

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

LIE MACHINE

EXPOSED

TOP TELEVISION reporters and commentators say that the BBC and ITA are censoring and distorting the news from Northern Ireland.

'The BBC and ITV networks are a part of the Establishment. When the Establishment is in a political or economic crisis, broadcasting will defend it.' Socialists are always saying this about the press, TV and radio. But the man who said it in London on Monday night was Stuart Hood, the former controller of BBC Television.

He was speaking at a mass meeting of journalists and broadcasters called to protest and organise against the blatant censorship of news from Northern Ireland. It became clear, as speaker after speaker told the meeting of his experiences, that there is a deliberate and conscious plan to prevent the views of Irish Republicans reaching the British public.

Did YOU know that the BBC now refuses to let any of its radio or television reporters interview supporters of the IRA, and that since last April no such interview has been allowed on the air?

Did YOU know that all the editors of the national press saw Maudling, the Tory Home Secretary, the day after internment, and agreed to make it easy for him by unanimously supporting the policy of imprisonment without trial?

Did YOU know that a film made on Southern Ireland by the World in Action team was banned by the ITA bosses before any of them had even seen it?

We cannot mention the names of those who took part in the meeting because they said their jobs are in danger for revealing that the 'liberal' BBC has a censor installed in the building. But it was clear that there really is a crisis when the leading lights of '24 Hours', 'World in Action', 'World at One' and other mass-audience programmes stand up and denounce the refusal of their bosses to let them tell the truth.

The meeting of more than a hundred people, most of them with first-hand experience of Northern Ireland, unanimously passed a motion saying: 'We condemn the intensifying censorship in the television, radio and press coverage of events in Ireland and pledge ourselves to oppose it'.

Many speakers called for a campaign to involve the press and television trade unions and approaches are now being made in this direction. The Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians has already condemned the banning of the 'World in Action' programme.

What the meeting made clear, and what every worker must remember as the fight against unemployment goes on, is that for all their talk about impartiality and free speech, the Tories regard press and television as their property, to act as their mouthpiece when things get tough.

The line between managed news and out-and-out censorship is a very thin one, and the Tories have crossed it with a vengeance. If they win this battle, then it is only a very short step to the time when every trade unionist in this country will be subject to even more systematic lying and distortion in the media than he is now.

The Tories have already got away with imprisonment without trial. They have got away with torturing innocent people in camps and prison ships in Ulster.

But they will not be satisfied until every dissenting voice in the country has been forcibly silenced.

WE MUST NOT LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT.

Men kept with their heads in bags for several days. Forced to stand against a wall for 48 hours. Driven half-mad by high-pitched noise. These savage Army methods were revealed in the Compton Report last week. And the report only scratches the surface of Army brutality. Press and television know what is really going on in Northern Ireland—but they keep quiet covering up for the interests of their ruling-class friends. EDITORIAL: PAGE 3



LAW AGAINST MILITANTS

SPECIAL FEATURE P8

Revolutionaries lead fight against sackings

by Richard Kirkwood

WORKERS in France, as in Britain, are facing the problem of 'rationalisation' accompanied by sackings. The most dramatic case is in the steel industry, where over the next four years 12,000 jobs will be lost in one company, Wendel-Sidelor. The company claims that this will be done by 'natural wastage', and that other jobs will be available.

In fact the Lorraine area, France's major steel region, is already experiencing economic difficulties and workers can't see where these other jobs will come from. Many skilled workers are trained only for particular specialities. The closure will virtually destroy the communities at Villerupt and Ongwy. On top of that, 4000 workers on 'temporary contracts' (mainly youths and immigrants) will simply not have their contracts renewed.

The background problem is the technological backwardness of the Lorraine steelworks. The difficulties could have been foreseen years ago, but nothing was planned.

Wendel-Sidelor, at the same time as it closes steelworks in Lorraine, is building an ultra-modern complex near Marseilles—and getting a government subsidy for it.

So far the unions, the communist-led CGT and the CFTD, have confined themselves to a one-day protest strike on 16 November. Although massively supported in the area immediately affected—where shops and cafes closed in sympathy—only 30 per cent of the Lorraine steelworkers came out.

In the Paris area 1000 jobs are threatened: Roussel-Uclaf, the second biggest French pharmaceutical company, is threatening to close the SIFA works which it took over only in 1970, and to sack 200 at its Romainville factory. Roussel-Uclaf's profits last year were almost £2 million, and over the last five years distributed profits have risen by 60 per cent.

But here, unlike in steel, the bosses are taking on a relatively strong and confident section of workers. The CGT at SIFA is more than usually ready to fight.

At Romainville there is a left-wing section of Force Ouvriere (nationally a right-wing union), led by revo-

lutionary socialist militants from Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Struggle). This section played a leading role in a tough strike last year and is now trying to push the unions to take up a serious battle.

Despite the hostility of the CGT (the largest union at Romainville), but with the support of the CFTD, the Force Ouvriere section succeeded in organising a protest strike on 28 October by 1200 workers and a demonstration by 800 who went by tube (without paying) to the company's offices in posh central Paris.

The CGT was forced to join the strike, though not the demonstration, and the next week all three unions mobilised 1500 workers from the two factories. But the CGT has remained reluctant to act and still seems to think it more important to continue its negotiations for a wage rise.

The most militant workers, led by the Lutte Ouvriere militants in Force Ouvriere, are putting forward the demand for work-sharing without loss of pay. They point out that an expanding company like Roussel-Uclaf cannot afford to lose production. Protest meetings will not save the jobs, but an all-out strike and occupation could force the bosses to retreat.

THERE have been huge strikes and demonstrations in Japan protesting against the new treaty with the US. Under this, Okinawa, previously a US colony, will revert to Japan, but the US forces will stay and continue to store atomic weapons there. Previously they have not stored atomic weapons anywhere in Japan, but now by extension they can do so.

All these changes are because of the economic strain on US capitalism, which shows itself in the present balance of payments crisis. It is a way of slowing down Japan's growth by unloading extra defence costs on to her. The logic is the nuclear armament of Japan, and as a concession to her ruling class, the return of Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines, and perhaps Indonesia and Malaya, to the Japanese 'sphere of influence'.

So much for Pearl Harbour! The struggle in Japan has become so widespread because of the general support of the left, the Socialist and Communist parties. However, the really violent and militant demonstrations have been carried out by the leftist groups, of which by far the largest is the anti-Stalinist Revolutionary Communist League (Kakumaru faction)—which holds that Russia and China are state capitalist societies.

In the course of the protest many railwaymen struck. The Kakumaru have considerable influence here, and there were many attempts to prevent scab trains running. The police responded brutally, and nearly two thousand people were arrested, often after severe beatings.

Japan is in for a violent sharpening of class tensions, brought on by a gathering economic crisis. Already her steel plants have cut production and laid off workers for the first time since 1949. As usual the capitalists will try to unload the costs of their adjustments on to the working class.

FRANCE'S colonies in the West Indies, Guadeloupe and Martinique, have seen a number of important strikes during the last year. It is doubtless this which has led to continuing attacks on basic freedoms.

For example, the Trotskyist journal *Combat Ouvrier (Workers' Fight)*, which was launched earlier this year, and is aimed at West Indian workers in France and the West Indies, has had each of its issues seized at the airport so as to prevent distribution in Guadeloupe and Martinique. No official ban has been made, or other explanation given—the journal is sold quite legally in France.

A meeting was recently held in Paris to express solidarity with *Combat Ouvrier*—speakers included intellectuals such as Daniel Guerin and a representative of the *Journalists' Union*.

NIGERIA and the Soviet Union have signed an agreement to expand trade and cement friendly relations. In 1964 the value of Nigerian trade with Russia was only £100,000. By 1969 it had risen to £12 million, including Eastern Europe. The Russians are reaping the rewards of their support for the Federal side in the Biafran War.

THE Spanish miners' strike cost over 300,000 tons of production, and left the Spanish steel industry with less than a month's supply of coal.

However, Franco is still not without friends. As in the last miners' strike, Poland came to his aid, and several shiploads of Polish coal arrived at the port of Gijon.

TROUBLE in Africa. At the beginning of November doctors at several hospitals in Kenya went on strike, though declaring they were still willing to deal with emergency cases. On November 4 the strike was declared illegal and twenty doctors in Nairobi were arrested.

A few days later students in Dahomey requested meetings with the education minister to discuss educational reform. When the meeting was delayed the students went on strike. The Government responded by closing down all educational institutions which supported the strike, and dissolved the students' union.

A BLOW against the permissive society in that stronghold of Western democracy, South Korea. The Minister of Culture and Information has announced that during October nearly fifty thousand young men had their long hair trimmed as part of a national campaign against 'decadent trends'.

ELABORATE preparations have been going on in Czechoslovakia for the holding of elections. An all-out effort is being made by the government to ensure that things go well. Last week five people were imprisoned in Prague for duplicating a leaflet that pointed out that there was no law actually compelling them to vote at all.

Latin Left changes tack

By JUAN McIVER

FIDEL CASTRO's visit to Chile marks a whole shift in Latin American policies.

Allende's election to power meant that Cuba was no longer alone in Latin America. In the sixties, Cuba's armed struggle policy didn't relieve American pressure. Almost all the guerrilla groups supported by Cuba were destroyed. Che Guevara was killed in Bolivia with many other guerrillas; Guatemalan leaders of the FAR and the MR-13, Turcios and Sosa, plus countless peasants, were killed. The Peruvian guerrillas were smashed in isolation from the urban centres.

When the guerrillas moved to the cities after failure in the countryside, they still faced immense odds. Brazilian guerrilla leaders like Marighella and Lamarca were ambushed and killed. Those who had organised the peasants, like Hugo Blanco and Francisco Juliao, saw their efforts destroyed.

Little gained

The success of the Uruguayan urban guerrillas—the Tupamaros—and the relative impunity enjoyed by the Argentine urban guerrillas do not dispel the fact that the strategy of 'armed struggle' did not achieve much.

This lack of significant gains gave credence once again to the Communist parties.

The talk of 'peaceful ways' and other reformist schemes gained many new adherents. Even 'left-wing' military juntas



CASTRO AND ALLENDE: Moving to centre?

are now considered acceptable agencies of social change. Hector Bejar, a survivor of the Peruvian guerrillas, has openly capitulated to the present nationalist regime of Velasco.

But Cuba too has supported this regime and Castro's visit to Chile should be seen in the context of this shift in Castro's ideology.

The US government can't play the same role as in the early sixties. Blockades against Chile or Peru won't work because these countries have successfully diversified their dependence on various imperialist

countries. A balancing act is possible.

Openly belligerent US policies would provoke intense reaction in Latin America and worsen the precarious US situation. Protectionism and cuts in foreign aid will also prevent the US from intervening decisively against Allende in Chile, or any other nationalist regime.

Raul Roa, Cuba's Foreign Relations Minister, was in Lima, Peru, to intervene in a third world conference, two days before Castro landed in Santiago. Roa, claiming that Cuba was participating in the meeting in 'her threefold character of

Workers' struggle hots up in generals' Turkey

EIGHTEEN young men were sentenced to death in October by the repressive government that took power in Turkey early this year for 'attempting to overthrow the constitution'. Sixty-three others await trial for the same offence.

More than 10,000 people have been thrown in prison and tortured in the last six months.

A week or so after these first death sentences had been handed out, the British Royal Family arrived in Turkey as guests of the generals. Let us have a look at the filthy company that the Queen keeps.

After 1946 a secret treaty between Turkey and the US led to the construction of over a hundred US conventional and nuclear air bases. Foreign capital flowed in, but the growth of heavy industry and land reform were resisted by the ruling party. Opposition grew among groups—intellectuals, civil servants, workers and the armed forces—who wanted a more efficient development of the economy.

ACTION

In 1960 the military threw out the government of businessmen and landowners. But the same people gradually crept back into power.

In order to increase exports, the government tried to force amalgamations of firms and to keep down the living standards of workers and peasants.

