. Here's another one.

On the board of Jessel Securities sits Toby Jessel, Tory MP for Twickenham. In the financial year ending June 30, 1971 Jessel Securities gave £2,145 to the Tory party.

On January 24, the 'Financial Times' reported: 'Jessel Securities is planning to expand in S Africa by acquiring a 50-per-cent stake in ES&B Gordon, a wholesaling group.'

Jessel Securities, a rapidly expanding conglomerate, already has a S African subsidiary, Falks Electrical, as well as a 45 per cent holding in Wandrag Asbestos.

# BOOKS



LEON TROTSKY:  
Germany 1931/1932  
Paperback £1.25—cloth £1.87½  
Where is Britain Going?  
Paperback 37p  
Revolution Betrayed  
Paperback 62p—cloth £1.05  
Problems of the Chinese Revolution  
Paperback £1.12½—cloth £1.87½  
Permanent Revolution:  
Results and Prospects  
Paperback 75p  
In Defence of Marxism  
Paperback 75p  
Lessons of October  
Paperback 60p

Postage 10p per book, 3p per pamphlet. Order from:  
NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS  
186a Clapham High Street,  
London SW4 7UG.

# COALFILD COMMENT

## MERTHYR REPLIES BY CALLING SAFETY MEN OUT

FROM IAN YEATS IN S WALES

THERE was mixed response from S Wales miners to yesterday's recommendations from the Wilberforce inquiry.

Miners at the Merthyr Vale lodge—the lodge covering the scene of the Aberfan disaster of 1966—yesterday rejected outright the Wilberforce offer and announced that from today they will be withdrawing all safety men from the pit.

The men say they will continue to organize pickets. No matter what the NUM leadership says, they will continue to fight until the end of the strike.

At their meeting yesterday the Merthyr lodge also voted to support the Young Socialists Right-to-Work campaign and to send a speaker and a delegation when the march comes through Merthyr Tydfil and Aberfan.

Ogilvie lodge secretary Evan Jones said:

'I've got great doubts whether the day-wage men will accept, but as far as the men on the face are concerned it's very reasonable.'

He added: 'I think the ten weeks' back pay to surface and underground workers is bait to get the men back to work, but I think both groups should get at least £7 each.'

It is a question now of whether the Tories will sacrifice their 7 per cent pay norm to get the miners back to work. Said Mr Jones: 'I think they will have to. Robert Carr said the government would pay whatever the Wilberforce inquiry recommended.'

Welsh NUM vice-president Emlyn Williams told me: 'We can make no public statement until after the national executive have considered the inquiry's findings.'

'We came out as a national union and we'll go back as a national union. If they are against it, we will be 100 per cent behind them. If they are for it, we'll go back.'

Blaenant lodge secretary Ben Davis yesterday described the new offer as 'totally unsatisfactory after the sacrifices the miners have made'. He will recommend that it be turned down.

## Surface men still left behind

BY PHILIP WADE

**BERNARD DONAGHY**, secretary of the St Helens miners' panel and Cronton lodge, said: 'On the face of it, it is a tremendous victory. It has driven a line right through Heath's pay policy.'

'But we're suspicious as always as to what might be attached to the deal. There are no ifs and buts—it's a defeat for the Tories. That's two votes of no confidence in 24 hours.'

'The Tories have been given clear orders to get out. But this is the first round.'

'History shows us that the Tories buy people off and prepare for the next time. Now they'll try and pick on weaker sections like the railwaymen. We're pledged to give our full support to their struggle against the government.'

Malcolm Gregory, acting president of Bold colliery, commented: 'The offer for underground men is reasonable. But for the surface men it is disgusting.'

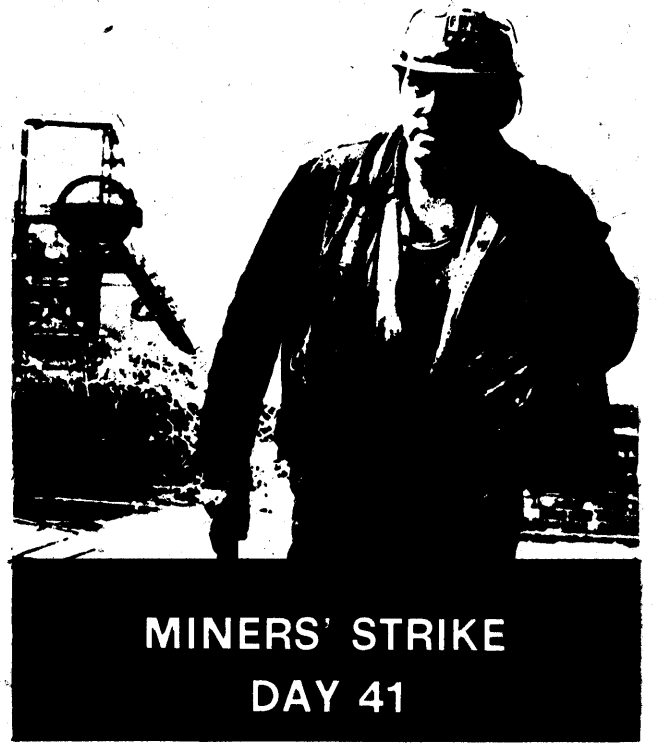
'All they got was 62 per cent of their original claim. I don't know whether they'll accept it.'

'Another objection is that the agreement is for 16 months. The cost of living will go up faster before that period is out. We should put in another claim in November.'

'It's a pity the Tories are still in. I think the TUC should have called a national strike. But it's a victory in the sense that we smashed the Tories' wage "norm".'

'The NUR is next. We'll support them every inch of the way. The Tories still have to defeat the working class.'

