

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

TORY DIRTY WORK IN THE DOCKS

AND
THE
MEN
THEY
PAY
TO DO
IT...

by Laurie Flynn

ONCE AGAIN dock workers face the prospect of imprisonment for picketing and blacking an inland container depot, Midland Cold Stores in East London.

But the employers, Sir John Donaldson and his National Industrial Relations Court colleagues, with the advice and consent of the legal department of the Tory government, appear to have learnt their lessons well since Chobham Farm.

What looks to be a watertight legal case has been built up against five picketing dockers and the chairman and secretary of the London portworkers committee. Already they have been served with—and defied—injunctions restraining them from fighting to protect their jobs, wages and conditions.

This time the injunctions are backed with others from the High Court. More injunctions will follow, probably with Pentonville or Wormwood Scrubbs prisons as the upshot.

Great effort has gone into preparing the legal niceties of Midland Cold Stores' NIRC action. In order to really prepare and truss their intended court victims the employers resorted to the use of private detectives, radio cars, secret photographers, bugged lorries with hidden tape recorders and bugged telephones. The detectives passed themselves off as journalists.

SINISTER

The whole sinister technical apparatus of the secret agent was let loose in a drive to avoid a repetition of Chobham Farm where legal pretexts were found to retreat from jailing pickets held in contempt of court. Sir John Donaldson, and the entire freedom-loving capitalist press accepted it all without a murmur.

Tony Merrick, one of the dockers named in the injunction, was first observed and photographed on picket duty. His conversation with a lorry driver trying to get into the depot was secretly taped. He was followed into a cafe, a public house and then home.

Subsequently Garry Murray, senior partner in Eurotec, the firm hired for the job, telephoned Merrick's number. This is how Tony Merrick described to Socialist Worker what happened that evening:

'A man I now know to be Murray rang and asked for me. I was out walking my dog and my wife told him that. That suited him fine. He went right ahead and told my wife he was a newspaperman from the City Press and that I had been pestering his paper to give the dockers' case some space. He was very keen to do that, he said.



Private cops at Midland Cold Stores on Monday hiding their faces from Socialist Worker cameraman Mike Cohen

'My wife took him at his word and tried to answer his questions. He asked if I was on the picket. He asked how he could get through to the pickets' headquarters. She said we didn't have one and told him it was all done through the union. He wanted to be sure where I worked and he really wheedled it out of her.

'He rang back again and tried it on my young son. They've done it to all of us. They tried to interview Eddie Hedges' 12 and 13 year old sons. When we found out who it was, we were shattered. My wife and the others were deeply frightened. My wife is very upset and sick as a result.'

The dockers selected for this treatment were rank and filers. It was hoped that they would crack and appear in court. With wives and children cheated and used by these highly paid—if entirely legitimate—criminals, the strategy came only too near to success.

In their drive to sling dockers on the scrap heap, Midland Cold Stores—seemingly a small firm, but really part of a giant shipping-to-insurance empire—resorted to the tactics of the police state. And what they did was fully supported by the law and the government of the land, and a Labour Party opposition pledged to uphold such laws.

It is a solemn warning. As Ray Halsey, one of the Midland Cold Stores pickets put it: '1984 is close to hand now.'

These squalid terror tactics are living proof of how the Tory law will be used against trade unionists. The fight to smash that law and the men behind it must be stepped up.

And if the dockers are jailed the entire labour movement must mobilise for full-scale industrial action to free them.



A picketing docker explains their case to a lorry driver

MPs knee deep in filth

THE SCANDAL arising from the Poulson case is rocking both political parties. John Poulson used to be head of the largest architectural practice in Europe employing 750 people and taking more than £1 million a year in fees.

In February of this year he filed a bankruptcy petition in Wakefield County Court.

It is the hearings arising from his bankruptcy that have aroused the widespread public interest. They have so far revealed that Poulson:

Gave T Dan Smith—former Labour boss of Newcastle-upon-Tyne—more than £150,000 over a period of eight years. When asked what he got in return for this vast amount of money Poulson replied: 'Nothing. I don't know.'

Paid a leading civil servant, W G Pottinger, now Secretary of the Scottish Department of Agriculture, a total of £21,000, built a house for him and gave him a Rolls-Royce car.

Gave £2500 to E G Braithwaite, Secretary of the South West Metropolitan Board. Poulson designed a new extension for a hospital in this region.

'Dear Reggie'

Paid for an extended sea-cruise for A J Merritt, regional officer of Leeds Hospital Board. The cruise was arranged by Home Secretary Reginald Maudling through his travel agents, Clarksons. The cost was £972.

In a letter to Maudling, Poulson wrote: 'Dear Reggie, A personal friend of mine who has been most helpful to us is retiring soon. He wants to take a sea voyage. Can your travel agent help?'

Paid Maudling a sum of £22,000 for being chairman of one of his companies. Maudling asked, for the money to be covenanted to 'his wife's favourite charity', the Adeline Genee Theatre Trust in East Grinstead. The trustees told reporters they had received £15,000 not £22,000.

For socialists, the most interesting revelation was that Poulson had paid Mr Albert Roberts, Labour MP for Normanton, who is sponsored by the miners' union, a sum of £11,508. Poulson was asked in court why he did this. He replied:

'Mr Roberts seemed very friendly with the governments of Spain and Portugal. In fact he was recommended to me by the Spanish government with reference to work done by him for the Portuguese concerning a harbour in Angola.'

Not true

It is to be remembered that there is a war of national liberation going on in Angola. With reference to Poulson, Mr Roberts has said: 'I was a consultant to Poulson's company. I did nothing in this country.'

This is not true. In February 1968 when the harbour in Mossamades, Angola was being constructed, two professional men in Poulson's employment wanted to get to Angola quickly. At this time there was a hold-up of between nine weeks and six months in obtaining visas for this war-torn country.

The two men met Roberts at the House of Commons and went with him to the Portuguese Embassy. Roberts left them waiting in the lounge and returned five minutes later with their visas fully stamped and valid.

Roberts' working-class constituents might like to enquire of him why he is a paid spokesman of the Spanish government.

There are many more revelations to come, for the bankruptcy hearing is only just beginning. At the hearing last week Poulson collapsed with 'severe shock', doubtless much to the relief of many men in high places.

But the facts are now emerging and those corrupt parasites, living on the backs of the workers, will no longer be able to conceal their filthy dealings.

Martin Tomkinson

WORLD NEWS

THE



The jockeys, from left, McGovern, Humphrey and Wallace, and Nixon, the man in the saddle

HORSE-TRADERS' CONVENTION

by Hannah Shoemaker

SO THE great spectacle of American politics is over. After the horse-race of the primaries, and the horse-trading of the Democratic Convention, George McGovern has come out as the highest bidder for the Democrats' presidential nomination.

The point of the primaries is to collect delegates, but, much more important, to show the people with the money and influence that a certain candidate can win the prize in November.

The primaries were intended to make the process more democratic by taking the choice out of the hands of the party bosses in smoke-filled rooms. But from

the very first a candidate needs money and backing, and on the whole most Americans are not very interested in the process, which—apart from being like a football match—has little relevance for their lives.

The need for money—before and after the convention—is overwhelming. Hubert Humphrey recently commented that his challenge to the California convention delegation was not just for the votes of the delegates, but to convince the big boys he was still in the running and deserved their financial support.

In American political rhetoric the very idea of a working class is to be avoided at all costs. The nearest approach to it is that some candidates—like McGovern and Wallace—claim to speak for the 'little man' against the 'big interests'.

In fact each is backed by a particular set of big interests—otherwise they wouldn't have achieved the positions they've got. They may claim to speak for the working man and woman, but they don't call on the working people to act on their own behalf.

The conventions, then, are the time for horse-trading. Different groups trade their support for the prospect of a share in power.

Their rewards may take the form of office or influence. The vice-presidential candidate is chosen to 'balance' the ticket—that is, to represent a different set of interests than the presidential candidate. Hatchets are buried and unity is restored.

The choice of candidates is always limited to those who can raise enough financial support to stand a chance of winning. So they have to convince people they are the right men for the job. Some business corporations back the candidates of both major parties, hedging their bets so they can influence whoever wins.

So it's not surprising that the closer McGovern gets to the nomination, the vaguer his ideas get. He wants to pull out of Vietnam as soon as possible, but so does a large segment of the American ruling class.

Already he is hedging on his welfare and tax proposals. These weren't so radical

anyway—a lump sum to everyone won't even out the huge differences in wealth that exist in America. His economic advisers are re-doing their sums on taxes.

In many ways the conventions are like a stage show. The ending may not be planned, but the various groups which a party claims to represent are brought on-stage. In general members of the Democratic Party take more liberal stands than the Republicans; they win most of their votes from trade unionists who have traditionally been loyal to their party, though they are not linked to it formally as trade unions in Britain are linked to the Labour Party.

PAYMASTERS

The Democrats also expect votes from Catholics, Jews, minority groups, the young and city dwellers. In addition they are traditionally the party of the South.

This year the convention will be made to look more democratic than before. New rules say that each state delegation is supposed to be representative of women, blacks, the different age-groups and so on. But the money still comes from groups within the ruling class, whatever ideals delegates or candidates may have.

The ruling class is willing to supply these huge sums of money because it suits their interests. Businessmen don't waste money. They want to influence national policies.

There are also lots of smaller contributions and fund-raising concerts, but this is not where the bulk of the money comes from. The 'small people' that McGovern is appealing to also contribute to the campaign fund and work for the candidate; but they just don't hold the power.

The fact is that whoever is elected will have to work within the same system as his predecessor. There are indeed two parties with real differences between them. But these differences are about how to run the existing society, divided between capitalist and worker.

More and more people are beginning to doubt whether a 'nice guy' like McGovern can solve their problems inside the present system. The next stage is to recognise the need to change that system.

Will the French Left be Messmerised?

by Ian Birchall

THE RESIGNATION of French Prime Minister Chaban-Delmas and his replacement by Pierre Messmer reflects a serious crisis in the Gaullist Party, the main party of the French ruling class.

Gaullism—like the British Tory Party—has always consisted of a number of strands. While some people in the Gaullist ranks could be called semi-fascists, others are straightforward representatives of the big middle class.

Moreover, Gaullism has always cultivated a left face. So-called 'left' Gaullists put the main stress both on de Gaulle's foreign policy of detachment from the US orbit, and on his advocacy of 'participation' and co-operation between capital and labour.

The Gaullists came to power in 1958 as the only combination that could extricate France from the problems of the Algerian war. When the war ended they could stay united as French capitalism went through a reasonably successful spell.

But in May 1968 10 million French workers struck fear into the hearts of the ruling class. From then on the splits in the Gaullist ranks got deeper.

In 1969 de Gaulle himself was removed, as his eccentricities had become a luxury that French capitalism could no longer afford. Pompidou brought French foreign policy back on to a more orthodox line, letting Britain into the Common Market.

But over the last couple of years a number of Gaullists have drifted away from the party, and several have accused it of betraying the ideals of its founder. Former Trotskyist David Rousset, who for years was a leading 'left' Gaullist, is now flirting with the Radicals.

Pipe-dream

All this worried the Gaullists, with elections due next spring at the latest.

The French electoral system is in two rounds; in the second the candidates who led on the first ballot fight it out, sharing out the votes of those who came lower down the list. So the only way the Gaullists could be beaten is by an alliance of several opposition groups agreeing to support each other in the second round.

There are two possibilities for such an alliance. One is between various centre parties, excluding the Communists, but bringing in some left Gaullists. This was the pipe-dream of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, stunt-man leader of the Radicals.

The other possibility was an alliance of Socialists and Communists, and this has now been achieved with the signing of a



Messmer: fits the middle-class image

joint programme. Already a minority faction in the Radical Party are having talks with the Socialists and the Communist Party.

The Gaullist shuffle is designed to present a new image for the election run-up. Earlier this year Chaban-Delmas, was involved in a controversy because (quite legally) he was found not to be paying any taxes.

Rumour

Messmer—a former colonial governor and Defence Minister—fits the image the respectable middle class are looking for, and is known as a loyal Gaullist.

But there is also a top job for Edgar Faure. He is known as being on the party's left, and after May 1968 was rumoured to be discussing with opposition figures. His promotion is meant as a clear sign that there is still a place for the 'left' in the Gaullist ranks.

The French ruling class have nothing to fear from the Socialist-Communist programme. The Communists have been falling over themselves to prove how respectable they are: they have even stopped beating up left-wing questioners at their public meetings. But such is the tradition of anti-communism in post-war France that the ruling class still clings to the Gaullists.

But the whole political line-up is beginning to crack. If the revolutionary left can break with its past and face the challenge, there are big possibilities in the next couple of years.

BRIEFING

RICHARD 'Tricky Dick' NIXON has been promising to cut the number of US forces in South Vietnam. He has been doing so—but many air and ground forces have simply been moved to Thailand. According to the American magazine Newsweek, two bases have been opened in Thailand in the past six weeks, planes increased from 450 to 750, and troops from 32,000 to 49,000. The ground forces are the first seen in Thailand for 10 years.

Thailand is ruled by a military dictatorship which removed a civilian government in 1971. At that time it appeared that the government was threatening the position of privilege which the Thai military has held since 1932, a position which guarantees vast quantities of US aid and a large share of the national budget.

This clique is quite happy about the new build-up of US forces—they supply both ammunition and fuel to the US bases.

The US aims to keep these forces in Thailand for the war in Laos. Newsweek quotes an American diplomat in Bangkok: 'We couldn't keep Laos afloat for a minute without the use of Thailand.'

And the Thai government, struggling against its own guerrilla movement, sees the US presence on its soil as a long-term guarantee of support. You scratch my back...

