Nurses say it: Strike with us!

'We MUST learn from the experiences of the miners that the only way we can make the kind of gains needed to raise our wages above the poverty line is by direct action. Nurses are now learning that they do have industrial power and are prepared to use it. The only special case is the one that is backed by strike action.'

-MIKE ATKINSON, NUPE shop steward, Darlington District Hospital.

'The real feeling of the nurses was expressed by the numbers that poured into Manchester to attend a meeting called by NUPE. At least 2,000 backed inside Houldsworth Hall but even more were waiting outside the doors, unable to get in.'

'Ve were all waiting for something to happen there and then, when the voice came from the floor shouting 'Unify is Strength. We must unite with the nurses outside.' This was the signal we were waiting for. The meeting collapsed and the nurses couldn't get out fast enough to join their fellows sat in the main road of Deansgate, holding the traffic to ransom.'

-JUDITH JONES, NUPE shop steward, Salford Royal Hospital.

'It is a pity that the higher echelons of the Royal College of Nursing have not come out from behind their starched 'pinnies', and the top brass of the Public Employees and Health Service Employees Union did not come out from their ivory towers before and give a lead before encouraging the nurses to become so fed up as to put themselves at risk to get something moving.'

-STEVE COX, NUPE branch chairman, Croydon General Hospital.

'Most nurses who work at the Bolingbroke have worked at other hospitals in the group. We noticed that the food at the Bolingbroke was undeniably worse than elsewhere in the group. A petition was organised and was signed by nurses and other hospital workers.'

-UNA MCDONALD, NUPE steward, Bolingbroke Hospital, Wandsworth, South London.

'There remains only one more barrier to our success. Those nurses among us who consider it beneath their professional dignity to take industrial action and those who are just too damn lazy. But remember this, if you fail us now, then you have failed the nurses who marched on Tuesday and those who marched in Liverpool, London and Cardiff and you will have succeeded in perpetuating the exploitation of nurses.'

-The chronicles of staff will continue and the conditions will deteriorate. Old workhouse which are already bursting at the seams with patients just waiting for treatment will collapse into the wreckage of a nursing system with only despair and demoralisation for its future.'

-PETER HOLMES, NUPE, Birmingham.

'Personally I'd like to see the whole movement become aware of the crisis within the Health Service in the form of chronic staff shortages due to low pay and underfinancing. At present the press is backing nurses—even strike action—but I wonder how they'll react when the organised trade union movement joins the press campaign and launches sympathy strikes with the nurses in their justified claim.'

-ALAN ELLIS, NUPE convenor, St George's Hospital, Hyde Park, London.

'When this goes, the NHS will be in a pickle. Anyone who is against the NHS is out of order. The NHS is a public service. Whether you like it or not, it's ours to defend. We must defend it.'

-JULIET MILLS, NUPE, Manchester.

'We have to make sure that we are not the only ones who are fighting. If we are not, we will be losing battles.'

-MICHAEL BROWN, NUPE, Manchester.

'The National Rank and File Organising Committee has backed a call from The Hospital Worker rank and file paper to call a national conference of nurses on Saturday 1 June in Manchester.'

'The Hospital Worker's demands for nurses will be discussed: £12 a week across-the-board rise for all grades. A 35-hour week, The fixing of junior prices and rents. A 30-hour week on Saturdays, double-time on Sundays and for nights. A complete end to the use of agency nurses, 100 per cent trade unionism, Finance for any increase to come from outside the existing Health Service budget.'

-Limitations on overtime, minimum staffing levels, and on-call payments.

'The conference will also discuss action that nurses can take. The making of joint action. Striking action will be a possibility.'

-For leaflets, and further details of the conference, contact the Hospital Worker Business Manager at 8 Beverstone Road, London SW2.
The spy who came in and can stay

IRAN is one of the most savage police states in the world, with thousands of tortured political prisoners. Political trials are all conducted under military law, and under this law, prisoners merely holding socialist ideas can be sentenced to between three and ten years solitary confinement. Trade unions are all run by the state. Strikes are illegal.

Iran's present regime dates from 1953, when the CIA-organised coup overthrew the nationalist government of Prime Minister Mossadeq. The coup also ended Britain's oil monopoly in Iran and all political freedom.

In 1957, under the direction of an ex-SS Brigadier and with American money, the secret police, SAVAK, were set up. They were given all the powers of the police and of investigating magistrates. People in their hands have no protection and can be hanged by order of the secret police.

Terry and Eli Povey . . . the spy's target. Picture: Christopher Davies (Report)

There is no such system on numbers one, two and three blast furnaces at the plant, and the system allows three blast furnaces to operate in parallel.

What makes these killings so poignant and intolerable for me is that a year ago I attended a safety conference where a worker at the Port Talbot plant, I spoke up at the conference about the inconsistency in the detection systems and the appalling dangers of failing to install an alarm system on one blast furnace and two and three blast furnaces.

My arguments were shrugged off by safety officials. At the time, I was given the reprimand of my attack on this dangerous now.

I am not bitter against any single member of the safety department. Instead, the entire work force should know that the blame rests with management, with employers who have always been reluctant to spend money on improving equipment.
The Belfast strike seems to have been organized by rank and file workers against the Government and the Union leaders. Shouldn't socialists support it?

No. The leaders of the strike are out for a return to the old-style Stormont regime, with Catholics discriminated against in jobs and houses and the Catholic community in general held in subjection. We no more support this strike than we would support a strike in Britain against black workers.

But the strikers say they merely want a new election for the Northern Ireland Assembly. Surely that is a reasonable, democratic demand?

There is nothing democratic about it. The strikers calculate that an election now would return a block of right-wing Protestant politicians who could thwart the demands of democracy to Catholics.

DEMOCRACY

The British government and the troops are against the strike. So are they on the side of democratic rule here?

Not when you look at the roots of the problem. Britain helped create and develop Protestant sectarianism. It was Protestant politicians who set up the sectarian Orange state in the first place, in order to protect Protestant owners from democratic rule.

In the initial stages Britain armed the Protestant extremists so that they could terrorise the Catholic workers into accepting the state. As a result Catholics were second class citizens for 50 years. In Derry, for example, 160 Catholic men and women could not be elected to Catholic council.

Catholic workers were kept out of jobs in the shipyard and many engineers who had been members of the union they protested about this were blacklisted and dismissed. Catholic Miners were blacklisted by the notorious B-Specials, who had been established for the purpose by London.

So the British ruling class cannot avoid a major feature—its faulty brakes, for the sectarianism evident in the current strike.

The people's party...

MASSIVE popular support for the governing National Front of East Germany (DDR) was shown in the municipal elections this week. According to Reuters, 57.9% of the votes cast were valid votes to NF candidates. There were no other candidates, of course.

However, in addition to the 0.09 per cent of fractions and disloyal elements who actually voted no, some cowardly watchtowers obtained. Although 98.27 per cent of the electorate voted, this figure fell short of the 99.83 per cent in the last municipal elections in March 1976.

SAFETY TAKES A BACK SEAT

by Leo Duggan, TGWU Bus Shop Steward

suddenly everything locked on and I went down the hill. There was nothing I could do. 'Any driver who has driven the Leyland National knows they are a death trap in wet weather.'

Mr Neville said: 'I blame the brakes. They applied themselves but

THE VITAL QUESTIONS AND THE ANSWERS

But none of this is true now. Surely in recent times the British Government has been trying to bring the two sides together and the troops have been stopping them killing each other.

