

# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# KILL THE NIRC!

## And here's the court's most enthusiastic supporter

OUR PICTURE shows Reggie Maudling leaving Downing Street while Home Secretary, two years ago.

As Home Secretary, Maudling:  
INTRODUCED Internment in Northern Ireland.  
PERSECUTED Rudi Dutschke, the German socialist.

DREW UP the racist Immigration Act.  
But Maudling is not just a politician. He is also a businessman. From 1967 to 1970 he worked for companies associated with John Poulson, who is now in prison for corruption.

Maudling used all his influence in foreign countries to sell Poulson's designs. With Maudling's help, Poulson designed:

A hospital in Saudi Arabia which was reserved exclusively for the friends and relations of King Faisal.

A palace in the middle of the desert for Sheikh Khalifa, son of the ruler of Abu Dhabi.

An empty hospital in Gozo, Malta.

These three obscenities earned Poulson £1 million in fees. Maudling, while helping him get these contracts, was Tory Party spokesman on foreign affairs. Again and again he spoke in the House of Commons defending 'British interests' in Malta and the Middle East.

He came out with plenty of reactionary tripe about the need for more taxpayers' money in Malta and more British troops in the Gulf—nothing about Poulson's empty hospitals and palaces there.

At about the same time Maudling was soliciting funds all over Europe for the Real Estate Fund of America, an 'offshore property fund' which soon went broke and whose founder, Jerome Hoffman, is now in prison for fraud. Maudling was president of the fund for two months and clung on to 50,000 of its shares for more than two years.

Now that his 'business activities' are finally being exposed, Maudling tells the House of Commons: 'There comes a point where one can no longer put up with this kind of thing.'

He is right. We have had enough of this greedy hypocrite. We have been putting up with him and his class for far too long.



LAST WEEKEND Harold Wilson called the National Industrial Relations Court a 'putrescent corpse'. This 'corpse' has sunk its poisoned fangs into the Engineering Workers Union. It is about to sink them into the Transport Workers Union.

The scandalous failure of the Labour government *immediately* to repeal the Industrial Relations Act has given Tory Judge Donaldson his chance.

Funds belonging to AUEW members have been seized to 'compensate' anti-union boss Dilley of Con-Mech for the expense involved in smashing the attempt at union organisation at his firm. Dilley claimed, among other things, for the cost of holidays in Spain for blacklegs! The infamous Donaldson actually awarded him union money on this basis. This is on top of fines amounting to over £200,000 already stolen from the union.

Now General Aviation Services, the private profiteers who sought to undermine job security and public ownership at London airport and who were kept out by TGWU members, are doing the TGWU for up to £2 million. Donaldson's decision is to come. On past form it is easy to predict.

The court must be killed now. Judge Donaldson must be put out of business. The Act must be repealed now. The plundered union funds must be restored.

The gutless wonders on the right wing of the movement say wait for the government to repeal the Act in its own good time. Meanwhile let the unions bleed.

These are the same people who have counselled surrender at every stage of the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act. These are the same people who tried to sabotage the movement to free the Pentonville Five, who opposed action against Goad the Scab. They were wrong then. They are wrong now.

Strike action freed the Pentonville Five. Strike action put paid to Goad and Langston. Strike action is what produced the promise to repeal the Act.

Strike action is what will make them keep the promise. Strike action will make them do it now.

## MAKE IT A GENERAL STRIKE

All trade unionists out to support the AUEW.

Mass picketing to spread the action.

Force the government to kill the court.

Force the government to refund all the fines and costs filched from the unions by the NIRC.

All out to kill the Tory court.

## INSIDE

Portugal's Barbarism in Africa and the British who pay for it—CENTRE SPREAD

How the Portuguese Communist Party is selling the pass—PAGE THREE

Joy in their hearts, laughter

in their eyes . . . and asbestos in their lungs—PAGE SIX

How a working woman revolutionary socialist got 600,000 votes—PAGE TWO.

AND TWO PAGES OF LETTERS—pages four and five.

## 3000 ARRESTED IN BID TO BREAK STRIKE

THREE THOUSAND railway trade unionists have been arrested in India in a government attempt to smash the national railway strike called for Wednesday this week.

Already there has been an explosion of rage throughout the main cities. With a 37 per cent rate of inflation and desperate future food shortage, there are few people outside the establishment not eager to demonstrate and protest against this assault on the right to strike.

The government says the strike by 1.7 million railwaymen is illegal under the Defence of India regulations—emergency measures introduced during the war with Pakistan in 1971.

Yet there have been many strikes since 1971. There need not be a railway strike now if the railway ministry had had any serious interest in a settlement during the long months of negotiations. For the main union in dispute, the Railway Federation is desperate for a settlement. For years it and the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen have had a cosy back-scratching relationship with the railway ministry.

But as inflation has torn into the pay packets of railwaymen the men's anger has grown. Several breakaway unions have been set up. Last summer, one of these, the Locomotive Running Staffs Association, led one of the best organised and most militant sections into a 35 day strike.

### QUIETLY

It ended when the railway ministry agreed to set up a committee to see how the men's demands—including one to cut the working day from 14 to 10 hours—could be implemented.

The ministry met the leaders of the two main trade union federations. As a result, both the committee and the demand were quietly allowed to fade away.

But the dangers alarmed the Railway Federation. They set out to regain their leadership among the workers with militant demands—equal parity wages with nationalised industry and an annual bonus of a month's pay.

The ministry say the cost of this will kill the railways. But corruption and incompetent management are already doing this. The ministry has only been negotiating long enough to persuade public opinion that the workers are to blame.

To help this along they have now cancelled several main-line passenger services—in order, they say, 'to safeguard the movement of essential supplies'. In fact no more supplies are moving than before.

The government needs a scapegoat for the disasters its own policies have produced. The railwaymen are an ideal case. Anyone found starved to death can be blamed on the railway men.

In Britain, railway workers' union branches should get resolutions rolling both in their own unions and directly to the Indian High Commission, India House Aldwych, London WC2.

Rank and file railwaymen in India will fight this fight despite the desperate desire of their leadership to escape. 'Rank and file' railwaymen in this country can make sure they don't fight alone.

## How to beat multinationals

**ACTION** against a multi-national company by workers in Holland has won the reinstatement of eight militants sacked in Spain. Nine men, members of a clandestine union, were sacked when they joined a strike for more pay at the Barcelona firm of La Seda, a subsidiary of the giant AKZO. The victimisation took its toll of one worker who, suffering from a heart complaint, died a few days later. His funeral was attended by 2000 workers in a big display of solidarity.

But the solidarity did not end there. AKZO workers in Holland responded to a call by the sacked men and launched a campaign in the Dutch press and radio. They also agreed unanimously to strike unless the men were given their jobs back.

Faced with this ultimatum, AKZO immediately reinstated the Spanish workers.

# 700,000 vote for French Revolution

**FRENCH** revolutionary socialist Arlette Laguiller received 595,000 votes in the first round of the presidential elections. Arlette, a leader of the recent bank workers' strikes, was the candidate of the revolutionary weekly paper *Lutte Ouvriere*, with which the International Socialists have fraternal links.

Arlette campaigned as the only worker and the only woman among the ten candidates. She called for

freedom of abortion—still a 'crime' in France—and contraception, and equal pay for women.

She denounced racialism and the treatment of France's millions of immigrant workers, police brutality and the repression of the left. While correctly emphasising these immediate issues, she made it clear she stood for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the socialist reconstruction of society.

Another revolutionary candidate,

the former student leader Alain Krivine, also did well, polling 94,000 votes.

Francois Mitterand, candidate of the 'united left', easily won the first round with 11 million votes. He ran on a Labour Party type of programme, with the support of the powerful French Communist Party.

Next Sunday Mitterand faces the right-wing Tory Giscard d'Estaing in the run-off contest.



**ARLETTE LAGUILLER** said in her election address:

In these elections there are three 'platforms', two on the right and one on the left, all of which defend, with words and seemingly different programmes, the interests of the ruling class. You will have noticed that for them, above all else, business must go on.

Business of course, is capitalist business. When things go well the workers get the crumbs, but when they go badly they have to tighten their belts. It is the capitalists who direct the economy . . . but it's up to others to bear the cost of their miscalculations . . .

We refuse to pay for their crisis, or foot the bill for their inflation. And we say they needn't say they will force us to make sacrifices if the right wins once again, or ask us to make them if Mitterand is elected.

It goes without saying, but it is worth repeating that my standing in the election is not intended to hinder Mitterand's success.

If I stand, it is so that in the first round the largest possible number of workers can say, by voting for me that they have had enough of the politicians of the ruling class, the class that really governs.



## The case of the missing police

by Mansab Daid

**BLACKBURN:**—As Qadeen Ahmed Khan and Mumtaz Hussain got off the bus on Bolton Road, opposite Albion Mill, where Qadeen worked, they were confronted by 20 white teenagers. The youths jostled and swore at them—then started to hurl stones.

### Protection

Qadeen and Mumtaz escaped into a public house. Their attackers waited outside. The two Asians rang the police, who asked what they expected them to do. Mumtaz replied that they would like protection, and the police said they would be on their way.

suggested a deputation to the police.

The police denied that such attacks had even taken place. But they sent two or three constables to the bus station every now and then. The attackers moved elsewhere, to the mills where Asians are employed.

So the police went back to the police station, and the Labour Party back to ward meetings. Everybody was happy.

### Robbed

Except the Asian community of Blackburn.

'We want action,' said another Asian. 'The attacks have continued—mainly at Skewbridge, Row Lee and Albion Mills. Asians are still beaten and robbed.'

The attackers are urged on by the National Front, who have distributed leaflets among white people living close to the Asian community urging them to come down to Blackburn bus station and help with the 'Paki-bashing'.

A Pakistani summed it up: 'We must unite and be prepared to meet this form of vicious racist violence with force. We know that when the summer comes, just like in 1972 and 1973, the gangs will be out on the streets again.'

## YES, YOU'VE BEEN HAD!

**THE FACTS** about Dennis Healey's so-called 'soak-the-rich' budget are now out. A recent expert analysis shows its effect on two families—one rich and one average.

**FAMILY A:** Income £5500 a year. Almost all the money to be paid in increased income tax is won back in tax relief on mortgage interest, which is up from 30 per cent under the Tories to 33 per cent under Healey. £5 a week is LOST in national insurance contributions, but £4.50 GAINED in food subsidies.

The overall effect of budget is a 2 per cent drop in standard of living. The Economist, the bosses' paper, commented last week: 'The upper middle classes had feared the worst from the budget, but they have fared better than they had dared hope.'

**FAMILY B:** A worker on average earnings, married with two children. If they have a mortgage, they will be level on the budget, neither better nor worse off—but if they live in a council house, they will be 4 per cent worse off.

The person who comes off worse because of the budget is the single schoolteacher, whose income after deductions is now £33 a week—a 7 per cent fall in standard of living.

# How I sacked Sir Arthur Irvine

BY JOHN LLYWARCH, Shrewsbury picket

I WAS interested to see that Sir Arthur Irvine, the former Labour Solicitor-General who is now Labour MP for Liverpool Edge Hill, has suggested that Edward Short should be sacked.

When I was standing trial for conspiracy at the Shrewsbury pickets trial last year, I sacked Sir Arthur Irvine.

He was chosen as my barrister by my solicitors. A few days after the trial started, he arranged a meeting with me in a private room in the court. He advised me to plead guilty to conspiracy and to unlawful assembly.

If I did that, he said, I would be let off a charge of 'causing an affray'. What's more, he made it clear that I would not go to prison. He was very insistent about it.

If I had pleaded guilty to conspiracy, the other five trade unionists in the dock with me would have been compromised. They would have found it almost impossible to say that they had not conspired with me, if I admitted I conspired with them.

So I told Sir Arthur what to do with his dirty deal.

And a few days later I 'withdrew my instructions'. Or sacked him, as we say in the building trade.

After a long trial, three of the six were found not guilty of conspiracy.

Frankly, I'm not greatly impressed with Sir Arthur's claims to be the Labour Party's Knight in Shining Armour.



John Llywarch: He rejected Irvine's dirty deal. PICTURE: John Sturrock (Report)



Irvine: 'Plead guilty', he said

# BORN TO RULE... BORN TO TORTURE

UNTIL recently 26-year old Eton-educated Richard Cecil was one of 'our boys in Ireland'. But he resigned his commission as a Grenadier Guard because he and his kind were being prevented from doing their job properly.

Captain Cecil gave a moving explanation of his problems to a recent Tory-Unionist dinner in Belfast. He explained that he and many others favoured a return to the use of torture by the army in Northern Ireland.

Captain Cecil insisted that 'deep torture' was vital to the army's mission in Northern Ireland. This mission,

he claimed, was 'to wipe out terrorism'.

Deep torture is one of the most appalling forms of torture—or uniformed terrorism. The victim is systematically disoriented by being deprived of food and sleep, kept in unfamiliar circumstances, often hooded, subjected to extremes of cold, wet and noise.

The fact that Captain Cecil 'favours a return' to deep torture is most interesting. It proves that the British Army has been using it, a fact that the British Government is now busily denying before the European Human Rights Commission.

Like the overwhelming majority of young officers, Captain Cecil had a good start in life. The good start was his father, Viscount Cranbourne, who in turn had a good start in his father, Lord Salisbury.

Lord Salisbury was one of the most powerful men in the Tory party. He was a millionaire landowner, director of the Westminster Bank and the British South Africa Company.

Salisbury's main preoccupation in life was the British Empire and the need to maintain white supremacy in Africa. His grandson is applying similar doctrines to Ireland.

The fact that Lord Richard Cecil—for this is the captain's name in civilian life—is such a passionate advocate of torture means that his views find expression in some of the highest corners of the land. He is related to the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Harlech, Harold Macmillan and Robert Boothby, or in short, a good cross-section of the very people for whom 'our boys in Ireland' are fighting.

## THE POLICE CLEAR THE POLICE—SENSATION!

IN A sensational and secret report last week, senior police officers found no fault whatever with the actions of senior police officers in the Special Branch over the killing of Kenneth Lennon.

