

The Poulson arrest: sighs of relief in top places...

by Paul Foot

BASIC BRITISH decency demands that any nastiness of the Watergate variety should not in any circumstances be allowed to emerge in Britain.

Operation Cover-Up on the friends and influence of John Poulson, Yorkshire architect, is now in full swing.

The position is clear: nothing can be written or broadcast about Poulson or any of his friends or any of his activities which could possibly 'prejudice' him in his forthcoming trial on corruption charges.

Even in parliament, allegedly the highest court in the country, MPs who raise the details of Mr Poulson's activities will be silenced by the Speaker.

There will be no tribunal of inquiry, no Commons Select Committee investigation, and no inquiry of any kind by journalists or broadcasters.

This silence has been insured by the arrest of Mr Poulson—and one of his friends, Mr George Pottinger—last Friday night.

The arrest was ordered by the Director of Public Prosecutions two days after The Guardian had reported that 'nothing substantial' would be submitted by the police to the DPP 'for at least a year'.

Silence

A great commotion had been unleashed in the House of Commons and the press following reports 10 days ago in the Daily Mail, carefully planted by senior police officers, that the police inquiry into the Poulson affair was being obstructed.

The commotion led to a hurried report being submitted prematurely to the DPP, who instantly ordered Poulson's arrest.

The arrest, and the silence it involves has nothing at all to do with sudden press and television interest in the Poulson affair.

It has nothing to do with the fact that the Sunday Times intended to start last Sunday a massive three-part investigation into Poulson and all his works. The article was hurriedly 'spiked' after the arrest.

It has nothing to do with the fact that the BBC programme Midweek has several hundred feet of film of T Dan Smith talking about Poulson, which was to have been shown soon but has now been put into cold storage.

It has nothing to do with the investigation carried out by journalist Richard West into the corruption trial of a former Mayor of Pontefract (Poulson's home town), which was to have been published in last Sunday's Observer, but which was cut out after news of the arrest.

Assault

It has nothing to do with the fact that the hearings into Poulson's bankruptcy were due to restart in public last Monday and that counsel for the creditors, Mr Muir Hunter, QC, had recovered his nerve and planned a full-scale assault on the unhappy architect.

It has nothing to do with the fact that Mr Hunter planned to concentrate his fire on the activities of a Poulson company called ITCS Ltd in the Middle East. ITCS' chairman from 1967 to 1970 was Mr Reginald Maudling, the former Home Secretary.

The decision to arrest Poulson was, it can be repeated, entirely coincidental with the expected avalanche of publicity for Poulson and his friends.

It has been greeted with almost total relief by everyone in high places. Ministers can go about their daily jobs with a more peaceful mind. Opposition leaders can shout about principle in public life with greater credulity.

Big building contractors can go on getting 'negotiated' contracts without fear or favour, and local government bosses, especially if they live in Yorkshire or the North East can sleep easily in their beds.

Black groups call for strike action

FIGHT TORY PASS LAWS

BLACK PEOPLE in Britain are fighting back against the Immigration Act and its racist deportation powers, recently reinforced retrospectively by the House of Lords.

In the wake of the Lords decision, reports of police harassment and intimidation of black people are coming

SW reporters

in from all over the country.

In Goodmayes, Essex, a 17-year-old Ugandan girl went up and asked a local policeman how to get home. She was promptly bundled into a police car and held until her passport was

produced and she could prove her 'right' to be in Britain.

In Hitchin, Herts, two men were arrested at their work, and taken to the police station. They were eventually released when they proved their 'legal' right to stay.

In Gravesend, Kent, Mr K K Kaila appeared in court last Tuesday charged with blackmailing illegal immigrants. A number of Asians have been picked up by police in Gravesend recently.

At Kings Cross Station, London, George Peake, a South African Cape Coloured who spent seven years in South Africa's notorious Robben Island prison for 'terrorist' activities, was waiting for a train last Thursday when he was approached by a policeman.

'You look suspicious,' said the policeman. 'Why?' asked George, who is now a full-time organiser for the International Socialists.

'Because I say so,' replied the policeman. 'Now can I see your ticket and your passport?' 'I didn't realise,' said George, handing over his ticket, 'that you needed a passport to go to Huddersfield.'

'Now then, wog, don't get stropky with me,' yelled the policeman, who then questioned George closely about his home and family, and only allowed him to go when he handed over his address.

WAKING UP

Mary Dines, of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, told Socialist Worker:

'This sort of harassment has been going on ever since the Immigration Act became law—and before. People are only just waking up to it. The police and the social security officials have been working together, checking insurance cards against Home Office lists of legal entrants. They know where the illegal immigrants are, and they are rounding them up.'

Meanwhile, black communities and organisations are organising for a counter-attack. A meeting of 70 black people in the Dominion Cinema, Southall, last Saturday, was attended by representatives from Indian Workers Associations all over the country, the West Indian Standing Conference, the Pakistani Welfare Associations and other black organisations.

The meeting passed a motion calling for the boycott of all government-financed race relations bodies until the Immigration Act is repealed. Darshana Tomkinson, from the International Socialists' immigration committee, moved an amendment calling for the setting up of committees in each area to ensure that the boycott was effective, and to deal with complaints against the police and queries about immigration.

Her amendment also called for work committees in all factories where blacks were employed to be formed to raise the issues of racism and the Immigration Act. These committees, the amendment argued, should work for strike action

to back page



INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS
Protest meeting
Tuesday 3 July 8pm

**Fight
the racist
witch-hunt**

Speaker: George Peake
(IS organiser and victim of apartheid)
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1 (nearest tube: Holborn)

Builders' crime: they fought the lump

FIVE MEN under attack for fighting to build their union appeared in a Birmingham court on Monday. Seen arriving for the hearing, they are (left to right): Fred Ainslie, Gerry Kelly, Peter Davidson, Graham Stevenson and Phil Beyer. They are charged with conspiracy to trespass and unlawful assembly. The charges arise from a demonstration earlier this year at the offices of a Birmingham firm—the SOS Bureau—which supplies non-union 'lump' labour to building firms. Building workers and other trade unionists demonstrated outside the court in solidarity with the five, who were remanded on bail until 23 July. Picture: Christopher Davies (Report). FULL STORY: BACK PAGE.



AMERICAN SCENE

by Steve Jefferys

OUT OF RESPECT to comrade Brezhnev, who stayed not far from the Watergate hotel complex in Washington, the Senate Watergate Committee postponed its hearings a week.

The two Senate leaders, Republican Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and Mike Mansfield of Montana, requested the postponement in a sweetheart letter to Committee Chairman Irvin. It might help, they wrote, 'achieve results which would be beneficial not only to our two countries but, hopefully, to all mankind.'

The committee then voted six to one in favour of postponing former White House counsel John Dean's testimony, which, as expected, is now going far to expose Nixon's involvement in the affair.

The Senator who wanted to get the dirty linen washed while Brezhnev was in town was the Republican from Connecticut Senator Weicker Jr. He believed going ahead with the investigation 'might give an idea to Brezhnev of the strength of our kind of government.'

Senator Weicker knows what he's talking about.

Under Section 9.348k of Connecticut State election law it is illegal to buy a vote 'at any election, caucus, convention or primary.' But, as the Connecticut Secretary of State pointed out, 'there is no specific statute which applies to a referendum per se.'

So, when a referendum took place last week in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, on whether to approve a local authority investment of \$2.25 million in an industrial estate, the 1,000 veterans in the Rocky Hill Veteran's Home and Hospital had a treat.

Many of those who drifted down to town in the evening were offered \$1 for a vote in support of the project. The local mayor said, 'A buck isn't much, but it buys you another drink.'

The vote for the industrial estate investment won by 555 votes to 536. Cheap at the price.



POLITICAL advertising is free of control in America, but for the last two years the Federal Trade Commission (the equivalent of our Board of Trade) has exercised occasional control of the most exaggerated of commercial advertisements.

Just last week the Commission ordered a big sugar corporation to 'correct' advertisements it put out for its Domino sugar.

Under the order Amstar Corporation must devote either a quarter of its Domino advertising budget, or one out of every four Domino advertisements in the next year to a statement clarifying its earlier claims.

The earlier ads had shown a young woman in baseball gear holding up a bag of Domino sugar and saying: 'You want your weary bones to have strength, energy and stamina, don't you? Well, besides plenty of sleep and exercise and all that stuff, you should have sugar. Sugar! Mmmm! And not just any old sugar you never hear of.'

The correction Amstar have agreed to make says: 'Do you recall some of our past messages saying that Domino sugar gives you strength, energy and stamina? Actually, Domino is not a special or unique source of strength, energy and stamina. No, sugar is, because what you need is a balanced diet and plenty of rest and exercise.'

So that puts everything right again—the other sugar companies must be sleeping easier now.



EARLY this week a Public Health Service advisory panel reached its conclusions on the government study begun in 1932 among 430 Alabama blacks to gauge the long-term effects of syphilis in men.

Three men were given no treatment whatever by the medical authorities responsible for them. At least 28 of the men died directly from the disease.

The panel's report concludes that the study was 'ethically unjustified', and states that 'Penicillin therapy should have been made available to the participants in this study, especially as of 1953, when penicillin became generally available, amplified the injustice to which this group of human beings had already been subjected.'

Only 112 of the men are still alive. They have all been offered medical examinations, treatment and continuous health care by the Macon County authorities.

The Assistant Secretary of Health stated that 81 of the men had chosen to receive federally-financed health care, 26 had declined, and five were undecided.

The vote fixers

IN NEW YORK, you can't buy votes, but you can try and fix them.

The Republican New York State Attorney General has been sweating it out this past fortnight, and not because of a heatwave that put temperatures into the middle 90s. He's been conducting an inquiry into a New York Watergate-style scandal involving the local Republican Party.

In certain marginal constituencies during last year's election, Republican campaign funds and personnel were apparently used to support the Liberal Party in the hope that, by their taking votes from the Democrats, the Republican candidates would win through.

A printer has testified to receiving a check from the Republican Party for 'Liberal' campaign literature. The literature went out over the signature of a Mr Harold J Relkin, a former member of the Liberal Party who has now got a job on the Republican Party payroll. The Liberal Party denounced the material as unauthorised.

The Republicans also provided the Liberal Party with stamped mailing labels for the entire electoral list.

The value of this pro-Liberal campaign to the Republicans can be seen in the vote in one district where the Republicans wore these two hats, the 25th Assembly District in north-eastern Queens. There, the Democrat got 23,973 votes, his Republican opponent 22,705 and the Liberal got 3,305 votes.

A near miss. Still it probably wouldn't have made a great difference even if the vote had gone the other way. Politicians in both big two parties here resemble each other even more closely than do Labour and Tory MPs in Britain.

In New York city next week the run-off Democratic primary for City Mayor takes place. This allows registered Democratic Party voters (750,000 voted in the first round) to choose who'll be their candidate in the election proper in November.

The favourite in the off-track betting shops is City Comptroller Abraham Beame, a member of Mayor Lindsay's current administration. His advertising posters urge—'Save New York—Vote Beame.'

If you wonder what the danger is, you don't have to go much further than the name of his opponent, Representative Herman Badillo. He's the first Puerto Rican to get so far in New York, and the racism in Beame's campaign—backed by the right wing trade union leaders of the AFL-CIO—is quite blatant.

But don't let your natural sympathy for the underdog go too far. Badillo's an ex-City policeman and a big part of his campaign is based on increasing law and order and the City police budget.

Heath's boom: is it a summer wonder?

GIVE THANKS and sing praise—as the Heath economic boom starts to burst its valves there are 'only' 545,000 unemployed in Britain. This is the line being given by Tory ministers following the news last week of the fall in unemployment and evidence that the economy is growing at the breathtaking (by British standards) rate of 5 to 6 per cent a year.

As always the unemployment figures need taking with more than the customary pinch of salt. Studies done two years ago on the official statistics for the jobless show that they tend to underestimate the true level of the workless by as much as 30 per cent. On this basis the real number of those out of work this summer is nearer 700,000.

Allowing for this, however, we can accept that demand for labour is on the upturn. Indeed the employers are already beginning to whine about running into shortage of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

This is hardly surprising, for the economy is going through a boom thanks in part to the world-wide recovery in trade and production in the past year and in part to the desperate measures adopted by the Heath government to push the British economy out of its deep-seated stagnation.

The increase in job vacancies is, of course, only one side of the picture of boom. The other is the explosion in prices. The fact is that the gloomiest predictions of Socialist Worker last year about the course of prices have been amply justified.

The latest figures show that in the past year prices have risen by 9.5 per cent and are currently running at an annual rate of well over 12 per cent. Food prices, in particular, have gone through the roof at an annual rate of more than 20 per cent. And all of this in a period when wages have remained frozen almost solid.

According to the government's own figures, prices have risen by 4.3 per cent since last November while money wages have now been falling in Britain for nearly six months.

What of the future? The Confederation of British

Industry has already warned that still more price rises are inevitable later this year partly because of the continuing rise in world raw materials prices and partly because the employers are planning to increase prices in order to raise their profit margins.

It would not be surprising if the cost of living rose by 12 per cent or more in 1973. Given tax and other stoppages, workers would need increases averaging 16 per cent or more even to maintain the real value of their wages in these circumstances.

What will the Heath government do about this? The answer is precious little. In fact they accept the employers case of the need to increase profit margins, which is why they are not discouraging the rumours that their proposals to the TUC chiefs for Phase Three of the wage freeze will be even tougher than either Phase One or Phase Two.

In any case the Heath government is powerless in the face of the tidal wave of world-wide inflation to affect prices in Britain.

Only a government prepared to nationalise the great industries and impose a state monopoly of foreign trade could hope to stem the flood of price increases. It goes without saying that the Tories would never contemplate such action against their pals and patrons in business, industry and the City.

And for all the hot air coming from the executive of the Labour Party, the Labour leaders have no intention of engaging in an all-out struggle with the forces of British capitalism. Which is why their protests about price rises and the savage impact they are having on the families and lives of millions of workers and retired folk are the purest hypocrisy.

One effect of the cut in real wages brought about by the pay policy and the price rises is to produce a slowdown in consumer spending. Before long this is going to work back to production and thus to employment.

In other words, Heath's boom has all the signs of a mid-summer wonder. The outlook for jobs and the economy is going to look much more forbidding this autumn.

John Palmer

COVERING UP ROOF COLLAPSES

CONTRARY to universal reassurances from the Ministry of Education downwards, the designs of the roofs of the Camden School for girls and the geography reading room at Leicester University which collapsed on 12 and 13 June, were in clear breach of the current building regulations.

Both roofs collapsed because the huge pre-cast concrete beams supporting them were laid on a thin ledge, with nothing binding them to the side walls. In the Camden school, the ledge was an inch and a quarter wide, in the case of Leicester, an inch and a half.

In both cases—by a combination of good luck and good eyesight—the halls were empty. At Camden, where 50 girls were taking examinations by day, the roof collapsed at ten o'clock at night.

At Leicester, two cleaners and a student saw cracks appearing in the room just in time to clear out the readers before the collapse.

NO RULES

In either case, if the rooms had been fully occupied, a disaster of Aberfan proportions would have resulted.

The Education Secretary, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, and other official spokesmen for the building and engineering industries, have pretended that there were, at the time the buildings were constructed, in 1953 and 1964, no rules about the width of ledges on which pre-cast concrete beams must rest.

This is quite wrong. The magazine *New Civil Engineer* reports this week: 'When the [Camden] building was designed 18 years ago there was specific guidance in CP 114.100-105 (1950) on bearings for pre-cast units. Like the current recommended practise in CP 116 on pre-cast concrete (published in 1965) that Code stated: "Wherever possible pre-cast units should have a bearing of at least 75mm (3 inches) on steel or concrete".'

In other words, the consulting engineer for both schools, the late



A section of the perimeter beam at Camden shows the narrow ledge—only 40mm wide—which supported either end of the roof beams.

Mr Felix Samuely, had broken the building code by a substantial margin. At Camden, the ledge on which the beams were resting was only half the minimum recommended size, while at Leicester it was only two-thirds the minimum.

You don't have to be an architect or a consulting engineer to see that 1½ inches is nothing like enough space on which to rest beams which weighed 1.2 tons each.

To start with, the engineer should allow at least 1¼ inches for faulty measurement of the beams in the factory. Moreover, if mortar is packed in too close, or if the sun on the roof contracts the concrete (or the steel in the concrete) or if the foundations move fractionally outwards, the beam can fall off its ledge and the whole roof will then, inevitably, collapse.

By allowing such tight margins, in other words, Mr Samuely was behaving like a reckless hooligan.

Yet throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Mr Samuely was highly regarded by his profession. The Camden school architect, Mr John Stillman, said of Mr Samuely last week: 'He was a pioneer in the development of structures, particularly in pre-cast concrete. At that time, people wanted a lot of schools, and

we were encouraged to use methods which were up to date and quick.'

And, of course, cheap. Like the consulting engineers for Roman Point, a block of flats which collapsed in 1968, Mr Samuely found it cheaper not to bind the roofs to the walls with steel or any other connection.

The local education authorities loved him for his quickness and his cheapness. So Mr Samuely, using his quick, cheap, 1½-inch-to-collapse method, designed Harlow Technical College, Huddersfield Polytechnic, Ipswich Civic College, a girls high school annexe at Alperton, Blackdown High School, Leamington, Chiswick comprehensive school, Harlow, Christopher Wren School, London W12, Creighton School, Hornsey, the Hundred of Hoo School, Rochester, John Kelly High School, Brent, Langley School, Slough, Bucks.

No charge of any kind has been prepared against anyone associated with the design of any of these buildings. Mr Stillman, the architect at Camden, is confident about the design.

'Even when I saw the roof down,' he told the Hampstead and Highgate Express last week, 'it was of textbook construction, showing no sign of failure.'

Paul Foot

APPEALS SNUB FOR SIX POLITICAL VICTIMS

THE JUDGES had a field day at the Royal Court of Appeal last week. Noel Jenkinson, charged in connection with the Aldershot bombing, was refused leave to appeal against a sentence of 'at least 30 years'.

And the 10-year sentences on the four alleged members of the 'Angry Brigade' were confirmed.

Noel Jenkinson's grounds for appeal were that the jury had heard evidence which might have prejudiced them against him. This was evidence given in support of a charge of 'conspiracy to commit a public mischief', a charge which, in the end, was dropped.

Before it was dropped, the jury had heard that Jenkinson had visited Albania, that he had copies of the works of Lenin and Mao and a book called Guerrilla Days in Ireland in his home, that he was a Maoist and a former member of the Communist Party.

'IMMACULATE'

None of this, said judges Davis, Bean and Croom-Johnson, would have coloured the thinking of a Winchester jury when it came to consider verdicts on the charges which were pressed.

The summing up by the trial judge, Sebag Shaw, in the course of which he referred to the fact that Jenkinson thought that 'sages on the other side of the world know how we should live our lives better than we do ourselves', was described by Judge Davis as 'immaculate'.

The only 'evidence' that Noel Jenkinson had ever been in Aldershot was a receipt issued by an Aldershot department store and found in a vase on the living room mantelpiece in the Jenkinson home. It emerged at the original trial that the receipt had in fact been issued to Detective

by Eamonn McCann

Inspector Smith, one of the men who searched the premises.

Rejecting a defence contention that this was a 'plant', the appeal judges delivered themselves of the opinion that Detective Inspector Smith might well have dropped the receipt accidentally on Noel Jenkinson's floor, that Mrs Jenkinson might have then swept the floor and deposited the rubbish in a vase on the mantelpiece and that the police, quite possibly, had returned, discovered the receipt and understandably enough, come to the wrong conclusion...

The same day the 10-year sentences on Anna Mendelson, Hilary Creek, Jimmy Greenfield and John Barker were upheld, the Appeal Court declaring that they were 'in no way excessive'.

At this point readers might usefully recall the trial of Marples-Ridgway, whose neglect of safety precautions caused the death of three building

workers when a bridge collapsed last November. A fine of £150 was imposed—50 quid a head.

Readers may care to note for future reference that the lives of building workers are worth £50 each. But if you blow up Mr Robert Carr's wife's kitchen sink then they will lock you up and throw the key away.

SCAPEGOATS

Noel Jenkinson and the others are political prisoners, locked away by a class which is perfectly prepared to condone and participate in bombing, mass murder and terrorism on an international scale but which foams with fury and sends its police to find scapegoats when relatively tiny acts of violence are perpetrated by persons of a different class.

