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Reality behind Heath call for wage restraint

TAX BONANZA FOR THE RICH

by Jim Kincaid

THE HEATH GOVERNMENT has brought about the biggest redistribution of income in favour of the rich that has occurred in Britain this century. This is the reality behind the demand for wage restraint and incomes policy: while workers and their pay claims are put under the spotlight and blamed for inflation, the rich quietly get richer.

Last year the value of ordinary shares in the United Kingdom rose by a mind-bending £21,100 millions. Happy days for the richest 1 per cent of the population who, according to the latest figures,

own 81 per cent of all stocks and shares.

The workers, despite the highest level of strikes since 1926, did not do quite so well. Manual workers—two-thirds of the adult population—increased their wages by a total of £2,300 millions, less than one-ninth of what the capitalists got.

In the various Budgets and mini-Budgets since June 1970, the lucky quarter of a million people with incomes of more than £5000 a year have shared the benefit of direct tax cuts amounting to £480 million a year. This enormous handout could have been used to raise the old-age pension by £1.30 for every one of the seven million pensioners

in Britain.

The Chancellor has used a wide variety of techniques to raise the living standards of the struggling upper classes. In 1971 Barber decided that for tax purposes it could be assumed that the wealthy no longer lived in families. Husbands, wives and children can now choose to be taxed as if they were separate individuals, each living alone.

Thus a single block of wealth can be parcelled out among the various members of a family, who are then presented to the Inland Revenue as an unconnected series of relatively less rich individuals and taxed at lower rates. The abolition of the upper class family costs the Exchequer about £27 million a year.

No tax is easier to evade than Estate Duty—provided you can afford the services of an enterprising and imaginative accountant. But to make it even easier, since 1970 the minimum size of estate on which death duties start to operate has been raised by a massive 50 per cent.

The cost to the Exchequer is £143 million a year. A further £15 million a year has been given to those inheriting property by the abolition of capital gains on shares sold at death.

Both for earned and for unearned income, the level at which surtax starts to bite has been raised by a large margin. Already surtax was a minor item in the tax budget, providing only 1.5 per cent of government revenue. These changes reduce the revenue for surtax by about £148 million a year. The tax payments of surtax payers have been cut further by £150 million as a result of the increases in personal and child allowances.

The tax system has been reorganised in favour of property owners in other ways, too. In an effort to prop up the profitability of British capitalism there have been substantial cuts in company taxation. In 1971 the Selective Employment Tax was halved.

CONCESSION

And Corporation Tax, which is levied directly on business profits, was cut by 2½ per cent. These two concessions have cost the Exchequer a sum approaching £400 million a year and have been a significant factor in the 17 per cent rise in business profits in the last 12 months.

A large part of these losses of government revenue have been met directly at the expense of workers and their families. About £135 million a year was saved by the abolition of cheap welfare milk and free school milk for children between the ages of 7 and 11, by the increase in dental and prescription charges and by the steep increase in the price of school meals.

The total raised by the workers' share of the national insurance stamp was increased by £370 million a year in 1971 and by a further £320 million starting this autumn.

The only tax concession made to workers was the £1 a week reduction in income tax made in the last Budget. For a great many council tenants the benefit of this tax cut will be lost again if the Tories succeed in imposing rent rises.

The net effect of these changes in tax and welfare benefits is summarised in the table, calculated from data by Michael Meacher, MP.

WEEKLY INCOME	VALUE OF TAX CHANGES MINUS WELFARE CUTS SINCE 1970
	(per person, per week)
Under £20	£1.20
£20 - £40	£0.71
£40 - £100	£6.38
£100 and over	£36.35

Paul Foot
REPORTS

Labour funds aid Tories

FOR the past three years the Labour Party has been investing part of its superannuation funds in British big business, including many firms who have contributed to the Conservative Party.

Labour's Superannuation Society manages the money set aside for pensions of party staff and agents. Much of it has been contributed by agents and staff themselves.

Until 1968, all this money was invested in government stocks and public utilities. In 1969, a decision was taken by the society's trustees to invest in equities, that is in shares of private firms.

A prominent trustee at that time was the chairman of the Labour Party Finance Committee, Alderman Andrew Cunningham, the General and Municipal Workers Union boss in the North East who has been named recently as one of those who received substantial sums from that celebrated architect, John Poulson. Another trustee was Mr Charles Pannell, MP.

The decision came only a year after



CALLAGHAN: party treasurer

the election of James Callaghan as Party Treasurer.

In 1969, the value of the private enterprise equity shareholding of Labour's Superannuation Society was £74,000, about a tenth of the total value of the Society's funds. In 1970, the value rose to £116,000.

And last year, as a result of the fantastic share bonanza sponsored by the Tory government, the holding leaped in value to £218,000—23 per cent of the total funds of the society.

Add to this the debentures held by the Society, to the tune of some £64,000. Nearly a third of the Society's £1 million is now being gambled on the stock market.

What are the firms who are benefitting from Labour's investment?

Generous

GKN, the engineering and steel complex which throughout the 1960s was the most generous contributor to Tory Party funds. In 1959 and 1964 GKN spent thousands of pounds in anti-Labour, anti-steel-nationalisation propaganda. It had £806 of Labour Party money invested in its shares two years ago—a sum which has grown to £2,600 plus £4,200 in debentures.

£10,000 worth of debentures are held in Slater Walker, the investment bankers, one of whose founders—Peter Walker—is the Tory Secretary of State for the Environment. This year, Slater Walker announced a donation of £15,000 to the Conservative Party, arguing that a Tory government is 'best for the money business'.

£5,000 worth of debentures are also held in Smiths Industries, the engineering company of which Lord Jellicoe, Tory leader of the House of Lords, is a former director.

Every pillar of capitalist society is included in the list of firms in which Labour, through its Superannuation

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Police attack anti-racists

BLACKBURN police launched a series of attacks on a 1000-strong march in the Lancashire town last Saturday held to counter a demonstration by 150 supporters of the racist National Front against the Ugandan Asians.

The socialist march was made up of International Socialists' branches, the Asian Workers Federation, trade unionists and Rebel youth groups. Pictures show police moving in on a section of the march and an anti-fascist being bundled into a police car. FULL REPORT: back page.



Rents battle special: centre pages



Soldiers guard the Hilton Hotel in Manila, capital of the Philippines, where martial law was declared last week.

Martial law as president aims for dictatorship

by Nigel Harris

THE PHILIPPINES is a gangster society, dominated by the 100 rich families who own 90 per cent of the wealth. Its people is now suffering from the results of the 1969 election, when President Marcos opened the public purse-strings to stay in power.

Now there is a disastrous rice shortage—rice is the basic element in the diet of the 40 million Filipinos—heavy unemployment and ever-growing urban slums, a rising wave of violence, warlordism and corruption among the rich. Last week martial law was declared.

The hand-outs of election year have now brought on an economic crisis, a slump in currency reserves and a rate of inflation that has now jumped from 15 to 20 per cent per year.

Marcos accuses any critic of his regime of being communist agents of 'a foreign power', of being Huks (the communist guerrillas of the early fifties, now largely wiped out or paralysed by factional rivalry and banditry) or members of the New People's Army (a fragment of the Huks, now Maoist, estimated at 350 in number). The government's own army numbers 60,000.

The young people who joined the 1970 revolt were not deterred by the anti-communist hysteria. For a time, Marcos was besieged in his palace by the

mass youth organisation, Kabataan Makabayan. He was reduced to travelling by helicopter to avoid the demonstrators at his gates.

The president assured his critics that he did not intend to stand in 1973 for a third term of office, which is forbidden under the constitution. Yet simultaneously he began—like Governor Wallace of Alabama—to put forward his wife as presidential candidate, and to press the Constitutional Convention that met this spring to create a parliamentary regime so that he could become the prime minister.

Neither tack was successful. His wife is trying to become president, but not at all as the creature of her husband, and the Convention refused to create the office of prime minister.

But the third string in Marcos' bow is to find a pretext to set up an authoritarian regime. This is why he is so urgently playing on the anti-communist terrors of the rich, their American backers and the fearful middle class.

Grenades

Not all the ruling class is persuaded that a Marcos dictatorship is the only alternative to anarchy. A couple of hundred members of the establishment—including three senators, three representatives, two provincial governors, five newspaper editors (including the publisher of the largest daily)—are now in jail as 'subversives'.

In August last year, someone threw grenades at a rally of the main opposition party, the Liberals. Eight were killed and 96 wounded, including virtually all the leadership. Marcos deplored the violence and suspended Habeas Corpus. He also accused the only prominent Liberal not at the rally—Senator Aquino, a candidate for the presidency—of supplying arms to the communists and assisting the New People's Army.

Aquino replied by comparing the bomb attack to the burning of the Reichstag and Marcos to Hitler. He accused the President of importing arms from communist countries to distribute them in caches round the country so the police and army could 'find' them and prove there was a communist conspiracy to take over the country.

Aquino is one of the senators now in jail.

The number of political murders has risen steadily as the entrenched and greedy factions of the ruling class struggle for power.

In July heavy floods cut the harvest so badly that hunger and refugees are now serious problems.

The climax of the internal disintegration and Marcos' personal struggle for power is the introduction of martial law last week. The army has taken over all key installations and companies, shutting down most of the press, and jailing as a 'subversive' anyone Marcos does not like.

Marcos may make some of the right noises. Some even on the left may see his dictatorship as the necessary step in breaking the stranglehold of the rich, the clans and the private armies of prominent families.

Yet in the last analysis Marcos cannot afford to make enemies of his fellow rulers by jeopardising their power. When the dust settles, the old order will remain intact.

But for the rebels, the young critics who have seen Marcos' regime slide further away from 'democratic' rhetoric towards dictatorship, the lessons are vivid. Now it is clear that any change in the Philippines will come only through a revolutionary struggle.

THE BEHAVIOUR of US Ambassador Hurd is causing a stir in South Africa. While pressure from US blacks is demanding the withdrawal of US investment from South Africa, liberals are trying to stave off this pressure by recommending minute wage rises for African workers in US subsidiaries and the appointment of black—Uncle Tom style—diplomats.

Hurd, appointed personally by Nixon, has upset this strategy by calling Africans 'nigras' in public, opposing the appointment of a black diplomat, and by going pheasant-hunting on Robben Island, the notorious camp for political prisoners, where the leaders of the banned African National Congress and hundreds of others are held. The US had hoped Hurd would visit the island to inspect the conditions of prisoners, not the state of the shoot.

Hurd is indignant at complaints in the US press. He insists that the prisoners used to pick up the dead birds were 'common criminals', not political prisoners.

BACKGROUND to Sweden's 'generous' offer to take 300 Ugandan Asians: talent scouts are being sent to pick the refugees 'most qualified to get on in Sweden'.

The kind of standards that will be judged from an article in the Social-Democratic paper Aftonbladet, which says of the Asians: 'They work hard for their big families and they have small demands for wages. They work long shifts and they don't want to have anything to do with the unions. They take low-paid service jobs which the English seldom want to do any more.'

REPORTS from Saigon say repression is being stepped up against opponents of the regime—neutralists, Buddhists and others. Hundreds of students and school-pupils have been arrested and tortured. One woman was subjected to having mice and ants running over her body, while electric shocks and needles in the fingers are other favourite tortures.

In July alone about 10 boat-loads of prisoners, about 8000 in all (mainly women and children), were shipped from Saigon to Can-Son Island.

FOURTEEN AFRICANS who struck work (illegally) at Paarl Council electricity department in South Africa for more pay and better conditions are to be deported to the Transkei Bantustan.

When brought before the Paarl chief magistrate they refused to go back to work. He ordered their deportation within two days.

The 14 follow the 1000 copper workers who were deported to the Transkei last November after refusing to break their strike at Prieska. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of workers are deported to their so-called homelands every month. It is a convenient way of getting rid of worker militants.

There is no work for them in the Transkei. Many will have to become illegal migrant workers in order to earn the cash necessary to keep their families alive.

LAST WORD on the recent confrontation between Uganda and Tanzania. In August General Amin sent a message to President Nyerere of Tanzania urging him to leave Ugandan affairs alone. He ended by saying: 'I am anxious to assure you that I love you and that if you were a woman, despite your numerous white hairs, I would consider you worthy to be my wife. But you are a man, so this is out of the question.' Love's young dream is soon ended!

ALAIN PEYREFITTE, the secretary general of the French Gaullist party, who has recently visited Cuba and Chile, claims that he was told by Fidel Castro that if Chile was to make a socialist revolution, it would have to break with the institutions in which it was entangled by respect for middle-class legality. The Cuban Ambassador to Chile has now issued a statement formally denying that Castro said any such thing.

A LEADING Argentinian trade-unionist, Agustin Tosco, has been released from the prison where he has spent the past 17 months. As a leader of the CGT trade union in Cordoba, centre of the Argentinian car industry with a record of militancy, he had organised several strikes against the policies of the military government.

THE FRENCH Maoist newspaper La Cause du Peuple has stopped displaying the picture of Chairman Mao on its front page. It claims this is its contribution to the fight against the 'cult of the personality' which it says has virtually disappeared in China since 1971.

WHY NORWAY VOTED 'NO'

LAST WEEK'S 'No' vote in the Norwegian referendum on entry to the Common Market may be only the beginning of a new period of politics in Norway.

Last August an opinion poll showed how pro- and anti-Market feeling was distributed in different classes in Norway.

	Yes	No
Farmers	13	68
Others self-employed	45	40
White collar	48	34
Workers	28	47

About half the Norwegian people still live in the countryside, and their concern was clearly a major factor in the vote. Farmers were worried that the Common Market would end the system of subsidies, while fishermen feared that Market entry would mean other European nations could fish in Norwegian waters (an agreement postponing this for 10 years was merely delaying the problem, not solving it).

