



# MARCH AGAINST THE THATCHER GOVERNMENT

## But we make Steel ...!

AS THE STEEL strike enters its eleventh week the press has been keeping very quiet about the effect of the strike on British industry. With capitalists falling over each other in their haste to get steel through to the customers - at a price - it appears that Britain is to be swamped with steel when the strike ends.

Suddenly the idea that there is too much steel is ditched and Britain is to become a vast magnet. Already estimates show that steel imports will reach 30 per cent this year as against last year's 20 per cent. And that is only an estimate because firms like the Dutch Hoogovens will dump 100,000 tonnes in Britain as soon as possible.

In Belgium Cockerill has filled its warehouses in Ostend and Antwerp. The French firm Sacilor-Sollac has thousands of tonnes of tinplate on the Dunkirk docks.

The delivery quotas supposed to be part of the Common Market Davignon plan are to be swept aside in a desperate attempt to swamp Britain with steel and help Thatcher kill off British Steel.

Steelworkers in Britain have not been slow in developing their own plans in this battle. Last week all 13 unions representing steel workers formed an Iron and Steel Coordinating Committee. The TUC has set up a fund to aid the steelworkers and more than £50,000 has already been raised from donations such as £20,000 from the National Union of Railwaymen.

The Coordinating Committee has issued instructions to strengthen picketing, to extend picketing on firms using steel and for members not to cross these picket lines.

At the TUC demonstration against Thatcher on Sunday the steelworkers naturally took a prominent part and there can be no doubt that the only force in the world capable of saving British Steel has now taken up the responsibility to do just that.



Central London closed as thousands of workers take to the streets.

Photo The Worker.

## Welcome Zimbabwe-The Birth of a Nation

"THE PEOPLE of Zimbabwe have placed Imperialism in a real quandary. The tricks they were about to play to keep us out of Government are of no use now".

This was the comment of the election organiser of ZANU(PF) on hearing the results of the elections in Zimbabwe, in which the Party of the Guerrilla leader, Robert Mugabe, won an overall majority of 57 seats in the New Zimbabwe parliament.

The victory is all the more impressive when we consider

that almost 100 per cent of the electorate voted. More impressive still when considering the wheelings and dealings of the Imperialist powers and capitalists like Oppenheimer, to bring about the election of their stooge Muzorewa - who only got three seats! Yet the Muzorewa election campaign spent more money than all the other parties put together. There were jamborees and carnivals with free food given in the name of his party. All to no avail.

The campaign efforts of

ZANU(PF) on the other hand were sabotaged at every turn - transport and printing facilities made difficult to obtain, not to mention the intimidation, indeed attempts on the lives of ZANU candidates.

The people of Zimbabwe were neither to be bought off, nor in any way deterred from their course of beating British imperialism at its own game and using the vote they had fought for to vote out the enemies of genuine independence. As Mugabe pointed out, the intimidation from which

his party suffered most "had not savaged the minds of voters".

The problems facing the people of Zimbabwe and their new Government are tremendous and British imperialism will certainly intervene and interfere in any way possible; but a people who have fought a successful liberation war and have won a political victory in the elections which that war brought about will bring the same unity and determination to the tasks of building a prosperous and just Zimbabwe.

# The Week

## Historic Notes

### Adam Smith and the economics of destruction

THE National Heart Research Fund has dropped a bombshell on the medical world with its latest proposal. It has launched a £250,000 appeal for heart transplants, but this is not unusual in these days of our fund-starved National Health Service. No, what has stunned the NHS is that Mrs. Thatcher would be the recipient.

ALL OVER the country, following cut after cut, the cry has gone up 'have a heart Thatcher'. But this has met with little response from Whitehall's Wonder Woman, so called because of phenomenal leaps over logic. Claimed to have the largest chest of drawers in Downing Street, Wonder Woman, it is agreed, has something vital missing. Informed opinion is divided on this. Some say her head rules her heart, others claim her heart rules her head. If you think about it neither proposition seems likely.

THIS is now the dilemma confronting British surgeons. How do they give Thatcher a new heart? Quite apart from the necessary advance in medical expertise, difficult with the closure of medical schools, there is the problem of the right tool for the job.

