

Socialist Worker

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River Don and BSA workers take action to stop factory closures

FIGHT FOR JOBS TOP PRIORITY FOR THE UNIONS

THE FIGHT FOR JOBS is now the most urgent problem facing workers all over Britain. Last week's unemployment figures show that the toll of redundancy continues its relentless upward climb.

Big business's own house magazine The Economist predicts confidently that there will be a million unemployed in Britain alone by January or February—and another 50,000 or so in Northern Ireland.

The TUC has organised a series of demonstrations against unemployment. These should be supported. But token protests alone are not going to force the Tories to change their policy. Militant resistance to every attempt at redundancy is necessary. Any worker who loses his job now is unlikely to find another one quickly.

Workers at British Steel's River Don plant in Sheffield, and BSA's Small Heath plant have joined those at Plessey, Alexandria and UCS who are refusing to leave the factories when the employers tell them they are sacked.

This is an enormous step forward for the struggle against unemployment. But no one should think that merely telling the employers and the government that you want to work will save jobs.

Full occupations and strikes in the plants are necessary to stop the employers fulfilling any remaining orders and to stop them moving work or valuable machines elsewhere. The call must go out for sympathy strikes and occupations from other, neighbouring factories. An overtime ban must be imposed throughout any combine calling redundancies.

And the unions must be forced to fight now for a cut in the working week to 35 hours without loss of pay as the way to force employers to take on more workers.

STEEL MEN TO 'WORK ON'

SHEFFIELD:- Last Friday 4000 workers at the River Don steel works voted to 'work-on' in an effort to stop redundancy.

After the vote convenor Ernie Webster said: 'From now on the men will not work for the British Steel Corporation, they will work for us. There are 13,000 men unemployed in Sheffield.

'No one from this works will go down the road onto the dole queue.'

The need for co-operation in the fight has been recognised by River Don and UCS shop stewards who had lengthy discussions before Friday's meeting.

The order books for River Don are still full. The crunch will come at the end of November when the private firm of Firth Brown is due to take over parts of the River Don works.

Because of the relatively short time it takes to produce even the heavy forgings and castings at River Don, the stewards will have to consider how effective the 'work on' policy will be.

Tony Hope, assistant secretary of the stewards' committee said: 'As the work begins to peter out, men will be found other jobs. We have taken the decision to stop shift work. The working week will be based on 38-40 hours.'

But the workforce will soon have to make a choice as the available work dwindles. Either they will have to stage a

full occupation and strike, or they risk being forced into acceptance of the redundancies.

Donations and messages to: R C Wing, River Don Fighting Fund, Transport House, Harts Head, Sheffield 1.

BSA NEED TRIUMPH BACKING

BIRMINGHAM:- The first batch of redundancy notices at the Birmingham Small Arms motor bike factory will come into effect on 1 November—and on that day workers will start a 'work-in' in an effort to save 3000 jobs.

The decision was taken at a mass meeting last Friday. The workers are already on a three-day week because of shortage of work and it is rumoured that the management, under pressure from Barclays Bank, will attempt to move all production to the neighbouring Triumph plant at Meriden.

Barclays Bank has loaned BSA £10m to stave off bankruptcy.

The BSA stewards are hoping to win support from their opposite numbers at Triumph to black any transfer of work or machinery.

The workers have been heartened by local support. At an emergency meeting of Coventry Trades Council last week, delegates passed a resolution from its secretary Dave Edwards, pledging full, active support



7000 Sheffield workers took part on Saturday in the first TUC demonstration against unemployment. River Don workers formed a major contingent. Picture: W Grant.

to the BSA struggle. Lucas workers have also declared their full backing and BSA stewards were meeting this week with officials of Coventry Trades Council to plan solidarity action. A call may go out for support from all local engineering unions and for links with River Don.

The BSA workers need massive support from the entire labour movement, together

with a determination to go beyond a work-in and to occupy the factory as the only effective way of staying the bosses' hand. Defeat offers the grim prospect of joining the 77,000 workers already deprived of work in the West Midlands as a result of Tory policy.

Donations and messages to: BSA Fighting Fund, c/o Roger Louch, 7 Kirkwall Road, Bartley Green, Birmingham 32.

20,535

THAT'S the record-breaking number of copies of Socialist Worker printed this week. We hoped we might go 'over the top' of 20,000 after the paper goes to 12 pages in two weeks' time—but such is the demand that we've reached our target in advance.

So how about a new target of 25,000 for the 12-page paper? The bigger the readership, the better the fight back against the Tories and the bosses.

The new paper starts on 13 November, with more stories, more facts, more arguments for all working people fighting for socialism.

The bigger paper will cost 4p. We are sorry about the increase—but, remember, we get no 'hidden subsidy' from commercial advertising and, page for page, the paper will be better value than any other.

March against brutality

by Brian Trench

COACHES will come from many parts of the country to London this Sunday for the mass rally and march organised by the Anti-Internment League. Irish republican and British socialist groups have been working for several weeks now to ensure that this is the biggest demonstration on the Irish question yet seen in this country.

The demonstration comes at a time when repression is at its most severe in Northern Ireland for many years and resistance is at its most intense.

The continued policy of internment, the introduction of new legislation to deduct rents from social security payments and from wages, and a further build-up in the troops—none of these have had the required effect of intimidating anti-Unionists.

They sense that a victory of some sort is close, and that if they maintain the pressure, the Unionist regime must collapse.

No weakening

The civil disobedience campaign is being intensified. Street committees are being elected to organise the campaign, and in some places are taking over functions of the local authority.

Although the military authorities claim every day that they are on the point of 'winning the war', the physical campaign shows no signs of weakening. Some time ago, shootings such as those which occurred at the weekend were immediately followed by demands for a public inquiry.

This week, not even the moderate opposition MPs have demanded an inquiry. Catholics in Northern Ireland have had any belief in 'British justice' completely shattered.

But the Catholic workers of the Six Counties cannot win a lasting victory in isolation. Although the Unionists and the British government are clearly losing control of the situation, the Orange state and British imperialism in Ireland cannot be defeated unless the struggle is carried over to the Southern working class and to workers in Britain.

We must build a movement that connects the struggles of workers in Britain with the struggle of the Irish people to get British imperialism off their backs.

31 October is one important gesture. It is only a beginning.

All out on Sunday!

RELEASE THE INTERNEES! WITHDRAW THE TROOPS!

Main assembly point: Speakers' Corner, 3pm. March to Whitehall for rally with Bernadette Devlin, MP, Frank McManus, MP, Mike Cooley (DATA), Ivan Barr (NICRA), 'Butch' Roche. Provincial delegations to go to Speakers' Corner. N London and E London branches of IS go to Kentish Town (Fortess Road/Highgate Road), 1.30. S London and W London branches of IS go to Hammersmith Broadway, 1.30pm.

Ireland: the lie machine in action

THE LAST THIN veil has been stripped away from the pretence that the British Army is in Ireland to protect law and order. The indiscriminate imprisonment without trial of opponents of the Tory regime in Northern Ireland has been followed by the equally indiscriminate shooting of civilians.

Last weekend, in two separate incidents, five unarmed people were shot down. In the case of two women killed while travelling in a car and sounding a fog-horn, the army tried to justify the shooting on the grounds that they were wearing 'men's clothes'—in reality, the slacks which millions of women wear every day. And it claimed they had broken the back window of their car in order to use a revolver—although witnesses noted the absurdity of this claim since no weapon was found and the window was in any case open.

In the other main incident the army has not even claimed that the victims were armed. Three men engaged in an attempted theft were simply shot down in cold blood.

Meanwhile, stories continue to filter out from the internment camps of horrific tortures. The forms of psychological and physical torture employed by the secret police in Stalin's prisons and by the French in Algeria are now being used in what is claimed to be part of Britain. Men are eventually being released after brainwashing, hardly able to speak, in one case at least entering straight into a mental hospital, completely broken.

The British press has been forced to take note of some of these incidents. The occasional cough of protest has been made. But it has been drowned in continual and systematic distortion of what is going on. The Daily Express, for instance, had the effrontery to claim last Friday that a man suffering from the effects of psychological torture had in fact been beaten up by the IRA—although the doctor who had examined him vouched, when asked by the Sunday Times, that he showed no signs of physical roughing up.

The Daily Mirror printed a similarly fabricated story on Saturday. Its front page headline screamed 'IRA hire red killers'. According to the paper, the IRA had been paying 'assassins' from behind the 'Iron Curtain' to snipe at British troops and one of them had now been shot dead. Yet not one piece of evidence to justify that claim was produced. The only proof pointed to by the Mirror reporters was the fact that the weapon in the dead man's possession was a Kalashnikov—yet such guns are used not only by East Europeans, but by armies in all parts of the world. Otherwise they merely quoted a Dublin businessman who had 'heard' rumours that a Czech citizen had been involved.

It is not only the press that is distorting what is happening in Ulster. The BBC has imposed a form of censorship following complaints in August from the Tory Minister of Defence that its news broadcasts were giving an unfavourable view of the army. Now, according to the Guardian of 25 October, 'a memorandum from the Director General forbids BBC reporters to submit for output any interviews with members of the IRA or associated bodies'. And for six weeks a Belfast news editor was moved to London to ensure the 'impartiality' (ie lack of criticism of the army) of broadcasts.

For years the British establishment has boasted about its 'liberalism'. But the moment a substantial section of the population begins to challenge its rule the mask of liberalism is dropped.

