

The Week

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**The Struggle
for
Labour Party
Democracy**

THE WRONG EMERGENCY

54 Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham

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THE WRONG EMERGENCY

So Mr. Wilson has announced a State of Emergency. The time-worn ^{weapon} of successive Tory governments against striking miners, railwaymen and postmen, has now been deployed against the seamen. Mr. Wilson is to use the Navy, or troops, on ships and, if (as it certainly must become) necessary, dock work as well. It is utterly rash of the Prime Minister to pretend that he is not acting against the seamen. None of the powers he has taken are directed against the shipowners. He could easily have compelled them to answer the Hull seamen's demand that they open their books: More obviously, he could also have insisted that they yield to the 40-hour demand. If Labour had done as the TUC constitution says it should, the 40-hour week would be the law of the land anyway. An I.L.O. Convention of thirty years ago insists upon a legally enforceable work week of 40 hours: but successive Tory and Labour Governments have point-blank refused to ratify it. Instead of taking such elementary steps to defend the workpeople, Mr. Wilson moves against them. In backward Indonesia the ILO Convention is law, but not in Mr. Wilson's tough abrasive England. We now see who is to be tough and upon whom the abrasions are to be inflicted.

The seamen are aware of this duplicity. On Monday the Tower Hill branch of the N.U.S. expressed their dissatisfaction with Mr. Wilson's attitude towards their union. The right response has quickly come from the 60 Glasgow shop stewards, representing 75,000 men, who immediately wired the premier to protest against the introduction of a state of emergency. In the House of Commons, where Eric Heffer properly insisted that if troops were moved into the docks the dockers would regard this as a serious crisis, he spoke for every trade unionist. Mr. Wilson's answer was unspeakable: he said that the some of these crises were not spontaneously organised. Reds, in short, were under the bed. It is a good job that there are reds somewhere. Obviously they have not yet arrived at 10 Downing St.

M.P.s must not allow themselves to be intimidated by the premier's attacks: every trade unionist worthy of the name is in bounden duty to "deliberately organise" solidarity with the seamen. So too is every Labour politician worthy of the name. In Parliament it is vital that members should stand up against the "emergency", oppose it, and insist that the real culprits, the shipowners, be put under Governmental pressure. The shipowners must pay! Every worker must lend his support to the seamen to see that they do! Labour must unitedly call upon the premier to defend the people who elected him, not their exploiters. There must be a flood of demonstrations and protests against this emergency, which has a very simple aim - the maintenance of serfdom on British ships, and the curtailment of all trade union freedoms within the hoops of George Brown's disgraceful incomes policy.

(Another editorial note on page four)

MORE AND MORE DELEGATES ENROLLED FOR WORKERS' CONTROL SEMINAR by Ken Coates

The steering committee of the Centre for Socialist Education, last Saturday, discussed the forthcoming seminar on Industrial Democracy, arranged for June 25th and 26th in Nottingham. This meeting is shaping up to become the largest on the subject since the heyday of the workers' control movement just after the first world war. More and more trade councils and trade unions are sending delegates. The latest to register is Dumfries Trades Council.

From London, the Industrial Shop Stewards Defence Committee, set up at the recent very successful conference convened by the E.M.I. Shop Stewards, and at which Reg. Birch was one of the main speakers, has agreed to participate in a big way. A good number of stewards will be making the journey to Nottingham. The Defence Committee has published a most impressive indictment of the Government's incomes policy, a 136 page book by T. Cliff and C. Barker, with a preface by Reg. Birch, which sells at the ridiculously low price of 2/6. Copies of the book, "Incomes Policy, legislation and the Unions" are obtainable from 117, Carmelite Rd., Harrow Weald, Middlesex. Although the book is defensive in its argument, and concentrates mainly on providing ammunition to oppose George Brown's policy, without putting forward alternatives, it is still a mine of useful facts (We shall be publishing a review of the book by Tony Topham next week: Editors) which will be needed by every active militant. Undoubtedly it will figure among the papers discussed at the seminar, which will set up a special grouping to discuss its topic.

