



Troublemaker

Issue 1

5 April, 1993

Free

By Some Supporters of the Timex Strike From Glasgow

The determination of the strikers at Timex Dundee is not only one in the eye for Peter Hall, Fred Olsen and the entire disgusting multinational. It also marks the failure of all the bullshit from the Tories, TUC and media about how industrial unrest was left behind in the 'Eighties'. As unemployment soars and the poor of various British cities become increasingly ungovernable, workers in factories, transport and coalmining have all shown that despite the lies they're fed they still know how to fight. All boss-haters and cop-haters should be very pleased.

SOLIDARITY

Clearly the strike can only win if we close the gates. The donations must continue, but the picket is the bottom line. If work stops for even one day, both Hall and the brown-nosed scabs who work for him will be unsure as to whether they can go on breaking the strike. The scabs will be scared of showing up, and Hall won't be able to rely on getting them through the gates even once they're on their way to work. If the drop in production due to Hall's employing 'new labour' was enough to break his strategy, he would already have given in.

Make no mistake. In 1986-87 London's printers lost after a year of failing to stop Murdoch's lies coming out of Wapping. There was rioting outside the plant, occasional sabotage against depots, and mass pickets. The resistance was brilliant but still the strikers lost. This time as before, **work must stop**. Not only would Timex strikers be at the brink of victory, but spirits would be raised elsewhere: at Albion, at NCR, in the mines, and among rebels generally.

We're not saying that joining mass pickets to stop the scabs getting in is the only type of solidarity that can be offered. Scab morale can be eroded too. Those working at places of recruitment such as the skills centre can be asked not to advertise Hall's jobs. Scabs can be followed home, identified and threatened.

On the other hand, we would like to know if it's true that social security officials are threatening to stop benefits if claimants fail to attend interviews at Timex. Claimants under

such pressure should be encouraged to contact the strike committee for support—moral and, if necessary, legal.

Obviously there can never be any excuse for scabbing, but if all else fails, claimants can write to Hall personally asking what union they should join, or what the strike's all about. Then after one interview's been cancelled because of a trip to the dentist, what chance is there of getting another?!! These are just suggestions, since we don't know the exact score, but the point is: claimants too can join the struggle to stop the plant, and they should be welcomed.

Finally, what about the demand for Timex goods? It won't be easy cutting the demand from IBM, and we don't yet know if any progress has been made with the demand from cooker manufacturers. But Timex **watches** are sold around the world, and we don't have to wait for the unions to tell us talks are in the pipeline with people at Argos and high street jewellers.

It doesn't matter if they're produced in France—it's the same company, so let's hit them wherever we can. Everything that hits the bastards' profits must be good. '*340 Sacked—Don't Buy Timex*' is a message simple enough for everyone to understand, and we're therefore producing stickers for distribution in the main city high-streets.

COPS—FOUR DIFFERENT KINDS

● 1 THE BASTARDS IN ● BLUE

So the cops are driving in wood for the pickets' braziers. So they've only kidnapped a few people and stopped the odd bus. Poor darlings, they must be cold and bored too... Anyone who thinks like this should wise up fast. **The cops are the main reason work hasn't been stopped**—and for those who want to stop the plant they're the most important immediate enemy. The only reason they're there is to defend the 'right to scab'.

The police force only exists so that scum like Hall, Olsen, Major and Yeltsin can keep on collecting the profit from forcing the poor to work. So it's obvious that when workers look like reducing the bosses' profits, or preventing extra profits by resisting cuts in wages or conditions, the filth will turn up to protect management's right to manage. We could be wrong, but we have not sensed much hatred for the cops among the sacked strikers. We hope this changes soon. If the struggle hots up, it's bound to.

● 2 UNION COPS ●

Since victory means imagination, escalation, and a physical battle with the cops, rather than negotiations between Hall and a bunch of union bureaucrats, it's clear that the union leaders and structure will fight to stop workers doing the necessary. Already a Timex shop steward, banned by interdict from attending demonstrations, has been banned by the AEEU higher-ups from speaking at a rally held by Albion workers on the Clyde. They've also sent a letter to all strikers telling them that any more trouble on the picket-line could mean the withdrawal of union 'support', i.e. strike pay. Trade-unionism is thus directly conflicting with workers' solidarity and the escalation of trouble.

