

THE

Week

**A news analysis for socialists 9d.**

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ONCE MORE ON AN INCOMES POLICY....

We must apologise to our readers for returning to a theme which we discussed last week. As we were going to press, The Grand Council of the Federation of British Industries was discussing a complex report by Mr. Hugh Weekes, the chairman of its permanent economic study group. As we were putting the stamps on our envelopes, the Federation was announcing that it had failed, in the words of the Financial Times, 'to find a quick method of regulating prices and profits.'

Mr. Weekes was not presiding over an undergraduate commission. Indeed, his group was about as high-pressure a team as could be assembled by all the key employers' associations of the land. It included members of the F.B.I., the British Employers' Confederation, the Association of British Chambers of Commerce and the National Association of British Manufacturers. They had been working continuously since January, when the notion that employers should make themselves responsible for price restraint was canvassed, not for the first time, at the N.E.D.C. Their recommendations included 3 possible schemes: for a scheme of registration of prices; for a variable profits tax scheme; and for a mechanism for dealing with consumer complaints about prices. Each of these alternatives was plausibly set out: and each was rejected on grounds which were, from the point of view of the rationality of capitalist production, equally plausible.

The Labour movement should study these arguments, and study them carefully. What alternative measures will Labour adopt to meet this problem? Harold Wilson, in an article in the Journal of the National Union of General & Municipal Workers, outlines a 3-pronged attack on rising prices. This includes his policy on interest rates, projected legislation to stabilise rents, and a campaign against the land racket. Timely though these measures may prove to be, they are scarcely enough. A "fair & proper" incomes policy "related to national productivity" cannot possibly thrive on control of wages before they have been earned and profits after they have been garnered, and smuggled away into corners of the complicated accounts which capitalism may well try to hide in next two years or so.

The worker in neo-capitalism has every reason to fear, not to welcome, increased productivity. This invariably results in the increased power of capital to order him about, to control his movements, and ultimately, to dispossess him of his livelihood. It is not enough to call for 'retraining.' What is lacking, in this situation, even for a retrained worker, is control over his own life and work. Certainly we need more productivity: but we must also have control over it: the fruits of our additional efforts should be reinvested not at the whim of arbitrary rentiers and tycoons, but at our democratic decision. Only in this way can man control the machines whose multiplication Wilson is rightly seeking. If the new Labour Government is to begin the transition to socialism, then it must use the resources of its supporters as well as its fiscal experts.

Workers' control over profit levels is not a utopian demand in this case, but an economic and political necessity. The new era must become known as the time of the opening of the sealed books. When the unions gain access to the accounts of the employers, they have the key to the future.



# INDUSTRIAL week

## LONGER HOURS WORKED IN INDUSTRY

from Julian Atkinson

The March issue of Process Control & Automation had an article by Walter Woodford, executive committee member of the U.K. Automation Council, which discussed the number of hours worked in industry. He said, "About  $\frac{1}{2}$  million people unemployed in Great Britain at this time. In the 1930's, unemployment approached 3 million, so that the past 30 years has seen a reduction in the number of unemployed of more than 2 million, quite apart from the additional jobs that have been created during this period. Unemployment is wholly unnecessary today and could be eliminated almost with the stroke of a pen, if we chose to do so. For political and other reasons, we do not choose to do so: but we must not blame automation because society is unwilling to organise itself properly.

"Figures just published by the Ministry of Labour reveal that the male worker's average hours in October, 1963, were 47.6 a week, which was 0.7 more than in the previous April and 0.6 more than in October, 1962. Thus the number of hours actually worked per man per week in the 12 months, October, 1962, to October, 1963, was seen to rise in spite of the fact that, during this period, unemployment in Britain reached the highest figure for many years. Unemployment, at the present moment, is about 2% of the working force. About 2% of 47.6 hours per week is one hour: if the working week were reduced by one hour, therefore, unemployment would vanish at once. In fact, because some people are unemployable and because there are always some people moving from job to job and, therefore, temporarily registered as unemployed, a reduction of one hour in the actual working week would create a labour shortage.

