

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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ELECTION YEAR: NOW'S THE TIME TO PUSH UP WAGES

by SABBY SAGALL

'THE SETTLEMENTS are getting even bigger' was the anxious headline in an article in the Financial Times last week. The last few months have seen a rising tide of militancy.

Last autumn local authority workers — dustmen and firemen — received a rise of 16 per cent and the miners won 10 per cent.

By early January it was clear that the government's official aim of keeping increases within the limits of 2½ - 4½ per cent would be defeated in 1970 by settlements at least two to three times larger.

In February, Ford workers won an 18 per cent increase without strings. Currently ICI workers have received a 10-14 per cent increase and Vauxhall workers have been offered a £4 rise. Nurses received a 20 per cent settlement, seamen were offered 19 per cent and clothing workers won a 17 per cent total settlement for this year.

Most of these increases followed militant strike action or the threat of it. And many of them carry productivity strings. But the size of the rises is nevertheless significant.

The Labour government is allowing its incomes policy to be reduced to a laughing stock because we are approaching a General Election. The Financial Times complained that 'any employer who attempted a stand would have the mat pulled out from under him by the government'; and Ministers hardly bothered to deny that appeasement is to be the order of the day until the election.'

Appalling record

No workers should have any illusions that Labour's apparent softness towards these large pay increases stems from any conscience over their appalling record in social policy, unemployment, price increases or the threatened anti-trade union legislation. They are prepared to stomach a temporary break in the incomes policy purely for electoral considerations.

This view is underlined by the fact that, in the past, wages rose faster in election periods than at other times. The average rate of increase in men's hourly earnings in the 'non-election' years between 1946 and 1969 was 5.8 per cent. In General Election years, the average rate of increase was 7.4 per cent.

In periods when the government of the day's attitude to wage increases is influenced by the need to win electoral popularity, wages rise by 25 per cent more than in non-election times. It is estimated that the level of wages today is 17 per cent higher than it would be if the election was not approaching.

Since the war, there have been General Elections in 1950, 1951, 1955, 1959, 1964 and 1966. If you look at the years 1950-52, 1955-56 and 1959-60, they are all periods in which the accelerating speed of wage increases was quite striking.

In some cases, wages continued to rise faster in the period immediately following the election because of the time taken by negotiations and due to the fact that certain groups of workers were slower than others to respond to the example set by militants.

It is equally striking that in the long-term period after a General Election, the rate of wage increases nose-dives.

Keeping quiet

The way in which workers' living standards and security have been affected by the electoral aims of the major political parties is also shown by unemployment figures. In elections years between 1946 and 1969, average unemployment was 338,000. In all other years, it averaged 433,000, a difference of nearly 100,000. The level of unemployment has obviously influenced the pace of wage rises as workers feel more confident when they know there is no competition for jobs.

Unemployment today, at more than 600,000 is well above the post-war average. But the recent wage increases are still higher than the post-war average. The lesson of this for industrial militants is clear.

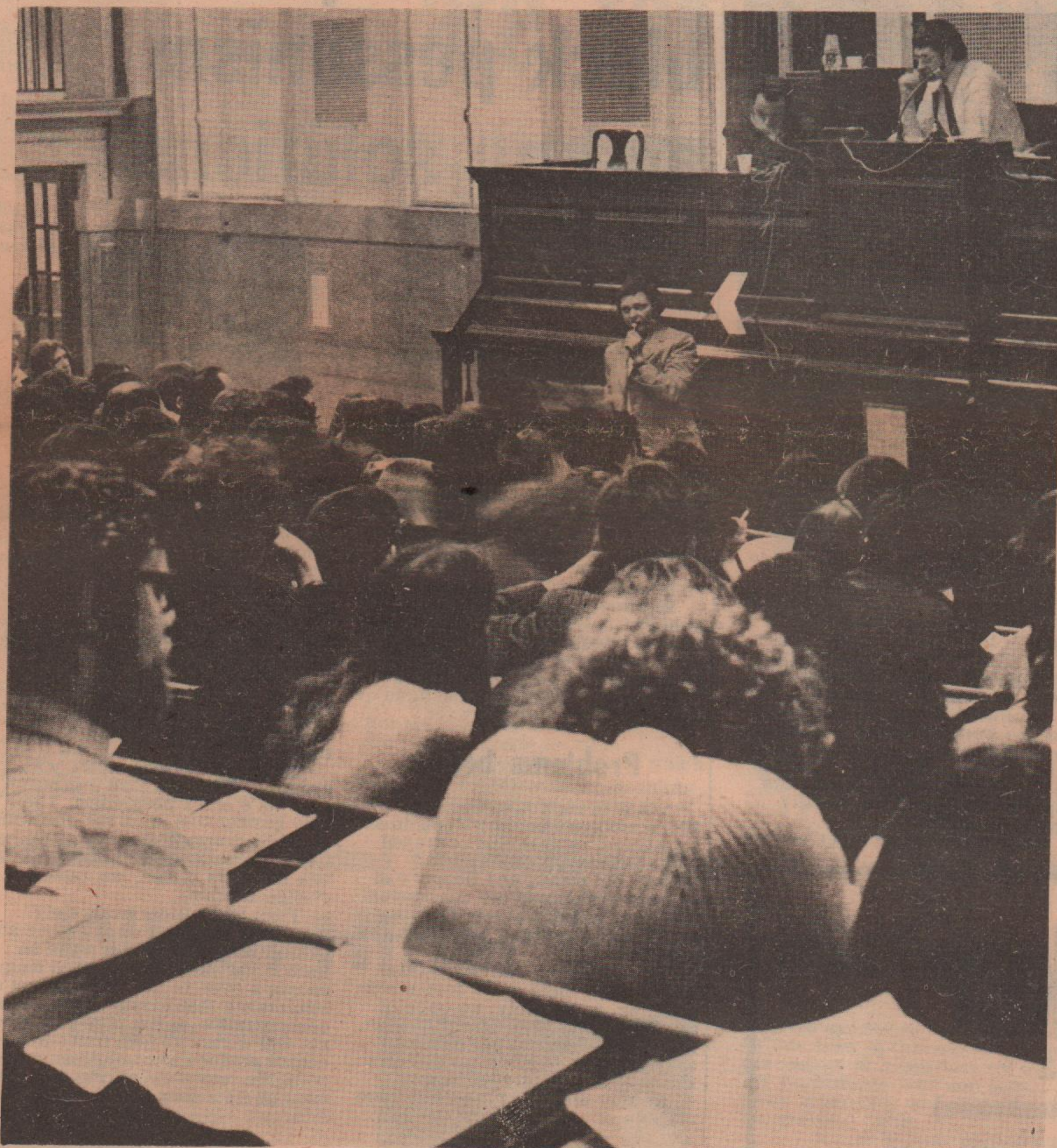
The government is keeping quiet about wage increases because it needs the electoral support of the working class. Now is the time to push for really big increases and to fight for straight increases without productivity strings.

The period after the election will see intensified attacks on the working class and on factory organisation, whichever party wins. If workers are able to conduct successful struggles in the pre-election period ahead, they will be more confident in resisting the attacks by employers and government that will be made when polling day and its promises are forgotten.

Black Power

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Voices from the barricades at IS conference

RAY BURNETT (arrowed) who fought on the barricades in Derry last August, telling delegates to the International Socialists' annual conference last weekend of the struggle against British imperialism in Northern Ireland. On the platform (left) is John Palmer, who gave the main report on Ireland. The delegates

gave a rousing ovation to Eamonn O'Kane who brought greetings from the People's Democracy movement. The conference expressed its solidarity with the Irish struggle and said that IS would do all in its power to promote revolutionary unity throughout the whole of Ireland.

Irish left under attack from British troops

by John Palmer

MORE THAN 20 arrests of republicans and socialists were made by British troops last weekend during demonstrations to commemorate the 1916 uprising.

This is the clearest demonstration to date of the real role of British forces in Northern Ireland.

With a brutality which would have done credit to the RUC and the B-men, British soldiers dragged off demonstrators who were protesting about the provocative display of Union Jacks on a police building on the route of a Republican march in Derry.

One prominent Derry socialist, Eamonn Melaugh, was arrested when he tried to photograph a

soldier beating a demonstrator. These and other incidents with British troops have shown a growing number of Catholic workers a true picture of the British army of occupation.

At the time of the arrival of British troops last August there was understandable relief among Catholic workers who feared further bloody Paisleyite pogroms. At that stage Republican and socialist militants were correctly anxious to take advantage of the breathing space permitted by the clashes between the British forces and the Orange mobs.

But the underlying purpose of the British army in Northern Ireland is to stabilise Britain's imperialist rule there. This means two things:

First that Britain will interfere as little as possible with the Stormont regime. Whatever its talk of sympathy with civil rights, the Labour government is not prepared to force a breach with its former Orange henchmen.

Secondly, the troops are being used increasingly to contain the growing radicalisation of the civil rights movement rank and file. This

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DOCKERS MUST DEMAND REAL CONTROL

ALL THE ENQUIRIES into the docks have shared the opinion that the major cause of industrial disputes has been the fact that there are too many employers.

It is clear from the Rochdale Enquiry (1962), Devlin (1965) and Honeyman (1967) that the port employers, concerned only with the pursuit of profit, have throughout their history denied dock workers the most basic human rights.

Even in this age of automation, men are still expected to grovel among fishmeal (that is, decomposed fish) for 10 hours a day in order to achieve a far from wonderful standard of living, in spite of misleading press reports that dockers get more than £60 a week. At present, only one docker in four is able to get more than £25 a week.

Under the new productivity deal accepted on 20 March, dockers' conditions will deteriorate further.

The deal gives no protection on manning scales. Its shift work will destroy 50 per cent of the average docker's social life and one in five of the men will still receive less than £28 a week.

HIGH PRICE

It is true that dock workers, because of the insecurity and anxiety of casual labour, look forward to a guaranteed basic weekly wage under the new deal. But they will have to pay a high price in terms of lost jobs.

Nationally, the dock labour force has been reduced by 13,000 over the last three years. In the next three months another 3000 will join the ranks of the displaced personnel.

Since 1945 all rank and file committees in the docks have called for the full nationalisation of the industry. The Labour Party has pledged itself to this aim.

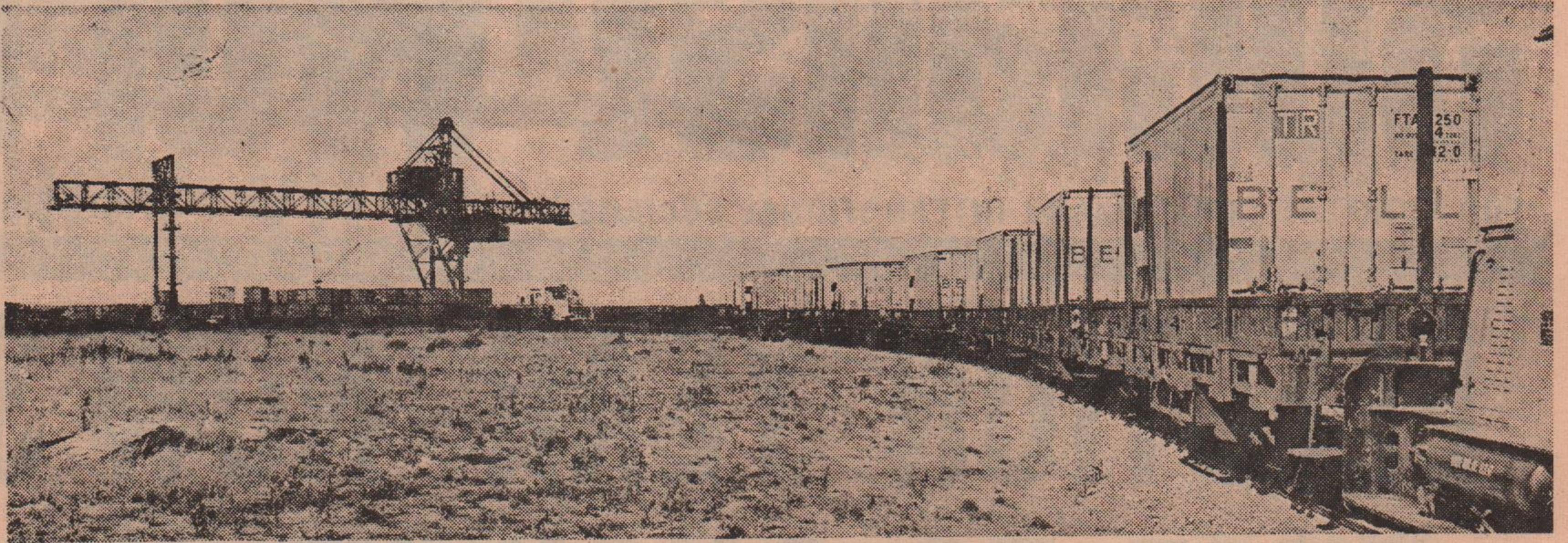
Since 1922 the majority union in the docks, the Transport Workers, have had in their rule book rule 2(a) '... and to endeavour by all means in their power to control the industries in which the members are engaged'. And in rule 2 (1) '... securing a real measure of control in industry and participation by the workers in management, in the interests of labour and the general community.'

LIP-SERVICE

In spite of years of paying lip-service to a qualified and restricted demand for dockers' control, its so-called left wing supporters in the trade unions and the Labour Party are left wing only until they are in power. Then they become as right wing as their Conservative counterparts.

In the very near future, the proposed nationalisation of the docks will be used to the fullest benefit of the employing class.

The nationalisation Bill provides that only ports with a throughput of more than five million tons will be



A container berth: threat to jobs unless controlled by workers

by Terry Barrett (TGWU), Alfie Waters (NASD), Frank Shilling (TGWU), Alan Sutton (TGWU), Peter Bloss (NASD), Bernie Whitwell (TGWU), Bill Kemp (TGWU) and Nigel Coward (ATTI)

taken under government control. This will leave more than half the ports in private hands.

The Bill also provides that all existing port authorities (such as the Port of London Authority, Mersey Harbour Board, Port of Bristol Authority) which at present control and administer all the port facilities — cranes, fork-lifts, warehouses, quays, dredging etc — will be taken under the control of a new ports authority.

This provides for no worker representation whatever — even to the exclusion of the present degree of joint control in the National Dock Labour Board.

In fact, if the Bill should be passed, only 25 per cent of dock labour will come under government control.

The remainder will revert back to the hands of the private employers who were proved unfit to administer labour in 1947. This regressive step must not be allowed to happen.

The TGWU have taken some limited steps to protect the present NDLB set-up by calling the one-day token strike and mass lobby of parliament on 17 March. The union has asked 'left wing' MPs to demand:

1. The simultaneous extension of nationalisation to all ports and harbours and private employers of port labour.
2. The preservation of the powers of joint control under the Dock Labour Scheme.
3. The extension of workers' representation in the management of the port industry as envisaged in the Labour Party report of 1966.



Dockers lives will be destroyed by shift work

But if these aims were realised, they would not solve the problems of the industry. While the demands are political, they are limited.

Real political demands would deal with the problems at their roots and would leave no control at all in the hands of the employing class or their agents in the shape of any Labour social democratic government or any Conservative corporate state government.

Real nationalisation requires that the workers in ALL industries own and control the means of production. All wealth created should be at the disposal of its creators (the working class) for socially necessary purposes.

While dockers and other members

of the working class are being diverted into reformist demands, the real issues continue to be clouded.

It is clear that the workers have the ability, the know-how, the

desire and the willingness to run industry efficiently. It is only while they lack political awareness and confidence in themselves that the bosses can remain on our backs.

America's problems: black pessimism and no solutions

ONE OF THE MOST hopeful aspects of present-day cinema is the rise of the off-beat nonorthodox film. The best current example of this trend is *Easy Rider* now on general release following a wildly successful West End run.

Part of the film's appeal and success, I think, can be ascribed to its general simplicity. The 'plot' itself is uncomplicated — two hippies (Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda) set out to explore the American South, taking in various communal experiments in living, but mostly finding only total incomprehension and blind hatred, culminating in their murder in a stunningly effective last scene.

The moral? Quite obvious: America is a thoroughly intolerant society. Seemingly, nothing could be more straightforward and the film undoubtedly succeeds at this generalised level. Moreover, the film touches greatness in the acting of Jack Nicholson as a drunken American Civil Liberties Union lawyer.

Problems begin

Yet it is right here that the film's problems begin. Nicholson as a 'politico' is seen and portrayed as an oddity — politics is his 'scene' but Fonda and Hopper can no more understand his commitment than they can appreciate the position of their supposed attackers, the poor whites.

