

# Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS' CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM 197 28 NOVEMBER 1970 6d

The scars  
the system  
leaves behind

Special feature by  
Dr Gerry Dawson  
—see centre spread

## Only 10 days to go

december 1970					
sun		6	13	20	27
mon		7	14	21	28
tue	1	8	15	22	29
wed	2	9	16	23	30
thur	3	10	17	24	31
fri	4	11	18	25	
sat	5	12	19	26	

# HAVE YOU VOTED TO STRIKE YET...?

THE SIGNS are that tens of thousands of workers will be on strike on Tuesday 8 December as part of a national day of action against the Tory government's proposals to cripple the trade union movement.

Every day there is news of fresh support for the strike. Engineers, car workers, print workers, dockers, teachers, airport workers, shipyard workers in all parts of the country have decided to make a big drive to pull out all their members on 8 December.

The strike, called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, cannot be too big. It must be the most important day of political action by trade unionists in the post-war period.

Has YOUR place of work discussed the Tory proposals yet? Have you and your workmates thought about supporting the strike?

You should. The trade unions face one of the biggest and most vital battles of their history.

The Tory plans will mean: Outlawing unofficial strikes, smashing the closed shop and threatening shop-floor leaders with fines and imprisonment if they campaign for strike action.

Only union executives that are legally 'registered' will be able to call strikes — and even they can be 'cooled-off' for 60 days if the government declares a national emergency.

But only 2 per cent of all strikes are official. That means that workers will be deprived of their fighting ability — to strike at the workplace against dangerous conditions or speedup or for more pay.

As inflation roars on, how can workers keep abreast of rising rents, fares and prices without the strike weapon at their disposal?

There has to be a massive fight by organised workers to smash the Tory Bill. Only the rank and file can lead that fight — so far only two union executives are backing the 8 December strike and the TUC is confining its protest to a London rally next January.

**Fight for your rights! Call factory and workplace meetings now and vote for strike action on 8 December.**

## A quiet word of advice to red baiter Robens

# Shut your coal hole!

### 'Outlaw strike pickets' says Coal Board chief

LORD ROBENS is at it again. The pompous £22,500 a year chairman of the National Coal Board has unearthed yet another 'Red Plot' to destroy the economy and inflict a dreadful dictatorship on us.

Speaking in Hull on Tuesday to members of the British Institute of Management, Robens said: 'You are up against a conspiracy in this country and those of us who stand up and speak are called Red baiters who are expected to slink away.'

'I will not slink away. I accuse the militants of this country, backed by a communist conspiracy, of trying to do what the Russians have not been able to do in this country and Western Europe.'

He complained that strike pickets were using strong-arm methods and were paid to drive from factory to factory and pit to pit to bully and threaten other workers into joining strikes.

### WILD TALK

Robens produced not a single shred of evidence to back up his allegations. In spite of his wild talk of 'violence' during the miners' strike, no strikers were arrested and even police chiefs pooh-poohed his statement.

Robens' speech is a sign of how rattled some sections of the employing class are becoming. As inflation threatens to get completely out of control, they cast around hysterically for a scapegoat.

Jews? That's been overdone. Blacks? Careful — mustn't tread on Enoch's territory. Ah, let's drum up the old communist bogey — we haven't used him for some time.

Out flow the familiar clichés — 'violence, intimidation, conspiracy, dictatorship'.

There IS violence in our society — the miners know it well. The violence that maims and kills men in filthy and dangerous working conditions.

There IS intimidation from bully boys like Alf Robens who deny workers a basic wage of £20 a week and who demand more work, more sweat from a smaller workforce or they'll close your pit and throw you on the scrap-heap.

There IS a conspiracy, organised by a tightly-controlled group of well-paid men. They're called the ruling class. Through the press and loyal mouth-pieces like Robens, they place the blame for the economy's problems on the shoulders of the workers.

And, yes, there IS a dictatorship, a dictatorship by that same ruling class, 2 per cent of the population, who own



ROBENS: sinister undertones to his speech

and control all the wealth the workers produce.

It is tempting to dismiss Robens' rantings as those of a man who has become half-crazed by the pursuit of more wealth and prestige. But there is a sinister undertone to his speech.

### 'SEIZE NETTLE'

He called for savage legal restrictions on the right to strike and picket, to break the provisions of the 1906 Trades Disputes Act.

'If the government wants to seize the nettle firmly, it would introduce a very short Bill of a very few clauses and it would withdraw the whole of the legal protection of the 1906 Act from workpeople who break the rules.'

'This would make their picketing illegal. It would be a restraint on trade

and instead of police having to protect the picket lines they could disperse them.'

Already some sections of the ruling class aren't satisfied with the sweeping measures put forward by the Tories. They want even more vicious attacks on rank and file trade unionists.

Workers have to grasp the nettle, too. We ARE out to break the rules — rules drawn and framed by the bosses and the judges.

We have to redouble our efforts to build a movement that will effectively shut the mouths of Robens and all the despicable red baiters of his class. Make no mistake — that's what they want to do to us, shut the mouths and take away the trade union rights of every working man and woman in this country.

## Big interest in IS conference

TREMENDOUS interest has been shown in the conference called by the International Socialists to discuss a militant policy to defeat the Tories' anti-union laws and to democratise the trade unions.

Coaches, minibuses and cars will bring delegates from all parts of the

country to the conference in Birmingham on Saturday 5 December.

The conference will meet in the Digbeth Civic Hall from 10.30 am to 5pm. The morning session will deal with the fight against the government's Bill.

In the afternoon delegates will

debate a policy for rank and file control of the trade unions. This will include a discussion on the role of full-time union officials and their accountability to their members.

Don't delay — time and places are short. Write for credentials now to: IS secretary, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

# The paper that fights anti-union laws

## Curbing inflation at workers' expense

INFLATION, we are told, is a major problem. Few people would deny it. Every week prices rise. Every week a typical wage packet buys less than the week before unless action is taken.

Explanations of inflation can be read any day in the capitalist press. Wages rise and employers pay these by charging more for the goods they sell. So prices also rise, until the original pay rise is cancelled out. Workers react by demanding further wage rises. And so the vicious circle starts all over again.

How much more logical it would be, authoritative voices argue, if some policy could be devised that would plan wages and do away with this endless spiral.

But it is important to understand that under the present system of society such schemes can never work to the benefit of working people.

Increased wages are not the cause of the present inflation. The most important strikes of recent months have been of lower-paid workers who had seen the real value of their wages fall over the last five years of 'incomes policy' and 'wage freeze'.

They went on strike because their wages were rising more slowly than prices. Their pressure cannot have been the cause of rising prices.

You have to look further afield for the origins of the present inflation. Two or three years ago, interest rates rose to almost unprecedented heights throughout all western countries.

## Moneylenders want more

This rise in interest rates provided the impetus for the present inflation. Industrialists wanting to build new factories found that they had to pay higher rates to the moneylenders. In order to protect their own profits they raised prices accordingly.

Public authorities wanting to build new houses and roads had to pay increasing amounts on interest repayments, and so raised taxes, rates and charges for public services.

Once under way the process is self-perpetuating. Workers do respond by rightly demanding wage increases to keep abreast of prices. But these are not the cause of the initial rises.

Under the present system of society there is only one way in which the inflationary spiral can be brought to an end — by the employers persuading or forcing workers to accept a cut in real wages.

This is what the Tory government is trying to do at the moment. It hopes to stop major groups of workers winning wage rises, while cutting living standards through increased welfare charges, fares, postal charges, and so on.

Many people who see that such an approach is wrong try to suggest that there is an alternative one, which would involve not only keeping wages down, but also freezing prices and dividends.

The trouble with such a scheme is that it just will not work. When prices are going up all over the world you cannot freeze them in just one country. For prices of essential imports continue to rise.

A broader policy is needed. Not an 'incomes policy', but a policy that tackles the roots of these problems in the ownership of society's wealth by a small minority of the population. For instance, interest rates could be cut right down — but only if the mass of the population intervened to stop a small minority moving resources abroad.

Such a policy will never be taken up by a Tory government, nor by a Labour one. It requires direct political and industrial action by the whole working class. The need at the moment is to build a political movement of workers capable of arguing for and leading such action.

## MORE BARBARISM IN VIETNAM

THE VICIOUS BOMBING of North Vietnam at the weekend underlined yet again that the war in Indochina continues. The US government continues to burn, bomb, kill and maim. The Vietnamese continue to fight back with the meagre weapons at their disposal against the most powerful state in human history.

The excuse for the US action — that the Vietnamese had shot down an American plane deliberately flying over North Vietnam to spy — reveals the crude aim of the Pentagon's policy. America's rulers are out to prove that they have the power to do whatever they so desire, anywhere at any time. They want to show that it is impossible for anyone exploited by imperialism in any part of the world to fight back.

Yet the background against which the most recent incident has flared up is one in which the US is on the retreat. American forces are being withdrawn from Vietnam, although at a slow pace.

Withdrawal is not a product of the kindness of Nixon's heart. Such has been the fighting determination and courage of the Vietnamese people that the cost of keeping them down has escalated beyond a figure that even the immensely wealthy US ruling class can afford.