"The number of hours worked in a week is not a matter of automation it is a matter of politics. The 40-hour week is a myth: it is simply a basis for negotiating pay. If the working week were actually limited to a maximum of 40 hours for any one person, our economy would be wrecked: we should not be able to automate fast enough to make up for the labour shortage!"

## D.A.T.A. CAMPAIGN FOR UNION RIGHTS

In the March issue of The Draughtsman details are given of a campaign which is being promoted to make unions aware of the implications of the anti-strike *Rookes v. Barnard* judgement. Resolutions have been put down for the Confed., the T.U.C., the National Federation of Professional Workers, the Scottish T.U.C., and the Labour Party. A meeting is to be held in the House of Commons, jointly with A.S.S.E.T., to explain the issue to M.P.s. Union branches are being asked to raise the matter on their local trades councils. A free pamphlet, published by the union, is available from: D.A.T.A., Onslow Hall, Richmond, Surrey.

BIG ANTI-APARTHEID DEMONSTRATION IN MANCHESTER by Alan Rooney

There were about 370 people on an Anti-Apartheid torchlight march through the centre of Manchester last Friday night (March 13th) in memory of the Sharpsville massacre. Most of the marchers were students from the University where even the Tory Society supports Anti-Apartheid. The timing of the demonstration was useful because only a few days earlier the Manchester Evening News had urged the British Government to develop trade with South Africa. The paper informed its readers that there was no difference between trading with Cuba and trading with South Africa.

The meeting after the march was chaired by Professor Max Gluckman. Over £100 was collected.

ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE LOOMS IN NOTTINGHAM

The first step was taken in the process of getting Nottingham City Council to boycott South African goods on Thursday March 12th. At the City Labour Party meeting the question of the forthcoming visit of the South African bowling team was raised. It was unanimously agreed that the secretary be instructed to write to City Labour Group (the policy making body of Labour Councillors) telling them that: (a) the City Labour Party was in favour of a total boycott of any civic welcome for the South African bowlers; and (b) that the City Labour Party favoured a Council boycott of South African goods. Strong feelings on these matters were expressed at the meeting and anyone, from no matter what party, who attempts to ignore this feeling will do so at their peril.

N.A.L.S.O. SUPPORTS ABERDEEN

After hearing a report of the struggle that is going <sup>on</sup> in Aberdeen over the Council decision to boycott South African goods, the Executive of the National Association of Labour Student Organisations decided unanimously to send a message of support to the Labour Council. The meeting was held in Leicester on Saturday, 14th March,

SOUTH AFRICAN BOWLS TEAM VISIT CAUSES STORM IN SCOTLAND

Glasgow and Edinburgh Councils have both discussed the forthcoming visit by the South African bowling team this summer. Glasgow voted not to accord them a municipal welcome. In Edinburgh, the Progressives (the local pseudonym of the Tories) succeeded in defeating a Labour/Liberal motion for a boycott by only one vote. Even so the Labour members of Edinburgh Council will not attend the civic welcome.

ROLL OF HONOUR

We have received from one <sup>of</sup> the comrades involved in the Aberdeen struggle over Apartheid a list of local authorities supporting the boycott of South African goods. They are Aberdeen, Erith Borough, Great Yarmouth, Hackney Borough, Harlow Urban District, Hammersmith Borough, Hull, Lewisham Borough, Liverpool, Newcastle (City and Borough), Romford Borough, the Country Borough of South Shields, Stockton on Tees and West Ham. We hope to see this list grow!

TORY ARGUMENT ON COUNCIL HOUSES EXPOSED

from Tony Southall

The hoary old Tory argument about owner-occupiers subsidising Council House rents has been exposed by Mr. Kaim-Caudle, lecturer in social administration at Durham University. Writing in the current issue of *Local Government Finance*, he says of the frequent complaint made by owner-occupiers that as taxpayers and ratepayers they have to subsidise council tenants: "Many of them are genuinely unaware that they themselves receive a tax remission." To support his argument on this matter he takes as an example a man aged 35 buying a house on an insurance with a £2,000 mortgage over 20 years, whose income is sufficient for him to be paying tax at the standard rate. This man's reliefs would amount to tax liability of £93 a year.