The campaign among miners will also prove most encouraging. Prior to the seminar, the Voice papers will be producing a special Miners' Voice which will put the case for workers' self management in the clearest terms. Joe Kenyon, from Barnsley, will be bringing a strong contingent of Yorkshire miners, who will also be meeting with fellow-workers from South Derbyshire, Scotland, and other areas.

A number of trade union leaders have sent greetings to the seminar. These included Dave Lambert, that staunch friend of good left wing causes, who is still convalescing and who, therefore, unfortunately will not be able to attend. Dave Lambert has frequently written on the question of workers' control in his union journal The Foundry Worker and some of his comments will be circulated among the papers of the conference.

There is a towering problem of accommodation in Nottingham. Will anyone who can offer a bed to a trade unionist attending the seminar, please write or telephone urgently to Geoff. Coggan, 47, Brindley Rd., Wollaton, Nottingham (Telephone 281364). Applications for credentials should be rushed, equally urgently, to same address.

A FURTHER NOTE ON THE CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRACY (see elsewhere in this issue)

On the home front, the supporters of the campaign for democracy consider that the key issues over the coming months are the nationalisation of steel, docks, and aircraft with workers control. All campaigns should be run on a tripartite basis with constituencies, trade unions and M.P.s involved of equality and coordinating their activities into a single campaign. A call went out at the meeting to all Labour democrats to organise themselves to preserve and strengthen rank-and-file within the Party. The London convenor will be pleased to assist other groups and individuals to coordinate their activities - please write c/o The Week.

of law and
lished and preserved,
was also necessary.
had already had the effect
the shop stewards' movement.
on workers' control and housing.

by Ken Tarbuck

to wreck an incomes policy without really trying", "First essential",
In the first place, the only hope of selling to the trade unions the idea
that it is in the interests of wage and salary earners to accept the
disciplines implied by an incomes policy lies in demonstrating to them that
real earnings will rise faster with such a policy in operation than without
one.....Secondly, there has been the unfortunate tendency for the incomes
policy to be applied in such a way that it has begun to look very much
as though there is one incomes policy for the rich and one for the poor -
or perhaps more accurately, one for the professional classes and one for the
rest. It is a matter of cold fact that the increases in incomes that have
taken the public's breath away since the incomes policy entered the picture
all affected professional groups - judges, doctors, top civil servants,
Members of Parliament and Ministers of the Crown."

Who said this? Not some naughty left-wing M.P., not some striking seaman,
not even a well-turned out member of ASSET - but Lombard, commentator in the
Financial Times (May 23rd). It seems as though Wilson's incomes policy is
like B.O. everyone knows about it, but even your best friend won't tell you.
Perhaps we should send a copy of the Financial Times to Mr. Wilson. But
maybe I'm wrong, because Lombard is Wilson's best friend.

At a meeting
Students, workers
people realised
because the U.S. was
using the pretext of 'oppression'
for the American people's movement.

Many New Zealanders picketed the U.S. warship when it anchored at Wellington harbour on May 17th. The newest guided missile destroyers in the U.S. navy, has provided support for the U.S.. Demonstrators carried slogans-"Warring Yanks, get out of Vietnam", "Mein Kampf- LBJ and Hitler's Bible". On May 16th, a hundred prominent citizens, including trade union leaders, university professors added their names to the list of 350 prominent New Zealanders who have already declared their opposition to New Zealand's participation in the Vietnam war.

About 4,000 West Germans held a demonstration and a rally in Frankfurt-Am-Main on May 22nd in protest against the Vietnam war. A telegram from the West German Socialist Students' Union to Chancellor Erhard was read out at the rally, and a leader of the union condemned the Bonn Government for its 'aid' to the South Vietnam regime.

EDITORIAL STOP PRESS: newspaper reports claim that the Labour Party National Executive Committee has expelled Ken Coates and barred a number of Nottingham Labour Party members from holding office for three years.

