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BY STEPHEN JOHNS

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Airports throughout Britain will also be hit as traffic control assistants at all Civil Aviation Authority airports join in the protest against the 'freezing' of their pay deal by the government.

Even more serious industrial action is looming in the gas industry. Gasworkers' leaders met in London yesterday and backed a rank and file call for a nationwide overtime ban and possible selective strikes starting next Wednesday (see report p.12).

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Their action today will be a militant curtain-raiser to tomorrow's talks between the TUC and the government.

The Tories are hoping to create another diversion and to trap the working class with more repressive laws on pay and trade unions.

Yesterday's news of the growing anger over the pay laws came as Prime Minister Heath began talks with senior government Ministers over the second phase of the Tory plan to control wages by government decree and destroy the right to free collective bargaining.

It seems certain now that the emergency state pay plan will be extended to beyond the 90 days into April to give the government time to rush its next measures through parliament.

The calls for industrial action are a major indication of the desire among a large section of workers to fight the Tory offensive.

The great danger is that the TUC and the union leaders will use the phoney discussion over Phase Two and possible 'de-

freezing' of the right to negotiate to put off action.

Leaders of the General and Municipal Workers were distinctly annoyed yesterday when asked if a government 'concession' on this issue would mean the overtime ban would be called off.

Yet this remains a real possibility—the G&MWU bureaucracy is noted for its right-wing attitudes and dislike of militant industrial action.

The Tories are obviously walking a tightrope. Action on pay could easily spill over to other workers who have also been caught in the freeze. It would also encourage sections with claims pending to come forward and join the campaign.

The Tories' main allies at this time of crisis are the TUC leaders.

Commentators openly view the Downing Street initiative as a trap. As one observer put it in 'The Times' yesterday, the Tories want to 'softly, softly, catchee, monkey'—the monkey being Victor Feather of the TUC.

The aim is threefold. To halt the build-up to a showdown over pay; to divert the working class with talk about possible relaxation of the attack on the standard of living; and to allow that essential margin of time to prepare the real offensive.

Workers with pay claims should demand, and take, immediate action to stop this Tory-TUC conspiracy.

The TUC must be forced to break off all contact with the Tories and recall a special Congress to prepare a campaign to remove the Tory government and all its laws.

More than pay is involved in the latest manoeuvres. The Tories are in the process of constructing a corporatist plan to tie unions to the state and abolish the right to collective bargaining.

'Cheap-food' Cobden praised in ASTMS requiem



THIRTY workers from the London headquarters of the white-collar ASTMS took part yesterday in a union-sponsored 'Requiem for Britain' march against the Common Market.

The demonstration, from Camden Town tube station to Mornington Crescent tube station—about three-quarters of a mile—had one aim: to pay tribute to 19th century Liberal Richard Cobden who led the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws!

Cobden's statue was mostly subscribed for by Napoleon III, of all people!

Ian Mikardo—'left'-talking Labour MP for Poplar—rounded off the requiem by declaring:

'Above all, Cobden was an apostle of cheap food and that's why we pay tribute to him. Cobden would have turned in his grave to see Liberal MPs supporting the Tory Party in taking Britain into Europe on terms which are an economic burden to the people as a whole.'

Hospital boss in pay plea

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He said the letter, signed by board chairman Sir Cyril Harrison, was sent after a meeting between the board of United Manchester Hospitals and National Union of Public Employees.

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It was the second consecutive day that the paper was delayed.

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The union's council held an emergency meeting yesterday to consider the full legal implications of the order which came into effect on January 5.

The government order has frozen a £7 pay rise in mid-November, plus the £5, that would have brought actors up to £30, from January 1.

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● WEDNESDAY JANUARY 10, 1973 ● No 967 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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WHAT WE THINK

Free political prisoners

AN APPLICATION for the extradition of Anthony 'Dutch' Doherty from Eire to Northern Ireland is now before the district court in Dublin. Doherty, a former Provisional IRA officer, was arrested in Dublin on Monday. He is wanted in Northern Ireland on a charge of possessing a revolver in Belfast.

Irish premier Jack Lynch has already demonstrated his willingness to serve his Tory masters at Westminster by railroading through the Dail the Offences Against the State Act. This followed his talks with Edward Heath at the end of November.

The arrest of Doherty once again shows Lynch's complete collaboration with the British Tory government and its military regime in Northern Ireland.

The real purpose of the reactionary legislation passed in Eire in December is now revealed. It is designed not only to deal with the IRA in the south, but to enable the Lynch government to act as policemen on behalf of the Tories and northern Orangemen.

Workers Press has always denounced the method of terrorism as it isolates the movement from the working class. However, the sole responsibility for the bloodshed in Ireland rests on the British government and its imperialist army.

Demand the release of all political prisoners! No extradition! Unite the working class of all Ireland and Britain against the Tories in Westminster and the Orange and Green Tories in Ireland!

Engineers in action

THE STRIKE of 90,000 engineers in Tyneside, Wearside, west Lothian and south Wales on Monday was proof once again that the working class is determined to defend its trade unions against the Tory government and its National Industrial Relations Court.

13,000 west Wales engineers struck last Friday, as did another 13,000 in Leeds on January 1. London, south-east England and Sheffield engineers struck on December 18 like their brothers in the north-west, the Midlands, Dundee, the Home Counties and the west of England on December 20. Swansea engineers struck on January 5.

The engineers—and other workers who came out with them, like the London and Merseyside dockers have shown the way to answer Heath and all those who wish to smash the trade union movement.

But while the workers demonstrate their ability to defeat the government, their leaders prostrate themselves repeatedly before it. Again and again Feather and company crawl to 10 Downing Street.

These men dissipate the enormous strength of the working class and allow valuable time to slip by while the Tories prepare Phase Two of their wage control legislation and even more vicious attacks on workers' standard of living and organizations.

Last year when the working class displayed its potential in the miners', builders', engineers' and dockers' strikes and in mass demonstrations against the rent Act, their leaders permitted the government to implement the final stages of the Industrial Relations Act and to legislate for wage control, rent hikes and entry into the Common Market.

It is solely thanks to these leaders that the Tory government survived 1972. Now they must be told 'No more talks with the sworn enemies of the working class!'

Councils of Action must be built in every area to link workers' struggles on jobs, wages, prices, rents and defence of the unions. Build the mass movement which will make the Tory government resign.

I would like information about

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Fill in the form below and send to NATIONAL SECRETARY, SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, 186a CLAPHAM HIGH ST, LONDON SW4 7UG.

Name.....

Address.....

1,000 tons dropped around Kontum

Blanket bombing in the south

AMERICAN B52 bombers yesterday carried out their heaviest raids for six months dropping over 1,000 tons of bombs on a concentration of National Liberation Front forces near the central highlands city of Kontum.

Fifty B52's and 40 fighter-bombers attacked within a ten-mile radius of Kontum.

The US military command fears that the North Vietnamese may take over Kontum, which they regard as a 'very vulnerable' provincial capital in the south.

Kontum was one of the main targets of the Easter 1972 offensive of the NLF.

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

Most of the plateau north of the city is under their control.

Attacks have recently been stepped up along Highway 14, which is Kontum's only road link with the rest of South Vietnam.

Yesterday's bombing raid followed a report in the Hanoi official daily 'Nhan Dan' accusing the Nixon government of military blackmail.

It described the massive raids on the north as an attempt to 'force us to negotiate on their terms', showing that 'the US imperialists are obviously worse than a Chicago gang'.

NLF anti-aircraft gunners shot down one more B52

and a US reconnaissance plane on Monday.

Ground fighting was stepped up at the southern tip of the Ca Mau peninsula.

President Thieu in Saigon warned that not 'too much trust' should be put in signatures on peace treaties.

The south should be wary of a new Tet offensive by the North Vietnamese, he said.

The US high command in Saigon is still trying to work out what went wrong with the bombing raid on their own base in Da Nang.

The US bombers destroyed 750,000 gallons of aviation fuel, eight C119 transport aircraft, as well

as several US service men. First explanations were 'bad weather conditions'.

Spokesmen now say that the planes were 'instrument-controlled' and that the reference point for the target was Da Nang base.

The target location became confused with the reference point!

● German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel has issued a statement denying that his government had 'protested' against US bombing.

Scheel, who had just returned from consultations with Willy Brandt in the sunny Canary Islands of fascist Spain, observed that 'a pause for reflection' was needed before 'taking up a position'.

Israel: Postmen strike

MRS GOLDA MEIR, Israeli premier, has threatened drastic measures if dockers refuse to end their go-slow by today.

But yesterday as the number of ships lying idle in the ports of Haifa, Ashod and Eilat rose from 40 to a 100, postal workers began industrial action for higher wages.

Over 6,000 postmen and employees in the central telex and cable offices began a work to rule, banning all movements from job to job.

The dockers have already rejected a 40 per cent offer and have maintained a firm stand for their full claim of a 50 per cent rise.

The strike comes at the height of the citrus season and growers foresee

massive losses if hundreds of tons of oranges and lemons are left to rot on the trees and quaysides.

It is part of a broad movement of workers to protect their wages from inflation, which was at a rate of 16 per cent in 1972.

Golda Meir's government has removed price control on goods which were not considered as 'basic necessities', leading to rapid price increases.

On January 1 there was a protest strike in hundreds of factories against price increases and for wage increases. The workers condemned the fact that in 1972 bankers' profits went up by 80 per cent and employers' profits by 23 per cent.

Inflation can only increase rapidly with the implementation of Monday's

budget proposals which will cut income tax but impose Value-Added Tax.

The development of the strike movement poses a sharp threat to the Israeli onslaught on the Arab masses.

While Israeli jets have renewed raids on guerrilla camps and army posts in Syria, the Israeli Cabinet has to deal with the anger of Jewish workers whose living-standards are being cut.

● The Israeli trade union Consumer Council has published a list of firms which it claims have raised prices excessively and are going to 'recommend' a 'consumer strike'—a boycott of these firms' shops. The trade union leaders who back the Council have done their utmost to get the post and dock strikes called off.

US raises import tax on Michelin tyres

THE United States Treasury Department has decided to raise the import tax on Michelin tyres from 4 to 10.6 per cent.

They enter the US from the Canadian branch of the French monopoly.

This protectionist measure follows complaints from American tyre manufacturers on the size of Canadian government subsidies for two Michelin factories in Nova Scotia.

According to figures

presented to the US Treasury, the government subsidies were worth \$23m and were allied with a loan of \$50m at very low interest rates.

American tyre manufacturers are still not satis-

fied by the 6 per cent increase in the import surcharge.

They claim this puts them only on level terms with the French monopolists in the domestic market.

Record exports from Japan

PRELIMINARY bank statistics issued in Tokyo yesterday showed Japanese exports at record figures in 1972.

