

ON THE ROAD TO ANOTHER 1926

THE TUC REJECTS GENERAL STRIKE CALL

By Royston Bull

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The leading union bureaucrats, including the 'lefts', have already decided not to take any concerted industrial action against the pay laws. This means individual groups of workers are to be left to fight it out alone.

The scene of this betrayal will be the Special Congress at Central Halls, Westminster, next Monday.

The TUC's Finance and General Purposes Committee, which includes transport union chief Jack Jones and engineers' leader Hugh Scanlon, has agreed with the line of secretary Victor Feather and the right wing to place nothing before Congress other than the worthless policy document issued last week.

All resolutions for a General Strike will be ruled out of order. No amendments to the document will be accepted. Delegates can only vote for or against it. Jones and Scanlon have already assured its passage by a big majority.

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The whole trade union movement will remember how the postmen were allowed to go down to defeat two years ago. Feather's assurances will be as worthless as the policy document.

This TUC line is a blatant piece of deception, and Jones, Scanlon, and the Communist Party Stalinists are at the heart of it.

If, as they say, the gasmen must not, and will not, be allowed to go down to defeat; if it is the case that it is either a victory for the gasmen or a victory for the government over the whole trade union movement, then why not spell it out in unmistakable terms by challenging the government's power?

If they are serious about defeating the pay laws, they know that this entails defeating the government. They have no intention of embarking on any such political programme.

The fight against the state control of wages is going to go the same way as the fight against the state control of trade unions by the National Industrial Relations Court.

The NIRC still stands, and it has fined Jones' and Scanlon's unions in a massive way with impunity.

The phoney campaign of 'boycott' and half-hearted one-day strikes was a cover for a complete capitulation to the anti-union laws, now fully operative and usable at any moment by the Tories.

Now the union chiefs and Stalinists want to lead the working-class docilely into the prison of a fully-fledged corporate state, if they are allowed to get away with it.

They have started by deliberately demoralizing and consciously undermining the militancy of Ford workers by confusion and a refusal to give leadership.

Sid Harraway, Stalinist secretary of the convenors' committee where Jones' and Scanlon's union colleagues predominate, said this week:

'We are laying down a programme of action until October or November. We wouldn't be going on all-out strike right from now to the end of Phase Two.

'The big debate on our side will be going on about all-out strike for a period of weeks that could transform the situation, or more longer-term action.'

The Stalinists want to under-

mine the fight against the pay laws because they are now the most conscious anti-revolutionary political tendency in Britain. They are bitterly hostile to any turn towards a revolutionary solution to Britain's crisis, and determined to impose reformist 'peaceful road to socialism' policies on the workers' movement.

Gasmen, hospital workers and civil servants will be left to fight it out alone under the full burden of legal repression demanded by the Phase Two laws.

Home Secretary Robert Carr, the Minister in charge of the police, repeated two days ago: 'The government will not shirk this confrontation.'

One-day General Strikes will be completely useless in this political situation. The Tories are determined to take on the trade union movement and defeat it.

If the government is allowed

to isolate groups of workers and take them on one by one, the working class could have inflicted on it the greatest defeat since the 1930s.

Such a set-back could have the most serious consequences as the economic crisis gets deeper and the Tories drive the working-class harder and harder, and internationally the imperialist circles prepare for trade war leading to a hot nuclear world war.

Capitalism is careering towards economic crash and fascism. If the appalling suffering of Nazism and World War II are not to be repeated, the working class must step forward and end the chaos.

It can only do this under the revolutionary banner. The first step is to force the resignation of the Tory government by creating the necessary industrial and political conditions through the General Strike.

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Brolly brigade strikers claim 98p.c. success

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DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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AFL-CIO backing state pay laws

Nixon hogties union chiefs

JOHN SPENCER

PRESIDENT Nixon's ultra-tough 5½-per-cent ceiling on wage increases is to stay with the tacit backing of the United States' most powerful labour leaders.

The White House claimed it had unanimous backing of an advisory committee of management and union representatives for the continued wage controls which have been in operation in one form or another since the summer of 1971.

With food prices rising at a rate of 2.3 per cent a month, the continuation of controls is a direct challenge to the US working class.

But Nixon has already ensured the benevolent neutrality of the trade union bureaucracy for his scheme.

This is clear from the two standing ovations he was given at Bal Harbour, Florida, when he spoke to the executive council of the AFL-CIO.

There were supposedly 'frosty' relations last year when the union leaders quit the Pay Board.

Nixon himself told the executive council that food prices would rise sharply in the foreseeable future. But this did not shake the bureaucrats at all.

'We had a very pleasant meeting with the President of the United States,' said Secretary George Meany when the meeting was over.

The president has invited Meany to nominate union representatives to serve at

assistant secretary level in the Departments of Defence, Housing, Commerce and Urban Development.

This is in addition to the appointment, already confirmed, of building union leader Peter J. Brennan as Secretary of Labour, and it is only the start of the process of drawing the trade unions directly into the operations of the imperialist state machine.

At the President's own request, Meany and the AFL-CIO hierarchy are sending names to the President for sub-cabinet posts in all other departments.

Nixon has made a similar invitation to Frank E. Fitzsimmons, the corrupt right-wing boss of the 2 million-strong Teamsters (truck-drivers) Union.

The 'New York Times' suggests that Fitzsimmons might like to nominate an assistant Secretary of Agriculture 'now that the teamsters are co-operating actively with the California lettuce growers to smash Cesar Chavez's infant United Farm Workers—a course Mr Meany himself describes as "absolutely disgraceful and tantamount to strike breaking"'.
The ties between Nixon and the top union chiefs are so close that at Bal Harbour none of the 70 executive members and other union leaders raised the slightest

opposition to the government's stringent wage controls.

These laws are even now being used for the brutal smashing of strikes.

In Philadelphia, where 12,000 members of the teachers' union have been on strike for eight weeks, Nixon's close associate, the law-and-order mayor Frank Rizzo, has had over 1,000 strikers arrested and jailed the strike leaders for up to four years.

Rizzo ordered the judge to impose sentences which would 'break the back of the union'.

When Philadelphia workers threatened a General Strike against these savage attacks, the AFL-CIO leaders appealed to their friend in the White House to mediate in the strike.

Nixon has already indicated that his second term will be dominated by what he terms the 'work ethic', meaning that there will be wholesale cuts in social services, welfare, medicare and education schemes.

Such schemes were heavily trimmed in the latest budget.

Union chiefs' grovelling before Nixon reached its peak in the AFL-CIO's crudely protectionist trade policy. Its latest report blames the US trade deficit for the loss of some 1 million job opportunities for US workers over the last six years.

Meany finds the President's Trade Bill attractive and says:

'If any nation closes the door on us—on our products—then we should turn around and close the door on them: just as simple as that.'

Meany's policy involves complete subordination of the unions to the requirements of imperialism. By accepting posts in the government the union chiefs are converting themselves into the direct policemen of the workers' movement.

Their betrayal must be met by the building of a Labour Party in the United States which will fight to a finish against class-collaboration and sever the reactionary ties which bind the US unions politically to big business.

US claiming farm exports compensation

THE NIXON administration plans to have talks with the British government next month on compensation for British entry to the Common Market, which has affected American farm exports.

White House adviser Peter Flanigan said in Washington that the talks would be held well in advance of the international trade talks under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the autumn.

American officials are insistently demanding the abolition of the EEC's high tariffs on agricultural produce from abroad—tariffs which are designed to protect European farmers against competition from their more efficient US counterparts.

Britain is a prime target of US demands for compensation because having only just joined the Common Market, it has worsened the position of American exporters who previously relied on the British market.

Flanigan told a congressional committee preparing President Nixon's Trade Bill that the US balance of payments deficit could not be overcome by restricting imports. 'We need policies which will increase exports,' he said.

However, as Flanigan well knows, US exports can only be raised by forcing other countries to cut back their trade and accept more American goods by contracting domestic industry.

In retaliation against the mounting protectionism in the US, the Common Market is making a formal complaint about US companies' special tax deferrals under the Domestic and International Sales Corporation scheme sponsored by the government.

They complain that this violates the terms of GATT. However, the US has indicated it does not accept that the DISC scheme violates any trade agreement and has consistently made it clear it regards GATT as an outmoded and impotent body in the present situation.

Hanoi demanding assurances

Vietnam peace on verge of breakdown

NORTH VIETNAM is seriously concerned about the 'extremely grave situation' in the south and wants assurances from South Vietnam and the US before it will release any more prisoners.

Hanoi's sternest warning to date on the operation of the month-old ceasefire deal indicates that the whole ramshackle 'peace' arrangement in Indo-China is on the verge of breakdown.

There has been no cessation of hostilities and the South Vietnamese have made every effort to provoke the North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front representatives on joint commissions under the treaty.

Hanoi warned in a broadcast on Monday night that 'peace cannot be maintained with durability in South Vietnam' if these violations of the ceasefire arrangement continued.

On the question of prisoner release, Colonel Bui Tin, a member of the Hanoi delegation to the four-power joint military mission said: 'We are all prepared for the next release, but we are waiting for a response from the other side giving assurances that they will seriously respect all the clauses of the agreement.'

'We must await the response from the other side. It is not reasonable for the US to seek the implementation only of articles which are of advantage to the US. There must be an equitable implementation of all articles by all sides.'

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

Colonel Tin indicated that he would be putting a series of fundamental questions to US and South Vietnamese delegations to the commission organizing the ceasefire.

