

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Vital struggle on Race Act

by Nigel Harris

IN SOUTHALL families have been deserted by their menfolk because they are not sure if they are 'illegal' immigrants. In Gravesend, mothers are too frightened to go and collect their social security or to go into hospital in case they will be asked for their passport.

In Birmingham, a girl asks the policeman the way and is asked for her passport. Up and down the country, factory militants who dare to question the management can now be threatened directly by their employers with police persecution and possible exile.

All this flows from the House of Lords' decision, making the 1971 Immigration Act retrospective. It is a measure designed to terrorise people, and it is already having a deadly effect.

For the mass of working people in this country, the Lord's ruling is a very serious attack on the unity of the labour movement. It is yet a further step in the attempt to control workers by police power, legal intimidation and the courts.

Hesitant

The weakness of many of the existing immigrant organisations is tragically evident in the hesitant response. Instead of a day of defiance, a majority at the immigrant organisations conference on 30 June voted for a 'day of mourning'.

By contrast, the Southall Indian Workers' Association called for the formation of local action committees of immigrant and other organisations to fight the Lords' decision. Given the frequent weakness of the immigrant organisations, this places a major responsibility on organisations like the International Socialists.

In some places, local committees have already begun—but usually far too slowly. The national demonstration of protest on 22 July is the first target in the campaign, and there is little time.

Important

Immigrant organisations must be contacted—addresses can be obtained from the local Community Relations Office—leaflets issued in English and immigrant languages, public meetings and meetings in factories and workplaces organised, banners made and buses ordered.

The campaign against the Lords' decision is as important as the campaign against the Industrial Relations Act. The involvement of white trade unionists is vital, and we publish on page 2 an important appeal to them.

There must be trade union banners on the 22 July demonstration, so that the government cannot shuffle the whole issue into an 'immigrant' ghetto. This is NOT an 'immigrant' issue.

Each and every black immigrant is under threat. His fear can be conquered only if there is effective collective strength. The campaign against the Lords' decision is also the struggle to conquer that fear.

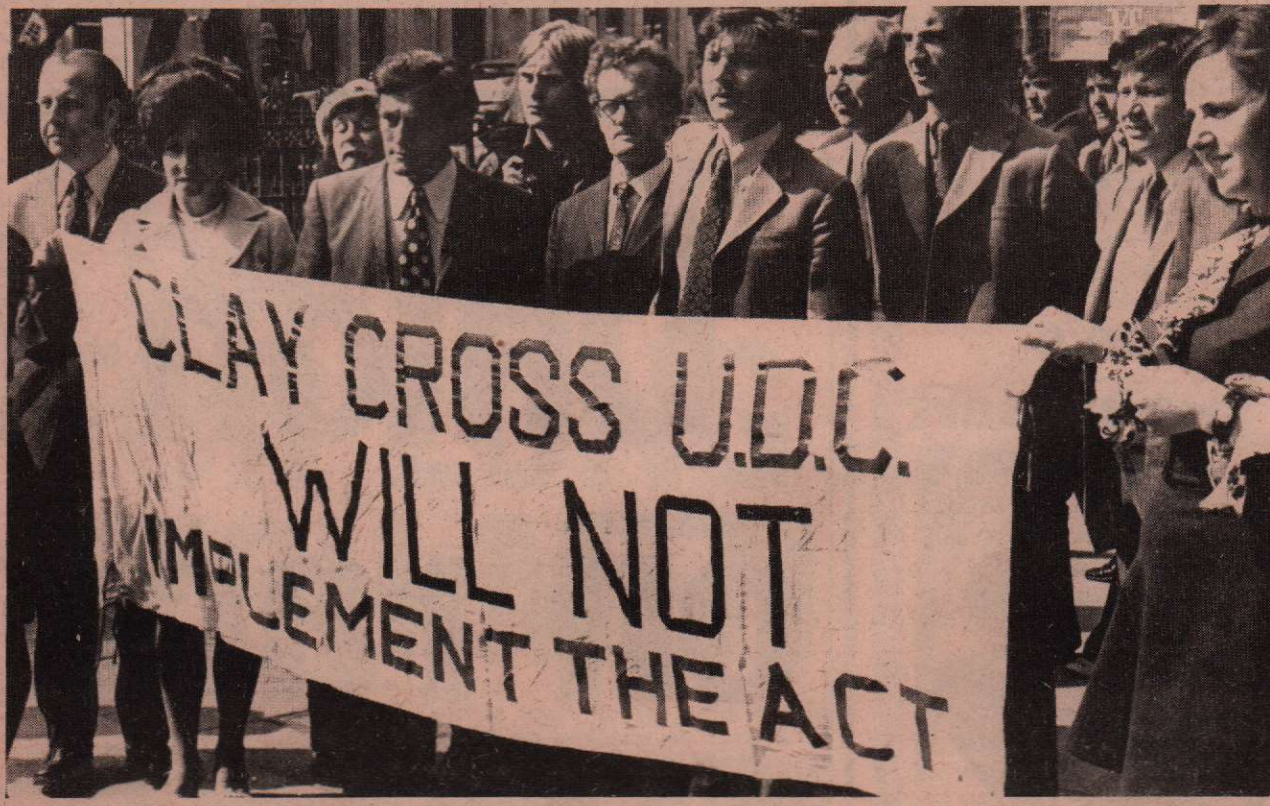
22 July is the first step towards the most important demand of the Southall IWA—for strike action in the autumn.

ALL IS BRANCHES TO SUPPORT

Fight the racist witch-hunt

Sunday 22 July
Assemble 2.30 Hyde Park Corner
March to 10 Downing Street
(Free coaches from Dominion Cinema, Southall)

Clay Cross fights rents fine



MORE THAN 200 trade unionists and socialists picketed the Law Courts on Monday and Tuesday in solidarity with Labour councillors from Clay Cross, Derbyshire, who have refused to implement the vicious Tory 'Fair Rent' Act.

The councillors were appealing against a £6985 fine imposed by the district auditor. The hearing ended on Tuesday and judgement was reserved.

Some of the councillors—including Graham Smith, Charlie Bunting, Roy Booker, David Nuttall, Graham Skinner, David Skinner and Arthur Wellon—joined the picket before going into court.

TGWU, foundryworkers and miners branches supported the picket, with tenants' associations, IS and Labour Party Young Socialists branches. Labour MP Denis Skinner gave his support but one notable absentee was Tom Swain, Labour MP for the Derbyshire constituency that includes Clay Cross.

Picture: Christopher Davies (Report).

GREAT WAGE ROBBERY

SW Reporter

SHOCK figures produced by the government prove the lie of Tory propaganda that living standards are rising in Britain.

Things are improving—but only for the rich minority.

The latest release from the Central Statistical Office—a section of Mr Heath's own Cabinet office—deals with personal income, expenditure and savings in the first quarter of this year.

Total personal income had risen by 3 per cent since the last quarter of last year. But tax payments, up by 9 per cent, and national insurance payments, up by 7½ per cent, have reduced the so-called '3 per cent' increase to less than 1½ per cent.

IGNORES

Taking into account the increase in prices during the same period—more than 2 per cent—the CSO release concludes: 'Real personal disposable income scarcely changed at all between the fourth and first quarter.'

That means income for everyone, rich and poor alike. It ignores another fact, buried away at the foot of the document: 'Nearly one half of the increase in total personal income before tax reflected a

recovery in payments of ordinary dividends...'

In other words, half the increase went into the pockets of shareholders, who make up less than 3 per cent of the population. Another substantial slice of the increase went in rents and interest.

For people who rely on wages or salaries for their livelihood, the standard of living actually fell—by nearly 4 per cent.

And all the signs and statistics indicate that this drop in the living standards of working-class people has continued in April, June and July. The £1 plus 4 per cent rises have not kept pace with the headlong rise in prices, especially of food and housing.

On top of all this comes the wholesale price figures for June—up 1 per cent on the previous month and rising at a rate of 12 per cent a year.

Home Secretary Robert Carr declared last month: 'It is hard to think of a family in Britain that is not better off as a result of government policies.'

In fact, it is hard to find a working-class family in Britain that is better off this year than last. Millions of families, especially those on fixed incomes, have sunk beneath the poverty line as a direct result of government policies.

But every week there is news of the enrichment of already rich men on a scale which is beyond the imagination of most working people.

Two weeks ago a speculator sold a house in the City of London for £9 million. Nine months earlier, he had bought it for £4 million.

Last week, Mr Edward Du Cann, chair



CARR: figures destroy his boast

man of the 1922 Conservative back-bench committee and chairman of Keyser Ullman Bank, personally made more than £150,000 by the sale of his bank's subsidiary, Central and District Properties, at a profit of £14 million.

PARALYSED

At the same time the system that produces these inequalities is paralysed by a poker game between international bankers and speculators gambling in currency.

The pound has been devalued by a further 4 per cent. At a stroke, this devaluation wipes out the alleged 'advantages' to the British economy of nine months' wage restraint.

This is why the delegates to the Transport Workers Union conference were wrong to allow their general secretary, Jack Jones, to talk with Heath about further trade union sacrifices under

Phase Three.

It is why workers everywhere must organise in their factories and their union branches for a battle to smash the Tory incomes swindle.

Militant action is the only way to stop the savage assault on workers' living standards.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Chairman: Durham Police Authority.

Chairman: Finance Committee, Labour Party, and member of the Party's National Executive Committee.

Member: Newcastle Airports Authority.

Secretary: Northern Region General and Municipal Workers Union.

The union post is advertised at £4000 a year and the airports authority post at £1500 a year. The other jobs are unpaid, but successful applicants will be surprised how much can be made with a little enterprise and initiative.

Qualifications: At least 10 years as a trade union official and a knowledge of public relations.

Applications to: T Dan Smith, Jobs for the Boys Ltd, Newcastle on Tyne 1.



AMERICAN SCENE

by Steve Jefferys

PHASE THREE AND A HALF, as it's known here, is now a month old and already the signs are that it's much less effective than Nixon's Phase One. The law of diminishing returns from trying to control a chaotic capitalist economy is beginning to operate. And as usual it is the capitalist class that ignores its own regulations when they apply to itself while at the same time preaching obedience to the working class and tame trade union leaders.

Phase three and a half was supposed to stop inflation by freezing all prices and by keeping wages and dividends within strict limits of seven and four per cent rises respectively. Yet there is evidence that only the biggest shop chains are keeping to the maximum price levels of the first week of June. The small ones are simply ignoring the law. And in some cases, where fresh food prices were artificially high early in June because of shortages in supply, now that supplies are much more plentiful the prices have simply remained at the luxury level. The normal seasonal fall in prices has not taken place.

Nixon, however, has not been standing idly by. Not for him the long relaxing hours in front of the television watching the Watergate hearings, that is left to General Haig, his new domestic affairs adviser as successor to H R Haldeman, who provides Nixon with a daily resume.

Arthur D Burns, the Nixon-appointed head of the special committee on interest and dividends who is also chairman of the powerful federal reserve board, last week announced a new deal for shareholders. 'This should be of particular help to elderly individuals and widows dependent on dividend income,' he said, as he relaxed the strict four per cent limit on dividends.

Companies would be allowed to pay out dividends this year based either on the average ratio of dividends to after-tax profits in the 1968-72 period or on the four per cent of after-tax profits ratio, whichever was the highest.

This handout will also help restore some confidence to the shaky New York Stock Exchange which has been going through hard times recently with international doubts about the dollar and Watergate.

The farming sections of the American ruling class has not been silent either. They are very unhappy about the attempt to freeze food prices at wholesale and retail levels. Prophecies of food shortages and rationing have been trumpeted about, and so Senator George McGovern, the defeated Democratic presidential candidate from the farming state of South Dakota, stepped to the farmers' defence.

He moved a resolution through the Senate that was carried by 61 votes to one to allow food prices to rise if the price freeze began to result in food shortages. 'The result of the price freeze,' McGovern said, 'is that the farmer cannot get from the middleman or the store a sufficient price to cover his costs. If things remain as they are consumers will soon find it as hard to buy certain agricultural products such as eggs, chickens or milk as it is now to get gas (petrol) on a Sunday afternoon.'

Basically the 'gas shortage' and 'power crisis' that is a big concern of the American news industry is the response of big business to the anti-pollution drive of the last year or two. If people can be frightened by the fear of not having enough petrol to drive about their cities, then they will be ready to vote to desecrate Alaska with massive oil pipes.

Nixon's sweetheart



TALKING of corruption, you can't get far away from Watergate and Nixon's close friend Bebe Rebozo, the famous speculator and financier. One of the documents that John Wesley Dean borrowed from the White House when he knew he was on the way out shows how dependable Richard Nixon really is.

A New York daily paper owned by the Los Angeles Times carried a series of articles on Rebozo in October 1971, so Dean was instructed to make sure that the reporter involved 'should have some problems with his tax returns.'

A month later John J Caulfield, a White House intelligence agent, wrote a memo to Dean saying that he spoke with Lyn on this matter—a reference to Lyn Nofziger, a close friend of Nixon and Californian president of the campaign to re-elect the president. Nofziger advised caution, and there that matter.

But Caulfield didn't only involve himself in making things difficult for enemies of President Nixon. He also sent a memo dated 30 September 1971 referring to investigations into the income tax returns of two of Nixon's friends, Billy Graham and John Wayne.

This memo was rerouted to White House Chief of Staff Haldeman's department. On it, next to the handwritten initial 'H' on the slip is the note 'Next question: Can we do anything to help?' Then, in different handwriting, 'No, it's already covered.'

NIXON'S SWEETHEART 2

WITH Watergate and the fantastic inflation here you wouldn't expect union leaders to be accepting lower living standards for their members.

Far from it. Probably the most important national contract that expires this year is the one involving the big truck drivers and general workers union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Its President is Frank Fitzsimmons, the union leader who's been sweethearting it with Nixon. He was the only union leader invited by Nixon to meet Russian leader, Brezhnev, at a banquet.

The teamsters have just announced agreement with the employers on a new 33-month contract with the trucking employers organisation covering 12,000 firms and 400,000 lorry drivers.

The Seattle Semi, a monthly rank-and-file paper for members of the Teamsters' union, has produced a leaflet calling on teamsters to 'Vote No' in the postal ballot which starts shortly. 'This contract is a sell-out,' it says. 'We wanted: sick pay, no forced overtime, decent grievance procedure, the right to strike, pension reform, \$500 a month at 50 years of age.'

What was achieved by the teamsters' negotiators was '95 cents an hour rise over three years (this is less than seven per cent

less than this year's inflation rate.) Two cents a mile for line drivers (this is an insult), 11 cents cost of living rise (for two years of the contract) and one holiday two years from now.'

Most drivers earn an average of \$6 an hour, and the teamsters had originally claimed \$1.50 so the settlement was exactly what Nixon wanted. The secretary of labour, Breenan, immediately issued a statement hailing the agreement as 'good news'.

The agreement will only last 33 months and not the usual full three years because Fitzsimmons will be up for re-election at the teamsters' conference due to begin on 4 July 1976, and he wants to go to that conference with a favourable new agreement.

His probable opponent in 1976 will be James Hoffa, who's barred from holding union office again until 1980, but who hopes to get a full pardon (his prison sentence for embezzling union funds was commuted by Nixon in 1971) so he can stand.

So the employers' agreement to shortening the length of the agreement by a possibly vital three months indicates their opinion of Fitzsimmons is the same as Nixon's: Fitzsimmons is 'good news'.

Money row: workers

DURING previous currency storms the line put out by the Fleet Street leader columnists and the Tory politicians has been that it was all a storm in the tea cup, nothing the working man need worry about.

The fourth major financial crisis this year which hit the currency markets last week made it difficult for both the press and the politicians to maintain this attitude.

When the pound loses 2 per cent of its exchange rate in one day, when holiday makers abroad suddenly find they have not enough foreign currency to get home with and when prices take off into the stratosphere, not all the measured tones of the BBC can disguise the seriousness of the

situation.

When all the technicalities about floating rates, devaluations, revaluations and the rest have been stripped away what do the events of last week amount to?

First they show that world inflation is rapidly getting out of control of even the most powerful capitalist states.

Secondly they show that the 'peaceful co-existence' which has marked the commercial and trading relations of the capitalist world in recent decades is slowly but surely giving way to increasingly bitter conflict.

Thirdly they show the kind of anarchy which an outmoded social

and economic system can cause in the modern world.

Who benefits and who gains from the chaos? It is easy to see who benefits. The giant companies, the banks and the very rich private currency speculators have all made enormous killings from gambling on the gyrations of the currencies.

The big US corporations have been the heaviest speculators against the US dollar and have been able to report massive profits as a result.

It is equally easy to see who the losers are. The reckless currency gamble is directly feeding the apparently unstoppable tidal wave of price increases sweeping the capitalist world.

The latest figures for industrial

Union call on race Act

IN RECENT WEEKS the Tory attack on the conditions of working people has reached an entirely new pitch through a relatively small change in the law. After the Industrial Relations Act, the Housing Finance Act, direct police assaults on pickets, and so on, we now have the House of Lords' decision on immigration.

This ruling could be as powerful a blow against working-class unity as any we have seen so far.

What does it mean? Under the 1971 Immigration Act, all security is removed from the lives of new immigrants to Britain. Any black worker entering the country after the Act became law (last January) has no rights at all. He can be deported without right of appeal. He needs police permission even to change his job or his home. For every industrial militant, this is a very powerful weapon in the hands of the employers.

Now the House of Lords decision has made the Act retrospective. Anyone who entered the country 'illegally' before the Act can now be deported without right of appeal (before this, six months' residence here gave an immigrant some security).

This gives the police the legal right and incentive to harass, blackmail or imprison anyone they dislike. It gives the bosses the power to threaten shop stewards and trade unionists with real police persecution—the threat not just of the sack, but of exile. Every black militant will have this thought in the back of his mind every time he questions a management decision unless he is sure of the support of the labour movement.

Division of the workers' movement means defeat. This legal ruling is designed to weaken the unity of workers in struggle. If the state succeeds against black workers, white workers will be the next in the firing line.

We appeal to all shop stewards committees, trade union branches and trades councils to make the defence of their black members and their families a most urgent priority. Even at this moment some of their members are already under attack. Unless we protect them with all the means at our disposal, they will be used as scapegoats for the failures of the ruling class. Enoch Powell and the right wing are only too anxious for workers not

to recognise this attack for what it is.

Please try and ensure that resolutions are passed in branch, district, and trade union conferences expressing your complete opposition to the Lords' ruling, and that the power of your union is mobilised in full support of all the measures to reverse this attack.

Will Fancy, NALGO National Executive Council

Alan Watts, Enfield District Committee, AUEW

Ian Morris, Southall District Committee, AUEW

Terry Rodgers, Chairman, No.5, Divisional Council, AUEW/TASS

John Fontaine, UCATT Convenor, McInerney

Arthur Affleck, Chairman BSC Lackenby Joint Shop

Stewards Committee

Mike Smith, Secretary, Darlington Trades Council

Ray Thomson, ETU Convenor, BSC, Consett

Greg Douglas, Chairman, Joint Shop Stewards

Committee, Anchor site, Scunthorpe

Fred Hodgson, Delegate, NUM, Prince of Wales Branch, Pontefract

Gordon Wray, Chairman, Leeds City Branch, EEPTU

Brian Parkin, Chairman, Leeds West Branch, AUEW/TASS

Woodheads Ossett Shop Stewards Committee

George Roberts, NUPE Branch Secretary, St James' Hospital, Leeds

George Guthridge, Secretary, Huddersfield Trades Council

Mac Reid, NUPE Area Organiser, Yorkshire District

Sid Lampitt, TGWU Convenor, Sasnir Bearings, Wolverhampton

John Clifford, Branch Secretary, UCATT, BE 305 Branch

Tom Griffiths, NUPE Executive Council

Albert Luck, SOGAT Executive Council

Tom Henderson, District President, No.4 District, Sheet Metal Workers.

● Socialist Worker will publish further signatures to this letter and asks all trade union readers to win support for this important statement.

PD HUNGER STRIKE

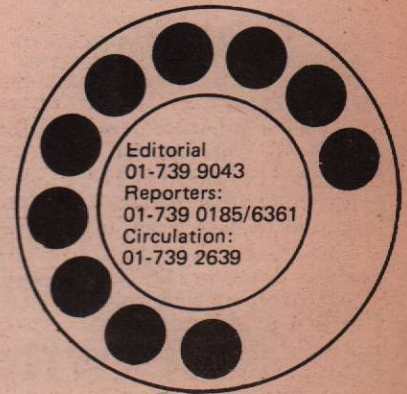
MICHAEL FARRELL and Tony Canavan, two leading members of People's Democracy in Belfast, are on hunger strike in D wing of Crumlin Road jail over their campaign to be treated as political prisoners.