There was an overall increase of 19.3 per cent over 1971, with a total value of £12.3m.

The increase in December was 30.4 per cent overall.

The export drive by Japanese capital reached most belligerent proportions in western Europe.

Exports last month were 84 per cent higher than in December 1971.

Exports to the United States were up by 19.5 per cent.

The banks' figures show a particular increase in the export of ships and steel in December.

As record exports were announced, the Bank of Japan declared its first

credit-tightening move for two years.

The Bank of Japan Governor, Tadashi Sasaki, announced the raising of reserve ratios to combat inflation.

The new ratios—the percentage of deposits that have to be placed in the Bank—are now 1 per cent for deposits from commercial banks and 2 per cent for demand deposits.

Officials said that the measures were expected to mop up about 300,000m yen of surplus liquidity.

A heavy inflow of US dollars had increased external reserves by \$13,000m and most of these had been converted into yen by the central bank, thus increasing domestic liquidity.

Sasaki remarked that this money had been invested in land and stock, as well as industrial expansion, thus creating an 'inflationary mood'.

Socialist Labour League North West Rally

FORCE THE TORY GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN!

BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY!

SUNDAY JANUARY 14, 7 p.m.

The Everyman, Hope Street, LIVERPOOL

'RIGHT TO WORK' FILM

G. HEALY (SLL National Secretary)
CHRISTINE SMITH (Young Socialists)

In a personal capacity:

CONNIE FAHEY (Manchester Tenants)

ALAN STANLEY (Vauxhall Shop Stewards)

BRIAN GEENEY (U.P.W.)

WALLY FOUCHS (CAV Occupation Committee)

Fighting the Tory rent Act

Camden opposition hangs in the balance

CAMDEN council meets tonight and the whole policy of non-implementation of the 'fair rents' Act hangs in the balance. A number of those against the Housing Finance Act are said to be wavering under the threat from the Tory government that £8m subsidies will be withheld if the rents are not put up.

Camden has for some time been the last council in London to defy the government's plans to smash municipal housing, destroying a basic democratic right of the working class.

And on Sunday the rebel councillors received the backing of well over 2,000 trade unionists, tenants, Labour Party members and youth in a demonstration through the streets of the borough.

One man definitely voting against implementation at tonight's meeting will be Cllr Dick Collins, one of the leaders of the bitter rent fights of more than a decade ago.

Chairman of the Regents Park tenants' association at



DICK COLLINS... Led struggles decade ago

Mornington Crescent, Cllr Collins was then involved in a struggle against rent increases on the council estate.

Police were called in from neighbouring districts and at least two families were evicted by the Tory council after court orders

No LP backing for anti-Tory fight

for possession were made out.

He said he felt somewhat bitter at the recent reversal of conference policy on the 'fair rents' Act by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

'Although it obviously

BY PHILIP WADE
OUR HOUSING
CORRESPONDENT

didn't do us any good, I must say it wasn't an unexpected decision,' he told me.

'They have this idea that while in opposition they cannot ask people to break the law because when they become the government the other side will do the same to them.'

Did Cllr Collins agree with such an 'argument'? 'Of course not. I say if a law is bad we must break it,' he replied.

'All along we look for the NEC and the leadership of the Party to back us up. But we haven't got that, have we?'

'Twelve years ago I was on a similar march against a council. Now we're fighting a government,' added Cllr Collins.



Deal imposed over telegraphists' heads Doubts cast on UPW's pay fight

A PAY-and-productivity row at Britain's overseas telegraph headquarters has thrown up serious doubts about whether Post Office union leaders intend to fight the Tory pay law.

Last month the Union of Post Office Workers announced that it intended to press a big, new pay claim despite the law.

And in a letter to overseas telegraph operators at Electra House, London, last week UPW secretary Tom Jackson said that the ambition of his executive would be 'to achieve a settlement well beyond any norm which the government proposes'.

The union chief went on to suggest, however,

that the executive might well feel itself 'compelled to accept the norm'.

Jackson's letter, addressed to Electra House branch secretary Michael O'Keefe, is intended to explain why a productivity deal signed last October is being implemented without the consent of UPW members.

This is a rather difficult job, since Jackson promised that the deal would be rescinded if it was not approved by a ballot.

The first ballot on the issue was declared invalid by the executive and no date has been fixed for a second.

Operators at Electra House say that the deal is already changing the face of the exchange.

The Post Office refused approaches from Kim McKinlay, the union officer responsible for telecommunications, asking for a delay.

'This being the case,' Jackson said in his letter, 'the union has no alternative but to stand by its given word.'

This statement has caused ructions at Electra House since it implies the UPW's given word to the employer has priority over its given word to its members.

But the row assumes even wider significance as a result of Jackson's argument that if the deal was held up to await the second ballot, the Post Office would refuse payments of up to £95 a year agreed under the deal.

'As you know,' he told O'Keefe, 'we have a wage claim in for the grades which we represent including OTOs and our ambition must be to try and achieve a settlement well beyond any norm which the government proposes.'

'If, however, we are compelled to accept the norm, then this will be a single sum of money unrelated to the ITS [International Telegraph Service] efficiency agreement.'

This statement is in direct conflict with the impression most UPW members have been given that the union intends to proceed with its national claim regardless of the pay law.

14-day deadline to Midlothian rebels

MIDLOTHIAN county council, one of 12 Scottish authorities still holding out against the 'fair rents' Act, have been given 14 days to fall in line or face the consequences.

Following a public inquiry into their affairs, the Tory government has declared the council to be in default under the provisions of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Scotland Act.

Midlothian, which refused to increase the rents of 11,000 council dwellings, has been

ordered to pay the costs of the inquiry.

If the Labour council refuses to comply with the two-week deadline, it is possible that the Secretary of State for Scotland will seek a court order against it.

Failure to comply at that stage could lead to the imprisonment of the Labour councillors for contempt of court.

Other councils holding out in Scotland are: Clydebank, Dunfermline, Kilmarnock, Alloa, Barrhead, Cowdenbeath, Cumbernauld, Dalkeith, Denny and Dunnipace, Saltcoats and Whitburn.

Sunderland yards need £20m job: shipbuilding manager

THE FUTURE of British shipbuilding hangs on a massive injection of government aid, says a leading shipbuilder. Mr Jim Venus, managing director of Court Shipbuilders, told a meeting in Sunderland his company needed a £20m handout from the treasury to make the three Doxford and Sunderland shipyards viable.

Court, which also owns the Dorset firm of Appledore Shipbuilders bought the three obsolete and ailing yards for £8.5m last summer.

Now it says that if the yards are to pay they must be modernized on a scale which amounts to virtual rebuilding.

Court has already announced it intends to reopen the Pallion site where it will build a capital-intensive covered yard costing £8m-£10m.

The yard will employ up to 1,000 men—about half the total three yards' workforce—and produce technically-advanced ships of between 5,000 and 20,000 tons.

But Venus warned that without government cash the jobs of men at the two other yards, North Sands and Deptford, could be in jeopardy.

Court says it plans to modern-

ize both for the building of 150,000-ton liquid gas tankers.

The Tories are unlikely to make any decision until after they receive the nearly-completed report on the future prospects of UK shipbuilding by consultants Booz Allen and Hamilton.

Farm warning

ENTRY into the Common Market meant Britain was moving towards 'a more capitalist philosophy', Mr Henry Fell, one of the country's biggest and most influential farmers, said yesterday.

Fell said this more capitalist philosophy meant 'rewards for some and curtains for others'. He was warning farmers at an Oxford farming conference not to underestimate the ability and competitiveness of their European counterparts.

Socialist Labour League Yorkshire Rally

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GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN!
BUILD THE
REVOLUTIONARY
PARTY!**

SUNDAY JANUARY 21, 7.30 p.m.
Great Northern Hotel,
Wellington Street (near Leeds station),
LEEDS

**FILM: THREE YEARS
OF WORKERS PRESS**

Speakers:

G. HEALY (SLL National Secretary)
PAUL WHETSTONE (Young Socialists)

In personal capacity:

GEORGE LUBY (U.P.W.)

ROBBIE ROBERTS (N.U.M.)



A THREAT TO TRADE UNIONISM

An examination of the Confederation of Independent Staff Organizations (CISO) by Jack Gale

A potentially significant threat to trade union organization, particularly in banks and finance houses, appeared last month with the launching of the Confederation of Independent Staff Organizations (CISO).

CISO's launching followed the setting up of a steering committee composed of the heads of the Barclays Bank Staff Association, Commercial Union Group Staff Association, Sun Alliance and London Staff Association, ICI Staff Association and Kodak Senior Staff Association. This culminated in a meeting of representatives of some 45 staff associations.

The meeting, held on December 5, resolved support for the principle of CISO, agreed that the steering committee should remain in being, that a draft constitution be drawn up and that a further meeting be held on February 1 following the report back of representatives.

According to the secretary to the steering committee, Mr Paul Nickolson:

'The confederation is being formed to give impetus to the demand now being expressed by employees for the establishment of organizations to represent them on a company or corporation basis. This has already led to the emergence of new staff associations, independent of management, which are seeking recognition from and negotiating rights with employers and are building on the experience of well established staff associations.'

This is clearly intended to be an alternative to the established white-collar unions and particularly to those unions in the financial sector—APEX,

ASTMS, NUBE.

CISO argues that staff associations should be 'given the benefit of back-up facilities similar to those available to TUC-affiliated trade unions, which are too expensive for individual associations to provide on their own. They are important because trade unions would find it difficult to subsist without them'. A confidential CISO steering committee paper prepared for the December 5 conference put this even more strongly:

'TUC affiliated trade unions are unable to subsist without back-up facilities and staff unions are a long way from getting similar facilities.'

CISO claims that it will provide:

- Research and information services on remuneration policies, employment conditions, protection of employment, training and career development, legal problems.

- Facilities for training and the exchange of ideas and experience.

- Advice and assistance, where requested, for the promotion of:

Good communications, including quick and effective ways of resolving disputes.

Staff involvement in decisions affecting their work.

Opportunities for increasing personal competence and its reward.

Effective negotiating procedures and practices, including assistance and negotiation if required.

CISO also argues that 'the needs of white-collar workers are not properly understood. A principal fear is that the pay and conditions of white-collar staff are being squeezed between boards of directors anxious to keep down labour costs and workers whose militancy achieves substantial wage increases'.

In recent years there has been a large growth of trade unionism among white-collar workers. Four main factors have contributed to this.

Through nationalization and mergers in the private sector, the organizations in which these workers are employed have become very large. This has not only brought large numbers of white-collar workers together, but has brought them into closer contact with other workers whose unions are strong.