AS THE first step to 'normality' the Ceylon government has brought to trial

about 40 of the 13,000 prisoners held without trial in their concentration camps. Seven are being tried in their absence. Almost certainly two of these were killed by government forces during the revolt.

But these macabre proceedings are unlikely to trouble Mrs Bandaranaike and her cronies, who are guilty of far worse crimes.

Ceylon's emergency legislation deserves study by socialists. Under the proclamation of a state of emergency, strikes and lock-outs are forbidden in certain key industries. These industries are defined as 'of public utility or essential for the public safety or to the life of the community.'

But they include such 'essential' firms as the Ceylon Pencil Company, and a lot of other little industries making or distributing ice, soap, bottles, wire, nails and bicycle tyres. In fact, all Ceylon's industries which belong to the rich friends of the Bandaranaike.

The Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, which has done much to publicise conditions in Ceylon, is holding a public meeting at 7.30pm on 18 July at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. Nigel Harris and Tariq Ali will be speaking on perspectives for revolution in South Asia.

THE EMPLOYEES of the Social Security in the French West Indies have been on strike since 8 May in pursuit of a wage claim and other demands. Despite police harassment, for example a vicious attack

S African students sack president

by W Enda

THE South African Student Organisation (SASO) voted unanimously to depose its president, Tembo Sono, at its third annual conference recently.

SASO led the recent massive wave of sit-ins, strikes and boycotts in African, Coloured and Indian colleges. It is an all-black organisation founded in 1968, on the basis of total non-co-operation with apartheid and its institutions, such as the Bantustans. Its members had broken from the white student bodies in which they had lost faith.

Sono shocked the 200 black militants present by proposing co-operation with the Bantustans and other separate development bodies. He said that SASO should 'move away from the aloof attitude which regards the Bantustans in a negative light.'

Moreover, he recommended that SASO should spend its energies on converting collaborators with apartheid, including everybody, black and white, whether they are security police or liberals.

A motion was immediately put and carried to dissociate SASO from the speech. Another deposed Sono from the presidency and told him to leave the conference immediately.

The conference's swift action in deposing Sono shows SASO's determination to prevent confusion in the black ranks.

Trap

Work with white liberals would cut right across the growing solidarity among South African blacks demonstrated in the recent strikes. SASO cannot afford to get involved with the numerous 'white liberal lobbies' which have been conspicuous for their failures in past years.

In 1968 SASO set itself the main task of dedicating its members' minds and energies 'to the needs of the black community at large'.

Sono's appeal to see the Bantustans in some sort of positive light is just as dangerous. It is falling into the trap set by the Nationalists, who hope to spread illusions among the black masses that there may be something to be said for separate development after all.

As far as black people are concerned, South Africa is a police state. The entire membership of SASO could be jailed at the drop of a hat and held for 120 days without any reasons being given.

So far the white authorities have allowed them to exist, but obviously the demands they can raise publicly are limited. The unanimous decision to throw out Sono shows that SASO is determined not to be corrupted from the inside and that it will continue to stand on the basis of black solidarity and total opposition to apartheid.

on workers who went to meet their representatives at the airport after negotiations in Paris, and attempts to accuse them of being a privileged section holding the unemployed to ransom, the strike remains solid.

It is after all a bit difficult for the government to blame the plight of the unemployed on the Social Security workers when it has itself completely failed to do anything about unemployment.

The French West Indian revolutionary socialist paper Combat Ouvrier reports that successful meetings have been held with social security claimants and that there is now talk of bringing out other groups of workers in support.

ANOTHER STORY from Izvestia that shows how Russia's bureaucracy works. A firm was informed by the railways that it had failed to unload wagons of goods within the required time and that it was subject to a heavy fine. The fine had already been deducted from its bank account.

A representative of the firm asked to see documents proving the offence, and pointed out to the railways that it was a quite different firm that had been at fault. The railways admitted the mistake, but declined to return the money.

Instead they told the firm: 'When you're late in unloading wagons, we'll consider the fine as already paid.'

Socialist Worker

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Threshold to danger

THE GOVERNMENT now desperately needs the help of the TUC to put over an 'incomes policy', in reality a policy to restrain wage increases. The best current estimate is that retail prices will go up by about 12 per cent in the next 12 months as compared with an average rise of 8 per cent a year over the last three years. Four to 5 per cent of the increase will be due to policy decisions the government has taken and cannot now reverse—Common Market entry and devaluation via the floating pound.

All the more urgent then, is the government's need for some 'left-wing' protective cover. Last week's talks at Downing Street will be followed by a series of discussions which, Heath hopes, will result in a government-TUC-CBI agreement. The government has turned the full circle. 'Less government interference' has followed 'stand on your own two feet' into the wastepaper basket and we are back to the Wilson-Brown incomes policy strategy.

It gives many workers some pleasure to see Heath having to eat his words but there is nothing funny about the present incomes policy threat.

We have argued repeatedly that an incomes policy will hit the working class, that it will benefit the rich and that it will hit the lowest paid workers worst of all. The scheme which the government is proposing, and which has considerable support on the right wing of the TUC, is to link pay rises with the cost of living through 'threshold agreements'.

The idea is that the government will fix a norm—8 per cent is being mentioned—as the maximum increase in a given year. There is, of course, no guarantee that poorly-organised sections will actually get 8 per cent. It is a maximum, not an automatic increase. On top of the increase, whatever it is, there will be an agreement that if the cost of living rises by more than a certain figure **over and above 8 per cent**, then there would be another rise to compensate—4 per cent is being mentioned as the figure in this connection.

Lag behind prices

To illustrate how the scheme is intended to work, suppose that an 8 per cent increase is conceded to a group of workers and that, over the period of the agreement, the cost of living increases by 12 per cent. When the 12 per cent inflation was reached the workers would get an extra 4 per cent automatically.

What is wrong with such a scheme? First, there is a built-in guarantee for the employers that pay rises will always lag behind price rises because not even the most wildly optimistic government economist expects a price rise of less than 8 per cent. Second, suppose the cost of living index is held down to an 11.5 per cent increase over the period of the agreement. The workers are stuck with 8 per cent maximum because the magic extra 4 per cent has not been reached. They take a cut in real pay.

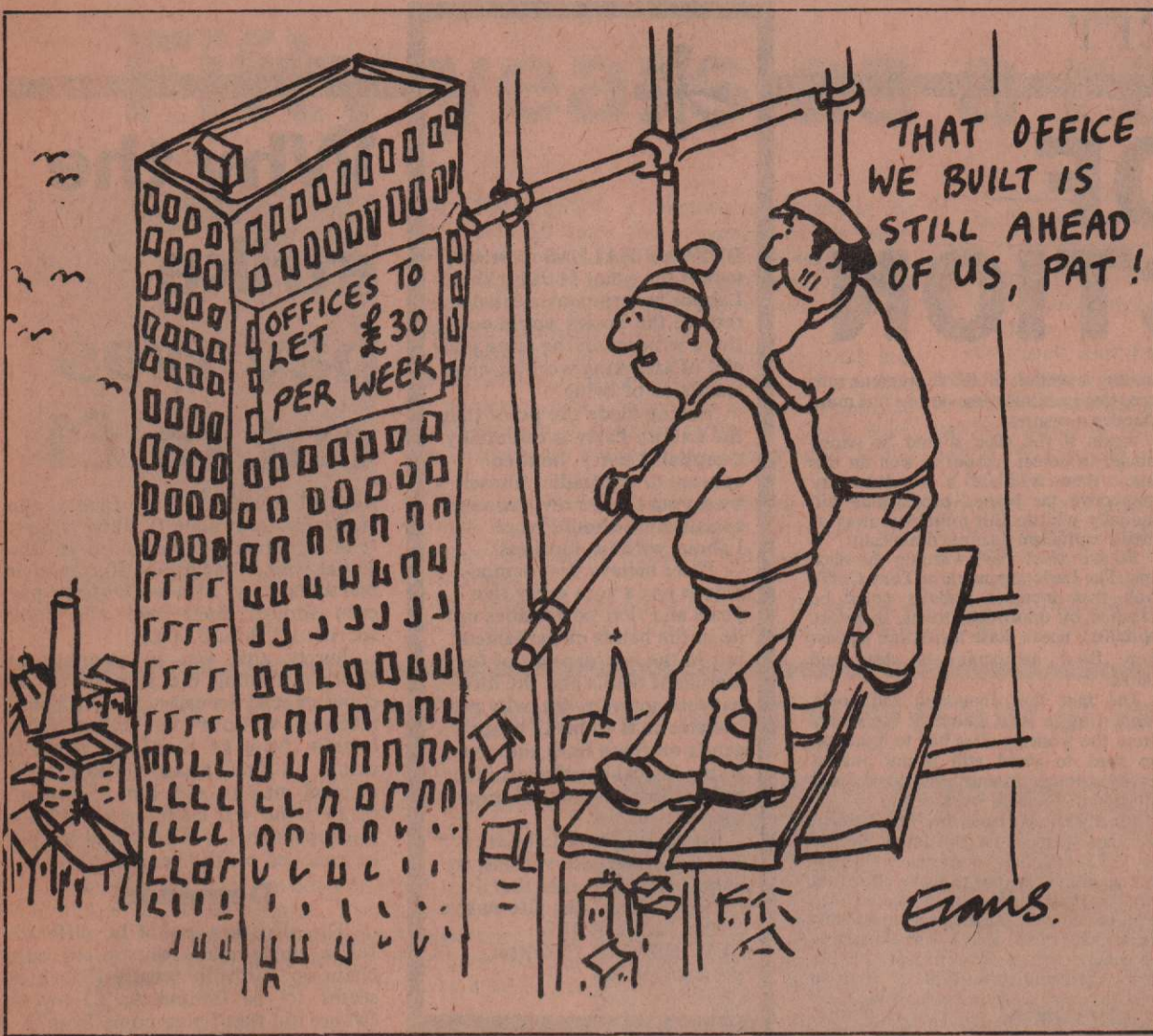
Then there is the effect of taxation. The 8 per cent or whatever figure is agreed is not take-home pay, it is gross pay and will be reduced substantially by tax, especially for the lowest paid. As the Sunday Times pointed out in connection with the miners' wage gain: 'The underground worker kept £3.24 of his £4.50 while the surface worker lost his right to Family Income Supplement and began to pay more tax leaving him with only £2.70 out of £5.'

These particular figures apply to a married man with two children but the effect is a general one. Even the best-off miners lost a quarter of the rise in tax. The worst paid lost getting on for half. Any threshold agreement scheme will result in reduction in net real earnings if it can be enforced.

There needs to be a fight in every union against such schemes. And when trade union leaders argue that they 'can't afford to be purely negative' towards government proposals let them put some positive proposals. Since the Tories have now adopted the 'sliding scale' approach, the TUC should demand:

- A national minimum wage of £25 with automatic increases to compensate for price rises.
- A pension of two-thirds the minimum wage with automatic increases to compensate for price rises.

The TUC 'left wingers' have a special responsibility. They know the facts about incomes policy swindles as well as anyone. Indeed they have often pointed them out. Now is the time for Scanlon, Jones, Briginshaw and the rest to stand up and denounce Heath's schemes and to expose Heath's fifth column on the General Council. Let them do what the members pay them to do—fight for working class interests.



COTTONS WARS

Stern gang

EVIDENCE to support the socialist contention that the Tories' Fair Rents Bill is a landlords' charter comes in an article in that worthy liberal newspaper The Guardian. Reporting on leading London landlord and property man William Stern of Stern Holdings, the paper said:

'Mr William Stern played an influential role in the drawing up of the Housing Finance Bill. He gave evidence to the Francis Committee which last year reported on the Rent Act. It was Mr Stern who recommended the setting up of the national rebate scheme for needy tenants who could not afford to pay the rents landlords wanted to charge. He urged it in June 1970 and Mr Walker [the Environment Minister] has followed his advice. It was Mr Stern who made the observation that existing legislation "protects the tenant from reality".'

'Mr William Stern is one of London's biggest landlords and as the incorporation of his proposals in the Housing Finance Bill shows, one of London's most influential... The government's proposals, embodied in the Housing Finance Bill, are aimed at encouraging more landlords to invest in residential property. It will undoubtedly sway the balance in favour of the landlords and thousands of tenants face the prospect of rent rises at a time when house buying is beyond many people's means.'

TALKING of Peter Walker, he has streamlined the old 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours' system of payment for favours done in a way more in keeping with modern Tory planning. The latest list of payments by big business to Tory Party funds



Walker: Scratch the surface

shows that Walker's own multi-million combine Slater Walker Securities gave the party £15,000 last year.

High among the list of benefactors are several key insurance companies: Eagle Star (£5000), Guardian Royal Exchange (£5000, plus £10,000 to the Tory front organisation British United Industrialists), Phoenix £5000 and Royal (£10,000 to BUI). Could it be they really believe Labour's new 'pledge' (ho, ho) to nationalise insurance?

Yug up

OLD COTTONIANS will recall that Bob Guccione, millionaire boss of the Penthouse magazine empire, had been given the go-ahead by the Yugoslav government to develop the island of Krk as a gambling resort for Western businessmen.

The redeveloped island was officially opened last week by Guccione and a bevy of his buxom Penthouse girls and Guccione was given the red-carpet treatment by the local comrades.

Party officials met Guccione at the airport and garlanded him with flowers. The secretary of the Croat Communist Party and none other than Mijalko Todorovic, President of the Republic, were present at the opening ceremony on Saturday.

Guccione, who mixes exploitation and full-blooded right-wing anti-communist propaganda in Penthouse, was admittedly surprised by the glad-hand from Tito's apparatchiks. 'Yugoslavia was a virgin country, ripe for new tourist trade,' he said. 'I expected a few ideological problems but there were none. I am one hundred per cent capitalist. Socialism to me is an evil. They could not have found a bigger capitalist than me if they had looked for one.'

