

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Soaring meat prices expose the Tory 'freeze'

SWINDLE!

**IS fund:
get the
message
from this
cartoon!**



THE CARTOON came from a Socialist Worker reader with a £10 donation to the printshop fund. We hope that this fine example will be followed by many.

Readers of this column will be surprised to see that it is not signed by Jim Nichol, the National Treasurer of the International Socialists. We are sorry to report that Jim was involved in a serious accident on his motorcycle last week.

As a result he is now in hospital with a fractured leg and broken wrist. Until he is fit again, I will be in charge of fund raising.

Last week the response by our supporters was magnificent. A total of £1808 in donations pushed the total received so far to £10,434.

Our own IS branches, in particular, have responded well and include: Wandsworth £200, Fulham-Hammersmith £92, Portsmouth £41.45, Southampton £69.10, Hackney £200, Tottenham £80, Reading £14, Nottingham £30, Cambridge £400, Tower Hamlets £100, Oxford £32, South Birmingham £10.

Readers have again given generously. In particular, I wish to thank the workers on the World's End building site, who have been on and off strike for six months, for donating £12.97 and workers in the toolroom of MK Electric, Edmonton, for £5.05.

And I would like especially to thank the anonymous donor in Stoke-on-Trent who sent £100.

The support for the fund is growing but we must not relax for a minute if we are to reach our £30,000 target and establish a modern printshop and better paper to step up the fight for socialism.

Send now to: Acting IS National Treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

Tony Cliff
Member of the Executive Committee
of the International Socialists

● Messages to Jim Nichol should be sent to: St Leonard's Hospital, Lane Ward, Nuttall Street, London N1.

The truth about Turkey

THE Tory government and its millionaire press supporters are busily presenting the Turkish government as a friend of the West and a guardian of democracy. In a special feature on this week's centre pages, PAUL FOOT describes the reality of Turkey today—massive repression against the trade unions, Labour Party and student movement, plus exclusive pictures of police violence on opponents of the regime.

Also in this issue a dramatic eye-witness account by MIKE MILLER of the spate of sectarian killings in Belfast and action against them by the working class. PAGES 6 and 7.

WHEN is a freeze not a freeze? When it applies to prices.

Agriculture Minister Joseph Godber tells us that he 'cannot interfere with the free market'. He can freeze the farm workers' pay rise, though.

Beef prices are up by 40 per cent since the so-called freeze started in November—with other

BY DUNCAN HALLAS

meat prices following close behind—and not one penny piece of these massive increases goes to the workers.

Who benefits? Farmers, especially the big farmers, dealers, speculators, the giant Vestey corporation and others who all have one thing in common: they are already either rich, very rich,

or super-rich—like Lord Vestey, whose personal fortune stands at £150 million.

Who loses? Working people, housewives, pensioners and others who also have something in common: they are very much poorer to start with than the profiteers who are making a killing out of the meat price bonanza.

Mr Godber (ex-managing director of his family farming business and owner of another farming business as well) has an easy answer: Let people eat cheaper foods like cod (prices up by 50 per cent over the last year) or mince (prices up 30 per cent since November).

And Heath has an answer, too: a farcical 'commission of inquiry' into meat prices which has been hand-picked to discover that nothing can be done.

Meat prices are only the most spectacular of the price increases in store for us. Butter, sugar and cereals (including bread) are all scheduled for price rises to conform to the Common Agricultural Policy of the Common Market.

In the case of butter, the current wholesale price of £460 a ton is to be raised to £852 a ton in six stages. It has already been announced that the price of bread will go up by a penny a standard loaf in February and further increases are in the pipeline. Wheat prices are up by 50 per cent.

And not only food prices are on the increase. Value Added Tax is coming in to push up a wide range of other prices.

ROBBED

In short, the 'freeze' is a swindle. There is no doubt that a lot of people were taken in by it at first. It seemed to many a reasonable idea to accept a wages standstill in return for a prices standstill.

We have the wages standstill all right. Some of the lowest paid workers were caught by it and robbed of promised increases—farm workers, health service workers and others.

They—and working people as a whole—are already materially worse off. And the freeze has been operating only for two months.

What can be done? The idea that there can be a 'fair' prices and incomes policy under capitalism is a pipe-dream.

There is one answer—and one answer only—to rising prices under the system of private profiteering. It is to fight for compensating wage rises with automatic cost of living increases built into the agreements.

That means defying the wage freeze. The gas workers have shown the way. They were told there could be no more talks about pay even though the increases were not to be immediate. The threat of militant industrial action forced the Tory government to back down.

What about those who have no bargaining power?

The pensioners will soon be offered another miserable increase but they will never achieve decent pensions until the organised working-class movement takes up the fight on their behalf.

Vietnam: US terror goes on



North Vietnamese soldiers stand guard over the remains of a B52 bomber shot down in Vinh Phu province

Stop Nixon's slaughter!

All out on Saturday 20 January
Assemble Charing Cross Embankment 2pm
March to Trafalgar Square for 3pm link-up
with British Council for Peace in Vietnam march
to US Embassy, Grosvenor Square

ALL IS branches to support

The Americans are back at the conference table in Paris talking peace with the North Vietnamese but the terror bombing goes on. Giant planes continue to devastate and maim as mass murderer Nixon and his gauleiter Kissinger attempt to force concessions from Hanoi,

The labour movement in Britain must mobilise against this barbarism and the complicity of the Tory government which shrieks about 'terror' in Ireland while condoning the greatest terror ever known in South East Asia.

Report: page 3



WORKERS HOLD ON TO CHILE'S FACTORIES

BRIEFING

THERE is now clear evidence that the Israeli government is using torture against the militants it has rounded up in its 'spy scare'.

A revolutionary socialist arrested early in January, Rami Livneh, happened to be the son of a Communist Party member of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. When his father, mother and wife visited him in prison a week later he told them, in the presence of a police interrogator, that he had been tortured while in prison.

He told them that he had been forced to strip naked for interrogation, had been beaten and received electric shocks.

Rami Livneh has maintained since his arrest that he is innocent of spying or terrorist activities. There is no doubt that this is a deliberate frame-up by the authorities, and that torture is being used on many others arrested on the same flimsy excuse of this spy scare.

TWO PEOPLE were killed and seven injured when police fired on anti-American demonstrators in Dacca, capital of Bangladesh, on New Year's Day. Since then, anti-American demonstrations have spread, and have called for the resignation of the government of Bangladesh and the

withdrawal of Indian troops as well as burning effigies of Nixon.

SIXTEEN million Italian workers will come out on a general strike on 12 January. Factories, shipyards, schools and offices will close, the first time since last autumn that the various groups of workers whose contracts are being renewed have linked their struggle on such a scale.

THE People's Daily, the main Chinese Communist Party newspaper, has approved Britain's entry into the Common Market, in an article entitled 'West European countries strengthen their alignment to counterbalance the two Super Powers'.

THE Turkish government is planning sweeping changes in the university system to control opposition. A central council will be appointed to control all universities, but the government itself will have special powers to take direct control and suspend university teachers whenever it feels that 'the freedom of education is endangered'. In addition, fees are to be charged for higher education, which at present is free.

WORKERS in the town of Arica, in northern Chile, have been fighting bitterly to maintain the gains they made during the bosses' strike last October.

Workers in 13 electrical equipment factories took over their factories and managed them for two months after the walk-out by directors, managers and most technical employees, despite attempts to disrupt production.

Many factories in Chile are occupied, so the outcome of events in Arica could be crucial.

The bosses' strike was an attempt by the upper and middle classes to force Chile's Popular Unity government to abandon plans for further nationalisation.

But the majority of workers stood firm, and rallied to the call to keep production going. They discovered that they could run factories success-

by Vic Richards

fully, even without most of the technical personnel. Action committees, price and supply committees were set up in most areas, and kept production going, supplies moving and prices under control.

To get the situation back to normal, the Popular Unity government gave in to the bosses' main demands and launched a campaign for 'social peace'. Although 'the people' were praised for rallying to the government's support, it gave no recognition to the committees that had actually saved it from collapse.

SABOTAGE

The courts are interpreting 'social peace' as a return to the situation before the bosses' strike. Having ignored the constitution in October, the ruling class is now using it to launch

a new offensive.

The workers in Arica have refused to abandon the conquests made in overcoming the chaos and sabotage of the bosses' strike. Having learned to live without their former employers, they don't want them back.

The government, in the person of General Prats, commander-in-chief of the army and now also Minister for Home Affairs, launched 'social peace' on Arica. The Popular Unity parties have taken no position on whether this should mean the return of factories to their former owners and managers.

The leaders of the CUT (the Chilean TUC) also refused to take up a position on the social peace policy, and refused to issue a statement of support for the Arica workers. Alejandro Alarcon, a member of the Revolutionary Workers rank-and-file group and the only CUT executive member who went to Arica to express his support for the workers there, was denounced for preventing a peaceful solution to the conflict.

One Arica worker explained: 'This morning we went to have talks with the Ministry of Labour. One of the lawyers there told us that the dispute could be solved through an army arbitrator, and that this is the Ministry's position on the conflicts in Arica, Santiago and Concepcion. We said no.'

SACKED

Another said: 'It is essential to make the CUT leaders see that if the bosses return we are done for. They will not allow us to organise, and will try to break our solidarity.'

'This happened to our brothers in a shoe factory. They accepted the bosses back because there had been no solution to the dispute for so long. The first thing that happened was that four leaders were sacked, and the pace of work was stepped up.'

'For this reason we must make it clear that the factories are not to be given back.'

Alejandro Alarcon summed it up: 'The fact is that when General Prats announced the decision to step up the policy of social peace, they all hurried to obey it. For this reason, we can say that the government and the majority of the Popular Unity coalition are themselves guilty of handing back the factories that had been taken over by the workers...'

'Worse than that, social peace has not stopped at the return of the factories, but has led to public statements that the best interests of the middle class will be guaranteed and that the "excesses" of workers will be curtailed.'

Egypt closes universities after police break up big demo

THOUSANDS of police used tear gas, bamboo staves and truncheons to break up students' demonstrations in Cairo last week. The next day the authorities shut the universities to end several days of student strikes and demonstrations.

The crisis erupted when the government arrested 45 students, mainly left-wingers. Under a law passed last summer anyone found guilty of belonging to a political party apart from the official 'Arab Socialist Union' or of 'spreading rumours' can be imprisoned for life.

The police broke up the demonstrations because they were afraid that students might repeat their success in demonstrations last January, when they formed links with many workers.

Landless

Beneath the surface are numerous grievances that could easily catch fire. Most of the industry in Egypt is nationalised, but it is firmly controlled by a narrow class of bureaucrats and army officers, who enjoy high living standards while most of the population have an income per head of less than £1.50 a week. The top salary for managers is £100 a week.

The regime boasts that it has carried out a thorough land reform. True, it has destroyed the power of the very large landowners. But this has been of virtually no benefit to the vast mass of landless peasants. Only a tenth of the total land has been redistributed, and only 300,000 of more than 14 million landless peasants have received land.

Regime

In the cities there is a massive population of unemployed and semi-employed immigrants from the countryside, living in abject poverty.

The country clearly needs massive investments in industry and agriculture if such problems are to be dealt with. Since the Arab-Israel war in 1967, the regime has spent a fifth of the national wealth on military forces and only a tenth on investment. Yet it seems no more able now than in 1967 to fight back against the Israeli forces that are annexing parts of Palestine and occupying large areas of Egypt itself.

This is why the government has reacted so violently to the student demands for further social reforms, and for a policy that could drive the Israelis from Egyptian territory in Sinai.



Keep off of YOUR land: Zionist fences go up on the Israeli-Syria border

Revolutionaries challenge French elections

by Richard Kirkwood

WITH less than two months to go to polling day, French politics is largely dominated by the coming general election. The main forces which confront each other are the 'majority', formerly the Gaullist UDR but now a coalition of three conservative and Gaullist parties, and the 'Union of the Left'—Communists, Socialists and left Radicals.

In between there is a 'Centre' grouping of Radicals and 'Centrists'.

At present the opinion polls show a lead for the Left Union with 45 per cent, and the government trailing with only 40 per cent. What would a victory for the Left mean?

Firstly, it is far from certain that they would get to form a government. Under the French constitution it is the President who chooses the government and Pompidou has not committed himself to appointing a Left government. Unless they had an overall majority the President has all sorts of ways in which he could try to stop them taking over.

But in any case the French ruling class has little to fear from the Union of the

Left. The limited reforms of the Communist party's programme have already been watered down to suit the largely lower-middle-class Socialist Party and further adjusted to gain the support of the dissident members of the Radical Party.

The parties of the Left Union have been going out of their way to show how respectable they are. One key demand of workers for years has been the return of the legal enforcement of a 40-hour week without loss of earnings. This was put into law after the great strikes of 1936 but has been a dead letter since 1937.

All the programme offers is 'a progressive move to the 40-hour week'. Similarly the minimum wage offered is miserably low and there is no guarantee of its immediate introduction. The same allies on welfare, nationalisation and other issues.

The Communist Party has refused to create local action committees to support and discuss the programme for fear this might frighten its middle-class allies.

To offer workers a real alternative to this opportunistic coalition and to the corrupt government, two revolutionary organisations are running candidates in the first round of the election. (French elections are held in two rounds a week apart. In between the candidates at the bottom of the poll can withdraw and, if they wish, recommend their supporters to vote for one of the other candidates.)

Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Struggle) and

Alliance

the Ligue Communiste are running 309 candidates between them, 176 for Lutte Ouvriere and 133 for the Ligue, in every part of the country including all the industrial centres.

They do not expect to win any seats but aim to use the election period to put the socialist message to millions of people both locally and through the television time to which they are entitled.

In a recent public meeting Lutte Ouvriere explained that 'to vote for the revolutionaries is the only way for communist workers to express their views to the leaders of the Left.'

We will not put any obstacle in the way of the election of a Communist or Socialist candidate on the second round. But we know too that many of you are far from universally enthusiastic about this Union of the Left... this alliance with bankers and ex-ministers... these fears, these criticisms are what voting for revolutionary candidates will allow you to express.'

Since May 1968 the revolutionary left has gained at least a toe-hold in the working-class movement. Many workers have heard some at least of its ideas and are becoming more sympathetic.

This election campaign will be both an opportunity to get these ideas across on a much larger scale and a test of the real impact that revolutionaries have gained among workers.

If the Left Union wins, then even greater possibilities are opened, as workers become disillusioned with the failures it is certain to produce.

Hidden threat of the nice smell

IF YOU WERE a businessman and you wanted to invest in a sure thing, what would you choose? Remember, you don't have to have any particular interest in the product, just so long as it will bring you the fastest and biggest profit.

Reckitt and Colman, a firm who already had the mustard market tied up, were recently faced with just this problem. And they came up with a fantastically profitable answer. It's called Freshette and it's a vaginal deodorant, though it prefers to be called an 'intimate spray'.

Of course, Reckitt and Colman are not the only people to have jumped on this particular bandwagon. Since the four year-old vaginal deodorant industry has a staggering annual growth rate of 70 per cent and since it is worth about £2 million a year, that bandwagon is a pretty crowded place.

No doubt when the first deformed children are born as a result of these sprays, the manufacturers will stampede just as fast to proclaim their innocence.

You see, there is one snag in this industry, for those who like to keep their exploitation above board. The fact is that these sprays contain some very dangerous chemicals.

They don't say so on the container, and there is no legal requirement for them to do so. On the contrary, many of the sprays bear the words 'medically approved' and 'safe'.

One such chemical ingredient goes by the name of hexachlorophene. It is used in cosmetics as a preservative. And it is used in deodorants such as Boots' Family Deodorant Spray, and the Max Factor equivalent.

These 'family' sprays also bear no warning of their lethal contents, though in fact they should never be used on babies or children.

Already it is known, from tests on rats, that even small amounts of hexachlorophene absorbed from a pregnant woman's bloodstream can damage the brain of her unborn child. In larger quantities, the effects are likely to become visible in deformities like those produced by thalidomide.

Profits lure

Even facial cosmetics like Natural Wonder Night Treatment (Revlon) and Pure Magic Medicated Liquid Make-Up, and the skin cleanser Phisohex are dangerous for this reason. But when hexachlorophene is sprayed directly on to the vaginal area it is absorbed and will enter the blood stream much more quickly.

However it is possible to make these things without using hexachlorophene, and a lot of manufacturers are now patting themselves on the back and declaring their products 'hexachlorophene free'. Some of them have taken the precaution of keeping their 'new ingredient' a secret. There is no reason to believe that any new ingredient has been tested more than the original chemicals, if indeed it is fundamentally different.

The fact is that the market and the lure of profits is far too strong to stop these people exploiting us. No government regulations cover the testing of cosmetic products, and there is no legal requirement for the ingredients to be listed.

Even if there were such regulations, far too much would still rest on the goodwill of people whose only interest is profit—people like the bosses of the Distillers Co, who gave us thalidomide.

Unfortunately the market is already primed. Women were made to feel ashamed of their bodies long before the admen dreamed up their special brand of hints and innuendos. What they tell you is, that you smell and no man will want you unless you try to cover the fact.

Men, incidentally, also smell, and the admen had a go at promoting genital deodorants. Unfortunately for them, men are not quite so primed into despising their own bodies, and, as the jargon goes, the market proved 'resistant'.

Meanwhile an estimated 22 per cent of women between the ages of 16 and 24 have been conned, and their secret from exploited. Women's Liberation has tried hard to make women aware of this simple fact, but the ad man has centuries of repression on his side.

Finding a man has been and still is for most women the only way to live. And it's a fact that will go on being true until we get rid of people like Helena Rubinstein, multi-millionaire, and the system that supports her.

But let's not forget the rest of the crew, Reckitt Colman and the band-wagners, wondering what to do with all their spare capital. And let's not forget the reason they want us to smell so uniformly sweet—the most foul smelling of all women's profit.

Janis Candian

SLAVE LABOUR FOR PHILIPPINES GIRLS

by John Edwards

THE OWNERS of the Alderglen Mill in Rochdale, Lancashire, have devised a system for making girls from the Philippines work virtually under slave labour conditions.

