

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM



What trade unionists should tell Mrs Castle and the bosses —

HANDS OFF!

Socialist Worker Industrial Reporter

THE PROPOSALS IN THE GOVERNMENT White Paper on industrial reform are a totally unwarranted attack on the trade union movement. Cynically labelled In Place of Strife, the proposals are less important than the precedent they will set when they become law later this year—the precedent of direct legal interference in the affairs of the trade union movement.

Three of the proposals are of special interest to militants. The first is the call for ballots before national strikes in certain situations.

This is an attempt to measure opinions of workers when they are isolated and separated from one another, when their personal considerations may come to the fore.

It is an attempt to break them up as a collective at work when they feel strong and where the problems likely to lead to strikes will arise. The move must be deplored. But its overall effect is likely to be small, and conditions for its use rare.

Enforced

Secondly there is the proposal to set up a Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) which could make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Some of the recommendations could then be enforced legally.

Thirdly, and most threatening, there is the proposal for a 28-day cooling off period—or 'conciliation pause' as the White Paper cunningly calls it.

While the pause is in operation there would 'normally' be a return to the situation which had prevailed before the dispute broke out.

In this form it is not too dangerous, but it must be stressed that capitalism can often benefit by waiting and planning before a strike.

But any delay can weaken the workers' position, especially in any trades subject to seasonal fluctuations such as the building or the exhibition trades.

The motivation for these proposals springs from a number of sources.

Serious

The Labour government has to convince the international bankers, who have bailed out the British capitalists repeatedly since 1964, that they are serious—and this means attacking the working class.

The government also has electoral motives in mind. At every level they are forced to compete with the Tories.

Tory pressure on immigration led to the complete collapse into racialism of the Labour government. Similarly, Tory pressure for trade union 'reform' is followed by Labour attacks on the unions.

The particular proposals are not a massive threat. But they do not come on their own.

They must be seen in the light of a prolonged offensive by the ruling class to solve capitalism's problems by hammering the workers.

As Andrew Shonfield, one of the hard-liners on the original Donovan Commission has put it, the government has 'moved sharply in the direction of legal regulation. That is the essential point. Future reformers will be able to build on the new structure.'

Door opened for further attacks

(Observer, January 19). Next year we could, for example, have the cooling-off period without the return to the previous situation. Then employers could bring in any work changes they liked and have 28 days grace before the workers could fight back.

The law is a facade. How it is applied depends on the balance of class forces in any particular situation.

Part of this balance is ideological. That is, the extent to which groups of workers swallow the Labour government's rubbish about the 'national interest' and 'all pulling our weight', to that extent they are weakened in defending their class interests against the present offensive.

For many years since the war there have been three forces in industry—the employers, the trade union officials and the shop stewards. The last two co-existed with little interference with each other.

Undermine

Now the long-term effect of trade union legislation and productivity deals is to undermine the independent power of the shop stewards.

One of the tasks of the CIR will be to seek ways of bringing shop stewards 'within a proper framework'. In this situation the present proposals must be met by an uncompromising:

Hands off the trade unions!

But the fight is a long one and the workers must learn the lessons of the present situation.

The only effective way of resisting the transformation of trade union officials into government police agents will be to fight for rank-and-file control of the trade unions.

To the government's In Place of Strife there is only one answer—Workers' Control.



Students marched through Prague on Monday following the death of Jan Palach

Czech youth and workers step up fight for freedom

By CHRIS HARMAN

A MASSIVE NEW WAVE of protest has spread across Czechoslovakia this week following the death of Jan Palach, the student who set fire to himself.

The common theme behind student demonstrations and resolutions passed at workers' meetings is opposition to attempts to cut back on the freedom of discussion and of the press won at the beginning of last year.

This is coupled with the demand for immediate withdrawal of Russian troops.

Throughout last summer, both before and after the Russian invasion, the new controllers of the Czech government, such as Dubcek and Svoboda, willingly gave the impression of being in the vanguard of the movement for increased freedom and of opposition to the Russians.

UPSET

In effect they told the workers and students: 'Leave it to us, we know how to deal with these people. If you do anything you will just upset them and achieve nothing.'

The mass of the Czech people are now beginning to see how hollow these pretensions were.

Despite the sickly adulation of Dubcek in the western press he rose to eminence during the worst period of Stalinism and was not really worried by its methods.

Last year he employed fine liberal words about 'freedom' and 'democratic social-

ism' in order to gather support behind him, to remove the previous rulers of the party and to introduce economic reforms aimed at improving the efficiency and profitability of Czech industry.

Since the Russian invasion his whole tone has been changing.

The Czech leaders want independence for themselves and for the Czech economy which they, totally controlling, regard as their own property.

At the same time their concern for increased industrial profitability forces them to contain any independent movement of Czech workers and to do away with freedom of speech.

Since August, they have been using the ferment among the masses as a weapon against the Russians and the threat of direct Russian intervention as a weapon against the masses.

Like a man standing on the backs of two horses, the Dubcek group has been attempting to follow its own policies through a difficult balancing act.

