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£6 claim

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Lord Carrington, the Defence Secretary and Tory Party chairman, told the Conservative Central Council in Newcastle: 'The next six months are going to be decisive to our political fortunes.'

'We are going to be under sustained attack . . . it is the period when we shall be told that every case is special. Just as you stand firm, so the government will stand firm.'

While his henchmen were laying it on the line, premier Edward Heath was engaging in his 'one-nation' fraud. At Swinton, Yorkshire, yesterday he offered a 'voluntary' deal on pay—if the union chiefs would give up every right to defend their members' interests and take their place in a corporate state.

But whereas Heath has said he will see TUC secretary Victor Feather and the union leaders about the hospital workers' case this afternoon, he has already said in advance that he won't give them a thing.

For all the trimmings, the hard centre of Tory premier's message here was the same as to the Conservative Central Council at Newcastle on Saturday.

In a 'no surrender' speech, he stressed that there would be no relaxation of either the state pay laws or the Industrial Relations Act.

Exuding confidence that the TUC is now backing down all along the line, he included a carefully-judged echo of his November 1970 warning to the United Nations that governments must prepare for civil war.

A government climbdown on pay would open the way to social divisiveness and injustice, he told the council. The implication, which will not be lost on Feather, is that the Tories are prepared to meet such a situation.

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BY DAVID MAUDE
OUR LABOUR
CORRESPONDENT

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In the hospitals the union chiefs are still refusing to take decisive action. All the running is having to be made by the rank and file.

Predictable

The Tory reaction to all this is predictable:

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A possible breakthrough

workers defending their livelihoods with sweeping changes in the law on picketing.

THEY INTEND to go ahead in six days' time with making every struggle to raise living standards a criminal offence. Hence their vicious and spiteful action last Friday against power workers.

The power workers' leaders had already made them victims of the pay laws by concluding a £3 long-term settlement, when their claim was £5.50 immediately, within hours of Heath's 'freeze' announcement on November 6 last year.

Now the second stage of this settlement, due to have been paid last Monday, has been stopped. An order from Employment Secretary Macmillan forbids payment until Phase Two of the pay laws becomes operative on April 1.

This kind of action is designed to delight the Tory faithful, present a tough image to the wavering middle class and make clear

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There is a round-the-clock vigil (above) at the pithead by close relatives

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Challenge

Their fear is that the working class, which is forced to struggle whatever its leaders do, will take up the political challenge thrown down to it and make it impossible for the present government to continue.

Yet it is at precisely this point that the Stalinists of the British Communist Party move in to try and disarm

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Plans to hold an official inquiry are being stalled until the fate of the men is known.

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It continued: 'If they had continued and stepped up their fight, and been given industrial backing, especially by the TUC, they could have smashed Heath's policy to smithereens.' Now the hospital workers should get such support.

Concluded the 'Star': 'Every section of the trade union movement should prepare now to make the day of protest and stoppage which the TUC has called . . . a 24-hour General Strike demonstration of working-class power.'

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DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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TURN TO BACK PAGE

WHAT WE THINK

Aren't our bankers wonderful?

PREMIER EDWARD HEATH paid a handsome tribute to British bankers in the Commons the other day. In reply to a question about the banking world, he declared: 'I do not think there are many in the world who would criticize the honesty of the British banking system.'

To this there were Conservative backbench cheers. Heath went on: 'In fact, for many decades it has been the envy of the rest of the world.'

To the worker with an overdraft or the small shopkeeper seeking a loan this claim—the envy of the world—might seem an overstatement. An exaggeration. A gross distortion even.

It is perhaps understandable why Heath is so flattering to the bankers. They contribute mightily to his party's election coffers and, after all, he was one of them—a paid director of a firm of merchant bankers until his election to the premiership in 1970.

What have the bankers done to earn Heath's glowing praise? In all unfairness it must be said, very little. That is to say—nothing. They have, of course, been responsible for bleeding the country dry and exporting vast sums of capital to Common Market countries, Spain, South Africa and Australia.

By shifting investment abroad the bankers are deliberately setting out to crush the standard of living of the British working class who, they feel, are overpaid and overfed. But when it comes to wages and eating, the City bankers do very well indeed. Their salaries float in the £50,000 a year mark—just under £1,000 a week. And they think nothing of taking the wife to a restaurant where the bill is anything up to £30 or £40.

Yet these gentlemen don't produce anything. They're just money managers. The manage other people's money and cream off a vast profit for themselves. Putting it simply, they are parasites. The bankruptcy of British capitalism is more directly attributable to them than any single sector of society.

Yet Heath has the cheek to call them 'the envy of the world'. If this is the case, the time has come for bold decisions. The rest of the world can have them. We must export them to Spain, Luxemburg, South Africa.

If they decline this chance to spread their native honesty and integrity abroad, we must expropriate them. Their money houses must be nationalized and placed under workers' control. Only then can the working class see the books, the balance sheets and discover the extent to which the parasites have bled us into bankruptcy.

Negotiators discuss national strike

Danish unions prepare second wave of strikes

BY FOREIGN EDITOR JOHN SPENCER

NEGOTIATIONS were under way in Copenhagen at the weekend as the national strike and lock-out involving some 250,000 Danish workers entered its sixth day.

The talks, between Leif Hartwell, chairman of the employers' federation, and Thomas Nielsen, chairman of the trade union confederation, lasted for

several hours on Saturday.

They were held under the auspices of the mediator appointed by the social-democratic government, Sigurd Wechselmann, who met both sides for an hour on Friday.

It was the employers' rejection of a compromise proposed by Wechselmann which precipitated the confrontation.

The employers are adamantly refusing to pay wage increases to bring pay into line with the rising cost of living.

The strikes and lock-outs are the most extensive to hit Denmark in 37 years.

The 250,000 engineering and transport workers already involved are to be joined on April 3 by a second wave of office wor-

kers, shop assistants, airport and power workers.

Long queues formed outside wholesale and retail grocery stores.

Motorists were stockpiling petrol which will be virtually unobtainable once the petrol station workers strike.

The strike comes less than three months after Danish entry into the Common Market under Anker Joergensen's minority social-democratic administration.

Numeiry on state visit

SUDANESE President Jafaar Numeiry is in Britain as the Queen's guest for a five-day state visit starting today. His visit is an accolade from British imperialism to a man who has served its interests well since he came to power on May 25, 1969.

The visit shows that the Sudanese regime now has excellent relations not only with the Soviet Union, China and the countries of Eastern Europe, but also with Britain and the US.

British Communist Party leaders were enthusiastic backers of Numeiry's regime while he was preparing to drown the Sudan Communist Party in blood.

Sudan CP leaders were brutally put to death after a farcical show trial following the July 1971 coup attempt which was defeated by Numeiry with the aid of Libya and Britain.

Executed were Abdel Khaled Magoub, general secretary of the Sudan CP, and Shafie el-Sheikh, secretary-general of the Sudanese Trade Union Federation.

Others who died were: Colonel Babakir Al-Nur; his chief aide Major Farouk Hamadallah (both kidnaped in Libya from a British plane bound for the Sudan); Colonel Monehim Ahmed; Lt-Col Osman Hussein; Captain Muaweya Abdel Hay and Major Hashem Al-Atta.

Thousands of communists and trade unionists were rounded up and thrown into desert concentration camps where the survivors remain under frightful conditions to this day.

Numeiry could never have taken office, let alone carried through his counter-revolutionary policies, without the backing of the Stalinists not only in Moscow, but in London and Khartoum itself.

The British Stalinists sent delegations to the Sudan under Numeiry to boost the regime:

Idris Cox, of the Party's International Committee, wrote an article in the 'Morning Star' in October 1970 under the heading 'This government backs the trade unions'.

Yet Numeiry's first act on taking office in May 1969 was to introduce the death penalty for strikers!

Two weeks after Cox's article appeared, the regime jailed Mahgoub and purged left-wing officers from the armed forces.

Numeiry has now graduated to attacks on the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The United States State Department congratulated him for his treatment of the Black September kidnapping of two American diplomats.

Numeiry claims Al Fatah, the largest Palestinian guerrilla organization, staged the kidnapping and subsequent assassination of the diplomats.

The eight captured guerrillas now face the death penalty.

The works of Enoch Powell are passed on

A GROUP of right-wing Tories have launched a campaign to bolster Enoch Powell's support in the Tory Party. They are printing and distributing leaflets containing Powell's views on industrial relations and council rents.

The campaign strategist says it is designed to win support from 'the ordinary intelligent man in overalls'.

Mr David Lazarus, chairman of Brent Conservatives, said the idea stemmed from a meeting of 'leading industrialists and others' who were concerned about the way the government case was being put.

The leaflets will be sent to the chairmen of all Tory constituency associations for distribution.

'Mr Powell's logical yet lucid arguments appeal to the ordinary intelligent man in overalls,' writes Lazarus.

'This is the man—the working man who wants to think for himself—whom we should be attracting to the Conservative Party.'

The leaflets deliberately play down Powell's notorious anti-immigrant views ('I see rivers of blood' etc).

Nor is there any mention of the fact that Powell is pathologically against the closed shop and is in favour of stronger police action to smash pickets.

Officials 'No' to White Paper

THE OFFICIAL IRA rejected the Tory White Paper on Northern Ireland at the weekend.

But they said their ceasefire would continue except for the policy of retaliation for actions taken by the British army against the people of the north.

A statement called for the withdrawal of all troops from the Six Counties and for Britain to renounce all

claim to sovereignty over any part of Ireland.

It also demanded the release of all internees and political prisoners and an end to repressive and anti-democratic legislation.

The only long-term solution was the establishment of a democratic, 32-county, socialist republic, the statement said.

Orpington prices demo

A 50-STRONG demonstration against rising prices marched through Orpington on Saturday calling for a General Strike to force the Tory government to resign.

The march was backed by the Socialist Labour League, the Young Socialists, the Labour Party, the Labour Party Young Socialists, Bex-

ley Trades Council, the Artists' Union at Ravensbourne College of Art and local factories.

Speakers included David Grant, prospective Labour Party candidate for Orpington, Tom Shanahan, secretary of St Pauls Cray Tenants' Association, and spokesmen from the SLL, the CP and T&GWU.

High Court summons to print work-in leader

'THE WORK-IN goes on whatever happens,' Briant Colour Joint Chapels leader Bill Freeman said at the weekend within hours of receiving a summons to appear in court on April 4.

BY IAN YEATS

He has been ordered to appear at the Chancery Division of the High Court at 2.15 p.m. to surrender all the company documents and accounts.

Liquidator's spokesman Mr H. B. Blandford Baker said: 'The writ says that Mr Freeman will be apprehended if he does not appear.'

