

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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KEEP THE TORIES OUT

Vote Labour – and prepare to fight

THE TORY PARTY – the party of Enoch Powell, of the 14th Earl of Home and the big business ruling class of this country – must not be returned to power next week.

Tragically there is no real socialist challenge to the Tories and Tory economic system being made at this election. The Labour Party will run the Tory system in all its essentials.

Both the Tory and Labour parties are capitalist parties. They both accept and support a system which condemns the mass of working people to a life of struggle and insecurity.

But there is a difference between the parties.

The Tories are more than just a capitalist party. Big business, the financiers and property owners regard it as their own chosen instrument of political rule.

Labour may run their system – and even run it 'better' than the Tories themselves – but they will never completely trust even the most servile Labour Party.

A defeat for the Tories next week would be a blow to the self-confidence of the ruling establishment. Politics is more than economics. Socialists are in the business of raising the political consciousness of working people.

The Tories are equally anxious to try and demoralise workers and turn their political energies into reactionary directions. That is the value of Powell and racialism to the Tory Party.

If the Tories are defeated it is less easy for the bosses to dampen down and divert the militancy of workers. On the other hand a Tory defeat will tend to divide and demoralise the establishment though Labour will carry out the anti-working class policies expected of it.

Lease of life

Socialists have another important reason for wanting to see the Tories smashed at the polls. A Tory victory would give the Labour leaders a further lease of life in which they could pose as a genuine alternative.

Wilson, Castle and company are no alternative for the working people. But the mass of workers do not yet see it.

They will not see it if the Labour leaders can prowl around in opposition making 'militant' speeches.

Let no one have any illusions in either party.

The Tories are the party of Racism and gangster landlords.

They are the party which wants the remnants of the social services disbanded and returned to the private market.

They are the party of social privileges for the rich.

They are the party which wants to try and reassert the gun boat in Asia and the Middle East.

The Tories represent the most reactionary elements among the middle and upper class. Their war cry and answer to all social prob-

A statement by the editorial board

lems is 'hang em, and flog em'.

They want to see a total apartheid system in education. On race, whatever the qualifications of Heath, the Tories stand openly for racialism and the fascist policy of repatriation of immigrant workers.

A victory for this party would mean that the whole political debate in the working class movement would swing to the right. They must be decisively rejected at the polling booths next Thursday.

The only way of keeping the Tories out this time is by voting Labour. This does not imply any faith in Labour (or in its built-in, tame 'left' wing).

Labour has long since abandoned any pretence of working for a socialist society. The Labour leaders are even now preparing a new offensive on wages and the trade unions.

The months after the election will see Labour, if elected, return to the field of statutory incomes policy and anti-union laws.

The International Socialists have made it clear in recent weeks that the slogan 'Keep the Tories out – vote Labour' also means 'Prepare to fight'.

And by fight we do not only mean fight at a trade union level. This is important of course and the wave of struggles in industry in the past months has been inspiring and of great significance.

But it is necessary for trade union militants to extend the struggle into a political challenge to the government and the whole system.

Credible alternative

The urgent need is to develop a credible socialist alternative to the Tories and Labour.

The International Socialists are committed to building such an alternative party. We appeal to all other sections of the revolutionary socialist left not to stand aside in sectarian isolation but to help build this movement now.

The struggle will not end when the votes are collected on Thursday night. In a sense, it will be starting at a new and higher level.

This must be the last election in which, for lack of a credible mass socialist alternative, we have to say:

'Keep the Tories out'.
'Vote Labour – and prepare to FIGHT.'



Frank Keane (centre) seen on a demonstration in Ireland. On his right – the Starry Plough, flag of the Irish Workers Republic

New move to frame Frank Keane

by Sean Matgamna and Liam Daltun

THE IRISH POLICE are uncertain that the charge against socialist republican Frank Keane of killing a policeman in April can be made to stick.

So they have brought in a new charge. Keane, at present held in Brixton jail in London pending extradition to Ireland, is now also charged with complicity in an armed bank robbery at Rathdrum on 20 February.

It looks as if the Irish police do not have enough confidence in their ability to fabricate evidence serious enough to pin the murder charge on Keane.

The new charge at this stage probably means it is the one they are relying on most. It does not mean they will stop trying to frame him for murder.

Supporter

It shows that Keane is right when he says that the murder charge is a frame-up because he was a supporter of a left socialist republican group, Saor Eire (Free Ireland).

It had been expected that at least some of the 'evidence' would have to be presented in the British court.

exists between Britain and the Irish republic. Under a special arrangement, no evidence needs to be presented in court here: only a warrant from Ireland which is almost automatically endorsed by the magistrate.

An affidavit from the Irish police will also be presented to 'show' Keane is not wanted, as he claims, for political offences. This does not rule out victimisation and frame-up because of his politics.

There is a possible loophole that may allow the introduction of the political issues. This will probably emerge in the appeal, which is when the fight will really start.

Money is urgently needed. Legal aid covers no more than the magistrates' court. The appeals could cost up to £500. Donations and requests for collection cards should go to Joe Quinn, 4 Nightingale Lane, London N1, or the Irish Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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A late squeak by Benn

by Paul Foot

ONE WORD adequately describes the recent election row between Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Minister of Technology, and Mr Enoch Powell, who hopes one day to be Minister of Repatriation. That word is: hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy, first, of the Tory newspapers and the Tory leaders who were quick enough to condemn Powell when he started making racialist speeches in 1968. But now they are content to attack 'the exaggerated language' of Benn's speech which they see as 'more dangerous' than Powell's speeches.

Calling Powell a racist, implies The Times, is more reprehensible than wholesale attacks on the blacks. And wholesale attacks on the blacks are, according to The Times, 'not racist'.

The sections of the Tory press and the Tory leadership who attacked Powell in 1968 are now making it clear that the luxury of attacking one of their own must be kept in the family. The moment anyone does it from outside, or uses it in an election, the racist must be defended against the 'agitator'.

SILENCE

But there is hypocrisy too, in wide measure, from Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn, together with Jenkins, Crosland and the other Fabian radicals of the early 1960s who have sat in silence while a Labour government:

Banned all unskilled blacks from coming into this country (1964).
Cut down the number of blacks coming in by two thirds (1965 Immigration White Paper).

Broke their pledges to Kenyan Asians by denying them free entry (1968).

Harassed and bullied new black immigrants at London airport with a host of new restrictions.

And finally made it even more difficult for the families of blacks already here to come together (entry certificate requirement, 1969).

One squeak of protest in government from Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn at any one of these racist measures would have been worth a hundred flowery phrases about Dachau and Belsen at election time.

THE EMPLOYERS' OFFENSIVE

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Hysterical attack on Bernadette Devlin by pro-Israel Labour MP



Bernadette seen helping to build a barricade in the Bogside last year. Paul Rose accuses her of 'sabotaging' the civil rights movement.

