

Socialist Worker

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WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

**FINE TUBES
CONFERENCE**

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

Admission by union card: further
details from Fine Tubes Strike
Committee c/o 65 Breton Side,
Exeter Street, Plymouth.
Phone 0752 65459/65667

**We reveal
secret
rundown
plans**

Big threat to steel jobs

AS SECRET TALKS between the British Steel Corporation and the Tory government on the future size and shape of the UK steel industry come to a head, BSC management is more determined than ever to continue concealing the true extent of job losses and plant closures that will be pushed through by 1980.

by Rob Clay

Over the past three weeks, BSC has issued a spate of statements saying that a secret forward planning document, leaked from inside the corporation and detailing the planned jobs butchery, is a forgery.

BSC's attempt to represent an internal working document from one of its own most high-powered

committees as a fake follows publication of a detailed analysis of its implications in the current issue of the rank and file steel industry paper *Steelworker*.

Steelworker disclosed that over the next eight years BSC wants to slash its workforce by 60 per cent, from 250,000 to 100,000. The document obtained by the paper sets out in detail what this means—the virtual annihilation of the Scottish and Welsh steel industries and the application of the surgeon's knife everywhere else.

Every single plant in **Scotland**, with the exception of Ravenscraig, is earmarked for closure. In **North Wales**

most of Shotton and Brymbo is to go, plus East Moors and Panteg in South East Wales. Everything but the cold mills is up for the chop at Ebbw Vale. In **Rotherham**, the whole of Steel Peech and Tozer will be axed except for the 12-inch bar mill.

On **Teesside**, Hartlepool is to be obliterated along with massive reductions in plant throughout the whole region. And in Corby, **Northamptonshire**—a town almost totally dependent for employment on steel—10,000 redundancies are envisaged.

The forward planning document 'The Pattern of Development at each works', which *Steelworker* published and analysed is not the final word from the BSC on the forthcoming jobs butchery. The study is only one of several forward planning studies carried out by the BSC Economic and Further Planning Committee.

'Low Cost 1', which *Steelworker* detailed and analysed, is based on a 1980 UK steel production capacity of 36 million tons. This is the most optimistic estimate and other internal BSC planning documents have been drawn up on the basis of much lower figures.

The Tory government and the other Common Market governments which are wary of BSC's size would prefer a capacity much closer to 28 million tons a year. Each step nearer this lower figure will involve still more redundancies and closures.

Essential

The reason for the high-powered BSC operation to discredit the *Steelworker* disclosures is simple. BSC's stated policy is to operate closures and redundancies on a plant-by-plant basis. The purpose is to prevent any effective industry-wide opposition to the swingeing redundancy programme. Secrecy is essential for the success of this huge exercise in deceit.

Between March of 1971 and March this year, 22,700 jobs were axed in the steel industry. The 'Pattern of development at each works' document first drawn up late in 1970 forecast the closures for that period. Every single one of the closures it projected was carried out on schedule—a very accurate 'forged' document.

Faced with intensive international competition and major problems in obtaining the huge amounts of capital necessary to renew UK steel, the Tory government wants to wield the axe, leaving eight or nine major plants which actually make substantial profit.

BSC is squabbling over the range of the cut backs, but not the principle. It too is out to make massive reductions in the workforce and the number of operating plants.

Redouble

Rank and file resistance is growing in the face of weak trade union leadership. But the rank and file shop stewards committees will have to redouble their efforts to break down the craft barriers between workers and the lack of union democracy that has prevented a united struggle.

All redundancies should be opposed, the tactics of overtime ban, sympathy strikes and factory occupations to prevent closures should be adopted. The massive compensation to previous owners (£28 million last year) should be stopped as should the policy of supplying private industry with steel at uneconomic prices.

Where jobs are threatened steel workers should fight for the 35 hour week and retirement at 60 on full pay. All productivity bargaining should be opposed. Over the past few years this has led to the loss of tens of thousands of jobs.

In the long term and increasingly in the short term there are no stop-gap solutions. The fight is about the purpose of the whole industry, whether it is run to meet the grab motive priorities of private or state-owned enterprise, or planned to meet the needs of working people.

● Copies of *Steelworker* (4p plus post) and photostats of the BSC forward planning document are available from 3 Pasture Lane, Lazenby, Teesside. A charge of 35p per photocopy has to be made to cover costs.

PROFIT BOOM FOR BIG BUSINESS

by PAUL FOOT

AN AMAZING monster is being concocted in Blackpool this week by press and television: the Tory socialist.

Inventor in chief is Professor Nicholas Kaldor, financial adviser to the Labour government after 1964.

Writing in the *Sunday Times* under the heading 'Mr Heath's New Socialism', the Professor declared his support for the Tory government's new £2-wage peg proposals.

Mr Heath, he wrote, has adopted 'all the ideals and the intellectual make up of a left-wing member of the Labour Party.'

Professor Kaldor's ideas, in rather less ludicrous language, have been taken up by the 'middle of the road' press, the television companies and even by the government as the theme song of this year's Tory Party Conference.

ROBBERS

The image is being presented of a Prime Minister and Cabinet who have abandoned the industrial battleground for the conference room, who are 'deeply concerned' about the plight of ordinary people, about unemployment and the Ugandan Asians. A government who intend to freeze prices, fix wages 'all the way up to the company chairman' and reform the tax system with a brave new plan to switch the responsibility for state handouts from the Ministry of Social Security to the Inland Revenue.

A 'firm and courageous' Prime Minister can be discovered on television putting his 'right-wing critics' to flight, and declaring his new-found socialist principles.

What has really happened?
The robbers have cleaned out the bank. Now they are demanding an amnesty so that they can get away with the swag.

The monthly business publication *Vision* has just conducted its annual survey of Europe's top 500 companies (161 of which are British). It finds that by every test British companies have made the most profits. In every department of commerce and industry, profits are increasing faster even than in that capitalist 'miracle', West Germany.

BONANZA

From these profits, a larger proportion than ever before have gone straight into the pockets of shareholders. The prospect of a 'freeze' on dividends has stamped a number of companies into giving massive handouts to shareholders.

Lord Beeching, chairman of Redland, told his shareholders on 28 September that they were getting a bonus to the value of one share for every four, just in case the government declared a dividend freeze.

But shareholders in Redland, or, for that matter Glaxo, (which have declared an extra £2 million profit this week in spite of the deaths of five patients in Devonport Hospital earlier this year, caused directly by gross negligence of management at Evans Medical, Liverpool, a Glaxo subsidiary), are not as lucky as some.

The real bonanza has been in property. On 4 October the *Guardian* reported that 'at least 18 new millionaires' had been created 'as a direct result of the boom in

to back page

500 challenge racists



BRADFORD: More than 500 staged a counter-demonstration on Saturday against a 300-strong Stop Immigration march led by Tory councillor Jim Merrick with the support of the fascist British Movement and National Front. The socialist march was made up of Yorkshire region International Socialists, the International Marxist Group, Bradford University students and the local branch of the Indian Workers Association of Great Britain.

After marching through the city centre, they linked up with 100 supporters of the Bradford Anti-Racist Committee, made up of the Communist Party and a few Labour councillors who had accepted police demands that they should not confront the racists. But a number of their supporters joined the main march which picketed the racists' rally before holding their own public meeting. Picture: Wilson Grant. Blackburn march aftermath: page 11.

WORLD NEWS

Election campaign begins amid bribery accusations

THE WEST GERMAN parliament, the Bundestag, has been dissolved before the end of its full term and on 19 November a general election will end the hardest-fought campaign yet.

The two main parties—the ruling SPD (social democrats) and the CDU/CSU (conservatives)—have refused to sign a 'fairness treaty'. The government accuses the opposition of bribing its members to desert. The opposition compares Willy Brandt to Hitler.

The election was called after the government—of social democrats and the small liberal party (FDP)—lost its majority in the Bundestag: in the past three years a series of FDP and SPD MPs have deserted their parties.

Chancellor Willy Brandt has openly accused the opposition of bribery, and certainly some of the circumstances are highly suspicious. One liberal MP discovered a crisis of conscience over the government's

from a correspondent
in Frankfurt

foreign policy after his farm had got into debt: his financial circumstances are now considered good.

With almost no exceptions big business is standing openly behind the CDU/CSU, far more than at the last election. This increasing distrust between business and government is the basic reason for the changes that have caused the crisis.

The main issue is the way in which middle-class rule is to be maintained and the working class controlled. Where the CDU/CSU stands for more or less open repression and the ideology of the free market, the SPD hopes to continue its traditional role of binding the working class to the system through reforms while holding wages in check through its links with the trade union leadership.

The SPD/FDP government came to power on a platform of peace abroad and reforms at home. The promised reforms have either not materialised or been unrecognisably watered down.

One of the main points of SPD election propaganda is therefore its peace policy, the real aim of which was to open up the East to trade and investment for West German business. While the treaties have brought real improvements, above all for the people of West Berlin, these remain marginal and the armaments budget, despite all talk, continues to rise.

Strikes

In the background the working class is slowly waking. Although in comparison to Britain the strike rate remains low, it is increasing. In the past few years real wages have risen little despite full employment, and the inflation rate is four per cent, for Germany an unknown high.

The new confidence of the West German working class was shown dramatically in the spring, when workers in towns all over the republic struck against an attempt by the CDU/CSU to take over the government through a parliamentary vote. These strikes effectively forced a general election as the only solution to the impasse in parliament.

If the SPD is to remain in power it must use, and not simply repress, this growing class consciousness. It therefore shies away from any too strong disciplinary measures against its own left wing and for the first time since the early 50s has begun to talk of 'democratic socialism' instead of simply social reforms.

If the SPD has been unable to bring the working class reforms of financial and direct benefit, it is all the same stressing such 'quality of life' issues as pollution and urban transport. It proposes measures which, although they will have to be paid for out of higher taxation, will benefit the

less well-off.

At the same time the trade union leaders are showing increasing 'theoretical' radicalism: while fully accepting their 'duty' to keep wages to a 'reasonable' level, they not only stress their campaign for increased *Mitbestimmung* (co-determination) in the factory, but set as a long-term aim even the control of the means of production by the majority of the people.

The problem that faces the SPD was shown in the aftermath of the massacre at Munich.

During the campaign against the Red Army Fraction (the Urban guerrilla group popularly known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang), the authorities had been seriously worried that their attempt to whip up hysteria didn't really work. The public seemed more prepared to regard the whole affair as a case of cowboys and Indians than as the last-ditch fight against desperate reds.

But the politically idiotic action of the Black September group at Munich was different. It caused a real shock (athletes are different to policemen, and wasn't it all meant to be a marvellous holiday from reality anyway?) and caused a hysterical reaction in the mass media and sudden unpopularity for all Arabs. Arab workers were physically threatened in the factories by their work-mates.

Scapegoat

The right-wing press has used Munich as a pretext to scream for action against 'the terrorists and their supporters' (that's meant to include everyone from the Young Socialists leftwards).

In fact, political repression has been on the increase for some time now. A particular target has been the 3,400,000 foreign workers and their dependents. Their important role in recent strikes has helped to overcome the distrust and open prejudice they face from many of their German fellow-workers.

If the foreign workers can be made a scapegoat and terrorised into political submission, then a passive industrial reserve army will have been created.

Political deportations had occurred before Munich, but now they are the order of the day. Well over 100 Arabs have been simply bundled out of the country with, as the authorities themselves state, a speed designed to ensure that they have no chance to get any legal help.

The Palestine student organisation, to which virtually all Palestinian students in Germany belong, has now been banned.

Radical

Yet the SPD would really prefer to do capitalism's dirty work without too much publicity—the steady build-up of the police apparatus, the training of the border defence force for 'civil disturbances' (not unconnected to strikes), the increasing political repression in the schools and universities.

All this cannot be used as the basis for a law and order election campaign since, after all, the CDU can do that sort of thing better. So the SPD is having to make more radical noises to keep its support—and this is worrying business.

Not that it is thought that the SPD and the trade union leaders take their long-term aims particularly seriously, or that they are about to abolish capitalism when nobody is looking. The capitalists are really afraid that the rank and file might be encouraged in real radicalism by the verbal radicalism at the top.

'SLUMP' FEAR SWINGS VOTE

from Rasmus Rasmussen
in Copenhagen

A WEEK after Norway voted 'no' to the Common Market, the Danes went to the polls and voted overwhelmingly for entry. About two million voted for, while only one and a quarter million were against.

After the Norwegian 'no', the Danish middle class stepped up its propaganda campaign. The government stopped all foreign money exchange, and said that a 'no' would mean a devaluation of the Krone.

Newspapers were full of articles predicting economic disaster if Denmark did not go in—mass unemployment, factory closures, the moving of industry out of the country.

A month or so earlier the government had said that a 'no' would mean that welfare would have to be cut back and that new measures which are in the planning stages would be abandoned. Some firms announced they would move their factories to Germany, and others threatened their workers with the sack if they did not vote for the Market.

This provoked several strikes, when anti-Common Market speakers were denied entrance to factories, and at the Ford assembly plant in Copenhagen workers walked out because management refused to allow any anti-Common Market material to be posted up.

Workers at large factories and shipyards had already overwhelmingly rejected the Market in trial ballots organised by shop stewards, usually with more than 80 per cent against.

CHALLENGE

As in Norway the main opposition was a popular-frontist alliance of the Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party, various middle-class and extreme right-wing groups, and large sections of dissenters from the pro-Market parties.