What the union leaders want is a drawn-out strike leading to a crappy deal on pensions or severance pay, if anything at all. They have made it very clear that they do not want work to stop, since that could only happen by violence, and they don't want that or any other kind of trouble. That would mean strikers and supporters acting together as a mass, and the union leaders would be left without a role. Indeed, they could easily be seen for the collaborating 'social firemen' that they are.

Of course union money could be sequestered, but one need only remember that if it was in the hands

of the workers in the first place, the workers could try themselves to hide it from the authorities, and try to escalate the strike at the same time. The idea of winning by long-term peaceful picketing, maybe extending into a second winter, is simply a fantasy. Of course escalation means solidarity. But it doesn't mean the 'labour movement', any more than it means waiting for parliamentary shitbags to go to committee meetings. Solidarity means standing together on the picket-line, fighting together against the police so as to stop the scab buses, getting support from as many other claimants and workers as possible; it means direct delegations to other workplaces, such as have already gone to Albion and the English coalfields.

● 3 LEFTY COPS ●

Everyone's heard about the presence of various extreme leftist parties on the picket-line. Most of them are easily spottable with their bunches of newspapers and their monotonous slogans.

The only kind of 'escalation' these parties want is one subordinate to the politicking of wally Trotskyists on one side, and the leaders of the STUC on the other. 'Get the STUC to call a general strike' they whinge. Maybe we should remember how much the STUC and TUC have supported us in the past... Like at Ravenscraig—remember?

Some details. In the Timex dispute the 'Socialist Workers' Party' (or Student Wallies' Party?) has been very strict in telling its members not to get involved in any trouble. Sell the paper, have a shout, make sure you wave your papers to the media, comrade! Meanwhile Militant have brought down their great leader "Shop'Em" Sheridan, a Glasgow councillor who advocated grassing after the London poll tax riot. We wonder how long the angry youth of places like Pollok will put up with such creeps.

People who encourage others to put their faith in union leaders, particularly TUC leaders, must be either very naive or else just manipulative bastards. For the leftist followers it's usually the first, whilst for the leaders and 'old hands' it's usually the second. Basically they don't think we're able to organise and fight without politicos telling us what to do. That's why they say we should try to get support from leaders of the official labour movement: they want us to bang our heads against brick

walls, fail, and hopefully then look to the Trots for leadership.

Of course this won't happen here, but it's still worth remembering that 'workers' governments' have always slashed living-standards whenever they have deemed it necessary, e.g. in Russia after 1917, or Nicaragua after 1982.

Whilst 'preparing for power' the leftists do want things to be stirred up a bit, but only on condition that the working class doesn't get completely out of external control. Then there'd be no need for representatives in union offices, lefty party-sellers and such like. People might even organise themselves to stick the boot in to the very roots of exploitation: money, work, and the State. And that the leftists simply couldn't tolerate.

● 4 MEDIA COPS ●

Recently the picket-line has seemed infested with cameramen and journalists, especially when they think there might be trouble. Quite a few journalists have given the impression that they support the strike.

A journalist for the big media is either a spy-cum-disinformationist for a huge company like Murdoch's multinational, or else works directly for State TV. It's a total illusion to think that any kind of coverage by these bastards can possibly benefit the strikers.

Strikers have either been portrayed like near-extinct animals in a zoo, or else as fodder for 'outside agitators' selling lefty papers. Journo Chris Fletcher interviewed 'all sides'—strikers, Peter Hall, scabs, some wally academic from Dundee Uni—for Murdoch's *Sunday Times* (28 March). Chris liked the women strikers: that's why the bastard described how they bent over and "moved with their hips" when Hall came out, "their bodies turning in perfect harmony with his car." Women who have refused to be treated like objects by Timex thus get their time and motion studied in the national press.

As for cameramen, we can only say that it's a shame people aren't more conscious of their mentality. These leeches like pictures of trouble. We all know that so far the trouble they've filmed has been exaggerated, but if a big battle breaks out **they won't hesitate to hand over their film to the police**. Some plainclothes photographers are probably coppers anyway. At the very least, anyone taking pictures should be hassled to explain themselves. ■