That's what the Tory press would like you to believe. It is true that the British government has withdrawn wholehearted support for the old Orange structure. (Not, incidentally, for democratic reasons but because massive new British investment in the South of Ireland makes it necessary to stop a front wheel skid between the two communities now, not back on the other.)

TERROR

Even then, British strategy in Northern Ireland has been marked by a fascination with terrorism that has never been really non-sectarian. For example: almost all the 600 people interned without trial are Catholics, despite the proven existence of right-wing Protestant terrorist groups.

Indeed, British soldiers, SAS men, have been known to join these terror groups in their attacks on Catholics.

Or take the deployment of the Army from Belfast. In Catholic areas like Andersonstown, Ballymurphy—where the troops are in saturation strength and houses are searched and people detained and roused up night after night.

In Protestant areas the troops are held in reserve, as Brother Neville's conundrum shows. It's the main reason the right-wing organization has been able to build up their strength, get armed and so on.

But admitting all that, if the troops go in now, to protect people defining the strike leaders and clean up these Protestant private armies, won't socialists still have to support them? Not at all. As we say, Britain created the sectarian monster—and is finding it difficult to get rid of. And it's almost inevitable that the monster is redundant. We support neither the monster nor the monster-makers. The best thing Britain can do is get out now.

Isn't that just a recipe for a bloodbath? If the troops leave won't all hell break loose?

Many people in Northern Ireland, mostly Catholic workers, have been living through hell for the past three years—anyone one of the reasons being the trooper presence.

TROUBLE

If the troops left the trouble would not stop immediately, of course. But one thing is certain: as long as they stay the trouble will go on.

So what is the way forward?

If this is the case, what would be the only way to create the conditions for the Irish people, British, Ireland and South, to work out their own future, free from outside interference. Which, of course, they have every right to do.

In that situation it is likely that Protestant, if and when the military force in Ireland is reduced, will be entitled to press the matter of the constitutional settlement. If Protestants lose the British backing they've come to expect as their right.

The basic point is that the development of working class policies in Ireland is desperately difficult while the National Question is still unaccommodated. That, is the right of the Irish people to administration and power within the boundaries of their country is denied by a combination of the British ruling class, in Ireland and South, and Protestant sectarianism, intensify an already existing ecumenical community over the other.

TRAGEDY

The tragedy of the past week has been that workers in Northern Ireland have demonstrated frighteningly the power to change society. They have shown how in the cause of progress, out of reaction.

That strength, brought to bear in a situation where Britain's presence and legacy were no more than a memory, could transform Ireland to the betterment of all its workers, British and Protestant.

It is to help speed the time when that strength can be unleashed for that purpose. Socialists in Britain must refuse to be diverted from their main job of getting the Army out.

THE CAUSE OF FREE SPEECH is attracting some unlikely champions these days. Right-wing Tory MPs, some of whom were calling for the banning of the Irish republican movement in Britain not long ago, declare that democracy is in danger because the National Union of Students has called for a ban on fascist and racist speakers at universities and colleges.

Right-wing newspapers which applauded the prosecution of the underground magazine Oz, and which would certainly applaud the prosecution of Socialist Worker, maquarade as the champions of the unrocked freedom of anyone to say anything, anywhere, anytime.

There is a simple answer to these hypocrises. Let them prove their sincerity by calling for the repeal of the Sedition Laws, the Incitement to Disaffection Act and the Public Order Act. All these measures, not only the Phase Three norm of 40p. Any settlement of current claims which fails to do these things is a sell-out.

THE FREE SPEECH CAMPAIGN

REAL EARNINGS, that is earnings in terms of what they will buy, have been cut as a result of the Tory pay policy, now confirmed by the Board of Trade. This is proved by government figures released this week.

Average earnings, including bonuses and overtime, were up by 1.4 per cent, by government figures last week but down 1.2 per cent this year. Retail prices were up by 13.5 per cent. But, because of the effect of tax and national insurance contributions, earnings have to increase by 20 per cent faster than prices to stay the same in real terms.

The effect of tax varies of course. A single man earning £305 a week now pays £58.70 a week to the Exchequer and stays put, gives present rates of inflation. Anything less is a pay cut in real terms.

Hardest hit are the very people that Tory-Labour propaganda claims will benefit from 'incomes policy', the low-paid.

A married man with two children earning £25 a week loses 33p of every £1 of pay rise in increased tax. This means that the average weekly income of one of the group, a quite likely figure, he needs an increase of 31 per cent just to stand still in real terms.

Compare this with the Phase Three pay norms of 7 per cent on basic rates plus possible threshold agreements giving up to 40p for each 1 per cent rise in prices after prices have risen 7 per cent in just October.

This 'threshold' level was almost certainly reached in April but, since the figures are normally issued about two months late, the threshold agreements will not be triggered off until next month.

Two points need to be made about this. First, the 40p increase at threshold will be tax-free and in the long run help a married man with a wife and two children loses 13p of each 40p in tax, his real increase is only 26p. Second, only 4½ million workers benefited from the threshold agreement.

It is a gross injustice that the majority will not even get these miserable threshold increases.

It all sounds very complicated but the substance of the matter is simple enough.

Phase Three pay norms mean cuts in real pay. The Labour government is trying to enforce the Tory pay law and so to push down working-class living standards. The latest government figures show that it has already succeeded to some extent. It is the longer it is able to hold the line on pay norms, the worse the cuts will be.

The real reason, however, is to smash through Phase Three, to get the increases of 20 per cent plus that are needed to maintain living standards. And to get realistic threshold settlements which will stop the current dishes being assigned and will provide the Phase Three norm of 40p. Any settlement of current claims which fails to do these things is a sell-out.

THE FREE SPEECH CAMPAIGN

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There is a simple answer to these hypocrises. Let them prove their sincerity by calling for the repeal of the Sedition Laws, the Incitement to Disaffection Act and the Public Order Act. All these measures, aimed at stifling free speech in the interests of the ruling class.

Unfortunately, sections of the soggy left have been taken in by this Tory inspired campaign against the NUS. Let us be clear about the socialist position.

We are not in favour of free speech for fascists. The simple reason that fascism aims to destroy the working class movement and every kind of civil liberty—including free speech.

We are not in favour of free speech for racists because racism is an inhumanity that destroys the human rights of any individual (be he black or white, Catholic or Protestant, alien or anyone whatever) and is, in itself, a violation of the liberties of those people. When Mosley's fascists mounted their Nazi-baiting campaign in the 1930s, we were the first to support them, believing that the braying was radically wrong.

The question asked by drivers at the garage is: Why should any driver be forced to use vehicles which at any moment can turn into a potential death trap?

The South, the Nationalist South, is a death trap. The South is a death trap in wet weather, when the road is wet and slippery. And the Nationalists have reported 'bad and dangerous skidding' on them.
Martyrdom pays very badly

THE CONTROVERSY over the salaries and conditions of nurses is concentrated on senior and prospective senior nursing staff. I'd like to say something about lower nursing staff, especially mental nursing assistants (MNAs), who are auxiliaries.

We are in urgent need of a pay review. On our money inflation is causing a big decline in an already low living standard. The salaries of auxiliary staff are regarded as too low and our training and skill depreciates. We cannot improve our status. It just deteriorates continuously.

I'm an MNA in a psychiatric ward for acute and chronic patients. The job involves no administrative responsibilities or academic training but not 'unskilled'.

The work ranges from clearing tables to cleaning patients, from washing lockers to preventing patients throwing lockers and themselves out of windows. Like all workers employed in humanitarian occupations I derive a profound satisfaction from my job. But exploitation produces resentment. For April I was 'given' 52 pence for an hour's shift.