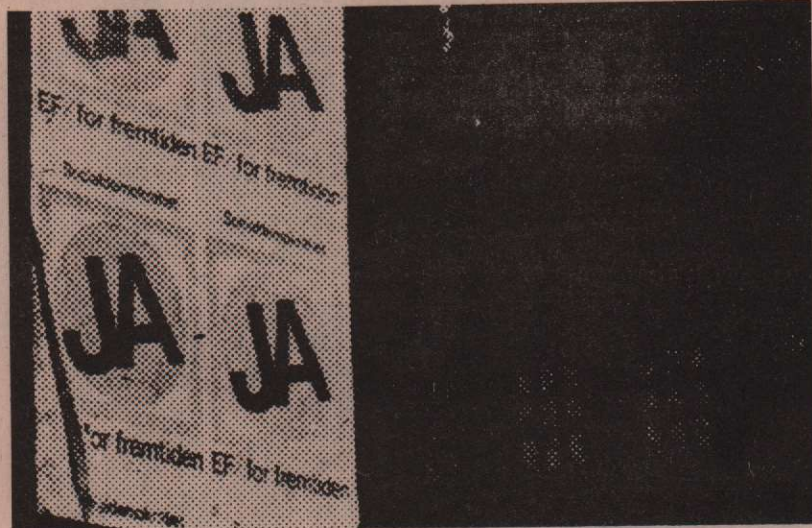
As in Norway, most of the propaganda was nationalist. The non-nationalistic opposition came from revolutionary elements in the Left Socialist Party, the Fourth International and others, but they could not really challenge the nationalists because of lack of resources and numbers.

In the traditional industrial centre, Copenhagen, the densely populated working-class areas voted 'no', and even when the recently-built outer suburbs were in, there was still a majority for 'no'. Only when the recently-built outer suburbs are included was there a 'yes' majority.

The day before the referendum about 100,000 anti-Market demonstrators demonstrated in the streets of Copenhagen.

In other big cities there was a small pro-Market majority, while in the rural areas there was an overwhelming majority in favour. The majority in the countryside is explained by the fact that if Britain entered and Denmark didn't, farmers would lose their main customer for farm produce.

Greenland—technically a Danish county—voted overwhelmingly against, but since it is really a colony, it won't get much more say in the matter.



Posters in Copenhagen calling for a 'yes' vote to the Common Market

The day after the referendum the Social-Democratic Prime Minister, Jens Otto Krag, announced his resignation. He said he was a bit tired of politics, but this could hardly be the real reason.

His successor is Anker Jørgensen, the 'left' leader of Denmark's biggest trade union, DAS (Danish General Workers' Union). He is Denmark's Jack Jones—plenty of rhetoric, no action—and was responsible for the recent pseudo-solidarity with British dockers.

His role will be to patch over the cracks in the Social-Democratic party after its role in getting Denmark into the Market. It is hoped that with his 'left' reputation he will be able to unite the party and stop any splits.

Several unions have already told their members to leave the party, and many of the youth are disgusted. The youth were

against the Market, and it is estimated that nearly half-a-million Social-Democrats voted 'no', so the party is facing a crisis.

After the referendum, representatives for opposition parties spoke on television. A revolutionary—speaking on behalf of the Left Socialist Party—condemned the nationalist anti-Market campaign, and said that even if it had been a 'no' the workers would have had to prepare for struggle.

So the biggest publicity stunt and con trick ever mounted in Denmark is over. The banks are doing business as usual and the Krone was saved. The threat to devalue was probably one of the best tricks, and must have been worth tens of thousands of votes.

For the moment the middle class are happy, but if the Market does not live up to the promises they can expect trouble from workers.

BRIEFING

THREE MEN arrested by the Israeli authorities last month—two Jews, Uzi Virni, an army lieutenant, and Mali Lerman, a computer worker, and an Arab construction worker, Shauki Khatib—were kicked and beaten with revolvers.

They were accused of putting up a poster issued by a group called the 'Revolutionary Communist Alliance'. This complained that workers in Israel have to work 10 or 12 hours a day, or take on two jobs, to earn enough to live on.

It recalls that 90 years ago American workers began the fight for the eight-hour day, and comments: 'While the bosses' children are travelling around, here and abroad, sunbathing during the day and dancing at night, our lives are like the lives of donkeys, without any limit to the burdens put on us. We have neither education, nor culture, neither fun nor enjoyment. We work under the control of second-rate policemen—the foremen.'

And the poster concluded: 'Let us stand up and fight. Every day we go and return, work and sweat, get broken and give up—until when?'

The three arrested men were held 10 days for questioning and efforts were made, by threats and bribes, to separate Khatib, the Arab, from the others and get

him to collaborate with the authorities. The three have now been released on bail and are awaiting trial.

The Revolutionary Communist Alliance has issued a statement declaring: 'We will not give up: the struggle continues.'

THE NEW press laws in South Vietnam are already beginning to bite. Within 10 days both the remaining oppositional daily papers have been condemned by a Saigon military court for violating the new statutes.

The editor of one paper has been given a suspended sentence of two years jail and fined more than £2000. His 'crime' was having published two foreign press agency reports: one reported an anti-US demonstration in Japan, and the other quoted a Chinese statement calling on the US to negotiate seriously.

SOME JEWISH immigrants who left Georgia in the Soviet Union to live in Israel are now returning to Russia. 23 left on 19 September and other groups will leave soon.

Ceylon: big protests against repression

by Edward Crawford

IN SRI LANKA (Ceylon), the government is faced with more protests against its repression. Recently two large public meetings, both packed out, at the university and at Colombo town hall, protested at the detention without trial in concentration camps of 14,000 people.

The committee organising these protests has called a nation-wide hunger-strike on 18 October and has received a flood of letters promising support.

Two documents now circulating give details of the atrocious conditions in the women's prison and descriptions of the torture used on detainees.

Rohan Wijeweera, who has been accused of leading the JVP rebellion in Spring 1971, is now on trial, and has denounced his judges and the class justice which they are dispensing. He has won some respect for his uncompromising stand.

Other news is more ambiguous. In the third week of September there was a report in the Ceylon Times that a body of armed men in a sort of uniform had raided the concentration camp at Anuradhapura and released 34 people. Whether they were really JVP comrades or an assassination squad is not yet known.

Industrial unrest still continues, and so does the bank clerks' strike. Even the Central Bank workers are out, and the government is busy recruiting blacklegs.

In Britain, there will be a picket of the London Ceylon Tea Centre at Piccadilly Circus from 11am to 2pm on Saturday 14 October, and a public meeting at the Unity Theatre at 7.30pm on Wednesday 18 October, to coincide with the Sri Lanka hunger strike. This activity in Britain is being organised by the Ceylon Solidarity Committee, which is supported by the International Socialists.

One of the main reasons is the complaint by Georgian Jews, who are very similar to oriental, or black, Jews, about discrimination. In Kiryat-Ata 5 families are living in bad conditions, with ten people to a room, and police had to persuade two families to move out of a synagogue. In Ashdod a big fight broke out between the police and some Georgian families who were preventing by force the eviction of three families from flats they had occupied.

THE STRIKE of Citroen workers at Vigo in Spain ended on 2 October. About 250 workers have been sacked, including 25 trade union delegates or members of the factory committee. The previous Saturday several hundred young people demonstrated in solidarity in the streets of Madrid.

BLACK CHILDREN are now to be allowed to ride the donkeys at the Johannesburg zoo. But apartheid principles will be preserved: they will be confined to a separate enclosure.

AT A press conference at the end of September, the French revolutionary group *Lutte Ouvrière* announced that it was in process of negotiating an agreement for the coming elections, probably in March 1973, with two other Trotskyist groups, the *Ligue Communiste* and the *Organisation Communiste Internationaliste*. This will mean that there will be more than 300 Trotskyist candidates in the elections, covering every town of more than 30,000 people.

EDWARD GIEREK, the first secretary of the Polish Communist Party, recently visited France, where he gave a long interview to the newspaper *Le Monde*. When asked about his attitude to the Common Market, he replied: 'If we have a critical attitude, it is not out of hostility to the principle of economic integration. We know that the Common Market is a reality. We criticise it for its restrictive policy towards the socialist countries. We are hostile to barriers which prevent the development of economic relations.'

Socialist Worker

For Workers Control and International Socialism, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN

Labour lets off steam

MANY left-wing supporters of the Labour Party are arguing that Blackpool 1972, as new NEC member Joan Maynard put it, represents a 'move to the left not only in this party but in the labour movement as a whole. It is a move towards socialist policies.'

On the face of it there is some justification for this claim. For example, conference called for 'public ownership of the commanding heights of the economy, with minimum compensation, including nationalisation of the major monopolies, the building industry and finance houses' and threw in 'the implementation of Clause 4 in full' for good measure. If taken seriously these are very drastic plans. But how seriously will they be taken?

A significant pointer was the NEC's attitude to this bloc nationalisation resolution. They put up a well known left wing MP, Ian Mikardo, to say that they 'liked the resolution very much' but they couldn't guarantee to support public ownership of the building industry. In other words they didn't mind the delegates letting off a little steam provided that the party leadership wasn't committed to anything too clear and specific.

True, the NEC was beaten on a card vote on this issue but it is safe to predict that this defeat will not worry Harold Wilson too much and that the resolution will join the many that reflect the socialist aspirations of sections of the rank and file but which have no effect at all on the actions of Labour governments.

Left-wing face

It is certainly the case that the easy passage of such resolutions does really reflect a move to the left among politically conscious workers. Unfortunately it does not indicate any change in the nature of the Labour Party. When the Labour Party is in opposition at a time of massive unrest, its leaders find it expedient to try to show their best 'left wing' faces. Their aim is to try to head off the development of a real and effective fight against the policies of capitalist governments.

Barely two and a half years ago many of those who decorated the platform at Blackpool were ministers in a government that was promoting just such policies. They hope to utilise the present discontent to get back into office and once in office, as all previous experience shows, they will go back to their old ways.

Some sincere but misguided people see the main task for socialists as pushing left-wing resolutions that, they hope, will commit a future Labour government to 'socialist policies'. It is a pathetic illusion. The real job of socialists is to participate in and try to give leadership to all the actual struggles that workers are engaged in on rents and wages and every other field where direct action is possible and to build a genuine socialist organisation—and that means a revolutionary socialist organisation.

We cannot ignore the Labour Party of course. It has to be discredited in the eyes of the working class. Its 'socialist' pretensions have to be ruthlessly exposed.

So, too, do its pretensions to be the party of social reform. Showing the real record of Labour in power is part of this process. Supporting the return of another Labour government is equally important. In the last resort the test of all arguments is practice. 'By their deeds shall ye know them.'

We are completely confident that a new Labour government will expose the futility of mere resolution mongering by carrying on where Ted Heath leaves off.

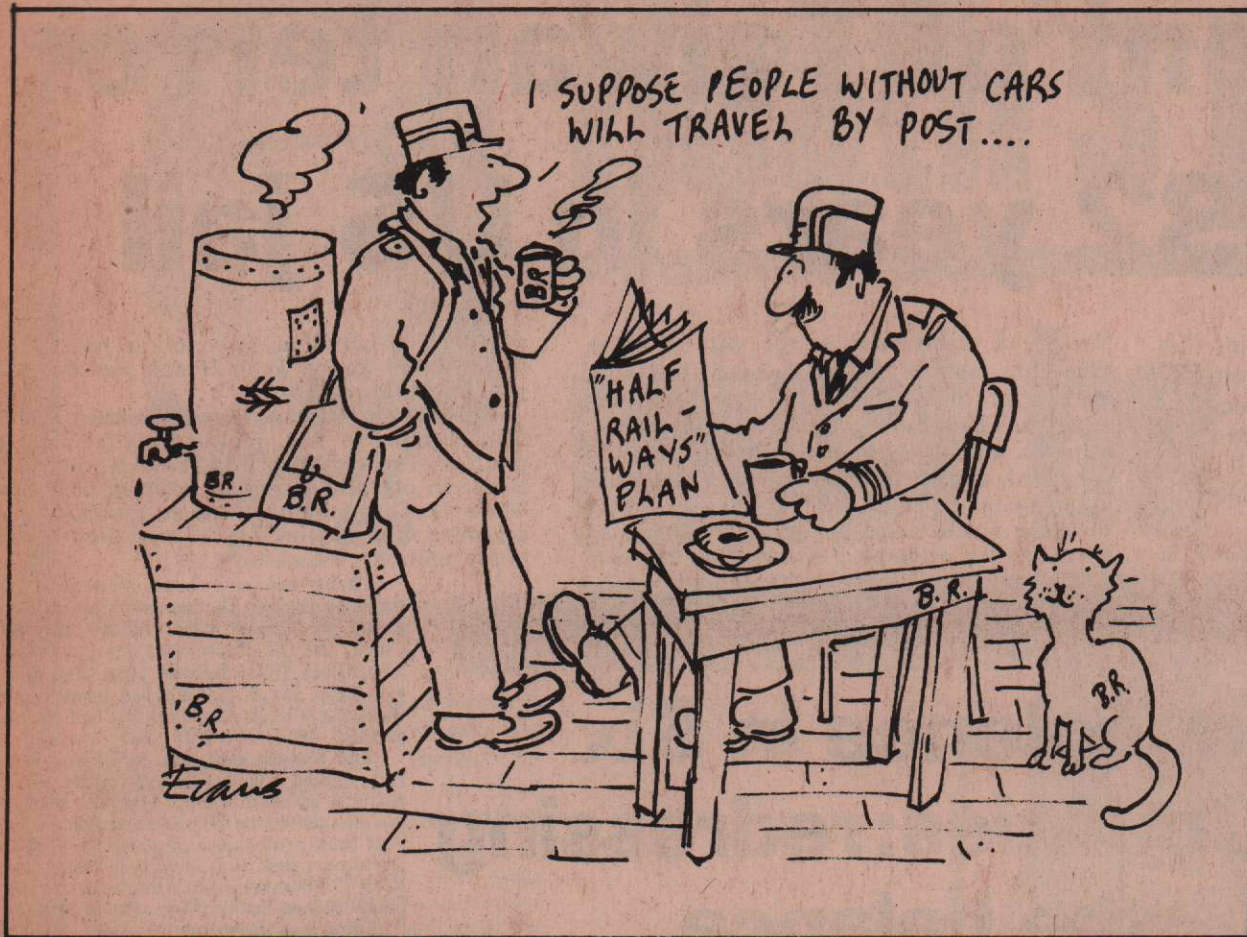
BETTER MEANS WORSE

ONCE upon a time the railway track mileage in this country was 26,000 miles. Come nationalisation and the railways were to become 'a public service'. Vast sums of money were paid to the former shareholders of the half bankrupt railway companies. Not surprisingly British Rail never recovered from this staggering burden.

