

# WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17, 1972 ● No. 691 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

## COMMON MARKET—SECOND VOTE

# MOMENT OF DECISION

BY ALEX MITCHELL

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It is equally clear that had the Tories announced in their 1970 election manifesto that a Tory government would enter Europe without consulting the electorate, they would have been soundly defeated.

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### Militancy

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This militancy is now given dramatic expression in the miners' strike.

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world market position (and big profits) by stepping up their exploitation of the working class.

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the standard of living of millions of working-class families.

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The pickets were arrested after an angry clash between miners and police outside Longannet power station in Fife on Monday.

The petition against the men alleged that they 'formed part of a riotous mob of evil disposed persons which, acting with a common purpose, did conduct itself in a violent, riotous and tumultuous manner to the great terror and alarm of the lieges, and in breach of the peace did curse, swear, and utter threats of violence'.

The accused were remanded in custody after being refused bail.

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Norman Wylie, Lord Advocate, has announced that he will investigate the circumstances surrounding the court hearing.

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A contingent of unemployed youth from N Ireland will also join the march in Liverpool.

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# ECUADOR'S VELASCO OUSTED—4th TIME

**PRESIDENT** José María Velasco Ibarra, dominant figure of Ecuador politics for three decades and Latin America's most frequently ousted president, was overthrown by a military coup yesterday morning.

Military sources said Dr Velasco — head of state five times since 1934 and now ousted for the fourth time by a

military coup—had been flown out of the country to exile. He is succeeded as head of state by army chief Brig-Gen Guillermo Rodríguez Lara.

The army has put the country in a state of siege and clamped a curfew over the whole of Ecuador. It intervened to prevent the presidential election scheduled for June. The favoured candidate in the election was Assad Bucaram, leader of the

Concentration of Popular Forces. The army claims Bucaram is a Lebanese and unqualified to stand.

The military chiefs have opposed all along Velasco's plans to allow even a minimal popular say in electing the country's ruler.

In a proclamation issued early yesterday, they said the aims of the new government were social justice and the redemption of the humble. The new presi-

dent is to be supported by a government council composed of a new army commander and the navy and air force heads.

Ousting the president is a familiar pattern in Ecuador which has had 16 constitutions since independence in 1830. The country's economy is entirely dominated by the big oil corporations and fruit companies. It is the world's largest exporter of bananas and Panama hats.

## CP TO JOIN NEW SYRIAN FRONT

BY A FOREIGN

CORRESPONDENT

SYRIA'S Communist Party plans to merge with various bourgeois nationalist groups, including the ruling Ba'ath Party, to form a 'Progressive Front of National Unity'.

The Front has been under discussion since last November and its formation is due to be announced publicly towards the end of this month.

Taking part in the front will be the Arab Socialist Union, led by Dr Jamal Atassi, which supports the present Egyptian regime; the Socialist Union Movement, led by Jamal el Soufi; the Arab Socialist Movement of Akram el Haurani and the Communist Party, led by Khaled Bagdach.

Atassi has been involved in almost daily consultation with Syrian President General Hafez al Assad on the formation of the new Front.

Assad's Ba'ath Party will dominate the Front. Until now, the Ba'ath Party has been the only legal political organization in Syria where the Communist Party has been tolerated only in so far as it subordinated itself completely to the bourgeois government.

Many communists who refused to accept these terms are still in prison. Clearly the CP has now decided to accept Assad's terms in full. This move follows the recent congress of the Lebanese Communist Party, attended by Ba'athist representatives as 'fraternal delegates'.

Syria forms part of the recently created Federation of Arab Republics with Libya and Egypt, both pillars of anti-communism in the Middle East. The Federation also plans to recruit the Sudanese dictatorship of Gen Jaafar Numeiry.

The Syrian regime described the new front as 'a step forward on the road of democratizing the regime'. But it is not yet clear what, if any, will be the Front's powers.

One of the clauses in the projected constitution bars students and soldiers from taking part in the Front. The Ba'ath Party will continue to be the only legal political organization in the universities.

## US TRADE DEFICIT SOARS

THE US balance of payments deficit soared to \$29,629m (£11,400m) last year, about three times the 1970 record figure, the Commerce Department announced.

This lifted foreign claims on the American gold stock to a massive \$47,536m (£18,300m) and reduced the reserves available to defray these claims to \$12,167m (£4,680m).

The growth in the US balance of payments deficit caused President Nixon to suspend the gold convertibility of the dollar last August 15.

As long as the dollar remains inconvertible, the foreign official claims on the US reserves cannot be cashed.

## NAVY WANTS GREEK HOME PORT

THE UNITED States will continue discussion with Greece for a navy home port in Piraeus, despite a Soviet warning against establishing US bases so close to its borders, diplomatic sources said yesterday.

State Department spokesman Charles Bray said the US was simply seeking residential facilities for some 3,500 dependents of American seamen in the Athenian port.

This would allow ships to remain longer in the Mediterranean without returning to the US for shore leave. The Nixon administration plans to strengthen its alliance with Greece, Turkey and Portugal aimed at winning a more powerful military basis.



ILWU CHIEF HARRY BRIDGES (FOREGROUND) WITH THE PMA'S FLYNN

## DOCKERS TO VOTE ON DEAL

UNION leaders representing 15,000 dockers on the American West coast have recommended acceptance of a new contract agreed with the dock employers. The contract must still be ratified by a majority of the dockers who have been on strike since last summer.

The new contract falls well short of the dockers' original demands. It contains a guaranteed annual wage provision to provide 36 hours of work a week for full-time workers and 18 hours for part-time workers, whether or not work is available.

Full-time dockers will receive a 24-per-cent pay increase, spread over two years, bringing the hourly wage scale to \$5.40 an hour.

It is not yet clear whether the contract contains the vital guarantees on container-handling demanded by the International Longshoremen's and Warehouse-

men's Union.

The contract was reached last week in negotiations with the Pacific Maritime Association representing 122 companies, including many foreign shipping firms. It was accepted by a meeting of 105 ILWU officials in San Francisco on Monday.

Mr Sidney Roger, deputizing for ILWU chief Harry Bridges, said the officials had recommended that members 'approve the proposed agreement and terminate the strike'.

Voting is through the union branches and could be finished by this weekend.

The strike has already lasted 130 days, not counting 80 days in which the dockers were ordered back to work under a Presidential order.

Nixon has asked Congress to rush through further legislation empowering him to order the strikers back.

## WHAT WE THINK



SHADOW POWER MINISTER ROY MASON, USING A POLICE MICROPHONE TO CONTROL TUESDAY'S LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT. HE USES THE DANGEROUS SLOGAN 'VICTORY IS NEAR'

## MINERS HAVEN'T WON YET

MR JOE GORMLEY, President of the National Union of Mineworkers, could spread a dangerous complacency among some sections of the working class.

To declare, after the first session of the Wilberforce inquiry: 'We believe the battle is won. We believe the court of inquiry is bound to come down in our favour' is lunacy.

THE BATTLE IS NOT WON.

The truth is that the Heath government has not given the slightest indication that it is preparing to make concessions to the miners. On the contrary, Heath declared in parliament this week, with 10,000 miners in the streets outside: 'It is not possible to give support to [the miners'] claim and at the same time pretend you are against inflation and unemployment.'

The loud cheers that erupted from the government benches reflected the Tory Party's traditional hatred of the miners. The miners are well aware of this. The soft words of Gormley, backed up by Labour's former Minister of Power Roy Mason who declared that the battle was 'almost won', will not disarm them.

Because that is what the Tory strategy is now about. The only purpose of the Wilberforce inquiry is to buy time for the government. It is an attempt to get the working class to lower its guard while even stronger measures, particularly in relation to picketing, are prepared against it.

In this situation, optimistic burlings can only assist the Tories to do that. But Gormley and Mason, whatever else they may be, are not stupid. They know the miners' leaders have received no guarantees whatever from the Wilberforce inquiry. They know also that the miners on the picket lines are too class-conscious to allow themselves to be fooled by changes in Tory strategy.

The Labour and trade union leaders, trapped between the Tory offensive and the growing determination of workers to fight back on a scale not seen since 1926, are terrified not by the government but by their own followers.

Gormley clearly expressed this: 'We don't think that there will be a cat in hell's chance of getting these men off the picket lines until this report is available.'

'AND, BY GOD, IF IT ISN'T FAVOURABLE, I HESITATE TO THINK WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BRITAIN.'

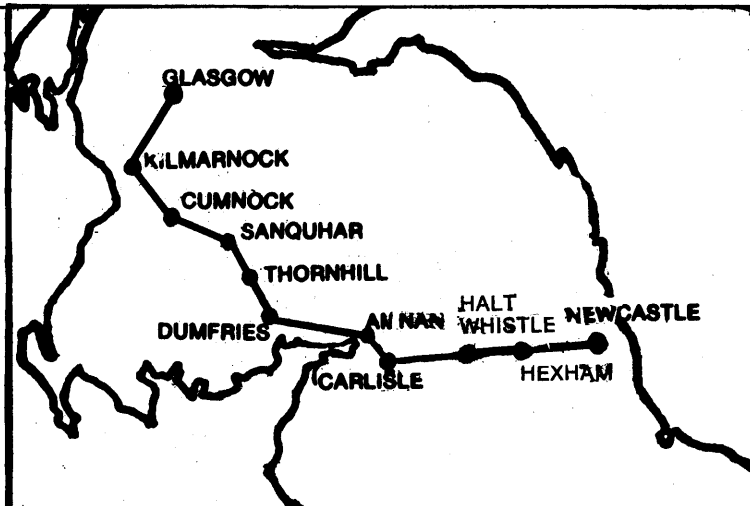
The miners are right to take this attitude. Victory is not yet in the bag. There must be no relaxation of picketing, no slacking of the unity between miners and other trade unionists. The fight must go on until the Tory government is defeated.

Right-to-Work

# DIARY

By Stephen Johns

WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO WORK



## NEW RECRUITS EXPLAIN WHY THEY JOINED

DAY NINE—Hexham

WE'VE begun to pick up people on the way. The latest recruit is a miner, John Hampson from Cumnock. He took the decision to come on the journey to London after the Carlisle meeting and play.