TO THIS end surgeons see no alternative but to take a risk. A hard heart is very difficult to remove. London's leading surgeon, Mr. Mick McCavity (15 stone) will be given a leg up on to the operating table. Using a pneumatic drill McCavity is convinced that 'the big P' will do the trick on Thatcher. McCavity originally had in mind 'a stick of gel between the ribs' but was talked out of it. The pneumatic drill will be less messy.

A revolutionary new anaesthetic, 2000 volts, will start the operation. But many are sceptical about the success of the question. Does it go far enough? Some say British surgeons should attempt history, combining a heart and brain transplant. Others say that it is too adventurous. Shouldn't surgeons simply amputate the finger on the nuclear button? In any event why spend all that money on Thatcher, paid over £400 per week, when others are on waiting lists?

A doctor writes:

"The Thatcher case is a real challenge for medicine. If she had the space in her chest that she has in her head there would be no problem."

There is a precedent for the attempted brain transplant. Many hundreds of years ago, in the English Revolution, Charles I was thought by many to have 'a few fittings on the top storey' badly in need of rearrangement. But surgery was young and rather crude. No sooner was his head cut off than surgeons realised it could not be put back. This setback for surgery was greeted with wild acclaim.

THOUGH it appears to everyone that Britain is now being governed by the most illiterate and unthinking persons that any state could be cursed with, these statesmen claim that their acts are based on sound economic theory. The master they seem to be following is the Nobel prize-winner, Friedman, though he feels that the Tory Government is not following his precepts in all their splendid simplicity! So we have on television a programme chaired by the ex Labour Prime Minister's son-in-law, where the American -from-Europe may display his wares in the market place, and Friedman goes to Downing Street to confer with Thatcher.

To date he has extolled the successes of Hongkong and South Korea and has made great play with the name of Adam Smith. We were given the spectacle of the cameras in Smith's University, unnamed. Did the University - was it Glasgow or Edinburgh? - not wish to be named and if so why? It would be worth our while

to look at the work of Adam Smith and other "Classical Economists" to see exactly which thimble holds the pea. For the moment, let us put on one side Karl Marx. He has always been as great an embarrassment to economists as gunpowder was to castlebuilders.

The great era of Classical Economics was 1800-1850; it is sometimes claimed that it began with the publication of Smith's "Wealth of Nations" in 1776. Adam Smith lectured in Edinburgh in 1748 and was a Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy in Glasgow from 1751 to 1764, and for 160 years was recognised as the most influential economic writer. Through such bodies as the Political Economy Club, the British Association and the Royal Society, Smith influenced the thinking of many in positions of power.

They were the men for the period, a time of change as population and national income exploded; the population rose from 6 million in 1700 to 22.7 million in 1871. National Income

rose from £50 million in 1700 to £916 million in 1871. Nevertheless real wages did not start to rise until 1800. This was the period of expansion in manufacturing, cotton, railways and in agriculture. Smith's underlying theory was of "harmony", that a benevolent order was to be found in the interaction of phenomena, not quite 'god in the machine', but coming from a good Scot, of course, moral. It was the "pursuit of self-interest". Smith wrote "It is not from the benevolence of the brewer or the baker that we expect our dinner but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love and never talk to them of our necessities but of their advantages". Competition provided the framework and it worked by means of the price system.

However, Friedman and the Tories have discarded parts of Smith's thinking, who believed that competition eliminated excess

profits and allocated capital and its resources when the technology, processes, tastes and total resources are all in a state of flux. He also believed competition itself to be part of the growth process, ordering the markets, increasing productivity and leading to further capitalist accumulation. Adam Smith always insisted on the framework of justice, sympathy in each man for the feelings of others, leading to private rules of behaviour and the formulation of positive laws of justice. He accepted the conflict between masters and workmen over levels of wages if masters combined to depress wages and he recognised the conflict of individual interests and social interests.

"The Wealth of Nations" is worth studying if only to see how our new tyrants through their economist, Friedman, now using British people as experimental rats, demean and degrade Adam Smith, using the dress and throwing away the gold.

## Profits from war threats in Japan

JAPAN'S equivalent of the CBI, the Keidandren, was quick to form its Defence Production Committee. Of course, the name is, like that of the Civil Defence Force of the Japanese armed forces, an excuse for making more machinery to kill people and more profit for the capitalists.