But the US government does not wish to admit defeat. Forces fighting against its control throughout the world would receive encouragement. The puppet regime in South Vietnam would collapse overnight.

And so the slow withdrawal is punctuated by murderous outbursts of aggression — earlier this year the advance into Cambodia, now the bombing of the north.

Socialists and trade unionists should not merely protest at the US actions. Renewed solidarity must be expressed with those still fighting to free their country from imperialist control.

At the same time we can draw heart for our struggles from the success of the Vietnamese. If they can force the massive weaponry of the US military machine to retreat, workers here should be able to tear up our government's anti-union Bill.

# Union leaders backtrack in US cars strike NO SPEEDUP CUT IN GM PAY DEAL

by Karl Fischer

DETROIT:— After eight weeks of strike, the United Auto Workers' leadership reached a 'tentative national agreement' with the General Motors Corporation on 11 November. It was accepted by the UAW GM Council, although 20 per cent voted against, and the contract now goes before the rank and file of the union's GM workers.

The proposed contract is wholly inadequate in virtually every area of importance.

The main issue is money. By the end of the strike, UAW President Leonard Woodcock had cut the union's wage demand almost in half, from the 7s 7d originally demanded in September (while union militants were demanding 10s 5d) down to the final settlement of 4s 3d an hour (4s 1d for most production workers, 4s 7d for most skilled workers).

Since this 4s 1d includes the 2s 7d already owed to workers because of losses due to inflation in the past three years, it really represents only only 1s 8d an hour in new money, or only 5 per cent the first year and only 4s during the life of the contract.

### NEAT TRICK

The major victory of the strike is the restoration of the cost of living clause. It is on this basis that the union leadership will try to sell the contract to the ranks.

In reality, the gain only means a return to what conditions were in 1967, when the union traded away COL precisely at the moment it was most needed. It's a neat trick for the bureaucracy, if it can get away with it: You bargain it away in 1967, get it back in 1970, and claim a major victory.

The other so-called victory is even more hollow. Woodcock went to the bargaining table in September demanding retirement after 30 years of service at £207 a month.

He called this demand the key issue in the whole situation. GM countered with an offer which conceded the principle, but none of the content.

They agreed to retirement after 30 years but at age 58. A worker retiring before this age would suffer a large drop in the amount of his pension.

Woodcock flatly rejected this proposal in September. But in November Woodcock accepted a retirement plan that is even worse.

It does lower the age limit to 56



UAW president Woodcock (right): sellout on working conditions

during the last two years of the contract, but there are numerous gimmicks attached which are bound to keep workers in the plant longer.

For instance, now there is no cut in the pension at 62 when social security benefits start. Under the new contract there will be. Also, there now will be, at 65, a cut of 4 per cent for each year before age 62 that a person retires. And if you retire before 58, there is an 8 per cent cut for each year.

The biggest blow is the union sellout on working conditions. The union bureaucracy knows that to fight for decent working conditions means a daily struggle on every factory floor, necessitating an active, involved rank and file.

That however is the thing the union bureaucracy most fears. For over 20 years the UAW leadership has been trading off working conditions for wage gains, hoping the rank and file would be apathetic and passive in return for higher wages.

Working conditions in auto, always poor, have become intolerable. No contract, even with economic gains much better than this flimsy Woodcock settlement, would be acceptable unless it improved the prisonlike conditions of the Big Three auto firms.

Instead the demand for an end to compulsory overtime was dropped without comment. Nothing was done to oppose the rampant speedup of line speeds and production standards on the shop floor.

Nothing was done to oppose the deterioration of safety conditions. Nothing was done to improve the

steward representation system or to improve the hopelessly inadequate grievance procedure.

We demand:

■ A steward for every foreman, so that the ranks have adequate representation with stewards who are close to and controlled by the ranks.

■ That line speed and quotas be subject to negotiation with rank and file as it was in the 1940s.

■ That grievances be automatically settled in favour of the workers if not resolved in 30 days.

### SELLOUT

To settle for less would be to waste all the sacrifices we made over the past eight weeks.

If the contract is ratified at GM, despite everything, the battle is not over.

Many local agreements are yet to be concluded. Many of these include important issues involving working conditions, shop floor rules, etc.

Now, more than ever before, the need for rank and file committees of auto workers at the local and shop-floor level is clear and critical. Auto workers in large numbers have placed their trust in their official leadership, and that trust has been rewarded with a wretched sellout.

The only way out for auto workers in America today is to build their own rank and file organisations to fight for their real needs, organisations which can pressure the bureaucracy and fight when and where the bureaucracy refuses to fight.

## Glassy-eyed millionaires

IT COST a cool £560,000 for Pilkington Brothers to make its long-awaited Stock Market appearance. In other words, each of the groups 32,500 workers unwillingly chipped in £17 each for the privilege of letting the rich deal freely in the company's shares.

I'm prepared to bet that a fair proportion of the enormous bill went under the heading of 'entertaining'. Certainly no expense was spared for the City Editors who tripped to St Helens for a private session with Lord P and the rest of his board.

It was the same, I gather, for the representatives of the big institutional investors, insurance companies and such-like, who in quiet meetings up and down the country were fed a rich diet of good food, vintage wine, and the future prospects of Pilkington Brothers.

Why did such a reputable monopoly as Pilkingtons, acknowledged leaders of the glass industry, need to take so much trouble to persuade investors to buy its shares?

It was clear that the same question nagged at the mind of every stock market pundit in the land: 'What



Lord Harry: winning investors

about the workers?' For the one thing that has long attracted investors to Pilkingtons is its long record of happy labour relations — happy, that is for the family which probably contains more millionaires than any other in the country.

Even now, with the shares and fortunes of the company at a low point, Lord Harry is worth £13.8 millions while D V Phelps can rustle up £20

millions if he's ever short of cash.

David Pilkington can probably claim to be the richest labour relations director in the country. With almost £10 millions to his name, he could, if pushed, pay any rise the workers cared to ask for out of his own pocket.

But the strike in April and May has somewhat tarnished the group's reputation. Worse still, it has apparently knocked £5 millions off the amount that can be dished out to shareholders this year.

It was not surprising therefore that more words were devoted to the section on management and employees in the company's prospectus than any other topic.

But it may take more than words to convince the hard men on the stock exchange. Lord Pilkington brought smiles to the faces of the City Editors with his proud boast that all the 'troublemakers' have been sacked.

Sceptics in his audience were wondering — at least one hopefully — how many remain.

Arthur Millium

# What was that about workers' violence?



Funeral at Aberfan: violence committed against a whole community

AT THE START of the recent miners' strike, Coal Board chairman Lord Robens, who is soon to get a £50 a week pay increase, claimed that 'intimidation' and 'violence' were being used to force the men to stop work for £5 a week more.

We should pay attention to the coal baron. He has considerable knowledge of violence in an industry that has killed and maimed thousands over the years in the quest for profit, an industry symbolised throughout the world by one word - Aberfan.

Psychologists suggest that clergymen tend to denounce from the pulpit the sins they are most likely to commit themselves.

A similar principle seems to hold true for the members of the ruling class. While they organise violence they blame others for resisting it.

When Cambridge students earlier this year stopped a banquet in honour of the murderers and torturers that rule Greece they were dealt with harshly by the courts.

Mr Justice Melford Stevenson handed out long jail sentences. These were confirmed by the appeal judge, who said it was important that citizens throughout Britain should not be placed in a state of fear or have their property destroyed.

Yet what happened at Cambridge was a mere bun fight compared with what occurred roughly at the same time in Belfast. British troops went on a rampage down the Lower Falls. Property was indiscriminately smashed and the entire population placed in a state of fear.

## No action

More than a hundred people complained about the troops, but the authorities decided to take no action.

Under the present system of society, 'legality' conveniently permits capitalists to do what they condemn when it is done by others.

Arab hijackers are deplored by many aristocrats whose own fortunes were gained by 'hijacking' the common land from the labouring masses in the 18th and 19th centuries.

To take a person against his will and confine him in close and uncomfortable quarters is regarded as an outrageous act of terrorism when done by the FLQ in Canada. When it is done to Bernadette Devlin by the Ulster Constabulary, kidnapping becomes lawful imprisonment.

Killing people because you want them dead is to be a mass murderer. Killing them because your government wants them dead is to be an heroic soldier.

The laws of the existing capitalist state defend the interests of a rich minority against the interests of the

## by RAYMOND CHALLINOR

### Lord Robens gives anarchy warning after pit strikers shout him down

From Our Northern Industrial Correspondent  
Doncaster, Nov. 19

Lord Robens, chairman of the National Coal Board, was assailed by what he described as the 'most violent' demonstration he has yet encountered when he visited the Doncaster area headquarters of the coal board today. When he attempted to carry out his usual practice of meeting demonstrators, he was surrounded by what he called a 'yelling mob' of between 60 and 70 men.

He said: "I would have been prepared to spend half an hour with them but it was impossible to get out half a sentence. It is a tragedy that one should think in this day and age that you can get anything at all by the kind of behaviour I am sorry for the quality of leadership that there is to blame for men to lose their heads."

