Crisis in Portugal

The military coup in Portugal last month brought the Portuguese people their first taste of freedom after 40 years of fascist rule. Political prisoners have been released. Now, pinned in the windows of cafes and bars are lists of the hated secret police. As each man is captured and interned his name is crossed off.

But the people of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau are still demanding their own military government—though it was their fight for freedom that brought the fall of fascist rule in Portugal itself.

Socialists must get on the streets and demand immediate freedom for the people of these countries. Total independence from Portugal now!

Assemble at Speaker's Corner, Marble Arch, at 2pm to march to a rally at Trafalgar Square to hear speakers from the Mozambique liberation movement, from Portugal and from the British labour movement.

All branches of the International Socialists and IS student societies in London and the Home Counties will be supporting this demonstration with banners and placards. (IS stewards' meeting: 12 noon at 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2.)

...and Italy

The Italian government has collapsed. The Socialist Party, which had linked with the Tory Christian Democrats to form a government, could not agree to the vicious cuts in Italian workers' standards of living which had been demanded by the international bankers.

In Italy prices are rising faster than anywhere in Europe. The balance of payments is in bigger deficit than anywhere in Europe. The fascists, who get more than a million votes in the last election, are out on the streets in force. They demand strong government — an end to all civil liberty and the smashing of the trade unions.

The workers are showing their might in a series of powerful strikes. The Communist Party, which has the most votes at the last election, may be persuaded to join a "national" govemment.

Read in next week's Socialist Worker a detailed eye-witness account and analysis of this turmoil.

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Plus TWO PAGES OF LETTERS

Four and Five

NURSES DITCH THE RICH

Total ban on private patients in North East hospitals

WE HOSPITAL WORKERS in the North East have put an end to private medicine in our hospitals.

Private practice, comfortable side wards which have been reserved for people who are not very ill but have a lot of money, are now being occupied by people who are very ill but don't have much money.

Two years ago the Labour Party Conference passed another in a long line of resolutions calling for an end to private practice in the hospitals. Last year, a committee from the Parliamentary Labour Party demanded an end to private practice.

Barbara Castle, the Health Minister, has said it will take 25 years to end private practice. We've done it in the North East in 25 days.

We've done it because the nurses have taken action themselves—suppored by other workers in the hospitals.

The nurses' advisory committee for the North East area—made up of more than 30 nurses representing hospitals throughout the area—had decided that private patients would not be treated until the nurses' claim was met. Now the committee has announced that private patients will never be treated again.

They have said that private practice means the hospitals will lose the best, the best medical attention is reserved for the rich—which means more crowding, delays, ancient equipment and less medical attention for the people who need it.

Private practice was wrecking the Health Service. So was low pay and rotten conditions for hospital workers. The nurses here have stopped private practice. They'll go on fighting until they get low pay and rotten conditions for hospital workers.

The nurses' action has really taken off in the North East and has had strikes and sit-ins in hospitals in Durham, Darlington, Aycliffe and Sunderland. We've had hundreds of applications for union membership.

The nurses have been joined by other women in the hospitals. Durham in May organised a meeting of radiographers called on the executive of the non-ASLEF radiographers to organise an immediate, all-out strike of radiographers throughout the country.

How have we done this? Because we're organised in the rank and file among all hospital workers. Because we've worked in the unions to pull together the militants in different hospitals and in different grades.

We're made it our union, our industrial action. A week ago Monday the executive of our union—NUPE—met to discuss the situation in the North East. They sent us a message: DROP ALL INDUSTRIAL ACTION IMMEDIATELY.

The Darlington NUPE General meeting passed a motion of no confidence in the NUPE general secretary, Alan Fisher, and demanded a meeting with him to discuss the matter. We got the meeting, and we got a free hand for all industrial action in the North East.

SUPPORT

We set up the nurses' advisory committee last year after the ancillary workers in the hospitals had been beaten by the Tory government. We realised that one reason those workers lost was the hostility of the nurses.

Now, again, the key to the situation in the hospitals is the link between the nurses' claim and the claim for the ancillary workers. The union leaders want to separate the two claims.

We in the rank and file must fight for the claim to be put in at once, and to be linked with the nurses' claim. The two battles must be fought together by nurses and ancillary committees representing all workers in all hospitals.

I'm glad to hear that a Nurses' Rank and File Co-ordinating Committee has been set up. We in the North East will be writing for a call from the committee's meeting this Saturday for a one-day strike right across the country in support of the nurses.

Once we get the date, we'll be out calling on all the trade unionists in the area. Its your Health Service. You can help save it by your action.
By EAMONN McCANN

the strike that they, not the security forces, control access. Most would switch to other jobs if they could; but male unemployment in the Bogside and Creggan still runs at more than 20 per cent.

Politicians scurry and scramble across local television screens, trying to get back into position. Mr Gerry Fitt and Mr John Hume, for example, have kept radio interviews to confirm their thoughts into expressions of concern about ‘this running sore in our society.’

It was a sore they seemed singularly capable of tolerating while they sat on the fake ‘power-sharing’ Executive with the chief architect of internment, Brian Faulkner.

Their new-found pain at its presence created cynical and weary smiles around the area. As so do many things now. The alternating bluster and self-satisfied, Hume’s address or Blair’s speech from the House of Commons. The people have heard it all before.

The one issue which has intrigued is the plight of Derry’s sick. On Thursday night hundreds marched through the darkened streets of the death of Michael Gaughan.

It is a grim race: explosive in its simplicity, and the spontaneous mobilizations as citizens in Derry who showed all over Ireland. As it showed there is something useful to quest in the minds of people to build on.

action call on Ireland

THE International Socialists’ National Committee discussed the Irish question on Saturday and the future activity in the organization. A resolution, carried unanimously, called all action in every area along the following lines:

Tonight: Open Public Meetings: Branches and Districts should be organizing these meetings in every area as soon as possible. Details will be announced in the Socialist Worker, Monday, March 27. Included in these will be: a meeting of Derry Independent Rotaries and Public Meetings in the Northern Union (see local details) and Public Meetings in the Northern Union (see local details).

Resolution of the Irish question: the question should be raised at the next conference of the Northern Union, and a public meeting should be held in the Northern Union.

A basic read list will be made available.

It is planned to hold new speakers’ schools to discuss the Irish question. Details will be announced in the Socialist Worker, Monday, March 27.

A draft of the schools to discuss the Irish question. Details will be announced in the Socialist Worker, Monday, March 27.

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LEYLAND'S 47 SAFETY AWARDS — AND DOUGLAS FIELD IS DEAD

READERS may remember our story a few weeks ago of how Douglas Field died at the back of the Liverpool shop at Austin, London, Bridge. The pit was 'guarded' by a bench 7ft long by 1ft 4in.

An inquest has now been held. The dead man had a cut on his head and cause of death was stated as suffocation. The inquest also recorded that three of the deaths taken were 'inadequate for the situation'.

According to British Leyland's company paper the firm has 47 awards for safety.

LEYLAND WORKERS LOCKED OUT AND ARRESTED

STRIKES are illegal in France so fascist police state. That is one of the main reasons why 'democrats' like Lord Stakes put up plants there. He was looking for a docile, low-paid workforce.

But Spain's fascist dictatorship is illegal. Attempts to call a strike were restrained. Spanish workers are on the move. 1000 of them staged a sit-in at British Leyland's Asturias subsidiary in Pamplona, claiming a 40 per cent pay rise.

The British Leyland 'democrats' called the fascist police who drove the workers out of the plant by their customary gentle methods. Management then suspended the workforce for two days.

But only 300 turned up for work after the suspension in spite of the best efforts of the police. So British Leyland declared a three-week lock-out. Lock-outs are illegal too under Spanish law, but the law is not enforced against 'respectable' and 'law-abiding' men like the British Leyland 'democrats'.

