

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Railmen show industrial action only way to shake Tories

PAY: USE YOUR MUSCLE FOR MORE

WELL DONE THE RAILWAYMEN! Thanks to magnificent, nationwide solidarity action and a thumping vote in the government-imposed ballot, you have shown every trade unionist that the Tories' wage policy can be dented and the full might of their anti-union laws ignored.

Dented and ignored—but not yet defeated. Even though the massive support for industrial action put some backbone into the rail union leaders, they still flouted the declared wishes of their members by compromising on the full claim.

And 13½ per cent on the average railway worker's wages will scarcely keep him ahead of accelerating prices, taxes and rents in the next year.

The crucial lesson of the railways dispute is that, however meagre the final settlement, it was achieved only by the use of industrial action. If the workers had sat back and left it to their leaders, the final compromise would almost certainly have been less than 10 per cent.

The Tories are annoyed by the size of the railmen's settlement and the grotesque legal tangle they caught themselves in with the use of the Industrial Relations Act.

But there is no room for complacency in the trade union movement. The Tories will not jettison the Act. They will use it with greater care and preparation in future.

The truth is that the Act is having a serious affect on wages and conditions NOW—in those sectors where union leaders fight shy of a confrontation with the government and prefer to settle for a pittance and the quiet life.

Thirty-eight settlements have been reached since the miners' triumph in February. Two covered workers in industries geared to coal mining and were in line with the Wilberforce award.

What they accepted

80,000 shipbuilding manual:	6.0 per cent
400,000 teachers:	9.6 per cent
100,000 steelworkers:	10.0 per cent
53,000 ICI manuals:	8.5 per cent

BLUSTER

Of the remaining 36, only five gained more than 10 per cent. Nine were above 9 per cent and more than half were less than 8 per cent. Most disturbing aspect of these figures is that they include industries with powerful union organisation and allegedly tough, left-wing leaders.

They include ICI manual workers (8½ per cent) and shipbuilding where union chiefs like Dan McGarvey settled for 6 per cent—less than half the expected rise in the cost of living for the next 12 months.

For all their bluster against the government and the law, the union leaders are using the cover of the Act to accept meagre increases.

At the engineering union conference on Monday, Hugh Scanlon called for the full mobilisation of the union to fight the anti-union law. Manchester engineering workers, left in isolation by Scanlon during their sit-ins, know how much faith they can place in these platform promises.

Where workers' wages are concerned, the one elementary lesson that must be rammed home week in and week out is this: the Tories can be defeated only when we use our industrial muscle, our collective strength and organisation at rank and file level.

To abandon industrial action in favour of leaving the fight solely to the union leaders will result in a savage slump in workers' living standards—to the great joy of the Tories and the profiteers whom they serve.

New court threat?

TUESDAY'S decision by the Appeal Court in favour of the Transport Workers Union on the container issue is not so much a victory for the unions against the NIRC as a political compromise by the Tories in a bid to head off a national docks strike. And the dangerous outcome could be that if unions are not responsible for their stewards then the NIRC will take direct punitive action against rank and file leaders.

Rebuff for witch-hunt

MONDAY'S Daily Mail alleged in a full-page article that Liverpool International Socialists had enticed a schoolboy away from his parents' home and that IS teachers had taken over the local Teachers' Association. A statement by Liverpool IS branch says:

1. The "boy" concerned is 18 years old and far from being "wooed away from home" was thrown out with police assistance at 12.30 on a Sunday morning and driven by his father to an IS member's house.
2. All the Mail's information came from branch circulars which his mother had stolen from him and passed on to a prospective Tory councillor.
3. As for Tory MP Tim Fortescue's fear that IS teachers "have penetrated and taken over" the Liverpool Teachers' Association, we only wish this were true. However this body is firmly in the control of head teachers, all of whom are opposed to our ideas.

Our influence in the union was on the Young Teachers' Committee where, with other left-wing teachers, we frequently gained majority votes. But this democratically-controlled body has recently been disbanded by the union's general committee.

Otherwise we fight within general union meetings like other trade unionists. If we achieve majority votes this is democracy, something we can hardly expect Mr Fortescue to be familiar with.

'Court won't stop our jobs fight'
—DEFIANT DOCKERS



IN DIRECT DEFIANCE of a National Industrial Relations Court order, London dockers this week continued their siege of the Chobham Farm inland container depot in Stratford.

On Tuesday all the pickets were adamant that neither they nor their stewards would have any truck with the Tory courts. Reactions varied from defiant humour to straight denunciation.

'They're going to move the NIRC into Australia House,' said one picketing docker. 'That's surely the most appropriate place for the employers to stage their kangaroo trials.'

Said another: 'What court? As far as we are concerned it has no authority. We are

by SW Reporter

defending our lives by direct action and we will continue to do so until we win. This law and this court are the direct agents of the employers and government and we will defy them.'

Commenting on the Appeal Court's decision to repay the £55,000 container blacking fine to the Transport Workers

Union, one of the pickets said he thought that the court might move for sanctions against individual shop stewards instead.

'If this happens the Tory government had better start a crash prison building programme because we will fight them all the way. We will need solidarity action and we will get it. The sooner this law is smashed the better,' he said.

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WORLD NEWS

Murder by pollution in Vietnam

by Tim Shallice

FOR the past week the newspapers and television have been full of the Stockholm Conference, whose supposed purpose is to increase 'every nation's responsibility for the consequences of its actions on the environment of others'.

The conference is made a tragic farce by the fact, hinted at but never openly stated, that its most powerful member, the US, is engaged in by far the greatest destruction ever of the environment of another country—South Vietnam.

The aim of the US has been to so destroy rural South Vietnam that the peasants would move under governmental control and the Vietcong would lose their refuges and their power-base. This policy has failed strategically, but through defoliation, bombing, burning, and even bulldozing, it is working extremely well technically.

Forests cover more than half of Vietnam and croplands much of the rest. About 10,000 square miles, mainly forest, has been sprayed with herbicides, much of it more than once.

The first spray kills off mangrove forests, and will also remove much of a thick tropical hardwood forest. A second spray, a year later, will get through to the ground and kill off the regenerating shoots. The area is then likely to be invaded by bamboo, which prevents the valuable hardwoods from growing again.

The sprays also affect land miles from the regions actually sprayed. Claims for compensation, particularly for blighted fruit in the rice-paddies in the agricultural Mekong Delta region, where only the relatively mild sprays are used, are far too great for the South Vietnamese government to pay.

Craters

The strongest defoliant is mainly used on the rice-paddies of the liberated regions to try to starve the inhabitants and the Vietcong. As little as one ounce of this is sufficient to produce general paralysis or death in man.

The Americans have used twice as much explosive in Indochina than they used in the whole world in the Second World War. The vast majority of this has been in South Vietnam, about 20 times more than in North Vietnam by the end of 1971.

Areas of South Vietnam now look like pictures of the Moon: there are about 21 million bomb craters, on average 30ft in diameter and 15ft deep. The craters fill with water and become breeding grounds for malaria.

The craters will not disappear. Areas of Okinawa which were heavily shelled in the Second World War are still barren and there are even the First World War craters at Verdun still.

Ten per cent of the agricultural land of South Vietnam has had to be abandoned and much of the rest is much more difficult to cultivate.

The economically important forests have been even more affected. Germany was virtually renewed 20 years after the Second World War, but the destruction there was mainly buildings. The destruction in South Vietnam is both greater and much deeper—20 years after this war ends South Vietnam will still be terribly scarred.

One group of environmentalists, though—the conservationists—have some grounds for pleasure. Tigers, supposedly nearing extinction in India, have increased rapidly over the past 24 years in South Vietnam. They have learned to move towards the sound of gunfire for a novel prey-wounded men.

CAPE TOWN: HABITS DIE SLOW

by W. Enda



South African police beating women students with batons

THE South African police have found a new diversion—cracking the white skulls of the highly privileged English-speaking students in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

These students are, on the whole, liberals and Christians, and therefore anti-government. They want the rights of free speech and peaceful protest. The original demand, two weeks ago—equal education for blacks—has been lost amid the reaction to police brutality.

The police are not retaliating against militant demonstrators charging police cordons or throwing stones and placards. The South African students run away when confronted with the cordon, but otherwise they take their punishment passively.

The government condones the police action completely. Prime Minister Vorster knows quite well that the first baton charge on 200 liberal students demonstrating peacefully on the steps of Cape Town Cathedral was totally unprovoked. But he backed the police fully.

Three days later he said in parliament: 'Right-thinking people in South Africa and throughout the world are sick and tired of this

sort of thing [peaceful protests]. If the police had not acted in this way, then I would have been disappointed in them because it would have been an indication that we are slipping off the road of the maintenance of law and order.'

The real crime of those 200 white students was their support—across the apartheid line—of the 1142 students expelled from the African University of the North following action over the expulsion of their delegate, Tiro, who had given an anti-apartheid speech at the annual graduation ceremony three weeks ago.

EXPELLED

Lectures are being boycotted in nearly every African, Indian or Coloured university and college. This is in answer to the call for solidarity by the all-black South African Students Organisation (SASO).

Black power speeches ring on the campuses. Three hundred students have been expelled from an Indian technical college after a sit-in.

SASO excludes white students—it sees them as inevitably committed to the system. In the past they have inhibited the building of a black leadership.

The white students were slow to move over the Tiro expulsion. The all-white Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, well-known for its liberalism, tail-ended the blacks by merely setting aside a half-day for protests.

The 200 white Cape Town students took the initiative among the whites by going on to the streets—or at least on to the steps of the cathedral.

BANNED

After they had held their placards quietly for a couple of hours, one student produced a megaphone and started addressing passers-by about the reasons for the demonstration. He suggested that the 70 police present might use their time better.

The police commander took exception to this and told him not to use the megaphone. The student then announced that the commander would explain to the public his reasons for banning the megaphone.

Three policemen immediately seized the student and began beating him. Other students started chanting 'police brutality'.

Then all hell broke loose with the batons. Liberal whites were particularly incensed when police charged into the cathedral itself and continued to beat them between the pews.

The issue of the expulsion of the African students now seems to be forgotten by the white students. Every day there are police charges against white demonstrators defying the blanket ban on gatherings and marches in university cities.

STRIKE

But the government is well aware of the background to the present situation. It is a background of increasing solidarity amongst the oppressed blacks—a willingness to risk expulsions and jail.

There has also been a significant increase of militancy among African workers—318 African bus drivers in Johannesburg went on strike and were jailed on the same day as the first police attack on white students.

South Africa's white rulers feel less and less confident about the future. They can see nothing but more baton charges, more imprisonments and ultimately more massacres as the only guarantee of their own survival.

Allende turns to 'law and order'

by Jose Martinez

'THERE is an alternative revolutionary road besides that of violent destruction of the existing institutional and constitutional system', Chile's President Allende told the country's Congress a fortnight ago.

Chilean workers and poor peasants, however, are rapidly learning otherwise.

The attempts of Allende's government to transform Chilean society are grinding to a halt. The ruling coalition grows ever more shaky and the state is turning to violence against the left.

The government has now announced that it is to pay compensation for the nationalisation of the telephone company owned by the giant American monopoly, ITT, which tried to organise a coup against Allende's government 18 months' ago.

Last week the army was used to throw striking workers out of a transport firm they had occupied. The firm is nationalised, but the man running it is an army general, Brady Ross.

Ordered

And in Chile's third largest city, Concepcion, a member of the revolutionary left party, MIR, was killed after the 'forces of order' had tried to break up a demonstration including rank and file members of four of the parties which are in Allende's government.

The police were ordered into action by the local governor, Vladimir Lenin (sic) Chavez, who belongs to the Central Committee of the fifth governmental party, the Communist Party. His action was supported by the national leaders of the party.

The reasons for this use of force are

simple.

Allende's idea of 'peacefully moving towards socialism' has meant carrying out only those measures which the middle class, who have the majority in Congress and dominate the army, are prepared to tolerate. So for the first year or so the government seemed to make enormous progress.

But now it has reached the point where the middle-class leaders and generals are saying: 'Enough'.

The main middle-class party, the Christian Democrats, have been organising massive street demonstrations against the government. In the countryside, particularly in the south, landowners and better-off farmers have already taken up arms to resist peasant moves to divide the land.

Although the government calls for 'order' and obedience to the law, it cannot stop such middle-class moves, because the army officers will not move against the class from which they themselves spring.

Within the government parties themselves there are two different reactions to this situation.

The first is that of Allende himself and of the Communist Party. They claim that the only way to stop the growth of the right wing is to appease the middle class, form an alliance with the Christian Democrats, and prevent any agitation from the revolutionary left.

The Communist Party supports the use

of the police to stop 'violence' from 'either the ultra right or the ultra left'.

The Communists take this line so seriously that after the incident in Concepcion they demanded that the other government parties condemn the left-wing demonstrations and break off all relations with the MIR. Otherwise, the Communists said, they would leave the government, thus ensuring its destruction at the hands of the right wing.

At the same time, Communist trade union officials urge the workers to moderate their wage claims, to avoid strike action, and to push up productivity.

But at a time of rapidly rising prices, such a policy can only cause increased confusion among workers.

Compromise

Some, disillusioned with government promises, are even turning to the Christian Democrat Party. But others are drawing a different conclusion: that the Communists are not really revolutionary, and that it is the non-governmental revolutionary left that deserves working-class support.

The other governmental parties are not prepared to go as far as the Communists along the road to compromise. They know that their own rank-and-file members are increasingly influenced by the arguments of the revolutionaries. A section of Allende's own Socialist Party is regarded as closer to the MIR than to the Communists.

The revolutionary left argues that there is only one way to prevent the gains made by workers over the past 18 months from being destroyed—to mobilise the full strength of the working class to carry the struggle forward, to gain support from the mass of peasants by encouraging occupations of all the big estates and large farms, and to arm the workers so as to be able to maintain the power of the army and police officers.

