



IT'S AS YOU WERE...

They can't put class struggle to bed

Times Management panics - European workers united

THE DECISION by journalists at the Times to black material for the international weekly edition of the paper has further deepened the morass into which The Times management has sunk itself. Perhaps now, after a five-month lockout, the owners will have to begin sensible negotiations.

It looked so easy at first; all they had to do, they thought, was to issue an ultimatum saying that all would be sacked unless there was unconditional surrender on their terms. A few weeks on the Gray's Inn Road cobblestones, at most, would be enough to bring an organised workforce to heel. It was thought that the myriad unions at The Times would disintegrate in internal bickering; that all would turn against the National Graphical Association; that large chunks of a defeated workforce would be sacked; and that the remnants would perforce have to allow themselves to be dictated to. This was, and still is, the dream of the bosses at The Times. And it is the dream too of every capitalist in Fleet Street. The New Technology (quite old actually), which goes away with all the established hot metal processes, is their great hope. The aim is not to increase efficiency,

but to bring in an entirely new process which cuts across traditional job demarcations and opens up the way to destroy union organisation, especially that of the NGA.

At first things looked good for the employers. The journalists, in a shameful, even if close, vote, decided to work for the international issue. A non-union, right-wing, printer with an immigrant workforce was selected in that supposed bastion of respectability, Germany. The seeds of division seemed to be thrusting up new shoots.

Then, in two days, all the employers' hopes were dashed. The Industrie Gewerkschaft Druck, the West German print union, decided to act. In the true spirit of proletarian internationalism, they announced that they would attempt to stop the printing at TER Drückerei near Frankfurt, and mounted a picket - even though they had no membership in the plant.

This was no mob of "outsiders". The German police said that many pickets were "well known" to them -- but then the German police start files on everyone at the moment they are conceived. The Wiesbaden police computer has 10 million people on file. They were workers,

German and Turkish, who were determined that no one would say Germany was a refuge for scabs.

On Sunday, April 29, after three days of picketing, the printing was called off. Management claims to have printed "a few thousand" are merely pathetic bravado: their plans are in ruins. They have discovered that the world of workers is everywhere and that it cannot be escaped merely by crossing the Channel. Perhaps if the Times comes back we shall read less fine editorials extolling the virtues of industrial relations in Germany.

The next blow to their hopes came the following day, the eve of May Day. The Times chapel of the National Union of Journalists met to discuss whether to continue working on the scab edition. Possibly no chapel meeting has ever been so addressed as was this one. Two union presidents (NGA and NUJ) and one General Secretary spoke to them. So too, disastrously for him, did the editor of The Times. In the end, honour was restored and the journalists decided to black.

Out of confusion, at last, has come clarity and unity. Increasingly, voices are being raised that the management has lost the right to manage.



NGA pickets outside The Times building (Photo: The Worker)

Some say, curiously, that other managements must be sought, that there should be "enlightened" owners at Gray's Inn Road. It is time, not just

at The Times to discard ideas of exchanging employers. In finality, there is only one answer to threats of sackings, all employers must be sacked.

Teachers withdraw goodwill 200,000 press sanctions against Govt.

HUNDREDS of thousands of teachers employed by Local Authorities across England and Wales are now engaged in action over pay. The main tactic is withdrawal of goodwill, the voluntary work of teachers on which so many schools depend for their proper functioning. It's guerrilla action, maximum effect for minimum effort. It's sanctions--confusion for the enemy, clarity for ourselves, all for no loss of pay.

In response to the call at the recent National Union of Teachers Conference, the NUT Executive has given the correct lead--mass action--and all must rally to the standard. By refusing to call off their action at the Government's request, and in fact stepping up their action at former Education Minister

Shirley Williams' interference the National Union of Teachers has set an example to all unions.

The major significance of this, not just for teachers but for all, is that the action is directed against the Government, Labour then, Tory now, and that they were not diverted from their task by an election.

In The Teacher, the weekly newspaper of the NUT, the General Secretary has written: "The employers had been prepared to improve their offer last week and it was the Government that had stopped that better offer." He accused the Government of "torpedoing" the pay talks at the eleventh hour just as unions and management were on the verge of a breakthrough.