He said the situation in the commission had become very serious and added Hanoi delegates had been instructed to take positive steps so that the scheduled release of over 400 American prisoners of war still in North Vietnam would go ahead.

Five North Vietnamese delegates to the joint military commission were injured in attacks on their compounds at Hue, Tam Ky and Ban Me Thuot. The attacks, by mobs inspired by the South Vietnamese government, were a crude attempt to sabotage the ceasefire deal.

North Vietnam has also accused Saigon of continued

'nibbling attacks' on NLF territory contrary to the treaty terms, refusing to release detained Vietnamese civilians and hindering the movements of North Vietnamese and NLF delegates to the commissions.

Big difficulties have also appeared at the 12-power Paris conference on Indo-China which is supposed to guarantee the ceasefire deal. North Vietnam and the NLF are resisting imperialist attempts to impose a permanent political authority from outside Vietnam to police treaty violations.

North Vietnam and the NLF have rejected a Canadian proposal that UN general secretary Kurt Waldheim be called in to take charge of such a body.

The two Vietnamese delegations are insisting that the main aim of the conference is to organize foreign disengagement from Vietnam, not to impose a new imperialist authority over the country.

Smith's jets in rocket attack on guerrilla bases

RHODESIAN Air Force jets launched a rocket attack on alleged guerrilla bases in the northern Centenary area, which borders Portuguese Mozambique, according to sources in Salisbury.

The attacks, said to have been made at the weekend by Vampire jets, were thought to have been the first in a district which has been the focal point of increased guerrilla activity since a white farm there was raided before Christmas.

The Smith government has admitted that the local population has supported the guerrillas and recently took powers to impose summary collective punishments including heavy fines on communities suspected of harbouring resistance fighters.

The defiant Tangwena tribe in the Centenary area, which has repeatedly been driven off its ancestral lands to make way for white farming, is reported to

have returned to its home on the Gaeresi Ranch from which the tribesmen were evicted last year.

The police detachment detailed to keep them out of the ranch was withdrawn when the guerrilla activity began to increase.

The situation clearly has the racist Ian Smith regime worried. Two leaders of the African National Council, general secretary Carlton Ngebetjsa and organizing secretary Arthur Chadzingwa, were detained under emergency regulations on Monday.

Peter Niesewant, the freelance journalist who is also detained, has now lodged an appeal against his arbitrary imprisonment.

Dangers in Italian one-day 'General Strike'

OVER 14 million Italian workers took part in a one-day 'General Strike' yesterday in support of pay claims and demands for social reforms.

Industry and many sectors of commerce were totally paralysed by the stoppage, the second in six weeks.

Workers staged stoppages ranging from one to four hours, while railway workers struck for 15 minutes.

Agricultural labourers came out for the whole day as did

those working in bars and restaurants.

Electricity and waterworks men also walked out and the utilities warned that public supplies would be cut off if consumption held steady.

While hospital workers struck for one hour, emergency services were maintained. Print unions called their members out for two hours each shift.

One of the main demands by the three trade union confederations was for the re-

newal of labour contracts for some 2.5 million workers, especially the 1.5 million metal and engineering workers who have been negotiating for over four months.

On the eve of the strike, the confederations—the biggest is the Stalinist-led CGIL—sent a joint letter to the government demanding 'precise replies on questions of social reforms, prices and employment'.

The overwhelming support for yesterday's strike proved once more the fighting capa-

bilities of the Italian working class.

But the Communist Party—which controls key sections of the trade union movement—is consciously intent on frittering away this strength with one-day stoppages with some workers only coming out for 15 minutes.

In this way the Stalinists hold back the working class, opening the doors wider every day to the extreme right in the shape of the fascist MSI Party.

Everyone must come out and carry on until we get rid of the Tories

When there's a Ford and hospital worker in the same family

MRS MISTREL Campbell thinks hospital workers the lowest paid workers of all. 'I have to work Saturdays and Sundays to earn anything,' she says. In fact for 45 hours' work she gets just over £21—and that is working evenings supervising domestics at Bolingbroke General Hospital. Embittered by the conditions, Mistrel recently joined the Confederation of Health Service Employees.

'They want to offer us £1.80. But we asked for £4 and I think we should have asked for more than that. I find it very difficult to manage with four kids to look after.

'Every day prices are going higher and higher. Our rent just went up as well. Things are going from bad to worse,' she said bitterly.

On a Thursday, when she got her wage packet, Mistrel said she used to go out shopping immediately.

Action

'Now I'm scared to go into the shops because I know the prices will have gone up. I don't even bother to look at frozen chicken. It used to be the cheapest meat. Now it's almost 90p for a medium-sized bird.'

She was dreading Value Added Tax because it would put the price of children's clothes up.

Mistrel was clear what sort of action was needed against the government:

'An all-out strike is what is needed. One-day strikes are useless. Hospital workers are all underpaid, espe-



Vincent and Mistrel Campbell with their four children in their Battersea, South London home.

cially the nurses.

'We can't do it by ourselves. Everyone must come out and carry on until we get rid of the Tories.'

She squashed any idea that the government could frighten her with threats of cutting off Social Security if she was on strike.

'All of us should go down to the social security office and leave our kids there until we get some money,' she said determinedly.

The Campbell family in Battersea, south London, is totally committed to fighting the Tories and their state pay laws. Vincent Campbell works at Ford's and his wife Mistrel in a local hospital. Both could soon be out on strike together. Here they talk to Phillip Wade.

VINCENT CAMPBELL has got one of the most back-breaking jobs anywhere in Britain: on the Ford assembly line at Dagenham where, as in Chaplin's 'Modern Times', the line never stops.

His job is take the cars off the line, focus the headlamps and make other adjustments in just three minutes, drive the new vehicles to be parked . . . then rush back for the next one.

'The three of us doing that work like madmen. You either get used to it, or drop dead,' said Vincent.

'Last year the company made £60m profit—but if we didn't work like that, Ford wouldn't make it. Even then they won't tell us how much they made and I think it is way over £60m.

'The £10 would only put us in line with other carworkers. Look, they make one engine every 60 seconds at Dagenham, which proves how fast we work.

'The Tories say we'll be breaking the law if we go on strike.

'What I think is that the Tories are trying to cut out the unions completely—trying to bring this country to something like Spain.

'If we had to go into a factory and there was no union, no one to

fight for you, there would be no point in working.'

He said everyone he knew in the factory supported a strike from Thursday (March 1) in support of the claim.

'But the only answer is a national, General Strike and settle Heath once and for all. We should all come out and I reckon we should force the government to resign.'

The TUC, he thought, could have forced a General Election.

'They don't want to know. On the one side they say they support us, then they support the government.

'Unless we get new leaders, the time Heath's finished with this country there will be no one left,' Vincent told me.

Warning against a repeat of the betrayal by union leaders of the 1971 Ford strike, Vincent said:

'Jack Jones and the others keep looking towards the government. Jones keeps on drinking tea with Heath. We want new leaders everywhere.'

Second site stops to defend trade union

THE STRUGGLE by London building workers against the undermining of trade unionism has been taken up by over 600 men at the giant 68-acre new Covent Garden site at Nine Elms in south London.

A mass picket yesterday morning successfully closed the McAlpine contract on the first full day of a strike demanding the removal of painters who refuse to join a union.

Led by the 300 McAlpine men, the site stopped on Monday when the six painters—who work for sub-contractors Brunel—allegedly broke a pledge about becoming members of a union.

The new market site—which will replace Covent Garden next year—is one of the biggest contracts in London.

Men there were some of the most militant during last year's strike for the national claim, coming out on the first day and being some of the last to go back after 12 weeks.

With the site on strike once more, the men have in effect taken up the same fight as the McAlpine men at the Aldwych luxury hotel site, also fighting to defend trade unionism.

'We've given these men every chance to join, but for months they've said no,' John Bambridge, Transport and General Workers' Union member and federation steward told me yesterday.

'Now we say no one is going to come on this site without a union card and it's about time this happened on every site.'



BY OUR OWN REPORTER

He said management had quoted the Industrial Relations Act at him and also said they were taking on Bovis who apparently own Brunel Paints Ltd. Bovis is the family firm of the Tory Social Security Minister Sir Keith Joseph.

'Never have I seen so many sub-contractors on a job,' added Bambridge 'I estimate there must be between 30 and 40 here.

'It is a new tactic of the employers. They want to split up men and undermine the union,' he warned.

He thought that the wave of industrial unrest against Phase

Some of the new Covent Garden builders outside the site yesterday at Nine Elms, south London.

Two could force the Tories into a General Election.

'They are out to smash the unions, but Heath will have so much trouble with the men in the trade unions. Everything is building up into a fight against the government.'

The TUC had to start 'an all-out war' against the Tories. Although he was in favour 'in the right circumstances' of a General Strike, he did not think the TUC leadership was prepared to call one.

Union officials were meeting McAlpine management yesterday afternoon in a bid to settle the strike on the site.

Clydebank: Another rent fine possible

THE COURT of Sessions in Edinburgh will this morning review the contempt of court position of Clydebank town council following its decision to pay a £5,000 fine.

Another fine is still possible because the council is still refusing to implement rent increases as ordered by the court after an application by the Tory government.

Baillie Mrs Betty Brown told a special council meeting on Monday night that the £5,000 fine had been collected by the trade union movement.

Part of the money had come from the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' work-in fund.

