

Socialist Worker

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WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

All out to defend the engineers STRIKES CAN BEAT TORY FINES!

ONCE AGAIN the working-class movement faces a major assault from the Tories and their anti-union laws. At stake are the rights and freedoms won by generations of trade union members.

- The right to organise in free, independent unions in order to mount an effective challenge to the power of the employers and the state.
- The right to run those unions without interference from government and the courts.
- The right for the members to decide who can join and to refuse admission to declared blacklegs and agents of the employers.

And it is these rights that the Tories and the National Industrial Relations Court, through their despicable creature, James Goad, are out to smash.

Goad, a card-carrying member of the Tory Party, boasts that the aim of his action against the engineering union, the AUEW, is to determine 'whether the law of the land is supreme or the law of the union'.

But the law of the land is the Tory law. It is not impartial. The Tory government has set out systematically to drive down the living standards of working people to boost the profits of their paymasters. The courts exist to shore up the system the Tories represent in parliament.

SHACKLES

Centrepiece of the Tory attack is the Industrial Relations Act. Its aim is simple: to make illegal the power of the unions where they are strongest, at shop floor level, and shackle shop stewards and militants in their fight to defend and improve the conditions of their members.

That is why the refusal of the AUEW to refuse to pay the £50,000 fine is so crucial. It affects every trade unionist in Britain.

If the NIRC has its way then every union can be bled white of its members' funds when action is taken against the employers or against strike-breakers.

More likely, a defeat for the AUEW will encourage more and more union leaders to surrender to the Tory law and abandon the TUC policy of non-co-operation with the Act.

The TUC has described the Tory law as 'a deliberate attempt by the government to control the legitimate activities of workpeople and their unions . . . to hamstring normal trade union activity in defence of the interests of working people.'

But the TUC has failed miserably to lead any real fight against the law. This week, as the AUEW faces further seizure of its funds by the NIRC, Vic Feather has spoken of the need to discuss amendments to the Industrial Relations Act.

In military terms this is known as 'cowardice in the face of the enemy'. The Act cannot be amended in our interests. It can only be smashed.



THE CENTRE OF THE STORM: a mass meeting of workers at the CAV motor components factory in Sudbury, Suffolk, voting on Monday to strike in protest at the £50,000 fine on their union, the AUEW. This is the factory where James Goad, Britain's Number One Blackleg, broke a picket line and was refused membership of the union.

Feather is preparing the ground for a massive retreat by the leaders of the trade union movement. Co-operation with the Act will inevitably mean recognising the NIRC and begging for favours from Sir John Donaldson.

The AUEW, to its credit, has at least maintained passive opposition to the Act—but that is not enough. Unless decisive action is mobilised now against the NIRC, the union will be bankrupted. The right wing in the union, already on the upsurge, will seize the chance to change policy and abandon any opposition to the Act.

HARDER

There is only one way to defeat the NIRC—and that is by mass industrial action.

The miners showed that powerful, grass-roots mobilisation, supported by other unions—especially the engineers—could drive a hole through the Tories' pay policy.

And the strike wave that released the Pentonville Five—the dockers jailed by the NIRC—proved that when

the working class fights together it can take on and beat the apparently invincible state machine.

Of course, it's harder this time. Nobody is in jail. Some workers think it is 'only' a fight about union funds. The holiday season discourages militant action.

The point has to be hammered home that if the attacks on the AUEW do not produce industrial action, if the employers are not 'fined' by lost production, then new and more serious attacks will follow.

Socialist Worker calls on trade unionists everywhere to act NOW to defend the AUEW. To urge for strike action in solidarity with the engineers. To demand that the fines be stopped.

And to unleash such a mass movement of opposition that the NIRC and the whole Industrial Relations Act will be thrown on the scrapheap.

ALL OUT NOW! DEFEND THE AUEW! SMASH THE NIRC!

Pensioners boost our fighting fund

DOZENS of letters have been pouring in daily to the International Socialists' office in response to our appeal for £30,000 to help expand our printing works and improve our paper. The total collected has now risen to £5,874.

Donations have come from every section of the movement—but the most prominent single group has been old age pensioners, low-wage earners and those on Social Security.

Accompanying many donations are letters bitterly opposing the shabby treatment doled out by the Tories. One anonymous subscriber writes: 'Sorry it's only 50p but it's hard to live on Social Security'.

Delighted

Another letter enclosing 75p sent from a victim of the wage freeze said: 'Sorry we cannot send any more but my husband only gets a farmworker's wage. Hope this is alright.'

From Cheshire a regular reader who pays 10p weekly for his paper writes: 'Although I cannot afford a year's subscription I would be delighted if you would accept the little extra I send as a subscription for your fighting fund.'

Much of this week's post has been from regular subscribers to Socialist

Worker. Many are anonymous but all are welcome. IS branch collections include Cambridge £154.05, Hornsey £102.80, Oxford £100, Croydon £10, Paddington £7, Kingston £24, and Tottenham, who raised £48 from a social.

The donations from old age pensioners and the lower paid show the extent of hostility and resentment towards the Tory government. If other readers were to subscribe as generously our target of £30,000 would soon be reached.

Donations to Jim Nichol, IS National Treasurer, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

PROTEST MARCH AGAINST SENTENCES ON THE AMHURST ROAD FOUR Assemble Shepherd's Bush Green 1pm, Saturday 16 December march to Wormwood Scrubs prison

AUEW

Strike round-up Profile of Super Scab Union leaders wobble

HOW THE COLONELS PERSUADE VOTERS

by George Gionis
STRIKE THREATS are increasing in Greece, although strikes remain illegal.

When bank workers threatened to strike early this month, their appointed leaders were persuaded to call it off only after an interview with the prime minister. Among other workers threatening to strike are shop assistants and railway workers.

The hands of Greek workers are tied by their appointed trade union leaders. Events before and during the student elections last month show what might happen if trade union elections were allowed.

The minister of education explained why the government had decided to allow elections in the universities and colleges of higher education: 'Firstly to show the complete faith of the government in the students, and secondly to show our desire to win the students to the side of the government.'

Despite this confidence, the government used all the trickery, double



dealing and intimidation it has practised for the past five years.

In March and April, students demanded general assemblies to prepare the elections and see that they were run fairly. The assemblies were allowed, but various tactics were used to try to invalidate them. In Athens, hundreds of students were marched off to the local police stations and the most militant drafted for military service.

At the law faculty in Athens and the University of Thessaloniki, students were required to register before

the assemblies could take place—but the registration offices were kept open long enough for only a small proportion of students to be able to register.

The president of Patras University declared: 'All students whose marks are under 60 per cent should not be allowed to vote. Only bad and mediocre students ever cause trouble.'

When the assemblies were eventually held at Thessaloniki, the students of one faculty walked out in protest at the presence of political police. In another faculty, only 40 students out of 2000 were allowed into the assembly. Two hundred philosophy students who also walked out marched to the centre of the city, where they were attacked by a large force of police and many arrested.

On the day of these assemblies at Thessaloniki, the army just happened to have arranged military exercises in the immediate neighbourhood of the university, and the above events took place in the middle of tank manoeuvres, machine gun fire and troop movements.

When the elections were held on 20 November, many students were demoralised, and in some colleges the government supporters were elected without trouble. In others, trickery was used.

For example, certain engineering students who were on strike over the downgrading of their qualifications were told that the matter had been dropped. They called off the strike in time to vote, but after the elections were told that they would be downgraded after all.

CANCELLED

The greatest trouble arose at colleges where the students managed to organise themselves. At the law faculty and the polytechnic in Athens, the candidates demanded sealed ballot boxes and the right to have representatives at the vote counting. Mass meetings refused to continue with the elections when these demands were not met.

In both cases, the students were finally dispersed by the police. At the medical faculty, the elections were cancelled because trouble was expected.

In two colleges where the authorities were foolhardy enough to allow student supervision of the vote counting, the results were clearly against the colonels and their representatives. Twelve out of the thirteen elected at these colleges have since been denounced as trouble makers.

On the day of the elections the minister of education announced: 'We have avoided any interference whatsoever in these elections.' Yet he went on to say: 'The conduct of the police was irreproachable. Their only purpose was to guarantee the right to vote to the majority of students.'



Miners at El Teniente, the largest of Chile's copper mines—nationalised, but the former US owners are still fighting to grab it back

BRIEFING

IN FRANCE the affair of the Lyons brothel keepers and their police protectors drags on. With the arrest of the former head of the vice squad, Tonnot, the cesspool gives off a new odour. For Tonnot has been publicly accused of falsifying a Lyons police report on Paul Touvier, a local military official during the Nazi occupation of France, to further his case for a pardon last year. These local police chiefs have some interesting friends.

FOUR HUNDRED French footballers went on strike on 1-2 December, and half the first division matches were cancelled.

The kind of management footballers are up against is shown by what happened at Racing-Strasbourg. The president of the directors was also director of a cable-making firm, and prided himself on having had no strikes in his firm for 37 years. He resigned in disgust at the strike, comparing the team to air hijackers because they turned back the coach taking them to Marseilles for a match.

The directors of the club made their position clear: 'We are the bosses, we pay you. Our own livelihood doesn't depend on football.'

THE WAGES of nearly 750,000 Yugoslav workers are to be cut by 10 per cent or more next year. This is the government's strategy to cut the losses of hundreds of firms described as 'near bankrupt'.

It appears that many enterprises—which are state-owned but are encouraged to compete with one another—have been investing without adequate cover. Others

have built up huge debts.

In Serbia 500,000 workers are affected, 40 per cent of the region's workforce, and in Croatia 20 per cent.

It is argued that the choice is between wage cuts and mass redundancies. The central committee of the Communist League in Macedonia declared that directors and others who opposed the wage cuts because they were worried about the effects on the workers deserved to be dismissed.

The government's accountants have also unearthed other examples of what has happened when enterprises disposed of their own funds. The directors of a copper mine lost £3 million in deals on the London Metal Exchange, and foreign middlemen had managed to disappear with £750,000 from the Yugoslav Agricultural Bank.

A LEAFLET distributed in Florence by Lotta Feminista, an Italian women's liberation group, calls on housewives to fight rising prices. While most women regard rising prices as an inevitable misfortune, the leaflet points out: 'This is not a natural disaster, it is caused by the bosses. While capitalists cause inflation by raising prices to cut workers' wage gains and keep profits up, they rely on women's isolated view of the situation to keep them from fighting back.'

The leaflet calls on housewives to fight for free nurseries, adequate social services, and cheaper public services such as gas and electricity.

A NEW institution of higher learning has opened in Israel—a school for 'appeal activists'. The United Jewish Appeal, which collects donations from Jews abroad, especially in the United States, has found that its income is no longer increasing so fast as it did in the days following the Six-Day War.

Among the methods to be taught is 'intelligence-service expertise in all concerning the collection of money and donations... The intelligence includes not only up-to-date knowledge about Jews rich in possessions and capital who are not on the list of contributors, but also efficient methods of persuasion suitable for use on such people.'

This story is not the concoction of some anti-semitic: it is quoted from Ma'ariv, one of the most widely-read newspapers in Israel.

US firms disrupt Chile copper sales

by Vic Richards

THE American mining companies nationalised by the Chilean government in 1971 have stepped up their campaign to disrupt the sale of Chilean copper.

To avoid the US government's threat of economic boycott, Allende's government agreed to pay compensation for the mining companies' assets. The biggest, Braden-Kennecott, had hoped for a deal like the nationalisation carried out by the Christian Democrat government in 1966. The company was then able to sell the required 51 per cent of its shares to the Chilean government for 80 million pesos, when previously the whole company had been valued at only 67 million.

The 80 million was immediately lent back to the new jointly-owned company, so that Kennecott received interest on its vastly inflated compensation as well as 49 per cent of the new company's profits. The profits were 27 per cent in 1967 and again in 1968, and soared to 50 per cent in 1969.

But Allende decided not to pay compensation for dubious claims and faulty machinery, and to discount any profits over 12 per cent per year in the previous 15 years. Kennecott's excess profits were by this calculation far more than the value of its assets, so no compensation is to be paid.

Anaconda, the other big American company, is to receive a small amount of compensation after the deductions have been made.

Kennecott's campaign of disruption has included pressure on the US government to intensify its economic boycott of Chile, and the setting up of companies in countries which buy Chilean copper—to claim ownership of the copper and start long

lawsuits over it. Even if Kennecott lose these cases, they can at least disrupt Chile's copper trade and drive her customers away.

The main area for Kennecott's campaign has been Europe, which takes 65 per cent of Chilean copper exports. But in France and Holland dockers have thwarted Kennecott's aims by refusing to handle the copper on the occasions when the company has obtained embargo orders from the courts.

Fifteen per cent of Chilean copper sales are to Britain, and there may soon be a similar attempt made here. The British labour movement must play its part in defeating this grasping monopoly when the attack comes.

Vietnam: murder raids go on

DESPITE frenzied speculation, the outcome of the Vietnam peace talks is still unclear. Meanwhile, the war goes on. According to Hanoi, B52 bombers flew 850 raids in November, dropping 36,000 tons of bombs.

One obstacle is the continued haggling of the ruling clique in South Vietnam, who are refusing to accept any agreement that does not include the complete withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from the South.

Indeed, last week the semi-official South Vietnamese newspaper Tin Song ran a massive banner headline declaring 'Rumours that a peace agreement will be signed on 15 December are pure fabrications'. It accused the French and American press of creating a 'false mood of optimism'.

But the South Vietnamese cannot defy Nixon indefinitely. Reports that the US had threatened to cut aid to Saigon if it refused to accept an

agreement were originally denied, but they have now been confirmed by US Senator Percy.

At the same time, the Saigon regime is taking advantage of the delay in signing a peace to strengthen its position against any potential opposition. New decrees will give military courts the power to impose death sentences on people found guilty of spreading false information about the economic situation.

Even more sinister are the accusations being made by Hanoi that the South Vietnamese and the Americans are making plans to exterminate political prisoners regarded as dangerous before an agreement for their exchange is reached. Hanoi alleges that in one province the list of people to be assassinated before the cease-fire amounts to 40 per cent of prisoners, and that prisoners are being transferred from camp to camp to make assassination easier.

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Labour bows to racists'

by Mike Caffoor

'DO YOU WANT to see Uxbridge become an Asian stronghold, more like Bombay, Calcutta, or Karachi than an English town?' bellowed the National Front loudspeaker van as it passed along Uxbridge High Street.

'It is no purpose of mine to spread alarm nor to provoke our people against immigrants... perhaps the most serious matter however is the reappearance of leprosy in the past 20 years, for the first time since it was eradicated from this country in the Middle Ages. But so many suffering from terrible diseases should never have been brought to Britain.' So wrote Dan Harmston, the Union Movement candidate in his election manifesto.

Such was the tempo set by the racist candidates in the Uxbridge by-election last week. And the most disturbing factor in the result is that the combined votes of the out-and-out racist candidates topped 4300, bigger than the racist vote at Rochdale.

hate drive

The defeat Labour suffered is of their own making. In a constituency with a large industrial working class, 6000 working at London Airport alone, Labour chose to have a 'silent' election campaign.

Instead of launching a concerted campaign against the freeze and other aspects of Tory policy, and fighting for an energetic anti-Tory campaign, they concentrated on individual canvassing. In the event it was the Tories and the racists who set the pace, and immigration became a major issue in a constituency with an immigrant population of less than 3 per cent.

Manuela Sykes, the Labour candidate, who, when she was a Liberal Party member with little prospect of election to parliament, was a consistent anti-racist fighter, ran for cover in the face of the racist offensive. Taunted by the

Tories that Labour was soft on immigrants, instead of taking a principled line and launching a counter-offensive about the rich man's Tory government, Labour capitulated.

Record

Peter Smith, chairman of Uxbridge Labour Party, wrote to the local paper in the following terms: 'To set the record right, the Labour candidate and her supporters wish to make clear to your readers. Immigration must be controlled so that not only the plight of refugees but also the rights and priorities of the indigenous and local population of Britain are safeguarded in a situation of housing and jobs shortage caused by bad Tory government. This control should include dispersal of new immigrants so

that new larger concentrations of immigrants do not occur.'

This disgraceful attitude led to the situation where the racists polled a significant vote. Typical of the atmosphere created was the incident of black people who were insulted and abused as they stood at a bus station.

Two men, Gary and Michael Montague, appeared in court. The latter had shouted: 'You black bastards, I will kill you. Why do you come to my country? All black bastards are for it.'

The International Socialists made an intervention to counter the racist campaign. 10,000 leaflets were distributed, a demonstration through the town was organised, open air meetings were held, and a public meeting with Paul Foot and George Peake was organised.

This meeting, with an attendance of 70, was the biggest meeting of the campaign. Michael Foot got only 20.

The racist bandwagon can start to roll again as a result of Uxbridge. Next time, IS must be even better organised to halt it.

WHAT WE THINK: SEE PAGE 4

Education on the cheap—that's new Tory plan

LAST WEEK Tory Education Minister Margaret Thatcher unveiled her White Paper that settles British education policy for the next 10 years.

It was hailed by the Guardian as 'more than half-way towards a respectably socialist education policy'. The rest of the press and most other interested bodies united in their praise of Mrs Thatcher for her 'progressive' and 'encouraging' plans.

In reality, the White Paper tries to do two things:

1. To educate more people for less money per head and
2. To tie in that education more closely to the needs of capitalism.

These aims can be seen throughout the plan.

NURSERY EDUCATION: The proposed expansion has been praised on all sides. It will benefit many children, but it will take place on ill-equipped sites, with not enough teachers for the numbers of children and inadequately trained staff. And it is not a present to harassed mums—its real aim is to free women for the lower-paid end of the labour market.

SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING: Only

HOSPITALS REVOLT OVER PAY AND JOBS

IN THE Oxford English dictionary the word ancillary is said to mean 'subservient' and 'subordinate'. Every ancillary staff worker in the National Health Service knows exactly what that means.

For the eruption in the hospitals this week expresses decades of quiet frustration not just about the appalling wages but the petty tyranny which still runs British hospitals. Certainly the wages of the telephonists, cooks and cleaners, whose invisible work is vital to the hospital service, is scandalous.

But so are the working conditions. Porters and technicians are expected to suffer preventable health risks from infected dressings, lidless swill cans, radioactive isotopes as part of the job.

Manual workers on the wards are at the very bottom of the hospital hierarchy so when a consultant snaps at a ward sister, the backbiting is passed down the ward until it finally gets taken out on long suffering cleaners. Doctors when they acknowledge the existence of the ancillary staff at all, talk to them like idiots. Black and immigrant workers are recruited direct from their home towns and equipped with work permits which bind them to named hospitals where their weak position is shamelessly exploited by the hospital management and talk of strikes are immediately met by threats of deportation.

CONFIDENCE

And there is no other industry, even in the most hard-bitten zones of the private sector, where women's labour is more scandalously underpaid. Equal pay is not tacked on to the end of the hospital workers' demands, it heads the list for the 70 per cent female labour force.

Mark Palmer, secretary of the rank and file committee LASH, told me that he is only too well aware that he takes home £2 more every week than the women telephonists who staff his exchange.

'They are simply not having it any longer,' he said. And it has been the black women's new-found

by Gerry Dawson

confidence that has led the big demonstrations throughout the country.

But the biggest frustration, and it's shared by all who try to work in the NHS, is the agony of watching the standards of medical care deteriorate before your eyes for sheer lack of money and facilities. For since the day the Health Service was founded, as an example of what practical socialism might mean, it has been in decline, by covert neglect from Labour governments and from open attack by the Tories.

Every hospital worker has his own horror story about the preventable suffering caused by lack of adequately rewarded staff and half-way decent buildings. Health workers in hospitals for the very old and the mentally ill and ill-equipped, which should be the measure of the civilisation of a society, have to watch their hospitals slowly turning into barn-like prisons where people are kept drugged because there are not enough staff to look after them.

LEACHED

When a patient dies in a particularly ghastly, unnecessary and public situation, an inquiry is duly heard and influential hands are held up to the sky in dismay. But anyone who works in the NHS knows of daily examples of patients suffering because of a penny-pinching and bureaucratic hospital management starved of capital by central government, leached by the drug companies, abused by private practice and drained by the mushrooming private health schemes.

Good medicine ought by its nature to be a collective team process which starts from the needs of the patient and is constantly striving to improve and perfect new methods of better health care. But instead a system congenitally short of cash is incapable of even providing such basic human rights as an effective contraceptive and early abortion service.



Health service workers demonstrating outside their union Headquarters

On the simple but vital operations for hernias and varicose veins, the waiting lists in the hospital clinics are as long as the council house waiting lists. And such outstanding gaps in the threadbare medical service as industrial health remain unfilled although the need for a government-run occupational health service has been glaringly obvious for the last 20 years and work accident figures continue to mount remorselessly.

The proportion of government spending going to the hospital service remains as low as ever in Britain and the service literally only keeps going through the willingness of those who work for it to accept unacceptable wages.

SPIRITED

And it is to become even more undemocratic in its control. The new hospital reorganisation plans promise further cuts in public participation and a strengthened hospital bureaucracy, all in the name of 'scientific management'. The new scheme consolidates the worst elements of the present service, making all

influential hospital board posts ministerial appointments and giving no money and no democracy to the 'Community Health Councils'.

This week's spirited strike and LASH, the rank and file hospital workers committee's, promise of a Week of Action from 29 December to include hospital strikes, token stoppages, demonstrations and meetings and most of all solidarity action, will not, alone, be able to halt the decline in the health service.

The stoppages over the disgraceful wages and the Tory freeze on even the beggarly increases negotiated by the hospital unions are a vital start. As a ward maid said: 'We've now got the confidence to stand up instead of lying down waiting to be walked over.'

For if the people who work in British hospitals were to take control of the medical services, then it would be a pleasure to be ill.

CHRISTMAS IDEAS

Next week's issue of Socialist Worker will be published on the 23rd to allow for maximum circulation. Christmas Day should be for all workers a day of joy and not an opportunity for the capitalist class to exploit the workers.



Mrs Thatcher: nothing for harassed mums

£10 million—that is seven new schools a year over the whole country—is to be spent on tackling the problem of old and crumbling secondary schools that should have been replaced years ago.

NUMBERS OF TEACHERS: The promised number of teachers is about 50,000 short of the number which the National Union of Teachers says we need. This proves that the Tories are not prepared to meet the long-standing demand for smaller classes. Some children will still be taught in classes of 35 or even more.

TRAINING FOR EXPERIENCED TEACHERS: This is the other 'shop window' device with nursery education in the White Paper. But it is really a means of controlling the teaching force more closely. If there is a shortage of teachers in one subject or age-group, practising teachers will be forced to fill the gap by means of in-service training.

Obvious ruse

HIGHER EDUCATION: Here is the most obvious attack on educational standards. The number of higher education places will actually be reduced over the next 10 years in proportion to the age group.

Every proposal points to one thing—education on the cheap. A new two-year higher education qualification is proposed, an obvious ruse to cut down or fail to increase degree course places.

The polytechnics are to be expanded at the cost of the more expensive universities. At the universities, staff-student ratios are increased and post-graduate research is cut. And you can bet that what research remains will be geared to the needs of big business developments, as the trend already shows.

Teacher-training will be under the direct jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Science and so much more open to capitalist and government control. These proposals seem never intended to provide a better education for working class children. They are simply to meet the needs of the capitalist class.

SUSAN BUDDLE



Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK...

FOR THE FIRST TIME since the 1930s the British fascists are beginning to get serious support. It is small as yet but it is growing.

At the Uxbridge by-election last week, in spite of several splits on the far right, their candidates collected nearly one-eighth of the vote—rather more than the Labour Party got at Sutton on the same day. It is also clear that the National Front has established itself as the fascist organisation that really matters.

In recent municipal elections in Hillingdon and Wandsworth, National Front candidates collected 20 per cent and 16 per cent of the vote. And at the Rochdale election a candidate appealing essentially to the same feelings got nearly a tenth of the vote.

The issue, of course, is racialism. Just as Mosley built up his support before the war almost entirely on Jew-baiting, so today the Front's real appeal is to those who can be persuaded to see black people as the cause of their problems.

There are differences in tactics between the old Mosleyites and our present-day fascists. The National Front has not yet sent its thugs on to the streets in force to beat up blacks and left-wingers, smash windows and terrorise whole communities as the British Union of Fascists did in East London in the 1930s.

But the difference is only tactical. The Front is cultivating a 'respectable' image at this stage because it has influential fellow-travellers in the Tory Party. Men like Jonathan Guinness, chairman of the Monday Club, who hold virtually the same racialist views as the National Front but are not yet willing to leave the Tories.

Real danger

In time the tactics will change. Indeed already in Leicester, the marches and intimidation are taking place against the Mansfield Hosiery strikers. And this will spread.

There is a real and present danger that fascism can become a mass force in British politics. On the one hand the housing situation gets steadily worse. Rents and house prices—deliberately excluded from Heath's fraudulent 'price freeze'—are soaring. Homelessness and overcrowding get worse and worse. Unemployment remains very high and fresh redundancies are announced every week. The wage freeze is reducing living standards. The social services are under-financed, under-staffed and overstretched.

On the other hand the Labour Party, the traditional 'answer', is clearly seen by hundreds of thousands of its own supporters to be politically bankrupt. The party's incredible failure to win the highly marginal Uxbridge seat, the almost total collapse of its vote at Sutton and the ignominious failure at Rochdale are the writing on the wall.

The experience of 1964-70 has sunk into the consciousness of a very large number of voters. The party's sabotage of the struggle against 'Fair Rents' has shown that its turn to the 'left' in words remains a matter of words only. Of course, the Labour Party is not yet dying—far from it. But the election results clearly show widespread and wholly justified cynicism towards its promises.

These are the conditions in which the fascists can make big gains. The struggle against racialism is now an urgent priority. It cannot succeed as long as it is confined to 'liberal' propaganda. The evils on which racialism feeds—unemployment, the housing problem, inadequate social services—are real evils that affect millions even though they may not be too obvious to those Labour MPs who live in Hampstead.

Propaganda is necessary. Solidarity with black people in struggle is even more necessary. But above all the struggle against the social roots of racialism is the way to beat the fascists.

The fight against the wage freeze, against rent rises, against the Industrial Relations Act, the fight to bring the Tories down, the fight for socialist policies and a socialist leadership in the workers' movement: these struggles are the ones that will beat the would-be British Hitlers.



12 ANGRY BRIGADES

PROVIDENCE intervened ironically on the Sunday before the so-called Angry Brigade verdict when the famous film *Twelve Angry Men* was shown on BBC television.

Twelve Angry Men, made in the 1950s, is the classic liberal statement on the wonders of the jury system. It shows how one liberal citizen, who takes his public responsibilities seriously, can by reasoned argument change the minds of 11 of his countrymen. A boy, who appeared on police evidence to be clearly guilty of a murder, turns out, after the arguments of the irrepressibly decent Henry Fonda, to be not guilty after all.

The reasoning behind this argument is that there is always one reliable fellow in a bunch of 12. Which is why at the time the film was made the verdicts of juries had to be unanimous. In America this is still so.

This was the situation which greeted those two liberal champions, Mr Roy Jenkins and Mr Dick Taverne, when they joined forces as Home Secretary and Minister at the Home Office in 1966.

Thirteen wasted years of Tory rule had at least left the jury system intact. But the Home Office hacks and the policemen who advise them started to clamour about the difficulty of getting convictions.

The answer was simple: a majority verdict system which would make it impossible to hamper a verdict because one or two people had been bribed or intimidated.

Fearless Roy and Slick Dick immediately saw the force of these arguments, and with a short clause in the Criminal Justice Bill, 1967 (incidentally one of the most deeply reactionary measures legislated by the Labour government) they swept away a simple civil liberty which had been part of English law for three centuries.

Anna Mendelson and Hilary Creek, John Barker and James Greenfield are to spend 10 years in prison because of the pusillanimity of Roy Jenkins and Dick Taverne.

I can deny a rumour that Jenkins



A LETTER from Remington Rand, the American typewriter combine, has been received by Remington's customers. It tells 'regretfully' of a five per cent increase in the prices of some Remington products. The letter is dated 3 November, before the freeze. But the letter which has found its way into the hands of *Socialist Worker*, was posted in Plymouth on 13 November, after the freeze, as the reproduced postmark shows. It was received on 15 November.

If anyone were to suggest that Remington Rand are back-dating their decision to increase prices in order to break the law (the Counter Inflationary Act) they would be guilty of a monstrous libel against a reputable public company.

and Taverne are planning a re-issue of the film *Twelve Angry Men*, in which the jury retire, take a quick vote, find 11-1 for guilty, and return to deliver their majority verdict, which is rapidly translated into an execution.

I DON'T know what has come over Lawrence Daly of the National Union of Mineworkers. He has put his name to a brochure drawn up by the National Coal Board which induces miners to become salesmen for solid fuel appliances. Commission at the rate of about two per cent will be paid in books of Co-op stamps. Chief beneficiaries will be the Co-op and J H Sankey, the retailing combine which was bought by the Coal Board in 1966 and which still has Lord Robens as a director.

Tender trap

THE Channel Tunnel, which will cost the British taxpayer some £366 million, will provide the largest and juiciest contract in the history of the British construction industry. It will be awarded after the submission of competitive tenders by a large number of construction firms.

British companies who are hoping to get a bit of the tunnel action can relax. McAlpines have got the contract sewn up.

Miraculously Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons last week secured a £350,000 contract from the

Transport and Road Research Laboratory (a public body which is part of the Department of the Environment) to conduct tunnelling trials in the lower chalk strata at Chinnor near Oxford.

Officially it is denied that there is any direct link between the Chinnor job and the massive spoils of the Channel Tunnel. But the chalk formation at Chinnor is one of the few places in the country where the deep bore chalk conditions of the Kent coast are reproduced.

McAlpine won this contract in competition with five other tunnelling contractors, largely because it is providing a new soft and hard ground digger for the Chinnor project at a notional cost.

The diggers, needless to say, would come in very useful for digging the Channel Tunnel.

Naive construction firm directors might imagine that a lower tender than McAlpines could still win the Channel contract. They should remember that McAlpines secured the £30 million civil engineering contract in Scunthorpe despite the fact that the McAlpine tender was at least £1 million higher than that of Mitchell Construction.

McAlpine's magic touch with tenders has been proved once again last week when the deadline for submitting tenders for the multi-million pound Humber bridge was suddenly extended. It is rumoured that McAlpines have belatedly decided to put in a bid.



PRINTS

CLOCKWORK ORANGEMEN

THE START of the Scottish football season this year was characterised by a fiercer than usual outbreak of sectarian violence on the terraces, made worse by the events in Ireland. The continued association of the Rangers Football Club with the cause of the Orange Order has given a considerable boost to the growth of the Order in Scotland over the past year.

Three months ago, a meeting was called between Glasgow magistrates and the managers of Rangers and Celtic Football Clubs (Celtic is associated with the Catholic cause). It was suggested that a public declaration by Rangers that they are prepared to field a Catholic might well alleviate the situation. Protestants have played for Celtic for many years, but never Catholics for Rangers.

Rangers manager Willie Waddell refused to do anything of the kind, shouting angrily: 'You'll find no sectarianism at Ibrox Park.'

Rangers made a disastrous start to the season, and the only cheer for the supporters was the excellent play of a young forward called Graham Fyfe. There was some angry comment on the terraces about the club's refusal to play Fyfe regularly in the first team, despite his good form.

The truth gradually filtered through. Fyfe's crime was not that of being a Catholic himself (he would never have been signed by Rangers if he had been) but that he was engaged to a Catholic girl.

The winning goal

To Rangers, this seems like the worst betrayal since Laurie Blyth, who played for them 20 years ago. Blyth's mother re-married and Blyth became a convert to Catholicism. He was swiftly given a free transfer from Rangers.

The trouble with Fyfe is that he doesn't want a transfer. But Rangers management seem determined to change his mind.

On 9 November, for instance, when four first-team Rangers forwards were injured, another suspended, and former centre-forward Colin Stein transferred to Coventry, Fyfe was named as substitute. He was brought on eight minutes from the end to replace a player who had limped on both wings for an hour. He promptly laid on the winning goal.

The following week, Fyfe scored the winning goal against Hibernian. The next game he was substituted, and the following game he was dropped.

The Glasgow press know exactly what is going on, and some papers have even commented on Mr Waddell's football judgment. But there the matter has been left.

So if your club is looking for a bright young forward, you can get one cheap from Rangers. And if Graham Fyfe leaves Rangers, he shouldn't worry. Players like Pele, Eusebio, Puskas and Di Stefano would all have been treated the same.

They all 'kicked with the wrong foot'.

ON 11 JANUARY at the Savoy Hotel in London the American Chamber of Commerce (United Kingdom branch) is holding an important dinner at which, according to the invitation cards, 'the guest of honour and speaker is J L (Jack) Jones, MBE'.

The invitations also note that bookings are expected to be heavy, so rush yours in enclosing the £3-a-skull cover charge. J L Jones' speaker's fee is undisclosed.

Clapped out

THE AMERICAN medical profession has been rather embarrassed by the publicity in the American press (not in the British, naturally) over the past three months about the 'Tuskagee syphilis experiment', in which 371 black men from Atlanta were deliberately allowed to die of syphilis as part of a research programme carried out by the local branch of the 'Centre for Disease Control'.

The men were regularly examined in CDC clinics, but deliberately not treated with penicillin or any other



GRAHAM FYFE, the Rangers player who is engaged to a Catholic girl. 'You'll find no sectarianism at Ibrox Park,' said the Rangers manager. Fyfe, despite brilliant play, was dropped from the team.

cure for syphilis so that the doctors could discover after they were dead how much damage was done by syphilis to the human body.

The 'experiment' was started in the 1930s on 443 young men, all of them black, who had reported to local doctors and had been found to be suffering from syphilis.

Only last month the American Health Education and Welfare Department recommended that the study should be ended and that the survivors, by now only 72 men, should be properly treated.

The doctors knew all the time exactly what they were doing. In a speech in 1950, one of the project's organisers, Dr O C Wenger, said: 'Remember, these patients... have received no treatment on our recommendation. We know now, where we could only surmise before, that we have contributed to their ailments and shortened their lives.'

None of the patients, however, had the slightest idea what was being done to them. 'The patients didn't benefit from enlightened consent', said Dr J D Millar. 'They couldn't have been told of the consequences or they would have sought treatment.'

Dr Millar went on to say that the patients had cheerfully accepted the 'rewards of entering the programme.'

Asked what these 'rewards' were, Dr Millar said: 'Mainly free burial.' (Washington Post, 2 November).

The prominent Swiss venereal disease researcher, Mr O Naegeli, wrote in the Journal of Venereal Disease Information as long ago as 1929 (long before the 'experiment' started) 'It is necessary that all latent cases of syphilis be treated, and it is malpractice not to do so.'

In September 1970, Dr James Lucas, assistant chief of the CDC's VD branch, wrote about the study: 'While some medical knowledge has been gained from this study, its volume and quality has been less than

that gleaned from the Norwegian study.'

The Norwegian study ended in 1910.

Despite the considerable publicity given to this interesting exercise in mass murder by the American medical profession, only three of America's 350,000 doctors and physicians have publicly protested about the Tuskegee experiment.

Tittle Tatler

THIS review in the November issue of Tatler may have escaped some Irishmen who take the view that ruling class attitudes towards Irishmen have changed in Britain over the past 50 years:

It seems a very strange time to bring out a book about the Irish and their characteristics. Most people, and probably the Irish themselves, must be heartily sick of the Irish. They have caused nothing but trouble for centuries and large sections of them seem to have no morality whatsoever, though no doubt they all regularly attend Mass or Communion! Many of them behave worse than wild beasts in the jungle and yet we are always told about the Irish 'charm' and the 'blarney'. The inevitable jayabout who touches your elbow and asks for 'the price of a cuppa tea' always has an Irish accent. But enough! *The Irish Are They Real?* by Patrick Riddell (Hamish Hamilton £2.75), does not pull any punches. The writer has travelled throughout the country in search of an answer to his question. He admits that they are treacherous and unreliable, but no man or race is all bad and there is much to admire in the Irish and Ireland if you can pretend that bombing, maiming and murder do not happen there. One Irishman said about his own race and extremely fertile and lovely country that if the Dutch lived in Ireland they would feed Europe and if the Irish lived in Holland, they'd flood it! Not a bad summing up.

Old Bailey verdict is a warning to police bomb-planters

ON 20 NOVEMBER, Kevin Winstain, the barrister representing Stuart Christie in the Stoke Newington Eight trial, alleged at the Old Bailey that Sergeant Gilham, a member of the raiding party of Bomb Squad regulars who were so active in Amhurst Road, Stoke Newington, on 20 August last year, had quite coolly planted three bomb detonators in the boot of Stuart's car.

Winstain, who explained how the Special Branch and Fleet Street had been hounding Stuart at his work and home ever since his return from Spanish jail in 1967, said in court that Gilham just couldn't resist planting the detonators.

'It gave them that little touch of evil power you get when you know someone is in for a vicious surprise,' he said.

He called the Bomb Squad's endeavours in general 'a disgrace', 'despicable' and the work of 'clockwork policemen'.

The police were understandably a little ruffled. Commander Ernest Bond described the allegations of planting against his men as 'monstrous'. Judge James, in his summing-up, told the jury that if the allegations made by the defence were accepted the police case 'would amount to a gigantic perjury'.

But the Old Bailey jury—which Stuart described as 'a 100 per cent working-class jury in which I have great faith' and which the Daily Telegraph glumly admitted was 'more working-class than would otherwise have been the case—it included one coloured man—clearly didn't think the allegations monstrous.

They disregarded the judge's benevolent advice and Bond's bluster and threw out of court all charges against Christie and three other clumsily-framed victims of this messy police operation.

The jury made it clear that after four solid months of police evidence, more than 800 exhibits and thousands of pages of evidence, they were still unimpressed and unconvinced by the police case against the four seized at Amhurst Road, allegedly sitting with an arsenal under the kitchen table.

Although the Prosecution chopped and changed its definition of the conspiracy and Judge James first insisted on a unanimous verdict but later accepted a majority finding, the police have got the Amhurst Road Four behind bars only by the skin of their teeth.

In their verdicts and their appeal for clemency, the Old Bailey jury, especially those two jurors who steadfastly refused to be taken in by the legal bullying, have given a working-class warning to the Special Branch that it's not fooling anybody.

Gutter press

Police behaviour in the aftermath of the trial has amply reinforced the points argued by the defence during the trial. Commander Bond has now openly admitted what was strenuously denied during the trial and has been curiously missing from the gutter press surveys of revolutionary black magic poultry orgies—that despite the Stoke Newington arrests symbolic bomb attacks mysteriously similar to the Angry Brigade explosions have continued, including at least two explosions at army barracks and installations.

Bond has also blandly announced that the people in the dock for the past 18 months aren't the Angry Brigade at all and, taking upon himself the powers newly enjoyed by his Southern Irish colleagues, he has identified two new suspects as guilty, without trial, of conspiracy.

Bond and Superintendent Habershon have had great difficulty in concealing their own annoyance at the jury's verdict.

Bond insisted to a Scotland Yard press conference the day after the acquittals 'that those eight people charged were all members of the Angry Brigade, including Christie'. Habershon

by **DAVE WIDGERY**

claimed, quite wrongly, that their fingerprints were 'actually on the bombs. What more do you want?' he asked, and described the defendants as 'lucky'.

An anonymous senior Special Branch officer told the Daily Telegraph Old Bailey correspondent that students at university 'are subjected to corrupting influences by certain academics in influential positions, forcing their extremist views on them'.

The cause of this ill-concealed fury is obvious. The Special Branch has once again been caught in the act and in the jury's view has been guilty of the most grave planting and perjury in its enthusiasm to convict left-wingers.

Stuart Christie is absolutely right to sue the police for wrongful arrest and illegal detention for 18 months for a crime he did not commit. If there was any justice in the world, Bond, Habershon, Gilham, Ashendon and Sivelli should be facing criminal prosecution for assault, perjury and conspiracy.

Rewards

Arthur Latham, Labour MP for Paddington North, is right to criticise the conduct of the investigation and the trial. Other Labour MPs should break their deafening silence on this case and demand a public inquiry into the work of the bomb squad and repeal of the conspiracy laws.

For the leading lights in this legal operation are being generously rewarded, instead of being brought for trial themselves. Bond has been promoted to Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard. Superintendent Habershon has graduated from his North London manor to become a permanent fixture in the expanded Bomb Squad, and the state's confidence in Justice James' handling of the case has been demonstrated by his elevation to Lord Justice of Appeal.

The four defendants which the State managed—just—to convict are supposed to be grateful that they are only losing 10 years of the most politically important years of their lives. But as Angela Weir, another falsely arrested defendant, said: 'This has been regarded as a lenient sentence, but those of us who have been in the dock with these four people for six months do not regard it as such.'

The conspiracy laws under which they were charged are vague, elastic, difficult to disprove and highly dangerous. The eminent barrister D N Pritt, QC, describes them as 'a remarkable law... long used as the most formidable weapon of the ruling class in times of trouble.'

Those of us who have not yet experienced the attentions of Commander Bond and his team of proven perjurers and planters owe a responsibility to the four people he has just locked up for a decade in Holloway and Wormwood Scrubs. That responsibility is to demonstrate the truly explosive powers of socialist ideas and working-class organisation to persuade people to take sides in the modern class struggle and fight it to a finish.

And in the meantime keep a sharp eye on the boot of the car... there's a Bomb Squad about.



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Tom Mann:
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REPRINTS IN LABOUR HISTORY

Pit village where a family face eviction on Christmas Day

OUT IN THE YORKSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE, somewhere between Leeds and Castleford, lies a tiny village with a population of just under 200 called Ledston Luck. All it amounts to is a cluster of houses built around a coal mine of the same name.

The name may be picturesque but this little hamlet would never make a cover picture for Country Life. A third of the houses, though modest enough, are palatial compared with the 44 'cottages' that line both sides of the village's single dead-end street. Most of the better dwellings house deputies and over-men from the colliery.

One of the tenants of the cottages, Mr John Charlesworth, together with his wife Carol and young son Dominic, will not be living there for very much longer if the landlord has his way.

They have been served with a notice to quit on 25 December—Christmas Day, Mrs Charlesworth is pregnant and the baby is due any day now.

When I spoke to the owner of the cottages, Mr J E Whitaker of 20 Castle Road, Sandal, near Wakefield, he told me that he knew nothing about the notice to quit and referred me to his agent, Harry Harrison, a prominent estate agent of Castleford.

I asked Mr Harrison whether he had any qualms about ordering a family out of their home on Christmas Day and he replied: 'It doesn't particularly matter to me which day it is.'

John Charlesworth is the secretary of the Ledston Luck Action Committee, a body formed recently by the tenants to force the National Coal Board and the landlord of the 44 cottages to bring them in to the latter part of the 20th century.

MEAGRE

Life is far from comfortable in Ledston Luck. For a start there is the inadequate and dangerous electricity supply run by the Coal Board, not the national grid. This consists of a meagre 110-volt supply from the colliery generators, which does not provide even enough current to run a television set satisfactorily.

The wiring in Mr Charlesworth's house has burned out twice recently. It has been described by officials from the fire service and independent electricians as a dangerous fire hazard.

Inspectors from the Yorkshire Electricity Board went round the village in June 1971 and said that it was necessary to rewire all the houses and convert the appliances to receive the 240-volt supply from the national grid. Since then nothing has been done.

Mr Charlesworth told me: 'When a tenant moves in he is not told by Mr Harrison that the supply is only 110 volts. When new tenants are told about this by their neighbours they often have difficulty in obtaining suitable appliances. They are advised by the landlord to spend up to £25 on a transformer.'

Mr David Killingbeck, another member of the Action Committee, explained: 'Transformers make no difference at all. And in any case, when the colliery is working the supply sometimes drops to between

SLUM IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

76 and 81 volts. When a cage comes up at the pit the voltage in the village goes down. The lights dim and even go out.'

It is impossible to run even an electric cooker or modern washing machine. Last year one of the villagers connected a small Baby Belling with the result that the electricity failed in the entire block in which the house is situated.

David Killingbeck said: 'We had to sell a fridge when we moved in and we had only had it about six months. Some other newcomers are even worse off.'

Mr Charlesworth called in inspectors from the County Fire Officers' department a few weeks ago. They were horrified at what they saw but although the wiring

by Bill Message

breaks almost every regulation laid down by the Home Office they claimed that they were powerless to act.

Nothing has been done so far because neither the Coal Board, which sells the electricity, the landlord, or the electricity board is prepared to foot the bill.

SCANDAL

Not only is the Coal Board willing to continue this practice of supplying such a miserable current through decrepit and dangerous wiring, it is also making the tenants pay through the nose for it. There have been three increases in the cost of electricity over the past nine months, and the villagers are now paying for it at the standard Yorkshire rate, minus 15 per cent 'inconvenience money'.

The scandal of this potential death-trap that the NCB calls an electricity supply is not the only grievance the tenants have. There is no gas either.

The anarchy of the whole system that condemns workers and their families to live in such conditions was pointed to by Neville Place when he told me: 'Last year they laid brand new pipelines across the top of the street for North Sea gas. The gas now flows directly under the top of the street, but they won't let us have any.'

Most of the tenants cook in ovens built into the fireplace or use Calor gas. The landlord tells those who complain that they have perfectly good cooking facilities—coal fires.

One elderly man has lived in the village for 30 years. His family is now married and he lives on his own.

He was badly injured in an accident at the colliery some years ago when he was trapped between two trucks. His poor health meant that he had to leave the house that he was living in

because the fire used to belch out clouds of smoke and nothing could be done to repair it effectively. He moved last year into a vacant house

His rent moved as well—from £1.50 to £2.50 a week. The landlord brushed this aside saying that, 'When a house becomes vacant we can increase the rent.'

SUMMED UP

Ledston Luck is a slum in the middle of nowhere. The landlord carries out improvements with as much regularity as Ted Heath helps the pensioners.

David Killingbeck summed it all up when he told me: 'It's about time something was done about this place, so we are forming this action committee. And we are going to get something done.'

'We shall be holding meetings to involve all the tenants and plan the campaign. We are out to get something done about this electricity supply, get the village cleaned up and put back on the map.'



The village from the colliery head

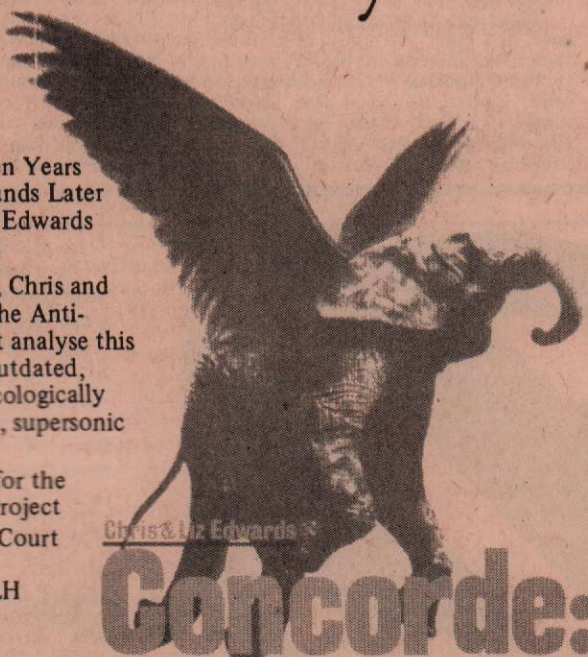
The children's playground

Supersonic folly

CONCORDE: Ten Years and a Billion Pounds Later by Chris and Liz Edwards 30p + 4p postage

In this pamphlet, Chris and Liz Edwards of the Anti-Concorde Project analyse this uneconomical, outdated, unmarketable, ecologically hazardous, noisy, supersonic folly in detail.

PLUTO PRESS for the Anti-Concorde Project unit 10 Spencer Court 7 Chalcot Road London NW1 8LH



Chris & Liz Edwards
Concorde:
Ten years
& a billion pounds later

Taking the council for a ride

THE COUNCIL for the London overspill town of Haverhill, West Suffolk, have their own 'fair rents' scheme. And it has been running for years. It is extremely fair—if you are an industrialist.

For between 1958 and 1966 the council granted 99-year leases at fixed low rents for factory sites to 13 firms moving into the town. And not a word of it got out in public until last month.

What has since emerged shows how industry can take a town council to the cleaners so often that the bosses can treat the council with contempt—and still get away with it.

The prime example in Haverhill is the anti-union firm of Project Office Furniture. Managing director Ivor Bloohn was given a 99-year lease for a 4½-acre site at a fixed rent of £1000 a year. This meant that Bloohn, one of the town's most successful businessmen, was paying a protected £212 per acre with the comfort of knowing that his rent could not be increased until the year 2058.

On the other side of the town, tenants on the crowded Clements housing estate, struggling to meet their increased rents imposed by a compliant Labour council, are paying several times the rent that

Bloohn has to pay. And they face the steady climb in rents until they reach the Tories' so-called 'fair' level.

Houses on Clements have been built to high-density specifications and there are as many as 16 to an acre in parts of the estate. Rents at present are an average of £3. This means the tenants are paying as much as £2496 a year per acre—more than 11 times the amount Bloohn was paying.

But as things get worse for the tenants they have got better for Bloohn.

Barrel

He has bought the freehold to his factory site, plus an adjoining 1½-acre plot for expansion, for a giveaway £23,000. At first he offered the council only £14,000, but even they weren't going to have that and the price was finally fixed at £23,000—£3680 per acre.

Bloohn was so confident at getting the land at a knockdown price that he started his expansion work several weeks before the council agreed to the sale. He knew he had the council over a barrel, because if they didn't sell to him he could wave the 99-year lease at them and just sit tight until the next century, knowing that his grandchildren would be paying the same rent

that he is.

Right next to Bloohn's factory is another plot of land which is being offered for sale to industrialists. The price the council have put on it varies from £10,000 to £12,000 an acre, the going rate.

Bloohn will be able to look across at the 'suckers' who pay these prices and chuckle over the fact that they have had to pay about three times as much as he has paid. But the newcomers will not have the advantage of 99-year leases.

The council no longer goes in for that kind of charity.

The giveaway leases were negotiated by the former clerk to the council, William Blake, who was awarded the MBE five years ago for his services to town expansion.

Shortly before he retired a year ago he drew up a report, advising the council to appoint an industrial liaison officer, whose job would be to attract industry to Haverhill. The council agreed—and who did they appoint? You've guessed it: None other than William Blake.

Blake took a three-month holiday in South Africa on his retirement and then returned to take up his new position on a salary of £2000 plus a car allowance.

R. K. NELSON

BY GUM!

-welfare cuts begin to bite

ANY horsetrader knows that you judge a horse by its teeth. By the same method, capitalism should have been sent to the knacker's yard years ago.

There has been a school dental service since the Lloyd George government in 1909 and a National Health Dental Service since 1948. Yet a recent survey has revealed that only three adults in every thousand have a perfect set of teeth. Practically all of these are black immigrants who benefit little from the National Health Service.

The statistics show an appalling state of dental health in this country. Thirteen million people in England and Wales, more than a third of all adults, have no teeth at all. Working people are twice as likely to lose their teeth than the middle class.

TOTAL TEETH LOSS AND SOCIAL CLASS IN 1968	
Social class	Percentage of adults having no teeth in England and Wales
Managers, professions and higher administrative	27.1
Manual workers	46.3

Nearly 70 per cent of all women in England and Wales have no teeth.

Dental services vary tremendously from region to region, and the poorer the service the greater the decay in the local population's teeth. One-fifth of the 'under-35s', who have all grown up under the NHS, have no teeth.

But this is the average figure for England and Wales. In the north of England, 25 per cent of the under-35s have no teeth, whereas in London and the South East only 15 per cent are toothless.

Staggering

When the effects of being a worker and living in the North are combined and are then compared with a middle-class manager living in the South, the difference is staggering. Only 10 per cent of the bosses living in the South-East have no teeth, but 75 per cent of the working-class mums in the North have lost all their teeth.

A decade of chewing sweets to relieve the boredom of school, skimpy and unbalanced meals for the housewife, rushed meals and Mars-bar snacks for shiftworkers, and a lifetime of neglect from the petty authoritarians in the dental profession. No wonder almost half the men and women in this country refuse to attend dental check-ups regularly when they have to put up with school dentists like this one:

... the treatment of children whose parents had failed to take regular advantage of past opportunities for treatment should, as a rule, be limited to extractions—allowance being made for those parents who showed a genuine change of attitude towards dental treatment.

In other words, teach the undeserving poor a lesson by pulling out their children's teeth.

Despite all the evidence of recent



BY LIONEL SIMS

statistics, and although there was a 30 per cent drop in the demand for dental treatment when charges were first introduced in 1952, the Tory government is giving us all a nasty kick in the false teeth with its scheme for 'greater personal responsibility' in dental health. Under the new system, which began on April Fool's Day last year, the patient pays half the cost of treatment up to a maximum of £10 and the age of exemption is reduced from 21 to 18.

Cheaper

Since the more regular are the check-ups the less extensive is the treatment needed at each visit, the Tories argue that their scheme will raise the level of dental health by making it cheaper to attend every six months rather than wait three years until you get a tooth-ache. This is just the reverse side of their argument against Bevan in 1948 that under the National Health Service working people would go

wild and obtain free pills, wigs, bandages and grab whatever else they could get free.

The truth is that under the dental service as it is now run the only financial rationale is corruption! General dental practitioners are not paid by salary but by contract for each service they provide the patient. The government draws up the scale of fees for these different services.

No differences at all were made to this scale by the Wilson government, yet it has no therapeutic value whatsoever. It is far more profitable for a dentist to repair bad teeth than to spend time attempting to keep a set of good teeth healthy.

How many people know that adult teeth first appear in the mouth when you are six years of age? That whether the movement of the toothbrush is across or up-and-down the teeth is irrelevant to dental hygiene? That a balanced low sugar diet is essential?

Well you are not likely to find

out from a dentist. He gets paid 60p for educating a patient and he has to pay an administrative assistant to fill in a complex form, which comes to 10p. In the same time he could have earned £3-£4 doing fillings, and the form he has to fill in is the same.

The result is predictable. There were 8,282,000 fillings done in 1963, rising to 10,481,000 by 1970. For every tooth pulled out in 1963, two were filled. By 1970 for every tooth pulled out, four were filled. There is enough metal in British working-class teeth to keep the UCS yards supplied with raw materials for years!

Brutal

The Wilson government did nothing to change the brutal facts of short supply and large demand in the dental service.

There were 10,496 dentists in Britain in 1963. By 1970 this had increased to 10,843. But an increase of 50 dentists a year is not even enough to keep pace with the growth of population. In 1963 there was one dentist for every 10,496 people falling to one for every 10,843 by 1970.

The worst year of dental health was 1958, when only five per cent of 12-year-olds had no decayed, missing or filled permanent teeth. By 1968, two decades after the start of the Health Service and four years of Wilson and the 'white heat of the technological revolution', 5.1 per cent of 12-year-olds had no decayed, missing or filled teeth.

Reduce

The state of dental health has nothing to do with Heath's 'financial incentives'. If he wanted to improve dental health and save money why not put fluoride in the water supply? It has been known since 1953 that this reduces tooth decay by 60 per cent.

The real fact behind this so-called reform in the dental service is the same that lies behind the cuts in welfare and school milk, the increased costs of prescriptions and private and council rents. Through these the Tory government 'saved' £330 million.

No prizes at all for guessing how much the Tories paid out in tax cuts and concessions to their piranha-teethed big business backers.

Yakir may be star of latest show trial

IN the past couple of weeks the Western press has been reporting rumours from Moscow that a new show trial is in preparation. The most prominent defendant is likely to be the historian Pyotr Yakir, son of one of the most famous victims of the purges of the 1930s.

Pyotr Yakir has been held by the Russian security police since June. His 'crime', it seems, is that he has been associated with the Initiative Group For the Defence of Human Groups, which has organised a number of petitions in protest against political arrests.

Pyotr Yakir has had plenty of first-hand experience of repression at the hands of the security police. When his father, a major-general in the Russian army, a hero of the civil war which followed the revolution, and a member of the central committee of the Communist Party of the USSR, was executed in 1937, Pyotr was himself, at the age of 14, sentenced to 17 years in prison.

He was not rehabilitated until 1956. Yet at the 22nd congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1962 the Russian leader, Shelepin, could give details of how Yakir's father had been arrested on charges trumped-up by Stalin, Voroshilov, Molotov and Kaganovich.

Repression

Pyotr Yakir has recently been one of the better-known of a circle of intellectuals who have been involved in various protests against what they regard as a reversion of Russia towards the repressive atmosphere of Stalin's years. They have protested at political trials, at events such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia and at increasing censorship.

They have also organised the unofficial distribution in typewritten form of novels, poems, discussions on society and accounts of police repression. The best-known publication of this sort is the Chronicle of Current Events.

Most of those involved in this movement come from relatively privileged sections of Russian society—writers, scientists, engineers, the children of prominent officials.

Their attitudes, by and large, have not challenged the fundamentals of the Russian system. Most of them seem to accept that system, but with amendments to allow freedom of literary expression and an end to political trials and the arbitrary powers of the police. When tried, they have quoted the Soviet constitution against the methods of judges and prosecutors.

But this has not stopped there being growing repression against them. In 1967 the authorities drew first blood with the public trial of the writers Daniel and Sinyavsky. In the years since, there have been a growing number of trials and of cases of imprisonment without trial—on grounds of alleged 'insanity'—in mental hospitals.

Exiled

But now the repression is rising to a new pitch.

In January Vladimir Bulkovsky, imprisoned in 1967 and rearrested after only 15 months of freedom, was sentenced at a closed trial that lasted only one day to seven years in prison and labour camps, to be followed by five years enforced exile in some remote area. He courageously declared to the court: 'My only regret is that in the one year, three months and three days [of freedom] I did so little.'

Since then dozens of people have been imprisoned in different parts of the country for 'unofficial literary activities'. But they are only the tip of the iceberg. Reports from the Ukraine indicate hundreds of arrests. So do reports from Lithuania, where large crowds demonstrated on the streets in May.

In the last few months it has become clear that the Russian leadership is quite incapable of keeping many of its promises to improve the living standards of workers. The failure of the grain harvest has led to long queues for food, despite massive imports from the West.

The Russian leaders fear that in this situation the dissent of a small group of intellectuals can spread to massive numbers of workers and take on a new, and more menacing meaning in the process. Savage prison sentences and talk of new trials are meant to prevent this happening.

However, such measures do not indicate the strength of those who rule Russia, but their weakness. They fear the anger of tens of millions of workers they have been exploiting for more than 40 years—and that fear could be shown to be fully justified in the not too distant future.

CHRIS HARMAN

International Socialism

'Do we want to bring ourselves down, as I say the miners did, to the gutter to hold the whole country to ransom?', inquired the Seaman's Union general secretary, Hogarth, at the union's 1972 conference. Roger Rosewell describes the background in 'The Seamen's Struggle' in *International Socialism* 54, the first issue of the new monthly version of the journal, out next month.

The emphasis is on shorter articles than in the past with a wider range of topics. The January number also includes Chris Harman on the crisis in the USSR, Tyril Harris on Wilhelm Reich, the prophet of sexual liberation, Duncan Hallas on the attitude of revolutionaries to 'reformist demands', Jim Kincaid on Who Owns Britain? and Nigel Harris on marxism and anarchism. Reg Groves, one of the leading pioneers of the left opposition in Britain, begins his 'Recollections of a revolutionary between the wars' and there is a new 'Notes of the Month' feature plus reviews of books of interest to socialists.

The price is cut to 15p, a move that is based on a drive for wider sales. The new-style journal aims to provide background information on the movement at greater depth than is possible in *Socialist Worker* together with simply written articles on marxist theory, controversy about the way forward, ammunition for our members and sympathisers and monthly analysis of the situation in Britain and internationally.

I urge all readers of *Socialist Worker* to take and study this new venture. It will be a real weapon in the struggle. Tony Cliff.



'The monthly journal
will be a real
weapon in the struggle'
says Tony Cliff

Republicans have no real answer to the crackdown

LYNCH STAYS AS IRA DITHER

THE TWO bomb explosions that shook Dublin's city centre two weeks ago helped to put Jack Lynch's rocking boat back on an even keel.

The head of the Provisional IRA had lain within hours of death. The government seemed to face imminent defeat in the Dail. Thousands were marching, calling for 'Lynch Out' and 'O'Malley Out'.

It might look as if the Fianna Fail government had stood on the edge of disaster. But was this really the case?

The Dail debates were a charade. There was no argument about the need to crush the IRA. Indeed, the opposition parties had, if anything, been more insistent on this than Fianna Fail.

Fine Gael and Labour—the parliamentary 'opposition'—found it hard to put much effort into their objections to the government's proposed new legislation.

Even before news reached the Dail of the bombings of Liberty Hall and the Busmen's Club, Fine Gael was changing course towards accepting it. Labour stuck to its position in the certain knowledge that they would not be called on to do anything about it.

TACTICS

If the government had been defeated on the amendment to the Offences Against the State Act, it is probable that a general election would have brought Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail party an increased majority in the Dail. In parliamentary terms, the majority of people in the 26 Counties see no alternative.

The different sections of the Southern Irish ruling class were last week not arguing about political principles, but merely about the best tactics for achieving political stability and thus being better able to co-operate with British imperialism in the exploitation of the Irish working class.

The real crisis is in the response of the working class and anti-imperialist movements to this situation.

The introduction of direct rule in the North took much of the steam out of the mass anti-Unionist and anti-imperialist campaign. The popular political organisations were unable to adapt adequately to the new situation.

It is as a direct outcome of this failure that the Dublin government has judged the time right to crack down on the republicans. Their base among the people has been weakened.

But nobody should under-



In the North, workers march against army repression. Such moves have forced the Officials to back out of 'civil liberties' campaign—but that is the new line in the South

estimate the power of the republican tradition. It was this tradition, and the instincts it fosters, that brought thousands on to the streets to protest against the imprisonment and the harassment of the republicans. If and when the government starts 'lifting' the militants, there will no doubt be local demonstrations in support of them.

Can this wave of protest be maintained? Are the perspectives which the republicans offer to Southern workers likely to keep them active in the long term?

The workers of the 26 Counties have long been prone to wobble between tough economic militancy and violent nationalist spontaneity. The combination of the two around a revolutionary programme should contain enormous potential.

But the general pattern has been to separate them completely. The trade unions, on the one hand, and the republican movement, on the other, have tended to see the political and economic problems of the Irish people as two quite distinct things.



Circumstances have forced the republicans to recognise one crucial fact: that their first line of attack, and their last line of defence, are the organised workers. The call has come from Provisional platforms for strike action against Fianna Fail repression. The suggestion for a General Strike has been put forward more gingerly.

The statements by the Officials on the current crisis have also made specific reference to the need for the trade unions to act against the wave of repression. But the appeals to workers and unions are not integrated into a working-class political perspective.

The vice-president of Provisional Sinn Fein, David O'Connell, put forward the demand for a 'national government for 32 Counties'. The Provisionals have put a lot of effort into arguing their case for regional parliaments—something which they seem to think can be effected as of now. However, there have been others who have spoken on Provisional platforms, and for Sinn Fein, who have said that the capitalist system must be smashed and replaced by socialism.

MISTAKE

The sum effect of all this is that nobody is very clear just what the Provisionals are advocating—including prominent Provisionals. That alone would seem to ensure that they will find it more and more difficult to maintain the interest and activity of those who have been supporting them.

It would be welcome to report that, against this, the Officials had learned the lessons of past struggles and had seen the need for mobilising the working class, as a class, against the capitalist state. But no—the most likely proposal to come from the Officials in the next days is for an all-class 'popular front' around the single issue of civil liberties.

Many of the Republican Clubs in the North have taken resources out of the civil rights movement because they have seen the involvement as a strategic mistake, but the Officials seem prepared to repeat the experience in the South.

Up to now, they have been as uncertain as the Provisionals how to react. There is still dispute among them whether or not they should call for the release of Sean MacStiofain.

Since his arrest, and in spite of the obvious signs of sharpening repression, they have not held a public meeting or march in Dublin or any other major Southern town.

The executive of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions has contented itself with a statement to the effect that the amendment to the Offences Against the State Act contained a threat.

PACKAGE

But leaders of two major unions, Michael Mullen, of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, and Matt Merrigan, of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (Irish section of the British TGWU), have been more forceful. Merrigan has urged the Labour Party and the Congress to call a general strike.

It is unlikely, however, that either of these union leaders will do much more to activate their members on these political issues. The job of explaining to workers that the repression now being directed at republicans is part of a 'package deal' between London and Dublin which also involves attacks on jobs and wages falls on the shoulders of the revolutionary socialists.

There are many workers who do not see the repression as 'their' problem because they see that the politics of the Provos, against whom it is now aimed, are not working-class politics.

It is clear, however, that the fight against Fianna Fail repression, and the defence of all who are victims of it, must be made a workers' fight. This is vitally necessary if it is to have any chance of success.

The struggle against imperialism in all-Ireland, and against the political and economic attacks on the working class and anti-imperialist movement which it causes, must be taken to the organised workers. They have it in their power—and it is in their most vital interest—to change the system.

UNIO

Hosiery: when blacks and wo get raw deal from their lea

THE PROUDEST boast of the National Union of Knitwear Workers is that they have no major strike. The strike of Indian workers at Hosiery mill, Loughborough, is the biggest in history and probably the fiercest confrontation since the East Midlands mill workers and the East Midlands mill workers Loughborough Luddites smashed the Heathcotes lace factory 156 years ago.

The exploitation of child labour, a prominent feature of the hosiery industry in the 19th century, is now illegal, but the tradition has been passed on to women and immigrant workers. The mill owners, Mansfield Hosiery proprietors, who have some way in accumulated, undistributed profits and fortunes from this exploitation, to a large extent, are co-operation of the National Union of Hosiery Workers.

For most of the last century the hosiery mill and even by 1910 the Federation of Hosiery Union members. The figures built up in 1945 to 201448 the help of numerous amalgamations with their own to 64,372.

The union's basic unit is the district committee among district membership. The 12 district committees have 12 members, half of whom have to stand for election every year.

The ballots are distributed through the factory committees, organised at the workplace, according to the union's rule book, 'for the purpose of creating a liaison between management and the union they represent.'

The factory committees have no formal contact with the district committees or with the national conference, the union's final authority. The factory committee has no right to send resolutions or elect delegates to the conference.

No contact

The annual conference consists only of the members of the district committees, and no factory committee or individual in the union may draft resolutions for that conference.

Outside of the district committees, in short, the rank and file have no means of contact with the decision-making bodies of the union. There are no branches, in the ordinary sense of the term, and no shop stewards' organisations.

The national executive, which takes decisions in between annual conference, consists of 18 voting members, 10 elected by the national conference, and eight appointed full-time officials. There are also three non-voting full-time officials. In between executive meetings, decisions are taken by an 'inner cabinet' which consists of four full-time officials and a lay member.

Skipped

The district committees can alter the election rules to give precedence in the ballot to candidates outside big factories or from specific areas. Last year, for instance, two Indian workers, J K Naik and Dhuru Patel, both of whom are on the Loughborough strike committee, came fourth and fifth respectively in the ballot for the six new members of the Loughborough district committee.

The first three on the poll (white) were declared elected. The fourth and fifth candidates (black) were skipped, and three more from further down the poll (white) declared elected.

SE

Harold Gibson, general secretary to Socialist Workers' Party.

'This could be the district committee about representative factories. The many candidates in the factory and in the outlying villages.

47,147 of the members are women's 18 ex-district secretaries woman. In the union's annual not debated equal pay for

Until very recently negotiated rates and women which lower than the rates'. 'No Gibson, 'we' all that. We equal work.'

The fact that the vast highly-paid jobs for men, a predominately majority in the union. Even in conference, of the delegates.

A recent Runnymede 20 per cent



'Political and social freedom are not two separate and unrelated ideas, but are two sides of the one great principle, each being incomplete without the other.'



JAMES CONNOLLY

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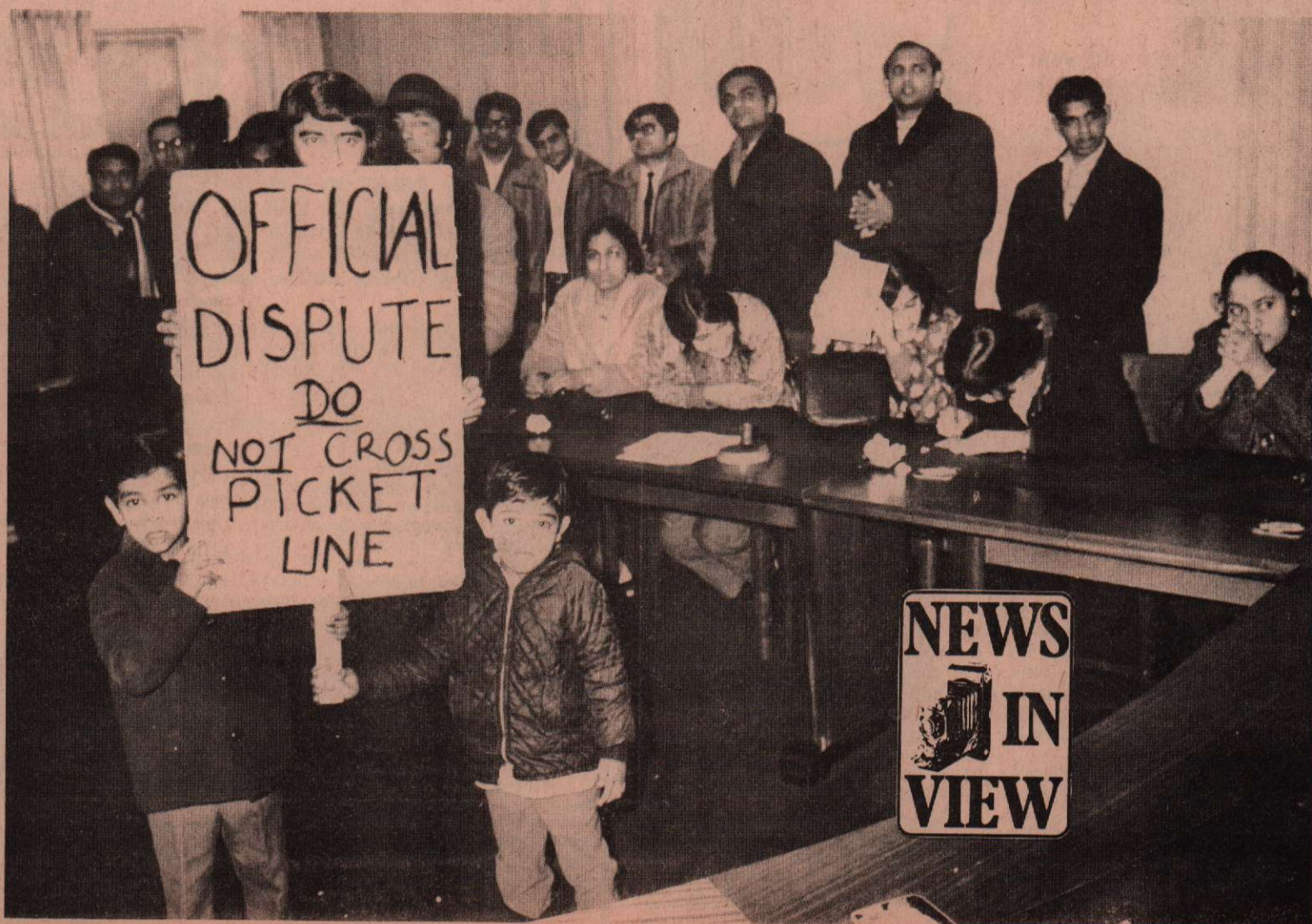
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Mansfield Hosiery strikers and their families occupied the union's office in Loughborough last week to protest at the officials' indifference and lack of action. Next day the dispute was made official.

unemployment will continue to harass the British worker... Unemployment will only be seriously tackled when the government shows its determination to give the British producer complete call on the British market, to pursue a national economic policy instead of international policies, to put Britain and the British worker first.

All this chauvinism has not prevented the union leaders from sponsoring expensive trips abroad. In 1969, a substantial NUHKW delegation left for Japan and South Korea.

Impressed

Earlier this year, six union representatives (three of them officials) visited Israel. An extract from the delegation's report indicates the high area of political sensitivity in the upper reaches of the union:

'The delegation... was impressed at all times by the tremendous feeling of belonging to their own country. It is a very salutary lesson when we visited factories and saw Arabs and Jews working alongside each other without any difficulty whatsoever. In fact, as our guide said, there should be no problems. People are people the world over.'

Or, to put it another way an Indian worker in a Loughborough mill gets as fair a deal as an Arab in Tel Aviv.

SPECIAL REPORT BY PAUL FOOT AND VICTOR KNIGHT

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Hosiery workers were immigrant workers, mainly Asians. The figure is contested by Harold Gibson. 'I'd say it was nearer 7½ per cent,' he says.

Whatever the figure, Mr Gibson agrees that not a single member of any of the union's district committees is an immigrant worker. Nor has his union conference at any time in the last 10 years discussed the problems of integrating immigrant labour into the trade union movement. 'We haven't discussed it,' he told us, 'because we haven't had any problems.'

Buffer

The union's district committees, permanently out of touch with the ideas and aspirations of the shop floor, have served effectively as a buffer between the union leadership and any militancy in the rank and file.

As a result, the union membership has been completely exposed to the ravages of the employers.

In 1959, for instance, the mill bosses, using as an excuse the increased competition in the trade following Britain's membership of the European Free Trade Area, announced a 25 per cent cut in knitters' wages. After some show of 'negotiation in protest', the union leadership recommended the cut to their

This is the only point on which British and Asian workers agreed. Both groups are fed up with the NUHKW because of its inability to secure a proper system through which prices are set for new piecework jobs.

—apt comment from the Runnymede Trust report

members in a postal ballot.

The ballot overwhelmingly rejected the recommendation and the employers' demands. The union promptly called a 'delegate conference', composed in the main of its precious district committees, which duly voted against strike action. The union negotiators crawled back to the employers, whined pitifully for a few marginal concessions, and settled for next to nothing.

A large part of the general president's address to the following year's national conference complained about 'outside interference' from the Socialist Labour League, without which, it was suggested, the knitters would have accepted a wage cut with better grace.

Since the 1959 upheaval, the union has settled down to its accustomed 'responsible' relationship with the employers. The members have continued to suffer. Some 7000 redundancies have been declared in the industry in the last few years and in 1966 an arbitration court removed the workers' cost of living bonus.

Some mild protest at this decision was quickly dowsed by

the president's reminder that there was nothing whatever the union could do about the decision of an industrial court. Since the loss of the cost of living bonus, the hosiery workers have been subjected to the full ravages of inflation.

Politics has never been much discussed at NUHKW gatherings. The union is not affiliated to the Labour Party and its officials have always sternly resisted any move in that direction.

In 1960 the annual conference rejected a call to reintroduce corporal punishment into the judicial code, despite a powerful plea on behalf of the birch by Mr Peter Prendergast, now the general president. The union is, and always has been, a fervent supporter of British entry into the Common Market.

Hallmark

On the other hand, the union is always the first to raise the flag for British hosiery goods against their competitors from India or Korea. Intense chauvinism about foreign goods entering the country and competing with British goods has been a hallmark of NUHKW official speeches during the last 25 years.

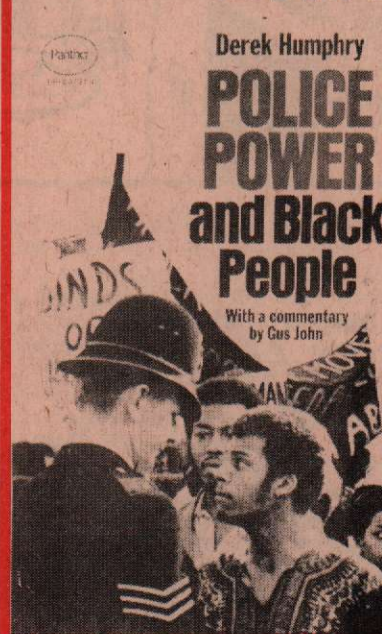
'It has always,' said Harold Gibson at this year's annual conference, 'been an axiom that we are proud to label our goods "Scottish" or "British" or "Made in England", and I cannot see why this principle should not apply to any goods that people in this country purchase.'

In the September issue of *The Hosiery and Knitwear Worker* (it is only the fifth issue ever: for at least two years in the 1960s, the union leadership stalled demands for some kind of union journal or newsletter) there is an article by a Leicester

NUHKW representative, W K Sanders, entitled: **PUT BRITAIN FIRST.** The article reads like a *National Front* tract:

'As it becomes obvious that the workers in the "under-developed" countries are still in their customary morass of poverty-squalor and that through the flooding of goods from these countries along with redundancy problems the trend of rising

RACIALISM IN BRITAIN



'To many blacks in our cities, police harassment has become a way of life. The police are viewed as the army of the enemy, which is the immigration-controlling, arms-to-South-Africa-selling, friend-of-Ian-Smith British government.'

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'We are now, as it were, in a besieged fortress, waiting for the world socialist revolution to come to our relief,' wrote Lenin

OUT OF YOUR MIND

Duncan Hallas on socialist ideas and capitalist myths

'WHAT about Russia then? Is that the sort of society you want?' Socialists are often asked this question. The short answer is no, certainly not.

But of course it cannot be left at that. Many socialists themselves have illusions about the real state of affairs in Russia and the rest of the so-called 'socialist camp'.

The Russian revolution was a genuine working-class revolution. Of that there can be no doubt at all. The Bolsheviks took power with the active support of the great majority of the working class.

Even the Mensheviks, the right-wing social-democrats, admitted in a resolution passed just after the revolution: 'The Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 has been historically necessary and expressed the endeavour of the toiling masses to steer the course of the revolution wholly in their interests...'

Yet it was a workers' revolution in a country in which the working class was a small minority—five million out of a population of 160 million. And without the support of the peasants, the great majority of the people, it could not have succeeded in the first place, let alone survived the four years of civil war and armed intervention by the armies of 14 capitalist states, including Britain.

But the peasants did not support the Reds because they wanted socialism. What they wanted was the landlords' land, the cancellation of crippling debts, the right to develop as small-scale capitalist farmers, and the end of Russian participation in the first imperialist world war. 'Peace, land and bread' was the Bolshevik slogan, alongside 'All power to the soviets'.

So there was a contradiction built into the Russian revolution right from the start. Of this the Bolshevik leaders were well aware. They knew very well that Russia on its own with a small working class, poorly developed industry and a very backward economy, could not make what was later called 'the great leap forward' into socialism.

Well, what about Russia then?

The revolution created a workers' state but, as Lenin said in 1921: 'What we actually have in a workers' state with this peculiarity, firstly, that it is not the working class but the peasant population that predominates in the country, and secondly, that it is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions.'

The 'bureaucratic distortions' were themselves a direct consequence of the weakness of the working class. Small in 1917, it was much smaller by 1921.

Russian industry, weak to start with, was ruined by war, civil war and foreign intervention which completely disrupted the supply of raw materials. By 1921 the total output of manufactured goods was down to one-eighth of the 1913 figure.

The prominent communist leader Bukharin, later to be shot by Stalin like so many others, spoke of 'the actual disintegration of the working class.' The trade union leader Radzutzak, noted: 'The workers, thanks to the contraction of production in the factories, are being

absorbed in the peasant mass.' By 1921 the working class proper was down to one million!

In spite of terrible privations—a million people died in the Ukraine in the famine of 1921 thanks, in part, to the blockade of Soviet Russia maintained by the British Navy—the peasants supported the Soviet government throughout the civil war.

They did so because the victory of the white counter-revolution would have meant the return of the landlords. But once the war was over their support vanished.

Doomed?

The Soviet regime found itself, by 1921, ruling through the party and state machines without the support, and even against, 'the immense majority' that Marx had regarded as the basis of a workers' state. The communist leaders hung on grimly, repressing a peasant rising in Tombov and putting down the revolt of the Kronstadt sailors, because they believed in the international revolution.

'The socialist revolution in Europe must come and will come,' wrote Lenin. 'We are now, as it were, in a besieged fortress, waiting for the world socialist revolution to come to our relief.' And, in particular, 'if the German revolution does not come, we are doomed.'

The German revolution was defeated. So were revolutions in a number of other countries in Europe. Was Lenin right in thinking that in this case Soviet Russia was doomed?

In one sense no, the regime survived. In another sense yes, he was right. For what survived was not a workers' state but a dictatorship over the working class and the peasantry.

BOOKS

REVIEW

Pop go the pundits

AFTER THE BALL, by Ian Whitcomb, Allen Lane, £3; VOX POP, by Michael Wale, Harrap, £2.50; SONG AND DANCE MAN, by Mike Gray, McGibbon and Kee, £2.50.

TODAY'S pop music seems to reflect only too accurately the values of Mr Heath's England. Chart music is either frankly exploitative or shoddily experimental.

And on the principle that almost anything would be better than the 1970s, the pioneering pop singles of the late 1950s and 1960s are being remorselessly re-released to swamp any originality which might be struggling to the surface. The merchandising of the recent past has reached such a point that half the record-buying public appear to be awash with nostalgia over experiences they never even had in the first place.

But while the music dies on its sequinned feet, the analysis mounts up. The trickle of music is treated to a torrent of analysis by those postgraduates who picked up an Olivetti instead of a Fender and who treat pop with an intellectual reverence that few of its working-class listeners bother with.

In the death agony of the music, the tasks of the rock writer have become more ambitious. There was a time when anyone who could spell 'Be Bop a Lula' was qualified as a pundit. But these three new books on pop represent in differing ways quite ambitious efforts at scholarship.

In Ian Whitcomb's case that effort is largely wasted. To compile his history of popular music he has scoured music trade papers, interviewed Tin Pan Alley veterans and exhumed long-yellowed sheet music.

But his determined frivolity and studied inability to make even the vaguest analysis of the social conditions which produced the music make the book simply a mildly-amusing catalogue of funny facts. This weakness is worsened by his obsession with ragtime, the catchy syncopated piano style and emotionless falsetto singing which gave him a minor hit in 1965.

The original ragtime emerged among black musicians as a fantasy alternative to the blues. It was a consciously Europeanised music expressing a dream of Westernness and a corresponding abandonment of Africa.

White composers stole this hybrid form and further diluted and stylised it, compounding its ironies. The cake walk, the ragtime-based dance for the young white middle-class of the 1920s,

He anatomises a world saturated with cynicism, obsessed with power, money and fame and lubricated with percentages, payola and product. The stars say how famous they are, the session musicians say how weary they are, the accountants chortle and rub their podgy palms, the record producers complain about their rivals. Tony Blackburn announces that 'I pride myself on having the best-run fan club in the world.'

The backbone of the industry is revealed to be the army of accountants, agents, managers, publicists, pluggers and hustlers who might as well be manufacturing ball bearings as music.

'It's quite like the Stock Exchange in a way' remarks a prophetic Wardour Street promoter. Only a lot nastier.

Mike Gray's study of Bob Dylan, Song and Dance Man, is simply the best book yet on Dylan and deserves to sell a million. Bob Dylan seems so far to have completely dumbfounded all attempted biographers and savants, reducing them to reverent fingering of the refuse in the maestro's intellectual wastepaper basket.

Gray is fascinated by Dylan but not mesmerised and his book treats Dylan with the sustained intelligence and chaotic wit he deserves.

Song and Dance Man takes you off the page and back to the music which Ian Whitcomb and Michael Wale had almost succeeded in putting you off for life.

DAVID WIDGERY



Countess Markiewicz: 'Today life IS politics. Finance, economics, education, even the ever-popular subject of divorce is mixed up with politics today.'

Official seal of approval

A BIZARRE product of the British Army's occupation of Northern Ireland has been a boom in books about the Irish people's attempt to free their nation. Several of these books have recently gone into paperback.

J Bowyer Bell's Secret Army (Sphere 60p) is virtually an authorised version of Republican history whose factual accuracy is endorsed by Cathal Goulding, chief of staff of the Official IRA. Tim Pat Coogan's The IRA (Fontana 60p) is equally comprehensive and more vividly written.

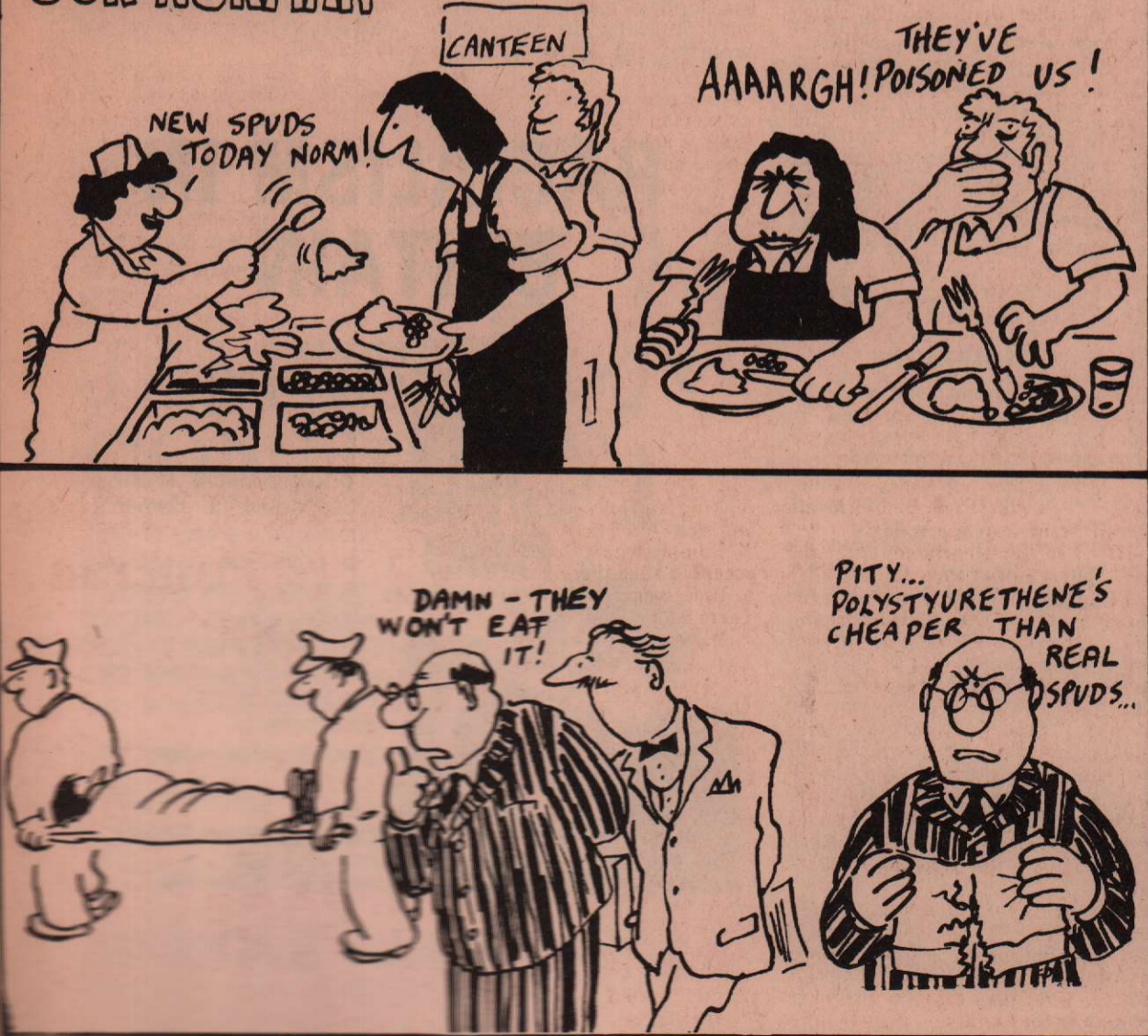
Reading either will shift many of the myths that the most thoughtful British socialist unconsciously holds about the Irish movement. But neither is very helpful in understanding and evaluating the permanent jostle between socialist and nationalist ideas within the Republican tradition.

Anna Marreco's biography of Constance Markiewicz, The Rebel Countess (Corgi 50p), is another illuminating read. Markiewicz broke away from her Anglo-Irish land-owning background to join the revolutionary artists of the Abbey Theatre, to help the Dublin poor and finally to be sentenced to death for her part in the Easter Rising. Later this was commuted to a jail sentence.

Markiewicz's revolutionary credentials have been often challenged. Sean O'Casey loathed her. But Anna Marreco's passionately-written reconstruction of the rebel Countess' turbulent life makes compelling reading and explains a lot about feminism and revolutionary nationalism at the time of the Easter Rising.

As the Countess wrote from Holloway Jail: 'Today life is politics. Finance, economics, education, even the ever popular subject of divorce is mixed up with politics today.'

OUR NORMAN



actually derives from a black dance done in parody of the slave-owners ungainly walk.

But such musical and political subtleties whizz past the breathy Whitcomb, who proceeds to give a potted history of jazz of quite scandalous inaccuracy, virtually attributing its invention to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and its popularisation to Paul Whitman. In fact both those bands were consciously racist thefts of the black music of New Orleans and Chicago toned down and bowdlerised to suit Broadway and the likes of Ian Whitcomb and Jimmy Young.

Whitcomb's treatment of rock yet again plays down black urban bluesmen and the independent labels which promoted them to the urban ghettos in favour of portly parodists like Bill Haley. After the Ball proves once again that you need more than a chirpy prose style and a vague resemblance to Mick Jagger to produce a good book on music.

Michael Wale's collection of interviews, Vox Pop, is a less pretentious exercise. He has simply tape-recorded conversations with functionaries from various layers of the pop industry in an effort to explain 'how the pop industry works'.

PITY... POLYSTYURETHENE'S CHEAPER THAN REAL SPUDS...

CRITIC WHO WANTS TO OVERTURN 'CULTURE'

LITERARY awards are the league table of the writers. The system presents a prize and a large number of rich people eat a large meal, while the subject of the novel is happily reduced to 12 draws, three aways and 27 home wins.

John Berger, revolutionary socialist critic and novelist, two weeks ago received the £5000 Booker Award for his novel 'G'. The money came from the Booker organisation, who got it from 200 years of blood and exploitation in the Caribbean.

Berger behaved in very bad taste. He told the truth about Booker, and about what he thought of literary prizes and what he intended to do with the money. Half will be spent on his new literary project, while the other half he gave to the London-based Black Panther movement.

Berger's writing has been the mainstay of marxist cultural criticism in this country, as his BBC 2 series 'Ways of Seeing' recently proved.

What ideas had he set out to question and undermine in his work as novelist and writer about art?

'The first target is the notion that some people are talented, intelligent and imaginative, while the vast majority are not. And the related idea that since people have significantly different degrees of talent, intelligence and imagination, they can be put into a hierarchy.

FREEDOM

'Talent is not an exceptional or an individual thing. I believe that everyone is talented.

'At the beginning of their lives all people are more or less equal, have more or less the same potential. Then the environment, the education system, the job and the factory crushes them and their potential.

'The whole thing combines to create in people an apparently inherent inequality which is then used to justify the inequalities of the economic system.

'As a storyteller one of the things that has greatly preoccupied me is what goes on in people's minds at a level which they cannot articulate because of the way they experience society. This level is their desire for change, their experience of freedom and the possibility of freedom.

'I am also very much opposed to the kind of cultural categories that

society uses—distinctions between documentary and fiction, between the real and the imaginary, between art and action. All these intellectual divisions in our society are internal weight-bearing walls. If you knock them down then the whole cultural edifice will come tumbling down with them.

'I want that edifice to come tumbling down not because I believe in anarchy or because I believe that working-class culture, when it is built and won, will be absolutely discontinuous with the past. The best of the past will be claimed by the masses, by a working-class culture.

'The reason I want the cultural edifice to come tumbling down is that it is a form of cultural oppression and exploitation.

SILENCE

'What I mean by this can most clearly be seen in those countries which have been most brutally exploited by imperialism. The first thing the exploiters did was to build a wall of silence around their victims. The victims then have to borrow the words of the oppressor to talk to themselves and the eyes of the oppressor to see themselves. But this is now being broken down.

'A similar wall of silence has been built into the minds of large sections of the working class in the industrial countries. The cultural edifice, ideas that art and culture are produced by lonely geniuses for a supposedly

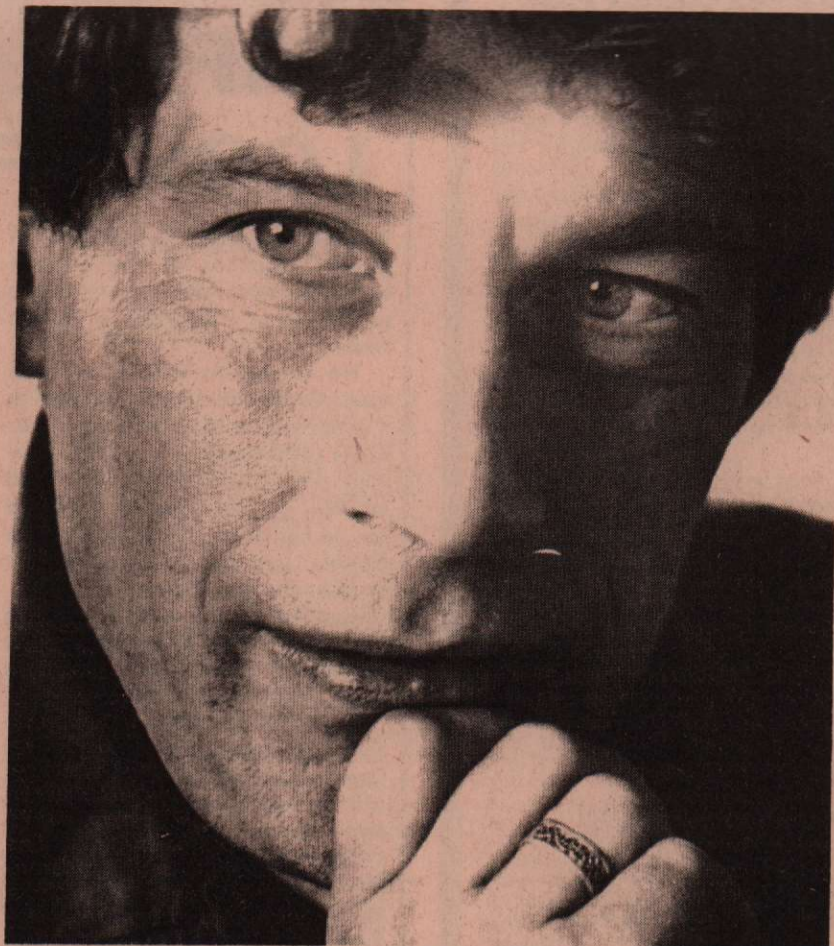


PHOTO BY COURTESY OF PENGUIN BOOKS

Laurie Flynn talks to novelist John Berger

intelligent minority and the rest, is in a sense part of that wall of silence.

'All this is only another way of saying that I concentrate in a specialised field, resisting, opposing and struggling against the class nature of our society. I tend to concentrate on this field because I have more experience of it than the shop floor. But it is only the tactic of the class enemy that separates these two things.'

STRUGGLE

What exactly do you mean by people's inability to express their own feelings and aspirations because of the way they experience society?

'What I mean is most strongly evident in people's aspirations for freedom. This is to say that the whole system of society breeds the idea that only a very limited amount of freedom is ever possible, that freedom is some quantity that you tot up rather than a quality which has to be struggled for and grasped.

'This attitude comes out very clearly in proverbs, statements like "Well, we'll just have to make do", "That's life", "That's the way the cookie crumbles".

'But go a bit deeper and you find that those self-same kids and adults who say these things also have infinitely greater aspirations towards freedom. They may only realise these very briefly in industrial action, strikes and demonstrations, when they fall in love, for a moment in sex or when

they are looking at a sunset or a painting.

'This is my area of concern, the relationship people have to freedom, to what is and to what could be.'

The way our society is organised restricts access to your work. How do you try to overcome this?

'Of course the question of who reads my books, or rather who does not read them, worries me. But the solution is not to simplify the truth, to water it down—though as a writer I am always trying to arrive at a simpler expression of what I have to say.

'My concern about the people my work reaches and does not reach is what has led me to work for television from time to time.

'I believe that a far wider audience can be reached this way, and an audience with a different class composition. After the recent 'Ways of Seeing' programmes on the BBC, I was pleased to find that I got many letters from working-class people.

PARTY

'My next work is about immigrant workers in Europe and in it I hope to achieve a simplicity and accessibility I have not yet achieved.'

You are a committed revolutionary socialist. Why then are you not a member of a revolutionary organisation?

'When I was formed politically during and immediately after the last war, in Britain, as we saw it then, the

Intellectual divisions in our society are internal weight bearing walls. If you knock them down then the whole cultural edifice will come tumbling down with them

only revolutionary party which had real access to working-class action was the Communist Party. So I worked with the Communist Party in many different ways, not only writing but speaking and organising. But I was never a member.

'I suppose it could be said I'm speaking now with the benefit of hindsight, but I was not a member because I had reservations. These were not fully articulated but they were strong and deep.

'This meant that I acquired the habit of working with but not within a political group or party. This is not of course a justification for continuing this attitude.

'In the past ten years, which is the time when real alternative revolutionary political organisations have begun to appear, I have been living abroad in places which preclude me being an effective, as opposed to a nominal, member of any such organisation.'

'As for the future . . . well, I'm thinking about it.'

Films, festivals and funerals

THE 16th London International Film Festival was opened by Lord Eccles with the aid of a pair of scissors. He'd made a little film of his own, proclaiming that 16 was always a difficult age.

To prove his point he brandished his visuals—all the film titles to be shown at the festival, and made heavy weather of relating their social significance to the problem of being 16. Thus inspired, the festival lights went down . . .

It didn't take long for eyes to become smokescreened and ears dulled. Gentlemen pissed in telephone boxes, members complained that the bar was invaded by non-members.

Film distributors cornered film-makers, desperate to fill their vaults with more film cans. House-managers tried to inject excitement into the audience by spotlighting directors and stars and suggesting post-film

MARC KARLIN, a member of the London-based Berwick Street Film Collective, writes on the recent London International Film Festival

question sessions. The audience had bitter memories of past attempts with sycophantic questions and obscure answers and wouldn't play.

Meanwhile the Festival brochure sold each movie as the most 'controversial/original/totally moving' thus giving them the Film Institute seal of approval—anything goes as long as it flickers.

The climax of the festival was the vain struggle of the five represented independent British film-makers to state their positions. Two were planning emigration, one was retiring, one smoked a cigarette, one, encouraged by questions like 'Why

haven't you created an English Greta Garbo?' sank into depression.

If I've concentrated on the atmosphere rather than the films it's because the atmosphere indicated the disenchantment with films in Britain. We know films are important, but most of us would still like to know why, and we haven't answered it in our films.

The film production and distribution network is monopolised by companies operated for money and ruling-class interests—but this shouldn't and doesn't stop us working. Working doesn't just mean making films, but showing them as well.

This in its turn means doing so in alliance with trade unions, schoolkids and revolutionary organisations. Revolutionaries should not use films just for what they say, but for what makes them unique, namely the

relationship between what one sees, and what one thinks one knows.

Film-makers have too long accepted that there is a wide interest in the cinema waiting to be stirred. There isn't.

We've got to awaken the interest there is, and bridge the gap between the people who make and the people who watch films. There is no alternative in an industry that's 80 per cent out of work and paralysed by lack of interest in the situation.

The cinema has shown how horses gallop, and that British social life is difficult to film. We've let 'critics' decide what is of value—pre-empting our reactions and boring our audiences—and film-makers asking 'to whom can we refer?'

It's up to us to create a cinema where the aesthetic of its politics is actively related to the politics of its production and distribution.

Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960

Dave Burn

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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'.
- For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.
- 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 a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.
- Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.
- For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.
- Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.
- Against immigration restriction.
- For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.
- For real social, economic and political equality for women.
- Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
- Against secret diplomacy.
- Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.
- For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.
- We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.
- The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.
- It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
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Dundee
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Glasgow S
Greenock
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THE UNIONS

AFTER COOPER, GMWU LOOKS FOR A NEW IMAGE

THE retirement of Lord Cooper as general secretary of the General and Municipal Workers Union is something of a landmark in British trade unionism.



LORD COOPER: witch-hunter of militants and 'reds'.

He earned his title for services rendered to the employing class as a witch-hunter of militants and reds in the GMWU and as general spokesman for productivity deals and incomes policies wherever he could get an audience. Under Cooper the GMWU became a byword for reactionary trade unionism.

But the union has been changing and the election of David Basnett to replace Cooper guarantees that these changes will continue.

Not that Basnett is militant. He comes from the same stable as Lord Cooper. His father was a GMWU official and he has had a job with the union since he left school.

But Basnett represents the modernising wing of the GMWU bureaucracy, and he was closely involved with the Pilkington strike. The revolt of the Pilkington workers in 1970 administered a shock from

which the GMWU still hasn't recovered.

Since then it has made more strikes official than ever before in its history to contain the rising militancy of the rank and file. Basnett, who was chased off the platform by the Pilkington strikers, is not likely to forget the lessons of Pilkingtons.

The GMWU leadership is not going to fight the employers but from now on it will put on a display of shadow-boxing for the membership.

At grassroots level there seems little chance that there will be any

more democracy in the branches or regional committees but the change-over from general to factory branches will be continued and this does give greater scope for militants to work.

The changeover is part of a general turn towards a kind of trade group structure in the GMWU, similar to that in the TGWU, and it is designed to make it easier to merge with other unions—for up to now the GMWU has missed out on the merger boom in the trade union movement.

Basnett is already being groomed by the press as the new leader of the 'moderates' in the TUC, and even the Morning Star has been hinting that he is another 'progressive' trade union leader to be wooed.

But any real progress in the union demands the building of a rank and file organisation that can restore control of the union to the membership—and Basnett is no less an obstacle to this than Lord Cooper.

IS banned by clerks union in big clampdown

by an APEX Action member THE clerical workers' union APEX is continuing its march into the past. Its latest move is to extend its list of proscribed organisations to include the International Socialists.

And rank and file members of the all-party APEX Action group are to be severely disciplined and so face the possibility of expulsion.

For IS members, proscription means a complete ban on them being elected delegates to bodies such as trades councils and the TUC. Like the long-banned Communist Party, IS members will be eligible to stand for office in the union but will have to declare their IS affiliations.

Although the APEX leadership is secure and contains no militant members, there is growing discontent among members. They have seen draughtsmen and technicians win big increases through strike action while their own wages crawl forward.

Manual workers, especially in engineering where more than 50,000 APEX members work, are gaining better conditions every year and in some cases are ahead of clerical workers. The recent move in engineering to replace national negotiations by plant bargaining saw APEX members taking part in short and sudden burst of strike action, particularly in Liverpool.

The leaders were taken by surprise but they recovered quickly, called off the strikes and suspended one official who protested.

Clerical workers were also active in the sit-in strike at the British Leyland plant at Basingstoke but they got only £5 a week strike pay while draughtsmen got £15.

A further sign of dissatisfaction came at the last annual conference. Executive plans for re-styling the union meant breaking with manual workers and stressing the 'difference' of clerical work. Essentially it is a policy of not fighting too hard for higher wages but taking what is offered after the appropriate fierce speeches.

Scraped through

The model is Clive Jenkins, the watchwords 'efficiency' and a 'modern union'. This explains the proposal to change the name from the Clerical Workers Union to Association of Professional, Executive, Computer and Clerical Staffs. To the platform's amazement, this just scraped through by 280 votes. Union membership is 120,000.

At present opposition to the moderate policy of the leadership is dispersed and fragmented. APEX Action could easily become the uniting factor.

Its programme has quickly gained support: £25 minimum wage, 35-hour week, equal pay now, no incomes policy or productivity deals, 100 per cent union membership, closer links with manual workers and all-out opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

The reason so far given for the crackdown on APEX Action is that it is 'abusive' to the union leaders. This can only be a reference to the group's demand that officials are elected and subject to recall. In general, the group's programme represents a considerable threat to the employers' and government's hopes for a tame trade union movement.

Why have IS members been singled out for attack when a bigger number of Labour Party members support the APEX Action programme? The aim is to focus attention on 'subversives' in a bid to shift attention from the union's own poor record. Its voice at the TUC has been consistently right-wing and moderate, from the anti-union laws fight to the Common Market. Union president Dennis Howell, MP, has been particularly energetic as a pro-Marketeer.

It is ironic that while the union leaders have formally opposed the Industrial Relations Act, they are now breaking the section that says there should be no political bans on members holding office.

The executive clampdown is the act of frightened men who cannot muster arguments to counter the influence of APEX Action. White-collar workers face increasing attacks as international giants take over small firms and brush aside former privileges.

Next year's union conference must be seen as the opportunity to fight for a democratic, fighting union that will refuse to accept gags on rank and file activists.

Libel charge

A NATIONAL Union of Journalists' official has issued a High Court writ for libel against four rank and file members of the union and a printer.

Mr Geoffrey Heighton, North-West Regional Organiser of the NUJ, claims that he was libelled in the paper Journalists Charter, a rank and file paper for NUJ members.

Named in the action are NUJ members Laurie Flynn, Paul Foot and Roger Protz, who all work for Socialist Worker, and Ron Knowles, who writes the press column Spike. Jim Nichol, manager of SW (Litho) Printers, who print Journalists Charter, is also named.

A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST MANIFESTO by Kuron and Modzelewski. The famous open letter to the Polish Worker's Party, written in 1964. A vitriolic analysis of the Eastern European regimes and a call for social revolution. 29p postage included, from PLUTO PRESS Unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road London NW1.

STOP SNEERING AT 'GAYS'

I WAS READING Roland Muldoon's review of The General Will theatre group (2 December) when I was startled by the following: 'My other criticism is that too much is made of Heath being bent.'

Roland Muldoon's view that 'too much' is made of Heath's supposed homosexuality betrays a fundamentally reactionary position. Any attack upon Heath, or anybody else for that matter, because they are gay must be rejected very firmly by the socialist movement. It is not a matter of degree, but one of principle. If The General Will group make Heath the butt of anti-gay humour it is the responsibility of Socialist Worker to attack this.

Male supremacy and the oppression of homosexuals in our society has deep roots—illustrated by slogans like: 'ee ay addio, Teddy is a queer'. Socialist Worker must explain carefully why we are opposed to all discrimination against homosexual people.

Finally, the use of the word 'bent' in this context in Socialist Worker is incredible. Women are not referred to in the paper as 'crumpet' or 'chicks', black people are not called 'niggers' or 'wogs' and I don't expect to see gay people referred to as 'bent' or 'queer'.—DON MILLIGAN, Lancaster.

LETTERS

OAPs angry over licence

AS an old-age pensioner I have just drawn my £10 'Christmas bonus' and I am sending you £1 for your fund for two reasons.

The first is that I regard the International Socialists as the only organisation on the left that is showing the working class the right way to fight Toryism in this country—not by uttering meaningless platitudes in parliament but by standing up on our own feet and fighting back.

The second reason for sending you £1 is that it is my answer to the second warning letter I have received from the Licensing Records Office that I have not yet paid my £7 TV licence, coupled with the threat to use the big stick in the shape of a £50 fine if I do not pay it.

Well, I have not paid it and I have no intention of doing so for quite a number of reasons.

The £7 TV licence is a very real grievance among the pensioners. We regard it as a gross injustice to expect us to pay £7 out of our miserable pittance—the same as a man earning £30 or £40 a week. There is no logic or fair play in that.

There are quite a few OAPs in my area who have also received these letters. They are very indignant about it and, like myself, are refusing to submit to what amounts to sheer blackmail on the part of the government.

If it comes to the point where any OAP is taken to court for non-payment of the £7 then we fully intend to turn the court into a platform of national protest on the issue. I am sure that we should have the backing of millions of fair-minded people.

This situation where people are refusing to pay fines and fees is very interesting. For instance, the government have already admitted that they are owed nearly £1½ million in unpaid parking fines on motorists. This, coupled with the fact that many people are not paying their licence, shows that there is a spontaneous passive resistance among the people.

It is a movement that could grow and grow like the ever-increasing crime in this country. After all, what is crime? It is simply another expression of revolt against the capitalist system.

It is no use the chief of police complaining about the ever-increasing crime rate. He and his police force uphold the very system which is the father and mother of all crime.

The system itself is a criminal system in which it is not the man who commits the crime that is to blame but the laws of capitalist society that create the crime.—ERNEST OFFEN, London W1.

Youth need your help

SOCIALIST WORKER is an excellent paper but there is one criticism I would like to make. That is the lack of coverage of young workers' struggles and the amazing exploitation which we have to suffer. Many good trade unionists have never seen, been told or remember what it is like to be under 18 and a worker.

My wage as a 16-year-old member of the National Union of Footwear Leather and Allied Trades must not fall below £9.35 for a 40-hour week. As my wage is £11.56 I should consider myself lucky.

In a way I am. At least I can be a member of a union and have a certain amount of freedom. Many apprentices are in a position whereby they have virtually signed themselves away to a firm for five years or more. They find that they cannot move from the area, belong to a union, or participate in a strike and have, in their course of training, to do a man's job for a mere pittance. Even after finishing the apprenticeship the contract you signed at the age of 15 may bind you for some years.

The main demands trade unionists should fight for with regard to the youth are: any young worker doing an adult job to be paid the adult rate, all workers under 18 should be paid a minimum of £20 a week, every point in contracts of employment should be made clear to prospective apprentices, and there should be greater opportunities for the young.

The reason for this call for help is that it is clear that young workers do not have the industrial strength to better their conditions and can only do that with the aid of the working class as a whole. Part of the task is to show young workers the broad political issues, to recruit non-unionist youths and to reach youths at a time when they know exploitation.—CHRIS TYNDALE (age 16), Ash Green, near Aldershot.

Discussion is vital

I HAVE only recently become a subscriber to Socialist Worker, having not bought it for over six months, and I am certain that it has improved a great deal. The Review page and Duncan Hallas' column are particularly valuable, in that they help to spread the vital understanding that socialism is to do with the whole spectrum of one's life, and not just with industrial action.

I do feel very strongly, though, that we should go much further in this direction: struggles for wage increases and against rent increases are only a part of what socialism is about, as anyone who has the slightest knowledge of Marx's work on 'alienation' is well aware. If someone asked me what socialism is about in one word, I would say that more than anything it is about relationships man to man and man to environment. We must always keep this in view.

Duncan Hallas' piece on democracy was particularly good. I think it helps towards understanding what democracy means if you imagine a situation like Huxley's Brave New World, where everyone is brainwashed and conditioned, and then call that a 'democratic state' simply because it is 'what the people want'.

This would be obviously absurd, and yet it is only an extension of present popular concepts of democracy. If democracy is to have any useful meaning, it must be related to progressive attitudes, and not merely be descriptive of a mode of government.

It doesn't matter how much so-called freedom of expression there is within society, there can be no democracy unless the people are capable of thinking democratically—ie, thinking liberated from capitalist mental conditioning. And this liberation is stimulated, as Hallas says, 'in the course of action, of struggle'.

In other words, we have to assert that 'the will of the people' is not the final judgment, but that there is some goal towards which we must struggle, even though most people seem fairly happy to stay as they are. This involves a certainty that the human race is capable of achieving some far better condition than exists now.

We have to believe that progress and liberation has a definite known direction, and is not just a matter of achieving personal freedom within any given social system. Until attitudes are liberated, accompanying progress towards genuine socialism, democracy must remain an idea in the minds of those who understand its meaning.—CHRIS SMALL, London N4.

Damage

SEAN MacSTIOFAIN is a very able leader from the military view but his political aspirations do not seem to go beyond a united Ireland—that is, a capitalist united Ireland. He and his followers do more damage than good for socialism in Ireland.

They do not deserve the support of any true socialist. Their action in killing workers in the North has lost them support in the South thus helping Lynch to pass his unjust Bill. MacStiofain as a martyr may be useful but his failure to carry his hunger strike to the death has left him in an awkward position.

Socialism in Ireland is gaining strength, but no thanks to the Provisionals and their kind.—ENA COYNE, Yeovilton, Somerset.

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive first post Monday and should be written or typed on one side of the paper only.

James the Scab's brief honeymoon with press barons

THE GOING RATE for a scab these days is £30,000. That is not my valuation, of course. It is the price-tag our most celebrated blackleg, James Goad, has put on himself.

It is somewhat less than the £400,000 that is being asked for George Best, but then Goad has doubtless taken into account the fact that whereas thousands of people will actually pay just to watch Best, no one will even remain in the same factory as himself.

Goad's campaign to bankrupt the AUEW through a series of court actions came to the boil last week when the remarkably easy-going workers at CAV, Sudbury, finally responded to his odious presence with some honest, straight-forward trade union action.

Goad goes, or we do, they decided. And they gave their management two hours to think it over.

The national press and television did not need so long to make up their minds. Goad represents to them the archetypal little hero who can be presented as the individual standing against the tyrannical machine. He can thus become a rallying point for the audience's conditioned response of outrage.

Field day

By carefully avoiding too close an examination of the man and the issue the national press and television are able to have a field day at the expense of their favourite Aunt Sally, the trade union movement. The most simple and popular presentation of the story has been on the 'David and Goliath' basis. Goad is cast as the intrepid David, clad in righteousness as he goes into battle against the ogre Scanlon and his Philistine hordes.

Trivialised to this level the story is so easy to write. Naturally, the hero must have no flaws, and the press, from the proud investigative Sunday Times to the sex-obsessed Sun, have failed completely to examine Goad closely. The nearest we have been given to a comprehensive background of the affair has been Martin Adeney's article in the Guardian, but this fell far short of a genuine scrutiny.

It seems almost as if editors and newspaper proprietors cannot quite believe the democratic element that exists, to a greater or smaller extent, in trade unions. Since they themselves have such autocratic powers they transfer the 'big boss' syndrome to the unions. Thus it becomes easy for the respectably intelligent Sunday Times to write an editorial that talks of 'Mr Scanlon's trade union' in the way that journalists speak of 'Lord Thomson's Sunday Times'.

Simple device

Similarly, the Daily Express came out with a tirade against Scanlon, seeking to persuade its readers that he solely is responsible for AUEW policy. It is a simple device. It is easier to focus mass hatred on an individual than on an institution representing more than a million.

But it also echoes the contempt that newspapers have for their readers. Editors who believe that their readers are an unthinking, undiscerning, lumpen mass, automatically assume that union presidents and general secretaries treat their members in the same insulting manner.

Another important aspect of the forecast of Bowler and the forecast of Bowler is the way it highlights the need for the merged company to buy up UK profits. Only £4.7 million is expected to be available out of a pre-tax profit of £15.2 million and while this includes an un- only known amount for minority interests, the ruling UK tax rate is 40 per cent. So expect an important UK on-acquisition before the end of this year. No one's giving out clues as to what sectors and countries will diversify into, an indeed whether the basis of operations will be in the UK. But Goad's campaign to bankrupt the AUEW through a series of court actions came to the boil last week when the remarkably easy-going workers at CAV, Sudbury, finally responded to his odious presence with some honest, straight-forward trade union action. Goad goes, or we do, they decided. And they gave their management two hours to think it over. The national press and television did not need so long to make up their minds. Goad represents to them the archetypal little hero who can be presented as the individual standing against the tyrannical machine. He can thus become a rallying point for the audience's conditioned response of outrage. By carefully avoiding too close an examination of the man and the issue the national press and television are able to have a field day at the expense of their favourite Aunt Sally, the trade union movement. The most simple and popular presentation of the story has been on the 'David and Goliath' basis. Goad is cast as the intrepid David, clad in righteousness as he goes into battle against the ogre Scanlon and his Philistine hordes. Trivialised to this level the story is so easy to write. Naturally, the hero must have no flaws, and the press, from the proud investigative Sunday Times to the sex-obsessed Sun, have failed completely to examine Goad closely. The nearest we have been given to a comprehensive background of the affair has been Martin Adeney's article in the Guardian, but this fell far short of a genuine scrutiny. It seems almost as if editors and newspaper proprietors cannot quite believe the democratic element that exists, to a greater or smaller extent, in trade unions. Since they themselves have such autocratic powers they transfer the 'big boss' syndrome to the unions. Thus it becomes easy for the respectably intelligent Sunday Times to write an editorial that talks of 'Mr Scanlon's trade union' in the way that journalists speak of 'Lord Thomson's Sunday Times'. Similarly, the Daily Express came out with a tirade against Scanlon, seeking to persuade its readers that he solely is responsible for AUEW policy. It is a simple device. It is easier to focus mass hatred on an individual than on an institution representing more than a million. But it also echoes the contempt that newspapers have for their readers. Editors who believe that their readers are an unthinking, undiscerning, lumpen mass, automatically assume that union presidents and general secretaries treat their members in the same insulting manner.

Because an editor can rap out instructions of editorial policy to a leader-writer and watch him jump to his bidding, it is not unexpected that he will transfer this power to a Scanlon and believe in the idea of the 'union boss' issuing orders to his members in a like fashion.

James Goad is clearly a fraud and any good reporter could take him apart. But nobody wants to. However, Goad has now undertaken his own demolition. For the first time he was put on the spot on Sunday in the Weekend World television programme. It was his own colleagues from CAV who grilled him—and they did a better job than anyone of the reporters who have so far spent many accumulated hours interviewing him.

They brought out many of the points made elsewhere in this paper in our 'profile of a scab'. The profile was possible because Socialist Worker took the trouble to get the local union officials' side of the story. When the points came out in the Weekend World programme (transmitted after the profile was written) they were news. This was simply because none of the scores of reporters on the story hitherto had bothered to seek and present the union viewpoint.

Foolish lie

But the most damaging feature of the programme, as far as Goad is concerned was his denial of his statement that he would quit his job and drop his action against the union if CAV paid him a £30,000 golden handshake. The Sun had misquoted him, he claimed.

In one foolish lie Goad ended his honeymoon with the press. If he was misquoted by the Sun, he was also misquoted by the BBC, Anglia Television, the Express, Sunday Times, Guardian, and the rest.

None of the national papers appeared to be upset by the notion that a man would put his ardently proclaimed principles up for sale, but the press has never shown an over-sensitive regard for principles. However, the idea obviously stuck in someone's craw, for the right-wing regional morning, the East Anglian Daily Times, was moved to comment: 'The case of Mr James Goad appears to have suddenly lurched off the hard tack of principle and on the smooth fast ring road of expediency.'

Somehow I don't think there will be a fairy tale ending to this story of a scab. No matter how much the press kiss this Goad he resolutely refuses to transform into Prince Charming. Following his outburst against the Sun, however, Fleet Street will doubtless conclude that the time has arrived when the kissing has to stop. Perhaps we might get some hard facts instead.

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'Anti-Chinese ravings'

ENCOURAGED as I am by Chairman Mao's teachings, I have tried to read Socialist Worker because although its strategy is not going to lead any country to socialism, it certainly makes life difficult for capitalism. But I find your rabid anti-Chinese ravings difficult to endure week after week.

The basic fact is that socialism is about people and not about formulas devised by any mind no matter how brilliant. The average Chinese worker for whom the revolution has opened new perspectives and given hope cannot appreciate your attention for

them when you despise the leadership that led them in moving the mountains of oppression from which they have always suffered.

This is not to say that their leadership is above criticism. But if you cannot follow their struggle for much the same reason as I follow yours, then at least you can keep silent about it.

I have read some Trotsky and I am not sure that he would approve this blanket condemnation of those with whom we confront a common foe. I hope I am able to regard you as comrades.—S NWOSU, London E17.

We fight again in 1973, say steelmen

by Roger Rosewell

TEESSIDE:-A thousand steelworkers ended their struggle for wage parity last week with plans for another battle in the New Year.

The strikers at British Steel's Lackenby works voted to return to work when they recognised that an alliance of local and national officials of their union, BISA KTA, was effectively sabotaging their fight.

But they also voted to prepare for further action in the New Year, this time to involve all the workers at Lackenby.

The dispute began when the steelworkers claimed an £8 a week rise to reach parity with steelworkers in South Wales. The Steel Corporation rejected these demands and a full-scale stoppage quickly followed.

This was the first real fight for parity ever organised on Teesside and the right-wing leaders of BISA KTA moved quickly to try to crush it. The local divisional officer, Jim Drinkwater, denounced the claim as 'unrealistic', tried—but failed—to start a 'red scare' witch-hunt, and then circulated every BISA KTA branch in the area instructing them not to support the strikers, who work in the beam and rod mill at Lackenby.

Packed

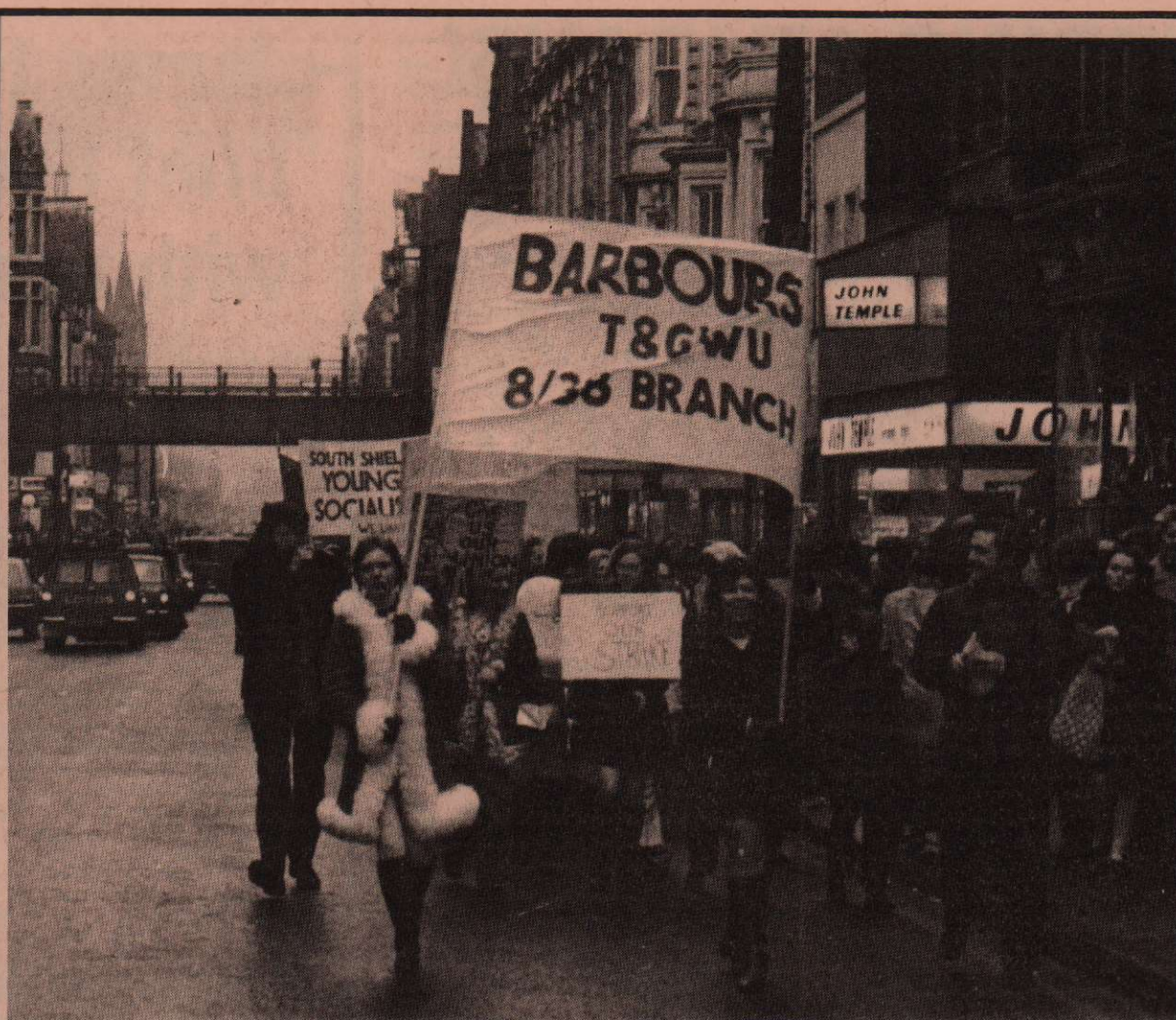
Within the giant works various other BISA KTA officials joined Drinkwater in trying to sabotage the parity fight. Un-constitutional branch meetings were held which instead of organising solidarity action were suddenly told falsely by various individuals that the strike had been called off and that there was no longer any need to discuss giving support.

Other meetings were packed with full-time officials and executive council members of the union.

Despite solidarity strikes from two other branches and militant rank and file pressure in several others, this alliance of BISA KTA officials eventually succeeded in an area unused to militancy and without any tradition of independent rank and file action.

The strikers recognised this last week and, bearing in mind the need to prepare resistance to any attempt by the union to victimise their leaders, voted to return to work.

The local International Socialists held a well-attended public meeting after the strike ended at which Tony Cliff, Arthur Affleck, chairman of the strikers, and Ian Clarke, boilermakers' convenor from Britannia Steel, all spoke. A number of workers joined IS and many speakers from the floor attacked the right-wing leaders of BISA KTA and called for the building of a reform movement to achieve democracy in the union.



The strikers, supported by 200 other trade unionists, marching through South Shields last weekend. The march, organised by the trades council, was the first trade union demonstration in the town for 30 years.

Anti-union firm gives in as neighbours join picket

SOUTH SHIELDS:-Sixty women won recognition for their union and a £2 a week rise on Monday after seven weeks on strike at Barbours rainwear factory.

Support from other workers brought victory for the strikers, members of the Transport Workers' Union, after reports that the management was to try to recruit scabs. Forty other workers joined the women's picket line and prevented the employer, local Tory councillor Kenneth Charlton, and supervisor from opening the factory.

Police were called in by the company, but the pickets would still not give ground. When the police called for reinforcements, the workers too got further help. Fifty sheet metal workers from the next-door factory of Elsy and Gibbons came out and joined the picket.

After two hours management was forced to give up its attempts to get into the factory. Later the union's regional organiser, Joe Mills, announced that the company had agreed to recognise the union.

Strikers hold out against scab labour

GRIMSBY:-The 45 men and women at Osmonds veterinary chemicals factory are carrying on their magnificent strike in face of management attempts, backed by the local press and employment exchange, to bring in scab labour. Five have accepted jobs, but ten others have refused to cross the picket line.

Local trade union support is beginning to come in—blacking, money for the strike fund and support on the picket line. The strikers are fighting for recognition of the transport workers' union in the factory and the reinstatement of their victimised shop steward.

They have been working in deplorable conditions for a pittance: women take home £6-£10 and men £14-£16 for the basic week, so excessive overtime is necessary to make a decent living. There is no safety officer in the factory.

Old Osmond is a millionaire and his works manager owns a Mercedes and a Jaguar. There are just 50 production workers—and 130 office staff and salesmen.

Donations and messages of support to Osmond Strike Committee, c/o Tony Jackson, 38 Humber Street, Cleethorpes, Lincs.

TORIES START TO GET TOUGH WITH REBELS

THE TORIES have begun really tough action against the few Labour councils still holding out against the Housing Finance Act.

Control over housing has been taken away from two councils in South Wales, Merthyr Tydfil and Bedwas and Machen, and given to

THE RENTS BATTLE

government-appointed housing commissioners whose job is to put up rents as quickly as possible.

Whether they can collect the increases is another question. Both councillors and tenants have said they

will refuse to pay. A district auditor has been sent to the small Yorkshire town of Conisborough, where councillors are now being threatened with surcharges in the same way as councillors in Clay Cross, Derbyshire.

In Scotland, the resistance of Glasgow City Council, by far the largest to defy the government, is in danger of crumbling. Last week the councillors voted to continue their opposition—but by a majority of only 53 votes to 48. Nineteen Labour councillors voted with the Tories.

Tenants against the auditor

CLAY CROSS:-District auditor Charles Lacy arrived last Thursday to demand an explanation from the councillors why the housing account was £7000 in arrears.

The answer is no mystery. The account is in arrears because the Labour council has refused to implement, has not implemented and will not implement the Housing Finance Act. That is why 300 people, mostly tenants, many of them housewives with children, were outside the council offices from 9am that morning demonstrating support for the councillors.

The place was also infested with police, although carefully hidden from public view. They had one 50-seater bus and nine mini-buses in the council yard, all fully loaded, another across in the car park, three hidden away in Bridge Street and another three by the canteen.

The demonstrators reckoned to have counted 24 different police cars in the course of the morning.

The auditor was expected at about

10.15am. But he knew what he was up against and sneaked into the council offices earlier, through the Social Security office next door.

Luckily someone spotted him, and the demonstrators rushed in and occupied the council chamber. Most had to stand, because the room was not big enough for all of them.

Eventually the auditor managed to get in through a door in the back, as the demonstrators sang 'The Red Flag' and 'We've got the best council in the land'. He said his bit, but did not look happy—he is not used to doing his job in a room full of tenants and banners calling for industrial action.

The 11 councillors are full of fight, although they stand to lose a lot. Councillor David Nuttall could lose his house. The others could be removed from office, denied the right to stand again and even imprisoned. But there is a list of 35 other people prepared to take their place, and they have been promised industrial support.

7000 refuse to pay rent rise

OLDHAM:-More than 7000 council tenants are now in the third week of a partial rent strike in the most spectacular action against the rent rises in the Manchester area. Even the 'official' council figures give 7000-8000 on the strike, which is more than three-quarters of all tenants.

The massive strike is the result of six months work by the Oldham Association of Tenants and Residents, which has organised rent action committees on the

estates and pickets at rent offices and following collectors.

A move has been made to get trade union backing for the tenants' stand. A local conference of union and tenants' organisation is sending a deputation to meet the Labour group on the council, which is in the majority, to demand a pledge of no retaliatory action and no evictions.

The deputation is backed by the local Engineering Union district committee.

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.

IS MEETINGS

KINGSTON IS Christmas Social: Friday 22 December, 8pm. Music, food, noggins and natter at the Union Hotel, Penrhyn Road, Kingston. Tickets 25p from 393 5751 or at the door. Proceeds to the printshop fund.

WOLVERHAMPTON IS Social: Saturday 16 December, 8pm, at The Posada, Lichfield Street. Entertainment from The Grey Cock Folk Group. Tickets 15p. Proceeds to the printshop fund.

ILFORD and DAGENHAM IS public meeting: Duncan Hallas on Can Labour bring Socialism? Thursday 21 December, 8pm, St Chad's Community Centre, Japan Road, Chadwell Heath (near Fine Fare). Buses 86, 193, 62.

EALING IS SOCIAL: Alex Glasgow plus disco Bar extension Friday 15 December, 8pm Ealing Technical College, St Mary's Rd (5 mins walk from Ealing Bdwly tube)

OTHER MEETINGS

KELVINGROVE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY: Teach-in on Poverty, Saturday 16 December, 10am-onwards. Speakers: Michael Meacher MP, George Robertson (GMWU), Baillie Janey Buchan and Liz Williamson (Shelter). AUEW, 145 West Regent St, Glasgow.

NOTICES

WANTED: IS Journals numbers 1-11, 15, 28, 29, and 31. Will swap for my spares of numbers 12, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23 and 41-11 Dale Street, Leamington Spa.

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ENTERTAINERS WANTED: Chertsey IS need entertainers (especially a pianist) for IS social on 12 January, expenses paid. Contact R Hayden at Chertsey 60666.

WHEN writing to Socialist Worker please mark envelopes clearly either EDITORIAL or BUSINESS.



£20,000 threat to pit village

SOUTH YORKSHIRE:—All over the coalfield miners and tenants are settling in for a long hard fight to defeat the 'Fair' Rents Act.

Conisborough, a pit village near Doncaster where the councillors are waiting to be surcharged by up to £20,000 for refusing to put up rents, is very much the forgotten Labour council. While Clay Cross has grabbed the headlines, the Conisborough councillors have hung on by a narrow majority.

The secret behind their struggle is the militant Cadeby branch of the National Union of Mineworkers, which has called a national demonstration in response to the expected £20,000 surcharge. It will be in Conisborough this Sunday. Like Clay Cross, this deserves the support of every tenant and trade unionist.

On the same day at 2.30pm, there is another important demonstration at Kiveton Park, a pit village near Rotherham, where the Labour council has served summonses for rent arrears on 12 tenants, including tenants' association committee members, in an effort to break the rent strike.

Crucial

Last Monday 100 angry tenants demonstrated their disgust at the council meeting until the Labour council leaders called in the police to protect them from the people they claim to represent.

In many ways what happens at Kiveton Park is the crucial test for the future of the tenants' movement, far more than Conisborough or Clay Cross. For if the Labour council is successful in breaking the tenants' resistance it will encourage every council in the country to try similar attacks.

It is vital that every tenants' association and trade union branch should give full support to the tenants of Kiveton Park for they are in the front line for all tenants.

On Saturday there is to be a vital meeting in Barnsley of all tenants' associations and NUM branches in the area to plan future moves. So far the NUM conference decisions on the rent Act have been ignored by all but a few branches—but there are signs that this is changing.

'Put up rent' ultimatum

CAMDEN, London:—The government has issued an ultimatum to Camden Council, the last in London to hold out against the rent increases. It orders the council to give a provisional assessment of fair rents by this weekend and firm notice of the increase by 22 December, and threatens a freeze on funds for all new house building and withdrawal of the present government subsidy.

Camden is totally dependent on the subsidy to make up the deficit between the £3.5 million a year received in rents and the £4.5 million it pays in interest charges.

At a special meeting on Monday the council voted by a majority of four to continue its stand against the rent rises, though seven Labour councillors abstained and one voted with the Tories.

Camden Tenants Federation is calling for a partial rent strike. The trades council supports the tenants and rank-and-file trade union support is being canvassed. In Camden Town Hall NALGO members passed a resolution last week calling on the union to support members who refuse to be involved in implementing the Act and to defend any worker victimised for such opposition.

Eviction move stalled

ALTRINCHAM:—Tenants crowded into the council chamber last week and forced the councillors to postpone for a month discussion whether to issue eviction notices to tenants refusing to pay the rent rises. Official council figures show 571 tenants on partial rent strike.

The 150 Altrincham tenants who went to the meeting were also supported by six engineering union shop stewards and tenants from all over the Manchester area.

The council's proposed ruse to divide the rent struggle was to issue eviction notices to people who had been in arrears before the strike, so the evictions could be seen as 'justified'. This had been narrowly defeated at a housing committee meeting where Labour had a majority, but stood to be passed by the Tory-controlled council.

You've got me wrong, says Michael Foot

From Michael Foot, MP for Ebbw Vale.

SINCE the Labour Party in Ebbw Vale has been fighting so long to protect the jobs and livelihood of people there, we are naturally glad when others belatedly promise to help. But your article on Ebbw Vale last week contains some serious misunderstandings and misapprehensions; so I hope you will allow me to correct them.

As I say, our whole livelihood is at stake, and it is of paramount importance that we do not allow false statements to take root and possibly to spread disunity in the struggle ahead of us.

You have misunderstood the nature of the so-called scrutiny committee which has been proposed, the establishment of which has been fully supported by the Works Council representing all workers in the plant. This is not to be a committee with the cramped terms of reference which you suggest. That was never the idea which I put to Lord Melchett in the first place.

The proposal always was that the committee

LATE LETTER

should be completely uninhibited in the inquiries it wished to make, that it should be able to recruit independent investigators and advisers, that it should be able to examine the whole question, including any proposed dates for closures, in order to co-ordinate any run-down with the introduction of new jobs.

This is what you later describe, in your article, as 'the obvious solution'. But this idea was already embraced in the proposed scrutiny committee. In other words, if this committee functions properly, it could be a real example of industrial democracy, and it is industrial democracy in action which we need to save Ebbw Vale.

You say, in the course of your article, that my 'trouble' is that I cannot make up my mind which side of the fence I am on.

No one who knows anything about the matter in Ebbw Vale would make so foolish an accusation. My attitude has been made clear at dozens of meetings I have held over recent days, weeks and years, both with the elected Works Council and the elected Urban District Council.

What is needed, certainly, to save Ebbw Vale, is that all of us in the town should combine intelligently to sustain work in the steel industry and to attract new industries as well. Perhaps the worst danger we face is that this effort should become fragmented by internal disputes about the best way to proceed, or by infantile sectarianism. That would help no one else but Heath and the Tories and would not save a single job in Ebbw Vale.—MICHAEL FOOT, House of Commons.



Leicester International Socialists on the anti-racist march

Counter-demo dwarfs racists

LEICESTER:—The Enoch Powell support group and their National Front henchmen were once again made to look ridiculous last Saturday when their small demonstration (optimistic press reports put their numbers at 300) was dwarfed by a counter-demonstration of 1000 people, mainly International Socialists.

The demonstration was also supported by the Black People's Freedom Movement, the International Marxist Group and the Young Communist League. More than 30 of the Asian strikers at Loughborough's

Mansfield Hosiery Mills marched under the banner of the Loughborough International Socialists, and the speaker from the strike committee thanked the IS for their help in the strike.

Gerry Kelly, a member of the International Socialists, brought the demonstration fraternal greetings from the Birmingham Building Workers Charter group and stressed the need for a political organisation which could cleanse the working-class movement of racial poison.

24 hour stoppage backs strikers

SOUTH WALES:—The Crompton-Parkinson factory at Newport stopped for 24 hours last Friday in support of the 131 workers at the firm's Glanamman factory, now in their eighth week on strike.

Sam Williams, engineering union shop steward at Glanamman, told Socialist Worker that after a factory gate meeting at the Newport factory the whole workforce walked out. Within two hours the picket had the whole factory sealed off.

The token strike meant gains for the Newport workers too: before it only 75 per cent were in a union, now 95 per cent are.

The centre of the Glanamman dispute is the management's 'blue-eyed boy' bonus system. Workers are paid bonus on management assessment—of time-keeping, rate of work, care of tools, adaptability—while their union, the AUEW, has absolutely no say in the matter. The result is that the 131 workers have 100 different rates of pay.

The convenor and shop stewards have proposed a basis for a return to work—end the present bonus system, and give the union the right to be involved in any future bonus negotiations. The company has refused these demands.

The stewards at Glanamman have helped form a South Wales Combine Committee covering Crompton-Parkinson factories in Newport and Tredegar.

The firm is a subsidiary of the giant Hawker Siddeley group and there are now moves to form a national Hawker Siddeley Combine Committee. A meeting has been called in Birmingham on 21 January and shop stewards in all Hawker Siddeley factories and subsidiaries are urged to attend. Write to: Sam Williams, 17 Maes-y-bont, Glanamman, Ammanford, Carmar.

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MINERS FACE YET ANOTHER CON TRICK

by John Charlton

'ARISE KING COAL', the headline in Tuesday's Daily Express, was typical of the reaction to Monday's Coal Industry Bill.

The press, TV commentators, Labour MPs and Coal Board chairman Derek Ezra were united in their fulsome praise for the Tories.

Miners union president Joe Gormley, with tears in his eyes, called it 'a vote of confidence we won't forget'. The deficit of 20 years is written off, the industry is healthy, the miners' future is assured.

The truth is somewhat different. The Bill and its reception is a massive con trick aimed at pulling the wool over the miners' eyes yet again.

Demand for coal can at best only remain static at around 140 million tons a year, and even this depends on the building of new coal-fired power stations, a vague promise. Demand on every other sales front is tumbling rapidly.

Despite the protestation about giving greater security to miners the most ominous figure in the Bill is the £100 million set aside for redundancy payments over the next six years. Calculations similar to those of the Jones-Aldington agreement for dockers (a maximum £4000 a worker) suggest about 16,000 redundancies.

With natural wastage this would mean only 140,000 miners by the end of the 1970s. This means about 130,000 fewer job opportuni-

ties for youngsters in mining areas.

The euphoria of this week cannot be shared by the miners, whose insecurity is in fact increased by the Bill.

The prediction by The Collier, the rank and file miners' paper, that there will be almost 100 pit closures is entirely vindicated. Wholesale closures are planned for Scotland, the North East, Yorkshire and South Wales.

Most shattering for the miners are the signs that the union leadership, or sections of it, is quite happy to preside over these massive sackings.

They have shown in the past and they are showing again that they are quite in agreement with management plans to carry on with productivity bargaining.

No group of workers in Britain has been so savagely attacked by such bargaining as the miners. Since the early 1960s wages have fallen disastrously in relation to other industries, supervision has increased to ridiculous levels, accident rates and the incidence of chest diseases have continued to rise and job opportunities have been halved. The arrogance and stupidity of the leadership in continuing to consider productivity bargaining is quite staggering.

The way the Coal Industry Bill has been presented is aimed to soften up the negotiations on the pay claim and to give the union leadership an excuse for failing to carry out conference decisions.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

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RANK & FILE BACK A U E W

Socialist Worker reporters WORKERS at the CAV factory at Sudbury in Suffolk gave a lead to members of the engineering union throughout Britain on Monday when they voted to strike against the £50,000 fine imposed on their union by the Industrial Relations Court.

James Goad's former workmates expressed in no uncertain manner their contempt for him, his legal action and the Industrial Relations Court.

Mick Stares, treasurer of the local AUEW branch, later told Socialist Worker: 'Goad is a waster. He's in CAV just for personal gain.'

'But this struggle is more than Goad or CAV. The workers of CAV Sudbury have stood up and been counted. Now it is up to the others. We hope for official support—not just for money, but by the AUEW executive making it clear where they stand.'

Unfortunately, this is just what the meeting of the union executive on Tuesday morning failed to do. It upheld its decision not to pay the fines, it called on the members to support the union in its stand, but it failed completely to give them a lead in what they should do.

The national conference of the four sections of the union indicated earlier in the year what actions should be taken in such cases: 'We instruct the national executive council to use all the resources of our union to develop a mass campaign at district and national level, including if necessary strike action, to defeat the Industrial Relations Act.'

The executive has chosen not to act on this instruction. But throughout the country moves have been made by stewards' committees, district committees and branches for more resolute action to defend the union.

STRIKES

In Scotland, the stewards' committee from the Chrysler Linwood plant organised a meeting of all stewards in the Paisley district, which includes the big factories of Rolls-Royce and Babcock and Wilcox, for Wednesday night.

In Birmingham too a meeting of the East District stewards was to be held the same night, and the British Leyland Longbridge stewards have called for a meeting of all stewards in the area.

In Erith, Kent, the engineering union district committee has called for a one-day stoppage. The Wolverhampton district committee, representing 37,000 members, has called on the executive to organise a series of one-day strikes, followed by 'an all-out strike if the one-day strikes are not effective'.

North London AUEW District Committee is calling for strike action and the Manchester Confed will be out on Wednesday.

In Birmingham on Tuesday, militants at the meeting of stewards from all the CAV-Lucas plants in the city found that the right wing had organised to prevent opposition to the fines. The district secretary excluded from the meeting delegates who had come all the way from the combine's Gloucester factory.

Despite powerful protests from two convenors from the Shaftsmoor Lane factory, Jack Lynch and Larry Connolly, the right wing pushed through by a vote of 129 to 42, a resolution refusing to take action and calling on the union executive to abandon its boycott of the NIRC.

This decision is particularly dangerous because cases similar to Goad's are developing in the Lucas factory at Shirley, which is a subsidiary plant of Shaftsmoor Lane. Two men there, Ivor Bridges and Jack O'Sullivan are attempting to defy the transport workers' union and end 100 per cent trade unionism. The right wing in the AUEW has opened the way for such scabbing activities.

DEFEND THE AUEW!

MEETING:
Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham
(lecture room 1)
Sunday 17 December, 7.30pm prompt
Speakers: Tony Cliff, Bob Light
and Larry Connolly (AUEW deputy
convenor, Lucas BW3 nightshift)
ALL OUT IN SUPPORT
OF THE AUEW!

Profile of Super Scab...

THIS is the profile of a scab—a sanctimonious superscab, who claims he is guided in his dirty work by the divine spirit of Jesus Christ.

James Goad, an ardent Tory Party member who is conducting his personal campaign to bankrupt the AUEW, first became a scab in 1967. When the stewards called a one-day strike at CAV, Sudbury, in support of a wage claim, Goad went into work.

When the workers refused to have anything to do with him after his scabbing the management transferred Goad from department to department, and finally to another of their factories a few miles away.

Goad accused Bill Duckling, the AUEW convenor, of arranging the transfer with the management. The Sudbury branch convened a district committee meeting to hear the complaint. Duckling turned up to answer his accuser. Goad failed to put in an appearance.

He has admitted on several occasions that he only wants union membership to help his advancement up the CAV promotion ladder.

Admitted

What he has not admitted is how much money he has been receiving from outside sources since he first took the AUEW to court. Throughout all the massive television, radio and Fleet Street coverage of the Goad affair this point has never been put to him. Only one newspaper, the provincial daily, the Cambridge Evening News, has touched on it.

They reported last week that Goad admitted to their reporter that he had received 'just a few' donations. When the News man pressed him to say how much they amounted to, Goad refused to give a figure.

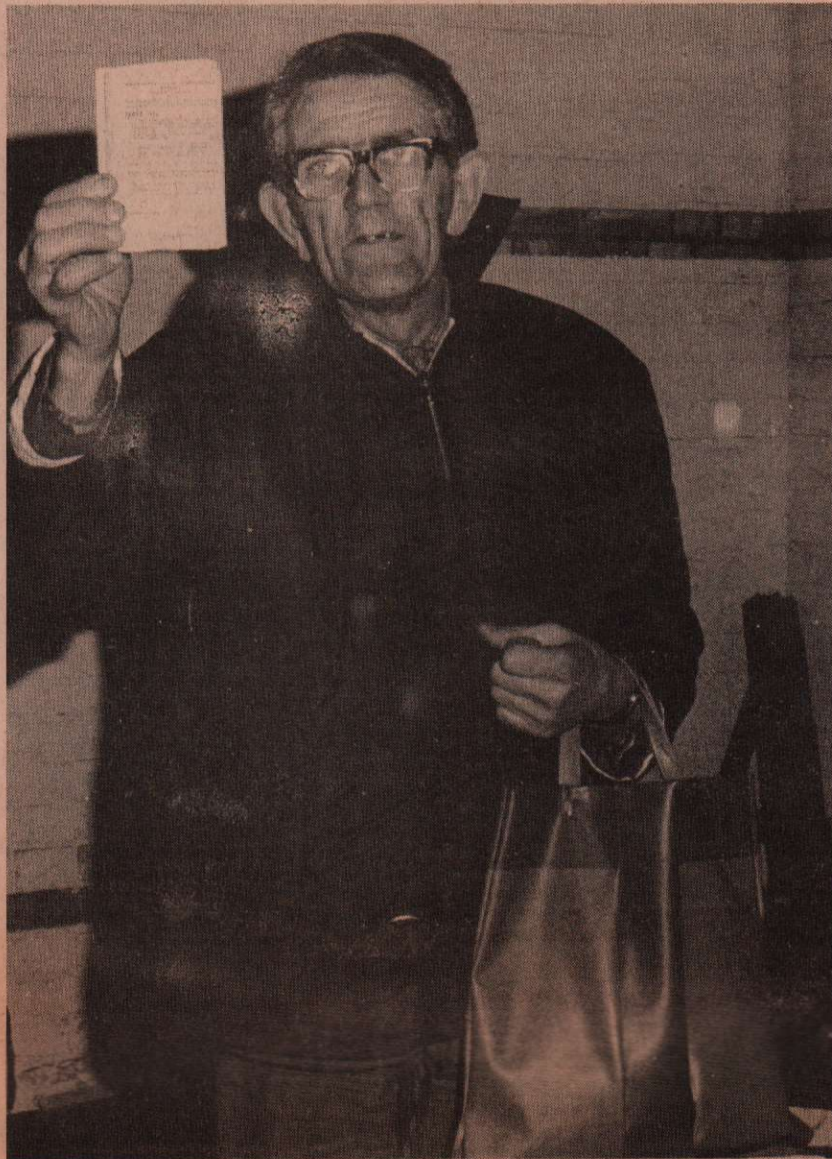
But a union official at the factory has said that Goad recently waved a £100 cheque at him, gloating over a windfall from that well-known tax haven for industrialists, the Channel Islands.

Goad plainly wallows in the attention he is getting from journalists and has become fairly adept at handling the friendly questions they put his way. But it is difficult for the individual journalist to get a series of pointed questions across to him, because Goad is always running after the BBC's man on the spot. He has been heard to voice his surprised glee at the interview fees paid by the BBC.

It came as no shock, therefore, to the more sceptical reporters covering the story, when Goad announced that Christ had guided him to put his principles up for sale—at the holy price of £30,000.

R.K. Nelson

* Socialist Worker



Goad brandishing his union card: will it get him into Heaven?

LEFT WOBBLING AIDS THE RIGHT

THE GOAD CASE is only the latest in a long list of crises that have gripped the leadership of the 1¼ million strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers during the last year.

In these 12 months the union has lost a major battle with the engineering employers, seen a dramatic fall in its general fund of more than £1 million, a re-emergence of a powerful right wing that was once almost thought humbled by Hugh Scanlon's triumph in 1970 and a series of retreats and divisions by and among its leadership.

In January the union took the leading role in an industry-wide struggle for higher wages and shorter hours in engineering. The employers refused to offer more than just a marginal increase in minimum pay rates and Hugh Scanlon forced through a strategy of fighting this by so-called plant-by-plant bargaining.

RESULT

No co-ordination, planning or direction was supplied for this campaign and with the exception of Manchester it was almost a total flop.

The final result was an improved increase in rates over an effective 20 month period with no reduction in hours or progress towards equal pay. The cost was enormous. The union spent over £1.25 million in strike pay and paved the way for a regrouping of the right wing.

Jim Conway, the general secretary, used his position as editor of the union journal to assist this trend.

The demoralising effect of the defeat, allied to the introduction of the postal ballot system and the refusal of Scanlon and the other left wingers to challenge Conway's conduct, saw left-wing candidate Ernie Roberts heavily defeated in the recent contest for the general secretaryship.

Instead of mobilising the membership against these developments, Scanlon blamed the members for the defeat of the

pay claim, took no lead in calling for emergency levies to strengthen the union's finances and joined with other TUC leaders in talking to Heath and the Tories.

But while the left has retreated and vacillated, the right wing has taken new hope from the current amalgamation talks with the extreme right-wing leaders of the electricians union and is now openly criticising the refusal of the AUEW to co-operate with the Industrial Relations Act and its court.

The refusal of Scanlon and the other left-wing officials in the union to organise resistance to the first fine of £5000 has further contributed towards this right-wing confidence and assisted its attacks.

For either the left openly fights to defend the union and attacks the right wing or else the right will be further strengthened and the membership demoralised and defeated.

That's why the Goad case is as much a struggle for the future of the AUEW as it is a struggle against the Industrial Relations Act.

Roger Rosewell

Picket Lines

WOLVERHAMPTON:—Alan Price, the engineering union shop steward sacked at Norton Villiers motorbike factory for his association with the factory bulletin, Villiers Worker, has got the full support of his union's district committee. The committee met on Monday and fully supported a resolution from Alan Price's branch requesting the district secretary to attend a meeting of Norton Villiers stewards 'to escalate Brother Price's reinstatement'.

COVENTRY:—150 draughtsmen and technicians at Herbert machine tools have been locked out since last Tuesday. TASS member John Atkins was sacked for applying sanctions against the company. Other TASS members promptly sat down on the job, and then walked out when

Asians: no union help

SW Reporter

LOUGHBOROUGH:—The strike of Asian workers at the Mansfield Hosiery mills is turning into the first official dispute in British trade union history where the union has tacitly encouraged its members to scab.

As the strike moved into its seventh week and was declared official by the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers, there was no sign of any instruction from the union's Leicester headquarters either to its own members or to other unions that the strikers should be assisted.

Without any official union complaint, work which would normally have been done by the striking bar-loaders has been prepared in outside mills and brought in by lorry to the Mansfield mill.

This is the explanation for the 'rowdy scenes' graphically described in the press and shown on television, in which lorries bringing in scab goods have had their tyres let down, to the fury of the blacklegs inside the mill.

Racism

Pickets have been even stronger this week while the strike committee are working out their case for the court of enquiry into the dispute ordered by the Department of Employment. The enquiry will be conducted by Kenneth Robinson, former Labour Minister of Health, who earns £350 a week as personnel and social director of the British Steel Corporation.

The employers, the millionaire Djanogly family, have been at last stung into an official response to the charge of racism in their factories. In a half-page advertisement in the Financial Times on 9 December, they claimed a long record of harmony and racial peace in their factories.

Perhaps the Djanoglys were forced to take this action by the pickets of Marks and Spencer stores (M&S own 20 per cent of the Nottingham Manufacturing shares, and use all its products) which have been organised by International Socialists and black revolutionary groups up and down the country. Pickets in Lambeth and Wigan have been particularly successful.

In Tottenham, North London, IS members gave out more than 3000 leaflets and demonstrated with placards. It is hoped to mount pickets throughout the country again this Saturday.

This Sunday, 17 December, the Black Panther movement has organised a community meeting at Oval House, 54 Kennington Oval, London, SE11 at 3pm, to discuss the strike and its implications. Several of the strikers will be speaking.

Union in a tangle: page 9

they were told that they too had been taken off the payroll.

The sanctions had been put on to make the management talk about the pay claim. They had steadfastly refused to do this 'because of the freeze'.

CHELSEA, London:—Bricklayers and labourers on the multi-million pound Cubitt's Worlds End council housing development are in the third week of their strike against the victimisation of bricklayers' steward John Fontaine. If there is no settlement of the dispute by the end of the week the builders' union, UCATT is expected to make the strike official.

Dig deep this week and send to Strike Committee Treasurer, John Fontaine, 28 West Bank, London N. 16.

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