The Doncaster area, where all 40 pits are on unofficial strike, was described by Lord Robens as a "straggling area". He was referring not to physical features but to the "straggling" nature of the coal board's operations. He said that coal board officials had given five pits to bring out men who wanted to work, he said. "Abusive shouting pro-



Lord Robens surrounded by what he described as a "yelling mob" at Doncaster yesterday.

There would be another move would have great difficulty in central field of 64 pits in Britain to that direction after the pro-maintaining power. There would, which are closed or affected war-

Lead story in The Times last week

vast majority.

Such laws are able to command obedience because of the superior might of the state. Lurking behind the law is force, the violence ever ready to protect the haves from the have-nots.

Throughout its history, British capitalism has been noted for its readiness to resort to violence.

The massive British empire was not built on Ghandi's pacifist principles. African natives did not trek to London, pleading to be allowed to live under the Union Jack.

Instead they had to be subjugated in barbarous, bloody conflicts.

Britain was the first country to be guilty of genocide when the entire

Tasmanian race was wiped out. British imperialists were also the first to expound the master race theory.

Men like Cecil Rhodes believed that the blacks were inferior and Britain had a God-given right to rule them.

Britain had another first - the introduction of concentration camps. This happened during the Boer war, and 40,000 men, women and children died in them.

Britain also topped the league tables for being the most belligerent country. Between 1815 and 1915, it was at war for 64 years. The runner-up, Germany, merely had a tally of 28 years.

With a record such as this, with

much of its wealth won from these acts of violence, it is sheer hypocrisy to denounce the violence of strikers, students or demonstrators.

Today the argument is more implausible: a state that spends £2400 million every year on weapons of mass destruction and other sophisticated hardware rather than on increasing old age pensions, improving the health service and welfare benefits can hardly pose as the prince of peace.

Karl Marx spoke of the concentration of wealth at one end of society and the concentration of poverty misery and oppression at the other. This polarisation inevitably involves tension and struggle that erupts violently from time to time.

Realising this, the various ruling classes take precautions to safeguard their privileges. The governments of the United States in Vietnam, the British in Ireland and the Russians in Czechoslovakia enforce their will - their foreign domination - by superior military might.

## Small value

As James Connolly, the Irish socialist, pointed out: 'One great source of the strength of the ruling class has ever been their willingness to kill in defence of their power and privileges.'

'Let their power be once attacked either by foreign foes or domestic revolutionists, and at once we see the rulers prepared to kill, and kill, and kill. The readiness of the ruling class to order killing, the small value the ruling class has ever set upon human life, is in marked contrast to the reluctance of all revolutionists to shed blood.'

'The French Reign of Terror is spoken of with horror and execration by the people who talk in joyful praise about the mad adventure of the Dardanelles. And yet in any one day of battle at the Dardanelles there

were more lives lost than in all the nine months of the Reign of Terror.'

Less than six months after Connolly penned these lines in November 1915, the British government proved his point. It court martialled Connolly and, while he was wounded and unable to stand, shot him dead.

Because socialists share a reverence for human life, a desire to protect it, we find ourselves implacably opposed to capitalism, a system that maims and kills millions of people.

Since it does not hesitate to use force against its opponents, we can not afford to leave ourselves unprotected. The force of the oppressors must be met by liberating force.

## Desperate

This does not mean that we support the line of some anarchists and Maoists. We do not seek punch-ups with the police, sabotage or assassination.

These are the acts of desperate men - of individuals rather than the class - and consequently, as Trotsky pointed out, do not further the class struggle.

'If it is enough to arm oneself with a revolver to reach the goal, then to what end are the endeavours of the class struggle? If a pinch of powder and a slug of lead are ample to shoot the enemy through the neck, where is the need of a class organisation?'

'If there is any rhyme or reason in scaring titled personages with the noise of an explosion, what need is there for a party? What is the need of meetings, mass agitation, elections, when it is so easy to take aim at the ministerial bench from the parliamentary gallery?'

'Individual terrorism in our eyes is inadmissible precisely for the reason that it lowers the masses in their own consciousness, reconciles them to impotence, and directs their glances and hopes toward the great avenger and emancipator who will some day come and accomplish his mission.'

Working class organisation and political clarity are the chief weapons in the struggle for socialism. Because we have such a powerful armoury of ideas, we have no desire to resort to violence and do so only when forced to.

We are generous people. We will even be kind to Citizen Robens in a socialist Britain...

We'll send him down the mines.

## Struggle for Socialism

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London E28DN

# Tory cuts are threat to your teeth

by MICHAEL SILVER, secretary dental group, Socialist Medical Association

INCREASED dental charges have been among the least discussed of the government's welfare cuts. Yet they will have a harmful effect on all working-class families.

After 1 April you will have to pay half the total cost of any treatment at the dentists, with a maximum charge of £10.

Some people will be able to claim exemption from the cost of treatment - but only if their total family income, before deductions, is less than £20 a week. And they will have to submit to a means test.

A minority go for treatment regularly every six months and can take the time off work to do so. The new charges will be likely to cost them between 10 and 30 shillings each

time. Many more than at present will simply put off going until the need is urgent. By that time the treatment required may be very costly.

## Keep away

For example, if you wait more than five years, quite simple attention is likely to cost between £4 and £8. You won't even know in advance what the total cost will be.

If your dentist decides you have to have a large filling instead of a small one, or a crown instead of a large filling, the cost will rise accordingly. Gum treatment will cost £2 15s, crowns and other dentures

£3-£7 and root treatment £2-£5.

There is no doubt what the result will be. Millions of working people will keep away from the dentist for as long as possible.

Some will be tempted to have all their teeth out and have them replaced by dentures when pain does finally force them to go. This will mean paying the £10 maximum for once and for all.

Fewer patients will mean a deterioration in the dental service. Dentists will leave the profession never to return. Redundancy can be expected among dental technicians and those who work for equipment manufacturers.

At the same time another of the government's measures - the ending

of free milk in junior schools - can only lead to poorly formed teeth. Children need a pint of milk a day but they rarely get this at home.

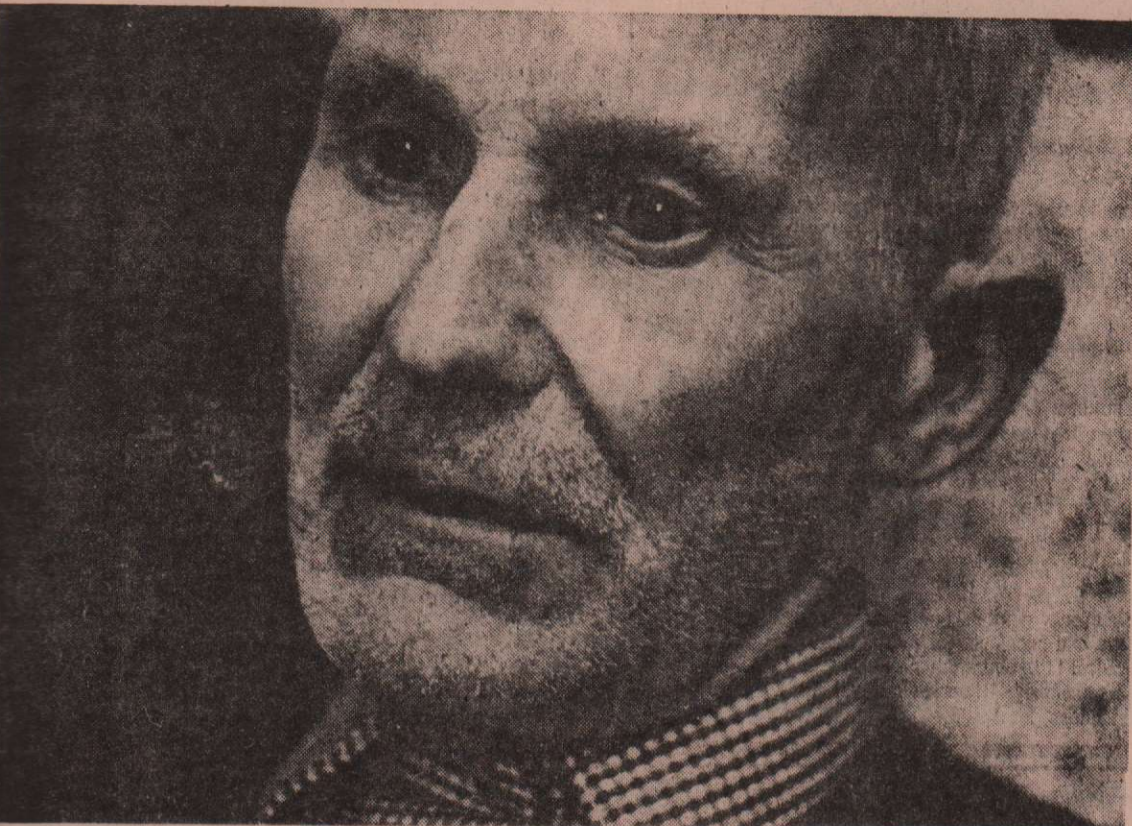
## Aches and pains

Millions of working-class people will suffer in the long term from the government's measures. Their teeth will deteriorate.