International competition and inflation have changed the climate in organizations and the style of management has become tougher.

Finally, in many companies there is an increasing professionalism in personnel departments which are no longer the welfare departments of paternalistic employers but act more like manpower economists concerned to get maximum output from the minimum number of people at a minimum cost.

Faced with these pressures, more and more white-collar workers have begun to realize that they have no power as individuals if there is no organization to protect their interests. Hence the growth of trade unionism.

That the CISO reflects the backward outlook of some sections of the middle class, and thus assists management against genuine trade unionism, is made clear by the seven principles on which it will operate. These are:

'1. Constructive rather than militant relationships with employers.

'2. An emphasis on company based negotiations. Interestingly, an addition to this principle set forth in the confidential discussion paper has been deleted: 'which balance self interest with a concern for

honourable conduct and the public interest'.

'3. Powerful but responsible promotion and support of the interests of employees who are members of organizations in the confederation.' This appears to have replaced an original principle as follows: 'Recognition that members' long-term interests are not best served by selfish and aggressive policies.'

'4. Political and financial independence which will enable the confederation to represent only the interests of member employees to the three major political parties, any elected government and any organization of employers in Great Britain and, where necessary at international level.

'5. The promotion and support of new independent member organizations within the confederation.

Above: Members of ASTMS locked-out during a dispute in Croydon. The CISO is a threat to white-collar unions ASTMS, APEX and NUBE.

'6. The absence of domination in the confederation by any large member organizations or combination of member organizations.

'7. The capacity to absorb a rapid growth of membership which will be increasingly representative of organizations of workers throughout the country currently unattached to any other confederation.'

As if that were not enough, CISO has openly declared that it is appealing to those people in the middle class who are antagonistic to real trade unionism.

Many staff, it claims, 'have no wish to join trade unions which are affiliated to the TUC. They simply do not like unions.'

Staff associations from amongst the following organizations are believed to have had representatives attending the meeting concerning the Confederation of Independent Staff Organizations on December 5:

Financial sector
 Barclays Bank
 Lloyds Bank
 Lloyds Bank—Technical and Services
 Midland Bank
 National Westminster Bank
 Bank of England
 Royal Bank of Scotland
 Bank of Baroda
 Bank of India (UK)
 Australian Mutual Provident
 Britannic Assurance
 Eagle Star
 General Accident
 Commercial Union
 Phoenix Assurance
 Sun Alliance & London Corporation of Lloyds
 Sun Life
 Welfare Insurance
 Norwich Union
 Nationwide Building Society
 Forward Trust

Others
 Lufthansa UK
 Balfour Beatty
 Imperial Tobacco
 Automobile Association
 Courtaulds Senior Staff
 Seaboard World Airlines
 Kodak Senior Staff
 A. Monk & Co
 British Council
 Coleman Association—Reckitt & Coleman
 Cadbury Schweppes—Senior Managers
 J. Bibby—Agriculture & Sales
 Telecommunications Staff Association
 Ilford Senior Staff
 ICI
 Tate & Lyle
 Arthur Guinness & Son



Rhodesia's Ian Smith

SMITH CALLS UP RESERVES TO FIGHT GUERRILLAS

The racist regime in Rhodesia is to continue calling up civilian reserves to assist in counter-insurgency operations.

The mobilization follows a series of well-planned raids by liberation forces in which a corporal was killed and 12 others were wounded.

The Territorials, called up for an indefinite period, will join regular troops, armed police and airmen in patrol operations.

Several guerrillas are claimed to have been captured, but their names have been kept secret even during court cases.

This is done so that guerrilla forces have difficulty in discovering the fate of their men. It also means that the Rhodesian authorities are free to inflict the most barbarous punishment and tortures on anyone who is picked up.

In a local magistrate's court last week, two tribal leaders were sent to prison for failing to report the presence of a guerrilla who had been recruiting Africans for training. Two were jailed for four years and the guerrilla was given five years' hard labour.

WORKERS IN VENICE ORDER GAS MASKS

Venice in the winter. The words conjure up blissful scenes of crisp morning air with wisps of fog swirling along the world-famous canals.

Not so. The air pollution is so diabolical that 50,000 workers on one large industrial estate are asking to be equipped with gas masks.

Two Republican senators have said that the pollution is high enough 'to endanger the lives of workers'.

The order for the 50,000 gas masks was sent to all 205 firms working at Venice's Porto Marhera industrial district by the chief inspector of labour conditions. This followed several cases of groups of workers being intoxicated by industrial gas fumes.

The industrialists are now complaining about the cost of the masks. Rather than pay £14 for each of the masks, as recommended, they want to buy £4 masks which they claim are lighter and more convenient.

The dangerous gases being released in the area are phosgene, prussic acid and sulphur dioxide.

BANGLADESH ON THE BRINK OF CIVIL WAR?

BY IAN YEATS

Bangladesh may be on the threshold of a bloody civil war, according to eye-witnesses who have quit the country for the 'safety of London'.

In the Bangladesh capital, Dacca, dusk falls each day to the accompaniment of rifle and small arms fire which sometimes lasts throughout the night.

In the cities, towns and even villages shops are looted and after daylight corpses are found in their homes or by the roadside shot or battered to death by unknown hands.

With unemployment and poverty raging, the writ of the Awami League government is being increasingly devalued by the actions of minorities taking the law into their own hands.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is determined to halt the break-up of his country by obtaining a clear expression of public support at the General Elections scheduled for March 7.

An Awami League splinter group disaffected with Rahman's softness—the Jatiye Shamajtantrik Dal (National Socialist Party)—is making shrill calls for a benevolent dictatorship in Bangladesh.

Rahman's strategy of asking his people to be patient while the new nation is built is in ruins. The right wing is clamouring for force to hold restive elements in check.

Black market and smuggling

Lavish foreign aid (at interest rates which in five years time will financially cripple the country) is falling disastrously short of what is required to develop the largely agricultural and war-shattered economy.

Essential goods are scarce and smuggling and black marketeering is flourishing, fanning the already chronic inflation.

With the Pakistanis out of their country, industrial workers expected rapid advances in their wages and living standards.

Instead Rahman has banned strikes. And since independence, he has less than doubled wages while prices have risen eightfold in the same period.

After months of mounting frustration, their anger broke loose last week after Rahman's police shot two students and injured at least six others.

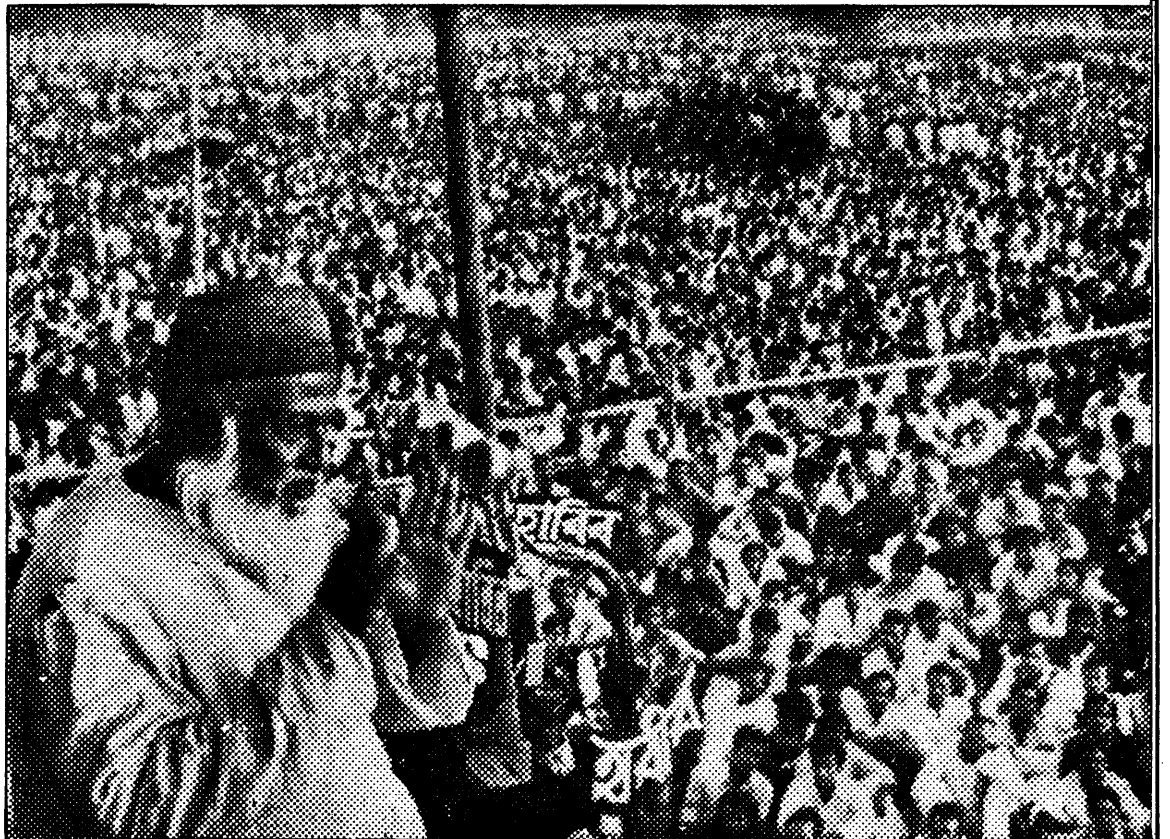
Led by the pro-Moscow faction of the National Awami Party, workers at most factories in Dacca downed tools in a one-day General Strike against the killings.

The students belonged to the NAP, whose members now control Dacca students' union after Awami Leaguers were ousted from power.

Since independence the pro-Moscow NAP has been known as the Awami League's 'B team' and the decision to call a demonstration at the beginning of this month against the US bombing of Vietnam can only be seen as a diversion.

If the NAP leaders intended seriously to oppose the Awami League government which until now they have critically supported, why not base their campaign on urgent home issues like prices, wages and the government's repressive labour code?

The Bengali government had already recognized North Vietnam and individual leaders, including Rahman, had condemned the bombing.



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Above: Moulana Bashani, veteran leader of the pro-Peking National Awami Party, addresses a huge rally in Dacca.

The riots in three cities and the General Strike in Dacca which followed were seen by Rahman and the right wing alike as a serious incipient threat to their rule.

Rahman himself called on loyal peasants and student supporters of the Awami League to 'save Bangladesh from communism'.

In an orgy of violence on January 5 pro-Rahman supporters set fire to the National Awami Party (Moscow wing) offices in Dacca.

Then they stormed on to set fire to the offices of the pro-Moscow students' union and threw stones at the offices of the pro-Peking Revolutionary Students' Union and the pro-Moscow Communist Party.

