

WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1, 1973 ● No. 986 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

NIXON'S PATIENCE THIN DOLLAR MAY BE DEVALUED

USA - EEC

TRADE WAR IS HOTTING UP



BY JOHN SPENCER

THE NIXON administration is planning a major new economic blow against Europe. It aims to win trade and monetary advantages through what amounts to exporting its balance-of-payments problems.

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MONTHLY
APPEAL
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**TREMENDOUS
RESULT!
JANUARY
TOTAL £2,043**

IT REALLY is magnificent and money is still pouring in. At one time it looked like we might not make our target of £1,750. But not only did you do it, but you even raised £293.33 over the top! We cannot thank you all enough.

Your response confirms the enormous feeling that exists inside the working class for a determined fight against the Tory government. As all sections of the trade union movement join in the battle for wages, more and more support is being won around the policies of Workers Press.

Only our paper explains the serious nature of this economic crisis and in this way politically prepares for the struggles ahead.

Help us in every way you can. Make sure our sales are expanded in every district. Keep up this great fight and let us have a good start for our February Fund—which starts today! Post all donations to:

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186a Clapham High Street
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In his preface to the annual report of the Council of Economic Advisers, Nixon strongly indicated that his patience with Europe and Japan is becoming exhausted.

Reviewing the continued adverse trend of the American balance of payments, despite the currency realignment agreement of December 1971, he warned 'this is not a situation that can go on indefinitely'. He added: 'We want to bring about those reforms that will permit us to earn our way.'

According to 'The Times' correspondent in Washington, there is 'strong evidence' to show that Nixon has concluded that the December 1971 realignment will not 'secure the desired improvement in the US balance of payments'.

He considers that 'further reforms to bring the world into "better balance" in economic transactions is necessary', the paper adds. Nixon faced a record balance of payments deficit of \$6,439m in 1972 and many of his officials regard this figure as an underestimate.

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This explains the dollar's extreme weakness on all European foreign exchange markets this week. It was supported at or near its floor by central banks in Holland, Belgium, France and Denmark on Tuesday, while in West Germany and Switzerland, it fell to a very low price.

The devaluation threat could produce panic conditions on the European foreign exchanges, above all among the holders of the estimated \$60,000m overseas

dollars circulating in the so-called Euro-dollar market.

A devaluation would place the US at a competitive advantage by comparison with its European and Japanese competitors. It would also wipe out a slice of the huge overseas debts accumulated by US imperialism.

A whole series of competitive devaluations and downward 'floats'—along the lines already pioneered by the Tory government—could result.

At the same time the rush to find assets which would retain their value could produce a major gold price rise.

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Today's centre pages SHAKE-OUT IN STEEL

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The Covent Garden
land grab
see pages 4 and 5



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Workers Press

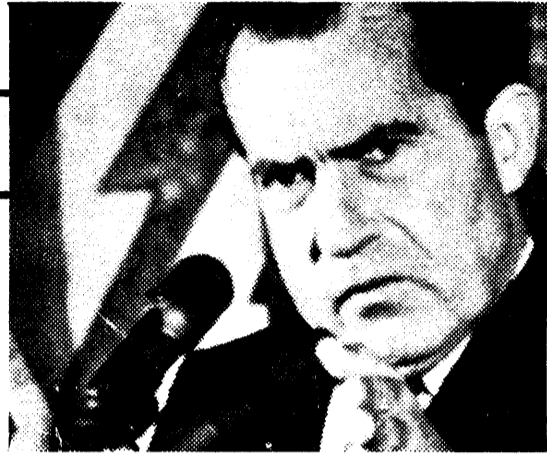
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Stalinists suppress Sabata letter

A LETTER to world communists from the wife of Dubcek supporter, Professor Jaroslav Sabata has now been made public.

Although the British Communist Party daily 'Morning Star' noted receiving the letter on December 5, it is easy to see why it decided not to publish it. The letter exposes the method of dealing with dissident CP members in Czechoslovakia since the Warsaw Pact invasion of August 1968, which the British Communist Party nominally disapproved of.

Sabata, now serving a 6½ years' sentence, was formerly a professor of psychology and secretary of the Brno regional party committee and a party member since the age of 19. He was sacked from his job and forced to do heavy manual labour after the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968.

His trial last summer was semi-secret. The courthouse was heavily guarded. No foreign journalists were admitted and only one close relative of each defendant was admitted.

Sabata has already had a heart attack in jail and his wife says that he 'has now been nine months in detention under conditions which, out of consideration for the present holders of power in Czechoslovakia, I will not describe in detail'.

Her children are also serving prison terms and she fears arrest.

Sabata was convicted because his views conflicted with the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy and its Czechoslovak henchmen.

Like Dubcek, Sabata represented a rightist trend. He did not look to the working class and to the overthrow of the bureaucracy, but to a form of liberalization which carried the risk of a return to capitalism.

While we have no sympathy with Sabata's views, as expressed by his wife in her letter, his treatment for holding them is an indictment of the rule of the bureaucracy and his trial a complete travesty of justice.

Communist Party members should demand an explanation from the leadership about why Mrs Sabata's letter was suppressed. Sabata and all political prisoners of the Husak regime should be immediately freed.

Consulate blast: Three face death

SIX MAOIST students on trial in Zaragoza, Spain, are said to have burned down the French consulate there, causing the death of consul Roger Tur last November.

Three of the defendants, in the third day of their trial, face the death sentence.

The Prosecutor wants sentences of 30 years for two other defendants and the case to be dismissed against a sixth. Police claim the students call themselves the 'Collective of the Hammer and Sickle'.

On Tuesday, right wingers in San Sebastian blew up a car belonging to Juan Maria Bandres, a local lawyer who defended the Burgos 16 against Franco's court.

The fascist regime now faces another challenge from 4,000 shipyard workers in Bilbao who have been locked out for a week following a series of short strikes for higher wages.

They have been joined by 25,000 primary school teachers who are on strike against the latest pay offer from their state employers and the fascist union.

The Education Ministry said pay proposals, including incentive payments, were still under review.

The Civil Guard and the Falange have already tried some 'incentives'—mainly as a result of their pressure, teachers now need a 'good conduct' certificate from the Civil Governor before they can get a job.

Scientist in Soviet hospital

ANOTHER oppositionist has been consigned to the refined torture of a psychiatric hospital in the Soviet Union. He is Kiev scientist Leonid Plyushch, who was connected with the underground publication 'Chronicle of Current Events'.

After some months detention in the Serbsky Psychiatric Hospital in Moscow the tame KGP (secret police) doctors pronounced him to be suffering from schizophrenia. After a trial in Kiev, he was committed to a psychiatric hospital for an indefinite period.

NEWS DESK

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Fascists' armoury

Pistol attack on Italian students' meeting

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE FASCIST MSI continued its aggression against left-wing opposition with a pistol attack on a student meeting in Verona on Tuesday.

Luigi Bellazzi (21), leader of the local Youth Front, headed a contingent of fascist youth which tried to break up a student meeting in the Economics Faculty in Verona university.

One student was shot, but police who arrived late on the scene did not capture Bellazzi.



Roberto Franceschi (21), an economics student, died in a Turin clinic on Tuesday. Franceschi was shot in the neck by a policeman during the recent conflict in the Bocconi college, Milan.

Turin police did arrest three MSI youth, fully equipped with chains, truncheons and iron bars.

The MSI activists had carried out a series of attacks on left wingers. Giovanni Mongui was beaten up as he was returning to his college on Monday evening.

A car suddenly drew up in the street, and out jumped the fascists swinging chains.

After Mongui had been dealt with, they blocked another car and beat up the three students riding home.

The Stalinist-led Milan trade union federation issued a statement condemning acts of violence 'which are not reconcilable with civilian harmony and arrest the progress of society'.



Some of the weapons taken from fascist youth

The same bourgeois democratic perspectives have led the CP to support the arrest of five leftists, including Guido Viale, a leader of Lotta Continua, for defending themselves against the joint forces of the police and the MSI on Sunday.

SOVIET agricultural official S. V. Shevchenko has been sacked following an inquiry into last year's disastrous harvest. He is head of the Agricultural Machinery Association, who is held responsible for breakdowns in the supply of machinery.

WHAT WE THINK

One law for the rich and one for the poor



Muir Hunter, QC . . . Brickbat

THE PROCEDURE for examining bankrupts was laid down in English law in the 1860s. The laws were further codified in extensive legislation—the Bankruptcy Acts—in 1914.

It is a body of law which has served a function in capitalist society—to discover assets and recover money for creditors.

As such it has been invoked countless times against small businesses and self-employed individuals who have been cast into bankruptcy because of unforeseen circumstances.

The public examination of bankrupts is an everyday occurrence in courts all over the country. The bankrupt is interrogated about his business, the reasons for his failure and any assets he or his immediate relatives might have.

This system has worked quietly away until now. Until the bankruptcy proceedings against John Poulson, the Yorkshire architect, whose British and international practice brought him into the closest business relations with 'top people'.

The chairman of his main overseas company was Reginald Maudling, the deputy Prime Minister and former Tory Home Secretary. Another senior director was Sir Bernard Kenvon, clerk of the West Riding of Yorkshire County Council.

His business associates included Mr T. Dan Smith, one-time leader of the Newcastle Council and the man considered for a Cabinet appointment in the second Wilson government after 1966.

People who received gifts or hand-outs from the Poulson 'gravy train' included Mr Andrew Cunningham, northern officer of the General and Municipal Workers' Union and member of the 26-man NEC of the Labour Party (he has since repaid money for a holiday in Portugal); George Pottinger, senior civil servant at the Scottish Office, who re-

ceived the 'gift' of a £23,000 house, a Rover car and a holiday cruise; Albert Roberts, Labour MP for Normanton, chairman of the Anglo-Spanish parliamentary group, received £11,508; John Cordle, Tory MP for Bournemouth, received £1,000 a year over six years for 'advice' about contracts in West Africa; Mr E. G. Braithwaite, founder-secretary of the South-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board, received a gift worth £2,500 (this has also been repaid).

There have been many more who have received favours from Poulson. Anthony Crosland, the Labour Cabinet minister, received an antique coffee pot (mysteriously devalued from £500 to £40 in the past couple of days!); Lady Fraser, of the House of Fraser family, had a gift worth £150; councillors all over Scotland and the north-east were sent hampers of turkey and wine at Christmas time during the 'boom' years of the Poulson empire.

All these revelations have been made as a result of the relentless search by Mr Muir Hunter, QC, on behalf of the creditors, to discover what assets are recoverable. So far he's got back about £165,000—and Crosland's coffee pot! But there's much more to be got.

Only last week the Official Receiver went to Poulson's Pontefract office and uncovered 300 files marked 'Poulson personal' and 18 cwt of other documents.

It was in this cache that the Crosland case and the 'Mr and Mrs George Brown' holiday trip were found. Mr Hunter has told the court he will be making further submissions on these files when the hearing reopens in March.

But it is at this point that the 'top people' start getting very worried indeed. Yesterday's capitalist Press was full of cries of outrage.

Labour MP Maurice Edelman likened Mr Hunter to the

notorious anti-communist, Senator Joseph McCarthy. He said: 'The Law Reform Committee should now get busy to make sure that a new McCarthyism isn't introduced into Britain to gratify the scandal-hungry while injuring the true cause of justice.'

Edelman's views were echoed almost identically in an editorial in that Tory organ, 'The Times'. The paper complained about names 'likely to be dragged into the proceedings' and accused Mr Hunter of 'carelessness'.

'One of the many thoughts prompted by the Poulson hearings is that it is high time the Bankruptcy Acts of 1914-1926 were brought under the kind of view to which Lord Salmon's commission subjected tribunals of inquiry.'

