

Socialist Worker

No 300 2 December 1972 5p

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Tories cook up jackboot law with Irish premier

HEATH-LYNCH CRACKDOWN

A WAVE OF ANGER has rocked the 26 Counties of Southern Ireland as the Jack Lynch government attempts to push through measures that would give it dictatorial powers to use against the opponents of its own rule and of the rule of British Toryism in Northern Ireland.

In the space of a few days it has dismissed the governing board of the radio and television authority for failing to impose sufficient political censorship. It has used a court without a jury to send Sean MacStiofain—desperately sick from a hunger strike and a kidney complaint—to prison for six months, despite the fact that there was no concrete evidence against him.

Journalist Kevin O'Kelly, who refused to act as an unpaid police informer, was sentenced to three months in prison. And the government has drafted a new law which, if passed, will mean 12 months in prison for anyone said by a single police officer to have been at some time a member of 'an illegal organisation'. Anyone who attempts to protest at such kangaroo court justice through a 'statement, meeting, procession or demonstration' will be liable to a term of imprisonment of up to five years.

Such measures have been directed in the first place at members of the republican movement. But as the Irish Times has noted, 'The Bill gives the state powers which might be used at a later stage in say industrial, or even farming disputes, as happened in the early 1960s.'

REPRESSION

All the evidence indicates that our own Tory government has been the main inspirer of Lynch's resort to jackboot politics. It was no coincidence that just as Lynch was preparing his crackdown last Friday, he dropped into London for talks with Heath.

What Heath, Lynch and the press barons object to about the IRA is that it has attempted to fight against the domination of Ireland by the British ruling class.

Tory control in the north has been maintained for more than 50 years by deliberately encouraging religious hatred within the working class. While giving marginal privileges to the Protestants, it used police repression, laws which prevent free speech and murderous mob violence to beat the Catholic section of the population into submission.

The government claims to be 'reforming' its rule over Northern Ireland. Yet for working people in the Catholic ghettos of towns like Belfast and Derry nothing has changed, except that repression is greater than ever before.

This point has been graphically brought home in the last few days. On Sunday Catholics in the Ardoyne district of Belfast were fired upon by sectarian thugs from a nearby Protestant area.

The British Army moved into action—not to protect the Catholic families, but to shoot at 'IRA men' who were defending

by

CHRIS HARMAN

the Catholic area.

Then Catholic surgeon Peter Gormley was driving through the Protestant Shankill district when his car was hit by sub-machine gun fire, injuring him and killing his 14 year old son.

Even as he carried his son down the road, crying for help, further shots were fired. The killers behind such murders have little to fear from the British troops. It is likely that in the guise of 'vigilantes' they regularly co-operate with the military.

The actions of Jack Lynch show that he shares the same desire to protect British rule in Northern Ireland. That is not hard to explain.

The Southern Irish capitalist class in whose interests Lynch rules collaborates daily with British big business in the pursuit of profits. The only real reform it would like to see in the North would be a slight shifting of political influence from the Protestant to the Catholic middle class.

REFUSED

Lynch believes Heath is now willing to concede this. And so he is letting loose his own barrage of repressive measures to build a police state in southern Ireland that mirrors the one that has existed in the North for 50 years.

The Irish working class has refused to accept such an attack on its basic liberties lying down.

In Cork dockers walked off 12 ships and 1000 workers shut down the Ford car plant in protest at the treatment of Sean MacStiofain. In Dublin there have been token strikes at the Coca Cola bottling plant and the Dubtex factory.

Radio and television services were closed for two days when both the journalists and technicians protested at the imprisonment of O'Kelly and the sacking of the governing board. Then 400 newspaper journalists struck for 24 hours and marched through Dublin against the 'creeping state control of the media.'

It is imperative that trade unionists in Britain express solidarity with the actions of their brothers on the other side of the Irish sea. If Toryism can succeed in using trials without jury and police evidence alone to imprison its opponents in Ireland, it may be tempted to repeat the experiment here.

Condemn Lynch law

THE executive committee of the International Socialists this week called on IS trade unionists to move resolutions in union branches, shop stewards' committees and other sections of the labour movement condemning the repressive crackdown in Ireland and demanding the immediate release of Sean MacStiofain. They should be sent to the Irish Embassy, Grosvenor Place, SW1.

Our fund appeal: cash is urgent

£3220.37½p—that's how the IS Fighting Fund stands after two weeks. We need to raise £30,000 to buy new premises and printing equipment to expand and intensify our fight against the Tories and their system.

Donations include 37½p from pensioner Mr S Smith of West Bromwich, who writes: 'Sorry I cannot afford more but as a pensioner I have little to spare.' Your donation is deeply appreciated, Mr Smith.

Handing over

An IS member in the Midlands sends us £1000, an 'improvement grant' from the local council for his house. Unlike the property sharks, he is not pocketing the money but is handing it over to IS—the only organisation showing the right way to fight the Tories and their infamous 'fair' rent Act.

Other cash comes from readers and the levy on IS branches. Please keep the money rolling in. The need is urgent, for we will soon have to sign contracts for premises and press and cannot do so unless we reach our target.

Donations to: Jim Nichol, IS National Treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

Pensions strike is historic



IS members speak to mass meeting

'YOU'VE written a page in working class history,' Tony Cliff told 2000 Scunthorpe workers last week. Cliff, a member of the International Socialists' executive committee, was speaking at a mass meeting in the local football stadium following a march through the town. The workers, from the Anchor steel site, supported by Drax power station and local pits, had struck work for the day to demand a £16 a week pension for old people. Another speaker was Wally Preston (right), convenor at Trafford Park power station, Manchester and an IS member. FULL REPORT: page 15.

London Region
International Socialists
SMASH RACIALISM!
Saturday 2 December

Demonstrate in constituency
where three racist candidates
are standing in 7 December by-election
UXBRIDGE STATION, 2pm
All London IS branches to support

Vietnam: split over peace move

by Ian Birchall

THE French newspaper Le Monde reported last Friday that early in November there was a revolt by sections of the liberation forces in South Vietnam.

The National Liberation Front have denied the accuracy of the report, but not only has Le Monde a reputation for being well-informed on Indochinese affairs, but it has been consistently sympathetic to the Vietnamese struggle for independence. It would be unlikely to be involved in any attempt to discredit the liberation struggle.

Indeed, the report itself is written from a point of view highly sympathetic to the majority leadership of the National Liberation Front.

On 10 November about 1000 North Vietnamese troops launched an attack on the camp where important leaders of the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government were stationed. After two days they captured the camp, but all the important leaders had escaped.

Jailed

They then invited General Tran Nam Trung, Minister of Defence in the Provisional Government and a member of the Communist Party, to join them, believing he was favourable to their point of view.

Trung, however, not only declined the invitation, but led the successful counter-attack. Two of the leaders of the rebellion have been jailed for 20 and 10 years and a third, who escaped, has been sentenced to death.

The revolt was the result of a long-standing difference of opinion about strategy. The rebels were opposed to the present negotiations, and had criticised the leaders of the Provisional Government for being defeatist, because they did not believe in the possibility of military victory against the US.

Demands

The immediate result of the revolt has been a shuffle in the Provisional Government, which has meant more representation for moderate elements—there are now only two members of the Communist Party in the government. The North Vietnamese have stressed their support for the present leaders against the rebels.

The revolt was in no sense a popular rising, but rather a split among the leadership of the liberation forces. The rebels, although more militant in their demands, do not seem to have had any alternative social programme.

However, the present policy of the North Vietnamese and the Liberation Front, which may lead to an end to the fighting without any real change in the social order in South Vietnam, cannot fail to lead to further divisions and conflict.



BRIEFING

EIGHT HUNDRED delegates from all over Italy took part in a national conference of independent community organisations called by the Tenants' Association of Milan and various committees from Verona, Turin, Bergamo, Rome and Naples.

Among those who spoke were workers organised in the rank-and-file factory committees, delegates from the poor quarters of Naples, and from the working-class districts of Rome, Milan and Verona. In districts of Rome such as Magliana and Valmelaina, several hundred families are withholding part of their rent, while in Milan altogether 30,000 families in the centre and suburbs are on partial or total rent strike.

The main topic of discussion was the problem of linking such struggles with one another and with the struggle of workers in the factories.

The programme of aims which was agreed included linking together all local struggles—on rents, education, transport and prices—in defence of working-class living standards. City-wide and nation-wide links are to be forged in the mass community organisations, and these are to be linked at rank-and-file level with the rank-and-file factory organisations.

THE GREEK colonels want a new power station in East Macedonia, where newly-discovered peat deposits can be used as fuel. The contract for building the new station, with a capacity of 375 megawatts, has gone to Russia. The Russians will get £38 million in return for boosting the technology of the backward and reactionary Greek regime.

WHEN the telephone company in New Orleans tried to raise the local coin-box call charge from a nickel to a dime (about 2p to 4p), a boycott of phone boxes forced it to withdraw its proposed increases.

ISRAELI government bodies are intensifying their attempts to remove Arabs from land in the conquered territories. A recent wave of confiscation and forced sales swept Samaria, on the West Bank of the River Jordan.

Any 'government land', even if permanently rented by the villagers for generations, is confiscated. Sometimes crops are destroyed by army exercises, and an offer is then made to buy the devastated land.

One village had 1250 acres declared a military firing range closed to the public, but this military need was forgotten as soon as the starving villagers agreed to sell 200 acres for use by a Jewish settlement.

Villagers may be called to negotiate sales in the presence of the Israeli military governor, who freely uses threats during the proceedings. Members of Arab families who are being pressed to sell land may be arrested while the sale is negotiated and released as soon as it is completed.

FIGURES in a preliminary report of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Review prove the argument that in many third world countries most of the people are worse off now than they were 10 years ago.

In 15 African countries, including Nigeria and Ghana, agricultural production per head for 1971 was below the yearly average of that between 1961 and 1965. Although the overall food production in these countries rose by four per cent, the annual growth of the population well outstripped this rise.

The report also shows that Tropical Africa is the only region in the world where the annual growth of the population dependent on agriculture is actually increasing. In other parts of the world the rural areas have a declining population as peasants drift into the towns to find work.

In Tropical Africa people are forced to stay in the impoverished rural areas because there is no work in the towns. The industries of these countries are not being expanded to absorb their labour.

This is particularly shameful in Nigeria, where oil sales since the end of the civil war in 1971 have trebled the national income. Instead of being used for development the extra money is being used to maintain the 250,000-strong army (50,000 more than the British Army) and on lush residences and parties for the politician and army rulers of Nigeria.



A demonstration in the centre of Beirut on the night of the general strike

General strike hits Lebanon

by SW Correspondent

THE most frequent reports of the Middle East situation in the millionaire press focus on the activities of the terrorist Black September group.

Yet socialists have continually argued that Black September's strategy can do nothing to reduce the misery of the Palestinian refugees, and the demoralisation which dogs their movement against Zionism.

This demoralisation springs from the refugees' lack of economic power. Although large resources were thrown into the strategy of 'armed struggle' in a 'people's war of liberation', this

posed no threat to the local or global imperialist powers—who are content to use the refugees and their suffering as pawns in their own big-power politics.

The only way forward for the Palestinian movement is to link directly with the struggles of workers in the Arab countries where the refugees live, and, where possible, with the fight of many sections of Israeli workers against their bosses and the police state.

The prospects of building such links have never seemed brighter.

Killings

In Lebanon, the Palestinian camps in the south suffer continual harassment from Israeli forces—and the Lebanese government does little to protect them. Indeed, in many parts of the country government troops carry out a smouldering war against the guerrillas.

These same troops earlier this month gunned down strikers at the Ghandour biscuit factory, killing two. The CGTL, the largest

union federation, called for a one-day general strike, and 150,000 workers out of a total population of 2½ million people, struck on 14 November.

For the first time in 20 years Lebanese workers responded as a class to a call from the Left, and many thousands took part in a demonstration in Beirut.

Meanwhile in Israel some 70,000 West Bank Palestinians are now working for Zionist employers. Though the bosses hustle them into dirty, dead-end jobs and try to segregate them from Jewish workers, they form a vital part of the Israeli labour-force.

When there are industrial struggles in Israel, these Palestinians will be in a position to play an important part.

So while the established sections of the Palestinian movement continue to argue with each other over what went wrong with 'armed struggle', a few Palestinians are coming to see that international working-class action might be the best strategy. Indeed, that the only way to win national liberation is to build a movement in the working class.

Militancy a year after murder

by W Enda

MILITANT anti-government speeches were heard by 250 young Indians at the graveside of Ahmed Timol on the anniversary of his murder by the South African police.

Timol was beaten up and thrown from the tenth-storey window of police headquarters in Johannesburg after being interrogated for four days and nights. An inquest held by the whites recently proclaimed that he had committed suicide and that the bruises and cuts on his body had somehow been inflicted before his arrest.

This is patently untrue. A close examination of the evidence shows that two burly policemen stood between the slender Timol and the window. A pathologist was persuaded by the inquest judge to alter his estimation of when cuts had been inflicted on Timol to longer than

four days before he died.

The police believed that in Timol they had captured a key member of the South African Communist party. They were torturing him to get information on the whereabouts of other members.

At the graveside, Timol's brother Mohammed risked the same brutal treatment by calling on the young people present, mainly from the Indian school in which Timol worked, to 'remember that our future lies with the black people of this country' and to dedicate 'every day to the struggle and to the commemoration of all political prisoners, as well as those who die in police custody.'

The South African government had hoped to use the issue of Amin's expulsion of the Ugandan Asians to split the growing solidarity between Indian, black and coloured people in South Africa.

A new underground duplicated paper called Searchlight, which circulates widely among Indians, warns against this and urges Indians to recognise themselves as having always been 'part of the oppressed majority in our suffering'.

In an article called 'Lessons from the Past' it points out the value of a united organisation and calls on militants to be prepared for violence in order to succeed.

It also calls on people to commit themselves to militant action as leaders 'who are prepared to sacrifice everything for the liberation of our country'.

Say Happy Christmas



the Socialist Worker way!

FIVE CHRISTMAS CARDS

with cartoons by EMMS

Set of five for 50p/twelve cards for £1 (including envelopes)

Proceeds to the Printshop Fund

FROM
IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens,
London E2 8DN

£1¼m - THE HIGH COST OF ROBERT CARR'S DOOR

THE PRICES SWINDLE

FOR the last six months Detective Sergeant Roy Creamer of the Special Branch has had one simple duty: Instead of his usual gruelling efforts at bullying editors of 'underground' papers and spying on drinking habits of Scottish anarchists he has been lounging in the back of the Visitors' Gallery of Court Number One of the Old Bailey.

Those visitors to the marathon Angry Brigade trial enterprising enough to push past the barrier marked 'Court Full' are carefully inspected by him on entry. He and a lady assistant then search the public for gelignite and sub-machine guns.

He then returns to his snoozing. For this service to the nation he has already been paid over the last six months £1,113 plus his special bonuses for detective duty, his plain clothes allowance, his cash housing allowance and his spending money for his visits to various left-wing bookshops.

Below him in the well of the court, the cost of this magnificent frame-up starts mounting.

Mr Justice James' reward for his 10am to 4.30pm stint as a High Court Judge is £15,750. Enough to finance his hobby of gardening and to leave a little time over to serve on the Criminal Law Revision Committee which is soon to present its new recommendations for changes in the law to parliament.

Among Mr Justice James' recommendations are the abolition of Judges Rules, the legal caution and the consideration of the accused as guilty until proved innocent. Mr Justice James does not, however, have any intention of applying this interesting change in law to people in power.

WHITEWASH

He is still remembered with affection by the four Ministers of Trade whom he carefully exonerated from ministerial responsibility in the Vehicle and General Insurance whitewash over which he presided.

The state's prosecutor, Mr John Mathew is on piece-rate. He will probably pocket £12,000 for his services in Court Number One. The nine defending lawyers, including a Queen's Counsel, Lawton-Scott, will be presenting bills for the trial amounting to a total of £70,000.

The four separate firms of solicitors marshalling the case for the defence will be presenting estimates for Legal Aid for more than £25,000. And it is perhaps fortunate for the Legal Aid office that three of the accused are defending themselves.

Two beribboned lawyers were overheard to remark, at the end of John Barker's masterly summing up of his own case, that 'Some people get £15,000 a year for doing that'.

But the £130,000 wage bill in Court Number One is only the tip of one of the biggest police hunts since the war. A police department which was at one time 200 strong was set up after Robert Carr's front door was scorched by a bomb.

This squad is led by Commander Bond (£5,013 per year) who told the court he was 'not aware' that 10 people a week die in industrial accidents but calls the series of 25 firework bombings which resulted in no deaths and one minor injury 'terror, violence and anarchy'.

It was Bond who told the court

David Widgery on the Stoke Newington 8 trial



L to R: Anna Mendelson, John Barker and Hilary Creek. Drawings by Roy Knipe

that he was directly responsible to the late and unlamented Home Secretary Reginald Maudling (£12,500).

At the other end of the police scale comes upholders of law and order like Detective-Constable Ashendon at a modest £1,362. This man's contribution to public order in the cells was described to the court by defendant Jim Greenfield:

'It wasn't like the times before when you got the occasional push and slapping around. This time the man went mad. I was just being bounced from wall to wall. Then they threatened to turn on Anna [Mendelson] in the same way.