He continued, the only people who do not benefit from subsidies or tax remissions are tenants of unfurnished houses rented from private landlords (and not subject to rent restriction) or the tenants of furnished houses. The figures he gave for the share out of subsidies and tax reliefs were revealing. In 1962 they were:

<u>Council House tenants:</u>	Central Government	£78 millions	
	Local Government	47	"
	Total	<u>£125</u>	"
<u>Owner-occupiers:</u>	Remission on Schedule A	£135	"
	Tax savings on mortgage	85	"
		<u>£220</u>	
Other (National Assistance, grants, etc)		£104	"
	Grand total	<u>£449</u>	"

So in practice tax relief, etc., to owner-occupiers is almost twice as much as the total subsidies to council house tenants. So those people who have been fooled by Tory propaganda on this point should direct their attention to real cause of their difficulties: the Tory Government's policies which result in land-speculation and increasing interest rates. Thus instead of the Council house tenant being their enemy he is an ally.

TWO NEW FABIAN PAMPHLETS

Two new Fabian pamphlets have recently appeared: Freedom and the Welfare State, by Brian Abel-Smith, Reader in Social Administration at the London School of Economics; and More power to the Regions, by David Steele, an Economist and Vice-Chairman of the Young Fabian Group.

Dr. Abel-Smith is critical of the social services, because of the minimum level of provision made, the lack of adequate buildings and trained staff, and the 'take it or leave it' philosophy. In the third section of the pamphlet, the author puts his proposals for reforming the social services. Rationing of services must be got rid of, and consumers must be able to exercise a degree of choice. 'We have got to get rid of the autocratic frame of mind of some civil servants, local government officers and councillors - even Labour councillors.' David Steel believes that the Government's policy of offering financial inducements to firms to set up in depressed areas has been very expensive, and that private industry should be given every opportunity but if there was scope "state factories or offices should be built and staff taken on to run them."

DENBY STRIKE NOW IN 5th MONTH

by G. Brown

I have interviewed one of the strikers and have gone into the background of the dispute. It began on October 30th, it is now in its 19th week. William Denby & Sons Ltd., of Tong Park are a public Company who have operated a closed shop since war time. There was a strike in 1937 that was unsuccessful, but when this firm went into the employers' Federation one of the conditions was that they should accept unionism and that has ruled ever since. There had been uneasiness in the shop before October, 1963, due to an uneven flow of work between the main 3 departments - the Grey Room, handling undyed cloth, the Dyeing Section, and the Finishing Room. A Works Council was suggested 18 months ago, and was not even considered.

A week before the walk-out, there was a meeting in the Trades Hall, Shipley, to discuss the friction, and the issue was about short time, and why it should not apply to foreman. It is a reasonably busy shop and there has not been more than occasional short time. The Trade Union Secretary was going to see the management. It was at this stage the foreman and under-foreman of the Finishing Department decided to operate a blowing machine during a mid-morning break. The shop stewards protested and were brushed aside by the Management, which said any protest meeting should be held in the yard.

The walk-out started in the Finishing Room, the Dyeing Room finished its particular work in hand and then struck, and the Grey Room followed. The operatives got their notice the very first moment thereafter, dated October 30th, saying <sup>in</sup> future it was to be an open shop. It added that the employers were prepared to allow members to join the Union adding that it would "no longer be under Union domination." There were roughly 300 employees, the majority being in the Finishing Room and approximately 250 of these were operatives as distinct from senior staff.

One of the directors admitted they would probably sack one or two, and the remainder could come back. Christmas came and offers of £15 extra were made, and only 3 operatives returned under this offer. In all only 15 men have returned to work, although 20 have sought work elsewhere. Approximately 60 black-legs, who are non-Union, have entered and are working with the few local people. In January the General Secretary of the men's Union, the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers, and Textile Workers, after meeting the Board, recommended that of the 60 black-legs, 20 be sacked and 40 of the loyal members be reinstated. There was a secret ballot and only one vote cast for these proposals. It was felt that the Union should not have needed to consult members about such terms.

