

Socialist Worker

for workers control and international socialism

Vietnam: victory, not 'peace'

Militant wins resounding court victory

TOM HILLIER, a militant worker at the CAV-Lucas factory in North London, won a resounding victory at the Old Bailey on Wednesday when he was cleared of a charge of inciting a riot. The jury retired for more than three hours then

found Hillier not guilty on the riot charge, incitement to assaulting a police officer and assaulting a police officer. They found him guilty of using threatening behaviour and he received a nine-month suspended sentence.

The charge arose out of a demonstration in solidarity with the French revolution held in London last May. After several committal hearings the trial began last Thursday—at the height of the uproar over the October 27 demonstration.

Hillier's victory is a notable defeat for the police, who mounted a strong case against him in court. Both the prosecution and the judge told the jury that if they found for Hillier, then they were implying that responsible senior police officers were not

telling the truth. The jury's decision speaks for itself. Hillier rejected pressure to make him change his plea to guilty. Socialist Worker congratulates him on a courageous stand that vitally affects the revolutionary movement

AFTER WAGING a cruel and relentless war for more than a decade, American imperialism is now facing defeat in Vietnam.

President Johnson has not been converted to humanitarianism in the dying weeks of his unlamented and squalid regime. The sudden desire for 'peace' in Vietnam is motivated solely by the interests of America's ruling class, which knows that a tiny peasant country has brought the world's mightiest military power to its knees. An heroic victory for national liberation is within the grasp of a people who have known no peace for almost a hundred years. The defeat of the US is not confined to Vietnam; it raises the possibility of a similar victory throughout Asia and Latin America.

PRESSURE

But there is no room for complacency. The Vietnamese have not laid down their arms and socialists throughout the world must maintain their pressure for the total withdrawal of American troops.

Although the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam are participating in the Paris peace talks, they have unofficially told their supporters in Europe to be on their guard against a betrayal. Johnson's move could be just a gimmick to ensure the election of Humphrey, the hawk in dove's clothing. Certainly the timing is significant.

There are signs, however, that the American ruling class, frightened by the escalating cost of the Vietnam holocaust, want a solution to the problem. This is where a compromise could be reached that could save the face of the US and help retain its hold in South East Asia.

That is why the 'peace at any price' brigade, the soggy pacifists around Peace News and Tribune, have to be rigorously opposed. Peace, a cessation of armed conflict, is not sufficient. Socialists must still demand the total withdrawal of American troops.

ANSWERED

Lawrence Daly, the Scottish miners' secretary (standing, we hope successfully, for the general secretaryship of the NUM this week) answered those who talk of the need for concessions from 'both sides' when he said:

'Yes, there have to be concessions. If the US stops bombing Hanoi, the NLF should stop bombing Washington.'

Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam expressed the same attitude this week when he called on the Vietnamese people to keep up their struggle until the last invader was expelled. (One might wish that he had adopted the same attitude to the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia).

The Geneva Conference of 1954 was a compromise that allowed the Americans to install a puppet government in the south, then cordially 'invited' them to invade and commit mayhem.

Only the total rout of American imperialism can open the road to total victory for the Vietnamese

3½d FREEZE: STRIKE WAVE MAY HIT SITES

BY THE EDITOR

A WAVE OF STRIKES throughout the building industry is expected to answer the government's latest kick in the teeth for the working class.

On Tuesday the government said it would stop the payment of increases to 1,500,000 workers in the building and civil engineering industries. Employers and union leaders had negotiated increases of between 10s and 12s a week.

Building workers are one of the worst paid sections of the working class. They work in appalling conditions and have suffered from weak, complacent union leadership.

The rank and file have shown a growing militancy in recent years. There have been bitter struggles on the Barbican in London and on Merseyside for basic union rights and opposition to productivity deals.

Smash bargaining

Now the government has thrown a match into the powder keg with its arrogant, authoritarian decision to smash collective bargaining and veto the agreed pay rise.

The agreement was an interim one, pending a report from the Prices and Incomes Board. It was ratified by both sides of the industry's joint council on October 24 and provided for increases of 3½d an hour for craftsmen and 3d an hour for labourers from November 4.

The government immediately put on the wages jackboot. It told bosses and union leaders that unless they agreed to hold up the increases then the Prices and Incomes Act would be brought in to quash the rises.

There have been squawks of indignation from the union leaders. Harry Weaver, secretary of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives said the decision was 'diabolical'.

He was at pains to stress that, through union connivance with general government policy, there had been rapid increases in productivity in the construction industry.

George Smith, secretary of the Woodworkers, said the decision would cause uproar and 'difficulty' in the industry.

Mr. Smith has put his finger on it. This is what he and Weaver—the men who hounded militants on the Barbican—really fear: that the government action will cause a rash of unofficial strikes that will further weaken their grasp on union machinery.

And this is exactly what should happen. Rank-and-file building workers should have no faith in 'leaders' who accept the idea of productivity deals that sell hard-won rights and conditions and open the road to redundancy in an industry already racked by unemployment.

Building workers should form their own grass-roots organisations to fight the government.

Joint-sites committees in every area should call an emergency national meeting to plan co-ordinated strike action that will bring the industry to a halt and force the government to pay the increase.