The background is one of growing opposition to

Government interference in teachers' wage negotiations. It is not yet explicit opposition to Incomes Policy; but they have fought against Government-inspired intransigence in negotiations and later blatant interference. Clarity is growing. At the NUT Conference, the supreme authority of the union, it was resolved to call for the removal of the Government representative from the salary negotiating body.

The next stage if the Government remains obdurate is rolling selective strike action of a guerrilla nature, and in this call the Birmingham Association of the NUT has given a lead. Impasse must lead to escalation. Let the Government beware. Tory meddlers will get the same treatment as Labour.

Law vs. Liberty

THE REAL intent behind slogans like "freedom within the law" and "bring the trade unions within the law" have been hinted at by Lord Denning in his appeal judgement against the National Graphical Association recently.

The NGA had been blacking the advertisements of companies who insisted on continuing to advertise with the Nottingham Evening Post which has waged war against any sort of trade unionism - being also in dispute with the NUJ for sacking 27 journalists for being loyal union members.

The NGA's blacking of some advertisements, Denning decided, was "so contrary to the public interest that it had to be regarded as the employment of unlawful means." The NGA has had to pay up over £80,000 in costs.

The company, no doubt, is pleased. Its freedom to manage has been upheld by law. Its freedom to change work practices, introduce new machinery, reduce staffing levels, pay low wages, and sack any people who wish to have some say over the conditions of their working lives has been upheld. Its freedom to impose its arbitrary will and dictate terms to those who make its money has been upheld.

Denning was not content to leave his dubious defence of "public interest" at that. He went on: "The Press shall be free."

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THE COUP de grace to London's declining docks may be a motorway running right through what is left of them, if the Greater London Council has its way. The GLC's plan envisages the loss of 600 jobs, the demolition of 400 houses and a threat to the India and Millwall docks. Their fear of public protest is such that they are trying to avoid a public enquiry by putting a bill to Parliament. Such democracy.

ANOTHER VOICE for British troop withdrawal from northern Ireland is that of the Deputy Prime Minister of Eire. Britain's involvement, he said, was 'tragical for Ireland and disastrous for Britain'.

THE UNION of Post Office workers has decisively rejected a 12 per cent pay rise by a six to one majority of 170,000 to 30,000. So much for the idea that secret ballots, so pernicious and beloved by the Tory Party, will be able to banish trade union militancy 'at a stroke'.

THE EEC plans virtually to double the butter surplus from the present 300,000 tonnes to between 500,000 and 600,000 tonnes. As usual, rather than make butter available to consumers, they want to reduce production, with new and more punitive taxes on farmers.

WHILE the electorate returned an openly anti-trade union majority to Parliament it rejected decisively the Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties, while National Front candidates generally polled lower than before. Yet the election shows that nascent fascism's roots are strongest in whichever capitalist government commands the state. How evident this is, now that a declared anti-union, pro-police, pro-capital punishment, pro-NATO, war and EEC administration has been elected, with at least some measure of approval from the British public.

THE GENOCIDE perpetrated by the government of China, not only on Vietnam but on the troops used as cannon-fodder, is revealed by their admission that 20,000 troops, a tenth of the 200,000 deployed were killed or wounded when ordered into suicidal assault against Vietnam. The true figures may be much higher. Yet the Chinese warmongers are exhibiting film of the debacle to foreign arms salesmen, so as to prove they need new weapons to carry on with such crimes.

RHODESIA's internal elections have been declared null and void by the UN Security Council. Although the old Labour government helped Smith by abstaining on the vote, Smith has welcomed the incoming Thatcher administration as even more sympathetic to his views.

"The Times" was founded on January 1st 1788 by John Walter, coal merchant. He turned to journalism after bankruptcy in a printmaking venture and was described by a contemporary as "as dishonest and worthless a man as I have ever seen." The chief source of the paper's income was "suppression fees", bribes paid by various interests, and not least the government, for selective coverage of news.

It was his son, John Walter II who, on taking over the editorship in 1802, began the tradition of more impartial collection of news for which "The Times" became famous. He maintained his own channel steamer, connected to a special train, ran his own pigeon service and courier post, and was one of the first to use the electric telegraph. "The Times" account of the battle of the Trafalgar was published days before the government, so prodigal of men's

lives in its mismanagement of the war against Napoleon, even knew. "The Times" based its success on the adoption of the most advanced printing systems of the period. The introduction of new machinery then, as now, always carried the danger of redundancy and worse conditions. It acquired its immense readership, because of its editors' devotion to a new ideal of factual reporting. Delane in 1841 took over the editorship from Barnes, champion of Electoral Reform in 1832, who gave the paper its nickname "The Thunderer". The philosophy of Delane, carrying on from his predecessor in an editorship which ended in 1877, was "to obtain the earliest and most exact intelligence of the events of the time and instantly by disclosing them make them the property of the nation.

