

# The Red Mole

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DEC. 8  
ONLY THE BEGINNING



STRIKE AGAINST THE TORIES



# THE SCABS CHARTER

## Tory proposals and what they mean for trade-union

**Double Talk**  
The introduction to the document is a typical Tory piece of double-talk. It starts off by saying that "poor industrial relations are not be equated simply with strikes." This is of course true. For example last year 134 workers were killed in accidents caused by illegal acts by employers. This was pretty bad industrial relations; but the Tory proposals have nothing to say on this subject. Similarly since July 1966 successive Labour and Tory governments have deliberately created an extra 250,000 unemployed. This wasn't very good industrial relations either. But again the proposals fail to deal with this. In fact the only thing the proposals do deal with is trade unions and strikes. This isn't an accident. Industrial injuries and deaths and unemployment don't cut profits. Wage rises and strikes prevent employers squeezing as much profit from the workers as they would like. This is why the proposals only deal with trade unions.

The Tory proposals have nothing to do with "poor" industrial relations. Their only aim is to prevent the trade unions defending the living standards of the working class.

### No "Rights" for the Individual

The Tory proposals are vicious in their attacks on individual workers. The proposals here are obviously meant to intimidate. In particular they would prevent trade unionists even saying certain things. For example the document states that, "It would be an unfair industrial action (i.e. against the law under the Tory proposals) to induce a party to a legally enforceable contract to break it." (Para. 117). The Tories wish to make all contracts legally enforceable. This makes possible the following sort of position. A union could sign a contract without the agreement of the workers covered by the contract; unions such as the General and Municipal and the ETU have done this frequently. If a trade unionist argued for a strike in his trade union branch or at a mass meeting, then he could be guilty of "inducing" an illegal industrial action. He could be fined and if he refused to pay the fine he would be imprisoned. On the other hand the company and the union who had signed the agreement would be free to make any propaganda they liked for the contract. In other words anyone calling for a strike would be fined, but anyone opposing it would be free to do so. This is a typical example of how "fair" the proposals are.

It is worth noting that this proposal is designed to be different from normal legal procedure. Ordinary legal rules ban discussion by either side of the issue under dispute. This proposal on the other hand selectively silences one side only. Of course even ordinary legal rules would be little better; once a contract had been signed then the silencing of both parties would aid the side which wished to retain the contract.

There are many similar paragraphs in the proposals. Para. 169, for example, would make it illegal for anyone to "induce" an industrial action during the compulsory strike delay periods which the Tories intend to introduce.

The laws would apply not only to workers directly concerned in a dispute. It also affects journalists, for example. Any journalist who wrote an article supporting the strikers in any of the situations we have discussed would be liable to be fined. On the other hand anyone would be perfectly free to write an article attacking the strikers. This is another form of censorship. It aims to silence socialist newspapers like *The Red Mole* but to allow employers' newspapers such as the *Daily Express*, *Daily Telegraph*, etc. to continue their attacks on trade unionists.

### Victimisation Unlimited

Another way the Tory proposals would attack individual workers is by aiding employers to victimise men. The paragraphs that deal with this are nos. 51-56. The key sentence is in para. 54. This states that "Neither the employer nor the employee could be compelled to accept an I.T.'s (Industrial Tribunal's) recommendation of reinstatement." Despite all the Tory talk about "protection from unfair dismissal", this paragraph simply states that a victimised worker would have no right to his job back. Some protection!

The direct aim of the Tories and their supporters is to victimise and intimidate. The employers' newspaper, *The Economist*, is already urging victimisation under the new proposals. Its article on October 10th about the proposals says, "activists in some factories may fight against the bill—and will have to be sacked."

### What Recognition Rights?

The proposals on victimisation make nonsense of paras. 45 and 47 which are supposed to "grant" the right to join a trade union.

The way any employer attempts to stop a union being established in his firm is by sacking the men organising the union. The Tory "victimisation charter" would give the employer a perfect right to do this.

### The Scabs' Charter

As for the "right" not to join a union, which the Tories aim to introduce, this hardly needs commenting on. The only right this gives is the "right" to ignore majority decisions of the men who work in a plant, the "right" to enjoy trade union pay and conditions without the obligations of trade union membership, and the "right" to scab. The Tory proposals are an open incitement to scabbing.