Instead the police burst into Pamplona Cathedral where the locked-out workers were holding a meeting with the permission of the bishop. The point is that meetings are illegal too, except on religious premises. The police are not supposed to enter such premises without permission.

They did. They broke up the meeting and arrested six 'troublemakers'. But the dispute goes on. Lord Stakes is beginning to learn that even General Franco's support will not enable him to maintain industrial feudalism in Spain any longer.

The workers were determined to go on industrial action to force General Franco to live up to his promise.

SOCIALIST WORKER meeting for British Leyland workers in Birmingham on the 20th, no FOR A WORKERS' PAPER

Students face the Front

STUDENTS who heckled a Canterbury National Front meeting last week were attacked by NF organizers armed with clubs and chains. One girl is still in hospital suffering from severe concussion. A National Front member hit her on the head with a chair.

The police protected the meeting and turned a blind eye to the violence by the fascist beaters. They arrested 10 students but the students were successful in that no members of the public went into the hall.

Donations are needed for legal aid for the 15 students arrested. Please send to Students Union, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent.

The fight against fascism is one of the main issues at the emergency National Union of Students conference this Saturday. The right wing of the NUS has attacked the resolution passed at the last conference calling on student unions to defy the NUS and install a platform in colleges.

Many students have opposed the resolution as a threat to free speech. They feel to recognize fascist groups like the NF as exploiting the right to free speech to win support for their attacks on black people, which are on the increase. The NF are holding an anti-immigration demonstration in London on the same day. The left are organizing a counter-demonstration to show that they cannot use the streets to spread racist ideas with impunity.

All IS student societies must mobilise for this demonstration and when possible get their student unions to support it. The grants campaign is the conference's other big issue.

The government announcement on grants last month attempted to buy off the well-organized students and put politics by raising the main grant to £655 a year. As opposed to the £655 demanded.

None of the other demands, especially the abolition of all selection against married women and of discretionary awards, have been met. The NUS Executive would like to use the government's concessions to call off the grants campaign next term. But the fight for higher grants must continue.

Because of the way in which the Executive has run down the campaign, with the possibility that students who have already been classed as low-status, have been left out in the cold by the government's announcement.

OCR Bridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS Phone: 01-739 9043/36210 0185

SOCIALIST WORKER 15 June 1974 3

Another plan to cut wages

A SYSTEM of universal indexation should be introduced on a regional basis wherever a per cent rise in the retail price index there is a corresponding one per cent rise in gross monetary earnings from employment, the system to be urgently introduced.

So says the report of the 'Independent' National Institute of Economic and Social Research. The proposal is part of a package of wage restraint measures which is expected to be introduced next year in all for years except the cost of living adjustments.

This is a plan to a systematic reduction of real earnings. It is a plan to weaken trade union organisation, especially at shop floor level. This means independent trade union bargaining. This is a plan to fasten state control of wages on the working class.

All workers must see that this is an attack on the cost of living wage. Workers must see that this is an attack on the real wage. Workers must see that this is an attack on the living standard. Workers must see that this is an attack on the wages that help to educate their children.

A system of centralised wage bargaining, and the indexation of wages, wage restraint, price controls, are all designed to weaken the trade union movement.

The other plans to control earnings, by wage target agreements, by threatening workers with a 'social contract', are all designed to weaken the trade union movement already. By indexing wages, wage restraint, price controls, are all designed to weaken the trade union movement already. By indexing wages, wage restraint, price controls, are all designed to weaken the trade union movement already. Even if the indexation did not weaken the trade union movement, it would put back the clock politically.

The indexation, the wage restraint, the price controls, are all designed to weaken the trade union movement.

SOCIALIST WORKER

WHAT WE THINK

Orange and black

IF YOU wear a red beret and dark glasses you will be prosecuted in future under the Public Order Act. If you wear an orange sash and the rest of the regalia you are perfectly safe. That is what Roy Jenkins's pledge to the Tories in the House of Commons actually means.

Incidentally, when the Public Order Act was originally introduced by the Labour Party, its object was to prevent an attack on freedom of expression and a weapon of the political wing. They voted against it and promised its repeal. That promise has gone the way of all the other Labour promises.

Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS Phone: 01-739 9043/36210 0185
Night we gave the boss a bad dream

FUNNY to see last week's Norman cartoon in Socialist Worker because Monday night saw our bosses getting the old ’Get up, get out of bed’.

Inter Xarcs of Ashton under Lyne, part of the KC Fibres division, has recently changed the old Qualutex shifts to new KC-type shifts. One concession made by the bosses was that payment for those on night shift would be made on Tuesday night instead of Wednesday morning, so that the lads wouldn’t have to come in for the first half of their wages on Monday morning.

The bosses, used to treating the lads in a high handed manner, had put up in the foreman’s book on Monday night that ‘Too bad, snowman, you’ve got the wages’. You’ll have to come in on your day off for them.

The lads decided to leave the machines and go down to the canteen, stay there until the bosses could guarantee us our wages. 5.45am on Wednesday morning—again on the march.

We are seriously beginning to think of Socialist Worker correspondence correspondence with the TGWU because we feel our own struggle could lead straight to a conflict with the national cartoon on the march.

The line you advanced in that editorial was an individual answer to a political problem. Surely the revolutionary soldier, more so in a revolutionary situation than exists at present, has the duty and the right to win influence for the idea of solidarity amongst those who would ally themselves with the struggles of the workers and peasants.

The individual road out is not our road, whether in the army or the factory we are organically part of the masses in their struggle.—HARRY WICKS, Leeds.

IRA damage to the workers’ movement

LIKE the glassworkers of Barnsley, I also see the black cloud of work against the arguments on Ireland and the IRA. But, unlike the Socialist Worker, I have not had the good fortune to express support for the workers’ movement.

The struggle in Northern Ireland, after all, is the same as the national working class there, and as long as that split remains, it is likely to be for a very long time. Russia leaves Northern Ireland outside any potential workers’ revolutionary movement. The political attitudes of the various IRA groups involved are very different to any Marxist movement, and the recent blowback on the Irish workers’ movement has played a role only in the fight of the IRA against the internationallist. We are not we, we are us. But we need to get the support of the Lovelle-type of people, the Kray Brothers.

The Germans support these politically doubtful groups, Northern Ireland workers support the Lovelle-type of people, the Lovelle-type of people, the Lovelle-type of people. A number of the Lovelle-type of people, the Lovelle-type of people. A number of the Lovelle-type of people, the Lovelle-type of people.

Wrong about the AUEW

AT a recent meeting in the Euston International Socialists’ Branch, strongly disagreement of the editorial (18 May) on the engineering union, the National and the British Relations Court.

The general analysis of the situation. There was no criticism of Scallon’s role in the dispute. This omission was of considerable support of his calling off the strike, which later proved to have been retained solid until the NIRC was dissolved.

The editorial ignores the potentially dangerous tactic of the ruling-class, buying of a strike by a seemingly large sum of money but which in fact represents only a small percentage of their profits. It is desirable to take every action against the BNP as a partial victory such as this.

Some readers requested that I be censured for calling a strike for the withdrawal of the line and not for a strike to smash the NIRC.

The paper should give a lead to the working class and seems to be failing in this by giving a superficial analysis such as this. It is a common fault in reformist papers but is not expected from Socialist Worker—ROSE MACKENZIE, Exeter.

Division between unions is harming nurses’ cause

LACK OF CO-OPERATION between the two main unions involved in the nurses’ fight for higher pay, NUPE and COHSE, is undermining the battle.

NUPE’s decision not to take part in any industrial action now that the inquiry has been granted for example.

In Edinburgh the feeling is that the two unions are reluctant even to jointly organise a march.

The SE Scotland regional officer of NUPE, Terry Martin, makes frequent statements to the press about the unpopularity of overtime work and overtime rates at a time when there is no national ballot of all nurses.

