A GENERAL STRIKE CAN KILL THE TORY BILL

WE HAVE THE POWER TO WIN!
After the Commune...

Prosper Lissagaray was one of thousands who had to flee the terror unleashed to put down the Paris Commune. He came to London to stave and prepare a true record of what the people of Paris had brought into the world.

Lissagaray wrote his book, underlining that no writer who dared out revolutionary legends is as useless as a map maker who gives seamen faked charts. Many of us are still afflicted with such faulty information, a lack of any serious political analysis. As a result each defeat tends to be the forerunner of the next, with nothing learnt except the taste of sorrow.

The boundless heroism of the Paris masses has been the source for a great deal of such faking. In the main there are two kinds of streetcagers to avoid on the Commune.

One celebrates the fantastic creative abilities of the masses at the expense of any examination of why we did not quite succeed that time.

It ignores the presence of weak and strong elements, and so provides no way of building the slogans and the organisations that can tie the weak to the strong and forge a single, united path to freedom.

The other views the Commune—such a bloody mess, those poor people—as the cry of simple workers for good government. This sort of stuff needs to be just as firmly shoved aside. For neither approach catches us for the struggles ahead.

By contrast, the most prominent revolutionary thinker and man of the last century was busy comforting the fruits of the Commune. Within a week of the last deaths, he had produced a study of its meaning for the world working class movements.

Karl Marx set on the completely novel contribution to politics the Commune announced. The masses had devised a mechanism through which they could govern their own lives.

Marx had always insisted— and organised workers had generally found—that the state, the whole apparatus of army, police, bureaucracy, and related parasites, was organised as a machine to serve the demands for democracy, freedom, and the right to life.

Indeed, the state machine was only perfected in the struggle between the working class and its masters. The struggle for socialism cannot therefore rely on parliamentary manoeuvres.

Socialism will not be achieved just by laying hold of the plant equipment that has been specifically designed in certain opposition and state-like line. This equipment has to be smashed to pieces and replaced by the organised power of the people.

In March 1871 saw power in the hands of a general committee of the National Guard—a council elected directly by the working people and their associates in other sections of society.

Its programme led speedily to the abolition of the standing army and the police, the two most immediate elements in the merciless power of the state.

In direct and immediate democracy, this form of power allowed for delegates to be elected and paid and paid the average wage. It was the exact opposite of the secrecy and crookery that characterised our own lives.

Ignore

Karl Marx drew all these aspects out of the Paris Commune. He then altered the Communist Manifesto to score on the wrong. But the ruling ideas in society proved so powerful that all kinds of socialists continued to ignore the conclusions of both life and Marx.

His life-long collaborator, Engels, was even said by certain socialists to "prove" that no revolution could succeed in the armed might of the state.

And with the turn of the century, Europe began to slide to war. Socialists in some wised enthusiastic to abandon their ideas in a rush for government posts or the comfort of being recognised as patriots. In fact most of them had few ideas to change, so superficial was their politics.

The vision of a new world was slowly replaced and shifted off the stage in favour of the same old vicious cycle of the old, where—just like Britain in more recent times—the ruling class would be swept out of the boardrooms, the hired workers would put their bells for the lower, and law and order would return.

At least that's how the dream went. But the whole perspective saw no further than the swelling belly of the nation state. British "comrades" gave up the fight for a world and used every weapon they had picked up along the way to power in order to build a squalid, squalid, and squalid state. The cooperative was the result.

Brutal

Once again the state machine had been invented. Once again it was the Paris Commune. In France, the main group of people split open the machine in order to produce a new world. The working classes were given the job of cleansing the world of ruling class culture.

In Russia, the communes were given this task. The co-operative was meant to be the forerunner of the next, with nothing learnt except the taste of sorrow.

Lessons of Paris 1871 aids Russian victory in 1917

Two revolutions that unfolded in Russia through 1917, Lenin wrote his recollections of the Paris Commune and its lessons for his time (and ours). With patience, his State and Revolution is an easy and rewarding book.

Ridiculously and gloriously, he posed the postures of the man who would bring you for the good of the national economy. Their grandchildren are too overly realistic today.

The beaten

Lenin's version was put to the test. And briefly—and in the most difficult circumstances—his version formed. Once again a new day dawned.

The masses were on the move everywhere, seated with the practical idea that they alone could shape their own destinies, put an end to war, famine and slavery.

They should not have been the agents of all humanity's future. For one reason or another they were beaten back. That is another story but reasons there were.

