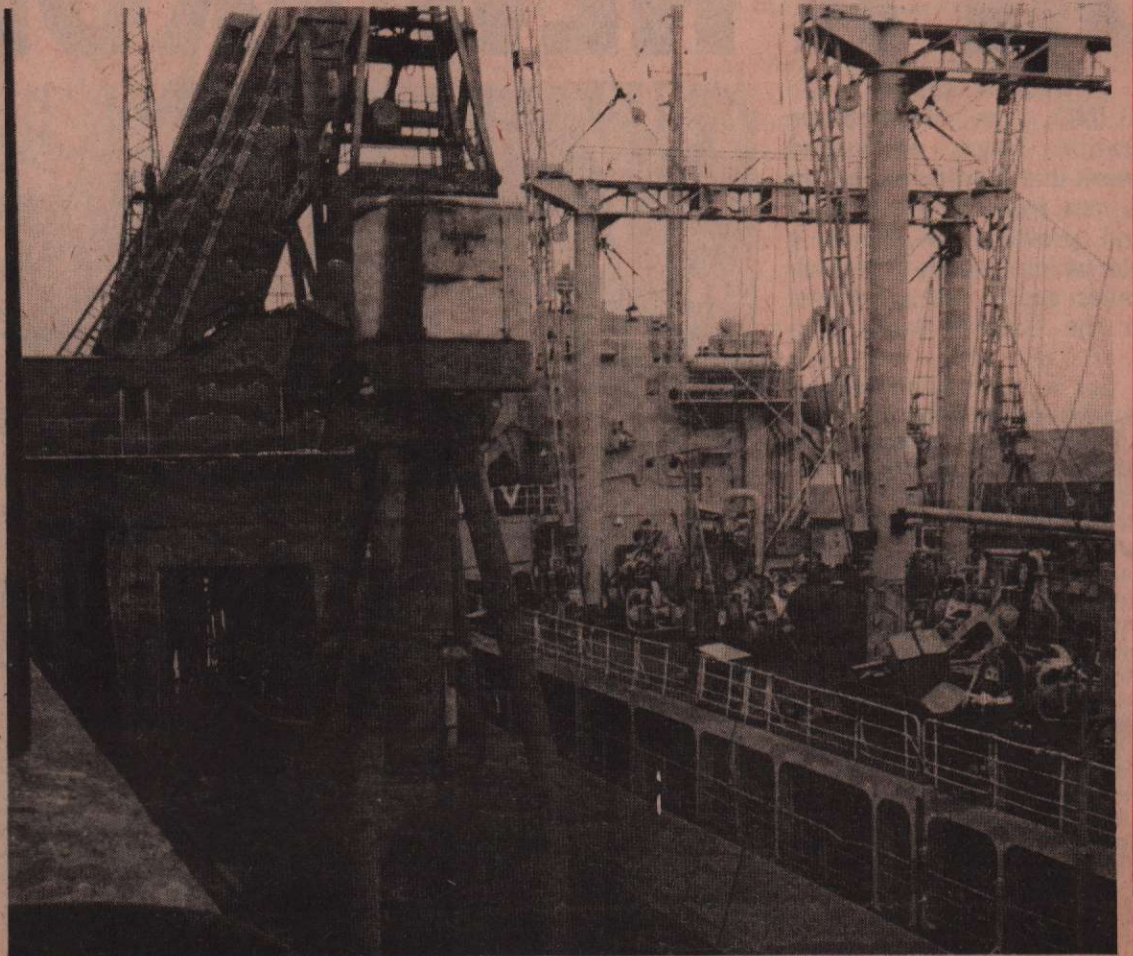


WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

Profiteers hit at dockers and housewives

THREAT TO JOBS and MEAT PRICES



The three arms of the Vestey-designed 'automated meat unloader' reach out over a ship which is berthed in London's Victoria Dock this week for repairs. The machine and the massive warehouse complex which serves it were built in 1968 at a cost of more than £2 million. They have never been used and are completely useless.

MEAT PRICES are now so high that working-class families are eating less meat than at any time in the past 10 years. And if the big London stevedoring companies have their way, not only will meat prices be artificially inflated still further but 1200 more London dockers and their families will be thrown on the scrapheap.

For the massive corporations that dominate London's waterfront are tired of speculating in dockers and meat. Their hunger now is for the enormous profits they can grab from redeveloping their dockland for such necessities as hotels, offices and conference centres.

ANGER AND DISGUST

It is a familiar tale, told in the employers' usual tissue of lies.

At a meeting last week representatives of the giant Vestey Union International—which prosecuted the dockers at Midland Cold Storage—told shop stewards in its subsidiary company Thames Stevedoring that unless output per gang was increased by 50 per cent then the massive New Zealand meat trade would be lost to London's Royal Docks. M R Payne, managing director of Thames, went so far as to say that if productivity was not increased by 50 per cent within a week then the company was doomed.

When the stewards reported their discussions to a mass meeting of the Thames workers, management's propositions unleashed anger and disgust. The



Lord Vestey: escape the unions

Thames stevedoring dockers know they are being used and cheated by a firm with a world-wide experience in cheating working people.

Many of London's dockers recognise the 'higher productivity' business for the sham it is. Lord Vestey and his pals have a master plan for London's riverside minus the working class who live and work there.

For three years now Royal Docks shop stewards have informed management of ways to improve productivity without loss of jobs and without anyone doing any extra work. Time after time they have drawn attention to the appalling maintenance of cranes and the huge delays this causes. They have complained repeatedly about the fantastic administrative inefficiency of the port authorities. Their suggestions met with a resounding silence.

The bosses' talk of higher productivity is just one more lie to compound all the other lies they have told the working class in pursuit of profit.

London's docks are bleeding with 'higher productivity'. In 1970 Hays Wharf demanded higher productivity. Custom

House Quay would go on forever, management said, if only output was increased. Up it went. But the dockers' sweat could not compete with the profits to be gained from the demolition of a wharf and its replacement by a hotel. Hays shut Custom House Quay last year and 75 jobs were murdered.

Southern Stevedores had the highest productivity in the Royal Dock. It closed in June with the loss of 1200 jobs. Such is the value of riverside land to dock employers turned property speculators.

And in the Victoria Dock there is a large and expensive monument to the extravagant ruthlessness of the London port employers. It is called B shed. Built in 1968, this was the wonder machine that would make the New Zealand meat trade more profitable for all companies concerned and keep it in the London docks forever.

SENTENCE OF DEATH

This massive computer-controlled and automated meat unloader was designed and built to Vestey specifications. It was to be worked by a Vestey company, the same Thames Stevedoring now under sentence of death. B shed was Vestey from start to finish, except that the Vestey firms paid not a penny towards the cost of this machine. B shed never got beyond trial runs and will never be used.

B shed cost £2 million, paid for out of the Port of London Authority funds. Despite its title, the PLA is a strictly commercial operation. The sweat of the PLA's own dockers is still paying for the Vestey mess. And now if the Vestey and their kind have their way, B shed will

simply be demolished and forgotten, along with hundreds of redundant dockers.

Now the New Zealand meat trade is to be moved out of London because, it is claimed, other ports are cheaper. This, too, is a lie. 60 per cent of all the meat that comes into this country is needed within 50 miles of the centre of London.

Behind the move is a simple desire for lower labour costs outside London and the release of land for speculative development. Moving to Sheerness or somewhere else outside London will mean massive increases in haulage costs. But working-class housewives can safely be left to foot the bill through higher meat prices—or let their families eat less.

The dockers are intensifying their blacking and picketing of the dozens of inland cold stores that waterfront giants like Vestey have opened up to escape from docks trade unionism. The dockers are determined to make sure there will be more Chobham Farm victories, more employment of registered labour.

The dockers are fighting to defend their jobs and wages. But we can anticipate the volumes of distortion from the millionaire press when the meat trade is moved from London. It is dockers' 'greed', they will shriek, that is responsible for pushing up meat prices.

They will cover up the real greed of Lord Vestey and his class, a greed that slaughters jobs, boosts prices and robs the workers to build meat machines that never work.

IS public meeting DOWN WITH THE RACISTS!

Tuesday 26 September, 8pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1

Speakers: Paul Foot (IS), Frank Campbell (UCATT, in his personal capacity) and a spokesman from the Black Panther movement.

All London branches to support.

WORLD NEWS

BRIEFING

FRELIMO FIGHTING ON A NEW FRONT

by Sara Trask

FRELIMO, the Mozambique Liberation Front, announced last week that fighting had begun on a new front in the massive central province of Manica e Sofala, which extends thousands of miles south and south-east from the Cabora Bassa Dam area.

In fact the first shots were fired on 25 July, after months of political work in the province, preparing the people for the start of the military struggle. This extends Frelimo's area of penetration from the already liberated areas of Cabo Delgado, Niassa, and Tete into the enormous southern area.

Polly Gaster, Pam Logie and Tony Gifford, of the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guine Bissau, have just returned from a 16-day visit behind the Frelimo lines, and have brought back valuable information of the military successes of the liberation movement, and also of the life emerging for the Mozambicans released from Portuguese domination.

In Fingoe district, Tete province, which the group visited, the population have responded to the form of guerrilla war by organising their foodstuffs collectively, to supply the needs of both the villagers and the Frelimo soldiers.

In the villages militias have been organised for the defence of the workers going out into the fields, and where Frelimo soldiers have fixed bases, they have cultivated their own crops, so that new forms of economic units are emerging from the guerrilla struggle.

FORCED

In every village Frelimo political units have helped set up assemblies of the villagers to run village life. Frelimo have concentrated on the interaction of political work and military success, and in the villages public meetings are called to explain the significance of military actions in the area.

In Fingoe district the villagers had not seen the Portuguese for three years, ever since Frelimo started fighting in the area. In those three years Frelimo have set up new political and economic structures, and the new system has given the villagers something to fight for, replacing the enforced taxation, forced labour and the removal of their crops by the Portuguese.



Rafael Romoja, Frelimo chief of personnel, addressing a village meeting in the Firigure district of liberated Mozambique

The group were also able to tell of the setting up of schools, hospitals and first aid posts by Frelimo which provide basic, but still desperately inadequate, facilities. They visited two schools where children are receiving primary education, and which are also the basis for adult education. Next year a programme of adult education will be organised by the students of Bagamoyo secondary school, the Frelimo school in southern Tanzania.

Life has changed for all in the liberated areas, but especially for the women. The women's detachments in Frelimo not only receive military training but also do much of the political work in the village meetings, contribute substantially to transport of supplies, and play an invaluable role in the cultivation of crops. The greatest advance has been in the disappearance of traditional attitudes to women and the group saw equal participation in village meetings of women and men.

DEFENDED

While the Portuguese had not been seen in the district for three years, their menacing presence was still apparent in the sound of distant bombing and firing. Frelimo attack transport columns and the few patrols that set foot in the area north of the Zambezi.

Supply to Cabora Bassa has become so difficult that Portuguese road transport has to have heavy military support, and air transport has also to be used. The dam itself is heavily defended by Portuguese and South African troops with air support, and the south-west corner of Tete province has become recognised as the Rhodesian operational area, where the Rhodesians make frequent border raids.

As the new guerrilla front spreads through Manica e Sofala province Frelimo will be able to claim control of most of Mozambique—except the southern-most area close to the South African border, and that around the Cabora Bassa Dam.

Spain: Strikers close down a town

by Vic Richards

FIVE THOUSAND workers in the Citroen car-plant in the Spanish port of Vigo went on strike last week demanding a shorter working week of 44 hours.

By Wednesday the police had arrested ten workers, while Citroen had sacked five and suspended four stewards.

A mass meeting demanded their reinstatement and the workers pledged themselves to stay out till this was achieved. At the same time, 4000 shipyard workers downed tools in solidarity and, with car workers, set up barricades on the main road out of Vigo.

Galician workers in the El Ferrol and Barreras shipyards have led the struggle in Spain this year, and the lessons from the previous strikes have been learnt.

By Friday they had brought out workers from 12 plants—15,000 in all—bringing the town of Vigo to a complete standstill.

Foreign

This struggle shows the deep crisis in Spain, which has developed enormously in the 33 years since Franco came to power. Industry is thriving. Agricultural produce is exported to Northern Europe and North America. Millions of tourists every year bring in thousands of millions of pounds, while millions of Spaniards live and work abroad, easing unemployment and sending tens of millions of pounds to Spain every year.

But this boom is dependent on foreign investment, foreign markets, foreign tourists and foreign employment opportunities.

The new ruling class that has arisen from the boom is weak because it is so dependent on foreign capital,

while landowners are now too closely tied to the new Spain seriously to consider a return to the fascism of the 1940s. The result has been the increasing inability of the Spanish ruling class to govern.

The experiment in 'liberalisation' of the late 1960s led rapidly to the growth of nationalist movements, illegal unions (Workers' Commissions) and a fantastic strike record.

The Spanish boom is dependent on low wages and 'political stability' to attract foreign capital. So the ruling class is now trying to bury internal differences and increase repression—not only against workers but also any groups seriously agitating for reform, such as university students.

Last week also saw the start of a new wave of repression in the universities.

The regime is resisting even the smallest reforms, so every demonstration and strike—strikes are illegal in Spain—is violent and takes on an immediate political character. Workers, having proved their strength in recent years, are increasingly able to take on both their employers and Franco's regime.

SUBVERSION IN CHILE:

a case study in U.S. corporate intrigue in the Third World



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THE US state of Arizona has introduced new laws to break the activities of the farmworkers' unions. The law makes all boycott activities illegal, empowers state courts to issue sweeping injunctions to end farm strikes, and excluded large numbers of migratory workers from taking part in union elections.

The farmworkers' union (UFW) is fighting the laws. It has refused a seat on the seven-man labour panel set up to enforce the act, is trying to get the Federal Court to rule that the law is unconstitutional, and is launching a petition to get the Governor of Arizona recalled.