The Yugoslav bosses looked, liked what they saw and are now giving

Guccione a free hand to photograph local lassies in the buff. Ideological purity is not infringed—everything is under public control.

Meanwhile Guccione is looking to new fields and is toying with the idea of opening a male brothel in London. Apparently only female brothels are illegal here. 'I've made a million out of female flesh,' says our virile entrepreneur, 'now I'll try to make one out of male flesh.' He's gaining first-hand experience from the way the Yugoslav party men are busily prostituting themselves.

PAY-OFF to our story last week about the attack on Socialist Worker and IS in the anti-union Sunday Post of Dundee. The paper received a letter from a 16-year-old schoolboy who had diligently read their piece on our threat to Scottish schools.

Then he reached for his pen and told the Post editors that he had been searching for a revolutionary organisation to join and was grateful to the paper for its detailed report on IS policies, complete with address of where to join. Which wasn't quite the result the Sunday Post was after.

Black money

CROCODILE TEARS from the Wankie Colliery Company of Rhodesia, owners of the mine that was the scene of last month's explosion that killed 400 miners, most of them black. A press statement by the colliery says that in the wake of the disaster steps were being taken to work out pensions for the dependants of the men who died underground and who earned less than £2000 a year—that is all the black workers.

'In common with other companies in Rhodesia, the colliery had insurance cover for the dependants of those men who had been earning more than this figure,' the statement adds. They mean the white miners. In other words, the whites were automatically covered by insurance while the families of the dead blacks will have to go through the grisly business of haggling for money.

A HEADLINE in last week's Morning Star yelled that Transport Union gensec Jack Jones had called for an all-out fight against... the Tories? the Industrial Relations Act? the right-wing on the TUC? Think again. Pollution. It's all in the mind...



THE LIMITS OF MILITANT ACTION

I FEEL that too much stress has been put in Socialist Worker's industrial coverage on urging militant action and not enough on pointing out its shortcomings and limitations.

The most alarming example is coverage of the Industrial Relations Act battle. This subject gives us an unparalleled opportunity to get marxist politics to workers. In his book *Incomes Policy, Legislation and Shop Stewards*, Tony Cliff points out that these state weapons are absolutely indispensable to the structure of capitalism in Britain today.

Since this is so, it follows that the most important contribution the

International Socialists can make towards workers' struggle is to underline this.

If at every opportunity we do not point out to militants that they are wrong to believe they can get rid of these attacks on trade unionism as though they were optional extras and return to the pre-1964 Labour government model of British capitalism then we are allowing people to lead themselves and the working class into a blind alley.

While our support for militant solidarity is necessary and good, if we fail to point out the limitations then it is difficult for us to warn against the danger of the next Labour government

conning a section of the movement into accepting seemingly less odious but more effective measures.

Again if the class should be strong enough to defeat Labour as well on this issue, then without a revolutionary perspective the bosses' propaganda will gradually whittle this militancy away as British capitalism declines drastically.

So we must start warning the class now. The basic argument of Tony Cliff's book—that incomes policies could be breached by unofficial strikes, therefore capitalism needs state legislation against shop floor democracy—is clear and simple.

The fact that economic and trade union struggle is 'a labour of Sisyphus', where the working class has to fight and run hard to stand still is not pushed heavily enough in our propaganda and agitation in Socialist Worker.

Finally a quote from the International Socialists' perspective document put to the 1972 annual conference: 'Our propaganda always has to make clear that only a revolutionary programme can begin to solve the urgent problems facing the working class. This means explaining the general nature of capitalism, the role of the state and so on. That is what we try to do every week in Socialist Worker.'

—KEITH JACKSON (AUEW), Hull.

They tell us we don't need unions...

THERE IS, in my office, great resentment about wages in general, caused almost as much by the many different grades of pay as by the low rates of pay. It is a privately-run concern and as such has no 'minimum rate' as is enjoyed by local government offices, for example.

Many women think that, as they accepted the job on these terms, there isn't much that they can do about it. What argument can one use against this?

The management tell us that we don't need unions—our wages are revised automatically twice yearly. They don't mention, though, that this does not automatically give us a pay rise.

Not belonging to a union, we then have to negotiate individually for our pay. Since the introduction of the Industrial Relations Act, the management have put out a circular stating that we can join any union of our own choosing and the women seem to be quite interested.

I am sure that, if approached, most of them would join. They are realising that belonging to a union and all asking for more money together is much better than asking for more money on your own.

We are in a very powerful position. For instance, if we were to stop work in our office, the works would come slowly to a halt, and yet, because we are unorganised we continue to work and grumble about the wages, but do nothing.

Most women think of themselves as housewives who go out to work. I refer they do two jobs—one very poorly paid, for the majority of us—and one not paid at all. I am sure we all realise this. What can we do about it?

I find, in talking to other women at work, that they know instinctively that they are working class and exploited and that their husbands are too, but there it ends. They see no overall pattern—that the dockers, the miners, the postmen, are all someone's husband and equally exploited—and therefore they come to the wrong conclusions.

These other workers are not, as they and their husbands are, just trying to make a decent way of life for themselves. They

are 'ruining the country', 'greedy', 'lazy' or 'Communists'. This sort of thing is helped along very nicely by the press and TV.

Another comment I have to make about women—we are split into groups. There are the working women who think that the women who stay at home just 'mess about all day'. The women who stay at home all day see the women who work as 'career women' who neglect their husbands, children and house.

I think, on the whole, that a woman tries to play the role which society has set out for her and it is when this conflicts with what she would really like to do that she begins to feel resentful.

There must be more scope, perhaps in the shape of socialist women's groups, for this resentment to be channelled along political lines.—MRS S W, Huddersfield (name and address supplied).

Hierarchy to blame

I WOULD like to draw your attention to a matter which is of particular interest to me both as a member of IS and a trade unionist. In most of the recent issues of Socialist Worker there have been various criticisms of the reformist policies of the Communist Party.

While agreeing 100 per cent with exposing these reforms, I feel it is also necessary to point out to the many Communist Party militants on the shop floor that our criticisms are aimed at the reformism of the Party hierarchy, and not the actions of individual members, who, whether we like it or not, still in most cases organise and influence the shop floor and, as I know from first-hand experience, do an excellent job.

To conclude, I feel it is completely negative to go on criticising the Communist Party without also appealing to the many potential revolutionaries in their party to give more thought to the true socialist policy which IS offers.—BARRY DOCHERTY, Glasgow W4.



DUNCAN HALLAS correctly makes the point (1 July) that a Labour government elected to replace the Tories would continue with much the same policies of attacking working-class standards of living.

Having made the point that the Labour Party is essentially a capitalist party, he then appears to contradict himself by saying that as revolutionary socialists we should 'vote Labour without illusions'.

If we believe that democracy is not a vote every five years and that power does not lie in the hands of parliament but in the boardrooms of the merchant banks and the international monopolies, why not use elections to make propaganda on these lines and come to the logical conclusion of calling for a boycott of these farces?

By saying 'vote Labour', with whatever reservations, we only foster the belief that Labour is a socialist alternative to the Tories.—JOHN DEVONSHIRE, Chorlton, Manchester 21.

Why the strike pay was cut to £1

ROGER ROSEWELL's article on the engineers' pay fight (8 July) states: 'The Boilermakers weakened it [the Manchester struggle] by offering their members only £1-a-week strike pay even though their own rule book specified it should be £5.'

Surely this was in response to Heath's slashing the amount of income a Social Security claimant could receive, without deduction from benefit, from £4 to £1 per week. It would in fact mean nothing to a married man to give him £5 instead of £1 if he was claiming benefit for his dependents, for it would simply be knocked off the benefit.

Demands

The situation would be different for a single man, who could only claim on 'hardship' (clause 13) which seems to be limited to £3-a-week (where did that figure come from?).

Demands to be put on a prospective Labour government must include:

1. Reversal of this clause on discounted income.
2. Scrapping the £3 limit on clause 13 payments.
3. End of wage stop, rent stop and the notorious four-week rule.
4. End of the 'cohabitation' clause.—M R PEARCE, Redland, Bristol.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive first post Monday. They should not exceed 250 words and must be typed or written on one side of the paper only. Letters may be cut for space reasons.

Solidarity, not politics

HUGH KERR attempts to answer my letter of 17 June. He says we must put forward 'political alternatives'.

There are no political alternatives to rent robbery. Either we go on paying or we stop. Socialist Charter and the Communist Party are trying to build up political support for the tenants' movement, but the tenants will have none of it, neither will they from IS.

As to strong links: they exist, tenants are linked by the fact that they pay rent or interest charges. Of course the landlords or building societies would like to pick a few of them off and evict them. But surely IS realises that when the Clyde workers, the miners, the railwaymen and

the dockers all stood together the employers were powerless.

The same applies to tenants. If they stand united no power on earth can force them to pay a 'fair' or any other sort of rent and they have done it in the past.

It is the business of socialists to point this out to them and not waste time trying to build up political support. The people of this country, be they trade unionists or rent or interest payers, no longer trust politicians.

I hoped that IS would give a lead. Mass action by workers from the grass roots is the only effective way of ending the capitalist system.—TOM BRADDOCK, East Preston.

COUGHING UP A FORTUNE
BY LAURIE TWENTY-A-DAY FLYNN

"I lit a cigarette and walked home. It seemed a natural thing to do."

Now sheer enjoyment comes in a new big way. To make you new big profits.

Manikin

SAFE SMOKE

JUDGING by a science report in The Times last year, smoking need not be a 'self-inflicted death', to quote Laurie Flynn (8 July).

The report showed that rats inhaling naturally-cured tobacco smoke enjoyed a normal life span. Not so the rats inhaling the artificially-cured tobacco smoke which we inhale.

This latter tobacco is cheap to produce but lacks a vital constituent. As the manufacturers are no doubt ignoring such a finding, could not the Tobacco Workers' Union take it up? After all, tobacco was originally 'safe and satisfying' was it not?—DAVE PEARSON, London W14.

As if they didn't know about Reggie...

FLEET STREET has unanimously greeted the allegations of corruption among MPs and civil servants with a huge doubletake of surprise. It is as if the shadows cast across the integrity of Westminster and Whitehall had no business there at all.

And once again our national newspapers, with all their tremendous resources, have found themselves trailing in the wake of Paul Foot's revelations in Private Eye.

Earlier stories of bankruptcy and gifts to Reggie Maudling's 'pet charity' had bloomed into full-scale demands for an inquiry by the end of last week.

Gutless

MPs TO PROBE 'CORRUPTION' yelled the Mail. CORRUPTION PROBE: HEATH ACTS, bellowed the Sun. 'CORRUPTION CHARGES' shouted the Mirror. The rest, following the 'corruption' line, echoed similar headlines.

But it was the leader comment that was most interesting. The Express, Sun, Guardian and Mail were the papers to offer any comment at all, and the



RON KNOWLES' EYE ON THE PRESS

Guardian and Mail were so anodyne that they might as well have kept quiet anyway.

Only the Express and Sun called for a public inquiry. The rest are quite content, it seems, for Robert Carr and other completely independent and impartial figures like him to carry out their own little secret probe, far beyond the disturbing public scrutiny.

The 'corruption' stories must have come as a bit of a shock for those readers hooked on the really world-shattering events such as Sir Francis Chichester's single-handed voyage from

Plymouth Sound to Plymouth Royal Naval Hospital, via the Atlantic, or Bobby Fischer's pathetic propaganda prelude to the world chess championship in Iceland.

It really is amazing just how much space the national press will give to an old fool or a young fool. But the Sun went too far, I feel, in devoting most of its centre pages to the geriatric yachtsman and then threatening those of us bored to desperation by his antics with the headline 'I'LL SAIL AGAIN SAYS SIR FRANCIS'.



THE TORIES have taken another knock with the enforced recognition of their vicious stupidity over the ludicrously named 'Fair Rents Bill'. It left the Daily Telegraph in a bit of a tizzy.

Their leader writer was so confused by the paper's front page story that the £1 rent increases scheduled for October could not be implemented by some councils because they were already charging 'fair rents' that he forgot his lines.

Instead of playing a straight bat to

the scandal of rising prices he admitted that the government might be tempted to compromise on its 'fair rents' legislation 'if only because of the political consequences of rising prices'.

Whoops! Whatever became of the notion that the Bill was going to make it easier for council house tenants?

Nothing

Still, we should really be encouraged. If the Telegraph can be shaken into the realisation that rising prices are actually a problem for council house tenants, there is room for hope that the old maid of Fleet Street may not be entirely deaf to reason and may one day graduate to some sort of realistic social analysis.

But we must not hope for too much from the Telegraph, particularly when the sage of its propagandists, T E Utley, gets to work. I quote the second sentence of what purported to be an 'argument' by him on the latest developments in Northern Ireland.

'The first point to be made is that nothing which has happened to date has been at all remarkable.'

Maybe. But it didn't stop him from boring his readers for a further column and half.

Trotsky

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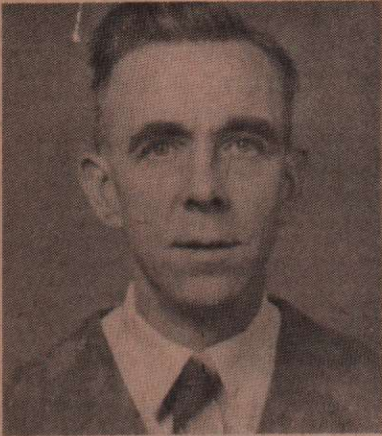
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Fifty years as a revolutionary



Jim Charleson: one of the very few who never compromised his beliefs

JIM CHARLESON, a revolutionary socialist for more than 50 years and a member of the International Socialists, died in Edinburgh last week.