We're there to preserve life, and we can't strike. I suspect the most articulate sections of the nursing profession have their demands placated. But will our position change?

I'm shortly going to give up the job. Martyrdom no longer sustains people. JOHN RAMPSON, Rochdale.

We must help

THE PRESENT STRUGGLE of the nurses deserves the full and active support of the trade union movement. When nurses were last involved in large scale militant activity, in the early 1960s their demands were eventually conceded because other sections of workers came out in support.

Nurses themselves have no great power—it's only workers' lives at stake, not profits! This doesn't mean that they shouldn't take action but it does mean that all socialists should agitate where they work for industrial action to win the nurses' full claim.

Under the influence of militant action by nurses the trade union movement responded (in 1961) and they can respond again, STEVE CUSHMAN, SUE THOMAS, Birmingham.

They're joining

I WORK in a big general hospital in Norwich and I'm sure we'll sell a lot of nurses to nurses here today. Although the boycotts etc are a bit patchy here as yet, but this is only the beginning anyway. A hell of a lot of nursing staff of all grades are beginning to get militant increasing those I know personally.

A fellow International sympathizer and myself have between us got about a dozen more nurses to join the National Union of Public Employees this last week, which I think is an achievement—STEWART, Norwich.
Fred finds the shoes fit

SOME TIME ago Socialist Worker did a profile of the National Union of Textile Workers General Secretary - The Glittering Career of Jack Peel. You might be interested to know the kind of character who has stepped into his shoes.

Already there are two versions of the Fred story doing the rounds. One by the Carrying Valley News and the other by the Daily Worker. I hope you have space for both.

Fred did not quite carry on where his predecessor left off. He actually marched through Phase Three with a 67 per cent pay increase.

So much for his pleasure at the speed at which negotiations had taken place. The employers expressed their satisfaction at the reductions they had made last year.

For a textile worker, buying a house is practically impossible. Not only can we not afford the prices, we can not even manage to buy from our savings for our full-time officials to use.

It is because of things like these, that workers are leaving the industry for ever.

You can see why Lewis' get the profits they do when you look at the state of pay. A 15 year old sales girl gets £10.65 before tax - at 21 she's up to £18. Better off than she would be as a restaurant waitress where she gets £16.35 at 21. A female assistant sales manager gets £23.90. Of course you get 50p more every five years service.

As more of the perspective you will realize, this only applies to women. Being a member of the 'gentler sex' myself, this is my particular bugbear.

The union's role seems to be one of peace-keeper between management and workers. 'Military' and 'strike' must never be mentioned. The only people who have to be in the union are the managers. So shop workers accept low wages and an attitude of 'The union will put up for its members if they are rounded on by the employers'.

The textile unions have a unique way of negotiating. They ask the textile employers' federation for a substantial increase in wages, the employers tell them what they can get in the marketplace, then they accept.

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Everybody is fed up with the wages and conditions, and the policies of the union. But some of us are preparing for a big fight.

Workers are finally becoming aware of this. The rank and file have already launched a national industrial paper. The Textile Worker which is fighting to bring together the whole movement of all the textile unions, for united action against the employers.

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TALKING ABOUT SOCIALISM

Racism: The fake divide

THE HAZARDS of asbestos have been known to the employees in the industry in considerable detail since the turn of the century. But it was a long time before the men on the receiving end of the dust and disease started to suspect what was being done to them.

As soon as they did suspect, the actions of 7/162 Glasgow lagers' branch of the Transport Union started to try to get something done about it. And since then they have accumulated a rich experience in the reality behind the rhetoric of British society.

During the Second World War some members of 7/162 called for an investigation into health conditions in the insulation industry. They got nowhere with the then group secretary of the Transport Union, Tom Oswald, now a Labour MP.

No right

So they wrote to Ernest Bevin, boss of the union and wartime Minister of Labour. He told them they had no right to raise the matter at national level. There was a war on. He didn't want any nonsense about safety at work.

Over the years this incident has been repeated in one shape or another many times.

In 1967, the men of 7/162 raised their late with members of parliament. In turn the members of parliament raised it with government ministers, who raised it with their civil servants. They raised it with the factory Inspectorate—people who provide the information to write—

surroundings, in complex societies.

Thus Eskimos and Siberian aborigines developed into short-faced, people, well packed with fat. Canadians and Russians working in the same extreme cold show no such trends, nor will they. Very long unhygienic stays there because technology has replaced evolution at the ranges of adapting to different conditions.

Twentieth century racists have tried to show that different races differ in 'intelligence', Professor Eysenck and others are trying to revive this nonsense. It is a political operation pure and simple. There is not a grain of scientific evidence for the idea. It is instructive to see how 'evidence' of a sort is manufactured.

Study

A well-known case is the US Army study carried out at the end of the First World War. Recruits were all given intelligence tests. The results showed that, although there was an overlap, white men scored, on average, higher than blacks. The white supremacists seized on the result as proving that blacks were inferior.

Then the figures were looked at more critically. They showed that northerners, blacks and white alike, scored, on average, higher than southerners of both colours—although again there was an overlap. For example, blacks from Chicago scored higher than whites from the rural counties of Alabama but lower than Chicago whites.

What was really being tested, of course, was education not heredity. The then largely rural south had a poorer schooling system than the more urban north, and blacks in north and south alike, got— and still get—worse schooling.

Race, then, is biologically irrelevant. Its sole importance is political. And as I said last week, racism is invariably a ruling class weapon to divide and rule.

Duncan Hallas

What's all this nonsense about safety?

The hazards of asbestos have been known to the employees in the industry in considerable detail since the turn of the century.

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Laurie Flynn's fifth article

reply containing a few facts about asbestos which the men of 7/162 already knew.

The same happened when they wrote to the Scottish TUC. James Jack, general secretary, sent back a letter labelling the different kinds of asbestos and informing the men that the General Council had agreed to indicate... interest and concern. They'd have been better to have a whip-round for a wreath.

This path and the parliamentary road having led precisely nowhere, the activists of 7/162 turned elsewhere. An article in the Scots 'Sunday Mail' on 28 January 1968 gave them another idea.

In the article, Professor Alexander Duff of the Scottish Occupational Health Laboratory Service insisted that unlike employers, Scots workers didn't care about occupational health. He pleaded for workers to inform themselves of dust and health hazards and stated that his unit would act quickly. The men of 7/162 took him at his word and wrote explaining the terrible hazards they faced at work.

The Professor was too busy to write... two of his assistants had to write for him. He wrote: 'We believe... do handle asbestos in a most hazardous fashion and that workers are very ill-advised to work for these particular firms and get the environmental conditions rectified... We can only enter a factory... if the invitation of the management who must of course pay us a fee for the investigation. We have already tried writing to all registered handlers of asbestos to try to persuade them to let us investigate their environments. But with few exceptions, the replies have been quite firmly negative.'

A year later, in June 1969, the man from the Professor's fearless paper, The Daily Record, with only our barest of fees, attended on their terrible situation. They got a much more sympathetic correspondent, Douglas Malcolm.

He wrote: 'As you probably know, we have been standing on asbestos over the past year or so but, I gather, it is not a very fashionable subject. It appears that industry and government regard it as "Daily". So for the press as guardian of the people's health...' Indeed.

In this way the story of this one union branch, a story of neglect, of dependence on the workers on and on it. It reaches into one area... to a factory... that are supposed to protect workers as de...

