

# BIG FLAME

Paper of the Revolutionary Socialist Organisation Big Flame

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10p

## JUDGES MAKE LAWS TO SUIT THEM....

"250 PICKETS arrested for obstruction at Grunwicks"

"SOLDIER given a suspended sentence on rape conviction to save his career."

"EX-ETONIAN major given suspended sentence for armed robbery"

These headlines have all appeared in newspapers recently. What they show clearly is the bias of the law— there is one law for working class people, another for police, soldiers, old Etonians.

But that is not the only important point to be learned from recent legal decisions. Another is the way crimes against women and children are treated so leniently by judges and juries — women and children are seen by them as men's property and it's taken for granted that nothing you do with your own property is a crime.

### Property Rights

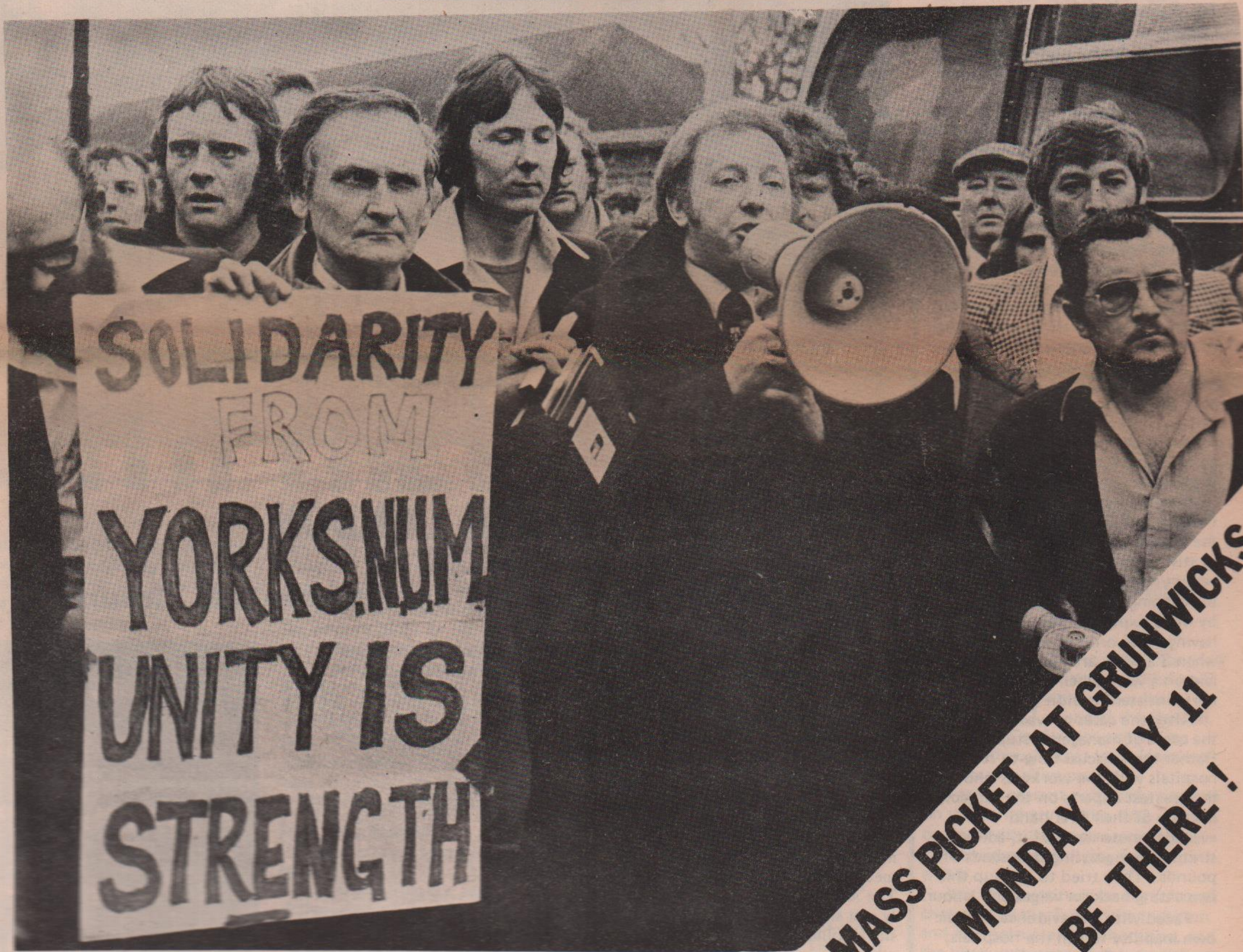
In fact the prime function of the law in our society is to protect property rights. To make sure that those who have no possessions have as few rights as possible and if through struggle they make gains — the law is there to limit these gains.

So when the press and the media are demanding 'a rule by law' we must be very clear what this means: it means making normal and acceptable the power of property.

### How to change it

Once we have seen what the law represents, the problem remains of how to change it. On the surface of things laws are changed in parliament, but they can also be changed by working class pressure outside Parliament.

It was the miners militancy that got rid of the Industrial Relations Act, it was the mass mobilisations of dockers that forced the Official Solicitor to 'spring' the dockers from Pentonville jail, and it is the



Miners support Grunwick Picket Laurence Sparham (I.F.L.)

## .. WE CAN CHANGE THEM

mass support in the Grunwick picket that will force the courts to enforce the ACAS decision that a union (APEX) be allowed to recruit at Grunwick's.

The right wing (see the article about the National Association for Freedom, page 6) is putting a lot of resources into its offensive in the courts. Only a determined effort by progressive sectors of the working class will defeat them. In particular

■ Flying pickets and national

blacking are needed to change the law on picketing and Criminal Trespass in favour of workers.

We should be clear that the law about picketing has been left deliberately vague to leave all the options of the police open. What the police are doing at Grunwicks is escorting the scab workers and materials into the plant.

■ A strong Womens Movement mobilising against backwood

changes in the Abortion Law and for a law which gives women the Right to Choose. And fighting for Womens Power — organised self defence, anti-rape squads and rape support groups — against the rapists and their backers — the judges, the police and the law.

The rape law will be enforced and changed when women force the judges to recognise their rights.

OF 90 JUDGES in 1975 (House of Lords, Court of Appeal, Chancery Division, Queens Bench and Family Division) at least 75(83%) went to public schools. No less than 76 (84%) went to Oxford or Cambridge. Where ascertainable, occupations of fathers of these judges included at least three judges, one county clerk, nine barristers, three top-ranking officers and six middle-ranking officers.

# CUTS...FIGHT HOSPITAL CUTS...FIGHT

THE E.G.A. occupation started it off. Now the fight against hospital closures is gaining momentum all over the country. The cuts *can* be fought. The struggles on this page suggest some of the ways.

Occupations to keep the hospitals open.

Occupations of administrators offices and meeting to force them to discuss their plans before they can put them into effect.

Bulletins and public meetings to inform the users about the situation and to win their support for the struggle against the cuts.

It can be hard having to do things like this for the first time. What makes it especially hard for many health workers is the isolation they often feel: the sense that they're all alone in the battle. But on this page you can read about ways of spreading support for the battle

against the cuts to the surrounding community.

The battle is worthwhile. Unless it is won, the health service of the future will offer impersonal treatment for those who can't afford anything better in vast, factory-like general hospitals. The rich will be

able to pay for treatment in the private clinics now sprouting up all over Britain.

Meanwhile, hospital workers are coming to demand a real say in the running of the health service — because they know best how to organise and improve it.

## LIVERPOOL Health Authority occupied

Geoffrey Bateson is in no doubt about the unpopularity of the cuts in hospital services — he's in charge of carrying them through. In the last few weeks, the Liverpool Area Health Authority, which he administers, has

had to abandon a meeting when the public turned up in force for a discussion about the cuts.

had its offices occupied by hospital workers demanding an end to the cuts. Now, before it meets again on July 1st., Bateson has had to agree to a meeting with the hospital unions to discuss the AHA's proposals for cuts in Liverpool of £1 million with 500 jobs lost before April.

Long before they arrived for work, the Health Administrators offices had been occupied by hospital workers and users. Bateson and Dalton, the Medical Officer, then faced an angry barrage of questions and demands in their own conference room. After an hour they had had enough. They asked permission for a short adjournment and a few minutes later returned with a promise to meet the stewards and officials to discuss their proposals for cuts in Liverpool.

They didn't take up the offer made by Frank Orr, a NUPE steward at St Pauls Eye Hospital, to call a halt to lightening strikes in return for a halt to the cuts while discussions go on. The A.H.A. intend the cuts to go ahead.

What really and visibly stunned Bateson and Dalton into silence were the dozens of examples of administrative incompetence cited by the occupying workers: sweets with the evening meal being replaced by more expensive veg; syringes having to be ordered in hundreds when 3 a week are needed; carpets laid on a ward when the charge nurse insisted he didn't want them.

After the cases of waste, came the cases of managerial stupidity. Rather than discuss how to run the hospitals with the workers, who are the greatest experts on the subject because of their first-hand everyday experience of it, administrators were wasting thousands of pounds. They tried to re-coup this by cutting back on wages and labour.

Faced with the evidence of their own inability to run the hospitals, Bateson and Dalton could only stand and nod as every point was made



Frank Orr, NUPE branch secretary, explains how not to run the hospital

## WEST LONDON

### Campaign to save the Western

"Without the Western, we've nowhere to go. I'm a street trader. I'd have been dead years ago if it wasn't for this place. Where am I to go if it closes?" (Maggie Chapman, aged 74 — a patient).

The Western Hospital is in Fulham in West London. It's an old hospital surrounded by grass and trees. The atmosphere is friendly. Everyone knows each other.

There are 111 beds at the Western. Some are for infectious diseases: anything from pyrexia (high temperature of unknown origin which is quite common in small children) and food poisoning; to smallpox.

"Elderly people have elderly friends and relatives, and if they go away they can't be visited. I would rather die happily at home than unhappily elsewhere." (Mrs. Van Dyke — patient)

Some beds are for old people and some are for chest complaints. But the Area Health Authority plans to close the Western and at least 6 other small hospitals in the area, in favour of lumping everything together in the big general hospitals. Over the next 10 years this will mean a loss of beds of 50% as well as a loss of jobs.

"All you need is one bad flu epidemic and the area won't be able to cope." (A sister)

So a campaign has started to keep the place open.

There have been letters, demonstrations, letters to MPs and the mayor. And on Monday May 16th, the workers at the Western came out on strike for a day to lobby David Ennals, the Minister for Health, who was visiting the nearby Charing X Hospital.

There are regular meetings for all staff inside the hospital, and now workers with the local Women and Health group have produced a bulletin to make sure all patients, workers and local people know what's happening.

To support the Western contact Mac: Joint Union Committee, Western Hospital, Seagrave Rd. London SW 6. Phone 01 385-2105.

Big Flame Photo

## SOUTH LONDON

### Another occupation against another closure

LAST MONTH some of the 50 workers at the Weir Maternity Hospital in Lambeth, south London, started an occupation to protest against the rumours of a closure. The Area Health Authority has been gradually running down the hospital over the last year — telling GPs not to refer patients there, offering the nurses and midwives jobs in other local hospitals and converting two of the four wards into administrative offices for the A.H.A.

The workers — nearly all women, many of them middle aged with children, have organised a workers Action committee that meets every day and holds a mass meeting every Wednesday morning. The Action Committee was originally just shop stewards and a few of the auxiliaries, but now most of the workers — auxiliaries, nurses and midwives — have joined the union.

NUPE, are attending the mass meetings and have stopped taking jobs offered them at other hospitals.

After two public meetings a support committee was formed which has organised two very successful street meetings with local people queuing up to sign the petition against the closure. People in the support committee go to the hospital regularly to

talk with the workers and the women's sub-committee has contacted 70 local doctors urging them to continue sending patients to the Weir.

There are plans to lobby the next meeting of the AHA on July 9th when the actual decision to close or not will be taken. If the AHA decides to close the hospital the workers plan to have a full occupation — but only if NUPE will make the strike official. The union hasn't yet made it clear if it will support the action. Money and messages of support can be sent to: Weir Action Committee (c/o shop stewards), Weir Hospital, Weir Rd. London SW 12.

AT THE June 13th meeting of the Sheffield Area Health Authority, the controversial proposal to close Thornbury Annexe (of Sheffield Children's Hospital) was defeated by ten votes to five. The brief but intensive campaign to 'Keep Thornbury Open' had been successful.

Thornbury is the main medical unit of the Children's Hospital with beds for 58 patients. In a report on proposed cuts published in 1976 by Sheffield Central District Community Health Council, it was stated that: 'Thornbury offers some specialised services which could not appropriately be offered elsewhere.' The unit provides a relatively 'non-hospitalised' environment which is not available elsewhere. It has built up considerable staff expertise in dealing with particular groups of children (e.g. Spina Bifida) which would be lost if the unit was split up. It provides paediatric nurse training which is not available at the Northern General Hospital. Thornbury's policy of

immediate 'admission for observation' is very important to parents.

The alternatives to Thornbury proposed by the management team were that two wards in the Childrens Hospital (stated to be unfit for surgical cases) were to be made available with approximately 30 beds. Although other beds could be utilised throughout the city hospitals there would still have been a reduction in the number of paediatric beds.