Socialists should demand the unconditional release of all prisoners.

The address of the Stoke Newington Five Solidarity Committee is 54 Harcombe Road, London N16.

Five freedom fighters are jailed

FIVE FREEDOM fighters in South Africa have been sentenced to prison sentences ranging from five to 15 years for 'terrorist' acts against the racist regime.

Sandi Sijaka, cattle-herder, Petrus Mthemba, factory worker, Rank Cholo, factory worker and Magiri Mpanza, sugar worker, were convicted on a number of charges under the Terrorism Act and sentenced to 15 years.

Passport

Alex Moumbaris, a former print-worker in London, was found guilty on 11 charges, and sentenced to 12 years in prison. John Hosey, son of the shop stewards' convenor at British Leyland, was found guilty on one charge—carrying a false passport—and received five years, the minimum prison sentence under the Act. Hosey is appealing against his sentence.

At a press conference organised by the Anti-Apartheid movement last Thursday, a message from Mrs Moumbaris was read out to the effect that the campaigns in Europe and Britain against the imprisonment of the six were the only reasons why maximum sentences had not been imposed.



Oliver Tambo, acting president of the African National Congress of South Africa, speaking at a meeting in London last week on 'Southern Africa in Struggle'. The meeting condemned the 'treason trial' and the jail sentences on the five freedom fighters. Picture: PETER HARRAP (Report)

Tenants angry at decision

THE NATIONAL TENANTS and trade union conference due to be held in Liverpool last weekend was called off at the last minute by the local trades council. Their official reason was that not enough tenants and trade unionists had applied for credentials.

But North West tenants are angry at their decision because little effort was put into publicising the conference. The North West tenants are now pushing for their own national conference in September when they hope to mobilise the tenants' movement for the battle against the rent rises in October.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

FOOD PRICES went up by almost 2 per cent in May, by 10 per cent since the fraudulent freeze started in November and by 36½ per cent since Heath took office.

The rate of increase is speeding up. Wage increases were held to nil until April and then to £1 plus 4 per cent. Actual earnings are up, on average, by just under 3 per cent since the start of the freeze and a good deal of this is due to increased overtime. In terms of what they will buy, earnings are going down and wage rates are going down faster still.

These are the fruits of Phase One and Phase Two of Heath's so-called incomes policy. Contrast this situation with 1972, a year of 'confrontation'. From January to October average earnings were kept well ahead of price increases; real earnings increased by around 8 per cent. Then we were told that inflation was due to trade unionists getting 'excessive' wage increases. The increases stopped. Inflation accelerated.

It will be worse under Phase Three. In the last 12 months food and raw material prices have gone up, on a world scale, by a staggering 74 per cent. Much of this has still to work itself through into shop prices.

Dangerous delusion

Meanwhile the TUC carries on its futile talks with the government, futile that is from the working-class point of view. For the government and the employers they are invaluable. Instead of helping those sections which have tried to challenge the freeze—the gasworkers, the hospital workers—the TUC chiefs have provided the other side with a 'respectable' cover.

They have helped to give credibility to the dangerous delusion that there can be a 'fair' incomes policy in a society that is based on production for profit and all the built-in inequalities that go with it.

The decision of the engineering union conference to pull Hugh Scanlon out of the talks, very much against his own wishes, is a real step forward. If it can be followed up, and there are prospects that the Transport Workers' conference may do likewise, the chances that the government can get away with further real wage cuts in Phase Three are greatly reduced.

What is at stake here is whether the trend to cut working-class living standards is continued or halted and reversed. Inflation will continue whatever happens. It is international and it is speeding up.

If the incomes policy norms are enforced, real earnings will continue to decline. The norms will not be broken by any amount of talks. They can be broken by strike action and only by strike action.

ANYONE FOR TRUTH?

WHAT IS 'NEWS'? It is, to a large extent, what the handful of men who control television and the press decide is news. The Wimbledon fracas, that is very big news, headline stuff for days on end. Several million people near to death by starvation in India, that's either not news at all or else it is very small news depending on which channel or paper you choose.

Part of this absurdly lopsided emphasis is due to sheer parochialism.

When the Titanic was sunk the Aberdeen Press and Journal is said to have run the headline 'Aberdeen man lost at sea' and something of this spirit is very much alive in television and press news departments today. But much more important is the conscious, deliberate policy of playing up the trivial and the stunt in order to divert attention from significant events.

The Roman Emperors had a policy for controlling their subjects that was summed up as 'bread and circuses'. Today's circuses are the telly and the 'popular' press. Both are controlled by a few dozen very rich men or, in the case of the BBC, by government nominees.

Most of us know from experience that these media are biased in favour of the bosses. You never get fair treatment of a strike for instance. But the greatest degree of 'thought control' is exercised by selection, by choosing what is news and what is not. We will never have a really 'free press' on television until this power is taken out of the hands of the rich.

Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2



Socialist Worker's editorial department has now moved to the new premises acquired as a result of the successful £30,000 fund last winter. The new address is: CORBRIDGE WORKS, CORBRIDGE CRESCENT, LONDON E2.

All correspondence—articles, letters, advertisements—must now be sent to this address. Letters sent to the old address will be subjected to considerable delay. The editorial telephone number is unchanged.



BRIEFING

SPAIN:—The town of Pamplona has been paralysed by a general strike in support of 200 workers sacked by the Motor Iberica car factory during a dispute. The company is partly owned by Massey Ferguson, which recently locked out the workforce of its Peterborough factories. Small workshops, shops and schools closed, 200 people were arrested and an unknown number injured in a clash with police.

The local archbishop allowed the Motor Iberica workers to sit-in at a church and had food provided for them by a Catholic organisation. The illegal Workers' Commissions are strong in this recently industrialised area, and the local middle class supports liberal politics rather than the right-wing represented in the new government installed by Franco.

FRANCE:—Workers threatened with redundancy in Besancon have taken over production and are selling the watches they make to pay their own wages. The watches are being sold, at reduced prices, only to individuals and trade union organisations, and wages are being paid on the basis of family needs rather than the usual grading system.

Five committees have been set up by manual and white collar workers. Members of the management staff also took part at first, but have withdrawn on the grounds that selling the watches is illegal. The committees are for assembly, sales, quality control, safety and public relations.

The Besancon workers have received great publicity for this 'new form of struggle', but the limits of the work-in tactic are clear. The CFDT trade union federation, to which most of the workers belong, has stated that 'the workers' intention is not an experiment in workers' control; they simply want to demonstrate their ability to make watches and sell them,' and that they 'wish to preserve the French watchmaking heritage'.

The Communist-Party led CGT federation does not even mention workers' control, but says the workers are fighting to defend their own interests and those of the region and the nation, and for the preservation of the 'technical, human and research potential of the enterprise' against bankruptcy.

CHILE:—The opposition to Allende's Popular Unity government has carried out its threat to remove two government ministers, including the Communist Minister of Labour, Figueroa. The opposition has a majority in the Senate, and when the vote was taken the 20 Popular Unity Senators protested by not attending.

Despite opposition attempts to use the miners' strike to undermine Allende, he

still enjoys enormous support among the working class, but the constitution allows the opposition to get rid of any ministers they chose through a Senate vote.

NEW ZEALAND:—The Federation of Labour has followed the Australian trade unions in placing a ban on trade with France and on air and sea traffic to and from France, in protest against French nuclear tests in the Pacific. The Labour prime minister, Norman Kirk, has not approved the ban.

FRANCE:—About 100,000 people demonstrated in defence of civil liberties in Paris last week. The demonstration was called by the Communist Party and was supported by the PSU left socialists and the Ligue Communiste, which is the French section of the Fourth International.

Though the demonstration was peaceful, police arrested six people as it dispersed. Many parallel demonstrations were held in other French cities.



FRELIMO, the guerrilla movement fighting for the freedom of Portuguese-ruled Mozambique, celebrates its eleventh anniversary this year. Frelimo, Africa's best-organised and most effective guerrilla movement, now controls large areas of Mozambique.

Its leader is Samora Machel (left), who learned guerrilla warfare in Algeria and took over command of the 20,000-strong Mozambique People's Liberation Army when Dr Eduarda Mandlane, a brilliant academic turned freedom fighter, was assassinated four years ago near Dar

es-Salaam, capital of Tanzania. He was killed by a bomb concealed in a book.

Frelimo's success is seen even by many liberals as the beginning of the end for white supremacy in Southern Africa.

With Machel is Frelimo's second-in-command, Marcelino dos Santos.

'LEFT' DICTATOR HITS OUT AT WORKERS

THE following extracts are from a letter signed by eight political prisoners in Peru. The 'left' military dictatorship of General Alvarado has nationalised some American companies and carried out a land reform, enjoys the support of the Communist Party, and is praised by the rulers of Cuba. But it has faced mounting opposition from the organised working class. Since last April there

THOSE who have signed this letter are political prisoners in the jails of Chorrillos and Lurigancho. We want the public to know of our arbitrary detention and of the tortures to which some of us have been subjected.

We were detained between 7 and 9 May in Moquegua, Arequipa and

Lima, together with many trade union leaders and militants, as part of the growing repression by the military government against the popular movement of industrial workers and students.

Tens of thousands of workers in Moquegua, Arequipa and other places have protested against the

have been short general strikes in several towns, sparked off by changes in the pension laws and the government's attempt to dissolve the various trade union federations into one state-controlled body.

The letter shows the repression with which the dictatorship has met working-class opposition.

government's anti-popular measures and in particular against the attacks on education, wages, the independence of trade unions from the state, and the gains made by the workers for a pension scheme. Their protests have been answered with dictatorial methods of jailing, torture, deportation, murder and shooting, and with the suppression of the working-class press, such as the weekly *Comunismo* and the periodical *Revolucion Proletaria*, whose editor has been deported.

We consider it vitally important to denounce this increase in repression, which began with the deportation of Hernan Cuentas, the Cuajone miners' secretary, followed by the murder in Chimbote of 15-year-old Humberto Miranda, a workers' son. Numerous others were wounded by police bullets.

The national press, radio and television have maintained absolute silence concerning our arrest. Government control over the media has been made obvious.

The accusations against us by the military's courts are, in this situation clearly ridiculous. We are accused of "attacking the security of the state, the honour of the nation, the constitutional order and the freedom of the press."

During our detention, for more than 20 days we have been denied any legal representative, and the courts have not even taken our "legal particulars", let alone allowed us legal advice, which they are bound by the existing laws to do.

We ask that this letter should be made public, and that you should publicly condemn the tortures and arbitrary detentions now being carried out in Peru, the repression against the movement of industrial and other workers and students, and the present military government's violation of the most elementary rights and achievements of the people.

Racist Israel heading for the apartheid camp

THE ISRAELI occupation of large territories populated by a million Palestinian Arabs presents a massive problem which is changing the face of Israel.

Traditionally, Zionism differed from other types of colonisation in that it refused to accept the native Palestinians as an exploited labour force. Zionism consciously sought to create a Jewish nation-state from which the Arabs were to be excluded economically, politically and even physically.

Despite the brutality of expulsion, this enabled Zionists to keep up a self-righteous picture of themselves: the Zionist settler thought of himself as a pioneer 'making the desert bloom', and living by the sweat of his own brow.

Since the six-day war of 1967, this image is being shaken. Arabs are now Zionism's captive population. According to Israel's minister of employment, more than 60 per cent of unskilled labourers in the building industry, about 60,000, are Arabs. "This is a dangerous situation," he says, "but it is worse in agriculture."

Israel's rulers are split in their attitudes to this new situation. Defence Minister Moshe Dayan, expressing the interests of private employers, wants the Palestinian Arabs to be integrated as workers in Israel, while keeping them apart politically and physically. He wants workers from the occupied territories to keep Jordanian citizenship and return home every night.

Deputy Prime Minister Allon, represent-

by Moshe Machover and Akiba Orr

ing the more traditional Zionist labour bureaucracy, is opposed even to economic integration of the Arabs. He advocates 'two separate economic sectors, interlinked but not integrated' and the development of industry and employment in the occupied territories themselves.

This would mean that the occupied territories would be more like a conventional colony—Israel would export capital into them rather than import labour from them.

Although the majority in the Zionist leadership, including Prime Minister Meir, support Allon's views, economic pressures pull in Dayan's direction.

Contractor

A revealing example of the economic situation which is developing and the mixed attitudes towards it is given by a letter written to Dayan by the wife of a farmer in a moshav, a Jewish co-operative village.

"Until the six-day war," she wrote, "we led a quiet life, worked hard and earned our living in a respectable way. Since the war things have changed, and my husband has become a contractor for various agricultural jobs.

"We now have five Arab workers, and no longer do any work on our own farm. My elder son even refuses to cut the lawn.

"Muhamad will do it," he says. My own children are turning in front of my eyes into the worst and most vulgar nouveau riche children, whose work is done for them by servants. They can't drive a tractor and don't care for farm work.

"In our village, the hothouses, which depend solely on Arab labour, have multiplied, and the Arabs are living in shanties a few yards away from the modern villas. Our villagers have adopted the life style of oriental landlords and the Arabs working for us are treated worse than the Fatah prisoners in jail.

"During the summer vacation, high-school kids came here to look for jobs. They didn't get any, it doesn't pay the employers to hire Jews. In my opinion there ought to be a law against employing Arab workers from the occupied territories."

Dayan's comment was that the letter exposed 'a painful and profound truth. By employing the Arabs we have created for ourselves an internal social problem'.

The Israeli police often round up Arab workers employed in Israel without permits, especially those who stay the night, and impose fines on both workers and employers. But the import of labour continues, as many employers, on both moshav and kibbutz, find it more profitable to pay fines than to stop employing cheap Arab labour.

Israel is not yet another South Africa, but some of the seeds of an apartheid society are germinating.

Ford: The struggle is the same

by Phil Harrison

AFTER almost a month on strike, 3000 Ford workers in Melbourne, Australia, have voted to stay out for better pay and conditions.

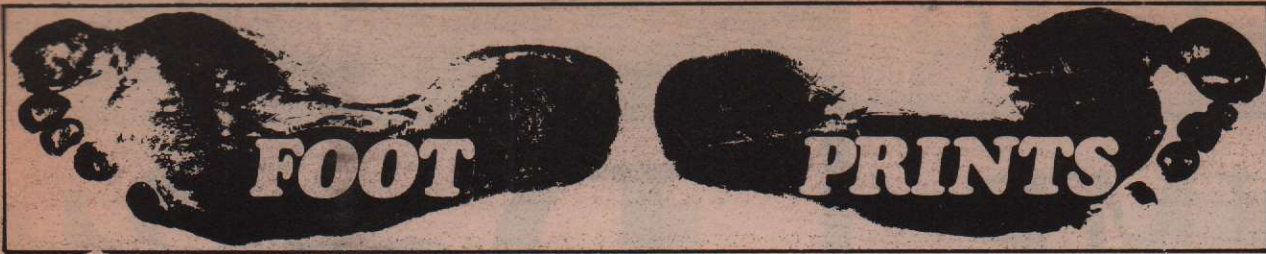
The four unions recommended that the workers accept a paltry five per cent increase with no improvement in conditions. A vote in favour of returning to work was first of all pushed through at a meeting at which the unions refused to provide translators, though most workers are European migrants, and many do not speak English.

But a mass demonstration outside the plant, at which police were called in and some windows and walls were damaged, reversed the decision to go back. The workers demanded continued strike action for the full original claim of 27 per cent plus drastic improvements in working conditions.

Following this demonstration, the union officials backed down and Laurie Carmichael, chairman of the joint union negotiating body and assistant federal secretary of the Amalgamated Metalworkers' Union, admitted: 'I say to you sincerely that we have made a mistake and you have taught us a lesson.'

Carmichael, who had to leave an earlier meeting by the back door to avoid rank and file abuse, is a leading member of the Australian Communist Party. The workers at Ford are fighting not only the management, but their trade union leaders, who are always one step behind.

The outcome of the strike is uncertain. The press campaign against the strikers is mounting, with headlines proclaiming 'mass violence' and 'mob rule'. Fords have threatened to lay off 3000 workers at another plant near Melbourne unless there is a return to work.



SOFTLY, SOFTLY, CATCHEE LORRY

GRADUALLY, the facts about police complicity in the tuggery at the Chrysler plant at Ryton last week are coming out. Reports in the Daily Mail and The Guardian last Friday stated: 'Mr Percy Brown, assistant chief constable of Coventry and Warwickshire police, said Chrysler had told them at midday on Sunday about the plan to move six-lorry-loads of parts. 'He added: "It was pointed out that it might be better in the daytime but it was entirely a matter for the company."

So the police knew about the company's plans to bring in thugs to break the picket lines. What precautions did they take to ensure that the thugs did not break the law?

This is what Peter Grimes, a Ryton picket who was there on the night of the raid, told me about the incident: 'We had a car parked across the gate. Suddenly in the middle of the night the gatekeeper came out and told us to move the car. We said we couldn't see any reason to do so. He went back into the gatehouse and we saw him lift his phone and speak to someone for some time.

Soon after he'd put the phone down, said Grimes, a police car happened to drive by, and a policeman happened to get out of the car and stroll nonchalantly over to the pickets. 'I'm sorry lads,' he said, 'I just happened to get a complaint about your obstruction here, and thought I'd tell you about it as I was passing by.'

Obediently, the pickets moved the car. Some 15 minutes later, the first three lorries roared through the gates, narrowly missing the car.

Other pickets gathered, and by the time the next three lorries came up to the gates there was quite a crowd. The drivers and their mates then 'softened up' the pickets by hurling bottles at them. The pickets appealed to the police to do something to stop them.

'Sorry,' replied one senior police-

man. 'They're on company property and there's nothing we can do.'

'What happens when they come out of the gates?' asked the pickets.

The policeman then issued a solemn warning. If any one of the pickets 'retaliated' against the lorries, he said, the offending picket would be arrested 'for disturbing the peace, destroying company property and assault with a deadly weapon.'

The pickets duly obliged. As the lorries roared past one of the pickets shouted to the police that there were no registration plates. 'Oh, they're going too fast for us to catch them now,' mumbled the fearless Z-car heroes.

The police are still 'pursuing their inquiries' about the incident.

ON 16 June the BBC television Nationwide staged a gentle discussion about a new public relations film for the police titled *The Police and You*. Taking part were a commander in the Metropolitan Police (from the Right), Martin Loney from the National Council of Civil Liberties (from the Left) and from the centre Lord Willis, former member of the Young Communist League and creator of *Dixon of Dock Green*.

The commander liked the film, Mr Loney didn't and Lord Willis thought there were two points of view, but he favoured that of the police.

The film was made by World Wide pictures, of which Lord Willis is a director.

QUOTE

'He reminded me of Mayor Daley of Chicago. He is little in appearance, but a very polished, powerful, resourceful and political man.'

Charles Percy, Republican Senator for Illinois speaking about Russian leader, Leonid Brezhnev.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE SCHOOLS EXAMINATION BOARD

General Certificate Examination, Summer 1973

Ordinary Level

Q 945

ART

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBJECT DRAWING (Q 944)

Either

On a table covered with a piece of newspaper is a bread knife, close to a large round loaf of bread from which one slice has been cut. Near the loaf is a scattered pack of playing cards and in the background there is a bottle of Guinness and a chipped mug. Across the table lies a heavy knotted stick.

