

# WORKERS' FIGHT

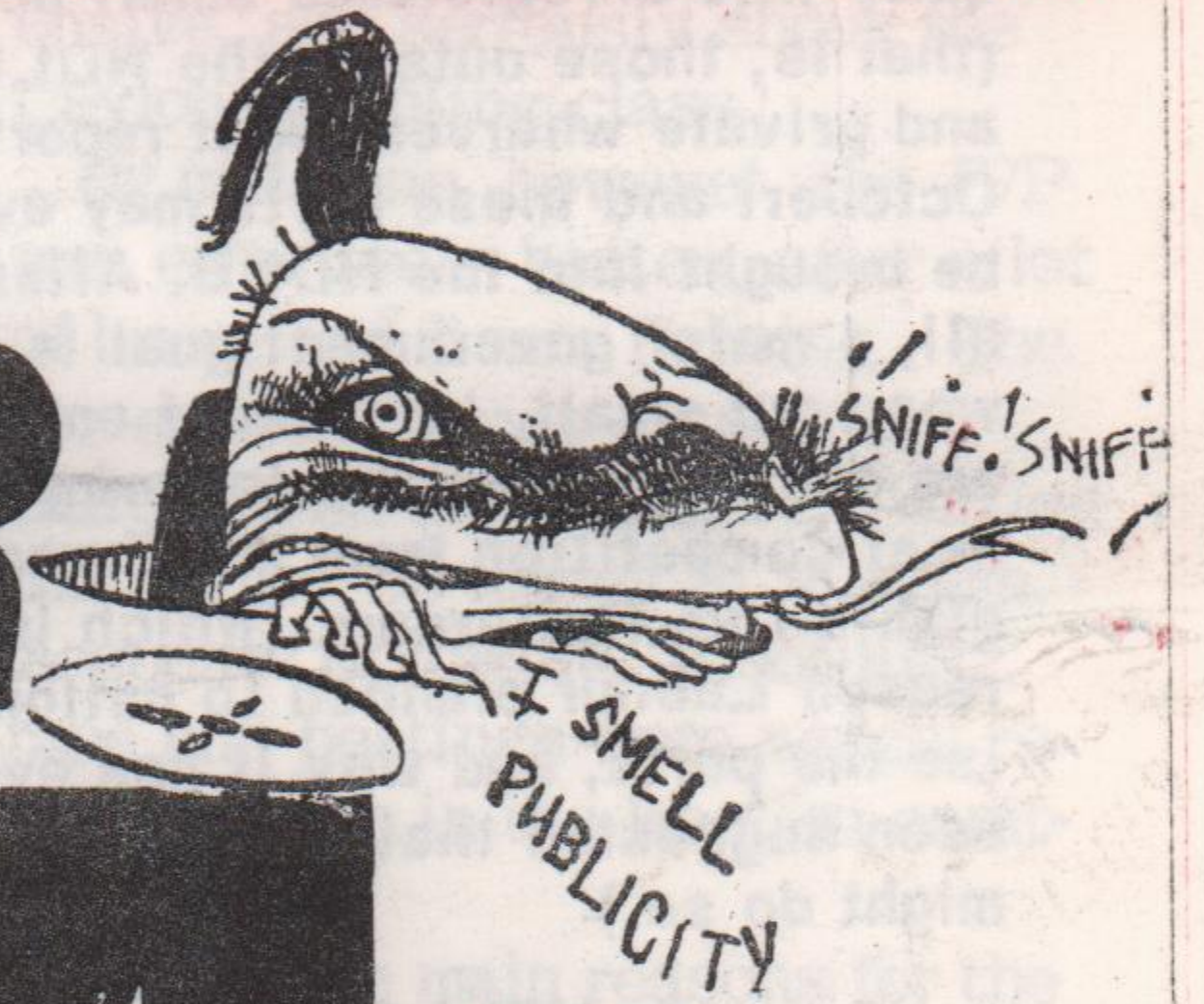
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4p

NO ROOM FOR ASIANS? RUBBISH!

# NO ROOM FOR RACISM



AN OPEN LETTER TO ENOCH POWELL

## LISTEN POWELL!

The Tory Government (and the bosses it serves) now desperately need, all the help you can give. It We have - so far - thwarted its plans, and defeated it again and again. We have spat on its laws. And we will drive it from office before long.

WE? The working class. The men and women of all creeds and colours who do the work in Britain, who man the factories, drive the trains, clean the streets, erect the buildings, care for the sick in hospitals, build the ships and load and unload them, stoke the furnaces and dig the coal. 'We', the real people of Britain, the "Lower classes", on whose backs your class stands.

Uganda Asians as another chance to whip up racist hysteria in Britain. Wrapped in the cloak of a far-seeing 'patriot', a man who speaks for the 'People', your service to the bosses is to try to get the Tories off the hook by dividing worker against worker, white against black; to deflect the anger of the working class, to head off its discontent and to pit one part of our ranks against another, to our common injury and to the benefit of your class.

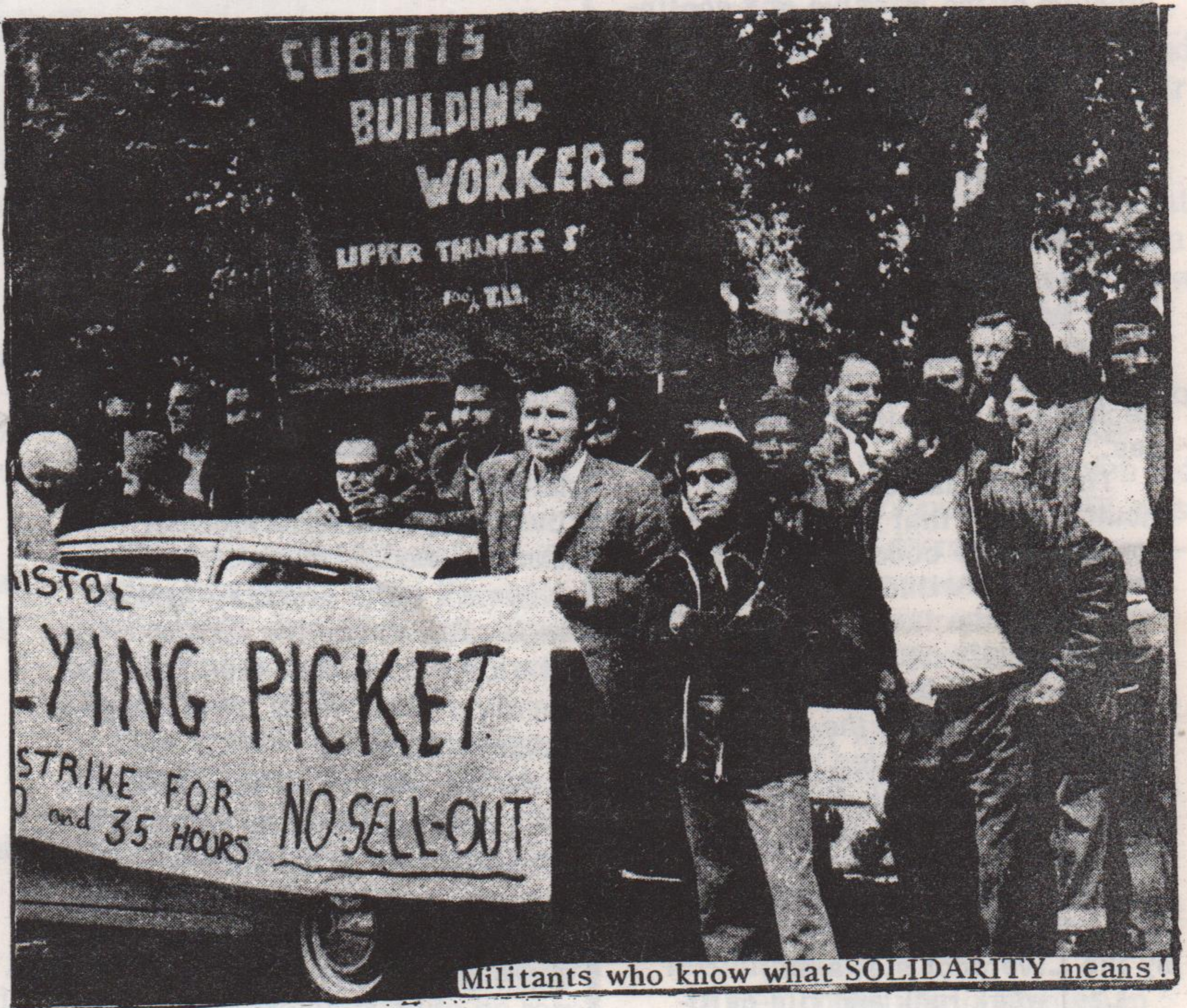
Your message is the sick message of hatred and division. In the name of averting a "national catastrophe" you want to promote a working class catastrophe - that of racial conflict. You harvest race hatred and you sow it. You have become the prophet of a race war which you do your best and worst to set alight.

After your 1968 speeches, fascists organised anti-black demonstrations, and racist gangs took to assaulting black workers and youths - IN YOUR NAME.

That, Powell, is where you link arms with the Mosley fascists and the National Front, that sick and obscene gang of misfits, of Hitler-lovers who get their kicks from hatred of blacks and Jews, and who want to destroy the trade unions and labour movement.

That is why you are one of the most dangerous enemies of the British working class - black and white - right now. You are the carrier of a disease of racialism that could ravage the working class and cripple its ability to go on standing up to the attacks of Heath's Government.

You are also the biggest fraud and con-man in the whole Tory



Militants who know what SOLIDARITY means!

Party. You are a shameless, habitual, barefaced liar. AND WE CAN PROVE IT.

YOU SAY: Immigration equals national catastrophe. Why? How? For whom? Immigrants to any healthy society are an asset and a 'bonus'. They are fully grown, educated (and they are educated) and capable of working, whereas additions to the population by natural increase need years of education, care and social benefits.

You play on the fears and the insecurity of workers under capitalism. But you, Powell, are a fanatical defender of capitalism and enemy of socialism, which is the real solution to the problems of the working class.

You are a foremost exponent of

the 'lame duck' philosophy. You believe in the 'free market'; even if it means 3 million unemployed. You care nothing for the working class or for the effects of capitalism.

You are against the Trade Unions, you were a minister in a Tory government whose every anti-working class act you supported.

You are no 'friend of the ordinary man'. No - you have nothing but a spiv's contempt for the working class.

You have one concern only - to divide our class on the idiotic basis of skin colour, to cripple us in the real fight. Keeping out immigrants will not solve unemployment or any other problem: if workers listen to you, they will be less

CONTINUED PAGE 2



Powell's the scab, not him!

Millions upon millions of workers hate and despise this Tory Government. They recognise it as their most bitter enemy, and they demand its immediate resignation.

And that's where you crawl out of your rat hole.

You see the tragedy of the

EITHER - a 30-hour week and nothing less. OR - the loss of 12,000 more jobs in the next 3 years and possibly 20,000 in the next 7 years.

That's the situation facing Britain's dockers. It is the main lesson of the docks strike for portworkers, and the reason why many dockers are feeling very bitter right now.

The dockers weren't defeated - they were betrayed by Jack Jones.

The betrayal was, of course, "sweetened" by sizeable concessions. Yet militant dockers outside Transport House as the strike was called off had only one response: "Sold Again!"

Jones would justify himself by saying that the 30 pieces of silver

in this case go not to him but to the dockers themselves. And, if the promises of Jones-Aldington are kept, this will be true.

The point however is that it is also the ordinary docker, and not Jack Jones or any other union bureaucrat, who will carry the Cross.

The settlement does little or nothing to staunch the flow of jobs away from the ports. Its intention is to quieten the ordinary dockers by a few concessions, while the bosses continue to reorganise the industry at the dockers' expense.

It is vital that portworkers understand why and how Jones and the bosses were able to head off their revolt, and outflank the militants of the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee.

## GAINS

At its meeting of March 4th the National Shop Stewards Committee decided to go for only 4 of the demands in the 9-point dockers Charter they had previously drawn up. On paper, dockers have now gained (or are promised) most of the immediate demands of the National Stewards.

There will be no compulsory redundancies. The 'Pool' of unemployed will be abolished, the men re-absorbed in employment. Militants feared that the National Dock Labour Scheme would be scrapped. But the bosses and the Government now appear to have opted for a strategy of 'sweating out' workers from the industry, within the scaff-

Continued Page 2

## DOCKS:

# 30-HOUR WEEK IS THE ONLY ANSWER



## DOCKS FROM PAGE ONE

olding of the NDLS.

Some progress has already been made towards getting container groupage jobs. In addition an Enquiry into unregistered small ports (that is, those outside the NDLS) and private wharves, will report in October and these ports may even be brought into the NDLB. After all, a major government goal is to weed out small, inefficient employers and centralise the industry to meet competition from the European giants like Rotterdam. (Which is the reason Labour planned to nationalise the ports, and why it has even been suggested that the Tories might do so.)

### HOLLOW

Then why so much anger, so much frustration among dockers? Because all the 'gains' are hollow and empty and do not solve the problem of the massive and continuous erosion of dockers' jobs.

Dockers know from experience that they can trust neither Union leaders nor employers — and that all 'fair' settlements in the past have been frauds. "Guarantees" provoke suspicion, not feelings of security. They know that the possible "addition" to docks jobs from all "concessions" are only a fraction of those that will be lost as mechanisation of the ports continues.

The bitter taste in dockers' mouths is not that of defeat (would any one of the concessions have been granted without militant action?). It is the taste of a hollow victory, empty because the movement set itself too limited aims; because last March the National Shop Stewards decided not to fight for the 30-hour week, (part of the original 9 demands) as an immediate demand. (Reported in WF4).

It was a major retreat and a serious mistake, opposed at the time by the Liverpool stewards.

Last week and finds militancy wrung many of the immediate demands of the Shop Stewards from the bosses. But far from really answering the needs of the dockers they became weapons in Jones' hands to confuse and split the dockers, end the strike, and gain a victory over the militants (albeit gleefully exaggerated by the whore press of the bosses which launched a massive witchhunt.)

The anger and the explosive but often directionless actions by militants were the result of the lack of a clear objective for the strike.

### 30 HOURS!

The only possible objective that could actually STOP the loss of dockers' jobs, unify all the registered Ports and stop Jack Jones playing the bosses' game, was the demand for the 30-hour week — immediately.

The National Shop Stewards Committee must learn from its mistake of last March. It must launch a new offensive — this time with the demand for an immediate 30-hour week as its main point, with no loss of pay. Nothing less will staunch the drain on dockers' jobs.

This demand can unify the ports for a new offensive, and set the bosses and their professional witch-hunters of Fleet Street cackling on the other side of their faces.

HAROLD YOUD

To read the papers these days, you'd think this country was threatened with the plague — all because the 50,000 people who on average emigrate from the country every year will this year be replaced by a like number with a different skin colour.

But the disease which really threatens is the disease of racialism.

Whenever some crisis erupts anywhere in the world, and plane-loads of British nationals arrive 'home', is there ever any outcry about the jobs or the houses they will take up, or any talk of the 'social problems' entailed in their moving? Often these people will have no ties at all with 'home'. But they are, of course, white. And that, to the racialism-mongers, is all-important.

They know, and anyone knows, that people create jobs as well as doing them; that they build houses as well as living in them; that they staff schools and hospitals, as well as using them; that they pay taxes and rates no matter where they come from.

What is wrong with this country is not the number of people in it, and least of all what colour they are, but the people who run it for their own private greed, and the system they use to squeeze their profits out of the rest of us. It is a system in which the number of jobs and houses is not determined by social need but by the need to keep profits high. If there were a million less working people in Britain today, it would not solve the unemployment situation. Demand would be lower, and unemployment quite probably just as high. Remember the '30s? Population a good deal less than now; hardly a black face. And massive unemployment.

All the 'horror', all the false talk of 'remote politicians who don't know the real problems' is nothing but pure racist demagoguery — and what more useful distraction can there be when the working class is ramming the Tories' vicious policies back down their throats, one

## POWELL(cont.)

and your class — as does the sight of black and white and Asian workers united on flying pickets.

The working class maxm UNITY IS STRENGTH applies outside the country, as well as in it.

**YOU SAY** the British people are denied the facts about what is happening in their country. But whose country is it, Powell?

Two or three per cent of the people — those you represent — own all the substantial wealth of the country. They contribute little or nothing to the wealth of the country, to the well-being of the majority of its people.

50,000 coloured immigrants who work for just so much as one year (and they do work) will contribute more to the common wealth of the British people than will the whole gaggle of spivs and parasites that make up the ruling class during all the natural lives of a whole useless generation of them.

Black workers have more right to live in this country than all the winter-in-the-Bahamas set, all the Reggie Maudlings, the Arnold Weinstocks, the Lord Vesteyes and the Enoch Powells — they have earned that right through hard work. And one day, quite soon perhaps, they will help 'us' make it really OUR country by taking it out of the hands of rats like you.

In 1968 some muddled workers joined with fascists in supporting you. Since then the working class has felt its own strength, it has got

# 'ANTI-IMPERIALISM OF IDIOTS' IN UGANDA

by one.

What more convenient, too, that the press and the right-wing politicians can cover up their own racialism with that of General Amin. They depict him as a big black bully — yet they endorse his stance by speaking of the Asians as if they were rubbish that no place could want. The 'Sun' even went to the nauseating point of showing Amin tipping out a wheelbarrow full of Asians.

But how did all those Asians come to be in Uganda in the first place? The answer to that question is quite illuminating — particularly of Britain's part in the affair.

When British imperialism first seriously began to grab African territory, India was already firmly part of the Empire. Large numbers of Indian labourers and technicians trained already in Britain's industrial discipline, were brought over to East Africa to build the railway — which was necessary to provide access to the interior. Later they were encouraged to become intermediaries between the ruling British and the Africans. Colonial edicts forced them into commerce, where, because foreign trade was dominated by Britain, they continued to act as middlemen.

When the movement grew for independence, the Indians were still in the middle, and often the Africans' blows at imperialism fell on them as the nearest and most vulnerable target. In 1959 they suffered from boycotts and physical attacks.

When Uganda became independent in 1962, although large numbers opted for Ugandan citizenship, others played safe and kept their

British passports as well. Now they are under attack, and in practice there'll be little distinction made between the loyal Ugandans and those with British passports.

The resentment of the Africans is understandable, but the situation is one of Britain's making. Britain both set up the Indians as her middlemen, and also quite deliberately made sure that no African middle class would develop.

Engels once described attacks on selected capitalists of one particular race — that is, anti-semitism — as the "socialism of idiots".

The venomous attacks on the Indians in Uganda are the "anti-imperialism of idiots". And they are being used by General Amin, the right-wing pro-British dictator, to try to gain a little support for his regime, which at present relies on simple force to keep it going.

It doesn't take much imagination to make the analogy between Idi Amin and Ted Heath, both desperate to deflect workers' anger from themselves onto a handy scapegoat. Some workers — good militants, even, like many of the dockers — will perhaps think that, as the Uganda Indians are many of them businessmen, then it is not racialism to attack them or to oppose their entry into this country, but good socialist anti-capitalism.

It is nothing of the kind! When we attack capitalism, let's go for our own bosses first, where they are strongest and all together. To go for one tiny section won't weaken capitalism. It will weaken and split the workers' movement and divert it up a blind alley of "idiot's socialism" Rachel Lever

a clearer picture of its real enemy now than for a long time past. It has the experience of a series of victorious struggles in common with tens of thousands of black and Asian workers.

Many militants must and will rally to protect our black brothers if the fascist gangs and backward workers of '68 once again try to use the 'respectable' cover you provide to attack blacks and Asians.

This time working class militants, black and white, can create defence groups to drive your fascist followers back into the sewers from which you encourage them to emerge.

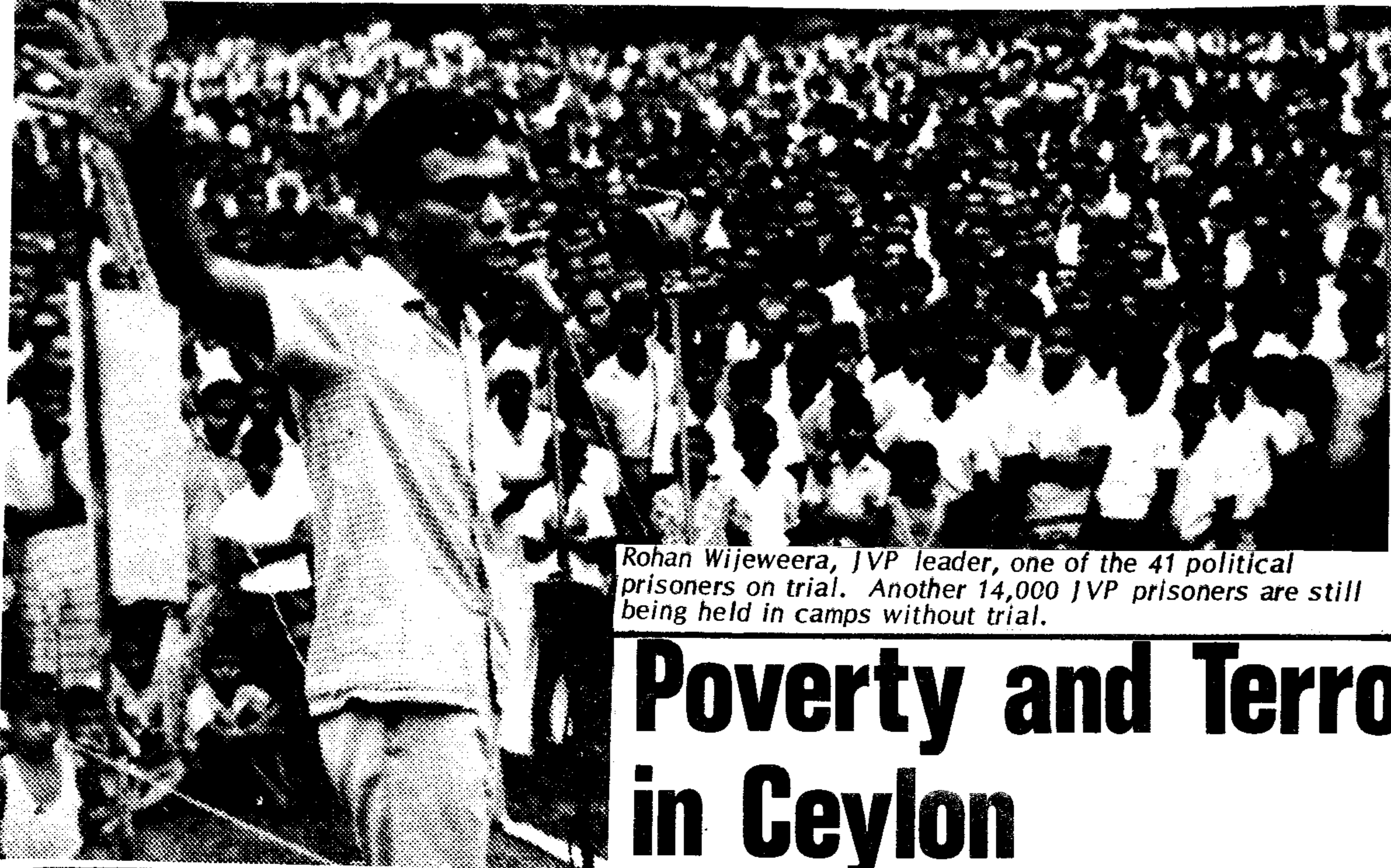
If they don't, they are allowing you, Powell, and your class, to inflict a wound on the working class which can turn septic.

With all our hearts we, working class militants from the port and steel industries, pledge ourselves to fight to root out, and to wipe out, the racist poison you represent for our class.

The black workers are our brothers in the struggle of the working class. You, Powell, contemptible gutter-rat that you are, are one of the most diseased representatives of everything we are struggling against.

Tony Duffy  
Editor, Real Steel News  
Harold Youd  
Editor, The Hook





Rohan Wijeweera, JVP leader, one of the 41 political prisoners on trial. Another 14,000 JVP prisoners are still being held in camps without trial.

# Poverty and Terror in Ceylon

by John Cunningham

## Set up by Britain, armed by Russia and China

Two months ago, Ceylon declared itself a 'Free Sovereign Republic' and changed its name to Sri Lanka.

Despite the fine sounding title, it is doubtful whether the 16000 political prisoners (whose trials began 12 June) consider Sri Lanka free, in any sense of the word.

These people have been imprisoned without trial for over a year for their part in the revolutionary insurrection of April 1971. It is worth taking a closer look at the 'Free Sovereign Republic of Sri Lanka', for, when the facade is removed, a mass of poverty, corruption, and oppression is revealed. For example:-

During 1971/72 the armed forces were expanded from 10,000 men to approximately 45,000.

The police force was doubled.

Under the state of emergency declared on 15 March 1971 and still in force, freedom of speech, assembly, and publication have been suspended and workers are not allowed to strike.

Police and military have the right of arrest on suspicion.

Out of a workforce of 4.4 million an estimated 700,000 are unemployed.

What caused this island to explode into revolutionary upheaval in 1971, followed by a wave of repression?

To understand, it is necessary to go back many years. Ceylon was brought under British rule at the beginning of the 19th century. Speculators and businessmen then swamped the country, transforming the common land of the native population into coffee plantations.

Many of the inhabitants refused to abandon their traditional subsistence small-holding and become wage-labourers. British imperialism found its own answer to this problem; many thousands of Tamil 'coolies' from Southern India were transported to Ceylon to provide cheap labour for the plantations.

The introduction of huge numbers of foreign workers into the country had a two-fold purpose. It provided enormous profits for British imperialism in Ceylon, and at the same time the ruling class used the difference between Tamil and Ceylonese to 'divide and rule'.

The large scale introduction of tea in the 1880s, replacing coffee

which had been ravaged by plant disease, led to the development of monopoly control of the plantations because only monopolies could forward the huge sums needed to start the plantations. The capital, and therefore the control, was British. To this day the two major companies in Ceylon are both British, Brooke Bond and Lipton. The control of the imperialist country does not stop there — marketing, selling, and distribution are almost completely in the hands of British capitalists.

There are only two other crops of importance in Ceylon, rubber and coconuts. Together with tea they make up 90% of Ceylon's export earnings. The important point to note is that the world demand for these three products has been declining for years. The economy, dominated by foreign interests and capital, has never been allowed to or encouraged to diversify.

Consequently Ceylon's economy has deteriorated over the years to

the point where it has a massive foreign debt.

As always when the economy runs down, it is the working class who suffer. Wages have been kept down, unemployment has been rising steadily for years, so have prices. To add to this corruption in Government circles is rife — even more so than in this country! Government departments concerned with public welfare have consistently underspent while the only Government department to actually exceed its budget in 1971/2 was the ministry of defence.

This framework of corruption, unemployment and exploitation produced the insurrection of 1971. On 16 March 1971, the Ceylonese cabinet — representing a coalition of 'left-wing' parties, including the pro-Moscow Communist Party and a party which used to be revolutionary, the LSSP — announced that a 'plot' to overthrow the Government had been discovered.

unists show that she was not only aware of it, but accepted it.

It is the history of a party which in the 1930s attained mass influence in the newly organised unions and could have taken the whole American labour movement at least to the point of a mass workers' party based on the unions with sizable Communist influence. Instead it supported the Democratic party, the party of the racist Dixiecrats. Instead of building and educating a rank and file militant movement in the Unions it allied with bureaucrats and even trade union gangsters until its very substantial influence in the CIO was merely another faction of the increasingly corrupt trade union establishment.

In the Second World War the CP supported the government fanatically: it supported and indeed advocated the jailing of Trotskyist militants who opposed the war, under legislation which was used extensively against itself later. It advocated the breaking of strikes, and when the miners struck in 1944 it advocated mass conscription.

A state of emergency was declared. Within a few weeks 300 people had been arrested. The Government set out to smash the revolutionary JVP (People's Liberation Front).

The JVP had been founded in 1965. It had a mass following in many areas of Ceylon, predominantly among unemployed graduates and peasants. Following the Government attack, it went on the offensive, and seriously shook the Ceylonese ruling class.

By mid-June, however, the JVP was effectively beaten, after a lot of brave and fierce fighting. The Government forces displayed a callousness and brutality rivalling that of the US forces in Vietnam. Accounts of torture, shootings, rape and beatings were widely reported, even in the Western capitalist press.

One of the main reasons for the defeat of the JVP was the vast amount of aid given by several nations — an 'unholy alliance' of capitalist states such as Britain, the USA, Pakistan, India, and so-called 'socialist' states such as Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and China. All were generous in their aid to this tottering, corrupt, repressive regime.

The 'socialist' apology was that the JVP were 'adventurist'. Even if we leave aside the fact that revolutionary groups other than the JVP, including the Trotskyist LSSP(R), suffered in the repression, the argument is a mockery. Marx thought that the uprising which led to the Paris Commune in 1871 was premature and doomed to failure — but he still supported it and defended it against repression with all his power. The Maoists say "what else could China do?" In this they show that they put their fundamental trust for the defence of the Chinese revolution with the maintenance of friendly relations with capitalist states, rather than with international revolution.

A Ceylon Solidarity Campaign has been formed in this country. For more information, write to 9 Dennington Park Mansions, London NW 6.

Its toadying went so far that at the end of the war Party leader Earl Browder advocated the dissolution of the Party into a non-political association. No more need for the class struggle, he said.

With this record the CP faced the cold-war persecution. It was quickly reduced to a shadow. It had alienated and disgusted the militants who might have protected it. At the onset of the Cold War its power in the unions — it controlled a sizable chunk of the CIO union federation — this power, based on corruption and bureaucratic deals, crumbled as the bureaucratic allies of the CP jumped for cover.

Today it has seen some revival, and is a hard-line Moscow-oriented supporter of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Running a token Presidential candidate, in practice it supports the 'liberal' (but anti-union) Mc Govern.

On black struggles, the CPUSA had a magnificent record in the 1920s, when, under the stimulus of the Russian Revolution, it raised forcibly, for the first time, the right and duty of socialists to org-

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## ANGELA'S PARTY

Angela Davis became for millions of Afro-Americans the symbol of black resistance. Her association with embattled militants like George Jackson and Ruchel Magee, struggling in the toils of a savage, murderous, and relentless legal system, seemed to point to a real substance behind the mass media figure.

But there was always something odd. What was she doing in the U.S. Communist Party? That party is one of the most corrupt and unregenerate stalinist parties in existence. Automatic sympathy and support for the members of this party victimised by McCarthyism cannot erase from our memories its gruesome history. And Angela Davis could reasonably be presumed to have acquainted herself with that history. Her seeming endorsement of the trials and persecution of dissident Czech comm-



# BLACK MAN'S BURDEN

Joe Wright examines

## THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE WHITE MAN AS CANNIBAL

Karl Marx wrote a hundred years ago that "Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Marx was referring to slavery in America. He saw that as long as the white workers of the USA passively put up with slavery, then these white workers themselves would be tied hand and foot to the ruling class which exploited them.

They would never fight against the employing class for their own emancipation, without also taking up the battle against slavery. As long as slavery was condoned, the working class would be content with their lot as wage-slaves . . . as long as they were better than the chattel slaves.

Finally the American workers, together with many thousands of freed and escaped slaves, did take up arms under the Union (northern) flag against slavery and defeat it. But in a different sense Marx's words have as much importance for the working class today as they did then.

Black people in this country are just as surely branded as were the American slaves. They are not branded with the red hot iron of the slave master, but with the hundreds of indignities and attacks they are subjected to because of the colour of their skin.

In Britain today black people face constant discrimination in housing, jobs and education. To have a black skin means to live with the threat of being physically assaulted by racist gangs or the police. The murder of David Olusoga by the Leeds police revealed just the tip of the iceberg of the consistent police harassment and attacks on black people.

The mass of such attacks never make the headlines. Besides the physical assaults, there are the verbal assaults. Any right wing politician can get up and stigmatise black people as lazy, criminal, unclean etc., and be sure that the press and TV will give him all the publicity he could hope for.

To these slanders black people have no means of reply.

Why is it that the working class turns a blind eye to the oppression that black people face? Why is it that the official trade union movement has never lifted more than a little finger against the blatant discrimination against blacks? Every trade union militant knows that "Unity is Strength". The international working class solidarity with the dockers demonstrates the basic truth that, regardless of race or nationality, the workers of the world have more in common with each other than they do with the employing class of any nation. Yet every day workers allow themselves to be duped by the propaganda of the racials.

The slogan which expresses the true interests of the working class, "Workers of the World Unite!", appears on union banners, while at the same time racialism, the ideology of the ruling class, eats like a cancer at the labour movement.

In China the British fought bloody wars in order to protect the 'right' to import opium, which the Chinese government had banned.

And yet how could these barbarous acts be justified? Europe and Britain in particular were supposed to be the centres of enlightenment and progress. And yet here was

Britain reintroducing slavery, running a massive trade in opium (compare this with all the humbug about cannabis or 'pot' today) and systematically robbing the resources of countries like India.

Well, the only way it could be justified was by making out that the Indians, Africans and Chinese were inferior. They deserved nothing better than to be pushed around.

Moreover, they actually enjoyed being pushed around. The myth of the happy slave or 'Uncle Tom' was created, together with the loyal Indian who was ever grateful to British rule.

The rape and destruction of those civilisations which existed long before Europeans ever came to Africa and Asia, was presented as the great civilising mission of British rule. In the racist mythology it became "the white man's burden" to educate and enlighten the inferior black man.

This was the way that the ruling class justified their pillage of vast sections of the world. But who did they have to justify it to? Well, perhaps being men of 'conscience' they had to justify it to themselves. But more important they had to justify it to the workers.

If there is one factor which, more than any other, is responsible for the grip that racialism has on

workers, then that factor is imperialism. The wealth of Britain was built on the cruel exploitation of Africa and Asia. In search of profits the British ruling class put in chains and shipped to the West Indies and America as many as 20 million Africans. India was devastated by the British drive for plunder, which ruined the existing structure of agriculture and trade and made famine a permanent feature of Indian life.

After all it was not so long ago that the capitalists had raised the cry of 'freedom' against the feudal lords. Being genuinely interested in freedom themselves, the mass of ordinary people had followed the bourgeoisie and won their freedom for them. Now these same people who led the movement for 'freedom' were systematically robbing the peoples of Africa and Asia of any freedom at all.

The 'free labourer' of Europe might well look suspiciously on any attempt to introduce forced labour in Asia and Africa. How could the idea of the 'free labourer' coexist with the ideology of slavery? The only way of settling this contradiction was to make out that black people are inferior.

"In general", said the wage master and slave master rolled into one "we are in favour of 'freedom', but in the case of Africans and

Asians, who are inferior beings, it is an entirely different matter. These people wouldn't know what to do with their freedom, if they had it. They are a lot better off under my rule."

So racialism came about as an ideology of the ruling class which justified the oppression of what today are known as the underdeveloped countries. And as the British empire expanded, so did the labyrinth of distortions and falsehoods, which permeated through every layer of society.

The working class too became poisoned with the racist myth. 300 years of colonialism and imperialism have imprinted racialism on the consciousness of the working class. That is not to say that the mass of workers go around insulting or attacking black people. But it is the case that many workers hold to a whole mass of misconceptions about black people and it is against this background that the racials such as Enoch Powell operate.

Take a statement that you can hear often enough from any racist - "Before we went to Africa they were all swinging about in trees". The racist will blurt it out, but many more workers will actually believe it.

What are the facts? We (Europeans) first went to Africa more than 500 years ago. The Portuguese explorers, who sailed down the West coast of Africa, far from finding men swinging around in trees, in fact found civilisations which they recognised as being similar to their own. The feudal states of West Africa were surprisingly similar to the feudal states of medieval Europe.

The strength of these states is testified to by the fact that for four and a half centuries they remained unconquered by Europeans, who, if they traded in Africa, had to negotiate with the various kings of these states. When Vasco Da Gama went round the Cape of Good Hope and sailed up the Eastern Coast of Africa he found dotted along the coast the city states of the Eastern seaboard. These city states had a history of trade with Asia and even with ancient Greece which went back two thousand years, and Vasco Da Gama reported that the goods he had brought to trade with evoked not the slightest interest.

The 500 years that followed the first contact between Europe and Africa was to see Europe develop out of feudalism to the capitalist stage of today. And what happened to Africa?

By the 19th century the old civilisations of Africa were completely destroyed, so completely in fact that the European countries were able to colonise the whole of Africa in a flash at the end of the 19th century. For the racist the explanation is that the innate superiority of the Europeans enabled them to develop, while the Africans went backwards.

In fact the answer lies in one word, and that word is slavery.

The wealth of 18th Century Britain, which formed the basis for the industrial revolution of the 19th Century, was built on the slave trade. Manufactured goods were taken to Africa and traded for slaves; the slaves were shipped to the West Indies where they were sold to the sugar plantations and

the ships returned to England loaded with sugar. The triangular trade raked in immense profits for the manufacturers, the plantation owners and the shippers. There was hardly an element of commercial life in 18th century England which was not in some way connected with the triangular trade, and essential to the whole operation was slavery.

The colonisation of the West Indies presented a glorious opportunity to the British capitalists. There they found masses of fertile land. The only problem was labour. At first, forced white labour was used. These whites were not slaves

**TO BE SOLD & LET**  
BY PUBLIC AUCTION,  
On **MONDAY the 18th of MAY, 1829,**  
UNDER THE TREES,  
FOR SALE,  
THE THREE FOLLOWING  
**SLAVES,**

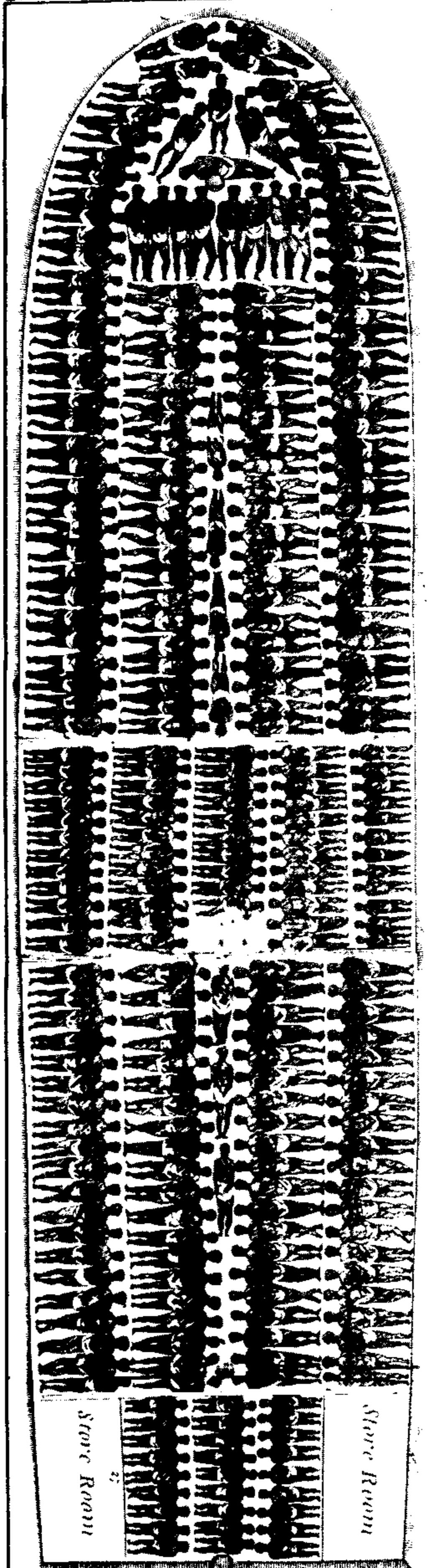
HANNIBAL, about 30 Years old, an excellent House Servant, of Good Character.  
WILLIAM, about 25 Years old, a Labourer.  
NANCY, an excellent House Servant and Nurse.

**TO BE LET,**  
On the usual conditions of the Hire finding them in Food, Clothing, and Medical  
the following  
**MALE AND FEMALE  
SLAVES,**

ROBERT BAGLEY, about 20 Years old, a good House Servant.  
WILLIAM BAGLEY, about 18 Years old, a Labourer.  
JOHN ARDEN, about 15 Years old.  
JACK ANTONIA, about 40 Years old, a Labourer.  
PHILIP, an Excellent Fisherman.  
HARRY, about 22 Years old, a good House Servant.  
LUCY, a Young Woman of good Character, used to House Work and the Nursery.  
ELIZA, an Excellent Washwoman.  
CLARA, an Excellent Washwoman.  
FANNY, about 11 Years old, House Servant.  
SARAH, about 11 Years old, House Servant.

Also for Sale, at Eleven o'clock,  
Fine Rice, Gram, Paddy, Books, Muslins,  
Needles, Pins, Ribbons, &c, &c.  
AT ONE O'CLOCK, THAT CELEBRATED ENGLISH HORSE,  
**BLUCHER,**

BELOW: a slave auction



A SLAVE SHIP

The slaves were purchased from dealers in Africa - the merchants and kings of the African kingdoms. They were loaded on the slave ships, packed in spaces of five feet by three by a foot and a half, chained together. About 20% of the slaves died on the passage.





Not only the cotton plantations, but many other industrial and agricultural enterprises in the New World were based on slave-labour. The illustration shows slaves washing for diamonds in Brazil.

but in many respects they were little better off. They consisted of indentured servants, criminals who preferred the West Indies to execution, Irishmen who escaped the massacres of Wexford and Drogheda or people who simply had the misfortune to be kidnapped.

But the West Indies' thirst for labour could not be quenched by this flow of whites. The colonialists now turned their eyes toward Africa and black slaves.

The exact number of Africans who crossed the Atlantic in chains can only be guessed at. The highest estimate is 50 million. What is certain is the devastating effect that slavery had on African civilisation.

Slavery had existed previously in Africa just as it had existed in Europe. Conquered armies would be taken as slaves and kept by the conquerors, or perhaps traded. But whereas previously local wars would be fought and slaves would be a by-product, now the wars were fought solely for the purpose of capturing and selling slaves.

The economies of the African states now became predominantly concerned with the barbaric human trade. Even those states whose rulers bravely refused to have anything to do with the trade had to watch out for raids from European ships or other African states. Moreover these raiders would be armed with guns, whereas those who refused to trade in slaves could get no guns.

For Europe and in particular Britain, the rewards of the slave trade were massive. Most people know of the saying that Liverpool and Bristol were built with the blood of slaves. What is not recognised is that it was the capital accumulated through the triangular trade that made possible the industrial revolution in this country.

For example Manchester, which became the centre of the industrial revolution, grew up in the 18th century around cotton and, of Manchester's cotton exports, five sixths went to Africa and the West Indies.

Birmingham in the 18th century was producing between 100 000 and 150 000 guns with Africa as one of its most important customers. It was a common saying that "The price of a Negro is one Birmingham gun"

It would take pages to go through the industries that in one way or another were connected with the triangular trade, but one that must be mentioned is banking. Profit eers from the slave trade and the West Indian plantations very often started up in banking when the slave bonanza was over, and it was this money which helped to finance much of the initial investment required for the industrial

revolution. It is sufficient to note that Barclays, William Deacons and Lloyds all had their origin in some aspect of the slave trade.

There could not be a clearer case of the profit and wealth of the British ruling class being directly due to the degradation and misery of the 'underdeveloped' countries. The wealth of 18th century Britain was dependent on the slave trade and the ideology, law, and religion of the British ruling class all reflected this fact. For example, in 1783, the captain of a Liverpool slaver threw overboard the 132 slaves he was carrying because he was short of water. There was a court case to investigate the matter. Not, as you might imagine, to find out whether the captain was guilty of mass murder, but to find out whether the insurance company was liable! The judge ruled that "the case of the slaves was the same as if horses had been thrown overboard", and therefore the insurance company was liable.

Today the legacy of Britain's cruel exploitation of the black people of Africa still exists. We have quack psychologists who try to make out that black people are by nature intellectually inferior to whites. We have quack historians who try to make out that there is no such thing as an African history, independent of European history. Thus Coupland, the author of standard British textbooks on African history, denies the existence of African history before Livingstone.

Terror and torture were fundamental to slavery as a system.



## Four Case Histories Of Savagery

In similar fashion racist myths are created around all the various different peoples that were exploited by Britain under the flag of the glorious empire. Irishmen, Indians, Africans, Cypriots — all, according to the racialisists, have their various characteristics which make them inferior to the master race.

For example, the Chinese, who had an exceptionally strong civilisation which resisted to the last British attempts to colonise China, are presented as being cunning and sly ... or, even worse, "un-Christian".

Listen to one John Quincy Adams lecturing on the Opium wars: "The moral obligation of commercial intercourse between nations is founded entirely, exclusively, upon the Christian precept to love your neighbour as yourself ... But China not being a Christian nation, its inhabitants do not consider themselves bound by the Christian precept, to love their neighbour as themselves. ... This is a churlish and unsocial system ... The fundamental principle of the Chinese Empire is anti-commercial ... It is time this enormous outrage upon the rights of human nature, and upon the first principles of the rights of nations, should cease". Get the idea? Those immoral Chinese bastards ... they wouldn't buy our opium!

Dr Johnson said patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel. We can say of the ruling class that their last refuge is nationalism and racialism. Whenever there is a crisis in the capitalist system, the ruling class turns to help from the racialisists. Just as Hitler made the Jews in Germany the scapegoat for all the ills of German capitalism, so we are seeing the British ruling class looking round for a scapegoat. And they have an obvious target.

After the war there was a shortage of labour in this country. Lavish publicity campaigns were started to get West Indians, Indians, Pakistanis, and Africans to come to Britain, where they would find a land of opportunity. The black people came and were used to do the worst paid and dirtiest jobs. When there was a question of a labour shortage, the ruling class immediately forgot any racial considerations. That arch-racialist Duncan Sandys toured Kenya and Uganda appealing to the Asians there not to take up Kenyan and Ugandan citizenship but to keep their British passports. He obviously hoped that they would come to Britain.

But now the capitalist system is in crisis. Now the dole queues stretch out into the street and the ruling class are looking for scapegoats. The racist ideology of British imperialism makes black people in this country the easiest victim.

For class conscious workers there can be only one answer. Defend black people against the racist onslaught, whether it comes from the state or from those backward workers who fall for racist lies. No worker can emancipate himself from the ruling class and their ideas without shaking off the most poisonous of ruling class ideologies — racialism.

We hear a lot about violence nowadays — demonstrations, pickets, teenage gangs and so on. One aspect of this that the bosses' press consistently fails to mention is the violence perpetrated by the police on black people.

Every day, in the major cities of Britain, police harass and assault the black population, and often openly collaborate with white racisists in attacks on blacks.

One case which did reach the public was that of David Oluwale, a Nigerian who was beaten and humiliated by Leeds police and finally killed. The Press raised their hands in horror for a moment and then promptly dropped the issue as if this was the only case of its kind. Of course, as every black person knows, this is only the tip of the iceberg — the racist violence of the police is a part of their everyday lives.

A few examples should show how the silence of the press is in itself a crime against black people.

### KEITH TAFFE: COVENTRY

On Monday 23rd. August 1971, Keith Taffe, a West Indian, was taking his wife to work when he was stopped by a policeman who said he was speeding. This Keith denied, but the cop, PC Smith 404 insulted and abused him and booked him for speeding. He was told to produce his documents at the police station, and then he drove off. The police car followed him, and when Taffe stopped he was dragged out of his car and beaten with a truncheon. His wife was also beaten as she tried to help him. More police arrived and Keith was taken to Coventry central police station where he was beaten unconscious.

The police then charged him with assault, dangerous driving and other offences and he was refused bail. On the Thursday he collapsed and had to be taken to Coventry & Warwick Hospital suffering from concussion, severe bruising and facial cuts, and remained there for three days.

When he appeared in court in January this year, the attack by the police was not mentioned, but Taffe was cleared of all charges.

### EDWARD COLE: LONDON

On Saturday 24th August 1971, Edward Cole was walking with his wife and a friend and her children near Waterloo. They were followed by two plain-clothes police in a car until they reached Exton Street.

There one of the police got out of the car and asked Cole to stop and be searched. He refused, calmly, saying that there were no grounds for him being searched.



Joshua Francis — given nine months in prison for being beaten up by the police.

Another car arrived and he was searched, but nothing was found. By this time a police van had arrived, and Cole was taken to the station. On the way he was beaten up and his thumb broken by a plain clothes man. Like Keith Taffe, he was assaulted further in the station and kicked about the body.

In court the jury mixed freely with the police. Edward Cole was sentenced to two years imprisonment for intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

This attack was carefully calculated by the police. Previously Cole had been arrested on an anti-American Vietnam demonstration in 1967.

With a vicious twist of sarcasm, he was charged with biting a policeman's thumb. It was the same policeman who broke his thumb when he was beaten!

### ASETA SIMMS: LONDON

On 13th. May 1971, Mrs. Aseta Simms was picked up by the police in Stoke Newington. She died in the police station about one hour later! According to the police, she was too drunk to find her way home and had fallen down.

Her friends, however, deny that she had been drinking excessively and reported that when they saw her body it was badly bruised about the face.

The police doctor from Wood Green said that he could not truthfully say what was the cause of death — but the coroner retired together with the jury and ... a verdict of death by misadventure, with no rider, was produced.

### JOSHUA FRANCIS: LONDON

Two years ago Joshua Francis, a busman, was off work with a broken jaw. While he was in bed convalescing four white men broke into his house and beat him up. It turned out that one of them was an off-duty policeman. During the attack more police arrived from Brixton police station. They all joined in the attack, causing Mr. Francis serious internal injuries and inflicting cuts to his body.

Yet more police arrived, and Francis was dragged from his house in his underwear, in agony. He was taken to Brixton Police station. Due to the extent of his injuries, he was rushed to Kings College Hospital where he was given 30 stitches.

After 14 days in custody, and still suffering from the effects of the attack, he was brought to court and charged with assaulting three police officers! And in March of this year he was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment.





workers  
fight

# WHERE WE STAND

□ CAPITALISM is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class 'at home' and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible, the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. And already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

□ TODAY the ruling class can keep their system going only at the cost of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

□ THE ONLY WAY OUT is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private-profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

□ The working class has created political parties for this purpose — LABOUR PARTIES, COMMUNIST PARTIES, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. — But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

□ The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class. WORKERS' FIGHT is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

□ The basis of our activity is the scientific theory of MARXISM, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

□ Although they cannot organise the struggle for workers' power, the TRADE UNIONS are indispensable for the defence of workers' interests. We fight for the independence of the unions from all state control, and within the unions for militant policies and for democracy. We see the trade union bureaucracy as a distinct stratum which acts as a broker between workers and bosses. Its life and work-situation is quite different from that of the working class. Lacking a direct, necessary allegiance to working class interests, or any fundamental historical interests of its own, its general tendency is to work with the bosses and their state against the working class.

□ Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries and guided by the ideas of revolutionary Marxism can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable instruments of working class interests, independent of the bosses' state.

□ We fight against the INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.

□ We fight against UNEMPLOYMENT; for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.

□ We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for WORKERS' CONTROL with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.

□ We believe that the "PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM" is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully; no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine (army, police, civil service) which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.

□ The LABOUR PARTY is a capitalist party in its ideas, its policies, and in its record in government. At the same time, the bedrock organisations of the working class, the trade unions, support and finance the Labour Party. There is an open valve connection between the Labour Party and the unions, allowing the possibility of large-scale active working class participation in the party.

We relate to the Labour Party, therefore, not by simply denouncing it, but by attempting to advance the working class towards outgrowing and breaking through the stage in its own development — ideological, political and organisational — represented by Labourism.

□ We fight for full and equal rights for WOMEN, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and which has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves."

□ We fight against RACIALISM and against immigration controls. We fight for the integration of immigrant workers into the labour movement and for a united fight against capitalism, whilst supporting the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.

□ We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere fighting against IMPERIALISM, and to their organisations leading the fight.

□ British workers have — fundamentally — more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party. We give critical support to the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

□ We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of THE U.S.S.R. and the other countries called 'communist', which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different Bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism, unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.

□ There are OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS (including the official British section of the Fourth International) which have generally similar aims but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously — sometimes grossly — inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

# A BOOK YOU SHOULD READ

"THE RAGGED TROUSERED PHILANTHROPISTS" — by Robert Tressell.  
Panther paperback, 37½p.

It may or may not be true that "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" was, as Alan Sillitoe says in the introduction to the paperback edition, "the book that won the '45 election for Labour". It is certain that the book is worthy of more than that.

It is a novel that argues clearly against capitalism and for socialism — not for capitalism plus a few reforms of the Labour Party.

The author — Robert Tressell, a house-painter who died, aged 40, in 1911 — writes about the sort of life he knew, among the working class in the early days of this century.

As a picture of that life, it is vivid, critical but not contemptuous, brilliant in such passages as the account of "the Beano meeting". But it is not simply a description. It also contains an explanation of why the hardship and lack of dignity in that life were not inevitable.

In one chapter, for example, Owen, the socialist central character, explains to three of his workmates how the capitalist class exploits the working class. It is worth reproducing a shortened version of his argument, still fresh and relevant today.

## EXPLOITATION

"These pieces of bread represent the raw materials which exist naturally in and on the earth for the use of mankind.

"I represent the landlord and capitalist class. That is to say, all these raw materials belong to me. It does not matter for our present argument how I obtained possession of them; the only thing that matters now is the established fact that all the raw materials which are necessary for the production of the necessaries of life are now the property of the Landlord and Capitalist class.

"I possess something else beside the raw materials. These three knives represent — all the machinery of production; the factories, tools, railways, and so forth, without which the necessaries of life cannot be produced in abundance. And these three coins represent my Money Capital.

"Now you three represent the Working Class: you have nothing.

"But before we go any further, it is most important that you remember that I am not supposed to be merely 'a' capitalist. I represent the whole Capitalist Class. You are not supposed to be just three workers — you represent the whole Working Class."

Owen proceeded to cut up one of the slices of bread into a number of little square blocks.

"These represent the things which are produced by labour, aided by machinery, from the raw materials. We will suppose that three of these blocks represent — a week's work. We will suppose that a week's work is worth — one pound; and we will suppose that each of these halfpennies is one pound."

Owen now addressed himself to the working classes as represented by Philpot, Harlow and Easton.

"I am going to invest all my money in various industries, so as to give you Plenty of Work. I shall pay each of you one pound per week, and a week's work is — you must each produce three of these square blocks. For doing this work you will each receive your wages; the money will be your own, to do as you like with, and the things you produce will of course be mine, to do as I like with."

As soon as the Working Class had done a week's work, Owen paid their wages.

"These blocks represent the necessaries of life. You can't live without some of these things, but as they belong to me, you will have to buy them from me: my price for these blocks is — one pound each."

As the working classes were in need of the necessaries of life, and as they could not eat, drink or wear the useless money, they were compelled to agree to the kind Capitalist's terms. They each bought back and at once consumed one third of the produce of their labour.

The process was repeated several times: for each week's work the producers were paid their wages. They kept on working and spending their earnings. The kindhearted capitalist consumed twice as much as any of them and his pile of wealth continually increased. In a little while he was worth about one hundred pounds, and the working classes were still in the same condition as when they began, and were still tearing into their work as if their lives depended on it.

Then the capitalist, just after having sold a pound's worth of necessaries to each of his workers, suddenly took their tools — the Machinery of Production — away from them, and informed them that as, owing to Over-Production, all his storehouses were glutted with the necessaries of life, he had decided to close down the works.

Then the unemployed began to abuse the kind-hearted Capitalist, demanding that he should give them some of the necessaries of life that he had piled up in his warehouses, and even threatened to take some of the things by force if he did not comply with their demands. But the kind-hearted Capitalist told them not to be insolent, and spoke to them about honesty, and said that if they were not careful he would have their faces battered in for them by the police.

## SOCIALISM

The basic element in the abolition of this exploitation — the public ownership of the means of production — is clearly indicated.

But: "If you wish to see these things done", the book argues, "you must cease from voting for Liberal and Tory sweaters, shareholders of companies, lawyers, aristocrats and capitalists; and you must fill the House of Commons with Revolutionary Socialists." The flaw in this conception — and it is hardly surprising, for its time — is that the achievement of socialism is seen almost entirely in terms of votes and Parliament.

"The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" frequently shows the socialist Owen in situations where he feels like losing hope. And it wouldn't be an accurate account of the life of a socialist if it didn't include those situations. But what way to renew hope? The light at the end of the book is Owen's discovery that one of his workmates, who has been keeping quiet up to then, is in fact privately wealthy and a socialist. "In the Spring I intend to fit out a Socialist Van, and then I shall come back here. We'll have some of the best speakers in the movement; we'll hold meetings every night..."

The book lacks the concept of an organised working class revolutionary party, which could link the efforts of isolated socialists like Owen with a coherent strategy for struggle in elections, in industry, and in other aspects of society. Lacking this concept, it does have a tinge of despair.

But it is a marvellous book to read. Interspersed with the accurately realistic documentary portrayal of the workers are savagely funny caricatures of the ruling class, and passages of glorious fantasy, as live today as when it was written.

John Sterling



One of 32 occupations — workers at Kearns-Richards in Altrincham

## ENGINEERS' PAY

# After the lost chances of Manchester

by  
**JACK PRICE**



This week negotiations were resumed between the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and the Engineering Employers Federation. And one thing is for sure: never have the engineers been committed to national negotiations from such a position of weakness.

Not long ago there were 32 sit-ins in the factories of the Manchester area for at least £4 on the basic, more for women as a step towards equal pay, an extra week's holiday, and — most importantly — a 35 hour week.

The national union leadership made no serious effort to spread this sit-in movement or even get nationwide support for it.

Now the men who failed to lead nationally and left it to local claims are to sit round the table, and are already showing themselves willing to ditch everything but the demand for a minimum of £20 a week for unskilled men.

### CROSS-PURPOSE

The union leaders, particularly the Scanlon left, have played the commonest of cop-out tricks. They claimed that the union was unprepared for the struggle. Scanlon said he couldn't take the chance of a ballot for national action in case people voted against. This, he claimed, would leave them in a very weak situation (as if that's not where the engineers are now).

Why didn't Scanlon begin a massive campaign to strengthen the union at the base by fighting for the full programme of demands and the action needed to get the programme through. That means fighting in the localities for an understanding of why the government's attack on the working class must be defeated, why the ban on blacking and sympathy action under the Industrial Relations Act would just have

to be trampled on and why the struggle would be a long and hard one.

But leaders like Scanlon "rule by cross purposes". The rank and file demands he should take initiatives and he replies that they shouldn't attack him because they are not showing any initiative.

If 'leadership' means anything, it means taking an initiative, going one step ahead.

What the Scanlons do is passively reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the localities. If a factory is strong the negotiator does well. If the factory is weak he does badly. But in either case he simply rests on what already exists, not trying to improve, to build and to strengthen.

### 'REALISTIC'

They aim for what they see as 'realistic' — that is, they drop the hours demand and keep the wages demand. But the hours demand is a necessary response to unemployment. If the bosses cannot grant it, let them get off our backs.

What is 'realistic' or 'unrealistic' is a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. And the positive action of the leadership enters into that relationship of forces as an important factor.

By means of the struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity to create a system that will be controlled by themselves and not by the profit drive.

The highest the present leaders of Britain's unions rise is to being good negotiators and effective public speakers. They fall lower, of course — to the Coopers, the Carrons, the Chapples, who constantly rule by crushing every spark of militancy they find. Con-

way would be of this type, if only he could get away with it.

### RIGHT-WING TACTICS

The Scanlon-type left-wingers are obviously to be supported against the right-wing Conways. But, even though the 'lefts' start out as genuine militants on the shop floor, they can end up using the same tactics as the right.

In Manchester the union officials Tocher and Regan stopped calling the mass meetings of stewards, agreed with the employers to keep all the agreements secret, and thus ensured that although there was a district claim each firm was well and truly on its own. And this at a time when the Employers' Federation had a strike fund for its members of over a million pounds.

When some stewards who were members of the International Socialists called a meeting to get a levy going and try to put some pressure for a return to mass stewards' meetings, the Communist Party — of which both Tocher and Regan are members — "blackened the meeting".

Meanwhile, in neighbouring Bolton, when a Workers' Fight steward called a meeting to pressure for a district claim, the union leadership locally also "blackened the meeting", and banned those calling the meeting from the AUEW halls.

### GETTING RESULTS

Look at the way the Manchester struggle ended as far as the majority of the sit-ins were concerned. The point the employers would not swallow in the men's demands was the one about shorter hours.

In the first place, it was a counter-attack against unemployment. In the second place, 5 hours gained now is still 5 hours next year — £5 gained now has been eaten away

by rising prices within a year.

At this point Scanlon wanted a quick finish with "results". The local leadership went along with his "realistic" approach.

Now, after previously threatening to discipline stewards' committees for accepting money-only offers, they proposed scrapping the hours demand.

To do this, however, they could not rely on the passivity of the mass of stewards. They knew there were hundreds who would not accept a sell-out. But the right wing was there to help out. The GEC-AEI-EE stewards, led by the notorious Brennan O.B.E. (!), packed the meeting to vote in a solid phalanx for the sell-out motion. Their employers even put on coaches for them!

Don't let the defenders of the Union officialdom tell you that it has to be accepted because "it is after all democratic". Those stewards had not turned up at any of the previous meetings which determined the strategy. If Tocher, for example, had got up and denounced these scabs for what they are, the right would have been defeated. But as it was, it was Tocher's recommendation that their solid phalanx of scabby hands voted for!

Now the engineers face a real danger. The abdication of leadership by the tops of the AUEW may mean a shift to the right at least at the local level in this round of election. In desperation the workers whose standards of living have declined over the past couple of years of 'Left' leadership, may shift to the right.

Militants must oppose this with all their power. But so long as all they have to offer is the old leaders and the old methods, they will get nowhere.

## from p.3 Angela's Party

arise an immediate-issue movement of the oppressed black minority. Later this record was trampled in the mud. The blacks and the black movement, under CP influence, were harnessed to the Roosevelt bandwagon. At the beginning of the war the CP did its piece to snuff out the important movement of the blacks round the march on Washington in 1942.

This history — well known in American radical circles — should surely interest Davis. It seems not.

The conduct of her trial is itself the latest example of the CPUSA in action. Clearly she was victimised for her colour and her party membership. Yet the defence was conducted entirely on legalistic terms. Granted, for whatever reasons, a world-wide audience, the CPUSA and Angela Davis totally ignored the revolutionary tradition of using the bourgeois courts as a propaganda platform to indict the system. In her case such indictment could have had an unprecedented audience and millions could have learned about Communism. The CPUSA could have extended this propaganda opportunity by putting forward Angela Davis as its presidential candidate this year, in place of the aging hack Gus Hall.

The CPUSA doesn't operate like that. Neither, it seems, does Angela Davis.

# STANTON:

# STEELWORKERS SAY NO TO SHUTDOWN

£30  
for 35!

by JOHN CUNNINGHAM

At Stanton, Derbyshire, the British Steel Corporation are planning to close the works down, and put 1500 out of a job.

On Saturday 4 August, over 1000 Stanton workers, with their families and numerous sympathisers, demonstrated their opposition.

After the march the meeting was addressed by most of the local MPs, six Labour and one Tory.

Denis Skinner MP seemed to be the only one who managed to mention the need for the workers to fight the closures and organise a sit-in to do this.

Apart from this the contributions were the usual "if Labour had been in it wouldn't happen" or "don't worry, we will ask questions in the house about it".

One of the Tees steelworkers who had travelled down to give support, a member of WORKERS' FIGHT, also spoke.

It was obvious that the government needed changing, he said, but the immediate problem facing the Stanton workers was the forthcoming redundancies, and for this they could not rely on Labour MPs.

The fight was in their hands, and only by using lessons taught by UCS and Plesseys could there be results.

He also gave a message of support from Lackenby steelworkers.

## OCCUPATION

After the meeting members of the Stanton Action Committee stated that the next move would be an occupation.

Ray Fletcher MP said that he thought that occupation of the works was the only realistic measure and that if it took place he would be at the works.

There has been much talk about a "work-in".

In fact, a work-in would play right into the bosses' hands — they would get production for nothing and the end would only be delayed.

The better tactic would be an occupation with NO PRODUCTION. The BSC will then be faced with having expensive plant and machinery tied up and idle. Faced with this, their position will be that much weaker.

It was suggested at Stanton by members of the Action Committee that it would be wise to keep the furnaces and coke ovens warm, so avoiding a collapse which would save the bosses the trouble of closing them down.

This is a valid point but such action would still not be a work-in as such, since there would be no

responsibility. "It's not competitive" is no excuse for a closure.

But if we put control in the hands of the State, we gain nothing by nationalisation. Control over hours of work — over conditions — over wages — over jobs — should



production. The threatened closure is not just the concern of Stanton workers and their families. Every time

BSC manage to push through redundancies, they are stronger and we are weaker for the next struggle.

But a victory at Stanton could provide a springboard for workers' victories elsewhere. The workers at Stanton need support from other workers. As a very first step, the Action Committee should send out a letter asking for support, and blacking in the event of an occupation.

Other works threatened with redundancy should also occupy.

## CONTROL

BSC lost £68 million last year. So, they say, they have to "economise".

In the first place, the figure wouldn't be £68 million loss if it weren't for massive compensation paid to former owners. And why should the robbers be compensated for the loss of their loot. The fact that steel prices are kept low to private industry also pushes up losses.

In the second place, so what if they're making a loss? If the bosses insist on running the economy on the basis of production for profit, not for need, then they shouldn't expect the workers to bear the burden.

The steel industry is nationalised. Fine. That means that the State should bear the financial

responsibility. "It's not competitive" is no excuse for a closure.

But if we put control in the hands of the State, we gain nothing by nationalisation. Control over hours of work — over conditions — over wages — over jobs — should

be fought for by workers. If the demand for steel is reduced, then simply reduce the hours of work with no loss of pay. No jobs lost!

## NATIONAL

We can't rely on the Labour Party, who nationalised the steel industry in order to 'rationalise' it.

But if MPs support the occupation, that's fine. We should demand that they use their position to help fight the redundancies.

\* They should use their influence to rally support in other workplaces for the occupation, organise effective blacking, and collect funds to help the strikers.

\* They should campaign in the Labour Party for MPs elsewhere to do the same.

\* No secret negotiations. All negotiations to be under the control of mass meetings in the occupation, to which MPs should be answerable.

\* Local Labour councils should act as an arm of the Labour movement. They should waive rents for Stanton workers when they occupy, and should provide money from the rates for hardship cases.

\* There is a need for a National Action Committee against redundancies in the steel industry. The rank and file must press for this, but MPs like Denis Skinner would be in a position to get this Committee really going. ♦♦

One of the most significant things about the building strike has been the way previously non-militant sections have come to the fore. Even Stoke-on-Trent, traditionally a reservoir of busloads of scabs for militant Merseyside, has seen a demonstration of 1000 workers.

In Bolton the call from UCATT secretary George Smith on Tuesday 15 August to intensify regional strike action has met with a good response.

Several sites were at a standstill already.

As well as picketing building sites building workers have picketed two of the major suppliers of building materials in Bolton, where workers have also come out with the builders. With the help of two police cars, a black maria, and numerous police on foot, some lorries have been loaded by office staff, but this amounts to only a trickle.

The building employers have been putting out propaganda to discourage workers from joining the strike. Builders were angry at misrepresentations contained in advertisements placed in the local (true blue Tory) paper. For example, the National Federation Of Building Trades Employers claim they have offered a guaranteed minimum of £29 a week for craftsmen by next May. What they do not mention is that £3 of this £29 is in the form of bonus. This means that a builder has only to be late for work or commit some other petty 'offence' and he loses the £3 immediately. And there are the usual fabrications about strong arm tactics and intimidation.

In a short time the strikers hope to have most sites in Bolton out — then they can concentrate on the no-cards, no-union, no-questions-asked 'lump' sites. The tactic of roving pickets is working well — on Wednesday morning about 25 men were out and several sites were stopped.

Mr Clifford Kay, secretary of the Employers Federation in Bolton, said last night in the local paper: "It is getting more and more difficult to measure the extent of the stoppages locally". To Mr Kay we can only say, get into your car and drive round Bolton a while. You'll see for yourself the extent of the stoppage, site after site empty and more to come!

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