Lennon was found shot dead last month three days after he had told the National Council for Civil Liberties that he had been 'pressured' by the Special Branch to infiltrate Irish organisations in Britain and encourage them to break the law.

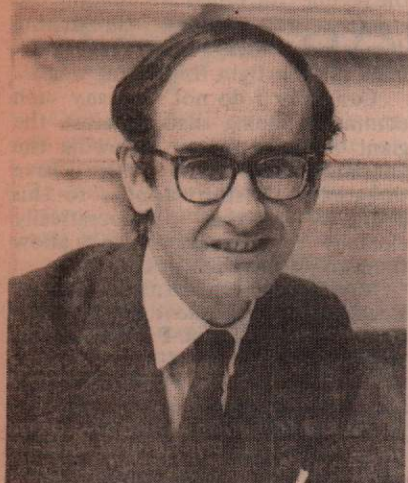
Roy Jenkins, Labour's Home Secretary, promptly set up an 'inquiry' into the Special Branch activities.

The inquiry was conducted in secret by senior police officers.

The report, which is also secret, completely clears the Special Branch. Although the reasons cannot be disclosed because the report is secret, it has been made clear by the senior police officers who were investigated are among the finest men in the country.

Jenkins, who has refused to publish the report, has accepted every word of it. He wants the matter to rest there—or at least until some other members of the Special Branch get themselves in further trouble.

When that happens, he will set up another secret inquiry by senior police officers, which will completely clear the Special Branch. He will accept the report



JOHN NOTT: Oil



LORD JELlicoe: Sugar



SIR PETER RAWLINSON: Property

## Sugar and spice and other things nice

THREE top Tories, all of them Ministers in the last government, are back in the clover.

Lord Jellicoe, who had to resign from the Cabinet when he was caught with his pants down with a prostitute has been forgiven by his class. He has joined the board of Tate and Lyle, which controls more than half British sugar production.

John Nott, who was an influential Treasury Minister during the last government, has accepted a post as 'financial adviser and consultant' to Burmah Oil.

Sir Peter Rawlinson, former Attorney General and leading Tory advocate of more police and legal repression—he pressed for the prosecution of the Shrewsbury 24—

becomes a director of the Mercantile and General Reinsurance Company, a subsidiary of the Prudential, the biggest life and property insurance company in the country.

When Sir Peter is not shouting in the House of Commons about greedy trade unionists he will be able to indulge in his favourite hobby—property speculation.

# Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

## A Party for the junta

'WORKERS at Portugal's biggest steel plant yesterday postponed a threatened strike in the first tangible example of close Communist co-operation with the country's military rulers led by General Spínola,' reported the Daily Telegraph on Tuesday.

'The Communist leaders apparently believe in the sincerity of the Army's programme for a juster Portugal, with a more equitable distribution of wealth,' it said.

The Portuguese Communist Party has learned nothing from the example of Chile. It is calling for 'national unity and discipline'.

In effect, the Communist Party leaders are offering to channel mass actions in 'harmless' directions when they cannot be stopped outright. In return they demand positions in a 'progressive government' to be set up by kind permission of the military.

Spínola may well decide to take Communist Party ministers into a government. The generals need a political force that enjoys working-class support. The Communist Party is the strongest and best-organised political organisation in Portugal today. From the general's point of view it is well worth hiring, if the price is only a few cabinet posts, some 'progressive' noises and a foreign policy friendly to Moscow.

The sordid transaction will, no doubt, be dignified by phrases about a 'Portuguese road to socialism', the uniquely 'progressive' nature of the Portuguese army and similar claptrap.

The facts that the army was the mainstay of a fascist dictatorship for 50 years, that General Spínola is just about as sympathetic to socialism as General Franco—for whom Spínola fought in the Spanish Civil War—and that the junta is the political weapon of Portuguese capitalism. All these facts are being swept under the carpet by the leaders of the Portuguese Communist Party.

Their reward may be government office in the short run. But as soon as they have served their turn, as soon as the generals no longer fear mass working-class action, they will be cast aside like old dishcloths. Alvaro Cunhal, general-secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party, will then suffer the fate of Luis Corvalán, his Chilean counterpart. Much more important, the Portuguese working class will be thrown back again.

It need not happen. The fascist dictatorship was overthrown because of armed rebellion in the African colonies and a mounting wave of illegal strikes in Portugal itself. Spínola and company acted to save Portuguese capitalism by giving it a 'liberal' face.

Their position is not yet strong. Mass action can sweep them aside. Their grip on the army can be destroyed. The alleged 'Maoists' who are urging soldiers to desert and keep their weapons are absolutely right. To disintegrate the army and arm the workers, these are the paramount tasks for real socialists in Portugal today.

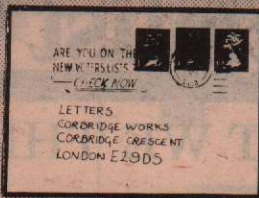
## Corruption at the top

CAPITALISM breeds corruption like dung breeds flies. Success, in our society, is measured by making money out of other people's work. The 'best people' are those who make most and do least.

Politicians and lawyers exist to grease the wheels of the money making machinery. It is hardly surprising that many of them grease their own palms in the process.

Local government is riddled with corruption, most of it of the straight forward palm-greasing variety. National government is also riddled with it, most of it quite legal. Government ministers and top civil servants retire from departments that award vast contracts and become directors of companies that have benefitted from them. How many ex-cabinet ministers are poor?

The trade union movement has to operate in this polluted environment. Where union officials are appointed, or where they are elected for life, the fungus of corruption can flourish. The only safeguard against the Andrew Cunninghams of the movement is democratic election, periodic re-election and payment of officials the average wage of the workers they are supposed to represent.



# LETTERS

## What did you do in the class war?

JUST AFTER four o'clock in the afternoon, enter Billy, just in from school. 'Hey dad, remember that model plane you bought me? How much did it cost?' (Dad) 'Seventeen pence, why?' (Billy) 'Do you know why it cost so much? Because you were out on strike last year.' (Dad) 'Who the bloody hell's been telling you that rubbish?' (Billy) Mr Jackson, our headmaster, so it must be true.' (Dad) 'Ballocks! It's because the bloody gaffers want to make more and more profits ... etc ... etc ...'

Billy is a pupil at the William Lee primary school in the pit village of Calverton. The above is only one example of the reactionary statements made by his headmaster; he always seems to be giving the kids little 'pep talks', extolling the 'virtues' of the capitalist system, exhorting them to work hard at school in order that they will 'do well for themselves' when they leave and imposing stupid rules about methods of dress etc (long trousers are now allowed but jeans are banned).

This is certainly not the only school carrying out this propaganda exercise, in fact it seems to be the rule rather than the exception. Another

local school even went so far as to hold a National Front meeting for its pupils under the auspices of—wait for it—Liberal Studies.

Working class children have it hammered into them from a very early age, that back-stabbing and throat-cutting in the name of 'free enterprise' is good; while the activities of their trades unionist parents in the struggle for better living conditions, are condemned as sinful and destructive.

In the face of such organised propaganda; it is becoming increasingly difficult for parents to instil socialist beliefs in their off-spring, especially when shift-working arises and it is quite possible that a father may not see his kids from one weekend to the next. Surely it is not too much to ask those teachers who are also socialists to help alleviate the situation by openly criticising and condemning such behaviour, not only in the revolutionary manner but in a revolutionary way ie by openly arguing with their reactionary colleagues in front of pupils, and criticising the propagandist nature of the system, both in the classroom and the staff room.—STEVE ABBOT (NUM) Calverton, Notts.

Chile: good  
for you  
Kilbride!

WE WOULD LIKE, through your paper to express our great satisfaction on reading that our brothers at East Kilbride (27 April) have blacked aircraft engines intended for use by the fascist military junta in Chile. We wish them to know as fellow socialists and readers we fully endorse their action. Our stewards committee are sending a letter of congratulations to our brothers in East Kilbride.—G E REES (AUEW shop steward), R A COMLEY, L U ARGELL, J YOUNG (AUEW shop steward), A W COATES (AUEW shop steward), G BLAKE, M MEACHAM (AUEW shop steward), P H PASCOE, C A JEFFRIES, D WILLIAM, P HANISON, J HARRISON, R RUSSELL, and seven other AUEW members and shop-stewards, Number Four Shop, Rolls Royce, Bristol.

## We want change

OUR STRIKE is for higher wages, but that's not all it's about. We are overworked and we do need more staff to provide a decent service for local people.

But some of us now realise that more staff alone is not the answer, for we are expected to run a system which is basically unjust, eg the housing situation. However, we do believe in a welfare state, so the difficulty we face is how to work within the welfare state in order to change it.

We want basic changes in local government services so that these services are at least effective, and so that our work is satisfying. (Not forgetting that many of us receive these services too).

Recently we have realised that we suffer from the same effects of inflation as other workers. We are beginning to see ourselves as workers, as like everyone else and no longer as a privileged class.

For the first time we are using trade union action to begin the fight not only to improve wages, but also to change the service.—SUE EINHORN (Islington NALGO)

## Patriotic Shell

EVERY TIME there is a major strike we are told in the capitalist press that the people concerned are 'holding the country to ransom, threatening democracy, using industrial blackmail' in their fight for a living wage.

Curiously I do not hear any such comments being made against the giant Shell company following the announcement that they have threatened to stop supplies to this country if the (democratically elected) government doesn't allow them to put up their prices.

If this is not blackmail, what is? Keep up the excellent work in the fight for socialism.—P WEBSTER, Wigston.

# SPUC: look at the back streets

READING REPORTS and seeing pictures in the more hysterical press of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child demonstration and counter-demonstration I didn't recognise myself among the 'solid citizens of SPUC' or the 'young people and student groups' of the counter demonstration.

I'm a 32 year old state registered nurse and family planning association trained nurse and was marching with the counter demonstration. My only regret is that I didn't wear my uniform.

I've worked in operating theatres and seen many aborted fetuses, I've also worked on casualty (three years on night duty) and seen the more horrific results of back street abortions.

I've seen many women, often working class and married with two or three kids who've been denied abortion by middle class gynaecologists whose personal and religious views got in the way of their duty as health service employees to implement the abortion act rationally.

The act doesn't give us much freedom of choice anyway but if SPUC gets its way we won't even have that and more women will die of back-street abortions.

Anyone doubting the political importance of women having the right to choose should have seen the forces of reaction on that demonstration.

An essential part of building a better society is for women to control the means of re-production as well as for all of us to control the means of production.

We sang a nice little song as we marched down Piccadilly. 'It's the same the whole world over, It's the poor wot gets the blame, It's the rich wot gets abortions, Ain't it all a bloody shame?'

Very bloody—especially back street ones.—JEAN SPRAY, Brighton.

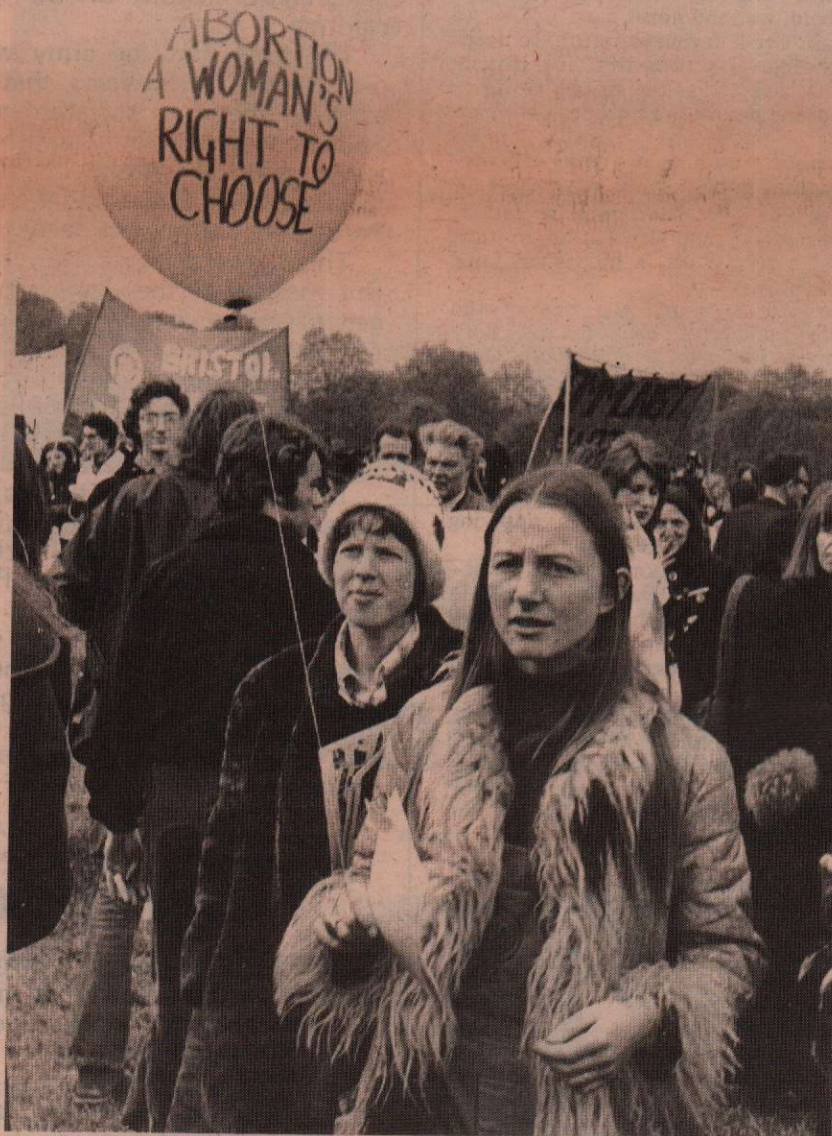
## Not socialist

AS A SOCIALIST I was sorry to see the article 'Abortion—A Right by Barbara Kerr (13 April) and to see an International Socialist banner among the pro-abortionists at the Glasgow Rally.