ORGANISE

'So I turned to Sivell [£1,460] and I said, "Okay, you have it any way you want. You say I brought the gelly back from France. OK, I brought the gelly back from France. Leave her alone. I still don't know what the . . . you are talking about." Then I got this belt that sent me down into the corner.'

This 'confession' is a main part of the evidence against Greenfield, who was seen by a doctor to have a black eye, a sore ear and a torn and bloody sweater by the close of his 'confession'.

For the last two years Chief Superintendent Habershon has been

QUOTES

'THE SORT of people and our politics, the people living at Amhurst Road, we didn't and we don't feel that there is any room or need for bomb attacks on cabinet ministers, although we may understand the feelings behind them. Because our politics are not the politics of bombing. Bombing a cabinet minister is not going to get rid of the capitalist system because there is always somebody to step into his place, unless the situation and conditions are right.—ANNA MENDELSON, defending herself, final speech to the jury.

'PERHAPS the Angry Brigade no longer see the bombings as relevant, particularly in 1972 with the miners' strike and the dockers' action around the Industrial Relations Bill. Perhaps they now feel that bombs are completely irrelevant and that the class war is being fought and that the Angry Brigade don't have to make any symbolic gestures with bombings to try and make it real. Because it is

real.—JOHN BARKER, defending himself, closing speech to the jury.

'YOU MAY think that when they arrested us they were getting pretty close. But the fact remains they got the wrong people—and that just isn't good enough . . . If you convict us we are not going to change. We will still be who we are and what we believe. I know that the people in this dock with me are people working together for a happier and more peaceful world. That is who we are. It is your decision.—HILARY CREEK, defending herself, closing speech to the jury.

'YOU PROBABLY realise that the whole British establishment awaits your verdict with bated breath. And you and the defendants, when you really consider it, are the only really unpredictable factors in the whole scenario.—IAN MACDONALD, defence council addressing the jury.

paid £4,230 a year to organise the 50 raids, the repeated illegal arrests, the telephone tapping, letter opening, and suspect bashing that preceded the arrests of the Stoke Newington Eight.

For a long period during the trial he was obliged to use a rear entrance to the Old Bailey to avoid a writ-server who wished to present him with a summons for the illegal arrest

of four women defendants in the Miss World trial last year.

The total wage bill for this two-year process of secret police scouring and spying will be more than £100,000. The hunting down and the framing of the Eight will finally have cost, from the exquisitely wigged Justice James at the top to the fat and floppy dogs trained to sniff out gelignite at the bottom, well over £¼ million pounds.

And never forget the personal contribution of the Daily Mirror (Forward with the Monarchy) to the manhunt. It was their front page blaring their offer of £50,000 reward for information after the Carr bombing that brought every informer and nark in Britain out of the woodwork.

The eight young people this ruthless, systematic and immensely expensive machine finally chose as its victims have no money. Though they mostly started at university, they left it fast, disgusted by its values and uninterested in the monied careers it offered.

They joined the squatters' and the claimants' movements in permanent poverty. They used battered old vans to transport homeless families to take over empty boarded-up dwellings.

Their printed political magazines on duplicators and small presses. They started playgroups for kids in backstreets.

Their reward was a quarter of a million pounds worth of state

Racists take to the hustings

by Julian Wells

THE FIRST by-election since Heath introduced the wage freeze looks like producing another defeat for the Tories.

But although Labour are set to win the suburban constituency of Uxbridge, in West London, it won't be a real victory in the fight against the Tories.

For Manuela Sykes, the ex-Liberal candidate who is standing for Labour, and the local Labour Party reject a fighting campaign to beat the Tories' anti-working-class policies. And they are not doing anything to combat the racist campaign being mounted by the National Front—most dangerous of three racist candidates in the election.

The others are from Mosley's Union Movement—successor to the pre-war British Union of Fascists—and the National Independence Party, a small breakaway group from the National Front.

Miss Sykes makes no effort to answer the Front's fake anti-Tory propaganda or its racialism. And she refuses to come out in favour of a campaign of rent strikes to defeat the Rent Act.

Tory speakers in the campaign include some of the most active anti-working-class ministers in the government—Margaret Thatcher, Sir Keith Joseph and Anthony Barber.

Pacesetter

The Labour campaign against them consists of speeches from Barbara Castle—architect of In Place of Strife, pacesetter for the Tories' anti-union laws, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, who slashed thousands of jobs on Clydeside when creating the ill-fated UCS combine, and Jim Callaghan, who rushed through the Bill to keep out the Kenya Asians in response to Enoch Powell's hysterical racist outbursts.

If Labour wins on 7 December it will be no thanks to these fighters for socialism. Miss Sykes is too worried about 'public

opinion' and showing 'disapproval' of the Tory government to mount a real fighting campaign among trade unionists.

But exactly such a campaign is being mounted—by the International Socialists. 10,000 leaflets are being distributed to answer the lies about immigrants sponging off the social services and doing other workers out of jobs and houses.

In the first full weekend of the campaign, 3000 leaflets were distributed to shoppers and on council estates.

This weekend the International Socialists are to hold a big demonstration in opposition to racialism. Already support has been promised by the student union at nearby Brunel University, the local Communist Party, the International Marxist Group, and individual members of the Labour Party. And Hillingdon Borough Trades Council is also likely to support it.

And next Wednesday Paul Foot and building worker George Peake are to address a public meeting on the eve of the election on how to fight racialism.

A LETTER in Monday's Daily Express outlines the wonderful new vistas opened up for old age pensioners by the Tories' £10 so-called Christmas bonus.

Mr W. Rockey of Portsmouth states that it will allow him to indulge in what 'has become a millionaire's luxury'. Mr Rockey's act of self-indulgence involves the purchase of a piece of sirloin of beef for his Christmas dinner.

The so-called price freeze does not cover meat or vegetables. And this weekend again meat prices in the shops will rise by a further 1p or 2p a pound, ensuring that still fewer working-class families can afford to eat a Sunday joint. Meat consumption is already at its lowest for many years.

In the first two weeks of the freeze prices per pound went up by 2p and this weekend's rises only double up on that. Further steep rises are expected throughout the winter.

The massive hypocrisy of the Tory election pledge 'to cut prices at a stroke' is only matched by the huge price increases they have presided over. Meat—the single heaviest item in a family food budget—has gone up 22 per cent since they arrived in office.

The interesting thing is that the current spate of increases have been triggered off by 'home killed' beef. What this means is that the increases are not, as the Tories claim, due to rises in the cost of 'imported meat'—prices the Tories are powerless to control. The current rises are very much within their control. But the Tories allow prices to climb ever higher.

Middlemen

Increasingly, too, meat is being exported from Britain in search of more lucrative markets than common-or-garden poor people's stomachs. Again the government could act to curb these exports but it refuses to do so. Nor is it likely to act to curb the many other costly aspects of the UK market, such as the huge numbers of middlemen who each take a cut as meat changes hands.

Interestingly enough the rises are not confined to beef. Beef price rises have merely provided the cover for producers of pork and lamb to jack their prices up without any pretence at justification.

And just in case you are entertaining any thoughts that you or old age pensioner Mr Rockey can find relief from soaring fresh meat prices in the government's freeze on manufactured food prices, you will be surprised to hear that there are much more needy people around. These include the other three sausage and meat pie giants who were not quite so nifty as the Walls empire.

Just before the freeze, Walls upped their prices by around 5 per cent. Last Friday, the Ministry of Agriculture allowed Scott Bowyer, C and T Harris and Hygrade Ltd to increase their prices by 4 per cent on average. This is despite the fact that Sir Geoffrey Howe, Minister for Consumer Affairs, pledged in the House of Commons (8 November) that 'manufactured food-stuffs will be dealt with in the same way as other manufactured goods', or in simple terms, prices should be frozen.

The supposed justification for the sausage and pie rises is the increase in the cost of imported pork and beef. This ignores the fact that much if not all of the contents are home produced. And pies and sausages are hardly renowned for actually containing such things as meat.

Killing of the week

OVER past weeks rather large amounts of money have been made in a company called the Manchester Ship Canal Co. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending which side you're on) it is not possible to identify the individuals who have been netting thousands of pounds for doing absolutely nothing.

On Friday 17 November a little party was held at Stockport Golf Club to celebrate rather belatedly the appointment of D K Redford as Manchester Ship Canal chairman. Amid the rather large quantities of free drink and food, Mr Redford gave the assembled businessmen and local dignitaries strong hints that they should buy some shares in his company, and fast. This was because sanction for property redevelopment was on the way.

Large numbers of those present presumably acted on his advice and in one week the shares rose from 260p to 320p. At absolutely no cost to themselves those in the know could have bought 1000 shares on Friday 17 November and sold them on Friday 24 November at a profit of £600.

But unfortunately we will never know the names of those who have been reaping such rich rewards for doing absolutely nothing. The Manchester Ship Canal does not have to publish directors' share dealings.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK...

THE GOVERNMENT of the Green Tory Republic of Ireland last week dismissed the entire board of directors of the Irish state television and broadcasting authority. The sacked men were not socialists or republicans. They were, as the Guardian newspaper delicately put it, 'generally sympathetic to Fianna Fail and its policies'.

In other words they were basically Jack Lynch's men. Their crime was that they did not see themselves simply as office boys, paid to carry out the government's every whim. They wanted to exercise a little judgement, a little discretion of their own in deciding just how best to serve the interests of the wealthy classes in Ireland.

Such limited 'freedom of expression' is no longer tolerable to Lynch and his associates. Now that they are themselves becoming more and more openly the office boys of British imperialism in Ireland they are driven to clamp down on all dissent. This is the background to the so-called 'trial' and the imprisonment of Sean MacStiofain.

MacStiofain was charged under the Offences against the State Act, the 26 County equivalent of the notorious Six County Emergency Powers Act. He was brought before a 'special court' of judges selected for political reliability. There was of course no jury since it would have been impossible to persuade a jury to convict.

The prosecution lacked evidence. The journalist they hauled into court to identify MacStiofain's voice on a tape recording courageously refused to do so. No matter. The judges demonstrated their loyalty to Lynch by imprisoning the journalist Kevin O'Kelly for three months for contempt of court and then going on to convict MacStiofain notwithstanding the small matter of the collapse of the prosecution case.

Fullest support

Dublin journalists struck within hours of the imprisonment of their colleague in a magnificent demonstration of solidarity. They are not a notably radical group but they recognise only too well the truth of the Provisional Sinn Fein statement that the sacking of the broadcasting authority, the jailing of Kevin O'Kelly and the railroading of MacStiofain are part of a pattern 'leading towards tyranny'. The journalists' action has led to O'Kelly being released on bail. All charges must be dropped.

This is not simply a 'domestic' Irish matter. Lynch is acting as Heath's agent. Sean MacStiofain was imprisoned because the British government wanted him imprisoned. He was imprisoned because he is a militant opponent of British imperialism in Ireland. He was imprisoned for doing what the present President of the Republic of Ireland and founder of Fianna Fail, Eamonn De Valera, did in his time, for doing what Sean Lemass, Lynch's predecessor as Prime Minister, did in his time. He was imprisoned for fighting for a united Ireland free from alien rule.

Though we are not in agreement with the policies and tactics of the Provisional IRA, we wholly support the aim of ending British rule in Ireland, both open rule in the North and indirect rule through what is now a puppet government in the South.

We support it, as all genuine socialists must, because every people has the right to self-government, because the enemies of Irish nationalism are also our enemies and because, in the profoundly true words of Karl Marx, 'No people which oppresses another can itself be free.'

All possible support must be given to the campaign to free Sean MacStiofain

TOOLS OF TYRANNY

WE CAN expect no help from those wretched tools of the employing class, the Fabians. With superb timing, these comically misnamed 'socialists' have celebrated the MacStiofain trial by proposing an 'Emergency Powers Act' for Britain as a whole!

It would be complete with 'special courts', powers to make organisations illegal, powers of internment, police powers to stop and search and hold without charge and to seize 'articles or evidence of unlawful activity.' If the Labour Party, to which the Fabians are affiliated, retained the slightest shred of socialist aspiration or even self-respect it would immediately expel these would-be tools of tyranny.

6 COTTONS GDNS, LONDON E2 8DN



FRED THE RED

HELL knows no fury like the Parliamentary Labour Party on the subject of food price rises. On 21 November, the wretched Joseph Godber, Minister of Agriculture, was subjected to a barrage of protest and abuse about rising food prices and the government's failure to control them during the freeze.

Outstanding among the Labour protesters was Fred Peart, Shadow Minister of Agriculture.

'Is the Right Hon. Gentleman aware,' shouted Peart above the hubbub, 'that there is now supposed to be a freeze on prices? What will he do about it? Is it not a fact that lower income groups now face considerable hardship because of the high price of food under the present administration?'

No one is better qualified to speak on the subject of food price rises than Fred Peart, and not just because he is a former Minister of Agriculture. Fred is also a director of the Fatstock Marketing Corporation, which sounds like a public body but is in fact Britain's largest meat wholesaler. 36.9 per cent of FMC shares are owned by the National Farmers Union, the employing body.

In addition, FMC run one of the country's biggest chains of butchers' shops and numerous sidelines in poultry, animal skins and slaughterhouses.

This year's company report, out last July, showed profits steady at £1.6m. The Investors Chronicle (14 July) reported that the Company's increased turnover (from £182m to £203m) 'reflects both volume and price increases'. The need for increased prices in the future was outlined by the chairman, Sir John Stratton, in a section entitled: *Prospects for 1972-1973*.

'In general,' wrote Sir John, 'the trend of rising prices for meat and meat products must continue. Higher operating costs resulting from inflation must be met from higher gross margins and hence higher prices to consumers.'



Peart: £120 a week from your meat bill

'In addition, the trend will be accentuated as we move into the EEC. We are then committed to adopting by stages various devices (sic) employed by the Community to maintain an internal market price satisfactory to producers.'

It followed therefore that the government's prices freeze operated against 'the producers' interests'. On 24 November, three meat companies asked for and got government permission to break the prices freeze. They were Scott Bowyers, C&T Harris and Hygrade. C&T Harris is a subsidiary of the Fatstock Marketing Corporation.

Mr Peart has 1000 shares in FMC and gets £120 a week as a director. On the day before the freeze began, 6 November, they were worth 82p each. On 24 November, they were worth 94p. So in the first two weeks of the freeze the value of Mr Peart's shares in FMC rose by about £50 a week.

PS: Mr Peart is an opponent of British entry into the Common Market.

Ghose writer

THE HIGH journalistic standards employed by the News of the World reporters on The Strife Makers series was illustrated yet again on 12 November by Charles Sandell, who wrote about his alleged 'interview' with Ajoy Ghose, of the December

Black Power movement in Notting Hill.

The article consists in the main of lurid expressions of hatred against the white man and the importance of whipping up hatred and violence, especially among young people—all put into Ghose's mouth.

A purple passage read: 'As he talked, Ghose walked around his office in his bare feet. A young white girl sat listening, held spell-bound by his words. Ghose ignored me when I asked who she was. But occasionally he turned to her for confirmation of his views.'

So it's true! These beastly Black Power men do seduce defenceless young white girls with their poisonous ideas!

Except of course that the 'young white girl' referred to was Cathy Ghose, Ghose's wife, and that Cathy opened the door to Sandell when he arrived, telling him, almost at once: 'I'm Mrs Ghose.'

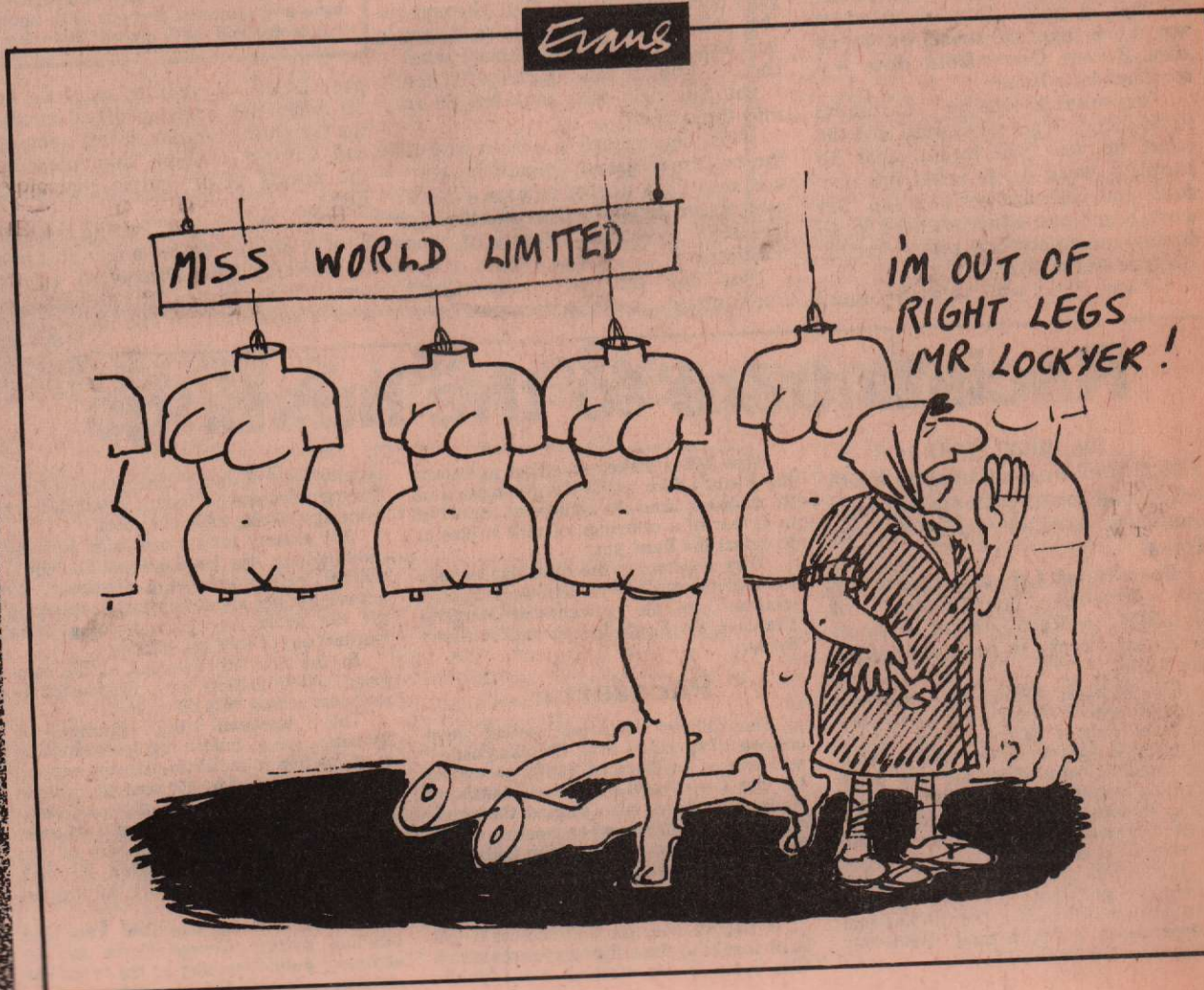
Unhappily for Sandell, Ghose has a transcript of a recording of the interview, which exposes what eventually appeared in the News of the World as a series of quotes which are either taken out of context or invented.