Japan officially has no army as we know it. This is part of the American dictated constitution that was introduced after the Second World War. Yet it has a large airforce and navy, and tanks with military personnel are strategically placed near areas of Japan where 'insurrection' is likely to break out. This is particularly true since the Korean War brought home to the American capitalists the contradictions of the industrialised nations. For the American government, 'world defence', and the concept of a western bloc and an eastern one, are ways of externalising exploitation which begins at home with the extraction of profit.

The Keidandren, directly representing the manufacturers rather than the indirect mish-mash of corruption that characterises the ruling Conservative Party (LDP), quickly points out the profitability of war threats.

Mounting tension in the world are useful for reducing opposition to an arms build-up. The primary aim is to produce precision-guided missiles. Needless to say, in a country which has known all the horrors of the nuclear bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the reaction is strongly against the plan. Ironically, the American Senate is at times hostile. Capitalism is divided in its own camp because the Japanese might corner the industry.

Laser weaponry has now been developed to back up the more conventional equipment that Japan used to sell to America in the Vietnam War days. While the logic of governments such as the Thatcher regime, or China's collaborators, or Carter's henchmen, seems to be 'save the world but kill the people if you have to', the arms manufacturers, pillars of world capitalism, trade increasing danger for higher profit.



Guerrilla fighters in Zimbabwe at drill. The people of Zimbabwe have defeated the reactionary Rhodesian and British forces and their lackey, Muzorewa, through armed struggle and the ballot box. The true feelings of the Zimbabwean people were shown by their unity behind Mugabe despite deliberate lies, half truths and violence against his organisation

## IMF pushes Jamaica to bankruptcy

THE SMALL Caribbean island of Jamaica which every advertisement proclaims to be man's Heaven on Earth is likely to be completely bankrupt by April or May this year.

Far from enjoying a luxury life of palm trees and silver beaches, the people of Jamaica are struggling against a soaring rate of inflation. Housing alone rises by 3 per cent per month, and food, drink and fuels all by 1.5 per cent per month. The rate for 1979 was more than double that for 1978.

The answer, so it seems to the politicians, is an increased loan from the all powerful IMF. Already the island is in debt to the extent of J\$620m, and have just negotiated a further J\$320m. Now it appears Jamaica must borrow more in order to survive the repayments on this huge sum or 'go under'.

The country is totally at the mercy of the IMF. There is now an acute shortage of foreign

currency due to quotas which must be paid into the IMF fund pool. Manufacturing concerns have found that no further credit is being made available to them because of the substantial amounts now owed to overseas suppliers.

The debts are now being called in and in the past few weeks 33 companies employing some 1245 workers closed down, and a further 90 companies see their doors closing in the near future, putting a further 7467 workers out of a job. Next month 82 companies with 7221 employees will shut down and 30 more employing 2315 cannot go on beyond May.

A total figure of 75,000 additional unemployed will result from these closures as other areas become affected. The existing unemployment rate of 25 per cent will seem a paltry figure compared to what the future holds.

Jamaica has been exploited

by every capitalist country in the world. Slowly it is realising that foreign tourism will not solve its problems of illiteracy and unemployment. The ruling Peoples National Party have done something to help the people of Jamaica with new schools, hospitals and factories. Now, however, their promises of an autumn General Election solving 'all the country's problems must ring a hollow bell in the people's hearts. We in Britain sympathise with them.



## Editorial

In organised resistance to Thatcher's frantic measures, millions of British workers are on the march in a demonstration of militant solidarity that is shaking capitalism in the very country of its origin.

In southern Africa white racist rule has been swept out of one of its last strongholds by the people of Zimbabwe who, having won by arms the right to decide their future, have voted massively for independence and socialism.

The world proletariat movement has suffered set-backs such as the defection from socialism of China. But we are still entitled to say with Mao, who, disowned by the capitalist-roversers of his own country, belongs to the international working class, that 'revolution is the main trend'. The absolute decline of capitalism is the world-wide rise of the working class, progressively armed with Marxism and prepared to build socialism on the ruins of an exploitative system.

There could be no better example of the complementary attacks on capitalism and imperialism than the revolutionising of class struggle in Britain and the overthrow of imperialist rule in Zimbabwe.

'Workers of the world unite' is changing from an aspiration in the hearts of oppressed working people into a shattering reality for capitalist predators the world over.