Or

Some clothes hang out of a laundry or theatrical basket and on top of the basket is a cushion. On the floor by the

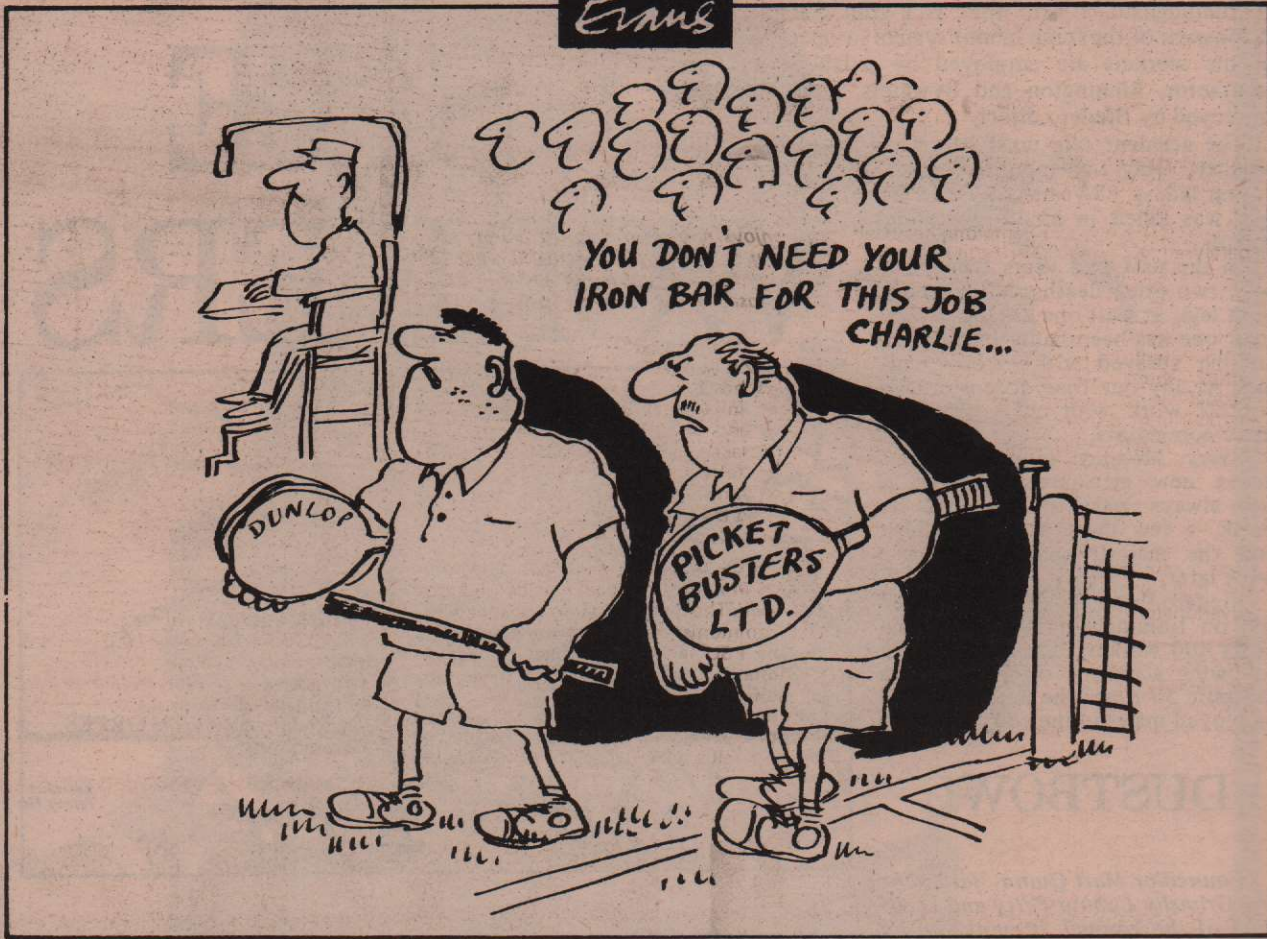
No marks at all for guessing which country the above 'scene' is intended to represent or the political views of the exam-setter.

Booze-up in a bankruptcy

STUCK up on the wall in the joiners' room at the luxury Turnberry Hotel, Ayrshire, is a gold-embossed menu—a memento of a fabulous weekend staged in the hotel for insurance brokers throughout the country who did business with the Vehicle and General Insurance Company. Apart from several high-priced meals, the company laid on dancing and a golf tournament for the lucky brokers. The weekend's festivities cost the company £26,000.

The date of the binge was 7 October 1970. By that time the company was hopelessly in debt, and four months later it collapsed leaving nearly a million car-owners without cover.

Evans



It's just a family party

ON A VISIT to Glasgow last week, I was surprised to learn of a tremendous increase in individual Labour Party membership in the City. In the new Central Constituency, for instance, Tommy McMillan, Labour MP for Central, has appeared in his party rooms with applications for membership for more than 140 local people. If all these became Labour activists, the attendance at ward meetings would go up by several thousand per cent.

Similarly, I understand that in Pollok there have been 102 applications for new Labour Party members and in certain other wards some striking 'advances' in applications have been reported.

In some wards, however, I understand that party officers have actually put a ban on new members pending the vetting of each application. These sceptics think that the flood of applications could have something to do with the selection conferences for councillors for the new, extraordinarily powerful Strathclyde Regional Authority, which will take in Glasgow and the whole of the West of Scotland from Ayr to Argyll.

The new authority will have control over almost everything in one of the biggest areas in Britain. Selection conferences for candidates will be held in the late autumn.

Anyone who wants to help select Labour candidates must become a member by September. Sudden interest in the Labour cause around and about selection time has been

'Grave' water cuts threatened

DAILY TELEGRAPH REPORTER

ASCOT COURSE WATERED FOR GOOD GOING

ASCOT WEATHER: cloudier and cooler than yesterday. Temperatures average for time of year.

With dry weather predicted, the four-day Royal Ascot meet

TWO HEADINGS WHICH BOTH APPEARED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH ON 19 JUNE

pioneered in Scotland, especially in Glasgow.

Tom McMillan's friend Hugh McCartney, Labour MP for East Dunbartonshire, has been involved recently in the selection of a Labour parliamentary candidate in the new East Dunbartonshire constituency.

The lucky man was Eddie McGarry, shop stewards' convenor at Standard Triumph and a member, like Hugh McCartney, of the Transport and General Workers Union.

McGarry won the selection conference by nine votes. Among those voting for him was Hugh McCartney, were delegates to the constituency and his daughter-in-law, all of whom had become delegates to the constituency's management committee either from the Young Socialists or from the Transport and General Workers' Union.

One of Mr McCartney's daughters,

into the bargain, who works full-time for the Transport and General Workers Union, turned out to be secretary of four union branches in Dunbartonshire, each of which was entitled to send six delegates to the selection conference.

A Labour Party National Executive inquiry into this unorthodox method of selecting an MP found that everything was entirely above board and there was nothing at all with which to reproach anyone at all. Which is one reason why similar spectacles are expected during the selection conference for new Strathclyde Labour candidates.

Postscript: Mr McCartney is a consultant in parliament to Wilkins and Denton, a subsidiary of GKN, the largest contributors to the Conservative party. Tommy McMillan is a founder member of the Anglo-South Korean Parliamentary Group.

MASSEY GO HOME

THE Financial Mail, which is a public relations sheet for companies in Southern Africa, carries an article in its 27 May edition about Massey Ferguson (South Africa) which includes some interesting passages for the locked-out men at Perkins, Peterborough, a Massey subsidiary.

For instance: 'As a foreign-controlled organisation liable to come under pressure, Massey Ferguson (SA) has progressive employment policies. Leon Knoll, managing director, says of his

African employees' committee that "it governs itself. We try to avoid being paternalistic. It's up to the Bantu to decide what he does with his money.

"Our job is to pay good wages." The article says that in 1966 the average gross pay at Massey Ferguson (SA) was 12.70 Rand per week. It is now R21.63 per week.

There are 1.7 Rand to a pound, so this means that the average weekly pay at Massey Ferguson (SA) has gone up from £7.40 in 1966 to

£12.70 in 1973. These are, of course, average figures, including payments to whites, which are very much higher than the average. In other words the 'good wages' still keep African workers on the poverty line.

Elsewhere in the article, Dr Knoll is quoted as saying: 'It's surprising how much fat you can cut off.'

Or, to put it another way: It's up to the Bantu to decide what he does with his money. He can decide whether to starve, go naked or die from exposure.

DEATH STALKS

A LAD of 19 is lying in Grimsby Hospital on drip feed. He has had his intestines and private parts removed after an accident at work last month. He was engaged to be married.

He worked at the pipe-coating works of Bredero-Price at Immingham—a firm that is a grim example of the viciousness of the lump labour system in operation. Most of the workers are employed by a labour-only sub-contractor, Binnington and Bywaters. Only a few are employed by Bredero direct.

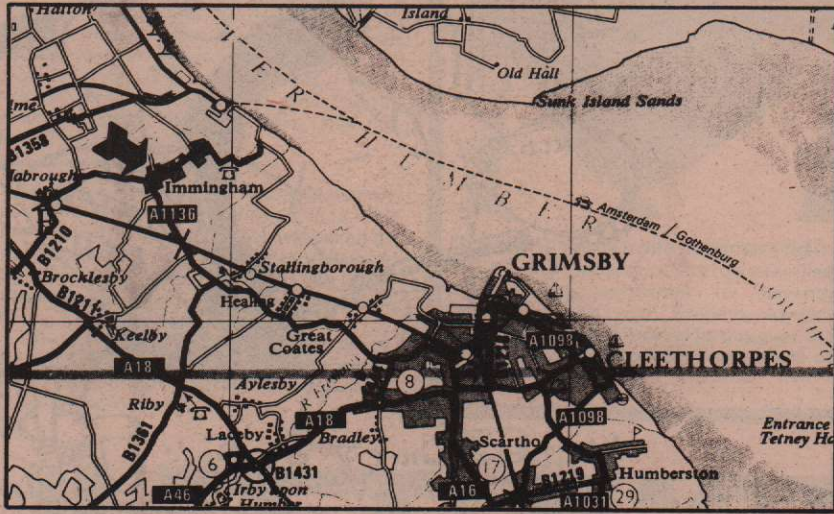
The accident rate must be among the highest in the country. Only two months before the accident to the young lad, a 58-years-old father of two was killed in identical circumstances.

In the past two years there have been two other deaths. One man lost both legs, at least one has lost several toes, one has been badly burned and another sprayed with corrosive enamel. At any one time dozens of men are off work with chest, skin and other complaints.

Every Monday morning a few dozen new men are taken on. A few always leave at the first tea break, a few more at dinner time, and the majority are not there a week later.

Bredero-Price is a tiny cramped site on Immingham Docks and employs 400 workers. The rate of death following accidents on the site is a fantastic 50 times the average for all employed males in the country.

LUMP SITE WORKERS



Seven years ago the then separate firms of Bredero and Price both put up the sum of £50,000 each to build the Immingham works. Apart from profits totalling at least £2 million that they have made since then, each parent company now has an investment worth at least £1 million.

The management has made a mockery of the Factory Inspectorate. In February a big lorry backed into a wall and left it on the verge of collapse.

For two months men were working underneath the wall despite the fact that it was so loose it could be moved by a push of the hand. All protests to the management were ignored.

FLURRY

On Monday 21 April there was a sudden flurry of activity and the wall was reinforced. On Tuesday the Factory Inspectors arrived.

On 7 June a diesel compressor caught fire and no fire blankets could be found. All the hand extinguishers were either empty or missing. The fire had spread considerably by the time a large floor extinguisher could be brought to the scene. One man was seriously burned and is still in hospital.

Immediately after the fire the management ordered new fire equipment, and on 9 June new fire blankets and extinguishers were installed. On 11 June the Fire Officer arrived

and, after looking around, found everything in order.

Unsafe conditions at the firm have been killing and maiming workers for seven years, and only now do the Factory Inspectorate seem to be taking a serious interest. They have been on the site nearly every day for the past few weeks and have found dozens of 'faults'.

This sudden concern for the suffering of Bredero workers may have something to do with the leaflet which the local International Socialists branch circulated in the factory last month, and which criticised Matt Quinn, the so-called safety officer. It created a lot of interest on all sides.

Since the IS leaflet was produced the men have finally joined a union. So far the management seems to be taking this lying down, although last year 40 men were sacked after a strike over recognition of the Transport Workers Union failed.

Now the men have joined the General and Municipal Workers. It remains to be seen whether a serious fight over safety, wages and conditions can be put up. Now, more than in any other firm, or in any other union, the key problem is for the rank and file to get themselves involved, to get themselves organised, and to get themselves united in their demands.

Dermot Smyth

Preparing for Power J.T. 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 steward movement.

Price: £1 plus 15p postage.

PLUTO PRESS, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH.

Shock report on how

Don't

'I FOLLOW the theories of Professor Eysenck on race and intelligence myself. Most of them are good kids, but they just haven't got it up here.'

The kindly, middle-aged teacher leant across his desk, tapped his forehead, and explained in his best confidential manner why he thought that so many black children are ending up in the Special Schools for the Educationally Subnormal.

Nationally, there are twice as many children of West Indian parents in ESN schools as one would expect from their distribution in the school population at large.

In some parts of the country—Inner London, Haringey, Ealing—the proportion is even larger. Despite the belated efforts of some education authorities to do something about it, the problem is going to get a lot bigger unless society as a whole faces up to its racist attitudes.

Much of the problem lies in the testing system inflicted on the black child. Intelligence tests like the Merrill system (tested on French children, perfected on Scottish, administered by a white, middle-class medical officer with a four-week training in psychology and too many cases to get through in one day) will determine the entire future of the seven-years-old child referred by a teacher totally untrained in the differences of background and culture of her children.

In theory, the tests will be given by a fully-qualified educational psychologist with a degree and two years' teaching experience before she's ever let loose on deciding people's life chances.

Condemned

In practice, in a big city like London, there aren't enough psychologists to go round, so that overstretched work-horse the School Medical Officer gets the job.

And the child he deals with is the product of an environment that is by definition deprived: parents working long hours in low paid occupations. Housing to go with it entailing long hours spent in cleaning. Little space available for children to play. Infants left in the care of unqualified child minders so mothers can add to the household budget and make ends meet.

No neat and respectable nursery schools here with their 9 to 3.30 hours, when mother has to clock on at the canteen or work bench at 7.30. So the child goes to a child-minder who herself will have to take too many children to make it pay, thus ensuring that she hasn't the time or the energy to play with them, to develop their ability to communicate and learn.

AND AT HOME discipline will be firm, much firmer than the progressive atmosphere of the school. Parents and their friends will probably chat to each other in Creole, itself a living language but not one the teacher at school speaks in or even acknowledges.

The Schools Council has recently set up Concept 7-9 to help teachers with communicating with Creole speakers. Admirable in outline, it handles 16 teachers every six months. There are 130,000 West Indian children in our schools right now, and estimates say up to 70,000

by DAVID CLARK

under-fives will be with us in the next five years.

And the family may well not all live together—the unsupported 'baby mother' being left to look after her child as well as earn a living and survive as a black woman in a racist society is a common situation.

It is this child—confused and confusing—that the teacher has to teach. And this is not a task her own education equips her for.

One of Britain's leading colleges—Goldsmith's, located right in New Cross in multi-racial South London—gives its students the grand total of two optional lectures in multi-racial studies in a three-year course.

Themselves possibly inclined to give Prof Eysenck a fair hearing, but 'definitely not racist', the students will sally forth determined to 'teach all their children the same.'

The Local Education Authority—particularly Inner London which has the biggest problem and slowest responses—may be wedded to a policy of separating all its children who need special education out of the normal school and into its ESN schools for a reason as simple as the fact that it has the buildings and doesn't want to waste them (ILEA Reports 1971).

What a dreadful reason for condemning children to be stigmatised for the rest of their lives!

And there is no doubt that the children are stigmatised. They go to the 'silly school' in a special bus that calls for them every morning while their mates walk or cycle off to their school.

Deprived

They learn different things. There's an emphasis, of course, on reading and writing, the simple everyday things like going on the tube and paying a bill—and though it's taught with an obvious care and compassion, the child is being condemned with kindness to an everlasting ignorance of history or geography or playing in a school football team.

AND SO a syndrome grows up and becomes a theory: a people different in colour and culture is enslaved and transported to another land. There its members are brutalised, most elements of their culture are destroyed and a new culture, a hybrid of African and imperial ideas replaces it.

After three centuries of brutalisation and struggle, they are invited

Stigma of

LEVINÉ

The Life of a Revolutionary

"We Communists are all dead men on leave... I do not know if you will extend my leave or whether I shall have to join Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg... But I know, whatever your verdict, events cannot be stopped..."

We have all of us tried to the best of our knowledge and conscience to do our duty towards the International, the Communist World Revolution."

These were Eugen Leviné's last words in court before his execution.

On 7 April 1919, a soviet government was formed in Munich led by poets, artists and writers. It had little working-class support and was doomed to failure. But the Communists rallied to it—to save what they could from the ruins.

Eugen Leviné led the defence of the Munich Soviet. He was born in Russia, educated in Germany and became a revolutionary very young. He took part in the 1905 events in Russia, was imprisoned, escaped to Germany, joined the German Social Democratic Party and then, during the war, the Independent Social Democrats and the Spartakusbund. Later he was one of the few Spartakists to be elected to the first Central Assembly of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets in December 1918.

He took part in the January fighting in Berlin, and then worked for the party in the Ruhr, Brunswick and again in Berlin. Finally at the beginning of March he was sent to Munich where he met his death.

This is the book of his life and of the Munich soviet, by his wife and comrade Rosa Leviné-Meyer

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West Indian children are classified 'subnormal' and herded into special schools

brand these black kids

to come to the Mother Country to fill jobs the white working class is beginning to reject.

In Britain, rejected because of skin colour, condemned to the unseen, lowest-paid jobs in society, their own children are entrapped from birth into a social position, justified by a half-understood theory of academic inferiority, typecast for a continuation of their own enslavement.

Are there solutions?

Partial

Outside of a radical understanding of the deepest roots of racism and imperial history—and the political alternatives necessary to destroy its continuing existence—any solution must be partial. But there are certain obvious and necessary demands that must be made.

The first one is for the total abolition of all class and culture oriented tests. The National Foundation of Educational Research—and the University of the West Indies—is working on this, but their results are taking a long while to come up.

In the meantime, we rely on a system that is acknowledged by all objective educationalists to be biased. These tests must be stopped immediately, and so must the system of administration by half-trained and over-worked medical officers.

Another fundamental need is for the positive support of black educationalists fighting uphill battles for their own credibility and the setting up of their own supplementary schools.

Black children must have black people of knowledge and authority

to identify with if even a small inroad is to be made in helping them to develop their own potentials.

AT PRESENT a claimed £400 per child is spent on the ESN pupil in the separate school compared to £90 for the ordinary child—but always in the separate school. Special schools must be abolished and this amount of energy and resources moved into the normal comprehensive school system so that the child can grow up in a normal school environment and part of the stigma detached from his existence. If we all live together, we must learn together.

Teacher training colleges must face up to their responsibilities and teach their students about their pupils. We are all equal, but we are not all the same, and it is a liberal cosmetic to pretend that we are.

Our teachers must be properly taught, and this demand is fundamental.

Finally, parental pressure has to be focused on the educational authorities to make them face up to their responsibilities.

Support

Despite all the problems attached to their own existence, the biggest and loudest voice in this affair must be that of black parents lobbying schools, education authorities and the political bureaucracy in the attempt to get a square deal for their children.

In this they are entitled to the whole-hearted support of teachers, political activists and all trade unionists.



Torn from normal school life and herded into ESN schools on the basis of quack 'theories' based on crude racialism

Picture: CLIVE CAPEL (Report)

Hard and implacable pressure has to be brought to bear to destroy forever the whole way of racist thinking that defines a person as an 'immigrant'—or even more insultingly, a 'second generation immigrant'—and thus condemns not only him to second-class work, housing and a future, but also ensures that his children will fulfil the same hidden and despised role in society.

And that is not a simple question of mechanical lobbying, but a complex and very political question on the whole nature of racism in our society.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Social Security for Strikers



a Socialist Worker pamphlet 2p

5p (inc post), 10 or more post free, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

the 'silly school'

Britain is the prisoner of the sectarianism in N.Ireland that it created

Birds come home to roost



THE TOKY GOVERNMENT and its Labour Party backers have built great hopes on the success of the new Assembly in Northern Ireland, elected this week. It is the one event that will show whether William Whitelaw's strategy since direct rule is winning or not.

All the indications are that the British have once more failed to find a way out of the mess which they themselves have created. It was clear at the time of the local government elections that there is no moderate party which accepts the British plan for rationalising imperialist rule here and which can win support from both sides of the sectarian divide. The nearest to such a party, Alliance, won only 11 per cent of the seats in the councils, and got very few Protestant votes.

The failure to span sectarian divisions through the building of a respectable middle-class party made up of both Protestants and Catholics, has led the British to try to institutionalise sectarianism, through power sharing between parties elected on sectarian votes.

But even this is proving difficult. On the Catholic side there

is the Social Democratic and Labour Party, whose leaders are prepared, for the sake of putting a little power into the hands of the Catholic middle class, to share anything with anyone.

