



Save Linwood from Thatcher! Hands off our motor industry!

WORKERS at the Talbot car plant at Linwood, near Glasgow, at a mass meeting on February 12 voted overwhelmingly to start a campaign to get the decision to close the plant reversed. Shop stewards said normal working could continue for the time being but that industrial action to save the 5000 jobs had to be considered.

The announcement that Talbot UK, owned by the French Peugeot Citroen Group, was to close the only car plant in Scotland and further increase unemployment in this hard-hit region has caused an outcry of protest. A trade union group from Linwood is discussing tactics to resist closure with the Scottish TUC and shop stewards from Talbot plants in Coventry.

Meanwhile the Convenor of Linwood has stated that any attempt on the part of Peugeot-Citroen to move equipment or machinery out of the plant would be met by immediate industrial action.

How long are motor workers going to allow the

END UNEMPLOYMENT

Workers march in Glasgow against unemployment. Workers at Linwood vote against closure. Miners threaten strike action to keep pits open. This is the working class on the march to save Britain from destruction. To save Britain from Thatcher. To save Britain from capitalism. Stand and fight.

multi-nation companies to treat their jobs as counters in the great world motor car gambling stakes? BL closes down its Belgian plant throwing thousands out of work in Seneffe. Peugeot makes thousands redundant at Linwood. For years Ford has been playing workers in one country off against those in another by making the siting of new factories a reward for 'good', that is to say, submissive, behaviour. And Thatcher stirs the pot by allowing Japan to move motor car production right inside Britain.

Car workers in Britain are going to have to impose their own import controls on foreign cars to save the British motor industry. Motor workers all over the world are going to have to agree policies of selective blacking to stop the multinationals setting them against each other over jobs and wages. Proletarian internationalism against the international profiteers!



Our picture shows miners and others taking part in the anti-Thatcher demonstration in Swansea in July last year, during the Welsh Conservative Party Conference. That spirit and much, much more will be needed as the fight to save Britain from Thatcher grows ever more urgent. (Photo: John Sturrock/Report)

Miners: we stand and fight

"I FOUGHT like bloody hell for this industry - it's my industry - and nobody's going to destroy it." The words of the President of the NUM express the response of miners throughout Britain to the announcement that capacity is to be reduced by 10 million tonnes with 30,000 jobs and 50 pits threatened. The growing resistance to the decline in the coal industry described in the last issue of THE WORKER is to be challenged outright. NUM members are to be balloted about industrial action. It is already clear that their response will be unequivocal.

The productivity of miners has increased at a faster rate than any other industry. Now they are told too much is produced at a time when 89 million tonnes are being imported. The reasons given seem to be those of MacGregor's steel "recovery" plan with the word "coal" inserted. Presumably the next to go will be the railways because there are no goods to carry.

The miners are showing that they intend to stand and fight. It is not yet too late for steelworkers to follow their lead and given the same answer in their own industry.

The coal industry in Britain is so clearly a result of the miners' struggle against those who would have long ago closed all the mines. That fight must not now be forgotten.

The Government, through BP, has been buying up coal-mines in the USA and Australia - investing in other nations' coal. Now it must be forced to invest in Britain. It's as simple as that. While coal is being produced so it must be used, so a steel industry and electricity generation industry must be retained, so construction and transport and manufacture must go on.

Coal is not so easily won

from the pits that the likes of Thatcher can simply fill the shafts or still the headgear wheels. Britain's coal cannot be given over to the Common Market like our fish, neither does it belong to the Yanks like our oil. Coalmining is Britain's oldest energy industry and the reserves of coal are still enormous - enough for centuries. British mining equipment and techniques are sought after by other nations. There is only one thing wrong with the coal industry and it is a cancer we call Thatcher. The form it takes may differ from industry to industry but the content is the same - war on the workers

Victory for seamen

THE NATIONAL Union of Seamen's five-week strike ended in victory when the General Council of British Shipping conceded a 12 per cent pay increase back-dated to the beginning of the year.

The question of increased pay for overtime will now go to arbitration as the seamen demanded at the start of their industrial action.