John Walter III, who controlled the commercial side, had the business acumen not to interfere

with his great editors. Contrast the paper under Thomson! At one point, the print run effected first by Steam and then by the rotary press which "The Times" was the first to adopt, had a circulation greater than that of all its competitors together. In the days before the international news agencies were invented to filter the news on which today's press depends, "The Times" had its correspondents all over the world. Some individuals were so outstanding that they altered the course of history: like Russell, whose despatches from the Crimea turned the tide of public opinion against the cruel and incompetently waged war. Although its reporting was too little and too late, "The Times" stirred the nation's conscience over the Highland Clearances. Nevertheless, the paper was always a capitalist enterprise and as such passed in 1894 from the

Walters into the ownership of Northcliffe and then the Astors, whose pro-fascist connexions were notorious. Dawson was brought in to "extend the imperial side" He edited through the years of Britain's imperial decline and the depression, from 1923 to 1941. He used the paper as an instrument of personal policy. A friend of Baldwin, he saw himself as the "Secretary-General of the Establishment." The paper declined in circulation. It was seen more than ever earlier as a means to personal enrichment of its owners and since they were incapable of running it successfully for this end, they sold it in 1966, an ailing paper, to Thompson. The ideal of journalism pursued make facts the instant property of the nation, was always threatened by capitalism, and has now savagely, but we hope only temporarily, been suppressed by the paper's capitalist owners.

May Day round the world - Socialism is the aspiration

ALL OVER the world May 1st is acknowledged as Workers' Day. It is a time of celebration when organised workers emphasize the aspirations they have that will make the world a better place. "The cause of labour is the hope of the world" still applies, for who else is there? Whether workers live in bourgeois democracies or military dictatorships the aspirations voiced are the same - Socialism.

Turkey

All May Day demonstrations were banned throughout Turkey. The whole city of Istanbul, with

5 million people, was put under a 29 hour curfew. On May Day 1977, 34 workers were killed and scores wounded when snipers opened fire on the thousands of demonstrators in Istanbul. Such intimidation was set aside in 1978 when 150,000 marched despite threats and subsequent arrests.

This year tanks were on the streets and soldiers were everywhere (a bit like Ireland). Ecevit, previously supported by trade unions, is growing increasingly unpopular. 300 people have died so far this year as a result of the oppressive government policies.

Pakistan

Martial law operates in parts of Pakistan also. It has a military government led by Zia whose penchant is the amputation of hands and the hanging of political opponents.

On May Day in Rawalpindi, 23 newspaper workers were wounded when Islamic fanatics opened fire on a meeting where anti-Islamic statements were being delivered. Islamic laws in Pakistan are the weapons employed against the people of the country. Two hand-grenades were thrown at the large rally, and the attackers also used firearms

and bricks.

Lorry loads of armed police stood by and watched the attacks take place. They did not intervene. Like Britain's 'Cobra elite' the Special Patrol Group, their job is to protect fascists not stop them.

Spain

The workers of Spain were also on the streets this May Day. Their aspirations are international. Spanish workers need more than a new constitution, unemployment and inflation are both endemic to capitalism. 300,000 workers marched in each of the two main cities, Barcelona and Madrid. Across Spain there were 400 May Day demonstrations involving over 1 million people.

Portugal

The spiralling cost of living and increasing unemployment concerned workers in Portugal who demonstrated on May 1st. 50,000 trade unionists marched through Lisbon. Slogans and speeches made clear their opposition to NATO and the EEC. Capitalism needs the EEC workers don't.

Chile

In Santiago, the capital, police attacked a May Day demonstration against the fascist junta that rules that country. The Chilean people have refused to accept the dictatorship, despite imprisonment, torture and killings. Workers all over the world have blacked the handling of military equipment for Chile since the 1973 coup.