The Tory Cabinet is considering whether changes in the law should be brought forward. If these changes are made, future proceedings will be held in private thus preventing the working class from peering into the world of high finance where the big names operate.

The facts speak for themselves! It is all very well for the Act to probe the financial failure of widows, small builders, shopkeepers and the like. But when it is Poulson and his hangers-on in the construction industry and local government, there are immediate cries for amendments to the legislation.

With big financial crashes on the agenda in this period of deep recession, it is no wonder that the Tories and their friends are rushing to keep things as quiet as possible.

Thus the working class is being ordered to bear the brunt of the economic crisis by savage cuts in its standard of living, but not allowed to examine the real nature of the rotten and parasitic system which stands over it.

How Brezhnev sees Viet 'peace'

THE VIETNAM ceasefire is intended to pave the way for improved relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. This was the message conveyed by Party secretary Leonid Brezhnev at a banquet in honour of Hanoi's chief negotiator, Le Duc Tho, held in Moscow on Tuesday.

He called on all sides to honour the accord and said that the Soviet Union 'will take an active part' in the coming international conference on Vietnam.

The Kremlin is also out to strengthen its ties with North Vietnam in order to counter Chinese influence.

Brezhnev also looked to the resolution of the Middle-East conflict on the same lines as the Vietnam settlement.

FIGHTING continued in various parts of South Vietnam yesterday, including a major battle along Highway 20 leading into Saigon from Da Lat, 150 miles to the north.

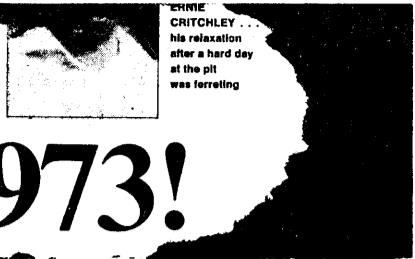
The Joint Military Commission has not yet begun work as North Vietnam and National Liberation Front delegates will not accept the immigration procedures imposed by the South Vietnamese.



Ernie Critchley, the miner whose hobby—ferretting—has landed him in jail for a year and who is afraid to take his appeal to a higher court. Right: His wife June receives the news of the lost appeal.

12 months for poaching... in 1973!

YESTERDAY'S WORKERS PRESS



'I don't like to risk putting more time on'

ERNE CRITCHLEY informed his wife, June, in a letter from Armley prison, near Leeds, that he had lost his appeal. He wrote:

Dear June, Ann and Jean, My first appeal has been turned down, love, but the position is this, love. I can appeal again to three judges, June, but this time it would take six weeks to three months before I will hear anything and

if I lose I can lose from 30 to 90 days. I don't like to take the risk of putting more time on, June.

But if you and Ann want me to risk it, I will, love. It is only fair that you should have your say, love, because it is you who will be waiting for me at home. I hope this does not upset you, love. I hope our Ann is all right and our Jean is getting better. You say you don't half miss me,

June, how do you think I feel?

I miss you more this time than I did before. It must be because I love you all so very much, my darling. By the way, when is your birthday, love. I know it is in February. Is it the 21st? Look after yourself because you have not said how you are. From your ever-loving husband, all the best to you and the two girls.

God bless,
Ernie.



Miners' appeal on year's jail refused

A JUDGE sitting in chambers has refused leave for a Yorkshire miner to appeal against a 12-month jail sentence for poaching.

BRIEFLY • BRIEFLY

TWENTY-ONE grinders—whose strike has hit tractor production at Massey Ferguson of Coventry—are expected to meet tomorrow. The strike, which involves piecework pay rates, has led to 600 day and night-shift assembly workers being laid off.

A CENSURE motion on actor and writer Peter Ustinov will be considered by Dundee University's student association today following his refusal to speak out as Rector in favour of the rent strike. The resolution will be proposed by student association president Eric Sanderson, who also intends to move for an end of the rent strike by 200 of the university's 800 students. The strike is against the Tory government's plan to put up rents for student accommodation.

PROPERTY developer Mr George Herbert Cross, of The Dower House, Compton Chamberlayne, Salisbury, Wilts, who started work as a 10s-a-week estate agent's clerk, left £2,192,096 gross, £1,900,331 net (duty £20,277) in his will published yesterday. He died on November 26, aged 88.

Ernest Critchley (34) of Fryston Colliery, near Castleford, is serving his sentence at Armley prison, Leeds.

The savage jail sentence was made at the York County Court on January 15 after Critchley and another miner, Roy Wright, pleaded guilty to poaching on the Escrick Park Estate at York.

When they were arrested by a game warden and the police the men had a bag containing ten pheasants valued at about £8.

Critchley's case has been rejected by a single judge sitting in the Court of Criminal Appeal.

On hearing the news Mrs Joan Critchley broke down. 'How am I going to tell the children?' she asked.

Further details have now emerged about the case.

● The estate is owned by a wealthy Tory family which has connections with the 'Yorkshire Post'.

● The judge who sentenced Critchley is a former Tory MP.

Our inquiries reveal that:



Ernie Critchley's two daughters Ann (14) and Jean (7) who, along with their mother, face hardship now their father, a miner, is in jail.

THE SQUIRE at Escrick Park is one Nigel Forbes Adam, youngest son of Colin Gurdon Forbes Adam. Nigel's father is married to the Honourable Irene Constance Lawley, only child of the third Baron Wenlock. And it was the Baron Wenlock who originally governed the estate during the 19th century.

Irene married Colin Forbes Adam in 1920 when he was a rising light in the India Service. In 1912, when he was just 23 and fresh from Eton and Cambridge, Colin Forbes Adam went off to India where, in

the following year, he became assistant collector and magistrate in Poona.

In 1920 he was appointed private secretary to the Governor of Bombay. He retired from the India Service in 1925 and, on the eve of the General Strike, he returned to Britain.

From 1934 to 1939 he was commissioner for the 'Special Area of Durham and Tyneside', which was devastated by unemployment and poverty.

'Who's Who' does not reveal his activities for the space of 20 years—the war years and after—but he re-

Investigation by ALEX MITCHELL

emerges in 1960 as chairman of the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Company, publishers of the 'Yorkshire Post'.

While his son, Nigel, manages the estate, his father lives in retirement in Petersham in Surrey, though he still retains his membership of the elegant Yorkshire Club, the meeting place of all the local Tories.

WORKERS PRESS has also uncovered some background of Mr Justice Nield, the man who jailed Critchley for a year and fined Roy Wright £100. Sir Basil Edward Nield was educated at Harrow private school and graduated at Magdalen College, Oxford.

He has had a long association with Tory politics. From 1930 until 1940 he was chairman of the Chester Conservative Association.

In 1940 he was elected Tory MP for the City of Chester and held this seat until 1956. He sat on the legal board of the Church Assembly and the Home Secretary's advisory committee on the treatment of offenders in 1957. He was also chancellor of the Diocese of Liverpool from 1948 to 1956, the same

years he held the post of Recorder of Salford.

To this day he belongs to the Oxford Society, the Imperial Society of Knights Bachelor, while he is a life member of the Royal Society of St George.

He belongs to London's two most notable Tory clubs—the Carlton and the Junion Carlton.

MRS JUNE Critchley, wife of the jailed miner, has received a letter expressing sympathy. It is from Mr W. P. Pickersgill, of Micklefield, near Leeds. He writes:

'I was very sorry to read of your husband being sent to prison. It makes it worse for you all being a happy family. You might remember a similar case a few years ago when three men were caught at Escrick.'

'We only went for a bit of sport and fun really, but we were caught and later sent to prison. We were wrongly convicted then—but more so your husband today. It seems that today you can go to work, but not do anything else.'

'Well, I think you might have some luck with your appeal. There is a lot worse things. Well we will have to wait and see. It's not right.'

Innocent will suffer if Tories tamper with 'justice'—barristers

THE INFLUENTIAL Bar Council has come out with an attack on the Tory draft legislation to change the laws of evidence in criminal cases.

In a statement issued today the council says: 'We are anxious that injustice should not be suffered by the innocent and we believe that, taken as a whole, the proposals would be liable to increase this possibility.'

'We are as anxious as anyone that those who commit crime should be brought to justice. We do not believe, however, that the proposals of the Criminal Law Revision Committee will contribute materially to this end.'

At a Press conference Bar

Council chairman Mr Roger Parker said that the Tory proposals hit at the basic concepts of 'English justice'. Already, Mr Parker said, a French judge has pointed out that if the amendments were legislated, they would overthrow safeguards against injustice which had taken centuries to develop.

Continuing its criticism, the Council says that barristers are concerned that some of the main proposals 'go far beyond the amendment of technical rules' and, in practice, impair fundamentally the constitutional position of the individual.

On many grounds the Council opposes the loss of the accused's right of silence during his trial. The Bill proposes that if an accused person refuses to give evidence or declines to give evidence at his trial the judge can comment on this to the jury.

If this happened, the report said, police would obtain unacceptable powers and interrogation would become oppressive.

Mr Parker said the abolition of the right of silence during a trial meant, in effect: 'Be silent if you dare—but if you are silent, you

will be liable to convict yourself.'

This, he said, would change the position of the individual in our society, his relationship with authority, and his right when in conflict with authority to remain silent.

The Council also sharply criticized the proposals that hearsay evidence should be admissible.

'We believe that in criminal cases hearsay evidence is inherently unreliable, is capable of being manufactured with ease and is usually incapable of being tested in cross-examination.'

The drastic interference with criminal court procedure shows the extent to which the Tories are preparing the legal ground for dictatorship.

It goes hand-in-hand with the plans to abolish the jury system in certain cases.

At every turn the Tories are attacking rights of all description. But the Bar Council, a collection of blue-nosed barristers, cannot and will not be able to stop the Tory juggernaut.

That is the task of the working class organized under the banner of the revolutionary party.



THE COVENT GARDEN LAND GRAB

BY PHILIP WADE: PART ONE

The Tories' decision to give the go-ahead for the wholesale redevelopment of the Covent Garden area brought joy to those sitting in the boardrooms of a select group of property companies, hotel groups and a leading publishing house.

After all, in his January 15 announcement Environment Minister Geoffrey Rippon had given the powerful Tory-controlled Greater London Council legal control over almost 100 acres of land right in the centre of London.

When the Covent Garden fruit and vegetable market moves south of the Thames to Nine Elms in 1974, the whole area, with its 17 theatres, could be turned into a concrete monstrosity. Hotels, office blocks, luxury shops and restaurants would spring up where none existed before.

And the reason for the popping champagne corks in those boardrooms was because those companies had the key weapon in the whole scheme: they owned up to 75 per cent of all the land to be developed.

With market price per acre an unreal and incredible £5m—an increase of £3.5m in 18 months—these companies would be in a position to call any tune they wanted.

They knew the GLC—even if it wanted to—could not use

the public purse to buy land at such phenomenal prices. And if the plan was to go ahead, it would have to come to some deal with the private developers.

In any case, compulsory acquisition by the GLC would be a lengthy process dragging through the courts in arguments over the rate of compensation.

In other words, the land owners could—if they so wished—hold up the entire plan for years, reducing the thing to a farce. All the aces were, therefore, in their hands.

The story begins in 1966 when the Labour government announced that London's old fruit and vegetable market would be phased out and be replaced by the Nine Elms site.

By November 1968 the GLC, with Camden and Westminster councils, published 'Covent Garden's Moving'—the first of the 'area draft plans'. For the first time the idea was born of redeveloping not just the 10-acre market site, but another surrounding 85 acres.