Before the girls leave the Philippines, they have to raise £75 towards their air fare. The company then makes them sign an agreement to pay back the residue out of their wages and also to pay a further £1 a week out of their wages into a fund as a 'bond'.

After two years of working for the firm this 'bond' is returned to them. But if they leave before the two years are up, they forfeit the money they have paid in and the company takes £200 out of the fund for itself. In addition the girls have to pay 9 per cent interest on the air fare.

In other words, the girls are forced to work for the firm when they get to Britain at whatever wages and conditions it chooses to offer them.

This dodge enables Alderglen to compel the girls to work for a basic rate of £12 a week. In order to make ends meet, the girls often work extremely long hours. One girl worked a 90-hour week and earned £33, of which the firm deducted £6.

The girls have been provided with 'accommodation' by the firm, some of it owned by Alderglen and some privately. In either case the girls find themselves packed into small, old houses in deteriorating conditions.

It is not uncommon to find three sets of bunks and a couple of beds to each room in a house, with no proper washing facilities and outside lavatories. As many as nine girls have to share a single small kitchen.

The girls pay another £1 a week each rent for such accommodation—providing the owners with at least £9 a week for the house, while similar houses next door will be let for about £4.

HAZARD

The Chief Fire Officer and the Public Health Officer for Rochdale have both said that they are appalled by the housing conditions and that they constitute a real fire and health hazard. The Health Officer also described the conditions as 'nineteenth century'.

The company personnel officer has attempted to dismiss such charges out of hand. He told the press: 'If anyone thinks they can do better, I would like them to come and show me how.'

By contrast, managing director Sydney Rubins has claimed that the accommodation the girls are in is only 'temporary'. But this has never been explained to them.

The National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers has made no complaint about such conditions. Indeed, last week it issued a statement that it was quite happy with the way the girls were being treated.

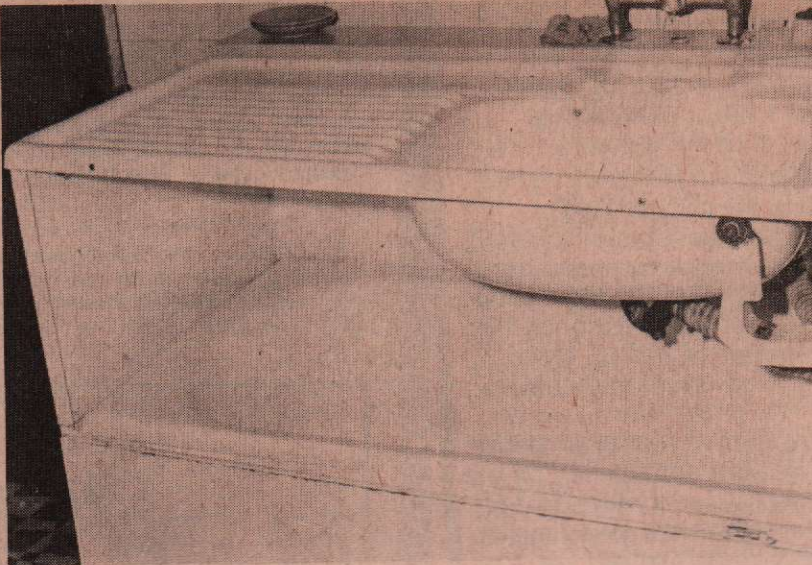
The girls who can speak English say that union subscriptions are deducted from their wages, but that they have never seen a union card.



'Home' for Alderglen-recruited Philippine girls at Overdale, Preston Street, Rochdale. They all share this one tiny bedroom—a situation described as 'appalling' by the local health authorities.

On the right is the entire washing facilities at another house in Beufort Street. The bath is under the sink. How the girls are supposed physically to get into the bath is a mystery—but no doubt their employer expects them to use it only for storing coal.

Pictures: STUART WHITWORTH



No peace in Vietnam

AMERICAN BOMBERS have continued this week to pour barbarous devastation on to the people of Vietnam. After inflicting the heaviest aerial bombardment in the whole of world history on the towns of Hanoi and Haiphong, Nixon has now stopped bombing north of the 20th parallel.

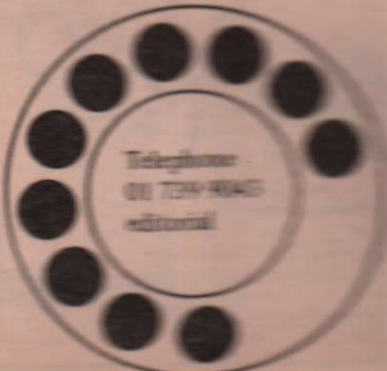
Peace talks have resumed in Paris. But south of that line the bombing is as heavy as ever.

For the pilots of North Vietnam there is no peace. Last Saturday and Sunday alone 125 fighter bombers and 50 gas B-52s were used to bomb roads and waterways.

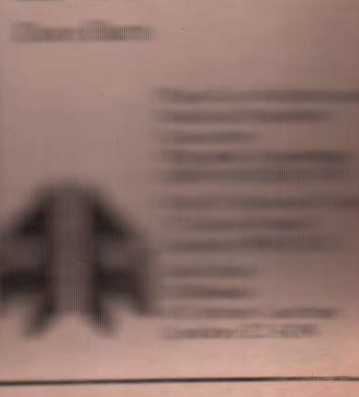
Yet it takes six years to do what the US really wants to do: destroy the 22 million people who live in the north of Vietnam.

the American 'Guns' bombers as well as ground forces, withdraw completely from the country, leaving it to the people to determine their own future.

For more than 10 years US government, Democrat and Republican, have bombed Vietnam in an effort to prove that the American ruling class is so powerful it can impose its decisions on a backward, feudal, semi-feudal, and semi-colonial country.



Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960



Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

IN THE TEN YEARS since the Distillers Company withdrew thalidomide from the market, their shareholders were paid a total of £181,681,000. That is the figure which has to be compared to the £2 million a year which they plan to spend over the next 10 years on 'charity' for the children who are deformed because of a drug which Distillers marketed.

Distillers (Biochemicals) which marketed thalidomide was never a very profitable part of the giant whisky-and-gin combine. In 1960, Sir Graham Hayman, the company's chairman, reporting on the Biochemicals division, said:

'Sales have increased, but low prices resulted in substantially reduced margins. Special efforts are being directed to the discovery of new products to broaden our base in the business, and some progress is being made.'

Much progress was being made with the various brands of the new German wonder-sedative, thalidomide, whose license Distillers had bought at great expense. A mass advertising campaign highlighted the drug's effectiveness if taken by pregnant women, although no tests had been made on pregnant animals or on any animals' foetus.

The law of the market prevailed and the thalidomide children were born. Then the other law, the law of the law courts, intervened in order to ensure that Distillers paid out as little as possible to compensate for the deformities their drug had created.

Judges, barristers and solicitors united to persuade the parents to accept paltry sums. In 1968, 64 parents accepted an average of about £15,000 compensation.

Hardship

In the 10 years since the drug was withdrawn, during all of which time the parents and children suffered indescribable hardship, the Distillers Company, the law courts, and the press combined to ensure that their hardship should continue and that the shareholders of the company should not lose a penny piece.

During most of this time there was a Labour government. Today, the parliamentary Labour Party is beside itself with horror and shock at the plight of the thalidomide children. Rivers of tears have flowed from the House of Commons as Mr Jack Ashley, Mrs Barbara Castle or Mr Alf Morris lay on the rhetoric. Mr Harold Wilson protests that the Fanfare for Europe money should have gone to the thalidomide children.

Now go and look up thalidomide in Hansard's record of parliamentary debates during the six years when Labour was in office and when the thalidomide children and their parents were suffering without compensation. Mr Jack Ashley, Mrs Barbara Castle, Mr Alf Morris and Mr Harold Wilson did not mention the subject once. Mr Kenneth Robinson, Labour Minister of Health, twice specifically rejected pleas to give government money to the children.

Mr Wilson spent a lot of government money on behalf of Common Market propaganda—but not a penny on the thalidomide children. And it was Wilson's white-heat-of-the-technological-revolution, export-or-die government which twice—in 1966 and 1967—gave Distillers the Queen's Award for Industry.

When Labour could do something about the problem, it did nothing. Now its rhetoric is as hypocritical as the moaning from the Prudential and other City shareholders in Distillers, who have pocketed their fortunes for 10 years without a murmur of protest. Terrified by the rhetoric, Distillers have pushed their offer up to nearly seven times what they offered in the first place. It should be very much higher.

But debate on the level of compensation should not obscure the real issue. There is no more irresponsible section of capitalist society than the drug companies. Hectic competition forces them to spend more on advertising, packaging and promotion than on research. Massive profits are siphoned off to shareholders who contribute nothing.

Government-appointed bodies who are meant to keep a watch on the safety of marketed drugs keep their 'interference' down to the minimum. In such an atmosphere, drugs are marketed whose side-effects are often unknown to their manufacturers and terrible disasters occur.

Thalidomide led to just such a disaster. And, until the drug industry is nationalised and fully integrated with the National Health Service, there will be many more like it.



New Year's fleecings

1973 started with two developments on the stock market which set the tone for responsibility and self-restraint in the year ahead.

On 1 January, Singer and Friedlander, merchant bankers, announced that the chairman of Kwik Save, Mr Albert Gubay, had secretly sold the rest of his shares in his own company and fled to New Zealand.

This sale of shares netted Mr Gubay £4 million. This has to be added to the £7.4 million clean profit netted to Mr Gubay by the sale of other shares in Kwik Save last April. He made £11.4 million in nine months for doing nothing except thinking up the idea of the 'discount' supermarkets several years earlier.

On 2 January, a company called English and Continental Property Holdings was sold to the Post Office Pension Fund by its owners—Mr Jack Walker, Mr Ramon Greene and the government-owned Crown Agents.

Walker and Greene, backed by the Crown Agents, had spent the previous five years buying up expensive properties with a view to selling them again. They bought Cunard House for £6½ million and the BBC's Bush House for £22.5 million. The profit made in this week's deal on these two properties alone was £24 million.

The combined profit for English and Continental on the whole deal, which involved 42 properties, is slightly more than £40 million. Of this Mr Greene and Mr Walker will pocket £10 million each.

Their contribution to the properties during their time of ownership has been nil.

Three multi-millionaires in two days is good going even by 1972 stock exchange standards. The next time several hundred thousand workers put in a wage claim costing, say, £40 million, they might like to remember the case of Messrs Gubay, Greene and Walker—and act accordingly.

ON 2 January, *The Times* published a stinging leader about civil servants and strike action, complaining that civil servants had a 'special



GREENE AND WALKER: Property speculation gives them £10 million each

responsibility' to the state, and that they had no right to claim any exemption from the freeze.

On the same day, *The Times* got a reply from the Department of Trade and Industry about their application some weeks previously for an exemption from the prices freeze for their advertising rates. *The Times* wanted to increase their rates from £1 a column inch to £16 a column inch. *The Financial Times* wanted similar permission to put the rates up from £2.50 to £16.50.

Both applications were turned down on the grounds that no case had been made out for exemption.

Dai's diary

THE 1973 Diary for steelworkers, issued at special cut price rates by the British Iron and Steel and Kindred Trades Association, the steelworkers' union, has some useful information for steelworkers—whose average wage is less than £30 a week and many thousands of whom face redundancy during the coming year.

A 'wine guide', for instance, tells steelworkers that the claret was terrible in 1956, but very good in 1966. The port was poor in 1958 and excellent in 1960—and so on.

One page is devoted to a list of hotels which includes Claridges, the London Hilton and the Connaught (cheapest single bed for the night:

15 guineas).

There is another page for restaurants, including the Mirabelle, Pruniers, the Cafe Royal and the Savoy Grill, where steelworkers can get a nice bit of steak (no veg, no booze) for just under £3.

If a travelling steelworker doesn't like the hotels or restaurants provided, moreover, there is a page and a half devoted to 'West End Clubs', which include Brooks, Bucks, Whites and the Carlton. You need a titled proposer or seconder to get you into Whites or Bucks. Lord Douglass, former general secretary of BISAFTA, would do fine, as indeed would Sir Dai Davies, the recently-knighted gensec.

To get into the Carlton, though, you have to be a member of the Tory Party.

Bernie Perks

MR BERNARD PERKINS, Tory leader of the Greater London Council Housing Committee, has just put in his expenses for work done as chairman of Harlow Development Corporation for July to September 1972. The expenses sheet mentions only five visits to Harlow, one to attend the deputy chairman's funeral.

Mr Perkins is paid £3500 a year for his chairmanship and this works out at £175 per visit.

Mr Perkins is believed to have been responsible for the recent sacking of Harlow Council's Labour leader, Martin Lawn, from the corporation. Martin was clearly unsuitable for the job on two grounds. He is not a member of the Tory Party, and he took his job seriously.

CAMDEN councillors who want to continue the fight against the Tory Rent Act have come up with an ingenious suggestion. If the government refuses to pay the subsidies for the borough's housing account—estimated at £8 million—the suggestion is that Camden should not pay their contribution to the Metropolitan Police, estimated at £7 million.

It is interesting that almost as much is spent by a local authority on the police as is spent by the government on those notorious housing subsidies.



PRINTS

Distillers' payments into court

IN THE recent contempt of court case in which the Attorney General, Sir Peter Rawlinson, successfully applied to the High Court for a ban on an article in the Sunday Times which would once and for all have exposed Distillers in their marketing of thalidomide, the three Appeal Court judges laid great stress on their impartiality. They were, they said, only there to protect the parties in a negligence action. After several paragraphs of grandiose tripe, they proclaimed a ban on the article.

The 'impartiality of the bench' has always been a cardinal principle in British law, which is why judges are not normally directors of companies. There is, however, nothing to stop judges being shareholders in the firms with which they are dealing, and there is no obligation or even tradition obliging them to 'declare an interest'.

Take the case of Mr Justice Brabin, one of the three judges who took part in that decision. The shareholders' register of Distillers (which has been combed by Mark Dougal and other International Socialists members in Edinburgh) discloses the fact that a Lady Mary Brabin bought 1500 Distillers shares on 18 December 1969. The shares are currently worth £1.70.

Bankers

Lady Mary Brabin's address was given as c/o Rathbone Brothers, Castle Chambers, Castle Street, Liverpool 2. Now Mr Justice Brabin and his wife Mary live in London, so a casual observer might think that this was another Mary Brabin.

Not so. Rathbones confirmed to me that they act as merchant bankers and stockbrokers and the only Brabin on their list is a Sir Daniel James Brabin of 4 Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3.

Mr Justice Brabin is not alone among lawyers and their families who have an interest in Distillers. Indeed judges probably own more Distillers shares than any other senior profession. There are judges on the register from every department of the law.

In the House of Lords, the highest court in the land and therefore presumably the most impartial, there is Viscount Dilhorne, one of Sir Peter's predecessors as Tory Attorney General, who has 2028 shares. Lord Morris has a mere 118. Lord Wilberforce, who gave to the miners and took away from the power workers according to what he was told by the government, has 2900 Distillers shares.

Politicians

In the Supreme Court of the Judicature, the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Sachs has 1520 and Lord Justice Stamp has 1953.

In the family division, Mr Justice Payne has 442, and Dame Elizabeth Kathleen Kane has 1100. In the Chancery Division, Mr Justice Plowman has 1108 shares, Mr Justice Megarry 2000 and the well-named Mr Justice Pennycuik 1713.

In the Queen's Bench Division, the arch-reactionary Mr Justice Thesiger has 470 Distillers shares, the 'liberal' Mr Justice Bridge 1100, Mr Justice Nield 1296, Mr Justice Chapman 1386, and Mr Justice Bristow 3020.

There are a large number of circuit judges on the list, including Judge Bell (75), Judge Duveen (3002), Judge Willis (912), Judge Aarvold,



MR JUSTICE BRABIN AND WIFE: He suppressed the Sunday Times report on Distillers; she owns Distillers shares worth more than £2,250



LORD WILBERFORCE: 2900 shares



VISCOUNT DILHORNE: 2028 shares



LORD JUSTICE SACHS: 1520 Distillers shares

Recorder of London, (800), Judge Wingate-Saul (1100), Judge Abdela (1200), Judge Honig (1008), Judge Agnew of Belfast, (320) and Judge Sheldon (1500).

Now for the politicians. It's a well-known 'rule' that ministers when they take office resign their directorships to avoid any 'conflict of interest'. The 'rule' doesn't seem to apply to Minister's shareholdings. Willie Whitelaw, for instance, the saviour of Ulster, didn't get rid of his 2000 shares in Distillers until March 1972—thus making a huge profit on the rise in shares since his government came to power.

Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Foreign Secretary, still has 20,000 Distillers shares. He is not selling them, apparently, since he has so many shares in so many companies, he cannot possibly be biased in favour of any one of them.

Stranger still, Sir Keith Joseph, who admitted in the House of Commons recently that he was part of the syndicate which insured Distillers against any damage they might suffer as the result of the marketing of thalidomide, has held on to his 800 shares in the company. Sir Keith is the Secretary of State for Social Services, and as such deals with government responsibility for the thalidomide scandal.

Other Tory MPs with holdings in

Distillers include: R T Boscawen (Wells) 2400, Bernard Braine (South East Essex) 150, A P Costain (Folkestone) 1000, G J M Longden, (SW Herts) 154, Charles Simeons (Luton) 372, W Van Straubenzee, Junior Minister for Education, 1176, 'Jerry' Wiggin (Weston Super Mare) 2352, Hugh Rosai (Hornsey) 690, John Stokes (Oldbury) 411, Sir Robert Turton, the 'father of the House', 6426.

Angus Maude (Stratford), Winston Churchill (Stretford) and Sir John Foster (Northwich) all have shares. Sir Clive Bossom (Leominster) has 1490, and Sir Harry Legge Burke, the 'much-respected' ex-chairman of the 1922 backbench committee, has 3472. Sir Gerald Nabarro has 1000, Nigel Fisher (Surbiton) has 1680, Barney Heyhoe (Heston) 1000, John Tilney (Liverpool, Wavertree) has 1550, and Miss Mervyn Pike (Melton) has 1000.

