

Socialist Worker

A FEW MORE PLEDGES TO BE BROKEN

for workers control and international socialism

The real voice of the labour movement



FIFTY MINERS marched into the Labour Party Conference on Monday and interrupted the chairman's opening address. They came from Scotland and the north of England to protest at government policy

Labour one step nearer scrapheap

Socialist Worker Reporter

BLACKPOOL:- Labour's conference which finished here on Friday displayed in greater measure its irrelevance both to the struggles of working people and to the political issues in front of the socialist movement.

The copper-bottomed boredom and pious aspirations of the platform and most of the trade union and constituency delegates was relieved on only a few occasions. Only the intervention of the miners' lobby brought some reflection of the anger and disillusionment with the Labour government.

For both the leadership and the Left establishment, the political debates on unemployment, incomes policy and trade-union legislation were earnestly kept within the polite confines of a debating society.

OVATION

Thus it was that Frank Cousins, leader of the Transport Workers Union, was able to make a ringing denunciation of the government's penal laws against the unions and still lead the standing ovation on Tuesday after Wilson's speech on the government's record.

And even a few weeks before the engineers' confrontation with the government, Hugh Scanlon, president of the AEF, was able to protest his loyalty to "this government of ours".

The policies in the Mid-term Manifesto in particular showed an almost total unawareness of the militancy and cynicism about the establishment's politics being displayed by growing numbers of workers. Chairman Jenny Lee was right in saying that the party is in danger of being by-passed by the new movement developing on the Left.

Nothing which has come from Blackpool this week can give comfort to those like Miss Lee who see the party confined to the scrapheap within a few years.

Engineers near crunch

Control of strike is key issue

By ANDREW HORNUNG (AEF)

IN TWO WEEKS' TIME more than a million engineers will down tools in an official national strike.

From October 21 they will be fighting the engineering employers and the government's incomes policy.

It is vitally important that engineering workers should plan for the strike now—which will be the greatest challenge yet to government policy. They should put forward their own demands concerning control of the strike instead of passive reliance on their union officials.

Worse

Some engineers are already talking about a "sell-out" if their union, the AEF, calls off the strike. But there could be a worse sell-out if the AEF succumbs to talk of "ending the national interest" and agrees to a productivity deal with the bosses and government instead of a straight, "no strings" increase.

The government are anxious to push through

productivity deals in the key areas of industry, including engineering. These deals are not in the interests of the workers.

Wrapped around a small pay increase are all manner of fancy agreements that mean harder work, worse conditions and a smaller labour force.

Although union leaders like Hugh Scanlon of the AEF and Frank Cousins of the Transport Workers oppose the incomes policy (their unions were responsible for the government's defeat at Blackpool this week) they have not condemned the idea of productivity deals.

Rank and file engineers must decide the pace of their strike. Instead of waiting to see what kind of "prod" deal the AEF leaders accept, engineers should declare now that they are against such deals in any shape or form.

The strike is not only against the bosses and the government. It is also against those union officials who will sell more of their members' labour and sacrifice their hard-won rights.

Hugh Scanlon, the new president of the AEF, has yet to win his spurs in a major industrial dispute. It

is not enough for his members to rely on him just because the millionaire press calls him a "left-wing militant".

Engineers should tell him that they will support him to the hilt if he leads the fight for a straight increase. If he accepts a productivity deal, then he is no better than the right-wing members of his executive.

Throw

The strike is a class battle. The engineers must throw back into the faces of employers and government the idea of "cooperation in the national interest".

The national interest is the interest of the employers and the government alone to maximise profits at the expense of the workers in order to reinvest in new machinery, new techniques, new methods of exploitation.

The strike is about far more than just money. And any wage gain can only be temporary, for it will soon be gobbled up by rising prices and rents.

But a "flexibility" agreement, or a redundancy agreement or a loss of conditions would be pem-

ment. This is the area of the real fight and this will be the area of any real sell-out.

The strike opens up greater perspectives than just a struggle for a £20 a week minimum for skilled men, three days' extra holiday, a non-contributory pension scheme and equal pay for women.

Engineers should throw up their own rank-and-file strike committees to organise the strike and to have a decisive voice in any negotiations.

The strike committees, properly elected and not appointed, even by shop stewards, should organise mass meetings at factories and, where possible, on whole trading estates so that workers in the AEF and other unions understand the issues and receive up to date information.

The issue of control of the strike by the rank and file is crucial. It will give engineers tremendous confidence in their own abilities instead of reliance upon officials.

From that confidence will grow an awareness that if workers can control a factory and a strike, then there is no reason why they cannot control both their industry and, in league with other workers, the whole of society.

PAPADOPOULOS JOINS BALLOT-RIGGING CLUB

THE GREEK COLONELS aren't doing very well. They only won 95.2 per cent of the votes cast in Sunday's referendum.

They are very junior members of the dictators' club. Old Uncle Ulbricht in East Germany has been getting 99.9 per cent for years in the "elections" there.

And Papadopoulos and his

ugly crew are years behind the Russians, who have got elections and referendums down to a fine art. They even know the results before the elections are held!

In July 1940, for example, the Lithuanians went to the polls to vote yes or no in a referendum for the country to be amalgamated with the USSR. At the last moment the officials decided to

extend the referendum over two days. They forgot to tell Moscow.