The three councils quickly approved the plan as a basis 'for consultations and discussions with owners, developers and others interested in the future of the area'.

By the end of 1970 the GLC felt strong enough to submit a request to the government for Comprehensive Development Area (CDA) powers for 95 acres of central London.

Never before had such an important slice of London or any other major city in Britain been brought into one massive 'redevelopment' plan. It was soon to become a speculator's paradise.

The plan itself was notable for its concessions both to the private developers and the type of profitable buildings they wanted to construct when two-thirds of the existing structures were demolished.

Under the GLC plan at least five theatres would be demolished. They are the Garrick, the Adelphi, the Vaudeville, the Duchess and the Arts Theatre. Actors and actresses, already facing a savage and almost unbearable 90 per cent unemployment rate, will be further pauperized if the scheme goes through.

In place of the market and the surrounding buildings the GLC plan stated: 'A substantial increase in hotel use is envisaged.' At one end of the Strand, on the site of the Duchess theatre, the GLC saw the need 'for a specially-designed centre for international conferences'.

The GLC has only committed itself to building 1,400 dwellings, confirming that the area was to be turned over to the construction of buildings which would serve the rich.

By early 1971 the developers were moving fast, buying up key sections of land in the proposed redevelopment area. Others who fortunately owned land in the area already also



Left to right: Geoffrey Rippon: Gave go-ahead for the scheme. Peter Walker: Millions through land and security deals. Edward Du Cann: Millionaire merchant banker. Above: Demolition at Odhams Press. Big office block planned. Right: Adelphi, one of five threatened theatres.

began to see the opportunities opening up.

They had not exactly been discouraged by the GLC. 'Injection of large amounts of capital into schemes of redevelopment cannot be expected unless there is a reasonable return upon the capital investment. The GLC believes that such returns are possible to both public and private sectors,' says 'The Next Step'.

The GLC proposes to acquire about 24½ acres within the CDA boundaries and add it to about the 10 acres already owned by local authorities. What are they intending to do with this land?

Says the plan: '... So much of the total 34½ acres as remains after making provision for necessary public amenities and service should be disposed of for development.'

With the hand of open friendship being extended, it was not surprising the developers rushed to buy up the land.

It was almost the understatement of all time when the GLC plan declared at the end: 'The council is confident that development agencies will take up substantial areas involving

several million pounds worth of building works, if they are given the opportunity (!).'

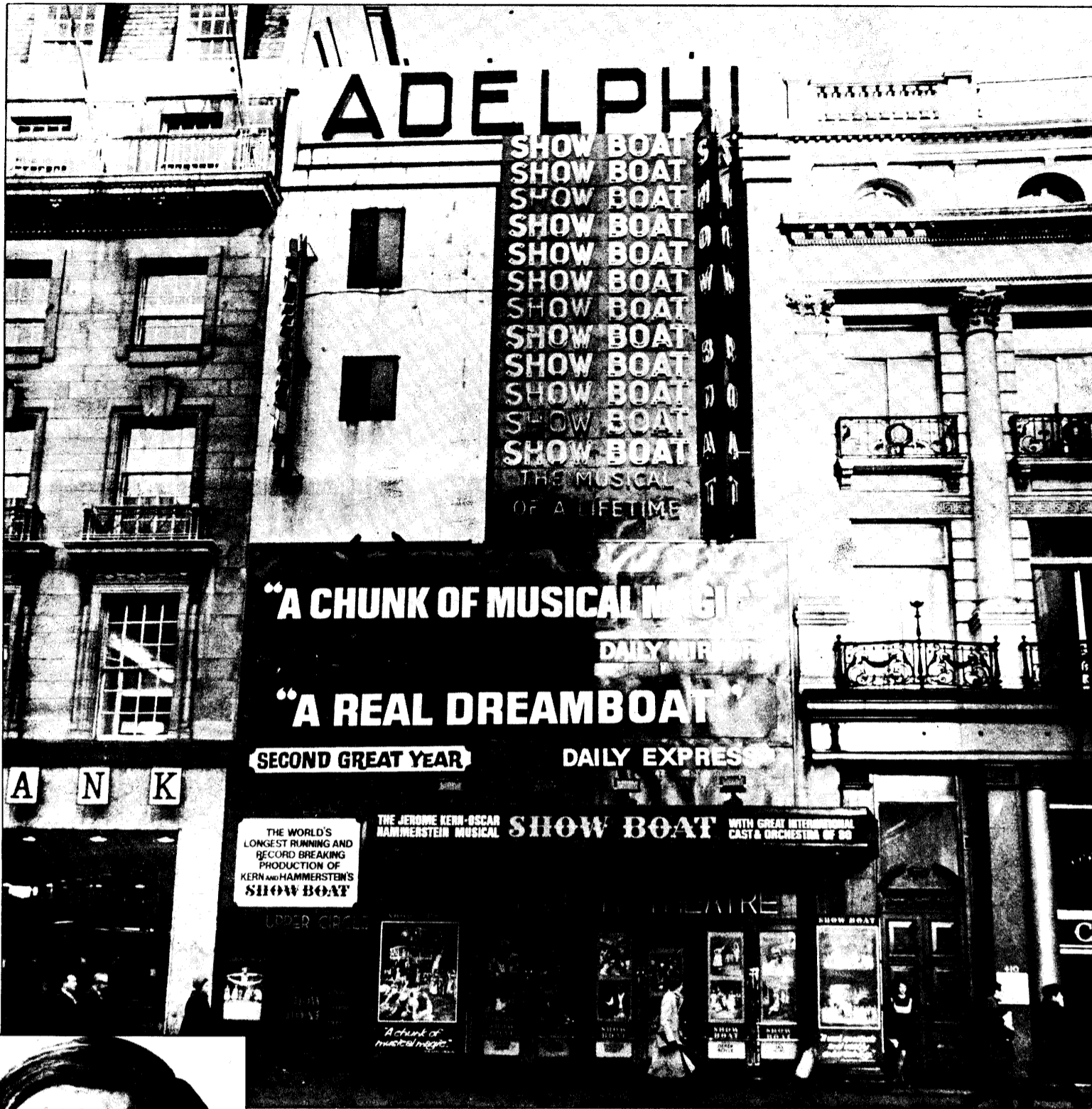
Yet at the beginning of its document the GLC boastfully stated: 'The plan proposes to provide a framework within which pressures for change can be controlled in the public interest.'

One can only assume that from the way things have shaped up in Covent Garden, the 'public' will be presented with office blocks, hotels and luxury shops.

There may be 168,000 people on London's housing waiting list alone. Will they benefit from the plans of Metropolitan Estates Property Company or Reed International, which publishes the 'Daily Mirror', to name but a few?

Part of the plan involves the widening of Charing Cross Road on each side to carry eight lanes of motor traffic. Up and down the street the property companies have bought various patches of land.

If the GLC wants to widen its road, it is going to have to do some deals with these companies. And don't forget, that's how Centre Point came to be built in the first place.



The whole area is now ripe for speculation. In the minds of the directors of the developers enormous values are being created. Office blocks not yet built are written down as assets in balance sheets. Paper fortunes are being amassed.

Private ownership of the land has enabled a monopoly to be established whereby millionaires are created overnight and whole areas of big cities are filled with buildings which often stay empty for years.

What is happening in Covent Garden proves beyond any doubt the case for the nationalization of the land, without a penny compensation.

Only when it is under the control of the working class will land serve the needs of the class by freeing the necessary space for the construction of housing, hospitals and so on.

Without its control, the working class becomes powerless in the face of a few companies who use land ownership for speculation.

The companies involved, as will be seen later, are in many cases open supporters of the Tory Party financially. And those who do not openly reveal their allegiance obviously find much in common

with the leading elements in the Tory Party.

Cabinet Minister Peter Walker, millionaire, now head of the Department of Trade and Industry, was only one of many senior Tories to make his money through speculation in either land or securities when he was with Slater Walker Securities. Edward Du Cann, restored to favour as chairman of the backbench 1922 Committee, was another.

All this means the Tory government must be forced to resign and a Labour government returned, compelled by the mass movement to expropriate the landowners.

And it will be no use Harold Wilson promising land nationalization by the end of the century, as he did recently. We can't wait that long.

HOW THE PLANNING PROCESS 'WORKS'

A glance at what has happened at some of the Covent Garden sites already will show vividly the power of the landowners—and how they can dominate one of the biggest local authorities in the world.

At the top end of Drury Lane, to the side and behind the famous Moorfields Eye Hospital, the land is owned by the Haslemere Estates Property Company. Its area is just over one acre.

In the draft GLC plan for Covent Garden, published in 1968, this site was earmarked for compulsory purchase by the authority.

By the time of the second document, 'The Next Step', put

out in June 1971, the GLC planners had the site lined up for the route of a new major road and a pedestrian route at deck level.

But in between the two plans something else had happened, as the 'Financial Times' was to reveal on April 26, 1971, three months before the public inquiry into the whole redevelopment plan.

'At the north end of Drury Lane, bounded by High Holborn and Shorts Gardens, Haslemere Estates are to build the first site within the reconstruction of the Covent Garden Area,' the paper reported.

'Percy Bilton [the builders] has secured a £1.9m contract for the first phase of the construction. The architects for the scheme are Geoffrey Spyer and Associates.

'They have devised a layout involving an office block, hotel, shops and public house, all with underground carparking. There is a total floor area of some 65,000 square feet. Also within the scheme the consulting engineers have had to incorporate a section of the proposed underground North Spine Road.'

The planning permission for this redevelopment was granted by then Tory-controlled Camden council on March 30, 1971.

It is reported, however, that an earlier planning permission application was turned down. Originally a sizeable part of the scheme consisted of rehabilitation work.

GLC planners, it is thought, pointed out that the application as it stood did not tally with the proposed GLC plan which had visions of sunken roads and pedestrian decks and so on.

Haslemere agreed and submitted a fresh application to Camden, the local planning authority, as the GLC at that time did not have general powers over the whole area.

In turn Camden referred the plans to the GLC for its opinion and was told promptly the County Hall chiefs did not have one.

The interesting question here is why did Camden eventually give planning permission? Experts agree that both Camden and the GLC would have been well within their powers to withhold permission on the grounds their overall, master plan for the area was still being processed by government departments.

It can only be assumed they chose not to do so because Haslemere's plans would at least see a start to the 'redevelopment' of the whole Covent Garden area. At the same time, the company had 'served the public interest' with its sunken road.

The GLC would also have been involved in considerable compensation payments to Haslemere if the property company's scheme had been thwarted.

The whole business is yet another example of how planning questions of such importance are settled. And it is clear, once again, that the mere ownership of land gave Haslemere an unbeatable advantage.

THE 'DAILY MIRROR'S' FINGER IN THE PIE

The owners of the 'Daily Mirror' are also deeply involved in Covent Garden, with plans for massive office blocks. They are working hand in hand with one of Britain's top property companies.

They own one of the most profitable sites in the whole

Covent Garden area—the 3.2-acre former Odhams Press site in Long Acre where the 'Sun' was once printed.

Proposals for the site are for an office development of some 300,000 square feet, 90 private flats and 30 flats for the council. So far no office development permits are through for the scheme. Demolition, however, is almost complete.

Cecil King's old firm, the International Publishing Corporation, took over the site when it bought out Odhams Press. And when paper manufacturers Reed's took over IPC they found themselves sitting on a valuable property portfolio.

The several properties in the Holborn and Covent Garden area were then valued at £36m. Don Ryder, chairman of Reed International, as the new group was to be known, could see it needed expert hands to realize the development potential from the sites.

So he formed a joint company with the Metropolitan Estates Property Company, the latter holding the majority interest in the venture. It paid Reed's £24m for that privilege.