Lock-out at Ivy Bridge site—see back page

JENKINS GRABS MORE CAKE

By BRIAN WHITE

NEW MOVES to cut back the workers' share of the national cake were announced by the government last week.

Under mounting pressure from international bankers and business interests, the Labour government slapped down a new round of credit curbs designed to cut back consumer demand by £100 millions.

These latest moves are bound to increase the jobless toll this winter and later next year. For the third year running, winter unemployment is likely to top the 600,000 mark.

Government and industrial leaders have been showing growing concern at the level of consumer spending in recent months. Chancellor Roy Jenkins' March budget was designed to cut back spending 2 per cent below the 1967 figure.

Fought back

Not surprisingly, workers did not accept these restrictions on their living standards. Many dug into their savings to buy necessary goods. And others fought back against the government's wage curbs to increase their income.

As a result, it looked as though consumer spending would rise above last year's level. This would, of course, have upset the Labour leaders post-devaluation plans.

In other words, the government was worried that workers' efforts simply to maintain their standard of living would jeopardise the recovery of British capital-



Broadwater Farm Tottenham: Ronan Point replica

'Disaster flats' still going up

TOWER BLOCKS of council flats built to the same design as Ronan Point, which collapsed killing several tenants earlier this year, have been completed and occupied.

Work has continued on the 'high-rise' blocks in spite of the fact that the Griffiths Report on the Ronan Point disaster in London's East End was only published this week.

Occupied

Three weeks ago Dodson Point, on the same Newham Borough site as Ronan Point, was occupied by council tenants.

The contractors had continued with their work throughout the summer while the gutted building close by remained as a terrible reminder of the death and havoc these shoddy constructions can cause.

Several floors of the 22-story Ronan Point collapsed last May. Five people were killed, many more injured and made homeless.

A gas explosion is thought to have blown out a wall.

An almost exact replica of Ronan Point has just been completed at the Broadwater Farm site near Lordship Lane in Tottenham. Haringey Council plan two 19-storey blocks there built by the same construction company—Taylor Woodrow Anglian—under the same industrial building system—Larsen Nielsen—as Ronan Point.

The first block was 'just off the ground' according to a council spokesman when Ronan Point collapsed. Taylor Woodrow Anglian, after some discussions with the council, went on with the construction.

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US: no change for masses

AMERICAN big business has chosen its new president. Nixon has been picked to control imperialism's tiller for the next four years.

There was no 'lesser evil' candidate. The choice between Tricky Dicky and the Hump is the choice between two varieties of

horse manure.

The millions of workers who gave their votes to the Democrats have been conned again by the tawdry facade of American democracy. A victory for either candidate would have meant no change for the millions in the ghettos and on the dole queues.

The disgusting little racist Wallace remains the most important candidate. The sections of the working class who swung behind him are the sections looking for a change.

If they can be won to a socialist rather than a near-fascist programme then the next election could be

Behind students' revolt —

There has been an upsurge of student movements in almost all the advanced countries in the last year or so. Two main reasons provide the key to this development.

1. Modern capitalism needs to gear the educational system ever more closely to the needs of industry to keep ahead of international competition. In the rat race, the necessity is for a skilled and docile labour force to introduce and operate new technical innovations.

The educational system tries to perform all three functions. In its research units it initiates technical discoveries. Through its teaching it provides a skilled labour force. And with its ideological manipulation it attempts to provide the essential docility.

In order to fulfil all these functions however, the old liberal institutions have to be transformed into educational factories. This places enormous strains on the student population and, to a lesser extent, on some academics.

MOBILITY

2. The student movement is the most obvious expression of a general crisis of capitalism East and West. Students, because they are all young and grouped together in college units, have a mobility of action that other members of society do not have.

But the ideological basis for the student revolt is a general reaction against the stagnation of our society, a general questioning of the legitimacy of our institutions and a refusal to accept a power structure simply because it is there.

The breakdown of the 'divine right' of the rulers to rule is the real source of what is normally called anti-authoritarianism.

Last year student struggles erupted on the British scene with unforeseen violence. Occupation followed occupation in closer and closer succession.

EDUCATION CAPITALISM and the STUDENT REVOLT vital new pamphlet 4s 6d inc post International Socialism 36 Gilden Road London NW5 special rates for student bodies

struggle against 'education factories'

by **ANDREW SAYERS**

Outside the colleges, the growth of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign was a direct result of the new mood of militancy among students.

But one of the results of these struggles was to pinpoint the isolation of militants in individual colleges. The weakness of an exclusively student movement was clearly shown by the French events.

The necessity of co-ordinating action, of exchanging information and formulating a common policy after a collective analysis became crucial. The need to form an organisation which could nationally try to forge links with the working class was more and more obvious.

It was as a result of genuine pressure from below that the Revolutionary Socialist Students' Federation was founded at the end of last term. The fact that well over 1000 people attended the founding conference at the London School of Economics was proof of it.

The RSSF was from the outset an umbrella organisation of militants from various factions in the socialist camp and of many activists outside any of the 'groups'. In a sense its perspective was to absorb, in time, the students, pupils and young workers that turn up for Vietnam demos, grouping them around a minimum political programme in a fighting organisation.

Now on the eve of the second RSSF conference it is time to take some kind of stock of its progress to date in order to formulate a policy for the future.

