

Socialist Worker

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WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Wages pegged as prices soar—now a 'freeze' on building

MAJOR SLUMP IN NEW HOMES

The most important worker in Britain...

IN ONE MAJOR AREA of the economy the Tory government's freeze is working overtime: house building. And as usual ordinary working people hoping for decent homes are the main victims of Tory policy.

The Tories have pretended that they are building more houses in the private sector to make up for the shortfall in council house building.

Socialist Worker Reporter

But the latest housing figures—issued this week—show that fewer houses will be built this year than in any other year since 1963—when housebuilding was held up by especially bad weather.

In the first nine months of 1971, 262,000 houses were built in Britain. In the first nine

months of 1972, the figure dropped to 247,400. The shortfall of 14,600 is not made up by an increase in new house starts in the same period of 12,600.

On 14 November Mr John Nott, a Junior Minister at the Treasury, summed up the government's attitude towards house prices. These, he confirmed, would not be subject to the freeze. 'The government,' he said, 'are taking steps to ensure that the present rapid increase in private housing is sustained. An increase in the supply of houses is the best way of slowing down price rises.'

Now the 'increase in supply of houses' is shown to be an illusion. The 'best way' to control prices has been abandoned. Which is why there is no check whatever during these bitter days on the meteoric rise in house prices.

In 1971, new house prices rose 13 per cent. In the first half of 1972 they rose 40 per cent. Old house prices in 1971 rose 11.8 per cent.

In the first half of 1972, they went up 40.8 per cent. These enormous figures will not change in the period of the freeze.

The housebuilding companies, led by George Wimpey, are not going to end the house price boom, and the massive extra profits that have accrued to them as a result, by building too many extra houses. Many Wimpey houses are being held empty as the prices rocket higher and higher.

House prices are the biggest hole in the Tory freeze. But everywhere else, as more and more workers are beginning to realise, the ice is wearing thin.

The latest issue of the retail magazine, the Grocer, indicates 118 separate price increases. The Grocer's food price increase of 2 December showed a rise of 1.32 per cent, compared with 0.86 per cent on 25 November and 0.33 per cent on 18 November—the first full week of the freeze.

POURING IN

The price of meat and fish, exempted from the freeze, has risen steadily and the latest index shows a 10 per cent increase in the price of eggs.

Meanwhile, even from those manufacturers who are covered by the freeze, the applications are pouring in to the Department of Trade and Industry requesting price increase permission.

Many permissions are expected over the next few days. The bulk of them are for price increases in clothing, leather goods (shoes and handbags), launderettes, furniture and publishing.

Last week, the DTI gave permission to Rio Tinto-Zinc to 'pass on' increased price the company is paying for non-ferrous materials.

A spokesman for the DTI told Socialist Worker: 'Most of the people who ring us are retailers and manufacturers, and many of them find on ringing us that the price increase they have in mind falls within the exceptions outlined in the Counter-Inflation Bill.'

Countless other exceptions are being found and will be found in the run-up to Christmas as retailers dream up more and more gaudy packaging.

It is more urgent than ever for trade unionists to go on to the offensive and use their industrial strength to win substantial pay increases and drive a hole through the government's freeze. If they don't, the next 90 days will see still further cuts in our standard of living.

Figures that spell misery for millions

	Council (figures in thousands)	Private
1967	17.0	16.7
1968	16.0	18.5
1969	15.4	15.1
1970	13.2	16.0
1971	13.2	16.0
1972	8.6	15.9

In October, only 8,289 council houses were built, down again on the monthly average even for the third quarter. And all the signs point to an even steeper drop in November and December

CENTRE of attention in our picture is Mr James Goad, the Suffolk strike-breaker who was back at the National Industrial Relations Court this week to complain against the AUEW, the engineering union.

Last Friday, Mr Goad, three times suspended from the union for being in arrears with his membership subscriptions, went back to the Sudbury, Suffolk, branch of the AUEW and demanded to be re-admitted. Branch officials, meeting at the Bear Inn, refused.

They do not want a man in their union who scabbed on a strike at the local CAV factory.

Outside the pub Mr Goad was surrounded by a posse of pressmen who clearly think him a Very Important Person—far more worthy of attention than the many thousands of dedicated, unpaid, part-time shop stewards who fight for their members' interests, far more deserving of big headlines than the thousands of workers killed on the job every year.

The law of the land, Tory-style, decrees that Mr James Goad, black-leg, must be admitted to membership of the union against the wishes of the members. That's 'democracy'—and, to reinforce it, further fines can be expected on the union.

Mr Goad says he has God on his side. The AUEW may not have such exalted backing—but it does have more than one million members and, if they are mobilised, the plans of messrs Goad, Donaldson (the NIRC judge), and Heath can be paralysed.

WHAT WE THINK: page 4.



James Goad (in anorak) reading a prepared statement to reporters in Sudbury last Friday. Picture: MIKE COHEN.

Old Bailey trial

Socialist Worker went to press before the verdict in the Old Bailey trial of the Stoke Newington Eight was announced.

Demonstration in solidarity with the Stoke Newington Eight this week—the day after the sentences are announced: 5pm from St Paul's Tube Station.

INSIDE

... the best reports from the major centres of struggle

- Jobs go west in East Kilbride.....page 6
 - Town under the axe: on the spot report from Ebbw Vale.....page 8
 - AUEW vote row.....page 12
 - Farm workers say fight freeze...page 14
 - Demo backs rent rebels.....page 15
 - Loughborough strikers get union backing.....page 16
- PLUS your letters, Footprints, Labour's record, Out of Your Mind, Our Norman, and all the top features in the left's leading paper.

Lynch's Reichstag fire—see page 3



BRIEFING

JUSTICE, Italian style: one of the leaders of the Italian fascist organisation Ordine Nuovo in Catania, Sicily, has been sentenced to four years in prison. He was found guilty of placing a highly explosive bomb in the left-wing Feltrinelli bookshop in Catania. A passer-by noticed the bomb a few minutes before it was due to go off and called the police, who managed to defuse it. It was powerful enough to kill dozens of people.

The same court in the same city condemned an anarchist journalist to two and a half years' imprisonment on charges

of incitement to riot, contempt of court and publication of false information. All the reporter had done was write the following sentence in an article: 'Fascism is reviving: there is no other solution but insurrection.'

PRESIDENT NIXON'S new Secretary of Labour, Peter Brennan, is a former building worker who has come up in the world. The president described him as 'a man who exemplifies the character and strength of

American working men and women', and as a trade union leader who has 'kept in touch' with the rank and file.

Brennan is leader of the New York State building and construction workers' union, and in every way typical of the right-wing, worker-bashing American trade union leader. His 'keeping in touch with the rank and file' consists of having got New York building workers to march through the city in 1970 in support of Nixon's invasion of Cambodia.



RHODESIA: Armed police confront the laughter and scorn of Africans at the attempt to hide their rejection of any settlement.

Toothless sanctions let Smith step up apartheid

LAST MONTH the Tories re-imposed sanctions against Rhodesia. They did so reluctantly, grudgingly and almost apologetically.

The right-wing Tory backbenchers wanted sanctions removed, but Sir Alec Douglas-Home met this revolt with a bland assurance that the re-imposed sanctions would not be 'vindictive'.

In plain words, the Tory sanctions will be as ineffective as possible.

Sir Alec claimed once again to be acting in the interests of the Africans in Rhodesia. But the findings of the Pearce Commission quite clearly state that the Africans want a further tightening of sanctions. The Tories choose to ignore the advice of a commission which they themselves, at great expense, set up.

Meanwhile in Rhodesia Ian Smith called his band of white reactionaries to a Rhodesian Front congress at which he announced his abhorrence of petty apartheid. This was conveniently timed to coincide with the debate on sanctions at Westminster.

Fleet Street faithfully reported his words, and the exercise had its desired effect of weakening sanctions.

Horror

Smith and his faithful Tory right-wingers in Britain were aided in this by the bishops and reverends of the African National Council, who found it expedient at just this time to have talks with the Rhodesian government. Instead of mobilising the tremendous potential for mass action provoked by the Pearce Commission, the African National Council embarked on a policy of sweet reason, and called for a Constitutional Convention.

To the horror of many of its former supporters, the council denounced a bus strike by Africans in Salisbury and Bulawayo with the justification that it is 'a political, not an economic organisation'. When the Wankie coalminers went on strike after the criminal disaster in which 500 miners died, they too were

by Roger Tembo

denied support.

Now, in a matter of weeks rather than months, Ian Smith's denunciation of apartheid has changed into a passionate commitment to this sordid policy.

The talks with the African National Council have ended—Smith's government broke them off. The government went on to exclude all non-whites from using public amenities in city centres, and Asians who, in their pursuit of middle-class status, had purchased homes in European areas, now have to leave. Worse was to follow.

Poverty

The Smith government is now faithfully following South Africa by forcibly removing all unemployed Africans from the urban areas. This is to be done by extending and tightening up the pass laws, and by periodic dawn swoops by the police to arrest any African without a job found in a town.

This can only increase the poverty of the over-crowded rural areas, as the urban 'surplus' is dumped in the poorest parts of the countryside. The malnutrition and starvation so common in the South African rural dumping grounds will become in Rhodesia too another monument to white Christian civilisation.

The conditions opponents of the regime can expect as political prisoners in the jails of Rhodesia also came to light recently. Thirty-four political prisoners wrote a letter of protest, complaining of unhealthy food, poor clothing and solitary confinement. The authorities replied by sending these prisoners to detention camps.

But the Rhodesian government has problems. The shortage of foreign exchange, so necessary for imports, and the lack of any new productive capital investment, make the Rhodesian economy increasingly insecure.

But far more threatening to the citadel of white privilege is the grow-

ing strength of Frelimo, the Mozambique liberation movement. The success of its guerrilla activity in the Tete province is threatening Rhodesia's economic lifeline to the Portuguese port of Beira.

Two weeks ago Rhodesia and South Africa expressed their concern by volunteering to provide an all-white army to fight the guerrillas. The Portuguese government was annoyed: it felt its dignity offended by the offer.

The real tragedy of the whole situation seems to be the impotence of the Zimbabwean African liberation movements. In the face of a politically alive working class and peasantry, the leadership split three ways, between

ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Political Union), ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) and Frolizi (Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe). The divided leadership seems incapable of responding to the present situation.

The policy of sending armed guerrillas in among a peasantry which has no political or organisational preparations has had its tragic consequences.

Within the nationalist framework, however, a growing movement has developed for a revolutionary change of policy. Inside and outside the country militants are demanding the application of marxist principles to the liberation struggle.

RIGHT AND LEFT LINE UP IN DUTCH ELECTIONS

by Edward Crawford

versus Conservative (right wing) form, as in Britain.

Because the Netherlands lacked large-scale industry last century, the Dutch working class until recently worked mainly in small shops rather than big factories. But this has been changing rapidly since the Second World War.

DIVISIONS

The huge post-war complex of large factories and plants in and around Rotterdam has brought a new working class on to the scene. Often the workers in the new big industries came from the countryside and had loyalties to the old religious parties, especially the Catholic. The children of such workers are now increasingly turning to the Labour and Communist Parties to defend their class interests.

Even more important, the religious trade unions, both Protestant and Catholic, are now losing out to the Socialist ones, as younger people lose interest in maintaining the old divisions.

On the political front, the Dutch Labour Party has not been in a position to expose itself in the way Wilson's Labour Party has done here, because it has not been in power.

Even if it now enters the government—and the process of forming coalitions is so complicated by the number of parties that it is likely to be about three months before the final result of the Dutch people's choice emerges—it can only be in a coalition. It will always have a handy explanation for its failures.

This means that the Dutch working class not merely has illusions in the Labour Party, but is likely to keep these for some time to come. There is no significant left-wing movement outside the established parties, and the student movement can only be described as frivolous.

It is becoming clear that as the world economic crisis deepens and the ruling class puts the cost of measures to deal with this on the shoulders of the working class, there will be a shift to the left. Unfortunately it seems likely that in the Netherlands the leaders of the main working-class parties may divert and exhaust this movement.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, in Tel Aviv, was broken up by the arrival of about 250 people, mainly members of the ruling Labour Party's youth section but also including recognised members of the secret police. The new arrivals all demanded to be admitted to membership at once and participate in the committee elections.

The League for Human and Civil Rights was formed in Palestine in 1937, and is a non-party body. In recent years it won wide respect outside Israel for its condemnation of Israeli atrocities in Israel and the occupied territories.

Many socialist revolutionaries of all tendencies, members of the Communist Party, and individual opponents of the Zionist regime have worked together in the league. It has done much to draw public attention to the condition of Arab workers in the occupied territories, and has taken up many civil rights cases involving both Jews and Arabs in Israel.

After half the planned meeting time had been taken up registering the new members, disruption of the meeting continued and the chairman, Professor Israel Shahak, declared it closed. The new members insisted on remaining and electing a new committee.

Despite this government attempt to remove an embarrassing thorn from its side, the members of the league as formerly constituted intend to continue their work.

EIGHTY AFRICAN miners working as contract labourers in South Africa have been deported back to Mozambique after striking for higher pay at a diamond mine near Kimberley. Strikes among migrant workers are an almost weekly event in South Africa, and a chain reaction is spreading from compound to compound.

These workers migrate to South Africa in order to be able to pay their taxes at home, to buy manufactured necessities of life, and to support their families, whose small, impoverished plots of land are not sufficient to keep them alive.

Their wages are £6 to £8 a month, and they live in dehumanising conditions, sleeping on concrete bunks in blockhouses surrounded by barbed wire, and fed on a diet of porridge just sufficient to keep them alive.

The bosses of the huge mining corporations, many of them members of the British ruling class, are worried by the revolt of the contract workers. W Wilson, chairman of the Anglo-American Corporation, which expects to make a cool £24 million profit this year out of one goldmine alone, said: 'The Ovambo strike [of 80,000 contract workers] in South West Africa this year constituted a serious warning on the question of communications.'

The company is trying to head off any repetition of the Ovambo struggle in its own mines by raising wages to the princely sum of £13 a month. Johannesburg Consolidated Investments, another gold giant, is applying the same strategy to its own 50,000 African workers.

Why we need £30,000

by Jim Nichol

THE International Socialist Review will know that all our appeals are connected with the progress of the paper. It is just 4½ years since we launched the paper and printed some 8000 copies a week. Today, with 16 pages, we are fast approaching a circulation of 30,000.

Counter

One of the corner-stones of IS policy is helping to build rank and file organisations in industry to counter the employers' attacks, as well as those of the trade union bureaucrats. At present our print-shop is at the disposal of The Collier, The Dockworker, Building Workers Charter, Journalists Charter, Rank and File Teacher, Case Con, Carworker, Post Office Worker, Steelworker and Printworker.

In addition, we attempt to provide a service to the labour and trade union movement. Many organisations find it difficult to publish their journals with commercial printers because of hostility and prohibitive costs. Among left papers printed by us are Black Panther and Black Power journals, Gay Liberation News, Free Palestine and Anti-Apartheid News.



Premises in Bethnal Green that IS hopes to buy for new printing and editorial offices

The main advantage of our own press is our ability to act quickly in crucial situations. When the five dockers were jailed last summer we produced 60,000 copies of a Socialist Worker special issue calling for immediate strike action.

And we opened our press to the docks shop stewards and printed tens of thousands of leaflets for them.

Solidarity

Again, during the national building workers' strike we printed three Socialist Worker specials totalling 45,000 copies to help build solidarity for the strike and counter the lies of the employers and the

national press.

Support for the IS fund is good. This week it stands at £4127. One member in London has sent £250 from a small inheritance. A further £50 comes from a student who had no money but was delighted to use the Access credit card his bank had the nerve to send him.

We appeal to members and supporters to continue their support for the fund. We ask for factory collections, branch levies and individual donations, large and small.

The increased capacity of our machinery will enable us to provide the printing service the socialist and labour movement needs.

All donations to: Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

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Rank and file journals printed by IS

Nigerian's brush with British justice...

FOR Sampson Omoyeni Friday 10 November was the last day in an eighteen-month nightmare which began with a savage beating by Stoke Newington police officers and ended with a £50 fine in the Inner London Crown Court.

The nightmare included a week in hospital, three months off work in considerable pain, and two trials, in the first of which the jury could not agree a verdict.

The incident which sparked off all the trouble happened when three police constables from Stoke Newington police station, Crosthwaite, Fitzpatrick and Turner, came across Mr Omoyeni when he was parking his car in Farleigh Road, Hackney.

The police all gave evidence that the car was completely blocking the road. They had, they said, approached Omoyeni to question him, when he had suddenly lashed out at them. A fight followed near the car in which, said the police, Omoyeni had pulled them over a low wall.

In the fight, Constable Turner's thumb was dislocated. Omoyeni had hurled politically motivated abuse at the police about 'white trash', and had used the term 'man' when addressing one of the policemen.

DENIED

Mr Omoyeni told a rather different story. The police, he said, had pounced on him for no apparent reason, making anti-coloured comments. One of them had said: 'He has a Volvo and I have worked for years and only had a bike.' Omoyeni denied almost all the comments attributed him by the police.

He had been seized and bundled into the back of a police van, he said. In the van, he felt his arm being twisted behind him until it suddenly went numb. 'I knew it was broken,' he told the court.

While in the van, Mr Omoyeni said, he also 'lost' £33—three £10 and three £1 notes—which he had been given by people at work for electrical jobs. These people appeared in court and testified to giving Mr Omoyeni the money before he had set out on his car journey. The money was not among his possessions taken off him when he arrived at Stoke Newington.