Further more, he was in a radio interview that NUPE would urge its members to vote for COHSE nurses who are taking industrial action. In our language, to seek on fellow trade unionists. Has he ballots his members to see if they would be in 1981? No, but NUPE nurses in the inquiry of our union, and the reactionary statements of such officers, and to organise at rank-and-file level to force the union into true representation of its members.

Only in this way can we present the united front that is essential—SUSAN SIMMONS, NUPE, Edinburgh.

SOVIET DISSENTERS

HOW ABOUT a real analysis of the whole phenomenon of the treatment of Soviet dissidents? While Solidarity’s struggle in the western press, the real heroes, eg Feinberg, Gorbachevskaya and General Grigorovcev, are ignored.

Further, much naivety is displayed, even in Socialist Worker about the machinations of the Soviet authorities. I would like to see more to bring to readers attention the way they have been beaten up and tortured. They seem to have 'released' him exactly when it suited them in exactly the opposite way he had broken.

Without further ado just compare tracts from ‘One Day’ with the crass trash he’s coming out with now. Could it be that he is not only unforgivably living proof that ‘dissidents’ really are unattractive ranters and not the socialist heroes that those who support the too all too familiar treatment...?—MIKE WOLSTENCROFT, Blackley.
SOGAT SAWNS AWAY THE WOMEN WORKERS

THE TRIGGERING of threshold agreements means women workers who negotiate together to stump the job will earn no more than £20 an hour. But under the Phase Three pay code many other women workers who have been locked out by a clause in national agreements could also claim. On 28 May the printers’ union, SOGAT, national executive which had been struggling to negotiate threshold clauses. On 29 May SOGAT signed an agreement which the employers association, Scottish Master Printers. All contracts were told about it in Glasgow and West Scotland.

Disabled: Don’t forget deaf

I REALLY must reply to Bob Kornfleith’s letter (1 June) which ad- vocates that trade unionists enforce the employment of disabled persons, rather than the present situation conditi on whereby it is impossible to comply the disabled as a favoured to society.

May I ask readers to consider not only the plight of the physically handicapped, but also the deaf, who, incidentally, were not mentioned.

I have the very dubious pleasure of looking for jobs for the deaf, although I am afraid that grumbling on my hands and knees before personnel directors is a better way of describing my work. The Ministry of Employment is unsympathetic and will not even interview prospective deaf persons, although it is traditionally the role of the social worker for the deaf to coerce and implore em- ployers to take on the deaf. To do what, the most sentimental and the congenially deaf cannot represent themselves at all.

Not only are the deaf and other disabled persons, most begrudgingly offered employment, but they are sometimes the first to be laid off and not at all uncommon. I have implored managers to retain them, but have met with the difficulties they would have nothing to offer. After all, what’s the use of reasoning and appealing to his conscience, calling the rest of the deaf, and looking over the whole scene of the Deaf Person’s Agreement. Action upon employers, who still will again the sweeping up posts to the handcapcd.

Placed in the right job a handi- capped person can do as good a day’s work as any other person. This should not be regarded by management as a burden, but as a help. It would be better to be unemployed in the board meetings drinking whisky... One thing that is known to any woman with three children condemned to the card table for the remainder of her life in order to keep up weekly and not of all, for the sake of the publicity is the benefit of the only death of a baby paper in Britain, such issues must be in stock in future. DICK DUNNENBER, Berrington.

WHISKY DRINKERS OF THE WORLD... WHO LIVE ON THE WELFARE IN THE NEWS OF THE WEEK

I am writing to find a group of social workers who do not see the point in newspapers that do not report the search at the other children’s houses. I am aware that no contribution to the community is so small that it is not enough to have money... while the children are still there. I am afraid that board meetings drinking whisky... One thing that is known to any woman with three children condemned to the card table for the remainder of her life in order to keep up weekly and not of all, for the sake of the publicity is the benefit of the only death of a baby paper in Britain, such issues must be in stock in future. DICK DUNNENBER, Berrington.

THE BEST OF THE TWO YEARS

The Adventures of our NORMAN by Ers

FORCE FEEDING... in prisons cannot be carried on indefinitely. At prison wards see the medical ones have little knowledge of the effects of force feeding. This is a result of feelings towards prisoners apart from bad acting of warders. The warders are always the last to be helped, being left behind in the fight. B.J.F. BLEN, Social Worker for the Deaf Barnsley.
TALKING ABOUT
SOCIALISM

‘Give us an organisation of revolutionaries and we will overturn Britain’

I TRIED to write an article about Paul Ginsborg’s pamphlet Lenin: we were round up to a shop steward’s meeting in Dundee. I put the pamphlet down and thought about how the ideas and practice of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party related to my life, and experiences.

On the news that day was the general strike in Northern Ireland. Workers exercising their own strength for the most reactionary reasons. Lenin’s ideas on imperialism explained exactly the situation. The Bolshevik Party had stood back the status quo in Ireland, where one section of the population will be completely oppressed.

The Observer last week.

And there won’t be anywhere to stand and we all starve to death.

This is one strand in the message of currently fashionable prophets of doom. The other is the argument that the exploding population is polluting the world so massively and using up essential natural resources so fast that we are all going to be poisoned and/or starved of necessary materials that civilisation will collapse.

The more extreme doomsayers believe that we are near the point of no return, that very soon the process will become irreversible. They advocate ‘zero population growth’, a return to older methods of ‘natural’ agriculture, a halt to technological development and so on.

How much substance is there in these gloomy forecasts? There is a grain of truth.

It is a fact that rapid population growth is one of the factors—although certainly not the most important—that help to keep the bulk of the world’s population in underdeveloped countries like China at a very low economic level. It is a fact that pollution is a serious problem.

Power

But these facts, taken by themselves, are misleading. Take population. The population density of Britain—the number of people per square mile—s much higher than that of India. Africa south of the Sahara is much underpopulated by European standards. One of the highest ‘scores’ in population growth is the highly developed USA. It is simply not true that dense population plus high population growth equals poverty and backwardness.

Nor is this at all surprising when you think about it. More mouths to feed, less land per head, and less hands to work the land. The question is what tools of production are used. This is a clear difference between the agricultural and industrial capitalism of Lenin’s time and our own.

It is the question of technology, of literacy, of medicine, of the educational system, of the degree of public organisation. The question of political economy.

I have already written what a complete distortion of Lenin’s ideas are those which see him as some sort of ‘mystical’ personality and demand an exact word-for-word account of his thoughts in every situation.

The politics of Lenin

by Willie Black

ETU, Rob Coledon, Edinburgh.

class came into being. And certainly nothing about Lenin or the Bolshevik Party.

I once called the revolutionary party, at a public meeting, the ‘memory of the past’, and it’s amazing how true this is.

A few years ago when I was a teenager, I used to go to parties and talk left. Revolution to me was what Che Guevara did in Latin America, or what the Viet Cong was doing in Indochina. Imperialism was what the Americans were doing in Vietnam.

I didn’t think revolution in any way applied to what I thought was my country. Britain didn’t need a revolution, British workers were all right. It wasn’t heaven but neither was hell.

Lenin’s idea that the trade union movement needed a short-term defence mechanism was brought home to me. I became aware that the trade unions could not achieve socialism. The mist was lifting. The International Socialists gave me the politics to grasp what the trade unions were all about.

Lenin began to be a great working class politician. That meant to be a bad bastard. The Bolshevik Party began to be a party to be admired. The Russian Revolution was the greatest thing the international working class had ever seen.

Ida and Trotsky were cleared up. I learnt that Russia was not a country of peasants but of cities. The Bolshevik ideas on Socialism in One Country and the British Communist Party’s Parliamentary road to power made sense.

For me it was a painful process to read the simple pamphlet on Lenin. It was like being presented over pints of beer, going to day schools, trying desperately to read Lenin’s own writings, which I found difficult.

