Labour's nasty medicine on the way

by DUNCAN HALLAS

"THE PICTURE is a sombre one, the gravest situation since the war," said Denis Healey in his Budget speech.

He announced a record trade deficit for February (£429 million), an annual rate of more than £5000 million, told us that the rate of inflation is still speeding up—it was 13½ per cent from February to February—and declared his intention to 're-create a sense of social unity.'

That is the key. 'Social unity' or the lamb lying down with the lion, is the core of the government's strategy. Heath's defeat by the miners and subsequent loss of the election makes it desperately urgent for British capitalism to pull the working class into co-operating in measures that will, in the longer term, fit workers hard.

Of course Healey has given some real benefits to working people. £500 million on food subsidies is not to be sneezed at. But we won't bring food prices down by 6 per cent claimed but will check the rises for a time.

The pension increases, supplementary pension benefit increases and sick pay increases are modest enough, but still a real gain to many of the worst hit sections of the community.

Even so, much of the gains come from redistribution of tax and income within the working class. The food subsidy is more than offset by £600 million total increase in taxes on confectionery, soft drinks, beer, tobacco and petrol.

THRESHOLD

A great deal of that £680 million will be paid by workers, including lower-paid workers.

An important reason for these changes is the 'threshold' clause in the Phase Three Incomes Policy which is still in force. When the cost of living index rises by 7 per cent from October last, the 9p per week per 1 per cent additional allowed increases in pay are triggered off.

Food is heavily weighted in the index. 'Luxuries' like beer and tobacco less so.

Not have the rich been hit as hard as is being claimed. A number of loopholes for well off tax payers have been closed and the rates for the very richest tax payer has been increased to 83 per cent. It sounds a lot until you remember it was 91 per cent in 1970 and 95 per cent in 1945. These rates are not, of course, paid on total income, only the upper part of income.

Nonetheless this will be an unpopular budget. It will undoubtedly be regarded as 'taxation without representation'.

Along with budget 'future', 'determined attack on the高标准. This is the theme of the government, the one line on which all its economic policy now hangs. The illusion, in the comment are the massive price rises to come and the lay-offs and short time that will bring on a really big scale later in

Army death squad in Ulster

TWO BRITISH SOLDIERS died in Northern Ireland last week, killed after an exchange of gunfire with the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

The dead soldiers and their companions were in civilian clothes. The RUC claim the soldiers fired first.

According to reports, the soldiers were returning from leave. They did not explain how they happened to be in the unofficial location of County Antrim, in civilian vehicles and armed with sub-machine guns.

Far more credible is the conclusion that the plainclothes soldiers were members of the Special Air Services. The army admitted recently that SAS men are active in Northern Ireland.

SAS was formed during the Second World War to carry out sabotage activity in occupied Europe. Since then they have developed into a sophisticated counter-insurgency force, skilled in the technique of infiltrating so-called "subversive" organisations. Accusations of murder, provocation and terror are activities in Northern Ireland.

Reports indicate that in Belfast and Derry alone 50 SAS men are working in plain clothes to infiltrate Republican and loyalist groups. The SAS is popularly known in Northern Ireland as the 'Special Assassination Squads'.

Aramed thugs

Army antics in Northern Ireland are a useful testing ground for the techniques they will attempt to use in Britain. Pioneered in the struggles against every movement for colonial freedom in the years since the war, SAS is an uncontrolled political weapon to be used without scruple if the need should arise.

Mervyn Rees, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, is supposed to be engaged in an investigation into the security forces in Northern Ireland. Not only should the immediate decision be taken to remove these squads of armed thugs from the province, but the Labour government should be pressed to reveal the strength and extent of the entire SAS operation as a preliminary to their complete dissolution.
New Provo bombings rule out politics

by Mike Miller

BELFAST--The upsurge of Provisional IRA activity throughout the summer has led to a resurgence of British army propaganda and a strong effort to undermine the political activism of the independent fighters. In the first few weeks they have claimed the lives of seven members of the security forces and inflicted serious injury on 10 others.

They blasted the army's headquarter in the centre of Belfast and made the British forces look totally incompetent by smuggling untraceable bombs through the tight security ring which supposedly seals off the streets.

Huge bombs have rocked virtually every big town and city in Northern Ireland and have been launched against troops and police in every one of the six counties. The army has apparently been too well co-ordinated and too well directed, despite army claims that every Provo leader of any standing is now in custody.

Power

The renewal of Provo activity on such a scale has come in the wake of the British general election. The government of 11 ultra-loyalist Unionists to Westminster has seriously jeopardized the Sunningdale agreement, which guaranteed power-sharing between the Catholics and the loyalists. The Ulster Unionists, along with a Council of Ireland.

The instability, coupled with political instability in Britain itself, has certainly encouraged the Provo to test what their leaders believe could be the 'final push' against British rule in the North.

Recent rumours in Belfast that the Provo were aiming for a truce with the new Labour government—be negotiated from their current position of strength—were to have been mere kite-flying by the over-reckless in the movement. The prospect for a truce has greatly diminished as the upsurge in the campaign has gained momentum, proved 'successful' and greatly strengthened the rest of the loyalist lines.

Labour's new base in the North, Merlyn Rees, is currently assessing the security situation and will be under strong pressure to expand the anti-Unionist armed struggle.

Backed

In the meantime, loyalist gun gangs undoubtedly backed by underworld British army agents, continue to wreak their own grisly revenge. For every IRA man who is killed, there are innocent Catholic and their dooms. This week, two Catholic families from different parishes have fallen to the assassins and dozens more have narrowly escaped death.

The truth is that the mass movement is at its lowest ebb since the Orange marches began back in 1968. The SDLP, in spite of its treachery and endless betrayals, still commands mass support against the anti-Unionist armed struggle.

The job of winning these workers back into mass action is a political task that must be undertaken in the context of an overall strategy of winning the support of the working class for a different way of life in Ireland today. We must not allow the mass movement to be isolated into a series of isolated campaigns of short duration—indeed they are important—but we must link them together into a unified struggle of the working class for the rationalisation of British big business in Ireland.

SOCIALIST WORKER

'GIVE THEM a chance. They haven't got a majority and they are doing the best they can. Anyway it is easy to criticize but what would you do in the circumstances?'

A lot of trade unionists, a lot of politically conscious workers, are being influenced by these arguments about the Labour government. A lot more will be similarly influenced in the next month or so as the effects of the concessions the government is making to working people take effect.

Counts favour the repeal of the Housing Finance Act promised. The Industrial Relations Act to be scrapped, pensions up a budget that hits the rich, if only by reverting to Barter's give away budgets. Add the settlement of the miners' strike and the ending of three day working and you have an attractive package.

It is quite true that these things are real benefits to workers and that had the Tories won the general election they would not have been conceded. But the conclusion that Labour Left wing critics draw that only Labour policy with socialist policies can solve our problems, is not true at all.

Just because the defeat of the Tories changed the political situation, an alternative government which operates within the framework of capitalism has no choice but to try different tactics. Confrontation is out in the short term. Conciliation is in. But the object of the operation is the same, to solve the problems of British capitalism at the expense of the working class.

CORBRIDGE WORKS, CORBRIDGE CRESCENT, LONDON E2 01-739 9043/0185/6361

What we think

Should we give Labour a chance?

Now this may seem to be contradictory. How can we say that the Wilson government is trying to solve problems and yet at the same time try and keep people when we also agree that some of its measures also help workers?

Because these measures are designed to sell the 'social contract' which is a scheme to give the appearance of fairness to basically capitalist policies. The government knows we all know that inflation will continue to surge ahead and that the current level of unemployment is going to rise sharply.

The essence of the 'social contract' is giving the trade union leadership the means to hold back workers who will want to fight against cuts in living standards. Today the sugar, tomorrow the pill.

Remember the last experience of Labour in office. From 1964 to 1966, with a tiny majority, the government was conciliatory to working class pressure. After 1966, with a big Labour majority, came devolution, a wage freeze imposed by law, a doubling of unemployment, the attempt at anti-trade union legislation and social service cuts.

The slogan does not change his spots, neither does the Labour Party change its nature. The difference is that this time the crisis of British capitalism is much more serious and so the policies of the government will be more severe.

Of course, socialists must support whatever progressive measures the government attempts to implement. But they must resist illusions that any fundamental change is intended or will be carried out. Patiently but firmly they must explain to their fellow workers what is in store and meanwhile to help push forward and every working-class struggle that can influence.

'Don't rock the boat' is a good precept if the boat is actually sailing in the direction in which we want to go. It is a very bad notion if the boat is sailing in the opposite direction, and there is no guarantee that the leaders are not the pay of the enemy. The Labour government's boat is being steered towards capitalist goals.

Even in terms of getting limited reforms, the more the boat is rocked, the more we get and Vice versa. Above all there must be no let up in the struggle to build a rank and file movement in the unions.

It may be that, for a time, we have to swim against the tide. But as surely as night follows day the tide will turn and those who have developed their muscles swimming against it will be rewarded with increased influence and support.

Profits' quest for plane crash

THE 346 people who died when a Turkish Airlines DC10 jet crashed into a forest outside Paris three weeks ago were victims of the profit hunger, according to astonishing facts revealed this week by the Sunday Times.

McDonnell Douglas, the 43rd biggest company in America with sales last year in excess of £1000 million, were so keen to mop up quick sales from newly-produced DC10-1973 that they did not modify their aeroplane in line with recommendations of the American National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

On 12 June 1972, the rear cargo door of an American Airlines DC10 came off high over Ontario, Canada. The cabin filled with smoke, the controls jammed and the plane would have crashed but for some good luck, good weather and expert pilots.

