ENGINEERS: FIRST TO STAND UP TO FOOT’S PHASE 3

A FULL six months after putting in their claim, the engineering workers decided this week to launch an unusual campaign to begin, on Easter Monday, April 15th.

The decision was taken at the Confederation of Employers and Engineering Unions was supported by all its 19 member unions, but only the right-wing-dominated electronics EPTU.

The engineers’ pay claim calls for a rise of £10 in the basic rate for craftsmen, to push the basic up from £25 to £35 per week, and a cut in hours to 35. The employers’ last offer, rejected by the unions as disingenuous, was a rise of £1.50 for craftsmen and £2 for labourers.

The employers claim that the engineers’ case is not one of pay disparity issues, as their union has already signed a new agreement with the employers.

The union leaders are trying to evade the issue of Phase 3 by arguing that it would be impossible to increase the basic rate, leave plenty for negotiation at local level, and still remain within Phase 3. It is expected that Employment Secretary Michael Foot will intervene to attempt a settlement.

The unions’ case appears to be one of whether or not the government has succeeded in pulling the sting out of the unions. The bosses’ press knows that it is a test case for the ‘Social Contract’ confidence trick in which the working class is expected to be satisfied with a few spurious promises of a new deal. The Social Contract’s ideal for the working class under Wilson’s government of a ferocious and bewildered rabble, begging open-handedly for what the government, in their humanitarian wisdom, are prepared to let them have.

But the engineers are showing that, despite their leadership’s passivity, they have learned the lesson that concessions are made not when you beg with your hand open, but when you shake your fist in their faces. The do-gooders are the first to challenge Labour’s attempt to continue with Phase 3.

The engineers have a big fight. If they use it, they can finish off Labour’s Phase 3.

NEW FINES ON AUEW: SCRAPS NIRC NOW

NO-ONE seems to have told Sir John Donaldson of the Industrial Relations Court that he is due, according to the pledges of the new Labour government, to walk the plank by May Day. The £47,000 compensation just awarded against the AUEW is an award made by an arrogant Trafalgar reactionary backed up by an anti-union works court.

The £47,000 damages – for what? Con Mech is a company which, in this day and age, dared to refuse negotiating rights to the union its workers had created in the shop, and which then went on to sack two stewards who tried to negotiate. Even a biased commission of inquiry set up under the Industrial Relations Act itself found the company’s attitude indefensible – but the commission is a joke.

The compensation includes half the £355,000 fine by the firm for sending three scabs to work on holidays in Majorca so that they could take over the union from Con Mech’s workers. The union isn’t just “bad” by the court for behaving as a union fighting for its members. It is humiliatingly forcing the firm to pay the scabs who crossed the picket line.

Not a single penny of the fine should be paid! We should not be making any such fine. It is the first fine with the Labour government in power – and it must be the last.

The government is pledged to remove the Act. It should not wait. It must scrap it now – and return all union money seized or demanded by the NIRC to the unions. Immediately it should begin to restore all operations that had been holding the unions to ransom between now and May.

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BUDGET: NO HOWLS FROM THE RICH

DENNIS Healey promised there would be “howls of anguish” from the rich when the budget appeared. But if there were going to be howls of anguish – they would be from anyone who had illusions that this was going to be a socialist budget.

Small tax benefits for the lower paid; subsidies on a few food prices; cigarettes and beer up; old age pensions up to £10 single and £16 for a couple; corporation tax up by 13p.

No wealth tax, which Labour promised. And the promised gift tax to plug loopholes in death duty procedure is postponed “until the autumn.”

This is not even a radical budget. The concessions on taxes to lower-paid workers and increases in pensions will largely come out of the increased revenues from indirect taxes on cigarettes, foodstuffs and petrol. Healey thus gives to sections of workers what he largely taken from other workers. Indirect taxes, especially on basic items, always hit at the lower paid. The increased taxes on rich do far less even than reversing the concessions made by the Tories to the wealthy.

The paltry food subsidies aim at slowing down the rise in food prices. This is welcome, though it also means the high profits of the food monopolies are being subsidised by taxpayers instead of slashed. But it is a matter of fact that if it slows the rate of increase, it will – and it is intended to – postpone the day of reckoning when the Phase 3 threshold agreement wage increases fall due – now expected to arrive in May.

The prospect of those thresholds being tripped sends shivers up the spines of the bosses and the government.

The pension rises are the best part of the budget from a working class point of view. Even here the pension, after the increase, will only reach 22% of the average wage. That’s quite a standard for living for those who have worked a lifetime for the bosses of Britain. It is a lower percentage than that of almost any other European country.

In terms of managing the economy, the budget is generally said to be ‘neutral’ or on the distributionally neutral side. In other words, the world economic situation is so unclear that the Chancellor doesn’t know how to be a neutral budget. He is making them jump through the hoops of Phase 3 in return for the phased repeal.

It is also, of course, designed to sweeten the atmosphere in what is, after all, a period leading up to a general election, in June or in the Autumn.

Howls of anguish from the bosses about the people who made £49,453 million profit out of the workers last year? A few howls from the Labour right, perhaps. But they are not going out of business, or even seriously hurt.