The Daily Express, like other newspapers, is very impartial in the thalidomide controversy, despite the fact that Sir Max Aitken, the paper's proprietor, has 8085 shares in Distillers.

The medical establishment, which is outraged by the thalidomide deformities, are not averse to taking Distillers' dividends. The Medical Research Council has 9536 shares, the Medical Defence Union 10,000, the Medical Protection Society 5000, the Medical and Dental Defence Union 3500 and the Royal College of Physicians 13,840.

All religious denominations have been very 'concerned' about the thalidomide children. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Dunkeld has 20,900 shares. The Church of England Children's Society has 18,285.

This makes the Distillers 1972 Christmas card all the more tasteful. It featured a Madonna and Child.

Bag and baggage

From the Daily Express, 4 January:

Back to duty

LIEUTENANT Mark Phillips, who spent New Year with Princess Anne and the Royal Family at Sandringham, was back with his regiment, the Queen's Dragoon Guards, at Catterick yesterday. They move to Germany in a fortnight. Lieutenant Phillips, aged 24, is baggage officer.

Jobs axeman who takes the biscuit

THE PRESS has been deafeningly silent about the proposed closure of the Wright's Biscuit factory in South Shields, where 800 jobs are at stake.

The attempted closure, now the subject of a Department of Trade and Industry inquiry, is a blatant attempt to shut a profitable factory so that the owners, United Biscuits, can strengthen their very profitable stranglehold on the British biscuit market. Not even the ingenuity of the capitalist press could easily disguise this.

The story begins around the end of 1971, when the company that owned Wright's Biscuits was sold to Cavenham Foods. At the time Cavenham said: 'Cavenham believes that within the Cavenham Group there are opportunities, which do not now exist in Wright's, for advancement for employees at all levels. Some reduction in the number of employees is anticipated but in any case this has been the trend in the company over the past two years.'

No one reading that could have guessed that it meant the complete closure of the South Shields factory. Opportunity for advancement in the Cavenham Group is now strictly limited, as in April 1972 the Wright's factory was sold to yet another company, United Biscuits.

United Biscuits (chairman, Baron Crichton, one-time Tory MP) is the largest biscuit manufacturer in the country, accounting for more than two-fifths of the biscuits sold—using the names Crawford's, McVities, Meredith and Drew among others. Five years ago the company used to be a collection of family firms, but the managing director, Hector Laing, has changed all that.

Closure

He started a programme of rationalisation and closure, dramatically reducing the number of lines manufactured and using his domination of the market to push up his prices. Recently, as he had screwed as much as he could out of his British biscuit employees he has started moving into new fields and into the Common Market—but that's another story.

All this has done wonders for United Biscuits' shareholders, who have seen profits grow from £3.87 million in 1966 to £7.7 million in 1971. The workers meanwhile have seen the number of depots dwindle from 110 to 25, the number of factories reduced from nine to five, the range of biscuits cut by two-thirds, and the labour force cut by 2000 in 1971 alone. The closure of one factory in Blackpool has saved £300,000 of overheads every year.

As you might imagine, there is not very much more that our Hector can now do to increase his market share and profits from the biscuit operation. The only remaining possibility was to take over a competitor, so that he could close down the manufacturing operation but keep the trade names and contacts. As he himself said, the acquisition of Wright's (along with Carrs and Kemps) represented 'a further



rationalisation of the biscuit industry'.

According to the Investors Guardian, that well-known workers' paper, Wright's South Shields factory has made profits in each of the 12 years of its existence, while the group's losses in recent years were from the retailing operation, which accounts for more than 80 per cent of sales.

It is possible that the action of the workers can break the conspiracy of silence by the press. The inquiry will find it impossible to uphold the closure.

But workers at the McVities and Cadbury cake factories should beware. In 1971 United Biscuits and Cadbury formed a joint company to run these cake interests. Laing said: 'It will be more profitable than the two companies operating separately.'

That can only mean a repeat of what has happened in the biscuit division. City expectations are that the cake division will make £500,000 profit in 1973, against £200,000 in 1972. Someone has to pay for that.

T H ROGMORTON

I AM writing a book that will be called something like *The Workers' Handbook to Company Accounts*. I am anxious that the book should be really useful and would like to hear of any problems people have had in finding particular pieces of information about companies or particular questions they would like answering on the subject.



Tom Mann: What a compulsory Eight-hour day means to the workers (1896) introduction by Richard Hyman
William Gallacher and J R Campbell: Direct Action—an outline of workshop and social organisation (1919) introduction by Alastair Hatchett
20p each + 4p postage

REPRINTS IN LABOUR HISTORY

Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH also from IS Books 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN

When the sparks began to fly

ONE of Hans Andersen's delightful fairy tales describes how a great Emperor was duped by two swindlers who promised to weave for him the most beautiful clothes he had ever worn. The only unusual feature was that the clothes would be invisible to every person who was either unfit for his office or impossibly dull.

The swindlers pretended to be making these fine garments and were paid fat sums of money, but at the end of the day had produced nothing. The king appeared in public in the nude, and his subjects applauded what they said were the finest clothes they had ever seen . . . until a child exclaimed: 'But he has nothing on!'

The crucial strike of 400 Indian workers at the Mansfield Hosiery Mill in Loughborough has forced us to take a closer look at the 'fine clothes' claimed to be worn by Britain's largest food and clothing retail chain, Marks and Spencer. For Marks and Sparks own just under six per cent of Nottingham Manufacturing, the parent company of Mansfield Hosiery, and buy more than 50 per cent of everything produced by the firm.

The strike was sparked off by the firm's racist policy of keeping the higher-paid jobs for white workers while blacks were only allowed the low-paid work.

This involvement with racialism does not go well with the almost mystical aura that surrounds the name Marks and Spencer. The story of how this monopolistic giant grew to its present size embodies the rags-to-riches theme so beloved by our masters.

One of Marks and Sparks' publicity sheets describes its origins in Michael Marks' 'Penny Bazaar' in Leeds in 1884: 'The small business prospered. Michael Marks worked hard, travelling round the North of England, and opening more stalls in town markets. He was soon known and respected by his customers for the quality and value he offered.'

Marks and Spencer have gone to enormous lengths to cultivate an image of a 'souful', public-spirited organisation whose main concern is benevolence towards the buying public and its employees.

As their President, Edward Sieff, puts it in the 1972 Annual Report: 'We like to think of Marks and Spencer—staff, management and directors alike—as members of a family.'

Another publicity hand-out, entitled 'You'll like working for a firm that cares', describes how this 'humanity' operates. Staff receive what is claimed to be 'good money' with under-21s getting a pay increase every birthday. Three-course lunches are provided at 5p and hairdressing facilities for women at 35p for a wash and set.

The Marks and Sparks showpiece appears to be their pension scheme. The late Lord Marks, son of the original founder, insisted that retired staff 'must continue to be treated as part of the Marks and Spencer family.' They get a Christmas bonus of a month's pension and a hamper, birthday presents at 70 and every five year afterwards and free chiropody.

All in all, Marks and Sparks pride themselves on spending some £3½ million a year on staff welfare. With 35,000 employees, this works out at an average £100 per employee.

Fanfare

Marks and Spencer have also fostered a tremendous reputation as consumer benefactors by selling high-quality goods at cut prices. This they claim has revolutionised shop-keeping.

But there is another side to this 'happy family' picture. The fact is that Marks and Spencer ranked 19th in The Times' 1972/73 list of the 1000 largest industrial companies in Britain. Their assets are worth £183,193 million, and total sales in the last financial year amounted to a staggering £463 million. Profits before tax were up from £50 million in 1970/71 to nearly £54 million in 1971/72.

According to the Annual Report, £31,088,000 was spent in 1971/72 on wages. Wage rates for women sales assistants outside London range from about £16 or £17 to £21. For all the fanfare of self-congratulation about the tremendous advantages that members of the 'happy family' receive, Marks and Sparks do not pay higher wages than other large chain stores.

One girl who recently worked at Marks and Spencer's Maidstone store received as gross pay for a six-day week the princely sum of £10.75, and the highest paid sales assistant was earning £13 gross after 2½ years' service.



St Michael looks down on those who make his profits: a cartoon from the Marks and Spencer house magazine.

SABBY SAGALL looks at MARKS AND SPENCER

Marks and Spencer employees, in common with shop workers generally, continue to be among the most downtrodden members of the working class.

And M & S appear to be the retailers most hostile to trade unionism among their employees. They always claim that due to their benevolence, their staff do not feel the need to belong to a trade union. Sadly, it seems that many do fall for the eyewash of '£3½ million spent on staff welfare'.

It is easy to put this £3½ million in perspective when you consider that in 1971/72, Marks and Spencer screwed an average £1512 profit out of the labour of each individual employee. Even after subtracting the average £100 spent on each employee in welfare provisions, Marks and Sparks still exploited each worker to the tune of £1412.

Considering the enormous wealth of this retail giant the £3½ million would appear to be money well invested if the result is to buy off trade unionism. Happy slaves are indeed the best!

The late Lord Sieff is quoted in the Annual Report as having believed 'that all those engaged in the team effort should fairly share in the rewards.'

Our doubts as to his sincerity are intensified when we glance at the other end of the pay scale and find that in 1971/72, Edward Sieff, then chairman, collected a cool £30,200, while his nephew, the Hon Sir Marcus Sieff, then deputy-chairman, was a close second with £30,000.

Marks and Spencer are controlled by a tight-knit group of people—the Sieffs, Marks and Sachers—all inter-related through marriage. They resemble a feudal family in which massive amounts of property are doled out to its members.

In 1971/72, Edward Sieff had, as well as his gigantic salary, a 'beneficial and family interest' amounting to 226,000 shares, worth roughly £750,000. The Hon

Sir Marcus owned 242,012 shares, while one of the joint managing directors, M Sacher, owned no fewer than 1,084,837 shares, worth perhaps £2½ million. Other directors, also members of the extended family, held equally staggering amounts of capital. These men, with their wives, sons and daughters, are the real 'happy family' of Marks and Spencer.

Nor does the 'benevolent' autocracy of M & S appear so benevolent when one examines certain aspects of their employees' working conditions. For example, although shops are required by law to provide seats for their employees, Marks and Spencer girls are not allowed to use them.

The crunch

One of the main recipients of Marks and Sparks' benevolence is the racist, pro-imperialist state of Israel. Tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of pounds are given each year both by the company and its individual directors. The story is told of how, during a crisis in the Middle East, Lord Sieff, at a meeting between M & S and its suppliers, talked them into giving more than £1 million to Israel.

Marks and Spencer, indeed, pride themselves on what is described in their report as a 'unique relationship with our manufacturers'. This is the crunch as far as the Loughborough strikers were concerned. For M & S openly boast about the extensive collaboration, both commercial and technical, which is the basis of their 'partnership' with their manufacturers.

Further, a special department at Marks and Spencer's head office is concerned solely with advising suppliers on all aspects of their technical and labour problems. The advice given ranges from what new machinery to instal to the kind of labour policy required to raise productivity.

There can be little doubt, therefore, that the Marks and Spencer management knew about and connived in the racist policy operated by the management of Mansfield Hosiery.

This is the reality beneath the official propaganda of 'cheap' goods for the consumer: low wages and racial discrimination. All trade unionists should be grateful to the Indian workers of Loughborough for shouting: 'The Emperor has no clothes.'

WORKERS BELFAST

THOUSANDS of workers downed tools in Northern Ireland last week in response to a call from the Catholic Ex-servicemen's Association to take protest action over the spate of murders and assassinations by loyalist extremists.

The most significant demonstration was by deep-sea dockers in Belfast. A mass meeting of both Catholic and Protestant dockers heard speakers from both denominations call for an end to the bloody violence.

And hundreds of housewives in the Andersonstown district marched through the streets to add their voices to the protest.

The extent of the demonstrations forced the authorities last week to start court proceedings for the first time against eleven loyalist extremists.

There has been no let up in the killings. Hugh Martin, a 56-year-old Catholic, left his night shift job at the bakery in East Belfast where he had worked for 20 years at 4am on 30 December. At 4.30 his body was found slumped over the wheel of his car.

He was the last man to be murdered in Northern Ireland in 1972. His killing was no accident. Whoever was responsible had a sure knowledge of his movements and had lain in wait for him outside the bakery. No arrests have been made and it is unlikely that any ever will be.

None of the assassinations in 1972 has been solved and, until last week, no one had been charged in connection with any of them. For press and television, Hugh Martin's death is just another statistic to be mentioned briefly one day and forgotten the next.

POGROM

But for the anti-Unionist population of Belfast, the murder of Mr Martin is no mere statistic. His death is part of a series of attacks and killings in East Belfast which together can only be described as an attempted pogrom.

The attacks are no longer just against individuals. A bus carrying passengers from one Catholic area to another was raked by machine-gun fire in the Protestant Highfield district. Afterwards 18 bullet holes were counted. Hundreds of Catholics have been forced to flee their homes. Scores of houses, shops, pubs and even churches have been bombed and burned.

Now it would appear that there is a determined and well-organised effort to drive all Catholic workers from their jobs. Since Hugh Martin's death, another Catholic worker has been murdered, this time as he was about to go on night shift at the Rolls-Royce factory at Dundonald. The men that killed him riddled his car with machine-gun fire in an attempt to kill all six occupants. Only 60 of the 800 workers at the plant are Catholics.

Far-right Vanguard leader William Craig predicted that such atrocities would happen and has now supported them. His threat to liquidate the enemies of loyalism—whom he classifies as the entire Catholic population—has become a reality.

SPIRALLING

He visited Britain's Northern Irish overlord William Whitelaw recently and told him that if his demands for the restoration of the full Stormont police state machine were not met then he would step up the campaign against anti-Unionists.

In December, loyalist extremists were responsible for the death of 19 people, 16 of them assassinated and three killed by explosives. Republicans killed three Protestants in re-

Mike Miller reports from Belfast



WILLIAM WHITELAW: Unwilling to act against loyalist killers



WILLIAM CRAIG: Threat to liquidate enemies of loyalism, retaliation—a tactic that must be condemned by socialists.

All told, 36 people died in December—and loyalist extremists and the British Army were responsible for 25 of them. Despite this, the British government continues to push the lie that the IRA is responsible for the spiralling death toll. This is to justify the one-sided actions of the army against those who dare to oppose British rule in the Six Counties.

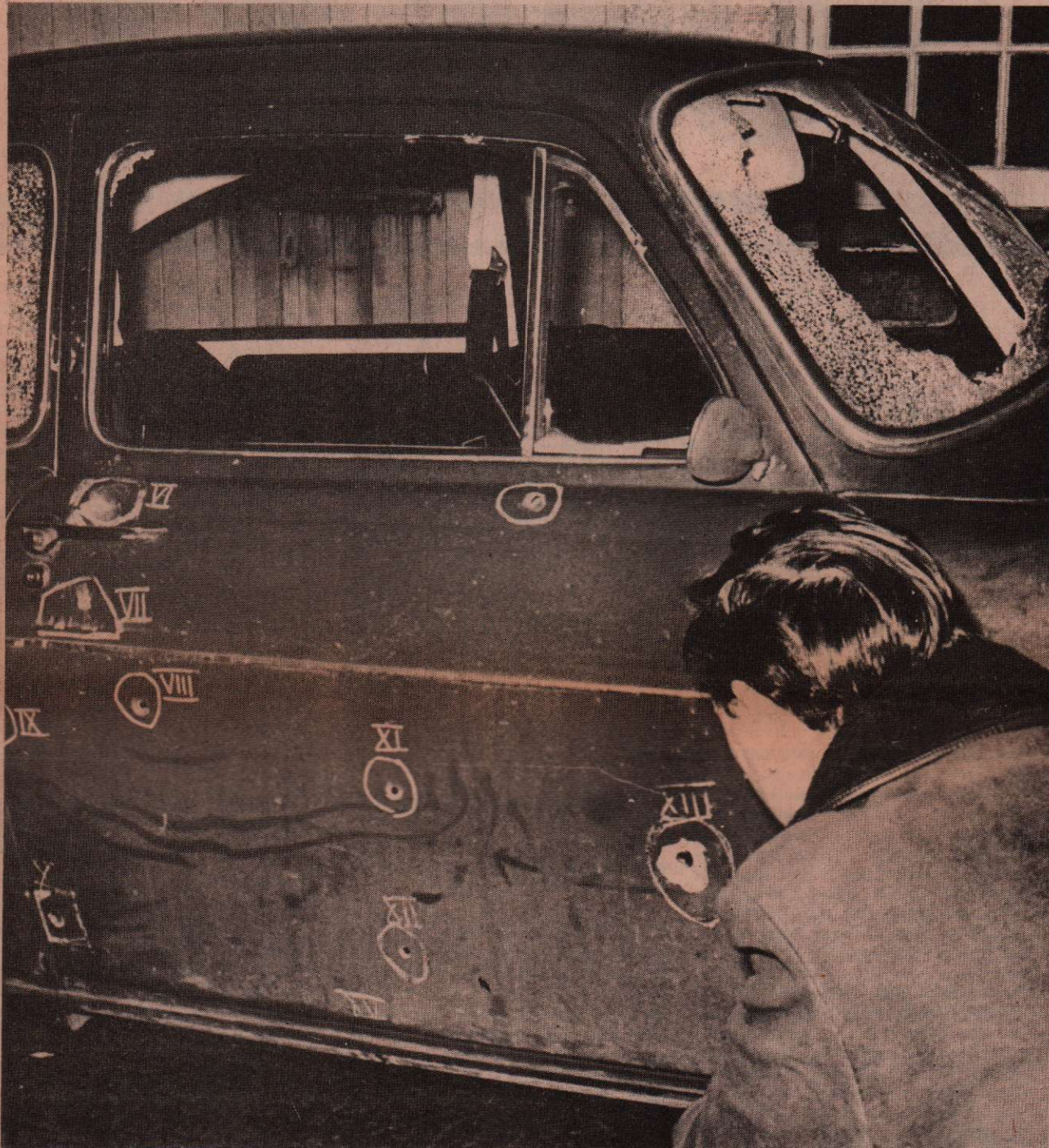
A few days after the killing in Armagh of a prominent Unionist councillor and member of the Northern Ireland Police Authority, hundreds of British soldiers swooped on the two Catholic housing estates in the city and arrested 20 men for no other reason than their religion.