During his life he saw the revolutionary struggle in many countries. He was one of the very few who never compromised in any way.

He was born in Leith, Edinburgh, in 1903, and his first inkling of socialist ideas came from reading the works of Jack London. He served his political apprenticeship as soapbox carrier and paper seller for virtually all the political sects around at the time.

None satisfied him until he joined the newly-formed Young Communist League. He became one of their star soapbox speakers and toured the East of Scotland.

Jim began his travels in late 1921 by getting a job on the Lenin, a Russian icebreaker on a trip

by Edinburgh International Socialists

which took him to Kronstadt and Petrograd, where he learned just how hard conditions were in Russia at that time.

His travels took him to South Africa, where he helped organise seamen to spread the unofficial seamen's strike that had begun in Britain. He also worked with the ICU, a multi-racial trade union, and in 1925 wound up in prison for his activities.

By his accounts this prison was a pretty luxurious place, for a white man. He had a black servant (who was terrified of being punished when Jim insisted on doing all his own chores), and used to lie in bed and refuse to get up for roll calls. At Christmas 1925 he was deported back to Britain.

Back in Britain, Jim began to have his first

misgivings about the Communist Party. When an expensively printed hardcover book, *The Errors of Trotskyism*, was distributed in large numbers to party branches, he successfully moved a resolution in the Leith YCL that they would just leave them to rot.

During the General Strike, he was puzzled and confused by the Party's policy of simply tailing behind the TUC General Council, and suspicious when special emissaries were sent from London to ensure that local communists toed the line.

He said of this period that the rank and file felt that they weren't being told the whole story, but trusted in the integrity of the Bolshevik leadership and assumed that it would all come right in the end.

Jim went to the United States in 1927, entering illegally under a false name to escape the blacklist that had prevented him getting work in Britain. He soon became a leading organiser for the American Communist Party on the New York waterfront, and a member of the executive board of the Marine Workers Industrial Union.

A bitter factional struggle was going on in the American Communist Party at that time, a reflection of the dispute in Russia.

About this time James P Cannon went to Moscow as American Party delegate to the sixth congress of the Communist International. He brought back a mimeographed document distributed by supporters of Leon Trotsky (who were promptly arrested for doing so).

Dazed

Jim told us how an ex-IWW-member, Max Rosen, brought a copy of the document down to the waterfront to show to him. It came as a stunning revelation. Trotsky's document explained in marxist terms all the disquiet Jim had felt with Communist Party policy since the General Strike. Everything fitted into place.

The shock was so great that Jim spent three days and nights without sleep just walking the streets of New York in a daze.

He met Cannon, Shachtman, Abern, Gildea and joined their group of supporters of Trotsky's line. He tried to continue to work within the Party, but was expelled within a few weeks and denounced as a police spy.

In 1931, unable to find work in America, Jim was offered, and took, the chance of a job in Russia working as a welder in locomotive repair plants. As an illegal immigrant, he had not used his real name in America, so by travelling under his real name he was not known as a Trotskyist in Russia.

He saw at first hand the misery of industrialisation in Stalin's Russia. He lived with ordinary people and gave away his privileged foreign worker's rations.

He saw starvation on a large scale, and at the same time saw the luxury in which the bureaucrats and visiting Western Communists were living.

After his return to Edinburgh, Jim had a rough time. Work was difficult, if not impossible to get.

Disappointed

During World War Two, a Trotskyist group finally did get going in Edinburgh. A branch of the Workers' International League was set up, with 20 members, all but one of them manual workers.

Jim had great hopes for this group, and was bitterly disappointed when it disintegrated due to faction fighting. He told us in graphic terms how the internal bulletin got fatter and fatter issue by issue until the sheer weight of documents started to drive the workers out of the organisation.

It was after the death of his wife that Jim joined the International Socialists in 1970. Despite worsening health, he insisted that no-one should be simply a card-carrying member of a revolutionary organisation.

During the postmen's strike he spent many hours in bitterly cold weather taking tea round to the pickets and selling Socialist Worker.

But his special talent was talking to the newest members, those who lacked the self-confidence to speak up in meetings. He could explain in simple human terms, always illustrating from his vast experience, the basic marxist arguments and theories.

He never kept any books, he made a habit of giving them away when he had read them, but he seemed to know the classic marxist texts almost by heart. Jim's life was full of disappointments: the degeneration of the Communist Party, the collapse of the WIL, the political fate of Max Shachtman, who had been his close personal friend in the States.

With all this, he never lost heart and always looked to the future with optimism.

Despite his impressive political achievements, many of us will remember him best for his extreme generosity and the many personal kindnesses he showed to us all. He had spent a great deal of his life at, or near, the breadline, and never refused another comrade in need. He showed us what true comradeship could

THE DORSET FIRE DISASTER HAS SPOTLIGHTED GRIM REALITY OF BRITAIN'S MENTAL HOMES

PATRICK MALONEY is a 22-year-old boy who has spent the last 18 months locked in his bedroom. He has a mental age of four and has violent fits.

His mother has made repeated attempts to find a place for him in a mental hospital. Eventually after Patrick had jumped from the bedroom windows neighbours drove him 80 miles away to the Stoke group of hospitals near Bristol and left him at the door to make sure of his admission.

It is just over a year since there was an investigation into conditions at the Stoke group of hospitals. The report revealed some disturbing facts: 'Wards were grossly overcrowded with beds touching each other and frequently no space for chairs between the beds'.

Dr Heaton Ward, the hospital's senior psychiatric consultant, said: 'It is only when people die that we can relieve the overcrowding a little. As soon as this happens we dismantle the beds to make room for the others.'

Because of this humane attitude the hospital waiting list is long. 'We just cannot take patients under these conditions', said the doctor.

On television a spokesman for the hospital implied that as Patrick Maloney was so badly disturbed Stoke would be unsuitable for him. At that group of hospitals three consultants have charge of 17,000 patients.

Understaffing and overcrowding are characteristics of many mental hospitals. In a recent survey 'rarely seeing a doctor' was one of the most frequent complaints.

Nurses are badly paid, often untrained and overworked. In the type of situation where five nurses look after 126 doubly incontinent patients, medical care becomes minimal and sedation replaces treatment.

If staff work in sub-human conditions it is hardly surprising that cases of cruelty and sadism occur. Shock reports of cruelty at Ely hospital (Cambridge), Farleigh (Somerset) and Whittingham (Preston) have appeared within the last few years. But occasionally imprisoning sick staff does little towards solving the staffing problems.

UNSAFE

According to the Hospital Advisory Service: 'It is generally agreed that a ward of 30 patients is the maximum number a nursing team can care for effectively and form satisfactory therapeutic relationships.' Yet in Bexley mental hospital (South East London) 70 per cent of all beds are in wards of more than 50.

In the Liverpool institutions of Rainhill and Winwick the figures are 42 and 36 per cent and in Whittingham (Preston) 70 per cent of the patients are in wards of more than 30.

Many of the buildings are old and unsafe. Two out of five mental hospitals are more than 100 years old and out of a total of 154 only four were constructed after 1915. The Friern Barnet hospital in North London was opened by the Prince Consort in 1849 and has faulty gas and drainage systems.

In a hospital in the Stoke Park group, Bristol, one ward is a former stable and, according to an investigation, 'The atmosphere and heat are almost unbearable because of the limited ventilation... the buildings are neglected and the toilets foul'.

The hospital group secretary stressed the danger: 'If the three storied ward caught fire it would be an almost impossible task to get the patients out. The place with its beamed ceiling would go up like a match box.'

In 1969 such a fire did occur in Shelton mental hospital near Shrewsbury where 24 women died. And in last week's fire in Dorset 30 patients were engulfed in the flames.

Money is desperately needed to provide an adequate service. At present everything is done on the cheap. The chairman of the



Social Services Minister Keith Joseph, right, in the ward where 30 mental patients died last week.

THE RAT RACE'S NON-STARTERS

by AUDREY KINCAID

hospital management committee said of the Friern mental hospital: 'It is a personal agony to eke out the money. We worry ourselves sick whether we should buy six new armchairs so that those which are sodden with urine and soaked with hair grease can be ceremonially burnt to the ground'.

Only 15 per cent of National Health expenditure goes on mental health, despite the fact that half of all hospital beds are occupied by those defined as sub-

normal or mentally sick. 6 per cent of us can expect to spend some time in a mental hospital.

According to spokesmen, 40 per cent of the patients at the Stoke group and 150 of the 520 patients at the Doncaster

hospital could be discharged if there was anywhere for them to go.

A report of the Mind Campaign points out that sometimes old people are admitted to mental hospitals for social reasons. It is cheaper for local authorities to send them to nationally financed hospitals than rate-supported homes or hostels. Mental hospitals then become 'the last and only resort for many'.

Understaffing of hospitals may mean lack of diagnosis and a lumping together of the old curable and incurables in long-stay wards.

Clinically many thousands could be discharged but long stays in the timeless order of hospitals produce the inadequacy of 'institutional neurosis'. Patients discharged would need housing or hostel accommodation, sheltered work places, medical care and help to cope adequately and happily with life outside.

Naturally Tory politicians have been quick to grasp the point about unnecessary hospitalisation. They have plans for cutting drastically the number of mental hospital beds available and for closing many wards.

HOSTELS

A typical Tory solution to welfare problems is to cut down an inadequate service and replace it with nothing at all. For them a rationalisation of the mental health service involves the pretence that alternative accommodation and community care actually exists.

To provide a half way hostel for 10 people costs at least £10,000. Under the Tory Housing Act the subsidies for such hostels will be cut.

It is clear that the government has no intention of providing either hostels or housing for discharged patients. Some doctors estimate that if the present closure plans for mental hospitals are carried out, accommodation will be needed for approximately 67,000 people.

There is no cheap solution. To put thousands of patients out on to the streets without making provision for them will simply result in an enormous swelling of the number of homeless.

Capitalist society has no time or money to spend on unproductive

Rosa Luxemburg

BY PAUL FROLICH

Rosa Luxemburg was one of the greatest figures produced by the international working class movement. Both a profound and original thinker and a brilliant speaker at party groups and mass meetings, she embodied all that is best in the revolutionary tradition.

For more than 30 years, until her murder in Berlin in 1919, she was continuously in the forefront of the working class struggle—in Poland, Russia and Germany.

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The article on Manchester engineers announced for this week has had to be held over.

India: the motor falters...

India is again in crisis. It is not just the routine disaster that fills the newspapers. It is a crisis of economic development. People can bear a great deal of hardship if there is some hope. But it is hope that is running out in India today. Industry should be the engine that is driving India out of the misery and brutality of the past. Factory jobs ought, for the first time, to be offering some breakthrough for the millions of the poor, some beginnings of a basic minimum of material freedom.

But the industrial engine will not fire. Or rather it splutters and puffs, lurches the country along briefly and then dies.

Indian industry ought to be roaring along at a rate of output growth of 10 to 15 per cent every year. In the quarter of a century that India has now been independent, it has never reached such rates.

There was an 8 per cent per year average growth rate in the first three Five Year Plans. From 1965 to 1969, the economy slumped. And in the first three years of the current (Fourth) plan, the growth rate declined from 7 per cent in 1969 to 2½ per cent in the first nine months of last year.

Yet even when the engine runs fastest, there are fewer and fewer jobs to go with it. Productivity has soared in Indian industry since independence, so that wages hardly increase as output shoots up.

There are more and more new workers looking for jobs, so that even when industrial growth is taking place there is growing unemployment.

All the massive investment made since 1951 has had the total effect of increasing registered factory employment as a proportion of all employment

by NIGEL HARRIS

from 2 per cent to 2.4 per cent.

The problem at the moment is not that there is too little industry to supply the goods demanded. Industry cannot even use its present equipment fully.

Less than half of the present engineering industry is being used. The rest is still not needed because the economy as a whole is so sluggish.

The public sector is especially bad. The great nationalised steel works run only at half rate. At that level of output, the financial losses are enormous.

As a result, what ought to be the giant valves of the industrial economy, turn out to be no more than decorative status symbols. They were enormously expensive to build—they are being paid for out of the sweat and blood of the mass of Indians—but they are only slightly more useful than the pyramids of the Pharoes.

The industrial engine is sluggish because there are too many people draining off the fuel. Foreign capital takes its share. Corruption yet another gigantic bite. And now defence.

What is left after that is too small to keep the engine going with any kind of momentum. To take the three in turn:

Foreign capital: The Indian government borrowed abroad heavily to finance its industrialisation, and it allowed important sectors of the economy to be controlled by foreign companies. The debts remain even if the projects don't work.

The British government which built the Durgapur steel mill still demands its pound of flesh even if Durgapur does not produce any steel at all. The servicing of loans takes about a third of all India earns on exports at the moment, and that proportion is growing rapidly.

Yet to keep existing industry going requires a steady flow of machinery and spare part imports, as well as raw materials. The growth of debt servicing can strangle the economy.

Dividends and other payments to foreign companies already help produce major balance of payments crises. But here the profits are not made on steel mills but on such obvious national necessities as Coca Cola and chewing gum.

Foreign capital now cares little for any raw materials India might have. It is interested solely in exploiting the small upper class market, a pure hit-and-run operation.

Secrets

It is a myth that foreign companies put much money into the country. They may put in some nominal capital to start off. But then they borrow on the local capital market for the rest.

That does not prevent them exporting the proceeds as payment for their trade 'secrets' or wildly expensive components imported from their parent companies abroad.

Naturally enough, the profits made are the best kept secrets in India. But sometimes bits of information leak out. For example, in oil.