Then a Tory government brought in a very highly paid 'management expert', Dr Beeching, to 'make the railways pay'. His method was to cut services. The track mileage, after Beeching's surgery, was reduced to 11,700 miles.

Naturally this meant less passengers as well as less railwaymen and British Rail staggered into fresh difficulties. Now there are plans for still more cuts to 'make the railways pay' by halving the remaining track.

On top of the massive rundown already achieved a further 25,000 railwaymen will be redundant. Railway users will get a still worse service. Road haulage firms will coin money, roads will be still more congested, air more polluted but the profiteers will be happy. Profits before people. That was the aim of the old style 'stand on your own two feet' Heath government and that is the aim of the new style 'incomes policy' Heath government.



COTTONS WARS

Andy capped

YOU'D think from reading the press last week that Michael Foot's election to the Labour Party executive had brought the nation teetering to the edge of the Red Revolution—a not inappropriate term, as most of the press coverage of the conference seemed to have been written through a Watney-induced haze.

Foot's sweeping victory was evidence, it seemed, of the growing leftwards drift of the party and the grip of the unions.

Strange then that block votes—with one exception—helped re-elect a staunch pillar of the extreme right wing of the party, none other than our old friend Alderman Andrew Cunningham, North East regional boss of the General and Municipal Workers Union.

Alderman Cunningham was named in the Poulson bankruptcy case. He enjoyed a free holiday in the sunny police state of Portugal and his wife was employed briefly by Poulson. There have been rumblings of discontent among trade unionists in the North East over Cunningham's connection with Poulson, together with a chain of part-time jobs, including the local police authority and the airport authority, which, they feel, necessarily compromise his role as an independent trade union negotiator.

But up went the card votes for Andy at Blackpool last week to keep him on the executive. Among the block votes was that of the Transport Workers, led by that left-wing demon Jack Jones. The only major union among the giants that couldn't stomach supporting Cunningham this year was the Engineers.

THE Chinese government pulled out all the stops on Sunday to greet a visiting group of Westerners. A vast banquet was laid on by the People's

FUNCTIONS OF SHOP STEWARDS — RULES AND POLICIES

For the purpose of representing membership on matters affecting their employment, a shop steward or equivalent representative shall be elected by the membership in a defined working area or at a branch meeting by a show of hands or ballot as may from time to time be determined. Special elections shall be held on the requisition of the membership concerned or at defined periods but in any case elections shall take place at least once every two years. The representative so elected shall be in compliance and act in accordance with Union Rules and Policies. The Regional Committee or its authorised sub-committee may have authority to withdraw credentials of a shop steward or equivalent representative in circumstances where it is considered that the representative is not acting in accordance with Union Rules and Policy, subject to the right of appeal as provided for in these rules. Shop stewards shall receive the fullest support and protection from the Union, and immediate inquiry shall be undertaken by the appropriate trade group or district committee into every case of dismissal of a shop steward with a view to preventing victimisation, either open or concealed. Shop stewards are not authorised to initiate or continue industrial action on behalf of the Union. This authority is vested only in the General Executive Council, its Finance and General Purposes Committee and the General Secretary.

HOW the Transport Workers Union fights the Industrial Relations Act: pictured above is the inside of the new TGWU shop stewards' credential card. The old card had no 'rules' for stewards, just space for names and workplace. Now the card carries five paragraphs about the stewards' function. The final one is most interesting, stressing that stewards cannot call industrial action, a tacit acceptance of the Act's provisions against 'unconstitutional action'. Amazing what happens to opponents of the Act once they cough up £55,000 in fines.

Daily, China's main newspaper. Who were the visiting revolutionaries who will return home to write glowing accounts of the wonders of Mao's China? Lord Thomson of Fleet and seven other hacks from Times Newspapers.

Bed sores

IF the Tories are so concerned about the parlous state of the country's finances why are they throwing away millions to help build new hotels? (It's a purely rhetorical question: don't bother to write in.)

The government's grant scheme for new hotels runs out next March and there has been a flood of applications from builders anxious not to miss out on the free sweeties from Ted 'Stand on your own feet' Heath.

Since the scheme started three years ago (that's right, under the Labour government) a total of £9 million has been paid out to 840 applicants, including £2 million to date in the current financial year. The scheme applies to new hotels of 10 or more bedrooms or 25 bedrooms in the Greater London area. By 20 September, the largest number of grant applications (323) came from the Greater London area, with a total of £22.57 million applied for.

If you imagine from all this that

English hotels are bursting at the seams, prepare to be disillusioned. In June, only 59 per cent of bedspace was occupied according to figures from the English Tourist Board. In July the figures went up to 65 per cent. The London average was much higher, up to 75 per cent in July. Greater London had an extra 4500 rooms this year thanks to the building bonanza.

Only unpleasant subversives would suggest that the thousands of empty rooms up and down the country could be used to provide accommodation for homeless families. It isn't possible—the government would have to subsidise them and that is totally contrary to their principles.

MAKE LOVE, not war, the famous slogan of the American peace movement, understandably was never popular among service chiefs but its literal application among the ranks is now viewed as akin to treason. Last year, 23 per cent of 'female personnel' in the US Air Force alone became pregnant. 'Pregnancy', declares the US Solicitor-General, 'diverts personnel from the primary function of fighting and thereby impairs the readiness and effectiveness of the armed forces.'

Jermyn's treat

A BIRTHDAY PRESENT to beat all birthday presents came to Earl Jermyn last month, son and heir of the Marquess of Bristol. To celebrate his 18th birthday, the earl was given a life interest of £4 million of family land.

He will become life tenant of between 7000 and 8000 of some of the richest acres in East Anglia. This is just over half of the 15,000 acres of the Bristol estates, 10,000 of which are in Lincolnshire and the rest in Essex and Suffolk.

But the gift is not all it seems. The Marquess did not have filial affection as his chief priority: transferring the land will enable him to avoid estate duty.

Ticked off

HOUSING manager of overspill Haverhill in West Suffolk, Pat Hewitt, has been conducting a blitz on tenants in arrears with their rent. The bailiffs have been called in and are grabbing goods left, right and centre.

One of the zealous bailiffs impounded a nice-looking watch from one tenant, who didn't seem the least put out by his loss. The watch belongs to Hewitt, who had given it to the tenant to repair for him.



China: check the record not the rhetoric

THE recent debate over China has raised the question of whether the International Socialists live up to their name. IS has consistently criticised the Chinese regime despite protestations from certain quarters that it is 'progressive' or displays a 'broad revolutionary ideal'.

This is because the rhetoric of the Chinese revolution counts for nothing when we actually look at what the regime gets up to. Socialists will always find themselves on the side of the oppressors, a statement that supporters of Chinese foreign policy might find hard to swallow.

Why did China support the West Pakistan generals in their murder of Bengali workers and peasants? Why did China back the Ceylonese government in its crushing of the left-wing rebels. Why the trade with South Africa and Rhodesia?

The International Socialists would only be misleading people if they pretended that China set an example for an alternative society. In no way is the Chinese bureaucracy internationalist and its commitment to permanent revolution is totally nil.

The apologists for this regime will one day be betrayed as were Russian admirers by the revelations of Khrushchev. Instead of romanticising the ludicrous claims of Chairman Mao, IS will continue to support oppressed people everywhere and in particular will get on with the most important job for any serious revolutionary—fighting our ruling class here at home.

The acid test of our success will be whether the individual industrial actions we support can be turned into a cohesive political force capable of getting rid of the Tories for ever. PETER MARTIN, Croydon.

Opponent of Taiwan terror faces 32 years in US jail

TZU-TSAI CHENG awaits trial in this country on an extradition order from the US. His 'crime' was to have been executive secretary of the World United Formosans for Independence, an organisation fighting the Chiang Kai-shek terror regime in Taiwan.

At a demonstration organised by WUFI in

New York, to protest at the visit of Chian Ching-kou, son of Chiang Kai-shek and Vice Minister of the regime to procure funds and weapons, Cheng was arrested. He had gone to help his brother-in-law Peter Huang, who had just fired a shot at Ching-kuo and was being beaten up by the police.

Cheng was subsequently charged with complicity in the attempted assassination and con-

victed by an all-white, all-American jury, after pleading not guilty. Peter Huang pleaded sole guilt for the attempt.

WUFI is an anti-imperialist, nationalist movement fighting to free Taiwan from its present position of pawn to the world's super powers. It is not an organisation of the working class, but while the Chiang Kai-shek regime continues any organisation is menaced by the repression of the secret police.

Cheng has now been reduced to a political pawn in the hands of the US. As a sop to Taiwan after Nixon's visit to China, the US government demanded his extradition from Sweden even though it was fully aware that he had been living there for a year after jumping bail in the states.

The Swedes gave way to US pressure and denied Cheng human rights as a political refugee. When Cheng was rushed unconscious to the US plane Swedish police beat back protestors at the airport, including airport staff. In Copenhagen Cheng was given 12 hours emergency treatment before being rushed to Gatwick. He is now in Pentonville in the prison hospital.

His case will probably come up at Bow Street Court in early November. After that it will be raised to a higher court and even to the House of Lords in every effort to fight the extradition order. This means funds are urgently needed from every union branch and every IS branch.

Cheng appeals to all organisations fighting exploitation and oppression. If he is extradited to the US he faces a maximum sentence of 32 years' imprisonment and the greater danger of extradition to Taiwan and execution. TZU-TSAI CHENG DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 313/315 Caledonian Road, London N1.

LETTERS

Sectarian violence in Six Counties: redressing the balance...

MY REPORTS of events in Northern Ireland were said to be 'partisan from the point of view of Catholic sectarianism' and as reading 'like a public relations job for the bigots of the Provisional IRA', according to some Walthamstow readers last week.

I would ask them to re-read my articles for they appear to have overlooked the continual criticisms I have made of the Provisional IRA's lack of working-class politics, which is responsible for their apparently sectarian actions. I have criticised the increasing number of Protestant sectarian attacks in a similar manner. It is necessary to point out the political assumptions that lie behind them and this is what I have attempted to do.

The reason I have concentrated in more detail on Loyalist sectarianism is because the British press has almost totally ignored this phenomenon, implying that all the violence comes from one side only. It has been necessary to redress the balance.

But in doing so I have been at pains not to appear to support one type of sectarianism against another. Unlike the writers of the attack on me, I do not blame the Provisional IRA for sectarianism. Sectarianism is the inevitable corollary of British rule in Northern Ireland.

The UDA is not a 'direct consequence'

of the Provo campaign, no matter what the Official IRA might say. The UDA and the Provos are the inevitable products of the disintegration of Unionism as a political and economic force, in the absence of a revolutionary socialist party.

This could have united the Protestant and Catholic working class in common struggle against capitalism and imperialism, overcoming the Loyalist workers' belief that their future lies in maintaining the British connection and the Catholic workers' belief that their future lies with simply removing the border.

There have certainly been sectarian actions from members or supporters of the Provisional IRA, but these do not amount to the total content of their campaign, unless one argues, as the Walthamstow comrades appear to do, that it is sectarian to fight against imperialism in the first place.

Although the Loyalist workers may

be subjectively pro-imperialist, their objective interest is not and never can be on the side of imperialism. The Provos fail to see this precisely because they do not see the present struggles in terms of classes, but rather in terms of nations. They identify Loyalist workers with imperialism, both subjectively and objectively.

Socialists who claim that Protestant workers do have a real interest in maintaining the union with Britain fall foul of the same nationalist trap in a different form which actually prevents the raising of socialist politics in the immediate future. MIKE MILLER, Belfast.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive first post Monday. Type or write on one side of the paper only. Letters should be not more than 250 words

We're laughing at the nastiest jokes

SUSAN BARNETT is right to remark on Johnny Speight's 'competence' in her review *Till Death Us Do Part* (30 September). Not just competent, he's bloody brilliant, because he has managed to get us laughing at the nastiest old jokes about blacks, queers and women and of course he's managed to make racialism and all the current stereotypes seem like something out of the Dandy.

Alf Garnett's views are only too prevalent, as we all know too well. They must be eradicated, not elevated into common badinage.

Let us hear the jokes attacking racialists, Enoch Powell and big business first, then perhaps we can start laughing.—JOANNA BORNAT, RICHARD BORNAT, Wivenhoe, Colchester.

Porn: the wrong target

DAVID EAST's article on the Longford Committee's report on 'pornography' (30 September) missed the real criticism. This is not that the committee made no real investigation and ignored almost all the scientific research. Nor is it that they've not reported that almost all this research shows that outlawing sex porn increases people's sexual problems.

The real point is that Lord Porn ignored the real 'outrages', 'indecencies' and pornography in 'our' society. And so did David East's analysis.

He took sex porn out of its context and cause and thereby weakened his counter-attack. The real pornography is that thousands of people are unemployed while thousands are homeless; the violence done to kids by lousy education and dead-end jobs; the fact that workers' families are having to go without meat because of its price.

Longford ignored the real deviants, prostitutes and hard porn merchants like Powell, the British Army in Ireland and the US in Vietnam. He ignored it because to his committee, and unfortunately many workers, this is taken for granted. We don't.

Sexual pornography must be located in the exploitation of the wage-labour and commodity system. Of course leers, smutty jokes, porn papers and sexual assaults on women are a problem. But women's enemies are not men.

The real enemies are the rulers of this society and their supporters. We should ignore Longford's distractions and build a revolutionary party to destroy this 'commonsense' pornography and create a society where production is for people and not for profit.—BOB KORNEICH, Bradford.

THE B MEN RETURN

THE DEMAND is growing here for the disbanding of the Ulster Defence Regiment, the official state militia that replaced the hated 'B' Specials in 1970.

The UDR was intended to be non-sectarian, avoiding the blatant discrimination practised in the Specials, who were recruited through the Orange Order, and whose sole function was to terrorise the Catholic minority.

In the early days a number of Catholics did join the UDR, on the advice of the Social Democrat MP Austin Currie. But there was a mass exodus of Catholics after internment, and since then the UDR has become virtually identical to the old style 'B' Specials, with all the sectarian trappings of that organisation.

