

# Socialist Worker

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WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Victim  
of the  
profits  
scramble

# BIG PAY LIE CAMPAIGN

The Killer Bridge:  
Full story and  
more pictures on  
page 3

**BLACKMAIL**—that word sums up the talks that have been taking place between the Tories, the bosses and the TUC.

From press, television and government ministers comes the same relentless message: rising wages are to blame for rising prices. And the only way to protect the old, the sick, the lower paid and the

Socialist Worker Political Correspondent

housewife is to accept a limit on wage increases.

The trade union leaders have gone most of the way in accepting this message. They have sat in the same room with Heath and his big business pals

discussing how best wages can be held in check. In the space of a few weeks they have quietly forgotten the Tory record of the last 2½ years.

When the Tories talk about helping the lower paid, nobody mentions the postal workers, bludgeoned into accepting a cut in their living standards after their long strike 18 months ago.

When the Tories talk about rising prices, nobody mentions the £1 rent increases being imposed on five million council tenants.

When the Tories weep for the old and the sick, nobody mentions that Health Service charges have been increased and the value of pensions allowed to slide.

And the 900,000 on the dole might just as well not exist as far as the 'men of goodwill' in Downing Street were concerned.

Yet it is the Tory government and the society it so vigorously upholds that are behind the current problems. No joint agreement between the working-class movement and the representatives of big business was needed to produce the fantastic growth in the wealth of the rich since the Tories returned to office.

No solemn declaration signed by unions, employers and government was required when the Tory decision to join the Common Market guaranteed a doubling of the price of meat and essential foodstuffs. The unions were not asked to approve last year's 17 per cent growth in company profits.

But now millions of working people are being told that they—and they alone—must sacrifice their living standards in order to mop up the economic mess. And the TUC has been prepared to discuss demanding such sacrifices from their members.

## Confused

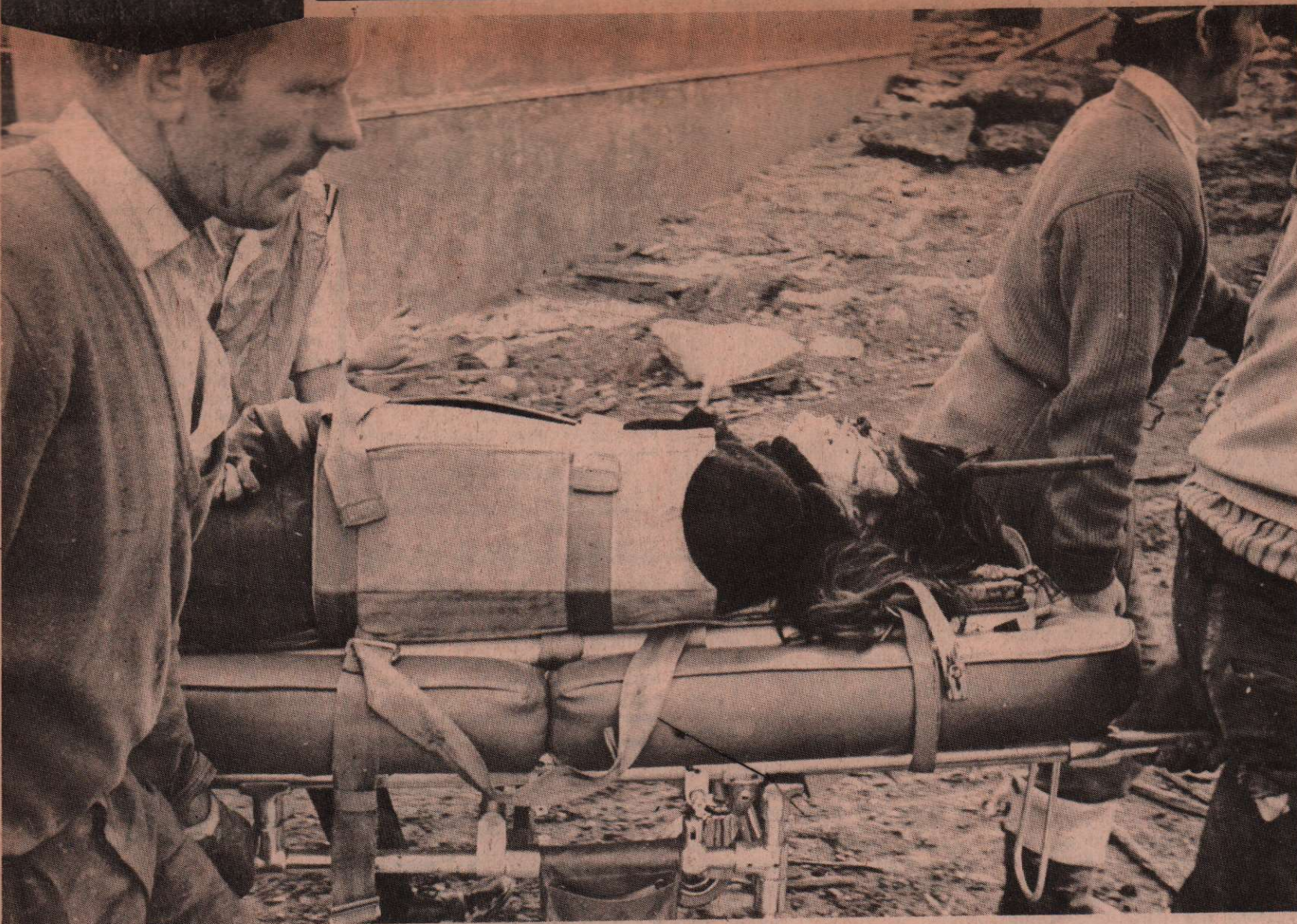
The disgraceful retreat by the union leaders means they accept responsibility for the faults of a system over which working people have no control. The union leaders' willingness to talk on the Tories' terms has given Heath and company a vital propaganda boost.

Millions of people are confused and bewildered by rising prices. Many of them accept the phony tale that all it needs is a cosy agreement between unions and government to stop prices shooting up. And when prices rise as a direct result of decisions already taken by the government, it will be all too easy for the Tories to pass the buck to the union leaders.

The lower paid, far from benefitting from government policy, will be the first to suffer. Even after a rise of £3.30 on Monday, farm workers still have a basic wage of £19.50 a week.

The choice for rank and file trade unionists is simple: the TUC has been collaborating with a government responsible for ever-rising prices, close on one million unemployed, a massive number of low-paid workers and a law designed to jail elected shop stewards who carry out their members' wishes.

The only possible alternative is to extend and direct militant action to break any wages freeze, to smash the rent increases, to force decent pensions for the old and to drive this rich man's government from office.



THIS grim and shocking picture shows 21-years-old Bernard Ford being carried from the Marples Ridgway Loddon Bridge site last week. He was one of three men killed by the collapse of a bridge span. No other newspaper has printed this picture 'out of concern for the relatives of the dead'. Our decision to print was not taken lightly, but out of concern for other construction workers, one of whom dies every day in an industry noted for its neglect for human life. Next time the News of the World decides to witch-hunt the 'violent men' in the building industry, let them recall this picture of Bernard Ford with a piece of steel imbedded in his skull and then aim their sights at the men responsible for the real violence.

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**FIGHT THE TORIES! BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE!**





# WORLD NEWS WORLD NEWS WORLD NEWS

## Doctors strike after 'Tupamaros' swoop

### BRIEFING

THE Irish Historical Society in New York recently awarded Mrs Richard Nixon a gold medal for 'humanitarianism and service to her country'. When she arrived to receive it she was greeted by 300 Irish Americans chanting 'Irish blood on Nixon's hands'.

The demonstration was organised by the Anti-Internment Coalition, Irish Republican Clubs and the National Association for Irish Freedom. They demanded the withdrawal of US troops from NATO and the closing of the US military base in Derry. They pointed out that British officers in Northern Ireland have been trained in the American marine base in Virginia, and rubber bullets for Northern Ireland are manufactured in Ohio.

Five Irish Americans have been jailed in Texas for refusing to co-operate in a grand jury investigation into allegations of arms shipments to Ireland.

IN THE occupied West Bank territories the Israeli Military Authority employs so-called 'education and culture officers' whose main task is to check that school libraries do not contain any forbidden books and to expel children who have any. The books that are forbidden include any which mention the word Palestine, any book about Algeria since the beginning of the revolution in 1954, and most books about Arab history and culture.

THE RECENT Common Market summit meeting in Paris has received applause from an unexpected quarter. The Chinese described it as a new step forward by the West European countries 'in their joint struggle against the two super-powers'. The Chinese press quoted at length from the speeches of Pompidou, Heath and Brandt—all representing countries whose foreign ministers have recently visited Peking or are about to do so.

THE PAMPHLET Ceylon: The JVP Uprising of April 1971 (published by Solidarity, price 25p, available from IS Books) is a useful account of last year's events. It consists of an interview with Edmund Samarakody, an old Trotskyist who makes some trenchant criticisms of the JVP, the ex-Trotskyists in the government and other so-called radicals. There is a comprehensive background article on the rising and some damning appendices.

Unfortunately the analysis is less good. It is far too pessimistic about the chances for successful revolution in the underdeveloped world, and by saying that support for any national liberation struggle is reactionary the author maintains a sectarian and passive perspective. Nonetheless the pamphlet is both informative and thought-provoking.

A BIG ADVANCE for trade union rights in the US. Eager Beaver Trucking, a Californian firm, has made an agreement with the National Labour Relations Board to settle charges about unfair practices. It has given back pay to workers sacked illegally and promised that it will 'not threaten employees with bodily harm if they support a union.'

Moreover, it has posted notices declaring: 'We will not point firearms at and/or discharge firearms in the direction of union representatives in the presence of employees.'

FOURTEEN MILLION Italian workers staged token strikes (usually of about an hour) last week in response to fascist terrorism against working-class organisations. Bombs had been planted the previous weekend on railway lines leading to Reggio di Calabria, where a big workers' rally was being held. It appeared that the bombs had been planted by a highly skilled and well-informed fascist grouping who knew precisely which trains would be taking workers to the rally.

NEW contribution to the Prayer Book from US clergyman Robert Shuler of Garden Grove Community Church: 'We thank you for our leaders, our president and all around him, who have the wisdom to know how to reduce unnecessary expenditure of funds without weakening our national defence. May our country always be so strong that if somebody wants to run away from Russia they will have a place to go.'

AS PART of the Uruguayan government's 'civil war' against the Tupamaros guerrillas, there have been widespread arrests of suspected sympathisers—in fact an excuse to lock up anybody suspected of opposition.

Four doctors were arrested in one such swoop more than three months ago. Last month a military tribunal

ordered their release, for lack of any evidence that they were supporters of the Tupamaros. At the end of the trial the four doctors said they had been tortured.

They were then taken back to the Sixth Cavalry Barracks, from which they were to be released. After being brutally tortured, they signed a letter—to the military tribunal that had

just absolved them—in which they admitted their guilt and withdrew the statement that they had been tortured.

The officers of the regiment then called for a retrial as they had 'new evidence' against the four doctors.

On 17 October the doctors' union announced that its 5000 members would start a 72-hour strike the next

day unless their four colleagues were released. This prompted the Defence Minister, supported by the President, to order their release.

As they were not free the next morning, the doctors' union went on strike, and 48 hours later, the four doctors were still in jail.

The President and the Defence Minister then called a meeting with the heads of the armed forces. That evening it was announced that the Defence Minister and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces had resigned.

The doctors' union has since issued a statement to Amnesty International asking for international pressure to help get the four doctors freed.

The army officers are unlikely to yield, as they feel that they have achieved almost all their political objectives now, short of taking power directly.

### Confidence

The 'civil war against subversion' has given them the opportunity to attack all left-wingers and working-class organisations. They are now able to use any methods they choose, including killings and torture, in their campaign. The 19 October take over removed the awkwardly 'liberal' Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief, and has the support and encouragement of the Brazilian dictatorship.

But they have been rather less successful against the Tupamaros.

Fewer than 1000 political prisoners out of an estimated 5000 are members or supporters of the Tupamaros, who still claim 600 men under arms, not counting the 'auxiliaries'.

The army's success is due to a number of defections, particularly of a Tupamaro leader, Hector Amodio Perez.

### Frantic

This puts into proper perspective a recent article by Brian Crozier in The Times which claimed that the army's hard-line interrogation methods were bearing fruit. As in Algeria and Vietnam, the claims are a propaganda exercise and do not correspond to reality: the methods are inhumanly brutal.

Six people are known to have died in torture chambers already, two of them trade unionists.

The greatest tragedy is that while the guerrilla methods of the Tupamaros have forced the Uruguayan government to reveal its real face of violence and subservience to foreign business, they offer no real course of action for the Uruguayan workers. The best militants are still under the sway of the Communist Party for lack of a revolutionary working-class alternative.

One consequence of this is that, when the doctors' strike was prolonged for a further 48 hours only the reformists were in a position to call for a general strike.

## Vietnam: all over

by Ian Birchall

AT LONG LAST peace in Vietnam seems in sight. The news cannot fail to be welcome to those who have spent the last eight years campaigning against the brutal US war of aggression.

But the proposed agreement contains an ominous reference to the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The compromise the Vietnamese made then—under pressure from Russia and China—paved the way for another bloody war.

And the present settlement is certainly not the end of the road for the Vietnamese Revolution.

Nixon's talk of 'peace with honour' is a hollow joke. It would be hard to imagine a more cynical or dishonourable peace than this—carefully timed to help Nixon pick up a few more votes for the presidency from the pathetic McGovern. The sleek campaign managers in Washington are not concerned about the few thousand additional Vietnamese who will die so they can get their timing right.

In fact recent reports show that the US bombing of North Vietnam has become even more blatantly inhuman than ever.

Harald Aarts, a Dutch doctor who was in North Vietnam in August, reports that US pilots are now using a cynically murderous bombing pattern, dropping first incendiary bombs, then fragmentation bombs, then finally blast bombs. The incendiary bombs drive people out of the houses, the fragmentation bombs catch them in the streets, and the blast bombs kill those who manage to reach the shelters.

### LESS SUCCESS

Too much importance should not be given to the unco-operative wriggling of South Vietnamese dictator Thieu. If the US wanted to get rid of him, they could do so in 24 hours, just as they have done with puppet dictators throughout the world. In fact the US have to keep Thieu in order to retain the confidence of petty dictators throughout Asia that they will not be abandoned in the face of popular revolt.

Thieu's weakness is shown by the mounting repression in South Vietnam: he is desperately trying to push back the tide of popular discontent.

It is clear that in recent weeks the North Vietnamese have made far more concessions than the US.

For example, in 1971 the North Vietnamese were demanding not merely the resignation of Thieu, but the 'dismantling of his apparatus of oppression'. Now they will agree to let Thieu stay. Similarly, on the exchange of prisoners, Hanoi is now not insisting on the release of all political prisoners in the South.

In short, the North Vietnamese are prepared to settle for something far short of social revolution. In an interview with Newsweek, the North Vietnamese Prime Minister stressed that 'national reconciliation' was the main thing.

It is clear from these concessions that, while North Vietnam could still hold out for years, it has no prospect of winning the war

## -bar the shooting



American weaponry: As the US troops go home, the air war grows outright.

But another key factor is the lack of support from Russia and China for any continuation of the war. Russia has little interest in any continuation of the fighting in Indochina. She has other fish to fry.

A US Congress investigation recently discovered that the Cambodian National Insurance Company, which insures American aid going to the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh, is reinsuring with an insurance company belonging to the Russian government. So Russia is taking a profit on insuring US supplies, while Phnom Penh is under attack from Communist guerrillas using Russian weapons delivered to the Vietnamese.

### GREAT TRAGEDY

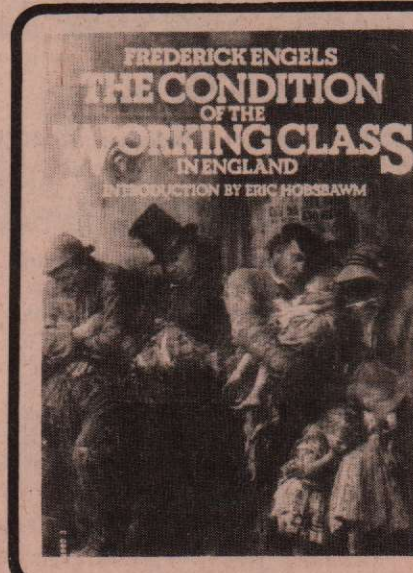
As for the Chinese, a book published last week by Mao's friend Edgar Snow shows that Mao decided as early as January 1965 not to get involved in Vietnam because the Chinese were 'very busy with their internal affairs'—preparing for the so-called Cultural Revolution, an embarrassing lapse the Chinese are now frantically trying to forget about.

It is hard to predict what course of events will follow an American withdrawal. The South Vietnamese ruling clique is so divided and corrupt that the National Liberation Front will have little difficulty in gaining influence. Indeed, for political reasons they may have to go

more slowly than would otherwise be necessary.

But the people of Vietnam have not fought with incomparable courage and determination merely for a change of rulers. They are fighting for a change in their whole way of life, and if they are disappointed new conflicts may erupt.

Socialists who have been chanting 'Victory to the NLF' for the past eight years will have to look very carefully which way the rifles are pointing.



## ENGELS

It is common to think of Friedrich Engels as the shadow and rich benefactor of Marx, and nothing more. He was, however, a man of outstanding ability in his own right—and much of Marx's work was based on Engels' knowledge of 19th century working conditions.

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# THE KILLER BRIDGE

by Arthur Malone

TWO DAYS after last week's Loddon Bridge disaster on the M4 link at Reading every man working to untangle the tortured mass of wreckage was issued with a new safety helmet.

The reason for this new-found concern to provide minimum personal safety equipment after three men had died and 13 had been injured was the presence on site of various groups investigating the collapse.

A police team was at work preparing for the coroner's inquest into the three deaths. The Factory Inspectorate was looking for reasons and possible breaches of the construction regulations amid the shambles in the river. And Marples Ridgway and its insurance adjusters too were looking for reasons, and considering delays, costs and possible legal actions for compensation.

One of the dead men, Derek Thomas, was a construction inspector with Berkshire County Council, clients for the road. The other two, Derek Cooper and Bernard Ford, were labourers on the bridge.

Bernard Ford was just 21 years old when he died last week with a piece of tubular steel through his head, a thing that might not have happened if safety helmets had been issued and ordered to be worn before the collapse.

In all probability, the relatives of Derek Cooper and Bernard Ford will never be able to sue anyone for their deaths. Derek Cooper and Bernard Ford were working on the lump—as non-union, 'self-employed' labour—for Keeny, labour masters on the M4 link for main contractor Marples Ridgway.

## INVESTIGATORS

By an illegal device, neither Keeny nor Marples can be deemed to have employed Derek Cooper or Bernard Ford. In death as in life no-one is responsible for them.

None of the teams investigating the collapse have shown any interest in the lump's presence on the job. Of course the lump of itself did not cause the collapse. There are other factors behind this. But the lump end of the operation knits perfectly with the method of construction and support used for the bridge spans.

Marples Ridgway was using a quick erection system of temporary supports for the wooden moulds into which the concrete for the bridge decks is poured. These systems are deliberately designed for speedy erection and transfer. The main emphasis is on low cost.

More and more, competitiveness and profitability in construction means the cutting of spending on temporary supports. With prices of materials and labour almost completely standardised for all contractors, it is by focussing on this that competitive tenders can be won and profits made.