Identical

Tass, the Russian news agency, announced the result of the referendum on the first day. But the slip didn't matter. Tass's estimate was identical with the

official result the following day.

In Greece, in spite of the threat of jail for not voting, 25 per cent refused to take part in the ludicrously undemocratic affair. Among that 25 per cent are many of the people who will eventually forge a movement to crush the thugs who now hold the country under their iron heel.

WHAT A FARCE! The Labour Party conference votes down the government's incomes policy (the polite name for the wage freeze) and Jenkins and Castle blandly announce that they will pay no attention and will continue with their anti-working-class policies.

The contempt which the Wilson gang have for the conference is further proof that the government in no way represents the interests of the working class.

No one should be fooled by the vague promises outlined in the Mid-term Manifesto produced for the conference. It talks about "Socialism in the 1970s" but gives no indication of how this is to be achieved, save for hints about a wealth tax and more public ownership.

These are just sops to win a few votes at the conference. The government has abandoned all the demands that it put forward in the manifestos for the 1964 and 1966 elections.

DOLE

Labour said it would maintain full employment and the free health service. Now the dole queues are growing towards the million mark this winter and prescription charges have been brought back.

Labour said it would build 500,000 new houses a year by 1969/70. The Housing Minister officially scrapped that target this year.

Labour said it would ensure a fair deal for council tenants by giving special grants to councils that would keep rents down. The grants have not been given and council rents are shooting up throughout the country from this week.

Labour said the incomes policy would be aimed equally at profits, prices and wages. But profits and prices are doing well while wages are held down and workers threatened with jail if they fight the freeze.

QUESTION

If all these promises have been abandoned, what hope is there of a wealth tax? And even if (and what a gigantic "if" it is!) Wilson did decide to distribute wealth more fairly, such a policy would not take into account the question of the ownership of industry, which is what the struggle for socialism is about.

This is a government of liars and hypocrites. They talk about Socialism in the 70s while they practice Toryism in the 60s.

We believe in Socialism in the 70s. It will not be won by votes at the Labour Party conference or by thinking that the Labour Party is an alternative to the Tories.

It will only be won by building a real revolutionary socialist party that will have its roots in the working class at rank and file level. That party will ignore the sham of the parliamentary system and will fight instead for real democracy—workers' power.

Labour policies boost accidents — page 2

LETTERS

CAN WE HAVE a less defensive Socialist Worker? The last issue presented the bosses case against disruptive sectional interests in industry quite brilliantly, and merely bemoaned the fact that action to suppress this disruption would be nasty.

How the hell are we supposed to inspire our readers to declare all-out industrial war against capitalism on these arguments?

Our case is not that there are certain sacrosanct trade-union rights that have to be defended whatever the effect on the economy. To stop there invites criticism, and gets it!

Our case only makes sense when you complete the argument—capitalism is unjust in its very essence, and creates a tension between labour and capital which will only be resolved by the victory of labour—the overthrow of the bosses by the working class organised at the rank-and-file level. This perspective makes the industrial chaos (resulting from working-class militancy) a cause for jubilation—not apology!

DAVE COWELL and TED PARKER, Folkestone IS.

MAY I answer requests for clarification of my article (The Starving Masses—They Need Guns not the Pill, September 7)—especially as you left out a piece attacking the Pope.

Of course I stand for the right of people to control their own fertility! Also, it is clear that the people interviewed by Terry Bull need to exercise this right immediately. In this connection we condemn the Pope's sinister "Appeal to the Public Authorities" to deny them this right.

My point was that birth control as a solution to problems of starvation, bad housing, etc., is essentially a private, short term, partial solution.

It has no relevance for long-term, universal, public solutions of problems which are essentially those of social organisation—at least until we have seen what a world socialist order is capable of, and what the purely voluntary rate of reproduction turns out to be. (And if it does turn out that mankind is forced to limit its numbers I venture to predict that it will not be because it is impossible to feed people but because the effort to do this will lower the quality of life in ways which are more apparent in London today than India, i.e. scarcity of open space, breathable air, etc.)

Imperialist apologetics rely on confusing these points. Ever since the time of Malthus the rich have blamed the fertility of the poor for their woes. This lie must be exposed.

Yet today they are having more success than ever before in diverting attention from their own crimes by playing up a wholly spurious "population problem"—CHRIS ARTHUR, Brighton, Sussex.

Going up (ALMOST AS FAST AS PRICES) the terrible toll of factory accidents

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO Karl Marx put the problem that faces the boss when he tries to get more work out of his labour force in the following way:

"Where we have labour, not carried on by fits and starts, but repeated day after day with unvarying uniformity, a point must inevitably be reached, where extension of the working day and intensity of the labour mutually exclude one another."

So at a certain point in the development of modern factory life, the capitalists realised that if they tried to lengthen the working day any more they would not get sufficient effort put in by the workers.

The bosses then decided that it would be more "economical" to allow the working class to work shorter hours—provided they worked harder during these hours.

In this way speed-up became more important to the employers than the 12-hour day.

