

# WORKERS PRESS

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER ● WEDNESDAY MAY 10, 1972 ● No 761 ● 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

## TORIES TAUNT THE RAILMEN ACCEPT OR FIGHT



Still waiting . . . the NUR's Sir Sidney Greene as conciliatory as ever.

BY IAN YEATS

**THE RAILWAYMEN'S fight for a living wage is in great danger. At 12 noon yesterday leaders of the three rail unions—NUR, ASLEF and TSSA—postponed a decision about the next step in their pay fight for the second time in 24 hours.**

NUR general secretary Sir Sidney Greene told reporters after a two-hour joint meeting at Unity House, London:

'We are doing everything we can to show, as always, we are in a conciliatory mood. It hangs on this. Do people want to talk to us?'

The answer is 'No!' A spokesman for the British Rail Board said immediately after the talks that they would 'stand firm' on their latest offer of a 12.5 per cent pay rise effective from June 5.

The leaders of the three rail unions have been told over and over again that there is absolutely no chance of the Board giving in to their full £20-a-week claim from May 1.

Aware there will be no improved offer from the Board the rail union leaders waited at Unity House yesterday marking time and waiting for an offer which would not come.

Government sources made it clear that as far as they were concerned, provided the rail unions did not call for a renewal of industrial action following the expiry of the 14-day, cooling-off period at midnight, May 8, they could go on calling and adjourning meetings as long as they liked.

Meanwhile no pay rises were being shelled out and rail services were running normally.

But behind the stalemate between the two sides yesterday, the swords of class war were still, nevertheless, drawn.

While Heath and top Tory Ministers had met on Monday to draw up their battle plans, late on Tuesday the railway leaders were showing a marked reluctance to enter the fray.

Not only did yesterday's noon meeting of the rail unions make no call for action, but Greene stressed: 'We want to see if we can do something without landing up in an industrial dispute.'

**But neither the Rail Board nor the government is under any illusion that the stark choice for the unions is now—EITHER GIVE IN OR FIGHT.**

To fight or not to fight was the vital question which disturbed the minds of the union leaders throughout yesterday.

The determination of rank-and-file railwaymen to defend their living standards—expressed in barely-controlled militancy on the Southern Region and in Scotland a fortnight ago—cannot be in doubt.

All three unions have already climbed down before the National Industrial Relations Court and two of them—NUR and TSSA—voted against recalling the TUC to discuss the working of the Act.

The present standstill is playing into Tory hands. We say to these leaders: If they are not willing to fight, they should resign and make way for those who will.

## EPTU looks for 'friends in Court'

ANOTHER union has decided to defend itself in the National Industrial Relations Court. The Electrical, Electronics, Telecommunications and Plumbing Trades Union is to fight the Union of Electricity Supply Workers' bid for recognition as a registered union.

Ian Clark, chairman of the union's shipbuilding and ship repairing conference in Newcastle, said yesterday that the executive council had decided unanimously to defend the union before the Court.

'Is it not logical then that the unions should make nominations to the Industrial Relations Commission and therefore have friends in Court as well as adversaries?' he said.



**TIE-BURNING PROTEST . . . Youths from yesterday's 3,000-strong pupils' march through London burn their ties outside County Hall, Westminster. One of their demands is against school uniforms.**

## Blockade: Grave risks says Labour

A RESOLUTION condemning President Nixon's Vietnam escalation moves was passed by the International Committee of the Labour Party yesterday.

It said: 'The events in recent months have led to further death and suffering of thousands of innocent civilians.'

'The mining of the ports could involve a possible act of war against an as-yet non-combatant nation, and will have long-term repercussions.'

Speaking on BBC radio, James Callaghan said: 'The duty of a friend in these circumstances is to point out to the President that the course on which he has embarked cannot bring success and will certainly heighten international tension.'

It was up to Sir Alec Douglas-Home to make a public or private approach to President Nixon, he said.

● See Blockade story p. 2.

● Another picture and story p. 12.



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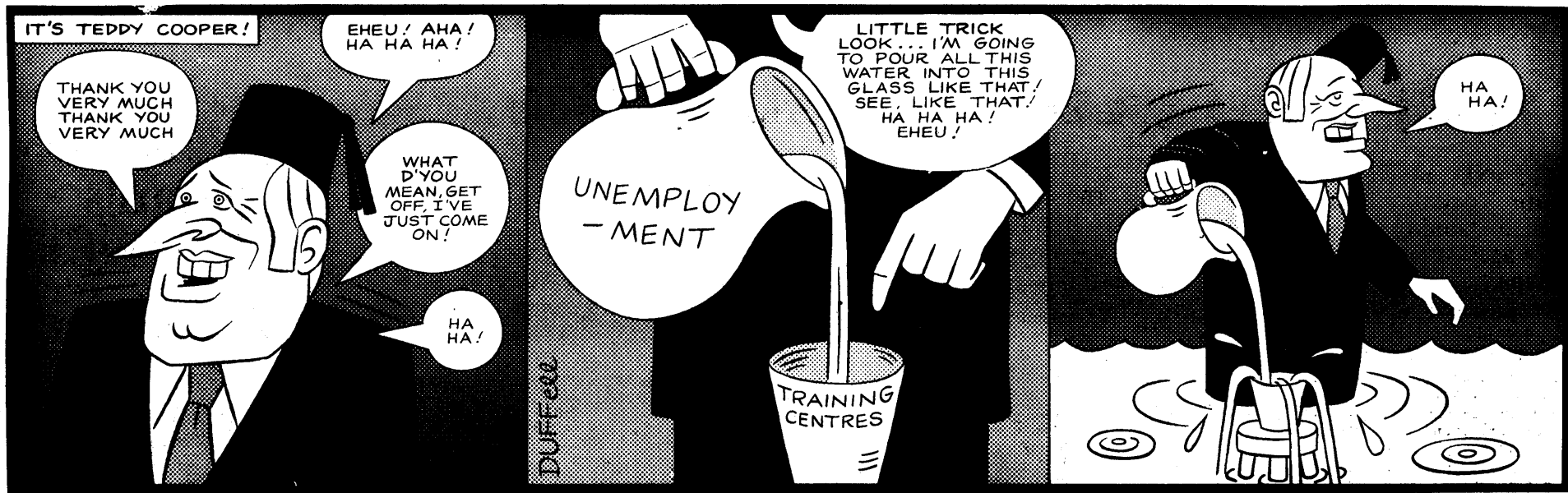
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## Fascist gains in Italy: CP to blame

BY OUR FOREIGN DESK

ITALY'S ruling Christian Democrat Party emerged yesterday at about the same strength as before from a General Election which saw considerable fascist advances and Communist Party losses in the Senate.

The Christian Democrats lost a small fraction of their Senate vote, but appeared to have gained slightly in the elections to the lower house. By contrast, the Communist Party lost seven seats in the Senate, but gained slightly in the lower house elections.

The fascist Italian Social Movement, led by Giorgio Almirante, a former aide of dictator Benito Mussolini, increased its vote in both houses, winning 9.1 per cent of the Senate poll compared with 6.7 per cent in 1968.

The main losers were the Social Democrats, heavily compromised in workers' eyes by their participation in the coalition government which collapsed at the beginning of this year.

The result will undoubtedly strengthen the Christian Demo-

mention of socialism in favour of so-called 'structural reforms' and did not oppose either NATO or the Common Market. During the election campaign the CP discouraged any effort to drive the fascists off the streets and vigorously denounced as 'leftists' those workers and students who did fight the MSI.

Far from being an alternative to fascism, the bankrupt Italian

### HOW THE SEATS CHANGED

THE final provisional results of voting for the senate (upper house) in the Italian General Election, announced by the Interior Ministry in Rome yesterday (figures for the May 1968 General Election in brackets):

|                                | Votes      | Percentage of Votes cast | Seats     |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Christian Democrats ...        | 11,457,746 | 38.1 (38.3)              | 135 (135) |
| Communists—PSIUP ...           | 8,565,820  | 28.4 (30.0)              | 94 (101)  |
| Socialists (PSI) ...           | 3,224,778  | 10.7 (15.2-PSU)          | 33 (36)   |
| Social Democrats (PSDI) ...    | 1,644,780  | 5.5                      | 11 (10)   |
| M.S.I. (Neo-Fascists) ...      | 2,763,719  | 9.2 (6.7)                | 26 (13)   |
| Liberals ...                   | 1,317,909  | 4.4 (6.8)                | 8 (16)    |
| Republicans ...                | 917,392    | 3.0 (2.2)                | 5 (2)     |
| South Tyrol People's Party ... | 113,392    | 0.4 (0.5)                | 2 (2)     |
| Others ...                     | 33,326     | 0.1                      | 1         |

crat right wing, which has adamantly refused to consider any government with Communist Party participation.

A coalition with the Republicans is now likely, which may lean on the fascists for support, is now likely.

The Communist Party bears a major responsibility for the fascist gains. Instead of mobilizing the working class around a socialist programme, drawing behind it the frustrated sections of the middle class, the Party posed as the respectable defender of capitalist democracy. Its programme dropped any

parliamentary system is, in fact, the spawning ground for extreme right-wing tendencies. The outcome of the present General Election will do nothing to resolve the chronic parliamentary crisis.

There is no stable combination of bourgeois-democratic parties in the new parliament and whatever coalition emerges will face the same conditions of economic crisis and class struggle.

However, the right-wing gains in the General Election are the prelude to new attacks on the living standards and organizations of the Italian workers.

## Blockade doesn't scare us—Hanoi



North Vietnamese troops continue the drive southwards. They are seen above on a captured South Vietnamese bunker.

AMERICAN planes yesterday dropped time-fused mines at the entrances to North Vietnamese ports while ships of the Seventh Fleet steamed to positions off the coast to stop vessels entering or leaving the country's harbours.

In the North an army newspaper reacted by saying: 'It is not the Vietnamese people that are frightened. Nixon himself is scared, despite his efforts to create pressure with bombs and shells.'

President Nixon's plans are the latest desperate effort to save the doomed South Vietnamese puppet government and the American presence in Vietnam.