But when five men were murdered in a Catholic pub in the loyalist Waterside area of Derry, no mass searches were carried out and no arrests were made, though the army and police are well aware of the identity of Derry loyalists.

Three major reasons explain the difference in attitude to loyalists and Catholics.

First, the British Army itself has been involved in an assassination campaign against unarmed Catholics. The latest attack came in the Ardoyne just before Christmas when two young Catholics were gunned down from a passing car under the noses of a

ACT AGAINST MURDERS



The car in which a Catholic Rolls-Royce worker died. He and five other Catholics were in the car when it was machine-gunned as it reached the factory.

military patrol—which refused to take action.

Second, the army is afraid that any serious attempt to come to grips with loyalist gunmen will reveal the extent to which these killers are bound up with the official Ulster Defence Regiment—which is financed and trained by the government and many of whose members are also in the para-military private army, the Ulster Defence Association.

KILLERS

The very first person arrested in East Belfast by Whitelaw's new Special Task Force, supposedly designed to deal with assassins, was a member of the UDR.

Since that embarrassing event the Task Force has virtually disappeared from the scene and the belief of anti-Unionists that the whole thing was a publicity stunt to cover Whitelaw's total unwillingness to act against loyalist killers has been proved correct.

Finally, the killings actually play a useful role for Whitelaw's regime, for they scare the Catholic population and weaken its ability to resist any coming settlement that does not recognise its demands.

The myth that the British Army is here to keep the peace should now be finally shattered. Its immediate removal can only serve to bring the end of violence closer.



Soldiers on patrol in Belfast. The army's own assassination campaign goes on.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



AS THE industrial struggle gets sharper, strikes are tending to become longer. At the same time, in face of the threat of unemployment, new forms of struggle such as sit-ins are spreading.

One important weapon for strikers is the ability to get social security benefits. These have now replaced strike pay as the main form of income during disputes. Payments have increased from a few thousand pounds in 1966 to £12 million in 1971.

Under pressure from the government the Department of Health and Social Security has tried to keep down the amount paid out. The purpose of this series of articles is to help those in disputes organise themselves to make sure they are not starved back to work.

Despite all that is heard of 'spongers' and 'idlers' the provisions are in no sense generous. Our society does not recognise the right of workers to have a decent standard of living when they are sick or retired. The worst treatment is reserved for those who are unable to offer an employer the chance to make a profit out of their labour.

The sick, the disabled, the old, the unmarried mother and the unemployed are still forced to undergo the indignity of the means test to get a pittance called supplementary benefit. A son or daughter staying at home to look after a sick parent gets £5.90. An unmarried mother and her baby living with relatives get £7.80.

It is small wonder that many are forced into what is hypocritically called 'cheating'.

Indeed, the welfare state as we know it only exists at all for two reasons. First, because of concessions made after years of working-class struggle. Second, because British employers had to raise workers' standards to develop production in face of foreign competition. During the Boer War it was found that half the potential recruits to the army were unfit to serve—a discovery that led to improvements in the public health services.

A study of the laws on social security payments and the way they are put into practice shows that the basic principle is to keep the payments to a minimum. The level of benefits provides a standard of living that is really not living at all, but merely existing.

A man off work sick, with a wife and four-year-old daughter, paying £3 a week rent, will get £13 a week sick benefit. If he claims supplementary benefit this will be made up to a maximum of £15.55 a week. If he is unfortunate enough to have ulcers and needs a special diet, the Social Security will give him an extra 92p—for a diet most hospitals reckon costs at least an extra £2.

Starving

For the unemployed the situation is worse, for the aim is to force you back to work as soon as possible, if necessary into one of the lowest-paid jobs.

A skilled man unemployed for more than a year can be reclassified as unskilled and sent after any job. Single men between the ages of 18 and 45 are sometimes given benefit for only four weeks. And if you are sacked for industrial misconduct (which may well mean industrial militancy) your unemployment benefit is not paid for the first six weeks.

Faced with a system that treats workers in this way, strikers have to organise to make sure they get whatever they can.

The object of the system is to try and force the striker back to work by starving him and turning his

How to claim state benefits

family against him. A man with a wife and family to support is not entitled to any benefit for himself, but only for his dependants. This forces him below the state's own poverty line—which is drawn at the level of bare necessity.

The amount of money you are entitled to while involved in a dispute is usually strictly laid down by law. But thanks to the all-embracing Section 13 of the 1966 Social Security Act, which allows money to be paid out in almost any case of need, it is possible to get fringe benefits.

Unemployment Benefit: Anyone in a dispute is excluded from receiving unemployment benefit under Section 22 of the 1965 National Insurance Act. It is not really worth challenging this one as their definition of a dispute covers anything from a strike to a lock-out. However, it is still possible to claim sickness benefit (worth remembering if you have a friendly doctor).

Dispute

Supplementary Benefit: This is probably what you will have to rely on during the dispute. It is a mean-tested benefit—in other words any income you have is offset against what they reckon your needs are; and your bare income can be made up only to this subsistence level.

Under Section 10 of the Social Security Act, you cannot, while on strike, claim for yourself, but only for your dependants. (But single people can still get benefit, as will be shown in a later article in this series.) A married man is allowed to claim for his wife (or a woman he is living with as his wife) and any children.

But if you have been laid off because of a dispute that your firm is not directly involved in (for example, due to lack of components) you can get benefit at the full rate.

If you are a married woman (or living with a man) the Social Security may maintain that your husband will be expected to support you. This is worth fighting if your husband is on a low wage.

The basic weekly rates are:

Striker	nil
Partner	£5.20
Dependants: under 5	£1.90
under 10	£2.25
11-12	£2.75
13-15	£3.40
16-17	£4.05
over 18	£5.20

So check that you're getting what you are due, at the very least.

NEXT WEEK: What you can get to cover the rent, and how to claim if you're single.

VICTOR SERGE

Memoirs of a Revolutionary 1901-1941

TRANSLATED BY PETER SEDGWICK

The memoirs of Victor Serge, revolutionary, novelist and poet, are a testimony to the experience of three successive revolutionary generations—the anarchism of pre-1914 France, the syndicalism of Barcelona 1917, finally Russia as Stalin took over. Out of the annihilation Serge himself survived as virtually a lone witness.

70p including postage, from

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TERROR IN TURKEY

'A MINUTE later they took me back to the same room. But then a friend of mine was also there. He had just been treated by the "falaka" and had lost consciousness. The feet were excoriated [stripped of skin] and he had blood everywhere.

'I was placed beside him, a few feet away. I stood upright and he lay unconscious on the floor. "Look at him," they said. "If you don't talk, you'll be worse off."

'Apart from the "falaka", they also use electricity. They take you to a dark room, where there are 15 to 20 men. Then you get electric shocks in the brain, the fingers, the hands and all over the body. They go on like that for a long time, and it has happened that the victim has lost some senses . . .

'Another method is extraction of nails. Many comrades are without nails. Nazan Alp, the wife of Saffet Alp, who fought and was killed in Kizildere, was raped by a police club. Another girl was about to be raped, and tried to commit suicide. She was taken to hospital, but we don't know what happened later.'

The woman was talking on Norwegian television last May. She was describing the state of affairs for dissenters not in South Africa, Spain, Czechoslovakia or Greece but in Turkey—a parliamentary democracy, an associate member of the European Economic Community and a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which defends the 'free world'.

Surprise

At long last, some of the facts about the Turkish regime are filtering through to the British public.

On 16 December, the political prisoners' pressure group Amnesty International held a press conference and announced 'incontrovertible evidence' of widespread torture by the Turkish police and army.

These revelations came as something of a surprise to a British public whose press and television has been singularly flattering about the Turkish authorities.

The news which comes out of Turkey is strictly controlled by the Turkish martial law command. The chief Turkish correspondent for the Guardian, the Economist, the Jewish Chronicle, the Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror (not to mention Time and Newsweek in the US) is Sam Cohen.

Sam Cohen (Sami Kohen is his real name) is the foreign editor of the Turkish government paper

Paul Foot on the fascist regime backed by Britain



A massive student demonstration protesting against government repression

Milliyet and a loyal propagandist for the Turkish army and its puppet government. A special advertising supplement on Turkey in the Guardian on 30 November carried a long article by Cohen in which he justified the atrocities of the Turkish regime on the grounds that 'East is East and West is best'.

Similarly, the local correspondent from Turkey for the Times, the Financial Times, (which also included

a special advertising supplement on Turkey on 31 October) and the BBC is Metin Munir, who works for the English language paper, the Daily News, which is owned by a clutch of right-wing businessmen. The support of these gentlemen for the government, if not its right wing ginger groups, is legendary.

In this way, the mass of the British newspaper-reading public have

had preserved in their minds the image of Turkey as a 'reasonable' parliamentary democracy struggling against extremist terrorist organisations.

Here are a few facts about Turkey which have not been publicised in the British press recently.

● Turkey is the poorest country in NATO.

● Two million of its nine million workers are unemployed.

● More than half its 35 million people are illiterate.

● A million families live in single rooms, without running water, bath, lavatory or any of the usual facilities.

● In 12 rural provinces there are no doctors at all.

At the same time, Turkey maintains the largest standing army in Europe, and the largest in the Western world except the United States. More than 500,000 men are under arms, and their generals are in complete control of the 'national security council' which wrote Turkey's fascist penal code.

The generals' coup, which took place on 12 March 1971, came at the end of a period of increased confrontation between the forces of the state and the working class.

Before 1960, despite laws apparently to the contrary, trade unionism was effectively banned in Turkey. The Confederation of Turkish Workers' Unions was set up with money from the American AID—whose funds are placed at the advice of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Its object was to ensure that the growing numbers of industrial workers were kept in check. The Turk-Is (as it is known) co-operated to the detriment of its members with the corrupt regime of Prime Minister Menderes during the 1950s.

In 1960, the Menderes regime was overthrown by a 'democratic'

army take-over that removed the bans on working class organisation and socialist writing, both of which flourished.

In February 1961, 12 trade unions, including the Metal Workers Union of Turkey, formed the Turkish Labour Party. For two years, the workers responded to the new atmosphere with a series of massive strikes.

Terrified, the 'democratic' government introduced the Collective Bargaining, Strikes and Lockouts Act which was instantly welcomed by the Turk-Is. The militant unions, including the Metal Workers, formed a 'solidarity front' to fight independently against the Act and class conflict grew. In 1965, the Zonguldak miners went on strike and the government called in troops to put down their demonstrations. Two miners were killed.

Soon afterwards, the Justice Party won another election with the help of massive votes in the countryside. At the mounting workers' demonstrations, the police were openly joined by fascist gangs.

Trade union and political meetings, including annual conferences of the Turkish Labour Party, were systematically broken up by these thugs, with the active assistance of the Turkish police. But they could not stop the growing confidence of the workers.

Battle

In February 1967, the unions which had formed the 'Solidarity Front' split from the Turk-Is and formed the Confederation of Progressive Workers' Unions (DISK). More than 100,000 of Turkey's million-organised workers were rapidly affiliated to the new organisation which called for a break in trade union policy from its traditional allegiance to the American State Department.

At the same time, resistance to the government-employers' offensive gained new strength from the students' movement.

During 1968, when the student movement in Europe was in ferment, the Turkish student organisations turned towards the workers and assisted in a number of factory occupations—especially in those factories where the government was trying to do a deal with the Turk-Is and the yellow unions.

On 16 February 1969, an enormous demonstration against the arrival of the American Sixth Fleet in Turkish territorial waters took place in Istanbul. A pitched battle was deliberately provoked by the fascists, urged on by the police. Ali Turgut Aytac and Duran Erdogan, two

NEW!

International Socialism goes monthly

International Socialism 54

**Breadless Russia
Wilhelm Reich
Who Owns Britain
Anarchism
Seamen Betrayed**



In the last 12 years International Socialism has built a reputation as the leading journal of marxist theory. Its move to monthly publication marks another major step forward by the International Socialists.

It will be invaluable reading for every active participant in the working-class struggle.

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Annual subscription: £1.60—special offer for January only.
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'Free world'



Armed police taking aim at students during a protest in 1970 . . .

demonstrators were killed. This was Turkey's 'Bloody Sunday'.

In August, the police attacked again, this time at the Turk Demir Dokum factory, which DISK had occupied.

This time the workers swarmed out of the neighbouring shanty towns and forced the police to retreat.

Taking fright, the yellow unions in Turk-Is urged the government to pass fresh anti-trade union laws. The government responded in June 1970, but completely underestimated the strength of working-class feeling.

The streets of Istanbul were packed with demonstrators in defence of DISK, and, after a series of bitter pitched battles, the government declared martial law. Hundreds of working-class leaders and radical students were arrested and many of them were tortured.

Even martial law could not prevent tens of thousands more workers from switching from the yellow unions to DISK. As DISK grew in strength and influence, so did the industrial struggle.

In the 10 months since June 1970 and March 1971 nearly every major factory in Istanbul went on strike at least once. In 1970 alone there were more than 700 strikes involving some two million workers. In the three years from 1968 to 1971, no less than 38 worker and student demonstrators were murdered by police thugs and fascist gangs.

This is the background to the take-over of March 1971. The military high command, terrified by the government's inability to control the situation and by DISK's new slogan, 'TURKEY WITHOUT BOSSES', dispatched a curt note to the Prime Minister, Demirel. Demirel, said the note, must resign, and hand over to the right-wing army puppet, Erim.

Banned

Demirel complied and at once the army set to work to pulverise working-class resistance.

A 'sledgehammer operation' was put in motion, which meant martial law in 11 provinces, including the eight more industrialised in the country. All trade union activity in these provinces was automatically banned (with the consent, needless to say, of the Turk-Is, whose financial assistance that year from the American AID programme was doubled). All socialist organisations and Labour parties were banned. Article 146 of the Penal Code made it a capital offence 'to seek to overthrow the government'.

On 18 May 1971 the general

secretary and general president of DISK were arrested. The following weeks saw a wave of arrests of all known DISK leaders and rank and file militants in every major factory. Most are still in prison.

Despite the terror, strikes still broke out in many years. In August 1971 36,000 railway workers at Eskisehir announced an immediate strike, and martial law authorities were forced to lift their prohibitions for the duration. In the same month, the Association of Turkish Employers and Industrialists put out a statement through the country's richest capitalist, Vehbi Koc:

'Now that we are about to enter the Common Market, our two forces must work together in order to increase our exports and the productivity of our industry. Competition within the Common Market will also pose the problem of workers' wages. The industrial workers' wage must not endanger Turkish industry by making it less competitive.'

Locked

The response has been an outbreak of still more strikes, met by fiercer and fiercer repression. There are now at least 4000 political prisoners in Turkey (more than in Greece) and some 2000 of them have been tortured.

In November 1972 all the leaders of the Turkish Labour Party were arrested and sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from six to 15 years. Behice Boran, the 62-year-old Labour leader, must spend 15 years in a Turkish jail for 'spreading communist propaganda'. Hosts of lawyers and professors have been sent to prison, some for the vaguest conceivable connection with 'hostile propaganda'.

At the same time, even the Turkish government admits an 11 per cent increase in unemployment.

This is likely to rise still further as half a million Turkish workers in Europe find it more and more difficult to hold onto their jobs under the wave of 'rationalisation' redundancies and return home.

Turkey is locked in a relentless class war, in which the employers, the government and the military will spare no horror to hang on to their property.

They can rely on the 100 per cent support of the European governments, including the British government, whose well-bred spokesman, Lord Limerick, parliamentary Under-Secretary for Trade and Industry, visited Turkey on a 'good will visit' in November.

A press notice distributed at the time by the Department of Trade



. . . their aim was good. The body of a student shot down by the police

and Industry points out that UK exports to Turkey increased from £29.2m in 1967 to £38.6m in 1971, and have expanded by a further 40 per cent in 1972. The share of the Turkish market, says the circular, has dropped to 10 per cent, but entry into the EEC should 'improve our competitive position in the market'.

Sir Alec Douglas Home, Britain's Foreign Secretary, added to the importance of this visit when he was asked by the Turkish government paper Milliyet on 20 November about the revelations of Turkish torture in the Sunday Times.

Sir Alec replied that the Turkish authorities deserved 'support and understanding in their determination to retain democratic institutions in the face of a ruthless terrorist movement'.

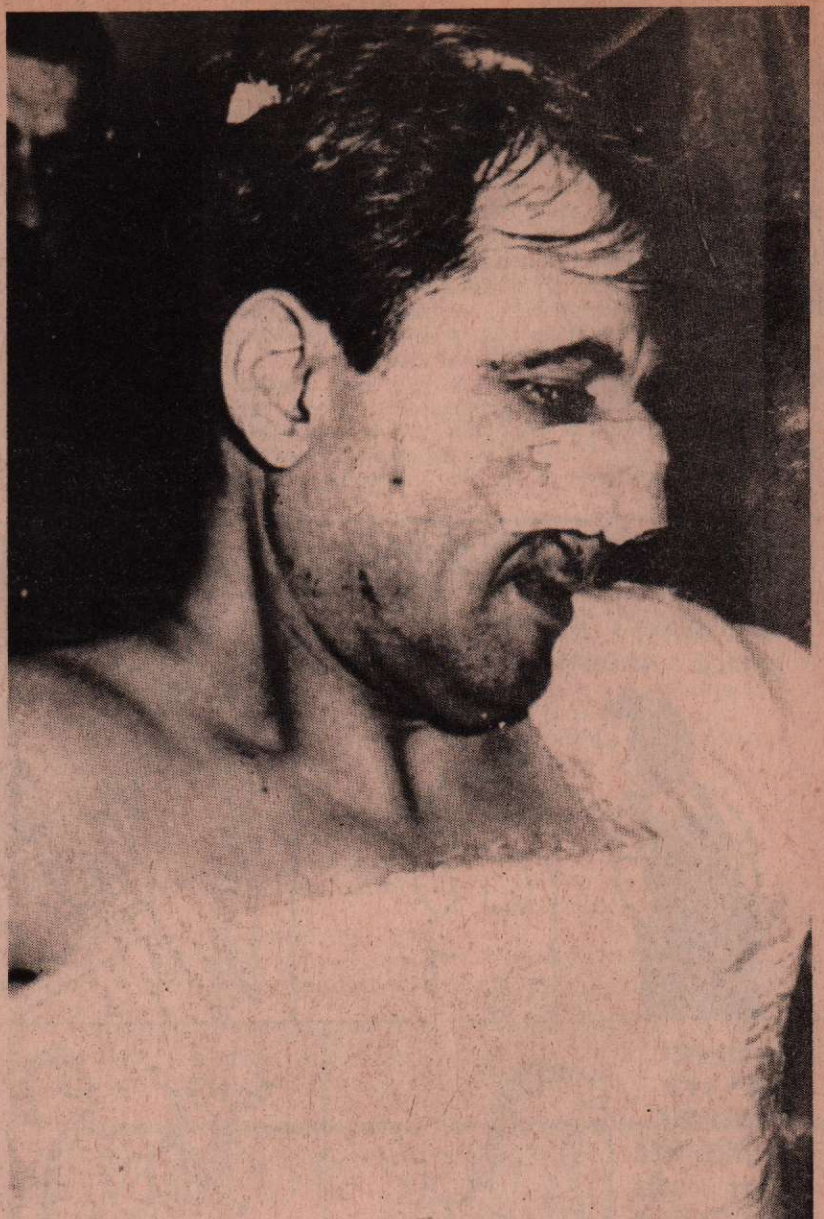
He expressed 'sorrow' at the protests about torture which had taken place in Europe. 'Such action', he said, 'can only encourage disruptive forces and consequently hamper rather than promote progress.'