The committee to 'Keep Thornbury Open', consisting of parents, nurses, doctors and ancillary staff, collected 58,000 signatures in only 14 days and got the support of the Trades Council, Community Health Council, tenants associations, shop stewards committees and many more.

## SHEFFIELD

### First success

### in Children's

### Hospital campaign

Armed with this massive rejection of the proposal, members of the K.T.O. committee and many supporters attended the A.H.A. meeting. The Central District Management team had no alternative but to withdraw it and they informed the staff at Thornbury that the matter was now closed. The Committee feel however that this is only a reprieve and they must remain alert to the future situation.

We talked to a member of the campaign about how they organised the committee.

"In the first week, when we started petitioning, the Central District nursing Officer came up and tried to intimidate the nurses she told them it wasn't the done thing and said nurses should have humility and loyalty — but that's only coming from one side — they don't think twice about lowering the status of jobs. The nurses were so angry they joined the Union on the spot — something the shop steward had been trying to get them to do for years.

No-one wants to see a children's hospital closing. There's nowhere else to replace it unless they build a new one. At Christmas they shut a ward down and redecorated it, and it's not been opened since.

At the AHA meeting the chairman kept stressing that Sheffield had too many paediatric beds, yet

15 beds have gone through the closure of that ward alone.

The authorities never came to tell us the situation till rumours about closing had been going round for months. They finally decided to tell the nurses after they'd announced the proposal for the closure in the morning paper.

The Area Official of NUPE sent a letter to Muriel, the shop steward about a meeting he had with the AHA on the 9th June. (4 days before the AHA meeting) where he agreed to the "rationalisation". Muriel rang all the shop stewards to get them to write and give support to the KTO campaign and tell the Area Official to come down to shop floor level. He made the decision completely on his own even though NUPE union policy is to fight the cuts."

A public meeting has now been called by the committee to discuss further action against health cuts.

MANY PEOPLE on the left, both inside and outside groups, are questioning ideas and ways of organising in a new and healthy way. The question of a serious re-groupment if forces is being posed for the first time for many years. Yet this is at an early and often confused stage. The tradition of sectarianism and mistrust on the left is shown by the reaction to Big Flame working with the International Marxist Group on elections.

Many people on the left believed that Big Flame was about to join the IMG. Well, we're not. At the moment we consider the general political differences between us to be quite strong. However, we're willing to develop unity in action with anyone on the far left. On the question of elections we agree broadly with the IMG. We both want to see a campaign for Socialist Unity candidates that not only puts an alternative to Labour's policies, but also builds local and national struggles in the areas. There is little doubt that such a united campaign echoes the desire of many working class people for greater unity. Of course, many militants are rightly suspicious of election campaigns. We have to show them that we are not interested in one-off stunts. Far from diverting the day to day struggle, it is precisely on building these struggles that the campaigns will be based.

The IMG is trying to re-group forces around a new more open newspaper, Socialist Challenge, and propagandising for a 'unified revolutionary organisation'. While we welcome this new openness, we have disagreements on its implications. We agree with the Revolutionary Marxist

Current when they say that merely posing the necessity for unity is not good enough. It would be pointless

*As our readers will know Big Flame is in the process of investigating the possibilities of forming with others, a new revolutionary organisation. This investigation will take the form of co-operation in joint political work and discussion. We are particularly interested in responses to our 'Manifesto for a New Revolutionary Socialist Organisation'. This page of the newspaper is open to any letters. Longer contributions will be printed in our Internal Bulletin.*



# TOWARDS A NEW REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

to put a number of groups together whose existing differences would simply be reproduced in a larger, faction-ridden organisation. The process of building a new organisation must be a longer process. More importantly, it must be tested in practice by joint activity. The key test within this is whether it succeeds in reaching and being fought for in the mass of the working class, instead of the usual fusion at the top.

Also, any new organisation would have to recognise the importance of

different revolutionary traditions and experiences. The IMG still sees the Trotskyist tradition as the only pole which other groups will be pulled towards. While recognising that any new organisation would have to incorporate aspects of that tradition, we want to help to create a new political tendency which is rooted in solving the problems facing class struggle in Britain today.

Our open conference on July 9th will propose to the groups and individuals

attending that, if broad political agreement can be reached, a process of discussion and action should begin towards investigating the possibilities of a new organisation in practice.

This could include joint activity and a common publication co-ordinated on a regional and national level. Big Flame is also willing to open up many of our mass interventions to be carried out jointly with anyone interested in the project.

## WHY WE DECIDED TO WORK WITH THE PROJECT

THE NUMBER of revolutionary organisations in Britain has increased strikingly in the past few years. Why are there so many different groups and why can't they unite? The answer isn't easy. All of the groups honestly believe that they have good reasons for working on their own. Nobody is going to build revolutionary unity by ignoring this fact. True some small groups may want to go on preserving the purity of their politics. But we believe that most of them find no joy in existing as small isolated groupings, overburdened with having to combine day to day political work with the internal chores that a "proper" organisation has to see to. We in the Revolutionary Marxist Current have always seen our goal as trying to promote a larger revolutionary regroupment around the political ideas we think are important. We are sure other groups share this view.

Right now there are two major regroupment efforts in Britain. One has been launched by the International Marxist Group, around their new paper, Socialist Challenge. The other is being organised around Big Flame

The RMC has decided to join in the regroupment initiative of Big Flame. In addition, since we recognise that any regroupment will take some time to build, we are prepared to carry out a period of close joint work with Big Flame, so that we can integrate our efforts and fuse in the autumn. For a group that has always seen itself as part of the 'trotskyist' tradition this may seem a surprising step. So we think it is important to explain it.

### WHAT KIND OF UNITY

The RMC thinks that the IMG and Big Flame initiatives have come about for good reason: large

sections of the left realise that the old ways of conducting politics no longer work. Yet we think that there are important differences in their two approaches.

### A LETTER FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST CURRENT

Big Flame has issued its call around its Manifesto. We disagree with parts of that document, to be sure. Its strength, however, is that it calls for regroupment around a basic set of political ideas on how revolutionaries should be organising their work in Britain today.

The IMG has called for regroupment on the simple idea that revolutionary unity is "good", and that all revolutionaries should therefore be inside one organisation. They have opened up their new paper in a welcome effort to make it a focus for such a regroupment.

But this is not enough. To us it is an abstract call for unity around the simple desire to be united. It ignores the important question, unity around what?

Revolutionaries can only unite if they have a shared view of what they should be doing. This can contain large differences on given issues. But they must have a common outlook on what is hap-

pening in society and how to build socialism. Such a common ground does not yet exist in Britain today. We wish it did, but it doesn't. We have to build it. The only way to do that is around unity in action. If the left can successfully unite around joint initiatives — as they are now trying to do around electoral work — such unity can be built from the bottom up. The RMC has always advocated this type of unity. We will do every thing we can to create it.

### WHY BIG FLAME?

One of the great obstacles to revolutionary unity up to now has been what we see as the sectarianism of the large left organisations.

One aspect of this is the bureaucratic internal life of groups like the SWP (formerly IS), the IMG and the WRP. We don't want to imply that they are all the same in this regard. But in our view none of them has offered a democratic internal life, where free discussion could go on and where entrenched leaderships did not try to protect their positions of authority. This unhealthy internal life is responsible for the high turnover in these organisations and the reluctance of many people around the left to join large groups. Perhaps the IMG (which is the only one of these groups to favour regroupment) is making efforts to correct these problems. But they will have to prove it if people are going to believe they are healthy focus for regroupment.

Another problem is these organisations' public practice. Big Flame is to us the only major organisation to have seen the need to go outside factory struggles (which are indeed important) and consistently assist the struggle against the oppression of women and sexual minorities.

the opposition to Britain's war against the Irish people, and the fight against racism and fascism. What is more, they have seen the basic need to take these struggles into the working class as a way of combatting conservative, nationalist and sexist ideas that have had such a damaging effect on the class struggle as a whole.

Although other left organisations take these questions up, their work has not been consistent — largely because they do not recognise that these struggles are important in their own right. Instead they have tended to see them as areas where they could extend their influence and possibly recruit.

We have public differences with Big Flame — e.g. over the Common Market (we say abstain on it) or the nature of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. Some are wider than our formal differences with the IMG. But in our view Big Flame has managed to combine a non-sectarian way of organising around important issues with a healthy internal life. We believe that working within Big Flame will give us the best chance to argue for and advance our political ideas. It will also give us the best opportunity to learn from the experiences of comrades doing other areas of political work.

To us this is the only real basis for regroupment. The first important step in this direction will be the regroupment conference in Liverpool on 9th July. We will be working hard in the coming months to encourage all revolutionary forces and individuals with who we have contact to help build this initiative.

Revolutionary Marxist Current  
Box RMC  
100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1.

## LETTERS

Dear Comrade,

After reading the Draft Manifesto, I wanted to write a few lines in support of your project for a new revolutionary organisation. The Manifesto lacked the usual mystifications that usually appear in the revolutionary press.

It also represents something new in terms of the revolutionary left in Britain. The section "Party and Class" was amongst the most interesting, it rejected the strictly "Leninist" conception of the party and democratic centralism which is the starting point for so many revolutionary organisations, (especially Trotskyist organisations)

I have personal experience of this conception of the party (that is the idea that revolutionary consciousness must be introduced from outside the working class struggle and experience. Lenin "The history of all countries proves that the working class on its own is only capable of developing trade unionist consciousness" (in 'What is to be Done') as I've been in the I.M.G. for two years and before that I was a sympathiser G.C.R. (4th International) in Italy. It was only a year ago, after staying in Italy for a month that I became interested in the development of Lotta Continua.

Since then we've had the 2nd Congress of Lotta Continua the splits in A.O. and P.D.U.P. and the growth of the 'autonomous' movement. These events have taught me that it is the movement that must build the revolutionary party and not the party that must build the movement. In Britain today a rigidly structured 'commandist' organisation cannot be flexible enough to assimilate even the experience of the first skirmishes in the situation of increasing class conflict. The inability of the I.M.G. to recognise the achievements of organisations like Lotta Continua which have been built very much from the movement is something which has been worrying me more and more.

I think that the ideas that the new organisation could introduce would be a gain for the revolutionary left as a whole.

Communist greetings

A.H. London

Dear Comrades,

I have been impressed over a period by the thoughtful and constructive character of your publications. I attended the Radical Education Conference some time ago and thought that your intervention was a positive one.

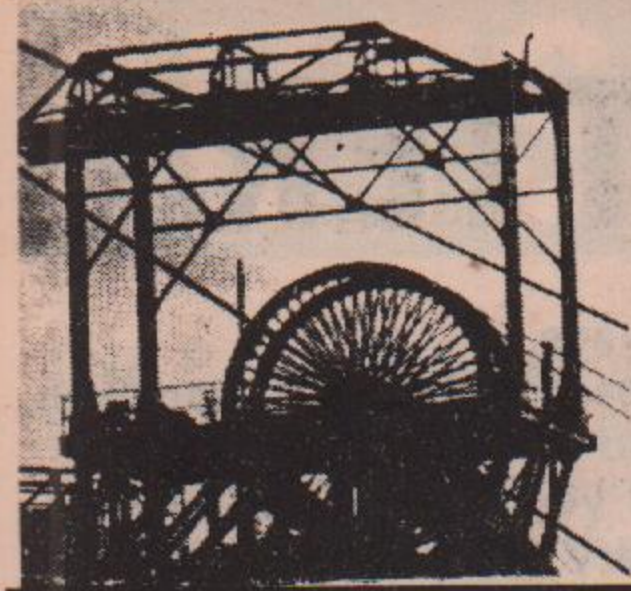
I am at present politically situated on the periphery of the IMG. I am in contact with this organisation and am considering applying for membership.

It is in my attitude to the role and character of the Trotskyist tradition and its international elaboration, and the likely influence of this tradition in the future, that I feel tentative about the IMG, rather than in my response to the Action Programme and present intervention of the group, which I am impressed by.

I was interested, therefore, to hear that Big Flame had produced a pamphlet on Trotskyism. I am interested to know how Big Flame, which I regard as the only credible far left group that does not stem from the Trotskyist tradition in Britain, characterises British Trotskyism,

D.H. London E. 17

**ONE DAY CONFERENCE**  
**'The need for a Revolutionary Socialist Organisation'**  
sessions on 'the current political situation' and the 'tasks facing the revolutionary left'.  
**LIVERPOOL JULY 9th.**  
Comrades wishing to attend this conference please write for more information to  
Conference Organiser,  
217 Wavertree Road,  
**LIVERPOOL 7.**



# PITS BONUS SCHEME COULD SMASH MINERS UNITY

"Having to come here is bad enough — any work they get out of us is a bonus for the Coal Board." That's how one miner, soon to retire, saw the situation when asked about the planned introduction of a bonus incentive scheme to the pits

Unfortunately, many miners aren't going to see it that way. After two years of rigid wage restraint and drastic fall in living standards more money in the wage packet through a productivity scheme will be a great temptation. In 1974, in a national ballot, the miners threw out such a scheme because then it seemed possible to win wage rises on the basic rate. Now, after a concerted campaign by the NCB, the press, television, Government and sections of the union's national leadership, the determination not to be drawn into a 'dog eats dog' wages system has weakened

## WHAT WOULD AN INCENTIVE SCHEME INVOLVE?

A working party was set up to look into it months ago — recommendations are that an agreement on production levels in accordance with a nationally agreed pattern, will be negotiated at colliery level for each coal face on the basis of method study assessment."