## Grim OECD Report

THE OECD report on Britain's economic future makes grim reading - ever-rising unemployment, ever-declining production. The Treasury forecast for the next two years - fall in output of 3½ per cent in 1980 with a further drop in 1981 - is so gloomy that the Government is considering no longer publishing it.

Looked at in terms of any attempt to increase production and raise the standard of living of people in Britain, Thatcher's policies seem quite mad - hiring 1000 social security "police" to hunt down "scroungers" who draw social benefits without working, while throwing hundreds of thousands more who want to work on relief; using monetarist techniques to bring down inflation, which she manages at the same time to double in six months; pegging wage rises to increases in productivity and then closing down section after section of industry altogether. But rising production and a higher standard of living for British people is not what she's really about.

Just as "Keynesianism" is the name of the attempt to save capitalism from itself by mitigating some of its harsher and more destructive consequences, so "Monetarism" is the name for capitalism's no longer being able to afford such modifications. The monetarist argument in the mouths of Hayek and others has always been around, but it took capitalism's absolute decline to make it seem like just the right medicine for an ailing patient. Health, education and the social services have to go back on the market again, to be supplied to those who can pay for them and the spectre of unemployment will hound workers into accepting wage cuts so that they won't be among those who can pay for health and education.

Monetarism needs a brutal, unimaginative, inhumane person to apply it and in Thatcher it has found its natural exponent. Socialism needs a strong, united, humane and caring working class and that is just what Thatcher is running headlong into.



Another view of the demolished Connaught Hospital. Destruction and waste of all that we hold dear is Thatcher's aim. Photo: The Worker.

## Waltham Forest, Wasteland in NE London

WALTHAM FOREST Council have inadvertently helped to finance a documentary film made recently which portrays the area as an industrial wasteland. They are very displeased at the result.

The film director has used the socialist principles of the Borough's most famous son, William Morris, to comment on the run-down, closure and destruction which can be seen throughout the Borough.

Indeed, it is an embryonic wasteland in terms of industry and public services. The largest factory in the area, Lesneys, which manufactures Matchbox toys, is due to close soon, and it is to be followed by other firms such as Caribonum, Raelbrook, Russell to name but a few. Some make the pretence of moving to Peterborough as their excuse, but how long will the already much-reduced companies last when they get there?

We have already seen the closures of many small clothing manufacturers and the women in the few that remain are doing their utmost to combat the shut-downs in their firms.

The Connaught and Chingford Hospitals have already gone, and in the case of the Connaught the building is in the process of being razed to the ground. The Council reassure us that the land will be used to build flatlets for the elderly, but when Mr. Heseltine turned down the Borough's request for £20m from the Housing Investment Programme we can see this housing plan disappear out of the window.

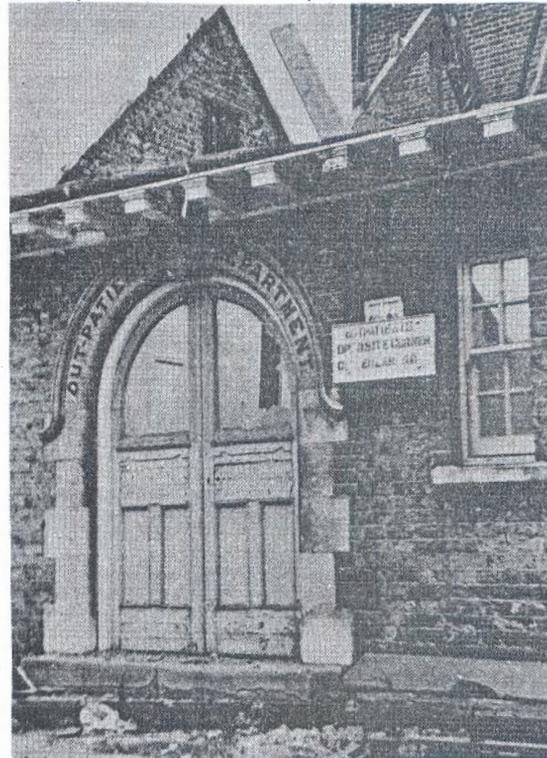
With it go many other plans for building and improvement amongst the area's council housing. In fact the Borough is spending over £23m less this year than last, and

that's excluding inflation.