'The reason why I came is because the march is in line with the battle down on the picket line—with one big difference. You are fighting for all the working class and trying to build socialist movements everywhere,' he told me.

'I believe in this. Socialism to me is making the workers one big family and getting a decent job and a good wage. Getting back to normal really, and away from what the Tories are doing to this country.

'When I say we want the right to live decently, I reach this conclusion because I see this right is threatened. All these lads on the march don't have a chance under this set up. They come out of school then waste away on the dole. There are boys I know with "O" levels who can't get work. This is no life for anyone.'

John also gets angry about the fate of the old people under Tory rule. He lives with his mother and father and they have to exist on £10 a week.

'It's better for me to go marching. It takes some weight off my parents and they back my beliefs anyway. One of the first things a Labour government must do is to give a better deal to the old.'

'As a whole if the Labour Party do get in, they must adopt the Young Socialists' policies. As far as I know them I agree with them 100 per cent.'

What does he think of the march so far?

'I have always been interested in politics and the main attraction for me is to listen at meetings and talk to people we meet in the towns.

'This has been a great experience for me. At first I thought the aim of getting the Tories out was perhaps a little bit ambitious, but now, after seeing the feeling in the areas we have passed through, I know this is possible if people would come forward and fight.'



Arriving for lunch after a long, wet march from Haltwhistle, the Glasgow-London marchers are led by John Barrie (right).

John is a great asset to the team. He has studied first aid in his spare time. Every evening the weary marchers attend the makeshift surgery where he treats their feet.

The other recruit is Ken Gannon, an unemployed labourer from Carlisle.

Ken knows just how the Tories are trying to smash the working class because he's experienced it.

Back in 1969 he was working for a tyre company. He was employed as a cleaner then found he was expected to do a lubricator's job as well. He complained, and lost his job.

Then he went into one of the local sweat shops that promised money for a crippling 12 hours a day. But after three months the overtime fell through and Ken left to work on the M6 motorway. One day the foreman drove up onto the site and sacked Ken and five of his mates without any explanation.

Ken went to the site agent to ask for an explanation. He was told to get off the motorway or face police arrest.

In his final job he approached the manager and asked for leave to attend a government re-training scheme. The boss told him if he went to the school, he went with his cards. Ken left the job and tried to train as a slater and tiler. He was dismissed because they said he was 'unfit'.



JOHN HAMPSON, WHO JOINED THE MARCH AT CUMNOCK

Ken was now cornered where the Tories wanted him.

'Eventually the assistance board came round, "Mr Gannon you have been on the assistance for some time now we think it's about time you found a job". What could I say? There aren't any jobs. I can't get one, I've been out 12 months. This is how you get lower and lower in spirit. I get £5.25 a week from the government and I have to pay £4 rent on this kind of money. You can't get a job. You don't have the clothes—they are all second-hand—you don't have the fares to travel for the jobs, it's hopeless.'

It was at this point that Ken

read about the march in the 'Cumberland News'.

'I could see the march stood for the working class.

'Carlisle is a funny place, you have a lot of people who talk about things and doing something else. Well for once I decided I would do more than talk, I was going to do something.'

'I'm learning about politics on this march. I'm not brilliant at it, but I have made this step and I'm going to stick it out to the end.'

We welcome Ken and John. I'm sure their experience and knowledge will be a big asset on the march to London.

A word about Hexham, last night's stop-over point. It's a rural area with one factory—a chipboard plant. And here's a dramatic lesson in productivity. This factory started out with 350 workers, it's now got half that number and the management hope to get another 100 out.

The reason for the savage redundancies is automation and particularly new machinery the firm has imported from Germany.

Now a tribute to the local Labour Party secretary/agent Tom Flaws. He's just come in with eggs, bacon, cornflakes and milk for our breakfast.

'It'll probably get me the sack. But you're left wing and on the move that's good enough for me,' he said.

## MORE WARM WELCOMES ASSURED ON ROUTES

MARCHERS on the Young Socialists' Right-to-Work march are assured of a warm welcome at two centres on the route to London.

Sheffield Polytechnic Students' Union has undertaken to organize a contingent to join the march when it

reaches Sheffield, to open the Students' Union building for accommodation for the marchers and to raise £100 for the campaign.

At Wallingford, near Oxford, the local Labour Party has agreed to support the march and donate £10 towards

expenses.

The local supporters have also agreed to find accommodation and book the town hall for a public meeting.

Meanwhile the women's section has decided to prepare soup and food for the marchers when they arrive.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL RIGHT-TO-WORK CAMPAIGN

RALLIES to launch SWANSEA and LIVERPOOL marches

THIS SATURDAY FEB 19 St Georges Hall opp. Lime St Str Liverpool 3 p.m.

Speakers:

- Gerry Caughey (Pilkington rank-and-file committee)
- Bill Measures (Pilkington rank-and-file committee)
- Larry Cavanagh (T&GWU dock steward)
- Bernard Bradley (Ford's convenor)
- Jack Spriggs (Convenor Fisher Bendix)
- Cliff Slaughter (SLL Central Committee)
- Christine Smith (YS leader of Liverpool march)

YMCA

SWANSEA 3 p.m.

SLL, YS and trade union speakers

Liverpool march arrives in St HELENS for a rally on SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20 Town Hall, 7 p.m.

see our documentary play

'THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION'

Directed by Corin Redgrave Written by Tom Kempinski followed by a meeting

Speakers:

- Gerry Caughey, Christine Smith and Gerry Healy, (National Secretary of the Socialist Labour League)

### TONIGHT

Glasgow march arrives in SOUTH SHIELDS Thursday February 17

Greet the marchers at 8 pm at a public meeting in the Town Hall

Speakers:

- M. Barras, Durham Mechanic NUM
- Jock Graffby, Trades Council secretary
- John Barrie, Right-to-Work leader on Glasgow-London march.

# WORKERS RIGHTS

BY BERNARD FRANKS

## PAYMENTS AND THE MEANS TEST

Under the means test a detailed examination of all a person's income is made before a supplementary payment is fixed. Some forms of income are counted in full or in part, meaning that you are only given an amount added to these to make up the scale rates.

Some other payments may be ignored entirely. Possible sources of other income treated in this way are:

**State Benefits:** Most National Insurance benefits are counted in full. So are family allowances and family incomes supplement.

**Maintenance Payments:** Whether voluntary or under court orders, these are also counted in full as weekly income.

**Earnings:** The first £2 of part-time earnings are not counted (£1 if being registered for work is a condition for receiving benefit). In addition, the first £2 of any earnings your wife may have are also not counted.

**Disability Pension:** Up to £2 a week of the total amount will not be counted.

**Other Income:** The first £1 only a week of the total of other income, including such items as charitable payments, pensions from former employers, regular payments from friends and relatives, war dependents' pensions and the assumed income from capital will not be counted.

The value of a house owned and occupied by the claimant is totally ignored. Money in the bank or Post Office—or kept at home, if they get to know about it—is ignored completely up to £325. Above this, they do not directly require you to spend any of it, but they deduct 5p a week from payments made to you for every £25 you have over £325. (5p off for £350, 10p off for £375 and so on up to £800, after which they take off 12½p for each £25.)

You can claim benefit using Form S1 which can be obtained from Post Offices, and Social Security offices. The form can be sent to your local Social Security Office or you can take it there. Alternatively, you can go to your local office without an appointment and be interviewed there. If you are ill or disabled someone else may go on your behalf.

In the case of a couple who are married or living together as man and wife the claim must be made by the man.

Anyone unemployed and registered for work can claim supplementary benefit through the unemployment exchange. Ask for Claim Form B1, fill it in and hand it back to the clerk who will complete it and send it off to the Social Security office. An interviewing officer will visit you, and payment will be made through the exchange. If you need money in a hurry, however, get the employment exchange clerk to complete his part of the form and you can take it immediately to the Social Security office and get cash.

An interviewing officer may be sent to your home or the office may be satisfied with the interview on their premises. In either case they will want to know details of your present or previous employment; why you are claiming benefit, previous wages, present income from all sources, outgoings on rent, rates, number of children and dependants and any other state payments received. If it's your first claim and you require money at once at the Social Security office, they



will want some proof of identity, Post Office book or pension book, etc.

The officers may make periodic visits to your home after payment is agreed to see if your circumstances have changed. They also keep in communication with the employment exchange to see if any of their rules have been broken—i.e. failure to take a job offered, failure to register for employment. Anyone interviewed is entitled to have a witness present.

Remember:

● The benefits payments are grants, not loans. This means you don't have to pay them back. (The only exceptions are the

emergency payments to claimants in full-time employment. These may be repayable.)

● Benefits are not charity of any kind. Your labour and that of other workers is the sole creator of wealth. Benefits are paid for by you either directly in taxes and insurance contributions, or indirectly from profits that you have created for the firms you worked at.

Exactly the opposite outlook is promoted by the authorities—i.e. that supplementary benefits, being non-contributory—not paid for out of weekly National Insurance contributions—are in some way a magnanimous state gift.

● Everyone on supplementary benefits or with a low income can claim exemption from prescription charges for themselves or their dependants and receive an exemption certificate from the local social security office.

● Families on supplementary benefit are entitled to free welfare milk and vitamin drops and tablets for children and expectant mothers and free school meals for children in the family at school.

Exemption from payment for dentures, dental treatment and spectacles can be claimed by anyone receiving supplementary benefit, and their dependants. Applicants can ask at the Social

Security office or apply on forms F1 or F1D which can be got from opticians or dentists.

The means test is much tougher if an 'exceptional needs' payment is concerned. Capital over £100 will not be ignored, but, on the contrary, may be a reason given for refusing an award.

The fact that the claimant has no fixed address does not allow the social security clerks to refuse all payment, though some of them try to imply that it does.

In the Supplementary Benefits Handbook, clause 191 states: 'The fact that a man does not have an address when he calls at the local office is not in itself a reason for refusing payment, although it is of course an indication that the claim must be dealt with cautiously.' It adds that a payment 'to see him through up to the next working day, or to pay a deposit to a landlady' can be made, or a voucher for a lodging house given.

Anyone dissatisfied with a payment awarded is entitled to go to an Appeals Tribunal. You do this by writing to the Social Security office, stating that you wish to appeal and giving your reason. Alternatively, you can fill in an appeals form. You are expected to make the appeal within 21 days of the decision you are disputing, but the chairman of the Tribunal can ignore this rule if you have reason for a longer delay.

