

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

EXCLUSIVE: unions agree to jettison fight for equal pay

TUC SECRET DEAL WITH TORIES

Gad! They're even on strike at the Commons



TOM JOHNSTON, with the beard, and George Jenkins are on strike—at the Houses of Parliament. Employed by Cubitts, the giant construction firm, on the new car park for the Hon Members, Tom, George and 30 of their mates joined the nationwide builders' strike for a 35-hour, £35-week when a delegation from the nearby St Thomas's Hospital site went to the car park works to urge them to join the battle.

Sad that the MPs' new car park will be delayed for a while as the builders fight for a living wage. With their

usual high regard for priorities, the MPs are spending £6000 of the taxpayers' money on each new car bay—more than is spent in building a new council house (before interest is charged, of course). And that £6000 per bay represents six times the basic amount a building craftsman gets in a year. But then, builders are not as important to the nation as an MP's car.

Picture: Mike Cohen.

BIG BUSINESS and the Tory government is now out to sabotage the Womens' Equal Pay Act of 1970. And Tory employment minister Maurice Macmillan has made a secret decision NOT to use his powers to compel employers to introduce the Act's target of 90 per cent of male earnings for women by 1974.

To have any effect, Macmillan would have to make the order almost immediately. His decision not to wrecks any possibility of full equal pay for women workers by the 1975 deadline.

In public the Tories continue to pretend that they are sticking to their time-worn promises and pledges on the subject.

In private they are dumping them with the same speed as their Labour predecessors abandoned their pledge to build half a million houses a year by 1970.

In a statement to the House of Commons on 1 August, Macmillan said he would shortly be taking steps to remind employers of their obligations under the equal pay legislation. The statement was eyewash.

A report prepared by his Manpower Economics Department and published on the same day as he made his speech spells out in bitter detail that the employers are making little or no voluntary move towards equal pay.

The reason for the Tory decision is simple. Justice is inflationary. And so at a time of massive profiteering, it is not just the dockers and the builders who are to be cut down.

Millions of working-class women are to be denied the justice they have so long been promised.

NO PROTEST

But the most scandalous aspect of this saga is that the leaders of the TUC have been given the nod and the wink about government and big business' intentions. Not a murmur of protest was raised. Not one jot of information has been put into the hands of the trade union membership.

The TUC leaders prefer to be party to public deception. They too continue to send out letters reminding the government and the employers of their 'obligations'—obligations the TUC leadership knows are to be abandoned.

The reason for the trade union bureaucracy's behaviour is also simple. At a time when this corrupt and shaking government could be brought down, when millions of workers show their readiness to struggle, the TUC prefers 'tripartite talks' with Heath and his big business pals in the Confederation of British Industry.

At the 1 August private meeting of the National Economic Development Council (the umbrella under which the TUC bosses talk with the Tories and the employers) Maurice Macmillan said the following to the TUC representatives Vic Feather, Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, George Smith, Sir Sidney Greene and Lord Cooper:

'I foresee immense inflationary problems if I were to implement the discretionary powers under the Equal Pay Act and impose a compulsory target of 90 per cent of male earnings for female workers by the end of 1973.' He made this private statement on the self same day he told the House of Commons he was 'taking steps to

remind the employers of their obligations'.

Earlier in the meeting CBI representatives underlined again and again that if justice was inflationary, then capitalism could not afford justice. CBI director general Campbell Adamson said: 'The CBI can accept that no male worker should be paid less than £20 a week.

'But not women. Enormous difficulties are arising as a result of the implementation of the Equal Pay Act.'

What goes on behind the sealed doors of 'tripartite talks' reveals a good deal about big business, its government and those it talks with in the working class movement. And it is the performance of the TUC leaders that is really nauseating. When face to face with Heath and his crew of businessmen and professional politicians, they spell out the real meaning of the TUC's policies.

At the 1 August NEDC session, the TUC representatives stressed that they did not expect their £20 a week minimum basic wage proposal to be implemented. It was 'a guideline for negotiators'. Which means that the TUC too has abandoned equal pay, the most elementary justice for women, and indeed for millions of other super-exploited, low-paid workers.

The TUC bosses have made it clear that they were 'not making reversal of the Industrial Relations Act' a pre-condition for dealing with the Tories. In direct contradiction with Trade Union Congress decisions, the TUC leadership hope to influence how the Act is operated.

NO ATTEMPT

The slight interruption in chummy talks with Heath occasioned by the imprisonment of five mere rank and file dockers is thankfully over as far as the TUC leaders are concerned. Having made no attempt to develop the magnificent movement of solidarity with the dockers into a fight to smash the Act and the Tory government itself, the TUC leadership will be back for another session with Heath and Co on 14 September.

Once again they will negotiate and barter with the Tories and the big businessmen who decide the government's policies. And those policies are quite remorseless—to find one way or another to make the working class, the old and the poor pay for the system's problems.

The shabby secret diplomacy of the TUC proves once again that a heavy burden falls on the rank and file of the union movement to lead the struggle against the Tories and the bosses.

by Laurie Flynn

Docks: now for Round 2

by Bob Light TGWU

JONES-ALDINGTON Mark Two has been hailed as the final solution in the docks. But it turns out to be a gift horse with false teeth.

Jack Jones produced two new cards from up his sleeve. The first was an inquiry by the National Port Council to discover whether bringing the small non-registered ports 'under the control of the larger ports', would be in the national interest. If these ports can show that paying the rates demanded by registered dockers would increase their port charges, then presumably that would not be in the national interest.

There is only one solution: bring all ports into the Dock Labour Scheme. There have been nine inquiries into the docks since the war and there is no guarantee that this one will offer anything more than the previous ones.

Secondly, Jones-Aldington offers a scheme to impose a punitive levy on containers that have been stuffed or stripped in a groupage depot employing non-registered labour. But where will this be collected?

INCENTIVE

And what if the employers decide to by-pass the Dock Labour Scheme altogether and go through a non-registered port? In other words the levy could become not a sanction but an incentive to the employers to avoid the registered docks altogether.

Other than these empty promises, Son of Jones-Aldington is the same package that was rejected just 20 days before the strike.

Jones' aim throughout the strike was not to win it but to end it. Yet with the power and confidence of Britain's dockers so much more could have been achieved. To satisfy the Port Shop Stewards' Four Points would take little more than a re-definition of dockwork.

Jones didn't even try. His first public statement on the strike was to call it off. Throughout the 20 days there was a non-aggression pact with the employers.

This time Jones came out on top. The National Shop Stewards' call was out-manoeuvred and fell apart. The attitude of the men is the spirit level of any struggle and this time the men proved themselves unworthy of their shop stewards.

Round One went to Jones and Aldington. But Round Two has begun.

The shop stewards will not relent. They cannot—they are fighting for the life blood of their industry.

NEW THREAT TO WAGES: CENTRE PAGES

WORLD NEWS

COME BACK JUAN-TO HOODWINK LEFT

It's time we learnt to go Dutch...

by Vic Richards

FOR the last few months the Argentinian military dictator General Lanusse has been using every means to try and force ex-dictator Juan Peron to return to Buenos Aires.

Lanusse has threatened to bar Peron from standing for President in the March 1973 elections unless he returns before 25 August. The top military leaders are pledged not to contest the election.

The armed forces are looking for a way to step down from open control without causing too much upheaval. Since the coup in 1966, they have been unsuccessful in their attempt to break the back of the labour movement.

This failure means that the main problems have not been solved for the Argentinian ruling class. The economy is in a mess, with rapid inflation, and the balance of payments and foreign debts are getting worse.

RAPID

The success of the army in smashing the labour movement in Brazil means that now most US military and economic aid goes there in preference to Argentina.

This lack of success has resulted in demoralisation among the officers. This led to the overthrow of General Lanusse's two predecessors, Generals Ongania and Levingstone, in rapid succession, by factions within the army.

The elections in March are being used to turn the limelight away from the army's failures. Lanusse knows that Peron is almost certain to win, and this indicates a complete change in the attitude of the armed forces.

They overthrew him in 1955, his citizenship was withdrawn, and his supporters banned from political life. Peron's Argentinian nationality has now been restored and his name put on the electoral roll by Lanusse's men.

The armed forces have finally had to come to terms with Peron's im-



Peron (inset) and Argentinian supporters marching to demand his return

mense popularity, especially among workers, and the fact that without him no government can be stable.

Lanusse hopes to use the myths built around Peron by the union bureaucrats and Peron's amazing gifts as a demagogue to hoodwink workers into accepting a wage cut and greater state intervention in the unions.

Unfortunately for Lanusse, the announcement of the elections has triggered off a dangerous political ferment. Under pressure from the rank and file, the Peronist leaders of the CGT (the Argentinian TUC) are making militant noises.

The army answered by freezing all union funds, which has brought threats from the CGT leaders of

'violent revolution' if the armed forces do not 'respect the people's will'.

If the workers take their leaders at face value, the consequences could be very serious. Time is running short, hence the haste to get Peron back to pour oil on troubled waters.

PRIORITY

But Peron is not prepared to be the army's stooge. Any suggestion of betrayal, and Argentinian workers, the vast majority of whom still follow Peron, will drop him.

Already the Peronist 'Justicialista' party has seen the first signs of the workers' increased self-reliance. The

unions have demanded priority over all other sections of the party, and the union leaders have refused to take their seats on the party executive until this is accepted.

Peron has said he will return, but not by the army's deadline, with the possible result that Lanusse's failure may lead to his replacement.

But Lanusse himself is the army's strong man. Another internal coup can only weaken and divide the army.

The army's present strategy has reached the end of the road. The choice may soon be between greater repression against the labour movement, or a popular revolt.

by Edward Crawford

AS BRITAIN enters the Common Market, British workers will need to find out more about the labour movement in Europe. As yet, most people tend to know much less about the situation in Holland than in France or Italy.