Their mouths will be full of a variety of irritating aches and pains. Their overall capacity for enjoying life will fall.

Finally a piece of advice for Socialist Worker readers: go to the dentist before 31 March. Any treatment started by that date will be at the old prices.

# Disease: the scars the sys



George Dobson is 67, a miner. He has pneumoconiosis and has been out of work for five years on a 50 per cent pension

MORE THAN any other section of workers, the miners and their union have seen the struggle for socialism as concerned with linking a working man's life and his health. Late in the 19th century the mining villages would collect money to buy the services of a surgeon to look after their health.

The Kent miners were already demanding in 1922 that such 'Field Clubs' and the village hospitals owned and run by the mining workers should be nationalised and form the basis of a national health service. It is the organised power of the Welsh miners in particular which backed Aneurin Bevan in the fight for the NHS. The reason is not difficult to find.

Miners suffer countless health hazards even in modern pits. Nystagmus, the eye

## The union tries...

'THIS destructive disease would not be nearly so alarming if half the resources were devoted to it now devoted to Ascot.' - NYE BEVAN on pneumoconiosis.

'OF 494 post-mortems (and it is very difficult to get widows to agree to allow them) in 1956, in all of which there was reason to believe pneumoconiosis was a material factor, only 155 were allowed by the panel.

'The appeals committee is loaded against the miner and the union is unhappy at the situation. We believe that, as long as there is pneumoconiosis in life and death is due to a chest or heart condition, then automatically a claim should be allowed.

'Then the psychological effects should be recognised. Pneumoconiosis is a dread word, it is an incurable disease and must materially affect general health.' - DAI DAVIES, National Union of Mineworkers.

## The doctor lies...

'INHALATION of coal dust causes no danger to life but on the contrary gives even protection against the development of tuberculosis.' - J S HALDANE, Director, Mining Research Laboratory, Birmingham University, 1923.

'IT MUST be admitted that medical men, by their ill-informed complacency, have a heavy load of responsibility to bear for the present high incidence of pneumoconiosis among coal miners.' - C M FLETCHER, British Medical Journal, 1948.

'A RECENT parliamentary question elicited the figure of 33 per cent of medical students from public schools, even higher than Oxford or Cambridge and a further 13 per cent from grant-aided schools. Public schools draw from 3 per cent of the population.' - SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, evidence to Royal Commission on medical education.

## what we stand for



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations. We believe in independent working class action, that we must overthrow capitalism and not tinker with reforms to patch it up. We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow.

To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time

officials. We are firmly opposed to secret negotiations and believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

We are for 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

We are against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

We are against productivity deals and job evaluation and are for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

We support all demands for equal pay and for a better deal for young workers.

We believe that there should be a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

We are opposed to unemployment, redundancy and lay offs and support the demand of five days' work or five days' pay.

We support all workers in struggle and seek to build militant groups within industry.

We are opposed to racialism and police victimisation of black work-

ers. We are opposed to any immigration restrictions and fully support the right of black people to self-defence.

We are opposed to all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

We are opposed to secret diplomacy. Neither Washington nor Moscow but international socialism.

We are opposed to all forms of imperialism and unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

We are for the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are for the introduction of a democratic planned economy in which resources can be devoted to social need.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time.

Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of men's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. Over a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it'. If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

## THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

**SCOTLAND**  
Aberdeen/Clydebank/Dundee/Edinburgh/Glasgow N/Glasgow S/Stirling/Fife

Bolton/Merseyside/St Helens/Wigan/Potteries

**EAST**  
Cambridge/Harlow/Ipswich/Lowestoft/Norwich/Colchester

**NORTH EAST**  
Durham/Newcastle upon Tyne/Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

**MIDLANDS**  
Birmingham/Coventry/Northampton/Leicester/Oxford/Nottingham

**GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES**  
Acton/Angel/Bletchley/Camden/Chertsey/Croydon/Dagenham/Enfield/Erith/Fulham/Greenford/Harrow/Hemel Hempstead/Hornsey/Ilford/Kilburn/Kingston/Lambeth/Lewisham/Merton/Newham/Reading/Richmond/Stoke Newington/Slough/South Ealing/Tottenham/Walthamstow/Wandsworth/Watford/Victoria

**NORTH**  
Barnsley/Bradford/Derby/Doncaster/Huddersfield/Hull/Leeds/York/Selby/Sheffield

**WALES and SOUTH WEST**  
Bath/Bristol/Cardiff/Exeter/Swansea/Plymouth

**SOUTH**  
Ashford/Brighton/Crawley/Folkestone/Portsmouth/Southampton

**NORTH WEST**  
Lancaster/Manchester/Oldham/

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# Big jump in

## The average wo

ITEM: A unfenced, rotating, smooth shaft at neck height catches a worker's collar. His body is wound against the machine and he dies of a fractured skull.

ITEM: An engineering worker attempts to shift a jammed sliding door with a crowbar. The door falls from its rail and crushes and kills him. There was no retaining device.

ITEM: A power station worker spots a fire and climbs over girders and a tank to get at it fast. He falls to his death.

THESE ARE THREE factory accidents from this year's record harvest of the dead and wounded on the factory floor. The Factory Inspectors' report on 1969, published last month, reveals an upswing of 3.2 per cent in the total of 322,390 accidents.

The rising trend in reported accidents, which begun in 1963, made its single biggest jump last year. The total now stands at nearly 70 per cent above the figure for 1962.

### Two accidents

The present rate amounts, in flat statistical terms, to the fact that the average worker can expect to be the victim of two disabling accidents during his working life. Every week of the year, 12 workers will be killed.

The Tories haven't even bothered to deplore the report but the Confederation of British Industry has acknowledged that the position is deteriorating and estimates the 'loss' to the 'country' is now over £600m a year.

What consolation that is to the 644 families whose Dad just does

not come home from work one evening no one bothers to ask.

Building workers stand the highest risk of death on the job. 265 died in 1969, nearly half from falls.

Builders accounted for a quarter of total deaths. This represents an 11 per cent increase and follows a 20 per cent increase in the previous year with construction engineering, especially the scantily unionised road building works, bearing the brunt of the upswing.

The inspectors, employees of Robert Carr's Department of Employment remark cynically that 'it cannot be said that the needless and senseless loss of a life as the result of a fall on a construction site is exceptional.'

But even these men find that in the cases of industrial death, where a clear breach of the law is involved, it is by the boss in 107 cases and the worker in only four. As the Sunday Times said: 'Some firms in the construction industry admit that they prefer to "write off" a number of workers each year than instal expensive safety equipment.'

Power press accidents, which accounted for 245 amputations in 1969, resulted in proceedings being started against 98 firms. It was noted that even when management had introduced fixed guards, according to the 1965 Power Press Regulations, there were 20 cases where a certified guard still allowed access to the trapping area.

The inspectors admit they remain grossly undermanned and that

by

their estimate of remains only an ap

As The Observer News was obliged present strength it one visit to a fat years. And on the admission, in that any good done by undone or forgotten the inspectors do visit a plant even been a fatal accident maiming by neglig

### Inadequat

Fines for violat regulations are inate. The 560 ins to investigate 125 covered by the Fa

If they discov fully prosecute a who knowingly conditions which accidents, the m £300. In the few p do take place, fine

There are no in sequent offences regulations.

It is a featu society that it knowing what hur If it did, it cou its daily destruct

But when 22 w as in the Glasgow in 1968 and the e guilty of criminal

butcher's tubercle, chain maker's cataract, confectioner's dermatitis, copper fe

# stem leaves

squinting resulting from cramped face work in poor light affected 50 per cent of all miners in 1922 and 6000 left the pits each year, unable to continue work. It was nystagmus which invalidated Bevan.

Miners' beat, the swelling of exposed parts, is still common. In South Wales alone there are 40 deaths a year, 190 severe injuries and 30 amputations. Since 1957 the number of miners has been halved but the injuries have gone down by only 20 per cent. Pneumoconiosis has only been counteracted after the introduction of a comprehensive dust ventilating system after nationalisation, arguably the best thing to have come out of it. Last year 7500 miners applied for compensation, 508 were granted it . . .

## The miner dies...

'BLOOD is on coal today as it always has been. Let those who criticise the miners now realise the price of its getting.' - ARTHUR HORNER on Creswell Colliery disaster.

'AT PRESENT it's a wet Friday night and I'm in a dusty, deprived tin mining town called Orura. I went down the mine yesterday - 300 metres - and plodded through the dusty sections and then the humid. After 10 years it's nearly 100 per cent miners with pneumoconiosis and the Caja de Seguridad ... delaying and lying till the miners are dead.' - A LETTER FROM BOLIVIA.

'MEDICINE is a social science and politics is nothing but medicine on a grand scale.' - VIRCHOV, 19th century pathologist who investigated conditions of Silesian miners.

'CLOSE the coalhouse door, lad, there's blood inside ... there's bones inside.' - song from Close the Coalhouse Door.