For the left in this country there is an urgent task to be accomplished. In the labour movement, in trade union branches, at the shop-floor level, we have to expose the lies that are being systematically put out. We have to campaign against internment and torture. Above all, we have to explain that there can be no way forward in Northern Ireland until the British troops are driven out and the Irish people allowed to determine their own future.

DREADFUL SPECTACLE

THE GOVERNMENT's plan to enter the Common Market, as we have explained in the paper in the past, is part and parcel of the general attack on workers' conditions. The Tories hope that entry will make it easier for them to hold down wages while prices rise faster than ever, that they will be able to explain away redundancies more easily, and that increased competition will force more workers to accept speed-up and productivity dealing.

We believe for that reason that the working-class movement has to oppose entry. But only as part of an overall campaign against the government, counterposing to the capitalist attempt to solve capitalism's problems a genuinely socialist alternative. You cannot fight one method of worsening workers' conditions by lining up with those pressing for a different method of doing the same thing. That is why the spectacle of the anti-Common Market demonstration in London on Sunday was quite disgraceful. For Communist Party members, Labour 'leftists' and trade unionists were marching alongside those who are the most bitter foes of the labour movement.

The Morning Star felt able to boast on Monday that 'Tory ladies, wearing Tory ladies' hats' were there, and 'even the Monday Club', an extreme right-wing organisation. It quoted with approval the speeches of two right-wing Tory MPs.

Such people claim to be opposed to the Common Market—but only because they fear it will interfere with the profits of big business with which they are associated. Furthermore, they are specialists in angling for popular support on a nationalist and racialist basis. Their technique is to pretend that 'foreigners'—whether working-class immigrants or European politicians—are really responsible for the suffering of ordinary people, not big business.

In the past the working-class movement in this country has had an honourable tradition of fighting the influence of fascists and right-wing Tories. That is why militants must oppose every attempt of the 'official left'—whether the Labour MPs, the Communist Party or the Morning Star—to give respectability to such elements and to let their pernicious ideas circulate within the working-class movement.

KEY TUSSLE FOR

As the Electricians and Plumbers' rules revision conference opens in Blackpool this week, the union is deep in internal crisis. A Socialist Worker reporter traces the crisis back through the last 10 turbulent years.

IT IS ALMOST exactly 10 years since—with a fanfare of press publicity—'democracy' was restored in the Electrical Trades Union. After a massive court case, the election of a communist official was declared void by the High Court and power, it was said, was put back where it belonged, in the hands of the members.

With much boasting, the anti-communist executive set up a rank and file appeals committee and told the world that all was well. The cancer of ballot rigging and undemocratic practices in a key section of the labour movement had been rooted out.

When less than seven years later the great democrats Les Cannon and Frank Chapple caused the rank and file appeals committee, their own creation, to be abolished, the occasion merited little public concern. In the intervening years the press and the employers had learned that the union was in safe hands.

The guardians of the new democracy picked three main targets for their attention: electrical contracting, London Airport and Clydeside.

The Hounslow branch was closed down and a new structure created for London airport. Others were to follow. In electrical contracting, the Scottish Joint Industry Board was set up, one of the earliest examples of a legally binding agreement in this country.

It was followed later by a version for England and Wales, equally tight and with a system of working rules which cannot be changed by union members. Chapple and Cannon had remained true to their union journal editorial of January 1962: 'The last word in the affairs of the union will always be in the hands of you the members.'

APPOINTED

In and around Glasgow, the strategy was similar: the creation of industrial divisions in the union, a reduction in the number of branches from seven to three with appointed officials instead of elected branch secretaries.

To the side of this 'streamlining' programme at local level, more 'businesslike' practices were pushed through by the union leadership. Communists had already been banned from holding any office whatsoever in the union. Now all officials were to be appointed instead of elected.

Every stage in this strategy was accompanied by a chorus of anti-communism. Head office officials formed an anti-spy group, according to the Sunday Telegraph. One woman clerical worker was sacked after it was alleged she had been making copies of internal union documents. And in 1967, a private film show was screened for the executive to help them identify ringleaders of opposition activity in the union.

When Alan Courtney, a London branch secretary who had been dismissed, took legal action, the ETU counsel claimed that his political opinions were very relevant to the case. He was, said W L Mars Jones, QC, 'a man with a very large axe to grind for the Trotskyist movement'.

And so the union's rules were changed to consolidate the new democrats. With the rank and file appeals committee abolished, five members of the executive became the disciplinary committee. The rest

Rank and file bid to win back control...

by LAURIE FLYNN



Montgomery: expelled

about the way their executive member, Bill Blairford, had dealt with proposed redundancies in a number of Glasgow factories.

For allegedly organising this breach of discipline, four men were expelled from the union. One of them was Charlie Montgomery who had announced his intention to oppose Blairford in the forthcoming executive elections. After expelling Montgomery, the executive ruled that he could not fight the election and that Blairford was therefore the only candidate.

Montgomery duly went to the High Court and the union was restrained from striking him off the ballot paper until the question of his expulsion was settled by the courts. The election was therefore held with the following results announced on 1 July:

Montgomery	4191 votes
Blairford	3588 votes

Before Montgomery could take his seat, Blairford wrote to the executive complaining about leaflets in support of Montgomery which had been circulated in Scotland. These were, he claimed, contrary to the rules of the union.

INJUNCTION

The executive set up an inquiry under three full-time officials, one from Scotland, one from Ireland and one from Wales. By two to one (the Scotsman who had been a strong supporter of Blairford in the election) the committee found that there was no substance in the charges and recommended that Montgomery be allowed to take his seat.

Despite this, the executive decided by seven votes to four that Montgomery's election was null and void and called for a new election. Montgomery has since been back to the courts to seek another injunction ordering the union to allow him to take his seat on the executive until the validity of the election has been decided in the courts.

The reverberations of the Montgomery election have not left the clerical staff un-

of the executive formed the appeals committee, a tidy arrangement.

Canvassing for elections became illegal, thereby preventing the issues being those of policy, rather than individuals. A rule inserted into the 1965 ETU rule book states that no member is allowed to send circulars to other branches or members on any union subject unless he has permission from the executive. And just in case that didn't make the matter clear enough, another rule ordered that no branch would have any unauthorised circular read to it.

The level of bureaucratic development prompted by these lovers of democracy is most perfectly expressed in the rule which allows each branch to submit one motion only 'for the consideration of the Executive Council for inclusion on a Biennial Delegate Conference Agenda'.

For those few positions which were still elected ones, other tactics were deployed. Candidates were declared void or expelled. The case of Charlie Montgomery, the democratically elected executive member for Scotland is perhaps the most revealing.

In June 1970 there was a mass demonstration outside the union's Glasgow office by electricians and plumbers protesting

Miners ready for strike to by a Yorkshire miner



Yorkshire miners demonstrating for higher pay last winter

THE scandalous and insulting offer of £1.70 a week for underground workers and £1.80 for surface workers, made by the National Coal Board to the miners, has set the scene for a major battle against the Tory government's conspiracy to cut not prices but the standard of living of workers at a stroke.

Worse still, this is the second offer. The NCB's original offer to the executive of the National Union of Mineworkers was £1.60 a week.

Disgrace

Wages in the mining industry are a national disgrace. The rates range from £18 a week on the surface, and from £19 underground, to a maximum of £30 a week for faceworkers in the best-paid coalfields of Kent and Nottingham. This means that men working underground can take home as little as £13 a week.

These are the rewards for 'cashing in on the great coal comeback'. New NCB chair-

square up in the big wages battle? Socialist Worker reports...

DEMOCRACY IN ETU



Frank Chapple: general secretary of the ETU: if he's beaten at Blackpool he will ballot the members

touched. A Mrs Jeanette McGinn gave evidence to the committee of inquiry that she received a phone call from Blairford's secretary asking her to telephone all electrical shop stewards in the area with instructions to distribute ballot papers and to instruct their members to vote for Blairford.

Mrs McGinn refused to tell shop stewards which way their members should vote and another secretary was then found to carry out the instructions. She has since been sacked.

Changes in the union's internal structure have been paralleled by the union's behaviour in industry. The ETU became a pioneer of productivity dealing, a remarkable way of getting workers to finance their own wage increases and lengthen the dole queues.

Speaking to a conference of shop stewards in electricity supply during the first phase of their new deal in 1964, the late Sir Leslie Cannon had this to say:

'The practical application of Mr Wilson's call for a scientific and technological revolution, was, in electricity, a willingness to study how one man could do the job of three. There could be no danger of redundancies in an expanding industry like electricity supply, he added.

Since that date, 15,000 men have been made redundant in the industry and in all 28,000 jobs have been lost.

The massive number of changes in working methods the ETU agreed in this industry were not slow to register among power workers. By 1970 they were ready to give the executive a hammering at an industrial conference called to discuss a forthcoming wage claim. They voted down the executive and claimed a £5 a week increase.

The executive's negotiating record was attacked because 'previous agreements have not obtained adequate reward for the very substantial sacrifices made by the membership and shown by the great fall in the numbers employed.'

The power workers were hammered

into the ground despite their watertight case and their immense industrial power. The union accepted a court of inquiry which gave them £2 a week.

At the Douglas Isle of Man 1969 rules revision conference, delegates turned over the executives' propositions for abolishing the rank and file appeals committee. They also rejected the proposal to abolish elected trustees for union funds and property.

Despite this the leadership put the proposals out to a referendum with only their own proposition on the ballot paper. They won.

Subsequent developments in the way the funds were to be handled are most interesting in revealing what this kind of 'unionism' is all about.