The harassed bosses of Europe are quick to spot a market where the labour force is properly disciplined. They expect, and get, the maximum support from their placemen in parliament.

Last summer, Lord Carrington, Minister of Defence and Chairman of the Conservative Party, took time off from a holiday in Corfu to pay official respects to the Colonels' dictatorship in Greece.

Sir Alec Douglas Home was recently in Spain, loving up to Franco.

The Spanish generals and the Greek colonels are now being challenged for leadership of the Terrorism League by the Turkish Brigadiers, while the parliamentarians of the new Europe struggle for a 'competitive position' in all three markets.



We have our methods . . . victim of a police 'investigation'.

country that jails union leaders

'Practially all the surviving leaders of the Bolshevik Party in 1917—Stalin excepted of course—were 'proved' to be 'counter-revolutionaries'

OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths

'LIFE is getting better, happier,' said Politburo member Sergei Kirov at the 17th Congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1934.

The congress was officially described as 'The Congress of the Victors', the victory being the successful completion of the First Five Year Plan and the progress of the second. The delegates, a few prominent 'capitulators' (former oppositionists) apart, were Stalinists to a man.

All the 'decisions' were unanimous. All the prominent speakers were greeted with 'prolonged applause' or 'prolonged and stormy applause', except General Secretary Stalin who was greeted with 'prolonged and tumultuous applause; all rise.'

What happened to the 'victors'? 'It was determined,' stated General Secretary Khrushchev in 1956, 'that of the 139 members and candidates of the Party's Central Committee who were elected at the 17th Congress, 98 people—70 per cent—were arrested and shot ...'

The same fate met not only the Central Committee members but also the majority of the delegates to the 17th Party Congress. Of the 1966 delegates with either voting or advisory rights, 1108 were arrested on charges of counter-revolutionary crimes, decidedly more than a majority.'

Life didn't get better for Kirov himself either. On 1 December 1934 a young man walked into his Leningrad office and shot him dead.

That shot signalled the start of the bloodbath in which the majority of the senior personnel, not only of the Party but also of the state bureaucracy, industry, the armed forces and even the secret police itself, were to perish.

Devastation

Why? Khrushchev's explanation is a very simple one. 'This was the result of the abuse of power by Stalin, who began to use mass terror against the Party cadres,' he said.

But how was this possible? In fact, although Khrushchev revealed many things about the great purges, neither he nor Brezhnev, who replaced him, could afford to destroy too much of the Stalinist myth. They were, and are, its beneficiaries.

The first Five Year Plan had, at terrible human cost, laid the foundations of an expanded modern industry in Russia and at the same time devastated agriculture. The living standards of the workers, many of them fresh from the terrorised countryside,

Stalin takes a bloodbath

were now far below the levels of the 1920s. The country was hungry. Bread, meat, sugar, tea, cooking oil and soap were all rationed and the rations were sometimes unobtainable.

The glaring contrast between the new industry and the wretched condition of the working people was becoming even more marked. 'I have seen the Dnieperstroy [the great hydro-electric scheme, showpiece of the 'first Plan],' wrote Victor Serge. 'It is truly a splendid work of human intelligence and strength. Beautiful as a toy, clean, resplendent, magnificent ...'

'A village has grown into a city of 70,000 ... only a minority of the workers live under tolerable conditions. The others live in squalid barracks in darkness, cold, filth and undernourishment. Their faces are peaked, expressing not discontent but utter despair.'

In the ruling bureaucracy, even in the hand-picked Politburo, pressure began to mount for a slowing down of the breakneck pace of industrialisation, for some concessions to the workers, for a modest degree of 'liberalisation'.

Kirov was identified with these dangerous thoughts. His murder, whether or not Stalin arranged it (and that is still uncertain), led immediately to widespread arrests, then to the spectacular Moscow 'show trials' of old Bolsheviks, and finally to wholesale shootings of Party and state bureaucrats at all levels from the Politburo down to the village chief.

The original bureaucracy, which had grown like a cancer in the Communist Party—which had itself been forced to substitute for the working class—was now physically

liquidated and replaced by new personnel 'uncontaminated' by past association with the revolutionary movement.

For Stalin was determined, come what may, that everything should be sacrificed to forced industrialisation. In his own words: 'The pace must not be slackened. On the contrary, we must quicken it as much as is within our powers and possibilities. ... To slacken the pace would mean to lag behind, and those who lag behind are beaten.'

'We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in 10 years. Either we do it or they crush us.' To maintain, let alone quicken the pace, was possible only on the basis of pure terror.

Failures

The show trials were the tip of the iceberg of the great terror, but they were also symbolic. Men like Zinoviev, president of the Communist International in Lenin's time, and Bukharin, described by Lenin as 'the favourite of the whole party', were driven to confess that they had, on the orders of the arch-fiend Trotsky, 'conspired' with Hitler and the Japanese emperor 'to restore capitalism in Russia'.

Practically all the surviving leaders of the Bolshevik Party in 1917—Stalin excepted of course—were 'proved' to be 'counter-revolutionaries' and indeed to have been so from the beginning. All the failures of the plans, the accidents, the hunger, the misery, was due to these old Bolsheviks.

'They blow up mines, they burn down workshops, they wreck trains, they mutilate and kill hundreds of our best people, sons of our country ... I am not the only accuser. I am joined in my accusation by the whole people. I accuse these heinous criminals who deserve only one punishment—death by shooting (shouts of "Shoot the mad dogs").'

The speaker was public prosecutor Vyshinsky, former right-wing Menshevik, opponent of the October Revolution and tool of Stalin. The old Bolsheviks were shot. Vyshinsky died in his bed, loaded with honours.

BOOKS

REVIEW

Biafra: Britain's betrayal

THE WORLD AND NIGERIA, by Suzanne Cronje, Sidgwick and Jackson, £5.95.

THIS BOOK tells the sordid tale of great and lesser power involvement with the Biafran War 1967-70. In the preface the writer states her support for the Biafran cause which came with her disillusionment with Nigerian unity in the wake of the massacres in the north of the country after the second coup of 1966.

Contrasting the regionalism and tribalism of Nigeria with the popular support for Biafran secession, she writes: 'What started as a struggle for survival, looked like becoming a successful experiment in nation-building.'

This said, the nationhood of Biafra is not pursued. Instead the book concentrates on a devastating attack on the lies and hypocrisy of the British Labour government of the time. Front benchers from both parties did not hesitate to back the Federal side. They intended to maintain Nigeria as an easily exploitable market. The oil wells had to be under trustworthy and tested command.

The USA, USSR and Britain all ignored the advice of their citizens based in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, who insisted that the secession was popular and not engineered by a handful of Ibo elitists. This led to a fatal assumption that a simple 'police action' would lead to a quick kill.

The biggest Labour lie concerned the amount of arms aid given to the Federal side. The Wilson government swore blind they supplied only 15 per cent of the total arms supply. Cronje shows that Britain supplied the vast majority of hardware and that the extent of Russia's contribution was exaggerated.

The supposedly impartial International Observer Team, sent to investigate Biafran complaints of genocide comes in for a neat hatchet job. Not only was it dominated by army men, who might have different ideas from the civilians on how the latter should be treated in war, but also by the British contingent, some of whom doubled as military advisors to the Federal Army and intelligence spies for the Foreign Office.

They reported no genocide, against the evidence of eyewitness reports by journalists on the bombing of markets and Red Cross posts and hospitals.

The chapter on Russian involvement relates the sorry history of the pro-Federal leaders of the militant Nigerian TUC (one of the five TUCs). The Kremlin, not without difficulties from some of their theorists who saw Biafra as a nation with the right to self-determination, came down on the Federal side.

The Nigerian TUC argued, in line with Lenin's conditions on support for self-determination, that the secession would not advance the workers' struggle but to side with the Federals would. With Russian influence on the government they thought socialism was on the agenda.

It was not to be. Sit-down strikers at Apapa were shot and killed by the army, strikes outlawed and the leader of the Communist Party put in jail. The president and the secretary were to follow him into jail after the war ended.

Unfortunately such insights into class movements lie in brief paragraphs.

At nearly £6 for 347 pages the price is ridiculous. Readers who can take being sickened by the cynicism shown to third world nations should order this book from the library.

WENDA CLENAGHAN

spontaneous creations of the organised workers in factories such as Fiat, where impressive factory committees have been formed.

The situation and general political climate is wide open for revolutionary socialists.

It is all the more depressing then to come across this little pamphlet by Lotta Continua, the revolutionary group that seems to have had more success than most in reaching the advanced workers in industrial areas like Milan, Turin and Venice.

The pamphlet (in fact a speech given to an anonymous convention in Buffalo in 1971) is an extraordinary, and, I'm afraid, not very potent cocktail. It is both naive and pretentious, balancing an extreme ultra-leftism towards the Communist Party and the unions (they are against both, or rather, see both as one and the same) with a vague populism.

The contradiction within this tract between talk of revolutionary bases (a la Mao) among the working class, and a rejection of work within the unions which are seen as 'revisionist' structures, could only happen in Italy, where a perverse kind of Maoism is married to anarchism and syndicalism. It is a pity, for Lotta Continua do in fact represent the saner element within Italian marxism, and this pamphlet for all its faults does stress the primary role of the working class and of the Southern question for Italian revolutionaries.

But dressing up a few rather fluid and innocently confused principles does not make for a programme or perspective. With the prospect of further massive unrest this autumn let us hope that the comrades in Italy will sort themselves out, before the police or the fascists do it for them.

MAL COLLINS

MILAN COCKTAIL

BENEATH CITY STREETS, by Peter Laurie, Penguin, 45p.

THIS is a book which should be read by socialists and active trade unionists. It is subtitled 'the fundamental function of civil defence ... is the preservation of defence is of special interest.'

The first part of the book deals with the possible effect of a nuclear attack on Britain. Peter Laurie's studies into the likely effects of H-bombs, MIRVs and biological weapons on England's green and pleasant land, he says, led him to inquire about the state's defence system—under the city streets.

Peter Laurie details some frightening facts about Britain's subterranean world.

London is riddled with tunnels, hundreds of feet below ground, linking government buildings. These tunnels are apparently capable of accommodating up to 44,000 bureaucrats at one time. The strange path of the Victoria Line underground, he says, is explained by the fact that it connects several important government buildings and Buckingham Palace.

The world-famous Post Office tower at Tottenham Court Road is far from being just a tourist attraction with its revolving restaurant. It is in fact the master tower in a whole network of such towers all providing a national ultra high frequency radio system.

Laurie, through his study of Post Office literature, has deduced the plan of a national emergency telephone system avoiding the major conurbations and linking defence bases. He also has an explanation for such edifices of modern capitalism as London's Centre Point, which he believes provides ventilation for really deep government bunkers.

But Laurie's enthusiasm for the subject lead him astray on several points. He believes that the Barbican and Horseferry Road buildings in London are connected with the state's defence system. He concludes this because of their geography and the fact that there was much industrial strife during their construction. He hints at Russian gold!

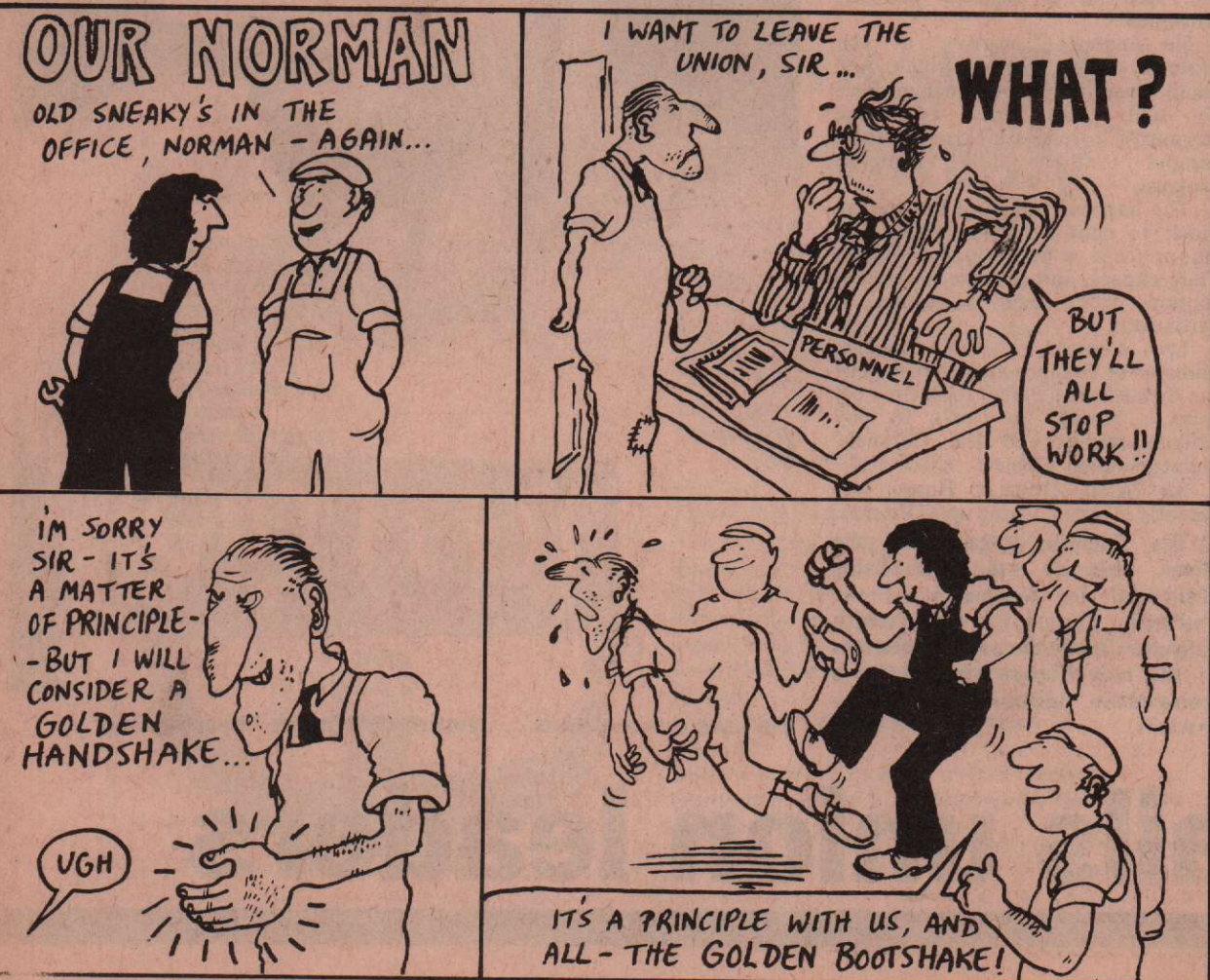
Basic to Laurie's approach is the belief that revolution in Britain is an impossibility. 'They' are too strong and well-organised.

He notes the October '68 Vietnam demo in this context. 'Anarchist' threats to seize the BBC, he says, would have been futile because immediately broadcasting had been interrupted another, secret, transmitter would have cut in, so frustrating the devilish long-hairs!

Clearly, Laurie's conception of revolution leaves out the working class. For him a revolution consists of a few desperate men, suitably attired seizing public buildings and so on for the state. No serious socialists would accept this caricature.

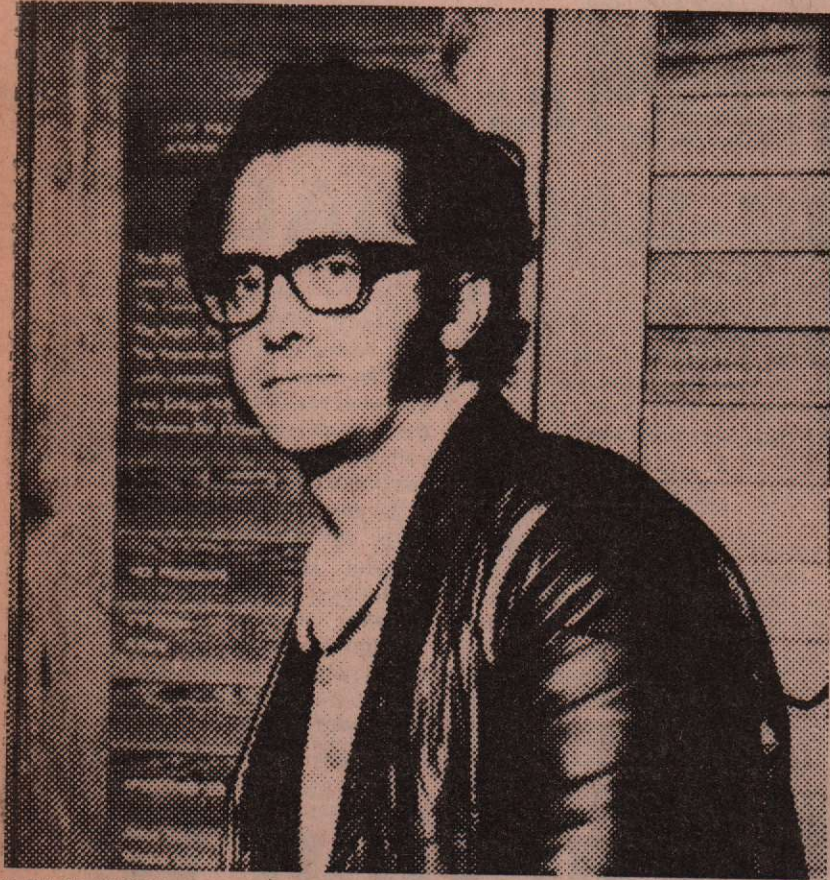
Nevertheless, Laurie's book raises some important points about the opposition and needs to be studied despite its misconceptions.