The trouble is that the two props it rests on are beginning to move in opposite directions. Rather than painfully submit to doing the splits, the Dubcek group is going over to the Russian side.

But the Czech workers and students are increasingly acting independently of their rulers. They are demanding that they have a say in decisions made, both at the factory and at the national level.

That is why Dubcek promises 'resolute measures against actions and publications at variance with the policy of the party'.

The Czech workers and students are no longer intimidated by such talk. They are making it clear that if their rulers will not confront the occupying army of Stalin's Russian successors, they will.

PRESSING

They are pressing for real workers' control of industry and the state. This cannot be equated with the demand for a western-type regime.

Because they reject the idea of the press being run by the single controller of the bureaucracy, the Czech workers cannot accept that it should be run by four or five millionaires.

Because they reject elections in which they have no choice of candidates, they cannot accept a system in which they have a choice between candidates with identical policies.

In demanding power for themselves, the ordinary people of Czechoslovakia are participating in a development that can in the long run shake the ruling classes on both sides of the iron curtain.

We on the left must support them against the glib condemnations of Dubcek or any armed repression

DUBLIN POLICE BATTER MARCHERS

Socialist Worker Reporter

DUBLIN:- 200 police with drawn batons brutally attacked 3000 demonstrators on O'Connell Bridge on Saturday, proving that while Northern Ireland is a police state, the south is not a haven of civil liberties.

The demonstrators, organised by the Dublin Housing Action Ctee, were sitting down on the bridge to protest against the imprisonment of committee member Denis Dennehy. He was jailed for disobeying a court order to quit a tenement room in Mountjoy Square where he was squatting with his wife and children.

The Dennehy's previously lived in a caravan which was destroyed by fire.

CHARGED

The sit-down was peaceful and few cars were held up.

But the police charged them and a battle raged for more than an hour. The demonstrators fought back with bottles and stones.

The Housing Action Ctee led a march on Monday night to the infamous Mountjoy Prison, used by British imperialist forces to jail revolutionaries earlier this century and now similarly used by Prime Minister Lynch to hold civil rights fighters such as Dennehy.

The Dublin Regional Council of the Irish Labour Party is to hold an enquiry into allegations of police brutality.

NERVY

The Dublin police have become more and more nervy on recent demonstrations, particularly those held during the successful fight to stop the Tory government's attempt at gerrymandering the electoral system, which would have resulted in a virtual one-party dictatorship.

The police violence reflects the instability of the southern regime. Both regimes, north and south, face the prospect of growing conflicts with the workers.

N.IRELAND: Eamonn McCann reports on page 3.

Anti-Powell marchers clash with police

OXFORD:- On Monday evening more than 1000 Oxford students and workers tried to prevent Enoch Powell speaking to the University Conservative Association.

The whole Thames valley constabulary were mobilised to get Powell through and succeeded in smuggling him in and out of the Town Hall through a back door, despite repeated attempts by the demonstrators to break through the massed ranks of police.

Thirty arrests were made and many people injured.

The purpose of the demonstration, clearly stated by speakers from the International Socialists and in leaflets distributed in the factories and in the university by an ad-hoc committee of socialists was to deny Powell the right to speak in Oxford.

MARCH AGAINST N. IRELAND POLICE STATE

Sunday Feb 2
2.30 Speakers Corner,
Hyde Park to Ulster
Office.

Two Polish socialists are jailed

TWO POLISH revolutionary socialists, who have called for the overthrow of the Gomulka dictatorship and its replacement by genuine socialism based on workers' councils, were jailed for 3½ years in Warsaw last week.

The men, university lecturers Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, have already served similar jail terms for writing their famous critique of the bureaucratic Polish regime, An Open Letter to the Party.

This time they were accused of activities harmful to the state 'during the period of

transition' and of instigating last year's student demonstrations.

Charges that Kuron and Modzelewski were in touch with western organisations were dropped. Even Gomulka's police agents could not make such a ludicrous charge stick.

The unflinching courage of the two men is a source of inspiration to socialists everywhere. In spite of the repressive, anti-working class nature of the regime, they continue to fight for their ideas.

In their writings they have in no way painted a rosy

picture of western society in comparison to their own. Their ideas flow from a sound marxist analysis of capitalism as an interlocking world system, which is equally repressive east and west.

They base their programme on the need for the working class in Poland to take control of the state and industry and run them in a truly democratic way.

Embassy march

LAST SATURDAY, the audience at a packed meeting in London called by the Intern-

ational Socialists to commemorate the death of Polish-born revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg, marched to the Polish embassy to demand the release of Kuron and Modzelewski.

The embassy staff refused to answer the door, but a protest note was pinned to the building. The marchers sang the Internationale before dispersing.

An Open Letter to the Party is available 4s 6d post paid from IS Book Service, 90 Mountview Road London N4.

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL...

WITH A FANFARE of publicity, London Transport has opened the first part of the new Victoria tube line.

Some Londoners are indeed favoured—not only can they read about it, they can, depending on geography, actually use a bit of it. And dream their dreams on the way to ... work.