POWER

A company called West Common Holdings was registered on 18 December 1969 with two subscribers, Frank Chapple and John Kenneth Brewster, the ETU office manager. These two plus Andrew Cunningham, the ETU chief accountant, became its first directors. The company has no shares but is limited by guarantee.

West Common Holdings, according to its articles and memorandum of association, acts as the trustee for the members of the union and any union which merges with it or with which it merges. Its purpose is to receive, hold or control the monies of the union 'not immediately required for general purposes' and to invest them in stocks, shares, land and property. The trustees of the union presumably define what funds are not 'immediately required for general purposes'.

One of the products of the scheme is to put immense power in the hands of the directors, who have to be either executive members or officers thereof.

At the same time the ETU's investment policy was undergoing a significant shift of emphasis. Up until 1968, its funds were in municipal and government bonds and the Trade Union Unit Trust.

The first new departure was the purch-

ase of nearly £250,000 worth of units in the M and G Fund of Investment Trust Shares, one of the most respected in the City. In 1970 the union purchased just over £20,000 worth of units in another unit trust, the Oceanic Growth Fund.

At the time the ETU bought its piece of Oceanic, the company's board of directors included Lawrie Kershaw, Reggie Burr and Tony Hunt, all directors of Vehicle and General, the insurance company which collapsed this year to the dismay of many policyholders.

In the 18 months up to December 1968, Mr Burr, finance director of V and G, sold off some 120,000 shares in his own company, Tony Hunt, V and G managing director, unloaded 50,000. In the following two years neither Mr Hunt nor Mr Burr had anything but encouragement and euphoria to pass on to policy holders about V and G's prospects. When it did finally collapse, they came out of it rather better minus their blocks of shares.

Oceanic, however, was not felled by the parent company's collapse, and was sold off to another outfit called Triumph Investments. The new Oceanic board includes Sir Charles Wheeler, a former chairman of Associated Electrical Industries who until 1967 sat alongside the late Sir Leslie Cannon, president of the ETU, on the board of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation. But the most interesting thing about Oceanic is where it invests its money.

Through the fund, the ETU has put itself in the position of owning shares in companies it either does or hopes to negotiate with. The Oceanic Growth share portfolio includes shares in the following electrical firms: General Electric (of which AEI is now a part), Decca, Midland Electrical Manufacturing (a non union firm), Aberdare Holdings, A B Electronic Components, Telefusion and George H Scholes.

In fact Oceanic Growth is an extraordinarily heavy investor in the electrical industry.

But the ETU conference this week has

more important issues to discuss. Formulation of opposition proposals has not been made any easier by the fact that branches have only been able to put amendments to the old rule book and not to the new rules as drafted by the executive and their lawyers. Nevertheless, two key changes are down for discussion: the election of officials and the reshaping of the executive itself.

The Glasgow branch proposals for reorganising the executive have already been ruled out of order by the standing orders committee but its report will be challenged and there may yet be discussion.

For the leadership, the rules revision is basically a tidying up operation. In a number of recent court cases, the rules have been found to be less than watertight.

Conscious of the growing revolt in the ranks of the union, a couple of valuable sops have been offered to the left. It is proposed to drop the ban on Communists holding office and to create area industrial committees.

The leadership's attitude on registration is likely to be one of seeking discretion for the moment to play along with the TUC General Council line but register quietly. Frank Chapple's personal assistant has been saying for months that the union would have to register.

The executive also proposes a wholesale revision of Rule 24 on industrial disputes. While the draft recognises the possibility of unofficial strikes, there would no longer be—as at present—a clause allowing them to call sympathy strikes. This is a major move into line with the Industrial Relations Act.

PROTEST

Frank Chapple has already indicated how concerned he is to get his proposals through. He has threatened to hold a referendum if he is defeated by the delegates.

The executive also proposes a significant change in the standing of full-time officials. This would allow them to be sacked at the discretion of the executive. They would not have to be charged under union rules. And there would be no appeal.

This proposition has led to such disquiet that the officials concerned this week lodged a formal letter of protest with Chapple and demanded to be represented at the conference.

And for the first time in years the executive is itself split as contending groups vie for top positions after Leslie Cannon's death. The split at the top opens up more possibilities for the developing rank and file opposition.

Recently new sections of the membership have begun to move into opposition on the whole question of productivity dealing and the inhibiting kinds of agreements the leadership are prone to sign.

The successful strike at Alcan has shown the Joint Industry Board agreement can be breached, and there are many thousands of underpaid electricians just beginning to take note of that.

As one leading militant put it this week, 'the ETU is at a watershed. It is the beginning of the end for the Chapple clique.' He reckons that if the left opposition can get through some major changes this week, particularly the election of officials, and do its utmost to connect with the struggles of the awakening membership, the whole direction of the ETU can be altered in the coming years.

fight pay insult by the Coal Board

man Dereck Ezra must be referring to himself with his £400 a week pay.

The offer of 7.1 per cent represents a cut in the value of miners' wages. Kent miners have worked out that, even with the increase of £1.80, price rises have cut the value of their wages by £1.84 compared with 1966.

QUOTE

Tom Dudley, secretary of New Stubbin, Rotherham: 'The offer is a disgraceful insult particularly when they intend to raise rents by £2.12 a week. At our meeting on Saturday, New Stubbin voted unanimously for the strike ballot. I expect this to be the same everywhere.'

Further, the NCB plans to claw back £2.12 a week from the rent rises of its controlled tenants. Council tenants, too, are faced with the threat of rent rises next year from the 'Fair' Rent Bill.

Just tot up the drop in real wages. £2.12 in increased rents, £1.84 lost through price rises. Add on a loss of one-third for the increase in income tax and you can

see we need the £35 we are claiming—just to stand still. Anything less is a cut in pay.

This is the treatment that miners get in return for increasing productivity, for working three or even four shifts (at no extra pay) in the most dangerous, damp, dirty and hazardous conditions. We are faced, too, with the strong likelihood of pneumoconiosis—the killer dust disease.

Last year the NCB made a loss of £26 million—after interest payments. Yet the Coal Board could pay a £3 a week increase.

This year a profit of £½ million was made and that was after paying £54 million to the sharks of the City of London. The miners' reward? A pay cut.

Strategy

Behind Ezra stands the government hard-faced men—Heath, Barber and UCS Davies—the men who refused more than 9 per cent to the postmen, who have increased unemployment to one million.

The low offer is part of their strategy of cutting wage increases in the public sector, never mind what has happened to the cost of living. They are determined to hold fast and defeat groups of workers, one after another. Only militant action can defeat their attack. Their attitude to UCS has shown that.

Along with the offer, the NCB are talking of more pit closures, in Scotland, South Wales and Durham—areas already devastated by Lord ('I'm not a socialist') Robens. Having closed pit after pit, he has just joined the Continental Oil Company.

QUOTE

Garvin Reed, NUM, Yorkshire Area: 'The immediate task at the moment for all miners is to back up the executive in an overwhelming vote for strike action. Miners must ensure that this year the fainthearts do not retreat from demanding the full offer, as they did last year.'

Some delegates to the Aberdeen conference of the NUM had high hopes of Ezra, but it is the case of the same old furrow—just a different ploughboy. And this ploughboy agrees with the Tory strategy of hiving-off the profitable ancillary activities of the NCB—the coking plants the brickworks, and the hotel reservation scheme. These activities made £12 million profit last year.

It is essential to stop the hiving-off and

to call a halt to pit closures. A victory on the wages front can form the basis for a defeat for the Tories on closures and hiving-off.

The offer was so disgusting that we are pleased to see complete unity at the delegates' conference last week behind the executive's three proposals:

Resist

1. An overtime ban from 1 November. By stopping weekend repairs to machines, this move is expected to cut coal production by 20-25 per cent. It will not beat the Tories by itself. It must be seen as a way to reduce coal stocks, to put us in a stronger position. Any attempt to pay men less wages if their usual work is not available must be resisted.
 2. Withdrawal from the consultative machinery.
 3. A ballot for strike action. Last year we failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority. But at this year's conference the required majority was cut to 55 per cent—a figure we surpassed in most areas last time, such as South Wales 83 per cent, Scotland 76 per cent, Yorkshire 60 per cent for strike action.
- Miners should demand that the trade union leaders launch a massive propaganda campaign to win a massive majority for strike action.

JOURNALISTS IN CRUCIAL TALKS ON NEW UNION

THE UNDISGUISED contempt which the press barons have for the leadership of the 25,000-strong National Union of Journalists was summed up last week by their pay offer to provincial newsmen: 4 per cent. It makes the Coal Board bosses with their 7 per cent offer seem like reckless spend-thrifts.

The NUJ rejected the offer but their members working for papers in the immensely rich and powerful Newspaper Society know that they face a tough battle, with only lukewarm support from the top, if they are to secure an increase that is anywhere near the rise in the cost of living.

The NS pay insult comes on the eve of an important conference for NUJ members. This weekend in Southend, delegates will meet with members of the tiny, 1500-member Institute of Journalists in an attempt to forge one union with common aims and rules.

It will be a difficult conference. Compared to the leaders of the IoJ, the NUJ executive is composed of militant Bolsheviks. The main preoccupation of the Institute is with registering the new body under the Industrial Relations Act, banning the closed shop and safeguarding the rights of journalists who do not want to join the union.

Opportunity

NUJ militants have been opposed to the merger all along the line. In fact some branches like Sheffield have tabled amendments to the draft rules at Southend with the clear aim of making unity impossible.

But other left-wing branches, in particular the giant Magazine and Book branch, see the conference as an opportunity to produce a more democratic rule book and union.