The GCBS found it impossible to hold out against the seamen's claim when company after company, the Fyffes Group, Townsend Thoresen, Canadian Pacific, all bolted the employers' front and settled separately.

The employers almost seemed to be gloating when they reported that because of the strike some 50 ships would go out of service with a loss of 1000 jobs. But the loss of jobs, often through ship owners transferring to flags of convenience to replace British seamen with unorganised foreign labour, was going on long before the seamen

decided to take their action.

In fact, they have proved that the fight for pay and the fight for jobs are one.

No better example could be given of what the seamen were fighting against than the sinking after collision in the Thames of the Panamanian coaster Frederika I. The NUS had asked the International Transport Workers Federation to put Frederika I on a blacklist because the owners had broken agreements on pay and working conditions.

An NUS official visited the ship last November and found that up to 100 hours a week were being worked by crew with no agreement on overtime pay, that the chief engineer was unqualified and that two of the deckhands were under age.

In spite of the blacking and against the harbour master's advice the Frederika sailed when visibility in the Thames was less than 100 feet and soon collided with the British cargo boat Blackthorn.

Water workers set for action

EARLY returns show a solid vote rejecting the 10 per cent pay offer to water workers. For example, in Exeter a mass meeting of 150 NUPE members ended with a ballot overwhelmingly rejecting acceptance.

The Government this week ordered private accountants to go to each of the regional water authorities to investi-

gate their accounts with a view to demanding further cut-backs.

Thatcher announced this in the Commons while talking about the "spectre of water charges rising by anything up to 30 per cent".

It is certainly not the manual workers' pay claim which is forcing up these charges but rather the Thatcher inspired massive interest rates that sap 50 per cent of water industry income.

Do we hear a peep out of the Government and the media about this scandal? They can only talk about the necessity for low wages and cut-backs. The manual workers are about to rock their dreamworld.

SACK THATCHER!

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Organising Smithfields in the '30s

First of a two part series

A pamphlet produced by the striking Smithfield workers to publicise their cause amongst the working class in London.

Part Two, next week, covers the strike itself and its effect on the trade.

THE LONDON meat market at Smithfield was once among the largest concentrations of workers in the capital. Day and night 10,000 men and women worked in despicable conditions for appallingly low wages. And in February 1936, it provided the setting for what came to be known as the Great London Meat Strike.

Prior to the strike Smithfields was a prime example of a workplace without union organisation to enforce rules governing hours and conditions. Overtime was worked as a favour to the 'gunvor' and many workers were on the job from 4 o'clock in the morning till 5 or 6 in the evening. This practice grew more frequent as butchers found that they got their meat cheaper the later they bought it.

Wage rates varied greatly, not

only between the hundreds of shops but also within individual shops. Humpers were paid anything from £2 10s to £4 10s. In some shops boys were taken on to do men's work for boy's wages. Cutters, nightmen and scalemen got anything from £3 10s to £5. In most cases it was the lower figure which was paid.

When the strike took place, it was for equalising wage rates and setting minimum rates of pay and standards, a 40 hour week and double time for overtime. And one of the first demands was that the bye-law forbidding purchases after 1 p.m. should be enforced.

In the summer of 1935, over a year before the Great Strike, shopmen began to enrol in the Transport and General Workers Union, aided by the meat pitchers, who had been tightly organised for years into a 100 per cent union shop. Recruitment accelerated after the pitchers' famous 'Jubilee strike' of 1935, when they came out for double rates for working on King George's jubilee, which was a national holiday.

The pivotal position of the pitchers, who brought the meat to Smithfield, meant that their strike brought the market to a halt. It was all over in 24 hours, their full claim met by the shop owners.

Strike deadlines

Throughout the summer of 1935, discussions and meetings of the shopmen went on, and into the autumn also. Three short strikes were held to prove strength and avoid victimisation. Finally, from Transport House was launched their programme of demands, following in the footsteps of the miners, weavers and railwaymen, who were all pressing for higher wages and shorter hours.

Trade unionism amongst the shopmen was new to the market, and no real negotiating machinery existed. Even the employers had

only just organised themselves. In the face of a threatened Christmas strike, they had set up, some 700 of them, the Smithfield Employers Council to meet the TGWU officials.