The new line is a great leap forward, but it is not designed to meet the social needs of Londoners, only to get them to and from their labour.

The London Transport net-

work does not enable us to live our lives as we choose. Though 'publicly' owned, it isn't a social service.

It gets you to work—a service to the employers, paid for daily by those who operate it and those who use it.

SHAMBLES

Yet we can witness in this newness the possibilities for abolishing the shambles of the city. It would cost less in economic terms to have a completely free transport system than to remain lumbered with the cost of congestion.

But the human savings would be enormous. No cancer and TB in the air, an end to



death on the roads. You could even drive a car for pleasure.

The mole of change tunnels deep, and you can see and use this underground, the creation of thousands of labourers, engineers, electricians, assisted by draughtsmen and surveyors.

You won't remember the two men killed at Tottenham Hale in the making of the Victoria Line. You'll have heard of the high wages, but not the foul conditions of sweated labour, 1969 variety.

PROFITS

You'll not know that it was all a non-union job, and now that you do you'll maybe not realise that this meant that while digging the bends the workers got them.

But you will guess that vast profits will have been made by those who do nothing other than lend their names to the hoardings outside the various site entrances.

In spite of the sweaters of labour and their vast profits, you can witness the wonderful product built by the collaboration of workers' skill and labour.

You can chuckle with pleasure at your thoughts, for the moment private, which grasp the huge possibilities for the transformation of a whole city, a whole world, that workers' skill—set free through workers' democracy—extends to you.

Yes, a whole city, a whole world, could be transformed... if work were directed for use and need, not for profit and its wars, waste and permanent fear.

The workers who created the Victoria Line have built a huge sign without words that points to a society whose first concern is freedom and human need.

This too, out of all the struggles, sufferings and defeats, will be built. And afterwards, people might pause to indulge themselves for a while and organise an election to change the name.

Laurie Flynn

Why Quintin Hogg supported the Welfare State: 'It's either reform or revolution'

by COLIN FALCONER

THE LONG STRUGGLE of the working class for a better life finds its expression in the 'Welfare State'.

But current campaigns for higher family allowances, pensions and supplementary benefit have little support in the labour movement.

Why is the Welfare State unpopular with the workers?

One reason is the success of Tory propaganda, which says that the government is 'smothering initiative', and encouraging idleness.

But workers only accept Tory ideology when it appears to explain their own—justified—resentment at the way the Welfare State treats them.

Scared by militancy

The origin of the Welfare State goes back to the Liberal government before World War I.

Scared by the growth of the Labour Party and the militancy of the workers led by Ben Tillett, Tom Mann and Jim Larkin, Lloyd George tried to buy off the working class by introducing old age pensions, unemployment and sickness insurance, and other reforms.

But if the workers inspired the reforms, they did not control them. Lloyd George was able to establish the 'contributory principle' in

which the poor paid for their own social security through compulsory deductions from the wage packet.

The scheme was so full of loopholes that the very idea of 'national insurance' became unpopular.

In practice—because workers were 'out of benefit' or 'not covered', or could not live on the benefit provided—few of the unemployed, old or sick escaped the Means Test.

This rotten scheme was supported by the Labour Party in parliament. Only five Left-wingers, including George Lansbury, saw through Lloyd George's swindle.

Labour's Welfare State of 1945-51 was not basically different. Once again, the real cause of the reforms was fear of the working class.

After 30 years of war and unemployment, a section of the ruling class decided that the people must be appeased.

As Quintin Hogg said in parliament in 1943: 'If you do not give the people reform, they are going to give you social revolution.'

The Tories were discredited, and entangled with vested interests such as the British Medical Association.

Only Labour could do the job of saving capitalism. Using troops to break the dock strike and jailing dockers' leaders was the other side of the coin.

Labour's Welfare State was nothing but a watered-down version of the wartime plan produced by the Liberal academic Sir William Bever-



Attlee



Lloyd George

Their welfare plans were motivated by fear of the working class

idge. The level of benefits was fixed so low that a large number of people became dependent on the Means Test, renamed National Assistance.

And the contributory principle was still the basis of the system. Instead of redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor, the workers were to save up for a rainy day by compulsory insurance contributions.

In 1938, 9.5 per cent of the national income went on social security. By 1951, the proportion had risen to just 11 per cent.

The Welfare State was created by middle-class politicians who are basically afraid of the working class.

The workers have less control over the welfare bureaucracy than over the factories in which they work, where at least they have trade unions and shop steward committees to protect them.

The first job of the bureaucracy is to prevent abuse.

Since the Welfare State is only a service for the poor—if you have money there is always the private sector, in education, health, housing and social security—there is no

need to throw money away.

Read Richard Titmuss on Supplementary Benefit Offices: 'There are ... some offices which take one right back to the Dickensian poor law. They are literally slums.'

The staff, some of whom earn less than the people they are dealing with, make their decisions according to a secret rule-book, the A Code, whose contents have never been revealed, even to social workers.