Farrell and Canavan were jailed for eight and six months respectively after a court rejected their appeal against sentences arising out of an anti-internment demonstration in February.

In a letter smuggled out of jail both men say: 'Our case is simple and clear. We were prosecuted for our part in a political demonstration against internment, repression and sectarian murders. We both

received mandatory six-month sentences which are reserved for political offences. Our trial was blatantly political and we were convicted and sentenced by a political judge—W W B Topping, a leading Orangeman, a Unionist MP for 15 years, chief whip of the Unionist Party for six years and minister of home affairs for three years.'

Both men say they were intimidated and have been locked up in a basement cell for 23 hours a day. The PD's central committee has expressed support for Farrell and Canavan, along with three Official prisoners also on hunger strike for political status.



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Don't keep the good news to yourself: urge your friends to buy SW

pick up the bill...

prices in Britain show them rising at 24 per cent a year and it is now certain that Socialist Worker was right last winter when we predicted that the cost of living would be rising at an unbelievable 12 per cent a year by this autumn.

The upsurge in prices is, as even the government's own figures now confirm, eating into real living standards.

It is not the corporations, or the speculators who are now having to cut back on the family budget to make ends meet, but the mass of working people.

The crisis conditions in the currency markets are likely to continue if only because the rest of the capitalist world has lost confidence both in the

overwhelming might of the American economy and now also in the credibility of its scandal-ridden President and his government. It is still very true that the capitalist world economy is only as healthy as the American economy.

As inflation and foreign debts hit the dollar, the European ruling classes are increasingly anxious to cut their losses and cut adrift from the dollar.

But this would involve a major diplomatic and trading split within the 'western camp' which would also increase the danger of an eventual all-out trade war between the Common Market bloc, the Americans, and the Japanese.

In this situation each ruling class,

in Britain as elsewhere, is going to be tempted to protect its own export industries. That, however, is a certain remedy for mass unemployment—another price tab which will have to be picked up by the working class.

It is against this ominous economic background that many trade union leaders are still prattling on about a deal with the Tories on prices and incomes.

The lesson of the currency chaos is that every union should follow the lead of the AUEW conference and tell its leaders to turn their back on Downing Street and start to fight in defence of their members' hard pressed wages and living standards.

John Palmer

ARMY BEATING FOR LONG KESH MEN

SEVENTEEN prisoners at Long Kesh internment camp near Belfast—now called The Maze prison—needed hospital treatment after clashes with soldiers last week.

A statement issued by the camp council, representing republican prisoners, denies the 'official' story put out by the army and the government and faithfully reproduced by the press.

According to the government version, prisoners in compound 16 attacked British soldiers without provocation to prevent a routine search of their huts.

The camp council has a far more likely version of the facts. The council claims that one prisoner was ordered to strip completely to undergo a 'body search'. He refused to do so as the regulations about such searches state that a prisoner must always wear one item of clothing.

DEFEND

When the authorities were told they were breaking their own regulations, the search was stopped and negotiations started.

But while the talks were in progress the British Army, which is stationed outside the camp, came in in force and in full riot gear. The commanding officer said the prisoners 'were going to be forcibly put out and searched.'

The republicans' commanding

by Mike Miller

officer ordered his men to defend themselves and prisoners in compounds 17 and 18 came to their assistance.

In the battle that followed, troops fired CS gas in large quantities and attacked prisoners with batons and rubber bullets. They also used Alsatian dogs.

The camp council pointed out in its statement: 'Obviously we don't seek confrontation with armed men in situations where the odds are stacked against us. If attacked, however, we must and will defend ourselves.'

When the riot was over, the army propaganda unit issued photographs of the 'fierce' weapons used against the troops. But it should be obvious that bits of stick are no match for the long-range weaponry of the army and troops with steel helmets and

shields.

The attack by the army on the republican prisoners at Long Kesh is not a new feature of repression in Northern Ireland. Prisoners are constantly harassed, with humiliating searches by hostile warders.

CENSOR

Visitors also have to undergo thorough body searches. Much of the educational material sent in to the prisoners never reaches them. Politically-motivated officials seize whatever they find offensive to their own beliefs. Letters are censored as well.

The degrading conditions are designed to break the spirits of the hundreds of men still interned in Long Kesh. So far the British have managed to drive one man to suicide.

In the meantime Whitelaw continues to peddle his sickening rubbish about building a new society with peace and justice for all.

Police quiz Loyalists over murder wave on Catholics

IN SPITE OF STRONG police denials, reports persist in Belfast that four ex-Ulster Defence Association men are being held in connection with a total of 31 sectarian murders.

The extreme Loyalist UDA has always rejected charges that it has played any role in the wave of assassinations that has swept the Six Counties for the last year, and at one point even threatened to root out the killers themselves. After that threat was withdrawn, the number of killings soared to frightening heights, and has continued to mount ever since.

Extortion

Information provided by one of the four men in custody is said to have implicated a number of other UDA members in the murder campaign which has been directed at Catholics for no reason other than their religion. He is said to have given information on nine separate killings, and to have provided the names and addresses of UDA men who were involved.

Although this man has not been named, it is known that he was a member of the British Army who went absent without leave several months ago and joined the UDA. After being court martialled and dismissed from the army, he walked into an English police station on the advice of a minister and offered information on

UDA murders and extortion rackets operating in areas under their control.

He was handed over to police in Northern Ireland and has been 'singling like a thrush'. At one point he attempted to commit suicide, and he has now become 'deeply religious.'

It is believed that it was information from this man that led to the arrests of 28 Loyalists in one week last month. After those arrests took place there was a great deal of tension within the ranks of the UDA, with the younger men complaining that the organisation was not doing enough to protect its members.

The attempts by the dissidents to make the UDA more militarily active led to several days of gun fighting between them and the British Army, in which Robert Morton, a company commander in the UDA, was shot and seriously wounded.

It was only after this trouble within the UDA that the Ulster Freedom Fighters emerged as the most blatantly sectarian murder gang yet. One theory is that the UFF is in fact a part of the UDA, operating under a separate name in case the British decide to outlaw them.

In this eventuality, it would be the UFF and not the UDA that would be banned. If this is so, it has enabled the UDA to pursue both political and military paths at the same time, by participating in the

elections on the one hand, and killing the 'enemies of the state' on the other, without being blamed for the latter.

Another man who has been held is John Haveron, who was questioned on 22 murders, and his relationship with the UFF. Haveron was 'deposed' recently as commander of the Shankill UDA after he was criticised by younger militants for his inactivity. If the UFF theory is correct, his removal would have been done simply to provide him with cover for terrorist activities. Water-tight alibis are said to be preventing the police from taking action against Haveron, and he has been detained at Long Kesh on an interim custody order.

Occupation

A number of UDA members have already appeared in court on murder charges, the latest is a top-ranking UDA officer from the Shankill who was picked up on Monday in connection with the murder of a number of Catholics.

In spite of the openly admitted increase in Loyalist violence, the army continues with its policy of total occupation of the Catholic ghettos, and this occupation is clearly not designed to offer protection to the residents.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

THERE has been a quite substantial change in the press image of Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones in recent months. Not so long ago it was usual for the Tory press to treat them as the 'terrible twins', responsible for much of the unrest in industry.

But now they have achieved a certain respectability. The worst enemies of the trade union movement have been giving unreserved backing to Jones' and Scanlon's pleas that the TUC talks with the government continue.

By contrast, many trade union activists who used to back 'Jack and Hughie' all the way find themselves on the opposite side to their old heroes. People who used to argue vehemently that all we had to do was elect left-wing leaders and then put our trust in them, now find that they are in disagreement with those very leaders.

The issue is all the more important because of the background against which it is taking place. Prices are rising relentlessly, despite eight months of wage freeze. Real living standards of many sections of workers are falling and the international money crisis makes it less and less likely that the government will offer Phase Three increases in the autumn that will begin to compensate for the decline.

The strikes by health workers, gasmen, teachers and civil servants earlier this year showed that even then large sections of workers were prepared to fight back against the government, given an adequate lead. The message has been reinforced since by the success of the May Day stoppage and demonstrations and by the militant tone of many union conferences.

Yet at this point, instead of organising for united action in the autumn behind whichever is the first group of workers to clash with the government's freeze, the 'left wing' leaders of powerful unions want to discuss with Heath a policy to preserve 'industrial peace'.

A number of explanations of this behaviour are current on the left. One, to be found in the pages of the Communist Party's Morning Star, for instance, argues that Jones and Scanlon are basically on the right side, but are just making a mistake of judgement. If only militants maintain friendly relations with them and exert a little pressure, then they will swing over to the correct position again.

Marshal the troops

There is very little concrete evidence to back such a claim. Jones and Scanlon no doubt are only too willing to make friendly gestures to those who do a public relations job for them. But that is not at all the same thing as marshalling the troops of the trade union movement for the battles which are approaching. In this respect Scanlon is likely to do just what he did during the postal workers' strike in 1971 and the strikes of his own members in Manchester last year: to make fine speeches but give little real help. Jones can be expected to emulate his own accomplishments in the dock strike last summer, by searching for some friendly Tory with whom he can arrange a quick sell-out.

Pressure from militants may be able to prevent some of the most blatant forms of capitulation. But it is not going to transform such men into the sort of militant, determined leadership which the movement is going to need in the months and years ahead.

There is only one way to ensure that such leadership begins to develop. And it is not through merely electing new officials and then leaving everything up to them.

A rank and file movement has to be built that brings together the best militants in different industries and allows them to hammer out the necessary policies. Such a movement would not break from the existing unions in any way. Nor would it abandon the official positions to the right wing.

But it would link the demand for better policies in the unions to campaign for democratisation in each and every union, whether 'left-wing' controlled or right-wing controlled. It would recognise that anyone elected to an official position in a union, however militant they have been in the past, is subject to immense pressures. The only way to counter these pressures is through the existence of an independent organisation of rank and file militants.

The demand to develop such a movement is often denounced as 'splitting'. But the charge should only make sense to those who identify the unity of the trade union movement with the class collaborationist policies that Jones and Scanlon have been trying to press.



ARMY TAKEOVER SPARKS OFF GENERAL STRIKE

THE Uruguayan army, which has virtually ruled the country for the past few months, took complete control in a coup d'etat a fortnight ago.

Two successive governments had been unable to defeat the urban guerrilla movement, the Tupamaros, and were unwilling to do anything to deal with Uruguay's worsening economic situation.

The army was given a free hand in its anti-guerrilla campaign and gradually extended its control over wide areas of the country's life.

The army has shown great caution and has concealed the extent of its rule. Uruguay, like Chile, has a fairly long tradition of parliamentary rule, and many officers feared they would arouse too much opposition if they were seen to act unconstitutionally. Even this latest coup, which closed parliament and local government councils and put Uruguay under the rule of the military-dominated

by Socialist Worker reporter

Council of National Security, was, on the face of it, carried out by the president.

'National security' was used as a smokescreen. A politician belonging to the reformist Broad Front was accused of being the civilian leader of the Tupamaros, and parliament of offering him protection.

DECLINE

The coup shows the inability of the political parties to give a real lead. For most of the present century, Uruguay has enjoyed high earnings from its beef and grain economy, and the urban population had something approaching a welfare state. But after 1945, the country went into slow decline, as meat and grain prices did not keep pace with the growth of the main towns.

By the mid-1960s many

Uruguayans were impatient with the two main parties, neither of which was seriously prepared to tackle the problems of inflation, unemployment and urban poverty. So the traditional left and the trade unions gained in strength, and the Tupamaros found widespread support once they started their guerrilla actions in the late 1960s.

The army was successful against the Tupamaros, at least in part, because the guerrillas were unable to create a mass movement of workers around them even though they had many sympathisers. Most army officers are not tied to the financial and political interests that control the main political parties, so can consider major reforms to avert revolution. This undercut the Tupamaros' support.

The victory of a right-winger after

fraudulent elections in 1971 made it easier for the army to extend its campaign against the Tupamaros, which became increasingly effective. But the government's unwillingness to undertake any reforms threatened to undermine the army's campaign in the long run, and Congressional opposition to the army's growing power annoyed the more ambitious officers.

Having seen through the weakness of all political machines in Uruguay, the army reduced the president to puppet status last February, and has now forced the dissolution of parliament.

NORMS

This blatant breach of the constitution, which the army was supposed to be upholding against the Tupamaros, has provoked considerable opposition. The Communist Party-controlled CNT union called a general strike from 27 June, which was still continuing at the time of writing, despite army attempts to buy off workers with a price freeze and a 25 per cent wage increase.

More interesting, from the point of view of socialists, are those workers who have started industrial action beyond the norms set by the CNT. Among these were workers in the state refinery, who struck against government instructions and stopped the supply of paraffin. It is now winter in Uruguay.

In an effort to restore the supply of fuel, the government has conscripted the refinery workers into the army and put them under military discipline. But it is not yet sure of victory against these or other workers.

Which way the army will go politically is still an open question. Of the two main wings of the army, one favours a 'nationalist' military dictatorship, as in Peru, and the other a pro-American military dictatorship as in Brazil.

Faced with these alternatives, the only hope for Uruguayan workers is to extend the general strike to paralyse the new dictatorship and bring it down.

Fear of police backlash behind ban of left group

A REPRESENTATIVE of the French revolutionary socialist group Lutte Ouvriere (Workers Struggle) spoke at last Saturday's London protest rally against the banning by the French government of the Ligue Communiste. Here is the text of his speech.

I am here to speak on behalf of Lutte Ouvriere to bring the support of our group to our comrades of the Ligue Communiste.

This isn't in fact the first time that the revolutionary movement has been under attack in France. After the May '68 events the government banned 12 revolutionary groups, including ourselves and the Ligue Communiste.

Since that time a lot of revolutionary militants have been harassed in various ways.

By being held for 24 hours in police stations while 'their identity was checked',

By being fined for selling a paper or distributing a leaflet in a public place,

By being arrested and condemned to several weeks or even months in jail for having allegedly 'resisted' the police.

The editor of the now defunct Maoist journal, La Cause du Peuple, was sentenced to several months in jail for what was written in his paper.

Alain Geismar, one of the most prominent figures in the May 1968 movement, was jailed for 18 months because of the protest he organised against this arrest.

Militant workers have been sacked from their factories because of their political ideas—often with the complicity of trade union officials.

Last year Pierre Overney, a Maoist worker who had been sacked from the Renault car factory, was shot dead by a company cop while he was leafletting

at the factory gate. Many other examples could be given of this repression.

This is the background which led up to the banning of the Ligue Communiste. But this time the government seems to have struck a heavier blow at the revolutionary left.

There are two reasons for this. The first is that the government had to satisfy the middle classes—the people who traditionally vote for the Gaullist majority. These people are disturbed about the agitation going on in the country, and many of them have started blaming the government for being passive in face of the 'agitators'.

Secondly there is some resentment among the police. These are the people who have to do the dirty work, they know that people are very hostile to them and they feel they're not backed up enough by the government.

Illusory

The ban on the Ligue Communiste was a response to these two problems.

In this regard it is highly probable that the government itself decided on the confrontation between the police and the leftist demonstration, for it looked very much like a deliberate provocation. Eighty police were injured which is many more than one could reasonably expect for such a confrontation. The provocation was denounced by the secretary of the police unions.

The alleged impartiality of the government in deciding to ban at the same time both the Ligue and the fascist group Ordre Nouveau is purely illusory.

Ordre Nouveau has been banned but it was the Ligue's headquarters which were smashed up by the police. It's the Ligue leader, Alain Krivine, who's in jail on a

charge of assaulting the police and who risks a five-year prison sentence.

Ordre Nouveau has been banned, but it's revolutionary militants who are being searched and raided. This is no surprise. Fascist groups have always enjoyed the help and sympathy of many members of the state apparatus, in the police and the government.

We can't so far tell whether the banning of the Ligue is the first step towards an intensified attack on the revolutionary left. But we view it as an attack on the whole revolutionary movement and thus on the whole of the working-class movement.

The Anti-wrecker law was passed after May 1968 to repress the leftist groups. But the government first tried out its use against trade union militants.

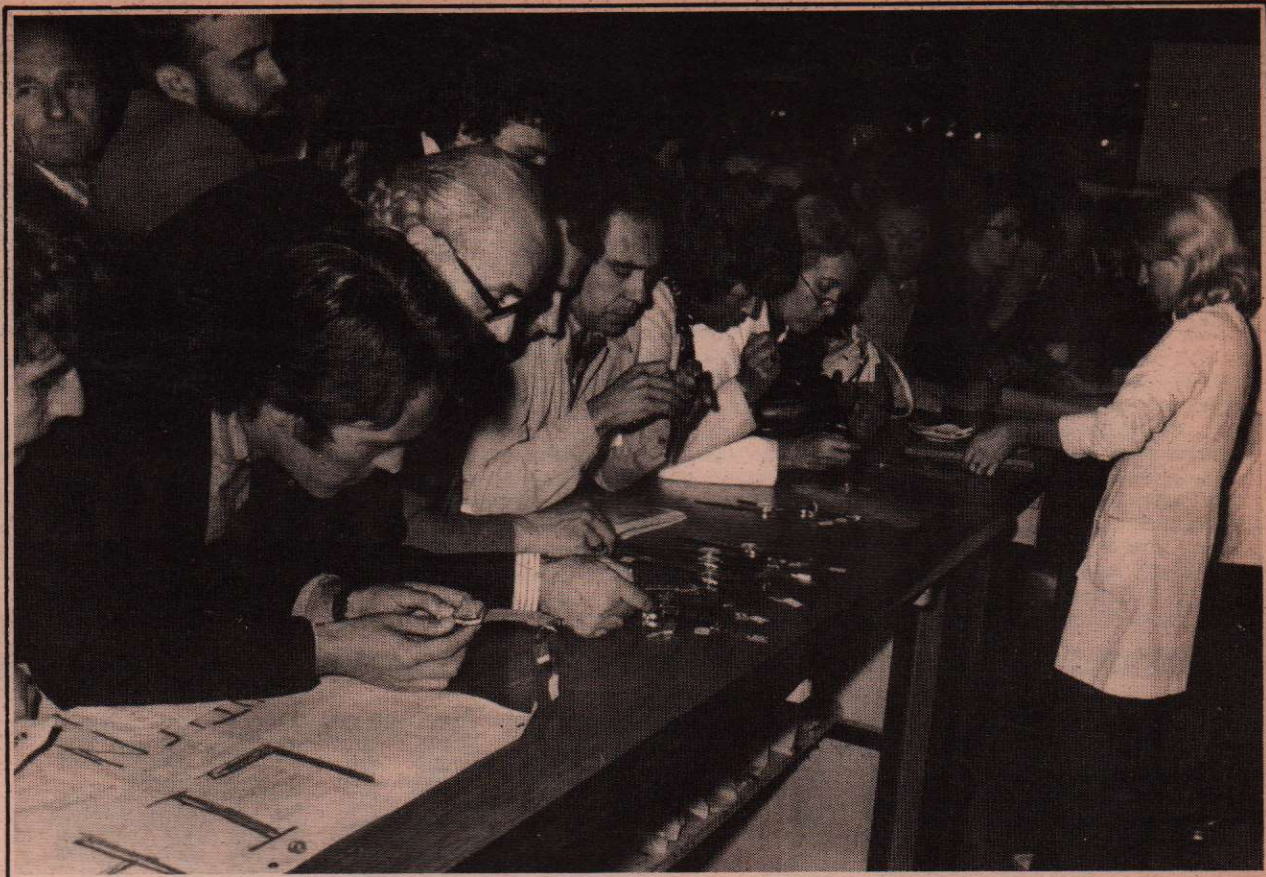
In this regard it is quite a positive step that for the first time in France, all the traditional left parties and the trade unions have protested against a government attack on a revolutionary group.

They held a protest meeting last week in Paris. Unfortunately, no member of any revolutionary group was allowed to speak—not even a representative of the Ligue!

This really shows the double-dealing of these traditional left organisations. This is especially true of the Communist Party which on the one hand was obliged to protest but on the other was really quite pleased to see one of its left rivals banned.

We as revolutionaries not only demand the lifting of the ban on the Ligue and the freeing of Krivine and Pierre Rousset, who is held on an arms charge, but we also have to carry on the fight against repression and put pressure on the traditional left parties and on the unions.

The campaign is only just beginning.



Workers occupied the LIP watch factory at Besancon, France, when the firm went bankrupt, threatening wholesale redundancies. The workers are selling watches at much-reduced prices to cover wages. The picture shows them doing a roaring trade to delegates to the Socialist Party congress at Grenoble.