He added: 'This is not an idle threat. One does not say action will be taken and then not take it.'

The legal move follows last week's hitch in the

talks with potential buyer Mr Peter Bentley.

In applying to the High Court for a warrant for execution of the possession order granted last month, the liquidator is making it clear that he wants a solution one way or another.

Either the buyer comes up with sufficient cash or the nine-month-old work-in by 105 men and women at the Old Kent Road factory is brought to an end and the assets realized on the open market.

Mr Freeman said: 'I have

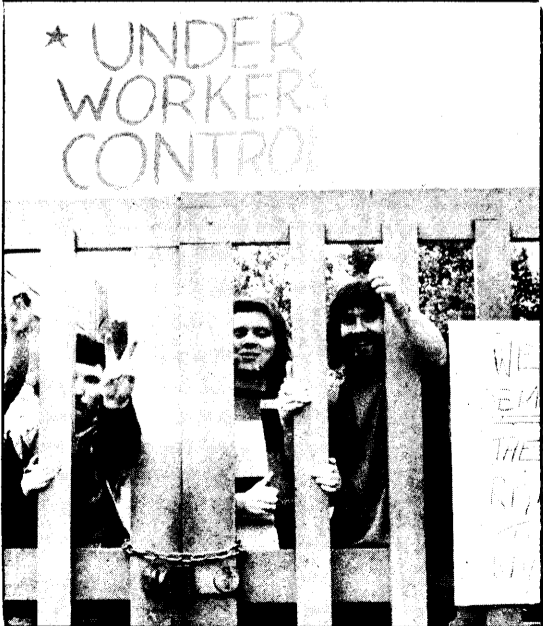


Bill Freeman (right foreground) ... Work-in goes on

no intention of going to the High Court. If they want me they will have to come and get me.

He added: 'The papers

are not at the works. They are distributed among members of the committee. We shall burn them rather than hand them over.'



Briant Colour gates under control

GBI CHIEF 'BROADLY WELCOMES' DEVLIN COMMISSION

The Confederation of British Industry will make no immediate moves to set up a Confederation of British Business—an amalgamation of the CBI and Chambers of Commerce.

This was revealed yesterday by CBI president Michael Clapham at a London Press conference on the proposals of the Devlin Commission which inquired into industrial and commercial representation.

Clapham 'broadly welcomed' the proposals, but he rejected some of the recommendations and gave only qualified support for others.

The CBI, he said, would undertake a number of discussions with large companies in various sectors of industry to find out their views on rationalization.

But on the recommendation of the setting-up of a Confederation of British Business, including Chambers of Commerce, he said the report had not taken sufficient account of fundamental differences between the two organizations.

Clapham rejected the idea of cutting out smaller firms from membership of the proposed CBB.

Even the larger members were against this, he said, and there were no guarantees that the 4,300 smaller businesses in the CBI would set up their own organization anyway.

Below: Michael Clapham, president of the Confederation of British Industry.



SALES BOOST FOR BUGGING DEVICES

BY ALEX MITCHELL

British private security firms are buying electronic bugging devices on a large scale although their use in this country is strictly illegal.

It is known that the agents of some overseas manufacturers are in Britain plying these secretive wares. One such firm is Ultron Micro Wave Inc of Farmingdale, New York.

Workers Press has obtained a copy of a brochure which Ultron sub-agents are distributing in London in their sales drive.

The 14-page booklet gives a complete guide to bugging and listening devices though their cost is modestly not mentioned.

The main buyers appear to be private security firms. In collecting evidence and dossiers for their clients these private police forces are increasingly using bugging equipment. Many make their own gear but these devices are usually adaptations of models imported from either the US or West Germany.

The increase in the demand for these items has been noticeable over the past four years. This can be explained in two ways.

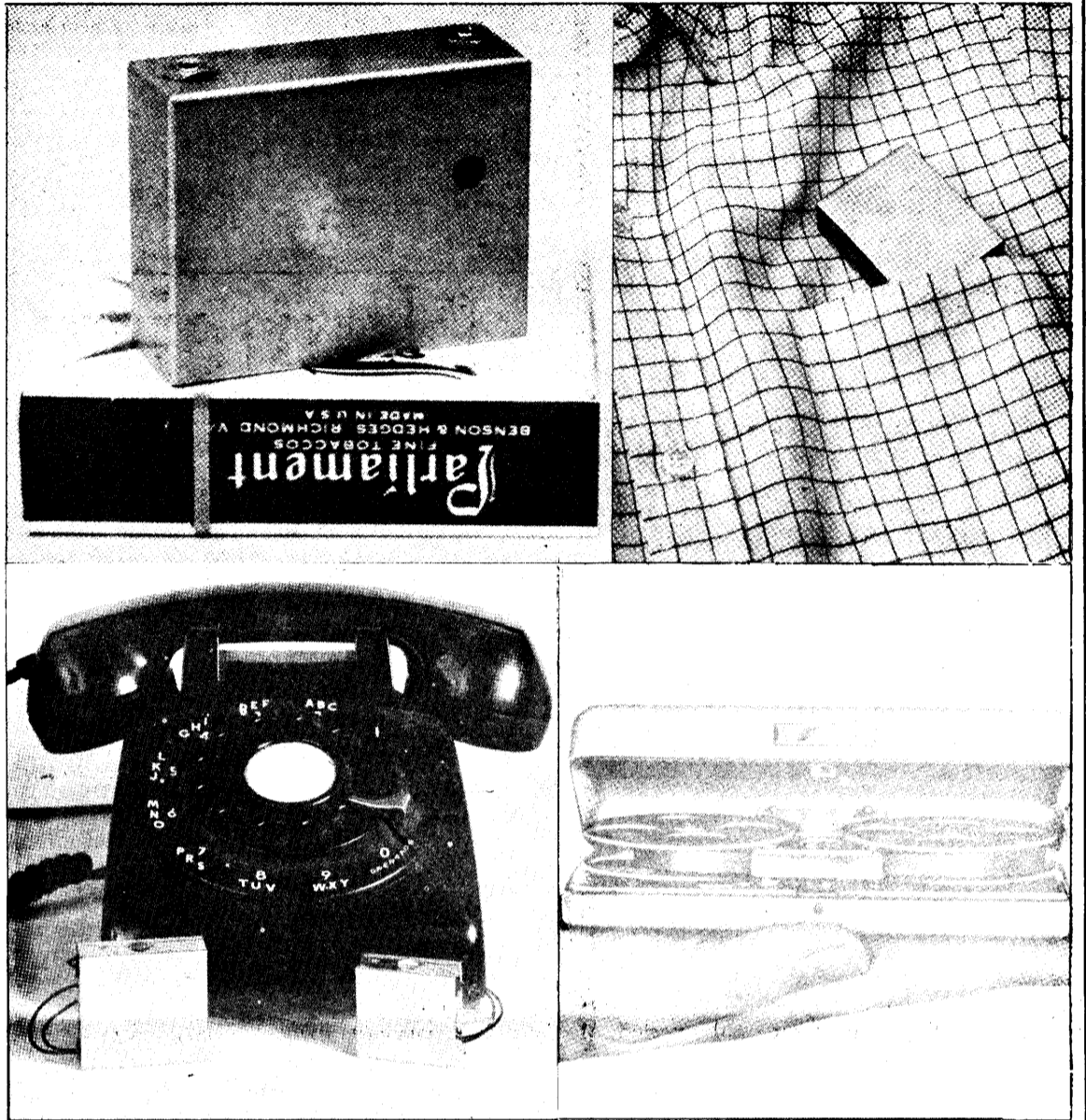
First of all, the earlier equipment was very unreliable. It was difficult to record a conversation either on a telephone or in a room which could then be understood intelligibly when replayed.

The latest equipment transmits and records more distinctly and is more durable.

Secondly, the boards of many big companies are becoming more 'security conscious', as the salesmen put it. They are worried about industrial espionage, particularly in the pharmaceutical and chemical industry.

These weapons have also been turned in another direction—against shop floor organization. About six months ago Workers Press was told that a leading security firm put a phoney 'militant' into an engineering works which was expecting trouble over a wage claim. His job was to infiltrate the shop stewards' committee and discover who was likely to fight the company's plans.

He privately reported to management the names of the militants and they were fired on trumped up charges.



The agent told us he used recording equipment to tape meetings of the committee. When Workers Press asked the man for proof-positive of his story he got 'cold feet' and decided not to co-operate further.

From his statements and other information, however, we have no doubt that such activities do go on in industry.

And why not? The ruling class is in a desperate position. Its parasitic system of industry is crumbling but it tries to cling to its profits and privileges.

To defeat the working class some of these reactionary employers will not stop at bugging devices, telecontrol and uniformed security. If necessary they will arm their guards as they do in France, Italy and the US.

The Ultron Micro Wave Room Microphone (top left)

Half the size of a cigarette pack, this miniature transmitter is sensitive enough to pick up a whisper across a large room and broadcast to a receiver with exceptional fidelity. Powered by a single mercury cell; range a quarter of a mile; battery life 40 hours.

The Ultron Micro Wave Body Transmitter (top right)

Specifically designed and constructed so that it can be carried by a person with no wavering or loss of transmission. Range is up to half a mile and its battery life is up to 20 hours.

The Ultron Model 350 and Model 700 Telephone Transmitters (bottom left)

These are two unique devices enabling the operator to monitor both sides of a conversation with 'exceptional audio fidelity'. Using the latest technology they are designed to achieve maximum range without deteriorating phone quality.

Stereo Pocket Recorder (bottom right)

This 11-ounce recorder has 106 minutes of tape time. It can pick up sounds up to 75 feet away. The entire unit is small enough to fit into a shirt pocket. The brochure says: 'Used extensively by law enforcement agencies, this is now, for the first time, available to the public.'

YORKSHIRE ANCILLARY WORKERS SPEAK

Ancillary Workers at the Hull Royal Infirmary are among those involved in the present selective strike action for better wages.

John Pettenuzzo, laundry worker, told Workers Press: 'I came out for more money. Now I realize it's political.'

Bob Nicholson, NUPE laundry steward, added: 'We've been out three weeks here. I think we've got a stranglehold and it's being stepped up in other places. It's got to blow soon.'

The workers accuse management of deliberately exag-

gerating the state of the fouled linen. 'When we went in to clear the backlog, two of the women had nothing to do', we were told.

About half the hospital beds in Yorkshire are closed by the strike action. Any threat to send laundry to prisons is bound to cause an escalation in industrial sanctions.