We are publishing some recent correspondence between Labour MP Paul Rose and Bernadette Devlin, Independent MP for Mid-Ulster. Last month, Miss Devlin accepted an invitation to speak at a rally in support of the Palestinian people. As her restrained reply shows, she supports the demands for a Middle East republic

with full rights for all the people of the area, including Jews.

Rose's hysterical, threatening abuse, including the standard accusation of anti-semitism against anyone who is critical of Israel, shows the depths to which the supporters of the Zionist state will sink.

'ON THE SIDE OF THE RACIALISTS'

Dear Bernadette,
I have just been phoned by an angry student alleging that you are speaking at an anti-Israel meeting this week-end. I hope this is not true but if it is I can only say that it will be an example of unsurpassed irresponsibility.

As 200 members of the Parliamentary Labour Party are supporters of Labour Friends of Israel including such people as Kevin McNamara, Maurice Miller and most of Ireland's sympathisers are also sympathetic toward Israel for exactly the same reasons I just cannot understand it.

I for one would have to challenge you to a public debate on the subject. If necessary in your own constituency.

I address an Irish meeting on Sunday and could not remain silent. I shall also be in Ireland for ten days at Whit, and am bound to be questioned about this. I do not want to see a split in Ireland — as happened over Vietnam last week when several abstained because of failure to condemn Arab action in the Middle East.

But if you wish to enter the public arena on the side of racialism, feudal sheikhs and military dictators against a democratic socialist state with a history so much similar to the tragic history of Ireland then you put yourself on the same level as the anti-semites in the Soviet Union and the National Front.

You would destroy your image and make it impossible for me and others to give you any support. I pray that you will not betray a

people whose fate has been so much akin to your own.

Sincerely,
Paul

Dear Bernadette,
I am thoroughly disgusted that a personal letter to you intended to save you from making a complete idiot of yourself should have been used by your friends unscrupulously at Trafalgar Square. They lied in saying what they did and your own conduct shows that you cannot be trusted by those who only sought to be your friends.

I have received dozens of phone calls every day by students outraged at your support for those who wish to murder 2½ million people. If it gives you satisfaction to support the ex-Nazis in Cairo and the lies of Hitler then you may do so. But you cannot expect me to sit idly by any more than those who defended Bogside could do so.

The Dublin Post Office and the Warsaw Ghetto; the June war that saved Israel from destruction and your own struggle are identical (sic).

Your action can only give satisfaction to the racialists.

I suggest you read your Michael Davitt who was one of the first to understand the need for a Jewish State. What I wonder would your position be had Ireland been depopulated under British rule and your fellow countrymen scattered to the four winds, would they have ceased to demand an Ireland 'not free merely but Gaelic as well; not Gaelic merely but free as well'.

Both Arabs and Jews have their right to self determination but the slogan carried at your meeting was 'Victory and no compromise'.

At the same time a group of genuine left wingers held a meeting for 'Jewish-Arab co-existence'. In the light of what you know about Ulster, which slogan commends itself to you?

Last night at the University of Ireland Club, I had the pleasure of supporting Austin Currie, who was active in the civil rights movement long before you came to sabotage it. How I regret that he was not selected for Mid-Ulster.

Paul

A DEMOCRATIC STATE OF PALESTINE

Dear Paul,

I have just received the second of your two letters regarding my decision to speak at a Palestinian rally in London. Let me say first that I regard your writing to me in the terms that you do as being totally reprehensible.

You suggest that you will be forced to withdraw your support for the people of Ireland if I do not support your position on the Middle East question. This suggests to me that there is but scant principle behind your support for Ireland. I suggest to you that it would have been preferable if you had sought to use rational arguments to convince me that you are right and I am wrong instead of making veiled accusations against me of racialism and of support for Nazism and the lies of Hitler, accusations which you know perfectly well you cannot substantiate.

Unfortunately, however, you did not seek to find out either what I believe to be the best — and indeed the only — solution to the Middle East question nor did you enquire how I came to be invited to speak at that meeting in the first place. I have never advocated, nor did the meeting support, the destruction of Israel, nor would I condone the slaughter of the Jewish people.

I do feel that the original decision to set up the Jewish state was mistaken and bound to lead to trouble. I would remind you of the remark of Sir Ronald Storrs, the first British military governor of Jerusalem, that the idea behind the Balfour Declaration was to set up a 'Jewish Ulster' in the midst of the hostile Arab world.

Indeed the treatment of the Arab population by the Israeli government, concerned at the fact that the natural increase of the Arab population is strikingly similar to that of the Catholic population of Northern Ireland by the Unionist government in that they seek to make life difficult for the Arab inhabitants so that they become 'voluntary' refugees. My own aim for the area would be the establishment of a democratic secular state embracing the whole of Palestine without discrimination or privilege in relation to any group on the basis of race or religion, guaranteeing in the words of the 1916 Proclamation 'equal rights and equal opportunities for all its citizens'.

As regards the Arab states, you suggest that I am a supporter of military dictators and feudal sheikhs. I most certainly am not. I believe that they too must be swept away and replaced by the rule of the people. Only then will the cynical manipulation of the situation by America and Russia in order to maintain and extend their own spheres of influence in the Middle East.

Nor is the Wilson administration in Britain innocent. I would remind you of its role in supporting 'feudal sheikhs' in the Gulf states in order to maintain its military bases and oil interests in that area. Nor am I unaware of the fact that Arab governments have sought to exploit the situation in order to divert the attention and energies of their working class from their own often appalling living conditions lest they should create revolutionary forces (as indeed they are doing) to overthrow those regimes.

Pious bromides about 'co-existence' whether between Jew and Arab in the Middle East or between Catholic and Protestant in Ireland can only become reality when the root causes of the problem are tackled and those I believe to be in both cases foreign exploitation and native capitalism coupled with multifarious devices employed to prevent the creation of working class unity which would result in the destruction of both. That is, in my opinion, the only way to create a society which can guarantee true civil rights. Your hysterical accusation that I 'sabotaged' the Civil Rights Movement does not require any answer from me.

Finally, let me say that I was asked to speak at this meeting by a member of the Democratic Front. Unfortunately, I was unable to speak at the meeting in question because of the urgent necessity of returning to Northern Ireland. I cannot believe that any demand was made at that meeting for the destruction of Israel or the slaughtering of the Jews. If it had been I would have repudiated it. I know nothing of the 'lies' which you allege were told in relation to your letter.

In conclusion, I feel that I have every right to publish letters relating to political issues.

Yours faithfully,
BERNADETTE DEVLIN

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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

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.

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

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper.

Keep the Tories out — but no illusions in the Labour Party

AS SOON AS the camera focuses on his face, Wilson's election style swings into action. He chats, takes a puff on the pipe, he breathes steadily. One of us. He's all right really.

But it's all one colossal con.

There's an easy guide. When you hear Wilson and the rest of them talking, pull out these statistics. They are taken from the government's own publications, so they can't be wrong. . .

When Wilson went on television that evening in 1968 after devaluing the pound he said: 'The pound in the British housewife's purse will not be worth less through devaluation.' Remember?

Well why is it that food prices have gone up and up since then?

TAXATION

Devaluation is one of the reasons. Another reason is the fantastic increase in taxation since the Labour Party came to power. They now draw in £600 million a year more than in 1963.

You would think that the higher the income a man receives, then more of his income would go in tax. The telly people, after all, frequently interview 'socialist' millionaires in Jersey who moan about their tax bills.

But not a bit of it. It's the other way round brother!

Total taxes paid as a percentage of income for a married couple and two children.

weekly income before tax	% 1964	% 1967
£11	31	41
£13	30	33
£16	28	34
£20	29	32
£24	27	32
£29	28	32
£35	30	32
£41	27	33
£50 and over	NA	31
Average for all incomes	29	33

('NA' means the statistics are 'not available')

In 1967, if you had two kids and earned £11 a week, then one-tenth more of your income disappeared as tax than the feller who earned over £50 a week.

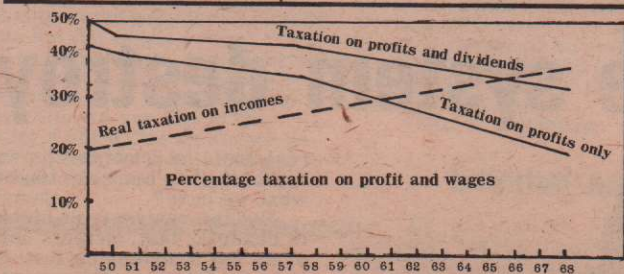
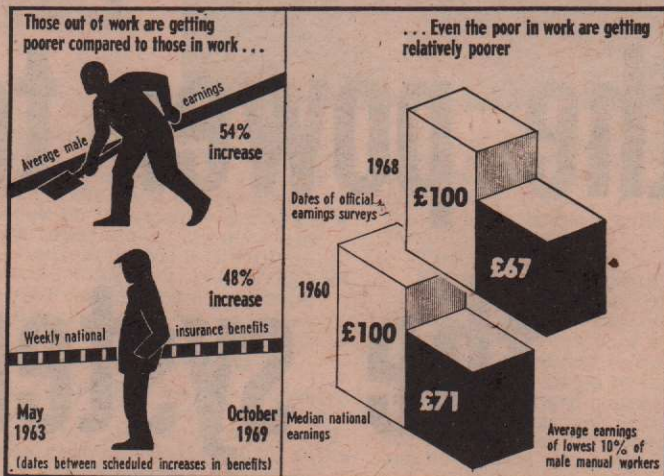
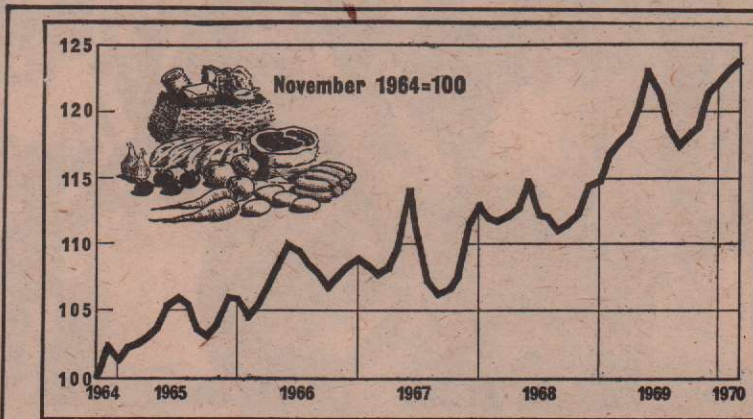
We are not just talking about income tax. It's all the other ways they cut your wage through such tricks as purchase tax and local rates.

STACKED

On top of that, the £11 a week man has had his tax increased by one-third, from 31 per cent to 41 per cent between 1964 and 1967. For those who got over £41 a week, it was an increase of only one-fifth, from 27 per cent to 33 per cent. The Labour government operate a tax system stacked against the working people.

So much so that the least organised workers have felt things getting much worse during the last few years.

The government gets round this embarrassment to its



integrity by a nit-picking use of statistics. Since 1964, for instance, the condition of houses in this country has got so bad, that the organisation called Shelter has pointed out that at a certain point a 'house' can no longer be called a 'home'.

The boys up top got a bit worried about this, and came out with the following reply: David Ennals, Minister of State for Health and Social Security, April 1969: 'There has been a great deal of exaggeration of the size of this problem and the numbers involved. I have even seen references to 'Three million homeless'. This is really nonsense. In England and Wales there are 3,594 families living in temporary accommodation — a total of 18,687 men, women and children.'

No, sir. We will judge for ourselves. The following is just one report from a large survey carried out by Shelter:

Mr and Mrs M and their seven children, live in a four roomed house in Manchester which is infested with rats, mice and cockroaches. The mice eat everything they can find including the bedding in the baby's pram.

Mrs M has begun to suffer with nerves, from her constant terror of having to face the

rats when filling the baby's bottle in the middle of the night and from her fright when she frequently finds rats in the beds while making them.

As the three eldest children now go to work the family's total income is £25 per week, but they cannot find alternative accommodation because of the number of children.

Instead, all nine of them are forced to share two bedrooms where they are often kept awake by the noise of a busy railway line which runs near their house. Each morning when they rise they have to face damp, dirty conditions without the basic necessities of a bath, running hot water, or even a means of heating.

TERRIBLE

Now either Mr Ennals does not know his job, or he is a downright liar, since this family is obviously homeless.

Shelter concludes that anything up to three million people live in such terrible conditions as to make it ridiculous to claim they are not homeless.

And the future? Well we have had promises. At Bradford in March 1966 Wilson said: 'By 1970. . . we shall

achieve the target of 500,000 houses a year, and we shall not allow any development, any circumstances, however adverse to deflect us from that aim.'

But in Labour's best years 1967 and 1968, only 400,000 new homes were built and the figure slumped to 367,000 in 1969.

It will take another 39 years to replace the existing pool of slums. And those well-known 'slum dwellers', the directors of MacAlpine and Costain, and all the construction industry chiefs, rake in £200 million profit a year.

Just like those 'homeless' moneylenders who took £105 million from the Labour government in interest on council house building between 1964 and 1967.

And in case you think we are mimicking Tory jibes at the Labour government, then it's the last table which tells you what's behind the message. Since the end of the second world war, right up to the moment, the taxation policy of every government, come Labour, go Tory, has been against the working men and for the profiteers.

The young victims

FAMILY ALLOWANCES were increased by 10s a week in 1968. This still left the family allowance at the same proportion (8 per cent) of the average weekly wage as in 1945.

The 1968 increase in family allowance was so inadequate that it left over half a million children living in families whose income was below the official poverty line.

In any case, the effect of the family allowance increase has been largely wiped out by the sharp rise in prices since 1968, and by increases in the price of welfare milk and school meals.

The price of a school meal has been raised by 75 per cent under Labour, that is three times faster than the general rise in prices.

Free school milk has been abolished in secondary schools.

Free school milk for fourth and younger children has been abolished.

In Scotland, the stillbirth rate fell between 1963 and 1968, from 1.9 per cent to 1.5 per cent of babies born. But the social class gap widened.

In 1963, stillbirth rate for unskilled manual group was 2.3 times rate for professional group.

In 1968, stillbirth rate for unskilled manual group was 2.5 times rate for professional group.

Puppets on US big business' string

'I have often thought of the parallel between Castro entering Havana and our own government entering power here. . . and thought that the two events should be as similar as possible.' Anthony Wedgwood Benn, 1966.

IT HAS long been a proud boast of the Labour Party that they understand and get on with the American government more amicably than the Tories.

A look at their foreign policy record over the last six years certainly bears them out in this claim. As the true rationalisers of British capitalism, the Labour government has quietly withdrawn from East of Suez in deference to Britain's new junior role in world imperialism.

In every respect, Wilson and co have tailored their policies to the overall needs of American big business.

Within that general framework, the Labour Party's foreign policy has a strong overall unity as can be seen if we look at some of the major issues:

VIETNAM: On this issue, Michael Stewart has proved the most obedient puppet throughout the western world and Britain has consistently supported America's war of aggression throughout the whole of South-East Asia.

RHODESIA: When UDI was declared in 1965, Wilson immediately ruled out any possibility of meaningful action, thereby defying the United Nations and the whole of black Africa. Instead he chose to operate petty, useless sanctions which could only work if similar action were taken against South Africa. Self-styled anti-racist H Wilson has of course refused to even think of such a possibility.

BIAFRA: In their most cynical move yet, the Labour government supplied derisory amounts of food for the starving Biafrans while at the same time supplying millions of guns to the Nigerians to help them kill the Biafrans.

NORTHERN IRELAND: In August 1969, Wilson was forced to send in British troops to Northern Ireland in order to stabilise the rule of the Tory Unionists, whose police state was in danger of falling, and to safeguard the interests of British big business. Now, nearly 12 months later, no possible solution for Wilson is in sight and the troops are being used increasingly against socialists and republicans.

In addition to this, the Labour government carried out vicious rearward defences of colonialism in Malaysia and Aden, invaded Anguilla and introduced a racist Immigration Act.

This sorry chronicle shows that the Labour Party has made no attempt to draw up an independent foreign policy, let alone a socialist one. They have zealously carried out the tasks given them by their American bosses and helped them to defend imperialism throughout the world.

Poor old 'Che' Wedgwood Benn. It's not much compared with Castro's triumphal entry into Havana, is it?

The plight of the old gets worse

POVERTY among old people is widespread. The basic state pension — now £5 a week for a single person — is well below the government's official poverty line.

Since 1964, the money value of the old age pension has been raised by 48 per cent. But by the autumn of 1970, average earnings will have risen faster — probably by at

least 50 per cent.

So after six years of Labour rule, the pensioners will end up poorer relative to the rest of the population. Worse still, money earning will continue to increase, but the government do not propose to increase the level of the old age pension for another 18 months, in the autumn of 1971. About 400,000 old people

exist at incomes below the official poverty line, mainly because they do not receive means tested supplementary pensions.

QUALIFY

The number of retired people dependent on means tested payments from the Supplementary Benefits Commission

WAS 1.9 millions in 1965 IS 4.2 millions in 1970. OUT OF a total of seven million retired in the whole population.

If the official poverty line were just £2 a week higher than its present starvation level, then three out of four of all pensioners would qualify for a means tested supplementary pension.

Democracy, the election and you



Workers have the power to smash the system...

WE HAVE a democracy in this country, so they tell us. You choose your own MP by secret ballot. Anyone who is not a peer, lunatic or convict can stand for parliament if he can find £150 for a deposit and a few electors to sign his nomination papers.

And the MPs who are elected choose the government. On the face of it nothing could be fairer. The people, so the theory goes, get the government and the policies they want. Or do they?

Pretty well everyone knows that it isn't like that in practice. It's a safe bet that most of the trade unionists who voted Labour in the last election didn't mean to vote for wage freeze, anti-union laws and record unemployment.

Nor for running down the Health Service and the housing programme. It is very likely that they didn't mean to vote for the highest interest rates on record or for supporting the US government's war against the people of Vietnam and Cambodia either.

Take one of the biggest non-issues of this election, the Common Market. It's an important issue.

Entry will have a big effect on the lives of ordinary working people, on prices, jobs, regional development and taxes. If the opinion polls can be believed, the majority of people are against entry.

Yet everyone knows that whether Heath wins or Wilson, it won't make a scrap of difference to whether Britain becomes part of the Common Market or not. The big business interests want to go in and whichever government we get, whether allegedly Labour or avowedly Tory, it will do its level best to oblige them.

What bosses want

The same is true of almost any issue you take. No matter what promises are made to catch votes, the policies of the next government will be the policies that the big business bosses want.

And when workers act against these policies, like the trade unionists who went on the demonstration strikes against Barbara Castle's White Paper In Place of Strife, they are denounced as being 'undemocratic' and acting against the 'national interest'. Minorities, we are told, must not be allowed to intimidate 'the majority'.

As if the majority of the people in this country, the working people, had any effective say in making the policies that affect their lives!

The word democracy means, literally, rule by the people. We don't have democracy, in the real sense, in this country and we never have had.

What we do have are certain democratic rights like the right to organise, the right to strike, the right to publish a paper like this one. These are very important rights and they have not been handed down to us on a plate.

They have been won by fighting for them. They have been won by militant 'minorities' — so called — who have defied the 'national interest' and often the law as well.

We have the right to strike because men have been prepared to face intimidation, victimisation and

imprisonment to uphold it. And we do not have it once and for all.

Because, under present day conditions, it is becoming a threat to the power of big business — in Harold Wilson's language, it is against the 'national interest' — the next government, whichever it is, will try to curb it. It will be preserved if — and only if — that very important minority, the politically conscious trade union militants, are able to carry enough workers with them to intimidate the union bureaucrats, big business and the government.

But why, in spite of universal suffrage, free elections and the rest, does an apparently more or less democratic political system — if we leave aside the House of Lords and the Monarchy — lead to such a state of affairs?

Part of the answer is no mystery. It is a question of money, wealth and property. 1 per cent of the population of this country owns 42 per cent of the wealth. The richest 5 per cent own 75 per cent of the wealth.

The overwhelming majority — 90 per cent, own altogether 17 per cent. Nor is this inequality getting less. Contrary to the Labour Party myths it is getting greater.

Some of the consequences are obvious. Money talks. A handful of multi-millionaires own the mass circulation 'free press' of this country.

The Tory Party, the party which exists to defend capitalism and to preserve inequality and privilege, gets millions of pounds from big business to carry on its propaganda.

Great sacrifices

But what about the labour movement? Over the last 150 years ordinary working people have painfully built up, often at the cost of great sacrifices, trade unions, co-operatives and a political party that was to be the party of the working man, the Labour Party.

A great many reforms and rights have been won in the course of the struggle. The Labour Party has been in power, at least it has formed the government, four times.

Yet we still have a ruling class, the bosses are richer and more powerful than they have ever been and we are no nearer a democratic, humane, classless society.

The fact is that the working class can only become the ruling class, that is, make a real democracy, by organising to exercise power itself through a democratic organisation under its own control, by abolishing the property rights of the rich which give them power



The working class must become the ruling class

over the mass of the people and by organising production for use and not for profit.

Politics is about power. Socialist politics is about workers' power. The whole basis of Labour Party politics is the running away from these elementary truths. That is why they have ended up where they are.

Once you are committed to this policy, as the Labour Party has been from the beginning, you have to keep the system going. Reforms are easier to put through when profits are high, when the capitalists are kept happy.

To keep up profits, the workers have to be kept in line and the rich given 'incentives'. The 'national interest', that is, the interests of big business, become the first consideration even if this means undermining the very reforms which are supposed to justify the policy in the first place.

Does it matter? After all reformist politics have brought some results. Life for most people today is easier than it was in the thirties and much easier than it was a century ago.

Most workers are more interested in the world cup than in the election and who can blame them? The system is a bad one but life goes on and it may be better for the next generation. In any case to build a

real socialist movement is very difficult. Why not make the best of what we have?

But the system isn't stable. It is changing fast. Mergers and take-overs are transforming British industry. International competition and the free movement of capital from country to country are forcing the pace towards fewer and bigger firms, fewer and bigger plants.

The British Steel Corporation is trying to get foreign steel giants to join it in erecting a super-plant on Teesside that will have a planned output of 20 million tons a year — equal to nearly the whole output of all existing plants. What will happen to them?

Watney-Mann are considering the construction of a single super-brewery that will replace all of its existing units throughout Britain.

These are only straws in the wind. The insane logic of capitalist competition is forcing the bosses themselves to jack up productivity — more output in bigger plants from fewer workers — regardless of the immense damage this will do to whole communities, whole areas of the country.

Bitter struggle

If Common Market entry is carried out it will speed up the process. Non-entry will not stop it.

Whether we like it or not, we are going to have to face a bitter struggle for jobs and working conditions, a struggle that is as much political as industrial. But this is only one problem. There are even more serious ones.

Since the Korean war, western capitalism has been kept booming by massive expenditure on armaments. Especially in the USA, the giant that dominates the system, immense resources have been poured into military and space programmes.

Millions of jobs have been created. War Expenditure became the fly-wheel that kept the system steady — and growing.

It still is, but it isn't having the same effect as before simply because the huge growth in productivity, more output from less men, is creating a slowly growing pool of unemployment. The US economy is faltering and the fall on Wall Street is only a symptom of the underlying crisis.

What happens in America affects us all. By autumn, this country will face new economic difficulties as a result of the American recession. A new and harsher economic climate is already creeping in.

Now it goes without saying that any government, Labour or Tory, will do its best, within the limits

of the system, to cushion the worst effects of these long-run economic changes.

But their power to do it isn't what it once was. The growth of huge international capitalist combines that can shift production and resources from one country to another to keep up profits limits the power of any government that isn't prepared to attack the root of the problem.

Balance of payments difficulties caused by huge movements of money by a handful of speculators can be used to 'discipline' governments as well as workers.

We don't live in an island any more. We are part of a world in which the techniques and resources to give everyone a decent life already exist and in which half the people are on the borderline of starvation.

It is a violent world in which the two superpowers, Russia and America, have between them enough thermo-nuclear weapons to wipe out the whole population several times over.

It is an unstable world in which local wars continue to grow.

It is a militaristic world in which the military coup leading to dictatorship is now the commonest way of changing a government.

It is a polluted world which national economic and military competition threaten to make less and less habitable.

It is against this background that the utter irrelevance of Wilson-style Labour-Tory policies have to be seen. None of the problems we face can be solved for us.

Ordinary people everywhere want peace, security, freedom from meaningless work, human dignity, a decent life.

Yet these things can only be had by the organisation of working people themselves into a real and ultimately decisive force both in Britain and internationally. Unless we destroy the system it will sooner or later destroy us all.

It is a hard job and it starts with the day to day struggle to involve people in the attempt to control their own lives. The job of socialists today is to link up these struggles — and there will be more and more of them — with an understanding of why the world is what it is and how to change it.

There are no short cuts. Years ago Marx wrote 'the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself'.

Today we can add that the whole future of humanity depends on its success. That is why we publish this paper and seek to regroup militants in a revolutionary socialist organisation.

There is really no other choice.

by Duncan Hallas

DANIEL DE LEON ON REFORM OR REVOLUTION

Poodles can be changed —but they stay poodles



Daniel De Leon was an outstanding marxist of the early American labour movement. We reproduce here a speech he made to the Socialist Labour Party in Boston in 1896 on the theme of reform or revolution. It is still brilliantly relevant to modern conditions and underlines the shallowness of the Labour leaders bidding for votes on a platform of 'reforming' the system.

WE HEAR people talk about the 'reform forces', about 'evolution' and about 'revolution' in ways that are highly mixed. Let us clear up our terms.

Reform means a change of externals; revolution — peaceful or bloody, the peacefulness or the bloodiness of it cuts no figure whatever in the essence of the question — means a change from within.

Take for instance a poodle. You can reform him in a lot of ways. You

can shave his whole body and leave a tassel at the tip of his tail; you may bore a hole through each ear and tie a blue bow on one and a red bow on the other; you may put a brass collar around his neck with your initials on and a trim little blanket on his back; yet, throughout, a poodle he was and a poodle he remains.

Gaily decked

Each of these changes probably wrought a corresponding change in the poodle's life. When shorn of all his hair except a tassel at the tail's tip he was owned by a wag who probably cared only for the fun he could get out of his pet.

When he appears gaily decked in bows, probably his young mistress' attachment is of a tenderer sort. When later we see him in the fancier's outfit, the treatment he received and the uses he is put to may again be, and probably are, different.

Each of these transformations or stages may mark a veritable epoch in the poodle's existence. And yet, essentially, a poodle he was, a poodle he is, and a poodle he will remain.

That is reform.

But when we look back myriads of years or project ourselves into far-future-physical cataclysms and trace the development of animal life from the invertebrate to the vertebrate, from the lizard to the bird, from quadruped and mammal till we come to the prototype of the poodle and finally reach the poodle himself, and so forward — then do we find radical changes at each step, changes from within that alter the very essence of his being and that put, or will put, upon him each time a stamp that alters the very system of his existence.

That is revolution.

External marks

So with society: Whenever a change leaves the internal mechanism untouched, we have **reform**.

Whenever the internal mechanism is changed, we have **revolution**.

Of course, no internal change is possible without external manifestations. The internal changes denoted by the revolution or evolution of the lizard into the eagle are accompanied by external marks. So with society.

And therein lies one of the pitfalls into which reformers invariably tumble. They have noticed that externals change with internals and they rest satisfied with mere external changes, without looking behind the curtain.

We socialists are not reformers. We are revolutionists.

We socialists do not propose to change forms. We care nothing for forms.

We want a change of the inside of the mechanism of society — let the form take care of itself.

We see in England a crowned monarch. We see in Germany a sceptered emperor. We see in this country an uncrowned president and we fail to see any essential difference between Germany, England or America.

They're waiting with open tills...

AT THIS TIME of the year big business and The Powers That Be decide that they'd better give their workers a rest so that they don't get too run down. (A horse always works better if it's put out to grass now and then.)

During the summer months the money-grabbing tourist trade spends millions trying to convince us that 'The World's Your Playground'. Every country is waiting with open arms (and tills) to welcome the British Working Man to its shores.

Suddenly all the propaganda put out by the press, radio and TV about Greece, South Africa, Russia, etc. disappears.

For instance, instead of being a wicked, Stalinist, treacherous nation plotting to overthrow 'western democracy', state capitalist Russia suddenly becomes 'one of the least understood countries in the world'.

The Russian working class, whose name is mud according to the British ruling class between the months of October and March, miraculously become, between April and September, 'a wonderful people, with a more boisterous sense of fun than almost anyone else in the world'.

What the workers have got to laugh at in Russia is beyond me.

SCREAMS

And, of course, there's beautiful Greece, land of sunshine, history and golden sands. You can read all about the olive groves and 'Mycenae is a must!'

'You will have heard of its famous Homeric Lion's Gate, but do you know about the fascinating Beehive Tombs nearby?'

I wonder why they fail to mention that if you put your ear to the street gratings in Athens you can hear the screams of political prisoners being tortured? Perhaps it wouldn't be good for business.

Well, how about Spain, then — 'land of flashing-eyed senioritas' and daring bullfights? Oh yes — we forgot to mention it's also a fascist dictatorship where workers are put in jail for going on strike and trade unions are unknown.

Those flashing-eyed senioritas are probably half dead from over-work and their eyes are clouded with

bullfight', this blood-sport is the only way out of poverty and starvation for many peasant boys in Spain. But this poverty all adds to the 'reality' and 'charm' of these 'foreign' countries.

South Africa's super, ducky. You can visit the mines and the Africans will put on a genuine tribal dance for you at the command of their white bosses.

Then they'll change back into their working gear and go back into the blackness for just over two quid a week.

Yes, it's quite amazing how suddenly the world becomes neutral, a paradise devoid of all conflicts and where poverty and humiliation are transformed into money-making commodities.

SAME

But it doesn't take much to see that the exploitation in Britain is just the same abroad. It doesn't take much to realise that the problem of how to earn a living, how to give your kids a decent life and how to fight the bosses who try to grind you down every second of the day, is the problem of the workers in Spain, Italy, Russia, Greece, and every country in the whole world.

There's no holiday in the world that can divorce you from politics. The results of big business and 'democracy' are there for all of us to see wherever we may travel this year, whether it be a Butlin's holiday camp or the Bahamas.

Don't be fooled into thinking that those 'gay peasants' in Spain or the 'friendly workers' of France and Germany are the mindless, pleasant idiots the travel brochures would have us think.

Yes, the smile on the poster's genuine all right, despite everything — and that's the wonder of it. The truth is that you can't crack down on the human spirit and, even though your travel agent is making capital out of it, we can appreciate it in a different way.

So enjoy your holiday, comrade. You're not going 'abroad' or to a 'foreign' country — don't you believe it.

You're just visiting future comrades-in-arms, just checking up that you're not on your tod.

Cottons Column..

THE South African government is in deep water again. In a couple of weeks' time, a swimming team is due to arrive from Japan.

The trouble is, the Japanese haven't quite got that whiteness deep down inside, and so all of them (except Japanese businessmen, who are taken as 'honorary whites') are officially classified as blacks.

Obviously Balthazar Vorster and his lads weren't going to allow anything as subversive and immoral as blacks swimming in the same pool as the white South African master race. So it looked as though the match would be impossible.

This caused quite a splash among sportsmen, who having been banned from the world Cup, the Olympic Games and the rest, are only too pleased to take any chance they get for international competition, from pancake races upwards.

Eventually a compromise was reached. The South African team are going to swim first by themselves.

The time they take will be recorded. The pool will be drained, washed down and refilled. Then the Japanese will swim — again on their own. The winners will be the team with the fastest time.

'Get out and meet the people, like Harold's doing' they told him. So last Wednesday afternoon, Teddy boy took an 'unscheduled' walk up Barry High Street in Wales to meet the people.

Wednesday is early-closing day in Barry. The 'people' are reported to be very disappointed at not being met.

SPAIN has barred Rhodesia from the Eisenhower Trophy golf tournament in Madrid in September. As the man said it's a dog eat dog world.

Send for Biffo the Bear

WHEN Socialist Worker tried to get some photos of the Dundee building workers' demo from the Evening Chronicle, we were told that the paper's early edition wouldn't be carrying one since 'there hadn't been any violence'.

The Evening Chronicle belongs to famous law and order lovers and infamous trade union haters D C Thomson. They also provide such cornerstones of British culture as the Beano, the Sunday Post and the Wizard.

Good for a laugh

ANTHONY CROSLAND, leading Fabian in the Labour government, wrote a famous book back in the 1950s called The Future of Socialism. Clearly a subject close to his heart.

At an election meeting in Ilford, Essex, last week, Crosland was asked when clause four of the party constitution — the one which calls for nationalisation of the means of production to be run by the workers — was going to be put into operation.

There was loud laughter on the platform and tittering Tony replied 'Never!'. Suggested title for his next book: No Future for Socialism.

Sharpen your claymore

THE Scottish Independent, newspaper of the Nationalist Party, worked itself into a frenzy in last week's issue on the subject of a travel poster put out to boost Britain abroad.

Under a picture of a kilted killer from the Black Watch caught against the background of Edinburgh castle and in massive letters, runs the word 'England'.

You take high load, me take low load

WE HAVE even worse news for them. On souvenir cigarette lighters widely on sale in Scotland and with the St Andrew's Cross or some other Scots symbol on the front, there is a delicate inscription in Gaelic. Roughly translated it reads, 'Made in Japan'.

A bit of bower with boots

MEANWHILE a lot of other people are making a lot of money in Mexico. Pele has been paid £10,000 by the German boot manufacturers, Addidas to wear their boots in the World Cup.

There's going to be a big advertising campaign, worth more than £10,000 to Addidas. The only snag is, Pele likes Addidas money but he doesn't like Addidas boots. He claims they hurt him, so he won't be wearing them — except on the advertising posters, that is.

Getting their priorities right

ON the day when 30,000 people died in an earthquake disaster in Peru, all the English papers lead with the same story: an England player getting a goal in a lucky win against a second-rate team.

Must be his vowel sounds

THE big-wigs who are running the Tory Party election campaign were a bit worried that only speaking to all-ticket closed meetings, might be bad for Ted Heath's image.

Join the International Socialists

There are branches in the following areas

- SCOTLAND**
Aberdeen; Clydebank; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; East Kilbride.
- NORTH EAST**
Durham; Newcastle upon Tyne; Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)
- NORTH**
Barnsley; Bradford; Derby; Doncaster; Hull; Leeds; York; Selby; Sheffield.
- NORTH WEST**
Lancaster; Manchester; Merseyside; Preston; St Helens; Stockport; Wigan.

- MIDLANDS**
Birmingham; Coventry; Northampton; Leicester; Oxford; Potteries.
- WALES and SOUTH WEST**
Bath; Bristol; Cardiff; Exeter; Swansea
- SOUTH**
Ashford; Brighton; Crawley; Folkestone; Portsmouth; Southampton.
- EAST**
Cambridge; Grays and Tilbury; Harlow; Ipswich; Lowestoft; Norwich. North-east Essex.

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

- Acton; Angel; Camden; Chertsey; Croydon; Dagenham; Deptford; East London; Enfield; Erith; Fulham; Greenford; Hampstead; Harrow; Hemel Hempstead; Hornsey; Ilford; Kilburn; Kingston; Lambeth; Merton; Reading; Richmond; Stoke Newington; Tottenham; Walthamstow; Wandsworth; Watford; Victoria (SW1).



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

Name _____

Address _____

Socialist Worker

Smears against Scanlon in vital AEF poll

by Roger Cox (AEF)

THE ELECTION for the presidency of the Amalgamated Union of Engineers and Foundryworkers, with voting now taking place in the branches, has been marked by a level of personal abuse and smears which makes the Wilson-Heath affair seem like a positive love match.

John Boyd, defeated in the 1967 ballot, and clearly lacking a single constructive policy with which to persuade the engineers to change their minds, has instead decided to conduct his campaign at the level of the gutter.

He accuses Hugh Scanlon of being elected by means of ballot rigging in 1967. He uses his election address in an attempt to substantiate this smear by listing branches in the Manchester area where there was 'phenomenally high voting' - around 30 per cent.

Typically Boyd chooses this moment to raise the issue instead of challenging the ballot at the time

Destroy democracy

Victory for Boyd in the election - the result will be known next month - would see an attempt by the right wing in the union to swing the AEF in the direction of the Electricians' Union and destroy the entire democratic basis of the union. An indication of the tolerance of any Boyd leadership is seen from a further section of his address in which he castigates that the Communists, Trotskyists and so called 'broad left'... have been endeavouring to arrange all sorts of meetings throughout the country to publicise their successful candidate.

Far from objecting to these meetings, AEF members should welcome the opportunity to get back into the presidency of the union a man who can be an asset to them in their daily fight against the employers.

The problem has been that Hugh Scanlon's approach to the election and in particular the attitude of those who lead his campaign, make it unlikely that his re-election will be the advance for the rank and file that it could be. By concentrating entirely on pulling out the vote for Scanlon, they have failed to involve the rank and file in a thorough-going examination of exactly what policies his candidature should be based on.

Strong policies

While this may win middle-of-the-road support for Scanlon, its long-term effects are disastrous. With all the will in the world, Scanlon cannot be of importance to the rank and file unless he has been elected on the basis of strong policies on questions such as productivity bargaining and disputes procedures and has a membership willing to back him up in any conflict with the right wing over these issues.

Scanlon came to the presidency from the ranks of union officials and his approach to the office has been conditioned by this. In his three years he has done very little to make fundamental changes in the union.

The major difference felt by the membership has been the greater ease with which strikes have been made official.

Otherwise the union has signed the same kind of deals and the division between rank and file and the leadership has remained the same. This means that when Scanlon has found himself a prisoner of right wing policies on the executive he has been unwilling to appeal directly to the membership for support.

It is important that Scanlon wins against Boyd. Under Carron's rule the employers got positive encouragement from the union leadership.

Today that is ended. What we now need is to go a step further and by electing a president on the basis of a militant policy, to ensure that the membership gets active encouragement and practical service from the leadership.

AEF snub for ICI prod deal

TEESSIDE:- ICI's proposed productivity deal, the Weekly Staff Agreement, received its biggest blow yet from a mass meeting of engineering union members last Friday.

A meeting of all AEF members at Wilton, ICI's largest complex, decided overwhelmingly to maintain their opposition to non-craft union members using their tools.

This is an important decision because the ICI management have made it plain that flexibility is essential to their proposals. The

vote was in effect for or against WSA, a fact recognised by all concerned.

This was stressed particularly by L Edmundson, AEF national executive member, who addressed the meeting. His attitude was 'never mind if the management are asking for too much, the important thing is to leave the door open and let the council decide how much to sell.'

Some indication of how much the officials are prepared to sell was given by H Robson. Teesside

district AEF secretary, when he remarked this week: 'When we sell our birthright we want a good price'. But this attitude has now been firmly rejected by the membership.

The decision could be a lead not only to other unions, but also to other ICI sites across the country in the fight against WSA.

The problem now for the AEF is not to become isolated and to take the initiative with a demand for a substantial pay rise with no strings attached.

ALL PRINTERS MUST ECHO FLEET ST DEMAND

by Ross Pritchard

THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER STRIKE this week has shown the way for the majority of printing union members employed outside Fleet Street. The slogan '25 per cent now - no strings' must be taken up by the industry as a whole.

The welcome, if surprising, militancy shown by Richard Briginshaw, joint general secretary of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades, must be applied to the claim by the majority of printing workers who are employed outside Fleet Street for a £6 a week, no strings wage award.

Given the record of the leaders of the print unions, including Briginshaw, many workers are insisting that no concessions are given to productivity clauses or manning agreements in these wage demands.

The bosses can afford to pay without any concessions from the workers. The phoney figures concocted by the newspaper owners - they don't take into account the more profitable part of their vast empires - which show they are on the breadline, must be exposed by socialists.

Bosses can afford increase

democratic function in society and not reflect the personal prejudices of their owners inserted between the glossy adverts.

No strings and extend the claim to all printworkers must be the slogan for all printworkers.

Closure shock

MORE THAN 1500 production workers at the Erith, Kent, and Greenwich, S E London, factories of Submarine Cables Ltd face a bleak future if plans for the run-down of their factories by the parent company, Standard Telephones and Cables, are pushed through.

The announcement of the run-down and of the first 300 redundancies came as a shock to many workers as Submarine Cables had only recently been taken over by STC from AEI-GEC combine.

Many local trade unionists and shop stewards, angered at the arrogant attitude of the STC management, see the redundancies at the Erith plant as the final straw for a town where over 20 factories and 7000 jobs have vanished in the last two years.

Late next week

NEXT WEEK'S issue of Socialist Worker will be printed later in the week in order to include up-to-date comment on the election results. Special arrangements have been made to deliver papers to the main centres and every effort will be made to ensure that postal subscribers receive their copies as quickly as possible.

McCann and Devlin offer only alternative in Ulster

by Chris Russell

THE executive of the Northern Ireland Labour Party last week refused to endorse Derry Labour Party's nomination of Eamonn McCann to fight the seat in the general election.

But both the Derry and Coleraine parties decided to go ahead and nominate McCann, even though they expect to be expelled. McCann's campaign will be fought on four main issues: housing, unemployment, British troops, and anti-Unionist unity.

House building is carried out by the Northern Ireland Housing Trust and local authorities. These agencies have a joint debt of over £100m.

This means that almost the entire investment grant goes to pay

off the interest incurred on this debt to the banks.

McCann wants all house building to come under the Central Housing Authority with the central executive of the authority elected by the tenants and the debt cancelled.

Although there have been massive state subsidies for private industrialists investing in the Six Counties, the government has no control over them. When profits start to fall, these firms are only too quick to get out.

McCann wants the state to set up industries under workers' control.

McCann says of the British troops: 'The only reason the army came on to our streets was that interests of British capitalism were threatened. They came in to protect profits.'

But the demand for the withdrawal of the troops cannot be isolated he says. It must form part of wider ranging demands for a whole economic transformation.

In Mid-Ulster, the Republicans will be supporting Bernadette Devlin, but the Catholic middle-class are worried about her socialist policies. They are likely to put up their own candidate, Michael Cunningham, against her.

So here the local businessmen have to discard their anti-Unionist unity posture and reveal their true class interests by attacking the socialist candidate.

One thing is quite clear: it is only the socialists who can provide a real alternative for the exploited people in the Six Counties and break the stranglehold of big business.



DUNDEE:- The picture shows some of the 2000 building workers who demonstrated in the town last Thursday. In all, 6000 building workers are on strike in Dundee in protest against rising unemployment in the construction industry. Workers claim that 11,280 houses in the city are unfit to live in, while at least 600 builders are on the dole.

Slogans on the march included: 'Houses, hospitals, schools - not planes, tanks and bombs'. A resolution carried unanimously by the strikers demanded the immediate demolition of all derelict property in the city and a crash building programme financed out of arms expenditure.

Ottery strikers stick out for victory

OTTERY ST MARY, DEVON:- The strike for parity with the national average wage and a closed shop by the 300 'former employees' of Otter Mill Switchgear is still solid as it enters its sixth week.

The dispute seems to be a test case for small factories in the South West. The men have been fighting not only the firm, who have given them the sack, but the police, local newspapers and the General and Municipal Workers Union.

The GMWU has not made the strike official, though the Electricians and the Metal Mechanics' unions have. It was only after an angry picket by 60 GMWU members of a meeting which their district secretary, Fred Walker, was to attend and threats of a mass resignation that the union agreed to pay them strike money.

This was announced to a strike meeting on Friday 5 June after negotiations between management and officials at Bristol, which failed to settle the dispute. At Bristol, the management refused to 're-employ' the strikers.

Fred Walker, who seems determined to get any settlement, regardless of the strikers' demands, told the mass meeting:

'Had the management re-employed you, I would have recommended a return to work so that negotiations could begin.'

But most of the strikers realise that this would lose all the advantage which they have gained by putting six weeks of pressure on the company.

Union officials are now taking up the dispute with the parent company (Drake, Gorham & Skull Ltd.) at national level at York.

Men determined

Meanwhile the management have placed large advertisements in the local papers announcing vacancies on the shop floor in yet another attempt to break the strike.

But these attacks merely make the men more determined. Arrangements have been made for a social on Saturday and for a 'March of the Underpaid' through Exeter, in collaboration with members of the strike committee which steered the Centrax workers to their victory after a 21-week strike.

Donations to: P Coward, 83 Slade Close, Ottery St Mary, Nr Exeter, Devon.

ANGUISHED

The bosses' anguished cries that they may have to shut down some of their papers must be countered with socialist demands for nationalisation of the means of production under workers' control.

By their very existence, the millionaire press has threatened the freedom and democracy they fondly consider they embody.

When the bosses say they cannot afford to pay the just demands of the workers in the industry, then socialists must point the way for society as a whole to control the industry.

Then newspapers could perform a

NOTICES

SCOTTISH REGION IS weekend school: Revolution, the Labour Party and the capitalist system in crisis. Free Gardeners' Hall, York Place (off Leith Walk) Edinburgh. Sat 13 June 2pm John Palmer. Sun 14 June, 2pm Chris Harman 2s per day.

NEWCASTLE IS public meeting. John Palmer on the election. 8pm Sun 14 June Bridge Hotel.

THE JUNE DAYS, 16-21 - a socialist conference at Exeter University. Spkrs will include Paul Foot, Ken Loach, Tony Cliff, Duncan Hallas and Terry Barrett. Films shown will inc Memories of Underdevelopment, The Big Flame and Hornsey Affair. Details from Paul Mackney, conference secretary, Flat 4, Penn House, 14 Pennsylvania Road, Exeter, Devon.

BIRMINGHAM IS public meeting Sun 14 June 7.30pm Digbeth Civic Hall. Tony Cliff on Productivity Deals.

NOT A PENNY ON THE RENT 1970: up-to-date version inc lessons of GLC tenants' campaign. Published by United Tenants' Action Ctee. 1s 6d each inc post (50 copies or more 9d each) from Sean Dunne, 223c Wood St London E17.

CASE CON for revolutionary social work. New radical social work magazine out now. Meeting to help determine policy and set up revolutionary social work organisation on Wed 17 June, 7pm, N W Polytechnic, 62 Highbury Grove N5. Copies 1s 6d inc post; 19 Lidfield Rd London N16.

WHICH WAY FOR INDUSTRY? IS industrial conference, Birmingham 28 June, to discuss policy and strategy. Credentials 3s from 6 Cottons Gdns, E2. Transport from London available.

SWANSEA IS: weekend school 20-21 June with Tony Cliff, Chris Harman. Details: F Clark 90 Bryn Road, Swansea

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