

# Socialist Worker



FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

The European financiers squabble, but they are united on one thing —that the labour movements must pay to stave off a further crisis

## BAD MEDICINE

—but only if the workers swallow it

by MICHAEL KIDRON

IT'S NOT THE END, nor is it anywhere near the end. But the system did lurch noticeably last week, and it looks as if this time it was a lurch to remember.

Political Europe was wrenched into line with economic realities. German capitalism is once again king, acknowledged as king and conscious of it. From now on it will rule Europe, sweeping French industry—and in particular France's nuclear industry—under its control, cooling its former ardour for Britain's entry into the Common Market, even

'In the long run this crisis means a lot more gravy for the stock market'—a leading London stockbroker.

testing the ground for an East-West accommodation in Europe once Czechoslovakia has been firmly rolled under the Russian ice-pack.

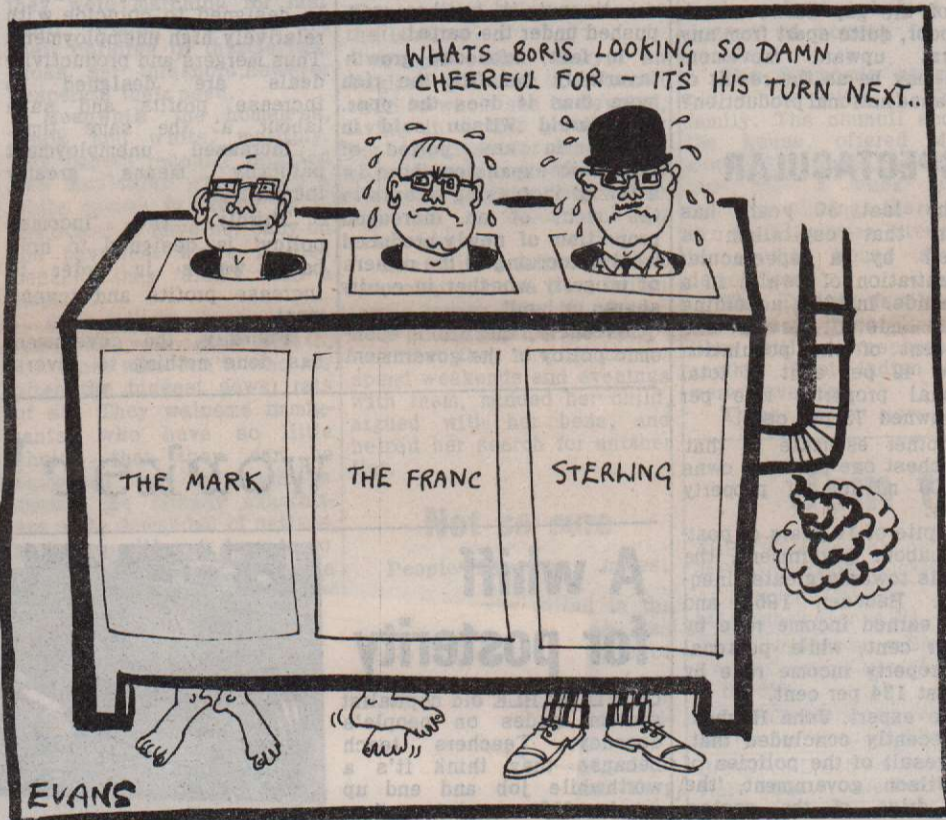
But so has the working-class map of Europe changed. From now on, and despite the clashed to be expected soon in France, it's the German working class that will be expected to bear the strain of its rulers' limitless political and economic ambition, to pay the price of competing with a United States 10 times Germany's economic size, or a Russia five times as strong.

It is on the German working class's continued acquiescence that the stability of the European system now rests.

It's a shaky enough foundation. Years of full employment and rising wages have bred a self-confidence in them that should terrify their regime.

For as the French workers have shown by reducing de Gaulle from strong man to sick man of Europe in under six months, no capitalist country can command any confidence once the workers have withdrawn their support.

And 'confidence' is the issue. In the seven days before the crisis \$1000 million left France to hole up in German, Swiss and other



foreign banks.

It was a purely financial collapse. Production was not sagging.

On the contrary, the French authorities were expecting a huge increase of 7 per cent in national income this year, and major markets like Germany and Italy were expanding strongly.

It was the third such financial crisis in the West in a year. It's unlikely to remain the last for very long.

Years of boom have hurled the western economies into dependence on one another, opened up their markets to one another, made the easy flow of capital between them seem necessary.