An official of the Nigerian Embassy also gave evidence to the effect that Mr Omoyeni had been born in Western Nigeria and educated in Catholic schools, and that the expression 'man' when addressing other people was unheard of among such people.

ACQUITTED

Mr Omoyeni called several other witnesses, all of whom bore out his story. He is not a member of any political organisation and had never been in court before.

The jury retired to consider the charges: assaulting Cornthwaite and Fitzpatrick and causing actual bodily harm to Turner.

(An ABH conviction can bring a prison sentence of up to five years.)

After three hours deliberation they unanimously acquitted Mr Omoyeni of assaulting Fitzpatrick and of causing actual bodily harm to Turner. By a majority of 10 to 1 they found him guilty of assaulting Cornthwaite.

Judge FH Cassells then said: 'As a result of the case you have suffered severe injury and in the circumstances I will fine you £50 and not send you to prison.'

Mr Omoyeni is not impressed. He has had enough of British justice, he told Socialist Worker, 'I plan to come home and tell my people just how your police behave.'

Dublin bomb blasts: were they Jack Lynch's 'Reichstag fire'?

From SW Special Correspondent
THE NEW Offences Against the State law that the Irish government pushed through last weekend gives the police powers that any dictatorial regime would relish.

People can now be picked up at any time of day or night and dragged before a court of three judges or even three army officers sitting without a jury and sent to prison for up to 12 months. The only 'evidence' needed is the word of a policeman or a statement printed in a newspaper.

Another provision of the law turns every journalist into a potential police spy. If a newspaper refers to an unnamed 'spokesman' for an illegal organisation, the writer will be sentenced to three months in prison unless he gives the name of that spokesman.

The law also effectively prevents any criticism of the decisions of the rigged courts. Any one who even attends, let alone organises meetings or demonstrations against the activities of the courts can be held to be 'interfering with the course of justice' and sent to prison for up to five years.

Opposition to the new law in the Dail, the Dublin parliament, collapsed when two bomb explosions shook the city centre last Friday, killing two people and injuring dozens.

Yet there is not the slightest

possibility that the bombings were carried through by the two illegal organisations—the Provisional and Official IRAs. Both immediately denounced the bombings. Both knew quite clearly that such action at that time could only aid the government.

And the targets chosen—Liberty Hall, the trade union headquarters where republicans often hold meetings and a bus terminus frequented by many republican supporters—made no sense at all.

The only people to gain from the bombings were the enemies of the republicans—the British Army that occupies Northern Ireland and those who support its presence, the right wing Loyalists organisations in the North and the Lynch government in the South.

'Atrocity'

The clearest historical parallel is the burning of the Reichstag—the parliament building—in Berlin in 1933. The Nazis, who had recently come to power, organised the fire and then blamed the Communists, using it as an excuse to push through laws destroying elementary civil rights. Lynch has used a similar 'atrocity' for a similar end.

The actions of the southern government will make it easier for the British Tories to achieve their aim of smashing resistance to their rule in Northern Ireland. They are already boasting that they have 'broken the terrorists'.

Certainly, the British Army is exercising a greater level of repression than ever before in areas like West



Lynch: dictatorial power

Belfast, continually ransacking houses, seizing arms and arresting people in the Catholic ghettos.

But the 'successes' of the troops are in no way bringing peace to the city. As the scale of troop repression has increased throughout the year, so has the death toll among civilians. More than 100 have died as a result of sectarian murders, two-thirds of them Catholics—although Protestants outnumber Catholics in the city two to one.

The pattern of the last week has been typical: the son of a Catholic doctor shot while being driven to school, a Protestant woman married to a Catholic blasted by a gun through the window of her house, another Catholic tortured and mutilated before being shot through the back of the head, a father and son both injured by bullets when they went to answer a knock on their back door.

Even Major Laynard of the British Army has admitted that attacks on Catholics occur 'almost on a nightly

basis in South and East Belfast'. Many Catholic families were living in fear of their lives, he said.

Yet those who organise the attacks have little to fear from the British Army or the police. The army operates in the Catholic areas of West Belfast, hardly at all in Protestant East Belfast. Catholics found with guns for self protection can expect several years in prison, while Loyalist organisations parade with impunity and have friendly discussions with the army.

Periodic conflicts between the Protestants and the army do occur—but the authorities are quick to patch over the differences and come to a compromise.

Devote

The different approach towards the republicans and the Loyalists is easily explained. Although the republicans oppose pointless, sectarian murders, they believe it is necessary to end British rule over Ireland. So the troops devote their energies to dealing with them.

The Loyalists on the other hand in general support British control. So although they thrive on building up vicious, sectarian feelings, the troops rarely stop them arming.

The Tories are prepared to offer certain concessions to the Catholic middle class, represented by the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

But for working-class Catholics, repression remains, with the threat of terror attacks from the Loyalists if they step out of line.



Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK...

JAMES GOAD is at it again. Continuing his campaign against the AUEW—the engineering union—he laid the basis for a new raid by the National Industrial Relations Court on the union's funds when he tried again last Friday to force his unwanted presence on the Sudbury branch.

The issue at stake, whether a proven blackleg can be excluded from the union he has stabbed in the back, is of fundamental importance to all trade unionists. It is in no sense merely a domestic matter for the AUEW. If Goad can be forced on the AUEW then any scab can be forced on any union.

And not only can be but will be. If Goad wins all the cockroaches will come out of the woodwork. The employers will be greatly strengthened. The government will have succeeded in its aim of destroying the right of union members to exclude flagrant and persistent enemies of trade unionism from membership.

Three weeks ago we congratulated the AUEW executive council for its firm stand in refusing either to re-admit Goad or to appear before the NIRC. We stated then, and we repeat, that they acted correctly and courageously in the interests of their own membership and of the whole trade union movement. Unlike the leaderships of the TGWU, the NUM and others who also committed themselves in words to non-co-operation with the NIRC, the AUEW leadership did not surrender at the first real test.

Road to defeat

Nevertheless it has to be said that the course of action they are now following—that of passive non-co-operation—is dangerous and self-defeating. By allowing the NIRC to plunder £6000 of the members' money without any reaction or retaliation, they are opening up the road to defeat.

Goad will not give up. He is a dedicated, politically motivated enemy of the movement. Tory judge Sir John Donaldson will be happy to oblige with a new and heavier fine. Passive submission to that will mean that the whole process will be repeated and repeated until the union is bled white or until it surrenders.

There is one way and one way only to beat this menace. It is industrial action each and every time a fine is imposed. Donaldson is acting on behalf of the employers. If the employers are 'fined' each time Donaldson fines the union, the judge will soon be brought to heel by his masters. That was the lesson of the freeing of the five dockers from Pentonville.

Of course there are difficulties in securing massive industrial action. Nobody supposes that it is enough for the AUEW to simply issue a strike call. The issues have to be brought home to the membership by a vigorous educational campaign. Appeals have to be made to other trade unionists to support the action.

Muted trumpet

But it is the duty of a leadership to lead. It will not do to justify inaction by the alleged 'backwardness' of sections of the membership. 'If the trumpet sounds an uncertain sound, who will go forth to battle?' At the moment the trumpet of the AUEW executive council is giving no sound at all.

If this situation is not altered the government and the employers are poised for a major victory. The left has a heavy responsibility. It has to alert trade unionists to the crucial importance of the case and prepare them for a real struggle. Resolutions calling for action should be pressed through branches and districts.

The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions has stirred itself from its recent lethargy to the extent of issuing a circular letter about the freeze. It is time it took a stand for action against the NIRC in the Goad case. Here is a real need for the 'Defence of Trade Unions'. The NIRC can and must be beaten.



Tall, white and have none

JONATHAN GUINNESS, the millionaire stepson of Sir Oswald Mosley, is desperately trying to retrieve an ounce of respectability for his Conservative candidature at Lincoln by announcing the expulsion from the Monday Club of all members who helped racist and anti-Common Market candidates in the Uxbridge and Sutton by-elections. Guinness got the Lincoln nomination largely through the publicity associated with his election as chairman of the Monday Club.

While he was establishing his power base in the Monday Club, Guinness was rather less scrupulous about extremism. Last January, for instance, he provided much of the money and most of the editorial content for the Monday Club Midlands Newsletter, which was little more than a racist tract.

Jonathan's own long article, 'Immigration, the Nation's Anger' started with the sentence: 'Loyalty to your own race, to your own kind, is one of the most natural feelings known to humanity.'

The trouble, wrote Guinness, was that immigrant black labour was not even cheap. 'Although in certain circumstances a flood of people who will work for lower wages is a real help in breaking working-class moves for improved pay and conditions, in this case it just did not happen like that...'

The establishment, Guinness complains, sneer at the view that 'the British race might have a right to be preserved' and have also 'succeeded in displacing disapproval of racial thinking into education itself.'



Jonathan Guinness: all froth?

Racial loyalty is natural, race is a reality', he writes. Moreover, 'the dictates of survival can mean you have to fight.'

I doubt whether we'll get any of these calls to race war from Tory platforms in Lincoln, because Jonathan Guinness has his eye on the main chance, and is anxious to join his cousin, Paul Channon, in the Tory government.

Banda ban

SEVERAL thousand copies of Peter Short's biography of Hastings Banda, Malawi's Life President and stooge for South African apartheid, are shortly to be burned on the instructions of the publishers, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, because Banda doesn't like it.

This new departure in free speech has been taken by the board of

Pearson Longman, who own the Financial Times and the Westminster Press newspaper group, as well as Penguin and Allen Lane. The official reason is that the Longman staff in Malawi, which consists of three people could be victimised by Banda if the book was published.

Penguin editorial workers have already discovered that this is nonsense. The three Longman workers are not in danger, and anyway, could be withdrawn.

The real reason is that Hastings Banda threatened to withdraw the Malawi government contracts with Longman for the publication of school textbooks, the annual turnover of which is close on £100,000.

I ATTRIBUTE to Bob Light, IS member and docker, the following comment: 'The reason the Daily Express is so interested in Martin Bormann is simple. They want a new leader-writer.'

Justice?

AT St Albans Crown Court on Monday 27 November, Mrs Norma Jackson was sentenced to nine months in prison for the possession of cannabis, which she claimed she took to relieve a chronic bronchial condition. No evidence was brought or claim made that she was 'pushing' the drug in any way.

The judge was Marcus Anwyl-Davies, QC.

Mrs Jackson, who lives in Katherine Road, East London and has four young children, is black.

ON 27 November, the North West Surrey Hospital Management Committee appointed a 'trouble-shooter' to look into the vexed question of accommodation for hospital staff. There is little or no accommodation to rent in the area, and the average price of a house is £10,000, for which weekly mortgage payments are £16. The average hospital worker's wage is £16 a week.

On 28 November, the trouble-shooter resigned, and went back home to the North. The problem? 'He could not afford to live in the district' (Surrey Herald: 1 December).

THE BISHOPS AVENUE, N2
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HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB

MARRIED readers who are having trouble finding somewhere to live may have missed this ad for a reasonably-sized family house in North London.





VIC'S KICKBACK

I'M SURPRISED that more has not been made of the following extract from Cecil King's diaries (Cecil King was chairman of IPC-Daily Mirror, People, Woman's Own, etc, etc—from 1963 to 1968):

'April 30, 1969: Lunch yesterday for Vic Feather, whom I had not seen since his appointment as Acting Secretary of the TUC. I have known him well for years, as the Mirror paid him a £500-a-year retainer and he was useful source of trades union opinion.'

Many facts in the King diaries have been denied, so I rang Congress House to see if this was true. Yes, it was true. I couldn't find out for how long the money was paid, but I was assured that it wasn't being paid any more.

So next time Vic Feather 'intervenes' in a newspaper dispute, trade unionists at the Mirror or the People can be quite confident of their general secretary's impartiality.

MRS FINOLA KEOGH, who was born in Dublin and lives on a Westminster council estate, rang Socialist Worker last Thursday after ringing the Irish Embassy in London to protest about Lynch's new fascist laws. She told us that after some mealy-mouthed preliminaries with an embassy official she shouted in desperation: 'All you're interested in is selling Kerrygold Butter to the English!'

'Yes,' replied the official. 'That's right.'

Con's con

THE interests of ordinary, working families have been closest to the government's heart in the appointment of the Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce which will take charge of the Common Market 'common agricultural policy'—which, to most people, means food prices once Britain's in the Market.

Its chairman is Sir Con O'Neill, who will get £150 a week. Sir Con led the negotiating team for entry into the European Community on behalf of the nation and of Hill Samuel, the merchant banker of which he was once a director.

Other members of the board are: Mr Peter Coleclough, chairman of Rotary Hoes, the huge Essex agricultural machinery combine, the Hon Islwyn Davies, a millionaire farmer in Wales, Sir Henry Hardman, who wrote the report insisting on a low increase in postmen's wages in 1971 and is also chairman of the Covent Garden Market employers, Mr Hector Laing, chairman of United Biscuits, Mr Alan Shaw, a rich farmer, and the three chairmen of the Milk Marketing Boards of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Cell sell

THE IMPACT of the Maxwell Joseph takeover is certainly being felt at Watney Mann, brewers. I hear that the contract for printing beer mats has been taken away from the commercial printers who have done the job for years, and given instead to Her Majesty's Prisons, the best source of cheap labour in the country.

The return from this shrewd move can be gauged from the figures relating to jeans made in prisons and sold (at a profit) by H M Government to Cockell and Johnson (wholesalers) at £2.25 each. Cockells then sell them to retailers at £3 each, and the trendy boutiques of Soho, Take Six, Lord John, John Michael and Jean Market flog them to the public for anything



Jimmy Reid: at the stake



Jimmy Airlie: stick to the rules

PROLONGED cheers greeted Mr Robert Smith, the prominent accountant who was charged with the task of winding up the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, after his 'controversial speech' to Glasgow's Publicity Club (whatever that is).

Mr Smith spent much of his speech pouring praise on the two Clyde shop stewards, Jimmy Reid and Jimmy Airlie.

'They are part of the folklore of industrial Scotland now', he said. 'Mr Reid is the sort of man who, in an earlier age, would have died at the stake for his principles. Mr Airlie was a man willing to find a workable agreement and make it work.'

'Both were desperately anxious to stick to the rules, and even to ask the 'referee' what the rules were in the situation.'

'They both gave short shrift to the many outside troublemakers who wanted to make a field day out of the crisis. I was, and am, very grateful for the control they were able to impose.'

between £3.50 and £4.50.

The pay in Winson Green prison in Birmingham and Filton in Bristol, where the jeans are made, is 49p for a 30-hour week.

Fiery words

MR ROBERT ADLEY, Conservative MP for Bristol North East and the hotel industry, and scourge of the building workers, has discovered another outbreak of law-breaking in England.

'At the moment,' he was quoted as saying by the Daily Telegraph on 27 November, 'if every police authority were to make thorough investigations, I have no doubt that a very large number of _____ would be found to be in breach of the law.'

What are the words in the blank spaces? What new lawbreakers are so flagrantly transgressing? The answer is 'small hotel keepers'.

Six months after the government's Fire Precautions Act came into force, almost half the hotels in the country have not even bothered to apply for registration under the Act, as they are bound to do by law.

The Act was brought in because of the huge increase in fires in hotels, which have resulted in many people being killed. The precautions, there-

fore, can easily be a matter of life and death.

No one seems to be worried by this law-breaking, least of all Mr Adley, who is only too anxious to explain the hoteliers' plight. The Telegraph article states, simply: 'Fire authorities . . . are not looking for wrongdoers.'

Mr Bernard Sanders, clerk to Blackpool Crown Court, explained: 'If they start prosecuting them all, they will bring these courts to a standstill.'

The biggest problem by far is in London, where there are 3500 hotels, only 1500 of which have applied for registration. The number of fire prevention officers to police the Greater London area is 18.

Heath Robinson

THERE are only 7000 readers of Management in Action, the management consultancy magazine, and many readers of Socialist Worker may have missed the following letter in the November issue:

Strikes and mental illness

The underlying causes of strikes and general unrest among workers has been under a tremendous amount of research. It has now been established beyond any doubt that behind the tendency to strike lies a severe mental illness, which has to be treated by psychiatric techniques. The best way to solve this problem would be to open psychiatric units in every major corporation where the workers could be screened for mental fitness.

KENNETH ROBINSON,
British Steel Corporation

33 Grosvenor Place, London SW1

Kenneth Robinson, a former Labour Minister of Health, is personnel and social director of the British Steel Corporation, and such a letter coming from him could have serious consequences for steelworkers.

Don't worry though. The December issue of the magazine carries a disclaimer of the letter.

The editor, a Mr Harvey, told me: 'The original letter had a BSC letterhead and a signature, so I took it to be genuine and printed it. Almost at once I was phoned by Mr Robinson, who told me it was forged. I then had another letter from Mr Robinson on differently-headed BSC notepaper, and with a signature similar to the one on the first letter, disclaiming the original.'

'Mr Robinson asked for the original letter, because, he said, there was a police investigation into the forgery. I sent it to him.'

'Naturally, I accept Mr Robinson's word that he did not write the original letter and so I printed the disclaimer.'

A spokesman from the British Steel Corporation said: 'The letter did not emanate from Mr Robinson, and does not represent British Steel Corporation policy.'

MANY thanks to Mr Cecil Carey, who is the chief fire officer for Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely, for backing up the article in a recent Socialist Worker about the fire at the Garden House Hotel, Cambridge, last spring which killed two old ladies.

Speaking at a meeting of 150 fire officers in Cambridge on 15 November, Mr Carey said about the fire: 'Fire detectors would have spotted the fire at 5am. Then it would have been a one-room job.'

And again: 'There is no doubt whatever that sprinklers would have checked the fire and a full set of alarm bells direct to the station would have enabled us to be on the spot within minutes.'