This is in fact the film's fatal weakness — there is no deep understanding, no subtlety, no trace of the complexity of William Faulkner, for example, here. The 'rednecks' are portrayed as mindless zombies acting without motive or reason.

Neither are the hippies any more capable of understanding the only



'free' man they ever meet in the film, a hillbilly farmer who has no experience of urban life. 'Great man, you're doing your own thing in your own way and your own time — groovy,' Fonda tells him, with total incomprehension and a consequent breakdown in communication.

Here is the film's deeper theme — none of the characters can communicate their ideas satisfactorily to one another. As such, the film makers are obviously underlining their view that this is the state of American society at the present time.

No one can communicate with or understand anyone else and hence the film's black pessimism. The only answer lies with the individual aided by drugs. There is no way forward — just turn on, man, and see what life brings, we cannot change anything.

Thus *Easy Rider* accurately poses the problems of tolerance and social change in America and as such it has obviously opened many people's eyes to the huge amount of intolerance that exists in the richest country in the world. The film does not and within its own framework cannot produce any solutions or point the way forward. For this, we must await a deeper, more sensitive film.

ABC of Greek repression

Z IS ONE OF the best films to have been shown in Britain within the last 12 months and it is good that people all over the country will at last soon have the chance of seeing a dubbed version.

Z tells the story of the assassination of the left-wing Greek MP Lambrakis and the consequent revelations about the complicity and responsibility of the police and the army in his death. Technically, the film is superb and totally gripping — this effect is largely achieved by the fact that not until the last minute of the film is any explicit reference made to Greece.

Because of this, the film undoubtedly achieves an artistic unity often lacking in films on similar themes, but unfortunately it is the unity of a good detective thriller. The viewer watches spellbound as the crusading Perry Mason type lawyer (played by Jean-Paul Trintignant) at first hesitantly and then with growing confidence exposes the real murderers and their political connections.

True, we are sharply reminded of politics in the film's last sequence when reference is made to the colonels and their whitewashing of the whole Lambrakis affair but it is a

politics in which the masses take no part. What the film omits is any sense of the huge, national mass movement that both produced Lambrakis and his kind and later protested over his assassination with massive strikes and demonstrations.

Lambrakis is never really shown in relation to the movement that both created and sustained him. He remains throughout the near-mystical revered hero and is in fact the most unconvincing of all the film's characters.

The whole action therefore seems to take place in a vacuum: who and what does Lambrakis represent? who and what does the army represent? And, most important of all, what is the government's role in the whole affair? None of this is clear from the film, which leaves numerous unresolved ambiguities.

However, despite these inadequacies, it must be stressed that Z is a magnificent film which must be seen by every socialist. It does attempt to say something unshamefacedly political about recent Greek history and as such can only be welcomed.

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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 state of workers' councils and workers' control of

WHERE WE STAND

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.

THIS IS ELECTION YEAR and for a few months the Labour government has decided temporarily to relax its hard line on incomes policy and to tolerate a few more shillings in the workers' pay packets.

Yet, in order to keep the 'balance' so ruthlessly maintained over the past six years, the government has also resolved that for every shilling grudgingly allowed the workers in wage increase, several million pounds must be handed out to pirates, speculators and profiteers.

In a single week (15 - 21 March) the government handed out some £6m to the millionaire shareholders of commercial television, thus reducing the television levy to some £3m below what it was under the Tories.

Two days later, it opened the door of the safe of civil aviation so that any third-rate freebooter could step in and grab the loot.

Civil aviation has always presented a problem for British big business. On the one hand, efficient and regular air services are required to transport executives to and from the commercial centres and to deal with the increasing volume of freight.

The size of Britain and the volume of her air traffic demand that such services must be nationalised, as the Tories found when they nationalised overseas airlines and created BOAC in 1939.

On the other hand, a glance at the accounts of BOAC or BEA shows that on the air routes which take the largest amount of traffic there is a great deal of lolly to be made. Nothing annoyed the defenders of private enterprise more than to see such profitable potential lapped up by public corporations even though those corporations were managed by 'safe' public figures doing a grand job in the interests of British capitalism.

Until 1960, the private airlines had been built up almost entirely on the bounty of Tory governments' troop-ferrying contracts.

Freddie Laker of British United Airways quickly made a million, bought himself 40 racehorses and a £40,000 house in Epsom on the proceeds. Jack Jones of Channel Airways also became a millionaire.

So did Harold Bamberg of Cunard Eagle (later British Eagle) who had been a strong supporter of the pre-war Hitler regime in Germany.

Profitable routes

In 1960, after a big election victory, the Tory Party started to pay back some of their debts. The Civil Air Transport (Licensing) Act opened up the more profitable scheduled routes of BOAC and BEA to Laker, Bamberg and Jones, who started to improve on their personal fortunes.

The more millions they made at the expense of the public corporations, the louder the hallelujahs from the Daily Express and Conservative Central Office. The Labour Party, needless to say, tut-tutted at this 'extravagance' and swore to put matters right when returned to power.

In fact, the Labour government granted even more profitable licences to the private airlines than had the Tories. At one time there were two private airlines (BUA and British Eagle) licensed to operate scheduled routes in 'competition' (which did not include price competition) with BEA.



While BUA workers demanded a BOAC take-over, Heathrow BOAC workers were also taking militant action: at a mass meeting (above) they voted to black work if airport facilities were granted to a private Canadian firm, GAT

The airline freebooters (with a little help from Labour friends) are taking us for a ride



LAKER Made a million



MASON Astonished the Tories

In 1967, the government set up a Commission of Inquiry under Sir Ronald Edwards to advise them on the future of civil aviation. The commission members which included a member of Rothschilds Bank and the general secretary of

the National Union of Public Employees, went all over the world on free trips to 'examine' how the foreigners ran things. The report retailed innumerable statistics to show that there was no case in logic, in economics, in safety or even in 'the national interest'

for operating private airlines on scheduled routes. It then recommended that private airlines should operate on scheduled routes.

It proposed a 'second force' private airline operating on the most profitable routes and tripling the profits of men like Freddie Laker, Harold Bamberg and Jack Jones.

The government, desperate not to offend Sir Ronald and Rothschilds Bank, accepted the recommendation and the champagne flowed in the boardrooms. The flow was only momentarily stanchied when British Eagle went bust in November 1968. £10,000 of the money deducted from its workers in pension rights was unpaid.

British United Airways, the biggest private airline, soon started to suffer from British Eaglitis. Investment plans for any airline today must include expenditure on absurdities like the Concorde and the Jumbo Jet. British United found they could not make the grade and decided to sell out for £9m to BOAC.

The other airlines hopped with rage. If British United went to BOAC, the future of good loot for the private airlines was bleak indeed.

A great howl was set up by every third-rate speculator and Tory MP merchant banker who ever had a penny invested in private airlines.

The vote of the workers at BUA, who passed a motion in favour of the BOAC merger by 3000 votes to six, was drowned in the clamour.

The Tories put down a motion of censure and rallied their aviation experts to the Commons. Even these hard-headed realists could hardly believe their eyes at the sight of Roy Mason, President of the Board of Trade, meekly giving in to their every demand.

The workers, Mr Mason was saying, do not matter a damn. If there is swag to be grabbed from airlines, then the Labour government will defend to the death the right of Tory freebooters to grab it.

Tories elated

He was putting the BOAC/BUA merger 'on ice' while his department would encourage a merger between BUA and another private airline, Caledonian Airways.

The Financial Times summed up the whole debate, if not the entire government economic record on the morning after the debate (March 19):

"The Conservatives got everything they wanted from the government yesterday... So great was the Opposition's elation that, in a gesture of magnanimity, they refrained from their intended vote of censure."

As England prepares for the World Cup we recall a not-so-sporting occasion 35 years ago

When Hitler's footballers went to the Spurs

by Christine Protz

'DON'T MIX sport and politics' is the message of right-wing politicians and the press to demonstrators who plan to protest against South Africa's all-white cricketers.

The message is not a new one. The same arguments were used in 1935 when protests were raised against an international football match between Nazi Germany and England.

The game was played at Tottenham Ho'spurs' ground in north London. The Spurs traditionally have a large body of support from the Jewish communities in north and east London and the choice of ground for the match led to a letter of protest from Jews to the Football Association.



HITLER: sport more important than his atrocities

'Little sympathy'

The sports writer in the Tottenham Weekly Herald commented:

The Jews complain of the Nazi treatment of their compatriots in Germany and demand that the match be cancelled! The Jewish protest has received little sympathy amongst the general football public, who resent the introduction into sport of such a controversy - which one of our correspondents describes as a 'Dictatorship'."

The writer mentioned that Jews planned to boycott the match and that heavy police reinforcements might be brought in. He finished with a plea for 'sportsmanlike sanity': "All this controversy, however, is most regrettable. Could

not the occasion be made the opportunity for the rival factions to show their sportsmanship?

"Boycotts and disturbances would embitter animosities. Good sportsmanship would most likely lead to appreciation of the fact that the other side are not such bad fellows after all."

The Herald then printed a selection of letters on the subject, five supporting the match and two opposing it.

"Continental grievances are best kept out of sport... the minority must give way to the majority" - FHC.

"I think it is going too far when Jews try to dictate to us what we should have and what we should not have. They dictate to us in more ways than one..." - Local Sportsman. "Might I ask how long have

English sportsmen been dictated to by the Jews in this matter?... major percentage of supporters (of football) are Englishmen bred and born... The Jews apparently do not realise they are guests." - ACS.

"... it will be very nice to watch an English match with only English supporters."

Further letters took up the protest that Jews were attempting to come between two 'Anglo-Saxon countries' and were likely to be the cause of the next war. One writer wanted it to be made clear that Jews were only allowed to reside in this country by courtesy of the British government.

Ingrained insularity

It seems clear that some of the letters came from Mosley's fascists, eager to air their views. Many were more reasonable, apart from almost unconscious racialism, chauvinism ("Furthermore, this island's name is still 'England' is it not?") and an ignorance and insularity even more ingrained than in sportsmen today.

The indignation at being 'told' to cancel a football match rankled more intensely than any feeling for the atrocities being committed by the Nazis.

In the event, the match took place, together with 800 police and 10,000 German supporters waving little swastikas. Seven people were arrested, four of them were discharged and three fined.

England won 3-0. The final comment comes from

Sir Charles Clegg of the FA who was horrified at a report of TUC support for the Jewish protest:

"We as English sportsmen desire to express our regret at the annoy-

ance to which our visitors have been subjected. This is the first time the TUC has interfered in football. I hope it will be the last..."

Over to you, sporting Vic Feather

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Socialists and the election

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How 'trusty and well-loved' George soothed the bosses



The CIR troubleshooters (left to right): Blakeman, Woodcock, Flanders and Paynter

by John Setters (AEF)

WHEN THE DONOVAN Commission on trade unions reported in 1968 one of its most important recommendations was that an 'Industrial Relations Commission' should be set up.

According to the report, the IRC should deal with the 'long-term reconstruction of British industrial relations' rather than the short-term problems.

'Nevertheless, the results of the Industrial Relations Commission's work will assist the workings of incomes policy. . . the registration of company and factory agreements would expose the whole process of pay settlement to the influence of policy.'

The Donovan report said that the IRC, if created, should accept that 'collective bargaining is the best method of conducting industrial relations' and that 'it is desirable for agreements wherever it is possible to link improvements in terms and conditions of employment with improvements in methods of operation.'

For Donovan one fact was clear—before productivity deals can be introduced and the incomes policy effectively applied, it is necessary for trade unions to exist. The commission understood the important role that 'reasonable and reliable' union officials can play.

In March 1969 the government decided to accept Donovan's advice. A Commission on Industrial Relations — the CIR — was formed.

In the chair was the former general secretary of the TUC — 'Our

Right Trusty and Well-beloved Counsellor George Woodcock, Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of the British Empire' as the London Gazette described him.

For being so trusty and well loved, George Woodcock is paid an annual salary of £11,500.

Among the other members of the CIR is Leslie Blakeman, the ex-Industrial Relations boss of Ford who, just before his appointment, had tried to introduce the notorious anti-strike 'penalty clauses'. He had taken the AEF and the TGWU to the High Court in an attempt to prevent their support of the Ford workers' strike.

Another member is Allan Flanders, a former professor of industrial relations at Oxford University. In a book published in 1967 and called *Collective Bargaining: Prescription for Change*, he argued that management must try and regain control from the shop floor.

Weaken

Because productivity deals are designed to weaken shop floor organisation, Flanders is an absolute supporter of them. In 1964, for instance, he wrote a book praising the Fawley productivity deal which smashed the shop floor trade union organisation and caused Fawley workers to drop from among the highest paid refinery workers in the country in 1960 to among the lowest paid by 1966 (see *The Employers' Offensive* by T Cliff).

A further CIR member is Will Paynter, the retired Communist General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers. Blakeman, Flanders and Paynter all receive

£6500 a year.

When the CIR was formed it was welcomed by the TUC and highly praised by many 'left' trade union leaders.

Clive Jenkins, General Secretary of ASTMS, the supervisors' union, and a so-called opponent of government interference in the trade unions, wrote in his union journal in 1969: 'We supported the establishment of the CIR. . . our feeling was justified: His only complaint was that it was not formed soon enough!'

The left Labour paper *Tribune*, of which the TGWU's elected-for-life general secretary Jack Jones is a director, said: 'The function of the CIR is not to weaken trade union power but to enhance it. Much of its job will be to put into effect demands which have been the subject of resolutions at countless TUCs. Who would find fault in that?'

One of the few sour responses came from Aubrey Jones, chairman of the Prices and Incomes Board. Writing in the *PIB's* third general report, he complained that the CIR might intrude into the powers of the board. While he welcomed its investigations into 'the causes of unofficial strikes in companies or plants where they are endemic' he warned that the CIR might be 'detrimental to a successful prices and incomes policy.'

Needless to say, although only six CIR reports to date have been published, Aubrey Jones has had no reason to complain.

It was announced recently that the government had decided that the CIR should investigate the shipbuilding industry. There was some hostility to this idea at first but on 12 March Dan McGarvey, the 'left' Boilermakers leader, announced his union's decision to co-operate.

He said: 'One of the things which swayed the executive was the fact that we are in the 12 month election period. The shipbuilding industry has a success story to tell, particularly in view of the assistance which this government has given to it. The employers accept this and we feel that the public is entitled to know.'

Election

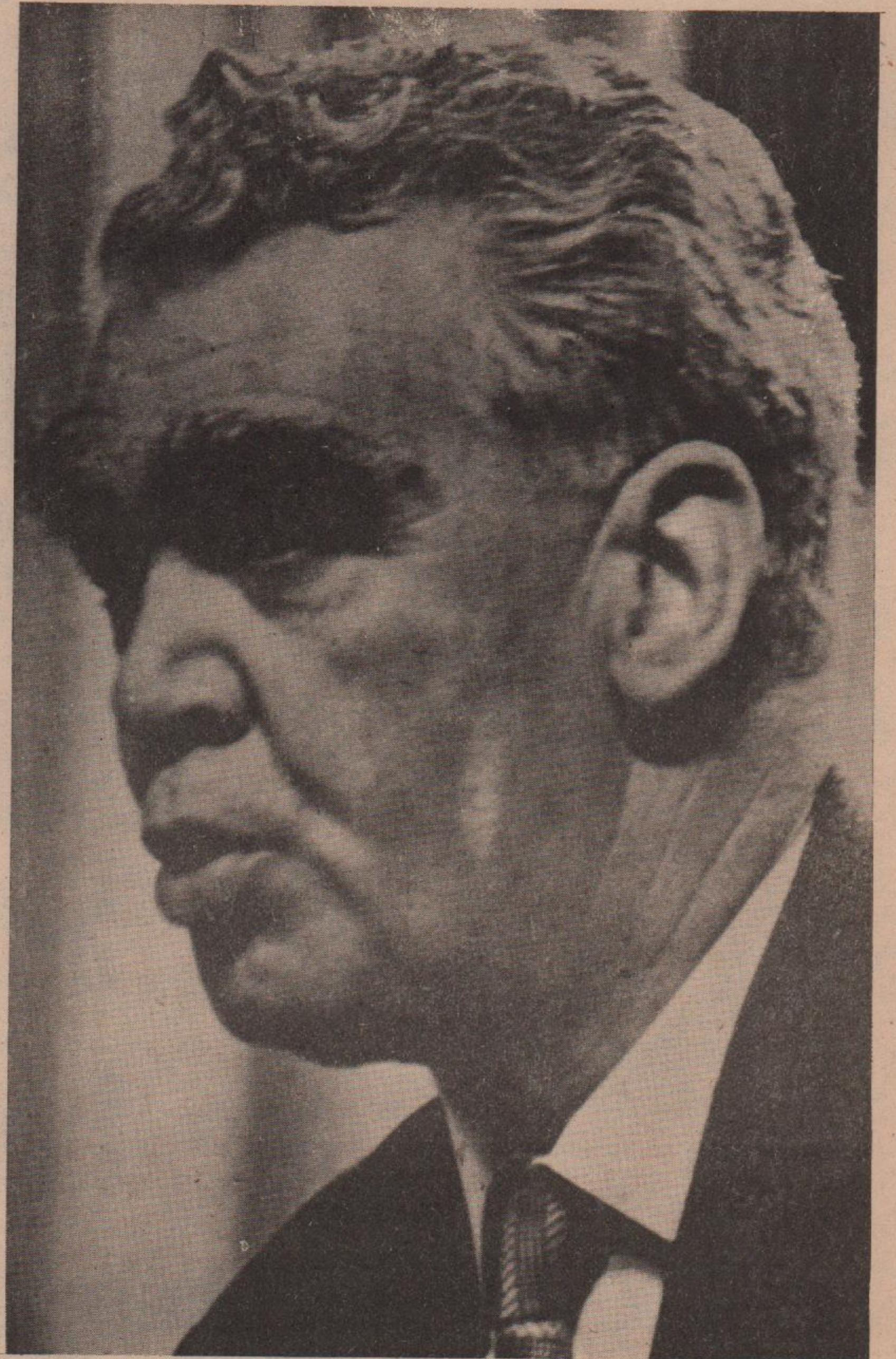
So now we know. An organisation set up by the government with known anti-shop steward members, each paid a colossal salary and with the defined job of assisting the incomes policy and spreading productivity deals as an important way of increasing managerial power is really an election winning machine for Labour!

The first CIR report dealt with the refusal of Associated Ocel, a Liverpool chemical company partly owned by ICI, to recognise foremen and technicians belonging to ASTMS. The final result of this inquiry was a recommendation that ASTMS should have negotiating rights.

In its report, which was prepared by Will Paynter, the CIR stated that the company had had a 'history of satisfactory relations with the unions representing craft and process workers.'

Just how satisfactory can best be seen by ICI's profit of £167,100,000 in 1969.

The report said: 'We do not agree (with the company - JS) that there is a special relationship between employer and staff workers which is incompatible with their representation by a trade union. We



WOODCOCK: paid £11,500 a year

have in mind the present rapid growth of white collar unionism and the desirability that this growth should proceed in a peaceful and orderly manner.'

The purpose to which this 'orderly' organisation of white collar workers should be put can be seen from the CIR's recommendations in their report on the Midland foundries of Birmid Qualcast. In this they complained that 'many workers have learned by experience that unconstitutional action, or a threat of such action, can be successful. . . in getting an improvement in management's offer.'

This, the CIR, said, had resulted in 'the position of foremen. . . being challenged by strong groups of workers' and that 'the emergence of shop stewards' had presented the foremen 'with powerful rivals'.

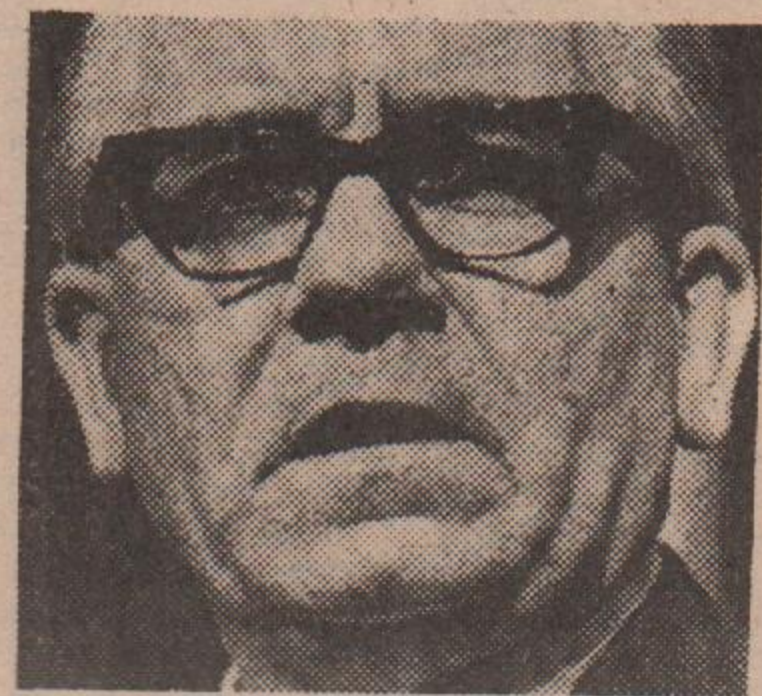
In order to 'reform' this situation and restore managerial discipline, the CIR stated that there must be a 'more active role for foremen in the direct supervision of workers' and that in the struggle to achieve this, ASTMS, the union denied recognition at Associated Ocel but finally supported by the CIR, must recognise 'their responsibilities to management'.

The reports in favour of trade union recognition, as at Associated Ocel and Elliotts of Newbury do not necessarily mean that the CIR is always of that opinion. An article in *Industry Week* (9 January 1970) said that the commission was 'not, despite appearances, intent on forcing all companies to grant unions immediate and full negotiating rights and attendant powers.'

This journal of Big Business actually thought that the CIR's first batch of reports were 'encouragingly temperate'.

In their report on the non-recognition of the Union of Insurance Staffs (affiliated to the TUC) by the General Accident, Fire and Life Assurance Corporation Ltd., the CIR decided that because the UIS only had 16 per cent of the staff organised they should not be given negotiating rights but that the firm should only 'accord consultative rights to the union'.

In their evidence to the commission the UIS admitted that their membership was low but complained 'that there has been a history of discrimination in the company and that although the management now openly acknowledge the right of staff to be trade union members it is



believed by the staff that the company do not favour trade union organisation, so that recruitment efforts are handicapped by staff fears that union membership will prejudice their prospects in the company.'

The CIR, far from condemning the company for its anti-trade unionism, actually hinted its support for General Accident's 'House Union'. On page 7 it said: 'Any approach to the joint regulation of pay and conditions would require the development of representative organisations with an independent status, ie having the characteristics of a trade union.'

The importance of these words was not lost on the author of the *Industry Week* article. He thought that they would be enough for General Accident and other companies that refuse trade union recognition to reject any such claims and would bring comfort to the employers.

Assault

Far from being—as *Tribune* called it — 'an enhancer of trade union power' the CIR report on General Accident was no more than an assault on the little power which the UIS had.

The Birmid Qualcast report has been the most important one issued so far. In it the commission called for an end to piecework and the introduction of job evaluation, the curbing of shop stewards' authority and the increasing of managerial disciplinary powers. It recommended that shop stewards should be sent on courses where 'there is a particular need for changes in attitude and for an understanding of the basic principles of industrial relations.'

The report also called for strict rules governing the elections of shop stewards. This proposal, together with a call for the centralising of negotiations in which the full-time trade union officials would be dominant, was repeated in the *British Sound Reproductions* report. This report also complained that there were too many shop stewards and that the number should be reduced.

The CIR is only part of the government's attack against shop floor militancy. Its purpose is to permanently weaken the power of shop stewards and increase the control of the employers.

The CIR is a vital part of the employers' offensive and must be opposed.

McGarvey: CIR will help Labour's election chances

"KNOW YOUR ENEMY" is as valid a maxim for managers in industry as it is for the militant Marxists who urge it upon one another. For this reason it might well repay any business executive who expects to be engaged in negotiating produc-

tivity deals in the near future to study a new book published today. Essentially, it is a handbook for militant shop stewards. It is entitled *The Employers' Offensive: Productivity Deals and How to Fight Them*.

Peter Jay in *The Times*, 25 March

the employers' offensive
productivity deals and how to fight them by Tony Cliff

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Dhofar: Britain's Vietnam in the Arab Gulf



Members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Gulf (Picture courtesy Black Dwarf)

by Stephen Marks
FOR THE LAST five years, it was revealed last week, RAF forces and British Army officers have been used to try to smash a resistance movement against one of the most foul and rotten governments in the world — the slave-owning British puppet Sultan of Oman in oil-rich South Arabia.

To prevent any threats to the flow of profits from British investments in the area, RAF planes have been bombing villages, flocks and wells to try to smash the economic life of the 250,000 people of the province of Dhofar, who mainly live by keeping animals or fishing. At a press conference last week, the first British correspondent to enter the liberated area of Dhofar (Fred Halliday of Black Dwarf and New Left Review) told how the Sultan's army, led by British officers, burns villages and tortures prisoners.

He also told how the liberat-

ion forces, led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf, now control most of the province except for the coast and the main town, Salala (pop. 15,000).

The Labour government has been running this bloody war for five years and up till now has been successful in keeping the truth out of the papers.

Oman, of which Dhofar is the western province, is independent only in name and ruled by a reactionary Sultan who keeps 5000 slaves as his personal bodyguard and as workers on his plantations.

Jails filled

All opposition is illegal and the jails are filled with political prisoners who are kept in chains.

In fact the sultan's cabinet are all English, his policies are made by an English adviser, his army is English officered, and Britain has 'leased' an island, Masira, as a military base and a BBC station for the area. In the area controlled by the liberation front, reported Halliday, who stayed with the liberation forces for some weeks, land reform has been carried out, literacy classes set up in all villages, and women have been freed from feudal oppression. The front has set up a special women's organisation and women fight with the liberation forces.

Muscat is just part of the crucial oil-rich gulf area, which is vital to British capitalism. It supplies half of Britain's oil and British oil companies rake in £200 millions each year on their £1000 million investment.

What's more the feudal sheiks Britain props up in the area help prop up the pound by banking their millions in London.

Britain wants to pull out of the area to save money but the Labour government means to keep the rotten puppet sheiks in power by giving them 'independence' and getting them to form a 'federation' which Britain would still run behind the scenes.

This is the meaning of the struggle in Dhofar: Wilson has helped to smash and jail striking oil workers in Bahrain protesting at redundancies and demanding the right to strike and form unions.

We cannot resist similar threats in Britain without supporting the workers of the gulf and their allies, the heroic peasants of the hills of Dhofar who are fighting our common enemy — and winning.

Cottons Column

A RUSSIAN-owned factory is to be set up in Doncaster. It poses a number of interesting questions.

Will the workers have full trade union rights or will the management use article 58 of the Russian Criminal Code, which outlaws strikes?

Will the management seek membership of the Engineering Employers Federation? And if they fail to meet the production norms, will the managers be sent to run power stations in the Outer Hebrides?

REMEMBER John England? He was the manager of the East Kilbride factory of British Sound Reproducers, scene of a bitter 16 weeks' strike last autumn over trade union recognition.

Mr England was violently opposed to workers having union rights. During the dispute, pickets were threatened, knocked down by cars, even assaulted in their homes. But the workers finally won.

Now Mr England is moving on. He is to run an electronics factory set up by BSR's millionaire founder, Daniel McDonald. The new factory is in a country that should suit Mr England's attitudes: Portugal.

Good thinking, Mr Tye. Management's rights to manage are not questioned. The Factory Inspectors' reports show again and again that management is nearly always to blame for accidents through penny-pinching and a callous disregard for workers' lives.

But the 'director general' does not demand action against bosses, doesn't demand that they should be trained in safety. Instead he drags out that tired old straw man, the 'agitator', who cares nothing for workers' conditions except to exploit them for his own dubious and unexplained ends.

What juvenile tosh. While General Tye searches for reds under the workbench, hundreds of workers are falling to their deaths or being chewed up by machinery.

Of course workers should be trained in safety — but not to suit management's needs. Workers should elect their own safety delegates who should be trained in working hours and on full pay.

And they should be trained to agitate, shout, scream and strike every time some pin-striped pariah risks lives in the pursuit of profit.

Workers' blood: that's the red that Mr Tye should be worried about.

From a great height

FUNNY how organisations thought to be quite neutral in the struggle between management and workers often froth at the mouth if the bosses and their profits seem threatened.

Take the British Safety Council, which churns out a useful stream of propaganda against the ever-rising deaths and mutilations in industry. But because no one can be neutral in our society and because the BSC has to rely on donations from companies to continue its work, it has to tailor its views to suit its backers.

James Tye, 'director general' of the BSC, has written to newspapers about the new Health and Safety Bill presently meandering through parliament. Mr Tye is upset. He sees dangers of a red plot.

Says Mr Tye: 'This proposed legislation for the setting up of Safety Committees could have been an important step forward in industrial safety. As it stands it could well open the flood gates to a wave of industrial disputes.'

Why? 'It is not required in the Bill that safety delegates should receive any training before they start inspecting their workplace and telling management what is safe or unsafe! What an opportunity for the agitators looking for a platform from which to stir up trouble!'

LONDON FIREMEN'S legal fight to control their conditions of labour in the interests of society developed further last week.

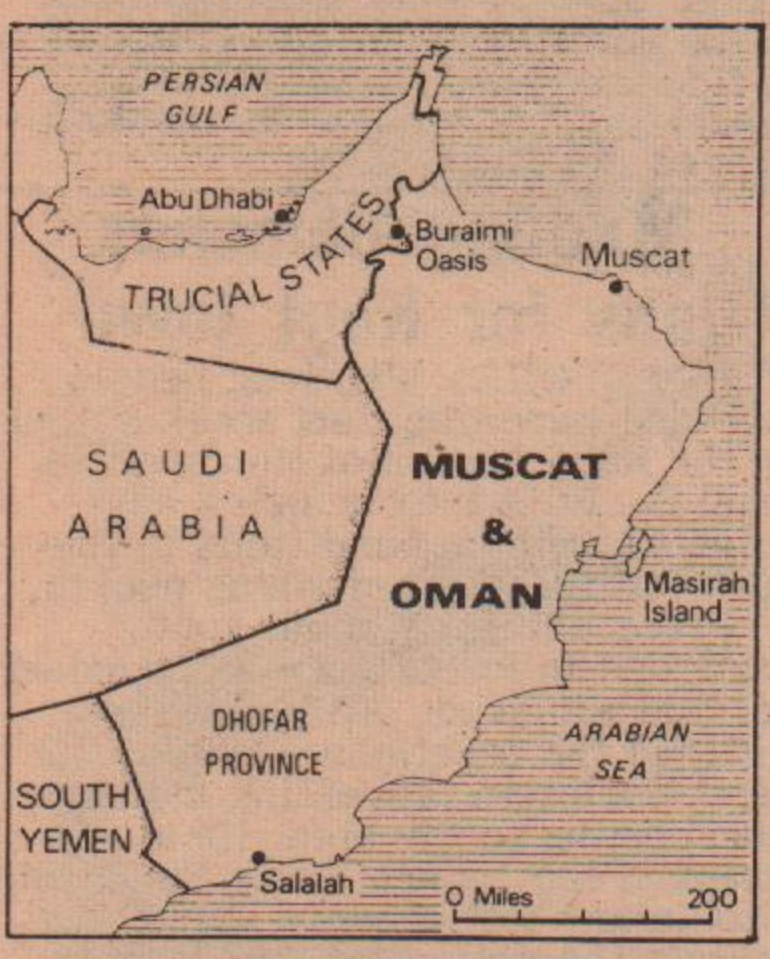
A High Court judge refused an application from 20 firemen that the order which encourages them to go through red traffic lights should be withdrawn. There is no special protection for firemen involved in accidents.

If the order were withdrawn the judge declared that 'the only result would be that from the point of view of fire brigade discipline, drivers would have greater, not less, freedom of action.'

All holds barred

THOSE TOUGH PROLES on the TUC General Council have taken up the 'open the books' demand in their latest bout of Indian wrestling with Mrs Castle over the Industrial Relations Bill.

The Financial Times had one theory of this latest victory for socialism: 'The TUC is likely to have little success... but it is also well aware that in giving Mrs Castle a chance to reject the requests, she would also be able to refute Confederation of British Industry and Tory allegations that the overall Bill is union-oriented.'



LETTER

Police are not workers in blue

LAST WEEK's article 'Support your local policemen!' seemed to me based on totally false assumptions about the class nature of the police force.

Your correspondent sees rank and file policemen as a particularly misguided section of the working class with whom the trade union movement and revolutionary socialists should attempt to unify and co-operate whenever it shows any discontent. It is assumed that opposition to this view will either be from 'liberals' or from 'anti-authoritarian rebels'.

Presumably the police are supposed to be workers because they come from working-class backgrounds, are poorly paid and do an unpleasant, hard job. This is an un-Marxist approach to the question of class.

Classes are not categories of distribution but define themselves in struggle. And in the struggle of the working class the police will necessarily, while they remain police, be on the side of the ruling class.

As Trotsky put it in one of his articles on Germany: 'The fact that the police were originally recruited in large numbers from among social

democratic workers is absolutely meaningless. Consciousness is determined by environment even in this instance. The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state is a bourgeois cop not a worker.'

This is not to say that work can never be done among the police but it will not be the sort envisaged by your correspondent. In a revolutionary situation, when the beginning of an alternative state power is clearly visible, it will be possible to agitate among the police, across the barricades as it were, with the aim of breaking dissident and demoralised elements from the police force.

To this end, better pay and conditions for the cops is positively counter-productive. In fact, as proposals they would not be out of place in the Tory 'law and order' programme.

As for the practical proposals of 'discreetly' contacting your local policemen and women's liberation groups trying to work with police wives campaigning for hanging, I am afraid I find these totally ridiculous. - JOHN MOLYNEUX, Southampton.

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Socialist Worker

CLYDE UNITY VITAL TO FIGHT THE SACKINGS

by Peter Bain (DATA)

THE DECISION of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders to sack 3500 workers out of a total of 13,900 has apparently come as a great shock to the press and union officials.

When UCS threatened to go into liquidation last summer, it was agreed as a condition of government aid that the work force (at that time almost 13,500) would be reduced by 3000 in two stages.

By August 1969 the company had achieved a reduction of 1500 men, but, in order to complete a number of orders, hundreds of outfitting workers (electricians, joiners, painters) were taken on.

As a result, it became clear that there would have to be at least 3000 redundancies by August this year if UCS was to achieve the planned reduction in its work force.

The press's attitude can be put down either to cynical distortion of the position the yard workers were in over the last few months when stories of UCS's rosy future were churned out, or complete ignorance of what was happening in UCS.

But some of the union officials are playing a much more subtle game. At least 12 days before the press announced the redundancies, the company quietly told the full-time officials that pay-offs were imminent.

STRONG REACTION

It was the officials who were instrumental in getting the original redundancies accepted by the workers last summer. Some officials seem more annoyed that they were not told exactly when the pay-offs would begin than they are at the pay-offs themselves.

The yard workers have reacted much more strongly to resist the sackings than on previous occasions. The 3900 boilermakers, threatened with 1000 redundancies, stated that if one member was paid off they would strike immediately. This lead has been taken up by the rest of the workers.

The yard workers have also banned overtime. The finishing trades have called for work-sharing and the boilermakers agreed to a demand for the nationalisation of UCS.

Steps have also been taken to overcome the traditional division between boilermakers and the rest of the yard workers. Stewards and convenors who have pushed for a united fight should be supported and encouraged.

The greatest dangers to united action are the company's proposed revised bonus schemes. The finishing trades and the boilermakers have both been given some details of the schemes.

It was hinted to the boilermakers' representatives that if they would ease the passage of the 1000 redundancies the company might grant their claim for a basic rate of 16s per hour.

BATCH PRODUCTION

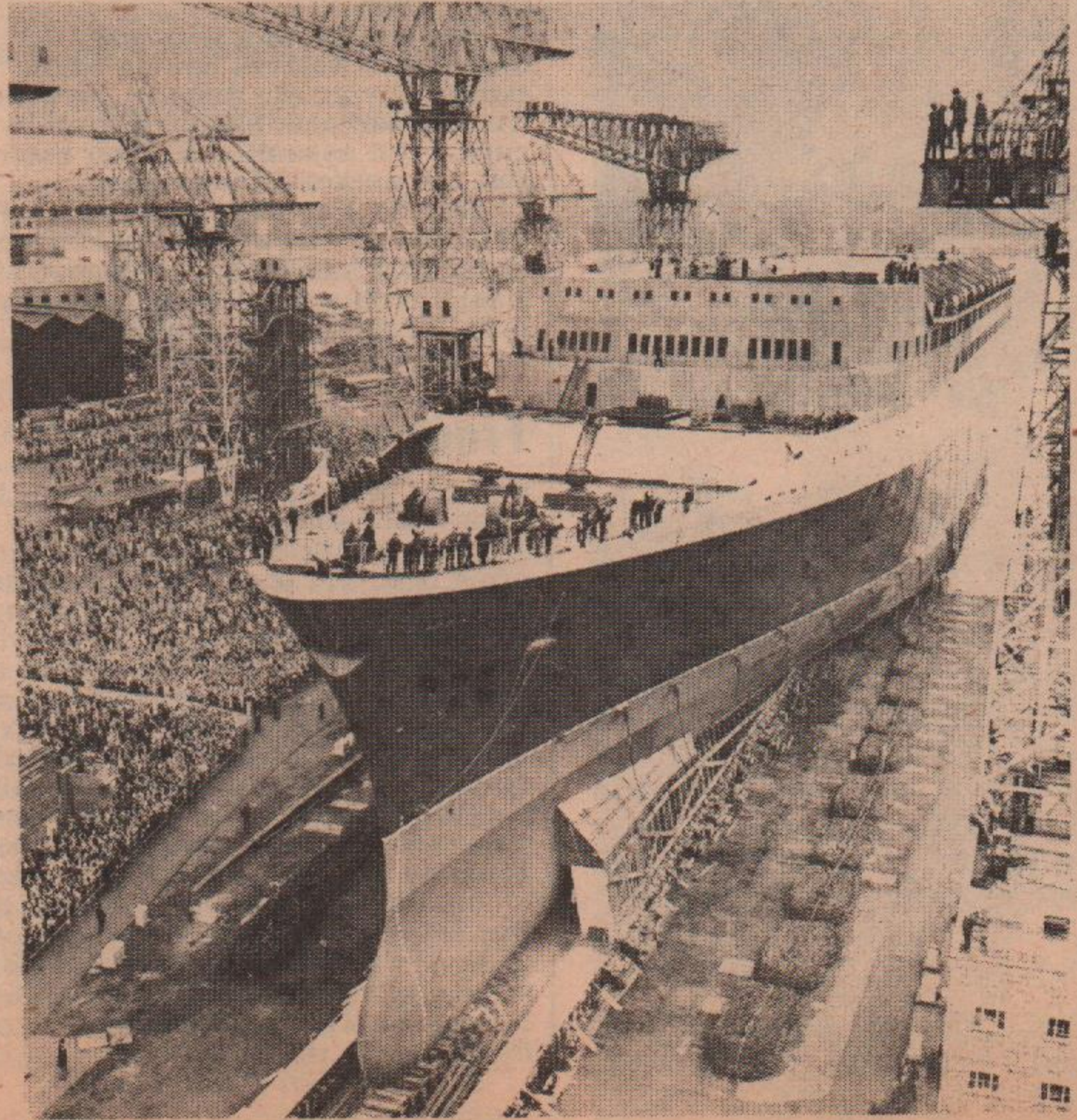
The company intends to concentrate on standardised designs. By getting 'batch production' as opposed to 'one off' orders, unit costs will be cut.

Fairfields will build the new 'Clyde' design cargo ships, Brown's will build bulk carriers, and Yarrow's will concentrate on naval orders.

UCS eventually hope to merge with the Scott-Lithgow Lower Clyde group. Before that happens, further 'rationalisation' of the work force is planned.

Shipbuilding is at present enjoying a world boom, stimulated by the 'container revolution' and the closure of the Suez Canal. As a result of the world boom and the £400 million in cheap government loans available to shipowners for orders placed with British yards, even UCS has been able to win orders.

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QE2: floating white elephant built at UCS.

Given the expected downturn in world trade and the rundown in container orders as the shipowners' building programmes near completion, (with a similar situation in oil tankers), the present sellers' market will not last for ever.

It is against this background that shipyard workers have to regard UCS's redundancy plans. The measures the UCS workers have taken so far, an overtime ban and work-sharing, are a start.

They can be sure that the employers will try to squeeze more productivity concessions from them. Measures like double-day shifts, tighter discipline, extended work measurement, are probably on the bosses' agenda.