## WHY ARE THEY TRYING TO BRING IT IN?

There are three main reasons: to buy the miners off and avoid any confrontation with future wages policy; to undermine job organisation, get rid of 'unproductive' pits and increase output per man-shift; and to divide the union and break up the solidarity and power that has built up in the last 10 years.

## SOCIAL CONTRACT

The Government would like a strict Phase 3 but it looks like they aren't going to get it. So they are looking for ways to buy off or divert powerful industrial sectors. With the engineers differentials will be an issue. In the pits, as in other industries, productivity is the answer — tie wage increases to production increases and you keep the bosses happy. It's not just that though — if militant sections are bought off as special cases on the basis of productivity, other workers will find it harder to follow.

If the basis of a miner getting more money is more work, more production then what about a hospital ancillary worker — he or she hasn't a leg to stand on — hospitals don't 'produce' anything, they are supposed to be a service to the community. The same goes for most jobs in the public sector — teaching, hospitals etc. — what bargaining power do they have?

The Government may shed crocodile tears about the low-paid being left behind by the 'big battalions', but that's what the bosses want, and at the moment that's what the Labour Government is doing — giving the capitalists everything they ask for.

## IN THE PITS

The Coal Board don't just want more coal, they want more coal from fewer men (that's what they mean by 'higher productivity'). According to the NCB's 'Plan for Coal' they envisage 20,000 fewer workers by 1980. So what's all this talk about new pits, big investment etc.?

Because an NCB scheme would be based at a pit level, men would not want to stay at pits where production is down because of bad conditions. As Arthur Scargill puts it: "Men would obviously be attracted to pits where the rewards would be greater. This would lead to the run-down of pits which, money-wise, were less attractive."

concentrate its capital expenditure on more productive pits. The Board would be able to make its neglect of other pits respectable, arguing that the workforce was drifting away."

## SAFETY

It's the consequences for the actual job that are the worst aspects of the productivity scheme. At the moment the battle cry of the face supervisor is 'whatever you do, don't stop the job'. The pressure for production now is enormous (corners are cut, some people work machines without water to keep down the dust rather than wait for the water 'bags' to be fixed) — what will it be like when you've got a few quid rid-

ing on an extra strip of coal before knock-off? Any miner who has worked more than ten years in the pits will know the evils of the old contract system — men crippled, maimed and long since buried because they didn't take their time and do the job safely.

## UNITY

The miners in the seventies have developed a unity and solidarity that has given many an employer or cabinet minister sleepless nights. Because the NUM has a reputation of giving support (to the nurses in 1974, Grunwick's today), other unions and workers have been prepared to rally round, like at the mass picket at Salfrey Coke Depot in 1972. Unity within a union is worrying for the bosses — extend that unity between unions and workers and the bosses have kittens. Successive governments have

failed to beat the miners in a head on confrontation so they are now trying subtler methods.

"Miners are not daft, they know why people in the coal industry, backed by the media, want them to accept an incentive scheme. Quite simply, it would seriously divide the men of this union and set pit against pit as productivity levels undermined all other considerations. With disunity like that in a trade union, it is halfway to being smashed." (Scargill — Yorkshire Miner May/June 1977)

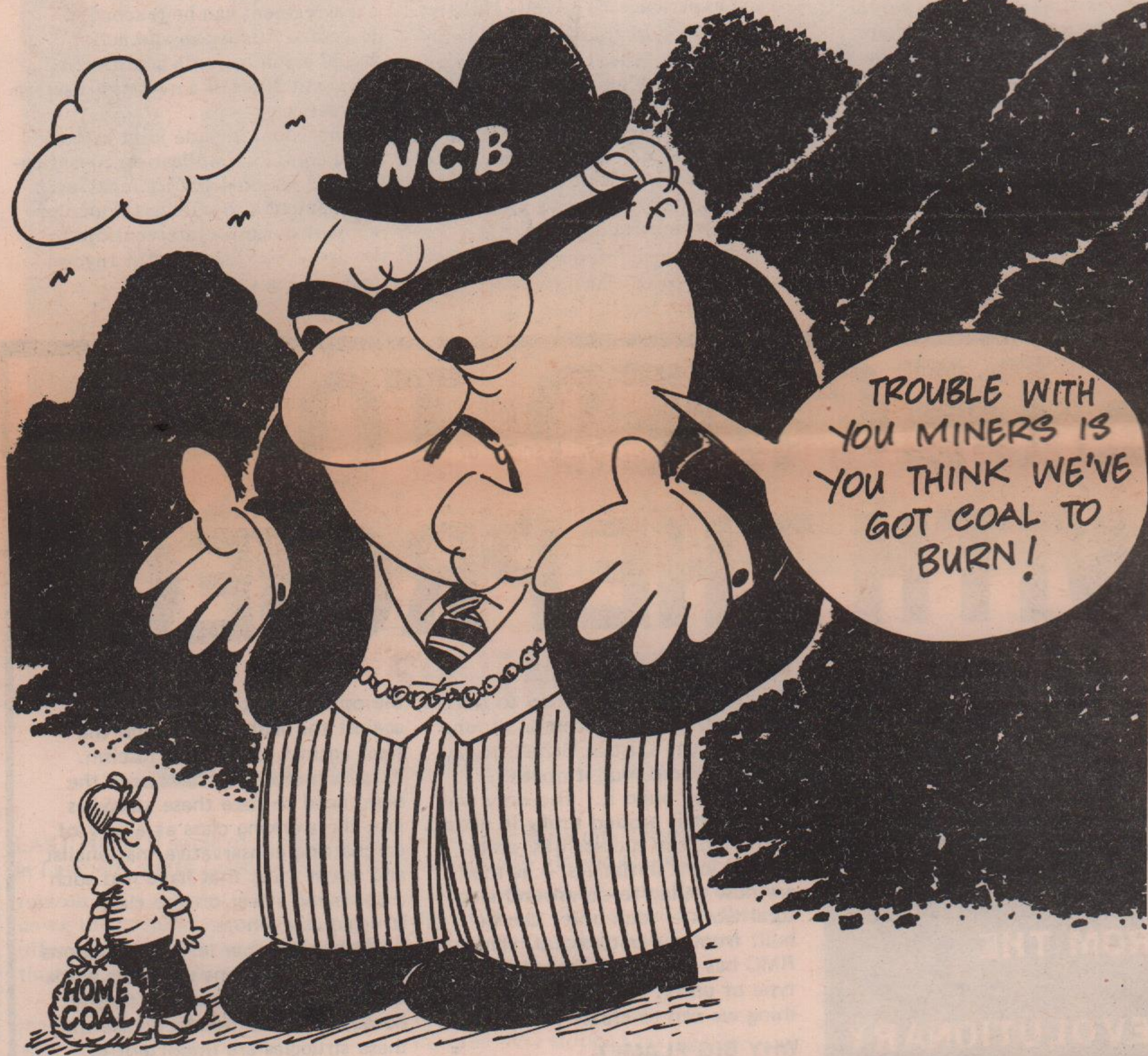
Squabbles about overtime are common at the moment because the only way to make up a decent wage is to put in more hours. With an incentive scheme that kind of back-

biting will be built in to the wages system.

The only way out of it is to fight for a big increase on the basic rate. Miners in less productive pits don't necessarily work less because they produce less coal — in fact, in most cases they work harder (coping with roof-falls, machine breakdowns etc.)

Everyone should be entitled to a living wage regardless of how much they produce to boost the employer's profits.

Some miners may think they'd be as well taking the bonus scheme as soon as possible and then putting in for a rise on the basic rate in March when the next increase is due. But this could be a disastrous plan — before long the miners as a whole could well be in no position to fight for anything. The better-off could find themselves begging for a bit more bonus and the rest will go to the wall.



## Threat to Coal Allowance

The penny-pinching Coal Board seems to be hell-bent on confrontation with the miners in the next few weeks over concessionary coal. They, with the backing of the National Executive of the union, want to standardise the amount of coal for miners and dependents at 8 tons.

This gives some areas, like Lancashire, more coal, but is a reduction in the allowance for Yorkshire, Notts., South Derbyshire and Leicestershire. Instead of pulling everybody up to the highest level they want, as in the case of Yorkshire, effectively to cut the wage by £1 a week.

The Coal Board is risking strike action (at the cost of £1 million per day in Yorkshire) simply to save £800,000 worth of coal. It would seem they are testing the unity and militancy on this issue, perhaps to soften the miners up for the bigger battles to come.

It's a bit of a sick joke to think that at a time when the NCB are putting forward an incentive scheme to produce more coal they aren't prepared to give a few cobbles back to the people who mine it.

THE CUTS in public spending are also affecting libraries. Capital spending on public libraries has been cut from £13 million last year to £2 million in 1979. The proportion of library money spent on books has dropped from 21% to 17% in five years, and book funds themselves have been cut by 35%.

Library opening hours in some areas (Surrey and Dorset) have been reduced to a 9-5, 5 day week. Other libraries, like the High Holborn in London, are threatened with closure. Library jobs have been lost — unemployment among library staff is 25% and a third of all library school students won't get jobs.

And this is in a situation where people are using public libraries more. Approximately 18 million people use libraries — 600,000,000 books go out on loan every year. But cuts in book spending, cuts in staff may all go unnoticed by the library user. Only when the library is threatened with closure do people respond. In the Hulme area of Manchester, the fight to save the library is involving many working class people.

## Keep our Library open!

rats, some smell. There isn't much play space. Last year a kid fell to his death. But Hulme had one good thing — a big modern library.

This year 'for purely financial reasons', 3 staff were lost by 'natural wastage', the 3 floors moved to one, 5,000 books transferred, the coffee



bar and toilets closed, the hours cut, the building shut Thursdays, the Childrens section closed. Meanwhile in nearby Moss Side, where the flats are no better, business was bad at the District Centre; Tesco's failed to rent their allotted space, and security guards couldn't control 'hooliganism'. The traders went to the corporation to ask for help.

To the Director of Cultural Services, Mr. Lovell, the answer was clear. The library was underused, and too good for Hulme — even after the cuts — and the Moss Side District Centre needed a civilising influence to bring culture and business.

A public meeting was called, and Mr. Lovell now faced over 200 angry tenants of Hulme and Moss Side. He said he was glad to see so many people interested in his library service! Tenants said a library in the District Centre would not serve Hulme people. No-one opposed a second library to be built in Moss Side. Hulme tenants are demanding: — 1. Immediate restoration of services. 2. Consultation with the Library Users Group over future improvements.

The next public meeting is Friday

"CLEARLY (Mr Holdsworth) was a man, who on the night in question, allowed his enthusiasm for sex to overcome his normal good behaviour."

This was part of the statement of three judges as they allowed a Coldstream Guard to go free after the court had been told of his brutal rape of a 17 year old woman.

Ask yourself are the following actions and injuries the result of "enthusiasm for sex"?

- a doctor told the court that the injuries to the girls vagina would have caused extreme pain which he had only seen in the cases of childbirth.
- During the assault the soldier had twice put his hand inside the girl's vagina. He was wearing rings on his hand.
- the girl suffered a broken rib, injuries to the kidney, torn ear lobes, bites to the breast and bruises to her thighs, ankles and neck.
- during the attacks which lasted more than an hour, the girl fainted with pain.

Or are they not an extreme example of the kind of humiliation and degradation that is imposed on all women in many different ways in society.

"In a society where man is seen as initiator and woman as consenter, aggressive and passive, hunter and prey, wolf and chick, then rape is not abnormal"  
*Rape Crisis Centre Report*

Why was the Coldstream Guard allowed to go free? The judge said:

"It appears that this young man has an excellent record of service in the Coldstream Guards extending over a period of 2½ years. The problem the court has to face in

this is whether we should allow the sentence (of three years) to stand which would destroy his career for ever....."

If he had committed any other crime would the courts have worried about his career? If he hadn't been a soldier would the courts have worried about his career?

Since the decision, outraged women have daubed huge slogans around Law Courts and other memorials in London: **What justice for Women, Dismiss the Judges, Women Against Rape Unite.** And an international meeting on rape has called for:

1. The dismissal of the judges in the case of the guardsman
2. Automatic financial compensation
3. Judicial acknowledgement of rape taking place within marriage.

The decision of the judges in this case is a major blow to the women who have been fighting rape in and out of court. It is not an isolated incident. Raped women usually face abuse from courts, doctors, the police, but it is a particularly blatant case.

Some typical comments from doctors:

"You're 5'8" - you're too tall to be raped."

"You say you've been raped... well I'll just ring the police to check that."

"How come you managed to get yourself raped twice?" to a woman who had been raped once at gun and knife point by seven men.

"You're just saying you've been raped because you want an abortion."

# JUDGES FREE RAPIST GUARDSMAN



Beginners' karate class at the Womens Free Arts Alliance, London. (Spare Rib. Michael Ann Mullen)

## EVERY WOMAN'S GUIDE TO SELF DEFENCE

EVERYWOMAN'S Guide to Self-Defence, by Kathleen Hudson, is a new book giving useful techniques for getting out of specific violent situations.