Poor marks

HAROLD GIBSON, the general secretary of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers, is very concerned about a settlement of the Indian workers' strike at the Mansfield Mill, Loughborough. His son works in the mill—as a supervisor.

Another man who wished the strike had never happened is Mr David Sieff, personnel manager of Marks and Spencer. Mr Sieff was until last spring the vice-chairman of the Institute of Race Relations, and persuaded his firm, which has always prided itself for its liberal race relations image, to give the Institute £1000.

Marks and Spencer, remember, own 20 per cent of the shares of the parent company of the Mansfield Hosiery, where racial divisions between black and white workers have been deliberately promoted and sell more than 90 per cent of the firm's products.



PRINTS

STEEL BAR

THE British Steel Corporation, while paying off workers in Ebbw Vale and allowing much of its plant in other areas to run down, is planning a massive investment in South African apartheid.

In co-operation with two West German firms, the corporation is planning an expansion of South African production which could cost more than a billion pounds.

In September this year, the Dutch newspaper, *To the Point*, reported that the BSC was planning a big switch in investment priorities from Britain to South Africa because of labour troubles, old plant and raw material costs. 'The schemes,' the article stated, 'would make it unnecessary for British Steel to replace many of its old steelmaking units, which are earmarked for closure.'

The new decision follows a history of increasing British Steel co-operation with the apartheid system since the Tory government was elected, and even before that.

In January 1971 British Steel awarded a contract worth £5.9 million for the supply of sophisticated steel production equipment to four South African companies.

At about the same time, Mr W N Menzies-Wilson, the corporation's director responsible for purchasing raw material (who is, incidentally, a former chairman of Stewarts and Lloyds, South Africa) was looking into the rich iron ore deposits in South Africa. A British Steel team recently visited South Africa's proposed new export ore harbour at Saldanha Bay on the Atlantic Coast in the Northern Cape.

The report, which recommends building production plant near the ore fields, is now with Lord Melchett.

The main reason why British Steel is considering moving its investment to South Africa is cheap labour. Eighty per cent of all African workers earn less than the official poverty line (£35 a month). Many black industrial workers earn less than £4 a week.

The deals, details of which are being worked out between representatives of British Steel and the South African state combine ISCOR, will enormously improve the power of the state in apartheid capitalism. The public sector share of total fixed investment has risen from 41 per cent in 1960 to 46 per cent in 1970.

Show Oleg

THE latest issue of *Quest*, the City of London University magazine, contains a long report of the 1972 Walmsley Memorial Lecture given to the Engineering Society earlier this year.

Subject of the lecture was 'Developments in bridge design from Sydney Harbour to Erskine,' and lecturer was Dr Oleg Kerensky CBE, Fellow of the Royal Society and partner in the well-known engineering firm Freeman Fox.

Towards the end of the lecture Dr Kerensky turned briefly to discuss the problem of aerodynamic instability in suspension bridges, which 'had been highlighted by the spectacular collapse of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in 1940.'

The breakthrough in tackling this problem came, according to Dr Kerensky, in the design of the box girder Severn Bridge, which was, strangely enough, carried out by his own firm, Freeman Fox and Partners.

Interestingly Dr Kerensky omits from his history of post-war bridge



OLEG: Kerensky by name, Kerensky by nature—see 'Show Oleg'

'spectacular collapses' at Milford Haven, in Wales, and Yarra, Melbourne, Australia. These two collapsed during construction, killing a total of 45 building workers—thanks to faulty design by Dr Kerensky's firm, Freeman Fox and Partners.

LORD CAMPBELL, the 'socialist' sugar king, chairman of Booker, McConnell, the 121st biggest company in Britain, recently chaired a discussion with the editorial staff of the *New Statesman* about the future of that learned weekly.

'We could, I suppose,' said the financial magnate, 'allow the circulation to settle down between 30,000 and 40,000 [the circulation at present is about 55,000], but then we'd have to charge 2s 6d a copy, which I'm sure is far too high.'

After an embarrassed pause, a minion pointed out that the price of the *New Statesman* is now 15p (3s in the old currency).

'Oh, dear,' smiled the charming peer, who is responsible for the lives of some 31,200 workers, 'I never could work out this decimal currency business.'



Free man and slaves

THE dashing young man in the picture is Mr John Freeman, the Left Labour MP for Watford from 1945 to 1955. The picture was taken in 1951 when young John Freeman resigned from Attlee's government in which he was junior minister at the Ministry of Supply. Freeman was outraged at the government's decision to impose charges for teeth and spectacles and thus damage the principle of a free Health Service.

The other two resigning ministers were Anéurin Bevan and Harold Wilson.

Freeman later became editor of the *New Statesman*, High Commissioner in India and Ambassador in Washington. Now he is chairman of London Weekend Television, in which capacity he introduced the company's accounts for the year ending last July.

Profits, he reported, were up from £2.37 million to £4.47 million, a marginal increase of 88.5 per cent. LWT has only a few more than 1000 workers, so this works out at about

highest such proportions in the country.

But Mr Freeman is all worry. 'LWT', he said, 'faces a disturbing rise in costs. For example, labour costs may rise by more than 25 per cent in two years. This should serve as a warning to all who live by television... that unless costs can be brought under control the quality and variety of programmes must in the long run inevitably suffer.'

Profits, in other words, are going up by 80 per cent a year and wages by 12½ per cent.

This scandal could lead to the situation where London Weekend Television puts out bad programmes.

What a relief that we have a socialist in charge who can point out these simple truths to the television workers.

Georgie gorgy

BUILDING workers, apparently, will be very welcome at this year's Annual Residential Property Seminar, which has been put together for the past five years by a fascinating organisation entitled Investment and Property Studies Ltd.

'The two main topics for the 1972 conference', according to the booking form which was sent to the Socialist Worker offices, 'are, predictably, land and money: commodities strongly connected, both becoming more difficult to obtain and requiring, therefore, a deeper understanding of their mechanics and the forces which control their supply...'

'This annual event has become the meeting place for developers and their advisers... Equally welcome are members from local government and all those who service or supply the housing industry.'

Most of the speakers were directors of building companies, but on 22 November, you could have heard Enoch Powell on 'the economic and social consequences of the UK housing market'.

Even more interesting, by all accounts, was the speech after tea on 21 November given by Mr George Smith, general secretary of UCATT, the builders' union. His title was 'Is a strong union necessary for the construction industry?'

One rude UCATT member has suggested an alternative title: 'Is a trade union bureaucrat necessary at a bosses' binge?'

Sorry, I nearly forgot. The do was in the London Hilton, and it cost

Knocking our health to boost the motor trade

THE ACTION of the Medical Officer of Health for Southwark in South London in offering to rehouse families in the area affected by fall-out from the Enthoven lead works in Rotherhithe may seem unnecessarily drastic.

Unfortunately it's probably not drastic enough, as the damage done already may well be irreversible. The Transport Workers Union had ascertained that there were high lead levels in workers at the factory for the last 12 months so the area as a whole has probably been contaminated for that period of time at least.

During this year the lead will have built up in the blood and the bones of the people who live around the factory, since the effects of lead are cumulative and the human body itself can only excrete at most one half of one thousandth of a gram a day.

The initial effects of lead poisoning are very difficult to distinguish from more familiar illnesses since the effects can include gastric disorders, constipation, headaches, pallor and seemingly psychological disorders such as depression and increased irritability.

In adults it is likely but by no means proven that the damaging effects can be substantially removed by treatment or by the patient leaving the contaminated region. In children, however, the long term effects are much more serious.

Nearly 30 years ago two American doctors wrote a research paper which described a 10-year follow up of 20 children treated for mild lead poisoning which they had suffered before the age of six. The children had all been cured of their immediate symptoms, but for 19 of the 20 children there was evidence that the brain did not develop normally thereafter.

Later research has produced broadly similar results. What is even more disturbing is the claim of Professor Bryce-Smith of Reading University that long term brain damage may result in children who do not show the normal immediate clinical evidence of poisoning.

Poisoning

The Rotherhithe poisoning affair like that at Rio Tinto-Zinc's Avonmouth smelter clearly demonstrates that the drive for profits is at the expense of working people in areas other than wage levels and that health control in capitalist society will almost always inevitably be ineffective.

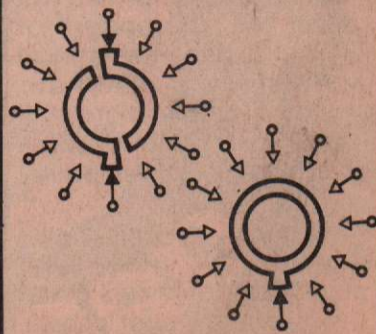
But serious though the Rotherhithe affair is there is an even greater misuse of lead for profits—the use of lead as an 'anti-knock' agent in cars.

The blood lead level of the average British adult living in a city is now 40 per cent of the level that is clinically accepted as producing clear lead poisoning symptoms. For children the percentage is even higher.

By comparison for a poison like mercury the average is about 2 per cent of the poison level in our blood. The clinical level is only a rough estimate and people differ by a factor of two in the amount of lead their lungs absorb and their sensitivity to lead poisoning.

The mild symptoms of lead poisoning have been found in adults whose lead levels were only 25 per cent greater than the average British urban levels. The proportion of lead in the air in British cities now frequently exceeds that proportion found to produce lead poisoning symptoms in rats exposed for a period of greater than two months.

SCIENCE



TIM SHALLICE

For children the situation is worse. A safety limit has been proposed by Professor Goldberg of Glasgow and a recent survey has shown that 30 per cent of a sample of British city children had lead levels in excess of the professor's safety level.

This situation is a new one. Studies of the amount of lead in glaciers has shown that the lead entering the atmosphere has increased by 400 per cent in the last 25 years. This rise results in the main from the enormous increase of lead content in petrol.

High-compression engines, introduced by car companies to raise power and boost sales, had a knock which actually reduced power. This knock can be removed most easily by the addition of lead compounds and this is now standard in high octane petrols required for high-compression engines.

Evasions

It has been known for many years that there may be injurious effects from such high lead concentrations. Yet the attitude of car and petrol companies and of governments has been a mixture of lies and evasions.

Consider what a government spokesman said in the House of Lords last year: 'The amount of extra lead we get from pollution by exhaust gases is comparatively small. I accept that we may be better off without it, but if we do without it we have to use low octane petrol. It is a matter of economics and sense.'

His economics and our senses! As far as the petrol companies are concerned an extra penny or so on petrol (the cost of doing without lead) would reduce profits in a cut-throat industry.

Much better to poison the population.

An International Socialists pamphlet

STUDENTS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Susan Buddle Richard Noss Colin Sparks

The struggle for socialism can only be won by the working class, but other sections of society are always drawn into the action. The International Socialists believe that students can and must be won into political alliance with the workers, and this pamphlet analyses the role of students and of the 'student movement' in an attempt to show the way forward.

Price 15p, plus 3p postage, from IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Another big step forward

From January International Socialism journal will move from quarterly to monthly publication.

This change marks a significant step forward in the development of the International Socialists and their contribution to Marxist theory.

The new journal, with a new design and format, will reflect the development of the British and international workers' movement. Monthly publication will enable us to write in depth on the contemporary political scene.

Although the journal will remain the theoretical publication of the IS group it will find space for debate, comment and polemic on the important issues of the day.

The price of the monthly journal will be 15p.

International Socialism 51



SPECIAL OFFER

Special bargain subscription rates will be available until 31 January 1973:

A six-month subscription to IS journal for 80p, including postage (normal rate £1.05)

OR

A combination offer of IS journal AND Socialist Worker: a six-month subscription to both for £2.25, including postage (normal rate £3.05).

Please send me

* IS journal for six months

* IS journal and Socialist Worker for six months

I enclose cheque/postal order for

* 80p

£2.25

NAME

ADDRESS

Post this form to IS journal special offer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 6DN

* delete as appropriate

Socialism on the map

Three years ago, the only International Socialists branch in S E Lancashire was in Manchester. Now there are branches in Stockport, Oldham, Blackburn, Salford, Stretford, Burnley and Rochdale. A Middleton branch will be launched in the next few weeks.

Our members include engineers, builders, teachers, local government workers, white collar workers, students, housewives and tenants. Over these years we've gained a lot of good members and at last we can play a small but increasingly influential part in the local labour movement. We are beginning to put revolutionary politics on the map in the Greater Manchester area.

Report by Wendy Henry and Glyn Carver

MANCHESTER tenants are involved in the biggest rent strike the city has ever seen. The local press has virtually ignored it, probably hoping that if they look the other way this challenge to the Tories will just go away.

They are in for a big disappointment. Salford tenants are now in the fray and last week saw the start of a spectacularly solid rent strike by Oldham tenants. Even the Manchester Evening News can't ignore that.

STRATEGY

The next item on the agenda for the rent strikers is the creation of a fighting organisation covering the whole of the Greater Manchester area. The first step towards this is a conference of trade union and tenants' delegates from all over S E Lancs to work out a common strategy for the coming weeks and the main emphasis of this strategy is on the organisation of strong industrial support for the tenants' cause.

As Gavin Russell, an engineering shop steward and member of the important Ellor Street Tenants Committee in Salford, pointed out: 'Almost half of the workers in Salford are council tenants so they are already affected by the rent rises.' In January private tenants will be getting their increases, so one way or another most trade unionists will be in the fight against the unfair rent act. We have to convince them that industrial action is the way to win.'

ORGANISE

Railwayman Gerry Walsh, an Oldham tenants' leader, put it even stronger: 'We are fighting against the rent rises as hard as we know how and we are already going all out to get concrete support in the factories. But we must realise that the rents issue is only one part of the Tory attack on the working class and we have to be organised to fight back on every issue.'

'This is easier said than done as long as you have a Labour Party that betrays the workers' struggle at every turn. That's why we have to aim now at the building of a fighting socialist alternative to both the Labour and Tory parties.'



3000 Oldham tenants on the march—and a cinema sign that sums up their potential

in Manchester

Racism: IS takes up the challenge others ignore

IT is only a few weeks ago that a fascist, standing on a racialist platform, got 4000 votes in the Rochdale by-election. This is bad enough, but the real tragedy of the situation was that the three major parties who were also contesting the election refused to put up any fight against the growing racialist menace.

The only organised voice raised in Rochdale against the fascist candidate was that of the local branch of IS which campaigned with leaflets and meetings not only against racialism but also against the cowardice of the other parties in trying to ignore the issue.

Deafening

There could be no better demonstration of the urgent need to build a real socialist alternative than the Rochdale experience. As the level of racialist propaganda increases with the arrival of the Ugandan Asians and the fascists begin to crawl out of their holes to take advantage of it the silence of the local Labour parties in S E Lancashire has been deafening.

It was the same story in Blackburn two months ago when the fascists held a small demonstration aimed at convincing the local population that it was the immigrants, not the bosses, who were responsible for rising prices and high unemployment.

There again it was left to revolutionaries and immigrant organisations to organise the massive counter demonstration which drove the fascists from the streets.

It was the presence of large numbers of immigrants which made the demonstration particularly important. There is clearly a vital section of

the Asian community in Blackburn which will not sit idly by while racialism spreads.

Since the demonstration, these comrades have taken a further step forward. At a meeting of more than 300, an Asian Peoples Federation was formed which will unite Indians and Pakistanis in one militant, left wing organisation.

The International Socialists were invited to participate in the founding meeting and have pledged their full support for this united defence organisation. As long as this sort of organisation continues to develop and the number of revolutionaries in the area continues to grow, the fascists can be assured of a hot reception wherever they raise their heads.



