

# Socialist Worker

The  
2d  
paper  
that  
fights for  
YOU

for workers control and international socialism

## THOUSANDS FACE SACK AS GIANTS MERGE

by  
DAVID BLACK

### Engineers demand 'No retreat!'

by TOM HILLIER (AEF)

ON MONDAY the Confederation of Engineering Unions endorsed the AEF's decision to call a national strike in support of their claim.

The date fixed for the strike by the AEF was September 23. This has now been deferred until October 21 to allow the other members in the Confederation to ballot their members. Militants see this as yet another tactic by the right wing, who were responsible for the decision to hold a one-day token national stoppage last May.

Frank Cousins of the transport workers has supported the AEF policy. Les Cannon of the electricians and Lord Cooper of the municipal workers are opposed to any industrial action.

They are relying on their members to vote against the strike.

### No betrayal

Members of these unions cannot betray their fellow-engineering workers by voting against industrial action. They are surely not prepared to cross the picket line if the AEF and TGWU have to go it alone?

Engineering workers have had a wage freeze since Carron's famous package deal of 1964. Their current claim has been discussed for 14 months.

Shop stewards committees throughout the country should be holding factory meetings to inform their members of the situation and build up support for the strike.

In order to show their leaders, the employers and the government that they really mean business, engineers must stand together and vote YES to their claim in full now and YES to a national strike.

THE £900 MILLION MERGER between English Electric and GEC casts a grim shadow over employment prospects in the whole of the country's electrical and electronic industry.

Even before the financial details of this shot-gun marriage had been settled, the bosses were at work examining areas where "rationalisation" could be achieved.

With the turore over the AEI sackings still in their minds, the directors of the two companies are remaining silent over possible redundancies.

But in an industry that employs well over a million workers—240,000 in GEC and English Electric alone—the sackings could run into many thousands.

### WORRIED

For it is not only English Electric and GEC that are planning a "shake-out". The other big electronics and electrical groups, worried by the strength of the new giant, are anxiously seeking ways in which they, too, can merge.

Sir Harold Mullens, the boss of Reyrolle, which employs 11,500 workers, admitted that he was worried that they could not meet competition from the new group.

A list of candidates for new mergers extends to Plessey, Ferranti, Thom, BICC, Rank and Hawker Siddeley. On the stock

### DATA acts

The draughtsmen's union (DATA) said on Tuesday it would hold a conference of all its members employed by English Electric to discuss the implications of the merger.

market, shares in these companies are eagerly snapped up by speculators hoping to make a quick profit from any take-over.

In the City at least there is little pretence about the outcome of the mergers. The closure of factories not making sufficient profit is being canvassed as the chief advantage of any industrial get-together.

But firms that remain independent will not be able to avoid cut-backs.

In the current wave of speculation, only one thing is certain—shareholders are unlikely to lose out. GEC and English Electric shares have jumped to new heights on news of the merger and shareholders in both companies are likely to double their money this year alone.

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



Federal troops on the march in Biafra—the weapons come from Britain and Russia.

## East, west crush Biafra

by RICHARD KUPER

THE HOLOCAUST which has laid Biafra waste looks as though it is slowly drawing to a close as the last Biafran towns fall to the invading troops of the Nigerian federal army.

Aba has fallen. Only Owerri and Umahia still lie in Biafran hands.

But there are still about 6,000,000 Biafrans in the surrounding jungle areas

who will continue to resist. Aba, with a population of 400,000 was deserted when federal troops entered.

The federal state of Nigeria was the artificial creation of British imperialism. After much political manoeuvring, Col. Ojukwu last year led the Eastern region away from the federal state and formed the independent state of Biafra.

Both Britain and Russia

have sent arms to crush the Biafrans

The Biafrans clearly have the right to secede from Nigeria—the right to national self-determination must be defended. Although in internal policies socialists would oppose Col. Ojukwu, in this genocidal war, with the imperialists and opportunists supporting Nigeria, we must wholeheartedly support the struggle of the Biafrans.

### Hypocrites

The British government and the Tory press are wringing their hands in horror as 6,000 Biafran refugees die every week from starvation. But Wilson and company have continued to supply the arms to the Lagos government which have allowed the massacre to continue.

It makes their protests about Russian troops in Czechoslovakia nauseatingly hypocritical. Capitalist morality clearly extends no further than the first opportunity to make profits at other people's expense and misery.

## AFRICA'S NEW COLONY

NO INDEPENDENCE is more false than that won by Swaziland on Saturday.

This last British colony in Africa has more wealth, notably iron ore, than Lesotho or Botswana; but not nearly enough to make it independent of its big neighbour, South Africa.

To enable the Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa to exploit the iron ore and sell it, mainly to Japan, a new railway was built linking Swaziland with its other neighbour, the Portuguese colony of Mozambique.

But skilled work on the railway is in the hands not of Swazis but of Portuguese and some white South Africans. The reason is that Britain kept technical training from the Swazis.

As if to underline that Swaziland is really a colony of South Africa, the government under its new black rulers has recently announced that it intends to make a new law forbidding sex relations between black and white, on the model of the notorious Immorality Act applied in South Africa.

## Foreign Office blocks anti-Nazi show

by DAVID WIDGERY

THE FIRST BRITISH exhibition of the posters and photomontages of Johnny Heartsfield, whose art put him on the Nazi death list, has been blocked by the Foreign Office.

Although difficulties had arisen in the planning stages of the show, the FO has used the invasion of Czechoslovakia to introduce a secret and selective package of cultural sanctions which blacklists Heartsfield.

Two weeks ago the Tory boss of Camden Council, Councillor Geoffrey Finsberg, used his "indignation at the invasion of Czechoslovakia" to personally

cil has been told by the FO that they will not allow Heartsfield's agitational political art for exhibition in any site in England.

Meanwhile the Soviet State Orchestra continues its British tour untroubled and the Red Army songsters will arrive this month.