THE PERUVIAN revolutionary Hugo Blanco has been in prison in Buenos Aires, Argentina, since 12 July. Blanco, who spent years in Peruvian prisons for his attempt to organise peasant unions, was deported in 1971 by the military dictatorship. He went to Mexico, but left there for the Argentine in June.

At present Blanco is threatened merely with expulsion, but so far no country has shown itself willing to accept him. The reputation of the Argentine dictatorship for violence, torture and even murder of political prisoners gives cause for concern about Blanco's possible fate. The Argentine Socialist Party and others have protested at the actions of the dictatorship.

THE PHILIPPINES government is launching a drive against homeless people in the city of Manila. A hundred thousand people living in shanties built over the city's waterways are being driven out. Their homes are being destroyed by wrecking and dredging machines and they are being forced to move to areas on the edges of the city far from their workplaces.

The excuse is the need to clear the waterways to prevent flooding. But the government is not clearing factories built over the waterways, and is not forcing big landowners to build dykes. At the end of August 1500 demonstrators staged a sit-down protest near the presidential palace.

SENATOR McGOVERN is getting rough treatment from Saigon television. On 1 September a commentator said: 'It is still too kind to treat him as cowardly, unworthy, treacherous, dishonest, disloyal and faithless... because however insulting these descriptions are, they are still applied to human beings.'

Two days later another spokesman described him as the 'most ignoble son of a whore in the history of human civilisation.'

THE TRADE agreement at present being settled between Spain and Russia reflects growing trade between the two countries. In the first four months this year Spain's exports to Russia were worth more than £5 million, and imports around £3 million.

The Russians use Spanish ports in the Canary Islands for their Atlantic fishing fleet. Spain already has commercial agreements with Yugoslavia and East Germany.

There are reports that Russia may renew diplomatic relations with Spain. These were broken off in 1939 at the time of Franco's victory. The Spanish Communist Party firmly opposes such diplomatic recognition.

IN NEW YORK last week a woman traffic warden issued a parking ticket to a car which parked in a forbidden zone. The car, however, was a police car, and she was immediately arrested.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has just published a report on political prisoners in Brazil during 1969 to 1972 which estimates there are 12,000 political prisoners, and 15,000 more people in exile. At least 500 have died under torture or 'disappeared'.

One favourite torture in common use—the pau-de-arara—involves hanging the naked prisoner upside down with his arms and ankles tied to an iron bar, and then beating him or giving electric shocks to the genitals. The prisoners' relatives are often present.

FOR ANYONE who doesn't understand why there was a coup in Bolivia last summer, there was a clue last week when the Banzer government announced that the former American owners of the Mathilde zinc mine (one of the richest in the world), which was nationalised by the Torres government, are to receive 13 million dollars compensation.

THE EMPRESS Farah of Iran is visiting China this week and will probably meet Mao-tse tung. The Shah is to visit Moscow next month. Iran is notorious for brutal treatment of the political opposition.



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Low pay cover-up

THE LAST WAGE FREEZE—incomes policy is the polite way of putting it—was wrecked by the revolt of the lower paid workers, starting with the historic dustman's strike of 1969.

Naturally the Tory government has learnt something from the defeats the dustmen and others inflicted on the Labour government's wage freeze. That is why, at the Chequers talks last week, Heath and the CBI were only too happy to discuss 'the problem of the lower paid'.

It's a real problem all right. There are some three million adult men and some four million adult women who earn a basic wage of less than £20 a week before stoppages. Now there is a very simple solution to the problem of low pay—it is to increase pay. All that the government has to do to solve the problem of chronic low pay in certain industries is to introduce a minimum wage by legislation.

We think that £25 a week is a reasonable, if very modest, minimum. The TUC is talking about £20. It is worth noting that a number of capitalist countries, including that stronghold of 'free enterprise', the USA, already have minimum wage legislation (although in the USA it does not apply to agriculture).

In fact nothing is further from Heath's mind than such a solution. What he is concerned about is getting the TUC to collaborate in putting a clamp on the poorest paid sections to prevent another revolt of lower paid workers.

It will be dressed up with talk about 'social justice', of course, but its aim is quite simply to 'make it easier' for the government to put over a wage freeze with TUC support and, probably, laws to back it up.

A wage freeze under present conditions does not mean that wages stand still. It means that, in terms of what they will buy, they go down and go down quite fast. With inflation running at 10 per cent in the next year—and that is the 'consensus' opinion of most economists—you lose £1 in every £10. In fact to stand still increases of 15-20 per cent a year are needed, the exact amount depending on where you start and your family situation with regard to loss of benefits like free milk and increases in taxation.

The press is talking about a price and profits freeze too. This will remain just talk as far as profits are concerned, for the government believes profits are still too low. Nor is a real price freeze on the cards. Not because it is impossible—it has been done before—but because the object of government policy is to shift income distribution in favour of the owners of capital, in favour of profits, and that would be hindered by a real, overall price freeze.

Indeed the government itself is directly pushing prices up. Value Added Tax, coming in next February, will be levied at 10 per cent on the prices of most goods. The government expects to 'gain' £1600 million a year in this way.

It will not be paid, in practice, by manufacturers but by consumers. The cost will be passed on in increased prices. The government is also responsible for pushing up the price of accommodation—'Fair Rents' and so on.

In these circumstances working people have two choices. They can sit still, accept 'incomes policy' and see their standard of living fall. Or they can fight to maintain these standards as the building workers, the railwaymen, the miners and others have done.

Choose your terrorist

THERE are terrorists and terrorists. Palestinians who kidnap civilians get the full hate treatment from television and press. Regular Israeli army and air units who deal out death and destruction on a vastly greater scale, to women and children as well as to men, escape censure.

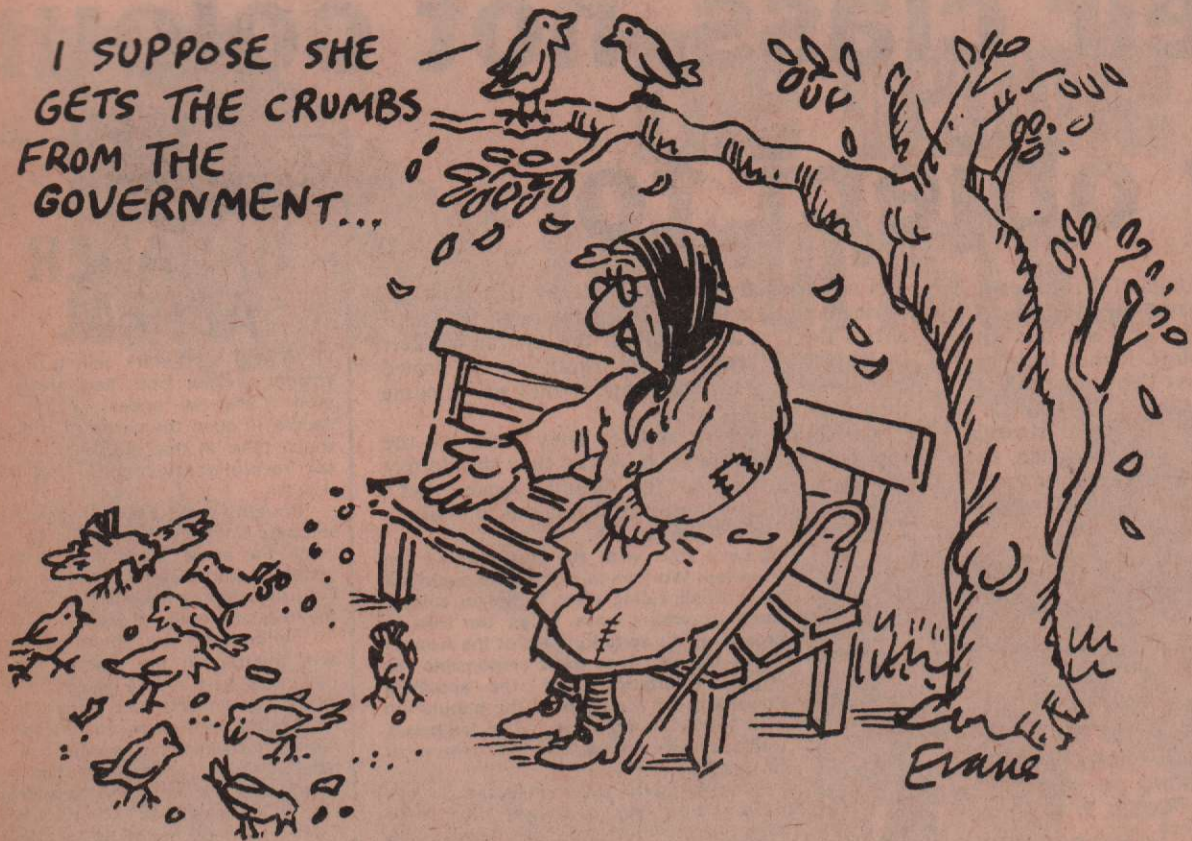
That is not terrorism apparently, it's war. The difference is between the retail killer (terrorist) and the wholesale killer (honourable soldier). To keep a sense of proportion we should bear in mind that the Israeli forces are themselves fairly small-scale operators.

For real mass terrorism, wholesale indiscriminate bombing which probably kills and maims more civilians in a week than all the Palestinian organisations have done in 20 years, the government of the USA is the current title holder.

Yet even in the retail trade there are very marked differences in the television and press treatment. Generally speaking, the more right wing your aim, the less you will be condemned. Consider the case of the Utashi Croat terrorists, mass murderers of Serbs and Jews in the last war. The Guardian informs us 'There have been at least 220 bombings of official Yugoslav property or that belonging to leaders of the emigrant community [in Australia] in the past five years' plus 'murders, knifings, intimidation, bribery, secret armies and thefts of dynamite.'

And what has the Australian Tory Prime Minister to say about these fascist gangsters? 'Their cause is a good one. We must encourage their spirit of independence.' We are still waiting for the torrents of indignation from our 'free press' and television.

I SUPPOSE SHE GETS THE CRUMBS FROM THE GOVERNMENT...



NOTHING WAS

Crime report

PRESS REACTION to the nine months' jail sentence on the Lincoln busman who allegedly fiddled the sum of 6p suggests that such legal savagery is most unusual, an unfortunate departure from the normal milk-of-human-kindness approach of the magistrates' bench.

But as readers of the courts column of local papers will know, the floggem brigade who hand out justice are dab hands at sending members of the 'poorer classes' away for long stretches for minor indiscretions.

At the Old Bailey last week, Ernest Rawlinson, aged 52, was put on probation for two years when he admitted stealing £140. That sounds a reasonable decision on the judge's part, but more revealing was Rawlinson's past record.

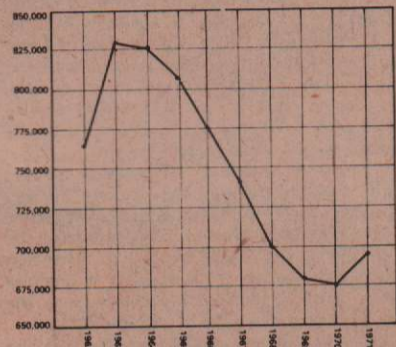
He had spent 30 years of his life in prison and his two most recent stretches had been nine years and 10 years. What dreadful crimes had he committed to earn such sentences? Had he dropped napalm on a sleepy English village or wiped out a guerrilla gang on the Scottish border? Not quite.

He was sent away by magistrates' courts for nine years for stealing a bicycle and 10 years for stealing £10.

Gloucester magistrates were in fine form last week. Up in front of them was George Kay, aged 61, of no fixed address, who had the singular misfortune of trying to sell a stolen wallet to a plainclothes policeman in a pub. He was put away for 12 months for stealing the wallet, some foundation cream and garter clips worth £2.05.

Endangering human life is a lesser crime in the eyes of the bench. Derby magistrates have fined Rolls-Royce £150 after hearing how a supervisor had been sucked inside a giant aero engine. The firm admitted that a Spey engine was not kept safe.

The supervisor, Robert Westnag, was sucked inside the engine when



LABOUR PARTY MEMBERSHIP RISING

Say that again?
—from last week's Tribune

it was turned on while he was checking it. He was dragged towards two sets of rotary blades. Fortunately the first set of blades was not turning but the second set was rotating at 400,000 revs a minute. If the first set had been working he would have been sliced to death. He escaped with a fractured skull and elbow and facial cuts.

Good job he didn't nick one of the blades while he was in there. He'd have got five years for certain.

PERHAPS we're getting paranoiac but isn't it just possible that the front-page fuss and bother over Myra Hindley being allowed out of Holloway for a brief sniff of oxygen was all a put-up job to focus attention on her and away from the massive prison revolt over conditions that has shaken the country from Aberdeen to the Isle of Wight? The governor of Holloway is 62 years of age—two years over the official retiring age—and she won't be worried by a public rebuke from the Home Secretary. She can just take her pension and go. Of course, it couldn't be a plot. Things like that don't happen here...

Absent friends

AS YOU won't know from reading the press, there was a 500-strong counter-demonstration in London on Saturday to a racist rally against the Ugandan Asians. Made up almost entirely of International Socialists and the International Marxist Group, the counter-demo was made memorable by the absence of the mighty battalions of the Communist Party.

But at least the Star mentioned the anti-fascist demonstration, which is more than can be said for that very r-r-revolutionary paper, Workers Press, which is always reminding us how lack of left-wing unity in Germany in the 1930s was one of the key reasons for Hitler's rise to power. The paper's reporter,

Philip Wade, reported the Monday Club-National Front rally but failed to mention the 500 counter-marchers outside the hall.

At the start of the anti-fascist march, Mr Wade was observed counting the number of participants and expressing his concern at the small turnout. There would have been a few more, of course, if his organisation, the Socialist Labour League, had bothered to join in.