Police in action on the Blackburn anti-fascist march

'A FIGHTING SOCIALIST PARTY —IT'S THE ONLY WAY FORWARD'



MIKE SMITH

Engineering is the major industry in the Greater Manchester district and it was here that rank and file engineers, with little or no support from the national leadership, put up a massive fight for the engineers' national claim earlier this year.

Mike Smith, convenor of Ferrantis, Hollinwood (one of the factories occupied in the engineers' struggle) assesses the fight and the way forward both in the union and in fighting the Tory government.

ALTHOUGH rank and file engineers in the district put up a great fight, the whole thing was hampered by the union leadership's refusal to organise on a national level. The occupations could have ensured a speedy victory but only if they'd been complete occupations, with the bosses out of the factory.

In many cases the partial occupations or sit-ins worked against us with the management being able to spread lies and rumours among those workers sitting in. At our place the foremen rushed around here, there and everywhere doing their best to demoralise the lads.

WAYLAID

Control of the dispute by the stewards was the only way secret deals could have been prevented. They could also have organised financial and solidarity actions around the country and actually spread the occupations outside the district.

As it was any attempt to gain momentum for the fight was waylaid by the union officials. The tragedy is that it could all happen again unless rank and file militants get properly organised and can bring enough pressure to bear on the leadership to force them into making a national stand.

Trafford Park workers hold SW discussions

AT TRAFFORD PARK, once one of the largest industrial complexes in Europe, now beset by tens of thousands of redundancies, a Socialist Worker discussion group meets fortnightly to discuss such problems as redundancies and wider political issues.

RON MURPHY, a worker at AEI, reports on the group's progress: 'It was established after a very successful meeting held on the GEC Anti-Report, produced by Counter Information Service. Two of the report's authors came up to debate with the management. Needless to say the management chickened out.'

500 copies of the report had been sold at Trafford Park and about 30 workers packed the meeting. Out of it came the decision to form a combine committee of GEC workers and also to launch a rank-and-file engineers' paper. It was also decided to hold regular Socialist Worker discussion meetings. So far the group has discussed what socialists should be doing in the factories, the prices and incomes fraud, and racialism. Future meetings include the press, the Rent Act, equal pay and the Industrial Relations Act.

There's a great feeling of comradeship at these meetings, a common bond among people all in the same boat. We hope to expand our group and establish groups in other industrial areas.

As for Socialist Worker, it's recognised as being the best socialist paper there is. Especially since it went to 16 pages, it's packed with informative and relevant articles. It arms militants with facts and arguments for their case. I look forward to the time when it goes daily.'

This means forming combine committees in plants such as the GEC/AEI complex, so that we can start attacking on a company basis rather than the odd factory here and there making a stand and getting picked off by the Employers' Federation. There must also be more effective involvement at branch level.

Organisation is the key, not only in the fight in the unions but also in the wider political struggle. Take the Tories, who are constantly passing anti-working class legislation, the very thing the bosses put them in for.

DETEST

Militants have got to realise that with the industrial strength at our disposal we can bring down this lousy government. The solidarity shown for the dockers against the Industrial Relations Act could defeat all Tory legislation—the Rent Act, the wage freeze as well as the anti-union law. It's time to stand up and say: 'Tory or Labour we're not going to take it.'

Many workers even up to five years ago believed that the Labour Party, however slowly, could build a socialist state. Today the majority of them detest the Tories but see no alternative in Labour.

A confused minority might be fooled into looking to the Liberal Party. To my mind the only real alternative is to build a revolutionary fighting organisation. More and more workers are asking 'where do we go from here?' The answer has got to be to commit ourselves to building such a socialist party. The International Socialists are attempting to do this and although we've a long way to go I think we've made an impressive start.

Apartheid? we need the trade, they said...

BY BASKER VASHEE

BRITISH capitalism detests apartheid. So does the Labour Party. Barbara Castle wrote in 1963: 'There are few people in this country today who are not repelled by the doctrine of apartheid.'

The denunciation of apartheid by the Labour leadership is based on 'christian' or 'moral' principles.

The establishment of capitalism in Southern Africa was also based on 'christian' and 'civilising' principles. To Cecil Rhodes this meant removing 'the native from that life of sloth and laziness, teach them dignity of labour and make them contribute to the prosperity of the state and make them give some return for our wise and good government.'

Historically, apartheid and capitalism are intimately linked. The £1600 million of British investment in South Africa and the £250 million in Rhodesia underwrite and benefit hugely from apartheid. All major British firms—RTZ, British Leyland, ICI, British Steel, Dunlop, GEC—have major investments in Southern Africa.

Crimes of Smith and Vorster

To Harold Wilson South Africa is 'a market of particular importance in view of its position as an important gold producer... Exports to this market may indeed not only save dollars, but earn us gold, and in view of its importance as a long-term market it can be placed pretty well on the par, though for different reasons, with the three permanently important markets.'

The 1964 Labour victory was joyfully greeted in Rhodesia and South Africa by the Africans, the mainsufferers from racial domination. It was calculated that no self-respecting Labour government could tolerate Smith or Vorster and the crimes they were perpetrating against the black majority.

In 1964, Harold Wilson himself wrote, 'the Labour Party was totally opposed to granting independence to Southern Rhodesia so long as the government of the country remained in the hands of a white minority.'

The nationalist leaders in detention in Rhodesia, the thousands of political prisoners languishing in jail and the workers and peasants, all felt a certain hope, that finally the days of white minority rule were numbered. The hope became justified and grew as Labour leaders publicly and loudly condemned racialism in general and apartheid in particular.

Britain's big investments

But these hopes were short-lived. Within a year of taking power, Wilson began negotiating an independence constitution with the 'illegal' Smith regime and the Labour government began heralding the 'technological' revolution in Britain by encouraging trade, and investment in South Africa grew from £1300 million to £1500 million. There was worse to come. In 1965 Anthony Wedgwood Benn gave the go-ahead for the UK Atomic Energy Authority contract with the Rio-Tinto Zinc Corporation for the supply of uranium until 1980 from its mine in Namibia. This had the tragic consequence of strengthening South Africa's hold over Namibia, where apartheid was slowly being established.



Barbara Castle: condemned apartheid when in opposition

him a sympathetic letter, stating: 'We have firmly resisted political pressure to terminate the preferential access enjoyed by South African products. Our concern to see this valuable trade develop and to avoid any economic confrontation with South Africa has been made repeatedly clear in parliament and in the United Nations.'

Nor was there any move by the Labour government to stop NATO arms being used against the freedom fighters in the Portuguese 'colonies'.

To the African movement this came as a shock, but a valuable lesson

was learnt. As in Britain, Labour was there to make capitalism more efficient and competitive. It was ridiculous to condemn apartheid without condemning and changing the economic system that was its basis.

British investment benefits from cheap labour in Southern Africa. In gold mining an African miner earns no more in real terms than he did in 1911. This horrible exploitation, with its consequent malnutrition, death, separated families, but huge profits attracts capital. Apartheid is necessary for capitalism.

The Labour government's dedication to capitalism meant its impotence against apartheid.

Indeed when Labour was in opposition in 1963, Barbara Castle wrote: 'In the economic field there can be no such thing as a non-intervention policy towards South Africa. Not only is British investment steadily increasing; it is playing an integral part in underwriting the apartheid policy.'

**NEXT WEEK:
Labour East of Suez**

International Socialism 53

Sit-Ins: The Experience



Lessons
of the
Sit-in
Decline
of
Reformism
Chile:
Time
for
decision
'Marxist'
Left
in
India
The
Fourth
International

October issue now out: 20p, or £1 for a year, from
IS JOURNAL, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Student trial reveals big business links with university

STIRLING — IN THE

DISCIPLINARY hearings against the 24 Stirling University students charged following demonstrations against the Royal visit in October resumed on Wednesday.

But the university authorities have already decided that as many guilty verdicts as possible must be recorded. In a private session during the previous week's hearings, the university's legal assessor let slip that 'after the students had been found guilty', sentences would be deferred 'until pleas of mitigation had been heard'.

Cost of the trial is estimated by the Council of Students Associations—the Stirling students' union executive—at around £30,000.

The authorities' purpose in spending this amount of money is to restore 'the faith' of the business community in their enterprise after various drunken journalists and their equally intoxicated newspapers reported that the Queen had been mobbed by students when she visited the university on 12 October.

TARNISHED

Just how desperate the authorities are to repair their tarnished image can be seen from the charges they have hastily trumped against the 15 students union representatives and nine other students. The crimes of the student union representatives are taking part in meetings prior to the Royal visit, those meetings being occasions where opposition to the visit was discussed and voted on, and failure in their responsibility to maintain order at disorderly meetings.

Linda Quinn, student union president and Jack Carter, the treasurer, are also charged with taking a prominent part in the occupation of the university library. In fact Linda Quinn spoke against the occupation.

CHAIRIED

Jack Carter is further charged with 'incitement'. This is believed to be a reference to the damning fact that he chaired student union meetings on the day of the Royal visit.

But it has not been enough for the authorities just to prosecute student union representatives for carrying out the instructions of mass meetings. The authorities also had to make some attempt to sustain the press absurdities about 'drunks' and 'mob violence'.



A section of last week's massive solidarity march at Stirling

MONEY MEN'S GRIP

BY LAURIE FLYNN

and disorderly charge against a randomly selected young woman. One man is charged with drinking from a bottle in the Queen's presence 'thereby causing her distress'.

It is widely believed that more serious charges will be brought against this subversive when it is discovered that he also said 'Good Health' to Her Majesty in Gaelic. And another student who committed the crime of saying 'Scotland for the Scottish, madam' in the Royal presence has been charged 'with using abusive language'.

Stirling University depends very heavily on donations from the business community for its survival and expansion. This is particularly the case since the Labour government made massive cuts in education and other social spending to correct the balance of payments and keep the Concorde up to the mark—policies followed to the letter by their successors.

SURFACE

The first foundation appeal was launched in 1966 with a target of £2 million. This sum was surpassed by the end of last year in the form of subscriptions or monies promised.

Among those who bought themselves a piece of the university were Babcock and Wilcox, William Collins (a rich printing business based on publication of the Bible), Distillers Company, General Motors, ICI, Joseph Rank, Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, Scottish Television, British Aluminium, the British Steel Corporation, Coats Patons and Baldwins and a host of others.

None of this is done from the kindness of the heart. It is only

the surface of a closely integrated relationship between education and big business.

At Stirling the best example of this concerns ICI. ICI's general manager, Mr A A L Challis, has a seat on the university court, the governing body. Mr T L Cottrill, the principal, is an ex-ICI man, as is the head of the disciplinary panel, Professor Bradbury, who used to work for the Mond division of that company.

Bradbury is also head of the Department of Industrial Science at Stirling. And it is a not uncommon occurrence for the professor to guide his researchers into work on certain problems which by chance happen to be of current concern to ICI-Mond or the firm's agricultural division at Billingham.

DRUNKEN STUDENTS MOB THE QUEEN

Unbiased reporting in the Mirror: the only drunks were at the Queen's booze-up

The reason for the Queen's visit was precisely to help raise the funds to perpetuate this kind of university. After Her Royal Highness had been paraded round the place, the authorities hoped, Stirling University's fund raising department would have really got to work to exploit the rosy climate she left behind. The money would really roll in to the second appeal.

But then the students, like miners, old-age pensioners, the inmates of prisons, dockers, Irish republicans and other serious threats to civilised society, had the temerity not merely to have independent ideas, but actually to do something about them.

They demonstrated against the absurdities of the monarchy, the way Royalty and education are used to further the interests of big business.

The press and responsible opinion generally worked themselves into a lather. Players, manufacturers and peddlers of tobacco, immediately stated that they would not cough up their promised contribution to the new appeal 'unless Stirling put its house in order'.

PROTEST

DCL (manufacturers of dozens of brands of intoxicating liquor) were similarly appalled at 'drunkenness in front of the Queen' and threatened to withhold their next contribution. (Parents of thalidomide children, please note.) A pack of other 'donors' followed suit.

The press had done its job well and the field was cleared for the show trial which is now under way. Fortunately, despite the attentions of the press and the education system, students throughout the country still will not lie down in front of Royalty, Distillers Company or the diktats of the so-called authorities.

They have launched a massive protest movement against the victimisation.

Actively supported as they are by the Stirling Trades Council, the Scottish Area of the National Union of Miners, representatives of UCS and thinking people throughout the land, this movement should ensure that the Business University is unable to extract its vengeance.

Put your house in order or we'll withdraw funds, top firms threaten

'Political and social freedom are not two separate and unrelated ideas, but are two sides of the one great principle, each being incomplete without the other.'



JAMES CONNOLLY

Works include:

- LABOUR AND EASTER WEEK
- LABOUR IN IRELAND
- SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM
- THE WORKERS' REPUBLIC

—each £1.05 plus 5p post and packing

ERIN'S HOPE AND THE NEW EVANGEL

—10p plus 3p postage

LABOUR, NATIONALITY AND RELIGION

—12p plus 2p postage

LABOUR IN IRISH HISTORY

—2p plus 3p postage

IS BOOKS

100 Cannon Gardens, London E2 8BN

Fakenham and David the pligh

JUST HOW about the pligh by its treat concern wo week increas Workers' Un make the bas Its concern £3.30 a week recommended about the 'syn farm workers.

A farmwo basic wage. He at a few all too A farm wo and a third on brings home at the £22 limit Supplement.

Skilled men earns £30 for a had a Christmas

A man ope takes home a week.

Because of men many wiv work. They ar masters—descr of the earth' to work in cre gang is picke after the child and it heads fo

The womé carrots in the fruit in the s weekly wage or machines don't earn averaged £6 months.

This is jus 'the lump', w sites. The wo or national i claim unemp benefit.

The gang fixed sum by the fields cl the gang toll their own pro

BL

WHAT are organising me workers? W respond as dockers, the building wo First of of isolation. fewer than workforce is down as mecl Secondly, the union. M bother to joi

STARVATION WAGES

Norfolk: Jenny Hawkes and Paul Feldman report on the lives of the farm workers

concerned the government is the plight of the low-paid can be seen in the case of farm workers. Its demand to stretch to the £8.50 a week—demanded by the Agricultural Wages Board—an increase that would stretch to the miserable £16.20 a week.

won't stretch to the miserable £16.20 a week. All we hear are a few kind words 'empathy the government feels' for

worker can't manage on the £16.20 a week. He is forced to work overtime. Look at the typical cases.

worker, married with two children the way, works a 54-hour week and gets £23 a week. This is just above the minimum he cannot claim Family Income Supplement.

are not much better off. A pigman works a 56-hour, seven-day week and hasn't a day off in 13 years.

operating a mechanical potato loader gets £22 for a 65-hour, seven-day week.

the low wages for farm workers have to go out to be recruited by gang leaders as 'the scum of the earth'—former gang members of 12 to 20. The typical morning starts off to school in the fields.

to lift potatoes or pumpkins in winter, and pick up the summer. There is no rain stops work. If it breaks down, they get a penny. One girl works over three

another version of the plagues building up. They don't pay tax, so cannot claim unemployment or sickness benefits.

masters are paid a premium for the farmers to have their land. They exploit the full to maximise their profits.



**NEWS
IN
VIEW**

...but without them we'd starve

Some women can find work in the food-processing factories. For instance, women can earn £10 a week peeling onions in a cold factory where the floor is usually covered with water. They have to eat their lunch in the factory itself since there isn't a lunchroom.

Or there is casual piecework in the evening. Rates are 5p for cutting the tops off ½cwt of carrots. Women in rural areas are clearly among the most exploited in Britain and have some of the

worst working conditions.

Why don't the farmworkers fight back—as they have done before?

In 1923 the farmworkers of Norfolk waged a bitter strike for four weeks against the farmers who were trying to force them to accept lower wages and longer hours. Tens of thousands of workers were involved. Flying pickets on bicycles moving from farm to farm stopped farmers using blackleg labour.

Police were drawn from all the surrounding counties to support the farmers and to try to break the farmworkers' resistance, but only the betrayal of the Labour Party leader, Ramsay MacDonald, finally brought the workers to accept a settlement. Although this was less than they had originally demanded, it was also more than the farmers were prepared to offer.

The experience of 1923 shows that farmworkers can organise militant action when their liveli-

hood is threatened. Why are they not able or willing to fight back now?

The freezing of the already derisory settlement—£3.30 a week from January—is a direct attack on their living standards. These were already abysmal, and had fallen in the face of rising prices.

Most of the proposed increase would have been swallowed up by increased rents and taxes and reduced benefits. The rest would not have kept up with prices.

In spite of this the only response to the freeze from Reg Bottini, general secretary of the Agricultural Workers' Union, is to say that farmworkers will 'vote

with their feet' and leave the industry. This is a strange thing to say when the level of real unemployment is over a million and more people are homeless than ever before.

The farmworkers and their union have relied too long on others to decide their fate. They need to regain the traditions forged by farmworkers in 1923, and which still wins battles for the miners, building workers and dockers in 1972. The only way they can protect their living standards and jobs is by their own militant action, helped by similar struggles throughout the trade union movement.

BACKMAIL HOLDS BACK A FIGHT

the difficulties of organising a fight among farmworkers do they fail to do the miners, the railwaymen and the others have done?

there's the problem of most farms employ casual workers—and the casual workers are continually being cut out of the industry.

there's the weakness of the farmworkers don't have a union and it hasn't

tried to organise temporary workers. In some regions union dues are collected by retired members. Educational programmes are considered an unnecessary luxury.