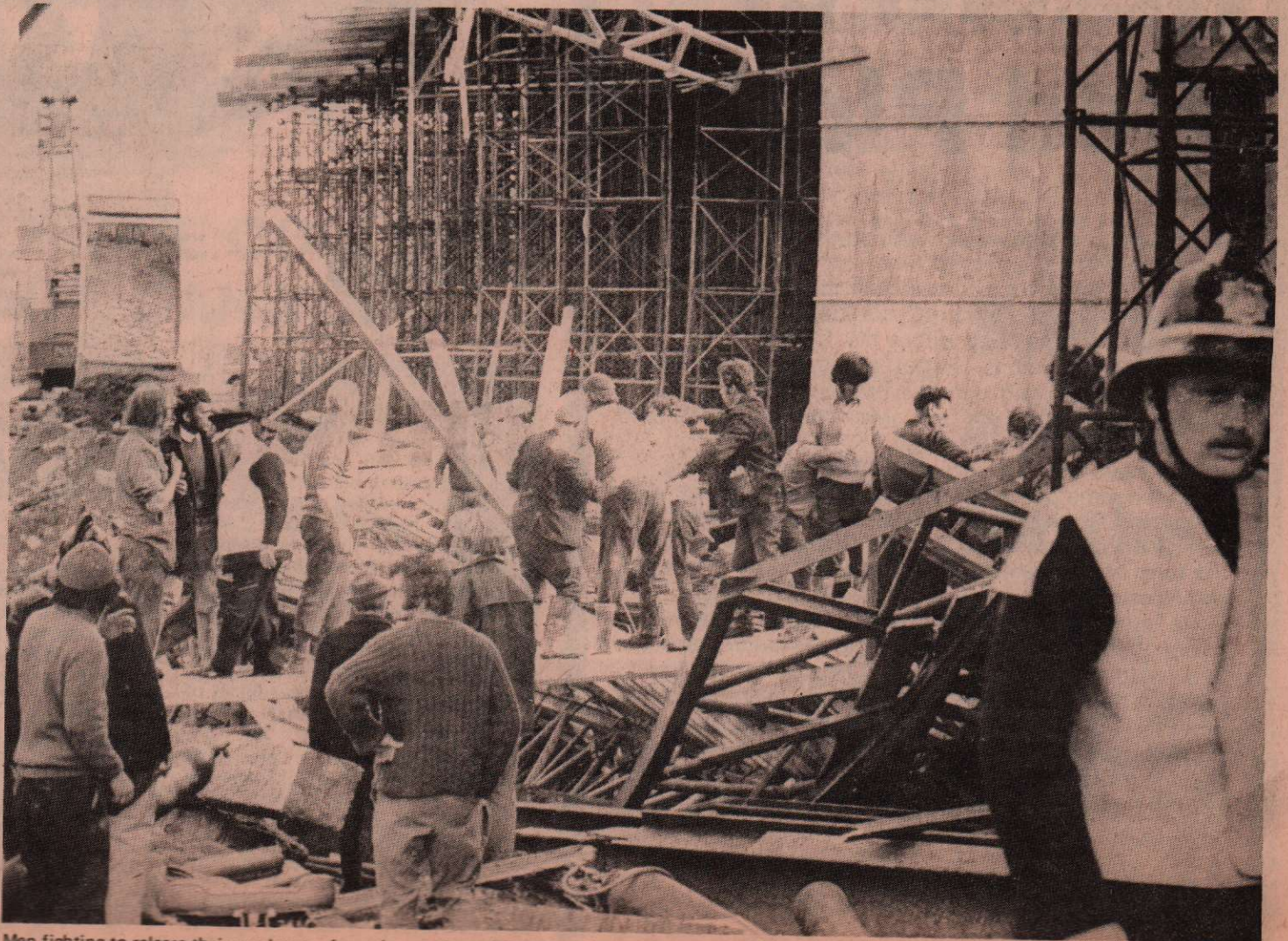
These support systems have been widely introduced without any real knowledge of their behaviour, without rigorous testing and without concern for the men who have to work above, below or around them. A rash of collapses triggered by temporary support failures has followed. The resulting deaths and injuries are classified under the category of 'industrial accidents' and forgotten.

## SKIDDED

Only now is the first basic study of these systems about to begin in this country. The funds to pay for it were not exactly oversubscribed by British construction firms. Indeed the vast majority of the 100 firms approached for money two years ago simply declined to give any. They just wanted to carry on using the systems.

Marples Ridgway had done no testing of their system. After last week's disaster the company merely stated that they had used it before 'without incident'. The very support system unit which collapsed last week had in fact just been skidded over from the completed twin span carrying the road in the other direction. This was done to reduce costs.

During the transfer, the support



Men fighting to release their workmates from the wreckage. The only safety helmet in sight is worn by a fireman

## Cost-cutting sets scene for disaster

system was under considerable strain. After it was repositioned, it was checked. It was checked by unskilled men working on the lump with little or no knowledge of the complexities and dangers involved.

After they had finished, it was pronounced safe by professionals equally concerned with rapid progress of the job. No electronic testing was done for strains, and the support system's 'log book' could not be found.

In marked contrast to all the fuss about violent pickets during the building strike, no special inquiry is envisaged into the Loddon deaths and their causes. A week later the site—and the industry—is back to normal, having written the incident

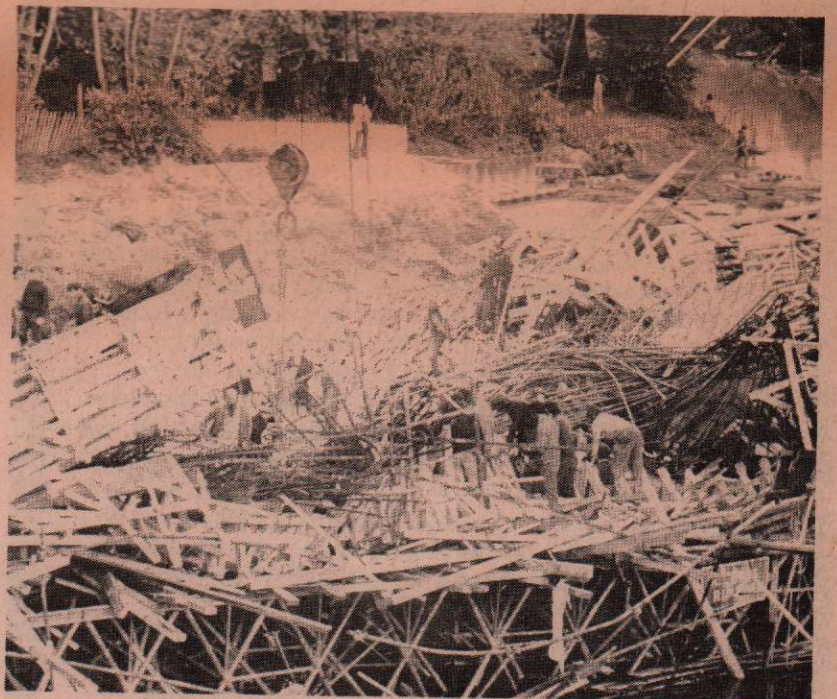
off as 'sad but inevitable'.

In the drive for rapid completion of contracts and profit, there is no danger that any lessons will be learned. Most of the material which might yield a rigorous scientific explanation of the span collapse conveniently lies twisted and torn in the river below.

Enough is known about the causes of these disasters before they happen to make a mockery of Berkshire County Council surveyor Mr E Davies' statement that all analysis is speculation. 'There is a multitude of things which could have caused this accident. It could have been such a small thing as one bolt missing from the scaffold,' he said last week.

But on the other hand, Mr Davies might just have hit on something despite the fact that he never asks why. The Department of the Environment this week admitted that bolts in the stiffening girders supporting the elevated sections of the M4 at Chiswick in London have fallen out.

Contractor for that part of the M4 was also Marples Ridgway.



The chaos after the collapse

## That election revival is racist, not Liberal

from Julian Harber, Rochdale

THE ROCHDALE by-election result last week was disturbing for the labour movement. Not only did the Liberals gain the seat from Labour but an anti-immigration candidate polled more than 4000 votes. Both events reflect badly on the Labour Party.

Of the two, the Liberal win was of lesser importance. Contrary to what certain sections of the press have claimed, it is unlikely to herald a Liberal revival.

The Liberals have always been peculiarly strong in the town and their candidate, Cyril Smith, has an exceptionally strong personal following.

Nevertheless, the failure of Labour to retain the seat must in part be due to the poor fight they have been putting up against the Tories and their lack of credibility as a better alternative government.

The large vote for the Anti-Immigration candidate, Jim Merrick—eight per cent of the poll—also reflects badly on Labour.

Rochdale is an old industrial

town. Unemployment is more than four per cent. It has some of the worst slums in the North West. The town's staple industry, textiles, has been declining ever since the war and now faces the threat of extinction through Britain's entry into the Common Market. The local trade union movement is exceptionally weak. People are apprehensive of the future.

The situation was ripe, in fact, for someone to step in and blame all the towns ills on the 6000 immigrants who live here.

### Enoch

Merrick—former mill manager and ex-Tory councillor from Bradford—attempted to do this. For though standing purely on a No More Immigration platform he is an out-and-out racist. His leaflets bore the heading 'Enoch is right', his vans toured the streets blaring

out the message: 'If you want a nigger for a neighbour vote Labour or Liberal'.

His supporters even made blatant attempts to turn away Pakistani voters at Castlemere polling station (an activity commended by at least one local Tory councillor).

During Merrick's campaign the Labour Party made absolutely no attempt to combat him or his racist lies. His name was never mentioned at any of their meetings and the whole question of racialism came up only briefly at one meeting. None of their leaflets mentioned the matter at all.

The Liberals failed to tackle the subject either—which makes Jeremy Thorpe's laments over Merrick's vote rather sickening.

The only people prepared to organise actively against Merrick were the International Socialists and the Communist Party. With the help

of the Manchester Committee against Fascism almost 20,000 leaflets were distributed in the town. These laid the blame for bad housing, unemployment and poor social services fairly and squarely where it belongs—at the door of the Tories and the bosses.

The large racist vote came as a profound shock to the local immigrant community. 'I was amazed, really flabbergasted,' said Councillor Abdul Choudray.

What shocked him most was that from the evidence of those acting as tellers during the counting was that many of the pro-Merrick voters were from strong working-class wards. 'Previous to this, we thought we were accepted as Rochdaliens. Now it is obvious that we aren't.'

Admitting that the immigrant community had been complacent over Merrick, he expressed hope that the right wing would be more actively combatted in future—especially if they tried to contest local elections.





# Socialist Worker

## Return of 'Red Plot'

'WE WARN the government with all the emphasis at our command, while there is yet time, that if the Chancellor's policies and pressures lead to industrial strife, with all the damage which would entail to this country and its export orders, the responsibility will be his. Do not let him blame the trade unions. Do not let him look for communist plots.' So said Harold Wilson in 1961. He was attacking the Macmillan Tory government's 'Pay Pause', the 'Incomes Policy' of the day.

Five years later his own government was pursuing much the same policies as those he had condemned when in opposition, except that the 'Pay Pause' had been rechristened the 'Incomes Crusade'. 'Industrial strife', in the form of the seamen's strike of 1966, duly broke out and Harold saw the error of his previous attitude.

He found a communist plot. The famous 'tightly knit group of politically motivated men . . . who are now determined to exercise back-stage pressures, forcing great hardship on the members of the unions,' were the cause of all the trouble, misleading the honest but simple-minded seamen. 'Some of them,' said Harold, 'are now saying very blatantly that they are more concerned with harming the nation than with getting the justice we all want to see.'

### Going to the dogs

Today this old, old tune is being played again in the service of yet another 'Pay Pause'. The building trade employers have discovered to their horror that during the builders strike 'militant elements inside and outside the industry succeeded in causing a degree of disruption far beyond that justified by their numerical strength.' How shocking. They actually brought out the sites during an official dispute. The country is clearly going to the dogs.

That old established crusader against sin, the News of the World, has been going to town about this red menace. 'Who financed the violent picket mobs?' it demands. Who indeed? The hacks who write this rubbish are obviously nostalgic for the good old days when any militant trade union activity could be blamed on 'Moscow Gold'. That doesn't cut much ice nowadays so the News switches to 'brutality, injury, arson and damage'—all, we are led to believe, due to reds of various persuasions.

As a matter of fact, arson apart, these crimes are indeed very common in the building and construction industries. In 1970, the last year for which figures are to hand, 203 building workers were killed. They were not killed by pickets.

They were killed by accidents on the site, many of them directly due to negligence and avoidance of proper safety measures by the employers. In the same year 39,823 building workers were injured. They were not injured by pickets either. They were injured by accidents on the job, many of them directly due to the negligence and avoidance of proper safety measures by profit hungry employers. What about some headlines in the News of the World concerning these 40,000 victims of 'brutality, injury and damage'?

They won't appear of course. Rupert Murdoch's big business friends wouldn't like them and, still more important, they wouldn't help the Tories at this hour of need.

### SOARING SUNG

NOT EVERYONE is hard up these days. Christie's, the auctioneers, report a 'leap forward' in sales and profits. 'Outstanding pieces of Sung and T'ang pottery, which in the mid-sixties were fetching £3000 to £4000 would now make between £15,000 and £20,000.'

So if you have £15,000 or so to spare, bear in mind that values are now increasing at '75 to 100 per cent per annum'. There are evidently still quite a few members of the hard pressed employing class who can afford more than the bare essentials. Or is it 'greedy workers' who buy these things?



### Black Liberals

'IT IS just possible', wrote The Guardian's Dennis Johnson on the day of the Rochdale election result, 'that Alderman Smith was elected on a combination of anti-Conservative but mainly anti-immigration votes, and this is an uncomfortable position for any new MP, particularly one representing the Liberal Party.'

There are, however, some excellent precedents. In 1969, Wallace Lawler was elected for the Liberals in a by-election in Birmingham, Ladywood. He was, like Smith, a small businessman who had built up his appeal on 'local hero' propaganda.

In 1968, the Liberal Party courageously devoted an entire party political broadcast to the subject of racialism and the Kenyan Asians. David Steel, Liberal MP for Roxburgh, delivered a passionate speech about racial equality and the plight of the Asians in Kenya.

'We have here', he said finally, 'a man who knows about our big cities, and their problems: Wallace Lawler. Wallace, what's your view?'

'Well, the first thing I want to say', said the folksy Lawler, 'is that we don't want any more immigrants in Birmingham.'

Collapse of Steel and Liberal image. Another prominent Liberal with interesting views on the race question is Mr Richard Lamb, who is chairman of the Party's Monopolies and Consumer Affairs Committee and President of the North Dorset Liberal Association. Mr Lamb used to edit the 'radical' Liberal publication New Outlook and now writes in his own paper, the City Press.

On 21 October, under the heading South Africa as Hedge Against the Pound, Mr Lamb had some tips for his readers.

'Some people', he wrote, 'have a doctrinaire objection to buying South African shares. I am a very strong opponent of apartheid, but I cannot see how you can benefit the coloured South Africans by refusing to buy South African shares, just as trade sanctions against South Africa would have desperately worsened the standard of living of the coloured



Cyril Smith: 'local hero' platform

people.'

Mr Lamb then goes on to 'tip' four South African shares, including OK Bazaars and South African Breweries.

In a survey in November 1971, the South African Institute of Race Relations reported on the 'Polaroid experiment' in which several 'forward-looking' foreign firms with plants in South Africa had pledged to try to 'level up' the wages of black workers.

The report said that all 17 companies who disclosed their wage levels had not managed to pay black workers above the experiment's 'effective rate' (£59 a month) and 13 of the companies were still paying blacks below the poverty level.

The 13 included OK Bazaars and South African Breweries.

Unique shooting week on one of the finest sporting estates in

#### HAMPSHIRE

Guaranteed 2,000 head during the week plus duck flying. A few days still remain at £200 per day. Further details from the resident agent, Beaulieu 374.

WORKERS who have not yet made their holiday plans might have missed this important advertisement in The Times on 28 October.

### Heavy boys

IT HAS been another week of mugging cases reported in grimy detail by the newspapers, and pronounced upon ponderously by judges. Average sentence for a publicised mugging offence is now somewhere about 18 months for a

white first offender and two years for a black first offender.

The muggers of Mr Willoughby Norman, chairman of Boots, in Knightsbridge, London, last month were relatively fortunate. Mr Norman's nose was broken and his face cut. Another (so far anonymous) victim of the same attack was also badly beaten up.

The two men were rushed off next morning to Bow Street Magistrates Court. They pleaded guilty. No one gave any evidence. No report appeared in any newspaper the next day. And the two men were fined £25 each.

Both were white, and both were members of the Household Cavalry, Her Majesty's special bodyguard.

### Just men

THE INTRODUCTION of Crown Courts, replacing the old circuits, has landed some of our junior judges in all sorts of discomfort.

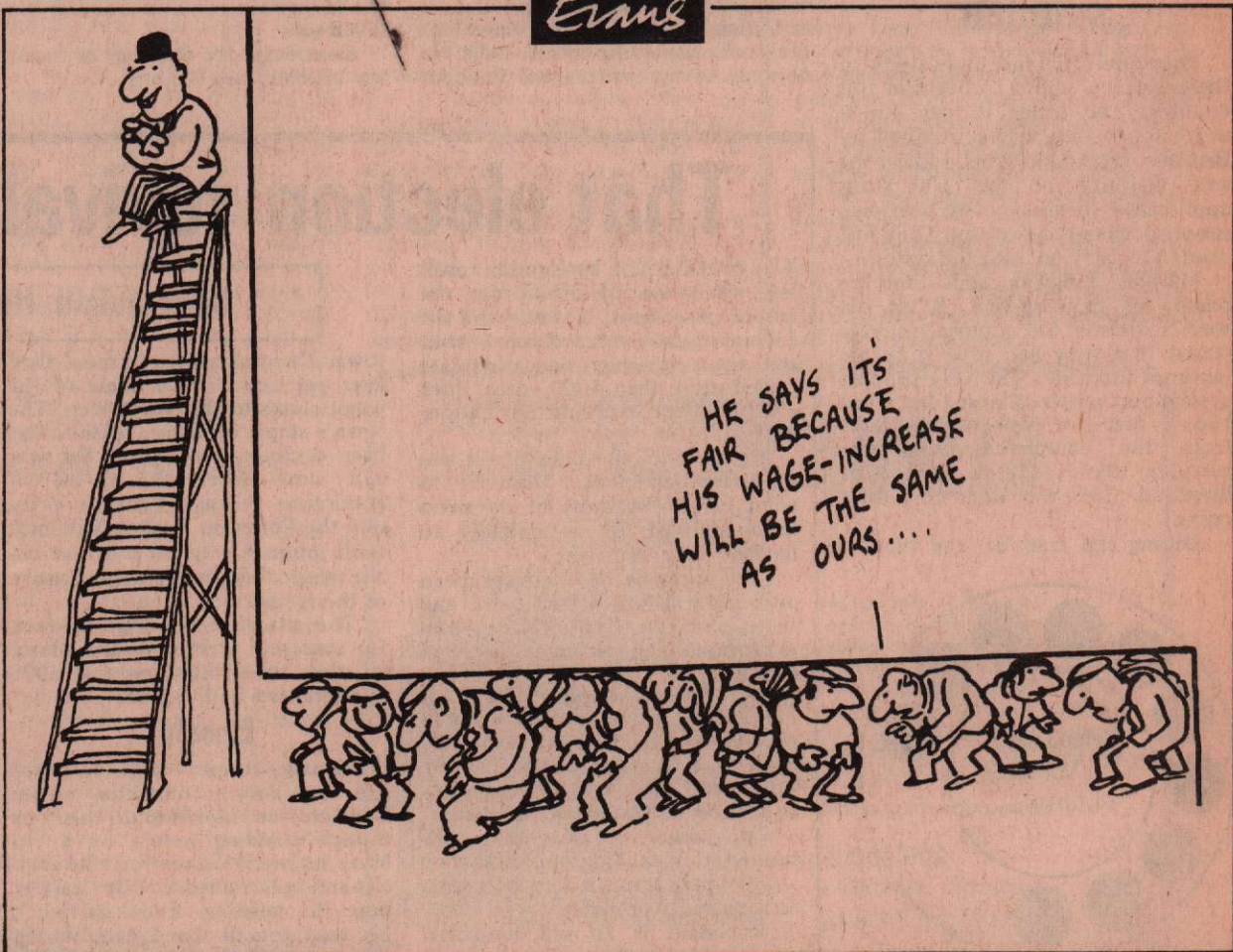
Judges sitting at Cardiff Crown Court, for instance, have had to stay up to seven months in the year at Cardiff—in a detached house at Radyr which has only eight bedrooms (that is, only two bedrooms for each judge). The property costs a mere £35,000 and the judges complained of 'cramped conditions'.