The Employers Council insisted that they would form a conciliation board, but only if the Christmas strike threat was withdrawn. They managed to get agreement to this not only from the TGWU, but also from the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers and the Journeyman Butcher's Federation of Great Britain along the following lines: "No member of the Board, nor any person or persons associated with this Board, shall have the authority to order or to cause a stoppage of work."

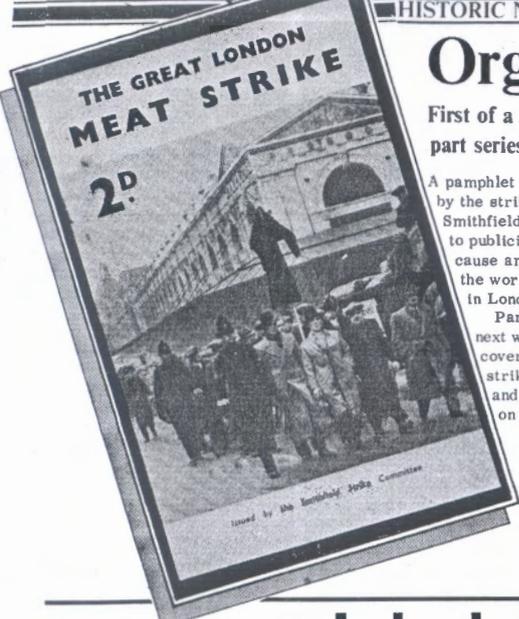
Thus the Smithfield workers forwarded their programme with precious little to back it up. In return for the withdrawal of strike notice, a Ministry of Labour Inquiry was to be set up to look into the workers' demands.

Feeling was running so high that this solution found little favour. By now, Christmas and the strike deadline had been passed by, and as the agreement to conciliation became known, a meeting of shop representatives was called.

The response was so widespread that it took some hours to find a hall in the district big enough to take them all. When the meeting commenced, notice to strike was again given, and a strike committee was set up.

Twice the strike was held up to give the employers a chance to come to the table and increase their offers (then standing at £3 for humpers and £3 15s for scalemen and nightmen - a cut in wages for many). Finally, at midnight on 2nd February, and with no word from the employers the strike committee met and decided enough was enough: the strike was on.

(cont. next week)



Ireland - One Nation

A VERY SUCCESSFUL meeting on the subject Ireland: One Nation was held recently in the Bellman Bookshop.

The speaker began by quoting Stalin's definition of a nation: "A nation is an historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make up manifested in a common culture."

The speaker pointed out that Ireland had been a nation more than 800 years ago when the English first invaded - an Ireland of which the first English colonialists were very wary because of the resistance they met.

English rule really didn't extend much further than Dublin Pale. Ireland had an identity, culture, language and social order quite distinct from English society. Celts, Gauls, Vikings and Normans had been incorporated.

To hold Ireland - which even in the 17th century was recognised as having strategic importance - and also to retain control of the 20 million acres of fertile land - plantations of settlers were established. Native Irish were driven off the land. But by the mid-18th century these Scots-Irish were Ulstermen and they too were up against landlords - absentee English or Anglo-Irish.

Secret societies

The speaker illustrated how sectarianism has always been exploited by the British to protect property interests. Yet agrarian secret societies such as the 'Whiteboys' who operated in the West of Ireland and the 'Oakboys' and 'Hearts of Steel' who operated in Ulster were united in their aim of moving against landlords - whether catholic or protestant.

Connolly, the great Irish marxist, had no time for sectarianism - Orange or Green. He pointed out the role of the Catholic Church in Ireland - its associations with the feudal order, its defence of property rights, its condemnation of the 'Rights of Man'. Its collusion with the foreign occupier, its burden on the peasantry, its defence of secret sectarianism. Its role in obstructing national and class struggle, its continual double-dealing and knavery. Little has changed!

Equally Connolly condemned the pathetic arrogance of the Orange Order. A declaration in court of a Dungannon magistrate

in the 18th century is instructive: "As for the Orangemen, we have a rather difficult card to play: they must not be entirely discounted... on them we must rely for the preservation of our lives and properties, should critical times occur."