It is wrong for women to ill-treat or kill their children, whether in utero or after birth.

It is hardly surprising that we are seeing a rapid rise in abortions and a sharp slump in house building—the worst figures since 1929. It is much cheaper for the capitalist state to finance abortions than to provide decent housing for all.

I have been told that nurses in abortion wards are told never to refer to their victims as babies, but as fetuses. Surely the essence of socialism, especially International Socialism, is that we fight for the rights of all human beings. Just as the essential of fascism is the idea of



'A woman's right to choose', but not a right accepted by three of this week's correspondents ...

the 'Master Race' or other group, which has the right to employ negroes at a tenth of the wages paid to whites, to kill Jews and Gypsies or to chemically ruin people's homelands because it is the mineral wealth they are interested in.—COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVID E PARRY, Chairman Midlothian SPUC (as individual).

## Is it 'women's' right to chose?

THE REPORT on the anti-abortion demo, underpins justification of abortion with the pro-abortionist's favourite assertion that it is 'women's right to choose'.

It seems to me that socialists produce such an individualistic slogan when defending abortion.

Marx, and the Jewish-Christian tradition, hold that man is essentially a social being. Presumably something more than individual choice has to be taken into account when the possibility of terminating a pregnancy is considered. Surely when a woman is pregnant she has control not only of her own body but also that of the embryonic human being?

If the International Socialists are going to base their defence of abortion on an appeal to an individual's right to choose, surely to be consistent they must also regard it as a right for an individual worker to choose not to join a union and not to strike.—ROGER CLARKE, Oxford.

## NO RIGHTS

AS A regular subscriber to Socialist Worker I am full of admiration for your vital and commendable work.

However, socialism denies any rights at all to unborn children, a group of people who may legally suffer the greatest oppression of all; namely death.

In her article Barbara Kerr advocates a policy of abortion on demand, which would vastly widen this area of discrimination and which in fact directly contravenes a statement in the United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights.

My opposition to abortion is based solely on scientific evidence that the unborn child is a human being. From conception, he has 46 chromosomes, a characteristic unique to our species and he satisfies all the criteria for life; he is capable of growth and cellular reproduction. By eight weeks' gestation he is recognisably human and his gender is determinable. By three months his brain structure and nervous system are complete and he will move and even suck his thumb. A baby undergoes pain at abortion, sometimes for a prolonged period if the abortion is a 'late' one.

There are nowadays about 10 couples wishing to adopt for every baby available. What is needed is, of course, contraception on demand and increased education in this matter. I am not talking from an ivory tower; I know very well the difficulties involved as I am an unsupported mother bringing up two children on Social Security.

May I conclude by saying that my condemnation of abortion itself emphatically does not extend to the women and girls who have undergone this operation. They are for the most part desperate people doing the only thing they feel to be right in the circumstances.—Ms D J SANDERS, Leamington.

## Cowley talk to wives!

I FEEL THAT you are in danger of doing what you rightly accuse other sections of the press of doing. Dismissing any news which goes against its 'line'.

You state that the carworkers' wives in Oxford 'allowed themselves to be used to weaken the British Leyland strike' without giving any evidence in support of this statement. Whereas if it were similarly baldly stated in another newspaper that strikers 'allowed themselves to be used' presumably by militants we would all be immediately indignant.

As for 'political pin-ups' everyone knows that to make one's views on a subject known one has to hit the papers and I am sure that any female doing so in a Socialist Worker-approved cause would not be thus insultingly described.

I had looked forward to a Socialist Worker interview with these women to find out their views and the feelings that prompted them to take the action, fairly uncharacteristic of housewives, of banding together and making a noise, and I was disappointed.—RUTH MAXWELL, Harlow, Essex.

## EXTRA

Torture 1913,  
Torture 1974

TV SUFFRAGETTES (13 April) completely avoided the key political issues. Anyone who saw Lady Constance Lytton or the episode on 1 May on hunger strikes could not fail to draw the links between events then and in jails today.

My gums where they prised them open, were always sore and bleeding; with bits of loose prised flesh; and other parts of the mouth got bruised or pinched in the struggle. Sometimes the tube was coughed up three or four times before they finally

got it down. Sometimes, but not too often—I was generally much too agitated by then—I felt the tube go right down into the stomach; a sickening, terrifying sensation, especially when it reached the breast. My shoulders were bruised, my back ached during the night. I scarcely slept. Often I fainted once or twice after the feeding.

This is from Sylvia Pankhurst's *The Suffragette Movement* written before the First World War. In 1974 Dolours Price's letters home are little different. This is what has been happening day in day out to the Price sisters, Hugh Feeny and Gerard Kelly for over 170 days.

In 1913 even the Daily Mail, with formidable medical agreement, called forced feeding 'Barbarous and uncivilised'. It converts a short imprisonment to a sentence of unbearable torment, degrading to the community which inflicts it. In 1974, Article 3 of the Euro Convention for the Protection of Human Rights goes by the board in the 'democratic' community that is Britain.

The British left has done very little for the hunger strikers incarcerated today. We have a duty as socialists to take this political struggle to its limits. There are four prisoners two men still kept naked, on hunger strike and five others who we have heard nothing about, serving sentences of up to 30 years. Their demand is for political prisoner status and that they be allowed to return to their own country and it must become a central one for socialists in Britain.

The hunger strike is the only political lever the prisoners have unless the labour movement takes action. The next step is to raise the issues in trade unions and in the Rank and File movement and take effective action. Free the prisoners and give them political status!-CAIT MUNNELLY, JULIET MACMILLAN, York.

30 years of  
'progress'

IN 1938 we were affronted when asked by the management to work overtime and I was one of the few sacked by the management for refusing to do so.

My mother would have been horrified at the thought of going out to work and my father's dignity shattered.

Today overtime is so firmly established that recently a change of government was brought about when the miners refused to work it. Now I work seven day shifts, six nights, five afternoons—and my wife works.

I reckon that if I kept the wife home, got rid of the mini, stopped smoking and drinking I would be about level with my dad in 1938. Most of my mates who work a lot of overtime just shrug their shoulders and say, 'I might as well'.

I believe they do it partly to help out at home and partly because their environment has nothing else to offer—many living in the cultural deserts of large housing estates. So much for 30 odd years of progress.-D PARKES, Cardiff.



A worker in the wrong place? A British soldier in Derry.

A SOLDIER?  
YES, BUT  
A WORKER

I FIND MYSELF agreeing with many of the views in the paper. But one article disturbed and saddened me. It was by Paddy Prendiville and was condoning certain actions against British troops in Ireland—which includes the taking of lives.

A few years ago when unemployment was high my young brother, failing to find work, in desperation joined the army, to do a job for an employer, namely the government. Unfortunately he was sent to Northern Ireland where he is at present.

Now I claim, that he, and indeed all the other boys in the army are workers. Why then is violence aimed at these working class lads who are only carrying on a job, and not at the very obvious bosses who employ them and order them to carry out a job which you know is impossible? Surely pressure should be brought to bear on them, and not on these innocent workers.

In closing I wish you well and hope that you realise why I so vehemently protest when I read articles supporting a cause which threatens my young brother's life.-A FELLOW WORKER, Lancs.

I wanted them to  
stop—not start

I CAN'T AGREE with the innuendo at the end of your report of a seminar in revolutionary warfare at Lancaster University (20 April) attended by army and police officers and a few others.

I have no particular quarrel with your report of most of the seminar, for the simple reason that I was only there for the morning. But what you say about my lecture implies that it was repressive, though not openly so, and that I was mainly concerned with advising the military and the police to 'look at the situation more effectively'.

The one actual point of substance you report me as making—about Russian influence and the growth of revolutionary groups—you have got the wrong way round. In fact my lecture was a lengthy critique of prevailing western military theories about 'subversion' and revolution. There is nothing hush-hug about it, I have a text, and I hope to publish it in due course.

I didn't expect the officers to agree with everything I said, and they didn't. But I happen to think it is important to challenge wrong-

headed notions about revolution and guerrilla warfare similar to those that were prevalent in the French Army in Indochina and Algeria, and then in the US Army in the Vietnam War.

As long ago as 1967 I told an audience which included senior US officers that they should get out of Vietnam. I don't expect bouquets from you for such activities, nor do I expect you to agree with everything I said. But the brickbats were I think off target.

For the record, as I told your reporter on the phone, I was in the early 1960s deputy editor of *Peace News*: not as he states editor.-ADAM ROBERTS, London School of Economics.

## RANK AND FILE?

BEFORE the recent Rank and File conference there was a very good build up in *Socialist Worker*, and after it there were good reports about it. But since then, nothing.

I am bringing it up because I have just persuaded my union (Union of Kodak Workers) to send delegates to any future rank and file conference. But when I was asked by the union for information about future conferences I was unable to answer them. I trust you'll be able to help me with my problem.-ROD MACFIE, Kirkby.

Postal  
Points

SOCIALIST WORKER, IT SHOULD CHANGE, STAY THE SAME, IT'S GREAT, IT'S TERRIBLE. . . . .

WELL, THIS IS WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO . . . I would like to see readers, especially new ones and especially young working men and women with little previous political background write to the paper stating their opinions. Which articles do they like? What are the main faults? . . . When the answers are known the debate will be more informed and less hypothetical.-PAUL WIMPENEY, Rochdale.

GET MORE HACKNEYED . . . This week Hackney Gazette has 26 reports of petty crimes committed by the unemployed and low paid workers. 10 on the terrible state of council housing and the local social services, four reports of violence resulting from bringing up families in poverty, two on property speculators, a death from industrial disease, one from racial violence . . . We should cover this in the paper, but differently. They should be written by people facing the problems and they must show the socialist way out . . . The main concern must remain the spreading of solidarity with all workers facing capitalist oppression, and spreading socialist ideas.-DAVE BLARE, London N1

GIVE US THE REASONS . . . Those who want a radical change in the paper must at least give convincing reasons. The argument is, as I see it, that SW must become a workers' paper, because it doesn't yet have mass factory sales. Therefore the paper should change to reflect workers' situations, and most importantly to educate those workers who do not yet feel at home in the rarefied atmosphere of high socialist theory. But why do critics decide the time is ripe for change? . . . Wider union and factory coverage presents new problems. You can't cover everything. You could change, but remain basically similar by getting rid of articles like *Footprints* about sex and scandal . . . 'Simple' articles mustn't be an excuse for illiterate rubbish . . . It is much easier to sell the paper if you believe in it . . . if the paper ceases to appeal to sellers they may stop selling.-SARAH METTERSHEAD, London SW18.

I LIKE THE REASONS GIVEN . . . If the working class is to go forward the plain language of working class men and women is what we need. I think workers should be encouraged to write their own articles, giving their views, questions about their problems and stories of their misfortunes. Workers who have solved problems can then contribute. This would give working class people all over the country contact with each other.-JOHN LLYWARCH, North Wales.

A WEAPON, NOT A MIRROR . . . It mustn't become a socialist 'Mirror'. It must appeal to the innate intelligence we have . . . The paper has always appealed to that side of the workers' intelligence which is a menace to capitalism—the desire to know, see and think for ourselves. Roger Protz, when editor always sought to foster this. The whole layout, style and content is a tribute to him, his fellow journalists and the desire to foster that spirit. Let us hope that the fine tradition he helped to build does not crumble . . . If I ever receive a bundle of 'Socialist Mirrors' to sell, they will remain in one corner. I am willing to sell a paper for socialist workers, I refuse to sell anything else.-TONY WILD, Gateshead.

IT'S BLOODY AWFUL . . . The 27 April front page headlines took the biscuit for bad journalism. ASBESTOS MURDERS, okay it's important but surely not to warrant the front page . . . Since the issue before the General Election the paper really has been boring. The Cowley strike and Enoch Powell's visit to Ulster should have been front page priorities, but Cowley was on page 15 and there was nothing about Powell . . . I'm getting really pissed off with the paper, and it's inability to show more dynamism and appeal to attract more readers.-P STEWART, Norwich.

IT'S BLOODY MARVELLOUS . . . Congratulations on the quality of 27 April's paper . . . I consider it is the best issue since I bought my first copy in December 1972. It's soberly and intelligently written and its contents are varied and interesting and devoid of those despicable slogans and

phrases which seem to indicate you presume to think your readers aren't too intelligent. Your calm and sensible report—rightly placed in the paper along with other union news of the Leyland Cowley dispute is welcome, particularly in a week when Fleet Street and the TV have made heroines of those contemptible scabs. JOHN DUNCAN, Fakenham.

WRONG THINGS, WRONG PRIORITIES . . . The 27 April front page didn't connect with what people are thinking about. There was the Engineers' pay claim, the pressure on the AUEW from the Industrial Relations Court, the Cowley wives and May Day less than a week away—yet there was no mention of organising any demonstration. The facts about asbestos need exposing, but it should be inside the paper.-LENI SOLINGER, London N16.

YOU START WRONG—AND GO ON FROM THERE . . . Because *Socialist Worker* doesn't start from a socialist viewpoint but starts instead by trying to turn the capitalists' arguments against themselves, it ends up responding to the crisis by saying It's All Lies, It's a Con Trick, and the bosses are making more profit than ever. This approach leaves readers of *Socialist Worker* with the impression that there is no motivation for the capitalist attack on workers living standards other than pure spite and insatiable greed . . . *Socialist Worker* does not give any real socialist ideas. The National Front injects its racist poison into the working class by suggesting that it is precisely corruption that explains why the blacks are first on the housing list, monopolise hospital beds and get preferential treatment at the social security.

For socialists there is neither an ugly nor alluring capitalism. There is just capitalism and that is bad enough.-JO WOODWARD, Leamington.

AMIALE WOLVES . . . We in Wolverhampton IS Branch agree in part to the National Committee's report, we think that there should be: More articles by workers, the paper should be increased in size—but not in price, more pictures—but not full page. A page devoted to educating people about their Civil Rights. We agree that on the whole the political balance of the paper is correct. More should be devoted to the trade unions explaining that when you become a trade unionist this is the beginning and not the end of your troubles. Historical articles are important—for some members this is their first look at Lenin, Trotsky, Marx, etc.—A BUTT



WEST INDIAN STORIES, edited by Andrew SAIkey. 25 short stories by black authors about Caribbean life. Stories by writers who first established the West Indian tradition of modern writing (60p).