Fake poverty—worth million pounds to the thalidomide makers

IN AUGUST 1971 Distillers Company, gin and whisky monopolists and manufacturers of thalidomide, did a very strange thing. They borrowed £40 million.

They said they needed the money to add to their already ample stocks of maturing spirits: around £220 million at cost. Whisky is increasing in value by about 13 per cent per year.

In passing, it should be mentioned that this increase in the wealth of Distillers' assets is not affected by the freeze and when they eventually sell the whisky, they'll show a nice profit on it.

But the decision to borrow all this money to buy yet more stocks looks odd because Distillers had enough money anyway and, as things turned out, they haven't used half the money they borrowed.

First, let's look at the position at the end of 1971. After handing out more than £23 million of dividends to shareholders, Distillers were left with £15 million to invest in their business in the coming year. In addition they had more than £6 million in cash in the bank and £38 million in investments that they could sell.

So altogether Distillers appeared to have around £67 million of cash and near cash at the end of their financial year in March 1971.

Assets

In August last year, then, amid much publicity, Distillers borrowed £40 million at 10½ per cent interest. Let's now look at the position in March 1972, which gives seven months for them to have found a home for all that money.

Stocks are higher by £23 million. The company has spent around £8 million on new property and plant and equipment. But cash in the bank is nearly £20 million higher and money owed to the company by customers is higher by £5 million.

In other words, Distillers spent around £30 million on stocks and fixed assets in the year to 31 March 1972.

This could easily have been met out of the profits carried forward from 1971 and by the sale of a few investments. But they borrowed £40 million instead; spent £5 million of it just letting their customers owe them more money and left £20 million of it lying idle in the bank.

As they were paying 10½ per cent interest for this money, and as they couldn't be earning more than 5 per cent on it in the bank, it was costing them well over £1 million off their substantial pre-tax profit of £62 million. As the company could anyway easily have borrowed any money they needed from the bank, why did they bother to borrow it publicly and then lose money on it?

This has been mystifying people in the City ever since July this year when Distillers' Report and Accounts was published showing what had happened.



It is now believed that the action was part of Distillers' policy of taking a 'low profile' on the enormous profits they make out of the two monopolies they run so successfully.

Hard up

They were also beginning to run into trouble with some parents of thalidomide children, who didn't seem willing to accept their offer of compensation. With £250 million worth of whisky maturing away and increasing in value at 13 per cent per year, what's a million pounds, it helps put around the idea that you are hard up for cash and so makes your claim of poverty more plausible when you say you can't pay any more compensation?

So the borrowing of that £40 million looks like a deliberate ploy to make people believe that Distillers is hard up. Nothing could be further from the truth.

They still have £42 million of investments, £24 million in cash and make annual profits of more than £60 million. In other words, they could afford to pay a substantial sum in compensation and it would be only a pinprick in the present and future wealth of the company.

T H ROGMORTON

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The 'rosy future' that led to the dole queue

A NASTY WEB of intrigue and profiteering has just trapped 150 workers in Scotland's famous new town of East Kilbride. The web is worth untangling because it may help the demoralised men to fight for their jobs—and because it shows once again why we should make capitalism redundant.

In August 1969 Mr Bill Sloan, who had previously worked for the motor firm Rootes and was a skilled production engineer, set up his own three-man firm, the Tolland Engineering Company, in a small rented workshop in East Kilbride. From the start the axles the new firm produced attracted the attention of Europe's largest independent manufacturer of heavy-duty axles, Kirkstall Forge Engineering of Leeds.

With a buoyant market for their axles, Kirkstall Forge's annual turnover soared from nearly £7 million in the financial year 1968/9 to more than £11¼ million in 1970/71. The three members of the Butler family on the board and the other five directors weren't slow to respond. They almost doubled their own 'emoluments' to an average of £7250 a year. And as between them they held 20 per cent of all the company's shares, they also did themselves another good turn by shoving up by £80,000 the annual dividend paid out to shareholders to a total of more than £¼ million.

In just these three years alone the directors received £180,756 for their services and the shareholders £728,025 for theirs. Profits ploughed back into the company amounted, after tax, to more than £700,000.

By June 1971 another 450 jobs had been created, bringing the total workforce up to 2400.

This fast expansion meant that Kirkstall got more and more interested in the potential at East Kilbride. Their orders from Tolland Engineering grew at a fast rate and Tolland expanded rapidly.

By October 1971 the collaboration had been so successful that Kirkstall arranged a £76,500 bank loan for Tolland Engineering so that it could buy a new 33,000 sq.ft. factory in East Kilbride's Milton Industrial Estate on a 90 per cent mortgage.

CELEBRATION

AT THE OPENING of the new factory, Gordon Campbell, Tory Secretary of State for Scotland, did the honours—only minutes after being shouted down by UCS and Plessey, Alexandria, workers in the town centre.

Part of the celebration was the signing of a £3½ million contract by Tolland to build and assemble under licence the whole of the 2½ ton range of axles for Kirkstall Forge. To achieve the target of 150 axles a week and keep up the other sub-contract work for General Motors, Rolls-Royce, British Leyland and the British Steel Corporation, another 200 men would have to be taken on and a 20,000 sq.ft. extension built on to the factory.

But the unplanned nature of the capitalist market, even for such vital equipment as heavy goods, earth moving and mechanical handling vehicles, coupled with the narrow greed of individual capitalists, com-



Tory Scottish overlord Gordon Campbell (centre) on his way to open the new factory, booed by UCS and Plessey workers

Jobs go west in East Kilbride...

pletely dashed these job prospects.

Even while the new Tolland contract was being drawn up, a recession in commercial vehicle production was gathering strength. It became so severe that turnover at Kirkstall Forge dropped in the last six months of 1971 by 40 per cent.

For Tolland Engineering, the fall in Kirkstall orders was much more serious. The first six months of 1972 saw the Sloan brothers constantly at the bank raising bigger and bigger overdrafts to cover their immediate needs.

By June this year it was clear that if Kirkstall wanted to continue to get axles from East Kilbride it would have to take it over. For the price of a few Kirkstall Forge shares, the directors acquired Tolland Engineering's overdraft and its machine tools and factory.

The saga of



by Steve Jefferys

THE NEW acquisition became known as Kirkstall Tolland, and workers were assured of a rosy future. The recession in the industry was almost past. Turnover was again increasing. By September, when ERF Limited, one of the leading UK builders of heavy duty vehicles, placed a big new order for Kirkstall axles, Bill Sloan says, 'The order book at Kirkstall Tolland was so full we were having to cut back on sub-contract orders.'

A profitable year, with Kirkstall reaping the benefits of its recent capital investment programme, was also promised by Mr Richard Caine, the Kirkstall chairman in his statement published on Thursday 16 November.

FORTHCOMING

But the plain facts are that just one week before publishing this statement, the company announced the closure of its Kirkstall Tolland division in East Kilbride. It is to be shut down in the New Year and all its workers were being offered 'alternative employment'—in Leeds.

Mr Roy Hencher, the general manager of Kirkstall Tolland, announced the closure saying it was 'in order to rationalise the manufacture of axles within the group'.

Mr J Hodgkinson, Kirkstall's financial control manager and secretary to the board of directors, was a little more forthcoming. He said that Tolland would have to close 'because of the group's loss in the financial year July 1971 to June 1972', and because 'Kirkstall Tolland was unprofitable'. In particular, he added, the sub-contract work done

in East Kilbride was highly unprofitable.

Now this explanation does not stand up to scrutiny. Tolland was taken over after the 1972 annual report was published so it could play no part in that year's loss.

As for the 'unprofitability' of Kirkstall Tolland, Bill Sloan, who left only eight weeks ago says: 'When I left the order books were full for the next six months. We were actually having to cut back on sub-contract work because of pressure for Kirkstall axles.'

'And about any of the work being "unprofitable", I'll challenge Mr Hodgkinson on that. In the new company I've set up here on the Hillington Industrial Estate we're doing similar work, and I can tell you it is profitable.'

RUBBISH

WHY THEN is Kirkstall closing the old Tolland Engineering Company and throwing 150 men onto the streets to swell the current 8.4 per cent male unemployment in the area?

The talk about 'rationalisation' is rubbish. The existing Kirkstall plants in England can only assemble the small axles. They would have to be sub-contracted out to small non-union firms to be built prior to assembly.

The real truth is that Kirkstall acquired Tolland Engineering on the cheap and now sees the chance of making a reasonable financial killing of between £100,000 and £150,000. This sum will be the approximate result of selling those machine tools it doesn't transfer South—Mr Sloan has already said he's interested in buying up some of his old equipment—and of waiting a few months and then selling off the factory itself, possibly at a price of up to £7 a square foot.

There is still time for a fight back by the workers in defence of their jobs. But what it needs is a rallying by the whole East Kilbride trade union movement against the Kirkstall job butchers.

If 150 workers in one factory can be sacked so easily then other employers may believe they can get away with the same kind of activity.

Delay caused one man's agony

GORDON HUTCHINSON, a 35-year-old power worker from Gainsborough, Lincs, is lying in agony in Sheffield's Warnccliffe Hospital.

More than a third of his body's surface area is covered in burns. His condition, according to a hospital spokesman, is 'still serious'.

Gordon Hutchinson's injuries were caused by an explosion in Cottam power station near Retford, Notts, of a type which was foreseen in a Central Electricity Board 'confidential' report last summer, whose main contents were published in Socialist Worker on 23 September.

If the board had acted on the basis of its own report, Gordon Hutchinson would not have been hurt. The report was entitled 'Safe Operation at P F plant'. 'P F' stands for pulverised fuel or ground up coal which is used in 82 per cent of Britain's power stations. The coal is ground in mills and funnelled by pipe into the power station.

For some years now, generating board officials have noticed that in the newer, more technologically complex power stations, the mixture of air and fuel in the pipes has developed a tendency to ignite. The ignition sends shock waves down the pipes, and from time to time the pipes blast, letting out a jet of flame.

The report listed power stations in three categories. In category one, the plant 'is that which is at greatest risk and satisfactory containment can present a serious problem.' Top of the danger list in category one was Cottam.

The report then made a number of proposals for strengthening existing plant and redesigning new plant.

Paragraph 4.3 reads as follows: 'Critical components (bends, elbows, raffle boxes etc.) on category one plant which do not conform with the design requirements of this Report, should be replaced with ductile components in the near future' (our emphasis). That was more than three months ago.

A SUBSTANTIAL number of the mills which grind coal for fuel for Britain's power stations are unsafe, according to an internal and 'confidential' report issued recently by the Midlands Region of the Central Electricity Generating Board.

What we said on 23 October

A spokesman from the Central Electricity Generating Board in the Midlands explained to Socialist Worker how Gordon Hutchinson met his accident. 'One of the mills was being brought back into service. A member of our own staff [Gordon Hutchinson] went to press a button to bring a coal feeder into operation. As he was walking towards the signal, a raffle box cover split, and a tongue of flame leapt out, unfortunately engulfing our staff member.'

A 'raffle box' was described by the spokesman as 'a junction in the pipe-work system'.

The spokesman went on: 'We consider this a very serious occurrence, and have set up a board of inquiry into the incident, which will be headed by a senior manager from another board area. The key question for the inquiry will be the failure of the alarm system which we have instituted in all P F plant to clear the danger areas.'

Asked if the union would be represented on the inquiry, the spokesman said: 'No. This is an internal inquiry.'

The board's attitude in the past towards accidents in pulverised mills is well illustrated by the case of Eric Ogle, an AUEW member who was badly injured by a P F mill explosion at Rugeley 'A' power station, Staffs, on 19 January 1971. Mr Ogle was ordered by a foreman to pull a feeder gland at a time when the unit was coming under service. He got onto the table to obey the order when an explosion rocked the plant. Mr Ogle was knocked off the table and burnt.

He spent 48 weeks off work suffering from deep burns to the face and hands. Both his ankles and heels had been smashed by the fall. Although he is back at work, he suffers from a limp and loss of feeling in his fingers, from which he will never recover.

The CEBG have denied all liability for the accident, stating simply: 'The man was to blame'. They have made no offer of any payment in settlement of Mr Ogle's claim.

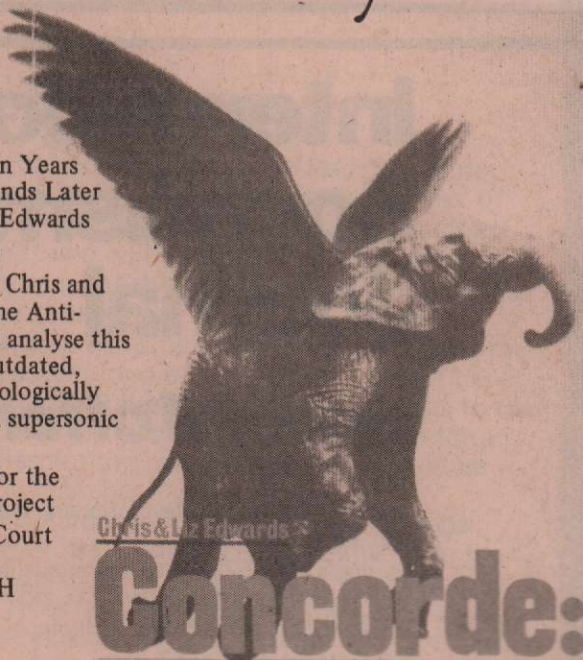
Power workers in the Midlands and other areas are increasingly worried that the incidence of accidents in PF plants will increase as the winter gets colder and plant becomes scarcer.

Supersonic folly

CONCORDE: Ten Years and a Billion Pounds Later by Chris and Liz Edwards 30p + 4p postage

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Miners receive their food at one of Consolidated Gold's compounds—porridge served with a shovel

COUNTER-INFORMATION SERVICES have struck again—another deadly blow at the men and women who make money out of exploitation of black labour in South Africa.

The target of the group's third report is Consolidated Gold Fields, the earliest, largest and possibly the most monstrous of the South African gold companies.

For the enrichment of a few thousand shareholders, most of whom live in Britain, more than 5000 black workers in South African gold mines have been killed, a quarter of a million have suffered from serious injury, while those lucky enough to escape injury or death work a 60-hour week in indescribable conditions for less than £3 a week.

'Under socialism,' said Lenin, 'the lavatories will be paved with gold'—to hold in permanent ridicule the absurdity of digging for a metal which is used either as a fetish for the rich or as a measure for international finance.

The competing national capitalisms had to find a measure which was not in too full supply, and could not be used for anything practical. So the ebb and flow of national trade balances was recorded by humping bars of gold through the vaults of New York. When some practical industrial use was found for gold, it became less important as a measure.

The one common feature of all this was the continuing enrichment of Consolidated Gold shareholders and the continuing degradation of the African workers in the company's mines.

The book traces the history of work in these mines. It shows how real black wages have fallen since 1911, and how the wages gap between white and black workers has increased by nearly 100 per cent in the past 25 years.

It shows how the white unions have been used as tools of apartheid capitalism, and, in the best chapter,

describes in close detail the reality of work in a South African gold mine, both from the viewpoint of the miner, and that of his family left to rot in one of the barren Bantustans.

It names the men and women who benefit from the low wages, which, according even to economic experts, can easily be doubled without affecting the company's viability.

Eight of the directors, who include Lord Erroll, a former Conservative President of the Board of Trade, hold 129 directorships between them, which is not a record.

More than a third of the 59 million

shares are owned by pension funds and other institutions, including pension money paid out by workers at GEC, Boots, Hoover, Associated Cement, Allied Breweries, Reed (IPC), Fisons, Dunlop, Bookers and many other such. It is time the trade unions started to question the investment of their members' pension money in outright barbarism.

Forty Tory and 27 Labour local authorities also hold shares in Consolidated Gold. The Central Board of Finance of the Church of England, whose hypocrites recently sold a holding in Rio-Tinto Zinc because of

their involvement in apartheid, hold 70,000 shares.

Not to be outdone, the Trustees for Roman Catholic Purposes, whose advisers believe in the brotherhood of man, hold 20,000. Even the United Synagogues Trust, a doughty opponent of racialism, has got hold of 5512 shares.

Most interesting of all, perhaps, is the report's revelation that Lord Widgery, the Lord Chief Justice of Britain, who is always impartial between company and worker, owns, with two other rather shadowy people, 3256 shares in Consolidated Gold.

Mr Boardman, the Minister for Industry, owns 2818; Mr Carr, the Home Secretary, (with others) 11,000. Other MP shareholders include Enoch Powell, Ronald Bell, Sir Tufton Beamish and the Minister for Overseas Development, Mr Wood. They are barbarians, every one.



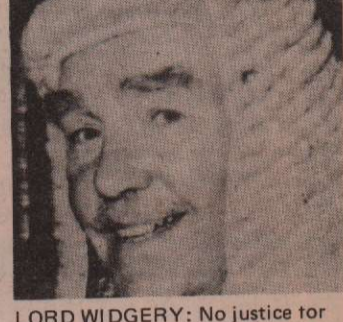
CARR: He owns part of an 11,000-share packet



POWELL: Profits from the exploitation of apartheid



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: The church holds 70,000 shares



LORD WIDGERY: No justice for blacks who earn his dividends

Paul Foot reviews the latest Anti-Report

LABOUR'S RECORD

COLONEL Colin 'Mad Mitch' Mitchell is an outspoken advocate for the crude far-right of Tory back benches. On not a few occasions he has made it clear, in parliament and elsewhere, that he expects to see troops in action against trade unionists. He has demanded that the army be given special training to deal with this possibility.