There is a lot of cynicism about what the union can and will do—and the higher-paid workers on large estates will not come out in support of the lower-paid.

Again, farmworkers, like nurses, come in for emotional blackmail. They are told they must think of the welfare of the animals. If they strike, the animals suffer.

Another reason for lack of mili-

tancy is the system of tied cottages. If a farmworker loses his job, he and his family lose their home.

The farmer takes advantage of this in many ways. Repairs to the houses are delayed. At election time Conservative Party posters are brought around for the tenants to put in their windows. Overtime on Sundays and late at night can hardly be refused. And in most rural areas there are few alternative jobs going.

Finally, farmworkers have undergone 50 years of appeasement in which their union could only beg for favours from a Wages Board domi-

nated by the farmers and the government. So they have lost confidence in their ability to fight and win.

Their power is considerable. Food production is critical to the economy; we all need it and it is a major item in the balance of payments. A carefully-timed strike—for example at harvest time—could undermine a whole year's work.

A further source of strength for farmworkers is the changing structure of control in farming. More and more, the big business that owns the food factories and supermarkets is buying up farms as well.

Action

The Imperial Tobacco Company, for example, controls 115 farms, 18 feed mills and six poultry processors through more than 30 subsidiary firms. Huge companies, such as J B Eastwood, are taking over more and more egg and broiler chicken producers. Eastwood now controls 20 per cent of the market.

Takeovers and amalgamations have been encouraged by direct grants through the Labour government's 1967 Agricultural Act. Farming is now so capital intensive that there is almost four times as much fixed capital as in manufacturing.

So an effective militant strategy would be selective action aimed at the big companies, involving workers at all stages of production and processing.

If the sugar beet factories, the dairies and slaughterhouses stopped work, if the lorry drivers refused to handle farm produce, if the doctors blacked farm importers' reports, the government and the farmers would quickly be forced to give the farmworkers' demands.

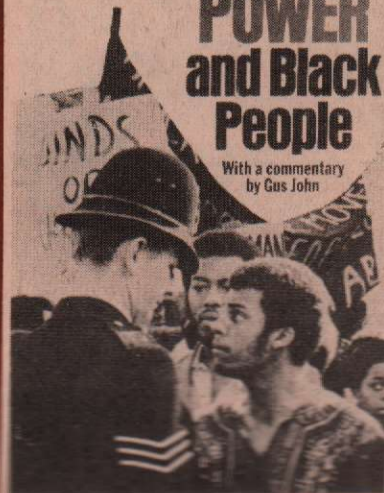
RACIALISM IN BRITAIN



Derek Humphry

**POLICE
POWER
and Black
People**

With a commentary by Gus John



'To many blacks in our cities, police harassment has become a way of life. The police are viewed as the army of the enemy, which is the immigration-controlling, arms-to-South-Africa-selling, friend-of-Ian-Smith British government.'

Price 40p, plus 5p postage

ALSO
The Rise of Enoch Powell
BY PAUL FOOT
Price 20p, plus 5p postage

IS BOOKS

6 Cottiers Gardens
London E2 6DN



They cheer the union during the 1923 strike. The cheers are muted now.

'The Communist Party has been converted to the view that there is a parliamentary road to socialism. It now believes that the aim must be to win a parliamentary majority...'

OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths

'GOVERNMENTS—Labour and Tory—come and go, but the key officials of the state go on.

'Persisting through every change of government are the heads of the armed forces, the police, the security network, the top civil servants in the main ministries, the judges, the controllers of the nationalised industries.

'Those selected for these posts have in the main, because of birth and education, training or career prospects, deep loyalties to capitalism, are conditioned to see their task as making capitalism work, and regard socialism as subversive.'

This very clear and absolutely correct statement is taken from the Communist Party's pamphlet *British Road to Socialism*. You will find no comparable statement in the Labour Party's literature because, of course, the Labour Party is and always has been a party committed to 'making capitalism work'.

True enough, it occasionally talks about socialism. MacDonald, Attlee and Wilson all found it expedient to make declarations of their socialist faith from time to time.

Harold Wilson, for example, told his constituents in 1965: 'I look forward to seeing the socialist commonwealth, and not only the socialist commonwealth in this country but an international movement.' Presumably he is still looking forward.

Problem

Such election speeches have never had the slightest effect on the policies of Labour governments. None of the four Labour governments had any real problems with the capitalist state machine because, though there might be differences about means, the ends were always the same—the preservation and strengthening of British capitalism.

The Communist Party is a different proposition. The Party was founded as a revolutionary socialist organisation and as such it had to face the problem of the nature of the capitalist state. It understood and apparently still holds that there can be no question of a 'neutral state', that any state is an instrument of class rule. So at its founding Congress in 1920 the Party took its stand for 'the Soviet (or Workers' Council) system as a means whereby the working class shall achieve power and take control of the means of production, . . . for the dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary means of combatting the counter-revolution during the

Parliament No Through Road

transition period between capitalism and communism and . . . [to] establish itself [as] the Communist Party on the foregoing basis.'

The Congress went on to define its attitude to parliament and parliamentary activity in these words: 'The Communist Party repudiates the reformist view that a social revolution can be achieved by the ordinary methods of parliamentary democracy, but regards parliamentary and electoral activity generally as providing a means of propaganda and agitation towards the revolution.'

This approach, the approach of Marx, Engels and Lenin, was and is the only correct and realistic one.

Decisive

It is not the approach of the Communist Party today. The Party has been converted to the view that, after all, there is a parliamentary road to socialism. It now believes, according to the *British Road to Socialism*, that 'the aim must be to win a parliamentary majority, pledged to decisive socialist change and actively backed by the working people . . . In this way, by political action, using our democratic rights to transform traditional institutions, parliament can be made into the effective instrument of the people's will, able to carry through major legislation to challenge capitalist power, and to replace capitalism by socialism.'

The 'British Road' certainly recognises that the 'socialist majority

in parliament will need the support of the mass movement outside parliament to uphold the decisions it has taken inside parliament.' It also calls for 'the leading positions in the ministries and departments, the armed forces and the police' and so on, to 'be filled by men and women loyal to socialism'.

These are not new ideas. At the very time when the Communist Party was being founded, 'left' social-democrats were advocating the same combination of reliance on parliamentary majorities plus outside support.

Indeed they went further. The Austrian Social-Democrats, the German Independent Social-Democrats and others were willing to accept Soviets as part of the constitution—alongside parliaments, as long as the supremacy of parliament was recognised.

Hypocrisy

The leaders of the communist movement denounced these views most vehemently.

'Only scoundrels and simpletons,' wrote Lenin in 1919, 'can think that the proletariat must first win a majority in elections carried out under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage slavery, and must then win power. This is the height of stupidity or hypocrisy; it is substituting elections, under the old system and with the old power, for class struggle and revolution.'

Lenin was right. The reason is obvious enough. If socialists pin their faith in electoral victories, they will inevitably subordinate all their activities to electoral success. They will inevitably go the way of the Labour Party and other social-democratic parties.

Does this mean that socialists advocate the seizure of power by a minority? Not at all.

As Lenin pointed out: 'Real life and the history of actual revolutions show that the sympathy of the majority of working people cannot be demonstrated by any elections, to say nothing of elections supervised by the exploiters with "equality" of exploiters and exploited.'

BOOKS

REVIEW

Chances they missed

PREPARING FOR POWER, by J T Murphy, Pluto Press, £1 paperback £3 hardback. (See opposite page for special offer for IS members.)

JOHN THOMAS MURPHY wrote this book shortly after leaving the Communist Party in 1932. From the age of 13 he had worked in the engineering industry and had emerged as a leader of the shop stewards' movement in Sheffield during the First World War.

He was acknowledged as a leading theorist of that movement and soon became a national figure in the revolutionary movements of that period. He played a key part in the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1920.

The real strength of this book is in its history of that early period. Murphy's account of the working-class movement in the first quarter of this century is compelling. He offers genuine insights into the reasons why the socialist movement could not and did not seize the immense opportunities offered by the massive strikes which were taking place.

The reformism and the 'Liberalism' of the leaders of the official Labour Party are neatly exposed. So too is the often self-imposed narrowness of the existing revolutionary groupings and their disastrous underestimation of the role of the state. Above all Murphy is uniquely well placed to document the emergence of the shop stewards as an independent class force.

If the strength of this book is its history, then its weakness is its political conclusions.

Murphy's closing judgments will be challenged by many. He maintains that the Communist Party should never have been formed, and asserts that by putting itself apart from the Labour Party it effectively strengthened the Right.

James Hinton's lucid introduction puts the bizarre political views of the late Murphy into the background setting of the trial and defeats of the period.

Despite its sad conclusions, the book remains a superb account of our movement during a crucial period of our history.

ROSS PRITCHARD

Getting ready for struggle

DIRECT ACTION, by William Gallacher and J R Campbell, Pluto Press 20p.

THE First World War began with a great betrayal. Throughout Europe practically all the official leaders of the labour movement supported their own ruling classes in the slaughter.

It ended with a great surge of working-class struggle following the successful revolution in Russia. Workers' councils sprung up in Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy. Britain was swept with massive strike waves.

Revolution seemed within the workers' grasp. All over the world Communist Parties were formed, inspired by the Bolshevik example.

But this period was not simply one of huge class battles. There was also a turmoil of revolutionary thought which we are only now beginning to re-discover. The re-publication of Campbell and Gallacher's *Direct Action* is part of that re-discovery.

The booklet is about two closely related and perennial themes of the socialist movement. How can the workers reorganise themselves to fight the new battles thrust upon them? What is workers' power and how can it be won?

These questions are put concretely against the background of the stewards' movement in the engineering industry, which grew as a reaction to the collaboration of the engineering union leaders with the government in war-time production. To fight their unofficial battles the shop stewards formed area workers' committees in various towns and by the end of the war these had a national link-up—the National Shop Stewards and Workers Committee Movement.

The authors proposed to build a new system of organisation on the workshop. Delegates should be elected to shop and plant committees, and factories bound together by electing delegates to district and industrial councils. Finally they should elect delegates to a national council.

Such an organisation would be ultra-democratic and would overcome craft and sectional divisions. They also proposed the formation of social committees which would organise workers' supplies in the great struggles they foresaw. In the face of this fighting workshop organisation, they thought the official trade unions would either have to imitate or lose real importance.

But Gallacher and Campbell did not see the workshop organisation they proposed as simply a fighting body for day-to-day struggles. They constantly re-assert the socialist message that the goal of the workers' movement must be the overthrow of capitalism.

They were convinced that to achieve this required a revolutionary struggle for power—smashing the capitalist state, the working class itself seizing the means of production. For the authors of *Direct Action* the workshop organisation and social committees, built up to fight the bosses, would be the means whereby the workers would run industry and society.

The embryo of the new society would grow in the womb of the old. Not, as the reformists believe, by piecemeal changes from above, gradually abolishing capitalism. But by the mass democratic workers' organisations of struggle becoming the organs of revolutionary power.

But the authors assume a process of patient building whereby rank-and-file movements would grow, somehow gradually transform themselves into workers' councils and seize power. In fact the process of revolutionary development has proved far more complicated than this.

The basis of shop floor power can be shattered by unemployment, as both the authors were to discover. There is a vital need to fight inside the official trade unions. Workers' councils don't grow gradually but appear suddenly in pre-revolutionary situations.

Real history has turned out to be more complicated than Gallacher and Campbell presumed. But as we dig it out and dust it down, for all its weaknesses *Direct Action* stands as an immensely fresh and relevant account of what the fight for workers' power means.

PETE GOODWIN

BOOKWORM'S EYE VIEW

SOCIALIST WORKER's international news of the working-class movement is crammed into one overcrowded page. But the International Socialists' mail order service can supply the newspapers produced all over the world by groups similar in outlook to the International Socialists. Better still, if more costly, you can subscribe to them direct.

THE WORKER is an eight-page newspaper produced bi-monthly in Dublin by the Socialist Workers Movement (one year's subscription is 80p from The Socialist Workers Movement, 30 Strandville Avenue, North Strand, Dublin 3). This paper has gone from strength to strength and its current issue, the ninth, is the best yet in its coverage of the Irish labour movement.

It also contains an in-depth analysis of the Southern Irish economy's changing relationship to European capitalism and a searing piece about child labour in Cork. If there is a weakness it is the rather scanty coverage of the struggle in the Six Counties.

UNFREE CITIZEN, the weekly news-sheet of the People's Democracy, was once called *Free Citizen*, until internment came. It is now essential reading if you want to find out what's really going on in Belfast. (Six months subscription

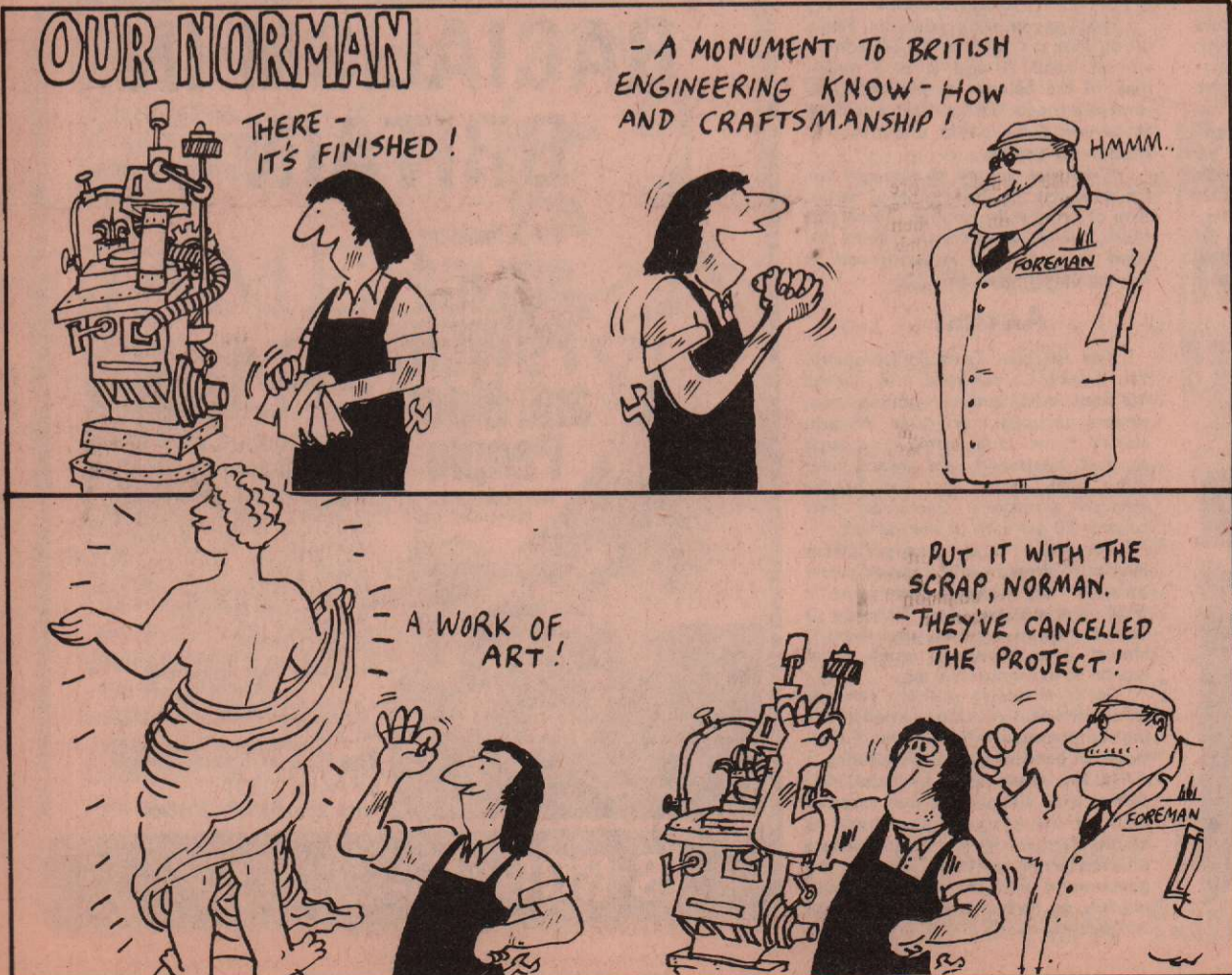
for 50p, from Paul Dillon, 50 Newry Road, Armagh.)

In America WORKERS POWER, the fortnightly paper of the American International Socialists, a group with whom IS has a fraternal but informal liaison, is another dramatically improved revolutionary paper.

Its coverage of the upsurge of rank-and-file trade unionism in America is excellent and it also covers the black, women's and gay liberation movements well. Refreshingly designed, it costs £1.60 a year, from 14131 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

LUTTE OUVRIERE (BP 152-06 75 263 PARIS CEDEX 06) provides well-informed marxist comment and coverage on the French labour movement and also runs a useful revolutionary *What The Papers Say* which reprints extracts from other papers on the French Left. Its independently-minded coverage of the international labour movement is invaluable with its analysis of the struggle in Britain often more clear and concise than that mustered by most British left groups.

All these papers and many others are handled at Cottons Gardens but, if you can afford it, direct subscription will help to worsen the balance of payments crisis.



