

COMBINE NEWS

LUCAS AEROSPACE COMBINE SHOP STEWARDS COMMITTEE

YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: M. COONEY
PHONE: 0282 25051 (BURNLEY)

LIAISON OFFICER: R. MILLS
PHONE: 021 707 1242 (BIRMINGHAM)

TREASURER: D. CONROY
PHONE: 0282 21158 (BURNLEY)

E.C. MEMBER: J. GUNTER
PHONE: 021 770 3671 (BIRMINGHAM)

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Secretary: E F Scarbrow, 86 Mellow Lane East,
Hayes, Middx. Phone 01 848 9604

FOR the past five years the Combine has been a real thorn in the Company's side. Over the past two years it has been able to prevent the Company from sacking large numbers of workers and forced the Company to resort to its now famous 'natural wastage' techniques.

IT HAS shown, through its 'Corporate Plan', that there are a host of other products on which we could be working if there is a recession in our traditional field of activity.

IT HAS successfully campaigned for the right of Lucas workers to have a say in how their £140 million in the pension funds is used and it won the right for Lucas workers to elect their own trustee directors to the pension fund board.

IT HAS exposed the manner in which the Company continues to cut our real standard of living. It was correct in asserting two years ago that the only way to defend against this was by 'indexing' wages to the cost of living.

IT HAS established a "Science and Technology Advisory Service" which provides information on the hazards associated with new materials and new processes. This service was the first of its kind and received widespread acclaim.

WARNED

IT HAS established links with the wider trade union movement, the T.U.C., and also with trade unionists abroad.

IT HAS, in short, fought fearlessly for your interests and has refused to become an adjunct of the personnel department. Because of this the Company determined some time ago that the Combine Committee would have to be destroyed. We warned you of this in the September issue of "Combine News".

Firstly the Company split off three sites at Bracknell, Bath and Neasden and called them the 'Defence Systems Groups'. It did so without any consultation with the workforce involved and simply imposed its will.

Then it suddenly refused to recognise the Combine. It did this although the Directors of Aerospace had met the Combine Committee on a number of occasions.

UNDERSTANDINGS

The latest attempt by the Company is to set up a separate manual workers combine. They have been conniving at this for some time. In fact the personnel director, Mr Whitney, boasted to a Norwegian journalist that the Combine would soon be split with the emergence of a separate manual workers combine. This would be led by "reasonable"

LOCKOUTS

IT HAS been evident over the past few months that, since it has succeeded in dividing off a few misguided shop stewards committees, the Company feels it can now go on the attack.

Disputes at a number of sites, in many instances brought about by management arrogance, shows that they feel in a good position to attack the workforce at this stage. Whichever site comes under attack the Combine Committee will

take whatever steps it can to defend the interests of the workers on those sites.

In Burnley recently the staff workers said that they were unwilling to take on extra responsibilities and would just work according to those responsibilities laid down in their job specifications. It should be clearly understood that this was not a question of working to rule, but simply doing the work that their job specifications required.

The reaction of the Company was to insist upon extra work being done or they would stop payment of wages to those involved. In fact the Company did actually stop payment of their wages for a short time.

The same thing was done to some manual workers at Hemel Hempstead. There the Company was insisting that it alone could unilaterally decide what their job functions were. When the workforce refused to

accept this arrogant attitude by the Company, payment of their wages was stopped, which actually meant of course that they were locked out. In fact, some 80 assembly and test workers were locked out for 4 weeks.

All of this really shows that the Company is now prepared to go on the attack and any weakening of the Combine Committee is inevitably a strengthening of the Company's hand.

... any divisions... can only play into the hands of the company

people with whom the Company could have 'understandings'. He said this to the journalist several weeks before anybody in the Combine knew that such a development was to take place.

The general manager of the Defence Systems Group, Mr Felix Sturm, (known as the "Undertaker" because of the departments he has rationalised into the grave) also boasted to the Convener at G & E Bradleys that the Combine was being broken up. Then, when a few shop stewards were foolish enough to announce that they were going to do the Company's bidding and set up a manual workers combine, the Company announced, in exactly the same week, that it intended to sack a further 1100 people at Burnley, Birmingham and Liverpool.

BEING USED

We sincerely hope that the few shop stewards involved in this escapade will realise how the Company is using them and that they will soon return to the Combine proper. Meantime, whilst the Company now refuses to recognise the real Combine Committee it provides facilities for this "alternative" to meet, appropriately enough, on the Company's premises. Some senior management in Birmingham now refer to this alternative as the 'Muppet Show'.