If this is true, protests should be sent to Transport House at once.

The London Labour Party's Annual Conference last week end opened with a motion of censure on Bob Mellish as Chairman, and revealed once again the folly of attacking personalities rather than promoting policies. Although there was considerable disgust at what Mellish had said at Blackpool, delegates could not connect with his function as London Chairman, the unions in particular swung in solidly behind him - and in the subsequent election his chairmanship was overwhelmingly confirmed.

On the new executive the constituencies voted for progressive candidates almost to a man - Ellis Hillman, Stephen Yeo, Illtyd Harrington, Hugh Jenkins, Joan Lestor, Gladys Dimson and others were elected. In the union section the move was the other way - most of the places being secured by paid officials who enjoy taking the occasional afternoon off. (Those who do their jobs with the most enthusiasm are too busy to attend.) It is high time the trade union rank and file woke up and exercised the powers which are rightly theirs. At present we have the Transport and General Workers voting for Bert Fry, the District Secretary, who voted in favour of the Immigration White Paper - in flat contradiction to his union's policy. Unless officials are called to order by their executives or delegations they nominate and vote for themselves and their luncheon partners in other unions year after year.

Active trade unionists should demand that at least half the elected positions should be taken by lay members. A motion calling for Executive meetings to be held in the evenings was quite closely defeated - further strengthening the position of the paid officials.

In the debate on party structure, the Executive said it would press the N.E.C. for a new democratic Greater London Labour Party. This raised some hollow laughs; particularly when Mellish side-stepped repeated demands for a rank and file all London delegate conference to discuss the party's future.

Highlight of the conference was the report given to the seamen in an emergency resolution
the Gover

MINERS DEMONSTRATE IN GERMANY

from D.P.A.

2,500 West German coal-miners held a rally and demonstration in Essen (large city in the Ruhr) on May 21st, demanding a wage increase and protesting against short-time work enforced by employers. Placards carried by the demonstrators demanded an immediate halt to short-time work and opposed the Government and mine-owners attempts to shift the burden of the mining industry crisis onto the workers' shoulders. Walter Arendt, chairman of the West German Mining and Power Workers' Trade Union, declared at the rally that the miners would carry on the struggle and take strike action if necessary. In countering the aggravated sales crisis of hard coal, West German employers are resorting more and more to short-time work. Wages lost by the miners from short-time work reached about 2,500,000 marks since the beginning of this year.

NEWSPAPER WORKERS STRIKE IN ITALY

Italian newspaper and news-agency workers went on a 24 hour nationwide strike*for the renewal and improvement of their collective agreements. The strike prevented all Italian newspapers from publishing the evening papers and the morning papers on the 18th May, and stopped news-agencies from broadcasting. Strikes for similar demands were held by 70,000 quarrymen on May 17th and 40,000 miners on May 16th. Ground crews and office workers of the Italian state-owned airline company 'Alitalia' began a four-day strike in Rome on the evening of May 21st. The strike was held after negotiations for the renewal and improvement of the collective agreement had broken off. * on 17th May

SEVEN MILLION FRENCH WORKERS GO INTO ACTION

Seven million French workers from both the public and private sectors of the economy went on a 24 hour General Strike on May 17th for higher wages and shorter working hours. This is the biggest industrial action taken by French workers in recent years. The stoppage affects gas, electricity, public transport, postal services, banks, and the chemical, metallurgical and textile industries. Workers are demanding a 6%

workers in

fitable

THE POLITICAL ASSASSINATION IN DETROIT

The following statement was issued May 17, by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, 873 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003:

"A young socialist anti-war fighter, Leo Bernard, was slain yesterday in the Detroit headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party by an ultra-reactionary gunman. Two other Wayne State University students, Jan Garrett and Walter Graham, are in the hospital, critically wounded.