### Clamp-Down on Shop-Floor Organisation

An important attack in the Tory proposals is on the powers of shop stewards and union branches. Under paras. 40-42 a Registrar for trade unions would be set up. Only unions which registered with him would be legally allowed to call strikes. The key point here is that the rules such as those in para. 80 are framed so that trade union branches, shop stewards committees and break-away unions could NEVER register. Under para. 70 if, for example, a shop stewards committee called a strike for higher pay, or in defence of a victimised colleague, then its members would be fined. If they refused to pay the fine they would be imprisoned. Furthermore, para. 70 also states that "There would be no upper limit on awards of compensation against unregistered industrial relations organisations." This means that shop stewards would have to pay unlimited fines.

### Blacking and Sympathy Strikes Outlawed

Para. 71 of the document makes illegal blacking and sympathy strikes. It states that it would be an illegal industrial action "to threaten or induce industrial action to persuade any other person not to enter into or perform a commercial contract, unless that person is himself participating in, or directly interested in, or supporting any party to the industrial dispute which gave rise to the original industrial action. This would mean, for example, that an attempt to threaten or induce industrial action to persuade one company not to supply goods to another where the latter but not the former was involved in a dispute would be actionable before the NIRC (National Industrial Relations Court)". This explicitly bans blacking. There is no need to go into what a powerful weapon this would give to the employer. It would mean they could use any labour to obtain supplies to defeat a strike. It



Clashes between strikers and police would become commonplace under the new Tory Bill.

would make the position of strikers in small factories almost impossible and would greatly weaken the power of all trade unions.

### Picketing

Picketing and blacking are two of the essentials of trade union action. Having outlawed blacking, the Tories then go on to hit out at picketing. This is done in the paragraphs dealing with commercial contracts.

In legal terms when a worker takes employment he enters into a commercial contract with the employer. If he withdraws his labour he is in breach of that contract.

Under the Tories' proposals, for example, a lorry crossing a picket line would be unlawful as it would cause a breach of a commercial contract to deliver goods.

The Tory proposals are aimed to make effective picketing impossible.

### New Courts, New Penalties

The National Industrial Relations Court is the body which the Tories would set up to police their new laws. They claim it would be fair and not biased against trade unionists because it would have an "independent" judge as its head. This is a lie. Judges are not "fair", they are enemies of the trade unions. They have already shown this by removing, for example, most of the protection of the 1906 Trades Disputes Act.

The Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) is another "independent" body whose powers would be greatly increased by the Tory proposals. How "impartial" this is can be judged from the fact that it includes among its members such "impartial" men as Leslie Blakeman—ex-personnel director at Fords and the man who supervised the victimising of the 17 shop stewards in 1962. Even the right-wing union officials whom Barbara Castle found to sit on this Commission are so disgusted with the role that the Tories would make it play that they are beginning to resign.

Both these bodies are simply respectable "fronts" for anti-union attacks.

### Tight Procedure "Agreements"

A key section of the Tory proposals, and particularly dangerous, is paras. 118 to 126. These give the CIR powers to impose legally enforceable procedures.

This proposal is far more important than the much talked-about proposals for legally enforceable contracts. Only the most right-wing unions are going to accept that. On procedures however there is need for an agreement. The procedure can be imposed without the union agreeing to it. This means for example that the totally unfair and long-drawn-out procedures of the York Agreement could be made legally enforceable. If workers struck before this entire biased procedure had been gone through they could be fined.

Legally enforceable procedures would also be used to back up the victimisation proposals. If procedures for dismissal were legally enforced then the firm could victimise a worker, and anyone striking, or even arguing for a strike, for his reinstatement would be fined. Para. 22 would make it an unlawful act even to threaten a strike for his reinstatement.

The paragraphs on procedures reveal completely the Tory lies about being interested in industrial "agreements". A procedure which is imposed by the CIR is in no sense an agreement—it is something that is dictated to the workers.

### Bosses' Emergencies

The section of the proposals on strike ballots and "cooling-off" periods is contained in paras. 165-176. This section brings us right back to the

them up so that the press and government can aim its hysterical propaganda against them.