Burmah Shell made gross profits equal to 53 and 48 per cent of its sales in 1968-9 and 1969-70. In the four years up to 1970, the major oil companies sent out of India profits and dividends equal to over half the capital they employed in India. The profits, incidentally, were gained not on refining oil or prospecting for it, but on marketing petrol.

The foreign leeches are not all from the West. Eastern bloc countries have also a similar range of aid and trade agreements with India.

State corporations in the Eastern bloc have also reached similar collaboration agreements with private Indian companies. For example, East Germany has 67 such agreements. In return, profits flow out of India.

The greasy palm: As for corruption, the signs of its increase are every-



Picture: ca

where. The volume of illegal cash—'black money'—is now probably greater than the legal. Anyone who can fiddle the books.

The man who claims to have no income at all lives in a block of luxury flats, runs a new foreign car, holds parties for hundreds with government ministers among the guests.

The son of a former finance minister, having purchased land speculatively, then forces the local plan to be altered so that a public highway crosses his property and he can secure handsome 'compensation' at public expense.

If you feel like complaining too much, there are men who will—for a consideration—happily put a bullet in your back.

Defence: The third great drain on resources is arms expenditure. For with corruption for the few and unemployment for the many, you naturally need a large army—and police force—to frighten the rebels.

Defence expenditure has been increasing by 41 per cent per year since 1961-2. In West Bengal, the scene of the most violent clashes between workers and bosses, rural guerrillas and landlords, spending on the police increased from Rs.160 million in 1966-7 to nearly Rs.500 million in 1971-2.

Defence takes an especially large share of resources now. For it is not enough to have a few guns, tanks, artillery. These might make for a boom in the engineering and heavy industries.

But India makes enough nowadays to export this kind of weaponry, without it doing much for the economy as a whole. What are required now are supersonic fighters, missiles, electronic equipment, all fantastically expensive and going out-of-date every few years.

This kind of gear has to be imported, so its manufacture does nothing for domestic industry. The cost either wrecks the balance of payments or drives India deeper into the embrace of the Soviet Union (or both).

Originally, high defence spending was justified on the grounds that Pakistan and China were both liable to attack India. Yet, by invading East

Bengal and creating Bangladesh, India has dismembered Pakistan, and demonstrated that China will not intervene.

Yet such considerations have not persuaded the government to make any cuts in defence. Indeed, arms spending is still rising, and some people are trying to push it up to the astronomical Rs.20,000 million (at the moment it is Rs.14,000 million or about £700 million).

Arms are not the only weapons that the Prime Minister of India, Mrs Indira Gandhi, has in her armoury. She has also 'socialism'. Not long ago she announced her intention to 'abolish poverty'.



Mrs Gandhi: everybody was cheered

Everybody has been very cheered by this. Unfortunately nobody quite knows what it means. Presumably, it does not mean hitting the one area of the economy that is really thriving, industry which caters for upper class consumption—refrigerators, air conditioners, household equipment, cars.

There are long waiting lists for the tall blocks of luxury flats in the big cities (flats going at about £150 rent per month, after key money etc). In a country where 99 per cent of the people travel on foot or by bullock, the streets of the cities are already jammed with the cars of that tiny group of people who can afford to buy and run them.

The authority more massive in eight-lane highway tiny group of p

Is this new revolution is to consumption of touched.

Mrs Gandhi's the sluggish economy forming Indian not a target of confidence trick.

The tricks of combinations of rebels, bribes for the majority Gandhi and her election victory. Indian ruling class

The unity was the most important since Independence capitalist class but the business far increasingly the between urban a

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20p

International Socialism 52

Labour, from the safety of opposition, once again proclaims its commitment to a 'fair society'. Raymond Challinor, in 'Labour and the parliamentary road' strips away the party's reformist pretensions and the Labour 'left's' hopeless dedication to evolutionary change. PLUS Nigel Harris on India Tony Cliff on Lenin David Widgery on Mayakovsky

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Government cannot break grip of con

Landlord beaten back in Bethnal Green

When tenants won the battle of Quinn Square



The East End tenements—challenging the profiteer's 'rights'

The Indian government of Mrs Indira Gandhi proclaims its commitment to socialism and the abolition of poverty. Yet misery for the masses continues and grows worse as the grip of foreign giants and the local rich minority squeeze the life from the crumbling economy.

NIGEL HARRIS has recently returned from an extensive tour of the Indian sub-continent. He reports on the current situation—the extensive corruption, the massive expenditure on 'defence' while millions starve, the grotesque 'white elephant' state industries—and underlines the desperate need for a real workers' party to grasp the enormous potential for revolutionary change.

The cash being poured into rich peasant pockets is badly needed to build industry. Without it, real pressure could be brought to bear on the capitalists to empty their wallets. But the government cannot stop the drain out of the cities. For the rich peasants control the real Congress organisation throughout much of the country.

Neither the government nor the industrial capitalists can or will tackle the rich peasants. To do so would be to start something that could not be controlled (and they might lose). Yet to do so is the condition for any further economic advance without a revolution. The world capitalist system offers fewer and fewer opportunities for development. Yet now even the opportunities that occur will be wasted because of the power stalemate.

The poor peasants will fight the system which hits them so hard, but not on a scale sufficient to affect the national ruling class. For that to happen they need a lead from the masses of the cities.

Courage

In the last analysis, only the workers could break the stalemate, and then only through a revolution which would topple not just the rich peasants but also the industrial capitalists as well. Indian workers have no shortage of courage and tenacity. But so far they have never been able to create a separate working class political alternative.

The Left hardly helps. It is dominated by what are entirely middle class parties, in particular the three separate Communist Parties. One of these is totally committed to the ruling Congress Party (which it identifies as the 'progressive national bourgeoisie'). Another—the largest—rejects Congress but is nonetheless completely tied up in parliamentary politics.

The third—or what is left of it after a savage police mauling—is entirely and by design isolated from the workers. It tried to start guerrilla warfare in the more remote villages but failed.

In all three cases there is no possibility at all that the party can lead any kind of revolutionary workers' struggle against Indian capitalism. Indeed, none of the parties accepts that it is possible to struggle for socialism in India today.

Rarely has the need for a revolutionary workers' party seemed so urgent. In the years to come, as Indian capitalism continues to stagnate, piling up a mountain of burdens on the backs of the mass of the people, the need will become ever more urgent.

The Indian ruling class is coming to play a more and more reactionary role both at home and abroad. For Indians in Britain and for those in India with a real working class perspective, the opportunities and the tasks are formidable indeed.

THE BATTLE over the Tories Rent Act this autumn is likely to be one of the major working-class struggles of recent years. Can the tenants take on the government and win?

It seems a formidable task—yet the famous Glasgow rents strike of 1915 showed that landlords and the state could be defeated. And that was not the only victory chalked up by tenants.

London in 1938 and 1939 was the scene of a series of rents strikes and some 30 of them were successful. One of the first involved the tenants of the Quinn Square estate in Bethnal Green in the East End.

Quinn Square was a block of 246 flats. There was one lavatory between two flats, one water tap between four.

The general state of repair was appalling. Steps and handrails were broken, ceilings were falling down, the walls were often damp and the sash cords broken. There were no cupboards for food or clothes and the fire stoves were often broken and dangerous.

Illegal

The tenants, although not yet organised in a tenants' association, sent a deputation to the local Public Health Committee. The committee visited the flats and ordered the landlord to carry out the necessary repairs.

Shortly after this success the landlord tried to evict a tenant for non-payment of rent. The tenants realised that they had won the repairs issue because they had fought together and that in order to win the fight against eviction they must form a tenants' association.

The association carried out research into the financial position of the flats. They discovered that the woman threatened with eviction was living in one of the 90 flats on the estate with a controlled rent.

They also found that the landlord had been charging her rent far higher than that laid down under the control. Further investigation revealed that this was the case with 70 out of the 90 'controlled' flats. This was—and still is—illegal.

Challenge

The landlord was forced to pay back the excess and reduce the rents to the level laid down in the control.

But the landlord was still getting away with charging much higher rents for the decontrolled flats, exercising his so-called 'right' to charge whatever rent he chose for 'his' property.

The Quinn Square tenants decided to challenge this so-called right. The tenants' association worked out a scale of maximum rents for the flats.

This was presented to a mass meeting of tenants and agreed. The scale was presented to the landlord's agent.

The agent spent the next few days rushing around the estate offering to reduce the rents by 3d or 4d a week. None of the tenants was prepared to accept

this insult and at a mass meeting they voted for a total rent strike in favour of their proposed scale.

Most of the organisation for this was carried out by the women from the estate. Posters were made: 'We refuse to pay high rents', 'Our landlord has made a huge fortune at our expense', 'Less rent, more repairs'.

The women paraded around the borough carrying the posters. Others were pasted up around the estate and neighbouring area. The estate agents office was picketed every day, meetings were held daily to keep people in touch with one another and to keep the strike solid.

Public street meetings were held around the borough explaining to people why the Quinn Square tenants were on rent strike and why they should be supported.

Yelling

The rent collector tried to go round the flats several times with tales of 'Mrs-next-door's paid, why don't you?' He was followed around the estate by angry women and children, including 'Mrs-next-door', yelling that she hadn't paid, that none of them had.

After a few days of this treatment, the rent collector stopped showing his face.

After two weeks the landlord gave in. He agreed to:

- Recognise the tenants' association.
- Carry out all repairs.
- Take no action against a tenant without first informing the tenants' association.
- Finally he agreed to the scale of maximum rents laid down by the tenants' association and all rents were reduced by this. The average rent was reduced from 14 shillings to 10 shillings a week.

The Quinn Square tenants had challenged the 'right' of a landlord to charge whatever rent he chose. Their victory gave confidence and experience to other tenants in the area.

Bob Graves, the secretary of the Quinn Square tenants' association, explains in his pamphlet (Quinn Square Tenants' Rent Strike Victory, published in 1938) the effect of the 1938 government Rent Act.

The Act sought to remove rent control from some 500,000 homes, restoring this 'right' to landlords.

Bob Graves explained that if the 500,000 followed the example of the Quinn Square tenants, they too could win.

The tenants did follow this example. There were more than 30 strikes in East London against the rent increases brought in by the Rent Act. Most of these strikes were successful in getting the rent reduced.

Similar strikes took place in other parts of the country and again a large number of them were successful. They worked from the lessons of Glasgow 1915 and Quinn Square 1938.

The same methods—solidarity, linking the struggle to the industrial struggle, total commitment of all tenants—can be successful today.

MARGARET FALSHAW



Bob Graves

International Socialism 46
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rupt profiteers

The day the police invented a crowd

THE ONE about the Glasgow policeman on the beat who asks his partner for a loan of 10 cigarettes until the shops shut has much more than a ring of truth about it.

Apart from the policemen jailed for theft, perjury and rape in the past few weeks, there has also been an increase in undetected outright lies told at various courts.

The conspiracy of the police has been deliberately aimed at leftists, particularly those associated with the International Socialists and anyone active on the Irish issue. Republicans selling literature in the streets have been charged with trading without a proper licence, and beaten up late at night after selling round pubs.

Four men were recently fined a total of £75 for offences connected with protests against the Bloody Sunday killings, and one lost his job when police called at his work to 'make investigations'. In Glasgow, where one man in ten is unemployed, the police are always ready to try the smear tactic with any small employer—because it usually works.

In one case, four witnesses told how an Orangeman had broken through a police cordon and assaulted a young marcher. But the Sheriff, in finding the demonstrator guilty of police assault, said he preferred that to admitting the police were telling a pack of lies.

Swear

In another case, two IS members had just opened an Anti-Internment open-air meeting on a deserted building site in the vain hope of attracting a crowd, when they and the one passer-by who stopped to listen were arrested and later found guilty of various charges of incitement and breach of the peace.

The police in their evidence conjured up a great crowd of 40 Rangers' supporters and 40 Celtic supporters, the traditional Protestant and Catholic Glasgow football teams. They couldn't call any of them as prosecution witnesses, but in their own evidence they could swear that the speakers' remarks were just about to start off another Battle of the Boyne.

All three spent the weekend in jail, and the passer-by was the man who subsequently lost his job.

Arrests and massive fines are increasing. Yet the fight against intimidation has to continue. It is in this light that we urge all readers to send donations themselves, or get their organisations to send money to help cover the four men's fines.

Send to Ian Mooney, Socialist Worker Centre, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow C1.

Steve Jefferys

SECOND OF THREE ARTICLES BY JOHN LEA
PICTURES BY JOHN SILVER

BLACK IN BRITAIN

Jobs: immigrants get the rawest deal

UNEMPLOYMENT has been above the million mark for five months this year, and the bosses and their spokesmen seek desperately to provide some facile explanation in the hope of preventing working-class people from realising the truth: that capitalism does not work in their interests.

Besides all the rubbish about 'unreasonable' wage demands causing unemployment, there is another favourite—the lie that immigrants are a major cause. It is useful to the bosses if workers can be encouraged to blame unemployment on immigrants rather than on the bosses themselves and their system.

During the 1930s, when there was hardly a black face to be seen in Britain, there was massive unemployment. Likewise, today, unemployment has been rising while in fact the number of immigrants have been falling.

Simple facts like these do not worry the racists. They argue that unemployment would be that much worse if it wasn't for immigration control. Thanks to immigration laws, they argue, the 'flood' of the 1950s was reduced to a trickle, and, but for this, unemployment would be much worse.

Racism

But immigrants do not come to Britain out of a masochistic desire to join the ranks of the unemployed. They come when there is a labour shortage in this country.

All through the 1950s and 60s immigrants came only when there were jobs available. During times of

unemployment in this country immigration fell off drastically. Laws such as the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 in fact made no difference at all to this. The law simply aimed at fanning the flames of racist hysteria.