"This shocking, tragic and ominous deed is not an isolated act. It follows the bombing of the W.E.B. DuBois Club offices in San Francisco and the bombing of the headquarters of the Berkeley Vietnam Day Committee. The pattern is one of terroristic intimidation against the American anti-war, anti-racist, radical youth and socialist forces. The Detroit victims were members of the Socialist Workers Party or the Young Socialist Alliance, both energetic participants in the protest movements against U.S. intervention in Vietnam and in the Freedom Now struggle of the Negro people.

"This murderous assault was politically motivated. It was a product of the witch-hunt atmosphere that has been stirred up and intensified by the "dirty" war in Vietnam. From the White House on down to the John Birchers and the Ku Klux Klan, the country is being incessantly incited against the "communist menace". Today's glorified "hero" is the killer in the green beret in South East Asia. This bloody blow at the anti-war and socialist forces is a terrorist attempt to curb dissent. It is a tragic confirmation of the recent warning by Sen. Fulbright that the war hysteria whipped up by all the reactionary forces, beginning with the Pentagon, menaces freedom of speech and the hard won liberties of the American people.

"Taking the official propaganda as a cue and a licence, the Detroit murderer armed himself and set out to kill some "communists". This super-patriotic supporter of Washington's foreign policy of intervening against "Communism" in places like Vietnam and Santo Domingo, is like many others also a rabid white supremacist. In March he applied for admission to Verwoerd's South Africa, saying he was "armed and prepared to fight against the communists". Unlike the mercenaries hired by the CIA to crush the freedom fighters in the Congo, he was turned down and so took to hunting for victims closer to home.

"American capitalism and its rulers are becoming increasingly prone to violence. Over TV and radio, in the press and comic books, violence is shown and is glorified day and night. The supreme madness of this system is the stock-piling of nuclear weapons capable of wiping out the entire race. And Johnson's policy of escalating the war in Vietnam has made this possibility very real.

"The Socialist Workers Party, as the most intransigent opponent of U.S. imperialism, mourns the martyred Leo Bernard. But it pledges to fight all the more resolutely to advance the socialist cause for which he died. The best way to honor Leo Bernard is to stand firm and close ranks against all assaults by the forces of reaction. Defend the right of Americans to speak out! Build a bigger, stronger anti-war movement! Forward to a socialist America in a socialist world - a society cleansed of violence, where peace, justice, equality and an end to poverty can be realised!"

(The latest issue of The Militant, that of May 21st, contains a full report of this event and the reactions to it by the American radical movement. It can be obtained from: The Militant Publishing Association, 873, Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003. Messages of solidarity should also go to the same address.)

Amongst the Papers already submitted for discussion at the forthcoming Workers' Control Seminar in Nottingham, is the following plan for an Occupational Health Service drawn up by the Socialist Medical Association:

Campaign for an Occupational Health Service

There is now wide agreement in the Labour Movement on the necessity for such a service. What is now needed is a plan to implement it in progressive steps. The programme we put forward is detailed below. It is essential, if the impetus of the campaign is to be maintained, to ensure that the Government now commits itself to a firm time-table. If the Labour Government appears to be dragging its feet on what is, after all, a life and death matter, we shall forfeit the respect of the working people.

1) It would be valuable for the Government to announce its intention to introduce an O.H.S. to promote understanding and to lead discussion. Above all, the purpose of legislation is to provide a framework within which voluntary effort and responsibility will be stimulated. Personal responsibility is essential for safety, but will come about only through involvement in running a scheme such as we have outlined.

2) We also feel sure that the stimulus to productivity will be valuable and educative. The most technically advanced industry is in our experience most concerned with, and most advanced in, safety measures. Firms producing dangerous chemicals are more aware of toxic hazards, being large-scale and employing automatic or semi-automatic processes, than the secondary users, generally less technically advanced. The O.H.S. will save valuable skilled labour time, whether through prevention (22 million working days lost through accidents alone) or speedy and effective treatment. It is time to say we cannot afford not to have an O.H.S.