The administration of rebate schemes helps illustrate the nature of the Welfare State. Again, the main priority is to prevent abuse.

Take the Greater London Council's rent rebate scheme. The applicant has to sign a declaration which includes words:

'I understand that... in the event of any of the information (in this form) being false, erroneous or defective in any material particular, the council may refuse to grant any rebate in future and/or, if deemed warranted, determine my tenancy...'

The declaration continues: 'I have no objection to your making any necessary enquiries from my employers, my wife's/husband's employers or elsewhere to check the information I have given'.

Paid for by workers

The GLC should not have been surprised when, out of 43,000 tenants expected to apply by the end of July, only 15,000 did so. And this is only one example of underclaiming of means-tested benefits.

This then is the Welfare State. Inadequate benefits, many of them subject to means tests, a heartless bureaucracy and the lot paid for by the working class, in compulsory contributions and taxes on consumption.

Understandably, the workers lack enthusiasm for

schemes which merely tamper with the system, however worthy some of the schemes may be.

The working class movement must demand:

- 1. A massive redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor and
- 2. A democratic Welfare State, based on adequate control of the social services by the working class.

Some of the ways in which these aims can be achieved will be outlined in future articles.

Rank and file — does it help

IN HIS ARTICLE on the latest betrayal by the building union leaders (December 21) Ted Richards concluded that 'the rank and file must organise themselves ... and not wait for others to lead the way.'

This is an excellent idea but it comes a cropper when implemented. The people that always benefit in the building industry from conventional rank and file activity are those very trade union leaders who are ruining everything.

When militants organise a site or workshop, a number of recruits are enlisted into the unions, which helps consolidate the financial power of the apparatus.

Then at branch level the new recruits quickly come under right-wing influence as most branches are controlled by non-militants who have 'steady numbers' with firms, which makes them bureaucratically consistent, unlike site militants, who are volatile and erratic.

Another influence at work in this destructive process is the Communist Party, whose members on sites are often very agitational but whose strategy, geared to the cap-

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THE CIVIL R ment in North has come to t the ways.

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N. Ireland and the British L

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Socialist Worker

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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 de-

WHERE WE STAND

mand 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 in-

fluence 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 and international socialism.

JUST OUT

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civil rights movement in Ulster has reached the parting of the ways

THE WAY FORWARD FOR IRISH SOCIALISTS UNITY OF ALL WORKERS AGAINST ORANGE AND GREEN TORIES

EAMONN McCANN in Derry



Moderates fear bloodshed if socialists win support—ignoring bloodshed caused by extreme right. Picture shows civil rights marchers ambushed by Paisleyites on road to Derry.

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WHAT LEFT MUST DEMAND

What are relevant socialist demands in Northern Ireland?
1. Cancellation of the Housing Trust debt to the central banks. Last year local authorities paid £2,600,000 in interest repayments—more

than the total rents collected.
2. Government, finance and industry under workers' control as opposed to the Orange ruling class scrambling around for 'foreign investment'.

Before the Newry march they insisted repeatedly that they would not recognise any ban or accept a re-route by the police.

Then, when confronted by the inevitable police barricade, they advised everyone to return to the starting point 'where prominent speakers will address you'. The result was the burning of the tenders that had

been used to block the route, the attempted occupation of public buildings and the traditional late-night baton charges.

Reactions have been predictable. The moderates' line is that the government, by allowing this to happen—and there is no doubt that the cops watched cheerfully as the tenders blazed—has successfully discredited the

civil rights movement. Already there is talk of 'purging the movement of "extremists" and "revolutionaries" who are using the civil rights for their own ends.'

What the Left must do now is clearly to define its political difference with the moderates.

A 'more militant than thou' stance is meaningless unless we communicate to the rank and file precisely what it is we are being militant about.

The problem is that, given the historical legacy of religious sectarianism, it is difficult to get across the point that the struggle is an issue of class, not creed. (And articles such as Paul Foot's in Socialist Worker of December 21, in which he examined

the unemployment problem in terms of 'catholic' towns and 'protestant' towns, do not help. The Left should make demands that demonstrate the line of class division and direct a considerably greater proportion of its energy and activity towards the protestant workers.

Shatter facade

To do this it is necessary to deliberately shatter the facade of 'unity' within the civil rights movement.

The catholic middle-class leadership cannot support socialist demands which pose as great a threat to themselves as to the open enemies of civil rights.

The unity they speak about is sectarian itself. They relegate or ignore class demands and therefore rule out the achievement of the only unity socialists should be interested in at this point—unity of our class

against its enemies, Green as well as Orange.

Unless the break is made we will continue like the Duke of York: marching towards battle, realising as we approach the front line that the 'enemy' is largely working-class protestants, deciding that strife between workers is a bad thing and pulling back in confusion.

This silly zig-zagging is caused by the fact that those leading 'our' side cannot and will not tolerate appeals to the 'enemy' on the only basis that holds any hope of success—on the basis that, as workers, they have to suffer unemployment, low wages, bad housing, high rents and disfranchisement in local government elections.