He announced the blockade and mining of the harbours in a speech yesterday morning following a crisis meeting of the National Security Council in Washington.

The mines will activate themselves at 10 a.m. tomorrow giving ships already in harbour just time to leave before the blockade comes into effect.

After that, ships trying to sail out would do so at their own risk, Nixon said.

There are at present about 35 ships in Haiphong harbour, most of them Soviet or East European. Nixon claims the blockade will cut off 90 per cent of the supplies coming into North Vietnam from the USSR and Eastern Europe.

Air force jets will also bombard the rail and

road links between China and North Vietnam, in an effort to cut off supplies coming in overland.

The bombing of towns and villages in the North will also be stepped up, in another futile attempt to break the iron solidarity and determination of the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

Hanoi Radio has said that the North Vietnamese are 'resolutely prepared to meet any new war provocation'.

The North Vietnamese army newspaper 'Quan Doi Nhan Dan' said Nixon hoped to frighten the Vietnamese people by escalating the war against the North.

'This however is but the crazy reaction of desperate imperialism. It is not the Vietnamese people that are frightened.'

The blockade will do

nothing to improve the desperate situation of the puppet army in the South.

Yesterday, liberation forces with tanks were closing in on the provincial capital of Kontum, while other regiments thrust towards Hue, south of the demilitarized zone.

There was also a new flare-up of fighting around An Loc, the town north of Saigon which has been under siege for almost a month.

The situation of the government troops on all these fronts is considered virtually hopeless, even by their American advisers.

Nixon's blockade is an act of desperation, but it clearly indicates the Americans have no intention of accepting defeat so long as they can continue to push South Vietnamese con-

scripts into the firing line.

With his Moscow summit conference less than a fortnight away, Nixon hopes to put pressure on the Kremlin through the blockade, which primarily affects Soviet vessels.

The Kremlin bureaucrats, who want agreement with the US on trade, European security and arms limitation, are not eager for a confrontation with the US at this time.

In his efforts to crush the Vietnamese revolution, however, Nixon is signalling that he will stop at nothing and is even prepared to risk military confrontation with the USSR and China.

The world labour movement must come to the defence of the Vietnamese revolution and beware of any secret sell-out over Vietnam.

## VW profits down Prices may rise 5 p. c.

VOLKSWAGEN, one of the world's largest car producers, has announced its lowest annual profit since World War II.

The embattled VW combine, which recently had a boardroom purge, is to raise its prices in an attempt to solve its financial problems. Executive director

Rudolf Leiding told reporters the company would have to increase prices by about 5 per cent to help pay for constantly growing labour and material costs. It raised car prices by an average 4.9 per cent at the beginning of this year.

But international competition on major mar-

kets, especially from Japanese car manufacturers, might make it difficult to increase prices by the necessary amount of 5 per cent, he said.

It sold 2.3 million cars—about 5 per cent more than the previous year—when profits amounted to £49m on £1,900m sales.

# More Brixton sit-downs?

**REMAND prisoners at South London's Brixton jail are planning new protests against squalid conditions.**

In particular the inmates are complaining about overcrowding and bad food.

In the past week they have organized a series of four sit-downs in the jail's exercise yard. About 200 men have been involved in the protests.

Prisoners on remand are not convicted men. Under so-called 'British justice' they are all innocent until proved guilty. Yet the conditions created at Brixton are deliberately persecutory.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

Because of the huge backlog of cases waiting to go to court and the persistent police refusal to grant bail in the most ordinary cases, the remand prison at Brixton has become wretchedly overcrowded.

The protests were sparked off when the majority of high security remand prisoners in the jail's 'A'-wing sat-down and refused to move during their exercise period last Wednesday.

On Thursday a similar action was staged by almost half the prisoners in the other large 'F' remand wing.

Another protest followed and

on Sunday about 140 prisoners organized a five-hour sit-down. A Home Office spokesman said that the sit-down started at 2.40 p.m. and ended at 8 p.m.

The prisoners are demanding that the authorities allow fortnightly 'open' meetings—where the prisoners are allowed physical contact with visitors—in parity with Pentonville prison.

Brixton prisoners at the moment are only allowed 'open' meetings once a month.

They have demanded that like Holloway prison, radio loudspeakers should be installed in cell blocks to make life bearable

for men who often have to wait over nine months for 23 hours a day in cells before standing trial.

The men also want their food improved. At the moment, they claim, the food is almost certain to prevent prisoner from being strong and vigorous in court at the end of a prison spell.

Their main diet is bread and potatoes, with just enough meat, fruit and vegetables to stop a complete physical collapse.

Almost 900 men are at present detained in Brixton—700 remand prisoners, 50 awaiting sentence and a further 140 'short-term' prisoners serving up to 18 months.

The governor earns nearly £5,000 a year for administering the prison's affairs.

## Recall T&GWU conference—stewards

**THREE HUNDRED** senior Transport and General Workers' Union shop stewards in Coventry met on Monday to discuss the implications of the Industrial Relations Act on their union.

Speakers condemned the TUC General Council for its retreat and criticized the T&GWU executive for paying the £55,000 fine.

A resolution was passed demanding the executive recall the biennial delegate conference to discuss means of beating the 'tyrannical' Industrial Relations Act, including a ballot for national strike action.

It also called on the TUC to reaffirm the policy of non-cooperation with the Act. Failing this, the T&GWU should consider withdrawing its affiliation.

In the event of a further NIRC fine, the Coventry committee was asked to call a meeting of all 1,000-odd T&GWU stewards in the area to move district strike action.

## TUC's about-turn on law pleases the EEF

**THE ENGINEERING Employers' Federation is jubilant over the Trades Union Congress about-turn after the government's confrontation with the three railway unions across the bench of the National Industrial Relations Court.**

The Federation's latest bulletin, 'EEF News', says: 'It has prompted the unions to think again on their approach to the Act and the results of this are by no means discouraging.'

'There are signs that the unions may at last discard the massive self-deception that the law does not exist and that it can be safely ignored.'

'The step from here to working constructively within the framework of the new law may be a painful one, but it is a comparatively short one.'

'There will be a good many more hurdles to cross before the law has proved itself. But its indirect results are considerable and important for the mere existence of the law and the Code of Practice are encouraging people—including the unions—to re-jig their policies and to form much more carefully considered judgements.'

The EEF is cautious about the direct impact of the Act and is watching the situation on the docks and railways carefully.

What happens there may be of immediate relevance to the steps it may eventually urge Manchester engineering employers to take as a means of ending the occupation of about 30 of their factories.

# Seaforth talks as ships stand by

BY AN INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

**AS THE Transport and General Workers' Union went to court yesterday to face contempt charges, talks resumed in Liverpool aimed at lifting the dockers' black on the new £50m Seaforth container terminal.**

The dockers have refused to work the terminal unless they get a new agreement covering improved pay and conditions, plus assurances that container-handling will be carried out only by registered dock workers.

Today's official opening of the terminal was postponed because of the dockers' decision.

The first ship scheduled to unload at Seaforth has gone on to America with Liverpool-bound cargo still on board. Six other vessels due to arrive at Seaforth between now and Saturday are standing by to hear from ships' agents.

MacAndrews have the 'Velasquez' due in today from Bilbao and the 'Cervantes' due tomorrow from Barcelona. Both are carrying fruit and other perishable cargo.

The Ellerman Line's 'Tagus' is also expected tomorrow from Portugal and the 'Tiber' from Israel, both carrying textiles and general cargo.

A spokesman for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company said yesterday: 'No new date for the opening of Seaforth has been arranged.'

IN HULL one of the firms blacked by dockers is threatening to go to the National Industrial Relations Court. A spokesman for Pilsanpina (Northern) Limited said the company had gone through all the procedures, but it had not helped.

He said it was quite likely the company would go to the Court 'because there is no other way'.

A spokesman for the other blacked firm, MAT Transport Limited, said a full board meeting would be held in London to review the situation. But at the moment the firm would not be taking action in the Court.

Yesterday almost 2,000 Hull dockers stopped work and marched to a privately-owned wharf to stop unregistered labour unloading timber from a coaster. The city's docks were brought to a standstill as shop stewards met the wharf company management. The stoppage made 27 ships idle.

At a mass meeting the dockers decided—in defiance of the Court and their own union leadership—to continue blacking the two firms.

Mr K. Wedderburn (l), legal adviser to the T&GWU, carries a little library into the National Industrial Relations Court yesterday when there were fresh hearings over container blacking by the union's members. See Court report p. 12.



### ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETINGS

**SLOUGH:** Thursday May 11, 8 p.m. Slough Community Centre, Farnam Rd. Speakers, Frank Tomany, ex-convenor Omes Faulkner, Brian Bailey, AUEW (in a personal capacity). The Industrial Relations Act.

Recall the TUC  
Expel the traitors  
Make the Tories resign

**CROYDON:** Thursday May 11, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Rd.

**LUTON:** Thursday May 11, 8 p.m. St John's Ambulance Hall, Lea Rd.

**N LONDON:** Thursday May 11, 8 p.m. Bricklayers Arms, Tottenham High Rd (nr White Hart Lane).

**SE LONDON:** Thursday May 11, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers' Club, New Cross Rd (opp New Cross station).

**WILLESDEN:** Monday May 15, 8 p.m. Trades and Labour Hall, Willesden High Rd, NW10....

## Lincoln pop in court

ATTORNEY-General Sir Peter Rawlinson will present a High Court action on Friday aimed at stopping the four-day pop festival in the Fenland parish of Tupholme, Lincolnshire.

Opponents of the Spring Bank Holiday Festival are trying to keep the tens of thousands of fans out of their locality.

The writ against the organizers, Great Western Festivals, is being brought by Lindsey County Council, Horn-castle Rural District Council, eight landowners and by Rawlinson, appearing on their behalf.

Two of the directors of the festival company are former British ambassador in Washington, Lord Harlech, and actor Stanley Baker.

The case is seen as a test case in preparing the way for the Tories' Night Assemblies Bill.