'This £5,000 will be paid, but we tell the Secretary of State for Scotland "enough is enough". We want no more punitive action such as this imposed on the people of Clydebank,' she added.

North-east gasworkers impatient

GASWORKERS in the north-east are growing impatient with the selective strike action being organized by the official union leadership.

Several hundred gasmen meeting at the Catholic Club, Sunderland, yesterday voted to continue their strike action for a further week.

The clear feeling of the meeting was that all-out national strike action should be started at once.

CIRCULATION

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A POLICY TO MEET THE CRISIS

THE TORY government is relentlessly pursuing its plan for a confrontation with the working class. Each day new sections of workers are forced to become criminals — under Tory law — to defend their standard of living against government-inspired soaring cost of living.

Large sections of these workers openly acknowledge that the only answer to their fight to maintain a decent standard of living is a General Strike. That is, the creation of the industrial and political conditions which will force the government to resign.

In its place must be elected a Labour government which is pledged by the mass action of the working class to implement socialist policies.

We say 'pledged to socialist policies' knowing that the present leaders of the Labour movement have no intention of introducing such policies. Indeed, in the last analysis some of them will be prepared to join a coalition government with the Tories to head off the working class.

But if the working class is strong enough to force the Tories out, it is strong enough to deal with the traitors in its own midst. This can only be achieved by exposing them in the fight for an alternative socialist policy.

The Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League calls upon the working class to support the following policies to unite the working class against the Tories and the present Wilson-Feather leadership of the labour movement:

Here is the policy which the next Labour government must be forced to carry out.

1) A Labour government must immediately repeal the Industrial Relations Act, Housing Finance Act, Immigration Acts, Fair Trading Act and all wage control. After the repeal of all Tory anti-working class measures, there must be legislation to implement the Charter of Basic Rights, along the following lines.

2) The right to work! Capitalism demands mass unemployment. The right to a job must

be guaranteed. This can only be done by breaking the grip of capitalist ownership on the economy. Employed and unemployed must unite to insist on a Labour government nationalizing the main industries and banks, under workers' control and without compensation.

The struggle must begin now. No closures, no sackings, must be the policy of the trade unions. Occupation of factories threatened with closure, as part of the fight to bring down the Tories.

3) The democratic right to strike and to organize in trade unions. Only the organized working class can lead mankind out of the historical crisis. Every right and every gain won by the working class, every democratic right in Britain, has been won because of the organized strength of the unions and the strike weapon.

A Labour government must immediately repeal the Industrial Relations Act. This fight must begin now by forcing the TUC to break off all relations with the government and mobilize the working class to destroy state control of wages.

4) The right to defend rights won in the past and change the system. All the changes in legal procedures made by the Tory government must be repealed. All secret police and MI5 organizations must be dis-

banded and fully exposed. The secrets of the Tory administration in this sphere must be published. All rights to assembly, free speech and the Press must be guaranteed.

5) The right to a higher standard of living. It is not the living standards of trade unionists, but the profit system, which causes the crisis. The first step must be to expropriate all the great fortunes of the rich, close down the Stock Exchange, place a state control over all movements of capital in and out of the country.

Nationalization of the basic industries and of all large companies, banks, building and insurance societies will provide the resources for a unified plan to improve the living standards of the whole people. Workers' control of these, as well as the present nationalized industries, will run them in the interests of the workers and consumers.

Again, the fight must begin now. State control of wages must be answered by the most widespread fight for wage increases to meet price rises and improve standards. This means a fight to remove the Tory government and change the union leadership.

6) The right to health and welfare benefits. Every Tory government cut in welfare benefits, in the health service and in all public spending must

be revoked. On the basis of nationalization, a crash programme of expansion of services to the unemployed, the low-paid, the sick and the aged must be undertaken as an absolute priority. The working class and the Labour government must take immediate and absolute responsibility for these victims of the capitalist system.

7) The right to decent housing. Decent housing is not a luxury; it is a necessity. People have the basic right to decent accommodation at rents they can afford. Nationalization of the handful of building monopolies and building societies will provide the basis for a massive programme of new house building. The disgraceful problem of the homeless in the cities must be immediately solved by census and taking-over of all unoccupied property.

8) The international responsibilities of the working class. The working class is international. We fight for the unrestricted right of any worker of any nationality to move freely through the world.

Withdraw the troops from Ireland. Unite the Irish and British working class to throw out the Lynch and Heath governments.

Unite in the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe, the only alternative to

the Common Market plans for dictatorship.

Withdraw all British troops from abroad and disband the present standing army.

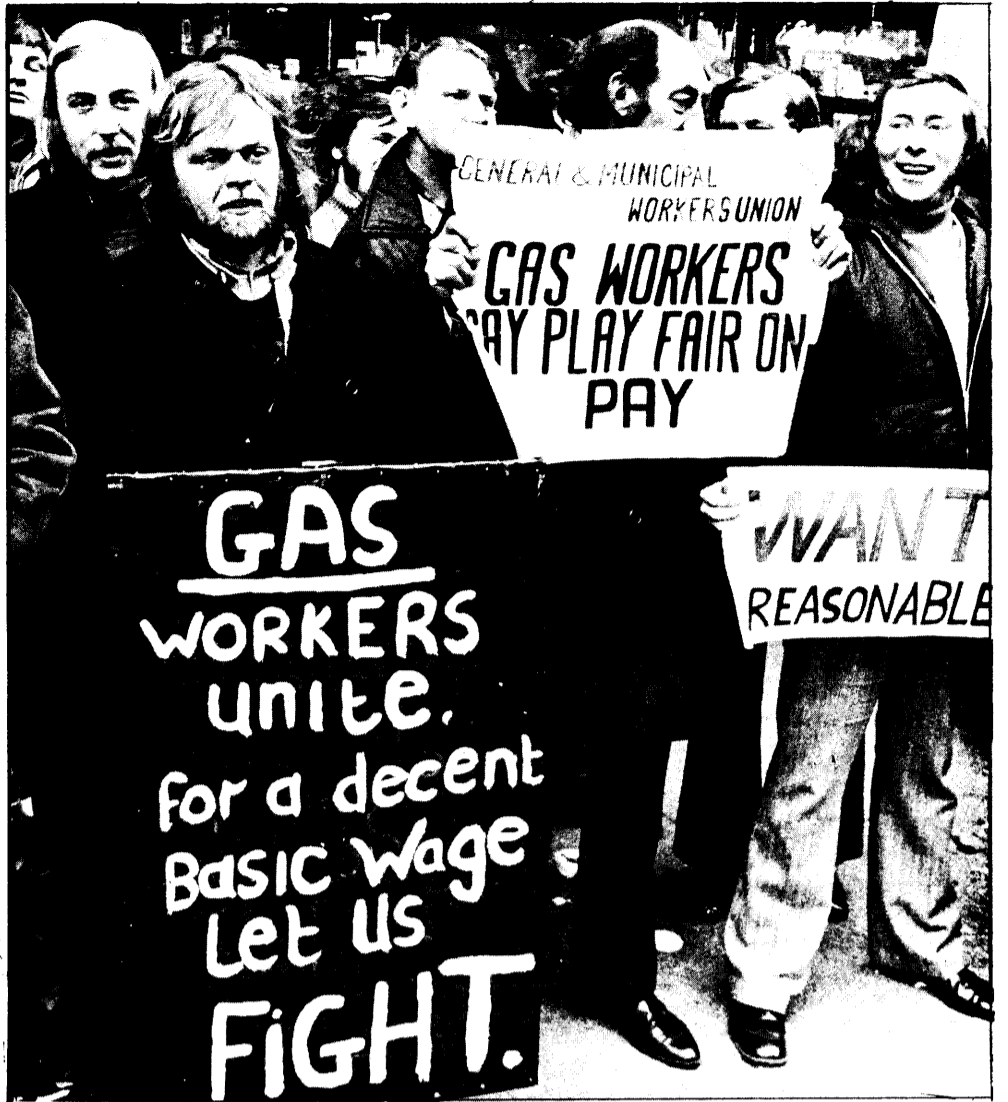
Sign treaties with all ex-colonial countries for programmes of equal trade and mutual assistance.

Break from NATO and all imperialist alliances.

For the carrying out of such policies the SLL fights for the setting up of Councils of Action to lead the struggle against the Tory government in every area. These Councils unite trade unionists, tenants, unemployed, all political parties and tendencies of the working class (Labour Party, Communist Party, SLL, IS, IMG, etc.) to fight against the main enemy, the Tory government.

The SLL calls upon every socialist and class-conscious worker to consider this programme and manifesto very carefully, and to decide now to take up their inescapable responsibilities. The building of the revolutionary party is the burning question now, not in some remote future. The SLL is determined to carry through its transformation into a revolutionary party.

We appeal to all readers of the Workers Press and our supporters to join the SLL and help transform it into a revolutionary party.