But these years have not resulted in common control over national economic policies. On the contrary, as each national capitalism tried to offset its international dependence by planning, it automatically made economic relations between the national

units more arbitrary, more chaotic, more unforeseeable. No wonder 'there is now', as The Times points out, 'a very large mass of money with no permanent national home

The volume of trading in equity shares on the Stock Exchange has so far reached an all time record of £7.6,000 million compared to £4.5,000 million for the same period in 1967.

and ... there is less confidence in national currencies than we have known at any time since the war'.

The crisis of confidence goes very deep. Economies that five or 10 years ago were working flat out, offering security and ever-expanding material gain to their workers, are now going slightly slack.

Some of this is due to the slow but steady drift in the importance of arms spending throughout the West—the market in destruction, once so enormous, has been narrowing.

The bark was there all right, but there was nothing like the four-times-more-fear-some bite of six months ago. The discrepancy is interesting and important. Partly it was a Labour show for

'A handful of senior partners will this year make more than £250,000'—senior partner in firm of London stockbrokers.

foreign bankers. Partly it came from their real fear that too much harshness will lose them the next election.

But mostly it was an attempt—one more attempt—to stop up the holes in their leaking wages policy.

British capitalism can't afford last year's 2 per cent rise in real wages despite the freeze. Competition in world markets is too fierce for that.

At the same time they can't afford too much lost production and higher costs through massive deflation and unemployment. Somehow the workers must be kept working and yet be frightened into accepting a wages straitjacket.

It is this that explains Jenkins' half-empty but resounding deflationary package. Coupled with Powell's racist diversion; and, more ominously, coupled

Unit trust advertisements this year have attracted approximately £230 million of the public's money on to the stock market (compared to £84 million in 1967) and unit trust holders have seen the total value of units rise to £263 million compared to £94 million in the same period of 1967.

with the moves taken by some of the largest trade unions—the engineers in particular—to professionalise factory wage bargaining and reduce shop stewards to becoming social secretaries, it can be dangerous medicine.

But only if we swallow it.

### DEMAND RELEASE OF ELDRIDGE CLEAVER

ELDRIDGE CLEAVER, a leading member of the militant Black Panther Party in the United States, faces jail.

An international defence committee has been set up which will bombard American newspapers and embassies to demand that Cleaver should be allowed to live under parole and not be imprisoned.

Cleaver is Minister of Information of the Black Panthers and is a senior editor of the radical journal Ramparts. He is author of the recently published book Soul on Ice, acclaimed as one of the most savage indictments of the position of black people in American society.

### Racist police

He was released on parole in 1965 after serving nine years in prison. In April this year he was arrested following a confrontation between the racist Oakland police in California and a group of armed Black Panthers patrolling their own neighbourhood.

None of the police was hurt but 17-year old Bobby Hutton was shot and killed by the police as he walked from a house with his hands up.

Cleaver was wounded and held in jail for two months without a hearing. Pressure finally forced a hearing at which the judge of the California Superior Court ordered Cleaver's release.

But a three-judge panel over-ruled the court finding, and ordered Cleaver back to jail this week for violation of parole.

### World campaign

Cleaver has been paroled twice in response to public pressure. The International Committee to Defend Eldridge Cleaver, based in San Francisco, is launching a world-wide campaign.

British organisations are urged to write or telegraph the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square, London W1 or direct to Henry Kerr of the California State Adult Authority, Sacramento, California, and to Governor Ronald Reagan, Sacramento, California.

Information and copies of a petition can be obtained from the London office of the International Committee—7 Carlisle Street, W1.

### Next week: Ian Birchall on the crisis and the French Left

## Dole for 600 as the new Cunarder sails

From PETER BAIN GLASGOW: Behind all the ballyhoo for the launching of the new Cunarder liner Queen Elizabeth II on the Clyde this week lies the grim reality of the dole queue for 600 shipyard workers.

Last Friday, as the liner

began her trials, the 600 men—joiners, electricians and labourers—who had sweated to finish the boat on schedule were sacked by John Brown's.

The timing was important. On the very same day, all the shipyard unions signed the

agreement—the 'Workers' Charter'—which will give workers on the Clyde a two-year guarantee of employment.

It is really an employers' charter, for it includes a number of damaging productivity concessions and men can still be sacked if they

break 'procedure'—but it would have saved the jobs of the 600 if the unions had fought for their inclusion.

To prove their benevolence, John Brown's bosses opened the new liner's bar for the sacked 600. The men became drunk, ran amok on

the ship and smashed up the Royal suite.

Not a political gesture, perhaps. But it shows the bitter frustration of workers at the ruthless and high-handed way they are treated under capitalism.