French migrants fight pass laws

BRITAIN is not the only country where racists and the government are trying to whip up hostility against immigrant workers. In France three million immigrants are also under attack.

A few weeks ago an immigrant workers' demonstration in Grasse, South of France, centre of the perfume industry, was savagely broken up by police and local racists and encouraged by the mayor who expressed regret at police 'leniency'.

In Paris an anti-immigrant rally of the openly fascist 'Ordre Nouveau' (New Order) was protected against counter-demonstrators by thousands of armed riot police.

A few months ago the government issued its notorious 'Fontanet circular' which brought together work permits and residence permits for immigrants. This meant that any immigrant who lost his job became an illegal resident.

Victory

The government and the bosses hoped to intimidate immigrants into accepting the low-paid and non-unionised work which most of them are already forced into.

Immigrant workers have fought back aided by revolutionary socialists and by a minority of trade unionists. After hunger-strikes and demonstrations all over France, they have won a first small victory.

The government has now agreed that workers who lose their jobs will get a three month 'temporary permit' to find a new one. They have also forced the government to legalise the position of all illegal immigrants up to 1 June this year.

But immigrant workers are not satisfied. They know that if the full weight of the working-class movement were involved, especially the Communist-led CGT, France's main union, they could win the total abolition of the 'Fontanet' rules, the first step to real equality.

This victory, limited as it is, shows what can be done by a determined fight against a racist government. Workers in Britain can learn from it that the Tory pass laws too could be beaten.

Socialist Worker

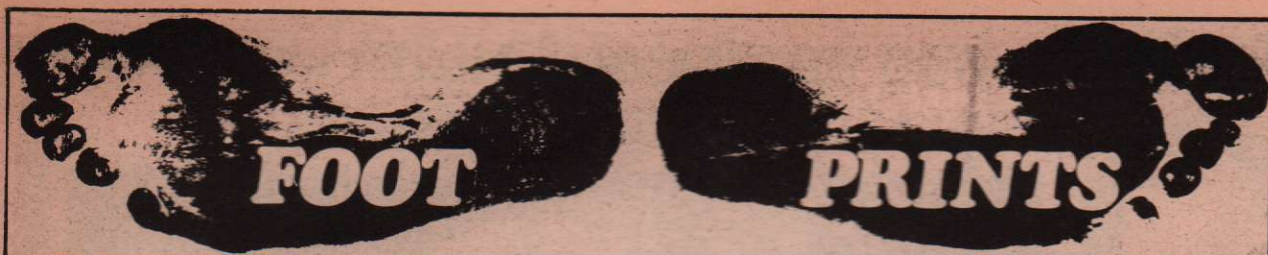
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FELIX THE RAT

FEW facts are expected to emerge in the newspapers about Felix J Samuely, the dynamic consulting engineer who designed the assembly hall at the Camden School of Girls and the geography room at Leicester University, both of whose roofs collapsed a couple of weeks ago when the temperature got a little hot.

By a miracle there was no one in either room at the time, and a disaster worse than Aberfan was thus averted.

Mercifully for all of us, Mr Samuely is dead, and the press have shown 'good taste' enough not to pass comment on his dynamic career.

But in the 1950s he was regarded as one of the most brilliant consulting engineers of all time.

During the early years of the post-war boom, he learnt the supreme art of getting work from public authorities, mainly for building schools, by cutting costs—and margins—to the limit. He discovered as another consulting engineer discovered later at Ronan Point, the block of flats subject to an earlier collapse, that if you balance one-ton concrete roof beams on one and a half inch of ledge, you can build cheaper than anyone else.

At first some of the old guard contractors complained at Samuely's methods.

When he designed the Whittingehame College, Brighton, for instance, his firm received a letter from the contractors, Major Rice, Rice and Son, saying that a truss had been delivered so light that it would 'whip round the men's legs,' and they, the contractors, took no responsibility for it. According to one of Samuely's designers, Mr A V Pilichowski, Samuely laughed at this and said: 'It will not only carry the load, but we have also designed it to carry ladders and ropes for the job.'

Samuely's strength was designing for concrete. His aim, according to a flattering 30-page obituary in the Architectural Association quarterly journal in 1959, was 'to standardise pre-cast concrete units to the economic limit of the method of fabrication.'

The author of the article was the first to admit that 'the design of the trusses for one of Samuely's first concrete jobs—Hatfield Technical College—illustrates clearly his desire for structural economy which at times bordered on the impractical.'

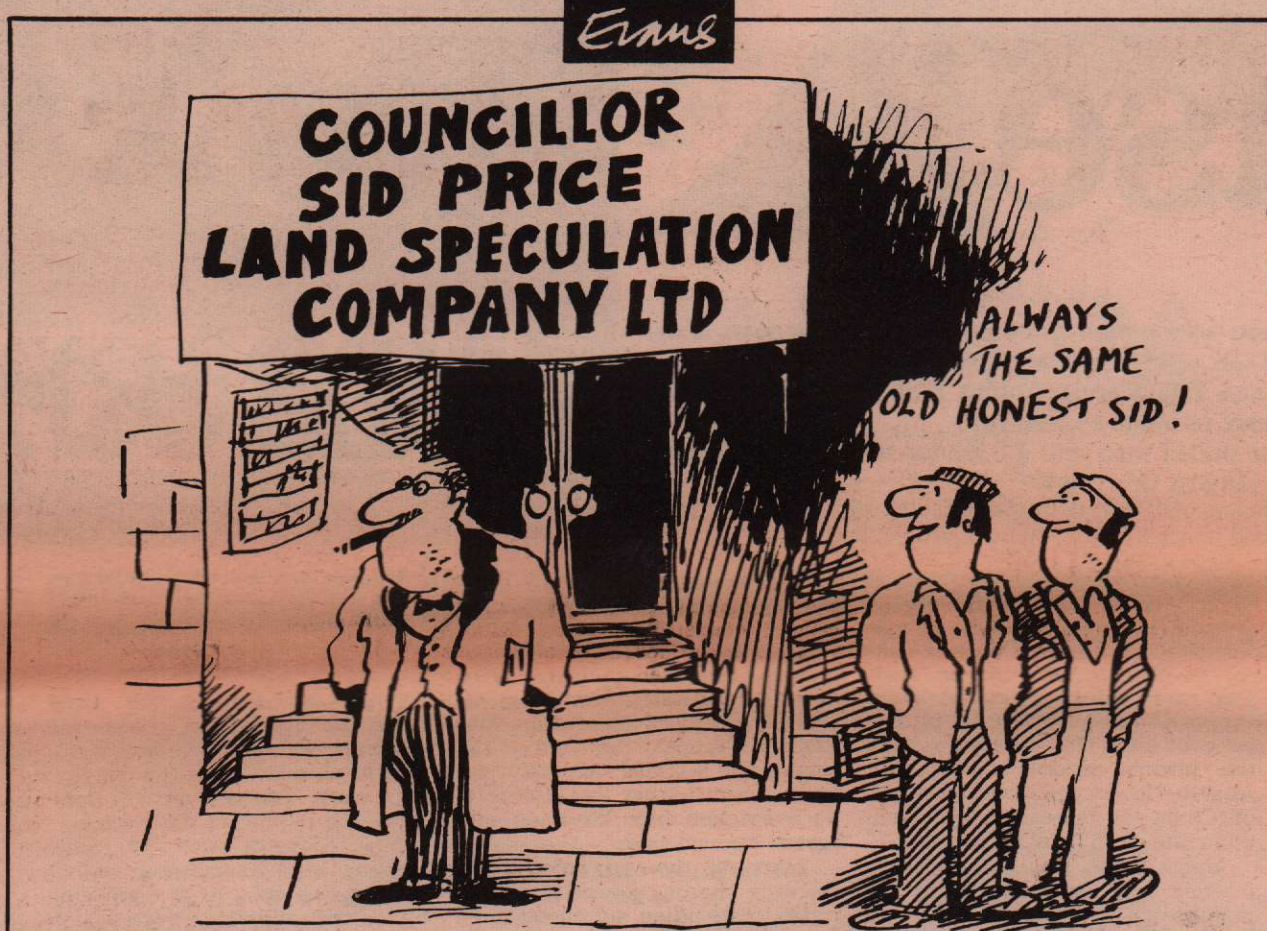
In other words, if you're a student at Hatfield Technical College, keep looking upwards.

Not content with cutting corners while building schools, Samuely tried his hand at factories and offices—anywhere in fact where large numbers of people and their children gather in large numbers in the belief that the buildings above their heads are safe.

He designed the London offices of the National Dock Labour Board,



FELIX SAMUELY: designer of collapsing buildings



Simpsons, the clothes shop in London's Piccadilly, the Gilbey offices in Camden Town, the Shell offices at Stanlow, the Rotunda at Folkestone, the huge E S and A Robinson factory at Malago, Bristol, the Technical College at Wigan, a block of offices in London Bridge Street, and even the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square, winner of the Most Hideous Building of the Century Award.

In the meantime, there's no need to worry. Mrs Margaret Thatcher has told the House of Commons that she has ordered a secret inquiry into the whole business, and she will publish her findings in about two months.

She is not in the least bit worried about schools falling down in the meantime. Both her sons go to public schools, which were designed by engineers in the last century, and are safe.

LABOUR MANIFESTO IN BLACK AND WHITE

THE state of the Labour Party in Liverpool can be best assessed from a leaflet which was put about in last month's district elections by Labour candidate Harold Lee and his election agent, M J Getty.

It was headed: TRUTH, WE CARE. LABOUR ACTION—NOT WORDS, and asked several questions about the Liberal candidate in the area. Such as 'Your Liberal candidate is opposed to HANGING for MURDER. Are you?'

And finally, in capitals: YOUR LIBERAL CANDIDATE SUPPORTS

The case of the sacked cashier

WHOEVER it was sent me a copy of the June/July issue of the Liverpool Free Press, thank you. It is an excellent paper, probably the best of the mushrooming local community papers which are trying to tell the truth about what goes on in Britain's cities.

The Liverpool Free Press is full of excellent stories, well-presented and well-written, exposing the dark side of Liverpool—its violent policemen, its lying industrialists and its corrupt press.

The lead story deals with the horrifying case of Kathy Fitzsimmons, of Runcorn, who was sacked as a cashier because she was going out with a black boyfriend.

The firm for which she worked, C W Coates' Army and Navy stores in Ranelagh Street, Liverpool, is controlled by a Mrs Coates. Ten weeks ago Mrs Coates called Kathy into her office and asked her if she still had a coloured boyfriend. Kathy replied: 'Yes'.

Mrs Coates then asked: 'What do your parents think?'

Kathy replied: 'It's nobody's

business. They can't say anything about it.'

She then said: 'Well, I can. Get out!' And she told Kathy to leave immediately.

Mrs Coates has refused to see Kathy's father to explain this dismissal.

The local Department of Employment has taken the matter up with Mrs Coates, who has agreed that the dismissal was unfair and blandly offered £50 compensation. Under pressure from the department, Kathy has accepted this, but the amount will be challenged at an industrial relations tribunal later this month.

The tribunal, when deciding on whether or not £50 is the 'going rate' for unfair dismissal, might like to have a look at the case of Mr Martin Trowbridge, who was dismissed as managing director of the Pegler-Hattersley plumbing and heating group last week after nine months loyal service.

He was paid £40,000, which works out at about £1000 for every week of 'service'.

Someone, somewhere wants a Lesser

MY FAVOURITE local newspaper this week is the Slough Observer, which followed up my story a few weeks back about the binge for friendly MPs, councillors, borough architects and engineers organised on 5 June by the Lesser group of building companies, of Hounslow, Middlesex. A boat trip to Greenwich was followed by a magnificent lunch for more than 100 guests.

The Slough Observer discovered that one of the lucky guests was Mr J A King, Slough's powerful borough engineer, who at the time of the celebration, was in negotiations with Lessers over a £1 million council house building contract at Langley.

Last February the housing committee had voted Mr King full powers to negotiate the contract with the firm of his choice.

On 28 June, three weeks after the glamorous river boat trip, Mr King told the Slough Housing Committee that Lessers should get the contract. The committee instantly agreed.

Mr King told the Slough Observer: 'My conscience is clear. I always watch my position very closely in these matters. I never accept private invitations from firms dealing with the council. The only ones I accept are group invitations to members of my profession.'

I DISCOVERED on a visit to Liverpool last week that the City Corporation there runs a special department to deal with complaints from councillors, MPs and other important people. Clerks in this department have been getting rather irritated of late at a large number of letters signed simply 'Mr Squiggle'. The letters usually make a recommendation for 'ignoring' normal council house priority lists in the case of such-and-such a particular person.

'Mr Squiggle' writes from Knowsley Hall, Prescott, Lancashire, which by coincidence is the home of Lord Derby, a Tory peer who is also, by coincidence, chairman of the North Western Development Council.

Shirley, Shirley, quite contrary

THE Labour Party is preparing for office. How do I know? Promises made last year in the radical fever of early opposition are being 're-negotiated'.

Consider the reactions of Mrs Shirley Williams, Home Affairs spokeswoman on the Labour front bench, to the demands for a public inquiry into the Hanratty case. James Hanratty was convicted and hanged in 1962 for a murder he did not commit, and his parents and others have campaigned ever since for the verdict to be reversed.

On 18 April last year Mrs Williams appeared on the popular radio programme What's Your Line, on which Robin Day invites listeners to ask questions by telephone and a Very Important Person answers them.

James Hanratty, the hanged man's father, asked Mrs Williams what she was going to do about

his son's case. She replied: 'I myself believe that the evidence which has been brought forward both in the book and in the television programmes and elsewhere is so disturbing that a case for a public inquiry is now made out.'

On 14 February this year she repeated her statement in a letter to Mr Jean Justice, who was standing in the Lincoln by-election to publicise the Hanratty case.

These statements held out great hope for Mr and Mrs Hanratty, who took them to mean that in the not unlikely event of Mrs Williams being Home Secretary in the next two years or so, she would be favourably disposed to a public inquiry. Last month, they wrote to Mrs Williams asking if this was indeed the position.

In her reply written on 15 June, Mrs Williams

revealed that she had 'discussed the matter with Mr Roy Jenkins.' Mr Jenkins turned down a demand for an inquiry into the case when he was Home Secretary in 1967.

'The upshot of all this,' wrote Mrs Williams, 'is that so much time has now passed that recollections are blurred and evidence is unclear so that these Ministers and ex-Ministers doubt whether an inquiry could ever now establish the truth. I doubt if Mr Carr will consider an inquiry...'

Mrs Williams forgot to say whether in her view the case for an inquiry was still made out. Probably not, assume the Hanrattys. After all 'recollections are blurred' and 'evidence is unclear'—and a Labour Minister close to office is a very different person than the same Labour Minister recently ejected from it.

A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST MANIFESTO by KURON and Modzelewski. The famous open letter to the Polish Worker's Party, written in 1964. A vitriolic analysis of the Eastern European regimes and a call for social revolution. 29p postage included, from PLUTO PRESS Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road London NW1.

Tough strategy needed to win engineers' claim

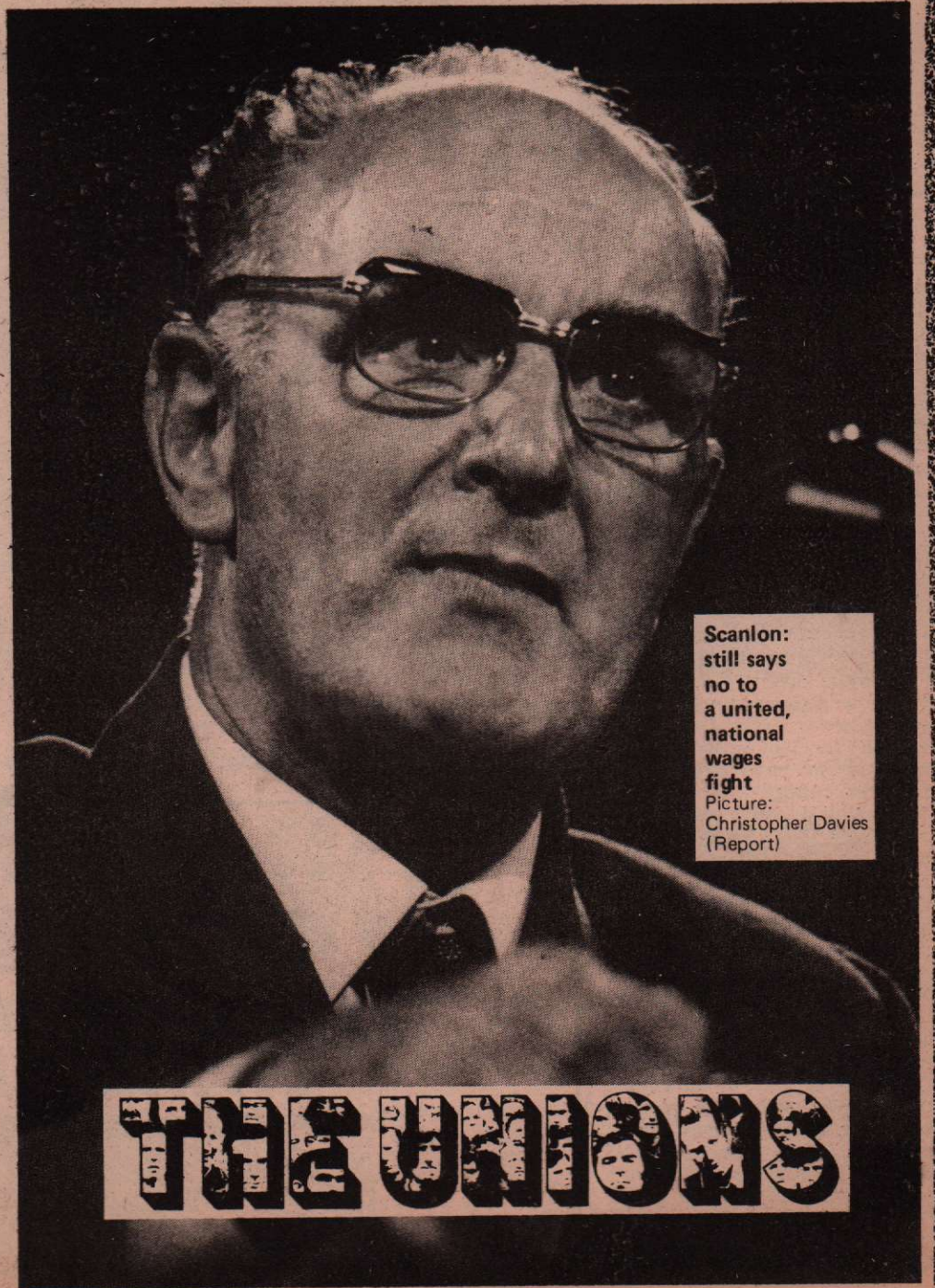
Big pay battle looms on Phase 3

A MAJOR BATTLE against Phase Two of the Tory income policy is now likely in the autumn. When leaders of 2½ million engineering workers in the powerful Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions met in Eastbourne two weeks ago they agreed unanimously to lodge a claim for:

£35 a week minimum rate for skilled men and a 35 hour week as soon as the current agreement expires on 25 August this year.

They also agreed to give the employers only one month in which to make a positive reply to the claim. The employers have already indicated they will probably refuse to do so.

And as the claim is in clear breach of two of the most important provisions of Phase Two, engineering workers in a few months time may well be in the forefront of this year's most decisive struggle against the employers and the Tory government.



Scanlon: still says no to a united, national wages fight
Picture: Christopher Davies (Report)

THE UNIONS

by ROGER ROSEWELL

The claim conflicts with Phase Two not only because it is in excess of the notorious £1 plus 4 per cent limit. On the very day that the present agreement ends—25 August—the second stage payment of £3 on the present skilled minimum rate of £22 will be made.

Under Phase Two no new wage increase can be paid within 12 months of a previous one.

The £35 and 35 hours claim also insists that a settlement 'should be operative from the end of the current agreement for a period of 12 months with no restrictive or productivity conditions included' and is in direct opposition to Phase Two.

The claim represents a demand for a £10 a week increase on minimum rates for skilled men together with a five-hour reduction in the working week for everyone.

The Tories were jubilant after their defeat of the gasmen, the hospital workers and civil servants. Now if their policy of holding down wages while profits and prices rise is to be maintained, they must defeat the engineering workers and their claim.

Shook

This is the special political importance of the claim. For, if the engineers were to beat the government, then millions of other workers would quickly follow their example.

Last year was one of tremendous working-class victories. Miners, railmen, builders and dockers shook the Tories.

Since then the government has enlisted the aid of the TUC leaders in trying to curb militancy and, at the present time, talks between the two sides are still going on.