The instinctive militancy of radical socialists will, in the nature of Northern Ireland society, achieve its greatest immediate response among the catholic working class.

We cannot wipe out the last trace of religious bitterness from working-class consciousness overnight.

There can be no doubt that the voices of moderation will cry to the heavens about the danger of bloodshed and civil war.

Our answer must be that it is 'moderation' and 'liberalism' which, down through the years, have prevented any assault on the system that provokes the possibility of civil war.

Keep control

It is the same moderates and liberals who are today struggling desperately to keep control of a movement that, under their leadership, has done nothing to lessen sectarianism.

And it is they who wish to expel the only people and ideas that might successfully realise struggle along a non-religious axis.

LETTERS

workers of all Ireland against their Green and Orange exploiters.

The confused thinking behind your approach is well expressed in your editorial: 'The British Left must act in solidarity with their Irish comrades by fighting to end British capitalism's role in Ulster'. How?

Its role depends in no way on the direct control of Northern or Southern Ireland; even less on the anti-catholic laws. Nor will it end if Ireland becomes a united bourgeois republic. It will end only when the market ceases to rule the relations of small nations and large ones.

Again: 'Too many socialists unconsciously accept its (Ireland's) colonial status by ignoring the grip of British capital over the country'. And neo-colonialism?

Like the majority of Irish workers, the editorial clearly thinks that the slogans raised are a solution to be basic problem of Ireland—the grip of British and Irish capital.

They are not a solution. For a country like Ireland, overshadowed by Britain, only the workers' revolution can change the basic situation. We must fight for limited gains (ie British withdrawal)—but we must not sow, or endorse, illusions.

The beneficial effect of complete British withdrawal would only be to clear the

nationalist roadblock that has stopped Irish labour in its tracks for 50 years. No more than that.

It is a crass oversimplification to call Northern Ireland a 'colony'—it is semi-autonomous, ruled by a sub-section of the British capitalists. Direct British control is increasingly unimportant: there is evidence of British desire for Northern and Southern Irish bourgeois rapprochement (in preparation for entry to the Common Market).

Orange bigotry today benefits the Northern Ireland employers who are not all English. We need a class explanation as well as a nationalist explanation.

Yet you stick to demands appropriate to Vietnam, or to Ireland in 1920, ignoring the effects of these demands on Irish readers—and others.

To take this into account, the proposal for a Workers' Republic slogan was raised at the NC. It could have taken the form of an IS expression of support for the Left in Ireland, and in no way would it have qualified the demand of 'Britain out'.

We don't tell Irish socialists what to do. But should we, out of contrition for Britain's role in Ireland, past and present, trail after people who see Ireland in national terms, or liberal terms, to the exclusion of class terms?

IS needs a line, an independent judgement: Lenin, while arguing with Luxemburg, was by no means a supporter of Pilsudski.

For instance, do we not

have a duty to criticise the apparent lack of concrete unifying working-class demands in the N.Ireland Civil Rights movement? No Irish socialists (except a few reactionary expatriate chauvinists) would object to this, nor to socialist propaganda among Irish workers in Britain.

At the moment IS is reproducing the line of Irish socialists who on this question are habitually to the right not only of Luxemburg—but also of Pilsudski! —SEAN MATGAMNA, Manchester IS.

IN THESE HEADY days perhaps it is felt by Socialist Worker that its supporters are likely to have increased difficulty in spotting the difference between IS and the Socialist Labour League.

Otherwise I see little point in the recent attacks on the SLL, a revolutionary socialist organisation, and David Mercer who, along with Dennis Potter, is a playwright British socialists have a right to be proud of.

One of the most important aspects of IS, until fairly recently, has been its political modesty, its recognition of the still tiny size of the revolutionary movement, and its repudiation of the sub-marxist cabbage water which passes as polemics on much of the far Left.

So let's leave the Bolshevik situation comedy to those groups who can only retain members by misleading them about the real shape of the Left.—DAVID WIDGERY, Angel IS.

The trials and tribulations of a Left MP

POOR ME! Several months ago I was attacked in the columns of the SLL journal following an inaccurate Daily Telegraph report about a vote in the House of Commons.

I made a reply headed: 'Trial by the Daily Telegraph'. I was then treated to several abusive remarks by Gerry Healy whom I have not set eyes upon for some time.

Now Raymond Challinor (equally not seen by me for so long) treats me to old-style Stalinist-type personal vilification (January 18). I used to think Ray had a fair chance of being in Parliament himself. Perhaps this attitude explains it all.

Both he and I know that conclusions cannot be based upon inaccurate information. I did not vote for the 1968 Act but I did speak in the debate as I have spoken many times on the immigration and race issue.

My attitude in my Constituency (where we know something about the matter) is well respected by all workers.

'Racialist effusions indeed' (Challinor). I'm known locally as the wog-lover. My home was twice attacked after the 1966 General Election by a lad with leaflets 'Blacks Not Wanted Here'.

The other Sunday I was

speaking with Ted Grant at a meeting in support of a campaign to free imprisoned Trotskyists in Greece. Can it be that Ted is the most civilised of the old RCP guard?