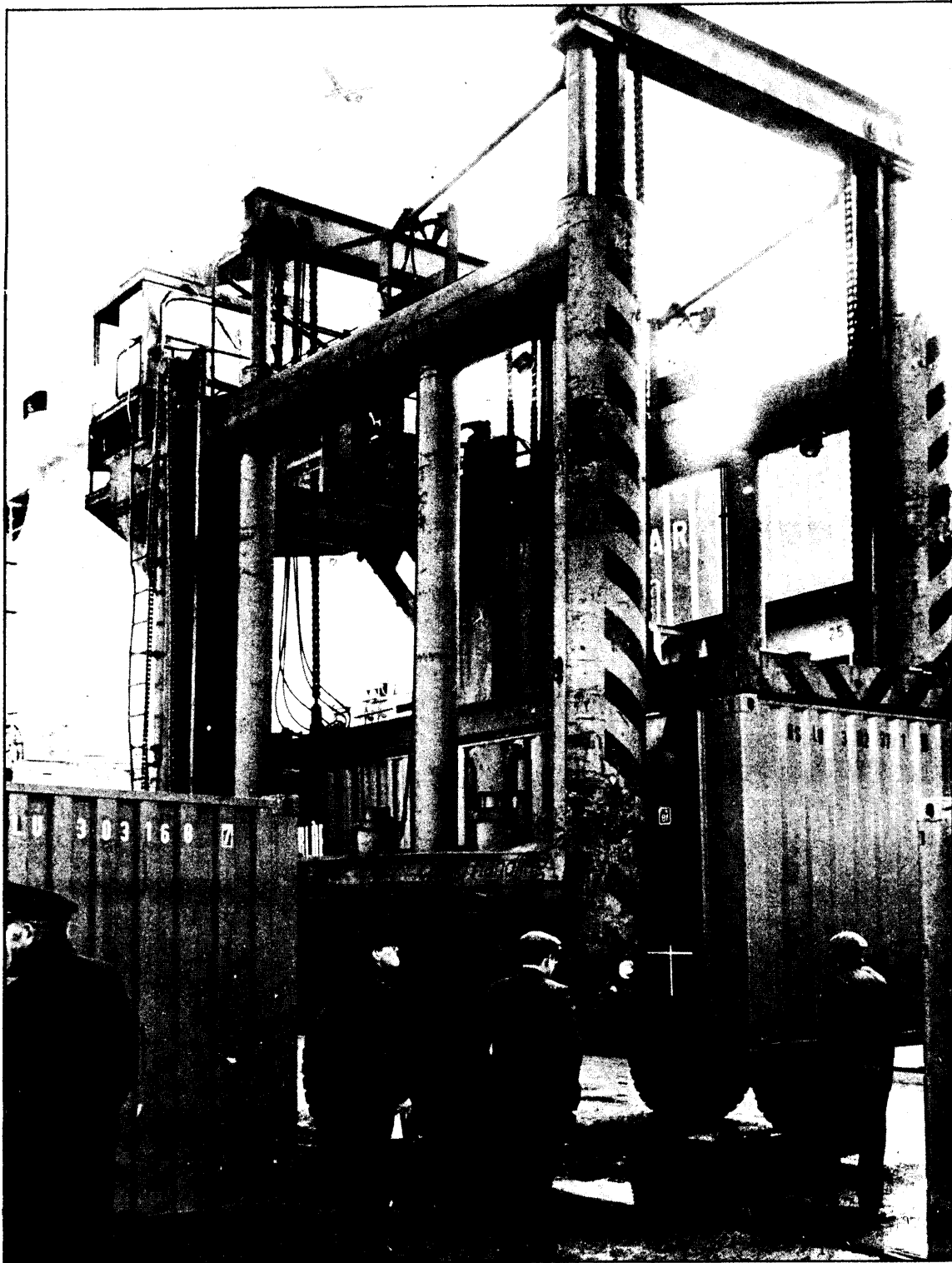
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# CONTAINER FIRMS GET READY FOR MARKET ENTRY

BY ALEX MITCHELL

The containerization boom has entered a new phase. A big firm has now been set up to lease containers to exporters who will be taking advantage of Britain's entry into the Common Market.

The newly-formed company, Eurolease Containers, advised by Robert Fraser and Partners, are particularly directing their business on the ports of Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Israel.

## IMMENSE

Eurolease chairman Robert McCarthy has described the immense profitability of the scheme:

'The container leasing market consists of meeting the requirements of shipping companies and forwarding agents who need units either to meet short-term increases in demand or to ship one way without having the trouble of returning units, or who lease over a long period as an alternative to buying.

'It is this latter business of long-term leases in which ECL will specialize. Higher rates are available from short-term or one-way leasing, but the overheads are correspondingly higher.

'We have had a great deal of experience in these matters,' McCarthy said.

'We saw an opportunity where we could contribute something of definite value to the container industry.

'Circumstances have changed radically in containerization and we are now in the age of long-term leasing. We are able to offer the industry finance and when you consider that a reefer box costs £7,000 we are talking about very expensive equipment.

'In short, we are in the market to meet the requirements of the trade for certain capital equipment which, is too expensive for them to buy outright, even if they could.'

Eurolease are currently building up a fleet of regular and specialized container equipment. It is expected that during the first two years of operation the company will purchase 2,500 20ft units and 1,500 40ft units.

It is envisaged that at least 1,500 containers will be leased in Italy, and 1,000 in Portugal. These areas will take priority, although McCarthy said that many other inquiries were in the pipeline in other European sectors.

## MARKET

It was estimated that the present world market for containers numbered some 400,000 units and the replacement market figure alone was running at 50 per cent. Experience had shown that many leasing companies had invested in fleets of containers over five-year periods and had found that the units lasted only three years.

The whole of the Eurolease operation is based on the capitalists' cut-throat drive into Europe. At risk in this drive are the jobs of thousands of dockers whose labour will be made redundant by the container boom. In its bid for new markets and new profits in the Common Market, the container operators regard dockers' jobs as 'expendable'.

# DOCKERS TOLD 'GET CRACKING'

Docks union leaders came in for praise last week from a port employer, who, in his next breath, urged dockers themselves to 'get cracking'.

The employer in question, Cmdre Dermot Jewitt, outgoing chairman of the London Ocean Trades Employers' Association, said in a retirement message that there were still too many instances where the fixed-wage policy embodied in Devlin Phase Two was not working.

'Everyone knows this,' he said, 'and, in general, each side blames the other.'

'Employers say "lack of effort" and "bad timekeeping" whilst men say "bad management".'

'With goodwill on both sides—and this must be what we all want as no one can work in an unhappy atmosphere—we can make our present productivity agreement a success which is vital to us all.'

Just the kind of public-

school, play-up-play-the-game, jolly-old-esprit-de-corps message to get the troops pulling their socks up and pulling together, what?

But, hang on. Haven't we met Cmdre Jewitt before? Wasn't he the philanthropist who proposed forcibly booting 800 light-duty dockers out of the industry early last year so as to pay for a wage increase?

Well, yes he was, which puts something of a strange construction on some of the other aspects of his message.

'Your unions—as I know from experience—have done and are doing a first-class job.'

'I have always been an advocate of an incentive scheme to produce results where man-handling is paramount, but the Transport and General Workers' Union opted for a fixed-wage policy in 1970 and I have always endeavoured to make that policy a success.'

Nice for the union bosses. But not so nice for the men who have to work Phase Two.

Jack Jones, T&GWU general secretary



# MONOPOLIES TO ATTACK UNIONS

The big monopolies have prepared plans for controlling and exploiting the working class on a Common Market scale.

Details of their intentions are unfolded in a document on industrial relations just produced by the Confederation of British Industry.

The document shows that the European Community has the power radically to influence the relationship between management and unions in all member-states.

The Treaty of Rome, for example, embodies principles touching on employment, labour, law, working conditions, basic and advanced vocational training, the law of trade unions, collective bargaining, equal pay, paid holidays and free mobility of labour.

In other words, just about

every basic right won by the working classes in western Europe is threatened by the new super state centred on Brussels.

The 'Journal of Commerce', the newspaper of the port employers and trading companies, commented on the implications of British entry last week:

'In many fields progress has been slow. But the pressures are growing and British employers will come face to face with them. Already there are trends towards common conditions of employment throughout the EEC which cannot be ignored.'

The intentions of the monopolies are clear: they want to create a western Europe of Orwellian proportions with a mobile and docile working class exploited by uniform labour laws. However, what the bourgeoisie wants and what the bourgeoisie gets are two quite different things.

# MOSCOW WON'T RELAX TRADE TARGETS

Hungary is no nearer getting a Soviet undertaking to supply increased quantities of fuel and raw material despite a visit to Moscow at the end of last month by Foreign Trade Minister Jozsef Biro.



Janos Kadar, Hungarian Communist Party chief.

Earlier visits by Janos Kadar and Janos Fock had failed to produce the desired results and further talks are scheduled for later this month. The main problem of the Hungarian economy is its narrow raw material base and unless the Soviet Union can supply its needs it will be impossible to fulfil the plan in the coming years.

## Resources

The Soviet Union is faced with its own raw material problems until new resources can be opened up, which requires heavy capital investment. The Soviet leadership is trying to impose the contradictions of 'socialism in one country' on its 'partners' in COMECON (equivalent of the EEC).

There are signs of growing resentment in the Hungarian government against what is felt to be a lack of comprehension of the problems of a small country whose ties with the world economy are curtailed on the orders of Moscow.

Fock has even had to make a statement denying the difficulties with the Soviet Union which have been reported and commented upon in the capitalist press.

## Balance

Since 1956 the Hungarian bureaucracy has clung to power with Soviet support, while increasing the flow of consumer goods in an effort to gain some popular support. This delicate balance will not last long if the Soviet Union does not come across with more oil and raw materials to permit the plans to go ahead.



# WILL RUSSIA HELP BALE OUT THE DOLLAR?

The Soviet bureaucracy is taking a considerable interest in the current plans to reorganize the world monetary system.



Nixon will see Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny (top) for talks

This is expected to be one of the items on the agenda when President Nixon visits Moscow for talks with the Soviet leaders in two weeks time.

Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin are expected to tell Nixon that they are interested in having a say in forthcoming talks on the international monetary crisis.