A statement issued by the joint company declared: 'It is envisaged that the properties held by the new joint company, which is mainly in Holborn and Covent Garden, will soon become ripe for redevelopment over the next few years.'

Commented the 'Daily Telegraph' on February 26 last year: 'Internal estimates are that the development will require about £60m over the next ten years, and when finished the joint company will be worth £200m.'

Mr Ryder himself was understandably most enthusiastic about the whole deal: 'The first to go will probably be some of the Covent Garden blocks, where the office development permit and planning situation is fairly well advanced,' he told reporters.

Odhams had an old outline planning permission for offices and printing works on the car park at one end, which was in fact a bomb site.

But Reed's thought this was a little inadequate. So with MEPC it called in Richard Seifert, the architect used to design London's most famous, unlined in and unused building—Centre Point.

Seifert, of course, had the reputation of being one of the best brains in the business when it came to squeezing maximum footage out of planning permissions. It was Seifert who came up with 300,000 sq ft of office extravaganza for the Long Acre site.

On the GLC map used for the area, the corner building at Endell Street and Long Acre, part of the planned redevelopment, is shown with the initials LB alongside it.

This means the building, where Charles Dickens first gave his public readings, and which was once the Princes Theatre, was listed officially as being of 'architectural and historic interest'. Under planning law, such listing makes it difficult to obtain permission to demolish.

In the early hours of Saturday June 24 last year, a fire started and quickly spread through the listed building. It took 150 firemen and 25 fire engines to extinguish the conflagration.

The building obviously could not remain in the dangerous state and has since been demolished.

It is planned that a sunken road will run under the Long Acre site and negotiations over the final route through Reed International's land could play a key part in any planning permission finally granted.

Tomorrow: Who Owns What. Tenants move out—and more office blocks are planned. GLC wants gigantic conference centre as well.



STEEL

Part One: The Tory Plan

BY IAN YEATS

The Tory carve-up of the steel industry, with a loss of up to 50,000 jobs, quite simply hinges on concentrating production at the most profitable sites and plants.

The scale and ruthlessness of this policy reflects the depth of their desperation. It is a make-or-break gamble which will see even the most modern plants put up their shutters or

set Britain streaking ahead of her competitors.

Massive rises in world steel output—up 9.4 per cent last year—have created conditions in which the Tories must make steel at give-away prices or face losing the industry.

Making more steel, as most of the action committees set up at doomed works seem to believe, is not the problem. The problem is how to produce even the same amount with less labour and less fixed costs.

The Tory answer, based on projections made by the Labour

government, is to make and roll steel, getting rid of as many men as possible and as many plants as possible.

Steelmaking is to be concentrated on five giant plants, using the basic oxygen process, at Port Talbot, Llanwern, Ravenscraig, Scunthorpe and Lakenby.

Not only is there no hope whatever of saving the doomed works, but soaring scrap prices will almost certainly threaten existing and planned electric arc furnaces.

These furnaces use scrap

almost exclusively and British supplies are exhausted. By the end of this year alone the British Steel Corporation (BSC) foresees shortages of up to 250,000 tonnes.*

Already British steelmakers import 8 million tonnes a year and on January 23 the BSC announced a deal with the USSR to import 10,000 tonnes annually.

Scrap is also chronically scarce in Europe and Common Market entry will only drive British prices still higher.

If the electric arc process becomes uneconomic, it will threaten the proposed mini-steel works at Cardiff, Hallside and Hunterston with a potential employment of 1,500 men.

Consett, Aldwarke, Brymbo and Panteg works could also go to the wall.

BSC's general steels division lost £21m last year, although after allowing for depreciation and interest charges there was a loss of only £6m on all six divisions.

RUTHLESS

Steelmaking is the Corporation's loss-maker and it is here that the most ruthless efforts will be made to restore and maintain profitability.

Large-scale basic oxygen making (BOS) is the cheapest

method at present or foreseeable available. Beyond it, no further rationalization is currently possible.

BSC already estimates that by 1980, if not sooner, its entire annual production of 25 million tonnes will be turned out by BOS plants.

The first steps to this concentration of productive capacity have already been taken with the announcement that the old, slow and expensive open-hearth steelmaking process is to end.

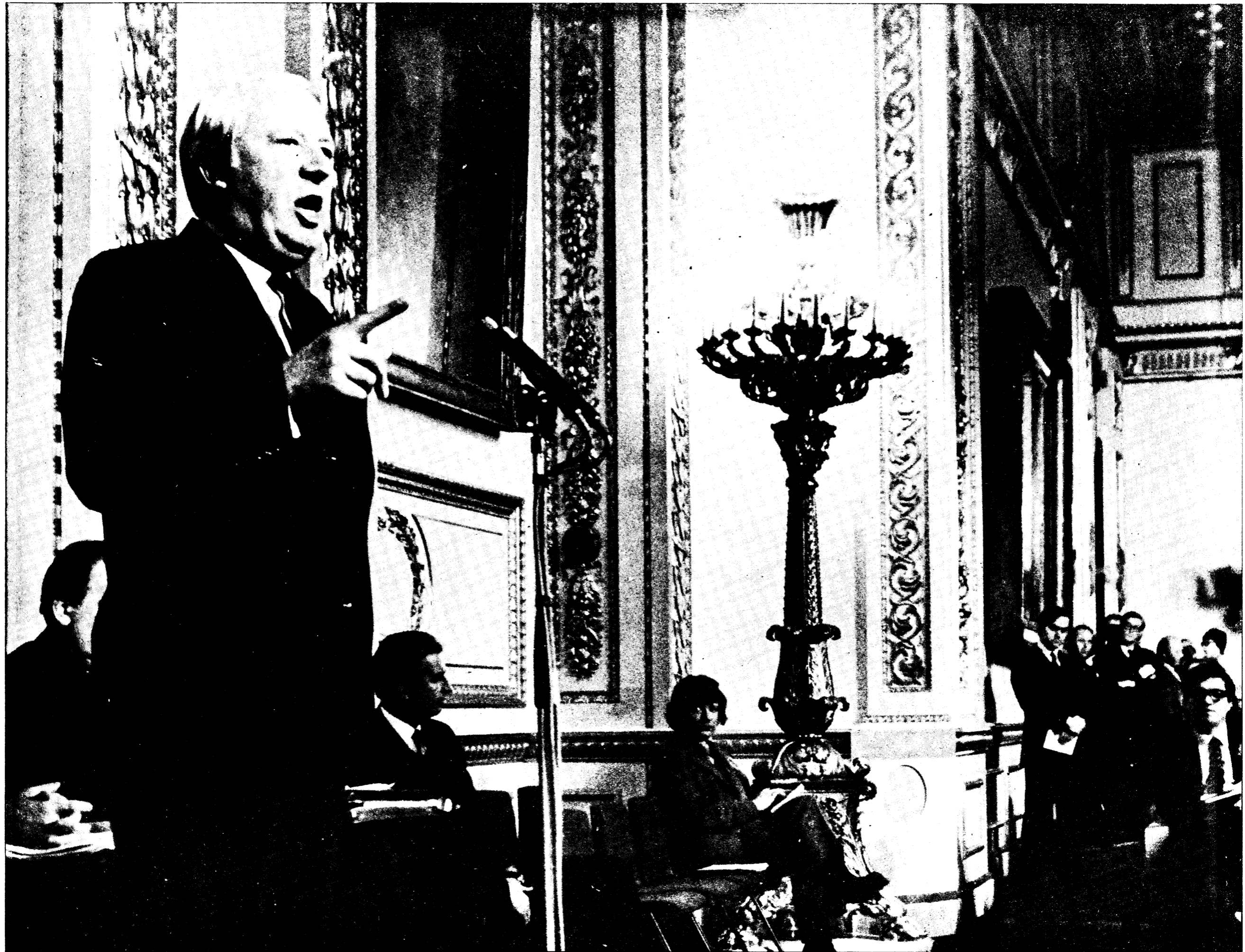
Corby, East Moors, Ebbw Vale, Shotton, Bilston, Irlam, Clydesbridge, Bellshill, Dalzell, Glengarnock, Lanarkshire and Hartlepool will all either shut completely or lose their steel-making sections.

At Scunthorpe the Normanby Park, Redbourne and Appleby-Frodingham works will lose their open-hearth furnaces and antiquated rolling mills with a loss of 3,500 jobs.

The furnaces at Ravenscraig will shut, but expansion of BOS capacity employing about 500 men is planned.

Although it remains to be confirmed by the government's White Paper on the steel industry, two steelmaking plants using Kaldo furnaces at Park Gate and Shelton will almost certainly shut.

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Location of main iron and steel works



But it is not only in steel-making that the Tories are planning rationalization.

The special steels and tubes divisions are likely to come in for some fairly immediate re-organization and the economies of scale to be had from new technology in milling threatens the strip mill division.

The way to this rationalization was paved by the Labour government's decision to divide up the industry into six product divisions.

In Scotland, tubes are near certain to be concentrated at Clydesdale, near Ravenscraig and Hallside, where the government has announced £60m new investment.

Scotland will remain a centre for tube production because of its proximity to the gas and oil operations in the North Sea which BSC estimates will lead to an annual steel demand of up to 3½ million tons.

Steel is used in the construction of platforms, pipelines and for semi-submersible rigs.

A new pipe casing depot has been established at Aberdeen and Redpath Dorman Long (BSC's wholly-owned subsidiary) is setting up a plant at Methil in Fife for the building of platforms.

The British, Calder, Imperial

and Tollcross works of the tube division are likely to close with the loss of over 1,200 jobs.

While North Sea steel demand is temporarily rising, demand from the home market and for export is falling.

In South Wales, BSC has already announced the closure of its Newport tube works sacking 1,000 men because of the fall in demand for large, seamless pipes. The main concentration of tubes production is likely to be Teesside, within striking distance of Lackenby, at Consett, Hartlepool and Stockton.

Although it has been announced that iron-making will cease at Stanton, with the loss of 1,300 jobs, tube manufacture will continue there and at Holwell. The future of the entire 12,000-strong Corby plant hangs in the balance.

Although new facilities for oil well tubing have been installed, demand from home and export markets was so low last year that both the steel-works and the tube mills had to be put on short time.

In special steels, production in Scotland is likely to be concentrated at Hallside, where the government has said £55m is to be spent, including the cost of the new mini-steel-works.

But this could involve the closure of the special steels plants at Craigneuk and Tollcross with a loss of 1,500 jobs and the foundries at Craigneuk and Tollcross adding another 500 to the redundancy list.

In the Sheffield district, Tinsley Park, Park Gate, Brinsworth Icles and Cyclops works, most of which are functioning below capacity, could also disappear.

The engineering section of the River Don works has been modernized and it is likely to continue as the maker of the largest open die-gorgings in the UK.

The BSC transferred part of its open-die operation and the drop-forge section to Thomas Firth and John Brown Ltd, axing about 200 jobs.

SOLD BACK

In the Midlands the Bilston and Birchley special steels section could be closed, although production will continue at Trafford Park and Audenshaw, near Manchester.

With the closure of its furnaces, the Openshaw works has already been sold back to private enterprise. BSC is engaged in negotiations with Guest, Keen and Nettlefold to hive off the Brymbo plant. If they fail, this works could shut.

Special steels production in South Wales at Landore and Panteg is assured.

In general special steels will be concentrated in Scotland, South Wales and Sheffield after a reduction of units in each area.

Reorganization at Sheffield is already under way with last week's announcement that a new £23m bar-rolling mill is to be built at Rotherham.