The Lord Chancellor's office responded immediately. Plans have been drawn up for improvements to the house which will cost £200,000. Apart from a two-storey extension at the back of the house, every attempt is being made to ensure that the judges have available everything necessary for their work.

An ornamental lake, a croquet lawn and new garages for nine cars (that is 2.25 cars per judge) will be provided. There will also be a new butler's pantry and a new wine cellar.

The judges, however, are angry at the government's meanness. A spokesman for the Government Services Property Agency, which is proposing the scheme, told the Western Mail: 'The judges did originally want a swimming pool provided, but this was turned down by the Treasury.'

That's the trouble with over-taxed Britain. The Chancellor takes everything away.





# PRINTS

## 12 GOOD MEN AND TRUE COULDN'T TELL THEM APART. CAN YOU?



A PRIZE of £10,000, possibly retrievable from public funds, is offered by Socialist Worker to anyone who is able to distinguish between these two faces.

One of them belongs to Sir Gerald Nabarro, MP for South Worcestershire. The other belongs to Mrs Margaret Mason, his former secretary.

Each picture should be marked with the name you think belongs to it, and sent, on a postcard, to Socialist Worker Spot-the-Driver competition, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.



## Worcester sauce

IN FEBRUARY 1969, I was on the panel of Any Questions radio programme which was broadcast from a school in Hale, Cornwall, a part of the world where the Methodist tradition flourishes. Another member of the team was Sir Gerald Nabarro.

Some decent citizen asked a question about drugs, and I remember replying in standard fashion that cigarettes, which were encouraged every day, were much more dangerous than other drugs which were discouraged.

Sir Gerald rebuked me roundly and then turned to the audience. 'I don't smoke', he bellowed, 'and I don't drink'. (Loud cheers).

Entering a pub after the programme, David Jacobs, the question-master, turned to us all, offering to buy drinks. 'Gerald?' he inquired of the tee-total baronet.

'A Scotch!' boomed Sir Gerald in reply. 'A large Scotch!'

## Down under

ON 16 October David Harrison, who came to this country to work 18 months ago, was charged at Oban Sheriff Court with a number of minor driving offences, including driving on a provisional license without a passenger.

Fining Harrison the unusually large sum of £250, the Sheriff of Oban, Donald McDiermid, made the following observations: 'The fact that you are an Australian does not allow you to flout our laws. I know

something about Australia and its people, so I am going to fine you heavily in order that the sooner it sinks into your thick Australian skull that you have to obey our laws the better.'

THE FINANCIAL TIMES of 10 October announced that Lonrho, the British firm that has made countless millions in all parts of Africa (and whose managing director, 'Tiny' Rowland, who was then called Mr Fuhrhop, was interned by the British government at the beginning of the last war) was to undertake a 'feasibility study' for a project to produce 300,000 tons of sugar annually in the Sudan.

In the face of it, this looked rather odd. The Common Market arrangements will give rise to a lot of beet sugar production in Europe and will shut out much of the European sugar market to outside producers, especially in Africa. This is not the best time to start new fields of sugar, especially in the Sudan.

Even odder was the additional announcement that the 'feasibility study' will be underwritten by the Overseas Development Administration, the government's aid ministry. If the study pays off, Lonrho will get 49 per cent of the loot. If it doesn't, Lonrho gets the fees for the study, and any losses are underwritten by the British taxpayer.

Questions about government involvement in this pot of gold for Lonrho should be directed to Bill Gordon, who was appointed last spring as chief adviser to the Overseas Development Administration on private investment overseas.

Gordon is an expert on such matters. For several years he had been a director of John Holt, the Liverpool exporters. When John Holt

were taken over by Lonrho, Gordon joined the Lonrho Board where he was working when appointed to his present post.

Lonrho, incidentally, are sole purchasing agents in this country for the right-wing dictatorship in the Sudan, after the company played a prominent part in the restoration of the Numeiry regime during the counter-coup against Numeiry last year.

## Prize Dick



A DEEPLY SHOCKING aspect of Britain's entry into the Common Market has been discovered by Richard Briginshaw, the handsome and militant general secretary of the print union NATSOPA.

In his column in the November issue of his union magazine, the Journal and Graphic Review, Mr Briginshaw, a strong supporter of Republicanism in Spain in the 1930s writes:

'The extraordinary thing is that in signing the European Communities Bill, the Queen will make the United Kingdom subject to the provisions of the Rome Treaty, and it is so little realised that this will be the end of the sovereignty of the Queen in parliament.'

It's all a plot, according to Brother Briginshaw. 'Our ruling capitalist establishment . . . had decided 10 years ago probably that the usefulness of the process of monarchy was so diminished that it could be made redundant.'

As Brother Briginshaw remarks, the antics of the establishment are no better than the 'wine-swilling students' of Stirling University who had shouted abuse at the Queen as she passed by 'with great dignity'.

The end of the Queen's power over parliament 'will indicate to trade unionists', writes Briginshaw, 'the depth of betrayal of the sovereignty of the British people by the Tories.'

There is something that trade unionists can do possibly to show their distaste. On 1 January, the day Britain enters the market, advises Mr Briginshaw, 'Every Briton should wear a black band on his arm. It is the end of a thousand years of history. For us moderns it is our blackest day. There will come another day—a day of reckoning for those who have sold our country down the river.'

There is, in short, a new day coming, a glorious Labour government under which Her Majesty the Queen will regain her rightful voice at least enough to intone the crucial words:

ARISE, SIR RICHARD!

# RAYMOND CHALLINOR



AS WE ALL KNOW, unemployment in Britain is 50,000—only 50,000 out of a total labour force of 22 million . . . Sorry, I've given you the figures for 1944.

Now there are 886,000 signing on at the dole. But the fact that the number was so small in 1944 shows that there is no inevitability about unemployment. In the past 28 years, the atom has been split, hearts have been transplanted, men have gone to the moon. In all aspects, knowledge has expanded.

Does anyone suggest that the government knew how to create full employment in 1944 but has since lost the knack?

Then, the Churchill coalition government, wanting to maintain soldiers' morale, claimed that it would be quite easy to provide jobs for all. Consequently, politicians of all parties pledged themselves to preserve full employment after the war. A White Paper to this effect was published.

But politicians' promises are a most fragile commodity. They are quickly shattered on the rocks of capitalist reality. As Karl Marx said, the system works best with 'a reserve army of labour'.

By having 11 men after 10 men's jobs, it becomes easier to keep discipline in the factory. Also, a pool of unemployment is likely to have a chastening effect, making workers moderate their wage demands.

Only a system geared to human needs and not to profits can finally end the scourge of unemployment. In a socialist society there will be jobs for all. Out of sheer generosity we will even find work for ex-capitalists to do!

## SORRY, FOLKS IT'S NO GOLD

STORIES of sinister red gold have clinked their way down through the ages. Usually they have been used by the political bankrupt, by individuals unable to counter good arguments with better and who therefore resort to making wild accusations.

And the most recent case is no exception. It comes from Dick Etheridge, Communist Party convenor at BLMC Longbridge. He says—or, rather, hints—in the Observer that the International Socialists receive money from shady sources. But he does not bother to tell us what these happen to be.

I suppose if we try to enlighten Etheridge, it will be of no avail. Nevertheless, here goes: IS is sustained by the energy and enthusiasm of its supporters. Anyone agreeing with its aims and wishing to help will be very welcome. Our resources are few and the needs are many.

In movements genuinely striving for social change this has always been so, and it is a galling experience to hear from our opponents that one is wallowing in wealth when the opposite happens to be the case.

During the First World War, the Clydeside Workers' Committee had the novel experience of being accused of getting money from the German government and, later, from the Russians. When it led a strike, it was not to defend workers' interests, claimed Tory newspapers. It was because the committee had been

## Spare a job for the boss

paid by a foreign power to disrupt the British economy. Challenged to give evidence, the capitalist press gave not a scrap.

Commenting on this fact, the Clydeside Workers' journal said: 'German Gold on the Clyde! This is the metallic melody that is being shriekingly sounded by the Glasgow newspaper of the pure-souled patriot, Lord Northcliffe.'

'But if German Gold has found its way over here, who has become possessed of it? Envious eyes fix themselves on our pockets as we move about the workshops and the bulge of a tobacco pouch almost draws them from their sockets. But, alas, it isn't there.'

Equally forlorn would be Etheridge's investigations. A bulging bag is much more likely to contain Socialist Workers than fivers. Would he not be spending his time better attacking the Industrial Relations Act or Measured Day Work than flinging mud at militants?

## FOR WHOM IS JUSTICE SWIFT?

IN MY OWN wicked mind, I can't help comparing the swiftness with which the Industrial Relations Court arrives at its decisions with the protracted legal wrangles that have held up the payment of compensation to victims of Thalidomide.

It seems that British 'justice' is more sensitive to pleas from big companies, like Midland Cold Storage, suffering from the effects of pickets, than it is to families with limbless children, suffering because a firm marketed the drug Thalidomide. Is it not another indication that we live in a society that puts profits before people?

A modest legal reform would be to reverse the position. Let the victims of Thalidomide and similar cases receive immediate attention while the Industrial Relations Court takes 10 years or more—better still, a hundred—to arrive at its decisions.

An International Socialists pamphlet

## STUDENTS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Susan Buddle Richard Noss Colin Sparks

Price 15p, plus 3p postage, from IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

The struggle for socialism can only be won by the working class, but other sections of society are always drawn into the action. The International Socialists believe that students can and must be won into political alliance with the workers, and this pamphlet analyses the role of students and of the 'student movement' in an attempt to show the way forward.



# Cuba 1962: when the

# world was on the brink

TEN YEARS AGO, on the evening of 22 October 1962, the American president, John F Kennedy, told a stunned world that US warships had surrounded Cuba and would stop and search any vessels going there.

He alleged that Russia had secretly been building missile sites on the island that would present a 'nuclear threat to America' and which signified that the Russians under Nikita Khrushchev were bent on a 'course of world domination'. If the missiles were not withdrawn, he warned ominously, the US would take 'further action'.

His speech was, according to The Times, 'the toughest presidential speech since President Roosevelt declared war in 1941.'

A Russian convoy of 25 ships, carrying crates of missiles and bombers, was heading for Cuba. The US Department of Defence declared that it would sink any ship that did not stop.

For the week that followed the world hovered on the edge of a collision that could only mean nuclear war.

The US concentrated in Florida the largest invasion force since the Second World War—100,000 troops, including 40,000 marines, as well as the 90 ships, 68 squadrons of aircraft and eight aircraft carriers in the Caribbean.

The Russian leaders announced that they had stopped all leave for their armed forces.

## The real thing

'In Washington', according to Kennedy's special assistant Arthur Schlesinger, 'the pressure to attack mounted.' Khrushchev later told the Supreme Soviet that he 'received information that the invasion would be carried out in two to three days.'

For centuries Biblical fanatics had spoken of the 'end of the world'. Now the real thing seemed at hand.

Workers clocked into factories believing that they would never clock out again. Classes of children sat at their desks while their teachers counted down the hours until the rival fleets clashed in mid-ocean.

In the Middle East, half-literate peasants went on a spree of panic buying, forcing prices in Jordan up by 30 per cent in two days.

Everything depended, it seemed, on what Khrushchev and Kennedy would do. But the leaders themselves seemed compelled by a power beyond their control to continue preparation for a war that no one could win.

The American president was quite prepared to invade Cuba, knowing that if he did so the Russians would be forced into nuclear war.

His brother, Robert Kennedy, could cold-bloodedly say: 'We all agreed, if the Russians were prepared to go to nuclear war over Cuba, they were prepared to go to nuclear war and we might as well have the show-

down then as six months later.'

Such acts of the greatest insanity seemed to Kennedy and Khrushchev necessary, clever, statesmen-like moves

The Americans had a four-to-one superiority in missiles compared to the Russians. They were worried what would happen if this lead was reduced.

Kennedy feared that Russian 'missile power will be the shield behind which they slowly but surely advance—through sputnik diplomacy, limited bush fire wars, indirect non-overt aggression, intimidation and subversion, internal revolution, increased prestige or influence and the vicious blackmail of our allies.'

In other words, he feared that if American nuclear superiority was

reduced, parts of the world would pass from the area of US domination and exploitation to the area of Russian domination and exploitation. He was prepared to resort to nuclear war rather than see that happen.

Khrushchev's motives were not much different. He claimed that he was putting up missiles in Cuba in order to protect the island from the threat of US invasion. The threat certainly existed.

But that was not what concerned the Russian leader. He saw the missiles as a counter in the game of nuclear poker he was playing with the US.

The stakes in this game were immense. For seven days it seemed to everyone involved that war was a fifty-fifty probability.

On Monday Kennedy made his speech. On Wednesday the Russian convoy drew closer and closer to the American fleet. With only a couple of hours to go it started to slow down. Some ships began to turn back.

## Itchy fingers

But the crisis was far from over. Khrushchev's first proposals to do a deal were rejected by Kennedy.

More importantly, he did not want just to end new shipments to Cuba, but he demanded the dismantling of the bases already there. On the Friday these bases were still there and, although few people knew it, he gave the Russians 48 hours to move them out or face war.

On the Saturday Khrushchev offered to withdraw the bases if Kennedy took out the US bases in Turkey. Although the Turkish bases were out of date, Kennedy still refused to give ground.

That weekend the fingers on the nuclear triggers were more itchy than ever. An American U2 spy-plane disappeared over Cuba. A second in the Arctic wandered off course into Russian air space. In the Pentagon it was thought for a few desperate hours that the Russians might interpret this as the first move in a global attack.

And then, at the last possible minute, Khrushchev backed down completely. On the Sunday morning, six days after the crisis blew up, he announced that he would withdraw the missiles and bombers.

## Saving 'peace'

The crisis ended as it had blown up. Life returned to normal as if nothing had happened. People forgot that Kennedy and Khrushchev had been prepared to contemplate the destruction of humanity.

Many, instead of blaming them for preparing war, congratulated them on saving 'peace'. There were even tears when a man who had threatened to kill everyone was himself slain by an assassin's bullet.

Ten years after it is difficult to believe that war was so near. That week on the edge of doomsday seems remote indeed.

Yet the Cuban crisis was no accident. We live in a world in which the rival powers still accumulate ever greater numbers of nuclear warheads

In the last 10 years the number of missiles on both sides has increased ten-fold. This year more than 100,000 million dollars will be spent on preparations for the war that nearly began in 1962. Not until we overthrow the minority ruling classes that spawned Khrushchev and Kennedy will those preparations cease.



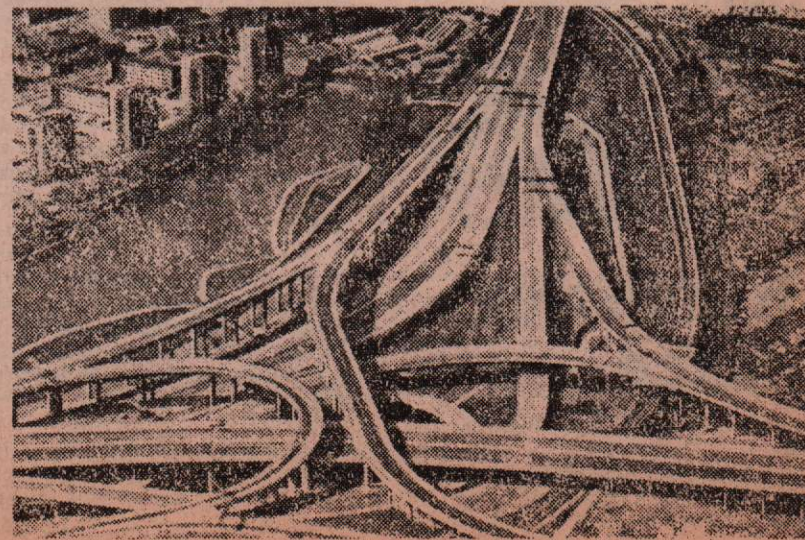
Kennedy: ready to invade



Khrushchev: nuclear poker game

# FIGHT

The International Socialists' major Fight the Tories campaign is now well under way with a heavy programme of meetings and activities up and down the country. The aims are simple: to hammer the Tory attack on working people and to expose Labour's pretensions to be a 'socialist' alternative. And the major stress of every rally, march and leaflet is the urgent need to build a real, mass socialist workers' party that will defeat the Tories and their system. This week, in our special series of articles, we cast the spotlight on a major industrial city and one London borough.



'Spaghetti Junction'—modern face hides the old problems

# Brum: No pipe dream

BIRMINGHAM in the brochures is a fast-growing conglomeration of concrete and steel, home of two of the biggest capitalist empires, British Leyland and GKN, where it is said you can buy anything from a pin to an aircraft carrier.

But forget for a moment this pipe dream of a bustling, happy urban development that is thrust at us by the advertising supplements. Let's move away from the Olde Edwardian office suites of the small band of capitalists who would like us to see only their Birmingham.

A city is not office blocks, multi-storey car parks and the Bull Ring shopping centre. A city is people.

And most of those people are members of the working class.

Walk out at 6am in the morning. The bus queues are composed of tired, shuffling people whose bodies have been warped and broken through working in badly-ventilated buildings and filthy, crowded conditions with little regard to safety.

Go into any working-class pub and you are almost certain to find someone injured or deformed by his job.

## Hutches

Birmingham, the real Birmingham, abounds with small sweatshops. For every large organised factory of more than 1000 workers there are 30 with less than 100 workers where men and women slave away, 50, 60, 70 hours a week for a mere pittance of a wage.

And nestling alongside the factories, workshops and foundries are the rabbit hutches built by the profit-hungry pioneers of the industrial revolution for 'their' workers to live in.

Despite the 'urban renewal' redevelopment scheme, by 1966 still two out of every five households in Birmingham did not have hot water, baths or an inside toilet. In some districts as many as nine out of every ten are without these basic amenities.

Is the situation changing? The 1969 waiting list for council houses was still as high as 26,140 families

BY  
HESTER  
AND  
LARRY  
BLEWITT

and in that year the council built 2000 fewer new houses (6500 in total) and rehoused 1500 fewer families than two years earlier.

Yet the slums are torn down the rows of terraced houses laid waste, whole communities dispersed to the vast, soulless estates on the outskirts and the 'overspill' towns.

## Battle

The slums of the inner ring are replaced by wind-swept, high-rise flats and maisonettes that accommodate just half the numbers that lived there before.

Meanwhile many other problems remain, whether in 19th century slum or redevelopment estate. In the slums, rents are low and many wives stop at home and do daily battle to keep on top of the damp inconvenience and filth from nearby factories.