It was inconceivable that any armed body required to be loyal to the basically sectarian state that exists in Northern Ireland could itself stand above the sectarian divide.

Although the UDR has not yet been fully mobilised in urban Catholic areas, the demand from the right wing is that it should be. Loyalists feel that the British Army is too soft with anti-Unionist demonstrators, and that if the UDR was given the chance it would soon put a stop to 'Fenian nonsense.'

LIKENESS

In days gone by, Loyalist extremists called for the mobilisation of the 'B' men for riot control and it is significant that they now urge the use of the UDR in similar situations.

There are not many institutions of the state in which Loyalist extremists are prepared to put their trust these days. Their willingness to accept the UDR is an indication of its growing likeness to the 'B' Specials.

The legal system and the mass media have done their utmost to play down the increasing number of sectarian incidents involving UDR men. In recent weeks, two UDR men and one ex-UDR man have appeared in court on attempted murder charges of a sectarian nature.

The ex-UDR man, John Haveron, is accused of attempting to murder three Catholics at the site of the Imperial Hotel, blown up a few days previously,



'B' men and victim in 1968. UDR men are worthy successors

by Loyalist extremists. But if the case of the other accused UDR men is anything to go by, then Haveron has little to worry about.

This case—which ended last week—involved a full-time sergeant instructor in the UDR, Peter Walley, from the Shankill area of Belfast. Walley was charged with the attempted murder of two Catholics at a taxi office last June.

At 2.30am on 1 June, Walley and some friends entered the office and ordered a taxi. They left the office before the taxi arrived, but Walley returned alone and shot both men inside three times each. He then went home, without reporting the incident. His victims called the police and an ambulance.

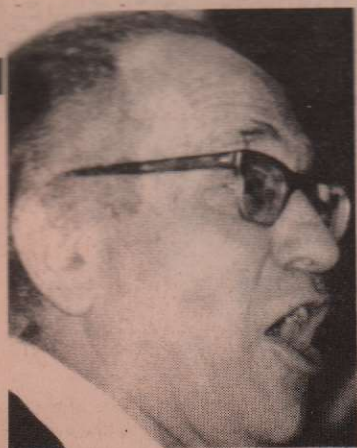
At his trial Walley claimed that one of the men he had shot pulled a gun on him first and he fired in self-defence. In spite of the fact that absolutely no

evidence was offered to substantiate this claim, it was accepted by the court, and Walley was found not guilty on both charges of attempted murder. He was sentenced to 18 months for maliciously wounding only one of the men.

The prosecution ignored some obvious questions. For instance, why had Walley, a member of the security forces, not arrested the man who allegedly pulled a gun on him? Why did he go home without informing the police? Why did the alleged gunman call the police?

The state is clearly more determined to preserve the reputation and morale of its armed sections than it is to come to grips with the rising wave of sectarian shootings.

The other UDR man who is currently on an attempted murder charge, James Farnan, allegedly shot down a civilian from a passing car. This is the manner in



TONY CLIFF

IS Executive Committee member

Heath's pay fraud must be smashed

BADLY BRUISED by its confrontation with such key groups of workers as the miners and the dockers, the Tory government has turned to 'prices and incomes policy'—the tired old weapon used by the Wilson government.

If the unions will accept that wage increases should be restricted to not more than £2 a week in the next year then the government has offered in exchange to restrain prices and to bring in 'threshold agreements' that would give 20p more for each percentage increase in the cost of living above 6 per cent.

The plan has been presented by the Tory press as 'aid to the lower paid'. Vic Feather agreed, saying that the scheme contains 'a good deal of fair play'.

And there is no doubt that the problem of the lower paid is serious. Three million men and four million women are paid less than £20 a week before stoppages. But will they be helped by Heath's package deal?

First, workers are not promised a £2 wage rise. Increases are to be restricted to £2—a significant difference. If well-organised workers manage to get only £2, there is no guarantee weaker sections will get the same.

But, for argument's sake, assume that the seven million lower-paid workers get a rise of £2 a week. Because of the 'poverty trap' many of them will be worse off straight away, without taking into account future price rises. The reason is that they will lose many means-tested benefits.

EQUAL PAY FREEZE

A report in the latest issue of the Political Quarterly shows that a man with four children earning £22 a week now has a net income of £25.08, thanks to the Family Income Supplement and rent and rate rebates. But if he gets a £2 wage rise, his net disposable income will fall to £23.75 because his higher wage level will disqualify him from certain benefits and make him eligible for income tax.

The net disposable income of a family with two children earning £20 a week is now £19.04. It will fall to £18.39 if the breadwinner receives a £2 pay rise.

The High Tory weekly, The Economist, was not slow to show that Heath's scheme will undermine still further the efforts of working women to achieve equal pay: 'The freeze freezes further progress towards equal pay for women and women would anyway have stood to get big pay increases in the coming year, since by law their wages were to have been brought up to 90 per cent of men's rates by the end of 1973.'

Militancy is the best way to help lower-paid and weaker sections of workers. The strongest, best-organised sections win increases and the rest of the working class keeps up by the simple process of comparing their own wages with those who have forged ahead.

When the miners broke through the government wage 'norm' of 7 per cent this year by winning 20 per cent they helped other groups to beat the norm, too. The miners had raised the 'unofficial norm'.

If the strongest and best-organised workers are held back then the whole working class will be held back with them.

IN ORDER to sell the deal it is possible that the Tories will include a limitation or even freeze on dividends. For years one way of selling the idea of incomes policy to the mass of people was to pretend that dividends and profits are the same thing or at least that dividends make up a decisive proportion of profits.



The miners' strike raised the 'unofficial' wages norm

A dividend freeze for a wage freeze is not a bargain at all. Wages are the payment workers get for the sale of their labour-power but dividends are not the payment capitalists get for their ownership of capital. Dividends are only part of the payment to the shareholder.

If a worker gets a wage rise of £2 a week instead of £3, the extra £1 is not saved for him to collect later. It is lost forever.

It is different for a shareholder. If he gets a dividend of £2 from a profit of £5, the remaining £3 is probably transferred to investment and will come back to him as a capital gain a few years later. A dividend freeze would not suppress capital gains but would increase them.

TAX FIDDLES

And the rich have other ways of getting round the £2 limit. If they are directors of big companies they will get fatter expense accounts, use bigger company cars, have trust funds, golden handshakes and tax fiddles.

Profit is the driving force of capitalist growth. The higher the rate of growth the higher the growth of profit in proportion. Productivity of labour in July was 8½ per cent higher than a year ago. Heath forecasts a rise in output of 5 per cent in the next year and, with prices increasing by another 5 per cent, profits are bound to rise steeply if wage levels are kept at a rate of increase of 9 per cent.

Price control is a central feature of

Heath's package. It is as phoney as the rest. Wages are negotiated and wage standards apply to a multitude of workers. But prices are not negotiated.

Three million price changes are made each year. It is unlikely that the government could keep track of them all. And there are many ways to cover up price increases.

As *The Economist* puts it: 'Because consumer goods are not homogenous [one distinct item], it is always going to be possible to argue back that an apparent price rise is due to an improvement in quality, a change in technology or simply the cost of re-styling.'

And the government itself is pushing prices up. Value Added Tax comes in next February and will be levied at 10 per cent on the price of most goods. The government expects to screw an extra £1600 million a year through VAT and most of it will be paid by the consumer. Millions of tenants are already having their incomes slashed by the Fair Rents Act and joining the Common Market will push prices up even more.

SOCIALISTS in the trade unions should develop a five-pronged offensive to the Tory £2 swindle.

1 Even if the TUC or separate unions agree to some form of amended pay-price deal, the rank and file must make sure that the union leaders cannot deliver the goods for the Tories.

One million local government workers have a claim in for £4 a week. 200,000 road haulage workers have a claim for £7. 280,000 miners are looking for £4.50 to £7

more. 320,000 agricultural workers are seeking £8.80 and 380,000 teachers have a claim for £5 to £8 a week. If any of them breaks through the £2 norm, then Heath's policy will be in a complete shambles.

2 Massive propaganda is needed to expose the phoney nature of the Tory policy. Millions of trade unionists are being conned by its appeal to 'fairness'.

3 The struggle against the Tory scheme must be independent of the union bureaucracy. It is true that the union leaders haven't welcomed the deal with open arms. They would like to revise it and have prepared their own scheme. But in principle they accept the need for incomes policy if British capitalism is to survive. The argument with Heath is not over principles but over how much say the union leaders will have in running the policy.

The fight against incomes policy demands a struggle against the class collaboration policies of the TUC and the trade union leaders.

4 We must not leave it to the Tories to talk about the 'national interest', the plight of the lower paid and the pensioners while trade unionists fight for their own sectional interests. A campaign for the £25 minimum wage, equal pay for women and a £10 pension must be at the centre of our agitation. And we should organise to use our industrial strength through demonstrations and strikes to achieve these demands.

5 The struggle against the Tory incomes policy—and any Labour version to come—must not be left just at the economic level. The struggle for the hearts and minds of the workers is now more important than ever before.

THE UNEQUAL

By talking in terms of the 'national interest', the ruling class is attempting to divert attention from the crucial question of the distribution of income and wealth between the classes.

One reason why many workers are prepared to accept arguments in favour of wage control is because the inequalities of wealth are either taken for granted or not really appreciated. The low-paid worker sees the printer or docker getting £35 a week. He does not see the man who gets £500 a week for doing nothing.

It is important to drive home the meaning of inequality with a wealth of facts and figures. Once they are grasped, no worker should feel guilty about hammering the employers for every penny.

It is not only propaganda but practical experience that teaches workers that the different parts of the economy are interwoven. It is impossible to concentrate on wages alone without paying attention to government employment policies, government and monopoly price policies and inflation. Questions of the balance of payments, the activities and priorities of the national economy and anti-union legislation have to be faced up to, not avoided. Rank and file leaders must all the time stress that these problems have alternative, socialist, solutions.

Socialists and trade unionists must oppose completely any incomes policy under capitalism, no matter how 'fair' it is dressed up to look. It serves only to increase the burden on the workers in the interests of a system over which they have no control.

We have to counter to capitalist exploitation the idea of a socialist society where the means of production will be the property of all working people. Only when those who produce the wealth control the wealth will it be possible to talk about a truly equitable incomes policy.

Hammer bosses for every penny

Freedom of the press - freedom for a few powerful men

VICIOUS ANIMAL! screamed a recent Daily Mail headline, dutifully echoing the opinion of a learned judge who had sentenced a Hull docker for defending a picket line against the police.

And power workers will not have forgotten how nearly two years ago one of their number, interviewed on the David Frost TV show during the work-to-rule, was set upon by Frost and members of the audience like a deer savaged by hungry lions.

But when printing workers at the Evening Standard refused to print a viciously anti-union cartoon by Jak, shrieks of abuse were hurled at their alleged 'undemocratic' action.

How often those who control the mass media urge us to be grateful for having what they call a 'free press', and a TV system untrammelled by state control. As the Duke of Edinburgh wrote in 1966: 'A genuine democracy can only flourish if it is exposed to the scrutiny of a free and uncensored press.'

It is doubtful whether the noble duke has ever had an article turned down or censored by any newspaper. But when SOGAT members recently demanded from Hugh Cudlipp, the Daily Mirror boss, the right to reply to scurrilous attacks on the jailed dockers, he retorted sharply that their views were already represented in the paper.

In a similar vein, Sir Robert Fraser, former head of the Independent Television Authority, defended the introduction of commercial television by arguing that 'the old system of monopoly in Britain was carried away by a wave of democratic thought and feeling.'

The 'democratic thought and feeling' were no doubt virtuous attitudes, coming as they did from such stalwart defenders as Sir Lew Grade and Sir Sidney Bernstein, whose TV companies made millions of pounds profit from the deal.

Millions

The mass media reflect the way in which, under capitalism today, a tiny handful of giant enterprises have concentrated within their hands nearly all the wealth and means of production. Nine out of ten national and local newspapers are owned by seven powerful combines, which, for all their pleading of poverty, made vast profits last year.

Associated Newspapers (Daily Mail, Evening News) made £7.47 million before tax. Rupert Murdoch's News International (The Sun, News of the World) made £6.57 million, and the Thomson Organisation (The Times, Sunday Times) made £9.5 million. These vast combines don't merely own the press, but have substantial holdings in other fields such as television, publishing, transport, shipbuilding and merchant banking.



MURDOCH: His News International made £6,570,000 profit last year

It is hardly surprising, then, that the politics of those who own and control the media are solidly conservative. Censorship is not exercised merely by the state. Owners and editors of newspapers, heads of TV companies are quite prepared to exclude material which they regard as politically dangerous.

The freedom of the press and television is the freedom of their Tory owners to write and produce what they please, and in particular to denounce workers struggling to maintain decent living standards.

Where owners don't themselves exercise direct editorial control, there is nevertheless an accepted political framework beyond which it is understood one does not venture. Not that many of them would want to anyway. Editors and producers are clearly selected because they are willing to conform in general with the ideas and values of capitalist society.

They see their role as not only making profits for their owners, but as bolstering the ideological fabric of existing society, upholding the values of free enterprise, competition and the acquisitive society. They are, most of them, willing tools of the media bosses.

A second source of pressure that ensures that the material produced by newspapers and TV

remains overwhelmingly conservative is that exercised by advertisers on whom most are heavily dependent. Anything that could offend these powerful outside interests, or which could result in the reduction of circulation or ratings, on which advertising rates are based, has to be carefully avoided.

Thirdly, in spite of all claims to the contrary, the state does exercise a direct influence on the media. Ministries go in for 'news-management' to engineer support for government policies. The disgustingly dishonest TV advert on the recent rent rise law is a good example.

The Tories have also resorted to a variety of pressures and threats to ensure that events in Northern Ireland are not reported in any way that might lead people to question their policy.

Silent censor

Though publicly-owned media like the BBC are officially independent of government, they are yet steeped in an official climate of opinion which ensures conformity to the general ideology of capitalism. A former controller of BBC TV, Stuart Hood, has described how BBC programmes are developed on the basis of an unwritten code prescribing 'what is admissible and not admissible, which is gradually absorbed by those persons involved in programme-making.'