I once read a general introduction to Lenin. Ginsborg pointed out how Lenin never wanted any cult to be made out of him. How Lenin never asked for any cult to be made out of him. How Lenin never asked for any cult to be made out of him. How Lenin never asked for any cult to be made out of him. How Lenin never asked for any cult to be made out of him. How Lenin never asked for any cult to be made out of him.

In answer to those who say ‘You will never see the revolution. You’re young, sonny, it’s a nice idea, but it’ll never happen’, I can point to the Russian Revolution and say: ‘It happened and it worked.’

Two weeks later the revolution broke out in Russia and seven months later the workers were in power.

We can refer to Lenin in February 1917 saying in a speech to the Swiss audience: ‘We the old shall not live to see the revolution.

The life and times of Lenin

by Duncan Hallas

Paul Ginsborg

An introduction to the political arguments used by Lenin in his work in the Russian and international revolutionary movements, his ideas for the working class, and the Bolshevik Party’s role in the Russian Revolution.

The politics of Lenin, by Paul Ginsborg, 15 pamphlets, 10p.

The life and times of Lenin

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The politics of Lenin, by Paul Ginsborg, 15 pamphlets, 10p.

The politics of Lenin, by Paul Ginsborg, 15 pamphlets, 10p.
THE old 'Brighton, Hove and District' Bus Company is now amalgamating with Southdown Motor Services and part of the National Bus Company. You've probably seen National's ads—"together we can really go places." Try telling that to the passengers!

But here in Brighton, at the Conway/Whitshawk depot, as far as we've concerned all that's happened is that the letters B H & D have been painted over. Exhausting duties, mass overtime, and no meals are still the order of the day, which is why busworkers here agree there will be changes in our working conditions—but on our terms, not management's.

The ads tempt you: "alternate mornings and afternoons off," they say. Can you imagine a more gentler way of describing the grind of shift work? Buses out so early and finish just before midnight are covered by two shifts—nine and ten-hour duties are inevitable and there are no meals because of it.

This inhuman system works wonders for profits so it destroys our health. The absolute maximum is squeezed out of both buses and the people who work on them, and both are used till they're copped. We're out to operate efficient, properly maintained vehicles—the night maintenance staff was sacked in a management 'economy' exercise—and broken-down buses are a familiar sight.

Slave labour

But more important is the effect on busworkers themselves. Conductor Paul Moran describes the feeling of 'perpetual exhaustion' from working unbroken shifts: "On early turn, you get up at 4.30am, work till 2pm, and you're too tired to do anything." On late turn your only free time is a few hours in the morning. Social and home life are bound to suffer. One driver said: "I never see the kids and I'm knackered when I'm off duty anyway."

The ads also talk about 'canteen facilities' although they don't point out that there's no time to use them while on duty. There is an excellent subsidised canteen at Southdown House, open at 7.30am from Monday to Friday at 10p.m. year pay 20p for a full scale meal. But bus crews at Conway are charged extra: sponsored by £1 and the order of meals in advance—when they can get it—at a canteen which is shut by 3pm.

At Whitshawk the 'canteen' is a vending machine which dispenses its own meal and sugar in paper cups with a dash of tea and chocolate for flavour. If you're lucky you get a cup cake.

As there are no scheduled meal breaks the only free time we get is in the few minutes at each terminus while waiting for our time to go—we're running late then we lose that as well.

There is nowhere even to get a cup of tea and nowhere to wash your hands. So bus crews have to stop the bus, nip out to the toilet, run back, gulp down a flask of coffee and grab a sandwich, then go back to work covered in grime. Stomach ailments are inevitable.

And the stresses aren't just physical. Said Paul Moran: "Working ten hours without a proper break, I think we all tend to crack up a bit from 'flash-load' contracts, are generally of severe disturbance requiring hospital treatment." What happens when you fall ill?

The ads refer to a 'kick pay scheme'. The 'kick joke scheme' means working a full year before receiving £1,16 for the first week, and £4 for each week after that, less if you claim social security. This is unless you happen to be a woman—in which case you must table work at least five years before you receive a penny.

For starting away under these conditions, we take home about £20 for 40 hours with £3 a week extra for driver/conductors. Is it any wonder that busworkers so often do massive overtime to boost their pathetic wages? Or that seven conductors in every ten left the job last year and three drivers in every ten, leaving the whole service understaffed.

One driver who left recently told us: "After many years of buswork in other parts of the country, I found the conditions in Brighton unbearable."

Shortage of crews means cuts in the service. Conway/Whitshawk buses are rarely on time and are permanent 15 cent cut, and this gets worse and worse as the holiday season goes on. But the management are doing very well thank you—they save a fortune on wages, uniforms, maintenance and diesel, while the buses that do run take double the money.

Determined

One conductor finally packed it in because "after ten hours continuous grind on a Saturday late turn, I got to the point in fact where I think that bus had taken over £50 in one day, manned by two crews. Finishing after midnight, I was then expected to report for duty again before 8am as Sunday schedule went. I consider this the ultimate in slave labour."

Paul Moran, 24, is against the cuts in the service. It's a lose bus service to the public, but non-union for us, but more profit for the companies. How come a management have got away with all this for so long? For a start, high staff turnover makes the job difficult to organize—potentially militant busworkers just get another job. But with high work and overtime mean crews have been too knackered or too busy working to bother with the union.

Obstacle

Another obstacle has been the lack of unity between busworkers on the different depots in Brighton, made worse by the fact that Brighton Corporation busmen are in a different union, the General and Municipal.

But busworkers here are determined that things will change. Union membership has more than doubled since January from 140 to 316. This leaver fewer than 100 still to get in, and the union committee has received a firm instruction from members to reach 100 per cent trade unionism by the end of July. We are fighting for a basic of £35 or £35 for 35 hours, with paid meal breaks, operated through a three-shift system.

The new shop stewards committee is building unity with the other Southdown depot, who are solid with us on the claim for £35 or £35 for 35 hours. To win our claim we'll need to take industrial action. We also need the active support of the corporation board.

For too long, powerful organisation among public transport workers has been undermined by the isolation of busworkers in different companies, with different pay and conditions. Our local rank and file paper, 'Waybill', must be expanded to involve workers in the other Southdown garages and the corporation, but local unity is only the start.

It's time for all busworkers to join together at a rank and file level and fight together for a good public transport service, a living wage and decent working conditions. Papers like 'Waybill', the Lancashire 'Busworker', and London Transport's 'Platform' should be developed into a national busworkers paper—part of a powerful rank and file busworkers move—rather than a paper that will make the conditions at Brighton just an ugly memory.

We'd do better ourselves...

ROCKETS fly to the moon at staggering cost and return within a few seconds of the schedule. Yet no worker could rely on his bus to arrive within 10 minutes of schedule, let alone seconds.

Society is super-efficient at sending two or three astronauts a quarter of a million miles to a barren chunk of rock but bungles the job of moving workers, school children and shoppers a paltry miles across town—why?

Transport is treated like any other commodity and provided not because people need it but because a profit can be made out of it. So we get luxuriant, fast and comfortable aeroplanes and clapped-out, slow and uncomfortable buses. While works buses, almost always on guaranteed 'x' miles, are reliable, the country services are axed, often isolating whole communities.

As cuts and connections become even more haphazard, travelling time is increased and so, effectively, is the working week for large sections of the working class. More and more people are forced to buy cars or remain isolated at home, only going out when capitalism permits them, in other words to work.

With the huge increase in the number of cars on the road, pollution, road building, congestion and road accident costs have escalated to a phenomenal level. All because the transport system is being systematically raped in the quest for profit.

Fine words

Workers in public transport have suffered seriously. Before the war busmen were at the top of the wages table. Today, they are near the bottom. Despite fine words from the union leaders, productivity deals, especially one-man-operated buses, have been sold for a song and, although there have been fine examples or resistance in many cases, they have been isolated by the union leaders' unwillingness to lead a national struggle against such attacks on working conditions.