If carried by the delegates—and it is a big 'if', for a successful amendment needs a majority in both NUJ and IoJ delegations—the new union would not be registered under the Industrial Relations Act, the general secretary and his deputy would come up for re-election every five years instead of elected for life and all full-time officials would be elected instead of appointed by the executive.

But if the radical and militant delegates lose out, they will be faced instead with a weak and rudderless organisation, bound by the crippling provisions of the Tory union laws, with officials appointed for life and with the organisation split in two halves to appease the former Institute members.

The former NUJ conference would be allowed to discuss only 'trade union' affairs—wages and conditions—while 'professional matters', such as cheque-book journalism, press freedom and pressure from advertising, would be hived off to a professional conference at which employers, under rule, would have to make up one-third of the delegates.

The fact that the NUJ executive is prepared to put forward such draft rules to appease the reactionary and insignificant IoJ leaders shows just how out of touch they are with their own members.

Widen gulf

At the annual conference in April, veteran Stalinist Allen Hutt was challenged seriously for the editorship of the union journal for the first time in decades—and beat militant Ron Knowles by a nail-biting 10 votes. And the leadership's own nominee for vice-president also had a narrow victory over another militant, Bill MacGregor.

The result has not been an attempt by the leadership to bridge the gulf between itself and the membership but a conscious effort to widen it. At the executive meeting last weekend the leaders banned Magazine and Book's branch newspaper and said that any members who canvas in elections will be debarred.

The canvassing ban is a serious threat to rank and file rights and means a heavy bias in elections towards candidates put forward by the executive.

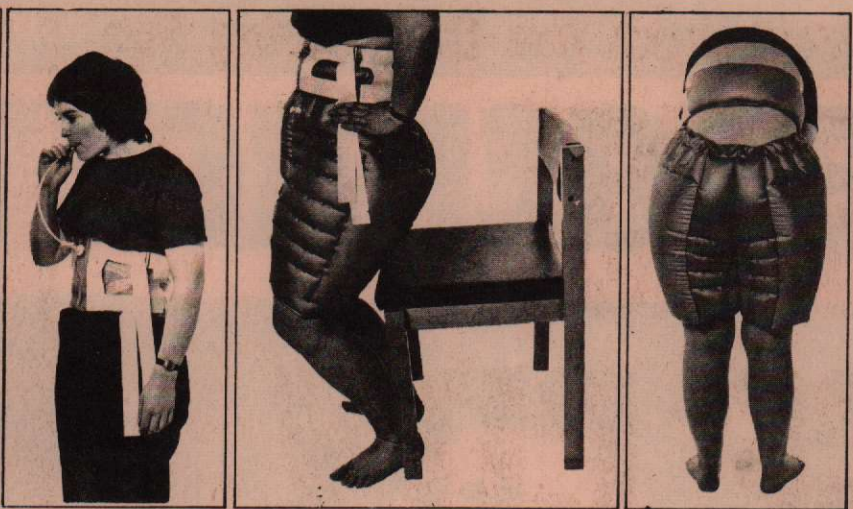
Another NEC decision was to make the editor of the union journal a full-time executive appointment—a clear move to crush Ron Knowles' almost certain victory next year.

So the Southend merger talks assume crucial importance. They could produce an even weaker organisation.

Or they could result in a united and more democratic body that would play an important role in combating anti-union propaganda in the testing times ahead as well as winning improved salaries from the profitable coffers of the press lords.

Roger Protz

When the balloon went up over rubber knickers



How to look like the Michelin man—and put on weight! A newspaper advertisement for inflatable 'weight reducers'.

by Roy Bainton

IF YOU are well-off enough—and, let's face it, you're lucky today if you even have a job—then you'll be falling over yourself to spend your money.

You must spend wisely, carefully and make sure you get the best. Therefore, whatever the product is that you buy, you can first check it out with that pillar of protection, 'Which?' magazine.

On the face of it, an organisation like the Consumer's Association seems a good idea. But doing my own twisted, biased little sur-

vey of a whole year's issue of 'Which?' magazine I get the impression that it caters for a middle-class intelligentsia.

When it discovers discrepancies and faults in products or services from the profit-hungry companies, large or small, the balloon goes up, everyone shakes their heads and says 'My, my, how disgusting'. The next month someone else gets a knocking, and so it goes on.

It's quite easy to fall into the trap of thinking how courageous they all are down at the Consum-

er's Association, but what they're actually doing is falling head over heels to make capitalism more efficient.

The swindling of the customer is a hallmark of western business ethics. 'Two for the price of three? Certainly Sir!'

Double-barrelled

From a box of damp matches to an elastic-driven secondhand car, if they can twist you in this society they'll do it, and I'll bet any money they'll escape with nothing less than a knighthood.

A quick glance at the names on

the council of the fearless Consumer's Association leaves you up to the neck in Lords, Baronets, MPs, OBEs and a host of double-barrelled insignia including a certain 'Victor' Feather.

The editor of 'Which?', the well-meaning Eirlys Roberts, writes a few columns in each issue, and it is there, in the editorials, that the whole naivety of the outfit shows through.

Her posturing and puzzlement over the shoddy practices she often reviews cries out for a political answer. Someone ought to tell them down there, (come on, Brother Feather, now's your chance), that it's not only the goods and the services which are lousy, but the whole system itself, starting in Downing Street.

Put on weight

For instance, how many working-class housewives in this country have fallen for the ridiculous adverts in the weekly and Sunday papers which show how you can slim 'easily' with the aid of some hilarious blow-up plastic knickers (sorry if I'm being a bit permissive here), or a rubber belt with an uncanny resemblance to a tractor tyre innertube?

'Which?' magazine tested them all, tyres, leggings, knickers, the lot. None of them worked, and some women actually put weight on. I'd say that someone somewhere was making the traditional fast buck at the expense of our plumper friends.

Not Miss Roberts, though. In a recent edition of 'Which?' she asks: 'Why is it that a product like this gets sold at all?'

There's a simple answer to that one. Profit. Greed. That's what business in Tory Britain is all about.

Profit and greed

As long as a product is promoted and marketed well enough, it sells. Hard luck if it doesn't work.

She says she is 'puzzled' and 'cynical' about the people who sell these goods. She wonders why the proprietors of the newspapers which carry these phoney ads do not refuse to take them.

There's an answer to that one, too, Madam Editor. Profit. Greed.

There is a mythical monster known as the 'Code of Advertising Practice' which is supported by—guess who—the newspaper proprietors. There is also a thing called the 'Advertising Standards Authority' and a 'Newspaper Publishers Association'.

However, the NPA is too busy locking out its workers and threatening its staffs with the sack to



EIRLYS ROBERTS It's our fault



RALPH NADER Keep the corpse twitching

worry about what trash they advertise in their papers.

Often a couple of thousand quid per page means more to a newspaper boss than whether or not his readers are being taken for a ride.

Not dishonest

Anyone who continues to believe that the Consumer's Association is the man-in-the-street's shield against a rough deal or a bum product should read the words of Miss Roberts carefully. On the knicker-twisters she says: 'I do not believe that the people who sell these things are dishonest'. In the current issue of 'Which?' she says: 'I believe myself that the manufacturers are no more wicked than we are and what consumers suffer from most is not the wickedness of manufacturers but their inefficiency (helped, of course, by the inefficiency of the consumers)'. . . .

Get the picture? It's as clear as a white Tornado. It's all our fault, after all.

People in the US are impressed by the consumer's Boy Scout Ralph Nader, now in Britain. He'll fight them all, General Motors, Volkswagen, the big corporations, the small.

The only things he won't fight are capitalism, greed and profit. Like our own Consumer's Association, Nader's outfit is only dedicated to making the present rotting corpse twitch a little longer.

The Tory government is the biggest production-line reject the public have ever bought. It's time we asked for our money back.

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 for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

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 through-



out the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

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

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

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the

demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

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

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restrictions. For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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. More than 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 15 BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen/Dundee/Edinburgh/Fife/Glasgow N/Glasgow S/Stirling

NORTH EAST

Durham/Newcastle upon Tyne/Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

NORTH

Barnsley/Bradford/Derby/Doncaster/Grimsby/Huddersfield/Hull/Leeds York/Selby/Sheffield

NORTH WEST

Lancaster/Manchester/Oldham/Bolton/Merseyside/St Helens/Wigan

Potteries

Birmingham/Coventry/Leamington/Leicester/Oxford/Nottingham/Northampton/Redditch/Telford

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath/Bristol/Cardiff/Exeter/Gloucester/Mid-Devon/Plymouth/Swansea

SOUTH

Ashford/Brighton/Canterbury/Crawley/Folkestone/Guildford/Poole/Southampton

EAST

Basildon/Cambridge/Harlow/Ipswich/Lowestoft/Norwich/Colchester

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Acton/Bletchley/Camden/Chertsey/Croydon/Dagenham/Enfield/Erith/Fulham/Greenford/Haringey/Harrow/Hemel Hempstead/Hornsey/Ilford/Kilburn/Kington/Lambeth/Lewisham/Merton/Newham/Notting Hill/Reading/Richmond/Stoke Newington/Slough/South Ealing/Tottenham/Walthamstow/Wandsworth/Watford/Victoria

I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name

Address

Send to: I.S. 8 Citrus Gardens, London



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spot report from the Derry firing line

THIS IS SIEGE CITY...

The people are tired but prepared. Sentries watch. The troops try to enter. Dustbin lids are banged

the ancient city walls, a towering monument to a local Orange hero and the Orange Apprentice Boys, lies a besieged area. Its streets are littered with paving stones, broken glass and occasional barricades. Its pavements are mud. Only a few of its street lamps are alight. Jagged and smoke-blackened buildings are reminders of previous battles, as are the memorial shrines to those shot in a shopping area or in one of its residential roads.

the Bogside. Above it and opposite the walls is the Creggan estate. Together these two areas are known as Free Derry. Inside them the community organises itself. Outside they are British troops.