3) The two immediate measures we consider primary are the setting up of group industrial health schemes, and legislation for safety delegates. (The principles of the latter are detailed in the second part of this paper) On group schemes, we suggest a start with 30 major industrial areas financed by the Government, with Government control and co-ordination. They would follow the pioneering work of Nuffield in Harlow, Slough, and so on, but with the advantage of having Government facilities and not being paternalistic. Trade Unions in these areas can then press their employers to join the scheme, and employers would finance the running (at 1s. a worker a week). We have also suggested a levy if areas are designated and that support of the scheme be made compulsory. The existing group schemes required £20,000 to £40,000 each to set up, and thus we are only asking for £1 million initially - chicken feed compared with the analogous Industrial Training Act.

Once a start has been made, the following points will have to be dealt with:

- 4) Preparation of legislation to codify statutes and extend them to all workers.
- 5) Co-ordination of Government Departments, with an Inter-departmental Working Party to plan and implement in stages a full O.H.S.
- 6) Regional Committees under it, appropriately constituted.
- 7) Reassessment of penalties for infringement of regulations, and machinery for enforcing compliance (note the Road Traffic Acts provide for imprisonment for dangerous driving, the Factory Acts a maximum fine of £300)
- 8) Strengthening the Factory Inspectorate (it would be doubled for £1½ million)

- 9) Creation of a separate medical inspectorate, with central and regional organisation, to include a reformed appointed factory doctor system with advisory powers, and to integrate all doctors in the field, including those in private employ.
- 10) The use of existing and intended health centres to provide occupational health cover and involve general practitioners. Harlow shows this can be done. There are already many applicants for vacancies for the appointed factory doctors. Moreover, it is essential to shift the emphasis in thinking towards a preventive service, to use the full facilities of the National Health Service for this, and thus in turn improve the preventive aspects of the N.H.S. The Health Centre alone can combine clinical and preventive medicine.
- 11) Extension of designated industrial diseases, e.g. to occupational deafness and chronic bronchitis.
- 12) The setting up of a central research and reference centre, and regional research facilities.
- 13) Integration of the hospital service: (a) with a regionally organised accident and casualty service to provide a special traumatic unit (the Birmingham Accident Hospital is internationally known), district general units with consultant cover, and co-ordination of hospital G.P. and accident prevention work. (b) Occupational hygiene laboratory services through group laboratories. (c) Specialist advice for radiography, dermatology, chest diseases, etc.
- 14) Extension of training facilities for doctors, nurses and safety officers in universities, medical schools and colleges of technology (i.e. Dundee).
- 15) Government-financed health education and safety propaganda, using the mass media and co-ordinating the Ministry of Labour and voluntary organisations.
- 16) Progressive development of proposed wage-linked sickness benefit towards a full sick pay cover scheme, and revision of injury benefit and disability awards.

Safety Delegates

We lay great stress on the part workers will play in running the scheme through the system of Safety Delegates. It is important for the Labour Movement to discuss in detail the functions and rights of these delegates, and we set below our suggestions:

- 1) A safety delegate shall be elected in every workplace to speak for the workers on safety questions.
- 2) There shall be one delegate for each 25 workers.
- 3) In workplaces employing 50 or over, a joint safety committee must be set up between management and safety delegates.
- 4) A safety delegate must have the right to pursue his duties during working hours and to have time off to receive training without loss of pay, including piecework and bonus payments which should be made up by employers from a special fund. He must be protected from victimisation.
- 5) His statutory rights shall include: (a) Regular inspection of the works. (b) Studying accident and health records. (c) To call in the medical officer or inspector. (d) To be informed of, and to accompany them on, their visits. (e) To receive their reports in writing. (f) To supervise safety education of workers, and especially entrants and young workers.

Over /

(g) To supervise dangerous processes. (h) To ensure compliance with regulations and the posting of safety regulations. (i) To compel stoppage of production pending the calling in of a higher authority from the O.H.S.