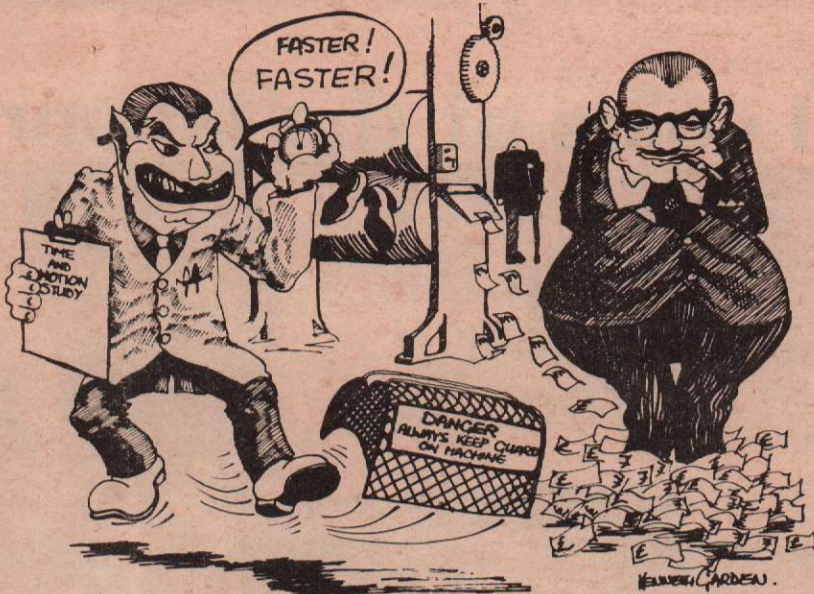
THE PRICE

What does speed-up mean today? Government figures never give the whole story but they can help us to build up the picture. They show that the price paid over the last 10 years for rising productivity (that is, speed-up) and for the shorter working week which it made necessary was more injury to the workers.

Productivity, measured by output per employee in all industries rose by an average 2.6 per cent a year between 1956 and 1966. Then, from the end of 1966 to the end of 1967 it rose by 5.5 per cent.

This greater intensity of work, together with pressure from the trade unions, led to a reduction in the length of the working-day. The average number of hours worked by adult men fell from 48.5 hours a week in April 1957 to 46.1 hours in April 1967.

The price paid for this greater productivity in shorter hours can be roughly worked out from the figures of industrial accidents. (The latest report was published at the end of September.)



by STEVE JEFFERYS

These figures are not accurate. The Chief Inspector of Factories himself pointed out in 1967 that between 17 per cent and 32 per cent of accidents that should be notified are generally not reported. And for an accident to be classified as "notifiable", it must keep a worker away from work for more than three days!

But even allowing for this understatement, the figures are still horrific. In premises subject to the Factories Act (which doesn't cover agriculture and about half the industrial and commercial firms in the country) 304,016 accidents were reported in 1967.

This figure was 2.5 per cent higher than the number of reported accidents in 1966, and nearly 15 per cent higher than the total for 1964.

This is the real success story of the Labour government. Only prices have gone up so quickly.

The rise in industrial accidents has continued unchecked in the last 10 years. It is the direct result of speed-up.

The Daily Express congratulated the bosses because "only" 564 people were killed at work in 1967 as opposed to 701 in 1966, and conveniently ignored the underlying rise.

The Engineering Employers' Federation starts its handbook Think about Safety with the words: "Managements do what is practicable to provide safe working

conditions and methods of work", but at the same time they introduce time-and-motion and speed-up which increase the pace and intensity of work and directly increase physical and mental damage.

Some workers hope that the Labour government will do something to improve conditions of work and safety. But how can they when they are doing everything in their power to raise productivity?

"The speed-up," as Wilson and Castle would put it, "is in the national interest"—that is, in the interests of those who control the state and the government—the big bosses and the ruling class.

THE ACT

What does it matter to them (as long as the speed-up is introduced) that one in every 35 workers in industry in 1967 was involved in a serious accident at work?

The bosses treat their labour force as just another object they have to buy in order to get production going. If they could get away with it and it was "economical", they wouldn't allow parliament and the civil service to interfere in the factories at all.

But there is a Factories Act covering a minority of workplaces and a small team of inspectors. Why?

The answer to this is also the answer to the whole problem of speed-up and industrial accidents. The working class has forced the state and the government in over a 100 years of continuous struggle to make a show of intervention on safety matters in industry, and this same collective force could, in a socialist society, also end the dangers of speed-up.

A 100 years ago Marx was also considering why a Factory Reform Act had been passed and how limited and unsatisfactory it was in reality. In his major work, Capital, he wrote:

"What strikes us about the English legislation of 1867 is, on the one hand, the necessity imposed on the Parliament of the ruling classes of adopting in principle measures so extraordinary, and on so great a scale, against the excesses of capitalist exploitation; and on the other hand, the hesitation, the repugnance, and the bad faith, with which it lent itself to the task of carrying those measures into practice."

So where the working class has fought for better conditions the state does make some show of reform. It gives the appearance of

operating against the bosses and in favour of the workers, when in fact its activity on behalf of the workers is very limited indeed.

Any wide-scale interventions by the state in the interests of the working class can be ruled out. They would raise the whole question of ownership, control and decision-making in industry and society. The government and civil service, acting in the interests of the bosses, could never allow this.