MILITANT

But workers too were opposed to Common Market entry. The trade union leadership—linked to the ruling Labour Party—was pro-market, and a trade union conference earlier this year voted for entry. But the delegates had been elected before the Market issue came up, and the vote was probably not representative.

At local level workers, especially in engineering and shipbuilding, the most militant sectors, have shown their opposition, in some cases by protest work stoppages.

Another argument against entry was that in the Market women are paid less well, proportionately, than in Norway.

There is virtually no unemployment in Norway, but some feared foreign workers might pour into the country. In general, however, racialism is not a serious problem.

On a political level, opposition was co-ordinated through a broad

by Ian Birchall

front called the People's Movement, which included the Centre Party, the Communist Party and the Socialist People's Party.

The Centre Party, formerly called the Farmers' Party, represented agricultural interests.

The Socialist People's Party originated from a split in the Labour Party over foreign policy. While it raised some class issues—stressing that the Market is in the interests of employers, not workers—it also tended to make concessions to nationalism, arguing against the loss of sovereignty and saying local capitalists were easier to control than the international firms.

Because of the broad coalition of opposing forces, political issues were necessarily blurred, and the question of Norway's membership of NATO was not raised. The Maoists, who ran their own campaign outside the People's Movement, were even more nationalist, making their main slogan 'No to the Sale of Norway'.

With the resignation of the

minority Labour government, Norway's political future is unclear. When the prime minister was asked by a journalist what he would advise the king to do, he replied: 'Have you any suggestions?'

The major problem facing Norwegian workers is inflation. Prices have risen about 30 per cent since 1968, and wages have not kept up—but as yet there have been no major strikes.

EXPORTS

Norway will probably have to make some kind of trade agreement with the Market: about 30 per cent of Norwegian industry is foreign-owned, and already more than half her export and import trade is with the nine countries of the expanded Market.

Whatever solution is found, Norway's future will be bound up with workers' struggles throughout Europe. The real question is whether the forces mobilised against the government's Market policy can go on to fight for further changes. This will require a higher degree of political clarity than found in the People's Movement.

Rent Rises International

RISING rents and prices are not a problem that affect British workers alone—throughout the world workers are facing similar attacks on their living standards.

Take the case of West Berlin—the outpost of Western 'freedom' in the face of communism. What does this 'freedom' actually mean for ordinary working people?

Already this year West Berliners have faced massive price increases—20 per cent on electricity charges, 30 per cent on water and gas and up to 50 per cent on transport. Now the landlords want to get in on the act, and their organisations have been pressing for the lifting of controls on rents.

West Germany is divided into areas known as 'black circles', where rents are controlled, and 'white circles' where controls are lifted. Controls are gradually being removed in more and more places, though

Hamburg and Munich are still 'black circles'.

West Berlin suffers from an acute housing shortage. There are about 70,000 people without homes, and more than 120,000 homes are without baths. As a result landlords feel they are missing out on big profits.

Profits

Already many devices are used to effectively increase rent. It is normal practice for people wishing to rent accommodation to have to pay key-money of between £100 and £1000.

The landlords claim higher rents are needed to pay for repairs, but the present law already allows increases in the case of repairs, and it is clear that in fact the higher profits will go towards building

highly profitable office blocks.

The West Berlin Senate is at present discussing a Bill to end rent restrictions by the end of 1975. The three years' delay is not due to any concern for workers' welfare: it is clearly stated that the reason for avoiding any too rapid increase is to prevent popular discontent, and in particular because it might discourage the immigration of much-needed workers and cause others to leave.

So the increases will be by stages. Rents can rise by 15 per cent from 1 January 1973 and by another 10 per cent from 1 July 1974.

It is to be hoped that Berlin workers will learn from the experience of tenants' struggles in other countries, and make the measures so unpopular they have to be dropped altogether.

Real facts on inflation

ACCORDING to a poll organised by the Opinion Research Centre, eight out of 10 voters support Heath's 'incomes policy' plan. Of course the questions are loaded. For example the sample of voters was not asked: 'Do you think it right that Ted Heath gets £266 a week take home pay after tax plus two free houses with free servants, free chauffeur driven car, free fuel and many other expenses when single men who are old age pensioners get £7.15 a week after next week's pension rise?' The answer to that one might not please the people who pay Opinion Research Centre and so it doesn't get asked.

All the same there is no doubt at all that many workers, especially women, are being kidded by this latest 'incomes policy' fraud. They are sick and tired of constantly rising prices with wages struggling to keep up. They desperately want a solution, almost any solution that will check inflation.

The efforts of press and television are being bent to exploit these feelings. The job of socialists in these circumstances is to get the real facts across to their fellow workers and go on getting them across.

Will the Heath plan stop rising prices? No, it will not. The drive to double council house rents over two to three years continues, with the first £1 or 50p instalments this week. Now that is one price rise that Tory Ted could stop 'at a stroke' as he used to say. Will he do it? Not on your life.

The proposed 5 per cent maximum increase in prices over 12 months does not apply to retail prices—that is to the prices we actually pay. This needs to be hammered home again and again. The 5 per cent is a voluntary restriction on manufacturers' prices. Will the Heath plan affect the big increases just made or about to be made that we haven't really felt yet? No it will not. The big increase in road haulage prices that will have a marked effect on shop prices is untouched. So are the big rises in rail fares.

Remember this: The Confederation of British Industry claims that its members (virtually all of big business) are already operating a 5 per cent 'increase norm' and have been all year. The result, according to Heath himself, has been a runaway inflation.

Will the Heath plan help the lower paid? No, it will not. 'The £2 a week wage rise limit will mean a fall in real incomes for many lower paid workers' reports the Guardian because, of course, only a really big increase compensates the family man with children on £20-£25 per week for loss of means-tested benefits.

The biggest group of lower-paid workers are women, and, as the big business weekly The Economist points out: 'The freeze also freezes further progress towards equal pay for women' who otherwise would have got big increases in the next 12 months to bring pay to 90 per cent of male rates by the end of 1973.

Who will benefit? Big business will benefit. The object of the operation is to push up profits, rents and interest at the expense of wages. The Economist spells it out for its readers. The effect of the Heath plan will be 'to redistribute income in favour of company profits and away from nationalised industry and wages.' And since there has been 'an 8½ per cent increase in productivity on a year ago... the rise in profits could be not 9 per cent but 13 to 14 per cent.'

What is the alternative? It is a hard saying but a true one that the gods help those who help themselves. There is no permanent solution to this or any other problem under capitalism. What can be done, by militant action, is keep wage rises abreast or ahead of price rises. There is no other way of defending living standards. The Heath plan must be smashed.

WILLIE'S HORSE LAUGH

TELEVISION and the millionaire press have been giving a deal of attention to the shadow boxing between left and right at the Labour Party's Blackpool conference. How much does it matter? Let us take a tip from the horse's mouth, the horse in this case being Mr W W Hamilton MP, vice-chairman of the parliamentary Labour Party.

Willie Hamilton sometimes lets inconvenient cats out of the bag. Last week he was ridiculing the idea that a future Labour government would be bound by Labour Party conference decisions. In 1947, he reminded readers of the Guardian, 'Nye Bevan was told by conference, unanimously, to get rid of the tied cottage. We are still waiting. Mr Benn himself was a member of the Labour Cabinet for some years, flouting conference decisions in all directions, from Vietnam to increased prescription charges and the abandonment of the raising of the school leaving age.'

As to the Common Market issue, Mr Benn 'was a member of the 1964-70 government which put a three line whip on MPs to force us into the lobby for entry to the Market—accepting the Rome Treaty as it stood'.

Yes, indeed, all very true and when Mr Hamilton tells us that no future Labour government 'can be dictated to by the edict of an outside body' (meaning the Labour Party conference) he speaks with the voice of authority. The next Labour government will pay as much heed to the Blackpool decision as the Church of England pays to the scriptural injunction 'Go, sell all that you have and give to the poor.'



COTTAGES AND SHIRTS

Pardon?

ONE small ray of sunshine for opponents of the Tory government is the amazing number of buffoons in the Heath administration who would be hard pressed to pass the intelligence exam for the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Even that most respectable of High Tory papers, The Times, has been forced to point out that Chancellor Barber's grasp of economics leaves a little to be desired, but the Freckled Fool is a veritable Einstein compared to some of his colleagues.

Take Maurice Macmillan, the Employment Minister. Asked to explain the £2 wage freeze on television last week, he bumbled on unconvincingly about inflationary wage rises and then attempted to tackle the following question posed by his interviewer: 'Won't a 5 per cent price freeze damage profits, particularly as many industrialists are already complaining about low profits making investment in new machinery difficult?'

Mac's eyes lit up. He knew the answer to that one! Ah, there's no problem there, he said. Plenty of money lying around waiting to be borrowed for investment purposes.

So there you have it, all you inflationary workers being cudged into accepting the idea of 'incomes policy' and severe restraint: there's plenty of money around. A government minister says so.

Not to be outdone, Julian Amery, the Housing Minister, explained to the world last week why the government has decided to take no action to clamp down on soaring house and land prices. He admitted that house prices had risen by 17 per cent in the first half of the year and land prices by 30 per cent, figures that forced even the Confederation of British Industry to describe the situation 'as a running sore'.

Amery was asked if he didn't think it hard for ordinary people to swallow pay restraint when they saw vast fortunes being made out of housing and land. Rising to the full



AMERY: getting shirty

depths of his intelligence, the Minister pointed out that housing 'is not a commodity like shirts or food' which could be controlled.

The only regulator, he said, was supply and demand. If prices rise it is because people were trying to buy their own homes and prices would have to go on rising until demand was satisfied.

So if house prices were pegged people would stop wanting to buy houses? 'I'm not buying that two-bedroomed slum for £8,000—it's clearly worth £15,000.'

Mr Amery is understood to have dined with building society chiefs before making his statement and was a little 'tired' at the time...

WHEN it comes to generosity, the big farmers make Heath look like a public benefactor. Reginald Brown, a leading swede basher in Cambridgeshire, has died and his Priory Farm has been sold for £245,000. Brown himself left £228,938.

And what benefits go to the farm labourers and household staff who produced that fortune for Brown and his dependents? Answer: £1 for every year of service. Brown's housekeeper, who served him for 15 years, gets £15. A 67-years-old farm hand, who worked 30 years at Priory Farm, gets £30. Maybe you can't take it with you, but looks like you have to leave a pretty hefty deposit at the Pearly Gates.

Flying high

YOU'D think from watching telly that the Ugandan Asians airlifted to Britain on so-called 'mercy flights' were being flown free by the generous, humanitarian airline bosses.

Not so. The airlines are charging £110 per passenger—£50 more than the usual charter flight rate. The combined profit for all the airlines is expected to be in the region of £1½ million.

The refugees have to pay for their flights on departure. The cost, plus Amin's policy of grabbing their savings, means that most of them arrive here penniless. One man, Mr Nandlal Mahta, arrived at Stansted

with his family clutching his sole remaining possession, a new sewing machine. Customs officials, with their customary charity, demanded £40 duty on the machine. Mr Mahta had no money so the machine was impounded.

FOLLOWING in the footsteps of industry, a time and motion study scheme has been set up at Willford Hill Crematorium in Nottinghamshire. The Funeral Directors' Association of Nottingham and Derby has said that stopwatch funerals rob the ceremonies of a certain dignity but management has complained that the pace of funerals is 'dead slow'. Our scout says the situation looks very grave.

Muted trumpets

REMEMBER the fanfare of trumpets when the terms of the Industrial Relations Act were first announced? How they offered a new blueprint for workers against such admitted evils as unfair dismissal?

Things haven't quite worked out that way, you won't be astonished to learn. Of 2932 applications for unfair dismissal complaints in the first five months of the Act only 26 per cent of those that reached tribunals were settled in favour of the workers. And although the Act prescribes that compensation of up to £4160 may be awarded the average in recent cases has been £150.

AS a publicity stunt, the US Army set up a recruiting office at the Republican Convention in Miami last month. Recruiting Sergeant Roy Gates actually persuaded 13 Republicans to enlist. Alas, the gimmick misfired. Nine of the 13 failed the army's elementary intelligence test.

TTFN

ALL the ballyhoo about suspending the Seamen and Bank Employees from the TUC has overlooked some of the other mighty battalions that have remained on the register. Such as the NACTSPS, the Nelson and Colne Tape Sizers Protection Society or the BADCBS—Bury and District Card Blowers and Ring Spinners. And we mustn't forget the Amalgamated Society of Woolcomb, Hackle and Gill Makers or the Beamers, Twisters and Drawers, Hand and Machine, of Blackburn.

It must give enormous satisfaction to Ted Heath, the biggest beaming twister of them all, to know that from now on he can have his ring spun by a genuine registered trade unionist.



Stop the machine—I want to get my finger out

by Roger Kline and Trevor Shaw

WHEN 44 Pakistani production workers went on strike at a crepe processing factory in Nottingham, they gave a sudden insight into the slave-labour conditions of many immigrant workers—conditions that ruthless, racist employers all too often get away with because of the legal threats of the Tories' Aliens Act.

The strike—at the back street firm of Crepe Sizes—began back in May. Five production workers were sacked for phoney reasons and the management rejected a demand for work-sharing. As soon as the men walked out the company claimed they were dismissed.

From the picket line, details of their working conditions began to spread to local trade unionists and socialists. The men worked a compulsory 84-hour week. Take-home pay for working seven days a week, 12 hours a day, was £35.40. The men were treated as mindless extensions of their machines.