### REJECTION

Heartsfield, whose real name was Helmut Herzfeld, adopted an English name as part of his life-long rejection of German nationalism. He avoided conscription in the first war by pretending to be mad and then went on to edit several anti-war satirical magazines from secret addresses.

In collaboration with the cartoonist George Grosz he

cartoon making. His technical inventiveness in this period made him a major figure in art history.

After escaping Hitler, Heartsfield lived in England where he experienced British political cartooning, British satirical cabaret and British detention camps. The last 15 years of his life were in Ulbricht's East Germany where his art was overlooked by the cultural apparatus men.

Unable to find a publisher in East Germany who would recognise socialist art when he saw it, a deeply dissatisfied Heartsfield worked mainly in theatre design. The cultural smog cleared a little towards the end of his life and the East Germans felt safe to make

Today Heartsfield's revolutionary work finds authentic echo in the posters of the People's Studio which was founded during the May revolution in France and which has found a footing in England among the group around Agit Prop.

Despite the Foreign Office ban, Heartsfield's work and its living tradition remain proof that art can be realist, popular and genuinely political, without painting soup cans or power stations.

**PUBLIC MEETING**  
The October 27 demonstrations and perspectives for the Vietnam protest movement.  
Conway Hall, 7 pm.





## The Vietnam march: squeals from the Fleet Street pig-sty

THE RIGHT-WING PRESS is frothing at the mouth about next month's anti-Vietnam war demonstrations. Even the "respectable" high-Tory Times has had wild headlines such as "Militant plot feared in London".

Not surprisingly, the campaign to discredit the anti-war marchers was started in the London Evening News, the rag that championed Mosley's Black-shirts in the 1930s.

The next day, two Times reporters clambered on to the Fleet Street dung heap and added their pennyworth of manure: "A small army of militant extremists plans to seize control of certain highly sensitive installations and buildings in central London next month," they yelled. "This startling plot has been uncovered by a special squad of detectives formed to track down the extremists."

Naturally, none of the papers has

been able to produce a shred of evidence to back up these statements.

The Times reporters even managed to contradict themselves. Later in their report they said: "Scotland Yard officially denied last night (Wednesday, September 4) that they had received reports that 'Molotov cocktails', home-made bombs and firearms might be used...They also denied that a special undercover team was searching for an arms cache, for the people responsible for buying arms, and for those who financed them."

In other words, the whole thing is a load of irresponsible codswallop. It is a deliberate attempt to smear the demonstrators and to frighten away thousands of people who might otherwise come on the march.

Who is responsible for these Nazi-propaganda techniques? The monopoly press would never start such a cam-

paign unless it was given the go-ahead by the establishment, which represents the interests of the government, the employers and the security forces.

The campaign was undoubtedly planned at top level, between police and government officials. They are worried by the growing opposition to the Vietnam war in this country. The Wilson government wants to turn attention away from its own disgusting support for American barbarity by finding a new scapegoat. They can't blame coloured immigrants this time.

In the weeks leading up to the October demonstrations, all supporters of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign must hurl the filth back into the pig-sty.

Yes, there are extremists on the Vietnam issue. They are the American ruling class, burning, looting and murdering in Vietnam, supported by the gang

who call themselves the British Labour government. These are the people who are using violence

Against these gangsters we will mount the biggest and most militant marches that Britain has ever seen. Members of International Socialism have called for a disciplined and orderly demonstration — we are not out for a punch-up with the police.

But — and let no one be in any doubt about this — if the police behave in their usual thuggish and provocative manner, we will meet that challenge with all the force at our command.

One reason for marching is to appeal to the working class, to the factories and the union branches, to ask them to join in even greater numbers in the campaign to break the Labour government's support for American policy.

This is what the government, press and employers are really frightened of — that such an appeal will win support from a growing section of the organised working class who can turn the anti-war movement into a revolutionary challenge to the whole capitalist system.

### Czechoslovakia and the Russian invasion: an open letter to members of the British Communist Party

# HOW CAN FREE SPEECH BE A THREAT TO A 'SOCIALIST' REGIME?

"Surely a situation where a Communist government, as in Czechoslovakia, can be denounced as a tool of counter-revolutionary elements for permitting minimal civil liberties which all Communist states have supposedly practised all along, means that Marxism has been stood on its head."

Dear Comrades,

This excerpt from a letter in the Morning Star on August 26 goes to the heart of the matter.

All serious communists have to face the question of how, after 20 years of supposedly socialist rule in Czechoslovakia, the very existence of the regime can be said, by the Russian government, to be threatened by free speech for critics, most of whom claim to be socialists.

What sort of "socialism" is it that existed in Czechoslovakia from 1948? The Czech Communist Party's letter of July 19, 1968 contains the following revealing statements:

"The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is trying to show that it is capable of a different political

leadership and management than discredited bureaucratic-police methods."

And again: "Any indication of a return to those methods would arouse the resistance of the overwhelming majority of party members, the working class, the co-operative farmers and the intellectuals." (Quoted by John Gollan in the Morning Star 26.6.68. Our emphasis.)

There could hardly be a clearer admission that Czechoslovakia had been ruled autocratically, run according to orders issued from the top, enforced, in the last resort, by police terror against the "overwhelming majority"

### Workers' power the essence

What has such a regime in common with socialism? Most communists, and many others, have accepted the equation "Total ownership of industry = socialism".

This is completely false. The essence of the matter is workers' power. As Lenin, writing in 1919 put it: "The quintessence of the Soviet system lies in that the permanent and sole basis of the whole state system, the whole state apparatus, is the mass organisation of precisely those classes that were oppressed by capitalism, i.e. the workers and semi-proletar-



LENIN: without workers' power, no socialism.

ians." (Selected Works, vol. 7 p.231)

Without workers' power, no socialism. Without freedom of discussion, publication and organisation within the working class, no workers' power.

