

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Union leaders hold secret talks with government

TUC'S STAB IN THE BACK

...while millions march and strike against the freeze

MAY DAY was a great achievement. Well over two million workers struck, a significant number in defiance of their union leaders who instructed them to work and said the strike was 'irrelevant'.

This fine response up and down the country was achieved in the face of the TUC leadership's attempt to sabotage its own day of protest and action. The TUC leaders tried hard to ensure that it was a sorry display of 'reluctant acquiescence' (in Feather's own words) in the Tories' plans to drive down working-class living standards.

Early in 1971 the TUC called a demonstration against the Tories' Industrial Relations Bill. And the TUC organised for it.

The 40-strong staff of its London headquarters issued propaganda of every kind and arranged publicity. As a result of those efforts coupled with those of rank and file militants up and down the country, 250,000 workers demonstrated in London.

So massive was the response, and so significant the rank and file initiative since, that the TUC leaders vowed 'never again'. For Tuesday's day of protest and action, nothing at all was done.

Yet across the country rank and file militants and some union officials stepped in and fought for the May Day strike. And the response was obtained.

Thousands upon thousands marched to show their contempt for the Tory government and their refusal in any way, reluctant or otherwise, to acquiesce in its anti-working-class policies.

SNIVELLING

Feather and company were and are terrified of a real fight with the Tories. They know and fear its consequences—a real confrontation with government and employers.

And it is this fear that has led them to renew their snivelling pleas for conciliation, reason and moderation with Heath and his cabinet.

While militants up and down the country were organising to make May Day a success, the TUC leaders were engaging in secret, off-the-record talks with Heath about a new deal. The contribution of Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, Vic Feather, Sir Sidney Greene, Alf Allen of USDAW and David Basnett of the General and Municipal to May Day was a quiet

by
LAURIE FLYNN
SW Industrial Reporter

trip to Heath's country house with the begging bowl.

Already the outlines of the deal are known to these secret diplomats of the labour movement. Scanlon's 'strange' speeches calling for amendments to the Industrial Relations Act show that he knows what the Tories are willing to give.

He and the others are simply trying to dress them up as 'concessions'.

The Tories want to make the Act more 'efficient'. Heath cannot afford any more martyrs, so the Tories are prepared to inflict penalties only on organisations not individuals.

No NIRC proceedings will be started without the consent of the Tory law and order man, the Attorney General. And unregistered unions will be allowed to obtain agency shop agreements thereby selling the closed shop.

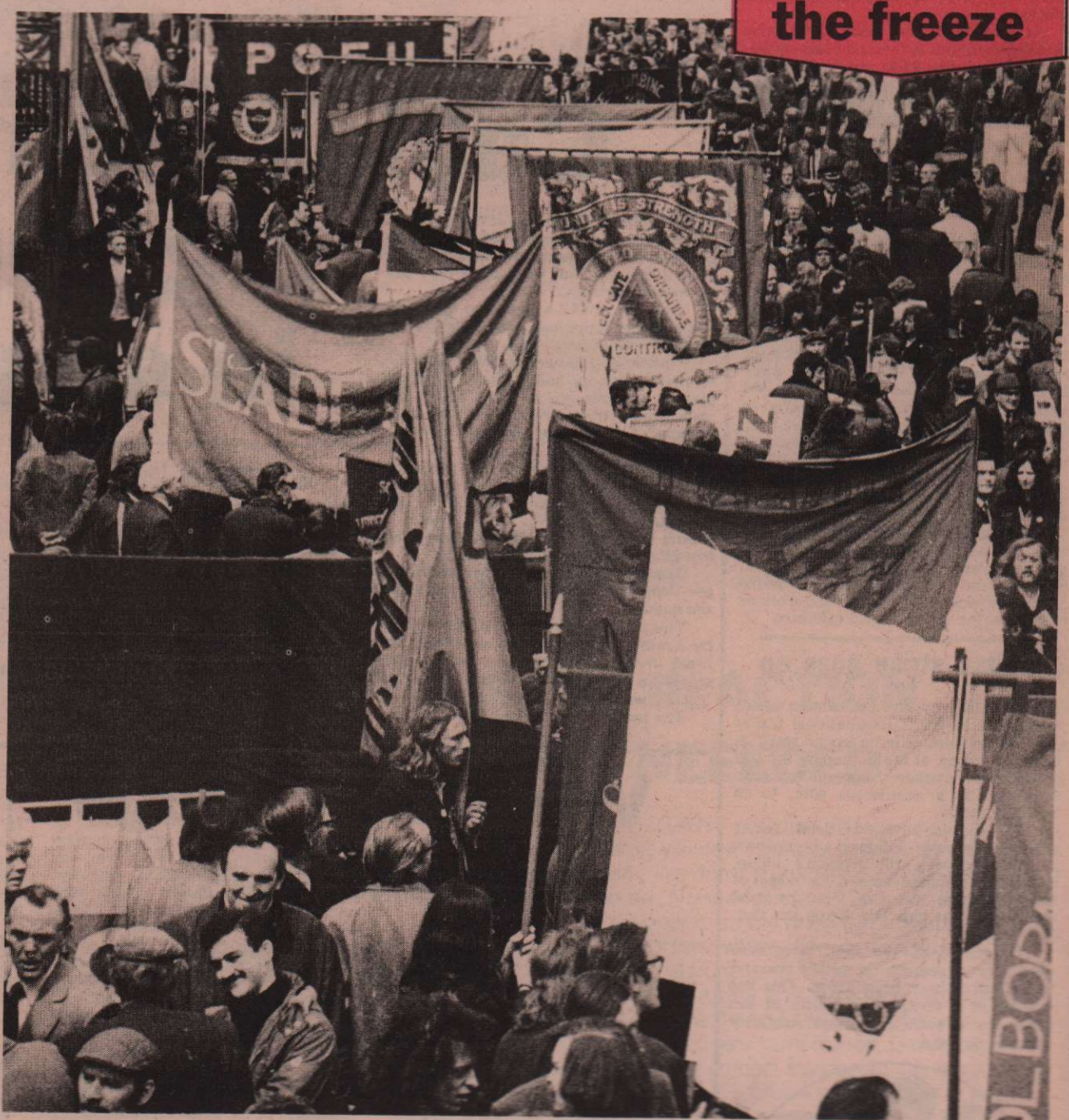
All these proposals are hinted at in the Tory Counter Inflation Act published in between the TUC decision for a day of protest and May Day itself.

And the TUC leaders are desperate to swallow and collaborate in a 'voluntary' Phase Three of the Tory incomes policy provided there are some other phoney concessions on price controls.

For them ducking, diving and collaboration are moral principles. They are terrified of the potential of the working-class movement.

May Day showed the way ahead. The rank and file delivered the goods.

It showed once again that a real fighting alternative can be built, an alternative which will combat the frauds of incomes policies and organise to defeat the governments that impose them.



MAGNIFICENT—that's the only way to describe the response by rank and file trade unionists on May Day. Millions struck and tens of thousands demonstrated against the Tory freeze. But even while the strike was on, union leaders were planning to sabotage their members by holding further talks with the government. Mike Cohen's picture shows a section of London's giant demonstration. More pictures page 15.

Nixon: the man who's bugging America : special report on Watergate inside

Key body plant keeps up Ford pay fight

by Sabby Sagall

FORD militants at the Dagenham body and paint trim and assembly (PTA) plants have come under increasing pressure from the company to abandon their campaign against the paltry offer of £2.40 under phase two of the freeze.

At a mass meeting four weeks ago, 20,000 Dagenham workers re-affirmed their rejection of the offer, but went on to reject action in support of their own claim for a 'substantial increase'.

The mass meeting was organised in working hours by the company, which paid workers on both day and night shifts to attend. The meeting was boycotted by the body plant, whose shop stewards did not want to be swamped by less militant plants such as the engine and foundry plants, where workers have substantially more overtime.

Body plant militants have been holding individual departmental meetings where there has been discussion of the issues and votes have been counted. At the last count, there was a majority of three to one against Ford's offer.

After the stewards lost their fight for a national stoppage, the militants introduced guerrilla tactics. Recently Dagenham has seen short sectional walk-outs in the body plant, an overtime ban in PTA and a work to rule in the press shop—all of which have caused lay-offs amongst other sections. Press shop workers are now working longer than those laid off by their action, a situation which is causing confusion and resentment.

Defence

The danger is that Ford, sensing disunity, will try to victimise individual militants.

At Dagenham last week there were several suspensions or threats of suspension: At Halewood the PTA and body plants voted to accept the offer. But last Thursday they struck in defence of several workers sacked after their sections had tried to keep the campaign going against the offer.

The crucial lesson is that successful guerrilla tactics need an even tighter, more co-ordinated leadership than an all-out strike.

This can best be sustained if the leadership's campaign is fully discussed before being supported by the rank and file.

Lay-offs will not then appear as the product of blind confusion but as the outcome of a plan of action which everyone understands. At their last meeting the union leaders on the National Joint Negotiating Committee made clear yet again their refusal to provide the kind of national lead which could really give Ford workers the confidence to beat the government.

The shop stewards' committees have not only lacked contact with the rank and file, but are isolated from each other.

The urgent task is to build an organisation of socialist militants inside Ford to link the plants at Dagenham, Halewood, Swansea and nationally. Only socialist politics can unite the militants and workers to counter the state political offensive.

United strike goes on

THE STRIKE by the 68 women office workers at Nu-Swift International Ltd at Elland, Yorkshire, is in its second week. A sit-in in support of the women by the 175 production workers has now been extended, by a unanimous vote, to an unofficial strike.

The dispute, over a claim for a substantial increase, followed a breakdown in talks between the women's union, IASS, and the management. The wages of the women are very low, even by local standards. Some girls take home less than £8 a week.

The men from the shop floor have joined the women on the picket line and no deliveries have been made. This has resulted in a complete standstill at the factory thanks to the magnificent solidarity of the men.

SIX WEEK SIT-IN TO HALT SACKINGS

by Roger Rosewell

LIVERPOOL:—400 print workers occupying the Tillotsons plant are determined to hold out in their fight to stop redundancies and defend trade union organisation.

The management has cut back the workforce by more than 300 in recent years. Last

year it tried the same trick again and demanded 103 more sackings. But this time the workers said no. Talks followed and the redundancies were suspended while a joint

working party was set up to examine alternative savings.

A document agreed by both sides recommended £30,000 in economies but the company refused to implement it. In February management broke the agreement and unilaterally sacked 26 women.

The management, despite all its smooth words to the contrary, was never interested in 'savings'. There was only one solution to the problem of low profit—sack some workers and speed up the rest.

The workers' response was immediate. A ban on overtime and mobility arrangements shut half the plant within a day.

Management then ordered the four senior SOGAT chapel officials to appear before the boss.

Only three went, the fourth was absent. The three were then told that they were guilty of an 'unfair industrial practice' and instantly dismissed. The fourth was later visited at his home, informed of the same verdict, given his cards and reassuringly told that 'it was nothing personal'.

An urgently called mass meeting later voted to ignore both these redundancies and the victimisation. But the next day the sacked four were barred from entering the factory and warned that they would be trespassing and prosecuted if they came in. Threats of calling the police were also made.

ROTA

When the workers heard this, they marched to the gates, escorted the four in and unanimously decided that, as the management had tried a lock out, then they themselves would have to go in. The occupation had begun.

Since that day six weeks ago the dispute has been declared official by SOGAT. The local chapel committee has run the occupation on a rota basis of attendance and with members in charge of different but necessary jobs such as finance, discipline, publicity, social security, canteen and welfare.

Management has been busy trying to weaken the occupation by individually attempting to persuade some of the workers to accept voluntary redundancy. They have also written to some of the 26 women and are hoping to demoralise the sit-in as a whole by stating: 'We are happy to have been able to progress voluntary redundancy in spite of the SOGAT opposition to the employees' right to make a free choice in this matter.'

Other tactics that they have employed are hints of a possible factory closure and offers to reinstate the four chapel officials in return for the acceptance of redundancy proposals.

Mass meetings have overwhelmingly defeated all of these tricks and the workers remain solid in their determination to win. But one important ally for management has been the local social security offices.

DESTITUTE

So badly have they treated some of the workers that Sarah Field, a machine operator and one of the original 26, told me that when she went to them: 'They wouldn't pay me anything. They just weren't interested. I live on my own and if I didn't have this job, I'd probably be destitute and have to go in a home.'

'But the social security don't care. As far as they're concerned I just don't exist. But I do and I have the right to work and they're not going to take that away from me.'

Eileen Austin, another machine operator, complained: 'It's our money. So long as the government can get it off you then they're happy. But God help you if you try and get any of it back.'

Arnie Martin, the SOGAT chapel chairman and one of the victimised four, recognises this problem and told me that it underlines the need for more support not only from Merseyside but also throughout the whole country. He said: 'I appeal to all readers of Socialist Worker to try and send us money so that we can carry on and win this fight.'

As the occupation goes into its sixth week, the spirit is tough and confident enough to do just that. Tommy Chute, the father of the chapel, has repeatedly said: 'We are not going to be moved out of here until we've won.'

And as I left the occupied factory that once made cartons for Typhoo Tea, Birds Eye and many other firms, another machine operator, Jennifer Jordan, summed up all the workers' feelings: 'We've been pushed around too many times. Now we're putting an end to it.'



Inside the gates, Aberdare Cables workers maintain a vigil

Cables men win big support in struggle

by Mervyn Jones

ABERDARE:—180 workers at the Aberdare Cables factory are continuing their occupation in protest against the management's cynical move to hide behind the Tory pay freeze and cut wages.

'I'm earning £13 a week less now than I was at the beginning of the freeze,' shop steward Henry Daniels said.

Workers at the nearby CWS creamery, Helliwell's factory and miners' lodges are pledged to mass action if the police and management try to break the sit-in, while workers at the factory not involved in the struggle are giving full support.

The trouble began 18 months ago when the factory was taken over by the Pirelli group. Pirelli immediately pushed through a bonus-sharing scheme which meant a drastic wage cut. On average the men have lost £5 a week across the board.

Despite a review clause in the agreement the firm has refused repeatedly to discuss the question.

This action by Pirelli is a serious attempt by a multi-national firm to cut wages and break union organisation in a development area. Also there are dark suspicions whether it really wants to keep the factory open.

The importance of the dispute has not

been lost on the other workers. 'This could be our Fine Tubes,' said Harold Lloyd, local NUM lodge chairman, urging delegates at the Neath, Aberdare and Swansea joint unions committee to back the occupation.

The joint unions, a rank and file action committee linking workers in different industries, voted to:

- Black all cables (85 per cent of cables used in the S Wales coalfield are made in Aberdare).

- Organise immediate financial support.
- Organise a propaganda campaign.
- Hold a mass picket at the factory.

In spite of overwhelming local support the men's own union, the GMWU, has so far refused to make the dispute official. It has simply advised the men to go back to work 'pending negotiations'—with a management that won't negotiate.

The factory is being occupied 24 hours a day and no management officials are allowed in.

Financial support is urgently needed. Send money and messages of support to Mervyn Fidler, c/o 26 Commer House Street, Llwyrcoed, Aberdare.

We won't budge say bin men on sit-in strike

by Jim Matley, URTU steward

DUSTBINMEN in Stretford occupied their depot last Thursday in protest against the sacking of seven of their fellow workers.

'We won't move an inch until all the men have been reinstated,' said Pete Toomey, deputy steward.

The seven had 'done a foreigner', that is, cleared several cases of rubbish outside the borough boundary. They received a £2 tip.

They were sacked on the spot by J Kay the Chief Public Health Inspector, acting as judge and jury, totally against procedure. For such a minor misdemeanour, men have only been fined in the past.

Three of the men are over 55 and

would not get another job if they were sacked. And two of the seven are active members of the union committee.

The workers believe the real reason for the sackings is that LAMSAC (work-study on the bins) had recommended reducing the workforce by eight men.

The men came out on Tuesday, but the police would not allow a picket, so on Thursday they voted unanimously to occupy until the seven were reinstated. Management then sacked another 11 men. But this had no effect, and the men are solid and confident of victory.

Messages of support and donations to:— Jim Matley, 551 Mauldeth Road West, Chorlton, Manchester 21.

Court move by bosses

by Monte Hulse

AUEW Convenor STOCKPORT:—Management at the small engineering factory of Bason Pasco is attempting to use the courts to end an occupation by the workforce against victimisation and redundancy.

The occupation began three weeks ago when the company sacked 11 workers, including the convenor and four stewards. It argued that it was applying the 'last in, first out' principle.

The unions resisted this, and said that there should be either work-sharing or voluntary redundancy. There are sufficient volunteers.

If the company is successful in using a court action against the workers it will have enormous repercussions for the whole trade union movement. It is important to all trade unionists that the Bason Pasco workers get urgently needed moral and financial support.

Messages of support and donations to: AUEW, 125 Wellington Road South, Stockport, Cheshire.



Civil rights fight is rejected by Communists

by Jim Higgins
IS national secretary

MIDNIGHT RAIDS on the homes of members of the International Socialists and other left groups, the arming of the police, the victimisation of our militants in industry—all of this is an indication of the growing hysteria of a system in crisis.

Despite a number of wide differences on many questions, IS and the Socialist Labour League, recognising the danger that government-inspired repression holds for all the left, discussed jointly a statement of mutual assistance in the event of further attacks.

The statement, which we publish here, was easily agreed, representing as it does the mandatory solidarity of serious socialists in the face of attacks from the common enemy.

Quite naturally we agreed to invite the Communist Party and the International Marxist Group to join us in this declaration. At the time of writing, the IMG has not replied. The Communist Party has, in the following terms, from its general secretary John Gollan:—

'Dear Comrades, Thank you for your letter enclosing draft statement on Tory action and measures designed to undermine working class democratic organisation and intimidate working class militants.'

Important

'We believe this is a tremendously important problem. Our party has consistently campaigned against these new dangerous authoritarian trends and to safeguard democratic rights and institutions, and will continue to do so.'

'Precisely because of what is at stake we believe that only the involvement of the organised trade union and labour movement can be successful in reversing this authoritarian trend.'

'The disruptive policy and actions within the organised labour movement which you have pursued will, in our opinion, make your proposal counter-productive in what must be the aim—the involvement of the labour movement.'

'For these reasons we do not believe it would be useful to join with you in publishing the statement. Yours fraternally, John Gollan, general secretary.'

The Communist Party believes, apparently, that 'this is a tremendously important problem.' It also believes 'that only involvement of the organised trade union and labour movement can be successful in reversing this trend.'

So do we. We would be more than happy to discuss how to join our efforts to involve the organised workers in this campaign.

rejected by Communists

Joint declaration by the International Socialists and the Socialist Labour League

IS and the SLL pledge themselves to jointly defend the democratic rights of the working class against the legislative attacks of the Tory government which seriously affect the trade unions and the working class as well as all groups on the left of the labour movement.

We believe the threat against democratic rights arises from:

1. Raids carried out by the police, the purpose of which they do not feel obliged to explain. These raids generally lead to large quantities of documents and addresses being taken away under conditions in which the work of the organisation can be disrupted.
2. Holding suspects for lengthy periods before they are brought to trial.
3. The secret decision to arm the police.
4. The use of telephone tapping, tape recording and letter opening by the police to illegally incriminate those on the left who are under surveillance.
5. Planting spies and provocateurs within the working-class movement. This is based on the so-called theories of counter-insurgency developed by Kitson, Calvert and Clutterbuck with the support of the Tory cabinet.

IS and the SLL believe that the fight for democratic rights must become an integral part of the struggle of the trade union movement and the working class to expose the operation of the National Industrial Relations Act and all activities of the Tory government through laws which are directed against the democratic rights of the working class.

In the event of an attack involving democratic rights by the Tory government or its agencies against working-class organisations we will together organise such public campaigns as are considered mutually necessary to protect these organisations and their membership from such attacks.

The fight to end all bans and proscriptions in the trade union and labour movement is an essential part of the struggle to defend democratic rights against the attacks of the capitalist state.

Jim Higgins,
national secretary, IS
Gerry Healy,
national secretary, SLL.

On the basis of alleged 'disruption' John Gollan refuses to subscribe to the most elementary solidarity of the joint statement. What does he mean by 'disruption'?

Does he refer to the witchhunting activities of CP member Max Morris in his capacity as president of the National Union of Teachers? Does he mean the physical attacks by CP members on delegates to the recent Liaison Committee conference?

'Disruption'

Perhaps John Gollan is referring to the CP members who have sat on the sidelines or even assisted the right

wing as it victimises our comrades in the factories and the unions? If this is the 'disruption' referred to, the solution is in John Gollan's hands, not ours.

The accelerating rightwards drift of the Communist Party and its fear of association with the revolutionary left leads it to the kind of verbal antics of John Gollan's letter.

But the sectarianism of the CP will not detract us for one minute from our determination to defend all militants, including CP members, from the increasing attacks of the state machine and the right wing in the labour movement.

...and Morning Star turns down debate on union struggle

READERS of Socialist Worker will be aware of our sharp criticism of the role of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, an organisation dominated by the Communist Party.

Both Socialist Worker and the Morning Star have given considerable space to

reporting and commenting on the 31 March conference of the LCDTU. Socialist Worker attacked the bureaucratic decision to refuse to allow resolutions to be debated at the conference and the strong-arm methods of the stewards against critics of the platform.

The Morning Star dismissed the substantial minority of delegates who opposed the platform as an unrepresentative handful of 'wreckers' and 'splitters'.

Interest

On 19 April, the editor of Socialist Worker sent the following letter to the industrial correspondent of the Morning Star:

'Dear Mick Costello, I read with interest your piece in Monday's Star (16 April), attacking Socialist Worker and the International Socialists for our attitude to the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, which repeated your criticisms of us in your earlier report on the LCDTU conference.'

'At present, the IS criticism of the Liaison Committee is confined to the pages of Socialist Worker while your criticism of IS is confined to the Morning Star. I think it would be beneficial for our opposing viewpoints to be heard in our respective papers.'

'I am prepared to offer you 800 words

in Socialist Worker to outline your attitude to the work of the LCDTU, the role of trade union officials and your criticisms of IS in return for the Morning Star offering equal space to an IS spokesman. I am sure that many militants would welcome such a frank exchange of views.'

In reply, George Matthews, editor of the Morning Star, wrote to Socialist Worker on 25 April:

'Dear Comrade, Mick Costello has passed me your letter to him of 19 April. As I understand the International Socialist position, it is that the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions is impotent and that there is now a need for another rank and file organisation to be formed.'

'We have published, and will continue to publish, differing left views in the columns of the Morning Star, but we do not think we should devote space to an article which, in our opinion, would not only be hostile to an organisation which has done and is doing great service to the labour movement, but would be aimed at establishing a rival organisation to it, and would therefore be disruptive in its effect.'

'So, sadly, the Star has turned its back on a discussion that would have proved of considerable value to the many militants in industry concerned about building a fighting organisation to defeat Tory policies.'

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

THE TUC, the Confederation of British Industry and the government are about to start yet another round of talks—about incomes policy of course. We have said this before, but it is worth saying again: incomes policies under capitalism amount to the rich telling the poor not to be greedy and appointing a man at £15,000 a year (more than £288 a week) to see how small an increase can be given to the hospital workers and the rest of us and thinking up reasons for his decisions.

We have just come through the first phase of Heath's incomes policy—the freeze. What happened is summed up in a sentence by the Financial Times: 'During the freeze, wages almost stopped rising while prices went on up as fast as before.' In other words, most of us ended up worse off but the rich got richer as profits accumulated.

Mr Heath celebrated his success by buying himself a new £45,000 yacht. He had good reason for feeling pleased with himself. Who would have thought a year ago that the confidence trick of an incomes policy would be put across so easily by the Tories? The answer is what a close student of our trade union leaders might have predicted. Their spinelessness made the freeze possible.

Running to Heath

We are now in Phase Two and once again the Tories have good grounds for self-congratulation. All settlements to date have been within the government's £1 plus 4 per cent norm. Prices continue to rise as before—at about 8 per cent a year.

This will change though. The price increases will speed up over the summer. Raw material and fuel prices have gone up 20 per cent in the last six months and the effects of the increases are only just working their way through to retail prices.

The Economist predicts that 'in the next two or three months, the rise in the retail price index on a year ago will be running at over 10 per cent.' And still Feather and Co will go running to Downing Street to plead for a 'fair', 'equitable' incomes policy in Phase Three. They might as well ask for a vegetarian crocodile or a flying pig.

Incomes policy is a weapon in the class struggle—a weapon belonging to the other side. It has to be broken. Every trade unionist must realise that we are in for a considerable period in which wages are going to be chasing prices and real earnings tending to fall. The whole point of Phase Two, and of Phase Three after it, is to weigh us down so that we lose the race. We need incomes policy like we need a dose of poison.

It is going to be a hard struggle to get these truths accepted by our leaderships. The longer it takes, the more working people are going to have to pay.

UNITY IN ACTION STILL NEEDED

WE HAVE IMPORTANT political differences with the Communist Party. We don't believe in a parliamentary road to socialism. We don't think Brezhnev's Russia is socialist and so on. None of these differences ought to stop practical co-operation between the Communist Party and IS supporters where there is agreement.

Unfortunately it is hard to get this co-operation even on issues where the Morning Star and Socialist Worker are putting much the same case. For example, at the National Union of Teachers' conference, leading and nationally known CP members **supported** the acceptance of a pay deal within the £1 plus 4 per cent norm and denounced IS supporters as 'ultra lefts' and 'splitters' for opposing it! And yet the Morning Star has correctly called for out and out opposition to Phase Two.

Similarly the CP, IS and indeed the whole movement, have a vital interest in defending democratic rights irrespective of our differences. We regret that the CP has refused to sign a joint statement with us and others on this issue. But this will not change our attitude. We are for unity in action on all issues where there is common ground.

SOCIALIST WORKER
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at 6 Cottons Gardens, E2.

BRIEFING

BELGIUM—which has had more general strikes than any other European country—could be facing another one, with transport workers, dockers, air traffic controllers and factory workers all striking in the past few weeks.

Many strikes have been unofficial, and some union officials got a stormy reception from workers. Typically, union leaders have accused 'leftists' of fomenting trouble.

Schoolchildren have also been agitating in protest against a plan to abolish defer-

ment of military service similar to the French proposals. The Belgian government now seems to have stepped down on this issue.

The outlook seems bleak for the government of M. Leburton, formed in January after a two-month-long cabinet crisis. The price rises affecting Europe have caught Belgium in a vicious circle. Belgian workers' wages are attached to a cost of living index, and since the government is the largest employer, it has to raise taxes to cover wage costs. But if it does so it meets

the resistance of the strong and militant small traders.

WORKERS In Rhodesia are in some ways even worse off than in South Africa. Agricultural workers, who still fall under the feudal conditions of the Masters and Servants Act of 1901, work an average 60-hour week for a monthly wage of 10.30 Rhodesian dollars (£6). This represents a drop in real wages of 16.5 per cent since 1963.

An organised system of recruitment of migrant workers from Malawi floods the agricultural labour market with 35,000 workers each year. This outstrips the number of jobs available and ensures the continuation of starvation wages.

Industrial workers differ from their fellow-sufferers in South Africa only in that they have legislation (the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1960) which regulates their exploitation. In practice racial job reservation operates and although there are some 'multi-racial' unions, the majority are racial. The 19 black unions only cover 5.2 per cent of the total black labour force of 790,000. Wages in mining average 28 dollars per month. The average annual black wage is 315 dollars, compared with the average white wage of 3387 dollars, a ratio of almost eleven to one.

IN EGYPT a wave of arrests has swept left-wing circles. Trade union leaders, particularly from the textile unions, have been imprisoned, and several intellectuals have been locked up following the discovery of an illegal printing press. Many workers have also been arrested in the working-class suburbs of Cairo.

The Minister of Labour, who is automatically head of the CGT, the Egyptian equivalent of the TUC, has dismissed three members of the CGT executive for having 'sympathy for marxism'. Contrary to Egyptian newspaper reports, the decision was not taken by the executive itself, which voted 13-8 against the expulsions.

THE latest changes in the Bolivian cabinet have not altered the nature of the right-wing military regime of Colonel Banzer. Army men have increased their share of posts in the cabinet, which also includes the so-called National Revolutionary Movement and the extreme right-wing Falange. But there has been a sharp rise in the number of land occupations, demonstrations and lighting strikes, suggesting that workers and peasants are beginning to recover from their disastrous defeat of two years ago, when Banzer took power.

The politics of the situation are confused. The Trotskyite POR and other left groupings have joined an 'anti-imperialist front' including army officers. To the east looms the menacing shadow of Brazil. If Latin America is Uncle Sam's back yard, Brazil is his watch-dog.

Yet from the evidence of its past Bolivian revolutionaries will play an important part in the international movement which alone can prepare the Latin America revolution.

In 1960 the council tenants in St Pancras, London, fought against a rent scheme which contained many of the elements which have now been incorporated in the Housing Finance Act. The story of that fight is told in this pamphlet by Dave Burn, with an introduction by Hugh Kerr of the Harlow Tenants Federation.

Rent Strike: St Pancras 1960

Dave Burn

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BOSSSES' CRIMES LED TO MINE DISASTER

THE DISASTER at the Wankie colliery in Rhodesia which killed the entire underground workforce of 391 black miners and 36 of their white overmen and surface managers last June received world-wide publicity.

But the official inquiry report into the disaster, published a month ago, has received virtually no attention. This is not unconnected with the fact that a careful reading of the report reveals a devastating indictment of the operations of 'liberal' big business in Rhodesia and Southern Africa as a whole.

The Wankie Colliery Company belongs to the great white hope for Southern Africa, Harry Oppenheimer, and his massive international group of mining companies, which the British press is so fond of describing as a 'practical' force towards the breakdown of apartheid. In fact the only aspects of apartheid Oppenheimer and his kind dislike are those which prevent their profits being even bigger.

The report contains no information on the working and living conditions inflicted on the black contract workers. But from the strictly technical information in the report, it is clear that Wankie was operated contrary to almost every known mining engineering practice and to the few pitiful government regulations which apply to the industry in Rhodesia.

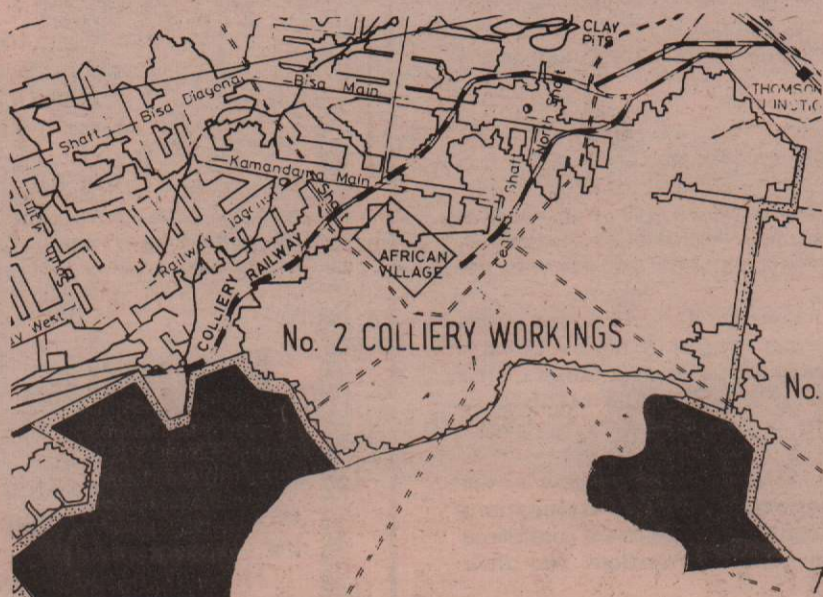
There was almost no proper planning of the mining operation at the Wankie Number 2 colliery.

DELIBERATE

For years before the explosion the mine had been operated with levels of methane gas way in excess of the legal limits. This was known to the management but they did nothing about it. They did not even abide by the legal requirements to report excess methane levels to government inspectors.

This build-up of methane caused last June's first explosion to trigger a series of others which devastated the mine.

The report states that no single cause of the explosion could be identified. This is probably because there were so many acts of deliberate negligence at Wankie. Among the crimes that the Wankie Colliery



A map of the Wankie number 2 colliery working

Company committed were the following.

They used diesel engines without proper exhaust systems below ground—where their use was specifically banned. This meant that exhaust sparks could not be contained and there was a permanent danger they would ignite the gas.

Repairing machinery by open flame welding and cutting was done far too close to the coalface—well within the safety margin. This was cheap and fast—but extremely dangerous.

This negligence confirms what Socialist Worker wrote after the disaster last year, that the deaths were 'the inevitable by-product of the South African mining system organised on the basis of slave labour by massive business interests in London and South Africa... the immense dangers of the mine were known... but this was not going to stop the search for "efficiency" and the drive for profits.'

But the thirst for profit was more insatiable than even we imagined. Wankie Colliery is situated in almost perfect rock conditions for easy and cheap mining. One of the three mines is an opencast operation. The other two involved sinking only shallow shafts. Elementary engineering and safety considerations dictate that roadways should not be driven further than 3000 metres from the outlet shaft.

Yet at Wankie last June face-

working at number 2 colliery was 3800 metres from the shaft. Management had also planned for another eight years mining there—yet had no plans to sink a new shaft. They intended that the black miners should toil even further away from the shaft and so further into danger.

The report concludes that the main reason for the explosion's devastating consequences was the lack of stone-dusting in the mine. This involves erecting barriers to draw dust down to the floor and keep it there. These techniques—which have been included in British general mining regulations since 1920 and have been progressively tightened since, were not used at Wankie. This was, according to the report, because of 'a bona fide but misguided belief that safety measures then in use were adequate.'

MURDEROUS

This remarkable conclusion does not explain why stone-dusting techniques were used in Wankie number 2 for an unspecified period some 20 years ago and then withdrawn.

Nor does this notion of 'bona fide but misguided' beliefs square with the sworn testimony of F A Braithwaite, the Wankie general manager from 1950 to 1970. Stone-dusting was not carried out because of 'the sheer size of the excavation,' Braithwaite told the inquiry. In

other words, it was not done because of the cost.

The Wankie inquiry most certainly does not require that murderous employers do anything substantial to change their ways. Having concluded that lack of stone-dusting was the main cause of the size of the disaster, the report does not even recommend that Anglo American be legally required to introduce it now.

The report is specifically designed to ensure that Wankie continues to deliver its super profits. The inquiry turned down every single major suggestion made by Keith Saunders, the British National Union of Mineworkers representative who went out to Rhodesia to give his skill and knowledge.

Most important of all, they turned down out of hand, his suggestion that a system of workers' safety inspections should be recognised in Rhodesia. This, they argued, might be of great value in British conditions but it was not appropriate to Rhodesia. Instead the report specifically commends the Wankie Colliery Company for its wonderful initiative in setting up a safety committee.

RACIALISM

Taffy Murphy and Jimmy Robinson are respectively lodge secretary and president of the Associated Rhodesian Mineworkers at Wankie. They have both explained what this 'admirable' committee involves. The mine manager meets a few selected white miners, reads out a pious address on safety and gives an account of accidents which have taken place. And that's the end of the safety committee meeting.

The reason this sham committee is commended and a system of workers' independent safety inspection rejected, is racialism. This dictates that no blacks must in any way be allowed representation for wage or safety bargaining. Their spasmodic attempts to set up independent black unions are brutally smashed by the government with the connivance of the Associated Mineworkers of Rhodesia.

So with the official approval of the Rhodesian government the slavery of Wankie is to go on. At any cost the mine must continue to deliver its accepted rate of return on capital—40 per cent per year—for international corporations and stock exchange investors.

Strongarm tactics hot up French car strikes

by Richard Kirkwood

AFTER SIX months in which the unions, especially the Communist Party-dominated CGT, tried to hold back strikes to gain respectability for the elections, French workers are now involved in important struggles.

Seven thousand Renault strikers are demanding to be paid for the 'lay-off' period during the recent strike in the press shop. Many workers have similar grievances to the press-shop and are using this issue to express their discontent. Although they refused to spread the press-shop strike the unions are being careful not to actually oppose it.

Similarly in St Etienne the unions have backed up the workers in one of the smaller Peugeot car plants who have been on strike since last month. The Peugeot workers occupied their factory until 12

April when the management used strong-arm men to kick out the occupying workers under the benevolent eye of the riot police who intervened to prevent the workers fighting back.

Despite this setback the workers have held on and are still refusing to go back for less than the original 1500 francs per month (£30 per week) which they are demanding as the basic minimum for a 40-hour week.

Although the unions in St Etienne are backing these demands they have done nothing to help the struggle in the other factories of Peugeot, in particular at the big Sochaux plant which is the real key to victory at Peugeot.

Despite the fury of Peugeot workers at

the strong-arm methods which led to a number of spontaneous stoppages, the unions have so far contented themselves with a half-hearted one-day protest strike at Sochaux and a three-day protest in the small plant at Dijon.

At the same time an unrelated strike in the Jaquemard factory in St Etienne was also the victim of strong arm methods. After a spokesman for the Jaquemard workers spoke to a mass meeting of Peugeot workers, 800 workers demonstrated outside the Jaquemard factory.

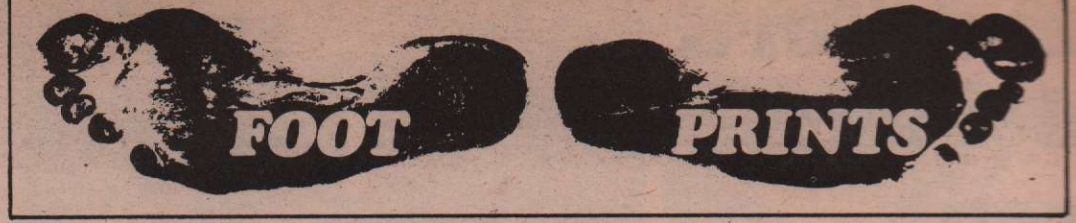
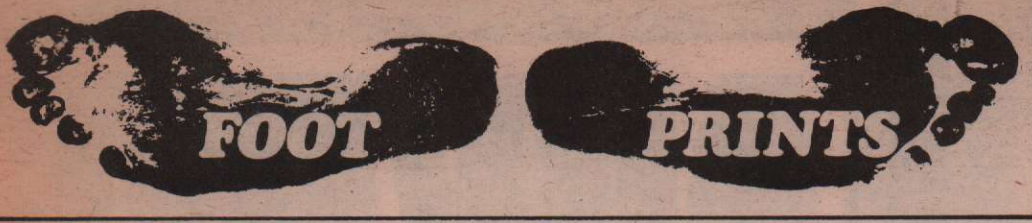
Two interesting features of the current strike wave are the high level of participation by immigrant workers who, especially at Peugeot, have often been terrorised by management into not getting involved in strikes, and the attitude of the unions.

Until recently the unions were labelling the demands now put forward as 'ultra-

left. (1500 francs per month was one of Lutte Ouvriere's demands in the March election campaign). Now they are so frightened of the movement getting out of hand that they are being very 'democratic' and supporting strikes which have emerged from the shop floor.

They are not, of course, actually pushing these demands on a national level but are at least supporting them where they come up. This reflects the growing militancy and self-confidence of French workers, feelings which were shown by the support for revolutionaries during the elections.

With the new term bringing a further stage in the struggles of the high-school students, and in particular with the entry of the technical schools into the struggle, there are possibilities of a development of wide struggles in France in the months ahead.



Pit managers prop up profiteers

IN CASE any miner who reads this column has not seen the March issue of the National Newsletter of the British Association of Colliery Management, which has some 15,000 members in senior posts in the National Coal Board, I'd like to quote a few sayings of Mr George Tyler, the 'union's' general secretary.

Mr Tyler's wife, it will be recalled, together with several senior NCB officials, was lucky enough to buy shares in Bonser Engineering, shortly before that firm was the beneficiary of substantial Coal Board orders for pit props in the mid-1960s (and even before the son of the Coal Board chairman, Alfred Robens, joined the Bonser board).

Mr Tyler was, and is, very angry that the Coal Board should have set up an inquiry into the ownership of Bonser shares by its senior officials.

On 27 November he wrote to the Coal Board chairman to complain about the inquiry and he publishes his letter in his association's journal:

'Investing in the Stock Exchange,' he writes, 'is a legitimate pursuit and one which I pursue myself. I have invested in companies producing mining machinery because it is the one industry I know something about . . . I have a son working in textiles who has a small investment in his own company and in a company for which his firm are main suppliers . . .'

Mr Tyler thought it irrelevant 'to criticise an employee who invests in a firm which supplies goods to the Board and in which he may have played a part in recommending for purchase.'

The inquiry set up in the Coal Board, Mr Tyler wrote, was a 'feature of totalitarian regimes'.

Many readers may find it surprising that such a stirring defence of the 'right' of senior members of a nationalised industry to buy shares in firms which supply that industry should come from a trade union official. But of course the BACM is not a trade union. It is registered under the Industrial Relations Act and has recently negotiated an 'agency shop' agreement with the National Coal Board. It is not affiliated to the Trades Union Congress.

It is doubtful, in spite of the high

degree of co-operation between the BACM and the NCB, whether BACM members will do as well this year as their association's officials did last year. The year's accounts show the total wage and salary bill for the two executive officers and the four regional organisers has risen from £24,589 last year to £29,370 this year.

To this has to be added 'meetings and travelling expenses' of the full-time staff, which was up from £9858 to £12,434, and other 'motor car expenses' of £6617.

In spite of another increase in subscriptions, the union had to record a small deficit and to sell some of its shares. Among the shares not sold were a block worth £8250 in Dobson Park Industries, the country's most profitable mining machinery manufacturers.

SOME socialists in Lincoln have been heard to express surprise that Dick Taverne's 'Democratic Labour' candidates in recent county council elections stood only in wards previously held by Labour. In one case, indeed, the Democratic Labour intervention let the Tory in.

Anyone who knows anything about Mr Taverne's ideas, his lifestyle or his business commitments, however, would be under no illusions as to his class allegiance.

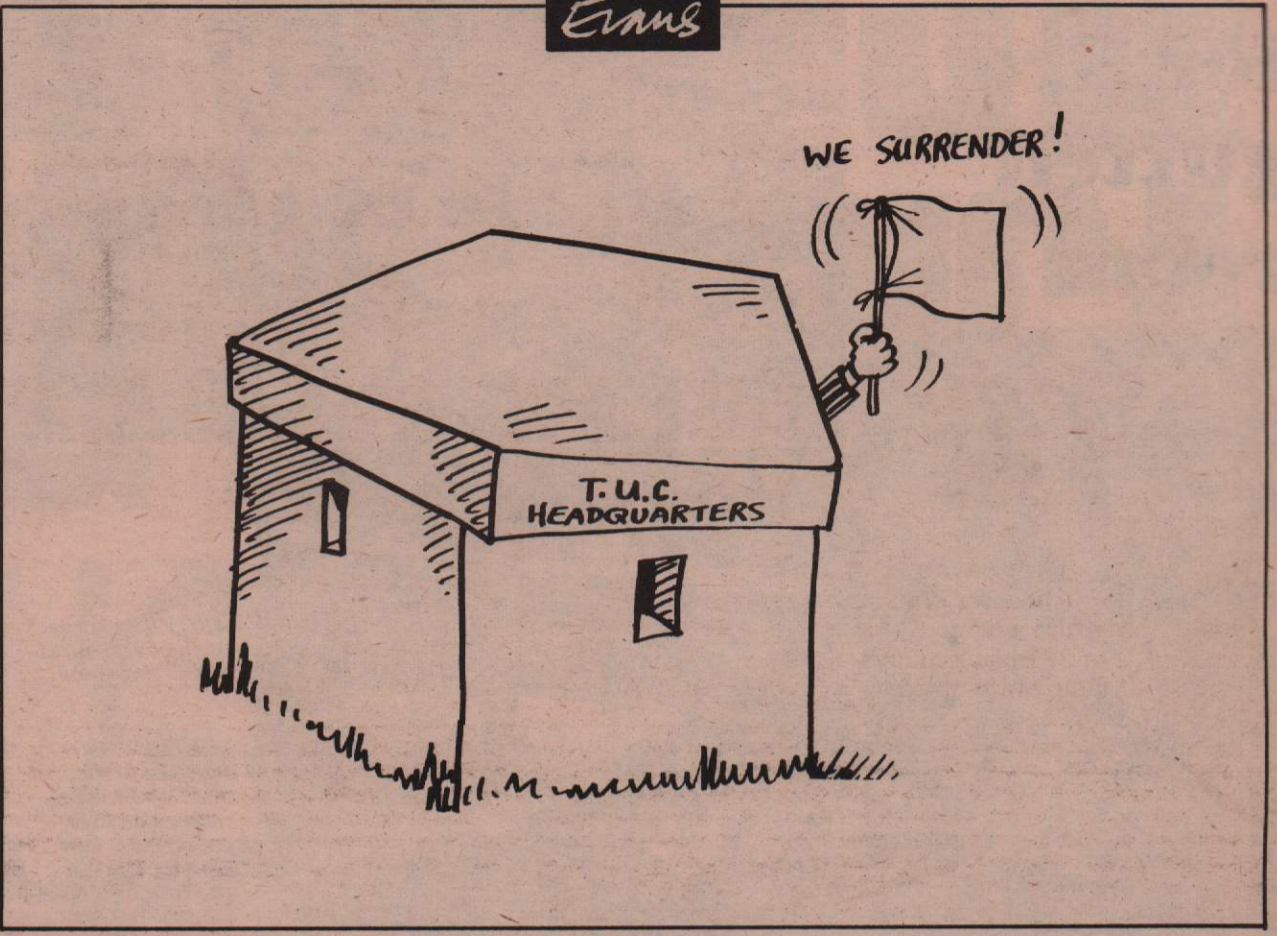
He is, for instance, the director of The Institute for Fiscal Studies—whose official purpose is 'to promote a deeper understanding of the economic and social implications of existing taxes and different fiscal systems.'

The president is Sir Richard Powell, a director of Hill Samuel, merchant bankers. Chairman of the executive committee is William J Hopper, a director of Hill Samuel, merchant bankers. The first offices of the Institute in St James' Square were provided by Hill Samuel, merchant bankers.

Hill Samuel's close contacts in intelligence on both sides of the Atlantic have earned it the nickname 'spy bank'.

The vice-presidents of the Institute (to give it an 'all-party' flavour) are Selwyn Lloyd, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Roy Jenkins, the 'all-party' back-bench MP.

The following corporations and banks are represented on the council: Rio Tinto Zinc, Shell, Commercial



SLICK DICK AND THE FISCAL TRICK

Lords of a Feather

VICTOR FEATHER, general secretary of the TUC, greatly enjoyed his dinner at the Institution of Electrical Engineers in London five days before the TUC's massive 'day of protest' against the freeze.

His address before dinner was mainly devoted to a plea for more 'understanding and co-operation' in British industry. The Industrial Relations Act, he said, 'needs to be amended'. 'There would be some good points which we could make use of.'

In conclusion, he told the institution: 'The expectations of working people are rather modest. Perhaps this is a good thing.'

The institution, which pretends to be a learned body of professionals, is the personal property of the GEC combine. President this year is Sir Eric Eastwood, GEC's research director. Last year's president was Lord Nelson of Stafford, a director of AEI until taken over by GEC, of which he is now a director.

The Institution's deputy president this year is Mr R J Clayton, the firm's technical director.

GEC's devotion to the trade union movement has recently been demonstrated by the firm's victimisation of two stewards associated with the combine's new rank and file newspaper.

The institution where Mr Feather chose to do his fawning is even more openly anti-trade union. It has advised its members that if they want to join a union, then they should join the registered company union UKAPE as this 'is more in line with the ethical considerations of the profession'.

THE latest move in The Guardian's bold campaign against slave labour in South Africa is the publication of a detailed questionnaire about profits, wages and conditions which concerned shareholders in British companies, with South African subsidiaries can send to their directors.

One member of the NUJ chapel at The Guardian has sent a copy to the paper's pension fund, which has some £700,000 invested in companies with South African connections.

This has led to a statement from Lawrence Scott, chairman and main shareholder in Guardian Newspapers, that the Guardian Pension Fund will not be circulating the paper's questionnaire to those companies in which it holds investments which are subsidising apartheid. This, Mr Scott told NUJ members, would be an 'impertinence'.



TAVERNE: Who paid?

Union, Schroder Wagg, SG Warburg, Kitcat and Aitken, Chown and Co, Marks and Spencer. Almost all the other executive members are chartered accountants, business academics, business lawyers or tax bureaucrats.

The working class is represented by Victor Feather, general secretary of the TUC, Professor Brian Abel-Smith of the London School of Economics, who is perhaps best remembered for his membership of the Sainsbury Committee on Drugs which came out against nationalisation in 1967, and Professor Nicholas Kaldor, of Kings College, Cambridge, who described Heath's policies last October as 'socialist'.

The composition of the Institute's council is reflected in its documents and study groups, which have almost all concentrated on how to save on those taxes which hit the rich hardest—especially Corporation Tax.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the cash has come flowing in. Mr Taverne hoped to raise £47,000 by March 1973, and has easily topped the target. More than £60,000 is now raised or promised, including £8000 from a mysterious 'private trust'. All the rest has come, in one way or another, from big business.

'Administrative expenses' in 1972-3 were £20,000, slightly less than research costs (£25,000). Administrative expenses presumably include Mr Taverne's salary, which is not published.

Meanwhile, Mr Taverne is having a lot of trouble with his engagements. On 6 April, he could not attend a crucial meeting in his constituency which had been arranged between the industrial committee set up by Lincoln Council and 'Minister for the Regions' Christopher Chataway to try to get 'intermediate status' (fatter grants for industrialists) for the city. The meeting had been twice postponed by Chataway on the grounds that Lincoln did not have an MP.

The 6 April meeting had to be called off yet again because Mr Taverne could not get there. He was that night in Canada, lecturing, apparently, to a group of businessmen organised by the British/Canadian Trade Association. Mr W G Stephens, managing director of Murco in Manchester, who is president of the British section of the association, confirmed to me that Mr Taverne had spoken at a British Canadian trade function in Canada, but denied that the association had paid his fare. A spokesman for the association in London told me: 'We've been taken over by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.'

The mystery of the month then is: who DID pay for Mr Taverne's trip to Canada? A question which, for some reason, Mr Taverne has not seen fit to answer in his vigorous explanations of his Canada trip in Lincoln newspapers.

Lincoln constituents who would like to know about this could always write to Mr Taverne at the House of Commons, London SW1, or even at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, 1 Bell Yard, London WC2.

Ladbroke's yesterday were offering 'no odds' on whether or not Mr Taverne paid for his Canada trip himself.



TYLER: Defending his shareholders

IT'S A REAL DILLEIGH DALLY

LABOUR'S surprise win of control on the new Northamptonshire County Council caused a bit of a flurry among the Labour group as to who was to be leader. Past form suggested Ron Dilleigh, the influential Northampton alderman who is a member of Northampton Development Corporation—but the job finally went to Gordon Richards, a railwayman, with Dilleigh as deputy leader.

The group's failure to appoint Dilleigh had, I am assured, nothing to do with Dilleigh's friendship with T Dan Smith nor his connection with the formidable Dan Smith/John Poulson partnership which played so crucial a role in construction during the 1960s. Nor had it anything to do with the difficulties caused in Mr

Dilleigh's firm, Dilson Electricals, over problems with the contract at the Doddington Road Council Estate in Wandsworth, South London.

The estate, which is one of the biggest estates in London, was at the centre of the Sporle corruption trial in 1971, as a result of which a 'middleman' called Peter Day was jailed for 18 months for suggesting to Wandsworth councillors that they might receive several hundreds of pounds if the contract went to John Laing the builders.

The contract went to John Laing. The estate had to be 'strengthened' after the Ronan Point disaster, which caused a lot of expense for subcontractors, including Dilson Electricals.

Mr T Dan Smith is now living in Northampton.

Landlord demands rent for fire gutted room

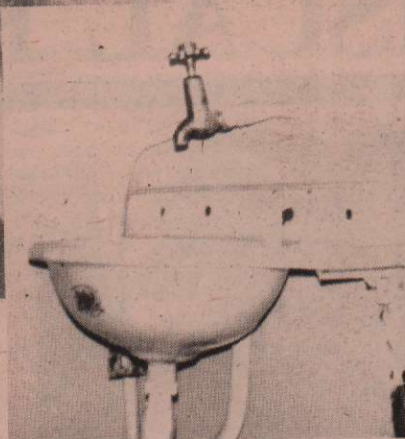


ABOVE: A corner of the Lees' burnt-out sitting room



LEFT: Mrs Lee standing in the middle of the room. The fire happened a year ago, since when the landlord has refused to repair the fire damage

BELOW: A wash-basin, with cold tap only, in the Lees' flat



COME TO SUNNY FOLKESTONE, shout the holiday advertisements. But Mrs Ann Lee is more interested in the ruins of her living room than in the sun. For on 11 March last year Mrs Lee's sitting-room was gutted by fire—and since then the landlord has refused to do anything more than replace the windows.

After the fire, which was caused by an electrical fault, Mrs Lee, who works in a local supermarket, and her husband Jack,

a school caretaker, have withheld their rent as a protest. Now, they say, the landlord has threatened to take them to court for non-payment.

Meanwhile the Lees and their 12-year-old son have been forced to live in one room of their three-room flat—and that room is small and damp. As a result, Jack Lee has had time off work with bronchitis and Ann Lee—on her doctor's advice—has had two months off.

'I can't invite my friends to come home after work,' says Mrs Lee, 'Even my sister

doesn't like coming here now.'

In the flat above the Lee family, Mrs Jean Ferguson, a nurse, lives with her three young children. Mrs Ferguson moved into 1 Trinity Crescent in January 1971. The flat she was offered suffered from damp—but she was told that this would be dealt with. Nothing has been done, and Mrs Ferguson's sitting-room streams with water when it rains.

She too has been withholding her rent, and she too is now facing the threat of legal action.

Both cases have been taken up by Folkestone Corporation, but to repair the property the corporation must know the identity of the owner—who can then be sent the bill. 1 Trinity Crescent is owned by Mr Frank Davis of Cannon Hill, London. He refuses to attend court hearings or take any interest.

Urgent

On 2 February this year he was fined £5 at Folkestone Magistrates Court for refusing to give the public health inspector information about the property. Despite the concern of the local medical officer of health and the public health inspector, Folkestone Corporation has so far been powerless to repair the property—which was described in court as 'in urgent need of repair'. Even the replaced window in Mrs Lee's flat was carried out on the orders of the rent-collector, without Davis' knowledge.

As a last resort, Mrs Lee phoned up the Folkestone Herald, the local newspaper, and told them of her plight. A journalist and a photographer visited Trinity Crescent, and handed their news editor a vague story that named no names.

But even this was too much for the Herald, which refused to touch the story and told its reporter not to hand the story of the Lees and Fergusons on to another paper.

The Folkestone Herald is owned by F J Parsons Ltd, which in turn is owned by Morgan Grampian. Morgan Grampian are also publishers of Muck Shifter monthly.

John Field

NIXON:

ON 26 MAY last year five men checked into the Watergate Hotel in Washington. They used assumed names. It was six months to the US presidential election and the surprise Democratic candidate, George McGovern, was sweeping to victory in the primary elections.

Following the arrival of the five men at the Watergate there were two attempted break-ins at the Democratic Party's National Committee offices in the hotel complex.

Then on 6 June McGovern triumphed in the key Democratic primary in the major state of California. The outsider, derided and scorned just a few months earlier, was now the clear favourite to win the Democratic nomination for the presidency.

The five men at the Watergate went into action. They made a spate of phone calls, held a series of secret meetings, acquired substantial sums of money and espionage equipment.

On 16 June they ate a hearty meal of lobster and then, at 2am, made their way through the Watergate maze to the Democrats' office. They used walkie-talkies to keep in touch with two other men in a motel across the road.

The five broke into the Democrats' office, repaired the already-planted bugging devices and opened files to photograph documents. But a hotel guard spotted the after-hours activities behind the office doors and called the police, who arrested the five at gunpoint.

So began the Watergate Affair, the scandal that, 10 months' later, is still rocking the US and is exposing the lies and deceit of high officials in the Nixon administration. Like falling dominos, White House officials and government spokesmen change their stories and admit their complicity in the bugging affair while the spotlight moves ever closer to the spider in the middle of the web of intrigue and conspiracy—Richard Nixon.

Hush-hush coalition against the mavericks

THE WATERGATE AFFAIR is filling newspaper columns and television screens around the world. For most commentators it is a scandal because it appears to be a sharp break with the normal democratic process and therefore must be condemned.

It is nothing of the sort. Watergate has exposed not just the thuggish, autocratic reality of the Nixon regime. The phoney nature of American democracy and the cosy, sweetheart deals between the two major parties have also been laid bare—for those that care to see.

Political parties in a capitalist society reflect class interests—sometimes competing interests within one class. In modern America, the ruling class enjoys the best of all possible worlds: two parties, Republican and Democrat, that are virtual mirror images of one another.

They are both parties of big business, bulwarks of the system, equally ruthless in pursuing the worldwide imperialist aims of their paymasters and crushing the most meagre and timid reforms at home.

Facade

Able to command vast sums of wealth from their backers, both parties have a virtual monopoly of electoral power. You need to be a millionaire to run for the presidency and a rich man just to stand for local office. This, plus laws that make it difficult and sometimes impossible for minority parties even to get on the ballot paper, gives Republicans and Democrats untrammelled power. The electors have become an irrelevance, at best a rubber stamp for the pre-packaged candidates.

The two parties are essential to maintain the facade of democracy, the party in opposition acting as a safety valve for the various discontents of the people against the party in power.

The choice of presidential candidates depends on the extent of agreement within the big business groups that dominate both parties. Usually this means the choice of political twins, such as Nixon for the Republicans and Humphrey or Muskie for the Democrats—the original plan for last year.

Occasionally, one candidate will appeal to almost the entire ruling



McGOVERN: The surprise contender who wasn't wanted

class, regardless of formal party allegiance. This happened when Lyndon Johnson was the Democratic choice, the man best able to contain social discontent at home and pursue a low-key involvement in Vietnam.

The Republicans wanted Johnson, too, and solved the problem by putting up a wild, far-right extremist, Barry Goldwater, who with his threat to use the H-bomb in SE Asia, sent the Republican voters dutifully flocking to the Democrats' camp.

But from time to time, a maverick candidate representing business interests that are not in the mainstream of American capitalism will upset the best-laid plans of the secret coalition that controls both parties.

Although Kennedy's brief stay in the White House did nothing to harm ruling class interests, big business was not comfortable with the Kennedy clan. They wanted a man in the White House who was a tried and trusted puppet. They don't come better than Richard Nixon.

Repression

For the 1972 election, the secret big business coalition plumped for Nixon and began a massive campaign to stop the adoption of the one man they feared could beat him—Edward Kennedy. They were determined to secure the Democratic nomination for Hubert Humphrey, a sure loser after his 1968 defeat by Nixon.

Out of nowhere came the virtually unknown senator McGovern of Dakota, challenging the party machine, picking up primary victories and winning support from not just the anti-Vietnam lobby but blacks and other groups feeling the lash of Nixon's urban repression and smashing of the poverty programme.

Democracy was threatening to rear its ugly head. Immediately, the ruling class machine swung smoothly into action to knock such nonsense on the head.

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THE MAN WHO'S BUGGING AMERICA



HUNT: The Cuban Bay of Pigs invasion was an earlier assignment



McCORD: 'Agent provocateur' with plans to bomb convention



LIDDY: former FBI agent who joined the White House

McCord blows the whistle

LAST SEPTEMBER the Watergate Five plus Hunt and Liddy were indicted on charges ranging from conspiracy to stealing. George McGovern, deserted by the ruling clique of the Democratic Party, twisting and turning in a desperate attempt to jettison his 'pink' image, made a half-hearted attempt to squeeze some political capital out of Watergate.

But Nixon was in charge of the state machine. He had not appointed hard-line conservatives to the Supreme Court just out of charity and the Watergate trial was simply and cynically put off until after the presidential election.

At the postponed trial, heavy jail sentences were handed down to the Watergate Five, Hunt and Liddy. James McCord, facing 45 years in prison for his part in the conspiracy, went before a Senate committee and blew the whistle on his employers in the hope of getting a considerable reduction in his sentence.

Under oath, McCord named former Attorney General Mitchell, H R Haldeman, Nixon's White House Chief of Staff, John Dean, Nixon's chief legal adviser, Charles Colson and Jeb Stuart Magruder, deputy director of CREEP, as partners to the Watergate affair.

McCord also claimed last week that he was offered a pardon by Nixon if he remained silent on the conspiracy and spent just one year of the 45 in jail.

All those named by McCord first denied their complicity and then, under press pressure, started to change their tune. John Mitchell, who until his resignation last year was the most powerful law officer in the United States, has now admitted that he was in on the Watergate bugging discussions—but he 'disapproved'.

Now Magruder has resigned from the White House along with the acting head of the FBI, Patrick Gray. And Mitchell and Stans are under investigation for receiving secret funds for CREEP from crooked property speculator Robert Vesco.

There is a sickening smell of hypocrisy hanging over the critics of Watergate. The disclosure of the ITT-CIA attempt to overthrow Salvadore Allende's leftist government in Chile

was not denounced by them with equal fervour.

The reason is not hard to find. For the critics of Watergate are in the main members of the Republican Party who are frightened not of the erosion of capitalist democracy in the US but of the threat to their own seats in Senate and Congress because of distaste for Nixon's methods.

The Democrats are maintaining a discreet, nervous silence. They do not want too close a scrutiny of secret election spy techniques for fear it may disclose the operations run from their side as well as the Republicans'.

As for the ruling class, it will swallow its bile and prepare to continue as before. A few heads will roll, including top White House officials. They may suffer the indignity of a former Attorney General getting a close look at one of his own penal establishments. They will tolerate Nixon until his term is over and then quietly write him out of the history books.

Goon squads

But not everyone will be prepared to let things continue as before. Watergate has removed the scales from many people's eyes about the real nature of American democracy and political freedom—a democracy and freedom fashioned to suit the interests of the industrial giants, the banks and the merchants of death in the Pentagon and guarded by the state goon squads of the CIA and FBI.

The blacks and other groups suffering at the hands of Nixon's racist backlash, the Vietnam veterans and the young demonstrators who fought so courageously for an end to the war, and above all the slumbering giant of the organised working class will read, learn and digest the political lessons of 1972.

Watergate may help open the flood-gates for massive social change in the mightiest nation on earth. And of one thing we can be certain, because the American ruling class has decreed it, that change will not come through the ballot box.

DEEP IN THE SLUSH...

IT IS an interesting insight into the minds of the US ruling class to realise that many of them believed that McGovern would implement some of his timid reforms if he were elected. Something akin to panic seized them at the thought of a tiny fraction of their immense wealth being directed to a few of the victims of their exploitation.

One outward sign of that panic was seen in the creation of a group known as 'Democrats for Nixon', with leading party members like Governor John Connally openly ratting and campaigning for their old arch-enemy. They still might not buy a second-hand car from Nixon, but they wanted him back in the White House.

But more sinister moves were in preparation behind the scenes. The plan was a simple one: to infiltrate the McGovern campaign at all levels, to spy, bug and photograph in the hope of discovering some incriminating tit-bit to publicly discredit McGovern.

CREEP

A top-secret fund—known as a 'slush fund'—was set-up to launch the Stop McGovern campaign. The Republicans' wealthy supporters chipped in, including such giant enterprises as International Telephones and Telecommunications who were exposed last year for their part in another, less successful attempt, to rig an election in Chile.

But the campaign, organised by the Committee for the Re-election of the President (CREEP) also gained substantial handouts from worried Democrats. In four months alone last year, CREEP was estimated to have collected at least 10 million dollars.

In charge of CREEP was White House official Charles W Colson, John Mitchell, the Attorney General of the United States and a member of Nixon's cabinet, and Commerce

Secretary Maurice Stans. As the money rolled in they hired a bigger and bigger staff to organise both the public campaign for Nixon and the secret one to spy on and discredit McGovern.

They chose as their chief of the espionage side of the operation E Howard Hunt Jnr, a leading official in the Central Intelligence Agency, an expert on subversion in Latin America who had acted as chief operations officer in the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961.

Second to Hunt was C Gordon Liddy, a former FBI agent who had joined Nixon's White House staff. When the New York Times published the top secret Pentagon Papers on the US conduct of the Vietnam war, Liddy had strongly advised bugging the paper's offices.

Backed by the millions of dollars pouring into the CREEP slush fund, Hunt and Liddy prepared their spying campaign. To finance the bugging and grease palms, money was channelled into a secret bank account of Bernard L Barker, a CIA associate of Hunt's, who was also involved at the Bay of Pigs.

Barker was put in charge of the Watergate affair. He recruited a three-man commando team from among the bitter, anti-Castro, pro-CIA Cuban exile community in Florida.

One of them was Frank Sturgis, a former member of Castro's guerrilla forces who had later defected. Sturgis was investigated by the Warren Commission into the assassination of President Kennedy. His evidence ran to 20 typescript pages but it was not published in the commission's report.

(Prominent journalists such as Joe Nelson of the Los Angeles Times, who have probed the killing of Kennedy,

the Pentagon Papers affair and now Watergate, are convinced that the team that did the Watergate break-in had links with the real murderers of Kennedy.)

The fifth member of the Watergate team and the most important was James W McCord, full-time security chief of CREEP and the Republican National Committee. He was officially employed by the CIA until 1951.

LOBSTER

He was also involved in a short-lived plan to cause a 'left-wing' riot at the 1972 Republican convention and explode bombs there to stampede voters behind Nixon and enable him to declare a State of Emergency and the arrest of the socialist movement.

This, then, was the team that booked into the Watergate Hotel, using names drawn from characters in cheap spy novels written by Hunt. They ate their lobster dinner on 16 June and made their unsuccessful raid on the Democratic offices in the early hours of the 17th.

The two men in walkie-talkie contact in the motel across the road were E Howard Hunt and C Gordon Liddy.



NIXON and HUMPHREY: Identical 'alternatives' who are the best of pals

BEER STRIKE IS GETTING BITTER

TOM KELLY has worked at Watneys Brewery in Whitechapel in London's East End for 12 years. For 10 he has been a shop steward. During this time he has seen beer getting weaker, conditions getting worse and Watney's bank account getting fatter.

Three weeks ago Watney workers hit back with a strike that is growing in numbers and morale as each day passes. They are costing Watneys £¾ million pounds a week and running many of London's pubs dry.

'The ground was laid for the strike during negotiations last July,' said Tom. 'It was a package deal really. In return for various concessions we were offered an increase in shift pay—to be left to a shift workers' working party and was to be brought in on 1 January. But the working party wasn't formed until we had approached the management three or four times actually in January.'

'Eventually we took a £2.40 increase back to the members. The company has said that if it was accepted it would be paid at the end of phase one of the freeze.'

'The £2.40 was accepted by the men and women. Then, come the beginning of phase two, we were told by the company we couldn't have the £2.40 and that they had sent it to the Pay Board.'

'The engineers and electricians took strike action and set up picket lines. The story put out by management was that it was a departmental dispute, but some stewards—including myself—felt worried about the situation and inquired further. When we were put into no doubt about the real dispute we had a meeting of the people in my department and they decided they would join the strike.'

The following Monday Tom's members let him attend the joint negotiating committee to get the guts of the story from management and the full hypocrisy of its attitude became plain.

'The attitude of management was: We have a wage deal. You have honoured your side of it. We're afraid we cannot honour our side and we expect you to carry on as normal. We can't break the law: we have to send the money to the Pay Board,' said Tom.

In the next few days the dispute escalated until the Whitechapel brewery was effectively closed. Flying pickets were sent to the two other Watney plants in London at Mortlake and Isleworth, which gave support.

Tom is bitter about the role the union officials have played in negotiations.

'We have learned a bitter lesson. The stewards will have to be the people who negotiate wage rises in future because we're selling away too much: we've been stripped of everything we've enjoyed in the past and we're not getting anything for it. To be a good steward you

Socialist Worker talks to brewery steward Tom Kelly



have to be dedicated to the job, you have to be honest with your membership and not withhold information from them.'

Watney Mann is now part of Maxwell Joseph's huge Grand Metropolitan Hotels empire. Watneys were taken over when Maxwell Joseph beat them in a vicious takeover battle for Trumans brewery, in which Watneys used outright anti-semitism against Joseph to further their bid. Now the wheeling and dealing between shareholders and managements are over, the prospects are not good either for Watneys or Trumans workers. 'Rationalisation' and the axing of jobs are both on the cards.

'This fight is the first of many,' said Tom Kelly. 'I'm pleased, because it gives people some idea of how things have to be done. We were disorganised at the beginning, but we've learnt a lot in the past two weeks.'

'We do not have details of the coming cut-backs at the moment. It has been put over in an ambiguous way to confuse people. Management say redundancy would be minimum and that the Trumans brewery at Brick Lane would be able to absorb any redundancy there might be.'

'This tale isn't being swallowed at all because we know that at Trumans there are also plans for

rationalisation. The Truman workers are probably being told: "It's all right lads, you can go to Watneys."

'I'm sure the things Maxwell Joseph has lined up for the brewery are unpalatable. His attitude towards the transport at Trumans sticks out a mile.'

'Before the takeover Trumans' drivers were paid waiting time at pubs where there are double yellow lines—lorries waited round the corner until the permitted unloading time. This waiting time amounted to more than £10 a week.'

'When Joseph got his teeth into what was going on he decided he wasn't going to pay waiting time. He didn't seem too worried that he was asking transport crews to break the law. Yet he is screaming at Watneys workers that: "You can't ask us to break the law of the land over the freeze." We must abide by the law of the land but when it comes to unloading lorries and he has to pay for it, then we must break it.'

The dispute has highlighted the need for liaison between stewards in different breweries. Tom Kelly sees this to be important in the fight against redundancies 'because we won't have to wait for the officials to get round the table and come to all sorts of compromise deals.'

'My own union, the Transport Workers, has shown in the past that it's not at all worried that some people are made redundant. Jack Jones proved it with his co-operation with Lord Aldington in arranging docks' sackings. He thinks he's done a good day if seven men are saved out of ten. My attitude to it is that one man made redundant is 100 per cent redundancy for that man.'

Watneys are known for the amount of money they pour into Tory Party coffers. In the past they have paid up to £60,000 a year.

We always remind the company of the sums they pay the Tory Party. They play the poor man when it comes to paying out to the workers, but they seem to have plenty when it comes to the Tory Party. In the light of what is happening now at Watneys they are getting some of their money back.

'As our money has gone to the Tory Pay Board this is essentially a fight against the Tory government. It is sad the leaders of the miners, dockers and everybody else have fallen away from the fight. The leadership has let the labour movement down altogether.'

'There is a great need for building a movement that will force a change of attitude and leadership of the trade union movement. I am sure that an organisation like the International Socialists would be the one that can do it. They seem in our experience to have a better base in the working class than any other I know.'

Jason Meyler

Tower

THE Labour-controlled Kirkby Council in Lancashire is using new tactics in trying to break the six-month rent and rates strike on the Tower Hill estate.

The council last month decided not to issue any notices to quit or to send out eviction orders to tenants on rent strike. Since rents rose by 95p per week under the Unfair Rents Act, Kirkby council have used the threat of evictions before to smash the rent strike.

Last November six tenants received letters from the housing officer stating that they had up to 4.30pm the following Monday to pay their rent and arrears or the council would start eviction proceedings. When the deadline came several hundred tenants from the Tower Hill estate and other areas of Liverpool sealed off the three roads leading to the estate, virtually making Tower Hill a no-go area to bailiffs.

The council immediately withdrew the eviction notices saying it was all a mistake by the housing officer.

The council did however decide to issue money judgement orders to tenants on rent strike. These court orders have been going out to tenants in batches of 40-50 a week, starting with the tenants who have the highest arrears and working down.

One interesting point about the court orders is that the first batch were endorsed by the Liverpool County Court seal on 23 March, which means that the decision to issue money judge-

ment orders was taken before the council meeting. In other words, most Kirkby councillors are acting as pawns for the Tory bureaucrats in the town hall.

At a mass meeting the Tower Hill tenants decided not to give the court the information they had asked for—wages earned, place of work, financial commitments etc. The Tenants Action Group are collecting the court orders as they are delivered and

sending them in weekly batches to the county court. In other words, most Kirkby councillors are acting as pawns for the Tory bureaucrats in the town hall.

Although the tenants acknowledged the county court prepared to accept the Act in any form in the hands of the council and there are orders as they are delivered and

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The Act that the court in collusion Court. For example, a batch of court orders on 9 April, were 17/18 April, the same batch delivered on

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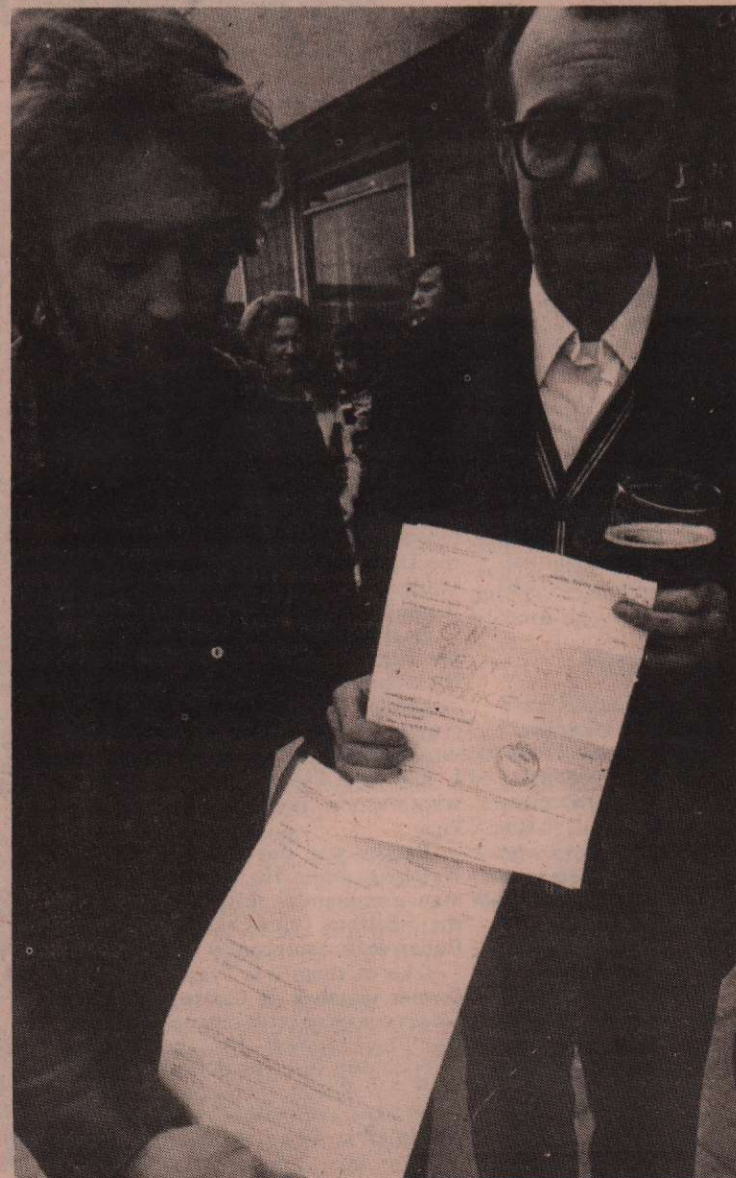
Although claim to be as rent struggle stronger than merely with tenants believe they adopted

Union

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The Scottish combat the tenants' association support of 30

And union success of the Paisley AUE Scottish min have spoken



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Hill's ants nt on



Some of the members of the Tower Hill Rents Action Group PICTURES: Mike Cohen

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by
Tony Boyle

Secretary,
Tower Hill
Rent Action
Group

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Owner-occupiers of the Old Hall Estate, Kirkby, have taken a leaf out of Tower Hill's book and are now preparing for an all-out rates strike against the vicious rate increases.

Unfortunately the owner-occupiers are using a solicitor to fight this battle. The Tower Hill tenants totally reject this method of fighting the Tory class offensive.

The only way that the owner-occupiers can fight the rate increases is by organising on the estates, not by messing around in law courts which are weighted heavily against the working class.

Hostile

Kirkby Labour Party have made no effort to involve themselves in the tenants' struggle, either by supporting the action groups or by taking the struggle out of the council talking-shop.

In fact, many Labour Party members are openly hostile to the stand taken by the Tower Hill tenants. Kirkby Labour Party have, however, sent a £50 donation to the Clay Cross councillors, presumably conscience money.

At the metropolitan council elections a vote of no confidence was recorded in the Kirkby Labour Party, George Bundered, a councillor who voted for implementation of the Housing Finance Act, obtained 2000 votes out of a possible 14,000.



A group of children on the Tower Hill council estate

on backing for Scots tenants

tenants still fighting the Housing
have met in Glasgow to review an
and plan action for the months

h Council of Tenants was set up to
'Fair Rents' Act and now has 45
ciations affiliated to it plus the
trade union branches.

support has been crucial to the
council. Donations have come from
W, British Leyland, Rolls-Royce,
rs and many others. Union speakers
with tenants at meetings called by the

council. Industrial backing is essential if rent strikes
are to have any chance of success.

Many areas have formed rent action committees
and are withholding rent increases. A tenants'
newspaper has been produced to link the struggles
and stop isolation and demoralisation.

In Fife there have been moves to meet with
Kirkcaldy Council to reopen discussions on
implementing the Act. But in most areas the
tenants are determined to maintain powerful
grassroots action committees to carry on the
fight.

International Socialism 58

Labour Party/Gaullism and after/Steel in crisis/The CP and the left May 1973 15p
Lenin and the revolutionary party



The May issue of International
Socialism features an important and
controversial article by Tony Cliff
Lenin on the Revolutionary Party.
This is an article that will be quoted
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The Communist Party and the Left:
Steve Jefferys
Gaullism and After: Ian Birchall
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Reforming the Labour Party?
Duncan Hallas
Plus Notes of the Month and Reviews.

International Socialism Journal
6 Cottons Gardens London E2 8DN
Annual subscription £2.10

That sham they call democracy

THE last Labour government was a disgusting spectacle of broken pledges, even though these were few and threadbare to start with. Harold Wilson, in his massive 'personal record' of those six and a half years, 'The Labour Government 1964-1970', goes some way to explain what happened.

'We had to listen night after night to demands [from the Governor of the Bank of England] that there should be immediate cuts in government expenditure which related to the social services. It was not long before we were being asked, almost at pistol point, to cut back on expenditure, even to the point of stopping the road-building programme, or schools which were only half constructed.

'Indeed in January 1965 at a private lunch at Number 10 I challenged him specifically on this point. I told him that government expenditure was committed far ahead; schools which were being built, roads that were part way to completion had been programmed by our Conservative predecessors in 1962-63.

'Was it his view that we should cut them off half finished—roads left as an eyesore on the countryside, schools left without a roof in order to satisfy foreign financial fetishism? This question was difficult for him, but he answered "Yes". That was, he felt, what he had to ask. And this discussion took place not against the background of a critical run on sterling, but in a period of calm following his successful swap operation.'

Scapegoat

When Wilson was elected he and the many hundreds of thousands who voted for him (including myself) imagined that he and his Cabinet colleagues were about to take charge of the state. In fact the state took charge of him and his government and drove it to attack the working class.

For Harold Wilson a scapegoat is sufficient explanation. The failure of the last Labour government was due to 'financial speculators', particularly of the 'foreign' variety. This is no explanation at all and is designed mainly to persuade people to give him another chance to repeat the operation.

In the statements of Harold Wilson—and indeed of all who see the way to socialism through the election of left-wing alternatives—there is no recognition of the systematic way the wealthy exercise their power



over the whole of society.

There is no understanding of the sham that is parliament and a so-called democracy in which each person over 18 has equality and freedom to the tune of just one vote. There is nothing to be said against the fraud of so-called justice. These things, they say, are merely a few minor blemishes which can be righted by getting the correct majority into that wood-panelled debating chamber in Westminster.

These people would have us all believe the class struggle, and capitalism itself are things of the past.

Yet there is no other explanation of the behaviour of the last Labour government (or the present Tory one) than that they are the agents of the few in the oppression of the many. And there is no other way to genuine human progress than through a clear and uncompromising understanding that parliament, the law, the courts, are part of an organised machine for keeping the people in their allotted place.

The whole panoply of the state, the government economic development committees, the high courts, the magistrates courts, the police and the standing army, the whole massive government bureaucracy, has been carefully constructed to 'harmonise' fundamentally antagonistic interests. And if this imposed 'harmony' is

challenged by the exploited majority, then 'order' and 'civilisation' can be preserved either by granting reforms just enough to head them off, or in more serious circumstances by beheading the movement.

For the working-class movement, threatened and attacked by the agents of the tiny minority with wealth and power, there is no way forward through seeking places within the machine.

There is no value in having working-class judges who dole out the law of the men of property. There is nothing to be gained in having the odd decorative 'worker director'. Indeed such things are designed precisely to weld the working class more tightly to the system.

What then is the way forward? How were the few freedoms we do have won? Freedom of assembly, to meet and speak your mind, to combine in organisations to speak a common aim, the right to print, publish and distribute opinion—these did not fall out of the sky.

Destiny

These freedoms were won in precisely the same way the miners broke the Tory wages norm last year, in the way rank and file trade unionists got the five dockers out of jail—by popular agitation and demonstrations.

Workers have to exercise their sway not on the basis of the geography of electoral wards and constituencies, but on the basis of the real power they have as the producers of the means of life themselves.

All over the world freedoms already won are under massive and sustained attack. The struggle of the workers' movement is, more vitally than for many years, the struggle to build a new society where class antagonism is ended, where the organised power of the workers can unleash the world's massive potential.

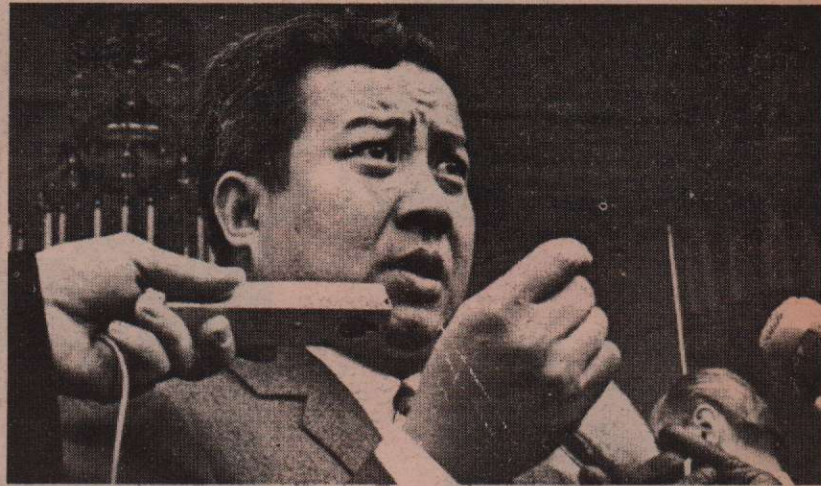
And that can only be achieved by people taking their destiny into their own hands.

For this there is still no better guide than the works of Karl Marx and V I Lenin. In Marx's studies of the first workers' revolution, the Paris Commune, and in Lenin's examination of the whole question of the state and revolution, the secret of socialism is teased out. For human freedom the narrow philistine and corrupt policies of parliamentarianism are but a hindrance. What is needed is the politics of the millions, the politics of life.

● *Lenin's State and Revolution* is available from IS Books, 8 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN, price 25p plus 3p postage.

BOOKS

REVIEW



Sihanouk of Cambodia, whose 'Royal' government operates from Peking

Arms, with love from the CIA

MY WAR WITH THE CIA, by Norodom Sihanouk and Wilfred Burchett, Allen Lane The Penguin Press, £1.60.

SHORTLY before Sihanouk was deposed as President of Cambodia in March 1970, the US ship Columbia Eagle sailed into the harbour at Sihanoukville on the Cambodian coast.

The officially given reason was that two sailors, war protestors who objected to carrying napalm bombs to Bangkok, had mutinied and imprisoned the whole of the crew.

Some French schoolteachers happened to photograph the ship when it arrived, and again when it left. They noted that the ship was low in the water on arrival, and riding high on departure.

After dark on the day the Columbia Eagle dropped anchor, the road from the port to the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh was suddenly closed to traffic. Convoys of military trucks were seen passing north during the night.

On the day of the coup, the troops that massed outside the Cambodian National Assembly forcing Sihanouk's overthrow were armed with new M16 rifles.

This is just one example of the CIA in action, from this book written by Sihanouk himself with the aid of an Australian journalist. Despite its title, the book is about Sihanouk's—and Cambodia's—war not just against the CIA, but against the whole US machine: 'diplomatic' manoeuvres, dollar imperialism, military invasion, bombing, as well as the CIA's undercover operations.

Sihanouk was overthrown by Cambodian Premier Lon Nol and Deputy Premier Sirik Matak. Selected Cambodian army units arrested dozens of high-ranking officers who supported Sihanouk and then sealed off Phnom Penh with barricades, machine-gun nests and tanks.

Tottered

Troops surrounded the National Assembly building. Inside, the deputies were called upon to depose Sihanouk in a 'secret ballot'—in which votes had to be signed to be valid. They then voted to suspend constitutional liberties for six months, so rubber-stamping the military dictatorship.

Since then the new rulers of Cambodia have removed what little democracy the country had, dissolving the National Assembly and declaring government by decree and permanent martial law. Nonetheless, the regime tottered almost before it started walking: popular opposition was so great that six weeks after the coup US troops had to invade from South Vietnam to prevent the resistance fighters from overthrowing Lon Nol.

The dictatorship is now propped up merely by US dollars and US bombs. US 'aid' shot up from 25 million dollars before the coup to 341 million in the year after. The US airforce is now flying 1800 B52 sorties and 6000 tactical strikes into Cambodia every month.

If anyone doubts that Sihanouk



The CIA's puppets: Lon Nol (left) and Sirik Matak

was fighting the US before the coup as well as after, this book provides a pile of evidence, ranging from the testimony of an ex-officer in the US 'Fifth Special Forces' who led a unit into Cambodia in 1967 and murdered a Cambodian agent on orders from the CIA, to the tale of Lon Nol's stay in an American hospital near Paris not long before the coup, where he was briefed by CIA advisers, disguised as patients.

But no socialist need have any illusions about Sihanouk himself. Though he abdicated as King of Cambodia in 1955, he still emphasises his 'royalty'. His government in exile is titled the Royal Cambodian Government.

His attitude towards socialism may be judged from the sort of democracy he instituted for Cambodia: the only candidates allowed to stand for the National Assembly were those on a carefully selected list.

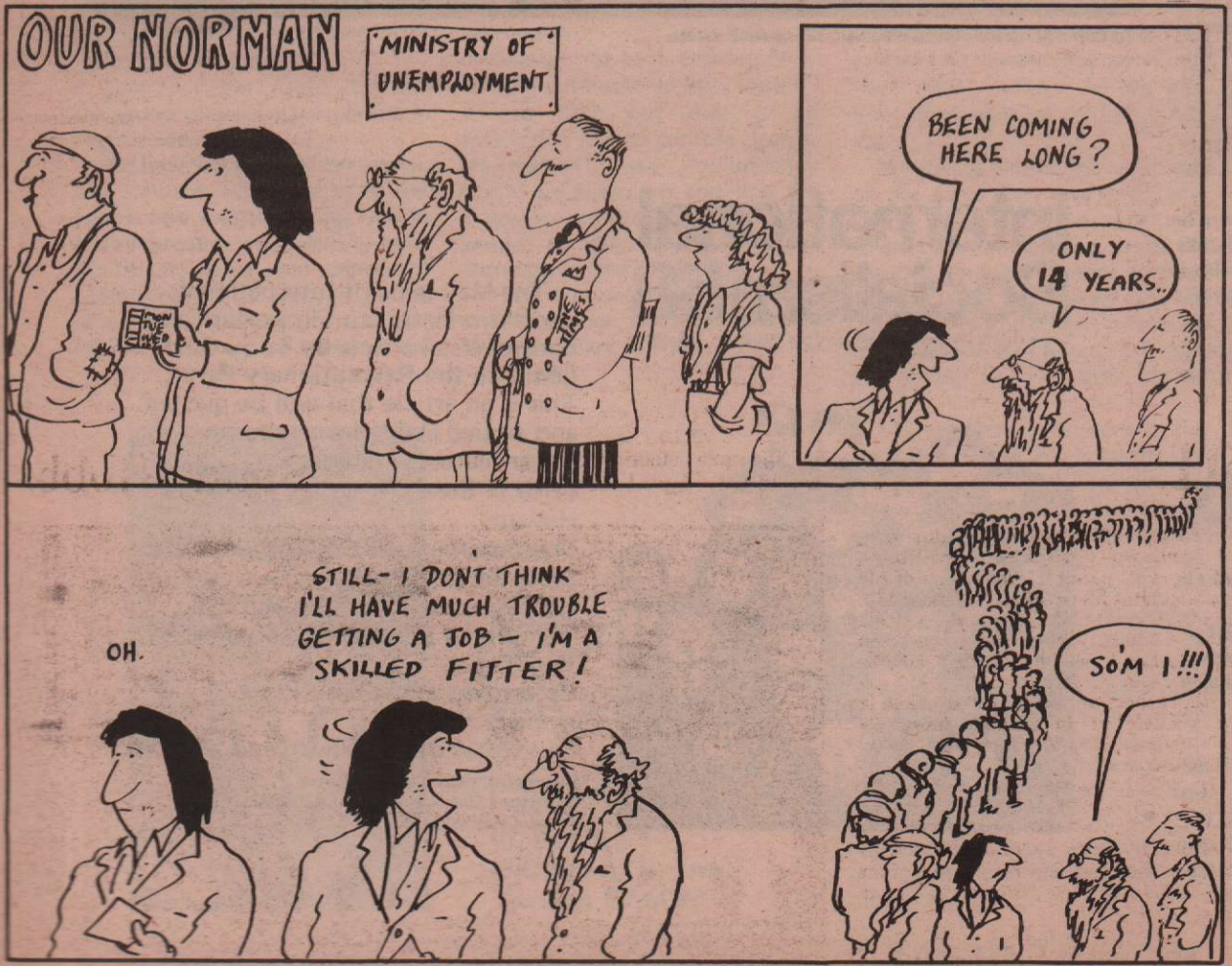
The US did not engineer Sihanouk's overthrow because of any socialist or communist leanings, but because of his nationalism. His policy for Cambodia was independence and neutrality—which meant a refusal of US demands that Cambodian troops attack the Vietcong and cut the Ho Chi Minh trail through Cambodia to South Vietnam.

Some indication of the Cambodian people's support for these policies can be judged from the fact that just one year after the coup, the resistance government controlled four-fifths of Cambodia, an area inhabited by five million of the country's seven million people. For them, the first step towards controlling their own lives is to remove American control over their country.

This book is a fascinating, detailed 'inside' story—but inevitably biased. When it comes to the South East Asian brand of political infighting, Sihanouk can fight as dirty as his opponents.

It's a story worth reading. The high price is simply for a pair of hardback covers—for inside, the typography reveals it as a paperback in disguise. So either get your local library to buy a copy, or wait for the paperback edition.

PETER MARSDEN



Things aren't Dandy in Dundee

A GREAT rainstorm has flooded the city of Burnham and the surrounding areas. One day, Billy the Cat and Katie, the mysterious, acrobatic crime-fighters, are on their daily patrol above the flooded city...



TO MOST people the phrase 'capitalist press' brings to mind big national newspaper groups such as the International Publishing Corporation or the Thomson/Murdoch/Beaverbrook organisations. But one of the most successful British press empires is so different from the others that it demands special attention: D C Thomson of Dundee.

'Of Dundee' gives the first clue to its unique character. Although it has London offices, it is really provincial, unlike the other big publishers. It controls the Dundee local newspapers and also the Sunday Post, one of the most widely read Scottish newspapers which is also reputed to have sales of around a million in England.

What really makes D C Thomson important, however, is its magazines and comics, including Annabel, Topper, Romeo, Bimbo, Wizard, Jackie, Dandy and many others.

On some of these you may see the name 'John

Leng' rather than Thomson. This is because 'the business grew out of two Dundee publishing firms, the Tory D C Thomson and the Liberal John Leng.

The original D C Thomson (1861-1954) was given the Dundee Courier by his daddy, who made his money from a shipping line. He built it up as a rival to the Advertiser, run by Sir John Leng, and eventually took the Advertiser over.

Sentimental

As well as newspapers, the two firms had weekly magazines, such as the People's Journal and the People's Friend. No irony was intended in the titles of these magazines. They were part of the Leng business, and in their early days took a liberal-radical standpoint. The People's Friend, which today runs sickly sentimental stories for respectable ladies, started out in 1869 as a magazine which would open its columns to 'the contributions of the people'. A

poem in the first issue, The Birth of the People's Friend, contains fine phrases such as:

'... and aye contend
Against oppression's iron might.'

Women's magazine publishing was presumably more profitable than contending against oppression, however, and publications with names like Secrets and Family Star began to appear. After the First World War, Thomson started boys' magazines such as Hotspur, Wizard, Rover. According to W Harold Thomson this was a philanthropic exercise, to give jobs to soldiers returning from the front! They were also very successful financially.

Later came their most famous publications of all: Beano and Dandy. Today, although some of the older magazines decline, contract and combine, they continue to bring out new 'products'. For example, a new comic titled Buzz started publication earlier this year.

DC Thomson, like many other press barons, used the power of his presses for his own personal vendettas, not only against trade unionists and nasty communists such as Hugh MacDiarmid, the Scottish poet, but also against fellow Tories. The cranky Thomson took a dislike to Churchill when he was Liberal MP for Dundee, and during the Second World War readers of Thomson papers read references only to 'the Prime Minister', not 'Mr Churchill'.

Although 'DC' has been dead for almost 20 years now, his spirit lives on in the regime of other members of the family, known in the firm as 'Mister Harold', 'Mister Brian', and so on. The rule in Dundee is feudal in style, with 'personal' negotiation of wages and a tendency to recruit workers locally who have no experience of less oppressive press employers.

The political line of the papers is broadly Powellite, carefully tailored for working-class readers. The Sunday Post and its stablemates are hardliners: there is no place for the token 'left' columnists such as in the Beaverbrook/Michael Foot relationship. The magazines are headline too—for a womanly kids-and-kitchen lifestyle.

Anti Union

Only in the comics is there anything like a break in this facade. Alongside the glorification of patriotism and war, there is the occasionally anti-authoritarian outlook of Corporal Clott and the Bash Street Kids. Perhaps the profits blind the Thomson family to any attacks on established authority and values which may occur in these strip cartoons.

Quite apart from the material that they publish, D C Thomson represent a continuing affront to trade unionists. Whereas in other publishers, trade union militancy has won some sort of protection for the workers in the various departments, D C Thomson maintain a solidly anti-union line, not only in print but also in their treatment of their own workers.

'DC' took the 1926 General Strike personally and decided to have no more truck with the unions. Employees have since then been forced to sign a standard letter:

'Dear Sir,
I undertake not to become a member of any union as long as I am in your employment.'

Over the years, many trade unionists have been sacked.

In the early 1950s, there was concerted action aimed at blacking Thomson publications—involving not only print unions but also the transport, locomen's and railmen's unions. The campaign failed. It is to the lasting shame of trade unionists—and particularly Scottish trade unionists—that no further major attempt has been made to break D C Thomson's anti-unionism.

One member of the print union SOGAT told me that they would declare a national holiday the day Thomson's is fully unionised. But the need is for some action before that day, and not a jokey 'plan' for when it does happen.

Are there among Socialist Worker readers some ex-Beano readers? If you are one, don't you feel a special obligation to do something about these reactionaries in Dundee?

Sandy Hobbs

SOCIALIST AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CLASS

'I BELIEVE in the ordinary man and woman and I write for them,' says Colin Welland, the 'nice fat boy' in Z-Cars who starred in Kes, and is now one of the new breed of committed television and stage writers who enlarge life rather than restrict it to the drawing-room.

Welland, a socialist, sees television as an important medium to show the exploiters they are exploiting, as well as reaching the exploited. 'Some exploiters are very nice people. They just don't know what they're doing. I never make my characters real villains. It's important that I get things right on detail.'

'People like Ken Loach and Tony Garnett (The Lump) say they so rarely get the chance to put the other side that when they do they go for strong drama. But that way you're only heightening the awareness of the converted.'

Welland, a former teacher, is a socialist 'because the education system only trains people for jobs and no more. Society is not stimulating, it constricts people. Education is not just about filling your head with facts.'

'I was an academic failure—always 31st out of 32 in class. I just couldn't see the point of stuffing my head with facts. Education should be about expressing artistic and human emotions, not moulding preconceived ideas in people. It's vital that we get away from the instructor-instructed relationship and build something new.'

'I would do without my car if it meant the end of enslaving people in car factories. While I was doing some research about the wool trade in Leeds I went round a factory and saw 300 ladies with thick glasses picking cloth. Rather than build machines ...

'I'm lucky, I write for fulfillment and can get involved in what I do. I have no conscious technique. I write instinctively. But I have a responsibility to people and my friends. So far I've resisted the big-money seductions of rewriting scripts.'

Welland's new West End play, Say Goodnight to Grandma, a diatribe on Northern male chauvinism and the family, is as they say packing them in. He defends the production of plays for the lognetted American tourists and 'naice' middle class out for a super night in town. 'It's better than giving them the titillation of No, No Nanette. Hearing "that big coon bird



Colin Welland and Stephanie Turner in 'Say Goodnight to Grandma'

Colin Welland interviewed by Neil Hamilton

with big titties" (a line from the play) shakes them out of their complacency and beats them at their own game. Grandma will be made into a film, will do the provinces and find a life and energy of its own.'

Rather defensively, he 'admits' he's in the Labour Party. 'I did it for my dad and grandad. My grandad was in it from the start, selling Reynolds News. I despise the Labour Party but I work inside it for change. I would like to see change come through the ballot box but I can't see it happen.'

'I don't like violence but I believe in the industrial revolution of the organised power of the working class. The miners' strike showed it—and if

the TUC had had any guts they would have taken on the government and destroyed it.'

'I don't believe that the worker is an angel. He is uneducated and easily led. You can't call a strike if there is no money in the kitty. You have to be realistic. I'd like to see a socialist state but I'd be finished. The system would be put back 40 years and our children would be the ones to benefit, not us. You work hard, knowing you'd suffer a great deal.'

Welland has done some sports work for the BBC and somebody joked: How could anybody against violence support Leeds United? 'I support Leeds because they play to

win and are unpretentious. The players still live in unpretentious semis. Chelsea sicken me. Fancy Osgood-dressing up as the Wizard for the Daily Mirror. Imagine Norman Hunter doing that!

'Of course I am changing, but my values are fundamentally the same. My palate is more discerning and I like modern furniture where a few years ago I went for Swedish pine—but it's a natural evolution.'

'Emotions in the south are so easily banded about—superlatives like marvellous. West End audiences applaud and cheer what they think they should like—not what they genuinely like. I had a headmaster up north who in his testimonial said I was a "pretty good" teacher. Coming from him that was praise indeed. In the south there should be more considered praise.'

ISOLATION

Z-Cars, where Welland played Constable Davy Graham, won favour because of its naturalism, sharp eye for dialogue and detail of police home life. 'But of course you could never be too honest about the police on TV. The BBC depend too much on them for day to day co-operation. Lancashire Constabulary didn't want to know us at first, but started feting us when Z-Cars did wonders for their image.'

Welland's written a film script about black youth-police relations in Manchester's Moss Side. 'It shows their isolation, both conforming to a code of behaviour that outside Moss Side would be regarded as horrific. Inside they are playing to the rules of the game. They are created by society and the police are as much victims as the boys.'

Welland sees Tories as evil people—despite their veneer of respectability. 'Nazis were obviously evil, but Tories like Heath are evil because they are connen... they have the ability to con working-class people to vote for them and against their own interests in an open election. My granddad would never have believed that one.'

Men without freedom

BEL-AMI, Guy de Maupassant's novel serialised on BBC2 television, is a reminder just how relevant this great 19th century French writer still is. Bel-Ami is a cynical account of how a young man makes a career and a fortune by total lack of scruples and manipulation of women—at the price of his own humanity.

Maupassant had a cruel vision of life which saw men totally without freedom, victims of chance events in a world fragmented and without meaning. He hated the middle class. He hated the bloody defeat of the Paris workers in the Commune of 1871. In 1877 he wrote: 'I demand the suppression of the ruling classes.'

Maupassant gained his reputation for his frank and witty portrayal of sexual relations. But his work is always an accusation against society: adultery is the

product of the boredom and corruption of the upper middle-class, the prostitutes who haunt all his books are the symbol of a society where everything is bought and sold.

Maupassant grasped one great truth about capitalist society. Men do not control things and use them for their own benefit—things take on a life of their own and dominate and destroy men.

One Maupassant story that illustrates this is about a poor woman who has the chance of a lifetime to attend a glamorous ball. She borrows a necklace from a friend and loses it. She buys a replacement and for years she and her husband slave away to pay off the debt.

Then one day, old and tired, she meets her friend—and learns the original necklace was only a cheap imitation. The only people for whom Maupassant

showed any affection or sympathy were the oppressed—poor artists, prostitutes, and above all peasants, whose way of life he knew during his childhood in Normandy. His peasants are not romanticised. They are crude and rough, brutalised by work and poverty, but unlike the corrupt middle-class, they are not hypocrites.

But Maupassant never had any faith in the workers or in socialist ideas. He dissected the reality of society, but had no alternative to offer.

In the end he was destroyed by the society he portrayed. In only 11 years he wrote six novels and more than 300 short stories, driven by an obsession with sales and financial returns. Over-exertion and syphilis drove him mad, and he died at the age of 43.

Ian Birchall

On Black Nationalism
 ... 45p
 ... 25p
 ... 40p

LEON TROTSKY

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

SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dundee
Edinburgh
Dunfermline/
Cowdenbeath
Glanrothes/Kirkcaldy
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Greenock
Stirling

NORTH EAST
Bishop Auckland
Durham
Hartlepool
Newcastle upon Tyne
South Shields
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside E
Teesside W

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Dewsbury
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Pontefract/
Knottingley
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

EAST
Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Harlow
Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

NORTH WEST

Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Burnley
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
Preston
Rochdale
Salford
St Helens
Stoke
Stockport
Trafford
Wigan
Wrexham

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Llanelli
Mid-Devon
Neath
Plymouth
Swansea
Swansea Valley

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Bexley
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon

Ealing

East London
Enfield
Fulham and Hammersmith
Hackney and Islington
Harlesden
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
High Wycombe
Hornsey
Houslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton

MIDLANDS

Birmingham NE
Birmingham S
Coventry
Derby
Dudley
Leamington and Warwick
Leicester
Loughborough
Mid-Derbyshire
Milton Keynes
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Rugby
Warley
Wolverhampton

SOUTH

Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Epsom
Guildford
Purton
Southampton
Woolwich



Your're wrecking our case Chapple tells strikers

ELECTRICIANS on the giant St Thomas' Hospital contract opposite the Houses of Parliament in London have been on strike for many weeks now.

They have been fighting their employers, Phoenix Electrical Contractors, over the small matter of a wage rise. The employers said they could pay no increase of more than the £1 plus four per cent. The electricians at St Thomas' were, in short, fighting the wage freeze.

First the employers tried to discipline the men. Then they set out to break the strike by the use of blackleg labour. They rounded up some self-employed 'lump' electricians and as a small encouragement to get them to break picket lines they paid them considerably more than the organised electricians were getting. Such an infringement of the freeze concerned the Pay Board and the Tory government across the water in parliament not at all.

When the St Thomas' electricians have been joined on the picket lines by other electricians and building workers, the police have brutally and ruthlessly smashed a way through the picket lines for the scabs. Several arrests have been made. The blacklegs to into the site in a purpose-built armoured truck which belongs to the main contractor on the site, John Laing.

Against this background you might expect some meek noise of disquiet from

the electricians' union, the EEPFU. Not at all. The union's executive has denounced the strike as illegal, while maintaining its own opposition 'in principle' to the wage freeze.

Indeed general secretary and president of the union Frank Chapple has written personally to each of the strikers. Among the gems contained in Chapple's masterly letter are the following:

'You will by now have received the terms of the 1974 agreement. That agreement provides for the biggest single increase ever in this industry and it is for ALL our contracting members. That agreement has many obstacles in its path, not least of which is government interference.

'Go back'

'The arguments we have used with the employers, and will have to use with government, to justify this advance are based on the stability of industrial relations and the honouring of the national agreement.

'By your action you are arming our enemies. You give the government the means to frustrate our case. By your strike you make it less likely that ALL contracting members will enjoy the increase the union has negotiated. That is

a heavy responsibility for you to bear and must be weighed together with no prospect of your being successful on your site.

'The instruction of the executive council in this matter is that you should resume normal working. Their purpose in writing to you directly is not only to make that clear but also to tell you of the harm you are doing to other members.

'It will also avoid any doubt as to responsibility should you suffer a long and abortive strike. The responsibility is yours.'

Signed yours fraternally F.J Chapple, presumably as a joke, it is a marvellously revealing letter. It shows the true argument of the TUC right wing which Chapple helps to lead. If only the trade union bureaucracy can be effective policemen over their members then perhaps Ted Heath will make a special case, they are saying.

Frank Chapple will do anything to be head of the one and only special case. He will use every chance to prove to the Tories how reliable he is.

As a result his members' wages will go on falling not only in relation to the cost of living but also to the gains other workers win through struggle, and the working class will continue to be weak in one key area which could really help to finish off the Tories.

IN MEMORY OF A GREAT UNION

SOMEWHERE in Britain members of TASS, the technical and supervisory section of the AUEW, are fighting to break through phase two of the wage freeze.

On the instructions of their union leaders they are fighting quietly. No one wants to alert the Department of Employment or, apparently, the rest of the union's rank and file. The victories have all to be silent.

It is regrettable that TASS should be encouraging this battle to go underground. Particularly since in the past 10 years it has been a union that WAS prepared to fight. All during the 1960s TASS (or DATA as it was then) was in the front of wage battles.

From 1964 to 1970 the wage rates of draughtsmen and other TASS members increased by more than 100 per cent. Minimum rates at 30 moved from an average £17.50 to £37.50, a success based on activity at office and factory level. The executive committee was always ready to support union members in struggle and the national campaign on minimum rates involved thousands.

TASS also made enemies through its militancy. In 1967 the shipbuilding employers locked out all the union's members in an attempt to break its finances. The TASS leaders were able to mobilise the rank and file, whose action and resolve defeated the employers.

The TASS leaders were always quite clear about the role of the government. At an early stage TASS firmly opposed the Labour government's attempt to introduce anti-trade union laws.

The TASS conference was equally clear about wages policies and productivity deals. These measures were declared to be methods of stabilising British capitalism and increasing profit at the workers' expense.

The confidence shown by TASS in fighting for its policies inside the labour movement and against the employers met a response at the TUC. Eventually the arguments TASS used were taken up by other unions. TASS could rightly claim to be the front line of the trade union struggle.

REVERSE

Today that claim could be challenged. Over the past three years the confidence has evaporated. The leadership of TASS, provided predominantly by Communist Party members, has become equivocal and evasive. In a series of fights the executive has not been willing to lead the rank and file.

This has shown most clearly when TASS members at C A Parsons, at Newcastle upon Tyne, were defending their closed shop agreement. The activists at Parsons had forced the company to accept that all staff workers would be TASS members, but once the Industrial Relations Act was passed, the employers tried to reverse the situation.

At first the union's stand was straightforward: if the members at Parsons were taken before the NIRC or TASS was fined, the whole membership would be mobilised

Jimmy McCallum, a TASS office convenor on Clydebank, gives a conference-week report on the leaders who no longer lead

in their defence.

But when it appeared that this might happen the leaders' position changed. TASS could be too easily isolated and would have to rely on the strength of the bigger unions, they said. When the general secretary, George Doughty, failed to win that support at the TUC General Council, the issue was dead.

The idea of offering a focal point for trade union opposition to the Industrial Relations Act was never considered. Each battle was seen separately and weighed according to its strength in isolation.

This thinking now governs the union strategy against the freeze. On every occasion that a battle arises the executive is keen to tell the rank and file of their isolation and the weakness of union finances.

At the start of the freeze in October last year draughtsmen at Rolls-Royce, Bristol, were made a low offer. The office committee decided to recommend that the 1500 TASS members reject it, and if it had not been for the intervention of the deputy general secretary that recommendation would have been carried.

But Ken Gill, who is also a leading member of the Communist Party, addressed the mass meeting at which the rejection motion was to be put. He spoke of the poverty of the union and told the members that any strike would be a long one. To bring home his point he reminded them that the government had its full weight behind the freeze and said it would be better to be cautious. The offer was accepted.

Members of the office committee at Rolls-Royce felt the executive was backing down and failing to support members prepared to fight the freeze. They were not alone. In other areas similar events occurred.

Faced with the open and vicious Tory attack on wages, TASS retreated. The once-prized traditions of the union had been set aside. The leadership is no longer responsive to rank and file activity. Instead the rank and file is encouraged to be submissive to the executive.

There was always a possibility that this note of the leadership's song could become dominant. The tendency to believe it was more important to win a full-time organiser's job for a 'left' than to develop rank and file activity was always apparent. This preoccupation with manning the bureaucracy with 'lefts' had its most serious implications for the 'broad left'.

At every annual conference the regular broad left meeting will attract 95-98 per cent of the delegates. The support given to it by activists is general and overwhelming.

Yet in recent years the broad left has been involved in no more than making a yearly list of supported candidates for positions within the union. The situation has become ridiculous. The right wing has been vanquished long ago, but every time the broad left merely discusses the mechanics of electioneering.

DOMINANT

It has now taken on a more sinister aspect. Some activists within the broad left are being increasingly excluded as the Communist Party asserts its domination. The Party now holds all the positions of strength inside TASS and has done so increasingly since amalgamation with the AEU two years ago.

This concern for the positions of power has led to IS members of TASS being excluded from broad left meetings and leading figures of the union being replaced because their politics are to the left of the dominant group.

This development is not encouraging rank and file activity. It is having the opposite effect. When coupled with the retreat on phase two it can only lead to further isolation and retreat.

There is still a tradition inside the union which is prepared to fight and regards which this fight as decisive in building a wider socialist alternative. These members have presented themselves as an alternative within the broad left and will continue to struggle for rank and file activity on the major issues facing the working class movement.

Union leaders: the missing link

PAUL FOOT's article last week correctly pointed out the betrayal of Scanlon and Jones on the question of the Industrial Relations Act and the Tory freeze. His explanations, however, are apt to be misleading.

It is not true that the trade union leaders are frightened of mass action by their well-paid, powerful jobs. But Paul Foot says nothing about their political positions.

It is their attitude to questions of the state, the role of parliament, and whether socialism can be achieved by reform or revolution that conditions whether they will carry the fight against Tory laws to the bitter end.

As revolutionaries, we know that the Frank Chapples of this world are on the side of the capitalists. But for all their rhetoric, neither Jones nor Scanlon wish to see capitalism ended by a mass working-class movement.

They have illusions in parliament, and therefore, while they may, under pressure from the left, make statements about the inevitability of laws being broken by trade unionists, they will fight to the end to retain the parliamentary system.

For deep down they also believe, with the right wing, that the Tories have a right to govern. As revolutionaries, we have to expose illusions in capitalist democracy.

The trouble with left reformists like Scanlon is that in practice they separate the economic struggle from the political one. Paul Foot's analysis could lead to the same separation.

It is no use saying that all union leaders are intrinsically impotent. The next stage is to say that we don't need leaders. And the final step is a retreat into syndicalism.

Of course, we will not get the leadership we need without building rank and file revolutionary movements within the trade unions. And we won't get that without a growing revolutionary organisation, free from the illusions with which Paul Foot's article was unfortunately infected.—**GEOFF WOOLFE**, London SE13.

Next steps

WITH THE May Day strike more like the last twitchings of the left trade union leaders and less like the beginning of a TUC campaign to bring down the Tories, revolutionaries within the trade union movement have some serious thinking to do.

The decision of many union leaders to 'leave it up to the districts, branches and trades councils' was to invite disaster. It was more than an abdication of leadership—it was a conscious attempt to damp down any possible militant action.

Clearly the first aim of such a strike was to unite all trade unionists behind militant action and to link the strike with the support for workers fighting Phase Two. These aims were sabotaged by the union leaders who no doubt feel that a massive and determined show of rank and file strength would embarrass their future talks with Heath over phase three.

Many militants are disillusioned with futile one-day strikes but see no alternative other than outright surrender. With sections of workers being isolated and falling to the Tories' wage norm there is a real danger of demoralisation.

What has to be realised here is

KEY CONFERENCE WILL CHALLENGE ARMY ROLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

SINCE August 1969 the British Army has been used to maintain 'law and order' in Northern Ireland. Yet during that time the violence, death and bloodshed has reached a level which few foresaw in 1969.

The successive prescriptions of the British government have failed to cure the patient. Three Stormont prime ministers, internment, the Derry massacre, direct rule, Operation Motorman and now the White Paper—none have succeeded in restoring stability. The time has come to challenge the assumptions of government and media. To question whether a British Army can ever solve the age-old Irish question. To ask whether British law and

LETTERS

Police attacks threaten future of Black paper

AS YOU are aware, our newspaper Grass Roots has come under increasing attack from the Special Branch. Attempts are being made to prevent us from providing a community service that seeks to report and investigate all the problems that affect the Black community.

The effect on the publication of our newspaper has been crippling, as we are now unable to publish future issues due to intimidation, harassment and confiscation and destruction of production materials.

It will be costly to replace these items destroyed by the Special Branch raiding party. Coupled with this we

that a defeat at the hands of the government means more than a wage cut, it means future attacks upon conditions and trade union organisation as the bosses gain confidence.

The right wing are echoing these justifiable doubts and fears in order to undermine the position of the so-called 'lefts' on the TUC and push the leaders into a direct collaborationist role. Indeed the 'lefts', anticipating such a right-wing resurgence, are already shifting their ground to accommodate it.

Scanlon's remarks on the Industrial Relations Act, Jones' and Feather's plea to the government over the hospital workers and their promise to hold back other groups of workers if the Tories will consent to an above-the-norm increase for the ancillary workers, the TUC's abject willingness to talk to Heath about Phase Three combined with their sabotaging of solidarity action in support of the gasmen and hospital workers: all this suggests that the TUC, with the active help of the 'lefts', is preparing for a total retreat.

Only one force can prevent such a retreat—the rank and file militants united across plant and union boundaries behind a common programme.

To the rank and file falls the task of building a fighting leadership at local and national level. To us falls the task of providing a militant focus within our districts which will encourage and support any section of workers opposing the Tory norm and the inevitable management attacks on conditions.

We have to fight inside the branches, district committees, confeds and trade councils for such a policy. But we also have to fight inside our respective bodies against the threat

of a right wing resurgence and left wing retreat that looks certain to follow May Day.—**MAL COLLINS**, (TASS), Coventry.

SOCIALIST WORKER is always printing stories about the way the Labour Party and union leaders like Scanlon, Jones and Fisher are betraying their members. But why on earth doesn't IS and Socialist Worker tell the union rank and file how to kick these traitors out of office?

We pay their wages, so why can't we form more militant unions or withhold our subs until we bring the Feathers, Scanlons, Joneses and Fishers to heel?—**J PREEN**, London SW18.

Sterile

SOCIALIST WORKER (April 7) carried an advertisement from the Workers' Association. This organisation openly supports repression of republicanism in Northern Ireland, under the sterile theory of 'Two Nations'.

They say that the 'Protestant nation' is being attacked by a foreign country and have the right to resort to barbarism to defend themselves. This includes the murder of children, pensioners, the hooding and torturing of political prisoners.

Recently they protested to the Independent Television Authority that Daithi O'Connell was given television time to put forward the republican position. In this they aligned themselves with five Monday Club MPs.

We do not think it is right for a British socialist organisation to accept an ad from such people. It is a pro-British imperialist organisation. If IS

have two outstanding bills to the printers, £145 and £45, which must be met before we restart publication.

We hope that you will be able to assist us. If you want to see Grass Roots appear again, please make a generous contribution to our survival fund.

Unless we raise £250 or more within the next two months, we will be forced to cease publication altogether. Please make cheques etc payable to Grass Roots, 54 Wightman Road, London N4.—**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**, Grass Roots, London N4.

is going to take an ad from them, why not from the Monday Club? Or the Loyalist Association of Workers?

The most important question facing the British left today is the struggle in Northern Ireland. What sort of politics is going to determine the future of British workers—chauvinist and racist politics, or consistent marxist politics? If chauvinism is not firmly attacked, it won't disappear.

Today Irish and black workers—tomorrow British trade unionists. British socialists should know that Kitson and the British state are testing out weapons and tactics on Irish workers to use next on British workers.

Which class is going to learn the lessons of struggle in Northern Ireland, the British ruling class with its long experience of butchery and divide and rule, or the British working class with its long history of social-chauvinism and narrow pragmatism?—**R ASCAL**, T HAIG, London NW1.

Housing and the great tax racket

A FEW points on T H Rogmorton's article on building societies (April). Total tax relief to mortgage payers in 1972 was five times as great as the subsidy to council housing rents, while in 1963 the figures were similar.

While inflation in house prices has increased tax relief, the total subsidy to council housing has been cut.

As there is no limit to the amount of a mortgage on which tax relief is granted, someone with a mortgage of £20,000 can make more each year in tax relief than most workers earn.

Many property speculators, for example, find it advantageous to take out large mortgages on their own houses. Look what they can gain—tax relief on the interest payments on the mortgage, tax relief on life assurance premiums, profits on the life policy when it matures, and a large capital sum for speculation at little cost.

Building societies waste thousands of pounds each year opening offices where it is fashionable to be. For example, before the so-called development of Romford four building societies had offices there, now there are about 10.

Three of the original societies have opened larger, plushier offices. But mortgages in Romford are more difficult to get.

When the building society manager says he has no money to lend, this is not true. There is always money available for solicitors and estate agents who have a common interest in good and long business lunches.

Building societies do not like bad publicity, which was why in 1966, after complaints by black workers in north London that they were being charged up to £150 by estate agents for false building society references, the case was quietly dropped after a lengthy investigation by the Fraud Squad.

Although in theory non-profit making, building societies work on the same basis of graft and corruption as the rest of the capitalist system.—**TERRY WARD**, York.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Social Security for Strikers



a Socialist Worker pamphlet 2p

UCS shop stewards dodge election

by Jim McDonald

SCOTLAND:-With the consent of the Communist Party Jimmy Reid and James Airlie, the AUEW shop stewards at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, have refused to stand in next October's crucial elections for the Scottish seat on the seven-man AUEW executive.

At an Engineering Voice 'broad left' meeting called last Saturday to discuss the left candidate, the Communist Party's nominee was Callum McKay, the union's district official at Paisley who has just been defeated for the post of Scottish regional officer by a right-wing convenor.

McKay's chances of beating John Boyd, who is defending the seat, are not half as good as Reid's or Airlie's, both of whose candidatures were pushed hard by a substantial section of the meeting, to the considerable embarrassment of the platform.

The chairman of the meeting, James Hamilton, a Communist Party member, explained that Reid felt that 'his interest lay in his work as a councillor'. More importantly, said Hamilton, Reid 'wants to be the first Communist Party MP since Gallacher.'

A new rule in the union means that if Boyd is elected to the executive this year, he will stay in his post for 10 years. If the left did manage to unseat Boyd, they would command an unchallenged overall majority on the union executive.

PRINTSHOP FUND

WE'RE on the last lap towards the £30,000 printshop fund. Our appeal to readers unable to strike on May Day to send their day's wages has been well received. The week's total was £501, and the fund now stands at £28,867.

IS branches contributing are: Stockport £15, Ipswich £10, Bradford £44.26, Sheffield £5.

Please sir, you're a shambles

THE executive of the National Union of Teachers succeeded in getting through the union's conference in Scarborough last week decisions that will weaken the ability of militants to organise.

The conference carried an emergency resolution that outlaws the right of local branches to call strikes and backed the abolition of the Young Teachers Conference, where the militant Rank and File group made the running last year.

Divided

The success of the executive was based on the fact that the conference tends to be unrepresentative of the union membership. It is heavily outweighed

by small country branches where headteachers dominate the proceedings. This was shown by one vote. It seemed from a show of hands that the conference was equally divided on a motion to make the executive more representative, but on a card vote the motion was defeated by 45,000 votes.

The ability of headteachers to dominate sections of the union is because they have much more spare time for union work than young class teachers, who make up more than half the membership. The heads have been using their influence to stop the union pressing for policies that might lead to greater influence for young teachers in the union or in schools.

They managed to get the conference to reverse a decision taken last year that teachers should have more say in the

actual running of schools. Instead, this year's conference opted, narrowly, for mere 'consultation'.

An important feature of the conference was the way in which the Communist Party, which was the leadership of the left in the union until the Rank and File group developed a few years ago, was completely divided over the crucial issues.

Refusal

After the conference the Morning Star criticised the refusal of the union to support the May Day strike, the winding up of the Young Teachers Conference, the restriction of the rights of local branches and the line taken on staff consultation. But at the conference lead-

ing Communist Party members either backed the executive on these measures or refused to take a stand.

For example, on 'consultation' Sam Fisher, a leading Communist Party member, spoke for the executive, even though other members of the same party opposed the executive from the floor.

On the rights of local branches, the executive resolution was seconded by Party supporter Jack Jones, while another party member, Joe Finch, from Lewisham, opposed the executive. But his speech 'against' was almost entirely devoted to an attack on the 'maverick ultra-left adventurists' instead of the executive's undemocratic manoeuvrings. Many members of the Party were appalled by Finch's behaviour and blame him for the fact that the executive's motion was carried.

Car men take on the freeze

SOUTHAMPTON:-Car workers at Strachans Coachbuilders, part of the giant Maxwell Joseph empire, struck on Monday in pursuit of their claim for £10 a week across the board rise, a 35-hour week and an extra week's holiday. After three months of negotiations talks broke down with a management offer of one day extra holiday, £1 plus four per cent, and a nine-month agreement.

In a bid to avert a strike, the stewards' committee held last-minute talks with the factory manager while notices were being posted up signed by the managing director saying that management could not give more because of the freeze, and if there was a strike they would withdraw the offer.

John Hodgkins, AUEW shop steward, said: 'We have offered them such a list of ways round the freeze that all they had to do was write them down, stick a pin in the paper, and they couldn't lose.'

The strikers hope that when the the strike is won it will provide a lead to other firms in the area to break through phase two of the freeze.

Messages of support to Tony Bonnar, 23 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Portsmouth.

NEWSMEN DEFEAT UNION LEADERS

HALFWAY through the last afternoon of the National Union of Journalists Annual Delegate Meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne a delegate shouted: 'Fifty up!'

The cry was greeted with some puzzlement, until someone pointed out that the union's executive had been defeated by vote of the conference for the 50th time. Even in the NUJ, this is regarded as a record. Once again, a sur-

prisingly young conference was shocked by the distance between the union's ageing and reactionary executive and the aspirations of its activist rank and file.

The conference voted overwhelmingly for a motion censuring the executive for the part it played in recent disputes concerning chapels caught in the government's pay freeze. Several chapels, notably at Sheffield, had shown they were prepared to put the freeze, under which they lost a pay increase negotiated the previous year, to the test of industrial action.

The executive was also heavily defeated when it recommended to conference proposals for reorganising the union's structure which would leave the executive almost as large and flabby as it is at present. The union, which has a membership of 27,500, has an executive of 29

In spite of the executive's constant defeats, however, conference was not prepared to vote for an all-out battle against the freeze. A resolution calling for action to win outstanding claims regardless of the freeze was heavily defeated in favour of a flat statement of opposition to the freeze in co-operation with the TUC. Even the call for an all-out strike on May Day, supported by the executive, was carried by a relatively small majority.

CHARTER

Perhaps the worst blow for the executive was the conference's censure on its decision to pay with union funds for a libel action against four supporters of the Journalists' Charter—Ron Knowles, Paul Foot, Laurie Flynn and Roger Protz—which had been begun by an NUJ official.

By an enormous majority conference 'strongly urged' the executive to pay the costs of the action, which has now been settled at the expense of the defendants.

Indeed, the most encouraging aspect of the conference was the enthusiasm for the Journalists' Charter. More than 60 delegates—about a fifth of the entire conference—attended a Charter meeting, elected a working executive and demanded a more regular Charter.

Ron Knowles, a well-known militant in the NUJ and author of Socialist Worker's Spike column, has been elected full-time editor of The Journalist, the union's monthly journal. He was unopposed. The previous year's editor, Mr Ted Simpson, had indicated that he was not prepared to stand for the post in the light of the previous year's conference decision that the editor should submit himself for re-election every three years.

A move to unseat Knowles on grounds of the union's poverty was defeated by conference by 171 votes to 155.

Militant meeting for centenary

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE:-More than 400 trade unionists and socialists attended the 100th anniversary rally of Newcastle Trades Council last Saturday. The main speaker at the meeting, the largest in Newcastle for 15 years, was Paul Foot of Socialist Worker.

He said that in the past year the Tories and the rich men they represented had been able to hold back wages and increase their own wealth and power. Meanwhile, the TUC had proved itself quite impotent. This proved the need for workers to organise politically as well as in the unions and workplaces.

The other main speaker at the meeting should have been Jimmy Reid, of UCS and the Communist Party, but a telegram arrived an hour before the meeting saying he could not make it as he was sick. The Labour Party had declined to send a speaker.

Conference joins picket

BLACKPOOL:-About 400 delegates to the annual conference of the shop workers' union USDAW last week joined the picket line at Empire Pools, where women workers have been on strike for 13 weeks for union recognition. Among the pickets was Dick Seabrook, the union president, who made a speech in support of the strikers.

The strikers only wish that his words were turned into deeds. He recently asked Tom Jackson of the Union of Postal Workers to black Empire Pools mail, an action which would immediately bring the firm to a halt, but then accepted Jackson's excuse that there could be no interference with 'Her Majesty's mail'.

He was speechless when one of the strikers reminded him that if working people had not ignored the law in the past, there would be no unions today.

IS NEWS

NEARLY 100 people attended a conference organised by the International Socialists Historians Group last Saturday, where Harry Wicks and Reg Groves, revolutionaries since the 1920s, discussed some of the lessons of the bitter years between 1919 and 1939.

Harry Wicks told how the Communist Party had been at its most effective as a force for workers' revolution in the early 1920s. But, he explained, after 1925 its leaders had used the party 'as a pressure group on the left union leaders more than as a party.'

But how did it all feel? Groves was unforgettably vivid. 'In 1919, 1926 and 1931 the revolution turned up, but nobody kept the appointment.' 'In 1931 Ramsay MacDonald split the Labour Party in his zeal to slash unemployment benefit. Bitterness and despair fed on each other. The fight back began locally, led often by fresh people with varying politics.'

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive by first post 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

GLASGOW IS public meeting
Roger Protz, editor of Socialist Worker
AFTER MAY DAY—WHAT NEXT?
Thursday 10 May, 7.30pm
Christian Institute, Bothwell St

BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT IS Social:
Saturday 5 May, 8pm, extension to 11pm.
The Mermaid pub, Stratford Road, Birmingham 12. Kartoon Klowns in Mr Oligarchy's Circus 1973, plus music and folk singing. Admission 50p—proceeds to district and printshop fund.

CHELMSFORD IS public meeting: Equal Pay—Women fight back. Speaker Barbara Kerr, editor of Woman's Voice. Tuesday 8 May, 8pm, Civic Centre, Chelmsford.

WOLVERHAMPTON DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE FASCISTS
Saturday 5 May
Stewards' meeting 1pm
Assembly 1.30pm
St Peter's Steps, Civic Square
All Midlands IS members to support

BRADFORD IS public meeting
THE WORKING CLASS ANSWER TO RACIALISM
Speakers: George Peake (IS) and Councillor Brian Rhodes (Labour Party)
Tuesday 8 May, 8pm
55 Godwin Street, Bradford 1

ISLINGTON IS public meeting
IRELAND AND THE BRITISH WORKER
Speakers from IS and Clann na hEireann
Tuesday 8 May, 8pm
The George, Liverpool Rd, London N1

ILFORD AND DAGENHAM IS meeting:
Industrial Perspectives. Speaker Andreas Nagliati. Thursday 10 May, 8pm. Becontree Labour Hall, Green Lane, Dagenham.

ENFIELD IS public meeting
THE PRICES EXPLOSION
Speaker John Palmer
Wednesday 9 May, 8pm
King's Arms, corner of Hertford Road and Green Street (buses 279, 135, 135a)
ALL WELCOME

STRETFORD IS public meeting: After May Day, what next? Speaker Bob Light (TGWU shop steward, London docks). Friday 4 May, 8pm, Dog and Partridge, Chester Road, Stretford.

LAMBETH IS public meeting: What next in the fight against the Freeze? Speaker Roger Cox. Wednesday 9 May, 8.15pm, Brixton Training Centre, opposite Brixton Town Hall.

SCOTTISH North East Region IS, DUNDEE: Industrial Day School, Sunday 6 May, 11am; Peter Bain (AUEW), 2.30pm; Rab Jeffries (EPTU), 4pm; Joan Smith, Old Union Building, 1 Perth Road, Dundee.

HORNSEY/BARNET IS public meeting: Fight the Tories—the need for a revolutionary party. Speaker: Paul Foot. Wednesday 9 May, 8pm, Bull and Butcher, Whetstone High Road (near Tottenham and Whetstone tube, buses 263, 134, 84, 125).

TOTTENHAM IS public meeting: Watergate—the Rising Tide of Scandal. Thursday 17 May, 8pm, 628 High Road, London N17.

OTHER MEETINGS

MEETING ON INDOCHINA: Thursday 3 May, 7.30pm, North London Poly, Holloway Road, London N7. Organised by Islington Indo China Solidarity Group.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT: Third conference of Radical Scholars of Soviet and East European Studies, 4-6 May, Union Building, University of Birmingham, Friday 4 May, 7.30pm; Marx and the dictatorship of the proletariat, Saturday 5 May, 10am; Dictatorship of the proletariat in 1917-21; 2pm; Bureaucracy and the Party in the 1920s; 7pm; Free discussion and social. Sunday 6 May, 10am; How to fight empiricism in Soviet Studies; 2pm; workshops. Registration: students and unemployed £1, others £1.50. Floor space for sleeping bags is available.

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE meeting: Speaker Ly Van Sau (official spokesman for the South Vietnam Provisional Revolutionary Government). Saturday 5 May, 7.30pm, Hine Street Methodist Church, London EC1 (near Broad Street tube).

CONFERENCE ON THE FAMILY
Leeds Polytechnic, 12 and 13 May
History of the Family
Speakers: Sheila Rowbotham, Linda Smith
The Family under Capitalism
Speakers: Margaret Coulson, Lee Sanders-Comer
The Family in post-Capitalist Society
Speaker: Maria Loftus
The conference is organised by Leeds Poly Women's Lib but is aimed at all those—female AND male—who see the importance of this subject to our political understanding
Facilities for children provided
Details: Val Jones, 69 Bagby Road, Leeds 2. Phone: 0532 27777

NOTICES

LARGE YORKSHIRE ATTIC (bedsit) to spare from October. Cheap in return for minimal reliable companionship of two small girls after school 4-6. Might suit part-time student, writer, etc. Send for details: Carey, 6 Granville Terrace, Bingley.

JUST OUT for May Day: Lessons of the General Strike, 1926, by Bob Dent. A look at the role of the government, the TUC and the rank and file with lessons for today. Copies 10p each (plus 3p postage). Bulk rates available. From Millenium, 9 Sefton Drive, Liverpool 8 (051-733 2635).

UNION OF POST OFFICE WORKERS
London Overseas Telephones number 2 branch
MAY DAY GREETINGS TO ALL FELLOW TRADE UNIONISTS
Sylvester McGovern (chairman)
John Haylett (secretary)



BACK NUMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL URGENTLY NEEDED

Copies of issues numbers 9, 12, 20, 28 and 29 needed for the production of the special issue for August. Please contact Bill Kaye, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN, phone 01-739 1878.

A MAY DAY TO REMEMBER



Part of the International Socialists' contingent on the London May Day march along Oxford Street



Section of the big crowd in Hyde Park at the end-of-march rally

Skeletons in the printers' cupboard

by SW Reporter

LONDON:—Some of the most amazing scenes ever witnessed at any union meeting took place at the quarterly meeting of the London Clerical Branch of the print union NATSOPA last week.

The chairman of the meeting refused to accept an emergency resolution protesting at the disciplining of most of the branch committee, although 90 per cent of the 400 delegates in the Hall protested. Pandemonium reigned for at least half an hour.

The previous quarterly meeting of the branch was adjourned by the then chairman, Barry Fitzpatrick. He had been told by the union general secretary, Richard Briginshaw, not to let the meeting discuss the events leading to the sacking of the father of the chapel (shop steward) at the Press Association, John Lawrence. Rather than take part in the suppression of discussion Fitzpatrick adjourned the meeting, expecting the branch committee to reconvene it within a few days.

Instead, the union executive took away his right to hold any office in the union for two years, so removing him both from the branch chairmanship and the executive itself.

Concede

Five members of the branch committee—Len Metcalf, Charlie Pratt, Mike O'Brien, R K Smith and R W Smith—had won a majority vote preventing the branch itself from disciplining Fitzpatrick. So the executive barred them too from office for two years and left the branch with a rump committee made up of the executive's own supporters. These appointed the chairman for the spring meeting, with instructions to prevent discussion of this affair.

Delegates at the meeting last week were unable to persuade the chairman to allow discussion and eventually decided to give way, to allow discussion on other important matters.

One of these was the John Lawrence case itself. This time the mood of the delegates was such that

the committee had to permit some debate.

It was reported that eventually the Department of Employment had been forced to concede Lawrence's claim for unemployment benefit on the grounds that he had been victimised—something the union leaders have been claiming did not happen.

Delegates then tried to move a resolution for the reinstatement of Lawrence in his job and censuring the conduct of the branch secretary in refusing to support his fight. The chairman ruled this out of order, again amid massive protest from the delegates.

The assistant national secretary of the union, Arthur Davis, was asked by Fitzpatrick to give reasons for executive decisions in the Lawrence case, Davis refused and told delegates to wait for the executive to report to the union's governing council in June 1974. Meanwhile, Lawrence is to remain without a job.

The officials became increasingly rattled as the meeting progressed. Davis launched an outburst accusing Fitzpatrick of being 'deliberately dis-

ruptive on every occasion we get down to serious business'. After delegates had jumped to their feet roaring disapproval, the chairman asked Davis to withdraw the accusation. He reluctantly did so.

The meeting showed the depth of rank and file feeling and was a severe snub to the officials and the rump branch committee.

The disciplinary actions taken by the executive against Fitzpatrick and the other five should be cause for concern to every serious trade unionist. Briginshaw and his friends are using the crudest bureaucratic methods to try to prevent socialist critics of the union leaders from expressing their views. But the leaders are also scared stiff of publicity.

NATSOPA militants must campaign for the unconditional reinstatement of the disciplined members, the reinstatement of Lawrence at the Press Association and the censuring of the executive. This should be the beginning of a campaign to ensure that the union is that the union is run in a democratic manner. If the NATSOPA leaders are allowed to continue with their present antics they will smash the union and destroy the aspirations of thousands of members.



Carworkers marching against the freeze . . .



. . . and railmen against the government



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____
 Address _____

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN

OUT AGAINST TORIES

A Better Tomorrow for the tycoons

THE MIDLANDS:—A magnificent May Day response with half a million on strike and 20,000 workers on the march made Birmingham's demonstration the biggest since the 1926 General Strike.

In the car and components industry Austin Longbridge, Rover, SU Carburettor, Tractors, Pressed Steel Fisher, Lucas, Dunlop, Wilmott Breeden, GKN and many other factories were out.

More than 12,000 building workers struck in response to the call of the construction union, UCATT, and a large

contingent joined the march.

But there was a gap between the militancy and enthusiasm of the marchers and the tired talk of the speakers at the town hall.

Anthony Wedgwood Benn, in his new role as the 'socialist' voice of the Labour Party, promised Labour's election manifesto would be 'the most radical socialist manifesto since 1945'. He promised Labour would carry through 'a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power in Britain' and warned people that such actions as the May Day protest were 'not to force the government out by revolutionary means or to undermine parliamentary democracy.'

Ten years ago Benn's speech would have got a standing ovation—but on Tuesday no one stood up. In the evening Birmingham International Socialists held a successful and well attended meeting which clearly pointed the way forward after May Day.

In DUDLEY about 500 trade unionists and tenants demonstrated through the streets. Production at Beans, a British Leyland subsidiary, was shut down and other factories were hit by the strike.

In WOLVERHAMPTON more than 2500 trade unionists marched against the Tory government's policies. Major engineering factories were at a standstill—including Hobsons, Fafnirs, Norton Villiers, Willenhall Radiators and Goodyear.

After the rally, at which Labour MP Renee Short gave the usual empty left-wing talk, a well attended meeting called by Wolverhampton International Socialists heard speakers Tony Cliff, of the IS executive committee, and Frank Henderson, a sheet metal worker from Austin Longbridge.

Both stressed that the main lesson of May Day was the need to build a workers' party that—unlike the dithering TUC leaders—would be prepared to lead an all-out fight with the Tories.

In WALSALL more than 700 trade unionists and tenants led by a majorette band paraded through the town. F H Lloyd and Rubery Owen workers, who have been on strike for five weeks, joined the march. When Harry Mountfield, president of Walsall Trades Council, tried to speak at the meeting in the town hall afterwards, he was booed off the platform. He is a foreman at Rubery Owen and has regularly broken official picket lines to get into work.

More than 2000 workers took part in a protest march through STROKE-ONTRENT, including a large contingent from the giant Michelin tyre factory where production was halted with 3500 men staying away. Pottery workers, building workers, 70 women workers from the Rist factory at NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME, and workers from Shelton steelworks, who are threatened with mass redundancy, joined the march.

Strikes hit the 21 factories of the William Bolton group, the giant GEC plant in STAFFORD, building sites and bus services. Factory workers and miners from CANNOCK and RUGELEY were also on the march.

Car plants out

OXFORD:—All British Leyland factories were closed down, with 25,000 workers out, and no buses ran as the bus drivers refused to cross a picket line organised by the trades council. About 1000 demonstrators marched through the city centre.

Shipyard stopped

SOUTHAMPTON:—Production was completely halted in at least 12 major firms including Vosper Thornycroft's shipyard, Camber and Nicholson, the yacht builders, Ford and Wellworthy's. 600 marched in Southampton and 300 in Eastleigh.

Appeal for support

BIRMINGHAM:—Workers at Baxters engineering factory are continuing their strike for the reinstatement of their victimised convenor, Larry Blewitt. The strike is now in its fourth week and financial support is needed urgently.

Official AUEW collection sheets are available from Baxters' Shop Stewards Committee, 46 Victoria Road, Harborne, Birmingham B17 0AE.

STRIKE GOES ON AS BOSS RATS ON DEAL

DARLSTON:—Rubery Owen workers showed at a mass meeting on Tuesday their determination to continue their five-week-old official strike.

Agreement had been reached with the company the previous Friday, and it looked as though an important victory had been won for organised trade unionism in the West Midlands. Management had been forced to withdraw its proposals to extend measured day work in the factory and to concede substantial pay rises to both pieceworkers and day workers.

But after the weekend the company ratted on the agreement and went back to its original attempt to impose a new pay structure and wage cuts of up to £11 a week.

Fred Griffiths, AUEW district secretary,

FINANCIAL journalists everywhere have been celebrating hard in the past few days at the news of a merger between the Hill Samuel merchant bank and Slater Walker Securities.

From the Daily Mail to the Sunday Telegraph, the toadies have been doing overtime searching for the right superlatives to describe this 'brilliant', 'exciting' and 'dynamic' new departure in the City of London.

Hill Samuel is Britain's second biggest 'money machine'. Together the two concerns will control a near monopoly of several markets, notably in the rich and expanding area of unit trusts.

In a rare moment of insubordination, the Sunday Times Business News has suggested that the massive power of what will be the biggest merchant bank in Europe should be subjected to the scrutiny of the Monopolies Commission. Some rude people in the City have even been quoting that hilarious document, A Better Tomorrow, the Conservatives' election manifesto in 1970:

'We will pursue a vigorous competition policy. We will check any abuse of dominant power or monopoly, strengthening and reforming the machinery which exists.'

All these considerations apply to the Slater Walker/Hill Samuel merger. Fortunately for both companies, however, each has its man in the Cabinet.

Loyalty

The man who decides whether to refer a merger to the Monopolies Commission is the Secretary for Trade and Industry, Peter Walker, who was the founder, with Jim Slater, of Slater Walker. Until February 1971 Mr Walker was still the registered owner of some 19,000 shares in Slater Walker, and will not comment as to whether or not he still has shares in the names of trusts or nominees.

Walker's loyalty to his old firm has already been recognised in the Slater Walker boardroom. Last year, for the first time in the company's history, the directors decided to make a contribution to the Conservative Party—£15,000.

Hill Samuel's man in the government is John Davies. Mr Davies was rescued by Hill Samuel after being sacked in 1969 from the directorship of the Confederation of British Industry, where he went after being sacked by BP.

It was largely due to the good offices of Sir Kenneth Keith, chairman of Hill Samuel, that Mr Davies managed to get a safe seat in parliament (and in the Cabinet). Mr Davies has already paid back part of the debt. One of the 'four wise men' appointed to 'look into' the problem of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in 1971, when John Davies was Secretary for Industry, was John Macgregor, a young executive at Hill Samuel.

The Slater Walker/Hill Samuel merger has been undertaken so that both companies can better compete in Europe. Mr Davies is Minister for Europe.

Socialist Worker confidently predicts that the merger will NOT be referred to the Monopolies Commission.

London stops as 20,000 join march

LONDON:—More than 20,000 trade unionists marched through London on May Day. Red and multi-coloured banners led column after column of marchers from the Embankment to Hyde Park.

Central London came to a complete halt and big crowds jammed the pavements to cheer and applaud as the march went past, accompanied by a lively band provided by the Musicians' Union. Among those marching were official contingents of railmen, dockers, post office engineers, engineers, transport workers, printers, teachers, NALGO and APEX members. Branches of the Communist Party and the International Socialists were also out in force.

The mighty demonstration concluded with a rally in Hyde Park where various trade union and Labour Party dignitaries addressed the marchers with the usual empty clichés about the evils of a system they will spend the rest of the year propping up.

Big and impressive though the march was, it was surprisingly quiet. The marchers knew that tomorrow meant back to work, with the same reactionary government in power and union leaders who wanted nothing more than the rank and file to let off steam on May Day.

Teesside engineers show way forward

NORTH EAST:—Every major engineering factory in NEWCASTLE was involved in the strike, including Vickers, Clark Chapman's and Reyrolle Parsons, where all 11,000 workers stopped. One pit was affected, Westoe colliery, where 400 mechanics struck.

Production workers at Scottish and Newcastle Breweries took action. Out of the total shipyard workforce of 11,000, 4000 were on strike. Pickets were injured by a car driving into the factory of Brentford Nylons at Camlington.

The 1000-strong Newcastle march was addressed by John Chalmers, general secretary of the Boilermakers, who argued that the pay freeze made it difficult for officials to persuade their members to accept productivity deals.

MIDDLESBROUGH'S 1200-strong march was the biggest trade union demonstration in the city since the General Strike. All the major construction sites were closed, many engineering factories were affected by the strike, all 800 dockers struck and closed the docks and the firemen in Middlesbrough and Darlington banned all work except emergencies and demonstrated.

Most of the steel industry continued to work. The main branch of the steel

union, BISAKTA—Lackenby no 5—wanted to take strike action, but had been ordered not to by full-time officials and told that if there was a strike the branch would be investigated.

In HULL, 24,000 workers struck. Most of the engineering factories were shut, including Hawker Siddeley and the three Armstrong plants. The docks were closed.

Massive strikes in North West

NORTH WEST:—In the MANCHESTER area there was massive but patchy strike action. More than 30,000 engineers were out in the city alone and printworkers, dockers, builders and busmen were well represented. 4000 workers from virtually every union marched to an open-air meeting in SALFORD.

In LIVERPOOL more than 60,000 struck and most of the city's major factories were closed. Amongst those affected were Ford, Triumph, Vauxhall, Lucas and Dunlop. The docks were closed, many buses were off the road and the morning papers did not appear.

12,000 workers marched in one of the biggest demonstrations seen in Liverpool for many years. At a mass meeting afterwards Jack Jones, general secretary of the transport workers' union, was heckled and jeered for not supporting the hospital workers and for continuing to support the talks with the Tory government.

In STOCKPORT a 500-strong demonstration was followed by a meeting at the occupied Bason's factory in the afternoon, when workers threatened with eviction by the courts were assured of active support, when the confrontation comes.

INDOCHINA: SUPPORT MUST CONTINUE
Demonstrate Trafalgar Square
Saturday 5 May, 2pm
Meeting and march to
US and Saigon embassies
Organised by the
Indochina Solidarity Conference

MARCHERS DEFY BAN ON RALLY

ONE TRADE UNIONIST in three supported the strike in Scotland, making a grand total of 250,000 out. All the car factories and the ship yards were out, as were all the major factories in GLASGOW.

Most of the Scottish pits stopped, although a few, including at least one that had voted overwhelmingly for an all-out strike over the miners' claim, worked.

More than 10,000 workers demonstrated in Glasgow. Despite the refusal of magistrates to permit a meeting to be held in St George's Square, engineers and building workers led the way into the Square for the first demonstration to be held there in 50 years.

The May Day stoppage got a massive response in DUNDEE. 20,000 stopped work, completely shutting down Michelin, Timex, the Robb Caledon shipyard and National Cash Register factories in the city.

2500 workers joined the march through the centre and 3000 attended a meeting addressed by Ray MacDonald of the Scottish TUC, George Machin, Labour MP for Dundee East, and Graham Steel, secretary of the Scottish miners and member of the Communist Party.

Big turnout in valleys

SOUTH WALES:—All 50 pits in the region were shut down on May Day in spite of last minute attempts by right wingers in the national union leadership to sabotage the stoppage. In Swansea alone 9000 AUEW members were on strike along with the docks, railways, aluminium works and Ford. 800 post office engineers struck for the day in defiance of their union.

In Port Talbot 1200 AUEW members at Borg Warners struck and 500 workers at BP's new Bagland Bay chemical plant came out. In Neath, Cam Gears, Tower House Ware, and David S Smith's factories were all shut down. At Metal Box about 30 per cent of the workforce struck.

In the afternoon 400 trade unionists and students marched through Swansea on a demonstration organised by the Trades Council. The IS contingent was the biggest on the march.

About 8000 people joined the protest march in Cardiff, mainly miners, steel workers from BSC's East Moors works plus the workers occupying Aberdare Cables. The meeting after the march had to be switched from a hall to the open air because so many wanted to attend.

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