# RACIALISM IN BRITAIN

Derek Humphry

## POLICE POWER and Black People

With a commentary by Gus John

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

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The Rise of Enoch Powell

BY PAUL FOOT

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CHRIS HARMAN



# THE TORIES

This is  
the  
real  
Southall

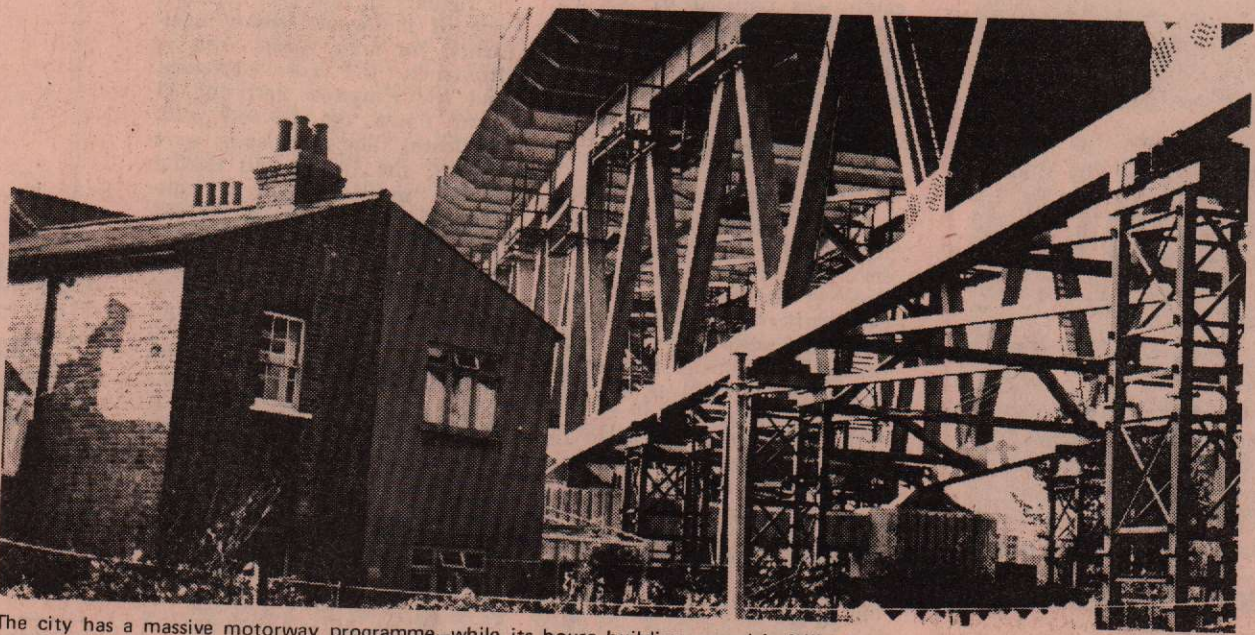


The slogan on the wall says it all: if your slum is torn down you're sent to live on a vast, soulless estate on the city outskirts.

Comes the day you are rehoused and in exchange for dearer and more easily maintained homes you've got double or treble the rent and you have lost your friends and neighbours.

Birmingham wives are driven out to work to supplement the budget and find the companionship they miss in the lonely estates. Three-fifths of the 192,000 working women in Birmingham are married and fulfil a vital need not just in clerical and sales jobs and the service industries but also in manufacturing.

When women cost only about two-thirds the price of men to employ and spend their lunchtimes out shopping for their families instead of attending union meetings, the bosses are only too glad to employ them.



The city has a massive motorway programme—while its house building record is falling

## Leisure for rich and overtime for poor

The 1971 Census returns show the city as having a higher percentage of men chasing jobs than anywhere else in Britain. Prospects are bleak for young people too, with double the number of unemployed teenagers this year as last. And firms have slashed their apprenticeship intake by a massive 42 per cent in the space of two years.

### Obstacle

In the town whose motto is 'Forward' a miserly 1250 places are being offered on apprenticeship schemes this year. The remaining 6-7000 school leavers are left to rot on the dole or find their way into dead-end jobs with no interest and no prospects.

Our local newspapers, the Birmingham Post and Mail (sorry, Mail) are always reminding us of the lively life to be had in Brum: the pubs, clubs, new theatres, bingo halls and cinemas, the community centre, youth centres and nursery facilities.

Yet while millions are spent on building one of the most modern urban motorway systems in Europe, the vast majority of Brummies without cars are left with a reduced and less-efficient bus service, an obstacle course of subways to navigate and few cheap and companionable places to go—if they have any energy left to get to them.

It is leisure for the rich and overtime for the poor.

No matter how fast the profits are churned out from massive and tiny firms alike, we're still waiting to enjoy our just share of the prosperity.

FOR THE LAST few months the Tory press has been weeping over the problem of inadequate housing, unemployment and overcrowding while pointing an accusing finger at the immigrants as the cause of all the trouble.

A glance at Southall, in West London, one of the largest concentration centres in the country, shows the same picture in stark relief.

### Appalling

The very basic services of water, gas, electricity and refuse collection are a low West Indian standard. In many small sweatshops in the area, immigrant workers are forced to work in appalling conditions at low rates of pay.

Until a determined strike last November won them better pay and conditions, the Indian and Pakistani workers at the Penwale Gutterman textile factory worked a seven-day week on a three-shift system for 37p an hour.

But more and more Indian workers are determined to fight back and link up with the struggle against the Tory offensive.

I asked Mohinder Singh, shop steward at United Biscuits, and secretary of the Southall Indian Workers' Association, what the major problems were for Indian people in Southall.

The same problems as those facing the whole working-class in this country—unemployment, rising prices, the struggle over wages and conditions. On top of that we've got the Immigration Bill. This Bill and the Industrial Relations Act are the twin bills to attack the working class and divide them on racialist lines.

### Condemn

I pointed out that Ealing Council, which has a Labour majority, recently passed a resolution urging the government not to let Ugandan Asians into the area. This followed a statement by Sid Bidwell, Labour MP for Southall, to the effect that Asians were not welcome here. What did Mohinder Singh feel about the local Labour Party's position on the question of the Ugandan Asians?

"When the Tory resolution was put forward we issued a statement which said: 'We call upon the Labour Party to condemn this motion. In doing so they will not only provide sanity within their own ranks, but would restore confidence in the working people of this borough.'"

"Instead the Labour councillors put forward their own resolution which was almost identical to the Tories'. The Labour Party is also the party of the capitalist class and does not represent the working class.

"Sid Bidwell, the so-called Left Labour MP cannot fight for the working class as long as he sits in the Labour Party. We're afraid that the racialists might be able to divide the working class but we are trying to make it clear that the problem is not immigration but the Tory government and its policies."

How did he think racialism must be fought?

"Black and white workers can only be united through struggle. With the economic crisis becoming so acute, white workers are beginning to realise that immigrants are not the problem although it is the tactics of the ruling class to divide the workers on race, caste and nationalist lines.

"Racialism cannot be solved within the capitalist system. Where we're fighting racialism, we are also fighting against capitalism."

JOHN ROSE



# Fishy fingers in the Cod War...

LAURIE FLYNN INVESTIGATES

FOR THE past fortnight, David Shenton, the Hull docks and fishing official of the Transport and General Workers Union, has been a happy man.

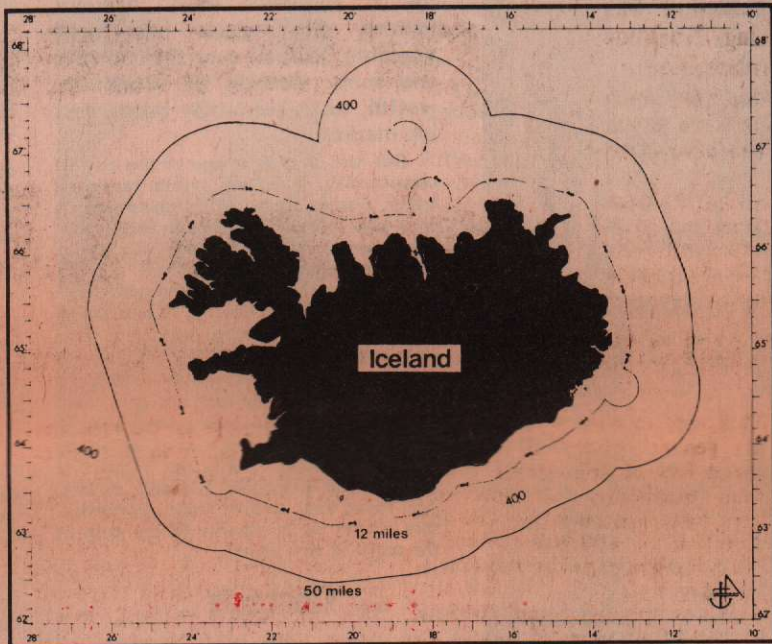
His union has been able to engage in the official blacking of goods, not only without the disapproval of employers, the Tory government and the press, but with their complete support.

The goods concerned are those coming from or going to that immense threat to British workers' living standards, Iceland.

The behaviour of Shenton and his union is in marked contrast to their performance during their dockers members' struggle to defend jobs and trade unionism. Then, the employers, the government, the press and the National Industrial Relations Court heartily disapproved of blacking.

Shenton and the other official custodians of the TGWU duly obliged by pleading with the dockers to end it.

The TGWU's new and authorised stance is a result of its support for the trawler owners and fish monopolies' 'cod war' against Iceland's extension of her territorial limits from 12 to 50 miles off the coast.



This is represented in the press as a patriotic venture to ensure that British fishermen hold on to their jobs and the British housewife has a regular supply of cod or more likely of adulterated and grotesquely expensive fish fingers on her table. Magically, blacking is patriotic.

In fact the increases in fish prices this year have been at record levels and the cod war will do absolutely nothing to

maintain what is humorously described as job security in the deadly trade of fishing.

Iceland's economy is almost totally dependent on the fishing industry, which is organised in tiny units by comparison with the giant British monopolies: Associated Fisheries, Ross (Imperial Tobacco and linked with Associated Fisheries through British United Trawlers), Findus (Joe Lyons) and Birds Eye (Unilever).

Iceland's argument is simple and unchallengeable. Unless immediate measures are taken to combat over-exploitation of the fish around its coast, then the fish are simply going to disappear, with ruinous consequences for all fishermen, Icelandic or otherwise.

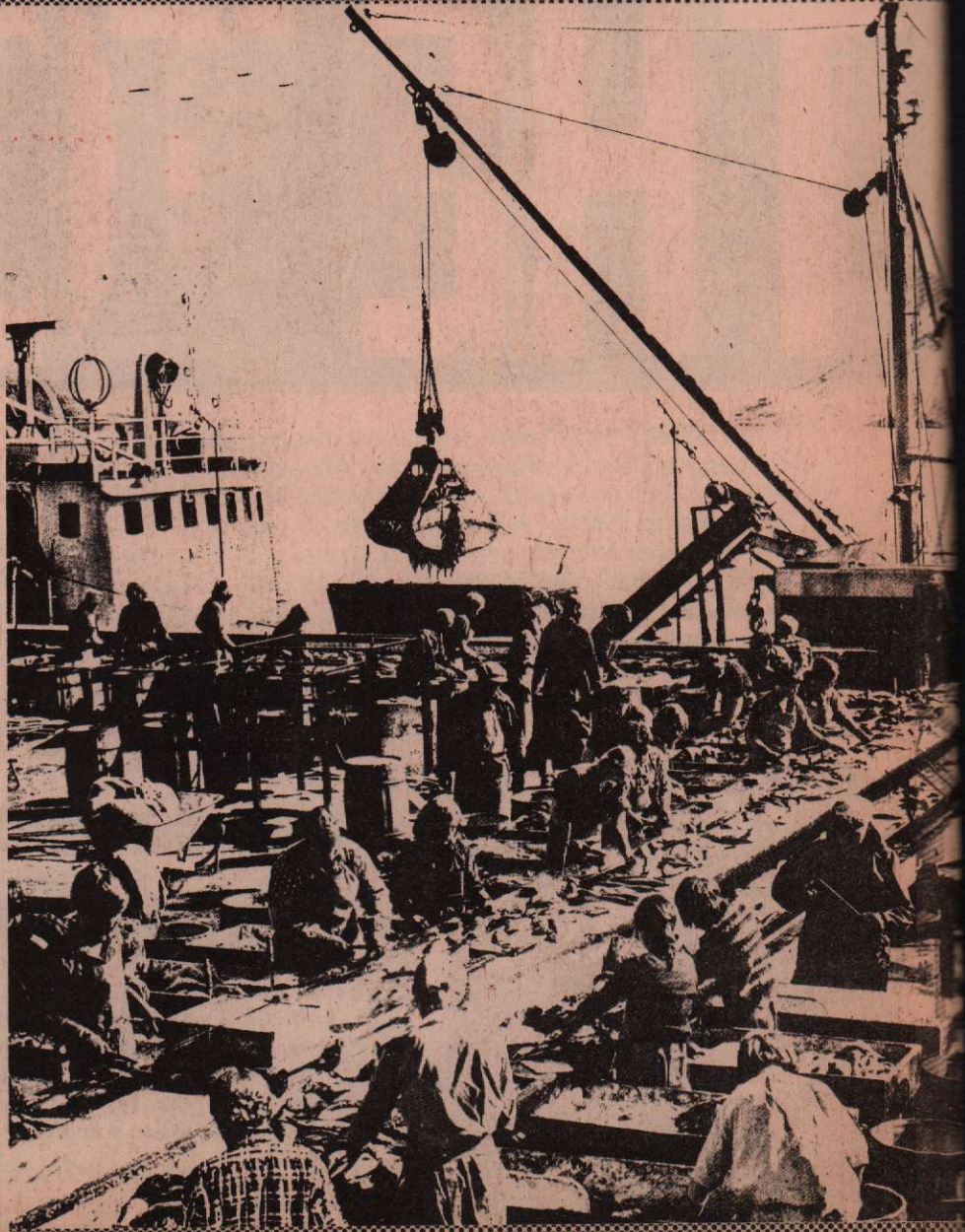
With herring this is already happening. Between 1965 and 1970, Iceland's annual herring catch was reduced by 93 per cent. Haddock is in an advanced state of decline and the most important catch of all, cod, is similarly threatened.

## Obliterated

This is a direct result of intensive fishing for one catch, irrespective of the age of the fish. As a result of this practice, bred by intensive international competition and completely uncontrolled use of new technology, the fish can never spawn and renew themselves. They are simply obliterated.

In 1950 40 per cent of the cod catch in Icelandic waters was 10 or more years old. This was down to 5 per cent in 1969 and 2 per cent in 1970.

But conservation of fish stocks does not suit the book of the big fish monopolies, including the Russian, Polish and East German state monopolies. They



Landing the catch at Seyoisfjorour, Iceland: the herring catch used to make up half the total catch—but

want to carry on emptying Icelandic waters of as many fish as possible. When they have cleaned the lot out they will simply direct their attentions elsewhere and repeat the process.

In the not too distant future there will be few if any fish or fishermen and the average British housewife will be lucky if she can afford the packet never mind the fish fingers.

This destructiveness is not confined to fish.

Without any 'cod war', fishing is the most deadly industry in Britain. In 1966 Professor R S F Shilling pointed out that the method of recording fatal accident statistics in the industry led to completely inaccurate figures. Instead of having the same incidence of fatalities as coal mining, as stated in the official figures, the industry was twice as dangerous. Between 1960 and 1966 223 men were killed in the pursuit of fish, 7 per cent of the total workforce in seven years.

## Condolence

In April this year Professor Shilling wrote another article saying exactly the same things and pointing out that nothing had changed since 1966, far less since 1968.

January of that year had seen one of the worst fishing 'accidents' for many years. The St Romanus, the Ross Cleveland and the Kingston Perrydot all went down off Iceland with 58 deaths. The newspapers were moved, the Queen and Harold Wilson sent messages of condolence to the relatives. So did the trawler owners.

A public inquiry was held and absolutely nothing effective has been done since. With an astute piece of public relations, a mother ship for the Icelandic fleet was introduced. This might just be able to haul men out of the sea after the 'accidents' have taken place.

Many things which get right to the bottom of the problem could have been done long before the three ships went down in 1968. All froze over on mast and rigging. The weight of the ice altered the centre of gravity and the ships overturned.

For years inventions had been in existence which would have offset any such possibility, even prevented it. Barnes Wallis had solved the same basic problem on aeroplanes during the Second World War. This could have been adapted.

Light electrical currents could have been run through the mast and rigging. And nowadays ultrasonics can be used to prevent icing up. The patriotic trawler owners did nothing before the disaster. Five years after it they have done nothing.

And in 1970 when Hull struck for nine weeks for a decent basic wage and ship-board shop stewards, the employers refused to have any truck with union representation on board. For the safety question is not one of technique. It is one of priorities.

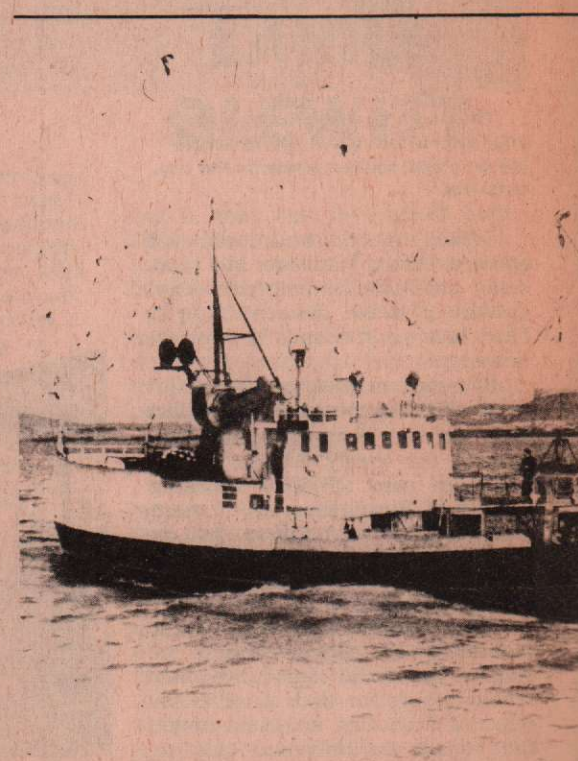
The purpose of the fishing operation is to get the maximum catch in the shortest space of time. Shop stewards might interfere with this by insisting that risks are avoided. And that wouldn't be good for the balance of payments.

Eventually the men returned

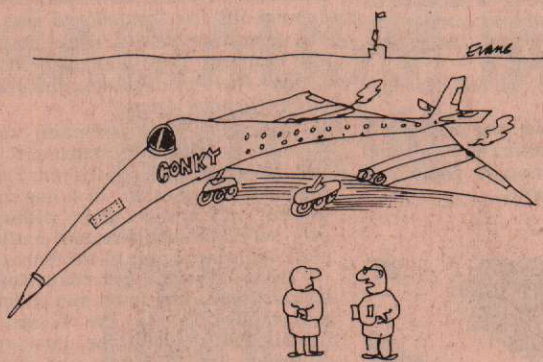
to work. The TG agreement which could have union on ships 'where been introduced and the consequent unbelievable for same David S. TGWU described as 'worthwhile'. Iceland has action to impose because it has b so-called norma got nothing. Th is that the big c and outmanoeuv

## Hypo

In 1971 Icela North East Ad Commission an agreement prohib the spawning of the 12-mile limit fused. Advising delegates with C Hudson, now British Trawling co-ordinator of But their hy



Trawlers: the most dangerous job in Britain



WELL THERE IS ONE DETAIL...  
- IT CAN'T FLY.