But there are encouraging signs that busmen are beginning to fight back. There has been a spate of garbage and road crew and local news sheets.

There will never be an efficient and ordered transport service until capitalism has been swept away.

This means that the industry will have to be brought under control by rank and filebusworkers with the support of their working-class brothers and sisters. This is why the National Intersocialists and other rank and file busworkers are laying the foundations of a national group which will gather all the militants in the bus industry around a platform of fighting policies, a group which will eventually take hold of the industry and start to build an ordered transport system.
How they made a bomb out of NYP

As the devastation recedes into the past and the various parties prepare for the public inquiry, the ‘cause’ of the Flixborough disaster is likely to be narrowed down further until some simple ‘freak factor’ emerges to explain it all. Within a few days the factory inspectors and company spokesmen were saying the explosion was not the product of modern chemical technology but of a simple failure in the engineering techniques. Already attention has been drawn to a length of 2½ diameter pipe which is thought to have fractured and allowed the escape of highly inflammable cyclohexanone vapour.

Attention will then be narrowed down to the installation of the pipe and to the welding method and to metallurgical problems. The approach will be run as a matter of course at the Nypco plant and in scores of other plants all over the country will be the burnt down.

It is vital to understand that risk and the commercial pressures which have driven employers to build such bombs all over the country were driven by the well-hidden mechanism that is not important.

Nylon is the chemical’s rather inferior imitation of the formula for sheep’s wool. There are six or eight ways to make it but until the early 1960s only one was cheap enough to be worth exploiting. Nylon 66, 611 and DuPont had up the pattern between them and for 20 years after the war creamed off the fattest called from an over-growing market.

Other firms wanted a share of this action and sweated in their labs to produce another, preferably cheaper, route to nylon.

In Holland the Dutch State Mines company succeeded, producing nylon 6.

It wasn’t as good as Nylon 66—but it made more water for one thing. It had the extra advantage of being cheaper to make. Dutch State Mines was on a good thing.

As British consumption grew, Dutch State Mines decided to set up in Britain. In 1965 construction began alongside the 25-year-old ammonia plant at Flixborough.

The Board of Trade and the local authority had both given the go-ahead without hesitation. Chairman of the Brass Rigg Council planning committee at the time was Councillor Peter Raby. He admitted last week that planning permission had gone through almost as a matter of course when Nypco got its certificate from the Board of Trade.

The inquiry: How the workers are being kept out

The shop stewards at Nypco learned some bitter lessons in the week after the disaster. Acquiesced to dealing with a management so smooth you couldn’t even tell when it was stringing you along, they suddenly found themselves working round the clock supplying management with lists of workers, visiting the widows, advising the 500 who had lost their jobs.

Although moved under such problems, the stewards committee kept pressing for an independent inquiry to get the facts for other chemical workers. They looked to their national officers for support. By last Thursday morning, when the only national union officer to have appeared was Owen Smith of the white-collar ASTMS, Engineers’ Union shop steward Dave Liston sent a telegram to his president, Hugh Scroggins, asking for a national officer. None came. But the stewards and activists in the labour movement had got things moving by themselves. On Thursday morning they were about to take two of their own technical advisers down to Nypco.

This pressure from below eventually forced the Transport Workers’ Union to agree to open inquiry under its own terms. Jack Jones, general secretary, announced that the union would conduct its own inquiry—and named a chemist picked by head office.

After getting an independent trade union investigation under way, the stewards wanted more to ensure that their investigators would have access to the evidence on the work site. They also wanted the public inquiry to be democratic, with a trade union nominee on the panel and a say in choosing the chairman.

They hoped they might get these things from Michael Foot, Secretary for Employment, when he visited Scunthorpe last week. They hoped he would have lunch with them to discuss their ideas. But Nypco management had him a plate last for the lunch. On it was the Lord Lieutenant of Humberside; all the maestros were on it. There were no stews on the menu.

When Foot finally came to Kinelsey Steel Labour Club in mid-afternoon, trade union and Labour representatives were treated to the sort of empty platitudes they could have had from any minister in government. Their suggestions for a democratic inquiry were not heard at all. Their demand for a right of access to the evidence was not answered.

Somewhere beneath the wreckage lies the smashed control room where 20 died.
Betrayal across the sea

By late September 25,000 workers from 27 unions were locked out. Murphy said he would starve the workers into submission. The Dublin police and British authorities made it clear they would side with him. They offered full armed support. The key to victory was in the hands of the English workers. Their support was crucial. The rank and file responded quickly. Dockers in Liverpool and railmen everywhere staged sympathetic action.

Massive

They were condemned by the TUC, which opposed a campaign of blacking all goods due for Ireland. Instead they went to Dublin on a fact-finding mission, they said, while the movement collected money to send supplies to the Dublin workers.

Larkin and Connolly appealed to the British workers directly: "We propose to carry the war into every section of the enemy's camp. Will you accord us your support?"

From late October onwards blacklegs were transported from London to Ireland. The Dublin workers fought on. Faced with massive police aid to the blacklegs they replied with their own mass pickets. Those workers who fell picket duty were refused food. The Citizen Army of armed workers was formed to support the pickets.

The TUC eventually called a special conference on Dublin in December. Larkin and Connolly were there. Still the right wing defeated proposals for blacking and strike action with a motion for a penny-a-head levy for supplies.

The Irish workers had been stabled in the back. A fight which brought them no immediate national gain was not to the fancy of the TUC, who sabotaged the solidarity movement in England.

Demoralising and starving, the Dublin workers began to return to work in February 1914. W M Murphy allowed police to travel free on Dublin trains for the next 24 years. In gratitude for services rendered in 1913, it is not known whether similar facilities were extended to the British TUC.

Dave Hughes
The woman who declared war — and won
By Ann Walsh, TGWU

The first reaction to my request for details of union branch meetings was: "Why should you be interested?" and that was from a convenor.

It was replied: "It was because I wanted to attend — the men answered by giving me a description of what we could do by way of entailing these at the next meeting..."

However, undaunted, myself and a colleague decided we needed to be organised, despite the union's reaction. We had just four members out of a possible 25 or so, but we knew what our next move was. We wouldn't recognise them, and from the fear of violence expressed by the TGWU representative, the word got round to management as if it were a declared war...

In fact it had.

My name was put forward as a possible factory representative and was immediately supported by the management and others.

We had no "basic" need of a new shop, yet quite last year, there were 66 children who had no school place at all — last year this was 150, and we feel that our own solution would be to increase the class size without any reduction of students, even more so in the temporary classrooms.

Apart from the cutsbacks, we lose 550 school places each other year.

At a meeting with Roy Prentis, the union leader, it was firmly stated that Newham was first in London on new schools.

We looked this up in the GEC 1983 and found that Tower Hamlets, a working class borough next door to Newham, was first, with more nursery schools and nursery classes with 70,000 less population.

Other figures show that the local education authority try to blind us with such that we have over our quota of teachers, but at Easter there were 68 teaching vacancies. What does not get too much publicity is that nearly every child is in some form of part-time education.

Unfortunately, gaining compensation in school closures is very difficult, and the few closures that are happening — such as Shrubbery Field — will cause massive redundancy and mass unemployment.

A 'catch 22' situation has developed with one primary school catering for almost 1000 pupils, which is formidable and does not want his large old school replaced by a new one, but the old school was condemned, and it is much easier to replace the old school, but the new school would not be able to accommodate all the children.

Due to the cuts, the new school cannot be completed on time and the school falls below DES standards. The way the building work must be done will be prompt and when the new school is completed, it is not going to be ready.

The poor result of Newham's children is blamed on parents' attitudes. We do come to work and start doing something, we are changed teachers and can do nothing, apart from something to be made.

The attached promissory note is to be paid in full, and the outcome is that none have been paid since.