Firstly the whole definition of "National Emergency" is a twist. For example, during a three-week dockers' strike less than 600,000 working days are lost. The Tories would rule that this was a "National Emergency" by using para. 166 which defines such an emergency. However, in a single year 120 million days' production are lost through deliberately-induced unemployment, nearly 30 million days are lost through avoidable accidents. But of course the Tories will not consider any of these things as national emergencies.

To take another example, consider the case of G.K.N. Sankey. This strike resulted in seven thousand workers being temporarily laid off. Under para. 166 this could be counted as a national emergency. But when GEC sacked 12,000 men permanently, that couldn't count as a national emergency.

The paras. 165-176 give the Tories two powerful weapons. The first is a 60-day compulsory strike delay period.

The entire aim of this proposal is to give employers time to prepare to defeat a strike and to prevent strike action which needs to be immediate to be effective: for example, a case of victimisation or when workers are told to handle dangerous goods without proper safeguards.

### Strike Ballots

Para. 172 would enable the Government to enforce a ballot before a strike. Of course they do not want a ballot before every strike. If the Government made it obligatory that in all strike there should be a ballot, then it could lead to a situation where members might insist on no return to work before all demands were met. This would give the members some control over their union executives and the Tories want to oppose this at all costs.

Note also that while a ballot would necessarily call a strike, it would not be necessary to call one off. A typical Tory double standard. The Tories' only interest in ballots is in manipulating the outcome.

### Other Proposals

There are a whole host of other anti-union measures in the Tory document. It states for example that employees must be given information by the employer about their right "whether or not to belong to a trade union" (para. 59). In effect this means that as soon as a man starts work he can be given a piece of paper by the employer which tells him that he does not have to join a union. What more could the boss want in the way of an opportunity to make propaganda against the union?

Other proposals could be used by employers to destroy the resistance to attacks of militant sections of workers. Para. 132, for example, allows the CIR to decide what is the appropriate "bargaining unit", i.e. which section of the men the company would have to negotiate with. This is especially crucial in productivity deals. For example if the management knew a deal would lead to heavy redundancy in one plant and not in others, it could ask the CIR to rule that a single factory or group was not a suitable bargaining unit. If the CIR enforced this then the firm would no longer have to negotiate with the men in the affected factory. Instead they could be outvoted by men in factories or groups not affected.

Another paragraph, no. 86, is designed to cripple unions by making possible the seizure of their strike funds. This paragraph states that the funds of a union that were available for industrial action could be treated as available for the payment of compensation awards.

Paras. 136 and 139 would be used to keep militant unions from sitting on negotiating





# HOW DO WE FIGHT THE TORIES

The Tory Party is acting true to form. It attacks the trade unions, the old, the poor, and schoolchildren, while it gives a £300,000,000 tax handout which only really aids the rich. The question now is how to defeat the Tories.

The first steps have already been taken in the shape of conferences such as that of the London Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions on Nov. 14th and the many smaller ones being organised up and down the country by trades councils and other such bodies. At these meetings trade unionists and socialists can begin to thrash out a policy for defeating the Tories. The Dec. 8th strike is the first step along this path.

But all this is only a beginning. The Tories are in too tough an economic situation to give in just because of a 1-day strike. A long-term campaign will have to be waged against them. While a second 1-day strike on Jan. 12th would be a further step forward, to ensure that the campaign continues to pick up steam we must involve more and more workers in it.

## Local Action

To achieve the widest possible unity in action, all-inclusive action committees must be established in every town and industry. These committees should be open to all those willing to struggle against the Tory offensive. Let there be no bans and proscriptions in the fight against the Tory offensive.

Committees of this type have already been formed in several towns in order to prepare for the Dec. 8th strike. These can be extended, but they must be co-ordinated nationally if they are to have a maximum effect. It is vitally important that they do not simply disappear after Dec. 8th. If the Tory Bill is passed, then they will be needed to co-ordinate opposition to the Tories' attempts to fine and imprison trade unionists. If the Bill is defeated by industrial action, then these committees will be needed to prepare for new attacks by the Tories which are bound to follow.