The big asbestos monopolies spend considerable resources on creating a different picture of themselves and of the society they are a part of. They do this in a number of ways. One way is to... big business.

Deceit

This new exercise in deceit is to be issued to all employees. It supposedly sets out standards of behaviour to which the firm is committed.

Turner Brothers Asbestos, for instance, in Turner and Newall, did much the same in 1918 when workers were on the move over pay conditions at Southall.

As Sir Samuel Turner himself put it in his company magazine for July 1918: 'Let us not be detoured by specious promises of a speedy million and a half in the next commonsense step to take which is without doubt the attainment of a gradual and orderly and co-operation and sympathy. Negotiations between those who are now directing and working our industries and...'

Indeed, let us not be deflected by the honeyed words of those who are not prepared to maintain their power and preserve their right to profit.

Today they claim they never knew about asbestos and its harmful effects. Today they say they have put it behind them and that they are asbestos-free insulation and everything is fine.

None of it is true. There's plenty of asbestos about. It is hidden away in the port and in the factory. Asbestos Workers' Action Group is not so strong A home it has merely changed its name.
I don't know how much this is costing daddy...

BAD NEWS for anyone's who's thinking of bringing their daughter out to the movies. Daily Express William Hickey gossip column reports that costs of every thing are going up. Hiring a marquee, for instance, costs £500 compared with a mere £350 last year.

I gather it's absolutely impossible to stage a decent deb dance nowadays without allowing £100 a head for the night for food and drink—a bit more if you insist on champagne. Flowers are also damn expensive. In 1972, apparently, Lady Hardie, wife of Sir Charles, one of the hardest men in England, threw a dance for her daughter at the London West End Cafe Royal, and spent a mere £3000 on flowers. I gather you couldn't do that today.

The Express calculates that the total cost for one dance is bound to be £10,000 at the least, but it's always been this way. There are not many, if not no, deb dances these days.

Michael Williams is a property developer who has three houses, including one in Co. Down with 50 acres of parkland and three lakes. His daughter Mandie is having a dance and Mr Williams has ordered three limousines—one for each lake. Says Mandie: "I don't know how much this is costing Daddy. I just wrote out the cheque last week!"

The deb season is renowned for its success as a marriage market for well-brought-up boys and girls. Another kind of social contract, in other words.

Rolling Sid gathers moss

LAST AUTUMN I happened to mention, in the course of an article about events in the village of New Hartley, Northumberland, that the clerk to the Seaton Valley Urban Council, Mr R. M. Ferris, was looking for a house through the Chester-le-Street building cooperative S. M. McCullogh. Mr Ferris' solicitors wrote saying that the article suggested corrupt practices, and I wrote back saying that I hadn't mentioned corruption at all. That was the last heard of the matter.

What a surprise, then, to discover that a former employee of the Seaton Valley Urban Council, Arthur Moss, has now been a new car in a Morris estate, and that local police are investigating a receipt which proves it.

Mr Moss is now engaged at Beverley. The growth of S. McCullogh, incidentally, was one of the many 'miracles' of the T Dan Smith era in the North East. From low beginnings as small plasterers, McCullogh and his associates moved into the big contracts.

As planning permission flowed in from the councils, the other building work became available, and by 1965 the company had it's 'plasterers' image, set up offices in Whitley Bay and Blyth and bought into several going clubs and hotels in the area, including the Top Hat Club, Spenzmour, the Spanish Hotel, the Garden Farm Hotel, Chester-le-Street near where Andy Cunningham used to live.

As Frank Routledge, electrician's shop steward put it in the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette: Finsification is apparently even aware of the plant available. When you get the bonus of the steel industry saying something like this it is very disturbing indeed.'
Stop London
to save London

A FEW years ago, it was the dream of every ambitious white-collar worker to work in London. Now they have to force us to stay there!
The local government authorities have set up a 'ring fence' around London which stops us from applying for jobs in the rest of England, Wales or Scotland.

Working in London is becoming impossible, especially for so-called 'public service' workers. At the same time, the services which we're running are collapsing—and all for the same reason.

Thousands of school kids are on part-time because there are not enough teachers, because the teachers aren't paid enough. Bus and tube services are slashed because there aren't enough drivers or conductors, because they're not paid enough.

Many workers take it for granted that they must spend an hour and a half queuing their way to work across London, until they earn £4000 a year they'll never get a mortgage for a house, that doesn't get cheaper outside London unless you travel more than 80 miles, that a third of a half of their wages go on rent, that more than 80% of the 'affordable' housing are being bought by the rich, even the 'gentrified' housing, waiting lists, they may never get to know their neighbours.

So, what do you think? You might not think it's too great till you get up in 'the bus', that's if you can find a bed for you by kicking an old lady out of the way.

Because there are many fewer places in London's mental hospital now a couple of years ago. Because there aren't enough hospital staff, because they aren't getting paid enough. Yes, it goes on forever.

Now for the first time the workers are beginning to fight back, and in the underground and the buses are threatening strike action. So are teachers.

So are hospital workers.

Their trade union leaders are terrified. The executive of the National Union of Teachers is holding back strike action over London pay allowances.

The busmen's union leaders, in the Transport Workers' Union, are always donating money away more and more of the bus services. Nearly all the executive members of my union—the government officers, NALGO are remote, high-salaried officials on first class travelling expenses. They have more in common with employers than with the mass of clerks, typists, rent-collectors, librarians and junior officers who make up the union.

These officials are holding us back. They would like to send us back to the 1500 of us who are on strike in Islington, although they have gained not more than £4000 a year allowance for working in London.

The silent majority in NALGO Britain's fourth-biggest union—have packed meetings, become trade unionists in a seemingly sudden awakening and demand the next militant action on the agenda. Frustrations caused by years of being undermanned, nurses take home less than £20 a week. Technicians, useless, powerless, overworked and under-staffing—often up to 20 per cent, have smashed the traditions of subservience.

The worst, however about status and not any left to lose. Only slightly among the 1500 NALGO strikers in Islington have been tremendous. We have nothing else plugging on the pressure to extend the struggle and demonstration the union from below.

After six weeks, in spite of the constant 'No!' from Michael Foot, the Pay Board and the union leaders, we are more enthusiastic than we were when we started. Our enthusiasm is based on our potential strength, won us up to the reality of life in London, brought us all together as working people.

We have shown that by not laying down while these services which we are often ashamed to administer disintegrate around us, we are the only people who can provide proper services for our fellow workers.

GORDON PETERS, NALGO STRIKE COMMITTEE

London at night—the other side to the bright lights. Workers at Kings Cross Station, 4.30am, waiting for the first train home. PICTURE: Romano Cagnoni (Report)

THE UNEMPLOYED ran into thousands and then into the hundreds of thousands. When the poor relief, roughly two shillings a man, had been spent, they took themselves off to the pawnbroker. And then they begat the soup kitchens.

This was Lancashire in the early 1860s, a country where workers lived on bread if they were lucky and hoped it would protect them from the scurril and typhus which preyed on starvation.

And they endured this suffering in the knowledge that other workers, thousands of miles away in a continent they had never seen, were suffering even more. They supported their brothers' struggles, despite the taunts of their 'betters' that those workers—black workers—were the cause of their misery.

The outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 divided no European country so sharply as it did Britain. The working class supported the emancipation of the American slaves, the ruling class opposed it.

Those who argued that the slaves were 'vile of our business' and that the Northern States were harming our own prosperity did not have to look too far to find support for their case.

For the war had drastic economic consequences for Britain. In 1860, more than three-quarters of the cotton for Lancashire's textile industries, which then employed half a million people, was imported from the United States.