The engineers' claim and the struggle it might create could well clash with the talks and wreck the outcome. This is one of the claim's most complicated points, for two of the TUC's spokesmen, Jack Jones of the TGWU and David Bassett of the GMWU, are involved

both in the talks and in the claim.

This contradictory role might well be of crucial importance. And Hugh Scanlon, the president of the engineering workers, has only just been removed from the TUC team on instruction from his union, and against his own views.

Last year, the engineering workers were the one powerful section of the trade union movement to be beaten by the employers.

The first reason for that defeat was the nature of the claim itself. The decision to fight for an increase only on minimum rates instead of a substantial all-round rise meant that the final settlement would affect only a small minority of the industry's workforce.

And so the claim failed to win the enthusiasm of the crucial battalions of the engineering workers—those employed in motors and accessories, electronics, aircraft and certain sections of metal manufacturing.

This year's claim—although for £35 instead of £25—is again unlikely to win the enthusiasm of these sections unless the 35 hour week demand is pushed to the forefront.

The reason for this is simple. When Tom Crispin of the TGWU spoke at the Eastbourne Confed conference, he claimed that on the basis of figures available in April 1972, 51 per cent of engineering workers earned more than £30 a week, with 25 per cent of those receiving more than £38. And since then earnings have risen.

This means that the best-paid and best-organised sections of the engineering industry are probably earning as much if not more than the £35 minimum in the new claim. And again they are unlikely to want to fight for what they already have or believe they could get without a full-scale struggle.

Those workers earning far less than £35 a week and who really stand to gain from its achievement are probably also the most poorly organised, often working in small factories in areas of high unem-

ployment.

The only demand that could unite the 2½ million engineering workers behind it is one for a general all-round pay rise of, say, £5 a week. This strategy was rejected by the Eastbourne conference.

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions leadership is solid in its opposition to united all-round wage claims because it knows that this is the best way to involve the whole membership in a national struggle against the employers.

Lessons

The refusal of the Confederation to demand an all-round general wage rise now means that every militant must place the emphasis of this year's struggle on the fight for shorter working hours from which every engineering worker would clearly benefit.

That is lesson number one. The second main cause of last year's defeat was the tactic used against the employers. This was the 'plant by plant' strategy which sought to win at factory level what the employers had refused at national level.

Despite a tremendous struggle in some areas, particularly

Manchester, the campaign as a whole was both costly and unsuccessful. An uneven response, fragmentation, lack of clear national leadership, sabotage by the right wing and a tough line from the Engineering Employers Federation were the main reasons for this.

Only national and united action against the employers and their government can succeed.

That is lesson number two.

This year's claim is going to be a test of strength. Last year—as was revealed exclusively in Socialist Worker last week—the engineering employers spent a massive £2,378,319 in subsidising their member firms to cause lockouts or resist strikes.

This year they are quite willing to do the same again. And the Tories will give them every bit of help they can.

Only a clear policy of an all-out strike by the industry's 2.5 million workers can defeat this kind of preparation.

It must be the job of every militant to force the union leaders to do just that. The Confederation leaders with their feet in both camps—more pay and shorter hours but talks with Heath on an incomes policy at the same time—cannot be relied upon.

That is lesson number three and one that every militant should avoid having to learn the hard way.

LEVINÉ

The Life of a Revolutionary

"We Communists are all dead men on leave... I do not know if you will extend my leave or whether I shall have to join Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg... But I know, whatever your verdict, events cannot be stopped..."

We have all of us tried to the best of our knowledge and conscience to do our duty towards the International, the Communist World Revolution."

These were Eugen Leviné's last words in court before his execution.

On 7 April 1919, a soviet government was formed in Munich led by poets, artists and writers. It had little working-class support and was doomed to failure. But the Communists rallied to it—to save what they could from the ruins.

Eugen Leviné led the defence of the Munich Soviet. He was born in Russia, educated in Germany and became a revolutionary very young. He took part in the 1905 events in Russia, was imprisoned, escaped to Germany, joined the German Social Democratic Party and then, during the war, the Independent Social Democrats and the Spartakusbund. Later he was one of the few Spartakists to be elected to the first Central Assembly of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets in December 1918.

He took part in the January fighting in Berlin, and then worked for the party in the Ruhr, Brunswick and again in Berlin. Finally at the beginning of March he was sent to Munich where he met his death.

This is the book of his life and of the Munich soviet, by his wife and comrade

Rosa Leviné-Mayer

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TRANSLATED BY PETER SEDGWICK

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STRACHEY

JOHN STRACHEY is the most influential marxist propagandist in the history of the British labour movement.

Between 1931 and 1938 he wrote four books, one pamphlet and innumerable articles which brought marxism to a wider British audience than ever before or since.

The books—The Coming Struggle for Power (1931), the Menace of Fascism (1932), the Nature of Capitalist Crisis (1935) and the Theory and Practice of Socialism (1936)—explained marxist economics in sparkling, simple language.

They explained, too, the causes and the meaning of fascism. They analysed the art and literature of the time in class terms.

They savaged the leaders of the Labour Party and exposed the bankruptcy of social democracy throughout the world. They called for the organisation of revolutionary socialist parties which would lead the working class to socialism.

Strachey's pamphlet Why You Should Be A Socialist summarised these ideas in less than 100 pages. It sold 349,000 copies in nine editions and did as much to enthuse a generation with socialist ideas as Blatchford's Merrie England had done before the First World War.

For most of this time, when he was not writing books, Strachey was reading and selecting books for the Left Book Club, which produced more than 250 volumes in just over 12 years. At the club's peak, in the late 1930s, its monthly books were selling 60,000 copies each, by far the biggest ever regular circulation of socialist ideas in Britain.

But there is another John Strachey, better known, perhaps, to the readers of newspapers and the watchers of television.

He is the withdrawn, weary Labour leader of the 1950s and 1960s, dogged by an unhealthy obsession with the machinery of war.

The founder member of the Institute of Strategic Studies, whose purpose was to study war in the interests of the 'Western Alliance'. The supporter of George Brown for the labour leadership after Gaitskell's death in 1963.

The frequenter of the Pentagon, a broadcaster on the anti-Communist Radio Free Europe, a regular speaker at the CIA-financed Congress for Cultural Freedom seminars.

All in all, the darling of the stale social democracy which the other Strachey had ridiculed in the 1930s.

This second Strachey was a senior minister in the post-war Labour government, failing to develop ground nuts in Tanganyika or fumbling with weaponry at the War Ministry.

Out of office, in the 1950s, he wrote three more books—Contemporary Capitalism, The End of Empire and On the Prevention of War—all of which were acclaimed by right-wing intellectuals.

The political scene is littered with the living corpses of former socialists and communists. Some of them are trade union officials ordering men not to strike, others are propping up the bar at the House of Commons, others (perhaps most) have retired to the universities or to television.

In most cases, the reasons for their demise is obvious: disillusionment, drink, money, the impotence or the pomp (or both) of parliamentary office.

The case of John Strachey is more serious. The change in him was too sudden, too catastrophic to be explained away, as in Hugh Thomas' biography*, with passing references to Strachey's psychological needs for

*John Strachey by Hugh Thomas, Eyre Methuen, £4.50.



FROM MARXISM TO PEANUTS...

by PAUL FOOT

an elder brother or to his admiration for Clement Attlee.

More importantly, Strachey, unlike almost all other contemporary politicians who entered the same blind alley, endeavoured to explain his 'conversion'. His book Contemporary Capitalism is often associated with Anthony Crosland's The Future of Socialism.

Both were published in the same year (1956). Both argued that Labour should accept the capitalist system. Strachey's book, however, is of a quite different order to Crosland's.

Crosland had been dandled all his life in the expansive lap of right-wing social democracy. His book, wrong in every prediction, arrogant in every assumption, was written to appease the conscience of Labour careerists.

Strachey, on the other hand, argued in marxist terms against the marxism of his earlier books. Contemporary Capitalism is a running argument with The Coming Struggle for Power.

The pity of Hugh Thomas' biography is that it does not (cannot, in fact, for Hugh Thomas sympathises with the latter Strachey, not the earlier one) take up Strachey's own arguments and explain how and why so apparently committed a marxist could develop into the opposite.

The immediate cause of the change is easy to identify. All Strachey's marxist books were characterised by an admiration for Russia.

In The Coming Struggle for Power, he wrote:

'160 million men and women have already . . . leapt out of the kingdom of necessity towards the kingdom of freedom—in Russia.'

Obediently, Strachey followed the Communist Party line on the Stalinist barbarism of the period. As late as July 1938, he wrote of the Moscow trials of old Bolsheviks: 'No one, who had . . . fixed his mind in the contrary opinion, could read the verbatim account of the trials without being wholly convinced of the authenticity of the confessions.'

Equally, all his works had been dominated by a hatred and fear of fascism. The Stalin-Hitler pact of

the two camps were linked by a strong theoretical thread. Strachey's old friends and mentors, the veteran social democrats Sidney and Beatrice Webb, had written of the Russian revolution, soon after it occurred:

'The Russian revolution is the greatest disaster in the history of the labour movement.'

What shocked the Webbs about the Russian revolution was the spectacle of working men and women taking action for themselves. The Webbs had been brought up to believe that the workers' case had to be argued and advocated for them, history had to be written for them, votes had to be solicited from them, and their destinies shaped in the most humane manner possible by people of intelligence, education and good will.

The Bolsheviks put paid to all that by unleashing the energies of working people, and by mobilising them to take power themselves.

Less than 20 years later, however, the Webbs were happy to notice that all that nonsense had been stopped. In 1934, they visited Russia, met a

1939, therefore, came as a mighty blow to his beliefs.

He turned, almost at once, not to the working class but to 'his' country. His speeches and books (notably A Faith to Fight For, which was published in 1941) became increasingly patriotic. Socialism took second place to patriotism.

In 1943, he started a series of broadcasts as press officer for the Air Ministry in which he eloquently justified the most monstrous of the British bombings of German working-class areas. By 1945, he had a safe Labour seat, at Dundee, and was back in parliament.

The somersault is not as complete as it looks. For all the polemic between Stalinists and social democrats,

Sidney and Beatrice Webb: personifying the link between Stalinism and social democracy—hatred of independent working-class action



large number of friendly bureaucrats, studied an even larger number of constitutional provisions, noticed that the energies of the working class were back in harness, and were delighted.

A 'new civilisation' was being created in Russia by enlightened bureaucrats for the masses.

Describing the situation after the Russian revolution, Strachey wrote (in the Theory and Practice of Socialism):

'What was the way forward for the international working class movement? Could the political power which the workers had won in the Soviet Union be used to build up the first socialist economic and social system which the world has ever seen, in spite of the fact that all advanced countries remained in capitalist hands?'

'Or must the workers either largely abandon their power in the Soviet Union or jeopardise it by trying artificially, and from the outside, to create revolutions in the rest of the world?'

All faith must rest in Russia. Socialism in one country (an impossibility, Strachey argued elsewhere, as far as Britain is concerned) must be the only hope for the international working class movement. The workers, then, had no real role to play, save to defend the wonders in the East.

This theme runs through all Strachey's writings of the period. He writes and speaks on behalf of the workers. He argues at them, without stressing the need to organise with them.

This lack of confidence in the masses is the key to Strachey's change of mind and deterioration. His own explanations fall flat by comparison.

In Contemporary Capitalism, he argued that the excesses of modern capitalism had been tamed by a combination of trade union strength and Labour Party influence. The arguments run directly counter to his own contemptuous dismissal of them in The Coming Struggle for Power.

More importantly, however, he studiously ignored the real explanation for the slumpiness of the 1950s which he himself had given before the war.

In Why You Should Be A Socialist Strachey had argued: 'The capitalist system works so much better in wartime. For then of course there is someone to buy all the goods which can be turned out. They are bought by the government and used, for the most part for destruction.'

In Contemporary Capitalism he hardly notices that massive armaments spending continued in peacetime and that this factor, far more than any alleged Labour Party or trade union strength, stabilised capitalism after the war.

More crucially, that stabilisation was not, as Strachey had predicted, permanent. During the 10 years since Strachey's death his two stabilising forces—the trade unions and the Labour Party—have grown in strength.

The trade unions have attracted two million more members and the Labour Party has had six years of parliamentary office. Yet in the same period capitalism has grown more unstable, more greedy, more ugly, more violent and more racist.

Hugh Thomas' readable biography will be useful if it directs people to John Strachey's pre-war writing. It will be worse than useless if the fundamental lesson of John Strachey's life is not appreciated.

That the power which can confront the barbarism of capitalism is not generated in Labour cabinets, still less in the Kremlin. It lies at the roots of the working class, in the factories mines and mills, and as soon as socialist propaganda and socialist organisation stray from there, they are lost.

Murderous a

ON MONDAY the Portuguese dictator Marcello Caetano arrives in Britain as the guest of the Tory government and the Royal Family.

Caetano's main aim will be to attract investments to 'Britain's oldest ally' and her colonies and to obtain finance, diplomatic support and arms to pursue three colonial wars in Portugal's East African colonies—Mozambique, Angola and Guine and the Cape Verde islands.

The Portuguese dictatorship has always realised that without African colonies the homeland would be reduced to a minor European power. For this reason the Portuguese dictator from 1929 to 1969, Doctor Salazar, enforced a policy of keeping blacks in the colonies in the deepest misery and total ignorance to prevent them coming into contact with ideas of personal and national freedom.

To prevent richer imperialist powers from wresting control of the colonies from Portugal, foreign investments were stopped. Portuguese capitalists were not able to make large-scale investments and blacks in Portuguese Africa were subjected to the worst unemployment, working conditions and lowest wages on the whole continent.

The extremes of misery in the Portuguese colonies delayed for a while the spreading of ideas about national independence which had affected most of Africa. Peasant families had to spend most of their time struggling just to survive.

The aspirations for national liberation at first took root among the relatively small urban population, in particular among the tiny minority of urban blacks who had received an education and among the urban workers.

But by 1956 what had been un-co-ordinated local movements of intellectuals had become clandestine organisations in Guine and Angola. Almost immediately they suffered the attentions of the Portuguese police.

This made the growth of the two organisations MPLA (The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola and PAIGC (African Party for the Liberation of Guine and Cape Verde) very slow.

Amilcar Cabral, the revolutionary leader assassinated earlier this year on the order of the Portuguese government, had come

Tory boost for terror by Portugal

Report
by Vic
Richards

to the conclusion that no urban-based movement could overthrow Portuguese rule. The PAIGC, though initially made up of middle-class people, had built itself a base among workers in the capital, Bissau.

In 1959 when they organised a demonstration of striking dockers, the Portuguese shot down 50 of them. As dockers were the only large, well-organised section of workers, there was no possibility of effectively spreading the strike.

Campaign

Cabral decided that no effective revolutionary movement could be built in the towns, as the workers were not yet a class on a national scale and only existed in any numbers in the capital.

From early 1959 to the end of 1961, the PAIGC carried out a thorough preparation in the areas where it intended to launch the guerrilla struggle.

The armed struggle was started in Angola with much less preparation. The opening shot in the MPLA campaign was an attack on the prison in Luanda, the capital. As news of the attack spread to the rest of the country,

there were spontaneous revolts in the North.

A murderous counter-offensive was launched by the Portuguese. They killed tens of thousands of Africans.

They extended the repression to Guine—forcing the PAIGC to launch the struggle earlier than intended—and to Mozambique, creating a massive exodus to Tanganyika.

At the same time Salazar's dictatorship decided to introduce a number of changes. At home it was trying to follow the Spanish boom, based on attracting tourists and foreign capital.

As Portugal was smaller and poorer than Spain, it had to open the colonies to attract foreign capital, thereby ending the monopoly of the few Portuguese companies.

Salazar also decided to improve the Africans' conditions in an attempt to stop the revolts from spreading. There was some

improvement in wages, taxes were reduced and the legal basis for compulsory forced cultivation was removed.

Under this system large numbers of peasants had been forced to produce cotton for the cotton monopolies which paid them starvation prices. In 1956, for example, 519,000 African farmers had been paid an average of £5 for a whole year's work. Some were getting £2.50 for their year's sweat.

But the legal change was not enforced. Other measures were put into effect only near areas of



Cabral: rural guerrilla strategy

guerrilla activity in an effort to isolate them.

But this meant the population behind Portuguese lines could be reached by the liberation movements and activity started there.

During 1962 and 1963 Guine was the only centre of serious armed struggle. The MPLA in Angola had suffered seriously from Portuguese suppression.

But in 1962 FRELIMO, the Mozambique Liberation Front, had been formed by exiles in Tanzania. Like the PAIGC, FRELIMO attempted to build a working-class base.

Fierce

But a strike of dockers in the three main ports of Mozambique ended with many militants being killed or jailed. FRELIMO shifted its activities to the countryside, starting military organisations in three regions and meeting with success in the two furthest to the north.

This success was due to the fact that in 1960 a demonstration in the town of Mueda had been fired on by the Portuguese, leaving 500 dead and a fierce anti-Portuguese sentiment. By 1968 operations successfully began again in the third area, Tete.

In 1964 the MPLA re-started

its activities in the most eastern part of Angola. Its slow progress was due in part to the repression in 1961 and to the nature of the foreign companies which had been set up in Angola after the crackdown.

These companies obtained fantastic concessions. In the case of the Anglo-Belgian-South African Daimang diamond mining franchise, 200,000 people lived in labour camp conditions where the MPLA could not operate.

Some companies spend up to £2 million a year on private mercenary armies to 'control' their territories and employees. Although they do not engage directly in fighting the MPLA, their military control over large numbers of people is extremely important to the Portuguese army.

Despite all this, by 1966 the MPLA was operating on three fronts and five by 1968.

'War zone'

The most successful movement is undoubtedly the PAIGC. By 1969 it controlled two thirds of Guine, confining the Portuguese to the coast and a few major towns and forts. When it became clear that the Portuguese could not win, they resorted to even more desperate measures.

The military governor of Guine, General Spinoza, declared most of the PAIGC-controlled territory a 'war zone', exactly like the US 'free fire' zones in Vietnam. Any civilians found in this area are shot up by Portuguese aircraft.

In Angola and Mozambique, the liberation movements control around one-third of the country apiece. As a result, Portugal spends 50 per cent of her budget on the armed forces. Spending on public works and social services has fallen from 34 per cent before the war to 25 per cent today.

In a country where a large proportion of young men are abroad, dodging the draft or looking for a job, the standing army has reached 200,000. To compensate for the manpower shortage this creates, Portugal has been trying to recruit increased numbers of Africans both into the army—to fight against their own liberation—and into the elite and skilled jobs.

This has been attempted most



Above: FRELIMO guerrillas on the march in Mozambique. Portugal will kick out so if British aid is stopped. Right: a guerrilla victim of a Portuguese napalm air raid.

thoroughly in Mozambique. In lectures given to Army High Command in 1966-1967, the Minister of Mozambique, de Arriaga, revealed real intentions.

Blacks are taken into the elite and more slowly than immigration is to. The higher percentage in sensitive areas giant Cabora Bassa tended to make FRELIMO.

Portuguese racialism despite racial equality. doubt at all that has inferior character white race, as certain character inferior to the people,' said the

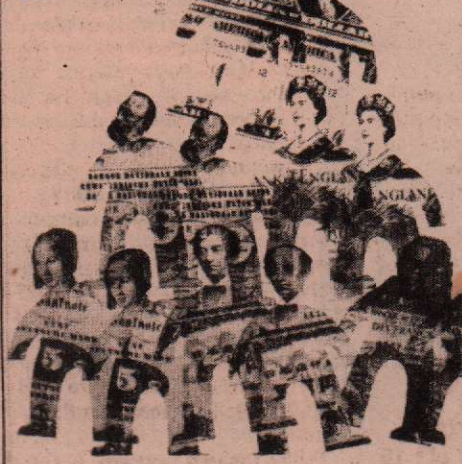
To overcome capital manpower number of white Mozambique, Portugal recently sought and close relationship theid states of South Rhodesia and have invested money in projects electric dams at Mozambique and River in Angola.

Since FRELIMO in the Cab South Africa's has been stepped Rhodesian soldier action there.

And there has British policy came to power. It is giving the Portuguese wholehearted reasons are not different. British companies million invested her colonies, 25

International Socialism 60

International Money Councils of Action China July 1973 15p



The July issue of International Socialism features an important article by Chris Harman on the experience of Councils of Action and their relevance to the current struggles of the working class. Other articles include:

Monetary Crisis: John Ure
India and China: Nigel Harris
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Heath will sell arms to

'FREEDOM' WE CAN DO WITHOUT

WHAT MAKES a workers' government different from any other? Any body of men exercising governmental power can call itself a workers' government, or a Labour government.