It is also important to realise that even defeating the anti-union laws will not solve many of the problems facing the working class. Even without the Bill, prices will still rise, cuts will still be made in the social services and firms will still carry out large-scale redundancies. Local action committees can have an important role to play in coordinating activity against these and other attacks on living standards. Two things, however, are necessary if these committees are to play this role: firstly, they must be put on a permanent basis. This means that they must be made up of *elected delegates* from trade union branches and shopstewards committees. Secondly, the aims of these action committees should not be confined simply to fighting against the Bill, but must also include aiding struggles against productivity deals, aiding in unionisation drives, helping rent struggles, carrying out campaigns against the social service cuts, etc.

## What Demands

If we really want to defeat the Tories, then we must make demands which will not simply lead to temporary victories or which will be frittered away by price increases, etc. We must make demands which will increase workers' power and erode the power of the capitalists and the Tories. We must point out that capitalism cannot even grant such elementary demands as the right to a job, and the right to a wage increase without selling conditions through productivity deal strings. For this reason, we must put forward demands for workers' control, shop stewards' control over hiring and firing, opening the books, nationalisation under workers' control (an obvious thing for Rolls Royce), etc.

## Nationally

At the same time as this is being done a fight must be waged to force union leaders to carry out the democratic decisions of their members and also to really fight the Tories. The suggestion that the TUC should do a deal with the government, offering a voluntary wage freeze in return for controls over dividends and prices is an extremely dangerous one. One of the aims of the Tories is to get the trade unions to police

their own members and the TUC must not be a party to this in any way. Its attacks on the Dec. 8th strike show that the TUC is more concerned with damping down the struggle than with giving it a lead. As a result rank-and-file militants will have to be extra vigilant.

## Unity

M.P.s who say that they oppose the Tory offensive must show this by their actions, not just by a lot of hot air. They must campaign up and down the country in support of the Dec. 8th strike and industrial action; they must support trade unionists who refuse to pay any fines which are imposed if the Bill is passed. At the moment they are doing nothing. How can a man like Eric Heffer be taken seriously, when he claims to oppose legal restraints on trade unions and yet, on the other hand, he is prepared to offer "assistance" to Barbara Castle who produced the anti-union *In Place of Strife* proposals. To defeat the Tories we certainly need unity, but it must be unity which will destroy the Tories' attack on the living standards of the working class, and not unity which will lead to a defeat. For example, it is ridiculous of the TUC to ask Wilson to speak at their special meeting on Jan. 12th as Wilson is the very man whose government first introduced measures against the trade unions and paved the way for the Tory onslaught. Similarly the right-wing union leaders such as Cannon and Cooper have no *real* intention of fighting the Tories. The only unity which would include them would be one which would lead to an acceptance of the Tory proposals. There is no point in this type of unity. We are interested in unity in struggle, not in unity in defeat.

The immediate aim must of course be to gain the maximum industrial action for strikes such as that of Dec. 8th and Jan. 12th, but we must always point out that this is only a beginning. It still leaves unsolved most of the real problems. Only the driving out of the Tories—both Labour and Conservative—can begin to solve these

## THE RED MOLE THE RED MOLE THE

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# ANOTHER GOOD REASON FOR STRIKING: The Social Service cuts

The Tories are not limiting their anti-working class measures to attacks on the trade unions. They know that in the area of direct industrial struggle the working class can hit back. The 14% wage rise won by the council workers shows clearly that the power of the working class is quite sufficient to defeat the Tories and all their industrial and local government helpers. The only way the power of the working class can be defeated is if it is misdirected into fruitless activities such as lobbying parliament, writing letters to M.P.s, etc.

Knowing that a direct attack on the living standards of the working class means an extremely tough fight, the Tories are looking around for easier ways. One is to cut the living standards of the working class by attacking the Social Services. Old age pensioners, the sick, and schoolchildren, the Tories calculate, cannot hit back in the way that trade unionists can. This is the meaning of their attack on the Social Services in Barber's "Mini-Budget".

The aim of any Tory Social Services and tax changes is to make the rich better off. It is not often however that the Tories are open about it. This time however they have made little effort to disguise their aim. Even the *Daily Mirror* was forced to point out that the sums work out roughly as follows:

If we assume a man earning £25 a week with a wife and two children in reasonably good health, then he will have to pay out the following extra money (this is an average):

School meals	£13. 6. 8
Child's Milk	£5. 0. 0
Prescriptions	£1.13. 0
Teeth	£2. 4. 0.
Fares	£4. 0. 0.