When the Southern States broke away, the North blocked their ports. The result, for Lancashire's cotton mills, was catastrophe. By November 1861, 49 mills had closed and 119 were on short time. By 1862, thousands were out of work—36,000 in Blackburn, 20,000 in Ashton, 23,000 in Stockport. Cotton operatives paid between 12 shillings and £2 a week, the war, now, to exist on poor relief.

Faced with bankruptcy and the wholesale movement of skilled workers away from Lancashire, the government, on the British government to intervene in support of the cotton industry.

Quick Echo

Such demands found a ready echo among many sections of the middle class and aristocracy. While the Times trumpeted the call for war against the North, and French capitalists raised £5,000,000 to aid the South.

The leadership of the working class was divided on the issue. There had been no sympathy for what the workers regarded as the organisation of the capitalist, industrialised North and championed the South. They did not support slavery but bitterly hated wage slavery more.

And when there was such a thing as Ernest Jones, an active supporter of the North and a friend of Marx and Engels, who, in the '50s and '60s argued that Northern capitalism was as bad as Southern, many trade union leaders disagreed with Jones' political views but resolutely opposed the slave system.

Working men and women were solidly behind the North, organizing more than 50 meetings in 1861 in its support.

THE DECISION of the engineering union executive to order the blacking out of armaments on for the military dictatorship in Chile has raised the standard of international working-class solidarity. As the employers unite in bigger and bigger multi-national corporations, the need for workers to unite across national boundaries becomes more obvious, more crucial. The new giants can only be worked down by workers of different countries join together and strengthen their trade union and social alliances.

This is the case to the same countries—and the Lancashire and the American and the same anywhere about Chile.

When, at a meeting in Blackburn, Mortimer Grimes, a worker's supporter to view the conflict, the secret weapon among the platform in followed, he said by more than 400:

''Adde'

In London, the newly-formed NALGO staged the big support of the NAG of Trades Union James Hail, in adopted an 'Adder' affirmed British of slavery:

"We indignantly
I'm a teacher, not a jailer

I've been teaching in North London for three weeks now and already I'm seeing things in a different light. London's problems are not all that different from anywhere else; it's just that they are so much more acute.

Workers, particularly those in the low-paid public sector, simply cannot afford to live here. Many move out, so that the public services are faced with staff shortages. It seems that this makes the job more difficult for those who remain. And because they are under greater strain the job doesn't get done properly. The whole community suffers as a result.

Underrated

Technically my school is not underrated. It survives only because of the high number of untrained supply teachers. The kids can't do the subjects they like, only those that are available. If the young are not able to choose the things that interest them, they become even more bored with schools. The teacher becomes more like a jailer and less like someone to learn with.

One of the most important conditions of learning is stability. But in London the staff turnover averaged a fantastic 35 per cent last year. This year it's going to be even higher. If kids are getting four or five teachers a year, then of course there is no consistency in the way they learn.

The problems at school are very bad. But they are nothing compared with the problem of finding somewhere to live. If I hadn't been able to pay on the generosity of some friends for a while, I would be pitching my tent on EdgWARE Green now and paying £6 a week for a flat in Limehouse. Or I'd be working 70 hours a week in a supermarket, and if I was going to pay the rent, I'd have to be working 12 hours a day. We're not really doing that, even the people who are doing it are going to be killed, in the end.

The London allowance is a laughable £11 a year. It hasn't been increased since 1970. Should there be any need to argue for effective action to put things right? There is no doubt that there is an unparalleled level of militancy among the rank and file of all public sector unions.

This is particularly the case in the National Union of Teachers. What is lacking is leadership. The executive will in the face of a threat trying to head off the anger and frustration of the membership with characterless indecision.

No action has been taken on the results of this month's strike ballot which, however badly it was organised, showed hundreds of schools with the two-thirds majority required for strike action. The need for an effective public sector alliance has been more apparent. But the initiative will only come from the rank and file. And time is running out...

The Platform

Buses: Not on time but on overtime

Pete Glatter, who is 25, drives a 73 bus from Tottenham to Hammersmith through the centre of London. He writes: There should be 25,000 busses in London, but there are less than 20,000 and people are leaving every day. At basic wages of £32.25 for 40 hours, the only way to survive is by working more and more overtime. One in every eight buses is run by workers on overtime. Even the basic week means four working Saturdays out of several Sundays.

If the 73 bus ran properly, there would be no need for overtime. We're running 80. That means longer waiting for buses, and fuller buses when they arrive. It means more misery for people who travel, and more misery for conductors and drivers.

Schedule

We don't have a timetable on the London buses any more. It's been scrapped for years. I was amazed on a recent visit to Blackburn to find that people still talked about 'catching the 9.30 bus'. You can't do that in London, because no one can keep to any sort of schedule.

Another menace is the bonus system. It's calculated by the London Transport Board, not the bus drivers. All the useful things which conductors do - helping old people on and off, stopping the bus for people where they are - have to be sacrificed for the collecting of the money. The failure of the bus, the last time we can spend helping people. The bus drivers are the last to suffer the bus.

The union hardly helps us. Just now they've agreed to a 9% increase, but we'll have to stand more staff cuts, more overtime. The 9% is not the only answer to the problem. More pay for the bus service, but the union is all for the cut.
AT THE NATIONAL SWITCH FACTORY in Keighley a strike with a difference has just ended. It was a strike started by women--where the men joined in later. ‘This struggle has proved that women can fight for men.’ It’s proved that men on the whole aren’t just in it for themselves in a factory where more than half the labour force is women,’ pointed out one of the women involved.

‘And apart from all that we women have gained more unity than there’s ever been before.’

The women are assembly line fitters. Their basic pay was £9.13. Although bonuses brought it up to £17.400 women struck and stayed out for eight days. The dispute was over a management decision on the national wages agreement which was for £3.75 rise for skilled men, £3.50 for semi-skilled men and £1.10 for unskilled men.

Ourselves

Winifred Allen, a woman worker for the Allen strikers, Irene Clifton a woman worker for the Allen strikers explained how it had begun.

‘We had a meeting in the early evening and heard that the new rise wouldn’t apply to us. We spontaneously held a meeting of all the women and the area manager tried to explain that unless we sort it out ourselves there won’t be any rise at all.’

COLCHESTER: More than 60 people, mainly women, met at the beginning of the month for a regional conference on equal pay.

It was organised by the local women’s liberation group and sponsored by the trades council and various union branches.

The speakers included Linda Smith, from the Equal Pay Campaign, a representative of NATSOA and local women trade unions. Women from a local factory spoke to the conference asking for support in a fight to set up a union branch and in exposing appalling working conditions.

East Anglia is a notorious low wage area. It became clear that the equal pay issue had to be tackled directly.

The Red Ladder Theatre performed their excellent play on equal pay--which extended the discussion. Then the演出 showed us how well the Women’s Centre was doing in the area and the women, you can contact Joanna Boror about it at 6, Vee Lane, Wivenhoe, Colchester (0206-22-2412).
Fascism on the retreat

THE REGIME of Marcelo Caetano, fascist dictator of Portugal, was ended in Lisbon, but in the liberated areas of Mozambique. The organisation which steadily drove the Portuguese army from Mozambique, the national liberation movement. Luanda, Maputo, Beira, and other film director has made a documentary on that struggle, FRELIMO.