The Awami League is blatantly moulding the political situation into one in which all left groups can be lumped together as 'saboteurs' and 'trouble makers'.

The March 7 election is calculated to give Rahman a mandate to take decisive action.

Relying on peasants' vote

He is relying on a massive confidence vote from Bangladesh peasants, many of whom benefited from the 25 per cent slashing of land revenues introduced as a popular measure when he came to power.

But this is by no means certain. A rally held by the

pro-Peking National Awami Party in Dacca last week drew up to 50,000 workers and peasants at a race-course meeting addressed by veteran leader Moulana Bashani.

Now UN secretary-general Kurt Waldheim has warned that Bangladesh will need up to 2 million tons of grain this year if famine is to be averted.

Together with Rahman's failure to redistribute land on any large scale, the effect of black marketeering and drought on food supplies and the general shortage of cash in the countryside, the stage is set for serious upheavals in 1973.

While the Awami League turns to repression in the face of the country's insoluble problems, workers and peasants alike are being thrown into confusion by the absence of a political leadership willing and able to provide an alternative.

The combined effect of shortages and the first taste of power for Awami Leaguers is a government riddled with corruption.

While the right-wing marshals its forces behind Rahman's back, the largely Stalinist opposition is paralysed by its adherence to the perspective of giving the Bangabandhu (Rahman) first one chance, then another and still another to get the country on its feet.


The net result is the increasing break-down of law and order and of established political relations.

There are now more guns in Bangladesh than during the war against Pakistan, ranging from pistols to bazookas, and raids are becoming increasingly commonplace as individuals and groups seize what they can get no other way.

In this dog-eat-dog atmosphere of deprivation and terror the ingredients exist for civil war. Businessmen, journalists, doctors and lawyers are said to be making preparations to leave the country.

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TORY PRESS DISCOVERS THE HUMAN FACE OF CAPITALISM

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

The extraordinary thalidomide affair offered the Tory Press an opportunity for an orgy of pompous self-congratulation.

The story dominated the front pages and by the end of last week several papers were claiming the unique distinction of bringing the Distillers company to its knees.

An added bonus came on Saturday when Fleet Street was able to write the 'happy ever after story' around the £20m offer (which after tax concessions is likely to cost the company £8m).

The whole affair was supposed to prove that capitalists, though often misguided, out of touch, stubborn etc., would eventually face the music and pay up.

Everyone was relieved. 'The City', reported the 'Sunday Telegraph' has never seen anything like the Distillers affair and one can only pray that it will never happen again.'

The same paper reported one of the more telling motives behind the campaign: 'Above all,' concluded City editor Patrick Hutber, 'there has been a realization that capitalism, if it is to survive, must be capitalism with a human face.'

TRICKY ISSUE

Eventually it was 'The Mirror' who sounded the retreat on the 'campaign' and began the gradual rehabilitation of the company to its old position of respect in the City.

'The Distillers' offer of £20m is . . . a fair one. The time for militancy is over—the sighs of relief on the Stock Exchange were almost audible.

The Distillers scandal was a tricky issue for the Tory bosses of Fleet Street. A campaign with great emotional appeal was clearly building up behind the parents of the 410 deformed children. At some stage this commanded recognition in the Press.

At the same time the protests had to be defused. The best method—and the one universally adopted—was to suggest that there was nothing basically wrong with a system that produces thalidomide and persistently denied compensation to the afflicted children, save a pig-headed board of directors.

Hence 'The Sun' concluded on Saturday: 'Great news at last. A triumph for the brave parents who never took no for an answer. But does anyone believe the £20m Distillers' offer would ever have been made had it not been for the outcry by the people of Britain and their newspapers?'

And the 'Daily Mail': 'The thalidomide children—the victims of one of the saddest mistakes ever to spring from man's scientific genius . . .' (Remember the word mistake. More on this later.)

In the pages of the capitalist Press all this jubilation is

most misplaced. It is a fact that since 1961, the year the children were born, parents have been fighting a bitter and unsuccessful battle to secure money from the multi-million pound whisky barons.

But at no stage did the 'campaigning' British Press take up their plight, neither did any paper print the true story of the thalidomide tragedy which was far from a mistake. This is despite the fact that at least one national newspaper has had the full facts since 1967.

The campaign began on Monday January 1 when the news leaked out that two merchant banks were surreptitiously attempting to settle the wrangle without further damaging publicity.

On Tuesday the government refused any special tax status to Distillers, which promptly withdrew its 'new' £11m offer (£6m of which it proposed should be shouldered by the taxpayer).

On the Wednesday things took a more serious turn. The price of Distillers' shares fell 3p to 163.5p, wiping £11m off its Stock Exchange value.

It was at this point the big battalions decided they had a heart after all (supermarket owner David Green had already decided not to sell Distillers spirits: 'Cynics in the trade thought it was all a publicity exercise . . .' reported 'The Grocer').

After ten years of witnessing the harrowing legal battles in the courts, which the parents lost, the 'Pru', with 9 million shares in Distillers, stepped in.

The entire capitalist Press gave blanket coverage to kindly Sir John Hogg, Prudential Insurance's deputy chairman and deputy chairman of Williams and Glyn's Bank (another 1.1 million Distillers shares).

The London 'Evening Standard' reported Hogg: 'The shareholders are worried—on two fronts of humanity and business—and we want to know if we can help.' They had of course been making their minds up for a decade, but they had finally come to it—Distillers would have to pay!

The 'Standard's' rival, the 'Evening News' turned its lead columns over to Richard Flemings, director of Robert Flemings, bankers and advisers to Distillers.

His remarks are worth reproducing in full:

'Lack of noise does not mean lack of action. Distillers is a quiet Scottish firm unused to the glare of publicity,' he said.

'This is a very difficult human problem. It is a terrible human tragedy and the company has to find a solution that is fair and just—and that is likely to mean figures as high as some of the over-ambitious demands made.'

Where, one might ask, was the humanity when Distillers was taking thalidomide campaigner David Mason to court to make his deformed nine-year-old daughter 'Lulu' a ward of the court? The argument was that by not accepting Dis-



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Saturday, January 6, 1973

tillers' 'highest and final' offer, he was unfit to bring up the child. There were no great emotional campaigns in the Tory Press about that case.

The phrase about the 'quiet Scottish firm' is also interesting.

£62m PROFIT

Distillers quietly made £62m profit in the year ending March 1972, £8m more than 1971. The yield per share was 7.25 per cent in 1971 when £23m was paid out to shareholders like the 'Pru'. The shareholders of the 18-man board of directors netted them an average of £88,000 each in 1971; this is on top of their salaries.

The directors generally live in a quiet style too. Take the Rt Hon Baron Forteviot of Eton and Oxford, chairman of the Dewars whisky group, a

£20,000,000 NEW THALIDOMIDE OFFER

'This is well worth considering . . . but my poor Freddie'

By VICTOR CHAPPEL and ANTHONY SHRIMSLY
TWENTY MILLION POUNDS! That "final offer" to Britain's thalidomide victims was made last night by the Distillers Company.

The offer was approved by the 17 man board at a three-hour meeting in Distillers' London headquarters.

It is four times as much as the last offer.

Any £100,000 share of Distillers' £200m will be worth £100,000 more than it was last night.

Distillers' new offer would mean that the 410 deformed children of thalidomide victims would have £200 million more to spend on their lives.

THE SUN SAYS
Great news at last. A triumph for the brave parents who never took No for an answer.
But does anyone believe the £20million Distillers offer would ever have been made had it not been for the outcry by the people of Britain and their newspapers?

A sample of the Press ballyhoo over Distillers' £20m offer to the parents of the deformed thalidomide victims. There were no headlines during the long years of legal battles when the parents were fighting for compensation for their children.



THE Sun

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PAGES



The Press barons. Chairman of the Newspaper Publishers' Association, Lord Goodman, with editor in chief of Times Newspapers, Denis Hamilton (right) and Victor Feather who, according to Cecil King, was receiving £500 a year from the 'Mirror' group of papers. Hamilton was present at the board meeting which was crucial in the 'Sunday Times' decision not to publish the full thalidomide story. Other men from Times Newspapers (top to bottom): Lord Shawcross, ex-Labour Attorney-General, a director; 'Sunday Times' editor, Harold Evans; and Lord Robens, another director.

40 PAGES TODAY

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ANTHONY SHRIMLEY
That "final offer" to
was made last night by
7 men held at a three-hour
quarters.
SUN SAYS
A triumph for the
who never took No for an
before the £20million
would ever have been made
for the outcry by the people
their newspapers?

parents of the de-
long years of legal
their children.

Distillers subsidiary. He lives quietly in Dupplin Castle, Perth.

The boss of the combine, Sir Alex McDonald, is noted for his quiet conduct of affairs. He was one of the four wise men who recommended almost the complete closure of the upper Clyde shipyards in the interests of efficiency.

The firm also has very quiet industrial relations. The last big strike was in Scotland in June. Then women had pitched battles with police on the Distillers picket lines.

All these facts, particularly the long legal wrangles over money, were either ignored or reported in a most desultory fashion by the Tory Press. But then thalidomide was not an 'issue'.

Anyway, the belated publicity did the trick. Distillers shares began to rise once more. They passed their earlier peak, adding £23m to the company's Stock Exchange value by

Thursday January 5.

There was one paper, however, that did have the full thalidomide facts. The 'Sunday Times' began investigating the case in 1967 and within 12 months had several cabinets full of documents. Men visited Germany and Sweden to track down the origins of the deadly drug.

But only a few shots were fired. The odd piece appeared, but nothing like the full investigation that the material gathered merited.

IN COURT

During 1972 the dusty files were reopened when the famous Insight team was told to cool their investigations of army torture and oppression in Ulster.

Stories pointing out the sad plight of the children and their

bitter fight for compensation were published.

Eventually a definitive 14,000-word investigation was completed. This article was sent to Distillers who forwarded it to Attorney-General, Sir Peter Rawlinson. Rawlinson promptly took the paper to court and halted publication.

One of the judges was Lord Widgery, who had also prevented publication of the 'Sunday Times' Bloody Sunday exposé pending his own lengthy investigation into the incident in Derry on January 30, 1972, when demonstrating civilians were gunned down by the British army.

However, events overtook the paper as most of Fleet Street jumped on the thalidomide bandwagon and began publishing their carefully-vetted 'exposés'. The 'UK Press Gazette' asked the 'Sunday Times' 'to publish and be damned'. But the story never appeared.

C. D. Hamilton, editor in chief of Times Newspapers is believed to have ruled that 'Sunday Times' editor Harold Evans would be in hot water if he was found guilty in any litigation resulting from publication.