Supplementary Benefit Appeals Tribunals are made up of three people, one of whom is usually a trade union official. All three, including a chairman, are state-appointed. You have to go before these and make your case.

You are entitled to take along a witness or representative to the Appeal whose expenses—fares and compensation for loss of earnings—can be claimed from the Tribunal. The representative can be a friend, relative, social worker or trade union official. You can even take a solicitor, though in this case expenses are not payable and the legal aid system does not apply.

If the appeal is loaded against you by alleged evidence being brought which you did not know about, or if an important witness is unavoidably unable to attend, you are entitled to ask to have the appeal adjourned while you examine the evidence, get more advice or ensure that your witness will be present.

It is not generally known that anyone on supplementary allowances can get free legal advice. A special Law Society scheme entitles an applicant to one hour and thirty minutes of oral advice from a solicitor on any one legal question. The cost 12½p to someone on a very low income and with capital less than £215—and free to anyone on supplementary benefits.

For anyone else, the rate is £1 for 30 minutes. The solicitors in the scheme are on a legal advice panel maintained by the Law Society. Names and addresses of such solicitors can be got from the citizens' advice bureau, local court offices, probation officers and Law Society offices. This is useful for obtaining professional advice before attending a Supplementary Benefits Appeals Tribunal.

Various benefits may also be obtained from the local authorities, usually by applying at the town hall. For example, help with school clothing, reduced bus fares for the elderly, rent and rate rebates and family planning.

In theory local councils are now required by law to locate and provide special services for the disabled, though reports indicate that in many cases no more than a nominal effort to do this is taking place.

If your answers in the initial interview are considered satisfactory, a first payment can be made to you in cash immediately over the counter at the Social Security office to cover emergency or urgent need. Likewise, the visiting officer can pay you in your own home, again in cash. Alternatively the first payment may be sent to you in the form of a money order to be cashed at the Post Office. For regular payment a book of orders is sent to you. Each order has a date on it and is cashable at the Post Office on or after that date.

Unemployed workers 'available for work' receive their Social Security payments at the Employment Exchange together with unemployment benefit.

Tomorrow Bernard Franks explains how supplementary benefit payments can be restricted.

# BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY



## DISCUSSION ON THE ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE DRAFT MANIFESTO

On November 6 last year a national conference of the All Trades Unions Alliance decided to adopt a draft manifesto to transform the Socialist Labour League into a revolutionary party. Since the conference a country-wide discussion has been initiated in League branches, in the ATUA, in the Young Socialists and among Workers Press supporters. Until the Right-to-Work rally at Empire Pool, Wembley on March 12, we intend to carry a full page each day devoted to your comments on the Draft Manifesto. We have received more than 100 contributions to this vital discussion. Now we want at least another 100.

Workers and their families, youth, students and the unemployed are all invited to join in this discussion. If you haven't got a copy of the Draft Manifesto write to Workers Press or contact your local ATUA branch.

**DAVID KETTLE**  
Draughtsmen's section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, works at GEC-Claudgen, London.

I have studied the Manifesto carefully and while agreeing with the main parts, it is most important that it is absolutely firm in principles.

I certainly agree that there must be an alternative leadership in the unions to carry through the defence and most of all the victory of the working class of which the building of a new party is a means to this end.

My union has a centrist leadership which follows the policy of ignoring the Industrial Relations Act. This policy is a highly dangerous trap: one might say to the Irish workers, ignore the British troops, but look at the events of Bloody Sunday.

Therefore the policy of making the Tory government resign through a General Strike is absolutely correct.

There must be the return of a Labour government pledged to the Charter of Basic Rights as a political preparation to take power.

Definitely all banks should be nationalized. Why should minorities have to depend on charity when socialist planning

can make it possible to improve their lot all round, instead of begging for pitiful grants for social amenities?

I want to raise the question of full representation of all minorities of deaf and handicapped in the unions which I think should be included in the Charter.

In order to make such representation possible the Manifesto raises the question that the working class is the only force that can defend and fulfil what all minorities cannot do on their own.

I see the ATUA as an alternative to the treachery of the TUC and welcome all workers who want to fight for their rights and win.

**MIKE JONES**  
Shop steward at CAV Liverpool.

The ATUA Manifesto is a document that should be read by every member of the working class in Britain.

The questions it asks and the demands it makes are both vital and long overdue. It attacks the enemies of the working class—the Tories, the Labour traitors, the TUC.

It also proposes the principled alternatives to these servants of capitalism. But for me the most relevant thing is the Charter of Basic Rights.

This seven-point plan should be forced down the throat of the TUC with a demand for a general strike to bring down the Tory government.

**TOM CLARE**  
President of Mitcham 58 ME AUEW branch. At 51 he works as a toolmaker in Sutton, S London.

This Tory government is trying to push us back to the 1920s because they want a cowed worker who is prepared to work for a mere pittance.

They want a docile, menial worker. I am not prepared to be slapped back to the 1920s and neither are my sons.

We won't defeat the Tories with the present Labour and trade union leadership. These leaders are only out for themselves.

They always abandoned the working class to improve their own conditions. The answer is to elect people who are prepared to fight for the working class and not for their own glory.

I agree wholeheartedly with the Manifesto and I support the building of a revolutionary party which concludes the Manifesto.

The state controls everything and you can't defeat it with the leadership we have got now. We have to clear the lot out now with a revolution.

I support the Right-to-Work campaign and I will be at the rally at Wembley Pool because it symbolizes our protest against the Tory interpretation of justice for the working class.

I think the Workers Press is a cracking paper. It portrays truth and it's the paper of the workers.

I support wholeheartedly the new 12-page Workers Press as long as the present standard and content is maintained.

**July 1970:**  
Liverpool dockers lobbying Transport House learn that the 1970 national dock strike is on.

**JOHN MCGINNIS**  
Docker, South End docks, Liverpool.

Unemployment is beginning to be felt on the docks with more signing on. It is obvious that a fight over redundancy is coming up.

In the present situation, with over a million unemployed, we are faced with the task of fighting through the trade unions to bring down the government.

It will only be brought down with a General Strike. Workers have no faith in the present leadership. We saw in Liverpool recently how Feather tried to dodge the issue and soft soap Christine Smith (Young Socialists' member who demanded a General Election to end unemployment).

Crawshaw, who is our MP, is one who voted with the Tories on the Common Market. I support the demand by borough Labour Parties and trades councils for the expulsion of these MPs from the Labour Party.

The call for socialism and the fight for genuine socialist policies is the only way to solve workers' problems. An alternative leadership must be built. I think workers will find that in the Socialist Labour League and the ATUA because their policies are correct.



# NOW THAT MAC HEATH'S BACK IN TOWN...

## THEATRE REVIEW BY ANNA TATE PHOTOGRAPHS BY SOPHIE BAKER

IT WAS exciting to imagine a London production of one of the most popular works of the greatest socialist writer of this century, Bertolt Brecht. Especially 'The Threepenny Opera', a universally accessible musical, human, funny, tragic, aggressive, with the music of Kurt Weill matching Brecht's anti-bourgeois drama so aptly that it is hard to envisage one without the other.

Of course, I knew there would be painful contradictions. The theatre is a bourgeois medium in this society, and the West End the Mecca of the middle-class. In addition, the opera itself had never possessed the inner strength of Brecht's later works which more successfully resist attempts to reduce them to bourgeois entertainment.

It has been seen that Brecht's attempt to counter Romanticism and sentimentality had, to some extent, failed in 'The Threepenny Opera' and that people have always romanticized the characters and songs of Mack The

Knife, Pirate Jenny and the Peachums.

What could have saved this new production from such a fate, which sends audiences away content in their own self-esteem and liberalism, would have been to do what Brecht would undoubtedly have done had he been directing it, which is to emphasize the relevance of the opera to the prevailing situation. As it is, the director, Tony Richardson and the translator, Hugh Macdiarmid, seemed to be doing everything in their power to reduce the impact and significance of the piece to present-day events, and to underline in a glitteringly liberalistic, sophisticated



Vanessa Redgrave as Polly Peachum, Joe Melia as MacHeath (above) in wedding scenes from Bertolt Brecht's 'The Threepenny Opera'. Left: Dan Meaden as the Queen's Messenger, and Annie Ross as Jenny.

way the undertones of anarchistic despair. In effect, Tony Richardson and Hugh Macdiarmid have had on 'The Threepenny Opera' the kind of effect that Lawrence Daly and Joe Gormley are having on the miners' strike—to stretch a political analogy.

The original translation of Marc Blitzstein was neither literal nor poetic, mirroring instead the human dimensions of Brecht's outrage, and the burlesque used rather as a weapon than as entertainment. Macdiarmid's method is slavish rather than dialectical.

The production as a whole suffers therefore from these two major weaknesses—that of direction and translation. The cast struggle heroically with such odds against them. Vanessa Redgrave is badly miscast as Polly Peachum, embarrassingly imposed on, yet managing, one never knows quite how, to make the part stand up. Annie Ross as Jenny is a good choice with just the

right degree of brashness offset with dignity. Joe Melia, hardly anyone's idea of a cut-throat, nevertheless succeeds in conveying sinister machinations quite sinistinely. Barbara Windsor does her usual turn communicating working-class idiocy in that inimitable fashion which makes her the darling of middle-class theatre audiences.

But what a pity it all is, given that the Brecht-Weill-Blitzstein version has a powerful relevance to us now, for 'The Threepenny Opera' presents a picture of that marvellous world of free enterprise in which the ruthless gangster is king. The real message is that there is very little difference between the present-day gangsters of free enterprise who wear starched white shirts, pin-stripe trousers, carry rolled umbrellas and work in City merchant banks and the world of hard crime.

Then, by a strange and not unhappy coincidence, the hero of the opera bears the same name as our present Prime Minister, and those who mourn their dead in Derry might also have found other coincidences in the Ballad of Mack The Knife:

'When the shark bites

With his teeth, dear, Scarlet billows start to flow. Fancy gloves, though, wears Mack Heath, dear, So there's not a trace of red.'