But these considerations apply equally to other East European countries and to the USSR itself. In our opinion, the Brezhnev regime does not differ in essentials from

the former 'bureaucratic-police' role of Novotny.

This is precisely what worries the ruling group in the Kremlin. What they fear is the possibility that Dubcek's attempt to "liberalise" Czechoslovakia may result in the sweeping away of the power of the bureaucracy and that the example may prove contagious.

What they fear is not counter-revolution but revolution. And their chief worry is not Czechoslovakia itself but the effects of a revolutionary development in Czechoslovakia on Russian workers.

The British Communist Party's criticism of Russian military intervention and call for the withdrawal of Russian troops was a big advance on its previous subservience to Russian requirements. In our opinion this relative independence is due largely to the Gollan group's adaption to reformist opinion in Britain, but it is nevertheless important.

The British party is now on record as saying: "Whatever differences of view there might be about developments in Czechoslovakia, military intervention was completely unjustified." (Statement by Political Committee 21.8.68. Our emphasis.)

We might ask, if a "tragic error" of these dimensions occur, what other "errors" may have been made? The break with China? The suppression of the Hungarian revolution?

### Implications for communists

But the fundamental question is the nature of the Russian type regimes and the implications for communists, although the causes of Stalinism and its persistence under other names is too complicated a question to be dealt with here.

International Socialism has developed its analysis over a long period and since the test of theory is its power to predict, we offer a prediction.

The compromise between the Czech and Russian positions announced on August 27 will lead to an attempt by the Dubcek group to re-establish, over a period, precisely that "bureaucratic-police" rule they have denounced. Such an attempt may succeed, as a similar one succeeded in Poland after 1956.

If it fails, the result will be, depending on the balance of forces, either another Russian takeover followed by a Hungarian-style repression or the establishment of a genuine socialist regime based on workers' councils.

The latter development would have a profoundly revolutionary effect on Europe, East and West alike. We do not make this prediction on the basis of any estimate of the intentions of the Czech leaders — they may be perfectly sincere in their dislike of Stalinist methods

ist analysis of Czechoslovak society which leads to the conclusion that such a regime could not be stable in an economically advanced country.

The reactions of the different Communist parties to the Czech events have underlined the degree of disintegration of the world Communist movement. Different parties have taken different sides, unrelated to other disagreements over policy.

The Chinese have lined up with the Yugoslavs and the Italians; the Cubans with the Russians and East Germans.

### The new generation

The stability that has characterised the western capitalist world for 20 years is beginning to break up too. The horror of the war the American ruling class has been waging against the people of Vietnam and the terror it was prepared to unleash in Chicago against the American people, is encouraging a new generation to look towards socialist politics.

The May Days in France gave us a glimpse of future possibilities. But the Communist parties have proved themselves completely incapable of grasping these. The French CP actually managed to lose votes after the May movement.

In this country the Party has not benefited from the workers' loss of faith in the Labour Party.

The present tiredness and timidity of the Party can only be understood in terms of its past policies. For years, willingness to accept every twist and turn of Russian policy created an artificial gulf between it and many workers open to revolutionary socialist ideas.

Loyalty to a periodically changing party line was more important than revolutionary zeal or scientific insight. The result is that while new socialist perspectives are opening up throughout the world, the party membership is increasingly cynical, defensive and apathetic.

A new revolutionary socialist movement can be built to grasp the new opportunities. But only by those who have broken with the dead weight of mistaken ideas and irrelevant organisations.

All Communist Party and YCL members who are concerned with participating in such a development are invited to discuss with International Socialism the forms of common activity and organisation.

Yours fraternally,  
The Executive Committee of International Socialism.

Hear  
**FRED HALSTEAD**  
Socialist Workers Party  
candidate for the  
American presidency

## Socialist Worker

Paxton Works, Paxton Road, London N17. Tel: 01-808 4847

Editor: Roger Protz Editorial Committee: Paul Foot, Richard Kuper, Peter Osborne. Business Manager: Jim Nichol.

## WHERE WE STAND

SOCIALIST WORKER IS THE paper of International Socialism, a movement of revolutionary socialists who believe that the present form of society, with its blatant inequalities, its periodic crises, wars and racialist hysteria must be replaced by one based on a planned economy under full workers' control; those who produce the wealth should own and control the means of production.

International Socialism is opposed to any incomes policy that seeks to restrict the wages of the workers in order to boost the profits of the employers. We unconditionally support all shop stewards and rank and file trade union members in their struggles for

better wages and conditions and oppose all reactionary laws that threaten the liberties of the labour movement. We support all strikes in defence of workers' interests with the demand of no victimisation of trade unionists. Redundancy should be opposed with the demand: five days work or five days pay. Shop stewards organisations should strengthen and extend their influence by linking up on an industrial and ultimately a national basis.

We are opposed to racial discrimination, a weapon used by the ruling class to divide the labour movement. Immigration control must be ended, ensuring the free movement of peoples regardless of

race and colour. Black and white workers must unite and form their own defence organisations to fight fascism and racialism. The labour movement must demand the immediate recall of British troops from abroad as the first step towards ending colonial exploitation.

The task of revolutionary socialists is to join workers in their struggles with socialist ideas that will link up the various sections of the labour movement and help create a force that will lead on to workers' power.

If you would like to join IS or would like further details of our activities, fill in the form below:

Please send further details of the meetings and activities of International Socialism to:

Name .....