The problems facing Lucas Aerospace are now really massive and any divisions of this kind can only play into the hands of the Company. The Combine would welcome back those who, perhaps genuinely, have felt that there was a need for a different kind of organisation. The structure of the Combine Committee is flexible enough to accommodate any particular wishes that they would have.

COMPANY ON THE ATTACK

WOLVERHAMPTON

THE MOST direct attack the Company has made on the Aerospace workforce is now being made on the manual workers at Wolverhampton.

A Group Incentive Bonus Scheme operates at this site, and although the workers in machining, detailing and machine shop areas were earning bonus, the Company insisted that the bonus earnings were not high enough. By which they meant they were not forcing the workforce to go as fast as they, the Company, determined to be acceptable.

In a statement issued on 15 June the Company stated "It had been our intention by working to 25 per cent layoffs in certain areas, to match labour needs to the restricted productivity levels". The Company then insisted that assurances must be given, by the 17 June, that the Company's levels of production would be reached, otherwise they would stop all payments to machinists, detailers, and machine shop inspectors as from June 20.

LUTON

THE JOINT shop stewards committee at Luton report a number of serious developments at that site. The Company is planning to reduce the factory space by at least 120,000 square feet. This is obviously part of the Company's long term rationalisation plan.

There is a shortage of work at this site

but, as usual, the local management are incapable of doing anything about it and are really just "messenger boys" for the main Aerospace board. Another glaring example of "failed management".

However, like most failed management, they are subservient to the main board yet are aggressive and militant when dealing with their workforce. Part of this new aggressiveness is to be seen in their refusal to permit joint meetings, in the Company's time, of the staff and works unions. They will not permit "report back" meetings longer than fifteen minutes in the Company's time and are systematically trying to confine union activities to lunch breaks. If the workforce has a mass meeting at that site they are then threatened with a lockout.

This new aggressiveness to the unions is evident at a number of sites. At Luton there is also the remarkable state of affairs where industrial relations are conducted by a part-time Personnel Manager who graces the site with his presence when he feels like it.

It is really remarkable, in a multi national company like Lucas, how primitive and inept their industrial relations are once one gets beyond a few "top brass."



In an attempt to destroy the shop stewards committee the Company went on to state "These assurances must be not just of the negotiating committee, nor just of the shop stewards, but of all machinists, detailers and machine shop inspection".

When the 400 workers in these departments refused to be intimidated by this attack, the Company stopped their payments from the 20 June. This is of course the Company's new way of operating a "lock-out". On 20 June 400 workers found that their clock cards had been removed and the power turned off.

The Company had hoped that they would set the rest of the workforce against the 400 in question. In fact, the Company's vicious action had the opposite effect. The other 600 workers came out in solidarity with the 400 the Company had already locked out.

It is clear that there is something much bigger behind the Company's strange behaviour in this situation. It is also clear that no neutral body could uphold, or support the inexplicable behaviour of the management. Throughout the dispute the trade union side has abided by the procedural arrangements. The official statement issued by the A.U.E.W. shop stewards states "Although normal working was being carried out the management took steps to prevent our members working, although a retrospective failure to agree was registered".

EFFECT

The Executive Committee of the A.U.E.W. has made this dispute "official". This means that they are supporting the 1000 members who are out of work. In fact, the whole of the Fordhouses site is closed down with the exception of some staff areas which are continuing to work with the agreement of the joint shop stewards committee of manual and staff workers.

This attack on the workforce at Wolverhampton is one of the most vicious we have seen in Lucas Aerospace for a number of years. It fits into the same pattern as the events at Burnley and Hemel Hempstead, but is obviously very much worse. It is imperative that workers throughout all Lucas Aerospace plants support their colleagues from Wolverhampton.

The Combine Committee urges Joint Shop Stewards Committees on all sites to "black" any work which is being diverted from the Wolverhampton plant. It further requests all shop stewards committees to send donations as quickly as possible to their Wolverhampton colleagues.

BIRMINGHAM

Mini Corporate Plan 400 NEW JOBS BY 1981

THE DECISION to set up the whole of the Electronics Division under one roof in Birmingham is due entirely to the initiative of the united union membership in Lucas Aerospace Birmingham.

The result of this initiative will not only strengthen this expanding division, but also provide the opportunity of more jobs for those threatened with redundancy elsewhere in Lucas and provide jobs for unemployed people outside of Lucas Aerospace who are suffering the effects of the Governments 'Industrial Strategy'.