COLIN BEADLE



ADVENTURES IN THE GURU TRADE

Why do so many follow a man who preaches poverty
—to swell his own Swiss bank account?



ALEX GLASGOW: 'I should hate to have written We Shall Overcome'

I.S. BELONGS TO GLASGOW

ALEX GLASGOW, the Tyneside singer, song-writer and observer of homo sapiens, has a thing about human waste. That's why he's a socialist. People who are being wasted are conditioned not to hear, he says.

But he doesn't set himself up as a left-wing evangelist breezing in to pass on The Truth. Sure, his songs in Close the Coalhouse Door, the searing polemic on Durham pit life, and pieces on Braden's Week are political comment, but he doesn't see himself as important.

'I don't think there's any point in singing political songs', he admits. 'But it's better than just writing ordinary songs. You might crystallise an unexpressed thought in somebody's head and then you'll have done a little service.'

'I would have hated to have written We Shall Overcome. It's all things to all men—you can even imagine the National Front singing it. No, I'm not important—but if a song makes a point it's that much harder to lapse back into woolly thinking.'

His recurring themes are continuity, class and wasted lives: the soullessness of suburbia, fish-finger two-car land, the self-confident upper class, the high-rise flat neurosis where the architects never live, and left-wing intellectuals whose public school children end up as right-wing intellectuals on TV.

ABUSED

Glasgow has written a Tyneside song cycle, showing the pre-ordination of people—the middle-class riding with the hounds while the skinhead is cheering on the local soccer team, the retired miner, abused by capitalism and now no longer needed, killing time walking the grandbairns who in 70 years time will be doing the same thing.

He's a socialist because of his father. 'His first job at 12 was working in a lamp cabin on the pithead. He graduated to the coalface before capitalism found him a useful role—as a soldier in the First World War. But he was wounded after a day and brought home—as a war hero.'

'Capitalism then trained him as an upholsterer, but it couldn't find him work. So off he went to Australia and New Zealand, making butter—not bad for a former pit lad.'

'Unhappy, he came home and capitalism again made use of his skills—making shells in the Second World War. And then I began hearing for the first time the words "they're

laying men off". That was when I first started making conscious political capital.

'It seemed such a waste of a man's talents. Here he was, curious, interested, willing to work hard—all the solid working-class values, and he was ground into the ground.'

How does Alex Glasgow keep in touch? Talking to people on trains and kids. He has three and they always mean contact. People are also always popping in.

Influences? Surprisingly few, though the Victorian music hall, the Ragged Trousered Philanthropist and his own observations help shape his work. Call him a folk singer and he'll give you an old-fashioned look. He finds it's a get-out for intense intellectuals to bore people—and puts a lot of the blame on the Communist Party.

'They've built up this myth of workers' songs which somehow have to be treated with special reverence. So many commercial songs do the job a lot better. When historians come to discuss the 1950s they'll do a lot worse than look up the words of the old rock classic, Blue Suede Shoes, for how a young bloke lived.'

The International Socialists can thank Enoch Powell for recruiting Alex. 'I saw the Labour Party weren't up to it when Powell started gaining influence. I realised it's up to people like IS to confront the Powells. Because if it isn't Powell it'll be somebody else.'

Neil Hamilton

Preparing for Power J. J. MURPHY

IN this book first published in 1934, Murphy considers the role and success of the revolutionary left 50 years ago and its later isolation. The author was a key figure in this first shop stewards' movement.

Special offer to Socialist Worker readers:
FREE hardback copy of Victor Serge's novel BIRTH OF OUR
POWER with every copy of Murphy's book, £1 plus 21p postage.
PLUTO PRESS, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road,
London NW1 8LH.

Balyogeshwar Param Hans Satgurudev Shri Sant Ji Maharaj (God to his friends) makes a comfortable living out of the growing guru market. While the followers of his Divine Light Mission renounce their material goods in order to achieve enlightenment—the 'knowledge', the 14-year-old Maharaj Ji owns a £50,000 house in Highgate and a private jet plane.

For the moment he drives a simple Rolls-Royce, but this will be remedied soon when his disciples will present him with a gold-plated version ('after all, the Maharaj Ji must have the best').

The ruling class itself might learn a few things from the Maharaj Ji. For example his ability to change mystical hocus pocus into hard cash.

His very rhetoric smacks of Barclays Bank. In the latest edition of his glossy 'And it is Divine' (50 pages for eight bob) he likens the giving of divine knowledge to the writing of a cheque:

'There is money in the bank and I, the owner of the money, am also living. The cheque book is also with me. But until I write on that cheque book and sign it, the money cannot be given to you. The cheque book will have to be signed, and the amount written, and the name signed. Only then will it be possible for you to get that money.'

MIRACLE

More recently wealth seems to have just materialised about the Maharaj Ji in the most surprising places. When stopped at the US Customs and asked what was in his baggage the sage replied 'dirty laundry'. The ungodly officials, however, opened his bags and found £30,000 worth of jewellery. When questioned about this discrepancy in material reality, he was overheard to reply: 'It's a miracle! Some should be so lucky.'

Another religious charlatan, yes, but to label the Divine Light Mission as a simple 'milking operation' does not explain the hold he has on a claimed 8000 followers in this country alone.

Why is it that such a sizeable section of disenchanted youth latch on to the numerous mystical cults which have sprung up over the past five years: the Maharishi Yoga, Hare Krishna, Jesus Freaks, Flying Saucer cults, and Zen Buddhism? Why are people so desperate for meaning that they will hinge their lives around any axis however preposterous its beliefs.

First of all, let's examine what exactly they get up to.

Divine Light starts from the



THE MAHARAJ JI: £50,000 house and a private plane

assumption that everyone is trying to find some meaning in life. Unfortunately, they say, people try to make sense of their lives through the accumulation of material goods and the satisfaction of their physical senses—be it through eating, drinking, smoking dope, or watching television. All this material consumption is, for Divine Light adherents, futile—for true peace can only be found spiritually, through receiving 'the knowledge'.

What you must do is renounce all sensual pleasures, meat, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sex (unless you're reproducing), consumer goods—the lot. You must rid yourself of anything that will distract you from seeing 'the light'.

This is achieved by instruction in what appear to be fairly standard yoga techniques, many, incidentally, which could be picked up without cost by a quick glance through the Eastern Mysticism section in the local library. But that would be free, and the Divine Light way a string of donations speed from every temple to the incarnation of God on Earth, the Maharaj Ji.

God-like wisdom would seem to be coupled with shrewd business sense, for the money is prudently placed in a secret Swiss bank account in order to avoid rendering into Caesar.

SECRET

The effect of 'the knowledge' on the new recruit is apparently 'difficult to understand if you haven't experienced it', but is perhaps captured by the phrase 'blissed out'. As one ex-druggie put it: 'Drugs: all they did was take you horizontally. Now this knowledge is different. This is a vertical high with no bring-down.'

But it does more than make you feel good. The 'knowledge' is also the clue to all man's problems on Earth. For wars in Bangladesh and Vietnam are a product of the pursuit of material ends and blissed-out people don't really need any of this. One wonders what the Vietnamese would make of the Maharaj.

The secret of the message's appeal lies in the class background of its members. Middle-class youth in particular have grown up since the war in a sheltered world where affluence is taken for granted. They can all too easily reject materialism, having never experienced poverty they readily despise those who struggle to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

Divine Light, and other groups of this kind, are a product of the desperation and futility of this class. Desperation because middle-class values cannot provide any meaning to their lives and understanding of the world around them. Futility because their isolation from the working class and their own native individualism renders them powerless to change a world they find meaningless.

The 'underground', the 'counter-culture' which such youth evolved as a 'solution' to the moral bankruptcy of their parents, opened up more problems than it solved. The 'liberated' sexuality, the path to meaning through heavy drug use failed abysmally.

The result is a series of kids whose heads have been so messed up that groups like Divine Light seem a safe sanctuary.

Their sense of futility and of powerlessness to change a world which they scarcely understand, was transformed into a demand for a change within the individual self. Change yourself and the world leaders, the bosses and society itself will become a paradise.

All this is a new twist to an old story: 'committed' Christians, Moral Rearmament, the Festival of Light all preach the same message. The Maharaj Ji, the little man in the mohair suit, is just an exotic variation, packed with Eastern promise perhaps, but in the end a manufacturer of illusions, a plump messiah driving a gold-plated Rolls-Royce.

Nick Van Zanten
and Jock Young

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
Dhcaster
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
Houslow
Ilford

Kilburn

Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton

North Herts

Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
Tottenham
Walthamstow

Wandsworth

Wattford
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



UNION OFFICIAL HELPS BOSSES' GO-BACK BALLOT

MR L HANCOCK, the Scunthorpe area official of the Electricians' Union, faced an unusual task when he came back to work after Christmas.

He had to count the votes in a secret ballot organised by a strike-bound firm of electrical sub-contractors on the new British Steel Corporation basic oxygen plant at Anchor. Special voting slips on company-headed notepaper asked workers to vote for or against a return to normal working.

Following a ban on overtime, electrical and mechanical engineers Watson and Norie made several

workers redundant when they refused to return to 'normal working'—up to 80 hours a week—in the rush to get the plant completed. Their mates then went on strike until they were reinstated.

Belief

Unable to force a return to work by more orthodox methods, the firm then turned to organising a secret ballot 'so that the true wishes of the majority can be shown'.

In a letter to all employees dated 22 December, the firm recorded its belief that 'a majority have been

forced by "show of hands" into "support" which is really against their wishes and better judgement.'

'The votes will be counted and the result certified by Mr L Hancock, the area official of your union, and you will be informed of the result next week,' the letter continued.

So quite clearly the EPTU supports the employers in this disgraceful assault on the elected authority of stewards and the democracy of mass meetings. It is thought however that few if any ballot papers were actually returned for Mr Hancock to count on behalf of the employers.

Uncivil reaction to the Tories' wage freeze

by Mike McGrath, CPSA
THE national press is reporting an unprecedented event: Civil servants are threatening to strike over their frozen pay negotiations.

The Civil and Public Services Association, the 190,000 strong clerks' union, is the best of a bad bunch among the civil service unions which include CPSA, Civil Service Union, First Division Association and Institute of Professional Civil Servants.

Pay negotiations in the civil service are unique and are designed to prevent open conflict developing within the state machinery. As The Times said in an editorial on 2 January, 'if they [civil servants] do not back up the state, who will?'

Joint consultative committees exist at every level. These are known as Whitley Councils on which all the staff sit—usually in uneasy alliance. The staff range from the most senior to the very junior and they face a management on the other side of the table, many of whom belong to the same union.

Time-servers

Pay awards are made on the basis of 'fair' comparisons with similar work outside the civil service. In the last pay freeze period under the Labour government, civil servants were forced to eat the bitter fruits of this way of negotiating. On 1 January 1966 they received 3 per cent but then nothing further until 1 January 1968 when 7 per cent was 'won'.

There are three consequences of this policy.

First, we are directly dependent upon the increases of other workers' wages. Second, the lack of struggle leads to softness and the ability of time-servers to control and lead the union.

Third, even with 'fair' comparisons, our pay drops further and further behind other white-collar sectors.

At present a struggle is developing in the union: On the one hand the right-wing bureaucracy that has controlled the union since 1951 when it wrestled power from the Communist Party, on the other, the left bureaucracy consisting of an assortment of left Labour Party supporters.

Frustrated

Neither group can or has the desire to actively mobilise the membership. In fact, two conferences ago the 'left' proposed and won acceptance for a resolution banning all unofficial groupings. Nominally, this was aimed at the right who weren't affected by it, but it has inhibited the left, who in the nature of things wish to operate openly.

The membership itself is in a

state of great flux. The Ministry of Defence group provides the solid support for the right, but the rest of the membership, especially the young, are completely frustrated as they see their wages eroded further and further. The average gross pay is only £24.

They look for a lead but find none. This is perhaps peculiar to white-collar unions. Most industrial unions have a left bureaucracy through which dissent in the union is channelled.

In our unions the only organised left is the revolutionary left. As a result, when a frustrated rank and file starts to move, it does so rapidly. This can be seen most clearly in the present wage freeze situation.

We were due for a two-yearly award under Pay Research rules on 1 January 1973 and the CPSA national executive is blowing hot and

cold over it being frozen. They say they would agree to a 'fair' incomes policy on one hand but are currently organising regional rallies, worktime protest meetings and are threatening strike action.

With the protest meetings called on 10 January and a series of rallies beginning with London on 16 January, the movement could well snowball but only on two conditions.

1. The CPSA rank and file has to organise to fight and pressure the NEC to call for official strike action for the full award, backdated to 1 January 1973.

2. Active unity has to be built at all levels with other public sector unions.

This year will see great changes, not only within the CPSA but all other unions in response to the government's vicious clampdown on wages. We must be in there fighting to continually advance the struggle.

AUEW leader under attack — for speaking to members

DON'T talk to rank and file workers—that's the warning to national officials of the engineering union from Edinburgh District Secretary Jack Keddie.

Keddie, hard-line right winger of the old Bill Carron school, is complaining to the executive of the AUEW about the union's assistant general secretary Ken Brett. Brett's 'crime', according to Keddie, is that he spoke at a meeting of an 'unofficial body'—the Edinburgh Engineering Workers' Discussion Group—without first telling Keddie or his committee.

In a letter to all local shop stewards, Keddie warns that the discussion group has no official standing and that as a result of local press publicity following Ken Brett's meeting some stewards who were present 'found themselves in difficulty with their management'.

Keddie's opposition to 'unofficial bodies' concerns only left-wing groups. In the late 1960s he was himself a member of a notorious right-

wing and unofficial body, the employer-sponsored Edinburgh Productivity Association that pumped out propaganda in favour of productivity bargaining, one of the main factors behind rising unemployment in recent years.

At Keddie's insistence, the Edinburgh District Committee of the AUEW has called on the union to change its policy on the Industrial Relations Act and recognise the Industrial Relations Court. Keddie argues that the union has to protect its funds.

But in other areas, Keddie is not so adept at safeguarding the members' money. He figured in the sale last year of the union's Blenheim Room head office to the local anti-union Orange Order. The property was valued at £8000 but all Keddie could get from the Protestant fanatics was £4500.

And now, to give the right air to the new AUEW office in Edinburgh plans are in hand to have the local officials' portraits painted to adorn the walls.



Bernadette: all out on 28 January

'REMEMBER THE DERRY DEAD'

SUNDAY 28 January 1973 will be the anniversary of Derry's Bloody Sunday.

On 30 January last year, British para-commandos murdered 13 peaceful demonstrators during an attack on a mass civil rights procession in Derry.

The murder of this 13 and of all those victims of the British Crown Forces who have died before or since, is part of a calculated policy of the British government to destroy the combativity and confidence of the nationalist population in the North of Ireland. Specifically, it was a last desperate attempt to shore up the corrupt Tory-Unionist regime at Stormont.

It failed. Stormont has been suspended.

But British aggression in Ireland continues. Since the abolition of Stormont, the British propaganda service has attempted to give the impression to the world that Britain is playing the role of arbitrator between two warring Irish tribes. Whitelaw, the British Gauleiter, is depicted as a gentle and impartial referee.

The reality is very different. The essential conflict in Ireland is between the Irish people and British imperialism, supported by native reaction. The specific form it takes is an attempt by Britain to suppress the struggle of the nationalist population, and to crush its vanguard, the Irish Republican Army.

What this means is the continuation of concentration camps, the imprisonment and torture of thousands of political prisoners, daily harassment and mass intimidation of the total Catholic population—highlighted by the situation in West Belfast, where over half of the total male population has been arrested, questioned, or had their homes raided by the British Army.

When people in this area talk of the British Army of Occupation, it is no idle slogan. It is the literal truth. Andersonstown today is as brutally and effectively occupied as Warsaw was under the Nazis.

But the people have not been cowed. By demonstrations, by armed struggle, by rent and rates strikes, they display their continued combativity. They must not fight alone. The international anti-imperialist movement must rally to the defence of the heroic people of Ireland.

The weekend of 27-28 January 1973 provides an opportunity for a world-wide weekend of activity to focus world attention on this struggle. I appeal to all revolutionary groups, to the student movement and to the workers' movement throughout the world to organise on that weekend in every major city in Europe, America, Australia, Asia and Africa, demonstrations, protest meetings, pickets and other activities, to demand the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, self determination for the Irish people, the ending of internment and release of all Irish political prisoners, and to show solidarity with those socialist and republican forces struggling against British imperialism in Ireland.—BERNADETTE DEVLIN, MP, c/o Anti-Internment League,

JOHN MacLEAN YEAR

THIRTY November this year will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of John MacLean, the courageous and beloved revolutionary, who was at the centre of the struggles on Red Clydeside during and after the First World War. He died in 1923, his health broken by his experiences in prison and his intense political work.

But unless some steps are taken this anniversary will go almost unmarked. MacLean's contribution to the working-class movement and the political ideas for which he stood have been almost forgotten.

