

Socialist Worker

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ONLY WAY TO FIGHT TORIES: STEEL MEN TAKE THE LEAD

THE TORY GOVERNMENT is trying to press home its policy of cutting the real wages of all workers in the country. That is the message of the Blastfurnacemen's strike.

In the last three months, prices have been rising twice as fast as wages. The Tories hope to continue this pattern by forcing the steel men to accept the same low rise as the postal workers—a meagre 8 per cent at a time when prices are rising by 11 per cent each year.

The press, radio and television have argued that the steel workers are cutting their own throats. At a time when steel plants are being closed down, it is said that a strike can only lead to more closures.

Stop workers pushing

But the same people who refuse a decent pay rise are responsible for the closures. Tory ministers have ordered the Steel Corporation to both make large profits and to sell steel cheaply to their friends who own private industry. That has meant the closing of plants and large redundancies. Now they hope that these redundancies will stop the workers pushing for pay rises to keep up with the cost of living.

Again the press says that the workers should be 'sensible' and accept productivity bargaining, in exchange for a pay rise. But productivity bargaining means fewer workers producing more goods—in other words, even more redundancies. And those who keep their jobs have to slave harder just in order to stay where they are.

At present 793,000 people are on the dole. Millions of workers are finding that every week their wages buy fewer goods than the week before. A million school children are going without a hot school dinner because their parents can not afford the increased prices. Old people still have to wait another three months before they get a miserable increase in their pensions.

Unless working people fight back, things will get even worse. The sort of action the steelmen are taking is the only action that any group of workers can take to protect themselves.

More is needed

The words of Tory ministers and press millionaires should be thrown back in their faces. If the present system of society cannot allow workers to maintain their already inadequate wage levels without leading to unemployment, then there is something seriously wrong with that system.

Struggles like those of the steelworkers must be supported. That is the only way in which we can ward off the Tory attacks. But more is needed.

An organisation of revolutionary socialist workers has to be built, determined to turn the struggle in defence of living conditions into an attack on the whole system that the Tories and bosses stand for.

G&M: union that's a stepping stone to the House of Lords—page 4
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NEXT WEEK: Paul Foot on the Bernie Cornfeld saga



What hope for her in London's Notting Hill...

A young black girl in the Notting Hill district of North London—an area of rotting slums, unemployment, high rents and day-in, day-out hounding by the police. The press plays up clashes between youngsters and police but ignores the grim reality of an all-too-typical part of London that is a breeding ground for rent racketeers and racist authorities. A special Behind the Headlines report on the back page.

<p>International Socialists London Region Day School Saturday 5 June 2-4.30pm: Work of revolutionaries in the unions Speaker Roger Rosewell 5-7pm: Imperialism Speaker Tony Clif</p> <p>Followed by social, including films and plays. New Merlins Cave, Margery Street, WC1. Admission 15p.</p>	<p>International Socialists Public meeting Tuesday 8 June 7.45pm Crisis in Southern Asia Nigel Harris Mirze Chagtai Chris Harman plus speakers from Bangla Desh and Ceylon</p> <p>Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1</p>
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**SPREAD
THE
STRIKE!**

by **ROB CLAY**

TEESSIDE:—The first national strike by any union in the steel industry since 1926 started on Tuesday with almost 100 per cent support in every major steel area of England and Wales. In only three places have workers failed to respond to the strike call.

It is another head-on confrontation between a union and a state employer backed by the Tory government. It has started at a time of major crisis in the industry.

The Blastfurnacemen's Union is claiming a 35 per cent pay increase. Many of their members are earning as little as £15 a week at present. They have not had a rise for two years.

They are asking for the present claim as an interim measure to make up some of the ground they have lost due to price, rent and other rises in the last two years.

DISTORTION

The British Steel Corporation's talk of men earning £30 a week is a disgraceful and deliberate piece of distortion. To earn £30 a worker would have to be on the killing 'Continental shift system' and doing overtime. He would also have to have worked in the industry a number of years in the most appalling conditions.

Is that a good wage for a man with a family who has worked in the heat, carbon monoxide fumes, filth and danger of the blast furnaces for 20 years?

As usual the millionaire press, led by The Sun this time, are preparing a public crucifixion of the 'irresponsible and selfish strikers'. The facts are that the claim has been in since last December and has been collecting dust on the desks of top Steel Corporation bureaucrats.

NO OFFER

The unions have asked BSC for a reply more than once but nothing has been forthcoming. Finally, BSC announced that it would not offer anything at all.

When they were given notice of industrial action the Corporation said that it would make an offer in two weeks if the strike was called off.

Hector Smith, general secretary of the Blastfurnacemen's Union, told me: 'What is the big secret? They have had six months. If they have an offer let them make it now.'

And yet the Corporation is now talking about the union 'holding the industry to ransom.'

The Blastfurnacemen are the first people for a long time to really put up a fight against the British Steel Corporation. It is long overdue. BSC has increasingly played the role of one of the most vicious and mean employers in the country.

The steel workers have put up with appallingly low wages and bad conditions for years, while the private owners milked the profits and the industry provides a cut-price service to the profit-hungry motor bosses.

SHAMBLES

The inefficiency of management planning is extraordinary. At present they are bringing American scrap steel to Teesside for remelting while local scrap dealers offering the same material at £13 a ton cannot do business.

As usual, it is the steel workers who pay the price for the bosses' shambles. There is now a major threat of sweeping redundancies—thousands of jobs have gone already.

In the face of all this there has been little response from the other union leaders. The three other unions (including BISAFTA, with over half the workers in the industry) have had claims turned down by the Corporation. So far none of them has taken any action.

The Blastfurnacemen are a small union with only 15,000 members. They are setting a fine example to other workers in the steel industry. It is tragic to have to see them go it alone.

Members of other steel unions should demand that their unions join the strike in support of their claim. Where possible, one day strikes should be held to press this demand and demonstrate solidarity with the Blastfurnacemen.

Socialist Worker

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What price democracy

ONE OF THE biggest myths in this country is that government ministers and MPs believe in 'democracy.' Every time, for instance, one day strikes have taken place against the Industrial Relations Bill the press, radio and television have taken up the cry that the unions are attempting to undermine the democratic process. Few people have been more vociferous in their comments than the members of the present government.

Yet over the past few weeks all these 'defenders of democracy' have been discussing one thing: week after week in their posh papers and journals they have been debating how best to ignore the feelings of the mass of the population on the Common Market negotiations.

The situation is simple. Opinion polls show that between 70 and 80 per cent of the population do not want to go into Europe. There are a variety of motives behind this opposition. Some hark back to the faded glories of the Empire. Some are alarmed at rising prices. Some fear that the Market will strengthen big business. But the total result is that those who oppose the market far exceed those who support it.

This poses a problem for those politicians who day after day proclaim their commitment to 'democracy.' Not, as you might expect if you take seriously their statements of how to enforce the rule of the majority, but quite the opposite. For they see the Common Market decision as a vital one, affecting the future development of British capitalism. And they are concerned to ensure that the 'democratic process' is not allowed to effect a matter so important for their profit levels. 'Public opinion' and 'secret ballots' are all right when it is a question of choosing between rival politicians with near identical policies or of ending a strike in the employers' interest, but not for really important matters.

So they devote an enormous amount of effort to trying to work out some manoeuvre that will get the Common Market decision through without any risk of majority feelings being taken into account. The 'democratic process' is meant to be a restraint on us, not a control over them.

THE LEFT ALONE

THE COMMON MARKET poses problems for the Left as well. Not that many on the Left have been fooled by the official talk about the 'European spirit' and such like. Most realise that this is just a cloak for the efforts of big business to get together on a European scale.

And it is usually recognised, too, that all the normal features of capitalist 'rationalisation' will be accentuated: there will be continued rising prices, further depression of the depressed areas like the North-east and so on. But what is lacking abysmally on the Left generally is any idea of how to fight such developments.

Most of the 'Left' MPs, Tribune and the Communist Party all seem to see the answer in wrapping themselves in the Union Jack and screaming about the need to 'defend national sovereignty'. The trouble is that such slogans in no way provide an alternative to big business.

'National sovereignty', for example, did not prevent Henry Ford threatening to stop investment in Britain during the Ford strike. It did not stop international bankers telling the last Labour government what to do. It has not prevented firms like ICI deciding to build new factories in countries where it is more profitable, thus pushing up unemployment.

The Common Market is one more step down the road along which the capitalist system is already moving—towards a situation in which the international firm, controlling the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers in different countries, is dominant. It cannot be fought by clinging to the idea of an isolated capitalist Britain. Nor by working (as are members of both the Labour Left and the Communist Party) with extreme right wing Conservatives to achieve that goal.

The efforts of international firms to make production more 'efficient' and profitable at the expense of the workers cannot be fought in a fully effective manner in one country. It needs the combined and co-ordinated activities of workers in all its factories, wherever they are.