The Soviet Union and China have already taken an active part in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago, Chile, with their supporters in the so-called 'third world' pushing for Soviet participation in a new monetary deal.

The Soviet leaders hope for an expansion of trade with the West, but their interest also has a more sinister implication. They have in mind the formation of a new monetary

system in which the Soviet currency can take part alongside the dollar, pound and other capitalist currencies.

Their intervention follows the breakdown of the Bretton Woods monetary system formed by the capitalist powers after the war. This system, which formed the basis for the post-war inflationary boom, finally broke down last year on August 15 when Nixon ended the sale of US reserve gold for dollars.

Since that time, the capitalist powers have proved unable, despite many meetings and international conferences, to agree on a system to replace Bretton Woods. There are already signs that the capitalist world is splitting into several mutually-hostile monetary blocs notably the US and the Common Market.

The Soviet government refused to take part in the Bretton Woods system because its currency could not be made fully convertible with those of the capitalist countries without breaching the state monopoly of foreign trade established by the October 1917 Revolution.

The Soviet leaders apparently hope that their massive gold reserves — the largest in the world outside the United States — would give them a big voice in a post-Bretton Woods deal.

Their interest in a new monetary deal implies that the Soviet leaders are ready to see some form of convertibility between the rouble and the capitalist currencies—in other words to submit the rouble to the processes of the capitalist money markets.

Already the Tito bureaucracy in Yugoslavia has made

sweeping concessions along these lines and is working towards making the dinar a fully convertible currency. This has had a violent impact on the country's shaky economy.

Rumania, under the 'independent' leadership of Nicolae Ceausescu, is moving along the same road, opening the country to foreign capital investment with fewer state controls than ever before.

The Soviet economy, of course, is far more powerful than the Yugoslav or Rumanian, with a much more developed industrial base. This could make it possible for the Soviet Union to compete in the market with the capitalist powers on more equal terms.

But the Soviet economy is still far from equalling the major capitalist countries in terms of the productivity of labour and, in many industrial spheres, quality of output.

At present, the state monopoly of foreign trade allows the control of imports and exports and enables the central negotiation of the most favourable trading terms. But acceptance of currency convertibility must tend to break down this all-important barrier between the Soviet economy and the world market.

The Soviet leaders are likely to demand as the price of any participation in a new monetary system that the 'official' price of gold be raised considerably.

One monetary official quoted in the 'New York Herald Tribune' said: 'I don't think the Soviet Union would take part in a new monetary system without a substantial gold price increase.'

The US administration has set its face firmly against any

such step. The furthest Nixon was prepared to go was to raise the gold price by a token \$3 an ounce to \$38—and he has made it clear there will be no return to convertibility, at least until the other capitalist states take steps to cut their own trade and help the US balance of payments back into surplus.

The Soviet Union is still a long way from any monetary deal with the capitalist powers. The big bankers of the West have shown no inclination to bring the Soviet Union into their discussions on the monetary crisis.

In many ways they regard the Soviet Union as a potential competitor rather than an ally in dealing with the crisis. And they also retain the ultimate ambition of restoring capitalism in the workers' states of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China.

The fact that the issue is being raised in talks with Nixon, however, indicates that the Soviet bureaucracy is prepared to gamble the gains of the October Revolution on the doubtful prospect of more trade with the crisis-ridden capitalist world.

It also illustrates in the most vivid way the impasse of the Stalinist ideal of 'socialism in one country'. Fifty years after the Revolution, the Soviet economy still cannot sever itself from the capitalist world—indeed this is less possible the more Soviet industry and economy develops.

In the pursuit of this reactionary Utopia, the Stalinist bureaucracy is forced into great contradictions which now threaten the social order and the gains of the Soviet working class.



# HOOVER

The tyrant who spied on 100 million Americans

BY ALEX MITCHELL

The 'New York Times' last week produced its epitaph on the late J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation:

'Few, if any, men in the history of the United States have accumulated so much power and wielded it for so long. His career as a public servant spanned a fourth of the history of our nation.'

'His power and influence far outweighed that of men he nominally worked for — the attorneys-general—and sometimes seemed to surpass even that of presidents, if only because he was here when they came and they knew he would be here when they left.'

Hoover worked under eight presidents in a career which covered more than half a century.

But if the powerful 'New York Times', publishers of the Pentagon Papers, can now poke at the sinister role of Hoover in US affairs, why didn't they write it a year ago, ten years ago or 20 years ago—at the height of McCarthyism?

The liberal establishment were cowed by Hoover. They privately detested him but publicly held their tongue.

This is perhaps understandable. After all, it was Hoover's department that, after Martin Luther King's assassination, leaked stories alleging lechery with white women and heavy whisky-drinking.

Members of the Kennedy family, and certainly members of its entourage, were victims of this type of FBI-fabricated slander. The liberals were unable to defend themselves against the poisonous operation of the FBI because many of them recognized the thoroughness of the FBI research.

In an article on Hoover a year ago 'Newsweek' magazine quoted an administration official as saying: 'Hoover doesn't threaten. All he does is call up someone on the [Capitol] Hill and say: "Senator, you don't have to worry about a thing. I've taken your file out of the main record section and I'm keeping it here right where I can keep my eye on it." He says it very sincerely, but the message gets across.'

Only a week ago Washington columnist Jack Anderson revealed that Hoover prepared films and dossiers on the extracurricular sexual activities of senior members of the administration. These were shown in the private rooms of the White House to ex-President Lyndon Baines Johnson who apparently had a hearty appetite for this type of FBI reportage.

But Hoover stayed in office until he was 83 because the various presidential administrations—Republican and Democrat—wanted him to. Individual presidents and attorneys-general may have had skirmishes with him, but he basically represented a force which they relied upon.

President Johnson certainly took this pragmatic view.

When one of his aides pressed him to depose Hoover, the blunt-talking LBJ replied: 'I'd rather have the sonofabitch inside the tent pissing out than outside the tent pissing in.'

Because of his huge apparatus of agents and personal records — he accumulated records on 100 million citizens — Hoover and his G-men were a formidable force in intimidating rebellious elements in American society.

The notion was fostered, however, that the FBI was in fact designated to fight organized crime. Because of his own involvement in the capture of one mobster, Hoover was cast in the role of No. 1 gang-buster. Television programmes, films and hundreds of bad novels were written to create the legend of Hoover's fight against 'The Mob'.

If Hoover was indeed fighting the Mafia, his career must have been a total failure and he stands nominated as the most incompetent police officer in history. For during his mighty reign, organized crime spread into just about every business in the country—real estate, banking, timber, pharmaceuticals, gambling, road haulage and even component making for the space race.

Behind this massive network of business stand the heroin smugglers, the currency hustlers, bond frauds and art thieves.

This unparalleled increase in crime occurred without Hoover batting an eyelid. In fact, when he was pressed about the crime increase, Hoover pretended it didn't exist.

The reality of Hoover's secret police is that it is more concerned with preserving capitalism than attacking its enthusiastic and reckless proponents in the Mafia.

In carrying out his war against militant groups Hoover arraigned all the vicious weapons of the police state: wire tapping, undercover agents, provocateurs, frame-ups and brutal interrogation methods.

His political role was completely exposed a year ago when, in Philadelphia, anti-war groups obtained copies of secret FBI memoranda. The papers showed that local FBI agents ran checks on a Philadelphia couple who openly visited the Soviet consulate in



Washington; an Idaho scoutmaster who wanted to take his troop to Russia; a Quaker couple who invited a Czech academic to the US for a lecture tour; a congressman's daughter who went abroad to a peace conference; a 14-year-old boy who spent a summer vacation in East Germany.

In recent years the number of 'defections' from the Bureau has grown and many of the former agents have told the press 'inside stories'. Robert Harris was recruited at the University of Illinois in 1968. He served for 11 months handing over information on left wing student leaders. He also identified photographs, reported on student politics and bank balances of campus groups.

He decided to quit, however, when the FBI asked him who in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was sleeping with whom. Further evidence of FBI methods surfaced recently in the Berrigan trial. One of the star prosecution witnesses turned out to be a 'prisoner' who occupied the next cell to the Rev Philip Berrigan in Danbury jail, Connecticut. Even before the trial began Hoover began to whip up prejudice against the defendants by publicly testifying that Berrigan

and a number of other Catholics and nuns were engaged in an incredible scheme to blow up heating tunnels in Washington. He also alleged that they conspired to kidnap a senior White House official, namely Henry Kissinger.

The charges were outrageous, but the Nixon Administration kept a bold front and totally supported 'the Chief'. As his body lay in state in Washington last weekend, Nixon went on television to give one of the most impassioned funeral orations heard since they buried George Washington.

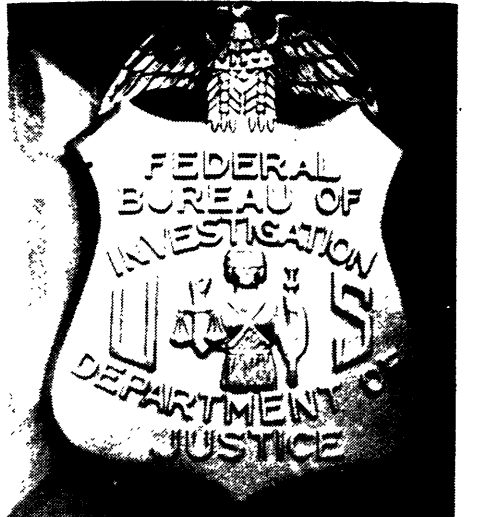
Nixon, of course, had good reason rampantly to praise Hoover. They worked closely during the McCarthy period, Hoover busily feeding the young senator with every possible piece of red-mania his organization could lay its hands on.

More interestingly, however, their careers were brought together as far back as 1937. In that year Nixon's university dean wrote to Hoover saying:

'Some time ago you suggested that I might refer to you an exceptional young man who has an interest in the work of the FBI. I have such a man in mind who is to graduate in June... Richard Nixon.'



Top: Hoover leading Alvin Karpis into court in New Orleans after personally arresting him. Above: Hoover, a bachelor, with his one close friend and assistant Clyde Tolson. Right: with Nixon, who is just one of the eight presidents Hoover has served.