From MIKE MILLER in Belfast

But even with the SDLP thoroughly tamed, the Provisionals' campaign continues unabated, and there are few signs to indicate that the recent claims by the British that *this time* they really are getting to grips with the IRA are any more truthful than similar claims in the past.

On the Unionist side the British are in serious trouble. The Craig-Paisley coalition, which rejects the White Paper, and is committed to wrecking the Assembly, won half as many seats in the council elections as the Unionist Party proper.

Corrupt

Many of the Official Unionists also reject the White Paper and are in fact closer to Craig's position than to that of their own party leader, Brian Faulkner.

The anti-White Paper Unionists see the Assembly as a 'half way house to a united Ireland', and therefore as a move which would end the corrupt system on which they depend. In the election there were more anti-White Paper Unionist candidates than there were supporters of it, and one estimate is that Faulkner's supporters will get 24 seats and his opponents 25.

With such a strong ultra-Loyalist voice in the Assembly, power sharing, of the type envisaged by the British, will be

impossible, because the hard-liners will refuse to operate it.

The ideology of Protestant supremacism, which Craig and his allies stand for, is as strong as ever. The monster of Orangeism, which the British created and used for so many years, has once again proved to be the stumbling block for their policy here.

The 'Protestant state for a Protestant people', which the British built and backed with the full might of their army, will not be broken with a few pleas for moderation.

The successes of the neo-fascist Loyalists has the British worried, and has forced them to try again to present Faulkner as a man of moderation. The recent Loyalist murders and bombings have led to vehement outbursts against the Ulster Defence Association in the press, although the same press maintained virtual silence for the last year as the ultra-right wing assassins killed scores of innocent Catholic civilians and organised wide-spread crime in the areas under their control.

The aim is to re-create the credibility of Faulkner and his gang by scaring the less militant and dedicated Loyalists out of supporting Craig and Co.

But Faulkner has no credibility with the anti-Unionist population at all, and try as they will, the British will not give him

The bombing and terror campaign of the extreme right Loyalists has forced the Tories to try to present the Faulkner Unionists as 'moderate men'.

any. Even the SDLP would find it hard to form an executive with Faulkner, who, in the days of the civil rights agitation, was always on the extreme right of the Unionist Party.

Faulkner, more than any other individual, is responsible for the introduction of internment and all the subsequent terror and death that has been meted out to his opponents in the Catholic working class.

The dilemma of the British ruling class is insurmountable. They have failed to overcome sectarianism through the Alliance Party.

It looks as if they have failed to create the conditions for institutionalising sectarianism. The bi-partisan approach to the problem by the Labour and Tory parties is under pressure, as Labour talks of a 'drastic rethink' in policy. And to top it all, there is a growing campaign to have the troops brought home.

Stabilise

The British ruling class needs to bring the Catholic and Protestant middle class together in order to stabilise the rule of British big business in Ireland as a whole. Every attempt they have made to do so since the Civil Rights protests of 1968 has failed.

The Assembly is the latest of those attempts. It too will fail.

It is clear that the British cannot solve the problems of sectarian divisions in the North. They created those divisions, they have thrived on them for centuries, and they have not got the ability to end them now.

It is British imperialism that is responsible for the slums, the unemployment, and all the other miserable conditions which make the division of the working class along sectarian lines both possible and necessary.

Every failure to reconcile the middle class in the last few years has led to more physical repression, more military harassment, more death and destruction for the anti-Unionist population.

Victory

Although there are signs that the British are prepared to use more force against the Loyalists, something which they have refused to do in the past, the possibility of a re-instatement of Faulkner and Craig, with a tame Catholic or two in their executive, seems just as likely.


The British have known no other road in the past other than capitulation to the right wing. With an even friendlier government in the South of Ireland, prepared to recognise the Assembly, the British can expect little opposition and much co-operation if they try once more to achieve a military victory over the anti-Unionists.

And army morale and public opinion at home would make a long war of attrition against the Loyalists a very difficult enterprise.

Whatever the final outcome of the Assembly election, and whatever new ploy the British ruling class may think up to 'solve' their problems here, British socialists must continue to demand the immediate withdrawal of the army, the last line of defence for imperialist domination in Ireland.

Orange stumbling block

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Is the car



giant on the skids?

by BRIAN
VASHER

The reasons, which the report traces in detail, are partly historical. In the cosy post-war years, when the British and American manufacturers shared the cream of the world market, shareholders of the major UK manufacturers took fat dividends, leaving very little for reinvestment, to meet the growing European and Japanese competition.

In the 1960s, to remain competitive, car manufacturers needed ever growing amounts of investment. By 1970 an investment of £100 million a year was needed for a new model launch.

This thirst for capital is a major reason for the world-wide tendency for concentration and the frantic efforts to increase output per worker. In Britain the result was the belated British Leyland merger in 1968, in the wake of Wilson's 'white heat of the technological revolution.'

ELBOW

The heat, it appeared, was not strong enough. On the average since then, British Leyland managed to invest a mere £50 million a year, compared to Fiat's £270 millions, Volkswagen's £150 millions and the American giants average running to £500 million a year.

As a result the fixed assets per worker (the power at each worker's elbow) in British Leyland is around £2000, compared to an average £6000 for its competitors. Nor will the latest flag-waving £400 million for the next five years suffice.

Even then to realise this investment the problems of finding markets is crucial. In its home ground, the report points out that British Leyland is losing out.

Car imports into Britain have risen at a phenomenal pace from 5 per cent in 1965 to 27 per cent in March this year, while British Leyland's share has gone down from 48 per cent in 1968 to about 30 per cent now.

And in a fairly comprehensive survey of the world markets, the report concludes that in the traditional Commonwealth markets the company has not

withstood the fierce competition of the European and Japanese companies.

The alternative for Leyland it seems is to join the fanfare for Europe. The latest expansion programme in fact has been concentrated in Italy, Belgium and Spain. Here again, the report points out that the company could come unstuck.

'Industry forecasts suggest that the rate of growth of new car sales in the EEC will decline from 7 per cent in the sixties to 3 per cent in the seventies.'

TACTICS

Apart from the corporation's vulnerability, the workforce could face reactionary bargaining tactics as its ability to switch production to European plants increases. Already 'most of the cars which it sells on the continent are now being assembled in Belgium, Spain and Italy.'

Again, 'the role played by the Longbridge plant... will undergo a fundamental change. Increasing emphasis will be placed in manufacturing components for assembly in Europe. By next year, in fact 80 per cent of all work at Longbridge will be KD (knock-down) form.'

The fact is that Leyland intends to 'rationalise' on a European scale, rather like Ford of Europe. Its expansion in fascist Spain, with the so-called 'amenable' workforce, should be watched carefully by trade unionists. In Europe again, the intensity of competition among car manufacturers in a contracting market has resulted in a more ruthless shopfloor regime.

CRISIS

Consequently, up to 30 per cent of the workforce is now recruited from the more vulnerable immigrants from Southern Europe.

Another place where Leyland would be willing to expand is in South Africa. It makes £1000 profit per worker in South Africa, compared to £250 per worker in Britain. The report devastatingly shows how meaningless the Poverty Datum Line is as a measure for African wages, given the high rise in the black cost of living and the racial tax system.

Can British Leyland survive? The report predicts that the UK

The modern form of slavery: Obey without arguing, suffer punishment without the right to appeal, lose the freedom of speech, the right to meet

Austin Morris Division 'will face a severe crisis before 1980,' as 'by then 80 per cent of the European car market will be for replacements' and the increasing tendency in Europe for over capacity.

Given the importance of car exports to the British economy, CIS predicts a salvaging operation by the government on the under-

standing that a Weinstock-type GEC operation can be forced on the workers.

'Another possibility is that British Leyland might merge with a major European or Japanese manufacturer.'

But 'whichever way Leyland jumps, the workers in the corporation will suffer, either by losing jobs altogether, or else by

being forced to accept the shop-floor tyranny which is an essential ingredient of commercial success in the increasingly irrational area of the world automobile market.'

CIS Anti-Report: British Leyland, the beginning of the end? 60p + 10p postage, 40p for bulk orders, 30p to BLMC workers. CIS, 52 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1.

SUFFER

across the factory lose the freedom of the freedom of speech, meet and associate... without arguing, suffer without the right to get the worst jobs if your doesn't like your being an assembly line

modern form of slavery' description of Measured and the abolition of work system. The change of payment implies control of workers, a of the management's

greater 'cost control', imate and direct idea 'cash flows' in the oration. It also means of management to efficient plants' and production. It means

CENTRAL

the tyranny? Why the efforts to increase at even a faster rate? the report says, 'the industry is central to the onomy. In 1971, the 700,000 motor and workers produced ent of the country's estic Product, but 11 of exports; and the rned a bigger surplus ance of trade in that did the economy as a

'indicator of national potency' is vulnerable. sh share of world ar production dropped since 1956. Between 1970 UK motor exports 11.7 per cent to 13.4

period output remained le the seven other producers increased from 17 million units

Bosses look to Europe

International Socialism 59



The June issue of International Socialism features an article by Brian Trench Perspectives for the Irish left that is essential reading for all socialists fighting British domination of the 32 counties. Other features include:
The Electricians—decline of a union: George Russell
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YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

CHRIS HARMAN on the importance of socialist ideas

THERE is one argument opponents of revolutionary socialism invariably use: 'Revolutions always fail,' they say. 'If you made a revolution, you would end up like the present lot, because there have to be rulers and the rulers will always be corrupted by power.'

Look into the past and you will see why this argument is strong: all the great civilisations were run by a privileged ruling group, and all previous revolutions have eventually led to the establishment of new ruling classes.

But this has not been because of some unchangeable feature of human nature. There have been many societies in which there were no rulers, chiefs or bosses, no police, law courts or state machine, societies in which everyone was more or less equal.

But such societies were always based on a relatively primitive economy, relying on the simpler forms of agriculture or fishing. Only societies in which there were class divisions were able to develop more advanced forms of economic life and the town-based social life that went with this.

The reason had nothing to do with 'human nature'. It was because a society based on primitive agriculture or fishing was likely to be a poor society, in which everyone just satisfied their basic needs and no more.

Advance beyond this point depended on people having time to do more than satisfy basic needs, so they could give time and resources to improving tools used in production, to building towns, to developing science and culture.

Under conditions of natural scarcity most people never had time for such things. Inevitably any social advance depended on a small privileged group not burdened with day-to-day toil.

Minority

The ancient civilisations were all based on the exploitation of the majority by a small minority: in Greece and Rome, the exploitation of slaves by a minority of 'free citizens', in China the exploitation of a massive peasantry by state bureaucrats and landowners.

It could hardly be otherwise. Literacy, art, the regulation of the economy, all depended upon a leisured minority. Had their wealth been divided out equally among everyone, the conditions of the majority would have been improved slightly, but not enough for them to have had time to create their own art and science.

That is why the many peasant revolutions in ancient China all resulted in a rebuilding of the old society, with only a few changes in the people at the top. When the Roman empire collapsed, what followed was not a liberation of those exploited by the Roman ruling class, but a return to backward forms of agricultural production and a virtual destruction of town-based civilisation.

For a whole stage of human history, natural scarcity made class division inevitable.

THE FIRE NEXT TIME

This continued to be true during the early years of capitalism. If capitalism had been destroyed 150 years ago, it would not have been replaced by a more advanced society, but by a more backward one.

There was just not enough wealth available to ensure a full, human life for everyone at that time.

That is part of the reason why the revolutions of the 17th century in Britain and the 18th century in France did not result in a classless society, but in a new form of class society.

The development of capitalism itself has changed all this. Industry has been built up to a massive scale by the continuous exploitation of people all over the world. For the first time in human history there is enough wealth to enable everyone to share equally in both its production and consumption and to have time for art, science, the advance of civilisation, or just simply relaxation.

But because the development of industry has been based on competition between rival groups of capitalists and the exploitation of the majority of the population, natural scarcity has been replaced by artificial scarcity. While whole sections of the earth's people live in unmitigated poverty, the rival ruling classes waste massive resources competing with each other economically and threatening each other militarily.

In 1970 the ruling classes wasted 183,000 million dollars on arms alone. That figure would be enough to double the living standards of the poorer half of the human race.

When you add to it the other sums wasted—through advertising, through

projects like Concorde and Concordski, through keeping factories shut and the men who could be working in them unemployed—it is easy to see that the lives of the mass of people can be vastly improved, without taking society backwards in any way.

All that is needed is that those who create the wealth seize control of it from the present rulers.

And here again, capitalism has made such a change possible. Until the 19th century the number of people in any society who were literate and had any knowledge of life outside their own district was small. The exploited people were spread out over the countryside, unable to communicate with one another and unable to impose direct control on any leaders they elected. It was easy for new groups of rulers to use the general ignorance to advance themselves.

Today things are rather different. Of course there are still large areas of the world populated by illiterate peasants. But in Europe, in America, in Russia, in much of Latin America, and in the great cities of India and China there is a new sort of exploited class—an industrial working class.

Revolution

For capitalism itself now has to ensure that workers have a certain level of education if they are to man its machines adequately. It also concentrates them into massive factories, where they can develop collective power and control elected representatives.

A revolution based on this working class, particularly in the parts of the world where it is strongest, would be quite different from any previous revolution.

Generalisations about 'power corrupting', based on previous historical experience, would no longer apply. For power would be taken not by some new ruling group but by workers' councils elected from the factory floor and subject to instant recall. The leaders of the revolution would not be people set apart from the mass of the population but men and women who, after the revolution as before, would have to endure the same conditions of life as the majority.

BOOKS

REVIEW

When every man was licensed to kill

ALL BULL: THE NATIONAL SERVICE, edited by B S Johnson, Quartet, 50p.

THIS book is a series of reminiscences about military life during National Service, which ended 10 years ago. It is boring, hardly surprisingly, as there is nothing more boring to non-military types than the 'Do you remember the time the sergeant-major fell in a vat of boiling blanco?' stories swapped by old sweats and squaddies.

But as an old squaddie, why was I bored? Why are the funny incidents less funny than the ones I recall? Why are the grim and intolerant incidents less grim and intolerant than mine?

And, above all, why is there so little analysis of the role of National Service and the role of the army in the modern, inter-continental-ballistic world?

One reason is that far too many of the chapters are written by ex-officers. The army doesn't bother about glossing over the class structure and officers are quickly elevated to a social station far removed from the muck, sweat and tears of the 'other ranks'. And, like the ruling class of which they are a part, officers are a tiny parasitic minority.

National Service was the first peacetime conscript army/navy/air force in Britain. It was started at the end of World War Two during the Cold War hysteria and with the ludicrous belief that a vast standing army of malcontents torn away from their normal jobs and lives was the best deterrent to the 'red menace'.

The reality of the post-war world slowly chipped away at this nonsense and, even more slowly, penetrated the less-than-flexible minds of the army chiefs. The idea of a 'conventional' army began to drain, along with the blood of dead Arabs and Englishmen, into the sands of Suez. Incompetent bods in khaki and blue were an anachronism in the day of the H-bomb.

There was also the growing unpopularity of National Service with ordinary people and with employers, who resented their trained workers being press-ganged for two years. Duncan Sandys was the suitably named Defence Minister (later MP for Lonrho and the Cayman Islands) who let the conscripts slip through his fingers and back into 'civvy street'.

But from 1948 to 1963 tens of thousands of young men of 18 were flung headlong into the brutal and brutalising world of the military.

Most of us tried not to go in and the medical was a weird pantomime of pretences and ailments. I borrowed a pair of spectacles from a drastically short-sighted fellow journalist, but I didn't have the nerve to wear them at the medical, mainly because I kept crashing into doors and falling down.

Like nine out of ten potential lead-swingers, I consumed vast quantities of sugar in the hope that my sample of pee would prove that I was diabetic. No luck. I also said 'Eh?', 'What?' and 'Pardon?' to the man testing my hearing. Again no luck. I was declared fit to be turned into a licensed killer.

The best dodge I ever heard concerned a man who turned up for his medical holding the hand of another man. As the medical proceeded, from eyes to genitals ('Cough please') he relentlessly clung on to the hand of his 'friend'. The horrified medics declared him totally unfit for service.

The rest of us were packed off to Catterick or wherever. We became numbers, faceless robots, drilled and screamed at, turned—hopefully—into unthinking cannon fodder. The army is class society with the velvet glove off. Officers have ladies, NCOs have wives, other ranks have women.

The officer class exercises power through the NCOs—sergeant-majors, sergeants and corporals, the army equivalent of foremen, attempting to outdo each other in sheer thuggery and bloody-mindedness. Rank is as carefully bur-nished and protected as the brass buttons on the uniform.

As John Arden stresses in the one really good and thoughtful essay in this collection, the army's job, shorn of bullshit about law and order, is to kill. Nobody should be surprised when, as in Derry on Bloody Sunday, it mows down 13 innocent people and its ruling class protectors heap on the buckets of white-wash.

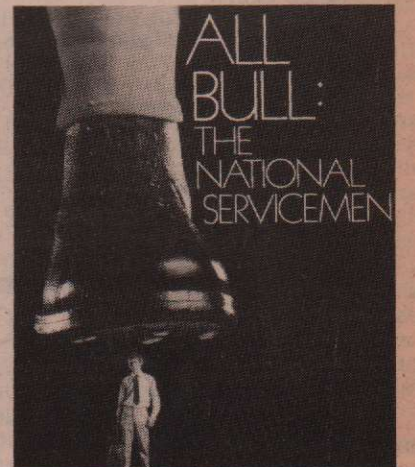
An organisation with that one, basic aim allows no niceties of style: the raw recruits are hammered, screamed at, degraded, terrorised into accepting the status quo without question. Not everybody survives the experience.

A lot committed suicide—there are no official figures. A lot more escaped, were caught and imprisoned, their jail sentences added on to the two years. There were some on every camp—gaunt, crop-haired, vacant-eyed men forced to march at double time by screeching NCOs when they were allowed out of their cells.

Most, amazingly, did survive, did their stint, went home and picked up the pieces. A few were turned into callous fascists. I've met some.

Me? Well, it turned me from a soggy social democrat into a fully-fledged revolutionary. It also taught me to fire a rifle. It's an ill wind...

23568920 A/Sgt Protz R, R. Sigs (rtd)



BOOKWORM'S EYE VIEW

THIS MONTH sees the first flowering of an ambitious new complete edition of Marx in Penguin paperback. It is an 800 page new translation of the GRUNDRISSE, the series of working notebooks Marx compiled while working towards Das Capital.

This notorious volume lay for a long time in Russian archives, was published in German in 1939 and has been available in English only in the tantalisingly brief excerpts. Its full publication in such an elegant and economic edition is a real event.

Marx's style in the Grundrisse is intimate and unpolished for publication. He is rambling and discursive and takes bitter sides against the economic arguments between the experts of his time. But the dark polemical passages that are so difficult to understand without a full knowledge of the debates burst into shorter dazzling passages of illumination on labour and money and automation.

Marx at his most delicate and clear jostles with Marx at his most thorough and heavyhanded, Marx the Jehovah of prose continually punctuates himself with venomous footnotes.

But this invaluable edition makes it clear that the Grundrisse's unavailability has inflated its reputation. There is little new here for anyone with a thorough knowledge of the three volumes of Capital and Theories of Surplus Value. But because it is a partially-worked notebook it does lend itself to political

scavenging and is full of sentences which can be ripped from their context to justify some new theory of student power or mock-Maoism.

It is not a book for Marxist beginners, but the clarity and quality of presentation bodes well for the future volumes in the Penguin Marx Library.

Another giant of a book, also in Penguin this month, is a welcome reprint of John Dos Passos' trilogy USA. Dos Passos is a fiction and fact writer who deserves to be mentioned alongside Marx, for his aim is no less than to portray in prose the birth of the modern American working class.

Dos Passos charts the personal trails of ex-soldiers, miners, organisers and manufacturers as they collide and conflict in the shaping of modern American capitalism. In stunningly written and carefully researched sections he peppers his book with real Americans, including one of the best portraits of Henry Ford the car baron and a harrowing account of the murder and castration of Wes Everett, the International Workers of the World organiser.

In the linking 'Camera Eye' passages Dos Passos explores a new way of writing prose which uses newspaper headlines, street scenes, conversations and a jumble of city imagery to create a montage. No matter he became a wicked old reactionary, this book will forgive him anything.