The education service is similarly affected as we see North Eastern London Polytechnic fighting to save in the region of 240 threatened jobs, and the NUT trying to fight the loss of some 43 teachers in the primary and secondary sectors. The future of

the Waltham Forest annex to the Polytechnic is now in doubt.

As rates soar this year from 84p in the £ to well over £1.20 the people of the Borough face a future blighted by, as William Morris himself said, "short-sighted reckless brutality and squalor".



The entrance to the Outpatient Department of the Connaught Hospital - as the demolition men move in, the once thriving hospital which served the local community is reduced to an ugly shell. Photo: The Worker

## No law will take away our union right

IN 1974 the Labour Government was keen to take the opportunity to use legislation to weaken trade union solidarity and isolate trade unionists. The result was the Employment Protection Act with a serious of clauses relating to 'fair' and 'unfair' dismissal, with an outside panel acting as an 'impartial' referee - the Industrial Tribunal. The Tories are taking steps in their Employment Bill to take these measures further.

For a start they want an industrial tribunal to take account of an employer's size and resources in deciding the fairness or unfairness of a dismissal - a plea of financial difficulties will bring the desired result. It is noticeable how often the threat of poverty and loss of jobs is being used at the present time as a tactic to try to dissuade workers from taking action against their employers.

The Tories are also removing the onus on employers to show

that they acted fairly in dismissing a worker. The onus is now on the employee who will prepare his case and persuade fellow workers to appear as witnesses.

The Tories propose to abolish the minimum entitlement to compensation for unfair dismissal (2 weeks pay) and provide discretion for tribunals to reduce compensation if an offer of reinstatement is refused, or because of the employee's conduct. In this way an employer victimising or dismissing an employee would not be liable to pay compensation.

A further clause (9) enables an employer to claim that a trade union induced him to dismiss the employee - for example by calling or threatening industrial action because the person concerned was not a member of a trade union.

This individual shop stewards seeking to enforce 100 per cent membership arrangements will be vulnerable to a tribunal ruling that they should compensation to dismissed non-unionists. This amounts to a very serious prospect for lay officials in particular, as well for affiliated unions generally.

At least the Tories' proposal are a salutary reminder to trade unionists never to allow law to take decisions that should be taken by workers themselves. As always we have to use our strength to protect ourselves, and in doing so we maintain our dignity instead of pleading before judicial and pseudo-judicial bodies that we have been unfairly treated.

### When the truth hurts

CAPITALISM'S unbiased attitude to scientific truth was revealed in a recent article in the New York Times. When working for the US Giant, Dow Chemicals, Dr. Jack Kilian developed a technique for spotting chromosome damage, a possible precursor of cancer, in workers exposed to hazardous chemicals. Dr. Kilian and Dr. Picciano, another scientist working with him, discovered that Dow workers exposed to vinyl chloride (a cancer causing chemical) had no greater chromosome damage than normal. The company allowed them to publish the results.

However when the same two researchers discovered that workers exposed to benzene and epichlorohydrin showed chromosome damage the company attempted to hush the results up. The two researchers were refused permission to publish the results, to tell government agencies, or even to tell the workers involved of the results.

### Fire prevention research to be cut

CHALK UP another lopsided victory for Thatcher and Co. in the crusade against wasted spending - the Fire Research Station at Borehamwood is having its budget cut back.

This station is at the centre of research into fire resistance of building materials and construction methods. Its work into the properties of fire spread in materials highlights the dangers and need for control of their application. A case in point is the now infamous polyurethane foam, which the research station, years ago, showed to be highly dangerous when involved in fire, giving off cyanide and other toxic fumes, and effecting intense heat build up.

The Station cost only a million pounds a year to run and in turn saves innumerable millions in fire losses and lives, yet this Government's incessant meddling would see us lose the services of another vital national institution.

# Scottish musicians fight cuts

THERE HAS been massive and bitter opposition from musicians and anyone concerned with saving our cultural heritage, to the Government inspired cuts which aim to extinguish five of its skilled, dedicated and painstakingly built-up orchestras.

In Glasgow, the Musician's Union Scottish District Office has been swamped with offers of support and demands for action. Stickers, leaflets and posters were immediately printed and on Monday over 200 students from the Academy of Music held a "play-in" demonstration in the centre of Glasgow.

