

News from everywhere

YOU MAY have noticed a remarkable similarity between reports from Rhodesia in several of our national newspapers. The work of the Daily Telegraph's Martin Henry, for example, bears a curious resemblance to that of Peter Newman in the Daily Mail and Henry Miller in the Guardian.

The reason is that they are all different names used by one man: Ian Mills — a Salisbury journalist who is also the BBC's correspondent in Rhodesia. He's also a correspondent for three of the four main international news agencies: Reuter, United Press International and Agence France Presse. And for Am-

erican readers, he's also Newsweek's man in Salisbury.

It's not unusual for journalists to have more than one outlet, but Mills' collection is thought to be a world record. One some days he is the world's only source of information about Rhodesia circulating in the outside world.

This doesn't make for very inquiring journalism, since he's so busy he scarcely has time to get out of his office. This also seems to be bothering his various employers, otherwise they wouldn't have gone to such trouble to conceal his identity. —The Leveller

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THE MANCHESTER paper Mole Express has revealed some of the city's preparations for war, either nuclear or civil.

A map shows various underground tunnels and bunkers in the city centre.

An interesting recent addition to the list is the new Crown Court building. When it was being built workmen were puzzled to find there were no detailed drawings for the two cellar levels. They were even more curious when all the detailed work on the cellars was done by the Ministry of Defence — even the wiring.

The cellars also have their own ventilation system, with provision

for flooding the whole area with gas.

The authorities say all this is just to protect their files.

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BUILDING contractors Henry Boot have won a major safety award for the second year running. What's puzzling some people is — Why?

In May last year they sacked 12 people for complaining about safety conditions on a site in York. They were asked to burrow a 9ft shaft under foundations without any supports.

During the same period, on another site in Northampton, three



"It doesn't mean anything. It's just a Job Creation Project."

men were killed in as many weeks and one man lost an arm.

—York Free Press

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THE HOME OFFICE Working Party on vagrancy and street offences (prostitution) is afraid that equal treatment of kerb crawlers and prostitutes would be unfair to the kerb crawlers.

"The kerb crawler may be a respected member of the community and much more sensitive to the stigma of a court appearance than, say, a confirmed prostitute."

The committee consists of thirteen respected members of the community — twelve of them men.

—Spare Rib

A PRISONER who was released on parole has been sent back to jail because of his trade union activities.

Mr Terence Gallogly was allowed out last April to take a job with Aronstead Ltd., a garden furniture company in Batley. One of the conditions of his parole forbade him from joining in trade union activities.

When Mr Gallogly arrived at the firm none of the 180 workers were in the union. Mr Gallogly soon changed this and within a few months 90% of the workforce had joined the engineering union, the AUEW.

In mid-October a foreman at the firm threatened a worker with a bayonet. Mr Gallogly, as an elected shop steward, took part in a delegation to the management, demanding that the foreman be sacked.

The foreman was sacked, but at

the same time the management asked the Home Office to take Mr Gallogly back to Wakefield Jail.

The Home Office obliged, and over 100 workers at the factory went on strike. They went back the next day pending discussions with the management. The union are now pressing for Mr Gallogly's reinstatement. —Leeds Other Paper

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WAS it really necessary for the British government to crawl on their hands and knees before the International Monetary Fund?

One man who thinks not is Mr Felix Bandaranaike, Finance Minister of Sri Lanka, who's continually popping off to ask the IMF for money — and he gets it.

When they try and suggest 'sensible' ways to spend it, he just tells them: "Name me one country whose economy has recovered as a result of following your policies."

So far, he says, they haven't thought of an answer.

—The Guardian

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PAT ARROWSMITH, the pacifist campaigner has successfully sued Hampshire Constabulary.

She was arrested a year ago under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, while handing out leaflets in Aldershot.

Ms Arrowsmith, who was held for five hours, sued the police for false arrest, false imprisonment and assault and battery.

The police eventually settled out of court by paying her £200, which she plans to divide between the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, the Troops Out Movement, and the trade union campaign against the Prevention of Terrorism Act. —People's News Service.

LUCAS AEROSPACE has seventeen sites in the UK. The company employs 14,000 highly skilled people. 43% of its capacity is directed towards the highly lucrative and competitive aerospace industry, and 7% of its activity is channelled into defence work.

Already the company has bought itself into similar industries in Italy, Germany and France. The budget for aircraft operations reaches £40 million.

Profit is the creed. The actual potential of human ideas and skill beaches on the annual company statement. Lucas will not diversify, and in this time of unemployment it has steadily practised a policy of eating away jobs, by refusing to fill vacancies made by workers retiring, and so forth. All this is common. What is not are the reactions and practices of the Lucas work force.

Starting in the late 1960s, the workers themselves drew up a series of plans to put to the management concerning their skills, and the potential of the technology they were skilful in.