STIFLED

Hence Fleet Street stifled the 'Sunday Times' thalidomide story. But this did reveal that the terrible effects of the drug could have been avoided. Workers Press published on Friday and Saturday of last week a long review of the Penguin Special 'Thalidomide and the Power of the Drug Companies' by Henning Sjöström and Robert Nilsson.

They reveal that by the late 1950s the German manufacturers of the 'wonder-drug', Chemie Grünenthal, were

flooded with warnings and complaints from doctors over the alarming side-effects of the drug. In 1958 Distillers began to manufacture the drug under licence and market the product as Distaval.

Grünenthal did all in their power to defend their 'invention' and keep it on the market. Only when its ghastly effect on babies came to light in 1961 was the drug withdrawn all over the world.

Since then most of the companies, Distillers included, fought a legal battle against compensation claims.

So much for the 'Daily Mail's' 'saddest mistake' theory. The thalidomide story challenges a fundamental principle of capitalism—that production for the profit of the few produces human welfare for all. Four hundred and ten children are living denials of this principle—a fact that the Tory Press is determined to keep from its readers.

'... IN CONTEMPT OF COURT'

A special correspondent looks at the laws of contempt.

The £55,000 fine sequestered from the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers funds by the National Industrial Relations Court has brought the question of contempt of court right into the centre of the class struggle in Britain.

It was for contempt of court that the Transport and General Workers' Union was fined a total of £55,000 by court president Sir John Donaldson, who also ordered the Pentonville five jailed for the same offence.

The rules governing contempt of court were used recently by the Attorney-General who successfully sought an order prohibiting publication of articles on articles on thalidomide and the Distillers Company in the 'Sunday Times' newspaper.

The issue of contempt came to a head early in the short life of the NIRC when railway workers were interviewed on television denouncing the court-ordered ballot. Sir John warned that the publication of interviews attacking court decisions and urging defiance could constitute contempt.

This threat sent a number of institutions, not least the BBC, into something very much resembling panic. Here they were, thoroughly respectable journalists, faithful supporters of law and order and now they faced trouble simply for doing their job.

Contempt of court can be broadly defined as conduct obstructing or perverting, or calculated to obstruct or pervert the course of justice. If a judge says an act is contempt of court then it is—there is no trial by jury on it.

The whole question of contempt of court is now being examined by a parliamentary committee headed by Lord Justice Philimore. This committee has received evidence from a number of bodies which clearly reveals the thinking of influential establishment circles on contempt.

In their evidence the Newspaper Society, representing all provincial newspaper proprietors, concentrated on the question of contempt of the National Industrial Relations Court.

They point out that the NIRC has the powers of a high court in dealing with contempt. This was confirmed by Sir John Donaldson in a statement made in June.

The Newspaper Society concluded from Donaldson's remarks that: 'Though there has as yet been no test case, we believe that as the law stands, comment by the Press on matters before the court would... be regarded as contempt, and dealt with in the same way as by any other branch of the High Court.'

This causes them some apprehension because of the impact it has in restricting reports of events surrounding cases before the court. Not that the Newspaper Society magnates want to detract from Sir John's powers to deal with

malcontents who deliberately set out to challenge the court.

They simply want a guarantee that they will not be liable for contempt proceedings if they merely publish comment on the court's proceedings and on cases before it.

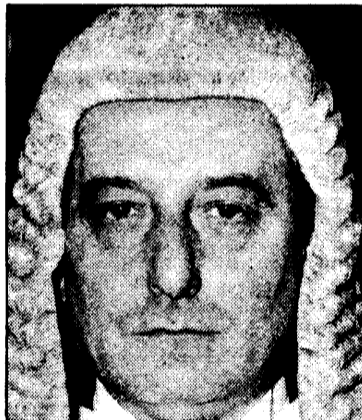
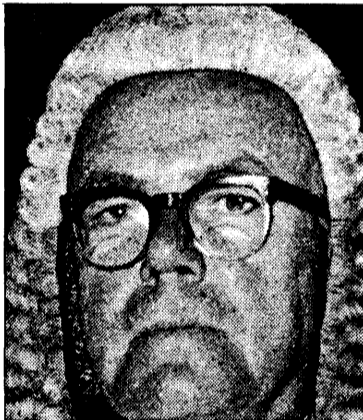
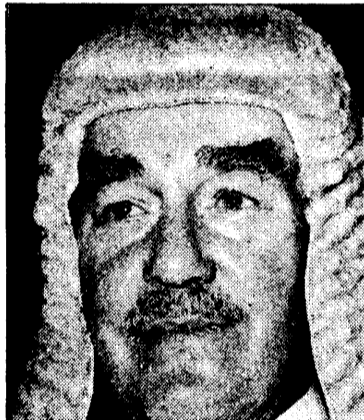
This is made plain when they tell Philimore's committee: 'We believe that the law of contempt should not apply to comment on matters referred to the court for adjudication, unless such comment:

'(a) is abusive of the court or its members, questions the integrity of the court, or holds it up to ridicule;

'(b) discourages any party from bringing an action, or from appearing before it to answer an action or to give evidence;

'(c) encourages disobedience to orders of the court.'

This lines the Newspaper Society solidly on the side of law and order against the working-class opponents of the Industrial Relations Act, who do not recognize the court, are pledged not to appear before



Lord Chief Justice Widgery, Mr Justice Mefford Stevenson and Mr Justice Brabin, the three judges who prevented the publication of articles on thalidomide and the Distillers Company in the 'Sunday Times'. Above: Release of the Pentonville five, jailed for contempt.

it and have already in a number of cases disobeyed its orders.

The provincial newspaper owners went on in the most obsequious way to assure Philimore that their main concern was to make the NIRC acceptable to 'public opinion'.

They assure him that this aim would best be served by allowing comment on the issues before the court:

'The court, if it is to function effectively, must have the support of public opinion.

'This is not to say that the public must be persuaded that its findings are invariably right [this might prove a task beyond the powers even of the Newspaper Society!] but the public must at least accept the court as a properly constituted branch of the High Court, and be able to feel and to see that justice is being done[!].

'This is unlikely in the highly-emotive atmosphere in which the court is having to function at the present time, with the standing of the court continuously under attack, and the facts surrounding the cases it is dealing with blurred by prejudice, ignorance and resentment...

'Freedom to comment constructively on established facts would we believe help to remove the court's activities from political controversy and enable the public to form a more objective judgement.'

The Newspaper Society was sure that by doing this public relations job for the NIRC, it would not be prejudicing the judges or for that matter the lay members.

'In our opinion no court presided over by a High Court Judge, sitting without a jury, is likely to be influenced or prejudiced by statements in the Press. Although there are lay members of the Industrial Relations Court, we think the same argument applies.'

It adds: 'If it is felt necessary to retain legal protection against the possibility of prejudicing the court, the test should be that the published matter was couched in such emotive opinion in which it was impossible for the court to discharge its duty.'

The essence of these proposals is that the law should be tailored so that only the opponents of the NIRC—that is, the labour movement and its Press—can conceivably be brought under its terms.

Anyone who has followed the provincial Press on the question of the Industrial Relations Act will hardly be surprised by this line. It is interesting to note that the Newspaper Society is not the only advocate of this type of solution to the contempt problem before the NIRC.

The Society of Conservative Lawyers, which once numbered Sir John Donaldson among its leading activists, put its evid-

ence before the Philimore committee two months ago.

Like the provincial newspaper proprietors, the Tory lawyers are in favour of 'reforming' the rules on contempt of court. But again, like the Newspaper Society, their proposed reforms are distinctly double-edged.

The centre of the Conservative Lawyers' proposal is the strengthening of the courts' powers to deal with those who disobey court orders, prejudice proceedings or interfere with the conduct of court cases.

They propose that these types of contempt should be punishable as now by summary committal—the Tory lawyers come down against trying them in another court, partly on the grounds that 'only the judge of the court where the contempt was committed can shrug off' minor contempts without detracting from the authority of the bench.

This consideration, however, does not prevent them from suggesting a new method of dealing with certain types of contempt which does involve trial in a separate court.

The Tory lawyers want to deal with criticism of the bench on a similar basis to criminal libel.

The Tory reformers justify their stand on the following grounds: 'Although we have stressed the importance of upholding the authority of the

courts, we think that the Press have on certain occasions been wrongly inhibited from just or fair criticism of judicial behaviour.

'There can be little doubt that the uncertain limits of the law of contempt is largely responsible for this inhibition. We therefore propose that criticism of the bench, or scandalizing the court, such as by letters to newspapers or by speeches in Lincoln's Inn Fields, should no longer be punishable as a contempt.

'Instead we propose legislation to establish an offence similar to criminal libel, by which action may be taken against criticisms which are thought to undermine public confidence in the bench. [Emphasis added.]

'Proceedings would be undertaken by the Attorney-General only; there should be trial by jury; and defences of justification, fair comment and privilege should be open to the critic.'

This proposal would amount to a sweeping change in the law. The power to institute proceedings would be placed in the hands of a political appointee—the Tories speculate that he would be very slow to institute proceedings, but there is absolutely no guarantee of this.

What is more, the nature of the charge would make it very difficult to guarantee a genuinely fair trial, as to exonerate the defendant would amount to attacking the competence of a judge.

Not only would the procedure be just as arbitrary as the existing powers of a judge to commit for contempt, but it would also manufacture a new offence with markedly political overtones when applied to such institutions as the Industrial Relations Court.

Far from diminishing the swipe of contempt proceedings, the evidence of these two influential bodies before the Philimore committee is a plea for the strengthening of powers against contempt of court and has very dangerous implications for the workers' movement.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

MEMOIRS

After the defeat of the Wilson government, various Ministers rushed into print to tell their side of the catastrophe. We had personal reminiscences written by Harold himself, Lord George-Brown, Marcia Williams (Wilson's private secretary and close friend) and Anthony Crosland.

The ex-PM's were particularly profitable, the 'Sunday Times' is believed to have paid Wilson some £200,000 for the turgid apologia for why he wasn't the greatest leader since Disraeli.

But everyone was really excited about the private



memoirs of Richard Crossman, the old social democrat who went off to become editor of the 'New Statesman'.

He has been working at the project for two years. The book was to be published during this year, but it now emerges that Wilson has intervened. Crossman has agreed to delay publication until after the next General Election. He said that Wilson had thought that publication of the Cabinet reminiscences might damage the Party's chances at the polls.

In good reformist fashion Crossman has decided to keep Labour supporters ignorant of the political atrocities committed by the Labourites while in power.

VICIOUS CIRCLE

Graduates will soon be forced to work as hotel managers, garage mechanics, undertakers, used-car dealers and mortuary technicians.

This follows the serious decline in jobs for graduates over the last few years, according to Bernard Holloway, secretary of the Manchester university careers office.