So how do you tell that it means business? Well, there are many ways of telling, but here is just one very important way. A truly workers' government would make it illegal to blackleg during a strike.

This would mean a complete reversal of the existing legal position on this matter. If today anyone wants to cross the picket line, he or she will have the protection of the law, with the police to back him or her up.

A basic principle of capitalism is 'freedom to work'. You must not interfere with a person's right to work. And this 'you' means you—you the worker.

It does not mean the employer, the speculator, the asset-stripper. These gentlemen can throw as many people out of work as they please without breaking any law.

What is the reality behind this worker's 'freedom to work'? No more than freedom to sell his capacity to work, his labour power, to those who, as a class own the means of production.



And of course from the capitalist viewpoint the ideal situation is one where the worker is an isolated individual seller—that is, not organised in a trade union. That is why, for example, British Leyland, Ford, Chrysler, Fiat and Citroen are going to invest by 1977 several hundred million pounds in expanding their car factories in Spain.

The Spanish workers are—capitalistically speaking—more 'free' than the workers elsewhere who are organised. Trade unions in Spain are illegal. They exist only as 'underground' bodies.

The whole power of the state is directed to smashing them. Workers on strike are shot down. Leaders are arrested and sentenced by military courts to long terms of imprisonment.

Of course, a similar situation existed in this country at the beginning of the capitalist era. Combinations of workmen, as they were called, were illegal here too. Here too they existed for a long, long time as illegal organisations.



Here too the capitalists and their political henchmen, the Tories and the Liberals, did everything they could to stamp them out. They all tried to stem the tide of progress.

Progress—that is, the coming together of working people into organisations independent of and opposed to the bosses. Progress—that is, working-class solidarity against the enemy.

Progress—that is, the quest for a way out of the capitalist jungle where all values, all worth, is measured in terms of money, where man exploits man, where the worker becomes a slave to the machine, where millions are slaughtered in the wars of commercial competition.

There was a man here in this country a month or so ago, a Spaniard pleading the cause of the Spanish workers. I do not know what particular party he belongs to and I don't care.

All I know is that he spent 20 odd years in Franco's jails for the crime of organising the Spanish workers and that he was



here asking the British workers to show their solidarity with his countrymen. He was here to remind us that the picket line does not stop at any national frontiers.

Now the British workers took action last week to express their antagonism to the French government's testing of nuclear weapons. The TUC gave the lead for this action. The question arises: why against only the French government?

Why not also against the Russian, the Chinese, the American? The answer to that is: this is a dispute between various imperialist powers, in which the TUC has involved itself. It has nothing to do with the picket line.

The men and women on the picket line are involved, whether they know it or not, in the battle to overthrow the system that will, if not destroyed, destroy humanity in a nuclear war. So—let us keep our eyes fixed on the picket line.

What an enormous step for-

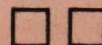
ward if the TUC took a look at the picket line in Spain, at the strike at the British Leyland car plant in Pamplona and the subsequent lockout of 1700 Spanish workers.

Took a look at this and the strikes in all the other car plants. And gave a lead for action by the British workers.

The Spanish workers are fighting against terrible odds. Fighting for freedom. Yes, they want a living wage, decent conditions of work and so on, but back of all these demands is the elemental, indestructible urge to be free.

Those multi-national companies hand in glove with Franco's thugs are getting away with murder and the TUC is so very, very busy trying to make capitalism function 'rationally'...

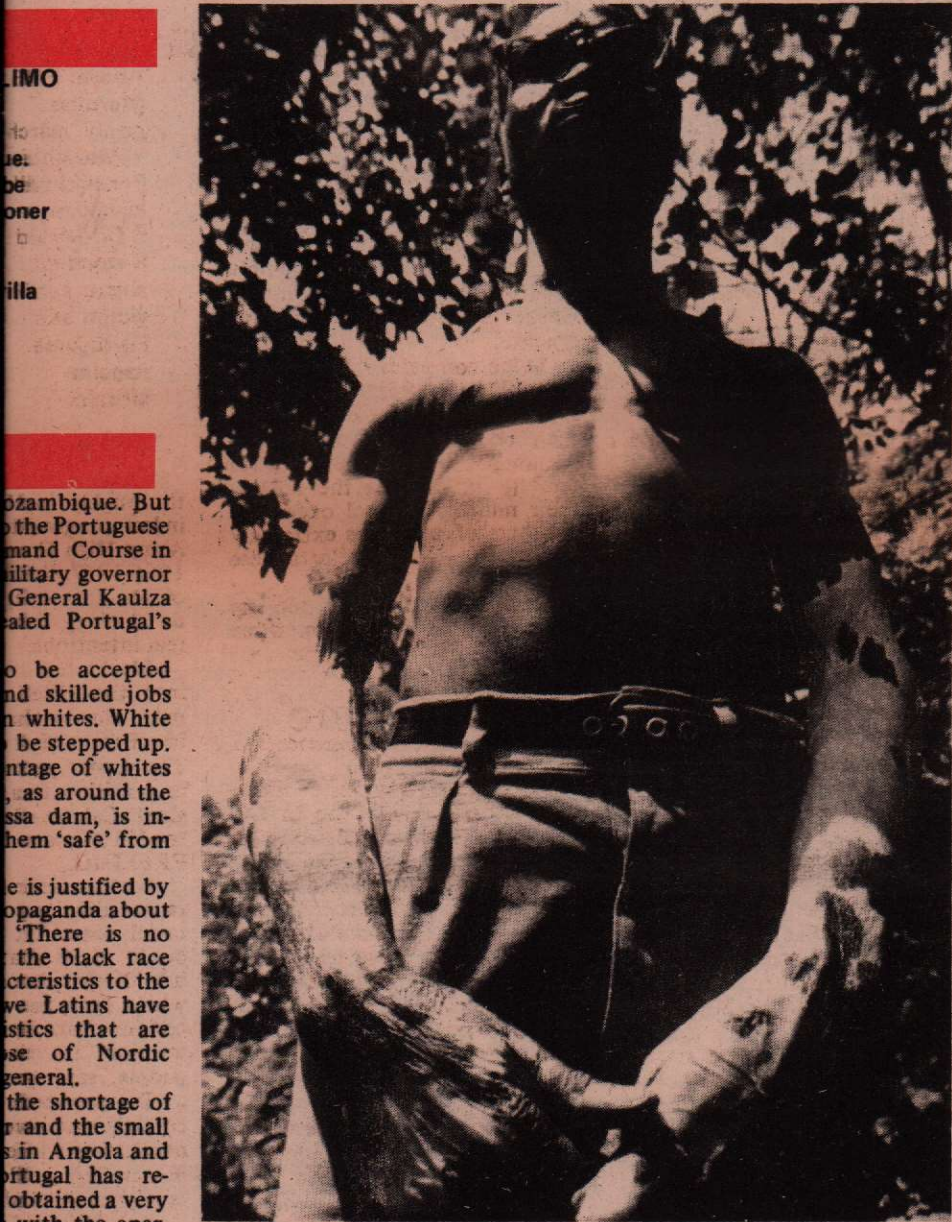
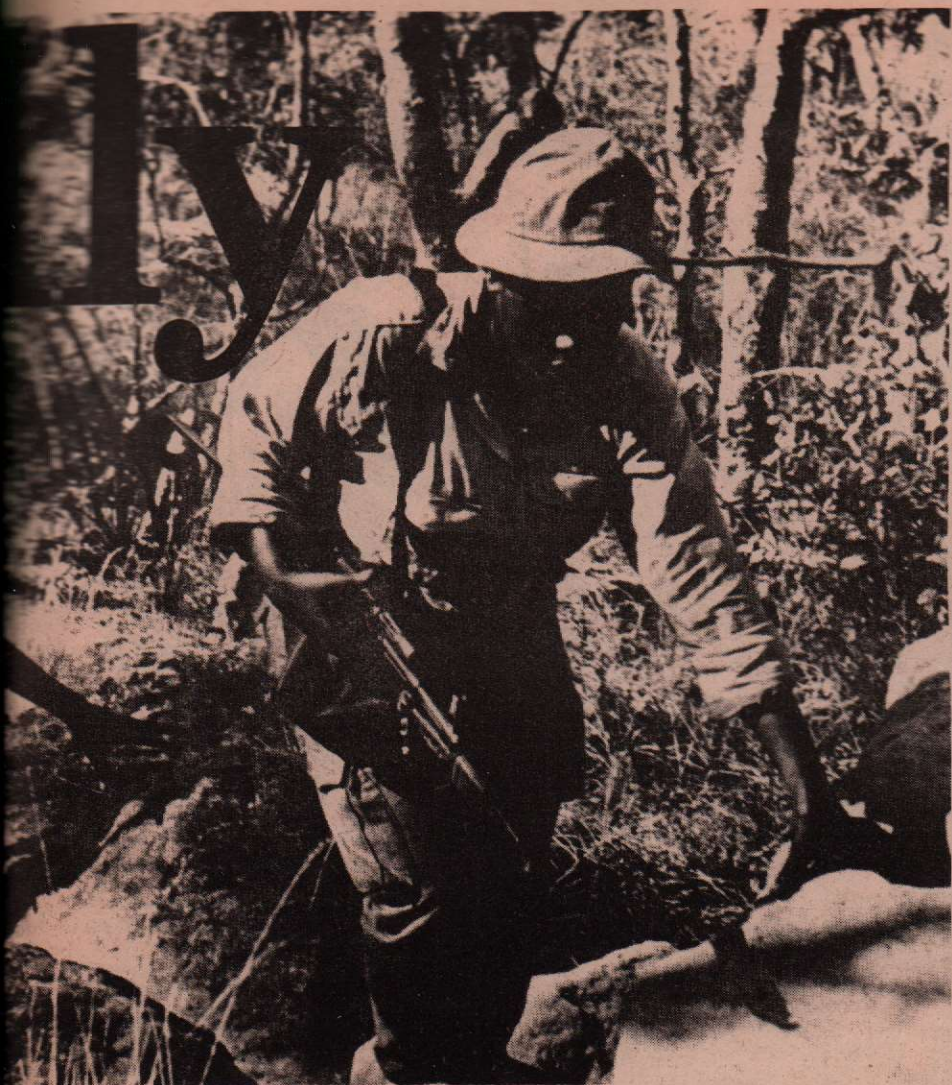
In the matter of understanding where the system is heading the whizz-kids of international finance are the greatest bunch of nitwits you could find anywhere, but when it comes to squeezing out the maximum profit they're dead keen.



They don't think Spain or any other country is too remote from their interests. They are only too eager to get in there where there's plenty of cheap labour power and friendly governments that jail or slaughter anyone who fights for freedom. That's what Lonrho and the like is all about—not boardroom throat-cutting but cheap labour, maximum profits.

That's why for us the picket line is all important. And not just the picket line here, but the picket line anywhere.

Hugo Dewar



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foreign investment. And British capitalists are expanding this share.

Southern Africa as a whole is crucial to the profits of many British firms. British capitalists are also the biggest foreign investors in Rhodesia and South Africa.

Invest

To preserve this situation the Heath government is only too willing to shore up apartheid and the Portuguese dictatorship.

The fact that the African worker is paid a starvation wage, that the Portuguese worker is immediately sent to prison with-

out trial to be detained at Caetano's pleasure as soon as he or she tries to organise a strike, does not concern the Tories. They will invest anywhere, and take positive delight in any regime provided it delivers the goods and the profits.

It is for this reason that investments, financial aid and arms will probably be signed over to Caetano during his state visit.

It is vital that Britain's link with Portugal is ended. In June last year a Portuguese officer in Mozambique declared: 'It's only a matter of time before they kick us out!'

Without British aid it will be that much sooner.

o back British profits



SPECIAL OFFER

The Pluto Press have a pre-publication offer on forthcoming publications for cash orders received.

The second price below is the retail selling price in bookshops.

Sheila Rowbotham's 'Hidden from History' (£1.15/1.50) is subtitled '300 years of women's oppression and the fight against it.' It's a study of the changing position of women in England from the Puritan Revolution through to the 1930's.

Werner Thonnessen's 'The Emancipation of Women' (£1.15/£1.50) is historical also and analyses the rise and decline of the Women's Movement in Germany

from 1863-1933. Thonnessen, like Rowbotham, believes that the fortunes of the movement will rise or decline along with the fortunes of the working class movement as a whole. (Rowbotham stresses the need for a stronger relationship with the working class and a sensitivity to 'the action of working class women in transforming Women's Liberation according to their needs.')

Mikhail Lifshitz's 'The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx' (£1.00/£1.35) demonstrates the relationship between Marx's changing views of art and the development of his revolutionary theory.

'Turkey: Torture and Political Persecution' (£1.15/£1.50) by Jane Cousins is a highly comprehensive survey of the brutalities perpetrated by the Turkish Generals since they took over in 1971; it is put into the context of modern Turkish history and also indicates the complicity of the British government, and the failure of the British press to investigate the situation.

Prices include post and packing. Orders should be sent to Pluto Press at Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, NW1 (722 0141).



YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

CHRIS HARMAN on the importance of socialist ideas

FOR most people, the idea of revolution is closely associated with violence. This message is hammered home in school textbooks and popular historical novels.

There you will find gruesome descriptions of the 'reign of terror' in the French Revolution of 1793, but hardly a word about the suppression of the Paris Commune of 1871, when more than three times as many people were killed, in a much shorter time, by the forces of 'law and order'.

Those who spout most eloquently about the horrors of bloodshed are not pacifists. They are politically committed to society as it exists today, a society that is the most violent in the whole of human history.

Twice in the past 60 years there have been world wars in which tens of millions of people have died. Since 1945 there has not been a single year in which there was not a war somewhere in the world. As you read these words, US bombers are dropping bombs on Cambodia, where they have already killed more than a tenth of the population.

British government spending on military preparations is at a peacetime record of £3000 million. Its 300,000 troops are trained to kill and it is a serious crime for them not to do so if ordered.

They have often been used to kill recently. When rebels in Malaysia threatened 'British interests'—the tin and rubber companies which British big business owns—the army was used to slaughter them. In one grisly episode, soldiers proudly displayed the severed heads of captives.

When a revolt broke out in Aden, leading to general strikes by the workers, British soldiers were used to protect the interests of the giant oil companies.

And the troops are still in use protecting 'British rule' and several thousand million pounds worth of investments in Ireland.

SMASH

The minority who own the wealth of Britain may preach about the dangers of violence. But they resort to it the moment their own wealth and power is threatened.

Tory ministers have repeatedly asserted that they are using troops to defend the 'civil authorities' in Northern Ireland just as they would 'anywhere else in the United Kingdom.' In other words, if the occasion arises, the army will be sent into the streets of Britain to shoot to kill, arrest without trial, throw tear gas about and smash up people's homes.

Leading army officers have been even more explicit. Brigadier Frank Kitson, head of the Warminster army training college, predicted in his book, *Low Intensity Operations*, that troops might soon have to be used against workers in Britain.

The parliamentary leaders of both the Tory and Labour Parties proudly place themselves in the tradition of men like Churchill, Lloyd George and Baldwin. Churchill ordered

Who are those men of violence?

troops to shoot striking South Wales miners in 1911. Lloyd George posted machine guns at the pit heads during strikes in 1919. Baldwin sent troop convoys through the streets of London and battleships to threaten Liverpool during the General Strike.

Note that in none of these three cases was there threat of a revolution. Workers were merely struggling over pay and working conditions.

The lesson holds today. If the wages struggle begins to threaten what big business regards as its most essential interests, then Edward Heath or Harold Wilson, the political disciples of Churchill, Lloyd George and Baldwin, would resort to the most naked forms of violence.

Revolutionary socialists do not create violence. We merely insist that if the workers are not to be blackmailed by the massive, organised violence of the ruling class and its state, then we have to be prepared to fight back.

This is true in any strike. The employers always use forms of violence in an effort to get their way. They threaten to violently disrupt the lives of workers who strike or transport workers who respect picket lines by sacking them and depriving them of a living. There is only one way for the strikers to protect themselves against such threats—through counter-threats of their own.

But to say that force has to be used is not the same as saying that bloodshed is inevitable. That depends on the balance of power between the two sides.

If there are a couple of workers, but 10 police at a picket line, then there will be bloodshed if the police decide to beat up the pickets.

But if, as at the miners' picket at Saltley Coke Depot last year, there are 10,000 pickets and only a few hundred police, then little violence is likely. The police will back down—provided the pickets make it clear they will reply to force with force.

The history of revolutions bears this out. In the October 1917 revolution in Petrograd, there was little bloodshed—only 11 people died. The workers were united and well-armed, while their opponents were demoralised, divided and had few forces at their disposal.

ARGUED

The worst bloodshed occurs not when the workers' movement uses force, but when it sets aside the use of force, leaving its opponents a free hand to assert their power. In Paris in 1871, the main leaders of the Paris Commune argued that it would be wrong to start a civil war by marching against the counter-revolutionary army based on Versailles, although it was weak and hardly able to resist.

The initiative was left with the Versailles forces, which waited, built up their strength and then, when they were most powerful, marched on Paris, murdering tens of thousands

In Germany after the First World War, the moderate leaders of the working class argued that it would be wrong for the workers to use force to overthrow German big business. But big business found it could not be profitable unless it destroyed the working-class movement at home and followed a policy of military expansion abroad.

In 1933 it turned to Hitler and millions of people died as a result. Even though they staged no fight back whatsoever, the working-class parties and trade unions were completely smashed and their militants put in concentration camps.

There is only one way to minimise bloodshed at decisive moments in history. It is for the workers' movement to ensure that it has more force at its disposal than the employing class and to be prepared to use it.

BOOKS

REVIEW

'It stank of human sacrifice'



BRING A REPLACEMENT!

SMALLCREEP'S DAY, by Pete Brown, republished 1973 by Picador, 40p.

SMALLCREEP'S DAY is a great book.

Pinquean Smallcreep leaves his machine one day to discover what happens to the component he has been making for 16 years. The search takes him into every corner of the vast factory, and what he sees is both horrifying and fascinating.

The pig who operates the surface-grinder, the labourers who stagger backwards and forwards carrying the same component from one stack to another, the man who loses one hand in his machine and the other arm when he reaches in to get it, the humble creature who lives in the sewage system and paddles his way through the filth for the honour of the country, Brother Knarf the union negotiator who erects a hard-board partition between the men and the management and reports back with a tuppence-farthing rise, a knighthood and the argument '... the only way we can have as much as we want is to go without.'

If you liked some of the fantasy in Robert Tressell's book *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, you'll like this, though you need a strong stomach to appreciate some of it, like the queue in the washroom or the swearing-contest.

Then they both stood up, and the old man took several deep breaths and snorted up his nose and spat a big green gobble on the floor and rubbed it in with his boot. Then he opened his mouth and shouted out the most terrible obscenity I have ever heard, all about private bodily functions and the other man's mother, terrible it was, I felt quite physically sick.

But the humour is used for a serious purpose, as in this description of piece-workers: 'I could see one man who was moving his eyes independently of each other, keeping one on the machine while using the other in preparation for the next component.'

Now I saw one who was, without pausing in his work, rolling a cigarette behind his back while deftly tightening a nut with a spanner held between his teeth. I could see another man unwrapping his lunch-packet with his knees while his hands paused not at all in their work.'

Or in Joe's opinion of the *Daily Mirror*, 'He threw down his own copy of the paper and stamped on it. "F...g nonsense and bloody fairy tales," he shouted, while the other three looked nervous and rustled their own papers as if they weren't sure if they shouldn't do the same. "I've sat at this table," he hissed, and raised his fists up in front

of his face, "at this time every day for 30 years"—all eyes were raised to his fists—"and read that bloody paper."

'He put his fists slowly back on to the table again and the others relaxed. His knuckles crunched as he leant his weight on them. "Read the news," he went on quietly, glaring at each of us in turn, "the news of a world where charlatans win fortunes, where ships sink with all hands, or men make daring rescues, or fight and die for their country."

'His voice rose a little. "Photographs of the world's best f...s, stories of men like us who make fortunes, Stuff about cars, stuff about sport"—all eyes were on his fists, but they did not leave the table—"stuff about football pools, stuff about criminals, stuff about people with money enjoying themselves."

'There was a second of silence, during which no-one dared to move. Joe began again, and his fists began to rise. The eyes followed them.

"So here we are," he shouted, "all the bloody millions of us whose lives are just home and work, home and work every day for all of our decent bloody lives"—the fists were up—"kept happy"—everyone cringed, waiting for fists—"by the vicarious"—he was bawling—"Daily, Bloody, Dream!" and as quick as a flash he grabbed the table and tipped it over, throwing everyone into confusion, then turned and strode away towards the furnaces.'