Above: the badge of Hoover's FBI. J. Edgar Hoover once held up Efram Zimbalist Junior, star of the television series, 'The FBI', as a model for his real-life agents. He wanted his men to be fastidiously neat, well-combed and tailored. He would deliver sermons against 'facial hair' and fired agents whose sideburns grew too long or who cultivated beards or mustaches. To gain promotion, an agent builds up his VOT (voluntary overtime), cuts down on his TIO (time in office) and tries to beat the BUDED (the bureau deadline for an assignment). Hoover fired agents for having affairs or messy divorce; others were rapped for letting their car tyres go too soft!

# THE CASE OF THE LANCASTER MINE

BY CHARLES PARKINS

The trouble at Lancaster university, which began over the issue of victimization of left-wing staff, could well be far from over.

Dr David Craig, the senior lecturer in the English department who was facing the threat of dismissal for alleged 'disruption', is not to be sacked after all. The special committee of the University Council shelved the charges last Tuesday after discussions with Dr Craig and his legal representatives.

He is to be given a new teaching post outside the English department.

But nine Lancaster students, who were reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions after police were called in to investigate a sit-in in support of Craig may still be charged with 'conspiracy to commit a trespass'.

Also the university has refused to withdraw internal charges against the nine. So even if they are not prosecuted in court, they will still have to face a university tribunal, which could dismiss them.

Three of the other teaching staff in the English department, who supported David Craig against discriminatory moves at the start of the dispute, are still being refused permanent tenure in their posts.

And Craig's own position is far from satisfactory. The students' original demand was that he should be reinstated to the modern literature course he had been teaching. Now he has been removed from the English department altogether.

## PERMANENT PROBATION

In a statement last Wednesday, Lancaster vice-Chancellor Charles F. Carter said that Craig was now 'on almost permanent probation' and that the statement drawn up by the special committee of Council was one of 'unprecedented severity'.

He said that the charges against Craig had not been withdrawn and they could be revived at any time. By accepting the agreement, Craig had admitted the substance of the charges against him, Carter claimed.

'This is a very unfavourable document indeed to Dr Craig,' said the vice-Chancellor. 'I am surprised that he accepted the formula.'

English students, who had spent an entire term opposing what they saw as a political witch-hunt, viewed with dismay what appeared to be a successful purge of left-wing teaching staff from their department. Head of the Department, Professor Bill Murray, they feel, is confirmed in a position of strength.

Murray, who initiated the original moves against Craig and others, once commanded British troops in Malaya during the 'Emergency' and is known in the university for his anti-communist attitudes and policies. In the course of the struggle to defend the lecturers, students had demanded that Murray resign.

Relief at hearing that Craig was not to be sacked after all, turned to anger on Wednesday when students realized the settlement left out the nine students and the other three teaching staff, and that vice-Chancellor Carter was once again claiming a victory.

There were cries of 'sell out', not only at a mass meeting of

students on Wednesday evening, but also at a meeting of teaching staff in the Association of Scientific, Technical and managerial Staffs branch meeting the same day.

The students' meeting passed a resolution saying the Craig settlement was unsatisfactory. It acknowledged that since Craig himself had accepted it, there was nothing more that could be done about his case.

The ASTMS staff meeting passed unanimously a resolution calling on the university to drop charges against the nine students and to try to persuade the DPP to drop any legal prosecution.

The mass meeting of students and some staff also voted for a resolution demanding Carter's resignation as vice-Chancellor. Speaking in support of this resolution, a young staff member attacked the calling of the police onto the campus to investigate the sit-in.

Dr Craig's 'trial' took place under conditions considerably more oppressive than those of either a factory negotiation or a law-court. The committee which Council set up to hear the charges against him included representatives of the same administration which was bringing the charges. The University Council itself is a purely 'Establishment' body, with a strong representation of business interests.

The meeting was held in camera. The previous week, Carter had refused to see a delegation of local townspeople who had wanted to press him to either drop the charges or, at least, make the committee proceedings public.

On the Tuesday afternoon, Peter Kennedy, full-time regional organizer for the ASTMS, of which Craig is a member, and Geoffrey Bing, Q.C. were both refused permission to observe the proceedings. Dr Craig's wife, Gillian, who is a Morecambe GP, was also kept out.

Craig faced charges relating to 'public criticism of the institutions of the university and reviling of persons running them' and 'incitement of student strike action', both these exercises in free speech being held to be breaches of university rules. Apparently, towards the end of last term, when students were holding meetings to discuss strike action, someone had followed Dr Craig from one meeting to another, taking notes and tape recordings of speeches he made. In accepting the settlement reached last Tuesday, Craig in effect pleaded guilty to the charges against him.

## BUILDING OCCUPIED

It was the threat of dismissal to Dr Craig, when these charges were announced at the end of last term, which led to a student mass meeting voting to occupy the university administration building and computer centre.

Now, while Craig has accepted a compromise, nine of the students who supported him face the possibility of court action and even jail sentences.

On Tuesday, as the committee met to decide on Craig's future behind closed doors in Lancaster town hall, extra police from all over Lancashire were brought into Lancaster. Mounted police waited at the bottom of the university drive to escort a student demonstration into the town, and more police, both on



Lancaster vice-Chancellor, Charles F. Carter: students and some staff voted for his resignation

horse and on foot, were guarding the town hall in strength.

Police remained on duty outside the town hall after the demonstrators had passed, while inside the worthies of the University Council, having completed their deliberations, went on to enjoy a buffet. Both buffet and policemen, not to mention the deposits left by the police horses in the Lancaster streets, presumably cost a considerable sum of public money. But so far none of the professional 'rate-payers' who regularly protest at money being spent on students have expressed any complaints.

The mounted police were not needed. There were no incidents at the town hall; the students demonstration passing off peacefully and orderly.

About 1,500 students took part in the demonstration, including some from as far afield as Southampton and Brighton. A large number of ASTMS teaching staff also took part, both those from Lancaster and delegates from the union's East Anglia branch. Some young workers from Lancaster, members of the Young Socialists, also participated.

The Communist Party, of which David Craig is a member, seemed to be out to get as much as it could out of this demonstration. Besides a number of CP students from other colleges who took part, Fergus Nicholson the Party's student organizer, was to be seen carrying the Preston Communist Party banner.

Concerned at the criticism from left-wing students, the Stalinists were determined to use the Craig affair as a prestige struggle. A special leaflet issued at the Lancaster demonstration attempted to claim a special significance for the CP as the target for the university witch-hunt and to suggest that the Party was playing a leading part in the students' struggle.

At the mass meeting after the demonstration, CP member and National Union of Students' president Digby Jacks struck 'militant' postures and promised that the NUS would take further action if Craig was dismissed. But most students felt that the Stalinist student leader failed to offer any lead to the students.

The speaker from the International Socialists—IMG revisionist amalgam, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Student Unions, was, if any-

thing, worse than Jacks. He spoke of the student unions needing to defend themselves against the state, criticized the NUS leadership for not having a programme, but then, as a heckler pointed out, appeared to have no programme to offer himself. The Liaison Committee speaker called for more demonstrations to 'show the state what we think'.

After various other speakers, including Peter Kennedy of ASTMS, one of the nine Lancaster students warned of the struggle being isolated. 'If we are, then we can be as militant as we like, and still be defeated.' He called on students to make a definite turn to the labour movement. He reminded those present that over a year ago Lancaster students had invaded the University Council's meeting, 'but they are there, the Lords and Ladies and Bishops and all the other parasites are still there. It's no use talking as somebody did of "showing them what we think". We have got to think about how we can get rid of them. It's no use talking about "showing the state what we think", or showing the government "what we think". They already know what we think, that's why they're trying to clamp down on our unions. We have got to get rid of this government.'

## THREATENED PROSECUTION

He went on to say that the threatened prosecution of the nine students was directly connected with the attacks being made on the working class.

'What's happening to us is the same as what's happening to the railwaymen, who have been told that they can be made to work overtime, by law. It's the same as what's happening to the dockers; and it's the same as what will happen to the engineering workers who are occupying their factories, if they get away with defeating us.'

He assured the meeting that whatever the TUC did, they could expect that the dockers in Liverpool, Preston and elsewhere would carry on their struggle. There were going to be some big struggles and a lot of workers would be asking themselves about the state, about the judges, and the law. They

would learn far more than could be taught in a university politics seminar.

Many people had said that the Lancaster events meant that 'the liberal university was dead'. If it was, then there was no point in trying to revive the corpse.

Students would have to make a choice. Either the kind of university students, and society the Tories wanted, or a better society—and the building of a revolutionary movement to get it.

Since Tuesday's experience feelings in the university have been very mixed. But there has been increased political discussion at a higher level of seriousness than before.

Many people are now prepared to ask all sorts of questions and to discuss the role of the CP and Stalinism in a way they have never done before.

Not only Craig, but student union leader Mick Murray—also a CP member—has come in for criticism because of his statement that Council had shown an understanding of the need for compromise and peaceful negotiation.

Students are contrasting this with the university administration's aggressive tones.

In a way, cries of 'sell-out' directed against Craig personally may be unfair, in that the English lecturer, although thrust into the middle of this struggle as the target of victimization, was never really a leader of any kind in the university. It is not quite accurate to compare it to a sell-out by, say a CP workers' leader like Jimmy Reid.

But the CP deserves what it has reaped, in derision and contempt, from the Lancaster situation. It set out to use the student struggle at Lancaster as a prestige booster.

All this rebounded in a big reaction against the Stalinists after Craig accepted the Council's 'judgement'.

But what is needed now is not the cynicism, jokes, or personal recriminations that have been heard, which could well lead to demoralization, but some serious thought about how to defend the Lancaster nine.

A serious turn to the labour movement, in practice and not just words, is absolutely essential for students—or for that matter academics—to achieve anything within the context of developing the revolutionary alternative.





A scene from 'The Ceremony'

# THE RITUAL OF DECAY

REVIEW BY STEPHEN JOHNS

'The Ceremony'. Directed by Nagisa Oshima. At Academy 3, Oxford Street, London.