With increasing attacks on their wages, workers were forced more and more into industrial action, which was often also political. In 1961 the revolutionary trade union federation DISK was founded by

workers dissatisfied with the non-militant policies of the majority federation. The Turkish Workers' Party (TIP), founded in 1961 to fight for parliamentary representation, has made propaganda against employers, landlords and American imperialism.

In 1970 the government brought in a bill which restricted strike action, while strikes in oil companies (including Shell and BP) were completely forbidden.

In June, 70,000 workers, called out by DISK, demonstrated in Istanbul against the bill. The government replied with police, soldiers and tanks, and three workers were killed. Strikes and sit-ins, however, continued for several days. At the same time peasants were occupying the estates and there were fierce struggles in the universities.

At the beginning of 1970 the TIP was split over whether to support violent resistance to the attacks of police, army and armed bands of right-wing extremists. A group broke away to form the Revolutionary Youth Federation, whose members began to arm themselves against such attack.

Strikes, occupation of land and university boycotts increased, partly because of the devaluation of the currency and the resulting inflation of 15 to 20 per cent.

The Revolutionary Youth and the

Turkish People's Liberation Army began to attack banks in order to buy the arms they needed.

On March 12 this year, the armed forces overthrew the government for its failure to crack down hard enough. A puppet government was set up, and on April 26 martial law declared in the main industrial areas. Strikes and meetings of trade unions and many other organisations were prohibited. Universities were closed, organisations banned and left-wing books destroyed.

BANNED

Persecution of the four to five million Kurds living in Eastern Turkey was unleashed, and as a result of its support, for their national rights, the Turkish Workers' Party was also declared illegal in July.

All trade unions of teachers, salaried staff and public employees were prohibited and dissolved.

The generals' aim is to break all opposition. Large numbers of prisoners have been barbarically tortured. A former secret police chief has said: 'The tortures that are practised in the Istanbul police headquarters are more terrible than the Inquisition. There is a trained group of policemen that is able to get any 'confession' it wants from suspected persons through torture.'

Peace needed

Castro openly supports Allende and has toured the country telling Chilean workers to increase overall production. He did this at the Chuquicamata copper mine, at the Pacific Steel plant in Huachipato, and wherever he has spoken to workers. If his continental strategy is to be a success, Allende must have internal peace.

Chile has been rocked by a series of walk-outs and strikes since last spring, plus peasant and squatters' takeovers. Continuous miners' strikes for higher wages mean Chile's copper production will be less than Allende predicted for this year.

Since Allende took power, Castro has clearly stated that the Popular Unity shouldn't alienate the Chilean army. The parliamentarians in the coalition, including Allende, all agree and are hostile to any attempt to arm the masses.

The lessons of Bolivia have been lost on Castro and Allende. *Granma*, the Cuban CP's official paper, reacted to Banzer's 'fascist coup' with total surprise, and was unable to explain why General Torres was overthrown so easily.

Swift coup

In Chile too, if the waves of miners' strikes continue, and link up in whatever form with urban discontent and peasant takeovers, the army will step in. By then the masses will be unwilling to defend Allende and will be demoralised enough to allow a swift coup.

Castro has said that if he were in Uruguay, he would vote for the candidate of the Broad Front—retired General Liber Seregni. The Broad Front is similar to the Popular Unity coalition of Allende, and includes the Communists and Socialists. The Tupamaros are giving tacit support to Liber.

If the coalition wins, the prospects for Chile and Cuba will be brighter, but if it is defeated by fraud or otherwise, the Tupamaros will step up their guerrilla operations. Even if the Broad Front wins, Brazil or Argentina will probably not intervene. Any such move will have to be backed by the US and it is doubtful that the US will be pushed into it.

Similar 'broad fronts' are being discussed in Mexico and will no doubt be present in the 1973 Argentinian elections. They might even become a reality in Brazil and Ecuador when their military regimes give way to elections. Argentina, Peru and Ecuador are seriously studying the possibility of recognising Cuba. It's a long way from the militant sixties.

Socialist Worker

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The real terrorists in Northern Ireland

WHEN THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR to Uruguay—kidnapped and held prisoner by left-wing guerrillas—was finally released, television and the millionaire press unleashed a torrent of slobbering sentiment about his ordeal, his fortitude and all the rest of it. In due course he was awarded a knighthood for his pains.

Now Sir Geoffrey Jackson was not, on his own testimony, beaten up or kept with a black hood on his head and made to stand with his hands against a wall for hours on end. He was not prevented from talking or subjected to incessant noise from a high frequency oscillator designed to drive people to hysteria. He was not systematically deprived of sleep. In short, because he had the good fortune to fall into the hands of the Tupermaros and not the interrogation squads of the British Army and the RUC, he was not tortured.

Compare the treatment by TV and press of this case with that of the Irish prisoners of British imperialism. On the admission of the government's own whitewashing Compton commission, the tortures described above are standard practice in interrogations. Government spokesmen have defended them on the grounds that they are in accordance with the instructions issued by Harold Wilson's Labour government and that such methods were used in Aden and Cyprus. No doubt they were, and before that in India and Palestine and Kenya and Malaya as well.

The brutalities admitted by the Compton report are merely the tip of the iceberg. The commission was designed deliberately to prevent a real enquiry. The hearings were held in secret. With one exception the only witnesses were the police and military interrogators themselves. No cross examination was allowed. There was no investigation into conditions in the concentration camps.

Worse to come

Compton himself is a notorious whitewash expert. As the liberal weekly *New Statesman* pointed out, when he was the Ulster Ombudsman he was 'not the watchdog of the public against the bureaucrats but the watchdog of the civil service against public complaints'. That is exactly why Heath selected him.

We can be quite certain that much worse tortures are normal and that, as the torturers become more brutalised, still worse ones will follow. That is what happened with the French in Algeria and the Americans in Vietnam. It is what happened with the 'gallant British Army's' squads in Kenya which finished up beating African prisoners to death in the Hola concentration camp.

The television commentators, the millionaire press, Tory MPs and others who defend these atrocities are running true to type. In colony after colony, as resistance to imperialism grew, they screamed about 'gunmen', 'murderers' and 'terrorists' and justified more and more savage methods of repression. They are playing the same gramophone today.

Along with repression comes a torrent of lying propaganda. The truth is very dangerous to the rulers of Britain. And so we have pressure put on the already reactionary TV bosses to suppress inconvenient facts and demands for censorship—as if one didn't already exist.

All this is justified by hysteria about violence. Faulkner, boss of the Orange-Tory police state, denounces 'evil men who use force to gain political ends'. It is a subject on which he can speak with authority. He and his party have been doing just that ever since the Six County statelet was established.

Maintain Orange regime

They have systematically terrorised all serious opposition. What is new is not the terror—that has always been built into Orange politics. It is that the Catholic population is now actively resisting the terror. That is why the mass media are so vigorously and so hypocritically denouncing violence. Nevertheless, since many decent people are influenced by this propaganda, it has to be answered.

ALL governments are prepared to use force for political ends. That is why they maintain armies, navies and air forces. No army exists in order to make peaceful propaganda. An army is, by definition, an instrument of force, of violence, to be used in the interests of the political ends of those who control it.

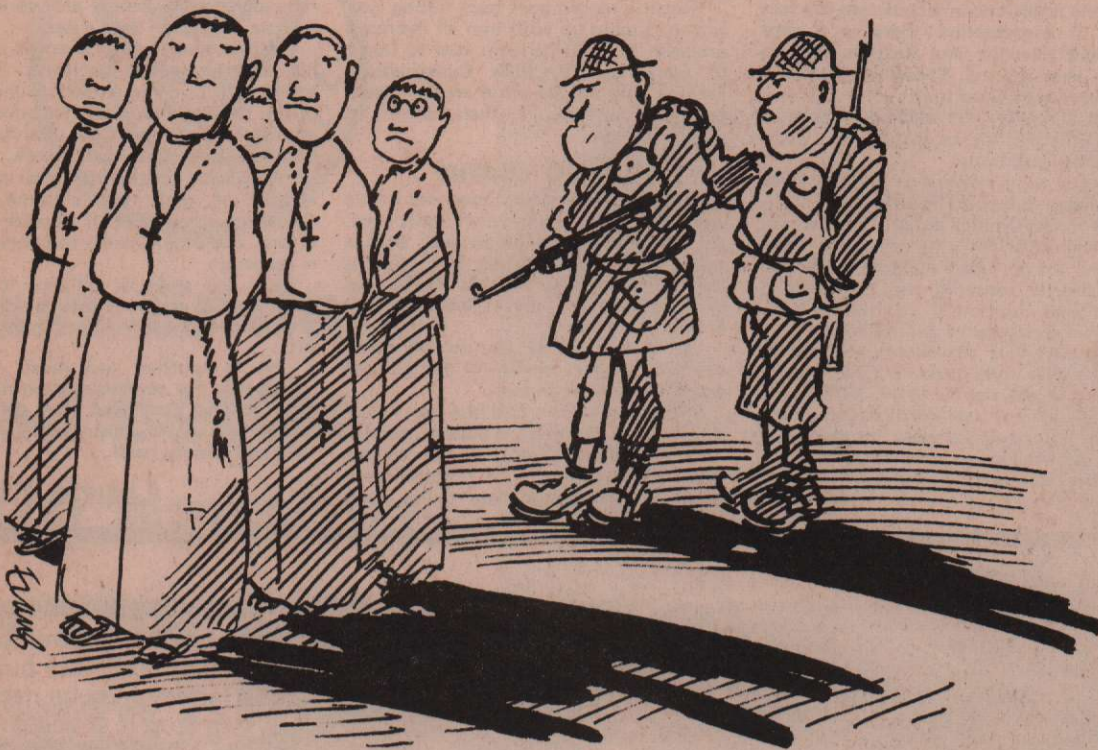
The British army today is being used for the political end of maintaining the Orange regime in the Six Counties. It is using force and violence for the purpose. The IRA Provisionals are also using force and violence with the opposite aim: of bringing down Stormont.

Both sides use 'gunmen', that is, men with guns. One difference is that the British Army has far more guns and far better ones. The other is that the British Army is fighting for a reactionary end, the maintenance of British imperialism's last direct foothold in Ireland, an end that is equally against the interests of Irish workers and of British ones.

It is the duty of British socialists to give unconditional support to those fighting imperialism in Ireland and to systematically expose the Tory lie and slander machine. Unconditional does not, however, mean uncritical. We do not support the politics of either wing of the IRA or of the so-called Social-Democratic and Labour Party. All these organisations have, as their first objective, a 'solution' of the Irish question on a capitalist basis. This is a reactionary utopia. British dominance in Ireland, North and South alike, can only be ended by the Irish working class fighting for a 32 county Workers' Republic.

British socialists have the double duty of working for the withdrawal of British troops on the one hand and assisting the development of an Irish revolutionary socialist organisation on the other.

THEY WON'T TALK



COTTONS WARMS

Karimbarred

A 74,000-ton British tanker, *Heythrop*, was crippled by an explosion off East London, South Africa, 10 days ago. One crew member was Abdullah Karim, a 21-years-old Pakistani seaman who was injured when a hold in the ship went up.

Both his arms were badly burned and as he tried to abandon ship the lifeboat he climbed into capsized and threw him into the sea. He spent four hours in the water, struggling to keep afloat in a turbulent sea. He was eventually rescued and rushed to Port Elizabeth along with other members of the crew.

They were all taken by ambulance to the Provincial Hospital and received treatment for their injuries. Only one snag: this was South Africa and Abdullah Karim was in the wrong hospital.

He should have been taken to the Livingstone Hospital for non-whites but the ambulance driver, careless fellow, didn't notice him—probably all the crew members had oil blackened faces—and took him to the whites-only Provincial. Once there a doctor decided to ignore the apartheid rules and relieve the Pakistani's pain.

The hospital authorities, tipped off by a newsman, are now gunning for the luckless doctor. Hospital superintendent Dr D J Slabbert said: 'When I find out who treated this man I will give him hell.' With rare exceptions, South African doctors use the hypocritical rather than Hippocratic oath.