In 1960 the council tenants in St Pancras, London, fought against a rent scheme which contained many of the elements which have now been incorporated in the Housing Finance Act. The story of that fight is told in this pamphlet by Dave Burn, with an introduction by Hugh Kerr of the Harlow Tenants Federation.

Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960

Dave Burn

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A scene from Granada TV's new serial, SAM: 'Wet washing in a hired clothes basket.' Sam, right, is played by Kevin Moreton

SON OF CORONATION STREET

IN the magic make-believe world of television you've only got to have a woman staggering out into the yard of her back-to-back two-up-two-down tenement and hanging up a pair of darned long Johns and all the critics scream 'Authentic working-class!'

The author of the present ratings-topper, SAM, is said to be drawing heavily on his own experiences of life in the hungry thirties for the subject-matter of the serial. If so, we know where he was brought up, right next door to Ena Sharples.

We know that to get the episode out inside the budget everyone has to talk about what's happening instead of letting us see what's happening, but personally I find that unless you follow it with a notebook and pencil at the ready and never miss a line of 'dialogue' you just can't follow it at all. John Finch, who wrote it, must have been deafened by the chatter at birth.

Now it so happens that I'm old enough to have been there, and to my recollection the people I lived with in 1936 weren't forever nattering about what the Means Test man was going to do to Elsie next door, or how you had to keep your nose down to the textbooks to lift yourself up out of the fate awaiting you for having been born working class, or how Polly's



Jack was heading for trouble with the woman three doors down.

Subjects for conversation in Scotland Green Road, Ponders End, concerned such matters of vital domestic concern as Dad putting his boots on the fender brass, whether Edward the Eighth had the pox and how to be out when the rent man called.

The point was that everyone was in the same boat, and when you're all in the same boat you don't moan about how it's near to sinking and the water's running out, you plug your finger in the hole, keep your eye on the water cask and chat about Leyton Orient's chances in the Cup.

What happens is something else. And it's bloody boring. It's gristle-and-bisto today and gristle-and-bisto tomorrow. It's

don't answer back or you lose your lousy job. It's you don't get married till you've got some poor girl up the spout. It's joining the fascists to get a bit of excitement on a Saturday night down at Bethnal Green. Or joining the party and getting a truncheon round your earhole demonstrating for Arms for Spain.

If there's a lesson to be learned from looking backwards—what's called taking a historical view—it's that it all comes out in the wash.

What happened to the Spanish Civil War? It turned up in South East Asia. What happened to the dole queues? They're called redundancy. What happened to cow heel and tripe and pigs feet? You buy them from the supermarket disguised as fish fingers.

In other words you can only look at the past with the present in front of your eyes. The object of the exercise is to discover the relevance of what happened then to what you see happening now.



Writers like John Finch don't want to look at what's happening now because that might disturb people. You don't get top ratings, so the John Finches of this world believe, if you disturb people.

So you get the designer to rig up a washing-line, hire some long Johns and a clothes basket from Berman's and you're in business. The 'authentic working class' business.

You get your sympathy by having an evil civil servant putting the squeeze on an abandoned wife. You don't show what's behind the evil civil servant. You show the hard times by letting your characters talk about the horrors below ground. You never show where the coal's going to, who gets the rent money, who it is who prescribes the conditions under which you live. To 'better yourself' you buckle down, accept the values of the class above you, and do your best to join it.

Now, a lot of what goes on in SAM did go on in real life in the thirties. But what you see on the screen is in no sense real, because the incidents have been extracted from reality, clothed in that dread 'authenticity' the critics rave about, and served up as experience.

Experience, which is reality as you live it, is something else. And what the writer has to do is to recreate experience. When he succeeds he illuminates something which wasn't illuminated before. You suddenly understand something you never understood in precisely that way. You get a flood of recognition, like suddenly recognising a face you thought you'd forgotten.

This is the sort of 'authenticity' that matters.

It's what stuck out a mile from the Tony Garnett production of *Blooming Youth* which was devised and directed by Leslie Blair and acted by a cast of young people who clearly believed in the truth of the characters they were pretending to be.



In this presentation you weren't asked to 'identify' with anyone. You weren't being urged to extend your sympathies to any particular character in any particular predicament. All that was asked of you was that you should watch and listen to what was going on and discover what Leslie Blair and his team of actors and technicians believe being a student at a Polytechnic is really like.

It doesn't matter if your recollections of being a student are different, that you didn't do the things these people did, what matters is that at the heart of the 'play'—the inverted commas are intended to be complimentary—there's the nugget of truth, of the reality of the experience of being a student. And *Blooming Youth* had that nugget of truth.

SAM hasn't got a nugget anywhere. All it's got is a lot of wet washing in a hired clothes basket, a load of tired actors on weekly turn-round hiding their drama-school accents under 'nawth country' dialect, and some carefully chosen locations which make you think how clever the production manager was to manage to shoot round the television aerials.

I'm now going to say goodbye to you till September. It's not that I don't get time to write this column and earn a living as well. It's that I don't get time to earn a living and watch television as well. At least, not till it starts getting dark earlier.

See you soon.

Tom Clarke

Black meant beaten

NEXT MONDAY Joe Frazier, former world heavyweight boxing champion, takes on Joe Bugner. One man in the past decade has injected fire into that tired and corrupt old sport—Muhammed Ali.

Most fighters are driven by vanity and anxiety, and few survive defeat. But Muhammed Ali isn't that simple, or he would never have got past boxing to become the century's most extraordinary folk hero. His iron and eggshell ego was consciously identified with black liberation—so he is a hero to oppressed people everywhere.

To explain Ali, Bud Schulberg, in his book *LOSER AND STILL CHAMPION* (New English Library 35p) is forced to look into the traumas of America during the past decade: civil rights, votes for blacks, the burning of the Watts ghetto, white terrorism, the debacle of Vietnam.

It was against this backdrop that Ali made his decisions to change from white Christianity to embrace Islam, and to call for separate black development. To the American ruling class such black 'disloyalty' made Ali a terrifying symbol of things to come.

Schulberg's main argument is that each heavyweight champion sums up the spirit of his age, either because it shapes his personality, or his personality reflects the times. This is particularly true of the black champions.

But Schulberg is aware of the significance of his book's title. How the image of the victorious champion corresponds closely to that of the masculine symbol in Western culture. How the law of the boxing ring is no more than that of the jungle, serving to justify the crushing of the weak by the strong. And he is quite clear about how essential this is to the values of capitalism. Because of this connection between boxing and the 'survival of the fittest', possession of the heavyweight crown was long considered to be the prerogative of a white man.

By arguing that there is a simple relation between the level of consciousness of black champion and black community, Schulberg makes the error of underestimating the techniques of 'Negro Control' developed by the American ruling class.

The first black heavyweight to win the world title was Jack Johnson, who defeated Tom Burns in 1908. The early years of the 20th century saw open race war in America after the collapse of the Populist movement in the 1890s. The poor whites, betrayed by their leaders and helpless under the combined onslaught of southern Dixiecrats and northern big business, withdrew from their alliance with the blacks and found refuge in virulent racialism.

These were the years when the Jim Crow laws found their place on the southern statute books, and the official rate of lynching ran at about 200 a year.

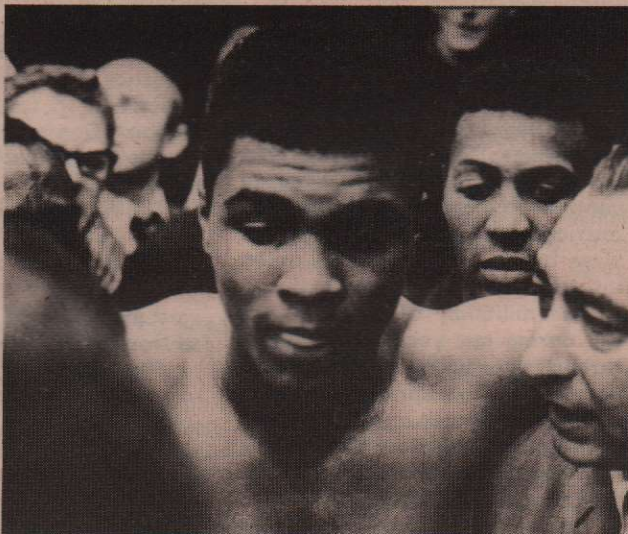
Better late than never

RECENTLY Brecht's play *The Mother* was produced at the Half Moon Theatre in Stepney. Disgracefully, Review page gave it no mention at all. Happily the production is to receive another London run, this time at the Roundhouse in Chalk Farm, so we can remedy our error.

The play deals with the growth towards socialism of a working-class woman in the years between the 1905 and 1917 Russian revolutions.

It isn't some dour and boring tract but an exciting and moving story. The Roundhouse is anxious to pull in a big working-class audience and while seats start at 60p there are reductions for parties. It begins next Monday and runs till 28 July. It would be worth tenants' associations, trade union or International Socialist branches organising outings to see it.

The Roundhouse's phone number is 01-267 2564.



MUHAMMED ALI: 'The Vietcong don't call me a nigger'

by BARRY ALMEIDA

Amid this swelling of white supremacy Johnson's victory came as a thunder-clap. That a black should be the better of a white in any sphere was unbelievable. A frantic search was begun by one-time socialist Jack London, backed by the yellow press, for a chosen representative of the white race able to level Johnson's pride.

The honour of being the first white hope fell to former champion Jim Jefferies, and with a delicious touch of irony a match was drawn between the two on the Fourth of July, Independence Day 1910.

What happened in that fight under the hot Nevada sky belongs to the brutal history of boxing. Suffice to say that the pre-fight publicity made it strictly a matter of prejudice. The favourite refrain of spectators at the ringside was 'All coons look alike to me'. Johnson, who had been born a slave, gladly adopted the role of combatant for his people and, ignoring death threats, beat and cruelly humiliated 'Master Jefferies'.

When the news spread of Jefferies' defeat, race riots sprang up like a wildfire

throughout the US. Behind the fire and carnage a more insidious weapon of repression was aimed against the black champion. Johnson's well-known fondness for the high life, fast cars, white women, imported champagne, enabled a certain Senator Mann to bring in the notorious Act of that name which made it illegal 'to cross a state line with a woman for an immoral purpose.'

As had been intended, Johnson was summarily tried and convicted under the Act, and sentenced to jail. Rather than face the consequence of such persecution he fled to Paris, and was forced to remain in exile until he agreed to lose the title to a white challenger.

For 30 years afterwards no black man was allowed by the British boxing controllers to contest the championship. When the demands of competition finally induced the sports moguls to waive their racialism, great care was taken to ensure that any successful black boxer should conform to the opinions of the Establishment. Those who didn't were subjected to character assassination and economic boycott.

Classic

The few blacks ever to achieve celebrity status in America were usually from the unpolitical world of sport and play, and that took 'the problem' out of context and placed it on the misty level of goodwill, charitable and harmonious race relations, and good sportsmanship.

The confrontation between Frazier and Ali in Madison Square Gardens on 8 March 1971 had far wider implications than just who was the toughest of the tough. The fight was seen to have bearing on the war in Vietnam and the black movement in the US. Ali's refusal to accept the legitimacy of Vietnam, his classic reply to the Draft Board that 'the Vietcong don't call me nigger', made him a political symbol.

For many, Ali seemed the autonomous black man incarnate, the Afro-American freed at last from mental slavery to white supremacy.

But the fury that Ali's opposition to the war provoked amongst the governing bodies in boxing, and the rapid stripping of his title and the compulsory four-year retirement that followed, though ostensibly carried out from the highest patriotic motives, was connected with the threat Ali and the Muslims posed to boxing's traditional promoters. Ali's attempts to put together a black sponsoring group threatened the structure.

After all, wasn't this a sport where blacks fought in the ring and whites collected the cash for their pains?

If Ali was the autonomous black man, then his opponent Joe Frazier was the subordinate negro. According to Schulberg's theory he was an anachronism. Conservative, he represented what Eldridge Cleaver called the leader of the mythical legions of faithful darkies that inhabit the imagination of the white racist. During the mayoral elections in Frazier's home city of Philadelphia, he found it in his heart to support the racist police chief, Rizzio, against the expressed wishes of the black community.

This white champion in a black skin, praised to black people as having all the wholesome virtues, particularly those of greed and self-interest, proved the downfall for the people's champion. After 15 brutal rounds, Frazier found in himself the strength to step back, and crash the Black Prince on the seat of his elegant satin shorts.

Frazier became the favourite son of reactionaries everywhere. He spoke before the South Carolina legislature—the first black man to do so for 50 years! But Ali had irrevocably broken the spell and Frazier found no acceptance in the black community.

Batter

Loser and Still Champion is a mediocre book. One gets the impression Schulberg wants to defend professional boxing by glossing it over with weighty intimations of social significance.

There is little value in a sport where members of subject groups batter each other into exhaustion for the amusement of their oppressors. The argument that boxing restrains 'natural' human violence is clearly absurd.

Schulberg strikes one as a middle-aged voyeur, rubbing his soft little beer-belly up against the bar, peering through the whisky haze at the ring where the flat-footed ultimate in manhood, the super-masculine menial, grunts, sweats and bruises his way up from futureless labourer to the middle-class's clown.

Schulberg just loves the black pimps and their blonde whores who follow the fight game. There never was an easier lay for the electric hair, Cuban shades, and rhetoric the hustlers use for stunning white liberals.

He is condescending about Ali. Ali is not a simple, golden child. As Norman Mailer noted: 'Ali the boxer worked out such a master schedule of thrust and riposte, of block and slip and counter to every conceivable punch and combination of punches, that one might have to turn to Clausewitz for a view of warfare as elaborated and comprehensive.'

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We fight:

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

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

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

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

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

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

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

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

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

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

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

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

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

Against secret diplomacy.

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

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

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

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

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

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND

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

NORTH EAST

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

NORTH

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

EAST

Basilston
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

NORTH WEST

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

MIDLANDS

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

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon

SOUTH

Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Eastbourne
Guildford
Portsmouth
Southampton

WALES and SOUTH WEST

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

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

THE UNIONS

Crucial talks for Britain's miners

by Bill Message



THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the National Union of Mineworkers begins on Monday at Inverness at a crucial stage in the union's history.

Delegates have to decide next week whether they are going to continue to accept the government's restrictions in Phase Three of the wage freeze, or whether the union is to mount a real fight against them.

The militancy of the rank and file during last year's strike broke through the shabby history of two decades of collaboration between the NUM leadership and the National Coal Board. But no sooner were the men back at work than the executive slipped back into its old role.

Last year's conference passed a resolution calling for wage increases of £5.50 to £7. The executive waited six months before submitting the claim to the NCB on 10 January this year.

Reject

No campaign was mounted for the claim and the union finally accepted the maximum offer under Phase Two of the freeze of £2.29.

This year's resolution on wages, standing in the name of the Scottish Area, calls for £35 for surface workers, £40 for workers underground, and £45 for faceworkers. It also seeks to 'emphatically reject the wages policy of the government as enunciated in Phase Two and the proposed Phase Three.'

There is an important amend-

ment to the resolution from the Midlands Area which calls for negotiations 'to take place following National Conference so as to revert to the pre-Wilberforce negotiating period.'

The Wilberforce agreement which ended last year's strike lasted for 16 months until the end of February this year. It is vital that the annual agreements revert to a November-to-November period.

The dangers of a summer strike were clearly in many miners' minds when they voted against a strike this year.

The other major cause for concern in many militants' eyes was the commitment the NUM gave in the Wilberforce agreement to negotiating a productivity deal.

When the Tories introduced their wage freeze last November the talks between the NUM and the NCB on the deal were interrupted, but in its annual report to conference the executive promises that 'The NUM will continue to press for the conclusion of an acceptable productivity scheme in the hope that Phase Three of the government's policy for controlling inflation will offer an opportunity for its introduction.'

A resolution before the conference from the Derbyshire Area advocates a policy of total non-co-operation with the Industrial Relations Act and its courts and tribunals. It also 'rejects the government's anti-inflation policy and urges a union policy of confront-

ation whenever it stands in the way of legitimate pay demands.'

The resolutions calling for more repeal of the Housing Finance Act and pledges support to councils that refuse to implement it.

Four resolutions calling for more democracy in the union have been ruled out of order and excluded from the agenda by the executive. One of these—calling for all full-time officials to be re-elected every five years—has been excluded on the grounds that 'it calls for something which is contrary to the rules, rather than seeks to alter the rules.'

Betray

In February 1972 the miners drove a coach and horses through the Tories' unofficial wages ceiling. Other powerful sections of the working class followed them, widening the gap.

The NUM executive betrayed these victories of the rank and file by holding fire on the claim this year until the last minute, spreading disillusionment among the rank and file.

If the miners are going to be in the forefront of the struggle against Phase Three of the incomes policy their delegates are going to have to tie the executive down firmly on the demand for a £35, £40, £45 pay structure to commence in November and total non-co-operation with the anti-working class policies of the Tory government.

Unions must not spoil oil bonanza

TAYLOR WOODROW—John Mowlem, the consortium that two of Britain's biggest building firms have formed specially to exploit the North Sea Oil profits bonanza, is determined to build its oil rigs as far as possible from the reach of militant trade unionism.

The firm is currently trying to buy land for an oil rig construction site from the National Trust for Scotland at Drumbuie in Ross-shire. And the current issue of the community paper The West Highland Free Press shows that in negotiations with the National Trust, Taylor Woodrow representatives admitted their real motives for seeking the Ross-shire site.

During negotiations, Scottish Development Department representatives stated that Taywood-Mowlem should build on Clydeside where there was massive unemployment. A Taylor-Woodrow representative replied: 'We would prefer not to work near other contractors because of the possible labour disputes which could not be tolerated because of our tight time schedules.'

Taywood-Mowlem want to set up in Ross-shire to get away from Clydeside trade unionism. They refuse to build any houses and intend to camp in Ross-shire, bringing workers in for the duration of the bonanza. When it is over they will be flung on the scrapheap and Taywood-Mowlem

will just pull out.

The firm has additional reasons for getting a site in the western highlands. It will be cheaper to float the rigs round the north coast from Wester Ross than from the Clyde.

And in Ross-shire, Taywood-Mowlem will hardly have a penny of outlay for site preparation if they get permission to buy the site from the National Trust. It is flat and has deep water access.

It is virtually certain that the National Trust will sell the land. It has big investments in North Sea Oil and like all the other so-called conservation bodies is the willing servant of the oil profiteers.

Women pickets in vital struggle

BIRMINGHAM:—40 women have been picketing Tucker Eyelets at Perry Barr for two weeks in an attempt to force the management to recognise the right of their union, TASS, to negotiate for them.