GOD'S BITS OF WOOD, Sembene Ousmane's novel on the 1947-48 railway strike in Senegal—how workers' own action gave them the power and confidence to face up to the colonial ruling class (60p).

ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI—WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND REVOLUTIONARY LOVE—an off-print pamphlet from Sheila Rowbotham which examines the available works of the Russian revolutionary—her writings on feminism and communism, the 'new morality' and love (15p).

Please add 4p for postage on pamphlets, 7p for books.

Available by mail order and direct from IS BOOKS, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4, and directly only from IS BOOKS, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow C1; 224 Deritend, High Street, Birmingham; 14 Grange Road, Middlesbrough, or the Coventry Socialist and Trade Union Centre, 65 Queen Victoria Road, Coventry.

## TALKING ABOUT SOCIALISM



RACE differences are mostly skin deep. Sex differences are much deeper. There has probably never been a society in which men and women have been fully equal—although the position of women has varied enormously in different societies.

This is not mainly because it is the women who actually bear children. This physical handicap, if it be such, is compensated for by the fact that women are certainly the stronger sex, or at any rate the tougher one. Everywhere and at all times they live longer, on average, than men.

No, the reason for the inferior position of women is not the nine months children spend in the womb. It is how children are looked after in the next 15 years or so. It is the man-made institution called the family. Or rather family-system, because there have been a whole number of different kinds of family arrangements in different societies, some of them much less oppressive to women than others.

The one we are most used to is a sort of butty system.

The butty system in the pits used to work like this. A miner was paid a lump sum for winning so much coal, much more than he could hew and shift himself. He then made his own arrangements with a number of assistants who worked for him and not for the coalowner. Obviously he had an interest in getting their work on the cheap.

### Output

That is how children are reared under capitalism. The man gets the pay and makes his own 'bargain' with his wife who looks after the offspring and after him as well.

The point needs to be made that the rearing of children is a necessary cost of production. The 'manufacture' of labour-power for the future is every bit as vital as any other kind of output. Without it, any kind of economy would soon run down.

Now obviously women can never be really equal as long as they have to depend on a male butty for an income. Therefore the present family system, considered as an economic unit, cannot survive under socialism. Women with children must have the income they need

## It's the butty system

as of right and not at second hand from their mate.

What other changes in family arrangements will take place is harder to predict. On the face of it the system of one woman, isolated at home, looking after one, two or whatever children, is very restricting to women as well as highly inefficient. To what extent it survives will depend on what women—and men—want.

Many people believe that the present family system is the most 'natural' and so will continue. This belief can only be tested in practice when the economic bonds that now tie women with children to the home are done away with.

One thing is sure. Our current husband, wife plus two and one fifth children family—the average in Britain—has not always existed.

Readers of the Bible will recall that Abraham had many wives. Missionaries discovered hill-tribes in Northern India, a century and a half ago, in which it was quite common for one wife to have two or more husbands. I am not holding up these cases as examples to follow but they do prove that there is nothing unchangeable about family-systems.

Duncan Hallas

# Hypocrisy of a killer

*'The workshop shall be as a sanctuary into which men shall enter with joy in their hearts and laughter in their eyes.'*—Turner Brothers Asbestos, company policy statement 1920.

*'T and N is conscious of its responsibilities as an employer and lays great emphasis on the need to create a harmonious working environment... A company has a social duty to allow employees to realise their full potential and T and N accepts it.'*—Turner and Newall (incorporating Turner Brothers Asbestos), company policy statement 1973.

THE DEAD and the dying in Glasgow's 7/162 insulation workers' branch of the Transport Workers Union are more than enough to prove that Turner and Newall's statements of company policy are no more than distilled hypocrisy and deceit.

In just eight years to 1973, 82 men, one in ten, in the branch are known to have died from causes associated with asbestosis. 50 more are receiving industrial disease pensions. All were exposed to the known hazards of asbestos while working for Turner and Newall and its competitors in the insulation business.



Nettie Brown and grand-daughter Sharon

## Scrapped

But the toll of misery inflicted in the pursuit of profit goes further than the men who have been diseased.

Employers don't have to—and don't—pay wages to those they have injured. They just cast them aside to suffer in silence and die, protected by nothing more than the pittance of social security. Used as machines, men are scrapped like machines.

Families too feel the blow. What happens to them as their men are eaten away by industrial disease? Who knows—there are no official statistics on this aspect of the civilised society.

But Nettie Brown knows. It was done to her and her husband Jas. He died on 23 July 1972 from cancer induced by asbestos.

Jas was just 47 when he went from being a fit man. He loved dancing and football. And in the mornings he would watch for the bus coming round the corner, run out of the house and sprint down the three flights of stairs and catch it.

## Insisted

Then all of a sudden he took this pain and went into hospital. That was just after the New Year. I was told he had a cankerous fluid in his lung. In seven months he was dead.

We never knew anything about asbestosis until his brother went to Canada and sent back some booklets. But that didn't really mean anything

## THE ASBESTOS MURDERS

Laurie Flynn's third article

to me. It was when he took sick he said: "I've got the bug" and went on about his hands. I said: "What in God's name is the bug?"

I remembered that when he was gone. That's why I allowed a post-mortem.

He was in Glasgow Royal Infirmary with it and I came down ill. He insisted on coming out for two weeks to let me go in. That's the sort of man he was.

He was in and out of hospital. They gave him a biopsy. It's a very heavy operation to see if someone has got the bug. After that he got really bad.

When he was home he was a changed man. He couldn't be bothered to see anyone. He couldn't walk. His hair went grey. His legs were as thin as a child's. It was pathetic. I used to hope that I'd never have to look on him again. That's what it does to you.

They took his football and his dancing. It got so bad he couldn't even take a glass of beer. He just withered away, sitting and sitting, with the dog for company.

Jas hadn't a clue how little time he had. The doctors told me, not him. I went away to a skeleton as a result. It got so bad I was frightened to go into the front room to see how he was first thing in the morning. I used to listen from behind the door.

## Penny

He worked with them all, Newalls, Cape, Wrights Andersons and the others. He was never off work until he took the bug. He chased the over-time. He was too conscientious was he?

When he had worked with in Wales sent a sheet. But through all our

time of troubles, when Jas was dying, no one from any of the firms came near. We never had a penny off them in our time of trial. When he was gone, they sent someone along to the funeral.

He was used to good money and he always handed it in to the house-keeping and we lived quite well. But then just when you really need money, bang—no wages. Social security is your lot.

Just after Jas died I had my pension. But then they cut off the earnings-related payment. I was reduced to the princely sum of £5.33 a week. My rent alone was £3 a week plus gas and electricity. But that meant nothing.

## Disgrace

They said: "You're young enough to get a job." I said: "Oh, aye. But what are you going to give me till I get one?" They said £2. I asked if that included an allowance for the rent. They said it did. You're supposed to sign on twice a week to get this. It sickened me. I just went off and got a job.

If it hadn't been for the union men I wouldn't do much about a claim. The legal set-up is a disgrace. It's always in someone else's hands and you don't hear a lot.

You can't be after them all the time. You have your life to live. You have to go to work. You haven't a clue how it's going. One time you think you'll get something and then you think it's just a passing fancy.

You feel that you'll be kicking up the daisies long before they pay a penny out. You keep saying to yourself: "Are there a lot of folk like me. Or am I just the unlucky one?"



### TRAINING COMMITTEE/STUDENT COMMITTEE

- Day 1: IS traditions/political perspectives
- Day 2: The student movement 1966-1974
- Day 3: Practical work
- July 24-25: EDINBURGH
- July 26-28: YORK
- July 29-31: MANCHESTER
- Aug 1-3: BRISTOL
- Aug 4-6: LONDON

SUMMER SCHOOLS

WELL, IT WAS LIKE THIS...

# Split shift Wilf

ON MY WAY to the Newt's Arms the other evening I heard my name called as I passed the home of an old acquaintance. Albert is a shift-worker at the local chemical works, but I don't see him often owing to the very complicated arrangement of his hours of work. He has explained them to me several times, but they are so unusual and oddly arranged that I have never managed to understand them properly.

'I wonder if you could tell me if my tie is straight?' said Albert, coming to his garden gate. 'I've just finished a "split" 23-hour shift and have to rush off to a wedding reception, and the wife's out.'

I stopped. 'Your tie is fairly straight,' I said. 'However you have forgotten to put your shirt on.'

'Why, so I have!' he exclaimed. 'Thanks for telling me.' He was turning to go inside when I gently stopped him. 'In addition,' I observed, 'you have got your trousers on back to front, and your braces are dangling on the ground.'

'Good Lord!' he said. 'Well I never!'

'I hope you don't mind me remarking,' I continued, 'but you are wearing odd socks. One is green and the other is yellow.' 'Well well, so I am,' he muttered. 'Tell me, am I all right otherwise?'

## Bristles

'Now you mention it, you are wearing your pullover inside-out and your jacket is buttoned in the wrong buttonholes. Your shoes are on the wrong feet and appear to be from two different pairs. On one foot you have a ladies bedroom slipper and on the other what looks like a child's football boot. There is a hairbrush stuck in the back of your head, and whereas one side of your face is nice and smooth the other is covered with coarse bristles and shaving cream.'

'Is that all?' What I could see of his red-rimmed eyes stared at me out of his haggard face.

'Not quite. You seem to have placed one arm in the lining of your overcoat rather than the armhole, one of your turn-ups is turned down, and the label on the back of your vest is clearly visible at the front. Also you are wearing your false teeth over your eyes and have put your spectacles in your mouth.'

Albert's drawn, tired face twisted with rage and frustration as he rushed back into the house. As I went on towards the public bar entrance of the Newt's Arms I pondered upon the system of working which can reduce a healthy and alert man into a mass of twitching nerve-ends. In this country they call it 'Continental' shift-working, but I hear that on the Continent its common name is 'English' shifts.

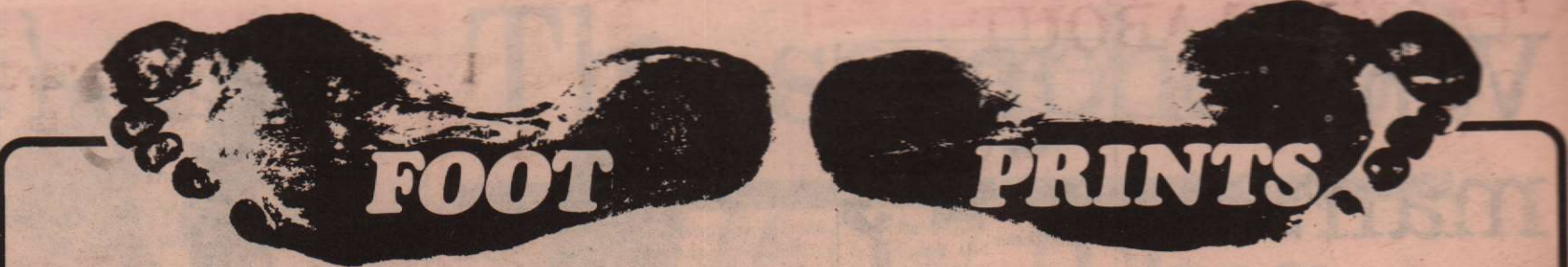
PHIL EVANS

Socialist ideas aren't just to be found in thick volumes of theory. They are present in the small change of life, in our jokes and our curses, the anecdotes and the stories we tell to keep ourselves going. Please send us yours. There are plenty of funny things that happened on the way to the foreman.

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LORD ROBENS: He matters, said Poulson

# If Alf says yes, then yes it is

AS USUAL, once the press starts to probe into corruption, they miss all the important points.

The most interesting fact by far in the Smith/Cunningham trial at Leeds was the mention, for the first time in the Poulson case, of Lord Robens, a former chairman of the

National Coal Board and former MP for Blyth, where the Poulson corruption case starts and finishes, and where Edward Short MP used to be a headmaster.

Robens, Socialist Worker readers will remember, was involved in some interesting 'outside activities' while he was chairman of the Coal Board. Public relations work for the

board was farmed out to a public relations firm set up by Lord Robens' son, young Alfred. Mining machinery contracts made a fortune for the shareholders of a Nottingham engineering company whose chairman's daughter was married to Lord Robens' son—and then young Alf became a director.

The 'pit props' scandal has for many years run side by side with the Poulson scandal, and now for the first time there is some sign that the two have Lord Robens in common.

Certainly, Poulson did a lot of work for the National Coal Board in Yorkshire. He designed the Doncaster NCB headquarters, plus a large number of pit-head baths.

He was also on friendly terms with the right-wing leaders of the miners' union, and, as we have seen, promised to keep a garage owned by Bill O'Brien, then a lodge secretary at Glasshoughton pit, in plenty of work in Poulson cars.

Now comes some evidence that Poulson was in touch with Robens.

In 1966, Poulson was hunting a contract for Coal Board houses in Castleford. He wrote to T Dan Smith on 16 August 1966 that Councillor Lee of Bradford 'told me that you had been in touch to ask him to go to Castleford about the coal board housing.'

'Dan, it is no use whatsoever a little mouse going out on this. Lee is an excellent type, but he cannot get to Lord Robens—you must do this... Lee doesn't know anyone at Castleford, Dan, no one that matters, that is, and I think that Lord Robens matters. If he says, yes it is.'

Well, it seems Lord Robens did say Yes in that case—at least to the tune of Poulson getting his fees.

But I wonder how much Lord Robens saw of Dan Smith and John Poulson in those heady days at the Coal Board and as MP for Blyth.