FOOTNOTE to the Picture Report on page 3 of the heliport row in London's East End: giving evidence to the public inquiry at Tower Hamlets Town Hall last week, Mr E A Bristow, chairman of the private enterprise firm, British Helicopter Advisory Bureau, said



Joseph: book your bed now

that a second heliport was vitally needed in London and that the service would not disrupt the lives of the local inhabitants.

He gave assurances that noise would not cause disturbance to the people of Wapping and Shadwell. Since the Vietnam war, he added, much progress has been made with quieter helicopters. Nice to know that the war has added such a vital dimension to the world's progress. Meanwhile, the Tower (Strategic) Hamlets Viet Cong are mobilising.

Assized up

JUSTICE, English-style: on 23 October two cases were heard in neighbouring Midlands courts. At Staffordshire Assizes, Mr Justice Ashworth sent eight youths to Borstal after they had been found guilty of attacking an Indian so badly that he will be disfigured for life. Among other injuries, he had his upper jaw detached from his skull.

The judge commented: 'If all of you had been 18 I should almost certainly have sent each of you to prison for three years . . .'

Meanwhile at Birmingham Assizes three people were being sentenced, one of them to five years' imprisonment. Five years is a heavy sentence. As the judge told the man in question, John Hutchinson, 'It must be made abundantly clear that violence in the streets of this country . . . will not be tolerated.'

Hutchinson and others appeared on charges arising out of a Maoist meeting in the Bull Ring. Police claimed that the accused became violent and Hutchinson kicked an officer in the face. The defendants said that the police provoked the violence.

In the judges' order of priorities, kicking a policeman is thought a more serious offence than maiming an Indian for life.

A MAGISTRATE in Stoke has come up with his solution to the unemployment situation. In dismissing an appeal, he sent a man to jail for one

year 'for not working to support himself, his wife and family'.

And what was Sydney Cooke's crime? The prosecution makes the case: 'Cooke has persistently failed to sign on at the employment exchange for work and officials have had no opportunity of offering him further jobs . . . He has just been content to live on supplementary benefits.'

Sydney Cooke is 50, married with five children, two of whom are dependant. The average wages for men in the pottery industry were, in November 1970, before a miserly £1.50 increase this year, 7.2 per cent below the average national industrial wage. £26.88 for a 45-hour week, in bad conditions at that and 52 per cent of male workers earn less than this, down to 30p an hour. Sydney Cooke was dismissed from a pottery firm for absenteeism, preferring to live on what he was legally entitled to from social security.

So Sydney Cooke was judged to be criminally idle for the fifth time in his life. There was no suggestion of fraud, or cruelty to his family, he just didn't like doing dirty, boring jobs for low wages. And obviously, the only cure for that is to sling him into jail for a year.

Foot faulted

PAUL FOOT speaking in Leicester on Friday was assailed by a member of the audience who thought he had gone too far in his denunciation of the police and his assertion that most of them were connected with thieves and villains.

'All right,' Foot told his critic, 'I'll prove it by giving you an example. Assume that you are a policeman . . .'

'I am,' said the other man.

CLASSLESS SOCIETY CORNER: Financial whizz-kid Nigel Broackes, chairman of Trafalgar House Investments, which has recently bought up Cunard and Trollope and Colls, has just treated himself to a new painting to hang at home. It is a Monet costing £493,000. That sum is more than the City of London expects to save in whole year by imposing museum charges.

Sick note

BETTER TOMORROW: Sir Keith Joseph, Tory Minister for the Social Services, extolling the wonders of 18 months of Tory government last week, declared: 'This is one of the best countries in the world to be acutely ill in.'

Telephone
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editorial

What 11 months on the dole did to John Kettle...

JOHN KETTLE and one of his friends have appeared in a London court for causing malicious damage. The place they attacked was the Waterloo Road offices of their own union, the Constructional Engineers.

In court Kettle pleaded guilty to this act of folly and outlined the circumstances that had driven him to it. He was, he said, sick to the death of 'months of unemployment, spun out by the bosses' blacklist and a union which allows its members to work 70 and 80 hours a week when other members are out of work.

He was sick of a situation where the social security called and asked to see if his bed linen was torn, if he, his wife or three children had private incomes, stocks or shares.

Since Christmas last year, he has had

precisely four days' work, victimised each time for his trade unionism. With a few pints down him, the accumulated frustration and rage of the past 11 months took over and he attacked the union offices.

Surprisingly when John Kettle came to trial, the magistrate listened to his plea. He was guilty but no jail sentence or fine was imposed. In the sublime generosity of the court, he was given time to pay for the £60 damages.

Tenacity

Time is the one commodity that John Kettle has plenty of. It is also the one thing he does not need, for time will not enable him to pay the fine. Only work can do that.

And so, mindful of the likelihood of prison if he does not cough up in time, John Kettle has plied for work with the tenacity of Kleeneze salesmen. He has had rather less success.

This is not unconnected with the fact that in construction there is a very efficient blacklist and Kettle's name is fairly near the top. The employers have reason to remember him.

On site after site men like him give others the confidence to fight for better wages or conditions.

Kettle was a steward on Simon Carves Greenwich Gasworks contract. The steel-fixers forced through an agreement which gave them £87 for a 4½ day week. Their actions not only gave themselves a better and shorter working life but created more jobs for other steel-fixers, both crimes the employers did not forget.

On Octavius Atkinson's contract to build a new body plant for Ford, Dagenham, there was a strike to get John Kettle on the job. The agreement signed by the union yielded £53 a week for seven-day working. Again the men forced through another agreement which limited work to five days a week and paid £106.

Kettle's record goes back a long way and so catches up with him all the more savagely. In 1958 he went over to Derry to work for Du Pont Construction. Finding that all the other workers were getting 2s an hour less than himself, he organised them.

Bad name

They won the parity issue and Kettle went on to take up the civil rights issue. All the resources of the gangster Orange state were pitted against him and his striking workmen. Kettle's home was broken apart by the B-Specials, then armed.

Kettle is a fighter, but do not underestimate what 11 months of the dole can do to any man or woman.

His union leaders told him that he has a bad name and there is little or nothing they can do to help, though he can point to several sites in London alone where CEU members are being made

redundant while others are working 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

He has sought other avenues to solve his own immediate problems. He has toyed with bringing an action under the terms of the Industrial Relations Act against Trollope and Colls, the firm that bumped him only last week.

And with the bailiffs after him for arrears of rent, the children listing Christmas presents their parents cannot afford, and prison likely to intervene, he is desperate.

But the state is unlikely to break John Kettle, try as it may by plunging him into despair, frustration and indignity.

He is touched too much by the belief that the seven-day overtime grabbers can be convinced that there is a better way of organising their working lives and society itself.

Laurie Flynn

The sorry saga of how Labour opened the public coffers to let big business build three smelters

£60m of your money goes up in smoke

WHEN ALCAN INDUSTRIES announced in 1968 that it would be building its £50 million aluminium smelter in Northumberland there was great delight among the region's bosses. A special TV programme was put out to commemorate the occasion and many were the cries of joy about the project's implications for reversing the heavy unemployment in the area.

The same was true in the other two regions where the Labour government sanctioned smelter develop-

...AND UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO SOAR

by Arthur Malone

the smelters have been brought into production. The third at Lynemouth will follow shortly.

But such has been the slowdown in the growth of the world market for aluminium that both Anglesey and Invergordon are working well below planned capacity. Lynemouth, conveniently, is running late.

The situation is such that the president of the world's largest operation in the field, WH Krome George of the Aluminium Company of America, stated in September that 'the new British capacity was not necessary in the world market.'

The total cost of the new UK smelters is estimated at around £160 million. It might be expected that the three companies involved in this fiasco are almost on the rocks since they cannot reach the level of production they require to make their sacred profits. But this is not the case.

Such was the enthusiasm for a home-based smelting industry that a veritable bonanza of investment grants, low interest loans, and subsidised energy was handed over to Rio Tinto Zinc, British Aluminium and Alcan, the three firms chosen to build the new plants.

The best terms

In straight investment grants the taxpayer will be footing at least £60 million of the total bill. This is the entire cost of one of the three smelters which all belong to private industry. Added to this is a £62 million loan at 7 per cent, which really is a remarkable deal for big business.

The chief executives of both Rio Tinto Zinc and British Aluminium told the House of Commons Expenditure Committee in July this year that neither smelter would have been built without these grants. The sites were selected not out of charity to the unemployed but because they yielded the best terms, they added.

It takes just over 18,000 KWH of electrical power to smelt just one ton of aluminium. Electricity is the key factor in producing aluminium.

Executives of Rio Tinto Zinc openly admit that they get their power so cheaply from the Central Electricity Generating Board that they would never have dreamed of building their own generating stations.

The power is sold to them at .4 of an old penny per unit. Other industrialists have to pay twice that and the individual consumer about five times as much.

One of the firms, Alcan, did decide to build its own power station. They agreed to the pleas of the National Coal Board to fire it with coal. There was a great cackle at the time about how this would save the jobs of 1000 Durham miners.

In fact the terms of the NCB-Alcan deal are such that they will impel a further drive towards productivity dealing in the pits concerned.

The lavish way the aluminium men were treated did not of course guarantee that they would be anything other than ruthless when it came down to the men who built the smelters. Rio Tinto Zinc, for instance, employed some most interesting techniques to stave off trouble (ie high wages and good conditions) on its Anglesey site.

A former trade union official was hired from the first day as a spy who followed the workers around in their free time, listening to their conversations in the pubs and clubs where they relaxed.

Rio Tinto Zinc have their own name for him - 'the Big Ear'. The company also used elaborate screening techniques to ensure that no 'troublemakers' got on the job. All in all it was a great success for RTZ. Similar methods got Invergordon out on time.

At Alcan, however, all has not gone so well. The managerial chaos on this site is a well-kept secret.

The Lynemouth power station is sited right on the coast, outside the smelter complex itself. No feasibility study of the coastline was done prior to design and this has meant that the station may in the future be at serious risk due to coastal erosion.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent on extra piling to try to counter the erosion threat, but no one should be surprised if, at some time in the not too distant future, large amounts of public money are spent on sea defence works in the area to cover up for Alcan's mistakes.

The original design for the smelter site included a permanent roads system. 80 per cent of this was cancelled on Alcan's instructions, to 'save' money. This obstructed work and gave rise to terrible site conditions. It has also increased accidents.

Power cables were buried only three feet below site surface instead of the normal five. As a result excavators kept short-circuiting the power supply and more

accidents resulted. Designs for permanent site lighting were issued and tenders received. Alcan decided that this was unnecessary and no contract was awarded. This made the site incredibly dangerous for workers on foot and a strike threat produced a minimal system of site lighting.

The Lynemouth smelter is now running some two years behind schedule, and the final cost is expected to be some £10 million over target. No doubt public funds will give Alcan another little helping hand.

The Alcan smelter has also been the scene of immense battles with the employers. No doubt most of these have been due to the Scrooge-like attitude of the management and the way the project is organised.

But privately, the aluminium boys are very glad that the smelter is late. Strikes are a good excuse. For such is the state of the world market that Lynemouth aluminium simply could not be sold if it were in production. Alcan executives themselves have said as much.

The free ride

But one day soon the smelter will be finished and join the other two in under-production. Each smelter was expected to bring 600 jobs to the hard-pressed regions of North Wales, the North East of Scotland and the North East of England. This was the rhetoric used to justify the free ride given to the firms concerned.