The Calderdale School 400 out of 1500 11-16 year olds had a reading age of age of less than seven and one remedial teacher to cope. That is 14 per cent against the national average of ten per cent. Six blackboards in the school had been broken for 18 months.

Worst

Still, they had a typing teacher, but no typewriters. By the time the commerce room had been equipped, the teacher had left and they couldn't recruit a typing teacher! How they got the work done, anywhere, or anywhere, get the work done when they were here, the worst schools when they are here, the worst schools when they leave school, and die of neglect when they are old.

Our life is meant to be one of servitude, to be obedient and to be obedient, and to be obedient, and to be obedient. The only women who are prepared to work are the women who have been prepared to work.

PAULINE FENN
Under the influence

It takes a long time to make a socialist, but often just one event can make the balance - taking part in a strike, reading a book, going to a meeting. What made you a socialist? Write and tell us.

IT WAS through racial rather than class discrimination that I became a socialist.

The English hated the Africans who hated the English back. They both hated the Jews, all three hated the coloureds and Indians, and they all together hated the black Africans. That was sunny South Africa.

On the eve of the Second World War, the black Africans were standing outside Cape Town Harbour. On it were 17,000 Jews who had been almost the last to escape with their lives from Nazi Germany. They were standing there on the planet which would allow them to land and set free.

The town itself was apogey. An Afrikaner Nazi organisation marched through the streets singing: "We hate the coloureds and we will not let them join." That was the first day after day to prevent the boat landing. The English complained that we stood outside it all, and the Jews stayed in their homes shivering and shaking.

The boat didn't land. It wandered the earth for many more months, and was finally allowed by the Chinese to disembark its passengers.

The ship and its memories. My school situation was one of all-pervasive, subtle anti-Semitism on the part of the entire Christian staff in the white, one-third Jewish school.

I didn't learn German. But I did learn (and passed exams on the fact) that the population of South Africa was two million (there were 10 million blacks at that time to the two million whites), and the official languages English and Africans (three quarters of the population knew no English or Africans). That history started in 1652 with the arrival of the first white settlers, and so on. We were kept strictly separated from the black people themselves.

EMOTIONS

The clear picture of my world as a child was the inferior breed of human beings, and the blacks were not human at all. In that case there was a genuine sense of cowherd's contempt for cows, not of black people.

With hindsight I know now that it was not the black people's emotions created by these racial hatreds that would shape my future attitudes. My teachers told me (subtly, unintentionally but unhesitatingly) that we were inferior.

My mother told me we were the Chosen People. I was only a kid, I believed them both. So to preserve self-respect I had to balance racial inferiority with profound racial superiority - bending the stick right over.

Our feelings were motivated by one thought: I'll show 'em who's who! Whatever I could do to get Jews chosen for school honours I would do. Great Jews of the past, ending up after a hard and cheering battle with teacher by being put in the corner with my feet in the wastepaper basket - which simply enraged me on to greater cussedness.

Our teacher was a Jewish woman. On the one hand, she told me I was inferior - all Jews were - to the other one who said I was the one of the best. I believe her. I worked for her as for no-one else: all my life. I never got along with her when I was doing it in her brief period she taught me.

What provoked my childhood pride was the fight-knit, defensive Jewish community, the only place a child felt wanted, important, was precious, where one got the emotional nourishment to stand up at school and fight.

Of course I became an extreme and militant Jewish nationalist, and the prevailing nationalism was Zionism, so I was a Zionist. It was only then that I became not prepared to fight against anti-Semitic indignities (usually for financial gain) and the inflation of the cover of socialist internationalists - none among the kids at school who were not of this persuasion. I was very religious too - that part of the whole prop to human dignity.

I am certain that this childish rebellion against racist injustices was the major influence in my development, and indeed is the major nearly all the small band of my companions, later became revolutionary socialists.

LOGICAL

Most of the comrades in any left-wing organisation who were white Jewish, and their earliest rebellions against racial prejudice was extreme Jewish nationalism, expressed a Zionism and religious fervour.

It was a short and logical movement taken between the ages of 13-18, for the victims of one racial oppression to become the vicinities of another - the blacks - to try and understand the causes of all racial oppression, and hence to break the ties with Zionism which was, as we later saw, an oppressive nationalism of its own.

On coming to England, where the majority do not live in tight communities, I found that many people do not understand that one racialism is not equal to another. One is the expression of the top dog, the other the rebellion of the underdog. One is propaganda, the other to achieve equality. They are opposites. One can lead on to fascist thinking, the other to revolutionary socialism, which destroys racialism altogether.

It was after the early life experiences, and because of them, that books entered, to confirm our awakening horror at the human relations about us, to explain the reasons why, to give the hope and dream of the brotherhood and equality of man, and to stimulate us to action to achieve it. We gathered up all political books and socialist novels available, early becoming Marxists and turning against religion and Zionism. There is no one book. I would pick out of the witter of them. They collectively consolidated what our circumstances had shaped us into.

SHOCKED

It was the circumstances first and foremost which shaped us. The road to revolutionary socialism for us youthful rebels took us through many strange events. I chose to travel third class (for blacks) on the train instead of first class (for whites) or second (for coloureds).

The white guard, shocked, pushed me out to the first class compartment. I protested. He did not de- mind the difference in the price of the ticket, but he did insist on the colour bar being kept. The incredu- lous blacks sat at one as I was bundled out.

Mr mother had drilled her chil- dren in the religion of sanitary precau- tions. In every cranny of every cup used by blacks lurked syphilis, TB, and other dread scourges. (My mother wasn't a racist - she was hygienist). I went to a black cafe for the first time. I was served tea in a cracked cup. I was nearly sick, I finished it and drank another. The second was easier.

I regularly took up a precious seat in a crowded bus, but of black wor- kers going to town, all of whom thought the white woman was off her nut. I marched through the while High Street in the company of only black men, to the amusement of the white pedestrians who stopped dead in their tracks to stare.

It wasn't too long before the police got on my track and I left the country. My best friend who stayed on spent nine years in jail.

In England I met coloured South Africans (there are scarcely any black Africans here) and for the first time could talk to them freely and hear how even the favoured few who managed to cope here had lived.

How a girl, one of seven children, spoke to only four of her brothers and four of her sisters, because the lighter ones were 'play-whites', mixed with white people in white places and women only meet their darker brothers and sisters, or parents, in the street in fear of discovery of their origins.

How a black boy who managed to be one of the 20 coloureds to get to university tried to learn maths, physics and economics. The latter two were being practical subjects, needed a lot of explaining, while physics student was found willing to partner, so the coloured student could study physics.

A chemistry partner could not be found so no chemistry. In the maths engineering class (for intended gold mine managers) any row of seats the coloured student sat in immediately emptied.

FURIOUS

Waiting for a boat to come to England, months passed before three whites could be found who would agree to share a cabin with this student. When he finally found one, just a black laboratory assistant in the lab, he gave me even greater heart. In public. A black worker on a train was expression under capitalism, when he opened a book in a spare moment - how dare the upstairs pre- sumption and talk about the sad state of the world in the room.

The child is father of the man. I am a socialist and now a teacher. I not only understand in my mind the situation of black kids in this country, I daily relive the furious rebellion against the indignities heaped on them by prejudiced - or more usually simply non-understand- ing, insensitive - white teachers and others.

We should demand the employ- ment of many more black teachers so that black children can find a home that is not.

I feel the damaged self-respect and confused self-image of the black children, especially those without strong community ties to refresh the hurt spirits. When I see a gate of black adolescents shouting black power and black consciousness demanding homage to black equality (or is it superiority as I have demanded?). I remember the fierce and flamed nationalism of my own youth.

And I rejoice, knowing that this positive, defiant assertion of their black identity can be the stepping stone to a more mature understanding of what blackness means, of the identification with the struggles of all workers and oppressed people, and in the making of revolutionary socialism.

In a different setting, it was my own path of development.