I would like to appeal for support from all those in England and Wales who are interested in some activity to mark the 50th anniversary of MacLean's death. Let 1973 be 'John MacLean Memorial Year'. There should be a series of activities to commemorate his work, to promote the publication of his writings, and to promote the broadest possible discussion about the man and his ideas.

Anyone interested should write to me at the address below. In Scotland they should write to Nan Milton, Atholl Cottage, Westfield nr. Bathgate, West Lothian.—BOB PURDIE, 81 Park Avenue North, London N8.



Flashback to Bloody Sunday: marchers flee from the troops' barrage of shots

LETTERS

London WC1. (Details of the London march on 28 January will appear in Socialist Worker.)

Bureaucracy

IN 'Out of Your Mind' (23 December), Duncan Hallas excellently portrays the weakness of the working class in Russia following the civil war and how this led to the rise of Stalin. But he neglects to describe the other factors at work and the precise mechanism by which the ascendancy of Stalin and the bureaucracy was achieved.

The Bolsheviks themselves were well aware of the dangers of bureaucracy both before the revolution and in the years immediately following it. Indeed it has always been one of the major themes of marxist thought.

In The State and Revolution, written a couple of months before the October 1917 revolution in Russia, Lenin writes that when the workers have smashed the old bureaucratic apparatus they must replace it by a new, non-bureaucratic system. He then goes on to suggest the measures necessary to prevent the transformation of the servants of society into its masters, into bureaucrats.

Firstly all administrative posts must be filled by election and the occupants subject to recall at any time. Secondly the pay of all officials should not be greater than that of a worker. These two measures are taken by Lenin from Engels' observations on the Paris Commune of 1871, but significantly Lenin contributes a third—all shall be bureaucrats for a time, so that nobody will become a bureaucrat.

Quite clearly Lenin is arguing for some kind of rotation of functions, for the opportunity for all to administer for a time. No one will become a bureaucrat because no one will be permitted to occupy an administrative position for long enough.

With the experience of the revolution behind them the Bolsheviks were face to face with the problem. 'What is now the general task of our party?' asked Bukharin and Preobrazhensky in The ABC of Communism, an educational handbook written two years after the revolution, 'The task is this, to replace the old officialdom by the masses themselves.'

The whole working population should administer, in some occupations for brief spells, in others for long spells. Four obstacles were apparent:

1. The general backwardness of the urban and rural population.
2. The lack of experience in administration, even in the best comrades.

3. Elitist technical experts (called 'bourgeois specialists' by Bukharin and Preobrazhensky) who set a bad example.

4. The civil war—the most advanced workers were in the army.

These obstacles tended to promote the re-introduction of bureaucracy into the Soviet system. To avoid this danger several measures were essential. First, every member of the soviet must play some definite part in the work of administration.

Second there must be continuous rotation of functions. Every comrade must, after a definite time, change over from one function to another. As soon as he has learnt the routine of one office he must change to another, otherwise he will become a routine official of the old type.

As the deadening influence of Stalinism descended on the international communist movement these ideas were forgotten. They urgently need to be revived and extended, and their significance for our revolutionary practice at the present time recognised.

—BOB WOOD, London W7.

Phone strike: what union officials really did

THE final paragraph of your report of the Garrick Telephone Strike (6 January) was not strictly accurate. UPW General Secretary Tom Jackson did not tell Ian Campbell and myself to get the men back to work.

He asked what the men's demands were and what the committee intended to do. He was told of the demand for an inquiry and also informed that the branch committee would probably call a branch-wide strike that evening.

He did not wield the union big stick but instead contacted regional management to set up an inquiry to begin the next day, on condition that the men returned to work. He also asked former union full-time official Willie Failes, a man widely respected throughout the union's rank and file, to lead the union side of the inquiry.

This was accepted by an emergency meeting of the branch committee, a meeting of the Garrick strikers and finally, since this was a decision that affected the whole branch, we called a mass meeting during working hours to ratify the agreement and show to management that the branch as a whole was behind the Garrick men. Several hundred UPW members attended the meeting and voted overwhelmingly their support.

The final act took place the next day when it was agreed that there would be no victimisation of any strikers and that all members who had left work for the Sunday and Monday meetings would be paid for time they were absent. The inquiry is at present in progress.

As you say elsewhere in the paper about not ignoring national organisations, this is an occasion when a local struggle has received full backing from its national leaders.—JOHN HAYLETT, chairman, UPW London Overseas Telephones No 2 branch.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive by first post Monday. They should be written or typed on one side of the page only. Letters may be cut for space reasons.

Press puts the cork on the Distillers campaign

THE DISTILLERS Company have lately become an increasingly obvious festering wound on the body of British capitalism and threats of mass action have squeezed some of the puss out of it.

Now the press is anxious to staunch the flow and hastily restore to big business some semblance of respectability.

The relief in Fleet Street when the company's £20 million offer of hush money was made to the thalidomide victims was obvious. Led by the heavy-circulation quartet—the Sun, Mail, Mirror and Express—the national papers sought eagerly to create the impression that the affair was virtually over and the unpleasantness forgotten.

RELIEF AS AGONISING BATTLE ENDS, was the Mail's Page One comment headline. 'The long fight . . . seemed to be over last night,' began the Express story. 'A triumph for the brave parents,' said the Sun, with a tone of finality. HOPES RISE FOR A DEAL, was one of the Mirror headlines.

Contrast

Fleet Street wants the story wrapped up and Distillers off the hook. Distillers are not the kind of fish that our national dailies like to fry.

They represent the essence of the society that Fleet Street serves and understands. If the press were to savage Distillers it would be tantamount to cannibalism.

Contrast the press treatment of Distillers to that of the AUEW. The company engaged in a ruthless legal

Another important aspect about the forecast of Bowater is the way it highlights the need for the merged company to buy up UK profit. Only £4.7 millions is her expected to be available out of 4th pre-tax profit of £13.2 millions and while this includes an usually known amount for minority interests, the ruling UK tax rate is 40 per cent.

So expect an important UK acquisition before the end of this year. No one is giving any aid clues as to what sectors of industry will diversify into an interest which includes a company that has a million will profit in France. French companies would have to be soft like the document giving the details of the merger. Any of the health workers at Malvern, the chairman of the AUEW, best is spread across several financial items which are accounted for in the business. Among differently in the two countries, Hall's stated £18 million to present two sets of consolidated accounts. Thus last year the consolidated net profits were £78.27 millions for the French and only £72.7 millions 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 of the company. In the proposed merger, the proposed directors' remuneration is included in the proposed profit in France. French companies do not, in fact, pay these amounts. About £1.5 million is expected to be spread across several items which are accounted for in the business. Among differently in the two countries, Hall's stated £18 million.

pursuit of Mr David Mason, who has fought them persistently over their meagre compensation terms. They were not satisfied in having produced the filth which half-destroyed his daughter before she was even born; they then tried to have her taken from her father's care so that they could come to a cheap settlement with less demanding parents.

Not one daily paper has expressed its disgust at this bullying by a massive institution against an individual who is simply seeking to assert his legal rights.

But when workers defend themselves against the Goads of this world they are vilified as 'shameful bullies' and 'shop-floor rowdies'.

On the day before the 'final offer' the Mirror published a confused leader, posturing as outspoken comment. It managed to demand in the same breath that Distillers should pay up, generously and promptly. AND that the public should also foot the bill.

Because the company peddled

their disgusting drug through the National Health Service, the Mirror argued, they should get public relief—either through tax concessions 'or from public funds'.

Either way the public pays, though the Mirror obviously does not want its readers to appreciate too well that tax relief for Distillers is the equivalent of a massive hand-out filched from the pockets of workers and other 'freeze' victims.

The Mirror also appears to believe that it is fair trading for capitalist enterprises to pocket the profits from their dealings, but that public funds should be used to underwrite their disasters.

Dangerous

The simple answer escaped the Mirror. Public funds SHOULD pay for the mistakes of the highly profitable drug industry—AFTER it has been nationalised.

Thousands of normally easy-going people were on the verge of making a startling discovery—that mass action could bring even the biggest company to heel. That is a dangerous drug in the hands of the public and could be as devastating in its effects on industry as thalidomide is to unborn children.

Small wonder that the national press is so keen to view the 'final offer' as a certain settlement and divert public attention from recognising this simple truth.

RON KNOWLES

Crunch is coming for Clay Cross

CLAY CROSS:—The confrontation between Clay Cross Council and the Housing Finance Act went a stage further last week when the district auditor returned to inquire into the rent arrears of £7985 which have built up since 1 October.

The auditor revealed that the government would take action within two weeks about Clay Cross's refusal to implement.

Council leader David Skinner says that if the government surcharges and disqualifies the councillors, they have 22 people to take their place. If the government sends in housing commissioners the councillors will lead the tenants on a rent and rates strike.

It seems certain now that the Tories will be forced to send in housing commissioners at Clay Cross and Conisborough, in Yorkshire, which is also still holding out.

Meanwhile several Labour councillors are proving reluctant to bring in the second phase of the Housing Finance Act, in particular the rent increases due in April.

In HARLOW the council has thrown out a recommendation that the rents be put up by 50p in April. Councillor Tom Topley said: 'Councillors must go out and build a united campaign of tenants and trade unionists to defeat the Act.'

The all-Labour council voted by 20 votes to 11 to throw out the rent rises.

WOLVERHAMPTON was Tory-controlled last April when the Act was implemented, but now with a Labour majority of one, it is holding out against raising the rents again.

Strike at university

COVENTRY:—Transport Union members struck on Monday for a £2.40 wage increase granted to council workers. Their wages are traditionally tied to Coventry Council rates, but the university announced that it would not pay the increase.

CUBITTS DEMAND AN EXTRA MILLION

CHELSEA, London:—One crucial fact underlies the uninterrupted industrial struggle being fought out on the huge World's End council housing site: main contractor Holland, Hannen and Cubitt is not going to make any profit, juicy or otherwise, and so has no objection to being way behind schedule.

Indeed stoppages are a positive advantage to the firm's battle to extract a massive £1 million 'ex gratia' payment from Kensington and Chelsea Council to finish the job.

For 18 out of the past 30 weeks alone, the site has been partially or completely shut down by industrial disputes due to management provocation. On Monday the latest official strike began after the sacking of five men—four of them union representatives—for supposed low productivity.

The following day a return to work was agreed for Wednesday but trade unionists expect more disputes will follow. Last week essential equipment was removed from the site—tower cranes, Acrow supports, cement mixing and batching plant and light boxes for running power into the tower blocks.

Cubitts say this is part of moves to reorganise the scale and method of the job. It had nothing to do with preparation for prolonged industrial disputes or with moves to get more money from the council. They also say they have no hand in the repeated dismissals and victimisation which led to the disputes. These are purely the responsibility of the bricklaying sub-contractor, Mark Prince, say Cubitts.

Cubitts, which has long complained of financial difficulties on the contract, has only just managed to submit a detailed claim for an extra £1 million to finish the job.

World's End is running two years behind schedule. It was originally due for completion in 1974. At the present rate of work, it will not be finished until 1979.



The generosity of Lord Carrington, Minister of Defence and chairman of the Tory Party, knows no bounds. Last week he gave away his daughter Virginia to Cubitts, the building giants. She and her father are seen above arriving at the Register Office for her wedding to Lord Ashcombe, Cubitt's chairman.

by SW Reporter

For the past six months only one eighth of the required number of bricklayers have been employed. It cannot be said that this is solely the responsibility of the sub-contractor.

Cubitts won the contract to build World's End in October 1969 at an agreed price of £5.6 million. At that time competition for work in the house-building sector of the construction industry was fantastically intensive. The bid price for World's End was tight.

But the philosophy of the building industry was to get on a job and then do something to jack the price up.

STRATEGY

Difficulties emerged right from the start on the brickwork part of the scheme. The facings on the seven tower blocks are complex decorative brick panels. On this sort of scheme men cannot produce fast enough on piecework both to earn a decent wage and meet the quality standards enforced by the council.

Cubitts could have got round many of the difficulties by insisting that bricklayers be paid a high guaranteed wage. They did not, probably because this would have shot a hole through the building employers'

strategy of low basic wages, piecework and the lump, which they use to keep union organisation in check.

It was clear that work was falling way behind hand as early as May 1971. A new crop of Labour councillors got on to the council then and started to raise the matter of delays with the Tory majority. In autumn 1971 Cubitts wrote to the Town Clerk stating that the firm was in financial difficulties on the site and that they were thinking 'ex gratia' payments might be required.

The matter has been discussed at almost every housing committee meeting of the council since.

At these meetings even the Tory committee chairman, Councillor Douglas Eaton, has intimated his belief that most of the strikes on the job have been provoked by the employers, to help Cubitts win extra payments from the council, or even to force the council to fling the firm off the job.

The Labour minority on the council firmly endorses this view. Councillor David Lewis, deputy Labour spokesman on housing, told Socialist Worker he believed the claim for extra payments was just a device and that Cubitts really just wanted to get out of their obligations.

'The conduct of this firm with regard to this contract has been such that they ought not to be given another single public contract throughout the length and breadth of the country,' he said.

At last Thursday's meeting of the housing committee some members of the Labour minority had intended to move for the firm to be flung off the job. But it was

revealed that the council has taken legal advice from a Queens' Counsel, who said the council should handle the matter delicately.

He said Cubitts had a good legal case for a massive High Court compensation claim on the basis of 'force majeure'. The firm could argue that the whole affair was due to forces beyond their control, a reference to industrial disputes.

GAME

The News of the World 'Strife-makers' series—which contained a lot of guff about World's End—could even be advanced as evidence, he said. And the firm could show that all the sackings and victimisation which started these struggles were initiated by a sub-contractor, not by Cubitts. So too with the moving of machinery off the site.

So the building workers of World's End are stuck as pawns in a complex financial and legal game between Cubitts and the council.

John Fontaine, the bricklayers' steward, said: 'The only thing that Cubitts are any good at is profitable intrigue. We have seen a glimpse of the real face of this industry with the Poulson scandals, the exposures of the industrial deaths at the British Steel Anchor site—all this in the pursuit of profit. The only way we will finally get construction sorted out is when it is taken out of the hands of the profit-seekers and run and owned by working people.'

'In the short term we have to fight to defend and extend our organisation, to show that we will not be the fall guys for complex intrigues that have nothing to do with building desperately needed houses and everything to do with legalised robbery and exploitation.'

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.

IS MEETINGS

LONDON SOCIALIST WORKER ORGANISERS meeting: Friday 26 January, 7-8.30pm, at 6 Cottons Gardens, E2. All organisers must attend or send a deputy.

CONFERENCE for IS members involved in Irish work: Saturday 27 January. Contact Mike Heym, 28 Manor Road, London N16 (phone 01-802 2961) for details.

COLINDALE IS public meeting: Fight the Industrial Relations Act. Thursday 18 January, 8pm, The Bald-faced Stag pub, Edgware Road, Burnt Oak. All welcome.

BURNLEY IS public meeting: Fight the Tories, Build the Revolutionary Party. Speaker Tony Cliff, Monday 22 Jan, 8pm, Burnley Miners Club, Plumbe Street, Entertainment by General Will Theatre Group.

CARDIFF IS public meeting: Women and the Struggle for Socialism. Speaker Jill Branston, Monday 15 January, 8pm, Blue Anchor pub, St Mary's Street, Cardiff.

ILFORD AND DAGENHAM IS meetings: Ian Birchall on Stalinism and the Communist Party, Thursday 11 January, and John Palmer on the Common Market, Thursday 18 January. Both meetings at 8pm at St Chad's Community Centre, Japan Road, Chadwell Heath (near Fine Fare). Buses 86, 193 and 62.

WANDSWORTH/MERTON IS public meeting: TONY CLIFF on The Unions, the Law and the Freeze 8pm, Thursday 18 January Battersea Library, Lavender Hill, near Clapham Junction Station

HARLESDEN IS Mike Caffoor and Steve Marks: WHY POWELL IS WRONG Thursday 18 January, 8pm Willesden Junction Hotel, Station Road, NW10

ENFIELD BRANCH SOCIAL Music, drink (until 12), food and!!! at The Falcon, South Street, Ponders End (279 bus) Saturday 13 January, 7.30pm

OTHER MEETINGS

EALING Rank and File: Tony Clark on Teachers and the Freeze. Monday 15 Jan, 7.30pm, Three Pigeons, High Street, Ealing W5. Public Sector Rank and File welcome.

PUBLIC MEETING: Class Struggle and the Common Market. Speaker Sam Mauger. Discussion. Thursday 25 January, 7.45pm, St Pancras Library, 100 Euston Road, London NW1. Organised by the London group of the Communist Federation of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES presents: Eileen Atkins in TRIALS AND ERRORS, a dramatic anthology on the theme of crime and punishment. The Mermaid Theatre, Blackfriars, London EC4, on Sunday 28 January at 8pm. Tickets £3, £1.50 and 75p, available at the box office, or phone 01-248 7656. All proceeds to NCCL.

DEMONSTRATION in solidarity with Merthyr Tydfil Council, at present being audited under the Unfair Rents Act. March on Saturday 13 January, 2pm, starts opposite the police station, Merthyr town centre. All who can attend should do so.

RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHER—Sunday 14 January, 7pm, at The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London—Salaries and the Freeze/Ideology in Education.

NOTICES

COMRADE wants room in flat/house, London area. Phone 01-444 0585.

OLD TROTSKYIST PAMPHLETS: Thanks to the generous gift of an ex-member of the WIL, we have a small supply of these pamphlets dating from World War Two. They are for sale, all proceeds to the printshop fund. North Africa Tangle, 50p; The Revolution in India, 20p; The Red Army, 10p; Defend the Soviet Union, 10p; Socialism through Victory?, 15p; Searchlight on the Duchess of Atholl, 15p. A very limited number of complete sets including DeLeonite and Loves'night pamphlets of the period, £1 each. All prices include postage. Order (with cash) to Edinburgh IS, 20 Stanley Road, Edinburgh.

WOMENS VOICE: Could all branches send in the money for the last issue and place orders for the next now please. Issue no 4 will be out shortly. All correspondence in future to Womens Voice, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION of a Russian protest leaflet. 'It is not towards Communism that we are going... Our system is State Capitalism.' January Socialist Standard. 7½p (including postage), stamps accepted. Dept SW, The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4.