The narrow limits within which the state can act on behalf of the workers are shown by the figures of prosecutions under the Factories Act and associated legislation. In 1966, only 1,471 firms or individuals were prosecuted.

They were fined a mere total of £62,277, an average of £28 10 each. In other words, there was only one prosecution for every 190 reported accidents.

Some people say that these accidents cannot be avoided in an industrial economy. This is wrong. Even the Chief Inspector of Factories believes that a lot could be done under the present capitalist system. Last year he wrote in his Report:

"There is very little evidence to suggest that industry is inadequately equipped to deal with the hazards which technological changes may involve; there is, however, abundant evidence to show that in some factories the most obvious dangers continue to be ignored."

THE MONEY

But he does not understand why these dangers continue to be ignored (or at least he does not say so publicly).

The ruling class ignore them because industrial accidents ham the workers, not the boss, and speed-up has to be introduced if British capitalism is to remain "competitive" and the bosses are to keep their profits. Factory workers often have to ignore the dangers because piece-work, time-and-motion and speed-up mean that they lose money if they don't.

The failure of the Labour government to protect the workers who elected it to power is because it is wedded to support of this way of running things. The system forces a worker to run physical and mental risk and strain in order to take home a weekly wage packet while the boss rakes in the profits.

The speed-up and its consequences—the rising trend in industrial accidents—are part and parcel of a broad attempt to regenerate British capitalism regardless of the cost to the workers.

The government's three-pronged policy of "rationalisation", "increased productivity" and "incomes policy" has nothing to do with socialism.

The first means mergers and rising unemployment.

The second means more accidents in industry.

And the third is aimed at the pockets and living standards of all workers. This is a policy in the interests of the ruling class.

Because it is the Labour Party that now carries the pitchfork, some working people find it difficult to continue the struggle. The answer is that it is the Labour Party and not the labour movement that is to blame.

Working people can and will unite to fight for better conditions.

Factory and other problems will only be solved by a new way of running things in a better system of society, set up and run by the workers—genuine socialism.

Socialist Worker

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WHERE WE STAND

SOCIALIST WORKER IS THE paper of International Socialism, a movement of revolutionary socialists who believe that the present form of society, with its blatant inequalities, its periodic crises, wars and racist hysteria must be replaced by one based on a planned economy under full workers' control; those who produce the wealth should own and control the means of production.

International Socialism is opposed to any incomes policy that seeks to restrict the wages of the workers in order to boost the profits of the employers. We unconditionally support all shop stewards and rank and file trade union members in their struggles for

better wages and conditions and oppose all reactionary laws that threaten the liberties of the labour movement. We support all strikes in defence of workers' interests with the demand of no victimisation of trade unionists. Redundancy should be opposed with the demand: five days work or five days pay. Shop stewards organisations should strengthen and extend their influence by linking up on an industrial and ultimately a national basis.

We are opposed to racial discrimination, a weapon used by the ruling class to divide the labour movement. Immigration control must be ended, ensuring the free movement of peoples regardless of

race and colour. Black and white workers must unite and form their own defence organisations to fight fascism and racialism. The labour movement must demand the immediate recall of British troops from abroad as the first step towards ending colonial exploitation.

The task of revolutionary socialists is to join workers in their struggles with socialist ideas that will link up the various sections of the labour movement and help create a force that will lead on to workers' power.

If you would like to join IS or would like further details of our activities, fill in the form below:

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WHAT STUDENTS WANT

FOR THE LAST YEAR, the press has been full of stories of student revolts both abroad and in Britain. What is behind these?

According to the organs of official opinion—"irresponsible agitators", "international conspiracies" or at best a "failure of communication". We believe differently.

Students do have a great deal to complain about. They are misled if they don't rebel against the horrors of the US war on the Vietnamese people, against a system which keeps two-thirds of the world's population in poverty, while wasting huge resources on arms expenditure; against racial prejudice peddled by some politicians and pandered to by others; against the authoritarianism of the educational system.

Everywhere in higher education, the emphasis is not on students understanding society and the world but on obeying meaningless rules and on competing with fellow-students in a rat race towards an irrational and often irrelevant examination for a degree of diminishing utility.

Control colleges

This cannot be changed until those who are being educated begin to control the colleges.

At the moment educational power does not even lie with teachers and academics. In most cases it is completely in the hands of directors of big businesses and government officials (a typical example is LSE where the 80 members of the Board of Governors share between them over 280 directorships of companies.) Their concern is with processing the student to produce a commodity that will make for industrial "efficiency". That is why the

Student revolt is spreading to all parts of the world. From Mexico to Warsaw, the banners and slogans proclaim the universal need to overthrow the bureaucratic regimes that stifle the lives and initiatives of ordinary people.

Students are not fighting a partial struggle for the improvement of their own conditions. They are demanding a total transformation of society to one based on democratic control by the workers.

In spite of the May events in France, in which workers and students united in a massive threat to the capitalist system there is still considerable misunderstanding in Britain of student political activity. As the universities and colleges gather for the winter term and, in Homsey, the battle is already under way for "campus control", we are printing a recruiting leaflet just issued by the Revolutionary Socialist Students' Federation.

authorities are concerned to prevent students from having any control of their own lives.

This treating of people as objects for manipulation is not something that only students suffer from. Those that rule over educational institutions exercise the same power throughout the rest of society, through their ownership of industry.