There was one lavatory for all the men. It was in a disgusting condition. When the Pakistanis suggested to the racist foreman that they would pay the wages if somebody was hired to clean the lavatory, he told them to do the job themselves.

One worker was sacked when he refused. The white staff employees had a separate lavatory.

One worker came 70 miles from Bradford for a job and was told he could start straight away without a National Insurance Card, which he could get later. He worked six hours and was fired without any pay.

Astonished bosses

Another worker lost his finger in one of the machines. The foreman refused to stop the machine to recover the finger so that it could be stitched back on.

The machine was stopped 10 hours later. When the man protested he didn't get his finger back—he got the sack.

Rates of pay were remarkable, but typical of back-street firms specialising in recruiting black workers. On night shift, the wage was made up as follows:

- 40 hours at 50p an hour.
- 20 hours at 46½p.
- 12 hours at 56p.
- 12 hours at 75p.

It took a long time for the men to fight back. Lack of union traditions and fear of being unemployed and black were barriers to the struggle. But all that has come to an end.

The directors, who drive Rolls-Royces and earn £8000 a year, were astonished to see their docile immigrant workforce hitting back. At first the bosses just waited for the strike to collapse.

But it didn't happen—in spite of the role of the men's union, the Transport Workers. One of the causes of the strike had been the demand for recognition of the union.

The union blacked work from Crepe Sizes but otherwise it showed just about as much backbone as it has at Fine Tubes. Strike pay was promised but never came. The strike was not made official and no union organisers visited the picket line.

Plan backfired

If the TGWU had done its job properly there could have been a determined, rolling unionisation campaign throughout Nottingham's sweat shops. It didn't happen and most of the sweat shops continue with their slave-labour conditions.

When the Tories passed the Aliens Act their aim was to frighten black workers into accepting appalling working conditions. Continual police harassment and supervision and the need to report a change of job, together with the threat of deportation, would discourage immigrants from joining unions or involving themselves in struggles for better wages.

The plan backfired at Crepe Sizes. After weeks of strike action and picketing, the management surrendered. The sacked men were re-instated and the union was recognised.

The men were jubilant. For the first time, many of them could relax with their families once a week, for the working week was cut.

But they have no illusions. They know they will face tough fights in the future.

And the campaign is only just beginning to win similar victories at the scores of other Crepe Sizes-type sweatshops where arrogant employers treat immigrant workers like animals.

want to get my finger out



Pickets outside Crepe Sizes during the strike—and the imposing front of the factory



On the offensive against attacks on blacks

MORE and more black people are beginning to organise themselves to fight back against racist attacks and to involve themselves in the industrial struggle of the labour movement.

We spoke to two members of the Black People's Freedom Movement in Nottingham—Dorothy of the women's group and Junior, a committee member. BPFM members do not use surnames, to avoid police harassment.

They told us that the BPFM had been set up because there was no local organisation representing black people and such an organisation was necessary because of the racism black people encounter.

'All black people are aware of racism but don't know how to combat it,' they told us. 'We point out to them that the basic problem is that of capitalism. We

cannot achieve our aims under the present social system. Only under socialism will we reach our goal.'

They said that when black workers first came to Britain in large numbers they were forced to work in conditions that many white trade unionists had fought against. This encouraged the growth of racist ideas.

'In the last year or so, the Industrial Relations Act and the Aliens Bill have combined to make many black workers feel insecure. Black workers already get a raw deal. These laws encourage the more faint-hearted to accept their position.'

Dorothy and Junior stressed that the BPFM encourages members to be active in

trade unions and to form pressure groups where necessary. 'Of course, the priority is to get all workers to fight together, but this is not always possible at present.'

'In addition we face the problem of the trade union bureaucracy. We have seen how the dockers were sold out recently by the TGWU hierarchy. Well, black workers are constantly encountering this enemy on the shop floor.'

'Take the recent strikes at Crepe Sizes and Jones Stroud. The black workers showed what was possible despite the TGWU officials. The TGWU bureaucracy in particular and white trade unionists have dragged their feet over these and similar disputes.'

The BPFM spokesman told us of increasing harassment by the police, particularly since the Aliens Act came in. They said that the police saw the movement as a threat and the BPFM had told a top police official, Chief Superintendent Britton, that they would defend themselves if nothing was done to stop the attacks.

As an example, they told us that six weeks ago some BPFM members were attacked by a large gang of white youths. Plainclothes police were nearby but did nothing. When BPFM reinforcements arrived a cordon was formed and the police arrested several blacks but none of the whites.

Challenge

Dorothy said there were few women in the organisation at present but there is a women's group with important work to do.

'Of course, the basic interests of men and women are the same', she said, 'but in particular a lot of BPFM men need to have their attitudes challenged. So far the women's group has concentrated mainly on discussions and speaking to meetings.'

We asked them how they answered the charge that setting up a separate black organisation was a dividing tactic. They replied that the first phase in any group's development is to gain self-identity.

'We have found that this cannot be done by first joining a white group. We consider we have a particular job to do and in any case some white groups are unconsciously racist in their attitudes towards the problems and struggles of black people.'

'We work for unity of black people. At the same time we are looking for a working relationship with white groups where this is possible.'

RACIALISM IN BRITAIN

Derek Humphry

POLICE POWER and Black People

With a commentary by Gus John

'To many blacks in our cities, police harassment has become a way of life. The police are viewed as the army of the enemy, which is the immigration-controlling, arms-to-South-Africa-selling, friend-of-lan-Smith British government.'

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IN THE CITY



with T.H. Rogmorton

COURT LINE, the shipping, holiday and aviation group making profits of more than £4 million, recently bought up Doxford and Sunderland, the Wear shipbuilding company.

The bid, described in the City as the 'worst-kept secret for years', made a lot of people a lot of money. Share prices rose from 45p to 288p within months.

Among those enriching themselves was a director of Court Line who made £6700. In all, dealings by Court Line directors in Doxford's shares totalled £150,000.

Two other interesting features of the bid were the lies told to the workers so that the bid could succeed, and the reasons for it—so Court Line could get their hands on some nice cash gifts from the government.

Doxford's losses in the last financial year came to £1.25 million, so Court Line's price of more than £8 million looks like takeover fever reaching epidemic proportion.

But Court Line's maverick chairman, John Young, had his eyes on Doxford's assets—conservatively valued at £9 million—and on the money the taxpayer was going to find for him: as the London firm of shipbrokers Eggar Forrester said: 'There will be an increase in takeover bids for shipowning companies in the near future, by entrepreneurs who wish to utilise the tax losses and cash reserves available.'

TROUBLESOME

The government has also introduced special grants for shipbuilders based on the value of sales, not on the number of jobs created. These are nothing new to Court Line, whose profit they have boosted by nearly £500,000, and they are estimated to be worth £4 million to Doxford's, quite apart from the regional grants that are available.

So at least half of the purchase cost is being paid by the taxpayer.

But Mr Young had a problem. He had seen what had happened elsewhere when yards were closed down or when aggressive young entrepreneurs moved in on sleepy loss-making companies—the workers often get troublesome, striking and starting occupations.

To forestall all this Mr Young made grandiose promises: 'It would also be our intention to construct a new covered shipyard to provide at least a thousand extra jobs.'

His co-director, Jim Venus, talked about the yard, modelled on their covered yard at Appledore, being in production next year. With union co-operation, said Mr Young, it could be 'a very profitable business'.

'I hope we would be able to allay any fears on the part of the unions', he enthused.

Although treating this with caution, the union was obviously encouraged to hear this as the last ship to be built at one yard was just about to be finished.

DISGRACEFUL

But Court Line must have run into a snag, because at the beginning of September they announced they had 'shelved' their plan 'until government policy has been clearly stated regarding the long-term future of the shipbuilding industry.'

Court Line had, although they didn't say so, been talking to the government in terms of another £4 million for the new yard—but the government apparently said no. John Young's promises were based on nothing more than his hope that the government would fork out.

The whole experience illustrates two important issues.

First, the only people who can possibly be sure of benefitting are the shareholders of Court Line: if the government coughs up they make money—if not, they sack the workers. Friendly capitalists who talk of an identity of interest between themselves and workers should not be trusted.

Second, it is disgraceful that the government should be giving large sums of money (well over £100 million is promised so far) to help make capitalists richer.

But if the money is not given, there will be fewer jobs. It is only by removing the capitalist and his morality—that profit is the be-all and end-all—that the resources of the state can be used to the benefit of the worker first and foremost.

Involve all tenants

— that's the

key to victory

ONLY a well-organised and militant tenants' organisation can hope to fight effectively against rent rises. Some of the important points in building the tenants' movement can be gained from experience.

Maximum involvement of all tenants: This is crucial. A tenants' organisation that speaks for only a few activists will never achieve anything.

But getting tenants involved isn't easy. You must begin with maximum publicity on the estate: leaflets through every door, regular meetings, both evening meetings in a hall and street meetings at weekends.

A petition round the doors which commits the tenants to action should be used. Many tenants' associations produce their own newsletters telling tenants what is happening locally and nationally.

The structure of tenants' associations should allow for one representative from each street on to the committee so that everybody in that street knows who to go to for information.

Union backing

Demonstrations, rallies and marches can also be used but experience shows that not too many people will travel far from their estate for this type of event.

Get the backing of the local trade union movement: This is absolutely vital. The most successful rent strikes in the past have had substantial backing from the trade unions.

Many tenants' associations have Joint Action Committees with local unions or delegates from union branches on their committee.

However it is done, the maximum support should be obtained: make sure that all leaflets and newsletters go round the local factories. Get every trade union branch to give support in moral and financial terms.

Most important of all, get your local shop stewards' committees to promise industrial action to support the tenants. In particular, the threat of industrial action should be used to protect tenants being intimidated by

by HUGH KERR

councils when they are on rent strike.

Rent strikes—how to organise them: The rent strike is the only effective weapon that tenants can use to fight the rent rises. But it is not an easy weapon to use.

It is of little use unless a large number of tenants can be involved. A rent strike with 50 or 100 tenants will quickly collapse.

Partial or total rent strikes?: This is another question that tenants raise and the answer must depend on the local situation.

If you have mass support from the tenants, then a total rent strike has advantages. It is easier to enforce than a rent increase strike. By picketing the rent office or 'escorting' the rent collector you get a good idea of how the support is going.

And in terms of forcing on confrontation with the government, the more total rent strikes the better.

But it is a big step for people to withhold the full rent and many tenants' associations are going for partial rent strikes this month.

It is important that everyone must know the numbers on strike, for the councils will sit back and hope that they will decline over time.

One good way of maintaining solidarity and contact is to collect the rent through the tenants'

organisations, either the full rent (if on a total rent strike) or the rent increase. But to do this you must have a very good organisation with a separate bank account.

When the strike is won, the tenants can pay off the arrears—minus the increase—from the central collection. Of course, with a really crushing victory, some tenants associations may decide to refuse to pay any arrears and can then redistribute the collected rent.

A new factor in the rent strikes from October will be that many of the tenants will be in areas where there is a Labour council.

Tenants' organisations should get a pledge that there will be no action taken against tenants withholding their rents. A number of Labour councils have given this pledge and few of them are likely to take any action against tenants on rent strike.

If a council does take action, it will be over a long period. First they will send progressively more threatening letters—one council has 14 different types of letters—then they may send the bailiffs round to intimidate tenants into paying up.

Then as a last resort they can go to a court for a possession order. But this takes six weeks and the court always gives 28 days' notice.

Other tactics

Few councils are in favour of evicting because in the case of families they have a legal obligation to look after the mother and children.

The only way to stop the council taking action is through the strength and solidarity of the tenants' movement. A threat of eviction should be met by a total rent and rates strike by tenants plus industrial action from local workers, including council workers.

Where the movement is not so strong you may have to employ other tactics, such as individuals paying up to stave off the order then immediately going into arrears again.

Can we win?: This is the question every tenant who joins the rent strike will be asking this week. The important point to stress is that we will win only if there is sufficient resistance to the rent rises on a national scale.

We can see from the number of towns and cities on rent strike in October that hundreds of thousands of tenants will be involved. If we can display solidarity and determination over the next month or so, these

figures can be increased.

It is important to understand that the Housing Finance Act is only one part of Tory policy. In the Tories' present attempts to get the TUC leaders to collaborate over a wages policy, they are prepared to make concessions, such as talking about low pay.

While we should not support these TUC-Tory talks, it is clear that if we can display massive resistance to the rent rises then the Tories can be forced to drop or suspend the operation of the Housing Finance Act.