The management's acquisition of the recently built York factory was forced upon them by the Combine Liaison Committee insisting that electronics would remain in Birmingham on one site, and threatening to take industrial action to bring that about. This was a complete reversal of the management's policy to further fragment this rapidly developing section of Aerospace Birmingham by allowing its further expansion to take place on a vacant floor of the Coventry Aerospace factory.

Secure

This is the second time that the Combine Liaison Committee, which represents all manual and staff workers in the four Birmingham Aerospace sites has successfully fought to provide a more secure future for the Electronics Division members. In September 1975, after underfinancing and undermanning had resulted in Rolls Royce cancelling the RB 199 MECU development programme, the Liaison Committee was successful in keeping the vast majority of the workforce together.

The extent of the electronics expansion can be seen by the estimated number of vacancies in the next few years. In the first twelve months another 90 jobs will be created while by 1981 an additional 400 will be available.

EROSION OF CONDITIONS

The Company it seems is never lost for new ways and means of undermining the conditions of our members. Quite often they use changes in technology or job content to do so. In many new processes, jobs that previously were direct manual jobs are now beginning to be changed into 'white collar' work. As this happens, those who undertake the 'white collar' work, and no longer use the tools of the trade, should have a right to all the conditions of staff workers. This includes longer holidays, a shorter working week, and better pension entitlements.

It has been drawn to our attention that in several plants the Company has gradually been introducing people from the shop floor into the staff areas. This, of course, should be welcomed by all if it represented an actual promotion. But what the Company does is to gradually reduce the content of the manual work until eventually they are not using the tools of the trade at all, but the Company still maintains them on a forty hour week and manual worker conditions. This means that they are eroding the conditions of the staff employees, and at the same time denying those involved conditions to which they are fully entitled by virtue of the white collar work they are doing.

A number of sites have now taken this up with the Company and at one site an official 'failure to agree' has been registered. All sites should guard against this new way of eroding the conditions of the workforce as a whole.

The Liaison Committee is now asking for identification of these future vacancies so that members of the individual unions concerned will be aware of the opportunities available over the next four year period. An understanding has also been reached with Management over joint involvement in a retraining programme.

The additional workforce will be involved on the RB 199 programme which at this time, depending upon its success or failure will determine the future of the electronics division. The Liaison Committee are concerned that its survival depends upon such a narrow



base and will make determined efforts to persuade management to diversify along the lines suggested in the 'Mini Corporate Plan' which was produced by the electronics division manual and staff shop stewards in September 1975.

Ugly Head

The Liaison Committee considers that persuading Management to buy this 90,000 sq. ft factory during a period when redundancy is rearing its ugly head yet again is the first step to reverse the trend set by management over the

preceding years. A trend which has reduced the workforce in Birmingham and elsewhere, the policy of which is based on short term expediency and gives no consideration to either the workforce, the community at large, or the long term effect on the industrial future of the country.

The committee will continue to pursue an alternative strategy in Birmingham, knowing full well that this has to be a part of a national plan along the lines of that suggested in the Corporate Plan, put into operation by a Combine Committee representing both staff and works union members.

FAILED MANAGEMENT



WHEN THE management at Hemel Hempstead come to the trade unions talking about a surplus of labour, the shop stewards now point out that this is a direct result of 'Failed Management'.

By this they mean that the management has failed in a prime responsibility. That is to plan a proper workload and product range to ensure the job security of the workforce. They, like the managers in the rest of Aerospace, have repeatedly come to the workforce over the past five years saying that there is not sufficient work and that there has to be redundancies and closures.

In fact, it looks as though that is all some of them are any good for. They are, of course, brilliant at checking if people have put in time-sheets. Some of them, for example one Chief Engineer, was even capable of having a row with one of his senior designers because he left an umbrella on his desk.

But they are incapable of dealing with the issues that really matter, that is the long term security of our members. It is their responsibility that we are in the present situation in Aerospace and they should be made answerable for their disastrous management.

It is a tribute to the workers throughout Lucas Aerospace that they have recognised these problems much more clearly than the management and have put forward constructive proposals.

We want to know what proposals the management have for safeguarding the work of the Lucas Aerospace employees.

DIRTY TRICKS DEPT

DURING THE RECENT Birmingham Liaison Committee/Management confrontation regarding the siting of the Electronics Division, an interesting development took place.

The Coventry Shop Stewards, who like every other shop Stewards Committee have a shortage of work problem, met the Birmingham liaison committee to discuss the situation.