# LETTERS

## May Day march: is it doomed to failure?

AS MARXISTS we should continue to analyse a situation as it really exists and discard wishful thinking. I am referring to the proposed Thursday May 1st march next year (SW November 16).

It is obvious to any industrial militant that it takes a supreme effort to get any kind of working-class support of any appreciable importance even on issues which directly affect them.

This year the success(?) of the march (which took place on a Wednesday) wasn't the result of massive working-class support. It was directly attributable to the anger and disgust of people to Enoch Powell's racist speech.

The overwhelming majority present were students. Unless IS can book Powell to make an annual speech immediately prior to May 1st the whole exercise is doomed to failure.

The importance of a May

Day rally is of course recognised. There are ample issues.

What I would suggest is that in order to get the most support the fact that the Labour Party has abandoned the traditional affair in Hyde Park on the first Sunday in May should be utilised. IS and other socialist groups could, I'm sure, get massive support.

To ask workers who are already undergoing a wage freeze and rising prices is unrealistic. Others are on nightshift—on a Sunday many workers outside central London would travel to attend.

I'd hate to see enthusiasm and money wasted. Believe me I'm all for it—but one can't ignore the facts of life.

A mainly student march using working-class slogans will impress no one and will not further the aims of socialists.—TOM HILLIER, London, N.W.10.

## Demonstrations and the need for strong leadership

CONSTANCE LEVER's letter (SW November 9) expresses the dissatisfaction felt by many with the failure of the October 27 Vietnam march to mark any tangible advance for the movement, and she points out how the International Socialists' representatives in the organisation of the march found themselves in a situation unpleasantly reminiscent of the CND and CP bureaucrats, counselling moderation and restraint on the participants.

When as on the 27th the police themselves show comparative restraint and refrain from pointless provocations there is certainly a problem as to what the comrades can do to confront the authorities in a way that does not puzzle or repel potential working-class sympathisers.

The difficulty about any plan to take over a group of streets for a meeting and other such excellent ideas is that to conduct public advocacy and detailed discussion of such projects among the rank and file during the period a demonstration is being prepared is to invite damaging arrests on conspiracy and incitement charges

or pre-emptive 'bind-over' orders.

Therefore there can be no advance until we have a centralised working leadership in whom the comrades have sufficient political confidence to entrust it with making correct tactical decisions, which they are then willing to carry through (demanding explanations and scapegoats afterwards if need be, without the interminable public discussions of every relevant and irrelevant detail that seem to be an article of faith with some.—TONY YOUNG, London W1.

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## Wilson's emphasis on growth means a bigger rake-off for the

# How Labour has widened the poverty gap

by COLIN FALCONER

FIFTY YEARS ago, the Labour Party proclaimed in its constitution its intention to '...secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible...'

For generations of Labour activists, it was mainly this aim which justified the existence of the party.

As Harold Wilson wrote in 1959: 'Given a Labour victory, the test is this: will there be, 12 years from now, a narrowing of the gap between rich and poor, quite apart from any general upward movement there may be as the result of increased national production?'

### SPECTACULAR

The last 50 years has shown that capitalism is marked by a spectacular concentration of wealth in a few hands. In 1960, according to economist J. Revell, one per cent of the population owned 42 per cent of total personal property; five per cent owned 75 per cent.

Another estimate is that the richest one per cent owns £30,000 million of property assets.

In spite of 10 years of post-war Labour government, the trend is towards greater inequality. Between 1955 and 1965, earned income rose by 84 per cent, while personal and property income rose by at least 134 per cent.

One expert, John Hughes, has recently concluded that, as a result of the policies of the Wilson government, 'the main drive of the system towards inequality has in fact been heavily reinforced.'

What are the reasons for this trend?

First, the main priority of the present government is economic growth. This change of emphasis has been justified by the claim that the poor can only be given more crumbs if the size of the national cake is increased.

In this way, the loyalists in the Labour Party are satisfied, and the poverty issue is, in the government's favourite phrase, 'taken out of politics'—or, to put it another way, pushed under the carpet.

In fact, economic growth invariably benefits the rich more than it does the poor. As Harold Wilson said in 1960: 'In any period of economic expansion, there is a law of increasing returns to the rich; of an increased proportion of newly-produced wealth accruing to the owners of property whether in equity shares or land'.

Secondly, the whole economic policy of the government

has been directed towards increasing the profitability of industry. This has involved massive handouts to capitalist enterprises.

The amount given to industry in employment premiums and investment grants is greater than the total yield from death duties. Increased profits means higher dividend share-outs and rising share prices, with additional opportunities for capital gains thrown in.