New attacks

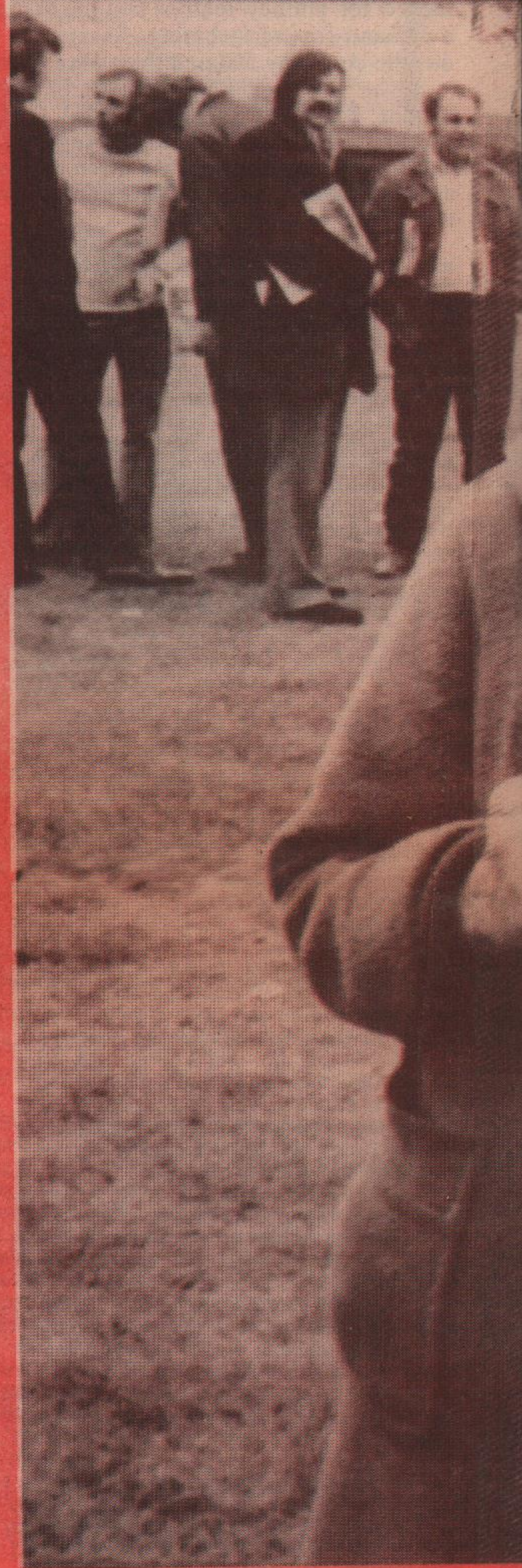
But even if we succeed in that, which would be a victory, we should have no illusions that the tenants' struggles will end there. New attacks will come at a later date from Tory and from Labour governments.

We must build the tenants' movement to resist these attacks. At the same time, we should draw the political lessons of the tenants' struggle.

There is no such thing as a 'Fair Rent' under capitalism with housing tied to the profit system. Until housing is under the control of tenants and trade unionists, we will be exploited.

The tenants' battle is only one part of the struggle of working people to change society and establish a socialist system where we take the decisions and not the landlords, profiteers and speculators or their representatives, the Tory government.

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High rise racket

MILLIONS of pounds that could have been spent on building council houses have gone instead into the pockets of property speculators and developers.

In the 20 years after the war something like 110 individuals piled up fortunes of more than £1 million each in property deals. Harry Hyams of Centre Point fame, the most notorious of the speculators, personally made a cool £27 million in just eight years.

Last year only 17 per cent of all building was council housing. Money and resources still pour into the construction of office blocks that rise empty and obscene all over the country.

In London alone there are approximately two million square feet of empty office space. Yet in the first three months of this year planning permission was given for the building of an even greater area of office space than in the same months of 1971.

In theory local authorities control what is built within their areas. To erect even a garage requires planning permission. How is it then that coun-

cils have not squandering of on speculative

The developer powerful that rings round pla buy up areas local authorities purpose and is condition they high blocks and

A good ex horse trading in famous empty Point. Hyams knew that the cil was having land needed St Giles Circus.

The owner reluctant to buy the land million pounds

He agreed provided that build a high of site. In fact changed and constructed.

Centre Point bargain. It star

CE BILL PROMISES
MANY (TENANTS)
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THIS BILL!



Pushover party that left tenants in lurch

WHY LABOUR RATTED ON COUNCIL FIGHT

WITH council rents, the Labour Party has turned out even more of a pushover than the government could have hoped. In the elections last May, Labour won back control of scores of local authorities on a promise to fight the rent increases planned by the Tories for this autumn.

The autumn has come and at the last count only 42 of the 1200 councils in England and Wales are still refusing to raise the rents. Even this figure exaggerates the extent of real resistance. Birmingham for example is counted among the 42, although Councillor Yapp and his Labour colleagues have actually written to the government inviting it to send in a Commissioner to implement the rent increases.

With only a few exceptions, the 42 rebel councils are in small places like Clay Cross in Derbyshire and Halstead in Essex, where the local Labour parties still have some roots in working-class struggle.

In Scotland, the pressures of high unemployment and a massive housing problem have forced Labour to make more of a show of resistance. A further factor is that in Scotland a far higher proportion of the electorate live in council houses than in England and Wales.

Some 28 of the 47 Labour-controlled councils north of the Border are still holding out against the rent increases. But almost every day brings news of fresh defectors.

Implored

This widespread collapse of effective opposition to the rent rises has been skillfully orchestrated by the national leadership of the Labour Party. Their campaign opened in earnest on 8 July when 1000 Labour members of local housing committees were summoned to a conference in London organised by Transport House.

Anthony Crosland—the 'shadow' housing spokesman—explained at length the terrifying fate that awaited councillors who stood out against rent increases. They would be stripped of their savings, their houses, their jobs and their seats on the council.

The Labour Party, he warned, would not lift a finger to help any councillor who disobeyed the law.

Crosland on this occasion was vigorously seconded by the party chairman, Anthony Wedgwood Benn. Suppressing his well-publicised enthusiasm for grassroots democracy, Benn implored the assembled councillors not to give the Tories any pretext for a campaign on the law and order issue.

The official Labour Party line, repeated endlessly throughout the summer, has been that the only correct way to fight the Housing Act is to work for a



CROSLAND: won't lift a finger

Labour government that will repeal it.

If returned to power at the next election, Labour may well repeal the Act. But, carefully, they have given no undertaking to restore rents to the pre-1972 levels. Yet if the Tories are allowed to carry through the timetable they have planned, rents could be nearly twice the present level by 1975 when the next general election is due.

All along, Labour opposition to the rent rises has been undermined by the fact that the Fair Rents Act is a logical continuation of the housing policies implemented by the recent Labour government. During their six years in office, the amount taken in rent from council tenants practically doubled.

And by far the major reason why rents were increased again and again under Labour was the mounting toll of interest charges which local authorities had to pay for cash borrowed to build houses.

The Wilson government was mesmerised by the power of the financial interests in the City who grow rich on high interest rates. The lending of money to local councils has become one of the safest and most lucrative investment opportunities in the City of London.

A loan of £5000 to build a council house will bring in an eventual return of £25,000 in interest—as well as repayment

of the outlay. A sure-fire profit of 500 per cent.

When Labour took office in 1964 local authorities were paying 7.7 per cent for capital raised on the open market. Five years later the rate had risen to 8.5 per cent.

There is an agency under the direct control of the government that supplies loans to local authorities—the Public Works Loan Board. Labour increased the interest rate charged by the PWLB faster than rates rose in the commercial market, from 6 per cent in 1964 to an amazing 9.9 per cent in 1969.

Labour made only one feeble attempt to protect council tenants from exploitation through the mechanism of higher interest charges financed by higher rents. This was the Housing Subsidies Act of 1967 that allowed local authorities to borrow money for new houses at only 4 per cent.

Monstrous

Whoever lost by this arrangement, it was not the money-lenders since the difference between 4 per cent and the market rate of interest was met at the expense of the taxpayers. In any case the subsidy made little difference to the burden on local authorities. The 4 per cent applied only to borrowing for a new council house.

The main factor behind repeated increases in council rents is the need to borrow and re-borrow to meet interest charges on the monstrous debts that local authorities have built up during the whole building programme starting in 1945.

So under Labour the total paid in interest charges by local councils rose from some £260 million in 1965 to £460 million in 1970. Nearly all

of this extra loot was financed by raising council rents.

In other ways too the present Tory Housing Act is built on foundations laid down by Labour. The mass means testing of council tenants the Tories have introduced is based on a plan worked out in detail by the housing 'experts' of the Fabian Society—the Labour ginger group.

Paralysed

Even the 'fair rent', the basis of the Tory scheme was an invention of the Labour Party. 'I am glad', Peter Walker told the Commons on 3 November 1970, 'to pay tribute to the Labour Party for introducing the fair rent principle in their 1965 Rent Act.'

Faced with a Tory elaboration of their own policies, the Labour Party's opposition was paralysed from the start. And in very many cases the local councillors were not reluctant to be whipped into line by the party leadership.

Certainly in the present Act the government has given itself stiffer powers to penalise local councillors than have ever figured before in British housing legislation.

But Labour councillors have thought only of their own individual weakness in the face of government power—and not of the massive support from the organised working class they could have earned by a serious campaign of militant resistance.

But such a campaign would need councillors with some kind of record of working class struggle and leadership.

Jim Kincaid

been able to stop the money and resources buildings?
ers are so rich and often they can run winning schemes. They defend they know want for a specific left to the councils on were allowed to build other land they hold. ample of this kind of the case of the most office block, Centre of Oldham Estates London County Council difficulty acquiring for a roundabout at about the land were Hyams managed to from them for half a abnuc to sell it to the LCC he was allowed to ficer block on a nearby the road plans were he roundabout wasn't be
t was the result of this ads 385 feet high and



HYAMS: a cool £27m in eight years

houses nobody except two men and 20 guard dogs.

The architect of Centre Point, Seifert, is in great demand by speculators not because of his artistic ability—but because he knows every loophole in the planning regulations. The office blocks stand empty because the developers are waiting for the value to rise so that they can charge the highest possible rents. The asking annual rent for Centre Point is more than £1 million.

It cost £5 million to build and has been empty for eight years. It is now valued at approximately £20 million.

Rates of only 50 per cent are charged on empty property. It is only in the last three years that any rates

at all have been paid on vacant buildings. Yet even now Camden Council loses about £250,000 a year in rates because Centre Point and Space House in Kingsway are both empty.

The links between the politicians and the property interests is a close one.

For example in the soon-to-happen destruction of Piccadilly Circus there will be 600,000 square feet of new offices built. Back in 1968 the planning authority said that 290,000 square feet of office space would be all that would be permitted.

How did the change happen? The companies developing the Piccadilly site are Land Securities, Trust House Forte, and Stock Conversion Investment. The planning authority is the Greater London Council. It was not purely coincidental that the Tory leader of the GLC, Sir Dennis Plummer, had shares in all those companies.

Property interests are also well represented in the Cabinet. Peter Walker, Secretary of State for the Environment, used to be a director of his family company, Slater Walker Securities, a company deeply invol-

ved in the development racket. Sir Keith Joseph is an ex director of the enormous Bovis Company.

Even if there were a change in government, the developers would still stand to win. Such large financial resources are available to them that they can turn changes in planning regulations to their own advantage.

For example if a Labour government managed to clamp down on the amount of new office building this would simply increase the value of completed projects and land with planning permission that developers already hold.

The option is also open to them of transferring their money abroad. Already British developers have projects worth £500 million in Europe.

The power of the property interests is far too deeply entrenched to be weakened by anything less than an all out attack. Certainly the reformist peashooting of the Labour Party will leave no scars.

Audrey Kincaid

International Socialism 53



Lessons of the Sit-in
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Danger: new road ahead

ONE DAY, out of the blue, the local council announced that they proposed to put a feeder road to a motorway through our school playing fields—within 40 yards of the classrooms.

Ours is a working-class area of South Leeds and this comprehensive school, only 10 years old, is one of the few things we have to be proud of. The reaction from school staff and parents was disbelief and anger.

A meeting was called. A committee was formed to fight the proposed road. I joined the cause about halfway through, but the founder members wrote letters to the council, MPs, the town clerk and various other people they thought might help. With a few exceptions, they received answers wishing them every luck—but very little help.

After much coaxing some of the councillors agreed to attend a public meeting at the school. The Labour and Liberals came, but the Conservatives sent their apologies. One councillor was heard to remark that he might as well come as his wife was sewing curtains and he couldn't have watched the television with the noise of the sewing machine!

But after the meeting the council did propose two alternative routes.

After several months and due to pressure from the committee, the Minister for the Environment decided to hold a public inquiry—bang in the middle of the holiday season when committee members who had booked their holidays in advance couldn't be there, nor could some experts who had offered help.

We decided to step up the pressure on publicity in the weeks before the inquiry, to further our cause and bring it before the public. Our one evening newspaper, a Conservative rag, suddenly showed interest after I had written to them complaining about the lack of help from the council, which was Labour-held.

After many letters, phone calls and personal visits to Yorkshire Television, they at long last agreed to give us a spot on their 'Calendar' programme.

The interview took place on the school playing fields, where pupils lined up along the exact line the proposed road would take. They stood a long time in a biting wind, but were not even shown in the edited programme.

Anything controversial was cut out. As a parent I was asked to speak on the danger aspect. I also said that if the school was in a more salubrious area the scheme would not have reached the drawing board—which of course was deleted.

We were advised to get legal aid to represent us at the inquiry and this we did, raising the money with jumble sales, raffles, sponsored walks and dances. The inquiry was supposed to last three days and after much hard work we achieved enough money to cover the costs.

We held a march to the building where the inquiry was to be held the day before it started. Teachers, parents and pupils took part. We also sent a petition to the Minister for the Environment, collecting many hundreds of signatures. Very few people refused to sign, but most didn't think we had a cat in hell's chance of winning.

The inquiry was most interesting, justice APPEARING to be done.

Naturally the corporation had all the advantages, maps and documents, the best experts and counsel. Our own counsel did his best in the face of superior odds. It lasted longer than was anticipated and of course the costs were higher, so we are at present back to square one trying to raise another £120. The total legal fees amount to £500, no mean feat for a handful of people to achieve.

It has taught us many things, among them that the so-called freedoms of the press and television are myths.

All this happened a year ago—we won't know the decision until the end of this year.

Jean Parkin

TERRORISM

IN RECENT WEEKS journals of official opinion have worked themselves into a frenzied hysteria over 'terrorism'. Hardly a day passes without some politician or another calling for energetic measures to deal with 'the menace to civilisation' of 'gunmen' and 'maniacs'.