After an honest discussion, in which both points of view were given, both sides parted amicably, the Coventry Stewards understanding that the redundancy situation in Birmingham made it necessary for the electronics division to be retained in that area.

A few weeks later, when still no firm decision had been made, the local newspapers in Birmingham and Coventry contacted the respective union

representatives in an obvious attempt to set one factory against another. Their intention was to portray two sites bitterly opposing one another for this work, like two dogs fighting over a bone. The Birmingham Evening Mail reporter added a further tit-bit. Over the phone he said that the Coventry stewards had persuaded Audrey Wise, MP, to make representations on their behalf.

Both Birmingham and Coventry representatives were both fully aware of the role the press plays on such occasions and immediately squashed these suggestions. Needless to say Audrey Wise was not involved in any way. The question is, who contacted the press? And why did they involve Audrey Wise?

Neither the Birmingham nor the Coventry shop stewards were responsible, they had settled their differences round the table. It is significant, however, that Audrey Wise is a great admirer of the Combine, and the Corporate Plan, and had played a leading role in the lobby of Parliament and the subsequent meeting between MPs and the Lucas directors. To be seen supporting the interest of one sites' trade unionists against another would have tarnished her image.

It would seem that in her attempt to help trade unionists to retain their livelihoods she has not endeared herself to certain Management people and that those people, through the medium of the press, are attempting to discredit her.

Birmingham Management have denied that an approach was made by them to the press. They say they were informed by their counterparts in Coventry that Audrey Wise was involved.

HEMEL AND WILLESDEN

The major project at the Willesden site is equipment which is being manufactured for a part of GEC who are acting as the main contractor for the Admiralty. Work from Willesden is sub-contracted out to Hemel Hempstead where a motor unit is being made, and to Bracknell where several large components are manufactured.

It was learned in mid June that the Treasury is now recommending the cancellation of this project.

If that happens it will create a very serious situation at Willesden and also problems at Hemel Hempstead and possibly Bracknell.

At the time we go to press it is not yet known if the project will be cancelled or not. The alarming feature about the whole affair is that the Management appears to have no alternative proposals whatsoever if a cancellation does take place.

This is all the more absurd since over the past two years they have been repeatedly warned, by the unions, of the danger of putting 'all their eggs in one basket'. They sit back and make no

contingency plans for a problem of this kind.

Even if the project is not cancelled at this stage there are still other dangers. Lucas is merely a sub-contractor to GEC and it does not require much imagination to see what would happen if GEC had a shortage of work in its factories dealing with this particular project. It is clear that they would take it back within their own Company.

The Lucas Management have been repeatedly warned about the danger of depending on sub-contract to other large companies. We have already seen the disastrous consequences of this at Burnley where there was such heavy dependence on sub-contract work to Rolls Royce. If management has any role at all to play then it should be to ensure a supply of satisfying and useful work, but these industrial 'Eichmann' (we are only doing what we are told) are outstanding at throwing their weight about on trivial and irrelevant matters but things that do really matter, like planning ahead, is completely beyond them.

The whole thing is a further example of 'failed management'.

Combine represented in Germany

'DOCUMENTA' is held in Kassel in West Germany every four years. The 'Times' described it as 'the most prestigious and adventurous exhibition of the visual arts and technology in the world.' It is visited by about 300,000 spectators.

The Free University of Europe was extremely keen that the ideas in the 'Corporate Plan' should be represented at this great exhibition. In order to do so, Phil Asquith of TASS (Burnley) and Terry Moran of the AUEW (Burnley) attended the conference from the 1 July to the 8th. They had with them descriptions of the alternative products proposed and video tapes showing some of them under test.

Their presentation was greatly enhanced by the visual impact of a series of dramatic colour slides produced by Dennis Marshall from the Willesden plant. Dennis has made a hobby of photography over the years and depicted a range of slides which depicted very dramatically the underlying ideas of the Corporate Plan.

Two further representatives from the Combine Committee have been invited to go to Germany to participate in the session dealing with the re-design of jobs and creativity at the workplace. This is to take place in Kassel from the 15th to the 22nd of September. The international interest in the ideas promoted in the Corporate Plan is growing daily.

Still working beyond retirement

Several sites report that the Company is now making a practice of keeping on selected employees after their retirement age. There seems to be two reasons for this. Firstly, many people cannot afford to retire on the appalling pensions they receive. Even with the recent pensions improvements, which are now related to final salary, it means that if the final salary is low then the pension is correspondingly poor. They are therefore very keen to supplement their income in any way they can.