'Mad Mitch' speaks from experience. He earned his reputation by his brutal suppression of a movement based on trade unionists, and sparked off partly by opposition to strict and vicious anti-union laws.

In Aden, under the last Labour government, he got the chance to try out the methods that he wants to see put to use against us here at home.

Labour's aim in Aden was to carry on Tory policy: boosting the profits of the oil companies by maintaining Aden as a British base for intervening in support of any local sheiks or colonels threatened (together with oil profits for Shell and BP) by revolution.

The only trouble was that Aden, as a massive port and military base, had a large and militant trade union movement with other ideas for the future of the country.

For Labour, the answer was obvious: carry on the Tory policy of merging the militant Aden workers in a rigged 'federation' with the neighbouring sheiks and sultans. The feudal rulers would keep the whole area safe for medieval tyranny and modern oil profits.

When the people of Aden showed they had other ideas, Labour stepped up the repression. A new High Commissioner (a director of BP and the Bank of the Middle East) was given, in June 1965, powers to arrest, search and imprison suspects. Later trial by jury was abolished too.

Finally, in 1967, the people of Aden took over the Crater district. 'Mad Mitch' and his Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders were sent in to make this work-

Keeping the world safe for profits

ers' quarter safe for Harold Wilson's New Britain. As the rising was put down with indiscriminate thuggery that even made the front pages of the British press, it was clear that the white heat of military technology was all that the Aden workers would see of 'the future Labour offers you'.

In the end Labour had to pull out anyway. The federation collapsed when the medieval sheiks were overthrown by their own peoples.

Nothing daunted, the Labour friends of the oil monopolies moved up the coast. A base on the island of Masirah, started by the Tories in 1962, was kept on and developed by Labour.

But Masirah belonged to the Sultan of Muscat, and unfortunately his subjects were almost as ungrateful as the workers of Aden.

This may have been due to some of his personal eccentricities. A strict Moslem, he banned drinking, smoking, radios, opposition, and free speech. Thieves had their hands cut off in public, and opponents rotted in chains

in the Sultan's dungeons, guarded by his army of 5000 slaves.

In the Sultan's province of Dhofar, a revolutionary liberation movement took over much of the countryside and introduced land reform, literacy, the liberation of women and other novelties much disliked by his medieval highness.

And, it appears, by the Labour government, which for five years ran a mini-Vietnam war against the rebels. RAF planes bombed villages, killing and napalming civilians, destroying flocks (the people's means of life) and wells.

Readers will be glad to know that this situation has changed.

The old Sultan, with his charming ways so acceptable to the Labour government, was too much for the Tories, who booted him out and replaced him with his son, Sultan Qabus. Slavery and a few other picturesque excesses have been abolished, but the mini-Vietnam that Labour started has been continued by their Tory successors.

After all, both share the same goals: defending the £200 million which the oil companies rake in each year and the millionaire oil-sheiks who help prop up the pound by keeping their cash in London.

This worthy cause is our old friend 'the national interest' for which British workers were being asked by Labour ministers to make 'sacrifices' at the same time that their money was being spent on giving Mad Mitch a trial run.

Further East, in Malaysia, another commitment to a Tory-engineered federation was inherited and upheld. Indonesia complained that Malaysia was being set up to defend Britain's investments—£225 million in rubber plantations, £150 million in tin and other mines, and £140 million in oil.

So Indonesia set out to weaken the new British puppet-state, and massive British forces were sent to repel it.

Despite a sympathetic rising in the Sabah province of Malaysia, this 'con-

frontation' ended in 1966. This may have had less to do with the efforts of the Labour government than with the US-engineered army takeover in Indonesia, in which an estimated 800,000 left-wingers were butchered by the right-wing. The new government, by happy coincidence, was not opposed to foreign investment.

So Malaysia was kept safe for freedom—unless of course you are a Malaysian, in which case you may have some ungrateful thoughts for a government which avoided losing the last elections by suspending them, banning the opposition and taking emergency powers to hold special trials, to suspend or amend any law, to revoke citizenship, and to impose any penalty, including death.

Slavish

With tears of nostalgia for the Commonwealth, the Wilson government was forced by cash problems to allow the Far East military commitment to lapse by the end of the 1960s.

But the US military were still available in the area to protect British investment and not least among the reasons for this happy state of affairs was the slavish support of Wilson and Co for the Vietnam war.

Now that the leather of the opposition benches is safely beneath their bottoms the Labour leaders can allow the party conference to pass left resolutions on Vietnam which they opposed when in office. But if the British employing class survived six years of Labour government unscathed, to reap the benefits of the Tory offensive, it was partly because of the loyal way that Labour in office defended investments overseas.

Meanwhile the methods pioneered in Malaysia and Aden, are being applied in Belfast today, and refined for use in Birmingham tomorrow.

STEPHEN MARKS

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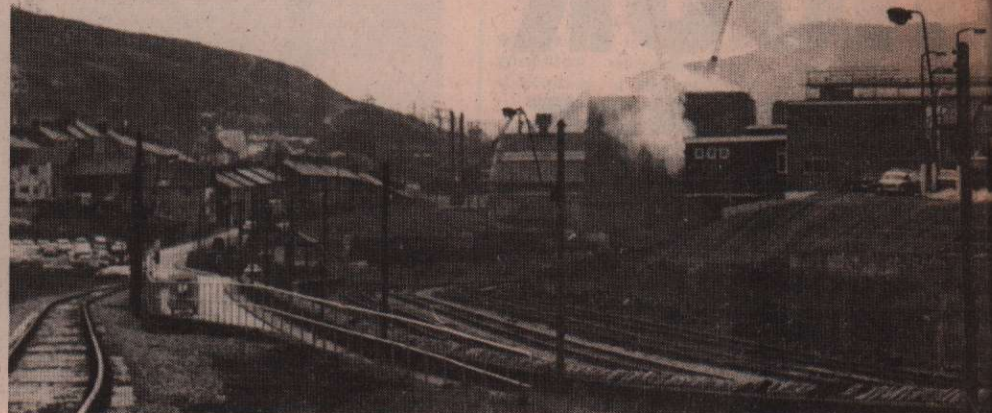


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A town under the axe...



MOST of the people who live and work in Ebbw Vale in South Wales want to continue to live and work there.

It might be hard to describe the place as attractive, particularly on a typical damp morning with a pall of mist and smoke hanging over the terraced houses. But a woman in neighbouring Brynmawr told me her son had been unable to take a good job in the Midlands: he is married to an Ebbw Vale girl and she, naturally, is unwilling to leave.

For better or worse, this is where the people have their roots. This is why Frank Eynon, of the Blastfurnacemen, says that it would be 'morally and socially wrong to expect men to move from the area to look for work'.

To work in Ebbw Vale is to work for the British Steel Corporation. The smoke hanging over the town is from the chimneys of the massive BSC works.

Employing nine and a half thousand workers, this is the economic heart not only of Ebbw Vale itself, but the whole area from Merthyr to Abergavenny.

The future of Ebbw Vale is now on the chopping-block. In its current scheme to 'rationalise' the steel industry, the British Steel Corporation proposes to close down about half the jobs.

(The corporation says that four and a half thousand jobs will be lost. The men estimate that it will be more like five

thousand.)

If this policy is implemented, the destructive effect on the life of Ebbw Vale will be devastating. 'If we allow these closures without ensuring enough job opportunities to replace them', says Frank Eynon, 'we will be condemning the youth of this area to a future reminiscent of the depression era.'

IMPACT

No one knows this better than BSC chief Lord Melchett. In 1970, he explained in a speech how much he appreciated that steel is indispensable to the existence of Ebbw Vale. Only the steelworks, he said, 'provides the jobs from which the community can exist and prosper.'

Although changes would be introduced, Lord Melchett said, the impact on Ebbw Vale would be relatively small. It would re-

main 'one of the major plants in Britain'. After rationalisation, he promised on 24 March 1970 'the works will require a labour force of approximately eight thousand.'

This assurance was of great importance to the people of Ebbw Vale. Largely as a result of it, the local council felt able to invest in the growth of the town. Shopping precincts were built, the public swimming pool was extended, slum clearance and rebuilding went ahead.

As BISAKTA secretary Keith Brookman, a member of the works council, says: 'We put our money on Lord Melchett's word. Because of his promise we all felt confident about taking out mortgages, buying furniture.'

The secretary of the works council, Malcolm Bourton, is a very angry man. 'I am personally very bitter about the way Melchett acted. He told me they would run down the steelmaking, but he gave me a definite written promise about the Tin Plate and Hot Mill sections.'

DOUBTS

'At no time in the last two years have I been given any indication of a change of plan. I was able to tell my members that, although things would be hard because we were losing one and a half thousand jobs, at least we would be able to survive. Now we are suddenly told that five thousand jobs are at stake.'

The works council first began to have serious doubts about Melchett's true intentions when they saw what purported to be a BSC document, the one reported in the socialist paper *Steelworker*. For weeks they had been assured because of lack of progress in negotiations about the development of the Hot Mill. The BSC document revealed that the corporation was really planning not development, but the drastic closing down of work at Ebbw Vale.

In July the works council met their MP, Michael Foot, and showed him the *Steelworker* document. It took it to Melchett and two weeks later reported back to the council that Melchett had denied the authenticity of

the document, saying that it definitely did not represent corporation policy. (Several members of the works council have told me that, as far as they are concerned, they do not doubt for a moment that it is an authentic BSC document.)

The works council wrote to Melchett asking to meet with him and a meeting in London was arranged for 16 October. At the meeting, Melchett assured them that he would want to give them at least five years notice before closures and that he would in any case want to adjust closure dates to take account of new industries coming into the area.

'We concluded', explains Malcolm Bourton, 'that the earliest possible closure for the blastfurnaces was 1978.' He was able therefore to give a fairly optimistic report to his members. He also told them that Lord Melchett was coming on 16 November to describe fully his plans for Ebbw Vale.

DISGUST

At this meeting Melchett suddenly announced, after two years of assurances to the contrary, that the Blastfurnaces and Converter Shop would close in 1975, that the Open Hearth would close in 1976, that the Hot Mill would close in 1978 (two years earlier he had pledged £15 million for development on the Hot Mill), and that the workforce would be reduced to 5,000.

Tom Coles, secretary of the Joint BISAKTA Committee, told me he found Melchett's behaviour 'disgusting'.

Of course there was also what Keith Brookman calls 'the usual guff' about this not meaning that all the lost jobs would be men out of work. Some of the jobs, Melchett said, will be accounted for by voluntary redundancy and 'natural wastage'.

This question of 'natural wastage' is a sore point with the men. For some time now they have been co-operating with the British Steel Corporation by



Davies: not seen



Melchett: not trusted



Foot: not realistic

having older men take redundancy pay.

In the whole of the Hot Mill section one man will reach retiring age in 1973. And, as one BISAKTA man put it to me: 'Even if all that stuff about natural wastage were true, it wouldn't alter the fact that four or five thousand BISAKTA jobs are going down the drain.'

What is BISAKTA doing to fight the closures? The works council has rather strong feelings about this. The secretary told me: 'You can quote us as saying

that we are very angry. We have had absolute control from our national union. Our general secretary they pay lip-service to. We are a native industry, the only one prepared to fight for it.'

Local feelings are influenced by the BISAKTA general secretary. Davies actually came to Ebbw Vale and saw the steelworks there. He has never even visited his area in its time of crisis.

'The trouble with one of his members is he is too busy trying to get the British Steel Corporation to let the union properly. In other words, the complaint is that again and again is that the officials of BISAKTA are not giving more priority to BSC at increasing profits. They do to fighting on members' behalf.'

Michael Foot's suggestion that some flaws in the economic plan which the BSC scheme has suggested the unions should set up to investigate the facts of the rationalisation perhaps make different recommendations.

BUNKUM

Not surprising Melchett has agreed to the principle. After all, he loses?

Some workers feel more than usual. Brookman describes 'bunkum' because it is the wrong assumption.

'It isn't our job as unionists', he says, 'to be involved in discussing the viability of BSC. You fall into the trap. What we have to do is to protect the jobs and standards of our members. What a union is all about.'

Others find the idea should prove the viability rather insupportable. Frank Eynon expressed this when he said: 'The Ebbw Vale should close until the BSC that we are asking taxpayers of this country to resist? It is increasingly evident that the Labour Party and union leaders have let the workers of Ebbw Vale down in present troubles.'

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Malcolm Bourton (left) and Keith Brookman

Next class

MacStiofain is not the first to feel the lash...

IRELAND—THE TRADITION OF

IN JUNE 1922 Winston Churchill drafted a letter to Michael Collins, chairman of the Irish Free State provisional government. It set in motion a chain of events, of bloody repression and harassment of republicans by the Irish government that continues to this day.

'The . . . position of the Irish Republican Army can no longer be ignored by the British government . . . His Majesty's government cannot consent to a continuance of this state of things, and they feel entitled to ask you formally to bring it to an end forthwith. Assistance has on various occasions been given to the Dominions of the Empire in cases where their authority was challenged by rebellion on their soil; and His Majesty's government are prepared to place at your disposal the necessary pieces of artillery which may be required, or otherwise to assist you as may be arranged.'

On 28 June the Free State forces that backed the treaty with Britain attacked the Four Courts in Dublin which had been the headquarters of the IRA for three months. The Irish civil war had begun at Britain's request and armed with British guns.

The civil war lasted for 11 months and was marked by extreme brutality towards republican prisoners and anti-treaty forces. It was a severity which exceeded even that of the British Army of occupation.

Proud record

In October 1922 the Free State government adopted Special Emergency Powers, creating special military courts that imposed internment, imprisonment and the death penalty on anyone found to be in 'breach of any general order or regulation made by the army council'.

In November Erskine Childers was shot, after summary conviction by a military court, for the possession of a revolver which had been given him by Michael Collins. On 7 December Liam Mellowes and three comrades captured with him in the battle of the Four Courts were shot as retaliation for the death of a Free State army officer, Sean Hales.

Mellowes had a proud record, having fought in Galway in 1916. Refused absolution he had said, 'I believe with the old Gaels, who dies for Ireland has no need of prayer.'

The torture and murder of hostages intensified. The governor of Mountjoy Jail warned military captives 'that any resistance to their guards, or any attempt to assist their own forces, revolt, mutiny, conspiracy, insubordination or cell wrecking will render them liable to be shot down . . . In all, 77 republican prisoners in custody were shot during the war. Many others were butchered before imprisonment.

On 7 March nine anti-treaty prisoners, one of them with a broken arm, another with a broken wrist, and one, John Daly unable to walk from spinal injuries, were taken by a lorry to Ballyseedy Cross about two miles from Tralee. The hands of each prisoner were tied behind him.

Blown up

A rope was passed completely round the nine men so that they stood in a ring facing outward. In the centre of the ring was a landmine. The soldiers who tied them took cover and exploded the mine. The remains of the prisoners killed were flung far and wide. Bits of bodies hung from trees in the woods that bordered the roadside.

By the end of the civil war more than 12,000 republican prisoners including 250 women, were interned in concentration camps. Many were to remain there for a further two years.

And the end of the war did not mean an end to repression. In January 1924 the government, with a new Public Safety Act, renewed its power to imprison without trial.

1931 saw the world slump and Ireland in the midst of social and political crisis. The Cosgrave



De Valera (left on platform) reviewing republican troops in the 1920s. In power he turned on his comrades

BLOODY TERROR

BY MIKE HEYM

government introduced amendment 2A to the constitution which enabled them to declare associations illegal and adopt extensive powers of search, arrest and detention.

Twelve republican and left-wing organisations were banned. The government hoped this way to stem the growing workers' and small farmers' movements. Military tribunals were re-established and not only republicans but the Fianna Fail newspaper, the Irish Press, became victims of their 'justice'.

The attacks were short lived. In early 1932 the Fianna Fail Party under the leadership of Eamonn De Valera came to power. Article 2A was suspended and a minister of the new government visited republican prisoners in jail prior to their release.

Precaution

De Valera, fearing the fascist blueshirt movement and a coup by the deposed party, could not afford to tackle the IRA, indeed he needed their support. He took the precaution of organising a new police force, the S-branch under Colonel Broy.

Known as Broy's Harriers, they were recruited mainly from ex-IRA men and for the time being they concentrated their fire on the fascists.

The turning point came in 1935. The IRA assisted a strike of Dublin busmen in March and by the end of April, 104 republicans were in jail.

The IRA paper An Phoblacht was censored and suspended. Military tribunals again set to work. In May 1936 Moss Twomey was arrested under article 2A. On the day before his trial the IRA was declared an illegal organisation and he received a sentence of 3½ years.

Now followed almost 10 years of almost uninterrupted repression. It took a heavy toll. After June 1936 prisoners were kept in solitary confinement, forbidden to speak, living in a silent tomb where even the guards wore rubber shoes. Under these conditions a volunteer, Sean Glynn, took his own life.

In 1940 a new Emergency Powers Act was rushed through the Dail (parliament). An internment camp was opened at the Curragh. In April two prisoners

major assault. Shortly after the Six County government introduced internment in 1956, the majority of the leading republicans were rounded up for three to six month sentences in Mountjoy. It needed the election of De Valera to re-open the Curragh Camp and introduce press censorship.

Although the Curragh was closed in March 1959, the military tribunals of the 1940s were re-activated. Men could be sentenced in these courts for refusing to answer questions.

Today we have the Offences Against the State Act, special courts and the Prisons Act which allows the transfer of certain prisoners to military custody. A new armoury of repressive law is being created.

Lynch and O'Malley and their British bosses are the violent men in Ireland today. Their state was baptised in blood. For them there is no other path.