It is true that in a rape situation self-defence does not necessarily provide a solution. For example if the woman freezes with shock or if she is attacked by more than one

man. But it is important as a way of giving women a feeling of confidence in their bodies. The important thing is for women to see that they can sometimes take control of situations. Little girls are not brought up to look after themselves in fights etc. Like boys are. So a lot of women find it hard to actually kick or hit someone.

Kathleen Hudson's book is a useful guide to techniques but will need to be combined with some kind of group activity where women together can learn to be angry rather than freeze with fear.

*Everywoman's Self Defence.*  
 Kathleen Hudson, Collins £1.95

# 'The Rightful Anger of Women will stop Rape'

## An Interview with women from the Rape Crisis Centre

In March this year the Rape Crisis Centre set up in November '74, published its first Report (Rape Crisis Report) The Centre in London is currently the only Rape Crisis Centre in Britain and over the past year it has provided support and advice to nearly 200 women who have been raped. The incidence of rape has increased dramatically over recent years. Cases reported in Greater London: 1953 - 17; 1963 - 49; 1973 - 132. Such statistics reflect little about the actual incidence of rape apart from its increase. Most rapes are not reported to the police. The sexual abuse of women is a common occurrence. Rape occurs inside and outside marriage. Nothing is being done to change this situation aside from the attempts of women themselves.

Below we reprint excerpts from an interview with women from the Rape Crisis Centre, published in the Islington Gutter Press.

In November '74, 40 women met to discuss rape. Some of us had been raped, others wanting to do something about rape. We soon split into two groups. Those wanting to talk over the political aspects of rape, and our group wanting to provide immediate practical support for women who have been raped.

### WHAT IS RAPE

Rape is an act of violence by men on women of all ages. It doesn't only happen to young "attractive" women, as the media suggests. It's neither sexual nor pleasurable for the woman, though some rapists cannot believe this. It's an act of violence that brutally opposes a woman's right to control her own body and life.

Rape can involve: -  
 Intimidation with threats or weapons.  
 Beating, choking, knifing.  
 Sexual and mental humiliation of the woman.  
 Oral rape.  
 Multiple rape.  
 Use of objects, e.g. bottles force into the vagina.  
 But according to the law, rape only applies to the penis in the vagina and does not apply to the forced penetration of the anus or mouth,

or the use of objects. Nor does it acknowledge that a woman can be raped by her husband.

We believe that any unwanted, forced or coerced sexual attention is a form of rape.

**Rape is the way in which all men keep all women in a constant state of intimidation. The rightful anger of women is a moving and creative force, and in the end it is the only force which will stop rape**

In November '75 we got a place from the DoE. In March '76 we opened with a 24 hour phone service and two paid workers, paid by money we'd raised through charities.

At the beginning women came who had been raped 20 or 30 years before. They'd never had the opportunity to talk about it.

Our aims are: -

1. To provide emergency legal, medical and emotional counselling by having a 24 hour phone service.
2. To provide a supportive, calm and sympathetic environment for the woman.



Spare Rib

3. To train women to be able to cope with the problems of women who have been raped.
4. To set up a co-ordinated group of contacts in different geographical areas who would be willing to personally meet and council raped women and accompany them to hospital, police, doctor and court.
5. To research the pattern and incidence of rape.
6. To publish information to destroy the myths about rape.
7. To liaise with community groups about rape.
8. To help women gain a mental and physical attitude towards rape that would help them deal with such situations in the future.

Often women find it's just enough to have a sympathetic woman who'll listen without judging and disbelieving them. A lot of women are very isolated and have often had hostile reactions.

### RAPE MYTHS

A lot of the hostility has to do with myths in society - that women provoke rape, enjoy it, deserve it, aren't raped unless they deserve it, can't really be raped.

MYTH: women enjoy rape.

FACT: In U.S. figures 85% of rapes involve violence, and physical force.

MYTH: Nice girls aren't raped.

FACT: In our experience women of all ages, races, classes and lifestyles get raped. (though a middle class woman is more likely to be believed in court.)

MYTH: Rape is an act committed by a strange man on a woman in an alley, late at night.

FACT: Almost 50% of rapes occur in the home of the raped woman or the rapist. 44% of those reported to us were committed by acquaintances, friends or relatives of the woman. Our sexuality has been socially defined in terms of male needs. Women are taught that they do not need sexual release, that men's sexual needs are greater and must be met. Sexuality is defined as genital and penetration-oriented. When relationships between men and women are seen in this way, then, rape is NOT abnormal, but rather the logical but extreme end of the spectrum of male female relationships. And this is why women's complaints of rape are treated so suspiciously, especially by men.

Women are afraid of being pregnant or having VD or being physically damaged. It is important that women who are raped are checked for these possibilities. We inform raped women of pregnancy prevention methods such as the morning after pill etc. We keep a record of treatment received by raped women and can advise on the most sympathetic treatment available in their areas.

### POLICE

We leave it up to the woman whether to report it to the police. We will support women going to the police, and the courts. Women often get

questioned by many police officers which is not necessary. Many women have felt they have suffered further degradation by the police. They are often asked for instance if they are on the pill. The assumption being if they are, that they're promiscuous and deserve to be raped. In court women have often been further insulted, with the judge referring to women being habitual liars etc. Magistrates have often given bail to violent rapists even to the surprise of the police.

### MEDIA

There has been some publicity following our report.

Our research shows that the media with few exceptions, publish sensational and distorted images of rape and its components. They uphold the many anti-female myths. A rape story and a 'daily pin-up' is not uncommon on the same page. Rape is being used more in films and advertising. One paper had a fashion feature called the just-raped look! This aids the whole glamorous picture of rape, ignoring its viciousness. Also there are five films on release at the moment featuring rape.

We're against those who simply tell women they should be more careful. This is nonsense when so many women are raped in their homes, by acquaintances

We don't call raped women 'victims' partly because of the social worker role it puts us in, but also it denies her the power to get out of the role and become self-determining, moving away from the passive image of women.

**THE RAPE CRISIS CENTRE:**  
 P.O. Box 42, London, N.6 5BU  
 01.340.6913 (office line 10-6 Mon -Fri) 01.340.6145 (24hr emergency line) RAPE CRISIS CENTRE....  
 FIRST REPORT 30p (14p &p) from address above.

# The Battle for Grunwick



## THE ISSUE WHICH DIVIDES THE NATION UNITES THE WORKING CLASS



If we don't crush this now, we shall have revolution in a few years. It must be put down with an iron hand.  
— John Stockes, Tory M.P.

What has happened at Grunwick's photo processing laboratories in Willesden, North London, is not just a triumphant demonstration that a daily mass picket of 2,000 will get results. This is also the single most important case of united, national rank and file workers action in this

country for many, many months.

The thousands who have travelled from all over Britain to lend their support on the picket line have been realising along with the rest of us that there's a lot more at stake at Grunwicks than first met the eye.

The heart of the affair is the right to form a union without being victimised. Nobody doubts that this question has spread beyond Grunwicks. The country is being polarised by the struggle. The National

Association for Freedom has turned this into a massive test-case. Others talk about further restricting the right to picket.

The pickets know that they are fighting for something which goes even beyond these issues. The real question is whether the struggle at Grunwicks will mark a break with the vicious circle of hopelessness which has plagued the working class movement for the past three years. Will the working class recover its ability to fight the social contract and rising prices?

## THE WORKERS' CASE

Here, in the words of an early bulletin of the Strike Committee, is the Strikers' case.

In the week beginning Monday 23rd August, over 200 workers walked out of the Chapter Road and Cobbald Road factories of Grunwick Film Processing. On 1 September the strike was declared official by our union.

### What Are We Fighting Against

1. £25 for a 35 hour week for office workers.
2. £28 for a 40 hour week for process workers.
3. Compulsory overtime.
4. We have only had a wage increase of between £2 and £3 a week in the past two years.

In short an employer who pays poverty line wages and forces us to work in feudal like conditions — an employer more suited to the 19th century.

### What Are We Fighting For?

1. The right to belong to a Union
2. The right to have our union, APEX, recognised.
3. The re-instatement of those who were sacked for joining the union and those who came out on strike in their defence.
4. A decent living wage, proper working conditions and an end to the abusive and tyrannical attitudes of our management.

Our wage levels are between £15 and £25 per week less than the industrial agreement negotiated by one of our sister unions with the Association of Film Laboratory Employers.'

- Since then the company has:
- \* Refused to cooperate in an inquiry conducted by the Arbitrary Conciliation and Advisory Service.
  - \* Refused throughout to negotiate with either the union or the strikers.

## EXPOSED! THE UNION BUSTERS BEHIND THE SCENES

"Any serious programme to resolve the 'British problem' will need to involve an attempt to reassert the rule of law in industrial relations"

Robert Moss, in his book *Collapse of Democracy*

The National Association for Freedom (NAFF) was formed to cut the power of the trade unions and the working class down to size. Its director, Robert Moss, describes himself as having "personal experience of political warfare in Portugal, Chile, Vietnam and Northern Ireland." Over the last year or so, he and other NAFF figures have seized on a series of industrial disputes to advance their political campaign against the workers movement.

Inside the Conservative Party

and business circles, the Association has been steadily gaining support. It claims a membership of 8-10,000 with an annual income of £50,000. In the short term, their strategy depends on using the law against workers in struggle.

At Grunwick they have advised the boss, George Ward, for many months against any concessions. They threaten legal action to stop the post workers boycott of Grunwick mail, just as they forced the Union of Postal Workers to drop its ban on mail to South Africa. They have encouraged the growing use of writs and injunctions by employers and college principals against workers and students.

But Moss makes clear in his book,

THE OBSERVER printworkers have refused to print an advertisement placed by the National Association for Freedom about the Grunwick strike unless they were given a right of reply. To save its sales the Observer granted them space on the front page.

The printworkers action shows how deeply and widely the Grunwick strike has stirred the working class. The Observer workers have stuck out their necks for something they feel to be important.

It's a pity, though, that in their statement they justify their decision to print the advertisement in terms of "freedom of the press". For the women who stood outside the factory gates in Willesden since last August there has been no freedom of the press. All the press gave its support to their boss. Which newspaper, other than a socialist one, has bothered to explain the striker's case in all that time? Only the Daily Mirror had anything favourable to say for the strikers, and it changed its tune as soon as it seemed the mass picket would win the day.

The Observer printworkers would have done better to point out just how little freedom of the press there is so long as the newspapers remain in the hands of the millionaires.



All Birmingham's uniformed police tried to hold the crowd back when ARTHUR SCARGILL and a group of Yorkshire miners arrived at Grunwicks, everyone was talking about that other mighty mass picket he took part in during the 1972 miners strike. The closure of Saltley Coke Works by 20,000 miners and Midlands engineering workers brought the issue to a head and led to an almost immediate victory over the Conservative government of Edward Heath. Here's how Scargill described the experience at Saltley to Red Mole "The events of today will go down in the history of the British working class movement as a historic day when not just individual unions but British trade unionists decided that they had had enough of police brutality.

They had had enough of intimidation by the police in obtaining passage through the picket lines for scab labour, and they decided to do something about it.

We had a lesson in workers' control. For the first time in many years the workers of this land decided that the nation would be defied

that the state system would be defied, and the gates of Saltley depot would be closed. At 10.45 those gates were indeed closed.

Action like this can and does topple governments. It can certainly put together a force capable of sweeping away medieval bosses like George Ward of Grunwick or even the Social Contract itself.

ANDREW WIARD (REPORT)



In the midst of the melee a Special Branch man is discovered and driven out. An official enquiry will look into union claims that two men who threw bottles at the scabs' coach ran away when challenged by stewards, one jumping into a police vehicle!

## LIFE ON THE PICKET

by

G Platt & T Siice

At 6.30 every morning outside the Grunwick's film processing plant for the last few weeks the picket line has started to form. Every day it becomes more representative of the working class solidarity which is winning this fight for trade union rights.

The police are already there in force: 1,000 of them for 2,000 of us. By 7 a.m. every train arriving at Dollis Hill tube station brings reinforcements to the picket: trade unionists, students and activists from all over London. Coaches bring more from

further afield — from Wales, Yorkshire, Manchester and Scotland.

The press tells us we're vandals but we know that this is an issue that has stirred the working class movement like nothing else for years.

Everyone on the picket line realises that this is going to be a turning point, a landmark in working class struggle. An angry trade unionist tells a policeman "Do you realise that you are helping to make a police state that you'll hate to live in as much as us?" That's a bit melodramatic but the sense of tension is deeply felt out here every morning.

If we lose then it's going to be harder to form a union in this country. Every employer in North London will try to take a leaf out of George Ward's book.

What if we win? The first thing is we'd be down the road to Desoutters, another factory with the same kind of boss, picketing there until the workers win.



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Collapse of Democracy, that in the long term, firmer action may be necessary. He discusses the merits of a dictatorship in the event of political disorder:

"You are forbidden to engage in politics but you may well be allowed to travel and marry as you please, to set up any kind of business .... it may in some cases amount to no more than a holding operation."