Helicopters cruise the ancient walls are sentries and on every street and bag-protected streets and stares at the sky.

In the centre soldiers are in groups of convoys of jeeps—armed guard at the high the streets.

London

Saracen cars rumble and mingle. Notices outside warn that any will be liable for a pistol-carrying soldier abolished in the barbed wire emplacements conceal the police

my road blocks. On my way in I while one soldier met of my car, and then searched

ks were spread. While one soldier car, another drifting with a self-loading my legs.

is an occupied Bogside life goes



The people are tired but prepared. Every night sentries watch. If the troops attempt to enter, dustbin lids are banged and car horns sounded to awaken and warn the community.

The response to an alarm is tremendous. Everyone reacts. People come into the streets to defend themselves.

Jammed

For they know that every army raid on their area will result in smashed homes ('searching for arms') and the legal kidnapping of residents ('internment').

The local Socialist Resistance Group operates a radio which

broadcasts twice daily and is called Radio Free Derry. But army technicians frequently jam its words.

In both the Bogside and the Creggan—where more than a third suffer from discriminatory unemployment—a massive rents and rates strike is continuing. House after house displays the sign 'Rent Strike Here' and 'Rent Man—Don't Call'.

Assault

The people of these areas are refusing to pay money to the Tory Unionist government until all the internees are unconditionally released. Support for the strike is overwhelming.

Street committees are now being elected to organise the struggle. Although the government has threatened to stop welfare payments unless the strike ends, no one suggests a surrender.

On the last day I spent in the city, the army launched two assaults on Free Derry. The first attack took place at about 6 in the morning.

Trucks rolled into the Creggan estate and after a brief battle the troops were forced to withdraw.

Later in the day there was a clash in William Street on the edge of the Bogside. An army



charge was made at a crowd of youths. Rubber bullets thundered across the road and loaded rifles were aimed menacingly.

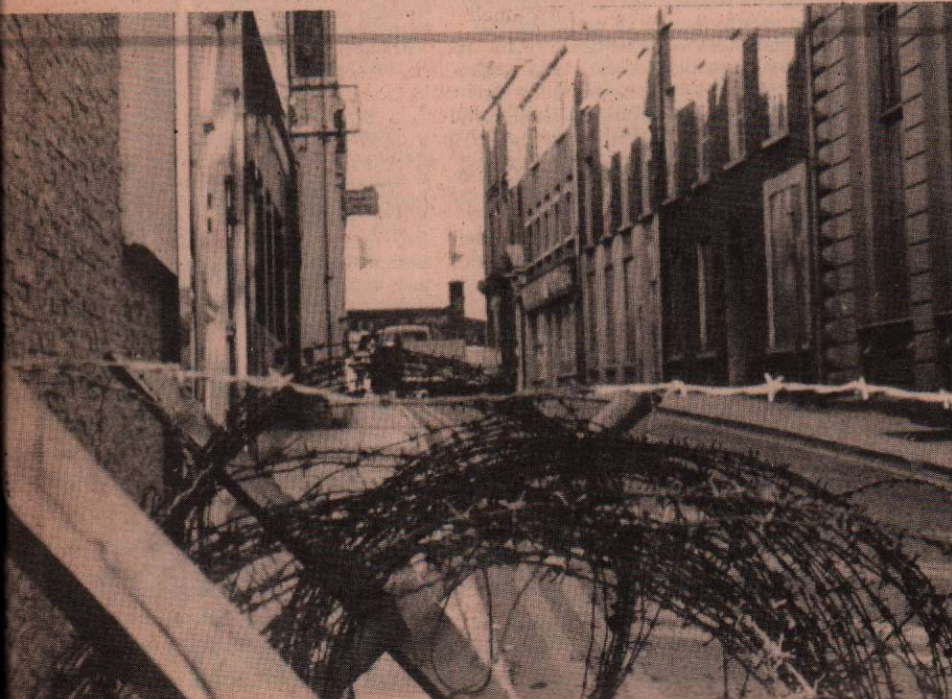
Two days before I saw the firing of CS gas and a volley of rubber bullets. On both occasions the people of the Bogside fought back.

As I passed through the Bogside for the last time I looked at the scarred streets and the determination of the people to carry on the fight.

One hastily painted slogan on a wall—near where a British sniper's high velocity bullet killed 14 year old Annette McGavigan—said it all: 'The great look great. But we are on our knees. Let us rise'.

And that's what's happening in Free Derry.

Story:
Roger Rosewell
Pictures:
Frank James



Top: a Saracen armoured car in the war-torn Bogside
Right: troops patrolling the city centre. Even shopping can be dangerous, with trigger-happy soldiers shooting anything that moves
Left: an army barbed-wire barricade near the ancient city walls

HUNGARY '56

ONE OF THE GREAT REVOLUTIONS of modern times took place in Hungary 15 years ago. A despotic regime was overthrown. In its place ruled, briefly, the direct democracy of the masses themselves.

Workers took over control of the factories. Administration ceased to be the responsibility of a remote and specialised bureaucracy. What power the official government retained was dependent on its ability to satisfy the demands of directly-elected workers' representatives.

Hungary's revolution of 1956 gave life to many of the principles for which revolutionary socialists had fought for a hundred years and more. Yet when it occurred, many militant socialists in the west were bewildered and confused. Instead of welcoming the revolution they thought it was their duty to lie about it and distort its meaning. Even today, many militants remain unclear about what really happened.

That is why it is necessary for revolutionaries today to understand the revolution of 1956, the events which led up to it and the forms of working-class power that flowered in the streets and factories of Budapest.

The revolution began on 23 October, when the political police used their machine guns against a demonstration composed chiefly of students. But its origins lay in the very nature of the society that was imposed on Hungary in the years after the Second World War.

At talks between the leaders of the USA, the USSR and Britain in 1944 and 1945 a division of Europe into spheres of influence had been agreed. This meant, for instance, that when British troops were used to crush the popular resistance movement in Greece and re-impose a discredited monarchy, the Russians made no protest.

In the same way, the western powers allowed the Russians to decide what sort of regimes would control Eastern Europe. The Russians began setting up governments whose members depended completely on their support, not on local backing.

The Communist Parties had increasing influence in the governments—not because of any growing pressure from the working class but because of the grip exercised by the Russian-run secret police.

The same police methods were operated inside the Communist Parties themselves to eliminate any leaders—usually in fact the majority—who might conceivably oppose Stalin's methods. In Hungary Rajk was executed, in Bulgaria Kostov, in Czechoslovakia Slansky and 10 other ministers, while in Poland Gomulka was imprisoned.

No part

When all opposition to bureaucratic rule had been eliminated, industry was nationalised. But what took place was by no stretch of the imagination what marxists mean by a socialist revolution.

The mass of ordinary working people played no part in bringing about any of these changes. No mass strikes occurred, no insurrection, no creation of workers' councils. Indeed, in Hungary, nationalisation took place on a bank holiday to ensure that there were no workers around who might feel they should have a say in the reorganisation of industry.

Nor were the economic and social policies carried through by the Communist-run governments in the interests of ordinary workers. Instead they served the demands of the rulers of Russia.

For instance, in 1945, 94 per cent of the produce of the engineering and metal-goods industries in Hungary was transported direct to Russia, without any payment, as 'reparation' for the crimes of Hungary's previous reactionary governments—although the crimes had been committed first and foremost against the Hungarian population itself, who were now expected to pay for them.

In 1948 a quarter of total government expenditure went on such payments.

After 1949 direct robbery of the wealth of Hungary was less pronounced. But in its place arose another form of subordination to the interests of those who ran Russia.

A policy was followed of expanding industry in Hungary without regard to the needs of the population and at the expense of the living standards of workers and peasants. Between 1950 and 1955 massive new industrial plant began to grow up.

But it was to produce not goods for the Hungarian workers and peasants, but



Budapest: wrecked vehicles litter the streets after fierce fighting between police and workers

Workers' councils—threat to 'socialist' regime

by Chris Harman



Nagy: called back

equipment that suited the needs of the military and economic competition of Russia's rulers with the rulers of the west. Meanwhile—as the Hungarian government now admits—workers' living standards fell by about 10 per cent.

Such exploitation of working people could not be carried through without the creation of a police structure that dominated all aspects of life. Workers on the factory floor were threatened with labour camps if they resisted the demands of their new bosses.

Managers, government officials and the like were also under tight leash from above. Otherwise it was feared that they might try and get an easier time for themselves or make concessions to the workers below. But one thing the police apparatus could not destroy—the feelings of resentment within the working population itself.

Some sections of the ruling apparatus were deeply aware of these feelings. They began to press for concessions to the masses and for reforms to put the economy into better shape. Their aim, however, remained to preserve in its essentials bureaucratic rule.

Result

Between 1953 and 1956 there was a continual jockeying for position within the regime between those who stood for limited reforms and those—especially the party secretary, Rakosi—who stood for inflexibly sticking to the old line.

The movement for reforms at the top was in some ways similar to the movement that developed in Czechoslovakia in 1968. It was to have the same important, although unintended result.

The police machinery for keeping the rest of society in order ceased to function. The police did not know who was going to win the fight for power at the top and were therefore wary of making arrests of dissidents who might end up on the winning side.