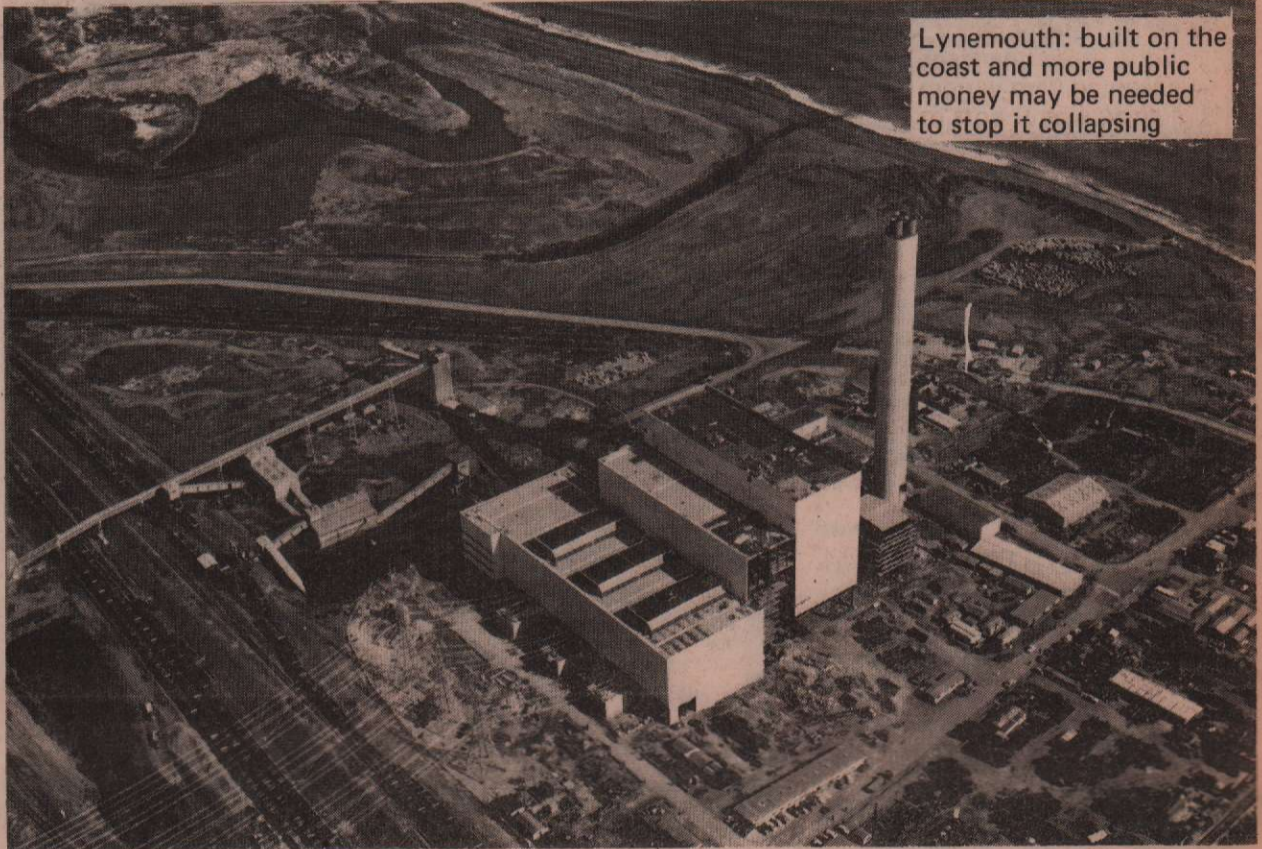
£60 million pounds of public money and massive indirect subsidies will produce at most 1800 permanent jobs. The jobs will be dangerous, as little or no work has been done to look into the effects on human beings of constant contact with alumina. As one RTZ executive put it when questioned, 'We will have plenty of time to find out.'

The same firm promised a public inquiry in Wales that 95 per cent of the fluoride gases given off would be contained. Much boasting was done about their concern for environmental pollution.

Already it has been proved that they are containing only 86 per cent. Little is said and less done about what new damage this will do to human beings.

But the saga of the smelters has a humorous twist. As the smelters are probably not all that necessary in terms of the world economy, at least one of them is likely to be Britain's most expensive white elephant yet.

And in any case, unemployment in the three regions where the smelters are located has doubled since work started. Someone somewhere is laughing all the way to the bank.



Lynemouth: built on the coast and more public money may be needed to stop it collapsing

Women and the family

LEON TROTSKY

The Russian Revolution was begun by women. On International Women's Day in 1917 women textile workers went on strike in Petrograd and sent an appeal to other workers to support them. This strike was the beginning of the revolution which was to culminate first in the overthrow of the Czar and then in the overthrow of the capitalist class. Why weren't women liberated by this revolution? Read Trotsky's important pamphlet. 31p plus 3p post.

Stepney Words

A book of poetry written by Stepney school children and edited by Chris Searle, the teacher sacked for encouraging children to put pen to paper. 30p plus 3p post.



East Enders had better buy earplugs as the City gents buzz in

Story: Stephen Stanford Pictures: Mike Cohen



BOSSES' HELIPORT WILL MAKE LIFE HELL IN WAPPING

IF A GROUP of businessmen get their way, householders in Wapping and children in parks in Shadwell in East London will be treated to a new sensation—80 decibels worth of helicopter noise.

A public inquiry at Tower Hamlets Town Hall in Bethnal Green has been hearing of a plan to transport City businessmen from their boardrooms in London Wall down to Shadwell and then—rapidly—away by helicopter.

It's been proved that the houses, schools and playgrounds that would surround the heliport would be subjected to very high noise levels. Blocks of flats like Riverside Mansions or Gordon House would shake to the sound of the flying paunches of stockbrokers.

The Borough of Tower Hamlets wisely commissioned a report from some noise consultants—Rupert Taylor and Partners—that flays alive the arguments of the Greater London Council Tories who are supporting the scheme.

Chalk and cheese

The GLC has argued that the noise would not worry anyone, because the Battersea heliport has not brought any complaints in the 12 years of its existence.

But the noise report shows Battersea and Shadwell are chalk and cheese. Battersea's site is surrounded by high industrial buildings and residents are shielded from the racket.

Shadwell, says the noise report, is much quieter than Battersea at the moment, and anyway there would be no buildings to absorb the noise of the helicopters taking off.

So old people enjoying the fresh air in the King Edward VII Memorial Park, or kids playing football on the pitch alongside had better take earplugs. And the kids had better be instructed not to go for any high balls or they could do themselves an injury. The helicopters would be taking off only a few feet away.

As people like Robert Milligan, chairman of the Wapping Community Association, have made clear, this service is of

absolutely no use to the local people.

If the City wants a heliport, say the people, put it in Finsbury Circus—right in among the insurance offices. Of course, there would be no chance of it getting permission there.

But down in Wapping, well, that's different. GLC Tories have even presented it as something Wapping should want to have.

Lieutenant-colonel Andrew Jardine, GLC member for Hounslow, has said it would bring jobs! A whelk stall would bring more than this heliport.

Bristow kids

There's something rather odd about the backers of the scheme—they call themselves The British Helicopter Advisory Board. But they do not advise anyone in an official capacity—except how to make money. And they are not an official or semi-official board in any sense.

They are a private company. The British Helicopter Advisory Board LIMITED. They are a front for a large group of helicopter manufacturers and operators, including such companies as Bristow Helicopters of Redhill; Westland

Helicopters; Ferranti; and BEA helicopters. Chairman of Bristow is also chairman of this front company—a Mr Alan Bristow.

The name helps the game. The august-sounding company applies for permission, gets it and hands it over to the Bristow kids.

The GLC's role is also discreditable. When the application for the site was first put in, it was for a full permission for an unlimited period of time. The GLC seems to have advised a more limited application for five years only.

Let no one be deceived. When the Battersea heliport got under way, it was on a short, seven-year planning permission. That was in 1958 and the heliport is now a permanency.

The same could happen to Shadwell—just as Heathrow also started off from small beginnings. The noise, the stench of kerosene, the traffic through these quiet streets—it makes nonsense of talk of new life for dockland in the East End.

The GLC also wanted the public inquiry to be held at County Hall—hardly convenient for East Enders. Under pressure, they agreed to hold it in Bethnal Green. An away match, you might say.



Top: children playing in the park at Shadwell—their games will soon be drowned by the noise of helicopters taking off. Above: Robert Milligan, Wapping Community Association chairman, on the balcony of his flat at Riverside Mansions. In the background, the site for the heliport.

Grim picture of family poverty

THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES, with both parents working, are living on the official poverty line.

A recent government study gives some interesting, and very sad, facts. The study does not include lone mothers—all families studied have both parents.

The official poverty line is accepted as the amount the family would be entitled to on Supplementary Benefits. Using this guide, at the end of last year, there were 100,000 families living BELOW that level, and in those families were more than 300,000 children. And there are many thousands more families living just a few pounds above

Most of the families are not par-

ticularly large. They have one, two or three children. What is really tragic is that the majority—74,000 families—have the head of the household IN FULL-TIME WORK and yet he is still earning less than he'd get on national assistance. This highlights again that low wages is one of the main reasons for poverty

Just as worrying, the study shows the importance of the wife's pay in saving the family from extreme hardship. If the wife's earnings were not included when working out family income, the number of families below the poverty line would be more than doubled.

Wives tend to work less and earn less while they have small children. In this survey, only one-third of wives worked

if they had a child under five. And yet this period of married life is usually the time of greatest financial burden

The Child Poverty Action Group, in reporting the study, criticises the Tories strongly. The very families shown to be in the greatest poverty are those with the father in work and with young children.

But it will come as no surprise to learn that the change in child tax allowances has given thousands of pounds back to the rich by way of tax relief.

The Tories' election manifesto said: 'We will tackle the problem of family poverty'—we can see which families they are really helping.

Valerie Clark

International Socialism 49



Europe
World Economy
Revolution and Education
Ireland

Autumn 1971 15p

15p
70p
a year

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Advertising!

‘In spite of all his pious talk of frugality, the capitalist searches for all possible ways of stimulating the people to consume, by making his commodities ever more ‘attractive’, and by filling their ears with babble about new needs.’

KARL MARX wrote that a hundred years ago, when the business of advertising was in its infancy. People who say he didn't understand how capitalism was going to develop should think again.

Last year £568,000,000 was spent on advertising in Britain alone. This colossal sum, in a country riddled with bad housing and declining welfare services, went to persuading working people that Brand X was inferior to Daz, or that pretty girls would do almost anything for you if you reeked of certain types of fags.

In the last month alone, Stork have announced a £500,000 campaign to convince us that margarine is better than butter and Walls are investing £220,000 in pushing their pies and sausages.

With Christmas coming, it gets even more hectic. The drink giants pull out every stop. Dubbonet are spending £250,000 on marketing their cocktail. And Rank Hovis MacDougall take the cake by spending £200,000 on advertising chicken and turkey stuffing.

The waste of resources involved in all this is tremendous. For instance, Osram are spending £100,000 on kidding the public that their light bulbs are better than the next brand. With that £100,000 they might be able to develop a light bulb that didn't go pop after a few days use, but what matters is the quick sale.

In fact, long-lasting light bulbs and razor blades have been developed but never marketed—they would be socially good but bad for profits and so, like the ever-lasting match, they are scrapped until we get socialism.

Cars have been getting a lot of publicity lately. In a highly wasteful and competitive system, what matters is giving your new model some sex appeal and flashy design to get ahead of the other firm.

Things like safety, efficiency and quality go by the board—the problem becomes one of hiring an even more unscrupulous advertising agency than the next man.

Any modern society needs to inform its members about goods and services. But only capitalism, with its wasteful competition, needs to spend millions on deliberate lies to working people, on the deliberate pretence that some new profit-making junk is a real must for every home.

Bargain!

In a world where millions starve, and are unable to buy goods, one of the ways a dying system keeps itself going is by persuading the affluent few to consume more and more. From the shanty towns which surround cities in Latin America, starving families have an excellent view of huge advertisements exhorting the plump middle classes to have more drink, a bigger car, another steak, another Coke.

MILLIONS ARE SQUANDERED TO PLUG BRAND X

TOP SPENDERS IN THE WAR OF WASTE

These are the nine products which spent most on advertising in 1970, and the firms that made them.

C & A Modes	£1,587,000
Radiant (Unilever)	£1,454,000
Weetabix	£1,346,000
Persil (Unilever)	£1,221,000
Kelloggs Corn Flakes	£1,100,000
CWS	£1,070,000
Ariel (Procter & Gamble)	£1,052,000
Milk Marketing Board	£1,018,000
Maxwell House Coffee	£1,006,000

Working mothers in Britain should try looking at the ads in posh women's magazines, all of which depend on the generosity of their advertisers to keep going. (Try it when you're next waiting for the dentist.)