The threatened BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra with a tradition going back 45 years, received an oration of support at its first concert after the announcement of the cuts. Composers, too, have joined the battle.

One, whose works have been performed by the orchestra, told *The Worker* about its role in commissioning and playing Scottish composers' music - giving them a national audience via Radio 3.

"Without the SSO our main outlet will have gone. It has been one of the most daring orchestras. We have launched a campaign in the national press and are closely in touch with our colleagues in the Musicians' Union, of which many of us are members. We are willing to join them, Equity, the Association of Broadcasting Staff and other unions in a

boycott of the BBC. "That amounts to about 100,000 people - quite a force, including those who copy music for orchestra, arrangers, and those who do film music as well as composers and performers."

A letter drawn up and signed by 21 per cent of Scotland's composers stated:

"The BBC's proposals to axe its Scottish Symphony Orchestra will be greeted with horror by many individuals and organisations. The destruction of the livelihood of many hard-working musicians and the closing off of a relatively inexpensive and accessible source of musical culture will bring widespread condemnation of those government-inspired cuts.

In addition we would point out the serious effect that this step will have on composers in Scotland and in particular on the development of younger composers. The BBC SSO

has an outstanding record in terms of first performances of new works by living Scottish composers and many established composers owe a debt of gratitude to the dedication and skill of these musicians. This volume of work cannot be carried out by any other musical organisation in existence in Scotland today - their priorities and commitments dictate that new music is a small part of their repertoire.

The problem is not only a personal one for composers themselves. The question is: are we content to have a "musician" culture, restricting itself to the achievements of the past or do we need a living culture which regenerates itself by providing an opportunity for the artist to develop? The BBC SSO is a vital factor in the development of the Scottish composers of today. It cannot be allowed to die and we pledge our support to any action to support it."

**RESOLUTION:** for consideration at the inaugural meeting of the Scottish Society of Composers held on 1st March 1980.

"From this inaugural meeting of the Scottish Society of Composers we extend a pledge of support to the Musician's Union and other organisations and individuals fighting to preserve the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in the face of cuts which would extinguish this essential part of our Scottish musical life. The BBC SSO has an outstanding record in terms of first performances of new works by living Scottish composers and many established composers owe a debt of gratitude to the dedication and skill of its musicians. We will not accede passively to what would be a major step towards cultural decline in Scotland, the wastage of musical skills and the closing of a very important outlet for creativity.

(PASSED UNANIMOUSLY)

## THE STATE OF BRITAIN/Education

### News round-up

ONCE AGAIN the Executive of the NUT has led the way in the fight for an increase in salaries. This year, as last, they have taken the lead by announcing a claim for at least 20 per cent across the board.

In pressing the claim the Executive will be waiting for local associations to take the initiative. With local support and action, the union will be able to unite behind a salaries claim that they deserve, they can fight for and they can win.

PICKETS were out in force on February 28th at the North East London Polytechnic as lecturers went on strike to fight massive proposed cuts in courses and staff.

The immediate result for NELP has been a cut of £2.4 million from the pool and a further £½ million from local authority support, threatening redundancy for 140 teaching staff and up to 100 other staff.

IT had to come. The Chairman of the West Midland police committee has demanded that 'candy floss' items like education and social services be cut to make more money available for the police. He said "for years the emotional services such as education, social services and housing have been running away with millions." His scheme would benefit Special Branch and Special Patrol Group.

## FIGHTING THEIR LAWS

A WEEK prior to the TUC demonstration against the Employment Bill, the issues involved were discussed at a public meeting entitled "Our Trade Unions or Their Law" held by the CPB(M-L) at Conway Hall.

Historically, use of the law against the working class was no novelty. At the dawn of the capitalist era Parliament had passed the Enclosures Acts, which had actually been instrumental in the brutal birth of the working class by pushing the peasantry off the land into the towns. From there on new laws had been written and old ones revived, to prevent workers uniting against their exploitation.

In 1799 the government passed the Combination Acts, in fear of the growing union among workers, while the ancient Unlawful Oaths Act was used to indict the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Similarly today, laws already exist or special powers can be invoked to oppose Trade Unions. For example the Public Order Act (1936) can be used against pickets and the more recent Criminal Trespass Act against factory occupations.