It would be a queer situation with a Labour Party based upon the trade union movement if there were no Left-wing Labour MPs. It doesn't seem that Ray Challinor has the capacity for deciding who they are.

You cannot cover up one inaccuracy (re Mrs. Short) by being nasty to Sid Bidwell.—SID BIDWELL, Labour MP for Southall.

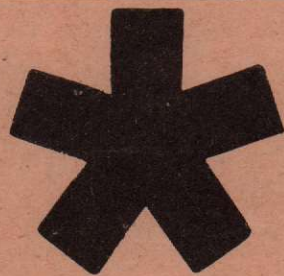
Join the International Socialists

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- BRADFORD Bob Kornreich Flat 1 7 Oak Avenue Bradford 8
- BRIGHTON Micky Adams Flat 4 85 St. Aubyns Hove
- BOLTON F Canavan 11 Sutton Rd Sutton Estate Deane Bolton
- CAMBRIDGE Peter Smith 65 Glisson Road
- CAMDEN Chris Barker 36 Gilden Road NW5
- CHERTSEY Nick Humphrey 83 New Haw Rd Addlestone Surrey
- COLCHESTER Ian Noble 12 Coach Rd Arlesford Wivenhoe 272
- COVENTRY Dave Edwards 53 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon
- CRAWLEY Deborah Ward 2 Weddell Rd Tilgate
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- MIDDLESBROUGH Chris Chard 32 Bedford Terr Billingham
- NEWCASTLE Tony Corcoran 26 Lesbury Road
- NORTHAMPTON Alan Druker 21 Ardington Road
- NORWICH Gerald Crompton 220 College Rd Norwich NOR 54F
- NOTTINGHAM Robert Abrahamson 15 Wellington Square Derby Rd
- OXFORD Steve Bolchover 181 Iffley Road
- POTTERIES John Whitfield 5 Grosvenor Rd Newcastle U Lyme
- RICHMOND Peter Glatter 3 Burlington Ave Kew
- RIPLEY & ILKESTON C Burnett 75 Heage Road Ripley Derbys
- SELBY John Charlton 12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks.
- SHEFFIELD J Wilkin 15 Raven Road Sheffield S7 ISB
- SOUTHAMPTON John Fisher 144 Thornhill Park Road
- STEVENAGE Michael Downing 57 Trumper Road Troatts Hill
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- SWANSEA Pete Branston 33a Uplands Crescent
- TOTTENHAM Laurie Flynn 374 High Road N17
- TOWER HAMLETS M Renn 58 Merchant St Bow E3
- WATFORD Paul Russell 61 Carpenders Avenue Carpenders Park
- WIGAN Ray Challinor 34 Whiteside Avenue Hindley
- WOOD GREEN Helen Wigley 332 High Road N22
- WOLVERHAMPTON Dave Spilsbury 274 Penn Road
- YORK Bob Looker 22 Hobgate
- READING: Miriam Belsey, 22 Redlands Rd, Reading, Berks.

Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the international socialists to

Name

Address



Ford's 'no strikes' pay offer

By JIM LAMBORN

FORD MOTOR COMPANY has joined in the popular pastime of clobbering the unions. Simultaneously with the publication of Mrs. Castle's programme for union-bashing, Ford has issued to its 40,000 workers a pamphlet called Pay Security and You.

It outlines proposals for the company's Income Security plan for 1969 and contains the menacing clause: 'There must be an assurance of uninterrupted production. So in the event of your taking part in any form of unconstitutional action, you would disqualify yourself from benefits for six months.'

Ford wants to blackmail car workers into giving up their right to strike in return for a 5-10 per cent wage rise.

Arrangements were made for shop stewards to meet officials of the 21 unions on the Ford negotiating committee at the firm's Warley headquarters to discuss the deal. Only 11 officials turned up and the stewards took this as an indication of their interest in the proposals.

None of the Ford plants has approved the employers' offer. Steward after steward at the meeting got up to ask whether rights won over decades of struggle were to be given away for a paltry rise.

HARSH

One veteran steward said as he left the meeting: 'Not one official on the platform spoke against these harsh measures. I would not have believed it.'

Ford national union officials stand at the cross-roads. Will they shrug their shoulders, sign the deal and leave militants to face the same fate as the 17 stewards thrown out at Dagenham in 1962?

Or will they refuse to sign and fight for their members' right to strike? If they take the second course, there is likely to be a bitter struggle at Ford.

The two sides meet again on February 3. Meanwhile, thousands of anxious rank and file trade unionists are lobbying their officials to insist that none of their rights are surrendered.

MEETINGS

SOLIDARITY Meeting: 'Alienation at Work'. Discussion introduced by George Shaw and Aktivz Orr Friday Jan 24 8 pm The Swan, Cosmo Place, WC1 (off Southampton Row).

SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain. Lecture on students' revolt. Thurs Jan 30 8.30pm. Waggon and Horses Hotel, Southgate, off Deansgate, Manchester. Enquiries ring 061-445 7641. Everyone welcome. Mts every Thurs 8.30pm.

