

Cement strike-CP leaders remain silent

Polish scabbing in

More Midlands
lay-offs as

D.E.P. steps into Lucas strike

BY A WORKERS PRESS
CORRESPONDENT

DEPARTMENT of Employment and Productivity officials stepped in yesterday as British-Leyland workers from Coventry's Jaguar plant swelled the number of Midlands car-workers laid off because of the shortage of Joseph Lucas electrical components.

They met management representatives, and then union officials, in London.

But it has become increasingly clear that the Lucas-Girling-CAV combine management is determined to resist its Birmingham die-casters' and plastics workers' claim for a 9.5-a-week pay increase even to the point of the massive shutdowns threatened by the end of the week.

Close on 10,000 Lucas components workers are now laid off in retaliation against the three-week-old, two-round strike of 650 workers from Lucas's Formans Road, Birmingham, factory.

Car production at Vauxhall's is now only being maintained on an hour-to-hour basis and 1,600 lay-offs at Dunstable have pared truck production down to a minimum.

Ford's daily production at Dagenham and Halewood is being stockpiled without starters or generators.

Production cut

All Jaguar and Daimler output at Coventry stopped with yesterday's 1,500 lay-offs and British-Leyland expects to cut its Austin-Morris production at the end of the week if Lucas refuses to settle.

The Formans Road strikers meet on Friday. Meanwhile, in another part of the Lucas combine, reports indicate that the company's hard line on wages is being combined with determination to push through productivity dealing.

Grading plan at Acton?

STEWARDS at the Acton site of Lucas's CAV subsidiary, who have submitted a factory claim for increases of £6 for men and £8 for women, believe that a document containing details of a proposed job-grading scheme for skilled sections may now be in existence.

If this is in fact the case, they say, it will seriously embarrass executive members of the factory's joint shop stewards' committee and cause considerable ill-feeling amongst rank-and-file workers.

One site convenor stated categorically last week that no grading committee had been set up.

Stewards warn that any proposals drawn up in this way—it is rumoured that departmental mentions include the toolroom and the setters—would seriously undermine their rights to negotiate wages for their members.

Eire - the proof

WHEN ARE the leaders of the British Communist Party going to break their despicable silence and denounce the international strike-breaking activities of the Polish Stalinist government?

A week ago we asked Party secretary John Gollan and 'Morning Star' editor George Matthews to declare their position on the Polish cement imported into the Irish Republic during the five-month strike of 750 workers at Cement Ltd in Drogheda and Limerick.

They have remained silent.

The Workers Press now has documentary evidence which proves the Polish government of Gomułka was involved up to the hilt in the export of scab cement to Ireland during the strike, which ended at the beginning of this week.

The bill of lading of the MV 'France', reproduced here, shows that the vessel loaded on April 6 at the port of Gdynia, Poland, with 520 tons of Polish-made Sail brand Portland cement.

The cement was exported by the state-owned 'Minex' concern—the central government agency in Warsaw for building material exports.

April 6 was just over two months after the start of the cement strike.

The scab cement was landed on or about April 24 in the port of Moville, Co. Donegal, Eire.

Profitable

The importer is named on the bill of sale as Henry Thompson, Coal Importer, Moville.

He bought the cement at £8 a ton, though the going price for cement in the Irish Republic during the strike reached as high as £26 a ton.

The scab trade in cement was thus extremely profitable. Moville is not a regular cement port.

It has no facilities for unloading cement cargoes and is, in fact, normally used by occasional coaling vessels.

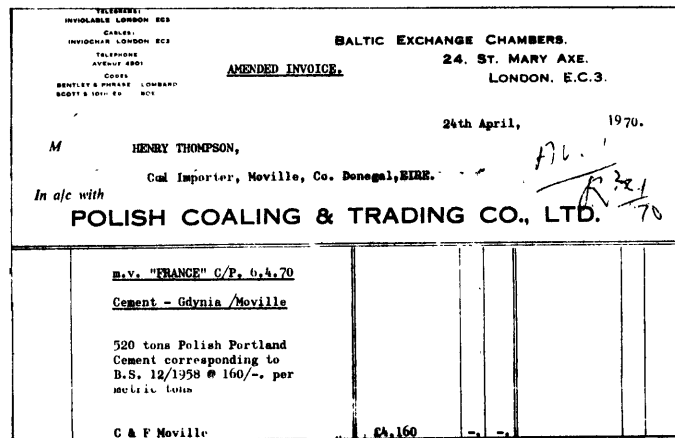
There was only one reason for shipping cement through such a port: that the cement was 'black' and that scab ships had already been chased out of most of the major ports in Eire.

Scab shipments became so widespread during the strike that the strikers were forced to organize vigilante squads to ambush the lorries carrying scab cement and destroy their loads.

Forced back

After 21 weeks on £5-a-week strike pay, the men were finally forced to accept pay increases well below their original demands, tied to an incremental scale.

A key role in forcing this settlement on the



Top: The bill of lading for the MV 'France' carrying cement from Gdynia to Moville. Above: The invoice made out to Moville importer Henry Thompson at £8 a ton.

Theodorakis denounces Stalinists

SPEAKING to a meeting of over 300 at the Camden Town Hall on Monday night, exiled Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis attacked Stalinist policy past and present for its betrayals of the Greek working class.

Asked for his opinions on Soviet trade with Greece and the strike-breaking of the Polish bureaucracy in Spain and now Ireland, Theodorakis agreed that these things were wrong.

From all corners of the hall, Greek workers—CP members included—demanded to know why the Stalinist-backed 'Patriotic Front' placed political confidence in the capitalist Party, and why the Greek Communist Party refused to attack or call for the removal of the Greek monarchy.

Turning on one prominent pro-Moscow Stalinist—Economidis—he shouted: 'Do you remember the red paper that Stalin sent us?'

The 'red paper', Theodorakis explained, was a written instruction from Stalin to the leaders of the Greek Communist Party, calling upon them to capitulate to imperialism and call off the struggle for power that developed after 1944.

Stalinists back anti-Market Powellites

AS TALKS began in Luxembourg on British entry into the European Common Market, a committee called the Common Market Safeguards Campaign began its work of confusing working-class opposition to the Market.

The Campaign, backed by MPs ranging from Labour 'lefts' like Frank Allaun to right-wing Tories like Ronald Bell, has the blessing of the Stalinists.

Jack Jones, Dan McGarvey and Richard Bringshaw are

Kremlin in line with Mid-East 'peace plan'

BY JOHN CRAWFORD

ACCORDING to the latest issue of the French weekly 'Nouvel Observateur', Dobrin, the Russian Ambassador to Washington, has already delivered the Soviet reply to the US 'peace plan' for the Middle East.

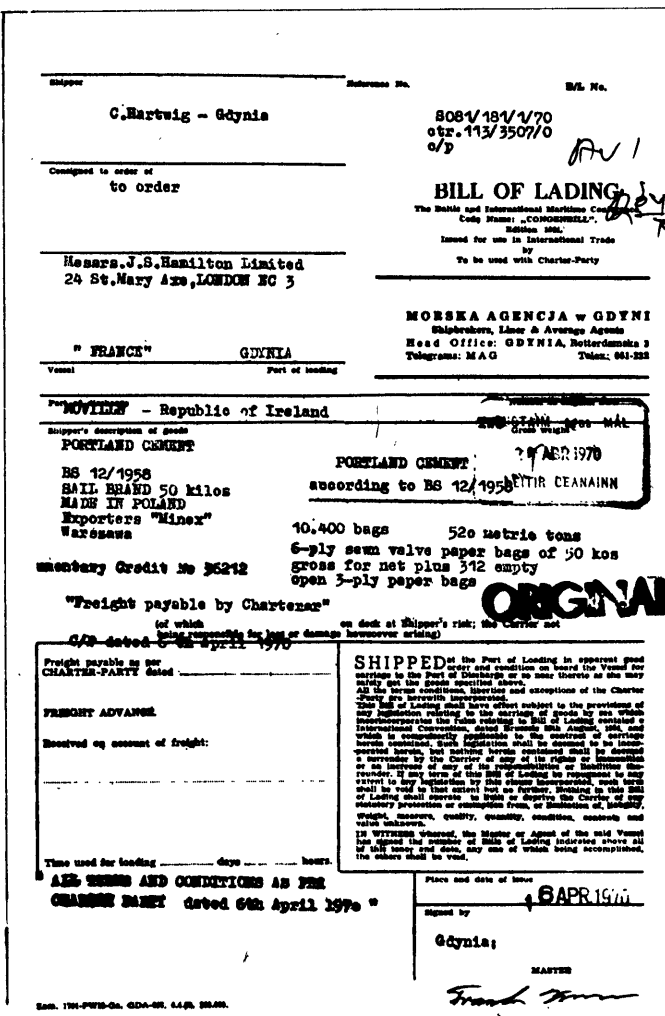
The text as described by Josette Ahia is in line with the treacherous role played by the Stalinist leaders which Workers Press has warned about for some weeks.

They propose pressure should be put on Israel and Egypt to issue declarations on the following lines.

The Israelis would declare their intention to withdraw 'eventually' from the territories occupied in 1967.

Nasser, on his side, would

● PAGE FOUR COL. 1 →



Royal dockers scotch Devlin date

BY A WORKERS PRESS REPORTER

With only 15 days to go before the threatened official national dock strike for a £20 basic wage, the employers will take this new crisis before Thursday's emergency meeting of the national ports modernization committee for discussion.

In a bid to avert the July 14 strike, the national port employers offered yesterday afternoon to increase dockers' guaranteed minimum earnings, now £17 in London and £16 elsewhere, to £20—a 4-per cent increase from which most dockers would get no benefit at all.



Erith strikers demand 'jobs not redundancy'

'JOBS not redundancy' demanded posters at yesterday's meeting of maintenance, electrical and engineering strikers from Standard Telephone's Submarine Cables factory at Erith, Kent, where 280 sackings have been threatened.

A total of more than 700 workers are now on strike.

170 workers from Greenwich, some of whom are also threatened with redundancy, shut down the company's plant there on Monday.

Greenwich Amalgamated Engineers and Foundryworkers' steward Harry Stevens told the meeting that only working-class action

could stop the sackings and warned 'it cannot be left to officials or MPs as they do not work on the conditions in which we work'.

A vote to carry on the strike and to demand the withdrawal of the 11 redundancy notices issued at the weekend was carried unanimously.

However, Submarine Cables workers still face a fight against some union officials who still talk in terms of 'better redundancy pay' and acceptance of 'some redundancies' instead of organizing an all-out fight against the proposed sackings.

£1000 June Appeal Fund tops £1,071

REGRETFULLY, our fund total did not appear in yesterday's paper. This was an oversight for which we are sorry.

Together with the magnificent collection at Monday evening's public meeting, we are now well over the top—£1,071—and at the time of writing there is still almost a day in hand.

We shall announce the final figure in our issue of July 2.

Meanwhile, please give us a big push for the July Fund. Many, many thanks to all our devoted readers.

Post all donations to:

Workers Press Appeal Fund
186A Clapham High Street
London, SW4.

Work-to-rule at Westland

ENGINEERING workers from Westland Helicopters' Hayes, Middlesex, site took the day off for the second time in three weeks yesterday after an 11 a.m. report-back meeting on negotiations for their £4-a-week pay claim.

Yesterday's meeting voted overwhelmingly to force a drastic production cut-back when they return today by going onto day rates, working to rule and banning overtime.

This is in protest against the management's 'improved' offer of a £3 rise with a 22-per cent reduction on piece-work times; an offer which, many skilled workers claim, would mean an overall loss in earnings of 8s 3d.

Further provocations—which are now undoubtedly being planned—could spark off a shooting war not only in the North but in the South as well.

Unionist Home Affairs Minister Brian Faulkner announced on Monday night

Virtual military dictatorship

Ulster drifts towards civil war

BRITISH TROOPS clamped down an iron cordon in the working-class districts of Belfast and Derry yesterday, restoring a temporary and makeshift 'peace' for the first time since the fighting broke out in Ulster on Friday.

Traffic and people entering the Ardoyne, Ballymacarret and Ballymurphy districts of Belfast were subjected to stringent security searches and thousands of troops ringed the main trouble areas.

But the military calm cannot hide the fact that Ireland is now very near the brink of a devastating civil war.

The provocative jailing of Bernadette Devlin and the brutal behaviour of the British troops over the weekend in Derry and Belfast have split the country into two armed camps.

Further provocations—which are now undoubtedly being planned—could spark off a shooting war not only in the North but in the South as well.

Unionist Home Affairs Minister Brian Faulkner announced on Monday night

that nobody in N Ireland had any real grievances.

He said on the BBC's 'Panorama' programme: 'Virtually the whole of the reform programme is now through and is law, and I think everyone will agree that there are no real grievances in N Ireland by anybody at this time.'

Faulkner's facile optimism is not shared by other observers, including his fellow Tory Reginald Maudling, who said yesterday that 'the tragic events of the last few days hang heavily on all of us'.

There could be neither peace, harmony nor prosperity until law and order was restored, he warned.

Home Secretary Maudling had talks with Stormont premier James Chichester-Clark, yesterday.

He also met Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Freeland, army GOC in N Ireland.

They were expected to discuss the use of even stronger forms of tear-gas and the possibility of using water-cannon to mark rioters with an indelible dye for later identification.

They were also thought likely to discuss the possibility of establishing military internment camps for suspected persons.

SPLIT DANGER

The big danger now developing in Ulster is that the split in the working class appears to be deepening under the military pressure.

500 Catholic workers were apparently driven out of Harland and Wolff's predominantly Protestant shipyard on Monday afternoon after threats that they would be shot if they stayed on the premises.

Labourite steward Sandy Scott—holder of the MBE for his 'peace-keeping' efforts last year—later saw premier Chichester-Clark in an attempt to heal the breach.

Scott later said he was 'hopeful' that normal safe working conditions for every worker could be restored.

People convicted of riotous or disorderly behaviour now face minimum sentences of one year's imprisonment under a Bill approved yesterday by the Unionist majority in the Stormont parliament.

Stormont has also informed the Home Office in London that it intends to begin arresting on suspicion and detaining without trial under the Special Powers Act.

This Act gives wide-ranging powers to the government to suspend what few civil liberties exist in Ulster.

DECISIVE

To all intents and purposes a military dictatorship now exists in Ulster.

The military—considerably reinforced with fresh troops—are the most decisive force in the situation there.

They have taken up a clear stand in preserving the right of the Orange Order to stage provocative marches through Catholic areas, and have singled out Catholic areas like Derry's Bogside for special treatment.

In a minor concession to Chichester-Clark, leaders of the Orange Order has agreed to call off about ten small parades scheduled to take place in Belfast over the next few days as part of the rehearsals for the July 12 Boyne anniversary.

The big July 12 marches, and most of the so-called rehearsals, will go ahead as before, however.



'GET OUT OF HERE NED KELLY...'



MY KNOWLEDGE of Ned Kelly, the Australian folk hero is limited. He came from Irish stock who were deported to Australia, he fell foul of the English police in Victoria and became a wanted man with a price on his head.

He wrote an extraordinary letter protesting his innocence and finally shot it out with the police single handed, clad head to foot in a suit of iron which he made for the purpose. He was hanged.

Such information is contained also in Tony Richardson's film 'Ned Kelly' — precisely that and no more.

On Kelly's side

Richardson attempts a sympathetic portrait, that is to say he is on Kelly's side.

In some sense it is refreshing to see a film which gives no quarter to the police and authority. Richardson is with the outcast and the rebel.

Yet the film leaves merely an impression of perfunctoriness, of shallowness.

It slips by at the regulation number of frames per second, in stunning colour, but as someone once said of Hollywood, there is less in it than meets the eye.

The Australian landscape is always swirling in mists, the lens catches only bloodshot sunsets or sunrises, driving rain and at one point snow. It is the effect that predominates. The characters merely tell the plot to each other.

They are recounting history and not really living it for us.

No relationship between the characters is explored. They say simple lines to each other which are merely devices to push on to the next bit of 'filmic' action, whether it be horse-stealing, a gun fight or a dance.

'NED KELLY'
starring MICK JAGGER
directed by TONY RICHARDSON

It has really then the intellectual content of a series of TV commercials, spectacular in many ways, but completely uninvolved.

If you read Kelly's letter, and I am relying on memory here, even though parts of it are quoted in the film, a completely different kind of Kelly emerges from the one that Mick Jagger plays and Richardson films.

It is a passionate, rich and semi-literate outcry of indignation, hatred and contempt for authority and the police.

Kelly was obviously a man absolutely rooted in the tradition of Irish struggle, with all the heroism, colour, ingenuity and adventurism of his past.

'I have been wronged!' he cries. 'I give warning!' he threatens.

He has an inspired insanity, bred out of oppression and hatred, that can drive him to take on the English police single-handed.

It's his fanaticism and wild improvisation that makes him interesting, not simply as a figure from the past, but as part and parcel of a tradition of Irish rebellion that to this day is being fought out in the streets of Belfast and Derry with all its heroic weakness.

Opportunist

In this sense Richardson has a completely opportunist relationship to his central hero, and his choice of Mick Jagger for the role reflects this.

He seeks to give a contemporary relevance to Ned Kelly by emphasizing the anti-authoritarianism of the modern protest of youth.

He chooses the personality and history of Jagger to do this for him in one leap and it fails abysmally, not because Jagger is inadequate as a performer.

I would defy any actor to give a comprehensive performance because the possibility

simply does not exist in the script or the treatment.

All the characters are animated shadows that move across the screen and no more.

To reduce Ned Kelly to a figure of pop protest is to mis-cast history for purely modish, opportunist reasons.

Richardson's inability to grasp the true significance of a Ned Kelly is not so much in question here.

For that he would have to be a Marxist and at this historical moment there are few creative artists who have that understanding. I am not therefore concerned with crimes of omission.

Middle class

But more important is a certain mood among the middle class that this film represents.

It's the kind of confused irresponsibility from the side lines, glib provocations to adventures, a sort of petulant 'damn them all'.

This mood was very clear amongst middle-class political tendencies throughout the election. And it is dangerous.

It is dangerous in N Ireland and it is dangerous here.

As a tendency posturing at this moment on the left it has direct social and economic links with the frustrations with monopoly capital and state authority that the petty bourgeoisie on the right are now voicing.

In a sense what both fear are organized working-class action and discipline.

The rebel posturing at one moment in a changed crisis situation can easily be transformed into its opposite, some form of idiot socialism, looking for the great man to put it all right.

The failed adventures of today are the preparations for tomorrow's retreat.



CINEMA By Brian Moore



Leon Trotsky

Where Is Britain Going?

Available from NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS, 186A Clapham High St., London, SW4. Price 5s

Workers Press notebook

POLITICAL FOOTBALL

MANY READERS will have been struck by the similarity between the statements of Mr Harry Nicholas after last Wednesday's Labour Party Executive and Sir Alf Ramsey on his return from the World Cup the following day.

'The team provided all that was necessary in skill and entertainment. They also played with dignity,' said Sir Alf.

'There were no recriminations at the meeting. The only weak point in the campaign had been the failure to get out sufficient postal voters in marginal constituencies,' said the Labour Party team manager.

'I don't think we can learn anything from the Brazilians... We were one of the best teams in the competition,' thought the England general secretary.

'The degree of work in the constituencies was even better than it had ever been,' declared outside-right Nicholas. 'It is fair to say that England

was a team the Brazilians feared most... People had been lulled by the opinion polls... England's defeat by W Germany in the quarter finals will be one of the mysteries of football... One of the TV authorities had a very interesting film on polling

night', said Sir Alf Nicholas—or was it Harry Ramsey? One thing is very clear. In order to stop anyone asking about the policies of Labour's captain, what Transport House needs is a star sweeper (under the carpet). No strikers, please!



Sir ALF NICHOLAS

IT IS JUST 20 years since the Korean war broke out in 1950.

N Korean troops, later joined by the Chinese Red Army, fought against the forces of the US puppet Syngman Rhee. Very soon, a big US army was in action, disguised as a 'United Nations' force.

The British Labour government sent troops to join the fight of imperialism against the Korean people and the Chinese Revolution.

As the Cold War began to hot up, the Labour leaders embarked on a massive re-armament drive, the expenditure for which was a major factor bringing the reforms of the government to a halt and leading to the Tory victory in the following year.

You might have thought that any account of the Labour government of 1945-1951 would deal quite extensively with these events. But a recent series in the 'International Socialist' paper 'Socialist Worker' (May 30 and June 6) somehow managed to miss the Korean war completely.

It is not hard to guess why. IS originated in a break from the Trotskyist movement on precisely this issue.

T. Cliff and his supporters, who had previously been in agreement with the tendency then led by Haston, decided that the Soviet Union was not a workers' state as Trotsky had analysed it, but was 'state capitalist'.

According to this line, therefore, the war in Korea was a conflict between two capitalist powers, the USA and the USSR. The conclusion—a firm position of neutrality on the part of socialists.

Now this was very comfort-

IS unwrites history



KOREAN WAR: Missed out

able, at a time when the Labour 'lefts' were running for cover, with the great 'anti-imperialist' Fenner Brockway well to the fore in supporting the 'UN'.

While the Trotskyists fought for the unconditional defence of the Chinese Revolution against imperialism, Cliff was giving very 'left' reasons for taking a neutral line.

In case anyone thinks that this might have been a mistake which IS later corrected, they published an editorial in the Spring 1968 issue of their magazine reaffirming their 1950 position, and trying to show that the Vietnam war was quite different.

But in 1970, IS, with its usual devotion to principles, tries to avoid the question altogether.

DON'T SAY 'BROWN'— SAY 'COURTAULDS!'



IT'S A bitter blow to lose your job at the age of 55. It comes even harder if you had been getting a salary of £3,250 a year.

No wonder Mr George Brown is thinking of selling his white Jaguar. Not that Brown is homeless. In fact he has to worry about his flat near

Marble Arch, a house in Sussex and another flat in his former constituency.

But, before Workers Press readers start sending cash to keep this poor old chap from utter destitution, let us hurry to reassure you: he still has his memoirs to finish, for which he is promised an advance of £20,000.

In the meantime, he might be able to scrape along on the

£8,000 a year he gets as industrial relations adviser to Courtaulds.

When Courtaulds chairman Lord Kearnton's salary was announced to have gone up by £7,500 to £30,025 in last week's annual report, it was explained that this was to enable the company to pay more to other executives.

So maybe Brown won't be on the bread-line after all.



... The deathly hush which settles over the whole works leaves the management in no doubt of the significance of the role played by the workers when operating the machines

Some questions on 'Productivity' payment schemes

7

If productivity deals offer more money for greater output — isn't this a fair enough bargain?

WAGES are not and never have been controlled by the quantity or value of the goods produced or by the productivity of labour.

The view which the employers and the ruling class have put forward on wages is that they are a logically worked out system giving 'fair' return for effort expended.

The old saying has been used for generations, 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay'.

It is used with equal gusto by the employer running a sweat shop on rock bottom wages, to the employer in a factory where trade unions have forced relatively high wages.

Even where workers were forced to work 14 hours a day for a few shillings, living in grinding poverty, employers have used this saying just as confidently.

Marx, in 'Das Kapital', pointed out that wages are simply a means of exploiting the vast majority of humanity in order that a tiny minority should continue to live in luxury and wealth far beyond the wildest imagination of any working man.

He set out to show that all wealth is created by the working class, using the tools of the

period and the available resources of nature, and that there is no other source of value on the earth.

The worker himself has no wealth or property. He has only one 'commodity' which he can sell, and that is his ability to work, or as Marx called it his labour power.

Marx showed that the value of a commodity (an item produced for exchange rather than personal consumption) depended on the amount of labour used to produce it.

He went on to show that under capitalism, labour power itself was a commodity produced for the market.

Labour power

Like any other commodity, labour power has its price. This price approximates to the cost of the upkeep of the worker and his family. The worker hopes to sell his commodity, his labour power, for as much as possible, the buyer, the employer, aims to pay as little as possible.

The real value of a workers' labour power is the sum of the value he produces during his hours of work. But the employer will pay him only a proportion of this; the rest is taken by the employer in the form of surplus value.

Some of this surplus is used by the employer for re-investment in order to lay the basis for future surplus value and the rest is retained for personal

consumption, liquid assets, etc.

An employer normally wants labour to be supplied continuously so that he can grow fat and rich on a stream of surplus value. The 'minimum wage' therefore is that wage which allows a worker to continually reproduce another week's supply of labour power.

In other words, to provide himself with enough food, clothes, shelter, etc., firstly in order to be able to return to the factory the next day fit enough to carry out another shift and secondly in order to bring up a family in order to provide the future labour power for the next generation of exploiters.

Even under a slave society these basic necessities had to be given to the slaves, otherwise they were of no further use. We are talking now, of course, of rock bottom subsistence.

In the industrialized countries (this excludes the semi-colonies where grinding poverty is still the order of the day) the working class has been able by struggle with the employers to attain a standard of living higher than this.

In Britain today, for example, it would be useless for an employer to offer wages—except at a time of enormous crisis—at bare subsistence level; in other words the employer must pay enough wages to allow the worker to reproduce his labour power at the

socially accepted standard prevailing at the time and place involved.

But the employer still sets out to pay the worker as little as possible within these limits, this is the reality of wages.

It is from this struggle between the working class and the capitalists that wage levels are set. After the employer has hired the worker he sets him to work, but as far as the capitalist is concerned it is no business of the worker whether his labour is used to produce ten or ten thousand items, the wages are paid for the hire of the labour-power for the day or the week and what the employer uses it for is his own concern.

This may not seem to be the case with piecework payments; after all, the worker is paid by the unit, which is apparently equivalent to being paid according to output. In fact, the wage arrangement is not a product of the number of items produced, but of the continuing struggle of the workers against the employers to revise and re-fix the piece-price.

The worker struggles to get a price which will, at the very least, give him his keep when all the payments have been added up. The employer attempts to keep this price down to the minimum subsistence level for the worker and the maximum profit for himself.

The arrangement where the worker gets a day's keep in return for a day's labour is very convenient for the bosses because the level of labour productivity is such that the worker has soon turned out the value of his day's keep, i.e. a day's wages. The rest of the working day is entirely for the employer's pocket. It is totally unpaid labour.

In fact, the story about the 'fair day's pay' (the minimum that the boss can get for the worker to accept) for the 'fair day's work' (the maximum amount of labour he can squeeze out of the worker during the working day) is the greatest confidence trick of all, far greater than that of productivity deals, which are just one form that the struggle for surplus value takes.

But surely the machines themselves produce value?

WE SAY NO. No value can be produced by a machine. But, you may then say, a machine can churn out masses of commodities in the course of a day, surely it is producing value?

This can only be answered in the following way. Machines do not grow on trees. They are produced by labour. Therefore if a machine is turning out commodities which have value, that value is not being created by the machine, it is created by the labour of the workers who work the machine.

At the same time, it is true that a small part of the value of the machine passes into each product as 'wear and tear' of the machine.

In other words there are, in a sense, two types of labour power used to produce a commodity. There is the labour power of those who made the machine that is used in production and the labour power of those who service and operate the machine.

Marx placed the investment industries—those that made machines, and not commodities for direct consumption—in section two in his economic schemata, and the industries that do produce commodities for consumption section one.

You may think that all this is irrelevant to the question of productivity, Measured - Day

Work, etc. But here we must turn to the role of crisis, which as was shown in earlier article is the real reason behind every productivity swindle.

If you ask why there are crises under capitalism, the answer will be found in the theory of value, wages, etc. To be specific, that part of the theory of value which explains the tendency to the falling rate of profit, the most basic contradiction of capitalism.

Marx showed that as time went by there was a tendency for every capitalist to invest proportionately more in machines than in labour. But since surplus value can only be created by living labour, the rate of surplus value from any given amount of investment has a corresponding tendency to fall as time goes by.

employers can only view with horror any existing wage systems which promote the illusion that pay is in any way tied to output.

This not only applies to piecework, but also to conventional time-working, where, although workers may be paid only for the hours of attendance, they nevertheless do not blind themselves to the amount of work they are doing (and the amount of profit being made) and consequently demand new basic rates in keeping with the work done.

It is the aim of the business consultants to wipe out the memory of the traditional systems of payment, and especially to stop the worker from adding up how much he would have earned if piecework rates were still operating.

of around 4 to 5 per cent—apart from the effects of national pay increases.

The second ploy, that under the new system wages are tied to productivity, is another deception.

When workers have increased output they will be told that only part of the increase is due to their extra labour, the rest being due to new machinery—and new methods.

An example of this is seen from the decision of the PIB on the 1968 ICI wage claim. The PIB's report admitted that productivity had risen by 10 per cent, but concluded that they could only allow a 3½ per cent rise and not the 6½ per cent asked for.

This was because: 'The increase in productivity is due to a wide range of fac-

etc.); they must be serviced continually by large numbers of maintenance personnel.

Th understanding of this indivisibility is usually brought home sharply to the employer when workers totally, or even in part, withdraw their labour. The deathly hush which settles over the whole works leaves the management in no doubt of the significance of the role played by the workers when operating the machines.

But in any case where have the machines—the 'capital investment' mentioned by the PIB—come from, except from the workers themselves?

Everything has come from their labour in producing commodities, thereby creating value. In this sense the entire increase in productivity can be said to be totally due to the working class and to no one else.

In fact, 'the experts' know very well the discrepancies in their argument and when pressed to define what they mean by increased productivity, explain that they are referring to that which is due to 'greater effort' by the worker.

To them, this would appear a safe way of holding down payment, as any human being is only capable of raising mental and physical effort to a limited extent.

The scientific equipment needed to measure the physical and mental effort associated with any activity occupies a volume of several hundred cubic feet and cannot be strapped unobtrusively to the back of the operative, even supposing for one moment he was willing to accept such an imposition.

Physical

But without such equipment it is impossible to have any clue whatsoever as to how much physical effort (use of muscles, chemical energy, converted to mechanical energy) or mental effort is involved in even the simplest operation. To what, then, are wages really tied in productivity deals?

They are fixed according to time study, or more specifically to the rating scale.

This is the measure of opinion of the consultants of how much effort is being used by the worker. Mathematical formulas have been invented by which the amount of movement the worker makes in one minute can be compared with a 'standard minute', which is the consultant's estimate of how much movement should have been made in the time.

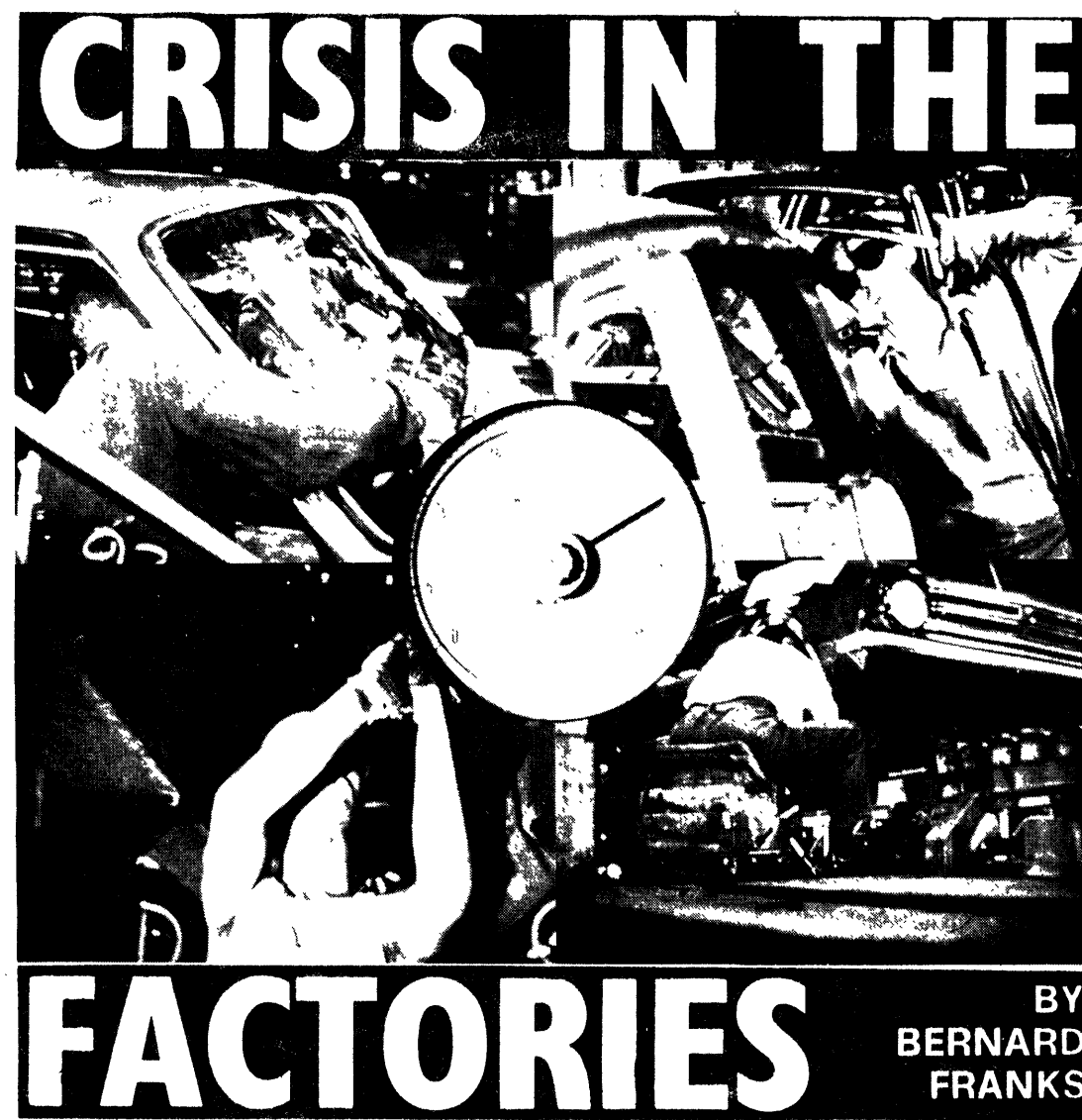
On the job this is usually reflected in each task being given a time in which it must be accomplished. With an incentive-bonus scheme the payment is based on an ascending scale of performance. With Measured-Day Work a fixed target level must be achieved for the payment of a basic wage to be made.

And how are the payments which will be attached to the consultants' formulas decided? As in the case of every other system of payment, by the struggle between workers and employers to fix the scale of payment according to their respective and entirely opposing needs.

In other words, 'productivity' wages, as with all other systems of payment, are not related to productivity, but to how much the employer thinks he can get away with paying.

When workers' performance figures are associated with a 3½ per cent bonus, it means that any production level at all will be translated by the consultant's own special brand of mathematics into a payment level somewhere on this scale.

Continued next Wednesday.



This is a regular series on 'Work Study' and new payment methods in industry.

TV schedule listing for BBC 1, BBC 2, and ITV, including regional BBC and ITV listings. Includes program titles like 'The Last Blue Mountain', 'The Paper Chase', and 'The Return of Bald Eagle'.