Mr Holloway was addressing the recent North of England Engineering Conference.

The easiest way to combat this loss of graduate jobs—which was heaviest in engineering and computing—was for graduates to take jobs that would normally go to school-leavers, Holloway suggested.

But he didn't say what the school leavers should do.

DECORATED

Colonel David Hackworth was the Audie Murphy of the Vietnam war. For his services to US imperialism he received a total of 91 medals. This made him the most decorated soldier of the war.

His decorations include two Distinguished Service Crosses, ten Silver Stars, eight Bronze Stars, four Commendation Medals, the Vietnamese National Order, fifth class, and eight Vietnamese Gallantry Crosses.

He was wounded four times during active service in Vietnam and wrote a much-used handbook on counter-insurgency called 'Vietnam Primer'.

He left the army because he had become 'disillusioned with the war'. Did he object to the barbarities of US imperialism?

No, what bothered the colonel was the US propaganda claim that it was winning the war. He also felt that soldiers weren't properly trained.

Hackworth is now in Queensland, Australia, where he is allegedly leading 'a more creative, truthful and worthwhile life'. He is working at 'Sid's Diner' at the beach resort of Coolangatta.

REPAIRS

More funny business is reported from Soviet Georgia where house repairs are taking several years instead of the planned two to six months. Funds allocated for housing repairs have, it appears, been applied to other purposes.

Towards the end of last year a number of Georgian bureaucrats were removed for building themselves luxurious secondary residences.

The chief engineer of Batoum municipal council has been dismissed for the expenditure of funds for wrong purposes and other offences. Local officials in other towns have been severely reprimanded.

BOOKS



Moscow Trials Anthology
Paperback, 621p
MAX SHACHTMAN:
Behind The Moscow Trial
Paperback 75p
ROBERT BLACK:
Stalinism In Britain
Paperback £1.12½—cloth £2
LEON TROTSKY:
Death Agony of Capitalism
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US WORKERS IN PICKET LINE BATTLES

US ROUND-UP BY SARAH HANNIGAN

Police are now being used to break up picket lines in the United States on a scale unknown since the huge union battles of the 1930s.

Biggest battles of all recently have been on the picket lines of members of the Newspapers' Guild.

During a recent strike at the 'Cleveland Plain Dealer', mounted police charged into the picket line, injuring several of the strikers.

After another such incident on a 300-strong picket line during a Newspapers' Guild strike in Wilmington, Delaware, one picket said:

'I turned around and there was this big police lieutenant,

with a big smile on his face, pouring mace into my eyes and mouth.

'It's hard to imagine what mace is like. But just think of tear gas applied to your face in liquid form, five or six times stronger than the vapour. I was completely incapacitated.'

Other workers suffered even more severe injuries. Said the picket: 'I saw one guy who had been hit by billy clubs. He seemed to be dead when the ambulance arrived.'

These attacks now have the full support of the Nixon regime, and every city police department throughout the country knows it.

Just three weeks ago, the US Supreme Court established a ruling that gives broad legal protection to scabs against

Mounted police charge printworkers on the picket lines at the Cleveland Plain Dealer Company.

retribution by unions and union members.

At the same time as he unleashes thousands upon thousands of tons of bombs on North Vietnam, killing hundreds of people daily, Nixon also prepares to bring the war home to the US, to every single section of American workers who dare to defend their union rights and conditions.

Printworkers who today defy the US Pay Board and who are demanding strike action to fight cuts in their contract are finding themselves increasingly threatened by armed strike-breakers.

POSTAGE COSTS HIT UNION

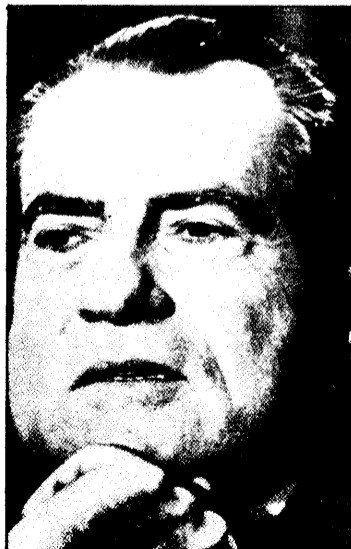
The increase in postal rates imposed on small journals by President Nixon recently has put 12 labour movement publications out of business.

One editor said that postal increases will total 700 per cent over the next ten years for working-class papers all over America.

He added: 'This will make people think twice before starting something. This is real intimidation.'

One journal for machinists, with a circulation of over a million, will be cut back to a semi-monthly or even a monthly as a result of Nixon's moves.

The 12 papers that have closed down stretch from Santa Barbara to the Oregon



Nixon: His increased postal rates put 12 labour movement publications out of business.

border. They are all published by Olympic Press, which is owned by the estate of an Oregon millionaire.

Undoubtedly the closures form part of the attack on the unions being put into effect by Nixon's government. The trade unions throughout California will now find it more difficult to communicate with each other following the loss of 12 papers in one go.

CUTS IN DOCK JOBS

A number of attacks are being launched on the conditions and employment of American dockers.

Only last week 260 men were thrown out of work on the Philadelphia docks when 13 gangs were laid off.

In addition to the lay-offs, the Luckenbach Steamship Company has stated it will be going out of business in the next few months.

Workers employed by the company have been denied their guaranteed annual income for the past two months and it is now clear the bosses have no intention of paying it at all.

The attacks on Philadelphia dockers follows the threat of jobs in Brooklyn, where three piers are closing down.

And on the Manhattan docks, over 190 men have lost the right to fall-back pay. In all these attacks the International Longshoremen's Association has refused to lift a finger to defend its members' interests.

TODAY'S TV

BBC 1

12.30 Nai zindagi naya jeevan. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 On the farm. 1.45 Made in Britain. 2.00 Fashion fanfare. 2.45 Cartoon. 3.00 Sunday debate. 3.35 Young Scientists of the year. 4.00 Deputy dawg. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Thursday's child. 5.20 Screen test. 5.40 Magic roundabout. 5.45 News. Weather.

6.00 **NATIONWIDE**. 6.50 **TOM AND JERRY**.
 7.00 **TOMORROW'S WORLD**. 7.25 **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**.
 8.10. **SOFTLY, SOFTLY: TASK FORCE**. Conspiracy.
 9.00 **NINE O'CLOCK NEWS**. Weather.
 9.25 **TONY BENNETT**. 10.10 **JOYCE GRENFELL**.
 10.45 **MIDWEEK**. 11.30 **LATE NIGHT NEWS**. Weather.

ITV

9.40 Skippy. 10.05 Film: 'Bottoms Up!'. Jimmy Edwards. 11.35 Galloping gourmet. 12.00 Cartoon. 12.05 Inigo Pipkin. 12.25 Rupert Bear. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Sing out with The Settlers. 1.30 Crown court. 2.00 Harriet's back in town. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Looks familiar. 3.25 Saint. 4.20 Get this. 4.50 Arthur of the Britons. 5.20 Survival. 5.50 News.

6.00 **TODAY**. 6.35 **CROSSROADS**.
 7.00 **THIS IS YOUR LIFE**. 7.30 **CORONATION STREET**.
 8.00 **PATHFINDERS**. Operation Pickpocket.
 9.00 **PUBLIC EYE**. The Golden Boy. 10.00 **NEWS AT TEN**.
 10.30 **A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY**. Wallington.
 11.00 **LATE NIGHT THEATRE: 'MELODRAMA'**. The Kong Ting Ruby or The Sparkle of Blood.
 11.30 **FILM: 'FIVE DESPERATE WOMEN'**. Robert Conrad. Five women college friends meet for a reunion on an island and one is murdered.
 12.50 **A NEW DAY**.

BBC 2

11.00-11.25 Play school.

7.05 **MAN AT WORK**. Please Disregard My Age.
 7.30 **NEWS SUMMARY**. Weather.
 7.35 **ALL IN A DAY**. The Crossing.
 8.20 **MUSIC ON 2**. Musici.
 9.15 **A HARDY SUMMER**. Thomas Hardy's words.
 9.25 **MAN ALIVE**. To Catch a Fox. Those who hunt and those who don't.

10.15 **THIRTY-MINUTE THEATRE: 'THE PUNCHY AND THE FAIRY'**. By Jim Allen. Directed by Roy Battersby. With James Culliford and Peter Kerrigan.
 10.45 **EDITION**. 11.15 **NEWS EXTRA**. Weather.

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BBC 2's Thirty-Minute Theatre presentation tonight is Jim Allen's 'The Punchy and the Fairy' with Peter Kerrigan as Charlie (left) and James Culliford as Gilbert.

REGIONAL TV

CHANNEL: 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Who'll bid me? 3.00 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Hogan's heroes. 6.35 London. 11.30 News, weather.

WESTWARD. As Channel except: 9.50 Walking in the sunlight, walking in the shadow. 11.40 Gilbert and Sullivan. 11.15 Rainbow country. 11.40 Katie Stewart. 12.05 London. 12.25 Hammy hamster. 12.37 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 11.28 News. 11.31 Generation three. 11.55 Faith for life.

SOUTHERN: 10.10 Twizzle. 10.25 Film 'Tarzan Goes to India'. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Saint. 4.20 London. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.30 Survival. 7.00 London. 11.30 What the papers say. 11.45 News. 11.55 Guideline. 12.00 Shirley's world. 12.30 Weather.

HARLECH: 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 4.50 Rainbow country. 5.20 Chuckleheads. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.15 Report Wales. 6.30 Arthur of the Britons. 7.00 London. 11.30 Cinema. 12.00 Weather.

ANGLIA: 9.45 Silent valley. 10.30 Common Market cook book. 11.00 Edgar Wallace. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 London. 3.30 Odd couple. 3.55 Romper room. 4.20 News. 4.25 London. 5.20 Lucy. 5.50 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 London. 11.30 Spyforce.

ATV MIDLANDS: 11.30 Cartoon. 11.35 North Sea oil. 12.00 Today. 12.05 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 10.30 Odd couple. 11.00 London. 11.30 O'Hara US treasury.

ULSTER: 12.05 London. 1.29 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Cartoon. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 London. 4.23 News. 4.25 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.35 London. 8.00 Bearcats. 9.00 London. 11.30 World War I.

YORKSHIRE: 9.30 Lidsville. 9.55 Plot to murder Hitler. 10.50 Dick Van Dyke. 11.15 Galapagos the islands. 12.05 London. 3.30 Jason King. 4.25 London. 5.20 Bewitched. 5.50 London. 6.00 Calendar. 6.35 London. 8.00 Persuaders. 9.00 London. 10.30 Adam 12. 11.00 London. 11.30 Spyforce. 12.25 Weather.