WOOD GREEN, Hornsey and Tottenham IS branches public mtg on Ireland. Fishmongers Arms, High Road N22 (tube Wood Green) 8pm Thurs Jan 30.

EDINBURGH: Teach-in on National Liberation and Social Revolution. Spkrs include Dr. John Chinnery (China), Chris Harman (Revolutionary Forces in E. Europe and Russia Today), C.L.R. James (Revolution in the West Today) and Tom Murray (The Revolution in Scotland). 11.00am-12.30 pm, 2-6 pm, Saturday Jan 25 Lecture Hall C, David Hume Tower, George Square.

STOKE NEWINGTON IS Public Mtg. on Housing, Education and Unemployment. Spkrs. D. Widgery and Roger Cox. The White Hart (opp Tyssen Rd., High St. N16. Monday 27 January 8pm.

EAST ANGLIA IS quarterly mtg. Feb 8 and 9. Norwich University. Starts 10.45 Sat. Spkrs include Nigel Coward on industrial work.

LONDON SQUATTERS protest meeting to instal homeless families in empty property. Sunday Feb 9 2 pm Manor Park station, Station Rd E12. British Rail to Manor Park on L'pool St-Gidea Pk line. Central line to Stratford, change to BR to Manor Park. Buses 101, 26, 86, 721 Green Line. We need money, cars on the day, offers of food, water containers etc. Further details 128 Hainault Rd E11. 01-539 5059.

POSTERS of Luxemburg and Liebknecht. Rosa: red on white 5s, black on white 4s; Karl: black on white 4s. French revolution posters still available. SW Paxton Works N17.

MAN'S WATCH found outside Rhodesia House after anti-Smith demo. 'M. Collison' on back. Ring 01-248 3881.

Clippies demand right to drive

From CHRIS DAVISON

IS A WOMAN'S PLACE in the home behind the kitchen sink or is it behind the wheel of a London bus? This is the argument now going on in the London Bus section of the Transport Workers Union.

On Tuesday, 25 women conductors lobbied the Central London Bus Conference of the Transport Workers Union, demanding equal rights for women to drive London buses. The delegates voted 35-33 against allowing them into the meeting but the clippies occupied the building during the lunch break.

With the 1968 productivity deal giving London Transport the green light for one man buses throughout Greater London, the question on women bus drivers has taken on a new urgency. Within eight years the clippie could be gone for good from London's buses.

Turned down

At the November Central Bus Conference, delegates representing all the red bus garages turned down by 2 to 1 majority a resolution from Southall garage calling for women bus drivers although the demand had the support of the Central Bus Committee and union officers.

Many delegates feared that women drivers would lower the status of the job and perhaps put men out of a job.

But many bus workers, men and women, have been far from happy with this decision. Women bus conductors have enjoyed equal pay for 20 years and with the recent 'no redundancy' guarantee from the management the fears of the conference seem groundless.

We may deplore the fact that women today often are forced to take full-time jobs as well as bring up a family. But instead of seeking to deny them the chance to work we should be attacking a society that leaves widows and others to bring up a family with little or no assistance.

Reflection

£19 a week is a poor wage for a bus conductor working shifts at all times of the day and week. Yet it is a sad reflection on the success of the fight for equal pay that few working-class women can get as much elsewhere.

No doubt encouraged by the women at Ford's and other factories fighting for equality, a small group of clippies surprised their men workmates by mounting a picket at the December conference. When they were refused the chance to speak to the conference they marched in to the meeting and gave the delegates a piece of their mind.

Now with Tuesday's demonstration it is clear that a large number of women conductors have been angered by the 'men only' decision and are determined to see this decision reversed.

STC goes back

A MEETING this week between the strike committee at the STC factory, East Kilbride and the ETU area organiser agreed to return to work. A hundred men walked out last week when one worker was sacked. The management agreed to reinstate him.

BARBARAS UNION PIESHOP



Newspaper bosses to profit from prod deal

AN AGREEMENT between the Newspaper Publishers Association and newspaper printworkers expired more than two years ago after protracted negotiations.

The employers made it clear to union leaders that if a new agreement could be reached, the money for a settlement would come from the men themselves through productivity bargaining in all

By a Printworker

offices. The employers also refused to continue a cost of living bonus.

The unions recommended the arrangement to their members. Only members of the largest union SOGAT (Society of Graphical and Allied Trades) rejected the offer.

There were approximately

4000 votes for the agreement and 10,000 votes against it. The vote proved that SOGAT militants on the shop floor understood the agreement better than their leaders and were not prepared to be sold such a crude productivity deal.

No meetings

Further meetings were held between the SOGAT executive and the NPA. The employers were told that the alternatives to the agreement must be chapel/management negotiations, which many chapels had demanded.

But the NPA, realising the strength of the chapels, refused to allow meetings at office level. They suggested that the offer had not been properly explained and the agreement should be voted on by the members again.

Although SOGAT members have decisively rejected the offer, the union executive is balloting them for a second time.