The second reason is really part and parcel of the first. Wages in Lucas are now so appallingly low that they find it difficult to recruit people of any calibre from outside. By not putting these matters right the Company is undermining the conditions of all Lucas employees. In addition, the Company only selects a few 'blue-eyed boys' who suit their requirements. Everybody else is required to leave right on the day they reach retirement age.

To keep employees on after retirement age is completely contrary to the Company's declared policy. On the 17 January 1973 Mr J J Righton, in the presence of Mr J H Williams, Mr Mason, Mr Clifton-Mogg, Mr Champneys and many others stated that 'It is now Company policy that people will retire at the proper age. This policy is inflexible and no exceptions will be made under any circumstances.' Mr Whitney has recently confirmed, in writing, that this is still Company policy, yet it is being systematically undermined on many sites. The representatives on those sites have a responsibility to see that this practice ceases immediately. There are many people in the dole queue who should have the opportunity of taking this work, and if Lucas paid decent wages they would have no problem in getting them.

MORE SACKINGS?

WHEN THE Company announced, last February, that there were 1200 people surplus to requirements, a number of actions were taken by the Combine Committee. One of these was to arrange a meeting with a number of MP's and government ministers at the House of Commons. This meeting was hosted by Mr Jeff Rooker, an MP from one of the Birmingham constituencies.

At this meeting the Combine Committee explained the manner in which the Company had continued to run Lucas Aerospace over the last few years, yet at the same time were expanding their activities abroad.

It was pointed out that the Company was refusing to meet the Combine Committee to discuss the 'Corporate Plan' which sets out a wide range of positive alternative products on which we could be working, rather than facing the dole queue.

WRONG

The MPs were also told that only nine months earlier, in April last year, the Company had stated in a written reply to the Corporate Plan that the best guarantee of job security was the widest product range! History now shows that the workforce were right to demand a contingency plan for alternative products and the Management was completely wrong. The meeting was attended by seventy two shop stewards from plants all over the UK. The MPs expressed their dismay that at a time when Mr Callaghan, Eric

Varley, and Shirley Williams were all saying that every effort must be made to get more people into industry, this Company was sacking some of the most highly skilled workers in the United Kingdom. They also pointed out that this was completely contrary to the Government's industrial policy, a policy incidentally which one MP pointed out had resulted in Lucas getting some £31 million in tax concessions in order to stimulate the manufacturing base in this country.

The MPs found it almost unbelievable that at a time of great national concern about unemployment in general, and the further decline of Lucas Aerospace in particular, the Directors could be so irresponsible as to refuse to meet the Combine Committee to talk about its very positive proposals for other products to retain the workforce. In order that they could check this out for themselves they agreed to invite some leading Directors of the Company to the House of Commons to explain the Company's attitude in this situation.

At this meeting, which took place in the House of Commons on March 17, the Company was represented by Mr J J Righton, Deputy Chairman, Mr G A Webb, a Director of Aerospace, and Mr



72 shop stewards from plants all over the UK gather at the House of Commons to meet MP's to discuss steps to prevent the company's latest sacking spree.

R E March who is Group Director of Personnel for the whole of Lucas Industries.

The eleven MPs present at the meeting were shocked at the attitude of the Company to the very positive suggestions by the workforce that there should be some contingency plans for

diversification into other areas of work. It was quite clear that the Company had an arrogant complacency in the correctness of their own policies and were not prepared to discuss any alternatives even as contingency plans.

Mr Jeff Rooker, on behalf of all the MPs who met the Lucas directors, has

now written to Eric Varley at the Dept of Industry stating that it is within their collective knowledge that the Company representatives had made it abundantly clear that they are not discussing the Corporate Plan for alternative products, either at national or local level.

7 WAGE CLAIM

member you need

27½% just to stay at
our present **REDUCED**
Standard of Living

Lucas profits

UP BY 300% IN THREE YEARS

1975 — £32,000,000

1976 — £56,000,000

1977 — £76,000,000?



THANKS JIM, FOR
THE WAGE CUTS...
ER. UHMM...
I MEAN SOCIAL
CONTRACT

Leader of Lucas meets Leader of Labour

Staff conditions for all

IT IS surely time that, in the late 1970's, manual workers in Lucas Aerospace should enjoy the same general conditions of employment as staff workers. There is no earthly reason why a manual worker with thirty or forty years service with the Company should not enjoy the same holiday entitlements, sick-pay, pensions, and other conditions which a staff worker has even with a short length of service with the Company.