The present Employment Bill should not therefore be seen as something new, but as part of the general onslaught against the working class on all fronts. With a host of unpopular legislation still to go through Parliament - a Housing Bill, a Health Bill, an Education Bill, a Transport Bill all attempting to create the antithesis of what their titles would suggest - the

Tory Government is arming itself against the opposition expected to these and other policies. The amount of law is therefore in direct proportion to the strength of the working class - the stronger the class the more law the ruling class feels it needs to keep it in its place.

### Outlawing Solidarity

However, as a speaker from the floor pointed out, we cannot always assume that strength, as strength was only manifested by winning and we have to keep on winning. The defeat of the Employment Bill will not guarantee that something even worse might follow. The whole question of what laws will be acceptable will only be resolved once the working class imposes its own law on the bourgeoisie.

Specifically, the attacks on trade unions encapsulated in this Bill were outlined. The attempt to impose ballots on the unions by the government was a threat to union independence as it would usurp the decision making machinery of the union. Clause 14 would abolish the civil right to picket and lay pickets open to claims of damages, and to prosecution by the police as it would limit the right to picket to the place of work of the pickets concerned. Thus a Ford worker from one plant could not picket another Ford plant. Furthermore, sympathetic action, the solidarity of the class would be outlawed.

## Fleet Street on ZANU(PF) victory in Zimbabwe

### Media's somersault

ROBERT MUGABE'S election victory in Zimbabwe gave the British Press an extraordinary problem.

How, after years of distortion, deception and double-speak, could Mugabe's triumph be presented to newspaper readers?

The simple answer is that, overnight, the Press turned a somersault

A "dangerous Marxist" and "bloody terrorist" became, instead, a "realist" and a "misunderstood man."

The Times, with a condescension reaching far back into Britain's imperial past, thought "Mr Mugabe a clever and well-informed man."

But it was left to the Daily Mail's senior diplomatic correspondent to bring the whole sordid turn-around into full view. He wrote: "The world knows the myths that have made Mugabe an ogre. Now let's look at the man behind them... a man with undeniable magic... and the whites would be well-advised not to jump to conclusions about him."

Is the fact that we are now suddenly presented with a new "truth" simply an example of investigative journalism, in which a diverse group of individual reporters collectively "reveal" something previously hidden from them, in spite of years of painstaking research?

Of course not. This is one of those rare, but important, cases in which the speed and surprise of an event -

surprising, that is, for British capital and its fawning acolytes - revealed a moment of ideological panic.

On top of all that Press humbug, the Daily Telegraph couldn't resist a stab even at the way the Zimbabwe people voted.

This newspaper found it hard to understand the election result "without seeing into the African mind and knowing really what frightens it... Is it that when they vote, many Africans are not so much making a choice or expressing a preference as making a prediction about who will come out on top?"

Who needs the National Front when racism of this sort is propounded by a national newspaper? If you know nothing about Zimbabwe then you must be reading the newspapers.

Apparently the Rhodesian press was much the same - paranoiac, hateful, distorted, going so far as a fake edition of 'Moto' which denounced Mugabe and Zanu(PF). Zimbabweans took hardly any notice of such hateful propaganda. Following years of guerrilla war for the freedom of Zimbabwe, the election result had a poetic justice.

For years, the freedom fighters of Zimbabwe were tagged as murderers who had no real support in their country.

The leaders were branded with that worst of all names - Marxists.

## Bookshops

- Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortress Road, London NW5
- Brighton Workers Bookshop 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton
- Clarion Books 5 The Precinct, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex
- Main Trend Books 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol
- Northern Star Bookshop 18A Leighton Street, Leeds
- Basildon Bookstall Tues, Fri, Sat Marketplace
- Hull Bookstall Old Town Market, Saturdays
- Liverpool Bookstall every Thursday Liverpool University

## Public Meetings

### LONDON

- Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, Tufnell Park, NW5 at 7.30pm.
- Friday March 14th 1980 "The Economics of Destruction"
- Friday March 21st 1980 "Children's Inheritance is not for Sale"

### KENT

- The Rose Inn, Delce Road, Rochester, Kent. at 7.30pm. Thursday March 20th 1980 "Smash Thatcher Stop the Drive to War"
- The Carpenters Arms, St. Peter's Lane, Nr. Westgate Canterbury, Kent. at 7.30pm. Thursday March 27th 1980 "Smash Thatcher Stop the Drive to War"

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