Look at it another way: There are more than a million unemployed in this country now, not because there aren't enough jobs that need doing. We need at least 40,000 new homes,

new hospitals and schools.

There are in fact enough jobs that need doing to keep all workers in this country, black, white or whatever, occupied for several years. Why is it then that these jobs aren't getting done, and that people are out of work?

Under capitalism it is the capitalist bosses that organise the work to be done. Unfortunately they don't organise jobs because they need doing

but because they make profits. If the job does not yield a profit to the capitalist then he won't hire the workers to do it, no matter what the need.

It should be obvious then, that what determines the level of unemployment is whether or not the capitalist finds it profitable to hire workers. This is the crucial thing.

It has absolutely nothing to do with the worker's skin colour. How could the colour of the worker's face determine whether the job was profitable?

Menial jobs

But to the extent that people fall for propaganda from racists like Enoch Powell, this affects the lives of black workers. On top of the normal capitalist exploitation by the bosses, black workers suffer the added burden of race discrimination and often personal insults and physical assault.

In employment, discrimination is widespread. There are black workers with university degrees who can only find unskilled jobs. In many factories black workers find that only the lowest-paid and most menial jobs are open to them.

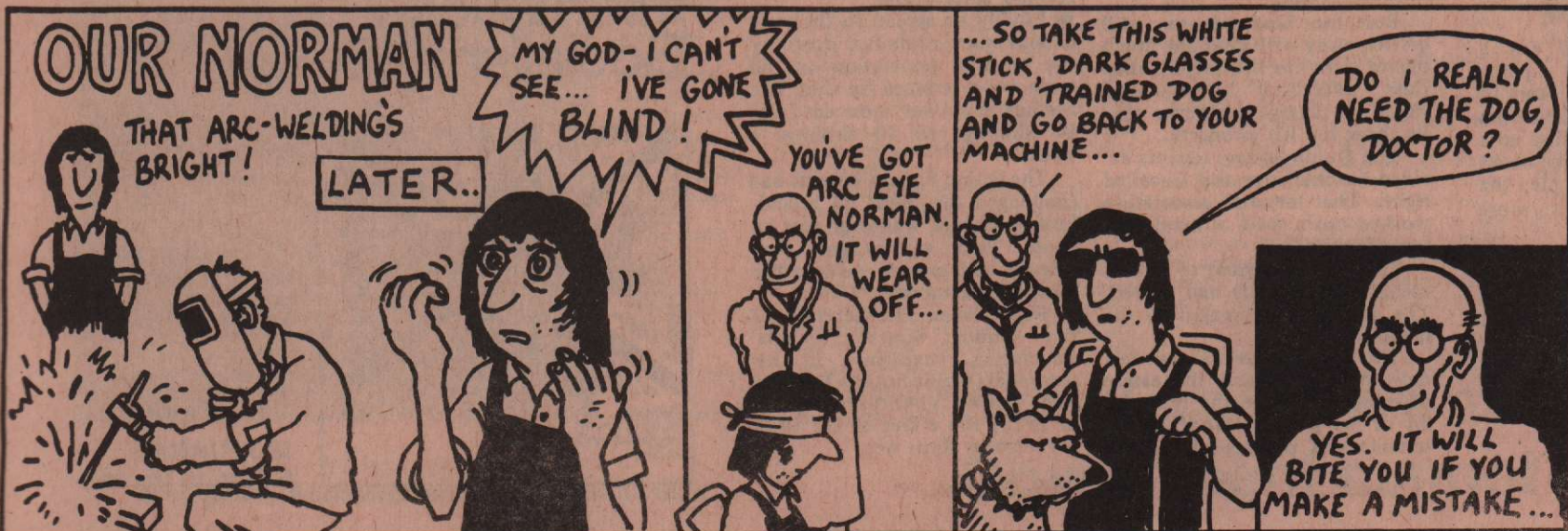
For young black school leavers born in this country, the unemployment rate is five times the national average. There can be no doubt that this is due to racial discrimination by employers.

What confidence can the black worker have that the existing organisations of the working-class movement are prepared to defend him against such things as this?

**NEXT WEEK:
HOUSING**



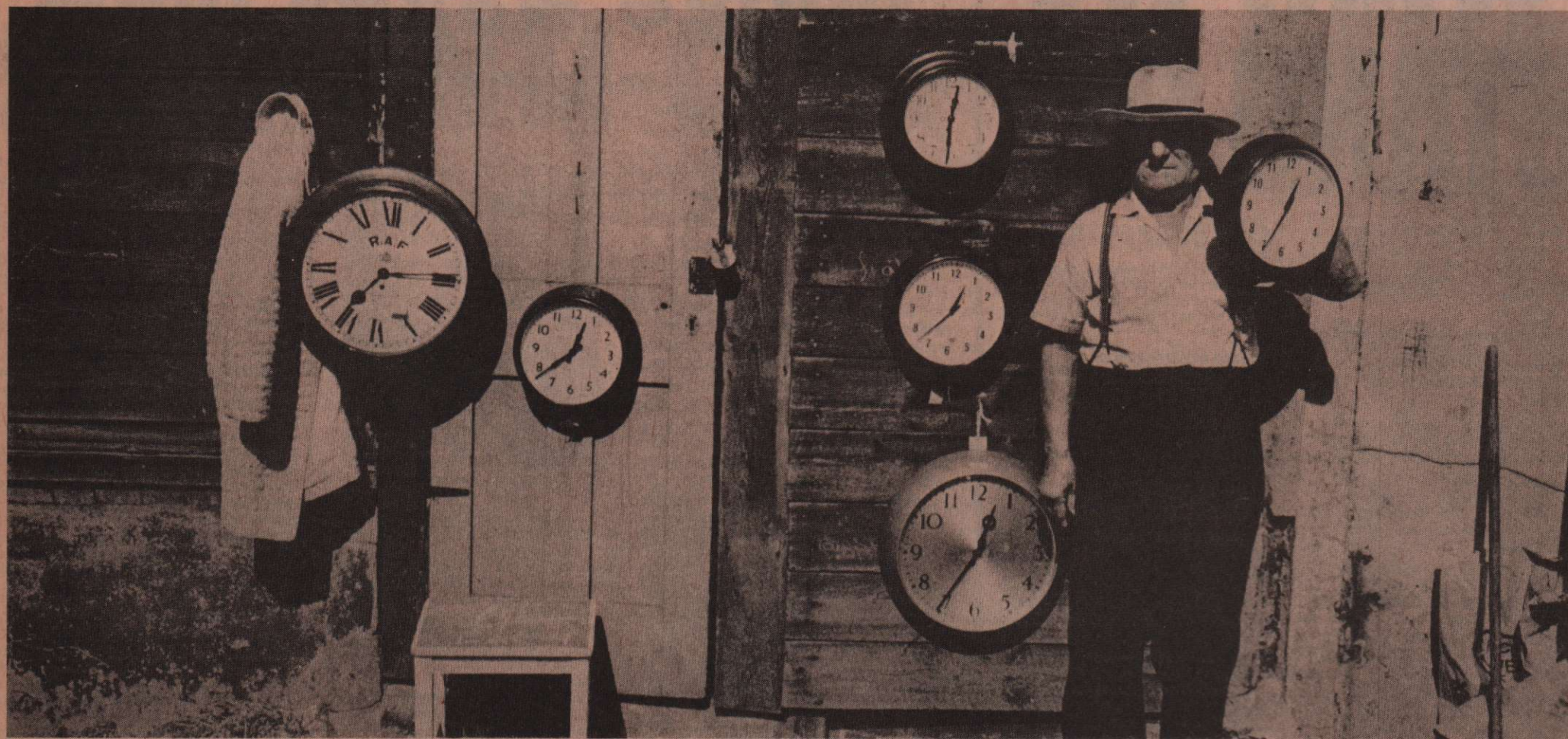
The wealth that is beyond their reach. Black workers are the first to lose their jobs when unemployment grows.



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Pictures from the exhibition: above, the clock seller; below, the schmaltz herring shop in Old Montague Street, Whitechapel

NEIGHBOURS

Chris Searle reviews

NEIGHBOURS/Spitalfields to Whitechapel, an exhibition of photographs by Ron McCormick, Half Moon Gallery.

PHOTOGRAPHER Ron McCormick co-edited, designed and photographed for Stepany Words, two anthologies of children's poetry. His photographs have recently been used in Rank and File, the journal of socialist teachers.

With Neighbours, McCormick has deliberately shown his photographs of the people, buildings and streets of his own neighbourhood world in the very area they depict. In doing this, he is giving back to his neighbours his own images of them, confirming their identity and belongingness to the brick and streets which the photographer and his subjects share together.

McCormick has efficiently fly-posted the area with posters telling of the exhibition, so the local residents have strolled into the gallery and recognised themselves and their own world frozen by the photographer's camera, as simultaneously the neighbourhood is being gradually demolished and redeveloped by outside forces, and the people arbitrarily dispersed to tower blocks and new towns as the speculators move in.

The photographs show a twilight world, where people of all races, ages and existences work, play and move around in an aura of decay. Crumbling buildings, cobbled streets, Dickensian shops, markets and debris are the environment of these neighbours.

McCormick sees the exhibition as a number of separate and individual impressions of a neighbourhood, rather than an attempt to tell a whole story or make a complete statement, and there is a wide spectrum of moods and energies in his collection.

There are skipping children and sleeping dossers, the sombreness of Gunthorpe Street where Jack the Ripper walked and killed, and pigeons flying among the sun and washing of Fieldgate Mansions.

The coherence of the exhibition comes with the feeling it evokes: that the photographer belongs to his subjects, that he lives and walks in the same streets with them, that every closing of the shutter is

an act of understanding the conditions which bear down upon them all.

A boy looks up from the heap of rubbish where he is playing, an old Jewish woman stares from her condemned schmaltz herring shop. Two Bengali boys hug each other and gaze at the camera, a street musician sits in an alley, his dog to the one side, his drums on the other.

Nearly all the photographs include walls and fences. They show an enclosed world, bricked off from space and beauty, yet still reflecting unique shapes of its own.

McCormick's neighbours are oppressed neighbours, living in conditions which they fight against daily. It is this sense of the stamina and strength of the subjects that finally unifies his exhibition, and makes it a deep statement of human struggle.

The Half Moon Gallery is at 27 Alie Street, London E1 and is open 12 noon to 6pm, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Neighbours is on until 18 July.



Pabst's call to action

WORKING people of all countries unite, you have nothing to lose but your claims. It is a simple message, and much ridiculed. For it hits at the very nerve centre of our world as it is now.

During the past 70 years those who shape our lives have been ably assisted by frenzied chauvinism, in film and newspaper, comic and textbook. It is easy to appeal to baseness, to put man-made misery down to demons and incite people to some crazy politics that translates baseness into action.

It is no easy thing to subvert such beliefs. Last week BBC 2 showed a film that is one of the truly great cinematic struggles to do just this and, along the way, to tell the truth about all aspects of the wage-labour system.

G W Pabst's 1931 film Comradeship is a study of a between-the-world-wars mining disaster in the French and German border lands. His aim is precisely to undermine heroic patriotism which is actually about which set of capitalists will have what section of the world marketplace.

Comradeship has a wonderful simplicity to it, a simplicity born of intense study and endeavour. It starts with the insanity of a system of production and

ideas which builds borders 20,000 below the ground to separate the 'French' and 'German' sections of the coalfield.

Pabst brings this system face to face with a mine disaster in the 'French' section. What are the German miners to do? Are they Germans or are they miners?

One speaks out where others are silent. Slowly the natural solidarity of the community is let loose and workers move to help workers. The boss is 'persuaded' to release the rescue gear.

Comrades

As the miners move across the border in trucks, French border guards are ready to shoot them. The weeping crowds of Frenchwomen who fear for their husbands, sons and lovers can scarcely believe that 'Germans' have come to help. With a joint rescue operation, the basis of a new relationship between the two communities is laid. But only the basis.

Underground a French miner taps away at a pipe to draw a rescuer's attention. The rescuer comes. He speaks German and wears a gas mask.

Wracked with pain, the French miner

has but one image in his mind, 1914-1918. He struggles with his comrade. They both die.

BBC 2 was proud to announce that their version of the film was the first UK showing of Pabst's 'lost and pessimistic' ending.

After the rescue operation is finished, Pabst shows the great miners' gala day. The French miners' leader says, to wonderful applause, that there are only two things which threaten them all, fire damp and war. The German miners' leader says that the German miners cannot understand the words, but readily grasp the meaning.

We must remember, he says, that we are not French or German but workers. Together we must rid the world of those whose pursuit of markets would turn us into killers.

Then the 'lost and pessimistic' ending: underground, French and German officers are once again inaugurating the border in the pit shaft.

Pessimistic? No—a call to action.

POOR MARX, NEW LEFT

KARL MARX, by Werner Blumenberg, New Left Books, 85p.

AT last New Left Books have produced a book at a price most people can afford. Unfortunately the book itself is not much good.

It claims to cast fresh light on Karl Marx 'as a man' rather than as the creator of a theoretical system. In fact it casts very little new light at all—unless you want to hear of the arguments between the young Marx and his father, or the detailed rumours about his alleged illegitimate son.

The author certainly does not give us any inkling what Marx was like as a person to know and to talk to.

The book outlines some of Marx's ideas—but in a fashion which presupposes an understanding of much of the terminology, which in turn presupposes an understanding of the ideas—not much good to newcomers. And on some questions—such as Marx's treatment of the Jewish question and the Paris Commune—it is outrageously misleading.