Although Holland has a long history as a commercial and financial centre, it has only developed as an industrial power fairly recently. In the 19th and early 20th centuries factories tended to be small workshops, and this did not encourage the building of a powerful trade union movement.

As a result there is a rather odd situation with three large trade union federations—the biggest is Social Democratic, the second Catholic and the third Protestant (Holland must be the only country with Protestant trade unions).

But since the Second World War the industrial revolution has come to the Netherlands with a vengeance. Around Rotterdam there are huge petrochemical works, many large engineering factories, important shipyards, and highly mechanised docks. Inland, the town of Eindhoven is entirely devoted to the enormous factories of the Philips Electrical Group.

Under the pressure of events the trade union federations are moving closer together. An interesting example of this was in the big Pilger electrical works earlier this year.

A Communist factory delegate was dismissed and the factory came out solidly on a 22 week strike which eventually won his reinstatement. All three union federations supported the strike by means of collections and a section of the leadership of the Catholic and Social Democratic unions are talking 'left'.

Freeze

This has enabled the left-wingers in the unions, mainly Communist Party supporters to come out more openly, though various bans and proscriptions are still in force.

The unions themselves are not very democratic. Most branches have only one meeting a year, and attendance is low.

The economic situation is getting worse, and the political parties are split over the question of a wage freeze. In reality this is not a left-right split, but a division between the pro-American elements who favour world stability, and the pro-Common Market tendencies who want to leave the Americans to look after themselves.

There are about 15 parties in the Dutch parliament, including the 'Anti-Revolutionary Party' (the revolution it is against is the French one of 1789!).

The Labour Party, which has usually got around 25 per cent of the vote, has been out of the government for a long time. There is a left wing within the party, and the Communists support them with the demand for a 'workers' government'.

Opinion polls show the Labour Party is increasing in popularity. The Communists—though they have little electoral support—are by far the most important of the left forces, and they are gaining influence. But they have great illusions in the Labour Party.

The Labour Party have a good chance of getting into the government after the next election and they will certainly grab the possibility. If so a wave of disillusion will follow, and with it a better chance for revolutionary ideas to make themselves felt.

Japanese rail battle

JAPANESE workers have been staging a major struggle against the management of the nationalised Japanese National Railways in support of a wage claim by working to rule.

The wage demands have been tied in with an attack on the government's support for the US in Vietnam. 20 trains carrying war material were even slower than the rest.

On 27 June the police arrested 19 leading militants of the Tokyo branch of the Doryokusha trade union, including the branch chairman, Kifuji. This was backed by a barrage of propaganda in the press, radio and television about 'infiltration by extremist groups'.

During July there was a go-slow on all the railways. 1500 passenger and 4000 freight trains were cancelled. Japanese railways are reckoned to have lost £170 million in revenue.

LETTERS

Expose bosses' propoganda

THE most important job which Socialist Worker had to do during the days of the dockers' imprisonment was not simply to rally support but to explain fully the political nature and implications of this mass action.

The bosses' propoganda on radio and television thrust forward their political line: 'In a democracy the rule of law must prevail.' Even the most militant trade unionists found this argument difficult to deal with, as the interview with the jailed dockers showed.

They said: 'We've no argument with the law itself. But we do not recognise the NIRC.' Socialist Worker failed to arm militants with a clear understanding of the law, all laws and all courts, as instruments of class rule.

Socialist political leadership means exposing and attacking bourgeois ideology for the most militant sections of the

working class—not just advertising their militancy or urging them to go one better. It is an old trick of the ruling class to upstage the political issues in a trade union struggle to take advantage of workers' uncertainties as to their own aims.

If militants are unable to meet this challenge with socialist answers they will, sooner or later, have to beat a retreat and fall back on the Vic Feather arguments that their actions are 'not political' or 'do not challenge the rule of law'.

Socialist Worker put the dockers' case very clearly. It raised the question of the struggle against unemployment. This was certainly necessary.

But it did not give a political lead to the trade union struggle, it simply reflected it. This was to abandon a duty nobody else could perform—the first duty of a socialist newspaper—to raise political consciousness.

'The Battle is Won—but the War goes on' said Socialist Worker. This is quite true. But unless socialists manage to break the hold of ruling-class ideas (like the 'rule

of law') on the working class then despite dozens of partial victories the war as a whole will be lost.—ARNIE PROUT, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.

THE lack of support shown by Socialist Worker for the Stoke Newington 8 must be brought to the attention of readers.

The lack of coverage is comparable to the conduct of the yellow press. At least we can excuse the yellow press because of its links with the state and the ruling class.

It is facile for Socialist Worker to dismiss 'gestures of defiant despair like letting off the occasional bomb' without any examination of what motivated such gestures.

With the trial restarting in September, Socialist Worker should provide as much material and solidarity to the 8 and the defence group as possible, have a complete appraisal of the trial to date in the paper and give a weekly report on the trial.—M J REID, Tonbridge, Kent.

Combat 'law and order' nonsense

I FIND that Tory propoganda on law and order and anarchy is making some headway on the shop floor. Questions like 'In a strike you expect everyone to conform to majority decisions, therefore with a majority in society in favour of the Industrial Relations Act, you must conform' are difficult to answer in a short phrase.

Like all ideology these essentially Tory ideas are based on some truths, such as the laws concerning murder and theft and are therefore successful. I would like to see an article or at least arguments in Socialist Worker that

will arm the industrial militant on the shop floor. It is not enough to just support strikers—we must also give a lead and point out that they must be smarter if they are to beat the Tories.

A worker pointed out to me that Enoch Powell is strangely silent on the dockers now. Remember dockers marching in support of Powell's racialism? If he doesn't make any statements, attempts should be made to draw him. We should stress the connection between his racialism and anti-union ideas, between anti-black and anti-docker ideas.—KEITH JACKSON (AUEW), Hull.

Unjustified attack

THE REMARKABLE thing about Don Bateman's letter (Nothing but a Yarn 5 August) is that he effectively concedes our main points: that Bristol Trades Council did not officially protest over the rise in bus fares, and that the TGWU delegation made threats of disaffiliation from the Trades Council if it ever actually did protest.

Comrade Bateman claims: 1. That the incident in question occurred at an executive, not a full Trades Council meeting. He is correct—but this error makes little difference to the central points.

2. That our correspondent did not protest against the attitude of the TGWU representatives. In fact, he did attempt to speak but was not called.

3. That 'the present parlous state of Trades Council finances is not entirely unrelated to the activities of an IS member'. This comment quite unjustifiably insinuates embezzlement.

The comrade concerned, as former secretary of the Trades Council, put tremendous energy into transforming it into a fighting organisation. Great efforts were made to increase AUEW affiliation in order to broaden the Trades Council's real membership.

His fault was that he overstepped his powers in hiring a photo-copying machine. But even this was done because he believed it necessary to assist the work of the council.

His time as secretary is a sharp contrast to the present state of the Trades Council, with its declining attendance, activity and influence. It is a pity that Don is reduced to slandering an old comrade of his.—PAUL DENHAM, on behalf of Bristol Branch, International Socialists.

Socialist Worker

For Workers Control and International Socialism, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN

Who gains from the docks setback?

THE DOCKS settlement is a poor one. Compared to the prospect of a loss of 12,000 jobs by 1975—and that is the figure the National Ports Council is working on—the concessions offered by Jones-Aldington are totally inadequate.

It was not, of course, a total defeat. Vic Turner was quoted in the Mirror as saying, 'We have lost the battle but not the war.' That is right. And the war goes on, not only for dockers but for all sections of the working class, because the employers and their government are determined to reduce the living standards of workers.

The whole point of the employers' strategy in the docks is to replace registered dockers by cheaper, because less well organised and militant, labour. There are important lessons for all workers to be drawn from the docks strike.

First of all, who benefits from 'increased productivity' and the run-down of the docks workforce? Consider the Hays Wharf company. Last year it made £1.7 million profit, an increase of 25 per cent on the 1970 figure and more than 100 per cent on 1969. The workforce was run-down from 5379 (1968) to 3228 (1971) as profits soared. Much bigger profits are in the offing. The company expects to make a clear £160 million profit from the re-development of the Hays Wharf London site, which is itself only one of the company's many interests.

The names of some of the people involved in this re-development make interesting reading. According to the Guardian, there is 'the Hon William Grosvenor, a relative of the Duke of Westminster' and Sir Max Rayne whose wife 'Lady Jane Vane Tempest-Stewart, is sister of the Marquis of Londonderry, and her family has large holdings in Hays Wharf'. Then we have Peter Walker's old pal Jim Slater who 'made £1½ million profit in six weeks buying and selling of the shares'. And there are the directors like Sir David Burnett who increased his shareholding from 126,676 to 174,676 in 1971. At current prices (£4.25 per share) this amounts to a pretty little nest egg of around three-quarters of a million pounds.

These are the people who benefit from rationalisation, 'increased efficiency' and the like. These are the people who benefit from putting dockers on the scrap heap. And what is their contribution to the common good? Well, Lord Vestey, personal fortune estimated at £50 million, 'is one of the best polo players in England'.

Conference rigged

The second lesson is the role of the press, radio and television. They have proved yet again that they can be relied upon to back the bosses through thick and thin, to lie, to distort and above all to suppress facts in the interests of the ruling class. For example, how many TV viewers and readers of the 'popular' press know that the MINORITY of delegates to the Docks Delegate Conference who voted AGAINST accepting Jones-Aldington actually represented 30,000 out of the 41,000 registered dockers? How many know that the conference is rigged by the gross under-representation of the big ports?