Even in defeat one fighter of the Paris Commune wrote a poem toFLOAT the flag of human freedom higher and provide the slogan.

"Rise up the cup's of every nation to fill our hunger with milk and soul.
"The liquid of liberation Emerge at last to chase the skies." But even songs like the Internationale are not enough. Lenins and symbols may be nice to rest on but they will not change the world. They might even be a hindrance.

What is needed most of all is that the struggle of the Paris Commune is buried by the masses of both past, present and future, which looks on itself and the world with unexpected clarity.

Since the Commune, the standing state machine has been reorganised in blood. Now they are competing to be the Commune.

Nevertheless, the tasks are essentially the same as those of the Commune, to overturn the system and grab more than a brief benefit of fresh air.

...what happened in Russia

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When the future government met in Hyde Park

21 FEBRUARY 1971 was a Sunday and on that day the future government of England met in Hyde Park. The 200,000 members crowded into a field behind Speakers' Corner.

Not many thought of themselves as members of a government, because they knew themselves as individuals to be of little importance. Individuals known as MPs had comprised all previous governments.

Few of the members of the new government cared much for MPs or had hopes of becoming MPs themselves. Only 650 were elected for the entire government, of which 200 were Liberals and of these less than 20 were actually called upon at any one time to exercise executive powers.

The MPs, especially the governing ones, knew this field well enough to be a rally but nobody called it the alternative government. The trade unions, as they were known, thought of themselves as non-political. They left the politics to an elite of their own MPs who had a shot at governing every few years but who never asked them to participate.

Though they didn't think so bold Sunday, they asserted their right to be heard. They staged themselves, too, according to their region and found all areas were represented. For all manner of men and women were there.

Fishermen from Yarmouth marched with weavers from Bradford, typists from Sunderland and miners from Wales.

Ranks of engineers, draughtsmen and builders were followed by the men who made the cars, trains and ships and the men who drove and sailed them. Rank upon rank, they asserted their right to rule as representative of all the working classes.

The percipient observer might have noticed that, unlike the handful of MPs they would soon replace, their strength lay in this - that they all were workers without whose cooperation the MPs' rule could not go on.

For few MPs were masters of any art except mawkish shuffling and interpreting the laws they themselves made. Those who had worked at a useful trade abandoned it on becoming MPs, but most had no experience of work.

The field of folk knew all about work. The difference I might explain like this: if we were thought necessary to build a great bridge or tunnel, the field of folk could have accomplished the task from their own resources, even fashioning the tools for the job.

The MPs could only order others to do it.

The field of folk represented everyone whom they called workers. They even had wage workers who had come to England from the former colonies - and of course none of them were MPs.

In short, so perfectly did they represent the workers of the land that it surprises me now that no one thought then what an excellent government they would make.

On the march to Trafalgar figures that sunny Sunday afternoon showed 'Organise a workers state.' At the time, not one knew what it meant.

We thought of the Russian MP's government as much and were confused. But as that year went on it became clear that one side, the MP's or the trade unions, must win the great struggle between them and so the possibility of us, the workers, taking over and abolishing their system was born.

We called it 'Killing the Bill'.
Poverty, bad housing, attacks on black workers: this is the real face of Britain today

Tory welfare cuts mean more hardship for the poor

Since 1966 the number of people in poverty in Britain has risen by one million. This is the estimate of one of the leading experts on the welfare system, Professor Peter Kenway. Writing in The Times last week, Townsend concludes that the numbers of people with incomes below the supplementary benefit minimum now total 3½ million people — an increase of one million over the past five years.

There has been no increase in the old age pension, the widower’s pension, or sickness or unemployment benefits for the last 18 months, yet during this period the purchasing power of money has dropped faster than at any other time in this century. The miserable £5.50 week paid to the single old age pensioner is now worth about 7s. 9d. less than it was in 1966. The same applies to the other social security benefits.

The Tory government is viewing the situation with monumental indifference. Instead of taking action to stop the runaway inflation, it is telling people that they must pay by cutting down on the supplements and housing allowances which are necessary to help them cope with the increased costs of food and rent. The statement that the government is taking no action to assist the housewife and the unemployed is against the law.

The International Socialists is a dem- ocratic socialist organisation. Membership is open to all who accept its principles, and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in furtherance of its organizations.

We believe in Independent working organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of interna- tionalism.