In addition if he lived in a council house, he could expect to pay out at least £1.0.0. a week extra in rent. For example the G.L.C. has announced that it is its aim to increase rents by 30/- a week over the next couple of years.

If we add all this up then the extra cost a year for all these items is £78. 3. 8d.

And how about the wonderful 6d off income tax which the papers made such a fuss about? For a man earning £25 a week, the saving from this is a miserable 3s 9d. a week, that is approx. £13.0.0. a year.

A man on the average wage for the country would be £65.0.0. a year worse off as a result of the Tory Social Security changes. In other words, the Tories have just cut wage packets by an average of £1 a week. And they claim to be the party that stands for more money for the individual! What a joke! A short-term answer to this type of this would be for all unions to put in an immediate demand for a £1 a week pay increase, but in the long term what we have to do is to remove from office the government which passes these types of measures. This means getting the Tories out of office by any means we can.

If you want another way of looking at the Tory cuts, you need only see that the income

tax saving would not even pay for the extra charge on school meals, and it would not cover a quarter of the increase in council rents.

All these calculations leave out of account the expected 10% increase in food prices caused by the abolition of the present form of food subsidies.

As for the "special" help for the very poor which the Tories have made such a fuss about, this is so small as to be almost non-existent. For example, a family with the extremely low income of £12.10.0 a week would have to have 4 children before it got even £3 a week. Also by ensuring that it is means-tested, the Tories are hoping that many really poor families will not apply.

## Who Gains

In contrast to the loss by the average worker, the rich will gain mightily. For example a man earning £10,000 a year gets a tax reduction of £200 a year, and a man on £20,000 gets an extra £450 a year (over £8.10.0 a week).

Companies are also aided by a 5½% cut in corporation tax.

Extra money is to be spent on defending the British companies' profits overseas. According to the Tories, money is not available for school milk, but it is readily available for keeping troops east of Suez.

The change in the system of food payments is to bring Britain into line with European countries, so as to prepare for entering the Common Market. This will mean huge profits for big firms but will be yet another attack on the living

standards of the working class. For example, the bill for food would go up by £170 million a year—equivalent to an increase in the cost of living of 4.5%.<sup>(1)</sup> The value added tax we would be forced to adopt would increase prices by another 2½-5%.<sup>(2)</sup>

## What Does It All Mean

If we look at all the Tory proposals, we see that they merely continue in the footsteps of previous Labour and Tory governments. For example in the field of taxation the last Labour government increased taxation on those earning £3,000 a year and over by only 3% while it increased taxation on those earning only £19 a week by nearly 17%.<sup>(3)</sup> Similarly neither Labour nor, of course, Tory governments have done anything about the fact that 1% of the population own 81% of the industrial capital of this country. The Tory Social Service cuts therefore merely follow in the footsteps of previous governments. The reason for this is simple: as long as the system of private ownership of factories, docks, transport, etc. exists in this country, then the owners of these means of production will ensure that all attempts to solve economic problems will be made at the expense of the working class. The only long-term way to defeat attacks on the trade unions and on the Social Services is to end that system of ownership.

(1) *The Common Market*, published by Labour Research Dept.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) *Economic Trends*, HMSO, 1969.



# INTERVIEW WITH MIKE COOLEY

Interview with Mike Cooley, who is National Vice-President of DATA, and is at the moment himself engaged in a struggle against redundancy in the Rotax factory where he works and where the workers are, for example, physically preventing the removal of machinery from their factory. He gave us this interview in his personal capacity.

—What would you say was the most dangerous part of the Tory trade union proposals?

I think it is a bad idea to try and identify the most dangerous part. This could lead to a fragmented opposition to the Bill, an attempt merely to get rid of the worst bits. I would prefer to say that the Bill is totally anti-working class and must be opposed as a package.

—Can you tell us about DATA's official position on the Bill and on the December 8th strike?