## Who runs the country?

SIX HUNDRED of London's best hotels have got together to publish a magazine for their guests entitled Passport to London. The idea is to sell the right kind of London to the inhabitants of the hotels—more than four-fifths of whom are on expense accounts. Here is a sample of the front page article in the current issue, entitled 'Here is the Real London'

You would have to get a friend to take you to a St. James's Gentleman's Club where the members' mail comes round on silver salvers. You might perhaps feel once you are inside that it is there that Things That Matter are done by People Who Matter. There is The City, that Square Mile beyond Temple Bar, where more financial business is done than anywhere else in the world. There is the Stock Exchange, in its midst, the bloodstream of industrial and commercial Britain. There are the High Courts of Justice where bewigged judges daily make it clear that no-one in Britain is above the law not even the Prime Minister.

These, the lairs of the Establishment, will give you an idea of the real London, the London behind the "sights". For the Establishment is that mysterious, typically British force in public life which is more powerful than any government of the day. Its nod is law, its frown is insurmountable.

So do not be fooled by talk of a £3,000 million British trade deficit, trade union belligerency, student revolt or whatever. The People Who Make The Most noise are not The People Who Matter. The People Who Do Matter you will not notice so much. They do not need to be noticed. The real leaders of Britain do not wear badges in Bond Street, though they may wear tweeds. But they are the people whose forebears made Britain GREAT.

It is worthwhile to try to see behind London's "sights". For once you understand what is there then you will never be in any doubt that There'll Always Be An England.

## QUOTES OF THE WEEK

FROM the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa:

'The past year has been an important one in the fields of industrial relations'

'The new structure which was implemented over a period of some months caused dissatisfaction among a section of black workers... The demonstration which took place on 11th September deteriorated into a riot of such proportions that the police were called in. During the course of restoring order, 12 men lost their lives.'

'We regret to record the death of 19 miners resulting from a violent rockburst on 19 December 1973'

And from an article by Sir Arthur Snelling, formerly British Ambassador to South Africa, in the Financial Times on 19 April:

'At this juncture, the most effective action the British government could take to improve the lot of Africans in South Africa would be to consult industrialists...'

## The £730m in your pocket

AT A May Day meeting in Manchester a worker at one of Shell refineries thrust into my hand a copy of the March issue of Spectrum, a ludicrous public relations sheet in which Shell 'explains' to its workers about the glorious triumphs of the company.

In an article titled 'The facts behind the profits' Shell make an effort to explain to their workers why their profits last year of £730 million was nothing really, and shouldn't be seen as an excuse for higher wage demands.

'Investment is recorded at historical cost whereas net income is shown in current pounds, which of course have lower purchasing power.'

'In other words, earnings represent "mini-pounds" made on "maxi-pound" investments,' it says.

As the Shell worker put it: 'It's the pound in your pocket all over again. We get inflationary pounds in wages and they get mini-pounds in profits.'

## WELSH CONNECTION

I NOTICE Edward Short says he never met John Poulson. I wonder if the same can be said for his wife, Jennie?

Jennie Short is obviously interested in business on her own account. When the second-mortgage operator and Welsh usurer Sir Julian Hodge launched his Commercial Bank of Wales in 1972, a large number of people close to the Labour Party were lucky enough to get shares in it. These included eight Labour MPs in South Wales.

Jennie Short, who doesn't seem to have any immediate Welsh connection, was also fortunate enough to get hold of 1000 Hodge shares.

# White man's burden: 50,000 dead



CHINTHEYA, a four-year-old girl, was crying, terrified. A soldier, pretending to be sorry for her, went up to her and, fondling the child, asked her if she was hungry.

Without waiting for a reply, he went on: 'Here's your bottle . . . ' And he shoved the barrel of his rifle into the child's mouth, saying 'suck it'. And he fired. The child fell with a gaping hole in the back of her head.

That murder, recounted by a group of priests in Mozambique, tells a little of Portugal's 'civilising mission' in Africa. It is no isolated horror story.

Britain's oldest ally, armed to the teeth by NATO, has shot, burned and beheaded rebellious Africans in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. And when that has failed, they have napalmed and defoliated.

But the terror has always rebounded back on them, strengthening the revolts they hoped to destroy and turning political protest into guerrilla warfare.

**GUINE:** In 1959, dockers striking for more pay in Pijiguiti, Bissau, were shot down. Fifty died, many more were wounded. After three years of peaceful undercover political work, the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) now laid its plans for a long guerrilla war.

Its first offensive was launched in 1963. Today, despite the assassination of its leader Amilcar Cabral last year, it controls three-quarters of the country, has set up a National Assembly and is recognised by dozens of states.

**ANGOLA:** In 1961, a revolt against forced labour on cotton plantations, was answered by a wave of indiscriminate Portuguese ground and air attacks on African villages. A raid to free political

# Portuguese men- British barba

ONE WORD sums up Portugal's 'civilising mission' in Africa. Savagery. Another sums up Britain's liberal 'concern' over that savagery: Hypocrisy.

While Portugal has massacred and pillaged, British big business has protested all the way to the bank, piling up the profits and then, like some sort of colonial Dick Emery, cooing 'Ooh, you are awful, but I like you.'

Portugal has fired the bullets, but Britain, above all other nations of the Free World, has loaded the gun.

Massive British firms provide the major pillar for the brutal exploitation of millions of workers throughout Southern Africa.

## Rake-off

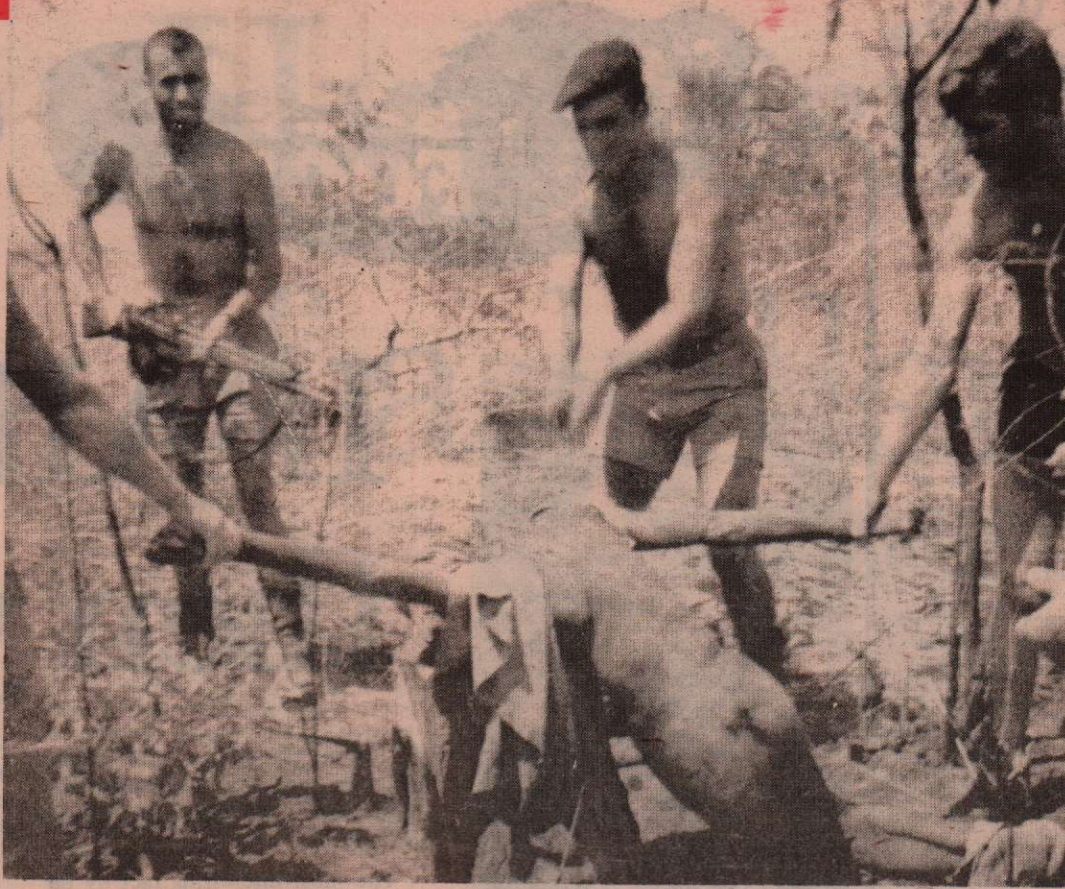
And, in the process, they have reduced backward Portugal to a colony itself, to a middleman who does the dirty work while they collect the rake-off.

Britain, Portugal's biggest trading partner, supplies the soldiers who defend 'freedom' in Angola and Mozambique with beer (Whitbread) and cigarettes (British-American Tobacco).

It supplies radio equipment and communications systems (Plessey and Racal) to track down the 'terrorists'.

It services and supplies vehicles and aircraft (Robert Hudson) for 'pacifying the natives'.

British Petroleum, half-owned by the British government, is involved in producing a herbicide



A routine beheading for an uppity black: part of Portugal's 'civilising mission' in Africa.

**FICTION . . .**  
'No-one can ever accuse the Portuguese of racialism. You have set an example to black and white. The difference of opinion between us has been on the scope and pace of advance.' Sir Alec Douglas-Home, during official visit to Lisbon, June 1971.

**FACT . . .**  
'There is a social legislation exclusively for Africans which is considered to be the legal establishment of a discriminatory regime.' From a confidential report commissioned by the Portuguese government on 'relevant aspects of Counter-subversion in Angola.'

which has been sprayed on the crops of Mozambicans who insufficiently appreciated the value of Western civilisation.

Many of these firms subsidise 'peace and order' and 'the defence of national property' with payments to the Portuguese army. Others go further still.

One British-backed firm, the Angola Diamond Company, spent £1,450,000 on training a special para-military force to guard its diamond fields.

There are other civilised and highly profitable practices. Sena Sugar produces two-thirds of Mozambique's sugar with the aid of forced labour, the modern form of slavery.

Most of its 5000 workers are paid £10.40 a month, from which £3.48 is deducted for food and clothing. Many are paid a lot less. One former Sena worker earned £1.10 a month. He said:

'Like most of the other workers, I had been arrested and given to the company to work. Every day we were given a certain amount of work which we had to finish in time.

'Those who did not finish were beaten and did not get paid.'

Last year, Sena's pre-tax profits were £1,500,000. Its chairman Lt-Col John Hornung, OBE, MC, admitted wages were poor but blamed that on the 'laziness' of the workers.

He said: 'Once they earn so much, they are not interested in earning any more.'

When he is not exploiting African workers, Hornung spends his time acting as Lieutenant of the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeomen of the Guard.



'I leave Mozambique with the opinion that it is a happy people of all races work in harmony for the common happiness.'—Duncan Sandys, spring 1971

Britain's finger in the Southern Africa pie has led to enormous backing for the dam being built at Cabora Bassa in Mozambique, which, like that being built at Cunene in Angola, would provide a white fortress against the advance of the liberation movements and also make black states such as Zambia economically dependent.

Involved in this colonial monster are Barclays Bank, ICI, Anglo-American, Guest Keen and Nettlefolds, and United Transport. British Leyland has opened an assembly plant near the Mozambique capital of Lourenco Marques to cash in on the expected boom.

Britain's enormous investments in Southern Africa, which underpin Portuguese and apartheid brutality, date back centuries.

Its economic position of a cold loosened after the power in 1926.

Britain recognises more quickly than predecessors.

**FICTION . . .**  
'The next Labour Government will play its full part in international action designed to bring about an end to minority rule in Southern Africa.' Part of resolution passed at last year's Labour Party conference.

**FACT . . .**  
Peter Shore, Labour's Trade Secretary, has authorised an £18,000,000 payment to the South African government to enable British business to secure orders for railway equipment from the Vorster regime.

And last month, a Labour Government-subsidised trade mission from the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited Mozambique in search of 'profitable opportunities'.

prisoners from a jail in Luanda and an uprising in Northern Angola were also viciously put down. The toll: 50,000 dead.

Thirteen years later, the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) controls one-third of the countryside and is driving on towards the main towns.

**MOZAMBIQUE:** In 1960, about 600 Africans were massacred in Mueda after peaceful protesters had been tricked into attending a meeting where they would be granted 'independence'.

Four years of preparation later, FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) began an armed struggle which has since won them control of much of Northern Mozambique and half of Tete province, where the strategic Cabora Bassa dam is being built.

# Feeling shaky, Mr Smith?

ONE MAN who greeted the Portuguese coup with something less than rapture was Ian Smith of Rhodesia. His white minority regime, harassed by a decade of sanctions and increasingly successful guerrilla activity, leans heavily on support from South Africa and Portugal.

And so any moves towards black independence in Mozambique, through which landlocked Rhodesia has vital supply routes, could mean the beginning

of the end for Smith's racist dictatorship.

South Africa's apartheid bosses, irritated by having to commit more and more arms and men to Smith's defence, would prefer Malawi-style black puppet states in Rhodesia and Mozambique.

If such a government was set up in Mozambique, South Africa would probably withdraw its line of defence south from Rhodesia . . . and sell Smith and company down the Limpopo.

**CO**  
**YO**  
554 political Mozambique survivor of food and they gave starvation.





'I didn't have equal opportunity in my own home, so how the hell is management going to give it me?'

JEAN JEPSON, Transport Workers' Union convenor at Armstrongs Patents in Beverley, Yorkshire, was sacked in January. It was the height of the Tory three-day week. The workers were expected to work long shifts on the three days when they had power, and to work the other two days on power from a generator.

All, that is, except 80 women who weren't to work or get paid for these two days—a breaking by management of the guaranteed wage agreement.

The workers wouldn't have it. If the 80 couldn't be paid then they wouldn't work the long shifts—or the two extra days. On 10 and 11 January they stayed away from work.

They returned the following Monday. Explained Jean: 'I called a meeting and we decided to co-operate on the long shifts, but to insist on keeping the guaranteed wage agreement.'

Two hours after the meeting the management broadcast over the Tannoy, 'We have now sacked your convenor. Anybody supporting her will be in the same position. If there's a large majority, we'll close the factory.'