Step by step the factory unfolds itself and reveals itself to be a gigantic conspiracy, a conspiracy in which everything has its place and function, but which is completely senseless and pointless. When Smallcreep is finally confronted by the monstrous end-product of the whole factory he has no idea what it is for.

'Good God, I said, is this machine what we have made, and I smelt the parts of it, of all its parts, and what we had done to them. I smelt the coolant oil, the smell of cut metal, of burning grinding dust. It reeked of sweat, it reeked of all the smells of the foundry, it smelt of the drawing office and the paint shop, of the cesspit and the toolroom, of hardening and softening of rubber and plastic and grease, it stank of human sacrifice.'

'My God, I said, is this what we have created?'

Human life is transformed into a mass of machinery with a life of its own. 'Something moved, I saw it. The thing sneezed. . . . A deep choking cough like the first breath of a newborn whale sounded deep inside, and a dribble of mucus came from somewhere.'

It's a book that will make you laugh and make you look at your life in a new light. Not bad for 40p. Go out and buy it tomorrow.

PHIL EVANS

DOCKER'S PENNYWORTH

HOLDING ON, by Mervyn Jones, Quartet, £1.50

WITH the London riverside land grab by city speculators and the running down of the riverside industries there has been a growing need for a record of what a poetic historian might call a 'passing age'.

Well, Mervyn Jones has come up with his pennyworth. It's a novel about 70 years in the life of a stevedoring family in a fictitious Canning Town street.

The family history is eventful enough. Jack Wheelwright is killed by a falling crate, his wife Dora marries the man from the Prudential, her son Charlie becomes a stevedore, sleeps with his wife's sister, and his eldest boy becomes a salesman who has a heart attack. Yes, plenty of things happen in this 300-page epic.

But when it comes to the interplay of the community, its livelihood and its characters, the book is a non-starter. The casual labourer who dominates the

riverside industries doesn't get a serious mention. The struggles for better conditions which came to a head in the 1911-1912 dock strikes and the post-war strikes are not dealt with.

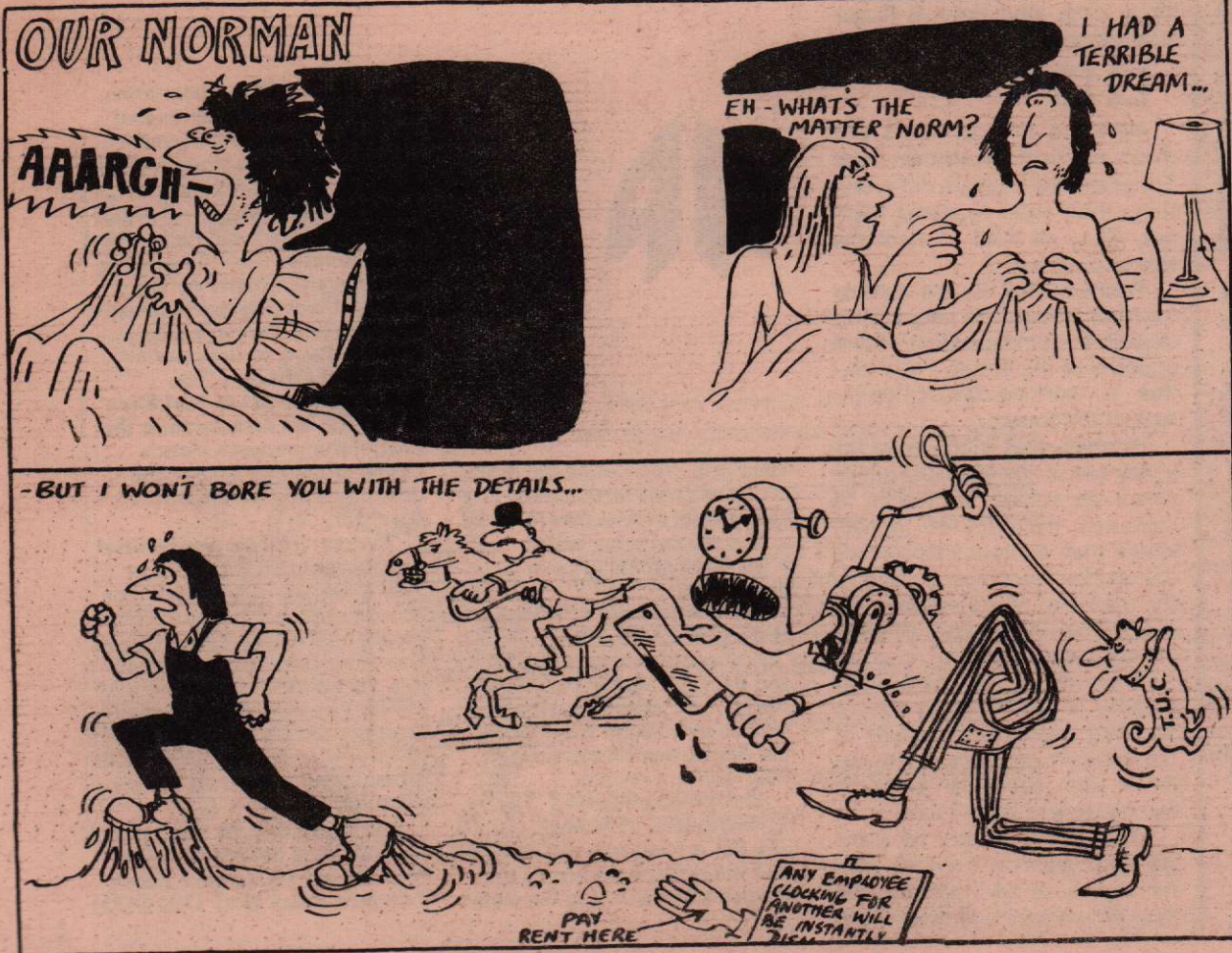
In fact the 1926 strike is the only dispute dealt with and then it is treated patronisingly.

The book has no direction, it is fatalistic. It may not condone high-rise blocks but its condemnation is from a liberal view of things which seems to regret the passing of the two-up, two-downs.

As for containerisation, which does get a mention, Mervyn Jones totally evades an obvious conclusion. If containerisation means fewer jobs why then does he accept it as inevitable? If his ear was that close to the ground he would have at least an indication that the employers would have a fair fight on their hands over it.

The book seems to have been written in a vacuum.

JOHN CLARKE



On the edge of the universe

THERE ARE two films, newly released, both science-fiction, one American, one Russian, both are disturbing—and one is a masterpiece.

Solaris has been billed as the Russian answer to 2001, A Space Odyssey. Now that film may have been interesting, but when set against Solaris, there ain't no contest.

This Russian film is taken from a novel by a Pole, Stanislaw Lem, and deals with a cosmonaut's experiences on a space-station orbiting a mysterious planet covered by a strange shifting sea, a sea that has the power to take shape as grotesque parodies of human forms, of cathedrals, chasms, grand canyons.

When the cosmonaut arrives he finds the station a shambles. Men had been studying the planet for more than 100 years and a science, Solaristics, has grown up around it. Most of the researchers have withdrawn, baffled, leaving just three men, one of whom commits suicide just before the arrival of the 'hero'. The three men become aware they are dealing with a form of life that has evolved as a huge brain that is the planet, floating in the infinity of the universe.

2001 fascinated the viewer with the technology of space research, and then wound up with a semi-religious last reel. Solaris, both for the spacemen and for the audience, is concerned with a far more interesting subject—the human mind grappling with a universe it seeks to understand, but with only limited man-made ideas as tools.

Omega

It is a staggering film. It uses marxism and several other 'isms' in a unique way.

It opened at the Odeon, Kensington, West London, on Thursday, and the distributors say they will have a problem getting it round the country because of shortage of prints, but the Russians are supposed to be sending more. If you fail to see the film, try the book. It is published by Faber, and will soon be out in paperback.

After the masterpiece comes Soylent Green, which is about Charlton Heston attempting to save the world. This is a job which has kept him going ever since he came down the mountain with the tablets in The Ten Commandments. Recently he's swapped the robes of Ancient Israel and Rome for spacesuits and the like in Plaet of the Apes, The Omega Man and now Soylent Green.

The year is 2022, the setting is New York, totally polluted, population 44 million, living on plankton supplied by the Soylent Corporation.

Heston is a cop called in to investigate the murder of a top Soylent executive. His inquiries lead to the horrific truth about a planet now dominated by a ruthless but desperate fascism.

It's pretty trite, relying as it does on a totally cowed mass being shoved around by riot squads and Heston as the Lone Ranger. Nonetheless the world it portrays is not too far from where the present system is leading us. Indeed some aspects, such as the position of women under technological barbarism, are chilling.

Nigel Fountain

In the thirties

AN EXHIBITION titled London in the Thirties is now on at the London Museum, in Kensington Palace Gardens. From what the catalogue says, it is an attempt to present a portrait of the city during the decade before the war.

It doesn't succeed—but the show is nevertheless fascinating.

It contains what would be 'likely' room interiors of the 1930s, including that wonder of wonders, one of the first televisions marketed in 1936. Assuming you could afford it, that is. The well-appointed kitchen also contained an electric fridge, washing machine, quart bottles of milk and stacks and stacks of Kellogg's Cornflakes in funny old packets.

Sonny's room is also rather nice. When he wasn't reading Eyeless in Gaza or flipping through F R Leavis's New Directions in English Poetry, he could pop down to the newly opened milkbar and daringly indulge in a few scoops of his favourite flavour, get hip to Benny Goodman, or



Mother takes the red flag

A WORKING-CLASS war widow is disturbed when her only son becomes involved with the Russian Bolshevik Party. The fear that her boy might get on the wrong side of the powers-that-be haunts her wretched life.

When faced with an appeal from the police to help them in their search for hidden literature, she defies them, and her humble belongings are smashed in front of her eyes.

So she questions the violence of the state yet accuses the revolutionaries of causing the trouble in the first place. Her situation leads her to the inevitable question: who should own the means of production, the boss or the worker? She takes up the struggle for the workers' state.

Brecht's play *The Mother*, now being presented at London's Roundhouse, takes us through the build-up to the Russian Revolution through the development of this exceptional woman and the role that she plays.

We see her learn to read and yet educate her teacher. She earns her Party card, yet she is ahead of the organisation. The workers are gunned down and she picks up their flag. This stringy old woman prints her leaflets while her son is jailed and prints more when he is released—and so it goes on through illness and defeat until the war-weary workers finally rise to victory and the old woman's bones ache with pride.

Wooden

The production is presented by The Half Moon Theatre. It's on until 21 July and the cheapest seat is 60p. You can't take your beer in from the bar—unless you're aggressive—and it starts at the Hampsteady hour of 7.30pm.

Now I am forced to add that because of the cultural differences between today and when the play was written it comes across in a wooden style.

The girl who acts the mother is great and the supporting cast do as well as anyone. I even got the feeling the trendy audience were agreeing with more than they would wish.

Yet it would have to go on with a lot more zap if it were to work for a working-class audience. For the theatre company would have to be committed to what they were saying. If that were so, the play would begin to live, change and develop as only Brecht could have wished.

I have seen a lot of Brecht. It's all been stiff, but this is the clearest I've seen. I recommend the experience.

Roland Muldoon

They could go on singing

MIKE ROSEN, who recently appealed for socialist songs and poetry for a book he's doing for Pluto Press, has been swamped by contributions. He wishes to thank everybody and will attempt to reply to all in time.

REVIEWING REVIEW PAGE

A RECENT correspondent, stung by a review of the film *Themroc*, criticised Review Page's choice of films, demanding that films reviewed should be ones that 'most people are going to see' and calling for an end 'to the intellectual and elitist rubbish that keeps appearing.'

Well 90 per cent (literally) of the films we review are either circuit release or potential circuit release.

A letter in reply came from Nick Hart-Williams, of the Other Cinema, who argued that Socialist Worker should not be tied to new films just because they had been chosen by the big companies for general release. We should deal with 'films that should be seen—circuit or not' and should go beyond reviews 'to discuss the role of films and filmmakers.'

Which is true, but provides problems. Review page must deal with the products that wind up at your local Odeon, because some happen to be very good—and others awful, but popular, and it's worth asking why. As far as non-circuit films are concerned, the general policy is to review them when we think them

important, even if, unhappily, readers will find it difficult to get to them.

One point made by Nick Hart-Williams which is very valid is that socialists could use film at their meetings far more. Both Cinema Action and the Berwick Street Film Collective have films on the struggle in Britain—documentaries and shorts which would be worth showing.

The collective is just finishing a film which traces the history of the struggle of the women night cleaners for union rights and decent pay. It is not of limited interest either—for it deals with the development of a struggle and is relevant for all workers banging away at sluggish union bureaucracies and intransigent bosses.

The tragedy is that socialist filmmakers can't deal with struggles as they arise, and get prints of the battles to union branches and socialist groups around the country fast. A film on the recent Chrysler dispute would be worth acres of newsprint. Attempts to do this are going on in France at the moment. The problem is not lack of enthusiasm, but cash.

In 1960 the council tenants in St Pancras, London, fought against a rent scheme which contained many of the elements which have now been incorporated in the Housing Finance Act. The story of that fight is told in this pamphlet by Dave Burn, with an introduction by Hugh Kerr of the Harlow Tenants Federation.

Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960

Dave Burn

Pluto for Architectural Radicals Students Educators
15p plus 3p postage.
ISBN 0902818 30 9
Unit 10 Spencer Court
7 Chalcot Road
London NW1 8LH
also from
IS Books
6 Cottons Gardens
London E2 8DN



John Hellebrand

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We fight:

- For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.
- Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.
- For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.
- Against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.
- For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.
- Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.
- For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.
- Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.
- For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.
- Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.
- Against immigration restriction.
- For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.
- For real social, economic and political equality for women.
- Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
- Against secret diplomacy.
- Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.
- For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.
- We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.
- The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.
- It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world, the point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

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

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

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Dewsbury
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
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

**GREATER LONDON
and HOME COUNTIES**
Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon

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

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

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

Dear... I real... the... to the... at a... to kick... socialist... not protest... of your demand for the... and... reformist... more... committed to... longer so... who... the... when... fore... substitution... HATERS

WE'RE HUMAN BEINGS -NOT STATISTICS

MANY thanks for your article on 'The Dust' (Socialist Worker 16 June). I wonder if you could bring the following 'case histories' to your readers' attention in answer to the footnote by Dr Cochrane of the Medical Research Council.

ONE: A miner from Porth Rhondda had to cease work in 1964 with a chest complaint. He went for six medical boards after this date, which entails x-rays etc, and was found to be free from dust. He died in 1972. Cause of death: PNEUMOCONIOSIS. His wife is now in receipt of Industrial Widow's Benefit. NO DUST IN LIFE, ONLY IN DEATH.

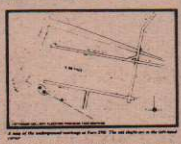
TWO: In the Pontypridd area in October 1972 a man was refused hardship allowance and was told he was fit to resume working underground. In December 1972 he died and after a post-mortem the cause

SHAFTS UNSEEN FOR 100 YEARS



The vital records were there—but they were not consulted

Mistakes that opened the door for disaster



of death was given as PNEUMOCONIOSIS.

THREE: A man certified as being 100 per cent disabled through pneumoconiosis dies and yet the cause of death is given as having nothing to do with the dust.

FOUR: A personal friend of mine, who in life was awarded the magnificent amount of 10 per cent disabled with 'dust', died last month. Cause of death: PNEUMOCONIOSIS.

I think Dr Cochrane and the Medical Research Council should have a good look at the physical effects of this disease before they say 'the results appear relevant to the work of the Industrial Injuries Advisory Committee.'

They, of course, are only dealing with statistics. We are talking of human beings.—A H DAVIES, Cwm Lodge, Pontypridd, South Wales.

THE Lofthouse disaster and the negligence which contributed to it reminded me of the war years when I was employed at Arley Colliery in the Warwickshire coalfield as a Bevin Boy.

The 'stall' where I worked had been operating in contravention of the Coal Mines Act for years. It was impossible to use a coalcutter machine on the face owing to the fragmented nature of the roof in '46s' stall. It is contrary to the Coal Mines Act to use explosive to bring down uncut coal in these conditions. Yet this we did every day.

When an inspector came in I was told to hide the shot-firing tackle under slack coal. The inspector must have known all about this.—DAVID FRASER, Rugby.

No, haters don't make the best socialists

A GOOD revolutionary is not motivated primarily by hate as John Prance argues. ('Haters make the best fighters', 30 June). The best marxists were men of great compassion and caring, as any reading of Marx, Lenin or Trotsky will confirm (this is also true of the best writers in this paper).

A psychology of hate leads to irrational, compulsive and patterned behaviour as you get with many fascists and racials. A revolutionary needs his intelligence to operate on all cylinders even where his feelings make it difficult.

One of the Fine Tubes militants said at a meeting last year that he tried to control his hatred for the scabs because it was necessary to attempt to recruit them into the union. Blind hatred would prevent this. Like all revolutionaries, he needed to temper his emotions with a

hard-headed strategy.

It is necessary to be both hard-headed and compassionate.

There is another danger to John Prance's arguments. If you are motivated by hate then you may create hating relationships throughout the revolutionary group. Some existing sectarian groups operate on the basis of browbeating and intolerance, and this is one reason why they won't build a revolutionary party.

Finally, there is a grave theoretical error in the letter. Prance has a 'stages theory' where 'stage 1' is fighting hatefully and 'stage 2' (after the revolution) is all brotherhood and love.

Marx rejected this way of thinking. The seeds of the 'new' are here and now in the 'womb' of present

society. It is foolhardy to forget this fact because, in certain historical conditions, leaders do sometimes arise in the movement with all the characteristics of 'haters' and the result can be disastrous. Witness Stalin.—JOHN SOUTHGATE, London NW3.

The rich were never needed

SHAME on Chris Harman. Class division never has been, nor will be inevitable. He justifies the inequalities of the past using an argument that is still frequently applied in varying forms to the present.

At what magic moment in time did the wealthy, leisured elite cease to be necessary to human advancement and become an oppressive ruling class of whom we ought to be rid? Nineteenth century millowners were no more socially beneficial than the industrial magnates of today: profit before people, then as now.

Those who are possessed of wealth and power do not surrender them for the asking. There will always be a substantial number of people ready to fight to retain their privileged status.

Once power has been wrested from them the whole machinery of repression is then created afresh to crush their resistance so that in an effort to preserve itself the revolution sows the seeds of its own destruction. It is this that has perverted the revolutions of the past and will pervert those of the future until someone finds means of shaking the majority of working people out of their apathetic compliance with the existing system into using their main weapon—sheer force of numbers—to peaceful and powerful effect.

The hate of which John Prance speaks is more easily learnt than eradicated and can have no place in the formation of a truly free and equitable society.—PAMELA VASSIE, Chesham, Bucks.

IT'S TIME WORKERS TOOK THE DECISIONS

WARMEST congratulations to hospital workers at the Royal Portsmouth Hospital who have been operating a ban on private patients since early March, and to the Wessex Shop Stewards Committee which has supported them.

This action is not only a well-directed attack on the pockets of the consultants who dominate the National Health Service and are, almost to a man, devoted supporters of the Tories and their policies. It is much more. It is an epoch-making demonstration of the power of workers to decide who should benefit from the services they provide.

Other workers please note! What about transport workers refusing to collect fares from old age pensioners? And clerks at gas and electricity boards and at the Post Office refusing to send bills to pensioners for gas, electricity, and TV? Not as part of a dispute, but as a permanent policy!

Going back to the hospital workers, let us never forget that the government spends huge sums in

subsidies to private practice in NHS hospitals. In 1970-71 they spent £15 million.

But there are two big gaps in the report from Portsmouth and Wessex. We hear nothing about what is being done to get the support of the other unions in the hospitals. Are there no joint shop stewards' committees in any of the hospitals? Have any mass meetings of workers been held in the hospitals so that the workers could be appealed to directly to support the struggle and so short-circuit union bureaucracies?

Secondly, we hear no word of any appeal for support being made to other trade unionists in the towns of Wessex. Are the hospital unions represented on the trades councils? Have the trades councils been asked to organise support from their constituent unions?

Perhaps all of this has been done, or attempted, but it is so important for the hospital workers' struggle that we should hear about it, one way or another.—E DYER, London WC1.

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Car firms make men into robots

THE review of the report on British Leyland (Socialist Worker, 30 June) was excellent, especially the part dealing with the tyranny of working under Measured Day Work.

A few weeks ago the following news item appeared in the local Birmingham press, and it will give readers an idea of what it's like in the car plants.