Obviously there has to be some differentials based on skill and responsibility. The manual unions have always accepted this in terms of different levels of payment on the shopfloor. But that should not be used as an excuse for not giving manual workers proper staff conditions. Staff workers, those doing technical jobs and otherwise, should have their skill and ability reflected in higher levels of payment. It is hoped to launch a campaign to achieve this during the coming months.

The first step has already been taken in the campaign to get staff conditions in the pension scheme for manual workers.

ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR

'FAILED MANAGEMENT' does not just show itself in an inability to provide a steady workload and job security. Even in simple matters, like running a ballot for the election of pension fund Trustee Directors, the same incompetence is evident.

In the recent annual election for a staff pension fund Trustee Director, the dynamic personnel departments were incapable of getting the ballot forms to the members on the sites in time for the election. In fact on some sites the ballot forms were being given out after the closing date for receipt of the returned forms.

Because of this shambles, created by the personnel departments, the Company's personnel supremo, Mr R E March, decided that the closing date should be put back one week. He called on the personnel departments to immediately implement this and rectify the situation. It is a measure of how unwieldy these large multi-national companies have become that even a direct command from the Lucas main board was incapable of getting the personnel departments to deal competently with the matter—it must be rather like shouting down an empty well; all that comes back is your own echo.

We now have the absurd situation that the whole election has to be held again. The Company will soon be putting notices on its boards saying this was due to 'administrative errors'. It was no administrative error, it was simply another indication of 'failed management'.

Kangaroo Courts

THE COMPANY is gradually establishing 'Kangaroo Courts' as a means of sacking people. Earlier this year a 'court' of 3 management nominees at Willesden confirmed the sacking of a non-union staff worker.

This dangerous development was taken much further in June this year when another 'court' was set up by the management to decide the fate of a shop floor union member at the same site.

His crime was that he refused to meet his foreman on a question of timekeeping unless his union representative was with him. The shop stewards committee advised him not to attend but the 'Kangaroo Court' still went ahead and sacked him.

The sacking has now been reported to the District Officials.

No more wage cuts

It does not need Combine News to tell you how your standard of living has been cut over the last few years. One union, in submitting its annual wage claim last year, pointed out that it would require a 48 per cent increase in wages simply to get its members back to the standard of living they had in 1973. In the event they got a pathetic £6 increase, or approximately 10 per cent. This means that your living standards, up to last year, were cut by an incredible 38 per cent. During the past year this cut has continued.

The Government itself admits that inflation is running at approximately 18 per cent per annum. If, therefore, you simply wished to keep your standard of living at its present depressed level, and that is not a particularly ambitious thing to do, then it would be necessary to get an increase of 18 per cent.

However, if you get an increase of 18 per cent you would then have to pay tax on it which means, that unless you get at least 27½ per cent your already depressed standard of living will be cut even further during the coming year.

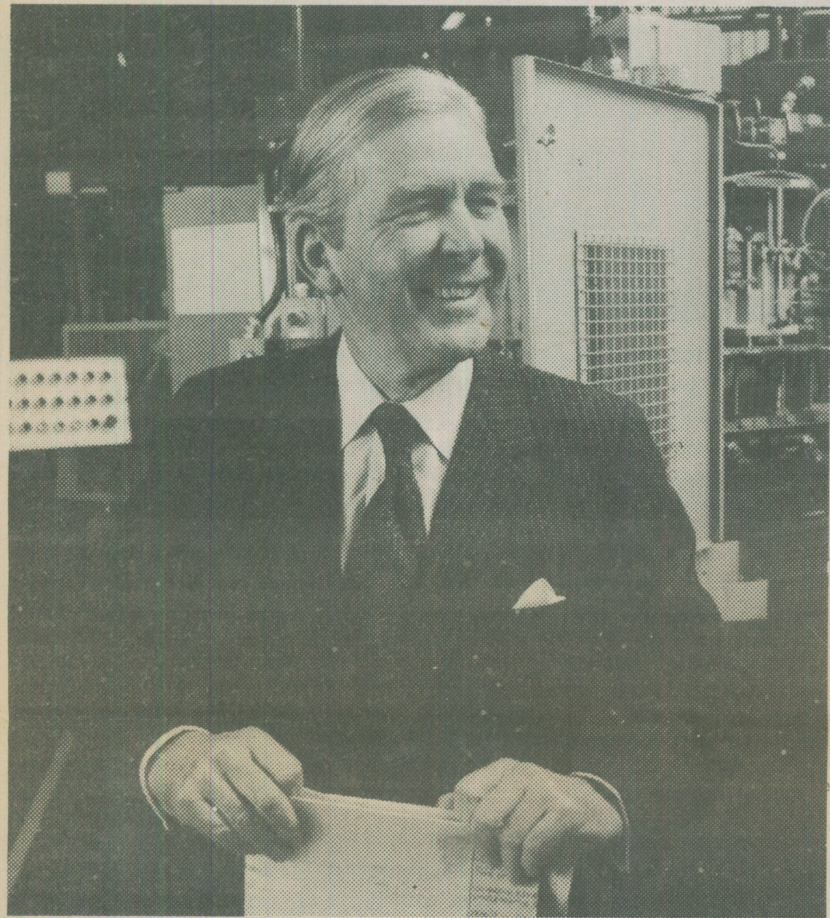
It is now very clear to everyone that the "social contract" has been a con-trick and a farce. We were promised that if we did not demand decent wage increases and actually accepted a cut in our living standards, then unemployment would be dramatically reduced. In actual fact it has dramatically increased and we in Lucas Aerospace have been particularly affected.