From the obsession with the question, you would think that people were being killed off by some modern-day Black Death.

Such statements by political leaders are sheer hypocrisy. As soon as they make them, they rush off to give support to, or even to organise much more widespread and horrific acts of terror.

The American government denounced as a crime against humanity the 'tea bag bomb' explosion at the Israeli Embassy in London. Yet every day the American air force, under orders from that same government, drops thousands of identical bombs onto forest tracks in Indochina, deliberately meant to kill or maim any unsuspecting peasant who treads on one.

When diplomats are seized by guerrillas and held in secret prisons in South America, the British press can be relied upon to denounce 'kidnapping'. But when the Tory government seizes people and holds them without trial in Northern Ireland the same press praises action 'against the terrorists'.

Socialists have to reject completely such official condemnations of terrorism. They are merely the stereotyped response of those who exploit and oppress whenever anyone stands up to resist them.

Object

But a different kind of problem arises for socialists. This concerns whether we should support individual kidnappings, bombings and assassinations as a tactic for fighting against oppressive ruling classes.

It is not a question of being 'for' or 'against' violence. If a few acts of individual terrorism could stop the murderous war being waged by the USA against the people of Vietnam, then any socialist who did not support such actions would be condoning that murder.

Similarly, in Britain at least one building worker is killed every day by an industrial injury, the result of dangerous conditions produced by the blind pursuit of profit. If kidnapping or assassinating a few directors of the giant building companies could end this carnage, then we would have to use such tactics.

Our objection is that this kind of action cannot end the built-in violence of the system. In fact, it makes more difficult the task of building a movement that can end violence.

The destruction of a few bits of property will never compel those who own it to give up the rest of their wealth. The assassination of a few particularly nasty politicians, police chiefs or army officers will never destroy the power of a whole ruling class. For every individual who dies, a thousand exist to take his place.

The belief that such actions can solve the problems of the working class is merely a different version of the idea that it is not capitalism as a system but merely a few unpleasant individuals who run parts of it who are to blame for the evils of existing society.

That is why it is not surprising when the most violent terrorists end up as placid supporters of the idea of peaceful reform. In pre-revolutionary Russia the



-no short cut to socialism

by CHRIS HARMAN

party known as the Social Revolutionaries organised individual assassinations, yet in 1917 the same people opposed the socialist revolution.

In Ireland today the Provisional IRA, because of its bombing campaign, often seems to be the most militant opposition to British rule. Yet it was the Provo leaders who, during their 'truce', were the first people to break the pledge not to negotiate with Whitelaw until all the internees were freed.

But, it may be argued, socialists do support some tactics that do not lead to the destruction of the capitalist system, but merely produce reforms. After all, we energetically support strikes, even though we know that the workers will return to work for the bosses with only slightly improved conditions.

The difference is that strike action does not merely improve conditions. It shows to those who take part their collective

ability to begin to control their own lives and to change society.

Individual assassinations, kidnappings and bombings have the opposite effect. Even if they produce some reforms they do not teach and show the possibilities of the need for united working-class action. On the contrary, they create the impression that all that is needed to defeat oppression are a few heroic individuals.

The more successful such acts are, the more they reinforce one of the most dangerous ideas put across by supporters of the existing system of society—the idea that only a few people are fit actively to determine the direction of society, and that the rest must be mere cannon fodder.

During the miners' strike earlier this year, it might have seemed easier for a few miners to dynamite the power stations rather than for thousands to man 24-hour pickets in the face of police provocation. But from the point of view of building a

movement that one day will be able to overthrow capitalism, blowing up the power stations would have been futile.

Even if it had brought the end of the strike nearer, it could not have increased the unity, solidarity and fighting spirit of the working class as did the same mass picketing at Longannet and Salfley.

In the long run, terrorist tactics can aid only the ruling class. For they mean that militants, instead of working with the mass of workers, cut themselves off to form conspiratorial groups.

In South America, for instance, the trend a few years back was for many revolutionaries to lose faith in the workers' movement and to try to 'inspire' them instead with guerrilla activities. Despite some spectacular acts, these groups have not presented any real threat to the corrupt and vicious ruling classes in that continent and in many cases they have been wiped out.

And when movements of workers began to develop again, few revolutionaries remained in contact with the working class and the field has been left clear for politicians and trade unionists opposed to revolution.

Maintain

Finally, the terrorist tactic damages the socialist movement by creating the misleading impression that revolution involves kidnappings, bombings and murder on a gigantic scale—an idea the ruling class loves to propagate.

Revolutionaries cannot be against violence because the ruling class will use any means in order to defend its power. But in fact revolutionary violence is much less destructive than the violence of existing society.

In Russia in 1917 hundreds of thousands of people were killed because of the war against Germany waged first by the Tsar and later by Kerensky. Yet in the Bolshevik revolution in Petrograd, fewer than a dozen died. Only when the old ruling class tried to make a come back with foreign assistance did the death toll mount again.

The reason for the discrepancy is simple. The violence of the ruling class is used to maintain its privileges against the rest of society. The violence of a revolution, on the other hand, is directed by the majority against the remnants of the former ruling minority.

In any case, the degree of violence used depends on the balance of forces. If two pickets clash with a dozen policemen, there will be bloodshed—the pickets', of course. But if 10,000 pickets clash with a few hundred police, the police will run away, as at Salfley, and no blood flows.

Prevent

The simplest way to prevent violence in a revolutionary situation is to make sure the working class is much better armed than its opponents.

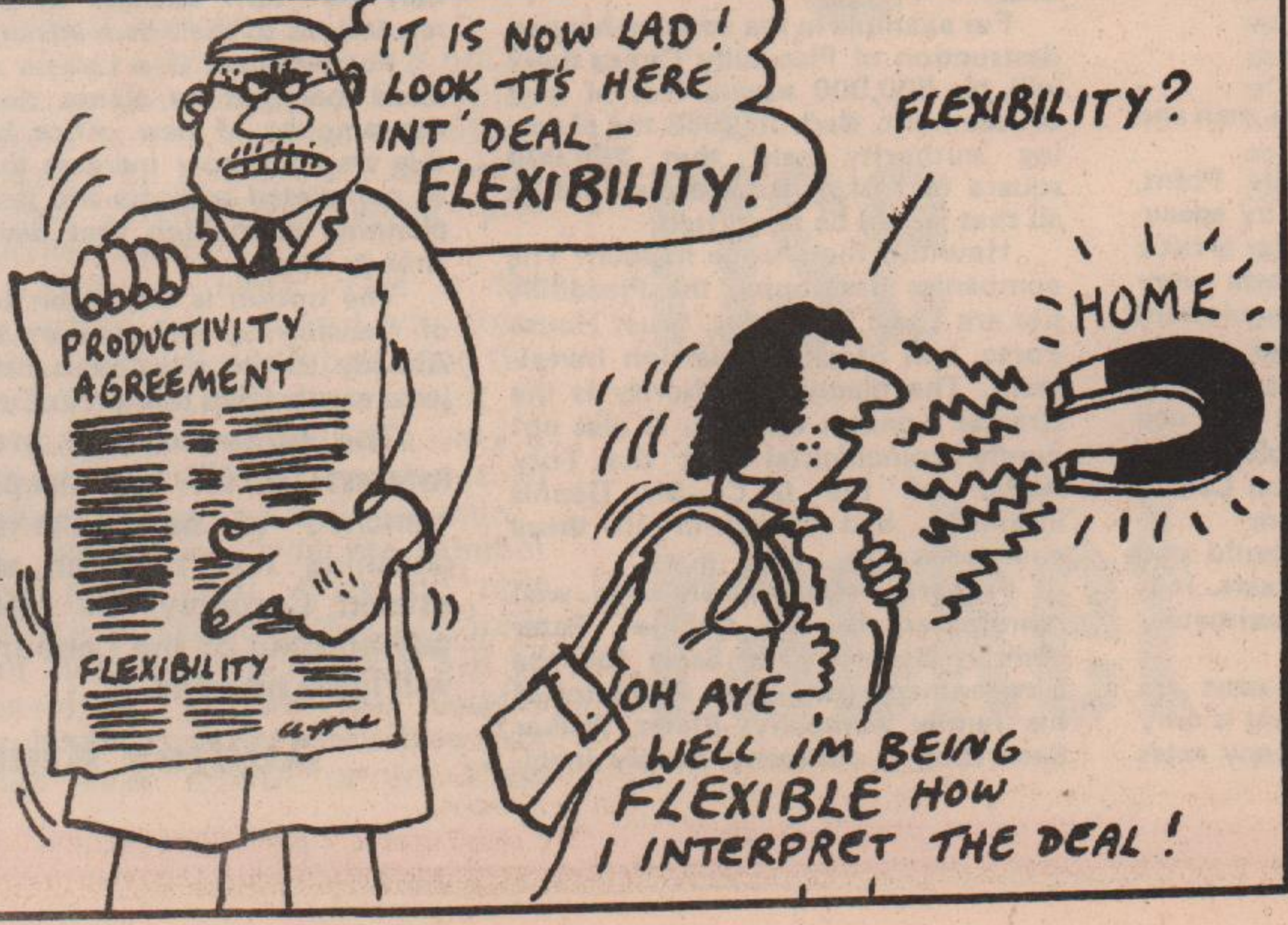
But mass activity aimed at weakening and destroying the employing class has nothing in common with attempts by small groups to wage individual warfare against the ruling class while the mass of workers stand on the side lines.

In the years ahead the number of incidents of individual terrorism is likely to grow. For throughout the world millions of people have little hope within existing society and see no way of peacefully improving their situation. A recent United Nations' report estimated that there will be 60 million unemployed in the underdeveloped countries in a few years.

The task of socialists is to stress that only a mass revolutionary movement, not acts of individual terror, will change this state of affairs.

But when acts of individual terror do occur we have to make clear that the violence of those fighting against oppression is in no way the same as the massive violence—in Ireland, Vietnam and elsewhere—carried on by those who oppress.

OUR NORMAN



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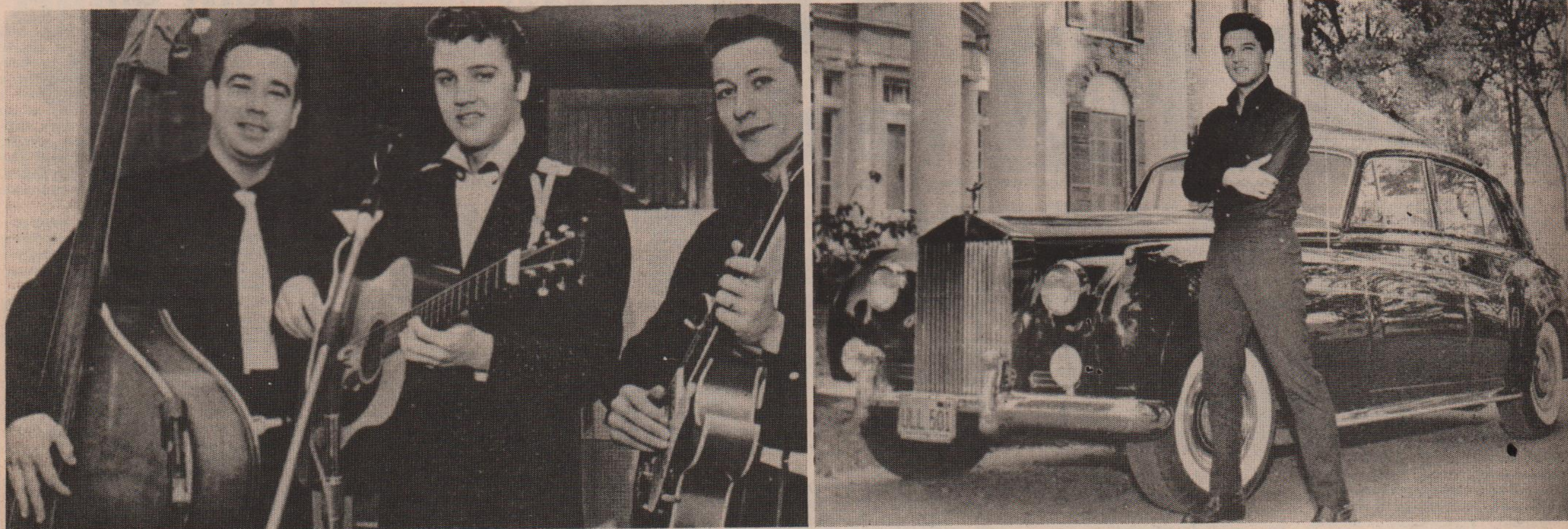
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REVIEW



ELVIS: before and after injection of money

THE REBELS WHO ROCKED THE 50s

'THE CITY's sounds are brutal and oppressive, imposing themselves on anyone who comes into its streets. Many of its residents, committed by their jobs to live in the city, measure their freedom by the frequency and accessibility of departures from it.

'But during the mid-Fifties, in virtually every urban civilisation, adolescents staked out their freedom in the cities . . . Rock and roll was perhaps the first form of popular culture to celebrate without reservation characteristics of city life that had been among the most criticised. In rock and roll the strident repetitive sounds of city life were, in effect, reproduced as melody and rhythm.'

So begins a brilliantly researched book which traces how the post-war generation was able to smash the puerile traditions of the music industry 'establishment' and develop a music that reflected its own aggressive and confident response to the boredom of the decade.

The revolt was not merely musical: the music generated the brash solidarity which in Britain brought outlandish teddyboy clothes, pseudo-American phrases and highly-publicised cinema riots.

The excitement mainly gripped city-centre, working-class youth.