On 6 July, the Safety Board, after an investigation of the causes of the disaster, recommended substantial changes to the floor and cargo door. The very next day the American Airlines' government's Federal Aviation Administration announced that the changes would be 'pirated'.

Hectic

The decision of the government not to order the modifications was taken, according to Sunday Times sources, because the company had 'appealed'. It was reported that McDonnell Douglas did not want any delay in the hectic overseas sales drive for DC10s.

The modifications as recommended would have held up the flight of 'Friendship 72', a sales plane which was to travel the following week around the world 'hawkin' the DC10. So the government was 'persuaded' not to order the modifications. Friday's 27th took care.

First stop was Istanbul, where McDonnell Douglas sold three

Women to launch education campaign

OXFORD--300 women attended a 'women and socialism' conference last weekend.

One major decision taken by the meeting was to launch a campaign through trade union branches and colleges of further education to demand educational equality for girls.

This followed the presentation of a paper from Arson (North London) Women's Liberation group which highlighted the scandalous situation facing young women school leavers.

The paper pointed out that in all discussion of the educational crisis, one group is never discussed. They are the school leavers. Children leave school at the minimum age and have no further contact with formal education.

The paper demands day release classes for young women workers and of other forms of further education. Other subjects under discussion included equal pay, abortion and contraception on demand and the campaign for proper nurseries provision for children.
EXPRESS OFF THE RAIL

It never pours but it Raynes

A SINISTER new figure appeared on the financial horizon this week in the shape of Max Rayne of the property speculate firm, London Merchant Securites. As a director of the demutualised business Last, it seems that the achievements of Rayne’s reputation was the selling of its shares toPriv.-Sec. and the divestment of the small shareholders at a knockdown price. This has beendoing for a while now, and the shares rapidly fell from their peak of 125 to around 100. The shares are now at 75, and it seems likely that they will continue to fall. The company’s debts are estimated to be around £10 million, and it is likely that the company will be forced into liquidation in the near future.

DECADES

In these days of rampant inflation, even £200—are the average public expenditure. But more important—especially the rise in the money that the workers receive, a democratic right to their jobs.

Workers produce the goods—and it is the workers themselves who are the real workers. It is not the government or the local authorities who should meddle in the matter of the workers’ wages and conditions of work.

The time is long overdue for a real fight-back against the press clamour for a 'solidarity strike' against the workers. The time has come to build a national industrial union to counter the influence of the unions and the machinery and subsidise the production of newspapers and workers’ control.

The government has authorized the Tolson government nationalized Rolls Royces. There is no reason why the Wilson government should not take this opportunity to nationalize the newspapers and the Sunday Times.

A paper produced by them, free from the commercial considerations and the mass, high-quality, journalistic policies of the Beaverbrook group, would be an important addition to the free press.

It is the only way to victory

NOBODY should be deluded into thinking he can take his or her redundancy money, stand back as the workers ‘make off’ for a massive profit, and then head south for a well-paid job.

The job situation in London is far from rosy. The Beaverbrook group is already threatening cutbacks in both Fleet Street and Manchester. The publishers are about the possible closure of the London Evening Standard and the Glasgow Evening Citizen goes without a fight—and the paper is one of the London Evening Standard. Book publishers are pulling in their horns and educational standards are closing their educational divisions.

The paper is backing the advertising as a result of the general run-down of the economy and the disintegration of the trade unions in public relations.

The fight has to be to save the jobs in Glasgow.

There is a united federated chapel determination to occupy the building and not to let it be sold for the sake of the paper and the power of the machine. This is not an easy task. Book newspaper is not feasible because newspaper will be cut off.

But an occupation is a challenge to management and publishers, and we are not moving until we get them. We are prepared to give the newspapers saying ‘You won’t get your redundancy money, and we’ll have to cut you out’—and then every printing union in the country must be mobilized to make sure that every newspaper employer knows that book will be taken off every one and each one of them unless the jobs in Amsterdam are saved.

Truth

There are many owners just dying to speculate with their newspaper offerings and who will not be heard of in the London Evening Standard. The Beaverbrook group can kill the Sunday Times because they will not be heard of in the London Evening Standard. There is no need for the Beaverbrook group to go into a new capitalist system to plan action. There should be a meeting of all the newspaper workers and the Beaverbrook group to do the same. The London Evening Standard has a firm action committee to save the Sunday Times and was represented in the demonstration in London on Saturday. Manchester must now declare that they will support the London Evening Standard.

Extended chapel meetings during the week. In the three-week strike action—this time and more must be supported. The paper will be an example, and the fight has started in Glasgow. The newspapers in London and the United Kingdom in distribution and transportation must be asked to refuse to handle the newspaper. The Expresses produced in Lancashire.

The Glasgow Evening Citizen has formed an action committee of up to 100 workers and they met on Saturday and they are the first action committee in London and to normalise working conditions on the paper. They are demanding the pay raises and union rights, and the paper is backing the advertising as a result of the general run-down of the economy and the disintegration of the trade unions in public relations.

If the Evening Citizen is forced to go through quietly then all the workers will receive two weeks’ wages for each year of service.

It is the only way to victory.

The 1973 accounts list the value of the group’s buildings and land as £8.4 million and £5.7 million in book value. But according to the Investors’ Newsletter of 11 January 1974, there has been no rescheduling of these assets for six years.

The Investors’ Newsletter suggested that if just two buildings—the London Evening Standard building in Shoe Lane and the office block in the Tollgate, Brixton—were properly valued, the 3½ current share price would be increased by £1.50 per share, quadrupled in value.

And as recently as 13 March, the Guardian’s business section estimated that while the Beaverbrook property was valued at £8 million it is in fact worth at least £50 million—and the paper says that this is a conservative estimate.

If you compare this figure with the £10 million profit the Beaverbrook newspapers made during the last 10 years it is not difficult to see that property speculation is now the name of the game. This is clearly ‘to the best advantage of the shareholders’ even if it does mean 1972 sales now and 1960s in the offing.

IN THE COMPANY REPORT for 1973 Sir Max Atikin wrote: ‘I have an unshakeable optimism in Beaverbrook Newspapers Ltd as both a company and its individual newspapers.’

His optimism was unshakeable despite the already soaring cost of newpaper. ‘They all have large and loyal circulation which, given any sort of fair wind, must result in reasonable profitability for the benefit of the shareholders’, he continued.

Just six months later, on 19 March 1974, all this had changed. Atikin’s optimism had crumbled and his axe came.

Citing the nature of the economics of the national newspaper industry, ‘managing director Jocelyn Stevens dictated to the Glasgow workers, ‘we have never been able to make sufficient profits to improve our cash reserves.’ And worse, ‘we cannot any longer afford to support the heavy losses being incurred in Glasgow.’

Why did the weather forecast change? Was it because the board of Beaverbrook Newspapers decided to play the property speculation game for real and move in for the killing it could not sell space and bodies?

The group’s pre-tax profits for 1973 were over £15 million. But this is just the tip of the financial iceberg.
by Paul Foot

IN THE mountainous regions of Chile, dead, disfigured human bodies were being hurled into the forests from circling helicopters.

'Body disposal' is becoming a serious problem for the Allende authorities. Vicuna McKenzie was arrested two weeks ago in the industrial area of Santiago because he was young (17) and had long hair. He was tortured for ten days. Both legs and one arm were broken. He was burned all over his body, and castrated before he died.

Left-wing political leaders who have fallen into the hands of the junta usually live longer, because their torturers think they will crack and give information.

Bautista Varas, former leader of the Bankers' Association, is against all the odd, still alive. In an interview with the London newspaper El Mundo, a nurse at one of Santiago's hospitals said that Bautista is taken by helicopter to the operating theatre at the hospital for what is described as 'medical torture.' The torturing doctors are named as Humberto Castro.

Bautista Varas has many legs. The whole of his body is covered in bruises and his head with bandages.

Last week another of the leaders of the Allende government which toppled last September, Jose Toha, was reported to have committed suicide by hanging himself in a military hospital. The 'suicide story' is the junta's favourite device for covering up their murders.

In magnificent defiance of the junta's ban on demonstrations 3000 people came on to the streets to block the road to Tordelop! The increase in murder and torture in Chile over the last few weeks is closely connected with the economic repression of the new regime.

The junta has removed all the price controls introduced by the Allende government. Milk has gone up from 7 escudos a litre before the coup to 40, bread from 11 escudos a kilo to 114, sugar from 3 escudos a kilo to 15 to 30, tea from 40 to 560, aspirin from 16 escudos for 50 tablets to 1280, and gas from 185 escudos a cylinder to 4000.

Old age pensioners get 620 escudos a month— that's the equivalent of £1.75 a week. A loaf of bread accounts for two-thirds of the pensioners' weekly income.

CREDIT

This is far, far worse inflation than anything that happened under Allende. But because it is hitting hardest at the poorest, the weakest and the oldest, the interest on close bank accounts is zero. The banks which refused to lend to the Allende government are now falling over themselves to lend to the junta.

The governments of the free world, including the United Nations Monetary Fund, and the International Development Bank, are financing the junta's plan to double the country's foreign debt in one year to over $2 billion dollars since the junta took power.

In addition, the governments of all the major Western countries are representing at talks in Paris last week, an agreement to lend the junta yet another 50 million dollars in credits for Chile. The British Treasury signed the cheque for the government, except the Dutch, to come to the rescue of the junta.

The British government had to pay back every penny it borrowed at half the rate of interest, 'suitable terms'— low interest rates and long repayment periods—from the French by the loan to the junta, as was agreed when the junta came to the rescue of the Pinochet junta. This is because industrialists and financiers everywhere know that Pinochet and his fellow barbarians intend to make the working people pay for every penny of their nationalised and tax money.