PLEASE KNOCK THE TORIES...

ROLAND MULDOON reviews THE GENERAL WILL theatre group

IT WAS with a feeling of trepidation that I went to see the Bradford-based theatre group The General Will.

Most 'left' entertainments that I have experienced were, frankly, lousy. These groups, usually describing themselves as spontaneous, were to my mind so amateur that the only reason they were allowed to get through their performances was through the good will of their left audiences.

But the days of toleration are over. No longer can you treat a working-class audience as if you know what's good for them. The need for thought-provoking 'professional' entertainment is vital.

The General Will are good. The play I saw, State of Emergency, is a chronicle of the struggle since the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders work-in started.

There's 'lame duck' Davies conspiring against the Clydeside workers and being forced to change his tune. The audience become the Plessey workers being told they are being made redundant.

The actors change characters in a flash: from the nightmare of the justifiably paranoid Ted Heath to the rock-hard solidarity of the miners. We see Vic Feather playing at statesmanship with the Fairy Godmother Wilberforce arriving in the nick of time to save us all.

The play is interspersed with songs, including a sort of music hall novelty number in which every occupation since UCS is listed at great speed. The dockers' fight against Vestey's is given detailed analysis, while the railworkers are shown learning from the Manchester engineers' sit-ins.

So it goes on, bringing us up to date, pouring scorn on the so-called

'National Interest' that the Tory press scramble to thrust down our throats. Seeing the play is like having the news pages of Socialist Worker, over the past few years, flicked through at an accelerated pace.

The play confirms the feeling that our struggle is taking on new dimensions. But I thought it lacked a feeling for theory. There was little mention of socialism. The role of the Labour Party was left out. The play, while attacking capitalism, seems to single out only the Tories.

Pressures applied by the militants on the union bureaucrats are left untouched. A naive member of the audience might get the impression that things would get better if the nasty Tories were to be disposed of—'Oh, if only things would get back to normal'.

My other criticism is that too much is made of Heath being bent. I say this after having laughed at the scene in the play when our PM, scrambling around the floor looking for matches during a black-out, puts his hand on his secretary's tit. He exclaims: 'What the hell is that?'

The General Will is the first left group to hit the road full-time. They need your support—you need their plays.

They perform for as much money as they can get (which is sometimes nothing). They have five plays in all, one of which deals with the 'Fair' Rents Act. They also claim to be able cut their plays to fit in with time schedules.

So here's your chance to make your socials more interesting. Speculate a bit, advertise it well and you will be doing everybody a favour.

You can contact The General Will at 25 Ternhill Grove, Bradford 5, Telephone: Bradford 42915.



A character from The General Will's play

END PIECE

WITH Tricky Dick selling America another second-hand government and McGovern back in wheat country chaffing at his luck, perhaps the film The Candidate is a bit faded.

But it's worth a look, if only for the insight into the processing and packaging of a Californian candidate for the US Senate and how he's forced to compromise himself all down the line in the search of votes.

Robert Redford starts out as the people's advocate, doing good works for the blacks and poor. Then the local political machine picks him up and gives him his head to say what he thinks without any questions asked. It can't last—and it doesn't.

More and more he has to be all things to all men—young, old, ecology interests, local capitalists—and despite the soul-searching he doesn't find it too hard to accommodate his beliefs.

The film's strong on picking up grubby little deals with local Tammany Hall and union bosses. Redford even has to run after his father, an ex-Senator, after rumours that the old fool is backing Redford's rival, a local redneck strong on the old American virtues of family, flag and hypocrisy.

The film's weakness is that it is as slick and laundered a product as its subject. Trendy shots, a good-looking candidate and some woolly liberal phrases don't amount to much. Nixon's ominous plans for greater self-help and a 'Disraeli-type' government show what this business is really about—and The Candidate poses and answers nothing.

The Candidate is showing at The Bloomsbury Cinema, London. Columbia Warner say they are 'arranging' its national circuit release.

SECTARIANISM is often considered to be exclusive of the political left. Not so.

At London's National Film Theatre the London Film Festival is clearly bringing in all sorts of dubious elements. Inside an NFT phone box stood a man. He wasn't ringing anybody up. He was having a slash.

The commissioner knew what to do. He didn't hurl the offender into the Thames. He banged impatiently on the door. 'Are you a member sir?' he shouted.

Neil Hamilton

John Berger's challenge

JOHN BERGER, the marxist critic and novelist, was awarded the £5000 Booker Prize last week for his novel G. Accepting the prize in the plush surroundings of the Cafe Royal in London, he attacked Booker McConnell, the sponsors, for their exploitation of the people of the Caribbean, saying he will share the £5000 with the Black Panther movement.

Afterwards John Berger told television viewers he is a socialist and revolutionary. Here is part of his speech at the Cafe Royal:

SINCE you have awarded me this prize, you may like to know, briefly, what it means to me...

I took five years to write. Since then I have been planning the next five years of my life. I have begun a project about the migrant workers of Europe. I do not know what form the final book will take. Perhaps a novel. Perhaps a book that fits no category.

What I do know is that I want some of the voices of the 11 million migrant workers in Europe and of the 40 or so million that are their families, mostly left behind in towns and villages but dependent on the wages of the absent worker, to speak through and on the pages of this book.

Poverty forces the migrants, year after

year, to leave their own places and culture and come to do much of the dirtiest and worst paid work in the industrialised areas of Europe, where they form the reserve armies of labour...

Yet one does not have to be a novelist seeking very subtle connections to trace the £5000 of this prize back to the economic activities from which they came.

Booker McConnell have had extensive trading interests in the Caribbean for over 130 years. The modern poverty of the Caribbean is the direct result of this and similar exploitation... Thus my book about migrant workers would be financed from the profits made directly out of them or their relatives and ancestors.

Slavery

More than that, however, is involved. The industrial revolution and the inventions and culture which accompanied it and which created modern Europe, was initially financed by profits from the slave trade. And the fundamental relationship between Europe and the rest of the world, between black and white, has not changed.

In G the statue of the four chained Moors is the most important single image in the book. This is why I have to turn this prize against itself. And I propose to do so by sharing it in a particular way. The half I give away will change the half I keep...

Before the slave trade began, before

the European de-humanised himself, before he clenched himself on his own violence there must have been a moment when black and white approached each other with the amazement of potential equals.

The moment passed. And henceforth the world was divided between potential slaves and potential slavemasters. And the European carried this mentality back into his own society. It became part of his way of seeing every thing.

The novelist is concerned with the interaction between individual and historical destiny. The historical destiny of our time is becoming clear. The oppressed are breaking through the wall of silence which was built into their minds by their oppressors.

And in their struggle against exploitation and neo-colonialism—but only through and by virtue of this common struggle—it is possible for the descendants of the slave and the slavemaster to approach each other again with the amazed hope of potential equals.

This is why I intend to share the prize with those West Indians in and from the Caribbean who are fighting to put an end to their exploitation. The London-based Black Panther movement has arisen out of the bones of what Bookers and other companies have created in the Caribbean; I want to share this prize with the Black Panther movement because they resist both as black people and workers the further exploitation of the oppressed.

PREPARING FOR POWER

by J T Murphy



IN this book first published in 1934, Murphy considers the role and success of the revolutionary left 50 years ago and explains its later isolation. He focuses on the syndicalism before the First World War, on the wartime shop stewards' movement and on what happened to them after the war. The author was a key figure in this first shop stewards' movement, a founder member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and one of its leaders until he left it 12 years later.

from The Daily Worker, April 1934...

'It would be a criminal waste of six shillings for any worker to spend it on Murphy's book. A good dose of Epsom-salt is much cheaper...'

This edition contains a new introduction by James Hinton. Publication date 26 November, 296 pages, £1 paperback, £3 hardback plus 15p postage.

Special offer to Socialist Worker readers:

FREE hardback copy of Victor Serge's novel BIRTH OF OUR POWER with every copy of Murphy's book, £1 plus 21p postage.

PLUTO PRESS, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH

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'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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 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
Dundee
Edinburgh
Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling

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

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Dewsbury
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Ponffract/
Knottingley
Scarborough
Salford
Sheffield
York

EAST
Barnet
Barnet
Cambridge
Chesham
Chesham
Harrow
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

NORTH WEST
Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Burnley
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
Preston
Rochdale
Salford
St Helens
Stoke
Stockport
Trafford
Wigan
Wrexham

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

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

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

WALES and SOUTH WEST
Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
Swansea Valley

SOUTH
Brighton
Canterbury
Slough
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Wandsworth
Watford
Woolwich

THE UNIONS

Two-faced Tories

dodge Equal Pay issue

by Margaret Renn
MAURICE MACMILLAN, the Secretary of State for Employment, has made yet another statement about equal pay for women. The government, he says, is going to consult with the TUC and the CBI again about the need to introduce an Order in parliament, under the Equal Pay Act, to 'force' the employers to pay women 90 per cent of men's wage rates by the end of next year.

Such statements are becoming a little familiar, but nothing has happened so far.

Avoid

The cause of their concern seems to have been the findings of the Office of Manpower Economics—a government department—in a survey on progress towards equal pay. Women's basic rates are, on average, 20 per cent lower than men's—their take-home pay is about half.

The Equal Pay Act is intended to close this gap. Between May 1971 and May 1972, the survey showed, it narrowed by 2.4 per cent. This progress is too slow if the government and the employers are to avoid a big 'inflationary' push in 1975, which is why the Act contains the '90 per cent by 1973' provision.

But Macmillan has not suddenly been overcome by the cause of equal pay. His public statements are just about as two-faced as the rest of the government's pay freeze.

He refused to commit the government to introduce the interim order, but did say that he was going to have



Macmillan: no legal sanctions

consultations with the unions and employers. He has already had one such meeting on this subject with them last August, on the same day that he made his first public statement to the Commons. At the private meeting with the TUC and CBI it was made clear that no such progress towards equal pay could be made.

The truth of the matter is that they cannot introduce an order which is actually going to improve women's wages when they have already imposed a total wage freeze.

Forced

Macmillan also said that the government has little or no evidence that employers are 'deliberately seeking to avert the Act'. Which is just the point that the OME study

made—the employers are doing nothing about the Equal Pay Act.

The only way the employers will concede what little they have to under the Act—that it, equal pay for the same work—is by being forced to either by the government or by women and the unions. The government has neither the inclination nor the power to do this—there are no legal sanctions under the Act which can be used against the employers.

Smokescreen

The only way equal pay will be achieved is by women fighting for it themselves and by not accepting the limitations of the Act. Women don't just want equal pay where it is clear they are doing the same job as a man. They want equal pay for work of equal value.

And this does not mean accepting the job evaluation exercises, as laid down in the Act, to prove their case.

Women workers must see through the smokescreen of the government's public statements, and give notice that they want NOW what they are sick of waiting for—Equal Pay, with no strings attached.

Those unions that are officially committed to equal pay must put their words into action and prepare to use industrial strength to win a small degree of justice for the millions of women workers who are doubly exploited by the system.

Teachers' leaders attack militants

by Hester Blewitt

UNION leaders are rather fond of trotting out the excuse of rank and file 'indifference' or 'apathy' when challenged to pursue a stronger and more militant line on policy. But when the members do start to fight the leaders react with bans and witch-hunts.

In September the Young Teacher conference threw out the current salary policy of the National Union of Teachers in favour of a programme that stressed the rate for the job and a single salary scale.

The conference has no constitutional power to make policy but it represents half the NUT members who are under 35 years. The national executive of the union, composed mainly of head teachers, had been rather complacent about the potential of the membership for adopting left-wing ideas.

Cocky

Before the Young Teacher debate, Max Morris, senior NUT vice-president and a Communist Party member, had cockily assured the press that the conference would heartily endorse the executive's salaries policy. He was forced to eat his words and now the entire leadership has had to re-think its line that the Rank and File group (see last week's issue), which is mainly responsible for pushing for socialist policies in the NUT, was just a tiny group of ineffective wreckers and troublemakers.

The weekly NUT journal The Teacher now has an editorial policy of not mentioning Rank and File by name. Perhaps it thinks it can wish it out of existence.

More ominous is last week's executive decision to discontinue the Young Teacher conference and the

Young Teacher Advisory Committee, to stop financing Young Teacher sections attached to local NUT branches and to bring down the age limit of members in Young Teacher sections from 35 to 27.

This is a deliberate move to eliminate the occasions when militants can speak to large numbers of teachers—the young ones and those who do the real job in the classroom, who are at the bottom of the salary scale and at the end of the teacher hierarchy in the schools.

Poach

Because the Young Teacher movement has never been a constitutional part of the union the executive can just vote it out of existence. And if the ordinary members are unable to penetrate the blue-eyed boys' re-union that calls itself the NUT annual conference, then that decision will be ratified there with a nod and wink.

In the long term, NUT members cannot afford to be isolated in special sections of the union. Teachers already have the problem of sectional unions like the Schoolmasters successfully poaching members. Many teachers have rejected unionism altogether as a way out of the increasing difficulties in schools.

And yet nationally and locally the union leadership seems terrified of the ordinary members becoming involved and attempts to stifle criticism by arbitrary bans and claims that the union must be 'non-political'.

The NUT leaders' panic tactics may succeed in driving people away by their monopoly of control. It is up to the militants to patiently win more teachers to the realisation that only by involving themselves in decision-making will they be able to create a fighting organisation to win real gains.

Resolutions

GLASGOW Central Branch of the Electricians and Plumbers Union, formed recently after the closure of Glasgow Central and Number One branches and representing around 5000 sparks, has sent a resolution to the union executive calling on it to press for a recall TUC conference to plan action against the Tory government's wage freeze.

NEATH number one branch of the AUEW passed a resolution unanimously on 3 November calling on the national executive to give full support to the Fine Tubes strikers and for the operation of Rule 15 clause 5, which gives the executive discretion to make payments even after the period of one year's strike pay is finished. Norman Thomas, chairman of the Joint Craft Stewards Committee at British Steel Corporation, Margam, seconding the resolution, said: 'I am disturbed and disappointed at the support the executive have given the Fine Tubes strikers to date.'

BRADFORD Trades Council on 16 November carried the following motion moved by the University branch of ASTMS: 'This ASTMS branch calls upon Bradford Trades Council to condemn the activities of the British Campaign to Stop Immigration and the racist and fascist organisations who scapegoat black immigrants for the unemployment, inadequate housing, education and social services caused by employers, landlords, bankers and Tory government policy. We also call upon the Bradford Council Labour Group to pursue policies which ensure a decent standard of living for all Bradford's population.'

MAGAZINE AND BOOK branch of the National Union of Journalists carried by an overwhelming vote a motion from its branch committee calling for opposition to the government wage freeze and for the union to pursue wage claims regardless of the freeze, using normal union action to secure pay increases.

The branch also passed a motion calling on its executive to launch a campaign jointly with SOGAT to unionise the fast-growing book publishing houses. This motion has been endorsed by the executive.

Brief look at China is not the final word

NO SOCIALIST likes to be compared to Enoch Powell, but Barry Turner's letter (25 November) raises some other points which need answering.

International Socialists do not consider the present rulers of China as in any sense 'our comrades in another country'. The workers of China are indeed our comrades—with a great tradition of revolutionary struggle—but they do not control either production or the state in China. Their interests, and the interests of workers everywhere, are opposed to those of the state capitalist bureaucracy which rules their country.

Barry Turner clearly does not know that this is our position. Socialist Worker has, we hope, many

new readers each week, and items in the paper should help explain our positions without giving a full statement on every issue every week.

But the Briefing column is not the place for a full statement of IS's position on China. Such a statement would in any case hardly be hung on the playing of the Eton Boating Song on Douglas-Home's visit. One of the reasons the item seemed worth mentioning was precisely what Barry Turner stresses—the level of ideas of the people who are likely to be fairly new Socialist Worker readers.

The days of Cold War propaganda are over and television in particular has recently given considerable space to broadly pro-Chinese views

(for example Felix Greene's series on BBC1). Workers who are sufficiently attracted to socialist ideas to buy our paper probably know of China as a 'communist' country which claims to have a social system different and superior to that of Western capitalism.

I hope the Briefing item may have caused a few such readers to stop and think for a moment. Perhaps to argue with the next IS member they met or to be on the lookout for a fuller article which would explain why we think such apparently ludicrous things can happen in China.—NORAH CARLIN, International Editor, Socialist Worker, London E2.

Forgotten workers on the land

I READ a copy of your paper for the first time last week. I found it very good reading and I agree with most views expressed.

However I read nothing of what the wage freeze has done to the farm worker. I agree: try to smash the freeze, but the farm worker lives in constant fear that any action, even writing a letter to the press, will get him the sack and eviction from what must be one of the biggest bugbears of our society—the tied cottage.

The farmer, with his friends in the courts, quickly gets the worker thrown on to the street.

A recent case shows this. A man and his wife and young child were evicted last August and are still living in a van and tent because the local council refuses to house them.

The farm worker is not militant enough. He feels he cannot strike because this would harm the animals he loves and cares for. Because of this he is exploited terribly. Pay for a farm worker is £16.20 a week for seven days.

Not good is it? It is disgraceful.

One day, maybe, a strike will happen and then this will show the government and apathetic public just how essential the farm worker is, providing the country with its most important product—food.—GEOFF HOBSON, branch secretary, National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, Sterling branch, Andover, Wilts.