Looking back, we can understand why America made this revolution in working-class culture. Its industrial rise had not been achieved easily: behind it lay centuries of exploitation of successive waves of immigrants.

Blues

The most oppressed of all had been the millions of black slaves, shipped from Africa to the Southern cotton states. 'Freedom' at the end of the Civil War only changed the form of oppression, and left many wandering the country starving and workless.

The most heartfelt expression of their misery was the blues, later adapted by American blacks to produce rhythm'n'blues and jazz.

Poverty-stricken rural whites, also in the south, developed hill-billy music, which later became country and western with the aid of the record companies.

Gillett is rightly not too concerned with early country music, but it is worth noting that it has always had its radical side. In the 1920s some of its most famous exponents were members of the IWW, the Industrial Workers of the World, including Goebel Reeves, the first singing cowboy, and Harry McIntock, writer of 'Big Rock Candy Mountain', 'Hallelujah, Bum Again' and 'Jesse James'.

Gillett takes up the story where blues and hill-billy music were transformed into rock'n'roll. He identifies five early varieties of rock'n'roll.

Northern Band rock'n'roll—such as Bill Haley and Freddie Bell. Haley's main innovation was to

emphasise the rhythm section in his neo-country and western band, borrowing heavily from blues styles, and to develop the shouted chorus—'See ya later, alligator'.

New Orleans dance blues—such as Fats Domino and Little Richard. Both these singer-pianists used rows of saxophones to great effect to give permanent growling support to a singer.

Presley

Memphis country rock (rockabilly). Gillett thinks this is the most complete of the rock'n'roll styles. Sam Phillip's 'Sun' recording label began with black performers such as Rufus Thomas, mainly using piano, guitar and sax. But after success with Elvis Presley's 'That's all right', Phillips abandoned black singers altogether and used whites such as Presley, Carl Perkins and Jerry Lee Lewis. When Presley went to RCA-Victor, Chet Atkins featured him with vocal groups and heavily amplified guitars and drums, separating him from his early country and western influences.

Chicago rhythm and blues. This rich field was reopened in the mid-1960s rhythm'n'blues revival led by the Rolling Stones. Throughout the 1950s the related 'Chess' and

**THE SOUND OF THE CITY
—THE RISE OF ROCK AND
ROLL, by Charlie Gillett,
Souvenir Press and
Sphere Books, 60p**

'Chequer' labels dominated Chicago with Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley and black performers such as Howlin' Wolf, producing a powerfully amplified development of the Chicago bar blues.

Vocal group rhythm and blues. With the exception of the Platters, most vocal groups came to rely on 'novelty' records and disappeared after a couple of hits. But they did bring a breakthrough by getting black performers on television.

Top Ten

With all this material to tap, the major recording companies responded with—indifference. Only Decca, with Bill Haley, could be considered at all enthusiastic about rock'n'roll. The others either ignored it or tried to steal the bread from the mouths of struggling rock'n'roll singers by having their ballad-singers 'cover' the rock'n'roll records.

Meanwhile the record industry

tycoons tried to keep to the traditional Top Ten pattern, and the small 'independent' companies, originally responding to minority demands for 'race' and 'hillbilly' records, producing their records in garages and distributing them in car boots, grew and multiplied as they released rock.

The first part of Gillett's book is titled 'They got what they wanted', and argues that the youth who were finding their identity in rock'n'roll would not be fobbed off with substitutes. Against the manipulation of the big companies they clung to the 'genuine' independents.

But by the 1960s the major companies again had things under control. The independents had either been absorbed or gone bust as the big boys mobilised. Those of us who had clandestinely tuned to Radio Luxemburg when the BBC had refused to broadcast rock'n'roll were aware that things were going wrong.

At the time Gaitskell was consolidating the Labour Party's movement rightwards away from working-class politics—but the betrayal we were worrying about wasn't political, it was the reduction of Presley by RCA-Victor from the rebel clamour of 'Hound Dog' to the pseudo-operatic trivia of 'It's

now or never'. It took The Who and the Rolling Stones to marry the earlier rebellion with the open political disaffection of the late 1960s.

Gillett's book poses intriguing questions. The youth of the mid-1950s, disenchanted with what the music industry was offering, changed earlier traditions to suit their own experience. At a more general level, how can revolutionaries contribute to this cultural field?

Groups such as East of Eden are concerned not with 'high culture' but with proving the relevance of their music to working-class audiences. It isn't easy.

This problem may be beyond the scope of this review, but the Gillett book reminds us forcibly of one overriding point: the break-up of the post-war log-jam of consensus and cultural sterility was done by working-class youth.

Dissent

Unrest then shifted up into the middle-classes with first CND, then the post-1967 student upheavals which found their musical expression in Dylan and folk rock.

This dissent came not from the top but from the bottom, and more important developments were at work within the working class on the industrial and political fronts. But class consciousness always finds its expression at a cultural level, and it is essential that we don't forget this.

Charlie Gillett's book has weaknesses, including at times a reliance on bad American sociology, but generally it is a fine example of such sensitivity.

Ted Parker

A few more twitching liberals

their first million.

So perhaps we have to be glad for every left-centrist trendy who can get in front of the camera, even if Mary Whitehouse and Private Eye do mistake their liberal twitching for a Bolshevik plot.

The core of the first programme was a studio discussion on what was tastefully described as 'the new Heath initiative' on wages. As this paper has been predicting for months the £2 wage freeze has only been kept above water by a lot of sickening sales talk about how much the Tories are moved by the plight of the pensioners and the distress of the lower-paid.

Surely this was a perfect chance to examine and debate the Tory record and the whole nonsensical myth that if a Ford worker settles for less, the spare cash finds its way into a pensioner's purse.

But instead a studio full of speakers were put through their paces like so many sea lions in the circus.

Even then there were some revealing snatches. The industrialists were all on best behaviour and made little speeches about the need to redistribute wealth to the poor. But they all ended with the political boot.

'We must create a climate of opinion

where sacrifice is possible', or 'We must encourage the silent majority to raise the voice of moderation in the unions'.

Some rank-and-file workers did get on to the programme.

Chris Davison, a London busman who is a member of the International Socialists, shook with anger at the very idea that the Tories were concerned about the lower-paid. When viewing Centre Point from a bus cab, as he put it, there's no doubt where their present priorities lie. Sid Harraway, Communist deputy-convenor at Ford's Dagenham plant argued, rightly, that a wage freeze, however camouflaged, was utterly unacceptable.

But none of the points were developed or argued out. The very comprehensiveness of the audience (almost everyone was there except Harry Hyams and Vladimir Lenin) watered down the discussion and allowed the compere to pass over the conflicts which were staring him in the face. It was the stupid Lime Grove fairy tale again that we're all one happy studio.

In the rest of the programme Vic Feather did his famous impersonation of a working-class leader, stonewalling John Torode's impersonation of an intelligent interviewer to a standstill without twitching an eyebrow.

But Ireland brought the programme to life.

On the rest of television reporting about Ireland is simply war propaganda. Both channels have effectively reduced coverage to a daily army casualty list and a Whitelaw press conference.

Mary Holland's sardonic account of that farcical 'conference' in Darlington and the film about Irish working-class distrust of the talks committed that greatest of television crimes by not being hypocritical.

Instead we saw some of the realities of occupied Ireland and some of the leaders, such as the Derry Provisional Sean Keenan and Mike Farrell of People's Democracy, who do more than just pose for flash cameras outside press conferences. Even these few glimpses should have been enough to make Whitelaw's meaningless mumbles stick in his throat.

Weekend World might be scheduled at 11am on Sunday to stop people watching it or to plough open new networking time for ITN—or simply to undercut the Church of England, but for socialists it will have to take a lot more risks before it becomes required viewing.

David Widgery

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We fight:

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

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

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

Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

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 restriction.

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

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

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

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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

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

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

Bosses out to break rank and file

by Dave Gibson and Neil Davies

THE site shop stewards committee at Drax power station construction site, near Goole in Yorkshire, stressed this week that the five and a half month wages battle is still on.

Through the determination of the stewards a strong site organisation has been built up at Drax which has pushed up the bonus rate to ensure a living wage. So the four contractors Babcock and Wilcox, Parsons, Yarrows and British Steel Corporation set out to break this rank-and-file strength.

Earlier this year a new national agreement for the construction industry established an increased basic rate. In April, BSC at Drax deducted this increase from the bonus.

Its men responded with normal working—for instance making sure that safety regulations were kept.

Two riggers who refused to handle an unsafe rig, even though a factory inspector had declared it unsafe, were victimised. The rest of the BSC men walked out in support and all 30 were sacked on 20 April.

After 23 weeks the situation is unchanged, but the BSC steward is adamant that his members will not go back until the management comes up with a concrete offer.

There are differences in detail about the other three firms' disputes but the issue is the same: the attempt by management to cut the bonus rate.

The Yarrows men have been locked out for 15 weeks, but Babcocks made a settlement. The only offer Yarrows have made so far would have meant lower wages than the men were earning six months ago. Like BSC, no-one will start work for Yarrows until they make a satisfactory offer.

The stewards have been sickened by the lack of official backing from their unions, the Boilermakers and the Engineering and Construction sections of the AUEW. They have been stabbed in the back by their union officials, who have negotiated with management without even consulting the stewards.

NAVAL DOCKYARDS FIGHT ON

THE Tory government's hypocrisy over the plight of the lower paid is clearly shown by the reaction to the recent claim of government industrial workers for a substantial increase on their £17.30 a week basic pay. The 'final' offer of an extra £1.75 a week, plus two days additional holiday after 10 years' service, resulted in a mass walk-out from the naval dockyards in Rosyth, Clydeside, Deptford, Devonport and some ordnance factories.

But the two principal unions involved—the Transport Workers' and Engineering unions abjectly agreed to go to arbitration last week and to tell their members to go back to work.

Although the Scottish yards are refusing to go back, Devonport has given in to union pressure and Deptford is meeting this week.

The strikers know that arbitration—with the government as their own judge and jury—is no solution. By getting them back to work and making them wait a month while the arbitrators do a deal, the Tories and the unions obviously hope to stifle shop floor militancy.

This has to be met by building a permanent link between the militants in the dockyards and arms factories to ensure that the union bosses obey rank and file demands.

Rosyth has now been out for seven weeks, Deptford for three weeks, without strike pay. Donations for Deptford to c/o 66 Longland Court, Avondale Square, London SE1.

MR ERIC HAMMOND

IN THE edition of Socialist Worker published on 3 June 1972 a reference was made to Mr Eric Hammond, an Executive Councillor of the EETPU in connection with a disciplinary offence of a member of the JIB. The words used were misleading and did not convey the correct facts of the situation.

In a booklet titled *The Power Game* there was a purported quotation on page 82 attributed to Mr Hammond in which he was alleged to have said in the EETPU journal *Contact* that the Executive Council of the union did not pay attention to resolutions adopted by the

Industrial Conferences in the contracting industry.

The words used in the quotation were never written or spoken by Mr Hammond and in consequence could not be attributed to him. In fact, Mr Hammond has consistently supported Industrial Conferences and is on record as urging their fullest use to affect the policies adopted by the EETPU.

The publishers and printers of *Socialist Worker* and *The Power Game* apologise to Mr Hammond for any embarrassment or inconvenience caused to him by the words published.

WHAT'S ON

Copy for *What's On* must arrive by first post Monday or be phoned Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

MEETINGS

EALING IS Rally and Social: To launch and raise money for the new branch. Paul Foot—Disco—Live entertainment, and bar. Fri 6 Oct, 7.30pm, at the George and Dragon, Uxbridge Rd, Southall. Admission 40p. For further details phone 579-1682.

Huddersfield public meeting: Anna Paczuska on The Fight for Equal Pay. Fri 6 Oct, 7.30pm in The Plough, Westgate.

SWANSEA IS: What's Happening in Ireland? Important public meeting, AEU House, Orchard St, Thur 12 Oct, 7.30pm.

MID-DERBYSHIRE IS public meeting: Hugh Kerr on The Fight against the Rent Rises. Wed 11 Oct, 8pm, at Clay Cross Centre, Market St, Clay Cross.

YORK IS public meeting: PAUL FOOT on Why the system stinks. Lowther Hotel, King's Staith, Wed 18 Oct, 8pm.

WOLVERHAMPTON IS public meeting: Tue 10 Oct, 8pm, The Old Still, Kings St (off Princess St). No incomes policy! No TUC talks with Heath! Speakers: Jim Higgins, ex-POEU executive committee member, and John Clifford, chairman of UCATT strike committee. All welcome.

BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT IS public meeting THE FIGHT FOR EQUAL PAY Speakers: Audrey Wise, Wynn Jones, Margaret Renn
Sunday 8 October, 7.30pm
The Shakespeare Inn, Summer Row (two minutes from town hall)

OLD GOOLE TENANTS' RESISTANCE ASSOCIATION Protest march and rally
NO TO THE RENT RISES
Leaves Old Goole Club at 1pm, to town centre
Saturday 7 October

NATIONAL ATTI IS FRACTION MEETING
Sunday 8 October, 11am-5pm
Room 14, Lanchester Polytechnic, Jordan Well (opposite Odeon), Coventry
Bring your own food
All IS teachers in further education should attend.