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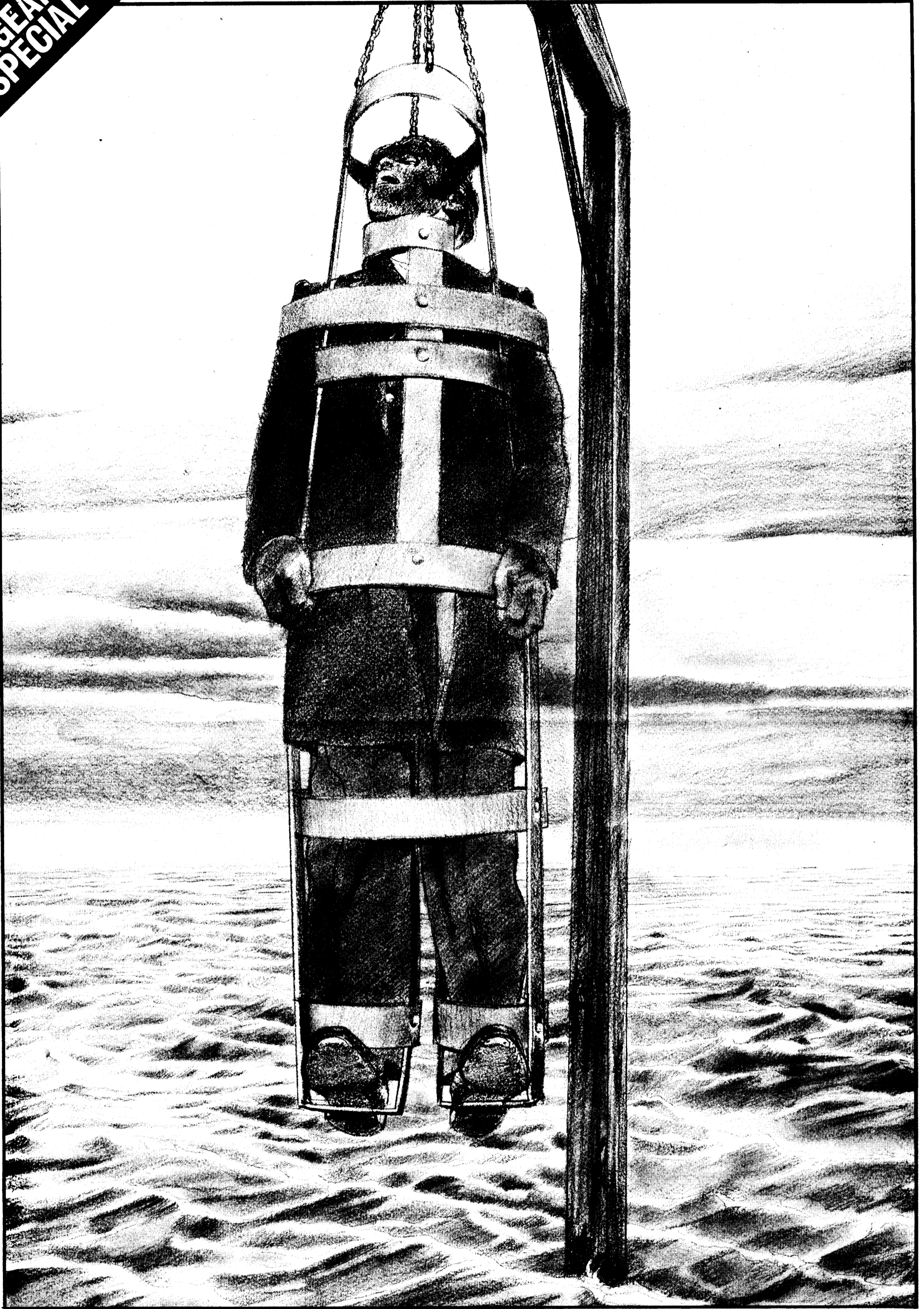
PAGEANT
SPECIAL

ILLUSTRATION BY JULIAN ALLEN

HUNG IN CHAINS

This is what happened to Will Jobling, a Jarrow miner, in 1831. He was on strike against the private coalowners in a bitter fight to build the first miners' union in the area. He was framed on a charge of

murder following the death of a local magistrate. They took Will Jobling and hung him. Then, on the specific instructions of the judge, his body was taken to Jarrow Slake where he was exhibited in a hideous steel contraption. 'Let this be a lesson to others who want to form combinations', said the judiciary. On pages 6, 7 and 8, we reveal the bloody struggle which went into the building of trade unions in Britain.



Will Jobling, continued from page 5

Will Jobling was a miner in Jarrow in 1831. He had a wife and two children. Every day he worked at Jarrow colliery. Like every other pit worker of his day, he was a virtual slave to the coal owners.

Each year a miner had to sign a bond. This was a contract for the terms of his employment for 12 months.

First of all, he wasn't paid in wages, but in vouchers which he had to spend in the 'tommy shop'—which in turn was owned by the coal-owners. All his food and clothing he had to buy there. Most of the time, therefore, he was in debt to the company store. So when pay day came around every fortnight, his debts were deducted at source.

He earned about half a

crown a day. For that he worked underground for 16 hours a day—if he was lucky, of course, because he could always be laid off. The favourite time for lay-offs was Christmas, which left his family without any income during the winter festive season. If coal stocks were high, he was laid off again.

He worked in the dark by the light of a candle which increased the danger of gas explosions. The seams he worked were only a few feet high, so he spent the time half-naked, on his belly, ripping at the face with a pick axe.

He was paid by the amount of coal that he hewed. If the basket contained impurities, like stone, he would be fined up to 5s.

In the pitch dark how could you tell what was coal and what was stone? That was the miners' problem.

Alongside Jobling worked women and children hauling the coal to the shaft. None

of them saw the light of day from one week to the next.

The small cottage that he lived in was owned by the colliery. If he refused to sign the bond, or the coal viewer didn't like him, if he argued at all about his conditions, he was evicted onto the streets.

For Will Jobling, therefore, life was hard and dangerous. The life of a slave. A miner was the property of the coal-owners.

It was conditions like these which made men organize. It was Tommy Hepburn who started campaigning for the first miners' union on Tyneside. Jobling was among his early recruits.

On March 12, 1831, 20,000 miners—'terrible and savage pitmen'—gathered on Black Fell in the County of Durham to draw up their demands for shorter hours and better wages. It was the first time that any such meeting had taken place on Tyneside.

There was a certain amount of nervousness when the mayor

of Newcastle arrived with troops and advised them to disperse. But they decided not to sign the bond unless their demands were met by the employers.

On hearing these demands the employers flatly refused. Instead great numbers of special constables were sworn in and as a further security the Northumberland and Newcastle Yeomanry were called up to hold themselves in readiness to 'suppress any tumult that may ensue'. The men went on strike.

The forces of law and order began to hunt them, harass them, arrest them. But the first threat they faced was the existence of a group of men in their own ranks who continued to work in the pits. These were the 'blacklegs'.

On April 18, 1831, between 1,200 and 1,500 miners marched to some of the local collieries and threatened to set fire to them if their demands were not met. They threw baskets, lumps of wood and

machinery down the pit shaft to stop it from working.

After this angry confrontation at the pithead, a small group of them broke into the residence of one of the most hated managers on the field. They ate and drank everything they could get their hands on. And when they left, they warned the manager that they'd come back again if he didn't choose to meet their demands. The next day the manager received the following letter:

I was at yor hoose last neet, and myed mysel very comfortable. Ye hey nee family, and yor just won man on the colliery, I see ye hev a greet lot of rooms, and big cellars and plenty wine and beer in them, which I got ma share on. Noo I naw some at wor colliery that has three or fower lads and lasses, and they live in won room not half as gude as yor cellar. I don't pretend to naw very much, but I naw there shudn't be that much differ-

ence gan the I d fit, o n wer and to g igne to f ters for o y hev ven I u wel In orde of l a m this old Shie dow to t his H or K devo





A scene from the Pageant rehearsal: A group of striking miners break into the house of a hated manager. They tie him up, eat and drink all they can lay their hands on, and warn him they will come again if their demands aren't met.

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ence. The only place we can
gan to o' the week ends is
the tel hoose and hev a pint.
I dinna pretend to be a pro-
fit, but I naw this, and lots
o ma marrows na's te, that
wer not tret as we owt to be,
and a great filosofere says,
to get noledge is to naw wer
ignerent. But we've just begun
to find that oot, and ye mais-
ters and owners may luk oot,
for yor not gan to get se much
o yor awn way, wer gan to
hev some o wors now. I di-
vent tell ye ma nyem, but
I was one o yor un-
welcome visitors last neet.

In the face of these 'dis-
orderly' incidents, the forces
of law and order retaliated on
a more vigorous scale. One of
the men in the vanguard of
this repression was a 70-year-
old magistrate from South
Shields who'd sent more men
down, transported more men
to the colonies than most of
his zealous peers.

His name was Justice Failes
or Fairless. He was a deeply
devout Christian who took

relish in doling out punish-
ment.

One thing he hated more
than working men was orga-
nized working men in unions.
He frequently appeared on the
picket lines to read the Riot
Act and to usher the scabs
into work.

But despite the activities of
his worship, the police, the
army and the scabs, coal sup-
plies dwindled. This forced the
owners to agree verbally to
concessions: shorter working
hours for children, a higher
daily rate, the abolition of the
'tommy shops' and payment of
wages. It wasn't all their de-
mands, but it was the first
time they had won anything.
The men were jubilant.

The union grew and Tommy
Hepburn was appointed the
first full-time organizer with a
salary paid from dues. All
seemed well. Until the next
year 1832, when the bond
came up for renewal. The em-
ployers declared they wouldn't
grant any increase in wages.
Furthermore, any man who be-

longed to the union couldn't
work.

When the men went on
strike for the second time they
faced a far better-organized
management. In the time they
had to prepare, the owners
arranged for scab labour to be
brought into the area and the
military was on stand-by to
'deal with any emergency'.