Broken

We were told that the social services would be improved, but in actual fact they have been made very much worse. We were told that transport costs would be stabilised and they have continued to go up. We were told that prices would be held steady and they have continued to rise almost daily. In fact we have had none of the benefits of the social contract.

The "social contract" has therefore been broken and we should have no part of its so-called phase two. What the "social contract" has done is make super profits for Lucas. Last year its profits were a record £55.8 million. This year the half year results stand at £34.6 million and it is confidently predicted that the profits will be at least £70

Now's your chance, Bernard!



'I am only sorry that the constraints of the national situation do not permit companies to reward the genuine efforts of their people, as I feel strongly that proper recognition and encouragement needs to be given to all who are putting their backs into making a success of Britain's manufacturing industry'.

Bernard Scott (1976 Annual Report)

Remember
You need

27½%

Just to stand still

SICK PAY CLAIM

LAST YEAR the Company made some small improvements in sickness payments to manual workers. But almost anything would have been an improvement on the existing arrangements, and they were allowed to get away with introducing a 'second rate' scheme that is calculated using the 'Net' wage, which can never lead to equality with staff conditions.

So bad was this settlement in Aerospace that it created considerable difficulties among our colleagues in the Lucas Automotive factories who were trying to achieve considerably better improvements. The Aerospace settlement inevitably made things very much more difficult for them. In fact, because Aerospace had reached such a disgracefully bad settlement the Birmingham electricians had to go on strike for two weeks to avoid having the same conditions thrust upon them.

'Off the cuff'

The central meetings that took place last year on sick-pay, wages, and non-clocking, were not negotiations at all and must have provided, for the Company, an eminently satisfactory situation which they would very much like to retain. The reasons for this are, firstly, that no preliminary work had been done in presenting the claims, it was merely "off the cuff" chat. Secondly, there are no procedural arrangements in existence whereby Aerospace manual workers can participate in central negotiations. Until that situation is changed any so-called

central "negotiations" can only be a farce and a "put-up" arrangement with the Company.

Before any progress can now be made towards equality with the staff conditions, the 'Net' wage sick pay scheme must be changed to a scheme that is based on the 'Gross' wage. Only then will it be possible to undo last year's mistakes and progress towards equality with the staff sick pay scheme. The Combine Committee therefore recommends that all sites should submit the following claim on an individual site basis.

The Recommended Sick Pay Claim

1. The Sickness Benefit Scheme to be changed from a 'Net' pay scheme to a 'Gross' pay scheme.
2. A phased introduction starting with 8 weeks for anyone with over one years service, with the ultimate objective of there being equality between staff and manual workers.
3. Pension payments to be deducted from the Gross Pay.
4. The funded sickness benefit now in operation should be reduced proportionately to the number of weeks of the Gross Pay Scheme and ultimately phased out.

In the likely event that management will reject this claim, then a formal 'failure to agree' should be registered **ON THIS CLAIM** and the full-time officials should be brought in to negotiate the claim at each site.

DO IT NOW don't put up with a 'second rate' scheme.

HOW DO YOU COMPARE?

We are falling further and further behind wage rates in the Common Market countries, while our cost of living has almost caught them up. Average wages in West Germany are £4.25 per hour; USA £4 per hour; France £2.65 per hour; Italy £2.40 per hour; Japan £2.20 per hour; Britain £1.80 per hour.

million for the whole year. There can therefore be no question but that the Company can afford to pay a decent wage increase. Do not forget, their profits are the unpaid wage increases of the workforce.