The same goes for the Common Market as a whole. We have to oppose the attempt to solve some of the problems of British capitalism at our expense by joining the Common Market. But the alternative is not 'national sovereignty', but the United Socialist States of Europe.

LITTLE RED HOOK

LAST WEEK the Ceylonese government revealed that a month before it had received a message from the Chinese government offering an interest free loan of £10.7m and congratulating it on putting down the recent 'insurrection'. With this message Mao Tse-tung's regime has added itself to the list of those like Nixon, Heath, Brezhnev, Yahya Khan and Mrs Gandhi, who have done their bit to maintain exploitation and oppression in Ceylon.

Such a move will be a shock for many people on the Left who have thought that the Chinese regime was somehow better than all the others. After all, until his support for Yahya Khan in Bengal, Mao was usually presented in public as being in favour of revolution and national liberation.

But now Mao has taken direct responsibility for the blood of thousands who have been massacred in Bengal and Ceylon. And he has done so while making conciliatory noises to the Americans, who are still using napalm and fragmentation bombs against the people of Vietnam.

The actions of the Chinese regime are not those which any genuinely socialist government could follow. But China has never had such a socialist government. The revolution that brought Mao to power certainly threw out the reactionary puppet of foreign interests, Chang Kai-shek. It nationalised most of industry, but it was not a revolution carried through by China's workers and it did not give control of industry to them.

Those who took power were, in the main, members of the old middle class who wanted to build up industry at the fastest possible speed. Despite their mouthing of socialist slogans, their foreign policy has always been determined by that consideration.

The people of Bengal and the people of Ceylon have learnt the harsh realities that lie behind Mao's words. It is up to socialists everywhere to learn the lesson too, and to build a movement that is not confused by the belief that this or that 'great power' is really on our side.

N. Ireland government praise for shoot-to-kill tactics

TROOPS STEP UP



Pub customers searched by the Army: part of the day-in, day-out harassment of Belfast citizens

GET-TOUGH POLICY

NORTHERN IRELAND government ministers say they are winning the war against the 'terrorist organisation'. John Taylor, Minister of Home Affairs, declares with satisfaction that 'the Army has made its presence felt in the last few weeks. It has taken a firm and resolute stand against the IRA, firing, and even scoring deaths.'

Following the deaths and explosions of the past two weeks, the whole Northern Ireland situation is being made to revolve around the fight against the IRA. But there is no conclusive evidence to show that the British Army is on the point of winning the struggle.

As Ian Paisley pointed out in the Stormont parliament last week, there have been only nine convictions in connection with the 303 explosions that have taken place since August 1969.

Arguing for even greater ruthlessness in the efforts to destroy the IRA, extreme right-winger Paisley said he 'could not agree with the Prime Minister that the terrorists were worried and were making a last desperate bid'. And the explosion at the Springfield Road police station, the highest security station, is evidence that the IRA are far from beaten.

ABANDONED

The clashes of the past two weeks have come largely as a result of a changed strategy by the British Army, and a corresponding change by the IRA. The Army has abandoned the 'containment' strategy and, with frequent arms raids and the intimidating 'duck patrols', is penetrating areas that were previously defined as 'no-go'.

The IRA's strategy merely of defending the Catholic ghettos has become impracticable. Its patrols are now moving outside their recognised territories to harass the troops wherever they are.

The line between 'defensive' and 'offensive' is a very thin line. If we support the right of people under attack from the occupying forces to arm themselves in self-defence, we must also support the republicans against the British Army when a changed situation makes purely 'defensive' actions irrelevant.

When the conflict between the IRA and the 'security forces' is pushed so much to the centre of events that the Stormont Minister of Home Affairs can claim that the disturbances around Gallaher's tobacco factory were due to the support given to the IRA, there should be no question as to where socialists

by Brian Trench

in Britain stand. Against the occupying forces, we have no choice but to support the IRA.

We regret the loss to working-class homes of the sons who have often had no choice but to join the Army. But we oppose completely the British Army's role as a defender of capitalist interests.

The Army officers in Ireland have shown a will to 'get even tougher'. Those who are actively fighting the troops have had no option but to do the same.

This cannot justify attacks against civilians of the kind that have also become more frequent in the past weeks. It is often those who are fighting the British troops who also see all Protestants as enemies of 'the Republic'.

But it is clear that only a united working class can defeat the British Army and all that it represents in Ireland.

The situation in the Six Counties is full of dangers. Confusion is being sown by those who emphasise distinctions between Scottish regiments and others who call for the withdrawal of the Highland Fusiliers only and who oppose the British Army because, they say, it discriminates.

Labour MPs in the South have actually asked the Prime Minister, Lynch, to point out to the British government the danger of having young Scottish soldiers with guns in Belfast!

The dangers of a recurrence of large-scale sectarian conflict are fairly considerable. From the point of view of socialists in Britain, the dangers of making any concession to the point of view represented by the Woodvale branch of the Northern Ireland Labour Party which has called for assistance to the security forces 'so that community strife—which is the aim of the terrorists—can be averted', are just as great.

LOW MORALE

With mass unemployment, the British Army may start to overcome some of its recruitment difficulties. One Conservative MP has already suggested to a Trades Council that if it is worried about unemployment it should support a recruiting drive by the Army. This is no solution at all.

Socialists should also support the efforts being made by some soldiers, with the help of socialists and trade unionists outside the forces, to gain trade union rights for soldiers.

British soldiers nowhere have to work in worse conditions than in Ireland. The morale of the troops is low, and refusals to obey orders are frequent. We can only welcome this, and seek to promote the dissension by building a large campaign calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Ombudsman and the High Court judge, Curran, were rolled into one in Brian Trench's piece on 'justice' in Northern Ireland last week. The Ombudsman is, in fact, a Stormont civil servant, J.M.Benn.

THEIR WEEK

Happy families: US exports slipped behind imports last month for the first time in two years. Said John B Connally, US Secretary to the Treasury and Arthur Burns, Chairman, Federal Reserve Board in Munich last week: move over or the US will 'begin to put its own self-interest first'. Their programme: Japan to open up to US goods and investments, and to stop exporting so aggressively (by revaluing the yen); the Common Market to buy more US food, and Canada more US cars; Germany to pay more for US troops; and the whole holy family to bless its children with incomes policies.

New member: Mrs Bandaranaike welcomed the People's Republic of China to her ghoulish club, already joined by the US, Britain, Russia, Pakistan, India and Australia. The PRC congratulated lefty Mrs B on breaking up her revolutionaries ('Guevarists') and chipped in £10.7 million as an interest-free long-term loan to be spent anywhere on anything. This was one week after the PRC had sunk £88 million into the Pakistan Death and Dispersal Machine, impressed no doubt by its high productivity: half a million corpses and 3½ million refugees in only two months.

A day in the life of the air business: 'Tour Jet Crash Kills 73 Britons' (Financial Times front page 24 May). 'IATA to Oppose New Air Traffic Control Scheme' (Financial

Times inside page 24 May). IATA represents the air lines including BOAC and BEA.

The high and the mighty: US Defence Secretary Melvin Laird urged South Vietnam to crack down on the narcotics trade which had hooked 20-30 percent of GIs in that country. Not easy. It's big business worth at least \$100,000 a week in heroin alone, and run by the police and army in Saigon, as well as by the remnants of the Chinese Nationalist Army in North Thailand.

The l of the storm: At his first press conference since crunching Bangla Desh Pakistan's President Yahya Khan promised a restoration of democracy (so far only three of the 167 elected and outlawed Awami Leaguers are prepared to work with him) and a trial of the imprisoned Sheikh Mujib 'as and when I like'.

Uncley doings: Gustav Husak thanked Brezhnev and his East European friends at the 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party for 'understanding the fears of Czechoslovak Communists' and sending in their troops to stamp out counter-revolution in 1968. 1195 delegates applauded. Not applauding were the Czechoslovak workers (74 per cent of the party are non-workers), the youth and middle-aged (average age of party members 47), the British CP and the Italian CP (stopped from making critical speeches).

As unemployment grows and there are ominous predictions of one million workers out of jobs this winter, the press and television look back to the 1930s and draw crude and shallow comparisons with that period of acute misery. The ghost of the Jarrow March is paraded once again to symbolise the 'dignity and humility' of the men on the dole. This patronising and dishonest re-writing of history ignores the militant demonstrations against unemployment mounted during the 1930s, demonstrations organised by men and women who recognised that a passive acceptance of the inevitability of unemployment had to be replaced by politics that saw the need for massive social change. In this feature, DAVE PEERS argues that the difference between the Jarrow March and the now-ignored demonstrations of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement hold lessons for socialists and trade unionists today.