The Great Famines of the 1840s must be among the clearest illustration of English policy in Ireland. While food was exported in abundance a million died; further millions were forced to emigrate to America and England. Just as in India later the English conducted an agrarian "revolution" - forcible depopulation in order to replace the system of small tenancy with big tenancy, the old landlords being replaced by big capitalists.

So too today, the EEC, heralded as a bringer of prosperity, has dispossessed more Irish farmers and workers than at any time since the famine. Only the multi-nationals gain!

Repression and terror

The speaker said that, in view of this history of constant repression and terror and the cobbling together of part of Ulster as a 'separate' country, both artificial and internally suppressive, what happened in Ireland in 1969 should come as no surprise.

Yet what have we in Britain done to oppose British occupation of Ireland? In Britain we have allowed the working classes in Ireland and Britain to be threatened by the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Thousands have been detained, while few are ever charged. Ireland has become the testing ground for mass-surveillance of a nation by police computers and regular phone-tapping and searching. The SPG snatch squads and SAS operations were first rehearsed in Ireland. Even the prison camps set up during the recent Prison Warden's dispute were based on the army experience in Long Kesh and Magilligan.

Our responsibility

Marx's resolution to the Council of the International in 1891 is still very relevant today: "Landlordism in Ireland is only supported by the English Army. The moment an end is put to the compulsory union of these two countries, a social revolution will break out in Ireland... English landlordism will lose not only a big source of its wealth, but also



A landlord and his henchmen stand by while a makeshift battering ram is used to demolish the door of a tenant resisting eviction. Armed police are on hand to prevent intervention by sympathisers.

its most important source of moral strength, as the representative of the rule of England over Ireland... Ireland is the only excuse of the English Government for maintaining a big standing army which in case of need they send against the English workers."

And so to Thatcher and Haughey, millionaires both. NATO, and especially war-thirsty Thatcher, wants and needs the Dublin Government to abandon the stance of neutrality and consider "the totality of relationships within these islands."

In return Thatcher seems prepared to jettison fools such as Paisley who, after Robert

Kee's "Ireland" have remembered the Carsonite tactics for regaining votes lost, as sectarianism is discarded as experience of massive unemployment and poverty makes the people of northern Ireland more aware of class rather than sectarian divides.

But Haughey and Thatcher must be made aware that Ireland is not up for sale. The British troops should get out and allow the Irish working class to solve their problems unaided by NATO bases or Thatcher's economic theories. By fighting Thatcher's policies here we will be striking a body blow for the Irish workers

ADVERTISEMENT

Old men urgently required for part-time secret work of national importance

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They can't be undertaken in the limelight of conventional party politics.

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This involves high levels of self-sufficiency, the ability to issue misleading press statements, withhold information, censor TV programmes and tap telephones--among other things. The country can't afford to wait until the need for such forces arises.

The Special Amateur Saboteurs have a vital part to play and they need unfit old men urgently. You don't have to have been in politics or have any special qualifications--judges, controllers of the BBC, ex-policemen and liberal moderates are welcome.

Of course, we look into your background to make sure you aren't an habitual trade unionist or a Russian agent.

If, we accept you, we will make demands on your spare time for progressively more opulent living both here and abroad. And we would be less than honest if we didn't admit that only one in ten applicants finally make it.

And even if you do make it, we won't allow you to parade your allegiance to Central Government or join the Cabinet, but insist that you keep a low profile, for we are a shy and retiring organisation, and definitely do not believe in blowing people up or shooting captives at close range. In fact, we doubt we exist at all except as a figment of a madwoman's imagination.

Think you can meet the challenge? Ring Whitehall 0001. Or write to Centre Party Headquarters, Knightsbridge. We have squadrons in Brussels, the Pentagon and Hampstead.

Editorial

Nothing could be sicker than Government support for the right to work of the scab, Harris, when 3 million workers are denied that right.

It is all part of the latest attempts to make illegal any effective action by organised workers to defend themselves and industrial Britain from Thatcher's destruction.