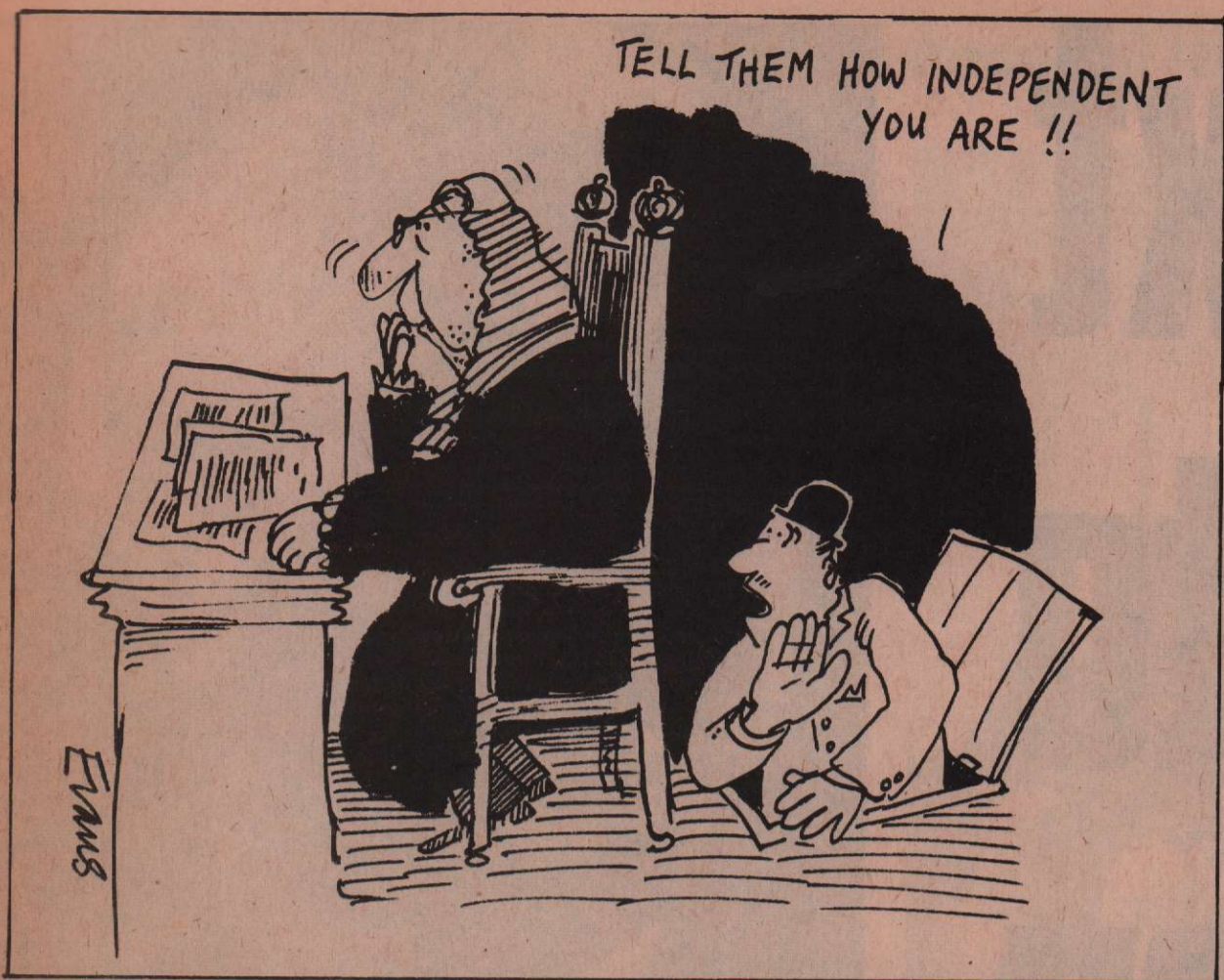
The third and most important lesson is the role of the trade union leaderships, in this case the allegedly 'left wing' leadership headed by Jack Jones. Here we had an official strike. What sort of encouragement and leadership did Jack Jones give? How many meetings were held by TGWU officials to strengthen the determination of the strikers? How many leaflets and posters were issued by the TGWU in support of the dockers' excellent case? Answers: none, none and none. Instead the TGWU leadership was desperately concerned to get a settlement at any price it could hope to sell to the Docks Conference.

Let us be quite clear about it. The four point programme of the National Shop Stewards was a modest and realistic one which could and should have been won. It **would** have been won if Jack Jones and the rest of the TGWU leadership had been doing their job—fighting for the interests of their members. They did not fight and it is not surprising that the dockers pressured by their own leadership headed by a supposed 'left wing militant', as well as by the mass media, voted to return to work. Unfortunately the price of that decision, understandable as it was in the circumstances, will have to be paid in lost jobs.

It should be absolutely clear by now that no confidence whatever can be placed on 'left leaders' and that the development of a real network of rank and file organisations that can and will fight is more vital than ever. It is not a question of turning our backs on the official union machinery. That would be stupid.

It is a question of developing a network of militants that can unite workers against the employers' offensive by the necessary combination of official and unofficial action. Which brings us to the final lesson. The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions again failed to play this role.

TELL THEM HOW INDEPENDENT YOU ARE !!



COTTONS WARMS

EVER WONDERED why the newspapers so often ignore important political stories, such as the current 'Angry Brigade' trial?

The trouble is that they are not spicy enough. A recent UK Press Gazette, the Fleet Street trade paper, carries an interview with Press Association court reporter John Morecroft, whose main claim to fame is that he broke the 'Lady and the Butler's story, carried extensively in the nationals.

He explained how it happened: 'I had been listening to the "Angry Brigade" case in Court 1. But as it was not yielding any copy I decided to go on circuit.'

'Not yielding any copy' incidentally, does not mean that the case had come to a halt. Simply that there was nothing that Mr Morecroft felt worth reporting.

He ambled into another court where a seemingly innocuous fraud case was just starting. After the first speech Mr Morecroft knew he was on to a good thing. And from then on he told the world of the onerous overtime activities the Butler performed for Lady Peek.

Meanwhile, the Angry Brigade case continued, unreported by the country's largest news agency. This does not appear to worry Mr Morecroft, as he reflects on all the 'good copy' the other case produced.

'What more could a reporter desire for a story?' he asks. And what more could the system desire from a reporter?

Bristol fashion

INTIMIDATION—that's the new in-word for politicians and telly and newspaper pundits when describing workers fighting to defend their jobs and improve their wages. Even tougher language is being used down in Bristol in the building workers' battle.



JONES: pink flush

Trevor Riches (!) of the local Building Employers' Federation described the strikers Flying Picket as 'a roving gang of strong-armed thugs' who are 'terrorising' workers into joining the strike. Such terror was in evidence when 20 of the 'thugs'—many armed with that dreadful torture weapon Socialist Worker—went to picket Durston's construction site at Avonmouth.

Within minutes these vicious men were busily intimidating a 20-ton truck driven at them at 30 mph by Durston himself. Understandably, a police inspector threatened to arrest the pickets for 'obstruction'. It's a bit much when a decent, law abiding lorry can't attempt to knock down strikers.

SMALL AD in the Leicester Mercury: 'Wanted third chap to share country cottage, must be Tory and educated. The chaps may have a long, hard search on their hands.'

Shining Light

STRANGE are the ways of reformed revolutionaries. Sidney Bidwell, Labour MP for Southall, sent a message of support to a local rally against 'moral pollution' held by that unpleasant 'burn-the-books' outfit The Festival of Light, run by Mary Whitewash and Lord Pornford.

Brother Bidwell has also turned his attention to the question of the Uganda Asians. The Middlesex County Times cheerfully headlined his remarks 'Southall can take no more migrants—MP' and reported that while Bidwell did not mind the gradual admission of Uganda Asians into Britain who hold British passports, he was 'concerned at the possible effects of increasing numbers coming into such areas as Southall. He considers Southall cannot take more immigrants and expressed this view to the immigration minister Mr David Lane.'

Bidwell said the government had a special responsibility not to allow the Asians coming to this country to go 'willy-nilly' to various areas. 'It is not good enough for them to land up with

their families in one room in places like Southall.'

In other words, let them end up in one room somewhere else. Mr Bidwell's brand of socialism finishes at the boundaries of his constituency. Perhaps the Festival of Light could turn its attention to the pollution of his principles.

POSTSCRIPT to the docks strike: Jack Jones, the 'left that never was', has received one of the highest accolades in the land. The Financial Times named him as their Man of the Week. The previous week it was John Partridge, wily bird of the Confederation of British Industry. We hasten to add that there is a major difference between the two men: Partridge would like the docks industry run down as quickly as possible, Jones as smoothly as possible.

Cracked China

ALWAYS anxious to play up divisions in the workers' ranks, the telly and newsmen went to town on the counter-demo by Cornish China Clay bosses and workers during the docks strikes. The strike, they said, was threatening the future of their industry and so concerned were the bosses that they gave their workers time off to march.

It is reasonable for the Cornish workers to feel anxious about their jobs. 800 of them were made redundant by English China Clay last year. But if they are looking around for people to blame they should look nearer home.

For the truth is that English China Clay sacked the 800 at the end of a highly-profitable year. Sales were up from £72m in 1970 to £79m in 1971 and pre-tax profits up from £11,157,000 to £11,741,000.