OWN ROOM available to female comrade (pref. student) in family house West London area. Meals provided. £7.75pw (incl heating). Please write Box B, Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL: The following back copies are still available, but some only in limited numbers: 33, 34, 37, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52. 20p per copy, including postage. Money with orders please to: IS Journal, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

WHEN writing to Socialist Worker please mark envelopes clearly either EDITORIAL or BUSINESS.



British Oxygen men fight for their jobs

NORTH LONDON:—British Oxygen workers in Edmonton and Tottenham are stepping up their fight to save their jobs.

The company plans to close its local factories and move the work to Skelmersdale in Lancashire, hoping to sell the big Edmonton plant for around £10 million, and get a bonus of government grants for opening a new factory in a development area.

Employment prospects for those made redundant will be bleak. Industrial jobs in the area are due to be cut back by 18,000 by 1976—by half.

Workers at Edmonton have been opposing the closure attempt with a go-slow and have stopped the movement of machines out of the factory. Last week they went

on a 300-strong protest march, and Labour MPs have promised to 'help' by asking parliamentary questions and seeing top management.

But many workers in Edmonton are beginning to see through the speechifying and have noted the successes of workers in Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, Fisher Bendix and Briant Colour—successes which resulted from the workers themselves taking action to defend their jobs.

At the South Tottenham plant workers are more complacent and still hope the management can be persuaded to save their jobs. But once the big Edmonton plant has been sold off, there is little chance of the smaller Tottenham factory being left alone. Once again, militant action to prevent the closure is the only answer.

Students still on rent strike

STUDENTS at about half-a-dozen colleges have been on rent strike since October, refusing to pay rent to the college authorities.

The strikes began in protest at the inadequacy of the student grant, which allows only £240-a-year to cover board and lodging, and at the rent increases at the start of the academic year.

At 75 per cent of the colleges, rent is other than the £240 allowed. At Surrey, rents discovered that the university is nearly £100,000 on the running in 1970-71. The rent campaign clearly needed to be directed against government, but the National Union of Students, with a 'left-wing' leadership

to give any lead. Instead of calling for action from all colleges and leading a national campaign, it only half-heartedly supported the local rent strikes.

At the national conference in November, when several colleges were calling for a national campaign, the executive still opposed taking the lead in any sort of struggle—claiming that a national campaign might not be in the best interests of unity of the student movement. It had not occurred to them that a successful bit of 'student-bashing' by the Tories might not be too good for unity either.

A motion on grants was passed at the conference, calling for national rent action and mandating the executive to co-ordinate the campaign. But no such lead is being given.

VESTHEY COURT THREAT COULD FORCE DOCKERS' UNION CLOSURE

THE giant Vestey organisation will launch proceedings before the National Industrial Relations Court on Thursday which could lead to the first state-enforced shut-down of a trade union under the Industrial Relations Act.

The disguised Vestey subsidiary Midland Cold Storage, in East London, has named the Transport and General Workers Union and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers in an action for compensation for loss of trade resulting from unfair industrial practices.

by Laurie Flynn

The Midland cold store has been picketed constantly for the past eight months by London dockers in an endeavour to bring the work back inside the dock labour scheme. Virtually all trade has been halted and the Vestey's are claiming trade worth £250,000 has been lost.

The TGWU is certain to make an appearance before the NIRC to answer the charges. This union's defence will involve a renewed disavowal of the picketing as unofficial and something that the TGWU leadership has done everything in its power to bring to an end. This might well be

accepted by the court and the TGWU would get off the hook and would not be ordered to pay damages to the Vestey's.

But the NASD is in an entirely different situation. To its credit, the union has never disowned the activities of the pickets at the Midland cold store. Both times that dockers have struck against the actual or threatened imprisonment of their brothers the NASD has made the strikes official.

The chances of the Vestey's winning an order for compensation are therefore fairly high.

Like the engineering union, the NASD is committed to boycott the National Industrial Relations Court by a previous decision of its executive. Though the pressure to reverse this decision is most certainly on it is thought that the union will maintain its stance of non-co-operation. The union could also therefore face hefty fines for contempt of court.

One small problem stands between the state imposing the fines and actually collecting them. The NASD is a tiny union which operates from three back rooms in London's Poplar district. It has no merchant bank account that can be raided—or even an ordinary bank account of any substance. It is in fact almost broke.

Dickie Smith, one of the union's two full-time 'outside' officials, has recently had to go back to work as a docker because the NASD could no longer afford to pay him.

CONTEMPT

The pay of the remaining 'outside' official, Ron Webb, and the acting general secretary, Les Newman, are very low by comparison with those paid by any other union.

Clearly any financial penalty against the union will mean that its very survival is called in question. The NIRC may in any case order a foreclosure on the entire assets of the union to meet any contempt fines or orders for compensation.

Thursday's session at the NIRC is only the preliminary hearing in what is likely to be a drawn-out case. But all trade unionists should prepare to defend the NASD.

To its credit the NASD, unlike the wealthy and huge TGWU, has not set out to sabotage the struggle of its members for the right to work. And the very notion of the supposedly neutral state machine granting the Vestey's compensation for unfair industrial action exposes the law for what it really is—the agent of those with wealth, power and titles to property.

Vestey's have continually lied about their ownership of Midland Cold Storage and used every dirty trick in the book as part of their tactics to break the dock labour scheme.

Millionaire boss provokes factory occupation

SUNDERLAND:—The Coles Cranes factory is now under total occupation by the workers, following deliberate provocation by the managing director, W A de Vigier, a Swiss millionaire.

The factory was taken over by the Acrow group last July and 350 of the 2500 workers were declared redundant before Christmas. Only 15 of the sacked men fought the redundancies, turning up for work and being paid by the rest of the workers.

In the week before Christmas de Vigier announced that he would break agreements that had been in force for years. It seems that he wanted a strike over Christmas, so that he would not have to pay holiday money.

After the holiday, union representatives made recommendations to the management for solving the approaching crisis. The company refused to accept these, and a mass meeting decided last Thursday to occupy the factory.

This action has been supported by members of the Engineering, Electricians, General and Municipal Workers and clerical workers' union (APEX). The only union in the factory that has not supported the action is the Boilermakers Union, whose members have been laid off.

Morale among the workers is high. Other workers in the area are backing them, despite distortions by the press and TV.

De Vigier has unofficially made it known that his real objective is to reduce the workforce from 2500 to 700, which he regards as a 'nice size'.

To fight such an employer the workers at Coles urgently need financial help. Donations to: Coles Cranes Strike Committee, c/o AUEW House, 189 Roker Avenue, Sunderland.



A poster at the gate of the Coles Cranes factory—depicting the managing director as star of The Godfather, the film about the mafia

'Goad disease' hits the North East

SUNDERLAND:—The North East had its first dose of the 'Goad disease' last week when two men, Joseph Young and Terry Canavan, took advantage of the Industrial Relations Act to break the closed shop at Thorn's radio and TV valves factory.

They claimed that they were tired of the 'quarrelling' between the two unions in the factory—the engineering union and the General and Municipal Workers'. During a television interview the two press heroes had the nerve to say that they had only dropped out of their unions to demonstrate what a danger the Industrial Relations Act is to the trade union movement!

Whatever their motives, the action of these two scabs has produced a wave of anger among the 2000 workers at Thorns. A go-slow has reduced production by half and further sanctions will be imposed until Young and Canavan are sacked. Under no circumstances will they be allowed back into their unions or into the factory.

Barney McGorrigan, AUEW convenor, told Socialist Worker: 'This is the thin end of the wedge. We're going to show them that they can't get away with it up here.'

'The Industrial Relations Act has brought to the fore the type of man who will exploit his fellow worker, and Heath thought this type of person could be used to weaken the unions. Instead they've gone a long way to strengthening the unions and bringing them together.'

One sign of this is that the GMWU at Thorns supported the AUEW district strike against the fines on the union last Monday. Barney concluded: 'I'd like to bring to

the attention of trade unionists in other Thorn factories the danger of letting these men get away with this. It's a cancer which can destroy trade unionism. We would welcome the support of other Thorn workers to defend trade unionism.'

Messages of support to: B McGorrigan, AUEW Convenor, Thorn's Radio and Television Valves, Pallion Industrial Estate, Sunderland.

Barney McGorrigan will be speaking on The Fight Against the Industrial Relations Act at the Trade Union Club, in Frederick Street, Sunderland, on Tuesday. The meeting, organised by Sunderland International Socialists, will begin at 7.30pm.

Sacking claim 'distortion'

DUDLEY:—The crane driver who claimed before an industrial tribunal last week that he had been sacked for refusing to join a union had in fact lost his job because he was unsuitable.

Arthur Garratt, Transport Union convenor at Midland W Grazecrook, where he worked, told Socialist Worker that the driver had been taken on by the firm for a six-week trial, but it was his eyes were suffering from welding flashes. This made him unsuitable for the job.

'It is true we asked him to join the union because everyone else is either in the TGWU or the union, but what he has said is a distortion,' said Garratt.

THE MEANING OF MARXISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

The London Region of the International Socialists is organising a series of important lectures. They will centre on the relevance of marxist theory to the working-class struggle today.

Time: Friday evenings, 7.30 - 9.30 p.m.
Place: The Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (three minutes walk from Holborn Tube).

Friday 26 January
The Meaning of Marxism
Speaker: Duncan Hallas

Friday 2 February
Reform or revolution and the nature of the British Labour Party

Friday 9 February
Bourgeois democracy, state and revolution (why there is no parliamentary road to socialism)
Speaker: Richard Kuper

Friday 16 February
The Relevance of Lenin to the struggle today
Speaker: Tony Cliff

Friday 2 March
The Russian experience—a marxist analysis
Speaker: Tony Cliff

Friday 9 March
The underdeveloped world and the Chinese experience
Speaker: Nigel Harris

Friday 23 March
The nature of imperialism and the anti-imperialist struggle today
Speaker: Steven Marks

Friday 30 March
The struggle for the British revolution
Speaker: Jim Higgins

Friday 6 April
The marxist theory of the revolutionary party
Speaker: Chris Harman
The need for the party in the struggle for socialism
Speaker: Duncan Hallas



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INSIDE:
VESTEY THREAT COULD FORCE UNION SHUTDOWN—page 15
CUBITTS DEMAND EXTRA £1 MILLION ON WORLDS END—page 14

Socialist Worker

GASMEN CHALLENGE THE TORY PAY FREEZE

THE gas workers are the latest group to rebel against the government's pay freeze.

Over the past week delegate meetings of workers in both the Transport and General Workers and General and Municipal Workers Unions have voted for an overtime ban and selective strikes in protest at the freeze. In Scotland stewards representing 3500 workers have announced that they will strike for the day next Wednesday. Such action would

by SW reporter

hit gas supplies in Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen and Glasgow. For years the gas workers' unions have been able to persuade them to co-operate with management. Productivity has increased by 200 per cent in the past five years, while 22,500 men have been made redundant. The union leadership boasts that there has been

not one strike in the 25 years since nationalisation. Yet wage rates remain low, with a miserable basic of £19. Now they have been forced to wait for a wage increase they need urgently if they are to keep up with the escalating cost of food. There is a danger that the union leaders will abandon any plans for action at the first excuse—and it seems the government itself might be preparing to provide this. Just before Christmas the government told the employers that they could not even negotiate over a wage increase until after the end of the freeze. If the government now withdraws this instruction in preparation for the second phase of its wages policy, then the union leaders are likely to claim a 'victory' and call off all industrial action, even though they will still not have gained the wage increase their members need. Yet the sort of limit the government is likely to set for wages during the second phase of the freeze will in no way deal with the gas workers' demands. Only industrial action will force it to give ground. That is why Scottish gas workers, for instance, have made it clear that they will only call off their action next Wednesday if 'a serious offer' is made. They have also made it clear that if there is not such an offer, Wednesday's strike will only be regarded as part of the build-up towards an all-out strike in three weeks' time.

Pay claim 'a device' for NUM leaders

AS FAR as leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers were concerned, Wednesday's formal tabling of the 1973 wage claim for £4.50 to £7 increases was only a device. In unofficial discussions, the Coal Board had already made it clear that probably they could not come anywhere near to meeting such a claim. The NUM leaders have already indicated that they intend to fall back on an alternative wages resolution, also carried at the union's annual conference, which only instructs the executive to seek a 'substantial' increase. This second resolution was passed thanks to the manoeuvring of NUM president Joe Gormley, and the rest of the right wing. But perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the NUM leaders' renewed romance with the Coal Board lies in the hours, shifts and productivity package that will be negotiated with the pay claim. A joint productivity committee has started meeting to devise a method of negotiating a national productivity deal. At last week's meeting the NCB intimated that it would like to return to some sort of piecework system for extracting higher production. The NUM reply was that while they were extremely anxious to increase production, they were concerned that unit or regionally based schemes might renew sectional divisions and increase differentials. The NUM has also informed the Coal Board that it is anxious to reduce wasted production time. This is the background against which any discussion of shorter hours will take place. Miners could end up with much more intensive shift working as a result of the claim for a shorter working week, with all benefits going to the Coal Board as higher productivity. More redundancies would inevitably follow. FULL ANALYSIS NEXT WEEK.



Members of the International Socialists on the protest march supporting Camden Council's opposition to the Tory rent Act

LONDON:—About 30 hours after a big solidarity march through Camden in support of the council's decision not to implement the government's Housing Finance Act, the controlling Labour group decided by 32 votes to 17 on Monday to recommend that the council implement the Act after all. The Sunday demonstration was much larger than had been predicted. Some 3000 people walked from Camden Town Hall to Hampstead Heath chanting anti-Tory and pro-council slogans. There were delegations from Ebbw Vale, Merthyr Tydfil and Clay Cross, whose council is still refusing to implement the Act. At a meeting before the march, Coun-

cillor Millie Miller, the Labour group leader, talked of the 'great struggle' which the council had put up against the Act. 'There will be more struggles in the future,' she promised. The following evening Mrs Miller, flanked by Mr Peter Best, formerly deputy leader, and R E Shaw, the council's Labour chief whip, proposed a motion to the Labour group that the 'nasty and vicious' Act should be administered because of the government's decision to withhold the borough's housing subsidies. After a stormy argument, the motion was carried when seven councillors, including the three leaders mentioned above, changed their votes, agreeing to implement.

Anger over power station death rate

THERE is growing anger among power workers at the soaring death rate from industrial accidents in power stations. The deaths of Leonard Harris, 37, Terence Burton, 29, Stanley Lee, 37, and Terence Hazeldine, 22, at Thorpe Marsh Power Station near Doncaster last Saturday is seen by many power workers, especially at Thorpe Marsh, as the last straw. No one yet knows how the four workers died. They were cleaning out an electrostatic precipitator, and all four bodies were found close to each other and as though they had fallen from a height of up to 100ft. The area where they were working is full of electric gadgets, but the North East Central Electricity Board still cannot say whether the men were electrocuted as a result of an electrical fault or suffocated by the dust in the precipitator. Thorpe Marsh is very much a danger station. Six building workers died while it was being built. There have been several explosions at the station since it was commissioned in 1967, and several workers have been badly injured. Power workers are quick to point out that the pay and productivity proposals firstly proposed by Lord Wilberforce after the immediate lower work-to-rule in December on welfare, failed to a huge increase in the industry. The Communist and 1971-72, four deaths in the power industry were recorded in the current year, with two and might frighten its still to run, but it has been at deaths.

30,000 strike in protest at £55,000 fine

TYNESIDE:—Thirty thousand engineering workers staged a one-day stoppage in the North-East on Monday in protest against the £55,000 fine imposed on the AUEW. The call for the stoppage, which came from the union's local district committees, received a 100 per cent response. The Tyne District Committee is now asking the union's national executive if it can call an overtime ban and one-day-a-week strikes against the fines. The only weak spot on Monday was among members of TASS—the technical and supervisory section of the engineering union. The TASS national executive did not order its members to take action, but merely advised them to support any action taken by the engineers. The result was that TASS members at many factories rejected strike action, although at the big Parsons plant three-quarters of the TASS members came out.

ELECTRICIANS OUT ON STEEL SITE

SCUNTHORPE:—1200 electricians on British Steel's massive Anchor site struck on Monday to win reinstatement for 38 men victimised by electrical contractors Watson and Norrie. The men were sacked before Christmas as part of the firm's attempt to break a safety work-to-rule. Since the dispute started other issues, including the low wages of Watson and Norrie electricians, have come to the fore. Laurie Hancock, the local electricians' union official, has done everything in his power to help break the strike, claiming that the International Socialists and other 'subversive organisations' were stirring the safety issue up, and that bomb threats had been made against him. Such a threat would be absurd for any militant or socialist, since Hancock's behaviour can effectively be countered only by trade union action.

Bakery drivers locked out in dispute over overtime

NORTH LONDON:—When drivers at Camden Road ABC bakery turned up for work on Monday they faced a lock-out. This was management's latest tactic in a dispute over a one hour cut in overtime. Wages in this bakery, like all others, are appallingly low. Bakery hands (members of the Bakers' Union) get £19.50 for men and a scandalous £14.12 for women for 40 hours. A £2.25 rise has been frozen. The drivers, all members of the Transport Union, get £22.80 plus a £1-a-day bonus. Most workers depend on overtime for a living wage. The factory is owned by Associated British Foods, one of the largest firms in the industry. This firm made a trading profit of £44 million last year and is controlled by the multi-millionaire Weston family. The dispute concerns Saturday overtime, which is compulsory. The drivers clock off at midday on Fridays and start again at midnight, working through until

Saturday midday. During much of this shift they have to wait around for deliveries. They have demanded that management put their last delivery back one hour and for the past three weeks the men have refused to take deliveries after this time. Last Saturday management threatened that if 'normal' working did not resume there would be no work for drivers. But though the drivers have stood united against management's vicious attempts to divide them, TGWU union officials, instead of backing them in their struggle, refused to negotiate until the men went back to work, thereby conceding to the management. As the struggle continues workers in the Bakers Union in the factory must unite actively with the TGWU men and links must be forged with other bakeries in the group.

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