Jarrow: failure of a great crusade

In 1936 200 marchers left Jarrow on Tyneside to present a petition to parliament to re-open the shipyards to bring work to the 75 per cent of the town's workers who were without jobs. The Jarrow Crusade has become a kind of symbol of the Hungry Thirties, and an impression has been created that it was the only significant demonstration against the conditions of the period.

A recent BBC2 programme in the series Yesterday's Witness gave new substance to this old myth. Once again the march was presented as an isolated event in which everyone did their bit, and in which the attempts of 'Fascists and Communists' to infiltrate the march in London were scornfully resisted by the solid citizens of Jarrow.

This is a complete distortion of history. Now that demonstrations on unemployment are once again on the agenda it is important not only that the record be set straight, but that the real lessons of the Jarrow Crusade are made clear.

Disapproval

For years before 1936 the National Unemployed Workers' Movement had been organising vast marches and demonstrations of the unemployed. But because this organisation was both militant and Communist-led, it incurred the disapproval of the official Labour and TUC leadership.

Nevertheless, when the idea of a Jarrow march was first proposed it was to the NUWM that Ellen Wilkinson, the town's fiery young Labour MP, turned for advice. Wal Hannington promised her the full co-operation of the NUWM and suggested that the Jarrow men march as a contingent in the National Hunger March.

But the town council did not wish to be associated with the 'subversive' NUWM, and so the Jarrow Crusade set off for London one week before the Tyneside contingent of the National March was due to leave.

Despite these efforts the executive of the Labour Party and the General Council of the TUC made no distinction between the 'respectable' Jarrow March and the marches of the NUWM. No help and assistance came from these leaders.

When the Crusade arrived in Hyde Park on 1 November, no welcoming demonstration had been laid on by

NO WORK

I's weary I's wretched, I wander forlorn
I sign for the neet an' then wish for the morn;
For neet brings no comfort an' morn little more
In both mind and body, I's worn out and sore.

Chorus: What wretchedness, what misery
There's no one can tell
Except them that's been out o' work like mesel'.

I wander to places an' try to get work
Where 'call back again' is the foreman's remark;
Thus hopeless an' cheerless I pass many a day,

Joe Wilson (1841-1875)

Though pay-week comes round, it to me brings no pay.

No work yet!—heartbroken I bend me ways home
No work yet!—to tell them I really think shame;
For dependance is painful, though it's on your own,
Though to comfort and cheer you, they try all they can.

There's none can imagine the anguish I feel
When I sit down at home to me own humble meal;
Each bite seems to choke's—the day seems full long,
An' all that I do, why I feel though

'twas wrong.

Me father looks dull, though he strives to look glad
An' says that it's nowt to the troubles he's had;
Me mother smiles kindly, though sad like the rest
An' whispers 'cheer up, lad, an' hope for the best.'

It cannot last always!—I hope afore long
Wi' work I'll be freed from sad poverty's pang
For without it, home's dreary—the fire's bright spark
Turns gloomy an' dim when you find there's no work.

the London Labour Party. And far from infiltration, it was only the fraternal assistance of the Communist Party which saved the day.

Ellen Wilkinson described what happened in her book 'The Town That Was Murdered': 'The Communist Party had gathered a big demonstration on a general unemployment protest. They generously gave way for an hour and asked their great audience to swell our Crusade meeting, which grew to enormous size when it was known that the Jarrow Crusaders were there.'

She goes on to sum up the experience of the Crusade: 'I thought that we were guaranteed 100 per cent respectable. With the blessing of bishops, priests and clergy, subscriptions from businessmen, the paternal interest of the Rotary Club and the unanimous vote of the Town Council, could anything have been more constitut-

al? . . . The Labour Party, however, drew out, and the TUC circularised the trades councils advising them against giving help. So in places like Chesterfield, where the Trades and Labour Council obeyed the circular, the Conservative Party weighed in with hot meals and a place to sleep.'

Left quietly

When Jarrow's petition was handed in to the House of Commons on 4 November a few questions were asked by local MPs. But to the disappointment of the marchers in the public gallery, there was no debate and the House quickly moved on to next business.

The Crusade fizzled out like a damp squib. On Saturday 7 November the Jarrow marchers quietly left London without any farewell dem-

onstrations. bugles pierced through the gathering dusk of Hyde Park last night. For a moment there was silence. Then a quarter-million voices suddenly lifted in one great flaming challenge:

'Down with the Means Test!
'Work for the Unemployed!'

It was the dramatic climax—to one of the mightiest demonstrations London has seen.'

And it had immediate effect. The government suspended the introduction of lower unemployment scales and agreed to revise its new relief regulations.

Shameful

This is the event of 1936 that should be remembered by the labour movement of today. The myths surrounding the Jarrow march serve only to cover up the shameful role of the official Labour and trade union leaders whose campaigns against the NUWM divided the working class at a period when a united fight against mass unemployment was vital.

The Jarrow Crusaders had to learn the truth about the official leaders the hard way. Let us respect their memory and avoid the same mistake.

One strike the Mirror backed

WHEN 3250 workers went on strike last week over a pay claim they were given front page headlines in Thursday's Daily Mirror. The workers, at five Plessey electronics factories in Essex, rejected a management offer of 9 per cent and stopped work for the day.

It was the only story on the front page and set out the workers' case, complete with a quote from senior shop steward Kathleen Kelly. There was no savage denunciation of the strikers, no screeching editorial with the usual heavy phrases about 'Luddites' and 'wreckers' 'holding the country to ransom.'

Has the Mirror been converted to the workers' cause? Of course not. The Plessey strikers had used facts from the Mirror about rising prices. It was a lovely plug for

the Mirror, rapidly losing sales to the Sun.

The workers flourished the Mirror's 'Shopping Clock' feature to show that a basket of food and household goods that cost £5 six months ago now costs £5.56.

Said Mrs Kelly: 'The 9 per cent we've been offered after negotiating for four months has already been gobbled up by the 11 per cent rise in prices shown on the Mirror Shopping Clock.'

Not rebuked

Buried away at the foot of the report was the information that the strike was unofficial. Now there's nothing the Mirror hates more than an unofficial strike.

Out come the 2 inch headlines and the blackest of type to browbeat and threaten

'wildcats' back to work. One shop steward who led an unofficial strike in the power industry in the early 1960s was labelled 'the most hated man in Britain' by the paper.

But the Plessey steward was not rebuked by the Mirror. On the contrary, they blew up a statement from her in big type: 'Every worker buys the Mirror. Every housewife studies the Shopping Clock to see what's happening to prices. Everyone can understand it and we know you're telling the truth.'

When is an unofficial strike a good strike? When it boosts the Mirror sales. Otherwise, look out.

David East

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G&M: union that's a stepping stone to the House of Lords

TWELVE MONTHS ago the small Lancashire town of St. Helens was rocked by a bitter, seven week strike. For years the glassmaking firm of Pilkington Bros. had dominated the town and then, one afternoon in April, its rule was challenged. A Sunday newspaper described how it started:

The Pilkington directors were entertaining the Mayor of St. Helens, who is one of their glassworkers, and the Mayoress, to lunch in the boardroom. The Mayor had just concluded a speech expressing the town's appreciation of the company, which had just given St. Helens a £160,000 theatre, when a telephone call brought the news.

During the weeks that followed 8500 workers battled with their powerful employer. In this critical struggle for a decent living wage and faced with tremendous opposition from the press, the police and the courts, the role of the workers' trade union was to be crucial. For far from assisting the strike to victory and contributing to its success, the National Union of General and Municipal Workers collaborated with the company and combined with them in an effort to defeat it.

Thousands of workers left the NUGMW in disgust and after it had ended tried to form their own separate glassworkers' union. This attempt ended in failure and many militants were later sacked. The Guardian summed up the role of the NUGMW as follows:

The purpose of the union ... was clear from the start: to issue propaganda against the strike leaders and to erode their solidarity that had been a characteristic of the strike ... The union ... appeared to echo the employers' arguments throughout, refused point blank to declare the strike official, and organised a ballot among Pilkington workers. The result of this ballot, however, appears to have vanished into thin air—although it is rumoured that it showed a big majority in favour of the strike.

The conduct of the NUGMW during the Pilkington strike was widely condemned and exposed what many active

ROGER ROSEWELL on Lord Cooper's noble union that sold out the Pilkington strike

trade unionists had known for years—that the union was both undemocratic and opposed to fighting on behalf of its members.

The NUGMW was formed in 1924 by the amalgamation of several unions and has had a long history of sell-outs and anti-democratic behaviour ever since.

In 1946, two major disputes were callously betrayed by the union. The first of these took place at Cossor's

London factory. It began with the victimisation of four shop stewards, including the union's branch secretary who was also the convenor of stewards.

The strike was not supported by the union executive although they succeeded in persuading the strikers to resume work while talks took place. These failed to produce a settlement and despite strict orders to the contrary, the workers resumed the stoppage.

The union set up a special inquiry

into the strike. This recommended wholesale disciplinary action against a number of militants, including the expulsion of the sacked branch secretary.

Before the recommendations could be implemented, however, the second dispute broke out. It began in October at the Savoy Hotel, following the management's refusal to recognise the union.

This was soon resolved and the outcome was an agreement on recognition and a promise of no victimisation. The hotel promptly ignored this and suspended a militant named Piazza.

The union referred this deliberate breach of a recently signed agreement to the National Arbitration Tribunal which recommended Piazza's reinstatement. The Savoy retaliated by sacking him.

Dismissed

The NUGMW reluctantly decided to call an official strike but postponed it once the government announced that a Court of Inquiry was to be set up. Its hotel members, however, refused to tolerate the Savoy's attack on their organisation. They came out on strike and were all dismissed. The union unwillingly endorsed the strike but called it off after one month without winning Piazza's re-instatement.

The London District Committee was shocked at this sell-out and passed a resolution expressing their 'disgust' at the settlement. The union responded by relieving Arthur Lewis—the left-wing official who had led the strike—from his responsibility for the catering industry and set up yet another inquiry.

On the basis of the reports produced by the two inquiries, the chairman and



Once elected, anent job for life support their introduced in 19 the president, ha election. Although overwhelmingly, that someone ha him and said: 'I more than 35 y general secretary certain other opposed.'

Criticising Scottish official more than 'dem farce'.

A new system was introduced. official to be app two years, conte election, branch members for the full candidate is e

The other stand for office, executive has th would-be candid member shall be election to including that Treasurer ... un Executive Committee or she is capable tently the duties

There is a s officers and, Hugh Clegg, th the union: 'So g the official cand lost an electi system ...

WHAT WE STAND FOR

THE International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid, by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations through-



out the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards' committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the

demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restrictions.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of men's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

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NORTH WEST

Lancaster/Manchester/Oldham Bolton/Merseyside/St Helens/Wigan

Potteries

MIDLANDS

Birmingham/Coventry/Leamington/Leicester/Oxford/Nottingham/Northampton/Redditch/Telford

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath/Bristol/Cardiff/Exeter/Gloucester/Mid-Devon/Plymouth/Swansea

SOUTH

Ashford/Brighton/Canterbury/Crawley/Folkestone/Guildford/Portsmouth/Southampton

EAST

Basildon/Cambridge/Harlow/Ipswich/Lowestoft/Norwich/Colchester

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INDUSTRIAL MISCONDUCT STOPS BENEFIT

Second of two articles by JIM KINCAID

THERE is a popular misconception that workers who become unemployed have a right to claim unemployment benefit. This is by no means true in all cases. One important restriction is that a worker is deprived of unemployment benefit for up to six weeks if he loses his job because of what the Social Security officials regard as 'industrial misconduct'.

The same restriction applies if a worker is accused of having left his job 'voluntarily without good cause.'

Industrial misconduct is a very special sort of crime. It is only a worker who can be accused of it, never the employer. Nor is the case heard in a court of law. In most instances, the man behind the counter in the social security office is judge, jury and prosecutor all rolled into one.

An appeal against his ruling can be made to a local national insurance tribunal, and beyond this level to a government-paid lawyer called the National Insurance Commissioner. This official

is the final adjudicator in disputes between individuals and the national insurance authorities.

Decisions made by national insurance officers up and down the country are to a great extent based on the rules laid down by the Commissioner sitting in London.

A worker accused of industrial misconduct is in a difficult position, for 'proof is not restricted to such evidence as would be admissible in a court of law ... hearsay evidence which would not be admissible in a court of law may be accepted in proceedings before the Commissioner'.

PUNISHED

In general a worker is held to be guilty of industrial misconduct if he is dismissed by an employer for dishonesty or negligence in his work. The national insurance authorities consider that to lose one's job is not a sufficient punishment for the crime of industrial misconduct. So in addition they impose a cut in social security entitlement.

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**MISCONDUCT - THE 'CRIME' THAT
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The permanent full-time officials have tremendous power within the union. All the 10 district secretaries sit on the General Council and five of these together with five 'lay' members, form the national executive.

This 10-man NEC is then supplemented by two national officers so that the full-timers have a built in majority on the executive. In other words, the executive is controlled by permanent officials. These men hate any rank and file militancy and Lord Williamson expressed their point of view in a House of Lords debate in 1969: 'My Lords, no unofficial strike is ever justified'.

During the past year the union has been forced to spend more money on strike pay than ever before. According to Lord Cooper's Annual Report to last week's conference in Yarmouth: 'For 1970 we spent nearly £3m in dispute benefit.'

Instead of militancy the union believes in partnership with the employers. In its evidence to the 1966 Royal Commission on Trade Unions it said:

'It is an elementary requirement

of our basic purpose that we should do everything possible to contribute towards maximising the revenue of a firm or industry to increase the prospects of obtaining better wages and conditions. This approach is the basis of the fruitful co-operation which we enjoy in many firms in which we have exclusive or near exclusive organisation of manual workers.'

Banning

This is the kind of cosy relationship that the Pilkington strike threatened to ruin and explains why the union refused to support its low-paid members.

But continual sell-outs produce opposition and the leadership of the union is faced constantly with extremely dissatisfied members. It neatly resolved this danger by banning the right of opposition.

Under rule 43 any member 'who makes or in any way associates himself or herself with any defamatory, scurrilous or abusive attacks, whether in any journal, magazine or pamphlet, or by word of mouth, or any official of

the union or committee of the union, or who acts singly or in conjunction with any other member or persons in opposition to the policy of the union as declared by its committees or officials under these rules, or for any other reason deemed good and sufficient ... is liable to expulsion.

This rule is not used against those who usually apply it to others. In 1959, for example, the annual congress of the union surprisingly voted in favour of instructing the next Labour government not to manufacture or use nuclear weapons.

The executive were horrified at the decision and decided to ignore it. Lord Williamson, then general secretary, explained the logic as follows: 'The 3½ line motion on record as being carried at our last congress dealt with only one factor in the matter, that of banning nuclear weapons, and under no stretch of the imagination could the union's comprehensive policy of defence and disarmament built up by congress over the years be considered as abrogated by the single decision in June.'

The Birmingham and Lancashire districts protested at the flouting of union policy, but the NEC declined to take disciplinary action against itself. But in the same year, they did agree to 112 members being suspended for six months for taking part in an unofficial strike at the British Oxygen Company.

The present Tory offensive against trade union militancy is centred around the Industrial Relations Bill. The NUGMW is formally against this but totally opposed to the use of strike action to defeat it when the special TUC met at Croydon on 18 March.

Triumph

According to Cooper this decision was correct and: '... the result was a triumph for good sense. Delegates refused to be stampeded into supporting strike action against the Bill. They rightly took the view that such action would be self-defeating.'

Instead of strike action to kill the Bill, Cooper has a different remedy: 'The NUGMW thinks that the most effective way it can contain the effects

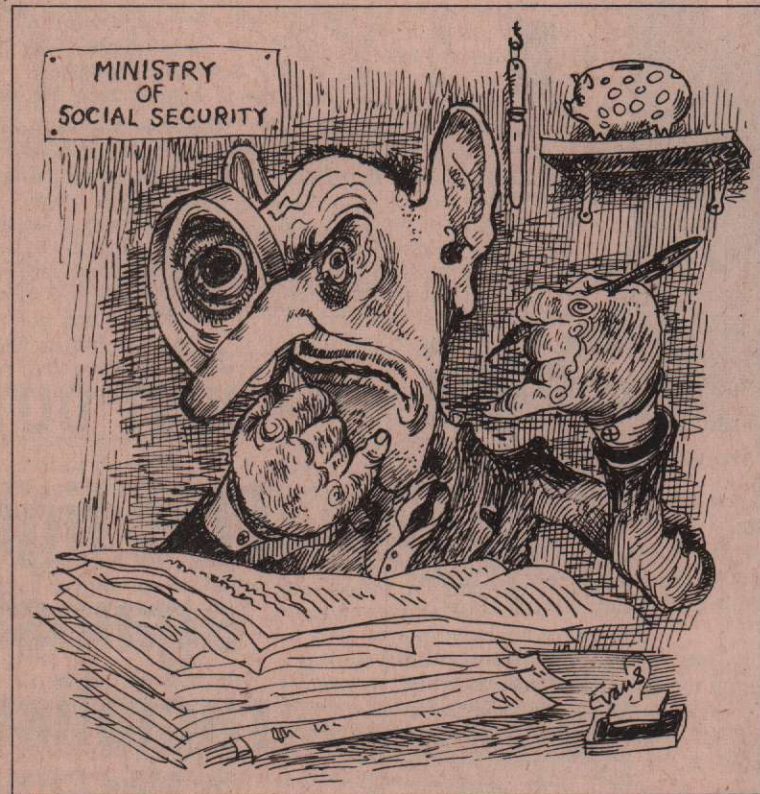
of the Bill is to persuade employers not to operate it.'

Lord Cooper is the chairman of the TUC this year. Although the TUC is opposed to unions co-operating with the Bill when it becomes law and registering with the government, he has recently made two speeches announcing that he will recommend the NUGMW to ignore this decision and register.

In practice the union is not against parts of the Bill. It supports those clauses that threaten to outlaw unofficial strikes. The union even anticipated the laws by agreeing with the Ilford Company in 1965 that unofficial strikers could be sacked.

Commenting on this agreement one union official said: 'A greater degree of self-control is needed and members must be taught to honour agreements.'

No Tory would disagree. The need for a militant opposition to the leadership and policies of the NUGMW is urgently required. For as long as Cooper and his gang of officials rule the union, the hopes and aspirations of thousands of workers will be betrayed and ignored.



conduct, and that the sacking was justified because the shop steward had 'disregarded the negotiating procedure which was available for the adjustment of

disputes and to avoid stoppages of work'.

The victimised steward was deprived of unemployment benefit for six weeks.

**MISCONDUCT - THE 'CRIME' THAT
FIT TO THE JOBLESS**

Such decisions are used for guidance by national insurance officials in their day to day dealings with people claiming unemployment benefit. What they add up to is kicking the man who is already down.

If you leave a job, you can be penalised by the Ministry of Social Security if they decide that you left 'without just cause'. For example in a classic case in 1951, a trade union member gave up a job with a non-union firm because his union objected to a particular demarcation of duties.

BENEVOLENT

It was held that he had left employment without just cause, and he lost his unemployment benefit for six weeks. According to the Commissioner, 'there was no justification for leaving when he did, simply because the firm with which he was employed did not follow the practice laid down by the rules of the union.'

On the other hand, when dealing with non-trade unionists the National Insurance Commissioner shows rather more benevolence. 'An electrician, not a union member, left his employment vol-

untarily rather than yield to pressure to join a trade union. In this case it was held that the electrician's action was reasonable and that he had just cause for leaving his job.'

A person who is employed, and is not getting unemployment benefit, is able to claim money for himself and his family from the means tested supplementary benefit system. However even here there is a snag. If unemployment is due to industrial misconduct or leaving a job without just cause, then the unemployed worker will get 75p a week less than the official minimum income which supplementary benefit normally provides.

For some time employers have been arguing that this penalty is insufficiently severe. The last Labour government was happy to accept this view. When Labour lost the General Election last year they had a Bill before the House of Commons that would have increased to £1.65 a week the cut in supplementary benefit made in cases of industrial misconduct or leaving a job without just cause.

The Tories are reaping where

Labour sowed. The new Social Security Bill which the government will shortly pass, imposes a cut of £2 a week in supplementary benefit where workers have been disqualified from unemployment benefit because of misconduct or loss of job

DEPRIVED

The Tories reckon that this stepping up in penalties will save the government £500,000 a year in supplementary benefit. As this large sum indicates, tens of thousands of workers are being deprived each year of their social security rights because of rules which exist solely to strengthen the employers' power

The TUC claims to be making protests against such abuses of the welfare state. But in a responsible way of course—that is, about as loudly as the legendary mouse with laryngitis, like so many other TUC protests on so many other issues of concern to workers.

All quotations in this article are from the 'Index and Digest of Decisions of the National Insurance Commissioner' published by the Stationery Office.

Education bosses look to industry for new

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES is not noted for its militancy. But last term it saw a strike and demonstration against the policy of the local Tory Council. The participants: students from the one-year old Kingston Polytechnic. The issue: the refusal of the council to endorse the students' claim for a union fee of £10 per student per year. The council's main argument was that £10 was just too much to ask from the ratepayers.

Dr. Lawley, the polytechnic's director, has given restricted circulation to a discussion paper on 'academic' policy. It contains a number of points that could hardly be called academic, but will no doubt please the local council.

For instance: 'We must expect that for the foreseeable future we shall be short of accommodation.'

For instance: 'In discussing future academic policy, we should consider ways in which to utilise our resources more effectively by greater use of modern management methods, and, perhaps, by extending the length of time for which our facilities are used.' At the same time: 'Since any academic trend towards shorter periods of higher education will reduce costs, governments will tend to encourage them.'

And finally: '... it seems likely that staff-student ratios are more likely to be forced up than permitted to fall. If this is likely then again academic policy should be aimed at achieving a highly economical use of staff.'

Harsh reality

This statement barely conceals the increasingly harsh realities of education today. What and how much students can learn will be determined by how much costs can be cut.

Lengthening the academic year, cutting overall course lengths and allowing the staff-student ratio to rise are three examples of how to cut costs.

'How to cut costs' means the same as 'how to worsen the conditions of students and staff.' The Department of Education and Science, local education authorities and the small-time bosses of higher education are united by a single slogan: 'The cheaper the better.' The quality of education is to be measured by how far it is possible to restrict the student's ability to learn and the teacher's to teach.

Since producing his document, Dr. Lawley has been to the USA, with his Head of Management to study management education techniques. They travelled the length and breadth of the country, visiting among other places, Harvard, the Polaroid Corporation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, IBM, the Small Business Administration and the Ford Foundation.

Fewer jobs

This little cost-cutting exercise was 'arranged' for them by the Foundation for Management Education and the Department of Education and Science.

Meanwhile, graduate unemployment became news back in Britain. Figures at the end of 1970 for professional and executive unemployed were 27 per cent up on those for the previous June.

As a recent Guardian article put it: 'Graduates are warned to expect an average of six months unemployment before their first job. It seems odd that a society can invest over £1,000 a year in educating a graduate and then not employ him.'

The British economy as a whole is in poor shape. This means that there is less money to devote to things like higher education. Economies are necessary even where expansion is on the cards.

Quiet victory

The Labour government was quick to catch on to this fact. A recent article in the Times' Educational Supplement put it in a nutshell: 'It is no secret that the previous government's commitment to the polytechnics and the Open University was based largely on the need to provide mass education at 18-plus at the lowest possible cost with maximum return on investment guaranteed by predominantly vocational training.'

Since then, Britain has caught economic pneumonia. That means pressure on education, and on students above all, particularly where there are any links with industry, 'vocational education', or direct control by the state.

But authorities on the whole do not want any trouble. Expanding on the cheap

attack on students

by PETE GLATTER

faces them with enough problems as it is. They want a victory on the quiet.

That is why men like Dr. Lawley slip ideas on how to economise into a paper on academic policy. That is why they are so fond of hatching their plots in exam terms.

This makes it even more vital than usual to keep one's ear close to the ground. Authorities like nothing better than to present slow-moving student unions with a series of accomplished facts.

Nationally, things do not look very bright. The National Union of Students has traditionally sold out its members—except under the threat of losing members or other kinds of intense pressure from the rank and file.

Not that we are in a 'traditional'

situation. Students are no longer just a privileged minority. They are facing an attack from the Tory government. This attack is part of a general attempt to make ordinary people pay for someone else's problems—the problems of the ruling class.

Students are one of the established scapegoats of the press. Now a more serious onslaught is being mounted against them.

It will need more than just the election of 'left' union officers to hold back this attack. The fact that a Communist Party member, Digby Jacks, will be the next NUS president is not an alternative to rank and file students building strong local organisations and preparing their defences.



Students: harsh conditions and poor job prospects

IDEAS IN SOCIETY

by
DUNCAN
HALLAS

Pulling the wool over the workers' eyes

THE DISCOVERY of agriculture made possible a social surplus—a reserve of food over and above what was necessary to keep the cultivators alive. Before the development of power-driven equipment this surplus was fairly small. It had to be carefully doled out to the various specialists needed by the new society.

Someone had to decide who got what. Rulers appeared and, later, ruling classes to do just this. And naturally they did not forget themselves when issuing rations.

The division of society into classes was actually necessary for further progress. The class struggle has been the main source of change ever since. But the inequality and oppression that are part and parcel of any class society have to be justified. There have to be systems of ideas that make them seem right and inevitable.

Marxists call these *ideologies* and all the 'official' ideas in our society—ideas of law, patriotism, religion and so on, are more or less ideological. They exist to justify the rule of the capitalist class.

Not automatic

Today the development of techniques of production has made class society obsolete. The material basis for a classless society based on co-operation and not coercion *already* exists. But there is no automatic transition to socialism. It has to be fought for and the *main* obstacle to this fight is the power of ruling class ideas among working people.

Take the question of class itself. A notion very popular in certain circles is that nowadays classes are withering away. We live in an affluent society. We are all middle class now, and so on. Mr Anthony Crosland wrote a whole book along these lines a few years ago.

What are the facts? First of all, who owns the country? In Britain in the mid-1950s, two-fifths of all private property were estimated to be in the hands of only 1 per cent of the adult population, four-fifths in the hands of only 10 per cent... Legal ownership of private corporate business is especially highly concentrated, four-fifths of all share capital being held by only 1 per cent of the adult population and nearly all the rest by



CROSLAND: keeping the balance

another 9 or 10 per cent.' (J.H. Westergaard, in *Towards Socialism*.)

Since the 1950s, property ownership has become more rather than less unequal. A very small fraction of the population controls most of the wealth.

This small group lives on unearned income. The vast majority of us on the other hand have to work to live or, in the case of many married women, to share the earnings of someone who does. And what is the source of the huge incomes of the wealthy? All wealth is produced by work. All wealth is produced by workers.

Shares are the main source of the income of the rich and shares are nothing more or less than a legal title to wealth produced by others—by workers.

What about 'excessive wage demands'? Wages

amount to around 42 per cent of the total production—almost exactly the same proportion as a century ago. A century of trade union action has managed to *maintain* the proportion of output going in wages, not to increase it. Of course, the real value of the 42 per cent has increased enormously as output has grown.

The cake is bigger. But the shares going to labour and capital remain the same. And the capitalists are enormously wealthy. Crosland and his like are engaged in a confidence trick. They know the facts. Their object is to pull the wool over our eyes. Their job in society—and it is a well-rewarded one—is to act as 'labour lieutenants of the capitalist class'. We have to make them redundant.

JUST OUT The fight against racialism

by Mike Caffoor

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NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN! NOW THEN!



BOOK

WILHELM REICH, the Communist psychiatrist, remains a figure persistently and often deliberately misunderstood on the Left. From the Moscow-marshalled bureaucrats of the German Communist Party who expelled him in 1934 to today's anti-Stalinist who sees Reich as some sort of mad hippy, socialists have often seemed to fear rather than to grasp Reich's revolutionary analysis of sexual repression.

And this neglect has allowed the touchy-touchy psychiatrists and the most elitist and self-satisfied of our hippy comrades to claim him as their own.

A new paperback study of Reich's ideas (Reich by Charles Rycroft, Fontana Modern Masters, 30p) shows just how wrong this is. Reich the Communist saw the socialist revolution as the only way out of the quagmire of hypocrisy, sadism and exploitation which was sexual life in Weimar capitalism.

His membership of the Communist Party, his intransigent advocacy of marxism in the Freudian front parlours and the location of his Sex Clinics in the heart of working class Berlin were no accidents. They stemmed from the deepest logic of his medical experience.

He knew from his own patients how poverty and lack of privacy diminished and distorted sexual happiness. His first hand experience of Nazism showed him how important sexual guilt and repression were in working class support for fascism and racialism.

His finest book, 'The Sexual Revolution', studied both the role of the bourgeois family in creating misery and sustaining capitalism and the efforts of the young Soviet republic to bring the revolution to the nursery school, the kitchen and the bedroom. The Trotskyist textbooks on the decline of Russia tend to ignore the rehabilitation of the family which took place under Stalin.

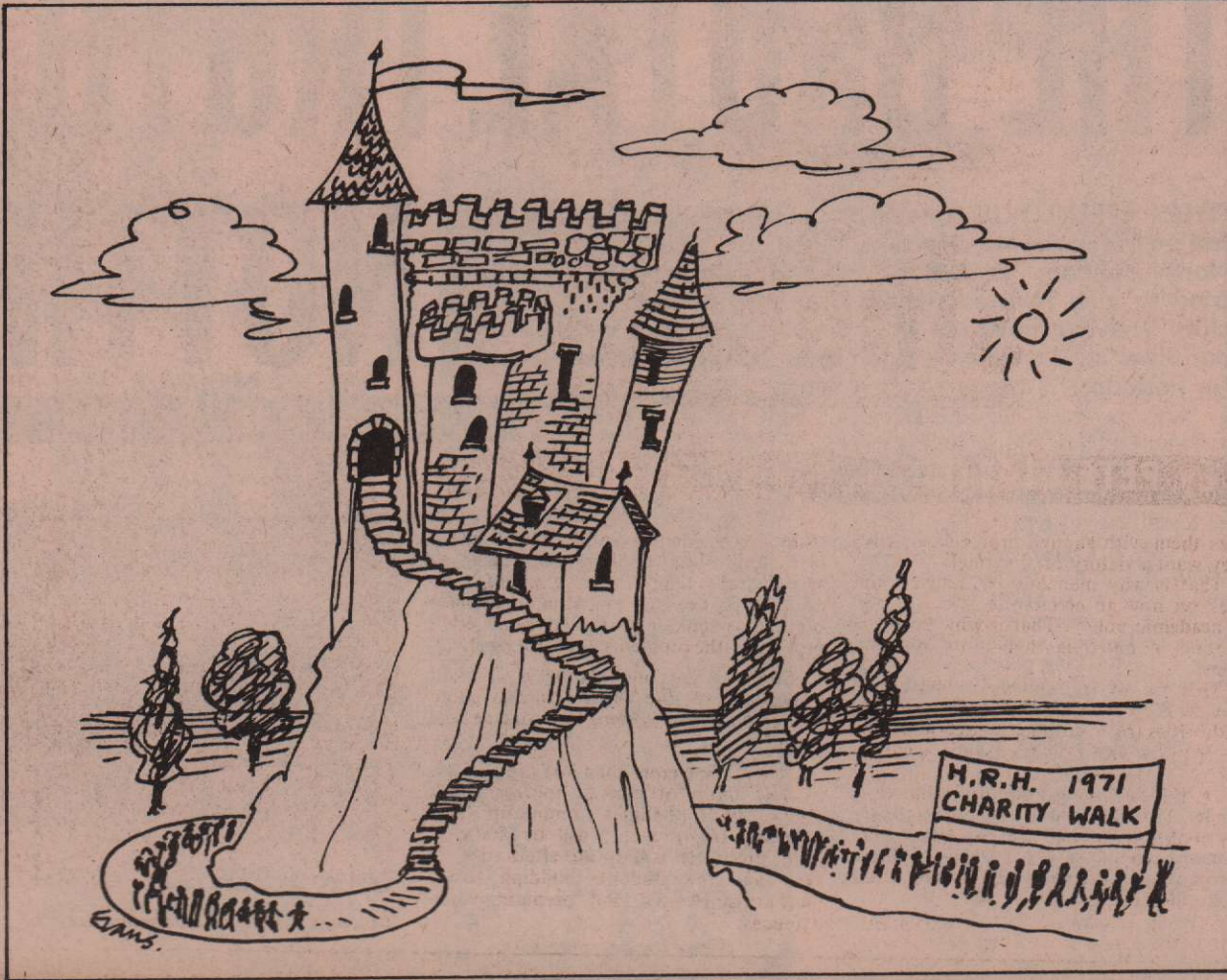
But by 1937, all the laws on sexual freedom and collective living were reversed, legal abortion abolished, homosexuality made illegal and wedding rings and bells brought back. Reich remains the most penetrating guide to this period where the faltering and falling back of the political revolution dragged back with it the deepest emotions, hopes and glimpses which had been freed in people's inner consciousness.

Reich's understanding of the sexual frustrations of adolescence, the lie of 'conventional' morality and the cynicism with which capitalism appeals to the virtues of 'the family' while simultaneously destroying its meaning by shiftwork, lousy housing and unemployment remain explosive. The tenacity with which the Right defends censorship and maintains sexual ignorance should show us how important they consider sexual obedience for maintaining their status quo.

Rycroft's is a plainspoken and systematic account of Reich's thought. Since Reich himself has a dry and repetitive prose style and his most interesting books are inaccessible, we must be glad for this cheap and clear booklet though the socialist reader will have to put up with Rycroft's self-important tone and political ignorance.

The section on Freud is especially interesting and backs up the Women's Liberation critique of Freudian theory's inaccurate anthropology. He also gives a scrupulously fair account of the science-fiction flying saucer fantasies of Reich's last years which are so frequently used to dismiss the whole of his work. But his truths are too important and too revolutionary for us ever to forget.

Gerry Dawson



COTTONS COLUMN

THE MINING INDUSTRY, for long a pace-setter in screwing more work from a smaller labour force, has come up with the granddaddy of all productivity deals. Production at the Marine Colliery at Cwm, Ebbw Vale in South Wales has hit record levels since a pithead radio station started playing taped music.

The 586 men at the colliery have achieved a productivity record of 53 cwt per man shift—24 cwt better than the area average. Management is so delighted that the scheme may spread to other South Wales' pits.

The music—which ranges from Welsh choirs to pop—was the idea of the pit's safety team. It is played in locker rooms, pithead baths and the canteen, but not yet underground.

Is the union fighting this sly move to squeeze more profits from the workers? Hardly. Two of the 'disc jockeys' are local union officials John Holloway and Peter Morgan.

Makes you fume

THE CAR industry has developed a host of smaller leech industries that fasten on to the unfortunate motorist. As the quality of cars deteriorates, more one-man-and-a-dog enterprises appear to supply meaningless accessories or cheap and shoddy replacement parts.

One item guaranteed to last not a second more than two years is the exhaust system. Manufacturers' replacements are hard to get so the luckless driver is forced into the arms of the local 'Hot Rod' shops who supply spares that an independent survey has shown are even worse than the originals.

But a firm called Peco that makes exhausts for Rolls-Royce says that it brought out a replacement exhaust for many popular models of car in 18 gauge aluminised steel and costing 20 per cent more than other exhausts.



The Queen: help from Labour friends

The company claimed a greater life expectancy for this 'armoured replacement exhaust'.

Says Peco: 'The trade was just not interested. They wouldn't stock an exhaust that in the end brought them less profit. It wore out too slowly.'

A SURVEY of 12 companies carried out by the magazine *The Director* shows that the average company director gets £770 a year in fringe benefits, such as company cars, subsidised lunches, loans for house purchase and expense allowances. That is what they admit—the actual amounts are likely to be somewhat higher. Even so, for a director whose marginal rate of tax is 60 per cent, fringe benefits of £770 a year represent a gross salary increase of £1750. So a director who says his pay is £10,000 a year is really getting nearly £12,000.

Queening it

RICHARD CROSSMAN's attack on the Queen's pay demand has disclosed the interesting tit-bit of information that the late and unlamented Labour government gave the Windsors a substantial increase by agreeing to take over the running costs of the royal palaces.

As well as giving the Queen £475,000 a year, the taxpayer also foots the following bills: maintenance, heating and lighting for Buckingham Palace, Windsor, Holyroodhouse, Kensington Palace, St James' Palace and Hampton Court. Various items of capital expenditure will come to £312,250 this year, maintenance and gas bills, plus the wages of gardeners, boilermen, etc, will reach nearly £1.2 million and there is a £38,000 grant for accommodation at Buckingham Palace and Windsor.

We also pay something like £185,000 a year for household salaries and £122,000 on household expenses and sign the cheques for the Royals' rail travel, the Royal train, their phone and postal services and £40,000 for entertainment. It is likely that the total amount paid out by the taxpayers is equal to the annual Civil List award of £475,000.

Surely redundancy pay would be cheaper?

Crusty remarks

THE anger and militancy at the University of East Anglia over secret files on students has caused the Deputy Dean, Mr Douglas Baker, to launch a tirade of abuse against those who protest at the way in which the university is run. At a press conference, he said he was disgusted at the techniques of a small minority, who were using the methods of the Nazi propaganda chief, Goebbels. All such activities, claimed Baker, originate in the use of drugs.

The typical utterances of a hard-line Tory or Monday Clubber? Far from it. Mr Baker is prospective Labour candidate for Lowestoft. Norwich students are keeping their fingers crossed that the 10 per cent swing to Labour will soon deprive them of their appalling Deputy Dean.



I HAVEN'T seen a single memorable programme in the last week, which is a hell of a way to start to fill up 14 inches of yawning empty space. Perhaps I'm suffering from post-Rank and File depression, but I suspect BBC1's Play for Today series will taste like pretty thin gruel after the Loach-Allen Pilkington epic.

Last Thursday's offering, *The Man in the Sidecar* by Simon Gray, was a beautifully written and acted piece of nothing. It concerned the lives—or really the lack of lives—of a middle-class group with too much time and money on their hands.

Edith is a successful novelist of the Iris Murdoch school, effortlessly meandering out line after line of arch, angular prose about the decay of middle-class marriage and family life. The particular marriage she is dissecting in her latest masterpiece mirrors exactly the collapse of her own marriage to Gerald, a failed novelist and unsuccessful playwright who drives around on a motor bike with a pathetic Welsh hanger-on, Tommy, in his sidecar.

Gerald disappears, taking Edith's manuscript with him. She wants only the book back and Gerald underlines her lack of concern for him by returning and quietly consuming a large overdose of sleeping tablets in front of her unconcerned gaze. He dies, she gets the novel back but is lumbered with the dreadful Tommy. An attack upon the middle-class's concern for material values above human ones? Possibly. But it was hard to care.

Bank holidays see television at its lowest depths. Old film follows old film, interspersed by Disney Time and horse racing. I saw the 1955, how-Britain-won-the-war epic *The Dambusters* on Sunday. At first, suspending my critical and political faculties, I was fascinated by the undoubted genius of Dr Barnes Wallis, who invented a bouncing bomb to breach three vital German dams.

I found him less endearing when he expressed grief at the loss of 56 airmen in the raids on the dams but not a tinge of regret at the thousands of ordinary Germans horribly drowned by the ensuing floods. The film showed its age in small ways: gritty, pipe-smoking hero Group Captain Guy Gibson had a large black dog called (wait for it) Nigger. 'Come along, Nigger...good boy, Nigger,' he yelled merrily, the film makers apparently unaware of the offence they were causing.

But being an officer and a gentleman, he knew when to draw the line. The dog was not allowed into the officers' mess. 'Stay outside, Nigger,' he commanded. It was probably a popular film in South Africa.

In search of humour, I turned later to BBC2's American import, the *Flip Wilson Show*. No doubt Group Captain Gibson, in this more enlightened and careful age, would describe the star of the show as 'a gentleman of the coloured persuasion'.

I was astonished to hear Wilson blandly tell one of the oldest gags in the book, about the bear that goes into a restaurant for a meal and is given a bill for £5 by a waiter who says, 'We don't get many bears in here.' To which the bear replies, 'I'm not surprised, the prices you charge.'

When the credits rolled up at the end, there was the usual list of 20 or so script-writers. It's not a bad life, getting money and credit for re-writing jokes that I was telling all of 12 years ago. But I'd better be careful: if the letters and phone calls about this column are anything to go by, there is no shortage of people prepared to subscribe to a one-way ticket for me to Hollywood.

David East

Socialist Worker

Big fight looms as Coventry talks fail

SW Reporter

COVENTRY:- Talks broke down last week in one of the most important disputes in the engineering industry in the last five years. The employers want to scrap the 30-years-old Coventry tool room agreement.

The agreement formally covers only 22 firms with 1500 workers in the city. They are paid the average earnings of skilled production workers on piecework in the union District.

But the agreement acts as a wages barometer for all engineering workers in the Coventry area. Every pieceworker, skilled or semi-skilled, can look at the rate, which increases every month, and compare the price of his job.

Those below average push harder and so the average goes up. In 1940 the rate was 15½p an hour and in May this year it was 99.01p—an increase of 540 per cent. Since 1966/7, it has gone up by 35 per cent and wage freezes have had no effect.

SCRAP IT

Although some employers, such as Triumph motor cycles (BSA) benefit from the agreement as their factory pieceworkers' average is higher than the District rate, the majority of bosses want to scrap it—in particular, British Leyland, who are bringing in Measured Day Work.

At Chrysler's Stoke plant, the tool room is still on the rate even though MDW operates inside the plant. This ensures that Chrysler workers can relate their wage claims to an ever-increasing District rate.

And the rate is also quoted increasingly in national negotiations.

If the employers are successful in scrapping the agreement and MDW gets the go ahead, wages will be held down while prices soar. It will be an important victory for the government as well as the employers.

BRISTOL IS public meeting: Ian Birchall on Internationalism, Sunday 13 June 8pm, Old England Pub, behind Henley's Garage, off Cheltenham Road, Stokes Croft.

BERNADETTE DEVLIN MP will speak at a Fight the Tories public mtg, Wednesday 23 June, 7.30pm, Transport House, Main Hall, Victoria Street, Bristol 1.

WEEKEND School on Fascism at Bristol University Students Union, Friday 11 June, to Sunday 13 June. Speakers include Betty Ambatielos, Robin Jenkins, Peter Fryer and Richard Kirkwood. Registration fee 50p. Write to Socialist Society, Queens Road, Bristol 8.

THE SOCIALIST ANSWER: public mtg with Bernadette Devlin MP, Duncan Hallas and CAST. Town Hall, Harlow, Wednesday 16 June, 8pm.

IS conference on women. 26/27 June. Details and documents available now from branch secretaries.

CHERTSEY IS requires information, pamphlets etc regarding the Plessey co-management, finances. Send to Dave Bridge, 75 Common Lane, New Haw, Weybridge, Surrey. Weybridge 49652.

Pilkington sack militant

ST HELENS:- The management of Pilkington's glassworks, who victimised most of the leaders of last year's strike, are now trying to further intimidate militants. They are attempting to sack Bill Cowley, a worker in the Sheet Works plant, on the excuse of bad time keeping.

Ten days ago Cowley was seen by a foreman leaving a Sunday morning shift 10 minutes early. Normally such an 'offence' would have been dealt with at plant level and meant a slight penalty of, perhaps, two days suspension.

But in this case the works manager demanded the sacking of Cowley, at a joint meeting with union representatives.

Workers on the shop floor in the Sheet Works are convinced that this is a deliberate attempt at victimisation. In the past sackings for bad time keeping have only taken place after repeated warnings.

At present the management are trying to push through a new wages structure in all their St Helens' plants. But the Sheet Works branch of the

General and Municipal Workers Union has rejected the proposals out of hand, although the branches in the other five plants have been balloting their members on them.

Clearly, Pilkington hope with this latest attempt at victimisation to frighten other workers who have been speaking out against the pay scheme.

So far the Sheet Works branch has been backing Cowley in his fight for reinstatement, and the matter has been referred to the regional head office of the union in Liverpool

THE BRUTAL TRUTH ABOUT NOTTING HILL

'THEY LIED TO US', one black teenager told me bitterly about last week's police attack on the Metro youth club in Notting Hill, North London. 'It started', he said, 'when a couple of cops tried to grab two lads who'd been playing around outside the club. The two guys ran into the club and then we barricaded ourselves in. We weren't going to let the police arrest our mates for nothing.'

'After a while', he added, 'more and more cops arrived, including some dog handlers. They surrounded the club and asked us all to come out and go home. We refused.'

'Then they got angry and tried to break in. Some of them went to a van and got some crowbars.'

'When we eventually came out of the Metro the police immediately started grabbing us and hitting people. Some of the bastards were wading in with their truncheons.'

PAPERS LIE

'The next day in the papers I read that a few cops had been hurt but no mention was made of what had happened to our mates. One of them has had both his legs broken and a lot of others were injured. Just like the cops, the papers always lie.'

Police harassment of black youngsters is nothing new in Notting Hill. It's been going on for years. Everyone I spoke to told similar stories. Michael, for instance, a 19 years-old painter, said that he and his mates were constantly being stopped and questioned by the police.

'Only a couple of weeks ago', he complained, 'about four of us were just going in a pub when a copper stopped us and asked what we were doing and where we were going. We told him.'

'Then he said that he wanted to search us and my brother said, 'No you're not, the Immigration Bill's not law yet. The cop looked at him and said 'a clever nigger eh' and grabbed and twisted his ear.'

'Then he told us to clear off. We don't complain because they'd probably arrest us if we did'.

I saw the truth of Michael's remarks as I walked around Notting Hill last Friday. Three times in a day I witnessed pairs of policemen stop black youngsters and harass them.

NO EXPERIENCE

A 20 year-old I spoke to told me about the high level of unemployment among black youth and how difficult it was to get a job. He told me that on one occasion he had answered a newspaper advert for a job as a cook in a restaurant that had said 'no experience necessary'.

'When I went for the interview the man asked me what experience I'd had. I told him none. He asked if I was interested in cooking. I said yes.'

'Then he asked me why, if I was so interested, I hadn't been to catering college. I didn't know what to say. I didn't get the job.'

As well as racialism, both rents and evictions are rising sharply in Notting Hill.

Behind the headlines report by JOHN SETTERS



Luxury flats for the wealthy, slums for workers

For years whole parts of the district have suffered from high charges and neglectful landlords.

This situation is getting worse. This has been caused by property developers trying to force tenants out of their homes in order that the present slums and totally inadequate houses can be redeveloped into high priced luxury flats and homes.

The cost of these kind of flats now being charged in Chelsea and parts of Kensington has led to an overspill of the wealthy into other areas of London. Notting Hill is one of those other areas.

Tenant after tenant told me of the tactics that are being used by swindling landlords to drive them out. Rents are going up in an effort to force people to quit

and where this fails then strong arm evictions take place.

One reason why it is suspected that the police attacked the Metro Club is not just because of racialism and a desire to show the local black community that they are the boss, but also because the club is situated next to a block of now uninhabited slums that are waiting for luxury redevelopment. Tenants won't be attracted to these new high priced flats if they are built opposite a popular youth club. Both the landlords and the police want the club closed and the youth driven away from disturbing the new and not-needy tenants.

Last week's Greve report on London's homeless estimated that nearly a half of the houses in the Chelsea/Kensington/

Notting Hill area are shared by more than one family.

A tenant at a house in St. Ervans road told me that there were seven families in her house. The weekly income for the landlord from this property was more than £40 a week and her two rooms had leaky roofs. She was charged £5.15 a week for her flat and the landlord refused to carry out repairs.

Another woman I spoke to was Merle Major. She explained that her landlord had evicted her illegally and used a variety of tactics to try to make her quit. He had smashed in the doors of her flat, cut the electricity supply off, emptied rubbish all over her floors and finally entered her flat and stood by while his brothers assaulted her and pulled her clothes off.

NO PROSECUTIONS

The landlord, Peter Reilly, was fined £200 but the assault is only typical of what happens all the time in Notting Hill. The majority of cases are not prosecuted by either the police or the council.

Merle Major and her four children have now occupied an empty council flat and are resisting attempts to evict them.

Notting Hill is an area where human rights and dignity are being stamped on. The police are using their 'bovver boots' to attack local black youth.

The landlords are using gangs of toughs to intimidate and threaten tenants. The local council refuses to help and coldly ignores the misery of the people that it is supposed to represent.

A young black engineer summed it all up. 'The people of Notting Hill—black and white—must unite together not only against the racist government in Westminster but also against any local victimisation. Self defence is an urgent need.'

'We must organise ourselves to fight the profiteering landlords that condemn us and our parents to live in rotten houses and the council that lets them get away with it. And we must struggle to put an end to this capitalist system that is the cause of the misery we face and fight to get socialism.'

McGARVEY BACKS BOSSES IN SHIP CRISIS

IN A DESPERATE bid to try and smash a strike of 70 boilermakers, the arrogant management of Cammell Laird's Birkenhead shipyard have sacked them and threatened to close down the whole yard unless the other boilermakers deliberately 'scab'.

The employers have received the full support of the Boilermakers' Union President, Dan McGarvey.

The strike, which started 10 weeks ago, is still unofficial and is about the refusal of the company to uphold an agreement.

The deputy chairman of the firm, Mr Norman Cave, has condemned the strike and said: 'It is now obvious that we have an element in our midst who are prepared at any cost to prejudice the livelihoods of the company's 7000 employees, to delay the financial recovery of the company itself and to disrupt the good management-union relationship.'

He has also appealed—with vocal backing from McGarvey—to the other boilermakers to do the work normally done by the strikers.

On 9 May McGarvey spoke at a strike meeting. He instructed the men to return to work, but this was defeated by 38-20 in a secret ballot.

Outraged that he should be defied, McGarvey suggested that the 20 should report to work under the full protection of his union and leave their workmates outside the gates. This was contemptuously rejected, as has been every effort to persuade any of the other boilermakers to scab.

Both the company and McGarvey had been encouraged in their attempt to smash the strike by what happened to 70 scaffolders who had gone on strike. They were sacked with the consent of the union, the General and Municipal Workers, and then selectively re-employed.

This disgraceful collaboration between the unions and the Laird management is designed to try and defeat any militancy in the yard.

Laird were last in the news a year ago when 11 directors were fired from the board. This happened after a huge financial crisis had hit the company and a loss of £7 million had been estimated.

The government stepped in and loaned the firm the necessary money to continue.

One of the conditions of the loan was that the directors should be sacked. They

INTRODUCTION to Marxism: series of six lectures by Duncan Hallas. Sunday 6 June: The Workers' Movement—social democracy and communism, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2, 7.30pm.

MANCHESTER: Demonstration against Aliens Bill, Saturday 5 June, 1.30pm Alexandra Road South, Moss Side.

BERNADETTE DEVLIN MP and Roger Rosewell speak at a Fight the Tories public meeting, Thursday 10 June, Connaught Hall, Blackett St, Newcastle upon Tyne 7.30pm.

included Edward du Cann, a former chairman of the Tory Party. Another director was on the Boards of more than 50 companies and chairman of 27 of them.

A new board was appointed. In their just published report for 1970 it is disclosed that they gave £43,000 to the sacked directors as 'compensation for loss of executive office'.

In other words, after running the company £7 million in debt and being sacked by the government, the 11 directors were awarded extensive compensation by the new directors.

By such acts do the ruling class demonstrate their solidarity. They would never dream of 'scabbing' on one another.

One would at least expect McGarvey to learn from this lesson and begin to support his own members.

SWANSEA IS: Tony Cliff on The Struggle in Industry. Thursday 10 June, 7.30pm, Working Men's Club, Alexandra Road.

CRAWLEY IS membership campaign success. John and Pat Owen announce the birth of a son.

HALDANE SOCIETY. A talk will be given entitled CONSTITUTIONAL BREAK-DOWN IN EAST PAKISTAN. The speaker will be MR JUSTICE CHAUDHURI, of the High Court of East Pakistan. TUESDAY 8 JUNE 1971, 6.15pm. ROOM 404. LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS.

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