### INCREASE

The new element in Labour's growth policy is that it is designed to coincide with relatively high unemployment. Thus mergers and productivity deals are designed to increase profits and save labour at the same time. Increased unemployment naturally means greater inequality.

Thirdly, the 'incomes policy' is designed to hold back wages in order to increase profits and investment.

Fourthly, the government has done nothing to reverse



Wilson: In any period of economic expansion there is a law of increasing returns to the rich ...

the sharp trend towards regressive taxation (taxes which hit the poor more heavily than the rich).

In 1961, a family of two adults and one child, with an income of £539, paid the same proportion of its income in taxes, 29 per cent, as a

similar family over £2000.

In 1966, the family had risen 100 per cent, while the family paid only

### OBSTINATE

Finally, the welfare policy, half-hearted, a split personality

Increases in family allowances barely kept pace with the cost of living. Rebates have been the obstinate failure of potential recipients.

Prescription has been reintroduced, school milk in addition there is going on between the principle of 'universal social services' reserving a loyalty rebates have been the obstinate failure of potential recipients.

### EFFICIENT

Labour has been against the centre of reformism—the policy of reform without overturning power structures chosen to co-opt businessmen and increasing the British capitalist

As a result, permit greater rising property on one hand, and wage freeze cutbacks on the

Colin Falconer writing regularly for Socialist Worker on well known social services

## worker's diary

### A whiff for posterity

OUR LOVABLE old capitalist system trades on people's decency. Teachers teach because they think it's a worthwhile job and end up earning £10 a week less than all those alienated workers out on the production lines.

Ditto health service workers like hospital porters. They have just been given the enormous increase of 11s 8d a week for men and 9s 8d for women.

With neat timing, the United Manchester Hospitals Group announced it was £50,000 in the red. Solution: a 10 per cent cut in staff and a cut in overtime pay. The hospital porters finished up with a wage cut instead of an increase.

For porters at the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, this was the last straw. They had already been campaigning against working conditions in the hospital.

Porters on the 2pm to 10pm shift have to work without a meal break for seven days a week. Their locker room next to the kitchen had to be fumigated when it was found to be infested with cockroaches.

When the cuts were announced, the porters demanded an interview with the hospital secretary. They were met with the usual bland, bureaucratic bilge about the national economic crisis and the refusal of the Ministry of Health to meet hospital financial estimates.

Present at the abortive meeting was Albert the swill porter, who has put in 24 years' high-ranking service at the hospital.

When Enoch (I hate the



Enoch: the swillman come...

old, the sick and the poor) Powell was Minister of Health and visited the hospital, Albert was hustled out of the way for the day so that the right honourable gentleman would not see the appalling conditions under which the swill man worked.

Albert consequently earned the distinction of being considered too odious to meet even Enoch Powell...

### Another victim of the class war

COME CRISIS, go crisis, the traditional work of parliament goes on. There has been a special committee of the House of Commons for the last three years, whose task is to organise a fitting memorial to Winston Churchill.

It decided on a statue, and the next few weeks will be involved in inspecting it and finalising the details.

The chairman of this Committee? Emanuel Shinwell.

### Where there's life there's hope

HOW EMBARRASSING for the left reformists of the House of Commons, forever biding their time and awaiting an opportunity that never comes.

Their hopeful schemes for reform from within have been foiled by the maddening

intrusion of facts, and their positions become more redundant the greater the breakdown is at international level.

It was Russell Kerr, MP for Feltham, who rallied the flagging spirits of the Left MP's earlier this year, when squeeze followed freeze and nobody was listening to their plans for saving the nation.

Kerr felt that it was a matter of waiting for the result of the American presidential elections. Senator Eugene McCarthy was 'one of us' in his love of peace and justice and all the other right-thinking things. If we could not have our own reforms, look for another white hope...

Now, with the electorate only too well aware from their own direct experience that their role in capitalist life is to pay for the international problems of the franc, pound and dollar, even the cheerful optimism of the Left MP's is daunted.

It was ironic that Harold Wilson—the man they tried to persuade and pressure for four years—was addressing City of London dignitaries at the Lord Mayor's banquet only days before the international meeting of finance ministers.

Here was the headmaster attending on his Board of Governors. He had no wish to interfere with the City, he

said, or its money for its nation.