Trevor Jones works in the Cofton Hackett plant at Austin, Longbridge. He's done the same job for 10 years—drilling holes in fly wheels, 74 fly wheels by the hour. He explained: 'The place just got me down. Try to imagine doing that job day in, day out for 10 years.'

Something snapped in him, the dust and boredom got on top and he threw a chunk of metal into a £200,000 machine and caused a breakdown.

He ended up in court—a man of previously unblemished character as they say—and was put on probation for 12 months.

His case, and the situation which is similar for thousands of other car workers, should be remembered. The pursuit of profit, the degradation of men to robots is behind the glossy front of British Leyland and the other car giants. Our arguments for a society based on workers' control and production for need, not profit, have never been more vital.

As one Austin worker said: 'If I knew what the parts we were making are for, if we had decided to make dumper trucks for India or kidney machines I could stand working, but all it means now is I'm like one cog in a big machine.'

The one point the review didn't mention was how to organise to fight British Leyland, and here the need is to build factory branches of the International Socialists in all the plants and link them together. In Birmingham and elsewhere that is the job readers of the paper have to do.


1980 isn't far away—that's when the report predicts a severe crisis for British Leyland. Time is short.—GRANVILLE WILLIAMS, Birmingham.

England's first wage freeze

REG GROVES' chronology of the Peasants' Revolt was admirable, but I think the reasons for the revolt were not brought out sufficiently.

From the article it appears that the Poll tax was the last straw which shifted the starving people into action. In fact the revolt occurred when times had never been better for the peasantry.

The 13th century was a time of appalling misery and suffering, largely because the level of technology remained static while population kept rising. The Black Death of 1349 and later plagues reduced the population by about a quarter.


Socialist Worker wants to hear from you. What you like about the paper—and what you don't like. Your thoughts and comments on problems facing working people. Your experiences at work.
But please be brief. We receive so many letters now that we cannot publish them all. We could publish many more if writers restricted themselves to 250 words at the most.
Letters must arrive first post Monday. Handwritten letters must be legible and with names in capitals please to avoid confusion.

This shifted the advantage from capital to labour so that by the 1370s labourers were in a position to enlarge their land holdings or pick and choose between employers. Workers began to make extraordinary demands which staggered the ruling class—like insisting on three kinds of meat to be provided at dinner time, in addition to wages. Monetary wages doubled almost everywhere.

The ruling class, desperate to maintain the old conditions, passed the Statute of Labourers. This declared that wages above the 1346 level (tuppence a day) were 'excessive' and illegal. The prices clause in the act was much more non-committal and declared that prices should be 'reasonable'—which meant, as it does today, the most that they could get away with.

The workers and peasants were angry about the Act, which they rightly interpreted as directly against their own interests. They ignored it and eventually the lords gave up all hope of enforcing it. The workers were aware that real gains had been made and were determined not to slide back into the old conditions. This was still a burning issue in 1381, but Reg Groves does not mention it.

Reg Groves' assertion that the peasantry of 1381 were not stupid, as most historians believe, is certainly

true. Many of those still owing labour services to the lord took the precaution of stealing and burning the manorial rolls, which laid out in detail the duties of each serf, before they set out for London. On their return, if the lord sought to drag them back into servitude, they would say very politely that the lord must be mistaken as they had never been serfs.

Without the evidence of the manorial rolls the lord could not pursue his case.

The peasants did not refuse to pay the Poll Tax because they would starve otherwise. They realised that the new tax was just another way in which the landlords were attempting to reduce their incomes and they just were not going to swallow it. Opposition to the tax was so ferocious that the government never again attempted to introduce it.

Another factor which was not mentioned was the crucial role played by the artisans and tiny working class of London. Although the peasantry began the revolt, without the help of these wage labourers the rebels would never have been able to enter the city, let alone hold it for three days.

One of the major lessons of the revolt is that in both country and town the most prosperous and advanced people led the struggle, not the most oppressed and downtrodden.

Marx said that each epoch is pregnant with the seeds of its own destruction. In the fragments of the propaganda circulated by the rebels that have survived, the phrase 'for now is tyme' constantly recurs. Six hundred years later workers are still struggling and I get the feeling that they think that the notion 'for now is tyme' is still apt.—SUSAN BRULEY, London SW16.



The realms of partial truth

AM I getting jaded, or would I be correct in saying that a paper which has 'Socialism' inscribed on its banner has no business in peddling the half-truths, innuendo, and lies which characterise the capitalist press?

I refer to your report on the ATTI Conference (2 June) which, in seeking to damn the executive and give credibility to the Rank and File Technical Teachers group, moves from the realms of partial truth to falsehood with an ease which would do credit to the Daily Express.

We were told that the executive tried to head off militant resolutions, which is perfectly true. It is also true that the executive 'includes members of the Communist Party'. Put the two facts together and you get

the innuendo that the Party was trying to head off militant resolutions.

It reminded me very much of last year's report in Socialist Worker of the conference in which a Communist member of the executive was said to have spoken—unsuccessfully as it transpired—against a resolution opposing government pay policy. In fact, it was his splendid speech for the motion which certainly got it through!

Another half-truth: your reporter writes that the executive made it clear they would not fight seriously against staff-student ratio cuts. I too was very disappointed with their attitude. Yet it should be said that the executive gave full support to a motion to blacklist the Kent authority should they fail to respond to ATTI

demands not to sack more staff. This was the most militant resolution of the conference—Socialist Worker did not report it.

Finally, the flat-rate salaries demand 'was overturned by the executive'. Not at all. It was vehemently denounced by them, but it was defeated overwhelmingly by the conference. And lest your readers have by this stage got the impression that I'm some kind of right-wing Party or executive hack, may I say that I was the proposer of the flat-rate motion and bitterly attacked the executive's attitude towards it.

I look forward to next year's conference report.—LES BROOK, Tonbridge, Kent.

Communication is power - with money in control

ABOUT two-thirds of the way through his diligent examination of modern journalism,* Herbert Brucker writes: 'Our problem remains what it has always been—to democratise communication.'

Brucker's problem is that he is the classic 'liberal'. He is honest, sensitive, suspicious—but he lacks a sense of outrage, while approving of it in others. So, while he can recognise the equation money = the power of mass communication, he cannot see that hope of altering the equation will only come through a radical change in society.

His book concentrates on tinkering with the relationship between communication and state or commercial control. It is a pity that so much thought poured into a book should lead to a whimper of conclusions.

He cites admirably the examples of French, German and Scandinavian 'democratisation'—particularly on Le Monde, where the staff have a controlling slice of the action and a veto over major editorial decisions. But he seems to see this as the ultimate rather than a step in the right direction, and doesn't ask why most of the power in Le Monde goes to the journalists, rather than composers, printers, van drivers and all those others who keep the paper coming out.

He also sees technology as an ally in freeing the media and the public from commercial shackles by making communication more flexible, cheap and accessible through the introduction of cable channels. 'We must... make certain that cable, including all its ancillary hardware, is set up not as a private possession but as a public service,' he writes.

Bravo! But only two paragraphs earlier he has conceded that the economics of radio and TV led the Americans to give 'the public airwaves, without charging rent, and with little other restraint, to the money men—each of whom, if he was reasonably competent, found that he had in his possession a money tree that really belonged to the public.'

Sterile

How all this is going to change when cable or any of its competing communications challengers become cheaply available, Brucker does not explain. Without a drastic upheaval of the American system—a system crudely based on the power of the dollar—it clearly will not happen, despite the elegantly propounded arguments of well-intentioned men like Brucker.

And this is the failing of his book: he lacks a political perspective. I suspect, from the casual apolitical tone of his book, that he has become politically sterile through years in the impartial wilderness of 'objectivity'.

Nonetheless the book is well worth reading for those who wonder sadly over the daily doings of the newspapers, radio and TV. Brucker's knowledge is wide-ranging and his points, though rarely barbed as they should be, are buttressed by many good examples of how the media operate.

It is simply his unsuspecting optimism for the future, when contrasted with his analysis of the past, that I find impossible to accept.

Early on he says of the reporter: *COMMUNICATION IS POWER, by Herbert Brucker, Oxford University Press, £4.25

Another important aspect of the forecast of Bowler is the way it highlights the need for the merged company to buy up UK profit. Only £42 millions of profit is expected to be available out of a pre-tax profit of £152 millions and while this includes an unusually known amount for minority interests, the ruling UK tax rate is 40 per cent. So expect an important UK acquisition before the end of this year. No one is giving off class as to what sectors and industry will diversify into, on indeed what exists. That means in as much as will be held in the future. Finally, the decision to give £1.3 billion to the way of health work in Malindi. The CJ chairman is spread across one of the financial operations which are accounted for in the business. Among differently in the two countries. The consolidated net profit for the merged company to buy were £92.7 millions for the French and only £72.7 millions for the British. This arises because of a different treatment of certain items. French directors, for instance, are usually entitled to a proportion of the dividend attributable to shares held by them. In France, the director's profit is paid as part of the remuneration to the director. In the UK, the profit is paid as a dividend. The French companies do, in fact, pay these appropriations. American companies do not. The spread is spread across several items which are accounted for differently in the two countries.

'He practices a calling that can be second to none in nobility. For the reporter who knows his job, especially if he has a boss who realises that journalism is something more than a business, has it in his power to make the fresh winds of truth blow through the minds of men. It is in this that reporting has its greatness.'

It is the warning about the boss that poses the problem, and Brucker, for all his honest searching, cannot find an answer—because he is searching in the dark. Someone needs to switch on a political light for him, and he could then come up with something really valuable.

ONE of those newspapermen who act as amateur management consultants to industries in trouble has just turned professional.

Innis Macbeath, until recently Labour Editor of The Times, has just joined AIC, a firm of management consultants which is an offshoot of LEASCO. The headman of LEASCO is the American Saul Steinberg who was so impressed by the number of millionaires prepared to drink Robert Maxwell's champagne that he offered to buy Pergamon Press from him.

Now Macbeath, when at The Times, was a strong union man; father of the National Union of Journalists' chapel, chairman of the federated house chapel. And he is still chairman of the Central London Branch of the NUJ, a position which he would like to keep unless, in his own words, his new employers 'find it incompatible with his work.'

What is more important is that Macbeath has retained a contract with The Times to continue writing on labour and industrial affairs.

As a man employed in one job to help managements out of trouble, he is hardly likely in his other job to give helpful advice to unions and workers in disputes with the bosses. Otherwise, AIC might find Macbeath's Times contributions 'incompatible with his work', bosses. Otherwise, AIC might find keep both jobs.

Barry Ellis
LEONARD HILL IS ON HOLIDAY.

THE MILLION POUND STRIKE

THE strike in defence of trade union rights at Roberts-Arundel, Stockport, in 1967-8 was a victory for working class solidarity. Millions threatened to strike in solidarity, thousands blacked the factory's products, and management was forced to climb down. The firm made such losses in the confrontation that it later went out of business.

Trade unionists won the first round at Roberts-Arundel, and lost the second at Fine Tubes. Be ready for the third.

THE MILLION POUND STRIKE, by Jim Arnison, introduction by Hugh Scanlon 45p (postage included) from

NEWS

Militant beaten up by police



TONY BOYLE: Smashed lip

'I'll show you my credentials,' said Tony Boyle, engineering worker at Massey Ferguson, Liverpool, producing a jacket soaked in blood and a number of photographs of his face battered to pieces.

'This is what happened to me last Saturday when I was running amok, beating up policemen, handcuffed to a police van. Somehow, I found the strength to throw a 3ft long bit of wood 600 yards into the Mersey!'

He was appealing to a packed meeting of International Socialists on Wednesday last week for funds to help the defence of the 13 arrested during the previous Saturday's demonstration which forced Colin Jordan's fascists out of Liverpool, probably forever.

So angry were several of Tony's

mates when they saw his condition after being released on bail from the police station that they had to be restrained from re-entering the station and savaging the desk sergeant. Tony, whose face was gushing blood, had been charged with assaulting the police officers and possessing an offensive weapon—the stick which he had, according to the police statements, thrown into the Mersey.

The meeting collected more than £25 for the defence fund.

Earlier Paul Foot, from the IS national committee, had spoken of the urgent need to build a revolutionary party. Six people joined IS after the meeting.

NEWSPAPER SELLERS FACE HARASSMENT

THE police in the Devon town of Exmouth are showing an uncompromisingly hostile attitude to anyone who tries to sell Socialist Worker.

On 30 June, three members of Exeter IS travelled, as is their custom, to sell the paper in Exmouth High Street. A uniformed policeman approached them and demanded that they stop selling. The three IS members protested that Socialist Worker is registered with the Post Office, and that there is no law against selling.

'Ah,' said the policeman, 'but the pavement is crowded and you are taking up too much space.' The sellers protested that it was not a busy Saturday, and the pavement

was not at all crowded.

They weren't taking any more space, they argued, than the several other people up and down the pavement who were collecting money for mentally-handicapped children, and who, for some reason, had not been approached by the police.

This is not the first time that IS members have been harassed by the Exmouth police. Three months ago sellers of Socialist Worker outside a factory were closely questioned by the police as to their political motives, and two weeks ago two IS members, who had been round the docks selling papers, were stopped in a main street of the town and frisked.

MINERS SIGN ON FOR PHASE 3 FREEZE BATTLE

BRITAIN'S 260,000 miners put down their names last week for the coming fight against Phase Three of the Tory wage freeze.

by Bill Message, Inverness

Delegates to the annual conference here instructed their executive to lodge a claim for increases of between £8.21 and £12.71 and voted for a policy of confrontation if the government's limitations seek to restrict the claim.

President Joe Gormley made possibly the most militant speech that has ever passed his lips, but this did not fool many rank and file delegates who recognised the familiar signs of hedging.

Mr Gormley promised that 'never again shall we allow miners' wages to slip down the scale, such as we allowed during those years of 1947 to 1958.' But at the same time he committed himself to the pending productivity deal, ignoring the fact that productivity dealing led to many wage cuts, massive redundancies and sweeping pit closures in the late 1960s.

He pleaded: 'How can anyone expect trade union leaders to be moderate in their claims for wages for the members they represent when they see so much money available for squandering in the board rooms of multitudes of companies?'

FAILURE

The wages resolution instructed the national executive to secure increases to establish minimum wages of £35 per week for surface workers, £40 per week for underground workers and £45 per week for face workers, in an agreement to run for 12 months from November.

The executive was instructed to ballot the members 'for their decision on any negotiated settlement or forms of industrial action.'

After the failure of an attempt by delegates to withdraw an executive invitation to Coal Board chairman

Derek Ezra to speak, Ezra made the familiar appeals for higher productivity and closer co-operation between the NUM and the NCB. Talking of the recent European tour by board and union officials, he said: 'On our travels throughout Europe I'm glad to say that the people to whom we speak often cannot tell who is management and who is union. If we can achieve this external appearance of solidarity I am sure that we can achieve internal solidarity as well.'

Not a murmur of protest from the union leadership greeted this scandalous indictment of the example NUM officials set their fellow trade unionists in Europe.

The conference passed unanimously a resolution declaring its complete opposition to the Industrial Relations Act and advocating 'a policy of non-co-operation with the agencies the Act has created.' Then Joe Gormley said that it was 'accepted on the understanding that the union is still able to protect itself' by appearing before those very same agencies.

The resolution went on to reject the government's anti-inflation policy and urge 'a policy of confrontation when this stands in the way of legitimate pay demands.' It also condemned 'the huge inflationary burden of arms spending' which now runs at over £3,500 million per year, and demanded the repeal of the Housing Finance Act, pledging its support to local authorities which defy the Act.

Several delegates condemned the executive's handling of this year's unsuccessful claim and its insistence on the productivity deal, but many of the lessons of the unsuccessful

ballot of March this year were not applied. Delegates pressed the executive to submit the claim immediately, but it is not likely to go before the Coal Board until the beginning of October—at the earliest.

Michael McGahey and other delegates stressed the importance of returning to the coal-fields to campaign for the claim, but the closest the conference came to discussing the actual tactics was when Don Hayward, from South Wales, called for an immediate overtime ban to prepare for the fight ahead.

Arthur Scargill, newly-elected president of Yorkshire NUM, claimed it was not necessary to discuss the tactics at this time, but hinted at possible new methods of struggle.

INSIST

This attitude which exists among many of the left-Labour and Communist Party leaders in the NUM needs to be fought hard by the rank and file, who must insist on their right to discuss and prepare for the fight now. These 'left' leaders only play into the hands of the right-wing by failing to mobilise the members in preparation for the wavering and betrayal that is to be expected from the right.

In the election for a national vice-president to replace the Yorkshire right-winger Sydney Schofield, who is retiring through ill-health, Michael McGahey beat Len Clarke, president of the Nottingham area, by 155 votes to 126.

McGahey also came close to beating Joe Gormley in the election of two NUM representatives to the TUC General Council. The voting was: Lawrence Daly 278, Joe Gormley 146, Michael McGahey 135.

Village workers to defend 1000 jobs

HORNDON, Essex: 1000 workers are waiting for the message that will mean the end of their jobs.

For their bosses, Howard Rotovator, the agricultural machinery giant, have decided to close down the only major industry at Horndon, a village near Basildon new town. The chop will come at any time between now and autumn and will throw hundreds of men and women on to the unemployment scrap heap in an area where jobs are scarce.

Management dropped the bombshell when they called the stewards in to discuss a pay rise. The stewards were told that there was no room to expand.

But former steward John Daly said: 'They have been planning this for the past two years but never said anything to the men about it. They said they couldn't expand but we have been expanding. We have a new assembly shop and a new timber shop. And there's plenty of land around.'

No guarantee

Speaking on the sports ground outside the factory, John said: 'We have plenty of orders and plenty of work. The place has been making a profit of between £1 million and £2 million a year for the past four years.'

'We have heard that the management is getting £12½ million for the site. But they told us they were only getting £2 million.'

The work is being moved to new factories at Ipswich and Durham. The Horndon workers have been told they can move too... but without a job guarantee.

Said John: 'The firm will have to employ 75 per cent local labour anyway. So they're planning to take only key workers with them. What with the grants they'll get for opening new factories, providing new jobs

and moving the workers they want, they're not exactly going to lose on the deal.

The people who will lose out are the workers. They stand to get a paltry £50 severance pay plus redundancy money. At a mass meeting called by stewards to relay news of the closure, the idea of a factory occupation was put forward and received enthusiastically.

But so far no real fight has been put up by the union organisation—mainly General and Municipal—at the plant. The chief concern of the factory convenor has been negotiating better severance pay.

John Daly added: 'We want another mass meeting and we want to get the union officials in.'

The answer to this mass murder of jobs must lie with the shop-floor workers themselves. They must organise rank and file resistance, link up with workers at other Rotovator plants and fight for the right to work.

As assembly worker Les Witterick said: 'This is the thanks we get for slogging away at an assembly line for years. We're all really angry about it.' That anger needs to be translated into action.

BUSMEN'S PAPER IS PLANNED

MEMBERS of the International Socialists who work in the bus industry have decided to work towards a national rank and file paper. A meeting last week was attended by busmen both from within and outside the National Bus Company. Several IS bus branches are being set up.

One is already established in York.

WHAT'S ON

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

IS MEETINGS

TEESSIDE DISTRICT IS public meeting
THE UNPLEASANT AND UNACCEPTABLE FACE OF CAPITALISM.
Speaker Tony Cliff (IS executive committee member). Friday 20 July, 8pm prompt. AUEW Hall, Borough Road, Middlesbrough.
ALL SOCIALISTS AND TRADE UNIONISTS WELCOME

DEWSBURY IS public meeting
WHY LABOUR DOESN'T FIGHT
Speaker Tony Cliff
Tuesday 19 July
Textile Club

ISLINGTON IS Public meeting: Socialist Worker—why we need it. Speaker Laurie Flynn. Tuesday 24 July, 8pm. The George, Liverpool Road, London N1.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD IS public meeting: The Exploitation of the Third World. Speaker Peter Marsden. Thursday 19 July, 8pm, 105 Turners Hill, Akeleyfield.

CARDIFF IS public meeting: Public Employees—Scapegoats for the Freeze? Mon 23 July, 8pm, Blue Anchor pub, St Mary Street, Cardiff.

CAMDEN IS public meeting: Joe Levy—one of the most unacceptable faces of capitalism. The socialist reply to property speculation. Tuesday 17 July, 8pm, The Enterprise pub (opposite Chalk Farm tube).

CRAY VALLEY IS public meeting: Wages and prices—the Big Confidence Trick. Speaker Dave Percival. Tuesday 17 July, 8pm, The Broomwood Hotel, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray.