### Suspected

Those words began a battle which has continued ever since. 130 workers came out in Jean's support, including Pat Lloyd, deputy convenor and Jean's friend. They stayed out until the union's 'full' inquiry, a week later.

'It was made up of four management, two shop stewards picked by management and two picked by me,' said Jean. 'The result? Six to two against me. Just what we'd suspected.'

'The following day the district officer of my union told us there was nothing to do but go back to work—well there was all hell let loose at the suggestion. Fifty said they'd go back, the others said they wouldn't go back at any price and if that was the union's attitude they'd probably lose some good members.'

'Eventually 100 people left Armstrongs. They refused to go back in, but couldn't afford to stay out because we weren't getting any money from the union. When the picket line dwindled to 30, big brave Armstrongs got the courage to come out and give us all our cards.'

'Let's get it straight, it's not a strike, it's a dispute which we intend to carry on until we're 60!' says Jean.

Below Jean and Pat talk about the struggle, how they came to socialism and their ideas about the position of women in this society.

## GET UP AND FIGHT

**ANYONE** who comes on a bit militant like me is a danger to management, especially if it's a woman. The women's angle is important.

You see half my members were men, and I got them united—supporting women—supporting equal opportunities and equal pay. We had resolutions on it which had been taken at mass meetings, not in small branch meetings, so this had to stop as far as the bosses were concerned.

My brother was given a trade, but I didn't have equal opportunity

within my own home so how the hell is management going to give it to me?

Say a mother has a boy and a girl. She automatically brings the girl up with a little doll and she is automatically put into motherhood as a child, while the boy has a Meccano set.

If I had a girl she would have a Meccano set and if she had a doll so would my son.

### Afford

The boy always gets the large piece of meat although the girl may be twice as big and she needs nourishing just as much as the boy. There's an old saying 'A son's a son until he finds a wife. A daughter's a daughter for the rest of her life.'

# Now here is a works announcement: Your convenor is sacked!



Jean Jepson with some of the 130 who struck in her support

# an announcement: Your convenor is sacked!

## IT OPENED MY EYES

**WHEN** Winston Churchill used to come on the wireless we were told to shut up. Why? Well it was a great honour. That was the way I was brought up and it was damn well wrong. As I got older I became a rebel in my own family and my mother looked down on me.

But I was never really politically minded until the fight at Armstrongs. It's opened my eyes and changed my ideas. I always considered myself a good trade unionist, a good shop steward and I always fought for members of my own department. But I thought of myself a little bit to the right if anything.

But now my political ideas have been strengthened by our struggle, strengthened within the factory and it's made me think not only of people within the little empire of Armstrongs but also of the whole working-class struggle which I want to be part of.

I want to belong to an organisation that I can see is doing something solid and concrete for the working class, a good political organisation. I don't think a good trade union is enough.

It was a mistake when I agreed to going back and calling off the strike. But we had nobody to lead us and this great strong union we heard so much about let us down.

I've had to wait for youngsters to come and have courage to do this. Why didn't I waken from my slumber?

I was one of the lambs. It has taken a younger generation of lions to wake me up. But now, if my health holds out I'm good for another 20 years!



Pat Lloyd: 'My political ideas have been strengthened by our struggle'

A small working family can only afford one child to be educated and that will automatically be the boy. I was left to wander up and down in a factory all my life.

We're educated to believe that good guys build factories for us silly little girls to go and sew shirts in. And it isn't true! Then we wind up sitting at these boring monotonous jobs and just plod along.

Recently I've had a lot of time sitting on the picket line to think about it and it stands to reason that it suits the bosses to have women like this. Women have got to liberate themselves nobody else is going to liberate them. Women class themselves in their own homes as second-class citizens.

Young mothers must start by giving their daughters equal opportunities within their own home. I want to get among as many women as possible and make them join the working class struggle for themselves and their families.

### Debt

I owe a debt to my grandfather who never returned to work after the General Strike. I saw him victimised—and my father. I owed something to both of them, they'd made this Earth a little better to live on and I had a debt to pay back.

One year I went to school and I thought: 'There's only about six of us left alive of those of us who were here before Christmas. Why?'

Because the rest of us were boys, and they went into Barnsley Main Colliery. Two weeks later there was an explosion and they all got killed.

Who killed them? The bloody capitalist system!

My grandfather had been victimised because he stood outside Barnsley Main and told them it was full of gas. It was a gas leak at Fitzwilliam Seam which blew up those comrades I went to school with...

Get off your arses girls! Look after your children and their future. So you want to become a robot in a factory like I was? If there was a revolution tomorrow we'd still have factories, but we'd be part of that factory—it will be our factory—we'd have an interest to work in it.

# WOMENS VOICE



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# So you want to be a robot in a factory...

# The iron law

from Bertolt Brecht's play *The Mother*

**PAVEL** Sit down with us, Mother, we want to explain it to you.

**IVAN** You see, in the leaflet it said we workers shouldn't put up with Mr Suchlinov cutting the wages he pays us as and when he pleases.

**VLASOVA** Nonsense, what are you going to do to stop him? Why shouldn't Mr Suchlinov be able to cut the wages he pays you as and when he pleases? Does his factory belong to him or doesn't it?

**PAVEL** It belongs to him.

**VLASOVA** Right then. This table, for example, belongs to me. Now I'll ask you a question: can I do what I like with this table?

**ANDREI** Yes, Mrs Vlasova. You can do what you like with it.

**VLASOVA** Right then. Can I, for example, smash it to pieces if I like?

**ANTON** Yes, you can smash it to pieces if you like.

**VLASOVA** Aha! In that case Mr Suchlinov, whose factory belongs to him just as my table does to me, can do what he likes with it.

**PAVEL** No.

**VLASOVA** Why not?

**PAVEL** Because he needs us workers for his factory.

**VLASOVA** But what if he doesn't need you any more?

**IVAN** Look, Mrs Vlasova, look at it this way: some days he needs us, some days he doesn't.

**ANTON** Right.

**IVAN** When he needs us, we have to be there. When he doesn't need us, we're still there. Where else can we go? And he knows that. He doesn't always need us, but we always need him. He counts on that.

Mr Suchlinov has got his machines standing there, all right. But those are our tools. We haven't got any others. We haven't got any other looms or lathes for the very reason it's Mr Suchlinov's machines we use. His factory belongs to him, but when he shuts it, he takes our tools away.

**VLASOVA** Because your tools belong to him the way my table does to me.

**ANTON** Yes, but do you think it's right our tools belong to him?

**VLASOVA (loudly)** No! But whether I think it's right or whether I don't, they still belong to him, don't they. Somebody could just as well not think it right my table belongs to me.

**ANDREI** Then we say, there's a difference between owning a table and owning a factory.

**MASCHA** Of course a table can belong to you, a chair too. That doesn't hurt anybody, does it. Even if you put it on the roof, what harm can it do? If you own a factory, though, you can hurt many hundreds of people.

**IVAN** Because you have their tools in your possession, and that way you can use people.

**VLASOVA** Yes all right, he can use us. Don't treat me as if I hadn't noticed that over the last forty years. There's only one thing I haven't noticed, though, and that is that there's anything you can do about it.

**ANTON** Mrs Vlasova, we've now reached the point in talking about Mr Suchlinov's property where we've established that his factory is property of a totally different kind

from, say, your table. He can use this property to use us.

**IVAN** And his property has yet another unusual property: unless he uses us with it, it's absolutely worthless to him. Only as long as it's our tool is it worth anything to him. When it's no longer our means of production, it's a heap of old iron. So he's also dependent on us with his property.

**VLASOVA** All right. But how are you going to prove to him that he's dependent on you?

**ANDREI** Look; if he, Pavel Vlasov, goes up to Mr Suchlinov and says: Mr Suchlinov, without me your factory is a heap of old iron, so you can't knock my wages down as and when you please, Mr Suchlinov will laugh and throw Vlasov out.

But when all the Vlasovs in Tver, eight hundred Vlasovs, stand there and say the same thing, Mr Suchlinov won't be laughing any more.

**VLASOVA** And that's what your strike is?

**PAVEL** Yes, that's what our strike is.



**'It is strange the indifference to drama with drama everywhere around us—in the solemn, muttering gossip of old men and women, in the gestures we make, in what we say and how we say it, in our prayers, curses, regrets for the past, hopes for the future and our birth, our growth, our decline, and our death; all of them, day by day, tintured deep with politics; for politics are more than a clever speech, a point gained against an opposite, a passing from one diversion into another. It is a searching out, a finding out of the best way of ordering life to bring out the brightest and fullest development of the mind, body and soul of man. And no bigger influence exists for this end than the influence of the theatre.'**—Sean O'Casey

## The poor little rich man

DON'T believe what you may have read about *The Great Gatsby*. It may have been overpublicised and just another expensive way of making a fortune for Paramount Pictures, but it is also a good film.

The *Great Gatsby* was a novel written in the early 1920s by F Scott Fitzgerald, who—like many writers—was hailed as 'great' some years after he died of drink and disillusionment in 1940s Hollywood. It is about the Jazz Age, the period of the 1920s when for the upper classes of the USA the war was over, money came out of gold taps and the Great Depression was a hangover the morning after.

That is what the film has been sold on. Money, glamour, clothes and film star Robert Redford. But it isn't what the film is about.

The film is about a wasteland, created by money, and people obsessed with what money can do for them. Gatsby (Robert Redford) is the poor boy who makes good by breaking the law—he is involved in

mysterious crooked dealings. He gets rich and thinks he is powerful. And he loves the spoiled rich girl from way back, when he was a poor boy.

But the rich girl has got married to established money, by name Tom Buchanan, who came from the right family, and knows how to use power. He is insensitive, racist and ruthless.

### Doomed

Much of the film takes place in the homes of Gatsby and Buchanan, places where money oozes out of the wallpaper. But other scenes are in the Valley of Ashes where Wilson, an impoverished garage owner lives with his wife surrounded by garbage and petrol cans.

Wilson wants to go out West, where he can live a 'decent life'. And Gatsby came from the West to lead a 'decent life', and they are both doomed.

They both believe in the system, but the system and specifically

Buchanan, doesn't believe in them.

The film drags in places. But not usually. Wilson, seeking to force his wife out with him to the West, gazes at a tattered old billboard and threatens his wife with God's vengeance. But there's no God in the world that the Buchanans have made. 'Don't you realise that God is an advertisement!' screams his wife.

At the centre of the film is the 'love' of Gatsby for Daisy. It isn't really love, but an obsession. An obsession that there must be something more than accumulating money and it must be the beautiful Daisy. But the 'beautiful little fool' is money on two legs.

The film ends with the sound of 'Ain't We Got Fun' echoing eerily out of the past. 'The rich get rich and the poor get poorer' go the words. And they do too, back in the 1920s or now. All that wealth, burned up because in 'this world' you are expected to spend, rot or kill one another.

JOHN TELFAIR

PAM BRIGHTON is the producer of a new version of Bertolt Brecht's play *St Joan* and the Stockyards, which opened this week at the Half Moon Theatre in Alie St, White-chapel, London. During rehearsals she talked about the play.

'Brecht wrote *St Joan* just as he was becoming a Communist. He was literally devouring Marx's *Das Kapital* and at the same time he came across *The Jungle*, which is a socialist novel about the conditions in the Chicago slaughterhouses. He hit on the idea of mixing up the two, using the backstage manoeuvres of the capitalists in the meat packing trade to show Marx's ideas.

'The play is a subtle dramatisation of Marxist ideas. The most important capitalist is called Mauler. He's busy taking over all the smaller suppliers and distributors and organising meat monopolies, but he is the only one who realises the power that his workers have.

'While the others don't give a damn about the unemployed, Mauler is terrified that they will get organised. He realises that the lock-out of the meat packers might rebound if the strikers stay solid and if the Communists can organise a city-wide sympathy stoppage.

'He understands Marxism upside down almost. He uses *St Joan*, a sentimental welfare worker with the 'poor's interest at heart', to weaken the strike with sentimental pacifism when what's needed is hard organisation. He's really arguing that the welfare state is a better weapon than the lockout.

'It's a great play to be producing now because once again companies are showing record profits, really juicy ones, when cutting real wages and forcing the general standard of living down. I was really knocked out when, after the first run through, the actors whisked out their notebooks and started asking me, not about who was getting the best lines, but about company profits and the law of surplus value.

'But we've still not got a working-class audience, like Brecht could get in the 1930s through the Communist Party. And until we have that, it's all a bit of a waste of time really.'



Robert Redford in *The Great Gatsby*

## Feeling alien at the ICA

THE Institute of Contemporary Art in London—just up from Buckingham Palace in The Mall, is a smart gallery in a smart street. Its name and address is enough to put most people off from going there.

But this month the ICA has run a series on 'Alienation' and one of the most impressive sections is an exhibition by Conrad Atkinson, a Cumberland artist who is secretary of the Artists Union.

Now this is no ordinary art exhibition where people can wander aimlessly around a display. It's starkly called 'Work, Wages and Prices'. Lining the walls are the telex reports of dealings on the Stock Exchange on the day Wilson announced his cabinet. Below these are blown-up photos of the wage-slips of a railway worker, an agricultural labourer and a shop assistant.

Below these are a series of single facts about the privileges of the rich in their deals with the law, while wallowing in disgusting, extravagant luxury. Since the exhibition opened some trade unions have added their own statistics to it.

Critics have attacked Atkinson for committing one of the greatest crimes in the art world—talking about politics and using art as socialist propaganda. They see art as something separate from and superior to life.

### Politics

What they really mean is 'leave the world as it is'. Art itself is big business and the wealthy owners of galleries have their own interests in keeping socialism out of art.

This particular exhibition is not aimed at working people who, as Atkinson is well aware, are effectively excluded from the ICA. But he intends this exhibition to influence artists and encourage them to take political stands. There must be many socialist artists who find it hard to get their work shown, simply because of their politics.

Atkinson doesn't think that art, alone can change society. But he is hopeful it has a useful place in the struggle for socialism.