The Green Paper on Trade Union Legal Immunities proposes to add to the immunities from civil lawsuits swept away by the 1980 Employment Act, in order to eliminate altogether 'closed shop' or '100 per cent unionism arrangements', 'secondary' or 'sympathetic picketing', and to make collective agreements legally enforceable and secret balloting a prior condition for all strike action. This further revoking of immunities simply means that any industrial action could be so interpreted by the courts as to lead to an injunction against it, and those workers failing to comply with the injunction would be subject to fines for contempt and, then, to imprisonment.

As a sop to us the Green Paper suggests that, as is the case in some other countries, workers in Britain might be granted "a positive right to strike" under those conditions defined as acceptable by the government. Can anyone think of any strike whatsoever which any government has ever approved of? They

are asking us to accept from them, hedged about with a thicket of reservations, and to hold entirely at their discretion, what we have won for ourselves through 200 years of struggle. They are asking us to put our trust in bourgeois democracy when they are abandoning it themselves for the naked coercion of fascism. We would have to be green ourselves to fall for such a Paper.

This is simply the latest twist in the fundamental contradiction of capitalism. The human labourer, in that portion of time he is not paid for his work, creates all profit; but that same human labourer, organised with his work-mates, is the greatest enemy of profit. And, of course, in capitalism's general decline, when the rate of profitability has fallen lowest in Britain, the first capitalist country, that fundamental contradiction is enormously exacerbated.

Thatcher's answer is simple; smash the organised workers, no matter that they are alone the creators of profit. Industrialists and business men are feeling the blows and letting out yells of protest, however much they may hope that Thatcher may succeed in destroying the workers' will to resist.

Thatcher has not denied that unemployment could go to 5 million or more if that is what it takes to break us. She is going to solve that fundamental contradiction of capitalism by killing the goose that lays the golden egg of profit.

And we are indeed geese if we let her get away with it any longer. Cut the cackle. We have our own solution for that fundamental contradiction of capitalism. Get rid of capitalism.

SAS - terrorists of Imperialism

THE SPECIAL Air Service came into being as a secret weapon of British imperialism in Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, northern Ireland and other colonial territories. This force was used in all sorts of terrorist and murderous ways which could not have borne the light of publicity without exposing the British Government to world wide criticism by civil rights organisations.

But at the time of the siege of the Iranian Embassy this force was suddenly exhibited with its wraps off in the full glare of television cameras. The reason for this is perfectly simple. At a time of the mobilisation of the working class against Thatcher, this force devised to fight anti-imperialists abroad, can be used to intimidate British workers at home.

We condemn all terrorism, including the small group terrorism apparently directed against the state but in reality against the working class. It plays into the hands of the state for it is used to justify repressive measures.

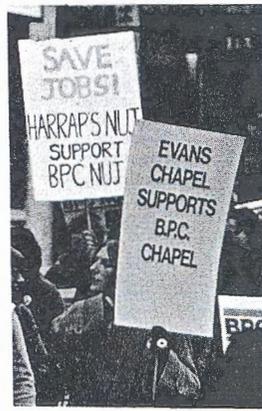
But much more to the point, we condemn the terrorism not talked of in the Press. The bigger and more extensive terrorism of the state. Take the Iranian Embassy siege. We do not sympathise with those terrorists who occupied the Embassy, their aims or methods and especially their murders. However, if the Embassy staffs' accounts are true, then terrorists were shot in cold blood after they had surrendered. This was murder.

Even presuming all the terrorists were at least accessories to the hostage murder (and that certainly was not known at the time they were shot) we do not have the death penalty for murder in Britain, never mind accessory to murder. The SAS appointed themselves judge, jury and executioners (or was it Thatcher?). Are these faceless Government sponsored terrorists to face trial for their illegal murders? No, most of them didn't even have to appear before the Inquest but had their statements read out. No questioning; no search for the truth. In Britain soldiers are subject to civil law, or so they say. The law, having been flouted, is now to be changed to allow lawful 'killings'.

Now Reagan, inspired by this, wants to create and use such a force all over the world.



The NUJ's Bloomsbury march on February 9 in support of the 65 journalists sacked by BPC for defending jobs on the 8 week anniversary of the start of the journalists' occupation of their offices in the City, delegates from more than 35 publishing companies marched through the heart of publishing land. At the Publishers Association (employers organisation) and at BPC headquarters, they handed in letters demanding reinstatement of the sacked 65. As the struggle enters its 15th week, the BPC workers remain as committed, united and strong as ever. Photo: Nick Birch.