That is why more and more British companies are setting up in Chile. That is why Pilkingtons, the glass giant, has negotiated the building of a huge new glassworks near Santiago.

That is why the rich men in Britain who make money in Chile are rubbing their hands in glee. Chief of these is Lord Alldenham, chairman of merchant bankers Phillips Gibbs, much of whose wealth was made in Chile. Alldenham is chairman of the Anglo-Chile Society, which keeps a 'neutral' office inside the Chilean Embassy. The executive and general committees of the Anglo-Chile Society are made up of rich men who were worried that the Allende government would put a stop to their exploitation in Chile.

These include:

- James Blair, chairman of the Antofagasta Railway Company, whose shareholders have been growing fat for years because of a railway in Northern Chile.

- Harry Tharks, international banker and director of the Stanhope Transatlantic Fund.

- Ralph Young, former chief accountant of the Nitrate Corporation of Chile.

- Edmund de Rothschild, merchant banker and extraordinary near Santiago.

- Sir Frederick Mason, a senior Foreign Office diplomat who holds the Grand Cross of the Chilean Order of Merit.

These people, who are constantly pretending that they are not political, have nothing but praise for the way the Chilean junta has 'opened up the country for private investment.' They hope that the hundreds of millions of dollars from Chile will be a great help to the junta. Every new credit voted, every new boost to Anglo-Chilean trade, every new cruiser which the Labour government allows to have British shipyards bound for Chile is an open admission of support for torture and barbarism on a grand scale.

'That is why we are standing!' bellowed Admiral Ismael Huerta, Chile's Foreign Minister and Brute-in-Chief, at a press conference in Mexico. 'Yes, they are fascists. And like many fascists before them they get much of their confidence and strength from rich, titled democrats in the City of London who subsidise their atrocities.'

PRIDE

- J V Gallacher, former chairman of merchants Duncan Fogg, who, before Allende, had a near monopoly in the export and import of all kinds of basic consumer goods to and from Chile.

- Henry Tharks, international banker and director of the Stanhope Transatlantic Fund.

- Ralph Young, former chief accountant of the Nitrate Corporation of Chile.

- Edmund de Rothschild, merchant banker and extraordinary near Santiago.

- Sir Frederick Mason, a senior Foreign Office diplomat who holds the Grand Cross of the Chilean Order of Merit.

These people, who are constantly pretending that they are not political, have nothing but praise for the way the Chilean junta has 'opened up the country for private investment.' They hope that the hundreds of millions of dollars from Chile will be a great help to the junta. Every new credit voted, every new boost to Anglo-Chilean trade, every new cruiser which the Labour government allows to have British shipyards bound for Chile is an open admission of support for torture and barbarism on a grand scale.

'That is why we are standing!' bellowed Admiral Ismael Huerta, Chile's Foreign Minister and Brute-in-Chief, at a press conference in Mexico. 'Yes, they are fascists. And like many fascists before them they get much of their confidence and strength from rich, titled democrats in the City of London who subsidise their atrocities.'

Another hot spring ahead

The main battle is still the bank strike. The big Credit Lyonnais bank is now totally paralysed. The main office was occupied by the workers for a week.

The occupation and strikes were led by an elected strike committee, rare in France as the unions like to keep all action under the control of their full-timers.

After a week, the strikers were kicked out by the police but morale remains high. Last week more than 30,000 bank workers demonstrated through Paris. Outside the Credit Lyonnais the riot police tried to break up the mass-picket and attacked leading militants, notably the main strike leader, revolutionary socialist Arlette Laguiller.

But the strike is still spreading and one building is still occupied by strikers.

There have also been strikes at Fords in Bordeaux and in the mines of Northern France. Several factories are still being occupied against closure threats and in the Lorraine mines in North East France a series of small strikes looks as if it may lead to a major confrontation.

But none of the unions is willing to take on government and employers on a national scale and they seem to be hoping that the strikes will peter out.

Revolutionary socialists are leading both the bank strikes and the school and tech students' struggles. In both cases the Communist Party-led 'official' organisations have tried consistently to take a 'moderate' line.
At the court of Harold Wilson

We are the masters now, a Labour Minister is reputed to have said soon after the election of the 1945 Labour government. The same thought has occurred to the courtiers who have stuck loyally to Harold Wilson during his worst hours, not the Labour MPs who were stuck with him anyway, but the strange group of ‘men and millionaires’.

SOME are millionaires, Eric Miller, for instance, chairman of Peachey Property Corporation.

'It was my ambition,' Miller told the Sunday Times in 1961 'to be a millionaire'. In 1954 he joined Peachey, then the largest owner of privately rented property in the country, and by some shrewd speculation became a millionaire less than seven years later, when he was only 34.

From then on, Peachey went from strength to strength. It developed the massively profitable Churchill Hotel in Portman Square, and bought up the whole of trendy Carnaby Street for £2.25 million. It also engaged in some smart wheeleing of British Rail with several joint developments—British Rail supplied the land, Peachey took the profits.

In an interview in the Evening Standard last year, Eric Miller outlined his ideals:

'If anything drove me on in business, it was the thought of owning a fine motor car. I wanted to be able to travel in safety, speed and comfort.'

Support

'At present,' the Evening Standard revealed, 'Mr Miller owns a taxi, a Rolls Corniche, and three different types of Ferrari. He has also got a BMW and a Citroen Matra on order.' Did he need seven cars? asked the imperious Standard reporter. Miller accepted 'I suppose it is a bit of an indulgence'.

Miller's other main hobby, apart from his motor cars, is Harold Wilson. Property speculation and self-indulgence on a grand scale has not deterred his support for the Labour Party. When Miller's daughter was married in February 1972 at a £25,000 wedding feast at the Dorchester, Wilson was guest of honour.

When Wilson wanted a suitable meeting place for the recent meeting of the 'Socialist International' with Golda Meir, Miller provided the Churchill Hotel.

And when Wilson wanted to run to Portman Square and to the Ibrox during the election campaign, why, there was a magnificent white helicopter from Peachey to speed him on his way. Miller will be watching with interest to see whether Harold Wilson is as hard on the 'land-grabbers' as he promised to be.

Profits king

HARRY KISSIN, a millionaire commodity broker, has been a busy boy ever since 38 February. Kissin is joint chairman of the Guinness Peat Group, Britain's largest Geordie, and chairman of the Hambros Bank. He is also a director of the EEC and a member of the National Economic Development Council. He is a director of the National Economic Development Council.

KISSIN: £17,500 rise

Kissin's Ladbroke Grove profits rose from £575,000 in 1963 to £25.5 million in 1972. In 1973, Kinnon was paid £1,250 as chairman. In 1973, the year of the freeze, he got a £1, plus four per cent rise—to £20,000. He also made about £50,000 in dividends from his quarter of a million shares.

Through all this fortune-making, Kissin remained loyal to Labour. During the recent Tory government, he helped substantially towards paying for a 'special research unit' for the Labour Party, which was headed by an arch Labour right-winger, Bernard Donoghue.

Donoghue, a lecturer at LSE and co-author of Herbert Morrison, has now been moved from the Research Unit's offices in the Strand to 10 Downing Street, where he is 'directing policy' for the Prime Minister.

STERNBERG: Metal boss

The man who has been a busy boy ever since 38 February is Sir Joseph Kagan, chairman of the Mountain Metal Corporation. Sternberg, who has 13 other directorships, not only contributed generously to Mr Wilson's London campaign, but was also to be seen in the 'holy of holies' of Harold's encircling during the election.

There, too, was to be seen one of Wilson's oldest and most trusted friends, Sir Joseph Kagan, chairman of the Ganges Mattiackson. Kagan got the 'Sir' during the last Labour government when he was a more than frequent visitor to Downing Street. During the recent election campaign, Harold started wearing that Ganges mac again in front of the tell-tale cameras.

Harold Wilson's association with commodity dealers and brokers is not as bizarre as might appear. Soon after resigning from the Labour government in 1951 after that government decided to impose health charges, Wilson was signed up by Montague Meyer, an up-and-coming timber merchant much of whose business was conducted in Eastern Europe. Wilson's ready acquaintance with Meyer's company eventually bridged the gap between his former salary as a Minister and his pay as an ordinary MP.

Wilson stayed with Meyer through most of the 13 years of Tory government, and helped build it into one of the most profitable commodity companies in the country.

Honours

Harold Wilson has already said that he will be handing out fewer honours than the previous Prime Ministers. But the Queen's birthday honours are due in June, and if there are any relatives reading this column, they could do worse than write a letter to the Daily Mirror of Lord Miller of Peachey, Lord Kissin of Commodities, Lord Sternberg of Brokerage and, who knows, even Lord Murray of St Cuthbert's, at the very least, Lord Brittain of Borough Road.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

ONE shareholder suggested they should pay money to political parties which support capitalism.

Mr Maxwell Joseph replied: 'I am against it. This company has never done it and never intends to. I am a Labour government as much as you do, but we have always made more profit under a Labour government than under any other.'

WHILE working for a plumbing company in York I claimed 'conditions' money for five weeks from when I started on the contract. But the company would not pay me.

I could claim the money because of the noise from pneumatic drills, compressors, needle guns. Because of the fifth-including pigeon nest dropings, dead pigeons—which made a terrible smell. There was no protective clothing to guard against the spraying of irritants.

The company bought dust-heavy from compressors, drills, soil and sulphur, and there was no explanation or payment for the damage. I was working on an old rain water pipe and that was full of the dead pigeons and dust.

While working under these conditions I have contracted an irritation of the scalp and skin which, thank goodness, is clearing up.

The failure to pay conditions money was explained by the boss saying that the main contractor on the job wouldn't pay them so they wouldn't pay me.

Then I was given my notice, the reason?