KICK OUT THE TORIES
Wandsworth IS present
Mr Oligarchy's Circus (socialist theatre)
Speakers: Jim Atkinson and Eric Porter
Christchurch Hall, Cabul Rd, Battersea (Buses to Prince's Head, Battersea Park Rd)
Wed 18 October, 8pm
Tickets 15p from Wandsworth IS

HOUNSLOW IS public meeting
Christopher Roper (editor of journal 'Latin America')
Imperialism and Revolution in Latin America
THE FOX, CHURCH STREET, TWICKENHAM
8pm, FRIDAY 13 OCTOBER

EDINBURGH IS public meeting
FIGHT THE TORIES
BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE
Speakers: Tony Cliff and Jim Higgins
Monday 23 October, 7.30pm
Freegardens Hall, Picardy Place

BILLY CONNOLLY, ALEX GLASGOW, THE GENERAL WILL
in
AN EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT
Woodside Halls, St George's Cross
GLASGOW
Sunday 8 October, 7.30-11pm
Admission 50p

IS MIDLAND REGION CONFERENCE
Sat 7 Oct, at Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry.
11am: Fraction meetings
2pm: General Perspectives—Duncan Hallas
Creche—Social in the evening
Details from local branch secretary or IS, 327 Prestwood Rd, Wolverhampton.
ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

POST OFFICE WORKER GROUP meeting: Sunday 22 Oct, 2pm. Speakers on The Struggle against Productivity Dealing, and Why the Unions don't fight—the Struggle for Rank-and-File Control. Details from Tom Dredge, 3 Godric Crescent, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey.

YORK IS public meeting
Chris Davison on
WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO THE BUSES?
Lowther Hotel, King's Staith
Tuesday 10 October, 8pm

COMRADE requires room in Colchester from beginning October: phone Ken Jones at Slough 21542.

CLERICAL HELP needed for two days a week in London; some office experience preferable. Phone SW Business—Margaret Renn, 01-739-2639.

GIRL REQUIRES ROOM in mixed socialist flat from end of September or later. Phone Sandra at 01-459-4295

IS National Office requires experienced typist/secretary to work in administration office, from among IS members. Details available on request/application. Apply to National Secretary, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

COMRADE, with car, needed to take Socialist Worker to Central London bookshop every Thursday morning. Must be reliable. Please phone 739 2639.

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Parsons: Blow for 'elite' unions

by Dave Peers

NEWCASTLE:—The report of the Commission on Industrial Relations on trade union membership at C A Parsons has the appearance of a non-event.

After months of deliberation, the Commission's verdict is 'no change'. The CIR recommend that TASS should retain sole negotiating rights for technical staff below the grade of assistant manager and that no union be granted negotiating rights above this line.

One effect of this recommendation will be to puncture the pretensions of the yellow, professional 'unions', which are trying to establish themselves by using the Industrial Relations Act. An appeal from one of these, UKAPE (the United Kingdom Association of Professional Engineers) to the Industrial Relations Court resulted in the destruction of the closed shop which TASS had established for most technical staff.

The court's decision came in the middle of a battle over redundancies, which disrupted production earlier this year; the CIR began collecting evidence while the offices were paralysed by a sit-in of the technical staff.

In line with national union policy, TASS refused to give evidence or appear before the Commission. The only union to give evidence was ASTMS, whose leader Clive Jenkins then intervened in an opportunist manoeuvre on the pretext that his union was acting in 'self defence'.

Support

ASTMS had nothing to defend. Only 22 of the 1431 technical staff below the line were ASTMS members, and above the line there were only 14. In fact, Jenkins argued for a new bargaining unit involving managerial staff above the line throughout all sections of the company.

This proposal could in no circumstances be described as an act of self-defence and was an obvious attempt by ASTMS to use the CIR to win a more substantial foothold at Parsons.

But this proposal, and that of UKAPE, which sought to create a new bargaining unit of graduate engineers, received no support from the CIR.

The senior management of Reyrolle-Parsons argued strongly before the Commission that the status quo should be maintained. Like most of big business, the Parsons bosses find the Industrial Relations Act an embarrassment and in their evidence they were clearly concerned to limit its provocative aspects.

As for TASS, despite the loss of the closed shop, the union's membership and bargaining power remains largely intact. In short, the union has succeeded in defending the interests of its members and in maintaining its principled opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

Strike wins £3

JARROW:—The strike of 22 Engineering Union members at Fry's Diecasting, the longest struggle of the national engineering pay claim on Tyneside, ended after 16 weeks with a £3 increase on the basic rate, the scrapping of the old bonus system, and a guaranteed earnings minimum of £30 per week.

GEC strikers reject offer

GLENROTHES:—2600 workers who have been on strike for nine weeks at the Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes GEC factories voted at a mass meeting last week to continue the strike. They rejected a management offer which purported to be worth £2.08 for semi-skilled men and women, but was really worth little more than 50p, since it included sums already being paid before the strike.

The strikers, members of the Transport Workers', Municipal Workers', Electricians' and Engineering Unions, have been manning successful pickets and all lorries have been turned away.

The management is getting desperate. At first it thought the mainly female workforce would give in to a few easy threats. Twice it had machines ready to resume work after mass meetings.

The personnel manager has written to every worker about 'everyone pulling together' and promises have been made to talk about restoring the holiday credits lost by the strike.

The most recent management threat is to move work to the factories in Middlesbrough and Aycliffe where 1000 workers have been laid off because of the strike. But stewards treat this as a bluff.

The strikers are determined to hold out. Shop steward Bob Scott said that 'even if it takes 18 months, we will still be out'. They are also becoming impatient. Last week three pickets got into the Kirkcaldy factory and placed placards in the directors' offices, saying: 'We want the cake not the crumbs'.

Support has been received from workers in nearby industries, particularly the miners, and contact has been made with stewards at GEC Hartlepool.

Messages of support and donations to: J Smith, Spence Drive, Leslie, Fife, Scotland.

HEATH LIMBERS UP TO HIT AT MINERS



DALY: 'Carry on regardless'.

EVENTS over the past few weeks indicate that the government is preparing for another battle with the miners in the New Year.

Heath and his new boy Tom Boardman, Minister at the Department of Trade and Industry, want their revenge for the drubbing they received at the hands of the miners in January and February.

The situation is now remarkably similar to that of the same time last year. The National Union of Mineworkers is committed by a conference decision to a claim that would add up to £7 a week to the wage packet of surface workers, but the government has told the National Coal Board not to offer a penny over £2—in line with its new wage norm. The familiar old threat of the build-up of large coal

by Bill Message

stocks is being trotted out once again.

What gives the government hope this time is the attitude of Joe Gormley and the right-wing majority he controls on the national executive committee of the NUM. Ever since the end of the strike earlier this year Gormley has been going out of his way to show how willing he is to co-operate with the coal board.

But NCB chairman Derek Ezra is taking his orders from Downing Street. A child could see the tremendous dangers involved in such a policy of co-operation, but Gormley wants an easy life. To defeat the government twice in just over a year would be too great an embarrassment to Gormley, who constantly maintains that the only way to defeat the Tories is constitutionally—through the ballot box.

Gormley would like all the fuss to die down so that he can sit down with Ezra in

peace and quiet to negotiate the productivity deal that has been hanging over the miners' heads since the Wilberforce settlement which ended the strike.

Here again trouble is brewing because the NCB has been told firmly by the government what it must do to earn the cash needed to write off its deficit (now running at an accumulated total of £724 million).

CLAIM

Ezra has been told that the coal industry must be put on a profitable basis. This would involve the closure of up to 100 pits and the axing of well over 50,000 jobs immediately.

Gormley's conciliatory posture is becoming rapidly untenable and NUM secretary Lawrence Daly's statement last Saturday provides some hope for a fight. Speaking to reporters in Blackpool he said: 'We are going for our wage claim regardless of any action by the government.'

But militants are worried that when the coal board fails to meet the claim Gormley will press for arbitration rather than submit it to the membership before taking industrial action, as was demanded at this year's conference.

There is a large and influential 'left' wing in the NUM. It is vital that they initiate a campaign now to involve the members in the fight. Unless they do this there is a danger that the right wing will do a deal with the Tories—a deal that will cut yet another large chunk out of the remaining 280,000 miners in this country.

Sacking sparks off walk-out

by Eve Brook

BRADFORD:—Workers at Bairds Television walked out last week in a magnificent show of solidarity with Bill Stuart, the deputy works convenor, who had been suspended for moving from one department to another. In fact, his job was to 'float' around!

The factory, part of the giant Thorn group, employs almost 4000 workers, nine out of ten of them women, most of whom have families. For far too long, the management have pushed the workers around, with petty rules, line speed-up, low pay and unequal work opportunities for women.

The workers walked out, held a mass meeting and organised an effective picket line.

The workers won their victory. Bill Stuart was reinstated at lunchtime the next day. But the workers won a greater victory: they came out without any official 'leadership'. Ronnie Savage JP, the works convenor, was away doing his traditional class-conscious duty sitting on the magistrates bench!

A sustained fight for trade union democracy on the shop-floor is needed to get the works convenor and local officials to lead Bairds workers forward, especially over equal work and pay, or move over.

NALGO militants push for rents action

STRONG pressure is growing within the government officers' union, NALGO, whose members include workers in council housing departments, for action over the rent rises.

This year's union conference passed a resolution condemning the Tory rents Act and supporting members who face victimisation in authorities which refuse to raise rents. So far, the national executive council have done nothing.

A circular giving advice is promised soon, but socialists within the union do not expect any support from the leadership for positive action in support of tenants fighting the rises.

Attempts are being made to commit local branches to support members who refuse to co-operate with the housing commissioners. It is vital that militants in the union raise these issues in their branches.

Without the co-operation of NALGO members, the Housing Finance Act's attack on the living standards of all trade unionists cannot succeed.

It is interesting, to say the least, that in Camden, one of the boroughs refusing to implement the Act, the council has gone on record as 'expecting' its staff to co-operate with the housing commissioner.

If these authorities allow their staff to operate the Act, it is an easy get-out for councillors who are not prepared to face the consequences of their opposition to the Act. Socialists within NALGO must organise to prevent this happening by putting resolutions to their branches.

Crucial

Tenants associations in some areas, such as Lewisham and Haringey, are asking NALGO members to support rent strikes: the Act cannot work if NALGO members do not collect rents, work out rebates, or evict rent strikers.

With the sharpening of the struggle over the next few weeks, it is crucial that links are made between the tenants movement and the trade unionists in the town halls. Solidarity action between them would mark a major step forward in the labour movement.

Tenants organisations should use the official NALGO position to put pressure on individual NALGO branches to give support for tenants action.

Walmsleys back

WIGAN:—Workers from the four Walmsley factories voted at a joint mass meeting to return to work last week, accepting a £3.25 across-the-board increase.

A third of the workers voted against the settlement, even though it was recommended by union officials and stewards. Militants fear there may be fresh redundancies.

Strike firm is blacked

WOLVERHAMPTON:—An official black has been placed on all goods from M C Hives, where workers have been on official strike for 13 months demanding union recognition. Hives manufacture king-pin bearings for tractors and are ball-bearing wholesalers.

The blacking instruction has been sent by the executive council of the Engineering Union to all districts. It gives workers at the Ford tractor plant at Basildon, Hives' main customer, official support for the blacking.

Dave Smith, the Hives' shop steward, welcomed the official blacking order. 'What is needed now is solid action all over the country to get these goods blacked. Then the victory for trade unionism will be in sight,' he said.

The strike is Wolverhampton's longest in living memory.

Counter-demo

YORKSHIRE branches of the International Socialists are staging a counter-demonstration to a National Front anti-immigrant rally in Bradford on Saturday. Assembly point for IS members is Bradford Technical College at 1pm.

DOCKS COLD WAR SET TO BOIL UP AGAIN

by Bob Light

the New Zealand Meat Producers—which the talented Lord Vestey dominates—he is threatening to cut off the meat trade from London's docks.

That would be the executioner's axe for another of Vestey's companies, Thames Stevedoring. It begins to look as though Vestey is determined to murder his dockland interests.

BLACKING

That is why Midland Cold Storage is once again turning to the Industrial Relations Act. That is why it is crucial to the blockade of Midland is OFFICIAL.

The decision was made at a Recalled Docks Delegates Conference last year, after the matter had been referred from the TGWU Biennial Delegates Conference. It was decided to black two companies, Midland and one in Hull.

As far as dockers can discover, the conference has never reversed that decision. Yet, behind the scenes, dockers' representatives have been told that the original decision was altered, when the Industrial Relations Act became law—a law which the Transport Union is pledged not to recognise.

Why is Jack Jones so quiet in his reply to Vestey? The silence is frightening. As it is, TGWU drivers are taking cargo, loaded by TGWU dockers, across an official TGWU picket line.

This is an issue that affects the livelihood of every registered portworker. It also affects the whole future of the evil Industrial Relations Act, and the TGWU's attitude to it.

If Jack Jones is serious about his determination to smash the Act, if he is seriously interested in defending dockers' jobs, then there must be a ruling that the Midland picket line is OFFICIAL.

He must be forced to throw the full might of the TGWU against the Act and against the mighty Vestey Empire. Otherwise, dockland is likely to boil up in his face.

THE COLD war in the docks is boiling up again. For more than a year, Midland Cold Storage in East London has been under an official union siege. But now the owners, the Vestey empire, are apparently massing for a counter-attack.

First, Vestey demanded a ruling from Transport House on whether the picket line was official. So far, Transport House has made no public statement.

Then, this week, a major load of cargo was sent in, the first big consignment to cross the picket line for months. Naturally, the police were out in force to escort the scab lorries through.

Finally, there was a visit to the picket line by private detectives taking photographs.

The storm clouds are all looming. It looks as though Vestey is shaping up for another stand-up fight. Already, since the famous Jones-Aldington 'final solution', Vestey has condemned Nelson's Cold Store, where 70 dockers will lose their jobs.