It lasts 50 minutes, costs £5.00 to make and is shown in colour and sound. It is available from the Other Cinema, as are other two films of Africa. WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY and the British's role on Kenya, from the same group. Possibly 10,000 people died—15,000 Africans and 32 white settlers.

A STRUGGLE rather nearer home was that of the Mangrove Nine. The Mangrove is a West Indian restaurant in Notting Hill Gate, London. Over a long period the restaurant was a centre for black activists—and for police harassment. The battle eventually found its way to the Old Bailey, and was won by the police, not the police. The story is told in MANGROVE Nine, a short 16mm film also available from The Other Cinema.

THE OTHER CINEMA is at 12/13 Little Hanover Street, London WC1H 2JJ (01-734 8600)

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

clearing the jungle for socialism...

DURING the 1959 printers' dispute, which lasted six weeks, the unions involved followed their usual practice of not calling out strikers. This was not as important as it seemed to some as an example at the time but, nevertheless, whether the effect was minimal or not, the personal effect on us was immense. Some of us felt that to cross the picket line, under any circumstances, was scabbing. After one stormy branch meeting, where a handful of us had successively called for apprentices to strike (we didn't have a vote, so we could only call), we were invited to the pub to lick our wounds.

As the arguments raged, two non-printers turning around the booth joined them. They told us they were Communist.

Convince

Armed with irresistible facts supplied by the Scottish Daily Express, we soon demobilised them. Communism was 'a load of theory, but didn't work in practice', or it was 'against human nature'. Better still, 'What about Hungary?'

Reflection, they must have dealt with their ignorance relatively well, although I cannot remember exactly what was said. One even tried to be polite. He pointed out that, if we had a book called The Jungle, the book would be out of date. It would be wrong to say I was immediately converted to Marxism by him. What it did make possible was that, with my own experiences, it made all sorts of connections with my own experiences.

ALL those who have promised to write under the influence or who have ideas about people who would, please send to Workers' World at Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 8DE.

THE success of immigrants searching for a living in the Chicago stockyards echoed my own family, one from a Norther Ireland background, one from the South. This only supposed solace from poverty, the Christian Church, always ready for anyone to marry each other. Bringing up six children in two rooms, the only outside toilet shared with three other families, we compared well with the Chicago slums.

The story of my old man searching for work in the 1930s duplicated the plight of the Lithuanians and other poor immigrants portrayed in The Jungle. There was, of course, nothing extraordinary about my family. We were born in London. It was a book that helped me. It made all sorts of connections with my own experiences.

Expose

Sure, some of us had escaped. Glasgow Corporation had built huge housing estates for them, including Housing estates without pubs, clubs, cafes, playgrounds, football pitches, churches—but with Co-op shops. We had bath where we could take our own bus tickets and ship to the ships.

Unfortunately, Sinclair would have loved the Glasgow Housing Schemes, as they are called. After his brilliant expose of rapacious capitalism at its worst, he deliriously believed in socialism equalled the Tennessee Valley Authority or the Highlands Clearances or whatever.

Anyhow, our job is to point out that to this day, The Jungle has changed, the snakes are still there. Their fans are sitting and making sure the de-poisoning. Sinclair ends this book with a cry from a socialistessler: 'Chicago will be ours.' We will need to substitute 'The World'.

NATIONWIDE—a local anaesthetic

IT'S HARD to say exactly why NATIONALIDE (BBC1) is so much loved. Perhaps it is because it reminds me of school, or rather what I imagined a co-educational minor public school is like. Michael Barrett is the headmaster, Bob Wadling and Sue Lawley are the head boy and girl. Jolly Jimmy Hill is the sports master and Susan Hall in the English mistress who could turn pretty nasty if you step out of line.

The rest of the staff are in their classrooms around the place. Good at that, probably because he gets plenty of practice.

When any real issues get too big to be dealt with, the programme is 'fair' by allowing "both sides" of an argument to be heard. In other words, one person says what he would to something and then another person says what he would do, and they both talk comfortably about the subject—without doing anything.

The purpose of these discussions seems to be to avoid disturbing viewers from their slumber, or from losing track of the argument by the discussion. It is very well received, especially by the older generation.

We feel that these husbands, their jobs are sharing when these debts can be settled by overtime working. So it seems that poor wives who are, right up that creek;

That their husbands can work here for seven days a week.

Now in ten years of rule, we fully agree, must have an effect on a man's energy. And the situation, they think it's a sin. They're feeling hearts out of the profits roll in!

So hurry to the 'best', or should that read 'higher'? Who take refuge behind their women folks' skirts? And the 'bird' wives of Cowley, who make millions above.

And tell themselves and their class straight down the road.

EX-SLEEPER

THE LOYAL WIVES OF COWLEY

I once had a vision of a paradise Where the management always paid a good price And the Unions were no longer required To fight for the pay and conditions desired.

And indeed in gold letters above the gate Was: Enter the working man's paradise and read Through the inscription for all to see This plant is GEC LTD.

In the Labour Relations Department I saw Three hundred tea cups and saucers and more. And the Personnel folks said 'Have me, my brothers The only Union recognized here is named Mother.'

'We've suffered a lot through industrial strife Ignoring the man to talk to his wife. And we never give them poor woman's Petty wages just because they're head over heels in debt.'

PREVIEW

SUNDAY, BBC1. 2.00. No time for a BBC pro- gramme, but the late night film, THE RULING CLASS is a rambling but often savagely funny attack on —the ruling class.

SUNDAY, BBC1. The evening film is THE BIG SLEEP with Humphrey Bogart. The career of ex-actress Deanna Durbin-McLennon Allen Picture is covered in OMNIBUS.

MONDAY, ITV. 10.15. ANTONIONI'S CHUNG KUO (CHINA). An intimate documentary by one of Italy's finest directors. The result of five weeks filming in China and it is the best programme of the week.

TUESDAY, BBC1. Documentary on the life of Iranian socialist, THE MATTEOTTI AFFAIR, in 1942, might be relevant to today.

THURSDAY, BBC1. The life of a working class family is the subject of Tony Garrett produced play HARD LABOUR.
CHILE. The firms who

Some of the men who won't be holding the country to ransom

by JIMMY MCCALLUM
TASS office convenor,
John Brown Engineering, Clydbank

FOLLOWING the AUW executive's official support for the blacking of arms for the Chile, groups of workers have stopped work on military contracts for the Junta.

At Rolls Royce, East Kilbride, the stand of the shop stewards to black work on engine repairs for Chilean fighter aircraft has been strengthened by the official support.

Work on the engines had, in fact, stopped about eight weeks ago.

Engineers in Yarrow shipyard on Clydebank also walked out on the frigate Lynx, which is the yard is about to hand over to the Junta. The engineers followed the instructions of the Glasgow AUW District Committee to black work on it.

When the AUW instruction passes down to the district committees and the 2000 branches, the blacking of the work for the Junta would obviously gain support. Every militant must make sure that the instruction is carried out and the blacking spread.

At the same time many workers are confused about the issues involved. Although they have sympathy for General Pompero’s government at the murder of thousands of trade unionists, they are seeing it as a threat to their jobs.

At Scott-Litirow on the Clyde, the instruction was rejected despite statements by the regional officer, Gerrie Laird, and the district president, Jack McCauley.

The workers obviously thinking that two submarines being built there would lead to redundancies. As a similar decision was made in previous years, many workers share this fear.

In fact the fear is groundless. If shipyard workers stop building frigates and submarines there will be no work.

The development of the North Sea oil field means that support and shipping, not to mention tankers, must be built on the Clyde—more than enough to employ the thousands of skilled workers.