Quake - Albania rebuilds

THE BRITISH press has been full recently of reports of the earthquake that devastated part of Yugoslavia - yet hardly a word has been written about the country most affected by the disaster, Socialist Albania. Below we reproduce information carried by the Albanian Telegraphic Agency, which shows you do not have to grovel for foreign aid in order to rebuild a shattered community.

"The very powerful earthquake of April 15 which hit the districts of Shkodra and Lezha and some other regions of northern Albania caused heavy losses: 35 people were killed and 379 wounded, 10,255 houses and 439 economic and socio-cultural buildings were destroyed or damaged.

"The misfortune was grave, but it did not subdue the Albanian people, who in this case as always

enjoyed the immediate aid of the Party. Hardly a few hours had passed before the first medical assistance, food and other essentials needed to bring the situation back to normal went to the affected areas.

"Within two days every single homeless inhabitant in the damaged areas was found lodging. Work on the repair and construction of houses and projects began immediately, without neglecting for a single moment the production front for the fulfillment and over-fulfillment of the targets set in honour of the 35th anniversary of the liberation of the homeland and the triumph of the people's revolution.

"Meanwhile hundreds of specialists from different districts of the country have gone to the damaged zones to make their contribution to the elimination of

the consequences of the earthquake - architects and construction workers from the Institute of Design Study in Tirana are designing five new villages which will be built in place of the damaged ones. The Bacallek quarter of the city of Shkodra will be rebuilt anew, finer and stronger than before.

"By decision of the Council of Ministers, the new houses and villages as well as the other objects will be set up with state funds and the consequences of the earthquake will be liquidated completely by October 1, 1979. Such a thing can be realised only in a country where socialism is being built, only with a brave people like the Albanian people, who are led by their Party of Labour, loyal to marxism-leninism."

Serious issues on NALGO agenda

ON FRIDAY, May 11, delegates employed in local government will meet to decide the NALGO claim for salaries and conditions in that sector for this year. Branches all over the country are preparing by holding meetings to consider their attitude to the draft claim, which is for 15 per cent increase in salaries.

If NALGO is to assert its independence and move away from the corporatist policy embraced at the last National Conference of the union,

members must ensure that the divisive notions being voiced from some quarters that we should seek a flat rate increase or a mixture of flat rate and percentage be defeated. These are simply attempts to split 'low-paid' NALGO members (i.e. those on clerical grades) from other members. Members will also have to deal with the reactionary notion that our claim should be based not on our own collective strength, but on comparisons with other

groups of workers. Recent months have seen, many sections of the working class of whom it was said that they had no "muscle", take actions in pursuit of their claims. NALGO, the fourth largest union in Britain, organising workers from typists to computer operators, from telephonists to council rents staff, can no longer hide in timidity and bewail our lack of "muscle". We have the ability to hit the employer hard: what matters is that we

develop the confidence to use it. In deciding the final claim, delegates to the national meeting will set our union back on the right path, the path of independence and self-assertion. Whatever ways the new government will use to seek to shackle us, be it restraint, freeze or guidelines, or the continuing destruction of the services we provide, the capitalist class will find in our union a united face against their scheming.

1979 - Victory for Civil Servants

AS NATIONAL conferences approach and as the civil service unions catch their breath after the pay struggle, this is no bad time to look at what was achieved and discuss the way forward.

As with all battles over pay, rather more than pounds and pence was at stake - the fight had a lot to do with the dignity of the unions and the self-respect of the members. The heavy-handed tactics of the employer strengthened the determination to win but should also serve as a warning to expect harder battles in future.

What was gained, what must be consolidated? A new confidence and a new independence of the individual unions involved, especially the SCPS and CPSA. These two unions showed themselves to be willing and able to fight alone if necessary, shattering the "lowest

common denominator" approach on the National Staff Side (joint union negotiating committee). This was done in the proper way - setting the pace for the other less experienced unions and paving the way for a future unity in strength.

Just as the NSS will never be the same again the dispute has shown that Whitleyism in itself is designed only to hamper struggle. Councils of management and unions cannot legislate to prevent a class war which is endemic to the structure of capitalism - the peace they offer is the peace of surrender not compromise. It is time this understanding is translated into union policy.