ON THE BOX

Sunday, ITV, Noon. One British Family, the last of the John Pilger series books at a black family. Monday, BBC-1, 8.10pm. Panorama in China, intro- duces a talk with Chinese prime minister Chou En-Lai. Wednesday, ITV, 9.30pm. The finest family in the Land is a feature by Henry Living, who has been a very successful musician. On Concert BBC-2 features Alan Price, ex-Animals organist, writer of music for O Lucky Man! It is at Thursday, BBC-1, 9.25pm. Friday, ITV's new series is Schmoebsipus about 'parents and children and sanity and its alternatives. Friday, BBC-2, 8.15pm. The Friday Night Programme is Sincerely, Bernie Cornfeld, an interview with 'financial' Cornfield, who made a fortune for himself and lost many for other people.
An another lesson in democracy, Chapple-style

TOP OF THE FLOPS

DELEGATES to next week’s Folkstone conference of the National Graphical Association will hear a report from the print union’s leaders worthy of a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the most complete record of failure any union leadership has presided over.

Its greatest achievement was to turn an overwhelming conference vote last year to decertify under the Industrial Relations Act into a majority the opposite way when an admirally-worded paper went to the members.

It has also settled all national agreements within the government pay norms while declaring total opposition to the minimum wage and pay action go on.

Closures and redundancies have been accepted. The only exception was the brave stand by the workers at British Telecom.

Key conference resolutions will be those from Liverpool and London calling for the re-election of officials every three years. There is also a host of resolutions on future wage agreements. The passing of these resolutions—or even some of them—will be a big step forward.

The biggest problem facing the left in the union is the absence of any building of support among the membership. Although marginally successful at winning elections, the Broad Left has to bridge the gap between the activists and the rank and file, who are still generally loyal to the leadership.

The issues that must be settled include the fact that the union is building of united action between the different print unions in rank and file level, the formulation of a strategy to fight the closures and -on the one hand, the fight for a democratic union controlled by lay members.

There will be a Socialist Worker meeting at the NGA conference. Paul Foot will speak on The Social Credit trip, 5pm-7pm at the Chivers Hotel conference room, Sunday 11 June.

Jailed Pickets - Now the Inquest

The second National Delegate Conference of the building workers’ union UCATT in Blackpool next week has been flooded with resolutions over the jailing of the Shrewsbury pickets.

The position of the National Union can be seen from the reactions of its members sending their appeal-to -rule out resolutions in which the picket line is always justified as only part of the full resolution.

The UCATT obviously try to avoid coming under the full force of criticism over their refusal to mount any serious campaign to free the six.

More than half of Britain’s manual work has been set on a three-week holiday a year. Building workers should be doing the same.

The question of picket pay has been watered down almost to the point where it merely calls for a ‘substantial increase’. The Department of Employment is probably going to be asked for under 50 a week to avoid the messiness of assessing the industry and abolishing pickets.

Resolution demanding the abolition of labour only sub-contractors. "The Government has no right to sub-contract the work of the GMB workers."

The official resolution calling for the abolition of all picket lines and picketing.

Conrad the Trust is ‘The Queen’

The conference dinner was in full swing. A group of delegates from the rank and file seem to have happened to ask one of the waiters which union she was in.

She was surprised anyone should think the hotel was organized and astonished that this beam (£5.50 a head) was for a trade union.

When the local toast to the Queen was announced, the rank and file delegates stayed seated. 'I know you must be Communists', said the waitress.

'Not us', came the reply. 'The Communists are the ones standing to attention on the top table'.

This was one of the most militant of the leadership of the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions claim to be the most left-wing of any teachers’ union and are composed largely of left Labour and Communist Party members.

In practice, their left image is confined strictly to words.

Most of the executive hold mushroom collecting in hot weather business. Yet those with management positions make up only five per cent of the union membership.

The other 95 per cent hold lecturing jobs. So the member has his gaff for a union leader.

The tone of the conference at Sheffield is set by the general secretary’s report. This consists of an attack from the rank and file side of the QTAA.

They would involve the association in confrontations for which it has neither the resources nor the will, and would frustrate any efforts they make to unite them into effective action for their own interest.

The words effective action” trip readily from the tongue. Unfortunately, when it comes to taking any action, it’s different matter. The executive failed to act on a single resolution passed at last year’s conference.

But any concrete action, the executive aims to keep the membership on a tight rein. It narrowly pushed through a resolution calling for a reorganization of national negotiations on conditions of service. As was strongly pointed out by Rank and file spokesmen, most local areas are in the middle of negotiations or getting long-term deals.

This resolution will mean that all the local authorities will stop negotiations and wait for the national outcome, which will be a disaster.

The whole aim is to stifle local initiatives and keep everything under control.

Rivalry, local areas of the union are not allowed to take any action without the specific authorisation of the Executive. And it is is scarcely forthcoming, as members in Manchester and Newcastle found out last year when they were blacked on the picketing strike action by the Executive.

by an electrician

Frank Chapple: Nothing for the rank and file to smile about
THE DREAM of one union for the whole engineering industry is now "off the boil", Bill Simpson, general secretary of the Society of Motor Engineers of the 1% million-strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers said last week.

When the union's fourth national conference opens in Great Yarmouth on Monday, the prospects for establishing any real unity between the different sections will be pretty bleak. In April, the amalgamation proposals were rejected by 27 votes to 24 by the national committee of the powerful Engineering Section.

Much was wrong with the proposals put forward by the joint national executive council to the conferences of the four sections of the AUEW. They were for unity at the top of the union tree, at executive level, but were against grass roots unity, with joint district committees and joint shop stewards' committees.

They allowed TASS (the Technical Administrative and Supervisory Section) to keep all its existing appointed full-time officials without insisting on elections. Even worse, they allowed TASS to appoint rather than worker representatives to the new 13-man executive council.

Strength

They suggested an annual conference for the whole union—a revolutionary idea for the Engineering Section, whose last such conference was in 1919. But then they suggested it kept very small, with a maximum of only 400 delegates.

The worst aspect of the proposals was not, however, what they contained, it was that they were not fought for among the rank and file.

In the early '60s, socialists fought and sometimes died trying to build giant industrial unions that would give workers the strength and confidence to fight their employers. Tom Mann, the first general secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, was one of them. He had joined its forerunner, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, in 1878 at the age of 25

"In ten years later, as a member of the Marxist Social Democratic Federation and with two years' hard work at organizing a Dockers' Union (of which he was elected president) under his belt, he came close to winning the position of ASE general secretary.

His platform was the 'true unionist policy of aggression'".

Mann's campaign for direct action and industrial unionism—one industry, one union—led before the First World War to the formation of several local Amalgamated Committees. Made up of militant rank-and-file workers in the ASE and the other 50 societies in engineering, they linked up in 1915 to form a National Amalgamated Committee.

Over the next two years they held six national conferences of rank and file delegates from different engineering unions to discuss amalgamation, and in 1917 they fused with the National Shop Stewards Movement.

When the crucial ballots on amalgamation took place in 1919, the membership in many parts of the country already had working experience of the value of unity.

Mann, elected ASE general secretary that same year, threw his weight into the campaign and the ANE voted 92 per cent in favour of amalgamation.

Nine other unions also got more than 90 per cent of their members to vote for the Pattern Makers and Electrical Trades Union (ANE) and the Amalgamated Engineering Union came into existence on July 1920.

The lessons of the early campaign for amalgamation must be acted upon today. International Socialists Union members are not just the leadership of the different sections.

Unity

A real, active amalgamation will only be brought about if, in every locality, the entire membership of the current union is made aware of the advantages such strength would bring.

The leading Communist party members in the AUEW are primarily concerned with unity at the top, so that their considerable strength in the Construction Section and in TASS is brought to bear on the weak Amalgamated Union.