There are three aspects of the ad business which should concern socialists.

The first of these is the con-

rol it gives to capitalism over our lives, especially over the mass media.

Last September, £22,121,942 was spent on ads by the bosses. ITV got £10,000,000 of it, the press got £11,500,000.

It is obvious that they couldn't exist without it. So it is also obvious that they won't upset the people who give them the money.

Scottish TV—owned by Lord Thomson—made a pre-tax profit of £¼m. In the first half of last year, they made a big loss.

Chairman James Coltart said that a 'substantial increase in advertisement income' had done the trick. And of course he's grateful. And so are the press lords for their £11m.

It's not so much that they cover up for a particular firm as a result (though they do it all the time, most notably with newspapers in relation to the safety or quality of cars.) It is that they will be committed to the system which has bought them all up, and which can bankrupt them if it likes.

Small wonder that no newspaper ever supports a strike. It doesn't have to be against one of their advertisers for them to lie about it. It just has to threaten the system that provides all this gravy

Special!

And of course if the workers ever do get restless, the employers can buy space to speak to them direct. The huge Tory campaign of anti-nationalisation ads is an example. Or the Barbican and Pilkington bosses' anti-strike advertisements.

Of course, there's nothing to stop the workers replying with their own ads. Except the small matter of a few thousand quid...

Until recently, journalists on the paper Construction News were not afraid to print the truth about the corrupt British building industry. So it's a pity that their paper, which is owned by Lord Thomson—the same one who owns Scottish TV—should be so dependent on advertising from rich and powerful contractors.

The journalists soon got a new 'code of behaviour' which said explicitly that they were not to offend the men who bought space in the paper.

It has got to the point where even a highly respectable writer like Anthony Sampson says of the Financial Times: 'Its immense dependence on advertising makes it hard for it to discuss objectively—even if it wanted to—the problems of the consumer society.'

When one considers that the Financial Times is probably the most objective of the capitalist press, the point sinks in with a

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vengeance.
The second of the advertising lies to working doing, it insult point perhaps, concerned with and the spectac small children market some ought to disgust
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STORY

TONS BETTER



The Track-Marshall 1600 1½ cu. yd. loader

Building bosses breathe again

THIS advertisement from the paper Construction News sums up the feelings of the building industry firms now that the paper has been restored to its true role of providing them with free—and uncritical—publicity.

When journalists on the paper started to look too deeply into the industry, to find out the fiddles, the fixes and the get-rich-quick attitudes that put profits before the safety of the workers, the bosses screeched and demanded action from the paper's owners.

A witch-hunt was launched against the staff. Private inquiry agents followed journalists and compiled dossiers on their private lives and political attitudes. Finally the editor and his deputy 'resigned' (ie, were kicked out) and the new editor started a fresh and simple policy: any articles mildly critical of firms would have to be cleared by the firms themselves before publication.

The paper is now just an advertising puff for the construction firms—but the journalists who have remained are fighting this blatant attack on their freedom through their union.

HOOSE CARD, ADY...



RED/CAST

offensive aspect of industry is this. It is people, and in so many ways. A small but growing number of socialists are concerned about human dignity, the role of women and the way in which they are being used to produce a crummy product for us.

It is that advertisers are in a position of intelligence of their customers). They can get away with

off!

not many people realise that sometimes a blatantly obvious price is fixed as a result of all the money wasted on competitive marketing. Glossy but useless packaging adds 25 per cent or more to the cost of production.

Take the case of airline tickets. The real cost of a flight even across the Atlantic is about £20 less than you will actually

his record. They must be laughing at us.

Of course, they usually pretend that the customer knows best. But sometimes the mask slips.

This is how Colt Ventilation tried to sell its product to factories in Germany last month. The ads had a picture of a muscle-bound worker on them with the words underneath:

'The worker is a modification of the human being who, due to his constitution, is a necessary part of the process of production. If air conditions are not right, you must reckon with a possible drop in their production. To them, we're just cattle.'

Then again, they must think we're stupid not to notice that prices are higher as a result of all the money wasted on competitive marketing. Glossy but useless packaging adds 25 per cent or more to the cost of production.

Take the case of airline tickets. The real cost of a flight even across the Atlantic is about £20 less than you will actually

be charged—because airlines compete with each other on the basis of 'extras' (films in flight, free teddy bears etc).

Which they then advertise glossily and hope you won't notice. In case you do, they can always shorten the air hostess's skirt a little.

Wow!

The third major objection to the ad business is that it is now so subtle and so widespread that it can be used to brainwash us over big things as well as little ones.

Big things like who to vote for, what to think, who to respect. All that is needed is a simple slogan, and enough money to keep pumping at people wherever they look from the moment they learn to read.

A huge wall of lies can be built up in this way—the United States Army has spent millions on its image in Vietnam, for instance.

A few years ago in America, the Coca Cola company found a way of flashing the words 'Coca Cola' onto a cinema screen so quickly that the human eye would not notice it consciously. But it would unconsciously.

Sure enough, in the interval, sales of Coca Cola trebled. That technique has been outlawed for the moment.

But the ruling class are unlikely to forget how useful such a device could be. Nor should we forget that it is only the logical conclusion of all advertising under capitalism. Only a socialist society can substitute useful information for greedy manipulation.

In an article written in 1969, Enoch Powell, one of the great liars of all time, said 'The enemies of advertising are the enemies of freedom'.

He was wrong, of course, because he sees freedom as the freedom to lie in the pursuit of profit.

But he understands how important is that lying to the survival of his rotten system. We should take the point and ram it home.

Dublin premier survives, but pressure grows on right and left

JACK LYNCH'S GOVERNMENT in Dublin has survived another round. A motion of no confidence in one of his ministers, which Lynch, the Prime Minister, saw as a motion of no confidence in the government as a whole, was defeated by a narrow majority of three.

This is not the first time in the past few years that Fianna Fail (the ruling party in the 26 Counties) has faced a serious threat. But since 1969 in particular, it has been affected by a sharp internal crisis on the attitude to the North. Two ex-government ministers, Blaney and Brennan, who abstained in the vote, have been expelled from Fianna Fail.

Now one has formed his own party, another voted with the government in the 'no confidence' debate and two abstained. They do not represent a coherent opposition to Lynch's control of the party, and of the country. Nor indeed do the other parties in the Dail (Dublin parliament).

The tensions remain. There seem likely to be more defections and expulsions from Fianna Fail. Lynch's tougher line towards the rebels, who advocate a more militant attitude in support of the Catholics in the North, will no doubt impress the Tory government in Westminster.

It will possibly also impress sections of the Irish middle class who thought the Fianna Fail government could not be stable as long as the nationalists remained within it.

But even with added support from these quarters, Lynch is not yet in a strong enough position to introduce more open repression against the republicans and socialists in the South. The army, the police, and the courts have all been affected by the upheaval in the North. Lynch cannot rely on them to enforce his policy of appeasement with the Westminster Tory government.

Conflict

Political life in the Southern 26 Counties of Ireland is more or less overshadowed by events in the North. But there are many other issues over which different groups are coming into conflict with the government and the interests it represents.

A certain amount has been heard in Britain about the civil disobedience campaign in the Six Counties, the total stoppage of rents and rates by roughly 26,000 families. Nothing has been heard about the rent strikes in the South—and these affect 35,000 families. Whole housing estates and towns in the South and West, in particular, have been on rent strike for several months now.

Three weeks ago, 200 tenants who had been served with eviction notices by the local authority in Cork ceremoniously burned the notices. Tenants' associations throughout the country are prepared to resist any attempt to evict tenants for non-payment of rents.

The main reason for the strike is the government's 'differential rents' scheme which means that rents are adjusted in line with income. The standard is income, not basic wage.

So the more overtime is worked and the more members of the family who are earning, the higher the rent. Tenants also object to the automatic rise in rent which occurs when a tenancy is transferred from parent to child, or there is mutual exchange.

3000 psychiatric nurses in the 26 Counties have just ended a strike. Mental hospitals had to be run by skeleton staffs.

The nurses are members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union—the largest union in Ireland—which demanded successfully that 1000 'temporary appointments' throughout the country be made permanent.

The catalogue of discontent could continue. But it would be too easy to give an impression of general disorder in which the government is only just holding on to its position.

In the present situation in Ireland any government—and that includes any



Lynch: tough line to impress London



successor government to Jack Lynch's—is bound to be unstable. Fianna Fail remains in power partly because it is still identified as the party which opposed the 1921 Treaty with Britain, and as the party of de Valera, who even in his old age is a sort of national figurehead.

But Fianna Fail is also an efficient machine, buying favours with jobs and privileges. It is the dilemma of the 'rebels' in Fianna Fail that they do not have the time or the resources to build up an apparatus which could effectively challenge the ruling party.

The next immediate difficulty which Jack Lynch faces is a referendum early next year on Irish entry into the Common Market. Recently, 1500 car assembly workers struck for a half day to demonstrate their opposition to Irish entry. They are prepared to resist any attempt to close the assembly plants in Dublin.

'Free Trade' has already meant a decline in the proportion of cars assembled in Ireland. Irish entry into Europe could mean the eventual end of the industry.

Reality

Whole sectors of the population are threatened by Ireland's move into the EEC and there is a strong ground-swell of opposition to the government's policy. But the brute reality of the situation is that Irish capitalism—weak as it is—cannot survive outside the Market. There are republicans and 'socialists' in Ireland who are peddling the fond illusion that there is some half-way measure in this matter—that Ireland could retain control of capital movement in and out of the country, trade with other small European countries and Eastern Europe, or possibly have associate status with the EEC.

Just as the line of 'unity against the Unionists' prepared the ground for middle-class and opportunist elements to partly capture the movement in the North, so too the line of unity (with 'patriotic businessmen') against the EEC prepares the way for a sell-out and disillusionment.

The task of socialists in Ireland is to spell out—in propaganda and in action—that the struggle against imperialist domination of Ireland must be fought in all 32 Counties, and must be based on the perspective of building up a working-class force which can take power in both Irish states.

The struggle in the South is important in order to convince Protestant workers in the North that there is no deceit in the claim of those fighting Unionism and the interference of the British state that they are equally opposed to the 'Green Tories' who are in power in Dublin.

As long as the opposition to British domination—which is military, political and economic—is confined to the Northern Six Counties, it cannot win.

There is a particular urgency in building up a campaign in the South—to head off the plans of the present, or any future, Dublin government to move against the revolutionary movement. Unless the movement is strengthened, and unless there is clear socialist leadership, the perspective for the immediate future in Ireland must be worse repression.

and RESEARCH by MARTIN PIPER

ON THE BOOKS—LAW THAT ALLOWS GOVERNMENT TO ARREST MILITANTS

FOR A FEW YEARS after the First World War it looked as if capitalism was finished. It seemed to be only a matter of time before all Europe and America would be ruled by the workers.

There has never been such a revolutionary period in Britain. And there has never been such a badly-documented period either.

But if the history books can ignore the class struggle, the law cannot. The law, after all, is for protecting one class against the other.

That is why it is written into the law books that Britain can be governed by decree. And that regulations and laws can be devised on the spur of the moment—along with penalties for disobeying them—by unelected, unseen officials.

Goodbye to DORA

This piece of parliamentary democracy is called the Emergency Powers Act. It was presented, debated and passed by the Commons and the Lords in one week in autumn, 1920. It became law on 29 October.

It is not the first law of its kind. The First World War had produced the Defence of the Realm Act which gave the government roughly the same powers. But the end of the war had meant the end of DORA. By the summer of 1920, so much of DORA had been repealed that it was useless for the government's purposes.

It is clear what those purposes were if you read the newspapers for the weeks leading up to the passing of the Emergency Powers Act.

Unemployed workers were demonstrating against the government almost every day. At last one demonstration was broken up by what The Times called 'the prompt action of the police' and the Daily Herald called brutality. A few months earlier the whole working class had acted against the British attack on Soviet Russia.