DATA, which is now the technical and supervisory section of the 1¼m. strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW), has for the last 7 or 8 years been fundamentally opposed to any form of anti-trade union legislation, whether under a Tory or a Labour government. Unlike the other unions, we opposed the wage-freeze legislation under Wilson to the extent that in some companies—for example Beckman Instruments in Scotland—we took the risk of incurring legal action, by pursuing claims in excess of the "norm". The union refused to be intimidated then—it instructed members to take strike action, even when this was illegal, or open to fines—and it certainly will not be intimidated by the Tories. Specifically the full executive committee of DATA has said unanimously that it believes that the way to oppose the legislation is through industrial action, and we have encouraged all members to take as much industrial action as possible against the Bill; in particular we welcome any industrial action taken on December 8th. The executive members have been travelling round the country addressing mass meetings encouraging members to participate in the December 8th strike. These meetings have been mostly in working time. I myself will be addressing mass meetings on the N.E. coast, for example at C. A. Parsons at Newcastle, when thousands of workers will stop work. Most meetings last about 1½ hours, so that means there will be two stoppages: we call them out now to tell them to come out again on December 8th. All trade unions should be doing the same if they were serious in their opposition to the Tory Bill.

—What about after December 8th?

DATA has said officially that this should be just the beginning of a campaign of industrial action which makes clear to the employers and the government representing them that DATA is determined that its own members will be able to take industrial action to obtain a more equitable share of the wealth they create. In particular, one of the most important developments, which has been largely ignored by the press, is the decision of the AUEW to call the first meeting of its new national committee specifically to consider steps to oppose the legislation. This is the rank and file policy-making body of the most powerful section of workers in the country who have opposed the Bill. We hope to obtain from this a call to engineering workers throughout the country to undertake industrial action against the Bill. After December 8th, I personally hope there will be continued industrial action culminating, for example, in a series of one-day

general strikes.

—Is there an explanation why DATA has taken this militant line?

I think the drive and energy in DATA stems from the fact that it is controlled by lay members at all levels. Even the National President must work in industry, under the union rules. All the members of the executive committee, the Divisional Council Secretaries, and the Branch Secretaries work in industry. This means that every political and industrial judgement they make is tempered by the fact that they themselves face the employers at the point of production, which is where the class confrontation is sharpest. We believe that all other unions should be the same. We also believe in DATA that the only way to defend and improve the members' working conditions is by industrial action; and in fact we spend over 50% of our total income from subscriptions on strikes (other unions just seem to put it in banks).

—If the Bill was passed, what would be your attitude on registration?

The trade unions will have to consider whether they should register; my own feeling is that they should not. If the Bill was passed, I think it would be essential for the trade unions to explain the nature of the law in bourgeois societies; the law has always worked against the interests of the working class in Britain. There is nothing moral or sacrosanct about it. As far as I am concerned, where there are bad laws the progressive forces have a responsibility to break them. The German people were condemned for not breaking the law in the '30s; the British working class could be similarly condemned by history if they obey these laws. The British ruling class is the most sophisticated in the world, but when it is faced with a direct confrontation with the working class, as in 1926, then it does not hesitate to use the most brutal methods. I believe in the coming period we will see this clearly. There is an intention on the part of the ruling class to introduce measures of the Corporate state. The statements of Robens and Sir Paul Chambers on a "Government of Business Men", together with Robens' latest rantings about communists and such like, and some of Powell's anti-union pronouncements, are a clear indication of this. These rantings are like those of some of the spokesmen in Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

—Do you feel the same way about how you should react to the threat of fines?

Yes, we should not pay them. Trade union leaders should be prepared to go to prison if necessary to demonstrate how inequitable the legislation is. If I personally was involved, I would not pay the fine.

—What is your attitude on the Labour Party's opposition to the Bill?

My personal opinion is that there is precious little to choose between the Tory Party and the Labour Party. They're like Tweedledum and Tweedledee. The Labour Party never was and never will be a party of revolutionary change. It has been in office six times; each time they are in opposition they say they support socialism, but in office they have introduced some of the most repressive legislation against the working class. They introduced the means test in the '30s. They very legislation which the Conservatives are attempting to introduce has been built on foundations laid by Wilson. It's complete hypocrisy that he should be speaking

against the legislation at the TUC really in January. Some parliamentary fakers have been saying in the last few weeks that the working class should oppose the Bill; when they were in themselves, not one of them voted against the initial July '66 freeze and anti-trade union measures (a few abstained). I feel personally that there is a real danger that the campaign will be side-tracked into one of returning a Labour government.