Looking at the NAFF's supporters, it's not hard to distinguish a broad group of well-placed people tending towards the far right who could form the basis of an "emergency administration" after a military coup in Britain.

Amongst Tory politicians, Rhodes Boyson became prominent through the campaign he directed for the NAFF in the Tameside comprehensive controversy. The case was carried to a successful conclusion in the High Court. Jill Knight M.P., notorious for her backing for reactionary causes such as James White's anti-abortion bill, is also a supporter, as is Margaret Thatcher herself.

### ROBERT MARK

Right-wing but respectable business circles are well represented in NAFF. There is Michael Ivens of Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, an organisation which carries out propaganda campaigns on behalf of unrestricted free enterprise. Phoenix Assurance provides much of NAFF's high command. Lord de L'Isle is chairman of both organisations. Hugh Astor is a member of the Phoenix board and NAFF's Council. He is also a director of Hambro's Bank. Sir Charles Hambro was chief of the Special Operations Executive in the last war. Astor also used to be in British intelligence. A recent recruit to the Phoenix board and to the NAFF is Robert Mark, until recently the head of the Metropolitan Police.

Now, with their current press adverts on the strike, it seems that the NAFF has decided to take its politics to a wider audience. The idea of freedom which the NAFF projects — an employers' paradise where workers obey unquestioningly — is a deeply appealing one for most of our rulers, although they'd prefer not to admit it themselves as things are. The NAFF can say in public what its backers among the Tories and the far right cannot afford to be heard to say.

## THE 50 WORKERS WHO SAT IN AGAINST THEIR BOSS, THEIR UNION AND THE SPECIAL BRANCH GET A RATES BILL FOR £26,000

MANY IMPORTANT issues are behind the occupation by workers of the British Steel Corporation factory in Greenwich, South London. They include:

- Industrial workers support for action against the cuts in the Health Service. The first six workers to be sacked were sacked for taking part in the NUPE demo against the cuts. The local hospital St Nicks was threatened with closure and the Greenwich workers realised what this would mean for their safety. As one of the stewards said 'Whenever accidents happened our lives would be placed on the table.' British Steel management, (a nationalised company) have made it clear that they will come down heavy on any attempt by their workers to show solidarity.

- The restructuring of the steel industry. Greenwich is a new plant (1974) with £1.5million of equipment. The occupation force have discovered that BSC management plan to close the plant down and to transfer the machinery to a new site in North London. Given its prime location as a development site, the 8 acres at Greenwich will fetch a good price on the property speculation market.

- Involvement of the right-wing Economic League and Special Branch. The workers in occupation have found files on themselves which show clearly how B.S.C. was using outside agencies to get dirt on their workers. On the file of one worker, they have listed an offence committed 22 years ago which the police had been told by the judge to rub out after he had been bound over for two years. On the same worker's file it says 'ex crane driver from the dockland area' and management are advised not to employ workers from that area.



Steel workers sit-in: learning the tricks of the trade on the Monopoly board.

Wiard (Report)

- Union on the side of management. The Union at Greenwich is the I.S.T.C., a reactionary union with no internal democracy. The union refuses to make the strike official and the following extract from a management file make the union's role clear: 'At 3.00pm L. Bambury (the full-time official) phoned and unofficially stated that he was not backing this dispute and had done all in this power to get the men to return to work and if this was ignored by the workers...

- The costs and dangers of occupations. Last week the workers occupying the factory were delivered a rates bill of £26,000: this follows a judge's decision in the Briants Printing Occupation where he said that workers occupying were liable for rates. The rates bills were delivered to the houses of the members of the strike committees — obviously the council had been given their addresses by B.S.C.

would take a firm line in order to exercise control over the militant element.' Hand in glove with BSC management, ISTC leadership has agreed to tens of thousands of jobs going down the road over the last few years — in exchange they have been given a few worker-directors on the board.

The costs and dangers of occupations. Last week the workers occupying the factory were delivered a rates bill of £26,000: this follows a judge's decision in the Briants Printing Occupation where he said that workers occupying were liable for rates. The rates bills were delivered to the houses of the members of the strike committees — obviously the council had been given their addresses by B.S.C.

### THE OCCUPATION NEEDS SUPPORT

It is quite obvious that the Greenwich workers are in a difficult financial position since they are not getting any strike pay. NALGO has given them £6,500 and the last NUPE conference instructed its executive to give £6,000 — so far only £600 has been given.

There are only 50 workers in occupation at Greenwich, but by the support they have given to the struggle in the NHS they have shown a rare solidarity — they deserve our support.

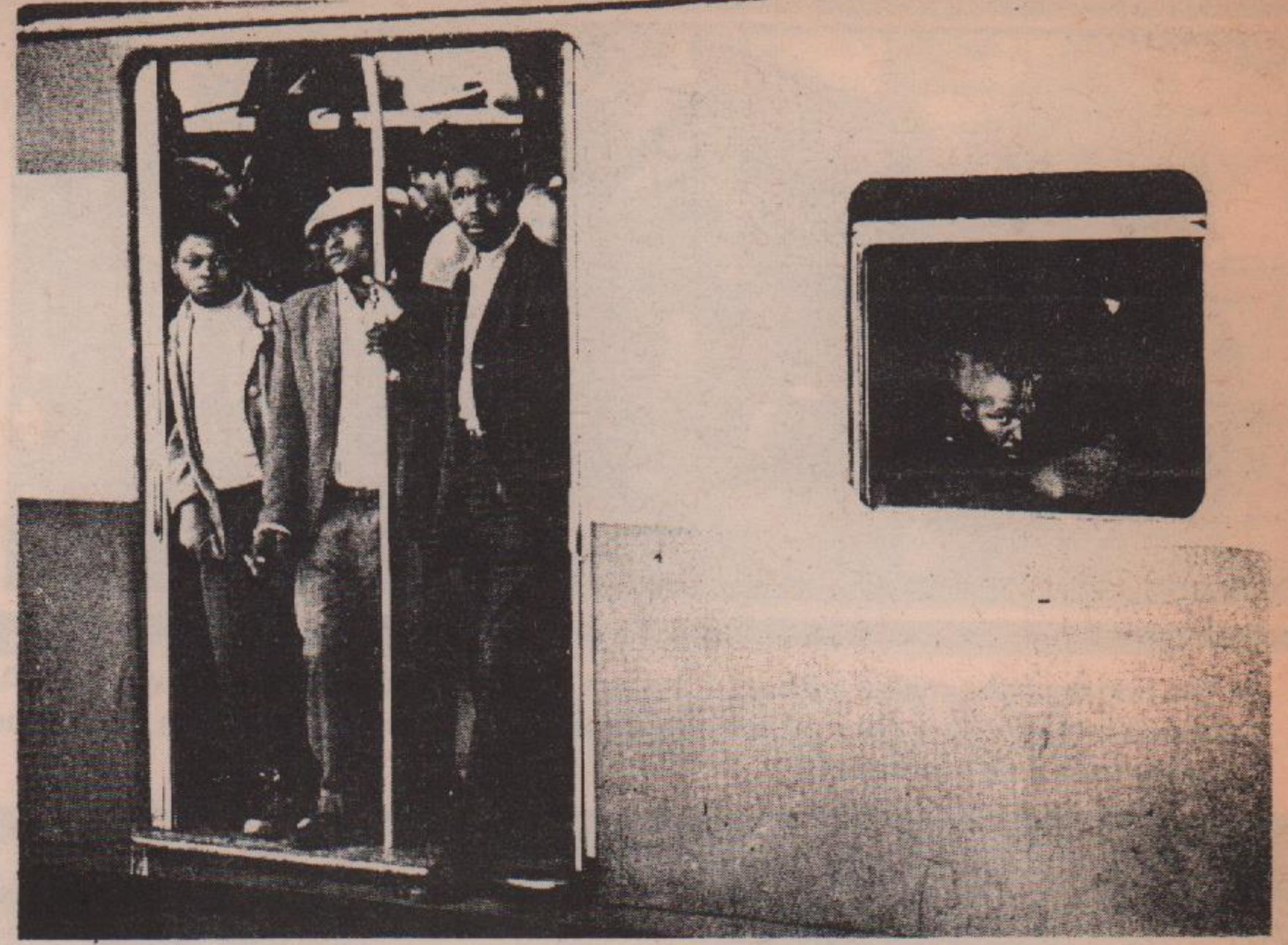
Money should be sent to: R. Mitchell, 24 Kentmere Rd., London S.E.18. The occupation committee can be visited at 90 River Way, Blackwell

# THE STRUGGLE WORLDWIDE

# SOWETO

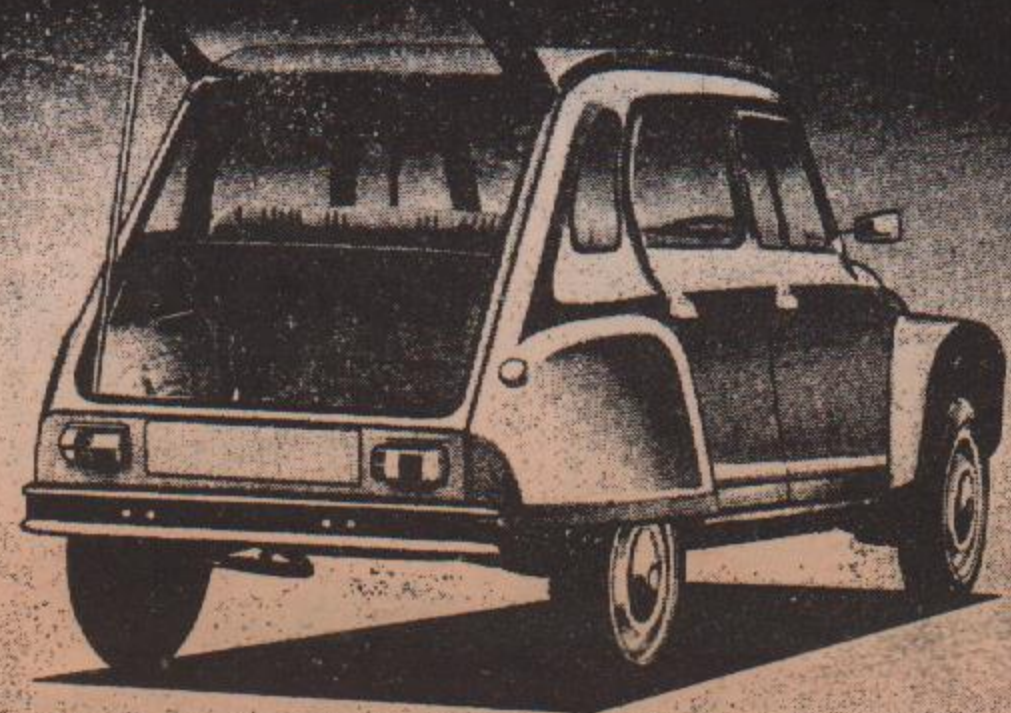


Outside a Soweto school. (Photo by John Seymour)



Black commuters travel 3rd class. (Photo by John Seymour)  
Soweto (jocularly called by its inhabitants 'so-where-to') is the largest single modern ghetto in Africa. Soweto is a bastard child born out of circumstances following the dispossession of the African people and the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand. It was born out of white greed and racism perpetrated against the Africans. Even its name is a bastard one, taken from its geographical location: South West Townships.  
From "A Window on Soweto", by Joyce Sikakane. International Defence and Aid Fund. 80 p.

## CITROËN DYANE



DOES OUR CAR SOUND LIKE YOUR CAR?

**'The Dyane performs perfectly'**  
CITROËN IS a company that relies on immigrant workers to do all the hard assembly-line jobs. The immigrant workers live in filthy, company-owned barracks, are not allowed to bring their families over, and enjoy none of the democratic rights of French citizens.  
... June 77.

**'It's an extremely practical house'**  
The union that controls things at Citroën is the Fascist C.F.T. It continually harasses and beats up members of other unions; intimidates militant workers and has close contacts with the Fascist armed squads (S.A.C.)  
... estate car.'

**'Specify a Citroën'**  
Lecomte's past includes a suspected rape of a woman at a party organised by a group of workers in a Citroën factory in Paris. When the police came looking for Lecomte, Citroën management said he no longer worked there. In fact, they had quickly arranged his transfer to their Reims factory. Lecomte was never charged.  
... cost, £170

**'Last month a worker on a picket line at a bottle factory in Reims was shot dead by a squad of armed Fascist thugs. The murderer was a foreman at the local Citroën factory, and the car he was driving was a company car.'**  
... does +9 mpg.'

**'A two-position sun roof is standard. If you carry a passenger you can be completely comfortable.'**  
During election time at Citroën, Lecomte used to say to workers, 'See that post, if you vote the wrong way we'll hang you from it - good'.

CITROËN DYANE

NOW ASK YOURSELF AGAIN, DOES OUR CAR SOUND LIKE YOUR CAR?

## Irish Front

IF YOU THINK the recent industrial stoppage in Ulster ended in a defeat for the Loyalists you would be mistaken. That was the warning that members of the Derry-based Irish Front gave in their recent speaking tour of the major cities of England. Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh, External Secretary of the Irish Front, said: "The Loyalist strike was not the failure the British press made it out to be. It was a victory for Paisley - since then there has been a massive increase in repression. The Loyalists have made many gains out of the strike." Not least have been the recent announcements of an increase of 2,000 men in the Royal Ulster Constabulary and further expansion of the notorious SAS units.