High spot of the picket outside the fascist rally was the look of sheer disbelief on the face of National Front organiser Martin Webster, who was vetting the unsavoury bunch filing into the hall. Unable to comprehend the sudden burst of cheering from the anti-fascists across the road, Oberstumpenfuehrer Webster turned round to find a West Indian employed by the Central Hall waving to the counter-demo. Collapse of stout fascist.

FOOTNOTE to the Saturday events: an IS member bought a mid-day copy of the London Evening Standard at 2.30pm and was not a little surprised to find a full report of the Monday Club rally. Intrigued, he rang the Standard news desk and asked if they were using crystal balls instead of reporters, as the racist meeting hadn't started until 2.15, long after that edition of the paper had been printed. 'Oh, we often do that sort of thing,' was the cheerful admission of the Standard man.

Off-white film

IN JOHANNESBURG, Julian Sanderson has been fined R290 for showing a banned film. He had put it on at a local hockey club and charged 1 Rand admittance fee to help buy new equipment for the club.

The police said the film shown had not been passed by the Publications Control Board.

Is this a case for Lord Pornford to investigate? What appalling sexual filth is being shown illicitly to decent, god-fearing white hockey players in South Africa?

Answer: that old mushy Hollywood liberal weepie Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? in which nice middle class Sidney Poitier falls in love with a nice middle class white girl.

MEANWHILE back in the English courts, labourer Joseph Owen was granted an absolute discharge at Clerkenwell Magistrates Court after he admitted that after a day's work on a building site he had climbed through a window of the next-door Royal Hotel and had a bath. He was charged with stealing hot water valued at 15p.



Asians: it's their class, not colour, that I really object to

I HAVE READ the articles in Socialist Worker about the Ugandan Asians. You are absolutely right to point out that the racialists are setting out to divide the working class and therefore help the employers.

There is one important argument you have not covered. The Asians are middle class not working class. In Uganda they exploited the African workers, in Britain they will do the same. Why should British workers support the entry of middle-class Asians who will continue with the

exploitation. We have got enough of them already.

The Tory government have only let them in because they are middle class. This is in line with their whole immigration policy. If they had been workers the Tories would have kept them out.

This is not a racist letter. The factory I work in has a good record of united struggle between black and white workers. When the dockers marched for Powell our stewards' committee condemned it. But on this occasion we are all opposed to their entry.

I can honestly say that had they been Asian or African workers I would have supported their entry. Look at it this way. If the African workers in Rhodesia threw out Ian Smith and his crowd of oppressors and exploiters, should we welcome them here?

Of course we shouldn't. They were on the backs of the African workers and they should pay the price. So should the Uganda Asians. Let's look after our own class and not our enemies.—
TONY GALLEY, London N1.

PAPER NEEDS BROADER APPEAL

IT IS very hard work selling Socialist Worker as your front page always has such a narrow appeal. I can't get people to open the paper. If it doesn't touch them at that moment, they just say 'revolutionary rubbish' and throw it down.

Couldn't you put lots of provocative snippets on your front page so as to catch the eyes of the broad mass of people? I know you are journalists and I'm just an ignorant reader—but without the likes of me you're dead.

Try to learn that there are women and children in the world, not just men. Just half a page geared to them would be a start, such as articles on why labourers' wives can't have the same housekeeping money as car workers' wives, so that you can teach them what strong and weak working-class solidarity means in simple terms.

Print a copy of the Social Security pamphlet on how old-age folks can live on scraps beside a menu of Ted's latest binge. Women learn more with their eyes than their ears. Keep showing photographs of peereesses in mink and ermine beside shabby young housewives and show up the contrasts and keep asking them why they accept it.

Finally, do you ever dream of becoming a national paper without one word about sport? What a chance to show the profit motivation at the back of great sport events.—(Mrs) ROSALIND GOSS, Paignton, South Devon.

● We agree with Mrs Goss that without 'the likes of her' we're dead. What do other readers think about the style, balance and type of articles in Socialist Worker? Let's have your thoughts.—
EDITOR.

LETTERS

OUR NORMAN



FUNNY HA-HA, OR FUNNY PECULIAR?

WE FOUND the sentiments expressed in Our Norman (9 September) to be seriously at odds with the duty of revolutionaries to support the Chinese revolution. While it is true that the bureaucratic structure of the Chinese People's Republic is a brake on the possible development of socialism in China, it is scandalous to imply that representatives of the Chinese government work hand-in-glove with the British bosses. Indeed the cartoon goes as far as to suggest that the attitude of the Chinese government is more reactionary than that of the British ruling class.

Although all revolutionary socialists must condemn the present foreign policy of the Chinese government, one cannot ignore the positive gains, made and sustained by the Chinese people, since the 1949 revolution. It is time the editorial board of Socialist Worker realised that cartoons in a revolutionary newspaper have a political as well as humorous purpose. They cannot be used to get cheap laughs at the expense of revolutionary principles.—Sara Carver, Wendy Henry, Glyn Carver, Dave Purdy, Judith Gray, Manchester 20.

● The International Socialists, as is well known—not least to the signatories—has taken and maintains the view that China is a state capitalist regime no more deserving

of support than regimes based on private property.

It has also been the view of more 'orthodox' Trotskyists that the Stalinist bureaucracy is counter-revolutionary, opposed to and inimical to the interests of the working class. The idea that the Chinese government 'works hand-in-glove with British bosses' is not only not scandalous but is a simple statement of observed fact, a denial of which casts some doubt on the comrades' political judgment as well as their eyesight.—**EDITOR.**

Strike pay and SS: know the facts

TWO READERS have recently been forced to correct Socialist Worker on the question of strike pay and social security. The casualness and ignorance of the original contributors is appalling and for two reasons:

Firstly, the problem of money is absolutely crucial for any striker. This cannot be emphasised too much. Rank and file unity depends on the unity of mind and body.

Secondly, the information in question is widely known and is contained in the Claimants Union's 'Strikers Handbook' which is essential reading for anyone involved in industrial activities.

This leads me to add some point to Andrew Buick's letter (16 September). Whether strike pay or social security is involved, the flat-rate of either will certainly not cover the strikers' basic needs, never mind other financial commitments. Ideally, therefore, what the unions should do is organise and inform workers in order to gain maximum rights from the Social Security, particularly under the discretionary and emergency provisions (sections 7 and 13 of 1966 SS Act).

In fact unions, almost without exception, won't do this and it is on those grounds that they can and must be criticised. On the other hand, this also means that the rank and file are forced to organise themselves and in this way can be greatly assisted by IS members and Socialist Worker.—**DAVID GIBBENS, Canterbury, Kent.**

Letters to Socialist Worker must arrive first post Monday. They should be typed or written on one side of the paper only and may be cut for space reasons.

That Munich massacre: how Fleet St covers up for the lie machine

THE BIG LIE of Munich added a victim to the carnage: the credibility of the world's press. To the discerning in this country the national press has rightly been suspect for its political bias, its nasty distortions of facts, its sensational scare-mongering, and its crude misrepresentation of working class and liberation struggles both at home and abroad.

But never before has it been so massively and clearly hoodwinked as it was by the information that the Israeli hostages at Fuenfenfeldbruck had escaped with their lives.

Like many lies it was born of panic, and obviously it could not be sustained. Equally plainly it was not an honest mistake by some uninformed German cypher at the airport.

As the Observer pointed out in its over-long Daylight examination of the story, the German authorities permitted the 'they're safe' story to circulate for two-and-a-half hours after the final bloody shoot-out.

The Daylight feature weakly asked 'Why?' but offered no explanation. The Daily Mirror promised much under a bold headline YOUR PAPER AND THE TRUTH, but delivered nothing more than an apology for co-operating with the lie.

Instead of pressing the point our newspapers held off and hoped that their embarrassment would be forgotten under a welter of other questions like 'Who shot first?' and 'Will the games go on?'



RON KNOWLES' EYE ON THE PRESS

It is not difficult to appreciate the reasoning behind this attitude for the real answer to the big lie is distressing for the press to face. It is simply that the manipulation of news so frequently practised by governments with the collusion of the press was, on this occasion, done behind their backs.

Plastered

UK Press Gazette, the Fleet Street weekly that covers press affairs, commented last week: 'An allegation of gross news-management is what the bewidered press of the world is levelling against the German authorities...'

But the whole point is that the charge has NOT been made. The papers just dropped the matter. If there was any debate above Fleet Street canteen level it certainly was not being conducted in public.

More accurately the Press Gazette

declared: 'The suspicion that there was some awful conspiracy between the newsmakers and the news-getters must hang heavily on the minds of the millions whose morning newspapers so misled them.'

What the millions had suddenly realised was just how wide of the mark their newspapers could be. This time they knew about it. The truth could not be hidden. It was plastered in grisly confirmation over a Munich airfield.

But what about those scores of stories that blast across the front pages of the Express, Mirror, Mail, Sun, et al from time to time like a passing dream scenario? They are the unmistakable lobby by-products, stories replete with dramatic revelations of uncheckable 'facts' issued by un-named sources from unconfirmable 'high-level sources'.

Invariably such stories reap little in the way of confirmed follow-ups. There is nothing to follow up. They are the products of a much more subtle system of news management, a mixture of mischievous rumour, primitive kite-flying and lobby journalists' imaginations.

It is a system which relies on the eagerness of journalists to pimp for news from government sources in the most degrading manner possible. It keeps them completely in thrall to their 'sources', bound completely by the conditions that their confidants wish to impose on them. For those who fall into disfavour are told nothing.

And just in case any journalist really gets to work and prises some scrap of truth out of the lie machine, the government of the day always has the 'D'

Notice system in its armoury of secrecy, ready to trot it out to suppress information—all in the interests of national security and public order, you understand.

Britain's national newspapers abjectly accept this bondage. True, an occasional squeal is uttered about the 'D' Notice scandal when an exclusive has to be consigned to the spike, but no concerted attempt has been made—nor is it likely—by those great upholders of freedom and truth, the Newspaper Proprietors Association, to smash the lobby system. They could achieve it easily, given the will.

Wallow

It takes two sides to operate it, and the government, since it is so clearly an admirable tool for their usage, are going to wallow in it for as long as they are able. The Tories, no less than the Labour government, are fond of their tame news management team.

But the Sun—'Forward with the people', the Express—'The voice of Britain', the Mirror, Mail, and the rest will not rise up and fight for an open system where the truth is readily available for all to see. They prefer to play footy with the lie machine and its programmers.

Which is why there has been no great fuss about the German lie from Munich.

But if that lie makes even one of the millions of national newspaper readers in Britain more sceptical about what they read in future it will have served some good purpose.

Racist ideas have to be fought

IT IS a pity Tony Greenstein (16 September) was so busy looking for opposition to immigration control in the What We Stand For column that he missed the full-page article in the 9 September issue devoted precisely to arguing the case against all immigration controls.

However, it is not so much this disregard for facts as Greenstein's whole approach that is wrong. Of course it is important to argue against all immigration control. But our aim is not to demonstrate our own political purity and correctness, but to counter defeatist and divisive ideas that have a real force in the labour movement.

Many workers are quite legitimately worried about jobs, houses and schools. We have to start, not from abstract slogans, but from the real hopes and fears of real workers. Otherwise we might as well not bother producing a workers' paper at all.

No one has suggested that militancy automatically destroys racialism. We have to fight for our ideas. But the fight against racialism and the fight for militant industrial policies are not separate—they are part of the same struggle.

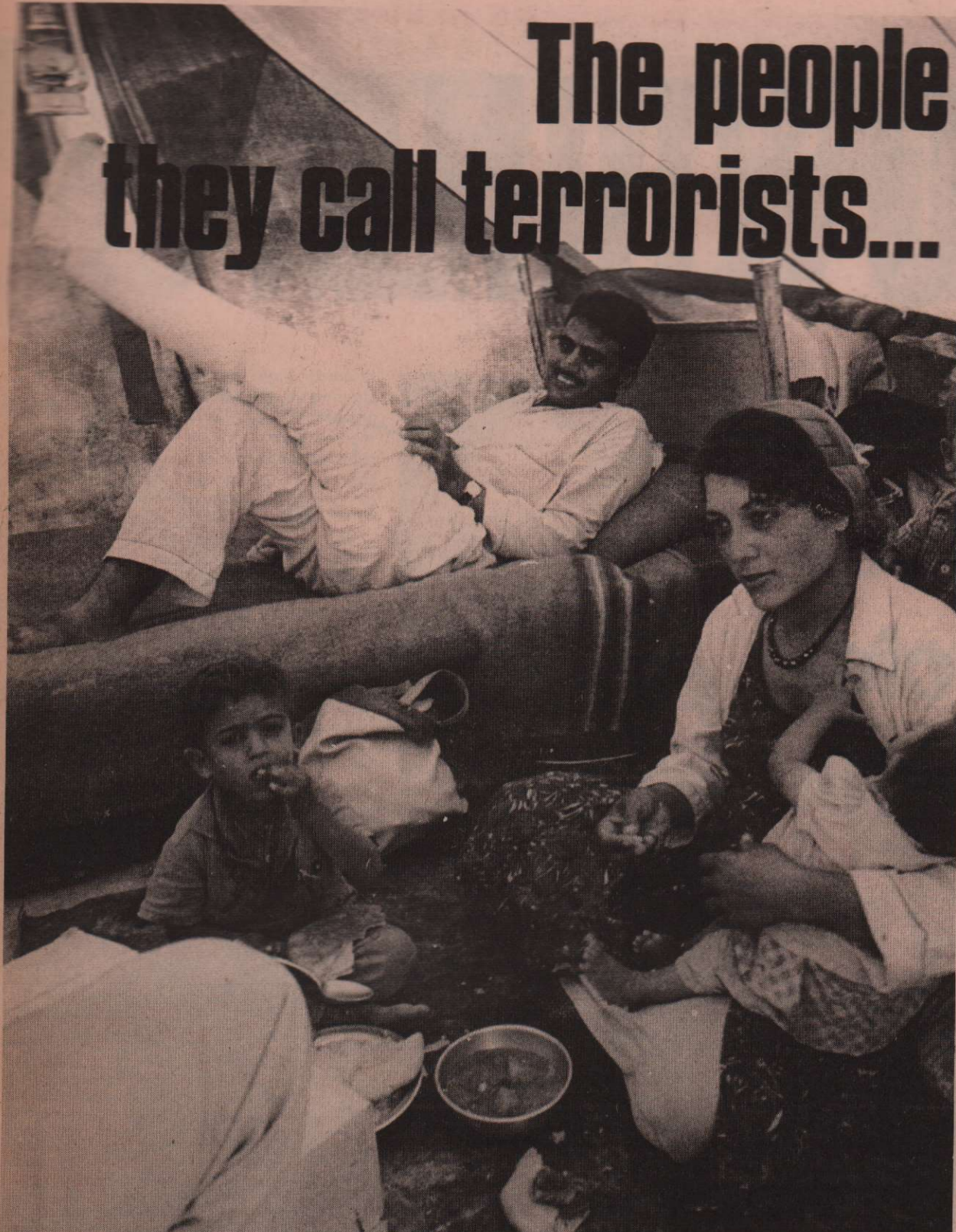
Greenstein is right to support the self-organisation of racial minorities (though quite wrong to suggest that it was the Jews alone who defeated Mosley in the 1930s). But for a revolutionary organisation which, unfortunately, has very few black members to put the main emphasis on proclaiming this support is a dangerous excuse for inactivity. Our main responsibility is to fight racialist ideas in every section of the British working class we have contact with.—**IAN BIRCHALL, London N9.**

TONY GREENSTEIN's description of racialism as 'the cancer of the working class' is used to suggest that it is some form of god-given blight which mysteriously attacks 'healthy' would-be socialists. If this were true, then the scorn which he shows for factual arguments, and his faith in a neat bit of surgery—simply to 'smash' and 'drive off the streets' anti-immigration marchers—might be an adequate answer.

Because racialism has concrete historical origins, which have made it an essential part of British capitalism, we don't just suffer from it, we have all been weaned on it. Moreover since it still has material causes sustaining it, it must be fought in the same way as all other capitalist ideas which usually dominate workers' thinking. A convincing alternative set of ideas have to be argued out during the struggles of our class.

The emphasis given in Socialist Worker is quite correct. 'Militancy is the answer'. While it is true that the working class has not yet been heavily represented on anti-immigration marches, it would be absurd to underestimate the widespread support among workers which exists for the propaganda of these 'fascist scum'. This will not be eradicated by brute force, whether accompanied by left-wing slogans or not.—**GORDON BLAIR, London SW6.**

The people they call terrorists...



Refugees in Syria living in a cramped tent on a starvation diet supplied by relief organisations. The man was injured in a clash with Israeli forces.

by Chris Harman
Refugee picture
by Red Saunders

THESE are pictures of the people portrayed in the west as 'butchers', 'heartless murderers' and 'terrorists'.

More than a million of them live in tents, tin huts four yards square and crude concrete boxes more like coal bunkers than houses in the sun-baked, dust-swept compounds in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

The only regular source of income for most of them is a meagre 2½p a day donated by the United Nations.

The children go to school to study and acquire skills they will never have the chance to use. The only future they know is one of never ending confinement to the camps, of waiting, year in year out, for something to happen.

Yet if they climb the hills near the camps, they can see the villages they lived in until 25 years ago, in some cases five years ago. The land they used to till is still cultivated. Its fertility is still providing a living standard of rather more than 2½p a day.

They could walk over the hills and through the Jordan valley in a few hours and enjoy part of that living standard. Except that in the way are the tanks, the armoured cars, the squadrons of jets waiting to strafe and napalm them.

And so they remain confined to the camps. The Palestinians were driven there

in 1948 when the rulers of Israel and the then ruler of Jordan, Abdullah, divided up their homeland. An unofficial Israeli force, the Irgun, organised systematic massacres to drive them out. Moshe Dayan, Israeli Minister of Defence, once explained, in a moment of unusual candour, what the result was:

'Why do the Arabs hate the Jews? Answer: because they take us to be foreigners, invaders who took an Arab country and turned it into a Jewish state. And they are right about it. From their point of view we did it...'

The founder of the movement to establish an exclusively Jewish state in the Middle East, Theodore Herzl, made clear years before 1948 that this was to be done by driving out the Palestinians who lived there already: 'When we occupy the land... we shall expropriate gently the private property in the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit out the penniless population across the border...'

The Zionist founder of Israel found ready support from reactionary, and often anti-Semitic, governments in the West.

The same politicians who opposed plans to let Jews escaping from Nazism into the various Western countries, gave full support to the idea that a Jewish state should be established at the expense of the population of Palestine.

They knew that such a state, permanently in conflict with the Arab world around it, would be a willing ally of the Western big business interests who control much of the wealth of the Middle East. In 1956, when Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal, the Israeli government obliged its paymasters by collaborating with the French and British to invade Egypt.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian people have been left to rot in exile, a few miles from their former home, the majority in the refugee camps.

It is no wonder that the younger generation of Palestinians are determined to do something, however desperate, to change things.

Guerrillas

After the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, they flocked to the guerrilla movements. They argued that it would be possible by armed force to defeat Israel and build a new, secular Palestinian state, where Jews, Moslems and Christians would live and work side by side.

But this dream was shattered two years ago when the Jordanian King Hussein broke the back of the guerrilla movement, murdering 20,000 people in the process.

Since then, many of the refugees have seen no choice but to copy some of the methods of those who oppress them, to take vengeance through individual terror against those they regard as responsible for their plight, to use bombings, kidnappings and hijackings in an attempt to force concessions from the Israeli government.

Socialists criticise such methods because they offer no real solution to the mass of refugees, who continue to suffer in the camps. They lead also to needless deaths of innocent people, while big business interests who pull the strings go untouched.

But we should not make the mistake of seeing the futile attempts of some Palestinians to fight back against oppression in the same light as the organised terror of those who oppress them. The real terrorists are those who, a fortnight ago, bombed the defenceless huts and tents of the refugee camps, deliberately maiming and killing those they had previously driven from their homes.



Refugee huts blasted in the Israeli raids two weeks ago. The huts are in North Lebanon, nowhere near Israel. The Israeli government claimed the raids were to protect its borders.

RAYMOND CHALLINOR

IT IS APPROACHING 10 years since George Woodcock, then general secretary of the TUC, proclaimed that the time had come for trade unionists to stop demonstrating in Trafalgar Square and enter the corridors of power.

Since then, union leaders have followed this advice with enthusiasm. Indeed, their visits to Downing Street have been so frequent that anyone might be forgiven for thinking that they were permanent members of the cabinet.

But what has all this union diplomacy achieved? For the working class, the answer is precisely nothing.

While Vic Feather and Co were chatting with Heath during the past 12 months, a third of the British labour force received a cut in their real wages, unemployment crept up to an all-time post-war record, and the government introduced a vicious anti-union Bill. The same thing happened in previous years: no tangible gains accrued from negotiations.

Nor is this surprising. Progress arises from the development and use of working-class strength, not by having little cosy chats with the government.

Vic Feather could go on talking till his nose dropped off and the five dockers would still be in jail. It took strike action to secure their release. Workers downed tools and, as if a magician had waved his wand, the cell-doors mysteriously opened.

What is more, this victory was achieved by only 142,000 men and women. It prompts the question: What other successes could be gained were greater numbers of workers mobilised on other issues?

There is no reason, for example, why the Industrial Relations Act should not be rendered inoperable. If, every time a fine was imposed on a union, trade unionists withdrew their labour in protest, then the loss to the bosses would be colossal. Far from injuring the unions, they would be injuring their profits—and themselves.

MUFFLED

But this is the last thing union leaders want. A privileged group, much more wealthy than those they 'represent', they have interests of their own, quite separate from those of the members. They act as intermediaries, go-betweens trying to reconcile workers with the employers and government.

To perform this role satisfactorily, they have to retain the confidence, at least to some extent, of the membership and this means occasionally expressing, albeit in a very mild and muted way, workers' demands.

The influence union leaders acquire as a consequence can be used to restrain the rank and file, to muffle their protests and keep them within limits that do not endanger the system. Sometimes, when the pressure of workers' grievances builds up, they find it necessary to let off steam by calling the men out.

What happened recently in the docks is a good example of this. Jack Jones, the TGWU boss, realised that dockers were so riled, so angry at the loss of jobs through containerisation, that there was sure to be a strike.

He was therefore confronted with the choice—either it would be unofficial, led by rank and file leaders, or it would be official and hence under his control. Obviously, from his standpoint, the latter was preferable. It meant that he retained his authority and, at the first opportunity, could apply the brake.

A docks' delegate conference, where the smaller and less militant ports have undue representation, was convened and the strike called off. Jack Jones had secured his objectives—thwarting the militants and securing acceptance of Lord Aldington's proposals.

People conducting a serious struggle usually don't have frequent chats with their opponents.

During battles of the Western Desert, Field-Marshal Montgomery did not go for afternoon tea with General Rommel.

Union leaders, like the government, see that shop floor militancy constitutes a threat to them. Hence they are prepared to have discussions with Edward Heath and his ministers on how to lessen this danger. Even where the talks do not directly relate to this topic—when, for example, they centre on promoting the well-being of the economy—they nevertheless indirectly deal with it. Capitalism can only function efficiently if workers know their place—in other words, if the rank and file organisations have been either tamed or smashed.

The union leaders have no desire to make swingeing changes, to redistribute the national income radically. Had they such aims, then we can be assured that the prime minister would have no inclination to see them so often.

Genuine leaders of the labour movement, like James Larkin and Tom Mann, never found themselves within the precincts of Number Ten.

People conducting a serious struggle usually don't have frequent chats with their opponents. During the battles of the Western Desert, Field-Marshal Montgomery did not go for afternoon tea with General Rommel.

GARBAGE

Nor does Mohammed Ali use the time between rounds to talk with the other boxer on how they can improve the fight. The fact that there are repeated meetings indicates that they have quite a lot in common.

Each time Vic Feather and Co go to see the prime minister, it is well-worth recalling the lines of John S Clarke, the Clydeside poet:

If you've searched without success in every pestilent latrine

For a sample of the most revolting filth the eye has ever seen;

If the garbage of the midden and the sewage of the drain

Reward you not, and all your efforts seem to be in vain,

Let not barren explorations fill your bosom with despair

Just trot around to Downing Street, you're sure to find it there.

When union leaders visit Edward Heath, they merely aggravate the pollution problem.

FREDERICK ENGELS
THE CONDITION
OF THE
WORKING CLASS
IN ENGLAND
INTRODUCTION BY ERIC HOBBSBAWM

ENGELS

It is common to think of Friedrich Engels as the shadow and rich benefactor of Marx, and nothing more. He was, however, a man of outstanding ability in his own right—and much of Marx's work was based on Engels' knowledge of 19th century working conditions.

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OVERCROWDING

City that gives

the lie to racist nonsense

GLASGOW was described last week in a Corporation planning report as suffering from 'serious multiple deprivation'.

It is the centre of a region with the highest unemployment rate in the country (excluding Northern Ireland). 'Ripe', Mr Powell, Mr Sandys or the Daily Express might say, 'as an illustration of the real problem in our midst—immigration.' But they won't say that, because immigration to Glasgow and the West of Scotland is marginal.

Coloured immigrants account for less than one per cent of Glasgow's population. The current racist arguments of the right wing cannot be used when the 'flood' hardly amounts to a trickle.

But Glasgow is not just an exception—it is the exception which proves the simple-mindedness of the Tory right wing's racist slander.

Most of Britain's coloured population, about two-thirds, have settled in Greater London and the West Midlands, with a few concentrations further north such as Leeds and Bradford. These are the areas where there were labour shortages during the expansion of the 1950s.

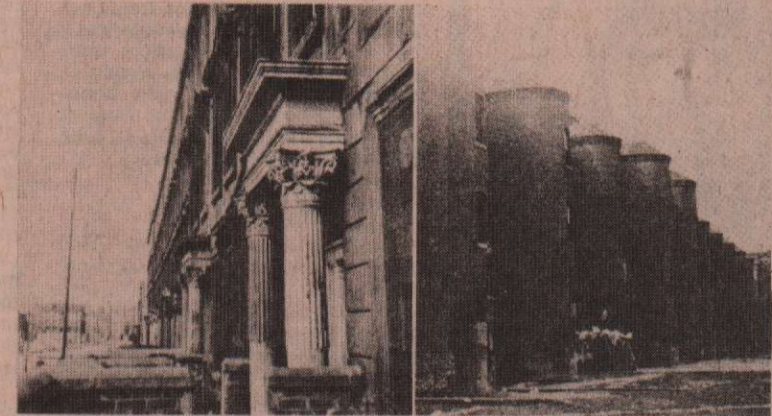
Glasgow and the West of Scotland received few immigrants because the city's unemployment since the war has been double the national average. Since 1960 alone employment in the basic industries of Central Scotland—steel, coal and shipbuilding—has slumped by 100,000.

The idea that unemployment is caused by immigration is exposed for the lie that it is by a brief look at the latest unemployment figures, which conclusively show the barrenness of Powellite ideas.

COAL FIELDS

In the areas of high immigration, unemployment is below the national average—Greater London 1.7 per cent, Birmingham 4.1 per cent, Wolverhampton 4.9 per cent, Bradford 3.6 per cent, Leeds 3.5 per cent. In Glasgow unemployment stands at 7.7 per cent, in Greenock 8 per cent, in the Ayrshire town of Irvine 7.2 per cent, and in the

BY MURRAY ARMSTRONG



Housing for Glasgow's 19th century rich and poor: now the workers have inherited the rich's run-down houses, while the tenements have gone

deserted coal-fields of North Lanarkshire 8.4 per cent.

Not only in jobs, but in health and housing, Glasgow stands as a monument to capitalism. Last week's Corporation planning report, entitled 'Areas of Need in Glasgow', shows that the city's death rate is higher than elsewhere—13.3 per thousand, with the highest incidence of deaths from TB and cancer.

In housing, 88.7 per cent live in 'multi-dwelling' buildings—the rotting tenements of the old city and the multi-storey

barracks of the newer working-class areas. 32.7 per cent of houses have no bath, 23.8 per cent have no hot water, 17.8 per cent have shared lavatories.

All this is caused, not by immigration, but by the blatant lack of planning for people's needs which characterises capitalism. Overcrowding—45.9 per cent of Glasgow people live in dwellings with only three rooms or fewer—occurs in spite of a loss of population. In the past 10 years Glasgow has been losing 25,000 people each year.

Peter Mansley, Glasgow's Director of Planning, said last week that the rate at which people were leaving 'must be slowed down, stopped, or even reversed if the city is to become an area of economic growth.' His conclusions may be questioned, but one fact is clear, immigration is NOT the cause of unemployment and overcrowding.

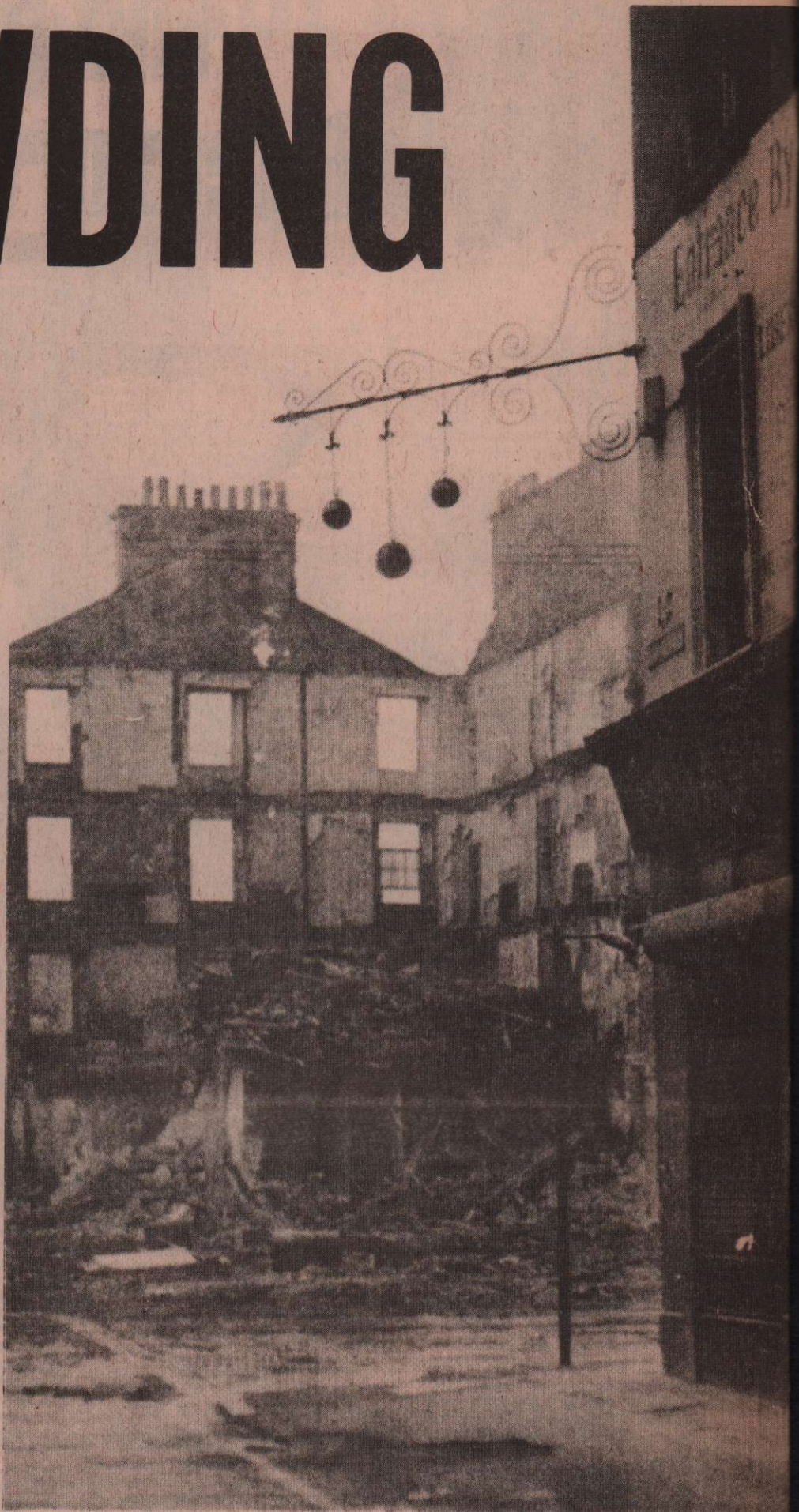
In spite of the massive waste and human suffering, the ruling class will stop at nothing to divide the growing workers' opposition to unemployment, bad housing and social service cuts. The predicament of the Ugandan Asians has given them their latest opportunity.

SLANDER

In 1968 they attempted the same ploy when the Kenyan Asians were faced with a similar fate. At that time the lack of organisation among the working class allowed the Labour government to back down and introduce its Immigration Control Act.

In Scotland the apparent material basis for this sort of slander does not exist, but another does—anti-Irish slander.

Since last century the working class in Scotland has been periodically split by the divide and rule tactic of the Orange Order. The steady arrival of Irish immigrants during the 1840s,



The Gorbals: if it weren't for the banks and moneylenders taking their high interest rates, such slums would be demolished years earlier

fleeing from the poverty and oppression of British rule at home, was used in exactly the same way as Powell uses the immigration question today.

Although Irish labour provided the manpower for industrialisation, a split was engineered on the lines of 'Orange' and 'Green' to prevent the growth of trade unions. Later, in the depression

of the 1930s, this split was used again to divide the opposition to unemployment, overcrowding, and poverty.

The attendant problems of poverty—violence, drunkenness and crime—were directed into the sectarian fighting of gang-land.

Racialism on any lines is the deadly enemy of the working-

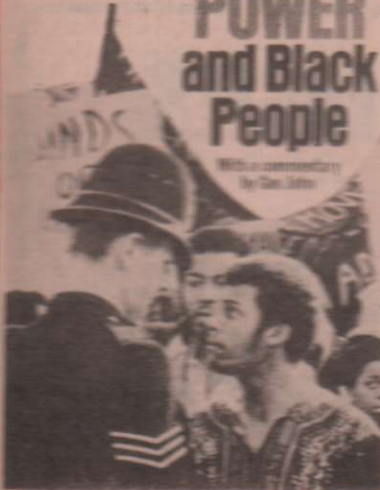
class movement. The solution to the problems of Glasgow and every other city is the creation of a working-class movement to defeat the Tories and the bourgeoisie which they represent.

As Glasgow's Corporation planning report in 1971 shows, the city is capable of any improvements but

RACIALISM IN BRITAIN

Derek Humphry

POLICE POWER and Black People



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

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HARRY McSHANE:



HARRY McSHANE, Clydeside revolutionary and a leading figure in the unemployed movement between the wars, speaking to Steve Jefferys.

IN YOUR 70 years of activity in the trade union and socialist movement on Clydeside have you come across racialism?

We've never really had much racialism in Glasgow through the years. There was some anti-German feeling at the beginning of the First World War, and some attacks on Italian shops at the beginning of the Second World War, but it didn't last long. And with all the unemploy-

It's not white,

ment and poverty we've never had a workers here.

What about immigrants?

Well, certainly a lot of feeling about most of it was based on You used to have an argument about it and taking our jobs from inside the factory. I believe our socialist movement was very effective in fighting for the Catholics and Protestants.

There weren't many Catholics in the movement in the early days when I joined the

OVERPOPULATION

BUT there's no room—Britain's overcrowded already. Arguments such as this have flourished in the past few weeks as every kind of racist lie and prejudice has been whipped up to try to prevent Ugandan Asians coming to Britain.

Inevitably they have been accompanied by yet another wave of warnings about the alleged dangers of overpopulation. Some scientists and politicians are already forecasting that, unless 'the explosion' is stopped now, there will be at least two million people to every square foot of the world's land surface in a thousand years time.

None of these arguments is particularly new. Indeed they were first thought of nearly 200 years ago before Uganda had been explored by white men, when nobody knew anything about immigration controls, passports or any of the other paraphernalia which surrounds the subject today.

But the views are the same and are encouraged for almost exactly the same reasons. The minority that rules a capitalist society, confronted with the numerical and organisational strength of the working class, must continually struggle to maintain its power. In this it uses the mass media, the schools, the law courts, the police and the army—and that important weapon, divide and rule.

DIVERTED

Divide by encouraging the lower paid to blame the higher paid for rising prices, to blame unemployment on other workers fighting for excessive wage increases. And to blame shortages—of jobs, of houses—on those workers who just happen to be born with black skins, who, our rulers say, take these things away from their 'rightful' owners, who happen to be born with white skins.

So attention is diverted from the real causes of unemployment and poverty and the responsibility dumped on the shoulders of those who are least responsible.

This is the how and why of racialism.

These arguments about space, overcrowding and shortages first appeared in 1789 with the Rev. Thomas Malthus, who said poverty was inevitable because population rose geometrically (i.e. 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 . . .) but food only increased arithmetically (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 . . .)

Malthus wrote this at a time when the French Revolution was terrifying the ruling classes of Europe. The political consequences of Malthus's ideas were not lost on the British rulers. Malthus's ideas were, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica says, 'very welcome to the highest ranks of society, in that they tended to relieve the rich and powerful of responsibility for the condition of the working classes.'

If indeed the size of the population will always outstrip the food



Thomas Malthus



Overpopulation, say the modern apologists for imperialism, will increase the poverty of the people in the 'underdeveloped' countries—as if the people themselves were responsible for that poverty. In fact their plight is the result of looting by the imperialist powers. This print shows the entry of an early imperialist adventurer, H M Stanley, into an African village.

supply, then poverty is inevitable. It is a natural result, a basic law of existence. So it is not the rulers' fault. Indeed, if anyone is to blame then it is the poor themselves for continuing to reproduce and so make the problem worse.

In 1798 there were no black immigrants in Britain, but Malthus' purpose was the same as the current fury against the Ugandan Asians. His theory served to divert attention away from the real causes of poverty.

Since then, the whole basis of Malthus's ideas has been proved wrong by experience.

In 1798, the United States had a population of five million people and more than enough food to feed them. Today it has a population of 200 million and still has enough food. Indeed farmers are paid to destroy crops and restrict food production so that prices are kept artificially high. In Britain the same is true. Our population has risen and the farmers produce more than ever before.

There are two basic reasons. The industrial revolution brought tractors and other farm machinery and the scientific revolution brought plant nutrients and fertilisers.

But still there is poverty: a United Nations survey has shown that nearly three-quarters of the world's children

The myth of 'inevitable' poverty

suffer from starvation. This is not due to some Malthusian law, but to the economic system known as imperialism, whereby the rich nations loot the poor nations.

The raw materials and labour of the so-called under-developed countries, instead of being mobilised to produce more food are exploited by huge international companies.

The American United Fruit Company, for example, owns two million acres in various South American countries where bananas are grown and controls a third of the world's entire banana market. It economically dominates three countries—Panama, Costa Rica and Honduras, where average income is 250 dollars, 240 dollars and 120 dollars per year respectively. The wealth they produce goes off to America.

In 1960 new American investments in South America amounted to 267 million dollars but the take-home profits were 641 million.

GREED

This robbery condemns millions of people to hunger. But whenever the poverty of the underdeveloped countries is mentioned the present-day Malthusians swing into action.

Instead of blaming the arms race and imperialist greed they blame the poor themselves and suggest massive birth control schemes. They give transistor radios to encourage sterilisation and cash prizes to those who remain childless.

Whatever applies to these examples of food and population is also relevant to the shortages of houses, education and jobs in the rich countries. Instead of tackling the causes of these problems, the racists complain that there is 'not enough space', and that the Asians will make the housing shortage even worse.

But the shortage of housing and the abundance of poverty and unemployment are not the faults of workers but of the very system of capitalism itself.

One simple example should suffice.

In 1969, 185,090 council houses were built. Each cost £5,000, but because of the enormous rates of interest charged by the banks and other money lenders the final repayment costs will be a staggering £25,000 for each house.

If instead of blaming Asians for the shortages the whole credit and banking system was abolished then the rate of council house building, even assuming that only the current

Politicians argue that they can't afford to build more hospitals. Yet in 1965 Labour gave £150 million to the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, which in turn invested in GEC-AEI in order to stimulate mergers, monopolies and rationalisation. As a result thousands of workers lost their jobs.

So capitalism could not afford more hospitals.

How fortunate it is that those responsible for acts such as these have men like Enoch Powell and newspapers like the Express to rant about the dangers of letting some Asian refugees into Britain.

For common to Malthus, imperialism and today's racists is that they never admit that the problems of society are the products of the unequal divisions of wealth and power. Always they divert attention away from this and shift the blame to working people themselves.

TESTED

Whenever overpopulation is mentioned, the need for strict birth control in the underdeveloped world is immediately urged. With an almost Nazi-style method, these thinkers talk of sterilising black people. In this, they demonstrate the 'master race' ideology.

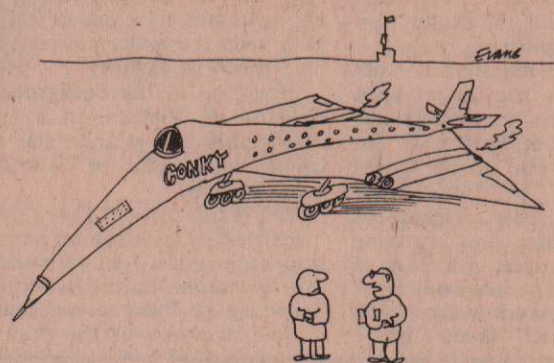
And they carry it out too. Birth control pills are first tested on poor South American women instead of white Americans and compulsory sterilisations are being carried out in some of the under-developed countries.

In Britain too, various doctors and spokesmen for the so-called scientific community regularly inform us that there is a need to restrict the birth rate of the supposedly unskilled and uneducated sections of the population.

This twisted view of human beings is, of course, never applied to the wealthy. Only the working class is to suffer. The Duke of Edinburgh, who has five children of his own, tells us that the average working class family should include 1.5 children. No clearer indication of the arrogance of the rich is needed.

A socialist society built by the working class and united against racism can conquer shortages, destroy imperialism and democratically determine its future. Every racist trick and smear undermines that struggle and reinforces the rule of capitalism.

PETER RANKIN



WELL THERE IS ONE DETAIL...
- IT CAN'T FLY.

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a question of black and white but one of unemployment

that's existed many coloured

the Irish

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Labour Party in 1909, I was the only Catholic in my local branch. But we used to concentrate on sinking the differences between Catholics and Protestants because we knew the dangers. The main argument we used was to point out that the bosses actually wanted us to fight one another.

You led unemployed marchers in the 1920s and 1930s, what do you say when you hear the argument that coloured immigrants make it more difficult for workers here to get jobs?

It's not a question of black and white, Catholic or Protestant, or anything like that. It's a question of sorting out the

problem of unemployment.

And I still believe the old demand is right: they must give us jobs or provide full maintenance. Unemployment is their fault, not ours. 'Work or full maintenance', that's the demand. But, of course, there must be no cutting of rates.

Finally, what do you think the labour movement's attitude should be towards the Ugandan Asians?

You've got to accept them. Of course. There's no alternative. If you think about it, if we didn't support the right of workers from other countries to come here, then probably none of us would have been here now.



Boilermakers picketing at the Vickers yard during a recent strike.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS is a Lancashire town dominated by a single industry controlled totally by one firm.

The industry is shipbuilding. The firm, Vickers, the Krupps of Britain which has monopolised the economy and manpower of the area since 1897 seeking constantly to subserviate the shipbuilding workers to its policies and control.

Labour battles between workers and firm have been many and bitter. Early this century the Federation of Shipbuilding Employers was formed specifically to destroy union strength and workers' control over their own craft and labour.

The campaign was long and vicious, with partial victories to the employers, backed by government and press. Lock-outs were frequent, wage reductions common and a premium bonus system of payment, leading to unemployment and the speeding up of work, was forced through between 1902 and 1905.

The 1914-18 war became a battleground between the shop stewards' committees and the government. Union officials sold out to the government to give full support for the imperialists' war.

Isolation

While working conditions for men and women worsened, and protests were met by military force, Vickers made vast profits from the production of warships and munitions.

Vickers has maintained its stranglehold upon the town until today. The position of workers and their families is complicated by the geographical isolation of the town and the refusal by both early industrialists and, later, Vickers to allow any alternative or competing industry into the area. Any loss of employment forces people away from their homes to seek work in the North West, an area which already has a

Bosses who have a stranglehold on a town

high unemployment rate.

The neighbouring town of Millom was virtually destroyed when its single industry, iron, was closed a few years ago.

This vulnerability is constantly used by the management to threaten town and workforce in times of disputes. The managing director of the shipyard, L Redshaw, recently threatened to do a UCS to Barrow should the workers fail to comply with his wishes. (Incidentally, Redshaw has recently been knighted for 'services to export'—when it is well known that Polaris submarines, built on fat government contracts, not as commercial vessels for export, have been the major source of profit for Vickers in Barrow.

Hovering in the background as a director of Vickers on a reported £70-80,000 per year is the miners' friend and expert in redundancies, Lord Robens.

It is in this context that a proposed 'package deal' based upon continental shipyards and in line with entry into the Common Market is being introduced by the Vickers management.

The structure of the deal derives

directly from the report of a 'study team' to a number of continental shipyards. This team, comprising of the shipbuilding group training manager, the local director and the shipbuilding works production officer, reported favourably upon the organisation of the yards visited.

Ignored

Each account included the observation that 'the unions and workpeople co-operate fully towards achieving company policies and objectives', and 'consultation with unions on the employment of labour does not take place'. The report quickly passed over facts like an average weekly working time higher than that in Britain, the fixing of workers' grades—and so earnings—by the foremen, and a retiring age of 70 in one yard.

This report appears in the firm's magazine, Link, for May this year. The softening-up process which precedes 'comprehensive' productivity deals appears in the same edition when the proposals are outlined. It is worth examining these proposals in some detail.

1 'Vickers shipbuilding group seeks the ability to allow men to help themselves to a much greater extent than in the past.' This would render the position of the low-paid labourer particularly insecure, with inevitable unemployment and poor protection from the General and Municipal Workers Union.

2 Extensive labour 'dilution', leading to large lay-offs and reduction of the skilled workforce generally.

3 Extra disciplinary measures and payment of a 'timekeeping bonus'.

4 Extension of the working day—this in a climate of mass unemployment—and neither are the unions to ban overtime, nor allow stoppages over demarcation disputes (often provoked by the management themselves).

Finally, the firm generously guarantees 'full employment for all local men until the end of 1974' subject to there being no cancelled or deferred orders.

This is no concession, for orders will carry the firm over until 1974, including nuclear submarines, and naval vessels for two of the most oppressive regimes in the world, Brazil and Iran. After this date the final 'shake-out' will begin and any short-term benefits will be completely destroyed by long-term unemployment after this date.

These proposals, now being debated by the unions, pose a direct threat to the workers and the town as a whole. They give the employer full control over working and time activities, increase discipline and lengthen the working day. They seek to destroy any militant activity and put back the clock 50 years.

Victory at Vickers will need a powerful and militant movement in the yards, relying on its own strength, not the union leaders', if it is to avoid the retreats and set-backs of UCS.

DAVE STARK

Paul Foot REPORTS

Secret list of 'danger' power stations

A SUBSTANTIAL number of the mills which grind coal for fuel for Britain's power stations are unsafe, according to an internal and 'confidential' report issued recently by the Midlands Region of the Central Electricity Generating Board.

The report, entitled 'Safe Operation of P.F. (pulverised fuel) Plant', which has come into the hands of Socialist Worker, lists Midland power stations in three categories, in order of danger.

The danger arises in the vast pipework system between the mills and the power stations, into which is fed the ground-up coal.

In the older power stations, the mixture of ground coal and air was too rich to burn. But in the newer, more technologically complicated power stations where the pipes are much longer, the mixture is liable to ignite.

As it ignites, it sends shock waves through the pipes. The longer the pipes, the more powerful the shock waves. During the fifties and sixties there were a great number of pulverised fuel explosions in power stations all over Britain and in many cases the pipework system burst.

The report states: 'The first category, Category One, is that in which it is possible for shock waves with a pressure ratio greater than four to be developed.

Risk

'The plant in this category is that which is at greatest risk and satisfactory containment can present a serious problem.'

Five stations—Cottam, West Burton, Rugeley 'B', Drakelow 'C' 12, and High Marnham—among the biggest in the land, are listed in Category One.

Nine more are listed in Category Two, in which, according to the report, 'a risk of a serious explosion is possible'.

The report gives urgent instructions for strengthening the pipework in both categories. In some stations, for instance at Cottam, the entire pipework system will have to be replaced.

A spokesman for the CEBG assured me that there is a 'wide safety margin' between the maximum pressure demanded in the report and the pressure required for an explosion which can burst the pipework. But the report makes clear that at present, in at least five Midland power stations, there is no safety margin whatever to ensure against these explosions.

Sacked

Which is why, no doubt, the report and its recommendations have been made partly through pressure from the Factory Inspectorate, which has been inundated with complaints about power station explosions. The spokesman for the CEBG assured me that 'nobody has been killed by these explosions'.

In the past three years there have been serious explosions at Thorpe Marsh (North East Region), Cottam and Rugeley 'B' (Midlands) and Tilbury and West Thurrock (South East)—all from pulverised fuel.

A court of inquiry at Tilbury criticised the German plant manufacturers. At West Thurrock, a station superintendent was sacked.

The CEBG's code of practice meant that neither explosion was actually reported as such, or as one militant in the industry put it: 'They report explosions as anything except explosions.'

Eighty-two per cent of Britain's power stations use pulverised fuel.

OUR NORMAN



I'VE NOTHING AGAINST THEM MYSELF, NORM, BUT IT'S LIKE A BLACK TIDE

A FLOOD OF ALIEN ASIANS

WHY - THERE'LL BE ALMOST AS MANY AS - A - A SMALL SCRUMTHORPE UNITED FOOTBALL CROWD!

DAILY EXPRESS ENOCH SPEAKS OUT - AGAW!

I DIDN'T WIN THE WAR TO LET THEM IN!



BUT I THOUGHT WE FOUGHT HITLER -

PARTLY BECAUSE HE WAS A RACIALIST - AGAINST THE ALIEN JEWS?

AH, WELL, THAT'S A GOOD POINT, LET ME SEE NOW, HA HA, ANEM YES - COF -



SOLZHENITSYN: SEARCHING FOR THE ROOTS OF HIS OPPRESSION

Alan Purkiss reviews August 1914



WITH his latest novel, August 1914, Alexander Solzhenitsyn has begun what he describes as 'the principal project of his life'. His purpose is to examine the roots of the Russian Revolution.

This work—by Russia's greatest living writer—is bound to provoke extraordinary interest among socialists. Especially since August 1914 provides a clear indication of his own political position.

Like his earlier works, *The First Circle* and *Cancer Ward*, the book has been banned by the Russian government. And like them it establishes itself as great literature by the central relevance of its subject, its moral intensity, and the fact that it is not limited to a narrow intellectual background.

In depicting the common man, Solzhenitsyn once again displays the deep sympathy and understanding learned during his years as a front-line soldier and an inmate of Stalin's slave-camps.

But August 1914 also reveals a political outlook with which Marxists will want to take issue.

Fairly clearly, Solzhenitsyn believes the Revolution would not have taken place if Russia had kept out of the First World War. The novel revolves round the battle of Tannenberg, where the Russians, led by monumentally incompetent generals, were surrounded by the Germans and destroyed. Solzhenitsyn sees this as the crucial blow.

THE TASK

And tragically, Solzhenitsyn's understandable hostility to the regime that transformed Russia into a prison-camp—and expelled him from the Soviet Writers' Union—has effectively anaesthetised him against socialist ideas.

He has said: 'It is not the task of the writer to defend or criticise one or another mode of distributing the social product, or to defend or criticise one or another form of government organisation. The task of the writer is to select more universal and eternal questions—the secrets of the human heart and conscience, the confrontation between life and death, the triumph over spiritual sorrow.'

In August 1914, the engineer Obodovsky—one of the characters with whom the author clearly identifies—says: 'My main preoccupation is how to create. The best brains and hands in the country should concentrate on doing that; we can safely leave distribution to the second-raters.'

Existing in an environment in which political terminology has been corrupted by the universal doublethink, Solzhenitsyn stresses cloudy virtues such as 'honesty' and 'decency', the importance of 'building up' rather than 'destroying'. At one point there is a sharp exchange between Colonel Vorotyntsev—the main character, and the most sympathetically portrayed—and Lieutenant Lenartovich, a revolutionary intellectual who has deserted.

THE RUINS

'At a time like this, Lieutenant, party political differences are just so many ripples on the water,' says Vorotyntsev. 'Party politics—ripples?' Lenartovich retorts. 'What about international politics, then? Are they just ripples on the water? It's because of them that we're fighting, aren't we? In that case, what differences mean anything at all?' 'The difference between decency and swinishness, Lieutenant' is the reply.

This vague moralism is linked with an implacable hostility to the revolutionaries. Solzhenitsyn believes that today's totalitarian regime developed directly out of the revolution, not that it arose on its ruins.

All the revolutionaries in August 1914 are depicted as naive, fanatical, and incapable of really communicating with anyone outside their own narrow circles. Solzhenitsyn sets up a couple of cardboard figures—Naum and Sonya, revolutionary students—for Obodovsky to knock down. They decide to launch a verbal attack on him over the dinner table—'preferably no later than the soup'.

'What industry are you going to develop,' asks Naum, 'capitalist industry?' Solzhenitsyn regards such a question as irrelevant. As for Obodovsky, to 'indulge in arguments with hostile, half-baked youth struck him as *vieux jeu* [old hat] and boring.'

Nevertheless, he is very patient with

them. He asks 'What is an exploiter?' and goes on: 'Today we were looking at a grain elevator, where not long ago there was nothing but long grass growing, and then we looked at a modern mill. I can't begin to convey to you how much intelligence, education, foresight, experience and organisation have gone into that mill. Do you know what it all costs? Altogether, 90 per cent of future earnings. The labour of the workers who laid the bricks and hauled the machines costs 10 per cent—and even that could have been largely replaced by cranes. And they got their 10 per cent.

THE MISERY

'But then along come some young men, arts students . . . and they explain to the workers that they are earning too little, and that that little engineer over there in spectacles is earning God knows how much, and that it's sheer bribery. And these simple, uneducated people believe it and get indignant; they can understand the value of their own work, but they're incapable of understanding or putting a price on somebody else's.'

Forget about distribution, he says, industrial development is the important thing. 'When enough has been built and made, then even if distribution is less than perfect no one will be left

completely without his share.'

Never mind inequalities of wealth, economic growth will take care of everything . . . The workers are incapable of running society . . . Strikes are caused by a minority of troublemakers. It is all sadly reminiscent of the right-wing mythology with which socialists in the West are only too familiar.

Obodovsky typifies the progressive but non-revolutionary forces that Solzhenitsyn considers could have created a peaceful 'liberal' Russia, if it had been spared the war's misery and deprivation.

This gives the business class far more vitality than it had. It was tied to West European business, it faced a home market dominated by an impoverished peasantry and it was so frightened of the revolutionary workers that it was incapable of fighting Tsarism.

The revolutionary who appears most frequently is Lenartovich—probably a Bolshevik. 'The worse' Russia's fortunes in the war, he says, 'the better'—an obvious reference to Lenin's 'revolutionary defeatism'.

Characteristically, Solzhenitsyn has him argue this case with a doctor at a military hospital. 'It even helps if we're so inefficient that we treat the wounded badly,' he says. 'It brings the day of reckoning nearer.'

But in the exhilaration of a victorious

night attack, and later in his longing to escape the German encirclement, his principles seem less important. Presumably it is in such situations that Solzhenitsyn believes the 'secrets of the human heart'—more deeply rooted than political beliefs—reveal themselves.

In August 1914 we meet vivid characters from practically every group in Tsarist society: except the workers. They will probably appear in subsequent volumes—Solzhenitsyn is working on October 1916, behind the lines—but,

Hancock's Half Hour

NEXT Sunday on Radio 4 at 7pm the last of a series of four 1950s episodes of Hancock's Half Hour is repeated. It'll be well worth listening to.

The character that Tony Hancock created in that brilliant series proved to be tragically close to life, until his attempts to destroy it destroyed him.

The Hancock of East Cheam was a lower middle class everyman. Delusions of grandeur, delusions of money, delusions of a world—that

given the circumstances of 1914, the omission is startling.

For in the months prior to the outbreak of war, Russia was developing towards a revolutionary explosion of unprecedented magnitude. The number of participants in political strikes—1,843,000 in the revolutionary year 1905, but down to 4,000 in 1910—rose to 1,059,000 in the first six months of 1914 alone. It is clear that the war—at least in its initial stages—was a tremendous setback for this movement, for it diverted the people's minds into patriotic channels.

Only the intellectuals are presented as wholly alienated from Tsarism before the war. However, as the disaster of Tannenberg unfolds, the soldiers start moving.

At one point Vorotyntsev meets some survivors from a decimated regiment. Attempting to break through the German lines, the men have deliberately avoided the rest of the fleeing army. They feel instinctively that their loyalties are to each other. They owe Tsarism nothing more.

'There was something odd about this group, something unmilitary. Their relationship was not based on subordination, but on trust.'

Solzhenitsyn displays an immense fascination for the old Russian peasantry, which suffered so many years, and was finally destroyed by Stalin's collectivisation of agriculture. He refers to the peasants as 'an inexhaustible supply of spiritual strength'.

The evocation of a vanished class is magnificent, but curiously backward-looking. Solzhenitsyn's loathing of the Stalinist regime and his pessimism about the prospects of changing it lead him to try to recapture Tolstoy's world.

Solzhenitsyn isn't deluded by Tsarism. This becomes clear when Vorotyntsev rallies the retreating Estland Regiment in order to fill a gap in the front line. He can't use the appeal of the Tsar. 'To Vorotyntsev there was no eternal, anonymous Tsar—only the real, present-day Tsar, whom he despised, and who headed a system of which he felt ashamed.'

THE DEATHS

Vorotyntsev represents the progressive part of the old order. But that system can't use him. After escaping from the Germans, he delivers to the Commander-in-Chief, Grand-Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, a damning report on the generals who have led thousands of men to their deaths.

But the Grand-Duke, though able and intelligent, is the Tsar's uncle. At first, on hearing Vorotyntsev's account, he is tempted to punish his subordinates. Then a telegram arrives from the Tsar.

'Listen to the comfort his majesty offers us,' says the Grand-Duke. 'Hear how graciously he has responded to the report of the catastrophe: "Dear Uncle Nick, I grieve deeply with you over the loss of our gallant Russian soldiers. But we must submit to the will of God. He who endures to the end shall be saved. Yours, Nicky."'

A few years later, Trotsky recruited thousands of ex-Tsarist officers of Vorotyntsev's type into the Red Army.

Solzhenitsyn is a Russian patriot. And although love of freedom informs every line of his work, class and the class struggle—the only means by which that freedom can be won—is unimportant in his eyes. At the end of the novel Vorotyntsev shouts at the generals: 'All we Russian officers bear a responsibility for this history of Russia.' That sums up Solzhenitsyn's own outlook.

But whatever disagreements we may have with him, he is an author to compare with Tolstoy, and a society that suppresses his work is certainly not a socialist one.

August 1914 is published by The Bodley Head at £3.

would recognise his talents, crashed against the dumbness of Bill Kerr and the rapacious and crafty Sid James. James, the non-working worker, knew the score, made the money, and left Hancock in jug or having 'gone back to nature' as the 'Wild Man of the Woods'—with James collecting the admission fees.

A generation grew up on that programme—Hancock's reactions to his situations can be heard every day from a thousand people as the system, once more, crashes down on their heads . . .

THE RENTS BATTLE

Dockers will strike to support tenants

by Hugh Kerr

TEN THOUSAND Liverpool dockers will be on a one-day strike on 2 October in solidarity with tenants who begin a rent strike that day. Liverpool Trades Council is attempting to spread the strike into a one-day stoppage all over Merseyside.

This is the latest example of militant action taken by tenants and trade unionists all over the country against the 'Fair Rents' Act. Four million tenants who will face rent increases of £1 a week on 1 October have been holding meetings, rallies and demonstrations to organise for militant action.

In towns and cities up and down the country more and more tenants are pledged to go on rent strike in October. The rents battle is building up every week and it is important to prepare now to make sure the strikes are successful. The pickets at rent offices and to ensure that the tenants have regular information on what is happening locally and nationally.

It is also vital to make sure that others follow the lead of the Liverpool dockers. Pledges of industrial action in support of tenants must be obtained from every trade unionist in the area.

GLASGOW: More than 3,000 tenants and trade unionists marched last weekend against the rent rises. Dozens of tenants' associations were represented, with transport workers, building workers, boiler-makers and many others.

More than half the local councils in Scotland have now decided to defy the Tories and will refuse to put the rents up in October.

BIRMINGHAM: Tenants on the Lea Bank Estate formed a tenants' association last week at a meeting organised by South Birmingham International Socialists. The council is to meet this week to reconsider its position on rents. Tory Housing Minister Peter Walker has made it clear that there will be no reduction of the 55p increase even though Birmingham had a profit of more than £3 million from housing last year!

A Co-ordinating Committee for all Birmingham tenants and trade unionists is holding a meeting on 26 September at Digbeth Civic Hall to consider tactics.

BOLTON: Tenants burnt rent rebate forms on the town hall steps at the weekend to show their disgust with the 'Fair Rents' Act. The tenants' association is calling for a rent strike and plans to picket all rent offices.

SWINTON: 400 tenants took over the town hall in protest at the Labour council's decision to implement the Act.

KNOTTINGLEY, Yorks: Tenants are organising rapidly following the Labour council's last-minute decision to implement the Act. The local miners' union branch at Kellingley has offered full support. Earlier this year the Labour Party fought the local elections on a platform pledging to fight against the Act.

MANCHESTER: 1500 people attended a march and rally against the coming rent increases of 92p. Delegates from local branches of engineering, general and municipal workers', construction workers' and local government officers' unions, as well as from about 20 tenants' associations, took part.

The march was organised by Manchester and Salford Trades Council and Manchester Rents Action Group. Salford is one of the few councils still holding out against the Act.

GOOLE: Tenants in Old Goole are forming a tenants' resistance association after a packed meeting. More public meetings and rallies are planned. The feeling for a rent strike is very strong.

MANSFIELD: 300 tenants marched through the town on Saturday to protest at the proposed rent increases. A meeting which followed was in militant mood with individuals threatening to withhold their rents, but organisation among the tenants is negligible. The local Labour leadership was conspicuous only by its vacillation or absence.

In contrast, the council at neighbouring CLAY CROSS has unanimously decided to ignore the Act and is organising tenants to fight any government attempts to impose the rent rises. Denis Skinner, who comes from Clay Cross and is MP for Bolsover, was at the Mansfield meeting and promised his support to any tenants and workers action against the Act.

Willie Whitelaw starts the chat show to background of UDA murder campaign

THE 'TOP-LEVEL' TALKS on the future of Northern Ireland—convened by Tory boss William Whitelaw—start this week, boycotted by the Catholic middle-class and outstripped by events.

Whitelaw's refusal to end internment means that the Social Democratic and Labour Party, Nationalists and Republican Labour, will not attend.

Meanwhile, the Protestant Loyalist rank and file, uninvited to the conference, continue to

From MIKE MILLER: Belfast

voice their resentment on the streets. For a long time their activities were confined to individual assassinations and road blocks in country districts. But earlier this month they clashed openly with the British Army and have taken to bombing Catholic premises.

In Carrickfergus last week loyalist crowds attempted to burn down the town hall when 16 Ulster Defence Association men appeared on arms

charges. They ran amok through the small Catholic ghetto of the town but no arrests were made.

In Larne, William Craig's constituency, 2-300 men attempted to attack the Catholic community last weekend, but were met by fierce resistance from the local people. The RUC intervened and fired some warning shots, killing a leading UVF man who was also a member of the reformed B-Specials, the Ulster Defence Regiment. When the Army arrived several hours later they were deployed by the UDR and fired into the Catholic ghetto.

Last week a bomb exploded without warning at a Belfast hotel frequented by Republicans, killing a passing motorist and a 91-year-old woman in a nearby old people's home.

The Unionist Party remains silent. William Craig, a member of its policy making body, is now directly implicated in the murderous activities of the UDA. Last week he emerged as leader of the United Loyalist Front, made up of Vanguard, the Loyalist Association of Workers and the UDA.

Protestant workers have realised for some time that the new direction taken by the British ruling class is against their own interests. But their only alternative is a return to the old Stormont system, with built-in guarantees that the current 'betrayal' will not happen again.

Vacuum

They recognise that Britain is unwilling to restore old-style Unionism and that if they want their marginal privileges back they will have to fight for them. The absence of any alternative that could take them beyond that outlook means that right-wing adventurist politicians like Craig can still manipulate them.

The Front is a result of this political vacuum. The UDA and the LAW came close to making a final split with the Unionist bosses but could find nowhere else to turn for politics relevant to their situation.

To develop the struggle beyond civil rights and to win Protestant workers away from aspiring fascists like Craig, it is essential that working-class socialist politics are raised to the fore now and not left to some point in the distant future.

In the present situation, Whitelaw's conference is of little importance. The fundamental issue at the root of Ireland's problems—British domination—is not on the agenda. Those who hold the only solution to the problem—the working class, Catholic and Protestant—will not be represented.

The only item of discussion is the political form that imperialist exploitation is going to take in the future. The decisions reached by the British ruling class will be based on its assessment of just how little the Catholics will accept and how much the Loyalists will give.

Withdraw

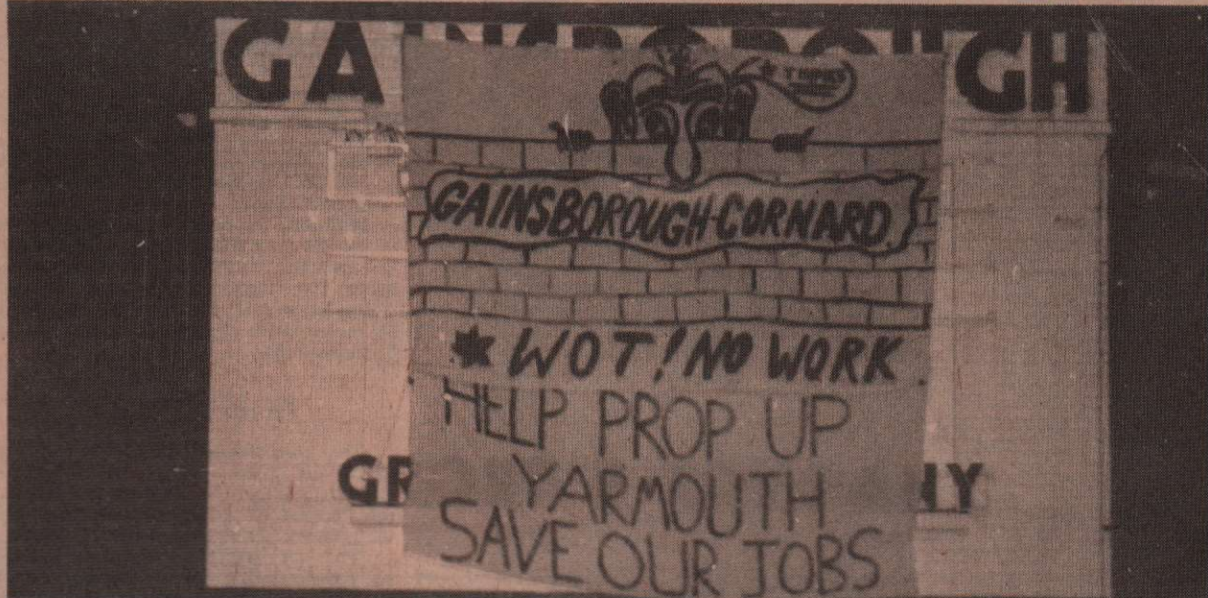
The official Unionist Party is publicly committed to total resistance to any settlement that does not meet its demands. It wants to be restored to its old position of total domination with a new structure of repressive institutions that amount to a police state. This is unlikely to be granted.

The SDLP and the Nationalists want a declaration from Britain of the intention to withdraw altogether from Ireland, leaving home-grown 'Green Tories', dedicated to the maintenance of imperialism, firmly in control.

The British ruling class, if given the opportunity, will impose a reformed Stormont without any real power. They will then have to face the long-threatened Loyalist backlash.

For all Irish workers any settlement imposed by British imperialism is completely unacceptable. The task facing socialists is to offer an alternative which can mobilise workers in all 32 counties and begin to win support from sections of frustrated Loyalists.

WE WANT WORK



CRY AS PLANT OCCUPIED

SW Reporter

YARMOUTH:—340 workers occupied the Gainsborough Cornard weaving factory last week in a bid to stop its closure.

When news of the impending shut-down leaked out, 25 members of the supervisors union, ASTMS, took control of the gates and refused to move despite management threats to call in the police.

A mass meeting of the entire workforce decided to occupy the premises indefinitely. When management officials arrived for work the next day, they found a banner flying over the gate reading 'We want Work'.

Gainsborough Cornard is owned by the £45m firm of Carrington-Viyella, which in turn is 49 per cent owned by Britain's second biggest company, ICI.

Last year Carrington-Viyella made profits of £5,844,000, four times the figure of the previous year. This massive boost to profits was achieved while the workforce was cut by 6000.

The Yarmouth closure is intended to continue this trend of producing more profits from a smaller workforce. For some time many of the better lines from the factory have been transferred to the main Cornford knitting mills

factory in Sudbury, Suffolk.

At Sudbury, work is organised on the inhuman, 'continental' shift system of four rotating shifts, seven days a week.

Yarmouth workers suspect that Viyella bought the factory two years ago in order to make a handsome profit by closing it. They reckon that the land on which it stands will be worth at least £2m to the company and the machinery another million.

Meanwhile, one of the few sources of stable employment in this seaside town will be finished, raising total unemployment in the area by 4 per cent at one go.

That is why they are determined to stand firm and not let the company move out any work or machinery.

Messages of support to Dave Arnold, Gainsborough Cornard, St Nicholas Road, Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Yorks IS region slips into gear

From Dave Gibson

LAST SUNDAY 100 delegates from the Yorkshire branches of the International Socialists crammed into Leeds Trades Club to hear Nigel Harris of the executive committee introduce the Fight the Tories Campaign to be run in the autumn.

He stressed that the next few years was a vital time for the development of IS. If the organisation did not stretch itself to the limits there was a danger of missing the boat. IS had to transform itself in the shortest possible time into THE revolutionary alternative in Britain.

Harris explained that the events of the last year showed the inadequacies of the established leaders of the labour movement, from the far right to the so-called left. He emphasised that the power of the rank and file in freeing the five dockers stands in sharp contrast to the antics of the leaders. The militancy and consciousness of large sections of workers has caught even the revolutionary left unawares at times.

In the fight to transform IS from a small organisation, Harris made clear that an important part was to develop rank and file organisations in the unions. IS had already taken some impressive steps in that direction with 14 industrial groups and was

putting a lot of resources in to help the growth of 12 rank and file papers, but this was nowhere near enough.

The building of these groups must be linked to the building of IS in the factories: the development of Socialist Worker discussion groups in the factories was a priority. In conclusion Harris underlined that the key component in becoming the revolutionary alternative was to develop these factory groups and to fight for IS politics where it counts.

A member of the NSD Keighley strike committee made an appeal on behalf of the TASS members now in their fourth week on strike. He appealed to IS branches to organise collections and obtain messages of support from local trade union branches.

The concluding section of the meeting was devoted to a discussion on implementing of the anti-Tory campaign in Yorkshire. Regional secretary Bill Message reported that the campaign would be launched in almost 20 centres. The response of local branches had been good so far and plans were well advanced.

Several speakers emphasised the exciting possibilities for growth offered to IS in Yorkshire—nowhere more than in the mining areas.



I would like more information about the International Socialists

Name _____

Address _____

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

Socialist Worker

Fine Tubes call vital conference

ON 15 June 1970 workers at Fine Tubes, Plymouth, went on strike for trade union rights. They are still out, in spite of local press campaigns and abuse.

In the words of their strike committee: 'We have survived because rank-and-file trade unionists, shop stewards' committees, district committees, branches, lodges, chapels have responded magnificently to our financial appeals. We have survived because some trade unionists have blacked Fine Tubes and helped us on

the picket line.'

But the need is not only to survive but to win. To this end the strike committee has called a conference to discuss the issues involved and to strengthen their campaign.

The conference will take place at Digbeth Hall, Birmingham, on Saturday 28 October. A number of union organisations have agreed already to sponsor the conference, including:

Executive council of the South Wales National Union of Mineworkers, the Glasgow divisional council of TASS,

Chrysler and Rolls-Royce joint shop stewards' committees, C A Parsons joint office committee, Plymouth and Liverpool Trades Councils.

The strike committee urges all trade union bodies to send delegates to the conference in order to plan a stepping up of the campaign to bring victory at Fine Tubes.

Credentials are available from: Fine Tubes Strike Committee, c/o 65 Breton Side, Exeter Street, Plymouth. Phone: 0752-65459 and 65667.

WAVE OF PROTEST AT BUILDERS PAY DEAL

ROUND THE SITES

by John Fontaine (UCATT)

THE leadership of the main building union, UCATT, signed a deal late on Thursday last week to end the massive 11-week-long strike. It is a deal that has caused a wave of protest throughout the industry.

There is a wage increase of £6 for craftsmen and £5 for labourers, but no concessions on the key issue of the shorter working week. There is actually an increase in the differential between the lower-paid labourers and the better-paid 'craft' workers.

Nevertheless, many of the best organised building workers will see the settlement as a partial victory. A victory, however, not for the executive who tried to end the

strike on much worse terms than the present ones five weeks ago, but for the rank and file who rejected that offer and took the initiative, extending the struggle into a national stoppage.

There is no doubt that the examples of the successful struggles of the miners and the dockers were decisive ingredients in bringing about the dispute. Yet with the employers on the point of cracking and the total number of workers on strike at around 300,000 George Smith and his friends in the union delivered the stab in the back.

Had the strike continued another three weeks, then it is quite certain that the full demands would have been met and a victory won that would have translated the

slogan 'kill the lump' into a reality.

The present settlement will enable George Smith to continue a relationship with the employers' federation that Sir Kirby Laing himself has described as 'cosy'.

Although the TUC is officially pledged to support the 35-hour week, Smith, its president this year, dropped the issue of hours in this dispute without hesitation.

A victory on the hours issue would have had an immediate effect in cutting the numbers of those unemployed in the industry—about 150,000. And a reduction in hours is something that rising prices cannot eat away.

The rise in sick pay, to a mere 75p a day, is surely an insult in the most dangerous industry in Britain which

accounts for 40 per cent of all industrial deaths although it employs only 14 per cent of the total workforce. Each year every building worker has a one-in-18 chance of an accident serious enough to keep him away from work.

Although the deal has been signed, it is important now for rank-and-file militants to consolidate the organisational gains made. The struggle against the lump and victimisation must continue, and the fight for rank-and-file control of the union must be stepped up.

MILITANTS

The co-ordinating committees set up during the strike must be kept going and improved, so that they have a policy-making role instead of the merely advisory role they played during the strike.

Well organised sites must continue to be the bases from which the fight for 100 per cent trade union organisation and against the lump continues. Rank-and-file militants must take seriously what even George Smith admitted on Saturday: 'If employers persist in using the lump, they will be rejecting the agreement. On this basis we will be back in dispute.'

Combine committees of stewards employed in the major companies should be built to strengthen links already made during the dispute.

Finally, the struggle for democratisation of UCATT must be stepped up. At present the union executive has the power to accept an offer from the employers without any reference to the rank and file.

In London there were not even any mass meetings to discuss a return to work. Instead, small meetings at various picketing centres were held to 'advise' the official action committee.

If the present increase in membership is to be maintained, then the union must be transformed into a fighting machine. It is not enough just to campaign for George Smith to be booted out. The demands have to be raised for:

- Delegate conferences to be policy-making bodies,
- All trade union officials to face re-election every three years,
- Disbanding of selection boards for union officials.

GLASGOW:—4000 building workers were shocked at last week's meeting when five minutes after it started the chairman, Tommy McTurk, a UCATT full-time official and leading Communist Party member, announced it was closed.

The right-wing UCATT Executive Councilman for Scotland, Danny Crawford, opened the meeting with an account of the national negotiations in which he had taken part. When he came to outline the settlement, and the men realised the accounts they'd read in the press were accurate, he was howled down.

When a vote was taken, it was split down the middle, showing what could have been done with a proper lead.

LONDON:—Workers on a number of sites found when they returned to work on Monday that employers were trying to cut bonus rates, reduce the work force and victimise militants.

The Fulham Hospital site stopped work when Higgs and Hill sacked a steward, Charlie Kelly, as redundant. At the big luxury council development at World's End, Chelsea, dumper drivers were told that they were being transferred elsewhere by the main contractor, Cubitts, 'if vacancies on other sites can be found'. And the brick-laying subcontractor told men that they would not be getting the increase they had been fighting for 12 weeks.

By 3.30 in the afternoon the entire site was stopped, and attempts were being made to get similar action from other Cubitts sites.

The West London building workers' picket is calling a public meeting at Fulham Town Hall this Friday (23 September) at 6pm to work out ways of maintaining the gains of the strike in the area.

LIVERPOOL:—The biggest-ever demonstration and rally of Merseyside building workers erupted into fury when union officials recommended acceptance of the national settlement on Tuesday this week.

About 12,000 building workers paralysed the city centre as they marched arm-in-arm to the Pierhead where they were met by another 7000. UCATT regional secretary Bill Crichton was slow hand-clapped and constantly interrupted as he seconded the motion for a return to work. Regular re-election of officials was demanded again and again.

When the vote was first taken only about 100 hands went up in support. Then the platform asked for the supporting hands to be raised again so they could be counted. No hands went up. The huge boisterous meeting decided unanimously to stay out for £30 for 35 hours.

BRISTOL:—A visit by Les Kemp of the transport union's building section before the settlement last week laid the ground for acceptance of the sell-out—even though the union nationally claimed it was against the deal. Kemp told a mass meeting that it was useless to press for a reduction in hours and that the workers would have to go for a 'compromise'.

The meeting rejected this, but lack of confidence in the union leadership set the scene for acceptance of the national deal later by a narrow 5-4 vote.

Workers in Bristol see the sell out as a sell-out, but not a defeat.

FIVE HUNDRED socialists marched in London last Saturday in support of the Ugandan Asians and against a rally at the Central Hall held by the racist Monday Club and fascist National Front.

The march was organised by the International Socialists and the International Marxist Group, which both stressed the need for a united socialist and trade union opposition to pro-employer groups that try to divide workers with the poison of racism.

The marchers picketed the Central Hall for an hour and held an open-air meeting there behind ranks of police protecting the racists' meeting.

Picture: JEFF PICK.

Battery factory stopped

WOLVERHAMPTON:—Four women production workers at the Ever Ready factory staged a protest against target rates set for their work which mean they earn £8 per week less than workers on assembly.

Their action sparked off a stoppage of almost all the workers in the assembly shop, and a meeting was held to protest at all production target levels. This had the full support of Indian workers in the factory and forced management to put the issue through procedure again.

Although this action showed the united

PICKET LINES

action of workers of different races it was not reported by the local Express and Star, which prefers to concentrate on propaganda about the entry of Ugandan Asians.

HALIFAX:—Corporation busmen struck on Monday for a £2 increase on their basic wage of £18.75. When the claim was first submitted management rejected it outright, although the buses have been making a profit of between £90,000 and £100,000 a year for 10 years.

After the men had voted for strike action, the management offered £1 more with 'productivity talks'.

But a mass meeting last Saturday rejected this offer, despite attempts by the local transport union full-time official, Joe Brogden, to persuade them not to strike. One lesson already emerging is the need to link up with other West Yorkshire busmen.

LONDON:—Night cleaners from the Home Office building in Horseferry Road, who are

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on strike for the back wages of three cleaners in a dispute lasting five weeks, have moved their picket line to the offices of their contractor, J Gatland (Industrial Cleaners) in Dulwich. Gatland did not arrive for a meeting last Friday afternoon and the picket will continue till he pays up.

FIFE:—Workers at the Royal Naval dockyard have been striking over a national pay claim for £4 a week. So far the government has only offered £1.50.

This strike has been the first organised by industrial workers employed by the Ministry of Defence which has lasted more than one day and is important in breaking a system where an employee is bound by his conditions of employment not to strike.

BAC: 600 more for the chop

by Bob Whitfield

THE British Aircraft Corporation are threatening another 600 workers with redundancy. They sprung this announcement on the stewards last Friday, ending a month of rumour and uncertainty. The affected workers are 300 at Weybridge and Hurn, and another 300, mainly draughtsmen, at Filton and Fairford.

As predicted in the Bristol IS pamphlet 'Boom or Bust' (obtainable from 9a Oakland Road, Bristol 6), the aerospace bosses are stepping up their offensive on aircraft workers' jobs. Only a month ago Rolls-Royce announced 1000 sackings at Bristol and Coventry.

The latest redundancies at BAC are the

fourth in 18 months at Weybridge and the third in a year at Filton.

These sackings follow soon after the Farnborough Air Show, when the press was talking of record sales in the industry. Regardless of the level of sales, the companies are pushing through rationalisation plans aimed at cutting costs and increasing profits—and that means sacrificing workers' jobs and conditions.

If the sackings are to be fought, support from all sections of workers throughout the BAC combine will be needed. The combine committee has to be transformed from an information swapping body into a fighting organisation, united on the central demand of 'No Redundancies'.

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