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



JAMES CONNOLLY

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Teesside—the slipway of death

There is no room for divided loyalties in a situation of this kind. You have to choose whether your concern is with making the British Steel Corporation more profitable or with defending the workers it employs.

The trouble with both Michael Foot and Dai Davies is that they cannot make up their minds which side of the fence they are on.

The solution to the Ebbw Vale problem is, in a sense, quite obvious. There must be no job closures in the steelworks without an equal number of job opportunities being provided in alternative industry in the area, at the same rates of pay. The only kind of 'scrutiny committee' the workers need is one vetting the job opportunities to make sure they are satisfactory: it is no good offering a man earning £40 a week a 'job opportunity' at £20 a week.

THREAT

The real problem is getting action on this solution, pressing it on an employer and a government indifferent to the plight of Ebbw Vale. It is a fact of life that has to be recognised that no one will do this for the workers of Ebbw Vale: they must do it themselves.

The strategy the steel corporation will try to use against resistance in Ebbw Vale is to play off the rest of BSC production against it, threatening to accelerate plans to shift Ebbw Vale production elsewhere. The only answer to this is a national strategy.

Links across the country must be strengthened. It is particularly important that links be established between Ebbw Vale and the Teesside steelworkers who are campaigning for parity with South Wales: these workers have something to offer one another.

The British Steel Corporation will follow a policy of divide-and-rule, encouraging workers not directly hit by the current rationalisation scheme to turn their backs on Ebbw Vale workers. Steelworkers should base their own counter-strategy on this.

The key to success is rank and file unity. This can be achieved only through a good deal of hard work.

As the secretary of the works council says: 'We must galvanise steelworkers throughout the country.' If steelworkers were united in this way, they would be invincible.

'Democracy had nothing whatever to do with the idea that if the aristocratic party could somehow collect a bigger vote then it was entitled to rule'

OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths

LENIN argued that 'Only scoundrels and simpletons can think that the proletariat must first win elections carried out under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage slavery, and must then win power. This is the height of stupidity or hypocrisy.'

But then what about democracy, what about what Marx called 'the rule of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority'?

Democracy means, literally, 'rule of the people' and was originally contrasted to monarchy—the rule of a king and aristocracy—the rule of the nobility. These words are of Greek origin and were first used in the course of the fierce class struggles in the Greek city states from the sixth century BC onwards.

Those struggles, like all political struggles, were only concerned with forms of government as a means to an end, not as an end in themselves. What was at issue was which class should control the state in its own interests.

Democracy, the rule of 'the people' meant, broadly speaking, the rule of the whole body of the free citizens—small traders and artisans (often themselves slave-owners as at Athens)—over and against the aristocratic party. It was maintained by force, by depriving the aristocrats of political rights, by exiling dangerous aristocrats or by killing them.

Democracy had nothing whatever to do with the idea that if the aristocratic party could somehow collect a bigger vote then it was entitled to rule. No such opportunity was afforded, because an aristocratic victory was undemocratic by definition.

Interests

Indeed the important posts were generally filled (with an annual changeover) by lot, by requiring the qualified citizens to take straws out of a bag, and not by election at all. The unqualified—slaves, aristocrats and foreigners alike—were simply excluded from the draw.

But words are also weapons. Since our ruling class was forced to concede the vote to working men and women, the whole content of the word democracy has been changed in the interests of the rich. From being a form of class rule it has come to refer to the mere mechanism whereby alternative governments 'constitutionally' succeed one another in the service of capitalism.

Of course this system has real costs to the rulers and real advantages to the working class, advantages—such

The real meaning of Democracy

as the right to organise—which have been won by struggle against the capitalist class and which can only be maintained in the same way.

Nonetheless 'Western Democracy' is in reality just as much a form of class rule as the Greek original, with one important difference: it is now the rule of a class that is a small minority, the capitalist class.

This is a very hard idea for many people to grasp. Because the ruling class controls what Marx called 'the means of intellectual production'—the educational system, the mass media and so on—the idea that democracy is a matter of form, of mechanism, and not of content, of which class rules, is deeply implanted into most people's thinking.

And yet it is absurd, as a few examples will show.

When the resistance of the American colonists to British rule led to the first armed conflict at Concord, Massachusetts, the revolutionaries were decidedly a minority. 'Roughly speaking,' wrote a patriotic American historian, 'possibly a third of the population were loyalists, a third definitely Whig (ie rebels), and a third not active on either side.'

There is little doubt that a vote on the basis of universal suffrage would have upheld the rule of George III because the loyalists would have got more of the votes of the least active and least knowledgeable sections of the people.

And yet, irrespective of this, can anyone doubt that the revolutionaries were the more 'democratic' side?

There is another lesson from this same example. By the time of the declaration of independence in 1776, the same historian tells us, 'the patriotic element decidedly out-

numbered the Tory' (ie pro-British). People had been won in the course of the struggle to a recognition of the necessity of the revolution.

And it is generally true that it is only in the course of activity, of struggle, that the habits of acceptance, of indifference, that class rule imposes on millions can be shaken off. Mere voting can at best register attitudes. It can in no way replace the struggle.

A more recent example that should be of particular interest to supporters of the British Road to Socialism is the Russian Revolution itself.

In November 1917, after the Bolsheviks had overthrown Kerensky, elections were held for the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. Fifty-eight per cent of the votes were cast for the Social-Revolutionary Party as opposed to 25 per cent for the Bolsheviks. As Victor Serge pointed out: 'The rural areas voted for the Social-Revolutionaries, the industrial cities for the Bolsheviks.'

Destruction

But the Social-Revolutionary Party, originally a peasant party, was disintegrating, split between a pro-Bolshevik left and a pro-White Guard right, and was quite incapable of ruling. Had it been allowed to take power it would simply have paved the way for the counter-revolution.

In fact to achieve that basic 'democratic' task—the destruction of landlordism and the land to the peasants—which the Social Revolutionary Party had been founded to achieve, it was essential to shoulder it aside in spite of all its votes.

More recently still, in Britain in 1970, the Tories won an election pledged to bring in the Industrial Relations Act. Who was the more 'democratic', the Tories and their Labour hangers-on who advocated non-resistance to the Tory law—or those workers who fought to defy the law, to prevent its introduction and then its implementation? Who was the more 'democratic', those who supported the attack on basic democratic rights in the sacred name of electoral mandates or those who fought to defend the gains workers had made over decades of struggle?

BOOKS

REVIEW

BOOKWORMS EYE VIEW

A NEW socialist comic from an Islington community press tells the story of blacklisted builder Bill, his wife Rita and their son Gerry. An everyday story of townfolk, it deals with the builders' strike, squatting and women's liberation. Get it from 11 Hemingford Road, London N1 or Centreprise, 34 Dalston Lane, London E8.



Part of the Irish problem

STATES OF IRELAND, by Conor Cruise O'Brien, Hutchinson, £3.25.

WE ALL get confused from time to time, and mostly we try to hide it. If, however, you are a writer who dabbles in politics or a politician who dabbles in writing, then you must, as Conor Cruise O'Brien has done, put pen to paper.

At that point you stop being just confused and become a deliberate confusionist.

In some spheres the confusionist can be excused, as either naive or innocent. In politics, especially in the midst of upheavals on the scale of those in Ireland today, the results of such confusions can be thoroughly reactionary.

States of Ireland is a confusing and reactionary book.

Its author is a leader of the Irish Labour Party and its main spokesman on Northern Irish affairs.

Dr O'Brien's thesis is that Ireland consists of two separate religious communities, the Catholic Irish nation and the Ulster Protestants, and that those who speak of the 'Irish Nation' in fact speak only of the former and do so always with no real consideration of the latter.

This in turn reinforces the Ulster Protestants in the siege mentality which has been their characteristic since they first set foot on Irish soil. Anyone who speaks of a United Ireland merely encourages the Ulster Protestants in their further oppression of the Catholic Irish, several hundred thousand of whom have by some fluke managed to find themselves living in the wrong state.

The conclusion, then, is to stop talking about and fighting for a United Ireland and leave any problems to be sorted out by 'democratic' politicians such as Conor Cruise O'Brien.

At this point the book becomes a diatribe against the Republican movement and the IRA, on whose shoulders the responsibility for the present state of violence is placed. This, of course, is the whole point of the book and the excursions into history, literature and autobiography serve merely to buttress it.

The evidence to support this case is carefully selected and invented. The active role of British imperialism in shaping the history of Ireland is either neglected or ignored.

We are told: 'Our frontier is exceptionally old—over three and a half centuries,' when every schoolboy knows that it is exactly 52 years old and established by an Act of the British parliament, and this Act itself was the result of a threatened armed uprising led by Protestant Unionist landlords and actively supported by the British Tory Party.

To suggest, as O'Brien does, that the undemocratic and sectarian nature of the Orange state was a response to IRA threats is ridiculous. The basis for this state was already there in 1914, years before the Irish national movement was broken from the leadership of the constitutional Irish party, who were in fact ready to support partition.

Few escape criticism.

The United Irishmen and the uprising of 1798 which united Protestant and Catholic 'did more than any other single set of events to divide Irishmen'!

Everything except British imperialism comes under fire.

The Lemass/O'Neill talks of 1965 were to achieve 'a pleasanter image for all'—no mention here of the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of the same year

and (dare we mention it) British imperialism's changing relationship to Ireland as a whole.

The most blatant dishonesty is in statements like: 'Eoin O'Duffy... would have made a good Provisional.' O'Duffy, leader of the Irish fascists in the 1930s, had been a leading general in the civil war against the Republicans and for the treaty O'Brien now upholds.

Like all frightened liberals faced with sharp social conflict O'Brien wishes to preach peace and submission only to the oppressed. He fears the Republicans, who hold 'that power must come from the barrel of a gun.'

He finds it convenient to forget the 20,000 British gunmen in the Six Counties, or the gunmen whose armed revolt established the Northern state or indeed the (British armed) gunmen who imposed the 26-County Treaty state. If there is an 'Irish problem', Conor Cruise O'Brien is part of it.

MIKE HEYM

Now for the seven-hour day

WHAT A COMPULSORY EIGHT-HOUR DAY MEANS TO THE WORKERS, by Tom Mann, Pluto Press 20p.

TOM MANN was one of the great figures in the history of the British labour movement. He was a leader of the first big dock strike in 1889 and president of the union formed out of it—the precursor of the present Transport and General Workers' Union, secretary of the Independent Labour Party in the 1890s and a central figure in the mass rank-and-file activism of the years 1910 to 1914, leading the general transport strike in Liverpool in 1911 which paralysed shipping, docks and railways.

It was with this pamphlet, written in 1886, that he first made his mark. The argument he put forward was simple.

There were a million unemployed. Yet the average working day was something like 12 hours. If this were cut to eight hours, not only would the mass of workers have more leisure and more pleasant lives, but employers would be forced to take on more men and destroy the unemployment problem overnight.

The argument is still valid today. Even the eight-hour day has not yet been won, in that low wages still force workers to do an average of seven hours overtime a week. A seven-hour day would certainly banish the dole queue.

Tom Mann's case is as unanswerable today as it was 85 years ago.

But, as Richard Hyman points out in an excellent and well-written introduction, what was lacking in Mann's perspective at the time was any real conception of how the working class was to get the shorter working week.

The eight-hour day, he quite rightly argued, could not wait for the establishment of socialism. But this in turn led him to claim that there was nothing impossible about the idea of getting the shorter working week and ending unemployment without really threatening the profit system.

Demands such as this, although they can be won quickly if the working class uses the power of its organisations, do challenge the basic tenets of the profit system. They will never be achieved by waiting for parliamentary action from those who uphold that system.

Mass action for them can, however, involve millions of workers who are not yet in agreement with the full socialist case. And in the course of that action they will begin to see the need for more thorough revolutionary change.

CHRIS HARMAN



DING-A-LING: IS MARY OFF

END PIECE

THE BBC's search for a new chairman is over. Whoever is formally named to replace Lord rumble-belly Hill (and historian Asa Briggs is strongly tipped) the effective chairman will be a woman.

And before Women's Liberation raises a cheer, let me name the lady: Mrs Mary Whitehouse, leader of the Clean Up TV campaign. The power wielded by this modern Mrs Grundy has reached such proportions that when she picks up the phone the vast Beeb bureaucracy quails and crumples.

Last week Mrs Whitehouse, who sniffs out the slightest whiff of sexual depravity with the skill of a mangy cat, complained that a hit record by Chuck Berry called My Ding-a-Ling was an incitement to masturbation. I haven't heard the record and will have to bow to her superior knowledge in such delicate matters.

You may think the matter is of little concern, but the implications are rather important. For it seems that Mrs W has greater power than we ordinary viewers. I don't know if you have ever bothered to complain to the BBC, but I frequently don the mantle of 'Disgusted of Tottenham' and ring the corporation after some particularly crude piece of anti-union vitriol. (It plays havoc with my phone bill, but it's cheaper than heaving a brick through the telly.)

Now the BBC tycoons have a neat way of heading-off such tiresome people. You can't get through to the studio in question but are referred to an ubiquitous 'duty officer' who patiently listens to your tirade, takes your name and address and says that your point of view will be 'passed on'. You hear no more, and I suspect they've got the first vowel in 'passed' wrong.

FILM CUTS

NEXT WEEK Review hopes to make some more extensive comments on the London Film Festival and its function. Although it ended last Saturday some of the films shown are likely to find their way to some of the regional National Film Theatres, of which there are an astounding number.

Their chance of a national showing will hinge on the willingness of commercial distributors to pick them up.

Generally speaking the British film industry is in a state of rigor mortis. Carry On Up The Buses to Pompeii (Danish Style) expresses the breadth of imagination, drive and intellectual honesty which we have come to expect of the moguls of Wardour Street. Old Hollywood may have been composed of grasping slobes, but at least we got Bogart. Reg Varney is not a decent replacement.

People who make films and are concerned with cinema in this country are beginning to realise that some alternative to the present deadly stranglehold has to be found. Attempts are being made to set up an alternative distribution system. More of this later.

SORRY!

NIGEL FOUNTAIN's piece on the BBC's Colditz and its ancestors in the British film industry included references to the GPO Film Unit and the Crown Film Unit, arguing that it was from this tradition that the shabby patriotic war movies, of the 1950s sprung.

This provoked an angry response from someone who had worked for both, who pointed out that they had produced a lot of good material. Which is very true, British documentaries having been one of the few high spots in the British film tradition. It was Wardour Street and the government who put the boot in. The government pulled out the money, and Wardour Street then debased the tradition.

NFT GALORE

THE 'astounding number' of NFTs are at Aldborough, Basildon, Belfast, Birmingham (education only), Bolton, Bradford, Brighton, Bristol, Canterbury, Dartington, Doncaster, Edinburgh, Exeter, Grays (Thurrock), Grimsby, Harlow, Horsham, Hull, Kings Lynn, Lancaster, Leatherhead, Leeds, Luton, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, Newport, Norwich, Nottingham, Petworth, Plymouth, Reading, St Albans, St Austell, Sheffield, Southampton, Stirling, Street, Swindon, Weston-super-Mare, Whitehaven, York.

HER TROLLEY

Mrs W faces no such restrictions. One day after tossing off (whoops—you have to be so careful) her complaint about the offending disc, the BBC decided to drop it from Top of the Pops.

The ban was ordered by the programme's producer, Mr Bill Cotton, son of the bandleader whose great contribution to British culture was I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts—just think of the implications of that, Mrs W.

JUMP

There was worse to come. Last week Ian MacNaughton, the producer of Monty Python's Flying Circus, admitted that the future of the programme was uncertain because of attacks from the Whitewash Brigade.

Doesn't it occur to MacNaughton, Cotton and company that if they feel Mrs W's hot breath on their necks they can tell her, in the politest possible way, to take a running jump—preferably from the top of the mast at Ally Pally?

They are the victims of a monstrous piece of duplicity. They are convinced that Mrs Whitehouse represents the 'average viewer' instead of a rancid group of puritanical kill-joys with enough lolly to have some smart letter-heads printed.

It's time that this advance guard of the legions of outer darkness were put firmly in their place, for if their power is allowed to spread then inexorably the mass media will clamp down on what little dissent is left.