More work

The agreement states that printworkers will receive a three per cent increase backdated from last September. Arising from productivity (that is, more work), the first savings must be paid to the employers for a three per cent increase.

The NPA expects heavy lay-offs when the scheme bites and redundancy will be paid for out of productivity. What is left will then be shared on a 50:50 basis.

Under the so-called wage agreement, the employers will make a profit and the members will have to cover more jobs and work harder at a faster pace.

Printworkers should again reject this agreement and demand:-

1. Consolidation of the cost of living bonus
2. Continuation of the cost of living bonus
3. Five per cent increase for each year of a two year agreement.

This can be the only way forward. There must be no capitulation to the employers SOGAT must carry on the fight for a straight wage increase without strings.

Strikers are told 'work shifts or factory goes'

Socialist Worker Reporter

DONCASTER:- 100 strikers from unions at H.W.P. Engineering have been told that unless they work a night-shift system the factory will be moved, under pressure from the Board of Trade, to a 'development area'.

Local housewives plan to protest if the factory is put on round-the-clock working. It is situated in a densely populated, terraced-house area.

But the wives do not want the factory moved.

Strikers claim that conditions in the factory are already hazardous. During the production of 600 trailers for British Rail, electricians and welders have been instructed to work on bodies still in the spraying department.

No safeguards

They say the department has no extractor fans, screens, or adequate fire safeguards.

Men injured in accidents caused by defective equipment have been refused ambulances and told to find their own way to hospital.

Welders have been sacked on the spot for waiting for instructions on making up girders. This is the foremen's responsibility.

The strike blew up when the managing director, Mr. H. Field, published a notice attacking shop stewards who were attempting to get union recognition as the first step to improving conditions and consultation.

Mr. Field called the stewards 'fools who have no responsibility either to themselves, their families, the company which employs them or the country to which they belong.'

Donations and support to shop stewards' chairman D. Howard, 7 Lindum St, Hexthorpe, Doncaster, Yorks.

'Black, white unite' chant at Powell

From DAVID PRYNN

SHEFFIELD:- A protest march against a visit by Enoch Powell last Friday was the climax of an active campaign against racialism in the city.

The Campaign against racial discrimination (CARD), the Sheffield Vietnam Campaign, the university socialist society and the International Socialists put out a joint leaflet calling on black and white workers to unite against racialism. It told them to recognise the Wilson government, the employers and the landlords as their real enemies.

The leaflet was widely distributed outside factories, trade union meetings and districts such as Attercliffe where a large number of Pakistani and Indian workers live.

Powell had been invited to address a Tory dinner at the Grand Hotel on Friday January 17. Two days before, a resolution supporting the demonstration against his visit was carried overwhelmingly by the university students' union.

Slogans

In spite of heavy rain on Friday, more than 600 people took part in a march through the city centre, shouting 'black and white unite' and anti-Powell slogans.

In front of the Grand Hotel, which was defended by a line of police, speakers pointed out that the forces of the state protected racials like Powell while coloured workers faced insult, discrimination and attack.

The demonstration ended in a march through the Havelock Square area, which has a large West Indian community. Marchers linked arms and voiced their solidarity with black workers against Powell's racialism.

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Yorks Vietnam march seeks trade union support

Socialist Worker Reporter SHEFFIELD:- The Committee campaigning for a Vietnam demonstration here on March 1st will march from Tinsley Wire Works, a factory whose parent company is involved in production for the US war effort.

The marchers will go to the City centre, a distance of about three miles. In line with the chief object of the demonstration to involve trade unionists and young workers in the Vietnam protest movement, it will pass through Attercliffe, one of the main industrial and working-class areas of Sheffield.

It was agreed at a meeting on Sunday to go all out for a militant march, with pavement-to-pavement street occupation for the length of the route.

The march will end with an open-air rally. Speakers

invited include Lawrence Daly (NUM), Clive Jenkins (ASTMS), Tariq Ali and a representative of the NLF or the Hanoi government.

Prospects for a demonstration of several thousand look good. At the meeting to set up the Ad Hoc Committee called by Shardlows Shop Stewards there were more than 100 representatives from trades union branches, CND, YCL, VSC, IS, IMG and student groups in Yorkshire.

Slogans will declare solidarity with the NLF and oppose British support for the war plus the demand of 'Visas and recognition for the NLF'. The meeting urged the setting up of March 1st ad hoc committees throughout Yorkshire and the north.

For more information contact Mick Sheppard, 17 Hillview Rd., Kimberworth, Rotherham or Sheffield IS

Dockers in mass walk-out

Socialist Worker Reporter

HULL: Motivated by the ominous White Paper on industrial relations and resumed attacks on individual militants, 2,650 Hull dockers staged a mass walk-out last Friday in protest against another flagrant example of victimisation.

The employers, Hull & Humber Cargo Handling Co., suspended a militant because they said he showed an 'unco-operative attitude' which appeared to influence the rest of the men.

NEXT WEEK

An investigation of the inter-union row in the steel industry.