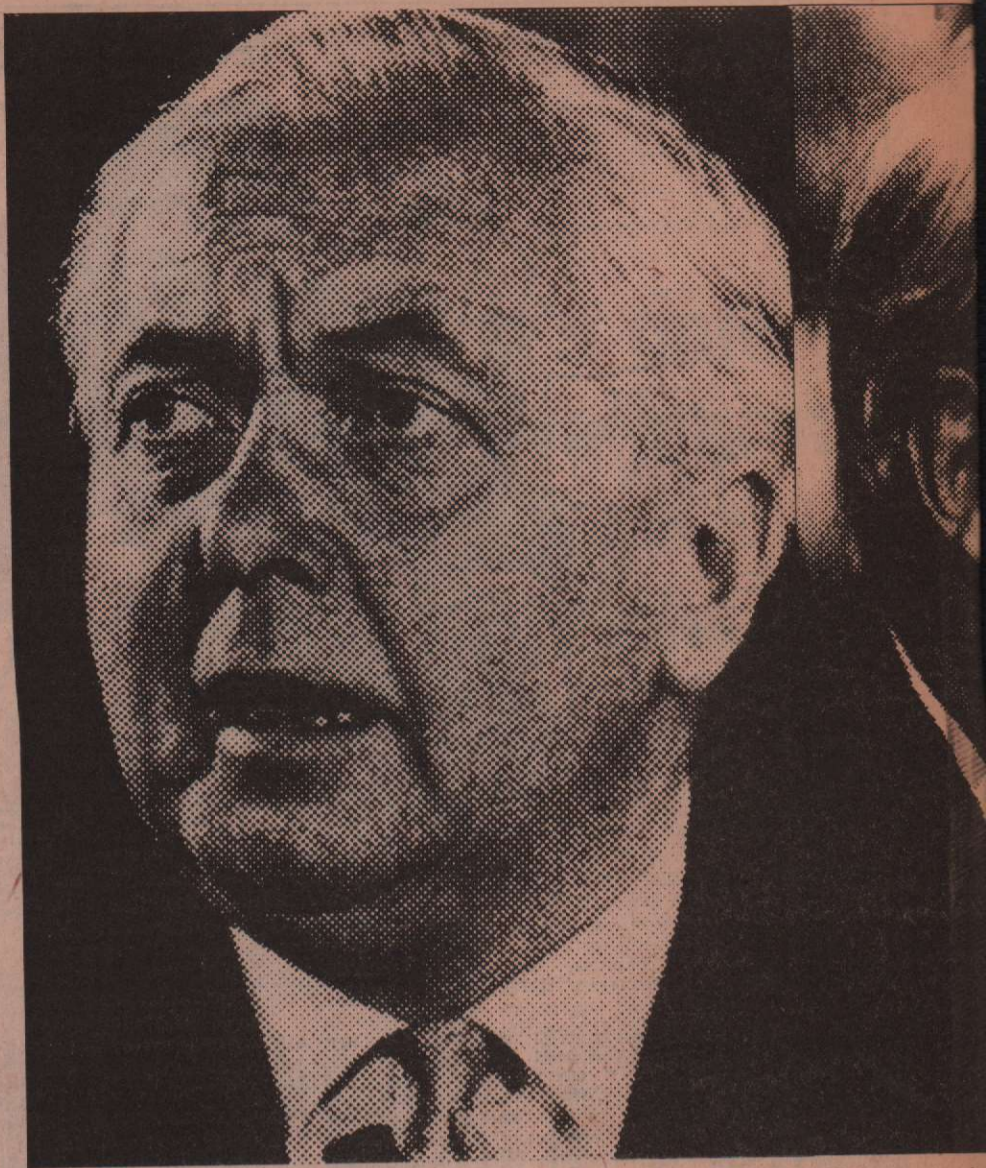
Explaining the redundancies, chairman Lord Aberconway said: 'Conservation of cash was an ancillary purpose of the redundancy operation.'

His Lordship is pretty good at cash conservation. He owns 1,744,273 personal shares in English China Clay and another 2,489,757 as a trustee. For the second year running he received personal dividends of more than £45,000 and more than £65,000 from his trustee holdings.

His salary as chairman went up by 50 per cent, from £5000 to £7500. But he hasn't forgotten the luckless 800: 'To those in particular who had to be made redundant we give our thanks, our sympathy and our very best wishes.' Just try living on sympathy in Cornwall in the winter months.



The next threat to your pay



The Terrible Twins: both Wilson and Heath say 'wages policy' will help the...

CLOSE ON the government's defeat over the jailing of the five dockers, following their drubbing at the hands of the miners and railwaymen, the Tories are once again bringing out of the ruling-class armoury the dusty old weapon of an 'incomes policy'.

They have failed to cripple the potentially Samson-like strength of the rank and file through frontal assault. Now they are returning to the subtler tactic of using the Delilah of the union leaders to quietly emasculate the giant.

And as the Financial Times made clear on 31 July, while only a voluntary wages policy was discussed at the recent cosy chat between the government, the CBI and the TUC, the threat of statutory wage restraint lay near to the surface.

In the early days of the last Labour government, the Labour

— 'incomes policy' comes

leaders tried to sell their incomes policy to the unions as a lever for raising the standards of the lower paid. Just as Labour then disguised the reality of their wage restraint policy in terms of assisting the lower paid, so today the Tories bleat hypocritically about the plight of the worst off sections.

In order to hammer home the fact that under capitalism any 'incomes policy' inevitably means restraint on wages alone, it is instructive to see what actually happened to the lower paid under Labour.

A report on the lower paid published by the Prices and Incomes

Board in 1971 stated: 'Over the five-year period [of the prices and incomes policy] the relative position [of the lower paid industries and services] did not change significantly.'

'The statutory minima laid down by Wages Councils [covering 30 of the 37 lowest-ranking industries] rose by ½ per cent per annum slower than average over the five years . . . Agricultural workers are on the whole a little worse off relatively now than they were 10 years ago.'

'Local authority manual workers appear to have succeeded in improving their earnings somewhat in relation to those of other workers. In engineering low-paid workers have, if anything, lost ground relatively. Efforts to improve the relative position of low-paid workers in retail drapery have not succeeded.'

Fury

'In clothing, low-paid workers in the ready-made sector have moved up relatively, but those in the dress-making sector have fallen back. There is good reason however to think that low-paid workers in coalmining and in the industrial civil service have gained relatively as a result of recent agreements.'

In other words, those sections of the lower paid, such as the dustmen, miners and textile workers, who from 1969 onwards were prepared to use their muscle, succeeded in improving their wage levels compared to better-off workers. The fact that these improvements were due solely to the militant efforts of those workers themselves, and owed nothing to the Labour government, is borne out by additional figures.

Between April 1965 and April 1970, annual increases for lower-paid workers averaged 4.9 per cent. But, between October 1969 and October 1970, the average

weekly earnings of the lower paid increased by 13.9 per cent.

When the seamen went on strike in 1966, the Labour leaders responded to the claims of this traditionally low-paid section with all the red-baiting fury they could muster. No further proof was required that Labour's 'incomes policy' had nothing to do with raising the level of the lower paid but simply with restraining all wages, high or low.

And, if Labour had had any real intention of seriously getting to grips with the problem of low pay, one would have expected wage differentials to have narrowed as a result of government economic policy.

The PIB report makes quite clear that nothing of the sort occurred. On the contrary, 'pay differentials have a great capacity to reassert themselves. There appears to have been remarkable stability in the overall distribution of earnings.'

The fact of widening differentials throughout most of the 1960s was also emphasised by the Child Poverty Action Group in their pamphlet Poverty and the Labour Government. They stated that in September 1960, the 10 per cent of manual workers with the lowest earnings averaged 71 per cent of average earnings, but that in September 1968 they averaged only 67 per cent of average earnings.

There can be little doubt that Labour's 'incomes policy' hit the lower-paid harder than it did the better-off sections. During the four years from October 1964 to October 1968, average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) rose by 27 per cent as against 23 per cent in the four preceding years.

Even Aubrey Jones, former chairman of the PIB, estimated that the net effect of the incomes policy was to have reduced average annual increases by just under 1 per cent.



GEORGE BROWN: talk of dividend restraint caused no worries in the City

In other words, no paper law could prevent well-organised workers from pushing up their wages in an effort to keep up with rising prices. But it could, and did, affect the position of those workers with weak or no union organisation.

The principal overall effect of the 'incomes policy' was an indirect, ideological one: preparing the ground for the spread of productivity deals.

Today the Tories, like their Labour twins before them, are trying to con workers into believing that if only the higher paid withhold their wage demands, the increases they give up will go to benefit the low paid.

Persuade

But no carworker or docker should be under any illusion that any increase he may win through strong union organisation could possibly be diverted under the capitalist system into the pockets of farm workers, catering workers or nurses.

If a carworker or docker gives up an increase, that money goes towards lining the pockets of Henry Ford or Bill Tonge. On the contrary, wage struggles on the part of the better paid assist the

lower paid to get them to set up and encourage militant action among the lower paid. When George Brown sells Labour's the union leader at pains to such a policy against wages applied equally to profits, price well as wages.

The Tories 'persuade workers policy' promote exacting equal sections of the But Labour attempt to re than wages, this must be s

First, there between wages are part of the while profits over after pro This mea both the enri duction and its speed and Profits for which a co has to be fina would mean as owners transfer their government talist system profits witho capitalism is hardly see th

Secondly, is a near-ir implies a P million price addition, m ways under lowering the its products others in a producing under differ prices.