These are the 1 per cent who own 80 per cent of stocks and shares, control national newspapers, who sit on the boards of the BBC and ITV and who preside over the courts.

These are also the people, who, because it profits them, condone the rape of Vietnam and press for cuts in the standard of living of workers in this country.

The RSSF exists because there is an alternative to this. This is socialism, where the mass of the people democratically decide how society is to be organised.

This will only come about as a result of struggles against the ruling class. All over the world students are doing just this, and when in France this year millions of workers joined with the students,

the whole structure of the society was shaken. And in Vietnam workers, peasants and students by their courage are teaching a lesson which others will learn.

In Britain, RSSF believe we can aid these revolutionary struggles by fighting both within the colleges and schools for student power and by joining with other sections, such as immigrants defending themselves against reactionary legislation or attacks by hooligan elements, and above all with the increasing number of workers who are beginning to fight within the factories to control their own lives.

Prepare to replace

Join your local branch of RSSF and become a part of this struggle. If there isn't a branch in your locality, form one. France in May proved the instability of the existing order. Vietnam demonstrates its bestiality.

Help us prepare to replace it. The address of the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation is 120 Commercial Road, London E1.

Socialist in race for White House seeks Vietnam GI vote



FRED HALSTEAD is a candidate in the American presidential election. You hear a lot about Nixon and Humphrey and the racist Wallace, but not much about Fred Halstead.

That's because he is a socialist. He is the presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers' Party, the American Trotskyist organisation.

Fred Halstead has visited South Vietnam to talk with American servicemen as part of his presidential campaign. He stopped in London on his way back to the United States and I spoke to him at his hotel.

"The two key issues for our party," he said, "are the Vietnam war, with the Bring the Boys Home Now campaign, and black control of the black community."

The anti-war movement is a mass movement in the USA, he said, but at present it is made up chiefly of students—and they don't have the power to stop war. Only two groups of people could do that.

One group is the workers and as yet it has been difficult for socialists to get them to react against the war on a mass scale.

The other group is the fighting men, the soldiers. The government draft (which is like the National Service we had in Britain in the 1950s) hits most at workers, including black people who have a much higher proportion in the army than their percentage of the population.

Middle-class youngsters get deferred from the army when they go to college.



GI in Saigon: enormous potential

In San Francisco, leaflets have been given out, announcing a march on October 12 by GIs and army veterans. The army brass is very worried and is thinking of banning the march.

On the negro question, Fred Halstead said that black people in the United States are generally more class conscious and radical than white workers.

"The black working masses have moved into the raw form of spontaneous elemental explosions in the city," he said. "Right now mass radicalisation is occurring among the black people and among students, but this is absent in the white working class."

The reason, he added, was because poverty, unemployment and ghetto conditions are the daily experience of black workers. But he thought that the process of winning support from the white workers would slowly be achieved.

One reason for keeping white workers out of the black movement was because of the different levels of political consciousness.

He explained the black attitude as "don't get in our goddam way. We're ready to fight and until you are, stay the hell out."

Fred Halstead isn't expecting to win the presidential election. He has no illusions about elections under a capitalist system.

He said the SWP's objective was to publicise the fact that there is a revolutionary alternative to the two capitalist parties. The election gives them a platform on radio and television to present their ideas to a huge audience of black and white workers.

JENNY SOUTHGATE

WHEN THE WORKERS OF PARIS HELD POWER

BOOK REVIEW

The Fall of Paris 1870-71. Alistair Home. Pan 12/6d.

AFTER THE Communist Manifesto, the most brilliant piece of polemical writing by Marx is undoubtedly The Civil War in France, which covers the life and death of the first workers' state, the Paris Commune.

With the events of the May rising still fresh in our minds we must turn back to 1871 to understand the incipient civil war which grips France and to some degree still dictates French politics.

The students who built the barricades on the Left bank were the natural heirs of the revolutions of 1848 and 1871 and the distinctive French revolutionary tradition stretching back to the Jacobins. To understand the present unrest we must be aware of both the mistakes and the tragedies of the past.

Under arms

Alistair Home's new book is a narrative which fully utilises contemporary sources and for that reason alone it is worth reading. The halfhearted defence of Paris by Trochu against the Prussians is the preliminary to the emergence of the National Guard—the Parisian workers under arms.

This was the body which called for a federal structure for French society, fixed a maximum wage and introduced a number of confused reforms before it was drowned in blood by Thiers and the ruling class. Lenin learnt from the mistakes of the Commune, its vacillations and failings which saw 25,000 citizens, men, women, and children, unmercifully butchered by the force of "law and order".

Let us remember General Gallifet who selected captured communards to die on the basis that men with grey hair had fought in the revolution of 1848, those with watches were probably "officials" of the Commune, while the balance was made up of those unfortunate



The massacre of the Communards: courage was not enough

enough. It even continued to allow the Bank of France to supply the Versailles with money which ultimately led to its own destruction. The desperate courage of the barricades was not enough to stop the professional soldiers of the bourgeoisie, just as the molotov cocktails of the Budapest workers failed to stop the Russian tanks in 1956.

This book is narrative. It has few real insights which, for all its detail, make it a slight thing besides Marx's pioneering work, but it does lay out the panorama of Paris and the ultimate desperate efforts of the Communards in the burning of Paris, trapped between the Prussians and the butchers of Thiers.