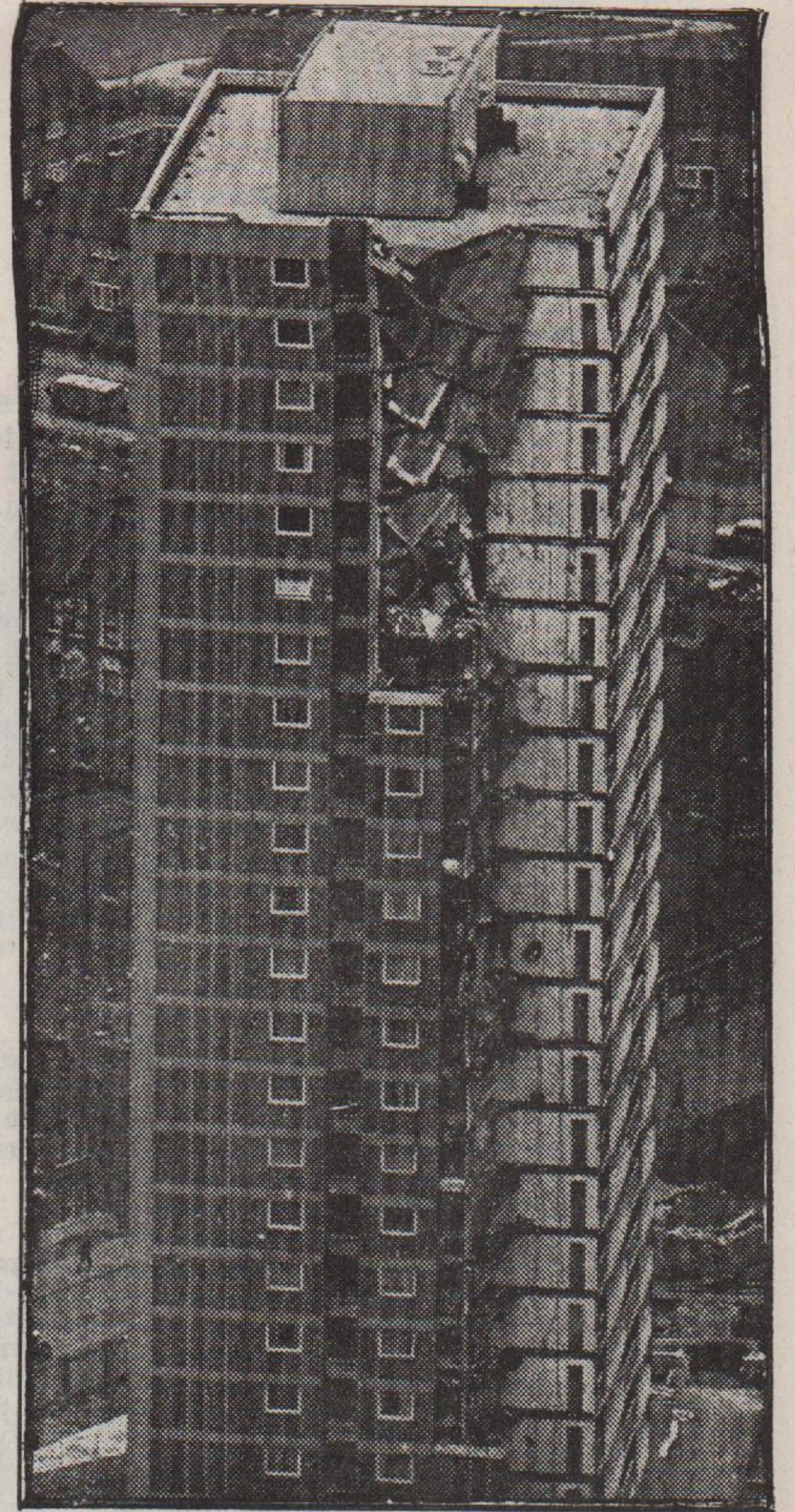
Address .....



Ronan Point—a symbol of all that is best in Labour's 'moral crusade'...

# 3000 people 'at risk' in sky-high death traps

by **PAUL FOOT**



Ronan Point 19 shattering conclusions about the gas blast.

IT IS ALMOST a year now since Francis Taylor, founder, chairman and managing director of Taylor Woodrow Ltd., the second largest construction firm in Britain, burst into the headlines with violent attacks upon the unofficial strikers at London's Barbican.

Night after night the smiling, confident features of Frank Taylor told the public about the ignorant thugs who were holding up the building programme of his subsidiary.

On television, Frank ordered one of the strikers to consider the interests of his country. And when the Barbican workers called off the strike with a march through the City of London, there was Frank Taylor, standing next to his brilliant black limousine, smiling patronisingly at the workers he had helped to crush.

In recent months very little has been heard of Frank Taylor. The smile is reported to have been wiped from his face.

## Rumble, roar

What disturbed him was a rumble and then a roar in the early morning last May, when a section of 22 stories of a high block of flats in East London were tumbled to the ground by an explosion, killing five people.

Taylor Woodrow Anglian, the firm which had built Ronan Point, is half-owned by Taylor Woodrow, Phillips Consultants, the consulting engineer, which, Taylor Woodrow insisted had to act for the local borough council, are entirely owned by Taylor. It was Taylor Woodrow who persuaded the West Ham Borough Council to build the new-fangled, continental system (known as Larsen Nielsen), as they had persuaded the London County Council before them.

Immediately, the company rushed in with explanations. It was, as the Coal Board had said to the Aberfan enquiry, an Act of God. The explosion had been enormous. The distinguished lawyers who represented Taylor

Woodrow at the inquiry tried to prove that no building on earth could have withstood that terrible blast.

Very quickly the arguments were exposed. A firm of consulting engineers, Bernard Clark and Co., were instructed by the government to investigate the collapse.

The Clark Inquiry revealed in a report described as "a summary" (perhaps all the conclusions would have been too much for the authorities) 19 shattering conclusions which have been wholly ignored by the national press, the architectural and engineering journals and television.