The old 'lack of work' trick. But the job was working on good for a few months at least, I am positive that if I had continued to work the job would still be on the same site under the same conditions. It is a blatant attack on people's work and contracts of employment. If I had broken my contract I would not be able to live on the same level of employment benefit, not to say my job of course.

That happened at my previous job, the boss would not sign off overtime for non-overtime rates. I left and lost my unemployment benefit.

That is why I joined the International Socialists like many more. Further we workers need a rank and file movement of our own. We are sitting ducks.—D Singleton, York.

Miners: We’ve been sold out

REALISATION is quickly setting in among the many miners in the mining industry that the recent wages deal was just another sell-out.

The full claim, backdated to 1 November, would have been won if the miners had any real effort by the National Executive of the union. After many pleas declarations that the claim was structured in such a way as to enhance the position of the lower paid the very same group were the ones to leave the union to the wolves when the time came for the inevitable sell-out.

The bureaucratic manoeuvring by the NEC in calling off the pickets and even requesting the men to work before the vote was taken, coupled with the breakdown in com-

Bobby Moore, you got it all wrong...

MOST NEWSPEPAPER treatment of football is pretty lousy, but if Socialist Worker cannot improve on it, better leave the subject completely alone. The article on Bobby Moore (23 March) showed soccer correspondent Roger Protz to have a very lyrical, but does he knows about football.

Firstly, to say that Moore 'commanded the play, from midfield', suggests a super-bossy knowledge of the sport of a football pitch. Moore was at his best as a 'sweeper', playing behind the defence, and was therefore an excellent example of the man-sectarian systems, so bitterly criticised by Protz.

Moreover, your correspondent's treatment of professional footballers' behaviour is really reactionary. The implication was that Moore was a gentleman, a 'game', surrounded by many ruthless bulldogs who would destroy his image, unprofessionalism, in fact, the system in which our Mr. Moore is exemplified.

Professional football is a cross between showbiz, and a hobby for the petty capitalist creeps who make up the Directors of the clubs. Naturally, this perversion of sport produces tedious, banal and lifeless on the field and in the terraces. Good football can only return when we have amateur or part-time professionals representing democratically-governed local sports clubs whose aim is to provide recreation for all, rather than status for the few. To expect players to suddenly repent and copy Blue-eyes Bobby, is definitely 'Blowing bubbles in the air'.—JORDON BLAIRE, London SW6.

Moore—sweeper 'brakes of midfield' here reading a game—

Thief

A TV programme on the law dealing with the case of an ex-Forf worker in Liverpool, who was accused of theft from his employer—it emerged that legal advice considered the charges against him particularly serious because it was his own employer that he was alleged to have stolen from.

Interestingly—it appears that stealing the product of one's own labour from one's own employer is a more serious offence than stealing the property of somebody else's employer.

Noel Jenkinson

NATIONAL Front is a fascist group and is a danger to the revolution. It is not a valid political group in this country, and any attempt to compromise with it no good. We who are in the Independent Socialist Movement, will be united in the struggle against fascism.—T H转载请注明来自https://www.toutiao.com/a/[phone number]2859773768/
Scandal of worker classified 'sub-normal' and paid starvation wages

CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN is a rich display of immorality, exploitation and systematic injustice. But then, from the lower depths, a new example comes to the surface. Suddenly you know that your knowledge of it is superficial. The story of Andrew Milne is one of these.

Andrew is a runaway, but not from school or Borstal. For Andrew is 34 years old. He has run away from his work on a farm, from a unique and modern form of slavery which enjoys full government protection. At 16 years, Andrew was sent by his father to work for farmer John Riley, a prosperous operator in Derbyshire and tenant of the Duke of Devonshire.

Andrew earned the magnificient sum of £4 a week plus board for his life of constant toil. At 18 he was told his parents would get his wages and bank them for him.

From then until he left, Riley's farm to work for one of Riley's relations, Andrew did not know what his wages were. He never got more than £2 a week in cash and did not know what was banked for him.

But in 1970 Andrew was subjected to an even more brutal form of oppression. In October of that year his boss applied for a permit classifying Andrew as mentally sub-normal and formally allowing him to pay him a dirt-poor starvation wages, £10 a week for 45 hours, a full £2.15 less than the miserable bulk.

In his application to the County Committee of the Agricultural Wages Board, Riley stated that Andrew was 'backward and needed constant supervision.' As he gets older, his disability increases. Not trustworthy,' he added.

Ostensibly Andrew was a joint applicant for the permit. But this cannot be taken seriously. Farmworkers are often forced into a position where they become completely dependent on their employers, and dare not challenge them.

After an interview conducted by a 78 years old farmer and a farmworkers' representative, the permit was granted. Andrew became one of 500 farmworkers in England and Wales who have been classified as mentally deficient by a wages board.

Interestingly enough, the gentlemen who classified him did not even bother to talk to his fellow workers on the farm. They just accepted the employer's view.

Anxious

Robert Broomhead, now aged 26, worked with Andrew from 1970-71. He says: 'Andrew did all the dirty rotten jobs and worked like a slave. Once he had been given his instructions, he got on with the job without any questions.

He worked hard and did all the rough work, shoveling muck and cleaning out buildings.'

Andrew's family put up with this. His father was a union accountant with the British Steel Corporation, wanted him off his back.

His employer was only too anxious to tie Andrew in this way. He got rich rewards for pathetic wages on the shadow grounds that he was subnormal.

And Andrew was far from being mentally deficient. He was deprived and unhappy, crushed by his family, and by the job he was thrust into.

As long ago as 1959 Doctor William Seagrant, a psychiatrist at the Royal Waterloo Hospital in London, examined Andrew and recommended that he cut all ties with his family and the farm on which he worked.

Andrew did this in 1972. He is now working on a mushroom farm earning £34 a week, £50 with overtime.

In the wake of the publicity given to his case, unhearted by Geoffrey Seed of the Daily Mail, Agricultural Workers Union general secretary Reg Bottini has called for 'radical revision' of the system. But he doesn't want its total abolition.

Nor does the National Farmers' Union, the employers' outfit whose thirst for profit and cheap labour is

Commended that he cut all ties with his family and the farm on which he worked.

Andrew did this in 1972. He is now working on a mushroom farm earning £34 a week, £50 with overtime.

In the wake of the publicity given to his case, unhearted by Geoffrey Seed of the Daily Mail, Agricultural Workers Union general secretary Reg Bottini has called for 'radical revision' of the system. But he doesn't want its total abolition.

Nor does the National Farmers' Union, the employers' outfit whose thirst for profit and cheap labour is

Simple

unimated and who claim that if there was no permit system, the men would be 'unemployable'.

Jean Maynard, a former executive of the Agricultural Workers' Union disagrees with the Bottini/NFU position. She says that the scheme is a disgrace and asks one simple question: Why should anyone be paid according to their so-called 'mental ability'.

The scheme was brought in in 1948 under the post-war Labour Government. Until it is swept away there will be other Andrew Milnes who are legally cheated of their lives.

In Yorkshire, for example, more applications for the permits await consideration.

Laurie Flynn

Eamonn jailed

but no trial...

EAMONN LAUGHLHEY is languishing in Long Kesh internment camp in Northern Ireland. This is the news that Eamonn has been an unwilling guest of the government.

It was after his marriage in 1970 in Unity Flats, Belfast, working as a labourer. That year he was arrested and held without trial for a year in Long Kesh.

He was released in April 1972 after the fall of Stormont. Freedom from Long Kesh did not bring freedom from the attentions of the 'security forces'. He was continually threatened by the Ulster Commandos who occupied Unity Flats.

On such occasions when Eamonn thought the army were acting illegally, he reported the facts to the police—a course of action recommended by government publicists.

Closed

One ominous incident, also reported to the police, occurred on 15th February. Eamonn Laughey explains what happened: 'I had been to visit [a neighbour] in Unity Flats. When I left there were soldiers either end of the balcony who closed in on me.

They accused me of a lot of atrocities and said they would leave me in a pool of blood as I had left others and they were going to shoot me.'

Despite the fact that this incident was known to the police, 12 days later Eamonn was shot at the back and the arm at his own front door. Army statements on the shooting were widely contradictory.

They claimed he was shot, after firing six shots from a Thompson machine gun. They also claimed that he was shot handling a rifle to another man.

They claimed he was shot taking a rifle from a youth and that only one shot was fired by the army despite his two separate wounds.

All charges about Eamonn carrying a gun were dropped the day before the trial of the activist of Public Prosecutions.

On 25th February 1972 Laughey was out of hospital and apart from the fact that he was unable to work because of his wound, a free man. Fort is that until May 1972 when he was arrested again for "membership of an illegal organisation".

Enquiry

After 65 hours he was released on the intervention of Labour MP, Kenneth McNamara. During his short detention he was offered £10 a week to join the IRA and become an informer. He refused.

This information was passed on to McNamara and the police. On 12 June he was informed that he had to take place into his allegations. Two weeks later he was arrested once again.

A police officer came to see Eamonn, asking him if he had anything to add to his statement. He replied that his statement was a full and truthful account of the events and he had nothing to add.

This reasonable reply was used by Whitelaw to write to Kevin McNamara and demand Eamonn's release. But the police's arrest he has refused to co-operate in any way... without such co-operation no information into the allegations cannot continue.

Eamonn Laughey claims he has never been a member of the IRA, and to be the strongest possible suspicion remains that he is in Long Kesh to shield the army from a proper investigation into the shooting.
THE RESPONSE to the conference has exceeded our best hopes," Roger Cox declared. "More than 600 delegates have so far asked for places. This response clearly reflects the worries and concerns about the future of our trade union movement which many trade unionists are raising today.