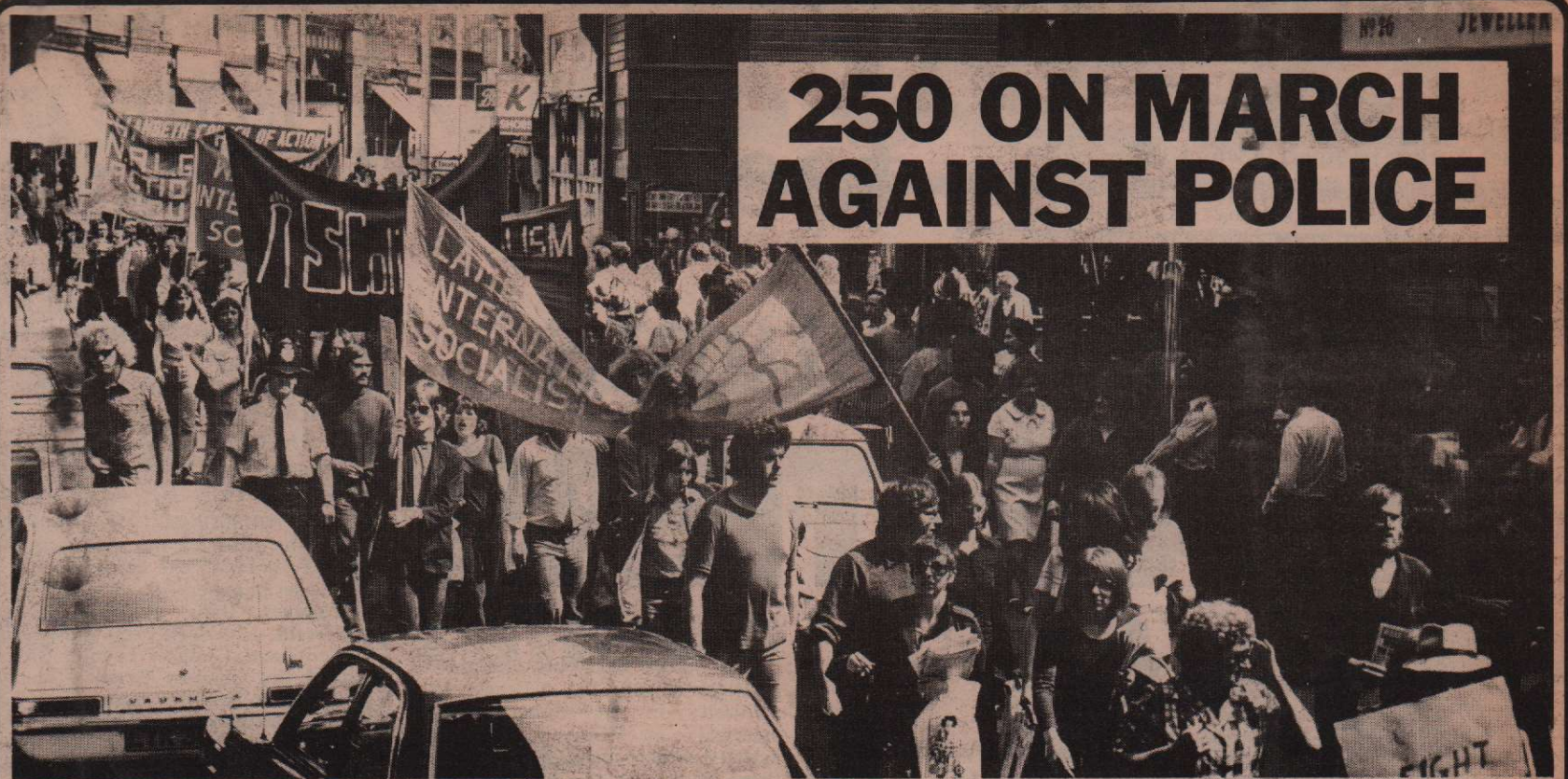
Management has used the usual threat: it picked out the youngest girls and told them that they were easily replaceable. But despite this, the strike is still solid.

Tucker Eyelets management, part of the multi-national United States Shoe Machinery Corporation, claim that TASS is barred from representing the women by a national agreement. They have been helping attempts to recruit the strikers to ACTS, the clerical section of the Transport Workers Union.

Support from the Engineering Union members in the toolroom and planning office has been good, and the management are wavering under the threat of sympathy action.

But the Transport Union in the factory and transport drivers are showing less support. Although the dispute is official, some TGWU drivers have crossed the picket line, claiming that they do not have definite instructions not to break the pickets.

Many women clerical workers in Birmingham are watching this strike with interest. If these girls can get support from the men and win their fight, it will be a big boost for trade union organisation among this section of workers.



250 ON MARCH AGAINST POLICE

Members of the International Socialists who supported the demonstration PICTURES: Mike Cohen

SOUTH LONDON: — 250 people marched through Brixton last Saturday in protest against growing harassment of black people by local police. Recently 200 police attacked a crowd of young people, mainly blacks, coming from Brockwell Park Fair.

Speakers at a meeting after the march praised the resistance being put up by black youths against police harassment and demanded

an end of Special Patrol Group activities, not only against blacks in Brixton but also against pickets at factory gates.

After the meeting police threatened all the speakers with prosecution, but no charges have been brought so far.

Members of Brixton and Lambeth International Socialists, Lambeth branch of the National Union of Teachers, other socialist groups and students from Tulse Hill School, where one of the three youths arrested after the fair is a student, joined the demonstration.



The black workers' banner at the head of the march

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post Monday morning. Adverts will not be accepted over the phone. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

IS MEETINGS

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD IS public meeting: Socialism or Barbarism? Speaker Peter Latache. Thursday 5 July, 8pm, 105 Turners Hill, Adeyfield, Hemel.

IS IRISH CONFERENCE Saturday 7 July, 10.30am-5.30pm Room B8, North London Polytechnic, Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, London NW5 (near Kentish Town tube) Entrance by IS membership card Send for documents to: Irish sub-committee, 6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN

HOUNSLOW/FELTHAM IS public meeting THE TORIES' UNPLEASANT FACE Speaker John Palmer Tuesday 10 July, 8pm Feltham Lower School, Feltham

EALING IS public meeting: Family Allowances. Tuesday 3 July, 8pm, Co-Op Hall, Greenford Road, Greenford.

HACKNEY IS public meeting THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENTONVILLE FIVE AND THE STRUGGLE AHEAD. Speaker: Bob Light (TGWU steward, London Royal docks) Monday 9 July, 8pm Rose and Crown, corner of Albion Rd and Stoke Newington Church Street (opposite Town Hall/bus 73)

ABERDEEN IS Day School THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND — A MARXIST ANALYSIS and HOW THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION WAS LOST Speaker Chris Harman Sunday 1 July, 1pm Trades Council Halls, The Adepthi Aberdeen (next to ABC Cinema)

WOLVERHAMPTON IS public meeting HARRY WICKS founder member of the British Communist Party, active in the General Strike, now a member of the International Socialists, speaks on THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM Tuesday 3 July, 8pm The Posaads, Lichfield Street

DUDLEY IS public meeting THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM PAST AND PRESENT Speaker Harry Wicks (activist in socialist movement since 1920, member of IS) Thursday 5 July, 8pm The Green Man, Castle Hill

EDINBURGH IS public meeting: Party and Class. Speaker Chris Harman. Saturday 30 June, 3pm, Society Centre, Hill Place (near Surgeons Hall).

MID-HERTS IS public meeting WHY WE NEED A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY Speaker Ian Birchall (IS national committee member) Thursday 28 June, 8pm The Beehive, Watsons Row, London Rd, St Albans (1/4 mile from city centre)

LLANELLI IS public meeting: The Lofthouse Disaster and the Mining Industry. Friday 13 July, 7.30pm, Room 1, Mechanics Institute, Pontardulais.

NEWCASTLE IS public meeting THE UNPLEASANT FACE OF CAPITALISM Speaker: Roger Protz Thursday 5 July, 7.30pm Bridge Hotel, Castle Square Newcastle upon Tyne (at Newcastle end of High Level Bridge).

LEWISHAM IS public meeting: Why the Labour Party won't fight. Speaker Stephen Marks. Thursday 5 July, 7.30pm, Deptford Engineers Social and Trade Union Club, New Cross Road (opposite New Cross station), London SE14.

TOTTENHAM IS public meeting: How high can they go? Prices, Rents, Fares... Speaker John Palmer. Thursday 12 July, 8pm, The Greyhound, corner of Philip Lane and Lawrence Road, London N17.

LAMBETH IS public meeting PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM? Speaker: Ian Birchall Wednesday 4 July, 8pm Brixton Training Centre, 2 St Matthews Road, (near Lambeth Town Hall/Brixton tube)

STRETFORD IS public meeting THE NEED FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT IN INDUSTRY Speakers: Wally Preston and Andreas Nagliati Friday 29 June, 8pm Dog and Partridge, Chester Road

BARNET IS public meeting HOW TO FIGHT RACIALISM Speaker George Peake Wednesday 4 July, 8pm Bull and Butcher, Whetstone High St (near Totteridge and Whetstone tube)

BIRMINGHAM IS district meeting THE LESSONS OF THE 1926 GENERAL STRIKE Speaker: Harry Wicks Wednesday 4 July, 7.30pm Shakespeare pub, Summer Row

OTHER MEETINGS

RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS meet at The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (near Warren Street tube). Sunday 1 July, 7pm. Discussion on APT and Academic Boards.

NOTICES

IS BOOKS can now undertake to obtain any paperback under the following imprints within two weeks: Aldine, Armada, Arrow, Bantam, Carousel, Corgi, Coronet, Everyman, Faber, Fontana, How and Why, Knight, Lions, Mayflower, New English Library, Paladin, Pan, Pan Piper, Panther, Papermac (fiction only), Peacock, Pelican, Penguin, Piccolo, Puffin, Signet/Mentor, Sphere, Tandem (not soft cover library), World Distributors.

FULL-TIME SECRETARY/TYPIST wanted for IS national office, IS members only. Apply to Jim Higgins, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

EARLY COPIES of International Socialism Journal (numbers 1-26) needed to complete microfilm record. Copies will be returned in good order. Please send to IS Journal business manager, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

GIRL COMRADE seeks own room in mixed flat, preferably South West London. Phone Marion, 622 2652.

BRIGHTON IS comrade and two kids wish to exchange flat with similar elsewhere 1-2 weeks in August. Write details to J Clements, 9 Bedford Square, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 2PN.

IS MEMBER wants room in flat or bedsit in London from first week in July. Around £5 per week. Write Box number NMC, Editorial, Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN.

COMRADE WANTED to share flat in Islington, £7.50 per week. Write C Holt, 8 Almeida Street, London N1.

WANTED: Room, flat, North London. Phone 97 34613.

Seafood packers win rise — to £7

LIVERPOOL:—The seven-week strike by 62 women at Crofts Seafood against casual labour payment has ended with a partial victory. The women had struck with union-backing against piecework which was only giving them a couple of days work a week, no lay-off pay and wages of about £2-3 a week.

This had been going on since the factory opened with a 50 per cent government grant last September. The factory site on the isolated Netherley council estate was ideal for Crofts as they could exploit the cheap female labour force which had little other choice of work locally.

But in November the 80 women left out of the original workforce of 300 organised themselves into the

General and Municipal Workers Union and in May started the strike for a guaranteed 30-hour week and £10.50 a week.

Strings

During the strike the women stayed solid and received support from dockers, airport workers and local bus and factory workers. Now after several pathetic offers Croft co-director Jenny Farragher has conceded a working week of 40 hours at £7 and 30 hours at £5. However since even these modest concessions don't take effect till 18 September and have productivity strings attached to them it seems the women's struggles are far from over.

Ban on private patients

by Ron Pearson

PORTSMOUTH:—Members of the public employees union in the Royal Portsmouth Hospital have been operating a ban on private patients since the beginning of March. A meeting of the Wessex Shop Stewards Committee last week decided to continue this ban.

But it has now been told that what it is doing is not union policy and the area official of the union has passed on to the stewards a letter from the

regional board of the Health Service which seems like a threat against those continuing with the ban.

Stewards are worried by these developments, particularly since resolutions regarding private patients were passed at the recent conference of the union. They are asking other branches of the union to back them by sending resolutions to the union executive on the question.

Don't leave it to chance: take out a postal subscription to SW

Paper lock out after threats

NOTTINGHAM: 300 workers have been locked out by the city's monopoly newspaper proprietor, T Bailey Forman, which publishes the Guardian Journal and Evening Post.

The dispute was triggered off on Monday of last week when management ignored union agreements involving a new printing process and tried to force production workers into using the equipment on its terms, although national talks to regulate manning for the process were due to open this Monday.

T. Bailey Forman recently installed two lettraflex machines and last Monday ordered members of the print union SLADE to operate them. When the majority refused they were sent home. Members of the other unions, the National Graphical Association and National Union of Journalists, then blacked all work on the lettraflex process.

Unions meet

When the NUJ chapel failed to get an assurance that their work would not help produce a newspaper printed by blacked members, NUJ and NGA members stopped work on the Guardian Journal.

Further developments last week included a meeting of all the unions involved, which set up a joint liaison committee. This committee reaffirmed the position of all the unions that they would only work according to national agreements.

When the management refused to accept this, the unions treated the dispute as a lockout. The committee is appealing for support from other trade unionists, particularly ETU members, still working at Bailey Forman.

It has also called for trade unionist and public support by boycotting the Evening Post, which is still appearing in very limited editions.

A committee spokesman told Socialist Worker that 'the catalyst which brought us all together was the way the director of T Bailey Forman, Christopher Pole-Carew, has dealt with various unions over the past four to five years. Management forces its views through without proper regard to workers as represented by trade unions.'

1000 strike against lump

NOTTINGHAM:—A thousand building workers responded on Monday to a call by the Building Workers Charter Group for a strike in protest at the use of the lump on local sites and in solidarity with five Birmingham building workers charged with criminal offences for protesting against the lump.

A flying picket pulled out sites after site meetings. Five major jobs were shut down completely, while five other sites were affected. The stoppage had the backing of Ken Barlow, Midlands secretary of UCATT.

Militants win key demands on sites

BLACKPOOL:—Militants in the construction section of the Engineering Union scored several successes at the section's conference last week. Many of the resolutions passed expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the state of the industry and laid down militant policies to change them.

The most comprehensive resolution, from the North West Division, urged the executive to fight for a total ban on the lump. A crucial demand was for one national agreement for the industry, negotiated annually. The lack of such an agreement bedevils the industry.

It also called for a 35-hour week and shorter hours in the 12 weeks around Christmas for safety during the months of short day light, a total ban on overtime, better holiday agreements, improved travelling and lodging allowances.

A strong resolution from the North East Division called on the executive to fight at the TUC for a policy of national one-day stoppages to win higher pensions. Delegates stressed that a once-a-year lobby on the House of Commons made no impact whatsoever. Militants in the North East—from the Anchor site at Scunthorpe and the Drax site at Goole—held a one-day strike and demonstration for higher pensions last November.

All round, the resolutions were a real victory for the militants in the union.

WITCH-HUNTED THREE HIT BACK AT UNION

THE National Union of Teachers is organising a witch-hunt against three militants in its first moves to discipline members before fixing up a 'sweetener' deal with the Tories.

The union, whose new president is Max Morris of the Communist Party, is also clamping down on local branch democracy and wants to push through productivity deals at the expense of free salary negotiations.

The three teachers at the centre of 'this historic test case' are Fred Scott, Eric Porter, editor of the left-wing Rank and File teachers' paper, and David Whiteley. All are members of the Wandsworth NUT branch.

The union is accusing them of 'unprofessional conduct' at the London meeting in February when they challenged the executive's mealy-mouthed approach to the London allowance campaign which had led to strike action. The three, along with many others in the hall, wanted to extend the campaign to a general fight against the government's freeze and anti-working class laws.

The three have now been called before a disciplinary panel on 14 July at which they face a fine or expulsion from the union but they are considering taking out a High Court injunction—which could mean a two-year fight to clear their names.

BRAVE WORDS

Already the union has refused the three space to state their case in The Teacher, claiming the matter is sub judice—although not before the union itself issued a host of damaging statements against them.

The three say in a statement: 'Undoubtedly, the executive fears exposure of the role they are adopting behind the brave words uttered to the members. The NUT leaders resist progressive actions by the TUC, their opposition to the Industrial Relations Act is really only a paper one, they wish to conceal their capitulation to the idea of free salary negotiations in the future. They are determined to conceal their capitulation to the idea of free salary negotiations in the future. They are determined to crush, if they can, political opposition.'

Fred Scott says the union executive is using the disciplinary machinery and 'professional honour' as a cover to decide on policy differences and hide their sell-out on pay.

'One difference is that we want the union to be a genuine trade union calling for working-class demands, and not a professional society. It is an



Jack Archer, of ATTI, speaking at the teachers' picket of the NUT head office last weekend. Inset are the three: from left, Fred Scott, Eric Porter and David Whiteley. PICTURES: Peter Harrap (Report)

important matter—we are affiliated to the TUC but Edward Brittain, the NUT general secretary, is a shameful member. With talks over pay Brittain wants the Industrial Relations Act amended and hopes to get a special deal for teachers with sweet reasonableness and argument.

'But first the NUT must deal with its own militants. If they beat us militancy will be threatened over local issues and pay which means that the political fight against the government will be gravely damaged. Already they have clamped down on the young teachers' movement and persuaded the annual conference to stifle local branch autonomy over calling for strikes.'

Dave Whiteley says support is flooding in from all over the country despite the lack of publicity. Schools and local teachers' associations are questioning the executive campaign and there is a big demand for leaflets and information. Defence committees have also been set up to help the three.

TIME, BROTHERS, TO GIVE IN

WASHINGTON, Co Durham:—The executive of the engineering union decided last week not to give official recognition to the strike at the Timex factory over the victimisation of convenor Albert Ogle.

The strike had been over for more than a fortnight and ended in defeat. Ogle was removed as a steward, although he kept his job. The reasons given for this extraordinary decision by the executive were that a mass meeting had voted against strike action and that only a 'sprinkling of members' in the factory had struck.

These reasons don't stand up to examination. The strike was backed by the Tyne and Blyth District Committee and although it is true that only 100 out of the 500 AUEW members at the plant took action, the issue was clearly one of trade union principle.

Furthermore, during the strike the union district organiser did succeed in getting a mass meeting of members inside Timex to support Ogle's re-instatement.

This is the second time the Timex management have victimised Ogle. The first time was in 1972 when he was a steward. Then only 50 AUEW members came out on strike, but nevertheless the national executive recognised the strike as official and Albert Ogle was re-instated.

Nickel giant caves in over recognition

by John Fisher (ASTMS)

HEREFORD:—After a 16-week strike, 250 members of ASTMS, the supervisors' union, have won a significant victory at Henry Wiggin, a subsidiary of the multi-national International Nickel of Canada, which controls the supply of more than half the west's nickel.

The staff objected to a clause in an agreement giving the management complete discretion without any right of redress. The firm also insisted on a 'no strike' clause and no recognition for foremen and key technicians.

The major weakness of the staff workers was the fact that the Engineering and General and Municipal Unions had signed the agreement. But effective picketing and financial support for the strike from throughout ASTMS, effectively tied up the company. The final straw came when Rolls-Royce workers 'blacked' Wiggin products.

The agreement provides for representation of all members and contains no restrictions on the union's activities. For the majority of members who have only recently joined a trade union, let alone taken strike action before, it represents a con-

siderable victory and shows the way forward to the other unions.

As Frank Marsden, branch secretary, said: 'We have learned many lessons—but above all we have proved that with the solidarity of the rank and file members we can win.'

Strikers kick out stewards

GLASGOW: 200 drivers have been on strike for two weeks at the National Carriers Ltd depot over the use of hired vehicles. The men say the management policy will lead to redundancies and loss of bonuses.

The drivers' stewards reached an agreement with management, but the deal was rejected by a mass meeting which then voted to strike. The men's union, the Railmen's Union, told them to return to work, but the strikers threw out their stewards, elected a strike committee and have since kept pickets on the gates of the depot. Police have been busily attacking the pickets to get blacklegs through.

Without union support, they are desperately short of funds. Please rush donations to: R Herman, 8 Muir Park Street, Glasgow G11 5NH.



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Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Crowd cheers accused builders

STRIKERS DIG IN

ECCLES:—The equal pay strikers at Salford Electrical Instruments are in their eighth week and digging their heels in. They are picketing at the local Engineering Union office to try to get support from union members in the factory and in the district. They have managed to get drivers of the work buses to refuse to drive through the picket line. Sid Witty, branch committee member of the Waste garage branch of the Transport Union, said: 'The strikers fight is a good one. We should all support it with industrial action.'

Last Friday strikers and supporters in the AUEW spoke at an International Socialists meeting in support of the strike. They heard Hestor Blewitt, AUEW steward at the Extelair GEC factory in Birmingham, speak on the growing struggle among women workers.



BIRMINGHAM:—More than 300 trade unionists demonstrated outside the law courts on Monday in support of five building workers charged with 'conspiracy to trespass' and 'unlawful assembly'. The five occupied the office of the lump firm SOS during the campaign to end the lump in the city in February.

Among the demonstrators, who clapped and cheered as the men went into the court, were delegates for shop stewards committees at Austin Longbridge, Rovers Solihull, SU Carburettors and several building sites. Several branches of the International Socialists were represented, including the Chrysler Coventry branch, and supporters of the rank and file paper *The Collier*, from Stoke and Barnsley.

Ken Barlow, regional secretary of the builders union, UCATT, told the demonstrators that the court cases were a serious challenge which the whole of the trade union movement must take up. Peter Carter, chairman of the Birmingham building workers' joint shop stewards' committee, said the men had been charged not for breaking the law, but for 'trying to change the whole character of the building industry by fighting the lump'.

Among other speakers was Eddie Tomlinson, from Chrysler, who said the purpose of the charges was 'to intimidate trade unionists from fighting their employers'. The case was adjourned for one month, to 23 July.