So we must demand a really substantial increase in our earnings. In addition to this we must also demand a "social wage" in return for the money which was taken from us during the social contract. We should ask the Company to explain how the millions that we did not have in wage increases are to be used to improve the working conditions and the job security of our members. We should insist that the Company uses some of this money to diversify and produce socially useful products as envisaged in the "Corporate Plan". This would directly improve the standard of living and the job security of our members and the communities in which they live.

Inflation

We should also want to know how much money will be used to improve pension and sick benefits. How much will be used for training courses which would be approved, not by the Company, but by the trade unions and the TUC, which greatly improve heating and ventilation systems and to reduce noise levels which are still intolerable in many of our factories.

The last three years have proved that it is a lie to suggest that wages are the cause of inflation. We have had wage cuts until we are now the lowest paid workers in Western Europe, yet inflation has continued. The only way we can defend the living standards of ourselves and our families is to now stand up and demand a decent wage increase. We hope all Aerospace workers will discuss this seriously with their shop stewards committees.

The Combine Committee has prepared a background "brief" dealing with the wages situation and making recommendations for the current wage claim. Copies of this are available from your shop stewards, or from the Combine Committee Secretary, Bro. Ernie Scarbow.

Liaison with Automotive Combine

IN THE Automotive Division of Lucas the company has had a hey-day playing one factory off against the other. In an attempt to counter this the workers there have been building a Combine Committee which would cover all their factories. They have already produced six issues of their own excellent Combine newspaper entitled 'Lucas Report'. Copies of this are available from the Business Manager, Lucas Report, 52 Springfield Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

It is obviously in the interests of all workers throughout the whole of the Lucas empire that the trade unions should attempt to co-ordinate their

efforts to improve the wages, conditions and job security of their members.

As a first step towards achieving this your Combine Committee had an informal meeting with the Automotive Combine Committee at its quarterly meeting at Wortley Hall, near Sheffield. As a result of that meeting it was agreed to have an informal working arrangement on a number of joint issues.

The first of these will be to produce a report on the different wage bargaining procedures that exist throughout the whole of Lucas. An attempt will also be made to get some guide-lines for a joint approach for this year's wage claim. We are confident that this liaison will grow and develop and will strengthen the workforce in facing up to the attacks which the management have been launching on them.

CAN YOU AFFORD IT?

WHEN THE Company is selling its products it always boasts of their technical excellence and the skill of those who design and develop them. It is, of course, entirely a different matter when it comes to paying those who do that job.

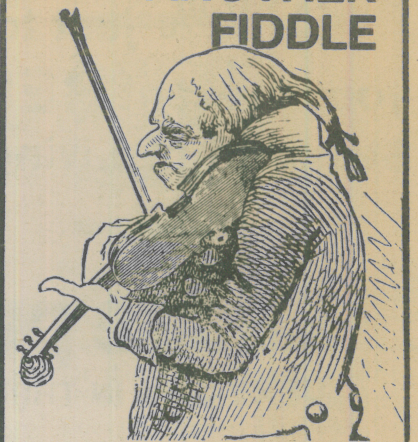
Wages of the technical staff in Lucas have now become so appalling that people from the shopfloor can no longer afford to accept these 'promotions'.

A grade 19 development engineer, who was promoted from the shopfloor two years ago, now finds that his salary is £7 a week less than those he was promoted from such a short time ago.

At another site a young development engineer with a T6 qualification (which is the equivalent of the old HNC) found he had to return to the shopfloor because he could not afford the wages he was being paid as a member of the technical staff.

Can you afford promotion?

ANOTHER FIDDLE



YOU WILL all know from the terrible drop in your living standards how enthusiastically Lucas has stuck to the 'letter of the law' in respect of the social contract.

It is by no means clear however, that the Directors ensured that they abided by the £6 limit they so enthusiastically imposed on the rest of us.

The Lucas directors have service contracts which cover all the benefits that they receive for their 'employment' with the company. These are available for inspection by shareholders between the publication of the accounts and the Annual General Meeting.

In the electrical group in Birmingham one shop stewards committee was unkind enough to think that the directors might have treated themselves to a little more than the £6 they gave the rest of us. So they contacted Mr Spottiswood, the Company Secretary, and requested to see these contracts in order that they could be satisfied that the Company directors adhered to the social contract themselves.

Mr Spottiswood's reply is itself a revelation. He says, 'The matter of principle to which you have drawn attention has received careful consideration but under the circumstances the Company is not able to accede to your request'.

We wonder what those circumstances are!