The most obvious problem of the RSSF's growth is its unevenness. Recruitment in the universities has been steady but in the schools and technical colleges, the inroads, if hopeful, have been very limited.

Identification of the members with the organisation also varies tremendously from place to place. Nationally it has been unable to respond to events.

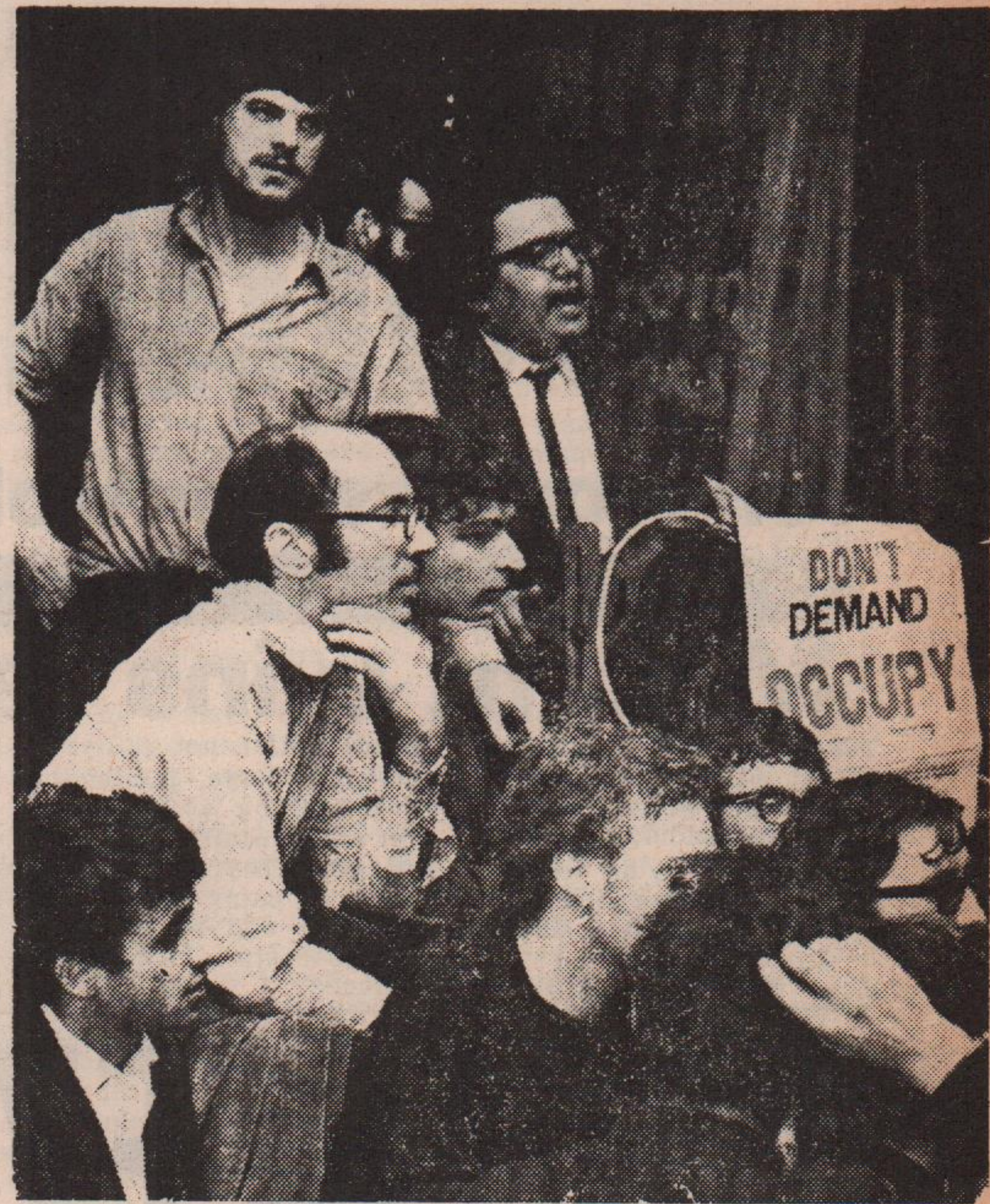
RESPONSE

Demonstrations against Russia's intervention in Czechoslovakia have taken place only in a few places. Even on a subject closer to home, the conference of university chancellors and the not so veiled threats to student militants that have ensued have not provoked a national response.

In some places there have been attempts by factional groups to take over the organisation.

Yet if all these are gloomy signs there is still a great potential. The assumption that the student movement would continue to grow has been borne out by the recent occupation of the LSE, the extremely successful demonstration of October 27, by the perspective of a continued struggle at Hornsey and by the springing up of new socialist societies in all kinds of colleges.

The movement from below is still present, stronger in fact than before. The need for an organisation to coordinate and to become the national interpreter of this movement is still pressing.



LSE students at the sit-in before October 27

The RSSF can be this organisation to the extent that it retains maximum flexibility of structure, that it eagerly incorporates new groups (such as the secondary schools, apprentices, youth) that it is democratically controlled from below and most important, that it does not develop a power structure.

The new desire of students to control their own lives—together with the general rebirth of libertarian socialism—should ensure that at the conference this will be the direction RSSF will take.