I wouldn't go to the stake in defence of Mr Chuck Berry, but I am prepared to

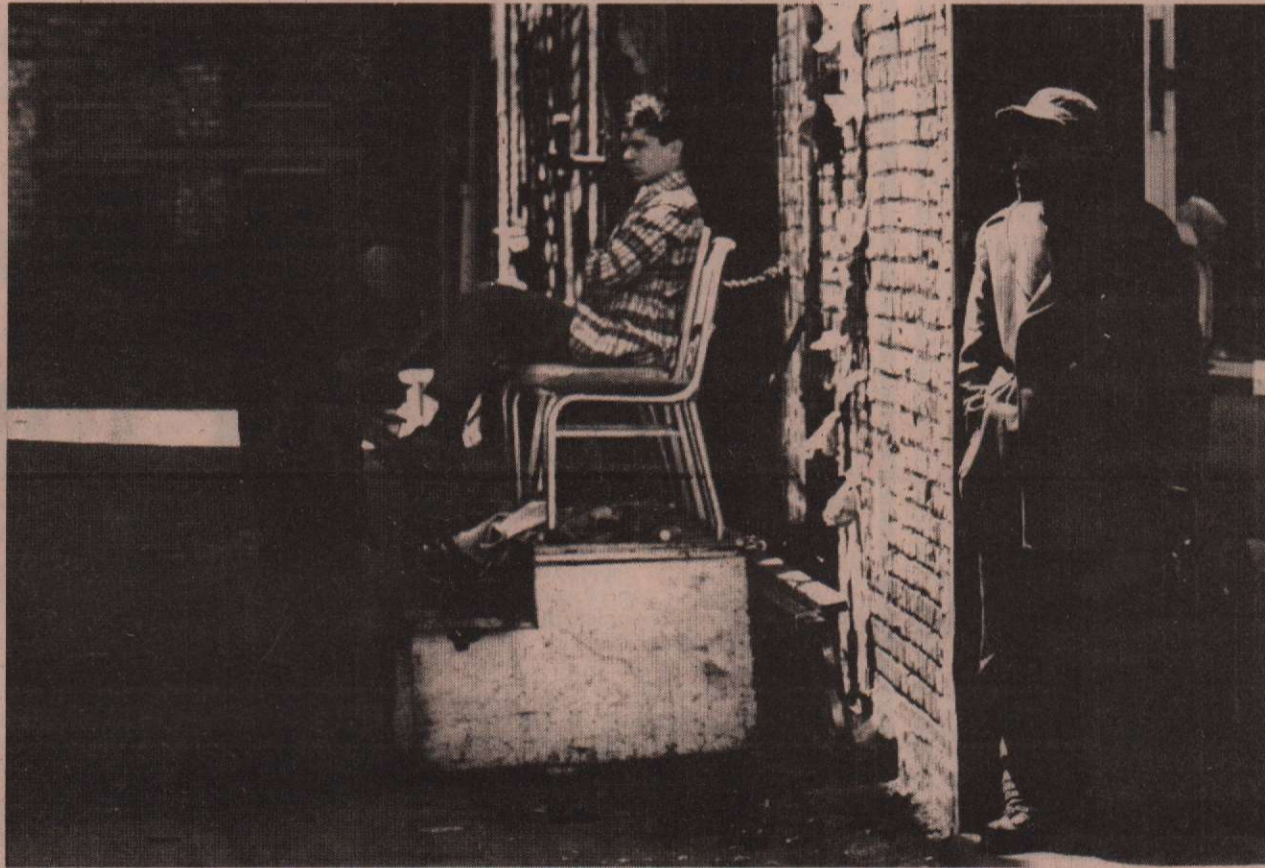
fight to save Monty Python, a brilliant breakthrough in visual comedy that often strips bare the pretensions and humbug of our society.

If Mrs W. and her band aren't prepared to stomach off-beat humour, just pause to think what else they might ban if given the chance.

The backlash will be beaten only by collective action—not by my ringing the Wood Lane Duty Officer three times a week and twice on Sundays but by the unions in television using their strength to instil a modicum of backbone into producers.

The telly technicians' union, the ACTT, has a good record in exposing anti-union attitudes on the box. Let them join with the NUI, the ABS and the electricians to call a halt to the cringing before the genteel jackboots of the Whitehouse gauleiters and not only defend what limited free expression exists but push the boundaries wider.

David East



The black experience: scene from *Jazz is our Religion*

Blowing my soul through a white man's machine

FILMS about jazz are pretty rare, so John Jeremy's independently produced 50-minute feature, *Jazz is our Religion*, shown last week at the National Film Theatre as part of the London Film Festival, is doubly welcome.

Stylistically, the film follows the basic technique used so well in John Jeremy's first short, the highly praised *Blues Like a Shower of Rain*. Collect together the best available photographs of the musicians, images of the city or country background, the social and political context which gave rise to the music, then splice on a soundtrack of the music and the musicians talking.

So the music is delivered direct, in its own context and without the crass comments of the geriatric jazzers who have done so much to put a whole generation off 'Jazz'. The director's contribution is a question of selection, form and technique.

This is a form of inexpensive filmmaking that depends for its ultimate success on excellent timing and synchronization between sound and image. John Jeremy has done this well, aided by such greats as Johnny Griffin, Kenny Clarke, and jazz poet Ted Joans.

The title comes from Ted Joans' opening solo. He also delivers several other gems, including two classics by Langston Hughes. The second, a slow

blues, read over precisely observed shots of the black experience in the United States, is something else.

The unobtrusive tale of rip-off ('Cockroach Capitalism', as critic Kofsky calls it) that is the story of Music, USA, receives its tribute from Ted Joans:

'to lift up my horn and face the music those black dots with white mathematical tails to blow my soul through a white man's machine and then allow white critic to tell me what I blew was either Left (over) Right (white) or wrong (black song!) . . .'

Static images given continuity by film can be immensely effective when moving pictures would be distracting. Selecting and 'freezing' an image forces concentration.

Rhythm

Unwisely John Jeremy has not just used stills, but has introduced some live sequences, as well as attempting to simulate movement by strobe-like cutting during a drum track. This undermines the unity and rhythm of the film so that the earlier *Blues Like a Shower of Rain* remains more impressive.

There is one great exception to my

complaint about 'live' sequences—a magic cut from a still to a live bird, its curving flight exactly matching Charlie Parker's alto-sax solo. Generally the 'Hear Me talkin' to ya' collage of voice and jazz, together with some great photography, still makes this a must for devotees of 'the black experience' in music.

Blues Like a Shower of Rain is showing at the Academy, Oxford Street. No news of distribution of *Jazz is our Religion* yet, but you can read Ted Joans in *A Black Manifesto in Jazz Poetry and Prose*, published by Calder and Boyars, 18 Brewer Street, London W1, 60p.

David Wild

SUBVERSION IN CHILE:

a case study in U.S. corporate intrigue in the Third World



Price 85p, plus 7p postage
IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens,
London E2 8DN.

JUST arrived in my mail: a sheaf of articles by Thomas Szasz, author of *The Myth of Mental Illness*, *The Manufacture of Madness*, etc, etc.

Szasz's material is entertaining and sobering. He has uncovered a treatise of 1851, Cartwright's Report on The Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race, which identified two psychiatric diseases peculiar to black slaves.

'Drapetomania' was apparently an illness whose only symptom consisted in the slave's propensity to run away from service. This, said Dr Cartwright, 'is as much a disease of the mind as any other species of mental alienation, and much more curable, as a general rule.'

The favoured therapy was for the slaves 'to be treated like children, with care, kindness, attention and humanity'. Any still inclined to disobey 'should be punished until they fall into that submissive state which it was intended for them to occupy.'

The other mental disorder was 'Dysaesthesia Aethiops', a 'disease peculiar to Negroes' who proved 'insensible to pain when inflicted as punishment', hence displaying a partial insensibility of the skin' as well as 'torpor of intellect' arising from 'the want of blood sufficiently aerated or vitalized in the circulating system.'

Szasz is very good at denouncing and exposing the insanities of official sanity and its regulators. It follows however, from his position, that heroin addiction should not be interfered with by outside authority since 'we must regard freedom of self-medication as a fundamental right', as he says in his paper *The Ethics of Addiction*. He also opposes medical intervention to frustrate suicide, unless the suicidal person volunteers to be persuaded (in other words is not feeling all that much suicidal).

THE second edition of William Safire's *The New Language of Politics*, which is subtitled *A Dictionary of Catchwords, Slogans and Political Usage*, caught my attention in a bookshop. It is published by Colliers at £1.50 and cannot be reviewed but simply quoted:

BALONEY: . . . 'No matter how thin you slice it,' said Alfred E Smith in 1936, 'it's still baloney.'

BOODLE: graft; illicit profit derived from holding public office, usually in form of bribes; more loosely, loot of any kind.

CONTRACT: . . . A contract is not a 'deal'; a deal clearly implies a two-way transaction, while a contract is merely an assignment accepted with no-specific return favour demanded.

ELECT A LEADER NOT A LOVER: see **DIVORCE ISSUE** (Remarriage after a divorce will not be forgiven by a wide section of the great American public, though they will accept virtually any hypocrisy, financial or sexual.)

HOOPLA: devices and techniques to stimulate enthusiasm. 'Hoo' is the sound of excitement and gaiety, 'Hooray' and 'Hoo-hah!'. Along with 'Whoopie' and 'Whoop-de-doo', all probably derive from the excited squeals of children. In politics, Hoopla is a necessary ingredient of campaigns.

INFLUENCE PEDDLER: one who has, or claims to have, the contacts and 'pull' supposedly necessary to get government contracts and favours from public officials, for a fee.

STAYING BOUGHT: constancy in corruption. Lincoln's First Secretary of War defined 'an honest politician' as 'a man who, when he's bought, stays bought.'

Mr Safire, the compiler of this excellent dictionary, now works at the White House as Special Assistant to President Nixon. Somebody in the Tory Party or Transport House should try to hire him for a season: over here in Britain we have the same reality after all, we just lack the vocabulary.

Peter Sedgwick

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We fight:

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

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

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

Against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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

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

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

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

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

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

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

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

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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

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

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

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

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

NORTH EAST

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

NORTH

Barnsley
Bradford
Dewsbury
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Pontefract/
Knottingley
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

EAST

Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

NORTH WEST

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

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
Swansea Valley

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

MIDLANDS

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

SOUTH

Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Eastbourne
Guildford
Portsmouth
Southampton

THE UNIONS

SUGAR ON ANTI-UNION ACT LEAVES A BITTER TASTE

WHEN the Tories pushed through the Industrial Relations Act they tried to sugar the pill by references to 'protecting workers' rights'. In the months since, the layer of sugar has been shown to be very thin indeed.

Robin Chichester-Clark, Minister of State for Employment, recently revealed to the House of Commons that in the first five months of the Act, 73 per cent of claims for unfair dismissal heard by Industrial Tribunals had been rejected. And in the few cases that were successful, compensation for loss of job was tiny—in 85 per cent of cases less than £500 (or a mere four months wages at the average industrial wage).

It is not that the tribunals have been afraid to use their teeth. They have—but only in cases where it is a question of weakening the solidarity of workers' organisations or their ability to take a decisive stand on questions of basic humanity.

The tribunal in Birmingham ruled recently that the Union of Sheet Metal Workers did not have the right to expel a member who opted for voluntary redundancy, because such an expulsion 'might very well savour of being repugnant to the Redundancy Payments Act'.

In other words, the tribunal holds that unions should not have the power to resist the attempts of employers to cut the workforce by offering bribes to individual union members. The 'rights'

of the individual worker, for the tribunal, include the right to remain in the union even after breaking the solidarity of his workmates.

But even more blatant was a ruling against the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians. The union has a rule that members seeking employment in the racist state of South Africa should be fined up to £250 or expelled from the union.

The tribunal meeting in London in August judged that this would be 'unfair or unreasonable disciplinary action' in preventing the member from exercising his 'lawful rights'.

The Industrial Relations Act has often been called, correctly, the employers' charter. It is now clear that it is the scabs' and racials' charter as well.

Roberts to contest

by Roger Rosewell
A MAJOR row may now develop over the recent re-election of Jim Conway as general secretary of the giant Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW).

Conway defeated left-wing candidate Ernie Roberts by 169,806 votes to 96,206—a majority of 73,600.

Ernie Roberts has announced that he intends to fight this result because of a number of alleged irregularities in the way in which the poll was conducted. He has said that during the postal ballot some members received two ballot papers and others none, while some papers were sent to people who had died or left the union.

The election of Conway for the next eight years—until his retirement—is a serious blow to the left wing. He is a leading right-winger in the union and uses his control of the union journal to attack or ignore the majority policies of the membership.

Because Conway supports the Common Market he prints articles in its favour but none against. The union is officially opposed to entry.

During the eight-month wages campaign earlier this year no articles supporting the claim were published even though the union spent nearly £1½ million in strike pay and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions had urged every union to publicise it fully.

Conway's control of the journal was undoubtedly important in contributing towards his election success. It appears every month and is partly used as his own personal publicity machine. In the latest issue his photo appears some six times.

The introduction of the postal



Conway: eight more years



Scanlon: no campaign

ballot was another reason for his success, and so was the general failure of the left to fight for Roberts and lead a real attack against Conway's misuse of the journal and sabotage of the wages fight.

If, instead of maintaining a peace treaty relationship with the right wing, officials such as Hugh Scanlon, Reg Birch, Bob Wright and Les Dixon had openly criticised Conway and toured the country appealing to the rank and file who had fought for higher wages but had been ignored and betrayed by the general secretary and his journal, then the result could have been very different.

Any AUEW members who have any evidence of voting irregularities should write to Socialist Worker at 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN, so that they can be published in a future issue.

WORKS COMMITTEE THANKS I.S.

Six members of the Banner Works Committee have sent the following message to Socialist Worker:

On behalf of the workers of John Banners Warehouse, Acton, we would like to express our thanks to the brothers and sisters of Paddington and Harlesden International Socialists for the efficient and dedicated help they gave to us during our recent occupation. Their support and the magnificent solidarity of the workers of Whiteleys were vital factors in bringing about our speedy victory over a management bent on using the threat of closure to intimidate the workforce.

Stay with us, brothers, there will be more fights ahead.

BOOM OR BUST?

The crisis in the aircraft industry

'The huge sums of money being spent on Concorde will only serve to save a few hours for businessmen or to carry on pleasure trips a tiny handful of privileged people. We have to ask what sort of society refuses to spend even a small amount of money providing a reliable and efficient bus service for ordinary people while at the same time wasting millions on Concorde.'

15p per copy plus 3p postage.
Six copies or more post free from
BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS
9a Oakland Road, Bristol 6

Miners leaders back down from action for tenants

RANK AND FILE MINERS are trying to get the South Wales National Union of Mineworkers to take a firmer stand on the struggle against the Rent Act. At a recent NUM area conference, with delegates representing 130 lodges, 72 delegates signed a petition asking for an emergency discussion on a resolution calling upon 'all lodges to support strike action should any trade unionist be evicted for withholding the rent increases'.

Despite protests, area president Glyn Williams ruled that the executive council must discuss the resolution before it came before the conference. But he promised that the executive would discuss the question at its very next meeting, which took place on 24 November.

But when the executive met it approved a much weaker position, saying that action would be taken only in the light of 'particular circumstances'. Many miners are now saying that the NUM has demoralised the tenants who are on rent strike.

The next moves are expected to come from lodges in the Neath and Aberdare valleys. Workers at British Aluminium, Rheola, have already pledged that they will take industrial action if tenants are victimised. Neighbouring lodges will certainly follow suit.

HIDING TRUTH ON WOMEN

THE MEDIA have given coverage to the plight of agricultural workers, but have only mentioned the appallingly low rate of £16.50 basic paid to MEN. There has been, as far as I know, no mention whatever about the female agricultural workers' basic wage of £12.96, an example of the gross inequality of female wages.

Surely the Agricultural Workers Union should be called upon to bring this to public attention and demand equal pay. We must fight for our rights but while the government's prices and wages freeze remains farmers cannot claim more money for their produce and some cannot afford more wages. Any suggestions on what might be done?—MELANIE LANDELLS, Cheltenham, Gloucs.

LETTERS

Parker: the union view

AS THE TIME-SERVING management lackey who is paid by the membership of this union among other things to look after the interests of Charles Parker and Mike Rosen, I am probably the best person to answer the criticisms in David Widgery's piece (25 November). Widgery, who did not speak to any union representative in preparing his piece, has got his facts wrong, and his conclusions are therefore invalid.

The Association of Broadcasting Staff (he couldn't even get its name right) is not the BBC house union, and hasn't been since 1946. Less than a week before Widgery's piece appeared, it warned the BBC that it was prepared to call for industrial action to save Charles Parker's job—that doesn't strike me as being unable 'to bring itself to question the sackings.'

The 'rash of motions from rank and file members' stemmed directly from a branch circular describing the case put out by me; without it it is unlikely that there would have been any at all. Nobody in authority in the ABS told Widgery or anyone else that Charles Parker's case would be judged 'on its merits'—but if they had, the view expressed would have been that the proposed 'premature retirement' had no merits.

Mike Rosen was not sacked by a member of the ABS, but by the BBC management. An administrator who is an ABS member had the job of conveying that decision to him, but the decision itself was taken at a level of responsibility far higher than that to which the ABS organises in in the BBC.

So much for Widgery's inaccuracies as far as the union is concerned. There are also, I suspect, inaccuracies in the parts of his piece which refer to the BBC, but that organisation needs—and will get—no defence from me.

For the record, though, Charles Parker never made a radio ballad about engineers, the songs in the radio ballads were all specially composed by Ewan MacColl and arranged by Peggy Seeger, and his present situation arises out of the BBC plan Broadcasting in the Seventies. The McKinsey report which preceded it was a separate document, and probably contributed to it, but the decision to get rid of him was taken by the BBC unaided by its management consultants.—TIM FELL, Assistant General Secretary, Association of Broadcasting Staff, London W1.

David Widgery comments: I really don't see what Tim Fell is making all the fuss about. Apart from the bonus 's' added to his union's name by the printers' gremlin and the fact that the ABS did finally muster up the threat of strike action between the writing of the piece and its publication, Fell's points are the merest quibbles.

The real question is whether the union is a genuine independent body capable of dealing with the real needs of BBC workers. Socialist Worker has argued that the present ABS structure, leadership and policies simply don't face up to the real situation in the BBC and that it is a safety valve rather than a fighting union.

My four-sentence reference to the ABS's tardy response to the Rosen/Parker sackings stands. And Mr Fell's complacent tone strengthens my point. BBC workers, including Rosen and Parker, will need a far more militant union than the present self-satisfied phantom if they are to defend themselves against Broadcasting in the Seventies and its implications.

● In Robert James' obituary of Max Shachtman (25 November) the date of his death was given as 7 November. In fact, it was 4 November.

Palestinian resistance

YOUR REPORT on the growing workers' militancy in Lebanon (2 December) rightly condemns the press for focusing only on the sensational activities of the Black September organisation, but then your criticism of Black September's strategy is based on the same understanding as the Fleet Street editors you condemn.