Hope this week's special feature on farm workers makes amends!—EDITOR.

ONE MAN'S LIFE ON THE 'MODERN' RAILWAYS... LETTERS

I HAVE just finished reading your excellent paper which exposes the unjust and inhuman society I live in, with thousands of low paid workers in deplorable working conditions.

I am a goods guard on the railway. To take £20 home I have to work at least 50 hours. Out of 16 different shifts which we work seven of them are signing on duty between 0.100 and 0.330 hours.

We have the same uncomfortable brake vans as were in use 40 years ago. I have been fighting for better conditions for us for a long time.

The other morning I signed on at 0.228 for a coal train job. On arrival inside the brake van I found damp, the seats were worn out and ripped with age. The seat is just a solid lump of wood.

The only means of heating is by a tiny stove, so I have to walk about looking for coal. Then through looking for coal, we get a letter wanting to know why we are late away.

Every day I see hundreds of high-paid officials who do nothing, but want to know why you are late, or why this wagon has not been shunted.

I have found myself that when one tries to improve conditions or expose them, management try victimisation.

Quite a number of people at our depot are sick of this rich and poor system we live in. The working people are the producers. The answer is a united effort in our hands.

The trouble is people are brain-washed by the system we live under. I believe in a classless society with profits to be shared by all.

I see you want more money to expand your campaign. I am trying to raise a small amount for you, as I do not want to live under this system all my life.

I thank you for an excellent paper. I will support you all I can and try to get others as well.—L.N.H., Wellingborough, Northants (name and address supplied).

LETTERS

Fine Tubes

ROGER COX states (18 November) in reply to my letter that I point out that, under Rule 29 (Dispute Benefit Rule) the AUEW executive council can pay benevolent grants. This is simply a lie. I did not.

The executive council can pay benevolent grants for members in 'cases of distress' under Rule 15, which defines their powers, but these grants are restricted to Sections 1 and 2 only, ie, not Sections 5, 4, or Women's Section.

The simple fact is that benevolent grants are not intended by our rule making body as an extension of dispute benefit.

Cox suggests that the executive council could invite the members to vote for a national levy to assist the dispute and this, of course, is quite possible, but would the results be in favour of such a levy particularly if the members in the country are aware of the failure to secure support for such a levy in the Plymouth district, or would this information be

kept from them?

In any case, supposing the ballot did result in favour, how would finance as distinct from *blacking* assist the dispute?

Again, the simple facts are that after the executive council have taken the decision to pay maximum dispute benefit and circulated all districts that the factory is 'blacked', the responsibility for conducting the dispute does and must rest with the district committee concerned.

Unfortunately, the Plymouth

district has been hamstrung by the lack of support in Plymouth (membership less than 5000) and, indeed, there are only 16,000 members in the whole of the division, which covers Devon and Cornwall.

Compare the position with the Roberts-Arundel dispute. The Stockport district committee (9000 members), the Manchester district committee (32,000 members) and the Ashton district committee (6000 members), that is, 47,000 members concentrating with the district offices within 15 miles of the Roberts-Arundel factory.

These members voted for a district levy, organised mass pickets and token stoppages.

Roberts-Arundel had to leave the Engineering Employers' Federation

in December 1966 with the consequence that the EEF adopted a policy of benevolent neutrality in an attempt to minimise the sympathetic strikes at their factories. Nevertheless, despite all these favourable objective circumstances, a determined and experienced Stockport district committee could not bring the dispute to a successful conclusion without a struggle that lasted nearly 18 months and cost the company £1m which led to them filing bankruptcy proceedings in April 1970.

The essential facts are that the attitude of the executive council was not decisive in regard to Roberts-Arundel and equally is not decisive in regard to Fine Tubes.—R WILLIAMS, District Secretary, AUEW, Oldham, Lancs.

Passing up golden opportunity to expose the press

WITHIN 24 hours of an entire national television service's board being dismissed by an oppressive government and a television journalist being imprisoned by a court serving that government, it should have been the least to expect that something coherent would emerge from a 90 minute television debate on the problems of the media.

Unfortunately we were denied this by Weekend World on Sunday. The programme, which totally lacked spontaneity, writhed in the straitjacket of its well-prepared formula and gave everyone the opportunity to speak but no one the chance to say something.

Perhaps the programme expected too much of itself. Certainly the people gathered in the studio confused rather than clarified the issues—none more so than the hapless Wedgwood Benn, who fainted, dodged and weaved so much when confronted by the question of workers' control in the media that by the end of the programme he was himself as bemused as the viewers.

Justice

One or two others present, who might have been able to put the case for workers' control, were either not given the opportunity to develop their theme or were unable to do the cause justice. Whatever the reason, none of those taking part seemed able to explain simply to viewers how a system of workers' control could operate. Even the most basic steps were overlooked.

No one, for example, considered the possible service to minorities that television workers could offer by lending the specialised talents of an experienced documentary team. The simple act of putting television expertise at the disposal of, say, a group of immigrants, a collective of unsupported mothers or perhaps workers occupying a factory, was never even hinted at.

Similarly when newspapers were discussed, the idea of collective democratic control was derided by a Fleet Street

editor who was allowed to go unchallenged when he suggested that every decision over the insertion or withdrawal of a punctuation mark would have to be decided by committees.

We also heard from John Whale, a highly successful Sunday Times reporter, who surprisingly minimised the constraints under which journalists operate. It could be that his exalted status on a 'big time' newspaper has led him to underestimate the difficulties that face thousands of reporters on provincial papers and periodicals every working day.

His remarks only served to emphasise the absence of anyone on the programme to shriek the fury of the army of anonymous journalists who operate against a thousand and one insidious pressures.

Dictates

No one explained the puzzling, sudden interest that normally somnolent editors sometimes display in a story which concerns one of their local rotarian clubs.

Nobody described the legal panic that seizes editors when a reporter turns in a well-researched scandal story. No one spoke of the advertising dictates over the size of newspapers, and thus how much news they are able to carry.

There was no one to describe how

editors appoint 'safe' candidates as their departmental lieutenants, no one to blast the myth of Lord Thomson's non-interventionist policy, no one to explain how the accountants and lawyers in managerial chairs keep editors strictly to heel.

If any of those present had really wanted to demonstrate just how bankrupt our national press has become they need only have referred to Friday's Daily Mirror, which led with a grovelling non-story on a speech Princess Anne delivered to that simpering, moribund, quasi-union, the Institute of Journalists.

Fawning

She told the assembled newspaper pseuds and public relations tapeworms that press attitudes to Royalty were hypocritical, though she did not of course spell it out as crudely as that.

But the Mirror, in the most fawning piece of Royal nonsense for ages, described her speech as giving 'her critics a right royal dressing down... in the nicest possible way.'

How nice! What a nice newspaper! Nowhere in Britain or abroad could its nice reporters and its nice correspondents find a more significant news story to make a page one lead.

The Mirror is obviously sinking faster than I thought. It really must be in a bad way when it begins to believe that the Institute of Journalists represent the best story of the day.

Whatever problems might develop in a newspaper under workers' control, it stretches credulity too far to imagine that even the most sterile bunch of fumbling amateurs could adopt the Mirror's current sense of news value.

RON KNOWLES

Putting the Bootle in

The following letter was sent to the News of the World to set the record straight on one of their 'Strike Makers' articles that smeared industrial militants. The letter was not printed and the writer asked that it appear in Socialist Worker.

IN REFERENCE to your article on the Inland Revenue site, I feel it was biased against the men on strike and I would like to raise a few points.

Q: Why did the strike arise?

A: Because of the differential in wages between members of the EPTU and other workers on the site. Approved electricians earn £27.78 for 44½ hours while building labourers earn £44.35 for 44 hours.

In October 1970 the question of parity was raised with the union and management. In February 1971 no progress had been made.

Q: Who brought us out on strike, the Communist Party or ourselves?

A: After four months during which no progress was made on the claim, the electricians voting democratically on the stewards' recommendations, decided to withdraw their labour. Brother Byrne was not the steward.

Q: Why did Alcan take strike action?

A: The stewards there invited a member of our strike committee to speak on our strike. Brother Byrne was sent. After addressing the Alcan members the brothers there decided to have a one-day solidarity strike.

While they were out, they looked at their own position and on realising it was similar to our own they decided

to stay out for decent wages and conditions. It was poor wages and conditions that made them strike, not Brother Byrne. To suggest that anyone could pick up a phone and start a strike is ludicrous.

Q: Was Brother Byrne disciplined by the union?

A: Brother Byrne was not disciplined by the union, but by the Joint Industry Board. He was informed by letter to be in London by 9.30am, 3 March. When we went to the regional office in Liverpool to enquire about expenses as the trip required an overnight stay, we were threatened with eviction by the police.

On 2 March, Brother Byrne received a telegram informing him that he would be disciplined in his absence if he didn't attend. Here is a case of a man on national assistance being told that to defend himself he has to travel 250 miles at his own expense.

Q: Are we defying union policy?

A: NO. The demands put forward by us are in line with the industrial conference of the EPTU held in 1970 and 1972.

Q: Who is running the strike?

A: The men elected a strike committee to run the strike. Brother Byrne is a strike committee member, no more, no less. His name is on our leaflets because he is the only member on the phone. Any decision taken is decided by majority vote.—T HENDERSON, senior steward, Bootle.

'Emergency only' ban by Essex firemen

by Terry Segars

ESSEX: Firemen have banned all duties except emergency calls after persistent attempts to transfer a fireman, John Crabbe, from Ongar to Harlow against his will.

At issue is whether fire brigade officers should have the power to shift men around without reference either to them or the union. This has become one of the most arbitrary ways of disciplining firemen who get into arguments with their officers.

In John Crabbe's case, the chief fire officer is denying that the move has anything to do with discipline, claiming it is a matter of inefficiency—with some difficulty, since John Crabbe recently passed a fire brigade examination giving him extra pay as a skilled man.

If it were a matter of inefficiency, the chief officer could resort to the Fire Services Discipline Regulations, laid down by Act of Parliament, but no attempt has been made to do this. With the Essex firemen's duty ban, the Fire Authority has found it has bitten off more than it can chew.

'Friendly' firm to sack 720

READING: Huntley and Palmer's are to 'phase out' their biscuit factory over the next three years. At least 720 men and women will lose their jobs.

Known for years as a 'family firm', they are to shift production to Huyton and Bermondsey. Business consultants recommended the closure because the plant was no longer making enough profit. The firm say the move will make 'an important contribution to our competitiveness'.

This will be made possible by sacking the Reading workers and cashing in on the lower wages at Huyton.

WORKERS STEP UP SIT-IN BATTLE

by Steve Emms

LIVERPOOL:—Workers at the CAV factory in Fazakerley have dramatically stepped up their battle to stop the Lucas Combine breaking their sit-in and closing the plant. New moves against Lucas were announced at a Merseyside shop stewards meeting in the occupied factory.

After the Trades Council had called for a demonstration this Saturday, TGWU convenor Franny Martin said: 'Sixty per cent of the machinery at this factory was paid for by the government, yet the run-down of the plant has been planned since 1968. Nobody ever gives you anything. You've got to get up and fight for it.'

Now both Ford and Standard Triumph plants on Merseyside are being picketed 24 hours a day—and Lucas drivers, mainly from Birmingham, are refusing to cross the picket lines. With similar action in operation at the Lucas Aerospace factory at Broadgreen, Liverpool, the Ford management are being forced to find alternative sources of supply for some of the Lucas components.

The Fazakerley workers are determined to show Lucas management that it will cost them far more to close the works than to keep them open.

BLAME

If the picketing is successful, both Standards and Ford may have to close down, even though other suppliers can be found. All workers must fight the 'right' of big business to close factories as and when they like and support the Lucas workers.

The CAV workers know that their action may lead to other workers being laid off. But the real blame for this must be laid at the door of the Lucas management, who are responsible for threatening the livelihood of 1200 men.

PICKET

If the picketing hits Lucas hard and their profits are threatened, they will have to re-open the factory all the more quickly.

In the short run other workers may suffer, in the long term we will all gain. If Lucas can be forced by militant picketing to keep the Fazakerley plant open, every other firm is going to think twice about making closures.

● Lucas workers need the support of the entire trade union movement. Messages of support, donations and news of solidarity action to: CAV Sit-In Committee, c/o AUEW House, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 1.



Teachers say 'No' to freeze

FIFTEEN thousand teachers showed their contempt for the government's miserable £15 a year offer on their London allowance last week in the biggest white-collar demonstration in the history of British trade unionism.

The strike followed a call from the inner and outer London branches of the NUT and culminated in a lobby of parliament, where teachers made it quite clear to MPs what they thought of Heath's pay freeze.

The teachers had put in a claim for an increase in the London allowance of £182, bringing it up to a total of £300 a year. The negotiating committee to

consider the demand stalled discussion until 5 November—the eleventh hour before the announcement of the freeze. The teachers were then offered a take-it-or-leave-it £15 from the government, who knew the freeze could be used as blackmail in the protracted negotiations.

An increase in the allowance is vital. Staff turnover has reached crisis proportions, with nearly one in three teachers leaving London service every year. Almost half take home less than £20 a week.

The Inner London Teachers Association have voted unanimously for a campaign to include extended strike action to win the full claim. The danger is that the union leadership, reluctant to enter into a direct confrontation with the government, will

damp down the struggle. Max Morris, the union's vice-president, has been at pains to stress that the strike was 'not illegal'!

Some London associations are calling for militant action. Eric Peagam, president of the North London association, told the demonstration: 'The response today is a clear indication both to the union and the government of the feelings of London's teachers. We have an excellent case and we do not intend to be intimidated by the action of the government in making our fight illegal.'

'The time has come for the NUT leadership to stop looking for loopholes and to be prepared to lead the union in a real struggle to defeat the government's attempt to impose its wage freeze on teachers.'

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.

IS MEETINGS

WALTHAMSTOW IS public meeting
Can Labour Bring Socialism?
Speaker: Duncan Hallas
Tuesday 5 December, 8pm
Ross Wyld Hall, Church Lane,
Walthamstow E17

TOTTENHAM IS Christmas Social
Saturday 9 December, 7-11.30pm
Tottenham Community Hall (YWCA)
628 High Rd, N17 (nr Lansdowne Rd)
Music, dancing, hot food, drink
Admission 25p (proceeds to printshop fund)

SWANSEA IS: public meeting on LAW AND ORDER, led off by Dave Wiggery, one-time editor of OZ, AEU House, Orchard St, Thur 14 December, 7.30pm.

HOUNSLOW IS Benefit for Unity Movement of South Africa. Folk, disco. Bar until midnight. Admission 50p. The Fox, Church Street, Twickenham, Friday 8 December, 8pm.

WALSALL IS public meeting: The Employers' Offensive—the Fight Back in 1975. Speakers: John Wirth, victimised AUEW deputy convenor at Chrysler, and Frank Henderson, shop steward at Austin Longbridge. Friday 8 December, 8pm, The Anchor, Bridgeman Street.

HOW TO BEAT THE TORIES: Debate between Hounslow IS and Twickenham Labour Party. Speakers: Michael Kidron and Norman Willis. The Fox, Church St, Twickenham, Tuesday 12 December, 8pm.

LONDON REGION IS FORUM, due to be held on 2 December, has been postponed until further notice.

PSYCHOLOGY DISCUSSION GROUP for IS members and sympathisers
TREATMENT OF MENTAL 'DISORDER' introduced by Ed Conduit
North London Polytechnic,
Prince of Wales Rd, Kentish Town
Saturday 2 December, 3-5.30pm
For further information, contact
John Southgate at 01-267 2419

OTHER MEETINGS

WEST LONDON Anti-Internment League
Social: Friday 1 Dec, 8pm-midnight, Kings Head, Fulham Broadway. Traditional Irish music, bar and disco.

NOTICES

GIRL wanted for own room in Streatham flat (nr Tooting). Use of kitchen, bathroom, phone. Rent £4. Phone Siri at 739 1870 (during day).

RACE TODAY

is shortly expanding its editorial staff and is looking for two people to join its present team. We want:

- 1) An experienced journalist who will be able to assume much of the responsibility for the day-to-day running of the magazine. He or she will be a competent sub-editor with lay-out experience, and will act as assistant editor.
- 2) An IBM Selectric Composer operator who will typeset the magazine and other work on the Institute's own computer.

For both these posts we shall want people who combine relevant expertise and ability with an understanding of racial and social injustice in Britain (and beyond), and who are committed to working for greater justice.

If you think you could be the right person for us, write to the Editor, Race Today, 36 Jeremy Street, London SW1, giving details of yourself, and stating which post interests you ('Assistant Editor', or 'Composer'). Details of salaries and conditions of employment will be sent on request.

THE IS BOOKS CHRISTMAS SALE will be on Saturday 9 December, 1pm-4pm, at 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

THAT UNIQUE Christmas gift? From China: LP record, 33rpm of The Internationale by choir and orchestra, 37p only. Woven-in-silk portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and others (7 x 4 inches), 22p each. Immediate delivery, D Volpe, 16 Belmont Court, London N16 5QD.

ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE Grand Christmas Draw: First Prize £100. Tickets 12p a book from Maureen McGuire, 38 Roslyn Road, London N15.