RSSF CONFERENCE
November 8 & 9
10.30-5.00
Round House
Chalk Farm
London NW5
(tube Chalk Farm)

LETTERS

OCTOBER 27: SHOULD THERE HAVE BEEN A 'CONFRONTATION'?

WHY WAS THERE a sense of let-down after October 27's Vietnam demonstration? Why did we become aware of physical tiredness already half the way along the route?

We had a pretty successful demonstration by Richard Kuper's definition in Socialist Worker, October 26—we 'maintained our structure and purpose', we achieved the objectives we set ourselves, there were few or no arrests among those who came with us. But if our objectives do not worry the police, are they worth obtaining?

A demonstration is only the symbol of revolutionary struggle and revolutionary power—but if there have not been elements of real confrontation, how clear is the symbolism?

In past demonstrations IS has been in the thick of confrontations with the police. Each demonstration which involved collective violence brought out more people the next time.

More and more of those who took part became seriously politicised. Many would contest Kuper's view of the demonstration of March as representing stagnation.

As our experience grew, we learned to beware of bad tactics—badly chosen streets and squares, weak sorties etc.—and of individual bravado as opposed to mass action. On July 21 we decided that the vast majority of marchers were Communist Party members, unwilling to fight, so we said 'Let's not get massacred now, wait for October'.

As it became clear that October really would be very large, both sides began to confuse symbol and reality. The police and press started talking of revolution, of the planned take-over of strategic buildings etc. The Maoists spoke of the need to beard imperialism in its lair—the US embassy!

Our reaction combined our earlier preoccupation with good tactics with a reassertion of the symbolic

nature of demonstrations. But we heavily over-reacted, to the extent of trying to eliminate all confrontation—rather to leave the onus for it on the police to a degree which would leave them with little incentive to challenge us at all.

We started explaining ourselves in terms reminiscent of the CP and CND. For example, we talked of opposition to individual hooliganism and concluded with unspoken opposition to mass action. We argued that we were inexperienced and the police were strong—all arguments which have always been true and will continue true until the revolution.

What we needed was to provoke a degree of confrontation in strategically favourable circumstances, and in such a way as not to alienate public opinion. Examples of this were actually proposed by our members to the Ad Hoc Committee and outvoted, e.g. the take over of a group of streets for the conduct of a meeting. Perhaps in an East End residential area, or around the Stock Exchange.

If outvoted on these should we not have proposed others? Were we as insistent as we could have been? Could we have even threatened a boycott?

As it was, we were saddled with leading a more or less pointless walk around. We were admirably, but irrelevantly, organised for self-defence, with stewards and runners and tight-knit groups. But instead of presenting a militant alternative to Maoist adventurism, all we could do was use our organisation to physically prevent too great a diversion.

Which way from here? IS must continue to combine the politics of militant demonstrations with that of industrial struggle. On the basis of both we hope to build a revolutionary party. Let not October 27 mark the first step of a retreat from the first of these.—CONSTANCE LEVER, London NW3

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 racism. 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:

Please send further details of the meetings and activities of International Socialism to:

Name

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Send to Socialist Worker, Paxton Works Paxton Road, London N17

Orwell: honesty, courage and faith in the 'proles'

by PETER SEDGWICK

Four volumes amounting to some 2,000 pages, with the title *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*,* have now been published, painstakingly edited and provided with notes by Sonia Orwell (the writer's widow) and Ian Angus (the librarian of the Orwell Archive at University College, London).

This is a real event for socialists. Orwell wrote about a few simple themes—war, revolution, social life in Britain, nonsense and reaction in the printed word—with total dedication and remorseless attention to two kinds of detail: the detail of observation and the detail of the connection between ideas. He seldom wrote on any topic which he did not know about deeply and personally (which means that his writing during the war, for instance, has extraordinarily little to say about Nazism). Every page is compulsively readable, and usually says something very funny, even if it happens to be wrong.

There are virtually no other political journalists from this period (roughly 1936 to 1950) whose collected output could be printed today except as a dreadful warning. Orwell's politics were inconsis-

tent and eccentric, but nearly always displayed a primitive, unerring class-sense.

Up to the age of 24, he steered himself, with an inner core of rebellion that became more and more articulate, through a series of repressive and peculiarly British institutions: first as a scholarship boy at a private junior school and at Eton, then as an uneasy middleman of authority in the Indian Imperial Police.

Boycott, blue pencil

When he returned from Burma in 1927 he at once threw himself into a vagrant existence among the poorest proletarian and sub-proletarian strata in London and Paris. His early novels were usually rejected or blue-pencilled by publishers on grounds of libel, and his more political scripts were subjected to boycott, tampering and scaremongering by publishers and reviewers almost to the end of his life, often because they gave offence to the nostrils of the established Left.

For a few years from 1937 on, Orwell was a socialist revolutionary of unrivalled eloquence. He reached this position following his enrolment, almost by accident, in the POUM (Workers' Party of Marx-



ORWELL
Primitive class sense

ist Unification) militia during the Spanish Civil War, where he underwent a baptism of fire in the Barcelona workers' struggle against Franco Fascism and the Communist Party suppression of revolution.

This experience is recorded in his classic documentary *Homage to Catalonia*.

Until late 1939 he regarded even an anti-fascist war fought by the British ruling class as an unmitigated evil, likely to bring a home-grown fascism to Britain. He tried to get the anarchist writer Herbert Read to join in plans for an underground anti-fascist, anti-war printing press.

After the Nazis conquered France he became what is often called a 'revolutionary defencist'; he thought that the British capitalists and aristocracy were heading for a sell-out with Hitler and that the workers were developing a mood like that of 'St. Petersburg in 1916.'

In his long pamphlet *The Lion and the Unicorn*, published in 1941, he advocated turning the war into a

revolutionary war of defence by nationalising the land, banks and major industries, levelling down incomes, suppressing or integrating the public schools, and granting independence to India and representative government to all the colonies. The alternative (he thought) was to lose the war.

From this point on, Orwell's explicit politics become vaguer. For him, politics was always excessively 'the art of the possible' and once it became evident that the British ruling class could wage an anti-fascist war, and that the working class were not ready for insurrection, he ceased to advocate revolution.

Warm, willing

He still displayed magnificent virtues: extensive criticism and analysis of his own errors in political judgment; a warmth and willingness to make amends to those he had criticised too bitterly; a sternly accurate observation of the popular consciousness (he saw, for instance, that Labour's election victory in 1945 signified very little in terms of any socialist impulse among the workers).

Two or three passages in his later articles exhibit distinctly pro-American Cold War tendencies. Orwell became an Ernie Bevin man in the early post-war years, on the strange grounds that the Labour government was working towards a socialist united Europe, free from

both American and Russian dominance.

These shameful deviations are surprisingly infrequent, considering the pressures of the time. When the Cold War grew fiercer, he withdrew from current political commentary.

His long battle with illness and fatigue, as the terminal stage of his TB drew nearer, is stoically recorded in the last pages of his letters and journals. Before his death, 18 years ago, he completed and published *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

This novel's preoccupation with pain and defeat has often been commented on: 'I bullied it up rather,' he himself wrote to a friend, 'partly owing to being so ill while I was writing it.' Yet one passage from it will serve as Orwell's own epitaph:

If there was hope, it must lie in the proles... Everywhere stood the same solid unconquerable figure, made monstrous by work and child-bearing, toiling from birth till death and still singing. Out of these mighty loins a race of conscious beings must one day come. You were the dead; theirs was the future. But you could share in that future if you kept alive the mind.

Through his honesty and courage in an age of suffocating political illusion, through the strength of his basic commitment to the cause of the workers, Orwell indeed shares and perhaps helps to mould, the revolutionary future, at which he could only guess.

Secker & Warburg, £2.10s. per volume.

IAN MACDONALD says the government's new law is a sop to immigrants

Labour's Race Act — move to head off black militancy



Islington tenants —black and white— took the law into their own hands in 1966 to fight a slum landlord.

The Race Relations Act 1968 is one half of the government's race relations policy. The other half is its curb on immigration from the commonwealth.

There it has almost word for word fulfilled the demands made by Sir Oswald Mosley and certain Tory extremists in the 1950s. The immigration policy is a complete surrender to the demands of racialism.

The Race Relations Act (it became law on October 25 and comes into effect on November 26) is its counterweight—a sop to the black community.

But the Act has a more serious purpose: that is to channel the energies of the black community along constitutional lines.

Black leaders in the communities will be offered jobs on the new conciliation committees and, if they are important enough, on the enlarged Race Relations Board or the new Community Relations Commission.

Their job will be to urge the people back in the communities from which they have come to take their grievances to the new body. The idea is to give a new constitutional remedy, and thereby discourage direct action or any kind of self-organisation among black people.

Already there are black 'leaders' and their white mentors raising the cry that 'we must make the Act work'.

Unfortunately there are a lot of people, many of them very sincere, who will take up this task—quite fruitlessly. They will not make the Act work other than in a few isolated cases.

Enforcement of the new laws is not in the hands of those who are the victims of discrimination. It is in the hands of a new body of race relations 'experts'—the Race Relations Board—appointed by the government with a specific mandate to conciliate wherever possible. That sort of law will never be effective, and there is a whole

history of legislation to prove it.

In the 1850s this country passed some of the most progressive laws for that time to deal with the insanitary, rat-infested housing in which most industrial workers then lived.

But most of these laws remained dead letters, because the tenants had no say in their enforcement. The only time they were ever put in to operation was when the landlords and the ruling class felt there was a risk of typhoid or other dangerous diseases spreading to their own homes from the workers' quarters.

Eliminated

Today there is a much more comprehensive set of Public Health Acts and Housing laws in force. Under them, all the rotten housing conditions could be eliminated.

But that doesn't help the tenants of Notting Hill, Lambeth or Coventry Cross, because it is not they who enforce the laws, but the town hall and the various financial interests which dominate them.

The same principle will work with the Race Relations Act. Certain cases will get through.

There will be glowing reports each year from the Race Relations Board. These are the formalities, but the majority of those who suffer from discrimination will be unaffected.

When it comes to the details of the Race Relations Act even the Uncle Toms will have difficulty in giving the new Act a good recommendation.

The Act makes it unlawful to:

- Discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin in public places, such as restaurants, pubs, hotels and shops.
- In the provision of insurance, banking, hire purchase and other business facilities and services.
- In jobs including hiring, promotion, and sacking; and in housing.

Government departments and local authorities are bound by the new law as well as private persons. Nevertheless it should not be thought that the Act puts a ban on racial discrimination. It does not. Each of the areas in which discrim-

ination is generally outlawed is so riddled with exceptions that it will not require much ingenuity to find ways round the law. Take a few examples. One of the main areas of discrimination is at work.

20 per cent of the working population work in firms employing less than 10 people. Yet in the last two years of the new laws, firms employing less than 25 people will be entirely exempt.

After that, firms employing less than 10 will be entirely exempt. In the larger firms where the Act does apply, employers will still be allowed to discriminate provided they already employ a certain num-

ber of coloured workers and the Race Relations Board accept that their quota is 'reasonable' and is operated in 'good faith', whatever that may mean.

Exceptions

In housing too the exceptions would appear to outweigh the rules against discrimination. A lot of houses to let are in two or three storey terraced houses.

The landlord and his family live on the ground floor and the two floors above are to let. A toilet or bathroom is shared.

All these houses will be exclud-

ed. So will small lodging or guest houses where there is only room for six people in addition to the landlord and his family.

Under pressure from the shipping magnates an exception has been put in the Act for ships. If any shipping company wishes to instal segregated sleeping quarters for crew or passengers it will be perfectly entitled to do so.

These are just a few examples. There are other less important exceptions and no doubt quite a few loopholes.

Anyone who thinks that this Act is a substitute for self-organisation of the black community is deluding himself.

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- SELBY: John Charlton, 12 Thatch Close, Selby, Yorkshire.
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- SOUTHAMPTON: Mel Doyle, 87 Empress Road, Itchin.
- STEVENAGE: Michael Downing, 57 Trumper Road, Troatts Hill.
- STOCKPORT: Barry Biddulph, 10 Foliage Crescent, Brinnington.
- STOKE NEWINGTON: Mike McGrath, 28 Manor Road, N16.
- SWANSEA: Pete Branston, 33a Uplands Crescent, Swansea.
- TOTTENHAM: Laurie Flynn, 374 High Road, N17
- TOWER HAMLETS: George Webster, 30 Leferve Road, E3.
- WATFORD: Paul Russell, 61 Carpenders Avenue, Carpenders Park.
- WIGAN: Ray Challinor, 34 Whiteside Avenue, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.
- WOLVERHAMPTON: Dave Spillsbury, 274 Penn Road, Wolverhampton.
- YORK: Bob Looker, 22 Hobgate

MINERS' VITAL ELECTION

BRITAIN'S 380,000 miners will vote at pit-head ballot stations this week for a new general secretary of their union, the NUM.

It is an important election, for the Left-wing candidate Lawrence Daly, secretary of the Scottish miners, has declared his intention of leading a fight against the deliberate run-down of the coal industry.

Such a campaign is urgently needed. In the last 10 years, the number of pits has dropped from 793 to 340 and miners from 680,000 to 380,000.

And if government plans are not fought, then as few as 190,000 men will be working in the pits by 1975.

The figures tell only half the story. Although overall coal output has fallen from 200 million tons a year to 170 million in the last 10 years and is expected to drop to 120 million by 1975, the screws have been turned on the miners. A smaller labour force is now producing more coal.

Here is the vicious side of 'productivity' deals. While the dole queues lengthen and mining villages are turned into ghost towns, the remaining miners are sweating to produce more profit for

the bureaucrats who run the NCB and for the former shareholders, who still get a rich bonanza in annual compensation payments.

Leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers have staggered from one pit closure to another like an alcoholic on a pub crawl. They have no plan, no campaign, no intention of conducting a fight to save the jobs of the men they supposedly represent.

The retiring secretary, Will Paynter, a member of the Communist Party, has been notable in recent years for his outspoken attacks on 'absenteeism'. When miners are too sick too tired or too apathetic to turn out for work on Monday, that meets with Mr. Paynter's wrath.

There have been no similar attacks on the absentee shareholders who have been bleeding the industry dry for years or on the pompous NCB boss, Lord Robens, who spearheads the closure of mines—including new and highly profitable ones.

A fight involving the rank and file miners could halt the NCB and the government. Daly, who is campaigning on a Left platform of guerrilla strikes at the most profitable mines to halt the decline



DALY
Guerrilla strikes

of the industry, deserves the support of the membership.

Support does not mean passive reliance on the leadership. The fruits of high office have bought off militants before and it is up to the rank and file to ensure that Daly, if elected, lives up to his election promises. But only an incurable sectarian would deny the galvanising effect that a militant miners' leader could have.

In spite of their decline, the pits still provide 58 per cent of the country's fuel, including power stations. The campaign envisaged by Daly could cripple key sectors of the economy and quickly force the government to concede a new

deal for miners.

What is missing from this Left-reformist platform is the key question of workers' control. For generations, miners have died and coughed blood to keep the capitalist system ticking over.

It is the men in the pits who should be running the industry, not the NCB; it is the men in the pits who should decide the rate of output and the rate of pay; and it is the men in the pits who should decide when a seam is no longer viable.

A campaign for workers' control of the pits, tied to the demand of work or full pay while retraining in areas where closures are inevitable, could raise not only the morale of the miners but their political consciousness too. Willingness to accept such demands would ensure Daly's success; failure to do so would quickly send him down the slippery path of compromise and retreat.

The other candidate for the secretaryship is Mr. Joe Gormley, leader of the Yorkshire miners and a right-wing supporter of government incomes policy.

Miners should treat him with the respect traditionally shown by pigeons towards tourists in Trafalgar Square.

70 men locked out at giant site

Socialist Worker Reporter
A MAJOR ATTACK on trade-union organisation and working conditions on the giant Ivy Bridge development at Isleworth, Middlesex has been launched by Turiffs, the main contractor.

Last week the 70 men still locked out of the site received union backing and the other AUBTW (bricklayers) members are on an official work-to-rule.

Suspicion is growing among the 400 men employed on the site that Turiffs is planning a 'Barbican-style' showdown with union organisation while its contract is renegotiated with the local council.

Trouble began when the management announced they would stop paying bonus rates agreed at site negotiations. They proposed instead the PIB-approved national bonus rate, which amounts to little more than 2d an hour.

GO SLOW

Workers hit back at this attack on their hard-won conditions and a go-slow was started by the whole site.

The management immediately sacked 120 men. Although some of them have been taken back, the management have done nothing about the 70 still locked out.

A Disputes Commission has recommended that the sacked men should be taken back—but with the qualification 'as and when they are required'. This gives the bosses a virtual hand to keep the men outside the gate.

It is feared that Turiffs next move will be to sack other workers on the site and employ new labour.

In spite of losses on the Barbican project in the City of London, Turiffs pushed up profits from £286,000 to £414,000 this year. The five directors received £50,000 in pay and a total of £110,000 was dished out to shareholders.

Removes fuzz

ON OCTOBER 26, the day before the giant anti-Vietnam war march, The People newspaper rang a well-known firm of household cleanser manufacturers and asked for confirmation that there had been exceptionally high sales of oven foam cleanser in some areas. The paper demanded to know anti-dote to the cleanser, which contains ammonia and threatened to ring the parent company in America if a reply was not forthcoming.

MEETINGS

MANCHESTER IS: Tony Cliff on 'Prospects for World Revolution', Black Lion Hotel, Blackfriars St. (continuation of Market St. beyond Deansgate) 8 pm Thursday November 14.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM N.W. Regional Conference November 16/17. Meeting Room 2, Manchester University Union, Oxford Road, Manchester 13. Saturday and Sunday 2 pm.

SOCIAL: Crown & Anchor (Near Stevenson Sq.) 8 pm Saturday November 16.

MANCHESTER VSC: Friday November 8 at AEF building Rusholme Road off Oxford Road. Speaker Henry Wortis: 'Why we demonstrated—What next?'

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Morganite vote to fight on

By ANDREW HORNUNG (AEF)

AFTER SEVEN WEEKS of strike, 1700 workers at Morganite Carbon Company's two South London sites voted on Monday to stay out until their demand for a 6d. an hour rise 'without strings' is met by the management.

This decision, although opposed by a third of the meeting, represents a triumph for the rank and file. It was a vote against the majority (9-5) recommendation of the negotiating committee and against the advice of the TGWU official, Charlie Barlow.

Mr. Barlow showed his true colours at Monday's meeting.

'Management have been rigid,' he said. 'Let no one say that we are rigid too.' When the workers gave him the bird for this sell-out line, he took refuge in the ambiguities of a letter sent to all workers that morning.

The letter suggests, but does not promise, a rise. It does not contain a single firm offer that is an improvement over the company's original one which agreed to the 6d increase if workers gave up a tea-break.