Capitalism is international. The class forces have ramifications throughout the world and owe no allegiance except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

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Infested, freezing hovels for thousands

She lives with George and her son in a house in a slum in a tenement in the Gorbals. "They told us we had to move. They said it was bad for the children."

The Gorbals is a slum area in Glasgow, known for its poor living conditions and high unemployment. The residents face a difficult living situation, with inadequate housing and limited resources.

The Glasgow Evening Citizen reported on the problems faced by the residents, highlighting the challenges they face daily. The article described the poor conditions in the Gorbals, where residents struggle to make ends meet.

The article mentioned the case of a family who lived in a tenement in the Gorbals. They were told by the authorities that their house was unsafe and that they had to move to a better place. However, the family was unaware of the severity of the situation and did not understand the implications of their living conditions.

The report highlighted the need for better housing and living conditions for the residents of the Gorbals. The authorities were urged to take action to improve the living standards of the residents and provide them with the necessary support.

The article concluded with a call for action, emphasizing the need for urgent measures to address the housing crisis and improve the living conditions of the residents of the Gorbals.
What next if the Tories are beaten?

A Labour government that comes to power on a wave of widespread industrial unrest and against the back-ground of continuing economic crisis will be quite unlike previous Labour governments since the war. Such an eventuality would be heavily dependent on trade union support. In this situation it would be far more difficult for the Labour leaders to disguise their real aims. The scene would be set for the sharpest challenges from the left.

For all these reasons it is important that socialists frame a programme of political demands for the trade unions to impose on an incoming Labour government.

Confront Labour

This must be a programme that corresponds to what growing numbers of trade unionists think is the minimum to be expected from a Labour government.

It must confront Labour with the choice of challenging the whole structure of capitalist power in Britain or standing exposed as traitors.

Since the strike of 8 December more and more demonstrations and rallies have raised the demand that the TUC must be forced to call a General Strike to fight the anti-union Bill.

WILSON: working in the wings

Positive sanctions

This programme would have to be fought for by militants inside the trade unions and through Council Action against the Bill and similar rank and file bodies.

Such a policy could only be carried in the unions against the opposition of the right wing. But it is also important for militants to demand positive sanctions if the Labour leaders refuse to carry out such demands.

Those trade union leaders who claim to be on the left should be called on to commit themselves to support no Labour candidates who oppose this programme.

And if the Labour leaders reject the programme, the union leaders must then go to the workers.

Why 'prod deals' must be resisted

Strict control

In other words, the purpose of a produc-tivity deal is to give more power to manage-ment over the workers on the shop-floors and impose stricter control over the production process.

The facts prove the truth of these fears. In the three industries, for exam-ple, British Leyland is currently trying to establish piece-work and profit-sharing on a Measured Day Work basis.

This system has existed for several years at Ford and is the main reason why wages are much lower in that company than in Leyland factories. British Leyland want to copy the Ford success and know that if they can scrap piece-work they will be able to hold down earnings.

The secret report issued in 1967 by the Cosslett Employers Federation stated: 'The complete elimination of bargaining about money or payments between the operator and his foreman ... means that higher management is in a much better position to con-trol its labour costs than at present.'

However, productivity deals have also held down wages. The first important instance of this was in 1967 at the Essex Oil Refinery at Fawley, Hampshire.

Initially the management conceded incre-ments of up to 30 per cent in order to persuade its workers to accept the agree-ment. But by 1967 the refinery workers’ wages had slipped from being among the highest in the country to nearly bottom of the Southampton area’s wages scale.

Productivity deals have also led to redundancies and increased unemployment. In the power industry the labour force was reduced by 26,235 men in three short years and on the railways massive retrench-ments have occurred through the mechanization of productivity deals.

As well as attacking pay and job security, these agreements also lead to the speeding up of production and worsening the working conditions and as more in industry.

The main benefits of these deals are of course.

Part of the evidence to the Royal Com-mission on Trade Unions (the Donnison Commission) says: 'Joseph Lucas gave an interesting example of reorganized arrangements at CAV Ltd for work testing and adjustments of pumps under which the workers engaged on testing pumps also carried out certain adjustments to fault pumps.'

The 'handover' was very satisfactory to the company. It reduced the labour force by 17 per cent, and 90 per cent of the savings achieved as a result were paid out in the form of extra wages.

These are other similar exam-ples, for the mining industry a productivity deal known as the Porter Loading Agree-ment was signed in June 1966. From June 1967 to June 1968 the coal,miners won by 2.5 per cent while real wages actually declined.