But the Republican population don't intend to take this without a fight. In fact, Republicans and socialists are now working hard to create the necessary unity of all possible forces prepared to wage the anti-imperialist struggle. Leading the way is the Irish Front, founded 6 months ago around four basic demands:-

- 1) An end to harassment, torture and intimidation.
- 2) Full support for political status leading to an unconditional amnesty.
- 3) Repatriation of all Irish political prisoners.
- 4) Withdrawal of British troops and an end to British interference in the political, cultural and economic life of Ireland.

### INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Members of the Irish Front have spoken in many European countries and in the USA in recent months. But for them building support in Britain is crucial:- "The best way to help our struggle is to engage against your own ruling class. We think that the struggle in Britain is of key importance, but we don't agree with people who just raise all the respectable questions like the social contract

and ignore the struggle going on in Ireland only 50 miles away." said O'Dochartaigh. Michael Montgomery, another of the touring group and an ex-internee, spoke of the continuing torture and imprisonment without proper trial in the North. Arrests and beatings are a feature of everyday life for the youth of the Republican areas. Prisoners are being subjected to ever more diabolical conditions.

### BUILD A TROOPS OUT CAMPAIGN

The speakers drove home to their audiences the need to build a united movement in this country to get the British out of Ireland. They welcomed the proposed Open Conference on Ireland to be held on July 2/3, and also the International Tribunal on the Prevention of Terrorism Act to be held in early 1978.

## LETTER

Derry  
12.6.77

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the Irish Front and in particular our three comrades who travelled to England recently to participate in a series of speaker meetings on the Irish liberation struggle. I wish to convey our thanks for the kindness and co-operation shown to us by your members in the North of England. We feel that such co-operation is a practical demonstration of solidarity, particularly at a time when the Irish struggle and its activists both here and in Britain are under increased repression. We salute your organisation in its efforts to expose imperialist policy in Ireland, and extend our warmest greetings.

With love and solidarity,  
Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh  
External Secretary of the Irish Front.

## AMIN : LOSING HIS USEFULNESS

IT IS a well known fact that whenever a Commonwealth President went away for a conference, he would transfer the presidential palace into his wife's name - just in case there was a coup whilst he was absent.

During the recent Commonwealth leaders' conference the press kept us well informed about the movements of General Amin - 'was he coming?' 'would he be allowed in?'

In fact, Amin has become an embarrassment to Western rulers - but only because he is doing what he is doing in an extreme and unobvious way. We should not forget that it was the

U.S. and U.K. that put Amin in power in 1971 - whilst the more left-wing Milton Obote was at a Commonwealth leaders conference in Singapore!

### OBOTE

And the reason they replaced Obote with Amin was very clear: he would carry out economic policies that favoured the imperialists. As the Economist put it at the time:

"To foster the image of stability and to encourage foreign investment the General has dropped Mr Obote's plans for the state to take a 60%

share in most of the large private enterprises. Instead General Amin will demand only 49%, except where agreements have already been signed - and these can be re-negotiated if the companies so desire.

Mr Obote's 60% take-over plan threatened to involve Uganda in crippling compensation costs, but General Amin's plan bears all the marks of a political compromise that makes only slender economic sense, since the Ugandans will take on a large liability for compensation without actually getting control.

Perhaps the most interesting consequence of the coup has been

the apparent evaporation of all enthusiasm for the African socialism that Mr Obote preached.

There was little support for Mr Obote's move to the left among the educated classes and very little understanding among others. What happened in Uganda will give other African socialists a few sleepless nights."

### MIRROR

In those days, before it was discovered that Amin was good cover with which to make its readers forget the real issues of international politics, the Daily Mirror was all for Amin. They wrote:

"A thoroughly nice man. That was the diplomatic summing up in London last night after a three-day look at President Idi Amin of

Uganda, the 48 year old soldier who threw out President Milton Obote in January. Amin has been here with Mama Malyam, one of his four wives.

They liked him on personal grounds. He looks every inch the heavyweight boxing champion that he once was.

But in conversation he was as gentle as a lamb.

They liked him on political grounds.'

### BUTCHER

We are not saying that Amin is not an unpleasant butcher with blood on his hands - he is. But he can only indulge in his sadistic brutality because he has the backing of international capitalism - and its the system that must be changed. Moral outrage is not enough.



# Fear in the Boardrooms

## THE ISSUES AT STAKE IN THE IRISH ELECTIONS

NOT MANY British businessmen panicked at the results of the recent Southern Irish elections. But a lot of them may have sweated a bit.

After all, the Irish economy is only an extension of the British (and US) economy. Anything that threatens stability in Ireland threatens a profitable slice of British businessmen's investment.

In other words, the capitalists who control Britain also control Ireland and they hate the thought of Ireland becoming genuinely independent. Because that would cut their profits at a stroke.

THE TOP 10 COMPANIES IN IRELAND	REALLY OWNED BY....	OWNING CO. BASED IN'....
1. Jefferson-Smurfitt Group	Continental Group Incorporated	USA
2. Cement-Roadstone Co.	Tunnel Holdings Ltd	Britain
3. Esso Teoranta	Esso/Exxon	USA
4. P.J. Carroll & Co.	Rothmans	Britain
5. Fitzwilton	*****	Ireland!
6. Waterford Glass	Glaceries de St. Roche	Belgium
7. Irish Sugar Co.	Irish based, but all sales controlled by Heinz International	USA
8. R&H Hall (Grain)	International	USA
9. Irish Distillers Group	Seagrams	Britain
10. Brooks Watson	*****	Ireland!

In fact ¾ of the most important firms in Ireland are foreign-owned and all their wealth is exported from the country.

Information from 'Unfree Citizen', the newspaper of Peoples Democracy.



Law and Order: Irish Style

### BATON, BOOT AND FIST

So the Government led by Liam Cosgrave, totally defeated in the elections, was just the kind of government worried businessmen like. Under Cosgrave prices rose to dizzy heights while the Irish version of the social contract kept workers' living standards really low. Unemployment rose. Jails like Portlaoise and Mountjoy filled up with Cosgrave opponents. New laws meant that anyone could be jailed for 2 years in the Special Criminal Court without a jury or evidence. A senior policeman's word that a prisoner is in the IRA is enough to end the case - with another political prisoner inside!

Any protest against this police state meant demonstrators suffering

under the boots, batons and fists of the Gardai, the Irish police

### CENSORSHIP

And it's no good trying to get into the newspapers or on the TV to complain about the situation. Because anyone the Government calls a 'subversive' or a 'terrorist' is not allowed to put their views to the rest of the population. Journalists have been jailed for interviewing well-known Republicans.

This is the 'freedom and democracy' that the British and Irish governments say their troops and police are protecting!

### LYNCH LAW

Will the new government of Jack

Lynch be any better? At first glance Lynch's policies are just the same as Cosgrave's. But he knows that he was only swept to power because of the people's disgust with the economic and political situation. So he will be reluctant to repeat Cosgrave's policies without change.

Except in regard to Northern Ireland. Because the biggest opposition to the exploitation of the Irish working class by British businessmen comes from the Republican population in the North. Lynch has no intention of making his country independent so he will try to crush the Republicans as hard as Cosgrave did.

His fear is that he won't be able to control the anti-imperialist movement now that Cosgrave is gone.

JULY  
1917



The demonstrations in July 1917 turn into an attempted uprising against the Provisional Government. In Petrograd many people are killed in the fighting that ensues

## THE MONTHS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Russian revolution is now evaporated. The objective situation is as follows: either the complete victory of the military dictatorship (the Provisional Government) or the victory of the determined struggle (armed insurrection) of the workers. This victory is only possible if the insurrection coincides with the deep effervescence of the masses against the government and the bourgeoisie, caused by the economic disaster and the continuation of the war.

To carry through this new policy, new structures for the party were needed 'The Party must, without giving up lawful work but without over-estimating its importance, link lawful work with illegal work.... We must create, without delay, clandestine organisations or cells.' With this new strategy went a much less enthusiastic assessment of soviets: 'to demand today the transmission of power would be a joke. To take up this slogan would in objective terms to mislead the people, to give them the illusion that even today it was enough for the soviets to want to take power for them to be able to take it.' And this position was fully shared by Trotsky who wrote 'However important are questions about the role and future of soviets, we consider them less important than the questions about the role and future of soviets, we consider them less important than the question of the struggle of the proletariat and the semi-proletarian

masses of the towns, army and villages for political power, for the revolutionary dictatorship.'

But once again the leadership of the party had great difficulty in convincing its militants of the need for a 'harder' strategy that would polarise all the institutions of 'dual power' in a period of social unrest and agitation; as Lenin put it 'In truth this democracy (the soviets) is a battle field. It is the terrain on which the Bolshevik force has the best chances precisely because it is not democratic.' The 6th conference of the Bolshevik Party took place from 26 July to the 3rd August; it was semi-clandestine. The rapid growth had stopped with the failure of the 'July Days' and many of the members felt that the 'adventurism' of the now absent leadership had put them in an exposed and isolated position in relationship to the class. Only after a lot of argument was Lenin's insistence that 'For the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants' as the main political orientation, accepted.

In fact the party was very much on the defensive as the Provisional Government under Kerensky continued to 'muddle through'. By August, the Bolsheviks had lost the initiative. But the balance of forces was again changed in their favour by the attempted coup of the right-wing general Kornilov.

(Next month, 'A right-wing coup')

AT THE end of June, discontent increased amongst the working masses. The military offensive was in a stalemate and there were many food shortages.

By the beginning of July things were at a head.

The Bolsheviks rapidly increased their following amongst the workers, soldiers and sailors. Opposition to the Provisional Government's unsuccessful offensive against the Germans grew. The unrest which was growing amongst the revolutionary section of the working-class erupted in the 'July Days' (July 3rd-5th) when thousands of armed proletarians marched through the streets of Petrograd demanding that the Soviets take power....

It is not possible for us to be certain of the exact involvement of the Bolsheviks in the 'July Days.'

What we do know is that the party had been increasing its agitation amongst the masses over the previous weeks and there is good evidence to suggest that Lenin and the Central Committee had formed plans to call for a proletarian insurrection at a later date - when anger at the military defeats really began to aggravate the masses. Once again it was the sailors of Kronstadt that took the initiative. Starting from their naval base, they marched to the Tauride Palace in Petrograd to present their demands to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. Fighting broke out and the houses of the rich were looted. The Bolsheviks, taken by surprise by these events, were unable to respond to the revolutionary surge of the soldiers, sailors and workers - and the 'July Days' fizzled out.

Not surprisingly, the Provisional Government used this opportunity to crack down on the Bolshevik leaders who were denounced as German spies and blamed for the failed insurrection. Lenin was forced into exile in Finland and Trotsky, who had just joined the Party, was put in jail. The 'July Days' forced the leadership of the Party to completely change their tactics - events had proved that the Soviets were unable to seize power in a revolutionary situation - they were grass-roots bodies that by their very nature contained non-revolutionary (e.g. Menshevik) elements who would always oppose the seizing of power.

In the days after the 'July Days' Lenin began to formulate the strategy that was to lead to the successful taking of power in October; 'all hope in the peaceful development of the

FRANCESCO ROSI'S new film 'Illustrious Corpses' (Gate Cinema, West London) is a masterpiece. Made by a committed left-wing film maker, it is a film that reflects very accurately the political situation in Italy where the ruling class uses a permanent strategy of tension to maintain power. A political stalemate has been reached between the main forces in the political scene - Christian Democracy, the armed forces, the state organs - and the Communist Party. In 'Illustrious Corpses' the stalemate is so finely balanced that none of the contending forces feels able to move one way or the other. Of course, for militants, the main focus of the film will be the role played by the Communist Party; a role as byzantine and ambiguous as are the social forces the Party represents.

**Honest Cop**

Into this explosive equilibrium Rosi places an honest cop whose investigation of a series of murders leads him to new (and dangerous to him) insights into the political wheeler-dealings he is forced to operate within. Uncompromising and straight, the cop is able to piece together a pattern of political conspiracy that involves the judiciary, the army, the government the mafia and armed "left-wing groups." Knowing he knows too much, Rogas, the cop, decides to spill the beans to the Communist Party - during a meeting he has with the CP leader, they are both shot dead. In response to this double killing, the working class come into the streets to avenge the death of their leader. The party has the choice: to

follow the revolutionary anger of the masses or to defuse the whole situation by accepting the 'official' story that the honest cop killed their leader. Not surprisingly, the party leadership sees the mass mobilisations as a provocation of the ruling classes. The mobilisations have no place in their long-term strategy of gaining a piece of state action by patient negotiations. The CP journalist who wants to publish the truth is told 'the truth is not always revolutionary.' The crisis is over and the political stalemate is given a new lease of life. 'Illustrious Corpses' is a film about this historic compromise. Apart from being a first-rate political thriller, it is a film that never insults the intelligence of its viewers. See it!



# 'Illustrious CORPSES'

A Film by FRANCESCO ROSI (The Mattei Affair)



A film about the communist party and Italy today

## Rosi speaks

'The film shows the CP as the only uncorrupt party in power, but it shows that it too in the end has to take part in the maintenance of a certain political balance of power.'

the film is meant as a warning to keep us attentive to what might be happening around us. It's also an attempt on my part to participate, with some anguish, in the difficult task of change.'