There are also shades of Derry and Bloody Sunday in other tales of Mack Heath:

'On the sidewalk, Sunday morning, Lies a body oozing life. Someone's sneaking round the corner— Is that someone Mack the Knife?'

And there are other parallels for those who wish to see them in 'The Threepenny Opera'. A thought of British troops in Ulster might not have gone amiss in the following song:

'Let's all go barmy Live off the Army See the world we never saw. If we get feeling down, we'll wander into town, And if the population Should greet us with indignation We'll chop them to bits Because we like our hamburgers raw.'

And if that seems rather extreme to you, Brecht was clear on one thing: 'But blood is blood and red is red

And the Army is still recruiting.'

But most relevant of all in this time of the miners' strike, the calling of commissions of inquiry, arbitration, deals, negotiations and the attempt to drive men to settlement, is the finale of the Ballad of Mack The Knife:

'Happy ending, nice and tidy, It's a rule I learned at school, Get your money every Friday, Happy endings are the rule. So divide up those in darkness From the ones who walk in light, Light 'em up boys There's your picture, Drop the shadows Out of sight.'

And that is exactly what the production of 'The Threepenny Opera' at the Prince of Wales theatre does: it drops the shadow over the real relevance of the piece. Inasmuch as there are indestructible elements in Brecht and in the music of Kurt Weill, there are reasons for going to see it, although the price of admission no longer bears any relation to the original threepence which was intended.

# SECRET PLOT TO PROP UP CAMBODIA

An amazing piece of diplomatic trickery has been staged by the US State Department in a desperate bid to prop up the tottering economy of its puppet regime in Cambodia.

The story of the fraud has come to light following the Australian government's decision to chip in almost £400,000 to an international support fund for the Cambodian currency, the riel.

It gives yet another twist to the Maoist dictum that imperialism is just a paper tiger.

Reeling under repeated blows from the Cambodian liberation army, the National Union of Free Khmers, led by deposed Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the anti-communist dictatorship of Marshal Lon Nol is breaking up.

## BIZARRE

So in Washington a bizarre scheme was hatched. Begging letters were drawn up for Lon Nol to sign and send to various foreign governments asking for a total of almost £10m.

The letters were to be sent out as 'personal notes' to heads of state, designed 'to bring to Your Excellency's attention directly the economic problem that we are now confronted with in the Khmer Republic (Cambodia)'. They ended on this surprisingly direct note: 'I am asking that your government make a contribution of . . . to the fund for 1972 at a meeting to be held in Phnom Penh (the Cambodian capital).'

Commented American columnist Jack Anderson, who published the story, 'all Lon Nol had to do was fill in the blank space with the correct amount for each country'.

The prospective victims of this confidence trick were the United States itself, Japan, Australia, Britain, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines.

The amounts they were to be asked for ranged from £4.8m from the US to £100,000 from the smaller countries. Britain was down for £200,000.

In the event Australia coughed up only a third of what it was asked for, following up with a flurry of denials that the donation was its answer to a 'personal' approach from Lon Nol.

The British Tories' response is not yet known. Despite the denials, however, there is little doubt that the Anderson revelations are completely authentic.

At the end of last month, Lon Nol announced a major construction and irrigation programme in the areas surrounding Phnom Penh—now just about the only land under the Marshal's control. The communist-killing dictator, who has been ruling by decree since October last year, announced that a fund of 80,000,000 riel was on hand for the projects.

Such grandiose measures are a frantic attempt to retain some credibility for the regime in the eyes of the 2 million or so Khmers still nominally under Lon Nol's control (the country's total population is 7 million).

Their basis is purely US aid, which is now running at £136m a year—almost a third of it for military purposes.

Last year an International Monetary Fund team visited Cambodia and it was from there



Top: Lon Nol (r) with Sirik Matak, Cambodian vice-premier. Below: Australian Prime Minister W. McMahon

that the idea of an exchange-support fund emerged. A similar fund is already in operation for the US puppet regime in Laos.

## ARTIFICIAL

The idea is that participating countries give the riel, which is not quoted on foreign-exchange markets, a stable but completely artificial value by buying it up

with 'hard' currency—if any currency can be described in those terms these days.

In other words, the capitalist powers buy up Cambodian paper with their own paper and thereby try to give the Lon Nol regime some purely imaginary reserves.

It was this scheme the State Department confidence trick was designed to boost. And it was into this venture that the Australian £400,000 disappeared.

Anderson says the secret documents he published prove that the US government was lying

when it claimed Cambodia had undertaken to make its own approaches to donors for the fund.

What premier William McMahon and the Australian government are worried about is that, even though their contribution was cut, it makes them look the dupes of a huge American fraud operation.

The twist it gives to Mao Tse-tung's teachings is—imperialism may well be a paper tiger, but these days even the paper can be fictional.

# PLANNING A SAFETY VALVE

Brazil plays a key role in the United States strategy for the continued domination of Latin America. This was shown by the importance attached to last December's secret talks in Washington between President Nixon and the head of the military regime, Emilio Garrastazu Medici.



President Garrastazu Medici

However, the Americans want the regime to restore bourgeois-democratic forms to give greater confidence to investors and counter the claim that the US is backing a corrupt dictatorship. Washington is concerned about the dangers of revolution in a country where the rich get richer and the masses live in extreme poverty.

Washington believes that a safety valve is necessary. Medici has already referred to the possibility of a return to 'full democracy' and a less prominent political role for the army.

Support for this comes from business circles close to the US corporations and banks which control the economic life of Brazil. The chorus has been taken up by a number of politicians believed to reflect the views of Washington.

Military chiefs are emphasizing the dangers of lowering the guard before the 'Marxist-Leninist threat' and there is no relaxation in the fight against 'subversion'. Early in January the young revolutionary leader Jeova Assis was shot dead at a football match.

Police shootings, arbitrary arrests and torture are everyday occurrences. All law-making powers are concentrated in the hands of the executive and the deputies and senators have no power. The government can deprive them of all political and civil rights if they do not behave themselves.

The hard-line militarists intend to hold on to power and believe that they are indispensable in the struggle against the guerrillas operating in various parts of the country.

The underground guerrilla bulletin, 'Venceremos' reports a series of actions at the end of last year, despite heavy losses. Army units fighting the guerrillas are trained and equipped by the US army.

Besides fighting its guerrillas at home, the Brazilian military regime is taking the lead in backing up reactionary regimes throughout Latin America on behalf of the US and threatening those countries which step out of line.

# TITOISM

The American Inton firm will provide 49 per cent of planned investment in a domestic appliances factory to be built in Celinac, Yugoslavia.

The investment is to be for a 20-year period. Marketing the products in Western Europe will be undertaken by the American partner. Factory operation should begin early next year and reach its full capacity by 1975.

The deal is a further example of the growing links between the Yugoslav economy and Western capitalism.



## TORY PRESS



## QUEEN MEETS SUPREME LORD

You may not have taken much notice, but half the Royal Family recently packed their bags and left for an extended tour of SE Asia and the Indian Ocean. You probably don't care, anyway.

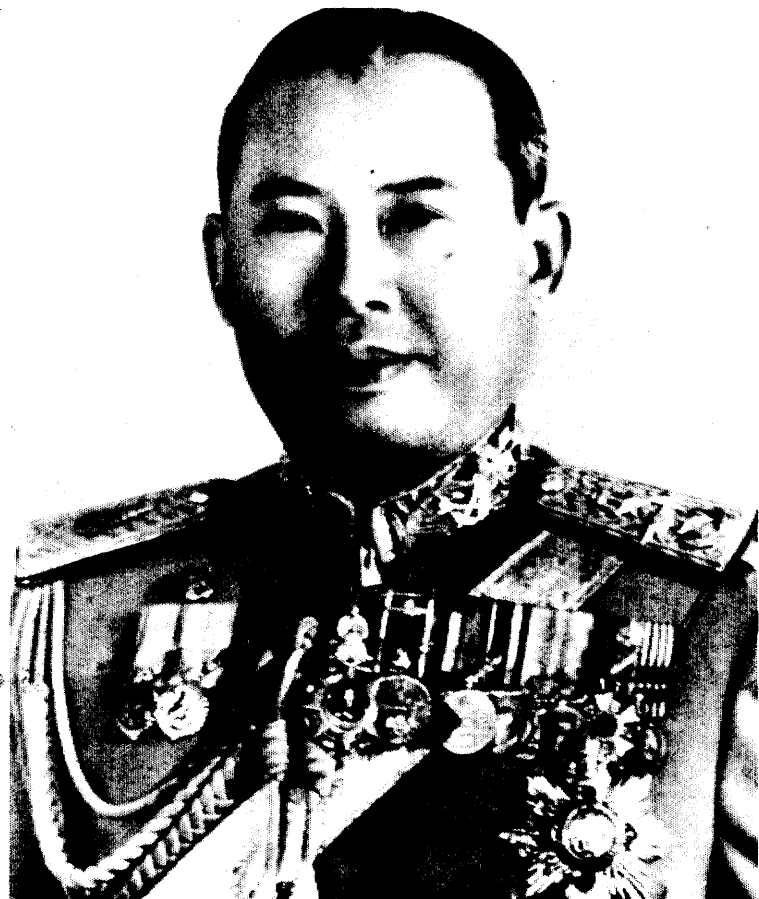
Anyway they're there now. In Thailand. With King Bhumibol. Why Thailand? Well, you won't find out from 'The Times'. On the day the visit began they chose to print a lengthy and incredibly po-faced despatch which looked as if it had been cobbled together out of back copies of the 'Readers Digest' and 'Encyclopaedia Britannica'.

It didn't tell you why the Queen was there, or much about what she was doing, but it did give a good deal of fascinating information on Prince Bhumibol's remarkable gifts of compassion, redemption and righteousness (bestowed at his coronation in 1951, 'The Times' assures us).

Ceremonial on the Royal visit is likely to get rather tiresome if the top people's newspaper is to be believed. The Thai monarch's full title is His Majesty the Supreme Divine Lord, Great Strength of the Land, Incomparable Might, Greatest in the Realm, Lord Ram (sic!), Holder of the Kingdom, Chief of the Sovereign People, Sovereign of Siam, Supreme Protector and Monarch.