Mr Nicholson went on: 'With regard to the Tories, those earning over £5,000 a year will benefit greatly from the new tax system. I'm married with two kids and I earn just over £1,000 a year so I'll be paying about 30p more tax. They should cancel the tax concessions to the rich. I think

the result of the miners' ballot will be for a national strike and it could lead to a General Strike. On April 1 if we're still out we will be breaking the law.'

Mrs Emma Grace, aged 56, a laundry worker, said that Heath didn't know what it was to manage a home on ancillary workers' pay. 'My husband who is a pensioner has £6.95 and I put out £4.05 for rent. That only leaves a bit to live on. I work to keep us. After stoppages I take home £13.50.'

Another woman laundry worker said, 'I have three children. I had to come to work because you just can't manage with today's prices.'

POLITICAL PROFILES

By LEON TROTSKY
Paperback. £1.00 Illustrated



Sharp pen-portraits of leading figures of the Second International in Russia and Europe, for the first time published in an English edition. The translations were first commissioned by the Young Socialists' paper 'Keep Left' Their enormous success has led to the completion of the translation of the whole book, which is the first part of Volume 8 of Leon Trotsky's 'Works' published in the Soviet Union in 1926. It provides the most vivid picture available of the historic figures of the Second International, their strengths and weaknesses, written by an observer who was also a participant in the daily struggle of the European and Russian working class.

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LUCRATIVE 'OWN LABEL'



Once the big food bosses trembled at the thought of 'own label' brands sold by the independent supermarket chains.

For years beans has meant Heinz—and here was Sainsbury's retailing almost exactly the same commodity only much cheaper. The magic halo built up around the brand leaders by years of multi-million pound advertising was suddenly threatened.

At first the food combines resisted pressure from the retailers to manufacture processed foods for the own-label market—but a threat from groups like Fine Fare or Sainsbury's to withdraw the franchise of the manufacturer's product led to a rapid change of mind.

By the mid-sixties 'own label' was an established feature in every supermarket.

This led to the myth of 'structural competition'. Defenders of capitalism had to admit that monopoly, especially within the food industry, had wiped out price competition—but they argued the retail end of the trade had re-introduced it via the 'own label' brand.

Now no one uses this argument.

Manufacturer and retailer have settled down in cosy partnership, and the latest evidence uncovered by 'Mintel', the marketing intelligence journal, shows that retailers had begun to enjoy higher margins on own label brands—higher in some cases than the traditional brand leaders.

So long as the public are subject to the advertising propaganda war the advantage of price reductions on own label goods is less than effective.

A 'Mintel' survey showed that opinion was firmly against the view that own label was equal in quality to the brand leaders. This prejudice is not particularly based on fact or knowledge of foods but on the promotion undertaken by the big combines like Heinz, Kellogg, Unilever, Imperial Tobacco and so on.

In fact the advent of own

label has increased the necessity for the big brand to advertise and keep their share of the market. When Heinz beans compete against Tesco beans, Sainsbury's beans, Co-op beans etc. more and more TV space must be bought to persuade the public that Heinz beans are unique.

Own label brands, therefore, succeed the most in what are called 'low interest' markets.

This is the ad-man's description for markets where it is difficult to confidence-trick the housewife into believing Brand X has some magical (in fact spurious) superiority to Brand Y.

Own labels also flourish in fields where the manufacturers enjoy high profit margins, and there is a potential for large price-cuts.

Cereals could be one—but Kellogg's make an incredible fortune on their cornflakes and so far have successfully fended off the own label challenge by refusing to produce for the retail chains.

'Mintel' found that own labels are generally 10 to 30 per cent cheaper than branded goods mainly because of cheaper packaging and larger size than the brand leaders.

They examined a range of own label goods in January 1973, where packaging was identical and quality was about the same. The average price differential was 13 per cent. The main components for this difference were:

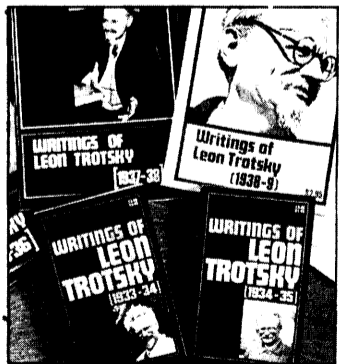
- No selling costs for the manufacturer of own labels—2 to 4 per cent.
- No advertising—2 to 8 per cent.
- Lower product quality.
- Cheaper packaging.

'Mintel' say that considering these cost savings, it is surprising that own label products are not cheaper than they are—this is because the chains make higher margin on own labels compared with the branded goods. The profit, therefore, that normally goes into the pocket of the food manufacturing monopolies, is going instead into the pockets of the retail chains.

'Mintel' figures on own label (OL) versus brand leader (BL) product	Fine Fare		Tesco		Sainsbury's	
	OL	BL	OL	BL	OL	BL
jam	10.5	13.5	11	14	11.5	—
milk powder	14.5	16.5	—	—	14.5	—
beans (16 oz)	6	7	6	8	6	7
frozen peas (16 oz)	13.5	14.5	12	14.5	13	—
Cornflakes (12 oz)	9.5	10.5	—	—	9	10.5
Flour (3lb)	10	13.5	10	13	9	12.5
Coffee (8 oz)	—	—	42	54.5	42	55

(All manufacturers' recommended prices in case of brand leaders.)

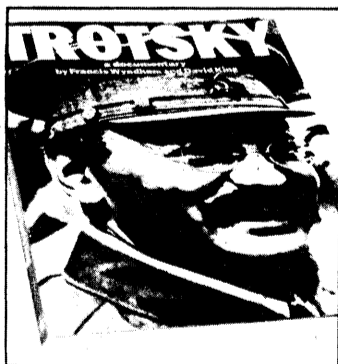
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UNHAPPY HUNTSMEN

In these days of state wage controls and soaring prices, life is very difficult for the working man and his family. But spare a thought for the huntsman. Things are going badly for him too.

Take this gruelling report from the recent meeting of the Cheshire Hounds.

The 'Chronicle', a local newspaper, reported the following incident:

'Black Firs, Wrenbury Mosses and Starkey Gorse all failed to hold. Taken on to The Heald and finding hounds killed in covert. Next, a fox was viewed on Mr Probins' land running a right-handed circle. He crossed the Higgins-field road down to the brook on Mr Latham's where he was marked to ground.

'Baddiley Gorse, Ravensmoor and Dorfold were all blank, and this ended a very disappointing day.'

This is all double-Dutch to us. But our hunting correspondent says that it means that the Cheshire gentry failed to slaughter many foxes in this particular sweep. Life's tough, isn't it?

SPARETIME COMMANDOS

The Tories have begun an advertising campaign to recruit youth to become sparetime commandos.

This drive is going alongside the recruitment into the Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve (TAVR) which now has more than 70,000 men armed and trained to regular army standards.

These developments are being presented as if they are in line with NATO developments. This is done deliberately to create the impression that the part-time army will be used against a foreign or invading force.

In private, however, army officers are only too willing to admit that the recruits are being brought up to strength for 'internal security'. They talk about the possibility of a 'national emergency'.

The advertisement for the part-time commando reserve says:

'The basic training is one evening a week. You'll learn to shoot, become skilled in unarmed combat, listen to talks etc, to get you ready for your training sessions "in the field".'

APARTHEID HITS THE HOSPITALS

Apartheid is rapidly bringing medical services in South Africa to crisis point.

The decision of the Transvaal province to implement apartheid in hospitals means that no non-white nurses can be employed in 'white' hospitals, nursing homes and old age homes.

There are already 1,100 hospital beds empty because of staff shortages and a 'white' hospital building plan to add 13,000 new beds is now in peril. The J. G. Strijdom Hospital in Johannesburg has 550 beds which have never been used because of a shortage of nurses.

Collapse

Sister Irene McFadzean has resigned from the Johannesburg General Hospital in protest against the exclusion of non-white nurses.

She said: 'If the bureaucrats go through with their threat then I predict that many hospitals will be forced to close and that the entire hospital system in South Africa will collapse'.

She said that the apartheid measure was 'a slight on the entire nursing world. . . I call upon all nurses to stand four-square in this crisis. People who are dying don't care what colour hands save them'.

No allowance

If the lives of white patients are being jeopardized through lack of nurses, the situation for Africans is much more acute. There are fewer hospitals, poorly equipped and lacking doctors and other trained staff.

Yet Africans have to pay more for hospital facilities than whites, at least in the Transvaal.

A member of the provincial council, David Epstein, has pointed out that while the number of people in the family is taken into account in assessing what a white patient can pay, in the case of non-whites no allowance is made for size of family.

Since complete apartheid in 1966 fewer African doctors have been trained. Today only a dozen qualify each year; that means one doctor to every one-and-a-half million people. About 600 white doctors qualify each year out of a total population of under four million.

Only one out of South Africa's six medical schools is allowed to train African doctors. When African doctors do qualify they are paid less than whites.

An African intern starts out at little more than half the salary paid to the white doctor.

Committee

If he becomes a Senior Medical Officer he can expect to earn from 6,000 to 6,600 rand (there are about 2 rand to £1), while an Indian or coloured doctor can go up to R7,200 and a white doctor will earn from R7,200 to R9,300.

A multi-racial group of doctors in the Transvaal is trying to upgrade the salaries of black doctors and has set up a committee to campaign for this end. A donation has been received from the white Association of Surgeons.

The example of the Johannesburg City Council, which decided in October 1972 to pay all its doctors on the same scales, following a one-day strike, has not been followed elsewhere in South Africa.



Left: Sir Leslie O'Brien, governor of the Bank of England.

commented to his Chicago audience, 'there are many observers who are uneasy' about the market's stability.

'Can we be confident of the stability of the market?' O'Brien asked.

'It extends across national frontiers, so that there is no one national banking authority that can supervise its operations, insist on sound practices and stand ready, in emergency, to be "a lender of last resort".'

'By the same token, it cannot be easy for lenders, whose interbank lending is unsecured, to know much about the creditworthiness or the full financial commitments of the ultimate borrower.'

'One big failure, it is sometimes said, could lead to a chain reaction bringing down all in its path.'

The most significant passage here is O'Brien's reference to the absence of a lender of last resort.

In banking parlance this means someone—in Britain, usually the Bank of England—who is ready to buy for cash unmatured paper of certain types in the hands of other banks.

The need for such an arrangement arises where the banks have liabilities to their depositors which are payable at short notice but have loaned money which does not fall due for repayment for a longer period.

Clearly, if a bank in this position is unable to find someone who will advance money on the strength of the unmatured IOUs in its possession it will be unable to repay its own debts and faces the prospect of failure.

That this is not a remote prospect is shown by the relatively close watch the Bank of England maintains on what it terms the 'maturity balance' of London banks in the Euro-currency markets.