The first people to take advantage of the new freedom were the writers, intellectuals and students. In the summer of 1956 the Young Communist League began running a series of meetings, the 'Petofi Circle', at which prominent speakers discussed a variety of issues. Attendance grew rapidly from a few dozen to hundreds or even thousands.

But the movement was not yet one of workers. The discussions were by and large confined to the middle groups in Hungarian society—intellectuals, managers, specialists, army officers.

In October, however, it began to spread to students. The range of issues under discussion was widened to include, for instance, the role played by Russia. And students began to break completely with their state unions to form independent organisations of their own.

But much of the debate was still about how workers were to be controlled from above, rather than about how they were to run their own lives. Then suddenly on 23 October the long drawn-out disagreements on whether or not to reform the regime erupted into open warfare.

Marched

The Budapest students and reluctantly, the Petofi Circle, had organised a demonstration demanding reforms. 100,000 people joined it—an unparalleled sight in a city that had not known any oppositional demonstration for more than eight years.

At first the demonstration was peaceful, with an air of festivity. A large section of it marched to the government radio building to demand that it broadcast their demands.

The building was guarded by a detachment of the heavily-armed political police. They tried to disperse the crowd by firing into it. Dozens of demonstrators fell to the ground.

The reaction of the others was immediate. The murderous viciousness of the police summed up everything they had been fighting against. In the crowd were all sections of Hungarian society. They began to fight back with any weapon at hand—

stones, petrol bombs, and even, in the case of rank and file soldiers present, the occasional gun.

The fighting spread throughout the streets of the city within hours. Guns were procured from factory sports clubs, from Hungarian army units, from arms factories.

For large numbers of workers the issues at stake were now quite clear. It was no longer a discussion among those who ruled over them as to the best way to reform society, but a direct struggle for control by all those at the bottom themselves.

The next day almost all the factories in the Budapest region were closed as workers marched out in support of the insurgents. The armed struggle was being supported by a General Strike.

And in a few factories a movement began that was within a few days to draw in the entire Hungarian working class. Workers' councils, elected directly from the shop floor, came into being to organise the strike and run essential services.

The government saw its whole power slipping from its grasp. It began frantically making concessions to try and retain support. People like Imre Nagy, who had previously been driven from the government for supporting reforms, were now put back into positions of power.

Bitter

But the movement in the streets and the factories had now gone beyond the point where it could be altered by concessions. It seemed that no one was left supporting the old order and the Russian presence, apart from a few hated secret policemen. Almost the entire army had passed over to the side of the revolution.

After a week of bitter fighting, it seemed to many people that the insurgents had won. Russian troops withdrew from the major cities and the government proclaimed an end to the one-party system, ministers joined it from all the non-Communist Parties that had been opposed to fascism before 1945, and a whole range of reforms was promised.

What was the nature of the forces that had achieved these successes? According to Moscow, and to the leaders of the British Communist Party at the time, they were 'fascist' or 'pro-capitalist'. But there is no evidence to support such contentions.

No doubt among the thousands of people released from prison were a few fascists and old aristocrats. But they were singularly unsuccessful at gaining any following among those fighting in the streets. When the revolution had been put down almost all those executed by the Russians

were either Communists or ex-Communists. Hospital statistics indicated that 80-90 per cent of those wounded in the fighting were working-class youth. The newspapers and manifestos produced by the fighting groups and the various workers' councils made it clear that while the insurgents were against the Russians, they were against any return of the old property owners.

Probably the most telling witness as to who was fighting and why, is the man who ruled Hungary after the revolution was put down—Janos Kadar. In a radio broadcast on 1 November he pointed out that it was 'Communists, writers, journalists, students, the youth of the Petofi Circle, and, by the thousands, workers, peasants and militants unjustly imprisoned who fought in the front line against the despotism of Rakosi and against political banditry. We are proud of you, who took your proper part in the armed rising.'

But the rulers of Russia were frightened of the revolution, not because it was fascist or pro-capitalist, but for the opposite reason. In the factories, the mines, the railways, among army units, forms of organisation were developing that represented the most radical challenge to existing society since the Soviets of 1917.

Everywhere working people were beginning to take control of industry and society themselves. They ran the factories, the press, the radio stations. They were disarming the old police and keeping order themselves.

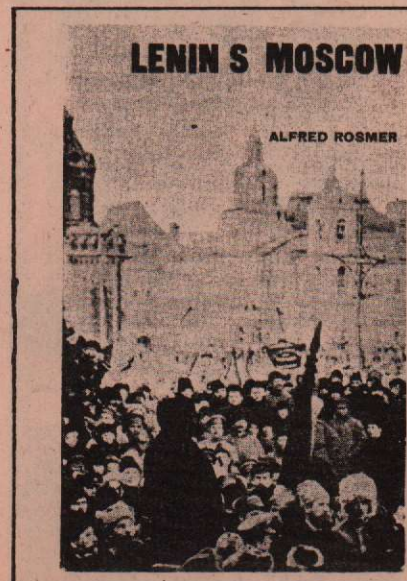
The government of Imre Nagy could only get things done in so far as it could persuade the various workers' councils that it stood for the same things as them. But this meant making concession after concession—abolishing the political police, recognising independent trade unions, promising workers' control, asking the Russian troops to leave, and, finally, declaring its independence from both the Eastern and the Western cold war blocks.

Move in

The Russian leaders feared this radicalisation more than anything else in the world. It could spread across Hungary's borders—to Poland on the brink of revolution already, to East Germany which had seen a workers' uprising three years before, even into Russia itself where strikes and demonstrations had flared up in the massive slave labour camps.

In the early morning of 4 November hundreds of Russian tanks began to move into Budapest. The Kremlin had decided to use all the traditional weaponry of counter-revolution—indiscriminate shelling, the killing of 20,000 people, the kidnapping of leaders, mass deportation—in order to crush the hopes of Hungary's workers.

NEXT WEEK: tanks crush the uprising



LENIN'S MOSCOW

ALFRED ROSMER

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A highly readable and enthralling account of life in the capital of Red Russia. An important analysis of international revolutionary organisation before the rise of Stalin's bureaucracy. £1.30 plus 10p post from PLUTO PRESS

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It seems that ALL coppers really are...

REARED on Dixon of Dock Green and Z-Cars, I went happily through life thinking that a bent copper was a rarity and that his fellow pointed-heads would come down on him like a ton of half-bricks in order to preserve the integrity of the force.

Then I read a novel by G F Newman called *Sir, You Bastard* (New English Library 30p) and I have broken out in a cold sweat ever since at the mere sight of a blue serge uniform and big boots.

For Mr Newman shows that, contrary to my naive view, it is the honest copper that is a rarity and that 99 per cent of the 'guardians of law and order' are up to their bull necks in lying, cheating, stealing and general villainy.

Don't get me wrong—I never had any doubts about the objective role of the police force as an organisation. As a glance at the history books will show, the Peelers were created with the direct aim of protecting the ill-gotten gains of the rich and influential.

What I had failed to grasp—and I am indebted to G F Newman for casting the scales from my eyes—is the way in which the development of a society where the real arch-criminals are the politicians double-dealing their way to power and wealth and the industrialists fiddling, fixing and enriching themselves at the expense of ordinary working people, has led to a virtual identity of interest between the police and the official criminal class.

In other words, there is a truce between coppers and crooks. 'You scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours' is the rule of thumb-screw for both sides.

Newman's novel tells of the rapid rise of Terry Sneed, from promising man on the beat to Detective Inspector in seven lucrative years.

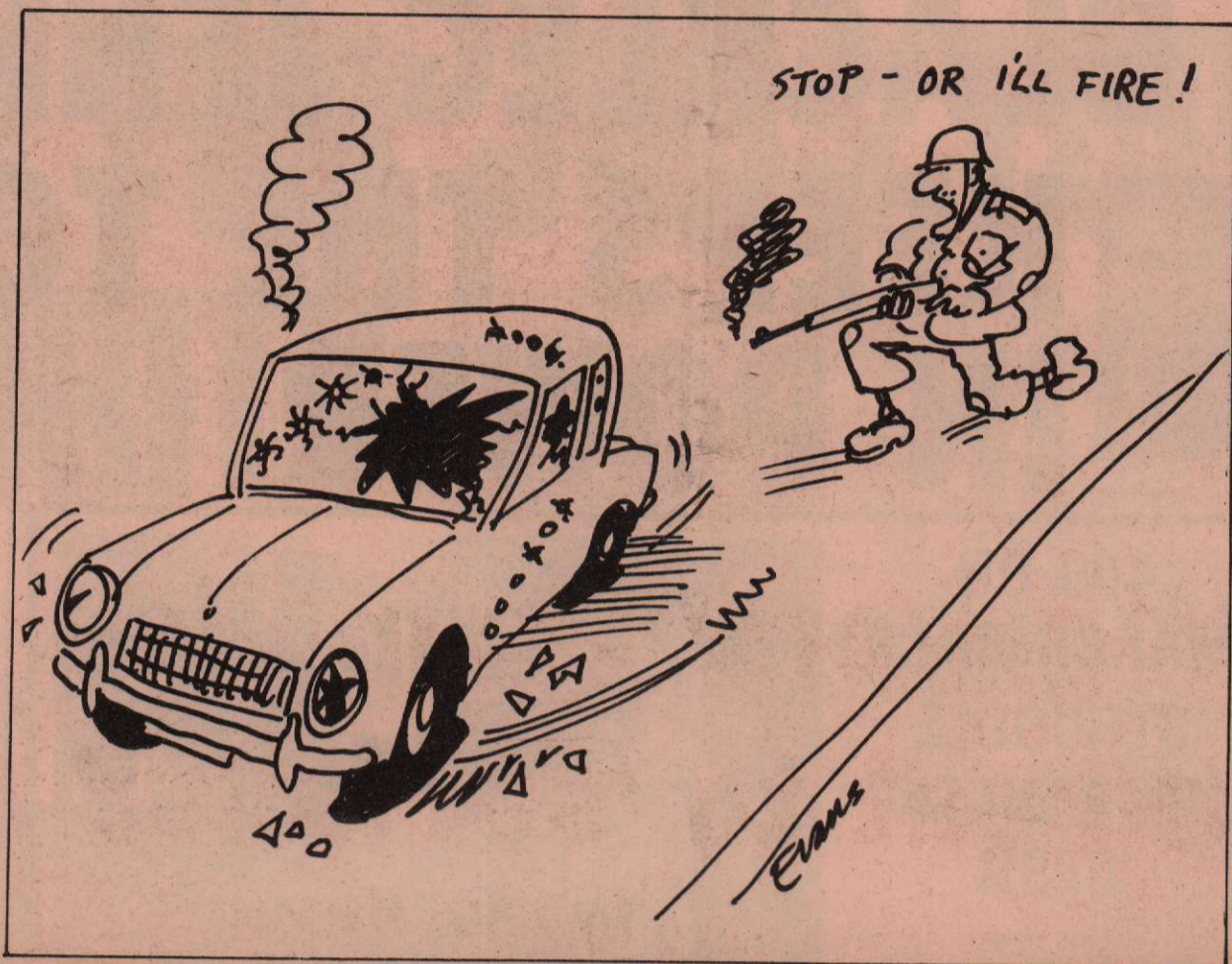
For Sneed and his fellow pavement-bashers the world is peopled with mugs, so why not make the most of them? All the coppers are on the fiddle but it is the plain-clothes boys who do really well. Once promoted to the CID, Sneed is taken by his superior to meet the boss of the local thieves and a large bundle of folding money is dropped into his itching palm. More follows.