'The Ceremony' is a subtle and intricate film about the crisis of value and identity experienced by the Japanese ruling class since their humiliation in World War II.

A process of decay and alienation is unfolded within the Sakurada family whose rituals over marriage and death, which once bound them together, become increasingly empty and finally grotesque.

The impact of this on the young men and women of the household drives them into a fruitless search for some meaning, equilibrium or escape that ends in suicide and madness.

The story is told in flashback by the young man Masumo who returns from Manchuria with his mother at the end of the war to his grandfather's house.

There he is befriended by his young relatives — two boys, Terumichi and Tadashi, and a girl, Ritsuko. The blood links between them are a source of mystery. To the end Masumo does not know whether he is the cousin of Ritsuko, whom he loves, or her brother.

The confusion, I think, is deliberate — an expression on one level of the incestuous relations within the Sakurada family, but on another, a symbol of the bewildered groping by the youth for an identity they never find.

Though all the action takes place within the stifling confines of the family, the film's underlying theme is the tremendous trauma caused by the war and the colonization of Japan by American capital.

This is never directly expressed, but the disintegration of family and ritual within the upper class is the expression of this upheaval.

This is keenly exposed by the director Oshima, when he

examines the ceremonies — climaxed by a ludicrous arranged wedding.

Masumo's bride fails to show up, but the authoritarian grandfather declares doggedly that the event must proceed for the benefit of the guests. Masumo is forced to go through an awful mime of leading the imaginary bride in and out of the banqueting hall to the applause of the diners.

The ceremony is an empty shell—without the main participant—and life is reduced to a hopeless pretence.

An outraged Tadashi, in his own desperate attempt to find an escape, condemns the proceedings and calls for a 'New Japan'. He is bundled out and meets an ineffectual death under the wheels of a car outside the wedding hotel.

A hysterical Masumo drags out the ritual to a nightmarish climax. Before the family he 'makes love' to his imaginary bride and finally turns his attentions to the grandfather who has caused his humiliation.

The Sakurada family could be taken as a microcosm of the Japanese ruling class in crisis.

Masumo describes the stages of decline. At first the leading members are 'war criminals', then they are rehabilitated and grandfather becomes the head of a corporation. The older members face the future clinging cynically to rituals and procedures that no longer have a real meaning. But the young are completely disoriented.

Their search for identity appears sometimes mundane. In the opening minutes Masumo asks Ritsuko: 'What are we?' He could be inquiring whether he is her brother since his own father was Ritsuko's lover. But the question has greater import. He is also asking what is happening to my kind, my caste, my class, my family—what roles are we supposed to play?

They all seek desperate solutions to the problem.

Tadashi wallows in his fantasies of a 'New Japan' and becomes a dedicated member of the police force.

The strong man is Terumichi. He can stand up to the grandfather and eventually leaves the family for a self-imposed exile.

He nihilistically accepts the hopeless logic of his position and commits suicide—so ending, as his testimony states, the Sakurada family.

Masumo is weak, unable to break from the ritual and the family, yet unable to find peace or a role within it.

He became, for example, a baseball player—the game is a symbol of the American threat. But then burns his equipment in a fit of remorse because he misses his mother's death to play an important match.

He compares himself to the Flying Dutchman—condemned to a lonely and tortured limbo. Eventually the enormous pressure drives him crazy.

The film is a perceptive insight into the crisis facing the Japanese ruling class and through the person of Tadashi clearly gives some hint of the way the crisis could be resolved.

It is, however, ultimately nihilistic. The only 'solution' is offered by the 'noble' suicide of Terumichi.

I think Oshima must be influenced by Mishima — the writer who acted out his own fantasies on the restoration of Japanese power, by committing ritual suicide.

This philosophy is ultimately reactionary — though I would not say this of the film. It is deliberately obsessed with the sterility, frustrations and inward-looking nature of the Japanese upper class — hence the theme of incest and Masumo's mock sex attack on his grandfather.

But no solution is offered —and, of course, within the confines of the Sakurada family and their kind there is none, bar a return to fascism.

# WORKERS NOTEBOOK

## New born

The great new 'New Statesman' has been born under the dynamic editorship of Anthony Howard. Back on the front page go the editorials, out go the front page cartoons.

The editorial says: 'Nearly 60 years ago the first leading

off from writing about his vasectomy to describe the local elections, Jeremy Isaacs does a 'fun' piece on the new code of conduct at the BBC and Peter Paterson, the new assistant editor, writing on the unions.

The new, get-up-and-go magazine also carried a piece from that all-purpose favourite of the masses, Harold Wilson.

He wrote on a book by... Richard Crossman, the previous editor of the 'New Statesman'.

All in all one could say that the Turnstile nest has been disturbed very much by the 'workers' control revolution'.

## Verdict

An Austrian jury has acquitted a former SS officer, Johann Gogl, on charges of murder and cruelty while commanding a section of the notorious Mathausen death camp in 1944. There were shouts of protest in court when the not guilty verdict was pronounced.

The communist daily 'Volkstimme' described the verdict as 'incomprehensible and shocking' and said that it indicated Austria 'did not consider it necessary to atone for monstrous crimes'.

It was alleged that Gogl had personally murdered and tortured Jews, communists and British paratroop prisoners by making them haul heavy stones up the 186 steps of a quarry. Those who survived the ordeal were flung against an electric fence at the top.

A Russian witness claimed that Gogl headed an SS squad which murdered 15 Austrian anti-fascists. A strong impression on the jury was made by a petition from the entire adult population of the village where Gogl is a watchmaker saying what a 'decent citizen' he was.

About 30 other people charged with World War II atrocities are due to go on trial in Austria this year.

There are many people whose own records during the Nazi period would not bear close scrutiny who find such trials over a quarter of a century after the event too disturbing.



Top: 'New Statesman' editor, Anthony Howard. Above: Harold Wilson

article that the "New Statesman" ever published concluded:

We have put our cards on the table. We have said enough to show our readers where we stand, that we really intend the New Statesman to be an independent journal in the fullest sense of the word. It only remains for us to invite their support, not merely as readers, but as critics, correspondents and collaborators in the task which we have undertaken.

'There is not a word in that which we would change.'

But who are the scintillating new recruits to the magazine? Michael Parkinson takes time

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# Fighting the Tories' Rent Bill

Imaginative in lay-out and design

## Newcastle's housing threatened by double rents

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

FIFTY YEARS ago the bulk of the working-class population of Newcastle lived in row upon row of terraced houses winding away up the steep sides of the Tyne valley.

The cobbled streets usually led directly to the factory gate, since at that time—and still to a large extent—all the industry was concentrated along the waterfront of the River Tyne.

Home was a place within a few minutes' walk from the gloomy workshops where you spent your working day. Indeed, home seemed more like an extension of the factory yard. The huge slums that existed at Elswick and Scotswood directly across the road from the Vickers works and at Low Walker within a stone's throw of the shipyards, were stark testimonies to this conception.

The houses themselves consisted mostly of two or three small rooms with one 'upstairs' and one below on the ground floor. Into these would be crammed workers and their families with maybe four or more children sleeping in the one room.

The long terraces had no gardens and the best view obtainable was often only of the hills in the distance beyond the lofty black corrugated iron sheds silhouetted in the foreground.

But these slums are largely becoming a thing of the past as the bulldozers move in to level them flat—the Scotswood Road slums are now no more than a pile of rubble.

Over recent years Newcastle has been extremely active in removing these eyesores and replacing these with modern homes. Some of the very latest schemes initiated by council-building projects are extremely imaginative in layout and design.

It was in the early 1930s that council housing was first properly initiated in the area. Flat complexes such as the Sutton Dwellings in Benwell and the Walker Dwellings at Low Walker were built which, although not being a great improvement in terms of space, nevertheless provided what were then luxury amenities.

After the war several huge housing estates were built by the council around the periphery of the city. They were largely identical to the pattern of most other council estates built up and down the country at that time. The



Newly-built houses in Newcastle's Crudda Park area.

houses were arranged in long rows, each being absolutely identical to the next one, built to a standard design. The flats were either of the ugly monolithic multi-storey type, or else arranged in row after row of three-storey blocks.

Such estates provided quick, cheap housing. Design considerations never went beyond this framework. Still, to the families that moved out of the slums of Byker onto the Benton Estate, this must have seemed like a great improvement at the time.

Recently the planning has improved significantly with the accent on creating a pleasant environment on the estates. One of the latest projects the Newbiggin Hall Estate, is arranged in neat terraces and squares which help to create the community atmosphere of small streets. New material and new shapes figure largely in the designs.

This council house building programme established over the last 20 years, although still inadequate and in the case of the older estates poor aesthetically, has still firmly established cheap and decent housing as a basic right of the working class in Newcastle . . . as elsewhere in Britain.

The Tory government by its cut back on council house building and by its so called 'fair rents' Bill has placed this basic right in jeopardy.

The rents of houses set at £3 to £4 now would be raised to £6 to £8 upon the implementation of the clauses in the Bill now going through parliament. To many families on the Newcastle estates this will bring extreme hardship, it will drive others out of their newly-acquired homes

back into the slums, or even worse—out onto the streets.

With much of the substandard housing demolished, this is the stark reality for any families evicted because of the Bill. The houses they had vacated would then be let to the few people wealthy enough to afford the new rents. Faced with such a prospect, the removal of the Tory government, the instigator of these attacks, becomes an urgent task.