The budget shows that workers can rely on the government for little to advance our interests. We are left to our own resources, to our own resistance, to direct action. Militant action must stay in business, too.
Defeats in Africa shake Portugal

The Portuguese regime is busy trying to paint last week's military fiasco in Africa by General Spinola, as the work of a crank whose actions might shake the reality of Portuguese overseas empires, a threat to appear to be borne out by the fact that the armed colonialists, some of whom were disarmed officers, had driven to the outskirts of Lisbon, was so seriously disarmed and then sent back home. This opposition is in fact the case.

Portugal is at present wrecked by the internal operations of its own colonial rule in Africa. Unlike the more advanced imperialist nations such as Britain and France, Portugal never looked seriously to the possibility of a national association with its colonialist relationship with its former colonies. For this reason, it attempted a combination of "assimilation" and "indigenization" into Portugal, with tragic results (see below) ... and massacre the national words and the latter's

Liberated

But for over a decade now the policy of colonialism, with a few exceptions, in Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, is an increasingly successful national liberation movement. No longer is Portugal, either "assimilated" nor massified, a country independent from Portugal.

From the end of 1961 to 1962, African Africa have been financed by Portugal, and today even the USA and South Africa. They fear that the whole of Southern Africa is no longer a country independent from Portugal. For example, South Africa have been financed by Portugal, and today even the USA and South Africa. They fear that the whole of Southern Africa is no longer a country independent from Portugal.

Thus, in the light of the present situation in Africa, all are doomed. The national liberation governments administer areas with stable institutions covering in some cases partially and certainly the territory of these colonial states. So much so that General Spinola, as a state of the United States, and its representatives are official delegates to social democratic parties conferences too, the Portuguese colonialists are willing to give up any semblance of a Portuguese identity as a people of Mozambique and, more and more, as a people of France.

This is an example of the Portuguese Bourgeoisie's case, but also of the Portuguese case as a whole. The Portuguese Bourgeoisie's case is a classic example of the process of decolonization.
conditions are that the debtor country should balance its trade and its trade with exports should not exceed its imports. It is not yet clear whether this rule will be applied to all debtor countries or only to those that are unable to pay their debts. It is not clear whether this rule will be applied to all debtor countries or only to those that are unable to pay their debts.
CONCORDE: 'WORK OR FULL PAY' CALL FROM BRISTOL T.C.

If you come across a group who proposed a mass action campaign, its campaign against the 34-hour working week, who called for better pay, and who then called it off when, two weeks or so after it was proposed, it was near actual consumption, you would say it was pure sea weather.

The policy that has the British ruling class — through successive governments, the TUC and the other unions, and those who browbeat them — has done over Concorde.

The leadership of the Concorde campaign is more than just an object lesson in the narrowness of its aims and the need for socialism. Apart from the extra ten million pesos that have been saved with Concorde, the campaign has been a much better policy for the future of society and industry rather than the current one.

On 28 March, union representatives flew to Paris for talks with representatives from the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) and the French government.

The basic demand of the Concorde workers is that the negotiations put forward in the Trades Union Congress resolution — work or full maintenance. If Concorde is not continued, jobs must be found for all those working on it, without loss of pay. To be flexible in ways in which the skills of those being released can be put to use — even on other projects. The policy adopted under Concorde must be answered immediately by factory occupations.

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1st March will be Hugh Fenn's 22nd birthday, and 4th April, his 23rd, and he was born on 13 May, 1968. Pitmen have been working for over two years.

Pic: in support of victimised 'Rank & File' member Dorothy McColgan

R & F should draw in militant teachers who are not very aware politically, without any explicit 'brought home' attitude. But R & F should also fight to help make teachers aware. R & F has decided to campaign against the government in schools. And how can that campaign be effective if R & F is silent about what the government is doing in Ireland?

The 'trade-unionist' approach could fail in part to R & F's failure to organise those connected in the attraction of the struggle in Ireland.

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Home Office turns down hunger strikers' petition

Clay X must not pay fine!

FROM words to deeds is a long way for some people.

The October 1973 annual conference of the Trades Union Congress passed a resolution supporting Clay X and condemning the Home Office for repaying the fines levied on people who were seeking to defy the Housing Act.

On 27th March, the National Democratic Front Party, Concorde菱 and the Clay X Party and other next pert state to defy the Housing Act.

If the government moves to collect the fines, to jail the organisers for non-payment, or to deduct it from the ex-convict's wages, there must be a storm of protest.

There were useful discussions at the conference on these questions. But, however, it has been agreed politically to brake the housing flows of open to direct action and organised strike action.

A key question, raising its head at a meeting of the Coordinating Group, was whether R & F should confine itself to the trade-unionists' situation or, on pay and conditions, and on the question of solidarity — or whether it should work with other workers, as a trade union, in the national movement to find a solution. Based particularly on this country's experience of the position of the struggle in Ireland.

The International Socialists, who are the dominant political group in the UK, have issued a call to R & F must expand to include other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events. The R & F must not support other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events. The R & F must not support other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events. The R & F must not support other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events. The R & F must not support other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events. The R & F must not support other sections of the working class, and the R & F should exploit this tendency in recent events.