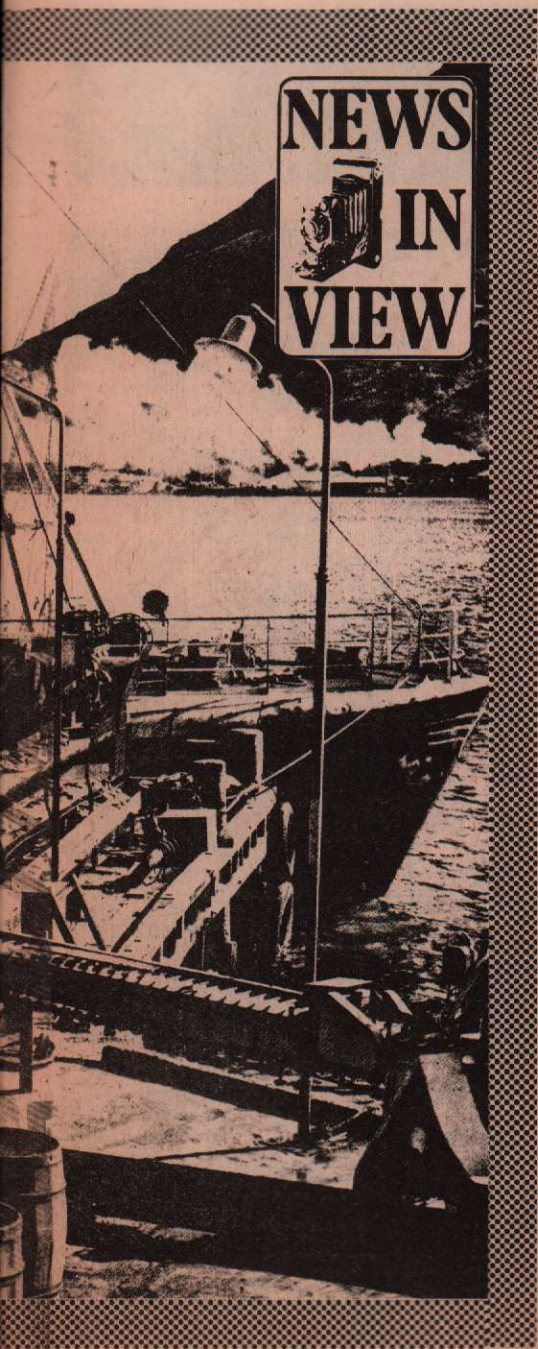
## BOOM OR BUST?

The crisis in the aircraft industry

'The huge sums of money being spent on Concorde will only serve to save a few hours for businessmen or to carry on pleasure trips a tiny handful of privileged people. We have to ask what sort of society refuses to spend even a small amount of money providing a reliable and efficient bus service for ordinary people while at the same time wasting millions on Concorde.'

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**NEWS  
IN  
VIEW**



# NIXON:

## Most corrupt president... since LBJ

IN 1971, George Meany, President of the American trade union federation, the AFL-CIO, delivered a stinging attack on Richard Nixon: 'When you look back, look at the President of the United States. This was the Number One anti-communist that this country had. I know, because I was Number Two. I didn't like being Number Two, but I concede he was Number One.'

'Well, now he is a realist... We don't see much wrong with Mao Tse-tung. We don't see much wrong with Russian communism. You have to be realistic.'

It is certainly strange at first sight that Richard Nixon, who built his political career on anti-communism, should have achieved most publicity during his four years as president for his spectacular visits to Moscow and Peking. But it is not really strange. However much circumstances may have changed, Nixon has remained the loyal servant of the American ruling class.

Nixon could recognise that the foreign policies of the 'cold war' period no longer served the needs of US imperialism and that there was nothing in the nature of the Russian or Chinese regimes to prevent them becoming at least temporary allies of the US.

But the war—and a hot one at that—continued against ordinary people anywhere in the world who dared to demand freedom or justice.

### FANFARES

When the people of Bangladesh threw off the Pakistani dictatorship, Nixon actually accused members of his inner circle of not being favourable enough to Pakistan.

And in Vietnam, despite the repeated fanfares announcing new peace plans, Nixon has continued the terror that Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson launched. His sole concern has been to make the war more acceptable to American opinion by withdrawing ground troops and murdering Vietnamese with remote-controlled electronic devices instead.

As a writer in the American socialist paper Workers' Power wryly observed, 'Surely Richard Nixon will go down in history as the most corrupt and venal president this country has suffered since Lyndon Johnson.'

Press exposures and scandals have touched only the tip of the iceberg as far as the Republican administration's links with big industry are concerned. Nixon's moves to step up the arms race soon after he took office meant massive contracts for Bell Telephone, General Electric and other companies.

In 1971 Nixon publicly promised to help the US textile industry by limiting imports.

### IAN BIRCHALL on the man heading the race for the White House

This was in clear contrast with his general policy of 'moving ahead toward freer trade rather than protection'. It may not have been unconnected with the donation of 300,000 dollars to his campaign fund by the textile industry.

Nixon has not found time, in his first four years of power, to even scratch the surface of the real problems facing American society—poverty, housing, unemployment and racism. His contempt for the 25 million black people in the US is shown by the fact that in a 45-minute State of the Union speech in January this year the words 'black' or 'negro' never crossed his lips.

By the fourth year of Nixon's rule unemployment had risen to five and a half million—more than 6 per cent of the Labour force. But these figures hide the real impact of unemployment.

At the beginning of the year unemployment in Detroit was up to 14 per cent, and in the inner-city area, where most blacks live, it is nearly 30 per cent. Among black teenagers, the figure has been put as high as 70 per cent.

### BLATANT

But the very core of Nixon's policies over the last couple of years has been the effort to hold down wages while allowing prices and profits to rise.

The whole set-up was so blatant that even the tame union leaders put on the three-sided Pay Board eventually resigned.

The Pay Board's guideline was to restrict wage increases to 5.5 per cent, based on an estimated 3 per cent increase in productivity. In fact, productivity has risen by 3.5 per cent, but wage rises have been held to an average of 4.9 per cent.

Price controls, on the other

hand, were quite ineffective. Unprocessed food was not even nominally included.

And profits, as Nixon candidly put it on television last October, were not intended to be controlled: 'Let us recognise an unassailable fact of economic life. All Americans will benefit from more profits... higher profits would be good for every person in America.'

### ILLEGAL

But better for some than for others—this summer General Motors announced its highest quarterly profit in its history.

Nixon is a man with a keen sense of who the real enemy is. He is happy to dine with Mao or Brezhnev, but at home his

eye is always seeking some means of limiting trade union rights.

During the 1970 rail strike and the 1972 dock strike he officially requested Congress to consider legislation making strike action illegal in certain sectors.

And in 1971 he suspended the 1931 Davis-Bacon Act which obliged contractors on federal building projects to pay union rates, thus allowing contractors to negotiate lower rates with non-union workers.

If Americans re-elect Richard Nixon next week it will not be out of any love for his policies, but because George McGovern's alternative is so grotesquely implausible.

One thing is certain—the next four years will see even sharper struggles.

## International Socialism 53

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



October issue now out: 20p, or £1 for a year, from IS JOURNAL, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

## Contempt for blacks, pay freeze for unions



'But the abolition of the power of the capitalist class is far, far more unacceptable. So Labour have never even dreamed of attempting it'

# OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths

THE revolution that made possible the development of British capitalism happened in the 17th century. Since 300 years have passed since then, it is not surprising that, for most people who live in Britain, revolutions are things that happen in other countries.

As Charles Dickens' Mr Podsnap put it: 'We Englishmen are very proud of our CONSTITUTION, Sir! It was bestowed upon us by providence. No other country is so favoured as this country'.

It would be more accurate to say that the constitution was 'bestowed upon us' by Presbyterian merchants, radical craftsmen, Oliver Cromwell and Dutch William—the Orangemen's King Billy—all of whom 'subverted by force and violence' the government as by law established. Nevertheless it is true that since the revolution of 1688 there has been continuous 'parliamentary government'—a unique record.

Why then, in Britain at any rate, should not the working class be able to use the existing political institutions to establish its own rule? The establishment of workers' power would be a social revolution, even if it came through strictly 'constitutional' channels.

But can it happen in this way? First of all, consider the experience.

James Ramsey MacDonald became the first Labour Prime Minister, committed to the 'inevitability of gradualness' or 'socialism on the instalment plan'. When his first government took office there was, by all contemporary accounts, a good deal of excitement and uncertainty. Many working men and women expected, if not the New Jerusalem, at any rate a reasonable token of what the Labour Party's platform had called 'The New Social Order'.

## Daring

What they got, as a contemporary wrote, was the spectacle of 'Cabinet Ministers who had been dreaded by their opponents as irresponsible revolutionaries . . . turning out in practice to be only a rather more than usually ineffective government. 'Greatly daring, they had considered whether they might not break with tradition and eschew court dress but had decided, on the advice of their leader, that to do so would be inadvisable.'

MacDonald turned out to be a traitor to socialism. After twice heading Labour governments he ended up as prime minister of a Tory (alias 'National') government from 1931-35.

## It could never happen here!

Attlee, who had served under MacDonald, headed the third Labour government (1945-51) and Wilson, who had served under Attlee, headed the fourth (1964-70). These governments, though they could not be dismissed as merely 'ineffectual', did not take us one jot or tittle nearer the Workers' Republic.

Indeed they did not even go so far as to abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords!

The last point may seem trivial but its importance is symptomatic. The abolition of these profoundly undemocratic institutions was unacceptable to conservative opinion and was, and perhaps still is, electorally unpopular. So it was not attempted.

But the abolition of the power of the capitalist class is far, far more unacceptable. So Labour governments have never even dreamed of attempting it.

True, there have been some nationalisation measures, mainly in 1945-51. But these measures were state purchases of industries in difficulties and were acceptable to the ruling class. The Tory Party supported the nationalisation measures of 1945-51 (with the exception of steel and road haulage).

Once nationalised, the industries were run on the approved capitalist lines.

There have also been some considerable social reforms, notably the National Health Service, again chiefly in 1945-51. But Liberal and even Tory governments have also introduced substantial social and political reforms. One man, one vote, for

example, was won before the Labour Party was born.

The Tory attitude to change was succinctly put by the present Lord Chancellor, Hailsham, who as plain Mr Hogg MP told the House of Commons in 1944: 'You must give the people reforms or they will give you revolution'.

Exactly. Reforms are conceded when our rulers are worried about the growth of active discontent leading to direct working-class action.

As Raymond Challinor has pointed out: 'The three great periods of reforms—post-1867, 1906-14 and 1945-51—have each been associated with different political parties. In the first of these the Tories, led by Disraeli, wished to tame the newly enfranchised working class, to secure its adherence to capitalist politics.'

'The second was the Liberals' response to the mounting industrial tension and social unrest that characterised the period before the first world war.

## Crumbs

'The third came when Labour had the task in 1945 of making the transition from war to peace while trying to avoid the harmful and potentially revolutionary social clashes that happened after 1918. People had to be granted crumbs to keep them quiet . . . Reform is the reply to the threat of revolution'.

But perhaps the British Labour Party is a peculiarly bad specimen? Not at all. The record of other 'social democratic' parties is every bit as bad and often worse.

The idea that workers' power can be established by piecemeal legislation flies in the face of all historical experience. Rosa Luxemburg pinpointed the reason in the reply to Eduard Bernstein, its first advocate: 'People who pronounce themselves in favour of the method of legislative reforms in place and in contradiction to the conquest of political power and social revolution do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the same goal, but a different goal.'

'Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a new society they take a stand for surface modification of the old society.'

## BOOKS

# REVIEW

## Russia's poverty line

CLASS AND SOCIETY IN SOVIET RUSSIA, by Mervyn Matthews, Allen Lane, £3.

FOR many years people on the left felt that Russian society was superior to that of the West.

This orthodoxy has taken some severe bashing. Khrushchev's revelations and the events in Hungary in 1956 shook the faith of many socialists. Since the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 by Russian troops, even many of the Communist Parties in the West have voiced some criticism.

But enormous confusion persists about what Russian society is like to live in. People still use the argument that, for all its failings, Russian society is much fairer and more equal than the West.

This new study provides ample evidence to disprove any such belief—and it draws its evidence almost entirely from publications in Russia itself by sociologists and official bodies. These official figures reveal very marked social inequalities.

At one extreme are the mass of workers. The economists G S Srkisan and N P Kuznetsova calculated a 'poverty line' for Russia in 1967. 'A monthly income of a little over 200 roubles is needed to satisfy the minimal requirement . . . for a standard, typical worker's family of four people.'

In other words, a wage of at least 100 roubles would be needed if both husband and wife worked. Yet when this book was published the minimum wage in Russia was only 40-45 roubles a month, raised a few months later to 60 roubles.

And an awful lot of workers are on the minimum. The economist Kaputsin has provided figures that indicate that more than a fifth of workers in the relatively well-paid building industry and three-fifths in the textile and food industry earn less than 75 roubles a month. In Byelo-Russia in 1965-6, a third of all workers were in this low-paid category.

The average wage of all employees and workers is only 104 roubles a month, and 'this means a per capita income of only 54 roubles a month for the working class as a whole'.

Miserable wages are matched by even more miserable housing conditions. In 1958 three-quarters of Moscow families had less than seven square yards of living space per person. Imagine trying to live in a space of 6ft by 10½ft.

Now these figures in themselves do not prove that Russian society is based on principles opposed to those of genuine socialism. If society as a whole was very poor then even such poverty would have to be accepted.

But in Russia there is a group of people who live in quite different conditions. The basic wage rates for managers were at least four times those of workers inside their factories, varying from 190 to 400 roubles. Bonuses could raise their salaries to 10 times what a worker could earn. On collective farms the chairman's salary could be 15 or even 19 times that of the unskilled workers.

No one knows what Brezhnev, Kosygin and other Kremlin creatures receive but there are reports that the President of the Academy of Sciences gets 1200 roubles a month and senior officials 600. This privileged group of 'responsible persons in state and economic administration' numbers about two and a half million—or 2½ per cent of the population.

These are the people who make the decisions in government ministries and economic enterprises, who the workers have to obey. They do not exercise their

control over industry by individual ownership, and because of this cannot pass on control through inheritance, but this does not prevent the ruling group passing its power to its children through the education system.

Not only do the children of the privileged have a clear advantage in getting into university but they enjoy special access to the universities which lead to top jobs. 'Institutions of considerable political importance . . . are said to be the exclusive preserve of the children of the elite. Though not secret, they are not listed in the annually published handbooks of VUZ (university) applicants.'

Children of the elite are able to go to private creches, to stay at secondary school longer and to gain admission to special ability schools.

The Soviet Communist Party is dominated, despite its name, by the same elite of managers and specialists.

Although this book is difficult to read and in no way marxist, its statistics are essential for socialists prepared to face up to the realities of modern Russia.

CHRIS HARMAN.

## Students on the streets

STUDENTS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM, International Socialists, 15p.

THE role of a revolutionary, said Lenin in his famous pamphlet, What Is To Be Done?, is not to concentrate the attention of the working class exclusively on its own problems. Rather it is to help the working class to see that all the problems of society, and especially of other oppressed groups, are its problems.

Lenin gave the example of students—it was necessary for the working class to understand the student's struggle against the state and give it a socialist lead, he said.

The workers' movement in Britain is still far from accepting this idea. Students, like black people in this country, or the Irish and the black Rhodesians in their own countries—are too often seen as the kind of people who cause 'trouble' not just for the state but for ordinary workers.

The biggest misconception this pamphlet has to expose has, ironically, been advanced in the name of Leninism by both the Communist Party student bureaucrats and the ultra-left International Marxist Group. This is that socialists do not have to fight for a practical working-class political perspective in the student movement, that we should aim for either narrow student trade-unionism or a student vanguard adept at an abstract, formal marxism.

The irony is that these positions are caricatures of what Lenin attacked. For they focus the student's attention, in practice, more or less exclusively on student conditions—on anything but the practical problems of the working class.

The authors, who are students, frame a strategy for student politics, basing their argument on a brief summary of the marxist analysis of the earlier IS pamphlet, Education, Capitalism and the Student Revolt (now out of print), but develop it in a rather brief and dense manner, so that the relations of education to capitalism are not made visible enough.

The militancy of 1967-70 is too easily dismissed. The tactical experience of the mass sit-ins, which is important, is ignored, and the role of IS's own politics is not examined. I suspect that ignorance played a role here: the 1967 LSE sit-in is dated 1968, the October 1968 Vietnam demo is dated 1969!

But on its own ground, this pamphlet is at its best. Again this is because it has learnt the main lesson of the past: that student politics without working-class politics are lost.

Only one practical query; as a university worker I think that socialists will have to pay more attention to the increasing militancy of trade unions in higher education (ASTMS, ATTI, NUPE). Could these not be an important link between the mass of students and the workers' movement?

MARTIN SHAW

## BOOKWORM'S EYE VIEW

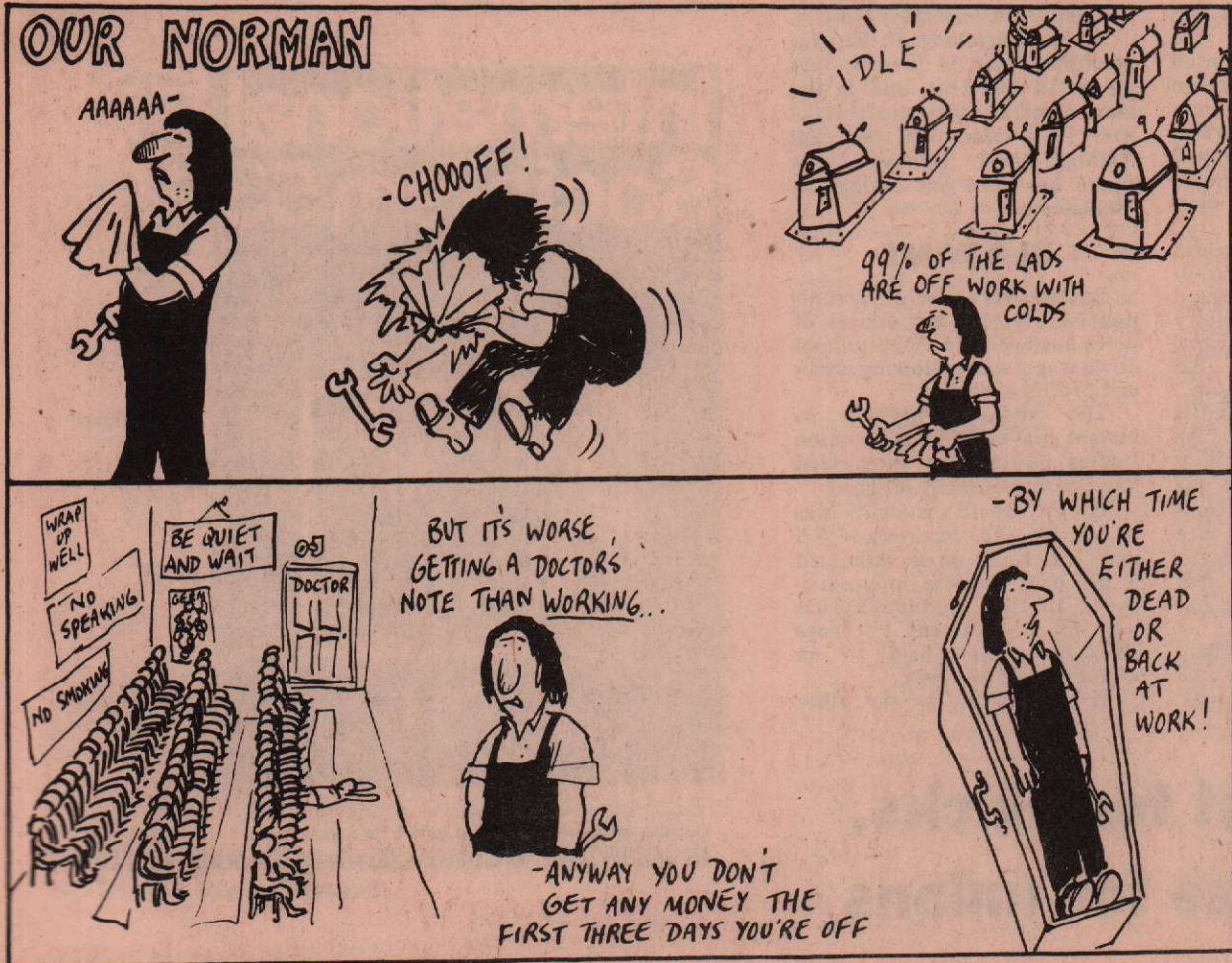
TWO new pamphlets on housing with differing political approaches appear this month.