OTHER MEETINGS

WORKERS' FIGHT public meeting
FIGHT AGAINST RACISM—WHAT STEPS FORWARD?
Speaker Stephen Borishley (Workers' Fight editorial board)
Sunday 15 July, 8pm
Golden Lion (corner of Kings Cross Rd and Britannia St), London N1

MARCH AGAINST THE ANGLO-PORTUGUESE ALLIANCE STOP CAETANO'S VISIT!
Sunday 15 July. Assemble Charing Cross Embankment 2.30pm, march to Downing St and Portuguese Embassy, rally in Hyde Park with speaker from PAIGC (Guinea). Further info from End the Alliance Campaign, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2. Phone: 734 9541

NOTICES

ALGERIA: Only two places left in IS minibus to Algeria leaving London 25 August. Costs for travel (including petrol) only £55 return. Phone 01-254 3543 or write to Richard, 19 Lidfield Road, London N16.

FULL-TIME SECRETARY/TYPIST wanted for IS national office, IS members only. Apply to Jim Higgins, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

LARGE YORKSHIRE ATTIC bedsit, low rent from October in exchange for being in the house most weekdays from 4pm-6pm with two small girls aged 5 and 7. Contact Carey, 6 Granville Terrace, Bingley, Yorkshire.

GAY SOCIALIST GROUP
All IS members welcome.
Contact Sue Bruley, 18 Dickenson Rd, London N8.

IS BOOKS can now undertake to obtain any paperback under the following imprints within two weeks: Aldine, Armada, Arrow, Bantam, Carousel, Corgi, Coronet, Everyman, Faber, Fontana, How and Why, Knight, Lions, Mayflower, New English Library, Paladin, Pan, Pan Piper, Panther, Papermac (fiction only), Peacock, Pelican, Penguin, Piccolo, Puffin, Signet/Mentor, Sphere, Tandem (not soft cover library), World Distributors.

URGENTLY NEEDED for completing micro-film records: **INDUSTRIAL WORKER** nos 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10; **LABOUR WORKER** nos 11, 12, 30-32, 35-44, 49-52, 54-55, 58-64, 81, 83-86, **SOCIALIST REVIEW** vol 1, vol 2(6), vol 3(1, 6, and 9), vol 5(1-9), and vols. 6-11(all). Copies will be returned in good order. Please contact Bill Kaye at 739 6273, or J Hennessy, The Harvester Press, 50 Grand Parade, Brighton, Sussex.

BRIGHTON IS comrade and two kids wish to exchange flat with similar elsewhere 1-2 weeks in August. Write details to J Clements, 9 Bedford Square, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 2PN.

Don't leave it to chance: take out a postal subscription to SW



LONDON:-500 people marched on a demonstration last Saturday in protest at the French government's ban on the Ligue Communiste. The demonstration was supported by almost all the British revolutionary Socialist groups, and nominally, by the Communist Party. Speakers at the Hyde Park rally stressed the links between repression in France, Britain and Ireland. They included John Palmer of the International Socialists, Angela Weir, who was acquitted in the Stoke Newington 8 trial, a representative of the Shrewsbury 26 Defence Committee, speakers from the Ligue Communiste itself and the French revolutionary socialist group Lutte Ouvriere. PICTURE: Peter Harrap (Report).

Chrysler unions scared of victory

by Ian Connell
(AUEW, Chrysler)

NOW that the dust has settled over the Chrysler 'shoddy work' affair, are there any lessons that can be learned?

The first is that a determined and united workforce can and will win concessions from a reactionary management. The Chrysler pickets proved this—especially the flying picket.

Another less obvious, and alarming, lesson is that the unions appeared afraid of an outright victory. No doubt they scored on several points, but when a little more pressure could have won almost any demands, they did not know what to do. Or did they?

Did they see, for example, that such a victory could have made trade union members realise, at last, the power they have as long as they are united? Did the union leaders see that this could be a threat to their own positions?

Some of the union leaders were members of the Communist Party—a party pledged to replace the present system with socialism—and they were among the worst offenders. At every stage of the struggle the leaders balked when action was required. They had to be forced along.

One gallant convenor informed a group of pickets that 'they', the convenors, were running the strike and would do so any way 'they' saw fit.

Warnings

On the day before the Stoke plant was picketed, the same numskull told the Ryton Action Group that under no circumstances would they picket the Stoke plant, also that he had already spoken to 'a few influential people' and told them: 'If there are any pickets on this plant tomorrow they are unofficial, so run over the top of them.' In the light of what happened later, I have no doubt that he regretted the statement.

Another said we should not picket any place other than Ryton, as to do so would serve no useful purpose, while a third refused point blank to do any picket duty at night. Needless to say, these three freedom fighters are still firmly entrenched as convenors.

Since our return to work, the company has been handing out warnings like Christmas cards and have told the workers that it is costing the company more to keep us working than it cost them to keep us on strike. They have accused men of going to the toilet 16 times in one shift, and have spoken of a loss of £1500 per hour. They will not tolerate this, they say, and will take whatever action they see fit.

So now we know. After four weeks on strike the workers in Ryton are worse off than ever. The pay and other agreements are finished and we are working without an agreement of any kind.

Can the union officials really have been so stupid, or are there more sinister reasons for sending us back under the conditions we have to bear now? Must we fight an enemy in our midst before fighting the enemy of the working class?

Council site 250 out

ISLEWORTH, Middlesex:-250 building workers have struck again at the Ivy Bridge council site estate in Twickenham Road, where a previous contractor went bankrupt after a stormy two-year fight with the men. This time the men are demanding another 35p bonus and the end of lump labour.

Mowlem, the contractors, employ about 100 lumpers on the site which is now years behind schedule.

No support for accused 26-official

by Ian Collins, TGWU, Bristol

BRISTOL:-The local transport union district committee has refused to support the campaign for the 26 building workers to be tried at Shrewsbury. A resolution at a joint meeting of the steel fixers' and labourers branches, calling on all branch officials and shop stewards to discuss the trials, was never put, despite an angry debate.

Bill Hamer, local building section full-time official, said it was 'unconstitutional' since it was being moved by labourers at what was a steel fixers' branch meeting.

This is correct, according to the rule-book, but it is about 12 years since the labourers' branch met. Under pressure, two meetings were held after last year's strike, but now the union is refusing repeated requests to revive the branch.

It should be noted, however, that votes are regularly cast on behalf of the branch during elections, that its members contribute weekly to a branch fund, and that Sid Parfit represents it on the regional committee.

For months labourers, scaffolders and steel fixers have been pressing for support for the North Wales building workers' on trial. Last month a meeting of shop stewards was called 'due to the concern of many members,' to discuss the trials.

At the meeting every steward except one supported taking a coach party to Shrewsbury for the hearing in the middle of June. The loudest voice against this was that of Sid Parfit, the regional representative, who said that 'it should be left to the jury to decide.'

Another meeting, only three days before the hearing was to discuss any developments 'further up the union'. There were. No more meetings would be held.

The Shrewsbury trial is to be dropped—by order.

'Black Prestige' call

DERBY:-APEX members on strike for equal pay at the Prestige kitchenware factory have called on other factories in the group to black any work that is transferred. GMWU shop floor workers at Derby last week refused a management request to do some office work.

'SINISTER' ACCENT IN TRIAL OF PICKETS

MOLD, Flintshire:-The first stage of the biggest court-room attack on picketing and workers' organisations in this country for half a century is now under way.

In the Crown Court at Mold eight North Wales building workers are on trial accused of making an affray, intimidating people to refrain from working and causing damage to property during a picket of the Brenig Dam site at the height of the official building workers' strike last September.

The trial is now into its third week, and since the defence is not expected to open its case until Monday, it is likely to continue into next month.

Five of the eight will be in court again in October as part of the giant 'Shrewsbury 26' trial for alleged conspiracy to intimidate strikebreakers during the same strike.

The prosecution has concentrated its fire on the supposedly unofficial nature of the Chester and North Wales strike action committee, on the defendants' membership of, or association with, the militant rank and file trade union organisation, Building Workers Charter, and on some of the defendants' alleged admissions

that they had taken part in damaging property at the Brenig Dam site.

Maurice Drake, prosecuting, said last week that what had allegedly gone on at the site was 'not ordinary trade union conduct'. The pickets 'had been organised by the action committee' and this 'was not part of the union'.

In fact the action committees were set up officially by both unions concerned, the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians and the Transport and General Workers' Union, to spread and strengthen the strike.

The men were members of Building Workers Charter, said Drake. This was not, he insisted, 'a trade union movement', and 'not run by trade union officials.'

Building Workers Charter is a rank and file trade union body which holds regular meetings, publishes a paper and elects its officers in exactly the same way as the more democratic sections of the official trade union movement which the prosecuting counsel pretends to uphold.

REFUSE

The prosecution has also made constant references to the Shrewsbury trial and the events leading up to it. This is part of the attempt to establish a 'sinister' element in the case. The judge, Lord Justice Talbot, set aside defence objections to this line of argument.

Kenneth O'Shea said under oath that when the police first came and asked him to go to the police station for questioning and he refused, they said they would get a warrant and take him by force if necessary. He added that he was threatened with 10 years imprisonment and that he got the impression that the police were determined to get convictions.

Mr O'Shea said that he felt he had been treated like an animal by the police—as if he had committed murder. The strike had been for better pay and conditions, he said. On some sites, conditions were so bad workers had to use hedgerows for toilets.

Another of the defendants, Gwyn Roberts, denied that he had volunteered a statement produced by the police earlier in the trial. He said when he was first taken to the police station, the police seemed to know a fantastic amount about his picketing activities and had produced photographs.

He had been asked questions but did not know his answers were being written down for his signature later. He had not been cautioned, he said. He denied that he had at any time admitted smashing a dump truck window.

Now union tries to victimise printers

by Roger Rosewell

LIVERPOOL:-A second attempt is being made to victimise the four trade unionists whose sacking in March sparked off a six-week sit-in at Tillotsons printing works.

The four were sacked for obeying the instructions of a mass meeting to organise a work to rule against 26 threatened redundancies. The sit-in won their reinstatement.

But this time the workers' union, the print union SOGAT, is attempting to victimise the four chapel officials—shop stewards—and again the charge against them is their belief in trade union democracy.

This is a clear example of how trade union leaders and employers share certain common basic dislikes. High on the list is rank and file trade union democracy.

On 27 June the four officials had to attend a special committee of inquiry set up by the SOGAT executive. The results of this are not yet known but if the four are found guilty there could be an attempt to ban them from holding office in the union.

Rejected

The men behind this latest victimisation attempt are Bill Keys, the SOGAT president, and Mr Miles, a national officer of the union, who have complained that during the sit-in they met the management and negotiated a settlement only for the chapel to reject it by an 85 per cent majority.

Since the end of the sit-in Keys has privately met the Tillotsons management without consulting the chapel committee. Near the end of the dispute, after the chapel had rejected his 'settlement', he wrote to the local branch of the union stating that because of this he and the general secretary, Vincent Flynn, were refusing to continue supporting the Tillotsons workers and cutting off strike pay.

This is the conduct that ought to be investigated—not the decisions of the four officials to carry out the decisions of mass meetings. All SOGAT members should prepare to defend the four if they are victimised by the union.

SECOND MASS PICKET AT EQUAL PAY STRIKE

ECCLES, Lancashire:-Nearly 200 engineering and clerical workers' union members turned out on Monday morning for the second mass picket at Salford Electrical Instruments, where APEX members have been on strike for six weeks over an equal pay claim.

The police were better prepared this time than last and 40 reinforcements were called in to force a way through for the scabs. When some set fire to the banner of the shop stewards' committee from nearby Gardners, the police response was predictably nil.

The last scab to cross the picket line was Harry Tonge, the AUEW convenor in the factory who has refused to black goods produced by scabs and has ignored directives from the district AUEW. He

was the only steward to go in. 'AUEW members want to know why this man's union card has not been taken off him,' said AUEW member Ron Coburn, from nearby Burmah Oil.

The picket was not strong enough to force the factory to close for the day. There was a lack of support from the AUEW district committee—no directives were sent out to convenors and some AUEW members were not even sure that the picket was on.

The solidarity shown with the men and women strikers at SEI has already borne fruit. Management has finally backed down on the principle of equal pay—and has offered 40p towards the £2 demanded. This laughable sum has been rejected.



I would like to join the International Socialists

Name

Address

Trade Union

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

Back-to-work vote a farce—steward

PERKINS 30000 BATTLE ON

PETERBOROUGH:-3000 workers at Perkins Engines walked out on strike on Tuesday less than two hours after returning to work after a 24-day lock-out.

The previous day a mass meeting had voted to accept a return-to-work agreement after Bob Wright, of the Engineering Union executive, told them management had conceded the principle of parity with the Coventry factories of parent company Massey Ferguson.

Militants at Monday's meeting had wanted to contest Wright's claim. They chanted, heckled, and demanded the right to address the meeting themselves.

Stewards on the platform seemed about to agree with them, but Wright refused to let the militants speak, shouting that there were paid anarchists at the meeting.

CONFUSION

One Perkins worker leapt on to the platform and took the microphone. Wright rushed towards him, grabbed the microphone and pushed away the man, whose union dues help pay for Wright's well-pressed and expensive pin-striped suit.

During this confusion the vote was taken, even though the workers had only heard one speech and one point of view. It was declared carried.

Afterwards groups of workers were scattered all over the playing field trying to work out what had happened. In just 45 minutes Bob Wright had managed to divide and confuse a work force which had stood firm against 11 weeks of harassment and three and a half weeks of lock-out by the management.

TOO CLEVER

As he hurried off the platform, he did not notice that he trod on a couple of torn-up union cards flung down by disgusted workers.

'It's typical. You can see what side they are on,' Perkins worker Pat Bennett told Socialist Worker. 'They were not prepared to allow any discussion.' Shop steward Paul Green described the way the vote had been handled as 'a farce'.

But Bob Wright had been just a little too clever. That very evening a management spokesman made it clear that the company had not accepted the workers' main demand. 'The unions can put whatever inter-

by S W reporter

pretation they want on the agreement. But we haven't conceded parity,' he said, when interviewed on Anglia TV.

The Perkins workers were determined not to lose everything after their long struggle. They struck on Tuesday, angrily demanding the retraction of this statement and the sacking of four canteen women who had worked during the lock-out.

Ernie Mason, senior engineering union steward, summed up the feel-

ings of a lot of workers. 'I am not a militant. I am not an anarchist. At the shop stewards' meeting I recommended the settlement, but I've since changed my mind,' he said.

Another steward, who did not wish to be named, said that the Perkins spokesman had done more for the unions at Perkins by telling the truth than Bob Wright and all the full-time officials put together.

Deputy convenor Jeff Cain told Tuesday's mass meeting: 'We ask you what you want to do.' There were chants of 'Out! Out!' and 'Bob Wright Out!'

Union cold shoulders strikers

BOOTLE:-Officials of the electricians' union ignored strikers from the Inland Revenue site, the longest strike in Britain, at a meeting of the Joint Industry Board at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, last week.

The JIB was meeting to discuss a dispute at Bass Charrington in Liverpool. Three strikers from the Inland Revenue site, John Byrne, Tommy Henderson and Keith Lofthouse, went to the Adelphi to meet the JIB, or at least arrange a meeting.

While they were waiting outside the hotel for the press to arrive, the strikers met Arthur Bates, an ETU area official. Bates, resplendent in a blue tie and well-cut suit, said vaguely that he was 'going to a meeting' in the hotel.

When the strikers entered the hotel, they were told by porters that the JIB meeting was secret, and the room number was not to be disclosed. Notice of the meeting had been removed from the board.

The JIB had also left word that it would accept no written messages. Tommy Henderson said: 'We're trying to get a settlement but they don't want to know. While they persist with this attitude we won't go back.'

The strike started two and a half years ago, when 16 electricians demanded an extra 25p an hour, to give them parity with other workers on the site. The employers are James Scott and Lee Beesley, sub-contractors to McAlpine.

Management have persistently refused to negotiate, happy in the knowledge that the government has been in no hurry to use the building.

Employment minister Chichester Clarke has stated that men have had to be laid off since last July because of the strike.

Delegates give Jones go-ahead for No 10 talks

by Laurie Flynn, Brighton

BY A three to one majority delegates to the Transport Union's delegate conference this week gave general secretary Jack Jones the go-ahead to continue taking part in the TUC talks with the Tory government and the CBI, the bosses' organisation.

The debate on Tuesday showed much militancy against the Tories and their masters, the employers, but Jones and the executive won the day. They were supported by delegates from the floor who saw the issue as one of 'free speech for our general secretary', 'getting the union's point of view across,' and 'not getting the blame for breaking off talks.'

Jones insisted there was no question of class collaboration. 'I have the responsibility to put your case. I'm not paid to be dumb. I'm paid to speak and act. I put your case as forcefully as possible. I don't pull any punches.'

'You don't throw any either,' interjected one delegate. And in truth Jack Jones has none to throw. His speech showed there was no real strategy for tackling the Tories' and the employers' offensive, and no understanding why it is happening.

Talks and more talks are the only answer, they say. Somewhere along the line, it is hoped, the trade unions' 'irrefutable' case for the restoration of free collective bargaining, for price controls, for higher pensions, a £25-a-week minimum wage, will at last be conceded. And devils become angels.

Struggle

'If free bargaining is not restored in Britain then there could be a major crisis in British industry,' said Jones. 'Even some big industrialists see the sense of our views,' he added, giving the game away.

Calling for an end to the talks with the Tories and the beginning of a concerted struggle to bring this government down, Eddie Loyden said: 'We have seen this government claw back many victories, some of them achieved over 50 years.'

'Our first responsibility is to give a lead to all our own members, our second to the movement as a whole. We must break off the talks and direct our energies to the defeat of this government and the return of a government pledged to socialist policies.'

Eric Rechnitz, London region, said: 'Heath has no intention of conceding. Even if he had, the present crisis makes it impossible. We cannot accept that our representatives talk to this government and its profit-greedy paymasters. We must say either they give way or we will mobilise our mighty power.'



A protesting Perkins worker trying to remove the microphone from Bob Wright (left) who attacked militants as 'paid anarchists'.

LOCK-OUT NEWSMEN GO ALONE

NOTTINGHAM:-Printworkers and journalists in dispute with T Bailey Forman, publishers of the city's two newspapers, are publishing their own newspaper. The signs are that people in Nottingham prefer the new paper, called The Press, to the commercially-produced Nottingham Evening Post and Guardian Journal.

The solidarity of the workers, united under a liaison committee of all five unions involved, has increased.

Although the original cause of the dispute has long since been settled, the management is insisting on its 'pound of flesh'—105 redundancies, the closure of the Guardian Journal, and a promise from the unions that blacklegs who have worked during the dispute will not be disciplined.

Last Tuesday, a mass meeting of all the workers involved unanimously endorsed the liaison committee's insistence on no redundancies, and the right to take action against people who act against the interests of the unions.

An issue of The Press will appear every other day, and possibly every day, until the dispute ends.

DEADLOCK ON FLEET STREET

THE national newspaper proprietors, who have been eagerly advocating 'threshold agreements' as the 'answer' to industrial relations are equally eagerly breaking a threshold agreement which they signed only nine months ago.

In a deal hurried through last October to 'beat' the wage freeze, the Newspaper Publishers Association, which includes the owners of all national dailies and Sundays, paid an 8 per cent increase to all its manual and clerical workers, and promised the six unions involved a further 8 per cent this October.

The agreement stated that if meantime the cost of living index rose above 177.4 for any two months together, the increase would be paid for those months.

The cost of living index in May was 178. The figure for June, which will be available soon, will be even higher. Yet the newspaper bosses, who can hardly move for loot from the advertising boom, are refusing to pay out as promised.

Their excuse? Payment would be in breach of the wage freeze law. With his hand on his wallet, Lord Goodman, chairman of the NPA and one of the richest lawyers in the country, has explained that in his position he must remain on the right side of the law. His members agree.

The unions do not. Members of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants (NATSOPA) have called

meetings at crucial production times, with resulting losses in newspaper production to the tune of about £1 million.

The losses have led to talks between the press barons and five of the unions involved. The executive of NATSOPA, however, has barred Richard Briginshaw from attending any talks with the NPA until the bosses agree to pay the money as promised.

MILITANT

This has led to deadlock, with the bosses even threatening to lock out all workers from the national papers unless they can rely on 'co-operation'.

A similar situation in Scotland last month was dealt with by the Scottish Daily Newspaper Society after only two days of militant action by the Scottish Typographical Association. The unions agreed to forego their 8 per cent in exchange for a promise of another paid non-production day at Christmas. This would not bring in as much money as the 8 per cent rise, and cannot be guaranteed because no one knows what powers the government will take to deny wage increases during Phase Three.

Nevertheless, it seems that at least five of the six unions are prepared to reach a similar settlement in England.

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