Here are some of them:-

1. The explosion itself was very mild indeed.
2. "In our opinion there are weaknesses in the general design of the building structure."
3. "The building as constructed is incapable of accepting the consequences of a reasonably mild explosion which may occur due to many causes other than town gas, i.e. various forms of vapour given off from liquid gas available to the domestic market, such as petroleum, butane, also of cellulose thinners, paraffin, and similar volatile liquids for domestic purposes and

likely to be stored in small quantities of the flat."

4. The building was not up to standard fire regulations.

5. "Progressive collapse" of one floor after another is an inevitable characteristic of this kind of building.

## Resting panels

The report, and many similar statements from experts at the inquiry, showed that Ronan Point was kept together simply by resting the floor panels on the walls, and hoping that gravity would keep the building from falling down.

The 4-ton floor slabs rest on the outside wall panels - overlapping by 1 1/4 inches. If the wall is pushed out by 1 1/4 inches, the floor collapses, as do all the others above and below.

Any number of eventualities (many of them natural and foreseeable) can push the wall out to that extent. Wind can suck wall panels out. An explosion inside the flat caused by as little as two pints of petrol is enough to push the wall out the crucial 1 1/4 inches.

Subsidence in the ground; expansion of floor panels through underfloor heating; large numbers of people jumping up and down (dancing?) in time on the floor panels - any of these can cause "progressive collapse". And if

the sections which collapse are living rooms in day or evening time, not five, but 500 could be killed.

These new forms of buildings are not necessary, still less traditional. Traditional frame building can withstand heavy explosions. Even carefully jointed system buildings rule out progressive collapse.

Yet the Larsen Nielsen system, which has no tie between wall and floor, is the most popular with the local authorities. Altogether more than 3,000 working people are living today in sky-rise flats built in the same way as Ronan Point and liable to collapse at the slightest explosion.

No wonder Frank Taylor and the directors of Ready Mix Concrete, who own the other half of Taylor Woodrow Anglian are worried. But they are not the only people to blame for the Ronan Point monstrosity.

The government has from the outset, welcomed these new "streamlined" techniques, which so effectively kept down the cost of the already monstrously expensive sky-rise flats.

Failure to "tie" walls and floors, failure properly to observe fire regulations or basic engineering principles, failure to insist on independent construction engineers

- all these add up to a cheaper building. And cheaper buildings are what the Labour government wants.

Ronan Point stands today as a monument to the technological revolution about which Wilson enthused in the Good Old Days, and about which the lickspittle Left rejoiced with him. Ronan Point is a symbol of all that's best in Labour's moral crusade.

Perhaps the inquiry will be forced to recommend that this particular monument be destroyed. But there will still be many others, perhaps with gas turned off (with the tenants, unable to afford electricity, making do with paraffin lamps and other "safe" substitutes), perhaps with token attempts to "secure" the walls and floors but all equally liable to tumble down at any time of the day or night, slaughtering their unsuspecting inhabitant.

The shareholders of Taylor Woodrow, whose dividend has been held at 20 per cent for the last three years, need not be unduly worried. Government and local authorities will ensure their firm's profits for many years to come.

And most of them live in buildings which are either safe or heavily insured..

## 'Home rule' threat to Franco

from our Spanish correspondent

POLICE ACTIVITY continues in the Basque region of Spain (the provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya) following the assassination last month of Inspector Meliton Manzanos of the Brigade of Social Investigation, the official name of Franco's Gestapo.

The proclamation of a state of emergency in Guipuzcoa has been followed by certain forms of military law throughout Spain. Catholic priests in the Basque areas have been forbidden by the hierarchy to preach at Sunday masses. Fifteen priests have been arrested following the wave of repression against Basque separatism during the summer.

The "home-rule" demands of the ETA which conducted the assassination of Manzanos have become more popular within the region.

The Basque region is crucial to the economy of Spain. The terrorism of the ETA marks a new development in the politicisation of the region which has been among the most industrialised and yet among the most politically old-fashioned areas of Spain. But the basic demand of the ETA for a unified Basque nation composed of the French and Spanish Basque provinces which would join the Common Market as an independent entity, is simply fantastic.

Of the four Spanish Basque provinces only two (Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya) have any important

spoken in the towns. In recent years the Franco regime has permitted a limited Basque cultural revival, so that the language is unlikely to form a rallying-point. Basque demands for a separate state are similar to Scottish and Welsh nationalism, with the same mixture of left and right, idealism and sentimentality.

The economic difficulties of the region may open up more clear-cut class politics. Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa, Spain's oldest industrial base, benefited from the economic boom in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Migration of workers into the area from the rest of Spain will weaken the basis of separatist politics.

## FREEZE

The region has now been badly hit by the economic freeze in Spain. There have been widespread sackings and a serious crisis of business confidence. Orders for machine goods and imports of capital equipment have fallen and investment is paralysed.

There seems no way out of the crisis except for further cuts in workers' living standards. Spain is blocked from the Common Market, and tourism, Franco's favourite stopgap, is beginning to decline. The tourist influx dropped 4.5 per

In Bilbao there is evidence of working-class opposition. LA EMPRESA A LO QUE TRABAJA (The factory to him who works) has been painted in huge letters on one of the city's largest public buildings - in Spanish, not in Basque.

# Join International Socialism for a real alternative to capitalism and stalinism

- ABERDEEN: Janet Kennedy, 94 Bankhead Road, Bucksburn.
- ACTON: John Deason, 148 Rusthall Avenue W4.
- BIRMINGHAM: Sue Harvey, 96a Church Lane, Handsworth, Birmingham 20. (021-554 6346)
- BRADFORD: Bob Kornreich, Flat 1, 7 Oak Avenue, Bradford 8.
- CAMBRIDGE: Mike Cowen, 11 Brookside, Cambridge.
- CAMDEN: Chris Barker, 36 Gilden Road, NW5.
- CHELTSEY: Chris Wickenden, Langmead, Pirbright, Woking, Surrey.
- CROYDON: Jenny Woodhams, 26 Braemar Avenue, South Croydon.
- DURHAM: Graham Atkinson, 1 Medway Avenue, Hebburn, Co. Durham.
- EAST LONDON: John Metcalfe, 61 Wolsey Avenue, E17.
- EDINBURGH: Jim Smith, 13 Union Street, Edinburgh 1.
- FULHAM: Nicki Landau, 1a Phillimore Terrace, Allan Street, W8.
- FOLKESTONE: Dave Cowell, c/o 18 Station Road, Folkestone, Kent.
- GLASGOW: Ian Mooney, 4 Dalcross Passage, Glasgow W1.