Vestey is adamantly refusing to make any offer of redundancy pay. And through



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Socialist Worker

LABOUR FUNDS AID TORIES

From front page

Society, has a stake. There is Redland, whose chairman, Lord Beeching, has spoken out last week against dividend restraint, the arch-reactionary television company, Rediffusion, and Land Securities and Investment Trust, the country's biggest property company, whose plans for wrecking Piccadilly Circus have so shocked Labour spokesmen.

The list of companies speaks for itself: Glynwed Ltd (ironfounders); British Insulated Calendars; GEC; Birmid Qualcast; Delta Metal; Plesseys; Thorn; Associated Engineers; BBA; Allied Breweries; Scottish and Newcastle Breweries (whose chairman is chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party); Grand Metropolitan Hotels; Brooke Bond; Rank, Hovis McDougall; Unilever; Cavenham; Tesco; Bowater; Metal Box; GUS; Marks and Spencers; United Biscuits; Grand Portland Estates; Alliance Securities; Courtaulds; Beechams; ICI; Reed International; BP; Shell; Lloyds Bank; Natwest; UDT; the Prudential; Royal Insurance.

Even in Transport House, the Labour HQ, there have been simmerings of shock over these investments. When the list of firms was first secretly circulated, many



CUNNINGHAM: another architect

party worthies thought that the investments were for the purpose of obtaining information, or making political propaganda at shareholders' meetings.

These illusions have been quickly dashed. The only purpose, according to the trustees, is to make money.

No wonder that the Labour Party are giving all possible support to the 1972 Industry Group, whose purpose it is to further the Labour Party among industrialists. One of the vice chairmen of the new group, whose opening meeting on 23 September was addressed by Harold Wilson, is Sir Joseph Kagan, the Yorkshire raincoat manufacturer.

Kagan was also a sponsor of the recent 'Working Together' advertising campaign in the national press, which was organised and financed by the extreme right-wing Aims for Industry organisation.

Sir Joseph's firm manufactures the Gannex raincoat. The two most distinguished men to wear a Gannex in public during the 1960s were Harold Wilson, a close personal friend of Sir Joseph Kagan, and T Dan Smith, formerly 'Mr Newcastle', also named in the Poulson bankruptcy hearing.

Thousand-strong counter-demo stops racist march

BLACKBURN:—A thousand people demonstrated against racism and prevented the fascist National Front from marching through the centre of the city last Saturday.

The Front were forced to flee to their back-street headquarters, next to a police station, and were prevented from putting out their race-hate propaganda.

But the local police did their utmost to allow the racist parade while disrupting the anti-racist

demonstration, which included local Asians, members of the International Socialists and Rebel groups and which was led by the Accrington branch of the Engineering Union.

The demonstrators refused to tolerate police disruption and after a meeting they surged down the hill to

the station forecourt shouting 'Fascists out, Asians in' and 'Defend the Asians, defend the unions'. A police cordon was hurriedly flung across the street to allow the racist march to move off, but was swept back.

The police then resorted to the most vicious tactics to break up the anti-racist demonstration. Suddenly police cars and motor cycles drove into the demonstration and marchers were grabbed at random.

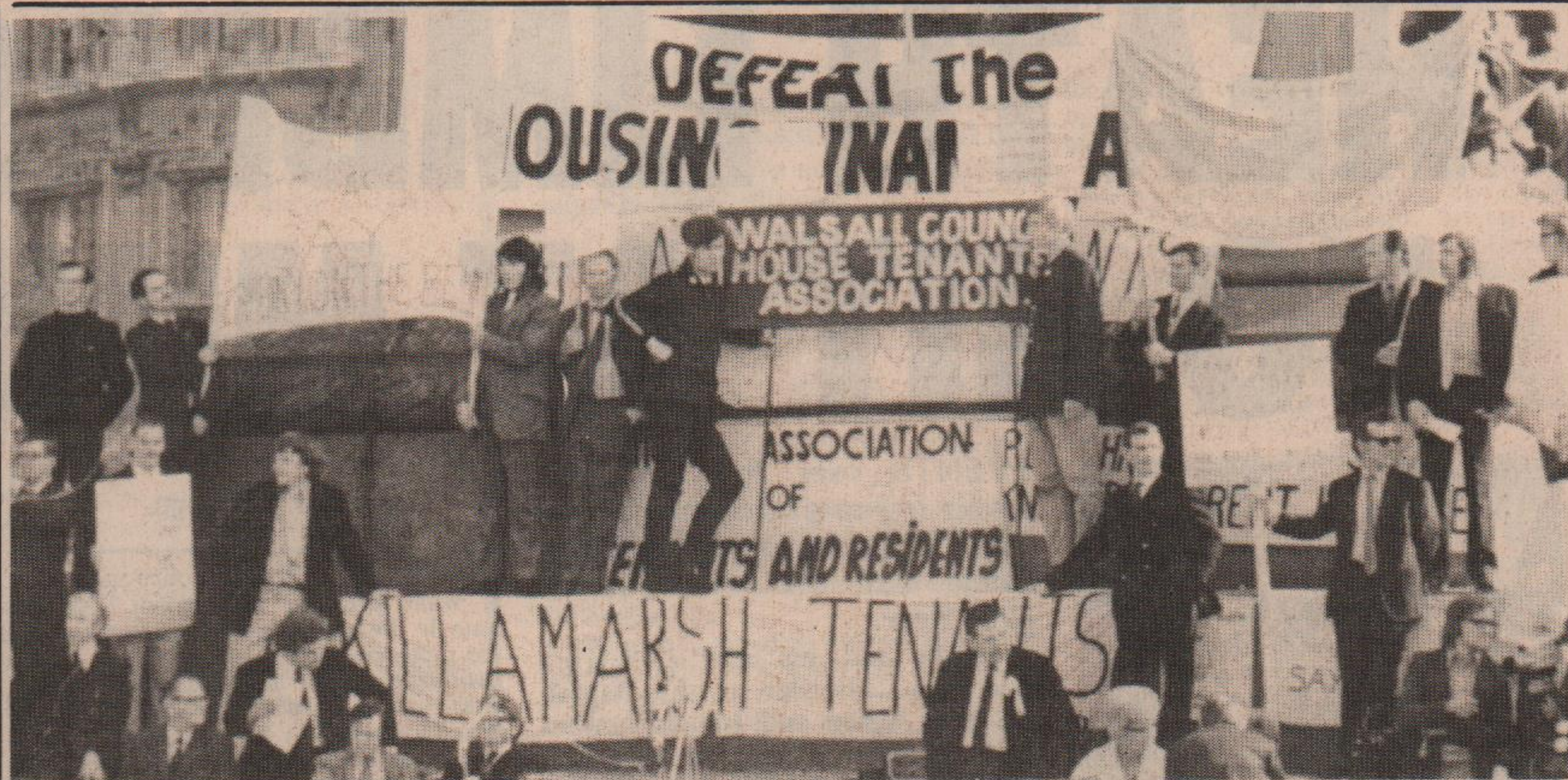
One IS member, a shop steward from Wigan, was literally thrown into the back of a police van. He was kicked and punched by one policeman, and when his wife attempted to stop this, she was punched in the face, blacking both her eyes.

Now both have been charged with assault and with contravening the Race Relations Act! Other demonstrators were also beaten up, including a worker from the Kirkby Fisher Bendix factory.

A local Asian leader, Nazim Bajwa, said afterwards that an Asian Workers Federation had been formed to resist the activities of the racists. He said that previously liberal and welfare immigrant organisations had refused to take this action.

He thanked IS for their support and guaranteed collections among the local Asian community for the defence fund of those arrested.

Please send any donations to: Mrs Patricia Horn, 16 Queensway, Blackburn.



Some of 2500 protesters at Sunday's Fair Rents demo in Trafalgar Square.

RENT STRIKES SWEEP ESTATES

by SW Reporters

RENT STRIKES hit more than 70 towns and cities throughout Britain this week as the Tory Rent Act came into force. On hundreds of council estates, tenants' organisations have put plans of resistance into action.

In Liverpool, the opposition to the rent rises got off to a flying start on Monday with a one-day strike in a number of industries and a 6000-strong demonstration through the city. The 9000-strong docks workforce stopped completely, as did the Plessey plant and a number of smaller firms. And they were joined by several sections of the Standard Triumph factory, as well as by thousands of tenants.

A resolution was passed pledging full support for those refusing to pay the increases and for tenants in Birkenhead, Kirkby and Fazerakaley who are on total rent strike.

Elsewhere, pickets have been placed on rent offices, defiant tenants are putting stickers in every window and

rent collectors are being 'escorted' round estates.

These areas will soon be joined by thousands of other tenants where Labour councils have not yet put up the rents. It now seems certain that within a matter of weeks the Tories will force these local authorities to put up their rents.

It is now vital to spread the rent strikes to every area of the country and to develop the trade union support essential to the success of the strikes.

CANTERBURY:—200 tenants and trade unionists marched through the centre of Canterbury on Saturday to a rally in St Thomas' Hall where they heard speeches from Hugh Kerr of Harlow Tenants' Association, Harold Davies of the miners' union and Nora Berry of Haringey Housing Action Committee. Hugh Kerr stressed that Canterbury tenants must prepare and organise for rent strikes to meet the increases when they come.

SCOTLAND:—Most tenants have not yet faced rent rises as their pressure has stopped many Labour councils from implementing the Act. But rent strikes have started in areas where tenants are faced with rises.

In the Vale of Leven in Fife, nine tenants' organisations have been set up and 2500 tenants have signed a pledge refusing to pay the increases.

Pickets have been placed on every rent office in the area. In nearby Kirkcaldy, tenants of the Scottish Special Housing Association (a government housing agency) are going on rent strike this week.

The Scottish section of the NUM, with 26,000 members, pledged full support to rent strikers and to Scottish councils that refuse to put the rents up.

SOUTH WALES:—More than 100 tenants from associations in the Pontardawe area re-affirmed their decision to go on rent strike and ask for speaking time at an emergency council meeting.

Tenants threatened with eviction will move to a neighbour's house and members of the tenants' association will move into the empty house. They can be threatened only with trespass, for which they cannot be prosecuted unless damage is done to property.

South Wales miners have promised strike action if tenants are evicted.

PONTYPRIDD:—A crowd of more than 200 besieged the council offices where the local Labour Party were disciplining four members who voted against the council's decision to implement the Act.

NEWCASTLE:—A group of housewives on Leam Lane estate—the biggest in the North East—'escorted' a rent collector and urged tenants to withhold the increase. When half the estate had been canvassed, it was reported that the strike had won 100 per cent support.

Back Fine Tubes campaign grows

SUPPORT is growing for the Fine Tubes Conference, planned to organise countrywide action to win the two and a half year strike in defence of union organisation.

This week the strikers' delegation which has been touring the country was in London, meeting stewards in the docks and many factories, speaking at union branches and district committees.

The conference, to be held in Birmingham

on Saturday 28 October, is to co-ordinate the widespread support for the struggle into a massive show of solidarity which could bring a rapid victory.

Strike committee spokesman Frank Clarke said support for the Plymouth strikers was bringing a lot of pressure within the trade union movement. A graphic example of the results is a letter received from steel stockholders John Cashmore Ltd, who had been sending lorries into the Fine Tubes factory until a few weeks ago, assuring the strike committee that they will no longer deal with Fine Tubes.

Reports that filter out from inside the factory indicate that the scab labour recruited by the management is unable to work much of the time because of the success of blacking and picketing in stopping supplies.

FINE TUBES CONFERENCE

Saturday 28 October
Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham
11am-5pm

Admission by union card
Further details from the
Strike Committee, c/o 65 Breton
Side, Exeter Street, Plymouth
All trade union officials
should ensure that their
organisation is well represented

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PICKET LINES

Bosses hit at militants

YORK:—Building employers are still trying to victimise militants involved in the recent strike. Peter Jackson, deputy TGWU steward on a W J Glossop site, was sacked after the return to work on a trumped up charge of 'bad workmanship'. Area organiser Mick Rooney has refused to do anything, although workers on the site are demanding Jackson's reinstatement.

CARDIFF:—A two-week strike by 300 women workers at the Tudor Car accessories plant in Ystrad Mynach has been won, despite attempts by office staff to take over their work. The women have also faced intimidation and violence on the picket line, threats of dismissal and the refusal of their union, the General and Municipal, to give support.

But their solidarity and determination was undaunted. They drove home their point that 'Tudors work the pants off us' by heading this slogan with a line of knickers. And finally, the company was forced to concede a £1.40 rise without any strings, although previously they were trying to insist on productivity concessions.

LONDON:—Workers at Cubitts' World's End site are fighting on to resist management attempts to offset the rise in the basic by cutting bonus rates and to prevent victimisation of a steward. The men have now been out for nine weeks but the London action committee and the regional officials of both unions have refused to honour pledges made before the end of the national strike to organise joint site action against such attacks by employers.

Donations to The Treasurer, World's End Strike Committee, John Fontaine, 25 West Bank, London N16.

WOLVERHAMPTON:—More than 500 workers at Fafnir Bearings are on strike to gain parity with other local major companies. Recently a shop stewards committee found there was an average gap of £7.11. Management said the financial state of the company could not stand a pay increase—although reports suggest the company has had its best year ever.

The answer from the shop floor was clear. Spontaneous sit-down strikes took place and, after giving management a last chance to come up with an offer, the whole workforce walked out of the factory.

MANCHESTER:—ICI stewards' combine committee won the re-instatement of 19 canteen staff given four days' notice at the Hexagon plant. After management had refused to negotiate, phone calls from bosses at Trafford Park, Huddersfield and Blackley factories warning of solidarity strike action quickly made them see the light.

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