PICTURE: Chris Davies (Report)

CHRYSLER BOSSES RETREAT

COVENTRY:—The first round of the dispute at the Chrysler Ryton plant ended last weekend with a temporary retreat by the company. Their plans had backfired on them.

The feeling of most of the strikers was that Chrysler had been defeated, but among the pickets there was considerable dissatisfaction. Militants felt that if the screws had been tightened even more Chrysler could have been brought to its knees.

When the Chrysler management provoked the 'shoddy work' dispute they expected that the Ryton workers would be isolated and the strike would have little effect on their other plants. This is because Ryton is the assembly plant and while it is shut engines and other parts turned out by other plants can be stored.

Chrysler did not reckon with the initiative of the Ryton workers. Using the flying picket, they cut the links between Coventry and the Linwood plant in Scotland, bottled up the Stoke engine plant and brought the whole of Chrysler's production to a halt.

This was the first major dispute in the car industry in which the flying picket

by Roger Kline and Pete Caldwell

had been used. It will be used again. At first the strike committee decided simply to picket their own plant at Ryton to stop foremen and contractors going into work. The idea of extending the picket came from the Ryton Action Group, a recently formed group of shop-floor workers.

The action group does not seek to replace the shop stewards' committee, but to put pressure on it and to take the lead whenever joint shop stewards do not.

MISTAKE

So they picketed, the giant car depot at Ansty and the Gosford railhead—a move later endorsed by the joint shop stewards committee.

They then turned to the Stoke plant itself. The idea was to bottle Stoke up and turn the lay-off agreement against the company. Within a couple of weeks hundreds of Stoke workers were pushing brooms and polishing machines, but the attempt to make Chrysler cough up half a million pounds a week in lay-off pay was a serious mistake.

Trade unionists elsewhere should learn a key lesson. Trying to force the company

to pay lay-off pay leaves the initiative with the company. It can prevent active support for the strike spreading and then, at a time of its own choosing, engineer a dispute to avoid paying out. So the way is open for the company to use splitting tactics. This is exactly what happened at the Stoke engine plant.

During the strike, there were real problems of organisation on the workers' side. Many stewards and the strike committee put in long hours on the picket line, but two-thirds of the stewards did not even appear.

Initial talks with management were held secretly in Stratford, while later talks were opened and re-opened without referring to the joint shop stewards. At the talks the pickets were called off without even telling the pickets why, let alone informing the joint shop stewards.

At the final mass meeting, no discussions or votes against were allowed.

Had the strike continued, then management might have been able to drive a wedge between the picket and the majority of strikers—as happened in the docks dispute last year. If the shop floor is to beat Chrysler next time round, then the joint shop stewards must be encouraged to avoid these shortcomings.

The press has greeted the settlement as a crushing victory for the Ryton shop floor. But a look at the planned new procedures reveals considerable dangers. The trade unions have accepted responsibility for the quality of their members' work. The procedure being worked out could turn some stewards into policemen. Whether this happens depends on shop-floor strength.

In addition there is now unlikely to be a real fight over the plant agreement on pay and conditions which runs out this week. Management bank on this and no links were made between the strike and the claim.

Chrysler UK has got a rather bloody nose from its first attempt at mafia tactics. But unless work starts now on improving shop-floor organisation in Ryton and other plants, then next time the company will have a chance of succeeding.

LAST WEEK's story about work on the Chrysler production line described the writer, Eddie Tomlinson, as a shop steward. This should have read 'former shop steward'. The picture illustrating the story inadvertently showed a British Leyland car. We regret the errors.

Perkins lock-out workers fear union betrayal

PETERBOROUGH:—It is now more than two weeks since Perkins, a subsidiary of the giant Massey Ferguson combine, locked out workers who had been imposing an overtime ban in support of a claim for pay parity with workers in Coventry.

The workers fear that the leaders of the Engineering Union are trying to sell them out. Last week Bob Wright, a national officer of the union, urged them to return to work and then discuss the question of parity with management. He claimed that workers at the Coventry Massey Ferguson factory would not support them and were opposed to their demand for parity.

But the stewards have rejected this defeatist position and are continuing the strike. They have also sent delegations to Coventry to find the truth for themselves.

On Monday they attended a Massey Ferguson joint shop stewards' committee meeting there, and were promised factory floor collections. Two days earlier, delegates attended a 50-strong meeting in Coventry, mainly of Chrysler workers, organised by the rank and file paper *Carworker*.

The Peterborough workers are now beginning to feel the power of their action. They are also beginning to see that Massey Ferguson's use of low wage areas like Peterborough to boost their profits is part of a more general policy which includes operating in Brazil and Spain, where unions are completely banned. Recently one of the firm's workers in Spain was jailed for 20 years for taking part in a national meeting of workers in Madrid.

TORY PASS LAWS

from front page

against the Immigration Act. 'We have had enough of passing resolutions and listening to speeches about unity,' said Darshana Tomkinson. 'We have the unity. What we need now is the action.'

Her speech was greeted with much enthusiasm, and her amendment was carried with only a handful of votes against. The meeting also voted for a mass demonstration against the Act on 21 July.

The call of the Southall conference should be supported to the hilt by shop stewards' committees, trades councils and trade union branches throughout the country.

The House of Lords decision that the Immigration Act can be used retrospectively to deport immigrants who entered illegally as far back as 1962 can cause nothing but disarray in the trade union movement.

It will act as yet another deterrent to black workers participating in trade union activities, especially militant activities. The authorities hope that by frightening a substantial section of workers by police bullying, the strength of the working class will be sapped.

The House of Lords decision, in other words, is part of the same package which has produced the 'conspiracy' trials against building workers in

Birmingham and Shrewsbury, and against Irishmen in Coventry and Liverpool.

Already there are signs of some response from the trade union movement to the government's attacks on black people.

Last Friday, the executive of the Civil and Public Services Association, ordered their 50,000 members who work for the Department of Health and Social Services to disobey the instructions of Sir Keith Joseph, the Social Services Minister, to demand passports from black men who ask for insurance cards.

The CPISA's statement said: 'Our strongest objection is the fact that social security clerks are thus forced to act as law enforcement agents checking on illegal immigrants. This would act as a major deterrent to all immigrants to apply for benefits to which they are entitled.'

Trade unionists can and must respond to the lead of their black brothers and sisters in the fight against their new oppressors.

Home Secretary Robert Carr, Sir Keith Joseph and the Law Lords must be made to understand that when they try to harass black people in Britain, they are taking on the whole working-class movement.

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Socialist Worker special on the great collapse

LOFTHOUSE

WHEN the night shift at Lofthouse Colliery, near Wakefield, Yorkshire, started on 20 March there were 25 men working in the South 9B District. They were extending a 210-yard long face in the Flockton Thin seam, a face where the coal was only three feet thick, so the men on the face itself were working in some of the most cramped conditions imaginable in a coal mine today.

By 2.30 in the morning seven of the men were dead. Five of them: Paddy Finnegan, Alan Haigh, Sidney Brown, William Armitage and Frank Billingham, were working on the face itself. The other two, Colin Barnaby and Charlie Cotton, were working in the advanced heading of the main gate.

At 2.15 the trepanner (coal cutter) was shearing along the face, travelling towards the main gate end. It only had another 30-50 yards to go when suddenly one of the most feared things underground happened. The face in front of the machine opened with a crack and water poured in to the confined space with such force that it swept everything along with it. The five men working by the machine must have been killed instantly.

Deflected

The water must have thrown the trepanner and the section of the conveyor on which it was mounted sideways across the face on the tail gate side, forming a temporary dam which deflected the initial force of the water along the face towards the main gate.

Colin Barnaby was trapped in the advanced heading by an overpowering wave of water. Amazingly all the others working in the main gate road-head managed to escape the torrent. Some of them were bowled over by it, but managed to regain their feet as the water swirled in to the advanced heading and they fled up the main gate with the water lapping at their heels.

Among this group of ten men fleeing down the main gate was Charlie Cotton, aged 49. He was older than the others and not so fit. He suffered from emphysema, a respiratory disease associated with bronchitis and pneumoconiosis.

Crippling

There is hardly a miner in this country of Charlie Cotton's age who does not have bronchitis, pneumoconiosis, emphysema—or some combination of the three. Crippling chest disease is just a part of the 'price of coal' which miners are compelled to pay in this productivity-mad industry. It leaves a man disabled or severely weakened—but only pneumoconiosis is officially recognised as an industrial disease for which compensation can be paid.

The pace was too great for Charlie Cotton and he did not reach the bottom of the main gate. One of the other fleeing men, deputy Brian Oldroyd, turned when he reached the cross gate, but he could no longer see Charlie Cotton's lamp. He must have collapsed at a point in the main gate where the rescue teams later found that the water had not reached higher than three feet from the floor of the



The 'tragedy' that was man-made...

road-way. Above that mark they still found dust on the girders.

Charlie Cotton's was the only body to be recovered after the disaster. It had been swept along by the water and lay buried up to the shoulders in mud in the cross gate, near to the overcast.

Compared with other disasters in the mining industry, what happened at Lofthouse on the morning of Wednesday 21 March was small in terms of the number of dead and injured. It made a good story for Fleet Street though, because it was so spectacular and because of the drama of the rescue attempts. It happened shortly before the miners held

their national ballot for strike action. If the ballot had been positive in terms of strike action it is a safe bet that Fleet Street editors would have been demanding a very different type of treatment of the miners from their writers.

What was tragic about the Lofthouse disaster was not the new-found human interest angle that Fleet Street and the TV suddenly focussed on the dangers of a miner's work, but the fact that the 'accident' should never have happened.

It would not have happened if those in a position of authority in the National Coal Board were half as much concerned with the

safety of the men who work in the industry as they are with the productivity they can squeeze out of them. It was not as though there were no warnings of danger. On the contrary, from the time that Face South 9B was first planned in 1970 it should have been apparent that there was a possibility of danger from old workings in the area.

Some of these warnings were ignored, others were misinterpreted. This was not done deliberately by the officials immediately involved, but was the fault of their superiors who were only too ready to economise on aspects of safety and planning in order to speed up production.

Report by BILL MESSAGE, who covered the official Wakefield inquiry

SHAFTS UNSEEN FOR 100 YEARS

THERE was extensive mining in the Low Laithes area, just a couple of miles to the south west of Lofthouse Colliery, in the 70-odd years up to the mid-1800s. The land was on the Earl of Cardigan's estate and the mining was done under a lease by a company called Smithsons.

Smithsons went bankrupt in the early 1850s, and all that remains to show the extent of their mines is a surface estate plan which shows the area dotted with shafts both small and large, and some legal documents. Although the surface plan shows accurately the position of all the shafts, it gives no indication of how deep they are.

A few years after Smithsons went bankrupt the lease was taken up by Benjamin Roberts, who continued to mine in the area of the Bye Pit and the Engine Pit (see plan) until 1868 when the colliery was closed.

According to the terms of their lease both Smithsons and Roberts were only supposed to be working the Gawthorpe and Haigh Moor seams. In fact Smithsons, and possibly Roberts too, extended their shafts to the Flockton Thin seam, another 80 yards deeper, and carried out some work there.

According to old correspondence recently discovered in a Wakefield solicitor's office, Smithsons were preparing to exploit what they called the Beeston Bed, but from the depth mentioned it must have been the Flockton. From what can be pieced together it appears that their efforts were disappointing and that they gave up after some tentative working in the seam.

DOTTED

The Flockton Thin is only 3ft thick—not an attractive proposition for a 19th century miner. It was not until more modern techniques were developed that the working of such faces became really possible.

Lofthouse Colliery lies in what is now known as the North Yorkshire Area of the Yorkshire coalfield. It is estimated that there are some 8000 abandoned mine shafts dotted around Yorkshire, most of them in this area. Many are marked on old maps and plans which the Coal Board keeps at Rawmarsh, near Rotherham.

One of the most disturbing facts to emerge from the Lofthouse Inquiry at Wakefield is that the Coal Board has done absolutely nothing to check on the condition of any of these shafts—not even those that are situated in areas where mining is still going on today.

In 1968 a shaft-filling team was set up in North Yorkshire, but its activities were limited to the demolition of buildings and treatment of shafts at all the pits that the board was frantically closing at that time.

Today this shaft-filling team has

been cut back to an ex-colliery manager and two workmen—hardly sufficient to check the condition of all the old shafts scattered about the area. It is presumably being maintained at skeleton strength ready for expansion when the next round of pit closures comes along.

When shafts were sealed off in the 19th century they often didn't bother to fill them in from the bottom, but placed a wooden platform about 30ft from the surface and filled in above it. As you can well imagine, after 100 years shafts 'filled' in such a manner become quite dangerous. Yet the Lofthouse disaster has shown that the Coal Board's policy is to ignore them.

The only time the three shafts in the Low Laithes area were examined was when Face South 9B at Lofthouse Colliery was being planned—and that hardly rates as an examination. Coal Board surveyors examined the surface but found no trace of the shafts. They did not bother to locate the three shafts—the Engine Pit, the Bye Pit and the Bull Pit—that later collapsed when water flooded into S9B, let alone carry out a proper investigation to probe their depth.

Had they done this they would have found that the shafts extended as far as the Flockton Thin seam—and they would have suspected the presence of old workings at this level.



Mistakes that

fo

THE planning of a new coal-face is tremendously complex. It involves, or should do, vast research into old plans and documents, geological conditions, water levels and old workings.

Because of its complexity it is tempting for those who run Britain's extremely productivity-conscious mining industry to cut corners, saving time, personnel and expense.

When the development of the South 9B face at Lofthouse was being considered, the research work was not as thorough as it should have been. The bulk of the work was placed in the hands of the colliery surveyor and the senior surveyor for the North Yorkshire Area.

Though they may both be extremely competent surveyors, neither had sufficient geological knowledge to undertake some of the work the Coal Board placed in their hands. They made several crucial errors—all involving the interpretation of geological maps and documents.

At least 12 Coal Board officials, ranging from Lofthouse Colliery surveyor Peter Wood to the NCB Director of the North Yorkshire Area, Mr L J Mills, were involved in the approval of the development plans for S9B, but not one had any expert geological knowledge.

Before 1967 it was usual for the Coal Board divisional geologist to consult documentary evidence at the Institute of Geological Sciences in Leeds, but after the Coal Board was 'streamlined' in 1967 this was no longer so. Since then it has been increasingly the practice for local colliery and area surveyors to visit the institute alone.

There has also been a significant change in the procedure usually adopted for such visits. Before 1967 the Coal Board geologist would write to the institute informing them that he intended to visit them for information about a certain specified area. The institute would then arrange for the district geologist who specialised in this area to be present when the visit was made.

Since 1967 the help of the district geologists has been less frequently requested. So the streamlined procedure has been much more likely to result in vital evidence being misinterpreted or overlooked—firstly because the mending the research work in the institute's library have not been qualified to do so, and secondly because they have not had the benefit of the specialist help that was available.

It was almost inevitable that sooner or later these two factors would produce a situation that endangered men's lives. This is what happened when Face S9B was being planned at Lofthouse Colliery.

On 14 and 16 September 1970

Peter Wood, Coal Board surveyor attached to Lofthouse Colliery, and Eric Radcliffe, chief Coal Board surveyor for the North Yorkshire Area, visited the Institute of Geological Sciences in Leeds. The purpose of the visit, according to the visitor's book in the library, was 'investigating old mine shaft details.'

Location

Both Wood and Radcliffe claimed at the inquiry that a geologist from the institute had been present, but the records kept of consultations with district geologists make no mention of any consultation on these dates, nor can any of the staff at the institute

recall any such consultation. It seems probable that Wood and Radcliffe mistook the institute's librarian as being a qualified geologist—which is not the case.

The only document they found that they had not already seen at the pit, at area headquarters or at the collection of abandonment plans at Rawmarsh was a field map made by a geologist called A H Green in preparation for the first geological survey map of 1874. This map showed the location of shafts in the area covered by the old Low Laithes Colliery. It also mentioned the level of the Gawthorpe and Haigh Moor seams, but it did not specify the depth of any of the shafts.

According to the evidence of Dr Edward Francis, assistant director of the institute, at the inquiry, such information is not relevant for the drawing up of geological survey maps. The Coal Board surveyors were not aware of this.

Marked on the field map next to the two shafts called 'Low Laithes Colliery, Barron's-Pit' and 'Alverthorpe Colliery, Old Coal Pit' was the note 'XIII.74'. Neither of the two surveyors knew the significance of this note. Had the district geologist been with them he would have been able to explain it.

It referred to one of the notebooks kept by A H Green. The Coal Board geologist knows of these note-books because the geologists at the institute had referred to them in connection with previous inquiries, but he was not present on this occasion.

The note XIII.74 referred to

note-book 13, page following is record Colliery sunk 80 yd Moor and bored 3 the Bye Pit.'

In other words been sunk to a depth the Flockton seam bore hole had been 114ft to the Silks

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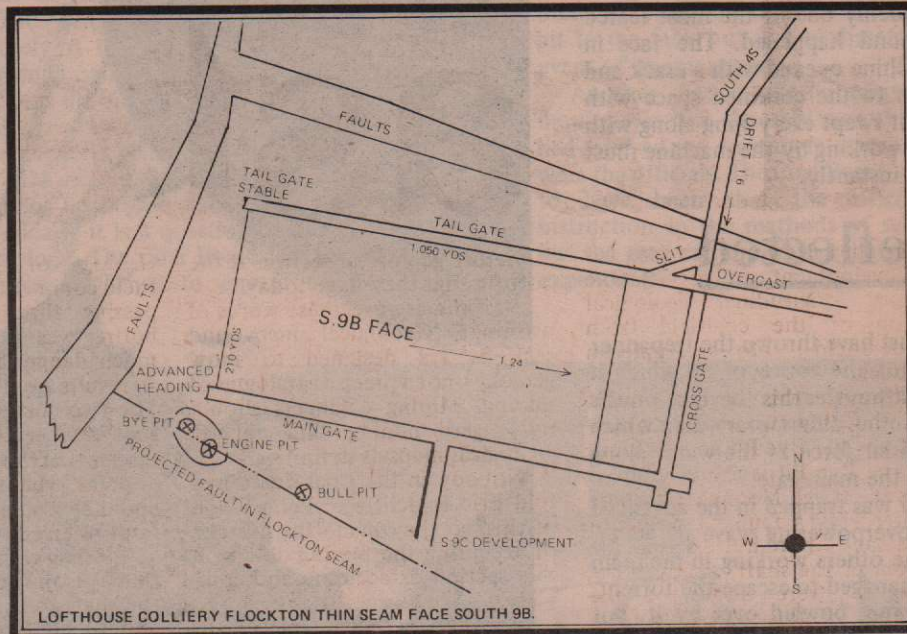
At the inquiry representatives tried even if this information made available to them would not have difference because no evidence to show had been carried Flockton seam.

This claim seen Although it is by no of for a shaft to given seam without being conducted would be pointless owner to sink all seam without work there.

Plum

After the disaster Bye Pit, the Engine Bull Pit had collapsed officials plumbed the Bye Pit. Although was done after it had begun they measure the depth the level of fill at the depth already width of the shaft of fill already used They calculated depth of the shaft—exactly the same A H Green's note in 1868.