The firm is now "blackened". The Trade Union insists that all members who are working inside now shall be expelled from the Union. There have been sundry incidents; pickets are present daily. There has been some violence, though not much apart from New Year's Eve, when people from neighbouring localities came. There have been three court prosecutions with 2 acquittals, and in the early days of the strike the fact that the wife of one employee, who was employed by one of the Board as a domestic, was also dismissed, attracted considerable attention.

Ed. Note: We have received a lot of material on this struggle. We shall publish more in our next issue including up-to-date information.

APPEAL OF THE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR THE RALEIGH AEU STRIKERS

A novel move to assist the Raleigh strikers has been taken by leading activists in the Labour movement. They have established a committee to work for support for the strikers, financial and moral, in the Labour movement as a whole. They say that the strikers, whilst engaged in a very important and self-sacrificing struggle on behalf of all trade unionists, are not getting a fair hearing for their case. They express the wish that the struggle will result in a victory for the strikers and the greater unity of all workers and trade unionists in the Raleigh works. They draw attention to the fact that the Nottingham City Labour Party Executive set an example by donating £5.5.0 to the strike fund. The list of sponsors, which is not complete, is as follows:

Dave Ablitt, West Nottm. Labour Party E.C. and secretary of the A.E.U. Junior Workers Committee; Jim Barnes, U.S.D.A.W.; Keith Bloor, chairman Forest Ward Labour Party; Dave Caldwell, secretary Socialist Education Association Nottingham branch; Jack Charlesworth, secretary of the Nottingham and District Trades Council; John Daniels, educationist; Councillor Flewitt, secretary Lace Makers Union; George Godfrey, secretary Mapperley Ward Labour Party; Councillor Greenaway, Manvers Ward; Bob Gregory, U.S.D.A.W.; Lionel Jacobs, vice-chairman Trades Council; Pat Jordan, Nottingham Co-op Society Political Committee; Rod Kreizman, treasurer South Nottingham Labour Party; Leo Keely, Nottingham City Labour Party Executive; Bert Mee, secretary North Nottingham Labour Party; Tony Morris, South Notts. Federation of Young Socialists; Judy Palfreman, chairman Nottingham University Socialist Society; Councillor Pate, Wollaton ward; A. Platt, chairman Nottingham branch Tailor & Garment Workers Union; Peter Price, prospective Labour candidate Mapperley ward; Brian Simister, N.U.P.E. organiser; Ken Simpson, union organiser; Arthur Tideswell, area secretary Fire Brigades Union; Vincent Walker, secretary Central Nottingham Labour Party; Sid Williams, union organiser; Peter Wyncoll, secretary West Bridgford Labour Party; and Dick Skyers, Metal Mechanics.. All the signatories are in their personal capacity.

Members of the solidarity committee have been active in getting collections made in various organisations, including the University Socialist Society, St. Anns ward Labour Party, Manvers ward Labour Party, etc.

Ed. Note: The committee are anxious to get further signatures in the Nottingham area and we ask all readers to help in this. We would also make the point that this form of activity could perhaps be repeated in many other struggles.

BANK UNION CONSIDERS INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The National Union of Bank Employees is considering taking industrial action against four banks. These are the banks which were involved in the Cameron Commission - National Provincial, Martins, District and Yorkshire. They have point blank refused to accept Lord Cameron's suggestion that they might allow officials to call on the management rather than restricting their representations to letters.



### MALCOLM X BREAKS WITH THE BLACK MUSLIMS

by Peter Wilkins

On March 8 Malcolm X announced that he had broken with Elijah Muhammad's "Nation of Islam" movement and is establishing a new black nationalist party. Malcolm X had hitherto been the most prominent leader of the Black Muslims after the Prophet himself. "I remain a Muslim" Malcolm X said, "but the main emphasis of the new movement will be Black Nationalism as a political concept and form of social action against the white oppressors. During my 90 days of silence" (imposed on Malcolm X by Muhammed after his applause of Kennedy's assassination) "I have reached the conclusion that I can best spread Mr. Muhammed's message by staying out of the Nation of Islam." Explaining his reason for stepping out of Elijah Muhammed's family controlled organization. Malcolm X said the movement as constituted and oriented had "gone as far as it can" because it was too narrowly sectarian and too inhibited to assume its responsibilities in the nation's social struggles.