"We have had applications from 30 shop stewards' committees, nine trade unions, 44 AUEW branches, 28 TGWU branches, 13 TASS branches and 16 NALGO branches.

"Some of this response clearly reflects the influence of particular papers—The Carworker, for example. Six London trade unions are coming as a result of 'The Platform'.'

"The NALGO delegates are a real claim for our National Action News. A number of print unions are also on the list. Many of the delegates are not covered by a rank and file paper. This must reflect worries in the movement. We can help in building them on their own papers.

"In the lettered discussions I have had about the conference, two real worries came up in time and again. The first was all the attacks on our living standards and organisation such as 'The Carworker', which is continuing under the Labour government. The second and most important speeches will be from John Cumberbatch, who was given a 19 month suspended prison sentence at the Shrewsbury Court. We are proud of how he came out on the platform to lead off the discussion on Shrewsbury and the attack on the right to picket.

"But the second worry was a deep distrust about the activities of many of the trade union leaders.

"The antics of trade union leaders who were prepared to talk with Heath was bad enough.

What could be worse is to turn the victory against the Tories into a series of concessions on point after point to the present government.

"And many delegates have raised on top of this the remote- ness of local full time officials. That is why one of the most important sections of the resolution before conference deals with the questions of power and democratic control in our unions.

"We don't want a series of descriptions of what went wrong or dispute after dispute. For every carworker, the memory of Chrysler Electricians' dispute will be sharp enough. We have delegates present from Chrysler who followed the AUEW and TGWU instruction to cross official picket lines.

"What we need is to discuss what to do about the problem. The conference must make practical, real steps to work out how to make officials account- able, to insist that union policy is carried out and not altered as it goes along. The conference must be constructive, and this is much harder.

Lockout

"Being practical means being clear about what can be achieved.

"The resolution will commit us to keeping the ongoing committee. This will serve as a clearing house of information. It will keep the links between the delegating bodies.

"These links can make an enormous practical difference to trade unionists involved in disputes. During the Perkins engine lockout last summer, members of the strike committee stayed with me, through the Carworker, and toured Ford Dagenham, the Royal Docks and other work places in London.

"The Carworker had the same in Coventry, arranged through the trade union official board up there. After the conference we can do this on a national scale.

"From these small beginnings we can learn from these essential services which the official movement was supposed to do. A national rank and file organisation will be built on these experiences and what we learn from them.

"The delegates themselves are not coming to the conference to listen to speeches, appeal and go home. They will have to do most of the speaking, and it is their experiences and ideas which will decide just how successful the conference is.

"It is a tragic reflection of the state of sections of our movement that we have to say clearly that the conference will be democratically run. If there are any irregularities about procedure, then a quick vote will sort it out.

"The reason why the conference must be democratic is not just that we believe in democratic procedures.

"We want the delegates to go back and argue about the decisions taken, to argue about the need to put more life, more activity into the trade union to argue that the unions belong to us, not our paid officials.

"Because the decisions taken at our conference will be decisions to be acted on, the delegates must understand what is being asked to act on it. That is why discussion must be free and open.

"The real measure of the conference will be how the delegates return to their work places to build involvement in our trade union movement and how in the coming months the links we have begun to establish in these last weeks can become a real force in strikes and disputes and inside the trade union.
SEE YOU IN BIRMINGHAM...

The only way for workers in all industries to fight building workers' trade unions is to gain more rank and file control of their respective unions. This can only be done by building strong rank and file organizations within the unions and linking together in the common fight.

For trade union conferences to be a success and so that it will emerge as a real fighting force, it is essential that genuine trade union representatives from all industries should be there in force. If it is now too late for you to get delegated to this conference, then it can never be too soon to start preparing for the next one.

For those who may believe that the rank and file papers have had no effect on the trade unions, it should be noted that in the miners' pay claim the magic figures £3.50-EG in the Collier, rank and file paper of the NUM.

In fact, the entire strategy for fighting the claim—a complete overtime ban to be followed by a national strike—clearly set in The Collier even before the leadership of the NUM), and would have been a complete success but for the role played by the NEC in the final solution.

So in fact there is proof that the rank and file movement can play a decisive part in determining policies within the trade unions, and that it may be as yet. See you at the conference!

---

ALAN THOMAS is Branch representative and education officer in his Post Office Engineering Union branch in London.

We need to get together unionists from other militant trade unions to exchange views and experiences of how to fight the bosses and fight the common enemy. But we also have to be able to fight the freebie right wing national executive in our own union.

They have continued to sell the membership down the river on wage claims by accepting massive productivity deals while accepting large increases in renumeration systems.

For example, I was told at last year’s conference, we had to accept the Tories’ phase two pay rise of £1 plus 4 per cent plus an additional 10% for productivity at the same time as the executive voted an allowance of £0 per week expense.

There was no opposition to this from the executive, who presumably thought we could tighten our belts but they let the noose hang on them.

It seems to me that the only way we can stop all this is to elect our officials and tell them if they try to have an easy life, will eventually be sacked.

The conference must be a success so that we can form the basis on which to fight against all anti-trades union and working class laws and right now further our attempts to get the Labour government to free the Shrewsbury building workers.

---

PETE GLATTER is a London busman. He helped set up the London busmen’s paper, The Tramper.

The paper was really started by just me and a bunch of others and it was we who started it. We talked a lot about our problems and decided to see if we could get something started.

It started off as a couple of duplicated sheets. We didn’t have any money or any supporters. Just eight months ago we were selling a few hundred copies in just four London garages, all duplicated. Now we sell more than 2000 copies and they go to garages all over London. In lots of places it is sold by the union representative—he is basically the shop steward—on the union table on a Friday.

The point is, the paper clicked. It met a need. We felt what a lot of busmen felt, and we had a bit of luck. It’s really the job itself that made the paper succeed.

The problem is at present we don’t have sufficient links and organization at rank and file level to organise back and fight for our decisions. This is where The Platform can make the difference. In the fight against the Phase Three offer, 27 out of 68 London garages rejected the offer and they were mainly the largest garages.

What is crucial is that our little duplicated sheet turned into a proper printed paper involving rank and file busmen.
It's no paradise on the 17th floor... and no joke for Daren, who has to jump to reach the button in the lift— one child was trapped for over an hour.

**Fighting back on £17 a week**

WHEN Mary Lerner was 15 her father, a scaffoldor, fractured his spine and was taken to hospital. The firm gave him his cards. That winter the family kept warm from the wood of their chopped-up piano.

Experiences like this made Mary, now a 27-year-old switchboard operator and typist, aware that there was something very wrong about a life where some people lived in ease and comfort, while others like herself, had to count every penny they earned.

'Things aren't much different now,' says Mary, 'but being in the International Socialists means that you're not an isolated individual fighting against a brick wall. It gives you a feeling of strength.'

A feeling of strength is important to a woman like Mary, who is bringing up her son, Daren, aged seven, alone. 'Most people just can't imagine the problems involved in bringing up an illegitimate child, let alone accepting that a white woman should have a black child.'

To them, this is a sexual— that white men aren't good enough. It's this kind of abuse I have to fight against and this is where being in IS has helped me to fight back again and against such racist ideas.'

Where Mary lives, in Edmonton, North London, there's a patch of two grass at the bottom of the 23-storey block of flats, which she feels thankful for after years of misconstrued rooms and damp walls.

**Result**

But it's no paradise on the 17th floor with the wind shaking the windows and stopping Mary from sleeping at night. It's no joke for Daren either, who has to jump to reach the button in the lift—the alarm button can't even be reached by some adults and in a result one child was trapped in the lift for over an hour.

Like most black working-class children, Daren encounters discrimination at his school. His last school was a multi-racial one in Harrow.

'He was coming along well—now suddenly at a school that has only a handful of black children—suddenly labelled backward.' And it's no coincidence that the other black child in the class is also supposed to be backward.'

Mary is now trying to form a play centre attached to the school for those mothers who are forced to work full-time and have nowhere to keep their children until they get home.

It's a real problem, I only get paid 10 days sick leave a year, so when Daren's ill I have to pretend I'm well, otherwise I get no money, and I don't know how to deal with the price rise, wage freezes, and other everyday necessities.

When Mary asked for a rise, her boss, a millionaire who owns property in the West Indies, went through her expenses, bit by bit, and when he saw that after all deductions she had £5 to live on he remarked, wide-eyed: 'Surely that's enough!'

**Increase**

'It's supposed to be enough for us to live on but not for the employees and their class who make more profit in one week than we earn in a year. At work we've been told that due to Phase Three we'll get no rise until May. You can bet your life that by that time the cost of living will have increased!'

'Socialist Worker needs to show how women like myself are discriminated against in all areas of life, and what more is important, how we can stop allowing ourselves to be kicked around, and fight against it. I'm in IS because I'm fighting for socialism but we're not going to get it until a lot more women stop moaning and start fighting.'

Jacquie Hayman

**Sorry luv, sold out**

SHOPPING takes enough of a woman's time as it is without having to hunt round all the grocers and supermarkets in the area for basic necessary foods. Anyone who uses a lot of rice, for example, had that annoying task in the South East. Now, Rice, it appears, is in short supply. The same has happened with other things—linguini, spaghetti, even sugar and pepper.

It was almost funny when we faced our first 'shortage' some weeks ago—toilet rolls. It's the world paper shortage, we were told, and many people accept that—but why are boxes of tissues still produced?

The reason, of course, is that profits are made on these items. Slowly toilet rolls are re- appearing on the shelves of the supermarket, but at a much higher price—22p instead of 18p. Linguini and spaghetti are re-appearing at 7p-9p more a packet. The same with sugar, they up the price, and sugar, then pepper, and down go our living standards.