All persons on certain occasions are still required to prostrate themselves in the Royal presence. 'The Times' describes Bhumibol as a 'lean youthful figure in rimless spectacles who plays jazz, gives lectures to university students and travels on foot to the hill country to present small gifts to tribal leaders'.

This constitutional monarch ascended the throne in 1946 after his brother was shot in circumstances which 'have never been satisfactorily cleared up', again according to 'The Times'. Bhumibol later executed two page boys for the crime. Another man was implicated in the 'plot' largely



## Kittikachorn

because he once crossed his legs in the king's presence.

Bhumibol is, says 'The Times', 'close to his subjects'. There is much more in the same vein, going back to the abolition of slavery (as long ago as the turn of the century) and ending up with the information that the country fought with the Axis powers during the war. The general impression is that everything in the garden is lovely.

'Times' readers are allowed just a sniff of what's really happening in Thailand. 'A constitutional monarchy was established by bloodless revolution in 1932,' the paper says. 'A tendency towards military dictatorship manifested itself soon afterwards and has never been eradicated.'

This is conceivably the year's biggest understatement. Thailand is ruled by one of the most repressive military regimes in the whole region. Its leader, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, holds hundreds of political prisoners in his jails without trial.

He presides over a country which is in reality little more than a vast air base for the American heavy bombers which daily pound N Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. A typical savoury item giving the flavour of life under Kittikachorn and Bhumibol is tucked away in two paragraphs under 'The Times' eulogy of the regime.

It states: 'Field Marshal

Thanom Kittikachorn, chairman of the ruling national executive council, has ordered the summary execution without trial of a man of 21 for the rape and murder of a girl aged ten, Thailand Radio reported.' That's more like the kind of regime that's needed in defence of democracy and the rule of law, don't you think?

It took the more outspoken 'Daily Telegraph' to reveal the real significance of the Queen's visit to this brutal US puppet regime. 'Telegraph' correspondent Brian Crozier went straight to the point:

'In Thailand . . . she will be greeted as the head of an allied state and fellow-member of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), at times derided but still active and in fact with much work on its hands these days.'

He even stated that: 'What the Queen will see is perhaps less significant than what she will not see. In Thailand, terrorism (the polite word for which is "insurgency") began in 1965 when the Thai Patriotic Front, sponsored by Peking, was created. . . . In recent weeks . . . they have staged daring ambushes in the S.'

In its usual cynical upper-class style, the 'Telegraph' doesn't bother to conceal the fact that the Queen is touring SE Asia as a PR job for British imperialism, promoting the 'defence of democracy' alongside the Supreme Ram and Marshal Kittikachorn.

motive in bidding for the highly lucrative contracts—the two papers rationalized their claim on the grounds that the radio stations could take away a lot of their advertising revenue.

The 'Standard' and the 'News' are reported to have been confident of getting their slice of the commercial radio cake until Christopher Chataway dropped his bombshell. They are now pretty upset about the whole business.

Chataway's original Sound Broadcasting Bill was tailored to the press magnates' requirements. It actively encouraged provincial papers to take part in forming local commercial radio stations. But other men of means felt they were being squeezed out of the Act.

Their spokesman in parliament was John Gorst, the secretary and founder of the Local Radio Association, and a long-standing campaigner for commercial radio. He is now Tory MP for Hendon N. His proposal to amend the Broadcasting Bill to keep the newspapers' hands off the new stations has been accepted by Chataway.

As Chataway put it: 'While we accept the press are going to play a large part in local commercial radio, we want to be able to ensure that unsuitable press interests are not being excluded automatically.'

Gorst's interest in the affair is not entirely academic. He recently joined Standard Broadcasting, a Canadian company that has been showing interest in local radio.

Finally, in an attempt to save some money, she sacked 22 journalists and 11 other workers. A majority of the staff decided to strike to try to save their jobs, including the editors. Outraged by the temerity of her servants, Madame decided to sack the lot and close the paper. Now 315 people have been sacked.

In this country as well as in France, the very existence, as well as the policy, of the big daily papers depend upon the caprice of a few rich men. 'Paris-Jour' shows, in an extreme and absurd form, what might happen to any of them. The proprietors show a complete contempt for those who buy and read the papers as well as for those who write and make them.

## RADIO CARVE-UP

Another saga of press freedom is taking place under our very noses. It concerns London's two proposed commercial radio stations and the city's two evening newspapers. Both the 'Evening News' and the 'Evening Standard' had hoped to lay hands on the lion's share of the London radio contracts.

Apart from unadulterated greed—no doubt their main

## STOP PRESS

The fate of the French tabloid daily 'Paris-Jour' is a good illustration of what 'press freedom' means under capitalism.

It belonged to Cino del Duca, the multi-millionaire owner of mass-circulation women's magazines and comics, who ran it at a huge loss for the power and prestige it gave him. Since his death five years ago it has been run by his wife in reverence to her husband's memory.

Like the heroines in her husband's magazines, she was the shorthand typist who married the boss. Knowing nothing about newspapers, she tried to dictate the paper's contents as well as its policy. Some things, like abortion, could not be mentioned in its pages.

One day, entering the office and finding the sub-editors pouring over the news agency tapes, she shouted at them: 'I don't pay you for reading.'

Despite the fact that the paper tripled its circulation to 600,000 in the space of a few years, it continued to lose money heavily, largely because of Madame del Duca's inept control. It ran for six months with a full-colour front page, despite the addition which this meant for the deficit.

# WORKERS NOTEBOOK

## WIPED-OUT

It isn't only human beings who get killed by capitalism. The polar bears at the North Pole are having a hard time of it, too.

They stand in danger of being wiped out by ruthless hunters equipped with motor boats and aircraft. Penetration of the Arctic for oil exploration has also threatened the polar bears, who now number only 10,000 to 12,000.

Next week a conference of five nations with territory round the North Pole (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the United States) will meet in Switzerland to plan ways of saving the animals.

Left cover at a time when he is facing growing criticism from the workers and poor peasants of Chile.

## ROAST

Memo to the Pilkington rank and File Committee.

You'll all be interested to learn that the latest issue of the General and Municipal Workers' Union journal is out today.

The front page is just the sort of thing to warm the cockles of your heart.

It pictures a leading chef at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London's West End preparing a tray of roast partridges.

Meanwhile, back at the black puddings . . .

## SAGA

The saga of Castro and the Christians entered a new chapter when students and staff at the Havana seminary of San Carlos and San Ambrosio spent a month cutting sugar cane alongside Communist Party members and other workers from the towns.

This is clearly what Castro meant when, in Chile, he spoke of the co-operation of Christians and Marxists as being a key factor in the revolutionary process.

Shortage of labour in the cane fields has been a besetting weakness for some years and the trainee priests, all 40 of them, and their six teachers, are said to have done quite well for beginners.

During their month's stint the seminarists cut the equivalent of 250 metric tons of sugar. The priest in charge said:

'To our way of thinking, work means taking part in God's plan for the world. As Cubans, this means the need to work to develop our country which is making a gigantic effort, in a revolutionary way, to emerge from underdevelopment'.

It may be asked why God's plan only requires one month's work a year and how a supply of holy men is going to overcome Cuba's underdevelopment.

## RETREAT



Admirer of Che Guevara, theorist of guerrilla warfare, Regis Debray, who spent three years in a Bolivian jail, has come out in full support for the reformist Chilean president, Salvador Allende.

His support for Allende has grown since the first appearance last year of his book 'Conversations with Allende'. In an interview last month he apologized for the sharpness of some of the questions which he had asked the 'campanero presidente'.

Debray is preparing a book on Chile which is expected to reflect his admiration for Allende. He said recently that, 'it would not be wise to attack Allende from the Left. The immediate task is unity and a united front before the common enemy. Perhaps I underestimated that in the course of our talks last year'.

His open support for popular frontism is not only in marked contrast with his earlier book, 'Revolution in the Revolution', written when he was a Castro supporter but provides Allende with a useful

## BOOKS



**LEON TROTSKY:**  
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# Workers Press and the the miners: Putting the record straight

Dear Editor,

MAY I try to express my sincere thanks to your paper for the support you have and are giving us in our present miners' strike.

I know you will realize that you have come in for quite a considerable amount of lies and falsehoods in Yorkshire, but I believe this is because the people who are attacking you are frightened of the truth and are very conspicuous by their lack of action or leadership during this present strike.

They are quite prepared to sit on their backsides and blame the Trotskyists, Communists and left-wing Labour members, for any flare up that occurs at the picket lines. But when they are asked themselves at the picket lines to do or suggest ways or means to prevent the strike

## LETTER

being sold out and defeated, they give their pet three reasons:

We can't. Let's wait a bit. Why don't they do it; meaning somebody else but themselves.

Let me put the record straight as far as I am concerned as a picket leader. I have not come into contact with any violence or action by Trotskyists, Communists or left-wing Labour members which has been directed against fellow trade unionists during any picketing in Yorkshire.

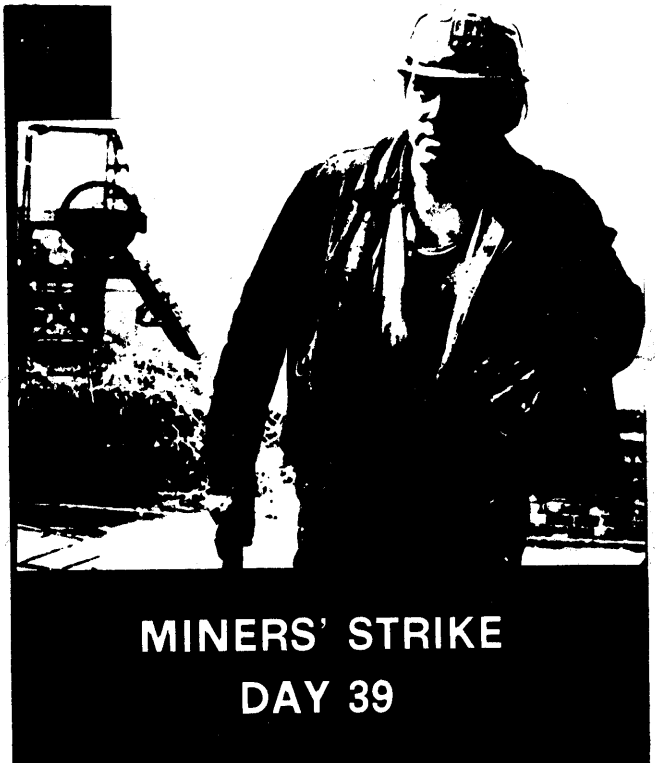
I have seen these people being subjected to violence by the police. I have read and seen the

abuse being directed by some of our so-called leaders after reading Tory newspapers to use these members as a scapegoat for their own lack of leadership and fight.