It is strange that this approach is as narrow and wrong. It is up to every shop steward and trade unionist who believes in the one union dream to agitate now for mass roots meetings for joint shop stewards' committees for joint district committees, for the exchange of observers at branch level, and for joint Amalgamation Committees to be established in every district to follow the campaign through.

Only when this is done will there be an active rank-and-file support for unity that will mean real unity in action.

 Classified

| Brightenup but workers: Rank and file meeting, with Pete Glanville, London UMP, 351 Whitecross Street, 3.00pm. |
| Social Credit 400, Social Credit party, 351 Whitecross Street, 3.00pm. |
| British and Irish Communist Students, Social Credit party, 351 Whitecross Street, 3.00pm. |
| Group of socialists with children, Brightenup but workers: Rank and file meeting, with Pete Glanville, London UMP, 351 Whitecross Street, 3.00pm. |
| Wigan: 351 Whitecross Street, 3.00pm. |
**Brighton: Naglo is calling off all action in support of its London weighting campaign only days before the Pay Board is due to report on the issue, taken at the union's local government council meeting on Monday, followed recommendations by the union's National Committee and National Executive Council.

by Barry White

**They'll Need the Army to Move Us?**

They've called for two strikes per day to shut down local government offices and city centres. They've threatened to do the same in other industries. They've said they will not negotiate with the government. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pay. They've said they will not accept any changes to their working conditions. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pensions.

**Management**

Management is sticking to its position. They've said they will not give in to the union's demands. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their budget. They've said they will not accept any changes to their policies. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their staff.

**Unison**

Unison is standing strong. They've said they will not back down. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pay. They've said they will not accept any changes to their working conditions. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pensions.

**Strikers**

Strikers are determined. They've said they will not give in to management. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pay. They've said they will not accept any changes to their working conditions. They've said they will not accept any cuts in their pensions.

**Conclusion**

This strike is a major test for both sides. It will determine whether they can reach a fair settlement, or whether it will lead to a bitter and prolonged struggle.

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**Birmingham**

Birmingham - Contract electricians working on a £5 million extension to a Birmingham council building have been on strike for six weeks. They have been balloted on strike action for five years, but the council has continued to use electricians from other firms. The electricians have been striking for three weeks, and have been joined by other council workers. They are demanding a living wage, and an end to the use of non-union electricians.

**Maverick on the run**

Maverick - The council has been inturbed by a series of disputes over pay and conditions. The council has been accused of breaking its own pay policy, and of failing to provide a living wage for its workers. The council has been forced to pay out millions of pounds in compensation to workers who have been affected by the disputes.

**Guerrilla Strikes on Way**

By David Yule

Edinburgh - A series of strikes is planned on the Scottish and Newcastle Brewery at Wester Hailes. The workers are demanding a 50% increase in pay, and an end to the use of non-union workers. The strikes are expected to start on Monday.

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**Chile Refugees**

Can you help?

The LAUNCH cooperative has agreed to give visas to some Chilean refugees. They are from the South American country and are political refugees. They are in need of food, clothing, and medical care. They are seeking asylum in the UK.

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**Victimisation of the floodgates**

BEVERLEY, YORKS: The impact of the victimisation of convener Jean Weir by the Yorks and North Yorkshire Pensions Committee has been highlighted by a report from the Yorkshire and Humber Public Services Union.

A report to the union's annual conference on the victimisation of Jean Weir has been made by Yorkshire and Humber Public Services Union.

Jean Weir was suspended by the union in 1978, following allegations made by a former member of the union's executive. The allegations were related to the suspension of another union member, and the union's handling of the case.

Jean Weir was suspended for a period of six months, and was later reinstated following an investigation. The investigation found no evidence to support the allegations, and Jean Weir was given her full pension rights.

The union's handling of the case has been criticised by the Yorkshire and Humber Public Services Union, who have called for a fairer and more democratic process to be used in future cases.

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**Pickers Fight on**

A national conference was held in Leeds in April to discuss the future of the Yorkshire and Humber Public Services Union.

The conference was attended by hundreds of trade unionists from across the region, and was chaired by the union's general secretary, Mike Smith.

Mike Smith opened the meeting by saying that the union was facing a difficult time, and that it was essential that the union's members stood together to fight for their rights.

"We are facing a difficult time," he said. "But we are united, and we will fight for our rights.

The conference was followed by a series of workshops, where delegates discussed the union's strategy and tactics.

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TRADE UNIONISTS around Woking, Surrey, where the bitter fight over Cropthorne took place, have already begun to contact the nurses in their demands for better pay and conditions. On Tuesday last week a meeting on the nurses’ wages and conditions at the Broomwood Hospital Action Committee and the Sheerwater branch of the Engineering Union.

Although the meeting was at short notice it was attended by about 10 trade unionists from factories and workplaces in the area, including British Aircraft Corporation, James Walkers, Airways, Bovis, etc. Creations are the representatives from the Woking General NUPE branch.

ANCILLARY workers at All Saints and the Oxford hospitals, BIRMINGHAM, joined in the meeting. United stands are not individually understood the threats of victimisation.

Nurses at Rotherbury Hospital sent a message to the nurses at Cropthorne urging them for an all-out strike and ancillary workers at the same hospital for an all-out strike action for a 3.5-hour strike if their claim for a 3.5-hour strike and a £10 minimum wage is not met.

In LONDON, nurses at Bromley and Hillingdon were told to contact nurses in other parts of the country for support.

An application was received from all the nurses at Cropthorne to join the Golders Green branch of the NUPE and the Sheerwater branch of the Engineering Union.

But the nurses are said to be in the process of forming a union with the help of the NUPE.

The nurses have offered a £25 basic and a £30 guaranteed weekly wage.

This was rejected because there was nothing on the unsociable hours. The strike is solid. - Picture: Phil McCowan.
Put another
Nichol in...

GREAT believers in free speech the Tories—
your peers and seniors. They are on your side.
They will back anyone who attacks the
Irish Republicans marching for Michael
Gaughan—and support the thousands
of Orange men who march the streets in bowler
hats and sausages.

What's wrong with the Tories is good for you—and
your peers. Keep out of real trouble for your
money. We turn the money into words and ideas
that are beyond hurt for our sides.

Contributions this week reached £326.39,
bringing the Tory total to £606.79 and
only a little way behind the Labour
£664.10. The old Liberal/Conservative
divide (TASS) remains solid. You'll see
No. 6 £1.60. That's a bit of a setback for
AWEU, who've just been recruiting
at Reading University, £2.92.

The payroll at Nichol, National
Treasurer, International Socialists,
8 Cottons Gardens, London WC2 £50.

Secret report
tells bosses: Don't pay

DETAILED guidance on how to deprive workers of
threshold pay has increased to circumvent
shipping building bosses by their employers' federation,
the Shipyard Repairers' Association. This
document, handed to organizers, tells bosses:
Don't pay—and if you're forced to make
concessions...

The confidential document, issued by the
Shipyard Repairers' Association, has come into the hands of Socialist Worker.
It confirms that the hard line being taken by
the employers is an organized campaign to
fight threshold payments.

The document tells bosses that now the
threshold has been 'activated', firms not yet committed
to an agreement will be under pressure
to introduce them. It adds:

'It is nevertheless our view, fully recognizing that
member firms must take the final decision
having regard to all possible circumstances,
that whenever possible such pressures should be
resisted.'

Cut back

The rate of increase of the RPI (Retail Price
Index) over recent months and particularly the
increase for the year ending October 20
cent over the previous month, has brought
on the inevitable pressure on the threshold agreements and
the inadvisability of being committed
to a type of payment which covers only
a fraction of total pay.

The document makes a number of suggestions
to how to meet threshold agreements cost
as little as possible.

1. Take it off, but never add it on. Threshold
payments must be reviewed on an individual
basis and a definite policy for the amount of
any payments must be made.

2. Make the agreement as brief as possible. It is
important that members of the

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