The Aneurin Bevan office suggested a productivity deal saved £175 million for management but gave only 61.5 million to be shared among the workers.

The present TUC offensive against the trade-unions is closely connected to produc-tivity deals.

The government hopes that signing un-conventional and the draft of the Indus-trial Relations Bill will compel workers to accept and extend the productivity deals.

Such agreements are an important man-ner of working out the latest TUC offensive. Since they were made two weeks ago the Middlesbrough branch of the Transport and General Workers Union, 123 people to add to the growing list of unemployment.

Trade unionists should campaign to get their organisations to follow this lead.

The best-seller that The Times called 'a handbook for militants'

Why 'prod deals' must be resisted

Roger Rosewell

The best-seller that The Times called 'a handbook for militants'

Employers’

Strict control

Productivity deals and how to fight them

by TONY CLIFF

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Since the strike of 8 December more and more demonstrations and rallies have raised the demand that the TUC must be forced to call a General Strike to fight the anti-union Bill.

The real danger in the coming months is that the trade union leaders will pay lip service to these and similar demands but evade any commitment to fight to impose them on the Labour leaders.

It is true that such a campaign in the unions around a minimal programme is only possible if the social-ist left develops as a more influential political force.

That is why we see this campaign as a further stage in the struggle to build the International Socialists and to develop a revolutionary socialist party.

The period ahead will be of funda-mental importance in the creation of a serious socialist alternative.

In a world where the superpowers continue to arm themselves to their nuclear teeth, the years ahead may offer the last chance for the socialist movement to save the world from barbarism.
BOOK TRADE

THE 'Big Book Bang' is about to take place in the United Kingdom. Mervyn Goff, 'whiz kid' director of the National Book League, has announced plans for a massive advertising and promotion campaign to stimulate the selling book trade.

Goff, who is currently buying the Bedford Square into a circus of public relations, is underlining the importance of bookstalls with background entertainment from pop groups and light shows. Two days of fun, books and profits. Unfortunately for Goff, many British publishers are worried about the venture.

Publishers and booksellers like to think of themselves as 'gentlemen' involved in business. Books to their minds are not goods like packets of tea or motor cars, but literary objects to be treated with respect.

Every publisher produces at least one 'usual' book and publishers like Oxford and Longmans produce only educational books of this sort that determine the image. Or the publishers tell us.

Mervyn Goff wants to change all this, to destroy the old image and to prove booksellers go-ahead and dynamic.

Cheapness

Whether or not Goff's plan to change the image succeeds, one thing is certain for thousands of men and women working as assistants in book shops or in publishing offices, things are going to remain much the same.

The whole point of books is based on two factors. The first is the intense desire for information which determines the publisher's right to fix the prices at which books are sold. These prices are not to be lowered, even by the publishers themselves, to price their books at ridiculously high prices and maintain profits at a high level.

The second factor is the cheapness of labour. A young,well-trained,working in a London bookshop will earn £5 and will be very lucky. Few bookshops however employ any one of the Labour Party average shop will have assistants aged between 15 and 19 and pay wages between £5 and £12.

In the provinces it is much worse and wages are just about £4 or £5 rising to £10 at 20.

Victimised

With such a large turnover of staff and because of the 'gentleman' image of the trade, union organisation in front offices is very poor. The trade organisers are usually met with victimisation tactics of a retort wages, solicitors and threats. All not only appalling low but conditions and hours are such to give most organised workers the shudders.

The need for strong union organisation is obvious. In union shops, conditions and wages are much better.

The long strike at Foyles, London's biggest bookshop, in 1967 won major concessions for the staff.

Trade workers' union USDAW seems totally unable to give a lead. But the task is far from hopeless. Rank and file organisations have been set up in the past in Leeds and London.

These committees have won fights which have won improved conditions including Foyles and W H Smith.

But the struggle must not be spread over the country if the book trade is to win. A general struggle for living wages and USDAW members must wage a determined campaign in all front offices and unorganised shops.

Mervyn Goff won't change the image of the trade to the benefit of shop workers. They must do that themselves.

By Barry Hughill

TELEVISION and the press broke their usual silence on giving adequate coverage of demonstrations by detailing at length the jamboree organised in Bristol last Saturday by assorted reactionaries and religious fanatics. 500 of them marched against 'permissiveness', for the closing of the town's new Sex Supermarket, the prosecution of traders selling blue books and the banning of sex education classes for school children.

A 100-strong counter demonstration demanded 'Mrs Granny Got' and 15 members noticed with interest that some of the slogans on the main march were distinctly political and anti-union. 'Be content with your wages and industry' is a mess.'