## Why...

WITHIN the capitalist system all the methods for increasing the social productivity of labour are carried out at the cost of the individual workers: that all the means for developing production are transformed into means of domination over and exploitation of the producer; that they mutilate the worker into a fragment of a human being, degrade him to become an appurtenance of the machine, make his work such a torment that its essential meaning is destroyed; cast him off from the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in exact proportion to the extent to which science is incorporated into it as an independent power; that they distort the conditions under which he works, subjecting him, during the labour process, to a despotism which is all the more hateful because of its pettiness; that they transform his whole life into working time, and drag his wife and children beneath the juggernaut wheels of capital's car. - KARL MARX, Capital.



# accidents

## Worker can expect to be disabled twice in his life

(losing nearly £15 in wages) because his eyesight is no longer perfect, rather than attempting to compensate a man whose sight has been ruined by hard and unhealthy conditions, or when a pot bellied judge orders a fine amounting to £13 12s per corpse for a boss guilty of allowing 22 workers to burn to death, class medicine and class justice are clear to see.

The fact that nothing worth calling real industrial health is likely this side of socialism should not stop us campaigning for:

- Shop floor safety committees.
- An increase in the numbers and powers of factory inspectors.
- An occupational health service.
- Total opposition to productivity deals that increase danger.

### Workers' control

But the key remains working-class confidence and control. A steward on a Manchester petrochemical plant where an explosion and subsequent death of a 16 years old worker sparked a one day protest strike earlier this year, put it like this: 'The truth is, under capitalism, you'll never get safety in construction.'

A really safety conscious firm would just go out of business. Short of workers control, safety depends on the level of organisation on the job.

'You can see it in the accident statistics - there are less deaths and injuries in the well organised part of the country. We need more training, but most of all we need to develop the confidence of the lads so that they'll feel strong enough to refuse to work in unsafe conditions at any time'.

## Dr Gerry Dawson

factory health

proximation. *Over's Business* to admit: 'On can only make *ory every four* inspectors' own length of time them is often n. Furthermore not invariably after there has nter or a serious nce'.

e fines

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rkers are killed, upholstery fire ployer is found glect and fined

£300 - £13 12s per carcass - the utter corruption of human values under capitalism is more than usually clear.

The demand for an occupational Health Service, which has been continually put by Labour and Communist Parties as well as by many medical organisations, is now further away than ever. The new system of 'community medicine' advocated by the Todd Report must, it admits 'limit the scope of the services demanded of British industrial medicine and we do not expect any major changes in this respect in the foreseeable

## A question of priorities



future'.

Safety standards on the shop floor depend very largely on the strength of workers' organisation and, in particular, the right of elected representatives of the men, usually the steward, to have direct access to the factory inspector when he visits the factory.

A study made by members of the Socialist Medical Association in Birmingham of over 700 union branches (the EPTU declined to co-operate for political reasons) showed that despite much lip-service from management and union officials on better safety, its practical application was forced second to the need to earn a decent pay packet, without regard

to life or limb.

The doctors write: 'Many men have written excellent comments, but it is obvious they cannot voice them, cannot "stick their necks out" for fear of victimisation. The economic cost of safety measures should not be allowed to weigh against safety and accident prevention. "Management closes its eyes if it slows down production" is a common quote.'

### Safety delegates

The TUC is on record, repeatedly, to obtain legislation concerning the right to elect safety delegates at the work place with:

1. Power of instruction of their department.
2. Right to set up safety committees.
3. Right of safety delegate to accompany factory inspector on visiting the factory.
4. Advice of factory inspectors to be available to the safety committee.

These oft-repeated recommendations might have a little more meaning to militants if the TUC didn't spend so much of its energies flirting with seductive 'productivity', 'high wage, high output' schemes that hinge on weakening the power of stewards.

The number of safety committees is increasing under voluntary initiative, primarily from the trade union side. The November 1970 Ministry of Employment Gazette found a 34 per cent increase on the previous year (not including

construction sites where they are most urgently needed).

The scope of such committees, their independence of management and their power to act on hazards regardless of concern for profit is not specified. For it is a question, perhaps the most important, of worker's control, of the balance of class forces on the shop floor.

A doctor writing in *Socialism and Health* (the journal of the Socialist Medical Association) says: 'Speaking at an AEU branch in Slough, I learnt of the safety committees set up by the men, the efforts to achieve power for their committee and the effects this is having on health and safety.'

'Of course they want legal backing - legislation and an occupational health service. But theirs is the only way it will be achieved, through political pressure.'

'A man fell into an unlabelled drum of phenol - and died. Now the factory concerned has introduced special tape to mark the danger. Only continued vigilance will influence the appalling accident statistics - and it is the worker on the shop floor who will exert it.'

For socialist health workers as well as trade unionists, the battle to stop the shop floor slaughter is part of the class struggle whether we like it or not. Medicine, of all the bourgeois professions, falls over itself to show its freedom from cash or class considerations.

But when a doctor in the steel industry downgrades a worker

# Chile's new president



Allende (left) congratulated on his victory by his Christian Democrat opponent

## walks the tightrope

THE NEW GOVERNMENT of Chile has raised great hopes among socialists throughout Latin America. And it has caused hysterical fears on the right.

A massive flight of capital, a run on the banks, some 25,000 people fleeing — these were the ceremonies which celebrated the coming to power of Salvador Allende. The new president, a stout, middle-aged doctor from the capital, Santiago, leads the Popular Unity coalition of Communists, Socialists, dissident left Christian Democrats and three other groups.

So frightened were Chile's upper classes that the outgoing Christian Democrat government forced on the incoming a 'Statute of Democratic Guarantees'. This commits the Allende government not to interfere in the last defensive bulwark of the Chilean establishment, the army.

But this was not enough for some on the right. Right-wing terrorist groups planted bombs in Santiago supermarkets, made two unsuccessful attempts on Allende's life and succeeded in murdering the chief of the army.

### Seize power

The aim was to create a crisis so that the Chilean army would seize power, oust 'Bolshevism', red in tooth and claw, and let rich men sleep in their beds once again.

Had that happened, some of the terror in Washington would no doubt have abated also. There are powerful US companies with assets in Chile, and US military facilities as well.

But even more important, Chile could start all the Latin American dominoes falling, particularly the two right-wing military regimes in Brazil and Argentina.

The fears on the Chilean right illustrate vividly the instability of Chile, the most stable of the Latin American countries. Squeezed between foreign capital, annually draining resources out of the country, and the poverty of the mass of the population, the ruling class of Chile must react with violence to any kind of threat.

But the fears are as misplaced as the high hopes on the left. Bringing in even elementary reforms is so difficult that socialists base inflated hopes on the slightest rumour.

Fidel Castro, after 10 years of failing to achieve power through guerrilla warfare anywhere in Latin America, now looks very favourably on the Allende regime. It is said he has threatened to withdraw his support from the Chilean guerrillas, the MIR, unless they lie low and refrain from rocking Allende's boat.

But Allende's programme is vague. Where it is specific, the government has neither a solid enough majority in the assembly to execute its aims, nor enough organised popular support outside the assembly to frighten the establishment into giving in.

Allende wants to make more equal the



CASTRO: favourable look to Allende

distribution of income in Chile. At the moment, 10 per cent of the population takes half the national income.

He wants to house the thousands trapped in miserable shacks round the cities, and give them jobs. He wants to give half a litre of milk to the half of Chile's children that suffer from malnutrition.

And he wants to break the stranglehold of foreign capital and local monopolies over Chile's economy.

But to feed the mass of the population better, to create the jobs for them, he has to tax the rich. And that he cannot do without splitting the middle-class basis for his own support in the assembly.

His supporters say they can pay for their programme by taking over the giant US companies that currently produce 75 per cent of Chile's exports, copper — the Anaconda, Kennecott and Cerro companies — and use the profits to develop local food supplies for the mass of the population and start new industries to employ them.

That would only be practical if Allende refused to pay compensation. And the assembly would not accept that attack on Chile's relationship with the US.

Even then, this course would take a long time to produce results. It would also have to be executed without affecting copper exports.

For any failure there would impose great strain on the economy. Even for the children's milk, powder has to be imported and so has to be paid for with exports.

### Wage cut

Allende does not have much time in which to produce results. Chile is already in recession, with some 30 per cent of its productive capacity unused.

World inflation is raising the price of Chile's manufactured imports, at the same time as copper prices are falling, and have been falling for the past eight months. Inflation in the country will this year reach a dangerous level — 40 per cent.

That means a 40 per cent wage cut for the mass of the population who cannot raise their own pay as they like. Right at the moment, the new government is negotiating a pay adjustment Bill to make up for inflationary losses.

Allende would like the upper and middle classes to get less than 100 per cent compensation so that more than 100 per

cent can be given to the lower paid. But the middle-class parties which dominate the assembly are not going to cut their own throats just for Allende's pleasure. And if the President looks like being too adventurous, the army is always in the wings.

Yet if Allende gives in and accepts the control of the assembly, the control of the Chilean ruling class, he faces increasing threats on his left.

The guerrillas will get a new lease of life from each of his failures. Even more important, the mass of Chilean workers will become much more sympathetic towards any political alternative outside the assembly, since it will be clear that the assembly is not some neutral forum, but the major obstacle to social change.

Disillusion will be that much greater because the hopes pinned on Allende have been so high.