This unwritten code doesn't exclude political controversy. It merely ensures that virtually all debate takes place within safe limits, within the limits of the consensus rather than outside it. The newspapers and TV reinforce a general political conservatism not by silencing all dissent, but by presenting any opinion more radical than mild reformism as curious and eccentric. A sprinkling of debate, say between Tory and Labour politicians, strengthens the illusion that we live in a free society.

But the mass media in fact devote more time and space to entertainment than to political news and comment. In this field, the owners aim to make money rather than to push conservative ideology

Propagandists

The result is the same. The political messages are implicit.

The heroes of novels by Mickey Spillane or Ian Fleming are in no sense political activists, yet quite clearly they are paragons of anti-communist virtues.

In a TV show such as Dixon of Dock Green, the police are portrayed as the friend of the common man, a picture that hardly squares with their real role as the armed defenders of capitalist property.

In a show such as The Persuaders, the image projected by Curtis and Moore is that of charming, amiable chaps, always ready to fly to the rescue of anyone in distress, especially helpless women. This image conceals the fact that such men could only have reached the top by ruthless exploitation and cheating their fellow men.

To make money, the media owners must appeal to the lowest cultural tastes and the conservative prejudices of the majority. The result is that much of the material processed for mass consumption—cheap thrillers, sex and violence stories, trivial family sagas—reveals a systematic debasement of cultural standards.

This is usually justified by the media bosses claiming that the majority of people are ignorant and stupid. Cecil King, former head of the International Publishing Corporation said: 'It is only the people who conduct newspapers . . . who have any idea quite how indifferent, quite how stupid the great bulk of the British public are.'

The bosses of newspapers and TV also perform a useful function for the ruling class as a whole. By offering workers a consistent diet of triviality, brutality and sensationalism, they systematically conceal the most crucial aspects of capitalist society and at the same time attempt to maintain workers in a passive and uncritical role.

This is why the mass media can only be transformed as a result of the working class taking control of society and all its institutions. Under socialism the media would come under social ownership, and so would be jointly controlled by the contributors and representatives of working people.

SABBY SAGALL

LORD THOMSON SWALLOWS THE TIMES, cartoon by Scarfe

NEWS

Forget the 'c'

THIS is a personal account of reporting, and watching other journalists report, a difficult political story for the British press.

By 'difficult' I mean a story which powerful political interests—the government, business—are anxious to see described in their terms so that public opinion is generally favourable to them and disapproving of their opponents.

It is an attempt to explain how, in practice, the press presents news in a light favourable to the ruling establishment, and why journalists go along with it when so many of them see themselves—and the press generally—as the fearless and outspoken critics of society.

The story I was covering happened to be the conflict in Northern Ireland. It could as easily have been any of the recent big industrial disputes, a housing story or a trial of political activists, anything where the official version of what is going on was likely to be in stark contrast to the experience of the ordinary people involved.

In Northern Ireland it suits the government that the news be presented in terms of a struggle between the IRA, portrayed as terrorists and thugs keeping a stranglehold on the Catholic community by

intimidation, and the British government aided by the British Army, patient, tolerant and doing everything in its power to reassure and pacify the people.

Anyone who has been in Northern Ireland knows that this is at best a garish distortion of the facts. Yet by and large it is the picture which emerges from press and television. Why?

Most left-wingers, if asked, would believe that there is a conspiracy between government and newspaper proprietors to ensure that their newspapers only print what is suitable to the interests of the ruling class. Proprietors then dictate to editors, who suppress any stories which are not suitable.

Life would in many ways be simpler for people who worked on newspapers if it worked like that. For a start, journalists, many of whom are reasonably honest, conscientious workers, would organise to resist it.

On the rare occasions when a story or a television programme about Ireland has been suppressed outright, there have been angry meetings, union deputations to proprietors, protests to broadcasting authorities and so on. It has not happened very often

because such cases are no need for propriety stories because the media is distorted towards adequately without measures. For under pressures, psychological, that discussed.

The material is taken for granted. Many want to earn a living as possible. The official version of look into things that you know editorial line.

Despite their how being watchdogs for journalists are as a whole insecure about their own and jealous of the organised trades union whom they are dependent journalists, and they are unlikely to rebel press publishing or shop floor disputes Northern Ireland.

The position is a liberal newspaper like or The Observer, who

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NEWSPAPERS ATTACK THE WORKERS

WHEN, two years ago, the press and TV brought out the big guns against the power workers, they kept ammunition for the miners, dockers and building workers.

According to the righteous media the power workers were nothing but heartless robots hell bent on turning off every kidney machine in the country.

The miners were 'holding the country to ransom' and were patronisingly told by the so-called papers of the people, the Sun and the Mirror, not to 'let down their friends.'

The dockers and building workers were 'brutal thugs'.

Here are a few putrid reminders of the propaganda that gushed forth from the media during the strikes.

Paul Einzig, Daily Telegraph, February:

'Had the British nation been inspired in 1940 by the same spirit as . . . in 1972, a report would have been produced favouring surrender to Hitler . . . Likewise the surrender to the miners is certain to encourage the enemy within, The Trade Unions, to exploit the situation created by the surrender to the miners and to achieve additional surrenders.'

MINERS' WORK 'A PICNIC'

'There is only one answer . . . we should have the guts to put up with equal hardships for the sake of defending our standard of living against their insatiable greed.'

Colin Coote, Daily Telegraph, March:

'The extremists, whom I call 'Wreckers', have acquired an immense psychological boost . . . the reward of many years efforts to permeate the unions.'



LORD THOMSON: £9,500,000

'1972 differs from 1926 or 1921 . . . when the miner's life was harsh. But in 1972 the demand is for a top wage. As for danger, 92 miners out of some 280,000 were killed compared with road deaths of 7700.'

'Work underground is a picnic compared with what it was . . . the proof of the improvement is that there is no shortage of recruits for the mines.'

'In 1921 Hyde Park bristled with volunteer defenders of the interests of the public, in 1972 one essential service, electricity supply, collapsed in one afternoon.'

'The miners' meat will be the nation's poison. The poison is particularly vicious.'

'On the maps of my childhood there was a legend: "British possessions coloured red". It would be tragic if, now that she has no possessions, Britain herself became Red.'

So much for the Tory Telegraph, but what did the 'newspapers of the people' have to say?

The Daily Mirror, February: 'Their course of action is plain: get back to work. Then Britain will start to get on the move again.'

'The miners have won, what more do they want?' scolded the Sun. 'Wilberforce offered them perhaps the most generous pay award in history . . . and still they ask for more . . . The Sun will not back them any further. Nor will the people of Britain.'

THE CRY OF 'LAW AND ORDER'

On 17 August the Sun invited Tory MP Sally Oppenheim to write in the opinion column:

'As many of us relax and enjoy our summer holidays is there really any need to be concerned about law and order?'

'I believe there is, and I am not talking about the more obvious forms of lawlessness. What I am talking about is recent events in Britain's dockland. Possibly the most disturbing example was when a policeman was knocked unconscious.' (This was at Scunthorpe, and several dockers ended up in hospital, though Oppenheim fails to mention it.)

'As a woman I am not at all surprised that it was the women of Scunthorpe who demonstrated against the picketing dockers.'

In this way the press makes a smokescreen of selected information with talk of 'public opinion', of 'wreckers', of 'greediness' and 'thuggery', implying that the national interest is at stake, that fascism is coming in a 'red' cloak. Where, they cry, 'have the loyal defenders of the public good gone?'

As the red herrings are fed to the public and newspaper profits go up, the royal family gets a pay rise and the press screams: 'Leave the poor Queen alone'. And the 'greedy thuggish wreckers' go back to their ill-paid and insecure jobs.

GINNY WEST

IN A SLANT

'Conspiracy' theory...

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journalists of left-wing views are likely to be working. Such papers express strong views about the duty of the press to get at the facts. And journalists on these papers have protested about their coverage of Ireland. Yet the journalists involved have always been isolated, even from their fellow-workers.

At first, before the British government became directly involved in Northern Ireland, it was recognised and the British papers reported that the Catholic minority had legitimate grievances due to the one-party domination of the province by the Unionist government.

The British government was willing to redistribute what little power there was in Ulster to stabilise things there. The Catholics' grievances were to be dealt with and the army was there to see fair play.

At first most reporters were happy enough with the simple army-loving stories. Most of us had been in the British army, and were as sentimental about the British Tommy as were our editors, proprietors and the public.

But another important reason why stories like those about the torture of prisoners took so long to get out

was that given the choice between the word of an English soldier and a hysterical Irishman, most of us felt happier with the former.

It was also easier and safer to get information from the army. They had an efficient press officer on the end of a phone while the IRA, operating from working class houses, had nothing so competent.

This is a big factor in the coverage of all news. The authorities—whether the town hall, the TUC or a government ministry—have the information machinery at their disposal, while tenants about to be evicted, a rank-and-file committee in the middle of a dispute, do not.

But to get back to Northern Ireland. Quite a lot of reporters did begin to be dissatisfied with the official view of what was going on. If they worked on supposedly liberal papers, proud of their tradition of letting journalists tell events as they saw them, their position became interesting.

The most insidious pressure on a journalist working on such a paper is an appeal to his professionalism. He is reminded to be 'objective', 'impartial', not to get 'too involved' in

the story. Any intelligent reporter is likely to form an opinion on a story but if these are 'awkward' (left-wing) he will be told that a reporter should not have views which cloud his judgment.

The reporter in this situation has two choices. He voices his opinion, writes his stories and does not get them printed. If his editor is tolerant (editors on liberal papers do not like to sack people for their political views, if at all avoidable) he is put to work where his opinions will not obtrude in such an aggravating fashion.

More often, because his whole training and instinct make him want to get what he writes into print, he compromises. He tells himself that it is better for him to write a story with some truth in it than leave the field to the politically reliable hack who will replace him.

Often he is used. The editor senses that it is time the miners, or the Catholics, got a bit of sympathy in the paper and sends him to do the report.

We live in a capitalist society with a capitalist press. It would be naive to a degree to expect that press to provide a platform for free and critical opinion of our government and institutions. Yet this is precisely what many journalists do believe.

CARLA GREENE

International Socialism 53



Lessons
of the
Sit-in
Decline
of
Reformism
Chile:
Time
for
decision
'Marxist'
Left
in
India
The
Fourth
International

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FORD: NOTHING LESS THAN £10 WILL DO

WITH five months to go to the end of the present Ford agreement, the 'shopping list' for the 1973 claim is already drawn up.

It was decided in Coventry last month by a conference of shop stewards from the 21 Ford plants in Britain, and apparently endorsed a week later in its entirety by a conference of joint works committee members and trade union officials on the national joint negotiating committee.

Already there has been criticism of the vagueness of the wage demand—which calls for 'a substantial increase'. Some stewards apparently believe that the official negotiators should not be tied to a fixed sum so as not to embarrass them!

This attitude becomes even more amazing when you bear in mind the Scanlon-Jones behind-the-scenes deal that led to the ending of the 1971 strike.



It is vital that the negotiators be tied to a fixed sum and that sum be £10—the approximate difference between the wages paid in the Midlands and those paid in Fords.

For years the miners allowed their representatives to demand 'substantial' wage increases—and the miners got very little. Earlier this year they insisted on a wage demand for a fixed sum—and won a tremendous victory in the face of a vicious campaign by government and press.

The 35-hour week has been bandied about at trade union conferences and the TUC for several years. Quite recently Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, wrote in the union's newspaper, *The Record*, that he was in favour of the 32-hour week with no loss of pay. We now have a chance to put these fine words into practice.

Ford were one of the first companies to concede the 40-hour week in 1961 after a long fight. Needless to say the negotiators then tried to sell the afternoon tea break for it.



And of course the 40-hour week, in Dagenham anyway, is somewhat theoretical given that the agreement stipulates a 'reasonable amount' of overtime—and some work more than 60 hours a week. This all indicates of course the relatively low wages being paid by Fords.

It is a real necessity that the four week holiday on average earnings is won. People on the line doing the same thing day after day, week after week, night after night, are quickly turned into robots—and four weeks away from this is a top priority.

Ford have always refused to pay the average earnings, taking into



The big walk-out: Dagenham workers leaving the factory at the start of the 1971 nine-week strike

Is this value for money?

1. A substantial wage increase
2. A shorter working week of 35 hours
3. A four-week annual holiday on average earnings
4. The same pension rights as staff
5. 100 per cent lay-off benefit
6. No time limit on the agreement
7. Opposition to a 'non-economic' demand clause as in the present agreement which stipulates that the unions cannot demand anything which would increase Ford's wage bill
8. Mutuality on line speeds
9. A status quo clause in the agreement so that if mutual agreement is not reached the work situation would remain as it was before negotiations took place

account shift payments, as holiday pay. This injustice must finally be ended.

The present pensions set-up also needs drastic reform. The demand is for the same terms as supervisory and staff workers. Many feel that the '30 years and out' would have been more appropriate.

Real criticism can be raised at the way in which the demands for mutuality and a status quo clause have found themselves at the bottom of the list again.

Ford have always believed that 'management has the right to manage' and this crude undemocratic attitude has always been accepted by the official negotiators. Any day of the week will find Ford operating this reactionary rule and many disputes have centred around this issue.

No agreement on this issue can of course guarantee anything, but it can become the basis for a long campaign to achieve something near human conditions inside the plant.

So much work has to be done if this claim is to be won. We must avoid a repeat of the 1971 events.

A real effort must be made to involve the 50,000 Ford workers in the campaign for the claim. It is a pity that the convenors' bi-monthly Ford Workers Bulletin has so far only appeared once, last June.

The lessons of the miners' strike cannot be stressed too much. Thousands of miners really took an active part in their strike. Efforts by the active trade unionists in Ford to involve the mass of Ford workers should start soon.

This is the only way to prevent sell-outs and defeat. It is the only way to win now that the Tory government has slapped on an 'unofficial freeze' which could soon become official.