International Socialism 52

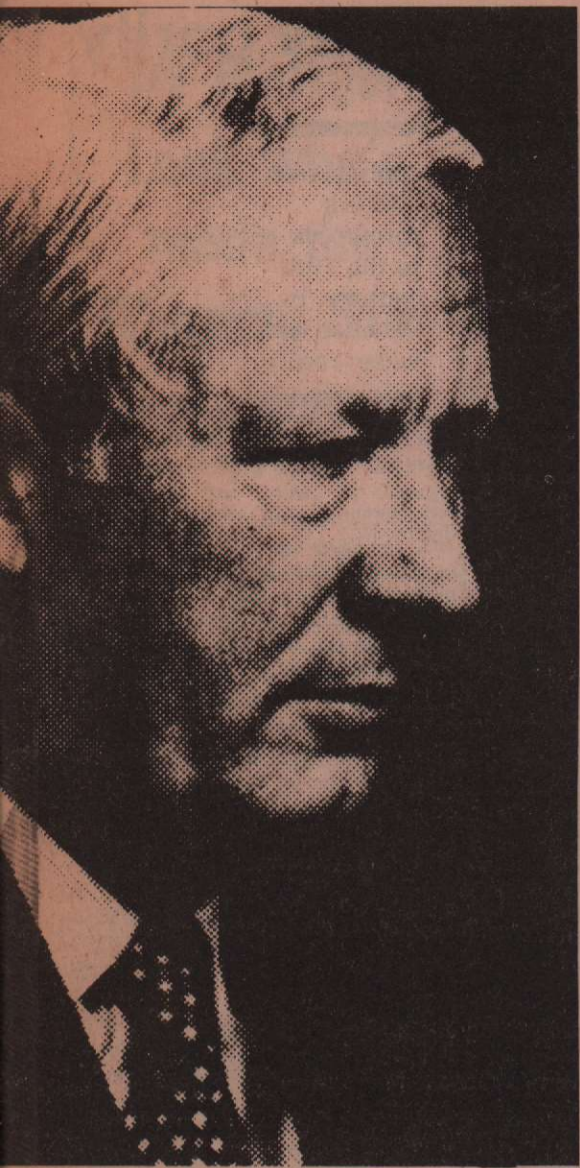


Labour, from the safety of opposition, once again proclaims its commitment to a 'fair society'. **Raymond Challinor**, in 'Labour and the parliamentary road' strips away the party's reformist pretensions and the Labour 'left's' hopeless dedication to evolutionary change. **PLUS** Nigel Harris on India Tony Cliff on Lenin David Widgery on Mayakovsky

£1 for four issues

IS magazine, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

SPECIAL SURVEY BY SABBY SAGALL



paid. The facts say the opposite.

game

use they enable
their sights higher
them to engage
in. The battles of
in 1969 owed
parity campaign.
Brown tried to
'incomes policy'
in 1965, he was
convince them that
didn't discriminate
it was fair since it
to all incomes, to
and dividends as

ill similarly try to
that 'incomes
social justice by
sacrifices from all
community.

policy failed in its
ain anything other
under capitalism

a basic difference
nd profits. Wages
ost of production
e the residue left
tion and sale.

that profits are
of capitalist pro-
gauge indicating
ciency.

the fund out of
ny's investment
d. To curb profits
ustrial stagnation
capital sought to
oney abroad. No
erating the capi-
id attempt to limit
going on to attack
And one can
ries doing that!

control of prices
sible task as it
vetting of three
anges a year. In
oly firms can al-
price control by
ces of certain of
raising those of
ensation, or by
ntical products
brand names and

Thirdly, militants should be clear that dividend control, which Labour practised until late 1969, is a complete swindle. In 1968, of dividends declared 1400 showed increases on the previous year, 1300 showed no change, and 470 showed a decrease, all with Treasury approval.

Nor can dividend control be equated with wage control. A worker who gives up a wage increase has lost it for ever.

But dividends that are frozen are merely transferred to investment, which leads to a tremendous rise in the value of the investor's shares given the expectation of big dividend pay-outs at a later stage.

Inflated

Under Labour, the gap between the rich and the poor became wider. The effect of their policies was to increase the riches of the 10 per cent of the population who own 83 per cent of all wealth.

Since the Tories came to power, they have immensely aggravated the unequal distribution of wealth and income. They have inflated the coffers of the rich more than any government this century.

Of the £3000 millions proudly 'handed over' to the taxpayer since the 1970 election, some 22 per cent has been directed to the richest 1¼ per cent of the population. In contrast, only 18 per cent of this total has reached the 50 per cent of the population with incomes around the national average, which is just over a third of their proper share.

Any 'incomes policy' which the Tories might introduce would only worsen the inequality which they, like their Labour predecessors, have already done so much to foster, and which is built in to capitalism.

Britain's imperial legacy in Uganda crisis

IN THE moralistic weeping over the fate of 40,000 Ugandan Asians, the press in Britain has forgotten the fate of eight million Ugandan workers and peasants.

Like many African countries, Uganda remains underdeveloped and exploited, in spite of gaining so-called independence in 1962 from Britain.

Ninety per cent of the population remain in rural poverty, with 200,000 wage earners who depend on processing agricultural products at dismal wages. The country still depends on the export of coffee and cotton to sustain itself.

Even these limited products benefit only 4 per cent of the population, who own 80 per cent of the plantations, mines and factories in Uganda. The monopoly position of British banking, commerce and industry remains intact since 'independence'.

As a result the economy remains stagnant, depending for its revenue on exports, which are tied to the markets in Britain and America. Since the prices of these commodities are controlled by large monopoly firms, the revenue from exports remain static at £49 million since 1966, in spite of increased production. With a steady rate of inflation, the income per head is £30 a year.

Sustain

This legacy of British imperial rule had another dimension. In the 19th century, the British rulers imported Asians from their oldest colony, India, to build railways and roads to sustain their rule against French and German expansionism in East Africa.

This culturally inward-looking community was encouraged to fill the role of middle-men in the British Empire. The Asians, in many ways rootless, became traders and filled the offices of the small civil service.

Their culture and insecurity denied them complete integration with the vast number of Africans while 'their special status' within the British Empire left them in a temporarily useful role for the British rulers.

The 'Asian problem' became important in Uganda after the colonial revolt of the African masses in the 1950s. After gaining 'independence' it became clear that nothing of significance had changed in Uganda.

The Milton Obote government from 1962 to 1969 played the role of protecting British interests and therefore the Asians, of whom 40,000 had opted for British citizenship.

In that period the Asians dominated commerce and part of the crucial cotton industry, which began a profitable link with the textile barons of Western India.

Banned

For the masses in Uganda 'independence' meant increased exploitation and poverty. The various tribal revolts against the Obote government that led to increased expenditure in arms for the security police and the army, was an indication of a deeper dissatisfaction.

In December 1969 all opposition political parties were banned. Obote suddenly announced a 'leftward' turn that promised 60 per cent nationalisation of the economy and the slow expulsion of British Asians.

In the army, mostly British trained, a right-wing reaction had begun to set in. Obote could not carry out his radical



Sergeant-turned-general: more unfulfilled promises

Amin race attack is cover up for plight of Africans

measures because of his increased isolation from the masses and the powerful British interests in the economy.

It is still astonishing that after 10 weeks of announcing the 60 per cent nationalisation of the banks, Lord Aldington, chairman of National and Grindlays Bank (the largest in Uganda) negotiated a 'willing seller, willing buyer' agreement with Obote in Kampala.

Pressure

In February 1971 the Obote government was overthrown by the army, under General Amin, with the help of British and Israeli officers. The coup solved no problems.

The workers and peasants witnessed another round of promises and plans. The takeover was welcomed by the British government, which never fails to speak up for Lord Aldington and his class. The Anglo-American hold over the economy was restored completely.

The new regime was never secure, because of the pressure from the masses for a better deal. The ex-British Army sergeant, General Amin, began creating foreign enemies to divert attention from a desperate economic situation.

He expelled the Israelis, became an ardent supporter of the liberation movements in Southern Africa and made friends

with Libya and Egypt, all in a matter of a few months.

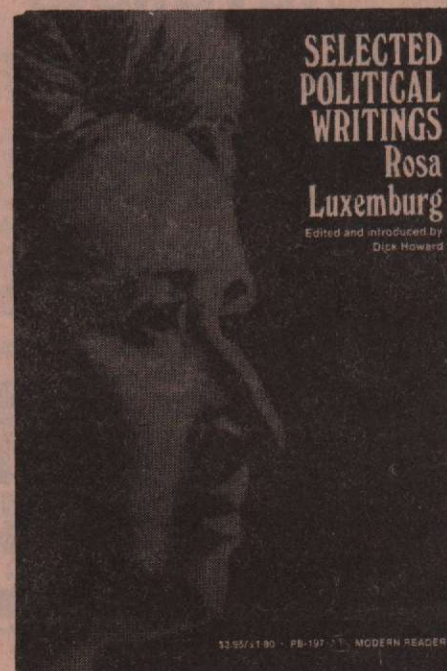
It is in this context of a hopeless economy, strangled by Anglo-American capital, that the expulsion of the Asians must be seen. Britain's £5 million aid programme is tied to British goods, so it is not likely to be withdrawn in spite of such talk.

Geoffrey Rippon's visit to Uganda was primarily to assure

Amin of this and to make certain that the Asians come to Britain with a sizeable chunk of their wealth.

For the rulers of Uganda it is a desperate measure to divert attention once again from the fundamental problem of neo-colonialism in the country.

ROGER TEMBO



SELECTED
POLITICAL
WRITINGS
Rosa
Luxemburg

Edited and introduced by
Dick Howard

Rosa Luxemburg, revolutionary genius, fighter and thinker, murdered in her native Germany in 1919.

This selection of her writings includes essays on Woman's suffrage and the class struggle, Social Reform or Revolution and The Beginnings of the German Revolution. Edited by Dick Howard. Price £1.80 plus 5p postage.

Also

ROSA LUXEMBURG: A STUDY by Tony Cliff
An analysis of her teachings, with a short biographical sketch.
Price 25p plus 3p postage.

FROM: IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

NEXT WEEK

Socialist Worker goes back to 12 pages—with special articles on the eve of this year's crucial Trades Union Congress

Star Chamber treatment for electricians who demanded pay parity

BOOTLE, a dockland outpost of sprawling Merseyside, has been the centre of a small industrial dispute for the last 18 months. Only 17 men are involved—yet their struggle has national importance.

They have challenged the agreements of an entire industry, won countrywide support from thousands of rank and file electricians and been the victims of united opposition from both unions and employers.

The dispute has led to a court injunction, a disciplinary trial, several mass demonstrations and no lack of working-class tenacity.

Scene of the battle is the construction site for the new Inland Revenue Office. It was sparked off by the use of a notorious agreement between the right-wing leaders of the Electrical Trades Union and electrical contracting employers.

The agreement, introduced in 1968, set up a Joint Industry Board for the bulk of electrical contracting. The JIB negotiates national rates of pay, outlaws local agreements and unofficial strikes and is equipped with powers that have more in common with King Charles' ruthless and dictatorial Star Chamber than anything known in modern British industry.

Such a profit-orientated outfit was naturally hailed with enthusiasm by the last Labour government and it's treated with equal fervour by the Tories today.

The IRO strike started in February 1971 when the men walked out after months of useless talks. They were demanding the same rates of pay as other trades on the site. But the two electrical firms involved refused to budge, even though the other workers were getting as much as £20 a week more than the electricians.

Smuggle

And in the months that followed both firms did their utmost to smash the strike. One firm—J Scott and Co—has been exposed recently for price-fixing on government contracts.

The firms sacked the men and made many attempts to smuggle non-union labour on to the site. On one occasion they brought unemployed electricians from Newcastle and Glasgow, met them at the station, rushed them to a plush hotel, collected them the next day and tried to force their way on to the site.

But a mass picket by other electricians blocked the entrance and repulsed the scabs. The bosses finally withdrew, their attempts at strike breaking defeated.

The unions collaborated openly with the employers. The ETU declared cynically that there wasn't a dispute on the site and other workers were free to steal the 17's jobs. The other building unions instructed their members not to assist the sacked men.

When all these efforts failed, the main contractor on the site—the mighty McAlpine—threw their resources into the struggle by getting a court injunction barring the strikers from entering 'their' premises.

After 25 weeks and with the employers ruthlessly sacking other workers, the 17 returned to work with a promise that more negotiations would take place. The promise quickly proved worthless. After just 35 days the men were sacked again and this time had the power of the Joint Industry Board ranged against them.

Threat

The Bootle dispute involves only a handful of the contracting industry's 67,000 workers but both the ETU leaders and their boardroom associates view the issue as one of principle. Their 1968 agreement banned local negotiations and weakened the role of shop stewards.

Seventeen men demanding the most elementary justice of equal pay were regarded as a terrible threat to these cosy arrangements. That is why union and bosses have dedicated themselves to defeating the men.

But once again the solidarity of the workers triumphed and after a three-week strike the 17 were reinstated. Meanwhile electricians on other sites were fighting similar battles and a major breakthrough was achieved on the giant Alcan site in Newcastle.

Despite the opposition of the JIB, a

Bootle —where 17 men fight bosses and union



John Byrne:
'JIB is a
throwback
to the 19th
century: its
injustice will
widen revolt'

own union, Frank Chapple and Eric Hammond.

As a lobby of 150 delegates waited outside the hotel, John Byrne spoke out to his accusers:

I am now here to answer charges, but what is my crime? My crime is that I am fighting to improve my wages and conditions and bring my standard of living up to the same level as that enjoyed by other workers on the site.

'If you fine me £100, I won't pay it. This is a throwback to the 19th century when employers could impose such fines. Suspension for three months? Well, we have been on strike 11 months. Expulsion from the JIB? If it is done then I will fight for the right to work.'

'This JIB agreement is in my opinion contrary to natural justice and immoral. Such discriminating action, far from setting an example in the hope of intimidating others, can only by its injustice widen the revolt against it.'

He finished, got up and walked out.

John Byrne was found guilty in his absence and has been suspended from all benefits for six months. There is no appeal against the verdict.

Dragged

Bootle IRO is now 18 months behind its scheduled completion date

The 17 men have faced tremendous odds. They and their families have suffered. That means nothing to the highly-paid bosses of the ETU and the JIB. They have succeeded in their aim of dragging a striker before them and depriving him of his rights.

John Byrne and his brothers are determined to fight on. They are in desperate need of funds and support. The crucial issues that arise from the IRO battle must be brought to the attention of trade unionists everywhere.

Support for them can help expose and defeat the brutal feudal authority of the JIB and aid in the long, uphill struggle to oust the right-wing collaborators from the leadership of the ETU.

Donations and messages to: John Byrne, 44 Sidney Street, Bootle 20, Lancs.

by Roger Rosewell

SW Industrial Correspondent

leading employer defied the board and agreed to pay an extra 15p an hour over and above the standard national rate.

The consequences were immediate at the IRO site. Using the Alcan victory the electricians again insisted on their demand for parity and when it was rejected they resumed the strike and reimposed their pickets.

That was on 25 October last year and today they are still on strike. In the last 18 months they have worked for just nine weeks and throughout this marathon dispute they have never received a single penny in strike pay.

The determination of the IRO strikers

has frustrated both union and employers. In February they resorted—for the first time ever—to the penal clauses of the JIB agreement. The clauses are legally binding and every worker must sign a contract accepting them before he is eligible to work in the industry.

The clauses provide for workers to be fined up to £100, suspended from work

for three months, barred from receiving sick pay or death insurance and, as a final punishment, expelled from the industry.

They are more vicious even than parts of the Industrial Relations Act. They are also contrary to TUC policy and have been rejected by successive conferences of the ETU. But they still remain in operation and in March they were brought into action.

John Byrne, the IRO strike committee chairman, was summonsed to a disciplinary meeting of the JIB at London's posh Cafe Royal. He was outnumbered by 15 to one and faced a joint judge and jury of his employers, the board and leaders of his

Labour loyalists combat mines militants

RIGHT-WING officials of the National Union of Mineworkers in the Yorkshire area have set up an organisation called the Labour Miners' Association with the declared intention of isolating militants in the country's 71 pits.

The organisation, which proclaims itself to be 'democratic', was set up at a secret meeting convened by NUM North Yorkshire Agent Jack Smart. Several prominent Labour Party members in the Yorkshire pits were deliberately not invited because Smart and his cronies feared that they were too militant.

The aim of the organisation is to demand pledges from Yorkshire miners that they are all 'loyal' members of the Labour Party and the NUM. Their idea of loyalty is that any miner who dares to



Jack: Smarting from defeat

argue against the policies laid down from the top will be a marked man in the union.

Jack Smart was recently thrashed in the ballot for area compensation agent. The man who beat him was Arthur Scargill, delegate from Woolley Colliery near Barnsley.

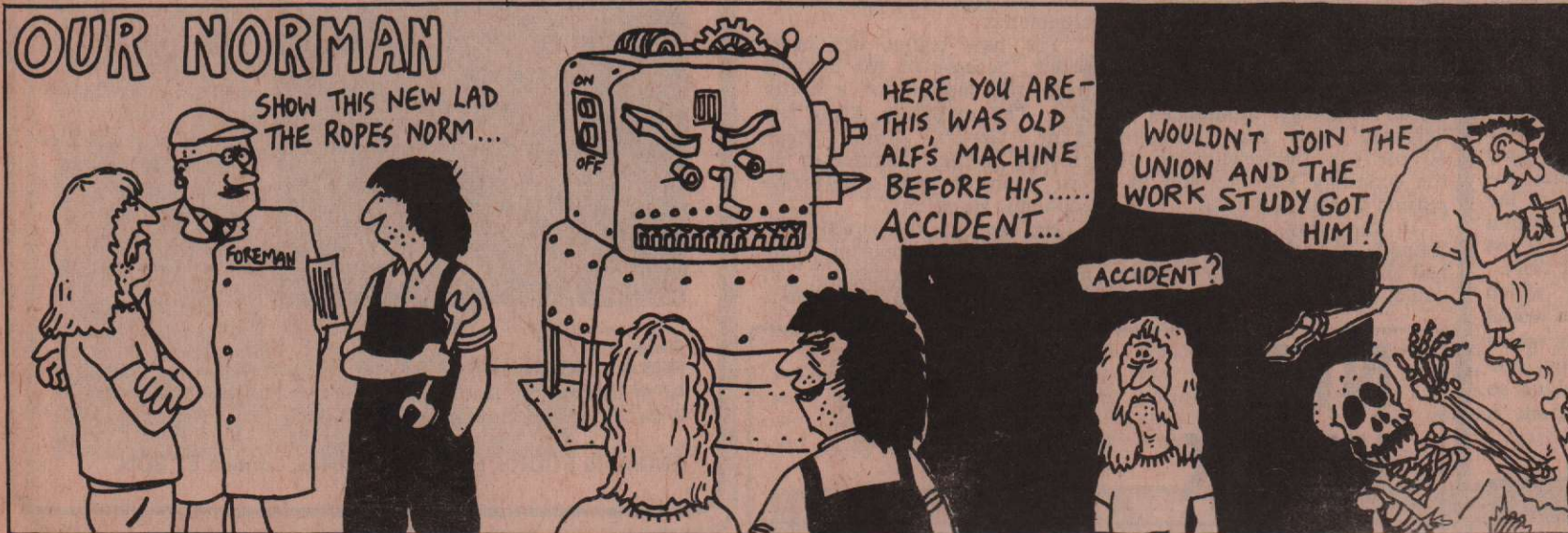
Scargill was responsible for the organisation of many of the mass pickets that brought the miners their victory in the national strike earlier this year.

Smart is obviously worried about the growth of militancy among the rank and file of the NUM in Yorkshire and the Labour Miners' Association has been set up to combat this.

Since the strike, great interest has been shown among NUM members for a new rank and file paper The Collier, that draws much of its support from Yorkshire. One of the central planks in the Miners' Charter that The Collier has adopted is the campaign for democracy in the NUM.

Jack Smart, who occupies a wide number of seats on various committees, is clearly worried about the effects of such a campaign on his position in the union.