There is a sad misunderstanding that Black September is the focus of the resistance struggle of the Palestinian people. This is not true. Day after day Palestinian commandos attack Israeli troops. This information is reported in the Israeli press, but conveniently ignored by the Fleet Street hacks. Of course, it is not good to admit that there is a militant resistance against the Israelis.

Black September's activities are insignificant compared to the real revolutionary struggle of the Palestinian people. However, in positive terms, Black September, by challenging not only Israel but the imperial powers who support the Zionists, helps to raise the morale of the Palestinian people.

If you take the trouble to examine the Munich incident you will find that it was not primarily an attack on the Israelis, but an attack on a well-prepared plan by the Americans to re-open settlement plans between Israel and the confrontation Arab states. Munich successfully sabotaged this plan. Munich may have been a deplorable operation, but it is doubly tragic if these people lost their lives while the world failed to realise why.—LOUIS EAKS, London N5.

Illegal action by police

AT LAST some recognition from Socialist Worker that an important political trial is taking place in London. Dave Widgery's article on the Stoke Newington Eight (2 December) was great stuff, but I would like to point out one small factual inaccuracy.

The writ that has been served against Chief Superintendent Habershon for illegal arrest and imprisonment (and assault by the way!) does not come from the defendants of the Miss World Trial. Although I had demonstrated at the Albert Hall during the contest, I was not one of the five who were actually arrested and charged. Neither were the other three women involved in the writ.

I attended Bow Street Court on 11 February, 1971, in the hopes of getting into the public gallery to hear part of the trial, instead I was whisked off by a bunch of plain clothes police officers and dumped in a cell. Later I was thrown in a Black Maria and

Remember Derry dead

ON SUNDAY 28 January 1973, the Derry Civil Rights Association intend to commemorate the anniversary of the killings on Bloody Sunday by holding a ceremony at Free Derry Corner.

Both the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and the Derry Civil Rights Association would greatly welcome support on this occasion from a large British contingent. An ad hoc group is therefore organising such a contingent. We hope the latter will include not only very many Scots, English and Welsh individuals but also representatives of trade unions, churches, political parties and other organisations.

In order that this British presence may be clearly seen, the contingent will travel over to Derry in time to hold an all-British vigil at Free Derry Corner throughout the night preceding the commemoration ceremony. It will then join in the ceremony next day.

The very least British people can do to atone for the military action on Bloody Sunday last year is go over to Ireland and take part in this anniversary commemoration, thus demonstrating their dissociation from the killings carried out by their troops in their name last year.

We urge readers to help make this an exceedingly large demonstration which cannot go unnoticed by the British and Irish public. Those who would like to take part should write to: The British Derry Commemoration Committee, 37 Middle Lane, London N8.—Fenner Brockway, Donald Soper, Gwynfor Evans, Stan Newens, Tony Smythe, Gordon McLennan, Digby Jacks, Peter Hain, Bill Jones, Ernie Roberts, Joan Maynard, Brian Nicholson, Ken Coates, Collin Sweet, Louis Eaks, John Berger, Adrian Mitchell, Malcolm Caldwell, Joan Gabriel, Chris Farley, Pat Arrowsmith.

MY HEART was deeply touched by the very courageous Irishman who is in his seventh day of hunger strike and I was very near to tears. This man is dying for his country whose one aim is freedom from British rule.

Why cannot their freedom be given them, instead of all this terrible bloodshed caused by the English villains? How many people are interested in Ireland's cause?

I for one and my mother also are very interested in Mr MacStiofain's bravery and I truly believe that if he dies, all hell in Ireland will break loose against the English villains. It is only propaganda when they speak of trouble between the Catholics and Protestants. Ireland wants her freedom, has wanted it for many years, and shall go on fighting until at last she gets it.—MISS MARIA TURNER and MRS ANNE TURNER, Blackpool, Lancashire.

taken to Barnet Police Station.

No one asked me if I would help with their enquiries or arrested me, I was simply 'removed from the scene' and locked up to await questioning or 'interrogation' as they openly referred to it. Even access to a lawyer was refused. I was released after nine hours in custody in a sick, weary and confused state.

The police claim they had 'reasonable suspicion' for their actions, but until that day as far as I knew my name wasn't even known to the police.

All of this was completely illegal and in direct disregard of 'judges' rules', hence the serving of the writ. But it is unfortunately the case that after the government's proposed changes in the law even these minor (and usually futile) safeguards will be eliminated. The scope of police powers will then be so wide that this type of activity will be regarded as entirely legitimate.—SUSAN BRULEY, London NW11.

RAYMOND CHALLINOR



A WORD of consolation for all engineers. Whatever indignities the AUEW suffer at the Industrial Relations Court over Goad the Scab, these are trivial—indeed of mouselike proportions—when compared to the bosses' legal onslaughts in the past.

In 1846, Messrs Jones and Potts, of Viaduct Foundry, Newton-le-Willows, Lancashire, sued the engineers' union. 26 workers stood accused of 'conspiracy to impoverish and bring the prosecutors to beggary' by their industrial action. The indictment contained 4914 charges and reached the mammoth length of 57 yards.

Speaking at a protest rally, the union's lawyer, W P Roberts, remarked about the length of the indictment: 'As far as my youthful reminiscences would allow me, I have made a pretty accurate calculation, and I find that 150 couples might safely dance the polka upon it.'

Amid laughter and cheers, he offered to give the indictment to the House of Lords, which at that time was being re-decorated. He suggested that it could be used 'if their lordships wanted something to adorn their walls which was extremely curious, though it might not be very ornamental.'

It is interesting to compare the reactions to legal repression of the engineering union then and now. In 1846-7, every effort was made to mobilise the entire working-class movement, meetings were held up and down the country, whereas the AUEW today has responded to the £5000 fine in a very low-key manner. No attempt has been made to stir up feeling on the shop-floor, presumably because the union leaders would be deeply embarrassed were strike action taken against the Industrial Relations Act.

Far from giving a militant lead, Hugh Scanlon and company have continued going about their routine business, only breaking it for the occasional cosy chat at Buckingham Palace or Downing Street.

Frankly, this is just not good enough. People like W P Roberts in the 1840s never claimed to be socialists but the lead they gave was much better than that given by our so-called left-wing union leaders today.

BARBARIANS

HIGH COURT judges, who function as the unofficial wing of the Monday Club, can be relied upon to be politically reactionary. Policemen's evidence is usually treated as if it has come directly from the lips of the Greek Goddess of Truth.

At the same time, their lordships always give salutary sentences to any coloured people, students or militants that are brought before them. Even so, as Eamonn McCann recently pointed out in his excellent article, Mr Justice Sebag Shaw's conduct over the Aldershot case sets a new low for repressive barbarity.

While Noel Jenkinson received 30 years in jail, Kissane got two years for lending him a false driving license and Duignan three and a half years for having a sawn-off shotgun.

Truly, so long as Mr Justice Sebag Shaw continues to serve on the bench, the spirit of 'Hanging' Judge Jeffreys can still be said to remain alive.

Of mice and men

I find it interesting to recall the reaction when, in 1918, that fine Scottish socialist, John Maclean, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for sedition. His comrade-in-arms, John S Clarke had a certain weakness. He enjoyed writing epigrams of people whom he disliked before they had actually died.

He did it as an encouragement, a polite suggestion that they might perform a public service by shuffling off this mortal coil. On Lord Strathure, who sentenced Maclean, he wrote the following epitaph:

Beneath this sod—another lies,
An autocrat of Scots' assize,
Now gone but not forgotten.
Although his carcase putrifies,
And writhing maggots eat his eyes,

It gives his Lordship small surprise,
For he was *always* rotten.

Perhaps a poem in a similar vein should be written about Mr Justice Sebag Shaw. He has tarried too long among the cares and woes of this world.

THE UNOFFICIALS

ISN'T it time that working-class organisations raised the demand that the Distillers Company be nationalised? For more than 10 years it has allowed limbless children, the victims of thalidomide, to suffer and has done nothing for them.

Year by year its profits swell as it continues to display complete contempt for the public's feelings or the children's welfare.

Underlying the tragedy is an important question that has largely been overlooked. Like many other pharmaceutical firms, Distillers marketed a drug before its effects were fully known. This means that, since exhaustive testing has not been carried out, there is always the possibility of another disaster occurring at any time.

There is always pressure in the drug industry to create a new commodity and boost sales by high-pressure selling techniques. Usually the difference between production costs and actual selling price leaves a handsome margin. With the National Health Service and medical profession, the drug companies enjoy a captive market. There's gold in them thar ills.



Tom Mann:
What a compulsory Eight-hour day means to the workers (1896)
introduction by Richard Hyman
William Gallacher and J R Campbell:
Direct Action—an outline of workshop and social organisation (1919)
introduction by Alastair Hatchett
20p each + 4p postage

REPRINTS IN LABOUR HISTORY

Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW11 8LH also from IS Books 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN

Shipyard workers ready for bosses' offensive

WORKERS at five shipyards in the North East are preparing for a 'Spring Offensive' by the bosses, which could mean the loss of 100 drawing office jobs.

Swan Hunter Group—which has four yards on the Tyne and one on Teesside—was to have axed the jobs in the New Year. Now, after a storm of protest from the technical and supervisory section of the engineering union (TASS), management has been forced to concede a stay of execution until May.

'We have managed to push back the deadline until May next year and this has brought us time to organise a fight,' said TASS group committee's Teesside representative Bruce Sanderson, who is also a TASS national executive member.

'With this borrowed time we have started a campaign to involve all the other unions in the yards in our struggle, and together we shall pressure the government to take over the yards under public ownership and give them immediate aid.'

On record

'A meeting of shop stewards from all five yards has been arranged with a view to forming a joint co-ordinating action committee to fight the redundancies and exert pressure on government.'

'If we are not working today, a whole lot of other workers will be out of work tomorrow. We are just the tip of the iceberg.'

Sir John Hunter, chairman of the Swan Hunter Group, is on record as saying that he has begged the government for investment grants 'until he was blue in the face' but with no success.

Many of the workers in the five yards, however, are a little baffled as to why a company with a trading profit of £2 million last year should have to grovel to the government. Even more perplexing for those whose jobs are threatened is the news that if the company's rate of profit for the first six months of this year is maintained, they will make a total profit of over £3 million by the end of the year.

'FIGHT FARM WAGES FREEZE' CALL IN NORFOLK

NORWICH:—Agricultural workers in North Norfolk are reacting bitterly to the government's decision to freeze their already miserable pay offer. Back in February they formed an action committee to discuss ways of presenting the union's demands more forcefully and since then 20 meetings in different parts of the country have been attended by more than 1000 people.

The repeated demand is for industrial action if the full union claim for a minimum of £20 for a 40 hour week is not met by February. The Norfolk County committee of the union has recommended that branches in the area consider what form industrial action should take, so that suggestions could be made to the union leaders.

A meeting of more than 50 rank and file members discussed this question last week in Wendling, near Dereham. Wilf Page, the district organiser, and a member of the national executive, told the meeting that the Agricultural Wages Board had failed to give the workers anything like a reasonable wage.

Farmworkers could only achieve the minimum wage of £25 that they needed by learning to fight as the miners and builders had, he said. There were considerable similarities between the problems the building workers had faced and those now confronting the farmworkers—a weak trade union organisation, a scattered labour force and the divisive effects of the 'lump'.

LIVESTOCK

A number of points were made from the floor on how to ensure that a strike would be fully effective. It should be timed to take place at the most important period, it was stressed, during the spring sowing or the summer harvesting.

Minimum feeding and milking of livestock should continue, but dairy and meat products should not be allowed to leave the farms.

And a commitment was needed from the whole trade union movement for protection for any agricultural workers threatened with eviction from tied cottages by farmers, the members declared. The organisation of flying pickets would be essential to prevent blackleg labour being used by farm contractors.

Big London rally scores in campaign against the Tories

LONDON's Camden town hall was packed last Friday for the International Socialists' Fight the Tories' Rally.

It got off to a lively start with music and songs from The Combine group. The picture shows some of the figures in a short play about exploitation on a lump-labour building site.

Speakers at the rally (left to right) were Chris Davison, a London busman, Bob Light, a London docker, chairman John Palmer, and Paul Foot and Tony Cliff, members of the IS national committee. They stressed the need to build a fighting socialist organisation to smash the Tories and their system.

More than £100 was collected for the building workers at the World's End site in Chelsea, back on strike again.

Pictures: JEFF PICK



Sacking in bid to break union

by Dermot Smyth and Derek Moffatt

GRIMSBY:—Forty-five workers at Osmand's veterinary chemical factory have been on strike for three weeks over union recognition and the sacking of their shop steward, Graham Bell.

Pay and conditions in the factory are bad. Wages are £19.25 for a 40-hour week, giving take home pay of only £14 to £16. Rain comes in the roof, dust is frequently blown all over the place, and fire precautions are inadequate. The only heating in the main shop comes from two old coke fires, since management were too mean to pay an estimated £158 to the Gas Board for a second-hand heating system.

Graham Bell was sacked as soon as he was elected shop steward for the transport workers union. Management claim that he

drove a forklift truck without a licence last July—although he did not drive on the public road and was acting on management instructions.

The men are determined to win. The strike has been made official and a good picket line has prevented lorries from entering or leaving, but there are half a dozen blacklegs. A man who has taken Graham Bell's job is brought into work by taxi every morning. Management is also attempting to move work to Wright's factory in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, another non-union firm.

Grimsby is a backwater for trade unionism, with many medium-sized firms like Osmand's. So the success of the struggle in Osmand's is important for the whole town.

STUDENT 'GUILTY' DESPITE EVIDENCE

STIRLING:—The first of the students to be tried by the disciplinary committee of Stirling University for demonstrating against the Queen's visit two months ago was sentenced last week.

He was severely reprimanded for 'conduct prejudicial to the good order and interests of the university'.

The sentence itself is insignificant. But the fact that he was found guilty, contrary to all the evidence, indicates the sort of punishment that could be handed out in later cases.

The authorities are attempting to appear 'fair' at the start of the hearings so they can crack down hard on those they consider to be the real offenders, the elected representatives of the student body. They believe that if they can spin the proceedings out they can crack down hard during the Christmas break when the students are away.

Meanwhile the principal, Mr Cottrell, has submitted to the staff of the university one of the most reactionary documents of educational policy ever seen.

It suggests the need for a 'more careful' admissions policy and says that the mass meeting of the students union is 'unsatisfactory'. This policy would mean that no students would be admitted with the slightest anti-establishment views and the democratic structure of the students union would be abolished.

At the National Union of Students Conference in Margate last week a resolution of support for the Stirling students was carried with only two delegates out of a thousand voting against. A massive vote of censure was carried against the president of the NUS, Communist Party member Digby Jacks, after he had joined right-wing elements in criticising Stirling students for demonstrating against the Queen.

WHAT'S ON

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

IS MEETINGS

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

SWANSEA IS: informal discussion—Are we heading for Fascism again? Belle Vue Hotel, Swansea, Thursday 7 December, 8pm. All welcome.

GLASGOW AREA IS meeting on The Tory Wage Freeze. Speakers: Georina Kelly (shop steward Glasgow Corporation), Jimmy McCallum (shop steward John Brown Engineering). Wednesday 13 December, 7.30pm, at IS Books, 64 Queen St, C1.

EAST LONDON IS public meeting
WHO ARE THE MUGGERS?
The police and the blacks
Speakers: 2 of the South London 4 The Eagle and Child, Wood Grange Rd, E7, (near Forest Gate station)
Tuesday 12 December, 8pm

BIRMINGHAM IS District Social: Saturday 9 December. Folk, jazz, pop, refreshments, 8pm, extension until 11.30pm. Adam and Eve, Bradford St. Tickets 30p available in advance from 021-444 5692 or on the door. (Proceeds to IS printshop fund.)

HACKNEY AND ISLINGTON IS Social: Friday 15 December, North London Poly, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, N5, from 7.30pm. Films—disco—trad folk—buffet—bar with extension. 50p admission (25p for OAPs, unemployed, students).

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

HORNSEY IS public meeting
SMASH THE WAGES FREEZE
Speaker: Bob Light
Tuesday 12 December, 8pm
Duke of Edinburgh pub, Fonthill Rd, N4 (close to Finsbury Park Tube)

OTHER MEETINGS

RANK AND FILE TEACHERS meeting Sunday 10 December, 7pm, at The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Rd, London W1 (Warren St tube)—education and ideology/salaries.

EVE-OF-TRIAL public meeting: Black activist Tony Soares is facing incitement charges on the strength of an article written in Grass Roots, the black community newspaper. A meeting about the case is being held on Sunday 10 December at 6.30pm at Camden Studios, Camden St, London NW1 (nearest tubes Mornington Crescent and Camden Town.)

DEMONSTRATION Saturday 16 December, 2pm, outside Holloway Prison, against the recent 21-month prison sentence imposed on Jacqueline Paddon for taking a baby for 15 minutes. Please support.

NOTICES

MALE COMRADE looking for room in London area—please contact Box J, Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

ENTERTAINERS WANTED: Chertsey IS need entertainers (especially a pianist) for IS social on 12 January, expenses paid. Contact R Hayden at Chertsey 60666.

COMRADES wish to share large 4-bedroom unfurnished flat with others, near Croydon. Ring after 6pm: 01-668 6596.

ESSENTIAL for all trade unionists: popular Claimants' Handbook for Strikers, 40 pages, illustrated, 15p plus 3½p postage. Up to 50 per cent bulk discounts to trade union branches, etc. 'The lid off the SS'. NFCU Publications, 19 Rea Tower, Mosborough Cresc, Birmingham B19 3AU.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS' GLASGOW OFFICE is now on the telephone. Ring 041-221 3426 for IS Books, Glasgow area committee, and Socialist Worker.