GRANADA: 11.00 Felix the cat. 11.15 Tarzan. 12.05 London. 3.25 Yoga. 4.00 Crossroads. 4.25 London. 6.00 News. 6.30 Lucy. 7.00 London. 11.30 What the papers say.

TYNE TEES: 9.25 They met him. 9.30 Lidsville. 9.55 Plot to murder Hitler. 10.50 Dick Van Dyke. 11.15 Galapagos. 12.05 London. 2.30 News. 2.13 London. 3.25 Champions. 4.20 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 10.30 About Britain. 11.00 London. 11.30 News. 11.45 Edgar Wallace. 12.40 Lecturn.

SCOTTISH: 12.02 News. 11.05 London. 3.30 Dangerman. 4.20 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Thompson at tea-time. 6.35 London. 11.30 A kind of living. 12.00 Meditation. 3sfwd aofw daofw oadmrt

All Trades Unions Alliance meetings

Fight Rising Prices
 Force the Tories to Resign
 Support the Engineers

SHEFFIELD: Wednesday January 10, 7.30 p.m. 'The Grape Inn', Trippett Lane, Sheffield 1.

HULL: Wednesday January 10, 8 p.m. White Hart Hotel, Alfred Gelder Street (near Drypool Bridge).

HACKNEY: Thursday January 11, 7.30 p.m. The Parlour, Hackney Central Hall (opp. Town Hall).

TONBRIDGE: Thursday January 11, 8 p.m. 'The Foresters', Quarry Hill Road.

KINGSTON: Thursday January 11, 8 p.m. 'The Liverpool Arms', corner of Cambridge Road and London Road.

SLOUGH: Thursday January 11, 7.30 p.m. Community Centre, Class Room, Farnham Road.

GLASGOW Thursday January 11, 7.30 p.m. Partick Burgh Hall. 'The Common Market and the wage freeze'.

EAST LONDON: Thursday January 11, 8 p.m. 'Festival Inn', Chrisp Street Market, E14. 'The crisis of leadership in the working class'.

LEEDS: Thursday January 11, 7.30 p.m. Peel Hotel, Boar Lane.

GLASGOW: Saturday January 13, 10 a.m. Keir Hardie House, Brougham Street, Greenock. 'The Common Market and Tory Wage Control'.

WATFORD: Monday January 15, 8 p.m. Watford Trade Union Hall, Woodford Road, opposite Watford Junction station.

CENTRAL LONDON (Press and Entertainments branch)

Sunday January 14, 7 p.m.
 11 Floral Street, RSC Rehearsal Rooms, London WC1.
 Defeat the Tory Government
 Build Councils of Action
 Speaker: Philip Wade
 (Workers Press)

WANDSWORTH: Tuesday January 16, 8 p.m. Selkirk Hotel, Tooting Broadway, SW17. 'The fight for a living wage'.

BRISTOL: Tuesday January 16, 7.30 p.m. Building Design Centre, Colston Avenue (opposite SWEB building).

HOLLOWAY: Thursday January 18, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Rd (near Finsbury Park tube).

MIDDLESBROUGH: Sunday January 28, 7.30 p.m. Settlement Community Centre, Newport Road.

An appeal on behalf of the Fine Tubes strikers of Plymouth

The Plymouth Fine Tubes Strikers, their wives and 53 children have just spent their third Christmas on strike with very little money.

These men have waged a bitter struggle for the most basic right a worker can possess—the right to belong to a trade union.

Strike committee members have travelled over 100,000 miles to sustain their fight.

This Christmas has been the hardest of all. It has imposed a great financial burden. Now the 37 strikers face the rest of the winter with a depleted strike fund. January is always a difficult month to raise money to further their fight.

Yet they are determined to fight on. This is a struggle the working class cannot afford to lose. That is why the Socialist Labour League and the Work-

ers Press wishes to make a special appeal to all trade unionists to take collections in their factories and branches for the Fine Tubes men in order that their heroic and determined action can be carried forward. All money should be sent to:

**Fine Tubes Treasurer
 c/o 65 Bretonside
 Plymouth, Devon.**

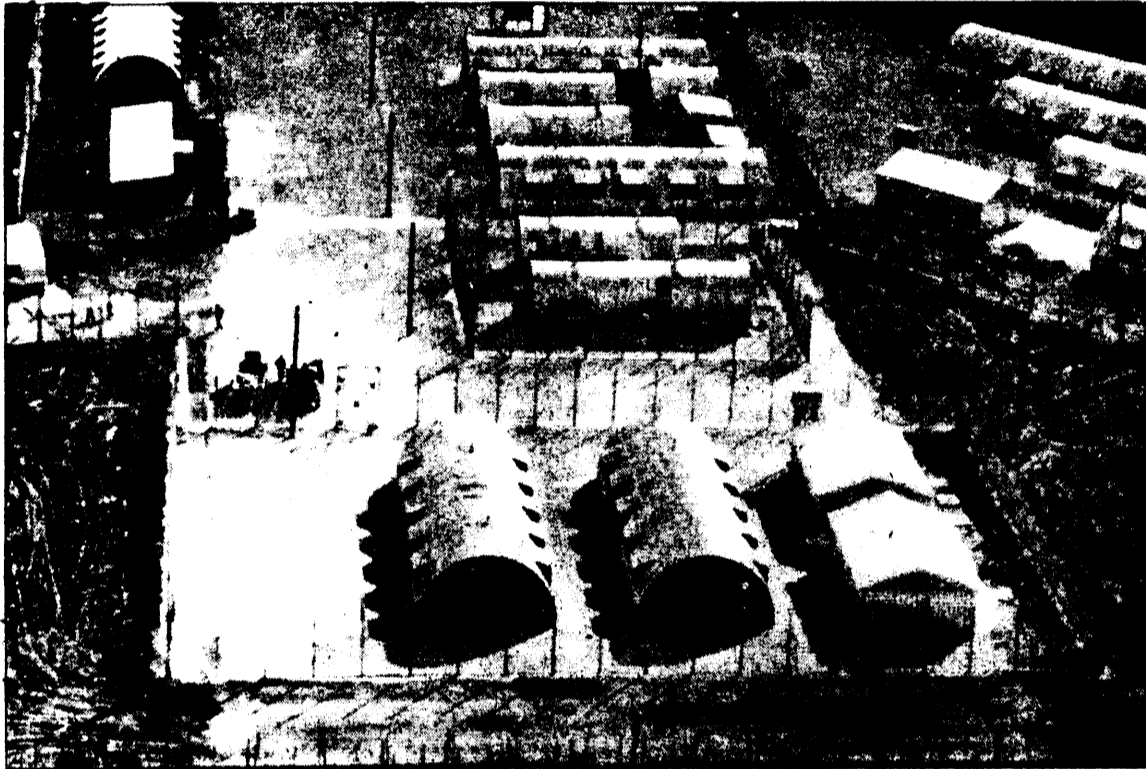
BRUTALITY BEHIND THE BARBED WIRE

THE KEENAN family has a legendary history of republican activity in Northern Ireland. The present head of the family, Sean Keenan, has spent 14 years in detention under the Special Powers Act since the war.

When the latest round of interning occurred Keenan was again picked up—one of the first. He was released just over a year ago, but fled Derry during Operation Motorman. He is now based at Buncrana just over the border in the Republic.

Since the army occupation began in 1969, one of Keenan's sons, Colm, has been shot dead by British troops and his eldest son, Sean, was picked up in Belfast two months ago and interned without trial.

Other relatives of the Keenan family have also been subjected to army harassment and torture. Workers Press has received details of recent brutality by the army against Cyril Canning, son-in-law of Sean Keenan, senior. The series of assaults took place in Compound 5 at Long Kesh internment camp on December 19, 1972.



Long Kesh camp from the air. Political prisoners are held in Nissen huts in barbed-wire compounds.

Canning was picked up shortly after internment was declared and only three months after he was married. His wife Nora (22), has to trek to Long Kesh whenever she can to visit her husband.

On Tuesday, December 19, Canning was taken from Compound 5 to appear before the Detention of Terrorists Tribunal where he was accused of shooting English and Scottish soldiers. There were three prison officers present on the escort, including a Scottish PO. (His name has subsequently been given to the authorities.)

As Canning came out of the 'court' he hesitated, not knowing which way to go. The Scottish PO attacked him, pulling him to the ground by the hair.

With the others assisting, Canning was batoned and handcuffs which were too tight were slipped on his wrists. They then dragged him along the ground by the chain on the handcuffs and threw him into a hut called 'waiting room'.

He was thrown onto the floor and beaten over the back of the legs. The officers then removed his trousers hitting him continuously.

The chain of the handcuffs was placed in his mouth and, holding his arms back, they ran him into the van backed up against the door of the hut.

Inside the van they walked on top of him and the Scottish PO stood on his neck. He shouted: 'Get on the radio and ask them to give us a clear run through.' At one gate they had to stop and he complained: 'Can't they see we're holding one of them down in here?'

Canning complained that he could not breathe and the PO said: 'There are a lot of men not breathing because of you.'

When they reached the "cooler" (the punishment cells) they beat him up, stripped him

and left him naked. They turned off the heating and then tried to get the handcuffs off. As these were too small they had caused his hands to swell and they could only get them off after throwing him on the ground and kneeling on his chest and causing him considerable pain.

Canning asked to see a doctor and after about two hours he arrived. The doctor was very alarmed and demanded that the prisoner be moved to the sick bay to be stitched.

At first the POs refused, but later they decided to rush him over in a group to conceal him from view if possible.

'Watch out, there's someone coming', they said at the last minute and drew back. They half carried him over.

He was stitched and his very considerable bruising measured. He was taken back to the cooler and left there all night. He did not sleep, but had feverish hallucinations throughout the night.

In the early morning the Scottish PO entered the cooler, which he was not supposed to do. He threatened Canning that if he said anything about him when he came before the

Governor, he would 'cripple him'. Canning asked for a drink of water and was refused.

Canning was brought before the deputy Governor for reportedly striking a prison officer (which was completely untrue); he could get three days in the cooler.

'As it is the season of goodwill' said the deputy Governor; 'I will only give you one day.'

Canning said: 'You might as well give me 30 as I have done nothing.'

The deputy Governor said: 'You have had a lot of family trouble' (Canning's baby had died suddenly while he was in Long Kesh). 'What has that to do with it?' Canning asked. He was sent back to Cage 5 without any punishment.

Canning's injuries were; four stitches in his mouth; headaches after being batoned on the head; he could not sit down; he had difficulty in passing urine; difficulty in walking, due to a badly bruised right leg; he had swelling of the neck; badly cut wrists due to the handcuffing and both his hands were swollen; the bridge of his nose was badly swollen.