There are world shortages. The major crop of sunflowers seed in the world has failed this year. Many margarine and cooking oil depend on this as the prices will rise.

But are all these goods in short supply? No. We read in Socialist Worker that lentils were being held up in a warehouse in Glasgow to break the blockade. The truth is that a handful of wealthy businessmen are making even more money than usual out of this crisis.

**Standard**

Because we need to eat... but how much sunflower seed oil about—but does this mean there must be a price rise? Economists say in the newspapers and on TV that prices must rise because people want more than can be produced. But of course one way down wages and price rises is wages going up last year in this country less than any other country in the Common Market.

For the Labour government who seem to protect his or her family's standard of living by getting a pay rise is accused of damaging the 'national interest' while the government, despite promises to 'Consumers Minister' Shirley Williams, allows the real villains to boost their profits and prices, and spend money on unnecessary expenses.

For the Labour government to talk about 'voluntary wage restraint' while admitting that they can't control prices is a sick joke! Harold Wilson has promised us food subsidies and we have to fight, struggle and organise to make him keep his promise.

For many women, coping with rising prices is the biggest burden of the crisis. It's important that all women know that it's not an act of God but class. To workers' best friends, the business men, are making a fortune at our expense.

**Barbara Kerr**

**International Socialism**

Journal of the International Socialists

ISSN 38-50 These views were produced as a single bound volume in a limited edition. Please order copy of this from Tony Cliff on China, Peter Sedgwick on Orwell, Tom Peckham on Adorno, John Higgs on the Communist Party, Roy Chubb on the trade union movement, Erazim Kohout on the community, Eamon McCann, John Palmer, Paul Colley on Trotsky, Brian Knox on Ireland, Nigel Harris on India.

**Corbynite, Corby, Corbyne**

IS JOURNAL, Corbridge Works, Corbridge, Crewe, London E2 7EJ.
'Workers will never be free while women are in chains' 

A couple of weeks ago the Red Ladder Mobile Workers' Theatre came to Bristol. Red Ladder is a socialist theatre group, which perform to working class audiences up and down the country, putting on plays about important issues of the day—war, class and trade union movement. They have done and still do, play on the Industrial Relations Act, 'productivity' bargaining, and how the 'national rake' is dished.

This time they performed a new play about women, 'Out of the Frying Pan'. It lasts an hour and a half—longer than most of their productions. But that's a reflection of the complexity of what it's about—the mass of prejodies surrounding the position of women in society.

It follows the developing ideas of Ellen, a working class woman, of her dewy-eyed prospects for wedding day, to the time when she energetically combines the roles of mother, wife and the milat of the close of the play.

Along the road, Ellen faces problems which many working women—the arrogance, indifference and patronising attitude of many male trade unionists, and her husband's initial failure to understand her skills and work in the home and social life outside the four walls of home and family.

Some of the sequences are extremely funny, as when Ellen's steamed up husband provokes her that a claim for parity is a completely different matter from Equal Pay. He ends up thanking himself of the justice of the women's demands.

Or when her husband, after cheaply dismissing the women's central demands—like equal pay, free nurseries, contraception and abortion etc., but perhaps its greatest strength is that it goes beyond this and gives to the audience a clear yet very comprehensive picture of the historical and social roots of the oppression of women in society.

The basic message—that workers will never be free while women are in chains—it will put over. It's a fine piece of revolutionary theatre.

Red Ladder's cast say that wherever they take their plays, they provoke lively and interesting discussion. It will be true of this play, so book them up for your trade union branches or any social function—it will be good for you, and of course it's good for them, since they depend on the support they receive from the working class movement. And if one of the more moulded male chauvinists amongst your work mates makes a bit snubbed the next morning, you can be sure that his wife or girlfriend, at least, has got the message.

CHRIS SINHA

Red Ladder can be contacted through 58 Hoxton House, Hoxton Place, London N1 (07-230 8356)

Television

There was nearly a riot at our place last Saturday. The television was on but nobody was really watching it—or so I thought.

Deep in a book, I was dimly aware of old Dixon gazically managing a paused salute as the credits rolled and then a voice said: 'And now welcome back to the White and Monitors'.

I was out of my chair, across the room, set switched off and back book in hand, so fast that I am now claiming the words 'and now welcome back to the White and Monitors' for myself. Five metre sprint.

The sun had lost its light. Screams rent the air. My ankles were kicked by vicious little shoes. Shoving pathetically, my daughter, aged 20 months, pounded the now blank face of the set and yelled that terrible modern incantation: 'Tell, tell, tell.

'Tell, my wife', said the wants to dance.

I gave in to this disturbingly youthful version of individual sentimentalism and turned the set back on. With a blank smile, my daughter stammered up and down on the spot in a passable imitation of what, in my distant Brylcreem world, we used to call The Crawl. All before the way of explaining how I came to watch the Black and White Monitors.

For years—it seems more like decades—there have been demands for this series to be taken off because of its offensive and patronising nature. And from the safety of a vast viewing feature, the BBC has replied with a silence as meaningful as Harvey Smith's famous two fingers.

Perhaps the BBC's Board of Governors thinks that the sight of men with painted black faces dancing with blonde young ladies is their contribution towards integration and racial harmony.

Perhaps, but I have to admit that my first sight of the BAWM for many years had me quietly guffawing in my chair. Having long ago my ears out of about 'black mammas' and 'lovin plantation—you know, all those really nice songs about three or four and a slave—and now to see a slave go down to snatch at so poppab抢劫 it can lay it white-gloved hands on.

INKY

So last week we had the mind-boggling sight of men with inkless faces, white mouths and white-ringed eyes stretching their vocal chords through a series of campy songs, a French love song—'I Am a Little South of the Border, Down Mexico Way'.

But wipe the grin from your face. It really isn't funny. BAWM remains patronising and offensive. There are a million black people in this country who must be sickened at the sight of a show that own its origins to the more honestly titled 'Negro Minstrels', produced and flaunted by white racists who made their fortunes from the slavery and murderous exploitation of the blacks.

There is nothing on British television for black people exceptridicule. Ridicule from BAWM, from the peripatetic Martin the Comedian and the laugh-at-the-horse-black-man attitude of Love Thy Neighbour.

So demands for abolishing BAWM should go on. But perhaps the campaign should have a commercial bias if we are to get through to the BBC.

With the corporation so anxious to flag colour televised, a 'black and white' programme is hardly good for its image.

ONE programme I watch with almost morbid curiosity is The Brothers (BBC), Sundays, 7.25pm. How joyful, how miserable is the world of big—well, mini—business.

The brothers run a road transport outfit. They need to expand, to make more money in order to expand to make more.

Their draft, colourless lives are dominated by cash, overdrafts, investments and credit. Their private lives are a disaster, marriages and affairs in disarray, effectively increasingly by the demands of business.

FRANTIC

The youngest brother, David, can't even get unchastened from his wife, because she put up the money for the firm's latest frantic expansion.

Karol Marx said that socialism would not only end the exploitation of workers under capitalism but also put an end to the misery of the capitalists. Now the fundamental right of accumulation for accumulation's sake.

Watch BCC on Sunday nights and you can see what the old boy meant. I recommend a new slogan: Socialism is Sunday nights without The Brothers.

ROGER PROTZ
It could have been a victory at Con-Mech

The bitter 26-week strike for union recognition in different forms at Control Engineers, Woking, Surrey, is over.

A week ago Thursday the four remaining pickets decided to lift the picket line. After six months of struggle they were forced to accept that Rover-Koyre owner and sweatshop operator Robert Dilley had defeated the Engineering Union. Their magnificent efforts to force him to recognise the union were not enough.

Said Lindsay Greg, one of the two shop stewards at Con-Mech: "The strike was not a planned decision to take. We had to take it. We felt the strike was not being effective, indeed that it was getting less effective. We also felt that it was virtually impossible to get us back from this situation to one where we were in a position of winning."

"Originally 27 of us struck. It was made official fairly quickly and we got strike pay throughout. It was predictable that some of the jobs would be lost at any rate. The strike became drawn out."

"But if the union had operated differently, particularly the union district, then the attitude could have been improved. We could have been in with a chance."

We were inexperienced. We did ask throughout for the district to try to involve as many people as possible in local factories. In the picketing and the other things too.

THE UNITED

The International Socialist is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its principles and who are willing to pay subscriptions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalistic relations and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the major organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism. Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and engage in no activities which extend to themselves and the economic system they maintain. In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multinational firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action. The striking working class

A single socialist state cannot successfully unite unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution. In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that will bring the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular selection of all full-time officials.

Against all wars and preparations for war. We are against war and preparations for war. We support the demand: First day’s work or five days pay.

For all workers in england, we seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racism and police violence against blacks.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of colour and people and all oppressed groups in society to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret police and other methods of political repression.

Against all forms of exploitation, we unconditionally give support to and work with all struggles for freedom.
Conference starts to build Black socialist leadership

by Bernadette Dunn and Ken Montague

‘TILL recently a lot of us would go, ‘I don’t have the time, and instead of fighting we’d give up,’ said William Heskey.

Heskey, a black shop steward in Caxton’s chocolate factory, North London, was talking about the despair, low pay and deplorable conditions in factories with a large immigrant workforce, where there was a general distrust of the white-dominated unions. At Caxton’s four workers in five are immigrants, but there is only one black charhose and two black stewards. But things are changing. He was speaking at a North West London IS conference on ‘Racism and Imperialism’ in Citicord last Saturday, 32 black workers from machines and three factories branches attended.

Lyttleton, Martha Osson, in an introductory talk on racialism, showed how the wealth of Britain had been built by taking the riches of the poor countries, how the slave trade financed the Industrial Revolution which in time produced factories from the outskirts of Britain in now work.