Nor will the leftist talk fill many stomachs. Giving diplomatic recognition to Cuba or China, or even accelerating the expropriation of US companies or completely taking over the banks, will not produce immediate benefits to the victims of the system.

The only way in which Allende could convert his accidental minority victory in the elections into what the right really fears, is for him to create a force capable of overshadowing not just the assembly, but its real masters outside in the ruling class.

The Popular Unity coalition created election committees up and down the country. They might have been the nuclei of a workers' and peasants' organisation to give backbone to the new government, to show the assembly and the ruling class the existence of a different kind of power and — if armed — to answer the threat of a military take over.

But that goes wildly far beyond the parliamentary rules of the game which Allende, and above all his Communist Party supporters have agreed to play. The more left-wing elements in the coalition might be tempted to go further than the rules allow.

### Hysterical right

But the Communist Party — much the biggest organised element in the coalition, and controlling 80 per cent of the local election committees — will make sure that the government only survives if it 'accepts the constitution'. Of course, the new Minister of Labour is from the Communist Party.

The hysteria of the right has little justification in Allende himself. But it is justified in what could come after him.

Allende, from the position of the right, is certainly the thin edge of a thickening wedge. Six years ago the Christian Democrats won a landslide victory in order to proclaim a 'Revolution in Liberty'.

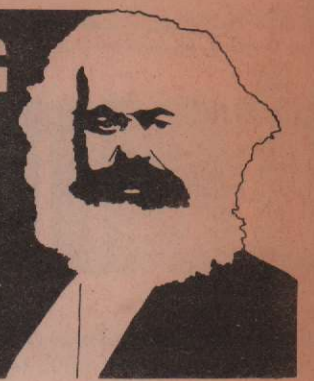
Today, what they did is dismissed as a failure. Now the Popular Unity's 'laying the basis for socialism' is a further lurch leftwards for the mass of the population.

But whatever its achievements — like those of the Christian Democrats before it — it will not at all live up to popular hopes. Indeed, the Chilean situation at the moment means that any 'effective' government must act as the agent for foreign and domestic capital, whatever 'adjustments' are made, or however colourful the wrapping in which it is packaged.

Which means that Chile's powerful and well-organised working class may then be forced to execute its own revolution.

## THE MEANING OF MARXISM

A weekly column by Duncan Hallas



THE REASONS for Marx's belief that periodic and increasingly severe economic crises are inevitable under capitalism can now be considered. The driving force of the system can be summed up as a compulsion to accumulate capital.

Competition between capitalist concerns forces each firm to attempt to expand its share of production by converting surplus value into capital. This process of capital accumulation tends to increase the demand for labour and so to push up wages. To minimise wage costs more sophisticated and expensive capital equipment is introduced with the aim of increasing the productivity of each worker and hence the amount of surplus value extracted.

An unwanted consequence of this increase in the amount of fixed capital per worker or 'rise in the organic composition of capital' is a downward pressure on the rate of profit.

The immediate cause of slumps is not this long-term tendency but short run fluctuations in the rate of profit. Of course every actual slump has particular causes of its own but certain causes are always present.

In the course of a boom the demand for labour rises, output increases and so does capital accumulation and hence the demand for additional machinery and equipment.

Unemployment falls and as it shrinks so does the most important check on rising wages. Earnings are pushed up and so the rate of profit tends to be diminished.

'But as soon as this diminution touches the point at which the surplus value that nourishes capital is no longer supplied in normal quantity, a reaction sets in: a smaller part of revenue is capitalised, accumulation lags, and the movement of rise in wages receives a check.' (Marx).

### Fall in demand

The result is a recession, which is first felt in the heavy industries making 'capital goods' — 'Department I' as Marx calls them. The loss of earnings of workers in this department due to lay-offs, reduced overtime and so on causes a fall in demand for the commodities that working people buy and so spreads the recession to the sector of industry making these goods.

Marx calls this sector 'Department II'. The effect is cumulative and the depression worsens. Whether or not wage rates are cut — and typically they are — actual earnings and hence demand falls progressively.

Unemployment rises until the wage gains of the boom have been cancelled out and the rate of profit starts to rise again. A new boom is then in the making.

This is a very much simplified picture which leaves out a number of features of importance, notably price fluctuations in the boom-slump cycle. Nevertheless it represents the essence of Marx's crisis theory. Before comparing it with the actual history of capitalist development, three points have to be considered.

The first is that though the crisis appears as a crisis of 'overproduction', of falling demand, it is not demand as such that is deficient. It is purchasing power.

As Marx wrote, 'The final cause of all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses as compared to the tendency of capitalist production to develop the productive forces in such a way that only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit.'

### Get worse

This fact is the basis of various reformist schemes that seek, in one way or another, to prevent or alleviate slumps by giving away purchasing power to workers. The possibilities and limitations of these will be examined later.

The second point is why crises should tend to get worse. This is where the long term tendency for the rate of profit to decline is important. To the extent that it is realised, it lowers the profits 'ceiling', and so the 'space' between that 'ceiling' and the 'floor' created by working class resistance.

## What causes the crisis

Thus, in the absence of offsetting factors, crises should become ever more frequent and more severe.

This is the basic reason why Marx believed that wages could not increase indefinitely in a capitalist society.

Finally there is the fact that there is a sector of production, called by Marx 'Department III', that makes neither 'wage goods' for sale to workers nor 'capital goods' for accumulation. It includes both 'luxury goods' for sale to the rich and, more important, various goods for the state which are, strictly speaking, not commodities in Marx's sense at all, since they are not produced for a market.

### Milder slumps

This sector is relatively unaffected by the factors making for boom and slump in Departments I and II. Its size is of great importance in modifying the boom-slump cycle.

How does the theory measure up to reality? The liberal economist Lord Beveridge concluded, 'Fluctuations of industrial activity in Britain in periods of an average length not very different from those of the modern trade cycle can be traced over the whole time for which data of construction industries are available, i.e. from 1785'.

The average length of the cycle, on Beveridge figures, is around 10 years. Clearly the boom-slump cycle is built into capitalism. When the severity of the crisis is considered this picture is modified. There was a general but uneven tendency for crises to become more severe until the 1880s.

Thereafter slumps became milder until after the first world war. The slumps of 1921, 1929 and 1938 were much more severe than those of the 19th century, though that of 1938 was interrupted by the second world war.

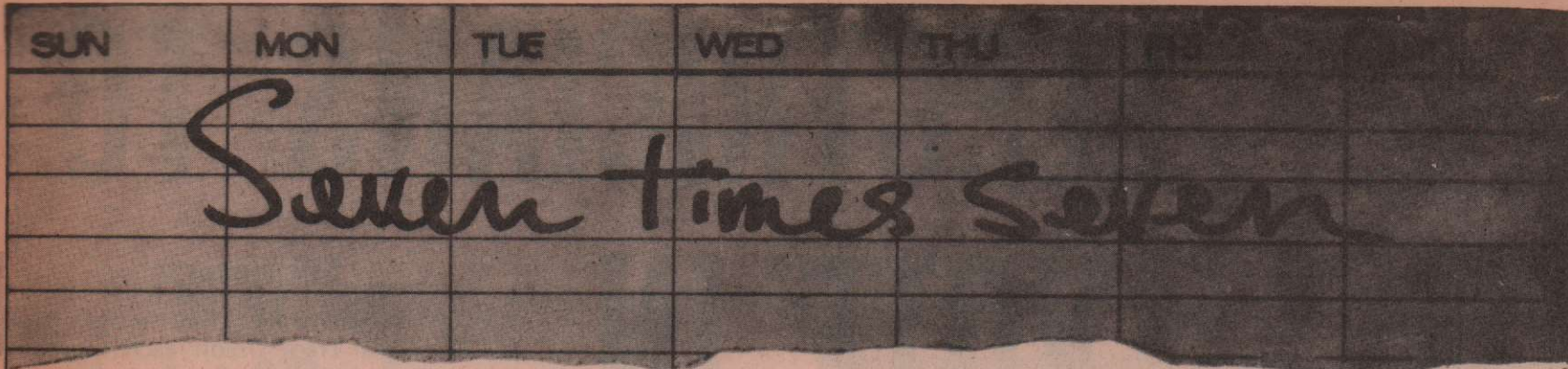
### Main features

Finally, since 1945 there have been a number of mild recessions, none of which deserve the name of slump.

These facts have to be explained before it is possible to reach a reasoned conclusion on the claim that the post-war economic expansion proves that capitalism has been drastically modified and is now slump free.

Three main features of the system that have not yet been examined have a bearing on the issue. They are the growth of monopoly and state monopoly capitalism, the export of capital and the expansion of Department III production.

Two of these have had, at various times, a medium run stabilising influence on capitalist economies. None of them can permanently stave off the system's inherent tendency to crisis.



# Bronco beats the royal ban

WHEN THE FILM *Bronco Bullfrog* opened recently at the Cameo Poly in London, it received favourable press reviews. Every night there were long queues of disappointed people who couldn't get in to see it.

Ten days later the film was taken off to be replaced by Chekhov's culturally more acceptable *Three Sisters*. Baffled newspaper reporters were told that Princess Anne was gracing the premiere of *Three Sisters* with her presence and that 'this was the only date Her Royal Highness could fit in her crowded diary'.