If a substantial number of workers can be persuaded to break with the vacillating policies of the government, then a movement can develop which will show the others that there is an alternative to the policy of making concessions to the right.

If not, there is a real possibility that the Christian Democrats and elements further to the right will gain from the growing disillusion among workers with the reforms of Allende's regime.

IS Books

UNTIL the opening of our new bookshop, IS BOOKS will be closed for retail sales from Monday 9 June.

But we will continue to expand the mail order side of the business, and a new expanded booklist is available on request. IS branches will be able to arrange for the collection of bulk orders.

Write to: IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

Socialist Worker

For Workers Control and International Socialism, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2 8DN

Threat to free speech

THE FACT that two Irishmen have been arrested and charged with sedition, on the basis of speeches they are alleged to have made in Hyde Park, has created very little stir. It ought to.

What is sedition? The legal position was summed up by the judge who tried John Burns and H M Hyndman, pioneer socialists, for this 'crime':

'A seditious intention is an intention to bring into hatred and contempt, or to excite disaffection against the person of her Majesty, her heirs or successors, or the government and constitution of the United Kingdom, as by law established, or either House of Parliament, or the administration of justice, or to excite her Majesty's subjects to attempt otherwise than by lawful means the alteration of any matter in Church or State by law established, or to raise discontent or disaffection amongst Her Majesty's subjects, or to promote feelings of ill-will or hostility between different classes of such subjects.'

Now this is comprehensive enough to satisfy the most fascist-minded Greek colonel. If it could be enforced then practically everything said in left-wing meetings or written in the left-wing press would lead to prison sentences. Socialists are necessarily concerned to 'raise discontent and disaffection' and 'to promote feelings of ill-will or hostility' against a class of 'Her Majesty's subjects', namely, the capitalist class. As a matter of fact we want to send Her Majesty packing, too, together with 'her heirs and successors'!

Burns and Hyndman were prosecuted for sedition in 1886 because they had taken the lead in organising militant demonstrations of unemployed workers. The next time our ruling classes railroaded socialists to prison under these Acts was in 1925 when 12 leaders of the Communist Party were convicted. The evidence against them was that they had been saying and writing the sort of things that appear each week in Socialist Worker.

Make no mistake about it. The resurrection of this ancient law is a deadly threat to the working-class movement. If convictions are obtained in the present case the law will be used against others. The widest possible defence campaign must be organised. Labour MPs, like Michael Foot, who has written so eloquently about democracy and free speech, must be called upon to translate their words into action.

Political trial

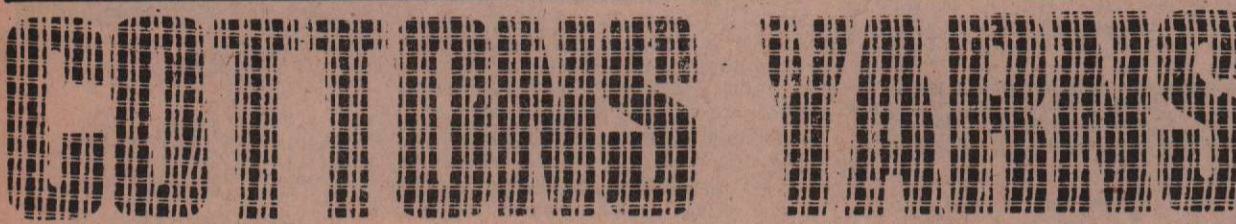
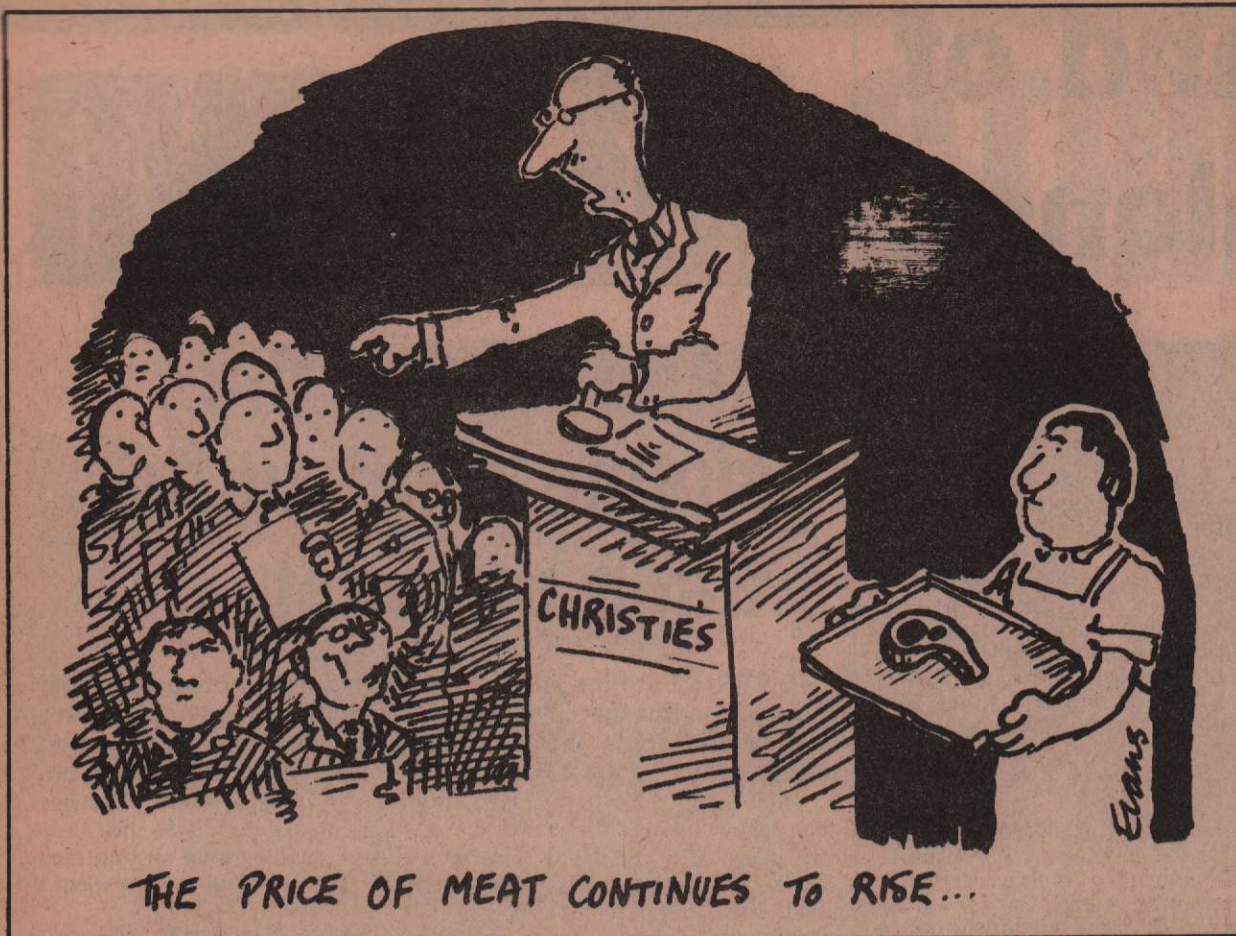
Of course this case is not an isolated incident. There is no doubt that our rulers, seriously worried about the rising tide of opposition, are consciously and deliberately resorting to all the weapons in their legal armoury to weaken the left. The case of the Longanet 13 is another political trial. The charge, 'mobbing and rioting to the terror, alarm and intimidation of the lieges' is a further example of the use of ancient legislation.

More recent laws are also of service to the bosses. A scandalous case, the prosecution of three leaders of the Anti-Internment League—John Flavin, John Gray and Michael O'Kane—has been dragging on for months. They are charged with 'conspiracy to cause a breach of sections of the Public Order Act (1936)'. This Act was supposed to be aimed at Mosley's fascists. Its use against the Anti-Internment League is a straightforward attempt to suppress political opposition to Tory policy in Ireland.

Trials like that of the Stoke Newington 8 and the forthcoming case of those accused of the Aldershot bombing while not, on the face of it, concerned with free speech, are in fact part of the same pattern of 'legal' repression. They are exploited to whip up a hysterical 'law and order' campaign which is directed against the left.

The prosecution under the sedition laws is the most serious of all. It represents a real escalation of legal repression. No evidence will be offered that the accused **did** anything at all. They are placed in jeopardy solely because of what they are alleged to have **said**. It may well be that they are falsely accused, even on this basis. But others are certainly guilty. They are all those who denounce the hypocrisy and lies of a society based on violence and robbery which puts property above life and profits above the needs of working people.

Remember, the right of relatively free speech we have enjoyed in Britain and which is now under attack was not a gift from God or the Tories. It had to be fought for. It was won by the determination and self sacrifice of men like Hetherington and Carlisle who, in the last century, endured repeated prison sentences for exposing the corruption and exploitation of capitalist Britain. It was won by the efforts of tens of thousands of working men and women who defied the capitalist class and its legal system. It can be defended successfully only by the same method. Political trials are a threat to the liberties of each and every one of us.



Meanyful

HOWEVER bad our own home-grown trade union leaders may be, socialists have had to admit that they were marginally preferable to the American variety. Now even that argument has disappeared.

Visitor to these shores last week was George Meany, boss of the AFL-CIO, American equivalent of the TUC. Vic Feather and his cohorts rushed to embrace their bureaucratic cousin and presented him with an exciting round of visits—including tea with the Rt Hon Maurice Macmillan, the employment minister.

To the acute embarrassment of the knights of Congress House, Meany refused to go. 'He's the enemy,' he pointed out, a simple fact lost on his British counterparts. And just to rub the point in, he added that back home he wouldn't introduce his dog to President Nixon.

We need hardly point out that Meany's bark is worse than his bite. But at least he has a few teeth left.

VIC FEATHER does have one treat in store for us. He will speak at a meeting of the Haldane Society on 3 July on 'Law and the trade unions'. The talk is 'in honour' of the late D N Pritt, QC who devoted most of his life to writing and speaking on the joys of Stalin's Russia, the wonders of 'workers' democracy' in that country and its delightful labour code that effectively outlawed trade unions. Vic's talk in honour of such a record may include some interesting insights into his real attitude to anti-union legislation.

Landslide

A RECORD of sorts has been chalked up by London's land profiteers. Developers have just paid £1 million for ¼ of an acre in St John's Wood.

The site adjoins a railway line and overlooks Lord's cricket ground. Plans for the site include 50 luxury flats and penthouses, an underground car park, garages, offices and a showroom. Overjoyed by their latest contribution to easing the plight of



MEANY: no tea, no sympathy

London's homeless, the estate agents declared: 'It is difficult to hazard a guess at present of the price of the flats but they will cost £6000 to £7000 a room.'

Orange squash

THE ROW over the sale of the engineering union's Edinburgh HQ to the Orange Order, announced in this column two weeks ago, rumbles on. The premises at 1 Blenheim Place were sold at half their valued price.

When local AUEW branches objected to the sale to an anti-union organisation, district secretary Jack Keddie said the union had no official connection with the sale and added that the union only rented the premises.

Trouble is that the Valuation Roll for the City of Edinburgh states that the proprietor and occupier of the offices was 'the Amalgamated Engineering Union per the secretary'. The secretary being Brother Keddie.

Now the officials are saying there has been a 'mistake'—the property was actually owned by the union's social committee who let it to the union.

All of which is grist to the angry members' mill. They will want to know why the truth wasn't told to the Assessor, who were the other bidders for the rooms and why it was advertised for sale at all when it was covered by a conservation order.

TOUCHING scene in Belfast: Colonel Winford of the First Battalion of the Paratroopers (of Bloody Sunday fame) dropped in to see Jean Moore, head of the women's section of the Orange Loyalist Association of Workers, before he returned to England. They were on first-name terms and Winford presented her with a Para beret and a plaque, accompanied by a fond, farewell kiss.

Ginger wine

THIS MONTH'S Fabian Newsletter, journal of the right-wing ginger group in the Labour Party, carries an advertisement for the Union Wine Club, offering the comrades wines at low prices, educational literature and trips to the wine-growing areas.

Readers keen to get a cheap bevvy ought to know that the club is run by the same outfit behind the Directors Wine Club, owned by a subsidiary of Watney Mann, a generous contributor to Tory Party funds.

The idea for a trade unionists' offshoot of the Directors Wine Club came from Lord Delacourt-Smith, gensec of the Post Office Engineering Union. Fortunately, the class system neatly maintains a division between the two clubs. Directors pay £2 a year and get fancier wines while trade unionists chip in with a more modest £1 for their cheap plonk.

Out of court

FREE SPEECH, Tory style: Eton and Slough Labour Party was warned last week that it could face the seizure of its assets and the imprisonment of its agent if a resolution criticising the National Industrial Relations Court were sent to the court.

Miss Joan Lestor, MP for Eton and Slough, announced this last week when she wrote a letter of complaint to Maurice Macmillan, Secretary for Employment. She said that the local party had passed a resolution criticising the functioning of the NIRC and intended to send a copy of it to the court and to the press.

'But a legal adviser at the Commission on Industrial Relations advised them that if the resolution were sent to the court the Labour Party could be held to be in contempt of the court,' she said.

Dead line

CAUTIONARY NOTE for any bowler-hats who chance to read this paper and think 'working to rule' on the railways is a heinous crime: An inquest in South London has heard that a railman was killed because he and his workmates were not strictly observing the rule book.

Dominco Borgese was one of a four-man gang working on the rail track a quarter of a mile outside London Bridge station. He was killed by a train and it was said at the inquest that he was acting as an unqualified lookout man. An NUR official told the coroner that the rule book forbade gangs to work on the tracks without a lookout man who had passed safety tests.



What to demand of Labour and unions...