The workers' answer must be NO. The previous productivity measures which the workers were blackmailed into accepting last year have been partly responsible for the present redundancies. Further concessions would only hasten the next stage in the bosses' plans.

The yard workers will also have to guard against a repetition of last summer's fiasco, when some of the union officials were mouthing fighting words in public but agreeing that redundancies were necessary in private.

Meetings of workers should be held as often as possible with the stewards reporting fully to their members. The full-timers must also be called to account for their actions, especially as there is reason to believe that a meeting with union top brass is very much on the employers' minds.

Only by involving all the workers in the fullest discussion will it be possible to avoid a repetition of the officials' grand tour of the yards last June, selling redundancy to their members. Nothing should be agreed to by any steward or official until the rank and file have had their say and voted on the matter.

But the success of the workers' fight against redundancies must also involve a challenge to the

bosses' order of priorities and expose their responsibility for the present situation.

UCS have received more than £20 million from the government. Almost half of this has been theoretically for investment. It is known that most of the first £5½ million given in January 1968 was simply divided up among the employers themselves.

Where the rest has gone is anybody's guess — but it hasn't been used to re-equip the yards.

Workers should demand that UCS employers provide efficient lighting in workshops, better heating, decent canteen and toilet facilities. These improvements should be financed from the government's investment grants.

Repair and outfitting orders should be pursued as a further measure to stop redundancy.

WORKERS' CONTROL

And if the employers plead poverty, then a campaign must be launched to demand nationalisation of UCS under workers' control and without compensation.

The old shipbuilding bosses made their millions during the war and in the 1940s and 1950s. These people are still on the UCS board of directors and are now calling on the workers to carry the can for their own failure to invest in the yards. Their accounts should be open to union inspection to justify the demand of 'no compensation'.

The yard workers are angrier than they have been for a long time. The number of jobs available in the area and their experience over the last few years have stiffened their resistance.

A united fight, with no section doing deals on the side to take care of their jobs, can galvanise the shipyard workers into a campaign which will show the employers and the government that the redundancies will not be accepted.

THE LATEST issue of Free Citizen, weekly news-sheet of the militant People's Democracy movement in Northern Ireland, has named a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary who, PD says, should be questioned about the murder of Mr Samuel Devenney in Derry.

On 19 April last year, members of the RUC beat their way into the home of the late Mr Devenney and cruelly assaulted him, his family and neighbours. Mr Devenney did not

recover from the injuries he received and he dies some weeks later following several heart attacks.

An RUC enquiry into the affair, like all other enquiries, produced nothing. The enquiry showed that the RUC did break into the house and beat the Devenneys, but the identity of the officers could not be established.

None of the senior officers and other officers on duty in Derry on that day would help enquiries by

Dangers ahead for teachers in new pay struggle

SW Reporter

EASTBOURNE:- Delegates to the conference of the National Union of Teachers have taken an important step forward by voting to affiliate to the TUC. The decision is part of the growing realisation that teachers are trade unionists, not 'professionals' divorced from the struggle of industrial workers.

The affiliation vote was boosted by the recent wave of militant strikes which won teachers an extra £120 a year on the basic rates.

But it is wrong to see this year's NUT conference as a significant move to the left. It has shown a move away from Tory conservatism to Labour conservatism.

The left in the union has so far been defeated on a few important issues. The executive, dominated by head teachers, won a substantial majority for a vague document on salaries.

Amendments from left-wing associations calling for further substantial increases on the basic scales were defeated.

Bigger differentials

This defeat could be crucial, for the employers are calling for 're-structuring' of the salary scales, with bigger differentials between high and low paid in a bid to divide teachers and weaken militancy. The executive are unlikely to oppose such 'productivity' measures for they would help to maintain their grip on the union.

And in the battle to cut down on the size of classes, the executive pushed through inadequate proposals against calls for strike action in the localities.

The conference has stressed that the task of activating rank and file teachers still has a long way to go before the union can be turned into a real fighting body that can win reasonable pay and conditions for its members.

Troops attack Irish left

from page one

expresses itself in a turn by Catholic workers to socialist politics and a determination to campaign against the repressive anti-republican legislation of Stormont.

This comes at a time when there are signs of Protestant workers as well as Catholics moving into increasingly militant struggles against the growth of unemployment and the wave of productivity dealing in industry.

The Unionist establishment and Westminster fear that the tame liberals in the civil rights movement are losing influence and the militants are gaining a hearing among Catholic and Protestant workers.

Display of force

It is for this reason that the authorities have agreed to the display of force by British troops.

Socialists in Britain never had any illusions about British imperialism and its objectives in Ireland. That does not mean that socialists are blind to the contradictions which exist between Westminster and the Orange regime.

But it does mean that socialists stand 100 per cent in solidarity with all those who face the British army in Derry and other parts of Northern Ireland.

The object of the struggle for freedom and social justice in Northern Ireland — for a workers' republic in a united Ireland — will not be served until the last British soldier is removed from Irish soil.

£400,000 for 'hands off profits' campaign

by John Watson

AN ORGANISATION known as Aims of Industry, with the financial backing of major companies, is about to spend £400,000 on an advertising campaign to promote 'free' enterprise in an attempt to prevent further nationalisation.

The campaign has been prepared by a major London advertising agency, David Williams and Partners. Before any actual work was done, they commissioned National Opinion Poll, a market research organisation, to gauge public attitudes to nationalisation.

These surveys usually interview some 200-500 people from all walks of life and from this tiny section pretend to be able to predict trends and attitudes on any given subject.

Some £300,000 of the budget will be spent in national newspapers, the remaining £100,000 on literature and public relations.

Threat to 'freedom'

Where does the money come from, which is roughly the amount an average worker would earn in 500 years? Naturally from those companies who see in nationalisation a threat to their freedom to make as much profit as they can at your expense.

Yet while our nurses have to threaten strikes to get meagre pay rises, while the millionaires' press tells us the country cannot possibly afford 'all these pay demands', our Lords and Protectors are still able to find the money for advertising campaigns, let alone massive donations to the Tory Party.

Meeting demands jobs for Kent town

FOLKESTONE:- 50 young people attended a meeting last week called by the local branch of the International Socialists to launch a campaign to improve conditions in the town for workers and young people.

Press publicity about youth 'violence in Folkestone has masked the real situation. An IS speaker outlined the reactionary role of the local Tories in preventing industry from coming to the area. He also attacked the Labour Party for failing to take any initiative in organising against the deliberate run-down of working-class conditions and job opportunities.

NOTICES

KEY BOOKS Ltd specialise in socialist, communist, peace and progressive literature. The only bookshop of its kind in the Midlands, SW stocked, 25 Essex St, Birmingham 5. 021-692 1765.

ACCOMMODATION for comrades: 930 3951 April, 229 8682 evening.

ENGINEERING VOICE assembly, Sun 5 April, Digheth Institute, Birmingham. 11 am to 4 pm.

MERTON IS lecture series, Sun 5 April 8pm William Morris Hall, Wimbledon Broadway. Spkr Jim Higgins on Trotskyism.

Ulster policeman named by PD in bid to re-open murder enquiry

THE LATEST issue of Free Citizen, weekly news-sheet of the militant People's Democracy movement in Northern Ireland, has named a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary who, PD says, should be questioned about the murder of Mr Samuel Devenney in Derry.

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recover from the injuries he received and he dies some weeks later following several heart attacks.

An RUC enquiry into the affair, like all other enquiries, produced nothing. The enquiry showed that the RUC did break into the house and beat the Devenneys, but the identity of the officers could not be established.

None of the senior officers and other officers on duty in Derry on that day would help enquiries by

joining an identity parade. It was established that at least one senior officer was present at the beating because his characteristic black-thorne walking stick was noted by those assaulted.

Free Citizen says that it is astonishing that this much should be known but the name of the individual officer cannot be discovered. The paper describes the investigation as a 'whitewash of police murder'.

Now Sir Arthur Young, the new

'moderate' boss of the RUC, has said that the investigation was, in some respects, unsatisfactory. He added that he might call in Scotland Yard for help and advice.

The PD paper comments: 'As befits a public-spirited paper Free Citizen this week presents Sir Arthur with the first name of these apparently invisible policemen: number one is Constable Nesbitt, then based at Victoria Barracks, Strand Road, and transferred.'