Although the new mill, to be commissioned in mid-1975, will provide 360 new jobs, BSC has said it is part of its rationalization plans and warned that others of its 13 mills in the area will shut.

Changes in the strip-mill division will be more long term and BSC has said that rolling machinery at plants like Shotton and Glengarnock previously associated with open-hearth steelmaking will stay open at least until the machines need replacing.

In all cases, this is unlikely to be later than 1980 and possibly as early as 1975, holding out the prospect of total closure at Ebbw Vale, Shotton, Corby, Irlam, Glengarnock, Clydesdale, Dalzell and Lanarkshire.

Huge gains from economies of scale, mechanization and automation are to be had in the rolling process and falling

Left: Edward Heath. Right: Map showing Britain's present steel-works, which will be cut down to a minimum by Tory plans for rationalization

order books have stimulated rationalization and modernization.

BSC has said that old mills will be phased out to avoid duplication and overlapping and to facilitate standardized mass production in the most efficient mills.

Few, if any, changes are planned in the tin plate, chemicals and constructional engineering divisions. Workers at some plants are already beginning to organize to resist these closures and cutbacks.

At East Moors works, Ebbw Vale, Shotton, Glengarnock and Tollcross, action committees have been set up and a national campaign committee has been suggested.

A special TUC conference has been called for February 13 to discuss the jobs crisis and the Welsh and Scottish TUCs are both looking at ways of co-ordinating the run down with the provision of alternative work.

In the next five articles men at Cardiff, Ebbw Vale, Shotton, Glengarnock and Scunthorpe reveal how they see the fight. CONTINUED TOMORROW

*Tonne is a metric ton (1,000 kg).

IRANIAN STUDENTS PROBE THE SHAH'S JAILS

The Iranian monarchy and its functionaries abroad are not usually noted for practising 'open government'. In London at the embassy in Princes Gate a uniformed flunkey is constantly stationed at the door to treat unwanted visitors with as much hostility as he can muster.

The atmosphere is rather chilly inside the building, as if the writ of the Shah's secret police Savak begins to run as you cross the threshold.

When a group of Persian and Arab students went to the embassy a few days ago to ask for details of political trials there was a lot of scurrying about and whispering in corners at this impertinent demand.

The Shah, after all, was the host to the United Nations International Commission on Human Rights and is a signatory of the UN convention on the question. His twin sister, the heroin-smuggler Princess Ashraf, is president of the commission.

Last year, however, his regime executed over 50 young militants before army firing squads, many after frightful tortures at the hands of Savak. Most of these victims were condemned at farcical trials on trumped-up evidence.

Sentenced

Understandably the Iranian embassy is not eager to publicize this aspect of the Shah's record. When Mr A. M. Shapurian, the embassy Press attaché, finally appeared to speak to the student delegation, he was very guarded, though he maintained a mask of extreme suavity.

Ahmed Ghotbi (29), a leading member of the Iranian Students' Society, put four questions to Shapurian. They all concerned the fate of Dr Sheibani, a prominent doctor and author who has long been known as an opponent of the Shah.

The student organization has heard from inside Iran that Sheibani's life is in danger. They say he has been tried in secret and sentenced to death as a means of ridding Persia of a troublesome and experienced focus of opposition.

Dr Sheibani is not a communist. He is a Moslem and a supporter of the National Front to which premier Mossadeq, murdered at the instigation of the CIA in 1953, belonged.

That is to say, Dr Sheibani was a supporter of the National Front. He has spent more than half the time since Mossadeq's overthrow in prison and his opinions may have changed radically. No one knows.

The Iranian students do not know where he is held in prison, what he is charged with, when he was last arrested or when he will be coming to appeal against his sentence.

The purpose of the delegation to the embassy was to try and find answers to these questions.

Shapurian's first question was: 'Who is Dr Sheibani?' He asked for Ghotbi's address 'because I shall have to ask Tehran for answers'.

The Press attaché's denial failed to convince the students, who told me that Shapurian is the embassy spokesman on all political questions, special-



Iranian political prisoners. One every ten days is condemned to death by secret tribunals. Above: Students lobbying the embassy last week.

izing in rebutting Press comments against the regime.

Under pressure, he admitted: 'I may have heard the name. These trials and these arrests, there are so many of them . . . They do telegraph details to the embassy, but I can't remember them all.'

Shapurian was at pains to explain, probably for my benefit, the strict legality of the trials: 'There are these people who carry out acts against the state. They are dealt with according to the laws of the country.'

'All actions against the security of the state are to be tried before the military tribunals. Yes, that includes the publication of communist literature. We have the best of relationships with communist countries, but communism is outlawed in Iran.'

He added: 'We are Moslems and we don't like communism. We suppress communism because it is against our religion.'

This will be little consolation to the Moslem and Nationalist Dr Sheibani.

It is hard to see what new crimes Dr Sheibani has committed to justify the imposition of the death sentence. He was last tried, in secret, in 1970. He was charged then in connection with a speech he had made at the funeral of Saidi,

a Moslem holy man who died under torture when boiling water was introduced into his intestines. Sheibani has almost certainly been in prison ever since.

Dr Hans-Heinz Heldmann, an assistant professor from Frankfurt University, tried to attend the trial as an observer for the Amnesty International organization. When he applied for a permit to attend Sheibani's court martial he was brusquely ordered to leave the country within 24 hours.

Expulsion

It was the first time any country had expelled an Amnesty International representative. His interpreter, Hossein Rezai, an Iranian student from Mainz University, disappeared the day Dr Heldmann was forced to leave.

Rezai's detention led to a series of hunger strikes in protest by students in Britain, West Germany, Switzerland and Italy. In Germany 30 students barricaded themselves in the embassy in Bonn demanding Rezai's release.

The Iranian students are waiting to see whether Shapurian will actually reply to their questions and inform them on what has actually happened to Dr Sheibani,

FURTHER EVIDENCE

More evidence of the fate of Dr Abbas Sheibani has come from the testimony of Mrs Françoise Rozelaar-Vigier, an advocate at the Paris court of appeal, who visited Iran as a legal observer to attend the trial of Sheibani and his brother-in-law Mohamed Mofidi.

Mrs Rozelaar-Vigier, who was appointed by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the International Secretariat of Catholic Lawyers, was not allowed to contact the prisoners.

She could not attend the trial, which was announced only after the defendants had already been sentenced to death. She visited Tehran from December 7 to 16 and met Dr Ameli, the former Minister of Justice, who is now secretary of the Iranian League of Human Rights (nominated by the Shah).

In her report she writes: 'He told me I could not meet any of the prisoners since the instruction (preliminary examination) of their case was still going on. I then met, twice, the prime minister, Mr Hoveida, who told me the Iranian government did not recognize the organizations I represented (even though they are recognized by the United Nations).'

'But he added that I would be allowed as a private person to assist any trial of my choice and would then benefit of the assistance of an interpreter. Mr Hoveida also told me that all important trials were announced 15 days in advance by the Press, and that I would be personally informed of those to come.'

'To his knowledge, however, no trial was imminent and Dr Ameli confirmed this information. I, therefore, learned with a particular emotion that while I was received most courteously, as a personal guest, by the prime minister, the trial, by the military jurisdictions, of the five terrorists later executed on January 4, was imminent, if not already under way.'

(This concerned another case involving five youths, executed, allegedly for having attempted to blow up a petrol station, only three weeks after they were arrested on December 13. Their trial, like so many others, was entirely secret.)

'My emotion was increased when I got the news, from a well-informed source, that both Mofidi and Sheibani had been condemned to death, also following a secret trial by the same military tribunal of which I was never informed, in spite of the assurance given me by Mr Hoveida.'

'These facts oblige me to draw the conclusion that the accusations against Iran concerning the violation of the rights recognized to the accused in political trials by international law are, alas, well-founded.'

'According to information I obtained during my stay, the Savak, the political police of the government, is omnipresent, and rarely respects the legal obligation it has to present even "terrorists" to the coroner of the military tribunal (who judges even civilians . . .) within 24 hours of their arrest.'

'About 3,000 political prisoners await trial, and most will be condemned to many years in jail, if not to death. Since March 1971, 68 accused have been officially condemned to death and executed, that is one every ten days. . . .'

'I was also told that Mofidi underwent torture and had both his legs broken. Is that the reason he was judged secretly, without anyone being able to control his physical integrity as well as the veracity of the charges against him?'

'Truly, Mofidi and Sheibani are only two cases among many others, but they, at least although condemned to death, are still alive; and the parody of justice that has led to their condemnation is sufficient ground for taking their case as an example.'

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

EXTRADITION

A Manhattan court has ordered the extradition to India of Elijah Ephraim Jhirad, a former Judge Advocate General of the Indian Navy. He will face charges of embezzling between 1959 and 1961 a total of £200,000 from a fund for retired navy personnel.

FLAG

The Anglo-French white elephant Concorde landed at Launda airport in Portuguese West Africa last week proudly flying what officials believed was the Angolan flag.

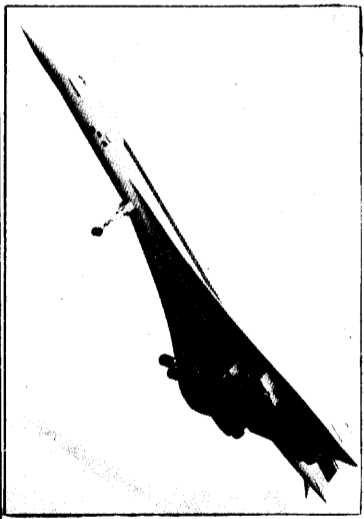
However, Angola doesn't have a flag. The Portuguese have been fighting against a revolutionary movement for Angolan independence for years.

So they weren't pleased to see an Angolan flag. According to one observer, Portuguese officials 'became very upset and began dancing up and down on the tarmac'.

A long search began for a Portuguese flag.

After nearly two hours one was found and the Anglo-French miracle of modern science taxied out again onto the runway and made a second ceremonial arrival—this time with the proper flag.

Inquiries are going on to see if Frelimo insurgents slipped the wrong flag aboard.



GRAVY BOAT

For the working class this is a period of large-scale oppression and impoverishment. But this is not a general condition. There are those in the ruling class who are still riding the gravy train.

It is to this crowd that a new company is addressing itself. David Laurent Giles, general manager of the Heron Corporation, has just launched a subsidiary specializing in luxury yachts. The series of yachts will be built in an Italian yard and each will cost £175,000.

Mr Giles says he has already contracted business valued at £1.75m. Asked who could possibly afford these fantastic sums, he said potential customers were those 'who have a million pounds in the bank'.

He said the company was 'confident that there are many people' who could purchase the cruisers.

RADIO

The battle for the London commercial radio licence is hotting up. New candidates are unearthed each week.

Perhaps the most intriguing band of entrepreneurs, apart from the John Bentley-NATSOPA group, is one headed by Sir Charles Trinder, former Lord Mayor of London. This outfit includes Michael Levene of the Charterhouse Group, ex-Tory MP Kenneth Baker, Sir Gordon Newton, ex-editor of the 'Financial Times' and now chairman of the Vavasour group, and George Clouston of the IBA Sound Recording Studios.

Also listed on the board of directors is none other than Norris McWhirter, twin brother of Ross, and a sports journalist on the 'Observer'. It was Ross McWhirter who successfully applied to the High Court to have the film on Andy Warhol taken off ITV. His action has been championed by Mary Whitehouse, ex-Moral Re-armament, and the extreme right-wing Festival of Light brigade.



THE CANARY THAT SANG

FILM REVIEW BY IAN YEATS

Was Joe Valachi, hustler, thief, drug peddler and murderer really a nice guy led astray? Or was he, to the very end, a mobster, ready at all times to kill or be killed turning scores of his former Cosa Nostra colleagues over to the police once he came to believe they were his enemies?