Sandwell gives Thatcher's stool pigeon the boot

ONCE AGAIN the capitalist press has risen in outcry against the injustice of the closed shop, what is more correctly called 100 per cent unionism. The 'victim' this time is a young 'courageous' girl, Joanna Harris, a meat inspector; and the 'ogres' are Sandwell Council and NALGO. As it turns out she is the grand-daughter of Bert Ward, a prominent and very wealthy Tipton Tory, owner of Ward's Poultry.

Miss Harris is employed by Sandwell as a poultry inspector and stationed at Ward's slaughterhouse. The poultry firm, notoriously in the area for its bad conditions, has never allowed its workers to belong to a union. It employs mainly youngsters and immigrant labour.

Throughout the press campaign

she has been taken up and down the country by a group of Tory backwoodsmen the Freedom Association. They have been urging a number of other Sandwell employees not to join the union with talk of greatly exaggerated sums of compensation and even promises that Thatcher would save their jobs. Sacking these employees would be legal but a tribunal would order compensation for unfair dismissal. The Unfair Dismissal Act, however, was not designed to make it enormously expensive for employers to sack workers and, ironically, in this case it does not suit the Tories. Hence the Press fury against the council and NALGO.

Most of these employees eventually decided to join the union. That left Joanna to read

her prepared statement. Sandwell Council, are regarded by their staff as good employers and have resisted pressure and stuck to the letter of the agreement. The local branch of NALGO has made progress in membership involvement. Following the industrial action on comparability it decided by ballot to negotiate a union membership agreement. This agreement does allow exemption from union membership on religious grounds and payment to a charity. To date five people have been granted this exemption.

Far from being panicked by the outburst in the press, NALGO members in Sandwell will rally in defence of their union and council. The Tories say they have lost this battle but threaten to win the war. The outcome depends on us all.

Labour rats leave a strengthened ship

WE LIVE in stirring times. The parliamentary charade which for so long has purported to express the will of the British people is losing its mystique. The working class which has tolerated the benefactors and imposters for a hundred years is turning to itself for salvation.

The Labour Party is rapidly beginning to play its role. Out of the EEC, it says, out with nuclear weapons, dispense with the anachronisms of private health and education, and expand public industry. What an indictment of capitalism in decline that such respectable demands are handed by the media.

The trade unions, providing practically all the money for the Labour Party, modestly secure a 40 per cent say in who shall be 'leader'. The parliamentarians are aghast. The social democrats are getting out, a mere handful in number: fat cats, has-beens, and performers with no stage to strut. Pathetic creatures, but traitors without exception.

Undistinguished

They have been members of the Labour Party but their record of service to the working class has not been distinguished. Roy Jenkins was the one who went to Europe at vast expense to the tax payer. On his return to Britain he took up appointment with bankers Morgan, Grenfell Holdings at a salary of £40,000 a year.

Shirley Williams is remembered as the Education Minister who was kicked out of parliament after the teachers had thwarted her clumsy attempts to deny them a salary increase. William Rodgers is the staunch defender of Gaitskell and NATO. David Owen is just intoxicated by his own supposed self-importance.

Their much-vaunted list of supporters contains little more than a string of former minor dignitaries, embittered because the world has passed them by. Some social democrats will stay in the Labour Party, but there is hardly a peep from them. Hardly a peep from Denis Healey, advocate of the International Monetary Fund and the five per cent pay policy. The working class is on the march and the blusterers of yore are taking cover.

No middle ground

The enemy is Mrs Thatcher and there is no middle ground. Those who run, run to the enemy and will be destroyed along with her. The Liberals still hope to have a foot in both camps but would be wise to take note. There is no Centre and the choice is 'for Thatcher, or against her'.

Schoolboy David Steel makes hollow talk about community politics and an electoral alliance. The advent of the 'kill all, burn all' of British capitalism has left him utterly out of touch.