This has revealed—as this month's Bank of England quarterly review demonstrated—that compared with 1971 the banks' short-term liabilities have increased while the proportion of their loans falling due in the long-term has also risen.

The result is that many of the banks' short-term debts are not covered by equivalent repayments of loans they have made. In addition the standard of creditworthiness required of a borrower has declined considerably.

As the 'Financial Times' put it on March 5: 'The pressure of competition for volume business has led to . . . the extension of credit to an ever-growing number of borrowers who a few years back would have been regarded as marginal by most lenders.'

All the conditions are thus being prepared for a major failure of one or more of the firms involved in the Euro-currency business.

Yet the banks involved are not acting as individuals, they belong to one or more of the 'multinational consortium banks' which have sprung up to deal in Euro-currency markets.

The capitalist world's banks are so closely linked together through these consortia that one crash could rebound round the world, affecting in particular the US commercial banks which have muscled into the Euro-dollar markets, and being transmitted back into the Federal Reserve system of the United States.

The system of credit internationally today is more extensive than at any time in the past. It has had its entire basis removed by the collapse of the post-war monetary system.

The slightest disturbance could now be enough to bring down the entire edifice, creating an unprecedented collapse with enormous revolutionary implications.

CREDIT SYSTEM ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE

The state of anarchy which now exists in the relations between national currencies has created the conditions for a wholesale collapse of credit internationally.

The first shocks could be felt in the Euro-currency market which involves a large pool of 'hot' money, mainly in dollars, amounting to some \$90,000m.

This money consists of funds held on deposit through a bank outside their country of origin by non-residents of that country. It is therefore completely free from the exchange controls operated by individual countries.

It is here that the big banks and the multinational corporations invest their funds in order to gain short-term interest and also acquire the finance for their international trade and investment.

The Euro-currency market has grown 100-fold over the past 15 years and now dwarfs the resources of even the largest central bank.

The total volume of paper being traded on this market is estimated to be at least one-and-a-half times the total combined reserves of gold and foreign currency held by the Common Market central banks.

It is at least eight times the size of the reserves of a comparatively wealthy central bank like the Bank of France.

The countries involved have in fact made almost no effort to control the Euro-currency

market because they recognized that it was essential to maintain the scale of world trade.

The proliferation of domestic restrictions on the purchase of foreign exchange, designed to protect the national currency, increasingly forces traders to borrow what they want on the Euro-currency market.

Despite numerous warnings about the instability of the Euro-dollar market governments have also been afraid to take any action against it for fear that it would simply change its form, move elsewhere and become even harder to control.

Instead of their controlling the market, the market is now able to dictate to governments, as the West German government learned to its cost on February 13 and again on March 2.

The basis for the expansion of the Euro-currency market was explained in a keynote speech given in Chicago on April 27, 1971 by Sir Leslie O'Brien, governor of the Bank of England.

He said the first participants in the Euro-dollar market back in the 1950s were the USSR and other East European countries which had reasons for not holding their dollars directly with banks in the United States.

'But though they held their reserves with banks in other countries, they insisted all the same in holding them in the form of dollars. They valued

the dollar for its strength and its world-wide usability.

'Ironical though it may seem, that was the beginning of the Euro-dollar market; the world-wide usability of the dollar laid its foundation and remains its keystone.'

These conditions which gave rise to the development and expansion of the Euro-currency market have now been completely transformed.

The dollar is no longer strong or universally usable, and far from wanting to hold their assets in dollars the bankers and financiers have been desperately trying to dispose of their dollar holdings.

On August 15, 1971, four months after O'Brien's Chicago speech, the American government stopped selling its official gold reserves for dollars.

This marked the end of the post-war Bretton Woods monetary system and created an untenable situation for the vast pyramid of inflationary credit in the Euro-currency markets.

From that day on the Euro-dollar market was doomed.

As Karl Marx wrote in 'Capital' (vol 3, page 483) ' . . . it should never be forgotten that money, in the first place in the form of precious metals, remains the basis from which the credit system can never detach itself.'

Once the link between paper money and gold was severed by presidential decree the basis of the Euro-dollar credit system was destroyed.

No wonder then, as O'Brien



HOW TOM JACKSON 'WORKS WITHIN THE SYSTEM'



Tom Jackson, UPW general secretary. Above: Post Office workers during the 1970 strike. 'To be quite frank, it scares me,' Jackson said.

The executive council of the Union of Post Office Workers is preparing a document for submission to the Tory government's corporatist-style Pay Board in relation to Heath's state control of wages legislation.

The aim of this, according to general secretary Tom Jackson, is 'to try and achieve the best settlement we can get'. Jackson's advocacy of accepting Phase Two of the pay laws

in the hope of getting a 'fairer' deal under Phase Three is an indication of the increasingly corporatist attitudes and procedures adopted by the leadership of the 200,000-strong UPW.

The recent special conference of the UPW was, in fact, directly dominated by the anti-working class legislation of the Tory government.

All discussion of the Tory pay laws was removed from the agenda by the executive. Discussion of wages was permitted only after assurances from the union's solicitors that it conformed to the requirements of the Industrial Relations Act.

In his conference statement on the union's £5.50 across-the-board pay claim (he refused, incidentally, to name a figure), Jackson called on the TUC to be 'more flexible in its attitude than it was being at the moment'.

Instead of calling for an all-out fight for the wage claim, Jackson insisted that 'a deal must be struck with the government'.

There were, he said, two alternatives facing the Labour movement.

One was to negotiate 'a better deal' with the government on the basis of statutory control of wages and prices. The other was 'massive all-out industrial action to change the mind of the government'.

Industrial action to bring

down the government is impossible, according to Jackson. It would simply replace Edward Heath with Enoch Powell.

'A general election might be forced,' he told his members, 'and in the weeks before it there would be fighting on the picket lines, and the lads would be out in the streets.'

'In this situation the Labour Party would not win. The Industrial Relations Act would remain on the Statute Book and Britain would have an even more reactionary government than at present.'

'After the 1968 uprising in France, they faced an even more reactionary government. At the end of the Weimar Republic there was fighting in the streets—and then Hitler came to power.'

'Do not any of us believe that any of us have the ability to force a General Election in these circumstances, bring down the government and bring back the Labour Party.'

Jackson's choice clearly is for the working class to permit the Tory boot to come down firmly on its neck.

Now 47, Tom Jackson became general secretary of the UPW in 1967 and joined the General Council of the TUC in the same year.

By October 1969 he was applying for a closed shop agreement with the Post Office in line with the Donovan Commission's report on the unions. The Donovan Com-

mission was set up by Harold Wilson and Barbara Castle to lay the basis for their anti-union plans subsequently embodied in 'In Place of Strife'.

That, in turn, became the first model for the Tories' legal attacks on the unions.

The Donovan Commission proposed closed shop agreements where unions had already agreed to discipline or expel workers who took unofficial action of any sort.

THE OPPORTUNIST POLICY

In April 1970 the UPW issued a joint statement with the employers on productivity schemes and declared: 'The union believes that improved productivity and efficiency will result in improved pay.'

This coincided with an announcement from the Post Office that 1,600 manual sorting offices were to be closed and replaced by 120 fully-mechanized centres.

One year earlier, during a strike of overseas telegraph operators, the union had sent a letter to 'The Times' which declared:

'Our organization has always welcomed technical developments inside the service in which our members work. We

have, for instance, over the years co-operated to the maximum possible extent with the introduction of Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD) which reduced enormously the need for telephone operators.

'Our record in the postal side of the business is equally impressive. We have always welcomed developments which would reduce the size of the labour force.'

'It is the policy of our union so far as posts are concerned to seek a gradual reduction in the number of staff employed on the basis that those left in the service will be better paid as a result.'

'We are one of those rare examples of a union which is prepared to face a change and has policies deliberately designed to reduce the labour-intensive nature of the Post Office.'

This opportunist policy of collaboration with the management was to bear bitter fruit in the following two years.

In early 1970 there were a number of unofficial strikes in support of the union's claim for 'a substantial increase'.

The membership considered 'substantial' to mean a rise to a basic wage of £20 and were incensed when the leadership accepted £2, which brought the basic to just over £18.

One of Jackson's major allies in controlling this opposition was an executive council member called Maurice Styles—a

prominent member of the Communist Party.

In November 1970 there was a spontaneous outburst of anti-Tory feeling when Lord Hall was sacked as head of the Post Office Corporation.

Workers felt that Hall would be replaced by someone who would take a stronger line on wages and jobs and pave the way for the 'hiving off' of profitable parts of the service, such as the telecommunications section.

But the crucial confrontation came in 1971 when the UPW submitted a claim for a wage rise of 15-20 per cent. The Post Office offered a mere 7 per cent, later increased to 8 per cent.

On January 15 the executive council of the UPW unanimously voted for strike action.

Jackson announced that this had been done with 'the maximum regret' and immediately wrote to Employment Minister Robert Carr pleading for conciliation.

The next day he told a Press conference that the union 'was not in dispute with the government'.

This, of course, was the direct opposite of the real situation. As Workers Press declared on January 16:

'The Post Office workers have now entered a decisive fight and it will be necessary for the whole labour movement to come in behind them against the Tories.'

'Only the most resolute leadership, prepared to go to the end to defeat the government and to call for support from the whole labour movement can win this strike.'

'The TUC is now called upon to support the postal workers by every possible means. The financial resources of the TUC must be put at the full disposal of the postal workers, because their fight is the fight of every trade unionist.'

But the following day Jackson told 2,000 of his West Midlands members that he found the strike 'sad and repugnant' and declared that he would 'go anywhere and talk to anybody' to bring it to an end.

At the same time CP member Styles was telling a Leeds meeting: 'The struggle is not against the government. The government is determined by elections.'

In a deliberate cover-up for this misleadership, the Stalinists' 'Morning Star' told its readers that meetings and advertisements were 'the way to defeat the government's plans'. And on January 19, the Stalinist daily carried a half-page strike-breaking advert from the Post Office Corporation.

The central feature of the strike was its political nature as the government prepared its anti-union legislation and its prolonged onslaught on all basic democratic rights.

'VERY DECENT INDEED'

'The nation has been held to ransom too often and it will not connive at unreasonable pay settlements for the sake of industrial peace.'

Yet Jackson described Barber's Cabinet colleague Carr as 'very decent indeed', and told a Birmingham postal workers' meeting:

'I feel bloody sad about not hearing from Robert Carr. We had hoped that the four-day respite we gave . . . would have provided talks at the Department of Employment.'

Like the Labour Party's parliamentary leaders, who also urged conciliation and compromise, the UPW leaders feared, not so much the Tories, as the power of the working class.