Wandsworth Community Workshop republish their 12-page pamphlet HOUSING (price 10p, including postage from 70 Loftus Road, London W12). This provides a simple post-war history of housing policy, a short guide to the Housing Finance Act and some comments on the deportation of London workers from their old homes and communities in the city. The authors insist that the housing crisis is not about the plight of the slums and homeless but the inability of the capitalist system to provide the necessities of a decent life to those who

make its wealth.

The National Union of Students' booklet HOUSING ACTION (25p, including postage from SCANUS, 3 Endsleigh St, London WC1H 0DU) is an anthology of articles on housing edited by the union's Community Action group. Although the editors want to show the relationship between 'slum and state', the selection of articles suggests that the problem can be solved by local direct action, if not by Shelter then by the squatters.

Housing Action does contain some useful factual summaries and a bibliography, but its political opinions should be disregarded.





# ARTISTS SET UP A UNION

THERE is no state bureau of censorship in Britain. This is a free, democratic country, the best in the world. Painters are free to paint. Having completed their works, they can lug them from gallery to gallery to get them shown and possibly even bought.

If at first they don't succeed they are free, just like the unemployed, to try, try again.

And when they have tried so often that they drive themselves to distraction or convince themselves of the need to make a more practical way in the world, they can attempt to 'get by' in advertising or some other occupation where great dreams become lost illusions offset by a regular wage packet.

Down the ages artists have generally accommodated to the powers that be, painting and sculpting to the requirements of those with buying power. But there have been exceptions, great men and women who like the pioneers of the trade union movements have refused to live on their knees.

Often at great personal cost, they have sought ways through the stifling confines laid down by the society in which they find themselves.

And again like trade union militants and socialists, they have been described as wreckers, mad people, subversives. The truly great among them stood by their path, even in the most difficult periods. Something around them and inside them said that they represented the forces of life, of freedom and human dignity.

But, still living within the atmosphere of the conventional myth that art is something above everyday life, radical painters and artists have seen themselves as isolated individuals fighting a lone war. Only in times of great social stress have they sided with the best elements of the working class. And rarely have they organised in trade unions.

It is of considerable significance that in Britain this autumn, painters and sculptors have done just this. After some years of talking about an Artists Union, one has indeed been formed. In less than three months 600 members have been recruited in the London area alone.

The miners and the dockers have taught the lesson well.

It is no top-hat artists union. The intention is to affiliate with the TUC and become an integral part of some established manual or white-collar union.

There are obvious reasons for this. The artist is seldom ever directly employed, except perhaps in some other capacity, as a teacher or illustrator. This makes organisation difficult to begin or maintain, hence the need for the strength of the broader labour movement.

The union is designed to organise major changes in the working conditions of artists and greatly expand the outlets for artistic production.

Painters and artists by the thousand are the victims of the gallery system and the rest of the battery of speculation in so-called culture. In Britain, and elsewhere, painting and sculpture are not for the nourishment and enjoyment of all. They exist to serve the appetite and property consciousness of the rich. The commercial galleries operate for profit and only show what they can ensure will be bought.

## Profits

A stable of artists is kept on contract to each gallery, and every now and then a new star is elevated to the ranks. While there is no state censorship in Britain, there is the censorship of the gallery owners, the market and the conditions of life which together ensure that only a tiny minority participate in artistic production and enjoyment.

The Artists Union is concerned to change this, to find and enforce ways whereby many more artists can win the right to eat, buy materials and get their work into people's lives in addition to the abstract right to paint.

A price limitation on all artwork is under consideration. If this were low, then many more people could afford paintings. Another idea is a tax on the huge profits made from reselling historic works of art. The funds levied would be used to provide subsistence to living artists.

The Artists Union also intends to seek representation on all public bodies dealing in the exhibition of art and also on the bodies that dole out the pathetic amounts of public funds allotted to support the living arts.

The Artists Union is definitely not concerned just with better regulation of the meanness of art and artists' existing conditions. The union is clear that these arise from the priorities of the society which stunts us all.

They see their organisation and its identification with the broad trade union movement as a method of creating a new and broader audience for art. For instance links with printworkers could be developed into insistence that things other than adverts go into the pages of the newspapers.

But the question of art and culture in our time is not just about broader audiences. It is about self-activity, high culture being part of high life for all. One wonders who will organise the building worker who plays a splendid violin.

● Artists' Union, c/o ICA, Nash House, Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

Laurie Flynn



TROTSKY IN POWER: MAKING A SPEECH IN MOSCOW

**TROTSKY: A DOCUMENTARY RECORD**, by Francis Wyndham and David King, Penguin £1.50

A *MAGNIFICENT* collection of pictures covering Trotsky's life has just been published.

His childhood, imprisonment and exile in Siberia in 1902 and 1906, his role in the 1905 Petrograd Soviet, deportation from country after country because of his revolutionary opposition to both sides in the first world war, the years of power 1917-23, exile again as Stalin strangled the revolutionary power and murdered its leaders, and finally assassination in 1940 by Stalin's secret police—all the changing fortunes of the revolution and the man are brought into view by more than 250 photographs.

Unfortunately the text is not so good. It is rarely wrong factually—though the author gives a naive account of, say, the Kronstadt rising—but it is written in the flat, colourless style of the Sunday supplements, obscuring the living movement of revolution and counter-revolution.

Readers who want to benefit from the pictures would do better to follow Trotsky's own account in *My Life*. CH

## TV on the workers' side

TELEVISION is not a medium noted for its support of the workers' cause. When workers are also immigrants the chances of their case being put are even less. With this in mind, last Monday's World in Action programme on the hotel industry may perhaps be considered in not too unfavourable a light.

The programme did not, and perhaps could not, in half an hour, do more than hint at the kind of exploitation and human misery which exists in the industry. But the impression left with the viewer was that the Carlton Towers Hotel is a semi-heaven whereas Grand Metropolitan Hotels are villains.

In fact both are part of the same system of exploitation.

The Carlton Towers' management regard themselves as 'progressive'. Their methods of fighting the unionisation of their workers is to try to buy them off as cheaply as possible, while Grand Met hope to achieve the same ends by scaring them off.

The programme also touched on the complex problem of immigrant

workers in a way which, although apparently sympathetic, did not come to grips with the fundamental issues involved.

Immigrant workers are undoubtedly a fundamental aspect of the advanced capitalist economy. In a period of so-called full employment they play the same role that the unemployed play in a period of depression. They also present the additional advantage to the system that when the depression eventually sets in, they can be used as scapegoats for the failures of capitalism.

The only way this danger can be effectively allayed is by forging a real unity between 'immigrant' and 'native' workers at the level of their class consciousness. This is a crucial question for the whole working-class movement and if it is ignored, this can only play right into the hands of the Powellites and the National Front.

In the programme the need for immigrant workers to be defended from exploitation appeared as a humanitarian need. This appeal to

humanitarian principles can be dangerous. For when the crunch comes, humanitarianism tends to vanish and only working-class solidarity can save the weaker sections of the workers.

It is probable that the well-intentioned but rather weak nature of the programme reflects to some extent the fact that the International Workers Branch of the Transport and General Workers Union is still in the early stages of organisation in an industry notorious for its backwardness. It would be unthinkable that such a programme could be made about the dockers or the miners.

For the moment the World in Action programme has helped to undermine the fear in which immigrant hotel workers are forced to live. But in the longer term they will have to rely on their own efforts and the solidarity of other organised workers rather than the occasional sympathetic TV programme.

**Alvaro Miranda**

Chairman of the TGWU International Workers' Branch



# 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'.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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

For 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.

## THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

### SCOTLAND

Aberdeen  
Cumbernauld  
Dundee  
Edinburgh  
Dunfermline/  
Cowdenbeath  
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy  
Glasgow N  
Glasgow S  
Greenock  
Stirling

### NORTH EAST

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

### NORTH

Barnsley  
Bradford  
Dewsbury  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Pontefract/  
Knottingley  
Scarborough  
Selby  
Sheffield  
York

### EAST

Basildon  
Beccles  
Cambridge  
Chelmsford  
Colchester  
Harlow  
Ipswich  
Leiston  
Lowestoft  
Norwich  
Peterborough

### NORTH WEST

Barrow  
Blackburn  
Bolton  
Burnley  
Crewe  
Kirkby  
Lancaster  
Manchester  
Merseyside  
Oldham  
Preston  
Rochdale  
Salford  
St Helens  
Stoke  
Stockport  
Trafford  
Wigan  
Wrexham

### WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath  
Bristol  
Cardiff  
Exeter  
Gloucester  
Llanelli  
Mid-Devon  
Neath  
Plymouth  
Swansea  
Swansea Valley

### GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley  
Camden  
Chertsey  
Croydon

### Ealing

East London  
Enfield  
Fulham and Hammersmith  
Hackney and Islington  
Harlesden  
Harrow  
Hemel Hempstead  
High Wycombe  
Hornsey  
Hounslow  
Ilford  
Kilburn  
Kingston  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
North Herts  
Paddington  
Reading  
St Albans  
Slough  
Tottenham  
Walthamstow  
Wandsworth  
Watford  
Woolwich

### MIDLANDS

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

### SOUTH

Brighton  
Canterbury  
Crawley  
Eastbourne  
Guildford  
Portsmouth  
Southampton



# THE UNIONS

## No fight at top as miners face new attack

by John Charlton

THE COAL BOARD and the government are poised to launch an attack on miners which, if successful, could thrust them back into the insecurity and demoralisation of the 1950s.

They plan massive pit closures of up to 100 pits over the next year or two.

Since the strike a softening-up process has taken place. Talks between the NCB and the union have been held over the summer about 'co-operation'.

These talks have enabled NCB chairman Derek Ezra to speak of 'acceptance by the unions to discuss closures for reasons other than exhaustion of coal reserves' and to propose that 'present redundancy agreements should be reviewed and substantially improved.'

This process took another step last week when Ezra announced that the NCB was prepared to 'open the books' and to have discussions locally and nationally on the 'viability of operations'. The new era of 'friendliness and cordiality' has even extended in the Derbyshire area to the board removing the free coal concession for miners.

During the past few months the National Union of Mineworkers has been excessively timid in its public statements and appears to be going along with the board's understandable desire to achieve these friendly and cordial relations.

### Astonishing

For example last month the NUM national executive decided not to press ahead immediately with the pay claim agreed overwhelmingly by the annual conference at Morecambe in July. And the executive has kept completely silent on the question of support for tenants who resist the rent increases to be levied in January by the NCB.

The executive's position would be understandable, though not forgivable, if the union was fighting a long and tough rearguard action following a major defeat at the hands of the employers. The astonishing thing is that it is behaving like this only a matter of months after winning the greatest strike victory in modern times, a victory which not only laid low the NCB but caused a British government its biggest scare for 30 years.

Remember last winter? After years of demoralisation and defeatism, the rank and file of the union came out punching. They overcame the miserable, cringing attempts of President Joe Gormley to get the government off the hook even before the strike began.

Thousands of men never previously involved plunged into activity with



Gormley: went before a tribunal

enthusiasm and relish. Picketing of docks, depots and power stations took place on a scale never seen before. The rest of the labour movement responded with admiration and comradeship. The miner walked tall.

The Wilberforce agreement—a shabby compromise—took some of the gilt off the gingerbread. But nevertheless miners resumed work in tremendous spirit.

In the eight months since the strike that tremendous fighting spirit has been almost totally wiped out. From the right wing, the attack has been cold and deliberate.

In May the union went before an Industrial Relations Tribunal. In June it entered productivity talks with the NCB. At the TUC in September Gormley attacked the engineers for their resistance to the Industrial Relations Act.

### Treachery

At a local level the witch-hunters crawled from beneath their stones in the shape of the Labour Miners' Association—formed to combat the influence of militants.

The same old petty bureaucrats still hold the positions of power and influence in the branches, co-operating with the boss to dampen down local issues and help the output figures. This treachery and pitiful crawling to the employers and government has always characterised the attitudes of the right wing.

The sad and disgraceful aspect of this situation is that the left has allowed this to happen with hardly a murmur—at any rate in public. Of course, many of these men are tried and tested fighters.

With few exceptions they are not management lackeys. They hate the board. They want to beat them. The problem is the tactics which they employ.

Quiet manoeuvring for office at all levels in the union is the name of the game. And it is a disastrous policy. Miners have the finest fighting traditions of any group of workers in Britain.

They have a wonderfully sure sense of class solidarity. But isolated pit by pit and without clear leadership they will retreat into passivity.

Since the strike the left has given no clear lead. You have a vague idea that they are for more money, that they are against the boss, that they hate the right wing. But that's it—no policy on wages, on productivity bargaining, on NCB corruption, on democracy in the union, on workers' control, no programme around which local militants can group and organise. As a result the field is clear for the right to make the running.

### Silenced

The pay claim decision is a prime example. Some miners have heard of violent disagreement on the executive. But that is all. The left wingers are silenced by the essentially conservative notion of the sanctity of majority decisions.

In fact the left have not only a right but an obligation to speak up if they believe the majority are pursuing a wrong policy. And even more so when such a policy flouts a conference decision, as this one does.

They must speak out against the treachery of the right. If attempts are made to discipline them, they must appeal to the membership.

It is only through the building of a fighting leadership clearly identifiable in both policies and strategy that the return to demoralisation can be stopped.

During the strike a number of militants recognised this. As a result the rank and file paper *The Collier* was born. Four issues have appeared since the strike.

The paid sale has now grown to 3500 and it is developing a credibility with a widening group of militants as a paper not afraid to speak out on the crucial issues that face the miners today.

## SETBACK FOR PRINTERS

by Ross Pritchard, NGA

BY A VOTE of 32,000 to 30,000, the National Graphical Association, one of the big three print unions, stays on the register set up by the Industrial Relations Act.

The ballot—with 60 per cent of members voting—followed the overwhelming vote for deregistration from the union's three-yearly conference in June, despite various manoeuvres by the union leadership to avoid conference coming to such a definite decision.

In the face of determined pressure from the rank and file, the leadership were forced to support the call—but made two conditions: that the decision would be by membership ballot and that the full facts of the situation would be put before the members.

How an almost unanimous decision by conference was lost in the ballot is a lesson significant not only to printers but to the whole trade union movement.

From the start the union leaders showed, to say the least, no enthusiasm for the action set in motion by conference. It took them three months to get the ballot

papers out—and when they did there were three pages of reasons why the NGA could not deregister (related to tax relief on provident funds and investment income) and one page saying *nevertheless we should apply to deregister.*

In the intervening three months the union leaders ignored the demands of many delegates that they go out into the chapels, into the movement, to sell the idea of deregistration to the members. There were no special meetings, no campaign in the union journal.

### BOYCOTT

Instead we were treated to the spectre of a demand for £680,000 in back taxes and the possible need to divert £4,500,000 from the general fund to cover provident benefits. The only definite action by the leadership was to boycott the TUC at

Brighton for having the temerity to suspend them for their shilly-shallying behaviour.

It is to the credit of the members that despite the performance of the leaders 30,000 voted for trade union principles and showed their determination to fight the Industrial Relations Act.

The base for a reversal of this decision lies with these 30,000. The limits of policy-making through resolutions have never been so apparent.

The ballot result means the NGA is the only print union on the register. The Industrial Relations Act will have to be fought on the shop floor, despite this decision and probably soon because of it. To win this fight, links will have to be built between chapels and policies developed to democratise the union and make the leaders accountable.

The rank and file paper *Printworker* is attempting to do this among all print unions—and it will be essential if the fight against the Industrial Relations Act and the system that created it is to be won.



# DON'T COVER UP FOR

# THE PROVOS 'MISTAKES' LETTERS

SOCIALIST WORKER'S Belfast reporter, Mike Miller, now admits (14 October) that he has 'concentrated more in detail on Loyalist sectarianism' because 'the British press has almost ignored this phenomenon.'

But why didn't he explain the 'need' for this biased reporting all along? And he still refers to the 'apparently sectarian actions' of the Provos. Is that to mean that somehow the Provos (unlike the Protestants) aren't 'really' sectarian?

How much longer must space in a revolutionary workers' newspaper be taken up with Provo excuses for their 'mistakes'? For that is how Provo supporters described the Abercorn Restaurant atrocity to me.

What makes Miller think the Provos always take responsibility for their actions? In the Donegal Street disaster they first denied it, then took credit four days later, saying they gave warning but the army distorted it. The same excuse was cited for Bloody Friday.

But we are socialists, not liberals interested in striking an 'even balance'. The point is that Miller is an Irish nationalist partisan because he thinks (incorrectly) that is to be anti-imperialist.

Never before have Leninists demanded that a consistently-expressed majority opinion on a nationalities dispute—an opinion rooted in the working class—should be overridden in favour of a minority showing absolutely no prospect of developing the class toward social revolution.—BOB HARRISON, Belfast 9.

## Privileges

STUART Morgan (28 October) attempts to explain the fact that the Ulster Protestants have a British national consciousness on the basis that this reflects their marginal privileges. No one would deny the existence of these marginal privileges, but it is completely un-marxist to identify these as the cause of the Protestants' British national consciousness.

On the contrary, the latter developed on the basis of Ulster's industrialisation as an integral part of the United Kingdom. Morgan denies, however, the very fact of this industrialisation.

It is obviously news to him that in the 19th century while Belfast and its surrounding area were the scene of considerable industrial development, the rest of Ireland remained an exploited agricultural colony. This uneven economic development provided the basis for the different national identities of Protestant and Catholic Irishmen.

The marginal privileges of the Protestant working class account for the strength of reactionary ideas within this national consciousness but cannot account for the national consciousness itself.

Having abandoned any attempt to understand the situation in Ulster on a historical materialist basis, Morgan is inevitably forced to rely on 'Machiavellian Tory plots'. This approach is adequate for middle-class nationalists of the Provisional IRA and their hangers-on, but it is a blind alley for socialists.—KEITH DAULTREY, London E11.

## Assessment

I AM well aware that the British Army is the army of an imperialist state. As a socialist of moderate intelligence I too can read a daily bourgeois paper reporting on Northern Ireland and interpret the 'facts' and 'opinions' there printed into something approaching an objective approach.

I do not need Mike Miller once a week to do this by crassly reversing every fact and opinion I had read earlier in the week. Surprisingly imperialists have been known to tell the truth and bourgeois commentators occasionally all the truth.

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## TROTSKY FILM: WHAT IS REALITY?

I HAVE NOT seen Losey's Assassination of Trotsky and cannot enter into any discussion of the film's merits. However, Sam Rohdie's criticism of Paul Foot's review (28 October) must be answered.

Rohdie is right to say that a work of art is not to be judged by its detailed truth to reality. If the director chose to have Trotsky killed on a Thursday morning rather than a Tuesday afternoon, or change the colour of the killer's hair, it would be of little concern. But this is not what realism means or has ever meant.

Every book or film is, however, a statement about reality, an expression of a certain view of the world. Foot's criticism is that Losey has taken a political event and presented it in psychological terms.

After all, Losey chose to make a film about a theme that his audience already have some knowledge of in a political context. If he simply wanted to make a psychological study of a murderer there are thousands of fictional plots he could have chosen to film. Likewise, Tolstoy gets his dates wrong in War and Peace, and it would be silly to condemn him for it, but the novel is an account of real social forces and as such it must be judged.