He was seen over the next few days by his wife, his family doctor and Father Denis Faul. A leading official of Long Kesh told Mrs Canning that Cyril 'got what he deserved'.

AN EXCLUSIVE REPORT BY A NORTHERN IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

Draughtsmen out 18 weeks

DRAUGHTSMEN, work-study engineers and planners at Rodley, near Leeds, are in their 18th week of lock-out over a claim for a substantial increase in pay.

Despite hostile coverage in the local Press and lack of response from production workers at their plant—Thomas Smith, part of the Thomas Ward group—they say they are determined to keep up their fight until a settlement is reached.

The men, all members of the technical section of the AUEW, began an overtime ban in September after months of negotiations over an interim pay claim.

On December 8 they accepted a £3 increase in the basic rate plus £2 'merit appraisal', but the offer was frozen by the government.

SLL LECTURES

TODMORDEN

Monday January 22

'Stalinism'

Monday February 5

'Trotskyism'

THE WEAVERS' INSTITUTE, Burnley Road, 7.30 p.m.

HULL

Wednesday January 17

Stalinism and Trotskyism

Wednesday January 24

Marxist theory and the revolutionary party

WHITE HART HOTEL
Alfred Gelder Street
(near Drypool Bridge)
8 p.m.

DONCASTER

Sunday January 21

What future for the labour movement.

Sunday January 28

The crisis and the socialist answer.

Sunday February 4

The revolutionary party in Britain.

Lectures given by Cliff Slaughter.

SPREAD EAGLE HOTEL
Westlithgate
7.30 p.m.

Four-week reprieve for 270 mid-Wales jobs

THE 270 men whose jobs are threatened at Buttington Contractors Ltd, Trewern, North Wales, have been given a four week reprieve.

Creditors of the company, which went into voluntary liquidation before Christmas, agreed at a meeting in Shrewsbury to a month's stay of execution while efforts to find a new buyer continue.

At least one firm is known to have made an offer for the construction and road-making equipment company and six others

have lodged inquiries with the receiver.

The creditors hoped that a buyer could be found willing to maintain Buttington's as a going concern, but workers fear that any deal will mean some loss of jobs.

The works' action committee, representing men scattered over about 30 mid-Wales sites, is concerned that only the road-making section may be kept going, employing only 100 men.

But even if both sections are continued, all the potential buyers have offices outside Wales.

Buttington's headquarters are in Trewern and many of the

white-collar workers there are certain to lose their jobs whatever happens.

Action committee secretary Mr John Llewellyn Cooke, who is also district secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union and mid-Wales representative of the reformist Institute for Workers' Control, told me there were contingency plans in cold store waiting to be brought to life if the worst came to the worst.

Meanwhile the committee is pressurizing the Welsh Office, government departments and the Secretary of State for Wales Mr Peter Thomas to take all possible

action to save the jobs.

Today the committee will meet shadow Secretary of State Mr George Thomas in Cardiff.

If no buyer is found for the company, Mr Cooke said he hoped the Tories would step in with measures for alternative work. Employment prospects are severely limited in mainly agricultural mid-Wales.

Said Mr Cooke: 'The next seven to ten days are crucial. The receiver only has so much money and the wage bill alone is thousands of pounds a week.'

The creditors will meet again on January 28 to make a final decision on the company's future.

Union chiefs leave options open

Gasmen give Tories eight days ultimatum

FROM DAVID MAUDE

GASWORKERS' leaders yesterday gave the Tories an eight-day ultimatum to lift their 'illegal' ban on pay negotiations. If the government fails to free the Gas Corporation's hand, overtime will be banned and co-operation withdrawn from midnight on Wednesday, January 17.

But leaders of the General and Municipal Workers' Union, which organizes most of the industry's 48,000 workers, have left all their options open for calling off the action.

National officer John Edmonds claimed that the ban on negotiations was 'a separate issue' from the Tory pay control law itself. And David Basnett, the G&MWU's new general secretary, revealed that a further executive meeting has been called for January 16, the day before industrial action is due to take place.

This will consider 'all the circumstances' which then exist—an indication that union leaders hope for at least a tactical softening of line by the government.

Yesterday's decision means that every manual worker in the industry has been instructed to hit supplies in eight days' time. Transport and General Workers' Union delegates decided for this policy last Friday.

Selective strikes could follow the overtime ban and withdrawal of co-operation, the G&MWU executive warned yesterday. This would happen if the Gas Corporation tried to escalate the situation. The union is particularly worried that the Corporation might try to use contract-labour to undermine its sanctions.

If action takes place it will be the industry's first-ever on this scale.

Even the eight-hour day, a demand fought for in a bitter series of localized strikes, was finally conceded by the employers in national negotiations in 1889. A threat of industrial action against wage cuts in the 1930s was lifted by union leaders after talks with the government.

'This confrontation has been thrust on us,' G&MWU secretary Basnett complained yesterday.

'We wanted to negotiate. The British Gas Corporation wanted to negotiate. But we have been prevented from doing so by a letter which a Cabinet Minister has described as mandatory.'

This was a reference to premier Heath's December 15 directive telling Lord Cooper, then just on the point of retirement after a long right-wing career as G&MWU leader, that negotiations could not be

G&MWU leaders have claimed the ban on negotiations is a 'separate issue' from the Tory state pay plan. Below at yesterday's post-executive Press conference national officer John Edmonds (left) and new general secretary David Basnett.



carried to the point of an offer.

Basnett hoped yesterday that 'common sense will prevail', but admitted that the bitterness caused by the letter in the union's ranks was 'very real'.

He would not say if he thought his members agreed with the distinction he made between the ban on talks and the pay law itself.

The union leader insisted that if negotiations were offered, yesterday's instruction would be withdrawn. And despite repeated questioning it was still unclear yesterday afternoon whether the G&MWU executive would call off the action if during the next

week they are offered talks starting after January 17.

It is also unclear whether the executive is setting any conditions on a talks offer.

'We want negotiations without constraint,' said Basnett. But he would not be drawn any further on this.

What if talks are offered, but are clearly constrained by the second phase of the Tory pay law? he was asked. Came the reply: 'It depends on the circumstances.'

A statement put out by the G&MWU following yesterday's meeting claims that in Heath's December 15 directive, the gov-

ernment had 'gone outside its own law to create a situation unprecedented in the history of industrial relations'.

Freedom to negotiate must be 'jealously guarded', the statement said.

● The gasworkers at East Green- wick and Croydon, who have been banning overtime and working to rule for two weeks unofficially, meet tonight. A G&MWU official will attend the meeting, John Edmonds said yesterday. 'He will have a great deal to say to them.'

This gave rise to speculation that the union may attempt to force a return to work until the date for official action.

Camden to implement rent Act!

CAMDEN Labourites have betrayed thousands of council tenants by voting to implement the hated 'fair rents' Act.

After months of fighting 'talk', the Labour group voted 35-17 on Monday night to put up the rents of over 20,000 workers.

The decision — backed by Labour leader Mrs Millie Miller — will be put into effect at a council meeting tonight. Some Labour members yesterday said they would still vote against implementation. (See page 3 for story written before news broke.)

BUILDING workers return to work today at the GLC Harold Hill site near Romford, Essex, after a four day official strike. They return following a management assurance that 'six sub-contract men brought on the site on January 1 are bona fide tradesmen and union members and will pay union dues back-dated to January 1.

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.

British investment drops...

BY A WORKERS PRESS CORRESPONDENT

NEW EVIDENCE of Britain's deteriorating economic performance has been released by a government department which says industrial investment will not pick up in 1973.

The Department of Trade and Industry forecast a small increase in capital expenditure of between 2 and 5 per cent over the next 12 months with the prospect of a revival in 1974.

But the Confederation of British Industry has warned that if

there is no bigger recovery in 1973, the chances of growth could fizzle out entirely.

The DTI figures come on top of ones that show that there was a drop of real investment of 10 per cent last year.

The level is so low now that even if there was a sharp recovery in 1974, it would only bring the rate of capital expenditure up to the rate during 1970.

Figures on spending show that the consumer boom is tail-

ing off but that it is still fed largely by credit.

The gloomy figures for investment coupled with the crisis on the balance of payments are dramatic reminders of the insoluble problems that face the Tory government and its capitalist backers.

The limited reflation undertaken by the government has produced little or no increase in real investment, but has succeeded in drying our trade performance deeper into the red as the extra spending power sucks in imports.

...US wholesale prices rise

BY A WORKERS PRESS CORRESPONDENT

0.6 per cent in November.

The rise in wholesale prices is normally followed a month or so later with an increase in the consumer price index, which hits the housewife's purse.

Biggest increase was in the cost of farm products, which rose 6.8 per cent, the biggest gain since March 1947.

Food prices have risen dramatically in recent months and have resulted in calls for controls on them.

At present, they are not controlled at the farm level as they were exempted from the wage and price controls imposed by President Nixon in November 1971.

Meat, fresh fruit, eggs, poultry and dairy products all rose during the month.

Since Nixon imposed the controls, the wholesale sale price index has risen by 6.1 per cent.

The Labour Department said that of the 15 major commodity groups covered in the wholesale price index, 13 advanced, only one declined and one showed no change.

Workers Press MONTHLY APPEAL FUND

JANUARY FUND NOW £185.79

THE FUND has begun to grow, but not yet fast enough. Let's make a very special effort this month and try and raise well over our £1,750 target.

Certainly we need to. All our overhead costs are going up. Newsprint has already increased in price by about 9 per cent so far this year. And this is just the beginning. Other costs will start to escalate.

We are determined, however, not to increase the price of Workers Press. Instead, help us with a campaign to expand our sales and raise our monthly fund. We know you will do it. Collect extra amounts wherever possible. Take collections at work and among your local readers. Raise all you can and post immediately to:

Workers Press January Appeal Fund
186a Clapham High Street,
London, SW4 7UG

Builders call for Council of Action

THE LEEDS building workers' branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union has asked for steps to be taken to build a local Council of Action.

The 9/79 branch passed the following resolution:

'The branch calls on the Trades Council to call a meeting for the purpose of forming a council which is prepared to fight against this Tory government and the actions it is taking against the working class.

'The million unemployed, the wage freeze and rising prices can only be aggravated by entry into the Common Market.

'A Council of Action representing all sections of the working class must be formed including trade unions, tenants' associations and all political movements in the working class.'

Tyre men meet

ANOTHER attempt is being made to end a strike which has halted production at the Good-year tyre factory in Wolverhampton.

Local officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union have decided to call a meeting of the 250 strikers today to report on the latest talks with the management. The men were not due to meet again until Friday.

More than 3,500 Goodyear employees have been laid off.

The strike of millroom workers began last Thursday in protest against the company's refusal to discuss pay differentials because of the freeze.