6) The above safety delegate is envisaged as part-time. There shall also be full-time delegates, to be called safety, health and welfare officers, where appropriate: e.g. in large enterprises employing thousands of workers, or when employed by group schemes. They would be paid by the O.H.S. on the same principle as full-time shop stewards' convenors, at a rate comparable with or just above the craft rate, and elected for a period of, say 3 years. They will have more training than the part time delegates, and are to be regarded as part of the career structure and a potential recruiting source for the inspectorate, engineering and technical staff of the O.H.S.

7) The trade union appropriate to the industry, or a confederation of the unions involved, shall have the right: (a) To represent workers on safety by making a closed shop agreement with employers. (b) To negotiate by collective bargaining safety schemes, if as good or better than those provided by legislation. (c) To appoint trade union officials to speak on safety in workplaces which are not trade union organised, or cannot supply a safety delegate, or by reason of fluctuating labour force (e.g. construction) cannot supply a safety delegate with adequate experience. The trade union would have to reach agreement with the workers on this representation. (d) To appoint a trade union official as the safety, health and welfare officer, by agreement.

8) The power of delegates and of Safety, Health and Welfare Officers to be parallel to, but separate from, the firm's safety officers, who are part of management; and management clearly retains responsibility in law for safety.

9) The delegate and Safety, Health and Welfare Officers shall be able, in the event of dispute with the workers over compliance with safety, to appeal for arbitration to the trade union O.H.S. Appeals Committee. The S.H. & W. Officer shall have power to initiate prosecution, with their trade union backing them, in the same way as the inspectorate.

11) The inspectorate shall have powers to enforce advice on safety, on threat of prosecution and subject to appeal to the O.H.S., irrespective of the letter of the law in Factory Acts.

12) Management in specified dangerous trades (e.g. construction, chemicals) to be required to have certificates of competence in safety, as in the mines now.

13) There should be special district courts with legal, trade union and employers' representation, to deal with prosecution and arbitrate in disputes (compare Rivers, Prevention of Pollution, Acts)

14) There must be advice available to the delegate and Health, Safety and Welfare Officer not only by area, but also for specific problems and special processes where expert guidance is needed, not available from lower level inspectorate or safety officer/engineer.

15) The delegates, the Safety, Health and Welfare Officer, inspector, industrial nurse and medical officer, and the firms' safety officer, shall form a team and hold meetings to determine policy from time to time, as appropriate.

DEMOCRATIC CONTROL CAMPAIGN STARTS from Unitas

A meeting was held last week of representatives of all sections of the labour movement concerned at the decline of democracy in the Labour Party. 42 delegates attended. It was agreed that 'Democratic Control' was now a key issue - ranking in importance with common ownership. Control of industry by workers, of trade unions by their rank and file, of the Labour Party by its members, of M.P.s by their constituencies, of the Executive by M.P.s - these are the immediate tasks before us.

A number of decisions were taken. In foreign policy first priority is to end American intervention in Vietnam - and an immediate stop to the bombing. The Labour Party must step up its pressure on the Government to abandon its East of Suez policy. Resolutions should be sent to the Parliamentary Party, and also to M.P.s who should be asked to call for a debate in the Parliamentary Party. (First step towards democratising Parliament!) Study groups were set up on "Nationalisation and workers' control"; "Sterling and the Balance of Payments"; "Incomes Policy"; and "Foreign Policy". The first three will report back within a fortnight on proposed resolutions and future campaigns.

There was considerable discussion about this year's elections to the N.E.C. following a similar meeting held at Blackpool. It was finally decided that the following sitting members deserved support:

Tom Driberg;
Ian Mikardo.

It was also decided to support only the two runners-up from last year to avoid splitting the vote:

Sidney Silverman;
Frank Allaun.

Support for further sitting members will be reviewed in two weeks' time.