The result is simple: when the gang plan a major robbery they tip off Sneed in advance and tell him the names of some unfortunate small-time crooks who have fallen out with the Mafia bosses. They are pulled in, evidence is rigged, they go down for a long stretch and the thieves and police continue their partnership.

Newman paints a horrifying picture of a half-world populated by uniformed crooks and thugs with private bank accounts that house their 'bunce' from the gang leaders. If you've ever wondered why the average copper, even when you merely ask the time, is arrogant, rude and brutish the answer is simple: he expects you to pay for the information.

And if you further wonder why, in spite of all this, the law sometimes puts away big-time villains like Richardson and the Krays, the answer is equally simple: the big boys didn't offend against the high moral principles of the police, they just didn't shell out sufficient loot into the ever-open paws of the real George Dixons and Charlie Barlows of this corrupt and festering world.

David East



COTTONS COLUMN

MEMO to all the dreadful jingoists from the Communist Party rightwards, screeching about the 'betrayal of Britain' if Ted the Teeth gets into Europe: why have you failed to mention the dreadful threat to the British sausage?

Will the wily Frankfurter and odious German garlic tube send the good old British Banger to the Walls? At least one stout-hearted man o' the people has been roused to the danger.

Speaking in the Common Market bore-in at Westminster, Widnes' Labour MP Gordon Oakes launched an SOS (Save Our Sausages) campaign. The traditional British sausage will disappear, he said, if Britain joins the Market.

This, explained Heart of Oakes, is because the Common Market rules forbid the special colouring known as Red (!) 2G, used to give British pork sausages their distinctive appearance.

Roared Mr Oakes: 'It's a national disgrace. I don't want a great white, insipid-looking sausage—I want the traditional British banger.' He added that he would challenge great white, insipid-looking Agriculture Minister James Prior to demand a change of-ruling on food colouring from the Common Market.

Here is a threat that strikes at the very fabric of our society. Who now can abstain on such a vital issue? Man the barricades.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: *Princess Anne loses her voice. Was she a little horse?*

Julie dealt with

KNOCKABOUT fun at the Students for the Trade Union Movement conference in London last weekend, organised by the National Union of Students and the TUC. Funster in chief was Julie Jacobs, full-time Communist Party organiser and secretary of London Trades Council



IT SEEMS that Oriental bosses really are wily, after all. Latest way to ease the pains of exploitation and the mental and physical agony of the production line comes from the management of the Osaka plant of the giant Japanese Matsushita Electric Industrial Co: when a worker can stand the pace and strain no more he rushes to the self-control room and lays about two life-sized padded dummies. He swats them with a bamboo stick until his anger is spent. Ah, so...

Criticised from the floor for the lack of politics in his lecture on the Industrial Relations Act, Jacobs, with both boots planted firmly in the Stalinist past, ranted: 'We certainly know how to fight the Bill and we certainly don't need the help of extreme right wing organisations like the Socialist Labour League and the International Socialists.'

Drawing the line

MICHAEL CUMMINGS, Edward Heath's favourite cartoonist, who draws revolting anti-union and racist 'funnies' for the Daily and Sunday Express, has complained to his union, the NUJ, over the action by fellow journalists in refusing to

print one of his cartoons.

This masterpiece of intelligent humour and comment depicted Russian leader Brezhnev dressed as a Catholic priest leading a contingent of Russian tanks for Ulster from an 'Irish Republican Airways' transport plane.

Journalists on the Glasgow edition of the Sunday Express, led by their Father of the Chapel Denny McGee, and mindful of the strong feelings in Scotland on the Irish issue, thought the cartoon so tasteless and deplorable as to be unfit for publication.

The outraged Cummings is now taking action against them through the union. But so far this stout defender of free speech is not taking action against his own management. Quite independent of Glasgow, the Manchester executives of the Express, who print the Irish edition, also decided to ban the cartoon, fearful of the impact upon sales in the South.

THE SOBER-SIDES who write our editorials have already commented on the Daily Mirror's ludicrous tale of a hired Czech assassin being shot dead in Northern Ireland. But one question remains unanswered: how did the troops know the dead man was a Czech? Answer: when they picked him up, they dropped him—and he bounced.

Deadly advice

SO YOU think we're too harsh when we label Social Security officials as the 'SS'? Now read on...

News item: A man of 60 was told at a Labour Exchange he 'was simply being lazy' when he took his cards there on being made redundant after 25 years in the same job. Later he threw himself under a lorry because the remark had played on his mind, the man's son said at an Enfield, Middlesex, inquest. Verdict: suicide.



JEREMY SANDFORD has followed up Cathy Come Home five years later with Edna, *The Inebriate Woman* (BBC1 last Wednesday). This deals with a middle-aged woman who tramps around, who is homeless, who is shuttled from reception centre to mental hospital to prison and who finds her consolation in drink.

Like Jim Allen's TV plays (*The Big Flame* and *The Rank and File*) Sandford's plays seek to convince the viewer of their case. Both Sandford's and Allen's work are directed to achieve 'naturalness' in the characters, surroundings and dialogue. Their plays are in fact part documentaries, part drama.

However, Allen is a revolutionary and Sandford is a radical social worker. Taking social work and the idea of 'helping others' to its logical limit is to help the very worst off, the down and outs.

Sandford is aware of the dangers of patronising those who are to be helped. He attempts to find a democratic solution—treat those at the bottom of society with respect. Provide hostels, with money raised by charities like Christian Action, which give the Ednas of this world dignity and freedom from petty and restrictive rules. The various government authorities are correctly characterised as authoritarian.

But Sandford misses two vital points. Firstly that it is not 'we' or 'society' who have turned our backs on and created the unwanted Ednas, but capitalism that at practically every point is unyielding to the most sincere do-gooder. Secondly, compounding these difficulties, is that many if not most of the Ednas of the world may be practically unsaveable. The real tragedy is that capitalist society *does* actually break people and their ability to be fully human.

On this latter point, Sandford in *Late Night Line-Up* tried to have it both ways. He said that Edna lives an independent life, that from a 'real' Christian point of view 'Christ today would be a dosser' and that this kind of life grinds you down, makes you emotionally unstable. Sandford does the opposite of 'respectable' opinion, he romanticises Edna and the real 'wayfarers' as rebels.

But Edna is obviously passively dependent upon the various powers-that-be, although she uses a certain cunning. This cunning is not effective because she does not understand the workings of the bureaucracies she encounters. When she does take up an active opposition, this is in the form of an outburst of impotent fury.

Hopefully Sandford's schemes will do some small good, but it will be in spite of his ideas which do not incorporate the need to fight to overthrow this system. This is the best form of 'help'.

Rasputin (Sunday BBC1) was a good laugh, but no more. A likeable, witty, hard-drinking womaniser is shown tricking the Russian Czar and Czaress into a commanding political position in Russia in the pre-revolutionary years.

However, Rasputin as a historical figure was the hopeless straw that was clutched at by the Czar and aristocracy in its profound decay. When the majority of the aristocracy realised he was more of a liability, they killed him.

But that didn't save them either. A historical play must do justice to the complexity of the historical situation in which the characters are located in order to understand them better.

Next Friday's *Review* (BBC2, 9.20) deals with Dostoevsky and his novels. It is followed later by *Late Night Line-Up* which discusses how TV depicts black people.

Phil Hall

Socialist Worker

New lockout in toolroom row

COVENTRY:- The row over toolroom workers' wages rumbled on this week with a further strike on Monday and a tit-for-tat lockout by engineering bosses on Tuesday.

The dispute centres round the 30-years-old Toolroom Agreement. This pegged toolroom workers' wages to the average for skilled engineering workers in the Coventry area.