Miners all over Britain were out on strike. The Times was quite determined that nobody should see the strike as anything but an economic affair and warned: 'On the outskirts of every strike there are those waiting for the opportunity to give it a political bias.'

Irish railway workers had been arrested for refusing to carry troops or arms. Railwaymen in Britain were threatening a national strike.

Racing at Newmarket had been abandoned and all items connected with coal or railways were to be removed from the coming Lord Mayor's show. There was a 'campaign against suggestiveness in films.'

'Urgent'

The offices of Sylvia Pankhurst's paper Workers' Dreadnought were raided, and Miss Pankhurst was carried off by police, charged with 'doing an act likely to cause disaffection and sedition' in the Royal Navy. A 'mysterious foreigner who will not give his name' had been arrested and found to be carrying letters from Miss Pankhurst to Lenin.

The Times came to the conclusion that 'the new Emergency Powers Bill' was 'an urgent business'.

The Act styles itself 'An Act to make exceptional provision for the Protection of the Community in cases of Emergency'. And it makes its aims clear in the first paragraph:

'If at any time it appears to His Majesty that any action has been taken or is immediately threatened by any persons or body of persons of such a nature and on so extensive a scale as to be calculated . . . to deprive the community, or any substantial proportion of the community of the essentials of life His Majesty may . . . declare that a State of

Emergency exists'

The Act goes on: 'It shall be lawful for His Majesty in Council, by Order to make regulations for securing the essentials of life to the community.' Persons carrying out the Act may 'make such provisions . . . as may appear to be required for making the exercise of these powers effective.'

The Act made it possible for the government to prepare to break any major strike—and especially a general strike. A whole apparatus existed on the foundation of the Act.

Command

It could be set in motion at short notice.

On 20 November, 1925 a circular from the Ministry of Health ordered local councils to prepare for a general strike and specified the chain of command in the expected emergency. England and Wales were divided into 10 regions, each with its 'Commissioner'.

On 30 April, 1926, four days before the general strike began, all was ready and the emergency government took over. There was no chance that Labour Councils or anyone else would help the strike, let alone surrender power to the workers.



The General Strike: rations for troops blacklegging at Neasden Power Station. The Emergency Powers Act gave the government unlimited scope to break the strike.

Sinister power in the hands of our rulers

by PETER HITCHENS

All this would have been impossible without the Act. And the Act made it a simple matter for the government to freeze funds sent from abroad to aid the strike. An Order in Council on 9 May prevented payment of any credits from abroad 'for any purpose prejudicial to the public safety or the life of the community.'

Of course this had to be backed up by massive force. To make it easier for soldiers to fire on workers the government issued what was called 'The Pogrom announcement' on 7 May, 1926:

'All ranks of the Armed Forces of the Crown are hereby notified that any action which they may find it necessary to take in an honest endeavour to aid the Civil Power will receive, both now and afterwards, the full support of His Majesty's Government.'

Under the Act, hundreds of communists and militants were hauled before Tory magistrates for distributing or simply possessing 'inflammatory literature' and jailed.

Troops were moved into working class areas. Battleships steamed up

the Clyde and the Mersey and trained their guns on the workers' houses.

The Act and the machinery based on it meant that the government was free to drop all pretence of 'democracy' and uncover the nature of its power, and its real purpose. Take these preparations for the strike-breaking food convoy through London on 8 May, 1926:

Intimidated

'The gates and buildings of the docks were guarded by a full battalion of the Grenadier Guards, who were fully armed and had mounted Lewis guns at various strong points . . . at the East India docks a mass of strikers outside were intimidated by the sight of bluejackets manning a machine gun that was directly pointed at them.'

One American reporter commented that the convoy was 'backed by enough artillery to kill every living thing in every street in the neighbourhood.'

Troops were used to break strikes on more than one occasion by the

1945-51 Labour government. Every time governments threaten this kind of action, it is the Emergency Powers Act they are counting on.

The powers it provides are so unlimited that the government thinks they would be sufficient to govern the country after a nuclear attack.

A recent Territorial Army exercise was based on the assumption that thousands of workers were marching on Buckingham Palace. Volunteers and others spend their weekends practising ruling Britain from a network of half-sunken fortresses linked to each other by strike-proof telecommunications and staffed by every government department.

And the sons and grandsons of the men who rushed the Emergency Powers Act through parliament are sitting on the same benches today—proclaiming themselves in favour of 'democracy' and very much opposed to 'violence'.

Everybody else's violence, that is. The fact remains that if they and their dividends are ever in danger they will destroy our hard-won and slender democracy and threaten us, with all the violence of their law.

OUR NORMAN



DON'T SUPPOSE SHE'D BOTHER WITH THE LIKES OF ME THOUGH



SPECIAL OFFER

Paul Mattick's *Marx and Keynes: the Limits of the Mixed Economy* is to be published shortly by Merlin Press at £2.50. Pluto Press has a limited number of copies available immediately which are offered to IS members only at reduced rates in one of the following ways:

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REVIEW

PLAYING IN THE STREETS - 2

Last week Review took a specific performance of the Red Ladder Theatre and dealt with the general development of the radical theatre over the last 10 years. But what are the radical theatre groups? How have they developed?

THE POLARISATION in street theatre finds two particular groups existing as overtly marxist in their outlook. These are CAST and the Red Ladder.

As Roland Muldoon of CAST points out, 'We may not be able to have socialist art, yet, but we can have marxist art.'

Between the poles of 'art for art's sake' and the marxists, lie a variety of organisations. In South London there is the Combination (formerly the Brighton Combination) which operates from the Albany, a social centre in Deptford. One of their productions, the NAB Show, on unemployment and the social security system is mainly performed for Claimants' Unions and similar groups.

Growth has also taken place in the community theatre. There are groups in Notting Hill and Haringey.

The Notting Hill Theatre Workshop came together over summer 1971 to do a play on the cops and the law for the Notting Hill People's Carnival, the 'Ello Ello Show'. The play attempted to show the connections between the police, big business, the press and the authoritarian personality.

TRIALS AND ARRESTS

They have produced a short on unemployment for the local Claimants' Union. The 'Great Conspiracy' deals with the string of political trials and arrests that have followed the return of the Tory government. It centres on the arrest and subsequent death of Stephen McCarthy, the trial of Jake Prescott and Ian Purdie, the Mangrove Nine and their harassment and subsequent (and continuing) prosecution.

The Haringey Theatre Workshop has been operating for around seven months, beginning with a play on the council elections and working on to material on the Immigration Bill—'Beat the Capitalist Clock'. 'Smasher Heath', a production on the Tory offensive, was performed at the Hyde Park OZ benefit.

It is an expose of the distortions, lies and bias of the Fleet Street press and links them with broken Tory promises, and fulfilled repressive legislation. The format is that of a boxing match with 'Smasher Heath' and the bosses versus workers, students and hippies.

But is this kind of theatre saying the right thing and in the right place? Roland



Red Ladder Theatre in action: 'more enjoyable than speeches and leaflets'

Muldoon of CAST and Chris Rowlands of Red Ladder are doubtful. Both groups operate as agitational theatre in a specifically working-class context—at factory gates, in canteens and at the big demonstrations that have taken place over the last few years.

Both are agreed on the weaknesses of some of the other groups. A lack of direction and purpose has meant that theatre that has sprung from mass mobilisations like the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign fritters away its energies in work that may not be just useless—but positively harmful. 'It may be worth a few column inches in International Times or Time Out but doesn't get the movement very far.'

CAST is one of the oldest of the street groups. Muldoon was involved in the Unity Theatre in the early 1960s. The Camden Town organisation was on hard times, as indeed it still is. 'The audiences were small and the material wasn't political. The Unity is a superb theatre and was being wasted.' We tried to make a 'revolution' and the old Communists moved in and massacred us,

called us bleeding Trotskyists, not that we knew what it meant. We went about it entirely the wrong way, spontaneously.'

CAPITALIST PROP

After being ejected from Unity, the small group began to rehearse in small rooms above pubs. They produced material for folk clubs, working men's clubs and colleges. By 1966 they had done 'John D Muggins is Dead', an attack on the Labour Party Left. 'Mr Oligarchy' showed the role of the Labour Party as a prop of the capitalist system. This production is still used now—with the emphasis shifting to the Tories. 'I think it's getting a bit old,' says Muldoon.

Then came the 'Trials of Horatio Muggins' on the failure of the 'orthodox' left to make any sense or contact with a working class militant. A lot of people have passed through CAST over the last six years, some have gone on to other groups, some have dropped out.

'It's a strain being in a theatre group'

Muldoon points out. From around 20 involved over the period the group has now stabilised with five regular members.

'The thing is,' says Muldoon, 'the working class have got top rate slick TV and they aren't going to sit through 10-years-old, second-rate undergraduate theatre. The groups that disintegrate have no real idea of entertainment. Take a music hall or club comedian. You know the routine—he won't come on till the audience says hello—and lets him come on.'

'There's got to be an understanding, an absolute knowledge that the audience are better than us. They know the score. To come out with some general statement that unemployment is bad isn't any good. After we've done our plays I've had people come up to me and say that we've had more effect than a dozen meetings with just speakers and paper sellers. A meeting with CAST and a speaker like Bernadette Devlin can have a great effect.'

The problem and one to which both Roland and Chris Rowlands of Red Ladder referred to was follow-up. The

initial impact of the play can be lost unless the political organisation exists to take advantage of the show. Muldoon would like to see the marxist groups moving towards some kind of broad unity so that agitation can be both directed and consistent.

'Within the labour movement as a whole,' says Rowlands, 'there should be at least 12 political theatre groups.'

The Red Ladder began as Agitprop theatre in October 1968. Its full name now is the Red Ladder Mobile Workers Theatre. Its initiation came through the Greater London Council tenants' movement. 'We were using posters so we moved on to 10 minute sketches at GLC meetings. They were simple shows—a cross between pantomime and music hall.'

From the simple beginnings the productions have grown in length, complexity, content and audience.

What's Red Ladder's aim? 'We are trying to analyse political conjunctures' said Rowlands. 'Primarily aspects of the British labour movement in a way that is both clearer and more enjoyable than the traditional speeches and leaflets. We are Marxist-Leninists.'

INVERT THE VALUES

'It's not just a question of standing on a platform and acting in the narrow sense either. Visuals are very important, we attempt to show what we mean. It isn't so much a question of the theatre at all, but the stuff which is thrown at the working class every day. TV, films, commercials, we try to invert the values and so invert the perceptive processes.'

'It's not a question of brainwashing, but a distanced, Brechtian approach, involving a critical thought process on the part of the audience.'

When it comes to a particular production Red Ladder relies on its contacts within the labour movement. They work collectively on their plays, arguing on methods, politics, and getting their raw material from the experience of militants. 'We are dealing with the same argument as the shop steward and we attempt to deal visually and dramatically with the questions—to pose them in a crystallised form—and it's extremely effective.'

Red Ladder has three plays at the moment. One new 20 minute production, the outdoor play seen on the February TUC demonstration (see Judith Condon's article last week), and a one-hour play which is for indoor presentation.

From small beginnings Red Ladder and CAST perform now every weekend and many mid-weeks too. Every other night is taken up with work on the plays. In the beginning the groups would sometimes turn up on spec at a factory gate—but not any more.

POLITICS PARAMOUNT

'The convenor tells the workers, and so we are publicised before we get there,' said Rowlands. 'If the plant organisation is strong we do it in the canteen, otherwise on the factory gate.'

Neither group is committed to a political organisation. The question of politics remains paramount however. 'We are continuously wrestling with the problems—every rehearsal is a political discussion,' said Rowlands. 'One problem is that if we are flying a party flag then we may be seen by the audience as sectarian and thus ignored.'

'But at the moment we don't see a group we can align ourselves with. You don't need to tell us about the need for political leadership in the working class, it's glaringly apparent to us and to our audiences. Within the political organisations themselves there was some philistinism. "What's the theatre got to do with us?" but that ends after they've seen it.'

There aren't that many radical theatre groups. More are needed, with roots in communities. And, as both Roland Muldoon and Chris Rowlands emphasise, a clear idea of what you are trying to do, and where you stand politically. Otherwise you stand the risk of winding up, as Rowlands points out, as a 'fun little group' with no particular place to go.