He was, in a sense, both. The breakdown of capitalism in the 1920s plunged millions of Americans into a period of poverty and degradation that seemed without end.

Immigrant communities — Italians, Irish, Jews and Poles — identified 'territories' of respective interest and fought each other and among themselves to defend them.

Industry, local government, entertainment and the law were all opened up in the 1920s and 1930s to what became known as the rackets.

The rackets expressed—and still do for that matter—capitalist relations at their most elemental and barbaric with the struggle for markets and personal survival dragging in every weapon from mere corruption to torture, intimidation and murder.

But within the ethnic groups the alignment of classes remained largely what it was in bourgeois society as a whole with social attitudes being tempered merely by the mores of the groups country of origin.

Within the Cosa Nostra Joe Valachi was to the capo what any worker is to his boss.

We have to decide quickly whether in whitewashing Valachi director Terence Young intends the paint to

rub off on the entire Mafia.

Valachi begins life as a Harlem barrow boy in a family of eight forced, eventually, by the slump to abandon this straight and narrow road to a living in favour of dishonest ways of obtaining larger pickings.

His boyhood in the Manhattan slums bears comparison with the experiences of millions of poor working-class families at that time — and indeed today.

A sense of hopelessness, truancy from school, poverty, fights, petty thefts, the equivalent of borstal, and then the final turn to big-time burglary, the rackets and murder.

But Valachi is not a Don, not a Godfather. He is an Italian worker, most likely of a peasant origin with a tradition of self help that leads easily to petty employer status. Barrow boy or driver for the Mafia makes no difference. It is a job.

In scene after scene the essential difference between the coarse and awkward Valachi, brilliantly played by Charles Bronson, contrasts with the mohair manners of the capos.

The choice for Valachi was rot in Harlem or get into the mobs. He chose the mobs and in doing so bound himself to their rules.

It would be easy to say that in perpetually stressing Valachi's innocence and longing for legitimacy, Young is not merely defending but approving the Mafia.

I don't think this is so. Valachi almost certainly comes across as a bit too innocent, a bit too slow on the uptake, a bit too generous. But, with one exception, no punches are pulled in portraying the mob leaders.

Left: Charles Bronson as Joe Valachi. While he played by the Mafia's rules, Valachi was as savage as the rest of them.

The exception is Valachi's godfather, Gaetano Reina, whose daughter Maria he later marries.

The entire Reina family are shown as unerringly refined and in the best bourgeois traditions. Yet to be a lieutenant there must have been as much blood on his hands as anyone else's.

And the Reina womenfolk are brought into the violence with consistent unwillingness—particularly Maria—turning blind eyes and deaf ears to as much of what is so clearly distasteful to them as possible.

For all their middle-class 'refinement' there is nothing good about mob leaders like Vito Genevese or Salvatore Maranzano.

Unlike Mario Puzo's 'The Godfather', 'The Valachi Papers' goes out of its way to point to the links between the well-heeled capos of the Mafia at the head of their paramilitary 'alternative government' in America and Italian fascism.

The film is based on the book of that name by Peter Maas, which was published originally in 1969 as 'The Canary that Sang—The Valachi Papers'.

In the book Maas spells out that Genevese, for instance, became 'the darling' of Mussolini when he fled to Italy in 1932 and gave \$250,000 toward the cost of building a new headquarters for the fascists.

When he returned from Italy in 1934, one of Genevese's first acts was to purge elements who had entered the Mafia undermining its exclusiveness.

While he played by the Mafia's rules, Valachi was as savage as the rest of them and at no time did he show any repentance for his long list of crimes and killings.

There is little evidence that he ever stopped playing by those rules except in the single instance of breaking one of the Mafia's most sacred laws and revealing its secrets to the outside world.

But, as he says himself in a quotation at the end of Maas's book, even that was strictly self defence—and some people might say revenge.

Emerging out of a web of intrigue between the New York families, branded a traitor and with every Mafiosi in every prison in America out to kill him as a result, Valachi had only one way to hit back and nothing to lose.

Over 13 months and 1,180 pages using 300,000 words he gave the world its first-ever glimpse of the Cosa Nostra.

At any other time in the history of the American mobs, such a confession may not have been possible.

The US establishment was not interested in the rackets now increasingly venerated as legitimate business enterprises turning over \$40 billion a year.

In 1959, before Robert F. Kennedy took over as Attorney-General and tried to capture 'the American dream' by cleaning up the mobs, FBI chief Edgar Hoover had only four men investigating the hoodlums, compared with 400 engaged in the fight against domestic communism.

With the end of Kennedy came the end of the clean-up and in response to pressure from the 'Italian lobby', Johnson ordered the Valachi Papers to be suppressed.

These were only revealed because a supreme court judge ruled that although Valachi's actual confessions could not be published (including allegations aimed at top men in the government and police) a third hand account of them could.

But it is unlikely that the book or the film hold any terror for the Cosa Nostra. They are, after all, but another face of social relations under capitalism.

POLITICAL PROFILES

By LEON TROTSKY

Paperback. £1.00 Illustrated

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



Now available from New Park Publications
186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UG

TODAY'S TV

BBC 1

9.42-12.10 Schools. 12.25 Disc a dawn. 12.55 News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at one. 1.30 Trumpton. 1.45 High street. 2.05-2.25 Schools. 2.50 Workers at risk. 3.20 Children growing up. 3.45 The countryman. 4.10 Play school. 4.35 Jackanory. 4.50 Blue Peter. 5.15 John Craven's news-round. 5.20 Brady kids. 5.45 News. Weather.

6.00 **NATIONWIDE**. 6.45 **TOP OF THE POPS**. 7.15 **Z CARS**.
 8.00 **COMEDY PLAYHOUSE**. 'Marry the Girls'. With John Le Mesurier, Barbara Murray.
 8.30 **HOLIDAY 73**. Istanbul, Torquay. 9.00 **NEWS**. Weather.
 9.25 **LORD PETER WIMSEY**. The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club.
 10.10 **FRANKIE HOWARD IN WHOOPS BAGHDAD**.
 10.45 **MIDWEEK**. 11.30 **LATE NIGHT NEWS**.
 11.35 **TAKE ANOTHER LOOK**. It's A Crystal, Crystal World.
 11.55 **Weather**.

ITV

9.30 Schools. 10.30 All our yesterdays. 11.00 Schools. 12.05 Inigo Pipkin. 12.25 Witches brew. 12.40 First report. 1.00 Jokers wild. 1.30 Crown court. 2.00 General hospital. 2.30 Good afternoon. 3.00 Generation three. 3.25 Happy every after. 4.25 Voyage to the bottom of the sea. 5.20 Pebbles and bamm bamm. 5.50 News.

6.00 **TODAY**. 6.30 **CROSSROADS**.
 6.55 **FILM: 'SIERRA'**. Wanda Hendrix, Audie Murphy, Burl Ives, Dean Jagger, Tony Curtis, Richard Rober. Western.
 8.30 **THIS WEEK**. 9.00 **LONGSTREET**. The Long Way Home.
 10.00 **NEWS**. 10.30 **CINEMA**. Films of Martin Ritt.
 11.00 **COOKING WITHOUT TEARS**. Expected Guests.
 11.30 **SCOTLAND YARD MYSTERIES**. The Silent Weapon.
 12.00 **WHAT THE PAPERS SAY**.
 12.15 **ALL IN THE MIND**.

BBC 2

11.00-11.25 Play school. 5.25 Open University.
 6.40 **SIXTEEN PLUS**. Changing Roles.
 7.05 **OPEN UNIVERSITY**. 7.30 **NEWS**. Weather.
 7.35 **WEB OF LIFE**. The Living Tundra.
 8.05 **EUROPA**. Rails for the Future.
 8.30 **WAR AND PEACE**. The Road to Life.
 9.15 **TIMES REMEMBERED BY PROUD MUMS**. Margot Fonteyn's Mother, Mrs Hilda Hookham.
 9.25 **HORIZON**. Crime Lab. 10.20 **SWALLOW YOUR LEADER**.
 10.50 **BONNIE KOLOC**. In concert. 11.20 **NEWS**. Weather. 11.50 **REAL TIME**.



On 'Cinema' tonight on Independent channels, Clive James examines the work of producer-director Martin Ritt. His films include 'The Molly Maguires' with Sean Connery (left) and Richard Harris (seated).

REGIONAL TV

CHANNEL: 9.30-12.00 London. 1.15 News. 1.30 London. 2.30 Women today. 3.00 London. 4.25 Follyfoot. 4.55 Jackson five. 5.20 Doctor at large. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 Maverick. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Remember the Day'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawaii five-o. 10.00 London. 10.30 Odd couple. 11.02 Cinema. 11.35 Scales of justice. 12.00 News, weather.
WESTWARD. As Channel except: 12.05 London. 12.37 Gus Honeybun. 12.40 London. 12.57 News. 1.00 London. 6.00 Diary. 10.30 Report. 12.00 Faith for life.
SOUTHERN: 9.30 London. 12.00 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Women only. 3.00 London. 4.25 Land of the giants. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.40 Film: 'A Breath of Scandal'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Doctor in charge. 9.30 Nearest and dearest. 10.00 London. 10.00 News. 11.10 Guideline. 11.15 Film: 'Half Angel'. 12.35 Weather.
HARLECH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Deline. 3.00 London. 5.20 Chuckleheads. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.18 Report Wales. 6.35 Sky's the limit. 7.05 Film: 'Above Suspicion'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawaii five-o. 10.00 London. 10.30 John Morgan. 11.15 Spyforce. 12.15 Weather.

ANGLIA: 9.20 London. 12.04 News. 12.05 London. 2.30 Katie Stewart. 3.00 London. 4.25 News. 4.30 Land of the giants. 5.20 Cartoon. 5.35 Wind in the willows. 5.50 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.20 Arena. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'The Sheriff'. 9.00 Pathfinders. 10.00 London. 10.30 Bygones. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 Living and growing. 12.05 Frighteners. 12.30 Reflection.
ATV MIDLANDS: 9.30 London. 12.00 Today. 12.05 London. 2.30 Women. 3.00 London. 4.25 Land of the giants. 5.20 Julia. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Dangerous Crossing'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 11.00 Angling. 11.30 Film: 'Gasbags'. Weather.
ULSTER: 11.00 London. 1.31 News. 1.40 Schools. 2.40 Romper room. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women. 3.55 Harriet's back in town. 4.23 News. 4.25 Elephant boy. 4.55 Phoenix five. 5.20 General hospital. 5.50 London. 6.00 Reports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Traitors Gate'. 8.30 London. 9.00 O'Hara. 10.00 London. 11.00 What's it all about. 11.20 Champions.
YORKSHIRE: 9.30 London. 4.25 Funky phantom. 4.50 Rovers. 5.20 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 Calendar, weather. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'The Iron Glove'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 10.30 Sport. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 Mod squad. 12.30 Weather.
GRANADA: 9.30 London. 12.00 Felix the cat. 12.05 London. 5.15 Smith

family. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. Put it in writing. 6.30 Sky's the limit. 7.00 Film: 'Flaming Feather'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Hawk. 10.00 London. 11.00 On the line. 11.35 Theatre macabre.
TYNE TEES: 9.25 Communications have broken down. 9.30 London. 2.30 News. 2.31 Place in the country. 3.00 London. 4.25 Funky phantom. 4.50 Stingray. 5.20 Partridge family. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'All the Young Men'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 10.00 London. 10.30 Sport. 11.00 Police call. 11.05 Cinema. 11.35 News. 11.50 Scales of justice. 12.20 Greatest fights. 12.30 Lectern.
SCOTTISH: 9.30 London. 2.30 Deline. 3.00 London. 4.25 Lost in space. 5.25 Crossroads. 5.50 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 Scotch corner. 7.00 Cimarron strip. 8.30 London. 9.00 Pathfinders. 10.00 London. 11.00 Angling today. 11.30 Late call. 11.35 Journey to the unknown.
GRAMPIAN: 10.58 London. 1.38 Schools. 2.40 Cartoon. 2.50 News. 3.00 London. 3.25 Women today. 3.55 Harriet's back in town. 4.25 Skippy. 4.50 Merrie melodies. 5.20 General hospital. 5.50 London. 6.00 News. 6.05 Try for ten. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Film: 'Invitation to a Gunfighter'. 8.30 London. 9.00 Persuaders. 9.55 Police news. 10.00 London. 11.05 Partners. 11.30 Frighteners. 12.00 Meditation.