The pay fight did have some elements of confusion,

of contradiction in it. Pay Research Unit comparability embodies the notion of a fair wage under capitalism. There is no such thing as a "just" or "fair" way to sell yourself for your working life to an employer who then misuses your creative power and takes the product of your work. Wage fights are important because they use our most basic freedom, to say "I will not work for you for that"; an assertion of class strength and loyalty; building towards the discipline and self-respect needed for a socialist society.

But there is another objection to PRU. It ponces off other workers who have done the fighting. It says they will always be left to break through, for us and then we will come along and get the same. At best

it is a cowardly reliance on others. It leads to the notion that public sector workers must always lag behind, always come off second best. At worst it embraces the whole notion of wage-fixing by a state appointed commission - we have learned how kindly the government is to its workers when it thinks it can get away with it.

We in the civil service can teach other workers a lot because we have seen in practice that comparability studies are worthless. If you have to fight to implement PRU you might just as well fight for the money anyway without the piece of paper.

Selective strikes paralysed key sectors causing maximum damage at minimum cost. This was guerrilla struggle proper-

ly conducted since the mass base, the solidarity between strikers and non-strikers was never lost. An impressive demonstration of this was contained in the mass walkouts in protest at the suspensions in Scotland - we should remember that example.

Looking forward to a policy of independence from wage-fixing by the PRU, of independence from wage-fixing by the government, and an end to the strength-sapping Whitley councils, it can be said that a good start has been made this year. The wider responsibilities of membership in the labour movement must also be faced - showing solidarity and respect for others in struggle, and going on from that to face the task recognised in the constitutions of the older industrial unions; to advance to socialism.

Reflections on Elections - We still have to fight

SOME labour leaders have been bemoaning the fact that with the election of a Tory Government the Concordat between the trade unions and the government was now dead.

In fact the Concordat never was alive. Hastily scraped together on the collapse of Callaghan's five per cent policy, it was used during the election to cloak the Labour Government's nakedness after the labour movement had torn the pay policy to shreds.

Before the election had even taken place the AUEW National Committee had reaffirmed in the strongest possible terms its adherence to collective bargaining which was a complete rejection of the Concordat.

It was always an unfortunate name, anyway, reminding us of the pact between Mussolini and the Vatican for uniting church and state in a fascist combine against the Italian working class.

The Concordat between the trade unions and the Labour Government may have been still born, but we must be in no doubt that the attempt to put us in some kind of wages strait jacket will go on. Capitalism can preserve its miserable life in no other way.

The Tories are saying that they will allow collective bargaining in the private sector, meaning that they will let wages be fixed by the fear of massive unemployment. But already they are talking about the cash limits that will be imposed in the public sector whatever rises in pay are suggested by comparability studies.

So for us in the labour movement its "no change". Lets get back to the job of fighting for wages knowing that in capitalism's decline the fight for wages must inevitably become the fight to overthrow capitalism.

Reforms do not last

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE, the policy making body of the Engineering Section of the AUEW, unanimously agreed at its annual meeting in Eastbourne to use "the full strength of the union" to see that employers paid more than lip-service to equal pay for 180,000 women members.

It was the women upholsterers at Fords whose strike made Barbara Castle come up with a bill to end unequal pay in five years time. That five year period ran out long ago in 1975 and the situation in respect to women's pay is still appalling.

The trouble with reforms which we workers are strong enough to wrest from the ruling class is that they can always be taken from us again. The fine health and education services we have made them provide for us they are now rapidly destroying.

Or if reforms are not snatched away from us they are perverted out of all recognition. We should be able to take pride in the fact that in Britain the struggle of the working class for equal rights and conditions for women led to the election of the first woman prime minister in one of the highly industrialised countries.

In fact those struggles have been crowned with the election of someone who stands for an attack on the liberties of organised workers, of non-Europeans, and of any others if their repression serves to increase profits or to divide the working class which comes to the same thing.

Nothing could show us more clearly the vicious meaninglessness for us of parliamentary elections and the impermanence of reforms. The only improvements we can ever rely on are those we bring about because we enjoy the state power to enforce them ourselves.

Labour Record

NOTHING COULD be quite so intensely boring, fascinating and at the same time so irrelevant as a General Election. Now we are invited to feel sorry for Callaghan and Healey, most of all for poor Shirley Williams. We are invited to forget the last five years the two million unemployed, the closed, empty hospitals, the 60,000 out-of-work teachers, the attacks on our unions, the destruction of our basic industries. Most of all, we are invited to forget the tide of struggle against capitalism which precipitated the election.