Read it for the taste of the Parisian life in the late 19th century. The contrasts between rich and poor, the heroic personalities like Louise Michel whose women's battalions fought street by street in the working class districts until finally shot down at the last barricades; and Charles Delescluze, incorruptible and dying of old age, who took command at the last. They have built a legend which cannot be extinguished.

"With the struggle in Paris the struggle of the working class against the capitalist class has entered upon a new phase. Whatever the immediate outcome may be, a new point of departure of world-wide importance has been gained," Karl Marx said.

Let us remember General Gallifet who selected captured communards to die on the basis that men with grey hair had fought in the revolution of 1848, those with watches were probably "officials" of the Commune, while the balance was made up of those unfortunate

their coarseness of features.

We know now who is the spiritual father of the riot police, the CRS, just as de Gaulle apes Thiers as the exponent of "order". Read this book because it is well written, because it tells the story fairly and because of its relevance nearly 100 years later.

TERRY BULL

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- MERTON: Malcolm Roe, 22 Elmhurst Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.
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- NEWCASTLE: Dave Peers, 106 Holly Avenue, Newcastle on Tyne 2.
- NORTHAMPTON: Bob Dean, 4 Ald-

- NORWICH: Gerald Crompton, 220 College Road, Norwich NOR54F.
- NOTTINGHAM: Roger Abrahamson, 1 Brunel Terrace, Derby Road, OXFORD: Harry Goode, 24 Stockmore Road, Oxford.
- POTTERIES: John Whitfield, 5 Grosvenor Road, Newcastle under Lyme.
- RICHMOND: John Watson, 20 Sydney Road, Richmond, Surrey.
- RIPLEY & LKESTON: Clive Burnett, 75 Heage Road, Ripley, Derbys.
- SELBY: John Charlton, 12 Thatch Close, Selby, Yorkshire.
- SHEFFIELD: Nick Howard, 15 Raven Road, Sheffield 7.
- SOUTHAMPTON: Mel Doyle, 87 Empress Road, Itchin.
- STEVENAGE: Michael Downing, 57 Trumper Road, Trots Hill.
- STOCKPORT: Barry Biddulph, 10 Foliage Crescent, Brinnington.
- STOKE NEWINGTON: Mike McGrath, 28 Manor Road, N16.
- SWANSEA: Pete Branson, 33a Uplands Crescent, Swansea.
- TOTTENHAM: Phil Hall, 374 High Street, N17.
- TOWER HAMLETS: George Webster, 30 Leferve Road, E3.
- WATFORD: Paul Russell, 61 Capenders Avenue, Capenders Park.
- WIGAN: Ray Challinor, 34 Whiteside Avenue, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.
- WOLVERHAMPTON: Dave Spillsbury, 274 Penn Road, Wolverhampton.

Thousands fight rent rises

By SEAN DUNNE

A MASSIVE CAMPAIGN is under way in London to fight vicious rent increases imposed by the Tory Greater London Council.

The increases—as high as 15s a week—came into operation on Monday. A spokesman for the militant GLC Tenants' Action Committee said that first reports from estates which the committee had organised indicated that a high proportion of tenants were refusing to pay.

Lipstick girls strike for living wage

From TONY CORCORAN LANCHESTER:- In North-West Durham villages where unemployment stands at more than 7 per cent, the bosses think they can get away with murder.

This week one boss got a shock. Once these were busy parts, but nowadays there's a shabby lipstick or potato crisp factory where a solid mine or forge once stood.

Lanchester has the cosmetics factory of A.J. Siris (Diana Marsh) and suddenly last Wednesday it was on strike.

The 250 women employed there have long been dissatisfied with their meagre wages—£6.15s.2d for 40 hours hard graft.

Negotiations on a claim for £1 a week increase broke down when the employers offered 3½ per cent and referred the matter to the Department of Employment and Productivity.

shop steward Mrs. Florence Cooper said, "They just walked out there and then!" LATE NEWS: The Lanchester girls returned to work on Tuesday pending further negotiations on their claim. But at a mass meeting they voted to ban overtime and give the management six weeks to make a satisfactory offer.

Convenor 'frog-marched from factory'

GATESHEAD:- 400 workers at Osram's electrical works, 300 of them women, have been on strike for two weeks in defence of their victimised convenor. Since the convenor started work at Osram's, which is part of the GEC-AEI monopoly, he has organised a closed shop and won big wage increases.

John Watson, chairman of the strike committee, said: "He was sacked on the spot and frog-marched out of the factory without being allowed to speak to fellow workers." A strike committee statement declares: "The challenge to us as stewards is a challenge to our movement."

They have appealed to workers in Osram/AEI/GEC in other parts of the country to contact them for leaflets and information. They are backed by the Tyne district committee of the engineers' union, AEF.

Donations to: K. Dodds, 12 Dixon Street, Gateshead 8, Co. Durham

On these estates, elected representatives collect the rents each week and hand them to the rent officer in envelopes with a printed message: THIS ENVELOPE CONTAINS THE OLD RENT AND CHARGES, BUT NO INCREASE.