Like most people they yearned for peace at home and abroad, and were vexed by the criticisms levelled at them whenever defence cuts were challenged in Westminster. Defence cuts meant redundancies.

Stewards and workers aware of this got together for two reasons. Firstly to defend their own jobs, which the policies of Lucas put at stake. Secondly to question the use of that technology itself, and to test its potential in socially useful areas of daily life.

VARIETY OF INNOVATIONS

A 'Combined Plan' was drawn up, often on the kitchen tables of the workers themselves, as the company had refused them desk space. Their aim was that every job in the company should be defended. And to do this they offered practical solutions. Their brains, hands and bodies had produced a variety of innovations through research and experience. Benn at the time was interested, and his successors have nodded, and remained silent.

The ideas involved in this corporate plan concerned social heating appliances, medical care, cheap public transport, and power plants that were utilitarian enough for underdeveloped countries not to become enmeshed in credits if they wanted these simple, often ingenious devices.

A vehicle with pneumatic tyres that could run on road, and then in series on rail, was tested. Solar energy harnessed for heating, in these days of oil and gas. A power plant for driving a small engine up gradients that made mountains no obstacle, excluding the usual desire to flatten them, fill in valleys and ruin natural landscapes. Innovations in aqua culture, and in deep sea research. All drawn up

Lucas men look into the future for today



Lucas workers Terry Moran, Lawrence Halstead and Phil Asquith pictured at the meeting in Liverpool.

in a six-volume, 200 pages per volume, Combined Plan.

The plan considered the potential of human skills, rather than the actual skills the management profited from. The plan was put to Lucas management and refused. Lucas refused to diversify, refused to consider alternative means of production, refused to think of workers actually participating in what they did. They wished their workforce to be robotic on the one hand, and to be inventive on the other.

In a land where the speed on production lines is crazily increased by the month, human beings are measured as if they were robots. British Leyland recently had a survey that allocated to each line worker, 32.4 minutes per shift for breaks. A pee was exactly 1.62 seconds. A seat was 65 seconds. This insanity that tries to produce robots to replace people, treats people as if they were already robotic.

At a small meeting at 'Liberty Hall' in Liverpool in November Terry Moran, Lawrence Halstead and Phil Asquith outlined the imaginative concerns of the workers in the Lucas Combined Plan.

Amazed at the indifference to innovation, at the calls by Ms Williams and Callaghan for more engineers when their own engineers were being paid off, they explained clearly and eruditely the plan of their brothers and sisters.

Although Lockheed and other large American firms have made enquiries about the workers' innovations in technology,

Lucas have held firm to their 'tradition'. A tradition of putting profit before people, of reducing people to the authority of actual production, and remaining unimpressed by plans that worked to increase the potential of technology in favour of human beings.

The whole history of Lucas is riddled with dirty deals, back bites and innuendo. Mikardo, our left-wing doll, moved to save jobs in the Ball Screw Sector, which Lucas threatened to close. He had shares in a company that produces them industrially.

WAR A 'SOCIAL NEED'

Military aircraft and the arms industry is seen by management as a 'social need'. Human misery is not accounted on their budget statements, and life itself is measured in terms of hard cash.

The full time officials of the varied unions around the Lucas combine grew afraid that their hired 'pimping' activities were under threat from workers negotiating directly with their bosses. Enemies became friends for a brief moment and friends turned into bitter enemies. The small beginnings of the Lucas workers thinking — that is the real rub — thinking for themselves about what they had done, and what they wished to do, was and is to this day ignored.

Although they see the possibilities for social improvement in the lives of us all, in heating so the old do not die for want of a coin, in health so that those with organic

diseases do not have to wait until it is too late, and among brothers and sisters in other parts of this earth who cannot afford the hideously expensive technology they so sorely require to feed each other, and spread joy instead of sorrow, management and its allies refuse again and again, to consider their ideas. Their power is threatened in two ways: Workers can maybe run the entire plant without them; and it will be seen that money only ever makes money, and human activity makes everything else.

The importance to us all of the things done by the Lucas workers, the dreams dreamed, the plans planned, make the calls for 'unity' in crisis baloney. The crisis appears as a crisis of power, power threatened, power that assumes our skills, imagination and activity is only ever relevant if it is hired for private greed.

Technology is not neutral, and the uses made by others, to kill, maim and keep in hunger most of the world, are not eternal truths, but social practices. If the Lucas workers' plans were implemented a small counter-attack would begin, where human beings were more important than market manipulations, and the religion of profit, enshrining us all in complete despair.

For the impressive story of the Lucas workers' Combined Plan, you can write to Terry Moran at 594 Padiham Road, Burnley. It's fine to know that already other workers have expressed interest, and although Lucas remain as they are, the future has been seen by some.