- Dickinson Road, N8.
- HULL: Norman O'Neill, 104 Park Grove, Hull.
- ILFORD: Lionel Sims, 99 Belgrave Road, Ilford (01-SEV 6991)
- ISLINGTON: Roger Cox, Flat 1, 37 Queen's Drive, N4.
- KENTON: Kevin Simms, 56 Salisbury Road, Harrow.
- KILBURN: Sean Dunne, 18 Lithos Road, NW3.
- KINGSTON: Roger Crossley, Flat 2, 6 The Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey.
- LAMBETH: Andy Smith, Flat 6, 126 Streatham Hill, SW2.
- LEEDS: Alan Bailey, 26 Bagby Road, Leeds 2.
- MANCHESTER: Jack Sutton, 11a Rowan Avenue, Walley Range, Manchester 16.
- MERSEYSIDE: Ross Hill, 11 Broad Square, Liverpool 11 (051-226 7074)
- MIDDLESBROUGH: Barry Slater, 14 Briardene Avenue, Acklam.
- MORDEN: Malcolm Roe, 22 Elmhurst Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.
- NEWCASTLE: Dave Peers, 106 Holly Avenue, Newcastle on Tyne 2.
- NORTHAMPTON: Bob Dean, 4 Ald-

- OXFORD: Harry Goode, 24 Stockmore Road, Oxford.
- POTTERIES: John Whitfield, 5 Grosvenor Road, Newcastle under Lyme.
- RICHMOND: John Watson, 20 Sydney Road, Richmond, Surrey.
- RIPLEY & ILKESTON: Clive Burnett, 75 Heage Road, Ripley, Derbys.
- SELBY: John Charlton, 12 Thatch Close, Selby, Yorkshire.
- SHEFFIELD: Nick Howard, 15 Raven Road, Sheffield 7.
- SOUTHAMPTON: Mel Doyle, 87 Empress Road, Itchin.
- STEVENAGE: Michael Downing, 57 Trumper Road, Trots Hill.
- STOCKPORT: Barry Biddulph, 10 Foliage Crescent, Brinnington.
- STOKE NEWINGTON: Mike McGrath, 28 Manor Road, N16.
- SWANSEA: Pete G. Banston, 33a Uplands Crescent, Swansea.
- TOTTENHAM: Phil Hall, 1 Pelham Road, N15.
- WATFORD: Paul Russell, 61 Carpenders Avenue, Carpenders Park.
- WIGAN: Ray Challinor, 34 Whiteside Avenue, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.
- WOLVERHAMPTON: Dave Spillbury



# £25 million site locks out 1000 workers

From ROSS HILL: Liverpool, Wednesday.

ONE THOUSAND construction workers were locked out of the giant £25 million Chemico GB site at Ellesmere Port last Friday. At a mass meeting, the workers narrowly defeated a call to occupy the site.

The lock-out was the latest move by the employers to crush the militant building workers who have managed to cut a fair slice off the firm's fat profits.

## Rail revolt against pay deal grows

A MAJOR REVOLT against the new railways deal is growing in the industry's biggest union.

On Tuesday the North London District Committee of the National Union of Railwaymen voted overwhelmingly to throw out the deal signed last month by the NUR, ASLEF (the footplatemen's union) and British Rail.

North London is the largest committee of the NUR. Delegates represent 27,000 workers.

The meeting demanded an emergency recall of the NUR national conference to renegotiate the whole £13 million pay and productivity deal. And they will urge other NUR district committees to join their campaign.

Delegates opposed three main points of the package deal: the £13 minimum wage, which they want raised to £15; the new four 10-hour shifts a week; and redundancy plans, which they feel are likely to exceed the 5,300 already accepted by the NUR.

## Manchester says No

MANCHESTER:- The local district council of the National Union of Railwaymen voted on Monday, by 66 votes to 4, to reject the new agreement.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

Earlier this year we launched a print shop fund to pay for the equipment needed to publish Socialist Worker. We need £10,000 by the end of the year.

So far we have received £7,200. Will you all do everything you can to help raise the outstanding amount?

We will run into serious trouble if we cannot pay all our bills by the end of the year.

In particular, we need £400 in the next few weeks to buy a van. This is vitally necessary to run the printed papers to the main railway stations for transmission to all parts of the country. Please rush donations to us as quickly as possible.