Only the working class can save Britain. We are witnessing a revolutionary transformation that has scattered the social democrats and is gripped by the need of workers to settle affairs for themselves.

The Common Market: fishing for trouble – and getting it!

ONLY an organisation as stupid as the EEC could by treaty dismantle the right of each member State to sovereignty over its coastal waters - and then work out a he-who-poaches-most-takes-most "fisheries policy." This must be unique in the world. In that it gives no livelihood to the fishermen, no fish to the consumer (it costs far too much and less and less is being bought), and perhaps most wicked of all is fishing most edible species to the point of extinction.

Because fish is not being stored in "mountains", the EEC disorganisation of food production here takes a different form - buying up of quayside fish for resale at quadruple the price, shadowy market organisations buying catches, exporting them and re-importing them at vast profit.

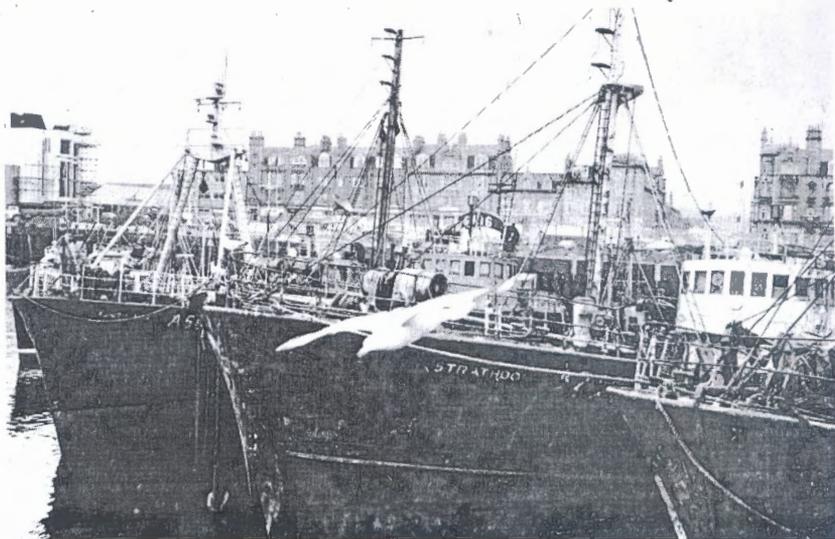
Fishermen suffer. Their sale price of catch to these profiteers does not cover their costs, forces economies and the working of increasingly longer hours. They are in protest all over Europe. Last year it was the French fishermen, now in Grimsby 11 fishermen are arrested for holding up cheap imports, while action continued at Yarmouth and Lowestoft. In the South West, at Plymouth, an action coordinating committee is being set up, while at Brixham six trawlers strung their vessels together with wire to block the harbour.

Later Torquay was hit too. In Germany, the fishing harbour at Cuxhaven and Bremerhaven was blocked.

Each member country of the EEC pays dearly for adherence to this ludicrous system, and Britain in particular: the natural resources of fish in British coastal waters, because they are richer, are handed over wholesale to this maniacal plundering of all the other EEC fleets. The demand is clear - sovereignty over our coastal waters, out of the EEC.

Failing that, we have the spectacle of a Fisheries Minister offering to foreign fleets not only the right to British coastal waters up to the beaches, but their right to start again the fishing of herring which was banned because of danger of extinction! All this as a bargaining counter for some supposed concession from the EEC.

But particularly do we pay dearly because Thatcher is in power in Britain. The Government sees nothing extraordinary in that cod landed at Bridlington and sold for 25p a pound should be in the shops at £1.10p. And because Thatcher is now seen all over Europe, by Giscard and Schmidt, but more importantly by those who vote for them, as both stupid and intransigent, we can be sure that whatever "agreement" is cooked up in Brussels will be even more detrimental.



Trawlers laid up in the port at Aberdeen. They and their crews are victims of a savage attack on British fishing. Are they to become like the herring gulls who find the fish disappear and who then search for rubbish in the streets? No!
Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

THUGS RAID LONGWORTH HOSPITAL

ON TUESDAY, February 10, the police blocked off all roads to Longworth Geriatric Hospital as agents of the Area Health Authority, disguised as ambulance men, forced their way past the picket line to remove patients from the second floor. The hospital has been occupied by staff opposed to its closure for 11 weeks.