Dafydd, who runs a youth centre in Wembley, explained: “The West Indies have been forced into a position of producing what the market wants. They’re not producing anything for themselves. If Britain turns to best sugar from the Common Market, thousands of West Indian workers will be lost of the market, and West Indian economy will collapse.”

The poor countries cannot hope to develop any real trade and industry against them on the world market. The Cubans are going much faster but producing more sugar but the Russians are holding the price down.”

White workers are suffering under the pressure of black workers, and the blacks are suffering from the capitalists coming to our countries to take away their jobs.

How can black workers fight back? Richard Mount, a West Indian, who works at Hoovers, carried out that you need to start from small beginnings.

As a steward at Quaker Oats, he had helped to build the union by campaigning against the bacteria disease that was contaminating food in the plant, and then he had to do something about the working conditions of the workers there. He had only one job and he was just a ‘rough diamond’

The most difficult problem is to break the fear of strikes and the fear of losing their jobs.

Everyone agreed that it was essential to bring together black people and that the new unions that were willing to fight, to fight is clear from the response of the last IS conference, and the laws that the existing leadership is trying to make. To give up the fight would be to give up the gains that the community belong to the immigrant middle class who just want to prove their respectability and think that if they keep their heads down long enough, the law will change.

But racialism and Powellism affect black workers most and won’t just go away.

This highly successful school was an example of a socialist leadership among black workers in North London. This school will be set up to train black shop stewards. Two people joined IS to take a role in the trade unions, and discussed group plans for organizing in the district so that militants could learn from each others’ experiences. The conference itself gave confidence to those present to go back to their localities and put into practice what was said, mobilising their political power, building education and discrimination in jobs, and organizing support for their brothers and sisters fighting at home.

Scientist Worker’s role in struggle

by Bernadette Dunn and Ken Montague

IS here this week is Paul Rose, the dazzling young Manchester Labour MP and author of The Manchester Martyrs. Last week plain-clothes police called at the home of 15 members in Moston, Manchester, which is part of Paul’s constituency. They were investigating allegations of violence all over the area during the election. The police wanted to know if these New Labour members were the Representation of the People Act. They didn’t tell us why, they said, from a Mr Paul Rose, MP.

The posters in question pro-

claimed: DEFEND THE UNIONS VOTE LABOUR.

The little local branch will remember Paul Rose’s magnificent speech to the Young Socialists Conference in 1961, where he opened a debate on unilateral disarmament with the stirring words: “For far too long, British Labour has been tied to the chariot wheels of imperialism.”

The Manchester Socialists take the view that for far too long Paul Rose has been tied to the chariot wheels of our pompous, petty reformism.

BLACKPOOL—Manchester IS District Committee, covering 17 branches in the Manchester area, have achieved a successful school in Blackpool this weekend. Thirty IS members and black workers, recruited in the past few months, held their first meeting in the town hall, the revolutionary party, the rank and file trade union movement, and factory workers branches.

TEESIDE—The local IS branch has organised series of meetings and paper-selling drives for April and May under the banner: A WORKERS’ PAPER AND A WORKERS’ PARTY.

Meetings will be held in 12 factories and in six districts. The speakers at the meetings will be workers in the factories and areas where the meetings are to be held, and a speaker from the Teeside IS branch will also be present. The speaker will be the factory workers and the IS branch and factory sales of Socialist Worker will be organised.

LIVERPOOL—The Merseyside District Committee of IS, in a ambitious campaign of education, already two weekend schools have been held, one

GLASGOW—At a Socialist Worker rally last week, the paper’s editor, Roger Protz, appealed to the 80 people present to do all in their power to build the paper’s circulation and influence in the months ahead. Socialist Worker was a vital weapon of militant workers, he stressed. It was important to build the paper’s sales in order to counter the danger of a ‘hurry up a penny’ for the Labour government, during which time the danger of a new clamp on wages would be introduced.

He outlined the 5½ years struggle to build the paper into an effective fighting force in the working-class movement. Workers will be won to the paper and to the IS’s socialists by the seriousness of our politics,” he said. “We will win new readers through our fight to spread socialist ideas, to raise the level of consciousness and by our principled commitment to the need to build a mass workers’ party.

He urged all supporters of the paper not just to be passive readers but to take extra copies to sell at their places of work, to write for the paper and to criticise the paper. These people are needed to join IS at the meeting.

Protz also spoke at a lunch-time
LUCAS: 600 STRIKE AS WOMEN SIT-IN

BIRMINGHAM—On Thursday last week 600 Lucas toolsetters came out in strike support of setters at the Shaftmore Lane factory who were laid off over their policy of non-co-operation. This began after the breakdown of talks on the setters’ claim, which included a new wage structure. At first the company said the setters were being laid off because of a labourers’ dispute. But it was the labourers because the labourers had agreed to return to work for talks and have been told by the company they are now in a lay-off situation because of the setters. So much for company statements.

On the day the setters took action management representatives went around the King Street factory telling production workers they were laid off—without consulting shop stewards first. Angry scenes followed and the whole factory came to a standstill at meetings began. The women decided to report for work the next day and sit in.

On the Friday, at three mass meetings, more than 2000 production workers—out of ten of them women—passed a resolution calling a lock-out and demanding payment for being laid off.

All this is happening at a time when the company has announced plans to make one worker in ten redundant. Senior shop stewards met management on Wednesday last week and demanded a withdrawal of the proposed redundancies. Management said they would tell the directors of the stewards’ demand but held little hope of any change.

The company then decided to oppose redundancies in any shape or form. Further sanctions will be applied and if as a result any workers are laid off all the Lucas factories in Birmingham, employing 14,000 workers, will take strike action.

The action taken by the women workers in occupying their factory provides an essential lesson for all Lucas workers in the coming struggle.

Teachers draft Charter of rights

A HUNDRED and fifty delegates attended the Rank and File Teachers Conference last weekend. They came from 200 local unions and groups. A third of the delegates were women. But the conference was not a meeting of professional Socialists.

The role of the conference was to assist the draft of a Charter of rights. The rank and file was not in a position to put forward a demonstration of the meeting.

The draft was rewritten in the election of the executive committee. Three-quarters of the conference voted for the amendment. The conference also discussed Rank and File to its present position and who were now seeking to expand further in size and influence. Solid support for the annual newspaper was clearly given when Dick North, the new editor, received a standing ovation.

The first session of the conference discussed the cuts in educational spending announced by the TUC and likely to be confirmed by the government. The cuts will mean worsening conditions in schools already strained to the limits, especially in the large industrial areas. It was decided that the presence of local dignitaries and present and future of the conference should be fought in the schools and colleges with parents and local trade unions.

FORWARD

A draft ‘charter’ was produced which aims to set down in detail the conditions under which the teachers should work. The present we have no contract or legal conditions and a teacher can be sacked if he takes children in a tin hat. This draft seeks to correct this.

The discussion on salaries re-firmed the policy of teachers to exercise the dual role of high and low-paid teachers and employees of the government. The government must be paid for the job of teaching in the classroom and the trade union must concentrate its efforts on improving support in the union and on a small fund for the NUT. The conference voted for a conference with 46,000 votes.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT and the NUT is working to strengthen the unions and to establish the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.

A report was given on the position of the teachers in the country and on the actions of the NUT. The conference was in order that Rank and File has its charter.
HUNGER STRIKERS TO STAY IN BRITISH JAILS

DOULOURS AND MARIAN PRICE, Hugh Fenney and Gerald Kelly are not to be returned to their sentences in Northern Ireland. This message from Roy Jenkins, to relatives of the prisoners, was a little further in tarnishing Labour's new House of Lords reform campaign for liberalism.

In the Action Committee, campaigning for the transfer of the four imprisoned priests, thetatations of Fenney and Kelly were told that they had been instructed by their daughter to make no further efforts on their behalf.

It will be Hugh Fenney’s 22nd birthday on 13 April and the prisoners have been on hunger strike for 137 days. On 10 January they went on their own for 142 days on hunger strike on 5 April. Victory for them is near.

The JAC is asking organisations to spread the message to trade unionists, and individuals to send cards. Hugh Fenney is at Mrs Patricia Francis’s Green House, South Bruce, Ayrshire, and Gerald Kelly’s home is in 102A Grosvenor Road, Dumfries. The Irish Nationalist Government has rejected a series of Labour MPs’ constituency ‘navigators’. Last week they passed a motion calling for the trial of 51 military prisoners in the absence of their defence lawyers.

International Socialists have already issued a call urging support for a number of trade union branches. More should follow.

On Saturday 30 March Jiljington and Finlayson announced that they would hold a protest picket at his surgery from 1.30-5.30pm. Readers of Socialist Worker who can, should attend.

The Irish political prisoners cannot be isolated from other cases, the interned held in Pataon in Whitehall under trial or trial, or the Shrewsbury building workers locked out for defending trade unionism. The state continues its repressive activity under Labour as well as the Tories. Action and protest can help, so please have a duty to join in.

Engineering walk out over lump

by Chris Milsom

Aluminium stewards

BRISTOL.— At least 100 employees at the Engineering walked out last Friday against management's plans to cut the lump sums paid to workers.

The agency workers would have been receiving a lump of as much again as the top-rated skilled man.

This dispute comes just after the submission of the Huntley Field’s Reluctance to take away the lump sum payments for the three-week work along with their compensation for their work.

The resolution of the dispute was prepared to take over everyone as non-employees—except himself, of course. But we just don’t want to know it. We won’t even bother to discuss it. It means no more lump sums for any other employees.

The brokers on the shop-floor are angry. They are still out in a 24-hour strike, even though the lump sum payment was reduced from £12.15 an hour, plus the agency fees, to avoid overcharging the shopfloor’s claim.