Everything possible was done to disarm the working class.

Thus Norman Stagg, the UPW's assistant general secretary, told Workers Press that after an eight-hour meeting at the Department of Employment, the unions had had a fair hearing, the Minister was 'impressed' and the government was not behind the Post Office.

And, on February 7, with more candour than he may have realized, Jackson told Workers Press: 'The longer the strike lasts, the more the men want. To be quite frank, it scares me.'

Jackson's hopes, in fact, were pinned on the possibility of a favourable outcome of the Wilberforce inquiry into the power workers' claim, setting a precedent for the postmen.

When this was not forthcoming, Jackson was finished.

On February 15, he walked out of talks with the Post Office saying that he expected his executive to turn their proposals down. The next day the executive reduced its claim by 2 per cent!

On February 17 it took five-and-a-half hours before the 31-member executive council unanimously voted to continue the strike.

But it refused to call for joint action with the engineers and railwaymen—who also had wage claims in process—and it even refused to call on the Post Office Engineering Union to come out with them.

On March 3 the entire executive—including CP members Maurice Styles, Dick Lawlor and Vi Clements—unanimously decided to visit Carr. The next day they voted unanimously to end the strike with not a single thing gained after a seven-week strike.

The 'Morning Star' (March 5) hypocritically declared: 'It is deplorable that the executive thought it was necessary to end the fight on the terms proposed,' yet said nothing

REDUCE THE LABOUR FORCE

Jackson's executive immediately recommended acceptance and embarked on an intensification of their policy of trading jobs for wages.

Jackson told journalists that he would not mind losing 50,000 members if the rest had a decent wage.

The UPW executive supported the speed-up scheme of Work and Staff Measurement, only to have it rejected at a special union conference in December 1971.

Despite this, the executive still sought to negotiate with the Post Office Corporation on a plan which could have destroyed 25,000 jobs within six years.

In a special report for the union's 1972 conference Jackson again spelled out his policy of collaboration with the employer in cutting down Post Office jobs: 'It will in the long run reduce the size of the labour force and thus make more easy the aim of higher wages for a smaller work force.'

Jackson told the same conference that in defending its

about the CP members on the executive nor about its own totally uncritical support for Jackson throughout the dispute.

This capitulation enormously encouraged the Tories to proceed with their attacks on the working class.

The UPW executive blames lack of funds to continue the struggle—and they certainly had been left shamefully in the lurch by the TUC. But the central reason for the defeat was the refusal to recognize the political nature of the strike.

It was this which firmly welded together the reformist Jackson and the Stalinist Styles.

Styles told Stephen Johns (Workers Press, February 6, 1971): 'We got the impression that if the Post Office had come forward with an increase this would not have been blocked by Mr Carr.'

'This was the view of Tom Jackson, the national executive and I share it . . . I share the view advanced by the national executive that, on the evidence, the enemy is the Post Office.'

'There is no evidence to suggest that the government has got its hands round the neck of the Post Office.'

Stating that 'we are not in business to change governments', Styles denied that an alliance of unions like the 1921 Triple Alliance was necessary.

Speaking to David Maude (Workers Press, February 1, and 2) Tom Jackson said the union could not 'nominate' their strike a political strike because many of its members supported the government!

And he continued: 'As to bringing the government down, I think that a government going to bat following a mini-General Strike would probably win hands down.'

'That's the nature of the British voter. I don't believe that the trade union movement can force a General Election and hope that the left will win it.'

Stressing his belief that the Tories could not be removed by industrial action, Jackson stated his faith: 'Given those circumstances, I work within the system.'

But Jackson's working within the system increasingly meant going along with the corporatist-style measures of the Tory government.

The Hardman committee of inquiry, constituted after the UPW leaders' capitulation, not surprisingly recommended exactly the Post Office's final offer—9 per cent with productivity strings.

members from unemployment the union 'had the full support of management'. So bound up was he in his full-blooded collaborationism that he apparently failed to notice the mutually exclusive nature of these two claims.

On April 24, 1972, Jackson announced that the UPW would appear before the National Industrial Relations Court, even if the TUC expressly forbade it.

This, he said, was necessary to prevent the Post Office from being ordered to recognize the tiny Telecommunications Staff Association, which had opposed the 1971 strike.

In May 1972, on advice from the London head office, the UPW's Glasgow district organizer instructed GPO van drivers to break the picket lines during a strike at Caterpillar Engineering in order to conform to the Industrial Relations Act.

And last month Jackson's executive instructed Post Office workers not to join the civil service workers' pay strike even though they had been invited to do so by the Post Office section of the Clerical and Public Services Association.

To do so, said Jackson, in a circular dated February 16, would 'dislocate services at a time when we are trying to win more traffic'.

An instruction to avoid picket lines was issued over Jackson's signature. This letter read, in part:

'The UPW is not involved in the industrial action due to take place on Tuesday, February 27, by civil service grades . . .'

'It is our understanding that in the majority of areas civil service picket lines will be strong.'

'It is not the wish of the union to embarrass in any way the unions involved in the industrial action. At the same time it must be emphasized that the action being taken by other unions must not be used as an excuse for our members not to report for duty.'

'Branches therefore who have members in such circumstances should try to resolve the problem with local managers before the event if possible. In any case, members should report to their normal office of employment as though the industrial action was not taking place.'

Tom Jackson illustrates the most glaring form of the total bankruptcy of reformist trade unionism at a time when the Tory government is forced by the international capitalist crisis to take back every gain the working class has ever made.

Overawed by the apparent great strength of capitalism (the working class, he thinks, could never overthrow it) he backs down completely when the time comes to call for united class action to support his members.

From then on it is but a series of short steps to complete acceptance of the Tories' corporatist-style measures even before they have been legally enacted.

Despite all this, of course, the CP members on his executive refuse to break with him and he is never challenged by the 'Morning Star'.

No wonder Jackson could say to a group of Leeds postmen, in the spring of last year: 'The Communist Party is like a tame pussycat. Stroke it and it'll do anything you want.'

Only a conscious struggle for revolutionary leadership in the unions can prevent workers from being handed over, bound hand and foot, to Tory corporatism.

All those who deliberately evade the political questions posed by workers' struggles to defend their jobs, wages and basic rights—in particular the question of forcing the Tories to resign—leave workers at the mercy of leaders like Tom Jackson.

STALIN'S FELLOW TRAVELLERS, PAST AND PRESENT

BOOK REVIEW



BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

PART TWO

The social democrats who assisted Stalin were not slow to recognize his gifts in return.

The Webbs appreciated Stalin's influence in assuring the defeat of the General Strike through his defeat of Trotsky's line. And 'Tribune', commenting on the Stalinist massacre of the militants in Barcelona, wrote:

'There is no doubt that since the liquidation of the Catalonian rising' Republican Spain has become not weaker, but definitely stronger.'

All this, the real political connection between 'fellow travelling' for Stalin and the betrayal of the world revolution, Kiernan ignores. He wants to be able to conclude, in best fellow-travelling style, that what the fellow-travellers reported 'had a positive influence for good on the west'.

Not only that! . . . the achievements held up to view by all these writers, scholars and artists, have injected new vitality into western as well as Afro-Asian veins.'

This conclusion is a reflection not of the objective reality, of Stalinist treachery and the necessity of struggle against it, but of the actual situation and wishes of the middle-class intellectuals represented by Kiernan. They seek every way of stabilizing and justifying a situation in which imperialism and Stalinism achieve a *modus vivendi*, with the working-class controlled.

Somehow the balance of power and the potential of technology will enable the bureaucrats and reformers to steer a course to progress (advised by the intellectuals), while the workers are protected from foolish revolutionary attempts and kept with their noses to the grindstone.

This reactionary Utopia is even more dangerous than it was when represented by the fellow-travellers. It has taken one section after another of the Stalinist intellectuals into the camp of the bourgeoisie.

Stalinism today is playing the same counter-revolutionary role as between the wars.

The fact that Kiernan makes so vigorous an apology for Stalinism is therefore ominous. It means that the political preparation of the revolutionary forces in Britain, as elsewhere, will need to be conducted in every ideological field.

Kiernan can even write the following as his description of the 'appeal' of socialism to the fellow-travelling intellectuals:

'It was the rainbow promise of art and literature and science finding again at last



Stalin signs a death warrant at the conclusion of one of the famous purge-trials. Kiernan dismisses the political meaning of the Moscow trials and thus dismisses the responsibility of members and supporters of the Stalinist parties.

a genuine place in the collective life from which they had been estranged; of the word made flesh and dwelling among men, serving mankind instead of coterie of patrons.'

But it was precisely the lie that this vision had been or could be achieved in one country by betrayal of the revolution that sustained Stalinism! It was the role of these intellectuals to blind those under their influence, by means of this vision, to the reality of Soviet art and science.

It is simply a lie that this 'rainbow promise' was coming to life in the USSR.

On the contrary, the Stalinist repression, its national narrowness, its crushing out of the historical truth, its destruction of the independent initiative of the proletariat, its growing dogmatism in every field of learning, wrought destruction in literature, art and even in science, as shown especially in Stalin's last years in the controversy over Lysenko's genetics and Marx's theories of linguistics.

Whereas Kiernan to some extent conceals his own standpoint in this review (though it is easily deduced from his vitriolic attack on Cate), he has been more explicit elsewhere, and we can find the key to his strong feelings if we refer to his article 'Notes on Marxism in 1968' ('Socialist Register', 1968).

Speaking of Marx, Kiernan says: 'The working class on which he pinned his faith has turned out to be, once acclimatized to life among factory chimneys, as unrevolutionary as the French peasantry after 1789.'

And so the struggles which

the proletariat undertook in Marx's day were only due to the unfamiliarity of their new 'factory chimney' environment?

Of course, if the working class has 'turned out' to be 'unrevolutionary' then of course the 'example' of 'socialist construction' in the USSR is for the edification of reasonable intellectuals and administrators, as the Webbs thought.

No wonder that from this Kiernan concludes that 'in the west . . . Marxism faces a long future as a minority movement'.

Once again we see the intellectual's resignation before the power of the ruling class and its bureaucratic collaborators.

The only thing that is difficult to see is why Kiernan thinks Marxism has any future at all. But here again there is a reason. The reformist intellectuals continue to lay claim to the heritage of Marx only to prevent its being taken up by the working class. This determination they naturally share with the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Behind Kiernan's politics (and we are interested in what Kiernan represents, not in Kiernan as an individual) lies the fact that he remains completely committed to a philosophical position totally opposed to dialectical materialism, the philosophy of Marxism.

The revolutionary role of the working class derives from the objective contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and the working class's position in that system. What does Kiernan say about those contradictions?