Bob Dickinson, surface worker at Bold, president of St Helens craftsmen's branch of the NUM, said: 'As far as I'm concerned it's a disgrace. The surface workers work all shifts and get nothing extra for it. The offer still leaves them way behind. Surface men are angry. They do a necessary job and are still underpaid.'



MINERS' STRIKE DAY 41



MALCOLM GREGORY, BOLD, LANCS, LODGE OFFICIAL

## Railways next pay challenge

BRITISH RAILWAY'S annual report — due out in spring — will show a deficit of about £20m for 1971. This compares with a £9.5m surplus in 1970.

The loss is blamed on the decline in freight traffic due to the poor state of the economy. In addition the railways have been losing £2.5m a week in freight charges during the miners' strike and cannot hope to get all this back.

The rail unions submitted a 'substantial' claim at the turn of the year, although no one will say exactly how much this is.

The Board has sent the claim back for 'reconsideration' and this is what the unions are busy at right now.

Last year the railwaymen were awarded a 9½ per cent increase. The government's norm this year, of course, is 7 per cent to 8 per cent. But clearly the railwaymen, also in a nationalized industry, will see no reason why they should settle for any less than the miners.

Transport Minister John Peyton announced a £27m handout to the railways in December, but a wages victory would knock a huge hole in this. British Railways could finish 1972 with a deficit of £10m despite the government's cash injection.

BR's chief, Richard Marsh, former Minister of Transport in the Labour government, will certainly be told by his Tory bosses to stand firm against the railway workers.

## 50-50 CHANCE—NE MEN

FIRST reaction from NE miners to the Wilberforce report was wary.

Secretary of the Monkwearmouth pit, Sunderland, Harry Tomlinson, said:

'I think this will be enough to get the Durham miner back at work, but whether it will be enough to get all the miners back will be another question. I

think it's 50-50.'

But other miners at the pit made it clear they were not prepared to accept any increase in productivity.

John Hampson, an Ayrshire miner from Killoch, was firmly against the offer.

'This is not enough for the time we have been out on strike', he told me.

## ONE HELL OF A FIGHT IN TORY KENT—MINERS

BY A KENT CORRESPONDENT

IN THE Welfare Club at Aylesham, Kent a group of miners had just returned from the funeral of Tommy Briggs. Tommy worked 45 years at Snowdon pit. He didn't drink or smoke, and, except for his last few weeks, he was never away from the pit.

Frank McMahon, his nephew, told me the story of the last months of his life:

'He was sent to Gravel Walk — that's what we call the National Insurance Office in Canterbury — where he was examined by a doctor and sent back to the pit for two weeks. I was amazed when I heard he was going back to work. Anyway, after insisting on a pro-

per check-up, he was finally sent to hospital and they diagnosed a tumour on the prostate gland. Within a few weeks he was a dead man.'

The anger of all miners round the table at the club about a situation that hasn't improved since the days of private ownership of the pits swelled in Frank:

'In this village there's men condemned to go back to work who aren't fit to go. In my opinion, men go to these Tribunals and they're brainwashed that there's nothing wrong with them. As they say, go into a mining village and you've got a streetful of widows.'

Another older miner intervened to insist that

there hadn't been 2 regular resident doctor for some 30 years. And this in a mining village of some 7,000 people which is still covered by only one doctor.

An ex-miner Jimmy Park, brother-in-law of Tommy Briggs, added some comments on the tremendous struggle the NUM has had in Kent.

'From Jimmy Duffy to our present branch secretary John McMahon, we have had one hell of a fight because we don't have one Labour MP in Kent. It's been so hard that I would say Jimmy Duffy died of a broken heart.'

I then asked Frank McMahon, who has been a face worker at the pit for ten years, about the present strike. 'The feeling now is we are not going back

unless we get what we asked for. What Gormley said the other day is a lot of rubbish.

'We'd never settle for £4 to £7. He's putting words into Wilberforce's mouth. I know from demonstrations that miners from all over the country are of the same mind.'

'And just look at Feather. Heath called on him to come back from America and appealed to him to try and get the men back to work. He should have come back weeks ago to go to the country to withdraw workers.'

'Anyway he should have jumped in on the postmen's cause a year ago. And why did Feather have to be called back from America while the crisis is on?'

## ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

Make the Tory government resign!

Return a Labour government pledged to restore full employment and repeal all laws against the unions!

**BARNSELEY:** Sunday February 20, 7 p.m. 'The Victoria', Darfield. 'The miners' strike and the Tory government'. Speaker: A Yorkshire miner.

**DAGENHAM:** Wednesday February 23, 8 p.m. Room 11, East Ham Town Hall. 'Labour must force a General Election.'

**WILLESDEN:** Monday February 28, 8 p.m. Trades and Labour Hall, High Road, NW 10. 'Labour must force a General Election.'

**W LONDON:** Tuesday February 29, 8 p.m. Prince Albert, Wharfedale Rd, off York Way,

Kings Cross. 'Crisis of capitalism'.

**SW LONDON:** Tuesday February 29, 8 p.m. Small Hall, Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor St, SW4. 'Labour must force a General Election'.

**ACTON:** Wednesday March 1, 8 p.m. Mechanics Arms, Churchfield Rd, W3. 'Labour must force a General Election'.

**LUTON:** Thursday March 2, 8 p.m. Recreation Centre, Old Bedford Rd. 'Marxism and the trade unions'.

**SE LONDON:** Thursday March 2, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers' Club (opp New Cross stn). 'The General Strike'.

**N LONDON:** Thursday March 2, 8 p.m. Town Hall, Edmon-ton. 'Building the revolutionary party'.