One way this can be done was shown by his previous exhibition, a collection of photographs and documents on a strike of women workers at Brannan's, a thermometer factory in his home town of Cleator Moor. That exhibition raised money for the strike fund and was visited by workers from Brannan's London factory, who unionised their department after seeing the exhibition.

Art in capitalist society means little to most people. Atkinson wants forcibly to shift it back to reality, at home, at work, on the picket line. At present what is called 'culture' usually means propaganda for capitalism. This exhibition shows just how art can also be effective propaganda for socialism.

Andrew Jardine

☐ SUNDAY, ITV, Noon (times vary). Weekend World has ended—but is replaced with PILGER, a new series with Daily Mirror's excellent reporter John Pilger, the first is VIETNAM: STILL AMERICA'S WAR, and the 6,000 Americans pulling Indo-Chinese strings...

☐ WEDNESDAY, BBC-2, 8.10 pm. MAN ALIVE is DEEP SOUTH, DEEP NORTH—TWENTY YEARS ON, about last 20 years of black America. MIDWEEK CINEMA is John Steinbeck's EAST OF EDEN with James Dean.

☐ THURSDAY, BBC-1, 9.25pm. THE PLAY FOR TODAY is BLOOMING YOUTH, produced by Tony Garnett, very good and extremely funny.

☐ FRIDAY, BBC-2, 8.15pm. THE MONEY PROGRAMME deals with Ford in THE CAR MAKERS, featuring production lines, bosses, workers—and an industrial dispute.

# THE UNIONS

## A DISPOSABLE PLASTIC UNION

-that's what general secretary Larry Walsh wants

DEMOCRACY and secrecy were the key notes so fiercely hit in the 84th annual conference of the Rubber, Plastics and Allied Workers (RPAW) held at Worthley, near Sheffield early last month. The union has about 5000 members based mainly in the Manchester and Newcastle districts, and an unimpressive history of militancy. Perhaps the most impressive thing about it is that it exists.

The burning issue of the conference was the emergency motion put forward by the executive committee. It recommended a ballot be held so that the RPAW could amalgamate with the General and Municipal Workers Union.

The 'emergency' motion was tabled only seven days before the

by Frank Logan

Rubber, Plastics and Allied Workers  
Union convenor, Halsteads, Manchester

conference. Many delegates were angry at this and said so. As George Smith, of Vitafeams, put it: 'If I wanted to join a secret society I would have joined one like the Masons.'

Delegates also found that some managements had known of the proposed amalgamation seven months before the delegates knew.

Perhaps general secretary Larry Walsh's desire as he said, 'not to influence anyone's decision' resulted

in none of the negotiations being reported back to branches. Perhaps it was this desire which resulted in the suspension, without notice and contrary to 1973 conference decision of area council meetings. These were suspended at about the time the negotiations with the General and Municipal began.

Other delegates related their experiences under the GMWU. A right proper chamber of horrors it turned out to be.

One told of the Ford dispute at Dagenham in 1969 when about 7500 GMWU members tore up and burnt their union cards in front of

the union's East London office in disgust at the attitudes of the full-time officials. Charlie Brooks, of the Padiham branch, told how he had spoked out against the policy of the GMWU in a dispute and how the full-time official had told him that he would no longer be welcome in the union.

The union's old guard rallied with speeches. Arthur Ludden, last year's president, said of the secrecy in the negotiations by saying 'certain documents have to be withheld as long as possible for very good reasons!'

But the real reason for the shotgun wedding with the GMWU was never

stated. It is that the union executive knows no other way to smash signs of militancy, militancy which threatens their 'happy relationships' with management.

By far the most forceful intervention came from the Halsteads delegates, who were instructed to fight the amalgamation by a vote at a mass meeting.

The Halsteads delegates produced a bulletin for the conference. This was ruled out of order by the chair. Indeed the chair ruled that no delegates were permitted to distribute or even read it.

And copies that were spotted were immediately confiscated by tireless officials. For good measure the general secretary is threatening to sue our shop stewards committee.

### DELEGATES

The bitterness of the Halsteads delegates was hardly surprising. Last summer two of the factory stewards were sacked by management. I was one. We went down to the union office to get support from union officials. They refused to see us.

While waiting outside on the street, we happened to see the management leave the union office.

We got another helping of this kind of behaviour at the conference. Two delegates from British Vita, at Middleton, were victimised by their management on the Tuesday before the conference, supposedly for breaches of procedure. The union officials' reaction was to refuse the lads the right to attend the conference on the grounds that they were no longer employed at British Vita. One was actually thrown out of the hall.

Before the conference Halsteads put forward an emergency resolution supporting the sacked Vita stewards. The general secretary suggested that this would be out of order. Vice president J Adams argued that the motion could be accepted if another motion was dropped—one that condemned the suspension of the area councils.

### ACCEPT

In the event the motion was ruled out of order by the chairman, who also refused to accept any motion of no confidence in himself. This was despite a constant barrage of criticism.

Throughout the facts about the GMWU were never fully brought out. No GMWU rulebooks were available and still have not come through to the branches. Nonetheless the conference decided to have a ballot on amalgamation.

Towards the end of the conference the president, F Wiggins, announced that the last three motions would have to be left to the newly-elected executive.

This, he said, was because 'time is running out'.

These were the key motions because they showed what a union really should be doing—fighting and organising. The delegates didn't like this move to kill them off. So general secretary Larry Walsh, asked conference to accept them by acclaim.

This the delegates did. The motions were in support of the jailed Shrewsbury building workers, condemning the full-time officials for cancelling the area councils, and calling for the publication of a fighting rank and file paper in the industry.

If only the executive meant it!

This was the end of the most stormy conference in the union's history. Possibly it is the end of the union too, though workers at Halsteads and elsewhere will fight every inch of the way to hold on to what we have already won.

# The stars face a fight

OUR UNION'S annual conference starts today in Harrogate in an atmosphere of 'give the Labour government a chance.'

Motions calling for the release of the Shrewsbury workers are likely to be opposed by platform speakers with 'Don't rock the boat' contributions. Talk of the 'social compact' will be used to counter opposition to any incomes policy under capitalism.

Those delegates calling for the return of free collective bargaining, across the board offers and the like will be turned on and denounced as idealists or wreckers.

A lot of delegates may be confused by this heady stuff. But on one issue at least there will be a real fight between the delegates and the national executive majority—democracy in the union.

by Ian Gibson

ASTMS executive member for the  
No 5 Division

Members of ASTMS know the executive operates with the belief that ASTMS can have little effect on most matters. In ASTMS fighting back means a high-powered head office producing pretty documents with circulation restricted to the members. Trust funds and other gimmicks were no way to fight Phase Three.

A strong and genuine leadership tries to change attitudes, to initiate action. It does not assume the members will not act.

Over the past year many ASTMS members have been involved in serious trade union action—striking, occupying factories, refusing to appear at

the NIRC and protesting at the investment of their pension funds in South Africa.

But the ASTMS executive is embarrassed at the members taking matters into their own hands.

The executive of ASTMS is dominated by people who see themselves as the management of the union. They are always worried about protecting union funds. The past year has seen members talked back to work by national officers, persuaded not to black certain products, had pay agreements accepted on their behalf or had their official action called off.

By seeking to compromise before the members have had a go, I believe they do them a disservice. This is not to argue for bashing one's head against a wall, it is an argument for mapping out a winning path and giving all the support necessary for a victory in any and every struggle.

In this light the motions calling for democracy in the union fall into place. One calls for the members of the executive to be accountable to those who elected them, by publishing a record of how they vote.

### Decisions

Others demand that the union's journal and its full-time editor be controlled by the members, that all pay agreements be referred to the members concerned before acceptance, and that the union's delegations to the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party uphold ASTMS policy decisions made at annual conference.

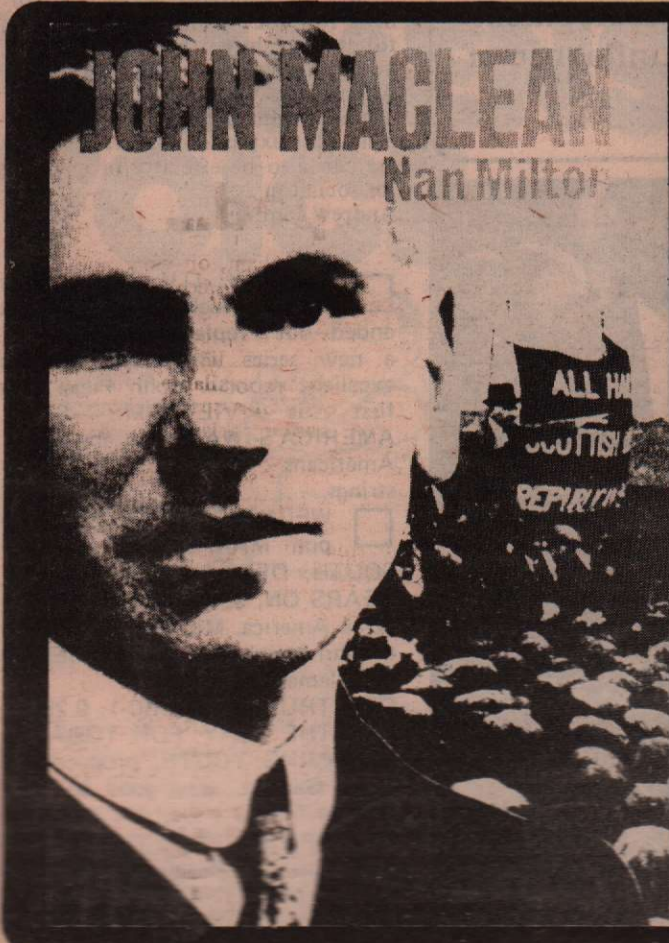
A heated discussion is also certain when the working party on union organisation and administration reports back. Among the issues which challenge the executive majority are proposals to do away with some executive seats and give administrative powers to the divisional councils.

The scene is set for a power struggle in ASTMS. Who is to run the union—the TV stars on the executive and their followers? Or the membership?

At a time when working people are increasingly having their living standards slashed by governments who work within the big business system, democratic control of the union becomes a central issue. Without it, the members cannot even organise their defences.



CLIVE JENKINS: A stained-glass window built into every pose



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John Maclean was regarded as Britain's greatest revolutionary leader of the time by both Lenin and the British government. He pioneered marxism in Scotland, was a major architect of the 'Red Clyde' and leader of the anti-war struggles during the First World War. He was the Bolsheviks' first consul in Glasgow.

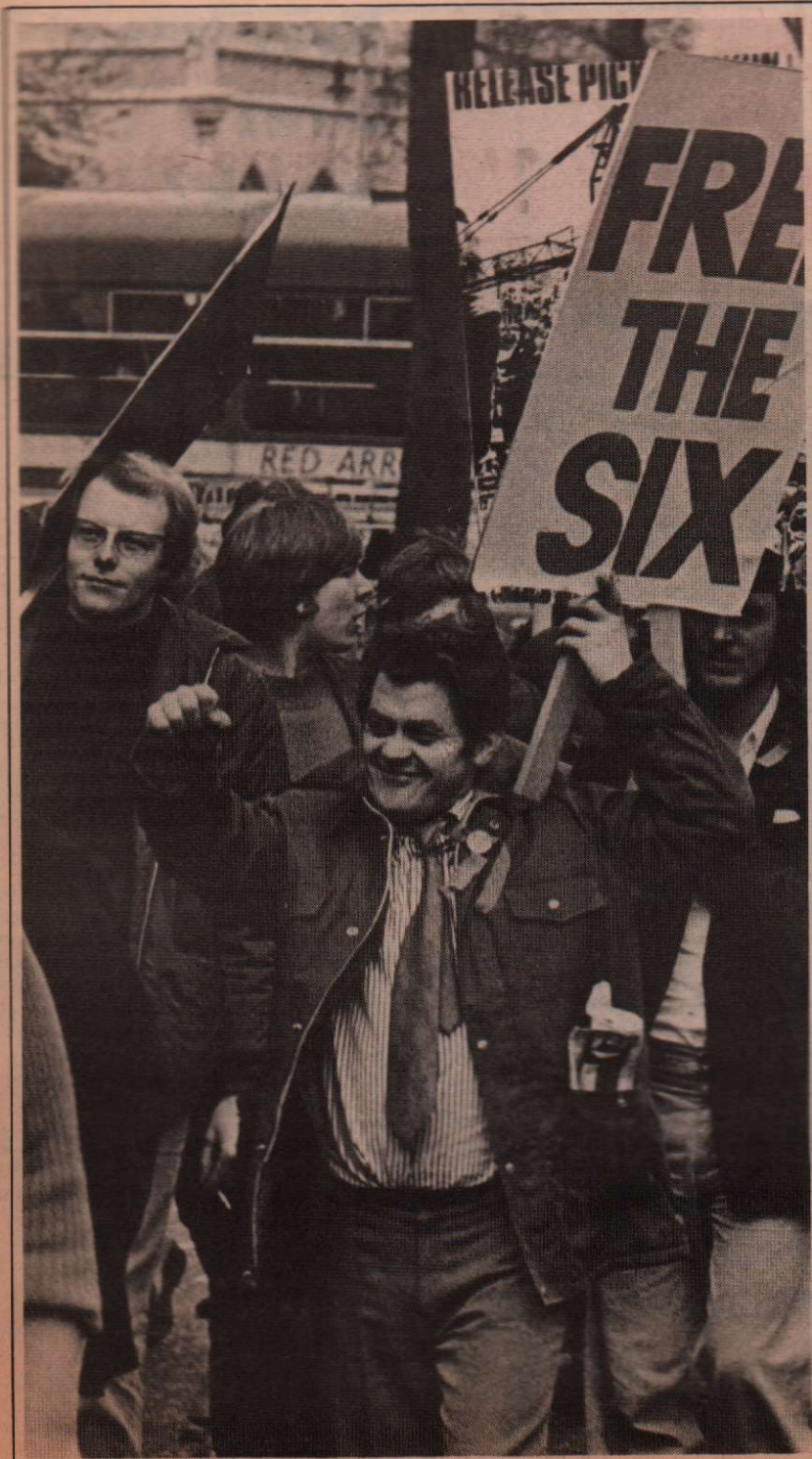
The author, John Maclean's daughter, traces his life from 1903, when he joined the Social Democratic Federation, to 1923, when he died at the early age of 44. She uses a mass of original documents, interviews with participants and personal memories.