If, as Foot claims, Losey is arguing that political events can be explained first of all in psychological terms, he is putting across the same reactionary view of the world as the press and television when they present political issues in terms of 'personalities'.

And when Rohdie suggests that Losey is 'subverting' so-called 'bourgeois realism' he takes off into pure absurdity. On this



The victim

standard any piece of fantasy automatically becomes 'subversive'—this should make Enid Blyton the great revolutionary writer of our epoch.—IAN BIRCHALL, London N19.

## In plain words

SAM ROHDIE's views on 'artistic reality' are really quite outrageous. He approvingly describes Losey's film as 'subverting the established system of depicting reality'.

So, no doubt, a film depicting Hitler as a great humanitarian would be equally acceptable. After all, it too would be subverting the established system of depicting reality—or, in plain English, telling lies.

Losey has every right to make a film about a senile revolutionary tending his rabbits in exile who gets bumped off by a maniac with a thing about bull fights. But he doesn't have the right to call it The Assassination of Trotsky.

To demand that a film about Trotsky relates certain facts about his life and death is not a call for 'socialist realism'. A call for realism, yes—not a call for the Stalinist system of didactic distortion misnamed 'socialist realism'.

We are in favour of portraying real or fictional events realistically but first it is necessary to agree on the nature of reality. We accept, for example, that a surrealist painting may depict reality more clearly than a photograph but to attempt to pass off a surrealist painting as a photograph is dishonest.

Rohdie's claim that the film is fictional is not a claim made by Losey himself, who says at the start of the film that it is factually correct so far as the facts were known in 1940.

Losey attempts to pass the film off as a historical exposition and it must be judged as such. All art is propaganda but not all propaganda is art. Losey's film never rises above the level of slanderous, reactionary propaganda.—JULIAN WELLS, PETER SMITH, Hounslow, Middlesex.

## Alas, Mr Griffiths does not want to expose himself in public

ELDON GRIFFITHS, Tory MP for the Vestey-dominated Bury St Edmunds constituency in Suffolk, was one of 191 MPs who were so afraid of exposing their daily follies to the electorate that they voted out the proposal for a three-week trial of televising parliament.

Even by Westminster's standards, Griffiths' hypocrisy takes some beating, for it is less than two years ago that he called on local councils to open their doors to press, radio and television coverage. Among the points he made on that occasion—the annual dinner of the Association of Councillors: 'The presumption in our local affairs, as in our national affairs, ought to be on the side of more open government, of more—not less—exposure to public discussion and public criticism.'

And: 'One of the best ways of improving it [public interest in government] is to encourage the press, including radio and television, to do a better job... they cannot do a good job if they find the door slammed in their face.'

Eldon's double standards will surprise no one. He isn't noticed for consistency—not even in sartorial matters. He attended a local Tory binge recently, attired in brilliant white shirt, immaculate dinner suit—and red socks.

THE LAW of libel is just one of the means whereby the press and the broadcasting media in this country are kept in cringing subservience. Even an unchallengeable truth must be handled delicately if it is likely to bring someone into contempt if it is published.

Newspaper proprietors and radio and television authorities have accepted the situation without much complaint and, not surprisingly, they take care to err on the side of caution wherever their business brings them close to the law.

It is therefore all the more astonishing when that conservative institution, the BBC, transmits a television programme containing a blatant libel. They did so

on another important aspect and about the forecast of how long the consolidated net profits for the merged company to buy up UK assets. Only 24.7 million is expected to be available out of its pre-tax profit of £12.2 million and while this includes an unknown amount for minority interests, the ruling UK tax rate is 40 per cent.

So expect an important UK one-off acquisition before the end of this year. No one is giving a shilling as to what sectors and how many will diversify into, or indeed, be sold off, to the public. But would the tax authorities be able to do this? Finally, the directors wonder how the shareholders will react to the proposed partial operation which is spread across several of the companies. Among the companies that are accounted for differently in the two countries had to present two sets of consolidated accounts. Thus last year the consolidated net profits were £12.2 million for the French and only £2.7 million for the British.

This arises because of a different treatment of certain items. French directors, for instance, are usually entitled to a proportion of the dividend attributable to shareholders —the 'dividend'—and the directors' remuneration is included in the profit. French companies go, in fact, public through the 'dividend' and not through the 'share'.

last week in their Midweek programme which investigated the case of Patrick Murphy, who is doing 20 years for a crime many people feel he did not commit.

The evidence that put him inside was given by Alfred Mathews, who was himself involved in the murder for which Murphy and two other men are now serving time. Mathews turned Queen's Evidence to say that he had only a minor part in the crime while Murphy was one of the ringleaders.

In the Midweek programme considerable doubts were raised about Mathews' evidence until finally one man being interviewed about the case calmly stated that Mathews, not Murphy, was guilty, and that Mathews had clearly lied in court and played down his own part in the crime.

It was plainly a filmed interview and the BBC could easily have edited it out. The decision to go ahead and transmit it in the programme was obviously a deliberate and calculated one, not at all a reckless gamble with the libel laws.

For, if Mathews were to sue for libel

## of bigger paper

THE MOVES to a 16-page paper confirms Socialist Worker as by far the best revolutionary paper in Britain today. I have one criticism, however.

Despite recent rapid growth in size and influence, the International Socialists are still a small group with tiny roots in most areas, industries, unions and so on. Partly because of this there are not enough articles in Socialist Worker discussing programmes for action for militants in the various industries, unions, areas where Socialist Worker is read.

There is a danger of relying too much on the brilliant journalism of Paul Foot and Laurie Flynn to expose the system. The editorial board and the readers need to ensure that features such as the unions page become the best ones.

A small example from last week's paper. On the back page is an acidic piece exposing the jellyfish resolve of Michael Foot.

But this article left completely open the question of whether having Michael Foot as leader of the Labour Party would make ANY difference. The priority in this area is not to simply 'expose' the Labour Party but to show how it is an inevitable dead-end and what our programme of action for militants with illusions in Foot and his like actually is.—ROGER KLINE, Nottingham.

## Piggery jokery

ANOTHER sick anti-Women's Lib joke. We have Socialist Worker extracting the urine from the phrase 'male chauvinist pig' (Our Norman, 21 October).

Male chauvinist pig may be an overused cliché but then so are a lot of other socialist phrases, such as 'build the revolutionary party'. Roger Protz quite correctly described Private Eye as reactionary when making sick jokes about the IRA, so how does he as editor of Socialist Worker justify jokes which run counter to the liberation of women and thus their participation in the class struggle.

The role of Our Norman should be to assist, not counter, this struggle or are we to have cartoons mocking Gay Lib and Black Power too? The purpose of Socialist Worker is to counteract capitalist ideas and such jokes should be left to the Daily Express and Private Eye.—PETE FIRMIN, Guildford, Surrey.

Look at the cartoon again, comrade Firmin. Far from being reactionary, it was a fierce ATTACK on male chauvinism. It was also funny—and I suspect that a few readers who never crack their faces forget that important point.—EDITOR.

the BBC could and would defend the case on the grounds that the statement was true and in the public interest. In doing so the entire case would be re-opened and any fresh evidence about the crime that implicated Mathews and pointed to Murphy's innocence could be introduced. Should the judgment go against Mathews he would certainly find himself in the dock and Murphy would be freed.

It was by the same legal boomerang that Alfie Hinds cleared himself while serving time for his alleged part in a big store robbery. The police boss who put Hinds away could not resist boasting about it in an article he wrote for a Sunday newspaper. Hinds sued, won his case, and, since his argument was that he was not involved in the crime, was freed.

The BBC programme really constitutes a challenge to Mathews to sue and be damned. Naturally, if he was deeply involved in the murder, and if he did falsely accuse Murphy, he is not going to take the risk of taking libel proceedings against the BBC. He will doubtless take the view that it is better to be defamed than locked up for the rest of his life.

Since the issue is of such public importance—involving the possible imprisonment of an innocent man and the further possibility of a murderer at large—perhaps we can hope to see that public hero No. 1, the Official Solicitor, in action once again. Surely he should sue the BBC on behalf of the reluctant Mathews! After all, a citizen's rights must be protected—even when he is the last person to want it.

RON KNOWLES



# Tenants heckle Tory Minister

**NORTHAMPTON:**—When Tory Minister of Housing, Julian Amery, addressed a meeting of 150 council tenants at a school hall last week, he was heckled, booted and jeered throughout his speech.

He said the Housing Finance Act would benefit the 'great majority' of people. 'This Act is going to work in the interests of...'

'The capitalists,' retorted a section of the audience.

Interruptors from the floor pointed out that £300 million extra a year would be squeezed from the 5½ million tenants whose rents were doubling over the next three years.

It was described by the press as 'the noisiest political meeting in the town for a long time.' The minister faced an almost continuous barrage of shouts and catcalls concerning the government's housing policy.

As interruptions reached the stage where Amery could hardly be heard, he shouted, using the full power of the microphone: 'No amount of barracking by militants will deflect the government from its housing policy.'

In this he was undoubtedly correct, which is why an International Socialists' leaflet handed out to the tenants at the meeting urged support for the existing rank-and-file tenants' organisations in the town and the setting up of associations on other estates. There is no rent strike in the town yet.

The audience of militant tenants also vented its wrath on Edgar Coker, the chairman of the local housing committee. Leaders of two tenants' associations in the town demanded to know why he had refused to appear at meetings called by the tenants associations.

## Students back tenants

**PONTADAW:**—A meeting of tenants—more than 1500 are on rent strike—decided to organise a rally against the Rent Act. Speakers will include a South Wales Miners' Union executive member and a representative from the University College of Swansea Students Union.

The students agreed two weeks ago to give full support to all tenants' associations fighting the Act and to provide duplicating and printing facilities as well as £100 in cash for associations in the Swansea and surrounding areas.

Tenants in Pontadawe are well organised by street stewards and regular meetings are held to keep everyone informed of developments.

# COUNCILLOR HITS AT 'LABOUR QUISLINGS'

by Tony Goodchild

'I WANT no truck with Labour quislings', Eddie Smith, one of the three Labour councillors on Pontypridd Urban Council to vote against implementation of the Rent Act, told a 1000 strong demonstration in Cardiff last week.

'We are being told that we can expect to be expelled from the Labour Party unless we publicly disassociate ourselves from those who have supported us,' he said.

The demonstration, organised by the South Wales Joint Trade Union and Tenants and Residents Association, was supported by tenants' associations from all over South Wales, including

those of Merthyr Tydfil and other councils which have refused to implement the Act. The Miners' and Engineers' Unions, Communist Party, International Socialists and Plaid Cymru were also strongly represented.

Emlyn Williams, vice-president of the South Wales NUM, said: 'Now we have to be clear that we must struggle industrially against political legislation. As a member of the Labour Party I am disturbed and disgusted with the attitude of

so-called 'socialist' councillors.

'The only means of beating blackmail is to fight it.'

He said the South Wales miners were committed by union policy to support any councillor who comes under attack from the Tory Rent Act. 'Speaking in my personal capacity, I am convinced the South Wales miners will rally support as soon as the first tenant is evicted.'

He finished his speech to a standing ovation, with the words: 'This demonstration is only the beginning. We can expect mass demonstrations, mass meetings and industrial action throughout South Wales. When the crunch comes I know the tenants will be there. Let's hope the Labour Party and the trade unions will be there too!'

**POLICY OF WORDS, NOT DEEDS**

**SALFORD:**—Reports of the tenants struggle throughout the Manchester area were given at a meeting of more than 70 delegates from trade unions and tenants' associations called by the Manchester and Salford Trades Council. An estimated 20,000 tenants in the area are withholding the rent increases.

Colin Davis, secretary of the trades council, described the Rent Act as 'a vicious piece of anti-working class legislation', but made no specific proposals for fighting it.

Wally Preston, convenor of Trafford Park power station, tried to remedy this omission by putting forward a resolution from the floor of the meeting. This spelt out how trade unionists could back the tenants with token, sympathy strikes and with all-out strikes if there were evictions.

But the organisers of the meeting refused to put the motion to a vote. It was argued that the trades council was a co-ordinating body for all trade unions, but could not recommend specific forms of action.

This policy of 'words not deeds' was backed by local Labour Party and Communist Party members. One leading Communist Party member launched a vicious attack on Wally Preston, denouncing him as a 'so-called worker'.

## Scotland: Unions to back big rally against Rent Act

**GLASGOW:**—Trade union district committees representing 150,000 workers met last week to voice their opposition to the Fair Rents Act. As a result of the unions' militant stand every Labour councillor in Glasgow Corporation is now firmly behind a decision not to implement the Act. Previously many Labour councillors had abstained because of the financial pressures which can be brought to bear upon individual councillors.

A rally is planned for Saturday 18 November in George Square—the political hub of the city. This will be the first time that a demonstration has been held there since the great unemployment marches of the 1930s.

Rents Action Committees in many parts of the city are planning meetings in their areas to coincide with the inquiry set up for 22 November by Gordon Campbell, Secretary of State for Scotland, into the working of the Act.

Glasgow is one of four councils to be investigated for refusing to comply with the Act. The other three are Lanark, Falkirk and Kirkcaldy.

The inquiries will find that the councils are in default of the law and can obtain a court order forcing the councils to implement or the government can take over their housing powers. In either case the councillors can be surcharged for non-collection of rent increases.

## POLICIES RAPPED

**NORTH LONDON:**—A meeting last week of Somers Town tenants discussed Camden Council's proposal to provide temporary accommodation for 40 Uganda Asian families in an empty block of flats.

The meeting was addressed by Peter Best, a local Labour councillor, who gave background information that had until then been kept secret by the council.

The speaker dealt easily with interruptions by members of the fascist National Front but was less able to deal with the grievances of local residents who criticised the council and the government for the borough's enormous housing waiting list, bad housing, and widespread hardship among the elderly.

These points were taken up by speakers from the floor who pointed out that the real villains of the piece were the Tory government and its big business friends who were having such a field day with land and property speculation in the centre of London. They pointed out the danger of accepting racist propaganda, which would divide the local people among themselves and divert them from the real struggle.

The meeting accepted this position and passed two resolutions—expressing sympathy for the British Asians from Uganda in transit in Camden, and condemning the Tory government and its big business backers for failing to provide jobs and housing needed by ordinary working people not only in Somers Town but in every part of Britain.

## Shouts of 'traitors' as council puts up rents

by Dick Williams

**DONCASTER:**—Cries of 'Sell-out' 'Traitors' from the public gallery greeted Doncaster's Labour councillors as, by a majority, they voted to implement the Tory 'Fair' Rent Act. As a result, Doncaster's 11,000 council tenants face rent increases of 94p a week, starting on 4 December.

Last May Labour stormed to victory in the local elections on their promise to fight the rent rises. And fight it they did. As Labour council after Labour council gave in, Doncaster held out.

Threats of surcharges were dismissed by local Labour leaders. Civil servants from the Department of the Environment who handed out threats and warnings were dubbed 'mere office boys'.

But last week the majority of the Labour councillors gave in after a chat with a 'mere office boy' in London.

## Compromise

Three weeks ago, suspecting that the Labour group was weakening, Doncaster International Socialists organised a demonstration outside the Labour group meeting. A number of tenants and trade unionists turned out to urge Labour to stand firm.

But instead they went off to London to try to get some compromise. They got a rent rise of 94p a week.

The protest at last Friday's council meeting was small due to rain and the time of the meeting, 4.30pm, but the battle is not over yet. Already a number of tenants, trade unionists and socialists have leapt into action.

Meetings of tenants will be organised on every estate. The way ahead is for Doncaster's tenants to join the growing number of tenants on rent strike. The Labour councillor who voted against the sell-out, has resigned from the Labour Group. He and the other opponents will be joining the tenants' fight.

# 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

**CAMDEN IS** is holding a branch meeting on Tue 7 Nov, 8pm, at the Kentish Town Library, Kentish Town Rd, London NW5. Speaker: Chris Harman, on the Russian Revolution. All welcome.

**ST HELIER TENANTS: Fight the Tories—Fight the Rent Rises.** Public meeting, Mon 6 Nov, 8pm, Hill House, Bishopsford Rd, Carshalton.

**IS TEACHERS MEETING:** Sun 5 Nov, 10.45am at 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. All IS teachers should attend or send apologies.

**LONDON PUBLIC MEETING:** The Industrial Situation Today. Speaker: Dick Jones, executive member of AUEW (TASS); Film: Fighting the Bill—Cinema Action; and discussion. Friday 10 Nov, 7.30pm, Holborn Assembly Hall, Johns Mews, WC1. Admission 15p. Organised by the London Group of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

**THE FIGHT AGAINST LOW PAY IN EAST ANGLIA**  
Sunday 12 November, 7.30pm  
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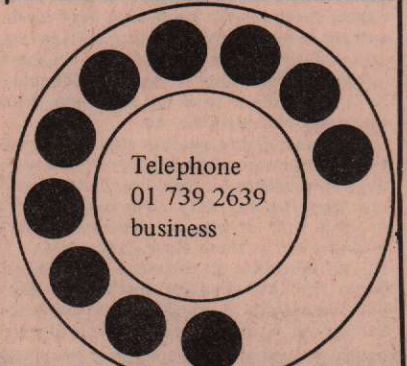
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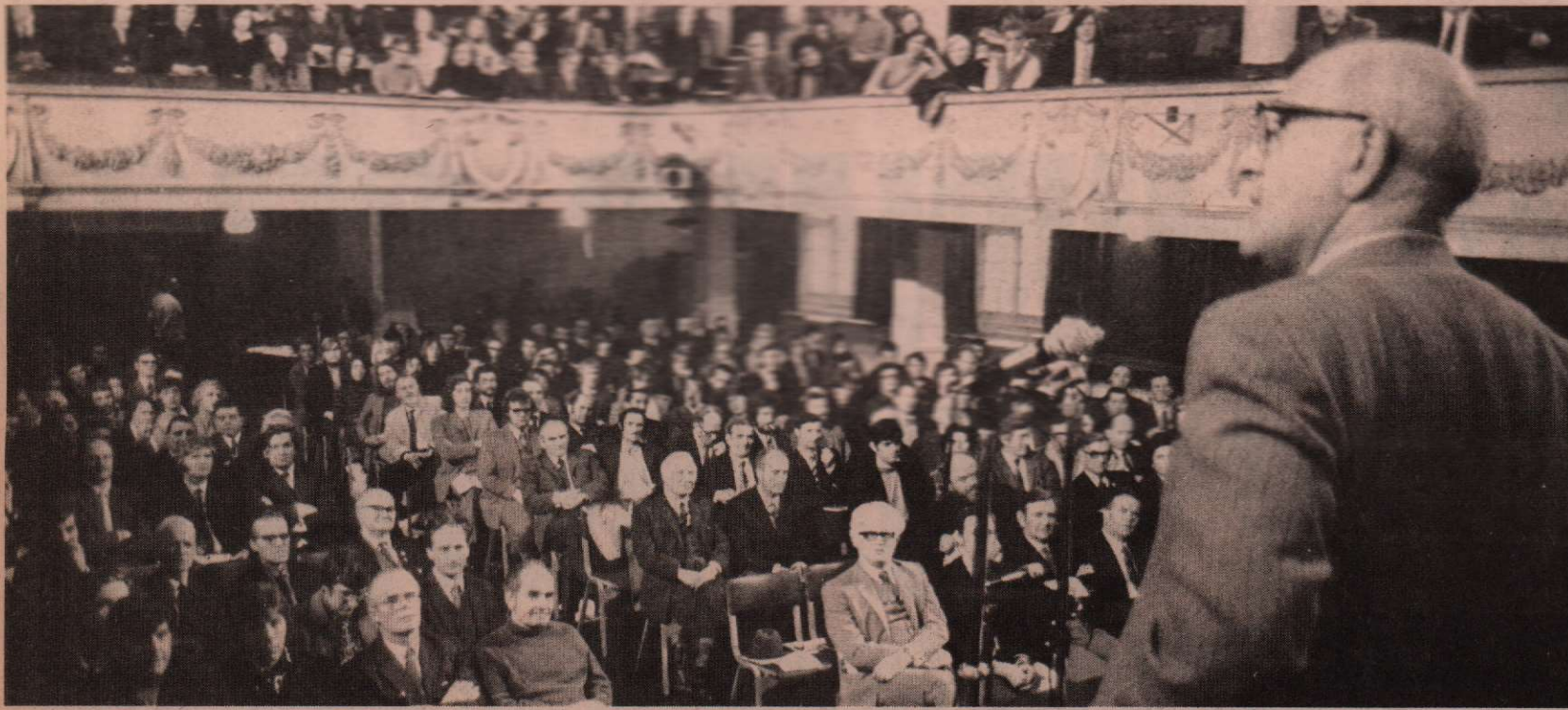
## Did you see this man arrested?