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# Socialist Worker

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## WHERE WE STAND

SOCIALIST WORKER is the paper of International Socialism, a movement of revolutionary socialists who believe that the present form of society, with its blatant inequalities, its periodic crises, wars and racist hysteria must be replaced by one based on a planned economy under full workers' control; those who produce the wealth should own and control the means of production. International Socialism is opposed to any incomes policy that seeks to restrict the wages of the workers in order to boost the profits of the employers. We unconditionally support all shop stewards and rank and file trade union members in their struggles for better wages and conditions and oppose all reactionary laws that threaten the liberties of the labour movement. We support all strikes in defence of workers' interests and the de-

mand of no victimisation of trade unionists. Redundancy should be opposed with the demand: five days work or five days pay. Shop stewards organisations should strengthen and extend their in-

fluence by linking up on an industrial and ultimately a national basis.

We are opposed to racial discrimination, a weapon used by the ruling class to divide the labour movement. Immigration control must be ended, ensuring the free movement of peoples regardless of race and colour. Black and white workers must unite and form their own defence organisations to fight fascism and racialism. The labour movement must demand the immediate recall of British troops from abroad as the first step towards ending colonial exploitation.

The task of revolutionary socialists is to join workers in their struggles with socialist ideas that will link up the various sections of the labour movement and help create a force that will lead on to workers' power and international socialism.

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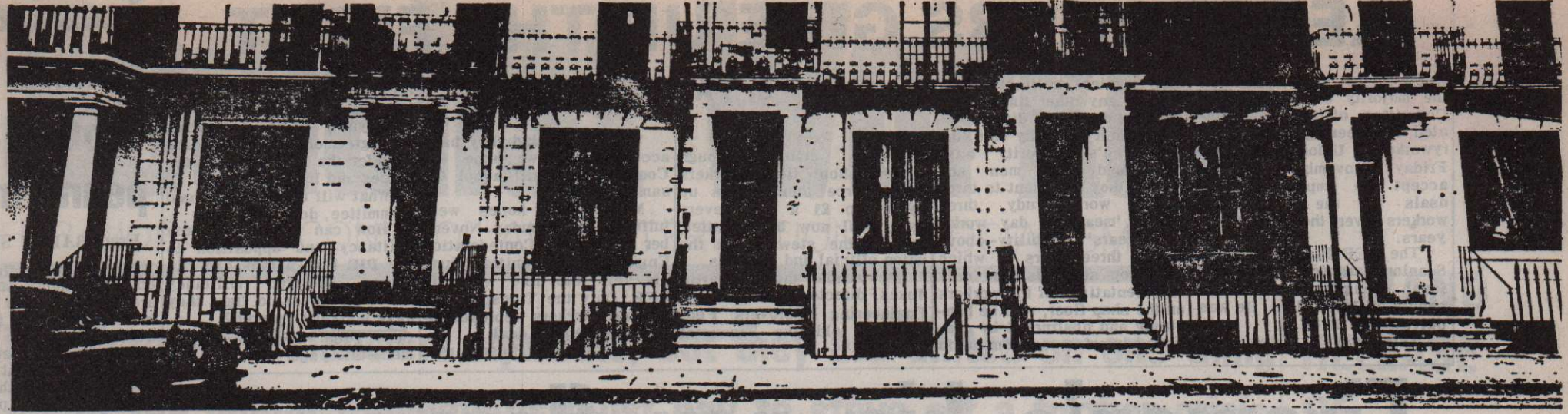
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# In London's slumland, where class not colour draws the battle lines...

by CONSTANCE LEVER

**ENOCH POWELL and his friends have given us the picture of a strange battleground.**

On one side stand the ordinary, decent, patriotic, British working men, who know about the blacks from their own experience; on the other are a weird gathering of long-haired students, Hampstead intellectuals and archbishops, who have never had to live with 'them' and who preach liberalism from their comfortable ivory towers.

### No expert

If we blow away some of the fog, we'd see that a Tory MP from Belgravia is no expert on living with immigrants.

If you do live in a slum area of mixed population and keep your eyes half open, you see a different battleground: working people, of all races, struggling to live decently and bring up their children, facing every kind of racketeer, Rachman and bureaucrat who end up pocketing most of their low wages, and the fruits of long hours of overtime.

Most workers keep up their standards, some disintegrate under the pressure, becoming mad or vicious. The latter are the worst-hit victims, but they are still a menace to their neighbours.

The immigrants suffer the same kind of exploitation as the natives—only more so. 'They segregate themselves...' say the letters to the papers.

The writers can never have been near Kilburn or Islington or Lambeth, with their shop windows full of cards all saying 'Rooms to let, no coloured.' But the same landladies also demand 'No children' and 'Suit business gent only.'

That dear old persecuted landlady the dockers thought they were marching for last April, would not have let their children or themselves, cross her threshold, however desperate their need.