They began evicting union
men from their cottages and
putting scab workers in their
place. Driven out of their
homes, union men, their wives
and families were forced to
live on the moors. The mili-
tary gave weapons to the scabs
to use against the union
pickets. In other words, the
union men watched as their
jobs, their homes and their
possessions were snatched
from them by a scab force
under the benevolent eye of
the police—and the church.

Most of the union men
stood firm, but there were
some waverers in their midst
who accepted the employers'

terms. They agreed to work,
signed the bond and de-
nounced the union. One of
these was called Errington.
But class justice reared itself:
Errington was shot dead by
the miners for collaborating
with the employers and the
army. When his coffin was
taken through the streets the
wives of union men spat at it
and jeered.

From now on the magis-
trates, Failes among them, de-
creed that it was illegal for
any union man to hold a meet-
ing. Any striking pitman found
on the streets was immediately
arrested. They were dragged
back to the jails, beaten, tor-
tured in the most horrible
fashion and told that they
must renounce the union. But
the majority of the men held
firm. This meant that the own-
ers needed something else to
break the strike, now in its
tenth week.

The position of the miners
at this point was very danger-

ous and difficult. A chronicler
of the time said:

☛ Their villages were
filled with insolent and
tyrannical policemen or special
constables who were pam-
pered by the owners with beer
and other refreshments and
who showed their gratitude to
the masters by knocking
down any of the men on
strike who came in their way
and by locking them up if
they presumed to say any-
thing. Men, women and child-
ren were seen begging about
the district; the men, hounded
by the police and military,
their wives insulted by the

Will Jobling, continued on
page 8



Will Jobling, continued from page 7

wives of the other men who ought to have had more generosity, and their bairns laughed at and mocked at by the children.

On June 11 at about 5 o'clock in the evening Justice Failes was riding on horseback to Jarrow Colliery. He was accosted by two miners who asked him for money for food. Failes replied angrily and when the two men came closer he lashed out with his riding crop. They seized hold of the hated magistrate and pulled him to the roadside. Failes was given a beating and left groaning. One of the men involved in the assault was named Armstrong, the other was Will Jobling.

On June 21, ten days later, Failes died in hospital. The vestry of St Hilda offered a £300 reward for the capture of the men responsible. Armstrong, who gave Failes the hiding, was never found. It is believed he hovered around the district for several weeks and then stowed away to America.

Jobling was captured and appeared before the Durham Assizes on August 1 charged with murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged on the 3rd. In passing sentence the judge said:

The case before us is one of wilful murder, committed by the man before us in the dock and accomplice Armstrong who has yet to be apprehended. Gentlemen of the jury, I look forward with painful interest to the discharge of your duties and mine, on which we are called upon to administer criminal justice. Almost every act of violence, I believe, may be attributed to the combinations into so called trade unions amongst working men which have prevailed for too long in this part of the country. Gentlemen, these combinations have unfortunately derived their origin from a change in the law which took place five or six years ago, when an Act was passed, repealing all former laws relating to the prohibition of combinations for raising the price of wages and permission was given to the men to meet for this purpose amongst themselves; a permission that I have no doubt has been carried to an excess and embraced objects which even under that Act of parliament are unquestionably illegal. Gentlemen, these combinations are so dangerous to public safety and so injurious to the peace and welfare of society that sooner or later they must be put down. I hope by proper administration of the law

as it stands this great object may be effected.

The sentence was carried out soon after 12 o'clock on the 3rd, on a scaffold erected in front of the County Court in Durham. On his way to the gallows 'he exhibited the utmost resignation and fortitude. His step was firm as he entered upon the scaffold; but the power of articulation failed him, and he was unable to address the spectators as he had stated it to be his intention to do.'

Just as the executioner was about to plunge the victim to his death, a person near the scaffold cried out: 'Farewell Jobling.' Jobling instantly turned his head in the direction of the voice. The cord around his neck slipped and consequently protracted his death for some minutes because his neck wasn't cleanly broken. The voice was supposed to be that of Armstrong's who smuggled himself into the square to pay his respects to his fellow trade unionist.

After hanging an hour, Jobling's body was taken down and removed to a nearby jail. This was carried out by men of the 8th Hussars and the 15th Foot Regiment who encircled the scaffold while the execution was carried out.

At the prison his clothes were taken off and he was

covered in pitch. On Monday, August 6, at 7 a.m., the body was taken in a wagon escorted by mounted cavalry, two companies of infantry, sheriffs, jailers and bailiffs.

They proceeded by way of Chester le Street, Picktree, Sludge Row, Portobello, over the Black Fell, to White Mare Pool and then by the South Shields turnpike Road to Jarrow Slake. About 1,000 local people had gathered to see the final detail of the judge's sentence enforced.

Under the direction of two local magistrates, Mr Bryan Abbs and Mr William Lorraine, Jobling's body was encased between flat iron bars of 2½ in breadth. His feet were placed in stirrups and bars and steel collars were arranged so that he was in a standing position.

At low water the soldiers buried the end of the pole deep in the slake. This meant that at low tide the gibbeted body was visible from the sea-front; at high tide only the top 17 or 18 feet of the pole would stand like a grim sentinel marking Jobling's grisly end.

'The body, when gibbeted, had on the clothes in which he appeared on his trial—blue jacket and trousers, the heel quarters of his boots were down, his head was thrown quite back so that his face

The Bolden colliery, one of the pits in the Jarrow area. It was here in Jarrow that the bitter fight to build the first miners' union took place.

appeared as if looking upward.'

Jobling was the first person gibbeted under the new Act of parliament which ordered the bodies of murderers to be hung in chains.

His body remained there for several days under the guard of infantrymen. One morning, however, the guard woke up to find that the corpse in the iron contraption had been removed. In the night miners crept past the sentry, took down Jobling's body and buried it in a hidden grave. Those who carried out the clandestine operation were sworn to secrecy. Nobody has ever discovered his grave.

It was under these conditions of struggle that the first unions were built. It will only be in struggle today that these same unions can be defended from the Tories, the judges and police thugs.

Anyone who says any less than this is seriously misleading the working class and not presenting the reality of today's crisis which is driving the Tories into the most ruthless attacks on the trade unions and their democratic rights.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

MR 280 PER CENT



Jeremy Thorpe, the leader of the Liberals, is having a rough time in the House of Commons.

Every time he tries to raise a point at question time he is vigorously barracked by members of the Opposition.

As he tried to speak the other day a shout of 'Mr 280 per cent' was to be heard in the chamber. Mr Dennis Skinner, MP for Bolsover, on several occasions yelled out 'Watch your pockets'. Others chanted: 'Give him a second mortgage.'

These remarks refer to Thorpe's directorship with Gerald Caplan's London and County Securities. A subsidiary, Overseas Financial Trust, last month denied an allegation that it was seeking interest at the rate of 280 per cent on a loan to a widow.

The usually garrulous Mr Thorpe is adopting a 'low profile' at the moment.

STRAWBS' UNION

One clear anti-union aspect of the Strawbs' 'Part of the Union' song, now at the top of the charts, is that both tune and lyrics have been plagiarised from a much older and far less ambiguous American trade union song called 'The Union Maid'.

In all of the interviews with the group we have so far read, not once has this elementary fact been admitted.

If the Strawbs had an ounce of sympathy or respect for the struggle of the working class, they would have been

quick to acknowledge their debt to the US labour movement which has now led them into the money.

The American song is about a woman trade unionist. One verse goes:

*'This union maid was wise
To the tricks of company spies.*

*She couldn't be fooled by
the company rules,
She'd always organize the
guys.*

*She'd always get her way.
When she struck for
better pay.*

*She'd show her card to
the National Guard
And this is what she'd
say.*

Chorus: *Oh you can't
scare me I'm sticking
to the union*

*I'm sticking to the union,
I'm sticking to the union*

(Repeat)
Till the day I die.'

The Strawbs' version goes:

*'As a union man I'm
wise*

*To the lies of the company
spies*

*And I'm never fooled by
factory rules*

*'Cos I read between the
lines.*

*I always get my way
When I strike for higher
pay*

*I show my card to the
Scotland Yard*

And this is what I say.

Chorus: *Oh you don't get
me, I'm part of the
union*

*I'm part of the union, I'm
part of the union.*

(Repeat)
Till the day I die.'

It does not surprise us to learn, therefore, that the Strawbs have confirmed to 'The Observer' that the song is meant to be a send-up of trade union struggle.

However, artistic products do not always have the effect their creators intended. Whatever anti-union points the new lyrics may try to make, millions of ordinary workers will turn the song into serving their own purpose—a pro-union one.



A ROYAL VISIT

Last year's visit to China by the wife of the Shah of Iran is apparently considered something to boast about by the Maoist leaders in Peking.

'China Pictorial', their glossy propaganda magazine, carried a really fulsome report of the event in its December issue last year.

The report gives the Iranian queen her full title—the Shahbanou—and refers with positive reverence to the fact that she was accompanied by her mother and the Iranian Prime Minister.

'Everywhere they went,' the paper says, 'whether in the capital Peking, in China's largest city, Shanghai, in the ancient city of Sian or in the "home of silk", Hangchow, they met with a warm welcome.'