Laurie Flynn

Stuart Morgan

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dumfries
Dundee
Edinburgh
Fife: Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glenrothes
Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling
St Andrews

NORTH EAST
Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Ossett
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

NORTH WEST
Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
The Potteries
Preston
Salford
St Helens
Stockport
Wigan
Wrexham

MIDLANDS
Birmingham NE
Birmingham S
Coventry
Dudley
Leamington and
Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Redditch
Rugby
Telford
Warley
Wolverhampton

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Camden
Chertsey
Croydon
East London
Enfield
Fulham and
Hammersmith
Greenford
Hackney and
Islington
Harlesden
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
Hornsey
Hounslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
South Ealing
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Wandsworth
Watford
Woolwich

WALES and SOUTH WEST
Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
SOUTH
Ashford
Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Eastbourne
Folkestone
Guildford
Portsmouth
Southampton

EAST
Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

Miners' leaders dodge wages hook

BRITAIN'S miners met in conference last week, less than six months after the most militant and determined strike in the post-war history of the working class—yet many militants were disappointed by the outcome of the debates at Morecambe.

The union executives declared its strong commitment to the new productivity deal it is due to negotiate with the Coal Board later this year, even though all the evidence shows that such deals have been behind the savage loss of jobs in the industry.

And moves to introduce a few simple elements of democracy into the union were defeated and several resolutions were doctored to remove any reference to industrial action.

NUM President Joe Gormley explained several times that the offending references had been removed to preserve the 'unity' of the union.

Two very different resolutions were passed on wages and militants expressed their concern that the one coming from the right-wing will be used by the executive to get them off the hook on the other.

A resolution calling for pay increases to be tied to the increase in the cost of living and to 'increased productivity and efficiency' was narrowly carried on a card vote.

Proposing the resolution Les Story of COSA (the NUM clerical section) pointed out that it deliberately excluded any mention of specific figures to aim for. He felt that it was wrong to tie the executive down to any particular amount and added that he did not want to provoke the government into cutting financial aid to the industry or delaying the setting up of a national fuel policy.

Speaking against the COSA resolution, Emlyn Jenkins (South Wales) maintained that there had to be a definite figure for the executive to work on. John Phillips (Scotland) said that because the great increases in productivity between 1960 and 1970 had not been reflected in wages delegates should be very wary of tying wages to productivity.

To the obvious annoyance of Joe Gormley, the delegates from South Wales insisted on a card vote to decide the resolution. The more militant areas of Yorkshire, Kent, South Wales and Scotland voted against but the resolution was passed by the narrow margin of 171 votes to 141.

The other resolution on wages, which was passed unanimously, called for a threshold agreement as well as an increase of £5.50 a week for face-workers and £7 for other grades. Proposed by Derbyshire and seconded by Kent the resolution stated that the basic rates should be £40 for face-workers, £32 for other underground workers and £30 for surface workers.



DALY: Flexible

An original resolution from Kent had put these figures forward as a demand but this was merged with a Derbyshire resolution calling for a threshold agreement. The combined resolution said instead that the figures should be achieved. But it did not contain an important instruction to the NEC to consult the membership about various forms of industrial action should the Coal Board come up with an unsatisfactory offer.

The worst fears of some of the delegates that the resolution allowed the executive too much latitude for manoeuvre were confirmed by NUM General Secretary Lawrence Daly. Summing up for the executive he described it as a 'flexible resolution' and only a 'desirable objective'.

Backlash

Proposing a resolution that called upon the executive to submit an immediate claim for a 30 hour week, Scottish miners' President Michael McGahey said that with the increases in the number of cases of pneumoconiosis (dust disease) it was necessary to keep men in the pits for as short a time as possible. He said that because of increased travelling times men were often spending more time at work, or travelling to and from work—up to 12 hours a day—than their grandfathers.

'We have a debt to pay the previous generation of miners in 1926 when they suffered the backlash of a Tory government, when they took away the seven-hour day,' he said. He praised the building workers for their campaign for a 35-hour week and a basic wage of £30.

Blaming the nature of capitalist society for the creation of unemployment, he said: 'If we can reduce hours by five per week, we could reduce unemployment at a stroke.'

Seconding the resolution, Sammy Thompson (Yorkshire) said that increased productivity alone should have led to the six-hour day. The resolution was carried

unanimously, but there is the danger that the executive, with its firm commitment to productivity dealing, might accept the six-hour day in return for more intensive shift patterns.

Joe Gormley indicated strongly in his presidential address that he was prepared to negotiate more intensive shift working.

Gormley said that he would like to see shift payments worked out according to the number of different shifts worked—a clear invitation to the Coal Board to introduce generalised four-shift working. This clashed with a resolution from Yorkshire which simply called for time-and-a-quarter for the afternoon shift and time-and-a-third for the night shift.

The executive asked for the resolution to be remitted but the Yorkshire delegates insisted that it went ahead. It was carried.

Arthur Pratt (Midlands area) moved a resolution 'to take whatever action necessary' to defeat the government's policy of wage norms in the nationalised industries. Asked by Joe Holmes of Kent if this meant industrial action, he replied hedgingly: 'It may be another Sattley, it may be something else.'

Joe Gormley clarified the situation by saying that the executive would decide. The 'positive' course of action to be pursued, he said, was to 'get the Labour MPs to defeat the Tories. That is better than other kinds of action proposed'.

On Thursday conference passed a composite resolution calling on the government to implement an integrated fuel policy in which coal would feature prominently. A resolution from Nottingham calling for industrial action to fight further pit closures was excluded from the composite resolution by the executive.

Speaking in support of the composite Joe Whelan said: 'Nottingham reluctantly agreed to the deletion of "industrial action" to preserve Joe Gormley's unanimity. "But that does not rule it out for ever," he added.

Throughout the conference this deference to the sham 'unity' of the right wing was hardly broken. The militants referred time and again to the experience of the strike, but they never pointed out that the majority in favour of the strike in the ballot had been less than 59 per cent—hardly a unanimous decision—yet the solidarity and unity displayed during the strike was unprecedented in post-war history.

It is time that the left seriously challenged this reactionary concept of 'unity' and showed that they have really learned from the strike that real unity can be forged only in struggle.

Also lacking in the conference was any serious move towards democratising the structure of the NUM. The loose wording of a resolution from Kent proposing that all full-time officials should be subject to periodic election gave the executive the excuse to exclude it from the agenda altogether.

This year's conference proves once again the urgency of building a strong rank and file organisation within the NUM based on a programme of action over wages, conditions and union democracy.

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday or be phoned Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

MEETINGS

STEVENAGE FILM: Angela Davis, Portrait of a Revolutionary. Followed by discussion. Friday 14 July, 8pm, Family Centre, Stevenage (near bus station). Organised by North Herts IS.

NEWCASTLE IS public meeting: Laurie Flynn on Law and Order. Sun 16 July, 8pm. Bridge Hotel, near High Level Bridge.

TOTTENHAM IS public meetings: Wed 19 July. Nigel Fountain on British Fascism. 8pm, The Bricklayers' Arms, Tottenham High St (junction with White Hart Lane).

FULHAM and HAMMERSMITH IS public meeting: Thur 13 July, 8pm, at Fulham Town Hall. 'Not another penny on the rent'—Lionel Sims and Frank Campbell (UCATT).

SOUTH-EAST LONDON IS DAY SCHOOL
Saturday 22 July, 2pm
Charlton House, Charlton, SE7
Nigel Harris: THE STRUGGLE FOR WORLD SOCIALISM
Tony Cliff: THE TORY OFFENSIVE AND THE WAY TO FIGHT BACK
Details: phone 01-237-6869

WALTHAMSTOW IS FIGHT THE TORIES RALLY
Speakers: Mike Cooley (TASS), Paul Foot (NUJ) and Roger Protz (editor of Socialist Worker)
Ross Wyld Hall, Church Hill, Walthamstow, London E17
Thursday 20 July, 8pm

IS PSYCHOLOGY DAY SCHOOL: 10am-6pm, Sat 15 July, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, London N5. Morning: A forum where working class militants themselves will discuss the problems, both political and personal, in day-to-day activity. Speakers include May Hobbs, two Fakenham strikers, a building worker and an engineer. John Southgate on the relationship of this discussion to the IS Group.
2pm: Interest groups (as decided by conference). Debate on motion 'Personal involvement in the class struggle is the only basis for a revolutionary psychology'. Creche and bar.
Details from branch secretaries or Alan Phipps 01-226 5625.

BRADFORD DAY SCHOOL
Sat 21 July, 10am-6pm
Morning: REFORMISM, AND IS INDUSTRIAL WORK
Afternoon: FACTORY BRANCHES
Details from branch secretaries

NOTICES

NALGO ACTION GROUP PAMPHLET
Job Evaluation and NALGO
Available from 1 Lupton St, London NW5
10p per copy (5p for orders of 50 or more)

CARTOON ARCHETYPAL SLOGAN THEATRE
CAST has split up—but the play Mr Oligarchy's Circus continues. We need urgently a committed actress. Any other socialist actors/actresses interested in workshop activity please phone 01-734-9083 between 10am and 6pm.

TONY CLIFF is in the final stages of his work on Lenin and urgently needs a typist. No money, but interesting work (as they say). Contact Penny Parkes on 01-739-1878 if interested.

BED AND BREAKFAST available to comrades in pleasant seaside town on East Coast. Main rail and bus termini, parking space. Phone Lowestoft 62865.

IS BOOKSHOP is now closed to retail sales until the opening of our new bookshop, but we will continue to expand the mail order side of the business, and a new expanded booklist is available on request. IS branches can still arrange for the collection of bulk orders. IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

CHEMISTRY STUDENT or graduate wanted for a couple of weeks research for Pat Kinnersley, now compiling a handbook on industrial health hazards. Phone 01-794-9577 between 10am-3pm.

ARE ANY COMRADES interested in sharing accommodation around Liverpool 8 area. Write to Lawrie Springate, 5 Bradstock Rd, Stoneleigh, Epsom, Surrey, or phone 01-393-1893.



Workers oppose grants fiddle

by Dave Peers

COUNTRY DURHAM:-100 workers took control of Leadgate Engineering a fortnight ago to prevent the movement of machinery and materials from the factory after they were told it was being shut down.

This closure is a classic example of how the system of regional grants and subsidies provides outdoor relief for the wealthy.

By the mid-1970s more than £1000 million a year will be spent on regional subsidies. Most of it will end up in the pockets of companies like G Stibbe and Co of Leicester.

Leadgate Engineering, a Stibbe subsidiary, was set up in the old Leadgate Coal Board workshops in July 1969. Stibbe and Co bought the ten-acre site and buildings outright. The site cost them about £75,000 and included plant and a factory shop constructed only eight years previously when it alone had cost £75,000. There were eight cranes included in the deal.

Within months, machine tools and other equipment worth about £130,000 had been installed. At the time, 45 per cent government grants were available on this type of new machinery.

Profits

All in all the company received more than £145,000 in government grants and subsidies. The bulk of these grants are not repayable if a firm remains in production for three years. On 30 June this year—three years to the day—Leadgate Engineering was shut down.

G Stibbe and Co are now opening another factory in Leicester, and want to move machinery there from Leadgate. They declared a pre-tax profit of £1,264,000 last year—a rate of nearly 30 per cent on capital employed. Company chairman P M Stibbe doubled his share of the loot from £9,203 to £18,830.

The Leadgate workers, who had co-operated in the most far-reaching productivity deals during the three years, were offered £50 each by way of compensation.

North West Durham has been hard hit by closures and redundancies and is threatened with many more. Members of Consett Trades Council are calling for the formation of a liaison committee to fight redundancies in the area and to press for a government inquiry into Stibbe's operations at Leadgate.

Meanwhile the workers are dug in at Leadgate Engineering and will stop any movement of materials or machines from the factory.

Messages of support and donations to F Carlyon, AUEW convenor, Leadgate Engineering Ltd., Leadgate, near Consett, Co Durham.

Sit-in as bosses break offer

ACTON, London:—Fitters and testers at the CAV engineering laboratory have now been sitting-in for two weeks, after a management attempt to breach a recently negotiated rate increase and the submission of the national engineering claim. The strikers are particularly militant because the 'moderates' accepted an earlier compromise wage offer from management, which then went back on it.

Pickets have been put on the main factory gates in a drive to win support from all CAV workers.

The sit-in began on the day a delegation of international engineers was due to visit the lab. This visit was considered so important that £3000 was spent cleaning the place up.

'Equal pay' demand

HAVANT, Hampshire:—Workers at Goodman's Loudspeakers, a Thorn factory have been on strike since last Thursday for equal pay rises for all workers irrespective of sex. Management offered £2 for women workers and £3 for skilled men. Workers are demanding £3 for all. The strike caused an immediate increase in union membership in the plant.

5000 MARCH ON BIG ANTI-CLOSURE DEMO

WALSALL ground to a halt on Saturday when nearly 5000 workers demonstrated against the threatened closure of the town's Tube Investments plant.

The shock news a fortnight ago that the plant was to close, with the loss of 1500 jobs, brought a massive response from the whole area. Workers from as far away as Chesterfield turned out on the march.

'There will be no redundancies,' Alan Colpitts, Tube Investments Action Committee chairman, told the town hall meeting after the march. 'If they

by Granville Williams

want the workers out, they will have to carry us out. That is the only way we will go.'

Many other speakers promised action to stop the closure. John Stonehouse, Labour MP for Wednesbury, pledged that he would take the battle to the floor of the House of Commons. But the truth is that that is not where the struggle will be.

Don Groves, an official of ASTMS, the white-collar union, pointed to the real target: TI's profits. Last year they made £68 million, more than half

from the steel tubes division.

The Walsall plant was only recently modernised at a cost of more than £1 million. It produces steel tubing used in atomic power stations. Whatever value TI places on its workers, the machinery will certainly have a high premium.