CAST: 11c Cabbel Street, London NW1 5BA. Telephone 01-734 9083, 01-402 6087.

Red Ladder Theatre, 37 Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place, London WC1. 01-636 9520, 01-735 7433.

Combination, The Albany, Deptford, London. 01-692 2347.

Research for articles by John Telfair and Mike Davis.

THE EYE: MOCKING NOT ROCKING THE SYSTEM

'Ten Years of Private Eye' Allen Lane The Penguin Press £1.50 BRITISH SOCIETY is still largely owned and controlled by public school boys. So it's not surprising that even intellectual groups who profoundly reject that society often turn out to be public school coterie too.

The New Left Review and Private Eye in their different ways are both examples of public school dissent and the 10th anniversary publication of a bumper Private Eye anthology is an interesting point at which to examine the strengths and weaknesses of this upper middle class radicalism.

The material contained in this Allen Lane anthology will be familiar to those who built their schoolboy pater on the Private Eye cast, if only because Lord Gnome has been busily marketing his own back numbers for some years now. But the introduction by the editor-in-chief of Private Eye, the self-deprecating and ungainly Richard Ingrams, is a rare chance to see the politics which power Private Eye's fortnightly assault and battery on our betters.

Ingrams tells how the Eye was spiritually founded some 20 years ago by a small group of friends at the medium-major public school of Shrewsbury (Eton provided the real men of power, Shrewsbury the men who mock them). It re-assembled again in the same Oxford college around a student magazine called Parson's Pleasure run by someone whose parents own the Telegraph.

Then after a period as 'Mesopotamia', this time secretly financed by Michael Foot, it made its debut as Private Eye

edited variously in William Rushton's mother's bedroom and the waiter's changing room in a satirical nightclub.

In this period of growing fame, the magazine shifted its intricate snobbery from the world of the Oxford wits to the land of the London trendies, providing what Ingrams laughingly calls 'a distinctive flavour; witty, sophisticated and urbane'. But the Profumo crisis, in which the Eye was forced by the cowardice of every other paper into a leading role, made the magazine more political and anti-Tory with the aid of those aristocrats of the revolutionary Left, Claud Cockburn and Paul Foot.

Hysterical rage

In the most interesting part of his essay, Ingrams explains the real hatred felt in the Greek Street office to Macmillan: 'We did everything short of assassinating him' and 'the outbreak of hysterical rage' at the appointment of Home, 'Macmillan's final gesture of contempt for democracy'.

It also makes it quite clear that the craven record of Wilson, especially in foreign policy, utterly disillusioned Ingrams' quite unnatural passion for Labour in 1964. The paper never seems to have regained that intensity of spleen. Today's grammar school Tories have not yet felt the last of Private Eye's wrath. Now Ingrams admits the paper has stabilised itself on a diet of 'jokes and information'.

The jokes remain ingrained with that special loathing the upper-middle class have for the lower middle-class, for grocers and Neasden and Wincarnis, a

comic snobbery so beloved of right-wing English novelists. Mrs Wilson's Diary was not a political attack on Wilsonism but a fortnightly cry of contempt for those who drink tonic wines and eat TV snacks instead of port and roast duck.

Although Private Eye's gift for non-sense writing is incurably, in fact additively funny, it's simply the old public school and Oxford review facetiousness. In the same way its hatred of anything 'pseudo-intellectual (ie intellectual) conceals a studied and deeply philistine refusal to take anything seriously (the exact obverse of the NLR's obsessional 'seriousness').

Even the loathing of all things trendy can become a Christian elitism, the fate of Muggeridge ('The guru' Ingrams calls him), Christopher Booker, who was to write a history of post war Britain blaming everything on the fall of Church attendance, and Barry Fantoni, failed pop star and premature Jesus freak.

The information is more informative. The post war explosion in TV, radio, national and local journalism has brought with it a new kind of journalist/public relations man of unparalleled intellectual mediocrity and political cowardice. For despite the guff about free speech, the communications industry and its workers are no less tightly controlled by accountants and boards of directors than their counterparts in ICI.

As Ingrams points out, 'the press has become part of the Establishment, maintaining a very close relationship with politicians and big business. Newspaper proprietors are made peers, city tycoons sit on their boards, the process may be

observed in the large newspapers as well as the intellectual weeklies'. Private Eye's existence as a kind of upper class underground press has made it for a whole era the only outlet for disgruntled communicators the censored and the ignored as well as the ambitious and malicious.

Masterly use

Paul Foot's back page expose journalism is unique and must remain the main reason for the quite large readership of the Eye among socialists and trade unionists. Footnotes have an unobtrusively marxist approach which leads them to look for scandal in the right places and a masterly use of research and contacts making them more use than a ton of rhetoric. The only danger is the implied view that the corruption exposed by Foot is an exception to the general rule of well ordered capitalism, rather than the view that all society is a scandal, not just the bits that fall down or the men with their hands in the till.

But the quality of Footnotes serves to underline the weakness of much of the middle of the paper. Their abysmal 'political commentator', Auberon Waugh, has neither Ingrams' deeply funny prose nor Foot's politics and perspicacity; he is upper class twit, pure and simple.

May Lord Gnome live for ever, wrights and the underground press notwithstanding. But why can't more of his Greek Street employees get a political point of view before they turn Christian too?

DAVID WIDGERY

Power workers set for new pay battle

THE ELECTRICITY supply unions repeated their pay-claim last week: for a substantial pay rise, a 38-hour week, and an extra week's holiday. The claim was submitted in September and has been considered in both October and November. The employers have still not drawn up a reply.

J Biggins, for the General and Municipal Workers Union, said he was 'frustrated' by the lack of progress. His members are even more frustrated. The 'substantial' rise asked for the unions amounts to £2, less than 10 per cent and less than the increase in the cost of living.

After the Wilberforce settlement in February, the employers said that in September they would review pay in the light of productivity. There are several factors for them to note in their review: rising output of electricity and further cuts in manpower this year.

But previous experience does not suggest that these

SW Reporter

matters will greatly move the hearts of the Electricity Council's negotiators. They will point to rising interest charges, and to the loss of more than £50 million they sustained last year. The fact that this loss was not due to the workers in the industry is hardly likely to persuade them to give a pay rise easily.

An all-union delegate conference is meeting in London on Friday (26 November) to consider the employers' lack of reply. The conference delegates should demand a really substantial pay rise, without strings, a real cut in the working week and the extra week's holiday.

Delegates will be aware, after the experience of last year's work to rule, that such a claim cannot be won without a fight. If the power workers are not to drop

behind still further in the pay race, the conference will have to force the union leaders to take action.

They should be demanding, first, an immediate end to redundancies in the industry and an end to all pay and productivity negotiations. This demand, along with one for improved pay and conditions, must be backed up by a national work to rule. And this time, the unions must make sure that the rest of the trade union movement is properly informed about the justice of the workers' claim.

The success or failure of the power workers' claim is of vital importance for other trade unionists. Last year, the defeat of the power workers was a major victory for the government in its offensive against pay claims generally. It prepared the way for the defeat of the postmen, teachers and other groups of workers.

This winter, the power workers must not be allowed to stand alone again.

11 weeks' fight for living wage

BIRMINGHAM:-500 men and women have been on strike for 11 weeks at the Moss Green company. The factory, where wages have been below the average for the Birmingham area, produces axles and shafts for heavy vehicles.

The dispute began when the union demanded a straight wage increase of £8 a week. Management offered £1 and a productivity bonus scheme which they claimed would give another £1.

This derisory offer was rejected. The AUEW—the engineering union—has made the strike official. At the last mass meeting the strikers stressed their confidence in the strike committee and expressed their determination to continue the strike.

One tactic that management has used to try to weaken this fighting spirit was to declare 75 redundancies and blame this on the dispute. One strike leader said that the real reason for the sackings was management's inefficiency.

Trade union representatives were told in July that management had lost a US military contract and this would mean loss of jobs. Since the strike management has tried to shift its responsibility for the loss of the contract on to the strikers.

There are signs now that the bosses have decided to talk, and negotiations are likely to take place soon.

ENGINEERING BOSSES IN DRIVE TO CRACK UNION

by ROGER ROSEWELL
SW Industrial Correspondent

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT pay battles for years is looming in the engineering industry. Its outcome will be vital not only for the two million workers concerned but also for the rest of the working population.

If the claim is successful it will smash the Tory government's policy of holding down wages below the rise in the cost of living. If the claim fails it will reinforce government policy.

The claim could also be the first major clash under the Tories' anti-trade union Industrial Relations Act.

The claim was presented in August and demanded:

- A 'substantial' pay rise—thought to be about £2 a week.
- Improved minimum rates—£25 instead of £19 a week for a skilled man.
- A 35-hour week.
- Longer holidays.
- More lay-off pay.
- Immediate equal pay for women.
- And all without productivity strings.

The employers declared their immediate opposition to the claim but dragged out their reply for almost three months. Then last week they spoke up with an almost total rejection of the claim.

DISMISSED

They refused to offer any pay rise at all and proposed an increase of a mere £1.50 a week on the skilled minimum rate with even less for other grades. No other concessions were made. Every other part of the claim was dismissed.

But the employers did make one suggestion—that if engineering workers want pay rises then they should try and negotiate them locally. This counter-proposal was closely related to the employers' three months' delay before answering the claim.

The union leaders, led by Hugh Scanlon, have decided to meet early next month to decide what action they should take to the employers. In the same month the sections of the Industrial Relations Act come into force that allow the government to ban strikes for 60 days or order secret ballots to be held before a dispute can be declared.

VICTORY

The law might be used if the engineers decide to take militant action. A decision by the engineers to obey the law would be a powerful victory for the Tories. A decision to defy it could lead to the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers being dragged before the new Industrial Relations Court.

If this happens the union—which has refused to register—could well be sued for enormous and unlimited damages by the employers. This is the first reason for the delay.

The second is more complicated. On 15 September all the engineering unions wrote to the employers and cancelled the industry's 49-year old procedure agreement for settling disputes.

This agreement was forced upon engineering workers in 1922 after they had suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the employers. The unions have been



Coventry toolmen demonstrating: bosses deliberately ended their agreement

trying to change it for the past four years. The main obstacle to this has been the determined refusal of the employers to accept a 'status quo' clause that would stop them changing or altering workers' conditions until they had first been properly discussed.

Because no settlement on the issue was reached the unions were forced to cancel the agreement and it is now due to expire at the end of December. After this date no procedure agreement at all will exist in the industry.

The unions have decided that new agreements—incorporating the 'status quo' clause—should be negotiated factory by factory. If this state of affairs exists in January and engineering workers are also trying to negotiate their own pay rises, numerous difficulties will arise.

Some workers will be confused over what issue is the most important, while others might be drawn into accepting productivity strings. And this situation will be made worse by the fact that those parts of the Industrial Relations Act that outlaw unofficial strikes and closed shops are due to come into force during February.

The employers are hoping that these problems and a million or more people out of work will weaken the ability of shop stewards to lead a fight and that union

organisation in the industry will be split into fragments.

This is why they are suggesting that negotiations should take place locally and not at national level. Their refusal to offer any pay rise at all is an attempt to compel the unions to accept their suggestion of factory negotiations.

SMASH

In recent months the employers have been carrying out an aggressive policy towards the unions. This has been partly in preparation for the present pay battle.

In Coventry they have caused a major strike by deliberately terminating a 30 year old toolroom agreement. In July the Draughtsmen's Union produced a secret document written by the employers that exposed a plan to try and smash that union.

Faced with this offensive by the engineering bosses no compromise can be tolerated. Only a real national fight against them can win the claim and defeat any attempted use of the anti-union Act.

The engineering unions are in no way preparing for such a struggle. It has been clear ever since they submitted the claim that many of the union leaders were not at all serious about fighting for it.

This situation must be changed urgently. Unless it is, the Tories will have won a major triumph. It is now up to every militant to see that they don't.