I am not a member of any political party, but I do believe a man should speak the truth and stand up and defend people who are being accused of doing something which they are not guilty of.

Let these people who are attacking all sections of our militants get off their backsides and get into the fight. Then they can criticize. Until then you keep up the work. We need help from every quarter, not attack. More power to your elbow.

J. Stones,  
Brodsworth colliery,  
Yorkshire.



**MINERS' STRIKE  
DAY 39**

William Paynter left the NUM to take a job on the Commission on Industrial Relations in March 1969. He is seen right with (l. to r.) Leslie Blakeman, of Ford's, J. R. Edwards, deputy chairman of Harland and Wolff and a director of Joseph Lucas, Allan Flanders, fellow of Nuffield college, Oxford, George Woodcock former TUC chief who chaired the Commission, and Norman Singleton, its secretary. Woodcock and Paynter left the CIR soon after the Tories came to power.

# 'The Guardian' upsets miners ex-chief But did Paynter really oppose pit closures?

**WILL PAYNTER**, former National Union of Mineworkers' general secretary and former Communist Party member (for 40 years) takes 'strong exception' to a statement in 'The Guardian' that he had assisted in the 'controlled contraction' of the mining industry.

In a letter in Tuesday's 'Guardian', Paynter claims that 'the union opposed the rundown of the industry and this opposition became a main preoccupation of the union leadership.'

Miners today, Paynter says, 'have a bargaining power vastly superior to that of the previous decade.' They 'lost ground' under his leadership because 'conditions were more difficult'.

What does the record show? Did Paynter — who took on a £6,500 per year job on Harold Wilson's Commission on Industrial Relations when he retired from the NUM — really fight closures?

Did 'more difficult conditions' really make closures inevitable? Was 'morale low' among miners, as he claims?

Paynter was pushed for the CIR job by both 'The Times' and 'The Guardian'.

'The Guardian', in particular, praised him in the most lavish manner — for preventing trouble over pit closures!

'His outstanding performance at the NUM during the contraction of the industry and his constant advocacy of a rational plan for restructuring the unions has won him many admirers.' (February 1, 1969.)

But Paynter devoted his 'outstanding performances' to stopping industrial action against pit closures.

His most blatant performance was his intervention against the New Monckton men in 1966. When 1,600 men lost their jobs at this pit the Yorkshire area council decided to fight.

A right-wing Yorkshire area official, Sid Schofield, then phoned Paynter and received a letter from him in which he declared that pit closures were government policy and that the union could not change that policy without the support of 'the whole labour and trade union movement'.

Paynter urged the Yorkshiremen to co-operate with the Coal Board in the closure of New Monckton and this intervention enabled the right wing in the Yorkshire area leadership to reverse the previous decision to take action against the closure.

Towards the end of 1967 both the Scottish and Yorkshire areas of the NUM demanded a special re-call conference of the Labour Party over closures.

Paynter then wrote to the Yorkshire area saying that 'no useful purpose would be served' by acting on this suggestion.

(The texts of both these letters were published in 'The Newsletter', February 25, 1969.)

In fact, Paynter's only gesture in relation to closures was to offer concessions to the very government which was closing the pits!

In the NCB publication 'Coal News' of May 1968 he declared that he would accept seven-day working in selected pits in return for Wilson's promise of a slowdown in the rate of pit closures.

Every miner in the land knew that he was working himself out of a job and that the Wilson government had cynically broken its promises made to the miners in 1964.

Paynter's attitude to the miners, however, was much more fierce. In April 1967 at S Wales he placed the blame for the economic ills of the industry not on the interest payments which are bleeding it white, but on the miners themselves!

His attack on absenteeism gave the green light to every vindictive manager in the land to launch an 'efficiency' drive against the men. Throughout all this, the Communist Party defended Paynter and many sincere rank-and-file members desperately sought for fig leaves with which to cover him.

The line was: he is in a minority in the national executive, he doesn't really want to do what he is doing, secretly he 'sympathizes' with the militants, etc., etc.

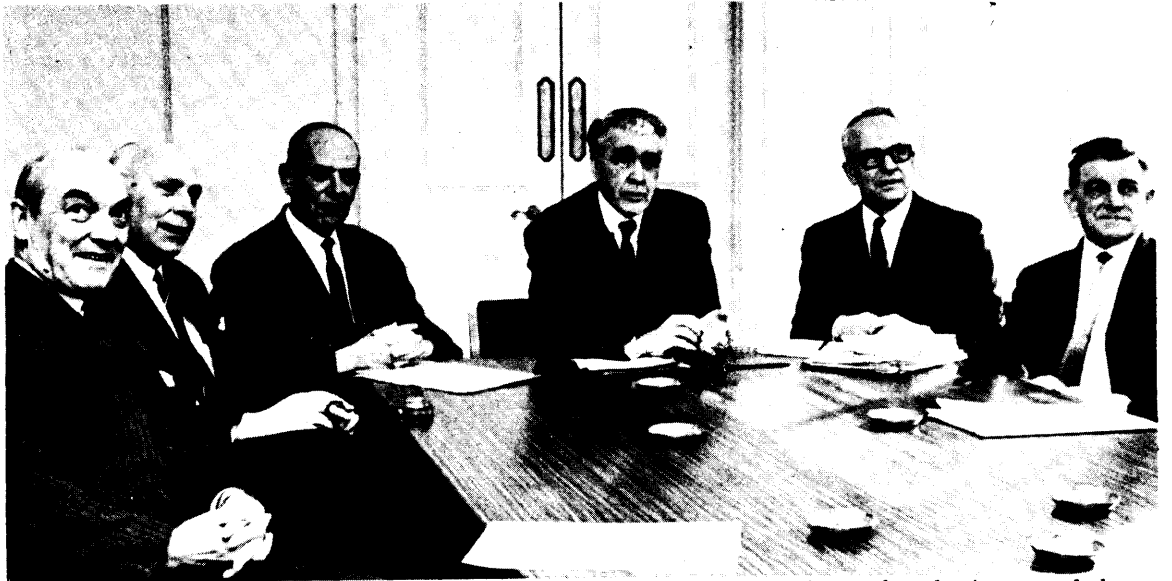
That was just not true. In 1964 a special NUM delegate conference called for a strike in support of a £1 increase for day wage men. All the main areas supported this demand against the opposition of the NEC.

Here was Paynter's opportunity! He had the ranks solidly behind him, and a conference vote to back it up. Now he could really go to war against the right wing.

He went to war, right enough — against the militants. Not only did he fall back on 'procedure' (a ballot with a two-thirds\* majority before a strike can be official) he and Sidney Ford — Gormley's predecessor as president of the NUM — toured the country opposing strike action on the eve of the ballot.

Paynter openly declared that he was speaking not only for the NEC, but for himself, and to underline this, the right-wing area council in Lancashire had his speech printed and distributed to every branch in the area in time for the vote.

\*This rule was, of course, amended in 1971.



Paynter's parting gift to his members was a public statement in 'The Guardian' to the effect that the unions should base their strategy not on the economic and financial requirements of their members, but on those of the employers!

'Government—Labour or Conservative—is in industrial relations to stay. We are facing a permanent and irreversible change in society. Our collective-bargaining strategy depends on the overall economic and financial requirements of two groups — the government and the dominant employers.' ('The Guardian', December 6, 1968.)

Paynter was not an isolated individual. His predecessor as NUM general secretary was another Communist Party member—Arthur Horner. Horner, in the first days of nationalization, assiduously opposed strikes as 'betrayals of the Labour government' (not a word about the Labour government's betrayals of the miners!) and he intervened personally to try to end the 1947 Grimethorpe strike.

The story of Horner and Paynter is the story of Stalinism in Britain. Dominated by the theory of peaceful transitions to socialism, the Communist Party failed to build and train Marxists in the unions.

In the immediate post-war years the Communist Party held leading positions in a number of key unions—such as the National Union of Mineworkers, the Electrical Trades Union, the Fire Brigades Union and the Amalgamated Engineering Union, among others.

Party members were frequently reassured that when class battles developed, the Party would come into its own because of its industrial strength. Yet now the Communist Party has lost position after position in one union after another.

After years of covering up for

those who held these positions, it now — far from leading the growing militancy of the working class—devotes its entire energies toward canalizing it behind the 'official' leaderships of 'lefts'.

These are no mistakes. It is the theories and policies of Stalinism which prevent any member of the Communist Party from developing as a revolutionary within its ranks. Lenin always insisted on a fight against the ideas of even the best workers who came to the communist movement, to free them

from the dominance of bourgeois ideology. He carried out this fight in the early Congresses of the Communist International and in writings such as 'Left-Wing Communism'.

Stalinism not only liquidated the leading cadres of the Communist International, it also abandoned the struggle for revolutionary consciousness among the advanced workers.

That is what accounts for the industrial decline of the British Communist Party and Paynter's pathetic excuses.

## ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

**Make the Tory government resign!**

**Return a Labour government pledged to restore full employment and repeal all laws against the unions!**

**LUTON: Thursday February 17, 8 p.m. Recreation Centre, Old Bedford Rd. World economic crisis.**

**SE LONDON: Thursday February 17, 8 p.m. Room 2, Deptford Engineers' Club (opp New Cross Stn). 'Support miners and Ulster workers.'**

**N LONDON: Thursday February 17, 8 p.m. Town Hall, Edmonton. Reformism and trade unions.**

**MANCHESTER: Thursday February 17, 8 p.m. Room 3, Wythenshawe social centre,**

Brownley Rd, Wythenshawe. 'Right-to-Work campaign'.

