

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

## Hospital, gas, civil service challenge to freeze

# STRIKE HARD —STRIKE TOGETHER

THE REVOLT against the government's pay freeze is snowballing. Leaders of 260,000 lower-paid Civil Servants, 250,000 hospital workers, tens of thousands of London teachers and 47,000 gas workers have announced plans for industrial action to win more pay.

In every case ballots or mass meetings have shown that the rank and file, many of whom have never thought of industrial action before, bitterly reject the government's clampdown on earnings.

There is a strong possibility that in the weeks ahead their outburst of mass anger will be joined by 250,000 miners and more than 50,000 Ford workers.

It is three months since Heath brought in his freeze on wages. Since then the upward spiral in prices has continued faster than ever.

The Grocer magazine reported a 2.25 per cent rise in prices last week. A member of its staff said he 'could not remember when it has moved up as much as this.' There could be no clearer rebuttal of the lie that price increases are a result of wage increases.

Behind the Tory policy lies the threat of court action and fines for any group of workers who defy the freeze. But such threats are meaningless if they are challenged by mass action.

The movement now developing could smash right through government policy. If the Tories did not dare keep five docks stewards in jail last summer, they will not even contemplate court action against the leaders of hundreds of thousands of workers.

Heath has justified his freeze with talk of helping the 'low paid'. Yet the leadership in the fight against the freeze is being taken by the low paid themselves—by hospital cleaners and porters, by young teachers, by junior Civil Servants, by gas workers, many of them taking home much less than £20 a week.

### CALL BLUFF

Leaders of public sector unions met this week to discuss a united stand against the freeze. But such talk means little unless it is translated into unity in action to smash the freeze and to call the government's bluff about court action.

The public sector alliance must be based on joint rank and file action in every locality with joint demonstrations and joint picketing with sections that are out on strike.

Lower-paid public sector workers should also form links with workers on slightly better rates of pay, such as the Ford workers. The government propaganda machine pushes the lie that if Ford workers gave up their fight for higher wages then the lower paid would benefit.

That's eyewash. Ford made record profits last year. The government's freeze regulations will allow Ford to pocket those profits and none of it will go to the lower paid.

But if Ford workers take action to push up their wages at the expense of those profits they can help hospital workers, Civil Servants, teachers, gas workers and miners. The freeze is holding down all their wages and an assault on it by the powerful Ford workers will bust a hole in government policy through which the rest can follow.

And united action, mass industrial action, by all these groups is vitally necessary to stop the Tories witchhunting any one group and attempting to turn 'public opinion' against them.

United action would isolate the government, not the strikers. That would mean the end of the freeze. It could also mean the end of the Tories.

Heath has twisted and turned in every direction in an effort to solve the problems of big business by holding down wages. The freeze is his last card. If it is trumped by united trade union action then it could well mean the downfall of his government.

## Steward goes aloft in sites protest

TWO HUNDRED FEET off the ground in the cab of this tower crane on the Worlds End council housing contract in Chelsea, South London, bricklayers' steward John Fontaine staged a one man sit-in on Monday and Tuesday.

He was protesting against the behaviour of main contractor Cubitts and the sub-contractor's tactics of provoking strikes and delaying the job in order to screw more money out of the clients, Kensington and Chelsea council.

'Cubitt's tactics make The Godfather look like a nursery rhyme,' stated Fontaine.

'The firm is involved in legalised robbery of the ratepayers and attempting to blackmail the council to the tune of an extra £1 million for finishing the job. They are stopping men with socially necessary skills from working and forcibly preventing working-class families moving into decent homes.'

A reporter from Radio London and Mike Cohen, Socialist Worker's photographer, were both attacked by Cubitt's project manager as they tried to get near the crane to take pictures and talk to Fontaine.



## FUND CASH STILL POURS IN

AND still it comes! There's no let up in our readers' determination to reach that £30,000 target for the new International Socialists' printshop.

In the last week £1482 has poured into the office, pushing the total so far received to £18,272.

IS branches are keeping up the pressure. Donations received include: Swansea £35.54, Hackney £522, Enfield £104, Merseyside £205, Paddington £268, Glasgow North £13, Chelmsford £68,

South Shields £8.45, Wandsworth £15, Wigan £18, Neath £17.50, Huddersfield £18, Exeter £6.

We have been cheered and encouraged yet again by collections from groups of workers. Dockers in London's Royal group sent £15, Barr and Stroud (Glasgow) workers £4, Glasgow corporation workshop readers £4. Tenants have also responded to our appeal with £3.76 from Kilburn tenants and £1.10 from Hackney tenants. Readers at Kilburn Polytechnic have sent a magnificent £25.

To help you raise money systematically we have printed collection sheets, available from local IS branches or direct from IS head office.

Keep up the good work, readers. There must be no let up in your efforts if we are to reach our target and strengthen our ability to fight—and defeat—the Tories.

● Rush donations to: Tony Cliff, Acting IS National Treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

## Court threat to strike pickets

FORTY BUILDING WORKERS in the North of England face a show trial for their anti-blackening activity during last summer's building strike.

A spokesman for the Director of Public Prosecutions confirmed to Socialist Worker that the DPP has examined the papers presented to him by the Gwynedd (North Wales) and West Mercia (West Midlands) police, who have had 20 officers working full time on collecting evidence against the building workers. The DPP has recommended prosecution and the police are expected to make their arrests shortly.

The charges will be brought under the Protection of Property Act, 1875, but there are likely to be 'conspiracy' charges, ensuring that there is no limit on sentence if the men are proved guilty.

The charges refer to events last 6 September when striking building workers visited sub-contractors' premises in Shrewsbury and Telford in an effort to stop work there. Other incidents in North Wales throughout the strike are also mentioned.

## Lynch poll move as crisis grows

by Mike Heym

IRISH prime minister Jack Lynch has called a snap election for 28 February in a bid to catch his opponents off balance. With the whole of Irish politics set on crisis course Lynch and the ruling right wing Fianna Fail party want to ensure their majority in the Dail (Irish parliament).

Lynch has chosen his time well with his opponents in disarray. The main opposition parties, Fine Gael and Labour, are likely to present a united 'People's Coalition' in the hope of winning the fruits of office. But their programme of mild reforms will not disguise the obvious horse-trading such a move entails.

Despite a liberal wing, Fine Gael is still a firmly right-wing party of the upper middle class and large farmers. Its ties to the Catholic hierarchy will make any promise of real reform a sham. The Labour Party, sharply divided on its attitude to the North, has shown itself ready to sacrifice any pretence of radicalism for the attractions of government.

### Difficulties

Lynch has recognised that the months ahead will require 'firm and resolute government'. The border poll and the British government's White Paper on the future of Northern Ireland will present intense difficulties. Any moves towards the solution that Heath and Lynch desperately want will mean a determined assault on 'national sovereignty' and on republican rhetoric which Fianna Fail still uses to attract support from workers and small farmers.

The effects of Common Market entry in increasing the rate of inflation and the widespread redundancies will add economic difficulties to the political instability generating from the North.

The working class in the South and the minority in the North can gain nothing in this election, whoever wins.

Their hope can lie only in the growth of a socialist movement dedicated to the workers' republic. The certainty of crisis for any future government should provide such a movement with fertile ground.

Belfast bloodbath: Mike Miller's on the spot report on page 3

CONCORDE JOBS FIGHT: REPORT BACK PAGE, COMMENT PAGE 4



# Revolutionaries launch election campaign

by Richard Kirkwood

THE French revolutionary socialists of the Lutte Ouvriere group (Workers' Struggle) started their general election campaign at a crowded and enthusiastic rally of 3000 people in Paris last week.

Their campaign theme is 'Let the workers speak'. To this end 76 of their 171 candidates are industrial workers. The rest include technicians, office workers, hospital workers, engineers, a teacher and a housewife. Forty-seven are working women.

Francois Delain, of the Lutte Ouvriere editorial board, stressed that running candidates did not mean the group had any confidence in the fake democracy of the parliamentary system. The real power of workers is in the factories and the streets.

Paul Leblay, a Peugeot car worker, pointed out that workers spend most of their lives in the factory, where politics are kept out both by the noise and speed-up, and by bans on political activity. Peugeot has rules which allow them to sack workers who engage in politics, and is especially vicious to migrant workers on temporary contracts.

Lutte Ouvriere's main election spokesman is Arlette Laguiller, a well-known trade unionist from a big Paris bank. She emphasised the importance of the struggles of working women: low pay, the 'double working day' of most women, and the shortage of nurseries. The scandalous abortion laws allow middle-class women to go abroad to private clinics but drive working-class women to the backstreet abortionist.

## Immigrants

While the French Communist Party has nothing to say about women's liberation (its women's paper is full of knitting patterns and such like), the liberation of women cannot be achieved through feminism, but only through the revolutionary working-class struggle for socialism.

Paris engineering worker Jean-Claude Vrain pointed out that 15 per cent of France's workforce are immigrants. Most of them have no vote, nor do the millions of workers under 21. 'Our campaign,' he said, 'will give a voice to immigrants and youth even if they have no vote.'

Bank worker Adrian Ferly is one of Lutte Ouvriere's three black candidates in France. They and the six candidates in Martinique and Guadeloupe belong to Lutte Ouvriere's West Indian sister group Combat Ouvriere.

Ferly spoke of the repression and exploitation in France's remaining colonies and of the failure of the Left Union's programme to guarantee them independence.

## Ballot

Finally Theodore Topolanski, who led the 1971 strike at the Paris Polymecanique engineering factory, said that workers clearly wanted to get rid of the Gaullists. While revolutionaries have no intention of damaging the chances of Communist or Socialist Party candidates in the second round of the ballot, they know that many workers deeply distrust the Left Union.

The Communist Party is going out of its way to be respectable. At a press conference its general secretary Georges Marchais said: 'Workers will work harder for a government they have confidence in.' He said the Left Union's programme would not really cost much because of the resulting increase in productivity.

Voting for workers' candidates would give workers a chance to show the 'Left' leaders that they expect something better than that—real improvements in pay, working conditions and the general standard of living.

PARIS, even more than London, is the victim of property speculators. Traditional working-class areas are being torn down and replaced by luxury flats and office blocks, and the workers rehoused in distant estates with virtually no public transport. Worst hit are the migrant workers living in hostels and lodging houses.

In the 15th arrondissement area some of the inhabitants have resisted their expulsion. Two groups barricaded themselves inside their buildings and appealed for support.

Last week police turned up at 5am at one of the buildings, where they were met by members of the local defence committee, including Michel Tardieu and Rolland Jo, candidates for the Lutte Ouvriere group at the coming elections. Although the tenants are paying rent and have not been told where they will be rehoused, they were evicted.

The second attempt at eviction took place near a working-class street market in the daytime, and the police were faced with a large crowd of indignant local people, including trade unionists from nearby factories, school students, housewives and building workers as well as revolutionaries. This time the police were forced to retreat, and the local authority to say it would postpone the evictions.

On Saturday 20 January a peaceful demonstration of 400 trade unionists and socialists of all political tendencies was suddenly charged by police armed with batons. Again the local people forced the police to give up their attempt to make mass arrests.

The struggle is by no means ended, and similar evictions have taken place without resistance in other parts of Paris. But at least in the 15th arrondissement the property sharks aren't getting all their own way.



Strikers from the six Frametex mills marching through Durban

# AFRICANS ROCK WHITES' BOAT

by W Enda

THE African workers of Natal, in South Africa, are rocking the white supremacist boat. About 25,000 workers have been involved in a wave of strikes for better wages and conditions in the past month.

White employers are panicking—they have had it easy for 12 years, and believed the workers had been broken by the police state which jails and deports strikers and arrests more than a million Africans each year for pass offences.

African stevedores in the Durban docks led the way in November. Instead of deporting them to the Bantustans the bosses looked at the clogged-up, non-containerised docks—and gave a wage rise from a minimum of £5.17 a week to the princely sum of £7.25.

On 11 January, 160 African workers at the Becketts tea factory went on strike, and the bosses took the chance, in the words of a company official, 'to weed out what we consider bad material', meaning the militants. Fifty-six sacked workers were later reinstated and a wage rise of £1.50 conceded.

A week later 3000 brickworkers accepted a rise after a week's strike.

On 20 January, 275 African lorry drivers who ferry assembled cars to Johannesburg were sacked.

They had gone on strike demanding a cut in the 14-hour shifts they drive for less than £7.50 a week. They have also been cheated out of last year's holiday bonus of 25p a week.

Cement and chemical workers in Natal have also been on strike, but the biggest section are the 6000 textile workers in the Frametex company's six mills. At the mill where the strike started, workers gathering in the yard were told to elect a committee and go back to work while it negotiated. This was met with hoots of derision.

## VIOLENCE

Squad cars packed with armed white police surrounded the yard, and black policemen mingled with the strikers trying to pick out the leaders. The strike spread quickly to the other mills, with the result that those who did not strike were locked out.

£9 a week is needed for bare subsistence in South Africa. The wages paid at Frametex—quite typical—average £3.70 a week for men. An African woman who had been working there for five years earned £2.25 a week. The workers get one day's paid holiday at Easter, and are fined 25p for being a minute late. All workers

are searched on leaving the mill.

So far the government has been playing it cool. Police violence has not yet been used against demonstrating strikers. A one-day workers' boycott of transport services from the African townships to white industrial areas appears to have been unsuccessful, and a government block on news may hide the fact that this was because of large-scale police terrorism to force the Africans to work.

What really scares the government is that the strikes might spread to the heart of South Africa's industry in the Rand. If the police attack the Natal strikers they risk provoking this.

Industrial upheaval in South Africa would inspire the Rhodesian workers and would have a devastating effect on Rhodesian Premier Ian Smith's increasingly stretched security forces.

Employers are running to the white-dominated trade union leadership for advice—African workers have no trade unions, and they don't know who to negotiate with. The bosses are now arguing that the absence of a responsible African trade union leadership gives scope for 'unsavoury agitators'.

But the government is not likely to be persuaded to allow Africans trade union rights. Apartheid says that African workers are only visitors to white industry, and have rights only inside the impoverished Bantustans.

IT WOULD be impossible to try to allocate responsibility for fighting since the Vietnamese cease-fire, but one thing is already clear—that the strategy of the South Vietnamese government goes beyond simply preserving its positions.

For the South Vietnamese Air Force is continuing to use napalm against villages occupied by the National Liberation Front. The US strategy of destroying a village in order to 'save' it is still very much alive.

**A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST MANIFESTO** by Kuron and Modzelewski. The famous open letter to the Polish Worker's Party, written in 1964. A vitriolic analysis of the Eastern European regimes and a call for social revolution. 29p postage included. from PLUTO PRESS Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road London NW1.

In 1960 the council tenants in St Pancras, London, fought against a rent scheme which contained many of the elements which have now been incorporated in the Housing Finance Act. The story of that fight is told in this pamphlet by Dave Burn, with an introduction by Hugh Kerr of the Harlow Tenants Federation.

## Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960

Dave Burn

Pluto for Architectural Radicals Students Educators  
15p plus 3p postage.  
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7 Chalcot Road  
London NW1 8LH  
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## Russian leaders face growing economic crisis

FACTS published in Moscow last week show that Russia's rulers have run into grave economic difficulties on a scale not matched since the last years of Khrushchev's rule.

The national income is growing at just over half the planned rate, according to the official statistics—at four per cent instead of six per cent. This growth rate is lower than most Western capitalist states and only about the same as Britain's.

The worst deficiencies are in those areas of production that directly

affect the living standards of the mass of the people. Food production actually fell last year by five per cent, and the total was only the same as that five years ago, although the population has grown considerably since then.

Industries turning out consumer goods have also been hit. They grew last year, but by a quarter less than in 1971.

For years the rulers of Russia have held down the living standards of workers and collective farmers, argu-

ing that this is necessary if the country is to 'catch up and overtake' the West. Like any private capitalist, they have forced workers to produce an ever-growing surplus product in order to get a still bigger surplus.

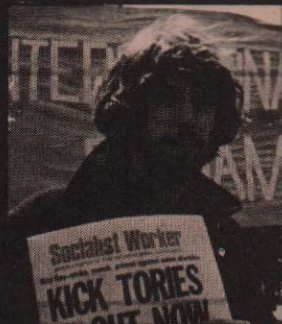
But now the past is catching up with Brezhnev and his friends. Agriculture, starved of funds for years so that heavy industry could grow, is in a dilapidated state. If there are prolonged spells of poor weather conditions, like last year, output drops and workers' living standards take a

further cut. Even massive consignments of grain bought from the USA have not been able to stop this happening in the past few months.

What the men in the Kremlin really fear is that in the period ahead passive forms of protest could turn into active strikes, demonstrations and armed conflict in the streets—after all, that is what happened in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1970.

# BELFAST BLOODBATH

HELP  
MAKE



OUR  
SALES  
SOAR

by Margaret Renn  
Circulation manager

SOCIALIST WORKER, since it appears only once a week, cannot compete with the 'popular' press, the Sun and the Mirror, with their millions of copies every day.

But Alan Watts, a member of the Enfield district committee of the engineering union (AUEW) says that for workers Socialist Worker is still invaluable. 'The Mirror and Sun trivialise every event and then raise trivia to the level of national importance—witness Princess Anne's activities in the horse box with the gallant dragoon Mark!

'There is more information of importance in one issue of Socialist Worker than in a week of the Sun and the Mirror,' said Alan. 'During the crisis in the AUEW over the scab Goad, Socialist Worker gave consistent yet critical support of the executive. It pointed out the way in which, from a position where the right decisions were taken in line with national committee policy, they soon began to vacillate in the face of the newspapers and television and the onslaught from the right wing of the union. They failed to put up the sort of fight that could have won a tremendous and historical victory for the working class against the Industrial Relations Act and the Tory government.

## Influence

'Socialist Worker analyses all the events of vital importance to the labour movement, but we need a circulation of 300,000, not just 30,000, if we are really to influence issues of national importance.'

In fact the response to our first appeal to readers to help boost Socialist Worker's circulation has been most encouraging. Several letters and phone calls have opened up sales in new areas—Accrington, Luton, Tunbridge Wells—and put others in contact with local branches.

We have had posters printed which read 'Socialist Worker—On Sale Here' and a space for headlines or details of local news or industrial coverage. They have been sent to all International Socialists branches, but anyone else wanting copies should write and let me know.

They can be used wherever the paper is sold: outside factories, in shopping centres and in newsagents. We have to find our own ways of competing with the commercial newspaper distributors.

If you find difficulty in getting Socialist Worker each week, write to me and we will let you know where you can buy it locally. Or take out a postal subscription—there's a form on the back page.

Please phone me on 01-739 2639 if you have any suggestions about circulation which would be worth including in this column.

# —ARMY FANS THE FLAMES

by Mike Miller

**BELFAST:**—The city has seen its bloodiest days since the first week of internment exactly 18 months ago. By Monday, 18 people had died, 14 of them killed in assassinations and four by the British Army.

Many more would have died had three Loyalist massacre attempts been successful.

One man died and nine were injured when a hand-grenade was thrown into a bus taking Catholic workers to a building site in East Belfast. After the arrest of three men in connection with this attack Loyalists rioted for several nights in East Belfast demanding their release, guns were used against the army and all the Loyalist military groups in the area joined forces.

Ten men playing pitch and toss at a street corner near the Falls Road were wounded when Loyalist gunmen opened fire. Three men were injured when Loyalists opened fire on a Gaelic football match with a machine gun.

Earlier in the week, Loyalists made a number of attacks in the Falls Road and Andersontown areas, killing four, two of them 14 years-old schoolboys. Although these areas have the heaviest concentration of British troops in Northern Ireland, the gunmen escaped with ease.

The location of the attacks suggests that the killers were operating from the Loyalist Village area, which has access to the Falls Road via Donegal Road and Kennedy Way. Two of the murder victims were kidnapped near Kennedy Way, another was shot dead in a garage there. The fourth victim was shot on the Falls, near the junction with Donegal Road.

Despite this, there were no military searches in The Village. The only response by the army has been a token presence on the roads to The Village, which harasses the local Catholics more than it does the killers.

## JOINED IN

On Saturday night six Catholics were shot dead outside a pub in the New Lodge area. The British Army issued a statement claiming that they were IRA men who had fired at the troops. This story was repeated by the British radio, television and press. Typical was a front page report in the Daily Mirror, which said 'six gunmen died in a shoot out with troops.'

But local inhabitants tell a different tale. What in fact happened was that Loyalist gunmen fired at a crowd outside the pub, killing two people and injuring several others. The army did nothing to ward off this attack—instead it joined in the shooting at the Catholics, filling a further four men.

The first of these to die, Mr Ambrose Hardy, was out getting cigarettes during a lull in the shooting. According to eye witnesses, he was gunned down by an army sniper while waving a white flag.

The other three were shot dead while going to help the wounded. One woman who lives in the building from which the British troops were firing told me that not one of the dead men belonged to the IRA. Everyone else in the locality backs that view.

In the last week four Protestants were killed as well. The Provisional IRA have claimed responsibility for the death of one of them, Mr Frank Smith, a UDA man, whom they claim



The troops—harassing the Catholics, a blind eye for Loyalist murderers

was involved in the murder of one of the 14 years-old Catholics on the Falls. Smith lives in The Village.

Two of the other Protestant deaths look like revenge killings, possibly the work of the Provos, although they have not claimed responsibility. The fourth death is puzzling, because the body was found in a strong Loyalist area and bore all the marks of sadistic torture.

The new wave of murders came after the main Loyalist force, the UDA, had withdrawn its threat to deal with the assassins. It did so to placate the most extreme Loyalists who were determined that the murder campaign should go on.

The changed line of the UDA has prevented a split. It also indicates that the right wing, under the leadership of the conservative and cynically sectarian Harding-Smith, is now in full control.

Some sections of the British press have concluded from the wave of sectarian murders and the threat of open civil war that there is a need for more British troops to be sent to Northern Ireland. And even some Catholics in Belfast are demanding

that the British take action against the UDA.

But the British troops are not a neutral force in Northern Ireland. Their main role continues to be one of carrying out systematic repression against opponents of British rule in Ireland.

That is why they are concentrated in Catholic areas, carrying out a one-sided war against republicans, while letting the sectarian murderers move freely. That is why they disarm and imprison republicans, the very people who could provide the Catholic population with self-defence against the murders.

## REJECTED

While the barricades were up and the no-go areas still existed, there were no sectarian murders. The people of the Catholic ghettos were able to defend themselves and the republicans rejected categorically any notion of sectarian attacks on Protestants.

The British Army tore down the barricades and invaded the no-go areas to enforce the Tory government's idea of 'law and order'. The

rising toll of sectarian murders was a direct result of that action.

In terms of Tory Minister William Whitelaw's real aim—to stabilise British rule in Northern Ireland—the murders performed a purpose. Toleration of the UDA, the UVF and similar groups stopped the Protestants from moving into complete opposition to the British. And Whitelaw saw the murders as terrorising the Catholics to such a point that they would submit to his plans for the Six Counties.

He may now decide that the reign of terror against the Catholic population has gone on long enough and put some constraints on the sectarian murderers who have hitherto been allowed a free hand.

Having used the Protestant workers against the Catholics, Whitelaw may now use a few of his troops and prisons against the Protestants—two Protestants were interned on Monday. But that does not mean that he will bring peace to Belfast. It will be just one more example of British governments exploiting religious hatreds in order to justify their own control over Northern Ireland.

# Ban on Irish play

by Paul Foot

last takes the onus for the troubles off the Southern Irish and the Northern Irish and puts the onus on the machinations of the British imperial government.

'The point of it all is, really, that you can't lecture the North and South of Ireland when your own government is entirely responsible for the situation.

'It comes over very clearly in the film—and I'm Welsh Protestant by the way, and the main villain in the film is Lloyd George—that the real reason for the Border was that Britain needed a corner of Ireland for strategic, economic and political reasons.'

## Silence

The film was completed in the autumn, and the documentary department at ATV, which had not interfered once with the film, submitted it for viewing to the IBA. It was seen on 22 November by three officials of the IBA. When it ended, there was a long silence, broken eventually by the senior IBA official who said that it was an extraordinary film, but that it probably contravened the Broadcasting Act.

'On what grounds?' asked the astonished ATV man.

'Incitement to riot,' replied the IBA man. A few days later, the IBA sent for a script of the film.

**THE TELEVISION CENSORS** have struck again. An eighty-minute documentary about Michael Collins and the formation of the Irish Border in 1921 has been banned by Sir Lew Grade, chairman of Associated Television, and the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

This crude censorship follows the IBA's final and unexplained ban on an hour-long programme entitled 'The friends and influence on John Poulson' and, at the request of police authorities, cuts from a repeat of the BBC's film about the Craig/Bentley murder case.

The Collins film was made by writer and actor Kenneth Griffith, who has already made two documentaries in the same style.

Mr Griffith told Socialist Worker: 'My aim was to put over the historical facts which are the cause of the contemporary problem, so that people can see that problem better. I did that with Cecil Rhodes and Rhodesia. I knew enough about Ireland to choose Michael Collins as the catalyst—he was the most successful activist against British rule in Ireland.

'The film showed how the Border was put up, why it was put up and by whom. It shows that the British government was primarily responsible for putting the Border up.

'The Southern Irish were innocent and the Protestants were the victims of British imperial needs. The film at



# Socialist Worker

## WHAT WE THINK

JOKE OF THE MONTH. Ted Heath denounces the Labour Party for representing 'sectional interests' whereas the Tories, of course, represent 'the nation'.

It was the late Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda minister, who said 'The bigger the lie, the greater its effect.' Heath obviously thinks Goebbels was right—and he has had a lot of practice at the 'big lie' technique, from his famous promise to 'cut prices at a stroke' (prices up 25 per cent since he came to power) through to 'We utterly reject the philosophy of compulsory wage control . . . Labour's compulsory wage control was a failure and we will not repeat it' (Tory election manifesto). But the latest lie really takes the biscuit.

The Tory Party is above all the party of the rich, the party of big business. That is why big business finances it. That is why it is not possible to buy a pint of beer without helping to contribute to Tory funds—the brewing giants are among the Tories' biggest backers.

And, of course, the present wage freeze which the Tories pledged themselves never to introduce, was brought in for the benefit of a 'sectional interest'—big business. We say wage freeze and not price and wage freeze because the price freeze is another joke—and not a funny one for most of us. Heath made his 'sectional interests' speech at the very time that the government announced the latest round of price increases on manufactured foods.

The law which enforces a wage freeze while permitting price increases is a law in the interests of big business. It is a law that can and must be broken unless ordinary working people are to suffer a steady worsening of their standard of living. It can be successfully broken **only** by industrial action. For Heath told another lie when he said that the Labour Party was a 'sectional' party defending trade unionists (with their families, the biggest part of the population). Would that it were true. Why, the wretched Labour MPs are not even voting against Heath's infamous freeze law in the House of Commons.

'Put not thy trust in prince or peer', wrote the author of the Internationale. If he had written a little later, he might have added 'or the Labour Party either'. To smash the freeze, workers need to pay heed to the only good piece of advice Heath ever gave us—'Stand on your own two feet'.

## PRIORITIES

IMAGINE a proposal for a scheme to provide vast sums of public money to give highly subsidised transatlantic travel to a handful of wealthy businessmen and super-rich pleasure seekers. There would be, you might think, a public outcry. But there is such a scheme. It is called the Concorde project.

The British share of the costs of this rich man's toy is £480 millions in development costs to date—and the French have contributed a similar sum. It currently costs £1½ million a week to keep the British share of the project going. As we pointed out last December, 'the current annual spending on Concorde represents more than the annual "saving" of all the recent government increases in charges for school meals, school milk, Health Service prescription charges and council council rents'. What a comment on the social priorities of capitalism.

There was never any chance of recovering a single penny of the development costs. It is now clear that there is no possibility of recovering the production costs either. In a desperate attempt to save face, Concorde was offered to Pan-American Airways at less than cost price—indeed they were begged to accept it 'on lease' for practically nothing! They, and others, refused because, as the Economist pointed out, 'Concorde cannot be flown at anything but a thumping loss . . . it is a reasonably sound assumption that the [operating] loss on each aircraft will be upwards of £2 million a year.' That is the subsidy to the rich that we will have to supply on each of the Concordes that the government forces BOAC to take.

60,000 jobs—about half of them in Britain—depend on this monstrosity. The workers must not be the ones to suffer for the insane priorities of the system. They must be kept on full pay until useful work can be found for them. No redundancies should be accepted. Full work or full pay must be demanded.

It would be a great deal cheaper to pay the workers their current earnings for the rest of their natural lives for doing nothing than to continue to subsidise the Concorde.

6 COTTONS GDNS, LONDON E2 8DN



## Divi up in a brewery

IN CASE you haven't got your current copy of Accountancy Age ready perhaps I can remind you of a very simple way of getting round the government's freeze on dividends, published in that indispensable journal. The way has been blazed, apparently, by Allied Breweries, which increased its investment income hugely last year as a result of its stake in Trust House Forte.

Schedule 23 of the Finance Act last year states that the difference between a dividend paid by a company and its investment income must not fall. The provision was put into the Act to stop companies not paying out dividends one year, and then paying them out another year when there were greater tax advantages.

Allied Breweries has 'interpreted' the schedule as a statutory obligation to keep dividends in line with increased income.

The company therefore applied to the government for a dividend increase under this schedule, and the government immediately agreed. Allied's shareholders benefit accordingly by rather more than £3 million.

Accountancy Age reports, not surprisingly: 'Other companies, which have increased their franked investment income during 1972-73 could follow Allied's example now the precedent has been set . . . A Treasury spokesman said that a number of other companies had also applied under schedule 23 to increase dividends.'

So there are exceptions to the freeze, provided of course that you receive dividends, and have increased your income by more than £3 million.

## No Hawkers

HAWKER SIDDELEY workers at Kingston, Surrey, are used to getting Economic League and Working Together anti-union leaflets in their pay packets (why else should Hawker Siddeley give the Economic League £2,250 last year?) but the local branch of the International Socialists were



Jack Peel: see Peel off

delighted at the recognition given to their work in the factory and their factory bulletin when last week an Economic League leaflet dealt solely with the IS.

It was entitled The Troublemakers, and referred to the IS as follows (only an extract):

'They set up groups in important companies and factories. These groups or "factory branches" operate under the directive of a full-time Industrial Organiser. Their disruptive efforts are aided by a constant stream of inflammatory propaganda contained in a wide variety of journals, pamphlets and leaflets.'

The leaflet ends: 'They [the IS] thrive on disruption. They are not so much "troublemakers" as CREATORS OF CHAOS.'

The leaflet has enormously improved the prestige of the IS in the area.

PS: The chairman of Hawker Siddeley, Sir Arnold Hall, was the managing director of Bristol Siddeley Engines during all the four years (1959-1963) when it deliberately overcharged the government for aircraft contracts. The excess profit made by this peculiar form of 'business practice' was about £6 million, and the company was eventually forced to pay back £3.9 million. Sir Arnold, of course, emerged unscathed, and was instantly promoted by his class.

PPS: One group of people whose ideas seem to be influenced by those of the Economic League is the Colchester and East Essex Co-operative Society. The publicity officer for the society, Mr J Green, wrote to Gordon Stewart, secretary of Colchester IS, last November refusing the local IS use of the Co-op's New Town Hall.

'The Society,' wrote Mr Green, 'does not wish to be associated with this organisation.'

I rang Mr Green and asked him to elaborate. He obliged as follows. 'First, there has been a lot of unruliness in the hall from this organisation. Secondly, more importantly, we found out that the organisation had been handing out leaflets to school-children calling them to a meeting. We had some complaints from members about that.'

Mr Green agreed at once that the main reason for banning the hall was political. 'There's an association with the society,' he said, 'and our board of directors didn't want it.'

Mr Green also agreed that if the local Communist Party tried to hire the hall, they'd be banned too, instantly. 'You see,' he said, 'as though to ram the point home, it's easy for us to book the hall anyway. There's always plenty of demand for it.'

## Peel off

ONE of the advantages of the Common Market is the very high increases in pay available to ordinary British people if they get a job in Brussels, George Thomson, for instance, former right-wing Labour MP for Dundee East, increased his pittance of some £7000 a year as MP-cum-director to £20,000 as European Commissioner, Gwyn Morgan has more than doubled his salary when he moved from the Labour Party deputy general secretaryship to a plum job in the Brussels bureaucracy, taking with him Ian Flintoff of the Labour Party press office, whose salary also took a jump.

Latest on the gravy train is Jack Peel, general secretary of the Dyers and Bleachers Union, whose members have some of the worst pay and conditions in the country, but whose general secretary was always to be heard preaching 'moderation' (the press word for silence and collaboration).

Peel is to get the directorship of the Common Market's Social Affairs Department. Salary: £9500 a year (nearly £200 a week), which should keep the well-groomed Peel in trim. The increase in salary at this time of freeze is around 300 per cent.



# PRINTS

## What the censor cut

IT'S ONLY after seeing the World in Action film on the Poulson affair that you realise the full significance of the censorship of the Independent Broadcasting Authority which banned it. It is a brilliant programme, relentless and in many places very funny.

It takes Poulson's career from Pontefract, where two senior councillors and the town clerk were at one time or another on his payroll, through the West Riding of Yorkshire (ditto), to the nationalised industries (especially the hospital boards, British Rail and the National Coal Board) and parliament. Everywhere he had key men on his payroll and everywhere work materialised for his organisation.

Although many Tories are involved at high levels, the chief damage is to the Labour movement.

The programme is particularly savage on Andy Cunningham, North East boss of the General and Municipal Workers Union and prominent on Felling Urban and Durham County Councils (his son is also active on Chester-le-Street Urban Council).

## Break law

Cunningham and his wife were paid large sums by Poulson, and Poulson got enormous contracts from Cunningham's authorities, not least the Durham Police Authority, of which Cunningham is chairman. Cunningham it was, remember, who recently put out a statement defending policemen who illegally take pictures of people going into court. There were times, Cunningham suggested, when policemen had to break the law in the interests of the law.

The unspeakable Cunningham, the programme pointed out to sardonic laughter from the journalists who watched it, is still chairman of the finance committee of the Labour Party, and so in charge of all the party's funds.

Cunningham, like almost everyone else asked to appear, refused to talk on the air to the World in Action team, but for some reason Alfred Roberts, Labour MP for Normanton, who has been on the payroll not only of John Poulson but also of the fascist governments of Portugal and Spain, did agree to be interviewed. He said he didn't know the rule whereby architects are not allowed to 'tout' for jobs, and didn't have any regrets at all about 'touting' for Poulson in Malta, Saudi Arabia and Angola.

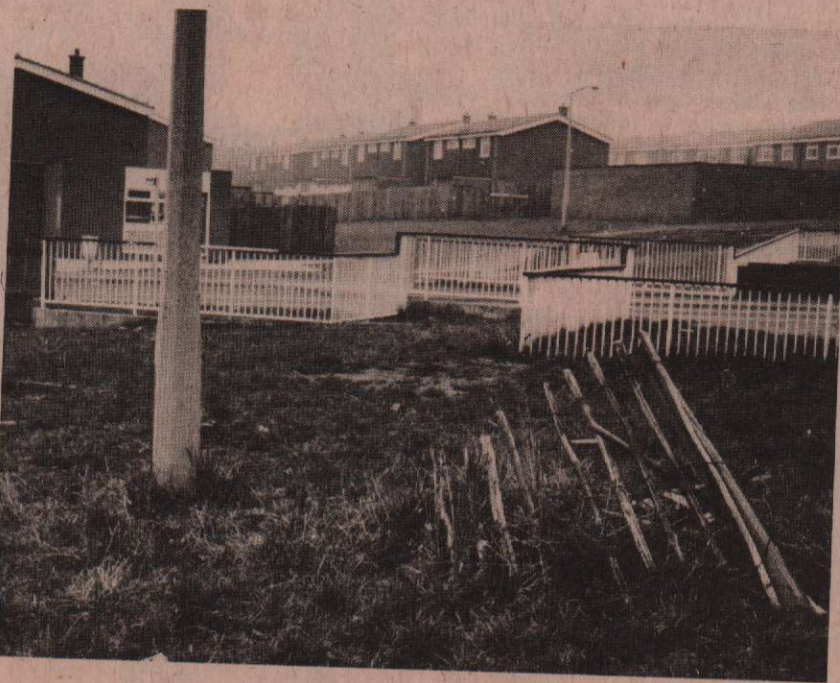
## Insulted

In a lyrical passage Roberts asked his interviewer: 'Where does this all stop. I mean, I can be bought a whisky—one can be bought a drink, but it doesn't have to go to your head.'

Roberts then said he thought there should be a register of MPs' private interests.

After the film showing, Dennis Foreman, managing director of Granada Television, explained that the IBA had definitely banned the film, and Granada had therefore 'withdrawn' it. He explained that the IBA had abandoned its original position that the programme was 'trial by television'. Now they were saying that they did not approve of programmes in which public figures were attacked 'without them being able to defend themselves'.

Gus MacDonald, head of World in Action, and Ray Fitzwalter, whose magnificent work in producing the programme has now been insulted by the men in charge of independent



A pleasant spot in the Carleton Glen Estate, Pontefract, where tenants have recently called off a rent strike. The plot of ground in the foreground was to be the mouth of a tunnel which was to link a road called Mayor's Walk Avenue with the back of a row of council houses.

The underpass (as you can see) was never built, but its cost was included in the money paid by the council. Also included in the rents is a charge for a 'piped TV service' throughout the estate which has never worked in the four years since the estate was built.

No prizes for guessing the name of the world-famous architect who designed the scheme, and had the licence for the system by which the houses were built.



Cunningham: in charge of party funds that everyone except Reginald Maudling and one other Tory MP had been invited to make a statement on the film, but had refused.

Gus MacDonald said: 'We have done several programmes before, using exactly the same techniques. What confounds us now is: where do we stand on this sort of inquiry and this sort of journalism?'

The Granada spokesmen refused to protest against the IBA ban. When I asked Foreman whether he thought the ban was 'absolutely scandalous', he replied: 'No, we're saying we're disappointed.'

Meanwhile, the IBA censorship is spreading even to the news programmes.

ITN's News at Ten on Thursday night refused to mention that the IBA had made its ban permanent. Instead they mentioned only that Granada had 'withdrawn their film', so making it look as though Granada had acted spontaneously.

Next time you see Andrew Gardner, Reggie Bosanquet or Sandy Gall oozing factual accuracy, remember that the IBA is everywhere.

## Grossvenor

THIS example of British life appears in the February issue of The Tatler:

Once every few decades there is an occasion, which surpasses all others, and the ball to celebrate the twenty-first birthday of Earl Grosvenor, heir to the Duke of Westminster, was just such an occasion. Guests arrived through the Golden Gates, before passing the candle-lit chapel of Eaton Hall on their way to the enormous marquee, which was decorated with thousands of pink roses and hung with enormous crystal chandeliers. In the middle stood the bronze statue of Ormonde, one of the most famous of the family's horses, which was also banked with flowers. The guests, who were received by the Duke and

organised by Searcy's, much along the lines of a medieval banquet with boar's head, salmon and every other known delicacy. Supporting the three hundred members of the family and friends were seven hundred tenants, some of whom had come from Westminster properties as far away as Canada, Australia and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific, and who all showed almost feudal love and loyalty towards the family.

There was great jubilation when, on the stroke of midnight, six liveried footmen wheeled in a 200 lb. birthday cake. As Earl Grosvenor cut the cake, the chapel choir sang, 'God be in my head', in descant and this was followed by the more traditional, 'Happy birthday to you', and, 'For he's a jolly good fellow'.

## Bossom's up

MEMBERS of parliament are always complaining that there is not enough reporting of debates, so each week I plan to publicise the hard work which the MPs do in the parliamentary committees set up to 'liaise' with foreign countries.

By tradition, these committees are headed by a Tory and a Labour man, so that party politics do not interfere. Most of the work, in fact, is taken up in lunches and cocktail parties.

On 22 February, for instance, there will be lunch for the Ethiopian Ambassador. The host will be Sir Clive Bossom, Tory MP for Leominster, doubling on this occasion with John Parker, Labour MP for Dagenham.

Five days later there is an Anglo-Iranian Committee lunch. The chairman is again Sir Clive Bossom, and the secretary is E L Mallalieu, MP for Brigg.

There will also be a handsome cocktail party for a delegation from the Lebanon on 14 February. MPs who want to be on the reception committee should apply now.

See next week for new engagements.

From the Dundee Courier:

WOMAN (26), prepared to work hard for pittance and accommodation, however humble, for herself and four children, two school age, anything

# OH PITY THE POOR INVESTOR...

NEWSPAPERS and television have recently been full of news about the crash in share prices.

The BBC considered this news so important one night that they gave it priority in all their bulletins over an air disaster in which 200 people died.

The impression you might get is that the stock exchange is somehow important to the economy and that it affects the lives of working people because their pension funds and insurance money is invested in shares.

All the concern also gives the impression that those speculators who became rich on the massive rise in share prices over the past 18 months are now the new poor.

These ideas are all gross distortions of the truth.

First how does it affect ordinary working people? Some, though by no means all, have either life insurance policies or are members of pension schemes. These people, so the argument runs, have been hurt by the falling share prices—just as they would benefit if companies made increased profits.

But a study made by researchers at Cambridge University found that less than 20 per cent of the shares quoted on the stock exchange are owned by insurance companies and pension funds. What's more, at the end of 1971 the total value of the shares held by pension funds was £5557 million.

Quite apart from the fact that many of those who benefit from this are not exactly poor, it is a minute part of the total value of all shares: £80,000 million. Again, £5557 million represents less than half the total value of all the pension funds.

## INCREASE

Nor is it true to say that all the speculators have lost money. A glance at the trend over the past few years shows that even after the big fall in share prices, the Financial Times 500 share index (which is a measure of share prices), is still higher than at the end of 1971. By then the index had already shown a 50 per cent increase over 1967 levels, compared with a 35½ per cent increase in average weekly earnings over the same period.

That 50 per cent gain shows the average increase in share prices: many will have done even better. By doing nothing, those five per cent of the population who hold more than 90 per cent of the private wealth in this country made 135p for every 100p extra the average worker earned.

The next thing to remember is that whatever happens to share prices, profits can rise unimpeded. Between 1968 and 1971 trading profits of UK companies increased from £8561 million to £10,741 million. The value of the total assets of public companies doubled, and £6743 million worth of dividends were paid. All this will continue now whatever happens to share prices, as businessmen find new ways of escaping the freeze.

Finally, how important is the stock exchange to the economy? To read the papers you might think the stock exchange was there to find money to finance expansion and provide more jobs.

This is rubbish: less than eight per cent of the money spent on new investment each year is raised on the stock exchange. The rest comes from tax allowances, government grants and money left over after the shareholders have been paid.



with T H Rogmorton

The stock exchange is just a market for second-hand shares in which the rich can get richer—and a reduction in the value of all shares by £5000 million doesn't make them poor. So long as they hold their shares, they will probably see them increase in value again and the dividends will keep them happy in the meanwhile.

The newspapers have treated the fall on the stock exchange so thoroughly for two reasons.

## DIVERTED

First as a rescue operation. As the excesses of the City became more and more glaring it seemed more and more likely that some token government measures would be taken against it. By giving full exposure to the new poverty in Throgmorton Street, this can perhaps be averted.

Second, it is a diversionary tactic. By publicising the paper losses in the stock market they hope that workers and union leaders will be persuaded that the freeze is really affecting capitalists too, and attention will be diverted from the real exploitation and profiteering.

But we must not be fooled into thinking that the interests of the working class are more than marginally affected by what happens there or into thinking that a real attack has been made on the great concentration of wealth in this country. A few fallen share prices do not mean that capitalism is crumbling.

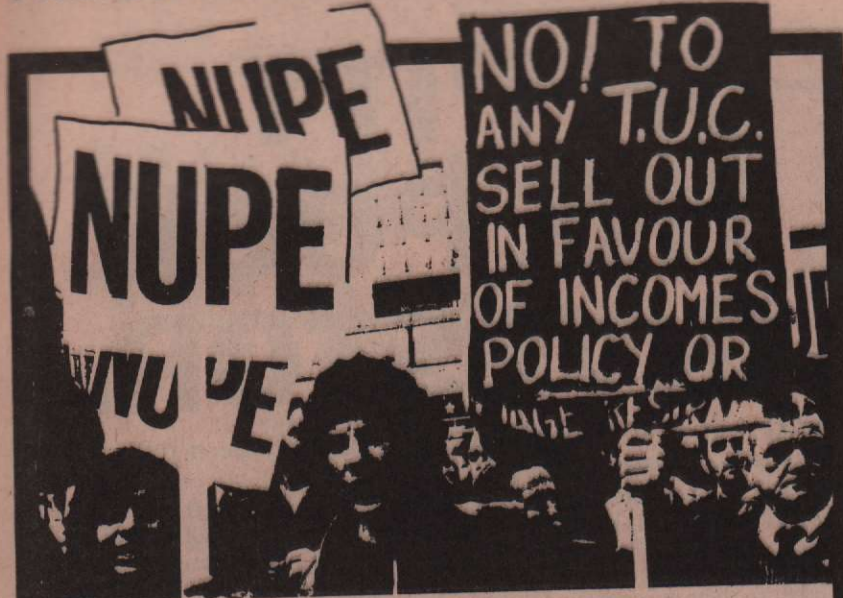


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**ROGER ROSEWELL on one kind of violence the Tories never mention**

SOONER or later everyone dies—but how much sooner or later is not just a question of luck or the lack of it. For recent official government statistics have once again shown that the life expectancy of workers is still far less than that of the middle class and the rich.

The Registrar General's latest figures on occupational mortality show there is a class way of death. The steel industry is a grim example of this. Almost 20 per cent of national steel production is concentrated in Teesside and Hartlepool. In 100 foot-high blastfurnaces, iron ore is mixed with limestone and then heated by coke and hot air pressure to convert it into molten iron.

Around these furnaces, in extreme heat, dirty conditions, almost permanent dust clouds and an ever-present danger of carbon monoxide gas poisoning, men work and suffer the additional hazards of chemical fumes and widespread instances of skin disease. The consequences are severe and the Registrar's report—based on a detailed analysis of death certificates—shows that blastfurnacemen have a 108 per cent occupational death risk compared to the national average of a 100.

But what is true of blastfurnacemen also applies to millions of other workers. Compared to jobs like teaching and the legal professions, not only are the death risks greater but so too are the possibilities of death from such painful diseases as tuberculosis, lung cancer and bronchitis.

And the figures do not tell the whole story. In 1971 45 steelworkers were killed at work and a further 14,120 seriously injured or crippled.

In the last analysed quarter of that year alone—2 July to 30 September—a staggering total of 5405 injuries were reported in just one single South Teesside steelworks where 13,476 are employed.

Spread over the year this means that every worker must expect to be injured at least once and almost certainly twice. The daily accident rate is 58.3 casualties.

A 53-years-old Teesside steelworker—26 years in the industry and who would not allow me to quote his name for fear of the sack—talked to me about the bronchitis from which he suffers and the conditions in which he works. Whenever he laughed, he coughed and several times had to interrupt our conversation with long pauses.



A steel furnace: 45 steelworkers were killed at work in 1971

# Health workers are ready to give Heath a bloody nose...

HAVE YOU or somebody close to you been inside a hospital recently? Did you catch sight of a porter wrestling with an oxygen cylinder, a ward maid replacing blood-and-urine-sodden sheets with fresh linen or a hospital telephonist trying frantically to warn doctors of a sudden case of heart seizure?

Did you notice that the porters do a compulsory night shift dozing on a camp bed in the front lodge and that the canteen ladies come back for an evening stint to keep the teapot hot for the night nurses?

Probably not. The vital work done by hospital ancillary workers is mostly out of sight in the boilerhouses, the sewing rooms and the kitchens.

But anyone who has been a patient in hospital will soon tell you quite how important a friendly chat from a ward maid can be when you're miserable or the value of a careful, strong pair of porter's hands when your bones are broken and grinding into each other.

Yet for working in the hospital service, ancillary staff are rewarded with wage slips which need to be seen to be disbelieved. They enter the lower depths of the lower paid.

adjusted at the Whitley Council, a supposedly independent arm of the treasury.

And over the last few years, job organisation in hospitals has been shredded by the hospital unions' enthusiasm for productivity deals and bonus schemes as an alternative to a straight rise in the basic rates. The results of the work study encouraged by the union officials are only now beginning to bite as staff are slimmed and work loads increased.

Far from the muscle-bound muggers so beloved of the Daily Express, the hospital trade unions are pale and frail. Yet they are also at the end of their tether and the phase two ceiling of £1.80 has driven hospital workers to strike action out of sheer desperation.

To keep their place in the wages table of two years ago, NASH (the national health workers rank and file committee) calculated a £10.90 increase was required last November. Unofficial strike action was set off by the Bristol '£8 Now' walkout.

The union journal has blazoned the official claim of £4 in every issue. The offer of £1.84 after three months in phase one is in reality an invitation to cut the real wage packet by a quarter.

## VICIOUS

Like all the low paid, a big part of their wages goes on food and rent which are completely uncontrolled. And many would register no net cash increase anyway because they are still held in the vicious orbit of the poverty trap whereby a wage increase results in a greater loss of mean-tested benefits.

Yet it is these obviously deserving workers, about whose plight Tory jowls have recently taken to quivering with compassion, who run the gauntlet of the new state labour laws and special trade union powers.

Hospital workers' wages are now fixed by government decree. If health workers follow the direction of the ballot and go on strike they face possible fines. And if they argue their case in demonstrations and meetings they will either be censored out of the news or denounced as murderous, greedy militants.

We don't want boxes of chocolates and thanks for looking after people in hospital any longer. We want industrial and political solidarity to force our way through the freeze and something like a decent wage for one of the most important jobs there is.

Gerry Dawson

## Savage comment

'Nine out of ten of us have it,' he said, 'and everyone knows that its fine grit and dust in the air that causes it, but what can you do? You just have to put up with it. If you go to the doctor he tells you to take a cleaner job and the corporation won't give you one, what can you do?'

'Beggars can't be choosers round here because there's not much work and there's a lot of lads on the dole. You've got no alternative but to keep working if you want a job.'

'Take me for instance. I'm 53 and got bronchitis. Who'd employ me in my condition? I'm not rich, I can't retire just like that.'

The Registrar's report has shown that three furnacemen die from bronchitis for every two of the rest of the population yet Mr James, the national compensation agent of their union, told me that he thought the figures were just 'an exaggeration'.

The local Teesside Medical Officer of Health, Dr R J Donaldson, doesn't agree. About lung cancer—from which again furnacemen die more than half as much as the rest of the population—has said that whereas this might be due to excessive smoking it might also be caused by 'Unfavourable atmospheric conditions in the working environment.'

The worker I spoke to who wouldn't allow his name to be published is a savage commentary on how the National Union of Blastfurnacemen doesn't defend its members and a management exploits the fears of unemployment.

# The class way of death

For only a few weeks ago this man—who works three different shifts each week, and as a result, is more likely than most to suffer from ulcers, constipation and rheumatoid arthritis—was late for work on three successive occasions. He was summoned to the manager's office and told to explain. He said that his bronchitis had been particularly bad that week. 'Don't be bad too often' was the warning that he got, after 26 years in the industry and permanent damage to his health.

## Choice of words

Politicians, TUC leaders, judges and managers unanimously condemn what they call the violence of 'picketing'. They have spoken at length and with emotion about 'union bully boys' and Anthony Barber, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and a leading architect of the wage freeze, told the Tory Party conference last year that militant pickets were a threat to 'our whole system of parliamentary democracy and our whole free way of life.'

His choice of the words 'our way of life' was most appropriate for as the statistics show ministers and MPs don't lead a dangerous life and die less frequently from tuberculosis,

lung cancer and bronchitis than the miners, dockers and builders they so hysterically attack and slander.

At the same time none of these well-paid dignitaries ever condemn the class way of death or care about the chronic bronchitis in a Teesside steelworks. They don't mention the fact that nearly 550 workers were killed last year in so-called industrial accidents or that coal miners die nearly three times as much from tuberculosis as normal. They don't tell you that dockers have a death risk more than a third higher than that of most jobs.

This wholesale destruction of workers' lives and wrecking of their futures is never the subject of special Sunday newspaper investigations or dealt with by the same kind of £55,000 fines that were imposed on the Transport Workers Union. Under the capitalist system violence is judged to be a policeman bruised on a picket line as he tries to defeat a strike and help rush through blackleg lorries and supplies. A worker found guilty of such 'violence' is heavily punished but the violence committed against a steelworker whose health has been permanently ruined goes ignored and unnoticed except for the warning of 'Don't be bad too often.'

## How to rate your chance of survival

THE CLASS WAY of death covers every occupation. The Registrar General's report recognises this by dividing deaths into five social classes ranging from professional at the top to unskilled at the bottom. The report calculates its statistics by establishing the total number of deaths in all occupations and then applying the national average to each of the 340 occupational groups that it studies. This average is called a

100. Where less than the average number of deaths for all workers is found the figure is below a 100 and where more above. On this scientific basis, which takes years to compile, averages are found for deaths from all causes and certain particular diseases and illnesses. Some simple examples from the report are shown below. The national average for all occupations is 100.

WORKERS				PROFESSIONAL CLASSES			
Occupations	Death from all causes	Tuberculosis	Lung Cancer	Occupations	Death from all causes	Tuberculosis	Lung Cancer
Coal face miners	180	294	140	Mine managers	66	18	56
Construction riggers	142	138	152	Contracting managers	50	33	66
Engineering labourers	139	169	151	Engineering managers	70	17	68
Furnacemen	108	106	168	Personnel managers	67	40	44
Fishermen	144	171	188	Ministers, MPs	75	29	69
Textile process workers	133	111	116	Judges, solicitors	76	33	40
Dockers	136	180	171	Clergymen	62	9	17
Kitchen hands	130	410	88	Teachers	60	23	34



Union leaders (from left) George Smith (UCATT), Jack Jones (TGWU), Tom Jackson (UPW), Hugh Scanlon (AUEW), Vic Feather (TUC), Walter Anderson (NALGO)—they're more likely to go into hibernation than call in the icebreakers

# UNIONS STUCK IN THE ICE

THE GOVERNMENT'S wage freeze measures are the biggest direct challenge to the trade union movement since the passing of the Industrial Relations Act two years ago.

Organising strikes to force employers to pay wages above a figure set by the government will be illegal—not just for a few months, but indefinitely. Anyone doing so could face fines up to £400 in a magistrates court or a limitless figure in the high court.

In one stroke the Tories are attempting to seize back the right the state was forced to concede through many years of bitter struggle—the right to organise together to fight for better wages.

When the Industrial Relations Act was introduced two years ago the leaders of the major unions did little enough to oppose it. The TUC called a 'day of action', with a meeting in the Albert Hall. It distributed a pamphlet and called a demonstration of more than 100,000 workers in London.

Yet such activity seems spectacular compared to what the TUC has done over phases one and two of the freeze. So far it has organised no meetings, no demonstrations and, of course, no strikes. Perhaps it will produce a pamphlet.

Some leading figures, such as Tom Jackson, have gone so far as to suggest that the unions should continue to chat amiably with Heath while he threatens their members with fines.

## CUCKOO LAND

The majority have been more cautious. Vic Feather warned that some union members might protest directly at government policy. 'It would be foolish to assume that resentment will not be expressed in stoppages or strikes of some sort.' But it was clear that he was not going to organise such strikes.

Nor are the men who are often presented as the 'left' in the TUC. When the economic committee of the TUC met a fortnight ago, Hugh Scanlon assured Jack Jones that 'those who were thinking of a general strike were living in cloud cuckoo land'.

Most of the 'left' trade union leaders were not even prepared to promise token support for strikes that might break out spontaneously. When Scanlon suggested such an approach, he was rebuked by George Smith (a man often claimed as a 'progressive' because he occasionally writes in the Morning Star). 'Blanket support could not be given... The TUC would have to consider each case first.'

The timidity of the trade union leaders is all the more striking, given that in the past year the government has been beaten



THE PENTONVILLE FIVE: The rank and file workers whose mass action got the five dockers out of jail, are the icebreakers who can break a channel through the freeze

time after time in its efforts to take on the trade union movement. Last time the law was used against a group of workers—the London dockers—five days of unofficial strikes were sufficient to force the government to give way.

The government is not stronger now than it was then. It is weaker. People know now from their own experience that it can be defeated. How then is the behaviour of the trade union leaders to be explained?

With some there is no difficulty at all. Many of the right wing in the trade unions see the movement as little more than a stepping stone in their own personal careers. After a decent period of moving up the trade union bureaucracy they expect to move on to the House of Lords, to well-paid positions on the boards of nationalised industries, the governing body of the Bank of England, and even to directorships in private industry. The Poulson saga has revealed a few of the sidelines open to some of them.

But Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones, for example, do not seem to be cast in this mould. Yet they seem no more able than the right wing to fight government policy.

The reason lies in the way they see trade unionism. Unlike many of the right wing they are more or less sincerely interested in building trade unions and the ability of workers to resist the worst excesses of the capitalist system.

## BIG BUSINESS

But at the same time they share with the right wing the view that the industrial struggles of workers inside existing society are something quite distinct from any talk about political action to transform that society.

They see socialism as a distant goal, a worthy topic for the occasional conference speech. But they insist that there is no link between that goal and the job of building the trade unions. They say that in the short term all that can be done is to force gradual improvements in workers'

## by Chris Harman

conditions by increasing the size and funds of the union, while leaving the big business structure intact.

There are periods in history when such a policy can work. If big business is in a generally healthy condition it may be able to afford, year after year, improved wages for workers, shorter hours, better welfare benefits and the strong trade unions that procure all these.

British big business now finds itself the sick man of Europe. Its rate of economic growth is half, or even a quarter, of that of its major competitors. Year after year it slides down the league table in terms of exports.

And now it is faced with an escalating wave of price increases. It cannot stop these by cutting into profits, for under capitalism that is to destroy the goose that lays the golden eggs. If the one per cent of the population that owns 80 per cent of industry do not have sufficient profits, it will not invest in industry, unemployment will rise and the economy will generally decline.

Yet if price increases are not halted, it will be more and more difficult for big business to sell exports and its balance of payments situation will get even worse.

The only way left open for big business is to devise some method by which wages are held back while prices rise. This can be done by using the law to make wage struggles illegal, as the Tories are attempting to do.

Or it can be done by encouraging trade union leaders to stop their members pushing for wage rises. In either case, it means sacrificing the living conditions of working people to sustain the health of the capitalist system.

The official trade union leaders are as much worried by the crisis of British capitalism as the representatives of big

business. They see the monetary assets of their union threatened by strike after strike. They fear that government action will further threaten these assets.

The only solution they know to the dilemma is to suggest a slightly different way of holding down wages to that course suggested by the government. It is worth recalling that all last year the TUC—including Jones and Scanlon—met regularly with the Confederation of British Industry and the government to try and work out a joint formula that would solve the problems of the big business economy.

## MISERABLE PAY

The talks eventually broke down because the union leaders did not think they could persuade their members to accept the miserable pay increases offered by the government. But their own differences with Heath were marginal.

The Tories suggested that workers were entitled to only 61 per cent of the national income. The TUC protested bitterly: 'The figure was selected by the government as being the average for the past 10 years, whereas the average in 1970 and 1971 was 62 per cent.' The government spoke of a five per cent growth target, leaving about 800,000 unemployed. The TUC demanded six per cent and 750,000 unemployed!

No wonder the trade union leaders' opposition to Heath's latest moves has been half-hearted: they agree with him that British capitalism needs to be bolstered. And they half agree with him on the kind of measures to be employed.

If a movement of rank and file workers develops against the freeze, then the union leaders will, no doubt, speak with tougher voices to Heath. They will do so with the deliberate intention of running to the front of such a movement in order to keep it under control.

That is what happened during the struggle over the imprisoned dock workers last summer. Jack Jones warned the rest of

the TUC that 'the TUC should call for a one-day stoppage... if the General Council did not... unofficial bodies would assume leadership.'

But it is quite clear that the trade union leaders themselves will not take the initiative in organising resistance to phase two. For the new measures can be fought consistently only by those who see that the organised working class does not have to be content with a mere fight for gradual improvements in existing society, that there is no need for us to accept the continued domination of the minority who own the wealth and control industry.

The force that succeeded in freeing the dockers last summer can walk straight through the government's freeze measures. That same force, if it were aware of the need to do so, could use its power of direct action to take the levers of economic and political control out of the hands of those who refuse to invest unless profits are high enough.

But that means using the industrial strength of the working class to force through a political and economic transformation of society—something to which all the existing trade union leaders, 'left' as well as right, are diametrically opposed.

Instead they hope that capitalism will continue to prosper as in the past so that their own form of trade unionism can continue to prosper with it. That dream leaves the unions defenceless against Heath's attacks.

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# Keeping those awkward officials at bay

DURING a strike one of the best ways to see that everyone gets the social security benefits he or she is entitled to is to set up a claimants' committee. This should be elected as soon as the dispute begins, or even better, before.

It is useful if the committee get copies of the 1966 and 1971 Social Security Acts and the Supplementary Benefits Handbook. These can be obtained from the government bookshops in all major cities, and can be quoted to awkward officials who think you don't know what you're talking about.

When the committee is fully informed on all the facts, committee members can arrange to be at the office on a rota basis to represent people.

Try to make sure that a representative is actually with anyone likely to have trouble (for example a single person) when the clerk takes a statement. If trouble arises, demand to see the supervisor and manager. If a payment is refused, try to find out the reason, and make sure a claim is signed before leaving the office.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you are receiving the correct



## Strikers and the Social Security—Part Five

amount, ask for a written assessment on Form A124. You have a right to know how your money is made up, just as you expect a pay-slip at work.

If you are still dissatisfied, there are a number of ways to continue the struggle. Direct action, such as sitting-in, can be effective—the people who work in the offices don't like going home late.

The regional office are often sensitive to any adverse publicity on television or in the papers, and they may put pressure on the local office to give in. Their address and number are in the telephone directory.

You may be able to get publicity for your case. But make sure the

reporter is sympathetic, or you may get the wrong sort of treatment. The papers and commercial television rely on advertising, and may be unwilling to upset the master that feeds them. And of course they are owned by people who have the same interests as the rest of the employers.

Finally, there is the appeal tribunal. This is weighted against the claimant, and takes a long time to deal with your case. During the Manchester sit-ins there were so many appeals they were taking two to three months to come up.

When making an appeal—either on a form supplied by the Social Security or on an ordinary piece of paper—

make sure you say: 'I wish to appeal against...'. Otherwise it may be claimed that you were not appealing but merely questioning your allowance, in which case your appeal may not be heard.

Keep a copy of your appeal. The tribunal consists of a workpeople's representative (usually a union official nominated by the trades council), a representative of the employers, and a so-called 'neutral' chairman (who will often be a solicitor and tend to have the same views as the employers).

You can attend yourself with a representative, so always take someone along if possible. Make sure you get the chance to state your case fully: there is no time-limit to the proceedings.

The key to victory, however, is collective bargaining.

Always appeal if you are dissatisfied—but first try to force the hand of the Social Security before you get to the stage of going to the tribunal. Sometimes even a letter to a sympathetic MP can win the day.

**NEXT WEEK:** Where Social Security fits into the general attack on workers.

Don't turn the page if you're not a Londoner. This may be happening in

# Land sharks sink their teeth

'WE LIVE in a society where over 100 people have made more than £1 million each out of property since 1945. We also live in a society where the number of homeless people has more than doubled over the past five years. These two facts are, of course, interconnected.'

These opening words sum up the contents of Counter Information Services' new 'anti-report' on the property developers. When the property racket has reached such proportions that even Tory ministers feel compelled to make it look as if they are thinking of doing something

about it, the subject CIS has picked is certainly topical. But its report goes beyond the trendy platitudes of the popular press. Like previous reports put out by this left-wing research group, it puts the spotlight on one particular company—in this case Stock Conversion and Investment Trust, who masterminded London's Euston Centre development and are behind the recent Piccadilly scandal. An investment of £100 in this company in 1953 would today be worth £750,000. And the report goes into the usual detail on the company's activities in the

London property market.

But this time, the report goes further. It shows the connections between the activities of the property sharks, the rising price of land, the growing housing crisis in London and the pathetic fumbblings of the 'planners' who help the handful of land profiteers hold the rest of the community to ransom. It clearly roots the cause of the crisis of London, and every other great city, in the private ownership and development of land. And it backs the argument up with a wealth of hard facts.

## Profits boom as rents zoom

UNTIL 1957 there was no separate property section listed on the Stock Exchange. In 1958 the companies listed were worth £103 million, and by 1972 this had risen to £2644 million.

The most fertile source of these profits was the boom in office property. Today London has the most expensive office space in Europe and it can cost more in rent to provide a clerk with office space in Central London than he receives in wages.

It is obvious enough that this alone would ensure bumper profits for the landlords. But this is only a part of the way the property speculation racket works.

The scandal of Centre Point has made it common knowledge that property speculators are quite happy to leave offices empty if it keeps the value up. 'A lot of office space is held in reserve, buildings nowhere near completion, no one in a hurry to complete them or to start to carry out planning permission; planning applications granted are not being translated into lettings . . . for 1971, only just over half of the planning permission budget was granted, and the Greater London Council refused practically nothing.'

This opinion of one ex-planner quoted in the report is backed up by the figures. In March 1972, while the GLC estimated that nine million square feet of office space was empty in Central London, 11.1 million square feet were under construction and planning

permission had been given for a further 8.6 million which had not even been started.

But by keeping rents up in this way, the property sharks do not only increase their incomes. They also increase the capital value of their property as a whole, including those already let, as the value of property is set as a multiple of the existing level of rents being asked.

As the planner quoted above puts it: 'Firms bolster up their share price on the stock market . . . by publicising those transactions that do take place at very high rentals, and by keeping very quiet about the others.' On the strength of these inflated paper values, they can go to the banks for a further loan, and start the whole process over again.

### Tiresome

The next step is that word gets around in the City that property offers a more secure source of profits than the tiresome and dangerous business of employing and exploiting productive workers.

As a result, in the words of the Investors' Chronicle: 'There is an insatiable appetite for real estate in the South East by the property investing institutions, who now consist mainly of pension funds, insurance companies and property

bonds. Total pension fund investment now exceeds £700 million a year, of which some 15-20 per cent is now invested in property. These figures alone show the demand and in the face of these millions of pounds which have to be invested each year, the values and rents in London must rise.'

As the report points out, one ironic consequence of this is that your pension fund helps make it impossible for you to buy a house. The role of the big financial institutions is central in keeping the property boom fuelled with funds.

Inflated rents drive up land prices and this affects council and private housing, schools and factories, all of which are priced out of the centre of the city.

The report quotes a director of the Midland Bank Finance Corporation as saying that: 'Since the Bank of England lifted their controls in September 1971 most of the banks' money had gone to the private and property sectors, not industry.' In effect the owners of capital are saying that if profits in industry are not jacked up sharply enough at the workers' expense, they will take their money elsewhere. This should be remembered the next time we hear talk of trade unionists 'holding the country to ransom'.

## EVICTED TENANTS MAKE WAY FOR THE CONCRETE AND GLASS BONANZA

THE REPORT shows how the real highwaymen operate when it looks at the Euston Centre development. This 13 acre site, with 510,000 square feet of office space, cost the developers' £16 million, the report estimates.

The current value is nearer £80 million and this 500 per cent windfall was only possible by a typical piece of developers' blackmail.

In the early 1950s Joe Levy, the man behind Stock Conversion, was granted planning permission for office development on a one-acre site. When the council later needed the land for a road scheme, Levy demanded compensation for loss of development rights—to the tune of £1 million.

### Free slice

To avoid the crippling compensation bill, the London County Council (forerunner of the GLC) worked out a deal with Levy: 'If Levy was prepared to give the LCC for free that slice of the site needed for the new road, the LCC would in return grant planning permission on the rest of the site to the same density as if the entire site was being built over.'

'The rest of the site' amounted to a total of 13 acres and the council helped Levy purchase the land while keeping the secret of the planned development. If the news had leaked, Levy would have had to pay much more for the land. The Chief Planning Officer with the LCC at the time now lives in a flat on the site and works as a planning consultant with D E & J Levy.

The tenants displaced to make room for the glass and concrete bonanza were not all so lucky. The report quotes first-hand evidence of some of the methods used to persuade tenants to leave, and contrasts the conditions they live in now with the promises made by the developer at the time.

The report's in-depth account of the ins and outs of the Piccadilly saga reveals the same pattern of sites built up in secret and plans prepared in the expectation of 100 per cent profits and more—not to mention the effect, if the Piccadilly redevelopment goes through, on the value of all the other sites the developers have carefully been building up in the vicinity.

Now that public outcry has forced postponement of the plans, the developers emerge in their true colours. Levy has threatened to leave the whole area to rot unless the council agrees to plans that would give him the giant profits he has come to expect.



Eros will need

## TH

'LAND VALUE already an obstacle all development profitability or ship.' This admission recent official D Council document between the risk property sharks of ordinary Lond

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From the top of the Post Office tower, a panorama of the speculators' blocks

Special report written by ERIC



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# h into London



more than a bow and arrow to stop Joe Levy's love affair with Piccadilly.

## THE GRANTS FIDDLE

In London are people, and increasingly the middle-class too, find that the property speculators have priced them out of their own city. 'Private enterprise' finds richer profits in buying up the few remaining working-class areas near the centre of London and converting them for the wealthy. This process has been helped along by the 'improvement grants' provided for in the 1969 Housing Act. This allowed local authorities to make tax-free grants of up to £1200 per dwelling to landlords improving the standard of their property.

### LUXURY

'Improvement grants overall,' concludes the report, 'have been a special tax subsidy to the property companies. In Hammersmith, for years a run-down working-class area, the council has paid out £950,000 in improvement grants since 1969. They created with these grants, luxury flats which gave a profit of £2500 per flat.' The report quotes evidence to the Greater London Development Plan inquiry on the position of



... and homeless kids wait

tenants confronted with the developer: 'They will be pushed out . . . if they are timid or ill-informed they will be harassed. If they are stubborn the landlord may have to wait, or even offer an alternative flat. But in the end the conversion will go through; the poor will be pushed out by the rich, the stock of cheap rented housing grows scarcer and scarcer, rents, overcrowding and homelessness are forced up and up.'

But, as the report shows, local authority housing also cannot meet the need. Councils also must buy their land, and pay interest on the money they borrow to the same banks and moneylenders who fuel the speculation that drives up land prices in the first place.

All this is reflected in the rents of council housing, and of course will be even more so as the full effects are felt of the Housing Finance Act. One expert witness, a former member of the London Rent Assessment panel, told the GLC Plan Inquiry that the 'fair rent' for a new three-bedroomed house in the outer London boroughs would be £14-£18 and in her view 'a lot of families will simply say "we cannot afford that type of rent"—even with the rent rebate system fully explained to them.'

The planners, far from trying to offset the effects of the crazy system of profit-mongering and land trafficking, accept its basic assumption. This emerges clearly from the report's dissection of the controversial Greater London Development Plan. The report of the panel of inquiry into this

document will, conveniently, not be published till after the Greater London elections in April.