Ruling class terrorism to destroy new unity

NOW THAT the election is out of the way and a new capitalist government safely installed in the Palace of Westminster it seems certain that the new Secretary of State for northern Ireland will be pressed to reintroduce 'selective' internment.

Due to the upsurge of violence during the past few weeks and the technical efficiency with which it was carried out, some senior members of the security forces are understood to believe that a 'partial' round up of those 'activists' known to the police is necessary, but would only be effective if internment without trial was re-introduced, as no evidence that would satisfy a court of law is likely to pertain. Mr James Molyneux, Official Unionist leader in Parliament, careful to steer well clear of such an emotive term as internment seeks 'executive detention' instead!

It seems strange that, in a period of so-called normalization for northern Ireland, with the police organised once again as a paramilitary force ready to take over

the offensive role of the army, the call for the return of internment should be made. Especially since the system of quietly detaining prisoners on remand for anything up to two years before their release due to inadequate evidence seems such a satisfactory replacement.

Internment without trial ran in northern Ireland from 1971-1975 and far from controlling the level of violence, its alleged intention, made a significant contribution to its escalation. However described there is no doubt what this new call is intended to achieve. It is an attempt to terrorize the Irish working class further, just when unity has begun to emerge.

Afraid of the strength of unity gained by the Irish workers in the struggle to break the government-imposed wage limits, when engineering, shipbuilding and transport workers, civil servants, nurses and teachers stood together in a mockery of the traditional sectarianism fostered by the ruling class, the government is seeking to refurbish the cycle of

violence and terror to destroy this hard won unity. It will be remembered how quickly a state of emergency was called in response to the lorry drivers' action, and how armed strike breakers took over the job of transporting oil supplies; in complete contrast to their seeming inability to do exactly the same during the fascist Ulster Workers Council Strike in 1974.

The fight to arrest declining living standards has caused a radical rethink of traditional values and loyalties in northern Ireland. The lesson is being learnt that only by relying on their own strength as an organised working class can peace and stability be achieved. Once learnt it is but a short step from the fight for wages to a fight against British Imperialism and an end to the domination of British capital north and south of the border. When that time comes the Irish working class will be best able to deal with terrorism from whatever source it emerges.



Belfast 1979 - a city and a people under Occupation.

(Photo: Belfast Telegraph).

MayDay, London - Beware old wine in new bottles

THE TRADITIONAL May Day rally was held by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on May 1.

The Party Chairman, Reg Birch, commenting on the fact that the meeting was taking place in the closing stages of the general election in which there had been so much empty rhetoric said: "In Britain the talking time is fast evaporating. The solution to Britain's problems about which so much hot air has been expended is resident solely in the people, in the working class which is the source of all advance."

"Britain is presented to the world as the most stable democracy but it is their democracy, the bourgeoisie's, not ours. They ask us to vote for them. They ought to vote for us. If it were a real democracy, if it were our democracy, did not write or think that way. He wrote about those simple things--about enclosures and a Countess of Sutherland driving people off the land; he wrote about the Paris Commune and the workers' first attempt at governing themselves. Those who came after him, dressed

"The election has been a diversion, turning the working class away from what it must do. Now that it's finished it's 'as you were'. We'll not be

pushed off course. We the workers are the power in the land. Can anybody imagine that we will go on letting our affairs be managed for us by a turn-and-turn-about, Labour-Tory government, personified most recently by the Darby and Joan, split-in-public agree-in-private marriage of Jim and Maggie?"

"For more than 30 years now, ever since 1945, whatever the name of the capitalist government in power, there has been constant battle waged by the working class over wages, how to pay the rent. It seems so simple but all of politics is in that struggle."

"We despise that reality because it is so simple. We turn to those who write with long words and propound elaborate theories. But Marx did not write or think that way. He wrote about those simple things--about enclosures and a Countess of Sutherland driving people off the land; he wrote about the Paris Commune and the workers' first attempt at governing themselves. Those who came after him, dressed



The Concordat: "I had to ask - did Murray say 'milestone' or 'millstone'?" (Photos: The Worker)

it up in various ways and used their cleverness to try to cheat us.

"Just as in a real democracy we would make them vote for us, so in dealing with unemployment we should put them on the dole instead of letting them put us on the dole. We have done that too.