LARGE BEDSIT with meals, also use of workshop. Would suit comrade in mid-thirties, two miles up-river from Kingston-on-Thames. Write Box SW, Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL: The following back copies are still available, but some only in limited numbers: 21, 33, 34, 37, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52. 20p per copy, including postage and packing. Money with orders please to: IS Journal, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

WHEN writing to Socialist Worker please mark envelopes clearly either EDITORIAL or BUSINESS.



'Work-in' man victimised

LETCWORTH:—1250 AUEW members have taken hard-hitting industrial action in support of 28 striking TASS members after a well-known local trade unionist was made redundant and ordered to be off the premises within hours.

Management at Herbert Controls and Instruments Ltd claim that serious trading losses have forced them to look for areas to reduce expenditure. But the sacked man, Les Wreford, worked in the servicing department. And part of his job is now being done by a non-trade unionist.

Other workers at Herbert's see this as a blatant case of victimisation to pave the way for redundancies: 'This is a deliberate attack on a trade unionist. If they get away with this then they'll attempt to shed a lot of labour throughout the company.'

Workers fear redundancies are on the way. Management are inefficient, no new machinery has been installed in the last six months and machines are working at half capacity.

Dave Gallard, told by management that the milling and grinding shops couldn't have new machines, estimates the present ones will not last six months.

He said: 'It is significant that Les has been picked on. Two years ago he

led the fight against an attempt by management to sack 30 per cent of the draughtsmen and designers, who were reinstated after a two-day stoppage.'

Last spring when there were rumours of Herbert's being taken over and closed, Dave Gallard and Les Wreford were among those who publicly warned they would occupy the plant, adding: 'It wouldn't be a UCS-style work-in. We would never give it back to the bosses.'

Danger

Sir Richard Young, chairman of Herbert's and of the right-wing Economic League, has helped put workers under pressure this year to agree to contracts of employment and other measures under the Industrial Relations Act. These have so far been successfully fought off.

TASS and AUEW members know that if they lose this fight the situation will be wide open for Herbert's to discipline the workforce and force through redundancies. In support of Les Wreford, AUEW members have put a total ban on overtime, blacked all repair work, plan to withdraw labour from key sections to produce bottlenecks, stopped all work leaving the factory, and put a levy on members for the hardship fund.



THERE'S NO HARM IN HOPING . . . One of the 8000 pensioners who lobbied their members of parliament last week protesting at the freeze and demanding a pension of '£10 for one, £16 for two'. Pensioners travelled from all over the country—including many whose journeys were paid for by trade unionists. The pensioners' demonstration itself was supported by miners, carworkers, civil servants and students.

2000 strike to back 'higher pensions' call

by Bill Message

SCUNTHORPE:—All work at the huge Anchor Steelworks construction site stopped last Wednesday afternoon and 2000 workers marched from the site to the town football ground for a mass meeting to demand higher pensions.

They were supported by workers from the Drax Power Station site and delegations of trade unionists from all over Yorkshire.

Geoff Garbett, national president of the construction section of the engineering union (AUEW) told the meeting that his own branch, Sheffield, is calling on the TUC to organise a series of one-day stoppages in support of higher pensions.

Wally Preston, secretary of the Manchester Power Workers' Shop Stewards Combine Committee, praised the Anchor workers for setting an example to the rest of the rank-and-file trade union movement.

'Tens of thousands of old people die each year,' he said. 'And they die not because of strikes by power workers or miners or any other section of the working class, but because they do not have enough money to live on.'

'The pensioners are a case that cries out for solidarity and support against the traditional enemies.'

Applause

Wally Preston also had a message for Jack Jones and the other trade union leaders. Amid loud cheers and applause he said: 'Talk is very cheap—what we want is action. Let's have some leadership from these trade union leaders!'

'Don't ask the trade union officials for support—demand it. We must smash the freeze and give full support for the fight of the pensioners. Organise industrially at the rank-and-file level to smash the Tory wage freeze.'

Wally Preston's speech was greeted by loud applause and shouts of 'Heath out—Chapple out!'

Tony Cliff, executive committee member of the International Socialists, said he was proud to be present at 'a day in the history of the working-class movement.'

'The tears of Jack Jones break my heart,' he said. 'But they will not give higher pensions. The only way to help the pensioners is to fight through strike action.'

Cliff went on to say, amid loud cheers: 'We are the army of the working class. I believe that the rank

and file is strong enough by industrial power to raise pensions now. I believe that the rank and file, by industrial power, can smash this Tory government.'

Gwynn Reed, speaking on behalf of Rotherham Trades Council and the Doncaster area of the National Union of Mineworkers, called for more demonstrations all over the country to show support for the old age pensioners. He said that Doncaster NUM is to push for one-day stoppages in support of the pensioners.

Greg Douglas, chairman of the joint sites committee, said afterwards he was encouraged by the turn-out and support. 'The future depends on the kind of reaction we are able to get from the union officials and the TUC.'

'We can only hope that this action will push them into taking a real stand in the fight for higher pensions and against the freeze.'

Sit-in workers win back day's pay

by Harry Tait (TGWU Shop Steward)

ACTON, West London:—'This warehouse has been occupied due to an industrial dispute and we ask all customers, managers and non-union people to leave the premises.'

This was the message from Christine Daniels over the Tannoy system when we occupied John Banners' discount warehouse, part of the United Draperies empire, last week. Most customers left quietly. Some department managers objected but were quickly persuaded to leave.

The union members, 35 in all, porters, salesmen, cashiers, cleaners, the canteen chef and the dispatch manager, were in sole possession of a warehouse full of £500,000 worth of stock.

The confrontation began when the management refused to pay the workforce for a day lost through the warehouse being freezing cold.

The heaters had been on all night and still the thermometer would not move above a chilly 55 degrees F. The Factories Act sets the legal limit at 60.8 degrees F, so the workers called a meeting and decided to go home for the day.

Management were rigid with indignation when the workers demanded that they should be paid for that day. When the workers imposed a work-to-rule and ban on overtime, the management replied by threatening to sack everybody.

The press made great play of the fact that the workers were living it up among luxury goods, which was partly true since

we made ourselves at home with a quadrophonic record-player and a colour TV set.

But we also had to organise ourselves to hold the warehouse for what everybody thought would be a long time.

A delegation went to Whiteleys of Queensway, the only other part of United Draperies to be unionised, to ask for support. They unanimously decided on a go-slow.

A leaflet, printed overnight by International Socialists members and approved by the workers, was ready to be handed out outside Whiteley's the day the go-slow was to start.

Within a day and a half, the management had given in.

They agreed to pay the wages and rescind the notice to quit, and while the heating was being improved, everyone would have a break of ten minutes every hour, or longer if necessary.

The United Draperies empire has a long history of bad conditions and anti-trade unionism. This was broken when we first occupied the warehouse to demand union recognition six months ago, the first part of the empire to win the right to organise.

It is urgent that the rest of United Draperies, which has hundreds of subsidiary firms, joins the move to unionise now. Any Socialist Worker reader who works for any part of this empire and is interested in discussing this, please write to me, Harry Tait, c/o 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

TENANTS CALL FOR TOTAL RENT STRIKE

CALLS to spread the struggle against the Tory Rent Act and to pledge trade union support were made by a conference of tenants' associations in Manchester last Sunday.

Fifty-two associations, mainly from the North West but with representatives from as far away as Glasgow and London, sent delegates.

John Hargreaves, from Hattersley Tenants Association, Manchester, said the meeting had been called by Manchester Tenants Action Group to plan the way forward for what would be a long, hard struggle.

Delegates first heard reports from various areas. The most encouraging were from Merseyside. At the Tower Hill Estate in Kirkby virtually all the 4000 tenants are on total rent strike. When a tenants' leader was threatened with eviction, hundreds of people sealed off the estate to stop the bailiffs getting in.

Reports from Bolton, Rochdale, Rotherham, Oldham and other areas showed that most towns are only on partial rent strike and that support is patchy, but the fight is continuing.

The second part of the conference was concerned with industrial support. Wally Preston, from Trafford Park Power Station, Manchester, stressed the importance of rank-and-file union support, attacked the flabbiness of most Labour councillors, and linked the rents battle with the whole struggle against the Tory government.

A delegate from Liverpool said the only eviction trade unionists in the city would allow would be the 300 Tories from Westminster.

Oldham tenants said they were getting support especially from the engineering union, but that it was essential to keep up pressure on the trade union branches to ensure action as well as words.

Ken Harvey, of Salford Tenants Association, reminded the conference of the need to involve private tenants and to keep the struggle going until the next round of increases, which should bring home what the Rent Act really means.

Maria O'Reilly of Netherley Tenants Association, Liverpool, urged women not to be afraid to go down to factories and building sites to urge workers to support tenants.

To try to combat the feeling of isolation of some areas, a call was issued for a national rent strike conference in January.

Protest greets auditor

CLAY CROSS, Derbyshire:—The government made its first move last week against Clay Cross Council, one of the few continuing to keep its promises and refusing to implement the rent increases. The district auditor has been sent to check the housing revenue accounts.

When he arrived at the council offices he was greeted by 200 chanting demonstrators. The entire public works department staff, local dustmen and street cleaners took time off work to protest and were joined by tenants and housewives.

The Body Politic

WRITINGS FROM WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN BRITAIN 1969-1972

paperback, 262 pages

Available now: 60p in bookshops, reduced rate to the movement from Women's Liberation Workshop

Published by:

STAGE 1, 21 Theobald's Rd, London WC1X 8SL

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

FIGHT THE TORIES campaign

BRIGHTON
Friday 1 December, 8pm
The Sussex Sports Centre, Queen's Sq
Speakers: Frank Campbell (UCATT) and Dave Wiggery
ALSO a left roadshow

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
Tuesday 5 December, 8pm
Friends Meeting House, off old High St
Speaker: John Palmer

RUGBY
Tuesday 5 December, 7.45pm
The Seven Stars, James Street
Speakers: Tony Cliff and John Worth (AUEW convenor, Chrysler Stoke works)

PORTSMOUTH
Thursday 7 December, 7.30pm
The Oddfellows Hall, Kingston Road
Speaker: Tony Cliff



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Treachery! So Indians strike again

LOUGHBOROUGH: The Mansfield Hosiery Company, with the connivance of officials of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers, are trying to rid themselves of 250 Indian strikers and to replace them with white strikebreakers.

The Indian workers went back to work last Monday claiming a substantial victory. They had won pledges of no redundancy, no victimisation, and no racial discrimination and a £1 a week rise after the freeze.

The management had also promised to retrain 50 of the Indian barloaders (£20.35 a week) as knitters (£35 a week). Before the strike the knitters' jobs, without protest from the union, were exclusively reserved for whites.

When they got into the factory, the Indians found that the situation was entirely different to what they had been promised.

As a result of extensive employers' advertising in the local press, 41 new white workers had been hired. In the morning, the Indians were told that these were 'engineers', who were employed 'to get the machines going'.

At a meeting with the strikers and the union in the afternoon, however, the management admitted that the 'engineers' were in fact trainee knitters. They also stated that they had more than enough skilled labour, and that, as a result of the new hirings, the Indians would have to work short time—three days a fortnight.

This is a clear breach of the NJIC agreement between unions and management in the hosiery trade, which insists on a minimum of 24 hours a week in the event of short time.

All the white workers in the factory, meanwhile, will be on full time.

The union officials, Carter and Green, who denied the management's assurance that they had 'known all

along' that these new workers had been hired, hardly managed a protest at these monstrous terms.

'We have more important meetings to go to', they announced as they left.

The Indian workers responded by walking out on strike again.

At a long meeting last Monday evening, the strike committee called for maximum support from every section of the trade union and labour movement. 'It's obvious that they want to get rid of us all', said Dhiru Patel, one of the strike leaders. 'But if they win here, what are the consequences for black workers—and trade unionism—all over Britain?'

Pressure

The Loughborough branch of the International Socialists, who have been active assisting the strikers, are calling on all branches and IS trade union members and contacts to organise the maximum pressure on the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers.

The Loughborough branch of TASS, the technical and supervisory section of the engineering union, has paved the way with a resolution to the TUC calling on the congress to put a stop to 'the irregular practices of the union'.

IS members and contacts are urged to move similar resolutions through their union branches.

IS branches are also urged to mount pickets on local Marks and Spencer which boasts a lily-white racial policy, owns 20 per cent of Mansfield Hosiery's parent company, and buys and sells, at a huge profit, all the mill's products.

The strikers urgently need money. The local Social Security office has consistently refused to pay even a pittance to the single men and even, in many cases, to the strikers' dependants.

Contributions and messages to: c/o NAIK, 31 Station St, Loughborough, Leics.

VICTORY FOR SIT-IN IN DEFENCE OF CLOSED SHOP

LEICESTER: A seven-hour sit-in at Economic Stampings, in Disraeli Street and Wigston, by 440 workers in support of the closed shop forced management to suspend a non-union worker.

The sit-in started after a worker at Disraeli Street was expelled from the Engineering Union for being 26 weeks in arrears. Management were told but refused to budge, saying it was the company's policy to obey the Industrial Relations Act—which makes the closed-shop illegal. When the stewards threatened to extend the strike to the rest of the Bentley Group the management caved in.

The non-union worker is suspended without pay pending his application to rejoin at the next branch meeting.

This shows that the Industrial Relations Act is merely a piece of paper provided that workers are willing to unite together and stand up for their rights.

Bosses' bid to break picket fails

LONDON: After the unsuccessful attempt to get transport union lorry drivers to cross the dockers' picket lines at Midland Cold Storage on Tuesday, the Vestey's, who own the depot, seem likely to head back to the Industrial Relations Court.

The meat importers called on the drivers to break the picket when the employer-union National Joint Council met on Monday. They were hoping that the Vestey's repeated threats to go back to the court would persuade the drivers to move against their fellow trade unionists.

But on Tuesday the TGWU London haulage drivers issued a statement noting the liaison between meat importers and government departments to start a concerted attack on the dockers.

'We wish to take no part in the set-up or be used by the Vestey group for their anti-docker machinations,' said the

TEESSIDE:—'At last we've got up off our knees—this is how one steel worker described the two-week-old struggle against the British Steel Corporation for wage parity with South Wales.

The 1000 Teesside BSC workers

by Roger Rosewell

kicked off their freeze-busting battle for an £8 a week wage increase with an overtime ban and work to rule last week.

Management then suspended a number of men but the steelworkers replied with a 24-hour sympathy strike. BSC then locked out all workers in the beam and rolling mills because the men declined to drop the claim.

When the men stayed solid management's ever loyal friends in the leadership of the right-wing steelworkers' union, BISA KTA, resorted to the time-honoured 'Red scare' tactic to try and break them.

Jim Drinkwater, the local divisional officer of the union, issued a press statement saying: 'There are extreme left-wing political moves behind this claim and this dispute. The aim is disruption . . . They are not going to ruin this industry . . . I'm going to fight hard and win.'

But at the mass meeting last Sunday Drinkwater was challenged to prove his lies, muttered something about being unable to, and was finally booed and jeered. The meeting voted overwhelmingly to carry on the fight for the £8 rise.

For more than 20 years Teesside steelworkers have been paid a great deal less than those in identical jobs

SOCIALISTS KILLED IN CAR CRASH

SOCIALIST WORKER has learned with deep regret of the deaths last Saturday of two young members of the revolutionary movement. Jack Carter, the treasurer of the Council of Students Associations at Stirling University and Findlay Dinning, a young laboratory technician at the university who had recently been sacked for supporting the students, were killed in a car crash as they were driving to the National Union of Students' conference at Margate. Findlay Dinning was a member of the International Marxist Group and Jack Carter, whom the university authorities were trying to victimise along with 23 other students for the October protests against the royal visit (see page 8) was a member of the International Socialist Society at Stirling.

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd (TU all depts). Registered with the Post Office.

in South Wales. The average difference is now £8 a week and the Teesside workers are determined to close the gap once and for all.

Pickets are now out at Lackenby and other workers are joining in sympathy. The platelayers and mobile tool workers have already stopped in protest at the lockout and others are expected to follow.

THREAT

Both the British Steel Corporation and the union are hiding behind the cover conveniently provided by the Tory government—the wage freeze. But the men are determined to have wage justice and are defying the profit-boosting wage freeze.

At Sunday's mass meeting one BISA KTA official threatened that the dispute would be 'investigated' by the union. This is a clear hint that the union leadership will move if at all possible against the leaders of the struggle. This has happened several times in the past few years, with whole branches being shut down or their elected officers banned from holding office.

BISA KTA is so undemocratic that it has no delegate conferences and there is no independent appeals committee.

As one steelworker said: 'It wasn't the branch committee who voted to carry on the fight, it was us, the men—the people who should run this union but are not allowed to do so.'

TEESSIDE IS
public meeting
THE WAGES STRUGGLE
Tony Cliff and other leading speakers
Thursday 7 December, 7.30pm
The Wellington Hotel, Albert Road,
Middlesbrough

**FIGHT THE TORIES
BUILD THE
SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE
LONDON REGION
RALLY**

Friday 1 December, 7.30pm
Camden Town Hall, Euston Road
Musical Entertainment by The Combine
Speakers: Tony Cliff, Paul Foot
and Chris Davison (TGWU)
Entrance 10p



Workers waiting outside Middlesbrough Town Hall for the mass meeting last weekend

TEES STEELMEN LOCKED OUT

Subscribe Now!

I enclose £ _____ for one year's/six months

Socialist Worker

(£4 for a year, £2 for six months)

Name _____

Address _____

→ Socialist Worker 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN