

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

149 4 DECEMBER 1969 EVERY THURSDAY 4d

UP PRICES, RENTS, FARES, BEER -NEW ATTACK ON WORKERS

by Lionel Sims

ANNOUNCEMENTS of the government's future state spending plans have hammered home the complete disinterest of the Labour Party in the economic problems of the vast majority of the population.

The government's White Paper published this week stated that spending on education, roads and housing would be severely cut back from now until 1972. The most damning part of this plan is the cut in the house-building programme.

In 1964 the government stated, with no ifs or buts, that they were committed to building 500,000 new houses every year by 1970. It is true that they have increased the amount of money invested in council house building from £481 million in 1967 to £541 million in 1968, an increase of more than 12 per cent. But the total number of council houses built has decreased from 202,178 in 1967 to 194,349 in 1968, a reduction of about 4 per cent. More money is being spent on fewer houses!

By 1970 the annual rate will have fallen to 360,000 houses while there is no possibility at all of the building programme reaching its 1967 peak of 404,000 thousand houses (council and private building) until 1972. Instead of being spent on houses sorely needed by millions of families, £146 million of the £541 million spent on local authority housing in 1968 went to line the pockets of the moneylenders who provide the loans for local house-building programmes. When out of office, Labour would at least have pretended to listen to these arguments. In office the cloak of sympathy is thrown off. They have welcomed the Prices and Incomes Board recommendation to raise all council rents.

More for moneylenders

Last week Horace Cutler, housing boss of the Greater London Council (the world's biggest landlord) announced average increases of 7s 6d in rents for early next year for tenants in 240,000 GLC houses and flats. This means more money for the moneylenders, higher rents for the tenants and a reduction in the number of houses being built — and the whole manoeuvre is fobbed off with the excuse that council housing is an increasing burden on the taxpayer.

Unfortunately, being a council tenant does not stop you being a taxpayer at the same time! In fact, a family of husband, wife and two children in 1967 with a total income of £11 a week, including every form of benefit, paid £4 10s in taxation (41 per cent), while the same size family with a total income of £50 a week, paid £15 10s in taxation (31 per cent). Council tenants have the honour of paying high rents because, so the argument goes, 'of the burden on the taxpayer' yet the burden of taxation is greatest on them!

The White Paper not only plans a drastic reduction in present and future council building but even past commitment involves a level of expenditure above the ceiling set by the government

last February for state social expenditure. They intend therefore to dismantle the system which commits them to subsidise local authority house building.

This is clear from proposals in a Fabian pamphlet published this week by Social Security Minister Richard Crossman. In it he suggests that the government should withdraw all subsidies on council house building and instead housing allowances would be granted to families who can establish that they are in need. The London Borough of Camden is already beginning to assess the rents on its newest council houses by rateable value. The cheapest houses on these estates would need to be let at rents of over £10 a week.

Together with fare increases on London buses and 2d a pint on beer announced last week, new additions to an enormous list of recent price increases, the logic of the strategy becomes clearer. The weekly budget of the average household increases by about 14s every year and there is nothing the individual family can do about it (except cut back on food as the 1968 Family Expenditure Survey showed some people to be doing). But at work workers can collectively control their lives by withdrawing their labour.

Whittle away wages

The government and monopolists realise this and merely whittle away wage gains by raising prices. The retail price index rose from 126.4 in October 1968 to 133.2 in October 1969. Government and bosses rely on workers being unorganised outside work in order to pose a political counter-attack to industrial militancy by boosting the cost of living.

A lack of organisation outside the work-place means morale can drop in the face of rising prices. When the cabinet discussed the timing of the increase in the price of beer they 'felt that the impact will have been forgotten well before a general election', (London Evening News, 28 November). What cynicism! It is not a growing forgetfulness but growing bitterness that is widespread.

The tenants on rent strike face the projected rent rises with more determination while in parts of London posters are appearing everywhere which capture the mood of recent months: **First the firemen, then the dustmen, now the teachers. Who next? The nurses!**

The open alliance between government and employers and their pompous hullabaloo about 'wage restraint in the national interest' is more and more to be seen as the interest not of 'the nation' but of a small and privileged elite.

While that elite dominates society, reforms and wage increases are immediately swallowed by rising prices and rents. The only way out of this seemingly hopeless situation is for the workers to organise themselves to take control of society and begin to plan for the people and not for the profiteers.



STRIKING TEACHERS seen this week outside the London headquarters of the National Union of Teachers. Nearly 5000 teachers in selected schools in Britain are on strike for two weeks to back their claim for an extra £135 a year — but militant teachers feel that more widespread action involving a greater number of schools would force the employers and government to capitulate. The teachers have emphasised that their campaign is not just for more money — they demand extra grants for education, more schools, more teachers and smaller classes. **SPECIAL FEATURE ON EDUCATION: Page 4.**

Rugby — police get tough

THE GOVERNMENT and the police are so determined to crush the growing demonstrations against the all-white rugby ambassadors from South Africa that they are introducing methods similar to those in the apartheid police state itself. On Tuesday, 98 demonstrators were arrested at the Aberdeen match. All 98 arrested were charged. This is most unusual. Rather than clutter up the courts with

marginal offences such as obstruction, the police usually release many of those arrested on such demonstrations.

But it is clear that the word has gone out to take tough action against those who demonstrate their opposition to a brutal, racist dictatorship which is an important source of British investment.

In Manchester last week, 93 marchers were charged after the anti-Springbok demonstration. They were denied the most basic rights — they were photographed without their consent and were not allowed to phone lawyers.

Charges ranged from assault to threatening behaviour and abusive language. Although some of the arrested could be fined as much as £50, they were all denied legal aid on the grounds that the offences 'were not serious enough'. They were advised to plead guilty.

THIS SATURDAY: Springboks versus Scotland at Murrayfield, Edinburgh. Glasgow IS are running coaches to the demonstration, return fare 8s. Phone WES 1075.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

STORMING OF THE WINTER PALACE/LENIN (1970 anniversary card) 1s (inc envelope) each or 10s a doz. Cash with orders to Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2.

Containers: Tilbury dockers hit back. See page 5

BOOK REVIEWS

'Greedy workers': demolition job on the bosses' favourite myth...

by Alan Woodward

A MYTH peddled by both bosses and all recent governments is that the workers' 'greedy claim' for more money is one of the chief reasons for Britain's economic difficulties.

Norman Atkinson, Labour MP for Tottenham, does a good demolition job on this argument in his pamphlet **Whatever Happened to our Wages?** (Tribune Publications, 24 St John Street, London EC1, 1s), surveying wage rates and take-home pay in 1938 and 1968, he proves conclusively that workers as a class today are getting barely as much as 30 years ago and many are below the 1938 level.

Using a documented weekly budget, Mr Atkinson shows that a weekly gross wage of £4 then is equivalent to £22 11s 8d now. He calculates take-home pay for a family of two adults and one child to be £3 18s and £18 10s respectively. Apart from standard deductions for tax, national insurance, pensions, etc, the weekly expenditure includes purchase tax and other indirect payments (rates) that knock off a further 10s 3d and £3 19s respectively.

Understatement

The wage earner of 1938 loses 16 per cent of his purchasing power, while the 1968 worker loses 35 per cent. Who said the welfare services were free?

Mr Atkinson proves the official 'prices index' estimate of the increased cost of living of 270 per cent to be a massive understatement. He calculates 371 per cent to be the real figure.

He adds on another 73 per cent for increased production and concludes that any worker taking home less than a 445 per cent increase on 1938 wages has actually lost out in the last 30 years of 'progress'.

Teachers are a good example. An experienced teacher's salary has increased by only 339 per cent as a result of years of non-militancy. By comparison, draughtsmen have secured

WORKERS INVOLVED	AVERAGE GROSS PAY		TAKE HOME PAY (2 adults, 1 child)		%
	1938	1968	1938	1968 increase	
Transport	£3 10	£22 15	£3 8	£18 16	446
Clothing & footwear	£3 4	£19 6	£3 3	£16 6	417
Paper, printing	£4 4	£26 2	£4 3	£20 18	404
Engineering (excluding vehicles)	£3 15	£22 4	£3 13	£18 6	395
Food, drink, tobacco	£3 5	£21 7	£3 4	£17 13	377

more than 400 per cent in increases and their well-known militant policy has taken them within striking distance of keeping up with the cost of living (figures from DATA Journal).

Recent activity has shown that rank and file teachers are learning a basic lesson that trade union action will get results while professional ethics and relying on the authorities' 'goodwill' have failed.

Ford workers of all grades will find backing in the pamphlet for their claim for parity with Midlands car workers. From a common base in 1938, the Coventry average has increased 480 per cent while Ford have managed only about 365 per cent. Other workers, like those at Rootes, who are soon to feel the weight of 'measured day work' schemes similar to Ford's, also need to study these figures.

Postmen and busmen are typical of workers who have to put in long hours of overtime to get a living wage. The table shows groups of workers who are far from bleeding the country dry. These figures are averages, of course, and in better-off industries there will still be pockets of poorly-paid workers.

The pamphlet contains a lot of useful information for International Socialists to use in their attempt to become an effective force in working-class struggles.

One example is to find out how long it takes a worker to earn the money to buy what he actually produces.

In spite of savage redundancies and more mechanisation, why does a miner still have to work one hour to buy one hundredweight of coal? Why is one week's pay necessary for a cabinet maker to buy a cabinet—the same as in 1938?

Can the Housing Minister explain why a building worker has to work 75 per cent more hours in 1968 than in 1938 to buy a house he has built?

Increase

As final proof of his case, Mr Atkinson shows that 55 per cent of total personal income in 1938 went to wages and salaries (as opposed to unearned income). In 1968 this had only risen to 63 per cent while the total number of working people showed a massive rise of seven million, up to 24½ million.

This large increase in the number of workers (40 per cent) which has only gained 8 per cent more of the country's wealth at the expense of those living off unearned income, exposes clearly that those non-producers getting profits, rents and dividends are the people causing economic hardship.

Workers who are better-off today owe this to the long hours of overtime, the greater number of women at

work or the practice of a second job on the side. These will pose difficult problems in the future for socialists and active trade unionists.

When the current wave of productivity deals reduces the labour force and increases unemployment, 'second' jobs will disappear. Another result will be a cut-back on overtime and more wages on the 'basic'. Women's employment is bound to be lowered when employers are faced with equal pay.

The future clearly holds a revival of the traditional struggles of the days before 'affluence'. While this should not be over-emphasised, we are in Mr Atkinson's debt for his exposure of the weakness of present-day prosperity.

But Mr Atkinson and International Socialists part company when it comes to deciding what to do about the present situation. He backs the TUC's advocacy of an annual 6 per cent growth rate and free wage bargaining, plus 'an imaginative combination of price supervision and productivity bargaining'.

And, 'Why not use the natural forces of free collective bargaining to inject a truly dynamic character into productive innovation and the need for continual new investment?' Rarely can so complete a rejection of socialism have been crammed into 26 words!

Mr Atkinson plans to freeze prices and allow workers to 'bargain' for higher wages, thus forcing more productivity or a cut in dividends. Any capitalist class with only a moderate determination to continue to exist would use 'the natural forces of free collective bargaining' to shout NO to wage increases while using productivity deals to an even greater extent to weaken labour, increase unemployment and score another victory over the working class in any confrontation.

Only an unprecedented degree of unity and militant action would defeat capitalism and under these circumstances a clear and open call for workers to assume complete control of the economy is far better than Mr Atkinson's tinkering.

But all this supposition is on the condition that Mr Atkinson puts his ideas into practice when he gets to power. Every Labour



NORMAN ATKINSON

government to date has contained left-wingers who had similarly made strong pleas for 'socialist' planning within capitalism.

Each one in turn has accepted the proposals of the big industrialists and financiers — Ramsay MacDonald in 1931, Stafford Cripps in Attlee's post-war government and Barbara and Harold today, whose membership of the apparently 'left-wing' Tribune group of the 1950s has led to the discredited wage freeze policy of the present government.

Reject

Today we have Jack Jones of the Transport Workers Union advocating pay and production committees and Mr Atkinson urging price supervision. Both reject the socialist idea that workers should directly control the means of production and pose instead reshapes of past examples of Labour 'planning'.

Will Messrs Atkinson and Jones follow the well-trodden path into government and decide in the interests of a more planned and rational capitalism, that 1980 must be the year of more squeezes, further productivity deals, greater integration of unions and closer supervision of stewards?

With all these reservations over the conclusions, the pamphlet is still a valuable source of information. Mr Atkinson has pointed to the sickness. It is up to us to use the knife.

Alan Woodward is a delegate to Haringey Trades Council

Bernadette — from swinger to red devil

17 April 1969 is a day that will be remembered by many a resident of Mid-Ulster. On that day the constituency returned to Westminster a young girl by the name of Bernadette Devlin.

The TV cameras clicked and the press had its story of the year. Remember the young swinger in the mini-dress or the MP who preferred jeans?

But a few months later the newspapers were telling a different tale. Four o'clock in the afternoon of 12 August and the battle of the Bogside began. For 50 hours the fighting went on and Bernadette Devlin was in the thick of it. The Irish orphan turned Cinderella was no more; in her place, a conspirator and plotter — a literal red devil.

The people of Bogside, amongst them Bernadette Devlin, did more in those 50 hours to destroy the Unionist regime than the collective effort of Green Tory Nationalists and middle-class liberals in 50 years.

Ruthless

The people wanted houses and they wanted jobs. The Unionists could offer only bullets and gas.

Bernadette Devlin's book (**The Price of my Soul**, Pan, 6s) is a hurried, rather garbled attempt to explain the reasons behind the growth of the Civil Rights movement. It is a ruthless attack on the capitalist system, North and South, which breeds hate among Catholic and Protestant workers while offering to both a future of unemployment or emigration.

She stress continually the need for Protestant and Catholic workers to unite and fight the common enemy. She paints a brilliant portrait of the Nationalists' attempt to jump on the Civil Rights bandwagon.

Her description of parliamentary life will come as something of a shock to some. As one MP said to her, 'We're all friends here—no politics outside the chamber'.

Of particular interest to those with a housing problem is the quote of the policeman on the door who wanted to tell her how to avoid people: 'I don't know why you bother to see people that come. Everybody else here ducks and hides', the specific example being Mr Greenwood, Minister of Housing.

Bernadette Devlin obviously hates injustice and hypocrisy and is determined to fight against it in all its forms. But hatred of the system is tragically not enough.

'Crime'

Neither the Civil Rights movement, nor Bernadette benefit from unjustified attacks on comrades as sincere as herself for the crime of being marxists. Does she really believe that nothing is to be learned from the May events in France or that socialism means an Ireland free from the British rather than a United Workers' Republic including the working people of the countries of the British Isles?

The fight for a socialist Ireland has created many martyrs: if Bernadette's visions are to materialise then a common socialist ideology uniting Protestant and Catholic is needed. Those who fight the bully boys of the B-Specials are undoubtedly brave, but bravely on its own will not make a revolution.

As she herself says: 'The task is not to free the Six Counties but to start all over again the national revolution.' And that revolution must be a socialist one.

Barry Hugill

Socialist Worker

6 Cottons Gardens London E2

Tel: 01-739 1878 (editorial) 1870 (business)

CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world—a tiny minority—subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through a

WHERE WE STAND

state of workers' councils and workers' control of production.

Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant struggle against the

ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism, into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois.

International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

Anguish but no insight on the Czech invasion

THE Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation did an admirable job in exposing the barbarity of American methods and tactics in Vietnam. It has now turned its attention to another small country oppressed by a large one — Czechoslovakia.

Czechoslovakia and Socialism (ed. Ken Coates, 25s), could have been a valuable piece of research at a time when Czechoslovakia is still a burning issue. Instead it is a ragbag of essays by distinguished contributors — Bertrand Russell, Ernest Mandel, Lawrence Daly, John Berger — not particularly noted for their expert knowledge of Czechoslovakia. (From Daly an ounce of support for British miners would be worth a ton of moralising solidarity with the Czechs).

Problem

As a result, the book lacks theoretical clarity. Ken Coates in his preface poses the anguished problem: 'Either the assumptions of a century and a half of socialist thought are invalid, or there exist unsocialist elements deep in the structure of the socialist countries which initiated the invasion.'

But neither he nor the other contributors can face the logical answer, that the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries have nothing to do with socialism. Instead they tie themselves in knots debating the Russian accusations of 'restoration of capitalism'.

This means that the authors are unable to show how the policies of 'reformers' like pubcek and Sik were in fact directly opposed to the interests of the working class. An exception is Daniel Guerin's article which brings to life the creativity and self-activity of Czech workers.

A further muddle is shown in Emanuel Litvinoff's piece on Czech anti-semitism, which is documented largely from the Israeli and Zionist press, surely a supporter of freedom for Vietnam and Czechoslovakia must also denounce the contempt for national rights shown by the racist liars in Tel Aviv?

The Czech bureaucrats disguise anti-semitism as anti-zionism; but to see every attack on Zionism as anti-Jewish is to play into their hands.

In short, a disappointing book. We may hope the resources of the Russell Foundation are better used in future.

Ian Birchall

James Connolly



Irish revolutionary/by Sean Matgamna

'Any man who tells you that an act of armed resistance — even if offered by 10 men armed only with stones — any man who tells you that such an act of resistance is premature, imprudent or dangerous — any and every such man should at once be spurned and spat at. For remark you this and recollect it, that somewhere, and somehow and by somebody a beginning must be made, and that the first act of resistance is always and must be ever premature, imprudent and dangerous.' - James Fintan Lalor

THUS IT WAS with the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin. This was the spirit in which the successors of Lalor acted. And to act at all they needed such a spirit.

One thousand men, one quarter of them the trade union militants of the Citizen Army, badly armed and with little training, went out into the streets of Dublin to challenge and to fight the greatest empire the world had then seen. Many of them knew — certainly the leaders knew — that, given the isolation of Dublin, they had little chance of success.

Yet, 'We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire and to establish an Irish Republic . . . believing that the British government has no right in Ireland and never can have any right in Ireland . . . ' proudly explained Connolly to the military court that condemned him to death a week later.

Earlier Connolly had summed up the spirit of desperate determination which governed him between the outbreak of war in 1914 and his murder in 1916: 'If you strike at, imprison or kill us, out of our prisons or graves we will still evoke a spirit that will thwart you, and maybe, raise a force that will destroy you. We defy you! Do your worst!' (Irish Worker, 1914).

With such conviction Connolly faced the British government and its firing squad. Awaiting his executioners he remained entirely unrepentant: 'Hasn't it been a good life — and isn't this a good end?' he said to his wife when she visited him for the last time. Yet, at his death, he believed that the socialists who knew him in Britain and America would never understand what he, a revolutionary socialist, was doing fighting for the mere national independence of Ireland. He knew that many of the socialists would regard it as an aberration for a marxist to take Connolly's course. And of course many of them did.

How came Connolly to that end of his, which united the last heroic act of traditional Irish Republicanism with the first decisive act of revolutionary labour?

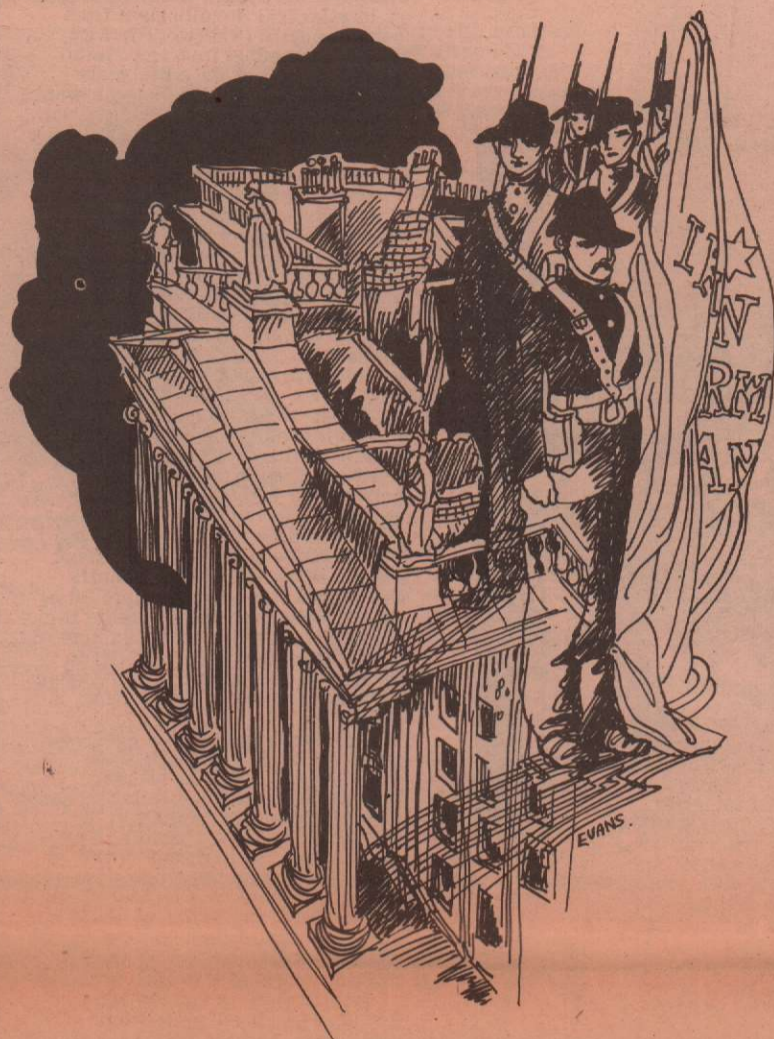
CALLOUS MEN

Born of Irish parents in Edinburgh in 1868, Connolly started work in a printshop at 10 or 11 and at 12 in a bakery. Like most emigre families, the Connollys remained very much attuned to Ireland. There at that time the crypto-socialist Fenian movement of the 1860s had given way to the fight of the Land League and Parnell's parliamentary party.

The League welded the tenants together to fight the landlords. Tenant solidarity and its warlike expression, the boycott, together with Parnell's obstruction in parliament, shook the English system. Callous men who had never bothered when the Irish people suffered in silence now became convinced of the need to solve the 'Irish problem' from above, before it solved itself from below.

The Connolly family atmosphere in Edinburgh, like that of most Irish families then, was saturated with a spirit of bitter rebellion against the 'English system'; it was in the air which the child James Connolly breathed, and it never left his system.

At 14 he joined the army, following many young workers forced in by economic pressure and following also a Fenian tradition; in the army they learned to use arms. Connolly was stationed in Ireland and it is probable that he deserted. By 1889



he had become a socialist. The Jacobin ideas of the Irish Republicans transplanted to the conditions of the workers in Edinburgh blossomed easily and naturally into a socialist consciousness. From then to 1896 he developed his knowledge, winding up in the marxist Social Democratic Federation (Though his 'marxism' remained one-sided; he seems never to have shed Catholicism).

He married and 'inherited' a job as an Edinburgh dustman but when he fought a local government election he was squeezed out and thereafter found it impossible to get a job. Then came the turn which threw him for the first time completely into Irish politics. The Dublin Socialist Society invited him to become its paid organiser. He accepted.

By May 1896 he was ready to transform the group into the Irish Socialist Republican Party. From the start the ISRP distinguished itself by declaring for an independent Irish Republic. Even the SDF declared only for Home Rule for Ireland and many socialists considered it a betrayal of 'socialist internationalism' to bother at all with the question of oppressed nationalities.

Following Marx rather than the shallow 'marxists' of his time, Connolly blended the plebian revolutionary tradition of the United Irishmen and the Fenians with revolutionary socialism. He declared, 'Only the Irish working class remains as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland.'

Often he expounded his ideas on this question: 'The development of democracy in Ireland has been smothered by the Union (ie the Act of Union of 1801 of Britain and Ireland). Remove that barrier, throw

the Irish people back upon their own resources, make them realise that the causes of poverty, of lack of progress, of arrested civil and national development are then to be sought for within and not without, are in their power to remove or perpetuate and 'ere long that spirit of democratic progress will invade and permeate all our social and civil institutions.'

'The Socialist Party of Ireland (the ISRP's successor) recognises and most enthusiastically endorses the principles of internationalism, but it recognises that that principle must be sought through the medium of universal brotherhood rather than by the self-extinction of distinct nations within the political maw of overgrown empires.' (Forward, March 1911).

GREAT FRIENDSHIP

And 'We desire to preserve with the English people the same political relations as with the people of France, of Germany or of any other country. The greatest possible friendship, but also the strictest independence . . . Thus, inspired by another ideal, conducted by reason and not by tradition, the ISRP arrives at the same conclusion as the most irreconcilable nationalists.'

But: 'Having learned from history that all bourgeois movements end in compromise, that the bourgeois revolutionaries of today become the conservatives of tomorrow the Irish socialists refuse to deny or to lose their identity with those who only half understand the problem of liberty. They seek only the alliance and friendship of those hearts who, loving liberty for its own sake, are not afraid to follow its banner when it is uplifted by the hands of the working class,

who have most need of it. Their friends are those who would not hesitate to follow that standard of liberty, to consecrate their lives in its service, even should it lead to the terrible arbitration of the sword.'

These words were written 19 years before Easter 1916.

Connolly at the same time struggled against the middle class Home Rule Party. He mocked at those who saw mere independence as a panacea. 'If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the Green Flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the socialist republic your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through the whole array of commercial-industrial institutions she has planted in the country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs. England would rule you to your ruin.'

A social as well as a national revolution was necessary: 'A system of society in which the workshops, factories, docks, railways, shipyards etc. shall be owned by the nation . . . seems best calculated to secure the highest form of industrial efficiency combined with the greatest amount of individual freedom from state despotism. . . .

CONTROL

But he qualified this: 'State ownership and control is not necessarily socialist — if it were, then the army and the navy, the police, the judges, the gaolers, the informers and the hangmen would all be socialist functionaries as they are all state officials — but the ownership by the state of all the lands and material for labour, combined with the co-operative control by the workers of such land and materials would be socialist. . . . 'To the cry of the middle class reformers 'make this or that the property of the government' we reply — 'yes, in proportion as the workers are ready to make the government their property. . . . ' (Workers' Republic 1899)

Arguing thus, fighting for working-class independence from Home Rulers and Nationalists alike, Connolly was by no means a 'millennial socialist'. He fought for limited gains and against sectarian socialists who refused to do so. 'Of course some of our socialist friends, especially those who have never got beyond the ABC of the question, will remind me that even in a republic the worker is exploited, as for instance in France and the United States. Therefore, they argue, we cannot be Republicans. To this I reply: The countries mentioned have only capitalism to deal with. We have capitalism and a monarchy. . . . This, too, was his approach to the national question: we have capitalism and national oppression.

Connolly would have had no time for the 'pure' nationalists today. Neither would he have time for those who, with the slogan 'For Connolly's Workers' Republic' on their lips, declare that the reunification of Ireland, even under capitalism, the removal of part of the double oppression of the workers of Ireland, is of no interest to socialists. Connolly was no 'Connolly sectarian'.

Connolly's ISRP never had more than 100 members, though at certain times it was influential beyond its membership. During the Boer War its anti-government pro-Boer press was smashed by the police.

In 1903 Connolly went to the United States on a lecture tour. Shortly afterwards he moved there

with his family. He worked for the American Socialist Labour Party and the Industrial Workers of the World. He had been one of the guiding spirits of a group of SDF members who had split off the same year to found a British SLP on the model of the American party.

Though eventually it was to become rigidly sectarian, Daniel De Leon's SLP was at that time producing trenchant criticism of the existing trade union and socialist organisations. De Leon was among the first to castigate the increasingly conservative and cautious trade union bureaucrats as 'labour lieutenants of capitalism'. He also saw how feeble were the big socialist parties of Europe with their dominant parliamentarianism. Both the one-sided trade unions and the equally one-sided socialist parties seemed to De Leon to rule out any chance of working-class revolutionary action. Just how right he was, was shown by the collapse of the labour movement in 1914.

De Leon tried to answer the problem he himself posed by arguing that the working class needed to build up a real social strength inside the womb of capitalism just as capitalism itself had done in the womb of feudalism. He proposed an infrastructure composed of industry-wide unions, capable of both seizing and running industry. And he saw the need to build, both politically and economically, towards a strategy of taking power.

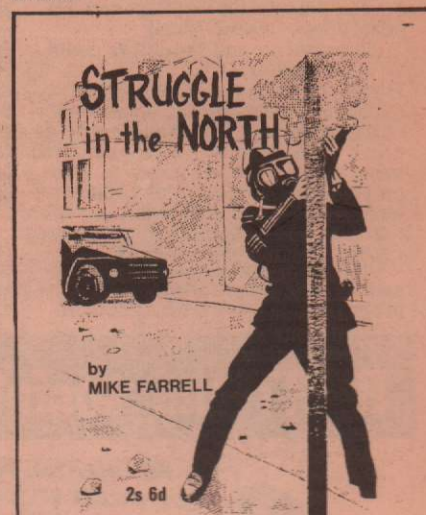
De Leon was groping theoretically for a specific working-class organisation form of industrial and social rule. History was to provide her own answer: the workers' Soviets thrown up in Russia in 1905 and in Europe after 1917.

SHED HARSHNESS

Of De Leon, Lenin was later to say that, despite a certain sectarianism, he was the only man since Marx to add anything to marxism. But, as so often happens, the De Leonites combined many correct ideas with a sectarian practice which rendered their ideas impotent.

Connolly remained with the De Leonites for some years, eventually breaking with them over their sectarianism. But while shedding much of the political harshness and intolerance of the SLP he retained a belief in 'industrial unionism'. Until 1910 he was an organiser for the IWW — the great syndicalist movement of migrant workers in America.

In 1910 he returned to Ireland, armed with the ideas of industrial unionism, to begin a period of mass activity which saw the Irish working class rousing itself for the first time into militant action.



NEXT WEEK: a rising tide of labour militancy, Home Rule, the war and Easter 1916

An analysis by a founding member of the militant People's Democracy movement in Northern Ireland of the country divided and dominated by British imperialism and controlled, north and south, by reactionary, anti-working class regimes. The author vividly describes the struggle for civil rights in the Six Counties.

3s post paid.
PLUTO PRESS
6 Cottons Gardens London E2.

Education: 'equal opportunity' —as long as you stay in the same social class

by Leni Solinger

ALTHOUGH it is rarely stated so baldly, the role of education has always been to perpetuate a social and economic system and to equip people for the system. It was best stated by Robert Lowe, in an address he made to parliament in 1862 on the expansion of education to working-class children:

'We do not profess to give these people an education that will raise them above their station and business in life, but to give them an education that may fit them for this business.'

As we live in a class-divided society, the education system will reflect this. The tri-partite system, that is, grammar, technical and modern schools, does just this.

Grammar schools train white-collar workers, professionals, academics, managers etc and recruit mainly from the middle class. Technical schools train technicians (where such schools exist). Secondary modern schools produce unskilled and semi-skilled workers etc. Most children attending these schools are of working-class origin.

The fee-paying 'public' schools, an untouched category of schools outside the state system, train our future bosses, top civil servants and MPs. The children attending public schools of course are recruited from our present bosses, top civil servants and MPs. Who else can afford to spend £600-£1000 a year on his child's education?

Comprehensives, move towards equality

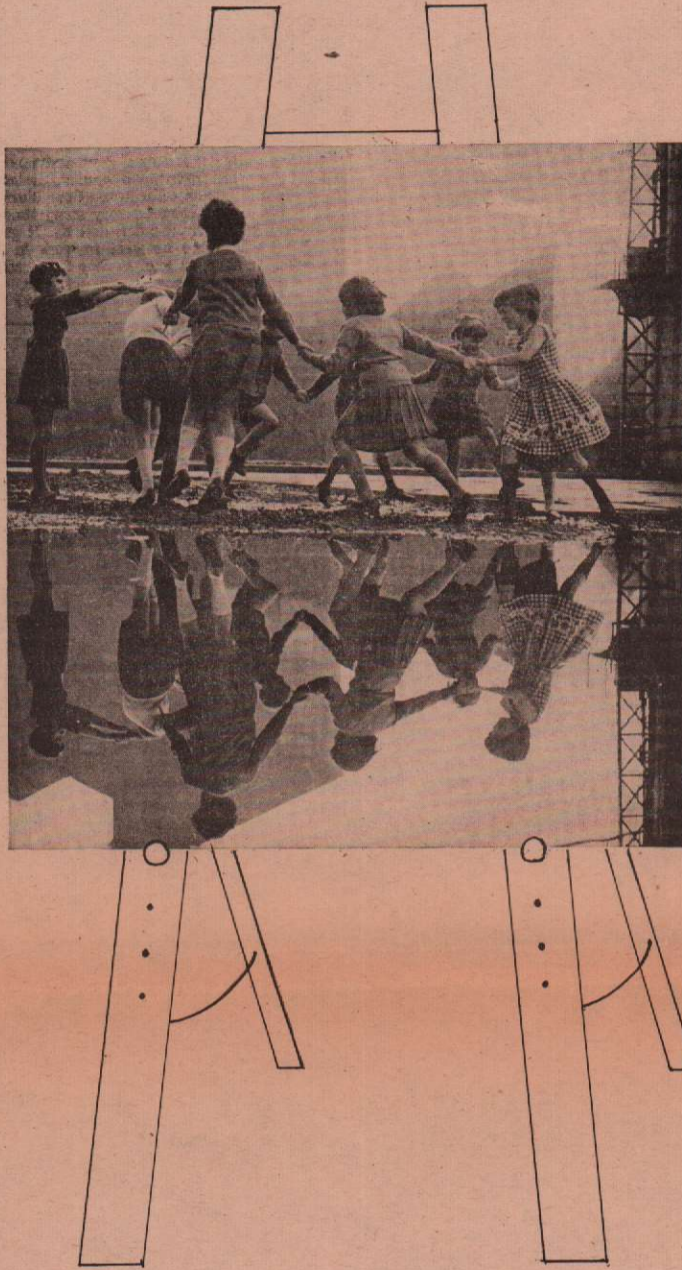
Comprehensive education is an alternative to this system. The comprehensive school is defined by the Ministry of Education as a school 'intended to cater for all the secondary education of all children in a given area.' It is an attempt to give all children an equal opportunity for education and is an important development in that it is beginning to offer some sort of equality to working-class children. We must look at its development carefully before judging how far it can succeed in this direction.

Because comprehensive schools are a development from, and are presently co-existing with selective schools, the selective system must be looked at first. The 1944 Education Act provided free state secondary education for all. Three types of secondary schools were created: grammar, technical and secondary modern. Selection took place at 11 determining which type of school a child was to attend. The scheme was based on three assumptions:

1. that this system provided equal opportunity for all children (an idea very similar to the 'separate but equal' farce which maintained segregated education in America).
2. that talent and intelligence are scarce and remain fixed
3. that ability and potential could be measured at 11.

The first assumption, equal opportunity, has meant equal opportunity to remain in the same social class as a child was born into (with some exceptions, of course). The proportion of middle-class children who enter grammar schools is higher than the proportion of working-class children of the same ability.

The National Survey of Health and Development followed the progress of 5000 children born in



the first week of March, 1946. They were tested at 11. Taking just the children who scored between 55 and 57 in the tests, grammar school places were awarded to 51 per cent of the upper middle-class children, 34 per cent of the lower middle class children and 21 per cent and 22 per cent respectively of those from upper and lower manual working-class families. (The Home and the School, J W B Douglas.)

You can see the sham of equal opportunity just by comparing the grammar schools and secondary moderns. 'Modern' schools are far inferior because they receive much less money. In a secondary modern school you might find excellent facilities for woodwork and other craft subjects, but the facilities in general are far inferior to those in grammar schools. People are being fitted for jobs rather than receiving a general education.

The modern schools receive much less money as the allowance a school receives for each child is calculated according to age. The sixth form pupil is 'worth' 10 times

more money than the first year pupil (and of course grammar schools have a much higher proportion of older pupils.)

Turnover in staff at secondary moderns is higher, classes are larger, and the drop-out rate at 15 is enormous in comparison. This is the 'equal opportunity' for working-class children.

The second assumption, that intelligence is scarce, is both false and true. It is false when interpreted to mean children come in types — a limited amount of intelligent, academically-inclined children and a larger majority of ordinary, ie rather dull children. This was the assumption leading to the development of grammar schools for the former 'type' and secondary modern schools for the rest.

But it is also true to say that talent and ability are scarce — scarce because they are stifled, not because of anything inherent (as the conservatives are always implying). The people who suffer this limitation most are working-class children.

A teacher's expectations are one thing that stifles a child's development. An experiment reported in Pygmalion in the Classroom, by Rosenthal and Jacobson, reveals just how influential a teacher's expectations can be. An experiment was done in which teachers were told to expect a spurt of intellectual development from certain pupils (who were in fact picked at random from the class). These so-called 'late-bloomers' bloomed. Their reading scores went ahead and some children improved dramatically. One boy went from an IQ of 61 to 106 after being labelled a 'late-bloomer'.

Expectations most often come true. People in the secondary moderns, because they are 'failures', have much less expected of them. Even the work of the top entrants deteriorates over the years (the average IQ in secondary modern schools declines 1.9 points in the three years after selection whereas it rises 4.9 in the grammar school).

Physical environment limits children even more than expectations. Conditions in schools are terrible — primary classes have between 35 and 40 children and equipment is insufficient. Working-class children are hit hardest by this because their parents cannot afford to buy the books, pencils and paints that are not supplied by the schools. And their parents are usually too tired after an exhausting monotonous day's work to fill in for what a teacher can not do when he or she has 40 children in a class.

The environment of a working-class child is limited in other ways as well. Working-class parents have suffered from the same sort of class discrimination in education as their children. The intellectual environment of the home is far from the equivalent of the environment in a middle-class home. Where money for clothing and food is going to come from is a much more relevant worry than intellectual conversation.

Intelligence is not limited to a few at birth, it is limited by conditions. Middle and upper class children are not naturally superior, it is just easier for them to develop.

Mass of evidence against selection

The third assumption, that a child's ability can be measured at 11 has really been countered by research. The conclusion that psychologists have come to is that out of every 20 children picked for grammar schools, 6-7 turn out to be unsuited for that type of education. The Crowther Report of 1959 has shown that 27 per cent of National Service recruits in the army and 29 per cent of those in the RAF have been placed wrongly at 11 judging from their ability at 18. Yet selection goes on, separating those who will manage from those who will man the assembly lines.

The mass of evidence against selection has led to the growth of the comprehensive system. In 1965 the government requested (it did not even instruct) all education authorities to submit plans for comprehensive reorganisation of secondary schools. Only 22 of the 163 authorities are now completely re-organised along comprehensive lines. Many of them are completely opposed to the idea and are without definite plans and a majority are planning to introduce comprehensive education without abolishing selective education. (At present there are 748 comprehensive schools in the country as compared with 4800 special type schools, ie grammar schools and 'modern' schools.)

Not only is research condemning the methods and efficiency of selective education but it is impossible to have comprehensive education while selective schools exist. As long as grammar schools are not abolished they will continue to take the most able children, leaving the comprehensives as secondary modern schools with a new name.

Where comprehensives do exist, without the interference of selective schools, the results, in narrow educational terms, have been very good. 30 per cent more pupils are staying on past the minimum leaving age of 15 than the average for the country as a whole.

The idea that capacity is a

fixed thing has been disproved in case after case. A survey of GCE O level and A level passes done by Robin Pedley, author of the book 'The Comprehensive School', showed that 'comprehensive schools which did not lose more than 10 per cent of local people to grammar or independent schools and which had been established for at least seven years, had GCE results in 1962-3 which easily outstripped those of secondary schools in the maintained system as a whole'.

But comprehensive schools are almost always competing with selective schools. And just as there are people fighting for the continuation of grammar schools, there are people who would fight even harder if anyone challenged the 'public' schools. But then who would fit our future rulers for 'their station' in life? Comprehensive education can't be allowed to challenge the system too much!

One very effective way the government has limited education is by cutting the funds. The massive cuts of 1968 will definitely delay building new comprehensives and properly staffing and equipping the existing ones. This has already opened the field to right-wing attacks on the comprehensive system, because no matter how good the idea, you can't make it work without funds.

The comprehensive school offers more opportunity to working-class children than any previous system of education. We must certainly fight for its expansion (which must include the abolition of selective schools and increased funds for education).

But we must also see education as it fits into the entire society. A society which says profit is more important than need will never give enough money to social services in education. A society which is divided into two main groups, those who own and control the wealth of the country and the rest of us who work for them, can never provide the environment necessary to give equal educational opportunity to working-class children. The ruling class maintains its position by perpetuating differences between classes.

Under a socialist system based on workers' control the situation would be completely different. Teachers would have to equip children to control their society. Democracy in schools would be an absolute essential for this.

If need replaced profit as the guide for spending, we would make sure enough money was spent on education. As the working week would probably be reduced because of advanced technology, we would have to teach people ways of using leisure time. Educating people to 'fit' this system would really be exciting.

Progressive reforms can be brought about by the limited scheme of comprehensive education, but our long-term answer is a complete change in our society. Only then will working-class children really be able to develop.

Leni Solinger is a member of the NUT and teaches in North London. A further article will deal with 'intelligence' and streaming.

TWO ARTICLES from national papers last week show how our class system is actively perpetuated through education.

On 18 November The Times ran an article on a 17 year old boy called Lindsey who "... was one of the three boys from St. Bartholomew's School, Newbury, Berkshire, who spent the day with three directors of an engineering company learning what boardroom life is like ... The day started at the 20 ft boardroom table at 9 am for a policy conference ... Before he left the boardroom Lindsey, as acting managing director, sat in Mr Oppeman's big leather chair at the head of the table 'to try it for size' "

The Guardian of 20 November stated that: "Children clock in and out daily at a comprehensive school near Basildon, Essex. They then work out the pay they would have received at 5s an hour, taking into account, income tax, selective employment tax, national insurance, and overtime at time and a half. These are arithmetic problems which they expect to face on leaving school at 15."

It can be clearly seen from this that any talk about the equality of opportunities presented by our education system is rubbish.

ANN RICHARDS,
Union of Women Teachers

BERT the socialist worker

by TJH



Containers: attempt to divide London dockers

by Terry Barrett (TGWU) and Alf Waters (NASD)

TILBURY DOCKERS decided last week by a clear majority on a show of hands to continue to ban the use of the OCL-ACT container berths at Tilbury Dock.

The mass meeting, attended by 1800 men, was convened by Mr H Battie, Tilbury delegate to No 1 Docks Group, TGWU, aided and abetted by Mr G Hughes, fellow union delegate, in an attempt to panic the men into accepting a separate package deal from the rest of London docks.

Mr Battie was clearly disappointed at the rejection of the grading and shiftwork deal by a majority of London dockers the previous week. The 'giant size' offer provided that men in dispute be replaced by fellow trade unionists. It has been called the 'scabs' charter by many dockers.

Both Brothers Battie and Hughes were pretty confident that the Tilbury men would go it alone on containers. Fortunately for the future of docks' trade unionism the men were of a different



CRICHTON: not at the soup kitchen yet

opinion. The Daily Mail and The Guardian reported that Mr Battie shed tears at the decision. He should save a few tears for the fact that 4000 dockers' jobs and 700 lighterage jobs have been lost since the start of Phase 1 of the Devlin scheme in London alone.

This is all too often the result of union officials and lay delegates playing at

employers' public relations officers and errand boys when a bit of pressure is put upon them. They cannot represent both sides and should cease trying to be chameleons.

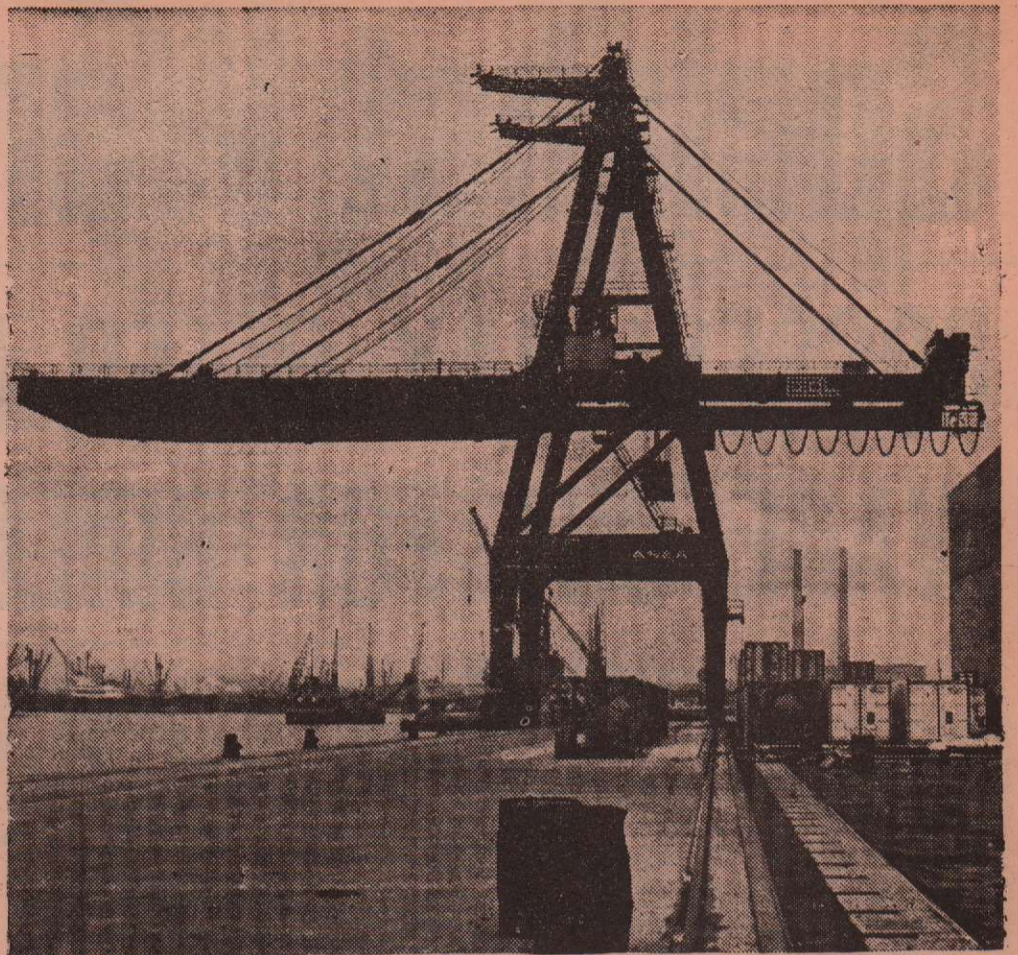
The press and television have denounced the dockers as the enemies of progress for refusing to work the containers. They have not attempted to present the dockers' side of the story.

The TGWU put the ban on containers until a wage structure for all London dockers was negotiated with the employers.

Earlier this year the National Port Council declared its intention of reducing the docks labour force by 25 per cent by the end of 1972, from 22,791 in 1968 to 18,750 working the containers without adequate safeguards against redundancy will only accelerate this process.

The dockers are fighting for their jobs. Is that against 'progress'? Is it 'progressive' to throw more than 4000 men onto the scrapheap?

Sir Andrew Crichton, P & O Shipping Co. director, and closely linked with the OCL-ACT Ltd., has endorsed Mr Battie's view and bemoaned the fact that the



Still in mothballs - the OCL berth at Tilbury

OCL-ACT berth cost £5 million in capital development. This pillar of the establishment has never once mentioned the vast amounts of public capital that have been poured into the docks industry.

CHEAP LOANS

Since 1908 the government has provided cheap loans to subsidise the Port of London Authority, which maintains all the enclosed docks from London Docks to Tilbury.

Mr Richard Marsh, former Minister of Transport (until Harold made him redundant) has repeatedly said that since 1966 the government has put £50 million a year into capital development in the docks, leaving the shipping companies free to invest their profits in more lucrative foreign fiddles.

The P & O Co. made more than £9 million last year, increasing their profits by

over £1 million on the previous year. Sir Andrew, the super patriot, is not quite at the soup kitchen door yet.

Almost every shipping and wharfing company improved their profits and cut their labour last year. So all the press whinings about the container ban are really farcical.

Since the men's decision, the press daily have claimed the OCL-ACT Co. will move their operations to Antwerp.

This is a lie. Over the last eight months, OCL-ACT have in fact been using Antwerp for their operations on a trans-shipment basis. They will continue to do so. This is nothing new.

To prove their sincerity in being concerned about the nation's economic welfare, Sir Andrew Crichton his fellow employers and Mr Battie and fellow union officials should demand the immediate nationalisation

of all Britain's ports. Such nationalisation, to be effective, must be complete, not piece-meal, as the Labour Party intends.

Portworkers run and maintain every operation in the docks now and are successful enough to keep the port employers in luxury. Workers' control would be the only democratic form of nationalisation.

STEAL WEALTH

Dockers do not wish to engage in disputes which bring real suffering to their families, but while Sir Andrew and his side-kicks persist in stealing the wealth they create, dockers will continue to fight them.

A socialist society, where the workers run their own lives, would gear all production for use not for personal gain of people like the hypocritical port employers.

CS - a disturbing silence

THE SILENCE with which the Himsworth Report on the use of the control agent CS in Londonderry by the Royal Ulster Constabulary has been received is disturbing. The Himsworth Report, compiled by eminent members of the medical profession, including the Chairman of the Chemical Defence Advisory Board, gives CS a clean bill of health. No serious medical effects of its use are discovered.

Abandoning any pretext of scientific objectivity, the Committee frames its judgments in a legalistic language which implies a presumption of the innocence of CS. First-hand reports from persons exposed to CS are treated sceptically as 'allegations', whereas official statements are accepted as 'facts'.

In the absence of biochemical tests which would be the only means of establishing whether or not reported effects were caused by CS, the Committee's presumption permits them to deny or dismiss the belief that CS was responsible for bronchitic and asthmatic attacks, 60 to 100 cases of diarrhoea and several cases of loss of consciousness.

The Home Office enquiry did not consider it within its terms of reference to consider the justification for the use of the gas, the weather conditions in which it was used, or the degree to which it affected plainly innocent persons. Since the report was published, CS has been used against strikers in Nigeria and anti-war demonstrators in Wash-

LETTERS

ington with very little public reaction.

It is not difficult to foresee that this Home Office-Porton report will be used to legitimise all future action with CS in Britain against demonstrations and is a threat to the right of free demonstration in every sphere. The purpose of anti-personnel weapons is to get politics off the streets and back into the corridors of power, where they can be contained safely by bureaucracy.

Can the left unite to campaign for the prevention of such weapons? - Ken Coates, Chris Farley, Russ Stetler, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Nottingham.

JIM HIGGINS refers to efforts at class analysis at the recent Communist Party congress as 'comically grotesque'. That description would be more accurately applied to his reports of the congress which seek to present it as a social democratic gathering rejecting mass working-class struggle, workers' power and socialist revolution.

Anyone who reads the reports of the congress in the Morning Star or in Comment will find that these issues were at the heart of the debates and decisions of the congress, which - Jim Higgins should have noticed - did in a special resolution also reaffirm the party's consistent demand for the repeal of

the Commonwealth Immigration Acts.

On the party's attitude to productivity bargaining Comrade Higgins' misreporting is not comical but certainly grotesque. In his first write-up (20 November) we are told that in his 'report' Communist Party industrial organiser Bert Ramelson referred to this practice as "something requiring 'more attention'". Ramelson's photo was provided with the caption: "Ramelson: 'more attention' to prod deals."

By the time he came to do his second article Higgins must have been reminded that the 'report' in question was made not by Ramelson but by Mick McGahey. So without a word of correction, mind you - he blandly transfers the quoted expression from Ramelson to McGahey, writing that the latter's speech allegedly "contained only one passing reference to productivity bargaining, suggesting that 'more attention should be given' to the subject."

Your readers might like to know that what McGahey really said, and what the congress resolutions reaffirmed, was: 'More attention requires to be given to the danger of productivity agreements, the basic aim of which is to have the workers pay for their own wage increases in the form of redundancies and speed-up of those who are still left on the job'.

Communists should always listen to, and carefully weigh, criticisms of our policies made by others on the Left. We do not claim any monopoly of Marxist truth. Mutual criticism can be beneficial to all of us in helping to find the best way forward in our common struggle against capitalism.

But it must be based on an attempt accurately to report and appraise what is actually being said - not on distortions like Comrade Higgins' designed only to confirm preconceptions of the Communist Party's so-called "tradition of class collaboration" and "final (yet again!) demise" as a revolutionary party. -MONTY JOHNSTONE, London SE3.

Join the International Socialists

ABERDEEN Pete Drummond
19 High Street Aberdeen
ACTON Bob Cartwright
27 Bath Road W4
ANGEL Barry Huggill
154 Downham Road N1
ASHFORD Phil Evans 'Eastside'
Ham St Nr Ashford Kent
BARNSELY Joe Kenyon
120 Standhill Crescent
BATH John Whitfield
17 Burlington Road
BECKENHAM Mervyn Smith
9 Alton Gardens Copers Cope Rd
01 658 6562
BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster
128 Yardley Wood Rd B'm 13
BRADFORD Neil Patterson
25 Fernhill Grove off Park Rd
BRIGHTON Andrew Moir
c/o 2 Montpelier Road
BRISTOL B R Horlock
26 Elmdale Road Bristol 8
CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham
12a Metcalfe Road
CAMDEN EAST Richard Kuper
45 Falkland Rd NW5
CAMDEN WEST Robert MacGibbon
22 Estell Rd NW3
CARDIFF Nigel Walby
35 de Burgh Street
CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell
The Flat St Thomas' School
Eastworth Rd Chertsey Surrey
CLYDEBANK Eric Duncan
1221 Dumbarton Rd Glasgow W4
COLCHESTER Ian Noble
12 Coach Rd Arlesford
Wivenhoe 272
COVENTRY Dave Edwards
53 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon
CRAWLEY Joanna Bolton
17 Park View Rd Salfords
Horley Surrey
CROYDON Jenny Woodhams
26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon
DEPTFORD John Ure
172a Deptford High Rd SE8
DONCASTER George Yarrow
39 Jossey Lane Scawthorpe
DURHAM Jane Mackay
15 Wanless Tce Durham City
EAST LONDON Bob Light
2 Oster Tce Southcoote Rd E17

EDINBURGH Brian Lavery
41 East London Street
ENFIELD Ian Birchall
109 Croyland Rd N9
ERITH Paul Wildish
30 Poplar Mount Belvedere Kent
EXETER Granville Williams
Town Tenement Farm
Clyst Hydon Cullompton Devon
FULHAM Brian Rose
49 Schubert Road SW15
GLASGOW North-Ian Mooney
4 Dalross Passage W1
South-S Morris 4 Elphinstone
Street Glasgow SW1
GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters
c/o 1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex
HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker
36 Gilden Road NW5
HARLOW Hugh Kerr
70 Joiners Field Harlow Essex
HARROW Kevin Simms
56 Salisbury Road
HAVERING Terry Ward
91 Heath Park Rd Gidea Pk
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD John
Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane
HORNSEY Chris Russell
131 Alexandra Park Rd N22
HULL Dave Gate 90 Bristol Rd
ILFORD Lionel Sims
16 Madras Rd Ilford 01 478 7811
IPSWICH Brian Mulvey
104 Westbourne Road
KILBURN Geoff Woolf
27 Sherriff Rd NW6
KINGSTON John Owen
4 Sandown Court Esher
LANCASTER Don Milligan
56 Norfolk Street
LAMBETH Andy Smith
Flat 8 128 Streatham Hill SW2
LEICESTER Barry Thomas
39 Lower Hastings Street
LEEDS Vince Hall
Flat 3 25 Bagby Rd Leeds 2
LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss
82 Blackheath Rd
MANCHESTER-J Sutton
11a Rowan Ave Wally Range M16
Joni Jones 15 Parsonage Road
Manchester 20

MERSEYSIDE Janice Humphrey
96 Princes Rd Liverpool 8
MERTON Pam Kelsey
47 Richmond Avenue SW20
NEWCASTLE Barney Hardy
13 Eslington Terrace Newcastle-
on-Tyne 2
NORTHAMPTON Mick Bunting
25 Witton Rd Duston
NORWICH Gerald Crompton
220 College Rd NOR 54F
OXFORD Steve Bolchover
181 Iffley Road
PORTSMOUTH Alan Sandham
43 Marmion Rd Southsea Hants
POTTERIES Dick Pratt
5 Grosvenor Rd Newcastle Staffs
NEWCASTLE Nicky Landau
Flat 3 44 Church Rd
SELBY John Charlton
12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks
SHEFFIELD Rick Osborn
159a Rustlings Rd Sheffield
S11 7 AD
SOUTHAMPTON Nigel Curry
31 Heatherdene Road
STOCKPORT Geoff Hodgson
73a Forest Range M/C 19
STOKE NEWINGTON Mike
McGrath 28 Manor Road N16
SWANSEA Dick Jones
37 Bryn Road
TEESSIDE Phil Semp
72 Mersey Rd Redcar
Rob Clay 33 Pasture Lane
Lazenby Teesside
TOTTENHAM Laurie Flynn
374 High Road N17
WANDSWORTH Mark Hutton
87 Broderick Road
Wandsworth Common SW17
WATFORD Paul Russell
61 Carpenders Avenue
Carpenders Park
WIGAN Ray Challinor
34 Whiteside Ave Hindley
YORK Bob Locker 22 Hobgate
VICTORIA Tony Dunne
14 Carlisle Mansions
Carlisle Place SW1

THE PUBLICATIONS sub-committee of IS is reprinting Russia, a Marxist Analysis by Tony Cliff. The book will be priced at 22s 6d retail, 15s discount price for bulk orders.

In order to raise the initial capital required to finance the printing, a pre-publication price of 15s for single copies and 11s 6d each for orders for two or more copies will be given on orders accompanied by cash from SW readers and bookshops received before 10 January 1970. Preliminary work on the job has already been completed, but in the unlikely event of the book not being printed I will guarantee the return forthwith of all money received by me with orders. IS branches are strongly advised to take advantage of this offer.

Statements have been sent to all persons owing money to the book service at this address. This money will be put to use on the printing of Russia, so will everyone contacted please respond promptly? - FERGUS NICOL, IS Book Service, 90 Mountview Road, London N4.

Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name _____

Address _____

Send to 6 Cottons Gardens London E2



Socialist Worker

BOSSSES' PAY OFFER MEANS WAGE CUT FOR BUILDERS

by Frank Campbell (ASPD)

IT IS now a year since the last increase was paid to building workers. That increase of 3½d an hour was cut by 'socialist' Barbara Castle to 2½d, demonstrating to the bankers of London and Zurich the reliability of Britain's socialist government.

Since then, however, a wave of militancy sweeping Britain (and Europe) has altered the industrial picture. Dustmen, miners, dockers, car workers, postmen and building workers employed in the exhibition industry have won substantial wage increases.

Exhibition workers fought for and won a £3 3s 4d a week increase last month. Already they are demanding another £4 16s 8d.

The lesson should be clear for Britain's million plus building workers — action is the way to win decent increases. That is the method used successfully by our brothers in other industries. There can be no other way for us.

The first offer made by the employers was rejected by the unions. But we do not know on what grounds it was rejected.

It should have been thrown out completely but the union bureaucrats will not reveal anything to their members about the negotiations. Why not? The details of the employer's offer cannot be seen as anything else but an attempt to foist onto building workers the rigid restrictions already imposed on members of the Electricians' and Plumbers' Union in the contracting industry.

The original offer was as follows:

Labourers

	Wage	MEL*
1969	£14 6 8	17s 0
1970	£15 0 0	25s 6
1971	£15 13 4	34s 6

Craftsmen

	Wage	MEL
1969	£16 16 8	20s 0
1970	£17 18 8	30s 0
1971	£18 6 8	40s 0

* Maximum Efficiency Level

The maximum efficiency level allowance would be paid only to workers who were not operating a bonus scheme (few), not working overtime (fewer), not on any 'plus payment' (above the minimum wage—fewer still). Should a worker be late, even once, in that week, or should bad weather or a dispute affect production, he would not receive the MEL allowance.

Even holidays that 'interfere' with any part of the working week, such as Christmas, will stop the

efficiency payment for that week.

In return for the above rises, the employers demanded the following:

1. Inter-availability of labour—the right to move men from job to job and from site to site.
2. Revised training for skilled building operatives, which is the latest jargon for grading.
3. A new wage structure, this to be linked to the grading system, thereby creating divisions among workers who at present receive the same rate. Many would be graded in a similar manner to the electricians and plumbers, a large number of whom have lost wages as a result.
4. Ending the present system of holiday payments. At present a stamp with cash value is held by employers and cashed by the workers at holiday time.

The bosses propose that no holiday payments are given to anyone who is employed during the week on which a holiday falls. This would be the green light to sack men before holidays.

FORMULA

The second round of negotiations produced a new formula. The employers mellowed on the MEL and agreed to incorporate it in their wage offer on the understanding that their programme of 'reforms' was accepted.

They also added another 'string' — the ending of all existing 'plus payments'. To a building worker, plus payments are a universally accepted part of his wage. One look at the building vacancies in newspapers where jobs are advertised above the minimum wage level, will confirm their acceptance by employers.

The economic reality of this string means that 95 per cent of building workers would have had a wage cut in order to receive a wage rise.

The skilled building worker will have achieved a £20 basic by 1971 if this agreement is signed. Experience has taught us that the cost of living will outpace our wage rise.

No further negotiations will be allowed until 1972. By then, stewards will have no right to negotiate bonus or plus payments. Plus rates negotiated at site level will vanish.

As happened last year, the Prices and Incomes Board has the right to refuse us part of the wage rise while forcing us to accept the strings. This will enable the union leaders to blame it all on the government.

Instead of these dangerous proposals, building workers should demand:

- £20 with no strings
- Three weeks' holiday with pay
- A minimum bonus payment on all jobs of 33⅓ per cent.

Strike stops 'flexibility'

HULL:- Management at Armstrong's Grovehill engineering factories have attempted to by-pass shop stewards and move workers from one department to another without consultation.

They wanted to establish this procedure before 1st December when the second stage of the national engineering package deal came into operation. The bosses' move is a prelude to making 800 people redundant out of a total workforce of 2200.

Armstrong's have offered a wage rise based on 10 per cent of the savings from the reduced labour force after

the sackings have taken place. The management hope to bribe the workers into being shunted around the factories while 800 of their workmates are sacked.

When the management tried to move 13 workers from the Grovehill production lines to the central stores, stores workers stopped work. Seven workers refused to scab, returned to the production line and were suspended.

The whole factory stopped and a mass meeting voted unanimously to stay out until the seven were reinstated. The management gave in and the seven went back to work.



BP prod deal splits workers at Grangemouth

by Peter Bain (DATA)

A REGULAR FEATURE of the television news in recent weeks has been film of fighting between police and picketing boilermakers at the British Petroleum refinery site at Grangemouth, Stirlingshire.

The dispute is an extremely complex one. It has its immediate roots in a productivity deal signed in August between the site contractors and the Boilermakers Society, the Electricians, Plumbers, Engineers and Constructional Engineers' unions.

It was agreed that welders who are members of the Boilermakers, the AEF and the PTU would accept 'flexibility'. The agreement was signed on behalf of the unions by John Chalmers, General Secretary of the Boilermakers Society.

When the Boilermakers' national executive committee learnt of the agreement they decided to oppose it since 'flexibility' could entail members of other unions doing boilermakers' work. The 500 boilermakers on the site were then instructed to come out on strike and were subsequently dismissed by the employers.

The four other unions accuse the boilermakers of failing to honour the productivity agreement. During the strike they have allowed their members to do work previously done by boilermakers.

The boilermakers say that Mr Chalmers only signed the agreement on behalf of the joint union negotiating committee and that they want to retain the right to represent their members independently.

Whatever we may feel about the sectarianism and narrowness of the boilermakers' outlook and

NOTICES
FULHAM IS, Sun 7 Dec, 7.30pm: Chris Harman on Workers and the Crisis in Eastern Europe. Wetherby Arms, 500 Kings Rd, SW10. Buses, 11, 22. Tube, Fulham Bdwy.
HORNSEY IS: public mtg on The Socialist Alternative to Powellism. Spkr Paul Foot, Hornsey Town Hall, Crouch End, NS. Wed 10 Dec 8pm.

recognising that this has made them extremely unpopular with many workers, the scabbing by the other unions cannot be condoned. It is clear that the employers wanted the boilermakers off the site as they are usually the most militant, 'troublesome' (and subsequently) highest-paid.

Although the men have accepted the TUC 'peace plan' as a basis for a return to work, they are refusing to go back until everyone is guaranteed a job.

Socialists in the Boilermakers Society have a job on their hands if they are to break down the narrow outlook prevalent in the union and if they are to create the conditions for the united working-class action which will be essential in the struggles ahead.

Socialist editor jailed for 17 months in Italy

FRANCESCO TOLIN, editor of the Italian socialist paper Potere Operaio, was jailed for 17 months on Monday. The sentence marks the growing move to the right by the government and the big monopolies like Fiat, Pirelli and Montedison, worried by the massive strikes and demonstrations of 19 November.

A recent meeting of the Prime minister, the home secretary and chiefs of police and carabinieri discussed the possibility of outlawing the revolutionary left-wing group, in particular Potere Operaio and Lotta Continua.

They decided that there were insufficient constitutional grounds for such a move, but on 24 November police arrested Tolin and arranged a rushed trial. Two days later, four Milanese workers were arrested

Why the nurses are on the march

by Jack Sutton (NUPE)

FOR MANY YEARS nurses have been blackmailed into accepting poor pay and conditions with the heart-felt plea that nursing is a 'vocation' and not a job. But it is becoming clear that many nurses are no longer content to be fobbed off with double-talk about 'vocation' and 'professional ethics' while they are being flogged to a standstill through over-work.

They are fed up with being used as a source of cheap labour by the Ministry of Health. They are tired of the rising pressure of work caused by economic cuts in the hospitals. Their social life is limited by unpredictable hours and their leisure activities restricted since they are often penniless for two weeks in every four.

Pay and conditions are in need of immense improvement. A first year student's wage is £7 a week for about 42 hours rising to £8 at the age of 21 or third year of training. On qualification a State Registered Nurse can expect to earn £13 a week.

But the question of wages is not the only one for concern. Working hours are long. A nurse on night duty can work a 12-hour day and day duty of up to 10 days without a break. Even after a full day's work a nurse is expected to return to her room and take out her books (which she has had to purchase herself) and study for at least two hours.

It is these low wages and poor conditions which are the direct cause of the present severe staff shortage. Three wards — 66 beds — at Crumpsall Hospital have been closed after an intensive recruitment campaign had failed to improve the acute shortage of nurses. Ancoats Hospital has also lost 16 beds. Between 50 and 100 beds in the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary are to be closed for a minimum of six months. Winwick Hospital near Liverpool is understaffed by about 20 per cent. A recent Confederation of Health Service Employees' Report claims that the mental health services may break down because of a critical shortage of nurses.

Improve wages and conditions

The Health Service must be a higher economic priority. You can't get 'health on the cheap'. The only way that the staff shortage will be overcome will be by raising wages and improving conditions until they compare with skilled positions in industry. It is a scandal that because of the staff shortage unqualified students should be left in charge of whole wards and that students should be taught in Nissen huts and in a disused basement laundry, as they were in Salford Royal Hospital until recently.

But to combat these conditions nurses must be prepared to fight and be militant, even with the present difficulties of organisation. They must try to break down the old traditions and ideas within their own ranks. They must join forces and be prepared for action that will be effective. If necessary, even industrial action must be considered, such as refusing to carry out the menial tasks which they are forced to do at present while the government refuses to pay for extra staff. This must include strike action if their demands are continually ignored.

Because of their fragmentation and lack of a militant tradition, nurses will be dependent on other workers to help their fight. If the nurses fight and win the sympathy of the unions and the rank and file labour movement, this would cause fantastic upheavals. The very fact that on one occasion the London busmen came out on strike in support of the nurses who did not strike themselves, shows that there is support.

Above all, however, nurses must stand up for themselves. They must support the demands for:

- A shorter working week.
- Substantial increases in pay.
- 'On-call' payments.
- Duty rotas to be planned well ahead.
- Unpopular hours to be fairly shared.
- Essential study periods to be longer.
- No victimisation.

Jack Sutton is editor of Germ's Eye View, paper for hospital workers, available, 8d post free, from 11a Rowan Avenue, Manchester 16.

ted and charged with violence, resisting the police and causing damage during a demonstration outside the Fiat factory. Many more militants and workers have been charged.

The prosecution were insistent on demanding preventive detention for Tolin. Such action has not been taken against a newspaper editor since the fall of Mussolini's fascist state.

Tolin was accused of condoning crimes of violence and of having 'incited workers all over Italy to rebel against the state.' In defence, he claimed that he merely reported and interpreted certain acts of violence which took place in several Italian factories, including Fiat. The maximum sentence for the offence is 10 years.

Protests over Tolin's arrest have come from all over Italy, from writers such

as Alberto Moravia, from individuals and from groups not normally known for political extremism.

Tolin's imprisonment is part of the struggle over the renewal of wage contracts, particularly for metal mechanics. The government, bosses and trade union leaders are attempting to impose on the workers a contract that is a sell-out as far as pay and conditions are concerned.

The attack on Potere Operaio and other militants is part of an attempt to keep the Left away from the factory gates during the final stages of the negotiations.

THIS FRIDAY (5 December) IS members and supporters will picket the Italian Embassy from 6 to 8 pm at 14 Three Kings Yard, London W1 (to the east of Grosvenor Sq). Bring banners and placards.