'Of course the end of the film cannot be interpreted as a realistic analysis of the Italian situation. It is a hypothesis pushed to its limits... In Italy there is a great desire among the people for the Left to govern. But on the level of government, or existing powers, this isn't going to happen in the way the public might wish. There is a feeling that something is going to be lost with all these pacts being made among governments. And

The film stimulated much debate on its release in Italy. 'Certain Communist critics thought I had made an anti-Communist film against historical compromise (the alliance of the Christian Democrat and Communist parties.) But it isn't my job to come out for or against. What I was attempting was to show the tension of this precise political moment. And to give the sensation of the centres of power moving further from the control of the citizen.'

# HOLLYWOOD

## A film..... An anti-star

For those of us who can't make it to the big city, "Twilight's Last Gleaming" is a film on general release and is well worth seeing. Located in post-Vietnam USA the film shows how deeply the barbarous intervention in Vietnam has affected many Americans. The hero of the film (played in his usual stiff, one-dimensional style by Burt Lancaster) is an ex-army officer who takes over a nuclear warhead base as a way of blackmailing the President into releasing secret documents on US involvement in South East Asia. What the film makes quite clear is that individuals, including the President, count for nothing when the ruling class feels threatened.

There is no way they will be prepared to concede 'open government' and let people know why decisions are taken. The film reflects the cynicism of many US intellectuals who have been radicalised by the Vietnam experience but who can only see the way forward in individual solutions - which are doomed to failure. This cult of the individual is understandable in a society where there is no obvious working class vanguard that is fighting, even sectionally, for socialism. It is reinforced by the Hollywood star system. We know that it is classes, not individuals, that make history, but it is not easy to portray a class in a film - and in any case Twentieth Century Fox would not pay for it to be done!

Recently, Marlon Brando was awarded an Oscar. Instead of turning up to accept the award, he sent Sasheen Littlefellow, a red indian militant, to read a statement on the oppression of the Red Indians. Not surprisingly it brought the house down.

"What kind of moral schizophrenia is it that allows us to shout at the top of our national voice for all the world to hear that we live up to our commitments when every page of history and all the thirsty starving humiliating days and nights of the last 100 years in the lives of the American Indians contradict that voice?"

**AMERICAN INDIAN**

"I think awards in this country at this time are inappropriate to be received or given until the condition of the American Indian is drastically altered. If we are not our brother's keeper at least let us not be his executioner."

**THE REVOLUTION UNFINISHED**

A Critique of Trotskyism. 60p. Two members of Big Flame dissect Trotskyism - the dominant tendency in the British revolutionary left.

**THE CASE AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT**

By a group of Independent socialists 20p.

**THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION**

An analysis of what's happening in education and the role of education in maintaining class domination. Out now. 40p.

**WORKERS' POWER**

A socialist report on the power plant and energy industries. By the Energy Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists, in co-operation with AUEW-TASS, Trafford Park, Manchester. 25p.

**SUNDAY JULY 3rd**  
Fight Back March for George Ince  
Assemble Tower Hill, London at 2.00

**BELT AND BRACES** Roadshow require full-time permanent political liaison person to promote advance performances throughout the country. Experience and drivers licence not essential, but preferable. Tel. Carol Spedding 01.485.2872

**SAT 2nd JULY 10.30-5.0 pm**

**OPEN CONFERENCE OF NUT MEMBERS**

Birmingham University Students Union Agenda: to include reports from various regions, speaker from NUPE and discussion on how to implement the cuts campaign, based on fighting motions narrowly defeated at NUT Conference

Sat 2nd JULY-4th July  
CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS. Starts 11.am Bradford University.

SAT 9th JULY, TUC Anti-Racist mobilisation. Assemble outside Strangeways Prison, Nr Victoria Station, Manchester, 12 Noon

THURS 14th JULY, SOCIALIST UNITY Public Meeting. The need for a revolutionary intervention in Elections. Speakers from Big Flame, I.M.G., and Tameside United Revolutionary Front. 7.30pm Basement Theatre, Town Hall, Manchester.

MON 18th JULY. TROTSKYISM: It's relevance today. Speakers: Paul Thompson, Big Flame, and from I.M.G. 7.30 Unicorn Hotel, Church St., off Piccadilly, Manchester

SAT 16th JULY 12noon - 6pm, then social. SOCIALIST TEACHERS CONFERENCE. Speakers: Terry Ellis and Brian Haddow (William Tyndale School) Dave Picton (Socialist Teachers' Alliance) Discussion will be based around: Socialists in the N.U.T. and Socialists in the classroom At Student's Union Block, Hull University, Cottingham Rd., Hull. fee £1.00. More information from Godfrey Laniel, 41 Saver St., Hull, 0482.799184

SATURDAY 16th JULY  
One day North-West Regional Conference of Socialist Feminists. Students Union, Manchester Polytechnic, Cavendish St. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Women only, creche available) For further details contact Nuala Morton. Tel. Bolton 44539

# THE THIRTIES & TODAY

PHOTOGRAPHS & DOCUMENTS OF SOCIAL STRUGGLE



1930's - Unemployed trade unionists "raid the Ritz" for a meal



1970's - Trade union leader at a "Working Together Luncheon" Half Moon Gallery 27 Alie Street London E1

19 June - 25 July 1977 Monday - Saturday 11-6



**PUBLICATIONS**

All available from 217 Wavertree Rd. Liverpool 7.  
All prices include postage  
Draft Manifesto for a New Revolutionary Organisation 35p  
Sections include: Modern Capitalism, Composition of the working class, Reformism and popular power, Trade unions, Party and class, International Perspectives, Revolutionary strategy.  
Industrial Bulletin No.2 20p  
Articles on Direct Works, Plesseys etc.  
Womens Struggle Notes No.2 20p  
Plus the old favourites:  
'Portugal - A Blaze of Freedom' (35p) and 'Chile Si' (30p)  
Rising in the North 30p  
Irish Bulletin No. 8 20p  
WEDS. 13th JULY  
Public meeting to launch campaign for Socialist Unity Candidate in the Edge Hill constituency. Gregsons Well (Tetley), Brunswick Rd. Liverpool. 8.00

There are Big Flame groups in :-  
Leeds . . . 80 Harehills Ave., Leeds 7  
Liverpool . . . 217 Wavertree Rd. Liverpool 7. 051 263-1350  
London . . . 27 Clerkenwell Close, EC1  
Manchester . . . 14 Piccadilly, M/cr 2 061 223-4515  
Sheffield . . . 0742-587120

# PLESSEY - THIS IS WHY WE OCCUPIED

**"We don't want to go out of the gate with just the bare redundancy money"**

"We don't want to go out of the gate with just the bare redundancy money. We want a job. We want paying for the stuff we've done.....Plesseys have treated people like dirt."

WORKERS IN the Plessey factory in Kirkby have occupied for the second time in the past few months. The first time was to prevent the announced closure and save their jobs. That battle seems lost. This time, they've occupied to win severance money and a decent sum for the 92 hours work in the first occupation.

Plessey, Kirkby, is a satellite of the main factory in Edge Lane Liverpool. About 300 people worked there, mainly women in the E.T.U. (Electrical Trades Union)

The banner on the gates says "This is an E.T.U. occupation for a better deal" Why only the E.T.U.? you think, wouldn't it be better to have all the workers united? It would but.....

Plesseys are past masters at splitting up the workers and playing them off against each other. That's how they've managed to make thousands of workers redundant all over the country.

## WORK-IN

All workers, including staff, were involved in the work-in. When it came to a vote it was mainly the E.T.U. women workers who wanted to keep management out, but they were outvoted by the others. Once back in management tried to move out the telephone exchange equipment produced during the work-in. The E.T.U. workers wouldn't let it go because they haven't been paid for it.

But the Transport workers were willing to move it. Management planned to make all the E.T.U. workers redundant and guaranteed all the other unions 3 months wages to move the work out and close the factory down.

## LOCK-OUT

Faced with this situation the shop-floor workers had no choice but to lock out all other unions and go it alone.

There's about 160 women and men occupying. Many of them have worked there for years. Over the years they'd won decent piece-work rates. They need the jobs and

the wages. Unemployment in Kirkby is among the highest in the country. They'll find it difficult getting other jobs.

"There's four of us in our family going. Usually if this happens you can get help through the family, but we're all in the same boat."

## RUBBISH JOBS

Management have offered some jobs in another factory. "They offered us rubbish jobs - £20 a week crap. After bus fares it wouldn't be worth it." They offered a partially blind woman a job - relay adjusting - which needs 100% eyesight.

They've been occupying since the last week in May. "We've split into 6 eight hour shifts and have one day on and one day off. We've got the full support of our families."

Those occupying are solid despite management's threatening letter and attempts to pay people off.

"We're strong now. Because all those who would have given up are gone. It's all organised about the shifts. If any woman can't do the nights because they've got little kids we sort it out."

## PROFITS UP

Plessey's profits have just been announced. They're £39million pre-tax, that's £5½million up on last year. Yet they're refusing to pay out any severance pay. They've paid out only the barest legal minimum. Who says profits safeguard jobs and benefit the workers?

Many of the women have been paying full stamps for years, yet when they go on the dole they'll get less money than men. And once the unemployment benefit



Plessey Women: We may have Equal Pay but we don't have Equal Dole

ends the ~~many~~ ~~women~~ won't be able to claim any social security. "We may have Equal Pay, but we don't have Equal Dole."

## PLAYS

The Broadside Theatre group came to the factory and performed two plays. One was about 'womens rights' and the other about the struggle of the Plessey workers in Portugal. The workers enjoyed both of them. They could see how Plesseys operate the same all over the world. Opening and closing factories wherever it's most profitable. In the discussion afterwards some workers said 'it would be better if all Plessey workers in every factory stuck together.'

They also talked about Equal Pay, the different jobs women and men did in the factory, and about sharing the housework in the home

The Kirkby workers at least have had a go and hopefully will force some money out of the company. If the company continues

to refuse to pay out, the workers could strip down all the exchange equipment they've made. Why should Plessey get it for nothing?

"There's no way we're walking out of the gate with nothing and leaving over £½million of work we've produced behind."

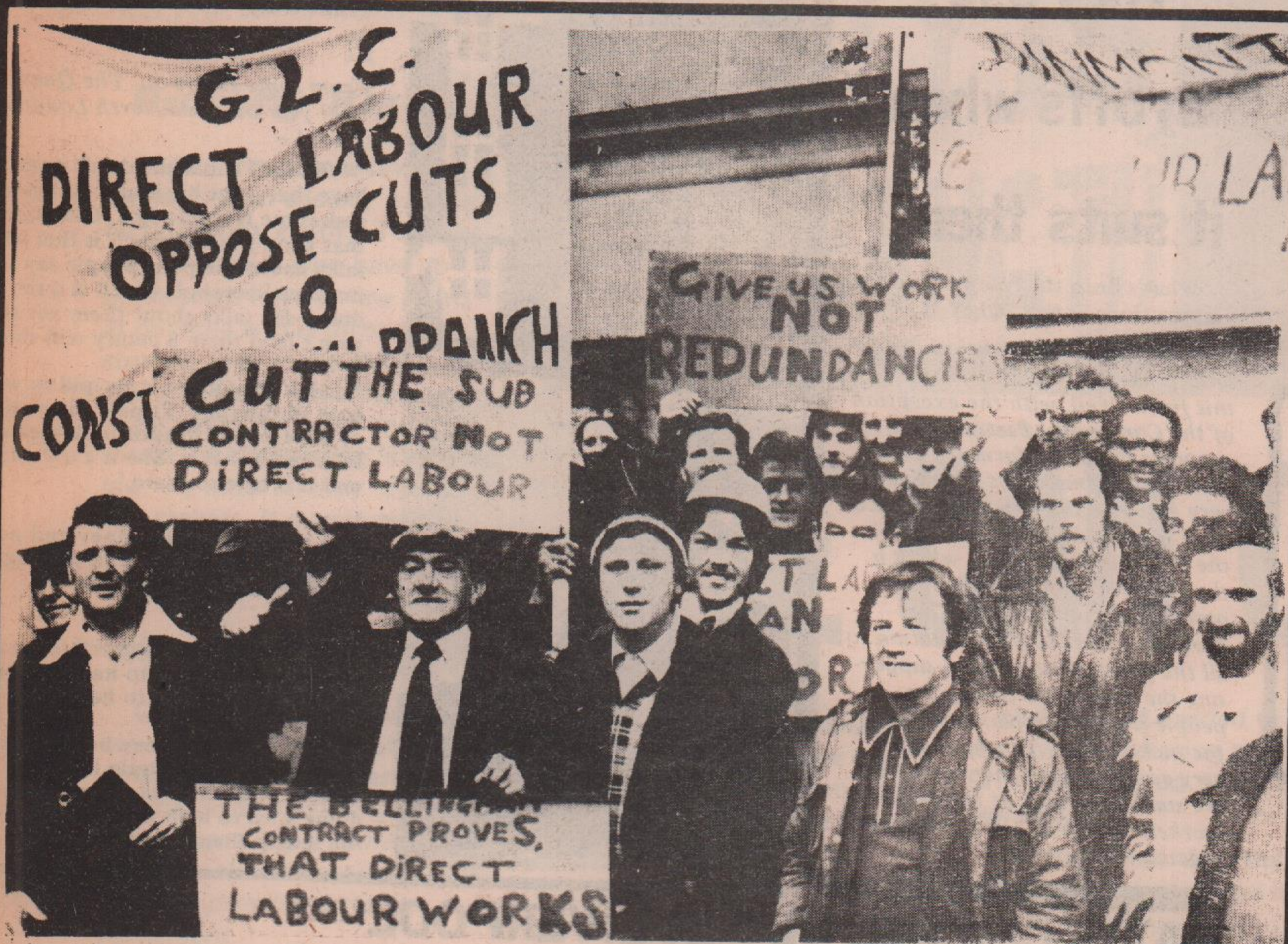
## SHEFFIELD HOTEL STRIKE

# Avoidable defeat

THE STRIKE at the Grosvenor House Hotel in Sheffield (reported in last months Big Flame) is over. The remaining strikers decided to accept management's new offer of £500 "compensation" for full time workers and between £300 and £400 for part-time workers. None of the strikers have been reinstated - all they got was a promise that they'd be "favourably considered" if a vacancy arose. And Trust House Forte still refuses proper union recognition - all they conceded was that a union could represent an individual employee.