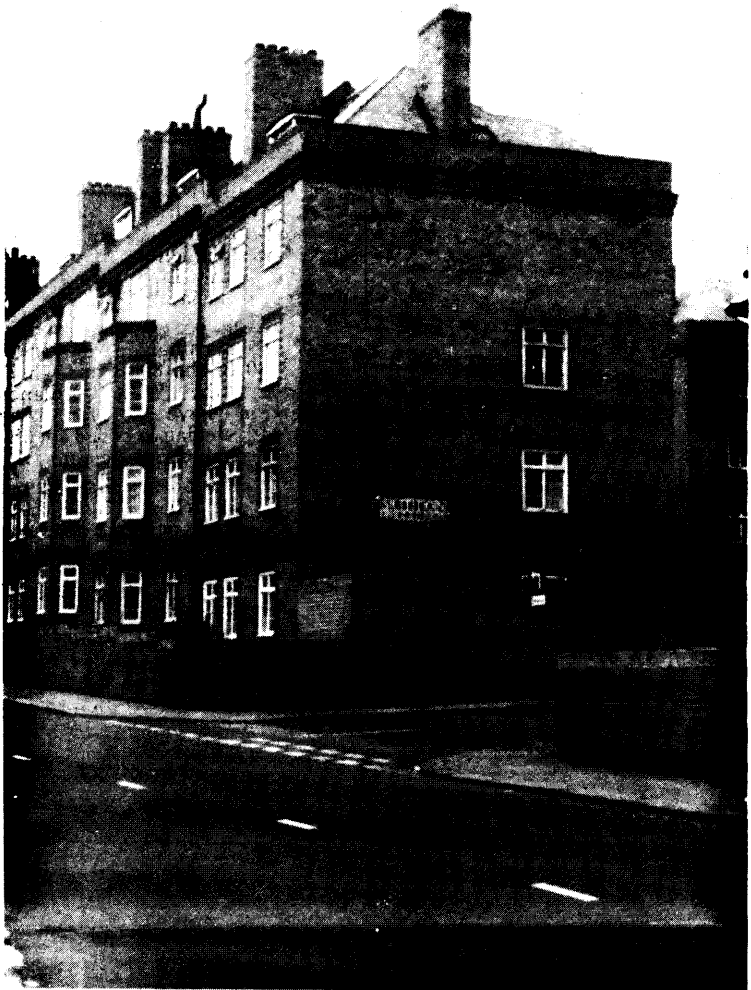
It must be replaced with a Labour government which would defend the right of the working class to decent housing by a policy of nationalizing the building industry under the control of the working class.

John Robinson is the secretary of the Old Scotswood Tenants' Association. When I spoke to him at his three-bedroomed council house about the 'fair rents' Bill, he said:

'Many of the people with families on this estate and the old age pensioners on fixed incomes will not be able to manage if the rents are increased. The rents are £4 a week now, in October they will be increased by an extra £1 and doubled to £8 over the next three years.'

'If they go ahead with the increases, there definitely will be a rent strike. The Tories have definitely got everyone's back up round here. We want a Labour government back as soon as possible. The working class could put pressure on the Labour government, they would have to listen, whereas the Tories don't.'

'We could try to force a General Election over this issue alone, never mind all the other things the Tories have done.'



Even though austere-looking, these flats—Sutton Dwellings—were revolutionary for 1934 and the area they were built in.

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This is old Newcastle—terraced houses in Byker, with the Tyne bridge in the background. Such houses will soon be for demolition—but will the occupants afford the rents for new houses?



# Film cash 'lame-ducked'

THE TORY government has effectively 'lame-ducked' the National Film Finance Corporation which was set up in 1949 to foster the British film industry.

In a statement in the Commons the under-secretary for Trade and Industry, Anthony Grant, said no further financial support would be given to the corporation.

'The government has now agreed to contribute £1m to the consortium to support its

## No chance of backing for new talent

efforts to achieve financial independence,' he said.

'The government does not, however, intend to make any further advances in the future.'

In 1970 the Labour government re-authorized fresh funds to the NFFC amounting to £5m. But when they came to power, the Tories decided to destroy state-financing of the film industry.

This week's announcement of a final £1m means that the Tories

have only given £2½m to the NFFC—half of what Labour promised.

The government has also drastically altered the corporation's character. To obtain additional sources of money, the NFFC has become a consortium involving capital and directors from the merchant-banking fraternity.

Instead of remaining an institution for fostering young British film talent, it will be a

purely money-making operation along the lines of the other film-backing groups.

NFFC managing director John Terry was putting the best face on the government's decision.

He told Workers Press he felt 'we can do something' with the money the consortium now had.

He said cash in hand stood at £3½m—made up of the government's final £1m, £750,000 raised by the NFFC in the City and £2m made available by various film distributors.

It seems optimistic, to say the least, to propose to sustain an independent British film industry on the sum of £3½m—enough for producing two full-length films or perhaps three 'low-budget' productions.

## Battery men to hear new offer

BY OUR OWN REPORTER

THE NINE-WEEK long pay battle at the Birmingham Battery and Metal Company may well come to a head today when 350 members of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers meet to hear a report from local union officials.

There is a general feeling that the company is ready to make a cash offer. But the workers fear it is likely to be little more than £1.50 with no concession on hours and wages—in accordance with guidelines laid down by the local Engineering Employers' Association.

According to a recent report in the Birmingham 'Evening Mail', 250 of the 800 firms which make up the West Midlands association have so far been faced with demands based on the national engineering claim.

The report boasts that 70 per cent of the claims have been settled for £2 or less. Not one firm has conceded a shorter working week and only a 'handful' have made any concession on holidays.

The 'Battery' men have been on strike since March 15 in defence of their claim for £6-a-week increase plus 35-hour week and improved holidays.

Last week's meeting dropped the demand to £3.50 wages with no mention of hours or holidays.

# Croat CP expels separatists

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

YUGOSLAVIA'S northern Croatian Communist Party has expelled four former leading officials for 'encouraging nationalist and separatist tendencies'.

The expulsions followed a one-day meeting of the Croatian central committee called to discuss the nationalist upsurge.

The expelled members include a former woman president of the Party, Dr Savka Dabcevic Kucar; Mr Miko Tripalo, ex-representative on the 22-member Yugoslav state presidency; Pero Pirker and Marko Koprtla, both members of the executive committee of the Croatian CP.

Croatia swept into a state of emergency last December with student riots, police brutality and racial ferment.

The expulsions were based on a 120,000-word report by a special commission of inquiry. The key section of the report contains a hitherto unpublished assessment made by President Tito at a meeting with Croatian League leaders last July.

Tito pointed out that with its 'raging nationalism', Croatia had become the key Yugoslav problem.

He observed that Serbs had become so alarmed they had started to arm themselves.

'A surgical intervention' was needed, Tito told the Croatian Party leaders 'and I myself will not hesitate to resort to it'.

In the same speech Tito said: 'Communist Party leaderships are not united. Now there has begun this trend against me both here and in Serbia. I have had enough of power. But now, in such a situation, I am not going.'

## Asturian miners in lock-out

THE PONFERRADA mining company yesterday closed down four of its Asturias coalmines for a week after 2,000 colliers staging an illegal strike refused to return to work. The miners have been on strike for two weeks, in demand for higher pay. Such stoppages are banned in Spain.

## May Day students jailed

GREEK security authorities are holding 25 students after demonstration in Athens and Salonica.

The students—20 in Athens and five in Salonica—were arrested while inciting other students to demonstrate against the army-backed regime on the eve of May Day.

They face sentences of up to ten years' imprisonment or deportation to remote villages.

Student unrest broke out recently for the first time since the army takeover five years ago.

## Nottm students demand freer second year

TALKS have started between student leaders and the authorities at the Nottingham College of Education to discuss removing residential restrictions on second-year students.

A spokesman for the students told a Workers Press correspondent there had been a 'break-through', but he did not specify what concessions had been won.

First-year students at the college have managed to get rid of rules limiting mixed visiting in halls of residence while third-year students have the option of finding their own flats.

But second-year students have to live in registered 'digs' under the eye of a landlady who has to report to the college if they come in late or bring guests of the opposite sex.

The union has been negotiating for two years to get more civilized rights extended to the second years.

The board of governors refused to take up the question and the evasions of the principal were eventually brought to an end when a deputation led by union president, Mr Z. Klich, went to see him.

## Furniture trade demand TUC recall

A RESOLUTION demanding the recall of the TUC has been sent to the executive and London district committee of the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union.

It was passed on Monday night at a meeting of the union's No 15 branch in the East London area. Members passed the resolution without amendment. It said:

'That this branch condemns the decision of the TUC General Council to co-operate with the Industrial Relations Act. This decision violates the policy of non-co-operation democratically agreed at last September's TUC conference at Blackpool. As the

voting at last week's meeting clearly shows, there is a majority of over 200,000 in favour of recalling the TUC Congress.

'And therefore we condemn the decision of the TUC Council not to recall Congress as a violation of basic democratic trade union principles and rights. This is clearly a minority attempting to rule the majority.'

'And we further call upon all those officers who voted for a recall of Congress to begin a campaign now to force the Tory government to resign, and to replace it with a Labour government pledged to repeal the Act and committed to carry out socialist policies.'

A BRITISH journalist detained by Ugandan police three days ago is being held for questioning on suspicion of spying, a magistrate's court was told in Kampala yesterday.

Martin Meredith (27) central Africa correspondent of the London newspaper, 'The Observer', had pleaded guilty before the court to stealing a telephone directory from his hotel.

# TV

## REGIONAL TV

**SOUTHERN:** 2.30 London. 3.45 Cartoon. 4.00 Houseparty. 4.15 Enchanted house. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 London. 6.00 Day by day. 6.30 Challenge. 7.00 London. 10.30 South scene. 11.00 Weather. 11.45 News. 11.55 death.

**WESTWARD:** 10.20 Schools. 2.32 Racing. 3.55 Gus Honeybun. 4.05 Paulus. 4.20 News. 4.22 Good afternoon. 4.55 London. 6.00 Diary. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Treasure hunt. 7.30 Coronation St. 8.00 Cade's county—Delegates at large. 9.00 London. 10.30 Both ends meet. 11.00 Wrestling. 11.44 News, weather. 11.48 Faith for life.

**HTV:** 11.00 Schools. 2.32 Racing. 3.20 Talking hands. 3.35 Enchanted house. 3.50 Ugliest girl. 4.15 Tinkertainment. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 London. 6.01 Report West. 6.15 Report Wales. 6.30 Odd couple. 7.00 London. 8.00 Cade's county—One small acceptable death. 9.00 London. 10.30 Alexander. 11.00 Wrestling. 11.45 Mad movies. 12.15 Weather.