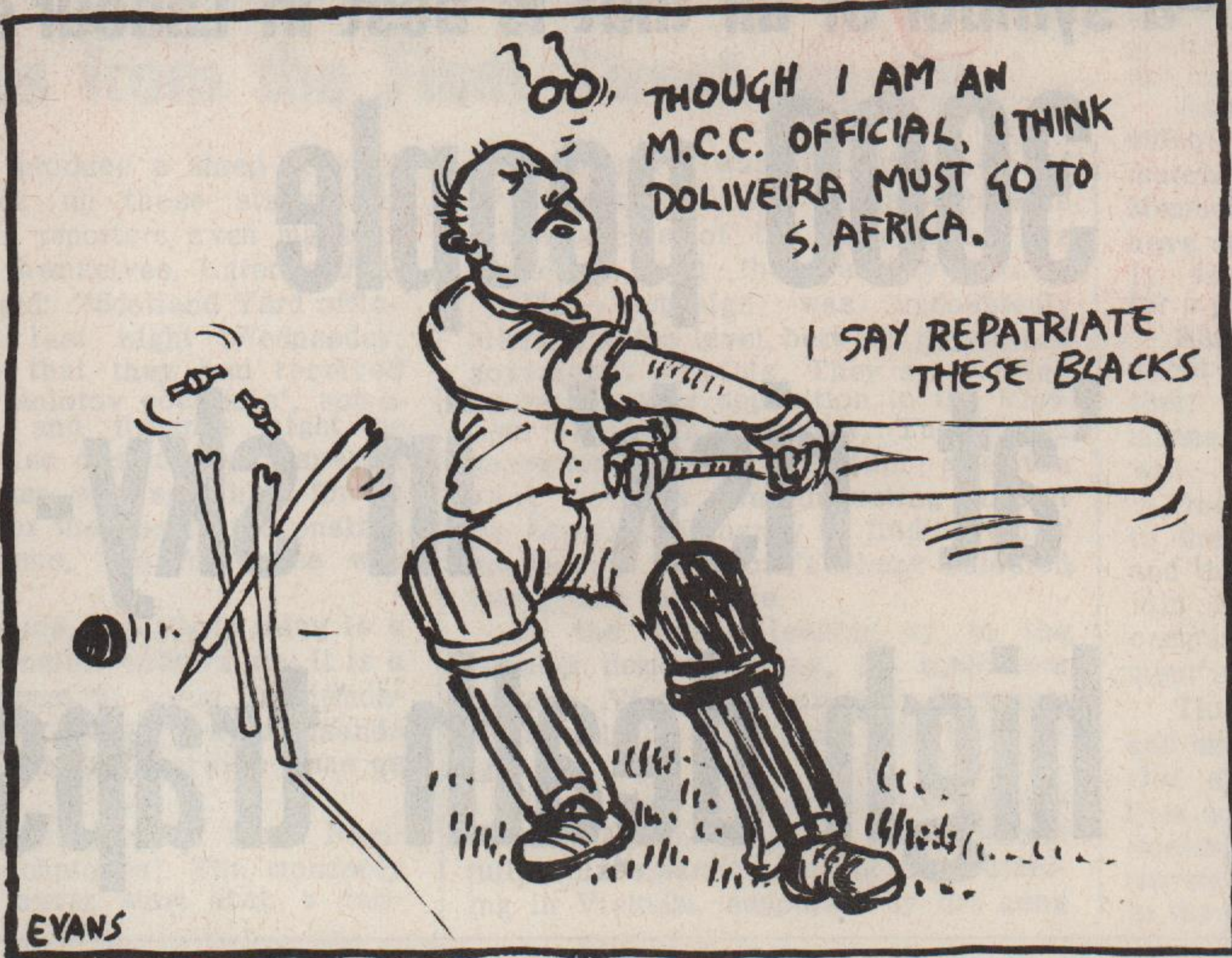
## Make sure you see Socialist Worker every week...

Name.....

Address.....

Organisation.....

I enclose £1/10s for a year/six months



## 'Red plot' at ICI - but stewards won't budge

From BARRY SLATER

TEESSIDE:- The giant Imperial Chemical Industries, which has just announced a record profit of £76 millions, has discovered a "red plot" to prevent workers accepting a productivity deal.

ICI has been trying for two and a half years to push through the new deal (manpower utilisation and payment structure) but the workers have repeatedly turned it down.

Now shop stewards have come across a copy of a top secret circular sent to senior executives outlining the steps the company intends to take to combat the stewards.

"Resistance to MUPS," says the circular, "is mainly due to organised groups of militant stewards in the main centres of production."

### PUBLICITY

The management admits there is little they can do to baulk the stewards. They recommend publicity to boost "the successes of the trial sites and to minimise the set-backs."

They add: "Militant stewards should be presented to more reasonable employees as trouble makers." The circular advises against disciplinary action against the stewards. It might lose the management the sympathy of the more "reasonable" trade union officials.

It advises instead enlisting "the aid of national officers to discipline the most active participants."

ICI are hoping that the government and the trade union leaders will eventually get them off the hook.

"It is thought that as government pressure is brought upon the unions' national bodies to conclude MUPS, some of the pressure will be exerted by the national officers on their more recalcitrant members, so that in time the trade union side itself will remove this resistance."

The management are alarmed that their "secret" circular has leaked to the stewards. A senior ICI personnel officer flew to the Wilton plant on Teesside last week to placate the stewards and stress that the circular was not really company policy.

The stewards were not taken in. They have distributed copies throughout the plant and have lodged the original copy with the editor of a national newspaper.

There has been a 24 per cent cut in the labour force at the ICI fibres plant in Gloucester since MUPS was brought in there. If that was repeated on Teesside, it would mean 5,000 redundancies.

But the management won't be able to bully the stewards into accepting the plan. A senior Teesside shop steward said: "As far as we are concerned, MUPS is dead and buried."

## Trade unions launch campaign against racist 'friendly' club

From STUART BENTLEY IN A SECRET BALLOT at the Batley (Yorks) Trades and Friendly club, by 88 votes to 8, members excluded black people from membership and employment at the club.

When the Race Relations Bill becomes law in five weeks, that section of the Batley resolution dealing with employment will be actionable, but the exclusion from the Bill of private members clubs will open the way for the proliferation of such bodies.

Comfort to racials is now assured. Freedom to be racist is only possible when we take away from black people the freedom to be equal.

Equity, the actors' union, reacted quickly. Mr. Alan Courtney, national organis-

ing secretary in Manchester, spoke of his union's "deep resentment of this type of action." He pledged his members to boycott the club, which not only discriminated in its employment, but also in its admission to membership.

Blackpool Trades Council passed an emergency resolution to that effect and Leeds Trades Council executive promised to follow suit.