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

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

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



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Uxbridge International Socialists leading Saturday's march

250 march against racism

UXBRIDGE:-250 people marched last Saturday in protest against the three racist candidates standing for Uxbridge in Thursday's parliamentary election. The march wound its way through Uxbridge High Street, handing to shoppers leaflets which revealed the lies about immigrants and exposing the nature of the National Front, Mosley's Union Movement and their allies. The march was supported by Hillingdon Trades Council, the Communist Party and students from Brunel College, though most of the marchers were members of the International Socialists. The marchers received little co-operation from the police, who tried to shunt the demonstrators through the back

streets. When stewards demanded that the route should include the shopping areas they were threatened with arrest. This week the local Monday Club—the right-wing Tory group—voted to support the National Front candidate rather than the official Tory, sparking off a row with Monday Club leaders. This move is an important indication of how far right-wing Tories are swinging towards racist and near-fascist organisations. The most ineffective campaign of the election was that of the Labour Party, both politically and in organisation. It failed miserably to counter the racist lies of the other candidates.

MASSIVE DEMO BACKS COUNCIL RENT DEFIANCE

CLAY CROSS:—As the district auditors began to wind up their investigation of the council's finances, 2000 tenants and their supporters marched to show their support for the councillors' stand against the Rent Act.

Ninety-one tenants' groups sent deputations to a Sunday rally and march, including coachloads from Merseyside and the Birmingham area,

by Nick Howard

South Yorkshire, Manchester and Camden Town, London. Labour and Communist Party banners were in evidence, but with the exception of the ICI Doncaster shop stewards, trade union banners were entirely absent. The march moved up and down the High Street, blocking traffic both ways, and ended with a rally at the Clay Cross

Social Centre. Speakers included Art Scargill of the Yorkshire NUM, Frank Allaun MP, Gordon MacLennan of Communist Party national executive, Mrs Elsie Singleton, of the Mersey Tenants Co-ordinating Committee. Christine Rzerzchowski, from Kiveton Park Tenants Association, described the Labour rural council there had served summonses for arrears of rent on tenants, including tenants' association committee members, in an effort to bring the rent strike.

Frank Allaun stressed that the official Labour Party policy, as decided at national conference, was to support both tenants and councillors who resisted the Rent Act. Now that the movement of resistance has collapsed among the vast majority of Labour-controlled councils, many Labour Parties are swearing wholehearted support for the rebels at Clay Cross.

Will the national executive of the Labour Party back up these claims disciplining and perhaps expelling Labour councillors at Kiveton Park who are so shamelessly flouting their party's national policy?

Orders

The Clay Cross demonstration organised almost entirely by tenants' association activists.

On Thursday, the Clay Cross councillors were to be surcharged for arrears of rent on the housing account fortnight later, orders will be made for recovery of these arrears and the proposal of declaring the Labour council 'in default' will begin, culminating in the appointment of a housing commissioner.

While the Department of Environment is getting its bureaucracy into action, the Clay Cross tenants have to be brought out of their homes into an organised response against the struggle will have to be taken into trade union branches and shop stewards committees by the tenants themselves. The Labour Party has no machinery, if it had the will, for broadening the struggle of tenants everywhere.

Merely calling for bigger and better lobbies in support of Frank Allaun achieve nothing. Labour's own policies seem hardly likely to prevent future rises.

As the tenants' campaigns in many areas face increasing intimidation by reactionary Labour councils, the tenants' associations need strengthening.

The rebuilding of a declining membership, the strengthening of rent strike during the freeze, the intensification of activities on the estates are all top priorities. Without the sure foundation of militant tenants' associations, the edifice of resistance to the rent Act is bound to crumble.

ANTI-UNION AIR FIRM SACKS FOUR

ACTON, West London:-Members of ASTMS, the technical and supervisory workers' union, have been victimised for attempting to establish union organisation in Horizon, Britain's third biggest air tour organisation.

Four members of the union, Luke Fitzgerald, Martin Hale, George Seears and Stewart Johnson, were sacked on the spot last Monday after organising a one-day stoppage for union recognition in the firm's Acton office. They were told they had caused a work stoppage 'unlawfully and in breach of their contracts of employment'.

When the union responded to this intimidation by giving seven days notice of strike action, Horizon took them to the Industrial Relations Court, which ruled that seven days was inadequate notice. It seems that no notice is required when an anti-union firm sacks its workers, but at least 14 days is needed for action against such sacking.

The union has now given a fortnight's notice and a strike looks like going ahead. ASTMS says that during the strike it will call on its members at the airports to black all planes booked by Horizon. It is up to other trade unionists to ensure that such action is effective.

Strike in seventh week

GLANAMMAN, South Wales:-The strike at Crompton-Parkinson over the 'merit bonus' which gives 100 rates of pay for the 131 workers is now in its seventh week and remains 100 per cent solid.

As a direct result of the strike delegates from Crompton-Parkinson factories in Newport, Tredegar and Glanamman have formed a South Wales combine committee. Shop stewards have visited the firm's Derby and Doncaster factories aiming to form a nation combine committee and to hold a one-day combine strike.

Angry health workers decide: We strike

HEALTH SERVICE workers decided last weekend on a series of one-day strikes and a week of action to push for their wage claim, which has been frozen by the government and suspended by their unions.

A rank-and-file conference in London decided to press ahead with the demand for an £8-a-week rise, shorter hours, longer holidays and equal pay. Union leaders have been using the freeze as an excuse for not fighting for the official claim of £4 on the basic wage of £18, and have refused even to consider the revised claim of £8 called for by the rank and file.

However, the hospital workers' anger has forced the unions to call for a national half-day stoppage next Wednesday.

The conference, attended by more than 100 health service delegates from all over the country, was organised by the London Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers (LASH).

Reports were given from areas where unofficial action has already been planned. On Monday a series of one-day-a-week strikes started in Liverpool, while Chester and Manchester health workers are to hold a one-day strike next Wednesday. Bristol, Bournemouth, Gloucester and London hospitals had also voted for strike action.

No one at the conference believed that the half-day action called officially by the unions could be effective. It was decided to extend this to a one-day strike, as the first of a series. Mass demonstrations will be organised and hospitals picketed to inform other workers and visitors about the strike, as well as to dissuade volunteers from scabbing.

Emergency services will be maintained on condition that no volunteer labour is used. Flying pickets will encourage other hospitals to come out and mass leafletting

will spread information about LASH and the need for further action.

This will be followed by one-day-a-week strikes and a week of action after Christmas.

The conference decisions show there has been a fantastic growth in confidence and militancy among health workers, who have thrown over their no-strike tradition.

A group of workers such as these in the front line against the freeze need support from other workers with more muscle. Sympathy strikes, of the sort that were taken by some workers in support of the pensioners a fortnight ago, would bring added pressure to bear to make the government surrender.

More blacking of Fine Tubes

THE Fine Tubes strikers' net is still spreading wider. Since the recent rank-and-file conference on the strike many new groups of workers have put the black on the union-busting Plymouth firm.

Last week alone the strike committee received information that Shepperd's Transport (Bristol and Halesowen), Rapp Metals (London), Allied Industrial Services, Woodbury Chilcott (Bristol), and Walsall Conduits are no longer dealing with Fine Tubes. The list is growing week by week.

The strike committee is also holding the third Christmas party for strikers' children next Saturday at the Honicknowle Labour Club, Plymouth.

Motorbike firm tries to sack shop steward

WOLVERHAMPTON:-An engineering union shop steward at Norton Villiers motorbike works, threatened with the sack because of his connection with a factory bulletin, has been suspended on full pay after getting the backing of a shop stewards' meeting.

The stewards told management they would not stand by while toolroom steward Alan Price was victimised. Management then sent him home.

The bulletin, Villiers Worker, appeared for the first time last week. It was written by a group of Villiers workers who want shop-floor discussion and involvement in issues such as the bonus rate, company profits and the Tory freeze.

Alan Price said after he had been sent home: 'This not only concerns me as a person. What is at stake here is the union organisation at Villiers. If management can pick on one shop steward, what is to stop them victimising somebody else who steps out of line in the future?'

The management clearly regard this as a test case and the response of the stewards, the shop floor and engineering union district committees must be clear and unambiguous.

Rent rises refused

BIRMINGHAM:-Several council estates started a partial rent strike this week after rises under the Tory 'Fair' Rent Act, delayed until now, put rents up by an average 60p.

A meeting of more than 100 tenants on Bromford Bridge estate voted for a strike after reports of other rent struggles throughout the country. Local shop stewards pledged industrial backing.

Teesside steel lock-out longest in twenty years

TEESSIDE:-The struggle of the thousand locked-out steel workers has entered its third week. It has already lasted longer than any other BISAFTA steel union dispute on Teesside for 20 years.

The strikers are now organising to overcome difficulties in claiming social security payments.

The struggle started after the British Steel Corporation had rejected an £8-a-week pay claim for parity with South Wales and then suspended some workers for operating an overtime ban and work-to-rule in protest.

When other workers then staged a 24-hour sympathy strike they were refused

readmission into the Lackenby works unless they called off the overtime ban and agreed not to fight for their claim. This was refused and for the past two weeks they have all been locked out.

During these weeks the Lackenby workers have received support and suffered treachery. The first few days two other Teesside steel branches stopped work in protest at the lock-out and in support of parity.

Only the most desperate collusion bet-

ween the steel corporation, the local full-time officials of the notoriously right-wing BISAFTA and a number of local officials on the Lackenby site, have managed to stop this solidarity.

The Teesside divisional officer of BISAFTA, Jim Drinkwater, has already tried and failed to whip up a 'red scare' witch-hunt. He said publicly that the workers 'are not just up against BSC, they are also up against this organisation.'



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____

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

INSIDE: Massive demo backs Clay Cross stand over rents—page 15
Farm workers call for action against the freeze—page 14



JOHN WORTH: first Chrysler, now his own union

Now union turns on Chrysler militant

by Martin Bramham

COVENTRY:—John Worth, the deputy convenor at Chrysler's Stoke plant in defence of whose job 4000 workers went on strike, had his shop stewards credentials withdrawn last week—on the casting vote of the chairman of the Coventry district committee of the engineering union (AUEW).

This move is the product of Chrysler's determined campaign against John Worth and by implication against militant and democratic shop stewards in general. Chrysler has manoeuvred itself into a situation where it can veto anyone workers elect to represent them.

Early last month the 4000 Stoke

workers walked out after John Worth was sacked by Chrysler, supposedly for refusing to attend a meeting and for being 'arrogant' and 'unco-operative' with management.

The strikers voted to return to work after the senior stewards announced that they had negotiated John Worth's reinstatement. But it was not made clear that management had been allowed to give notice that they would cease to recognise him as steward.

Management also presented the union district with a 22-page dossier on the

alleged crimes of John Worth and sought the 'concurrence of the AUEW district committee' to 're-establish a relationship within the Stoke plant in which consultation and negotiation can be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.' What Chrysler meant behind the nice phrases was that they wanted union help in ousting John Worth as a steward.

The company dossier—the product of years of spying—contained all sorts of dubious evidence to support its case.

For instance, Chrysler says John Worth caused stoppages over 'trifling' matters. One of these 'trifling' incidents mentioned in the dossier was in 1968, when two

men had their eyebrows burned as a result of bad equipment.

But the crux of the company case was the 'red scare'.

'The company believes that the whole of the future of its operations in the UK are being put in jeopardy by a small group of people whose objective appears to be the destruction of the company', said the dossier. 'Mr Worth is the most predominant and persistent member of this group', it went on—a clear reference to John Worth's membership of the International Socialists.

Not once during or since the dispute have the senior stewards or the full-time officials protested about the company's methods of recording or using such information. Nor have they attempted to explain the real motives of the firm—to make measured day work bite, reduce manning levels and rank-and-file job control through the shop stewards.

Dirty work

Events since the strike have clearly exposed the role of the senior stewards who, by design or default, have done the management's dirty work for them. At the recent district committee meeting (specifically held to discuss the company's documentary evidence!) the AUEW convenor and the chairman of the Stoke joint shop stewards committee both condemned John Worth.

They said that John Worth had given 'a teach-in on workers' control'. They were then informed that nationalisation under workers' control was AUEW national policy. Their reply was conspicuous by its absence.

Andy Boyle, AUEW district secretary, denied to the press that the company dossier had in any way influenced the district committee.

But he could not deny that Chrysler first called John Worth's credentials into question. The district committee decision to withdraw them was taken on the casting vote of the chairman, Jim Griffin, convenor of the Triumph car company. There can be no doubt that the report of the two senior stewards from Chrysler, Wild and Simpson, swayed the meeting.

John Worth is now appealing to the AUEW executive against the district decision and his branch has sent in a resolution of protest.

IT'S OFFICIAL!

LOUGHBOROUGH: — At a packed meeting in the King Street Church Hall on Tuesday morning the 500 Indian strikers at the Mansfield Hosiery mill won their first victory in five weeks on strike.

Officials of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers declared the strike official and agreed to pay all the strikers the mandatory £6 a week strike pay, backdated for three weeks.

The officials' announcement came after 75 strikers occupied the union's Loughborough offices on Monday.

The workers started the union officials in their 'boardroom' and calmly informed them that they would not leave the offices all day unless the strike was declared official. The union officials refused to make any announcement and the strikers stayed all day.

WALKED OUT

The Indians walked out of the Mansfield Hosiery mill on 28 October demanding a £5 a week rise and an end to racial discrimination in the mill which kept black workers out of skilled, well-paid knitters' jobs.

On 27 November they returned to work on the advice of union officials, only to be told they had to go on short-time to cater for 41 new white workers who had been taken on during the strike.

The strikers walked out again the next day, reverting to their original demands. A series of angry meetings with the union officials followed.

The Indians' determined action was highlighted by the attention of the national press and the TUC. The Observer carried a full-page report on Leicestershire hosiery workers, which strongly condemns the management



MANSFIELD HOSIERY strikers pictured at a Loughborough International Socialists' public meeting last week. Dhiru Patel and B R Limbachia (nearest camera) spoke at the meeting, stressing the importance of the dispute and praising IS members for their support. Also in the picture are Babu Patel, Mohan Patel and Chhotabhai Patel.

and the union. Vic Feather, TUC general secretary, was in contact with management and union.

Making the strike official will greatly help the workers, many of whom were nearing starvation level after being refused all payments by the local Social Security office.

But their battle is not over yet. Local hosiery union official Carter has made it clear that the decision to make the strike official is conditional

on the strikers' accepting arbitration.

The terms of arbitration, and the attitude of the employers to it, has not yet been made clear to the strikers, who voted unanimously at Tuesday's meeting not to accept arbitration until they knew the terms.

The union officials are still smarting from the fury they have aroused in the labour movement by their attitudes to their Indian members. One delegate to Leicester Trades Council got to his feet angrily after a series of hostile comments.

'I will defend my union against any other,' he shouted. 'We've had less disputes than any other union in the area.'

Three councillors back rent strike

SOUTH SHIELDS:—Tenants began a partial rent strike a fortnight ago when the rents were increased. The strikers are meeting weekly to discuss progress and tactics, and have decided to review the situation at Christmas.

Three Labour councillors are supporting the rent strike, but the leader of the council's Labour group and the chairman of the housing committee have declined to attend tenants' meetings. The housing committee chairman is on record as saying that he will not evict tenants, but requests for him to renew this pledge have brought obscure replies. Many Labour Party members have campaigned actively against the rent strike.

Women strike for union recognition

SOUTH SHIELDS:—Sixty women workers at Barbour's rainwear factory have been on strike for six weeks for union recognition.

Managing director Kenneth Charlton, a local Tory councillor, is refusing to recognise their union, the Transport Workers', because it is not registered under the Industrial Relations Act.

Pay in the factory has been low by any standards—£10.60 gross for a 40-hour week. In an attempt to break the strike, the firm has offered, with Department of Employment approval, an immediate rise of £2.50 if the strikers return without the union.

The strike is official and union drivers have stopped deliveries to and from the factory. But the strikers are not getting strike pay, on the grounds that they have not been in the union long enough.

South Shields Trades Council has organised a solidarity march for this Saturday (9 December) to get the strike more publicity and more factory collections.

Finance is urgently needed by the strikers—the police were called when seven single men strikers tried to present a claim at the local Social Security office.

Donations please to Barbour's Strike Fund, c/o 143 Weston Road, South Shields, County Durham.

World's End steward is victimised

CHELSEA, West London:—The giant World's End building site is strikebound again, following the victimisation of bricklayers' shop steward John Fontaine.

Building workers returned to work victorious after a 15-week strike in November, but last Friday Mr Fontaine was given his cards by sub-contractor Mark Prince for alleged 'low productivity'. A meeting of bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers voted unanimously to strike to demand their steward's re-instatement.

John Fontaine told Socialist Worker: 'This is a clear case of victimisation—another example of the tactics of black-listing used by the employers whenever conditions and wages on site approach a liveable standard.'

He dismissed the 'low productivity' charge as ludicrous. 'Usually the employers try to get rid of a steward for bad time-keeping or coming back from dinner late from the pub', he said. 'Well, I never drink at midday and I'm never late for work, so they've had to try a new tack. The charge cannot be substantiated.'

Deputy steward Peter Wing has had two warnings for 'low productivity' and it is clear that the employers are anxious to get rid of him as well. John Fontaine considers the attack has been timed just before Christmas to assess the strength of the workers in a bid to divide their ranks.

The attempt has failed so far, with the men determined to stay out until their steward is taken back. But so far the strike remains unofficial.

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