According to him: 'Contradictions meaningful for men

do not reside in the thing-in-itself [i.e. in the material world, existing independently of men, C.S.], but in their way of looking at it or feeling it' (!).

In other words it is the way you think or feel about capitalism (or the Stalinist bureaucracy) that determines whether it develops through internal contradiction!

And if there should be any doubt about this interpretation, Kiernan tells us on the following page: 'But it as true of capitalism as of everything else that there's nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so.'

This subjective nonsense allows Kiernan to dismiss the political meaning of the Moscow Trials, and the responsibility of members and supporters of the Stalinist parties, including himself, with a fine ethereal judgement:

'The portrayal of human motives that emerged from the treason trials, a nightmare but a naive and childlike one, reflected a genuine bewilderment about man's inner being.'

BLAME

Such is Kiernan's dismissal of any responsible accounting of the past, any preparation for the future of the revolution.

Because he will not undertake this responsibility, face up to the reactionary role of Stalinism and fellow-travelling, he can blame everything, in time-honoured fashion, on the working class itself.

And so: 'The new ruling class thrown up by capitalism survives, as its predecessors did, by force or fraud, and, chiefly, by the gullibility and indolence of the ordinary man.'

It is not surprising that with this cynicism goes that 'wor-

shipping of the accomplished fact' which led so many fellow-travellers (as Cate points out, very few of them ever claimed to be Marxists) to consider Stalin to have been right as against Trotsky. Kiernan writes:

'It was a true instinct [?] that made Lenin hope so ardently for simultaneous revolutions in the belligerent countries of the first world war. "Socialism in one country" became the right policy when this hope faded, but it made socialism in other countries, or rather its achievement by similar means, impossible. . . .'

As always, the man who is a complete idealist, telling us one minute that 'only thinking makes it so', will immediately capitulate with resignation before 'things as they are' and recognize that the socialist revolution is 'impossible'.

We might use Kiernan's own expression, then, and say that it is a 'true instinct' that makes him react so violently to the record brought together by David Cate.

With all its limitations, his book 'The Fellow Travellers' convincingly demonstrates that the intellectual supporters of Stalinism were anti-Marxists, people doing their best to adapt whatever they could bring from bourgeois scholarship to the service of the Stalinist bureaucracy. They preferred this bureaucracy, with all its repressions and betrayals to the proletarian revolution.

They represented the left wing of the bourgeoisie, pioneering cultivation of the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy as the most effective instrument against the international working class.

The monetary crisis of recent weeks has revealed the French Communist Party as the strongest defender of the franc and the firmest opponent of any revaluation.

It does so on the grounds that this will handicap French exports, decrease employment and 'raise the barriers which protect our money against speculation' ('L'Humanité', March 13). The decision to float the currencies of the Common Market countries against the dollar was bitterly attacked as a capitulation to the United States.

Promises made in the past by Giscard d'Estaing, the Finance Minister, 'not to allow a revaluation of the franc which will weaken our international competitiveness' and result in the franc becoming a satellite of the dollar are quoted with evident approval. But Giscard d'Estaing is then criticised for having gone back on those promises.

The Party has given tacit support to Gaullist monetary policy in recent years, a policy inherited from General de Gaulle's war on the dollar of the early 1960s.

Defence of the franc, 'our money' as the party organs put it, is a sop to middle-class rentiers, small property-owners and peasants. It rests upon a narrow nationalism which avoids any analysis of the international monetary crisis.

Comments on the monetary crisis are permeated with anti-Americanism—'goods made in USA will flood the markets of Western Europe', says 'L'Humanité', and also with anti-German feeling: the franc has been chained to the mark.

Whatever happens in the next few weeks, writes Jack Dion in that paper 'France will be the loser in every way'.

It is characteristic that the real gravity of the crisis of world capitalism is concealed in articles appearing in the party daily. Instead the appeal is to nationalism and to some above-class interests. 'Growth will slow down', Dion writes, and there will be an increase in unemployment.

The only criticism of the government is for its alleged capitulation to the United States. Dion writes that 'France has the means to stop speculation against a fall or rise in the franc. These means have names: exchange control and the two-tier system.'

As he claims that every country could employ such methods with success his readers must wonder why there is a monetary crisis at all.

The attempt is consciously being made to play it down while pleading with the Gaullist government to continue on its previous course and not to capitulate to American

FRENCH CP DEFENDS THE FRANC



Giscard d'Estaing, the French Finance Minister, whom the CP quote with approval, then criticize, for going back on his word.

pressure and be forced to buy dollars.

On those terms, the party will continue the tacit support which it has given to the government's foreign economic policy as well as to its policy of detente with the Soviet Union and the East European countries.

Support for the franc is the surest indication that the

Communist Party has passed long ago to the defence of the bourgeois social order of which the money is a main pillar.

The party thus conceals the full extent of this crisis and fosters illusions that jobs can be saved by preventing an up-valuation of the franc.

The French Communist Party fears that the repercus-

sions of the floating of European currencies and the devaluation of the dollar will be more inflation and higher unemployment which will make it more difficult, now that the elections are over, to contain the militancy of the working class.

The party has, of course, been an upholder of the stability of 'our money' since the

Popular Front days of the 1930s.

Ironically, it also opposed every devaluation of the franc, including the last one in 1969. It was these devaluations which enabled French goods to establish a competitive position in foreign markets, helped more recently by the revaluations of the mark and the yen.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

ACT OF HOPE

The noon-hour Vietnam Vigil outside the American Embassy is to end on March 28. This, according to its organizers, will be known as 'Suspension Day'.

The name does not indicate that the organizers are to symbolically hang themselves in Grosvenor Square, but simply that 'as an act of hope we propose to suspend the vigil for that day but we shall remain vigilant'.

Nixon, however, cannot re-



They threatened Nixon with the words, 'We shall return'.

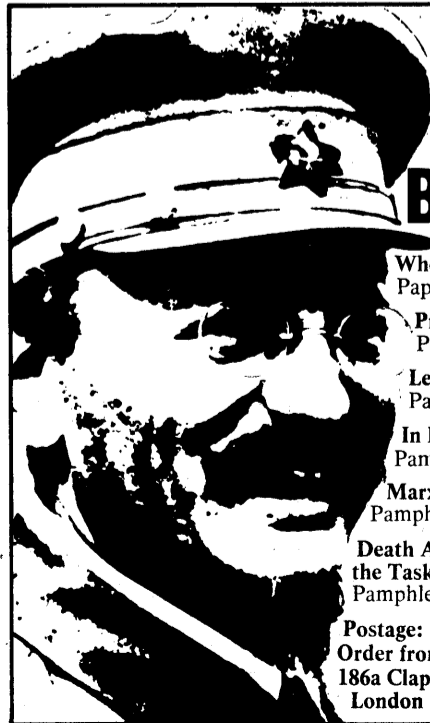
lax for one moment. Every step of the imperialist warmongers is being carefully watched and instant retribution

will follow if they step out of line.

Who can believe that the aggression against the people of Vietnam could possibly continue now that the British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam has delivered its ultimatum: 'At the first sign of resumption of direct American military activity on any scale, we shall return to the embassy.'?

The Campaign is also to send an official deputation to the Embassy to demand the fullest implementation of the Vietnam agreement, to 'plead' for the safety of the prisoners in Saigon and to 'urge' America to make maximum reparation for the destruction perpetrated against the people of Vietnam.

The deputation will be led by (who else?) Fenner Brockway. Brockway is a member of that alert, wide-awake, anti-war centre, the British House of Lords.



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SLATER IS SHOCKED BY CAPITALISM

Jim Slater is the head of the City of London's fastest moving financial conglomerate. He and his erstwhile partner, Peter Walker, now Secretary for Trade and Industry, began Slater Walker Securities in the early sixties and quickly became millionaires before reaching 40.

While Slater's knowledge of making money is boundless, his knowledge of world affairs is, apparently, sadly lacking.

Most people, you would have thought, know what the apartheid regime is up to in South Africa. Every schoolkid knows. Not, however, Mr Slater.

When it was revealed that workers employed by Slater Walker in South Africa were on starvation wages, Slater threw up his arms in horror and said he would launch an immediate investigation. This is what the 'Guardian' reporter found when he visited the Slater Walker subsidiaries:

'On two wattle farms owned by Slater Walker SA, I saw several children suffering from open sores, distended stomachs and weakened limbs.

'A Zulu interpreter and a University of Natal lecturer accompanying me said the children had kwashiorkor, a disease caused by protein and vitamin deficiency.

'The farm manager of Newlands Estate near Pietermaritzburg controlled by Slater Walkers subsidiary, Natal Tanning Extract, acknowledged

that malnutrition was rife. "What can I do about it?" he asked.

'A distraught Zulu father on Natal Tanning's Boscombe Estate, earning 24p a day said: "My child is dying but I cannot buy milk. I must earn more money."

'The farm manager dismissed the malnutrition sores as "flea-bites" and said that he himself received plenty of milk. Any that was left over after he had fed the dogs was "given to the Bantu".

On reading these reports Slater said he was 'horrified'. 'Neither my colleagues nor I knew anything about conditions of South African employees of NTE and that company has been regarded by Slater Walker simply as an investment.'

In other words, while Slater and his cronies were raking in the profits, they couldn't care less about the health, wages, welfare and conditions of their workers.

This is the damning indictment of capitalism, a system which is totally impersonal. It is only concerned with profits extracted from the backs of the working class and nothing else.

The same Mr Slater was recently lecturing 'The Times' readers about making industry and big business 'socially responsible'.

While Africans wither and die on his farms in South Africa, Slater plays the philanthropist.

When last year's world chess tournament broke down over the inadequacy of the prize money, Slater stepped forward and donated £50,000.

Just shows you what a big-hearted person he really is!

ACCIDENTS ON THE HIGH SEAS

LETTER FROM A SEAMAN

The Department of Trade and Industry will hold a commission of inquiry into the stranding of the 'Esso Cambria' in the Persian Gulf in August 1970.

The investigation will open on June 11 at the Seymour Hall in London with Mr Gerald Darling, QC, as Wreck Commissioner.

The 'Esso Cambria', laden with 241,045 tons of crude oil, left the Persian Gulf on August 29, 1970, for the Fawley Refinery in Essex.

The next day it became stranded off Jazirat Tunb Island. There was no loss of life or injury but oil spillage polluted the sea and nearby coastlines.

Workers Press has received a letter from a reader who is familiar with this type of shipping accident. He writes: **Comrade Editor,**

Today the media is full of reports of the oil tanker 'World Splendour', which went aground and threatened to spill its huge cargo of oil.