On the Silwood Estate in Southwark, tenants picketed the rent office on Monday morning and later 250 people from the estate marched round the flats chanting "We won't pay" and "Not a penny on the rents".

The rent office on the Suffolk Estate in East London was plastered with stickers on Sunday that said: "We won't pay" and "SS office". The unhappy rent officer spent most of Monday scraping them off.

DRAGGED

Three hundred tenants on Borehamwood Estate formed an association to fight the increases on Monday. A deputation went to the council meeting and dragged two Labour councillors before the tenants, who bitterly attacked them for not fighting against the increases.

Lansbury Estate in Tower Hamlets (named after George Lansbury, the former Labour leader of the old Poplar council who went to prison rather than increase rents) reported that 83 block representatives were handling the payment of the old rents. Nearby Ocean Estate announced that it had made 700 new members last week.

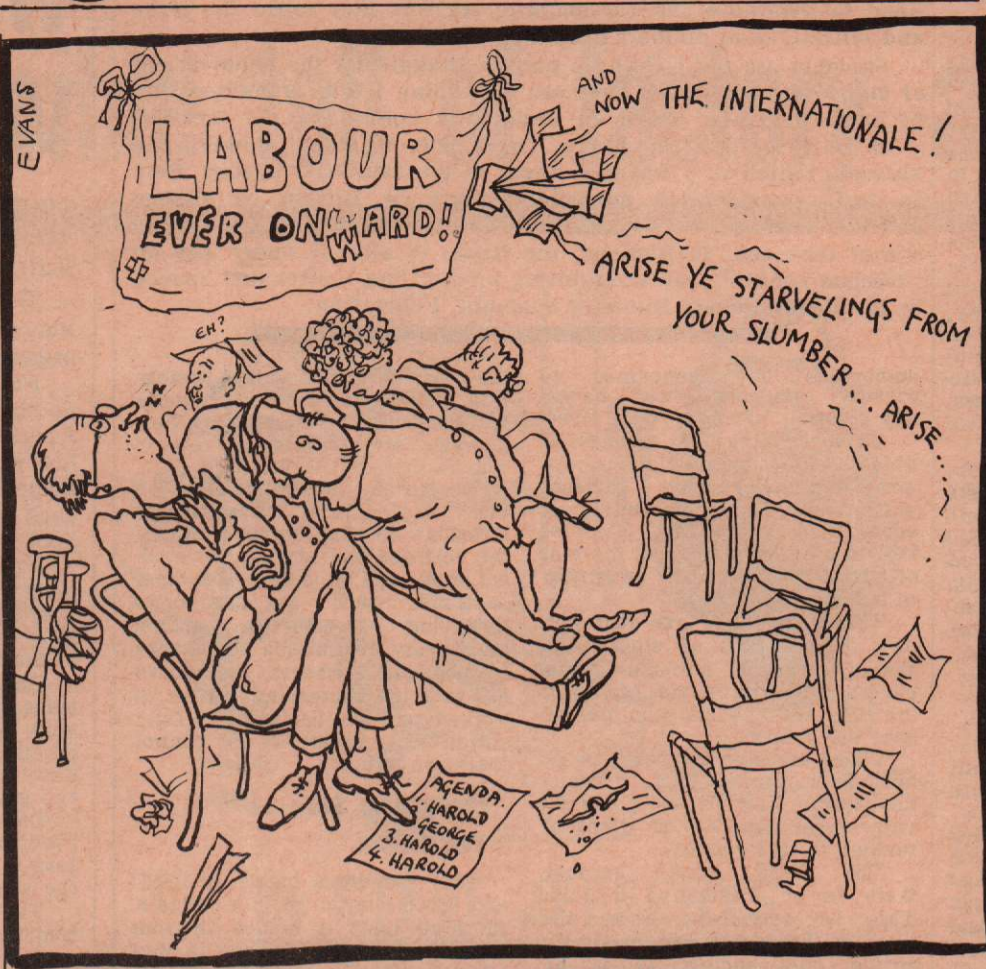
The GLC are unlikely to take any action for some months until non-payment of the increases puts the tenants into arrears.

The Action Committee insist that the fight against the increases is a political one, not just against the GLC, but the government, too, with its incomes policy

ACTION

If the GLC attempts to evict any of the tenants, plans have been made by the Action Committee to involve other sections of the London labour movement. Dockers, factory committees and union branches have pledged industrial action if any evictions take place.

And a total rent strike will be called throughout London as soon as the bailiffs appear.



TALLY CLERKS DEMAND EQUAL PAY WITH DOCKERS

By TERRY BARRETT

TALLY CLERKS in two of London's biggest docks are threatening strike action unless the employers agree to pay them more money.

When the docks were decasualised last year, the 1,000 Ocean Shipping Tally clerks, who check cargo, were given a wage structure of £19 1s 8d a week, plus £2 a week modernisation fee. Now, after a year of cooperation with the employers, the clerks are demanding a straight £8 10s increase to bring them into line with dockers in the mechanised berths who earn £29 10s.

STRAIGHT

The clerks work in the Royal and West India group of docks. Members of the Transport and General Workers' Union are calling for a straight £8 10s increase, but the other docks union, the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, want the increase to be based on productivity worked since modernisation was introduced with the Donovan Report.

The employers have offered £2 18s. Most port workers think that the

amount of money in question is irrelevant, as the government are bound to veto any increase in such a sensitive area of the export industry.

When the tally clerks met in Canning Town last week, members of both unions agreed that until one of their demands was met they would refuse any overnight work, except on continuity jobs started during the day.

They also agreed on: no transfers from one sector to another; no jobs to start unless fully manned; no cargoes to be handled if made up on the dockside; a minimum of one stagger truck per gang; and no weekend working.

Many tally clerks fear that a suggestion made by the National Shippers Council before the Devlin Report for women to be employed in inland container depots would do away with their jobs. This is one of the underlying reasons to the current dispute.

Dockers are in sympathy with the tally clerks, but they dispute the fact that they are earning more since decasualisation. Wages have gone up—but so has productivity.

And the dock register of

employed men has fallen from 59,000 to 56,000 in the last year, which means that fewer dockers are now doing more work.

FIREMEN SAY NO TO MORE 'BULL'

ESSEX firemen are fighting the introduction of a new work system.

The Chief Officer has, attempted to introduce a new system of drills, lectures and "bull" without negotiation with the Fire Brigade Union. The firemen say the new drills will take up some of their stand-down time.

The Essex Area Committee of the FBU has instructed its members not to work any of the extra time under the new system. Support from the membership has been considerable and in an effort to defeat this challenge to their authority the Fire Brigade have invoked the Fire Services Discipline Code.

Acting on instructions from the union, the 300 members so far charged with disobedience have pleaded not guilty, named up to 80 witnesses each (legally they are entitled to call every member of the Fire Brigade if they wish) and all named the same "accused friend".

This tactic will ensure that all the cases cannot be heard for some years.

OCTOBER 27 VIETNAM DEMONSTRATION

Posters 1 - 6d
50 - £1
Stickers and Leaflets
1000 for 25/-
(or proportion thereof)
Ad-Hoc Committee,
120 Commercial Road,
London, E1.

SOCIALISTS HAMMER OUT POLICY

FIVE HUNDRED delegates and visitors packed a large hall in London last weekend for the half-yearly conference of International Socialism.

The main debate centred around a document presented

by the political committee which dealt with the problems facing British capitalism, the developing struggle in industry and the type of organisation needed by revolutionaries.

It was decided to hold a re-call conference in two months in order to allow more discussion in the branches about the nature of revolutionary organisation and the reorganisation of the structure of IS.

The editor of Socialist Worker told the conference that the circulation of the new weekly paper had exceeded all expectations. He hoped that sales would climb still higher now that the universities had reassembled.

In line with its policy of unity of the left, IS invited

observers from a number of other socialist tendencies. The conference gave a warm reception to a member of one of the banned French revolutionary organisations, who brought fraternal greetings

SPARKS STAY IN AT MORGANITE

THE STRIKE OF 300 workers at the Battersea and Wandsworth plants of Morganite Carbon is now in its third week. Support would be 100 per cent, but for 50 electricians who refused to come out without their union's backing.

The strike has been made official by the AEF and the TGWU is expected to follow suit this week. But the ETU official for the area is "on holiday".

STEEL THREAT TO 5000 JOBS

From BARRY SLATER

TEESSIDE:- 5000 jobs may be lost if the nationalised steel industry goes ahead with plans to close down plants in the area.

Rumours are spreading throughout Teesside that major shutdowns may follow "costing exercises" by the employers.

Last week the Northern and Tubes group of the British Steel Corporation announced that the introduction of large, modern steelmaking facilities "makes necessary a full enquiry into the operational costs of producing steel at all plants."

The statement added: "It is the intention of the BSC to give adequate notice of major closures, to allow time for consultation with the trade unions and to reduce hardship to employees to the maximum possible extent."

BLEAK

But if works at Skinningrove, Warrenby and Cargo Fleet are closed, then hardship would amount to more than 5000 men on the dole.

This is the bleak prospect facing the steel industry on Teesside where unemployment is already high and growing. With winter approaching, there are 3000 people out of work in Middlesbrough alone.

And 1300 jobless young people on Teesside are registered with the youth employment bureau.

Workers are bitter about the closure threat. Behind all the talk about productivity and rationalisation is the hard fact of the run-down of Teesside's basic industry.

There was no consultation with the trade unions before the BSC statement was issued. A Transport Workers' branch secretary in the industry said: "Nobody consulted us in any way. We've just been told what's coming. It's bloody disgusting."

Steelworkers are finding out what miners already know: nationalisation under capitalism, run by government bureaucrats, does not benefit the workers.

There are non-elected "worker-directors" on the regional boards of the BSC, but steel nationalisation has nothing to do with socialism.

MPs refuse to debate Labour's record

NO MEMBER of the government is prepared to defend Labour's record in a debate at Queen's University, Belfast, next Tuesday.

The organisers of the debate, expected to attract an audience of 1300, have approached cabinet ministers MPs, the whips' office and Transport House in a vain attempt to find someone to oppose a motion of no confidence in the government.

Some MPs were interested in the debate when they assumed the other main speaker would be a Tory. But when they were told their opponent came from the Left, they immediately declined to speak.

The mover of the motion will be Paul Foot, author of the new best-selling Penguin, The Politics of Harold Wilson and a member of the editorial committee of Socialist Worker.

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