Bill Message



The Essential Left

FOUR CLASSIC TEXTS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM

The Communist Manifesto
Marx: Value, Price and Profit
Engels: Socialism, Utopian and Scientific

Lenin: The State and Revolution

75p, plus 7p postage, from
IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens,
London E2 8DN.

By George! Look who's made the Morning Star

by John Bell (UCATT)

THE MORNING STAR, the Communist Party's paper, featured an article last Friday by George Smith, general secretary of UCATT and this year's chairman of the TUC. Called 'Building bosses are whistling in the dark', the piece concerned the current building workers' strike.

As general secretary of the Woodworkers Society, the biggest of the four unions that merged to form UCATT, Smith was noted for his determination to witchhunt stewards or officials who put up any fight against the employers. The Communist Party is particularly strong in the building industry and bore the brunt of the right-wing attack.

The attacks reached a climax in 1970 when the executive pushed through a rule change. Among other things this involved the abolition of elections for the post of district secretaries. A new regional structure was brought in, with appointed officials.

Not one of the Communist Party members who applied for the new posts was successful. This was despite the fact that several of them had been voted in as district secretaries and subsequently re-elected for second terms.

Insult

In an attempt at further humiliation it was suggested to members of the Communist Party that they should leave the party if they wanted a job. To their credit all but one rejected this insult.

The exception was Ivor Jordan, then District Secretary for East Anglia who after publicly announcing his resignation was appointed Eastern Counties regional secretary.

Smith's reasons for co-operating with those he has spent many years attacking is closely connected with his now precarious position in the trade union movement.

He knows that if UCATT is not to go bankrupt then it must dramatically increase its membership. The union's structure is geared and staffed for 500,000 members. At present it has only half that number, a very expensive situation.

If membership does not boom then UCATT will have to transfer engagements into the Transport Workers or the Electricians.

Smith as a general secretary who is also this year's chairman of the TUC cannot possibly relish the thought of ending up as an office boy under Jack Jones, Frank Chapple or perhaps even Lord Cooper's successor. He is therefore anxious to get help even from the quarters he has spent years attacking.

Why the Morning Star opened its pages to Smith remains a mystery. Even party militants were unable to offer an explanation. And the article is a mish-mash of clichés and half truths which offers absolutely no analysis of the situation.

Reconcile

The 'lump'—non-union labour—is central to the problems of the building industry. Smith's article mentions it only in passing. 'We have been confronted with blacklegging and of course the lump is the hard core.'

Smith spends more words sympathising with the employers: 'I am sure that a lot of employers when they objectively survey the scene will understand perfectly the logic of our attitudes. They in turn have terrific organisational problems and the kind of disparities which exist is seen by the difficulties in trying to reconcile the differences within a national agreement.'

In his Morning Star article George Smith even presents the Tories' anti-union legislation as a possible weapon against Laing, McAlpine and company. 'As far as the Industrial Relations Act is concerned, the employers must be more frightened of it than we are. If they chose to use it, it would make mince-meat of them.'

It is bad enough that the Communist Party should give credibility to Smith as general secretary of UCATT. But Smith as TUC chairman, is also personally involved with the TUC/CBI 'independent conciliation and advisory service'.

The purpose of this operation is to shackle the working class in its struggle to protect its standard of living. Feather may be the architect of this class collaboration, but some of the dirty work has been sub-let to George Smith.

The fact that the Morning Star can open its pages to such a person is indicative of the politics of the Communist Party.

Engineers get miserly deal

by Dave Lyddon

THE FATE of this year's national engineering pay claim has been decided. The union leaderships' determination to avoid a national confrontation and the employers' equal determination to resist plant-by-plant action has led to a miserable settlement.

The settlement is confined to minimum rates and to holidays. Coming into effect eight months after the last deal ran out, the increases will be given half this year and half in one year's time, when the agreement ends.

A further claim can be submitted only after 25 August 1973. This year's settlement will last not merely one year—as the unions' claim—but at least 20 months and, by the time the next

negotiations have finished, probably at least two years.

In those two years there will be no progress towards a shorter working week at this time of high unemployment. There will be no substantial all-round increase for engineering workers to protect them from the soaring rise in the cost of living. And there will be only marginal progress towards equal pay for women in the industry.

All the employers conceded was one extra day's holiday this year, another in 1973 plus the following increases in the minimum rates:

A skilled man's basic goes up from £19 to £22

now and £25 in one year. A labourer goes from £15 to £17.50 now, and £20 in one year, and a woman from £13 to £15.50 now and £18 in one year. With a large number of engineering workers earning above the basic, the deal will affect slightly their overtime and other premium payments.

The employers estimate the cost in the region of 5 per cent in the industry's wages bill over the next two years. At a time when employers are vigorously resisting wage claims at plant level, the role of national bargaining becomes much more important. Scanlon and co stand condemned for their failure to lead their membership in a real fight for higher wages and shorter hours.



Manbre militants stick out

MANBRE SUGARS, the West London firm which sacked all its transport workers when they declined to take jobs at lower rates with a 'new' company owned and controlled by their original employers, has re-employed but not reinstated all but three of the men.

Our picture shows Jim Butt (centre), TGWU Manbre branch secretary plus Pat Harrison and Mick Gash, the three victimised men, picketing the plant this week.

This situation follows official union advice to accept re-employment minus the three leading trade unionists and then put the matter through 'the proper channels'. Workers at some of Manbre's leading customers are blacking the firm's products in solidarity.

PLYMOUTH STRIKERS GO IT ALONE

by Paul Foot

PLYMOUTH:—An ultimatum to the management of Samuel Osborn Steels, Sheffield, by the strike committee at Fine Tubes, will do more to bring the Plymouth management to heel than four months of 'official' activity from the unions.

'Until the beginning of this month,' says Jimmy Greenlees of the strike committee which has fought for more than two years for trade union rights, 'we've been inclined to leave things to the officials, and see what they could do for us. Now we've taken things into our own hands and they've started to move again.'

Jimmy Greenlees and Frank Clark, the strike committee chairman, have just returned from a fortnight's tour of Midland and Northern cities in yet another attempt to close the net around Fine Tubes. Crucial to continued production at the factory is the supply of stainless steel hollows.

Bit by bit, in countless delegations, the Fine Tubes stewards have shut off the sources of supply. In the past year, Chesterfield Tube has blacked Fine Tubes. So has Firth Vickers, Henry Wiggins, and a Swedish supplier. The main supplier now is Low Moor Steels of Bradford, a subsidiary of Osborns.

Previous attempts to black Fine Tubes at Osborns have not been welcomed by the steelmen's union, the British Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association (BISAKTA). George Caborn, AUEW official in Sheffield, has a letter from Dai Davies, BISAKTA's general secretary, refusing to black Fine Tubes at Osborns because of possible layoffs and cuts in overtime payments for BISAKTA members there.

A similar show of solidarity for the Fine Tubes men was given to Jimmy Greenlees and Frank Clark when they met Alec Hogg, Sheffield district secretary of BISAKTA, on 14 August.

Hogg asked why he should help the

TGWU and AUEW when these unions were 'pinching' his members? After going on for some time about his 'tooth and nail' fight to keep his members from the clutches of other unions, Hogg told the men: 'Your dispute can be won tomorrow.'

How, asked the men? Simple, replied Hogg. 'You lads should take your case to the National Industrial Relations Court.'

But Clark and Greenlees are not going to wait any longer. On 15 August they met TGWU shop stewards from Osborns in a Sheffield pub and urged them to approach

their management for co-operating on blacking Fine Tubes.

'We told them,' says Clark, 'that if nothing is decided in 10 days, we will take a dozen pickets from Plymouth and stand outside the gate at Osborns until Fine Tubes is blacked.' The Osborn stewards promised speedy action.

This decisive action has given a new heart to the 41 Fine Tube strikers, who now see victory in their 116-week-old dispute as an immediate possibility. The blacking of Osborns, taken together with similar promises of action at GKN Sankey, Bilston, will mean real trouble for Fine Tubes.

TOUGH FIGHT FOR SITE MEN

SELBY:—Things are getting tough for the 800 workers locked out for more than three months at the Drax Power Station site in Yorkshire.

Employees of four different companies are involved in the dispute over bonus payments. A leading steward told me that he had no doubt that the Engineering Employers Federation has instructed the companies to stick it out for as long as necessary in order to break the organisation of the men before the station is completed at the end of the year.

Three weeks ago the men of BSC (Pipes Division) were tricked into returning to work with a promise of negotiations. By Friday of the same week it had become obvious that management had nothing to offer so the men walked out again.

400 workers employed by Babcocks have been out for 13 weeks. Their full-

time trade union officials called a meeting against the stewards' advice to 'test the feeling of the men'. When the vote was taken only seven were in favour of returning to work.

Donations and messages of support are now urgently needed. They should be rushed to: the treasurer, site shop stewards committee, 72 Malvern Rd, Goole, Yorks.

Engineers locked out for 11 weeks

by Dave Peers

JARROW:—One of the last struggles of the engineering pay campaign is being fought at Frys Diecastings where 22 Engineering Union members have been locked out for 11 weeks.

Wages in the factory are £4 to £5 below the district average and the men are determined to stay out until this gap has been closed. The company is part of the giant Lead Industries Group which made £6½m profit last year—more than £700 per worker employed.

Some dies are still being produced by supervisors, apprentices and General and Municipal Workers' members who were instructed to accept management's offer by their union organisers. Chief customers for these products are the Spennymoor factories of Black and Decker and Smart and Brown.

Messages of support, donations to: Bro Alec Milne, 28 Raby Gardens, Jarrow, Co Durham.

NOTICES

BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT IS: Cliff on Lenin, Sunday 27 August, 8pm, New Inn, Bromsgrove St, Birmingham City Centre.

STEVENAGE: Paul Foot on Can the Tories smash labour? Public meeting, 31 August, 8pm, the Swimming Pool Hall. Organised by North Herts IS.

PLUTO PRESS: Natalia Trotsky on the Fourth International. Pluto Press, Unit 10,

Spencer Court, 7 Chalcott Road, London NW1. Price: 7½p.

INFORMATION needed by Chertsey IS on Plesseys—old leaflets etc, Dave Bridge, c/o Botley's Park Hospital, Chertsey, Surrey.

WANDSWORTH IS: Public meeting on Ireland. Speakers: Chris Harman, IS and member of Clann na hEireann, 8pm, Thurs 31 Aug. The Fountain, Garrett Lane, SW17.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Socialist Worker

More towns join pay and hours fight

SITES STRIKE SPREADS AND

ROCKS BOSSSES

Loyalist rift widens

by Mike Miller

BELFAST:—Since the British Army's invasion of the Republican no-go areas the confusion in both Nationalist and Loyalist camps has deepened.

On the Loyalist side, the alliance of all Protestant groups around the no-go issue has crumbled and fallen apart. The massive show of Britain's armed might has taken the wind out of the UDA's sails.

Only 5000 turned up at its latest 'show of strength' in Belfast last Saturday. The demonstration's organisers predicted 20,000.

The Unionist Party is now supporting Whitelaw, while the Loyalist Association of Workers still regards him as Enemy Number One. It is talking of setting up a new political party that would exclude the 'traitors' of the Unionist middle class.

Any move in this direction would be a significant blow to the already desperate Unionist Party. But although it would be a predominantly working-class party, its politics would remain extreme right wing.

Recent speculation about a shift to 'socialist politics' among Protestant Loyalist workers is dangerous day-dreaming.

The fact remains that only the conscious intervention of those with a clear and consistent policy for immediate socialist struggle in all 32 counties can ensure the development of Loyalist workers along a genuinely socialist road.

There is little hope of such an approach coming from either wing of the Republican movement. The Provisionals are stepping up their military offensive once more with several huge bomb attacks in Belfast city centre and elsewhere. They are once again engaging the Army in prolonged shoot-outs with a heroism that is to be admired but a political simplicity that can only be regretted.

The belief that imperialism can be defeated by military means alone persists, and the fact that sections of the anti-Unionist population are again taking on the Army in street fights is likely to create the illusion in Provo ranks that they can go back to the days before direct rule when their support was still fairly solid.

Whitelaw may be antagonising sections of the Catholic population by his unwillingness to check the UDA and its murderous off-shoots and his continuing one-sided searches and arrests, but his overall 'soft' approach remains fairly well intact and will continue to do so.

This means that continued Provo bombing will serve only to drive more people towards accepting the Social Democratic and Labour Party's sell-out deal with imperialism.

PICKET LINES

CAMBORNE, Cornwall:—3000 workers are operating a work to rule and overtime ban at Holmans engineering works, part of the Broom-Wade group. They are demanding £5 on the basic rate.

Management has refused to negotiate with the union. They have offered £1.50 on the bonus, but this is unacceptable to the workers as there is the danger that jobs could be re-timed. The men intend to continue their action until management agree to negotiate on the basic rate.

All payslips are being inspected by shop stewards and any bonus accidentally earned is given to 'a charity', usually the Fine Tubes strikers of Plymouth.

GREENOCK:—Scott Lithgow engineers at a mass meeting on Tuesday decided to stay out as their strike entered its tenth week. The strike committee said they are prepared to stick out for a good settlement, as the national engineering settlement gives them nothing at all.

A deputation from the strike committee went down to see Hugh Scanlon last week after the national settlement had been agreed. They pressed for continued official support for the Greenock dispute and Scanlon agreed to this. The strike committee have decided to put a mass picket on two gates of the yard.

CLEANERS:—One of the most exploited groups of workers in London, women office cleaners, scored a notable victory last week. After three weeks of strike action, they have forced the contractor for the Ministry of Defence building in Fulham to recognise their union and to grant a wage increase to £17 a week now and £18 in October.

The cleaners, members of the Civil Service Union, maintained the strike, despite efforts of some union officials to persuade them to return to work earlier. They picketed the building from 6 in the morning to 12 at night with the help of the Cleaners Action Group.

The benefits they have won will also apply to cleaners at the Admiralty building in Whitehall, who joined the strike during its second week. Night cleaners in different offices throughout London have been fighting for union recognition and better pay and conditions for two years.

Stronger links needed in key Jaguar fight

SW Reporter

COVENTRY:—Jaguar workers voted on Tuesday to continue their nine-week strike for a substantial increase in piecework rates. They did so despite an offer from the management of British Leyland which, it was claimed, would raise earnings to £44 a week—but in return for acceptance of the



The head of Glasgow's 15,000-strong builders' march last week

Top profiteers threaten to close four factories

by Glyn Carver

IT'S only three years since Ernest Scragg, the textile machinery manufacturers, were top of the British industry's 'profitability league'. Yet last week they announced plans to sack half their 1600-strong work-

force and close down completely one of their four factories.

This ludicrous situation is typical of British capitalism in 1972—firms make vast profits but refuse to plan for the future, secure in the knowledge that if things get bad they can always try to make the workers carry the can.

Unfortunately for the Scragg bosses, the reaction of workers at the plant they plan to axe, William Bodden in Oldham, is also increasingly typical of the determination of the working class to fight back.

Despite the fact that this factory has never been well organised, an immediate decision was taken to stop the removal of any machines to the other factories. And 50 representatives of the workers later met to plan resistance to the closure 'by all possible means'.

This was followed up last Thursday by a mass meeting to discuss further action.

Tom Staples, an AUEW steward from Fisher Bendix was warmly applauded when he urged the meeting to occupy the plant as Kirkby workers had done successfully in similar circumstances. He stressed that this was the only way to defend their jobs.

By an 8 to 1 majority, the meeting backed their representatives' recommendations. There is no doubt that the bosses are already having a rethink.

On Monday Scragg management agreed to postpone the closure indefinitely. This concession was due to be discussed by a further mass meeting. But the general feeling is that with massive redundancies still threatened this ploy can delay the final struggle for only a few weeks.

BUILDERS BACK TENANTS

WOLVERHAMPTON:—Striking building workers joined tenants, mothers and children from three blocks of council flats in Willenhall to picket Wolverhampton Town Hall on Monday. The tenants were demanding a cut in rent while major repairs are done to their flats.

The strikers are demanding, as part of their national struggle, that the local

council refuses to employ lump labour. They point out that the reason the flats need repair is that the lump system under which they were built led to shabby, sub-standard work carried out in the interests of a quick profit. Now the mothers, children and night shift workers will have to suffer noise and inconvenience as substantial structural alterations are carried out.

SW Reporters

MOVES by building employers in the last week show they are being hit hard by the extension of the strikes in the industry into an all-out stoppage in many areas. On Monday, in an effort to persuade firms to hold out against the demands of the workers the employers National Federation agreed to give interest free loans to companies facing serious losses because of the strike.

The strike is spreading at great speed. Almost all the sites in Central London are now shut.

In Liverpool last week 12,000 workers from as far afield as Wrexham and Wigan decided to make sure every job in the north west area was shut and on Friday the sight of 400 pickets marching along the A57 was enough to stop men on the M62 site.

The strike is also hitting many new areas not previously noted for their militancy. In East Anglia the three main towns of Lowestoft, Yarmouth and Norwich are all affected. In Lowestoft, a small town of just 55,000 people, more than 500 men are on strike.

Pickets from Cambridge are travelling to Peterborough this week and expect to close about half the sites in two or three days.

In Yorkshire, workers from Huddersfield, where all the big sites have now been closed, are turning their attention to smaller companies in the town and nearby places such as Gomersley, Batley, Marsden and Golcar.

REFUSED

But this growing movement is not being matched by most of the union officials who should be involved. In Bristol, for example, where the whole city has been shut for eight weeks now and where union membership has grown by 200 per cent, the local officials of UCATT, Ray Heal and Jack Slamen, have refused to try to call out the main local site that is still working—the M5 motorway.

When a mass meeting sent a delegation to demand that the officials call out the motorway site, they hid in the backroom of the union office. When finally they were forced out, they still refused to go to address the site.

In Scotland a different tactic has been employed by officials. They have been trying to hold workers back from an all-out stoppage, while making separate agreements on terms much less than the national claim with local firms.

The best known such agreement is with three firms, Cameron, Dye and Betts. But it contains at least three major faults.

Firstly, although many of the officials are claiming that it effectively concedes a £30 minimum, in fact it offers many of those involved in the present strike a minimum of only £25.50. And bonus payments will be calculated on much lower figures, £20 this year and £22.50 next.

PERSUADED

Secondly, although the high level of unemployment in the industry makes a reduction in hours to the 35 hour week imperative now, the agreement states that '40 hours to be maintained' and 'the parties to this agreement to meet in April 1973' to discuss reducing the working week to 35 hours 'over a period of at least two years'.

A mass meeting of workers in Aberdeen last Friday was persuaded to accept these poor terms. In Edinburgh the following day, the chairman of a 2400 strong mass meeting, Charlie McManus, a shop steward and leading local Communist Party member, refused to allow amendments to a two-part motion that both supported an all-out stoppage and endorsed the compromise terms, so there too the terms have been endorsed. But in Glasgow, workers voted to reject them and to keep up the struggle for the full claim.

The refusal of the officials to really fight shows the desperate need for rank and file organisation in the building industry to take the initiative locally and nationally independently of the union leaders.

The fight has to go on to demand:

- Extend the strike—for an all-out national stoppage.
- Strike pay for all strikers, regardless of how long they have been in the union.
- No local settlements.
- Fight for the full claim of £30 for 35 hours now.

Subscribe Now!

I enclose £_____ for one year/six months

Socialist Worker

(£3.40 per year; £1.70 six months)

Name _____

Address _____

→ Socialist Worker 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN