

# Socialist Worker

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## Empty talks on Ulster

by Brian Trench

AS EXPECTED, nothing positive came from the talks between Heath, Faulkner and Lynch, the Tory premiers of Britain and Ireland, north and south. The real work went on in the Six Counties, with troops rounding up new 'suspects' for internment and the Rev. Ian Paisley announcing the creation of an extreme right-wing Orange 'defence' force.

Some people did expect a little more from the parliamentary debate last week on Northern Ireland. The recall of parliament had been partly a concession to pressure from outside parliament as well as from Labour MPs.

But totally predictable speeches were made and the Labour leaders agreed that to vote against the government would be to 'encourage the terrorists'. They decided they could abstain on the issue of concentration camps in Great Britain in 1971.

The remoteness of the debate from the realities of the Northern Irish situation was stressed by the presence at the Commons of 30 dependents of internees. They had raised the fares to London by collections among their neighbours and had come to explain to the press, the public and the politicians what it is like to have a husband, brother, father or son lifted from the house at 4 o'clock in the morning.

### Bitter

But the press were hardly interested, so the public did not know. And the politicians, the 'left wingers', thought that the women and children had got in to the committee room 'by accident'.

They returned to the North, bitter. 'It's simpler getting into Long Kesh to see your man than getting into the Commons to hear about him,' one said. The wives of internees had just spent some time explaining how at Long Kesh—where all the prisoners are now held—they had been herded through four military checks and finally stripped completely before seeing their men.

The main topic for discussion at a meeting of the Labour Committee Against Internment in the House of Commons last week was the setting up of a commission to inspect the camps, and to take statements from internees. Eleven Labour MPs were present.

Some of them argued for co-operation with the official Compton Inquiry. Others thought that—for the sake of impartiality—a number of Tory MPs ought to be on the commission.

### Insisted

Representatives of the International Socialists and the Anti-Internment League insisted that only a totally independent commission representative of the labour movement would be acceptable.

In the North, the campaign against internment continues, in spite of the attempts at intimidation by the Stormont authorities. Government ministers now speak of the rent and rates strike in the same terms as the bombing campaign of the Provisional IRA.

Few people need much persuasion not to pay rents and rates. The intimidation is coming from the authorities who have already prepared legislation to deduct rents and rates from social security payments, and who are making moves to evict more isolated local authority tenants.

Although the press has shifted interest on to the level of political talks, the campaign in Britain against internment and against military occupation of Northern Ireland must be intensified. The essential task is to win the support of a significant section of the labour movement for this campaign.

Lame Duck Davies says 'lazy workers' cause unemployment

# TORY LIES

by SW Political Correspondent

AS THE unemployment figures climb grimly towards the million mark, Tory Minister for Trade and Industry John Davies smeared the entire trade union movement with the disgraceful remark that 'unproductive workers' were to blame for the plight of the jobless.

Speaking at a Tory businessmen's lunch in Preston last week just one day after 929,121 were officially declared jobless—the highest figures since the war—Davies shrugged off government responsibility with the callous statement: 'Over many years now our employment figures have covered up a situation of too much manpower achieving too little output.'

Davies is a liar. His declared intention since the Tories regained power has been to ruthlessly butcher 'lame duck' industries like shipbuilding and throw thousands more workers on to the dole queues.

And official government figures nail the lie that 'lazy' workers are throwing their workmates out of jobs. Since 1963, productivity has shot up by 37.7 per cent—and unemployment has been rising steadily ever since.

### TURNING SCREW

The real truth is that a smaller workforce is being squeezed harder. To underline just how big Davies' lie is, we obtained figures from the Department of Employment this week on productivity and unemployment.

In the period from January 1970 to July this year, productivity showed a rise for nearly every quarter—at the same time as unemployment rose from 666,995 to 829,602.

This is the reality: the employers and the Tory government are turning the screw on the working class, getting extra production and profits from a declining number of workers at the same time as soaring prices, rents and welfare charges decrease living standards.

Unemployment is a vital part of the Tory-employer offensive. It threatens those with jobs into accepting worsening conditions for fear of joining the dole queues.

Unemployment is deliberate Tory policy to increase the profits of big business in preparation for entry into the European Mafia's Common Market.

### THREAT TO UNITY

Davies admitted this in his same Preston speech: 'Employers have had to review more and more stringently the effectiveness of their own work forces and slim them down where the increasingly high cost of employing people could not be justified.'

The trade union movement must go on the offensive against unemployment, which means poverty and degradation for those without jobs and is a threat to the unity and strength of the entire movement.

The call must go out for:

- A total ban on productivity deals. They reduce the work force.
- Cut the working week to 35 hours without loss of pay to absorb the jobless.
- Five days' work or five days' pay. Work sharing instead of redundancies.
- A complete ban on overtime in any firm that declares redundancies.
- Nationalisation under workers' control of any firm that closes its plant.

When the figures were announced last week, 'Employment' Minister Robert Carr said unemployment was the 'greatest social curse'. He's wrong.

The Tories and the system they run is the greatest social curse. It is a system that cannot provide jobs, houses, schools and decent living standards for the people who produce the wealth. It must be removed.

Julian Amery knows about bad houses—he owns some of them...



JULIAN AMERY, Tory Housing Minister and member of the extreme right-wing Monday Club, knows all about bad housing—he owns some of them.

He is the proud possessor of eight properties in Colbrook Street, Southwark, south London. Two of his tenants, Mrs Manning of no 12 and Mr Chave of no 5—who is 77 and blind—have complained about the appalling conditions they live in.

Both houses suffer from damp, leaking roofs and basements that do not meet legal standards for natural lighting. The rents are £4 a week. The street has been placed under a preservation order and the houses cannot be pulled down. Who makes the preservation order? You've guessed—the Ministry of Housing.

Amery claims he is too poor to keep the houses in good condition and provide basic amenities like inside toilets, hot water and a bathroom. So eight houses are going to rack and ruin.

But there are two houses in Colbrook Street that are in fine condition. They have been tarted up by their new middle-class owners and stand out like a sore thumb compared to Amery's dwellings.

A statement by Amery's solicitor said he did not want to repair the houses or provide better amenities because he would have to put the rents up—something that

Colbrook Street—squalor for Amery's tenants, fresh paint for private owners

Tory Housing Ministers always shy away from.

Amery was the chief architect of the Tories' White Paper 'Fair Deal for Housing'. Among its proposals is one that controlled tenancies can be converted into regulated ones even if the houses do not have all the basic amenities and are in a poor state of repair.

The Minister's houses fall into this category. Is he waiting for his own proposals to become law before attempting to put the rents up? It would be in his interest to

wait.

Under the present law, if he carries out repairs and improves amenities, the rents can be doubled but spread over five years. Under his own proposals he will not have to spend one penny but the rents can be doubled as soon as the Bill becomes law.

And even if Amery is too shy to line his pockets in this crude way through his own legislation, all he has to do is sit tight and wait for his tenants to die. With vacant possession, he could reap a cool £10,000 a house with the present state of the private housing market in inner London.

Life's better under the Conservatives—for Conservatives.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE PUBLIC DEBATE

## HOW TO FIGHT THE TORIES

between Stan Orme MP, Norman Atkinson MP (Tribune) and Paul Foot, John Palmer (International Socialists)

THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER 7.15pm

THE DOME — New Road, Brighton

Organised by Brighton International Socialists



## Red scare is threat to workers' unity

SOONER OR LATER, the Tories were bound to resort to a red scare. When attacks on working-class living standards meet with stiff resistance, the Tories call up the ghost of Stanley Baldwin and the Zinoviev letter forgery that helped defeat the 1924 Labour government.

Of course, the decision to expel more than a hundred Russians from Britain goes deeper than just a desire to divide the labour movement and isolate militants from the rank and file. The man responsible for the expulsion is Sir Alec Douglas Home, one of the worst reactionaries in the present cabinet, a man of Munich who was in favour of a deal with Hitler and a staunch cold war warrior.

No doubt the Russians were spying. All the big imperialist powers do. There is no shortage of British Foreign Office chappies strolling around Moscow with cameras in their bowlers and microphones in their furled umbrellas. Spying is an odious spin-off industry of a world torn by competing power blocs. It is accepted as part of the price each side has to pay in the struggle for domination of the world markets.

The reason the cadaverous Sir Alec is getting shirty with the Russians is because he has had his nose put out of joint by the top level talks between Brandt of West Germany and Brezhnev of Russia. Home sees the new mateyness of Germany and Russia as a threat to British interests in Europe. So out comes the big stick, the Russians book their flights to Moscow on the first available Aeroflot and in due course will be replaced by other officials who will continue the activities of their expelled colleagues. And so the grisly charade goes on.

But this sordid rivalry between two imperialist powers has its sinister undertones. There is no doubt that top Tories welcomed the opportunity of a red spy scare to suggest that the Russians were also responsible for industrial and political unrest in Britain. The right-wing press, with the Express leading the pack, quickly picked up their masters' carefully-laid scent. The Russians, it was said, were behind Upper Clyde, Belfast, opposition to the Common Market, and strikes in the car industry. Look hard, and you will find traces of snow on every shop steward's boots.

## Damage is done

Of course, the Foreign Office denied these rumours. That was probably all part of the plan. Once the rumours begin to spread, the damage, if any, is done. At one level, the scares are ludicrous. The last thing that the rulers of Russia want is uproar and strife in any part of Europe. Like their British big business rivals, they want stability in order to expand their trade and influence.

But at another level, and one that deeply affects the labour movement, the suggestions are an insult to every working man and woman. The implication is that workers are docile people, unconcerned by the present onslaught on their living standards, simply manipulated by the agents of the Russians.

The danger of this argument is that, because of the serious lack of a sizeable socialist movement able effectively to answer all the lies and slanders of the Tories, their press and the employers, some workers may fall into this carefully prepared trap and shy away from militant action.

The response to the Tory offensive springs from the growing anger and bitterness of working people to attacks on wages and living standards, to the blight of unemployment, the unending misery of the slums. It is the twisted priorities of a system that puts profit before people that produces the present level of working-class opposition. And if that opposition grows and develops a socialist programme and leadership, it could threaten the entire system that the Tories are paid to defend.

So the red scare has a purpose—to drive a wedge between workers by drumming up a handful of sinister red agitators. Every socialist and trade unionist should stand firm against this crude witch-hunting. The absurd to-ings and fro-ings between London and Moscow are no concern of ours, but any attempt to divide and demoralise the working-class movement must be resisted with all the power at our command.

## LABOUR'S LEGACY

THE LABOUR PARTY conference meets in Brighton next week. The occasion will be used by the Wilson leadership as an anti-Tory jamboree and no doubt the party leader is busily honing and sharpening his wit for some verbal broadsides against Mr Heath.

Of course, the Tories need to be attacked. But Wilson and company are the least able people to lead that attack. Wage freeze, anti-union laws, means-tests, stripping the welfare services, putting up rents and failing to tackle the housing problem—these were the hallmarks of the last Labour government as well as their Tory successors.

For Harold Wilson and his friends, anti-Tory speeches are a convenient smokescreen to hide their own anti-working class record. They must not be allowed to get off the hook.

The Tories must be defeated. We all agree with that. But how? Saying 'vote Labour' is no answer, because that means giving Wilson a free hand to carry on with the same big business policies as before.

What is needed is a campaign that will involve many thousands of trade unionists and militants in a fight to commit a future Labour government to certain definite proposals—repeal of all anti-union laws, no incomes policy, an end to unemployment with work or full pay, restoration of welfare cuts with no welfare charges or means tests, repeal of all racist laws including the Aliens Bill, and renationalisation of all industry returned to private hands.

Many workers still have illusions in the Labour Party. A campaign in the trade unions to commit the party to such a programme and its refusal to carry it out when in office would help smash those illusions and hasten the building of a real socialist organisation.

# BANDA BACKS PORTUGAL'S WHITE SUPREMACY

by Peter Hitchens

DR HASTINGS BANDA, first black African leader to hob-nob openly with white racist South Africa, this week gave a cloak of respectability to Portugal's domination of Mozambique with an official visit to the giant Cabora Bassa dam project.

The dam is intended to supply electricity to South Africa and to Portuguese East Africa. Ian Smith's Rhodesia will probably be included as well.

But the dam is not just a hydro-electricity plant. It is an attempt to bring white Portuguese settlers into Mozambique, and it is vital for developing South African industry.

FRELIMO, the National Liberation Movement in Portuguese East Africa, is threatened by the dam and by the plans for a Portuguese 'plantation'.

Work started at Cabora Bassa in September 1969. Since then a whole new town has been built on the site.

The town, Songo, is run on racial lines. Black Africans live in barracks while white



BANDA: visit and be damned

workers are housed in luxury prefabs. Most of the whites are South African or Portuguese, but there are a few from Italy, France and Germany. Most of them are technicians.

Songo is a boom town—its supermarkets are full of Rhodesian goods for those who can afford them. But Tete, downstream from Songo, is more important to the Portuguese military. The inrush of money and people to spend it has doubled

Tete's size. And the authorities have other plans for the town.

It is to be the centre of a high-speed road and air network to carry troops to 'trouble spots'. The network will be backed by local farmers organised into paramilitary groups.

White workers at Cabora Bassa are being offered houses, land and tractors if they will settle round Tete and serve in these groups.

Meanwhile, the black population is herded into 'large villages'—concentration camps—where the army can keep constant watch on them.

FRELIMO has managed to move some of its guerrillas south of the Zambezi river—where they have never penetrated before—and get to within 22 miles of the dam itself. Last February the Portuguese army admitted that the dam was threatened.

They said that it would be built and operated 'whatever the cost and whoever may get hurt'. The area has been put under military rule.

British companies involved in Cabora Bassa include ICI, GKN, Barclays Bank, British Leyland and the Chestow-based firm United Transport Overseas.

# Tory lies—remember Zinoviev letter

AS ONE may expect, the capitalist press really has gone to town on the Russian spy scare story and the alleged Comrade X defector from the KGB who is still unnamed.

The makers of Concorde have dismissed as ridiculous the idea of Russian spies obtaining information of a secret nature regarding the project and Russian bankers in London consider the tales about their bank clerks acting as secret agents as laughable. I am tempted to ask just how much truth there is in the spate of cheap sensationalism being poured out by Fleet Street.

In order to find a somewhat similar case of sinister connivance between the British Foreign Office and the press lords one need look no further than the case of the 'Zinoviev letter' of 1924.

It has since been revealed that the letter was a fraudulent document cooked up in Berlin by two white Russians and sold to the British government for £10,000. This shows to what lengths the British Tories will go. By lying and deceit, the Tories succeeded. The Anglo-Russian trade and peace treaties were never signed because the British people had been brainwashed into voting in another war-mongering Tory government.

It is interesting to note that the Fleet Street press and mass media in general have not a single word to say about the greatest and most expensive espionage network in the world—the CIA, which spies on the world's working class in order to bolster up a rotten and corrupt system of society. — ERNEST OFFEN, London W14.

## Exposes system

I WAS DISAPPOINTED in the review of Polly Toynbee's book *A Working Life* (11 September). Surely we should make something of the fact that she uses her book to expose working conditions in capitalist Britain, whatever her motives and ideology.

Christopher Hitchens seemed more interested in getting a dig at the author for being middle class and a girl and totally ignoring the implications of the book for women workers.—JEFFER CLEMENTS, Brighton, Sussex.

## Fighting internment

The following letter has been sent to

# THEIR WEEK

SMELLING A RAT in the boardroom, Their Week probed the affairs of Company X. We went to the Search Room of Companies House, asked for its file, and found—nothing; not a single annual return since the company was incorporated five years ago. Suspecting that we had stumbled on a nest of rats, we found a friendly official who told us:

That at any given time there are 100,000 companies—one-fifth of all registered companies—who are in technical default of their legal obligation to file information.

That they can postpone doing so legally for a maximum of 2½ years by using the loopholes in the Companies Act;

That when they are finally prosecuted they are often fined a token guinea (maximum penalty—£7000); and

That as many as 20,000, or one-fifth of all defaulters, are in the opinion of Companies House officials, seriously trying to get away with it.

The Defaults Department employs 50 people, one per 400 serious defaulters.

POLITICS AND MONEY have always grubbed happily together, and nowhere so happily as in the backward world, nor so

professionally as now. Meet Mr Benjamin Weiner, ex-US diplomat and now the bright boy in Probe International, 'a small political intelligence agency designed specifically to help US corporations with their overseas investments'. His company aims:

1. 'to set up a working rapport with every government agency in the target country'. Not at Cabinet level—Ministers can be kicked out—but with 'high-ranking civil servants who provide government continuity';
2. 'to get to know the points of power within a country—not just the politicians, but the labour leaders, the military, and the key families'; and
3. 'to pinpoint . . . how the competition is related to the point of power'.

DR COLVIN DE SILVA, Ceylon's ex-radical Minister in Charge of Constitutional Affairs, popped up in London last week. Picking its way through the oratorical undergrowth, Their Week learned

A. that the present Coalition government is planning to hold on to power for at least eight or nine years (2-3 years to see the new Constitution through and six to see it working)

B. that the costs of the 'insurgency' last

Trotsky called for a united front between the German Socialist and Communist parties to resist Hitler he was calling for a united front, on one issue, with those who had strangled the German revolution in 1918-19 and who had been consistent supporters of capitalism ever since.

Now as to the particular demand of the Labour Committee which has distressed your correspondent—'Release or right of trial for all internees'—this can be tactically right or wrong. It depends on one's assessment of the situation at the time. What has to be said is that it is, neither more nor less 'reformist' than 'End internment' or 'British troops out of Ireland', both demands, incidentally, prominently displayed by Socialist Worker.

Why 'British troops out of Ireland'? Why not 'Abolition of the standing army and its replacement by a workers' militia'?

To put the questions is to answer them. There is a difference between propaganda ('many ideas addressed to few people') and agitation ('few ideas addressed to many people'). Agitation starts from the consciousness of workers as well as from the needs of the situation. It seeks to mobilise massive support for, normally, a limited demand.

There are all sorts of differences between organisations currently supporting the campaign against internment, and repression in the Six Counties. IS has its position which can be seen in the pages of Socialist Worker and International Socialism. The fact that we have differences with other groups ought, in our opinion, to be no obstacle to a common fight in support of our Irish comrades. We trust that your readers will share this view.—DUNCAN HALLAS, National Secretary, International Socialists.

April were 2 million rupees (a blatant lie) and are expected to rise 30-40 fold (through expenditure on the police and other repressive forces?—TW); and C. that the 'hard core' internees amongst the 14,500, or so now in detention are going to stay there indefinitely.

What de Silva forgot to tell Their Week was:

1. that his government gave the Ceylonese police a licence to murder in Section 44 of the Emergency Regulations of 16 March (promulgated BEFORE the 'insurgency') which permits a police officer to take possession of a body and cremate or bury it without needing to comply with any other law or regulation.

2. that all normal legal procedures are suspended even though the 'insurgency' is supposed to be over;

3. that the first people to get chewed up in the government's savagery were the young militants in the two minor coalition parties, the Communist Party and the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. No less than 2000 of them have been 'removed'; many of these must be presumed dead. And

4. that neither the CP nor de Silva's own LSSP, let alone the major governing party, are thinking of calling party congresses.



# Paddy Crerand: from shipyard worker to soccer star

PADDY CRERAND is a football star. Once with Celtic, he plays now for Manchester United and is a Scottish international. But as a former Clydeside shipyard worker and with a family that comes from Northern Ireland, his present fame and glamour have not blinded him to the kind of society we live in.

We mentioned that someone had said that football had replaced religion as the 'opium of the masses'. He agreed. He thought that people were mad about football because they have nothing else.

'I found this in a lot of countries, particularly South America. They know nothing about politics there. Football is front-page news and they don't know what's going on.

'I think that the governments are happy to keep them like that—to keep them ignorant of social problems. That's why I think that eventually people get that sick with things that they rise up against the establishment.'

Football violence he considers a social problem, a reflection of people's anger and frustrations.

'What have the people in Britain got to look forward to? They've only got football. They vent their feelings at football more so than at other places. I mean look at the figures—90,000 unemployed—that's diabolical.'

He was keen on the idea of the fans having more say in the running of the clubs. But what about the present situation, with control of the clubs in the hands of a few businessmen?

## 'They'll need the army to get them out of UCS'

'I think that football's the lesser of the evils with businessmen. They are willing to raise the standards of footballers and I know that at this club they're trying to raise the standards for the crowd because they're building great facilities here, new stands etc.

'Some clubs though can't afford it. The clubs that have got money have only got it from people coming through the gate so I think that the supporters should have more to do with the club, they should get together more.'

He thought it a good idea for the supporters to run trains to away matches. If they were in charge and responsible, the trains would be less likely to be smashed up.'

Did he think the extreme competitiveness of modern football had affected the game?

'A lot depends on results. People want a winning side regardless of how they get it. But the gates have gone down in English football because I think that football is so defensive-minded that people are getting fed-up coming to the game.'

'Although people say that the be-all and end-all is victory, people aren't accepting that anymore. They want a bit of pleasure as well as having a victory.'

He thought that fans were drifting away because the game is not entertaining. 'To be a defender today you don't have to be a footballer as long as you're big and strong so you can hammer people rather than do it skilfully. I think this is the way the game is going at the moment.'

He came from Glasgow, we pointed out. What did he think about the struggle going on in the shipyards?

'I worked in the shipyards, in Fairfield, for three years. I honestly believe

## 'Football violence reflects workers' anger and frustration'

# workers' anger and frustration'

that in UCS they'll have to get the army in, because the people aren't going to leave.

'They talk about all the money they've spent on UCS but where has it all gone to—the workers haven't got it. In Glasgow it's always been families that owned the shipyards and they got all the money out of the yards. The people haven't got it.'

## 'Wealth is the root of the Irish problem'

Paddy Crerand's people come from the North of Ireland and he has just been over to Ireland. What did he see as the cause of the Irish troubles?

'I think that money is the root of all evil. People that have got plenty of money are only interested in wealth and power. This is what all the trouble in Northern Ireland is all about.'

He said that few people realise that in 1920 in Northern Ireland, when Britain was giving the country back to the Irish people, the Nationalists won a general elec-

## Interviewed by Bob Whitehead and Keith Cash

tion and the three counties in the North broke away.

'That was because maybe you had five or six families in those counties that owned the wealth and they didn't want to know, so the British government backed them and they finished up with six counties and that's creating all the problems now.'

'They thought to themselves "we'll use the majority against the minority" Naturally, you don't use the minority because you don't stay in power, the majority vote you out. So there just happened to be a religious thing in Northern Ireland and they've used religion and abused it to keep themselves in power for the past 50 years.'

He said that the IRA were blamed for creating the trouble in the North but

people don't realise that every man, woman and child are IRA sympathisers, if not members.

'They think that the IRA is somebody that's come up from the South to fight the North. What they want in Ireland, what they've stated that they want is a socialist 32 county republic. They don't want just Brian Faulkner and his mob bombed out, they want Jack Lynch and his mob bombed out as well.'

## 'Even Rangers and Celtic is a money problem'

He thought that the sectarian rivalry between Rangers and Celtic in Glasgow had been created just as in the North of Ireland.

'Not so much with Celtic. People will think that I'm biased when I say it about Celtic, that they are a non-sectarian team.'

'Probably the supporters are sectarian because of the situation in Scotland and the way it has been built up through the

years. The manager at the present day is not a Catholic but Rangers won't even let you near the ground if you're a Catholic.'

Rangers know they would lose a lot of money and half their supporters if they had Catholics in their team, he added.

'So it's a monetary problem again. They only use people but people don't realise that they're being used. It's good for business isn't it?'

'That's the bloody joke about it. You can get people to go out and shoot each other but as long as it's good for business, let them shoot each other. As long as somebody is getting money out of it.'

And the future? 'I think that eventually the working-class people will run the world. Not in the sort of form that Russia and China run it because they've gone to the other extreme.'

'How it survived in Britain in 1926 God only knows. How the country as it stands today survived I don't know but the way it's going now the people will rise up the way this government is treating the working-class people.'

# Car bosses use disabled workers as blackmail

EVERY YEAR thousands of workers are killed or seriously injured in industrial accidents. Cut-throat competition and the quest for profits mean that workers are continually forced into faster and faster production schedules and management, eager to cut costs, are less and less inclined to provide adequate safety measures.

Productivity deals, speed-up, cut-backs in manning, have all meant increases in the hazards that workers are exposed to.

But what of those who are just badly injured—unable to continue in their job, unable because of their injury to maintain their previous speeds, unable any longer to make a profit for the boss?

Many such workers find their way into the workshops of Remploy, a government-subsidised organisation set up 'to keep disabled people employed'. Yet as the management at Standard Triumph on Merseyside have discovered, even these workers can provide their pound of flesh.

## 'No guarantee'

For more than 12 years, fascia panels for Standard Triumph cars have been assembled by men and women in the sub-assembly shop. But without any consultation with shop stewards, some of this work was contracted out to the Remploy factory at St Helens, a move which will mean redundancies in future.

The amount concerned is considerable, some 2000 hours a year. Yet despite an agreement signed by Mr T McDonald, the Industrial Relations Officer, 'that in the event of possible redundancies, work within their competence that may be subcontracted will be recalled wherever possible', no guarantee on redundancies has been given.

Many workers at Standard Triumph feel very uneasy at this, for while wanting to protect their own jobs, they are also

very concerned about the plight of the men and women at Remploy. And management are refusing to honour the agreement, using the disabled workers as a blackmail.

But these threats are not based on

human sympathy for the less fortunate. The rate for sub-assembly workers at Standard Triumph is 85 pence an hour. At Remploy it is 30 pence an hour.

Remploy workers cannot achieve the speeds of production line workers and this,

according to the management, explains the difference in the rates. But Remploy is a government-subsidised firm, financed at more than £600 each year for every worker employed.

Far from being used to 'rehabilitate

the disabled', this money is now helping to boost the profits of Standard Triumph.

No one should believe these hypocrites when they say they are concerned with the plight of the disabled. The callous exploitation of these workers by the Standard Triumph management should remind us that never has humane consideration motivated the ruling class, but always the incessant greed for profit.

STEVE EMMS



Just off the press ...an important analysis of events in East and West Pakistan

## The blood on Yahya's hands...

The struggle of the people of Bangla Desh for independence goes on, despite the bloody massacre waged against them by the West Pakistan army of President Yahya Khan. Nigel Harris outlines the background to the events of the last eight bitter months and suggests what action can be taken by the socialist and labour movements of the West to aid the Bengali liberation movement.

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# COLONIALISM is alive and well and living in Hong Kong

A SPECIAL REPORT BY J WALKER

## WHAT WE STAND FOR



THE International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations. We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism, and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

out the world.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the

demand: 'Five days' work or five days' pay.

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

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

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

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

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

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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

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

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

IT IS TWICE as easy to become a heroin addict in Hong Kong as it is to get the vote.

By British standards that sounds like a shocking drugs problem. By Hong Kong standards it shows how few people are allowed to vote. For this is British democracy, colonial-style, where 19 people out of 20 are disqualified from voting.

The five per cent who can vote soon find that this is meaningless. The people of Hong Kong are 98 per cent Chinese and 1½ per cent British. They are ruled by a governor and three councils.

The governor is appointed. He is British. The Executive and Legislative Councils are also appointed from above. Their members are mostly British.

If you have a vote you can use it for the Urban Council. True, its powers are limited to such things as rubbish collection and the upkeep of parks, but it has got 10 elected members. And 16 others appointed by the governor.

When, last year, the 10 elected members walked out in protest at the government's failure to bring in reforms, the appointed members carried on without them.

When I arrived in Hong Kong at the end of 1968 I was delighted to find an oasis of 'British civilisation' in the Far East. This attitude was bolstered by reading beautifully-produced pamphlets about the Hong Kong government's achievements in housing.

But over the next two and a half years I came to realise how very different the real truth was. My attitude turned to one of disgust and frustration at the endless injustice and exploitation that I saw all round me.

The government is proud of its 're settlement' policy in housing which it claims is solving the refugee problem. But the resettlement areas are slums.

### Shells

Government regulations say each adult must have 35 sq ft of living space. But some of its blocks of flats are designed to provide only 24 sq ft — less than the area of a double bed.

Some government housing estates allow children only 6 sq ft for eating, sleeping, studying and living in.

The 'homes' in a mark 1 resettlement block, with units 9ft by 9ft by 9 ft, are concrete shells with no windows, no electricity, no water, no washing facilities, no lavatory, just a cube with a door and a space for a window.

Cooking is done on paraffin stoves rigged up on balconies that also serve as access corridors and are always full of children running back and forth. The lavatories are rooms with troughs running round the edge, with partitions but no doors. Each is used by 600 people.

The government is now winding up its public housing programme because of 'lack of space'. Yet it recently gave 146,000 sq ft of land to the Hong Kong cricket club—which has all of 700 members.

The alternative to resettlement is the overcrowded and fire-prone tenements, cramped squatter boats which clog the typhoon shelters and harbours, and hillside squatting areas.

The government claimed its resettlement policy was to provide the squatters with homes. When the programme began there were a third of a million squatters. Now there are half a million.

### Repression

The real motive was to clear them off land that could be used for profitable development. Squatters living on land that is of no commercial use, as on the hillside or in the polluted harbour, have no hope of rehousing.

Conditions in industry are similarly bad. Last year it was made illegal for children under the age of 14 to work in industry. But when some employers



Home for thousands

Observer suggested a year.

The Hong Kong government itself makes a fortune since 1967. Enormous profits sent to British bank businesses.

### Profits

Yet when the Communist Party of China campaigned for a year, the money from workers' hands from the government's pockets.

Britain has no such profitable colonies. But two main ones are afoot.

The first is the Chinese an official support through the government though many people get involved.

The other is the Yu Tai campaign, with the future of islands north of Taiwan by the US, which over to Japan, through of China.

But its real protest at foreign Chinese territory implication also at Hong Kong.

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## Where it's easier to get heroin than the vote

were taken to court, the fine was only 30p.

The working week for women and young people is fixed at 50 hours (excluding overtime) but there is no similar limit for men. Nor is there any minimum wage, and women workers earn less than £1 a day.

The unions are badly organised, and have little power to improve working conditions. Instead they tend to function as social centres and to provide limited welfare benefits.

Though 98 per cent of Hong Kong's people are Chinese the ONLY official language is English—yet half the people cannot speak it at all.

The language of the courts is English making them clearly an instrument of class repression—the man in the street can only look to the courts for protection if he is wealthy enough to hire an interpreter.

### Trafficking

The police force is extremely corrupt. In December last year two policemen were jailed for taking bribes. In November two were jailed for soliciting bribes.

The Hong Kong Bar Association, with typical understatement, has said that 'the number of incidents where police officers have used illegal violence in the purported execution of their duties is greater than might reasonably be expected.'

Hong Kong is a valuable asset for British imperialism. It provides considerable support for sterling. The actual amount is a closely guarded secret. The

### THERE ARE 15 BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

**SCOTLAND**  
Aberdeen/Dundee/Edinburgh/Fife/Glasgow N/Glasgow S/Stirling

**NORTH EAST**  
Durham/Newcastle upon Tyne/Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

**NORTH**  
Barnsley/Bradford/Derby/Doncaster/Grimsby/Huddersfield/Hull/Leeds York/Selby/Sheffield

**NORTH WEST**  
Lancaster/Manchester/Oldham/Bolton/Merseyside/St Helens/Wigan

Potteries

**MIDLANDS**  
Birmingham/Coventry/Leamington/Leicester/Oxford/Nottingham/Northampton/Redditch/Telford

**WALES and SOUTH WEST**  
Bath/Bristol/Cardiff/Exeter/Gloucester/Mid-Devon/Plymouth/Swansea

**SOUTH**  
Ashford/Brighton/Canterbury/Crawley/Folkestone/Guildford/Portsmouth/Southampton

**EAST**  
Basilidon/Cambridge/Harlow/Ipswich/Lowestoft/Norwich/Colchester

**GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES**  
Acton/Bletchley/Camden/Chertsey/Croydon/Dagenham/Enfield/Erith/Fulham/Greenford/Havering/Harrow/Hemel Hempstead/Hornsey/Ilford/Kilburn/Kingston/Lambeth/Lewisham/Merton/Neveham/Notting Hill/Reading/Richmond/Stoke Newington/Slough/South Ealing/Tottenham/Walthamstow/Wandsworth/Watford/Victoria

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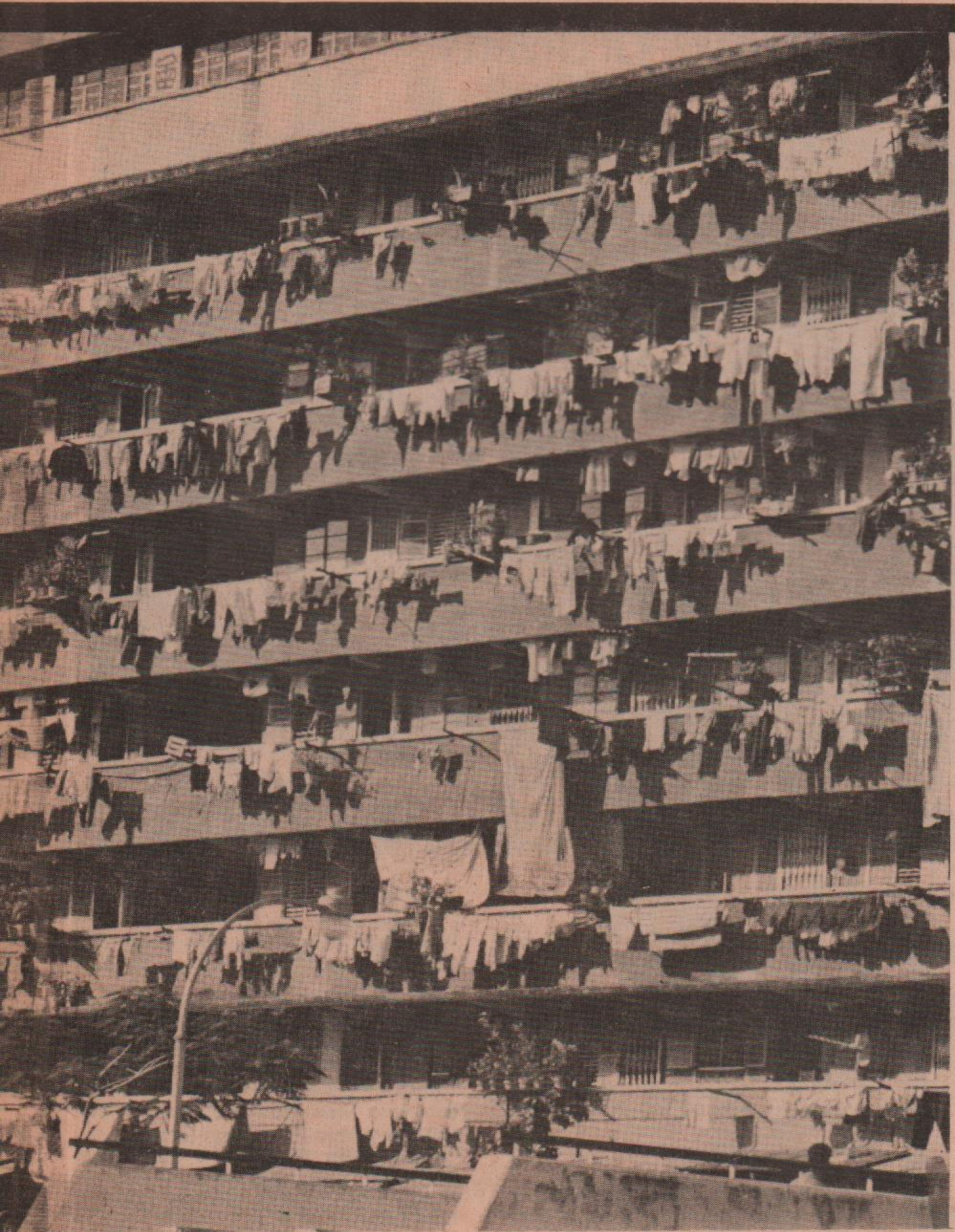
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Under the Whitewash, 35p, a forthcoming book about Hong Kong by J Walker available from Collet's London bookshop. 14121961 can be obtained from 7 Llanvanor Road, London NW2 2AR.





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The alternative: hillside squatters' homes

As councils face pressure to defy the milk  
ban, a look at what militant action can win

# The day the council decided to go to jail

ON 29 JULY, 1921, a strange procession wended its way from Poplar, through White-chapel, and on to the City of London. Led by the corporation mace-bearer, the procession consisted of the worthy Mayor, aldermen and councillors of the Borough of Poplar. Confident but determined, they marched to the accompaniment of a band, a number of supporters and a big banner bearing the inscription, 'POPULAR BOROUGH COUNCIL marching to the HIGH COURT and possibly to PRISON'.

The elected representatives of Poplar had been summoned to appear before the High Court judges because, it was claimed, they had not carried out their statutory commitments. They had failed to pay outside authorities the 'precepts', that is, a levy made out of the rates for services rendered to the ratepayers by other bodies. Poplar's main debt was to the then Tory-dominated London County Council of about £270,000.

The decision not to pay the 'precepts' had been made on 22 March, 1921. A short, jovial, old-style trade unionist, Charlie Summer, moved, and Charlie Key, a schoolmaster, seconded the resolution not to pay on the grounds that the council's resources were already overstrained.

The council had to pay relief to a large number of unemployed because at that time the whole administration of unemployment benefit was done on a local, not national, basis.

## BURDEN

If Poplar Council had paid the 'precepts' it would have involved cutting the amount of relief granted to the unemployed or, alternatively, increasing the rate burden. As both unemployed and ratepayers were ordinary workers, to take either course of action would involve further reductions in the living standards of that section of the community least able to make it.

The capitalist government of the day, led by Lloyd George, looked forward with pleasure to seeing the elected representatives of the poor being compelled to take measures that would adversely affect the poorer section of the community. Like the present Tory government, the government of 1921 relished the idea of Labour Councils up and down the country meekly carrying out Tory directives from Whitehall—increasing the burden of rates, cutting down municipal services—and probably getting blamed by the electorate for these measures. Far better let Labour get the blame than the real culprits.

To carry out such a policy successfully, the Lloyd George government calculated, just as Heath has today, that Labour representatives of local authorities would be so engrossed with trivial local problems that they would make no effective protest against the government's economy cuts. However, the government miscalculated: it had not reckoned on George Lansbury and the rest of the Poplar Council standing by their principles as firmly in the council chamber as outside.

## PRINCIPLE

With pungency, Lansbury pointed to the growing problem of unemployment—at that time it numbered about a million throughout the country—and said that he did not see why those working-class areas which had the misfortune of having a large number of unemployed should have to bear the burden of maintaining them while middle-class residential areas, places with far more wealth, did not have any unemployed to maintain.

Lansbury illustrated his case by taking two nearby councils—Westminster and Poplar—both with roughly the same population. In Poplar a penny rate raised £3,643, in Westminster £31,719. Yet Westminster's rate for unemployment relief was negligible while Poplar's took a large portion of its 2s 10d total rate.

It was a fight on the broad principle that the workers should not be made to foot the bill for unemployment maintenance, that other sections of the community were in a far better position to do so, that George Lansbury and co stuck out.

One judge asked, 'What would happen if all borough councils did this?' 'Why, we should get the necessary reforms,' Lansbury benignly replied.

But while this statement was no doubt true, it did not satisfy the judges. They sent nearly the whole of the council to prison. Only the Tories, one renegade Labour councillor and the Deputy Mayor, to conduct official business, remained free. The other 30 members were sent to Brixton jail for 'contempt of court'.



LANSBURY: denounced Tories

Brixton prison was hardly hospitable, but the Poplar councillors made the best of it. When they arrived the chief warden spoke to them in his usual stern tone and was greeted with, 'Where's your union card?' Worse jolts for prison discipline were to follow. The councillors refused to work; they demanded footballs, exercise, open cell doors and newspapers. Every day, council officials would visit them because it was necessary to consult them 'on business'.

The rest of the prisoners quickly became envious. They sent a deputation to the Governor asking for the same privileges as the Poplar councillors.

But it was not only the prison authorities who were becoming increasingly disturbed by the activities of Poplar Borough Council. Lloyd George's government were also disturbed. They were finding the Poplar Council as much trouble in prison as they were outside. While they were behind bars, they were the centre of public interest, the vocal point of opposition to the government's economic policies. Inspired by the self-sacrifice of the Poplar councillors, Bethnal Green voted to follow their lead, while Stepney and Battersea looked likely to come out—or rather be locked in—because of their solidarity with Poplar. Lloyd George's government was confronted with the dismal prospect of placing more and more borough councillors behind bars.

Meanwhile, Lansbury and his comrades were unperturbed. Each night large crowds would congregate outside Brixton prison to hear Lansbury denounce the government through the gratings of his cell-window.

'Where's your E'gar?' they would sometimes shout up. Amid cheers the face of Lansbury's son would appear in

the prison window.

But there was nothing to cheer the government. The situation was getting out of hand. Even moderate Labour Mayors headed by Herbert Morrison, who deplored Poplar's action, sent a deputation to the Prime Minister. They realised that unless agreement was reached the whole of London local government would soon break down.

As a result, in October, after little more than a month in jail, Poplar won their case and were released from prison. Their courageous stand received national acclaim. This action of a small East London borough had defeated the government and its corrupt legal system.

## FORCED

Faced with the threat of 'Poplarism' spreading—that is to say, other councils 'going on strike' and refusing to pay their precepts—the government was forced to hold a conference and then introduce a bill that equalised rate burdens, increasing unemployment benefits and making them a matter that was administered nationally.

What Lansbury did 50 years ago we can do with far greater success today. The Tory government's policies are unpopular.

What are local councillors going to do about such issues as school milk? Are they meekly going to administer the various government decrees, to apply the Tory policy of cutting down workers' living standards?

In which case they are making themselves the eunuchs of Whitehall, the unpaid servants of the Conservative Central Office. Their servility, lack of backbone, and reactionary policy will undoubtedly result in widespread unpopularity. People will say—and rightly so—that they are just as bad as the Tories.

Or are Labour councillors going to take the road to Brixton prison? The road tramped so courageously by those who built our mighty labour movement.

Such action would not only prevent Tory attempts to increase rents and rates, but would also aid the movement to get the Tories out now.

**RAYMOND  
CHALLINOR**

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Easter rising crushed with terrible brutality

# The guns are buried—and so

AT MIDDAY on Easter Monday, 24 April 1916, a motley bunch of armed men, not more than a few hundred strong, took over many of the main buildings in Dublin. Armed struggle by the Irish population against British domination had broken out once more.

For six days the rebels fought desperately against British attempts to remove them from their positions. Artillery was used to shell the rebel strong points and much of central Dublin was destroyed. 1351 people died in the fighting and a third of the population was forced onto public relief as a result of the devastation.

Finally the rebel leader, Padraig Pearse, ordered his followers to surrender 'so as to prevent the further slaughter of Dublin citizens'. In the days which followed the surviving leaders of the insurrection were taken from their prison cells and shot.

The rising was hardly successful in terms of its immediate effects. Much of the population of Dublin seemed indifferent to its outcome. The numbers taking part in the rising were much smaller than its leaders had hoped. Their defeat seemed to leave the British government as firmly in control as before.

But the British government could not take the matter lightly. It had an empire which ruled a third of the world. The news from Dublin might inspire rebellion elsewhere.

In Britain itself the working class was being forced to die in a bloody and futile war for imperialist power. Again the Irish example was a dangerous one.

Britain's 'Liberal' rulers turned viciously on the Irish rebels, determined to create a bloodbath that would be a lesson to all.

## Split off

The Irish middle class had been in a bewildered state in the years before 1916. Its dream of home rule—a degree of independence for itself within a framework of overall control from Britain—had been threatened by the resistance of the Orange Order in the North and its backers within a section of the British ruling class.

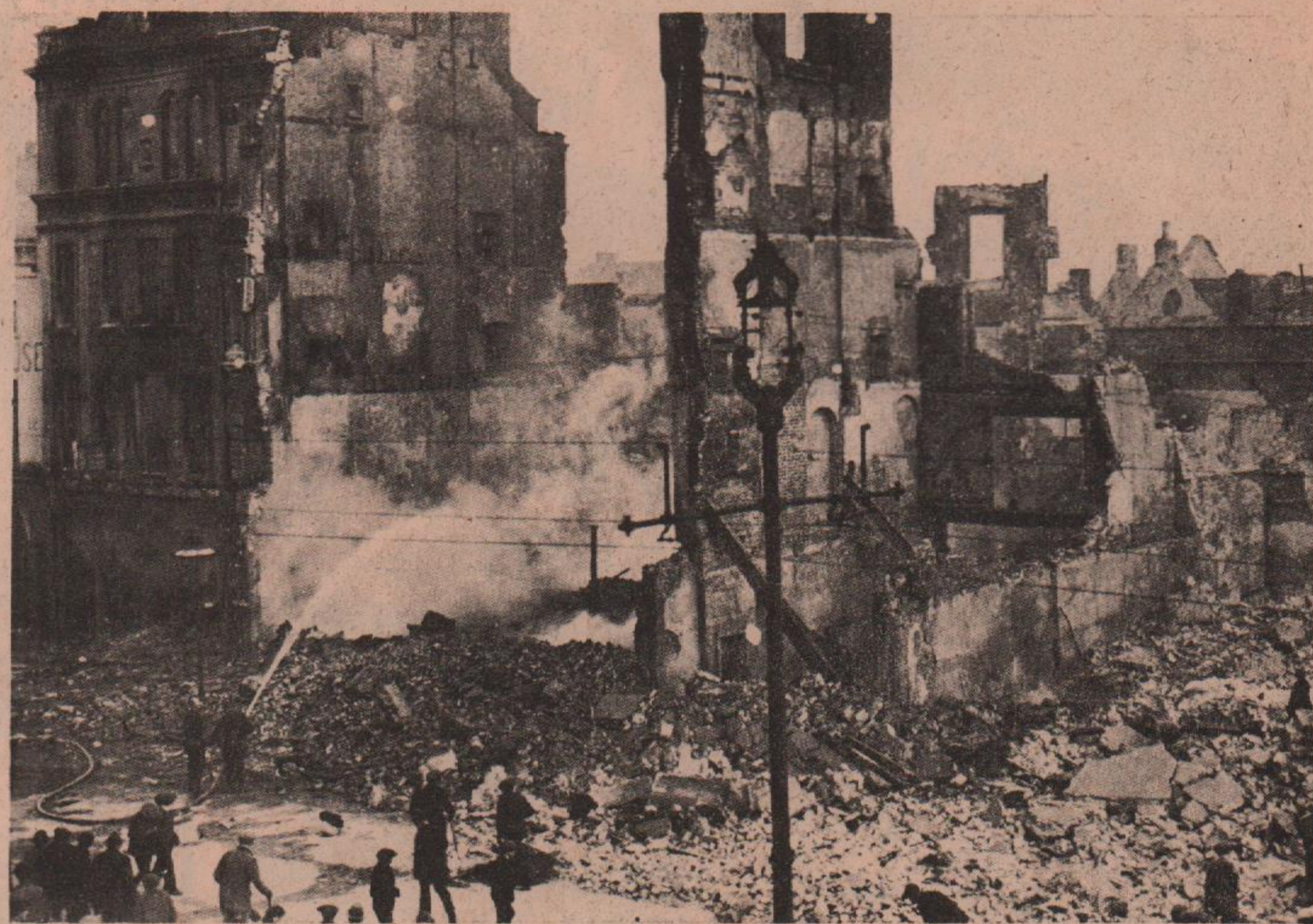
Yet most of the middle class were still a long way from favouring open revolt. When the World War broke out in 1914, nine tenths of the Irish volunteers—originally set up as an armed force to counter the Orange threat—split off to follow the parliamentary leaders of the nationalist party in support of the war.

Only about 10,000 remained who were committed to the more militant aim of taking armed action to achieve independence, and only about a tenth of these actually took part in the Easter rising.

The republican leaders who led the volunteers into battle were in the main teachers and lecturers. Their vision of an independent Ireland was essentially a capitalist one. The faults in Irish society they identified with British rule and believed that they would be overcome in an independent capitalist Ireland.

The Volunteers were joined in the rising by a different sort of armed force,

# are hopes of 1916



Cork—destroyed by Black and Tans



## IRELAND'S HISTORY OF REPRESSION

by JAMES WALKER Part five

the Irish Citizen Army. James Connolly, leader of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, had developed the army out of workers' defence groups that had been used to defend picket lines in the long industrial struggles of 1913.

In his book, *Labour in Irish History*, Connolly had shown, on the basis of study of the past, that the battle for Irish freedom could be won only by a class that had no stake in the imperial system, the working class. Now he set out to prove this in practice. But he warned his followers:

'If we should win, hold on to your rifles! The Volunteers may have a different goal. Remember we are not only for political liberty, but for economic liberty as well. . . .'

Connolly, however, was murdered along with the other rebel leaders after the surrender to the British government and his words were not often to be remembered in the years that followed.

The vicious retaliation by the British against the leaders of the rising evoked growing sympathy for the rebels among the mass of the Irish population. It also turned growing numbers of people against the parliamentary Home Rule party which still supported the British government and its war. At parliamentary by-elections the Home Rule candidates began to be defeated by Sinn Fein members, who refused to recognise the British parliament.

Worsening living standards, particularly for small farmers, and an attempt by the government to introduce con-

scription in Ireland strengthened hostility to British rule.

In the General Election of December 1918 Sinn Fein won the overwhelming majority of seats everywhere but in Ulster. The successful candidates refused to go to Westminster and instead met together in Dublin to proclaim themselves the independent parliament of the Irish Republic, *Dail Eireann*, with Eamonn De Valera as the President.

The Volunteers had already started to fight back against the British occupying army in certain rural areas. Now they swore allegiance to the *Dail* and became the army of the Irish Republic, or the IRA.

## Mercenaries

A struggle developed against the British that involved both civil non-cooperation with the British rulers and military resistance. Elected councils worked with the *Dail*, not with the British. Republican law courts exercised jurisdiction in much of the country. Railway workers struck to prevent the moving of British arms.

Meanwhile, a guerrilla war began to wipe out British outposts in much of the rural south west and in the cities the British political police were annihilated by republican assassins.

The British government was finding Ireland unmanageable. Its empire was threatened from its oldest colony. Greater repression was the only way it saw of holding on. A special force of mercenaries prepared to fight for 10 shillings a day

(then quite a large sum) was recruited from the most degenerate sections of the population of English towns.

The 'Black and Tans' (named after the colour of their uniforms) were let loose on the Irish population. A reign of terror followed in which tens of thousands of people had their homes raided, with 800 houses and 900 shops deliberately burnt down, dozens of people murdered in cold blood and many more imprisoned and tortured.

But repression alone could not contain the growing movement for national freedom. The British began to look for other methods to achieve the same goal. In July 1921 they arranged an armistice with the Sinn Fein government and negotiations for a treaty began.

## Welcomed

The leaders of the republican government, although prepared to use force, were by no means extremists. As the popular movement had gathered strength many of the wealthier sections of the middle class, previously in favour of some sort of link with Britain, now began to climb on the band wagon.

In the *Dail* a quarter of the members were capitalists and two-thirds belonged to the professional and white collar groups. The republican leaders welcomed such supporters, seeing the main aim to be 'Irish unity' against the British. And in order to keep the wealthy happy, they resisted any moves that might threaten the 'rights of property'.

In parts of rural Ireland, landless labourers and small farmers began an agitation to divide the land of the big ranchers—most of whom supported the British connection. The Sinn Fein government saw this as a 'grave menace to the republic. The mind of the people was being diverted from the struggle for freedom by class war. . . . There was a moment when it seemed that nothing could prevent wholesale expropriation.'

It went on to boast that 'this crisis was surmounted thanks to. . . the civic sense of justice expressed through the Arbitration courts and enforced by the

Republican Police'. In other words, the police were used to restore to the rich their lands.

Many of the middle class Sinn Fein leaders looked for any opportunity for a compromise that would restore peace, and with it 'law and order'. When the British offered them a treaty that seemed to satisfy some of their demands, they jumped at the offer.

The treaty gave the Irish middle class their own parliament. But it stopped far short of the 'republic' that the fight had been for. Instead what was agreed to was a 'free state', which would still owe allegiance to the British crown, which would leave the British navy in control of certain Irish ports, and above all, left six counties in the north east of Ireland under the control of Unionist politicians who were identified with British interests.

