

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

RACIST BID TO SPLIT WORKERS

by the Editor

A CHORUS of lies and hysteria has been whipped up by press and television on the entry of the Ugandan Asians into Britain. Labour and Tory politicians are united in stressing the 'serious overcrowding' that will result.

The self-same politicians who are responsible for policies that boosted unemployment to one million, slashed house building and savaged the welfare services are suddenly showing concern for the 'enormous pressure' on jobs, homes and welfare created by 50,000 Asians.

Working people don't need hypocritical politicians and sensation-seeking newspaper owners to tell them about the problems of jobs, homes and welfare. They know about such problems from bitter, first-hand experience. But these problems have not been created by immigrants.

If major cities are overcrowded, then the blame rests squarely on Labour and Tory governments that failed to achieve the target set in 1966 of building half a million new homes a year. As a result, 600,000 promised homes have not been built—enough to accommodate the Ugandan Asians and more than two million other people as well.

LAVISH GRANTS

And the politicians who are now obsessed with 'overcrowding' have in the last three years backed a policy that has led to the giant hotel boom in all the big cities. Under a Labour government scheme continued by the Tories, millionaire property owners like Sir Edwin MacAlpine, Sir William McEwen Younger, Sir Charles Forte and Maxwell Joseph have been given grants of £30 million—£1000 per bedroom—to build new hotels.

Backed by these lavish grants, a total of more than 45,000 new hotel bedrooms have been built in London alone in the last two years. The rush goes on—hotel space for 28,000 more beds will go up in London before next March, when the government's handouts will stop.

The new hotels are not overcrowded. A survey by the English Tourist Board showed that in June most hotels were 40-50 per cent empty—giving enough spare accommodation to house tens of thousands of people, white and black.

One further reason for the housing shortage is that more than 100,000 building



MILITANCY—that is the best antidote for the poison of racism. 300,000 building workers are on strike throughout Britain and on many sites white workers have fought and organised in impressive unity with Asian and West Indian workers. Our picture shows a section of a mass London strike meeting in Fulham Town Hall. The Asians are from the Surrey Lane site, the biggest GLC housing contract in London. [Picture courtesy Morning Star]

workers who could be constructing new homes are forced to kick their heels on the dole queue, waiting for work.

As total unemployment climbs back towards the million mark, those responsible for the plight of the jobless are not immigrants but the people who attack them most viciously.

Enoch Powell, for example, says that inflation could be cured by 'reducing the money supply'. In plain man's language, that means government action to encourage more factory closures, longer dole queues and increased pressure on workers with jobs to accept low wages.

For Powell, the present toll of 1700 redundancies a month is not high enough. He wants even more working people to be thrown on to the scrap heap.

With the working class showing its fighting capacity, using its industrial power

against the employers and the Industrial Relations Act, the poison of racism is being introduced yet again in a desperate bid to divide our ranks and divert our attention away from the real enemies of ordinary people.

Those who defend a profit-based society afflicted with unemployment and poor housing are trying to shift the blame. Labour Party spokesmen are playing the same game as the Tories.

They accept the absurd priorities of a system that builds half-empty hotels instead of homes for workers. They accept that council rents must double in the next three years because authorities like the Greater London Council pay more in interest to moneylenders than they collect in rent.

It is vitally important that workers are not fooled or divided by the lies and

distortions of the racists. The problems affecting the vast majority of people in Britain will be solved not by attacking scapegoats but maintaining the momentum of the miners' and dockers' struggles to forge a movement that will fight for a new, socialist society.

A society that will be based on the needs of working people, not profiteers. That will tear down the slums, the rotting schools and the crumbling hospitals instead of building useless luxury apartments.

That will smash the misery of unemployment by planning and controlling industry in the interests of us all.

The Asians can join and aid us in that struggle—a struggle to deal with the grip of the real aliens in our midst, the tiny minority who profit at our expense.

Facts you should know

CLAIM:—Immigrants are crowding into Britain.

FACT:—More people leave Britain every year than come in. The difference between the numbers emigrating and the numbers immigrating are, on average, 70,000 a year. In other words, even if all 50,000 Ugandan Asians come to Britain, there will still be 20,000 more emigrants this year.

This is not a new situation. From 1901 to 1961 the net outflow from migration was 1,934,000.

CLAIM:—Immigrants help cause unemployment.

FACT:—The areas with fewest immigrants—Wales, Scotland and the Northern Region—have the heaviest unemployment.

CLAIM:—Immigrants take more from the social services.

FACT:—Immigrants make fewer demands on the social services. A special study by the National Institute Economic Review in 1967 showed that the combined cost of health and welfare services, education and child care and national assistance and insurance in 1966 was on average £62.40 per head

for the population as a whole but £48.70 for the immigrant population.

More important, immigrants put more into the social services than the rest of the population. The reason is that many immigrants, especially West Indians, are young, single males who make less demands on the social services than families with children and old people. As a young single man pays as much in national insurance contributions as a married man, immigrants actually help subsidise the social services. Without immigrants, these services would be even more starved of funds.

A bigger paper —plus Paul Foot

SOCIALIST WORKER goes from strength to strength. This autumn the paper will expand to 16 pages a week.

And the editorial staff will be strengthened by Paul Foot, who will join the paper in early October as a full-time reporter and feature writer.

One of the best-known members of the International Socialists Paul Foot has won a deserved reputation as a brilliant and forceful journalist.

His exposures of the capitalist system and those who run it have become required reading for tens of thousands of socialists. His remorseless criticism of the 'business interests' of Reginald Maudling were a key factor in that top Tory's resignation.

Now Paul Foot has accepted an invitation to join Socialist Worker on a full-time basis. He commented this week:

For more than two years now a corrupt and reactionary government has been sustained by a corrupt and reactionary press. We desperately need a mass circulation workers' paper which tells the truth about the government and the monopolies which support it.

Socialist Worker has grown hugely in the past three years because it has campaigned consistently against the government, against the vacillations of the Labour and trade union leaderships and for socialist organisation and socialist propaganda among militant rank and file workers.

It is great news that the paper yet again is increasing its size and influence and I am delighted that I will be able to play a part in it.

The 16-page paper will have a new and improved news service, reporting and analysing in greater depth on the struggles of working people.

It is a big development. An exciting development. Socialist Worker, with your support, will become an even better weapon in the hands of militant workers.

Brighton International Socialists
PUBLIC MEETING
The unions and the
Industrial Relations Act
Thursday, 7 September, 8pm
Prince George, Trafalgar Street
Speakers:
PAUL FOOT, JIM HIGGINS
and a member of the
Fine Tubes Strike Committee

MOROCCO: NOTHING FOR THE PEOPLE

Allende warns Left: We'll use force

by Norah Carlin
THE RECENT attempt on the life of King Hassan II of Morocco hit British headlines when some of the army rebels involved took refuge in Gibraltar. Socialists need waste no sympathy on these rebels, whose aims were reactionary in the extreme.

Hassan's regime is absolutist and corrupt. Since he came to the throne in 1961 he has ruled with the support of a clique of rich merchants and landowners, who are heavily dependent on French capital for their luxurious way of life, their markets and their prestige tourist industry.

From 1965 to 1970 the Moroccan parliament was suspended, and the introduction of a new constitution in 1970 meant no change.

A year ago, an assassination attempt by army officers during a garden party at the royal palace of Skhirat scared Hassan into a programme of reforms. A few notoriously corrupt politicians were dismissed, a referendum on a new constitution held, wages raised and a new government formed.

But at the same time, student strikes against the regime were savagely put down, and the king sacrificed no power nor changed the social basis of his regime.

BOYCOTT

Hassan also invited the two opposition parties, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party and the UNFP (National Union of Popular Forces) into 'consultation' with him. Both parties refused, and boycotted the constitutional referendum. They are waiting for next spring's parliamentary elections, which they hope will put them in a stronger position by demonstrating the extent of their popular support.

Both parties do enjoy considerable support. The Istiqlal, formed in the 1930s to fight for Moroccan independence from the French, lost its right wing to Hassan and now depends on the smaller merchants and the artisans of the Moroccan towns.

The UNFP, founded as the



General Oufkir (left) with King Hassan, whom he tried to depose

Attempted coup was right-wing reaction

'popular' wing of the independence movement, draws its support mainly from the urban workers and the peasantry. At one time it co-operated with the Communist Party in elections.

Both opposition parties have strong links with the trade unions, which played an important part in the independence struggle and since the 1950s have been organising in the countryside as well as the towns.

But neither party was involved in the events of 17 August. The assassination attempt seems to have been directed against the king's attempted 'opening to the left'. Just how reactionary it was can be shown by the involvement of the Minister of Defence, General Oufkir.

Oufkir's rise as an army officer began in Indo-China, fighting for the French against the Viet Minh. His political rise was assured by 1960.

when he became head of the Moroccan security police. It is widely believed that he got this position through the influence of the French, who wished, after Morocco became independent in 1954, to have 'their' man in a position of power.

In 1964 Oufkir was responsible for shooting down demonstrating students in the streets of Casablanca, and in 1965 he was a central figure in the notorious Ben Barka affair.

Ben Barka, leader of the UNFP, was kidnapped in France with the aid of the French police, 'interrogated' there by Oufkir in person, and has never been seen again.

As Minister of the Interior, Oufkir was responsible for the repression which followed the Skhirat assassination attempt, though it is now claimed that he had promised to go over to the rebels if they had succeeded.

When men like Oufkir turn to

rebellion, their aims have nothing in common with those of the workers and peasants who make up the vast majority of their people. They are closer to the aims of Colonel Gadafy of Libya: smash all popular movements by an army coup which takes power 'in the name of the people', on an anti-Russian and anti-Communist platform, carry out nationalist measures against foreign capitalists, provide a bare minimum of popular reforms, but do nothing to free the people from the oppression of their own landlords and employers.

Gadafy's reaction to the attempted coup in Morocco was to broadcast an immediate appeal to all patriotic Moroccans to support it. This they notably failed to do. Gadafy backed a loser this time, but would undoubtedly prefer a successful coup of this kind to any really popular government in Morocco.

PRESTIGE

The Moroccan people certainly need and want to overthrow King Hassan's corrupt and backward regime. They have considerable experience of self-organisation in trade unions and political parties, and are not easily fooled by the 'patriotism' of army officers.

The Istiqlal and UNFP lead the struggle on the electoral level. But they face a regime which has the support of French imperialism, close relations with the neighbouring Algerian regime of Colonel Boumedienne, and a prestige position within the Organisation of African Unity.

It may take more than an electoral victory to crack this hard reactionary nut. To get rid of Hassan before another Gadafy-type army rebellion gets there first, the Moroccan people have to take events into their own hands.

It is easy to see why Britain expelled the fleeing rebels so rapidly from Gibraltar. Since General Franco's clamp-down on the colony, Gibraltar is almost totally dependent on Morocco for supplies and for workers. Hassan's days are surely numbered, but British imperialism will hang on to him while he lasts.

by Vic Richards

SALVADOR ALLENDE, President of Chile, in a recent speech accused the 'ultra-left' of ruining Chile's economy, by frightening farmers and private investors.

He aimed his threats directly at the revolutionary party MIR and rank-and-file bodies associated with it, saying they must stop their seizures of land and factories. He claimed the left was blackmailing him, and warned that force would be used if necessary to defend Popular Unity policies.

No similar threats were made against the right-wing parties, who are stopping Popular Unity policies from going through parliament every day of the week—force is to be used only against revolutionaries.

There followed, according to official reports, the assault by police on the 'Moncada Barracks settlement' on the outskirts of Chile's capital, Santiago. One person was killed and 11 wounded when police 'returned fire'.

The police were carrying out a pre-dawn raid to seize arms said to belong to revolutionary organisations. Leaders of the 'Moncada Barracks' community have accused the police of opening fire without provocation, killing five (not one) and wounding more than 35 (not 11) settlers, and arresting 110.

The irony of the situation was lost on the British Communist Party's Morning Star, whose report failed to mention that 'Moncada Barracks' is the name of the army barracks stormed by Fidel Castro on 26 July 1954—a historic date for Latin American revolutionaries. The Morning Star also omitted to report that the director-general of the Chilean police and his deputy have been suspended as a result of the shootings. The director-general is a member of Allende's Socialist Party, and his deputy a member of the Communist Party.

BRIEFING

THE ATTEMPT by the CGT (France's main union, dominated by the Communist Party) to interfere with the distribution of the revolutionary socialist paper *Lutte Ouvriere* (Workers' Struggle) seems to have been abandoned.

Lutte Ouvriere made it clear that their supporters in the newspaper distributors' organisation would not be intimidated into giving up their fortnightly revolutionary bulletin.

The Party's attack on press freedom also brought protests from the non-CGT journalists' unions, from all the political groups on the left—including the Party's prospective election partner the reformist Socialist Party—from the CFDT, the minority union in newspaper distribution (who said they too had suffered CGT intimidation) and finally from CGT journalists on a major provincial daily, the *Est Republicain*, including two members of the CGT journalists' national committee.

The result was that the CGT had to find a way out. So it denied that any interference had ever happened.