Being unable to find one of the patients that supposedly had to be moved, they took away another old lady instead.

Supporters from other trade unions later arrived in large numbers - but too late to prevent this distressing action.

The AHA has been determined to close this hospital. As retaliation to the occupation they had refused to open the new Witney Community Hospital even though finance had been set aside for it. In a more devious plot, they arranged for TV cameras to be at the hospital while they offered "holidays in Bognor" to some of the patients.

When COHSE officials and staff refused to allow patients to be removed, this was supposed to show the "callousness" of trade unions. A mid-February holiday is of dubious value to such old patients and the AHA "could not promise" they would be returned. In fact this plot back-fired, for the indignation aroused, amongst staff, patients' relatives, and the public, was all against the AHA. Finally came the raid.

At each step the hospital workers have become firmer and more determined. They know that when such old patients are moved a large proportion will die. They are aware of the fate of the Cowley Road Geriatric Hospital, now closed, and being used as a set for a film glorifying a Russian dissident. They are concerned with the shortage of needed geriatric places in Oxford, and the fact that elderly patients moved to the larger hospitals crowd out the people these hospitals were planned for. Hence waiting lists grow.

The AHA is trying to claim a victory (some victory) but the health trade unions are determined to keep up the fight for geriatric care, as for other health provision. Now taking stock of their action, they consider that if tactical mistakes were made, yet they are proud of their stand: the fight continues.

DHSS PLANS MASSIVE ASSAULT ON LONDON

LAST WEEK the DHSS announced the publication of a report on London's acute hospital services which proposes that more than 4000 London hospital beds used for all medical and surgical cases, excluding psychiatry and geriatrics, should be lost by 1988. This represents some 15 per cent of the total.

Yet at the time of going to press, none of the hospitals which are mentioned (virtually all major hospitals in London) have yet seen the report! Detailed analysis will have to wait until the prescription percolates through Dr Vaughan's surgery.

What can be said at this stage, however, is that the report, put together by a group of academics, some health service officials (who should know better) and

politicians - collectively known as LAG - is yet another attack on the NHS as a whole, and not just on London.

The rationale behind the report is to cut acute services in order to release funds for the 'Cinderella' services of psychiatry and geriatrics. Former general and acute hospitals will be turned into small 'loony bins' in central London, as cut off from society as the large 'bins' in the countryside that they are supposed to replace, or will be turned into graveyards for the elderly.

What both services need is more money to develop community based services with acute backup; what they do not want is money filched from the general medical and surgical services which have long enough waiting lists as it is.

Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortess Road, London NW5
Brighton Workers Bookshop 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton
Clarion Books 5 The Precinct, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex
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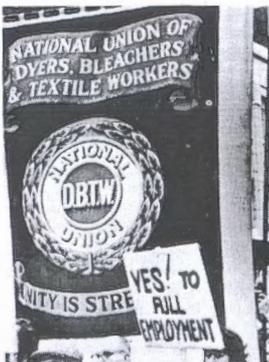
Textiles: jobs not museums!

WHEN is the textile industry dead and yet bustling with life? When the CBI-NEDC start telling us the corner has been turned in textile decline. In a recent report they catalogue a series of major ills. Use of capacity in textile manufacture has dropped yet again, now "only" 80 per cent of firms, are working below full capacity. New manufacturing orders are down. New deliveries are down. Exports are down. Retailers are cutting back orders. Job loss in December 1980 was running at 2000 a month. And the message from the CBI? Cheer up! Things may be getting worse but at a slower rate!

A total import ban would help save the industry: and the impetus for this must come from the workers in textiles themselves.

A joint report from Leeds,

Below: textile workers to the fore in a Huddersfield march for jobs.



Bradford, Kirklees and West Yorkshire County Councils, estimated that by 1990 textile and related production will no longer exist in West Yorkshire - knock 5 years off that date

and a truer picture emerges. What is an industry shrinking and growing? Textiles in West Yorkshire, which closes factories and opens Industrial Museums.

Public Meetings

LONDON

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