The employers will always put the idea of redundancies when workers' action threatens their profits and power.

And that is what is involved in Chile.

The Juntas came to power to push back the trade union movement. When Allende was president, the trade unions had been growing in strength and numbers.

In a land dominated by giant international companies the workers had not been making gains. The US copper companies like Kennecott Anaconda, and other firms like ITT, were taken over.

Wages had began to rise, to meet the growing inflation and conditions had improved.

What aims the international bosses—and what makes them support the Junta. The (Chilenos) growth protect their interests. That is why they aim them.

The employers only need to find frigates and Hunter fighters for what they call “Internal Security.” The first time they aircraft were used they were when the press and factories in Chile were bombed.

The frigates have been used when they bombarded the port of La Paz.

The ships have been used since then as against the foreign chambers for trade unionists. Is that why the blacking will be extended?

When Liverpool dockers refused to unload the Frigate, Jacksons went round. All the ships in Chile are used in companies that are international trade union companies. Now their supply of arms has been threatened.

UPW: Back to the business?

The executive was convened for general secretary Tom Jackson’s disgraceful telephone conference with a London North Central T&G No. 1 Branch carried a motion strongly against the UPW's Industrial Action.

In the telephone section, conference delegates were present in Basingstoke and North Central.

Some members were present in Basingstoke and North Central.

Joe Jones, marking, said, “Only the Post-Office Workers, in both financially and operationally and at our expense.”

An industrial action followed in support of the call for the only way to the workers and for the improvement of conditions.

They have carried out an organised national conference and the motion was clearly on many issues. There was a very large proportion of those who supported their say.

Unhappy deliveries are to be stopped and drivers of heavy goods vehicles to demand an increased allowance to bring their wages into line with the transport industry.

Our Norman cartoons are published in The Our Norman Book, price 40p from 15 Books, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

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Companies involved in arms trade

Babcock & Wilcox: Boiler manufacturers for Chilcot nuclear reactor (completed 1966). Also boilers for UK nuclear reactors.


Aero-Gasifier: World's largest biogasifier, provides nuclear power for research.

Air Shields (UK): They supplied the UK Ministry of Defence with high-density polyethylene sheets, used as ballistic protection for personnel and vehicles.

Avery (UK): They converted the world's first commercial nuclear reactor from gas to liquid.

AEG-Werke: They supplied the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft.

British companies exporting to Chile

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Consulting us then down the Drain!

by Martin Williamson

NORTH LONDON—The executive of the official National Union of Labour NALGO, is determined the tale of their recent losses will not be the end. This is despite demands by Tower Hamlets branch members that they too be brought out on strike. The union leaders have now been on strike for seven weeks. The pay dispute is a matter of cost of living. The union leaders now have to do more chance the conference decisions will be ignored on rather than thrown in the waste basket.

THE right-wing stranglehold on the 215,000-member Civil and Public Services Association has been broken.

by Mike McGrath

The tone of the conference was set on the Monday morning, in an incident without precedent in the history of the CP. The conference, which is the traditional first motion, was introduced, bitterly critical of the professional management. It was overwhelmingly carried. It was the first of many bitter defeats suffered by the outgoing executive. So many in fact due to the fourth day of conference platform speakers opposing company policies. They were guaranteeing support for the censure.

Conference passed a resolution supporting the introduction of the closed shop and an end to the use of agency workers. Given the clear conference decision and the massive swing to the left, we can now plan industrial action on these two problems.

This year's conference also considered a new motion. In this Refruder Tape, the rank and file group, made the running with a call for the repeal of the rule forbidding canvassing and banning so-called unofficial ballots. This received the support of about 330 delegates, not quite enough.

IMMEDIATE

The conference also called for the immediate release of the Shrewsbury building workers and for the repeal of the Conspiracy Laws. Ministry of Defence delegates—now popularly known as Members of Death—spoke against this and referred to ‘thumbs and headlines’. But they were denounced as in movement and the conference was overwhelmingly carried.

The conference of the security of the military was the members in the Department of Safety and Security. But even the Ministry of Defence delegates supported the blasts, the base of the right, were split on many issues.

Militants in the union now have the difficult task of going back to the branches and putting into action the decisions at conference. militant support must be given to the new executive majority as long as they carry these out.

HOLIDAY FIDDLE

COVENTRY—Management at the Jaguar plant got an unpleasant shock this week after they told white-collar staff to take a three-week holiday. A total of 350 members of ACET, the clerical section of the Transport and General Workers' Union, went on strike.

Mendham's idea is to shut down the plant completely on that day. The manual workers on the shop floor alone have no bargaining power and management do not want to be ‘battered’ with the loss of a day's production. The leaders are now up a day of their holiday to shut the government. But the workers on the plant were discussing the matter later this week.

Sectional NIP

OUT NOW

Paul Girbino's Introduction deals with the main political arguments of Lenin's books. Commentaries on The Russian and World Revolutionary Movement: There are many books on the subject—Building the Party, Workers’ Power, and Tactics and Methods. Available from IS Bookshop, 265 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 0ND.
Rally is warning for Chapple

BERMAGHTON—More than 600 plumbers and electricians attended a “Reform the Union” Rally in Barmagh on Saturday. The rally, sponsored by the Reform, Plumbers’ Action, and Flashlight Groups, was an attempt to form a new organization in action to eliminate the Electricians and Plumbers Union.

The first up was a complete success and a minimum programme for reform in the union was carried unanimously. But most of the discussion was on the low key and little real action was discussed.

The meeting was called to order with a demand that the rally should be repeated, and at the close, Mark Young, who appeared to have had a million dollars in support, supported the reform group platform.

Change

The rally was certainly a great step forward for the fight against decadence in the E.P.U. in the hands of the membership, but a lot of work needs to be done. It is not sufficient just to change the union’s leadership. The rank and file must be convinced of the need for change.

Reform groups should be built in each area uniting plumbers and electricians in the common struggle. So far left-wing groups in the union have had less because of the leadership’s efforts to throw off the block and build a reality. This must be pushed out the present executive and replace them with a new leadership that can really represent the members.

Pay claims start at home

by Mary Phillips

More than 500 office workers employed by the Engineers Union are threatening to strike against a substantial wage increase and a London standard that met with a “final” and final offer of £2.35 or 2.8 per cent from the union.

This was rejected by a three-to-one majority of the members.

Their request for a further meeting has been turned down by the A.U.W.E. and the Engineers Union.

The London standard is paid between £1.20 and £1.25, before stoppages, with only £1.20 a week for work in London.

Many take home less than £25 a week.

The Engineers Union are keeping an eye on the A.W.E. situation, and Beverley says there’s “no purpose” in a further meeting.

When the A.F.E. negotiating team called on the workers, they were informed that the strike card for strike action to form a majority of union branches at the Engineering section of the Engineers Union.

The strike card was immediately circulated to all engineers concerned with the A.W.E. situation demanding further strike action.

The A.F.E. negotiating team has been empowered to call strike action should there be no positive response from the A.W.E.

£1 in our pockets

TESSELD—Plan plantation at British Steel’s Cleveland Sinter Plant scored a short-term victory as a strike by the workers was called off.

The plant is the biggest and busiest of the company’s Cleveland operations and its closure would have had a major impact on the steel production of the United States.

The strike was called off after negotiations between the company and the trade union.

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Drivers tricked into defacto sackings

by Eddie Madden

Road Transport Union Steward STOCKPORT—After two and a half weeks of illegal strikes by drivers of Pike’s Triangle, the men were told to return to work and management made it clear that they would seek support from the Road Transport Union.