—What do you think of Eric Heffer's statement that it takes great courage to vote against a Bill?

Well, if he thinks that's great courage, we know what to expect in the next months when people could find themselves being put in jail for their political views. A fair indication of how the trade union leaders and M.P.s see the campaign is their continuous condemnation of the December 8th strike; if they were serious in their opposition to the Bill, they would be travelling all over the country encouraging direct industrial action against the Bill. I also think there's a real danger that the TUC will try and get itself into a bargaining position with the government in which it is prepared to offer a voluntary wage freeze as an alternative to the Bill; this would be equally disastrous; a wage freeze is a wage freeze, whether voluntary or otherwise.

—What do you think should be done in local areas to coordinate action against the Bill?

There is a definite need for local defence committees. They should be based on the sort of programme I have outlined, not try to attract sympathetic M.P.s and trade union leaders. They must coordinate the rank and file and be prepared to give vent to the militancy which exists on the shop floor.

—What are your general conclusions on the anti-trade union legislation?

It is inevitable that any government, whatever its complexion, that seeks to make capitalism work, will find itself having to attempt to do this sort of thing, for four main reasons, I think:

1. The general crisis of world imperialism makes this necessary. As a result of the national liberation movements, the metropolitan powers can no longer export the most intense exploitation. The Vietnamese people have demonstrated that they can fight the greatest imperialist power to a standstill. So they will increasingly have to bring the worst of the exploitation back onto the shoulders of the metropolitan working class. This means that there is an identity of interest between the struggles of the metropolitan and colonial peoples; they have the same common enemy.

2. There are the effects of technological change. The employers are involved in enormous capital investment in equipment which is obsolete in 3 or 4 years; they must exploit this equipment for 24 hours a day; therefore they will try to eliminate all "non-productive" time and to subordinate the work-force more and more to the machine, in other words to create a docile work-force. The contradiction for the employer is that the more capital is accumulated in one place, and the more production is synchronised, the greater is the strike power of the workers; therefore 12 workers in a foundry can stop almost the entire motor car industry. The working class now realises that it has new industrial strength and tries to use it to end the situation in which 7% of the population own 84% of

the nation's wealth. The employers are determined they shall not achieve this, and they are introducing the legislation.

3. There is the problem of overproduction which is run on capitalist criteria to produce to work. In the United States about 10 million are unemployed; in Britain that already demands that the 600,000 unemployed should be increased. There is evidence that the working class are preparing the strike weapon to assert the right to work. An example was the DATA demand for strikes throughout the GEC combine which seeks to prevent this.

4. The law of diminishing returns is setting in to bite. Rolls-Royce is in dire straits. British Leyland is also having trouble. Structural difficulties within the system make change necessary. Rather than the ruling class will try to make some work faster whilst simultaneously creating a pool of unemployed, in a desperate attempt to offset one of the inherent features of the capitalist system. It is very important that workers should understand that it is their problem to make these industries viable; they have a responsibility to heighten the contradictions in the system in order to make change necessary.

Workers will be told, once again, that it is in the national interest that they should accept legislation. It is becoming more and more important that we should explain the facts: that there are two classes in society, a parasitic class which extracts £8,000 profit from us every year, and the working class which creates all the real wealth we see. The interests of these classes are diametrically opposed: there is no cooperation possible between the exploiters and the exploited. What about this legislation being in the national interest, we have to ask which nation are the interests of?—the bankers, share holders and the working class? The Bill is in the interests of the former. It seeks to weaken the working class the basic trade union which have been established after generations of struggle and sacrifice.

I think there are three basic demands which the mass of the working class will be prepared to fight; these would be the bread and land of today:

1. wage increases without productivity deals.
2. no anti-trade union legislation.
3. the right to work.

If these demands were properly fought they would get mass support. The ruling class is incapable of granting them, and so they demonstrate the need for fundamental change. DATA, by the way, is the only union which won't accept productivity deals.

I feel that the limiting feature in Britain is that the working class has always sought to resolve its problems in the framework of capitalism. I recognise that the steps I have outlined are purely industrial, but I would see the heightening of the contradictions in the system as a level from which real political action could be embarked upon. I believe personally that the political lead could only come from a Leninist party which has deep roots within the working class, is led by the working class, and is trusted and respected by the working class.

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