### SUPPORT

Mr. Holmes, secretary of Batley Trades Council, urged his colleagues on Monday to support Equity. Three of the 16 delegates voted against.

"We cannot condone this sort of thing in Batley and condemn it in South Africa," Mr. Holmes said. "What would be their attitude if a coloured surgeon refused to treat them because of the colour of their skin?"

Batley, like other towns, depends on black and immigrant labour to keep its hospitals functioning. Only one doctor at the town's hospital is reported to be white. 60 per cent of the nurses are black.

The Afro-West Indian Society, Campaign for Racial Equality and the Indian Workers Association, aided by the Congress of Racial Equality (Leeds) staged a demonstration on the opening night of the new £53,000 premises. Over 130 black and white people came from Huddersfield, Bradford, Wakefield, Leeds and Keighley to picket.

Members of the Communist Party, International Socialism and the Young Liberals joined the picket with white trade unionists. An Action Committee was formed on Sunday. 15 organisations are represented, both multi-racial, black

Earlier this year, the management agreed to pay the men an extra £4 a week "without strings" - a move to get them to sweat harder. The men took the increase.

But then the government stepped in. It didn't want the workers to get an increase without tying it up with a package deal.

The workers were faced by the now familiar unholy alliance: the bosses, Barbara Castle and full-time trade union officials.

They worked out an "agreement" behind the workers' backs which gave them an increase of £5-but this time there were strings.

The agreement had many long, impressive words, like "interchangeability", "flexibility" and "productivity". But the workers knew that all meant the same in the long run: the dole.

The firm wanted the men to be jack-of-all-trades. They would all do scaffolding—a highly skilled trade—and the scaffolders would be sacked.

### NO STRIKES

Under the agreement, the men would lose their right to strike and no union meetings could be held on the site without the bosses' permission. When the scaffolders tried to meet in a cabin they were sacked.

The workers, threatened by a long winter of unemployment on Merseyside, were furious at being betrayed by their union officials.

Although some local union officials have done a good job, most of them are turncoats. Many workers are thinking of tearing up their union cards in disgust, but this would prevent them getting work on any of the strongly organised sites on Merseyside.

The men should stay in their unions, but they should build strong rank and file organisations at grass roots with elected shop stewards.

Meanwhile, the lock-out goes on. The workers need support from all the other sites in the area.

As one of the men said: "This government would rather see the site rot for ever than let the men smash the productivity agreement."

## Grey Mare Lane falls to the Viet Cong

From WENDY HENRY

MANCHESTER:- Members of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign here felt that although demonstrations against the Vietnam war were gaining momentum they were alienating us from the very people we were trying to win to our side—the public.

An effort to win more public support before the October mobilisation demon-

strations is needed and one member suggested that we try out a "wall newspaper" in the local market backed by leaflets stating our case.

So three of us set off on Saturday morning to Grey Mare Lane Market. We found a suitable pitch and nervously began to lay out our equipment.

We soon stirred up a lot of interest among the stallholders, who wondered what we were trying to "flog". Then the crowds really started to flock around when we stuck up a big blank poster on the wall and wrote across the top THE VIETCONG ARE WINNING.

We stopped passers-by and asked them what they thought of it. All our fears went when the first man answered: "It's great!"

Within half an hour we had four posters up, covered with such slogans as: "The

"The Vietnamese should rule Vietnam".

Not everyone agreed with us and there was a nasty moment when a little old lady came dashing up, started to rip the posters off the wall and told us what she thought of us in no uncertain terms. But the crowd was right behind us and told her to clear off.

When we packed up four hours later we had talked to 300 people, sold some literature and contacted three shop stewards for International Socialism. Some shoppers could be seen carrying VSC bags.

### Tenants demonstrate

ANGRY TENANTS demonstrated outside Haringey Council's meeting in North London on Wednesday night. They were protesting against the Tory council's plan to jack-up rents. Old

# FORD FIGHT GOES ON FOR EQUAL PAY

by SABBY SAGALL

IN JUNE, the 383 Ford women sewing-machinists at Dagenham and Halewood went on strike for three weeks in support of their claim for upgrading from grade B to C—from semi-skilled to skilled.

Before the strike, they were receiving 1s 4d an hour less than male machinists doing identical work. Although the strike began as a struggle against sex-discrimination in grading, the women raised the level of the issue by incorporating the principle of equal pay.

When they were brought face to face with the Ford management and their backer, Barbara Castle (who at £170 per week has already achieved equal pay), they demanded that their wages should be raised half way towards equal pay with the men in grade B—i.e. from 85 to 92 per cent of the male rate.

The company was forced to concede an extra 7d an hour although the women had started out with the wage-demand of only 5d an hour.

### Great defeat

Although on the grading issue the women were fobbed off with another Scamp Court of Inquiry, which has since come out against them, Ford suffered its greatest financial and moral defeat ever at their hands. The implications of the women's victory for thousands of other Ford workers are enormous.

It caused the first breach in the dam of the two-year no-claim agreement signed last year between the management and the union bureaucrats on the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee.

The full power of the state is also ranged against the women. The government are clearly terrified that complete victory for the women would unleash a rash of struggles all over the country of super-exploited women.

The women also struck a blow for the principle of democratic shop-floor leadership. It was the first time in the history of Ford that a strike committee negotiated terms directly with the directors and a Secretary of State.

When the Scamp inquiry rejected their claim for upgrading, the women declared a ban on overtime. All militants will hope that they will decide at their meeting this week to engage in an all-out struggle for equal pay as skilled workers.

# GIANTS MERGE

FROM PAGE ONE

There is always the additional prospect of a generous loan from the government-sponsored IRC to help the new giant on its way. The two companies are, however, unlikely to be short of cash.

The combined profits may touch the £60 million mark in the first year. Workers employed by both firms should immediately call meetings to demand "no redundancies". Factory-to-factory committees should be formed to ward off attacks when the bosses move into action.