Meanwhile the homeless, black and white, multiply. The papers recently reported two landladies who turned a white woman in labour on to the street to have her baby on the pavement where it died because they 'didn't want a mess.'

Living on the backs of the landlords who discriminate, are those who don't, who are often the biggest sewer rats of all. They welcome immigrants, who have so little choice that they can be squeezed for as much as double the already exorbitant rents demanded of natives, and who will not dare to go to the rent tribunal or to the health inspector if the roof leaks.

Like the working class, these landlords are of all races, with names like Rachman, Goldberg, Mohammed and (one of the biggest) Bowen-Davies.

If you live without prejudice in such an area you get to know immigrants and their stories.

People like the Morrisons, evicted with their two children from an unfurnished flat at 24-hours notice. The landlord (Bowen-Davies, owner of hundreds of houses before his suicide) had found a loophole

in the Rent Act, and simply cleared the entire house of four families.

The council legal officials thought the case 'too exceptional to be worth investigating,' and objected to the term 'Rachmanite' being applied to the landlord.

People like Mary, an English girl with a coloured child to whom she is devoted, living in a flat provided by her employer for whom she had to work over 60 hours a week to pay the rent. When she got a better job he evicted her.

The child's father had left the country, but a West Indian family, former friends of his, were so ashamed of his behaviour that they invited her to spend weekends and evenings with them, minded her child, argued with her boss, and helped her search for another flat.

### Not so sure

People like Mrs. James.

Her father was killed in the British army and she was brought up in Jamaica to be a patriotic Britisher.

She's not so sure now. She brings up her five small children in two damp rooms.

They are intelligent, polite, always clean kids—but they all have bronchial trouble. Her seven year old niece was found choking to death from it in bed one morning in a similar room.

Her husband is a skilled electrician. His name has been down for years as willing to go to a New Town,

where skilled workers are in greater demand than supply.

Each time he goes for an interview for a job there, he is rejected on sight.

People like the Simmonds. Mr. Simmonds is a building worker who has helped build dozens of houses for other people.

The Simmonds bought an old house with an English family. The council acquired the house, offered Mr. Simmonds £70 for it and charged him 30/- a week rent to continue living there. The two families were later moved to another house awaiting demolition.

The English family, after six years there emigrated, (they still correspond), and another West Indian family were moved in.

There were now seven

children and four adults sharing the bathroom in an increasingly decrepit house. The families quarrelled. The new family swore and fought; they nailed up the Simmonds' coal cellar, barred their access to the garden and the dustbins.

### Cracked up

They behaved like the racialists' imaginary stereotype—or like the only too real minority of all races who have cracked up. The English and Irish neighbours, who had known and liked the black Simmonds for years, understood that the issue was not colour but coping with individual hooliganism.

They signed petitions against the new tenants and broke their windows; but they took the frightened Mrs. Simmonds and her children into their homes each day, and even offered to come to court

and testify for her. The police and council officials refused to intervene, month after month, reckoning that 'you can expect blacks to fight among themselves,' and no doubt nodding knowingly as they read Powell's inflammatory speeches.

The line of exploitation and suffering, the line of battle, does not run between black and white any more than it runs between Poplar and Hampstead.

It runs clearly between landlords, bosses and bureaucrats, of all colours, on one hand, and the entire working class on the other.

The racialist spirit which turns white worker against black has the same destructive effect as the frustration which drives a man to knife his own neighbour or beat his own children.

The answer to racialism is not the platitudes of the archbishops, but unity in class struggle.

## Join the International Socialists

- ABERDEEN Janet Kennedy 94 Bankhead Road Bucksburn
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- BECKENHAM Mervyn Smith 9 Alton Gardens Copers Cope Rd 01 658 6552
- BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster 128 Yardley Wood Rd. B'ham 13
- BRADFORD Bob Kornreich Flat 1 7 Oak Avenue Bradford 8
- BRIGHTON Micky Adams Flat 4 85 St. Aubyns Hove
- BOLTON F Canavan 11 Sutton Rd Sutton Estate Deane Bolton
- CAMBRIDGE Peter Smith 65 Glisson Road
- CAMDEN Chris Barker 36 Gliden Road NW5
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- COLCHESTER Ian Noble 12 Coach Rd Arlesford Wivenhoe 272
- COVENTRY Dave Edwards 53 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon
- CRAWLEY Deborah Ward 2 Weddell Rd Tilgate
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- DURHAM A Beard 35 Hallgarth Durham
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- OXFORD Steve Bolchover 181 Iffley Road
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- STEVENAGE Michael Downing 57 Trumper Road Trots Hill
- STOCKPORT Barry Biddulph 10 Foliage Crescent Brinnington
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- WATFORD Paul Russell 61 Carpenders Avenue Carpenders Park
- WIGAN Ray Challinor 34 Whiteside Avenue Hindley
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# AEF LEADERS GIVE UP THE FIGHT

by PAUL FOOT

WITH HARDLY a discussion the majority of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering and Foundryworkers' Union voted on Friday November 22 to accept the employers proposals for the engineering workers over the next three years.