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ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

Fight rising rents and prices
 Defend basic democratic rights
 Force the Tories to resign

SWINDON: Sunday February 4, 7.30 p.m. 'The Locomotive'.

HACKNEY: Thursday February 8, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall (opposite Town Hall). 'Build Councils of Action.'

WILLESDEN: Thursday February 8, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road NW10. 'Victory to the NLF. Down with Stalinism and imperialism.'

BASILDON: Sunday February 11, 5.30 p.m. Barnstable Community Centre. 'Defend basic rights.'

WANDSWORTH: Monday February 12, 8 p.m. 'King's Arms', Wandsworth High Street. 'Fight rising rents and prices.'

CLAPHAM: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor Street, SW4. 'Defend basic rights.'

CAMDEN: Tuesday February 13 8 p.m. 'Prince Albert', Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross. 'Lessons of the rents fight.'

HARROW: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. Labour Hall. 'Defend basic rights.'

TOOTING: Tuesday February 13, 8 p.m. 'Selkirk Hotel, Selkirk Road. 'Defend basic rights.'

LIVERPOOL: Tuesday February 20, 7.30 p.m. AEU House, Mount Pleasant.

CAMBRIDGE: Thursday February 1, 8 p.m. 'The Rose and Crown', corner of Newmarket Road and East Road.

KINGSTON: Thursday February 1, 8 p.m. 'Liverpool Arms', (corner of Cambridge Road/London Road).

DERBY: Thursday February 1, 7.30 p.m. Metal Mechanics premises, Charnwood St.

SOUTH EAST LONDON: Thursday February 1, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club, New Cross Road.

HOLLOWAY: Thursday, February 1, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road.

MANCHESTER: Thursday, February 1, 8 p.m. Ross Place School, Fort Ardwich. Joe Potts, Winnie Price, Connie Fahey. 'Fight rising prices! Force the Tories out'

MIDDLETON: Thursday February 1, 7.30 p.m. 'Cardinal's Hat', Wood Street.

CROYDON: Thursday February 1, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road.

CORBY: Sunday, February 4, 7.30 p.m. 'Nags Head', Corby Old Village.

WIGAN: Monday February 5, 8 p.m. Market Hotel, Mesmes Street. Speakers: Frank Kelly, UCATT, Bill Lyons, AUEW, Ray Hudson, UCATT. (All in a personal capacity.)

LONDON TEACHERS' SECTION
 Monday February 5, 8 p.m.
 Conway Hall, Red Lion Square London WC1.

DAGENHAM: Tuesday February 6, 8 p.m. Barking Co-op Hall, Fanshawe Avenue. 'Inflation and state control of wages.'

EAST LONDON: Tuesday February 6, 8 p.m. 'Festival Inn', Chrisp Street Market, E14. 'Defend basic rights.'

SKELMERSDALE: Wednesday February 7, 8 p.m. Quarry Bank Community Centre.

WOOLWICH: Wednesday February 7, 8 p.m. 'The Castle', Powis Street, SE18. 'Defend basic rights.'

An appeal on behalf of the Fine Tubes strikers of Plymouth

THE Plymouth Fine Tubes strikers have just completed two years and seven months on strike.

These men have waged a bitter struggle for the most basic right a worker can possess—the right to belong to a trade union.

Strike committee members have travelled over 100,000 miles to sustain their fight.

These latest months have been the hardest of all for the men, their wives and 53 children. Common Market entry, with rapidly rising prices, has imposed a severe financial burden. The 37 strikers face the challenging months ahead with a depleted strike fund—this is in a period when meat has now become a luxury for all but the highest paid. January is always a difficult month to raise money to further their fight.

Yet they are determined to fight on. This is a struggle the working class cannot afford to lose. That is why the Socialist Labour League and the Workers Press wishes to make a special appeal to all trade unionists to take collections in their factories and branches for the Fine Tubes men in order that their heroic and determined action can be carried forward. All money should be sent to:

Fine Tubes Treasurer
 c/o 65 Bretonside
 Plymouth, Devon.

Macmillan 'pleased with results' of The Press briefing that never was

ON FRIDAY afternoon, January 19, a Press briefing on the government's wage control laws was held at the Department of Employment by the Minister Maurice Macmillan, accompanied by a senior civil servant and two Press officers.

Present were journalists from the 'Sunday Express', 'News of the World', 'Sunday Telegraph', 'Observer', 'Sunday Mirror', and two from the 'Sunday Times'. Their questions were answered on an unattributable basis, which means that they could use the information but could not say where they got it from.

They asked what the planned Phase Three controls due in the autumn would contain and were told by Macmillan that the government intended to legislate even stricter pay limits than the £1 plus 4 per cent being imposed under Phase Two.

In percentage terms, it means that by the end of the year it will be illegal to get more than about 4 per cent increase in pay instead of the present 8 per cent ceiling, regardless of what is happening to company profits and regardless of what is happening to the price of food and other imported goods.

In cash terms, it means that a man on £25 a week will be allowed a £1 increase instead of the £2 rise that he would get under the pay controls the Tories propose for the first part of 1973.

The correspondents duly reported these startling revelations. Not only was the state control of wages to become permanent, but the increases were to be

A WORKERS PRESS INVESTIGATION



GRANT . . . Questions



HEATH . . . No answers

steadily driven down towards a nil norm.

Workers Press has consistently explained how the Tories have intended all along to use the full power of the state machine to regulate wages and eventually to impose direct wage cuts.

Misleading

This, in fact, is already happening indirectly in that the small increases legislated for under the pay laws are easily being swallowed up by the uncontrolled rise in prices. Workers' living standards have been under attack for some time and the cuts will now become faster and more ferocious.

The Sunday newspaper correspondents merely reported that 'tougher pay curbs' were on the way.

But even this produced too much of an outcry from trade union leaders for the government's com-

fort and when the Prime Minister was challenged about it in parliament the following Tuesday, he categorically denied that the Sunday papers had any reason at all for saying that Phase Three would be tougher.

'There is no reason at all for that,' he told a questioner. 'The details of Phase Three will be discussed in the usual way with the CBI and the TUC.'

Heath then went further. Asked if he accepted responsibility for the Press briefing given by his Minister of Employment, replied: 'There was no such ministerial action.'

Later he added: 'There was no ministerial briefing that Phase Three is to be a tougher policy.'

These denials caused a storm to break over Heath's head. He was accused of misleading the House of Commons and Macmillan's briefing was blamed for causing a



MACMILLAN . . . Even stricter pay limits than Phase Two envisaged in autumn.

But the Tory 'Daily Telegraph' nevertheless reported the following day in its editorial: 'On the eve of today's reassembly of parliament, a Conservative government announces indirectly through Press briefings the probability of even stricter control of prices and pay in the autumn.'

It seems clear enough. Wage increases are to be screwed down even more tightly in the autumn and there is no announcement at all of any intention of introducing food price controls or repealing the rent Act or other measures to directly reduce the cost of living. Hence the nearly unanimous Sunday newspaper headlines of 'Tougher Wage Curbs'.

For his own populist purposes, the millionaire Murdoch returned to the attack in 'The Times' on Tuesday with the reported remarks: 'What really makes me cross is the way the system is used for flying kites. When they are later shot down, it is the Press which is blamed and that reflects seriously on its credibility.'

'We are always being knocked on the head by politicians. It is time the profession stood up for itself.'

Islington East MP John Grant, a former industrial correspondent, said Heath's written reply to him on the question was 'thoroughly unsatisfactory and evasive' and intends to raise the matter again soon.

He added: 'It seems apparent that the Prime Minister and his Secretary for Employment, both seeking to manage the news, differed in their definition of what a "tough" phase three would involve.'

One of the industrial correspondents who was at the briefing told 'The Times': 'I heard afterwards that Mr Macmillan was delighted by the coverage.'

It may be that the left hand of the Tory anti-working class conspiracy does not know what the right hand is doing. But the outcome is clear: the drive to take on and smash the working class, its trade unions, and its standard of living, will go on regardless of the lies and breaches of bourgeois democratic traditions that are required.

further slump on the Stock Exchange.

There have since been further questions in the House and the right-wing Press baron Rupert Murdoch has challenged Heath's denial.

The following words were attributed to the proprietor of the 'Sun' and the 'News of the World' in a trade magazine, the 'UK Press Gazette', this week:

Denying

'The Stock Exchange slumped. It was still shedding points on Tuesday when Mr Heath said in the Commons: "There was no ministerial briefing that Phase Three is to be a tougher policy."

'Well there was one. It took place on Friday. It was attended by the industrial correspondents of all national Sunday newspapers.'

The fig leaf the government is now trying to hide

behind is that Macmillan was merely explaining the policy as laid down in paragraph 32 of the White Paper published days before his briefing.

This states that the rate of both price and wage increases should be brought down in order to reduce inflation so that there could be a real improvement in living standards.

Accordingly, on Tuesday of this week, the Prime Minister was still denying in the Commons that there had been any ministerial briefing to the effect that Phase Three of the wage controls was going to be tougher than Phase Two.

The point was indeed made by Macmillan and his officials at the briefing that, in the government's view, living standards would be better protected if, instead of wages rising 12 per cent and prices 8 per cent, wages were to rise only 6 per cent and prices only 2 per cent, and this view was reported by most of the Sunday papers.

Socialist Labour League Public Meetings UNITE IN ACTION TO DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS

CLAPHAM

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14, 8pm
South Island Library
South Island Place
Stockwell, SW9
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

WATFORD

MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm
Trades Union Hall
near Watford Junction stn
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

ACTON

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 8pm
Woodlands Hall,
Crown Street
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

GLASGOW

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11, 7.30pm
Govan South Town Hall
Langland Road
nearest underground
Govan Cross
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

London

NORTH KENT

MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 8pm
The Shakespeare,
Powis Street
Woolwich
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

WANDSWORTH

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22, 8pm
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

MIDDLETON

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14, 8pm
Middleton Baths,
Middleton, Manchester
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

MEDWAY

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 8pm
Aurora Hotel
Brompton Road
Gillingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

SLOUGH

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28, 8pm
Britwell Community Centre
Long Furlong Drive
Britwell Estate
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

DAGENHAM

THURSDAY MARCH 1, 8pm
Manor Park Library
Romford Rd/Rabbits Road
opp Rabbits Pub
speaker: G HEALY
(SLL National Sec)

BIRMINGHAM

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25, 7pm
Digbeth, Civic Hall
Digbeth, Birmingham
speaker: MIKE BANDA
(SLL Central Cttee)

SLL LECTURES GLASGOW

Sunday, February 4
The Left Opposition's struggle
against Stalinism.

MID HALL
Partick Burgh Halls
7.30 p.m.