The strike was called off after negotiations between the company and the trade union.

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Air strike takes off

PRESTON—A long-standing dispute between British Aircraft Corporation and around 500 workers ended in a strike action. At a mass meeting on last Monday the strike was made official by the union, A.E.W.

Pickets have been taking some drivers, and hold up the new Jaguar plane which has come all the way from Traflagar, to try to continue in under police escort.

This strike has already stopped some overtime work in all three plants. Bernard McCarthy, a shop steward, said on Saturday that the union will start using the picket today. The importance of the dispute is that it supplies parts and

STRACHAN’S RENT-A-SPY

EASTLEIGH, HANTS—The Special Branch are keeping close watch on the 11-week-old dispute at Strachan Engineering. Pickets have been on the picket line opposite the factory for the last few days, while the company has refused to negotiate.

The dispute centres around a rent-a-car company, which Strachan has refused to deal with. The pickets have been on the picket line opposite the factory for the last few days, while the company has refused to negotiate.

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LIVERPOOL—The stewards committee on the Merseyside Loop Line, where 300 building workers are on strike, issued a statement saying that no deals were being negotiated with the Liverpool Echo. Part of the statement followed:

‘The Liverpool Echo has reported that the workers, the building workers on the Liverpool underground loop line, are earning between £100 and £125 per week. The figures quoted in the Echo are totally inaccurate in our wages are not as advertised.

REFUSAL

Basic rate is £75 per hour. One man, for working 53 hours, including Sunday, paid £45.45 GROSS.

This rate is not only more money, but more important, the company we work for refuses to recognise their elected steward, the company, although recognising the union, refuse to recognise the steward on the grounds that they have had no official notification from union headquarters. On checking this we find this not to be true.

The dispute management use this as an excuse to harass our stewards.

The company has refused to negotiate in a reasonable manner. This firm, W. Nuttall and Company, are the contractors on the job, in charge of the work and have been informed by the local press in an attempt to speak to the Liverpool Echo. The management has refused to have any contact with the Liverpool Echo.

The stewards committee has been in this “democratic press” and have sent support and demands which should immediately be sent to: Nuttall Shop stewards Committee, 9, Adam Street, Liverpool, L.3.

Ideal way to beat bosses

HULL—Last week more than 1000 workers from Ideal Standard walked out on the company when the wage was 20s. The company offered an increase of 5s, but that was made when the job was advertised years ago, and now this is a cut of £4 a week.

This strike has been called off after negotiations between the company and the trade union.

The company will not negotiate and has demanded that the union respect the strike action. The management refused to negotiate, and the management called out the members of union and stopped the plant.

This is the first time the whole plant has arrived together. Faced with such a strike, the management backed down and agreed to restore the rate.

Strength in numbers

COMPUTER OPERATORS in Scottish Universities, members of ASTMS, have been on strike for over a week. In Glasgow, picketing is effective, whilst at Strathclyde the operators are occupying the computer rooms. Technical staff are also striking in support.

International Socialists

If you agree with the views expressed in this paper, please send this form to: The International Socialists, 200, E2, London E2 8DN.

Name

Address

trade union
Violence they call ‘the law’

LONDON—Pat Arrowmith, a pacifist who tried to use his ideas to British troops, this week got our rulers’ views on the subject—an 18 month jail sentence.

Rhodesian-born Judge Abela, the man who handed out three-year sentences to those who kept a “peaceful” strike, the three black British teenagers, dismissed the idea that Old Bailey trial was “political”.

Pat Arrowmith was charged under the 1934 Incitement to Disturb Act. She had distributed leaflets to troops at Wattsworth.

The leaflets, produced by the pacifist British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland campaign, explained ways soldiers could get out of the Army, and countries they could go to if they decided to desert.

‘CRIMES’

During the trial the defence said that Pat Arrowmith had talked to members of the two wings of the IRA urging them to use nonviolent methods to affect a British withdrawal.

For ‘non-political’ Judge Abela, this was just more evidence of her ‘crimes’.

He said: ‘Apparently with some ease contact has been made with the IRA. It gives an idea of the politics that such a person’s imagination and his case.’

You have talked a lot about brutality,’ Abela said. ‘If only you knew what these troops have to undergo. I cannot understand diluting their morale.’

Not a word about the truth about Ireland, demanding withdrawal from Ireland, a country marked as crimes if the authorities feel they can get away with it.

WANTED: £500 IN A HURRY

WE ARE getting more and more collections from Socialist Worker Readers, so why not organise one in your workplace? This week we received collections from SW readers in Dhiego Industries, Dudley, £26.84, at the WPW canteen in Wolverhampton, £3.08, the ASW canteen in Birmingham, £9, and York bus, who now send in a monthly collection, £7.25.

Is your branch also靠 hung around? MC

Earl Street Colliery, Rotherham £18.10,
Northampton £18, Hackney £102,
Lewisham £35.35, Rotherham £19.
Southampton £13, Kirkby £14,
Woolwich £9, Paddington £35.
Darlington £6. Oxford District £15,
Birmingham £12, Domestic section £10
and Society, £3.50.

The total for the week was £532.02,
bringing the total for May so far to £64,614. This total will go to go make our monthly target.

Can you help with the last £500?

Why not organise a collection among your SW readers at work or in your area? It’s easy and you can afford it.

Address it to: Anis Nishtar, National Treasurer, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DQ.

ASIANS SHOW THEIR STRENGTH

PART OF the huge crowd which turned out last Sunday to demonstrate their support for the 400 strikers at Imperial Tyreworkers, Leicester. The meeting heard a number of speakers, including International Socialist Doshanha Tomkinson (right) who spoke in English and Gujarati.

Doshanha spoke about the great spirit of the strikers and the massive repudiation of trade unionists in India. She urged the strikers to build their own leadership.

The 400 strikers, meanwhile, have been laid open to victimisation by the Transport and General Union’s secretary, George Bromley. In a statement, Bromley said: ‘I can say in my opinion that the vast majority will be allowed to return when I make representations to the company. But . . . there must be a considerable number who will not be engaged under any circumstances.’ PICTURES: John Sturrock, Pinochio.

THE PAY STRIKE

India’s workers find out about militancy — and police brutality

The railway workers, who work a 12-hour day and have not had their £3.50 a week pay increased in seven years, have been singled out as an example by the Congress Party bosses.

To smash their strike in support of a modest pay rise, the army, police and bureaucracy have been mobilised in an all-out anti-working class campaign.

There have been mass arrests — well over 20,000. The police have run amok in working-class areas. There are beatings and shootings on a massive scale every day.

The government has moved troops into the key junctions; sacked many thousands of railwaymen; put others on summary trial; and issued mass eviction notices to strikers in railway quarters.

In the midst of Mrs Gandhi’s drive to force railwaymen to accept starvation wages, her government proudly announced that India has joined the ‘nuclear club’.

At a cost of £1,000 million to £1,500 million, India has exploded her first nuclear bomb.

Workers and peasants may starve but no expense is spared to put India on a par with the great powers in possession of the means of mass destruction.

THE CHOICES

Whoever else goes hungry, the appetite of the generals for more sophisticated and costly equipment must be satisfied.

It may not be long before those same generals elbow aside the hopelessly corrupt Gandhi government and try to seize power directly, meanwhile, the working class in one of the world’s largest countries, has begun to move.

It is quite certain that the ‘parliamentary’ regime has no long-run future.

Revolution or military dictatorship, these are the choices for India. The day of decision is not far off.

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