Justifying the treaty to British Tories, Lord Birkenhead (who had helped to organise the Ulster resistance to home rule before the war) explained that, 'The people who criticise the agreement would do well to remember that we are defending the Empire with the minimum of English lives.'

## Abandoned

The treaty threw the whole republican movement into a crisis. Most of its political leaders were in support of an agreement that ensured an end to social agitation. They took over the official government, working hand in glove with those who only months before had been their bitter enemies.

The rank and file of the republican army did not greet the agreement in the same spirit. They were small farmers, landless labourers or workers, who had seen the fight for the Republic as a fight for an alternative to miserable living standards and enforced emigration. Now their leaders had abandoned the struggle and accepted the English crown and a divided Ireland.

The IRA overwhelmingly rejected the agreement, broke with the government, and prepared to fight on. There was a degree of support for their attitude from some of the political leaders of Sinn Fein, including De Valera.

But the betrayal by one set of middle class leaders did not mean that those who remained with the republican movement changed their ideas. They still saw the struggle as one for 'all Irishmen', and rejected any notion that the republic for which they were fighting should be a socialist one.

## Reprisals

In a bitter civil war the army of the Free State hunted down the members of the republican army. Using arms left behind by the British, it took over those parts of the country still under republican control. Republican prisoners were interned in concentration camps, and a few were murdered in reprisal for army actions.

By May 1923 the republicans had been defeated militarily. De Valera ordered them to bury their guns, while he himself began to agitate politically for 'republican' policies.

The Sinn Fein leaders had looked to Irish independence as a means of developing an independent Irish capitalism, which would guarantee to the Irish middle class the same sort of possibilities as those open to the English middle class. But the middle class was not prepared to go on struggling for independence if this led to social agitation that might threaten its position.

The working class, on the other hand, would only really fight if social agitation was part of the struggle. Middle-class republicanism fell between the two stools. When the guns were buried in 1923, so too were the hopes of 1916.

TO BE CONCLUDED

# 'Hitleriana'—one piece of pornography the puritans aren't marching against

by ROY BAINTON

ONE DEALER told me that the reason for renewed interest in 'Militaria'—the collecting of military curios—is that 'People have become bored with such a long period of peace. . . .'

Perhaps he doesn't watch TV or read the papers. The collecting of army curios, especially Nazi regalia and uniforms, has grown at an alarming rate during the past year.

The most valuable collector's items are Gestapo badges, belts and anything which is associated with that foul organisation.

Collectors are not content, however, with merely displaying their collections. Many men are buying Nazi uniforms simply because they 'feel good' in them, although not all these would-be Gruppenfuhrers will admit it—it's far easier to tell someone you are in local repertory, or going to a fancy-dress dance.

Are we bored with peace? I would rather believe Julia Mueller, a German

psychologist, who sees the make-believe storm-troopers as victims of sexual boredom.

'The main reason for the attraction,' she says, 'seems to me to be the almost inconceivable obscenity with which the Nazis did everything. This, in an age where pornography has become emasculated with over-exposure, may offer itself as a quite successful substitute for the feelings pornography aimed to arouse.'

Britain is well-served by the regalia dealers. A quick flip through Exchange and Mart will bear this out. In Kingston-on-Thames, for instance, there are two finely-stocked militaria emporiums where the assistants will quietly tell you, 'the Germans are not our enemies now, it's the Russians and the Chinese' as they fit you out with your full Wehrmacht officer's uniform, £35.

The lure of the swastika has quite a hold on a number of people, but the really big items go to the Americans. Munich



Hitler: still making money

auctioneer Count Arnhard von Klenova knows some 200 US collectors of what he calls 'Hitleriana'.

Aided by his great Bavarian voice, Klenova recently sold quite a number of the fuhrer's personal effects. A US oilman bought Hitler's wallet, containing 37 photos, two negatives of Eva Braun, and a free ticket to a dance in Linz, Austria, in 1927.

## Not much change

An elderly German bought Adolf's shopping list, a small scrap of paper with a few pencilled words. You need a good bank balance, too. The wallet didn't leave much change from £400, and the shopping list went for £40.

In Germany today there are, according to Klenova, 'old die-hard' Nazis with their own Third Reich museums, although he rejects the idea that there are 'political' motives with the majority of collectors.

The reason for the high prices which are being paid for Nazi regalia stems from the fact that Nazi uniforms are almost

impossible to find—even in Germany, where ex-Nazis keep them hidden. One London dealer said recently that 'It's as if the Third Reich never happened,' when he returned from a gear-hunt in Germany.

So, in the classic business tradition, the shortage and the fad have been capitalised upon. There are several firms now engaged in the profitable manufacture of Iron crosses, coal-scuttle helmets (fibreglass, of course, with FREE Wehrmacht transfers), Gestapo death's head transfers for T-shirts, Luftwaffe eagles. . . . the list goes on.

The urge to dress up in a uniform seems overpowering. There are at least 12 military-styled societies which dress up at the weekend and play 'war games' in the local woods.

Any summer Sunday you could come across a platoon of Confederate States infantrymen, a bunch of Cavaliers, or half-a-dozen would-be Napoleons. They're all here, in England.

Good, clean, harmless fun? The French government don't think so. Collecting Nazi relics is forbidden in France.

Perhaps if we, too, had suffered a Nazi occupation, then the brainless savagery of Hitler's thugs would have been remembered more vividly by some of these dressable brownshirts. Behind the smart, black uniforms and the glittering insignia lies the torture and murder of six million people.

Try to remember THAT, curio-collectors.





## Stalin's ghost haunts Russia...

ONE of the most damning indictments of contemporary Russian society is the fact that the greatest novels which are written about it have to be set in prison camps. This is where writers find the greatest sweep of characters and this is the image which most accurately contains and sums up Russia today.

It is to a starkly unsentimental account of life in a Russian labour camp that we have to turn for the most compelling insights into what life for the Russian citizen is like. The book is Marchenko's *My Testimony* (recently republished by Penguin at 50p) and it is a work which demands to be read by anyone with a passionate concern for socialism.

*My Testimony* is distinctly not for anyone with a sensitive stomach or imagination. Marchenko documents with a refreshing lack of exaggerated 'humanitarian' outrage the conditions under which both 'political' and 'criminal' (the distinction is a difficult one in Russia) prisoners live.

Perhaps his most relevant and frightening point is that 'today's Soviet camps for political prisoners are just as horrific as in Stalin's time.' Despite the alleged liberalisation and humanisation that followed Stalin's death, Marchenko alleges that the conditions in the camps have not substantially improved or changed since 1953.

Marchenko does not make it clear whether he himself believes in the possibility of a socialist society. Understandably he is unremittingly bitter against the authority structure that needs such labour camps to maintain law and order in society.

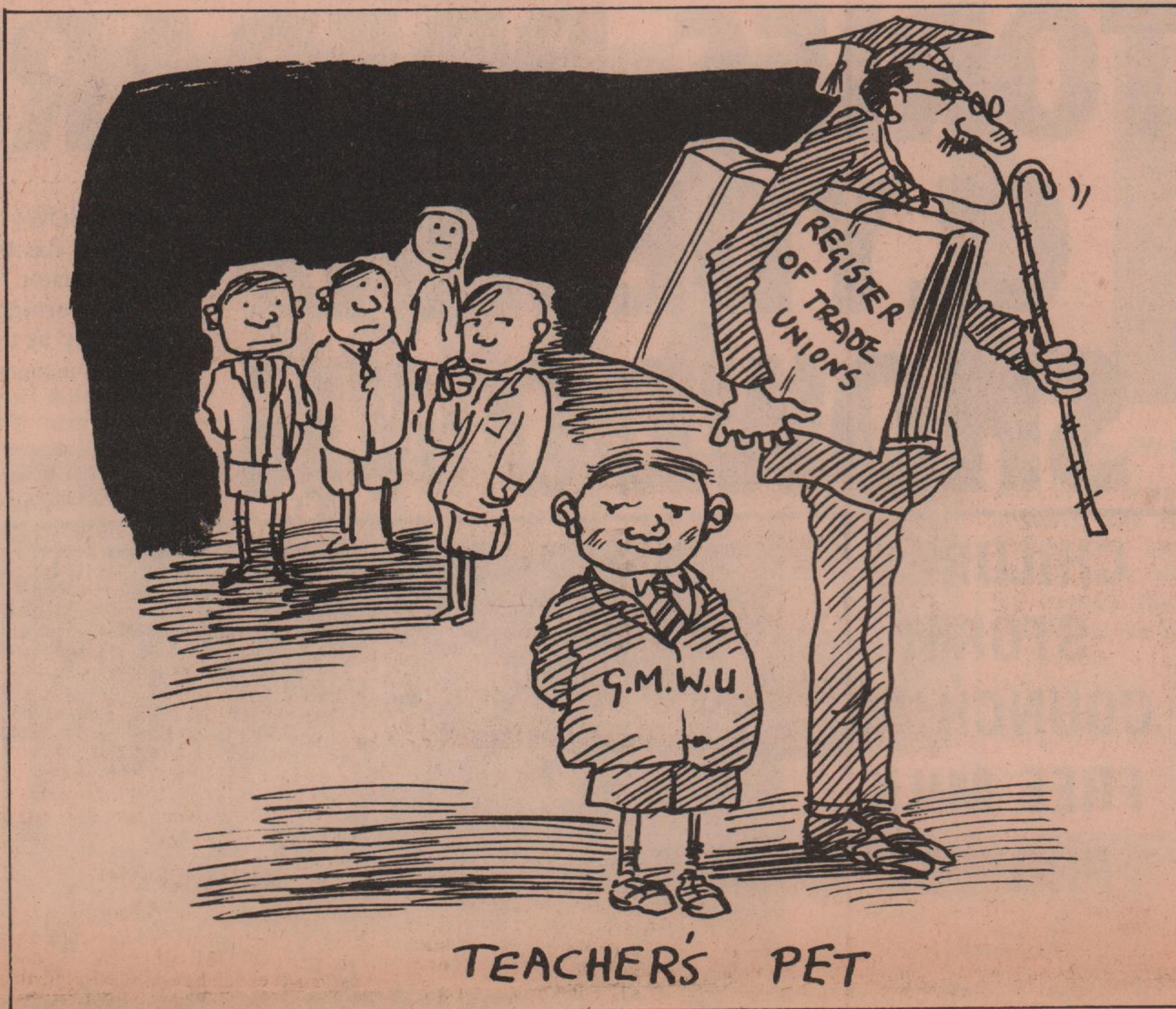
But, over and above this, Marchenko pours scorn on the Russian bureaucracy by contrasting their actions with the ideals they purport to hold. He reveals the farcical situation of an illiterate Political Education Officer giving lessons in 'marxism' to former professors and leading party cadres.

He scorns the supposedly 'comradely behaviour' of prison guards and authorities who deal as private traders with outside food and fuel concerns. And finally, he lays bare the tragic irony of a society supposedly moving relentlessly towards the realisation of full human freedom and potential but which in all of its day-to-day acts encourages lying, stealing, greed and brutality.

Marchenko is once again in a labour camp—this time for having written an open letter to the Czech people protesting against the Russian government's denial of any autonomy to the Czech government. In his preface to *My Testimony* he says that one of the reasons he wrote the book was to answer his company officer, Captain Usov, who once said to him: 'You, Marchenko are always dissatisfied, nothing suits you. But what have you ever done to make things better?'

The book stands as Marchenko's answer to all the Captain Usovs of Russia and as a horrifying indictment of the bureaucracy which rules Russia.

Martin Tomkinson



## COTTONS COLUMN

WHILE the Tory government and their big business cronies are quietly planning to 'hive off' the lucrative parts of the nationalised industries to give themselves some hefty profits at least one combine has found it just as profitable to 'hive off' its losses to the state.

In 1969 the Labour government formed the National Bus Company out of the existing state and privately owned provincial bus companies. The British Electric Traction Company was paid £36 million for its interests including companies like the South-down and East Kent. The annual report for the BET company has just been published and shows profits up by 10.4 per cent to more than £9 million.

BET used the £36 million to diversify into even more industries and its interests now include Argus Press, Rediffusion Television, Boulton & Paul, Advance Laundries, Wembley Stadium as well as a stake in North Sea oil, civil engineering and open cast mining.

In 1970 the National Bus Company made a loss of £5 million, mainly due to the government's policies of cutting all subsidies and running down public transport. A considerable proportion of this loss was made by BET's former bus interests. BET, on the other hand, is now able to announce to its shareholders that 'the businesses and investments we acquired with the £36 million proceeds of sale produced a gross profit of £4.1 million.'

### Crusty Brown

LORD GEORGE-BROWN is walking, living evidence of just what depths a Labour leader can plummet to. The former Foreign Secretary



BROWN: new depths

and economics overlord has been given a new radio series on Sundays—Radio 4, 12.15—with the suitably incomprehensible title *It's Something Else*.

In the first offering, Brown dwelt mawkishly on his own 'umble beginnings in order to underline his conviction that today's young people 'have too many opportunities'.

The sentences on the Oz defendants were justified, he added, and said that the youthful revolt was the result of mothers going out to work. They don't need to, he added, because a family can live quite comfortably on the average industrial wage.

There you have not only a shuddering and disgraceful ignorance of the conditions of modern working-class life but an insight into the basic philosophy of a leading social democrat: discipline, belt-tightening and poverty-is-good-for-you.

THE WEEKEND report that dry rot is ravaging 10 Downing Street and that it had cost £15,000 to renovate one room did not tell the whole dreadful story. The fungus has also attacked the Prime Minister.

During the parliamentary recess, skilled technicians stripped down the Prime Minister at astronomical cost to the nation—but to no avail.

'His brain has been badly damaged,' a spokesman told us. 'We have patched it up as best as we can but

there is very little of it left. It means that he is quite impervious to the state of the country, in particular to growing unemployment.'

The spokesman added that when dry rot strikes either a building or an individual to this extent, there is no lasting cure. 'The whole structure should be torn down and replaced,' he stressed.

### Hobbled

TWO Swansea pensioners have claimed that they are virtual prisoners in their homes because they cannot manage the steep flights of steps outside their pensioners' cottages. The reason? There are no handrails alongside the steps and in wet or icy conditions they are a real hazard.

The local old people's welfare committee has raised the matter with the council without success. A council official explained that they erect handrails only where there were six steps or more. A strange decision, for 80-years-old Mrs Harriet Kingsbury has to manoeuvre exactly six steps while 77-years-old Mrs Harriet Crocker is faced by a daunting eight.

Ah, but the cost, you see. 20 feet of handrail comes to £34 and the council can spend only £3000 a year on such items.

Unkindest cut of all: Mrs Kingsbury lives in William Morris Gardens.

A REPORT last week said there is more alcoholism in Britain's board-rooms than on the shop floor, but top management run a fantastic cover-up system that hides the problem. The report estimates that between £50 million and £500 million a year is lost to industry because of the problem.

The phrase 'drunk with power' takes on a new significance.

ALL IN A DAY (Wednesday last, BBC2, 10.20) was a documentary from which we could learn something extra about the social relations inside a factory—in this case just before a Royal visit.

The programme deals with the 24 hours of preparations that precede the visit to a clock factory in Scotland. We know already that for the employers the Queen is a symbol of what they hold dear. But the actual function that a Royal visit serves for them is more subtle.

The programme spent most of its time following around the managing director and some other members of management. It seems that if you follow someone around with several cameras they soon forget that the cameras are there if they are busy doing something else.

One manager addresses the foremen and tells them that the visit will help show what the company stands for and that it's a good place to work. In fact what gradually comes across is that the management is breeding, consciously and unconsciously, a false sense of togetherness out of the tension and nervousness of the preparations.

It is trying to mobilise the workers' emotions and energies behind the supposedly common task of putting up a good impression for the Queen. Another director innocently remarks that now the factory is spotless and that 'we need a royal visit every five years to get the place cleared up'.

So the workers are to get a bit of excitement, like Christmas but without the holidays and a break from the dull routine. But such 'occasions' allow a break on the management's basis only. Various employees are still receiving orders—how properly to address the Queen, how to curtsy and so on.

But for monarchs too there are less visible orders, besides from gracious living. They cannot be human, or even, like Edward VIII, marry divorced women without abdicating. People wouldn't be in such awe of a monarch (and tidy up their factories) even today. So in 1936 Baldwin's Tory government gave him the sack. Capitalists are in awe of no monarch, for profit is king.

Hildegard Neff, a German actress who moved to the US after the war and became something of a star of stage and screen, was interviewed on Late Night Line UP (Wednesday last, BBC2) about her new autobiography. But this was not the usual chat set-up.

Here was a very serious and intelligent woman telling about her experiences which were sufficiently thought out to bring home some interesting points about McCarthy and Hollywood, which she justly loathed and to mention Hollywood's inability to depict the enormity of Nazism.

What's the harm, though, with having chat shows which are just amusing, such as Parkinson on Saturday night with his fairly liberal and fairly talented guests? None, except when many of these guests are being amusing about Hollywood or whatever, they are consciously or unconsciously giving us a candyfloss view of the world.

Yet, for me, they were shown up just by seeing a single articulate and thoughtful 'show-biz personality' speak her mind.

Friday nights look good for a laugh with two new series, The Marty Feldman Comedy Machine (ITV 10.30) and The Goodies (BBC2 9.20). But next Tuesday's BBC2 film, David Mercer's *Morgan, A Suitable Case for Treatment*, looks best.

Phil Hall



# Socialist Worker

## Birmid victory on sackings

SW Reporter

WORKERS at Dartmouth Auto-castings, part of the Smethwick group of Birmid-Qualcast, scored an important victory on Tuesday in their fight against redundancies when they forced the management to suspend 110 redundancy notices due to come into effect this week.

The company had refused to negotiate on the redundancies despite proposals by shop stewards for work-sharing across the three foundries. The workers, with the backing of full-time officials in the TGWU and the AUEW, then started a militant

campaign to force the company's hand. They introduced a go-slow with a 20 per cent reduction in production and, when this failed, organised a surprise half-day strike and demonstration through Smethwick.

2000 workers, mainly Asian, marched along the High Street with shouts of 'No Sackings!' At the mass meeting after the march the workers were told by Don Higgs, TGWU official, that the management had agreed to suspend the notices and to start negotiations.

Mr Nirmal Singh, Senior Steward at

DAC said: 'We are united and we have shown our power to the management and to ourselves'.

Workers and stewards are determined to keep up the pressure on management. It is vital that they succeed in getting the sackings withdrawn as job prospects for men thrown out of work in Smethwick are nil.

Workers elsewhere in the area, many of whom face redundancies, now look to the Birmid workers for a lead. They gave in on 8 December in the fight against the Industrial Relations Bill and they are giving it now in the fight against redundancy.

## Supervisors need shop-floor backing

by Viv Hopkins

LEEDS:- 100 members of ASTMS—the supervisors' union—at Doncaster Monkbridge Forge have been on unofficial strike for four weeks over a 16 per cent wage claim. The strike, by workers organised only in the last three years, holds important lessons for all white-collar trade unionists.

ASTMS has not joined the shop floor unions on the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee of the Daniel Doncaster Firm. ASTMS at Monkbridge was the only union that did not come out on the strikes against the Industrial Relations Bill in December and March. As a result there is a cool reception for the strike on the shop floor.

At a time when the ASTMS leaders are trying to wriggle out of the annual conference decision instructing them to de-register the union, they have also refused official backing for the strike. ASTMS members at Monkbridge now realise that they cannot win without the support of the shop floor unions and principled opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

### Uproar

At their Leeds branch this week, ASTMS engineering workers insisted that the strike be made official and that the executive de-registers on 1 October. They also gave £50 to the strike fund.

Resistance to supervision by non-union blacklegs is building up in the factory. Last Friday a JSSC meeting broke up in uproar when an ETU steward was prevented from discussing the policy towards these blacklegs. Attempts were also made to censure an AUEW steward for canvassing support for the strike. On Sunday the serious injury of a fitter by fire led to a 48-hour walk-out by 90 maintenance men.

Trade unionists at Monkbridge must realise that the strike can resolve past differences. Blacklegs cannot and must not be tolerated.

ASTMS members must join the JSSC and Combine Committee. The strike can be won if management's attempts at divide and rule are thwarted by upholding the principle of trade union solidarity.

### Solidarity picket

SIXTY workers attended a solidarity picket on Monday as the Trianco strike in East Molesey, Surrey, entered its fourth week. The picket included 35 trade unionists from all over south London.

Trianco workers—members of the AUEW—are on strike to defeat management's attempt to destroy union organisation. The dispute started when the company bus arrived three hours late one morning. The two AUEW stewards demanded that their members involved should be paid their wage for the lost time. They were sacked when a lunch-time meeting overran into working time by 10 minutes.

# TORIES PREPARE FOR CLYDESIDE SHOWDOWN

by Steve Jefferys

GLASGOW:- The struggle at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders has taken a sharp new turn. John Davies, the Minister for Trade and Industry, has given a clear warning that the token demonstration 'work-in' at the yards has not fooled anyone.

He announced the appointment of the treasurer of the Scottish Tory Party, big businessman Hugh Stenhouse, as chairman of the Tories' new mini-company. This is to be based on only two of the four yards—the Govan and Linthouse divisions of UCS—and will employ only 2500 of the original 8500 workers.