Lectures by Tom Kemp, SLL
Central Committee member

DONCASTER

Sunday February 4
The crisis and the
socialist answer.

Sunday February 11
The revolutionary party
in Britain.

Lectures given by
Cliff Slaughter.

SPREAD EAGLE HOTEL
Westlithgate
7.30 p.m.

TODMORDEN

Monday February 5
'Trotskyism'

THE WEAVERS' INSTI-
TUTE, Burnley Road,
7.30 p.m.

Lecture 1
1919-1924—The Communist In-
ternational in the days of
Lenin and Trotsky

Lecture 2
1924-1933—The Left Opposi-
tion's struggle against Stalin

Lecture 3
1933-1938—From the German
defeat to the founding of
Fourth International
given by TOM KEMP
(SLL Central Committee)

ACTON

Wednesday February 7
Lecture 2

Wednesday February 14
Lecture 3

Woodlands Hall
Crown Street, W.3. 8 p.m.

EAST LONDON

Thursday February 1
Lecture 1

Thursday February 8
Lecture 2

Thursday February 15
Lecture 3

Old Town Offices
Poplar High Street
E.14. 8 p.m.

Wilson hot air about parliamentary institution

OPPOSITION leader Harold Wilson yesterday likened the Tory Cabinet to the board of directors of a property company.

Addressing a parliamentary press gallery luncheon at the Commons, Wilson said:

'More and more I get—and others get—the impression of a Cabinet which is a managerial

board, the directors' room of a property company, with the modern indifference to shareholders' meetings which characterizes much of modern industry.

'The board decides. Tell them as little as is compatible with the Companies Act. And get the meeting over as quickly as possible.'

He warned that the problems were only the tip of the iceberg . . . 'and the

dangers of continuing this trend are a growing cynicism, a loss of confidence in parliament'.

Wilson's fear for the institution of parliament is nothing more than reformist hot air.

If the Tories are using parliament as a rubber stamp for their anti-Labour legislation then no one carries greater responsibility than Wilson himself.

All the Tory legislation

being railroaded through parliament by Heath was originated by Wilson:

- The Industrial Relations Act has its seeds in the Labourite plan 'In Place of Strife'.

- The Housing Finance Act owed its origins to the Labour 'fair rents' scheme.

- The European Communities Act was actually drawn up while Wilson was still in office.

- Heath's state pay laws are a harsher step along the road paved by the Prices and Incomes Board.

In conclusion it must be said, if Wilson is so upset with the Tory presidential-style of rule, why isn't he joining with the TUC in mobilizing the labour and trade union movement to force the government out?

Wilson will not answer that question.

BRIEFLY

TROUBLE flared yesterday at the Mansfield Hosiery Mill, Loughborough, when white knitters briefly walked out. They left their machines for ten minutes following an argument with Asian workers. A tribunal of the Commission on Industrial Relations is currently investigating labour troubles at the mill.

FEDERATION of Master Builders is believed to be the first employers' association to hire an entire ship for a cruise by its members and their families at reduced rates. In November the 10,000 'Black Watch', owned by the Fred Olsen Line, will be taken over for a special cruise to Madeira and the Canary Islands.

BUILDING workers in Lancaster are to protest to their union leadership against the inclusion of fascist Spain among holiday arrangements offered by a new UCATT Travel Service, announced in the January issue of the union's paper, 'Viewpoint'. Sample arrangements prominently displayed in the advert are inclusive holidays in both Spain and Greece. The local branch is sending a protest to union secretary George Smith, recalling the shooting of Spanish building workers by Franco's police during a strike last year.

SEVEN leaders of the Briant Colour work-in in south London have been served with High Court writs. Issued by the Chancery Division they are returnable in 14 days. Earlier this week the company liquidator, Mr M. P. Granville White obtained the orders instructing the work-in committee to hand over the company's documents he needs to wind up the business once and for all. The writ says the Briant workers 'unlawfully and acting in concert together seized physical control of the factory, machinery and equipment and to this day retain control'.

Those named in the writ are Bill Freeman, Norman Pennington, John Wickham, Christine Brazil, William Sawyer, Denis Broad and Tony Austin. They belong to the print unions NGA, SOGAT, NATSOPA and SLADE.

FINANCE House Association will today raise its basic rate from 8½ per cent to 9 per cent. The rate last changed on January 1 when it rose ½ per cent to 8½ per cent. According to an association spokesman, 'rates are being watched almost by the hour' because of the troubled financial situation.

Thirteen councillors face jail Rally round Clyde rent rebels

BY PHILIP WADE OUR HOUSING CORRESPONDENT

CLYDEBANK councillors say they will not be intimidated by the government and are not deterred by threats of imprisonment now hanging over their heads for not implementing rent rises under the Tories' notorious Act.

'We are not going to be intimidated by the law courts of the Secretary of State,' Cllr Joseph Bauld, a leading Labour non-implementer, told me yesterday.

He was one of 13 councillors who on Tuesday night voted to ignore a court order instructing them to implement the Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) Act.

This decision means at the end of a seven-day period—which expires next Tuesday—councillors face direct collision both with the courts and the government.

Judges could summons the councillors to answer for their contempt. Imprisonment and fines could follow swiftly.

It would lead to their disqualification from their elected positions.

The stand taken by the majority on the council has split the Labour group down the middle—eight voting for implementation and seven against. Other non-implementers are Communist Party and Scottish Nationalist councillors and one Independent.

'If you believe in something, you put up some kind of a struggle. The alternative is to let yourself be used as a doormat,' said Cllr Bauld.

'We must stick to our principles. Nowadays some of our members just bend and they don't want this conflict with authority.'

Cllr Bauld indicated that those in the Labour Party who did not want to fight should resign. Of the Labour leadership at Transport House, he commented: 'They have been sitting on the fence, refusing to come out into the open.'

'Our position is quite clear. We have taken a stand and there can be no retreat from it now. The right to fix our rents in our towns has been taken away at the stroke of a pen.'

'We are determined not to accept these dictatorial powers,' added Cllr Bauld. 'We were elected legally to do our job and not become a rubber stamp for the Secretary of State.'

Clydebank was a 'distressed area', he added.

Unemployment was running at a staggering and savage 11 per cent. Over 20,000 jobs had been lost from the area in ten years.

'Now they want us to impose a flat rate £1 increase on everyone, including old age pensioners. It is all very well talking of rebates, but the pensioner wouldn't get the full £1 back,' explained Cllr Bauld.

'If we implemented the Act it would hang a rope round our necks and just cripple the town. We have to fight for the will and aspirations of the people.'

The threat of imprisonment or fines would not make him change his mind.

In fact the 13 against the Act will not meet again before the seven days are up to reconsider the position.

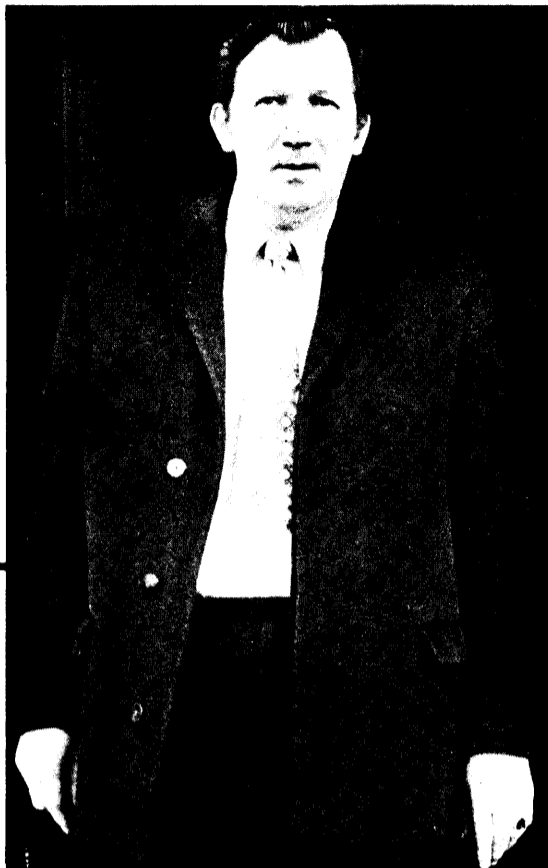
At the moment they are campaigning for a massive demonstration at Clydebank on Saturday morning, assembling at the town hall at 10.30 a.m. They are appealing for support from every section of the labour and trade union movement.

But it is clear that this vicious attack on the basic rights of Clydebank workers and councillors can only be defeated in one way.

The campaign in their support must be aimed at mobilizing the entire working class in a struggle to bring down the Tory government and return a Labour government pledged to socialist policies, including the repeal of the Tory rent Acts.

There can be no compromise in this fight as the Tories have made clear.

Rail pay offer 'soon'



ASLEF general secretary Ray Buckton

BRITISH Rail has still not answered the train drivers' demand for a £40 basic wage put forward by the locomen's union ASLEF.

At yesterday's protracted talks over a new pay structure for 30,000 drivers, British Rail could only tell ASLEF they would get an offer 'as soon as possible'.

ASLEF secretary Ray Buckton said afterwards the executive would consider the situation this morning.

'We do not want industrial action. But if we are forced into a corner, I hope the public will understand it's because

of British Rail's delay and procrastination,' he said.

The new structure, added Buckton, had been under discussion for two years.

The only thing ASLEF got out of yesterday's talks was BR's dropping its scheme for dividing drivers into three grades for pay purposes.

ASLEF's claim for a £9.25 increase in the basic rate is separate from the annual pay review for which no claim has yet been sent in.

The National Union of Railwaymen was also at yesterday's talks, but is known to be critical of the ASLEF claim.

Lorry ferry drivers defy state pay law

From David Maude in Birmingham

THE TORIES' state pay legislation has run into stiff opposition from 1,000 British Road Services transport drivers in the Midlands.

And at depots throughout the Birmingham area yesterday drivers were confident that the government will have to allow payment of £2.50 bonus by BRS.

More than 10,000 Midlands car and car component workers were laid off as a demonstration of the drivers' powerful position.

Seven British Leyland factories were hit, including the giant Austin Morris complex at Longbridge.

The bodies and parts are normally ferried into the car factories by the big BRS vehicles and transporters.

On Monday of this week the drivers handed in to shop stewards their Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) licences which became compulsory for driving the lorries from that day.

They are demanding the payment of a £2.50 bonus which is already being received by men working for more than 170 private transport firms in the area. The drivers emphasize that they are not on strike—and they are angry at what they believe are Tory-inspired reports that they are already earning £43 a week.

Ted Groves, a driver at the Oldbury BRS depot in Birmingham, told me: 'This is the only job where you actually have to pay to go to work.'

'They class us as unskilled, but I have to have two licences and a medical certificate before I can start work. You pay £1 for this new HGV licence and £4.50 for a medical.'

For a 50-hour week Ted Groves took home £29.50 in his last pay packet—and that was including £2.50 bonus.

This was the highest pay slip that I saw at the Oldbury depot. Most men, driving 24-ton lorries for which the HGV licence is now needed, are taking home between £23.50 and £27 for 50 and 56½ hours respectively.

The pay rates at BRS are in fact £4.60 lower than those for firms in the Road Haulage Association, driver Bill Garner said.

Bill Fletcher, shop steward for the Transport and General Workers' Union at Oldbury, said: 'We didn't ask for these licences, they've been imposed on us by law.'

'We didn't ask for the pay freeze either.'



SPECIAL LECTURE: Given by G. Healy, SLL national secretary
Marxism and the Road to Workers' Power
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 4, 7p.m.
BEAVER HALL, GARLICK HILL
(nr Mansion House tube)