**BARNESLEY: Sunday February 20, 7 p.m. 'The Victoria', Darfield. 'The miners' strike and the Tory government'. Speaker: A Yorkshire miner.**

**DAGENHAM: Wednesday February 23, 8 p.m. Room 11, East Ham Town Hall. 'Labour must force a General Election.'**

**WILLESDEN: Monday February 28, 8 p.m. Trades and Labour Hall, High Road, NW 10. 'Labour must force a General Election.'**

**W LONDON: Tuesday February 29, 8 p.m. Prince Albert, Wharfedale Rd, off York Way, Kings Cross. 'Crisis of capitalism.'**

**SW LONDON: Tuesday February 29, 8 p.m. Small Hall, Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor St, SW4. 'Labour must force a General Election.'**

**EXCLUSIVE**

# Pit closures coming rail chief warns

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

**A CONFIDENTIAL memo written by a top executive in British Rail states that the Tory government is not prepared to 'give in' to the miners' pay demands. And he also warns that after the strike is settled, many collieries are likely to be closed down.**

'In the longer term', he says, 'it is unlikely now that we shall ever see again a national coal production figure of 140 million tons per annum, and in fact it could well go down to nearer 100 million tons per annum with consequent loss to ourselves.'

The author of the circular letter is Mr R. A. Savill, regional freight manager (for coal) in the London Midland region of British Rail.

Savill's memo gives a very clear insight into Tory strategy in the strike. He says: 'The only inside information which I have been able to obtain is that both the government and the National Coal Board are determined not to give way . . .'

Warning about the future of pits throughout the country, Savill says:

'It may be that some colliery workings will be so damaged that they will never open again.

Officially the NCB are not talking to anybody about the position after the strike, especially about colliery closures.

'After the strike there may also be conversions by industry to oil and other fuels which might not otherwise have taken place, but there is no sign yet of any such revenge upon the NCB by their customers, although this is bound to happen.'

Savill also anticipates the rush to get supplies when the strike is over.

## Supply Scramble

(It is likely to be several more weeks before we see any sign of compromise.)

He reveals: 'There will undoubtedly be a scramble to get hold of coal immediately after

the strike in order to make up depleted supplies.

'It is expected that considerable stocks of coal in Scotland will need to be moved to power stations in England.

'There will probably be a flood of imported coal, and, for example, I have already had a request for rates for Australian coal to be imported through Immingham and moved to the Rugby Portland Cement Company.'

On the loss in revenue to British Rail, Savill writes: 'If the strike is settled within a week or two, then we shall largely get back during the rest of the year that volume of business which we have lost. If, however, the strike lasts two or three months, we shall never recover this lost ground.'

In view of these remarks, what are the chances of the 'substantial' pay claim just submitted to British Rail by the three rail unions?

## LOCK-OUT PAY NOT ENOUGH

**A ROW has developed at CAV's plant, Acton, over payment for days lost through the government's nationwide lock-out.**

Because the management offer for days lost is not high enough, the stewards have decided to pull everyone out—including maintenance men—on these days.

Originally, the CAV management offered time rate for Wednesday and Friday, provided that the stewards agreed to certain personnel attending on these days to maintain essential services.

The management claims that the offer is 'generous' since many other firms intend to make no payment at all. Stewards met on Tuesday afternoon and were told that the management wouldn't budge. Therefore, no one will be allowed in.

There is a lot of resentment because staff workers who will attend work on these days will have no loss in pay at all during the state of emergency.

A GLIMPSE of the chaos caused by the Tory regulations can be judged from the situation at Egham research laboratories of the giant Shell oil company.

About 400 workers, all salaried, have been put on a two-day week on full pay.

But many experiments require several days' continuous work and these have been halted. Many other research projects have been ruined because ovens and refrigerators are off four days a week.

Incredibly, the Shell management has asked research workers to take work home. For example, the staff has been invited to write up reports, read technical literature during the Tory-created lock-out. As one worker told us: 'I don't think many of us will take much notice'.

# TV

## BBC 1

9.38 Schools. 12.55 Tresarn. 1.30 The Herbs. 1.45 News, weather. 2.05 Schools. 4.15 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Blue Peter. 5.20 Dr. Doolittle. 5.44 Sir Prancelot. 5.50 National News, weather. 6.00 NATIONWIDE. Your region tonight. 6.50 TOM AND JERRY. 7.00 OWEN MD. Saddler's Challenge part 2. 7.25 TOP OF THE POPS. 8.00 SIX OF RIX. One Wild Oat. 8.50 DO YOU REMEMBER? May 1949. 9.00 NEWS, Weather. 9.20 PLAY FOR TODAY. 'The Villa Maroc'. Thora Hird, George A. Cooper. 10.35 24 HOURS. 11.20 PEOPLE LTD.

## BBC 2

11.00 Play School. 6.35 Rosla and After. 7.05 Open University. 7.30 NEWSROOM, Weather. 8.00 THE SHADOW OF THE TOWER. 7. A Fly in the Ointment. 8.50 EUROPE. The Pace of Life. 9.20 SHOW OF THE WEEK. Lulu's Party. 10.00 NEWS, weather. 10.05 WORLD CINEMA: 'LA BELLE ET LA BÊTE'. The first of two films by Jean Cocteau. Based on fairy story Beauty and the Beast. 11.30 LATE NIGHT LINE-UP.

## ITV

10.20 Schools. 2.32 Yesterdays. 3.00 Houseparty. 3.10 Tea Break. 3.40 Marcus Welby. 4.40 Origami. 4.55 Roadrunner. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 TODAY. 6.40 CROSSROADS. 7.05 FILM: 'THE LITTLE HUT'. Ava Gardner, Stewart Granger, David Niven. Husband and wife and best friend ship wrecked on desert island. 9.00 SEZ LES. Les Dawson, Syd Lawrence Orchestra. 9.30 THIS WEEK. 10.00 NEWS. 10.30 CINEMA. James Stewart. 11.00 THEATRE OF THE STARS. Anthony Franciosa in 'A Case of Armed Robbery.' 11.55 PEOPLE WITH A PURPOSE.



BBC 1's Play for Today at 9.20 tonight is Willis Hall's 'The Villa Maroc'. With George A. Cooper, Stefan Kalipha and Ann Beach.

All regions as BBC-1 except:

BBC Wales: 2.30-2.50 Schools. 6.00-6.45 Wales today, weather. Nationwide. 6.50 Heddiw. 7.15-7.25 Tom and Jerry. 8.00-8.50 Week in week out. 11.47 Weather.

Scotland: 2.30-2.50 Schools. 6.00-

6.45 Reporting Scotland, weather. Nationwide. N Ireland: 6.00-6.45 Scene around six, weather. Nationwide. 11.47 News, weather. England: 6.00-6.45 Nationwide. Look North, Midlands today, Look East, Points West, South today, Spotlight SW, weather. 11.47 News, weather.

## REGIONAL ITV

CHANNEL: 10.20 Schools. 4.05 Origami. 4.18 Puffin. 4.22 Nanny. 4.50 Bushboy. 5.20 London. 6.00 News, weather. 6.10 What's on where. 6.15 Farming news. 6.20 Sports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'The Man in the White Suit'. 8.30 This is your life. 9.00 London. 11.02 British museum. 11.30 News, weather. WESTWARD. As Channel except: 3.55 Gus Honeybun. 4.18 News. 6.00 Diary. 10.59 News. 11.30 Faith for life. 11.35 Weather. SOUTHERN: 3.35 Horoscope. 3.40 Tea break. 4.10 Houseparty. 4.23 Cartoon. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 Superman. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Day by day. 6.45 Jun. 7.16 Film: 'School for Scoundrels'. 9.00 London. 11.00 News. 11.10 British museum. 11.40 Weather. HTV WALES: 10.20 Schools. 3.50 Holidays abroad. 4.15 Tinkertainment. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 Huckleberry Finn. 5.20 Dibyn-Dobyn. 5.50 News. 6.01 Y Dydd. 6.18 Report Wales. 6.35 The Sky's the limit. 7.10 Film: 'Move Over Darling'. 9.00 London. 10.30 Songs for your delight. 11.00 Marcus Welby. 12.00 Weather. HTV Wales and the West and HTV Cymru/Wales as above except: 5.20 Magpie. 6.01 Report West. HTV West as above except: 6.18 Sport West. ANGLIA: 3.40 Newsroom. 3.45 Women today. 4.10 Tea break. 4.40 Rupert Bear. 4.55 Bush boy. 5.20 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.20 Arena. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Van Dyke. 7.30 Film: 'The Iron Glove'. 9.00 London. 11.00 Jesse James. 11.30 Living and growing. ATV MIDLANDS: 3.10 Yoga. 3.35 Horoscope. 3.45 Women today. 4.10 Family affair. 4.40 Rupert. 4.55 Get This! 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Cross-

roads. 7.00 Sky's the limit. 7.30 Film: 'The Canadians'. 9.00 London. 11.00 Marcus Welby. YORKSHIRE: 10.20 Schools. 2.33 Face the press. 3.00 Pied Piper. Matinee. 3.35 News. 3.45 Women today. 4.15 Crossroads. 4.40 Origami. 4.55 Lone ranger. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Calendar, weather. 6.30 Bottom of the sea. 7.20 Exclusively Elvis. 9.00 London. 10.30 Yorksport. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 Drive-in. 12.00 Weather. GRANADA: 10.58 Schools. 3.40 Another world. 4.05 News. Bird's eye view. 4.35 Once upon a time. 4.50 Arthur. 5.15 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Newsday. Police file. 6.25 Peyton place. 7.00 Williams. 9.00 London. 11.00 On the line. 11.30 British museum. TYNE TEES: 10.20 Schools. 2.32 Face the press. 3.00 Pied Piper. 3.05 British museum. 3.35 Newsroom. 3.45 Women today. 4.15 Crossroads. 4.40 Origami. 4.55 Captain Scarlet. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Today. 6.30 Smith family. 7.00 Exclusively Elvis. 8.50 Love, American style. 9.00 London. 10.30 Spottime. 11.00 Police call. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 Drive-in. 12.00 News. 12.15 Do you know? SCOTTISH: 10.20 Schools. 3.30 Once upon a time. 3.45 Crossroads. 4.10 Dateline. 4.55 Fireball XLS. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 Dateline. 6.15 Cartoon. 6.30 Who do you do? 7.00 Film: 'Paid in Full'. 9.00 London. 11.00 Late call. 11.05 Romany Jones. 11.35 Best of the Comedy Machine. GRAMPIAN: 11.00 Schools. 3.38 News. 3.40 Dick Van Dyke. 4.10 Yoga. 4.40 Origami. 4.55 Rainbow country. 5.20 Magpie. 5.50 News. 6.00 News, weather. 6.10 Lesley Blair. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Summer and Smoke'. 9.00 London. 11.00 British museum. 11.20 Golf. 12.00 Epilogue.