In the years the plan was being drawn up, planning 'experts' had noticed one consequence of the system that worried even them—growing poverty in the city centre. 'On present trends,' said one of them, 'the time is not far off when half of inner London's population will survive on allowances, rebates and free services . . . Manufacturing employment is rapidly moving out of London—we have lost a third of it in eight years . . . Unemployment is growing, hidden unemployment is worse. In 1971, in Tower Hamlets, 10 per cent of all males who called themselves economically active, hadn't worked in the week before the census. These all sound familiar American problems.'

### PROBLEM

The report points out: 'The more the level of economic activity in Central London rises, the more will rising land prices make it impossible to house the homeless and those in substandard housing at rents they can afford.'

The plan refuses to face the problem and instead sets housing targets which, if met, would still be below the level needed, and which will in any case not be met given the present Tory majority's unwillingness to use even its existing compulsory purchase powers. Even more incredible, there is no attempt to even discover if the houses built, by private or public developers, would actually be cheap enough for those in need to live in them.

The report comments: 'As long therefore as planning authorities accept the system of private ownership and development of land, they cannot escape the dilemma that if London runs down the developers lose interest in it, and if it expands, the mad escalation in land and house prices must continue.'

Because the planners start by accepting this system, they are driven logically to see to it that those affected by planning decisions are excluded from any




The empty office block towers over a decaying area of working-class homes—slums for the many, super-profits for the few.

say in the future of their own cities. The new Labour manifesto for the GLC elections makes great play of their intention to take on the land sharks.

But even if the land were nationalised, as Labour intends nationally, the problem would not be solved. As long as development, and the financing of development, are left in private hands, for private profit, the Stock Conversions of this world will continue to exact their ransom and turn our cities into glass and concrete deserts.

attack the banks and finance houses who stand behind them. In a rational and humane society the traffic in land and housing will seem as obscene as the traffic in slaves does today.

In the battle to build that society, the CIS report is a useful armoury of ammunition. Buy it, and the next time you hear anyone saying that the unions are holding the country to ransom, that immigrants cause the housing shortage, or that the whole big business system is anything other than a madhouse, open its pages and fire back a volley.



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DEUTSCH

## A candle burning at both ends

ROSA LUXEMBURG, by Paul Frölich, Pluto Press, paperback, £1.50.

ROSA LUXEMBURG is not well-known to the present generation of socialists although she made an invaluable contribution to marxism. Paul Frölich, the author of this book, was one of her comrades and describes the events and people from first-hand knowledge.

This has a special value for any study of Rosa Luxemburg, because this woman is quite overpowering. From her schooldays until she was assassinated in 1919 Rosa fought unceasingly for socialism. She was a brilliant speaker, writer and teacher. Her original mind and quick tongue did battle on every political question of the day.

Imprisoned several times, she still managed to play a leading part in working-class struggle. She stood at the head of the great German and Polish parties, and was also deeply involved in the development of the Russian revolution.

The author does not hide his admiration for Rosa, but he is also aware of her weaknesses and errors.

Much has been made of Rosa's arguments with Lenin over the organisation of the revolutionary party, and this has often led to both being caricatured—Lenin as a calculating bureaucrat and Luxemburg as an unrealistic libertarian.

The point is of course that their ideas and actions have to be seen against the different political conditions in which they operated.

### Decision

Frölich makes this clear, explaining how Lenin deliberately exaggerated his demand for centralism in order to counteract the anarchy prevailing in the Russian Party at the time. Lenin himself pointed out that the Bolsheviks' methods should not be slavishly copied by Western European parties.

But in Germany Rosa Luxemburg had to fight against reformist leaders who were anxious to avoid any real political struggles by the working class. So she had to stress continually the workers' own ability to move into action. She pointed out that revolutionary movements could not be 'fabricated', they did not come about as a result of a decision made by party officials, but broke out spontaneously and under certain historical conditions.

Rosa Luxemburg valued the creative role of the masses to an



extraordinarily high degree. She had unshakeable faith in the working class.

Her opponents have often deliberately distorted her ideas, alleging that she created a 'theory of spontaneity' which attached little importance to the role of the party. This was not true. Rosa was always

clear that the party 'is not to be dragged along by events, but to be consciously ahead of them, to have an overall view of the trend of events, to shorten the period of development by conscious action, and to accelerate its progress.'

While she strongly supported the freedom to express opinions and criticisms within the party, she was in absolute agreement with Lenin on the necessity for the party to be centralised and disciplined.

On the question of reformism, Rosa Luxemburg has perhaps more to tell us than any other marxist. The workers in Germany, unlike those in Tsarist Russia, were organised in trade unions and had a mass party.

Rosa spent much of her life fighting reformism, attacking the notion that by manipulating capitalism it would be possible to bring about socialism without smashing the capitalist state. She believed reformism to be one of the great dangers facing the workers'

movement, and we can see that this belief in 'the welfare state' and 'participation' still exists in the left wing of the British trade union and Labour movement.

This book contains first-hand accounts of some of the most important years for the world socialist movement, including the 1905 and 1917 revolutions in Russia and the unsuccessful German revolution of 1918. It also summarises with great clarity Rosa Luxemburg's writings on a wide range of political issues which are still troubling us today, such as the development of capitalism and national self-determination.

Frölich describes Rosa Luxemburg not only as a great revolutionary but as a person. This woman 'like a candle burning at both ends', so dedicated that she is almost frightening, was also a humorous companion, a warm-hearted friend.

She wrote to a friend: 'One sole passion consumed me day and night: to roam about outdoors in the spring

fields, to collect an armful of plants, and then sort them out at home, to identify them'. This ability to 'take time off' did not indicate that she was frivolous. On the contrary, it showed what was behind the woman and her revolutionary socialism—her great love of life in every form.

From childhood she had had a deep appreciation of music, painting and literature. Her love of mankind's achievements in art, and her love of all living things, was an overflow of her immense love of humanity—the motivating force of her socialism.

But this is much more than a book about Rosa Luxemburg. If you're one of the many people with not much time for reading, and not much money for books—buy this one. It is crammed full of the history, traditions and inspirations of our movement. And it is a joy to read.

Valerie Clark

## Britain's reserve weapon in Ireland

THE ORANGE ORDER, by Tony Gray, Bodley Head, £2.50.

ORANGISM poses a difficult problem for socialists. We believe that the working class alone can provide an answer to the problems facing society. Yet in Ireland the biggest single section of the working class, in the most industrialised part of the island, supports a reactionary ideology and has traditionally aligned itself with the British ruling class against the movement for national independence and unity.

Tony Gray has written a very bad book about this important phenomenon. The picture he gives of Irish history is often garbled beyond recognition: as for instance when he completely distorts the history of the British reconquest and colonisation in the 17th century. Key episodes, such as the united struggles of Protestant and Catholic workers in 1907, 1919 and the early 1930s, are more or less ignored.

Gray often seems obsessed with the quaintness of the Orange Order, forgetting the political purposes and the sectarian hatred that sustains it. But some parts of the book do contain information of some value in coming to an understanding of the real nature of Protestant sectarianism.

There has always been friction in rural Ulster since British Protestant colonists settled there in the 17th century. But only



An Orange march in Belfast

at the end of the 18th century, when the first mass movement for Irish independence developed, was the Orange Order founded. While Protestant working men in Belfast were taking the lead in the United Irishmen, the first republican movement, the Orange Order was founded to exploit religious differences to back up British rule.

British troops and the Orangemen worked together to shoot up and burn out republicans, whether Catholic or Protestant. To avoid this fate, many Protestants abandoned the United Irishmen and were more or less forcibly

conscripted into the Orange Order. Anger previously directed against British rule could now be worked out against Catholics.

The order began and grew as a mass organisation of counter-revolution. For years it would be dormant, but whenever there was pressure for substantial reforms or the growth of a revolutionary movement, it would burst into new life. It opposed the Catholic Emancipation movement of the 1820s, the parliamentary reform of the early 1830s, the moves to Home Rule in the 1880s and 1912, and the struggle for Irish independence in 1920.

As the official historian of the order has admitted: 'Most Irish Protestants... tended to consider Roman Catholicism and possible rebellion as almost identical terms. To keep things as they were in church and state seemed the guarantee of safety.'

The aim was, as one Orange song puts it, to keep the 'croppies' (rebels) down. If the 'croppies' refused to accept their subordinate role, then another song showed what to do: 'And when we came to Dolly's Brae [a Catholic area] they were in lines on every side... We loosed our guns upon them and gave them no time to pray.'

A song produced only two years ago by John McKeague of the Ulster Volunteer Force shows things have not changed: 'If guns were made for shooting, them skulls were made to crack. You've never seen a better Taig [Catholic] than with a bullet in his back.'

### Massacre

With such traditions it is hardly surprising that 80 Catholics were killed in sectarian murders last year.

Early last century the Orange Order had a certain success in establishing itself in Britain too—in areas of high Irish immigration in Lancashire and Scotland.

The British sections were active in fighting the first workers' movement during the social unrest and growing trade unionism that ended in the Peterloo massacre, at the time of the Reform Bill they offered volunteers to break up radical meetings.

But the order's real strength was in the north-east of Ireland, becoming firmly established in Belfast in the 1830s. There

were sectarian riots there in 1835, 1843, 1857, 1864, 1872, 1880, 1884, 1894, 1920, 1935, 1969.

The greatest single fault of Gray's book is that he does not attempt to explain how the Orange Order could put down such roots in Ulster but nowhere else. Yet the reason is not so hard to find.

In rural Ulster in the 18th century Protestants already had certain privileges over Catholics. They had political rights not enjoyed by Catholics and usually owned better land (a hangover from the colonisation in the previous century).

When parts of Ulster became industrialised, conscious attempts were made by the powers-that-be to maintain the allegiance of a section of the workers by handing out marginal privileges in the same way. Membership of the Orange Order could help a man get a better job and better housing.

Even today unemployment is twice as high in Catholic areas than Protestant. Most large factories employ very few Catholics.

Once the working class was divided in this way along religious lines, any movement towards even limited reforms was likely to run into Protestant working-class opposition. For if the croppies would no longer lie down, then the living standards of Protestant workers would seem to be threatened.

Any reformist movement in Northern Ireland has always run into this sectarian brick wall. This happened to the trade union militancy of 1907 and 1919, and to the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1960s. The alternative of a revolutionary socialist movement has hardly existed at all.

### Rights

It is sometimes said that the days of Orangism are numbered now that Britain is concerned not just with political control over the Six Counties, but with economic control over the South as well. But this view could be short-sighted.

Certainly, there is not going to be a return to the situation under Stormont, when the Orange Order reigned supreme for 50 years and Catholics were systematically denied political rights. But that does not mean that the British government will not continue to use Protestant sectarianism for its own ends.

Britain ruled the whole of Ireland in the 19th century. The Orange Order did not then have the power it got when the Northern Ireland state was formed—it was even banned for periods and its marches forbidden under the Party Processions Act.

The British authorities, relying upon the support of the Catholic hierarchy and sections of the Catholic rich to maintain their rule, did not dare put all their eggs in the Protestant basket. Instead, they encouraged Orangism up to a certain point, always keeping it in reserve as a weapon for use against the development of any national or working-class movement.

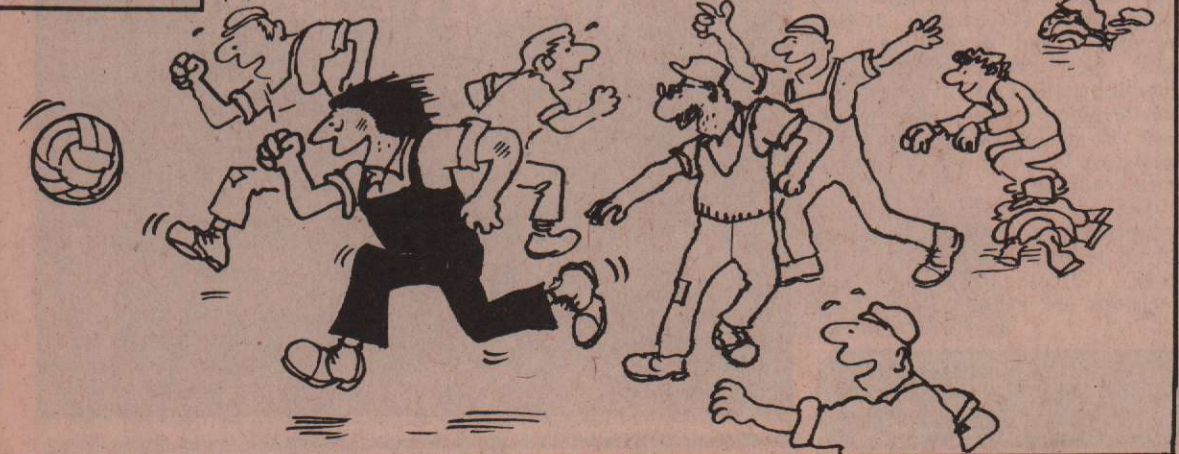
It seems likely that there will be a similar role for sectarianism in the new order that Tory overlord William Whitelaw is trying to establish. His toleration of sectarian murders seems to indicate as much.

Stuart Morgan

### OUR NORMAN



### DINNERTIME...



## Theodorakis: a poet who has lost his link with the struggle

MIKIS THEODORAKIS, poet, composer, former member of the Communist Party of Greece, was in London last week for a concert at the Albert Hall attended by 6000 people, and to launch his new book, *Journals of Resistance*, which is about the repressive regime of the Greek colonels and his imprisonment. GEORGE SUTTON, who went to a press conference given by Theodorakis, looks at the man, his book and the tragedy of Greece.

MOST PEOPLE know Theodorakis as a composer. His music for the film *Zorba the Greek* echoed around Europe five years ago. But his life and fortunes have been tied to the struggles of the Greek workers and peasants, and have inspired his greatest work.

His political career began during the Second World War when he joined the Greek National Liberation Front (EAM) in the struggle to drive out the Nazis. He was 17. After he was arrested, the combination of Nazi torture and socialist ideas he encountered shaped his political ideas.

The war ended and the British Army arrived. The EAM found itself now fighting His Majesty's forces for the freedom of the country. Theodorakis was himself a victim of this 'liberation'—he had his skull broken by British rifle butts wielded in the good cause of breaking up unarmed demonstrations.

While the national liberation movement was being physically exterminated, the Communist Party militants have to contend with the appalling confusion created by the refusal of the Soviet Union to help. This was too much for Theodorakis—he left the Party.

### Murder

When finally released he went to Paris to study music. In 1960 came his work *Epitafios*, eight revolutionary poems set to music. It sparked off a cultural debate in Greece which reflected the growing confidence of the Greek people in their challenge to the corrupt ruling class.

Theodorakis played a prominent part in the mass movement which grew up, and his music was an inspiration to it. One of his songs became the hymn of the Lambrakis Youth Movement. (Lambrakis was the left-wing Greek MP whose murder by the regime inspired the film 'Z'.)

A student was killed by the police—on later demonstrations the people sang the songs Theodorakis wrote about the murder. His concerts were political festivals for the young—throwing their defiance at the old society and learning how to struggle for the new.

Tragically the movement was misled. The militancy of the workers, peasants and students was held back by leaders who frittered away its strength to suit the political deals of the Communist and Centre (Liberal) Parties. As Theodorakis writes in his

# NOW WE ARE ALL GOING TO PAY FOR THIS MISTAKE

book: 'The people couldn't feel other than deceived and disorientated. And now we're all going to have to pay for this mistake.'

But the deals and backroom manoeuvres have continued as the main strategy in the fight against the colonels. Theodorakis was one of the few left leaders to escape arrest after the colonels' coup in 1967 and within days of the coup called for resistance 'to unite left, centre and right-wing political forces in the sacred resistance.'

Theodorakis became the president of the Patriotic Front—an organisation doomed to political failure. Its lack of success drove it more and more towards alliances with the centre and finally to sections of the right.



Mikis Theodorakis at the press conference in London last week. PICTURE: John Warren

Within a few months the original leaders had been arrested and the Communist Party took direct control.

Theodorakis joined those in jail, was ill-treated—and then went into exile. From his captivity he witnessed the failure of any organised resistance to the colonels. Each manoeuvre for unity created another split—and more and more militants turned their back on organised political struggle. The traditional parties of the left became skeleton organisations, locked in a deadly sectarian struggle.

It was in this atmosphere that Theodorakis finally formed the political views to which he's stuck since 1969. He now believes that the easiest and surest way to overthrow the colonels is to force them to step

down in favour of the right-wing former premier Karamanlis.

Since his release from prison, Theodorakis has argued for this policy in the Communist Party and has continued to do so since leaving the Party. The result has been greater and greater indifference by the people who had before listened to his calls.

### Tragic

Yet Theodorakis has not sold out. Something far sadder has happened. He has lost the link between himself and the struggles which inspired his music. I asked him about the working class in Greece and what role it had to play. 'What working class? It doesn't exist!' he replied.

He's a tragic and heroic figure. Heroic because of his devotion to the cause of freedom from oppression, tragic because he's lost faith in the class that could bring this about. So he is condemned to tour the concert halls of the world, attempting to gain a following for his cause through his music.

The Greeks still love his music, especially the older works, for they symbolise revolt. But his later works have been without that confidence and sense of direction.

'And now we're all going to have to pay for this mistake.'

*JOURNALS OF RESISTANCE*, by Mikis Theodorakis, is published by Hart-Davis, price £2.95.

## Three girls and thirty homes

by Nigel Fountain

IF IT'S Thursday evening and you're dozing in front of the box, turn to ITV and watch *This Week*. There's a programme on called *Take Three Girls*, part two of a documentary on Children in Care.

It's about the 91,000 kids who don't go home to their parents every night—they go back to children's homes. Last week the programme looked at the question from the administrator's point of view—specifically from Kidbrooke Grove, a local authority home in Greenwich, London.

The bloke who runs it is called Derek Brown. He works a 45-hour week, officially, though in practice it works out around 90 to 100. For the past 18 months he has had no deputy. Some staff last a long time, but most don't, they can't take the strain.

If you saw last week's programme you'll understand why. The children don't come from families whose

parents were shipwrecked or died—or at least not many. Most are victims of this society. Their parents broke up, ran away, had nervous breakdowns, just vanished.

One kid explained: 'My mother told me that if I went on like I was I'd be taken away. I didn't believe her—and I wound up here.' He didn't see his parents any more—he didn't like his step-father. 'I don't know where my mother lives, just her telephone number.'

### Beaten

'My brother and I,' said another boy, 'we set this Catholic church on fire.' He wound up in a home too.

Kidbrooke Grove is a well-run home. There they don't believe in clobbering children so they stay in line. Having a strict code of behaviour has simple results, as Derek Brown

pointed out, for the kids fall apart when the 'discipline' is removed.

*This Week* couldn't get into one of the authoritarian homes, but did talk to children who had been, children who were beaten around the room at the age of seven for wetting their beds, or children who were given cold baths and were too scared to turn the hot tap on.

Last week's programme highlighted five homes where the situation really got out of hand, where kids got beaten, where the homes got burned down, where the deputy battered the head to death with a crowbar.

But Derek Brown pointed out that to label the people who run many of these places as perverts, sadists and so on just isn't accurate. The kind of pressure they work under, in a society that doesn't spend the money, or allow the time necessary to cope with the problem, and creates the problem in the first place, can often be overpowering.

*This Week's This Week* (Thursday 8pm) deals with three sisters who spent most of their lives in institutions. Between them they spent 14 years in more than 30 convents, approved schools, mental hospitals, remand homes. Two, Maria and Mandy, survived the experience.

### Crime

'You're not trusted ever—at all. If you can keep your head together by the time you leave you'll be all right. Really it's an ordeal and children shouldn't have to go through an ordeal,' said Maria.

The three girls hadn't benefited from homes like the one run by Derek Brown—they hadn't been there. One girl had been kept in isolation for eight days, had ripped open the mattress to get inside and keep warm.

At the age of 15 Mandy committed

a real crime: she fell in love. Nobody had ever told her they loved her before. She got pregnant. Result? Greenacres Remand Home.

But Maria and Mandy survived. They're doing all right. The third sister, Pedrita, isn't so lucky. 'She was the best of all of us,' said one of her sisters, 'she went to grammar school'. But she was smashed, and now she roams the streets, dosses, moves on. Homes were her world and now she struggles to get out of it.

'I want to hitch around the world, just give me a sleeping bag and let me hitch around the world. I don't want to go to no more mental homes. I don't want to go to no more mental homes.'

The two programmes didn't answer certain questions that really needed answering—such as the attitude of the state to the homes. But they did graphically show part of the reality of 'family life'. If it's not too late, watch part two.

# 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 throughout 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'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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 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 restriction.

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 man'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 IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

## SCOTLAND

Aberdeen  
Cumbernauld  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Dunfermline/  
Cowdenbeath  
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Greenock  
Stirling

## NORTH EAST

Bishop Auckland  
Durham  
Hartlepool  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
South Shields  
Spennymoor  
Sunderland  
Teesside E  
Teesside W

## NORTH

Barnsley  
Bradford  
Dewsbury  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Pontefract/  
Knottingley  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

## EAST

Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Chelmsford  
Colchester  
Harlow  
Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

## NORTH WEST

Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Burnley  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Preston  
Rochdale  
Salford  
St Helens  
Stoke  
Stockport  
Trafford  
Wigan  
Wrexham

## GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon

## MIDLANDS

Birmingham NE  
Birmingham S  
Coventry  
Derby  
Dudley  
Leamington and  
Warwick  
Leicester  
Loughborough  
Mid-Derbyshire  
Milton Keynes  
Northampton  
Nottingham  
Oxford  
Rugby  
Wolverhampton

## SOUTH

Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Eastbourne  
Guildford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton  
Woolwich

## WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Llanelli  
Mid-Devon  
Neath  
Plymouth  
Swansea  
Swansea Valley

# THE UNIONS

## How NIRC and the TUC threw a lifebelt to the seamen

**PRESS COMMENT** about the right of scabs like Goad and Langston not to be members of trade unions always scrupulously avoids any mention of the National Union of Seamen.

This so-called trade union is not only registered under the Industrial Relations Act but has been granted a pre-entry closed shop with the full blessing of the employers and the state.

On 28 February last year the NUS and the British Shipping Federation made a joint application to the National Industrial Relations Court for a state-authorized closed shop.

In accordance with the terms of the Industrial Relations Act, the Commission on Industrial Relations made an investigation and concluded that the NUS had to be granted a closed shop order. Its report gave two straightforward grounds for this: if it wasn't granted, then wages would go up and seamen would be more

difficult to discipline. The NIRC naturally granted the closed shop order which came into force on 31 December 1972.

But the NUS—whose scab union nature has been roundly exposed in recent weeks by its behaviour in the Ocean Monarch dispute—still had a problem: how to hold the fort between making the application and being awarded the state-authorized closed shop.

### Sweetheart

They got a little help from their friends, the employers. The British Shipping Federation introduced a system of recruitment in which every potential employee was asked about his attitude to the NUS. If it appeared that he was a genuine trade unionist, someone who was in any way opposed to the sweetheart policies of the NUS, this was recorded on a form and he was not hired.

The reason for this was to prevent a reform movement from developing in the key period up to the NIRC granting the

closed shop order. Sir John Donaldson, the NIRC president, had nothing to say on this infringement of democracy. Neither had the press.

But the NUS leadership received help from those who were supposed to be its bitter opponents—the TUC. In September the Trades Union Congress, thanks to the stage-managing of Feather and Co, declined to expel the NUS. This prevented other unions recruiting and hindered the development of alternative forms of organisation within the ranks.

At the TUC in Brighton in September, NUS general secretary Bill Hogarth himself stated that unless the state granted a closed shop within three months, his organisation would fall apart—an admission of potential revolt within the ranks. The TUC helped to stave that revolt off and has since done so again by further postponing the expulsion of registered unions, including the NUS, whose closed shop the Goad's and Langston's of this world would presumably be only too happy to join.

# UNION GAG ON SACKED MILITANT

SW Reporter  
**THE ANNUAL MEETING** of the London clerical branch of the print union NATSOPA broke up in uproar on 25 January when the chairman declared the meeting adjourned.

Barry Fitzpatrick, newly-elected chairman of the 11,000-strong branch and a member of the NATSOPA executive, announced that an item included in the branch report on the question of the recent dispute at the Press Association news agency and the subsequent dismissal of Father of the Chapel John Lawrence could not be discussed.

Fitzpatrick said that Richard Briginshaw, general secretary of the union, had ruled the matter 'sub judice'. Fitzpatrick had also been warned about the limitations of his power as chairman, a threat that action would be taken against him if he allowed discussion. Rather than be a party to this blatant suppression of discussion, Fitzpatrick adjourned the meeting.

The background to the uproar was a dispute last year over the revision of an agreement at the Press Association when NATSOPA members went on strike against a management offer of £1.50. The workers said they were not prepared to return to work unless the management agreed to increase the offer to £2.50.

The management were anxious to get the strikers back to work and contacted the full-time secretary of the London clerical branch who instructed the members to return to work. They refused and set up picket lines outside the Press Association. The management then sacked John Lawrence. Nine days later they sent out circulars to all the strikers stating that unless they returned to work immediately they too would be considered dismissed. Under threat, a gradual return to work took place.

Once the return to work had taken place the chapel (union organisation at the place of work) requested the branch secretary to approach management to win John Lawrence's re-instatement. A meeting was held with the management at which they offered to present their

### Anti-fascist linkup

MANCHESTER:—A trade union committee against fascism was set up at a meeting called by the Manchester district committee of the engineering union (AUEW).

After the recent demonstrations in Blackburn by the National Front, many leading local trade unionists felt that more trade union support must be mobilised for the struggle against racism. On the new committee are delegates from seven unions, the Labour Party, Communist Party and the International Socialists.

It set itself the immediate tasks of broadening its trade union base and organising a big counter-demonstration to the fascist demonstration held in Manchester last weekend.



John Lawrence: jobless

evidence for dismissal to an inquiry set up by NATSOPA and to stand by its findings.

The union branch committee was determined to ensure that Lawrence was re-instated and decided to make immediate representations themselves to the management. When Briginshaw realised what was happening he successfully moved at the executive that the branch committee's decision be set aside.

In effect this meant that NATSOPA would not seek to defend Lawrence and would allow the management to sack him. Lawrence is now unemployed.

The device of using the legal term 'sub judice' is a blatant attempt to stop discussion. It is only applicable in a court of law. There is nothing in the NATSOPA rules to prevent discussion of strikes or the sacking of an FoC.

After the adjournment of the clerical branch meeting about 200 delegates stayed behind for an unofficial meeting. They called for the re-instatement of John Lawrence and for the branch committee to stand by its original decision to support him. All NATSOPA chapels were asked to pass resolutions of support to show the executive the real strength of the opposition to their shabby handling of the affair.

Further evidence of the problems in the union was presented earlier on in the same meeting when the branch secretary reported that an agreement with the Newspaper Proprietors' Association for clerical workers in London had run into difficulties. The NPA had agreed to an increase of £2.75 plus a £1 service increment. This had been put to a ballot of the membership who had voted in favour.

Subsequently the NPA had gone back on the offer, refusing to pay the £1

service increment. The rank and file demanded action including industrial action but the branch secretary explained that it was a misunderstanding because the NPA were 'honourable men'. Thus the NPA are being allowed to get off the hook and break the agreement.

Collaboration with management seems to have become a new vogue. NATSOPA has entered into a consortium with infamous asset stripper John Bentley called All News Radio, and have applied to the Independent Broadcasting Authority for a licence to run a commercial radio news station in London.

Richard Briginshaw commented: 'What do we do with these people? We dislike their activities, we denounce them publicly, we fight them industrially and will continue to do so. If we're together in a consortium that would offset any pretension anyone might have to do something we thought was industrially brutal. You don't run away from these people. We can't simply jump off the world.'

No one has yet asked Briginshaw to jump off the world but he needs to be reminded of a basic lesson, that unions exist to protect the interests of their members and not to chum up with the employers or dubious financial sharks.

It is vital that rank and file members, particularly those grouped around the paper Printworker, organise to stop the current drift of the union, end the victimisation of militants by the employers and the union and ensure that NATSOPA pursues a sane and militant policy.

### GEC grassroots paper

BIRMINGHAM:—More than 100 delegates from GEC factories all over England and Wales decided last week to set up their own rank and file newspaper.

This decision, at the biggest GEC combine meeting ever, marks a major step forward in the struggle against the ruthless 'rationalisation' always being carried out by the GEC bosses. Since 1967 the firm has doubled its profits to £77 million, mainly by sacking some 64,000 workers, a quarter of the labour force.

The conference was convened with the aid of Counter Information Services, the independent radical research group which recently published an 'Anti-report' on GEC.

An editorial board was elected to run the paper and a first edition is expected soon.

# How many more must die?

## Putting the boot in

AS A PATIENT of the General Practitioner concerned and a social worker in a Salford hospital, I would like to comment on your article on the death of Owen Traynor (3 February).

Such cases should be drawn to the attention of all socialists because the capitalist press rarely does this, but the reasons for this appalling neglect need to be explained so that we can learn how to fight on this question.

It is extremely likely that Mr Traynor died because of a 'boundary dispute'. Crumpsall Hospital is technically in Manchester (not Salford as your article states) and this hospital rarely admits from Salford. While hospitals argue over responsibilities, patients are left untreated every day.

Most days at my hospital we send home at least five elderly patients who are unfit to look after themselves with totally inadequate services provided—because hospital beds are full and casualty staff are instructed not to admit elderly patients who will 'block' beds for a long time. During the week Mr Traynor died the one geriatric hospital in Salford was also full.

Though most doctors (particularly consultants) come from the same upper-class backgrounds as the bosses and have no real understanding of the situation of working-class patients, they are not deliberately callous. Dr Kazi is in fact one of the more sympathetic GPs. However they do operate an old boys' system of mutual protection and cover up when things go wrong. They are encouraged to do so by the self-perpetuating power structure of the health service.

Mr Traynor died like thousands of others in and out of hospital because the NHS is dying on its feet, from understaffing and cost-cutting and the Tories are dealing the final blow. The service is shortly to be re-organised. It will then be more bureaucratic, waiting times will be longer, there will be fewer NHS beds and more private ones and there will be more Mr Traynors.

Tory Minister Sir Keith Joseph is planning an administrative cost efficiency solution for NHS problems and at the same time wants to introduce his business friends in to 'manage' the NHS. Militants in the weak NHS unions are fighting this re-organisation just as the ancillary workers are fighting for a better service with adequate pay for the manual jobs.

But alone we cannot save the NHS. Every trade unionist who cares about Mr Traynor's death and who wants the health service to survive at all must support these struggles and sympathy strikes are desperately needed.

Elderly people will continue to die from neglect until the NHS is controlled by the people it serves—that is until we have built a revolutionary party to overthrow this system which kills off the 'wage slaves' when they are no longer of any profitable use.—SANDY ROSE, Salford, Lancs.

## HELP THE JAILED FIVE

AS RELATIVES and friends of Jake Prescott, Anna Mendelson, Hilary Creek, Jim Greenfield and John Barker, we have formed a welfare committee. Its aim is to work in all possible ways for improvement in existing prison conditions for the five, and wherever possible, for all prisoners in their material and educational needs.

These five people are all serving prison sentences after conviction on charges of conspiracy to cause explosions. Jake Prescott was sentenced to 15; the others were sentenced to 10 years. All have lodged appeals against their imprisonment.

We are against the use of prisoners as a cheap labour force. The rate of pay in Holloway sewing machine shop is 25p for 27½ hours work. In Wormwood Scrubs, people in the allocation wing are locked up for 23 hours a day. Under these sort of conditions, prisoners lack the energy, time or facilities for study.

We reject the idea that prison has to be the end of all educational aspirations and outside interests. We reject the idea that prisoners have to be isolated from society except for a monthly-hour visit. We oppose the fact that only one daily newspaper is allowed, that only a specific type of clothing is allowed to be worn. We want to know how and why somebody decided to allow one single piece of fruit per week to be included in prison diet.

Their needs are a fight for which they need help. We have formed ourselves into a committee to help them. They need yours and our reaction to voice a protest about these conditions. We need you to tell others what is happening. We need money and help to meet specific material requests that we have received.

If you would like to help the five and eventually other prisoners, contact the committee. If you want further information, or if you have information about prison conditions, send your name and address to us.—THE SECRETARY, 54 Harcombe Road, London N16.

Owen Traynor died alone, for weeks he had been too ill to clean his own filth from around him...



Flashback to last week's article on the death of the Salford pensioner.

# LETTERS

## Unity

I AGREE very much with the letter Cash in on public's anger (27 January). I believe that if housewives were given a lead they could play a big part in fighting back at the government.

I don't think it fair that it should be left to the workers. If the workers and housewives fought together, I'm sure they could give the Tory government a tremendous beating.

The housewives need a lead, such as that letter suggests, and I'm sure some kind of action could be started. It is vital that a strong fight should be put up.—(Miss) A WILSON, Boothtown, Halifax, Yorks.

## Warning

MILITANTS in the AUEW will echo the warning contained in the article in Socialist Worker (19 January). The right wing is on the offensive. And the policy and leadership being shown by the 'left' majority of our union is playing straight into their hands.

Starting with the ludicrous and dangerous policy of region by region pay claims right up to the 'face both ways attitude' on the NIRC fine, the left leadership has been digging its own grave as well as that of the militant rank and file.

It is not even just a question of the Labour left and Communist Party elements in the leadership. Militants will be dismayed to see Reg Birch giving full support to these tactics.

A recent issue of The Worker (paper of the Maoist Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) of which Birch is chairman) says 'it is not a coincidence that in this union leadership [AUEW], which aroused engineers to factory-based actions all

over the country and brought half a million engineers into industrial action by stating that workers would not stand idly by while their funds were raided by the bosses' court, there is a Marxist-Leninist member of the executive, Reg Birch.'

This is just part of a wholehearted support to the dreadfully half-hearted and self-defeating tactics of the AUEW leadership over a period given by Birch's supporters.

The lesson is clear. The International Socialists have a tremendous opportunity and responsibility to carry political clarification into the ranks of the AUEW militants. The future of our union will depend on militants seeing the situation for what it is.—South London AUEW member (name and address supplied).

## Inflation

THE LETTER from John Charlton and Bill Message (27 January) needs an answer. It is not true that wage increases have kept above the rise in the cost of living. The inflationary trap of capitalism today has meant

a cut in the living standards of the working class.

Even the victory of the miners which smashed the government's wage norms in 1972 only just maintained their purchasing power. In this situation to talk of workers keeping ahead of price increases is complacent nonsense.

What does the demand for a rising scale of wages mean? It means that wages should be regularly increased to fully compensate for any increase in the cost of living and that this is the starting point for any fight for an increased standard of living. It means that the capitalists should pay the full cost of inflation, not the workers. Equally important is the demand that these wage increases should be based on a cost of living index for working-class families drawn up by committees of housewives and trade unionists.

The demand that Charlton and Message are so confused about is actually of enormous importance today. It offers a way out of the inflationary trap; it offers some prospect to workers of a decisive victory in the fight to maintain and advance their standard of living. The government and TUC might do a deal for a threshold agreement but not for a rising scale of wages backed by committees of housewives and trade unionists. The capitalists understand very well that such a victory for workers means that inflation would strangle them.—KEVIN WHITSTON, Stockport, Lancs.

# The press flaps as Conky takes a nose-dive

THE GOVERNMENT can manipulate all of the papers some of the time, and some of the papers all of the time, but they cannot manipulate all of the papers all of the time—not quite.