The announcement was followed by the news that Archie Kelly, the Scottish scrap merchant, had finally withdrawn his bid for the Clydebank division (John Brown) and this forced a change in tactics of the UCS Shop Stewards' Co-ordinating Committee.

For the first time in the four months since liquidation was announced they convened a mass meeting of all 8300 UCS workers (some 200 have accepted voluntary redundancy). The meeting, held last Friday, endorsed with only 15 votes against the stewards' recommendation to refuse to have anything to do with Stenhouse and his hirelings.

### REJECTED

But the other weaknesses of the 'work-in' policy still remain. A majority of the 750 workers sacked by the liquidator are still working in the yards while being paid by the UCS fighting fund.

The stewards have again rejected the policy of forcing a confrontation with the government by means of a sit-in strike along the lines of the Plessey occupation.

There is still talk of 'a Scottish people's convention' to meet and bring all political parties and respected persons together to put pressure on the government. And senior stewards are still stressing the productivity concessions they are prepared to make.

These weaknesses have left the way open for the professional compromisers. Already James Jack, the Scottish TUC General Secretary, has been described as 'statesmanlike' by Stenhouse for urging the stewards to talk with him. And Dan (the redundancy man) McGarvey, of the Boilermakers' Union, agreed to meet Stenhouse on Wednesday.

### INTENTION

The result of the stewards' 'responsible work-in' tactic was made crystal clear by Davies' House of Commons statement on Friday. He re-stated almost word for word the Tories' original intention: only 2500 jobs to remain for the time being—and even these would go unless the workers accepted lower wages and productivity concessions.

The most that can be claimed for the policy of moderation is that it has slowed down the sackings. To stop the sackings and defeat the Tories far more militant policies are needed.

1. No more work should be done for the liquidator.
2. A sit-in strike should be started and industrial action spread.
3. James Jack and Dan McGarvey must be told to start fighting unemployment or get out.
4. The Tories must be told the fight will continue until the yards are nationalised under the control of those who work in them.

## CHILDREN STORM COUNCIL IN FREE MILK PROTEST

SW Reporter

SMETHWICK:- 100 children from four local schools marched to the council offices and stormed them on Monday afternoon. They chanted 'We want free milk' and shook clenched fists at those council officials courageous enough to peep out of their windows.

The children broke through into the building and ignored police demands that they should disperse. They agreed to leave only when a petition demanding free milk was accepted by the town clerk.

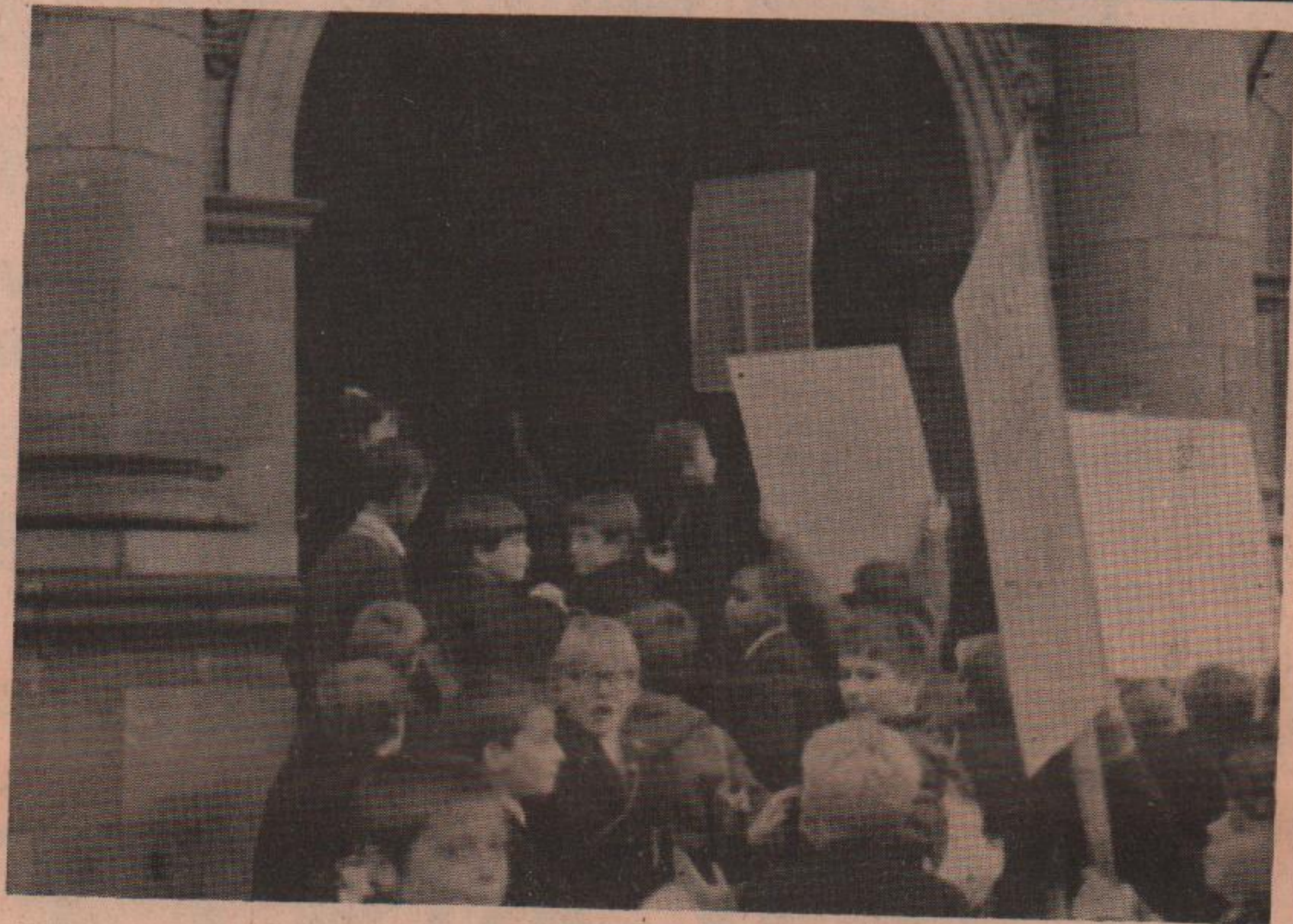
He refused to see the demonstrators at first but was persuaded by the police to accept the petition which contained nearly 9000 signatures.

### CHEERED

The petition, organised by members of the International Socialists in Smethwick, was distributed throughout Warley and presented by Miss Janet Higginbotham, who used the occasion to announce the formation of the Warley Claimants' Union.

A council employee who told one young lad 'Go back to Pakistan for free milk' was booed and hissed by black and white children who loudly cheered a speaker calling for the Tories to be thrown out. A banner proclaimed that 'Working class kids are not lame ducks' and some of the demonstrators threatened strike action unless free milk was restored. As one of them put it 'No milk—no school'.

The council's General Purposes Committee will discuss the issue at its next meeting on 5 October. A big demonstration at the meeting could carry to victory the fight the children of Smethwick started on Monday.



Smethwick children forcing their way into the council buildings

## CONCORDE MEN STRIKE AGAIN TO SAVE THEIR JOBS

SW Reporter

BRISTOL:- 4000 British Aircraft Corporation workers staged their seventh lightning strike on Tuesday against redundancy. A mass meeting voted to 'inform the company that unless the threat of redundancy is completely withdrawn all sanctions will continue'.

Talks between BAC and the unions broke down completely on Monday. For the past week the pre-production Concorde has been blacked completely and an overtime ban was operated.

The blacking has been the most effective weapon in the fight against sackings. An estimated 60 per cent of the workers are affected by it.

### WORRIED

There is a strong rumour in the factory of a lock-out or individual lay-offs if the blacking remains effective. John West, Director of the Engineering Employers' South West Association said: 'The biggest embarrassment to the company is the acceleration of blacking directed at the pre-production Concorde'.

The bosses are worried by the disruption of Concorde at a vital stage of its development. It is due to leave Filton for test flights in a few weeks and is already behind schedule.

The local press is conducting a hysterical campaign against BAC workers. The Monday edition of the Western Daily Press carried a full front-page story on Russian spies and reds-under-the-bed, including the story of Mr John Doyle (a former BAC worker) who claims to have sold Concorde and missile secrets to Russia for £5000.

This story has now been totally discredited and Special Branch have indicated they will be taking no action. Doyle, who attempted to tell his story to local and national newspapers as long as 18 months ago, was described as 'one of the biggest

jokers going' by former workmates.

Tuesday's mass meeting voted to hand in redundancy notices to their union committee, which will fight each case individually. This is a retreat from the demand of no redundancies. The sackings can be stopped only by refusing to let anyone go out of the gates.

### Brewery men march

A THOUSAND workers from Watney Mann's London Albion Brewery stopped work to march through Whitechapel on Tuesday against threatened sackings.

Watney Mann plan to turn the brewery into a distribution depot with a tiny fraction of the present workforce.

After Tuesday's march, management agreed to see officials of all the unions involved to 'discuss the situation'.

## NOTICES

FROM the National Caucus of Labor Committees US-NEW SOLIDARITY. In recent issues: 'Why the monetary crisis happened', 'Mandel's falling rate of intelligence'. Exclusive report from Bolivia. Organising in the South. Sub: airmail 26 issues £3.50. Solidarity, Box 49, Washington Bridge Station, NY, NY 10033.

FREE ANGELA DAVIS and political prisoners—mass rally Central Hall Westminster, 13 October, 7.30. Speakers inc Sallye Davis, mother of Angela. Tickets 25p, 50p and £1 from Angela Davis Defence Committee, 10 Greek St. W1. 01-437 5960.

WALLSEND IS school milk protest mtg Tuesday 5 October 6.30pm Richardson Dees Middle School, High Street East, WallSEND. All welcome.

IS TEACHERS meeting Sunday 3 October 11am, 2 Albany Terrace NW1.

BIRMINGHAM public meeting. John Gollan speaks 'Out with the Tories Now'. Sun 10 October 7.30pm Digbeth Institute Con-

cert Hall. Folk music. Q and A. Tickets 10p from Key Books, 25 Essex Street, Birmingham.

IS HQ urgently needs copies of Struggle for Socialism to supply increasing demands and help form new branches. Send copies to Secretary, 6 Cottons Gardens London E2.

IRELAND: 2 meetings arranged by Women's Liberation Workshop to discuss everyday family life in towns occupied by British army—and what are the troops doing there anyway? Contributions will be particularly welcomed from women recently returned from Ireland or concerned with Irish struggle. Tuesday 12 October 7.30pm at Finsbury Town Hall, 149 Rosebery Ave EC1 and Wednesday 13 October 7pm at Battersea Town Hall, Lavender Hill, SW11.

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