The AEF President, Hugh Scanlon, argued that a national engineering strike should still be called. He was outvoted by 31 to 23.

This was a bigger majority against militant action than at any other time during the long drawn-out dispute.

By their cowardly vote, the committee's majority have condemned the men and women they represent to three years' work study, three years' 'measured day work', three years' flexibility—above all to three years in which the shop stewards, the only representatives of the workers on the shop floor, will be hamstrung and obstructed by continued interference from union officials.

'Wage drift', through which shop floor workers could force their wages up by up to £1 a week every year, will now be a matter, not for the steward but the union official and the boss.

No wonder that Mr. Martin Jukes, director general of the Engineering Employers' Federation, told the Financial Times:

'I am very glad they have accepted and we hope the Confederation will adopt the same attitude'.

Mr. Jukes' hopes were fulfilled. On Monday November 25, the Confederation Engineering Committee humbly fell into line with the AEF. Only the Transport and General Workers representatives opposed the deal.

Now, however, come reports that the government, who strongly supported the employer's proposals during the agreement, is threatening to refer the agreement to the Prices and Incomes Board.

What will the AEF National Committee, do then? How can they create any militancy and opposition to the PIB from a rank and file whose declared militancy and willingness to fight they have blatantly ignored?

See Prod deal for steel men—this page

## Teesside tenants say 'Not a penny more'

From BARRY SLATER

BILLINGHAM:- Half of the council tenants on Teesside are refusing to pay rent increases of up to 7s 6d a week.

At a mass meeting in the town hall tenants decided unanimously that the increases should not be paid. Some tenants wanted to withhold the whole rent.

It was finally agreed that a total rent strike should be held in reserve in case of any victimisation by the council.

A resolution was carried demanding a rent freeze, the payment of all wage rises being held up by the government and the scrapping of the Prices and Incomes Policy. The meeting appealed for trade union support.

Resolutions of support are coming in from union branches, and three trades councils have declared support.

### DAUBED

Walls and public buildings have been daubed with the slogan 'not a 1d on the rents' and a polite declaration to the council that 'we won't pay'.

Tenants are picketing rent offices on Teesside and the rent collectors on all organised estates are followed from door to door by housewives who hope to ensure that the council gets 'the old rent and not a penny more'.

After six months talking, the time for action has arrived. Chairman of the Tenants' Federation, Bert Elcoate, has summed up the determination of tenants to fight this attack on working-class living standards.

'We will resist,' he declared in a statement to the council, 'and you will fail.'

## Road protest —students are fined

From JOHN LARKE

SWANSEA University students are waging a militant campaign against the local authorities in an attempt to get traffic control on the dangerous Mumbles Road outside the college.

As students daily risk death from traffic on the main coast road (several have been injured this term) Swansea council and police department claim they cannot afford to man a crossing.

But when students staged a non-violent blocking of the road there were more than 20 police waiting to wade in.

### 'Always win'

Two students fined £90 for obstruction and damaging a car, which reversed into the demonstration, were told by the court chairman, Col. K. Ivor Morgan: 'As students you should know that history proves that the state always wins. If it is a democratic state and fails to contain law-breakers, then the state changes its form and meets lawlessness with ruthlessness and, as you are well aware, with liquidation'.

In other words, you are free to demonstrate as long as you don't challenge our form of society, if you do, we will wipe you out.

### MEETINGS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST: Conference on Organisation London, Saturday, November 30. Details from branch secretaries.

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# Firemen's big pay flare-up

By a London Fireman

LONDON FIREMEN are working to rule in an effort to win a £2 a week pay increase from the Greater London Council. They have banned all duties except for emergency fire calls.

They are refusing to do practice drills, attend lectures, test hydrants or clean fire stations.

The GLC is trying to include a productivity deal with any increase.

The Fire Brigades Union this week rejected a productivity package and is now considering a 'final offer' of £1 a week plus an increase of 14 hours to 72 hours a week and the introduction of part-time firemen.

Feeling is running high and some stations, like Stratford, East London, are threatening a total shut-down unless they get a straight, no strings increase of £2.

The London district of the FBU refers to the £2 demand as an 'undermanning allowance' for its members. They justify this by claiming that the London Fire Brigade is 500 men under strength, which represents a saving of more than £½m a year in wages alone.