Unfortunately for them, their own daily paper, *L'Humanite*, had already reported: 'The sending out of *Lutte Ouvriere* has already been stopped twice. It may happen a third time... Also *Lutte Ouvriere* were able to produce proof at a press conference that their paper had not been sent to at least one major provincial city (Bordeaux) and to other places.'

When *L'Humanite* now claims that there was no interference they are trying

to retreat without admitting it. Only *Lutte Ouvriere's* refusal to be intimidated has prevented the Party's attempt to monopolise freedom of speech in the working-class movement from succeeding.

THIRTY-SEVEN Russian intellectuals have signed a letter to the Czech Federal Assembly asking for the release and rehabilitation of those sentenced in the recent political trials. The letter, which is being circulated in Moscow, states: 'We note with regret that the Soviet Union, which four years ago sent its troops into Czechoslovakia, thereby bears the responsibility for the present situation.'

MOWU ANGAMI, Commander-in-Chief of the Nagas, a minority people fighting for the right to establish a state independent of India, has been held without trial by the Indian authorities since March 1969. He is reported to have been to China, but since he was not armed when arrested, the only 'crime' he could be charged with is that of leaving and re-entering his own country without Indian permission.

As the Indian authorities seem prepared to let him rot in jail indefinitely, friends in Britain are writing to him (Mowu Angami, c/o The Superintendent, Nowgong Special Jail, Nowgong, Assam, India) to remind the Indian authorities he is not forgotten.

SPANISH painter Salvador Dali, who once had a reputation as a non-conformist, has announced that he is handing over all his paintings to Spain's fascist state. He is at present painting a picture of Franco's grand-daughter on horseback.

His former colleague Andre Breton pointed out a long time ago that Salvador Dali was an anagram of 'Avida Dollars'.

THE Far Eastern Economic Review reports that in North Korea the cult of the personality of leader Kim Il Sung has grown to monstrous proportions.

Visitors to his native village find that there are guides everywhere to repeat anecdotes in a whole series of different languages. The most extraordinary is that of the 'sliding rock'.

According to the guide, the young Kim used to like sliding on this piece of granite behind his home amid the azaleas. One day he tore his trousers and decided never to slide any more. And the future ever-victorious leader of the Korean people said to his mother: 'We are too poor for me to wear out my trousers sliding down the rock.'

But Mrs Kim, the mother of the Korean people, told him to carry on sliding so he could grow strong.

'Our wise and well-beloved leader went on sliding and grew strong, and was thus able to liberate his country from Japanese oppression. The rock celebrates this spectacular event in the history of the Korean people.'

Rosa Luxemburg

BY PAUL FROLICH

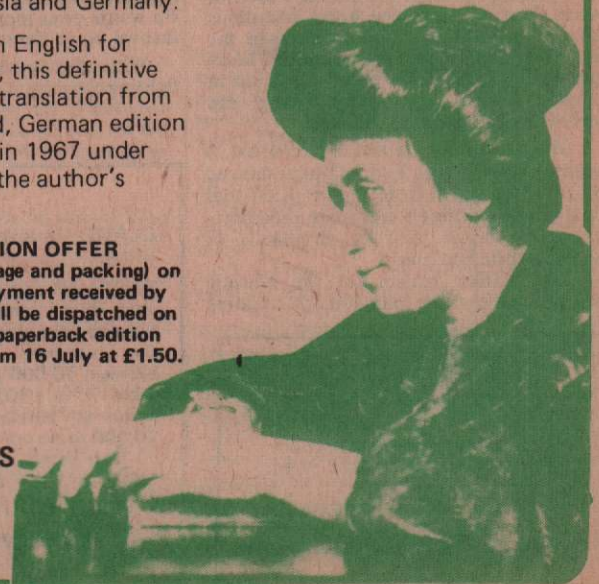
Rosa Luxemburg was one of the greatest figures produced by the international working class movement. Both a profound and original thinker and a brilliant speaker at party groups and mass meetings, she embodied all that is best in the revolutionary tradition.

For more than 30 years, until her murder in Berlin in 1919, she was continuously in the forefront of the working class struggle—in Poland, Russia and Germany.

Unavailable in English for many years now, this definitive edition is a new translation from the third, revised, German edition which appeared in 1967 under the guidance of the author's widow.

PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER
£1.00 (+16p postage and packing) on all orders with payment received by 16 July. Books will be dispatched on publication. The paperback edition will be on sale from 16 July at £1.50. Hardback £3.95.

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NOW IF ONLY WE COULD GET THE
ELECTRICITY TO GO FASTER!



COTTONS WARMS

Frank speaking

LOOKS as if Major-General Frank Kitson's ideas on the modern role of the Army have achieved another striking success in Northern Ireland. Kitson, former commander of a brigade in the Six Counties and now commandant of the infantry school at the appropriately-named Warminster depot, has outlined in his book *Low Intensity Operations* tactics for dealing with 'urban guerrillas'—people fighting to free their territories from British domination.

Among such attractive ideas as the use of scientific torture and the planting of spies, he advocates 'black propaganda'—the direct lie fed to the friendly press in order to undermine the morale of the enemy. Following the success of his ideas during the interrogation of internees and the massacre of Bloody Sunday in Derry, the Army has now adopted a further suggestion, a secret black propaganda department.

The department has had an immediate victory. Last Wednesday ITN featured as its second main lead item on News at Ten a story about three small girls, aged about 8 years, who trundled a large bomb in a pram towards a military post at the rear of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast. The bomb exploded as the girls ran away and the kindly troops refrained from firing on them.

ITN reported the soldiers as being 'absolutely shocked' that the IRA should so callously use young girls for such a task.

There was no truth in the story. It was subsequently denied officially by the Army press office, but only after it had been widely broadcast on television and home and overseas radio programmes. ITN did not correct the mistake the following night.

Second victory for Kitsonism last week occurred when the Sun and the London Evening News led on a story about 'IRA gunmen' raping young



Pat Beaven 200m breast

WOW!—caption in the Sunday Times

girls at gunpoint in the Markets area of Belfast. The stories gave gruesome details of the rapings and included the remarkable fact that four of the girls were already known to be pregnant.

If the girls are with child it can only be that the Holy Ghost has been up to his tricks again. For the story was a total fabrication. Even the Royal Ulster Constabulary, not renowned for its addiction to the truth, issued a statement saying the story was totally false. Neither paper carried a denial.

ANY dockers expecting support from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in their battle against the container bosses will have to think again. The Confederation of British Industry has set up a two-day conference on containerisation on 12-13 September in Leningrad as part of the British contribution to an international exhibition on containers.

Twenty-two experts from British firms engaged in the container business will outline their views on the system designed to screw more profit from fewer workers. Anglo-Russian co-operation in the container field goes back to 1968 when a working group was set up by the CBI and the Soviet Committee for Science and Technology to examine possibilities for industrial and technological collaboration.

Police exposure

NATIONAL FRONTIERS and similar fascist elements will be relieved to know that the Birmingham City police already gives preferential treatment to whites arrested alongside their black brothers on the picket line.

Two white International Socialists who were lifted with four Indian building workers outside the Rugby Portland cement works last week were out of jail well in advance of their four comrades—despite the fact that

the two lived in London. Their identities and addresses were checked by telephone whereas the Indian workers' homes had to be visited.

The rather unusual courtesy with which the arrested men were treated at the station broke down completely when the station sergeant was asking the Indians whether or not they could understand and read English. One Indian building worker, rather fed up with the imputations of ignorance, replied: 'Yes, and two other languages.' Exit station sergeant suitably deflated.

But by the following morning the Birmingham City police were back to full size. They systematically waded into the builders' cement works picket line and made more arrests.

One Indian building worker had been deputed by his union, UCATT, to take photographs of the scenes. He was arrested for the crime of clicking a camera and taken to the police station where the police exposed his films to daylight to prevent them ever being printed. Accusations of police brutality on the picket line conveniently remain accusations.

Con men

THE 'Working Together Campaign', the love-your-boss con game backed by the right-wing Aims of Industry outfit, which has been buying expensive space in the press, has signed up two trade unionists in their bid to hoodwink workers.

Among people advertised as writing pamphlets to back up the campaign are Tom Ham, former president of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers and (as if you haven't guessed) Frank Chapple, gensec of the Electricians Union. Our Frank is writing on 'Conflict and Co-operation in Industry'. No prizes for guessing which he is in favour of.

A MEMBER of the Lowestoft UCATT strike committee visited Great Yarmouth in Norfolk last week during the builders' strike and saw two men tiling the roof of the local Labour Party headquarters. Looking to them for support, he asked them which building union they were in.

'Union?' they asked incredulously. 'We're not in a union—don't believe in 'em.'

Which is interesting, considering that two of the three Eastern Region Officials of UCATT live in Yarmouth and one of them is on the Labour Party management committee. When approached about the two 'nons' retelling the roof, the UCATT man on the management committee cheerfully agreed: 'Yes, I understand they aren't in a union.'

Socialist Worker

How not to fight bosses

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

'IN JULY, the TUC and the CBI established a Joint Standing Committee to set up and oversee the new conciliation and arbitration service. The TUC's representatives on the JSC are the Chairman of the General Council, and the General Secretary, Mr A W Allen, Mr W C Anderson, Lord Cooper, Sir Sidney Greene, Mr J L Jones and Mr H Scanlon.'

So we read in the report of the General Council to Congress which also tells us that this joint TUC-employer enterprise 'can make an important contribution to the promotion and maintenance of industrial peace'.

It is an old idea, this 'partnership of labour and capital' in the interests of a supposed common good. Trade union right wingers have been preaching it for more than a hundred years.

It is no surprise then to find Alf Allen on such a committee. He reluctantly agreed to the deregistration of his union only when faced with expulsion from the TUC. Walter Anderson, who threatened to take his union out of the TUC in an attempt to sabotage even a token fight against the Industrial Relations Act, is in his natural home on the JSC and so, of course, are the noble Baron Cooper and Sir Sidney Greene.

But what about the 'lefts'? What are Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon doing on this committee for 'the promotion and maintenance of industrial peace'?

Perhaps they allowed themselves to be elected with a view to fighting the right wing, to preventing the 'service' from carrying out its function of clamping down working-class struggles? Not a bit of it. They **believe** in the conciliation and arbitration service. Indeed Jack Jones is one of the main authors of the scheme.

In the last resort the 'lefts' have the same basic view of their job as the right wing. They aim to control and contain industrial struggles, not to lead them to the limit of their possibilities. There **are** real differences between the 'lefts' and the Lord Coopers, but they are concerned with how best to achieve the same end, not with different ends. The conduct of Jack Jones in the docks strike is a case in point.

It is argued by some that the conciliation and arbitration service ought to be supported because it represents a 'defeat' for the government and its Industrial Relations law. In support of this claim the General Council reports that, as part of the deal, 'the CBI . . . had advised employers not to use the Act without carefully considering all the possible implementations and it believed that genuinely independent conciliation might remove much of the threat of the Act'.

This 'concession' means absolutely nothing. Of course the big employers will 'carefully consider' whether or not it is in their interests to use the Act—in other words whether they can get away with it at a low cost. If they think they can in any instance, they will do so, notwithstanding bleatings from the General Council.

The way to stop them using the Act is to make it too costly by organising massive action in each case. That is what the right wing on the General Council are out to sabotage and that is what the 'lefts' are helping the right to sabotage by lending their support to this spurious conciliation machinery. Far from representing a defeat for the government, the TUC-CBI agreement is a modest victory for Heath, Carr and Davies. To the extent that it can be made to work it will weaken the efforts of organised workers to maintain and improve wages and conditions.

There is indeed a need for the TUC to set up some Joint Standing Committees. A JSC to unite employed and unemployed workers in the struggle against redundancies and unemployment is needed. So is a JSC to unite organised workers with pensioners in a struggle for decent benefits for old people, for regular pension increases to keep up with prices and so on.

And if there are TUC leaders who really believe in the 'common interests' of workers and employers, let them test the matter by proposing joint action with the CBI on these questions. We all know what sort of response that would get.

The politics of conspiracy

THE ACQUITTAL of Peter Hain on three of the four 'conspiracy' charges brought against him by the South African-financed 'private prosecution' is a welcome defeat for the 'law and order' lobby.

The fact remains that Hain was convicted on one count under the infamous, judge-made conspiracy law. The last time this law was successfully used was against Communist Party members and supporters during the squatting campaign of 1946. The fact is that 'conspiracy' charges have always been used in political cases when there is no basis for a specific charge. The object of such prosecutions is invariably to restrict political activity that is inconvenient to the ruling class. We can be sure that this and other means of 'legal' repression will be resorted to more and more often. A united defiance, employing all available political methods, is the answer.

Telephone
01 739 9043
editorial

Corruption: how they tried to buy one Labour MP

PAUL FOOT's article is about the best that has been published in any paper on the Poulson case (12 August). But he is wrong in thinking that 1972 is Corruption Year.

The system is much older than that. In fact as long as we tolerate a corrupt system we must have a corrupt parliament.

I did not think so until I was elected an MP in 1945. Within a few weeks I was offered no less than six directorships or advisory posts in building firms.

I am an architect. I refused them all because I was an MP.

Foot mentions dinners being given at £6 a head. I had a comic incident like this in my first year as MP. I was approached by a comrade and asked if I would come to have dinner with a group of MPs who were interested in the building industry.

I assumed it would be in the House of Commons. When I met my comrade, to my surprise I was told it was to be at the Savoy Hotel, so along we went, up in the lift into a large private dining room.

I was greeted by an earl who said, 'My dear Braddock, how nice to meet you again.' I had never seen or heard of him before. After drinks we all sat down, 25 to 30 MPs, and had an excellent dinner.

I was a bit worried about how much it was going to cost me. I need not have been. When the coffee and brandy were on the table, a character got up at the top of the table and announced he was a director of a firm of makers of pre-fabricated houses and that the Minister of Health had refused to give them a contract.

He then went round the table asking each MP what they thought. All said they would do something about it in various ways. Fortunately I was at the foot of the table and had to think of a way out.

I said I knew the Minister and had no doubt the offer had been fully considered but he had probably come to the conclusion that the firm was so well organised that they would be able to do more valuable work on the open market.

My remarks were received in dead silence. The dinner, even as long ago as that, must have cost £6 a head. I was still an innocent in parliament and I ought to have referred the whole matter to the parliamentary Labour Party, but had then no idea how common such practises were.

We all know now and have got to realise that, if we have a corrupt system, it must be of the very nature of things include a party with many corrupt or bendable MPs. —TOM BRADDOCK, East Preston.

LETTERS

THE ARTICLE you reproduced from Workers Power on the manifesto of the Russian Citizens Committee (19 August) was quite uncritical. It would be wrong if your readers were to believe that this is the expression of a thoroughly revolutionary movement.

First of all, the contrast with the West is seen almost entirely in terms of living standards, eg, 'in the United States 80 per cent of all families have cars, in Britain 60 per cent, in West Germany 50 per cent, and in the USSR less than 0.1 per cent.'

Contrary to what the article states, the manifesto does betray illusions in the Western 'democracies', eg, 'the number of unemployed in the west does not exceed 2 to 4 per cent of the labour force'.

The document analyses the exploitation of Russian workers: 'The Russian working man's wage represents only a third of his real earnings'. The remainder, the authors say, is appropriated by the Kremlin rulers.

Among other expenses 'huge funds are being wasted by the Kreminites on the deliveries of arms to so-called "freedom fighters"... we are spending three million rubles a day on aid and arms for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in its attempts to seize South Vietnam.'

The manifesto in no way challenges the doctrine of 'socialism in one country'. But it does refer to independent working-class action as the way forward.

'Over the last 10 years, strikes, demonstrations and other actions were staged in a number of cities—Novocherkassk, Temir-Tau, Chirchik, Leningrad. Strikes also occurred in Moscow plants. The other day the working people demonstrated in Kaunas.'

The political perspectives hardly go beyond that. They do not say how 'freedom and democracy' are to be attained. As The Worker (paper of the Irish Socialist Workers Movement) said: 'The document is not fully socialist and internationalist, but it is a genuine reflection of the truth about the "socialist" world'. —BRIAN TRENCH, Dublin 6.

On the threshold



Building workers: threshold agreements could whittle away increases won in the strike

of new pay danger

by Chris Harman

THRESHOLD agreements are in the news. They are high on the agenda of the discussions between the TUC and Heath and they have been put into effect in a number of recent pay deals.

The idea of such agreements was first mooted by the TUC some months ago. Since then, they have been greeted with enthusiasm by leading Tories and by Labour spokesmen like Harold Wilson and Denis Healey.

But none of them is prepared to admit openly that threshold agreements are just the latest device to keep down the buying power of wages and to cut living standards. Indeed, when they describe threshold agreements, they try to give exactly the opposite impression.

The TUC first suggested that 'Every month... the two sides [of industry] should jointly calculate the percentage

increase in the official index of retail prices from its level... at the operative date of the agreement... The workers shall be compensated at the rate of 1 per cent for each 1 per cent by which the cost of living rises.'

In other words, if the cost of living rises by 1 per cent, then there should be an automatic increase in wages by 1 per cent.

Presented in this way, the idea must sound fair enough to large numbers of workers. But in reality it means that take-home wages will lag behind prices.

For two reasons. First a 1 per cent increase in wages does not mean a 1 per cent increase in the amount of money in your pocket.

The average worker earning more than £20 a week pays about a third of any wage increase straight back to the government in income tax and higher national insurance deductions. For lower paid workers, the situation is even worse. Every pay increase means less entitlement to rent and rate rebates, as well as the loss of free school meals for the children and Family Income Supplement.

In order to keep up with the official cost of living scale, wages would have to rise by at least 1.3 per cent for each 1 per cent increase in the scale. The TUC proposals, far from keeping up with the cost of living, mean gradual wage cuts.

Price rises

Moreover, the official retail price index does not measure the effect of price increases for most wage earners, particularly the lowest paid. According to the official index, the average cost of living had risen by 62.6 per cent in the 10 years prior to May of this year.

But the same government figures show that the necessities of life had risen by much more: bread by more than 70 per cent, meat by 78 per cent, fish by 91 per cent, vegetables by 86 per cent, rents by 91 per cent, fuel by 72 per cent, bus and train fares by 107 per cent.

These are items that most working class families have to pay for. If they increase in price then there is just no money left to buy other goods which might have risen less in price, like record players or colour televisions.

Half the families in this country cannot afford a car. For them it is no good saying, as the official price index does, that transport costs have risen on average by 55.2 per cent in the last 10 years when this figure is obtained by averaging out the increased cost of cars—a mere 39 per cent—and the increased cost of public transport—more than 100 per cent.

Workers lose in other ways too. For example, an agreement signed with British Oxygen by the TGWU and the GMWU earlier this year said that 'the company would make a weekly payment from 1 January 1973 to the extent by which the cost of living (officially measured) may have risen beyond 3 per cent between May and December 1972.'

Not only does this mean, as we have shown above, that the workers get a rise in take home pay less than the rise in the real cost of living. In addition, if prices rise in, say June-August, they have to put up with a loss in their buying power until December. The difference, of course, goes into the employers' pocket.

At present, leaders of the building

unions are desperately seeking to come to terms with building firms individually, on the basis of a deal already established with three Scottish firms, Camerons, Dye and Betts. This deal has been praised even by some leading Communist Party members in the industry.

But hidden between its complicated arrangement of different rates (a basic rate, a bonus calculating rate, and a minimum earnings rate) and disguised by references to 'safeguard the increases... against possible accelerated effects of inflation' is a scheme that will gradually whittle away the buying power of increases conceded to buy off the strike.

Minimum

One of the central demands of building workers is for a minimum wage of £30. The deal seems to concede this for craftsmen, although not for labourers. But although the other rates undergo a further increase in 12 months time, any change in the minimum wage is determined by a 'threshold clause'.

If this is not brought into effect, then the minimum will remain at its present level for two years. The clause says there will be no increase in the minimum unless prices have risen by more than 8 per cent next August. If prices rise by less than 8 per cent in the next 12 months, or by more than 8 per cent, but not until after next August, then the £30 remains unchanged.

But if prices rise by 8 per cent in the year, then the real value of the minimum in 12 months time will not be £30 in current terms, but a mere £27.60.

The 'threshold' clause says that any increase above 8 per cent that takes place before next August will be compensated for—but only by the amount by which it exceeds 8 per cent. If, for example, prices rise by 12 per cent over the next year, then next August the basic will be raised by 4 per cent—from £30 to £31.20. But again it will be worth only the same as £27.60 today.

Closed doors

And for a married man with two children, total tax and national insurance deductions will rise from about £3.50 to nearly £4. In other words, he will be worse off in take home pay than if he got a minimum of £27.60 today. And this does not take into account the way in which the official price index conceals the impact of food prices and other items for most workers.

Vic Feather has said in public that a policy of threshold agreements 'is not wage restraint and it has no relation to any policy of wage restraint.'

But behind the closed doors of meetings of the National Economic Development Council, he sounds a slightly different note. He admitted: 'These are a negotiating device which might help in countering inflation.'

And Campbell Adamson of the Confederation of British Industry was even more forthright: 'We agree that they could make for more modest settlements.'

If Feather and his friends were really honest they would admit that the real effect of threshold agreements they are encouraging and signing can only be to slowly reduce the buying power of wages.

Such a policy represents a complete retreat from any attempt to use trade unionism to force better living and working conditions from the profiteers who own industry.

Fiddling books while jobs burn

THIS is the story of Wiggins Teape. It illustrates how a subsidiary of a massive multi-national company has the facility to produce misleading accounts showing the company to be in severe financial straits and then using this as the excuse to sack workers.

It shows how multi-national companies can spend money on new plant abroad so that the new jobs created are not given to those who are made redundant. And it shows how all this is part of a well-thought-out policy aimed at making the greatest profits for the capitalists at the expense of the workers.

Wiggins Teape is a paper company manufacturing a wide range of paper, including the very profitable carbonless copying paper and the paper used in photo-copying machines. Since June 1970 it has been a wholly-owned subsidiary of British American Tobacco, whose profits last year were more than £150,000,000. It is one of the biggest companies in Europe.

According to the published report and accounts of Wiggins Teape, the greatest profit ever achieved was in 1969: £8.4 million. In 1971 profits were shown at £1.08 million.

In March 1971 the company sacked 400 workers at its Hylton Mill in Durham and in May 1972 it announced that it would be sacking 500 from its Tillicoultry Mill in Scotland. The company claims the reason for the redundancies is that the UK operation has been losing too much money—and they quote the report and accounts as evidence. But consider these facts:

1. There is no mention in the report and accounts of the loss attributable to the company's holding in British Tissues, amounting to £300,000. This is purely an investment and in no way reflects Wiggins Teape's ability to trade profitably, although it reduces the profit shown in the accounts.

2. The report and accounts do not mention the adverse affect that the

IN THE CITY



with T.H. Rogmorton

electricity work to rule and the postal strike had on 1971 profits.

3. The profit figure is arrived at after nearly £10 million of repairs and renewals and obsolescence write-offs: nearly £2 million more than the year before and more evidence of the measures being taken to increase profitability in future years.

4. Profits were adversely affected by the poor quality of hardwood chips in the company's mill at Fort William. This problem had been overcome by the time the report and accounts were published and was thus only a temporary set back to profits.

5. The company claimed their labour force had been reduced by 10 per cent in the UK. I have calculated from the British American Tobacco report and accounts that it probably fell by four per cent, which means that new jobs were created elsewhere in the UK, away from the areas where the redundancies were announced. In fact the chairman himself says that money has been spent expanding production and installing new plant.

6. The company is very rich financially—recently the head office was put on the market and expectations are that it will sell for around £20 million against a purchase price of £3.5 million. The original £3.5 million was originally earned by the workers and the profit could be spent creating new jobs for those workers. BATs have £135 million in the bank.

7. According to Dick Douglas, the Labour MP for Clackmannan, speaking in the House of Commons on 22 July, Wiggins Teape took £1.127 million from the Tillicoultry Mill between 1966 and 1971, money that if left could have prevented the mill from closing down.

8. The company spent heavily over the years and will do so in future. In 1969 they spent £16 million on the carbonless copy paper alone, only £5 million of it in England.

9. Finally, remember that a small subsidiary of a large public company has a degree of immunity from the avaricious shareholders. It can produce bad figures and not be criticised because the real owners (in this case BATs) know that it will work out alright in the end. In fact when BATs took over Wiggins Teape it said that it expected 'some time to elapse before the full benefits of the merger became obvious'.

In conclusion, no one is denying that 1971 was a difficult year for Wiggins Teape because of the conditions in areas of the paper industry. But these problems affected only 25 per cent of the company's business. What the company has done, with the protection of BATs, is to produce a deliberately misleading set of report and accounts and concentrate a great deal of reorganisation and re-equipment (which temporarily disrupts profits) in a short period of time that coincides with the worst trading period in the company's history.

And then armed with this evidence, it has sacked workers who have been providing the money for years that has helped the company invest profitably elsewhere so that profits in future years will be even greater.



**TONY
CLIFF**

IS Executive Committee member

Balance sheet on docks battle

IT IS TIME for an interim balance sheet on the dockland struggle for survival now that the official strike is over and the National Port Shop Stewards Committee has failed to convince the dockers to continue the fight unofficially.

The Aldington-Jones agreement was a sell-out, but it was far from a rout of the dockers. It gave a number of concessions to them that could not have been won without the strike. But in general the agreement was a sell-out because the compromise forced on the dockers was out of tune with the actual relations of forces between them and the employers. If they had not been led by Jack Jones, the dockers could have won all four demands for job security put forward by the National Port Shop Stewards Committee.

Jones was successful in his treachery because he separated the majority of dockers from the vanguard, the militants. This is the old game of the union bureaucrat: mobilise the backward sections of the members against the more advanced section. But the important question is: Why did the militants allow themselves to be divorced from the rest? Why did they fail to keep the mass of dockers marching in step with them?

Touched the nerve

The answer boils down to the non-involvement of the rank and file in action during the three weeks of the official strike. The picketing of Chobham Farm, Midland Cold Storage and the Hays Wharf complex in Dagenham demanded action from only hundreds of dockers. It involved only the militants.

Later, with the arrest of the 'Pentonville Five', the entire dockers' community united spontaneously. The issue here was simple and touched the nerve of every worker—the five must be freed, 41,000 dockers, with all levels of consciousness, from the most advanced to the most short-sighted and prejudiced, marched as a united army.

When a relatively small section of an army is enough to face the enemy it is natural that the leaders do not look over their shoulders to see if the rest of the forces are following suit. When a general assault takes place involving clear, direct issues that stir every soldier, again the leadership does not need to look over its shoulder. The first two stages of the struggle, therefore, did not prepare the militants to plan and arm themselves for the third stage.

The enemy, represented by Lord Aldington, with fifth columnist Jack Jones, planned a zig-zag counter-attack. The rank and file leadership should have fitted its strategy to the enemy's changed tactics.

Whatever tactics industrial militants choose, the central aim must be the active participation and understanding of the great majority of workers concerned. Workers' leaders can change tactics, can manoeuvre, can adapt themselves to changing tactics and the ruses of the enemy. Not only can but must, otherwise they are certain to be soundly beaten. But all the tactical changes have to be subordinated to one central, strategic theme: raising the activity, the consciousness and the organisation of the workers concerned.

In terms of this strategic measuring rod, the militant dockers failed during the three weeks of the official strike. It was an extremely passive strike, even more so than the official strike in 1970.

A few days after the Pentonville Five



Militants fought the battle of the scab wharves—mass demonstrations were needed, too

were freed and the official strike was called. I wrote in Socialist Worker: 'During the five days struggle the rank and file showed itself in all its glory while the trade union bureaucracy, including Jack Jones, showed their complete bankruptcy. Now that the dockers' strike is official, the danger is that those bankrupt full-time officials will take over the running of the strike. It is even more important now that the Joint Shop Stewards Committee is central in actively running the strike, in publicising the issues and in developing the strategy and tactics of the struggle.'

SADLY, it has to be recorded that the militants did not take the initiative in running the dispute. They were not able to involve the mass of the rank and file.

For example, only a few hundred militants were concerned in picketing open ports. The stewards should also have organised one or two mass demonstrations, involving thousands of London dockers, to Transport House, demanding that Jack Jones call on the railwaymen for solidarity action, as they had given the miners during their strike.

Education in ideas

Jones did everything to sabotage the dockers' struggle. He did not call on the lorry driver members of the TGWU, or on the NUR and ASLEF to black all goods coming through scab ports. Intentionally, he prolonged the official strike in order to tire the dockers. The final draft of the revised Aldington-Jones agreement was ready at least one week before the end of the strike. Even the timing of the mass meetings was arranged by Jones to defeat the militants, with Tilbury voting before London and Hull.

Education in action is linked with

education in ideas, with the question of communication of propaganda. The organised militants should have produced leaflets and posters and then more leaflets and posters to give a clear message to every docker.

How many dockers know that Lord Aldington is a former deputy chairman of the Tory Party? ('Ted Heath is one of my best friends' he told the Sunday Times on 20 August.) How effective it would have been to show that Lord Aldington, as vice chairman of GEC, presided over the sacking of 50,000 GEC workers in the last few years—the same man looking after 'dockers' security'.

A mass demonstration, with one of its themes 'Down with Aldington, the man who sacked 50,000 GEC workers', would have been most effective and would have helped immunise dockers from the sugary promises of the same lord.

Above all, how many dockers knew of the secret survey by the National Ports Council that estimates that the number of registered dockers will fall from 41,000 today to less than 30,000 by 1975? It expects a loss of 5000 jobs in London, a similar number in Liverpool and approximately 1500 in Hull, Grimsby, Immingham, Bristol and the small Lancashire ports. Contrasted with this loss of 12,000 jobs, what Aldington-Jones offers is next to useless.

The non-involvement of the majority of dockers during the official strike and the lack of printed propaganda among the dockers are part and parcel of the same problem.

The Aldington-Jones strategy was, first, to divert any demands away from the state. The kernel of the negotiations will be voluntary bargaining with individual employers. Secondly, the agreement is very complex and vague. In order to break

through this artificial fog, the shop stewards should have made specific generalised demands on the government that could not have been evaded.

For example, perhaps it would have been worthwhile emphasising the need to implement the abandoned Bristow Report recommendation for a five-miles-wide corridor each side of the Thames as an area confined to registered dock work.

If the Liverpool dockers' demand for '£60 for 20 hours' as a reply to technological change was not taken seriously, then a call for a government guarantee of full work or maintenance would have fitted the bill.

In the face of the phoney complaint of Lord Vestey that he cannot afford to employ registered dockers, the demand for the nationalisation of all ports under workers' control would have been a tough, realistic counter. Such demands should have been the centrepiece of a series of massive demonstrations directed against the government.

DOCKERS will discover the hard way that the promised severance pay of £4000 is simply a cruel joke. Only a small number—mainly the sick and disabled—will get this amount. And even if severance is paid, it will quickly come under attack.

After a year on the dole, workers have to apply for supplementary benefit which is calculated on the basis of how much money they have in the Post Office or the bank. For example, a man with £2000 will have £7 a week deducted from his weekly entitlement of £9.45. This is another point that should have been widely publicised by the stewards. Average severance pay will be about £2000 and with today's escalating prices that will hardly cover one year's subsistence.

Cut in wages

Aldington-Jones promised the end of the Temporary Unattached Register. But at the same time the report said: 'The committee expect that as a result of the other recommendations the need for work-sharing on any large scale will be of relatively short duration.' When Devlin Phase One was introduced, the TUR was meant for only short-term employed. But since then many dockers have found themselves on the unattached register for six, nine or even 12 months.

Aldington-Jones promised 290 guaranteed new jobs but on the very day the dockers went back to work, 21 August, the impending closure of Nelson's Wharf at Lambeth, employing 87 registered dockers, was announced. For the port employers and for Aldington-Jones, work-sharing means wage sharing—a cut in dockers' wages.

The dockers will pay dearly for Jones' 'promises'. Another round in the battle, perhaps triggered again by a conflict at an individual depot, is sure to come and will be even more bitter than before.

Militants must be clear that the ruling class is highly centralised and has great ability to manoeuvre. To stand up to the bosses and their agents it is necessary for militants to learn the lessons of the last few months and discuss seriously and systematically the question of tactics and strategy necessary to defend the right to work and fight for decent wages and conditions.

The militants need to start a massive propaganda effort as quickly as possible. They must flood dockland with leaflets and posters arguing a strategy for continuing and strengthening the struggle to stop the murder of their industry in the interest of profit.

Militants must involve rank & file

FROM BLACKPOOL TO BRIGHTON...

Year of the seaside flounder

A YEAR has passed since the Blackpool Trades Union Congress threw over the previously 'permissive' TUC policy on the Tory anti-union laws. Under the influence of Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones, Congress decided that 'advice' to member unions not to register was no longer adequate in view of the large number of unions who were saying that they would ignore it.

Instead unions were instructed not to register and, by implication, not to go to the NIRC or pay fines. It was an important decision, but no powers of discipline were taken.

Six months later the policy was unceremoniously dumped by those with the power if not the authority to do so—the General Council majority. Members of that committee were reported to have been badly bruised in April's rush to obey the government-ordered cooling-off period on the railways and pay the massive fines levied against the dockers' fight for the right to work.

Yet this is the so-called general staff of the trade union movement we are talking about, a body of men and the occasional woman who guard Congress decisions and lead the fight to make them a reality.

Contrast

The first time they came face to face with the reality of the Industrial Relations Act, they jettisoned all their empty speeches and ran for cover.

What a fantastic contrast with the behaviour of the dockers who defied the courts and the law and who struck until five of their members were released from jail.

What a contrast with the fighting spirit of the one million other workers who came out in solidarity and ensured that the five were freed within as many days.

Laurie Flynn sums up 12 months of TUC backpedaling and surrender

But the TUC's behaviour has not been inconsistent over the past year. Behind the rhetoric of Congress decisions the TUC leadership has been systematically undermining them.

Having allowed an infamous Bill to become an infamous law by refusing to organise massive action against it, they developed the internal logic of their position—by doing precisely nothing.

Right at the beginning of the year, Vic Feather was doing other things apart from making speeches about how 'the unity of the trade union movement had nullified and destroyed the Industrial Relations Act.' Off the record he was telling unions like the Electricians which had not come off the register that they had nothing to worry about.

A subsequent Trades Union Congress would, he implied get them off the hook of non-co-

operation with the Act.

The TUC's colours stood out most clearly in the miners' strike, that great groundswell of a whole industry, a whole community which had been cheated and robbed of the fruits of its labour, half a million men and women determined to win redress. Their determination, their unity and their tactics of mass involvement in the strike beat back a Tory government flushed with its brutal victories over postal and power workers.

What was the TUC's contribution to the struggle? It refused even to organise a meeting of the transport unions to plan solidarity action. It was left to individual unions to instruct their members not to cross picket lines.

One thing underpinned the TUC's pussyfooting on the miners' struggle—a rather superficial acquaintance with working class history.

Memories of the 1926 General Strike are the constant backcloth to the discussions on the General Council and its 'inner cabinet', the General Purposes Committee. The trade union leadership is scared to death of a real fight with the Tory government, any government. They conveniently forget the main truth of the 1926 defeat, that it was self inflicted.

Danger

Frank Chapple's every speech at the meetings centres on the terrible danger of using working-class strength for political purposes, as if politics was the sacred prerogative of MPs and employers. Time and again he returns to the dread danger of precipitating mass struggles against the elected government of the land.

But this system of ideas alone did not lead to the turncoating on the question of obeying the state's cooling-off periods and paying the fines it levied to cripple trade union action.

Jack Jones too was shifting. Those who pursue power and influence alone have little room for principles.

And the truth of the matter is that Jones was interested in the numerical strength that might be had through the Act and its agency

shops. He did not want another union scooping up membership with Tory assistance.

When it came to the question of refusing to pay the £55,000 fine, Jones did not keep the matter within his own union. He took it to the General Purposes Committee of the TUC.

They suggested non-payment, thanks largely to the persistence of Hugh Scanlon, but referred the matter to the full General Council.

The 'inner cabinet' of the TUC engineered it so that the matter would once again be thrown back to the General Purposes Committee. Second time around, this body advised Jones to pay.

Jones himself had managed to cajole his own Transport and General Workers Union executive into agreeing to pay on the casting vote of the chairman. He had the cheque signed and delivered before he had formal authorisation from the trade union movement's general staff, the General Council.

Hugh Scanlon and Lawrence Daly alone put up any fight on the General Council, both of them saying quite rightly that there should be a recall congress as the General Council had no power to reverse Congress policy.

But Scanlon was fighting as a diplomat. His tack was to suggest that if the TUC paid one union's fine, it should pay everybody's. The idea was to make the bill so expensive that the TUC would not dare to pay the first installment.

Scanlon made no attempt to put these vital questions before the mass of the trade union movement. And he had been careful in his conduct of the engineers' struggle to avoid getting his own union in the same position as the TGWU.

At no time in the course of that week of abject surrender to the Tory government did any of the members of the so-called general staff bring any of the arguments against paying fines out in the open. Left as well as right was caught within the system of ideas that trade unionism is about subscriptions, negotiations and barter.

Fortunately for the working-class movement, the dockers were around to pick up the dying flame of official opposition to the Tory

government. They defied the infamous court. They took Blackpool's decisions and put them into practice.

When the first three of their ranks were faced with jail, what did the TUC do? Did it campaign and organise for solidarity action? Did it try to show in action that the slogan 'an injury to one is an injury to all' is more than mere words? No answer is required.

Victor Feather got on the telephone and begged and pleaded with the three to go in front of a court, any court, to appeal the jailing order. He offered to pay their legal expenses if they did.

'Are you mad?' he said when they declined. But the dockers and other workers were prepared to give the 'injury to one' slogan real practical meaning. The state machine retreated swiftly.

In the period that followed, when the press was busy vilifying the dockers' struggle, when worker was being played off against

worker, did the put out one? No, the Gen their hands and would go away

And when imprisoned, Hugh Scanlon individual, th until the Mond Purposes Com moved in the d stoppage.

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William Hc ary of the s present—even been suspenc His contributi could not tak in support appeared to policy of thei Jack Jones

JUST FOR T

'We in the Union of Post Office Workers have been continually faced with staff associations, organisations designed to weaken the trade union movement, very often the creatures of the employer. We will demonstrate by our ability to represent our members that staff associations cannot fulfill the role of the trade union movement. It is imperative that we should come together, united as a whole, accepting the instructions of this Congress which I hope this Congress will give to the trade union movement this morning.'—TOM JACKSON, General Council member, speaking at the TUC 7 September 1971.

'Yes, the UPW is preparing to go to the National Industrial Relations Court even if the TUC tells us not to. This is because a non-TUC affiliated body, the Telecommunications Staff Association, is about to claim recognition under the new Industrial Relations Act.'—TOM JACKSON, TUC General Council member, 8 March 1972.

'The divisiveness intended by the Industrial Relations Act has been nullified and destroyed by the unity of the trade union movement.'—VIC FEATHER, 15 April 1972.

Jackson: Pri 'I have alw are not above of Appeal has approach.'—V 1972.

'The union the law and accept a High we do not acc law of the la political dogm shatter the tra VIC FEATHE



'The language of the civilised nations has clearly marked off two epochs in the development of Russia. Where the aristocratic culture introduced into world parlance such barbarisms as czar, pogrom, knout, October has internationalised such words as Bolshevik, soviet... This alone justifies the proletarian revolution, if you imagine it needs justification'—Trotsky.

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Why Sunday is a busy day for two top CBEs

IT WILL BE a busy weekend for Victor Feather, CBE. On Sunday he will meet with George Smith, CBE, chairman of this year's Congress and together they will go through the agenda.

The purpose of the exercise will be to decide who will actually speak in the main debates.

This process is officially known as 'catching the chairman's eye'. This is a somewhat inaccurate description of events—as is shown by a little mix up made by the good Lord Cooper, chairman of last year's Blackpool TUC.

During the debate on the TUC's attitude to Tory anti-union legislation, Lord Cooper called out the name of one General Council member who against all the odds had managed to catch his eye. Sadly, the gentleman concerned wasn't even in the hall at the time.

What Smith and Feather will be doing on Sunday is nothing more than a time-honoured ploy to ensure that the floor of the conference is as unrepresented as possible. The outstanding success of this endeavour can be gauged by a brief analysis of who has done the talking in the past.

At last year's Congress there were 24 speakers in the key debate on the Industrial Relations Bill. 13 of them were members of the General Council.



Cooper: a slight mix-up



Smith: getting his eye in

not possibly be discussed by the delegates. The matter was, he said, 'sub judice'—a legal technicality to stop discussion on court matters—under the terms of the Industrial Relations Act.

Doubtless the left votes of the engineering union will go his way again next week.

And last year, the big battalions of the left also helped a number of other well known militants to keep their seats on the General Council. They voted for Alf Allen of USDAW and Walter Anderson of NALGO. Both men favour registration.

The left votes also went to William Hogarth of the Seamen's Union, who has since threatened the TUC with a civil action for breach of contract and a NIRC action for contempt if they throw his organisation out of the TUC for going to the NIRC voluntarily.

Spurious

The point of the system is that in return for say Jack Jones' votes, those on the other end of the deal will cast theirs in a particular way. They might even move some little way on policies and a spurious unity would be achieved.

What must be underlined is that oppositional elements within the trade union leadership are up to their necks in both the rules and rhetoric of the TUC. They work within for this or that tactical victory and then when the bureaucracy unceremoniously dumps agreed policy, they try to patch up the pieces.

At no time do they endeavour to bring the issues before the mass of the working-class movement. They are caught, of their own free will, in a system of barter and compromise. They pursue power, pure and simple.

Nor is the Communist Party immune to playing along with the game. In the Scottish TUC over the years it has not been an uncommon occurrence for the left leadership of the Mineworkers to horsetrade their votes with those in control of the General and Municipal.

This is the inevitable by-product of a political approach which trails along in search of leftward moving personalities in high office.

Oblivion

At the 1971 special conference on the same issue, there were again 24 speakers—14 of them from the General Council. And at the 1969 special conference on the Labour government's anti-union legislation In Place of Strife, the trade union bosses did even better. Of 20 speeches, General Council members managed to make 14 of them.

And in none of those historic sessions did one single ordinary rank and file delegate succeed in getting called. At the TUC, the working trade unionist is earmarked either for oblivion or piety.

With a bit of luck he or she might be allowed to make a speech calling for the immediate introduction of equal pay or government legislation forcing employers to agree to factory safety committees. Both these issues have been the subject of successful TUC resolutions since time immemorial. The TUC bosses have simply gone away and forgotten about them.

Nor is stage management of Congress confined to the selection of speakers. Control of the agenda ensures that the debates go in a way that is acceptable to those in charge.

Dissidents can always be leaned on by the standing orders committee which will 'persuade' them to compose their motions in such a fashion as to maintain maximum unity and abandon their original intentions. This year is no exception.

Repent

What the TUC bosses have set out to achieve this time is a smooth ride for those unions which are still defying Congress by remaining registered under the Industrial Relations Act. They will be given more time to repent, effectively until next year's congress.

This in turn gives the TUC leadership more time to manoeuvre. And it is to be made clear that while they are suspended, registered unions should not be treated 'unfraternally'.

The agenda has been arranged and the voting will be called so that the National Union of Seamen alone is up for slaughter. This organisation has after all taken sin to its logical conclusion. It has put it into practice by going to the National Industrial Relations Court for a state-licensed closed shop in the shipping industry.

A more traditional piece of horse-trading will take place on the elections to the General Council.

Only unions within a trade group can nominate people to run for that group's seat on the Council. Since the General and Municipal Workers is the only union in its trade group, it alone can nominate. So there is no need for such a diversion as a bit of competition.

The GMWU appoints three men to sit on the General Council. Its total membership is slightly less than the combined membership of the unions in the paper and printing section. But the print unions only elect one representative to the General Council. The GMWU is therefore 300 per cent over-represented.

Or again, the Agricultural

Bosses are happiest when hob-nobbing with government and employers

UC give any lead, of propaganda? Council sat on toped the dockers the five were for Feather said 'helpful'. Though moved as an UC did nothing when the General ittee met. This ction of a one-day

to be the clincher—if the TUC didn't do something then unofficial bodies would assume leadership. The General Purposes Committee would put a recommendation to the full General Council on the Wednesday. In April the TUC had General Council meetings at the shortest of notice to meet the government. They did not do that for the jailed dockers.

Even with advance warning that the House of Lords appeal against the decision quashing the £55,000 fine would go against the TGWU (given in a confidential letter from Jones to Feather dated 17 July) the TUC leadership did nothing. The House of Lords is top of the altar of the law of the land.

With the dockers freed by unofficial mass action, the TUC bosses never paused for one moment to consider transforming the struggle into an offensive to smash the Act. It was time to get talking with Heath again: about inflation, a voluntary pay policy,

threshold agreements, some more knighthoods to replace all those CBEs.

Yet despite this year of flounder and surrender, there can be no question of abandoning the Trades Union Congress as a battlefield. It is an important one.

The General Council this week are out to justify their abandonment of Congress policy on boycotting the NIRC and it is vital to defend last year's Blackpool decision.

But there is one clear lesson: the balance of forces in the working-class movement is not decided by block votes. It is profoundly influenced by the pace of the struggle outside the conference halls.

Had it not been for the dockers' struggle and the wave of solidarity action, the willingness to fight the Tories they unleashed, there can be no doubt that the TUC bosses would have tried, successfully in all probability, to engineer a complete reversal of Congress policy.

Task

The undemocratic nature of the whole machine would have amply assisted them. They cannot do it now. And it will be much more difficult to pay fines in the present situation.

The task ahead is to consolidate against retreats and collaboration and go on to the offensive against the Tory Act, and the whole gamut of reactionary policies they pursue to uphold their sordid system of society. That needs organisation outside the TUC, within each and every union, for more democracy and involvement.

It needs councils of action to fight the Act and any future jail threats which will surely come when the voluntary pay policy approach is abandoned by the Tories or their successors.

To tinker around looking for another great 'left' hope to replace Jack Jones would be a worthless farce. Stage armies might be all right for the corridors of power. They can never fight to change society.

Feather

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THE RECORD...



got lost in the winter

ated that unions w and the Court med their lawful ADHER, 13 June

always respected never refused to e judgement. But at this Act is the his part of the e Tory Party to an movement.— July 1972.

'An infamous Bill has become an infamous Act. This has happened because until now this Congress has failed the people. The story of the TUC campaign against the Bill is a mixture of tragedy and farce . . . I give you my view because the so-called leaders of the trade union movement, the left as well as the right, see the union membership as a stage army they have no intention to use for anything except theatricals. It will not do.'—VINCENT FLYNN, General Secretary, SOGAT, at the TUC, 7 September 1971.

International Socialism 52

20p

Indian Capitalism and Revolution

Labour, from the safety of opposition, once again proclaims its commitment to a 'fair society'. Raymond Challinor, in 'Labour and the parliamentary road' strips away the party's reformist pretensions and the Labour 'left's' hopeless dedication to evolutionary change. PLUS Nigel Harris on India Tony Cliff on Lenin David Widgery on Mayakovsky

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PAY DEFEAT FOR ENGINEERS

by Roger Rosewell
SW Industrial Correspondent

AFTER EIGHT MONTHS of a sporadic and costly struggle in engineering a new agreement for the industry's three million workers has just been signed. Compared with the original demands on pay and conditions the terms of the settlement represent a clear defeat.

The responsibility for this lies with the union leaders and especially Hugh Scanlon, the president of the powerful Amalgamated Engineers. Talks first started almost exactly a year ago and collapsed in December when the employers refused to offer more than £1.50 a week on the minimum rate for skilled men and even less for other grades.

This was in reply for a union claim for a general wage rise, a £6 increase on the minimum rates, a 35-hour week, equal pay for women, longer holidays and improved fringe benefits.

Because the employers' offer dealt only with minimum earnings it meant that the overwhelming majority of workers would not benefit from the proposed increase except by improved overtime, shift and holiday payments. Jack Service, the general secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, estimated that the offer was worth only between 2 and 3 per cent.

The employers had shown that they were ready to fight the unions. But when the Confed met in January, instead of meeting the bosses' challenge, it decided to avoid a national battle.

Part of the reasoning behind this decision was explained by Scanlon at a meeting of his union's National Committee on 26 April.

Failure

He said that a national engineering confrontation could have made the unions liable to the emergency provisions of the Industrial Relations Act and he asked the delegates: 'Do you want a cooling-off period?'

Instead of campaigning for a national strike and being prepared to fight the Tories and the engineering employers, the union leaders desperately looked around for an alternative. The tactic they finally found and approved was one of pursuing the claim through plant-by-plant bargaining with the perspective of forcing individual companies to concede to their demands.

That has been the strategy followed for the last eight months and in general it has proved to be a failure with at least 40 per cent of engineering workers failing to obtain any kind of rise at all. There are several reasons for this.

The low level of economic activity in the industry, rising unemployment, no traditions and experience in fighting such campaigns, combined with a lack of propaganda and a complete refusal to organise it on any kind of national basis, were the main reasons for the defeat.

The union leaders, some of whom like the Boilermakers, Municipal Workers and Electricians openly sabotaged parts of the struggle, abstained from any planning, direction and building solidarity and support.

Instead of leading the fight and accepting responsibility for its organisation they confined themselves to paying strike benefit, attending a few meetings, issuing a few circulars and blaming the rank and file when the inadequacies of their own policies became increasingly apparent.

There was no worse example of this than when Scanlon addressed his National Committee on 17 April. Reversing the facts, he accused many of the so-called 'militant' districts of doing nothing and alleged that the critics of his policy were merely seeking 'an alibi for inactivity'.



Manchester engineers: where was Hughie?

But nothing was further from the truth. When in February, for instance, 45,000 engineers in Sheffield agreed to stage an indefinite city-wide strike in support of the claim Scanlon intervened and stopped it by ruling it 'unconstitutional'.

Despite this set-back, the Manchester engineers launched an offensive in March. This lasted several months and at its peak saw thousands of workers on strike and more than 30 factories occupied.

Faced with an opportunity of turning their fine words into practice, the union leaders did nothing to spread the fight.

On the contrary the Confed executive advised their members that the claim should not be fought on a district basis but only plant-to-plant and took no steps to either organise financial support or sympathy 'blackings' and stoppages.

And that was not all. In May the Confed approved a new long-term 'package deal' for shipbuilding that conflicted with every past principle of their policy. In cash terms it was worth only 6 to 7 per cent a year.

To his credit, Scanlon voted against the deal but it was also the case that only a few weeks before he had travelled specially to Manchester to announce the virtual dropping of the shorter hours demand.

Far from the rank and file not fighting for the claim, Scanlon undermined their capacity to do so and finally admitted at the Confed conference in Llandudno in June that he had already suggested the temporary dropping of the 35-hour claim to the employers long before the final breakdown of national talks.

Allegations

This is the record of how the claim was fought and is in sharp contrast to the response of the employers. They gave more than £2 million in assistance to the strike-hit firms and set up numerous special local committees to both advise and direct their member companies.

But even if Scanlon's allegations were correct, this still does not mean that the rank and file can be blamed. On the contrary the job of leadership is to lead and neither he nor any of the other union leaders attempted to do so.

One simple example should suffice: At the 1971 Confed conference in Torquay, a resolution was passed unanimously insisting that every trade union journal should devote publicity to the claim. But the Engineers' journal was conspicuous by its almost total blackout of any reference to it. The editor of the journal is Jim Conway, the right wing general secretary of the union.

Instead of publicly fighting this by writing articles on the claim and then, if they were not published, appealing to the branches and district committees for support, Scanlon chose to maintain his 'peace treaty' relationship with Conway rather than confront the right wing and spread support for the claim.

The agreement that has now been signed is for one year and gives a new minimum earnings level for skilled men of £25 a week in two stages. But the length of the agreement is already effectively 20 months, as the last one expired on 31 December and, assuming more negotiations next time, its final length will be extended to about two years.

No cut in hours has been achieved which means there has been no improvement since 1965 and none is possible until 1974. Holidays have been increased only marginally and there is little progress towards equal pay.

Financial observers have calculated the total agreement's worth to be about 6 per cent, compared to the average rise in earnings since June 1971 to 1972 of 11.6 per cent.

Crisis

It represents a major triumph for the employers. The failure of the unions to win a general all-round increase has delighted them as it means that the possibilities of having wage rises tied to productivity and influenced by unemployment, geography and the relative strength or weakness of every factory's local trade union organisation are much greater.

The overall defeat of the engineers is a direct result of the growing crisis within the trade union leadership. Torn between the aspirations of their own rank and file and the prospect of a possible national conflict with the government and employers, they desperately wriggle to try and find a compromise.

Events sometimes force them to take limited action but at the same time they are terrified that it will lead to a confrontation with government and employers. As a result they seek either to avoid or restrict every struggle.

That is why both Scanlon with the engineering pay claim and Jones with the docks behave as they do. The CBI-TUC conciliation service proposals, the refusal to smash the Industrial Relations Act and the current talks with Heath at Downing Street are all signs of this crisis and underline the need for militant policies and a revolutionary socialist leadership in the trade unions.

A quiet night for the Army in Unfree Derry

'YOU'RE an Irish cunt. Wot are you?' shouted the soldier into my ear, as he kicked my legs even further apart. There were eight of us spreadeagled against a wall in Fort George.

Behind us military police with batons and 'regular' soldiers with self-loading rifles walked up and down administering the odd, casual clout. After 90 minutes in this position your arms go numb and your legs start to buckle, unable to support the weight of your body. 'Stand still, fucker, or I'll blow your head off.' At the time one couldn't be certain, not absolutely certain, that he wouldn't do it.

My friend Dermie and I had been pulled out of our car at midnight at an army road block on the Northland Road, just outside the Derry Bogside. We were held at gunpoint there for about half an hour.

Eventually we were told to get into a Landrover. A soldier climbed in after us, sat opposite me and jabbed the muzzle of his rifle into my teeth.

'If you try to escape I'll kill you, and keep quiet.' Which convinced me. I didn't try to escape.

We set off, a Ferret car in front of us and a Whippet behind, along Northland Road, onto Strand Road and into Fort George.

Every time we went over a bump the possibility struck me that the guy's finger might be jerked back onto the trigger which might cause my brains to be blown out. In retrospect this may have been hysteria.

Into Fort George and up against the wall. There were six fellows there already. Standing against a wall for 90 minutes with your weight resting on your finger-tips and your legs spread so far apart that it hurts does not, set down in print, seem a very terrible ordeal.

The worst part of it is that you do not know how long you are going to be made to stand there like that, and you remember that after the introduction of internment people stood like this for over 30 hours...

Whitewash world

Then the more cultured accents of an officer interrupted proceedings. 'OK chaps, take them to the cubicles.' What, one wonders with rising apprehension, are the cubicles?

The cubicles turn out to be merely a hall in Fort George sectioned off by make-shift hessian partitions. Dermie and I are prodded into one of these. There are two plastic chairs about 18 inches out from a whitewashed wall.

'Sit down there. Don't turn round and don't try to speak.'

We are there in our little whitewashed worlds for about two hours. Behind us soldiers came in and out. Some indicate obscene interest in the young ladies of the Creggan Estate, some express a desire to shoot us now and get it done with, some threaten to cut off important parts of our bodies.

All warn us of the impending arrival of 'Whitey'. 'Oh, he'll see to you when he gets here, he's a real bastard.'

Whitey arrives eventually and it is immediately apparent that he has seen too many 'B' movies. 'Right, you 'orrible little Irishman,' he says, and one knows immediately that he has deliberately dropped the 'h' from 'horrible'. It is anyway, a strikingly unoriginal phrase. As was his next. 'I'm going to make you regret the day you were born.'

'You've just taken a personal dislike to me, haven't you,' says Dermie, who has a reputation as a minor wit in the Rossville Street area. Whitey seems somewhat taken aback by this line of argument and switches to a more direct approach.

'When did you join the IRA, McCann?' I don't answer this.



McCann: Socialist What?

'You were speaking with IRA men on Monday at a meeting. You're the guy who called us "lepers".'

At this point I am tempted to say that I regretted making the remark since lepers are not responsible for their condition whereas he, Whitey, volunteered.

But discretion, as it is sometimes called, won out. 'I'm not answering any questions.'

Whitey keeps at us for half an hour, then, rather abruptly, leaves. After a few minutes we are marched down a hessian corridor and into a room where three familiar faces from the local RUC Special Branch are waiting. Sgt Billy Kilfedder, who has a long-standing hate-hate relationship with both Dermie and myself, begins by telling us that if we continue to refuse to answer questions we will be held indefinitely.

'I could get the detention papers in half an hour.' And indeed he could.

Kilfedder is in front of us, behind a desk. The other two are behind, one standing over each of us. We are both punched in the back. About half an hour of this yields no answers.

We are taken into another room where Whitey, now accompanied by a scribe, sits behind a desk. We are told that this is our last chance. The atmosphere is less casual. The scribe has a pen poised to take down all our answers.

We begin at the beginning.

'Name?'
'McCann.'
'Occupation?'
'Journalist.'
'Oh, who do you write for?'
'Socialist Worker, among others.'
'Socialist what?'
'Worker.'
'And what does it stand for.'

'Well, it's against the Tories.' (This may strike readers as a less than adequate account of the paper's position, but it did not seem the occasion for a verbatim recital of What We Stand For.)

'I'm against the Tories,' says the scribe, looking up and speaking for the first time. I tell him that no, he's not, he's over here doing the Tories' work for them.

'That's rubbish. I wouldn't walk on the same side of the street as a Tory. We're over here cleaning up this mess.'

'And I suppose you'll go into the docks and clear up that mess too?'

By this point Whitey's complexion matches his name. 'Just a minute, I've never heard of this Socialist Worker.' I tell him that it sells more than the Spectator.

'Well, I've never heard of it. It's not a real newspaper.'

'I've never heard of the Spectator,' says the scribe.

'Neither have I,' says Dermie agreeably, pouncing. And after that it was all downhill.

Whitey gave up within 15 minutes. We were marched to the gates and told to go.

It was six thirty. We went to Dermie's house in the Bogside and a member of the People's Democracy called to tell us that he, too, had been dragged from his car last night. He had been kicked all over the street and had just come back from hospital.

His wife, Helen, had also been beaten up by the soldiers. Her collar-bone was broken.

Tony O'Doherty had been picked up at the same time and no one had heard of him since.

Eamonn McCann



REVIEW

WHEN THE UNIONS HOLD THE REINS

Review by
Roger Rosewell

MY GENERATION, by Will Paynter, Allen and Unwin, £1.50

THE RELATIONSHIP between active trade unionists and the political organisations to which they belong has always been a question of tremendous importance to revolutionary socialists.

Unlike the leaders of the Labour Party and the TUC, socialists have always argued that the trade union and political struggles cannot be separated. From this they have rightly insisted that the political organisation must demand first allegiance over the often narrow and restrictive interests of a particular trade union and industry.

The recent autobiography by Will Paynter clearly shows the dangers when this doesn't happen.

Paynter was a long-standing member of the Communist Party who was also general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers from 1959 until his retirement in 1968.

But the Communist Party did not direct his trade union work, and this book frankly describes

how, in effect, the opposite took place.

In the 1950s, for example, Paynter led several attacks against unofficial strikers. He writes in his book: 'The point stressed all the time was that the union existed to redress grievances and should be given the chance to do this before action was resorted to. The problem was not only discussed within the union but inside the Communist Party too.'

'I argued the position not only in South Wales but also in London, with Harry Pollitt and other leaders coming to South Wales for discussions with us. I argued that the union in South Wales was a militant organisation and that unorganised movement and leadership among miners outside the union was destructive and not constructive.'

'The Communist Party at that time accepted this reasoning and did what it could to reduce this kind of internal conflict which dissipated unity and strength.'

This situation remained until the recent unofficial strikes of 1970 and 1971 and this year's tremen-



Will Paynter

dous victory.

During the years that Paynter was NUM general secretary and the Communist Party was doing his bidding, he frequently denounced absenteeism, did almost nothing about pit closures and was one of those responsible for the miners slide down the wages league. In 10½ years their pay increased by only 77 per cent, compared to 101 per cent for manufacturing as a whole.

Some Communist Party members used to attempt to justify this conduct by claiming that Paynter was a prisoner of the right-wing majority on the union's executive council. But even if this were true it would be no defence.

PUPPET

A revolutionary, faced with such a situation, would publicly dissociate himself from these policies that he believed to be wrong and then appeal to the rank and file membership for support. Under no circumstances would he allow himself to be used as a puppet by the right wing.

In Paynter's case, however, none of this applied. In 1968 he finally confirmed the logic of his past statements by resigning from the Communist Party and joining the Labour government's Commission on Industrial Relations.

While it is true that the Communist Party cannot be completely blamed for Paynter's final betrayal, they cannot escape from some share of responsibility. For instead of disciplining and expelling him, the leaders of the Communist Party first tolerated and then covered up for him.

PAVED

The Party leaders refused to act against Paynter because they had chosen to try and win influence through the trade union bureaucracy rather than by the development of a militant rank and file movement.

This attitude was not confined to the miners' union.

Long before the electricians' union ballot-rigging case hit the headlines and paved the way for the present right-wing regime in that union, the communist leaders of the ETU were among the first ever to negotiate long-term productivity deals in British industry. Again no action was ever taken by the party.

The degeneration of the Communist Party is clearly shown in these and many other examples. Paynter's book is an interesting contribution to the history of this process.



Jimmy Cliff, star of *The Harder They Come*

by Neil Springven

LATE IN JULY the British premiere run of the film *The Harder They Come* ended at the Brixton Classic. It stars Jimmy Cliff, the Reggae singer, and is the first ever all-Jamaican film production.

The film is distributed by Island Films, who are hoping to release it in parts of North London and in other parts of the country in early autumn.

It is based on a true story and deals with the 'career' of Ivan (Jimmy Cliff) who comes to the big city of Kingston to make his fortune. There aren't too many fortunes to be made in that poverty-stricken city.

He begs, dreams of making a hit record, falls in with a charlatan priest, gets involved in a fight, is arrested and flogged, makes his record—and is paid £20 for it.

Ivan then moves into dope-pushing, fights against the extortionate cut taken by his anonymous bosses, finds that the police

ONLY A DREAM HERO

have been tipped off to arrest him, kills three and finds himself an outlaw, hunted by both police and the dope-pushing ringleaders.

But now Ivan is a popular hero, his record makes number one, and as he attempts escape to Cuba he is shot down by the military...

The story-line is familiar from a thousand cops-and-robbers films and Westerns. It is a fascinating

film in the way the theme is related to the hopelessness of life in a country like Jamaica.

All the garbage of the Western world accumulates in the poverty-stricken ghettos—but none of the money. 'Work', in the form of soul-destroying production lines, is meaningless, for there is no production. Escape from starvation means making pop records—and the total control of the corrupt record producer—or dope, or religion, and none of them are a way out.

The rebellion of Ivan is the fight of one man to kick the system, to become a folk-hero, but without any idea of what he is fighting and without any hope of victory.

The Harder They Come is exciting, funny and tragic and, crucially, highly political. It is one of three films which should be seen by anyone who wants to see how the struggle in the third world has developed and will develop. The other two are Pontecorvo's *Queimada* and *Battle of Algiers*.

Queimada can be hired from United

Artists for £9, stars Marlon Brando, and is about a series of revolts on a West Indian island in the mid-nineteenth century. The Harder They Come is being distributed through Island Films (01-229-1229).

Printed by Briant workers
in occupation

DOWN in the Old Kent Road the Briant Colour Printing occupation continues. Two issues of the Briant News have been produced, and now the occupation has produced its first outside job. It is Leo Tolstoy's classic anarchist text *The Slavery of Our Times*.

It is published by veteran militant John Lawrence, who said: 'I'd intended to publish it anyway and I'd been looking round for a printer. Then the occupation started and I thought they'd be the ideal people to do it. They jumped at the idea.'

'I wanted 500 but they've done 2,000. The whole idea is that there's

a bunch of workers down there and they've done the job without having to consult the gvnor or anyone—just themselves.'

The pamphlet was written in 1900, just before Tolstoy's death. It is, says the introduction: 'One of the best expositions of Christian radicalism in its most extreme and logical form.'

All profits from sale of the pamphlet will go to the workers at Briants. It is available from John Lawrence at 29 Love Walk, London SE5, and Houseman's Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1, price 25p.

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.

Anger after council's treachery

by Ethel Singleton

LIVERPOOL:—Enraged tenants clashed with police in the council chamber, as the Labour-controlled council agreed by 80 votes to 43 to implement the so-called 'Fair Rents' Act.

Since the elections in May the council has persistently stated its outright refusal to implement the Act. In fact the first statement from the leader of the council immediately after the election was: 'We have won this election on the council estates throughout Liverpool because of our stand against the Housing Finance Bill.'

But when the final crunch came the crucial motion proposed by the chairman of the housing committee to 'authorise all necessary steps to be taken to apply the provisions of the Act', the betrayal was complete.

Abuse

The packed gallery erupted and while hundreds of demonstrators who had marched to the town hall roared and chanted outside, the fury of the tenants, factory workers, dockers and trade union representatives in the gallery came to a head when the Tory opposition leader said that the sell-out should be opposed in an orderly manner.

Abuse was hurled at the political Judases on the Labour benches. The Lord Mayor then beckoned to two policemen at the chamber door and within seconds 50 police who had been conveniently situated in an ante-room entered the chamber.

They tried to eject some of the tenants and a Labour councillor, protesting about this undemocratic action, was turned upon by the police who tried to remove him forcibly from the chamber. This they were prevented from doing by tenants and sympathetic Labour councillors.

The council had to be adjourned

THE RENTS BATTLE

for 15 minutes while tempers cooled. The illusions of those who have always believed the Labour Party to be the vanguard of the working class were completely shattered. Their feeling of disgust were only surpassed by their determination to fight to have this Act repealed and never again to trust the political opportunists who put their pockets before their principles.

PONTEFRAC:—The Labour-controlled council has voted to implement the Housing Finance Act. The move was proposed by a Tory and supported by a Labour councillor while all the other Labour councillors abstained.

It is only a few weeks since two Labour councillors in Pontefract pledged that they were prepared to go to jail rather than allow the rent rises to go through.

JAGUAR RAISE PAY OFFER

COVENTRY:—Workers at the British Leyland Jaguar plant at Browns Lane voted last week to continue their 12-week-old strike, against the advice of Transport Union officials.

Opposition to the proposal to end the strike was led by the trim section who claimed that they faced a wage cut under the deal—Jaguar had offered a flat rate payment system of £44 a week, with pro rata increases for women and youths, a lump sum of up to £80, maintenance of piecework production standards, 80 per cent lay-off pay if the dispute is outside the Jaguar group, and full payment for any shift started.

The flat rate payment system was to operate while the introduction of measured

Foundry men in lock-out

BOLTON:—Members of all the engineering confederation unions employed in the Walmsley group are involved in a dispute following the lock-out of foundry workers at the Bolton plant.

Workers at Bolton had submitted the national Engineering Union claim, and had imposed an overtime ban after management failed to make a reasonable offer—the offer they made works out at a glorious 9p per week increase on the present wage.

Beloit Walmsley is an American-controlled multi-national company which also has factories in the US, Canada, Italy, Spain and Japan. Since the American takeover of the plants at Bolton, Bury and Wigan, there have been cut-backs as work has been transferred to overseas factories. 500 men have been made redundant, and two factories, Wigan Barley Brook and Bolton Riverside, have been closed down.

This dispute has inspired a unity between factories in the group. Previously management were able to play one factory off against another. Stewards from the different factories are meeting regularly and have stated that any settlement will have to be ratified by a mass meeting of workers from all factories.

It looks like being a long fight. The shop stewards have evidence that the firm is being backed by the Engineering Employers Federation to the tune of £10 per worker throughout the course of the dispute. Morale is high among workers at all plants.

Messages and donations to: Joint Shop Stewards Committee of Beloit Walmsley, c/o 12 St Mary's Place, Bury, Lancs.

British Leyland talks end

MANAGEMENT at British Leyland factories in Coventry and Birmingham are still trying to abolish the piecework system—trying to sell the measured day work system with pamphlets, meetings and articles in the press attacking militants for resisting such a 'desirable' system.

This propaganda has been met with little response from the unions, many of whose national officials are in favour of measured day work, but there is much resistance at Austin, Longbridge.

Negotiations finally broke up on 7 July, and a factory vote agreed that all sections should go for an increase in piecework

rates. The first such claim reached deadlock on 10 August.

A meeting of piecework shop stewards on 16 August refused to resume negotiations with only 13 dissenting votes out of 600. Two days later management registered a 'failure to agree' under the negotiating procedure, and are now asking for a plant conference with union officials, some of whom are known to agree with measured day work.

If the latest management offer of £44.20 was accepted resistance at other factories in Birmingham and Coventry would be undermined. This offer was obtained at Cowley seven months ago, and its acceptance at Longbridge now

would also weaken the position of stewards there who will soon be negotiating for a new agreement.

The fight against measured day work is not helped at Longbridge by the fact that almost all the works committee believe it is inevitable, and at best have made only half-hearted gestures of opposition, and at worst have actively co-operated with the management in their manoeuvres to impose it.

The militants at Longbridge who are opposed to measured day work must take a lead in demanding that the works committee initiate a campaign to explain to every worker just what the agreement proposed by the management means.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
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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.

on Plessey's—old leaflets etc. Contact Dave Bridge, c/o Botley's Park Hospital, Chertsey, Surrey.

NATALIA TROTSKY on The Fourth International—7½p from Pluto Press, Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcott Road, London NW1.

MEETINGS

LONDON BRANCH SECRETARIES meeting on The Fight the Tories Campaign: Sat 16 Sept, 2pm, at 6 Cottons Gardens. All London branches must be represented.

STEVENAGE: Paul Foot on Can the Tories smash Labour? Public meeting 31 August, 8pm, The Swimming Pool Hall, organised by North Herts IS.

SWANSEA: Tenants fight the Tories! Members of tenants' associations in the Swansea area talk on the accelerating fight against the Tories' 'Fair Rents' Act. Thurs 14 Sept, 7.30pm, Railmen's Club, Wind St.

NOTICES

OWN ROOM in NW10 flat—now til Oct, £4.50, Tel 969-9812.

Special issue, Bulletin for Socialist Self-Management. NEW FORMS OF STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN—The Road to Revolution. Price 6p pp. BMS Publications, 16a Holmdale Road, London NW6. INFORMATION NEEDED by Chertsev IS

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TRADE UNIONIST IS STABBED AT DEMO

MALCOLM KIRK, a leading UCATT member and chairman of the building unions' area strike co-ordinating committee, was stabbed by a white racist in Leeds on Saturday.

With 60 other socialists, mostly members of the Communist Party and the International Socialists, Malcolm was taking part in a counter demonstration against a racist meeting scheduled for Saturday afternoon. The counter demonstrators kept up a constant series of speakers so that the racials could not have the pitch.

Leaflets for the racist meeting—against the Ugandan Asians—announced that the well-known Nazi, Colin Jordan, would speak. Other leaflets asked: 'Are you afraid of a fight?' and appealed for people to 'Come and fight against the Asians and their Asian lovers.'

The stabbing took place towards the end of the counter demonstration. Earlier there had

been another incident when counter demonstrators prevented fascists taking photographs of members of the crowd, 'for their files'. The police arrived and after talking with the members of the British Movement issued a warning to the anti-racist demonstrators.

Later a racist with a cine camera started to film the demonstration. Malcolm Kirk told the man to stop this and clear off. The man drew an eight-inch knife and stabbed him, cutting into his head from the top of his skull down to his neck just below the jaw bone.

HOSPITAL

Malcolm's assailant then rushed across the road into a shop where he threatened customers with the knife. Police arrived but seemed reluctant to arrest the man. The police later told Malcolm: 'We had to arrest him because of the length of his knife. It was an offensive weapon.'

Malcolm is now out of hospital, where he had to have

many stitches. He is back at his post in the centre of the building workers' strike struggle for £30 for 35 hours.

On Monday he explained to Socialist Worker why he was at the counter demonstration and why, as a trade unionist, he will continue actively to combat racism: 'I went to the counter demonstration to give my support in fighting the disease of racism. I believe in the freedom of all minorities to live in peace without harassment or interference from these racist thugs.'

'I have been on strike now for eight weeks and the Sikhs, West Indians and Irish lads have been solid throughout. They are great lads and I am prepared to fight alongside them in what is our common struggle against racism.'

The British Movement and the various other thug organisations have no base in Leeds. But they are determined to exploit a situation where the press and the TV is raising a hysterical clamour against the Ugandan Asians coming to this country.

But racism is widespread in the city police force.

Few people will have forgotten the case of David Oluwele, a destitute Nigerian who was hounded to his death by members of the force. Two Leeds policemen are now serving jail sentences for their part in the affair.

In the building dispute, the regional employers' federation issued a leaflet encouraging workers to scab. 'We have guarantees of police protection for those who continue to work. If you require this please telephone.'

It is imperative that all socialists in Leeds actively combat racism. As Gordon Rae, an Electricians' Union shop steward, told the meeting in Leeds on Saturday: 'We must recognise that the poison of racism is an essential part of the bosses' arsenal. It is part and parcel of the wholesale attacks being launched on the working class movement.'

Brian Parkin

Army get free hand to step up terror

by Mike Miller

BELFAST:—Since Operation Motorman, little publicity has been given to the activities of the British Army in the former no-go areas of Belfast and Derry.

At first, the army maintained a fairly low-profile approach. There was little resistance and the SDLP were unsure about co-operating with Whitelaw.

But now the SDLP has given Whitelaw a virtual carte blanche to proceed with his renewed repression. And, as the determination of the minority not to be beaten back into total submission grows, the army terror has taken on many of its old characteristics.

The first move by Whitelaw after the invasion of the no-go areas was to set up a system for dealing with complaints against the army. If the system is being used at all, it must be under severe strain since the recent spate of army outrages.

In DUNGANNON, the army ignored a warning that a bomb had been placed in a postal sorting office. Instead they sent one soldier to look around.

When questioned by a postal worker as to the reason for his visit, the soldier refused to answer and quickly made off. Thanks to a nearby chemist who had picked up the bomb rumour, the post office was cleared in time.

A prominent trade union official was forced to conclude that the army wished to cause a major disaster for publicity reasons. His complaints to the relevant authorities proved fruitless.

In BELFAST, released internees have been constantly harassed. One man, Eamonn Laughrey, had been warned by soldiers to keep off the streets at night.

On 15 August, they told him they were going to kill him. Last Sunday, a marine commando shot Laughrey in the neck. His complaints about army harassment have now been answered.

Ignored

In DERRY and BELFAST, the army has been searching trouble-free areas and lifting whole groups of men for questioning.

An 18-year-old girl from the Falls Road was held for 60 hours for in-depth interrogation. She has now been detained under the Special Powers Act, which Whitelaw is pretending not to use. Again, all complaints about her treatment have been totally ignored.

A large number of Catholic schools have been taken over by the army as military posts. Teachers and parents are refusing to allow children to return to school next week because classrooms have been wrecked and blackboards defaced with obscenities.

In spite of numerous complaints, the army is digging in for a long stay.

When a large number of people gathered to protest against army occupations of the Gaelic football ground in Andersonstown, baton-wielding snatch squads laid into young children, bundling them into the backs of armoured cars and taking them away for more beatings away from the glare of the cameras.

On Monday night, after a soldier was shot in the Falls Road, the army ran amok, firing hundreds of rounds into Catholic homes. They claimed they had shot 15 gunmen. Allegations of indiscriminate shooting are being 'looked into'—by the army, of course.

Meanwhile, a new weapon has appeared on the streets of Belfast—the general purpose machine gun, capable of firing 1000 rounds. People are saying there will soon be no-one left to complain.

Council unanimous in refusing Tories' rent Act

CLYDEBANK:—500 militant and optimistic tenants and trade unionists marched through Clydebank last Sunday led by the town band.

The Labour-controlled council has voted unanimously not to implement the 'Fair Rents' Act. Baillie Eddie McGeachie told the rally after the march: 'Housing must be made a social service. We will fight to the last ditch to make sure the Act is not implemented.'

The platform was surrounded by banners from Singer, Yarrow, UCS Clydebank, the Boilermakers' Union, Dumbarton Labour Party and Hillington Rolls-Royce.

A speaker from the Scottish Council of Tenants put the Act in context with other Tory attacks on workers' living standards. Only a weak labour movement would seek to modify and amend the Act, he said.

Street committees have been set up and Clydebank Rents Action Committee is calling for a one-day industrial stoppage throughout Scotland.

GLASGOW:—Angry tenants left a meeting on the Rent Act last Saturday convinced that the fight against the Tory proposals will have to be led by the estates and not from the council chamber.

Almost 1000 delegates from the City Labour Party, the council Labour group, the trades council and shop stewards' and tenants' committees heard platform speakers run through the dangers of the Act—but without pledging any specific support if tenants go on strike.

Glasgow Corporation has voted to 'resist' the Act but has taken no decision on whether or not to implement it. The meeting's chairman, Baillie McKechran, warned that councillors would have to make up their own minds—the labour movement 'could not dictate to the corporation'.

His caution came under fire from floor speakers, including spokesmen from local Labour parties, printing, railwaymen's and engineering unions, the Scottish Council of Tenants and East Kilbride Rent Action Committee.

There were angry protests from rank and file tenants that none of them had been called to speak and they had heard no specific details of industrial action to back them. Many tenants in development corporation areas have already been threatened with court action and eviction since they have refused to pay rent increases.

LEEDS:—The Labour-controlled Garforth Council, near Leeds, is still refusing to implement the Housing Finance Act, despite pressure to do so from the regional officer of the Labour Party, Harold Sims.



Basingstoke car workers on the march

Car men fight 'no sackings' fraud

by Dave Lyddon

BASINGSTOKE:—The Thornycroft British Leyland factory has now been occupied by 1000 workers for two weeks.

In issuing the closure notice, the management set aside an agreement extracted last year promising no redundancies without consultation.

On 7 June, shop stewards were told the site had been sold to a property firm and the transmissions plant had been bought by a firm called Eaton's on a three-year lease. 300 jobs would be axed by the end of September following the transfer of all work except gear box production to other plants in the Leyland combine.

The 700 gear box workers would become employees of the Eaton

Corporation, which has a three-year contract to supply British Leyland with gear boxes.

But the Thornycroft factory is antiquated compared with Eaton's modern Newton Aycliffe plants in Manchester. Having bought British Leyland's share of the market, Eaton is likely to slash the Basingstoke workforce and transfer most of the work to Manchester.

Workers resolved to accept no redundancies and hand their notices back. They also want an assurance of future work from Eaton's. A work-to-rule cut production by 90 per cent.

But by 14 August they had got no

further in negotiations—so they occupied the works. The Leyland combine committee has told them that no British Leyland plant will accept Thornycroft gear boxes until the jobs are guaranteed, nor will they handle supplies from alternative sources.

But the committee's decision to picket Leyland's head office in London's Berkeley Square, and the mixed response to a call for a one-day strike last Monday is no substitute for a determined fight to end the constant threat of redundancies.

The Thornycroft fight will not be won in Basingstoke alone, or in the streets around Berkeley Square. Co-ordinated mass action throughout the combine is needed for that.

Upper Clyde bosses set yet another deadline for unions

GLASGOW:—Another deadline has been set by the employers now running the former Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' yards.

After the Marathon Manufacturing Corporation gave the unions a midnight deadline for signing their new procedure agreement which included penalty clauses, Lord Strathalmond, the government-appointed chairman of Govan Shipbuilders, has done the same.

Govan is to employ the remaining workers at the Scotstoun, Govan and Linthouse divisions of UCS. It has been promised £35 million in loans and grants by the government on condition that the workers sign a new procedure agreement similar to Marathon's.

Since that agreement was signed more than three weeks ago the jobs crisis in the yards has got worse.

Marathon intended to start by employing only a third of the remaining 1900 Clydebank workers. This means some 1200 could be paid off as the last UCS ships are finished, without starting new jobs immediately on oil-rigs. In Govan the workload for boilermakers has fallen off.

These problems were discussed last week at a meeting between shop stewards, full-time officials and management from both Marathon and Govan Shipbuilders. The outcome was a threat from the full-time officials not to sign the Govan agreement unless Marathon introduce round-the-clock working so that they can employ another 600-700 workers right from the start. There was then a counter-threat from Lord Strathalmond that the whole deal will be off unless the agreement is signed this week.



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Socialist Worker

'I'd shoot them' ... why Lord Cooper has murder in his heart

THE UNION leaders of this country usually see themselves as responsible, pacific men, opposed to violence for political ends. But Lord Cooper, retiring general secretary of the GMWU and last year's TUC president, has murder in his heart.

He told the Glasgow Herald last week-end that 'I would shoot a fellow like that',

referring to a 'Trotskyist' who had the temerity to be in St Helens at the time of the Pilkington strike two years ago.

He added: 'These people, the Trots, are a complete menace and we are being very naive about them here. They are totally against the system and only want its destruction.'

Cooper's greatest fear appears to be that 'Trotskyists' might one day get power.

'What in God's name would happen?' he asked. 'The country cannot afford to be ruled by fanatics.'

Certainly, the prospect frightens the former president of the TUC more than the present situation in which the country is ruled by men who have thrown a million out of work and have used prison bars to try to weaken trade unionism.

But then Cooper has no faith in the ability of ordinary trade unionists to understand and fight the problems they come across. For instance, it is his belief that revolutionaries have somehow succeeded in mesmerising 270,000 building workers.

'Such men are behind the present militancy of the builders', he explained. The statement will be of immense interest to GMWU members who have joined the strike to smash the lump, get a decent wage and reduce the toll of unemployment.

Confession

Perhaps it explains why Lord Cooper has refused them strike pay.

Lord Cooper had to chair the two key conferences of the TUC that discussed the Industrial Relations Act, at Croydon and Blackpool, last year. But it seems that 43 years as a full-time trade union official have destroyed his capacity to understand English.

For he confesses that he just does not know how the TUC came to its present policy on the Industrial Relations Act. To rectify matters he admits that 'I have put one of my research workers onto finding out why the TUC is so opposed to the Act. I can't myself find many reasons against it.'

Clearly, Cooper is confused and bewildered by what is happening within the trade unions at the moment. He is also frightened. Everything he has stood for in the House of Lords and on the General Council of the TUC is threatened by the rising tide of militancy.

'Take-over'

'If there are a lot of workers intent on blackmail and not argument, you get the decent chaps starting to ask 'What about us?' The process can be disastrous. It is disastrous.'

The only thing that brings peace of mind to the noble lord is his belief that the undemocratic structure of his own union will keep the rank and file at bay.

'Its regionalism will prevent a take-over by militants', he says.

Such a set of attitudes might seem inappropriate to a man so prominent for so long in the labour movement. Cooper, however, has no qualms in owning up to the fact that 'I don't think I'm a socialist. I don't really know what that means.'

No doubt he feels that as he is retiring he can afford, at long last, to be completely frank. But one can only wonder how many of the members of the TUC General Council, let alone the GMWU leadership, share his attitudes but prefer, for the time being, to remain silent.

DEALS COULD DIVIDE BUILDING STRIKERS

by Socialist Worker reporters

THIS WEEK again the builders' strike is growing in scope and intensity. Some 300,000 workers are now involved in all-out action for £35 for 30 hours.

But just as the strike goes from strength to strength, the union leadership is pushing increasingly for compromise local settlements to end the strike in individual companies. These not only sell the full claim short but they are of considerable value to the employers in weakening the strike movement.

The moves for local compromises have even been praised by the Morning Star. In its edition of last Saturday, the Star stated that builders were 'notching up victories' with these settlements.

But workers in Birmingham and in Edinburgh have totally rejected this approach.

In Edinburgh a mass meeting overwhelmingly defeated an official proposition for a model Scottish agreement. And at the Birmingham march and mass meeting last week UCATT Midland Region secretary Ken Barlow said that the region would not sign any such agreements. Only a national agreement on the full terms of the claim would be satisfactory, he said.

What concerns the Midland region action committee is that the policy of local compromise will be a serious setback for the weaker and more outlying areas. Also, the terms of the deals so far concluded make no real progress on the hours part of the claim and they get near the £30 part of the claim by extensive juggling of figures.

DANGER

The compromise agreement suggested in Scotland does not give anything like a £30 basic. It approaches £30 only with the help of part of the bonus guaranteed. Because of this and the rise in the cost of living, the deal will only be worth a basic of £27.50 by the end of the first year.

And for the first year the bonus will be calculated on the basic rates current before the new agreement. The deal does not involve any real progress to the 35-hour week either.

The other main danger of this type of agreement is that it encourages the big building employers to split the difference between their last offer and the Cameron settlement. This actually opens the way to a national settlement below the Cameron figure.

At the mass meeting last week the Birmingham building workers also decided to start putting all-out pressure on the employers to concede the full claim. Following the miners and the dockers, they have now extended their picketing to sources of building materials such as

cement works.

This tactic has already born fruit. Workers at the Caudon-Low cement factory at Leek, Staffordshire, voted to support the builders and the plant shut down last Thursday.

Other major targets have been the Tunnel and Rugby Portland plants and depots in Rugby and Birmingham.

Another key feature of this phase of the strike is the intensifying press propaganda, which has included such outrageous lies as saying that the builders' pay deal would increase house prices. As if they had not increased wildly over the past year, up to 76 per cent on a new house in London in one year—as a direct result of government policy.

Another disgusting smear has been launched on the question of social security, with the notion that taxpayers are 'subsidising' the strikers. This of course ignores the simple point that workers fund the social security out of their wages.

In the construction industry the real question of the public subsidising the bosses is posed more sharply than in any other. For years the employers have deliberately resorted to the lump in order to break site organisation.

In the past two months alone the builders' strike has done more to clean up this rotten industry than a century of public inquiries and bankruptcy hearings. The thousands of lump workers who have been drawn into the struggle must be set free from the fear of the tax inspector that constantly plagues them. The building unions must insist that the government grants a complete amnesty for workers who want to come off the lump.

The unions have not been paying any

strike pay for several weeks now. The UCATT leadership claim that they have not the funds to pay out. But the trade union movement as a whole has immense resources. The Transport Workers Union alone has £21 million.

George Smith, UCATT's general secretary, is this year's chairman of the TUC. If he were serious about winning this struggle, he would take the opportunity to demand that these funds be tapped to provide the sort of hardship fund needed by the building strikers, particularly by many single men who are being refused national assistance.

There are now more men involved in the building workers' strike than were involved in the postal workers' or the miners' strikes. It is essential that from every region and every locality the organised working class provides the sort of solidarity that ensured success to the miners.



Building workers in Bristol, where the 'flying picket' tactic started before spreading all over the country

Massive 'No' to sell-out bid

EDINBURGH:—Until this week the city's building workers were not in the forefront of the £30-for-35 hours struggle. But at last Friday's 4000-strong mass meeting, local union officials and Communist Party members urged the men to give up the fight for the full claim and aim for acceptance of a 'model' agreement for the whole of Scotland.

This agreement, based on the Cameron settlement, falls far short of the full claim and it would mean splitting Scottish workers from the common struggle of their

brothers in England and Wales.

But this new attempted sell-out met with a magnificent response from the rank and file. They overwhelmingly rejected it.

An important part of the 'model' agreement was a guaranteed £5 fall back bonus with penalty clauses attached.

In fact, the deal was set up behind the backs of the rank and file by the union officials.

Ray Waldie, deputy shop steward at Wimpey's Hunters Tryst site, summed it up: 'We knew before the meeting what was going to take place. The rank and file put pressure on to get this vote.'

'It's now up to the rest of Scotland to follow this lead. We will not settle for anything less than £30 for 35 hours.'

COVENTRY:—1200 building workers are now on strike. Mass pickets have been put on the few sites still open. The local press is in full swing against the strikers with big coverage for 'stories' of intimidation, work halted on pensioners' houses and the 'inflationary' effects of the builders' claim. Local government building workers are giving £3 a week to the strikers' funds.

HULL:—Dockers who bought a picketing bus for the docks struggle have loaned it free of charge to building workers. 'We have solidarity from the dockers because the building trade lads on the Scunthorpe Anchor site demonstrated in support of them', Stan Suddeby, chairman of the builders' strike committee told a mass meeting.

OXFORD:—In an area with little tradition of organisation in the industry, the strike is spreading with the use of flying pickets.

Support has been offered by car workers.

WIGAN:—Organisation of the strike is splendid. All major sites are stopped, including many lump sites. At a meeting on Tuesday, workers voted to continue the strike even if the unions proposed individual company agreements short of the full claim.

Demolition workers have also stopped work and joined the strike, as have building workers employed by the Corporation. And last week National Union of Railwaymen members stopped work for a day in solidarity with the builders and to prevent any rail supplies for lump sites.

GLASGOW:—At a mass meeting last week, 3500 building workers employed by the Corporation voted to stay out in defiance of their unions, who wanted to confine the strike to employees of private enterprise contractors.

LOWESTOFT:—A meeting of 400 building workers rejected settling with individual firms for less than the national claim.

But the national action committee has been ignoring the mood of strikers in the area and signing agreements behind their backs.

Typical is an agreement with a firm in Saxmundham which offers a minimum of £25 basic, with £5 bonus and no cut in the working week.

Richard Bennett, a member of the UCATT strike committee in Lowestoft, described the terms as 'worse than the last agreement. There is less on the basic.' Angry building workers from the town intend to send a delegation to demand an explanation from George Smith.

PICKET LINES

WEST LONDON:—The collapse of the drivers' dispute at Manbre's sugar works has left militants bitter and angry. The drivers fell for a deal between TGWU officials and Brocklehurst's, the so-called independent road transport contractors owned by Manbre's, and voted for the return of three victimised union representatives provided they did not resume their union work.

YORKSHIRE:—Another 100 construction workers stopped work at Drax Power station near Goole last week in response to a building workers' picket. They have joined 800 men now in the 14th week of a lock-out. Almost all building work on the site is now at a standstill. Donations to the treasurer, Site Shop Stewards Committee, 72 Malvern Road, Goole.

BIRMINGHAM:—350 workers have been on strike for four weeks at C D Cross, a light engineering firm. The strike—for a substantial pay rise—is only the third in the firm's 100 year history.

WOLVERHAMPTON:—More than 60 setters and maintenance men at Turner's manufacturing company have launched a series of one-day strikes and imposed a work-to-rule after the management went back on a parity agreement.

WIGAN:—600 workers, mainly women at Coops (part of the giant Dunn ready-made clothing empire) struck this week in protest at the sacking of their chief steward. She was dismissed for supposedly cutting two pieces of cloth at once. Police have been intimidating the pickets, mostly young girls, who earn around £12 a week.

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