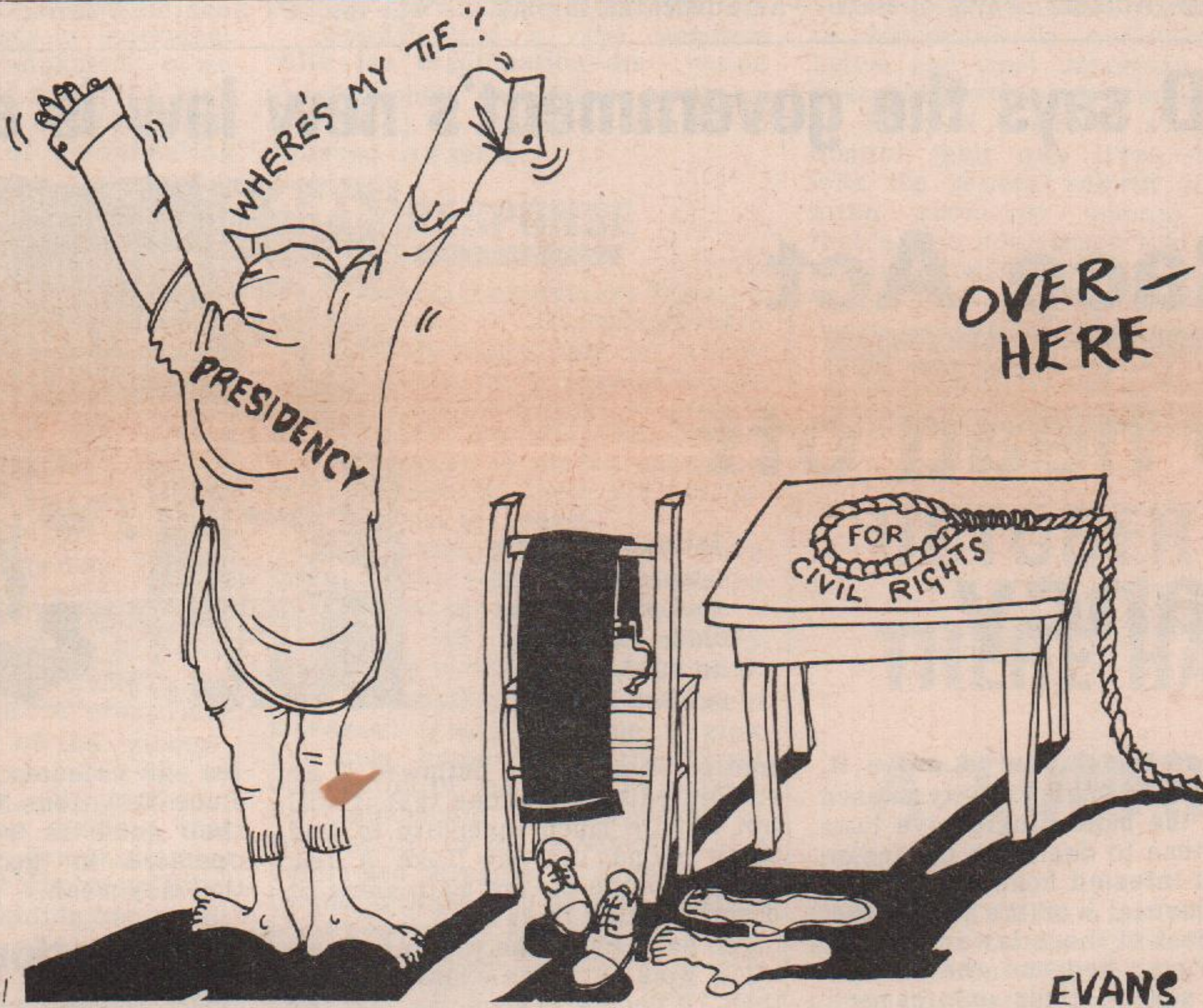
THREAT
What is new in the letter is the threat of redundancy. AS one man who was on picket duty on Sunday night to lead the meeting, all high ranking staff were working through the night to send out the letters to the employees before the meeting.

Some workers were frightened by the letters. But militants said at the meeting they were a sign of weakness on the part of the company. With the Girling brake strike over, and other disputes in the motor industry at an end, the crucial importance of Morganite's supply of 90 per cent of the industry's starter components is being brought home.

Alternative supplies are being flown in from Australia and India to keep Lucas' supplied with parts. Morganite workers can hold on, if they can work hard to bring in more money to the strike fund, and if they can succeed in spreading the strike to other Morgan companies there can be no doubt of their victory.

Overlap
Under the Larsen Nielsen system, four-ton slabs are rested on wall panels. There is an overlap of 1 1/4" and concrete is poured into the gaps. The Report will recommend that steel loops and rods should bind the slabs together, with concrete poured over the joints.

Air pockets could result that would seriously weaken the structure of the building. A high wind, subsidence or heat contraction could break a joint and force out a wall, sending several storeys crashing to the ground. This is the kind of cheap, shoddy and danger-



'DISASTER FLATS'

from page one

The Griffiths Report is likely to demand modifications to Larsen Nielsen tower blocks. The cost at Broadwater Farm of such modifications will be in the region of £50,000.

If the site had waited for the Report, the modifications would have cost only £5000.

To foot the bill, the council will probably have to borrow more money at exorbitant interest rates. The luckless tenants of the 'instant death' flats will pay back the moneylenders through high rents.

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other such tower blocks under construction in Britain, which will provide homes for 10,000 people.

Tenants' organisations and local groups of socialists should band together to demand that these tower blocks should be scrapped.

If the moneylenders squeak: the answer is simple: why doesn't the government break their stranglehold by taking over the banks, building land and construction industry and base housing on need not profit?

Students demand

STUDENTS at Manchester College of Commerce held an all-night sit-in on Monday in protest against college library facilities.

Within hours of the decision to hold the sit-in Manchester Education Committee agreed to most of the students' demands.

A general meeting of the college Union after the sit-in called for plans to be drawn up for the occupation of the college during the weekend following the corporation's meeting if the promises are not ratified.

A THOUSAND angry students marched in the rain last Thursday to the local Education Offices. They were from Liverpool College of Commerce and they made the following demands:

50 per cent student representation on the governing bodies of the college.

better deal

Better social facilities. There are 55 square yards of common room to serve 6000.

Better eating facilities. The campaign looks like sparking off a widespread revolt of students in colleges. It is responsibly run, well-organised and has the overwhelming support of the staff.

STUDENTS at Blackfriars College in London began a boycott of their canteen on Monday.

They have been complaining that the canteen is dirty, unhygienic and expensive. They want it to be run by the Greater London Council.

They manned a picket outside the canteen on Monday. The line was broken

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