Workers in 1945 discarded the great Marlborough. He had to go off to the US for an audience where he made his war-mongering Fulton speech.

"The wages fight may seem a very simple thing, but all the capitalist governments since that time have been obsessed with it. Cripps a leftist urged us 'Don't ask for wages'; Selwyn Lloyd tried to sell us 'the pay pause' which was to be more like a full stop; and George Brown had his 'solemn and binding agreement on prices and incomes'. I remember challenging him on that policy and being told that I was endangering the Labour Government. Now George Brown votes against Labour. Lord Robens, he also urged wage restraint in the interests of Labour and now he says he won't vote for Labour. Well, neither will I!

"We've had Heath and IRA --which was also a kind of terrorism and which the workers defused. And we've had Jim and his 5 per cent. And still they try to patch up

a Concordat! I was at the meeting in No. 10 when Len Murray was presenting it to us as a great milestone, but he didn't speak distinctly enough and I had to ask what he had just said. 'Did he say it was a great mill-stone?'

"Now we shall have a code on picketing. There'll be Thatcher's martial law and curfew.

"What's it all about? Just one thing. It's about putting all class struggle to bed. If we let that happen, we'll be right back where we started and we'll have it all to do again. So let's get back to the job. And let's remember that we can only prevent the decline of the proletarian movement in other places to the extent that we emancipate ourselves. We are fighting for socialism in China and the USSR as well as in Britain. Their decay and falling away is in our fear and hesitancy and refusal to face up to our working class mission.

"That is our May Day message to workers every where." The meeting ended with the singing of the Internationale.



"The solution to Britain's problems is resident solely in the people, the working class."

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It shall be at liberty to express views and give news and opinion to the public without interference by anyone outside or inside the organisation. Unions have no right to interfere with the freedom of editors to comment on matters of public interest."

We can only expect bigotry to be defended by bigotry. The freedom of a newspaper to express its opinion by depicting a railway driver alongside Crippen and Frankenstein in the Chamber of Horrors, Denning defends. The railway driver's claim to such infamy was his membership of ASLEF.

Denning continued: "All these freedoms are so fundamental to our society that no union has the right to interfere with them." It is clear that the actions of workers to prevent or ease exploitation, if effective, is outside the law, but the actions of employers individually or in concert are to be defended at all times - and this is called freedom.

EETPU Struggle for democracy

BEHIND the Electrical Electronic Telecommunication and Plumbing Union conference decision on the eve of the general election to rush to Labour's aid with a vote for the Concordat, there is an upsurge of members for the restoration of democracy.

The EETPU's "Shop Stewards Quarterly Review" was full of Labour's manifesto, "A Better Way", instead of anything to do with better conditions for electricians; and members were asked to contribute an hour's pay to Labour's election campaign. In reaction to this many members were arguing:

"There is a better way. Let our general secretary resign.

But of course the struggle for the restoration of democracy is really a matter of members laying hold of the policy-making machinery of branches and conferences and making them work as they should.

When a correct decision is taken by the members, as at the EETPU conference last May that productivity bonuses be abandoned by consolidating

the basic rates and not be replaced by "measured day work", then the members must see to it that such a decision is applied in all negotiations on their behalf.

The alternative, as speakers at the 1978 conference said, makes "the description 'wage slave' take on a more abhorrent form". The trend whereby jobs in the industry were reduced from 141,000 to 82,000 through the productivity deal and the use made by employers of new technology must be stopped. The attempt of the union's executive, in spite of the conference decision, to present a pay offer to vote by ballot has led to meetings of protest and some officials recommending acceptance of the offer in this form have been thrown off sites.

The results of this ballot are still to be declared but there is little chance that an offer amounting only to 8 per cent for craftsmen will be accepted. In connection with Tory proposals on ballots in the unions it is interesting to note that in the EETPU ballot

forms in elections are sent out by the employers along with pay slips, with no control or card checks by branches or stewards. A director of one firm has been declared elected a member of EETPU's executive!

All this adds fuel to the fight for basic union democracy with voting properly organised in branches, with negotiations conducted by those working in the industry, with a call that officials be elected not appointed and with the anti-communist ban being lifted. There are many dangers and difficulties ahead but the main trend is clear, that the members are seizing hold of their trade union, making it do its job, determining its policy.

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