This reminded me of an incident which might interest your readers. It concerns the previous ship to bear the name 'World Splendour'. Like the present one, she was an oil-tanker, and sailed under the Liberian 'flag of convenience', being owned by the Greek millionaire, Stavros Niarchos.

It would have been some time during 1958/59. I was on a ship steaming close to Gibraltar, when a report was received that a vessel in our vicinity had suffered an explosion. We rushed full speed to give assistance, arriving at the reported position in time to witness a further explosion. The forepart was submerged and the remainder of the ship was a raging inferno; much oil had been spilled and was burning on the sea.

We lowered all of our boats and spent some 3 or 4 hours searching and picking up survivors. Many of those who had not been injured by the explosions had jumped overboard and been burned. Oil was everywhere, and in the heavy sea that was running, it got everywhere, even in our mouths and most of us were vomiting. The owner of this 'World Splendour' did not allow us to tow her the few miles into Gibraltar, preferring instead to wait for a



Shipping millionaire Niarchos, who owned the first 'World Splendour'.

salvage tug to attempt the longer journey to Marseilles. But she sank on the way.

After the incident, our captain sent a message to 'moneybags' Niarchos asking if he would like to recompense all of us involved for the oil damaged clothes that had to be destroyed. We never heard of any answer to this request, and needless to say had to replace the clothes ourselves.

Not long afterwards, I was transferred to 'Lloyds Signal Station' on the Rock of Gibraltar. One of our jobs there was the relaying of messages from ships in distress. On receiving the initial distress call, we would then have to pass it on to all interested parties, Lloyds London, local agents, and all salvage companies who operated in the area.

Our instructions were very fair and explicit. All salvage firms were to be informed simultaneously so that none of the 'vultures' had an advan-

tage in getting to the wreck before the others. We also had to edit out any unnecessary matter from the distress call before passing it on, such phrases as: 'Many casualties', 'three men washed overboard', 'five men adrift in open boat', etc., were not necessary.

Many times I witnessed a concern and brotherhood between seamen that went way beyond any national differences. But this was not always apparent due to the rigid control exercised by the parasitic few in their pursuit of profit, as was shown in your recent article on the fishing industry.

Only through the building of the revolutionary party can the working class go forward to socialism, production not for profit, but to meet peoples' needs, and a society that has regard for workers who produce the wealth.

Fraternally,
A Reader.

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CABLE TO SPAIN

One of Europe's largest under-sea telephone cables will be carrying telephone calls between Britain and Spain in 1975, the Post Office announced yesterday.

The British Post Office and the Spanish Telephone Company (CTNE) have agreed to share the cost of the multi-million pound cable designed to carry up to 1,380 calls simultaneously.

Edward Fennessy, managing director of telecommunications, who signed the agreement with Spain, said: 'This new cable will help both Spain and the UK to provide better telecommunications services and to meet the demands of expansion which are being brought about by the increasing commercial and social ties between the two countries.'

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 3. The state and revolution. Reformism and revolution in Britain. The fight for democratic rights today means preparing for working-class power.
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 Perspectives for transforming the SLL into a revolutionary party.
 Marxist Analysis of the Crisis. Problems of the British Revolution (Trotsky).
 Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International, Communist Manifesto.

ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS
 'Forward to the Revolutionary Party.'
LEWISHAM: Monday March 26, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club, New Cross Road. 'Build Councils of Action'.
WANDSWORTH: Monday March 26, 8 p.m. Kings Arms, High Road, SW18. 'The Fight against Stalinism'.
WATFORD: Monday March 26, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall, Woodlands Road, near Watford Junction.
ABERDEEN: Monday March 26, 8 p.m. West Front Room, Music Hall, Union Street.
DUNDEE: Tuesday March 27, 7.30 p.m. YMCA, Constitution Road.
LEICESTER: Wednesday, March 28, 8 p.m. Pineapple, St Margaret's bus station.
LINCOLN: Thursday, March 29, 8 p.m. Albion Hotel, St Mary Street.

Socialist Labour League
PUBLIC MEETINGS
The Road to Workers' Power
 Build the revolutionary party
PRESTON
 Sunday March 25, 8 p.m.
 Windsor Castle Hotel, Egan Street
SALFORD
 Wednesday March 28, 8 p.m.
 The Angel, Chapel Street.

ATUA
Central London branch
 Censorship, the media and the Tory government.
 Chairman: Royston Bull
 Speakers: Stuart Hood, David Maude and other speakers from Fleet Street and ITV to be announced.

London Film School, Floral Street, Covent Garden.
 Sunday April 1, 7 p.m.

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 28 Charlotte St
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Yorkshire ancillary staffs march in Leeds

'Hospital strikers need wider support'

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

ABOUT 600 hospital ancillary workers and water board workers from west and south Yorkshire marched through Leeds on Saturday chanting 'Heath out!'

They marched to a meeting at the Grand Theatre in the city centre to hear National Union of Public Employees' general secretary Alan Fisher.

AS WORKERS from Gulson Road hospital, Coventry, return to work today after a week's stoppage, two other local hospitals start a one week's strike. These are the Whitley Geriatric Hospital and the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital. Next Friday, March 30, all hospitals in Coventry, Rugby and Nuneaton will hold a 24-hour close-down.

At a meeting last week Coventry Trades Council decided to call a demonstration in support of the hospital workers. All affiliated and factory organizations are to be asked to join the demonstration.

A UNION official has warned that if there is another allegation in the Westmorland area that a patient had died from lack of emergency hospital treatment, there would be an immediate stoppage by ancillary workers at the hospital involved, until the claim had been fully investigated. Mr Colin Barnett, north-west divisional officer of the National Union of Public Employees, was commenting after last Thursday's remarks by York coroner Mr Anthony Morris that a woman had died because her admission to hospital was delayed by the ancillary workers' strike.

'Things can never be the same in hospital industrial relations,' he said, 'and ancillary workers can never be treated the same again.'

'No matter what the TUC does, we can get support from other trade unions, because we can't win on our own. We've got to get support from other workers.'

'We are not asking for engineers and miners to come out for us, but to show their support.'

He said it was not an easy fight because they could not close the hospitals completely. The public had to be kept on the side of the ancillary workers.

He went on: 'The pay laws are

not fair. The percentages do not help the lower-paid workers. If the government claims that the public is behind it, then let's have a General Election.'

Mr Ambler, national executive member of Confederation of Health Service Employees and chairman of the meeting, said: 'The ancillary workers have not had a sudden rush of blood to the head—it's the lack of food in their bellies that drives them to action.'

Infantry

He said that workers who had been the least experienced in the trade union movement had been turned into the infantry of the movement today.

Terry Mallinson, COHSE national officer, said the government had lost all credibility and demanded an independent inquiry. He attacked the witch-hunting in the capitalist Press.

A Transport and General Workers' Union official from the co-ordinating committee said: 'There was a demo in Sheffield yesterday [Friday] and some of the engineering factories came out in the afternoon. That's not enough. The transport should come out as well.'

He said the May Day strike was too far away. But he could only recommend a token stoppage before that date. He called for a one-day stoppage of all ancillary workers in Yorkshire.

The meeting cheered the news that the private wards in Leeds and Halifax had been closed down by the strike.

Tommy Wright, a NUPE steward at the Leeds General Infirmary, said:

'The government says it is short of money. Yet members of the Pay Board are getting £16,000 a year. If the government is so sure it has the support of the public, why not try it out with an election?'

'This strike, in a way, is a political strike. If the government can be overthrown, so much the better.'

Coles Cranes' strikers return

WORKERS at Coles Cranes, Sunderland, the scene of a 12-week battle for jobs, voted overwhelmingly at a mass meeting at Sunderland Civic Centre on Saturday—only six against—to remove the pickets and start a return to work from today.

They then staged a victory march through the main streets.

The basis for the resumption was worked out at a meeting last Friday at a local hotel between the owner of Coles Cranes, Mr Alphonse de Vigier, company executives, Len Edmondson, executive councillor from the AUEW, and other national and local trade union officials.

A joint statement signed after the talks called for the return of staff and essential services today followed by

a complete return on Monday, April 2.

Under the terms of the resumption de Vigier was forced to accept a union document which calls for the honouring of all agreements and no victimization.

In an adjoining document de Vigier set out the company terms which were also accepted by the officials and shop stewards.

De Vigier said there could be a full return to work if only one issue—that of time-fixing in the assembly shop—could be agreed. This was vital if the company was to remain competitive.

The second point calls for 'negotiations with shop stewards and union officials with an independent chairman from the Department of Employment on assembly shop times to take place on March 20 and 30.'

ONLY SIX DAYS TO RAISE £947.57 FOR OUR MARCH FUND

THIS IS the toughest and most decisive time for raising our Fund. We have six days to go and, as you can see, we still have more than half our £1,750 target to collect. We appeal to all of you, dear readers. There is not a moment to waste. Do everything you can. We must reach our target before the end of this week.

We are confident that you will not let us down. This month, so far, has been a magnificent one. The enormous response to our Pageant at the Empire Pool, Wembley, on March 11 convinces us there is very big support for Workers Press and all our policies.

But the danger is to rest back in any complacent way. The Tories are not sitting back at all. They have pressed on ruthlessly with their attacks against the working class.

We must fight back in every way we can. Help us expand our circulation in every district. Make a huge drive. Start immediately to complete our March Fund. Collect extra amounts—raise all you can—rush all your donations immediately to:

**Workers Press
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 186a Clapham High St,
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BBC 1
 9.38-11.55 Schools. 12.25 Cywain. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 Woodentops. 1.45 Pets and vets. 2.05 Schools. 3.35 Television top of the form. 4.00 Pixie and Dixie. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Blue Peter. 5.15 Yao. 5.40 Sir Prancelot. 5.45 News. Weather.
 6.00 NATIONWIDE.
 6.45 TOP OF THE FORM.
 7.10 STAR TREK. Amok Time.
 8.00 PANORAMA.
 9.00 NEWS. Weather.
 9.25 PLAY FOR TODAY: 'Speech Day'. By Barry Hines. With David Smith.
 10.15 FILM 73.
 10.45 COME DANCING. 11.20 NEWS.
 11.25 VIEWPOINT. 11.45 Weather.