BLACKING

A really effective fight against the TI empire has to hit directly at these targets, and it means building and strengthening a combine committee for all unions and factories. The first roots for such a committee were there on Saturday's march. Already the 5000 ASTMS members in TI plants are banning overtime and other unions are expected to follow suit soon.

This combine committee would have to prevent any transfer of machinery and loss of the bargaining power attached to it. It will also have to commit other factories to black work which could be done at Walsall.

The lessons of such a struggle as Fisher Bendix are also important. The only way workers can control what is happening and prevent movement of work or machinery is to occupy, supported by other factories in the group and with trade unionists everywhere giving financial support and taking solidarity action.

Nuclear site workers strike

HEYSHAM, Lancashire:—Building workers at the nuclear power station site struck last week in support of the national building workers' claim for a £30 basic weekly wage, the 35-hour week, and an extra week's holiday. Both the Transport and the Construction Union (UCATT) have given the strike their official backing.

The men are determined in their struggle, and will not allow their strike to be hampered in the same way that their 10-week stoppage in support of 25 victimised workers earlier this year was hindered by the half-hearted behaviour of the regional union officials.

Police appear to be on constant standby to prevent forceful picketing. One striker said that the unions ought to follow the example of the miners and call everybody out, instead of selective sites.

Tin works staff refuse £175 offer

WEST WALES:—1300 white-collar Transport Union members at the British Steel Corporation's Trostre and Velindre tinplate works, striking for a wage increase identical to the one already given to production workers, overwhelmingly rejected a compromise this week. Traditionally production wage increases have been given to staff, but BSC now refuses to do this.

The compromise offered a lump sum of £175, but would have meant giving up the right to any future trade awards and doing nothing to improve basic rates.

PRESSURE on space has not allowed us to comment on the Labour Party's new manifesto. Watch out for a demolition job next week by Stephen Marks.

THE RENTS BATTLE

Submit says Crosland

by Hugh Kerr

SHADOW Housing Minister Anthony Crosland, speaking to an official Labour Party delegate conference on the Tory rents policy in London on Saturday, made the expected call for submission.

'We cannot defy the law. Parliamentary democracy must be respected,' Crosland told the 800 delegates brought to hear the official party line.

He did not mention that well over half Britain's council tenants are just about to have their living standards viciously attacked yet again by massive rent rises.

What Crosland advised was that Labour councils should use the so-called loophole in the Act that allows rent rises of less than £1 a week in October. He even talked of such 'reduced' rent rises as 'a gift horse' which 'Labour councils could not afford to look in the mouth.' As one delegate, John Kay from Kirkcaldy, put it: 'I have never heard a call for class collaboration put so nicely.'

When Crosland sat down after his appeal to throw in the towel, he was greeted by polite applause. The whole flavour of the conference was in fact distinctly unmilitant. This shows once again that the big majority of Labour councils are prepared to co-operate with the Tory Housing Finance Bill, abandoning even the most token opposition.

'Excuse'

A great deal of rhetoric was trotted out about fighting the Bill until it becomes law. But this was only the window dressing for the official Labour attitude, which is that what matters is that Labour keeps control of its councils even if they are implementing Tory policies.

A few more militant speeches did disturb the calm. 'The Nazis in Germany used the excuse of obeying the law,' said



London tenants demonstrate against the Bill in Trafalgar Square on Sunday

Councillor John Cox of Hackney. 'We must break laws that are anti-working class', he added.

'This is not a game but a battle between the working class and the ruling class over the distribution of wealth', said Councillor Dollis, from Mossley Labour Group. 'The only way to defeat the Tories is not by words but by action like the dockers.'

The conference was chaired by that well-known supporter of democracy and workers' control, Anthony Wedgwood Benn. He absolutely refused to take any vote on the question of the Labour Party's attitude to the Tory Bill. 'This is purely a consultative conference', he said.

Winding up the debate for the Labour Party executive, Frank Allaun tried hard to put a left face on complete surrender, implying that Labour councils should take no action against rent strikers.

It is now crystal clear that the only

way to defeat the Tory plans is for militant tenants' action backed by the full industrial power of the Labour movement.

The National Association of Tenants and Residents conference at the end of this month must issue a clear call to answer the October rent rises with a national rent strike. Every tenants' association should send delegates pledged to fight for such a line. Credentials for the 29 July conference are available from NATR, 283 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

The Manchester district committee of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers last week called for strike action against the Housing Finance Bill. A strike resolution carried unanimously will go before the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' district committee and could result in a 24 hour strike against the bill.

WAGES STRIKE IN 24th WEEK

by Steve Jefferys

GLASGOW:—A mood of quiet determination hits you when you enter the occupied Charles McNeil factory in Kinning Park. The 80 workers, now in their 24th week of striking and the fourth of sitting-in in pursuit of a wage claim, are planning their next moves.

Marshall and Anderson, the Motherwell based parent company, has been keeping

silent on the situation. After a couple of initial protests to the workers by telegram, Marshall, director-in-chief and a former Church of Scotland minister, refuses point blank to talk to anyone about the situation.

Only escalation of the workers' action can stand any chance of wresting victory. So workers are discussing plans to extend blacking to the parent company's steel suppliers. They are also talking of using the occupied factory's machinery to fulfil orders negotiated by the shop stewards.

So far the two main unions involved, the Boilermakers and the Engineers, have confined themselves to largely verbal support, though the AUEW is paying strike pay. It is vital that they pull out all the stops.

With the Glasgow holidays starting this weekend, the sit-in strikers need all the financial support they can get, especially from English workers.

Donations to E Reilly, 18 Elliston Avenue, Glasgow G53 6UN.

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Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

IRELAND ON BRINK: TORIES AID BLOODBATH

THE ATTACK by British forces on unarmed demonstrators in Belfast on Sunday evening, the subsequent IRA response and the UDA threat to massacre republicans, appear to have brought the North of Ireland finally to the long-feared brink of sectarian civil war.

British socialists have no reason to romanticise and peddle illusions about a sectarian war should it develop. The working class, Catholic and Protestant, will be the losers. The only victors can be the forces of bigotry and sectarianism and the privileged and propertied interests who stand behind them.

But socialists will not be taken in by the protestations of liberal horror from British politicians, Tory and Labour, who are now intensifying the military build-up in Northern Ireland. They more than anyone have been responsible for defending and supporting the social system in the Six Counties which bred the poverty, the hatred and the violence which now threatens to explode in civil war. Tragically the civil war will not be between the exploiters and oppressors but between two sections of the Irish working class.

Whitelaw and the British authorities stand condemned also for their acquiescence in the build-up of Orange terror in the Six Counties in recent weeks which finally led to the confrontation in Lenadoon Avenue on Sunday.

Since direct rule the British authorities have stood by and permitted the growth of Orange para-military extremist forces (led by 'respectable' Stormont Unionists) even where their complicity in the murder of Catholics has been beyond doubt.

Under Mr Whitelaw's benevolent rule some 500 Catholic families in Belfast have been terrorised out of their homes by UDA thugs. And when some of these families tried to move into empty homes last weekend (with the initial approval of the authorities) the British Army was put at the disposal of the UDA hooligans who wanted to stop them.

BANKRUPT

Of course not all the sectarianism and indiscriminate terrorism is the work of Orange men. The British forces themselves have been prepared to use the methods of individual assassination by plain-clothes officers against known republicans.

And individual Catholics, sometimes with the support of sections of the Provisional IRA, have also descended to barbaric attacks on Protestant workers.

Much propaganda will be made by Whitelaw and the Tories about the decision of the Provisional IRA to call off the truce. The International Socialists think that this is a misguided and potentially disastrous step for the republican movement.

But the real charge against the Provos is different. Despite the dedication and heroism of their militants, the political bankruptcy of the Provisional and Official republicans has rendered them impotent these past two years to give a clear lead to the working people throughout Ireland against the whole system of oppression and exploitation.

Only a day before the renewed fighting in Belfast, Provisional IRA leaders were

Statement by the Executive Committee of the International Socialists



Catholics who tried to move into Andersontown on Sunday were stopped by British Army CS gas and rubber bullets

engaged in secret talks with Whitelaw in a vain attempt to win his sympathies against the Orange forces. Reckless and indiscriminate terrorism have co-existed in the Provisional IRA with the worst kind of conciliatory, middle-class politics.

The Official IRA, balancing between the demands of the same bankrupt political tradition, the Stalinist politics of its leaders and the genuinely socialist aspirations of many of its rank and file members, has been unable to offer a counter lead to the Catholic working class that could have led

them away from the blind alley of sectarian warfare.

Nevertheless, it is the duty of socialists to give unconditional support to all those engaged in the defence of Catholic areas against the Orange mobs.

But as long as the Catholic working class conduct their struggle within the confines of the Six Counties there is no way out of the trap of sectarian strife on the one hand and sell out by the middle-class politicians and social climbers on the other.

VULNERABLE

The key to victory against British imperialism in the north has always lain in the struggle against capitalism in the whole of Ireland. Only an organisation that can unify the struggle of Irish workers against unemployment, bad housing, low wages, appalling social services and the other ills of capitalism in the 26 Counties can have any chance of appealing to the Protestant working class in the North.

And until a section at least of the Protestant working class is won to the need for socialism, the Catholics will always remain the vulnerable victims to pogrom and sectarian terror.

But neither wing of the republican movement has shown the political ability to grasp this. The need to build such an alternative has been left to the modest though growing forces of the Socialist Workers Movement.

The task of socialists in Britain in the

coming weeks is clear. IS believes that the socialists must demand:

● Withdraw the troops NOW. British forces can bring no peace to any part of Ireland.

● The Tories must go. The Heath regime is not an impartial referee in the sectarian conflict but the prime backer of the forces of sectarian privilege.

● Aid the building of a movement capable of bringing Catholic and Protestant workers together to fight the common enemy. Only an Irish Workers Republic can beat the British and Orange terror machine.

● End the complicity of the Lynch government with Tory policies.

● Free the prisoners.

Lynch's cops get tough

by Brian Trench

DUBLIN:—Rioting broke out in the South on Sunday when 2000 demonstrators came face to face with the Free State Army outside the Curragh military internment centre.

The demonstration, organised by the Provisional Sinn Fein, marched there to demand the release of Republican political prisoners. The army used CS gas and baton charges to disperse the crowd. Stones and bombs were thrown at the soldiers.

Sinn Fein stewards tried to prevent any confrontation. And in a statement issued after the march, the Provisionals laid the blame for the violence on members of Peoples' Democracy and the Young Socialists.

They denied that the army and the police had been provocative in any way.

This attitude shows their confusion about the nature of the Southern estate. Their own members are held in prison under some of the most repressive legislation that exists anywhere in the world. Yet the Provisionals still oppose those who see the fight against repression as a fight against the whole regime.

● At its annual conference in Galway last week, the Irish TUC managed to do a complete somersault on its opposition to a second national wages agreement. They positively rushed to abandon the instructions of the rank and file and lay the basis for further collaboration with employers and the state.

At a special TUC conference last month, where delegates were under direct mandate, the vote went 250 to 100 against the terms of the new national wages agreement.

Orange
murder
gangs on
rampage

by Mike Miller

BELFAST:—The truce has gone. The Provisional IRA decision to set aside their ceasefire and take up the armed struggle once again results from growing Republican frustration at the British Tory government's refusal to act against the para-military bands of the Protestant Loyalists.

And the activities of the Ulster Defence Association since the truce have brought the danger of civil war closer.

Incident after incident combined to create the Republican frustration. Whitelaw, Northern Ireland's Tory overlord, met the UDA leaders for talks.

He reached a deal with them, although no details were publicly announced. Since then British Army officers and UDA members have met regularly in Protestant pubs to discuss their common strategy.

Masked UDA men armed with clubs carry out joint patrols with the British Army. The UDA publicly admits 'preparing for and carrying out' armed warfare.

William Craig, the Vanguard leader, claims to have a 70,000 strong 'Protestant army' at the ready for the civil war he openly advocates each day.

Loyalist murder gangs continue to gun down Catholics on the streets. The leader of the outlawed Ulster Volunteer Force, himself jailed for murdering a Catholic bartender in 1966, was paroled from prison for a few hours at the height of the sectarian killings. He never returned.

In Portadown, Orangemen were allowed to parade through a totally Catholic area where even former premier Brian Faulkner forbade them last year. Local opposition to the march was met with massive military repression over the weekend.

Refused

But it was a particularly blatant incident that led the Provisionals to take up the armed struggle again. Sixteen Catholic families had been allocated houses in a 'mixed' area of Belfast. The local UDA objected, saying it would use force to prevent them moving in.

The British Army refused the Catholic families protection. And when the families attempted to move into their new homes with the help of 1000 supporters, the British troops themselves did what the UDA had threatened.

The families and their supporters were met with CS gas, rubber bullets and baton charges. In the rioting that followed, the IRA used their guns. Since then hundreds of shooting and bombing incidents have occurred throughout the Six Counties.

The Provisionals originally held that they would have no truck with Whitelaw until all internees were freed. The fact that they abandoned this position shows that they were serious about the ceasefire, though well prepared for it to break down.

It may be that they hope to force Whitelaw's hand with a new wave of bombing and shooting. They might hope to make him publicly announce further concessions to their demands, backed with a decision to move against the UDA.

But for the Provisionals to demand withdrawal of British troops and at the same time hope for British guns to be turned against the Protestant workers shows the insurmountable contradictions which flow from their lack of working-class politics.

They offer nothing to Protestant workers because they have no perspective for smashing capitalism and imperialism.

And unless they get peace on their terms, the opportunists of the Social Democratic Labour Party can readily fill the political vacuum which exists.

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