Cash in balance

LONDON.—The figures of the NALGO £400 London weighting claim hangs in the balance of the managers of the union’s negotiations last week. They have pocketed a £50.00 increase for outer London, 216 for intermediate London and £25 for inner London. These are, by December 1972. Workers under 18, get even less and the whole question is being dealt with by the Unions." (Unions’ approval.

At the same time pressure from the employers, the London Borough Councils and the Labour Government have forced put through a planned strike at Jiljington, Tower Hamlets. The demonstrators are expected to join a meeting with Michael Foot on Monday. At Jiljington, where a strike was to start on Wednesday, 6,000 members turned out a local agreement and at a demonstration at the Jiljington, Tower Hamlets, chairman of the Local London evening tomorrow. If Michael Foot rejects the settlement, line-up will move to a national action next Monday for the full claim.

270 sackings at another GEC plant

by Simon Turner and Alex Callicoins

COLCHESTER.—The police launched a vicious attack on the right to picket at Essex University last week.

They made 105 arrests as they attempted to break picket lines drawn by students protesting at victimisation.

The authorities at the university have been trying to break the student movement there since an occupation over the campaign for higher grants began in November. So far two students have been expelled for taking part in the occupation and many more face disciplinary proceedings. The response of the students has been to picket the university, stopping supplies, and challenging victimisation and incitement to law.

The students face severe charges, such as unlawful assembly—one woman has been accused of bringing charges of conspiracy and incitement to law.

The authorities at the university have been trying to break the student movement through an occupation over the campaign for higher grants before Christmas. So far two students have been expelled for taking part in the occupation and many more face disciplinary proceedings. The response of the students has been to picket the university, stopping supplies, and challenging victimisation and incitement to law.

The authorities at the university have been trying to break the student movement through an occupation over the campaign for higher grants before Christmas. So far two students have been expelled for taking part in the occupation and many more face disciplinary proceedings. The response of the students has been to picket the university, stopping supplies, and challenging victimisation and incitement to law.

ATTACK

Unfortunately, the actions of the local students union executive and of the leaders of the National Union of Students have not always displayed the same determination.

On the Wednesday the NUS executive and vice-president, Stuart Pahl, met the Vic-Chancellor who has maintained the victimisation of the vicar and the vicar himself. The NUS executive said the vicar should resign. This an attempt to repeat the meeting on Thursday was broken by 200 students, who entered the Vice-Chancellor’s house and kept him there for several hours.

The scale of the action has not broken the student protest. Students

Rusty Davies, president of Essex University students union, said he supported the picket and the barricade from Lewish, Portsmouth, Oxford, Surrey London and elsewhere.

The next day 2000 students from all over the country took part in a march, from Colchester to the university. The feeling of those on the march was that the picket must be defended until the students’ demands have been met.

ATTACK

Unfortunately, the actions of the local students union executive and of the leaders of the National Union of Students have not always displayed the same determination.

On the Wednesday the NUS executive and vice-president, Stuart Pahl, met the Vic-Chancellor who has maintained the victimisation of the vicar and the vicar himself. The NUS executive said the vicar should resign. This an attempt to repeat the meeting on Thursday was broken by 200 students, who entered the Vice-Chancellor’s house and kept him there for several hours.

The scale of the action has not broken the student protest. Students

270 sackings at another GEC plant

NEWTOWN-LE-WILLOWS, Lancs. CEC have announced redundancies for 140 shopfloor workers and 130 staff at their diesel engine works. The list has been hand-picked by local shopfloor management and this is an obvious attempt to secure good trade unions and socialists.

Far from following normal trade union practice of ‘last in, first out’, they include the longest serving man in each section, who also happen to be a good trade unionists.

The shopfloor management have said they are prepared to take the workforce if there is action against this blatant victimisation. They even admit that there is likely to be vacancies for up to 70 skilled men by October. Even now they are advertising for skilled men.

A Bolton factory which does sub-contracting work for the plant is advertising vacancies for turners while turners are being laid off in the works itself. Shopfloor stewards suspect that a deliberate shortage of work is being created by selecting work to the other plants and other firms.

Feelings are running high with frequent strikes. One worker said that the decision to retrench the redundancies was less obvious. The workforce, which was involved in long disputes in the 1972 miners’ strike, said the victimisation of a shop steward, needs more leadership if trade union organisation is to be maintained at the plant.
Con-Mech boss out for blood

ROBERT DILLEY, boss of Con-Mech Engineers, Woking, was back in his bid for National Industrial Relations Court last week.

This time his motion is not to get an order for picketing or stoppages, but to get an action for damages from the AUEW for loss of profits as a result of the six-month strike which followed his refusal to recognise the union. Judgment in the case was due on Thursday.

Dilley, in his case, claims that his profits have suffered from an AUEW boycott of his firm, and he has produced figures showing that his firm would have a profit of £50,000 more from the AUEW, which has had an adverse effect on his firm's accounts.

The AUEW cannot accept a case for damage to business, and it is not clear whether the company has been affected by the AUEW's activities.

On the march (from left): John Carpenter, who was convicted in the first trial, Marlene Tomlinson, wife of the picket Roy Tomlinson, Rita Carpenter and Nicholas Warren.

PICTURE: Phil McCawen

SHREWSBURY UNIONS BEGIN TO MOVE

THE series of pickets' trials at Shrewsbury Crown Court is over.

On Friday last week the judge hand-picked four juries to try Terry Rehansh, Lennie Williams and John Seaburg.

Terry Rehansh and Lennie Williams, who were both found guilty of unlawful assembly after four-month jail sentences suspended for two years.

John Seaburg, found guilty of unlawful assembly and affray, fully expected to join in his ex-tie union brothers already in jail. But the judge did not send him down. On top of a four-month jail sentence suspended for two years on the charge of unlawful assembly, John got another six months suspended for affray.

CHALLENGE

The stand of the three men in this trial took great courage. They maintained not guilty pleas throughout despite the fact that this increased their chances of going to jail.

John Seaburg was a particularly vulnerable position. The police had a statement from him in which he admitted throwing a lump of earth on one site. But to his credit, John persisted in challenging this statement. He insisted throughout that it was obtained under pressure.

On Friday too the last of the Shrewsbury 14, Les Mason, was told that the prosecution would offer no evidence against him. More than a year of the trial hanging over his head was thought to be punishment enough.

SLANDERS

So now the physical toll on the trade union movement can be reckoned up: six in jail on sentences ranging from four months to three years; 10 on four or more month sentences suspended for two years, one not guilty and one not to be tried.

More lies and slanders that surround the Shrewsbury trials are being pedaled away in the working-class movement. At its March meeting the executive of the print and paperworker's union, SOGAT, endorsed a call for the Labour government to release the jailed men and amend the conspiracy laws.

But a move to get the National Union of Mineworkers' executive to take a similar stand has failed.

Jack Collins, executive member from Kent, moved that the union come out for the release of the men who were jailed for using tactics pioneered by the NUM.

The executive majority felt that this would be to interfere in UCATT's business. The NUM should only line up behind whatever the TUC was doing, they said.

This position was pushed particularly by Joe Gormley. Gormley, interestingly enough, did remark that it had not been miners who had been jailed, they wouldn't have been in side very long. This is of course an argument for the NUM to interfere in the affairs of the six jailed pickets.

Last week's lobby of parliament to demand the release of the men, and to draw the attention of the six Labour MPs, and an end to the use of conspiracy laws to combat trade unionism brought to the fore the issues to the attention of some Labour MPs.

But the indications are that the Labour government intends to do nothing about releasing the jailed pickets and reforming conspiracy laws. This means that the trade union movement must redouble its efforts and campaign at every level for the Labour government to free the six.

FUND HITS TARGET

YOU'VE done it again. The Merch Fighting Fund has gone over the top—£466.64 this week has pushed the total up to £2580.03, well over the £2000 mark.

But we still have to keep it up. The Fund is an important new weapon in the battle against the Tories as it was with them. We need £2000 again in April, and your contribution, however large or small, will help.

We're now sending out more and more collections from Socialist Worker readers on estates and workplaces—why not see if you can organise one? Branches could also try new ways of raising money—have an auction at York branch did and raised over £40, or a raffle, a jumble sale, a social or dance.

£3, Glasgow Corporation Planning Department £2.05, SW readers £2.40, and merchants £1.05. Payment for branches by cheque or postal order. All cheques made out to the Merch Fighting Fund. (We are now sending out collections by cheque only.)

Send for these, and send your collections and donations to Jim Nichol, National Treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

Strikers refused dope

EASTLEIGH, HANTS: The occupants at Strachan's Engineering, now in their fourth week, are being visited by Department of Employment officials and denied their strike entitlements. About one third of the 60 picketers have been refused all dope.

On Wednesday last week, the men were issued with documents at the three local labour exchanges. These contained the following four questions: 'Please give details of the date and hours and times spent in the duties since your claim for benefit failed? What days and hours are you likely to be involved in the future?'

'If you yourself consider that you are available for normal full-time employment and you are prepared to take employment at once should a vacancy arise?'

The dope payment was a matter of dispute, the men were told. They were told they were available for normal full-time employment and if they accepted work at once they would be visited by officials and told they were available for full-time employment.

STRAWBERRY SUGAR

From the front...

The TUC general secretary, Len Murray, has said that the Budget "puts the trade union movement on the back foot" in the battle against the Tories.

This means that in return for the Budget concessions the union movement will have to hold down wages and, later, co-operate with employers on cost cutting.

That is exactly what the government is after. The Budget will help the Murrays of the movement to sell the short-term victory to the working-class people who will not be felt soon enough. The "fair" Budget is a weapon in the battle to preserve a fundamentally unfair society.