So *Bronco Bullfrog* had to go. So much for the customer always being right.

Fortunately, *Bronco Bullfrog* is being shown at various other cinemas and readers should make every effort to go and see it. Made on a small-scale budget and shot starkly in unfashionable black and white, the film portrays the life and problems of a small group of teenagers in London's bleak East End.

Bored and frustrated, the group drifts almost inevitably into petty crime and conflict with the police. Often awkward and inarticulate, like the boys themselves, *Bronco Bullfrog* manages to effectively communicate



Bronco actor Sam Shepherd

the utter lack of hope or meaning that is life for a teenager in E15.

Des' (the film's "hero") main problem is with his girl friend's disapproving mother and this forms the central part of the film. He runs away with her, realises that this is no solution and all and returns to 'face the music'.

## On the run

But before he can do this, he involves himself and his best friend in a senseless fight with a policeman. The film ends with the boys on the run from the law with a grim future ahead of them in the swinging, permissive 1970s.

*Bronco Bullfrog* wisely offers no solutions to the problems it poses. It is an uncluttered working out of the dilemmas of these young lads.

Politics of any form or variety plays no part in their lives. One of their main problems is their inability to become involved in any meaningful social activity whatsoever.

They perceive their problems to be private and personal and find great difficulty in even relating to each other in their own group.

The film does have its weaknesses — it is too long and might have made a much better documentary (its plot is, to say the least, a little thin) but it is honest and unpretentious.

It is well worth seeing. But Princess Anne got there first, in a much publicised visit on Monday.

**Martin Tomkinson**



Jean-Paul Sartre, whose *Roads to Freedom* novels are currently being serialised on BBC2, seen speaking to French carworkers at Renault Billancourt. As a mark of solidarity, he is editing a left-wing paper under police attack.

# COTTONS COLUMN

AS electricians and plumbers vote this week for members of the executive of the EPTU (that stands for Expulsion of Progressive Trade Unionists) we hear that one brother, thrown out of the union in Scotland for taking part in 'unofficial action', left his judge and jurors frothing with rage.

The spark in question appeared before the union appeals committee which subsequently recommended his expulsion to the executive.

Asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed, the rank and file scoundrel produced a package and announced that he would like to make a presentation to Bill Blairford, the Scottish executive member.

Blairford is up for re-election and is expected to lose to left-wing candidate Charlie Montgomery, who has also been expelled but is seeking a high court injunction to allow him to contest the election.

Opening the package, the spark said that since Bro Blairford would soon be returning to his trade, his loving members wanted to help him get used to working again. They were of the opinion that he didn't know a bus-bar (a solid metal rod that conducts electricity) from a Mars bar and they would like him to accept a small gift.

Inside the package (you've guessed) were a bus-bar and a Mars bar. Exit spark, stage left.

## Hard times

THE MILLIONAIRE PRESS has remained strangely silent over recent pay increases as high as 50 per cent. No shrieks, no howls, no abuse of sluggards threatening our nation's very existence.

Could the reason be that the recipients are company chairmen, not dustmen or miners? In recent weeks 23 of these fine patriots have upped their salaries from 10 to more than 50 per cent.

Top of the league comes J M Houlder of Houlder Bros and Co who weighs in with a 56 per cent increase,



Kearnton: not so dusty

up from £9000 to £14,050 a year.

High on the list is that friend of the Labour Party, Lord Kearnton of Courtauld, who has been slumming it on a mere £22,525 a year and has gone up by 33 per cent to £30,025.

Kearnton's increase amounts to £145 a week, more than a council worker will get for a whole year from his 50s a week increase.

## Roll up

INTERESTING information from the head of Shell's chemical section, Dr J Robinson, during a lecture at Strathclyde University. Speaking on the problems of pesticides, he said that Shell was fortunate as its Dutch workers could be used as 'human guinea pigs'.

He said that the Dutch workers' daily consumption of one particular pesticide — Shell's code is HEOD — was 80 to 126 times that of the average person's.

Asked what the average consumption of the pesticide was by Shell

directors and managers and how many of them had volunteered to ingest the same level of pesticide as the production workers, Dr Robinson said it was 'purely an accident of history' that the workers' consumption was 100 times as great as that of the directors.

And, he added, as a result of regular medical inspections all cases of convulsion that used to appear among the production workers had now been eliminated.

Things go better on Shell . . .

*THE PROBLEM with the modern political scene is that today's satire becomes tomorrow's gritty truth. We were about to have a bit of knock-about fun at the expense of the TUC's 'protest rally' in January against Carr's Bill ('who's going to be guest of honour, Harold Wilson?') when up sprung the headline: Wilson to be main speaker at TUC rally.*

## Top class

MRS MARGARET THATCHER, the pterodactyl of the Tory cabinet, has a certain basic, plodding class approach to problems.

At a recent dinner attended by senior academics and civil servants she turned to the problem of student accommodation and said: 'We will solve the problem by buying a house for my daughter to share with a few other students — and I will be the landlord.'

## NOTICES

CAMDEN IS public meeting on anti-union legislation. 8pm Friday 4 December, The Hall, Camden Studios, Camden Street, NW1. Speakers Don Cook (AUEW), Ross Pritchard (NGA).

DEMO in support of Civil Rights march in Fermanagh against repressive legislation. Assemble Shepherds Bush Green, 2 o'clock, Sunday 29 November. Organised by Irish Solidarity Campaign.

DAGENHAM IS public meeting: Roger Protz on anti-union legislation. Marsh Green School, South Close, New Road, Dagenham. Monday 30 November, 7pm.

MANCHESTER IS public meeting: The Millionaire Press and how to fight it. Speaker Roger Protz. Thursday, 3rd December, 8pm, Castle pub, Oldham St., Manchester.

MERSEYSIDE IS public meeting: '8th December. What next?' Speaker Roger Protz Friday 4 December 8pm Mitre Hotel, Dale Street, Liverpool.

CAMDEN IS: introduction to IS politics and policies by Nigel Harris. Laurel Tree pub, Bayham St, near Camden Town tube. 8.30pm, Thursday, 3rd December. IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN social: Saturday 28 November, 8 pm Boltons



OVERSHADOWING all else on television in the past week has been the tragedy of Pakistan. The impact of the news pictures, the savage immediacy of the reports of the unending, escalating figures of the dead and dying, show the medium at its best and its worst.

At its best, because there is the news on our screens just a few hours after it happened. At its worst, because it is all so glib and so quick.

The appalling facts have scarcely had time to register before the newscaster crashes into a new gear, grins cheerfully and says: 'In Australia, Geoff Boycott is on his way to another century... or 'Latest bookmakers' odds on the Miss World contest show Miss Sweden at 20-1 favourite'.

## Indictment

Even worse, the grisly corpses on ITV are followed by the honeyed voices of the commercials that sell us the soft pleasures of central heating, Findus Frozen Fish Fingers and Persil Whiteness, always a sick indictment of our own society with its eight million below the poverty line, but so much sicker in a whole world riven by disaster and starvation.

If only we could reach out and stop the telly machine, say for humanity's sake cut out the commercials, forget about cricket and beauty contests and get down to a real analysis of what has happened in the Bay of Bengal.

But that would mean interfering with 'the schedules', affecting the ratings, annoying the advertisers. There I go, getting all subversive again.

The unfolding pictures of the rows of human carcasses are etched on my mind. A few years ago there would have been an outcry against such horror being brought into millions of living rooms.

Vietnam has changed all that. We are used to horror. Perhaps an up-to-date definition of socialism is a society in which just one television picture of a person dead from violence or starvation will spark off a great roar of outrage from the viewers.

## Boring

Outrage seemed confined last week to Miss World. Kim Novak summed up the showbiz attitude to women at the time of Marilyn Monroe's death: 'They treat us like hunks of meat in a butcher's shop'.

Apart from the monstrous attitude to women shown by such contests, it is all so boring and unsexy. I say this on past experience — I couldn't bring myself to watch this time.

Yet another reminder to watch the Jean-Paul Sartre serial *The Roads to Freedom* (BBC 2 Sundays, repeat Saturdays). With the approach of the second world war the serial has really hit its stride and is the standout programme of any week.

BBC 1's Omnibus on Sunday gave us a sensitive and moving account of the final years of the tormented Italian painter Modigliani. As a bonus, it had more uninhibited female flesh in one programme than you'll ever see on Miss World.

It's actually fun being a culture vulture these days . . .

**David East**

Public House, Duke Rd, off Chiswick High Road. MARCH of health workers against the cuts: Wednesday 3 December, 2.30pm from Royal College of Physicians, Regents Park, down Marley Street to BMA House, Tavistock Square. Followed by protest meeting. IS WOMEN'S Bulletin (No 2) now available. Price is post free. Money with orders from A. Paczuska, 355 Lordship Lane, N17. NORTH LONDON Women's Group Sunday 29 November, 3pm, 380 City Road, N1 (opp Angel Tube). Subject: What is Women's Liberation. Facilities for children.