Peter Wood and consulted several o



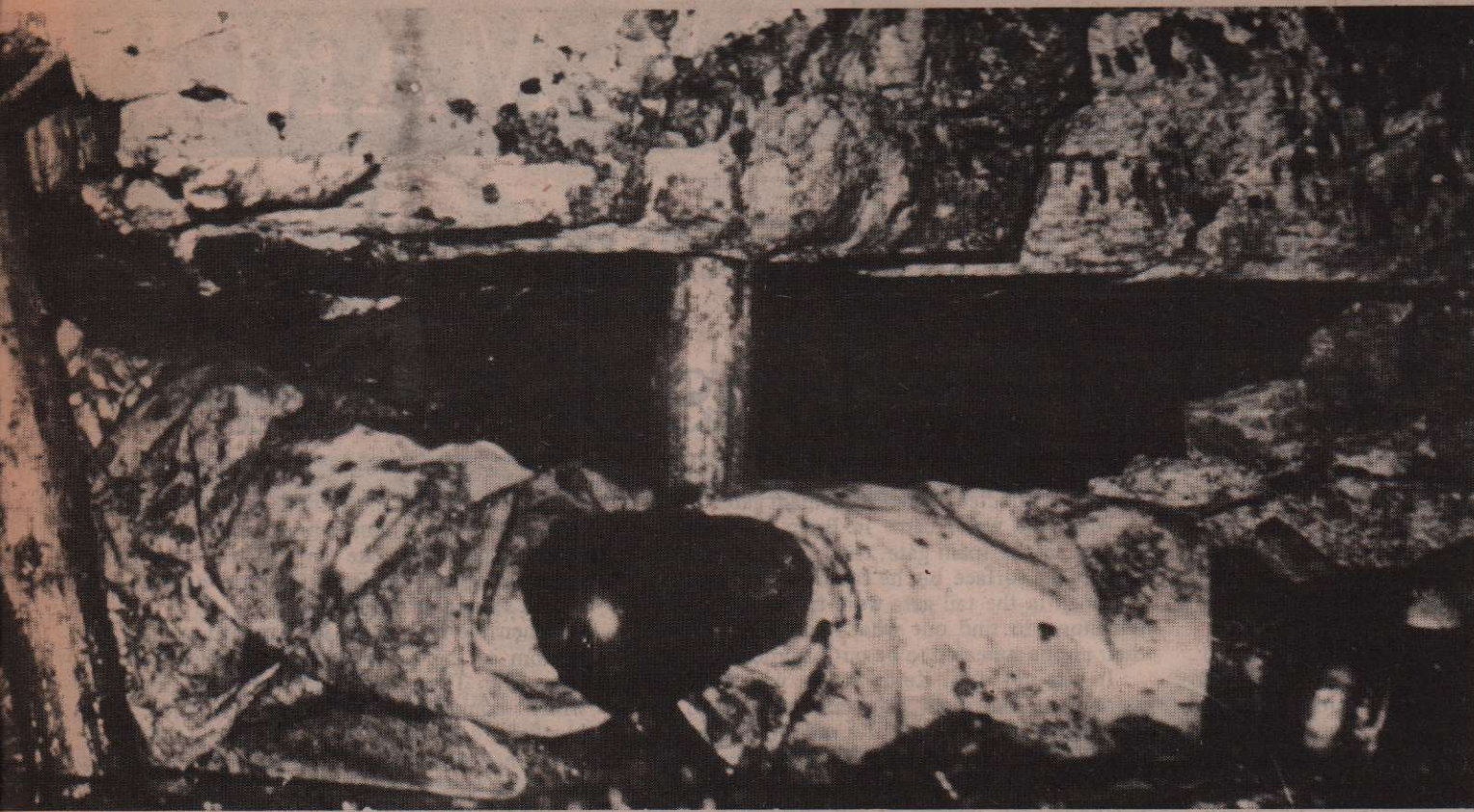
A map of the underground workings at Face S9B. The old shafts are in the left-hand corner

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The vital records were there—but they were not consulted

The Flockton Thin seam at Lofthouse is only 3ft thick. Attempts to mine it 100 years ago had been abandoned—leaving flooded workings as a potential death-trap

opened the door for disaster

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...Eric Radcliffe ther documents

before they drew up their plan for the development of face S9B. One was a longitudinal geological section of the coalfield from Huddersfield to Appleton Roebuck.

Although this covers a wide area, the only two shafts marked on it are the Bye Pit and Barron's Pit. The Bye Pit is shown only as far as the Haigh Moor seam, where it intercepts a fault. It does not show any bore-hole from the bottom of the shaft, although the surveyors were aware of the existence of this bore-hole from other documents they had seen.

Faith

Of all the documents they examined this was the only one that actually showed the Bye Pit to go no further than Haigh Moor seam. Eric Radcliffe told the inquiry that he had absolute faith in the accuracy of the section.

Eric Radcliffe was not a trained geologist, and had he had the assistance of a geologist in interpreting this document his faith would have been shaken. Dr Edward Francis of the Institute of Geological Sciences, giving evidence at the inquiry, pointed out that the sole reason for such sections was because 1-inch maps of the time did not have the

miniature geological section at the bottom that they have today.

Dr Francis gave these words of warning: 'Geological maps and sections are designed to show geology—not a precise catalogue of mining. Mining engineers should not regard mining data put on geological maps as definitive.'

Nobody in the Coal Board had told Eric Radcliffe or Peter Wood of this, so they made the mistake of accepting the mining details in this section as accurate and complete.

Another crucial piece of evidence that was misinterpreted by the surveyors was the log-book of a 19th century mining engineer called Joseph Tolson White. This log-book records various shaft sinkings and borings in the Yorkshire coalfield. One illustration is headed: 'Low Laithes Colliery Bye Pit—Sections of Sinkings and Borings.'

This section gave the surveyors some trouble. Tolson White was not consistent in the way he differentiated between a shaft and a bore-hole. Some of the sections in the book show the sinking of a shaft with the different strata coloured in, others show the bore-hole strata coloured, but there was no difference in width between the shaft and the bore-hole.

Another book entitled The

Geology of the Yorkshire Coal Field commented on the bore-hole passing through a fault: 'This boring was carried out under so much danger and difficulties that its results are not to be trusted to.' The two surveyors knew from the geological section that the Bye Pit intersected the Haigh Moor seam at a point where there was a fault and they assumed that this was the fault referred to in the book.

So they came to the conclusion that Tolson White's section showed the shaft to the Haigh Moor seam, and the bore-hole below that.

When Dr Francis was shown the section at the Wakefield inquiry he immediately interpreted it the other way round. He said that it showed the shaft extending to the Flockton seam from where there was a hole bored to the Silkstone seam. Logically there can be no other interpretation. Although Tolson White was haphazard in his colouring of shafts and bore-holes, there would have been no point in starting the colouration of the bore-hole, assuming that it did indeed begin at the Haigh Moor level, half-way down.

These were the crucial documents that led Peter Wood and Eric Radcliffe to believe that the Bye Pit extended only to the Haigh Moor level and no further. It is clear that had Coal Board practice

afforded them the advice of a trained geologist their conclusions would have been very different—and seven men who died at Lofthouse would be alive today.

On the basis of the conclusions they had reached, Wood and Radcliffe drew up a proposed development plan for the South 9B face in 1971. Under the 1954 Mines and Quarries Act neither bore any legal responsibility for the decision to accept that plan and begin mining operations on South 9B.

But other men, their superiors, did have that responsibility. The first person with responsibility in law to have signed the plan was the colliery general manager, Thomas Mapplebeck. He put his signature to it on 6 August 1971.

Zone

Radcliffe had marked the Bye Pit, Engine Pit and Bull Pit on the plan. He had marked a 50 yard precautionary zone around the Bye and Engine Pits because of the known existence of the bore-hole. He had also attached the following notes: 'Bye Pit believed sunk to Haigh Moor seam at 141 yards deep, and bored to Silkstone seam at 302 yards deep. Flockton Thin seam at 219 yards deep. Bull pit at 140 yards to Haigh Moor seam. No details available.'

Roland Hollis, deputy chief mining engineer for the North Yorkshire Area, who also had legal responsibility, was the next to sign the plan on 28 September 1971. Others, including William Forrest, area chief mining engineer, Thomas Wright, then area deputy director, and L J Mills,

then area director, followed.

All these men are given the responsibility under section 74 of the Mines and Quarries Act of 1954 of ensuring that all possible investigations are carried out for old shafts and workings in the area of any proposed development underground, and of ensuring that all possible precautions are taken to safeguard the lives of the men working underground.

In fact none of these men took the trouble of going through all the evidence that had led the surveyors to draw the conclusions they had. Numerous discussions were held while the plans were being drawn up, but no steps were taken to check the surveyors' findings.

This should have been done. That the surveyors had only felt themselves capable of writing the word 'believed' alongside the details of the old shafts must have indicated to these senior officials that the two surveyors had based their opinions only on research work and not on hard facts uncovered by survey work in the field.

Pit's warning was ignored

THE plans for Face S9B were approved and work on the face started in December 1971.

On 12 September 1972 William Dobson, manager of the shaft-filling team in the North Yorkshire Area, received a report that a shaft had subsided in the Low Laithes area. A local farmer, Raymond Stead, noticed it had dropped by 10ft when he came to do the harvesting. There was water lying in the bottom of the hole.

On 19 September the hole, which turned out to be in the Bull Pit, was 'treated' by the shaft-filling team. They filled it up with hard-core. No report of the incident ever reached Peter Wood at Lofthouse Colliery.

In 1969 the Coal Board had issued a directive to management concerning the treatment of old

shafts. This directive, Production Department Instruction PI/1969/4, was operative in 1972 and still is today.

Paragraph 12 states: 'In the case of old inaccessible shafts where little or no information is available regarding the existence of platforms, the shaft should be carefully sounded to determine their presence, depth and any opening through them. Consideration can then be given to removing any platforms or filling with suitable small material (eg pea gravel) which will flow through openings, or to inserting at a higher level a suitably-designed and constructed plug placed in strong strata.'

During Mr Dobson's activities at the Bull Pit last September this was not done. Nor was paragraph

4 adhered to. This lays down: 'In every case the advice of the Area Chief Engineer and the Area Civil Engineer must be sought regarding the method of treatment, the materials to be used and the design of plugs, cappings and stoppings.'

Paragraph 20 also states: 'After filling, a permanent marker stone or plate should be left at the shaft centre to ensure that the shaft can be readily located and identified. A record should also be kept of the method of filling and treatment of the shaft.'

In fact all that was done was that a flimsy barbed wire fence was put around the shaft. Another corner was cut. If the shaft had been properly investigated according to the procedure laid down the findings could well have saved seven lives just six months later.



Rescue workers at the Lofthouse pithead



GRIMEVENTS OF 21 MARCH

The fatal smell

FOR SOME MONTHS before the fatal inrush, water was observed to be collecting at the bottom of the tail gate, near the overcast. This in itself was not unusual, but the water had a peculiar foul smell, which was unusual.

This water collected in the lowest part of the district. There is a gradient of 1:24 sloping towards the cross gate and there is also a slight gradient sloping from the main gate end of the district towards the tail gate. This in itself presented a potential danger.

If the arrangement of gradients is such that the lowest part of the district is also the only exit point from that district there is always a danger that in the event of a disaster involving water the escape route (and rescue route) will be cut off.

In the weeks leading up to the disaster water started appearing on the face, particularly in the first 60 yards from the main gate end, in the advanced heading and in the shot-holes bored in the heading of the tail gate.

Again there was nothing particularly worrying about this. The surveyors had predicted that a certain amount of water would find its way down from the old Haigh Moor workings which were believed to be flooded.

Eggs

There was something unusual in the fact that this water had a strange, unpleasant smell to it—just like the water near the overcast. Some of the miners working on the district described it as smelling like rotten eggs.

The workmen on the face complained to their deputies and overmen about the smell. The complaints were passed on to John Oliver, the under-manager, and to Thomas Mapplebeck, the colliery general manager.

The only result of these complaints were that John Oliver and Gerald McWalters, the senior overman, carried out some tests for gas. These tests proved negative and nothing else was done to determine either the source of the foul-smelling water or its cause.

The men on the job continued to grumble about the smell, but were generally satisfied by the explanations that filtered back. These explanations—that the water came from a nearby bore-hole, or even from old workings—seem terrifying in the light of what happened, but paradoxically they satisfied the men on the face.

No part

It was assumed that if the management knew the source of the water it must have been marked on the plans. They trusted the plans and trusted the management.

They had not played any part in the drawing up of the plans or the decision to open the face up, nor had they seen the plans. Had they done so they might have been a little more concerned, but as it was all they could do was trust the management.

The men who made the complaints were concerned about their safety. From the evidence that was given at Wakefield it is clear that the officials who received the complaints were concerned only with the production life of the face.

All their inquiries and investigations were carried out with the object of satisfying this concern.

When the plug came out on millions of gallons of water

PRODUCTION-WISE nothing was hindering the advance of the face. Peter Wood told John Oliver less than 48 hours before the disaster: 'You have nothing to worry about. You have another 100 to 120 yards to go to a safe top mark.'

So they continued to cut coal on South 9B until suddenly at 2.15 in the morning on Wednesday 21 March the trepanner broke through the face into old workings that were full of water. 70 yards away the Bye Pit connected these old workings in the Flockton seam to other abandoned and flooded workings in the Haigh Moor and Gawthorpe seams above. The plug was taken out of an underground reservoir containing millions of gallons of stagnant water.

Collapsed

The caps to the Engine and Bye Pits, which must have been floating on the water, suddenly found their true weight as their support flowed away from under them. Their partial filling collapsed, as did that of the Bull Pit some seven hours later. Only then did the NCB officials set about measuring the depth of the shafts.

It has already been described how the men died and how the survivors in the main gate reached safety. One of the facts to emerge from the inquiry was that the men in the tail gate did not hear about the full extent of the disaster until about 15 minutes after the inrush occurred. Fortunately for them the initial force of the

water was directed towards the main gate.

When the water came in Brian Oldroyd, the deputy in the main gate, tried to telephone the news to the surface, but he could not get through. The men in the tail gate were trying to use their telephone to find out what had happened, but their phone appeared to be out of order.

It was not until Keith Stone, who had been working in the main gate, had escaped to the top of the 1:6 drift, about a mile from the face, that the men in the tail gate were told to get out. Stone tried to get through to the surface on the telephone, but instead he got through to Peter Barrett, the tail gate deputy.

The telephones in the S9B district, six of them, worked on a party line basis. That meant that if one of the phones was in use, or off the hook, no other phone could be used to make an emergency call. When one compares how easy it is to use an ordinary GPO telephone in an emergency situation with the difficulties of using one of the NCB telephones—which has no direct link to the surface unless all the other phones in the district are not in use or have remained undisturbed after an accident—something appears to be odd.

Surely it is vital to have the most efficient emergency communications system possible in a pit? But the Coal Board do not seem to have thought so. Indeed at the Wakefield hearing, board representatives boasted of how modern and up to date the ridiculously complicated party line system at Lofthouse was.

Basically it is a question of the application of technology. The Coal Board is prepared to go to enormous expense to ensure that its mining

machinery is the most modern and productive available. When it comes to expenditure on basic safety equipment like an efficient emergency communications system they are prepared to accept second or third best.

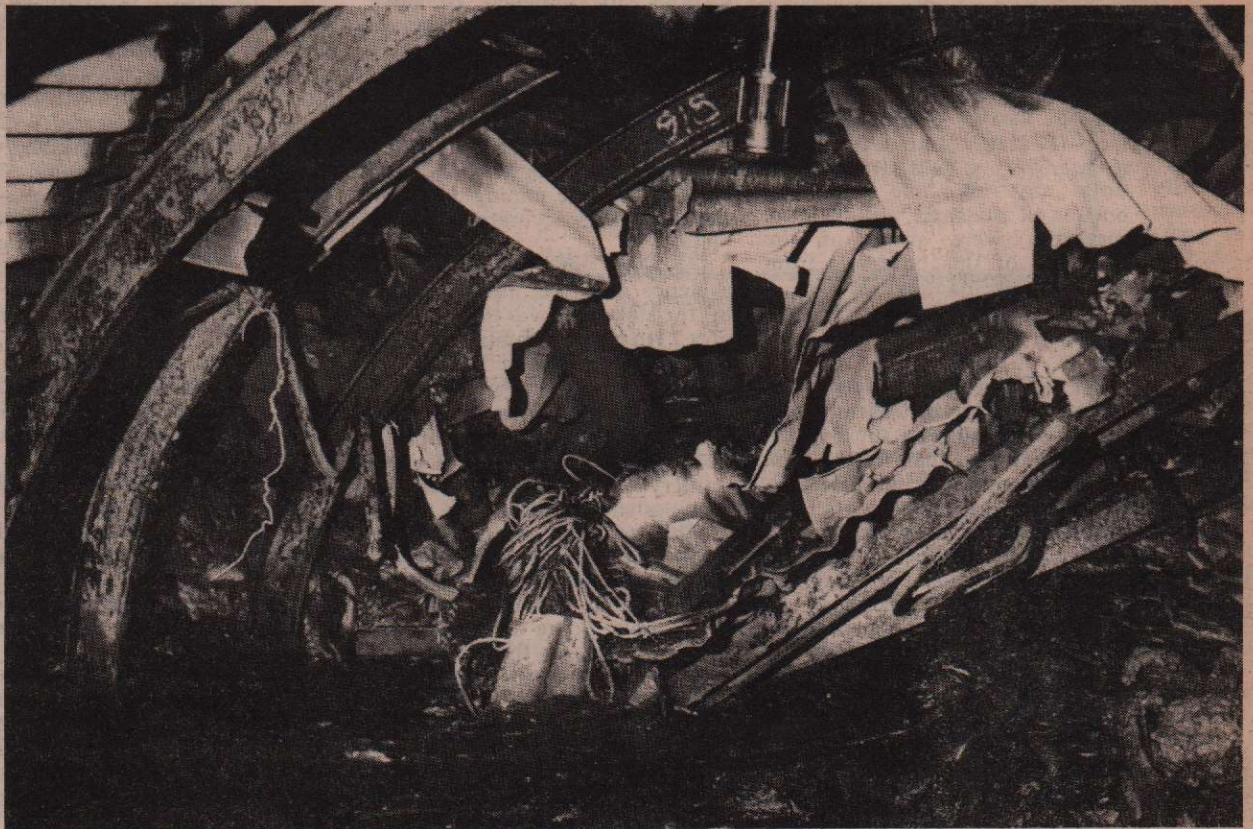
When the men in the tail gate had reached the bottom of the roadway their troubles were far from over. They found that the doors in the slit which connected them with the drift were blocked by the weight of water on the other side which had flowed down the main gate and along the cross gate. Fortunately they were able to escape through the overcast which carried the ventilation out of the S9B district over the cross gate into other worked out districts in the Flockton Thin seam.

Expendable

This provided an effective emergency exit route for the trapped men, but there was no signpost to say so. As Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miners' president, said at the Wakefield hearing, there are plenty of signs to direct you down the pit to the face, but few to direct you out in the event of an emergency.

Another factor which emerged during the inquiry was that the only men at Lofthouse who had received any training in emergency procedure were the officials. The Coal Board's attitude seems to have been that the officials are worth instruction in the methods of self-preservation, but the men can look after themselves; they are expendable.

The men must act



The mud and wreckage after the collapse

THE NCB emerged from the Wakefield Inquiry completely unrepentant. In his summing up, the chief NCB representative, Dr Leslie Willett, Deputy Director General of Mining, made the remarkable plea: 'I would hope that the workmen in the Flockton Thin seam at Lofthouse Colliery will not become unduly worried if they sometimes experience a smell of rotten eggs.'

But such a smell is not to be dismissed so lightly. It could mean that there is stagnant water from old workings seeping in, or it could indicate the presence of hydrogen sulphide, a gas even more deadly than carbon monoxide. For their own sake all miners are strongly

cautioned to ignore Dr Willett's dangerous advice.

As a result of the Lofthouse tragedy there will probably be some tightening up on certain procedures. One thing is urgently required—that in all areas where water or disused workings are suspected there should be bore-holes drilled forward from the face to test the safety of the conditions.

This elementary procedure, which was never employed on the S9B face at Lofthouse, was common up to 30 or 40 years ago in pits where there were problems with water on the face.

The Coal Board is reluctant to introduce this procedure on mechanised long-wall faces because it would slow down production. Instead the miners who cut the coal are expected to play Russian roulette with every slice they cut from the face.

Above all the National Union of Mineworkers must learn that to rely on legislation alone is not sufficient. There have been so many instances of the Coal Board ignoring or bending the rules when it suits them—as in the case of the treatment of the subsidised Bull Pit in September last year.

Ensure

The Collier, the rank and file miners' paper, hits the nail on the head in its programme, The Miners' Charter, where it calls for safety officers to be elected on every shift by the rank and file. In factories the man who usually takes up safety complaints is the shop steward, who is in a position to ensure that something is done to thoroughly investigate the complaint.

In the mining industry there are no such stewards, with the result at

Lofthouse that nobody was in a position to demand from management what was being done to investigate the reports of the water and the smell it gave off.

The Miners' Charter calls for a system of elected stewards on the job who would be in a position to check on the steps being taken by management to investigate such complaints.

These measures are vital, but in themselves they only serve to act as a counter-balance to the total disregard for safety underground shown by the NCB bosses.

The coal mines were nationalised on 1 January 1947. On that day the British miners lost one set of bosses and gained another.

Not until this new set are thrown out and the miners take control of the industry themselves will it be possible to tilt the balance firmly and decisively in favour of safety.