To prove their impatience, the police allowed the main march to hold a meeting and use a loudspeaker and arrested two socialists when the counter-march attempted to follow suit.

Mr Jonathan Guinness, wealthy member of the stout family and supporter of the extreme right-wing Monday Club, told Monday's Daily Mirror that he wants the complete abolition of the welfare state because 'handouts stop the lower classes making an effort.' 'My beliefs are patriotic,' he added. 'I took back to the England of Kipling and Orwell.'

But George Orwell was a revolutionist socialist. Neither Jonathan has been baptising the family beverage a bit hard, or the Monday Club has a ewoks in its nest.

Advance warning: don't drink Guinness in 1984.

When BBC television's news department next advertises for an industrial correspondent, the bloke could run 'Wanted: a middle-class cynic who oozes contempt for the working class.' The movement, enjoys bullying office boys, follows only one rule: the line of Tory Central Office and in subversion, groveling to management.

The chosen candidates would feel immediately at home with the BBC's current quo, Messrs Ian Ross and David King. Their expertise on industrial affairs with a knowing sneer at a limited choice of 'journalists' all wage claims are 'insufficiently aggressive' and 'lacking in management.'

His sidekick, Abbas, has a similarly restricted vocabulary, carefully reined and directed to bolster middle-class reaction against the trade union militancy. They are aided by skilful cutlasses to cut down any attempt to reduce even the most articulate and an answer that was cut off by spokesmen to apparent stammering incomprehension.

Ballots

Last Thursday was a case in point. Abbas went to York to cover the meeting of the Construction and Allied Workers Union where the AEU announced its intention to take strike action against the Bill the following week. The firm's production programme on Radio 4 carried a long introduction from Abbas, followed by a substantial interview with Hugh Scallon in which he could have explained the reasons for taking strike action and challenged the attitude that no strikes should be called until a ballot is taken of the entire union membership.

Parliament and local councils, he said, are not expected to hold a ballot or referendum of the electorate every time a new piece of legislation. If people don't like their legislation, they can throw them out at the next elections. Similarly, trade union officials are elected and expected to give a lead and can be replaced if the members don't like that lead.

Thoughtful

We can agree with his approach, it was a challenging and thoughtful reply to the BBC's holding the country to ramson' implications and implications.

But the television version of the interview on the main news was startlingly different. We were drawn into a discussion of the strike with a long introduction from Abbas, full of those catchy adjectives - the strike would crumble, the AEU was determined to 'ballot the workers through against the advice of the 'constructive' TUC - but the interview with Scallon was reduced to one question and one answer. Whatever the mid-sentence. Scallon's careful exposition of his union's position and his attitude to ballots were left on the cutting-room.

Action needed to be taken to remove the state of affairs. The Association of Cinematographers and Directors are to be concerned at television bias. They are there to be encouraged to draw up a set of rules and procedures governing the coverage of labour disputes on television that would ensure a balance of views and a refusal to have filmed interviews.

The tally boxes would scream 'ballots not before time' and we have now. Trade union action on this issue would achieve wider and more effective results and would expose the opponents of the strike as the real enemies of free speech.

David East

CROSSMAN: take the steam out

BACK in the early 1960s, Richard Crossman because known as Dickie Dicky because of his not inconsiderable skill at saying one thing and meaning just the opposite. A decade has passed and Crossman continues to weave his devices path, still with a misplaced reputation for being something of a left-winger. In between representing a Coventry constituency (£2,350 a year) he also edits the influential weekly New Statesman (at least another £3,000 a year)

Crossman has just announced that he will retire at the next election. Now that is a fitting gesture. The labour movement needs a political 'brain' all right - a real socialist party that will bring early retirement to the current bunch of half-baked and cheats personalised by the editor of the New Statesman.

MIND YOU, there are more creatures around than the above mentioned blacklegs. Take, for example, Mr Reginald Thomas Parget QC, Labour MP for Northampton.

Parget is a hard-line supporter of the Smith regime in Rhodesia and a firm 'fuss-the-unions' man. He is also Master of Hounds for his local huntsman.

Our readers will be sad to hear that Regge Parget will not be fighting the class struggle on their behalf for some time. Out of hunting last week, he was thrown by his horse and is out of action.