CAMBRIDGE C.S.E. HITS THE HEADLINES by Dave Laing

The first major meeting of Cambridge CSE hit the headlines in the local press because of a clause in a resolution passed unanimously which called on the town's new Labour M.P., Mr. Robert Davies, to vote against any anti-trade union legislation. The local paper's attempts to characterise C.S.E. as a "breakaway" group, however, were successfully countered by letters from local rank and file Labour Party members who are active in the work of the centre.

The meeting which attracted over 20 people on a Sunday afternoon, was addressed by John Palmer, and afterwards a committee of seven, representative of all sections of the local labour movement, was elected to plan future activities. The secretary of Cambridge C.S.E. is now Martin Housden of 38, Warkworth St., Cambridge.

THIRD ISSUE OF VIETNAM SOLIDARITY BULLETIN OUT SOON

The third issue of the Vietnam Solidarity Bulletin will be out over the Whitsun week end. It will contain all the discussion material for the Vietnam Solidarity Conference which is to be held the following week end, June 4 and 5. It can be obtained from 8, Roland Gardens, 9d post paid. A year's subscription (12 issues) costs 9/- post paid.

The N.U.M. has not played a positive role in the labour movement for some time, indeed it has not taken a positive attitude to most key questions which are of importance to the future of the miners. Today, however, with the National Power Loading Agreement, new ground has been opened, a new arena for discussion and struggle is open. The agreement has been steam-rollered around the areas by members of the National Executive, being in the process described as a "breakthrough", a "historic step", "revolutionary," etc. Thus a policy from the pyramidal head of the union came showering down on the rank and file, clouded by all the rhetoric the officers could muster.

Judging by the results of the area ballots, it seems obvious that, even though the full pressure of union officials was behind the agreement, at least a large section of the rank and file want time to think. What was needed was a policy that could unite the whole of the miners, and hence give the N.U.M. a solidarity it has lacked for years. By this "acid test" alone, the balloting deems it a massive failure.

The proposed breakthrough which the agreement sought was one of equality. The union deemed it against union principles that certain areas should, by virtue of better geological conditions, receive wages greater than those in other areas. A most notable and worthy principle, but to allow men's reason to be clouded by this and support a "national agreement at any price" policy is purely opportunist. The agreement, although promising parity of wages between area by 1971, has a serious and reactionary nature to it. In entirety it presupposes that the union has only a right to "consultation", thus assuming and making concrete, with the N.U.M.'s consent, the managerial prerogatives. The union also surrenders its previously won rights by agreeing to co-operate in the maximum utilisation of machines, without demanding a larger share of the extra productivity.

The bitterness of this pill is that whilst the N.C.B. received a 30% rise in productivity, the complete self-financing of all new investment (with £40 million a year to spare); an increase in its operating surplus of over £70 million a year, the miners received stagnating earnings, increased insecurity and an increase in accident rates. Thus how can a union describe an agreement as "revolutionary" when a miner cannot receive the full benefits of his past labour? How can it be a "breakthrough" when it makes concrete and universal that the union only a right to consultation. A National Power Loading Agreement has always been a nettle that the N.U.M. has refused to grasp. To its credit it attempted to grasp it, but apparently dropped it when it realised the implication it incurred. Any real coming to terms with the problem would have meant a challenge to all managerial prerogatives and raised the demand for workers' control of the industry. This has been avoided and consequently the rank and file are split by virtue of having, at the moment, no positive policies of their own. It is important that the miners should succeed in advancing the frontiers of workers' control in their industry, for, with their industrial strength and the concessions already won, they are in a powerful position to lead the workers in other industries who are still struggling for their basic rights.

The N.U.M. leadership has failed to recognise this and now any positive policies must come from the rank and file. The demand for workers' control should be the cornerstone of all our policies. To achieve this aim would indeed be a "breakthrough", anything short would mean a continuance of the status quo. Today's position within the N.U.M. makes necessary and urgent a truly representative policy, which purveys the hopes and aspirations of the miners as a whole. Therefore it is imperative that any future policy must as a first fundamental have a clear and determined will with regards to workers' control.

* Mr. Sherratt is a member of the Executive of the South Derbyshire Miners.