Textile victory

NINETY Indian and Pakistani workers at the Perivale-Guterman textile factory in West London returned to work on Monday after a week and a half on strike. Management agreed to all of their conditions, including a complete withdrawal of the bonus scheme that had sparked off the strike.

A written agreement on working conditions remains to be negotiated. The workers are all set to consolidate their victory.

Michelin men stay out

DUNDEE:-Workers on the Michelin factory being built here by MacAlpine's have voted to continue their strike, now in its fifth week.

The strike began after MacAlpine's had tried to dismiss 15 joiners and the federation steward, John Adams, who were fighting to prevent a drastic cut in their bonus.

Although the industry's joint local council decided against MacAlpine's, MacGregor, Scottish regional secretary of the ASW, the building workers' union, refused to make the strike official.

Last week MacAlpine's offered to re-instate the sacked men but would not pay £15-a-week back pay that is being demanded, and also indicated that they would not let Adams continue as a steward.

THREAT TO USE TORY UNION LAW

COLCHESTER:-'A bloody dictator' is how one worker described a boss who last week threatened to use the Industrial Relations Act against any worker 'stirring up trouble'.

Workers in the Colchester Lathe Company, an anti-union firm, have been growing more and more militant in the face of increased redundancies and rising local unemployment.

The firm, a member of the 600 Group of companies (£4 million profit last year), has already sacked 350 men—including a trade union branch secretary and chairman—and laid-off 200 for a week. It plans to close the factory for a week from December and for four days after Christmas.

The last 90 men sacked were simply told to go home—without any advance warning. The management hoped that by removing the dismissed men quickly they could isolate them and prevent the workers organising any counter action.

But the workers have been organising and some have joined unions—engineers' AUEW or the white collar ASTMS.

When the works committee, under pressure from the shop floor, confronted the boss with a £5 wages demand last week he offered only £1 and threatened them with the Tory government's new law, with more redundancies and a possible total shut-down. He has so far prevented the works committee from holding shop floor meetings to discuss how to fight the redundancy threat.

But the works committee is beginning to realise that it is completely powerless without the organised support of the shop floor. And the rank and file, for their part, have begun to accept the need to prevent their representatives feeling isolated once in the managing director's office. He refuses to meet more than three delegates at a time.

WORKERS' WAGES SLASHED -BOSSES' SHOOT UP

NEWCASTLE:- A mass meeting on Saturday of 400 workers employed by the corporation housing department demanded an immediate end to the new bonus scheme in operation since April. Under the scheme bonus earnings have been slashed by absurdly unrealistic target times.

But for the housing department chiefs things haven't been so bad. As the joint shop stewards' chairman, Dave Young, has revealed, the Assistant Housing Director, Mr Smedley, has seen his salary rise from £2949 to £3672 since the scheme was

introduced, while on the shopfloor men are going home with less than £16 in their pay packets.

Dave Young also made it clear that this was not only a fight against the bonus scheme. It was first and foremost a fight for the right to work.

The meeting also agreed to enforce a closed shop in the direct works department and to insist that any future changes in working conditions would have to be negotiated through the joint shop stewards' committee.



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Socialist Worker

INDO-PAK WAR THREAT

THE PRESENT CONFLICTS between the armed forces of the Indian and Pakistani governments are in no way in the interests of the mass of the people of either India, Pakistan or Bangla Desh.

They are desperate moves by two corrupt ruling classes to try and submerge movements of socially and nationally oppressed peoples in an orgy of chauvinism and military bravado.

The rulers of Pakistan have lost virtually all their support in Bengal (East Pakistan) since they tried to crush the movement for national independence there in spring. Despite massacres, continual terror and extreme repression, the popular Bangla Desh resistance is growing.

The rising cost of the anti-guerrilla war in the East and the economic dislocation resulting from it threatens to undermine what popular support there is for the military regime in the West.

Pakistan's rulers do not want a war. They risk losing everything in it. But they need the threat of war to whip up popular support through military hysteria.

MISERY

The situation in India is similar—except that India's government may actually welcome a full scale war. That regime is no more progressive than the one in Pakistan.

Mrs Gandhi rules over the same sort of exploitation and abject misery as Yahya Khan, on behalf of the same sort of cynical, bloodsucking ruling interests.

The Indian government claims to support the Bangla Desh independence movement. In reality they intend that support to be that of the rope for the hanging man. India's rulers fear any truly independent movement on the sub-continent as an encouragement to all the oppressed and exploited national groups inside India itself.

A victory for India would not produce true Bengali independence. It would merely mean the people of Bangla Desh returning to the situation prior to 1948, with rule from big business in Karachi being replaced by rule from big business in Calcutta.

If war breaks out it will be between two equally oppressive regimes, each one bolstered up over the years not by popular support, but by foreign military aid on an enormous scale.

Revolutionaries have to make it clear that a defeat for either government would not be a defeat for the workers and peasants of that country. On the contrary, there can be no future for the people of India, Pakistan or Bangla Desh until both regimes are overthrown.

SS officials and press aid giant combine R-R WORKERS FACE UNITED ATTACK OVER STRIKE

by Mike O'Neill and Sheila Melot

BRISTOL:- 6000 Rolls-Royce manual workers voted on Tuesday to continue their strike in spite of biased reports in the local press, and blatant discrimination by Social Security officials. The strike, now in its fourth week, is over a cost of

living claim for 15 per cent—about £5 a week.

The central Rolls-Royce management in Derby wants to crack Bristol—the only plant without productivity deals. This same get-tough policy is evident throughout Rolls-Royce. In Coventry Rolls played a key part in provoking the toolroom dispute.

Bristol stewards determined to hold out, and have kept a militant mood among workers through eight mass meetings, despite attacks from all quarters, including poison-pen letters to negotiating committee members.

Workers were needled by a letter from R-R management addressed to all strikers, but obviously aimed at their wives. It consisted mainly of empty remarks about the strikers' future and 'how carefully you will think of this'.

Throughout the strike, the Bristol Evening Post has backed management up to the hilt and has misrepresented the workers' claims. The line has been that the strike is just about an extra 50p.

IGNORED

Every day the paper has printed letters from individuals and interviews with wives (complete with photos of Mrs Striker's Wife amid the cooking-pots), all wanting the strike to end. It has consistently ignored the many thousands who wanted the strike to go on.

But the worst weapon that has been used against the strikers has been the stand taken by Social Security officials. They have been quick to apply new measures brought out this month.

Income tax rebate is now regarded as income for purposes of assessment. This means the strikers are taxed twice. The notorious 'two-times rule' hits at those with high pay packets the week before.

MILITANT

Because of this discrimination, strikers with a wife and four children to support have received only 90p and single men have been told they could have nothing.

The local Claimants' Union and the workers' negotiating committee have worked closely together from the beginning. Delay tactics and deliberate misinformation churned out by Social Security have been countered by an increasingly militant organisation, despite attempts to negotiate with stewards in the absence of Claimants' Union members.

The strikers show every determination to win and, as Vic Ryan of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions said at the mass meeting, it is a 'stoppage which takes the breath away from every union official. We have never seen the like of it.'

Ford men go back

DAGENHAM:- Trimline workers in Ford's Paint, Trim and Assembly plant returned to work on Tuesday after agreeing to a compromise deal between management and union officials.

The dispute arose over attempts by management to speed-up production on the light car trim lines from 263 cars per shift to 269. The trimline workers resisted this move by 'blacking' six jobs per shift, and the management then suspended several workers and sent the rest home.

PTA workers must now go on to demand a policy of action to involve the regular production of a shop stewards' bulletin, shop stewards to be elected by specially called meetings, and a regular report-back meeting by the convenor.

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'Copter bosses sell up to make fortune from sackings

SW Reporter

£2000 for every job you destroy: that is the very profitable formula which the management of Westland helicopters are now pursuing. They have sold their Hayes, Middlesex, factory which employs 2000 workers, to property speculators for £3,720,000 and are moving production to their Weston-super-Mare factory.

The property company buying the Hayes works, Slater-Walker, was co-founded by Tory Minister for the Environment, Peter Walker.

When the closure of the factory was announced some months ago, the workers declared their determination to stop it. An attempt by a security firm to move machines out overnight was thwarted by workers when they returned in the morning. The management agreed to delay action for two weeks, pending talks.

But last Monday management spokesmen were allowed to speak at a mass meeting in the works canteen. They attempted to divide the workers by a mixture of bribery and threats.

Demoralisation

They offered work until June and redundancy payments 'in excess of those required by law' if the workers co-operated and 'did not cause trouble'. If co-operation was not forthcoming they said they would close the factory by Christmas.

Demoralisation has been setting in among the workers in the absence of a fighting programme to keep the works open. A resolution to the meeting from Arthur Gibbard, the AUEW convenor, called for a continuation of the struggle, but gave no clear plan of action. It gained only a bare majority. Several hundred men have already left for new jobs and there is a danger of the fight just petering out.

The only strategy at this stage that can challenge the management and give the workers a fighting chance is a sit-in strike to stop the machinery being moved.

The management have a full and profitable order book and urgently need the machines to work.

If workers are to have confidence in the possibility of victory, a sit-in strike must be argued for by the stewards now and real support for it must be gained from neighbouring factories.

TV programme to feature paper's work

SOCIALIST WORKER will be featured next Wednesday (1 December) in the BBC2 programme Man Alive (8.10pm) which is analysing the 'Alternative Press'.



Dundee march for jobs

DUNDEE:- Head of the official TUC march against unemployment last weekend. Vic Feather led the demonstration—but his prescription for fighting the dole queues was a flabby mixture of 'economic growth' and a belief that a Labour government would be radically different to the Tories.

Picture: BRIAN MILNE

Setback in fight to stop heavy steel jobs loss

IRLAM:- The British Steel Corporation has already started to divert orders from the threatened Irlam works, while the campaign by the workforce against closure has suffered a serious setback.

After the massive demonstrations of protest last spring, the committee of steel and engineering union officials (BISAKTA and AUEW), who were organising the struggle, failed to come out with any policy likely to get rank and file participation in a continued struggle. Conditions in the work worsened, redundancies began and morale among the rank and file sagged.

The BISAKTA officials called a meeting to get a vote of confidence. Instead they were voted sharply out of office and a younger, more militant group of stewards voted in.

Fear and suspicion

The union's nationally-appointed full-time officials then intervened. In collaboration with the management and the local newspapers they began to spread fear and suspicion of the new stewards' committee. Front page stories spoke of the new committee as 'red' troublemakers, whose real purpose was to wreck the works and the campaign against closure.

This happened when two of the leading stewards were off on rest days and while the management was posting redundancy notices in the factory. The campaign against redundancy has suffered a setback, with fear and suspicion effectively bringing progress to a halt.

One result of the 'red-baiting' has been that a meeting assisted by local International Socialists to put the new stewards in contact with their opposite numbers at River Don Works, Sheffield and at Teesside, was cancelled by Wigan Trades Council.

So the 'patriotic' BISAKTA officials

have successfully wrecked the campaign, while they themselves have done nothing to stop the Steel Corporation moving Irlam's order to Scunthorpe and Rotherham.

The need for a rank and file campaign, linked up nationally, is increased by this setback. One defeat must not get in the way of the will to victory.

Strike call after sack

SHEFFIELD:- The struggle which began when the closure of the River Don Works was announced has spread to the Tinsley Park and Stockbridge Works.

At Tinsley a mass meeting of more than 1,000 workers voted unanimously for strike action against the sacking of 50 manual and 75 staff workers. But at Stockbridge the shop stewards have accepted 150 possible redundancies without a fight.

The management blame the redundancies on a decline in trade and low order books. But shop stewards point out that management do not expect this state of affairs to continue for long, as they plan to invest £35 million at Stockbridge and £70 million on the production of stainless steel in the Sheffield area. In any case, management are reducing orders by directing work to the Brymbo works in Wales.

TOOL ROOM TALKS

COVENTRY toolroom workers' leaders were meeting to decide their attitude to the employers' latest offer in a bid to avert the threatened strike as we went to press. The employers had suggested a three-month return to the old agreement plus individual plant bargaining.

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