Well done, that horse.
FIFTY engineers working in the AUW- E have been on strike for 16 weeks at the Harlow (Essex) works of Pitsnery-Bowen. It is an official dispute over union recognition. Pitsnery-Bowen, a giant, American-owned company, makes metal forming machinery in Britain. It refuses to recognize any trade unions. In its recent "Counsellor for Personnel Relations" - a company-sponsored and protectionist organization that discourages only legal means put forward by the union.

The AUW national executive is backing the strike and has declared "black list" all goods from the company and all supplies to it - action that would be illegal if the Tory anti-union Bill became law.

The strikers have fought magnificently for 16 weeks, marking a 24-hour picket. But to second they need national support by:

1. Blacking all goods to and from the works.
2. Financial support.
3. Mass meetings and donations should be sent to: Ken Murray, 10 Cottenham Place, London SW3.

A Nquisitive Action Committee to support the strikers is forming the AUW, GUD, Gen AYYAT, ATMS, UPW, Harrow Trades Council and Labour and Co-op groups.

WE'RE NOT BLUFFING!

by John Field NUR

MANY railwaymen are becoming worried at the urgent demands that the unions are being shown in the present pay claim. The claim is for a rise of 15 per cent on the basic rates, but the trade unions concede that overall ASLEF (or NUR) have co-ordinated their demands. The locomotive men demanding 17 per cent is the National Staffs Association, while the NUR is asking for 25 per cent.

The management's reply has been an insulting 8 per cent, raised last week to 11 per cent. This would mean less than £1.50 to many railwaymen who have a basic of £15.20. No wonder that ASLEF has been forced into considering militant action.

It is important for millians, even at this last stage, to be sure that the union should act in unison. The present chaotic situation, where the unions involved are placing varying demands and threatening separate industrial action, can only serve to weaken the solidarity of the rank and file.

Directly affected by the railwaymen's demand are the craftsmen employed by British Rail Engineering. In the past, the £40,000 workforce has stepped up to the challenge of machinery men to get wage increases.

Support action

This is because the two sectors, mainline and engineering, have had separate negotiating structures. But, with the government still feeling after the defeat of the postmen, the union negotiators must declare that they will support any action taken by mainline workers to win their claim.

They must also tell their members their feelings known about their determination to make the whole industry.

Rai workers should also be wary about attempts to split their unions with the BR, although a separate RLY-union in particular faces attempts to introduce drift systems into the workshops. The BR would like to keep the workshops open for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The dispute is crucial. It is the first attempt by workers in the public sector to raise wages since the postmen's pay was doubled a few months ago.

Tyne workers raise cash

A DELEGATION from the strike committee of Fine Tubes, Plymouth, who have been on strike for 39 weeks, with a warm and generous response from the public, are on a collections tour in the North East. When they returned home on Monday they took with them more than £400 in donations (plus another £100 so in the post). The public's and the pickets' goodwill has made up for the losses.

This is the second time the Fine Tubes workers have had from any area they have visited so far, and it is in a tribute to the strike committee that it has carried on the unofficial strike and to the traditional solidarity of the trade union movement.

Send further donations to: the Treasurer, Fine Tubes, PO Box 36, Frome, Somerset, or Plymouth, Devon.

kill the Bill march demands

SEVERAL hundred trade unionists march ed through Edinburgh, N.1, London, on Sunday against the Tory industrial relations Bill. Organised by the AUW, the march was accompanied by representatives of the TGWU, AUEW, UGC, FBU, AFA, NFPTU, and the National Staffs Association. The meeting voted to set up a joint trade union committee to organise further action against the Bill.

The OUTAW, the official union of the British Army's Northern Ireland Command, has agreed to reconsider the 10 per cent pay rise offer put to its members by the Irish Army and the 6.5 per cent offer made by the Northern Ireland government to its members. The OUTAW has stated that the sale of arms to the United States and Great Britain - the two republicans areas to prepare the ground for the opening of inter-party talks - is by no means certain yet was responsible for the killing. It might have been the work of extreme right wing elements such as those who launched a campaign of sabotage at power plants last year.

The IRA was blamed for the death of a 50-year-old man who died in hospital after being shot on the Longines estate in South Africa. The man was killed on 18 March, and the IRA has claimed responsibility for the shooting.

Union backing for striking technicians

TEN MEMBERS of DATA, the official and superintending section of the Engineering Industries (EIA), have been on strike since 3 March at Enfield Rolling Mills, North London. They are the first to strike in the META group, which includes the Metal Trades and Technicians (M&T) in the Midlands.

The META group has been in dispute with the company over the introduction of a new product line.

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