### SUPPORT

All sections of the fire brigade are supporting the dispute. As well as men manning the fire engines, control room staff are only accepting emergency calls. Training courses have been stopped and members instructed to return to their normal stations.

The dispute has shattered much of the apathy towards trade unionism that has existed for many years in the brigade. The new militancy will certainly kill any support which the 'scab' Firefighters Federation may have.

A mobile column of firemen is visiting stations throughout London to keep the members informed of the latest developments.

### Drugs are top

THREE drug firms are among the 10 most profitable companies in Britain. The American drug company Marck, Sharpe and Dohme is top of the list with a 59.4 per cent return on capital (net profit) in the last financial year. Beecham was third and Aspro sixth.



Firemen demonstrating outside the Soho fire station in Central London.

## Ivy Bridge lock-out: men refused dole money

Socialist Worker Reporter

LOCKED-OUT WORKERS at the Ivy Bridge Development at Isleworth, Middlesex, have been refused dole money by the Hounslow office of the Department of Employment and Productivity.

Local officials of the Ministry maintain that as workers are involved in a 'trade dispute' they are not entitled to receive benefits.

But following vigorous protests from the men, the

issue is being considered at a national level in London.

The decision to refuse payment, which is causing considerable hardship, is seen by the men as a blatant example of pro-employer bias by Ministry officials. For it is indisputable that the workers are locked out and willing to start work when the bosses open the gates.

It is ironic that a Ministry which boasts the word 'productivity' in its title is

supporting Turriffs, the main contractors, on this issue. The main reason behind the lock-out is that work was going ahead too quickly. So the bosses slashed back the bonus.

Turriff's action has meant that the project, which will provide council homes for 1,000 families, has now been seriously delayed. Workers on the picket line have met families with a letter from the council promising that their accommodation would be ready several weeks before.

Members of the International Socialists in the district have been leafleting working-class areas pointing out how Turriff's action was aggravating the housing problem. Meetings are also planned for shopping centres to build up local support for the locked-out workers.

Financial support for the locked-out men is urgently required. Send to: D. Hutchinson, 38 Fifth Cross Road, Twickenham, Middlesex.

## Prod deal for steel men

STEEL INDUSTRY unions have made major concessions on productivity in accepting a new pay structure for 15,000 craftsmen.

The 11 unions concerned, including the AEF, have agreed with the British Steel corporation to allow work study to determine 'effective' levels of work and efficient manning scales. They have also agreed to

further flexibility and interchangeability between craftsmen.

In return, craftsmen are offered new wage scales from January 1st (if Mrs. Castle accepts the package) which would bring their basic rates up from 6s 9½d an hour to 9s 4½d. After a year, a further 15s service payment will be made, bringing the hourly rate up to 9s 9d.

## Police threat to pickets

From PAUL SMITH

COVENTRY:- Police threatened to arrest student pickets who were helping at a lock-out at the Mother's Pride Bakery last week.

A hundred Indian workers have been locked out for more than a week after they had struck in sympathy with a victimised fellow worker. The management ordered the Sunday shift to take on extra work without increased help or more pay.

The men refused to accept this, and the first one to say no was sacked. The others struck in solidarity, and all received their cards on Monday.

The men belong to the Bakers' Union, which has told them to return to work without the victimised man, so that negotiations can begin. The men refused this advice.

The Bakers' Union has a closed shop agreement with the management. Delivery

drivers, who remained at work, are members of the TGWU which will not support the locked-out workers until the dispute is given official backing.

Last Thursday, 20 students from the local colleges, mobilised by the Coventry Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation, joined the picket.

### No right

Morale among the pickets rose as vans were stopped and drivers spoken to. Police then appeared and told the students they had no right to be there, and threatened to arrest them for obstruction.

The student pickets refused to go, and an hour later 12 more police arrived, complete with an inspector and Black Maria. The students were then offered the alternative of disappearing or arrest, and after some discussion and argument, they

decided on a tactical withdrawal.

Seventy students and trade unionists joined the pickets on Saturday and the factory gates were blocked. Only three police appeared, and although they kicked over the pickets' fire, cut down their canvas rain cover, and told the drivers to knock down any pickets who stood in their way, were far less aggressive than before.

The strike is likely to be long and hard. Attempts are being made to ban overtime and enlist support at other Mother's Pride (Enterprise) Bakeries.

The workers have the support of the local Indian community.

Messages of support and other information from Dave Edwards, 53 Palmerston Road, Earlsdon, Coventry.

Remember: letters for publication must arrive first post Monday.

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