Colin Beadle
TGWU, DAGENHAM



Millionaire Henry Ford II

City where immigrants are made the easy scapegoat

LEICESTER has recently been in the news over the issue of the Ugandan Asians. The city's Labour council sent delegations to parliament pleading that no more Asians be allowed to go there, and even placed an advertisement in the *Kampala Times* pointing out to Asians before they even leave Uganda that they will not be welcomed in Leicester.

This is in stark contrast to Expo 72, which has just finished and whose aim was to encourage tourists, industry and investment to move to Leicester. So keen are the city council to attract such visitors that they leave half a million square feet of office space empty for them, and are putting up several luxury hotels.

But there are no houses for Ugandan refugees, students or other less well off sections of society. Polytechnic students are having to sleep in church halls, and there are more homeless students than ever before.

It is a question of priorities, and not shortage of space and resources in Leicester, as the National Front, the British Movement and other such fascist and neo-Nazi sects assert.

Leicester has always been a ripe breeding ground for gutter politics—in 1965 there was even a branch of the Ku Klux Klan, and crosses were burned in public. Now the National Front, with its new style 'working class appeal' has moved en masse to Leicester and set up offices.

They claim more than 250 members, although the majority are card members only, and several shop stewards in key factories. Leicester has always been their strongest branch outside London—now it has become their centre.

The past history of the Front's leaders makes sordid reading. Tyndall and Webster, who both live in Leicester, are members of the World Nazi Organisation, although both deny it. A pamphlet Tyndall wrote in 1962 stated: 'The SS man has been our model; an SS state must now be our aim'.

Other national figures have in the past handed out 'Hitler was right' leaflets. One even has a shrine to Hitler in his living room. How then do they have what appears to be a large appeal to the working class?

Racism

Leicester is a city with little heavy industry, and declining hosiery and boot and shoe production. There are no strong traditions of trade union organisation and many factories, especially those with many women workers, are virtually non-union.

The myth that Leicester is one of the richest cities in Europe springs from the fact that Marks and Spencer bank there. In reality Leicester is far from wealthy.

All this makes the spread of racism, fanned by the popular press and exploited by the National Front, much easier. There are more Asians and Africans in the city than there were ten years ago—and fewer jobs and houses. So it is easy to look no further than the north and east of the city, where the immigrants congregate, for the causes of unemployment, homeless families and overloaded resources.

The real causes lie far deeper. They lie with the property speculators, who, with a government grant of £1000 a room, prefer to build hotels to houses. With the last Labour government, which began the cut-back of the housing programme. And with firms such as Dunlop, who closed down their Leicester factory after the merger with Pirelli of Italy.

There were no Asians on the board of directors who decided to close the factory—it was closed down in the interests of 'greater efficiency at less cost'. Profits matter more than workers in the dole queue.

The influence of the National Front and their like can only be halted by pointing out the real causes of unemployment and housing shortages.

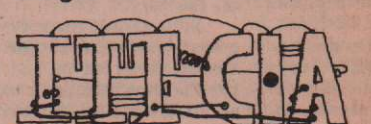
A demonstration is planned in Leicester on the issue of 'Houses and jobs—the real fight', on 21 October. Further details will appear in next week's *Socialist Worker*.

David Evans



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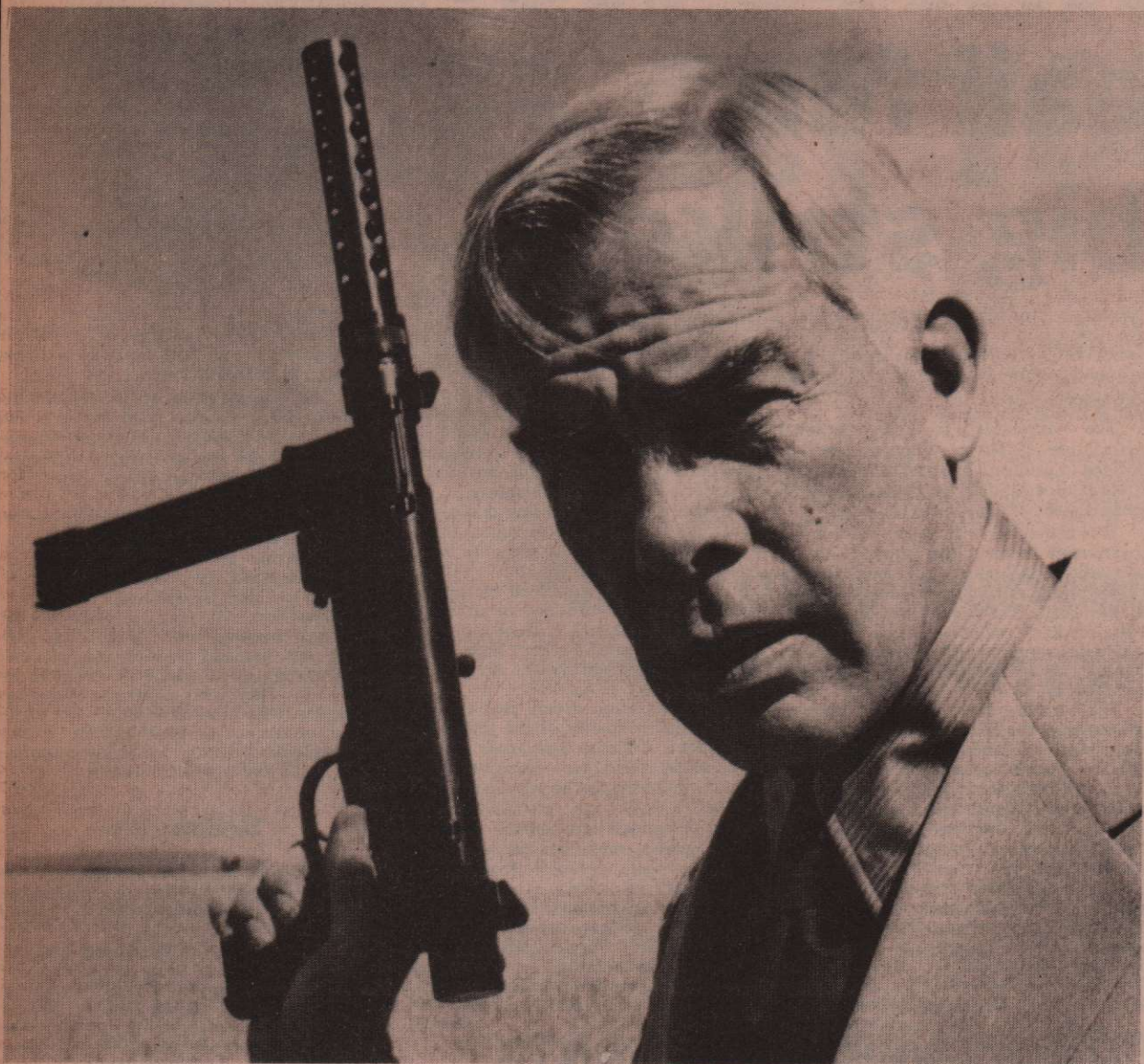
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REVIEW

PRIME CANDIDATE FOR THE CHOP



Lee Marvin, the big-time liquidator of Prime Cut

GENE HACKMAN and Lee Marvin are both great film actors. Put them together in the same thriller and you should have it made. Prime Cut, now showing on the Odeon circuit, stars them both and it's terrible.

Kansas City has got out of the control of the powerful Chicago Syndicate, or, if you prefer, the Mafia. In particular the local boss called Mary Ann, played by Gene Hackman, is giving them a lot of trouble with his freebooting ways. He's going his own way and they don't like it, more important—he's stopped paying his dues.

A sexually confused figure, in addition to farming on a grand scale, he runs a slaughter house, a meat packing plant, and—very important this—a sausage factory.

When the Syndicate sent two heavies down to sort him out, one disappeared, the other was returned, but in the form of sausages.

This is where Lee Marvin comes in. He plays a big time liquidator who agrees to work for the Syndicate on this operation. His mission is to straighten things out in Kansas and to cut Mary Ann down to size, if necessary to kill him.

He knows Mary Ann of old. Once they loved the same woman—now she's married to Mary Ann.

Arriving with his trusty companion and a group of henchmen at the Mary Ann Ranch, he walks in on scenes of gross indulgence. Mary Ann is entertaining business contacts. As they eat their lunch, they gaze at cattle pens full of naked young girls, drugged to the eyeballs, waiting to be abused.

The sight is too much for Marvin. Upright Mafia killer that he is, he rescues one of them, buys her pretty clothes, takes her to his hotel. There he discovers that all the girls are orphans, held captive by a friend of Mary Ann, so he determines to release them.

Crude

After killing Mary Ann and most of his gang, Marvin takes the girl to the orphanage, where she knocks out the house mother and the children are released.

End of film, as happy orphans play in field under the bemused eyes of Mafia enforcer Marvin.

The plot is miserably crude, the characterisation non-existent. If the script was written by a computer, I wouldn't be surprised.

What kind of film is selling well? Thrillers. Which film made most money recently? The Godfather. So let's include the Mafia. What else sells films? Sexploitation. Right let's have allusions to perversion, to sex with kids, to homosexuality, to drugs, and let's have plenty of violence.

Insults

Add plenty of action and a couple of big names and there you are. Feed it all into the computer and out comes Prime Cut.

The film is so mechanical that it doesn't just exploit the audience, it insults them too, and it's very boring. It's as if the director, Michael Ritchie, was so embarrassed with the material that he couldn't direct with any energy, let alone conviction.

So the few good ideas in the film don't come off at all. Tension never begins to be created, let alone sustained.

The cutting is slow and ponderous, sequences which could have been effective are lost—a thriller set in a slaughter house should have been at least exciting. Instead we get a dull and predictable film which leaves a very bad taste in the mouth.

Philip Eastman

In every worker there is a human being trying to get out

STRIKES, by Richard Hyman, Fontana Books, 50p

'PUBLIC OPINION' is certain that strikes are a bad thing. They are ruining Britain. And even if some sections of 'public opinion' don't agree about that, we all know that strikes, especially unofficial strikes, are a 'problem'.

A couple of years ago, a Professor Turner wrote a book titled *Is Britain Really Strike Prone?* in which he argued that the British strike record isn't all that bad. Other countries are much worse. So, he concluded, we don't really need all this repressive anti-union legislation.

The professor's argument was a liberal one. He said that if Britain did have more strikes than Australia, and if the strikes were destroying the economy, then anti-union legislation would be justified. Richard Hyman's very useful book goes well beyond this.

First, it contains plenty of useful and interesting factual information. Changes in Britain's pattern of strikes are well described.

The beginning of the Second World War represents a kind of watershed in the history of strikes. After 1940, we find that the typical strike tended to be small, brief, localised, and less concerned with wages than with other matters to do with control of the job, discipline, union rights and so on. Until recently, that is.

In the past few years, with rising unemployment, increasing state intervention in industrial relations and the employing class getting more and more 'tough-minded', strikes have been getting longer and more bitter. Larger numbers of workers have been involved and wage issues have once again become central. In 1968 the average strike lasted two days. Last year the average was 11 days.

At least until the mid-1950s, coal-mining dominated the strike statistics. Well over half the strikes listed by the government took place in mining. But the mass closures and sackings, and the smashing of piecework in the pits, have reduced the number of miners' strikes drastically: In 1957 there were 2,224, in 1970 165.

But outside mining, the number of strikes has been rising.

More and more workers, in traditionally dormant industries, manual and white-collar alike, have been turning to the strike weapon. The past few years have seen all manner of workers surprising their fellow workers (and sometimes themselves) by their trade-

union militancy.

For socialists, this is a development of profound importance. It signifies that the British workers are becoming more and more alike in their methods of struggle and their readiness to fight.

Unofficial strikes, of course, have been popular targets for 'public concern', especially among employers. The Donovan Report wailed long and loud about them.

Why? Essentially, because for a long period they were very effective: they forced concessions from the bosses.

A Glasgow sheet-metal worker explained to me in the mid-1960s how his factory had had 200 strikes: 199 were unofficial, and were victorious. For the 200th, they made the mistake of bringing in the officials, and they'd lost!

Today, the unofficial strike is perhaps declining as a weapon. The battles are much bigger, and the union full-time officials are much more involved in strikes—and in sell-outs.

For different situations, workers find different forms of struggle. The strike is only one weapon in the armoury. Go-slows, overtime bans, sit-ins, are all tactical responses to particular circumstances.

Nonsense

Where workers, for whatever reason, cannot or will not engage in collective action, then they use 'unorganised' means to express their frustrations and their demands: absenteeism, labour turnover, sabotage, 'lack of enthusiasm'.

Hyman reviews the major ideas, both 'popular' and 'academic', about the causes of strikes. One old favourite is the idea that red agitators cause all the trouble—which appeals to employers. And is nonsense.

Not because there are no red agitators—we hope they read this paper! But because, as any good agitator knows, you always need something to agitate about. There are more unsuccessful agitators than successful ones.

It's the capitalist system itself, with its profit-hungry bosses, its lousy working conditions, its accident rates, its endemic

poverty, that does the chief job of agitation.

The more 'liberal' managements explain strikes in terms of a 'failure of communications'. If only, they believe, workers were properly informed, if managers were only more enlightened in their approach, more warm and cuddly, strikes would disappear.

As the author points out, if workers ever really did get 'good communications', and found out what was really going on, the country would explode!

The 'anarchy' of industrial relations is the direct product of the anarchic capitalist system. Within that system trade-union leaders play a very special role. They are 'the managers of discontent'.

Some writers have suggested that now the unions have won 'acceptance' by managements and government, now our leaders get birthday honours along with other respectable folk, industrial conflict within capitalist society is safely contained. The spectre of bloody uprisings of workers is safely exorcised, for the union leaders have been incorporated into the system, which has been made stable and safe for business.

There is some truth in this. This, by and large, is the role the union leaders play. But they cannot deliver the goods fully, especially when business is demanding more and more concessions from the working class.

The 'institutionalisation' of industrial relations, much discussed in the 1960s, is a very shaky thing.

'Within every worker', Hyman writes, 'there exists a human being trying to get out.' Capitalist production denies the worker the possibility of humanity, reduces him to the status of a commodity. But that commodity has fists and feelings. In a thousand ways, the worker asserts his or her dignity and in so doing threatens the cosy status quo.