ITV
 9.30 Schools. 10.33 World War I (London only). 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Hickory house. 12.25 Alice through the looking glass. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Mr. and Mrs. 1.30 Emmerdale farm. 2.00 All our yesterdays. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Film: 'Gaby'. Leslie Caron, John Kerr. French orphan and American paratrooper fall in love. 4.25 Pardon my genie. 4.55 Clapperboard. 5.20 Lollipop loves Mr. Mole. 5.50 News.
 6.00 TODAY.
 6.40 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS.
 7.30 CORONATION STREET.
 8.00 LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR.
 8.30 THE RIVALS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. The Moabite Cipher.
 9.00 ROYAL FILM PERFORMANCE 1973. Pete Murray talks to stars arriving to see 'Lost Horizon'.
 11.15 DRIVE-IN.
 11.45 WORLD WAR I.
 12.15 THE DO-GOODERS. Angus Stewart talks to Countess of Dartmouth.



BBC 2
 11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University.
 7.05 TAKE ANOTHER LOOK. Behind the Garden Wall.
 7.30 NEWS SUMMARY. Weather.
 7.35 LOOK, STRANGER. Corr's Country.
 8.00 ALIAS SMITH AND JONES. Night of the Red Dog.
 8.55 CALL MY BLUFF.
 9.25 DAVE ALLEN AT LARGE.
 10.10 SIR MORTIMER. Digging Up People. Archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler.
 11.00 OPINION.
 11.15 NEWS. Weather.

David Smith is Ronnie Warboys in Barry Hines' 'Speech Day'—BBC 1's Play for Today.

REGIONAL TV
CHANNEL: 9.30-11.52 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.00 Schools. 2.25 Film: 'Five Finger Exercise'. 4.20 Puffin. 4.25 London. 6.00 News. 6.15 Maverick. London. 11.15 lottery. 11.45 News. weather.
WESTWARD. As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 6.35 Date with Danton. 12.10 News. 12.13 Faith for life.
SOUTHERN: 9.30 London. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.00 Schools. 2.10 Cartoon. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 Film: 'The Rabbit Trap'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.40 London.

10.30 Over the sticks. 11.00 News. 11.05 Royal Film performance. 11.50 Farming. 12.15 Weather.
HARLECH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Date-line. 3.00 Film: 'The Over the Hill Gang'. 4.25 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.22 Report Wales. 6.45 London. 10.30 Film: 'Kill Her Gently'. 11.40 Royal film performance. 12.25 Weather.
HTV Cymru/Wales as above except: 2.30-3.00 Hamdden. 6.01-6.22 Y dydd. 8.30-9.00 Yr wythnos.
HTV West as above except: 6.22-6.45 This is the West this week.
ANGLIA: 9.30 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Houseparty. 3.00 Marcus Welby. 3.55 Romper room. 4.22 News. 4.25 London. 6.00 About

Anglia. 6.45 London. 11.45 Big question.
ATV MIDLAND: 9.30 London. 12.00 Guide. 12.05 London. 2.00 Dr Simon Locke. 2.30 London. 3.00 Film: 'Fools Rush In'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Today. 6.45 London. 11.15 Shirley's world. 11.45 Stories. Weather.
ULSTER: 11.00 London. 1.33 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 Film: 'Tarzan and the Slave Girl'. 4.22 News. 4.25 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.15 Dick Van Dyke. 6.45 London. 11.15 Monday night. 11.25 Film: 'A Lady Mislaid'.
YORKSHIRE: 9.30 London. 3.00 Film: 'Atomic City'. 4.25 London. 6.00 Calendar. Weather. 6.45 London. 11.15 Outsider. 12.50 Weather.
GRANADA: 9.30 London. 12.00 Handful of songs. 12.05 London. 2.30 Film: 'Ferry Cross the Mersey'. 4.00 Crossroads. 4.20 London. 6.00 News. 6.25 This is your right. 6.40 London. 11.15 Boris Karloff presents.
TYNE TEES: 9.20 Memorable meals. 9.30 London. 2.30 News. 2.31 Galloping gourmet. 3.00 Film: 'Undercover'. 4.25 London. 4.50 Skippy. 5.20 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Cartoon. 6.45 London. 11.15 Name of the game. 12.35 News. 12.40 Lectern.
GRAMPIAN: 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 3.05 News. 3.08 Film: 'The I Don't Care Girl'. 4.25 London. 5.20 Emmerdale farm. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Royal Clansmen. 6.45 London. 11.15 University challenge. 11.45 Meditation.

Pit ballot can challenge Tories

BRITAIN'S miners start balloting tomorrow in a pay fight which could decide the fate of the state pay laws and the Tory government.

Two choices face the miners—

● **THEY** either accept the challenge of the hour and vote **YES** to reject the paltry pay offer fixed by Heath.

● **OR** they vote **NO** and turn down their union's recommendation to treat the Tory pay offer with the contempt it deserves.

But more than this is involved. Every worker in the country is looking to the

miners. If they decide to make a stand, it will be a decisive political challenge to the Tory government. Heath has already made the issues clear—his government can only survive if the working class and the unions are smashed. The miners are now target number one.

Among militants in Yorkshire—a key area in Tuesday and Wednesday's ballot—is an attitude of tense anticipation.

The Coal Board has been up to its old tricks. Overtime has been vastly increased in a calculated attempt to make earnings seem greater than they really are.

Miners are also questioning tactics. The build-up to industrial action could have

started much sooner that it has, some feel. Perhaps an overtime ban to reduce coal stocks could have been implemented earlier than it has been.

Miners remember the period last autumn when NUM leaders, including the now militant president Joe Gormley, appeared in joint platforms with Coal Board members talking about launching a 'joint initiative' in the industry.

This attitude on the part of the union lent itself perfectly to the massive boost in productivity the board needed to lull the miner into a false sense of security.

But now Heath's Phase Two, which specifically outlaws the long sought-after

third week's holiday, has shattered this easy 'old pals' act.

Yorkshire union officials and the rank and file militants are now working flat out for a YES vote in the ballot which will mean, they say, a national strike. The Lofthouse colliery, disaster which seems to have added seven men to the long list of miners killed backing coal from the bowels of the earth, is reminder enough to the Yorkshire colliers of the totally unjust reward they get for their exhausting, dangerous and back-breaking work.

Workers Press asked two of the 1,400 miners from Glasshoughton pit why they were voting YES for strike action.

'Most of the lads will vote strike'

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

PETER BOLDESON, married with five girls, is an underground worker at Glasshoughton colliery, Yorkshire. He has worked in the pit since he left school.

☾ All the lads I talk to want the strike and they are going to vote to reject the offer. Most I know will vote for strike.

The big trick has been overtime. At Glasshoughton the management has been trying to keep us sweet with this. People have been working overtime up to £15 and £20 a week.

It's quite blatant. They have been getting ready for this one for some time. There is no doubt that this has been a deliberate policy of the NCB.

Something should have been done about this long ago. An overtime ban should have been imposed. The Yorkshire council of the union passed this ages ago, but I think this was squashed by the right wing in the union.

Trevor Parsons, also from Glasshoughton, said: ☾ The political aspect of this struggle has also been a big factor. A lot of men realize they are not entering into a situation like last year's strike.

It's not just a matter of a strike. Everyone knows, every single miner in Glasshoughton, that it is the government you are taking on.

So the question of what leadership they have got is vital. The miners are looking to the other unions as well. Heath will make this one a make-or-break issue.

Peter Bolderson agreed: ☾ The government knows there are two issues involved in this struggle. We either win and hit the government or they smash us.

Can anyone have any doubt about this since the last strike?

We nearly had them out then. This is the crunch.

Opportunities have already been lost. At the TUC special conference our union had a correct policy. They wanted all-out General Strike action.

But it was withdrawn. I think this should have been put to the meeting and not decided in small, secret discussions.

As it was we have the May Day protest. This will not budge Heath one inch.

Trevor Parsons added: ☾ There is a lot of talk about General Strike, from people who use the words to avoid taking action.

It's the latest way of avoiding political reality and



taking on this government. I don't want to be negative. The miners must and will vote to reject this offer. Then an overtime ban should go on immediately to stop the NCB preparing for this confrontation.

When the strike day is decided we should go out immediately and ask the other workers to strike with us.

The miners and every worker know that under this government unions can't operate; your pay is dictated to you and the prices go up and up.

We have no choice but to take action. All the workers are looking to the miners for a lead.

Top: Rescue workers at the Lofthouse pit are reminded about the NUM ballot by a poster for yesterday's meeting. Above: Glasshoughton miners Trevor Parsons (l) and Peter Bolderson.

Miners urged: Reject offer—

ABOUT 2,000 Yorkshire miners yesterday heard their leaders call for strike over their £5 to £7 claim.

At a coalfield rally in Barnsley they were urged to decisively reject the National Coal Board's pay offer dictated to them by the Tory government when they ballot tomorrow and Wednesday.

After the meeting, acting Yorkshire secretary of the NUM, Arthur Scargill, said: 'We told them they either back up the national executive in opposition to the Tory government and its policies or they accept the NCB offer and take a reduced standard of living.'

If the miners vote against the offer the forms of industrial action would be decided by the national executive, said Mr Scargill.

These may involve overtime bans as well as national strike action.

He discounted a suggestion that Yorkshire might 'go it alone' if other areas voted against industrial action.

'To win a victory against this government we need absolute unity,' he said.

No one at the meeting raised the General Strike call made by miners' president Joe Gormley.

Mr Scargill said that other sections of workers would come to defend the miners

as they did at the Saltley Coke Depot, Birmingham, in last year's strike.

Asked about possible changes in laws and police regulations to stop mass picketing, he said:

'I was fined during the last strike for picketing and we were supposed to have laws protecting peaceful picketing.'

'New laws don't mean anything to the miners, or any other section of the working class.'

'If they are fighting an industrial war, they fight with what methods they can.'

The vote on the Yorkshire field will be decisive; it is by far the biggest of the board's areas in Britain.

TORIES ADVANCE AS TUC RETREATS

FROM PAGE ONE

with a phoney secret ballot.

Secondly, and even more seriously, it suggests that the tasks facing the working class are merely industrial, and not political at all.

All that has to be got rid of, say the Stalinists, is 'Heath's policy'—the Tory government itself can be left intact.

With this perspective, of course, it follows that all

that is required is a 'demonstration' on May 1. After that, everyone can go back to their factories, Feather can go back to his talks with Heath and the Tory Cabinet can go on plotting fresh attacks on the working class.

This policy would leave the miners completely out on a limb and open to a defeat which would affect every section of the labour movement.

The Socialist Labour

League denounces this treachery. The miners now coming into struggle, and the hospital workers who have already been fighting it out with the Tories for four-and-a-half weeks, must receive full backing.

That is why we say: all out on May 1, but make it the start of a General Strike to force the Tories out of office and put in a Labour government pledged to socialist policies.

13th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG SOCIALISTS BLACKPOOL APRIL 14/15 1973

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, APRIL 14 & 15, WINTER GARDENS, BLACKPOOL

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