The Fleet Street paper that is currently out of step is The Observer, which has given its air correspondent Andrew Wilson, one of Concorde's leading critics, his head in an excellently sustained attack.

While Wilson has been battling away, the rest of the air correspondents of Fleet Street have been saying what a jolly rotten bad show it would be, chaps, if we had to pack it in just as the ear-shattering, polluting, bankrupting prize was within our grasp. They have created the impression that criticism of Concorde is tantamount to national treachery.

It was Wilson who started off the latest round of Concorde debate when he left the rest of the air correspondents miles behind with an exclusive forecast on 21 January that Pan-Am would not be taking up their Concorde options. The usual lying denial was made in the Commons by Aerospace Minister Michael Heseltine who described the story as a 'fabrication'. This was given more than ample space by the Fleet Street dailies.

But by Wednesday of last week Wilson's scoop was confirmed and Thursday's daily papers were full of it though none bothered to compare the facts of Pan-Am's announcement with the fabricated denial of the Tory Minister. US CANCELS CONCORDE (Sun), DOUBLE BLOW TO CONCORDE (Mail) and CONCORDE: US STOPS 13 (Express) was the tale of woe that the air correspondents had to sing. The Express, Concorde's most enthusiastic supporter, also published a leader headed CONCORDE CAN'T BE GROUNDED, in which it said, among other stupid things that, 'Concorde is too important to be left to accountants.'

Another important aspect had to present two sets of consolidated accounts. Thus last year the consolidated net profits were £70.27 million for the French and only £72.7 million for the British.

This arises because of a different treatment of certain items. French directors, for instance, are usually entitled to a proportion of the dividend. In Britain the directors' remuneration is included in the profit and the profit is in fact, put to the shareholders. And the directors' remuneration is spread across several items which are accounted for differently in the two countries.

The Express neglected to mention that it was your money and my money that the accountants were dealing with.

Things got worse. The following day the Japanese were making discouraging noises about their options and the Express was raging hysterically about THE GREAT AMERICAN DOUBLE CROSS. The Americans 'would cheerfully kill off the British aircraft industry if we were mad enough to allow them', reported Daniel McGeachie, who clearly doesn't like the spectacle of capitalism competing with the gloves off.

But what makes the Express love affair with Concorde so ironically amusing is that the entire project was conceived as a hostage to Britain's Common Market membership application by Macmillan in 1962. And we all know what the Express feels about the Common Market.

IT WAS a good idea for Socialist Worker to discuss football (31 January), a subject which is of great interest to a great number of readers. Unfortunately the article contained much of the shallow nonsense which it was intended to criticise.

I find it extraordinary, for example, that one of the reasons advanced for declining attendances at matches is that spectators are jealous of the high wages enjoyed by footballers compared to those of 20 years ago. As Roger Protz points out, the players are all working class in origin, whose talent allows them to escape the tedium and insecurity for a few years and it is surely better they get the benefit of workers' enthusiasm for the game than fat-gutted bureaucrats at millionaire directors.

Protz's facts are also wrong. Gate receipts were quite low in the 1930s (hardly surprising with many people jobless), rose spectacularly after the war, gradually declining until the mid-1960s, and boomed for a few years until the present drop.

There is much else to criticise, but above all I am amazed that no mention was made of the greatly increased cost of attending, at a time of Tory attacks on workers' income. Not only have admission prices gone up, but also the cost of travelling, eating out, etc, and it is not surprising that the Daily Mirror should fail to mention it, but our paper certainly should.

Similarly, why was there no mention of the fantastic wealth of the club directors which gives them the right to decide how our game is run? If the paper is to comment on these less important matters and I think it should, it will have to be much less patronising.—DAVE PERCIVAL, London SE25.

ROGER PROTZ writes: I said that the alienation of young fans from the highly paid players was a possible cause of violence, not falling attendances. Crowds were low at the end of the 1930s but high at the start of the decade.

## Shackles

STATEMENTS like 'officials [in social security offices] nearly always see their interests as the same as the employers' and the government's so they will try to give you as little as possible', which appeared in the Know Your Rights column last week, must be condemned. Claimants must be made aware that it is the bureaucratic system that is their enemy, not the workers at Social Security.

The statement is particularly unhelpful at this time when civil servants are at last casting off the shackles of officialdom and taking strike action.—TONY HARRISON, Hyde, Cheshire.

article in the Guardian, covered many aspects of the way in which the law is kept a costly secret from the working class and drew attention to the various civil liberty groups who are attempting to unravel some of its mysteries.

But the same copy of the Guardian carried a story which must have dismayed those organisations who hope to catch up some day on the law's recurring anomalies. In an attempt to stop people capitalising on house improvement grants some councils have sought undertakings from homeowners that they must give the first option to purchase to the local authority if they wish to sell within five years of receiving grants.

But Department of the Environment advisors have said that this restriction on private individuals' profiteering from public funds is illegal, reported Judy Hillman.

If that was not enough, within four days we had the story, carried in most Fleet Street papers, of the Law Lords ruling that a club can legally refuse membership to somebody on the grounds of their colour. The story referred to the refusal by East Ham South Conservative Club to grant membership to an Indian immigrant, a postal and telegraph officer who has been a member of the Tory Party for seven years.

Needless to say the leader columns of Fleet Street did not draw any parallel with the denial of rights to trade unions under the terms of the Industrial Relations Act to pick and choose who they will allow into membership. Unions who find they are suffering from an outbreak of Goadism now have the answer. They should declare themselves a club and say they don't like the complexion of their Goads. It's all legal.

RON KNOWLES

# STUDENT GRANTS BATTLE HOTS UP

THE National Union of Students launched its latest grants campaign last week. Students at more than 40 colleges had already been on rent strike for at least a fortnight, demanding an immediate increase in grants from £445 to £550 a year, an end to parental contributions to the grant, the abolition of discrimination between students at universities and other colleges, and a full grant for married women students.

The NUS executive, which is dominated by the Communist Party, has been criticised for lack of leadership. The campaign has been waged on a purely local level so far and students at many colleges are feeling severely isolated.

Seeing the need for united action, students from several London colleges occupied the Department of Education and Science offices last week though they got no backing from NUS.

## BACKING

Reading University Students' Union is organising a conference for all colleges on rent strike to discuss the campaign this Saturday. Keith Faulkner, Reading's external affairs vice-president said: 'We have been asking NUS for some time to arrange such a meeting, but they did nothing, so we did it ourselves.'

It now seems that rather than give the conference full backing, NUS will attempt to draw people away by holding its own meeting the following weekend.

Speakers at the Reading meeting include Linda Quinn, victimised president of Stirling Students Union, Jerry Fitzpatrick, former chairman of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Students Unions, Hugh Kerr (ATTI) and Professor Thwaites, principal of Westfield College.

## Victory for RTZ workers

HULL:—Workers at the Rio-Tinto Zinc Capper Pass works won a significant victory last week.

Management had been trying to make workers accept lower pay when transferred from a high grade to a low grade job because of abnormally high lead content in their blood.

The strike, of members of the engineering and transport workers' unions, was later joined by electricians, who reversed a previous decision to wait for the advice of their area official before taking action. Management quickly agreed to the men's demands.

# How 191 seamen were betrayed by the union

by Roger Rosewell

VAL QUINN has only been at sea for six months but already she has learned of the brutality of the shipping employers and the methods of their stooges in the National Union of Seamen.

For in the past fortnight Val and 190 other crew members of the cruise ship Ocean Monarch have—in Val's own words—'been treated like animals' and 'double-crossed by a rotten union'.

The crisis began in Sydney, Australia, after the crew had demanded an extra £17.50 a month cost of living bonus and then been ignored by company and union alike. For eight weeks nothing happened, until they threatened to hold a protest meeting and Ron Spruhan, an assistant general secretary of the union, flew out to see them.

The first time they met him he was with the ship's captain and a boss of Shaw Savill, owners of the Ocean Monarch. Without any consultation or discussion with the crew, and straight in front of the employers, he told the ship's delegates—'You won't get anything', and that there was a wage freeze.

According to Eddie McNally, an assistant cook: 'If you didn't know who Spruhan was you'd have thought he was the Shaw Savill representative.'

After hours of talks the company refused to offer a penny and on Monday 22 January the crew voted to stop work. Again Spruhan interfered. He said the vote was 'undemocratic' and that he would organise a proper one. Under his strict supervision a secret ballot was then arranged which voted 138-68 for an immediate stoppage.

Spruhan then complained that the strike was illegal under the Industrial Relations Act, but still the crew walked off.

## 'FINAL'

For the whole of that day they sat and waited while more talks took place. The temperature was high and many had not eaten since the previous day when they had been pushed and chased out of the ship's canteen.

Meanwhile, on board ship, two 'final' offers were being made. Both were rejected as neither improved wages, and both were either totally or partially tied to strings.

Eventually as evening came the crew asked to be let back on board for a wash, a meal, and a change of clothing. An argument followed in which the captain finally agreed to let them on 10 at a time. The first few who boarded found them-

selves abused and locked out of their cabins.

The crew were left with nowhere to go, sweaty and dirty from the heat, hungry and with no money, and—as Val Quinn explained—denied 'even a comb'. The company thought that a cold night on the quayside would bring them all 'to their senses'.

But the intimidation didn't work. Australian dockers and seamen rallied round and offered their homes and paid for others to be put up in nearby hostels and hotels. A small group of seamen slept in a park and looked after any stragglers.

At 6.30 on Tuesday morning a fresh-looking Ron Spruhan visited this park to meet what he thought would be the entire crew. Unlike the seamen, Spruhan had slept and eaten on board the Ocean Monarch.

More talks followed, and when these too broke down, Shaw Savill offered to pay the crew off and fly them home. A majority accepted and many thought that their ordeal had ended. Little did they realise that the worst was still to come.

Glad that they were leaving, and with their bags packed, the crew queued up for their wages only to find a small slip attached to each of their pay sheets. It was brief and issued without discussion, warning, or appeal. It just said: 'The sum of £50 has been deducted under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1970.'



RON SPRUHAN: 'You'd have thought he was a company representative.'

This fine, together with a further deduction of three days pay, was a terrible blow. Most of the crew were left penniless and even now some owe Shaw Savill the balance of their fine.

But more was to come. The company paid every person £2 for expenses between Sydney and London, and then took the bulk of them on an 18-hour overland coach journey to Melbourne. The money quickly went and with no help from the union those few seamen with some money pooled it and shared it out.

When finally they reached London Airport, most were worn out and in need of a rest but still Shaw Savill kept up the offensive. A spokesman for the company met the crew and told them that they had

exactly 15 minutes to get themselves and their baggage on board some coaches or be left behind. Desperately the seamen protested that he should wait until their bags had been unloaded from the plane.

He refused, and after 15 minutes all the coaches left, leaving the crew stranded with only a railway warrant and still no money.

Now the crew are scattered all over Britain but the fight is carrying on. Pickets are out in Liverpool and London and efforts are being made to stop any seamen accepting jobs on the Ocean Monarch.

## ANTICS

The union has said that the strike was wrong and Bill Hogarth, its right-wing general secretary, has publicly forecast that about 10 seamen are likely to be victimised. A major campaign is now being organised to defend the crew and the Australian Waterside Workers have pledged their full support in this struggle. Liverpool seamen have demanded a full inquiry into the dispute and the antics of Spruhan.

They have also joined the growing opposition to the Merchant Shipping Acts, which were introduced by Harold Wilson and the last Labour government. It was these laws that enabled Shaw Savill to fine the crew and which also allow seamen to be prosecuted in the civil courts and fined or jailed.

The Ocean Monarch crew need urgent support. Tony McDonneigh, a head waiter, told me that they would fight for: no victimisation, repayment of the fine and compensation for the journey, no scabs, defence of seamen who refuse to work on the ship, repeal of the Merchant Shipping Acts and a democratic and militant union.

# New TUC-CBI panel courts the workers

THE decision of the joint TUC-CBI Conciliation and Arbitration Service last week to support the reinstatement of victimised building workers on a major London building site was taken with one thing and one thing only in mind.

Britain's employers' federation knew that if the Conciliation and Arbitration Service came out with a decision against the trade unions, then any credibility this body might have would be shattered right at the outset.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Service was set up in the autumn when the TUC leaders were renewing their romance with big business with a view to patching up an alternative to the Industrial Relations Act. The first panel met last Wednesday to rule on the six-month old dispute on Lovell's Guildford Street site, which was referred to it by the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians. UCATT general secretary George Smith was also last year's president of the TUC.

So the two panel members, Will Paynter, former general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers who left the Communist Party to take up a post on the Commission on Industrial Relations and Dan Flunder, a director of Dunlop, were well briefed to make the appropriate 'favourable' recommendation, which could then be used to advertise the beauty of the

scheme to other workers.

The CBI is courting the TUC leaders for tactical reasons. The employers know that the trade union leaders hold the key to disciplining the rank and file and are only too pleased to engage in a bit of window-dressing to encourage workers to put their trust in phoney conciliation procedures rather than in industrial action.

This explains why, the panel's 'verdict' was known even before it sat.

## Protest at police violence

BIRMINGHAM:—The 12 black youths arrested during a military-style raid by the police on Boxing Night were committed for trial by jury before a crown court at a hearing last Thursday.

The public benches were packed with families and sympathisers, including members of the International Socialists who had mounted a picket beforehand to protest at the brutal behaviour of the police in this case. Afterwards a meeting was held which set up a defence committee of parents, members of black community groups and the International Socialists.

## IS NEWS

A CRITICAL evaluation of the International Socialists' part in the tenants' struggle was made at an aggregate of IS tenants' activists held in Manchester last Saturday.

Hugh Kerr, of Harlow Tenants Association and the IS tenants sub-committee outlined the perspectives for this year's struggle and said that the basis for a tenants' victory over the Housing Finance Act and rising rents was the same now as it was a year ago.

It was clear from the profiteers' and speculators' stranglehold on the housing market that no future Labour government or action by Labour councils can solve the housing crisis. This means that any policy that doesn't include mass action on the estates and supporting action in the factories is of no use to the tenants. IS was the only organisation consistently arguing

for this policy and fighting to get it implemented, he said.

Delegates to the conference argued for greater clarification of the political lessons to be drawn from the present situation.

Some tenants were being drawn into the National Association of Tenants and Residents without realising that its policies of lobby and protest deliberately play into the hands of the Labour 'don't break the law' brigade by putting the emphasis on the council chamber rather than the estates. This had to be exposed and it was agreed that one way to do this was to organise among rank and file bodies for a national rent strike conference as soon as is practical.

The April rent and rate rises and the October increases will see the International Socialists fighting to turn the tenants' movement towards the realisation that socialist politics and mass action are the only solutions for a victorious struggle.

# WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

## IS MEETINGS

SWANSEA IS: Fight the Wages Freeze. Speaker Bob Light, London docks shop steward. Friday 9 February, 7.30pm, St Thomas Community Centre Annexe.

HACKNEY AND ISLINGTON IS public meeting: Chris Harman on The Revolt in Eastern Europe: Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Monday 12 Feb, 8pm, Rose and Crown, corner of Albion Rd and Church St, London N16 (73 bus).

WOLVERHAMPTON IS public meeting: The Fight against the Freeze. Speaker Tony Cliff, Tuesday 13 February, 8pm, The Posada, Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton.

LONDON REGION IS public meeting: The Relevance of Lenin to the struggle today. Speaker Tony Cliff, Friday 16 Feb, 7.30-9.30pm, The Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (three minutes from Holborn tube).

SOUTH WEST REGION INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS DAY SCHOOL Saturday 17 February 11am Students Union, Queens Rd, Bristol Patrick Goode and a national committee speaker on The Draft Programme John Palmer and Moshe Machover on Imperialism and the Permanent Arms Economy Admission only by IS membership card.

CARDIFF IS public meeting: Why the TUC will not fight. Speaker Chris Davison (TGWU), Monday 12 February, 8pm, Blue Anchor, St Mary Street, Cardiff.

IS ATTI NATIONAL FRACTION meeting: Saturday 17 Feb, 11pm in London—details from local IS branch secretaries.

NORTH EAST LONDON Industrial Meeting FIGHT THE FREEZE AND UNEMPLOYMENT Speakers: Alan Watts (AUEW) and Tony Cliff Saturday 24 February, 2pm WYCA, 628 High Road, London N17 (social afterwards)

## OTHER MEETINGS

WOMEN FIGHT BACK: Crawley public meeting open to all sympathisers of Women's Liberation. Tuesday 20 Feb, 8pm, AEU Hall, Robinson Rd, Crawley. Speakers Kathy Ennis, Caroline Charlton, Jenny Southgate.

EALING RANK AND FILE: Chanie Rosenberg on Women in Education. Mon 12 Feb, 7.30pm, Three Pigeons, High St, Ealing, London W5.

SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION London meeting: Occupational Health filling a gap in the NHS. Speakers Dr Stuart Hall and W Simpson, general secretary of the foundry section of the AUEW. Wed 14 Feb, 7.30pm, House of Commons. Open to non-members.

## NOTICES

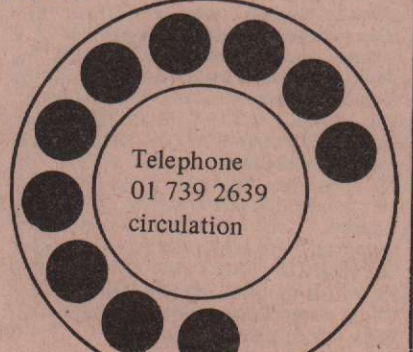
JUMBLE WANTED URGENTLY (for Wandsworth IS jumble sale in Feb (details later)). All proceeds to Printshop Fund. Please bring to Typesetting Dept, 6 Cottons Gardens, E2, or ring 675 3709.

FACTORY BRANCHES? For the background to the debate, read Communist Organisation—a pamphlet containing the Comintern theses on organisation, with a new introduction by Harry Wicks. 5p plus 3p postage from Comintern, 20 Stanley Road, Edinburgh 10. Ten or more copies post free.