And the more capitalism is riven by crisis, both economic and ideological, the harder it is for the trade-union bureaucracy to batten down the hatches on working-class struggle.

Nonetheless, there is a hue and cry about strikes. 'Public opinion' dislikes

them. Why? Hyman's last chapter is especially interesting on this.

It's not the 'importance' of strikes that gives them so much bad publicity. Every working day, on average, a worker is killed on a building site, but there is no hue and cry about that. Somehow, some things get defined as 'problems', while other matters are ignored.

How is 'public opinion' itself created? Who decides which problems are 'important' and which are not? Clearly, we have to look at the mass media that the ruling class own and control, at the education they provide for us, our very daily habits under capitalism, the various ways through which the ruling class impose on us their view of the world, their definition of what is a 'problem'.

Just as 'the world mourns' the Israeli athletes, but hardly notices the dead men, women and children in the Palestinian refugee camps, so too we are educated to abhor the 'violence' of the building pickets, but to ignore the building bosses' callous murders.

Politics

Of course, there is a 'strike problem' for the working class. The strike, by definition, is a 'temporary stoppage of work'. When the strike is over, even if it is totally victorious, we go back to work for the same employer.

The strike is a weapon for fighting the symptoms of capitalism—low wages, bad conditions, employer callousness. But it is less useful for fighting the causes of our problems. All purely trade-union methods of struggle leave us in the Alice-Through-the-Looking-Glass situation of running hard to stay in the same place.

At the same time, strikes and other methods of fighting the results of capitalism do help us to develop. Through trade-union activity we learn our own strengths and weaknesses, we learn to estimate who are our friends and our enemies, we learn a sense of tactics. But, in the final analysis, we cannot avoid politics.

During the French general strike in 1968, a worker wrote on a wall: 'My grandfather fought all his life for better wages and conditions. So did my father. So have I. I still live like a pig.'

That, for the working class, is the 'problem' of strikes. The solution is revolutionary socialist politics.

Richard Hyman's book is well worth reading. It is generally well-written, and only occasionally lapses into academic jargon. At 50p, these days, it's worth a good look.

Colin Barker

Strikes

by Richard Hyman

Price 50p, postage 5p

FROM

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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 activity 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.

THE RENTS BATTLE

Irish tenants call for big strike

from Michael O'Connor in Waterford

TENANTS in Southern Ireland are preparing for a massive protest at rising rents.

The executive of the National Association of Tenants Organisations has decided to call for a national rent and rates strike at a special delegate conference of all tenants associations in late October.

This action has been called to force the government to meet the demands of the association, including the repeal of the 1966 Housing Act, which is almost identical to the Tory 'Fair Rents' Act, in Britain. This Act has caused numerous local rent strikes in towns and cities, including one in Dublin, where the strike has continued since April.

The major cause of the tenants' grievances is the differential rent system, a means test assessment of rent. Under the Act a tenant's 'gross income' plus the income of other family members is assessed, before tax and social welfare contributions are deducted. Overtime, bonuses, shift differentials, meal allowances and the like are also assessed.

The association has instructed its members to include only their basic or take-home pay when filling in local authority forms. But in some cases details of tenants earnings have been sent to the rent offices by their employers. The leadership of the Irish Trades Union Congress has

done little to support the demands of the tenants.

Although the local rent strikes were fought with courage and determination their gains have been small. There have been attempted evictions and many tenants face jail sentences, including Matt Larkin, the association's general secretary.

Tenants are now realising that a major confrontation with the government through a national rent strike is the only way to resist this vicious rent system.

For the strike to succeed the rank and file must be kept informed of all developments during the strike. Their morale and fighting spirit must be kept high through protests, demonstrations, and the picketing of rent offices.

The association should seek the active support and solidarity of the trades union movement. Tenants and trade unionists can jointly resist rent increases and all other attacks by the bosses on their living standards.

At the association's annual convention in September, messages of support and solidarity were received from tenants' associations in Britain. The British rent strikes now in progress against the Tory 'Fair Rents' Act have brought the message home that the struggle of all tenants is a necessary part of the struggle for the emancipation of the working class in all countries.

BOSSES VERSUS TENANTS

CLYDEBANK:—The giant American-owned Singer Sewing Machine company, which employs 6000 workers, threatened to go on rate strike last week unless the council put the rents up—a graphic example of how the Tory rent Act is backed by big business.

The company claim that it would cost it £20,000 in extra rates because the council refused to implement the Housing Finance Act. It therefore intends to withhold £20,000 of its rates payment.

Local councillors pointed out that the company only pays half rates anyway, like all industrial and commercial property.

A clearer example of what the Housing Finance Act is all about would be difficult to find. Clydebank tenants should pay an extra pound a week to relieve the burden on poor Singers!

Workers at Singers have responded at a mass meeting where they pledged full support for Clydebank Council and called for industrial action if any attacks were made on the councillors.

Victory on the picket line

KIRKBY:—Joint action by tenants' associations and rank-and-file workers won a significant victory last week.

The management at the Bird's Eye frozen food factory tried to sack two stewards and suspend 22 other workers for joining the one-day strike and demonstration against the rent increases in Liverpool last week.

As soon as the Tower Hill rents action group heard of this they contacted two other action groups, in Bootle and the Scotland Road area, and organised flying squads to picket the factory.

Two hundred tenants, with the victimised workers and other local trade unionists, manned the gates and prevented the movement of traffic in or out of the factory. They also contacted Liverpool dockers, who blacked all Bird's Eye lorries and products. At Bamburghers, a local woodworking factory, all pallets destined for Bird's Eye were also blacked.

Solidarity

Within 10 hours the management was forced to give in. The two victimised stewards were reinstated and the suspensions lifted.

Billy Cass, one of the sacked stewards, said: 'In all my 14 years at this factory I have never seen anything like the solidarity which has been shown between tenants and trade unionists at these gates here today. It is obvious that the tenants' group played a vital part in winning this battle. I hope it is the sign of things to come.'

Kenneth Webb, chairman of the Bird's Eye group of companies—which are part of Unilever, the second biggest firm anywhere in Europe—flew up to the Kirkby factory in his private plane the next day. He told the press that he thought totally sinister outside influences were manipulating workers at the factory.

The outside influences were indeed to be seen at the factory gates, as mothers with young children and babies in prams demanded that their husbands be given their jobs back.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dumfries
Dundee
Edinburgh
Fife: Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glenrothes
Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling
St Andrews

NORTH EAST

Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W

NORTH

Barnsley
Bradford
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Ossett
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

NORTH WEST

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Blackburn
Bolton
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
The Potteries
Preston
Salford
St Helens
Stockport
Wigan
Wrexham

MIDLANDS

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Birmingham S
Coventry
Dudley
Leamington and
Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Redditch
Rugby
Telford
Warley
Wolverhampton

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Cambridge
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Islington
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Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
Hornsey
Hounslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Paddington
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Slough
South Ealing
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Wandsworth
Watford
Woolwich

WALES and SOUTH WEST

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Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
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Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
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Southampton

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

WALTHAMSTOW IS Public Meeting
IS CHINA SOCIALIST?
Speaker: Nigel Harris
Thursday 19 October, 8.00pm
Grove Tavern, Grove Road, London E17

LAMBETH Public Employees Alliance
meeting on the council workers' pay claim:
Speakers Peter Cain (NUPE) and Dave Percival (UPW), Weds 18 Oct, 8.15pm, Lambeth Town Hall.

SWANSEA IS: Paul Foot, Mike Caffoor—**FIGHT THE TORIES!** Don't miss this important meeting. Thurs 29 Oct, 7.30pm, AUEW House, Orchard St, Swansea.

SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Weekend School: Friday evening 20 Oct to Sunday 22 Oct at Beatrice Webb House, Pasture Wood, near Dorking, Surrey, on The New National Health Service: Integrated—Comprehensive—Democratic, the SMA working party recommendations. £7 per head, Contact SMA, 14/16 Bristol St, Birmingham B5 7AA.

SOCIALIST MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
meeting: Dr M Miller MP on The Reorganisation of the NHS, Mon 23 Oct, The Cole Room, Fabian Offices, 11 Dartmouth St, London SW1 (near St James Park tube).

FINE TUBES CONFERENCE: 28 Oct, in Birmingham. Coach leaving London 7.15am from Pancras Rd, by Kings Cross station. Return fare £1.25. For further details contact Mike Caffoor at 01-739 1878 (day).

LONDON SOCIALIST WORKER ORGANISERS meeting: Fri 13 Oct, 7-8.30pm, at 6 Cottons Gardens, E2. All organisers must attend.

CEYLON SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE: Protest at repression. Picket outside London Ceylon Tea Centre, Sat 14 Oct, 11am-2pm. Public meeting at Unity Theatre, near Kings Cross station, London. Weds 18 Oct, 7.30pm.

CAMBRIDGE IS public meeting: David Widgey on Law and Order: The Tory Attack. Mon 16 Oct, 8pm, Chetwynd Room, Kings College.

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

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

YORK IS public meeting
PAUL FOOT on WHY THE SYSTEM STINKS
Lowther Hotel, Kings Staith
Weds 18 Oct, 8pm

KICK OUT THE TORIES
CARDIFF IS PUBLIC MEETING
SPEAKER PAUL FOOT
Weds 25 Oct, 8.00pm
Guildford Crescent Baths (off Churchill Way), Cardiff

PONTEFRAC/KNOTTINGLEY IS public meeting
PAUL FOOT on CORRUPTION: Why The System Stinks
Kellingley (Knottingley) Social Centre Hill Top, Knottingley
Thurs 19 Oct, 7.30pm
Tickets: 10p from 17 Rossiter Drive, Knottingley

FINSBURY PARK ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE
Jimmy Greeley on
JAMES CONNOLLY—Republican socialist
Weds 18 Oct, 8pm
Duke of Edinburgh pub, Fonthill Rd, N4

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.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR IRELAND
South London Anti-Internment League teach-in. Speakers include Bob Purdy Wheatshaf, Tooting Bec
Mon 16 Oct, 8.30pm

NOTICES

NE LONDON: £10 room for two from 14 Oct. Share lounge (TV) kit bath garden garage phone etc with one comrade. 01-478 1736 evenings.

DOUG PATON: It is with deep regret that we record the death of Doug Paton. He was known as a dedicated and hard-working comrade by all who knew him in the Potteries and Merseyside.

ALL BRANCHES wanting to change their order for Socialist Worker must write or phone the business manager at 01-739 2639 before 5pm on Mondays.

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MORE ON STRIKE AS TORIES GET TOUGH

AS MORE tenants went on rent strike last week, there were signs that their ranks will soon be swelled by many others who have not yet had their increases.

Around half a million tenants are in areas where Labour councils have refused to implement the rent Act.

The Tories have begun to make threatening noises. Four English and five Welsh councils have been told they have a month's notice to say why they should be not judged as defaulting under the Act.

A default order would result in a housing commissioner being appointed or action being taken through the courts requiring the council to carry out the Act. In either case, rent rises will follow shortly.

Similar letters are likely to be received by other councils this week, and a rather different procedure but with the same effect is being taken in Scotland.

Meanwhile more Labour councils have broken their word and agreed to raise rents.

SHOUTS

In South Shields 11 Labour members voted with the Tories to implement the Act. A crowd of 500 tenants, inside and outside the meeting, continually interrupted the debate with shouts of 'traitor', 'scabs', and 'liars'.

The meeting broke into chaos when tenants hurled copies of last May's election leaflets at one Labour councillor. The police moved in and cleared the public

Miners back action

WALES:—Rent strikes are spreading rapidly. In Port Talbot a mass meeting of 500 tenants voted to withhold the rent increase. In the Rhonda, the joint miners' lodges are organising committees on every council estate and two more estates went on rent strike last week.

In Merthyr, a joint action committee representing trade unions and tenants' associations decided on a rent strike when

THE RENTS BATTLE

galleries as tenants shouted 'police state' and 'gestapo'. It took them 30 minutes to get everyone out.

But the tenants are not taking the rises lying down. One estate run by the North Eastern Housing Association is already on

rent strike and the council estates are pledged to join them when their rents are put up in a few weeks.

In Birmingham, eight Labour councillors voted with the Tories last week to implement the Act and several others abstained, so letting the motion through. Until then Birmingham had been the biggest council in the country refusing to put up the rents, and its capitulation is a major victory for the Tories.

Sir Frank Price, Labour councillor and millionaire, speaking for the right wing of the Labour group in the debate, trotted out the old sob story that defiant

councillors would be debarred from office, handing the council back to the Tories. It seemed to be everybody's assumption that Birmingham's massive industrial workforce would stand by while a Tory government invoked these penalties against the elected council.

But there has been a mushroom growth of tenants' associations in the past few weeks, growing stronger as more tenants became aware of the terms of the Act. Although councils have sold out, the final power to smash the law remains where it always was—in the hands of the people it sets out to exploit.

Militancy spreads: 400 tenants storm town hall

AT THE mining town of Thorne in Yorkshire, tenants are refusing to pay the increase. So too are 300 tenants on the Camp Hill estate in Nuneaton.

At Dronfield, near Sheffield, tenants are going further and also going on total rent strike for six weeks, to recoup increases paid since the Tory council implemented the Act back in April. After the six weeks they will join other tenants in the area in refusing to pay the increase.

In Sheffield itself there has been a cautious start to the strike, with some estates militant and others quite apathetic. But there are signs that opposition is growing.

Four hundred tenants stormed the town

hall at Warrington last week demanding action by the council. The only action they got was when the mayor called the police in to remove them. The tenants then met on the steps of the town hall and decided on a rents strike.

In Northampton tenants barracked councillors arriving at the town hall for the council meeting last week, and then went into the council chamber, where a petition signed by 1200 tenants was presented.

But in Nottingham tenants on rent strike have won a no eviction pledge from the city council. Chairman of the housing committee Councillor John Carroll said: 'As long as tenants pay the normal rent, we will not evict, and without our agreement no action can be taken against the tenants.'