Not only did the Chinese Stalinists turn out to welcome the queen, they also gave the following endorsement to the bloody dictatorship run by her husband:

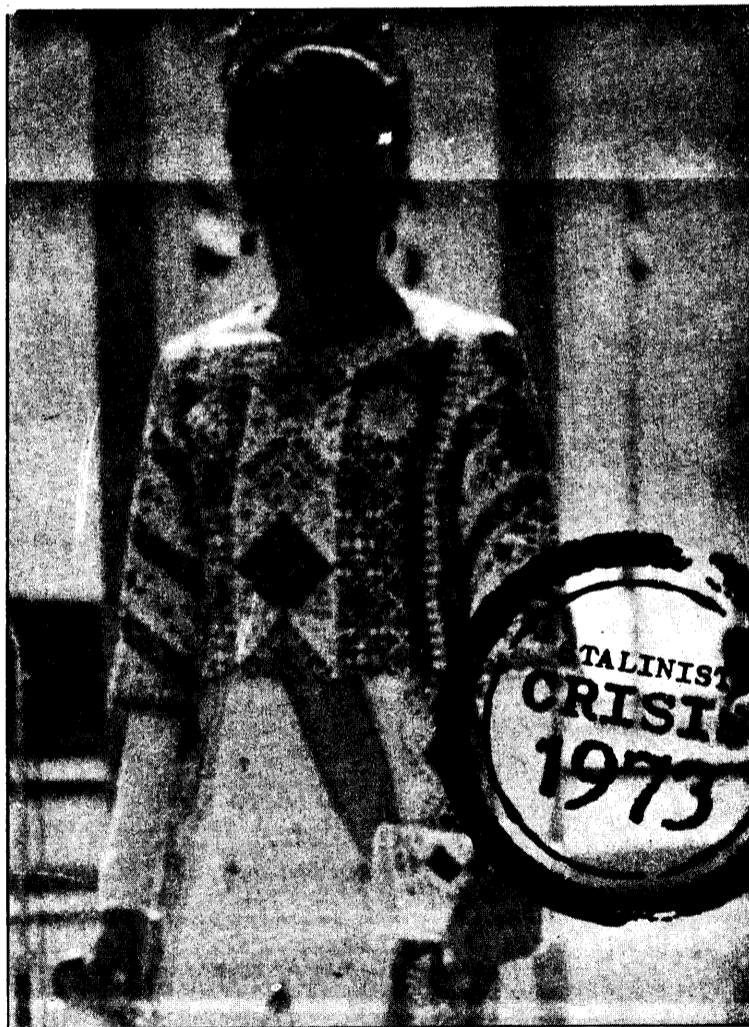
'Iran has a long history and ancient civilization. . . . Under the leadership of Shahanshah Pahlavi, the government and people of Iran have made continuous efforts and achieved successes in safeguarding state sovereignty, protecting national resources, developing national culture and building their country.'

The Shah 'protects' these resources, as the Chinese Stalinists well know, with the aid of the region's most efficient secret police force and squads of CIA-trained torturers.

Not only do the Chinese leaders boost his non-existent 'achievements', they also glorify the antiquity of the Persian monarchy, which is a constant theme of Iranian government propaganda.

The Shah is touchy about his dynastic claims, probably because instead of coming from a line of kings 2,500 years old, as he likes to claim, he is in fact the son of a semi-literate cossack sergeant who grabbed the throne as long ago as 1925.

So impressed were the



The Shahbanou, Princess Farah, at the Persepolis celebrations, where China also had an envoy. Above: Chou En-lai.

Chinese by the Shah's claims that they even sent an envoy to the obscene carnival of reaction at Persepolis which celebrated the supposed 2,500th anniversary of the Persian monarchy.

It must have been upsetting for the Chinese Stalinists that they themselves no longer have a King and Queen to send along on these occasions!

Since he appears to find monarchy such a congenial institution for other 'peoples', perhaps Mao Tse-tung plans to elevate himself to the throne as well?

Certainly his minions are great admirers of the Chinese dynasties of the past and of their exemplary relations with the Persian monarchy: 'In 138 BC the emperor of the west-

ern Han Dynasty sent Chang Chien from the capital Changan (now Sian) to the western regions as envoy.

'His assistant went to An Hsi (Parthia Kingdom, Persia) and was well received.'

This is a hitherto unknown new principle of foreign relations: a 'socialist' country which bases its foreign policy on appeals to the acts of an emperor 2,111 years ago!

According to 'China Pictorial', the 'friendly ties' were later interrupted by 'imperialist sabotage and obstruction'. They have now resumed, the magazine says, on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit!

POLITICAL PROFILES

By LEON TROTSKY

Paperback. £1.00 Illustrated

Sharp pen-portraits of leading figures of the Second International in Russia and Europe, for the first time published in an English edition. The translations were first commissioned by the Young Socialists' paper 'Keep Left' Their enormous success has led to the completion of the translation of the whole book, which is the first part of Volume 8 of Leon Trotsky's 'Works' published in the Soviet Union in 1926. It provides the most vivid picture available of the historic figures of the Second International, their strengths and weaknesses, written by an observer who was also a participant in the daily struggle of the European and Russian working class.



Now available from New Park Publications
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Militant teachers want tougher line on pay



Teachers and pupils mount a vigil at Primrose Hill Junior School, Camden, demanding an increased London allowance.

MILITANT Camden teachers yesterday called for a General Strike to force the Tory government to resign.

About a dozen teachers mounted a vigil at Primrose Hill Junior School and spokesman Mr Peter Rees told me:

'I think it is the only way to bring the government down. Until there is a change of government there won't be any change in our standard of living.'

He claimed that the majority of teachers earned below national average pay. A ballot of members would produce a vote of up to 65 per cent in favour of an all-out strike.

BY IAN YEATS

London's 36,000 teachers are demanding an increase in the special London allowance from £118 a year to about £300. They have been offered a rise of £15.

Another teacher, Mr. Garry Ogden told me:

'The Young Teachers' Association and the rank-and-file movement have been pushing for a long time for an extension of the rolling strike.'

And Mr Rees added that after the present campaign ends the NUT leadership would be put under strong pressure to adopt a tougher line.

He said: 'There is only one way for us to win and that is to stay out and stay out. If we were to do that the situation would be comparable to the miners' strike.'

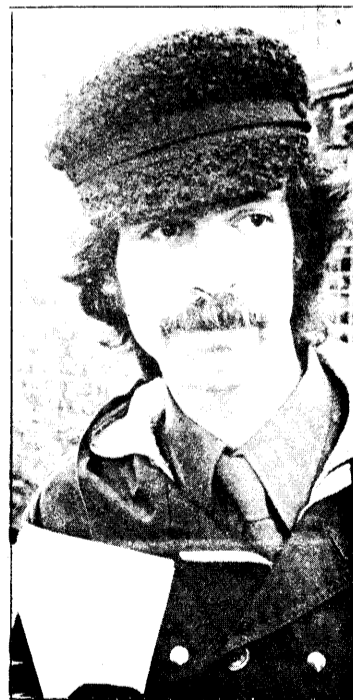
He and his wife earn about £2,000 a year between them but because of the high cost of accommodation close to the schools where they both work, they are forced to live in one room and can rarely afford entertainment.

Many of the teachers were insulted by the government's £15-a-year offer which they claimed amounted to 28p a week.

Mrs. Irene King told me that failure to improve the London teachers' pay could have a disastrous effect on education in the capital.

'If the London allowance is not increased the service here will break down and it is the children who will suffer,' she said.

'Teachers are already having to go out of London because they can't afford to live here and staff turnover is so high that a child can have four or five different teachers in a single year.'



PETER REES . . . Change govt

TODAY'S TV

BBC 1

9.15 Schools. 12.30 Nai zindagi naya jeevan. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 In the town. 1.45 Made in Britain. 2.05 Schools. 3.00 Sunday debate. 3.35 Television top of the form. 4.00 Deputy dawg. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Right Charlies. 5.15 Val meets the VIPs. 5.40 Wombles. 5.45 News. Weather. 6.00 NATIONWIDE. 6.45 ASK THE FAMILY. 7.05 TOMORROW'S WORLD. 7.30 NOW LOOK HERE. 8.00 BARLOW AT LARGE. Publicity. 8.50 WEEK BY WEEK. 9.00 NEWS. Weather. 9.25 THE BRITISH SCREEN AWARDS. Michael Parkinson and John Mills are hosts at the presentation of the 1972 awards. 11.05 SPORTSNIGHT. 1973 World Figure Skating Championships. 11.50 NEWS. Weather.

ITV

9.30 Schools. 10.35 Yoga (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Mr. Trimble. 12.25 Rupert Bear. 12.40 First report. 1.00 String out with The Settlers. 1.30 Crown court. 2.00 Harriet's back in town. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Whose baby? 3.25 Saint. 4.20 Get this! 4.50 Jensen code. 5.20 University challenge. 5.50 News. 6.00 TODAY. 6.35 CROSSROADS. 7.00 THIS IS YOUR LIFE. 7.30 CORONATION STREET. 8.00 THE FIRST OF LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR. 8.30 ALL OUR SATURDAYS. 100 Years of Outstanding Underthings. 9.00 LOVE STORY. When the End is in Sight. 10.00 NEWS. 10.30 ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL. 11.25 WORLD FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS. 12.25 SCOTLAND YARD MYSTERIES. Dover Road Mystery. 12.50 IT'S WORTH READING. Andrew Cruickshank talks about reading Kirkegaard.