The present size of the Muslim movement is difficult to estimate - though the figure of 100,000 members is sometimes mentioned. It is undoubtedly the most influential of the Negro movements among the Negro working class - it is also one of the most militant...Malcolm X has further said that the main of his new party will be to convert the Negro population from nonviolence to active self-defence against white supremacists in all parts of the country.

### NEW TREND IN UNION DEMANDS

by a special correspondent

The trend on the American trade-union scene for demands to be for fringe benefits rather than straight wage increases was further reinforced by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union when it recently took the position of wanting the equivalent of a 5% wage increase applied to fringe benefits. President Knight said that his union is taking this position as it requires more "net" for the worker. "Wage increases in the past," he said, "have been diluted by inflation. We get more money for our people, and they report to us that the grocer raises his prices, the landlord hikes the rent and taxes go up, so there isn't a hell of a lot left for the worker except higher costs."

O.C.A.W. wants the 5% increase to apply to one or more of the existing benefits: hospital and medical, pensions, severance pay and holidays. If the union were to win its demands, the bill for the oil industry's fringe benefits would be pushed up to 26% of total pay costs. Knight is also very worried about unemployment. "From what we have learned," he said, "automation has caused a disemployment of about 20% in the oil industry within the last 5 or 6 years. And we see more coming"...Knight continued, "Our militancy, purposefulness and willingness have never been firmer. At last years O.C.A.W. conference we got a 55% increase in dues....a clear demonstration of support." The union is rapidly building up a strike fund and is expected to threaten a national strike later this year.

CASTRO RAPS THE CUBAN PRESS

by Syd Williamson (Havana)

There was a reception committee welcoming the the arrival of the Cuban fishermen (captured by the U.S. Navy) in Havana earlier this month - Fidel was, of course, present and a newspaper man started questioning Fidel about what he thought of the American Government, etc., Fidel stopped him in his tracks when he stated that instead of talking only about the illegal seizure of the boats the press should also be writing about the future of the Cuban fishing industry. While on the subject Fidel said he would like to see the truth being printed in the press. This had recently given out figures to the effect that in some sectors of the fishing industry output had doubled - which was incorrect. Fidel stated that the press should not cheat the people nor be the willing tools for such deceit. They should check up all information they receive.

This shows in my opinion that whilst generally supporting the Government the press in Cuba will be encouraged to be independent from the state.

Ed. Note: Our correspondent ended his letter by asking us to do all in <sup>our</sup> power to support the Ban the Bomb Movement, for the sake of the Cuban people.

NEW ZEALAND COMMUNIST PARTY EXPELS 2 PRO-CHINESE by O. Gager (Timaru)

On 19th February the New Zealand Communist Party announced the expulsion of 2 members in Christchurch, New Zealand's third biggest city. They are John Sturt and Matthew Lygate, both militants of long standing and exponents of a pro-Chinese orientation for the Party. They were accused of "persistent factionalism" and "making threats against the Party that they would take action...detrimental to the good name of the Party" (quotes from Peoples' World).

Sturt and Lygate claim that they were in fact for opposing Party tactics which were in contradiction to the expressed principles of both the New Zealand and Chinese C.P.s, and that the action taken against them was in open disregard of the Party's constitution. They accused the Canterbury District leadership of the Party of making concessions to a centrist wing of the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy. One-third of the Canterbury membership of the C.P. have resigned in sympathy with Sturt and Lygate, including all but one of the Lyttelton branch, which consists mainly of dockers. The Y.C.L. is officially supporting the expelled members.