In Salford 40 social workers, members of the local government workers union, NALGO, have signed a statement opposing the Act because of its effects 'in bringing hardship to thousands of tenants and increasing the tendency for poor families and pensioners to crowd into areas of substandard housing'.

The statement pledges support 'for non-co-operation with the housing commissioner' and urges local government workers to 'take no part in helping to split up families as a result of eviction.'

a housing commissioner is brought in. Industrial action was also pledged to support the tenants.

In Cwmbran the United Tenants' Association is also organising tenants to withhold the increases when the rent rises are brought in. A co-ordinating committee has been set up in South Wales to link tenants and trade unions.

Leyland: crucial talks continue

NEGOTIATIONS crucial to the future of all British Leyland workers are taking place in a high class pub in the Midlands.

That is where representatives of the Longbridge workers have been closeted with management since the beginning of October in an attempt to come to some agreement on a change in the payment system.

In a relentless drive to increase profits, British Leyland is replacing the traditional piecework system with a flat rate structure similar to that operating at Fords.

This is designed to give the company much greater control over rates of pay and working conditions. Leyland intend to slow down the rate of wage increase, and considerably boost productivity per worker.

It has succeeded so far in abolishing piecework for a large section of its total workforce. But until piecework is ended at the heart of its empire, the giant Austin factory in Birmingham, Lord Stokes and his fellow directors still face an uphill struggle.

Little has been decided so far, certainly nothing about money or mutuality over working conditions. But there are fears that some of the 27 shop stewards, representing about 12,000 pieceworkers, will force the pace and reach an agreement, rather than finding out what the management are prepared to offer and reporting back to their membership.

It is vital that the shop floor demand to be consulted over every crucial point in the negotiations—especially money, mutuality, and length of agreement. The Austin agreement, more than any other, will set the pattern throughout the combine.

Car workers on strike

DUBLIN:—Eight hundred car workers are on official strike in the assembly plants of the Britain group which assemble British Leyland cars and commercial vehicles. The strikers are demanding the scrapping of the 1947 shop agreement which governs conditions in the six factories, and an improvement on bonus payments, which have not increased since 1966.

A work-to-rule started three weeks ago in one factory. Management answered with a lockout at the others. A strike followed and pressure from the rank and file forced the union, the TGWU Vehicle Building and Automotive Group, to make the strike official.

Proposals from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for a return to work were overwhelmingly rejected at a mass meeting last week.

The strikers have called on workers in British Leyland factories to support them by stopping exports of fully built-up cars to the Britain group.

Messages of support to Britain Strike Committee, c/o NUVB, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin.

IS branch formed

A meeting of 16 members and sympathisers of the International Socialists in the Burnley area decided to set up a regular meetings. This brings to three the number of new IS branches set up in East Lancashire in the past two months. The others are Rochdale and Stretford.

STUDENTS DEFEND LECTURER

NORTH LONDON:—Students at the North London Polytechnic have taken militant action to protect a lecturer who is under attack from the director, a former member of the Army Intelligence Corps and of University College, Rhodesia.

The head of business studies, a Mr Jenkins, was suspended after he refused to by-pass the Academic Board, the staff body responsible for running the academic affairs of the college. The director had called a meeting of heads of departments to decide policy over the board's head.

Mr Jenkins is an active trade unionist and is responsible for the college having the most members of the technical teachers' union, ATTI, of any polytechnic in the country. The charges drawn up against him are blatantly political, including one that he has been 'pliable in the face of student demands'.

His union have let him down by accepting these charges as the basis for an inquiry instead of calling for militant action against trade union victimisation. Instead, the students union has taken the initiative by occupying the building which houses the business studies department.

Marcher beaten up by police



THIS is Wigan International Socialist Anna Paczuska after a beating by Blackburn police. Anna was arrested on an anti-fascist march on 30 September and was savagely attacked by the police in the van taking her to the station.

The police, who attacked the marchers and defended a rally staged by the fascist National Front, handed out beatings to several other arrested socialists. Some of them—including Anna—face charges 'under the Public Order Act as amended by the Race Relations Act'. The Public Order Act was supposedly brought in in 1936 to deal with fascists and the Race Relations Act is supposed to clamp down on those inciting race hatred.

One Pakistani arrested on the march has been charged with assaulting a police officer, threatening behaviour and possession of an offensive weapon. He is only 18 years old and could be deported under the Immigration Act if he is found guilty.

Blackburn Labour councillor Peter Fielding has lodged an official complaint with the police about their activities on the march.

Fifteen people have been charged following the march. Heavy fines are expected and the defence committee are anxious to raise £1000 to cover fines and legal costs. Please rush donations to: Pat Horne, 16 Queensway, Blackburn, Lancs.

Walk-out at tyre works

STOKE-ON-TRENT:—A strike by 13 men in the engineering stores of the Michelin Tyre works is now in its third week. The strike is over management's use of apprentice labour, under the guise of a training scheme, to do work normally done by hourly-paid trade union members.

Michelin, the biggest plant in Stoke, with more than 7000 workers, are involved in rationalisation, which will mean the loss of 1500 jobs over two years. All recruitment has ceased and the company has asked the unions to co-operate by introducing greater flexibility and mobility of labour.

In the department affected there is a shortage of labour yet management has refused to employ men on the temporary suspension list, saying there is no work in the plant.

The men in the stores then came out. Management has refused to negotiate before a return to work, or to observe the status quo and withdraw the apprentices.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

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Work-in leaders call it a day —with a compromise

by Steve Jefferys

CLYDESIDE:—The historic work-in at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders ended on Monday, 14 months after its start when the government announced its intention to close two of the four yards and sack up to 6000 of the 8500 workers.

The UCS co-ordinating committee recommended on Monday that the handful

of workers still involved call off the work-in because victory had been achieved.

While this is an exaggeration—the original fight was to 'save UCS' and keep all the jobs—the anti-Tory feeling which was unleashed by the UCS campaign last year clearly forced the government to

retreat.

For the time being the Govan, Scotstoun and Linthouse yards are being kept together in a new company called Govan Shipbuilders employing the workers who were not sacked and those few who supported the work-in throughout, some 4000 altogether. At Marathon Manufacturing, the old Clydebank division of UCS, the remaining 1800 workers have been promised that they will either get started straight away or that as the liquidator sacks the men involved finishing the last UCS ships, they will be offered jobs by Marathon within four weeks.

Marathon are now saying they will build up from their present labour force of 400 to some 1250 by the end of the year. But the cost of this to the Clydebank workers has been their agreement to the uprooting of about 400 men to go to America for between two and eight months retraining.

This, following the Marathon procedure agreement which includes compulsory arbitration, penal clauses and the abandonment of direct wage negotiations, marks another step away from the best traditions of the organised labour movement.

Much more was undoubtedly possible if there had been a really vigorous fight. But the Communist Party stewards' reluctance to challenge, let alone break with, the full-time officials, especially the allegedly 'left-wing' leader of the boiler-makers union, Dan McGarvey, meant that such a policy was never advocated.

So this week, as the demolition squads moved deeper into the old John Brown shipyard at Clydebank and erased the memory of shipbuilding from the most famous of the Upper Clyde yards, many believe the 'victory' not nearly as great as it might have been.

'FIGHT TO FINISH' —TYNE BOILER MEN

by Dave Peers

NEWCASTLE:—After six weeks on strike, the mood of the boiler-makers of the Swan Hunter shipyards has hardened to grim determination.

Last week's mass meeting decided no further meetings would be held until Swans made a substantial offer in reply to the claim for a 17½ per cent increase on basic rates.

Only now do the Tyneside men realise just how badly paid they are in comparison with boiler-makers elsewhere. The strike delegations

brought back information about wage rates in other shipyards which the full-time officials would not reveal.

The facts were a revelation: the Tyneside rates of £27 and £29 for the two grades of boiler-makers, plus the average £4 bonus, leave them £10 to £15 a week behind other yards. Now the

strikers have demanded parity with other shipyards on top of their original claim.

There has been little movement in the strike over the past fortnight. Apprentice boiler-makers have applied sanctions in support of the strikers and the mass meeting guaranteed full support for any apprentice victimised.

Despite the assistance of International Socialists and claimants union members, Social Security officials are refusing to pay more than £4 to unmarried strikers, regardless of the level of their rent. In this situation the only chance of getting the funds to which the men are entitled is a mass sit-in or demonstration at the regional Social Security headquarters, but the stewards' leaders are too timid for such action at present.

Another weakness in the strike is the isolation of the boiler-makers from other workers in the yards. Except where they are laid off, the 7000 or so other workers at Swans are not involved in the strike. There is practically no money or support for the strikers from other trades.

For the first time all Swans workers are fighting the same claim, and this strike offers a major chance for a united front.

The stewards of other sections have turned down a management offer of a £1.50 increase despite pressure from their officials. But this pressure continues, and any settlement of the claim for other sections will set the limits for the boiler-makers.

Short of an unexpected capitulation by Sir John Hunter, the stage is set for a long and increasingly bitter struggle.

Send messages of support and donations to: T. Daley, 6 Jane Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 3US.

Strikers stage union sit-in

LONDON:—Building workers from the giant Cubitt's World's End site in Chelsea staged a short sit-in at the local offices of their union, UCATT, on Monday. They were demanding speedy action from the regional secretary Len Eaton to pull out all Cubitt's sites in London.

The strikers demand the reinstatement of a shop steward and the sub-contractors to return to the bonus payments agreed before the strike, plus payment in full of the newly-negotiated national increase.

World's End is one of the biggest and best-organised jobs in London, timetabled to be seven years in construction. The contractors aim to try to break site organisation early.

Two other major London sites are also still on official strike. MacAlpine's Tara Hotel is out over the use of the illegal and anti-union labour-only sub-contract system. So too is Lovell's, Guildford Street, where building workers occupied tower cranes in protest against the lump just before the start of the nationwide struggle.

Workers fight closure threat

LIVERPOOL:—1200 workers at the CAV plant at Fazakerley have occupied their factory to prevent its closure. Management were ordered to leave on Monday morning, a few days after announcing that the place would be closed next April.

Dave Martin, the Engineering Union convenor, told local newsmen: 'We shall stay here for 24 hours a day until the management reconsider their plan to make us redundant.'

Workers at the Lucas factory on the same site met on Monday afternoon and decided to levy £1 a man per week to support the occupation.

A meeting of shop stewards in other Lucas-owned factories on Merseyside is also planned for this week, and workers

nationally, especially those in other Lucas plants, are urged to give their support.

Trouble for the Fazakerley workers started four years ago when Lucas bought the Sims pump works at Finchley. At the time they were assured that sufficient work would be made available for both factories.

But two years ago pump production was moved to the firm of Con Diesel in Spain, where wages are much lower than any in Britain. Now Lucas consider that there is only enough work for two factories and are content to put the Liverpool men on the dole.

Messages of support and donations to Dave Martin, AUEW Convenor, CAV Long Lane, Liverpool 10.

PICKET LINES

GLASGOW:—Technicians at Glasgow University took strike action last week after learning the results of 'job evaluation' carried out under a national agreement between the universities and the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS). What was called 'restructuring' was a simple wage-cutting exercise.

Short of an unexpected capitulation by Sir John Hunter, the stage is set for a long and increasingly bitter struggle.

Send messages of support and donations to: T. Daley, 6 Jane Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 3US.

After a four-day strike, the university agreed to make some concessions by reappraising 100 of the 300 jobs. On this basis they returned to work.

WOLVERHAMPTON:—More than 500 workers at the American-owned Fafnir Bearings are now in the second week of their strike for parity with other local firms. At present there is a gap of more than £7.

The shop floor is at a standstill in spite of big efforts by the Transport Workers Union official to get them back to work. At a mass meeting last week he tried to split the standard and skilled workers by urging the strikers to stick to procedure. But the men are determined that neither vague offers nor procedure will stand in their way.

GOOLE:—By a narrow majority 130 men still in dispute at the Drax power station construction site returned to work on Monday. The settlement gives them £1.05 an hour minimum and a retainer of £55. Talks will be held over the bonus.

Many of the men feel the victory is a shallow one after four months of hardship. They feel that better terms could have been won in a few weeks if there had been full official union backing.

The shop stewards refused to recommend the terms, but union officials advocated the return to work.



Council tenants in Hackney, London, picketing the local rent office in support of the two-week rent strike called by the Hackney Tenants' Association in their campaign against the so-called 'Fair Rents' Act. At least half the tenants who arrived to pay their rents went home without paying. Due to a picket at Stoke Newington rent office four out of five did not pay.

Profit boom for big business

from page one

house prices'. That's not counting the McAlpine family, three of whom became millionaires the day—3 October—their firm 'went public'.

Record holder in the treasure hunt department is Viscount Wimborne, the Dorset peer who owes his wealth and position to his membership of the Guest family, which has had a Tory MP in parliament ever since they first started robbing the iron workers of South Wales 130 years ago.

In one day at the end of September, a

large area of Wimborne land around Poole was 're-zoned for building purposes' by Poole Corporation. The value of the Viscount's properties went up by £27 million as a result.

Will the new Tory 'socialists' stop this bonanza, and redistribute these fortunes to the workers, or to the pensioners whose fate has caused so much sorrow at Blackpool?

Or will they hang on to what they have got, sue for peace with the trade unions, and then quietly start making more?

For the answer listen to Julian Amery, Minister of Housing, and a leading exponent

of the new Tory 'socialism'.

'The government' will not take any special measures to curb rising house prices as part of its new counter-inflationary proposals . . . We do not regard housing as a commodity in the same way as shirts and food' (Times, 28 September, 1972).

One group of estate agents in Southwark, London, are delighted by the news. They manage eight broken-down houses in Colnbrook Street and four in Gladstone Street.

The houses have not been improved with the use of the new government-improvement grants. Their situation so near to central London means that their value soars, however much they deteriorate.

Three years ago, some similar houses were sold for £7000 each. Today one in Colnbrook Street is up for sale—for £22,500.

The owner of these houses will benefit hugely from the decision of Julian Amery not to freeze house prices.

The owner is Julian Amery, MP, Minister of Housing and Construction.

Jimmy Cliff's brilliant film

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