That average has risen over the years and has been a major weapon for combating inflation. The engineering bosses,

SW Reporter

anxious to force through Measured Day Work and individual plant bargaining, withdrew from the agreement in September, sparking off a series of weekly strikes.

The dispute has escalated at the Triumph plant where 36 engineers who service equipment went on indefinite strike last week after the bosses' lockout. 2500 other Triumph workers were laid

off but the engineers agreed to return to work on Wednesday.

Toolroom stewards have decided to continue the one-day strikes for at least another month. They will also attempt to hold talks with firms that are not members of the Engineering Employers' Federation for a deal similar to the now defunct toolroom agreement.

IN BIRMINGHAM on Tuesday 800 workers at British Leyland's Longbridge East Works rejected a move by the employers to scrap piecework.

Engineers strike for union rights

by Anna Paczuska

WIGAN:- 300 workers from more than a dozen factories joined a solidarity picket last week in support of 26 workers on strike at Millingford Engineering of Ashton. The strikers, out for 10 weeks, are fighting for trade union recognition.

Millingford is a village engineering enterprise, typical of many small non-union firms. It is notorious for its poor wages and appalling conditions.

When workers organised themselves in the AUEW and began pushing for better wages and conditions, management declared nine redundancies, including the entire union committee.

The men walked out. The strike was made official, but the men received little help from local AUEW official Bill Broxton.

Local trade unionists formed an action committee at the weekend to organise support for the strike. It plans guerrilla picketing tactics to supplement the 24-hour picket run by the strikers themselves.

Encouraging support

The action committee is made up of convenors and shop stewards from local factories. These include: Ruston Paxman Diesel, Walmsleys, Central Waggon, Birds Eye, Fisher Bendix and Lucas.

Neighbourhood support for the strike has been encouraging. Pickets march round the village 'visiting' scabs houses.

They are joined enthusiastically by housewives and children. Women workers from the local GKN factory have supported the picket. 'We had the same trouble when we wanted a union years ago' one said.

Despite high unemployment in the Wigan area, there are encouraging signs of a fight back against redundancy. Successful strikes against victimisation and redundancy have been staged at Ruston Paxman, Walmsleys, Fisher Bendix and on local building sites.

If the action committee can be maintained and spread to other areas, there is real hope for successful resistance to the current wave of sackings.

Donations and messages to: AUEW House, 100 Chapel Lane, Wigan.

Action call on Ireland

POST OFFICE overseas telegraphists' London No 2 branch voted on Tuesday to call on the leaders of the Union of Post Office Workers to condemn sectarian Tory policies in Northern Ireland and to call for an end to internment without trial. They will also suggest to the UPW that it launches an education programme among its members in Northern Ireland with a view to breaking down sectarian divisions and stressing the need for unity of all workers.

BLACKLEG JENKINS KEEPS THE TORIES IN POWER



Jenkins supported Heath

by PAUL FOOT

LABOUR's right-wing leader, Roy Jenkins, and 40 or 50 of his friends, voted on Thursday to keep the Tories in office.

The issue in question, the Common Market, is relatively unimportant. The fact which dwarfs all others is that a vote for the Tories was a vote to ensure that Heath stays in office.

If all Labour MPs voted against the government in line with the overwhelming majority of the Labour Party Conference and the TUC, this government would have been out—and out for several years.

In other words, the people who voted for Tory and capitalist strategy over the Common Market voted as well for:

- Continued torture in Northern Ireland.
- For arms sales to Vorster.
- For increasing unemployment.
- For the castration of the welfare state.
- For increased authoritarianism in the police force.
- And for a sell-out to Ian Smith's racials.

There is no other way of looking at it.

'TOLERANCE'

Faint-hearted Labour 'lefts', instead of demanding unity and discipline in the parliamentary party against the class enemy, have talked about 'a new mood of tolerance in the Labour Party'. They have compared the 'need for tolerance' on 28 October with the demand for 'no bans and proscriptions' against the Labour left in the Labour Party.

Nothing could be less comparable than these two demands.

No socialist worth the name has ever demanded 'no bans or proscriptions' for those who vote with the Tories. The bans in the parliamentary Labour Party and elsewhere have, in fact, always been carried out against those who voted against the Tories.

A vote for the Tories at this crucial time is an act of criminal folly, and should be dealt with in the severest possible manner. Talk of 'tolerance' and 'understanding' is mere parliamentary sham.

It is the language of men who put parliamentary courtesies before the living privations and aspirations of working people.

TGWU accepts dock offer

TRANSPORT UNION officials in the London docks have agreed with the employers to accept a £1.50 pay increase from this Friday, even though the Stevedores' Union is against the offer. The TGWU says that dockers who do not want the increase can return it from their pay packets—minus tax.

NORTH LONDON Inter-Union Committee for the Right to Work. Public meeting, Tuesday 2 November 7.30pm Conway Hall Red Lion Sq WC1. Speakers: Mike Cooley and other trade unionists—For an action committee to fight redundancies in the area.

IS Labour History School, Sat 13 Nov 11am to 6pm Warwick University. Topic: The Revolutionary movement in Britain 1910-1926. Further details from 187 Leam Terrace, Leamington Spa, Warwick.

GLASGOW IS Public Mtg: Paul Foot on Racism and the Tory Attack on the Working Class. Weds 2 Nov 7.30pm, the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street.

WALTHAMSTOW IS Public Mtg: Tony Cliff on The Struggle for Socialism. Weds 3 Nov 8pm, Trades Hall, Hoe St E17.

SWANSEA IS: debate with the chairman of Plaid Cymru, 14 Jan 1972 on The future of Socialism in Wales. Further details later.

Would any comrade who has a gas fire in good condition for sale please write to L Flynn, 355 Lordship Lane, London N17.

Does any SW reader have information on regular and flagrant breaches of the Factories Act and on the performance of the Factory Inspectorate in their industry? If so please write to L Flynn, c/o Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gdns London E2 8DN.

400 ON MARCH BACK STRUGGLE IN BANGLA DESH

by Joe Wright

MANCHESTER:- 400 people, mainly Bengali, marched through the city centre on Saturday in support of Bangla Desh. The march was organised by the Bangla Desh Solidarity Campaign—a united front of the Bangla Desh Association, the Communist Party and the International Socialists.

The BDSC, acting in solidarity with the liberation army in Bangla Desh (the Mukti Bahini) seeks to win support from workers and students for solidarity with the struggle for independence from West Pakistan.

The solution to the problem is being worked out now in the struggle between the Mukti Bahini and the Pakistan army. The solidarity campaign stands squarely for the victory of the Mukti Bahini and attempts to do what little it can to aid that victory.

ALLIES

The Mukti Bahini is fighting one of the best-equipped and best-trained armies in Asia. Pakistan has as its allies America and China, who supply vast amounts of military aid, and Britain and Russia who have only recently stopped supplying aid as a gentle nudge to tell Yahya Khan to get his house in order.

The Mukti Bahini gets no aid from the big powers and minimal aid from India, but it has a great potential ally in the workers and peasants of the world.

The majority of marchers in Manchester were Bengalis, not British. But the struggle for Bangla Desh will be a long one and it is only just beginning. As it grows we must make sure that our support and solidarity grows too.



Supporting the Bengali liberation army —part of Saturday's march. Picture: Duncan Blake

Sparks thrown out after sit-in protest over scab foremen

by Viv Hopkins

LEEDS:- Maintenance electricians at Doncaster-Monkbridge Forge were locked out on Monday when they refused to take instructions from blackleg supervisors.

Members of the supervisors' union, ASTMS, have been on strike for eight weeks over a 25 per cent pay claim. The electricians started a sit-in strike on Monday and were then locked out. They formed a picket on Tuesday.

The ASTMS strike was made official two weeks ago. The union executive sent their members back to work pending negotiations. But when talks broke down, the supervisors were called out officially.

But so far the union has refused to pay the strikers from the hardship fund for their five weeks of unofficial strike. Local ASTMS and ETU branches, plus Leeds Trades Council and some sections at Monkbridge Forge have raised collections for the strikers.

And a call has gone out to Rolls-Royce workers to black aero engine-parts from Doncaster-Monkbridge.

The action from the electricians is the first shop-floor backing for the supervisors. Management's tactic is to play on hostility to the supervisors to break the strike and force a settlement that would mean a cut in real wages for the ASTMS men—already earning less than production workers.

Blackleg supervisors have been given an 8 per cent pay increase. Engineers have been offered 15½ per cent and have been told by local AUEW officials that their pay dispute has nothing to do with the supervisors' strike.

Donations and messages to: ASTMS Doncaster-Monkbridge Strike Committee, c/o Leeds Trades Council, Upper Fountain Street, Leeds 1.

R-R action over bonus dispute

SW Reporter

BRISTOL:- A mass meeting of Rolls-Royce manual workers voted unanimously on Friday to reject the management's answer to their claim for a cost of living increase. They rejected the offer because:

1. Productivity strings were attached, including job evaluation.
2. The local pay rise would be counted as part of a national rise, when agreed. Then only the balance between the local and national rises would be paid on top.
3. The amount, in any case, was an insult: from 80p for unskilled men to £1 for skilled workers.

The workers had lifted sanctions on jobs during talks on the claim. The stewards recommended strike action to the mass meeting, but this was narrowly defeated in favour of a work to rule within seven days if management does not make an improved offer.

The stewards pointed out that a work to rule had dangers in a group like Rolls-Royce where management could shut down different sections. And pieceworkers would also come off worse through this kind of action, they added.

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