**HTV Wales and HTV Cymru/Wales as above except:** 3.50 Hamdden. 4.15 Miri Mawr. 6.01 Y Dydd.

**HTV West as above except:** 6.15-6.30 Report West.

**ANGLIA:** 2.30 London. 3.45 Yoga. 4.15 News. 4.18 Cartoons. 4.30 Romper room. 4.55 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 London. 10.30 Alexander. 11.00 Wrestling. 11.45 Music.

**ATV MIDLANDS:** 2.32 Racing. 3.05 Good afternoon. 3.35 Horo-

scope. 3.45 Women. 4.10 Mrs Muir. 4.40 Grasshopper island. 4.55 London. 6.00 Today. 6.35 London. 10.30 Alexander. 11.00 Wrestling.

**YORKSHIRE:** 11.00 Schools. 2.32 London. 3.40 Dr Simon Locke. 4.10 News. 4.15 Crossroads. 4.40 Hatty town. 4.55 London. 6.00 Calendar, weather. 6.30 University challenge. 7.00 London. 8.00 Cade's county—Violent echo. 9.00 London. 10.30 Alexander. 11.00 Wrestling. 11.45 Weather.

**TYNE TEES:** 11.00 Schools. 2.32 London. 3.40 Dr Simon Locke. 4.10 News. 4.15 Crossroads. 4.40 Make a wish. 4.55 London. 6.00 Today. 6.30 University challenge. 7.00 London. 8.00 Cade's county—Violent echo. 9.00 London. 10.30 A tale of two hawkers. 11.15 Wrestling. 11.45 News. 12.00 Epilogue.

**SCOTTISH:** 11.00, 1.40 Schools. 2.32 Racing. 3.30 Pinky and Perky. 3.45 Crossroads. 4.10 Dateline. 4.55 London. 6.00 Dateline. 6.20 Cartoon. 6.30 The more we are together. 7.00 London. 8.00 Cade's county—The armageddon Contract. 9.00 London. 10.30 Alexander. 11.00 Sport. 11.30 Late call. 11.35 Saint.

**GRAMPIAN:** 11.00 Schools. 2.55 Racing. 3.38 News. 3.45 Women. 4.10 Jimmy Stewart. 4.40 Enchanted house. 4.55 London. 6.00 News, weather. 6.05 Grampian Week. 6.35 London. 8.00 Cade's county—The mustangers. 8.55 Police news. 9.00 London. 10.30 Branded. 11.00 Wrestling. 11.45 Log drive. 12.15 Epilogue.

## BBC 1

9.20 Pogles' Wood. 9.38 Schools. 10.45 Boomph with Becker. 11.05 Schools. 12.25 Nai Zindagi Naya Jeevan. 1.00 Disc a dawn. 1.30 Camberwick Green. 1.45 News, weather. 2.05 Schools. 4.15 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Laurel and Hardy. 5.15 News Round. 5.20 Before the Event. 5.44 Hector's House. 5.50 News, weather.

6.00 NATIONWIDE.  
6.45 WHERE IN THE WORLD. Quiz programme.  
7.00 SPY TRAP. Redmayne—episode 1.  
7.25 STAR TREK. The Changingling.  
8.10 THE EXPERT. The Man on My Back.  
9.00 NEWS, Weather.  
9.20 SPORTSNIGHT.  
10.30 24 HOURS.  
11.05 THE DAME OF SARK talks to Tom Salmon.

## BBC 2

11.00 Play School. 5.35 Open University. 7.05 Measure of Conscience.

7.30 NEWSROOM, Weather.  
8.00 TIMES REMEMBERED.  
8.10 MAN ALIVE. An unusual American television reporter.

## ITV

11.00 Schools. 1.10 Remember. 1.40 Schools. 2.32 Good Afternoon. 2.55 York Racing. 3.45 Edgar Wallace. 4.40 Hatty Town. 4.55 Lift Off. 5.20 Escape. 5.50 News.

6.00 TODAY.  
6.35 CROSSROADS.  
7.00 THIS IS YOUR LIFE.  
7.30 CORONATION STREET.  
8.00 CADE'S COUNTY. Slay Ride.  
9.00 CALLAN. Call Me Enemy.  
10.00 NEWS.  
10.30 MAN AT THE TOP. Fixtures and Fittings.  
11.30 PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING.  
12.00 WHAT THE PAPERS SAY.  
12.05 ONE POINT OF VIEW.

9.00 POT BLACK. Snooker Competition.  
9.20 FILM: 'THE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE'. Peter Finch, James Mason, Yvonne Mitchell.  
11.20 News, Weather.  
11.25 LATE NIGHT LINE-UP.

# Court may tell unions: Discipline militants

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

A QUESTION of whether unions will be ordered by the National Industrial Relations Court to sack or discipline militant shop stewards hung in the balance yesterday.

This was made clear when the 1.75 million-strong Transport and General Workers' Union appeared before the Court for the second time to answer contempt charges, arising out of the blacking of container lorries in Britain's docks.

Court president Sir John Donaldson told counsel for the union, Peter Pain, QC, that the Court had already made its view clear.

He was referring to an earlier statement when he said the union had the responsibility to discipline or even dismiss shop stewards who disobey court rulings.

'The real issue, as we see it, is whether there is any accountability by the union for the action of shop stewards. We need, of course, all the factual information that can be given on this,' he said.

He said the union would not be faced with further penalties arising out of the blacking since the imposition of £55,000 fines for contempt of the order.

But he warned if the Court did uphold its existing view on the disciplining of shop stewards 'the union will be obliged to comply with the order hereafter and do far more than it has up until now'.

He added it would be Mr Pain's duty to make it clear to the union that if they failed to do this, 'very serious issues would arise'.

Mr Pain read out evidence from union officers including Tim O'Leary, the national docks secretary. In these, officials claimed that they had consistently advised dockers, particularly on Merseyside, to stop blacking container traffic.

In his statement O'Leary said: 'It has always been the union's policy to obey orders of what-

ever court, however distasteful these were.'

He believed the union should work within the law, but understood why the men were reacting as they were.

'The spectre of unemployment hangs over their heads. That, to me, explains everything.'

He added that action against stewards would lead to a national docks strike and the possible emergence of an even more militant leadership.

Counsel for Heaton Transport (St Helens) Limited, one of the blacked transport firms, challenged this evidence.

Mr Richard Yorke, QC, read a written statement from Robert Heaton, Junior, which claimed that on a recent 'World in Action' television programme, Lew Lloyd, Liverpool docks secretary, had made it clear that the blacking was a perfectly normal industrial action and that he was in fact 100 per cent behind the men.

Mr Pain complained that he had been given no notice of this further accusation. He said that this evidence implied 'that the union is not really genuine in what it says. That it says one thing to the court and says one thing behind its back to its members'.

If the court ordered the T&GWU to act against its stewards, it would be the most serious challenge to the trade union movement under the Industrial Relations Act so far.

Mr Pain asked for a review of the contempt orders against the union made on March 29 and April 20.

He argued that the court was unaware of the scope of the authority the union had over its shop stewards.

If shop stewards acted outside the authority given to them by the union, the union could not be held responsible for their actions.

The hearing continues.

## Leader remanded on £50 bail



Sixteen-year-old Simon Stayne addresses the mass meeting at Speakers' Corner yesterday.

## 3,000 pupils join in protest march

BY SARAH HANNIGAN

PUPILS marched over 3,000-strong through London yesterday in protest against unfair canings and victimization.

Youth from schools throughout the West London area joined the march from Hyde Park to London's education headquarters at County Hall on the Thames Embankment.

A delegation of 15 youth from schools on the march went to meet education officials when the march arrived at County Hall.

The march was headed by the banner of the Schools Action Union and followed by the banners of pupils from Paddington and Maida Vale High Schools demanding 'Democracy in schools'.

In pouring rain, the youth gathered at Speakers' Corner at noon where they heard 16-year-old Simon Stayne explain that Steve Finch (18) had been remanded on £50 bail until June 7 for his part in organizing Monday's march.

After the meeting, representatives of the capitalist press crowded around the teenager

seeking details of his 'political affiliations'. One asked: 'What political groups are behind this movement?'

Simon: 'What do you think, Peking?'

Pressed further he did admit that the SAU was affiliated to the 'London Alliance in Defence of Workers' Rights'.

He told them the political philosophy of the union was with a 'Marxist-Leninist-liberal front'.

Cheers welcomed the declaration of the demonstration's demands—for an end to school uniforms, no canings, detention or victimization and for an end to the system of passes for pupils who want to leave the

school grounds at lunchtime.

Schools represented on the march were Rutherford Comprehensive, Hampstead, William Ellis, Marylebone Grammar, Parliament Hill Girls, St George's Roman Catholic School, Paddington, Quinton, Kynaston, William Collins, Sarah Siddons, St James's, Pimlico and Haverstock.

At Marylebone magistrate's court yesterday Finch, a pupil at Rutherford Comprehensive, Paddington, was remanded until July 7 on charges of insulting behaviour and obstruction.

He was granted bail on his own surety of £25 and one other surety, Alfred Frank Finch, of £50.

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## LATE NEWS WEATHER

NEWS DESK  
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A RESOLUTION calling for a special delegate conference of the National Union of Journalists was passed by a narrow majority at the union's Central London branch yesterday.

The right wing in the union is campaigning for another conference to try and overturn the recent annual conference decision not to register under the Industrial Relations Act.

Annual conference voted against registration, despite a national ballot in favour of registration.

HOME Secretary Reginald Maudling, questioned in the Commons yesterday about overcrowding and demonstrations at Brixton prison, told MPs that he had asked the Regional Director of Prisons to visit Brixton to see what improvements might be made.

From the Opposition front bench, Mrs Shirley Williams (Lab, Hitchin) had asked what action was being taken to relieve overcrowding.  
● See story p.3

NORTHEAST Scotland will start cloudy with rain but it will become brighter from the south with showers at times.

Southeast Scotland, the Midlands, and eastern districts of England will be sunny at first, but showers will develop, becoming moderate and prolonged at times later.

Central, southern and southwest England, Wales, Northern Ireland and western Scotland will have a day of frequent showers, prolonged and heavy at times.

Temperatures will be mostly near normal.

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