STUDENT COMMUNITY HOUSING needs a community worker to help its 600 members, and anybody else, with housing advice, welfare rights and general social problems. We use short-life properties to house single-parent families, ex-mental patients and addicts as well as students; experience/qualifications/militancy and dynamism would all help. We are a unique self-determining community, and this is a unique job, with freedom and a lot of potential. Material returns: £15 a week, free place to live, and use of bicycle. Write SCH, 17 Prince of Wales Crescent, London NW1.

HARLESDEN IS SOCIAL Music, light show, drink Bar extension til midnight Willesden Junction Hotel, Station Rd, London NW10 Friday 16 February

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL: The following back copies are still available, but some only in limited numbers: 33, 34, 37, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52. 20p per copy, including postage. Money with orders please to: IS Journal, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.





Part of the anti-fascist demonstration, including a group from Manchester International Socialists

## 'HUMAN WALL' DEFEATS FASCISTS

MANCHESTER: National Front fascists, this time under the guise of the British Campaign to Stop Immigration, had promised they would have 500 at their meeting last Saturday. They managed to muster only 30, and then only after an hour-long battle between 500 anti-fascists and more than 100 police.

The massive human wall that wrecked this fascist meeting had been organised at five days' notice by a committee led by the Manchester district committee of the engineering union (AUEW) and supported by more than a dozen trade union and political organisations of the labour movement. The representative nature of the counter-demonstration, coupled with the high level of discipline and organisation, made this action a landmark in the fight against racism in the North West.

### STRONG

For not only was the meeting effectively stopped despite the many arrests made by the police, but the anti-fascist forces were also able to hold their own anti-racist demonstration and meeting.

At the meeting two speakers from the International Socialists, representing the organising committee, stressed the need to develop the committee into a strong and permanent force for the suppression of racism and fascism in the area.

They also outlined plans for the creation of greater trade union support and the extension of the political struggle against fascism on the shop floor.

In all, 17 anti-fascists were arrested, mainly on charges of breach of the peace. Also four fascist supporters finished up in the police station including one who caused them considerable embarrassment by revealing that he made his living as a police informer. It is not yet known if strenuous police efforts to have the charges against this man dropped have been successful, but the local anti-fascist committee is investigating this rather strange relationship.



Policemen, one without a helmet, move in to make arrests

## Strike at print union offices

LONDON:—Men office workers at the head office of the print union SOGAT are striking for more pay following the breakdown of talks with the union's leaders.

Last year the union offered workers at its head offices an annual increase of 12½ per cent—worth £4 for those on £30 a week. The offer was accepted by the women's chapel but rejected by the men's. Women workers receive the same rates as men but they are represented by separate chapels.

The men pursued their claim for more money, arguing that they had lost earnings in recent years due to reductions in overtime caused by branch mergers, decimatisation and rising prices, but no result came of negotiations with SOGAT's executive and finance committees.

When the men gave 10 days' notice of strike action, their women colleagues voted not to cross any picket lines, but the majority then decided to remain at work following advice from the secretary of the union's London Women's branch.

But two of the women workers are refusing to accept this advice and are not going into work while the men are on strike. One of them, Christine Smith, told Socialist Worker: 'This is simply a question of trade union principle.'

## Massive support as council defies High Court over rents

CLYDEBANK:—3000 tenants, socialists and trade unionists demonstrated last Saturday in support of the decision of the 13 Clydebank councillors to refuse to obey a High Court order to implement the Housing Finance Act.

This decision followed a stormy public inquiry last month at which hundreds of tenants and trade unionists were accused of disrupting the proceedings by placing banners in front of the hall.

Saturday's demonstration showed that the determination of the tenants of Clydebank to resist the Act was not limited to an isolated act of defiance. At the meeting which followed, a statement of support from Glasgow's Labour-controlled council received a cool reception, since it has abandoned its opposition. So did James Jack, secretary of the Scottish TUC, who said that although in all probability the struggle would end in defeat, it was nonetheless 'a glorious struggle which would be added to the pages of working-class history.'

Clydebank Labour Bailie Betty Brown replied that they were not going into the struggle to be defeated.

Two councillors from Clay Cross in Derbyshire were at the meeting and were asked to report on the progress of their

# WORK-IN PRINTERS FACE LAW THREAT

SOUTH LONDON:—Seven members of the Briant Colour Joint Chapels Work-in Committee have been named in a legal action for vacant possession of the factory, for recovery of company documents and for costs and damages resulting from their occupation in defence of jobs.

They have absolutely no intention of responding to the High Court summonses issued against them.

'There is no point in any of us putting in a court appearance in order to find out whether or not what we are doing is illegal,' Bill Freeman Junior, chairman of the joint chapels work-in committee told Socialist Worker this week. 'We have known all along that it was illegal and we do not want to spend thousands of pounds to prove the point.'

'They may not arrest us seven for failing to appear before the court. The liquidator is free at any time after Tuesday to go before a judge in chambers and get an order for vacant possession and for sufficient police to evict us from the plant.'

'What we say is simply that trade

unionists up and down this land must come in their thousands and show that they will not allow the law of the land or the courts to interfere with the fundamental working-class right to defend our jobs and the well-being of our families.'

Since the court orders were issued last week, the BCP joint chapels work-in committee has printed and distributed throughout the printing industry, the docks, coalmines, UCS and many other places, thousands of leaflets calling for solidarity. They have also elected a stand-by work-in committee should any of the present members be seized by the forces of the state.

### POWER

Already the response to the solidarity call has been good. For example, the joint chapels at Radio Times, in Park Royal, West London, have come in strongly behind the Briant Colour workers' stand and have sent a resolution to the various union executives asking for all-out national strike action if the BCP workers are in any way threatened by the law.

The 'impartial' laws of the land which make it illegal for workers to occupy factories and take control of machines are the basic property laws enacted as the business class consolidated its power. The particular formulation by which the Briant workers are now being threatened was redrawn in 1925, as big business prepared for the General Strike.

### Briant Colour Printing Joint Chapels Work-In Committee

Dear Colleagues,

This is an urgent appeal for your support. We are in a serious fight to defend our jobs and the living standards of our families.

In the printing industry we have had closure after closure. We say this is where it stops. After seven months working-in, the liquidator of Briant Colour has issued High Court writs against seven members of our committee to evict the work-in and for costs and damages against us.

We are calling for a mass picket and demonstration to take place outside our factory at 651 Old Kent Road, London SE15 at 12 noon on Tuesday 13 February—the day the writs expire.

We appeal to you to come in your thousands from all over this land to demonstrate that you will not allow the law and the courts to deprive working men and women of their right to defend their jobs and the well being of their families. Bring your banners.

W H S Freeman (Chairman and NATSOPA machine FoC)  
N J Pennington (SOGAT FoC)  
J Wickham (NGA FoC)  
Christine Brazil (SOGAT MoC)  
W Sawyer (NATSOPA ink and roller FoC)  
D Broad (SLADE FoC)  
A J Austin (secretary, SLADE)

### BR provokes strike

GLASGOW:—300 workers, mainly members of the National Union of Railwaymen and the electricians union, in the electrical department of the British Rail Engineering workshops struck on Tuesday after management withdrew guarantees in a productivity deal. Management is determined to attack the electrical department's high rate of earnings, won by their consistent militancy.

## Sludgemen locked out five weeks

LONDON:—Behind the five-week lock-out of 88 sewage sludge boatmen by the Greater London Council is the desire to give the contract for sludge disposal out to a private firm.

As Ron Fortune, shop steward of the Newham, one of the five boats involved, put it, reversing Harold Wilson's statement during the 1966 Seamen's Strike: 'It is a closely knit group of politically motivated men trying to force the crews out to put private enterprise in.'

The firm which has long been angling for the contract is Marinex Sand and Gravel, jointly owned by Wimpey, the building firm, and Imperial Tobacco's Ross Group.

The boats carry nine million gallons of sewage sludge a day from Beckton and Erith out to Barrow's Deep, where it is dumped. Since the lock-out most of this sewage has either been dumped in the

Thames or stored in lagoons near housing estates at Beckton and Thamesmead, causing a considerable health hazard.

The men are members of the Transport and General Workers Union and the National Union of Public Employees. Until the beginning of January all conditions of employment and discipline were regulated by the GLC staff code. But at the turn of the year the men were ordered to sign articles under the terms of the new Merchant Shipping Act.

This has vicious penal clauses which give ships' officers powers to hire and fire at will and to fine workers on the spot. The men refused to sign and insisted on keeping to the procedures agreed with the GLC. They were immediately threatened

with forcible removal from the ships by the police, and then locked out.

When the lock-out was raised in Parliament last week, the Tories went down the line with the GLC, stating that the men must sign articles in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act. Both the GLC and the Tories say that no exception can be made, though lifeboatmen and sea-going tug crews have been exempted.

Another major factor in the dispute is that the sludgeboat officers are very keen on the men being subjected to the terms of the Merchant Shipping Act.

'Last September there was an inquiry into the way one officer had been treating the men and he was sacked,' said Ron Fortune. 'Since then the officers have kept a blacklist of active trade unionists and hinted that the militants were for it when the new regulations came into force in January this year.'

by Richard Rieser



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

# HEALTH WORKERS FORCE THE UNION TO CALL ACTION

# \* Socialist Worker

AFTER a week of sporadic unofficial stoppages in hospitals all over Britain, the national executive of the public employees' union (NUPE) decided last Friday to call widespread official action against the freezing of their £4 a week pay claim.

For the second time in five months transport union members in BRISTOL hospitals walked out and stayed out for four days until union officials persuaded them to go back with promises of future official action.

More than 50 porters and cleaners in Highcroft Hospital, BIRMINGHAM, staged a 24-hour strike on Friday in solidarity with 220 NUPE members in PONTEFRACT General Infirmary who began a three-day strike last Friday.

In London, workers in St George's, at Hyde Park Corner, came out for 24 hours on Friday, supported by 30 porters and cleaners at St George's, Tooting, where the picket line was reinforced by civil servants, members of the CPSA, who had been lobbying their own union executive against the freeze.

Many of those involved in the unofficial protests made it clear they were striking not for the official demand of £4, but for the £8 demand made by the National Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers (NASH), which sees this sum as the minimum necessary to keep up with the rise in the cost of living in the past year.

The strike decision by NUPE leaders is a major victory for rank and file militants, who have been calling for official action since the freeze began in November while union leaders dodged from one meeting to another trying to wriggle out of a confrontation with the government.

But their attempt to cool down rank and file tempers with a long drawn-out, disorganised ballot only led to a seven-to-one vote in favour of strike action. Their final escape route was closed when the management made the insulting offer of £1.84 last week.

NUPE is now to meet the other unions involved—the transport workers', the Confederation of Health Service Employees and the municipal workers'—to discuss concerted action next week.

The NUPE leaders are studiously vague about the form this action should take,



Some of the 300 hospital workers at a meeting in Bristol during their four-day strike against the freezing of their wage claim.

although reliable sources predict prolonged selective strikes. This has already provoked anger among militants, since 207 branches vote for all-out action and only 45 for selective strikes. Selective strikes caused much division and resentment among NUPE members during the 'dirty jobs' strike of 1970.

Militants must use the next few weeks to make sure their fellow workers understand the need for a strike as the only way to challenge the Tory attack on living standards. Only an all-out strike can force the government to back down.

To keep up the momentum and solidarity of strike action, local action committees are needed to organise emergency services, picket rotas, flying pickets, marches and mass meetings. Rank and file shop stewards committees already springing up in Birmingham, Manchester, Darlington, Yorkshire's West Riding, Southampton, and South London are forming the nucleus of such organisation.

# CONCORDE: BIG FIGHT NEEDED TO SAVE JOBS

BRISTOL:—Rolls-Royce and British Aircraft Corporation workers have been meeting this week to plan action in defence of their jobs following the decision by two major American airlines, Pan-American and TWA, not to buy Concorde.

by Mick Bury and Bob Jones

issue is to ask workers to cut their own throats. Sackings will be the price paid to preserve the plane.

Any campaign that is confused by the difference between fighting for jobs or Concorde is playing into the company's hands. An effective fight to defend jobs can be mounted only if the unions declare total opposition to redundancies whether or not the plane is saved. A united struggle for work or full pay needs a clear-cut programme of no sackings and work-sharing without loss of pay.

Although Concorde is a tribute to the skills of the workers involved, it is not 'their' plane. They had no say in why it was built and must not be made to pay for its failure.

Their skills could be used for the

benefit of all workers in the country but at the moment there are no alternative projects in the pipeline. One union representative said: 'Alternatives to Concorde, such as the Hovertrain, could be produced now.' But while industry is run for profit, such socially-useful projects will not be fully developed.

Concorde is a symptom of a deeper disease in the aircraft industry as a whole. The production of aircraft, often for markets that don't exist, in a situation of acute international competition, can lead only to disaster.

The fight for the right to work cannot be separated from the need to take the aircraft industry out of private hands. This does not mean the type of nationalisation seen in the past—with Rolls-Royce a glaring example. It means the nationalisation of the industry under workers' control and planned in the interests of the whole working class.

With 30,000 workers involved off the project, thousands of jobs are at stake throughout the country. BAC chairman Sir George Edwards has warned that a 'rolling down' of the Concorde programme will probably be necessary.

If the Australian airline Qantas and Japan Air Lines follow the American decision to cancel their options, BAC will cut back on production. Only nine planes are definitely ordered—five for BOAC and four for Air France.

Rolls-Royce have made no preparations for full-scale production of the Olympus 603 engine for Concorde. Clearly management knew all along that a major Concorde programme was unlikely. Company statements are still vague but it is clear that Bristol's 7000 BAC workers and 5000 at Rolls-Royce will be hardest hit.

## DEFENCE

All sections of Bristol's aircraft workers have combined to set up a joint action committee, an essential first step to combat the bosses' usual attempts to split the workforce. This is a major development for Rolls-Royce workers, who have had no joint staff-manual organisation for several years. The re-birth of a liaison committee between BAC and Rolls-Royce is a major advance towards united action.

The first meeting of the action committee pledged to fight for no redundancies. But some workers saw the defence of jobs issue as related to the defence of Concorde. Bristol MP Tony Wedgwood Benn, who called the meeting, said: 'Bristol workers are going to fight for Concorde. They are not going to have it taken away from them.'

Benn took the initiative in calling the meeting, but he must now abandon his role as a Concorde salesman. As one Rolls-Royce steward put it: 'He should start talking like a trade unionist and socialist and start fighting for the right to work.'

To make 'Save Concorde' the central

## Rebel council calls total rent strike

CLAY CROSS:—At a council meeting on Monday, the eleven Labour councillors voted full backing for a complete rent and rate strike in the town.

They also decided to withhold £25,000 of the £90,000 owing to the Public Works Loan Board—which is about equal to the sum which the government have withheld in subsidies to the town's housing account. Most of the £25,000 represents interest charges on money borrowed for house-building.

Rent collectors have been instructed not to collect rents, and discussions have started with their union, NALGO, about finding them other jobs.

The council also voted to increase the chairman's allowance by £360. The money will enable the council to provide free school milk for all Clay Cross children.

The clerk, Mr F Green, warned the council that their actions might be considered by the district auditor as 'illegal and irresponsible'. The councillors agreed and declared their decisions unanimous.

Arthur Wellon, Labour group leader, told Socialist Worker: 'The time has come for the people of Clay Cross to act on this matter.'

## Union officials undermine hospital strike

YORKSHIRE:—220 workers at Pontefract General Infirmary struck last Friday, supported by small walk-outs at three Leeds hospitals, and 60 workers at Headlands Hospital, Pontefract.

The Pontefract workers hoped the strike would spread throughout Yorkshire. But by Sunday it was clear this was not happening, despite the flying pickets sent to other hospitals in Leeds and Wakefield, so they returned to work at midnight.

The failure was the direct result of a co-ordinated strike-breaking campaign by NUPE area officers throughout the West Riding of Yorkshire. As shop stewards toured Leeds hospitals, winning pledges of support wherever they went, their steps were followed by full-time officials who ordered stewards not to back the strike.

At St James' Hospital, the biggest in Leeds, an official told stewards representing nearly 1500 health workers: 'The five-week dustmen's strike in 1970 nearly broke the union, and we don't want this sort of thing to happen again.' The fact that the dustmen won seemed to him irrelevant.

Strike committee members at Pontefract were bitter about the behaviour of their union officials. It seemed the union mobilised every available official to keep the staff at work.

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## We'll take on freeze —civil service union

THE leaders of the largest civil service union, the 200,000-strong CPSA, announced last week that it intends to organise industrial action over its demand for a wage increase greater than that allowed under the freeze. This means complete overtime ban, non-co-operation, a national one-day stoppage and extended selective strikes. The union hopes other public sector unions will join these actions.

The new policy is an amazing somersault as a result of pressure from the rank and file. Only two weeks previously the CPSA leaders had rejected calls for industrial action and instead organised rallies of the membership 'to test opinion'—even though it was clear from meetings already held that members wanted immediate strike action.

But the CPSA leaders now have no excuse for prolonging inaction beyond this weekend.

At a rally in LEEDS last Wednesday more than 880 members from Leeds, Harrogate and Hull voted for a complete ban, a one-day strike, selective strike action and a refusal to implement any new government legislation. There was a lot of criticism from rank and file speakers of the half-hearted approach of the CPSA national

executive. More than a third of the meeting favoured a call for an all-out national strike.

At the MANCHESTER rally, attended by 2000 CPSA members, speaker after speaker from the floor called for selective or all-out strike action, many stressing how the machinery of government could be a standstill in a few weeks.

At the end of the meeting CPSA vice-president Clive Bush, who was chairing the meeting, broke his promise to allow motions submitted by supporters of the rank and file Redder Tape group to be voted on. Instead only the vague executive motion which ties the union to no specific action was put. To drown any protest music was then played over loudspeakers.

Afterwards the executive members present, including Communist Party member Jean Donoghue, said the mass meeting was unrepresentative and that action would have to be based on votes passed at individual branch meetings.

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