PLUTO PRESS

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ONE of the marchers on the May Day march in London to demand the freeing of the six building workers' pickets jailed at Shrewsbury. It is now more than five months since the first man went down. 5000 trade unionists and socialists were on the march. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report).

# WAGES SLIDE -SO ASIANS STRIKE BACK

by SW reporter

racial discrimination by management. The demand of no victimisation was added when the original 40 strikers received dismissal notices.

## SUPPORT

The white workers make up 500 of the 1,600 workforce, and are still going in although production is stopped. Relationships inside the factory between black and white have been good and the strikers demands apply to many of the white workers. It is hoped that most of those

still working will support the strike. A large number of the strikers are Asian women who have appeared regularly on the picket line. Some are on the strike committee.

Two major reasons brought about the strike. Imperials have set about attacking the wages, low as they are. Last year they attempted to cut the auto-setters wages by £10. They failed, but managed to increase the work load.

The other issue is the weakness of the trade union. Imperials is a Transport union closed shop, working the check off system. Reg Weaver, the convenor, is full time. He is also secretary of 5/221 branch of the union. With few exceptions shop stewards have been appointed by him and have been unwilling to do anything but accept management decisions. As a result there are hundreds of grievances large and small.

LEICESTER:-700 men and women are on strike at both Lytton Industries Imperial Typewriter plants. The strike started on May Day at the Cop Dale Road factory when 40 Asian workers walked out over bonus dispute.

By Friday they had been joined by hundreds of others, overwhelming Asian. Long-felt grievances over the running of the factory had come into the open.

The strikers are demanding backdated bonus payments, freedom to elect all shop stewards, and an end to

## TASS-great motions but where's the action?

DELEGATES left the annual conference of the AUEW-TASS (the white collar section of the engineering union) with most of their convictions intact but their confidence a little shaken. All the correct decisions had been taken in the resolutions that were carried. The one thing missing, however, was the confidence that these decisions would lead to action by the members.

Throughout the conference the executive of TASS (which is dominated by Communist Party members) diverted the delegates from decisions that would have involved the union in a serious mobilisation of its members. And in the process some very wrong things were said by leading members of the union.

In the debate on wages policy the delegates from the left attempted to strengthen the union's position on opposition to wage restriction by any government. This was opposed by the EC.

In support of their position Jim Thomas from Dundee East Angus (a Communist Party member) said 'some delegates are confused on wage legislation. When we oppose wage legislation we mean repressive wage legislation'.

## Repressive

Unfortunately this argument was accepted and TASS is now in the ridiculous position of believing it is possible to have wage legislation under capitalism which is *not* repressive.

When the conference discussed the organisation of combine committees the leadership's unwillingness to let the membership out of their grip was more apparent.

Again the left argued for combine committees to be set up by shop stewards and rank and file trades unionists. The EC were not in favour of this approach and urged support for an amendment which substituted trade unions for trade unionists, that is put officials in place of rank and filers.

Despite this reluctance to involve TASS members in a campaign to protect their rates, important resolutions were passed.

The delegates also gave their support to those fighting against the military regime in Chile and demanded that the Labour government cancelled the frigates. These decisions are positive ones which can be fought for in the trade union movement.

## PICKETS

The strikers had intended to put a vote of no confidence in Weaver at the last branch meeting. However, it was mysteriously cancelled. This is not the first time meetings have suddenly been cancelled.

A petition is going to G Bromley, JP, the district secretary calling for a branch meeting. But hope of him aiding the strikers is slim. He has not been to the pickets or meetings. He did however find time to give a talk on Radio Leicester about 'minorities' and 'intimidation'.

Already the strikers have been visited by Tom Bradley, MP, who put a back to work peace plan. Bradley was called in by management. The plan was unanimously rejected.

Messages of support have come from the Indian Workers Association, in Leicester, and Asian workers in Dunlops and Corahs, are looking on with interest and sympathy.

On Tuesday morning the police put in their expected appearance. They falsely told the pickets that only four pickets were allowed on each gate.

## COWLEY: IT'S NOT OVER... Sacked... for not being Supermen

by Terry O'Neill,

TGWU Shop Steward and Chairman of Mersey Loop Strike Committee

MERSEYSIDE:-More than 200 Transport and General Workers' Union members are on strike on the four sites of the new Mersey Loop railway line. The strike followed months of argument about bonus rates on the job, which ended recently in the ruthless sacking of 20 men at Lime Street.

The men were sacked because they refused to accept the bonus targets laid down by the employers, Edmund Nuttall. The targets were absolutely impossible.

I had a meeting with our union official, Fred Walker, Mr Naylor who is in charge of the loop line and Carol Meich who is in charge of production and manning on the job.

Naylor wouldn't agree to cash in the men's holiday stamps for Christmas, and in front of me and Fred Walker he offered a separate payment of £23 in 'gratitude' to the 20 men who had been sacked.

At another meeting with me and

the other stewards Tommy Gill, Brian O'Shaughnessy and Bert Ashcroft, Naylor still refused to reinstate the men. He also offered to pay the sacked men two weeks pay instead of the £23.

When we said we would take the case to a conciliation panel, Naylor withdrew the offer.

We went to the panel in London and lost the case. How we lost I don't know, but the panel told Nuttalls to improve their relations with the unions and provide proper canteen facilities.

Nuttalls have done neither. Things went from bad to worse. Stewards were hounded and the bonus rates weren't improved. So a fortnight ago we all walked off the sites.

The District Committee of the TGWU (Construction Section) has called on the executive to make the strike official.

We demand: Recognition of stewards, An end to harassment of stewards, Proper canteen facilities and a better bonus.

## COMPUTER SWITCH-OFF

COMPUTER staff members of the Civil and Public Services Association are in the third week of their strike. The 47 strikers from London and six from Bristol were joined on Monday by 100 more from Derby.

The union's annual conference opens this weekend when impatient delegates will be placated by the information that more computer staff will be called out from Portsmouth and Cardiff.

All are members of the Posts and Telecommunications' section of the union,

who are bitter at being excluded from payments under the Phase Two Anomalies procedure. Their colleagues in the Civil Service were paid, mainly because the Tory government feared turmoil among state officials.

This is the second round of strikes over non-payment to post and telecomms staff. The first was called off after Post Office boss Sir William Ryland gave an undertaking to hold a special pay review 'as soon as the Post Office was free to do so'. He ratted on his promise and the second round started.

### NATIONAL STUDENT DEMONSTRATION AGAINST VICTIMISATION

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March from Belvedere Rd, Victoria, to Trafalgar Square

All IS student societies to support

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If you agree with the views expressed in this paper and would like more information, or would like to join the International Socialists, then send this form to: The International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

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# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

**Ever heard  
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MORE than 10,000 people collected in Hyde Park last Sunday for one of the biggest demonstrations seen in London for some time.

Several speakers called for mass working-class resistance to the Labour government's plans to send gunboats to Chile. Michael Fenn, a London docker, called for total blacking of all goods going to Chile, and for organisation throughout the working-class movement to co-ordinate the blacking. Jack Collins, a member of the miner's executive, also called for blacking of goods for Chile.

The demonstrators then marched to Downing Street where a letter protesting against the government policies toward Chile was handed in. Nearly half the huge procession were International Socialists and contacts behind IS banners. At one stage the IS contingent filled the whole length of Regent Street from Piccadilly to Oxford Circus.

This huge demonstration was completely unreported in the national press. Of the national morning papers only the Morning Star carried a report. PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)

MORE evidence on the industrial espionage used by Britain's employers has emerged from the struggle at Strachans Engineering at Eastleigh in Hampshire.

Four weeks ago, the sit-in strikers discovered that their employers, Giltspur Investments, a subsidiary of Grand Metropolitan Hotels, had the assistance of the Special Branch in fingering the militants.

They have since discovered that the Special Branch was not the only sinister outfit 'taking an interest' in them.

## Uncommon

Before they were ejected from the factory three weeks ago, the stewards discovered management was 'phoning a London number to get confidential information about trade union activists.

The number is 01-686 9841.

A steward rang the number and was answered by a woman. Following the required procedure, he gave Strachans code number—520—and identified himself as Reg Aldhous, the personnel manager.

He asked for information on two of the Strachans' stewards. After a short delay it was provided.

Some of the material was inaccurate—not an uncommon fault with spying organisations. But hard information was also given.

*Socialist Worker has established that the number is an ex-directory line belonging to the Economic League, a witch-hunting organisation funded by donations from big business.*

The Economic League is obviously a sound investment. They tell employers who to blacklist or who to 'watch'.

## Determined

Mr Harry Welton, Economic director of information, assured Socialist Worker that none of this happened.

'We don't operate a blacklist', he 'I've never seen one.'

He refused to give Socialist Worker an interview on the subject. 'It would serve no useful purpose.'

**PICKETS** have stopped an attempt by Strachans' management to move 40 completed vans from the factory compound. The customers, Fords are desperate to get hold of the vans. But they have no chance as a total black has been placed on them.

Though the dispute is now in its tenth week, Eric Parker, a sheet metal worker shifts steward, said the men were determined to see it through to the end.

'In fact, the men are more determined than they were before the eviction.'

*Funds are still desperately needed. Send donations to Peter Hann, c/o TGWU, 67/71 London Road, Southampton.*

## Fighting Fund

**YOU GOT PROBLEMS?** We've got a serious problem and we need your help—urgently. Rising newspaper prices and other costs have seriously hit the finances of our paper.

We don't have big advertisers or big backers and we're struggling to keep our selling price at 5p. Which means we're relying on you.

We depend entirely on the labour movement for support and donations and that means you! Keep the money coming in.

We've received £389 this month—so we've got a long way to go. Donations this week include Wandsworth £6, Aberdeen £4.85, Wigan £15, Dundee £3.85, London School of Economics £8, Merseyside £20, Bristol £16, Southwark £53.58.

Please send donations to Socialist Worker Fighting Fund, IS National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

## 'Back the AUEW' call

THE NATIONAL Rank and File Organising Committee have called upon all delegated bodies and supporters to organise support for the engineers. 'Emergency meetings of shop-stewards committees and all trade union bodies should be called to discuss coming out in support' they state.

They called for solidarity meetings and demonstrations and for trade unionists to offer assistance to their local district committees. 'No return to work until the fines are repaid' said committee secretary Roger Cox.

# DOCTORS: STOP FORCE-FEEDING

**MARIAN and Dolours Price, Gerry Kelly and Hugh Feeney have been on hunger strike in British prisons for 170 days.**

Every day they have been systematically tortured. Last week 38 doctors demonstrated outside the London offices of the British Medical Association against the use of doctors in the disgusting torture of forced feeding. Here is part of their statement:

'Forcible feeding is medically dangerous, psychologically damaging and ethically unacceptable. It requires that a clamp hold open the mouth whilst a large stomach tube is passed, through which the daily calorie requirements are given in liquid form.

'Since vomiting often occurs, this process may need to be repeated. All

## 170 days of torture in British jails

four prisoners are actively resisting each stage of the procedure, thus increasing the risks.'

In 1917, Thomas Ashe died while being force fed. The coroner's jury condemned force feeding as dangerous and inhuman.

The Price sisters, Kelly and Feeney went on hunger strike last November after the home office refused to let them serve their life sentences in Northern Ireland, near their families.

The doctors' statement points out that 22 other prisoners have been transferred to and from Northern Ireland since 1971 including UDA murderer Albert Baker, and British

army man Foxford, who killed a child.

The statement adds: 'Although the prisoners were examined and declared mentally healthy by an independent psychiatrist, doctors have inflicted forcible feeding upon them against their wishes for 165 days.

Their relatives, from visits and letters, report a deterioration in their physical condition. They are very weak, with weight loss, alopecia (baldness) and loosening of teeth.

## OUTRAGE

There is extensive trauma to the mouth and pharynx from steel clamps used to open the jaws, and the daily passage of a large stomach tube. Vomiting, which occurs frequently, carries the risk of inhalation pneumonia.'

The medical establishment has remained silent over this outrage. And as the statement insists, doctors and medical students must not condone this dangerous and inhumane practice.

# PIECES OF EIGHT!

WHEN the Poulson case was in the news last summer, a funny thing happened in the Solicitors' Department of Scotland Yard. An elderly clerk circulated to the press a copy of a document which instructed the Fraud Squad, who was inquiring into the case, to 'interview and take statements' from eight members of Parliament.

The document was shown on television—without the names—and was immediately described by Scotland Yard and all responsible people as 'a hoax'.

According to the official version, the clerk had had a 'brainstorm'. He had forged a document and sent it round the newspapers all for a joke.

But the clerk wasn't charged with

forgery or anything else. He was sacked, and that was the end of the story.

Suddenly last week the newspapers got excited because senior police officers, going through the papers of T Dan Smith after that gentleman had been jailed for fraud, came across a list of eight names.

## MINISTER

All eight, apparently, had some kind of business dealings with Dan Smith and might be able to assist the police in their inquiries into the Smith/Poulson affair.

There is no telling whether the eight on his list are the same as the eight

on the 'joke' list last summer.

The eight on the 'joke' list were: Reginald Maudling, former Deputy Prime Minister, Ted Short, now Deputy Prime Minister, John Cordle, Tory MP for Bournemouth—and a leading Christian, Fred Willey, former Labour Minister of Land, Ernest Armstrong, assistant government whip from 1967 to 1970 and now Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Albert Roberts, public relations man for the Spanish government and Labour MP for Normanton, Ted Leadbitter, for a long time leading member of the West Hartlepool Borough Council and now Labour MP for Hartlepool, and Roy Mason, Labour MP for Barnsley and Minister of Defence.

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