# Socialist Worker

## Getting shop stewards to jump through the hoop

ROBERT CARR'S Consultative Document on trade union 'reform' has only one reference to shop stewards — a remarkable achievement when you consider that the fundamental strength of the trade union movement is the democratically-elected shop stewards' organisation.

That one reference speaks of: '...sufficient trained officials and shop stewards available to participate in negotiations.'

Training can mean a number of things. It can mean preparing for a fight. It can also mean jumping through the hoop.

Vincent Hanna of the Sunday Times helped spotlight where the main thrust is directed when he wrote last month: 'The shop steward is singled out by the new deal for special attention. He is the union official who operates on the shop floor and usually has a hand in unofficial strikes.'

'He will face an action for damages under the government's proposals if he induces a breach of contract. This may separate him from his members.'

'He also will be expected by his union executive to help them use "their best endeavours" to get a strike settled. And if he doesn't he could face disciplinary charges and possible legal action. Either way he doesn't look like winning.'

### Solidarity

The Carr proposals state that individual action is 'unrestricted'. This only goes to show the government appreciates that the strength of the working class is its unity and solidarity.

When this unity is needed most, someone — not necessarily the shop steward or office representative — must move and second a motion calling for militant action.

Trade unionists placed in such positions will be liable under the law for 'inducing' that action.

In 1906, following the Taff Vale judgment when the railwaymen's union was successfully sued for damages, legal protection was given to workers who take action in 'contemplation or furtherance of a trades dispute'.

This protection is still in force today, but it will be removed from all those except trade unions that are prepared to 'register'.

This would mean accepting rules laid down by the registrar which would seriously limit the actions that can be taken.

As Vincent Hanna pointed out, this '...area of reform is really aimed at changing the balance of power in industry'.

The balance of power needs to be changed — but not in that direction! Paragraph 46 of Carr's document, under the cynical heading of 'workers' rights', says: 'The Bill would secure the right of an individual to choose not to



CASTLE: new recruit for left?

belong to a trade union.'

Will the government introduce further legislation to give us the 'freedom' to drive on the right hand side of the road or to decide not to pay our taxes and rates?

A further paragraph says: 'There would be corresponding provisions to protect people seeking employment.' The only answer we can give that is — 'tell it to the 600,000 unemployed as a result of government policies.'

If the Bill goes through and a wage claim results in some trade unionists ending up in court with fines imposed against them, we should remember the answer given by representatives of the motor industry to the Donovan Commission.

Mr Woodcock: 'What would you do if the shop struck against deductions from pay?' Sir George Harriman (BMC): 'If we had a strike as a result of deducting a fine from pay?'

Woodcock: 'Yes, what would you do?' Sir George Harriman: 'That would be the next problem, sir, would it not?'

Woodcock: 'What would you do?' Lord Rootes: 'We are in trouble.'

### Compelled

Trade unionists must realise that they will be in trouble if the Bill is not defeated.

There are many more objectionable features to the proposals, including the right to impose procedure 'agreements' in certain cases. This means that we can be compelled to work under provisions that we have not approved or agreed.

'Industrial reform is not the only field in which the government has served notice that it intends to change the balance of power in our society. Mr Carr's challenge is part of the government's whole political challenge. The unions' answer must be political too. Who said that? Wait for it — Barbara Castle in the New Statesman.

She must be one of the newer left-wing MPs. Of course she is right, but not, I suspect, in the way she means.

**MALCOLM REID**

Draughtmen's & Allied Technicians' Assn.

# ELECTRICIANS TO VOTE IN CRUCIAL ELECTION

SW Reporter

A VITAL POWER BATTLE in the Electricians' and Plumbers' Trade Union reaches its climax this week as members prepare to vote for a new executive council.

Left-wing members are making a united and concerted effort to remove a number of key right-wingers. It is the biggest bid for office by the left since the present Les Cannon-Frank Chapple leadership was installed 10 years ago by the High Court.

The court removed from office most of the old leaders, mainly Communist Party members, who had been found guilty of ballot rigging. Socialists did not support their methods but stressed that behind the Cannon-Chapple clique stood the employers, the press and the government, all anxious to stamp out militants from a key section of the trade union movement.

In recent years, the new right-wing leadership has altered radically the structure of the union.

The once all-day executive is now composed of full-time officials.

Officials are appointed by the executive, not elected by the members.

District committees have been abandoned. The appeal court is made up of executive members.

And in the electrical contracting industry, the union has set up with the employers a system of Joint Industry Boards that is the most advanced and refined method of grading workers, weeding out militants and removing the right to strike.

A series of union 'court martials' has recently expelled a number of Scottish EPTU militants who have been leading opposition to the 'corporate state' methods of the JIB.

Discontent has reached boiling point in the union and has put a great deal of steam behind the left-wingers standing for the executive. They are:

- Div 1: H Chicken (Belfast)
- Div 2: C Montgomery (Glasgow)
- Div 3: B Connolly (Sheffield)
- Div 4: E Sabino (Liverpool Central)
- Div 5: H Shaw (Warrington)
- Div 8: F Morphew (Dartford)
- Div 9: J Atkinson (Lambeth)
- Div 10: F Gore (London Airport)

Some of these progressive candidates are tipped to beat the sitting right-wing members.

The most bizarre contest takes place in Scotland where sitting member Bill Blairford is being challenged by Charlie Montgomery, a left-wing militant recently expelled from the union for taking part in 'unofficial action' against the JIB.

### DISUNITY

He is seeking a High Court injunction that will declare the expulsion null and void and allow him to contest the ballot. He is expected to defeat Blairford, whose own branch — Edinburgh — has nominated Montgomery.

The militants' chances are improved by the present disunity among the right wing. President Les Cannon is ill in hospital and there is much back-stabbing and manoeuvring as the right wing squabble over his succession.

Some left-wing members who have been canvassing busily for the progressive candidates have stressed that winning seats and using the courts is not sufficient to defeat the right wing.

They say that only a massive campaign to rouse the whole rank and file to fight for total democracy in the union can turn the EPTU into an effective fighting force for its members.

Nevertheless, the current elections will give some indication of the feelings of the members, who must look to the future and ignore the witch-hunting tactics of the right wing.

Socialist Worker urges all EPTU members to vote for the progressive candidates.

### No strikes clause

ON MONDAY, EPTU leaders signed an agreement with the Electrical Contractors' Association that promised there would be no sympathy strike by craft members of the union in support of technical and clerical staff.

Section 3c of the agreement says that the union 'undertakes not to authorise industrial action by members of the craft section of the union in furtherance of any matters affecting technical, supervisory and administrative staff employees.'

Union secretary Frank Chapple denied that the clause removed the right to strike but added: 'There are probably more effective ways of pursuing claims than going on strike'.

### NOTICES

GLASGOW SOUTH IS Public Meeting, Tuesday 1 December 7.30pm. The Tory Offensive — How do we fight it? Speakers: George Kelly (Electricians' shop steward), Peter Bain (DATA convener), Chairman: John Moffat (AEF) in the AEU rooms, 897 Govan Road, Glasgow SW1

JOE KENYON in Devon: Thursday 3 December: The Miners, Past, Present and Future. 1pm Devonshire House, Exeter University. Trade union education: 7.30pm Oddfellows Arms, New North Rd, Exeter



CHAPPLE: put in office by a High Court

## 8 DECEMBER ROUNDUP

### Dockers back strike

by SW Docks Correspondent

A CALL for all dockers to strike on 8 December came from the National Port Shop Stewards' Committee last Saturday. Meeting in Preston, the stewards agreed to hold mass meetings to explain the strike call and to make sure that the stoppage is total.

All major ports, with the exception of Hull, and some smaller ports, were represented at the meeting. The stewards think

that the stoppage on 8 December will be bigger than last May Day's strike.

The meeting seemed confident that all dockers at Tilbury, London's Royal group, Liverpool, Manchester, Preston and Avonmouth would be out.

A deputation of sacked Pilkington glassworkers appealed to the docks stewards to black work from the St Helens factories. The appeal will be considered by London stewards this week.

### Teachers say yes

by Duncan Hallas, secretary ILTA Action Committee

THE three London Teachers' Associations, representing 18,000 teachers, voted by 41 to 25 on Tuesday to call out London teachers in support of the 8 December strike against anti-strike laws.

The decision was taken at a special meeting in spite of opposition from leading Conservative Party members, who tried

to substitute a harmless lobby of parliament for the strike call.

The vote is a major success among a section of white-collar trade unionists and should encourage others to take similar action. Last year London led the way in initiating a month-long teachers' strike all over the country.

### Layoffs hit Ford body plant

MANAGEMENT: Management at the Ford Motor Co on Monday laid off 'indefinitely' the whole of B shift in the Body Plant, where car bodies are assembled.

Last week the plant's workers walked out when supervisors attempted to do the work of suspended torch solderers. The solderers are fighting management's attempts to break down their jobs and increase speedup.

Management has also refused to accept the workers' demand for 10 minutes' waiting time every day.

### Women prepare

THE Women's National Co-ordinating Committee has agreed to start preparing for demonstrations during the weekend before International Women's Day, which is on 8 March next year. The campaign is centred round demands for more nurseries, free contraceptives and abortion, and an end to discrimination against women in education and industry.

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