BBC 2

11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University. 7.05 MAN AT WORK. Down with Drudgery! 7.30 NEWS SUMMARY. Weather. 7.35 JOHNNY MORRIS IN MEXICO. Acapulco, Toluca, Teotihuacan. 8.00 MAN ALIVE. If Only We Could Afford It. Thamesmead tenants meet the Greater London Council. 9.00 FILM: 'THE SWAN'. Alec Guinness, Grace Kelly, Louis Jourdan. Comedy about a princess with a matchmaking mother. 10.45 EDITION. 11.15 NEWS EXTRA. Weather.



Man behind the mask is Michael Parkinson who hosts the British Screen Awards on BBC 1. The mask is the British 'Oscar'.

REGIONAL TV

CHANNEL: 9.30-12.00 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Galloping gourmet. 3.00 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Linkup. 6.35 London. 7.00 Treasure hunt. 7.30 London. 8.00 This is your life. 8.30 London. 12.25 Epilogue. News, weather. WESTWARD. As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.25 Hammy Hamster. 12.37 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 12.25 News. 12.28 Faith for life. SOUTHERN: 9.30 London. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Danger man. 4.25 London. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.30 Whicker's South Seas. 7.00 London. 8.00 Hawaii five-o. 9.00 London. 12.25 News. 12.35 Weather Guideline. ANGLIA: 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Odd couple. 3.55 Romper room. 4.19 News. 4.20 London. 12.25 Reflection. ATV MIDLANDS: 9.30 London. 12.00 Programme guide. 12.05 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 8.00 Please sir. 8.30 London. ULSTER: 11.00 London. 1.32 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.45 Romper room. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet's back in town. 4.23 News. 4.25 London. 6.00 UTV reports. 6.35 London. 8.00 Protectors. 8.30 London. YORKSHIRE: 9.30 London. 3.30 Jason King. 4.25 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.35 London. 8.00 Anna and the king. 8.30 London. 12.25 Weather GRANADA: 9.30 London. 12.00 Handful of songs. 12.05 London. 3.25 Yoga. 3.50 Cartoon. 4.00 Crossroads. 4.20 London. 6.00 News. What's on. 6.30 Lucy. 7.00 London. 8.00 Lovel! 8.30 London. TYNE TEES: 9.25 Thoughts from the little read book. 9.30 London. 3.30 Champions. 4.20 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 8.00 Anna and the king. 8.30 London. 12.25 News. 12.40 Lectern. SCOTTISH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 London. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 University challenge. 7.00 London. 10.30 Sound stage. 11.00 Love, American style. 11.20 Late call. 11.25 London. GRAMPIAN: 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 2.45 Cartoon. 2.52 News. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet. 4.20 London. 5.20 Survival. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Thompson at teatime. 6.35 London. 8.00 Adventurer. 8.30 London. 10.30 Police news. 10.35 Untouchables. 11.25 London. 12.25 Meditation.

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ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

Fight rising rents and prices
Defend basic democratic rights
Force the Tories to resign

ABERDEEN: Wednesday, February 28, 8 p.m. Trades Hall, 24 Adelphi.

COVENTRY: Wednesday, February 28, 7.30 p.m. Woodend Community Building, Hillmorton Road.

EDINBURGH: Wednesday February 28, 7.30 p.m. Graphic Club, 15 Brunswick Street, 'Workers' rights and the fight against the Tory government.'

GLASGOW: Wednesday February 28, 7.30 p.m. Woodside Hall, St George's Cross.

DERBY: Thursday, March 1, 7.30 p.m. Metal Mechanics' Premises, Charnwood Street.

CROYDON: Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road. 'Support the gasmen'.

HOLLOWAY: Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road (near Finsbury Park Station). 'Marxism and the trade unions'.

KINGSTON: Thursday March 1, 8 p.m. 'Liverpool Arms', Cambridge Road. 'Support the gasmen and hospital workers'.

GLASGOW: Sunday, March 4, 3 p.m. Partick Burgh Hall, near Merkland Street Underground. 'Hospital workers and the Tory government'.

SOUTHALL, Wednesday, March 7, 8 p.m. Southall Library, Osterley Park Road. 'The Road to Workers' Power'.

PAGEANT DIARY

The Road to Workers Power



MERTHYR

Rail veteran Tom (82) tells How we built the union

IN THE valleys of South Wales there are still men who remember the dawn of the labour movement—they remember it because they were part of the early struggles.

Tom Thomas (82), of Dowlais, is one. He started on the railways in 1907, a year after the historic 1906 Trades Disputes Act which freed the unions from the threat of bankruptcy in a civil court action.

Within his own life-span Tom has seen the struggle to build the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants—the union penalized in the Taff Vale case.

He witnessed its early leader, J. H. Thomas, betraying the union and the working class.

He fought as an organizer during the General Strike and retired as a driver on top rates in 1951.

His verdict on today's struggle:

Richest

'They're trying to do it again, aren't they? This Industrial Relations Act is robbing everything we fought for.'

When Tom began work, the South Wales railways were the richest in Britain, carrying the coal, iron and steel gouged out of the valleys to Cardiff and the coast.

He worked for the Great Western and the Rhymney, the line in the valley next to the Taff Vale Company, which won damages against the ASRS in 1901.

'I started as a boy cleaner in 1907 at Caeharris depot. We were greatly awed by the Great Western and the Rhymney Railway Company.

'I got 9s a week for 12 hours a day. It was night work; we used to work the full week round, from Sunday night to the following Saturday morning.

'It was hard and there was an awful lot of poverty then, but the pound was full value and that was one advantage.

'In 1909, I became a foreman on 15s a week, 12 hours, six days a week.

'Then later the ten-hour day was introduced. That was something we fought very hard for.

'After that we got the eight-hour day—that's where we are now.'

Victory

Tom graduated up through the years. When he retired in 1951 his driver's pay was £6.18s a week.

'When I was young I used to walk in the countryside after work in the morning, or perhaps go to bed, get up in the afternoon and walk.

'That was in the summer. Sometimes you would go out in the evening for a bit of entertainment.

The other part of Tom's life was the union.

In his time he was secre-

The Pageant in South Wales is recreating the Taff Vale struggle of the railwaymen to show how workers won their basic rights. Here STEPHEN JOHNS interviews an ex-railway worker from the area who witnessed the early struggles.

tary, chairman and treasurer of the Dowlais National Union of Railwaymen—the modern name of the ASRS.

The key year was 1911.

'That was when we had the recognition strike all over the country. We weren't out much more than a week, but we won it. The employers had to deal straight with the union from then on.'

But before that it was more difficult:

'We had to fight very hard to keep the union alive. We held meetings and the main aim was to advocate and agitate to get men in the union.

'Today most workers are in some union or other, but it was not like that then. We would get a delegation to knock on the non-union man's door—I've been on many of them.

'We used to explain the conditions and how much better it would be when we were organized.

Traitor

'We always used to convince some, perhaps every month we would get five or six men in—but that was progress; that was how it was done.

'On occasions the management would make it difficult for us. It was never obvious, but if you were in a spot of bother the sentence would be more than normal if you were a union man.

'We had to be very care-

ful. But later when the union was recognized, they couldn't do this any more.

'In 1911 the head of the union was J. R. Thomas.

'He was a good leader, but he let us down. He turned out to be a traitor in the end after we had made him an MP, made him everything he was.

Alliance

'He abandoned the union for the Coalition under MacDonald in 1931.

'The executive said he must not do it, but he did and broke away from the union.

'A big issue I remember well was the Triple Alliance of 1919. The railwaymen were not to blame for this.

'You remember we were ready to come out with the dockers and the miners, but Lloyd George offered last-minute talks.

'But Hodges of the miners refused. Thomas wanted to go back.

'Hodges' attitude gave Thomas a loophole to break away. We were blamed, but it wasn't our fault.

'You see, Thomas was definitely a moderate. He would do anything to avoid a strike.

'But sometimes it is necessary to strike.

'That's what I know. These are the things we fought for that the young people of today take for granted.

'I hope you can show them how they were won.'



MI5 man gets three months backdated

A BRITISH MI5 agent and an Irish police officer were each sentenced to three months imprisonment at a special court in Dublin yesterday.

John Wyman (36) of Swann Walk, Chelsea, was convicted of attempting to obtain official information. He was found not guilty on a joint charge of attempting to pass information.

The Irish policeman, Patrick Crinnion (38) of Rathmore Avenue, Dublin, was found guilty of possessing official documents, but not guilty on the joint charge of attempted communication of information.

The sentences run from the men's arrest date last December.

Special ATUA meetings
POSTAL WORKERS
The crisis of capitalism and the future of the trade unions.
Sunday March 4
10.30 a.m.
Conway Small Hall
Red Lion Square
Holborn.
BUILDING WORKERS
The crisis of capitalism and the future of the trade unions.
Tuesday March 6
7.30 p.m.
Norfolk Room
Caxton Hall
Caxton Street, SW1

SLL Public Meetings

SOUTHAMPTON
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8 p.m.
Joiners Arms Hotel
St Mary's Street
Speaker: ALAN THORNETT
(Deputy senior steward,
Morris Motors, in a personal
capacity).

DAGENHAM
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8pm
Manor Park Library
Romford Rd/Rabbits Road
opp Rabbits Pub
Speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

HULL
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8 p.m.
'Windmill Hotel'
Witham
Speaker: CLIFF SLAUGHTER
(SLL Central Cttee)

WEST LONDON
THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8 p.m.
Lyndhurst Hall
Grafton Road, NW3
Speaker: M. BANDA
(SLL Central Committee)

LUTON
FRIDAY MARCH 2, 8 p.m.
Assembly Hall
Town Hall
Speaker: M. BANDA
(SLL Central Committee)

TOTTENHAM
TUESDAY MARCH 6, 8 p.m.
Lord Morrison Hall
Chesnut Grove
Speaker: G. HEALY
(SLL National Secretary)

SHEFFIELD
TUESDAY MARCH 6, 7.30 p.m.
Friends Meeting House
Hartshead
Speaker: CLIFF SLAUGHTER
(SLL-Central Committee)



Today the railway line which once belonged to the Taff Vale Company still runs through Merthyr Tydfil. It was once South Wales' busiest line serving nine pits around the town.