LAST WEEK'S letter criticising Socialist Worker's tendency towards 'Tory bashing' raised some important questions but failed to answer them. My criticism of recent editorials and articles is not that they spend too much time attacking the Tories but that they do not suggest any realistic alternatives or means of achieving them.

Furthermore they fail to make clear that such legislation as the Industrial Relations Act and the proposed Housing Finance Bill is part of a far more general offensive on the part of the capitalist class, acting through their lackeys in the Conservative Party against the working class. As such this demands a general political offensive.

Of course it is important to fight the Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Bill every inch of the way. But the fight must be a political one.

The strategy for fighting the Industrial Relations Act suggested in last week's editorial was correct as far as it went. But it was one that any militant trade unionist could have advanced. Something more is required from marxist revolutionaries. As such we should be proposing a strategy that would, if adopted by the working class, eventually result in their seeing the need for a revolutionary transformation of society.

Such a strategy would be one which puts the onus on the reformist leaderships of both the trade unions and the Labour Party to adopt, campaign for and implement a

clearly defined socialist programme. At the same time it would make it clear that we as revolutionaries do not think they will be able to. Only through the experience of reformist betrayal will the working class see that we are right.

A fight against the different elements of the Tory offensive cannot then be separated from the fight to kick out the Tories altogether and to replace them by a Labour government.

Such a fight would have to consist of more than sloganeering in May Day issues of Socialist Worker. It would involve building Councils of Action to co-ordinate the struggle in the localities. It would not however mean giving the impression as the Socialist Labour League does that the election of a Labour government would be a solution to the problems of the working class and which regards any other action, be it against redundancies or against the operation of the Industrial Relations Act, as a diversion.

On the contrary we should continually point out that this is not the case and that the only real way forward for the working class is the building of a revolutionary party dedicated to destroying capitalism once and for all. We should also stress that we will fight with the working class until they see the need for such a party and for such a transformation of society.—KEN MULLER, London SW4.

LIVELIEST LETTERS ON THE LEFT

Democracy—crucial issue for the Liaison Committee

I ATTENDED the national conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions as I have on the previous two occasions as a delegate from my trades council.

An early speaker from Haringey Trades Council presented effectively the IS case for local liaison committees. This was later reinforced by an electricians' delegate from Glasgow arguing for local committees which could formulate resolutions for discussion at conference, replacing the current practice of voting on a 'declaration', which is passed unanimously, but with no possibility of amendment, and hence no possibility of articulating the experiences and aspirations of the masses of advanced workers attending the conference.

It seems to me that this issue of democracy, which IS has previously decided to leave on one side in favour of concentrating on specific disagreements with the Communist Party on the conduct of the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act, must now become central in the interests of the whole question of the health and combative power of the workers.

The CP's arguments rest on two planks, both of which should be relentlessly challenged from now on. Firstly they say that a 'declaration' is preferable to resolutions because this 'prevents' the delegates from being attacked by the right wing (!), and because the business of circulating resolutions, with amendments, and branches mandated, would take too long. This position must be hammered by our press—by argument, not assertions—

with statements requested from the Liaison Committee.

Secondly, and much more difficult, they say that the standing organisation of the Liaison Committee, which does the donkey work, has never refused an application to attend from any shop stewards' committee of a large factory, site, pit or dock. We should seek representation on this basis as well as pressing for local committees with delegates from genuine union organisations.—TED PARKER, Lewisham, London SE1.

Who decides?

MANY delegates to the conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions on Saturday were disturbed at the lack of democracy, notably the refusal to allow any motions or amendments.

In fact it was more in the nature of a rally than a serious policy-making conference. Can Socialist Worker inform us:

1. Who decided on the way in which the conference was to be run?
2. Who wrote the declaration issued and on what basis?
3. How are officers elected?—M PEARCE, delegate Bristol Trades Council.

YOU continue to condemn lack of leadership from the Labour Party in the rents struggle but you take the same attitude. Item three of your proposals in your rents pamphlet does no more than say 'Full backing to the tenants' movement in fighting rent rises'.

What the tenants want is not somebody to back them but somebody to TELL them how to take effective action.

I have always said the only reply is to refuse to pay any rent at all to any landlord or council or any interest charges to building societies.

Why does not IS come out with this advice instead of running behind tenants offering to agree to any action they decide to take? The alternatives put to them are excuses for going on paying rent. They have been brainwashed into thinking it is a law of nature. So have you apparently.—TOM BRADDOCK, East Preston.

Not suitable for breakfast

SURPRISINGLY the only paper with the guts to front page the horrifying picture of napalmed Vietnamese children last week was the Daily Telegraph. The rest of Fleet Street was too conscious of the breakfast-time sensibilities of readers to give it such prominence.

Of the thousands of pictures that have poured out of Vietnam none have rammied home the vicious stupidity of the war more forcefully. It showed five children fleeing along a road, the faces contorted in pain and terror.

One of them, a little girl of about seven, was naked. She had torn off her clothing in a desperate effort to escape the burning jelly that was clinging to her.

The Telegraph treated the picture with respect and gave it a rare five columns above a simple caption that explained that South Vietnamese troops had napalmed the children and other civilians—by mistake.

In the Guardian the picture was relegated to the foreign news page inside. The paper preferred to give its front page picture over to Edward Heath fooling around on an ancient Danish organ.

The Times went one better. It gave the photograph similar inside treatment and contrived to carry a single-column story alongside it explaining that a South Vietnamese senator felt that the worst of the war was over.



RON KNOWLES' EYE ON THE PRESS

The senator was clearly not speaking on behalf of the children. And neither was the rest of Fleet Street.

The Mail, Mirror, Sun and Express all gave the picture a phoney 'horror . . . terror . . . hell' feature treatment, garnished with elaborately laboured captions. The cultivated distress of the caption-writers stank of that ersatz compassion that is one of the most offensive features of our popular press.

What was markedly absent from the entire coverage of the ghastly 'accident' was any genuine indignation at the kind of war operation that allows indiscriminate napalm bombing. Perhaps Fleet Street has lost its capacity for rage at the torture of children, and can only display it when commuters are kept waiting.

ALTHOUGH none of the papers was over-anxious to pillory the troops who

napalm children, or even remotely interested in who was responsible for the criminal decision to drop the bombs, they were less reticent over the psychopathic doctor who was found unfit to plead to charges of murdering three babies in a Blackpool Hospital.

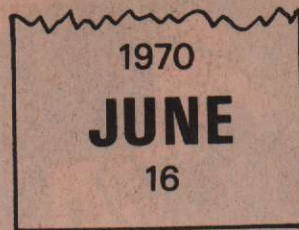
Not satisfied with carrying large pictures of the hapless doctor, the Sun, Mirror, Mail and Express took the disgusting step of printing pictures of the babies.

The Sun used its entire front page for the display, and, for good measure, labelled the doctor as a 'monster' under the headline JEKYLL AND HYDE BABY KILLER. I hope if all makes Rupert Murdoch feel proud.

If his own paper doesn't, maybe the Express will. Loyal readers of the Beaverbrook press may have been somewhat puzzled to find their foreign news page of 5 June dominated by a hymn to Murdoch, complete with portrait of the great man.

The story explained how he had taken over two Sydney papers, thus making him the most powerful newspaper proprietor in Australia. The Express is not normally so lavish in its publicity for rival newspaper-owners, and the uninformed (aren't all Express readers?) were doubtless still bewildered at the end of the piece.

For it managed to overlook completely any mention of the fact that Murdoch recently became a major shareholder in Beaverbrook newspapers.



TWO

—and all for the simple right to be trade unionists...

THE STRIKE at Fine Tubes, Plymouth, is exactly two years' old this week—a fact that says as much about the lethargy of Britain's two biggest trade unions as it does about the courage and determination of the 43 men and women who are still fighting on.

They began their struggle 165-strong on 16 June 1970, withdrawing their labour because the management refused to negotiate with their shop stewards over a pay claim. Some two weeks later they were all told they would be sacked unless they returned to work on management's conditions.

149 held firm. Scabs were recruited and awarded a pay rise more than the union had claimed.

From then on the strike was over the basic issue of management recognition for the right to form independent trade union organisations.

Such a situation should have provided the Fine Tubes workers' unions—the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers and the Transport and General Workers—with the opportunity to take a determined stand and to bring trade unionism to whole new layers of workers in the South West.

Devon has that lushness to it which has caused many a writer to talk of England's green and pleasant land. But for every advantage that nature offers, the lousy wages and conditions of the region's industry more than compensate.

Pitiful

Fine Tubes—a subsidiary of Superior Tubes in the US—came to Plymouth in 1962. Since then it has been joined by many other international firms attracted by government grants and a host of other fringe benefits.

The local development authorities had been pointing these out since the early 1960s. One propaganda brochure for Plymouth included the following: 'Beautiful seaside town, clean fresh air, plenty of new factories. Labour is abundant and cheap and there is no trade union organisation.'

And so the firms came and profited from modern factories often staffed by women who could see no alternative but to work for pitiful wages. The new employers were assisted by the whole atmosphere of Plymouth, a Tory town where the meaning of discipline is stamped into the brains of the people by courtesy of the Royal Navy.

Fine Tubes was the first serious threat to the stern and profitable class structure which kept the workforce loyal and badly paid. From the first, the success or failure of their struggle would determine what happened in many other factories in the area.

The strikers knew all this when they started their struggle. They also knew that they belonged to Britain's two

Story:
Laurie Flynn
Pictures:
Red Saunders

biggest trade unions.

As one of them put it on the first morning of the strike: 'Down here we're two million strong. We just can't fail to beat Fine Tubes.'

Two years later the 43 who are still determined to fight Fine Tubes still believe that they could be two million strong, and more. But their strike has also been an education in the nature and structure of the trade union movement.

'The general opinion among us all is that we have been badly let down by the executives of both unions', says Dick Williams, strike committee secretary. 'If more pressure had been brought to bear early on and really powerful blacking put on, then this strike could have been won very quickly.'

Ruthless

All 43 strikers know this now. They see the immense potential strength of the working-class movement and they see themselves left to fight their battle armed with their own resources and official advice to be 'cautious and reasonable'.

Their employer was ruthless, a liar and a cheat. He could rely on the forces of the press, the law, the good offices of the Engineering Employers Federation and later of Maurice Macmillan himself in his drive to break their spirit.

But all this, said the unions, could be set aside in favour of the pursuit of 'meaningful negotiations'. The tactics necessary to win the strike, blacking and picketing, quickly became an embarrass-



● Convenor Frank Clark: 'Union leaders' militant talk is just for the image. They're professional politicians trying to manage a stage army.'

YEARS ON STRIKE!

1972
JUNE
14



ment to the unions.

When the strike was 15 months old great hopes were held out for a settlement through a Court of Inquiry. In due time it deliberated and reported. Fine Tubes simply refused to abide by its recommendations, which were by no means favourable to the strikers.

In February this year the unions recommended suspension of blacking and picketing in an effort to get 'meaningful talks' with management. At that time the blacking was just beginning to hit home.

Horace Thomas, one of the two strikers who voted against suspension said last week: 'It's more than a bit stupid that we went along with this recommendation from the unions. If you've got your knife in, you should never be persuaded to withdraw it. You should turn it round.'

It had taken the Fine Tubes strike committee six months of solid graft to get the blacking on, travelling round the country and telling a tale that the official machinery of the union should have told for them. Once their decision to abide by the unions' recommendation was taken it took the unions exactly three days to lift the blacking.

When you talk to the strikers, any of them, they will tell you tales of the cold bureaucratic way their battle has been treated by their officials. Not unnaturally they sought redress through the godheads of the British trade union movement, Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones. In that sense they were the victims of the propaganda put about by the commercial and the trade union press.

Frank Clark, 'Fine Tubes' convenor, summarises the situation as follows: 'After the return of the Tory government, I remember reading Jack Jones' militant speeches in the TGWU Record. "We will defeat the Tories," he wrote. But that was for the image.

'I thought then that he and Hugh Scanlon were immensely powerful in a working-class sense. Instead I find that they are professional politicians trying to

manage a stage army.'

If anything the record of most of their local officials is even worse. When the strike committee really started to push for blacking to be extended officially in September 1970, this involved some criticism of the officials.

Immediately the strike leaders became 'communists', 'trouble-makers'. The TGWU threatened to take away Clark's credentials as a shop steward.

And when the committee called a meeting of all TGWU stewards to consider solidarity action, regional officials did everything in their power to undermine a successful outcome.

Now, with the strike two years' old and 43 people left who can do nothing but fight on, the Fine Tubes strikers are pushing hard for the blacking to be put back on.

Bitter

At the mass meeting last Friday, the anger and frustration came tumbling out once again. From the floor, several strikers voiced their bitter disappointment at the lethargy of the unions. Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones were repeatedly described as hot air.

Joyce Walters in particular was very hostile to any more asking for help, asking for the unions to send out letters reversing their announcement that the black had been lifted. 'Don't ask, demand,' she stated.

But you need power to demand and to have your demands met. Fine Tubes is a little strike in what is inevitably seen as a backwater from the vantage of the London head offices of trade unions.

Throughout their strike the Fine Tubes strikers have been greatly assisted by rank and file workers up and down the country who have put the black on, who have dipped deep in their own pockets. But they are collectively convinced that their experience has much

to teach those who are stronger, better organised.

The men and women of Fine Tubes are concerned about union democracy, about how you control union officials,

But they are concerned about other things, too. A strike is like going to school. 'After two years, you've passed through university,' says Frank Clark.

'At the beginning we knew about Communists and Trotskyists and tried to keep away from them because we thought they would give us a bad name,' says Dave Edwards. 'We've learned different now. You begin to find out things about your class you never knew.'

Pat O'Malley is one of their number, too. He was a Marine in Aden, one of the soldiers of the Queen whose duty was to smash the Aden independence movement and who hated independent trade unions because they were at the root of the trouble.

His experience with Fine Tubes has taught him very different and he now studies marxism—the theory and the explanation of that difference.

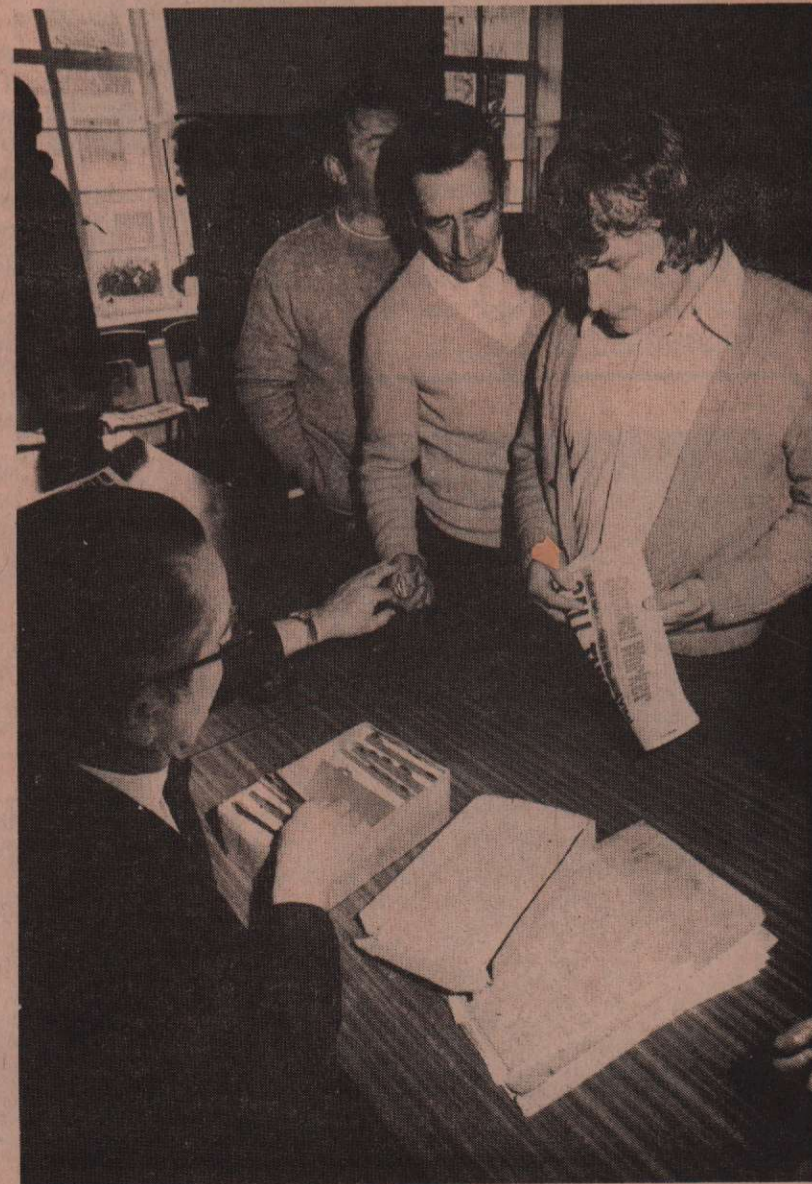
Far from all of them have gone over to revolutionary socialism. But all of them have grown and developed as working class people.

Terry Roberts sums it as follows: 'In struggle and debate, you change your ideas. You cast off the myths you have about lads with long hair, why people are poor or unemployed.

'In short, you stop blaming the victim. You stop being just a Labour voter or in some cases a Tory and start looking for the root causes and the solutions.'

And that is evident in all of them, in their spirit after two hard years of considerable self sacrifice for the right to organise independently of the employer. The best of them are often those whose names you don't know and from whom you didn't get a quote.

● 'Unions must reimpose blacking quickly and officially'—a voice from the floor at last week's strikers' meeting.



● Collecting strike pay for the one hundred and third time. A good paper helps pass the time.

'Don't ask unions to help-demand it'

WHY SOCIALISTS SUPPORT THE CALL FOR ABORTION ON DEMAND

EVERY BABY MUST BE A WANTED B



Working-class women living in cramped accommodation and struggling against rising prices, rents and welfare charges are the main sufferers of reactionary official attitudes to abortion. They are forced to bring up large families because they cannot afford 'legal' abortions and are frightened of squalid backstreet quacks.

ABORTION ON DEMAND: This simple and just call by women has created a furore of opposition from all quarters—the church, doctors, politicians, hospital administrators, anti-abortion organisations and the like.

When you look at this array of opponents it becomes clear that in their fight women are challenging all the prejudices and reactionary attitudes and institutions of our society.

The main argument is that free abortion would encourage women to be permissive. Because sex outside of marriage for women in present day society is considered sinful, the practice of making sure that abortions are difficult and costly, both in terms of money and physical and mental health, ensures that women are kept safely within the confines of marriage.

HYPOCRISY

And in a society that believes that women are naturally inferior and can find fulfilment only through motherhood, the idea that many women don't want children and regard other things, like a job, as more important, is intolerable. The thought that women may actually want more than just a marriage, a home and a family is unbelievable and even if believed is intolerable.

In the forefront of the mounting opposition to abortion is the church. It shouts the loudest for 'the right to life' and all the time that it shouts, it shows its complete hypocrisy when it comes to protecting 'the right to life' of children already born.

Look at the miserable conditions millions of kids are brought up in to see how much

by WENDY HENRY

the church really cares about protecting the lives of children. You don't hear the church shouting so loud when it comes to providing decent homes, decent wages, decent schools and recreation and all the things that actually make up the difference between just existing and really 'living'.

And what about the rights of babies—the right of being wanted and loved, security and happiness and all the rights that unwanted babies never get?

What about protecting the lives of the thousands of women who die each year from backstreet abortions. What does the church care about helping to drive women to despair and suicide by forcing them to have and raise unwanted children?

ALONGSIDE the church in the anti-abortion lobby is the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the institution to which most doctors who are qualified to do abortions belong.

They preach about the dangers of free and easy abortion, reciting the many examples of women that die from abortions. What they conveniently forget to mention is that they are often the main stumbling block to getting an abortion within the safe time limit.

At best the whole involved business of getting a National Health abortion, being passed from pillar to post, from one doctor to another, never being told your full rights, means that by the time the doctors actually get round to doing something, what should have been a simple matter has become a major operation.

At worst their blank refusal to co-operate creates such an effective brick wall that women who haven't

the money for private treatment are forced to undertake the danger and squalor of the backstreet abortion.

Even when medical research comes up with a painless and safe way, like the new suction method, instead of being pleased at the minimisation of risk, the doctors' opposition increases threefold.

This should come as no surprise when you realise they stand to lose a fortune if National Health abortions become readily available. It's no accident that all the time

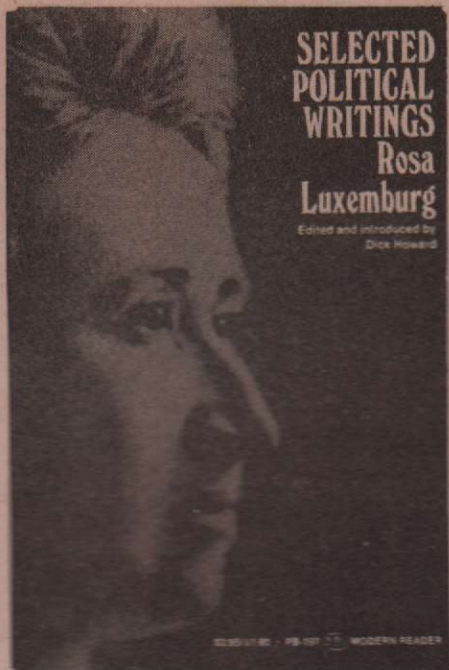
they are spouting and moral reas abortions they thousands from Street clinics.

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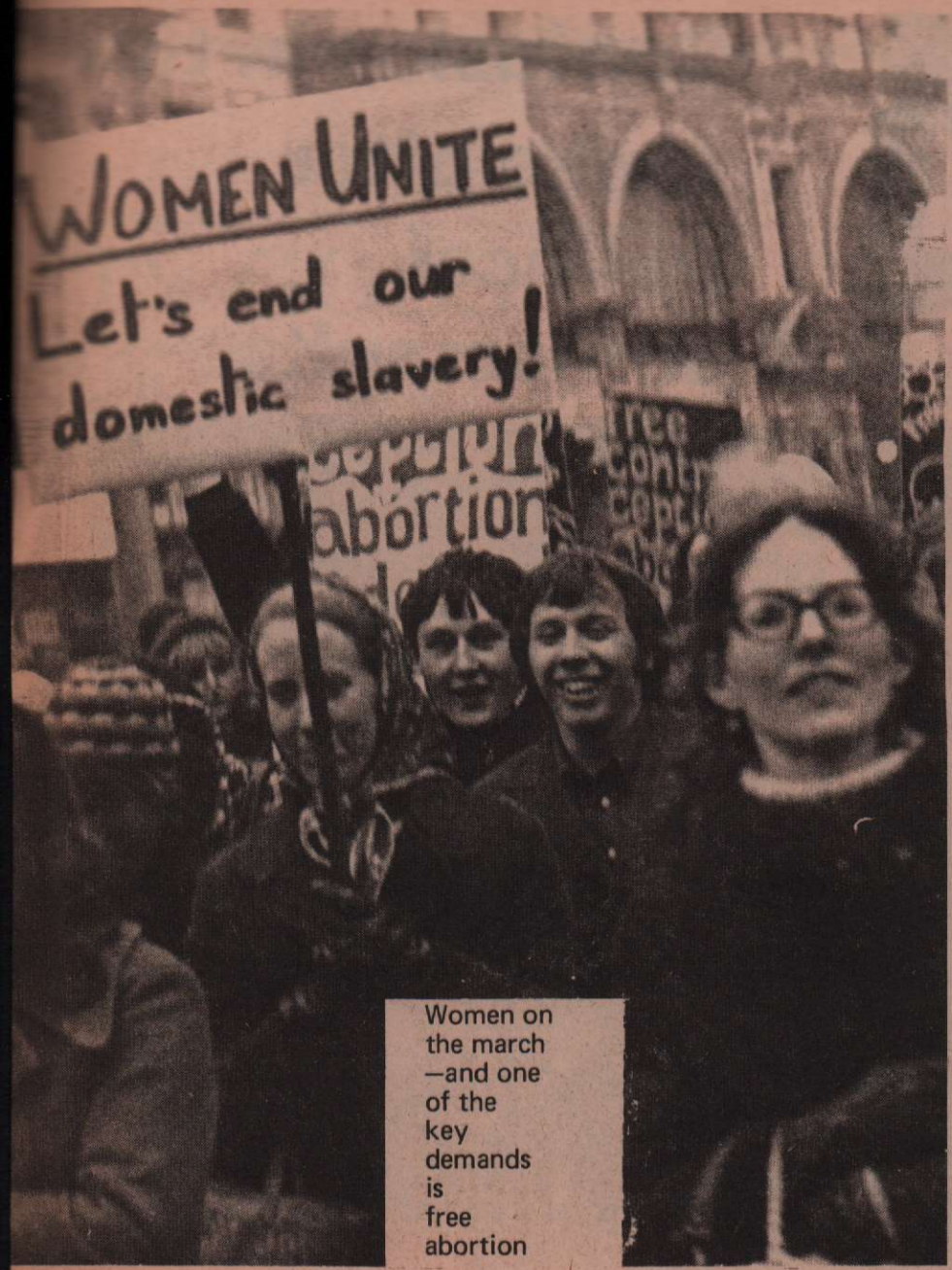


Rosa Luxemburg, revolutionary genius, fighter and thinker, murdered in her native Germany in 1919. This selection of her writings includes essays on Woman's suffrage and the class struggle, Social Reform or Revolution and The Beginnings of the German Revolution. Edited by Dick Howard. Price £1.80 plus 5p postage.

Also **ROSA LUXEMBURG: A STUDY** by Tony Cliff. An analysis of her teachings, with a short biographical sketch. Price 25p plus 3p postage.

FROM: IS BOOKS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.





Women on the march—and one of the key demands is free abortion

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those who are most desperate, the countless working-class women who just haven't the money.
And it's not only a problem for unmarried girls but also for those women who already have a family, for those families that are already struggling to provide some kind of life for their kids, those struggling to bring up their children in lousy, damp, tiny houses, with too little money and too little time.
In a time of rising prices and high unemployment, increased rents and drastic cuts in the welfare system, for these women another baby is not a mere inconvenience but a sheer physical

impossibility.
WE ARE FIGHTING for the automatic right of every woman to a free abortion on demand, whether married or single, 13 or 30, with or without the permission of their husbands or boyfriends, parents or doctors. Those who have to carry the babies and are expected to spend the rest of their lives looking after them have the right to decide whether or not to have an abortion.
But even widespread National Health abortions won't solve the whole problem. For there's no denying that for many women any kind of abortion is a pretty traumatic experience, although not as traumatic as actually having an unwanted child.
The real answer lies in effective and safe contraception. But here again women are up against the same reactionary forces.

EXPENSIVE

While it is accepted that men can have sex without the express desire to have children, it's not so for women. Men can get contraceptives over the counter but it is left to the whim of those same doctors whether to supply women with the Pill or not.
And even if you are lucky enough to have a doctor who will supply it, it's madly expensive and many women just can't afford it.
In our fight for free abortion and contraception on demand we are fighting for the rights of every man, woman and child. We are fighting for the right of women to control their own lives.
We are fighting for the right of every couple to enjoy sex without the fear of an unwanted child.
Above all, we are fighting for the right of every child to be a wanted child.

Another dumped, unwanted baby—from last week's Daily Mirror

The continuing saga of deformed profiteers

DOCTORS ARE INCLINED to be cynical about the mountain of glossy advertising material which is sent them each day by the drug companies. But the campaign in the summer of 1961 by a newly formed subsidiary of Distillers, the massive whisky firm, on behalf of their wonder-drug, Distaval, was something special.

A six-page document, beautifully photographed and produced, was sent to all GPs with some wonderful news about the new drugs' sedative effects on pregnant women:

'Distaval', ran the blurb, 'can be given with complete safety to pregnant women and nursing mothers, without adverse effect on mother or child. There is no respiratory or cardiovascular depression in the foetus of the new-born child; nursing mothers can be readily aroused to feed their babies and then resume sleep immediately.'

Profits

On 5 December 1961, two months later, Distillers withdrew the drug from the market on hearing news of 'adverse effects' on the foetuses whose mothers had taken Distaval.

During the next few months some 500 babies were born in Britain with limbs and bodies hideously deformed.

Their mothers had all been taking Distaval, or thalidomide as it became known. Medical research traced the cause of the deformities to the drug.

Ten years later, Distillers, whose profits last year topped £60m, have not had to pay a penny for their promotion and sale of the most dangerous drug of the 1960s. No prosecution has been taken out against the company.

Distillers have offered a lump payment of £3,250,000, payable (for tax reasons) into a trust for all the affected parents, plus a payment of £1500 per parents. This would work out at about £10,000 per deformed child, and has to be compared with awards of some 500,000 dollars for one thalidomide child which have been started in America and Scandinavia.

Negligence

Distillers imposed a further condition. The trust and the £1500 would have to be accepted by ALL the parents before any of them could receive a penny.

Furthermore, said Distillers, not a penny would be paid unless all the parents agreed not to sue the company for negligence.

Desperate for some money, most of the parents agreed. Five held out for more.

One, a London art dealer called David Mason, had the temerity to sue Distillers for negligence.

At first the courts refused him permission to sue and Mason had to go, at vast expense, to the Court of Appeal before his case could even be started.

Meanwhile, the slender charity funds collected for the thalidomide babies have now run out and the parents will have to meet the additional expenses of bringing up their deformed children



A victim of Distillers: money—if you don't sue

from their own resources.

The Sunday Times of 30 April reported the case of Mrs X of Teesside, wife of an unskilled worker who gets £20 a week, and who has a thalidomide son of 12.

She has been ordered by her lawyers to pay the £174 legal costs incurred as a result of the thalidomide case at £15 a week. 'She has hinted at suicide,' said a Teesside home visitor.

Tremendous pressure is being brought to bear on Mr Mason to drop the case and take the money. But he is adamant.

His negligence case against thalidomide will at least establish whether or not the drug was tested on pregnant animals before it was marketed, and whether the company can start to justify the ridiculous claims it made for what it hoped would turn out yet another money-spinner.

PAUL FOOT

International Socialism 51

Ireland



International Socialism on Ireland
JOHN PALMER on how, despite the pretence of independence, the Southern regime is fully integrated into the British imperialist economy
PAUL GERHARDT analyses the facts of sectarian discrimination in the North
BRIAN TRENCH demolishes the 'two nations' propaganda that keeps the Protestant workers on the Unionist side
EAMONN McCANN on why the revolutionary left in the Six Counties had no success within the civil rights movement

20p per copy, subscription £1 per year, from: IS Journal, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

NEXT WEEK

Watch out for a major article on socialists and the trade unions that will take up recent criticisms of the International Socialists by the Communist Party's Morning Star.

THE IRA

Confusion in the ranks after political somersaults



LEADING Provisional IRA officers sign a peace petition which is delivered to Northern Ireland overlord Willie Whitelaw. The Derry Provisionals organise a peace march, supported by the Officials. In Dublin, a young seller of the United Irishman shouts: 'Support the Official IRA's campaign for peace!'

The republican movement is trying to catch the mood of war-weary Catholics in the North. But it still remains their main defence against military repression. For many people throughout the 32 Counties of Ireland it remains the focus of opposition to British domination.

But Whitelaw's 'softly, softly' touch in the North, and the massive vote in favour of the Common Market in the South, have caused confusion in the ranks of the republican movement and its sympathisers.

New slogans

That is what Whitelaw set out to do—to split the support of the Catholic population from the militants. In spite of the threat of loyalist sectarian attacks, in spite of the shooting of Joe McCann, he has made a moderately successful start to that task.

The IRA has been for a long time the chief obstacle that prevents the British and Irish ruling classes imposing their solution on the Irish people. Whitelaw's assignment was to get them out of the way—even at the risk of further alienating the loyalists.

The situation presents the republican movement with enormous challenges. It has shown both its weaknesses and its strengths, for while slogans and perspectives are changed rapidly, the movement still commands a traditional loyalty.

When socialists have said in the past that the republicans were bound to 'come unstuck' because they did not have a revolutionary political programme, they were not making an academic observation or simply scoring a debating point. The present situation shows the truth of this statement.

Consider the responses to the introduction of direct rule.

The Provisionals had actually been calling for direct rule, and when it came, their chief of staff, Sean MacStiofain, immediately issued a statement rejecting it outright and promising that the military campaign would continue on the same lines as before.

Bombing

The Officials, on the other hand, had been demanding that Stormont be made more democratic, not that it be abolished. When direct rule was introduced, the United Irishman, their monthly paper, assured its readers in a bold headline that it was 'Not a Victory'. In a report to a convention of Official Republican Clubs in April, Ivan Barr, chairman of the Northern clubs, told the delegates: 'The overthrow of the sectarian Orange/Unionist regime was obviously a victory for the people.'

Neither section of the republican movement was capable of understanding that direct rule started a new phase in the struggle and that new tactics and strategy were called for. 'The War Goes On', said the Provisionals' papers—and they meant more of the same, a continuation of the bombing and shooting campaign, whatever the demands of the people on whom they depend for support.

'The Struggle Goes On', say the Officials, and repeat what they have been saying for months and years. They call for 'Progress towards full democracy' (Whatever that may mean) and insist that 'Civil Rights Now is still the slogan'.



Another new strategy: a Provisionals' poster trying to catch the mood of war-weary Derry



Members of the Officials taking part in the Provisional-run peace march

BUT there have also been some significant changes. The most important is the Official IRA's cease-fire. The Provisionals, for their part, have discovered that the Southern 26-county state is not the friendly haven they thought.

The price they are now paying for not directing their attention to the Lynch regime (for fear, they said, of alienating the 85 per cent support in the South) is to have three of their leaders held in custody on charges of being members of an illegal organisation.

The Officials have always denied that they were engaged in a military campaign against the British Army and the Northern state, so they have apparently called a halt to non-existent hostilities. The main reason they have given for the 'truce' is that there was a danger of sectarian conflict.

This is true, of course. But the danger has always existed. There was no chance of developing the peaceful, moderate civil rights campaign into a revolutionary situation.

It is absurd for the Officials to lay the blame for sectarianism on the Provisionals alone, claiming them to be imperialist agents. It is even more ridiculous for them to claim that a Bill of Rights passed in Westminster is the way to overcome sectarianism.

The Provisionals have certainly been responsible for blatantly sectarian acts. The bombing of Courtauld's and of the Belfast Co-Op would never have been done—in those circumstances—by any organisation which understood the need to break the hold of loyalism on Protestant workers.

Utopian

But simply to dismiss them as sectarians, Fianna Fail stooges, and agents of imperialism explains nothing of how they have won their support.

In their own confused way, the Provisionals see that there is more to the fight against imperialism than a military campaign.

In the Republican News, published by

the Belfast IRA, excerpts of *Eire Nua* (New Ireland) are published, outlining the social and economic policy of the Provisional Sinn Fein. But none of this relates to the situation in the North. It is not even intended that the programme should give a lead in day-to-day struggles. It is plainly utopian—policies for a new regime in a united Ireland, with no indication as to how a new regime is to be fought for.

There is a further irony in this. *Eire Nua*, the pamphlet which the Provisionals wave around to prove that they are more than an army, was drafted some years before the split in the republican movement. Its main author was Roy Johnston, recently resigned from the Official Sinn Fein, but previously the person and the influence most often cited by the Provisionals to show there was an attempt at a 'marxist take-over' of the republican movement.

BOTH sections of the republican movement put large resources into the fight for a No vote in the Common Market referendum in the South. Indeed, the Officials claimed that it was the central issue facing the Irish people and that: 'If EEC entry were to succeed it would destroy the whole basis of the struggle against British imperialism.'

On that basis, the Officials—and the Provisionals like them—were prepared to unite with nationalist middle-class elements simply to get a large No vote in the referendum.

Those within the movement who argued that it must be clearly spelt out that the alternative to entry into the Common Market was socialism were vigorously opposed. Now, after the massive Yes vote, the editorial of *United Irishman* stated: 'More urgent than ever is it now to show that there does exist a real alternative to the policies of corruption and frustration, and that this alternative lies in a fully independent socialist republic.'

It would be tempting to think that the Officials had learnt the lesson of a misguided campaign both in the North and

the South, but nowhere do they go beyond their 'left rhetoric' to develop a strategy for the working class. Indeed, many of their statements about the need for socialism do not mention the working class at all.

What is needed, says the Official IRA, is 'popular struggle in the South to complement the struggle in the North'. But what are the demands to be? What are the objectives?

Cease-fire

Some months ago, the Officials planned to produce a weekly paper, the *Irish People*, to extend and deepen their influence, particularly among town and city workers. That paper has never appeared, and the plan has been shelved—for a time at least. The Officials have had a Republican Trade Union Committee for years; only recently has it been at all active.

Having had the cease-fire virtually forced on them by events in the North, the Officials now give great prominence to the 'class action' of developing co-op shops in Free Derry, but these are largely a gimmick, designed to maintain popular support. They cannot demonstrate anything of importance about the capitalist system, and the way to fight it.

The Provisionals, too, have come to rely on gimmicks. How else does one describe the Bogside elections, scheduled to take place this Thursday? The hunger strikes, too—though they demonstrate the enormous courage and determination of the men and women who take part in them—seem designed mainly to win back popular support.

They may succeed, too. But such support, with no clear commitment to action, cannot last forever.

Rioting

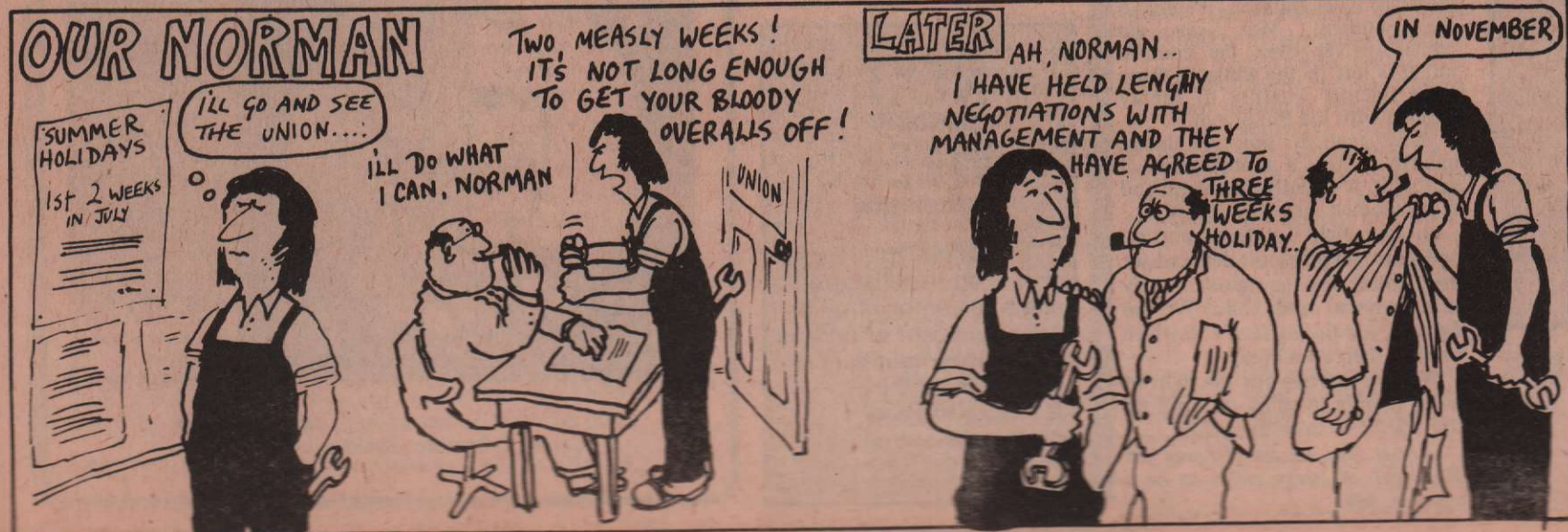
The Provisionals still cling to their naive ideas about the Southern state—even though some 20-30 of their members are locked away in military custody in the Curragh camp. They still believe that it is only British influence which causes this kind of thing to happen.

The rioting prisoners at Mountjoy shouted to the crowds outside the prison that they had nothing against the Irish state, the Irish people, and the Irish Gardai (police). Meanwhile, the Irish ruling class used the apparatus of the state—the police and the Irish Army—to enforce some of the most repressive legislation which exists anywhere in the world, and specifically designed to deal with such movements as the IRA.

The introduction of direct rule saw the start of a political and ideological offensive. The Lynch government, the Catholic Church, and other forces lined up together to persuade republican sympathisers in the North to give Whitelaw a chance.

To meet this challenge it was necessary to insist on the need for a strategy for all 32 Counties which placed the working class firmly at the centre of the struggle against imperialism and capitalism. That, it seems, is something which the republican movement cannot do.

Brian Trench



REVIEW

TV GOES CAP IN HAND by Barry Ellis

EVER SINCE the Tories won the election two years ago, attacks on television, especially the BBC, have grown in strength and confidence from the Right. The claim is that programmes are subversive, obscene, and overly 'Leftist'.

Of course every socialist knows what nonsense this argument is. The BBC and ITA have always supported ruling class ideas as a look at TV Times or Radio Times any week will show. But a disturbing new phenomenon is the increasing capitulation of broadcasters—like Fleet Street journalists never the bravest crowd—to this increasingly heavy pressure from the Right.

Not only is there noticeably less controversy on TV but there is also a definite and pathetic attempt going on to appease the Monday Club critics and Mrs Whitehouse with suitable programmes.

A typical example is the Sunday night series on BBC 1 'Kenneth Harris Interviews'. Each week Harris is given almost an hour of air time to talk to a successful capitalist. I say 'talk to' because the sycophantic Harris does nothing I want to dignify with the term 'interview'.

The series goes out of its way to show capitalism as a healthy, open and attractive system where admirable, clever and virile men can still make their fortunes with sufficient skill

and ingenuity. Almost every Captain of Industry who has appeared so far has 'made it' himself. Interestingly the only exception has been Lord Melchett, the Conservative heir to the chemical and banking Mond empire, who is chairman of the nationalised Steel Corporation.

Never once has there been any searching conversation. Not once has Harris tried to move outside a totally 'accepting' frame of reference. When on rare occasions a tone of criticism has been allowed to creep in, it has always been in capitalism's own terms of 'efficient management', 'smooth running', and the constant flow and growth of profit.

Ominous

More typical though are these questions Harris put to James Gulliver, chairman of the Fine Fare supermarket chain: 'What do you do about the queues in your stores?' and 'How did you move from being a management consultant to becoming a manager?'

The outstanding feature of the series is its unbelievable dullness. But it's precisely this feature that makes the wretched series so ominous. The one thing the media heroes out at Television Centre don't want is controversy, just solid reassertion of old values and the world as it

looks from Conservative Central Office.

It would be very interesting to see how the producer sold the idea of the series to BBC management. Certainly, we'll never see a similar amount of time and money devoted to an equally sympathetic and uncritical treatment of the dedicated enemies of capitalism. So much for the much vaunted balance of the BBC and its Charter. It's high time the chorus from the Right was drowned by a louder and far more justified cry from the working class for balance on the air waves.

One series that need never worry about attacks from the Right but which remains interesting viewing is The Money Programme, Friday night on BBC 2. Totally and openly committed to the capitalist system, this programme is nevertheless a must. Intelligently produced each week it examines various economic and industrial issues.

If there is a big strike on or in the offing, then The Money Programme is likely to look at it. And if there was any doubt where it stood, which is unlikely, the last few minutes each week set the record straight with the programme's own market meter and snappy market analysis. Marxists ought to watch this programme as they ought to see the Financial Times every now and then.

A play that grabs you roughly by the collar

THE THEATRE ROYAL, in London's Stratford, becomes a riotous assembly when Brendan Behan's *The Hostage* takes over the stage.

The language, the poetry is *alive*, carried up from the shop floor, bar floor, dog track, high street, pulpit. Behan's poetry grabs you roughly by the collar and shakes you with laughter or holds up a mirror to the world's pain and sadness, no holds barred.

The Hostage has a simple plot. A small group from the Irish Republican Army kidnap Leslie, a British conscript serving in Belfast, and takes him to Dublin to be held hostage. He is to be exchanged for a prisoner who is to be executed by the British for killing a policeman.

The action takes place in a Dublin warehouse which is being used to hide Leslie. The house, which has seen better days, is owned by Monsewer, an Irish patriot brought up in an English public school.

He can speak Gaelic, learnt in the hallways of Oxford. He is mad. He stalks the house playing bagpipes and talking of old campaigns against the British.

Trapped

The stage is full of light and colour, the talk flows as fast as the stout. The characters are all social misfits, prostitutes, homosexuals, a crackpot civil servant and a 'sociable' worker. Into this comes Die-on, a fanatical IRA officer, with eye-patch and bible, and a bewildered army conscript the same age as the boy in Belfast jail.

Behan wrote the play in the 1950s. He could see no way for Ireland to free herself from British rule. He could see that *all* working men and women were trapped by the lies and distortions of nationalism. He hated the middle class.

To him the Irish republican movement had become relegated to nostalgia and empty talk about 'the cause'. The IRA was immersed in middle-class nationalist ideas which could not break into the class struggle and could not break from religion and all the distortions that this meant.

And so *The Hostage* becomes a tragic comedy, a parody of old struggles.

The boy in the Belfast jail is an individual without any mass base. He is executed by the ruling class.

Leslie the conscript is just a working class bloke. His life is of no real interest to the ruling class. As a hostage he is an anachronism.

Equal

As the prisoner falls from the scaffold, Leslie is killed accidentally. The fantasy of 'the cause' becomes confusion and bewilderment in reality.

Because of its humour and music the play does not intend despair. The alternatives are made plain in the language. Solidarity in life is all that the characters know. They treat Leslie as an equal, a poor bloody conscript. They are united against the class that oppresses them, and mimic and ridicule the ideas of that class.

For these reasons it is a potentially revolutionary play. It will not get wide currency and will not now be shown on TV. It is too near the marrow of real life.

It could be watched by millions. Instead it remains in a theatre where its audience will be in the hundreds.

Ken Montague Roger Huddle

THE EFFLUENT SOCIETY

The rich keep their hands clean



Poison leaks from a drum washed up on the South Coast from a wreck. Children play on these beaches every summer . . . will they soon need protective clothing and gas masks too?

The Stockholm Conference: Only One Earth. Friends of the Earth (Earth Island, 75p)

Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet. Barbara Ward and Rene Dubos (Pelican 45p)

Murderous Providence: a Study of Pollution in Industrial Societies. Harry Rothman (Hart-Davis, £2.95)

AT THE END of the 10th century, thousands of European peasants laid down their tools, sat down, and waited for the end of the world. Some of them waited for 30 years and then went home; hundreds died of starvation.

It was a weird event, but not unique in the history of Western lunacy. The West has often been haunted by doom and apocalyptic, a vision of the world's end and an end to Old Corruption.

Now, at the end of the second millennium, we are again faced with the end of the world. For the last two weeks in Stockholm the UN has been running a special conference on The Human Environment, this time to face a technological version of pollution and doom.

The conference itself has been no more than a public relations job for the Western governments and international corporations, but it has called forth a crop of scaring literature and a movement which has become a medieval crusade, with plenty of popular terror.

Excuse

It is easy to see the whole thing cynically, as another red herring to divert us from more central issues, especially as the UN has vetoed basic questions, from safety in factories to the Vietnam bombings, and as only Algeria has pointed to capitalism itself as the basis of the environmental problem.

Conservation has become a middle class trip, an excuse to save the country retreats of the rich while airports are planned for the East End of London and more and more lorries make workers' homes filthy and unmanageable.

The working class have always lived with pollution on their doorsteps and it is only now that the depletion of resources and the poisoning of the environment has reached a point which threatens the middle class that anyone has paid serious attention. But the fact that the middle class feel threatened shows how far capitalism has taken us towards what one scientist called 'hell on earth'.

The environmental scare began in the US in 1962, when Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* first showed that the

increasing use of pesticides damaged the reproductive systems of wild life and of man himself. The book caused an enormous controversy and immediately the big chemical companies, who were making a fortune, hit back with threats and slanders.

The Secretary of Velsicol, a major pesticide manufacturer, accused her publicly of aiding a Communist plot worked by 'sinister elements' to 'create a false impression that all business is grasping and immoral' and to reduce Western food production to Iron Curtain standards.

Hand in hand with the chemical companies, the government's Pest Control Board attacked Rachel Carson personally and viciously, remarking that as she was a spinster she shouldn't be worried about genetics anyway.

It was only under public pressure that Kennedy's Science Advisory Committee took up the whole pollution issue. They kept it in limbo until ecologists Paul Ehrlich and Barry Commoner started their doom campaign in 1968.

According to ecologists, the world is threatened with extinction in the near future. The over-riding problem is one of population explosion, a major effect of imperialism being the creation of grinding poverty in the Third World so that people need to produce more breadwinners.

Whereas it took two million years for the population to reach 1000 million in 1850, it took only 80 years to reach

2000 million in 1930, and only 40 years to almost double again.

And this process continues to accelerate. The result has been a dreadful scarcity of land and a re-organisation of food production which has driven peasants into further poverty.

It has also increased the demand for poisonous pesticides and herbicides which leak into the sea and kill off at an alarming rate the plankton and diatoms which produce 70 per cent of the world's oxygen.

It is not correct though just to blame overpopulation onto the Third World. Overpopulation mainly includes the disastrous over-exploitation of resources by industrial capitalism in the interests of profit.

Exploited

Statistically, one Englishman uses 20 times the resources of one Indian (though some Englishmen use more than others) and does 30 times the environmental damage. The need of capitalism to over-produce its junk, to manufacture false demands, and to expand without regard for human needs has created this situation.

The US takes away 90 per cent of Latin America's exploited resources and at a five per cent growth rate will demand most of the Third World's available resources by the end of the century. Ecologically, it produces only 60 per cent of the oxygen that its population and industry use up.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

- For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.
- Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.
- For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.
- Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dumfries
Dundee
Edinburgh
Fife: Dunfermline/
Glenrothes
Glenrothes
Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling
St Andrews | MIDLANDS
Birmingham NE
Birmingham S
Coventry
Dudley
Laamington and
Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Redditch
Rugby
Telford
Warley
Wolverhampton | EAST
Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough |
| NORTH EAST
Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W | NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Ossett
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York | NORTH WEST
Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
The Potteries
Preston
Salford
St Helens
Stockport
Wigan
Wrexham |
| WALES and SOUTH WEST
Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea | GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES
Acton
Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon
East London
Enfield
Fulham and Hammersmith
Greenford
Hackney and Islington
Harlesden
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
Hornsey
Hounslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
South Ealing
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Wandsworth
Watford
Woolwich | WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: London's 'Revoluting' Schools. Speakers: Nan Scott, social worker; Fred Scott, teacher. Thurs 22 June, 8pm, The Spotted Dog, 72 Garratt Lane SW18 (near Wandsworth Town Hall). |

NO REAL LEAD TO KILL

by SW Reporters

NEARLY 1300 delegates last Saturday attended the largest conference yet organised by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. All the main sections of industry were represented by the 324 trade union branches and 91 shop stewards' committees that were present.

Speakers included leading militants from the docks, the railways, the mines, the shipyards—in fact from all the sectors that have been bearing the brunt of the Tory attack. Yet by the end of the day many delegates left the meeting visibly disappointed with a conference that had promised them much but produced little in the way of concrete action.

The theme which ran through the conference, to which all speakers kept returning, was the abysmal retreat of the official leaders of the trade union movement in the face of the Industrial Relations Act. **Bill Jones**, the chairman, set the tone in his opening remarks: 'I've had a bellyful of those who warm their arses at Congress House but never on the picket line.'

The point was taken up by many speakers. **Bernie Steer**, for instance, of the National Port Shop Stewards' Committee, pointed out that 'The trade union leaders decided to back down at the first sign of confrontation with the Court. Where were all the speeches, all the marches? We expected and hoped that the trade union leaders would take up this challenge. The tragedy was that they backed down.'

New words

Derek Fullick from the Waterloo branch of the train drivers' union, spoke of how 'I've learnt new words. One of the words I've learnt is "traitor". Another dirty word is "compromise". A 23-1 vote in the ballot does not give our trade union leadership the right to compromise. Our leadership have allowed themselves to be misled by the TUC.'

Delegates were equally clear on the only way to beat the Act. **Kevin Halpin**, chairman of the Liaison Committee, early on in the proceedings stressed that 'we should declare today that we will defy the law... We have said time and time again that the only way to beat the Act is through industrial action.'

David Bolton, vice-president of the Scottish miners, pledged that if the 13 men on trial for picketing at Longannet during the miners' strike were imprisoned 'there'll not be a miner working in a Scottish pit.' And **Bernie Steer** said that the response of the dockers to any attempt by the Court to hit at individual dockers would be strike action. 'If they're in the dock, we'll be out of the docks,' he declared.

Yet despite the militancy of the speakers, many delegates began to feel after a time that little was being achieved by the conference itself. After all, most of

what was being said had been heard before. Some delegates felt that a conference as representative of the most militant section of the trade union movement as this one was should not only engage in talking but also begin to hammer out a united strategy for fighting in the future.

Early on the question was raised of why resolutions suggesting various courses of future action, which had been submitted by some stewards' committees, were not down for discussion. Finally a vote was taken on the issue. Although there was no real opportunity for adequate debate on the issues involved, about a third of the delegates voted against the chair's ruling that no resolutions be taken.

But a few delegates called to speak in the general discussion did manage to point out the sort of activities the Liaison Committee would be undertaking if it were serious about producing an alternative to the policy of retreats by the union leaders. **Alan Woodward** of Haringey Trades Council argued that if the Liaison Committee was going to develop as a new rank and file movement in the years ahead then it had to do more than hold occasional conferences. In the localities it should encourage the development of a network of liaison committees, he stressed.

Regular conferences of the national committee itself should be organised to enable delegates to hammer out a programme for the future, he added. And since it has been shown repeatedly that successful struggle depends not on the speeches of official leaders but on the fighting spirit of the rank and file, then the Liaison Committee should try to organise rank and file militancy by encouraging its supporters in each union to get together to fight for effective action.

Alan Woodward pointed out that such a rank and file movement had been built before, in the Minority Movement of the 1920s, which was both a national movement and one active at the rank and file level in different unions.

George Kelly of the Glasgow Corporation Workshops underlined these points. He warned: 'I think what is happening today is a tremendous show of verbal militancy. But unless this is carried back into the areas it is of no worth at all and will be mere shadow boxing. Liaison Committees in the areas should be built and structured so that they can refer back to the centre.'

'We have to have a situation where contrary points of view can be put at conferences, so that we can come out with a principled programme that can lead to this Act being smashed,' he added. 'It would be criminal if

WHAT'S ON

Copy for *What's On* must arrive by first post Monday or be phoned Monday morning. Charges are 5p per line, semi-display 10p per line. CASH WITH COPY. No insertions without payment. Invoices cannot be sent.

MEETINGS

PLYMOUTH SOCIALIST FORUM: Which Way to Socialism? Speakers: Frank Judd, Labour MP for Portsmouth West, Tony Cliff, of IS executive committee, Sat 17 June, 7.30pm, Oddfellows Hall, Kingston Road, Portsmouth.

RANK and FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS: Important meeting for all socialists in ATTI at The Crown and Sugarloaf, Garlick Hill, off Mansion House, London. 20 mins, 7pm.

DAY SCHOOL on The Family: Sat 1 July in London. Details from your IS women's convenor or branch secretary.

SWANSEA IS: What Happened at Fine Tubes. Strikers from the Plymouth factory, out for more than two years, speak about their struggle. Thursday 22 June, 7.30pm. AEJ House, Orchard St, Swansea. All welcome.

LLANELLI IS public meeting: Fine Tubes strikers and their struggle. Mon 19 June, 7.30pm. Llanelli YMCA.

TEESSIDE IS Kick the Tories out now. Spkrs: Paul Foot and Arthur Affleck, chairman BSC Lackenby shop stewards Wellington Hotel, Albert Road, Middlesbrough. Thursday 29 June, 7.30pm. Tickets from IS members or at the door.

EAST LONDON WOMEN'S CONFERENCE Women and the Trade Unions Housing and the 'Fair Rents' Bill Women and the Welfare State Women and the Authorities Creche, food and a play 10am-5.30pm, Sat 17 June London College of Furniture, 41 Commercial Road, London E1.

KINGSTON IS DAY SCHOOL Roger Cox on Revolutionary Trade Unionism Tony Cliff on The Revolutionary Road to Socialism Sunday 18 May Apply 33 King's Rd, Long Ditton, Surrey

GLASGOW SOUTH IS FOLK CONCERT Laggan, Matt McGinn, Danny Kyle Whistlebinkies, Harvey and Brown South Govan Hall, Langlands Rd —buses 17/34 or subway Fri 23 June, 7.30pm Tickets: 25p from Old Scotia Inn

IS PSYCHOLOGY GROUP Reich, Sexpol and German Fascism A discussion meeting (including Alan Phipps on Wilhelm Reich) at 12 Montague Rd, London E8 2.30pm, Sun 18 June Buses 30, 38, 22.

FULHAM and HAMMERSMITH IS SOCIAL: Friday 23 June, 8.30pm. King's Head, Fulham Broadway (above tube). Tickets 25p, 30p at door. Extension applied for.

IS STUDENT CONFERENCE 24-25 July Details from branch secretaries All student members should attend

TYNESIDE ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE BERNADETTE DEVLIN MP speaks on IRELAND Fri 16 June, 7.30pm Curtis Auditorium, Newcastle University

BED AND BREAKFAST available to comrades in pleasant seaside town on East Coast. Main rail and bus termini, parking space. Phone Lowestoft 62865.

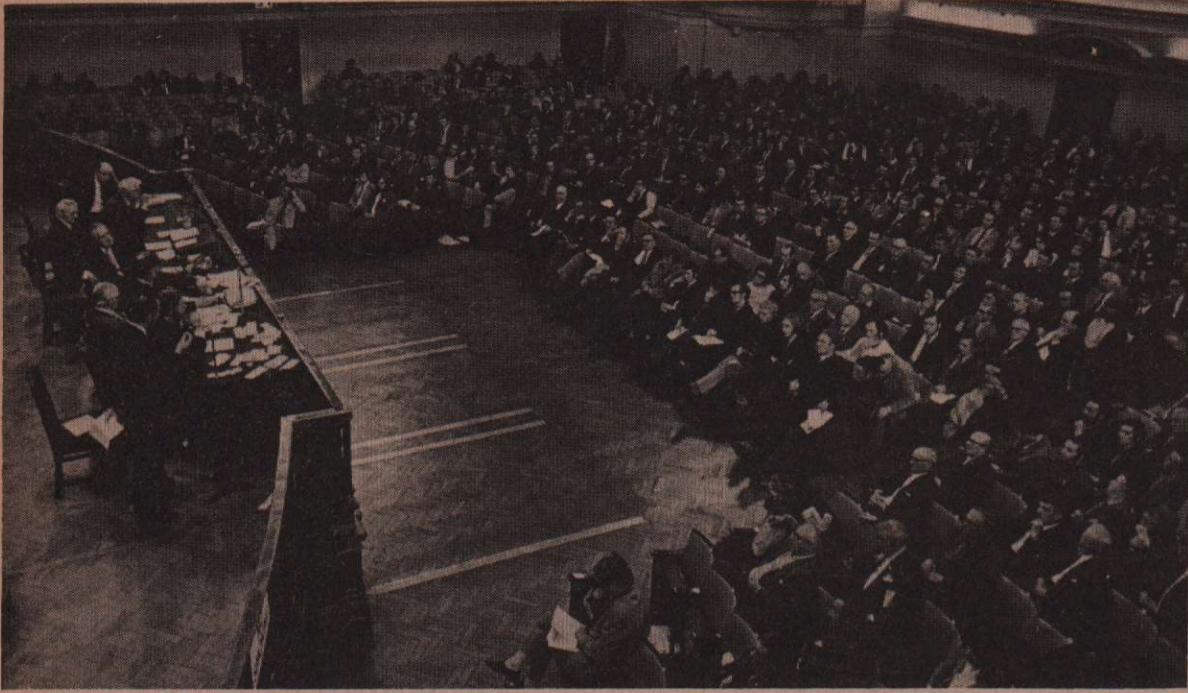
FLAT (one double/two single) in Surbiton offered to comrades for one week (26 June) while we're on holiday. Quick train service to London. Write Box PP, Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

BED AND BREAKFAST. Comrade on East Coast, 100 miles from London, needs to pay the rent. Country house, four miles from the sea. No public transport —car essential. Write Box 159, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2, for rates and dates available.

WANTED: Assistant business manager for Socialist Worker. Clerical experience essential, typing an advantage. IS members only. Apply Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. Tel: 01-739 1870.



IN THE FIGHT TORIES' LAW



More than a thousand delegates packed into Central Hall, Westminster, for the Liaison Committee Conference

we went back to the areas and the power of the delegates here were lost. The lesson has to be learnt from the Minority Movement. We can build a rank and file movement.'

Unfortunately, the organisers of the Liaison Committee seem unwilling to learn such lessons. In his final reply to the discussion, Kevin Halpin said: 'We are not opposed to local Liaison Committees'. He added that any strong section of workers could be represented at the Committee's meetings: 'No large factory or pit has ever been turned away ...'

All-out effort

In other words, the Liaison Committee will not oppose the building of local committees and will allow stewards' committees that manage to hear about its meetings to attend them.

But this negative attitude by no means measures up to what needs to be done if a mass rank and file movement is to be built. For that means the Liaison

Committee and all organisations and militants who support it going out of their way to start building local committees and supporters groups in each union. It means an all-out effort to make the meetings of the national committee as representative as possible, with an all-out drive by its officers to get new factory organisations involved.

If a call to build up the Liaison Committee in that way had come from Saturday's conference, then many delegates would not have gone away disappointed.

As it was, the committee had called together delegates from all the strongest sections of the working class, had gathered together the material from which the biggest rank and file movement yet could be built and then told them to disperse without giving any perspective or programme for actually building that movement. Despite the verbal criticism of the TUC retreat, the Liaison Committee itself is not prepared to develop an organised rank and file opposition in the trade unions.

Victory over anti-union boss

by Harry Tait

Transport union shop steward

ACTON: Ten workers at John Banner's cash and carry warehouse, part of the giant United Draperies empire, have succeeded in forcing a management with a long history of anti-unionism to recognise the Transport Workers Union.

When the men first joined the union the management said: 'We have never recognised the union and we are not starting now'. The United Draperies security force was at once put to work digging into the men's pasts and they were told it had suddenly been discovered that their references were not satisfactory. One worker was sacked, although he had been working there for ten weeks.

The workers did not feel strong enough in orthodox strike tactics, so first a leaflet was produced with the help of the local IS branch and distributed to customers about to enter the shop. The management, seeing its trade threatened, immediately promised to recognise the union.

But the moment the pickets were called off, it rattled on its promise and said it would never discuss anything collectively with the workers again.

The next day, after an angry meeting, the men occupied the huge warehouse, with more than £300,000 of stock inside.

After making undignified and absurd attempts to kick down the barricaded doors, the management finally gave in. By lunchtime that day an agreement was signed, recognising the men's elected shop steward and stating that no man could be sacked for 'bad references' if he had been working more than four weeks.

Left defeated at conference

THE 1972 Post Office Engineering Union Conference at Blackpool showed once again that the left have a long way to go yet to defeating the right-wing in the union. On wages, productivity, the Industrial Relations Act, and the national executive elections the left were defeated.

The wage claim was the dominant issue at conference. The Post Office offer, an average of 10.3 per cent, recommended by the executive, was carried on a card vote by 71,370 to 47,019.

The executive committee, through their spineless acceptance of the Tory government's 'norm' and with the ghost of the postal workers' strike hanging over conference, convinced the majority of delegates of the 'futility' of militancy.

Loyalists open up danger of civil war

by Mike Miller

BELFAST:—The show of force by Loyalist extremists under the direction of the Ulster Defence Association is seen by many here as the prelude to widescale sectarian warfare.

This weekend barricaded Loyalist districts intend to become permanent 'no go' areas until the British Army invades the Bogside and the Creggan. A direct challenge is being made to Tory overlord William Whitelaw, who has said several times that more such areas will not be tolerated.

The UDA action was accompanied by sectarian clashes in many parts of the province. Loyalist gunmen opened fire from the barricades on Sunday evening into the Catholic Ardoyne area, killing one man, who had been sweeping the street outside a shop.

The army then appeared and engaged the IRA, who had fired back in defence, in a three-hour gun battle. Loyalists joined in, and the army shot at them too, killing one.

In the Ormeau district of Belfast, Catholic workers beat off several hundred Loyalists who had crossed the River Lagan from East Belfast to attack their isolated ghetto. The police and the army stood by without intervening.

In the centre of the city tartan gangs ripped up paving stones to throw at Republicans who were expected to pass by on a demonstration demanding the release of political prisoners.

But the police and the army did their work for them, and prevented the march from starting. The Republican demonstration was broken up by armoured cars and rubber bullets.

Restrict

The UDA is almost entirely working class in composition and is almost synonymous with the Loyalist Association of Workers. Behind the emergence of these extremist organisations lies the feeling of betrayal among Protestant workers who have been abandoned by the British interests that gave them a privileged position for so many years.

To the men behind the Loyalist barricades, being 'British' means having a built-in superiority over the Catholics. In an area where the Labour movement is weak, the ability to restrict competition for jobs and houses from Catholic workers through sectarianism seems very important.

The latest crisis has revealed the class nature of Northern Ireland's problem—although in a distorted manner.

On the nationalist side, the middle-class Social Democrat and Labour Party is selling out the struggle against imperialism as fast as it can. Its members are returning to positions on official bodies and standing for council elections.

On the other side, the Loyalist working class is not at all happy with its middle-class leaders. The workers are bitterly against the leaders of the Unionist Party, and even William Craig and his Vanguard Movement have come under severe criticism.

But the two sections of the working class can only be united around demands and activities that meet their needs and interests as workers. Protestant workers will not be won to the anti-imperialist camp by civil war. Nor are mere phrases such as 'socialism' and 'non-sectarianism' going to win them so long as in practice the only alternative to the Orange capitalism of the North is the green capitalism of the South.

Shock for 200,000 tenants

FIGURES published last week reveal that the rents of 200,000 tenants in the London area will be doubled under the Tory Rent Bill. A report from the Greater London Council Housing Committee estimates that rents, which have risen 55 per cent in the past four years, will shoot up by another 105 per cent.

In two years time tenants will be paying from £4 to £10 a week rent. Extra charges for heating, service and rates would push such figures up to an average £9 a week, with £13 for newer homes—and there is little chance that rent rises will stop then.

The first rises, this October, will range from 62½p to £1 a week, with rises of at least 50p a week for each year after.

Such figures give the lie to those who believed that Labour councillors in Birmingham had found a loophole in the Bill.

Vague

Delegates from 74 Labour councils decided in Sheffield last weekend not to accept the advice of the party's national executive committee to implement the Tory Rent Bill. But they also refused to commit themselves unreservedly to a policy of defying it.

Instead they passed a vague resolution that 'the Labour movement should not take any steps which may lead to implementation of the Bill'. The conference set up a working party to discuss what the

THE RENTS BATTLE

resolution meant in terms of action.

Meanwhile, the Labour NEC has called a meeting for all Labour council groups in London early in July, when the Labour spokesman on housing, Anthony Crosland, will no doubt urge them not to defy the law, but to 'exploit loopholes in it'.

It seems likely the meeting will accept this advice.

So it is imperative for tenants' associations everywhere to intensify pressure on Labour councillors during the next three weeks to get them to commit themselves to defiance.

HAMMERSMITH: A major row has broken out in Hammersmith Council's Labour group over their decision to implement the Bill. Eleven of the Labour councillors voted against the decision and were suspended from the group. Now they are being threatened with expulsion if they speak out in public.

GLASGOW: The trades council, trade union delegates, the City Labour Party and Labour councillors have formed a district committee to fight the Rents Bill and plan to send a letter to every

London rents to double

council tenant warning of the dangers involved.

Ninety-three delegates from 13 factories on the Hillington Industrial Estate, the biggest industrial complex in Glasgow outside the shipyards, have formed a shop stewards' action committee and are holding a public meeting opposing the Bill on Monday 19 June in the Typographical Halls, Clyde Street.

LEEDS: 80 tenants from the Westwood estate have called on the newly-elected Labour-controlled Council to have nothing to do with the Rents Bill. The tenants also registered their disgust with the local Labour councillors who refused to attend the meeting.

Members of the audience called for a boycott of the £1 increase due in October, for protest petitions, for demonstrations outside the Labour councillors' houses and for lobbies of the council.

WESTMINSTER: 700 people packed a meeting against the Bill. To show their opposition the tenants' associations are holding a referendum on the Bill. So far only four tenants have voted in favour.

CANTERBURY: More than 100 tenants set up an All Canterbury Tenants Association at a militant meeting last week.

The meeting gave a rough reception to the leader of Canterbury's Labour councillors, who are in control of the council for the first time in its history, and who are sitting on the fence regarding implementing the Bill. The tenants made it clear that the councillors were elected to fight rent rises and not introduce them.

EALING: About 100 tenants last week heard the leader of the majority Labour

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Socialist Worker

Sackings loom again over Upper Clyde shipyards

JOB prospects for workers in the Upper Clyde shipyards have worsened over the last few weeks. The 6800 workers remaining out of the 8500 employed in the yards last June are again confronted with the threat of large scale redundancies.

Govan Shipbuilders, set up with £35 million of government aid to take over the

Govan, Linthouse and Scotstoun yards, has reached agreement to build only six of the 12 ships on the old UCS order book.

Unless new orders are obtained quickly, redundancies are likely, in the drawing offices by July and among manual workers a few weeks later.

The shop stewards want the management to join them in approaching the government to seek new orders. They say

that since the government was responsible for the UCS crash last year, it has a responsibility to help Govan Shipbuilders get business.

Meanwhile, the Marathon Manufacturing Company has agreed to buy the Clydebank yard and is getting £12 million of government aid.

Marathon says it wants to rebuild the yard for the construction of oil rigs. It says that it will employ 'at least 2000' when fully operational in 18 months' time.

But workers are due to start being laid off at any time now. They will receive redundancy pay, register as unemployed and wait for Marathon to re-employ them. In any case, the highest number Marathon says will be taken on is 2000. The present labour force at Clydebank is 2300.

The draft procedure agreement at Marathon lays down compulsory arbitration as a means of resolving disputes. Shop stewards claim that this only refers to demarcation disputes—in itself an important breakthrough for shipbuilding employers. But as it stands at present, the compulsory arbitration clause clearly covers all disputes.

The agreement has to be ratified by the district committees of all unions that are party to it, and it will probably be amended despite Jimmy Reid's apparent willingness to accept it.

The real significance of the UCS workers' struggle was the part it played in encouraging other workers to challenge the bosses' right to treat their employees as discardable appendages to machinery.

If further sackings are to be fought, then it is becoming increasingly clear that this can only be done on the basis of a real fight with the employers, and not with the methods so far used at UCS.

DOCKERS DEFY 'STOP BLACKING' ORDER

LONDON dockers defied the Tory Industrial Relations Court on Monday when it ordered them to stop blacking a container depot.

Scene of the dispute is in the Chobham Farm depot at Stratford which dockers have been picketing to back their demand that registered dock labour should work on the containers.

NIRC chairman Sir John Donaldson ruled on Monday that the men must not threaten or encourage others to threaten a national blacking of hauliers whose vehicles cross the picket line.

The court orders were made against the Joint Shop Stewards Committee for the Port of London and three named dockers—Bernie Steer, Vic Turner and Alan Williams. They refused to attend the court or to be represented.

When the ruling was announced, Bernie Steer declared: 'The shop stewards will continue to picket Chobham Farm—Donaldson or no Donaldson—until our men are in there doing work which we rightly claim is ours.'

'No court will intimidate us to do otherwise. If we break the law defending our jobs, that's their problem not ours.'

DIVERTED

Dockers have been claiming Chobham Farm as work for registered dockers since it began operations two years ago. And the non-dock workers inside were aware of that. All the cargo that is loaded and unloaded on containers there has been syphoned off from London's docks.

The major contractors at Chobham Farm are companies that traditionally operated through the docks. The reason why they have diverted trade to inland depots like this is clear enough.

The men at Chobham are paid £25 a week for 40 hours. They work in gangs of three. Over years of sacrifice dockers have won themselves far better conditions—they are paid £40 for 31 hours, working in gangs of 10-12 or more.

The aim behind the development of depots like Chobham is to use them as a haven for a form of cheap, docile labour

by Bob Light

TGWU, London Royal Docks

outside the protection of the Dock Labour Scheme, so escaping from the manning, wages and conditions that any self-respecting docker can command.

The tragedy is that the non-dock workers at Chobham Farm are members of the same union as most of the dockers—the Transport Workers. Mesmerised by sheer recruiting figures alone, no thought was given to the effect these men were having on the livelihood of other members of the union.

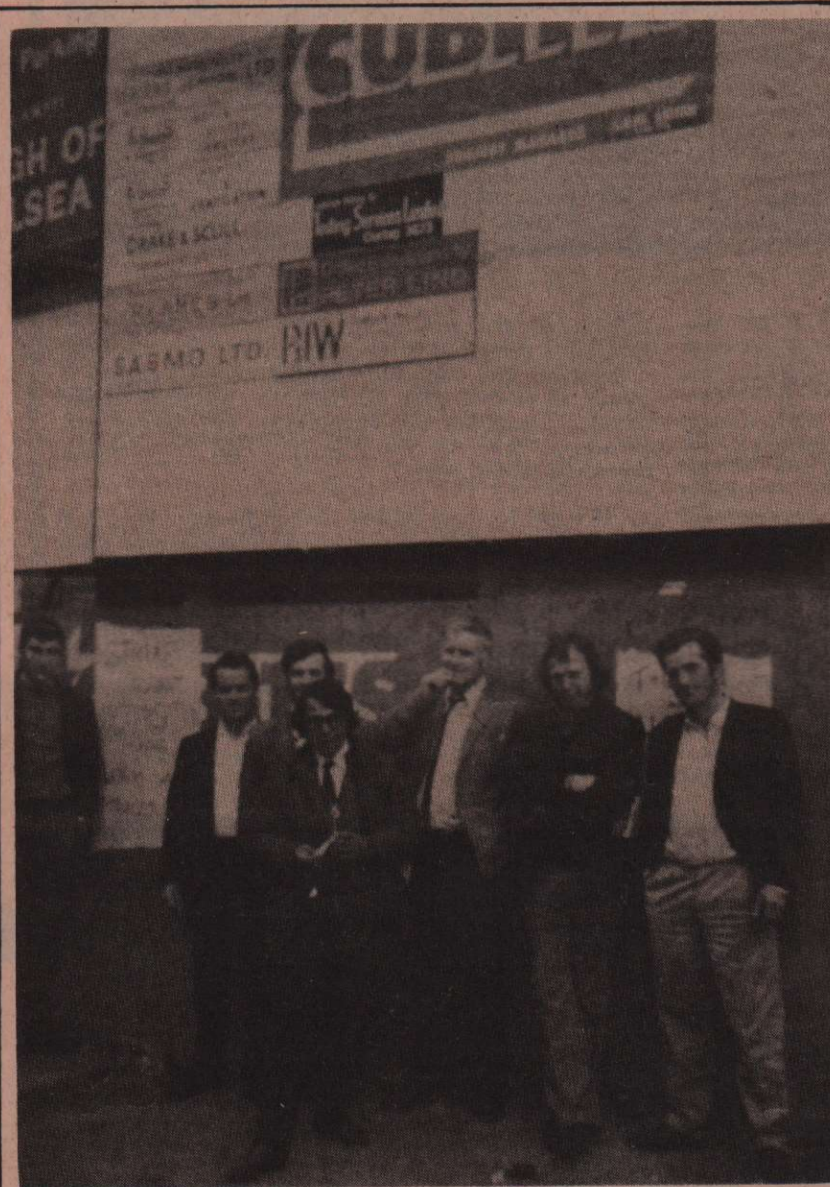
And now the chickens of this disaster are coming home to roost.

During the past month, the men from the Farm have cast aside any remnants of trade union principle: they have informed on pickets to the police, worked unlimited overtime, encouraged drivers to cross picket lines, driven lorries—rightfully the work of other trade unionists—and been prepared even to hand out a leaflet written and signed by management.

Now two 'stewards', Tony Churchman and William Cartwright, have formed a 'staff association' and taken out injunctions under the Industrial Relations Act against the dockers' leaders.

The 'container revolution' threatens the very existence of the dock labour force. Already dockers have seen their ranks filleted from 65,000 in 1967 to a mere 43,000 today.

That is why it is the clear duty of all trade unionists to support dockers in their fight to win the right to handle containers whether inside dockland or inland. The stand taken by the three stewards on Monday in defying the NIRC is a magnificent contribution to this vital struggle.



BUILDING workers picket the World's End site in Chelsea, London, where Cubitt's, the giant construction firm, and its sub-contractors are refusing to employ known militant trade unionists.

Some 250 building workers at World's End struck on Monday this week in opposition to this blatant victimisation. They are fighting to defend an agreement that the management will no longer honour. This guaranteed that any worker transferred off the site would be given priority when new employment arises.

Other Cubitt's sites in London have already informed management that they are considering solidarity action unless the blacklist is dropped. Another big Cubitt job at Thamesmead is on strike for reinstatement of six shop stewards sacked by the management.

Thousands join 'Euro-strike'

THE first 'Euro-strike' took place last Friday. Thousands of workers in the Dunlop-Pirelli combine in Britain and Italy came out in protest against growing redundancies. Ten of 55 factories were closed by a one-day strike in Britain and all the group's plants by a two-hour strike in Italy.

The strike was organised by a joint International Steering Committee, which produced a special four-page broadsheet in both English and Italian for the day of action.

Financial links between Dunlop-Pirelli, Fiat and Michelin are being used to re-distribute tyre orders to the benefit of shareholders and at the expense of jobs.

2500 workers take on whisky giant

GLASGOW: 2500 production workers, mainly women, struck in defence of jobs at five separate whisky plants in Scotland on Monday. They were opposing an attempt by the giant Distillers Company to drop a 'no redundancy' clause from a pay and conditions agreement.

The workers are also demanding that Distillers improve their latest pay offer.

WEMBLEY: The determined sit-in at Stanmore Engineering to enforce the engineers' union's national claim has now entered its fourth week and shows no signs of letting up.

Much depends on the efforts of the local union district committee mobilising mass support.

SHEFFIELD: 650 workers at the AEI Attercliffe Common factory began an occupation last week over a management attempt to scrap domestic wage agreements and freeze earnings.

The entrances to the factory have been blocked with lorries, and a three-shift system of occupation means that there are always 100 workers in the factory.

BRISTOL: 70 workers at the Masson Scott Thrissel factory have been on sit-down strike since 1 June over a management attempt to impose short-time working on shop workers.

Glass factories on strike

YORKSHIRE:—Workers at two Rockware Glass factories are now on strike. 200 sorters in Knottingley decided last Thursday to strike in support of their claim for an extra £5 on the bonus rate, and 1000 workers at Wheatley, Doncaster, have already been out a fortnight, backing their claim for 15p an hour more.

The sorters, who work on the crippling continental shift system, were offered an average increase of less than £3 in May but only if they agreed to a reduction in manning.

At two of the three factories in Knottingley this offer was accepted. But sorters at the 'Old Works' refused to be bought off, imposed an overtime ban and staged three 32-hour strikes. After the third stoppage last week they decided to stay out.

Meanwhile in Doncaster, striking members of the General and Municipal Workers' Union are operating a 24-hour picket and drivers have imposed full blacking.

Although basic rates within the Rockware empire show little variation, bonus payments vary up to £4 from factory to factory. Stewards at Doncaster and Knottingley now have the responsibility of forming a combine committee.

Messages of support and donations to: Fred Walker, 47 Windermere Drive, Knottingley, Yorks.

ENGINEERS' STRUGGLE GROWS

WHILE a handful of factories in the Manchester area, such as Metal Box and Ruston Paxman Diesel, still hold out for the demands of the national engineering claim, the struggle seems likely to spread to the Midlands.

Hugh Scanlon addressed meetings of stewards in Coventry and Birmingham last week, urging them to take up the fight. He stressed at the Birmingham meeting that the emphasis should be on pay and holidays, with the 35-hour demand being dropped.

But the stewards continued to consider the hours issue important while there is high unemployment, for inflation rapidly

reduces cash-only settlements. They reaffirmed the decision to press for the 35-hour week.

A steering committee was set up from the meeting to involve other unions in a series of one-day strikes for the national claim.

There is a danger that the national leadership of the union, having allowed Manchester to fight alone without a great deal of success, will now regard the Midlands struggle as merely a means of forcing a few concessions from the employers that would permit a return to national negotiations.

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PICKET LINES

The company claims the short-time was due to lack of work due to a work-to-rule in the machine shop. But the men know that in reality there is work available—especially since the company recently shut its Wimbledon plant, making 450 redundant, and moved the work to Bristol.

GLASGOW: The management of the Singer factory launched a new attack at the end of the fifth week of the strike by 4500 workers. The first of 720 staff workers who had been given notice were sacked as part of a blatant attempt to turn them against the manual workers.

In this situation members of ASTMS, the white-collar union, have taken an important initiative by saying that they will sit-in rather than accept the sack. Strikers are also picketing Singer shops in the Glasgow area.

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd (TU all depts.) Registered with the Post Office.