**DURING** the large and successful anti-racist demonstration in Leicester two weeks ago, the police seized a member of Bradford International Socialists, on whom they are now trying to pin the serious charge of 'assault occasioning actual bodily harm'. He urgently needs witnesses to his arrest if he is to defend himself adequately. Anyone who can help should contact D Rhodes, 10 Selbourne Terrace, Bradford 9.





# analysis of the struggle against the Tories and the bosses



George McCormack, AUEW convenor at Glasgow Rolls-Royce, speaking at the Fine Tubes conference: 'From the blacking list I see that Fine Tubes are still dealing with Babcock and Wilcox in Renfrewshire. This is a scandal because it's a strong trade union area.'

# BIG BACKING FOR FINE TUBES

by James Fenton

'I WAS arrested at Roberts Arundel and I have been knocked down by a van on the picket line. I don't intend to let this happen again. From now on, if I have a dispute I will be sitting on my job till the dispute's finished. The only real place for strikers is to stay in the factory.'

This statement by Bill Anten, now Engineering Union convenor at Hawker Siddeley, Woodford, was typical of the mood of militancy at the Fine Tubes conference last Saturday.

More than 500 union delegates from all over the country met in the Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham, to discuss the strike at the Plymouth factory, where workers have been out for two years four months in defence of trade unionism.

After an introductory address by the chairman of the strike committee Hermann Welch, delegates heard Ernie Roberts, assistant general secretary of the AUEW, deploring the lack of TUC support for the strikers. 'We have to be ashamed as organised workers that they have been left to fight alone for all this time.'

'Where is the TUC General Council in the strike? This conference should not have been called by rank and filers', said Roberts. 'It should have been called by the TUC leaders. Their place is at meetings like this and not at Number 10 Downing Street.'

## DENIAL

At this point an AUEW woman shop steward shouted out: 'Where's Hughie?' Roberts had explained that he was present on the invitation of the strike committee and not representing the national leaders.

As for Jack Jones, viewers of Weekend World, which televised the meeting for its Sunday programme, will have seen him denying that his union had failed to support the strike fully: he complained of the lies put about by those who had not got the interests of the trade union movement at heart.

Jones would have done well to attend the meeting, to have heard the continual affirmations by the shop stewards and convenors there that victory in the Fine

Tubes strike was indeed essential for the success of the trade union movement in Plymouth and nationally.

He should have heard the speech by Bill Freeman, of Briant Colour Printing joint chapels, who criticised those who were waiting for official blacking letters from the executive, those 'who want something signed in blood'. You don't win disputes by rulebooks but by action, he said.

## WORK-IN

Bill Freeman ended his moving speech with a description of what was happening to London's dockland: the rationalisation and rebuilding for the rich. Before long, he said, we'll all be waiters and servants in their kitchens.

'It's about time we had a complete bloody work-in all over the country and took it back to us, the people it belongs to.'

Hughie Scanlon would have done well to attend the meeting too. He would have heard Bernie Regan, the Stockport AUEW district secretary, attacking the lack of executive support for the strike. In this he compared it with Roberts Arundel, where with full executive support and a local levy it took 18 months to close the factory down for good.

Not that they hadn't had their problems at Roberts Arundel, such as the time when after a year of striking they were visited by an AUEW executive member who had been sent to persuade them to give up. What Bernie Regan did not mention was the name of that member—

Bill Freeman  
Jnr, spokesman  
for the Briant  
Colour workers  
PICTURES:  
MIKE COHEN



none other than Hugh Scanlon himself.

And it was instructive too to see the treatment given to Joe Beckett, an AUEW national official, the only man to attempt to defend the executive. Beckett thought the response had been fine: 'There is nobody in this country except the Queen who has not been involved in this dispute.'

The fact was, according to Beckett, that the blacking had been unsuccessful. Fine Tubes at one point was employing more people than before the strike began.

Here the speaker was shouted down by the strikers themselves, one of whom, Horace Thomas, shouted out: 'Sit down, you liar.'

Horace Thomas, who is blind and therefore claims an acute memory, explained to me afterwards why he had been moved to shout out. He said that at the time when the strikers removed the blacking, on the advice of the union leaders, Fine Tubes boss Tom Barclay had made several high-grade key workers redundant. It was not true that the workforce had at any time been larger than before the strike.

## BLACKING

The meeting concluded with a resolution to go back to the unions and factories and extend the blacking wherever possible in order to step up the campaign. There was an impressive number of questions about suppliers and constructive suggestions about methods of applying pressure.

It is now important that those who suggested setting up local action committees should do so, and that a national picket should be called at the earliest possible opportunity.

A victory at Fine Tubes is vital for the future of trade unionism in the South West.

£1000 for the strikers was received in donations at the conference and a further £137 was collected from the delegates. On Tuesday the Fine Tubes strike committee expressed its warm thanks to all those who attended the conference and to Socialist Worker for its support.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

# FIGHT THE TORIES campaign

**HARLOW**  
Friday 3 November, 7.45pm  
Harlow Town Hall  
Speakers: John Palmer and Bob Light plus Folksingers

**SOUTH BIRMINGHAM**  
Sunday 5 November, 3pm  
Lecture Room 2, Digbeth Civic Hall  
Speakers: Paul Foot and Frank Clark (Fine Tubes)

**CARDIFF**  
Monday 6 November, 8pm  
The Ruperva pub, City Road  
Speaker: Mike Caffoor

**LLANELLI**  
Tuesday 7 November, 7.30pm  
Dynevor Castle Hotel  
Speaker: Mike Caffoor

**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD**  
Tuesday 7 November, 8pm  
Friends Meeting House (off High St)  
Speaker: Roger Cox

**FULHAM AND HAMMERSMITH**  
Tuesday 7 November, 8pm  
Fulham Town Hall, Fulham Broadway  
Speakers: Frank Campbell (UCATT), John Palmer, Nigel Harris  
Chairman: Bill Goerge (POEU)

**LEWISHAM**  
Wednesday 8 November, 8pm  
Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Rd (between New Cross and New Cross Gate tube stations)  
Speakers: Mike Kidron and Mike Caffoor  
Chairman: John Phillips (NATSOPA)

**WOLVERHAMPTON**  
Wednesday 8 November, 8pm  
YMCA, Thornley St (off Broad St)  
Speaker: Wally Preston (AUEW)

**CAMBRIDGE**  
Wednesday 8 November, 8pm  
Duke of Argyle, Argyle St  
Speakers: John Palmer and John Broadbent

**HARTLEPOOL**  
Sunday 5 November, 8pm  
North Eastern Hotel  
Speaker: Arthur Affleck (BSC Lakenby convenor)

**SUNDERLAND**  
Monday 6 November, 7.30pm  
Transport Club, North Bridge St  
Speakers: Ray Challinor and Mac Reid (AUEW-TASS)

**NEWCASTLE**  
Tuesday 7 November, 8pm  
Bridge Hotel (end of High Level Bridge)  
Speakers: Duncan Hallas and Roger Rosewell

**CONSETT**  
Wednesday 8 November, 7.30pm  
Turf Hotel, Front Street  
Speakers: Duncan Hallas and Arthur Affleck (BSC Lakenby convenor)

**MIDDLESBROUGH**  
Thursday 9 November, 7.30pm  
AUEW Hall, Borough Rd  
Speakers: Roger Rosewell and Duncan Hallas

**SOUTH SHIELDS**  
Friday 10 November, 7.30pm  
Turk's Head, River Drive  
Speaker: Roger Rosewell

**DARLINGTON**  
Friday 10 November, 7.30pm  
Red Lion Hotel, Priestgate  
Speakers: Mac Reid (AUEW-TASS) and Duncan Hallas

**ASHINGTON**  
Sunday 12 November, 7.30pm  
NUM Miners' Hall  
Speakers: Ray Challinor and Dave Fisher (NUM)

**LONDON REGION RALLY**  
Friday 1 December, 7.30pm  
Camden Town Hall, Euston Road  
Musical entertainment: The Combine  
Speakers: Tony Cliff, Paul Foot and Chris Davison (TGWU)

## Five hundred delegates resolved...

FIVE HUNDRED delegates passed this resolution unanimously:

We, rank and file trade unionists attending the Fine Tubes Conference, commit ourselves to implement and extend the blacking of all firms concerned with Fine Tubes Ltd, and to raise the question of general and financial support on all the trade union bodies to which we belong.

We call on the executives of all unions, in particular those of the Transport and Engineering Unions, to ensure that their officers and members effectively implement the blacking in deed as well as word. We also call on them to approach the TUC to ensure that Fine Tubes and all companies dealing with them be declared black.

We commit ourselves to take this resolution back to our respective trade union organisations and pledge our full and continued support until the strike is won.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

## Quotes

Bernard Regan, district secretary Stockport AUEW: 'This is the acid test. That factory should not be getting even light, electricity and the post. If Fine Tubes has to be closed down, like Roberts Arundel, then even that will be a victory.'

Eddie McGarry, chairman BLMC Combine Coventry TGWU: 'One victory sets off a chain of victories, like the miners. But so does one defeat. If Fine Tubes goes down there will be an orgy of degradation for trade unionism here.'

Billy Taylor, North London AUEW: 'AEF members must feel a sense of shame as well as a sense of pride. When our executive sends out an instruction, people jump to it. Let them instruct a real black on Fine Tubes. If they'd stuck strictly to the rulebooks, we'd have had socialism 30 years ago.'

Ian Campbell, secretary London Overseas Telephonists Night Shift UPW: 'Against union indifference and management hostility we have collected over £1300 for UCS. Our levy will continue and be going to Fine Tubes from now on.'



# Tories turn back on Stormont

From MIKE MILLER in Belfast

THE TORY PARTY'S 'Green Paper' on the future of Northern Ireland, published on Monday, is based on the wish of the British ruling class to maintain its grip on Ireland.

It attempts to work out which political system will do this job best by drawing on all the proposals made by the various political parties from the Social Democratic and Labour Party to the Unionists—a fact that indicates that none of these parties' proposals is in any way a threat to British domination. It is no coincidence that all these parties have expressed approval for the plans and none more so than the Northern Ireland Labour Party, whose leaders pride themselves on the fact they drafted the proposals most closely adhered to by the Tories.

The most significant factor in the paper is its rejection of a return to Stormont with all its powers intact. It is precisely this point that Craig and the extreme Loyalists have said they will fight.

But if Craig and company seem to have been rebuffed it is so far only in words, for on the ground in Belfast the British Army continues its drive against the Catholic community. The most vulnerable Catholic areas—like the Short Strand in East Belfast—are being stripped of the means of self-defence, while the Ulster Defence Association continues openly to drill, arm and fraternise with the army.

## Alternative

The Tories are still keeping their options open. They have rejected the Unionists' main demand on security and government structures, while still recognising 'the role of the democratic majority' to keep Northern Ireland British. But faced by Common Market entry, they recognise for the first time the need to find an all-Ireland solution.

The Provisional IRA has rejected the Green Paper, but the Provos' alternative is a nine-county Ulster 'dominated by Unionist-minded people'.

The Provos have been very quiet lately and the number of violent incidents has fallen off dramatically in recent weeks. The Provos' argument that this is the result of changed tactics is only partially true.

The army claims to have shot 400 gunmen and arrested 100 IRA officers since July. Although these figures are wildly exaggerated for propaganda reasons, there is no doubt that the army has had military successes against the Provos and a certain degree of propaganda success in confusing the Catholics in the ghettos.

Although the Provos may reject the Green Paper, a growing number of those who were previously militantly anti-imperialist are now prepared to accept an imposed solution if it avoids the holocaust of a civil war.

## Strikers appeal for union help

CHATHAM, Kent:—The six official strikers at Griffiths concrete pipe works, members of the Engineering Union, have issued an open letter to trade unionists explaining the dispute.

Five months ago the men, who had been working up to 70 hours a week, put in for a wage increase. When the company refused to negotiate they banned overtime—and finally walked out when the company used outside labour to do their jobs.

The strikers have had considerable rank and file support from the area, but complain of lack of union backing.

The strikers' appeal to shop stewards' committees to bring pressure on full-time officials to organise and lead the strike instead of being 'arm-chair bureaucrats'.

## PICKET LINES

WORKERS at Cubitt's Worlds End and Lovell's Guildford Street Building sites in West London have united their strike committees in an effort to win a speedy joint victory.

Cubitt's bricklayers' steward John Fontaine said: 'With this joint committee we can pump information about the struggle and appeals for sorely-needed finance on to every organised job in London. With a joint victory on these two sites, we will go a long way to breaking the blacklist and ending victimisation once and for all.'

Donations to John Fontaine, Joint Strike Committee Treasurer, 25 West Bank, London N16.

MIDDLESBROUGH:—Dockers at Tees docks were treated to an interesting example of 'democracy' by their full-time Transport Workers Union official Barney Ward, this week.

Discussions have been taking place on the manning of two new berths to accommodate British Steel Corporation goods on Teesside. The port authority want to take on 100 men to run the berths. At a meeting last week the Teesport dockers voted for a system of working which would employ 200.

But on Monday Ward tried to undermine this decision by calling a meeting of dockers from all ports in the area to endorse the 100-man plan. Most of the ports are not involved in the dispute. Management paid the men to attend. But the Teesport workers refused to be bound by a decision taken by management-paid workers. They walked out in disgust and are fighting on.

BIRMINGHAM:—The negotiating committee at British Leyland's Longbridge plant has finally reported back to the piecework shop stewards on the progress of the month-long talks on Measured Day Work. So far the 'progress' has resulted in a suggested agreement that must rank as the worst ever negotiated at any British Leyland factory.

The proposed agreement contains no mutuality clauses, gives women workers only 80 per cent of the male rate, and lasts for two years—longer than any other British Leyland agreement signed in the last 12 months.

At the meeting to report back to the stewards it was clear that important differences of opinion exist on the negotiating committee itself. It is to be hoped that the militants stand firm and insist on a complete rejection of the agreement as it stands.

# \* Socialist Worker

## INDIANS STAGE BIG PAY FIGHT

SW Reporter

LOUGHBOROUGH:—Two hundred workers—most of them Indians—at the Trinity Street works of Mansfield Hosiery Mills are on strike in support of a wage claim for an extra £5 a week for loaders.

One hundred and twenty of the strikers are directly

involved and the other 80 have come out in sympathy. But the higher-paid knitters have broken promises of support. The management has sacked all the strikers.

The pay claim is based on the fact that loaders receive a basic wage of only £20.35 for 40 hours—well below the national level for the job and for other workers in the area.

The knitters receive £35 a week—and with the exception of

seven Indian workers this job is reserved for white workers only. Management has hired and trained unskilled white workers rather than give the jobs to Indians. The matter is before the Race Relations Board.

The claim was first submitted in June. After approaching the management for the seventh time on 29 September, notice to strike was given and the workers came out early in October. The workers have been accused of breaking the national agreement for the hosiery industry which demands that workers must go through six different stages before the matter is taken to an arbitration court. Even at this stage they can strike only after it has been declared legal under the Industrial Relations Act.

## DETERMINED

The local Community Relations Council persuaded the men to return to work on the promise of negotiation after 21 days. But nothing happened after this period and they are back on strike.

They are determined to stick out until they win. A solidarity committee to fight for the strike has been formed with the help of the Black People's Freedom Movement in Nottingham and trade unionists in the area.

Messages of support and financial contributions are urgently needed. Send to Strike Committee, c/o Mr Naik, 31 Station Street, Loughborough, Leicestershire.



## HOSPITAL WORKERS ANGRY

TWO HUNDRED angry hospital workers demonstrated in South London last week demanding that their full-time union officials replace their insulting £4 a week claim by one of £8. This is the minimum if they are to get any increase in living standards over the next year.

The demonstration, which contained a high proportion of women and immigrant workers, coincided with a day's token strike in several major London hospitals organised by the London Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers to show that hospital workers will take any action necessary to back the £8 claim.

Essential services were maintained during the strike as a gesture of goodwill to the public. But the stewards made it clear that these will be withdrawn if schoolchildren are again used to break the strike, as happened at Westminster last week—a risk to both children and patients.

A national conference of health service shop stewards is to be held on 12 November to discuss national action on the £8 claim.

## Stirling students fight witch-hunt

TWENTY-FIVE students at Stirling University have received summonses to appear before a disciplinary court to answer charges arising from the Queen's visit three weeks ago. The authorities have used the excuse of the visit to launch a political witch-hunt.

Fifteen of the students disciplined are elected representatives of the student body. They have been charged with carrying out actions voted by a mass meeting.

It is plain that the power structure which runs the university is more influenced by press hysteria and big business interests than by staff and student opinion. Last week the principal, Tom Cottrell, walked out of a meeting of the academic staff when it was apparent that the majority present were against political victimisation.

Stirling students have already pledged protest action and a mass meeting of students is to be held to work out strategy.

TYNESIDE:—By 1337 votes to 803 a mass meeting of Swan Hunter boilermakers decided to call off their eight-week-old strike and accept a new package deal.

The deal recommended by the executive and a narrow majority of stewards, gives an immediate increase of £2.50, 50p in January and April, plus a further £1 in August—£4.50 in all. A rearrangement of bonus payments is also promised, linked to a reduction in absenteeism (at present 14 per cent)—a new and potentially divisive element in the agreement.

This settlement falls far short of the original claim, and leaves boilermakers on the Tyne lower paid than workers in any other shipyards in the country.

But the most serious aspect is the refusal of Swan Hunter to extend the guarantee of employment beyond February 1973.

There is a major slump developing in shipbuilding which will start to be felt when present orders are completed in 1973 and 1974. Swans have not had a new order for two years and redundancies are certain next year.

## Strike victory at ICI

TEESSIDE:—A two-week strike by 700 maintenance and construction workers at ICI Wilton brought a major setback for management's 'get tough' policy.

The strike started when management refused to make special payments for working on the polythene plant where four men were killed in an explosion in 1969. Management stopped this money when the Weekly Staff Agreement (ICI's productivity deal) was signed, claiming that the deal 'absorbed' the payment.

After months of fruitless negotiations the polythene plant was blacked and then there was a walk out by all engineering service workers on the site.

After two weeks, the shop stewards

called a mass meeting of all 10,000 workers on the site. It is the first time in the history of the Wilton works that this measure has been taken. Shortly before the mass meeting management agreed to a settlement that met the unions' demands.

The company is believed to have a long-term strategy of eliminating all payments that are not scheduled in the agreement. They have been moving some of their better-known 'hard men' into Wilton management in the past few months.

The stand put up by the engineering services workers and the support they received from the rest of the site is a major blow to ICI plans.

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