This new tendency took a leading part in the demonstration against the South African cricket team on March 3rd. Its younger members have worked closely with left-wing Labour militants in the University of Canterbury New Left Club, and the Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

YOUNG SOCIALIST BURNS HIMSELF TO DEATH from Nigel Harris (Calcutta)

A 22-year-old Praja Socialist Party member burned himself to death in Fatehgarh, in mid-February, in protest against the Government's inability to check rising prices. Neighbours broke their way into his room only to find the man, Vishvambhar Singh, lying charred in a cot with a tin of petrol nearby. He left a note explaining his reasons for burning himself to death.

MADRID WORKERS DEMONSTRATE

Clashes between trade union officials and workers occurred on 10th March in Madrid when some 600 workers demonstrated in front of the headquarters of the Spanish national trade union centre. This was just before the conclusion of the second day's proceedings of the congress of the state-run Spanish trade unions, the so-called "sindicatos verticales", grouping together workers, employers and technicians. Shouting 'we want trade union freedom', the workers tried to enter the congress hall, but access was blocked by congress officials and the police. The police brutally attacked the demonstrators and some of them were injured. A number were also arrested.

CONCENTRATION OF INDUSTRY IN WEST GERMANY

After over three years of study the report on industrial concentration in West Germany is ready for Government consideration. About 2,000 firms were included in the study to ensure that the top 1,000 firms were covered. Most revealing of the figures in the report are those concerned with the proportion of a particular industry controlled by the 'top ten' firms in that industry. It gives the changes which have taken place since 1954 in the proportions. They reveal the following picture:

<u>INDUSTRY</u>	Proportion 1954	Proportion 1960
Refining and coal processing	72.6%	91.5%
Tobacco manufacturing	68.8	84.5
Ship Construction	71.5	69.0
Vehicles	58.6	67.0
Rubber, Asbestos processing	60.7	59.7
Iron and Steel	54.6	57.6
Glass	45.7	51.6
Non-ferrous metals	44.0	44.7
Coal Mining	34.6	42.0
Chemicals	37.6	40.6
Electrotechnical industry	37.8	38.4

COMMON MARKET INSTITUTION WORKERS FORM STRIKE COMMITTEE

The I.C.F.T.U. Bulletin of 12th March reported:

Discontent over salaries has recently led to protests and strikes in some of the European institutions - particularly at Euratom nuclear research centre at Ispra in Italy - and a special strike committee has now been set up as a result of a meeting in Luxemburg on 29th February of the leaders of the trade unions to which employees in the European institutions belong. This committee, representing the staff of the European Coal and Steel Community, Euratom, and the European Economic Community, is ready to organise a strike if its members' demands for salary increases are not met. The Council of Ministers of the E.E.C. recently rejected the unions' demand for an 8% increase in salaries.

SERIOUS TEEN-AGE UNEMPLOYMENT IN U.S.A. from an American reader

The Wall Street Journal, most authoritative voice of American big business, carried an article on March 3rd on the question of teen-age unemployment. It described teen-age joblessness as the most worrying aspect of the U.S. unemployment problem. "Nearly one out of every six teen-agers whowants work can't find any. That's about three times the over-all U.S. rate. Nearly a quarter of America's four million unemployed, in fact, are teen-agers," it stated. The paper went on to say that "teen-age unemployment is causing widespread concern not only because of its considerable magnitude but also because it has been increasing so spectacularly...the present one-sixth rate for teen-agers compares with only about one in ten as recently as five years ago. And the rate among the unschooled, unskilled dropouts, who constitute roughly half of today's job-seeking youths, is one in three, up from.. approximately one in eight only five years ago.

"Converging to force teen-age joblessness still higher are the twin pressures of population and automation. Last year 2.8million American youth reached 18. But next year, as a result of the great post-world war II baby boom, 3.8 million will reach 18, and the number turning 18 will remain at about that high level through the rest of the 1960s and into the 1970s. This imminent stampede of teen-agers into the job market means the U.S. economy will have to provide some 20 million more jobs in the next ten years if unemploymet is to be held down, according to economists. The projected increase, amounting to about two million additional jobs yearly, is more than twice the nation's actual job growth of 900,000 annually during the last dozen years, these analysts add gloomily."

The Wall Street Journal continued, "Automation also puts pressure on the teen-age job market because it is the teen-ager who most often lacks the training necessary to land skilled jobs that can't easily be automated. Social workers note that approximately half of those teen-age dropouts who do manage to find jobs wind up doing common labour, a type of work that has been losing ground for many years, as machines take over such chores, and now accounts for less than 10% of total U.S. employment." The paper said that the repercussions of teen-age unemployment are far-reaching indeed, "they are reflected in the spiraling teen-age crime rate in most large cities. And they are seen in tha nation's rapidly expanding relief rolls - expanding not because the relief ranks of the blind, disabled and aged are swelling - but because increasing millions of teen-age mathers, deserted by their jobless teen-age boy friends, need the dole to support their illegitimate offspring."

YOUTH FORCED TO LEAVE SCOTLAND

Information given by Godber in the House of Commons on March 16th, revealed the extent to which young people have been forced to leave Scotland to find work. The number of boys employed in Scotland declined by 600 between 1951 and 1963 -- this compares with an increase of 111,900 in the rest of the country. There was an increase in the number of girls employed of 4,400 compared with 140,400 for the rest of the country. If the figure was proportionate it would have been over 4 times as great.

A VISIT TO AN ANTI-STRIKE MEETING

by Joan Holman &amp; Silva Riley

On Friday, March 13th, the two of us decided to go along to the Raleigh anti-strike wives' meeting, which had been so blatantly advertised under a report in the previous night's paper, the Nottingham Evening Post. Apart from the more obvious reasons for going, such as to find out how many people attended the meeting, we were also interested to see what sort of women attended and whether or not they had any political leanings, or even any clear-cut political ideas.

So, flashing wedding rings and explaining that our husbands had been laid-off, we got into the meeting, held in the hallway of a local church hall. It was not well attended (18 women, including us and the reporter), or formal in any way. Women constantly interrupted each other, and we formed the opinion that they might have been friends prior to the strike. Handley, the leader was the only one with anything like initiative. Sample Dialogue: "Here's the Queen's letter if anyone wants to see it." Squeals of delight. "Oh, yes. She must have received it the day she had the baby."

In view of the amount of publicity accorded these women by the local press, we were struck by the inefficient, rather pathetic nature of this group, and by their unreasoned fear of the A.E.U.,

ABERDEEN STANDS FIRM

from Alec Bagley (Aberdeen)

At its meeting on Monday, March 16th, the Aberdeen Town Council voted by 19 votes to 11 to reaffirm its decision to boycott South African goods. The discussion was very heated and one Conservative councillor was suspended. Thus the campaign by the local press heavily backed by the South African Foundation has failed to reverse the decision which aroused so much opposition from the pro-Apartheid forces. A factor which is extremely interesting is that since the row began a South African firm has placed a £ $\frac{1}{4}$  million order for fish. The left is intrigued to know why the local press has not referred to this matter - don't they know about the contract or are they suppressing the information?

The Labour majority were heartened by the support they had received locally and nationally. The most important local support was the unanimous resolution passed by the Aberdeen Trades Council which also called for trade unionists not to buy South African goods and for pressure to be applied on the Government to apply sanctions on the South African Government. Among the messages of support were personal letters from Tony Greenwood and Anthony Wedgewood Benn, resolutions from Oxford City Labour group, Edinburgh City Labour group, North East Division of N.A.L.S.O., Bristol University Socialist Society, Norbury Labour Party, Woking Young Socialists, Saltcoats Labour Party, and a number of trade union branches.

FEELING STILL RUNNING HIGH IN DENBY STRIKE from M. Bennett (Bradford)

Last week a mass parade of pickets, carrying slogans, hooted, booed and jeered the scabs working at William Denby's as they left in a convoy of cars and vans. Photographs in the local press showed large numbers of police 'keeping order'. At one time when one of the vans stopped the pickets banged on the sides, and the police came in to clear a way for the van. The militancy of the workers is shown by the fact the number of pickets was the biggest for some weeks.

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