Some of the strikers wanted to stick it out - but after 6 months on the picket lines, and the T & G's disgraceful abandonment of their struggle, they could see little point carrying on. With national, or even strong regional blacking, and a determined campaign by the union to get other workers to support the strike, the Grosvenor workers could have won months ago. Instead, union officials blocked any attempts to get blacking implemented, despite the resolutions which were carried in favour of blacking at all levels of the union. No wonder so many strikers abandoned the dispute in disgust.

The defeat raises some serious questions. Why weren't Jack Jones and his fellow top officials prepared to do anything for these workers striking for the most basic demand of union recognition? Why were the resolutions passed for blacking not put into effect? Hopefully some of the delegates to the T&G conference will be asking these questions - and other members of the union will learn the lessons of the Grosvenor and Randolph defeats by organising amongst the membership to prevent Jones, Evans and Co from ever being able to sell out their members like that again.



Direct Workers in the Midlands are planning a demo in Birmingham on July 5th. They have issued a statement saying: "Our action is in defence of direct labour schemes and against the cuts in public spending. It will serve as a warning to local Tory administrations that we intend to fight to defend and extend public ownership of our industry."

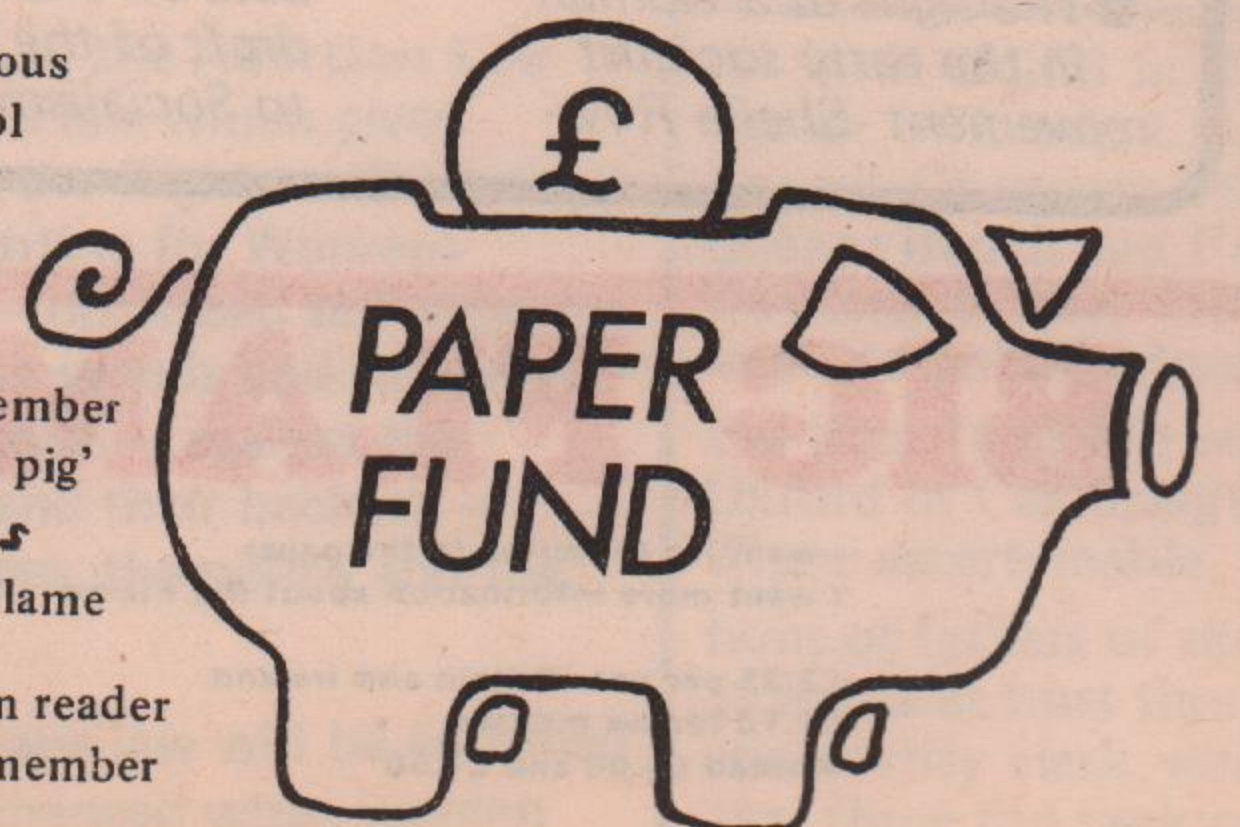
The call is going from the Midlands to other direct works workers in other regions to support their strike action and it has already won a response from Manchester convenors, representing 4,000 members, who will recommend

A very good total this month - £64.50  
This months contributions:

£20 anonymous  
£25 Liverpool member

£5 Norwich member  
£5.50 'save the pig'  
London readers  
£8 Leeds Big Flame

50p Rotherham reader  
60 Sheffield member



Donations to the Big Flame...

# BIG FLAME

## FORDWORKERS DEMAND

● 80% Lay off pay!

● No more casual labour!

### These are the issues

FORD DAGENHAM workers have been on strike for two weeks demanding that they are paid for time when Fords laid them off without pay. They are demanding 80% pay for every time management lay them off. (At present the lay-off money agreement only applies when workers are sent home due to disputes outside Fords).

The Dagenham Paint, Trim and Assembly Plant is on strike for 80% lay-off pay and the

Body Plant has also been occupied. The demand is vital to win if workers are to stop firms like Fords treating them like casual labour. The recent occupation of Massey Ferguson in Coventry fought for and won similar demands.

Behind the current struggle there is also looming a confrontation over the Ford pay claim which will be negotiated next month. It will be the first large wage settlement after Phase 2 and once again what Ford

workers win will pave the way for other workers.

How things go in the coming months will largely depend on the strength of rank and file organisation and determination. The strike at Dagenham is a very hopeful sign

At a mass meeting there in the second week of the strike, one man from the platform said "I've worked here 31 years. And this is the best thing that's ever happened in this plant." His words were met with a roar of approval.

### TRIM LINE STEWARD SPEAKS TO BIG FLAME

People realise that after years of wage restraint imposed by the Government and the T.U.C. a guaranteed week's pay is the best way to defend and improve our living standards. Do you know that we in the PTA since the start of the year, have lost an average of £6 a week due to lay-offs? This is not to say that we shouldn't go for wage rises - but emphasise that this fight for lay-off pay is an offensive one.

Also people are starting to see through Ford's tactics. Just think. One day, on Friday, they lay us off, because of a dispute in the Body. The following week, in similar circumstances, with no production flowing, they never laid anyone off for fear that it might give new fuel to the fight. In fact they were asking people to go to work, with the clear intent to break the strike. People are starting to think "they use lay-offs when it suits them".

What has the role of the union officials been?

You heard at the mass meeting. Every time the name Murphy was mentioned, there was booing, hissing, heckling. This man is the District Official of the T & G. He behaves like a Company man. We want 80% lay-off pay, yet agrees with management on a new disciplinary procedure!

What is the likely outcome of the strike?

I can only be optimistic. The PTA has never been so united and determined. Now Ford is at a standstill. What can they do? They must meet our demands. Or at least come to a compromise favourable to us. It all depends on whether we maintain the strength and unity of last week and get the solidarity of other places like Langley, Swansea, Southampton and now Halewood which will be laid off.

We've already achieved a lot. It's taken us a year of internal struggles - overtime bans, work to rule, the lot. Now we have a policy and, for the first time, a united shop stewards committee, which on this issue, is really a fighting body. If we win, we will have won a battle for all Fordworkers and the working class in general.

**"They use layoffs when it suits them."**

What's been the role of political organisations in this fight?

In general some political organisations have played a good role in this fight. Well, with the exception of the Communist Party, which supports the peace formula, even if some of its members have been very active in the strike. In particular, I want to mention the role of the Fordworkers Group, which is the embryo of an autonomous organisation of workers. They have been spreading information to all the plants almost daily, supporting the strike, and calling for people from other plants to join the picket lines. This has been very good. I think that workers are starting to look at the Fordworkers Group as part of their own organisation.

#### IN NEXT MONTHS ISSUE

● The Growing International links of the women's movement - including a report on two conferences in Amsterdam and Paris.

● The fight of a woman in the early socialist movement Sheila Row-

botham talks about her new book "A new world for Women: Stella Browne Socialist Feminist." (Pluto Press £1.50p)

● Split in the Communist Party? We examine the issues raised in the debate on the C.P.'s new draft of the "British Road to Socialism."

## DAGENHAM SIT-IN



Prince Philip's favourite theme is individualism versus the Welfare State. "Life should be interesting. There should be challenge, the risk of both loss and gain". In 1971 he declared that people ought to be taxed for having children 'because at the moment they are being subsidised to breed'. This echoed a similar outburst from a senior member of the Civil List, reported by Willie Hamilt- on, over the Royal Family Allow- ances - these were so large that 'we're encouraging them to breed like rabbits.' (From the excellent C.I.S. Anti-Jub- illee Report.)

Islington Gazette in North London ran a story about the ten minute visit of the Queen to Islington under the headline 'God Save the Noble Scrounger'. The response was im- mediate. The wealthy chairman of North London Newspapers told the editor, "We don't want any more articles about this". (Tyneside Street Press, May 1977)

## WOULD JUBILEE'VE IT



The appeal for 'Socialist Unity' candidates is now out Comrades wanting a copy should write to : SOCIALIST UNITY 14 PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER 1.

In 1917 a strike of engineering workers spread throught the North of England.

The Cabinet anxiously watched the strike, undecided how to proceed. It was decided to send King George V and Queen Mary to tour the most troubled areas, 'Merseyside, the Manchester district, Morecombe and Barrow, Workington and Gretna, visiting the leading munition factories and shipyards'. Later, Lloyd George paid tribute to the sovereign, writing that 'In estimating the factors which conduced to the maintenance of our Home Front in 1917, a very high place must be given to the King.' (From Kendall, The Revolutionary Movement in Britain)

When the Queen went 'walkabout' at a housing estate during her visit to Glasgow, she may have been struck by the pleasant flowers and greenery in the gardens of the new council homes she visited. So were the residents of the houses, Albert and Marie Currie: the Council had dug the grass and flowers up from the local park and transplanted them there the previous day. And the day after the Queen's visit, the entire display was dug up again and taken back to the park - lock, stock and daisy. (Time Out)

From some essays on 'The Queen' by 9 year olds in a North London school -

'Well first I think she don't need to have that great big house which makes me feel quiet sick. One thing that any's me so much is that she talks about the poor people say for instance liverpool, which is quiet a dump she talks about them yet she won't lend them a penny will she?

'I think the Queen is stupid to wear hats all the time. I think she is spoilt to have lots of beautiful clothes and hats and a crown. She is a old bag and it js true so there.'

'She gets too much money and neve shares it. I think she is an old bag and feel like brakeing her neck.'

'I think the Queen is horrible because oil of owr rent goes to her and ore tellivishan rent goes to her to.'

'I don't like the Queen because there is a million poor people living in tumble down houses and sh'e not doing a bit to help them and she say she'll help them but she dos'ent.'

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## NAZIS CHICKEN OUT IN LIVERPOOL

THE NATIONAL party on Mersey- side was planning a demonstration in Liverpool on June 25th. Their issue was to have been Ireland and they were hoping for Orange Lodge Support. It was rumoured they intended to march through Liverpool 8, the main black area.

many local anti-fascists, whose strength has prevented any fascist group from appearing in public in Liverpool for three years, the National Party chickened out at the last moment, and called off the demonstration.

Amusingly, the message didn't get through to two of the NP'S

Blackburn members who turned up in Liverpool and had to be told by members of a National Abortion Campaign street meeting that the fascist march was off.

This show of NP weakness has strengthened the rumours that its members will soon rejoin the National Front.