ONE DAY LEFT - £318.13 STILL TO BE RAISED

IT WAS a magnificent effort yesterday. You raised a great post of £311.48—but we still have another £318.13 to collect our £1,750 target. One more burst and we will do it!

Thousands of civil servants and teachers demonstrated yesterday the enormous feeling that exists against this Tory government. But this determination alone is not enough to defeat the corporatist measures of this government.

The trade union leaders refuse to unite the whole of the working class in industrial action which would make the government resign. It is vital that Workers Press is used to provide an alternative leadership in this important political situation.

Our paper is decisive. Let's therefore make a last major effort to complete the fund. We know you can do it. Rush everything you can immediately to:

Workers Press
February Appeal Fund
186a Clapham High Street
London, SW4 7UG

TEACHERS' leaders called for joint action against the Tory pay laws at a 1,000-strong march in London yesterday.

Wandsworth NUT association secretary Mr Eric Porter told a Hyde Park meeting: 'We believe that with solidarity in action the government can be made to see sense.'

Lambeth association treasurer Mr Richard North said: 'If we are concerned with a successful campaign, it is absolutely essential we link up with workers in other sectors such as the civil servants and gasmen to break through the government freeze.'

Backed by the NUT, the demonstration, representing about half the total number of teachers on strike yesterday, was mainly organized by associations at Wandsworth, Lambeth, Hackney, Southwark and Camden.

See p.10.

BRS drivers vote to return

THE 1,300 British Road Services drivers who have been pressing for a £2.50 bonus for four weeks voted in Birmingham yesterday to return to work.

Transport and General Workers' Union Commercial Trade Group secretary Alan Law told the drivers: 'The union considers that because of government intervention, we can at this stage get nothing more from BRS.'

Law said that they had arrived at a position where a split could have developed between car delivery men and other drivers. Unity could be preserved if the men returned to work so that the officials could negotiate an acceptable bonus claim.

The resolution was carried overwhelmingly.

But afterward, Harry Shorter, T&GWU steward at BRS Cheapside, Birmingham, told Workers Press:

'The conclusions are obvious. It is as it always was. Without the Tory government being brought down, sections of workers will be isolated and defeated. The TUC on March 5 must issue a directive—a General Strike to remove the government.'

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Brolly brigade's strike: 98p.c. success

BRITAIN'S civil servants yesterday went on a 24-hour strike in protest against the government's pay laws.

It was the first time that the civil service has ever been brought to a standstill by industrial action.

White-collar workers in all ministries stayed away. It disrupted airports, ports of entry, labour exchanges, the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Employment (which is in charge of Phase Two and Three legislation), the Treasury and even the Foreign Office.

Of the country's 11,000 customs officers, 9,500 were on strike.

The Royal Army Pay Corps computer centre at Worthy Down, near Winchester, which handles pay and allowances for the whole of the British army was at a standstill.

It was a brigadier in the army

BY OUR OWN
CORRESPONDENT

who was in charge of last week's move by the government to insert circulars written by Sir William Armstrong, head of the civil service, in the pay packets of the country's 270,000 civil servants.

About the only government building unaffected by the strike was the Houses of Parliament, where, with union permission, civil servants remained at their posts.

A boisterous 3,500-strong rally was held at Central Halls, near parliament, yesterday afternoon.

The one-day strike could not be regarded as a one-off operation, Civil and Public Services Association chief Bill Kendall told the rally.

Interrupted by chants of 'Heath out!' and 'General Strikel!', he pledged the CPSA to a campaign of selective strikes if the Tories maintained their hard line against civil servants' pay.

At the special Congress of the

TUC next week, he said, the CPSA would be demanding 'co-ordinated industrial action against the incomes policy overall'.

Had the union leaders fought more determinedly against Phase One of the Tory pay laws they would not now face such a tough battle against Phase Two, he said.

The rally burst into life at news that support for the strike throughout the country ranged between 85 and 98 per cent.

It gave a standing ovation to civil servants from Scotland, who had travelled overnight to join the rally.

Ninety-seven per cent of civil servants in Scotland were out. John Dryden, secretary of the Society of Civil Servants, faced continual demands for a statement on what his executive intended to do following yesterday's protest action.

Shouts of 'All out!' and 'Heath out!' punctuated his statement that the SCS executive would be meeting on March 5 to decide its future policy.



Some of London's civil servants on picket duty outside the British Museum.

'Only just a beginning'

OVER 9,000 civil servants brought government offices in Manchester to a standstill in an angry 24-hour strike against government's refusal to allow a pay increase agreed as far back as 1957.

Militants reported a 90-per cent success and the Department of the Environment, the Department of Health and Social Security and the Department of Employment came to a virtual halt.

Pickets warned that the demonstration was only a beginning.

'The next step will be selective strike action,' said Joe Power (20), branch secretary of Manchester CPSA.

'And this kind of action would have been unimaginable in the civil service two years ago.'

'But this was before the government froze our wages even before the pay laws came into operation. And we were already 20 per cent behind other comparable workers.'

Stuart King is what the civil servants is all about. He has a degree but his pay as a clerical officer is little more than £20 a week.

Stuart was out with broolly and pin-stripe on the picket line outside the Department of the Environment.

His 'uniform' was a deliberate caricature of the old and thankfully-disappearing image of the civil servant as a docile office slave.

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

Maurice Wilson, assistant secretary of the CPSA Department of the Environment branch, said that a rank and file movement connecting all public service workers in Manchester had been formed.

'It is important to stress that we have not been just caught in the freeze. We are demanding payment of increases that we should have got between January 1972 and 1973.'

Later civil servants from the greater Manchester area held a rally in Bolton. Later this week militants will meet to plan further action in the area.

OVER 1,000 civil servants went on a one-day token strike against the government pay laws in Swansea yesterday.

Anne Jones, secretary of the CPSA at the new government tax centre, Morriston, said that the pay negotiations procedure which had been working since 1956 had been broken.

'Private industry seems to be able to get "back handers" but the public sector workers get a hard and fast line from the government.'

'The TUC have been sitting on the fence. It's only now that they've been pushed into action by us and the hospital and gas-workers.'

THE CIVIL servants strike received massive support in the Glasgow area. At the National Post Office Savings Bank headquarters at Cowglen, almost 4,000 staged a walk-out.

Ian Irvine, social security branch chairman of the Glasgow North branch of the Civil and Public Services Association told Workers Press:

'We have closed every office in the Glasgow area. I don't think the claim can be won by a one-day stoppage.'

IN LANCASTER civil servants rallied in the Market Square. All local labour exchanges and social security offices were closed down.

'I pay more out to some people for social security than I receive in my salary,' said one striker.

Langston: No case against union

FROM DAVID MAUDE
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

THE AMALGAMATED Union of Engineering Workers yesterday received a temporary reprieve from legal attack in the National Industrial Relations Court.

But the union was warned that it is open to similar attacks in the future unless it registers under the Industrial Relations Act or the Act itself is amended.

NIRC President Sir John Donaldson, who issued the warning, dismissed a complaint of unfair industrial practice by the union from Joseph Langston, a Coventry car-body welder who wants to break the closed-shop at Chrysler's Ryton-on-Dunsmore factory.

Donaldson and two lay judges ruled that if Langston wanted to pursue his complaint under the Act, he must do so against his employer. But they held out the possibility that he might take action against his fellow workers in the High Court.

After the hearing, Langston, a non-unionist who is suspended on full pay because no one will work with him, said he would consider any advice from the NIRC about his next steps.

Yesterday's judgement hinged on whether Langston had a right to bring his complaint before the court.

The general right to complain of unfair industrial practices was modified by several sections of the law, Donaldson said.

After a complicated legal argument, the NIRC came down in support of the view that in cases such as Langston's the complaint could only be brought by the employer concerned.

Non-unionists' rights were only at risk if a union was able to induce an employer to act against them, or get their fellow workers to do so.

'If the employer resists the pressure by the union, the worker's rights are not infringed,' Donaldson explained.

'If the employer does not resist the pressure, the worker has a remedy against the employer . . . and the employer has a right against the union.'

Donaldson criticised the Birmingham Industrial Tribunal which originally ruled last December that Langston had a right not to join the AUEW.

BUILDING workers from several London sites picketed employers and union officials yesterday who met to try and settle strikes over the lump and the sacking of a shop steward.

See Covent Garden story p.3.

TUC must call a
General Strike to
make the Tory
government resign
LOBBY THE TUC
MONDAY MARCH 5

9 a.m. Central Halls, Westminster
(opposite Houses of Parliament)

Report back meeting: 2 p.m. Friars Halls, Sheetmetal
Workers Union, Blackfriars Bridge (nearest tube
Blackfriars).

SLI PUBLIC MEETING: Unite in action to defend basic rights.

SLOUGH

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28 8 p.m.

Britwell Community Centre Long Furlong Drive Britwell Estate
Speaker: G. HEALY (SLL National Secretary)