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# No more cash but big concessions needed - say NCB

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT DAVID MAUDE

**COAL BOARD** chiefs yesterday called for a no-strike agreement with the miners, binding arbitration on future pay claims and talks on a 'copper-bottomed' long-term productivity deal.

On day two of the Wilberforce inquiry, NCB chairman Derek Ezra warned that pit jobs would be at risk if a way were not found to avoid all-out confrontations over pay.

He called on union leaders to agree a procedure for the settlement of disputes; written evidence made clear this would mean a return to the pre-1961 practice of binding arbitration.

Lord Wilberforce and his inquiry team spent yesterday feeling out the possibilities for an increase in the last NCB offer of £2.75-£3.50 over 18 months, possibly with a further rise in the price of coal.

## No prospect

Any recommendation on these lines from the inquiry would certainly contain demands for big productivity concessions from the miners.

But during a lengthy exposition of the financial position of the industry, board member David Clement insisted that there was no prospect of meeting the £5-£9, 12-month union claim in full—not even if the board's whole capital was written off and no interest paid.

Ezra argued that an increase of 15 per cent or more in the price of coal could lose the NCB a third of its present market by 1980. And Clement told Lord Wilberforce that a 10-per cent increase would support only a slight increase in the offer.

The cost of the latest offer, Clement told inquiry member John Garnett, would be £52m over 12 months as compared to the union's negotiating figure of £100m.

If the board was to meet additional costs, there would have to be further improvements in productivity.

Industrial relations board member Cliff Shephard told Wilberforce that the NCB would welcome an agreement which gave miners an assurance of pay increases over more than one year.

At the end of yesterday

morning's session, W. O. Campbell Adamson, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, arrived to tell the court that big business was worried about a high settlement with the miners.

This would have a serious effect on settlements elsewhere, he said.

Legalistic feathers were slightly

ruffled when Lawrence Daly, secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, pressed Adamson to tell the court first his salary, then the tax benefits he had gained from the Tory government.

Adamson refused point-blank to answer the first question, and said he did not know about the second.

## V & G SCAPEGOAT IS FOUND

CIVIL servant Christopher Jardine is carrying the can for the Vehicle and General Insurance collapse which left about £8m debts.

The dominating finding of the tribunal, into the now-liquidated company, is that Mr Jardine (now retired) was 'negligent'.

He was Under Secretary in charge of the Department of Trade and Industry's insurance and companies division.

The report, headed by Mr Justice James, says: 'He did not display initiative or imagination in considering the company's affairs.'

'The ultimate responsibility for the failure of the department to take action against the company

lies with him. His conduct as a whole fell below the standard of competence which he ought to have displayed and constitutes negligence.'

Mr Jardine's father was the late Judge Willoughby Jardine and he is the son-in-law of Sir George Duckworth King.

The report exonerates Minister John Davies and his department. Referring to the company itself the report simply describes 'mismanagement' and 'weaknesses in its structure'.

Tell that to the 800,000 policy holders whose contracts with the company are now worthless!

## CONCORDE COSTS TORIES DO A COVER-UP JOB

THE GOVERNMENT is withholding information on the cost of research and development of the Concorde project. And officials of the Department of Trade and Industry have been accused of 'concealment'.

The government's reluctance to give vital costs information occurred yesterday during a hearing of the trade and industry sub-committee of the Commons Expenditure Committee.

The committee was handed a memorandum from John Davies' Department of Trade and Industry explaining why it could not comply with a request for information on costs.

The memorandum said: 'Knowledge by the manufacturers of officials' estimates of their part of the project would weaken the discipline and incentive of trying to complete the programme within their estimate of costs.'

'As such, it could result in an increase in costs.'

Mr William Rodgers MP asked Sir Robert Marshall, of the

department: 'Can you think of a parallel field where information about the spending of £500m of public money has been denied to parliament?'

Sir Robert: 'None. spring to mind.'

Mr Rodgers asked another witness, Sir Samuel Goldman, second secretary in charge of the Treasury's public sector group, about this 'concealment'.

Sir Samuel replied: 'I would not accept the word "concealment". This is not a matter of concealment, but trying to protect our commercial interests.'

Mr Rodgers persisted: 'I think it is the most outrageous example of parliament being denied information about public expenditure since John Hampden refused to pay ship money.'

NOTE: John Hampden was the English statesman who refused in 1637 to pay ship money, a tax imposed during Charles I's reign.

## JOURNALISTS BEATEN UP

PRESS BARONS in Puerto Rico, America's Caribbean colony, have no inhibitions about strike-breaking.

When the 500 journalists and printers on the San Juan newspaper 'El Mundo' struck at the weekend for higher wages and better conditions the paper's owner immediately called in the police to run a blackleg labour force through the workers' picket.

The police made ten arrests, beat up everyone on the premises and seriously injured six people, including Bienvenido Otero, vice-president of the Journalists' Union.

The attack was supervised by the Puerto Rico governor's press secretary and the colony's police superintendent.



## HOW MANY MORE GUNTERS IN THE LABOUR PARTY?

SARAH HANNIGAN

WILL RAY GUNTER join the Tory Party? This is the obvious question as one hears of Gunter's resignation from the Labour Party yesterday—just before departing on a visit to S Africa.

Gunter, says Labour Chief Whip Bob Mellish, has had an 'appalling' record in Commons divisions since last autumn. He hasn't even seen Gunter since October!

According to Gunter's family, the reason for his resignation is his disagreement with Labour policy opposing entry into the Common Market.

Mellish says it has 'nothing to do with the Common Market...'

'I am sure that he would not have conscientious objections to obeying the three-line whip on pensions, unemployment, the miners and many other critical divisions', he says.

But not many other people share Mellish's views on the state of Gunter's 'conscience'.

In addition to voting with the Tories for entry into the EEC, Gunter also supported the government over its plans for wholesale attack on the trade unions with the Industrial Relations Act.

His record of hatred for the working class is long and clear. As Minister for Labour in the last Labour government, Gunter's task was to impose and maintain a wage freeze while prices rose.

Having failed to do this, the Wilson government was forced to devalue the pound and work out a new strategy to control the unions.

Gunter resigned in July 1968 because he said he 'did not like the way the government was being run'.

And as can be seen from his record since the Tories came to power—Gunter's resignation was because he wanted tougher measures taken against the trade unions and the working class.

One more question — how many more Gunters are still roosting in the Labour Party?

**WE APOLOGISE to those readers — particularly postal subscribers — who may be experiencing delays in the delivery of Workers Press. Despite the government's power-cuts policy, we are endeavouring to get your copy to you at the usual time.**

## JUNIOR DOCTORS' 100—HR WEEK

JUNIOR hospital doctors are on duty 100 hours a week, according to a survey carried out by the Junior Hospital Doctors' Association.

At a London press conference yesterday the association said that a comprehensive questionnaire had been completed by more than a third of all pre-registration house officers.

It revealed that the average house officer was officially on call for 105 hours a week and could be expected to work for 80 per cent of that time.

Nearly half the doctors covered for colleagues' patients as well as their own for more than 30 night hours a week.

The General Medical Council had recommended that junior doctors should not normally look after more than 30 beds. Over 50 per cent had more than the 30, and when they covered for colleagues 83 per cent exceeded the recommendation by day, and 91 per cent at night.

In addition, a third of them were expected to assist their consultants with private patients, and 73 per cent of them did not get paid for it.

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THIRTEEN days to the end of the month and we have £619.09 left to raise. Keep up this magnificent effort and we will be well on our way to completing our target.

In spite of all the threats from this Tory government, nothing will force the miners back to work. The urgent issue now is for every trade unionist to rally behind the miners and force this government to resign.

As thousands join the fight, the role of Workers Press becomes more vital than ever. Help by taking extra copies to sell and if you can, make a special effort for February's Fund. Post all donations immediately to:

Workers Press February Appeal Fund  
186a Clapham High St,  
London, SW4 7UG.

## UNITE WITH THE MINERS TO FIGHT FOR BASIC RIGHT THEIR RIGHT YOUR RIGHT

To a job, to organize, welfare, housing and all the gains made by the working class  
**READ THE CHARTER**  
Free from  
186a Clapham High St,  
London, SW4 7UG

## THE CHARTER OF BASIC RIGHTS

THIS CHARTER of Basic Rights was supported by 4,500 people at the 'Make the Tory government resign' rally at Alexandra Palace, London, N.22, on February 14, 1971. It was first adopted by the 2nd Annual Conference of the All Trades Union Alliance in Birmingham on December 19, 1970. We believe that the role of the Tory government is one of attacking and taking away all the basic rights of the working class over the past 200 years. Such a government must not be allowed to remain in office another year. It must be made to resign and a Labour government returned to power to implement the Charter. This is the only way to prevent the working class being driven back to the conditions of the 1930s. The rally at Alexandra Palace on February 14 took the decision to transform the 'Socialist Labour League' into a revolutionary party. This party will defend the basic rights and interests of the working class by building a revolutionary leadership within the labour and trade union movement. This Charter is our basic document. We ask you to read it and if you support it and are willing to help to build the party in any way, fill in the form on page four.

Make the Tory government resign!  
Defeat the anti-union laws!  
Fight for the Charter of Basic Rights!

## LATE NEWS WEATHER

NEWS DESK  
01-720 2000  
CIRCULATION  
01-622 7029

E SCOTLAND and E England will be cloudy with occasional wintry showers turning to snow over high ground. Scotland, N Ireland, Wales and W England will have sunny spells and isolated showers with snow in places over mountains.

It will be colder than of late in all areas, with strong to gale force northerly winds in places. **Outlook for Friday:** Sunny periods in the N and W, but rather cloudy with some wintry showers in the S and SE. Rather cold, with night frost in most parts, but temperatures near normal in NW Scotland.

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Workers Press, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG.  
Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), 180b Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG.