

# WORKERS PRESS

The daily organ of the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER • PUBLISHED FROM TUESDAY TO SATURDAY • NUMBER 166 • WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1970

PRICE 6d.

**What we think**  
**Merseyside must back Pilkington strikers**

THERE should be no doubt in any worker's mind that the Pilkington glass workers' strike, which has now reached its most crucial stage, is the concern of the whole trade union movement.

Look at what the 8,000 Pilkington strikers had to face:  
RABID opposition of the union leadership,  
ARROGANT intransigence of a paternalistic employer,  
CRIMINAL silence of the TUC and government,  
MASSIVE witch-hunt by the press aided by a section of the shop stewards,  
VICIOUS police provocations and last, but hardly the least,  
SUBTLE yet immense church pressure.

If all these things failed it was not for want of trying. First the workers were asked to accept an interim £3 pay offer in place of the strikers' demand for £10-inclusive of an interim £5-a-week rise. This miserable offer, as the strikers quickly found out, was nothing more than a glorified attendance bonus since it would not be consolidated in the basic rate but simply added to gross earnings. General and Municipal Workers' Union (G&MWU) leaders, of course, recommended this offer enthusiastically. Its purpose became palpably clear when some of Pilkington factories like Pontypool accepted the offer and went back, leaving St Helens and Glasgow to fight on their own. Lord Pilkington's delight, however, was short lived. Despite the G&MWU leaders' refusal to make the strike official and immense hardship this decision entailed for the strikers, they decided to hold out. The union leaders' secret ballot ended in a resounding defeat for them and a threat of mass walk-out into the Transport and General Workers' Union by strikers. A new ruse was then adopted: Mrs Barbara Castle and her Department of Employment and Productivity (DEP) threatened to institute an inquiry in the hope that the workers would go back. Her joy was short-lived too. The workers decided to continue the strike—inquiry or no inquiry. Picketing on a mass scale was resumed. Not a cubic foot of glass was produced in five weeks. Another attempt to persuade the strikers was made when the union leaders offered every striker £12 hardship money. The strike committee refused to be impressed by this gesture. Then came the witch-hunt. Unable to find 'red plants', the capitalist press began to find 'Red Books' and other concoctions which only served to tax the credibility of every St Helens worker. When all that failed, the church was called in to give its benediction to the union leaders' attempts to break the strike—a move unprecedented in post-war labour history. The strikers have quite rightly rejected this ballot which was held under conditions of enormous economic and spiritual pressure.

Well done brothers! Now the full force of the state is being used on a massive scale to intimidate the striker and 'protect' returning workers. If the Pilkington workers are defeated it would be a grievous blow for the wages struggle in the Merseyside particularly. Every employer—not only on the Merseyside—is watching the gates of Pilkington's today because they know that if the workers win, they will establish a precedent which will reverberate throughout British industry. That is the real reason for all the violence and collusion in St Helens against the strikers. That is why this strike is a political strike. We call on all workers to support the St Helens strikers not only financially, but by token stoppages and other actions.

## Money crisis and June 18

# Shadow over poll decision

**DUBCEK FRAME-UP**  
**We're innocent pleads French C.P.**

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

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The meeting—between Waldeck Rochet, Dubcek and other Czech Party leaders—was held in Prague on July 19, 1968.

The French Party's hand has been forced by the claims of Roger Garaudy, recently expelled from his Party cell, that notes of the meeting were handed to the present Husak regime to assist in framing Dubcek, now ambassador in Turkey. Making a virtue of necessity, the notes—which appear in Monday's edition of the Party's daily 'L'Humanité'—are accompanied by a statement from the Political Bureau denouncing Garaudy's statements as 'calumnious', 'defamatory' and 'anti-communist'.

**'Referred to'**  
They reiterate the claim made by joint general secretary Georges Marchais in a radio interview on May 11, that they gave 'no document to the Czechoslovak Communist Party which could be used by anyone for eventual trials'. The notes in question, they say, were not handed over, but referred to by Etienne Fajon when he met the present Czech Party leaders in November last year. It is true that nothing Dubcek said in the course of the interview can be regarded as incriminating from a socialist standpoint. He stressed that they were conscious that right-wing forces were at work, but said they intended to deal with them openly in front of public opinion. Speaking of the 'Mani' **PAGE FOUR COL. 4** →

**THE COMING General Election is unique in every sense. It is probably the first whose polling date was actually determined by conscious knowledge of impending economic doom.**

Today neither Tories nor Labour will dare to deny this crisis. How can they?

Despite every attempt—not entirely unsuccessful—of the Labour right wing to restore a surplus to the balance of payments, to restore confidence in sterling and to repay the substantial debts to the international banks by creating unemployment and supporting Nixon's war in Asia, the prospect of a major economic and monetary crisis still stares them in the face. Every such attempt has only succeeded in exacerbating imperialism's general crisis.

### Collapse

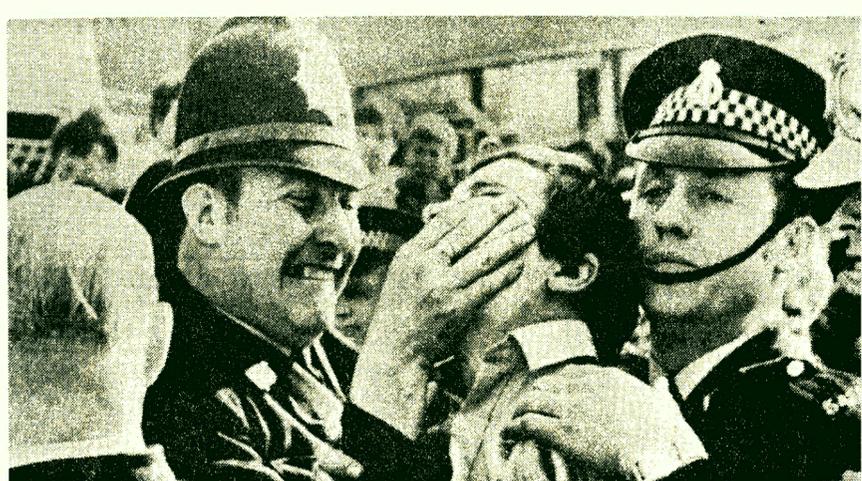
Conversely US imperialism's attempts to solve its 'own' problems by a massive increase in exports of capital to Europe and the UK, a whopping increase in its balance of payments deficit combined with high inflation rates and raging inflation, fed by the Vietnam war, have now led to a steep decline in profits and a threatening collapse of share prices in every major stock exchange. This is the grim paradox of US 'prosperity'. The 'authoritative' economists and Wall Street astrologers who sagely informed the shareholding public two weeks ago that the share market would rally once the Dow Jones index reached 680 (why 680?), now just as sagely—but more gloomily—inform the world that nothing will happen until a bottom of 500 is reached! (This is almost half the level of the share market in 1965!)

What this means for the US and British working class is that cash will become scarcer, bankruptcies will grow, monopoly mergers multiply and unemployment increase on a huge scale. **PAGE FOUR COL. 9** →

## Work-study foundation is set up

BY BERNARD FRANKS  
A WORK-measurement data supply service for employers, aimed at 'improving productivity in British industry' has recently been set up. According to the Institute of Work-Study Practitioners' monthly journal, the new body will be known as 'The British Work-Measurement Data Foundation' and will 'compile, develop and distribute data to members'. The report states that the Foundation will specialize in data for small batch production and maintenance work. In addition: 'Fields of activity covered are electrical, fitting, machine tools, sheet metal and plating, bricklaying, joinery and painting'. The reason for this emphasis is given by Foundation chairman Mr George McOnie. (Before his retirement last year he was a director of Pilkington Brothers Ltd): 'With the increasing sophistication of processing plant, very high capital cost is involved so it is in the users' interest to keep it running at maximum efficiency for maximum time. More effective maintenance is therefore vital.' This Foundation shows that the employers are determined to continuously develop work-study systems to cover new fields and to scale new levels of intensity of exploitation. The fact that the data library cost £250,000 to develop indicates that they mean business... and big business at that.

BY MICHAEL BANDA



**ALL TRADES UNIONS ALLIANCE MEETING**  
**NOTTINGHAM**  
'Tasks of trade unionists today'  
Thursday, May 21  
7.30 p.m.  
People's Hall  
Heathcote Street

## Fierce fighting around Phnom Penh

BY A WORKERS PRESS FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT  
THE pro-US forces of the right-wing Cambodian regime remain pinned down around the capital of Phnom Penh. Liberation forces composed of Cambodian and NLF guerrillas have established positions in key towns between 30 and 40 miles from Phnom Penh. Hand-to-hand fighting continues around the key town of Kompong, which was retaken by right-wing troops yesterday after a prolonged bombardment which reduced most of its buildings to rubble.

**Positions**  
In South Vietnam, National Liberation Front units attacked US positions in over 100 different areas. US army officials admitted that 70 of these raids had caused either damage or casualties. Nixon's extension of the war to Cambodia and now Laos has failed to undermine the fighting capacity of the Liberation forces in South Vietnam itself.

## World link-up to break strikes?

THE announcement by Fords in Detroit, USA that engines and transmission parts are to be made in Britain for a new American car has been followed almost immediately by General Motors' proposals to switch its Frigidaire division at Kingsbury, London, to car component production. In the case of Fords, this is a farming out of approximately £30 million worth of work to British plants. This is nothing more than a development by powerful companies towards a system of international strike-breaking. Faced with strikes and a strong working class at home organized to maintain wages and conditions, subsidiaries and associated plants abroad will, it is hoped, be able to maintain supplies of key components.

**Shopping around**  
A development of this type is seen by the employers as a considerable step forward from simply trying to 'shop around' when disputes occur. This is a process which the Common Market is expected to develop to a high level. Links between major companies—like the Dunlop-Pirelli tie up—are expected to provide alternative supplies when disputes are in progress. The possibility that a European Industrial Re-organization Commission may

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Government inquiry begins, but

## Glass men will hold out

St Helens, Tuesday  
PROFESSOR John Wood, Tory chairman of the government's court of inquiry into the seven-week-old strike at Pilkington's St Helens glass-works, today added his voice to the clamour for a return to work.

Like the company representatives, union officials, mass-media pundits and assorted clergy who went before him, he was ignored by the vast majority of the strikers.

In fact there were signs this morning that fewer workers were back at their jobs than yesterday. Pickets were out in force at all the St Helens factories early today, despite the revival of scare stories about violence in most newspapers. They discounted company

**A CLAIM** that during a recent anti-Cambodian war demonstration police showed 'exemplary conduct' in the face of provocation from 'filthy long-haired drop-outs' was enthusiastically applauded at the Police Federation's Llandudno conference yesterday. Below, a scene from St Helens. More 'exemplary conduct' from 'innocent police' assaulted by 'long-haired drop-outs'?

**CAR KEY**  
An item described as such in the caption to a picture carried by the paper, they claimed, was nothing more dangerous than a car key. Even the head of Pilkington's security today described reports of violence on the picket lines as 'grossly exaggerated' he was worried they might deter workers who wanted to go back to work. Strikers have now been steeled by several weeks of journalistic sharp practice, union-sponsored 'plot' scares and company threat to their jobs against the cruder attempts at strike-breaking.

Rank-and-file committee members today cited the names of three non-unionists who, they say, were definitely allowed to participate in Saturday's ballot and many glassworkers feel that this is only the tip of an iceberg. Government and Trades Union Congress intervention are in no sense a way out of what some strikers now feel to be a situation of apparent stalemate: their attempts to break the strike will be more devious, but no less dangerous.

The best way to 'hold out' a minute longer than Pilkington's, as one striker urged at a recent mass meeting, is to extend support for the strike throughout the Merseyside and S Lancashire area.

## Wearside shipyards stay closed

Sunderland, Tuesday  
DOXFORD and Sunderland's Wearside shipyards remained closed today as 500 fitters and plumbers voted unanimously to continue their ten-week-old strike against the company's proposed productivity deal. The strikers decided to continue pressing for a £27 10s 'no strings' increase. We hope to carry a full analysis of the company's 40-page document—which contains 26 conditions aiming at complete mobility and interchangeability of labour in the yards—in the Workers Press later this week.

However, the management also want 'anomalies' ironed out—a euphemistic phrase which could well cover productivity concessions. Lock-out committee chairman Bill Watson said the management had made lengthy statements on production. 'We feel we must have time to digest these before coming to a decision,' he added. The local Labour Exchange is still refusing to pay unemployment benefit to the locked-out men.

## May £1,000 Appeal Fund slowing down we need £739 16s 2d by May 31

SOMEHOW, we do not seem to get off to a good start. Our fund is still marking time. Yesterday we received £49 7s 11d which brought our total to £260 3s 10d. We deeply appreciate the efforts of all those comrades who have contributed so far, but there are a large number we still have not heard from. Please comrades, we have only 11 days to go! We know from the way our sales are rising that you are right behind us. Let us move into action at once around the Fund. Can we have a spate of donations which will take us immediately to the halfway mark. Post them to: Workers Press Appeal Fund, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

## 600 at Lenin centenary lecture

THE Beaver Hall was packed last Monday as an audience of 600 attended the second of the SLL's two London lectures to mark the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth. Gerry Healy, national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, speaking on 'Lenin and the coming English Revolution', emphasized the long, drawn-out and contradictory process that lay behind surface developments in the British working class. The working class begins with its unions, he said. The Taff Vale judgement of 1901 triggered an enormous development which culminated in the Labour Party.

'This is the spectre that hangs over the general election', Cde Healy said. The Tories were proposing to legislate against the unions along the lines of the Taff Vale judgement, and this, in turn could force trade unionists to take the revolutionary road. His contribution was followed by 90 minutes of discussion as members of the audience came forward with questions on various aspects of socialist theory. The collection raised £126 13s 2d towards the £5,000 Workers Press fighting fund and was the high point of what has been the most successful series of political lectures yet held by the British Trotskyist movement.

## Exclusive interview with DAVID MERCER



FINAL PART TODAY ON PAGE THREE

**Socialist Labour League PUBLIC MEETING**  
**For working-class action to defeat American imperialism in Vietnam and Cambodia**  
Sunday, May 24, 7.30 p.m.  
Beaver Hall (near Mansion House tube)  
Speaker: MIKE BANDA, Editor of Workers Press admission 2s

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In fact there were signs this morning that fewer workers were back at their jobs than yesterday.

Pickets were out in force at all the St Helens factories early today, despite the revival of scare stories about violence in most newspapers.

They discounted company claims that a total of 2,500 had again gone into the six plants.

Most glassworkers remained defiantly and unshakably on strike.

At the Canal Street sheet works, where several pickets say they were viciously beaten by uniformed and mounted police during yesterday afternoon's clashes, the numbers going to work appeared to be much the same as yesterday; no more than a few hundred.

However at Cowley Hill, where the company plans another float glass plant as part of its £20 million expansion programme, pickets said that there had been far less 'black-legging' than yesterday.

Cowley Hill pickets also angrily rejected claims in the northern edition of one national newspaper that Mrs Elsie Roberts, a former strike committee member who returned to work yesterday, was threatened with a knife as she left work.

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Pay offer for Rolls Royce strikers  
THE 460 coachbuilding workers locked out for the past three weeks from the Willesden, London, Rolls-Royce subsidiary, Mulliner Park Ward, are to meet on Friday to decide whether to accept an informal management offer in reply to their claim for a 20 per cent increase in bonus rates.

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BY BERNARD FRANKS

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## THIS THE FIRST ARTICLE OF A SERIES DEALING WITH THE LATEST SYSTEMS OF EXPLOITATION IN INDUSTRY - TO APPEAR EVERY WEDNESDAY.

WE MUST say right at the beginning that it is impossible to understand the issues involved in productivity deals and related forms of payment simply by studying technically the productivity deals themselves. This technical aspect is important, but secondary. No clue will be given in any particular deal that the company is uniting with all other employers in the implementation of a major political policy against the whole of the working class.

The most important thing to understand is why these forms of payment have mushroomed into a mass movement now, in the period since 1966. Unless this factor is understood it is possible to have only the most superficial knowledge of the subject and therefore the ability to fight these systems is developed in a totally inadequate way.

We must start with basic principles. This system of society we live under is capitalism. That is to say that the vast majority of wealth, the means of production, distribution and exchange are private property owned by private individuals who operate them not at all to fulfill the needs of society, but purely and simply for profit. The moment profit is no longer forthcoming, irrespective of the degree of need which may exist, production ceases.

This system, by its nature, is unplanned and anarchistic. Because of the contradictions inherent within it, capitalism is subject to recurring crises of a progressively more severe nature. Crises occurred regularly throughout the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The last major world crisis occurred in the early 1930s following the Wall St crash of 1929. The drive by capitalist nations to redivide markets internationally driven on by the crisis led to the Second World War. This, of course, resolved the situation temporarily for capitalism by the destruction of tens of millions of people and of untold amounts of wealth.

Mass destruction of this order had to be followed by a period of reconstruction. This reconstruction, coupled with a powerful position financially in which the USA had emerged from the war, laid the basis for a post-war boom period. When the war ended the United States proceeded from this powerful position to print, on the basis of unprecedented gold reserves in Fort Knox, billions of paper dollars.

### UNPRECEDENTED BOOM

With these paper dollars, through the Marshall Plan, the United States extended her financial and political influence throughout western Europe by propping up the nations ravaged by war. The result of all this was an unprecedented boom period from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s.

During this time the working class in Britain was not asleep; they took advantage of the clamour for production to organize in the factories, consolidating their trade unions and building a powerful movement on the shop floor geared to the drive for wages. As a result of this the standard of living for large sections rose more rapidly than in any other period. But this was not the true face of things. Capitalism is not a system of boom, it is a system of booms and slumps.

Under capitalism the slump is a normal part of the system and already by 1964 the boom was slowing down. The flood of US paper dollars, which had engulfed the capitalist world and generated the boom, now turned into its opposite. No longer was it the stabilizing force. Massive inflation had drained Fort Knox of vast quantities of gold. Now this flood of paper dollars which was providing the bulk of currency for international trade had no value behind it. In fact the stabilizer now became the main source of instability.

A piece of paper with 'I promise to pay' written on it retains value so long as everyone believes

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The books listed below were found useful in preparing this series of articles and act as a good basis for further study of the subjects examined. Reference to other works is made as the context arises.

'Wage Labour and Capital' by Karl Marx. Deals with the labour theory of value and the economic relations on which the existence of the capitalist class and the exploitation of the working class rests.

'Wages, Price and Profit' by Karl Marx. Deals with the value of labour power and its relationship to surplus value.

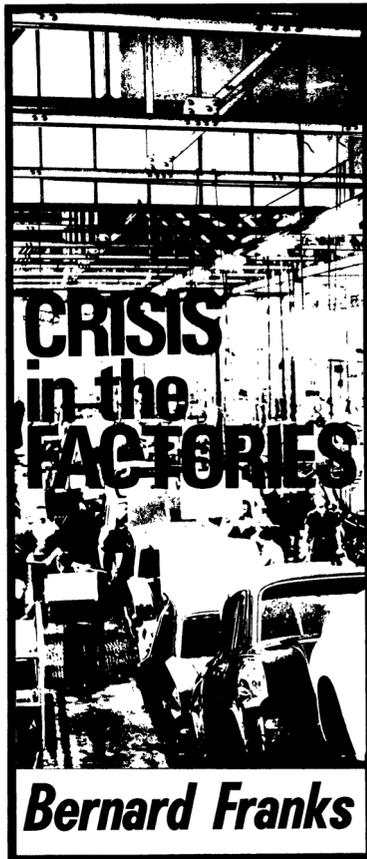
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## PART ONE



the promise will be kept. Once this is doubted the whole system is undermined, the money markets throw a panic every time a speculator sneezes and the spectre of a massive slump again begins to haunt the capitalist world. Capitalism now faced the question—how to attempt to stabilize itself.

The answer on the face of it is quite simple. Since the root of the crisis lay in the fact that the working class, through their union organization, had taken too much away from the employers in the boom period, all the employers had to do was take it back with a bit more besides, and transfer it back into the banking houses of capitalism. This, of course, while being a simple answer in theory is the tallest order of all in practice. Large sections of the working class in Britain had tasted the fruits of the boom period. The fruits of what the forces of production could do when released even for a short period of time and even though remaining distorted by private ownership. These sections would not let go easily the things they had gained in struggle and the organizations built to win them needed to be turned to their protection.

When the Labour government came to power in 1964 our movement—the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists—was alone in saying clearly that a massive crisis of capitalism was developing and that the Labour government would be a government of crisis and would attack the working class in order to attempt to solve the crisis on behalf of the employers and make the working class pay. This analysis proved to be absolutely correct. As soon as Wilson came to power he began the job and set out to reduce the living standards of the working class. The problem was how could it be done.

### SUBTLE METHODS

Ideally, capitalism would like to use force to do this job, that is the simplest and most effective way. But capitalism can only reduce wages by force under conditions of dictatorship such as Hitler's Germany or Franco's Spain. Where capital continues to rule under the cloak of 'democracy', open force is impossible, therefore more subtle methods of deception have to be used. The working class must be convinced that it is in their interest to be robbed.

This is where work study and its related systems come in. Wilson's first task was to set up committees and conferences which began to prepare the ground for productivity, job evaluation and all the rest.

Wilson said he was setting out to modernize British industry. Some may have thought this meant better factories and machines that would make working conditions better and easier. But this was not Wilson's intention at all. He was proposing only to 'modernize' wages. For 'modernization' then read 'job evaluation', 'Measured-Day Work', work study, productivity and all the rest.

All these things were started by the Labour government in response to the crisis of capitalism which grows continually deeper. This is the only basis from which a serious study of productivity can begin; not by simply examining 100 or 700 such agreements, or by reading every pamphlet written by the work study 'experts'. It is only by the study of the history of the working class and the workings of the capitalist system; by studying the works of Marxists and, in particular, of Marx himself, that a real understanding can be gained.

Marx, in his work 'Capital', dealt in great detail with the bosses' drive to intensify exploitation of the workers to offset the falling rate of profit.

Although the actual figure for profits may rise, the gap between the amount made compared with the amount invested to make it tends to grow larger and larger. Marx shows how the employer will strive to get labour of a much higher intensity out of each operative to try to make up the loss.

This is why under capitalism new plant and machinery in the workplace does not mean easier working, shorter hours and greater job security, but, on the contrary, brings a speed-up of operations, sackings and a drive to ensure that not a solitary second is wasted which could hold up production with the enormously expensive new equipment.

It is with this background of the development of the crisis of capitalism that we can look at the modern systems of exploitation now being put forward.

# The productivity deal: a system for the crisis

A PRODUCTIVITY deal may be defined as a 'confidence trick' aimed at solving the employers' crisis by introducing a political attack on workers at work-place level, using all the latest systems of exploitation, under the pretext of improving the wages and conditions of the operatives concerned. Productivity bargaining was developed in the USA in the 1950s, the most widely publicised agreement being that between the East Coast Longshoremen and their employers.

This agreement, offering large wages and improved conditions swept the docks clean of all the old methods of working, of old ropage, tackle, out-dated machinery—and of the dockers themselves. What was left was the most up-to-date methods of cargo-handling applied by relatively small teams of dock operatives working at a high pitch.

In Britain, during the 1950s, experiments were carried out with new working systems, new wage systems, etc., but the first complete productivity deal to be signed in Britain was that of the US-owned Esso oil refinery at Fawley. This was to be based completely on the principle that higher wages would be paid, but that the cost of these would come entirely from an increase in productivity. It is significant that this very first attempt to introduce such bargaining was considerably facilitated by leading members of the Communist Party, Foulkes and Haxell, the two leading members of the Electrical Trades Union.

Further experiments were tried on a local basis and the system of Measured-Day Work (MDW) was taken over from the USA and developed. After the election of the Labour government in 1964 a complete change occurred. The productivity deal moved out of the experimental stage and became a fully-fledged part of government policy.

### PRICES & INCOMES ACT

THE PASSING of the Prices and Incomes Act in 1966 instituted the wage freeze which held down workers' pay while the cost of living rapidly rose. At the same time, the Act put on a statutory basis the National Board for Prices and Incomes (PIB). This body, consisting of employers' representatives, trade union officials and labour relations professors from the universities, was to examine wage claims and to report as to whether or not they were justified.

In each case the PIB rejected the demands for basic increases, saying that they did not conform to the wage freeze and that they did not conform to the government's ruling that the workers could only get increased pay by accepting more exacting work or major changes in working practice. The PIB went on to publish reports recommending the introduction of all the most recent methods of exploitation under cover of 'productivity deals' for every industry.

Railmen were to be prepared to overlap jobs and do any kind of work on railway stations; busmen were to drive faster, spend less time at stops and to agree to the single-manning of buses; all craftsmen were to accept an end to demarcation between jobs and the elimination of mates. Airport workers must accept re-grading and 'realistic manning standards'; firemen were to be put on call for longer periods; factory and power station workers were to accept flexibility and mobility; journalists were to undergo job analysis to increase their efficiency. Nurses were to be paid on an hourly basis, to work revised shifts and accept that numbers be made up with part-time labour; university teachers were to accept a payment-by-results system; and piecework was to be driven out of the motor industry completely, and replaced with Measured-Day Work.

In effect, the Labour government has set out to change the work and increase the speed of the job of every worker without exception. In every one of these reports on 'workers' pay' and in every productivity deal that is put into operation a major emphasis is placed on work study. Over the last five-year period this official government backing for these systems has given immense impetus to the rapid development of work-study consultancy firms. National conferences and seminars are held constantly to devise new methods of regulating the worker at work. This is nothing more than the spreading of intensive methods of working into every aspect of work and into every second of the working day.

Large numbers of psychologists and professors of industrial relations have been employed by the government to develop ways of talking these

schemes in. (They say it is all a question of 'communications'.) The government often uses these people to run royal commissions, like Donovan, or courts of inquiry on questions of labour relations. They have also evolved the technique of incorporating shop stewards into work study. These men are sent on special courses under management or union control, after which they are expected to sell the schemes to their members on the basis of the large amounts of money to be earned.

Once the deal is in, the steward may be rewarded with a job in the management, or he may be sent back to his job. Anyone who simply looks at the 'bread-and-butter issues' may be fooled by these schemes during the early stages; but anyone who looks at the wider aspects will see the situation much more clearly. At the time of the developing capitalist crisis throughout the world, with over-production threatening many markets and with one currency after another under pressure, are employers really falling over themselves to put more money into workers' pockets?

In Britain a number of industries; aircraft, building, motor cycles and sections of heavy electrical engineering are in dire trouble. Recent strikes in the steel industry reflect a much deeper crisis of production, price and sale of steel, while in shipbuilding full order books in some sections of the industry have done nothing to divert the crisis which the government has tried to prevent by pouring in millions of pounds for 'rescue' operations.

The basis of the Prices and Incomes Board with its particular emphasis on introduction of all the latest systems of exploitation makes it quite clear that the Labour government is absolutely dedicated to solving the crisis of capitalism at the expense of the working class. However, while it is true that in many cases productivity deals have

force, by Communist Party members. The CP policy of peaceful co-existence with capitalism leads directly to the betrayal of the workers' struggles. The savage curtailment of the number of working miners and the foothold that employers have gained in the building industry with speed-up methods do not in any way result from the 'weakness' or lack of fight of the workers concerned, but have been entirely due to betrayals and retreats by the 'left' leadership in the face of a major political attack by the capitalist class.

While the 'militants' continue to deny the nature of the political struggle, the employers, the consultants, and the government continue to combine in the development of new extensions to their schemes. To the militants who say 'Let's negotiate the deals and try to improve the "good bits" and keep out the bad bits' we say—there are NO 'good bits'.

'The easier working system' is the sheerest form of speed-up. The flexibility and mobility proposals aim at shuffling the worker around to keep him continuously employed and to break up workshop organization. The new wages system is purely aimed at holding down wages while production—and the cost of living—rocket. Even the money that is paid over at the early stages comes out of the wages saved by sending the 'redundant' workers down the road. In other words, it is blood money.

### 'NATURAL WASTAGE'

Let us examine just one aspect of productivity bargaining which, on the face of it, might appear most harmless. This is 'natural wastage'. For this system the firm gives a guarantee that no compulsory redundancy will occur, but that when workers leave or are retired they will not be replaced by new labour. This might appear reasonable to some who feel more secure when no one is being threatened with the sack. Some union leaders and a section of the militants have actually pointed this out as a victory gained by themselves in negotiation. In fact, this method is closing down entire industries as far as new jobs are concerned.

Side by side with some gradual modernization, the run-down of the labour force in one trade after another becomes a continuous process.

The London docks is now being totally wound up as a place for East Londoners to find work. The employers plan a continuous run-down on the basis of the McKinsey Consultants Report—that 90 per cent of the docks labour force can be dispensed with.

According to recent reports 30,000 jobs were lost to the electrical engineering industry between 1967 and June 1969. A further 48,000 jobs are expected to disappear by 1972. This is equal to a cut-back of 151 per cent of the labour force in a period of five years.

In the farming industry, what with modernization as well as bankruptcies and the closing down



An All Trades Unions Alliance banner on the February 3, 1969 demonstration against the proposed anti-union laws.

been put into operation and some increases of output have been brought about by speeding-up, the plans of the capitalist class have received a severe setback inasmuch as the strength of the working class has not been broken. In some cases workers have been strong enough to force concessions even on productivity deals and have been able to increase their basic wages by this method. Also, the immediate preparations for mobilization by the working class, as reflected in the support for the demonstration against the proposed anti-union laws on February 23, 1969, and the strike on May 1 in the same year, showed the formidable opposition facing the government.

Now, with its so-called guide lines, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) is straining itself to prove that it can do the job of disciplining the workers through their own organizations—the trade unions—and that anti-strike legislation is not really necessary. All along the line, the union leaders have given full backing to productivity deals and the introduction of work-study systems. Without their support none of these schemes would have got a foot in the door anywhere. Basically, the story used by union leaders, officials, and many shop stewards has been that productivity deals are just a way of dodging round the wage-freeze. The fact that such systems were actually being developed by the government has been deliberately played down by these people. Instead, they make out that the new method has simply been evolved by the negotiators as a way of increasing pay during the period when no increases are supposed to be paid.

At the same time, union officials were given a 'left' cover for their activities by the Communist Party. As employers and government agencies combined to spread new methods of working, major re-organization and modernization throughout industry, CP militants told their followers that these were purely local actions by employers, 'bread-and-butter issues', and should be seen as such.

Members and supporters of the Socialist Labour League who set out to explain the political nature and the universal application of productivity schemes were directly opposed, in some cases by

of the small farms, a cut-back of 200,000, or one-third, of the labour force is expected over the next five years.

Finally, it is estimated that the number of busmen has fallen from 250,000 to 165,000 in the past ten years—a cut of a quarter in bus services in all major towns. At this continued rate, which shows no sign of abating, another 100,000 busmen will have gone in five years' time. The work that remains as the number of operatives is reduced, is spread among the remaining workers who, so it is claimed, can now do this as well as their own jobs thanks to the increase in efficiency brought about by the new measures.

The operation of 'natural wastage' with automation and work study is now being undertaken or prepared for every industry. With the slightest change in the economic situation—an inevitable change with the recession developing in the USA—this policy could lead to unemployment on a gigantic scale. And remember, this is one of the 'good bits' of the productivity deals.

The Socialist Labour League has consistently fought to expose every attack made against the working class by the government, the employers and the various trade union and university hangers-on, and to defeat every system of exploitation, every productivity deal and every new onslaught that is devised—the latest is the CAV tele-control system which sets every action of machines and men under computer control.

Through its trade union wing, the All Trades Unions Alliance, the SLL is continually fighting to establish an alternative socialist leadership in the trade unions which can take up every aspect of the struggle in a principled way. A fight against the employers' offensive is vital. It is to aid workers in the struggle against the Labour government's political attacks and in that to defeat the return of the Tories with their plan for even greater oppression of workers that we collect and examine the systems of exploitation now being prepared for every industry and for every worker under the heading of productivity deals.

Part two will appear in next Wednesday's Workers Press.

## MARXISM and the TRADE UNIONS

Two articles by LEON TROTSKY

Trade unions in the epoch of imperialist decay • Communism and syndicalism •

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This is the second part of an exclusive interview by Brian Moore with playwright David Mercer. Part one appeared in Tuesday's Workers Press

# An interview with David Mercer



BM: Obviously one can see again very similar themes in 'After Haggerty', this 16-month period of work (to which certainly, as we discussed, the whole development of the television trilogy and I think 'Haggerty' as well are quite clearly interconnected) shows a very much more coherent process in you, a whole way of thinking, a whole period of assessment and re-assessment etc. How would you say that 'Flint', which is your other stage play currently on in the West End, fits into that process?

DM: I think that 'Flint' is a very difficult play for me to relate to these processes of developing certain themes and preoccupations. Really, what I wanted to do in 'Flint' was not to make some kind of overt political statement (though it could perhaps be interpreted in a coherently political fashion), but I wanted to make a statement about how fossilized institutions which survive are a profound threat to the alleged social and humane reasons for their existence.

The individual who is within one of these institutions and, in the case of Flint, happens to be monumentally and catastrophically the antithesis of the institution of which he's a part, asserts a kind of anarchic humanity. Flint is living living out his life on his own terms, rather than terms dictated to him by a fossilized institution. The human reality of this seemed to me to be more important than the institution itself.



FLINT: '... I think there's a kind of warning note in 'Flint' for me which is that 'Flint' is a kind of instinctive anarchist.'

Of course there are enormous possibilities for comedy at that level, both obvious comedy and social comedy. But I think there's a kind of a warning note in Flint for me which is that Flint is a kind of instinctive anarchist, in the sense that, as I've said, he breaks all the rules and does all the wrong things, as right and wrong are understood by his institution, which is the Church of England.

Flint, in his iconoclastic fashion, is a healthy reaction against the fossilization of his church, the possible meaninglessness of his church's doctrine, and assertion of the realities of human need and human desire and human richness. The warning note is that I think Flint was simply that, he was no more than that. He was a kind of living example of the iconoclastic anti-thesis to the institution. Flint was almost logically doomed, so that his death at the end of his play, by driving his motorbike into an army truckload of explosives in some foreign country, is logical given the fact that he hints that wherever Flint goes things tend to burst into flames anyway.

The warning really is that Flint is the one who dies and the institution survives.

I think that 'After Haggerty' was in some ways more important to me and perhaps necessary to me privately because what I was... one of the things I was saying in 'Haggerty', which is about people being crippled, or limited or disillusioned at various levels of their different kinds of lives, was that we have created, certainly in England, the possibility—we always have lived in England with the idea that things go on somewhere else.

During the 19th century it was we who made them go on somewhere else, it was we who were out there colonizing and killing and exploiting and enriching ourselves through the colonies. Now we don't have colonies, we have no empire, but it is still possible for most people in England to live their private lives on almost on the basis that the terrible things in this world are going on somewhere else. And perhaps I felt that I too could fall victim to this process partly through being reasonably successful as a writer in the materialistic sense and the struggle merely to survive materially being over, (temporarily probably!).

I think in 'Haggerty' I wanted to place in counterpoint the notion of people living out their private lives as if what's happening on a big scale in the world is nothing to do with them.

The protagonist of the play, Bernard Link, has a kind of despairing, tortured, voyeuristic understanding of what's happening in the world. He's always being involved, almost accidentally, in other people's revolutions, getting shot at accidentally and coming out with a bullet hole in his raincoat from Budapest and being in Prague at the time of the burning of the Gestapo and all the rest of it. What I wanted to remind both myself and people in 'Haggerty' was that there are actually people in the world making revolution.

The absent Haggerty is the absent man in history, I suppose you could say this is perhaps a sentimental way of putting it, but I don't think it really is. It's a better way; it's a symbolic way of putting it and I think a perfectly valid symbol. That people were working out their private lives in England in these complicated ways there was this black man who had gone through the American experience, being an American spade who had gone to Africa and that man was out there in the jungle with a gun in his hands. He was the absent revolutionary, the absent man of history. In other words he was also the absent history, so to speak. He was the absent creator of history. What we had a play about was the abdication from history in a way and the absent Haggerty was the creator of history, or attempting to make his history.

BM: Where do you feel yourself to be now?

DM: With the completion of that trilogy ending in 'Emma's Time' and with the production of the two plays 'After Haggerty' and 'Flint' which by the way were presented to the world in reverse order, 'Flint' was written before 'After Haggerty', there is the sensation which I suppose any writer must have after an enormous effort, a huge effort of work, of being exhausted and disorientated and tired and all the rest of it to do with writing.

At the same time I am a compulsive writer and I'm going on writing, and the act of beginning to write again, of course, itself enables me to feel less

tired. What I'm writing is a screenplay for Kestrel Films which I believe I shouldn't talk about until they do.

One, of course, looks to the future in many ways. Both as a writer and as a person who is committed to a Marxist-Leninist view of history, or, if you like, the Marxist scientific method of approach to historical phenomena—the dialectical approach as opposed to the analytical approach which assumes that situations are static in some absolute sense, that they change like a kaleidoscope on the surface but they remain fundamentally the same. This, in my view, is a mistaken view of history, and the dialectical view of history the only tenable one which is that things are in a constant state of contradiction and flux and re-creation through the synthesis of the contradictions; some kind of upside down Hegelianism, which is, to some extent, what Marxism is.

But I do have a feeling in 1970 when I am coming into my 42nd year, I do have a feeling that we are entering a decade which is probably going to be one of the most violent and frightening and in many ways destructive of any decade of my life. I think of the adult life, including the wars. Because the wars, particularly the last great war 1939-1945, was partly of course a war which represented a particular phase in the development of capitalism, the imperialism and also it was a war which was to do with the preservation of the very real gains of the Bolshevik Revolution.

These remain and transcend as material facts the actual distortion of the Bolshevik Revolution which Stalinism amounted to. But one has the feeling that in the 1970s the whole damn thing is falling apart. The two great social systems as exemplified on the one hand by America and on the other hand by the Soviet Union, are in a state of dissolution. In the case of America, this process of dissolution, disintegration, internal conflict and fragmentation and revolt has proceeded to quite an extraordinary degree, obviously due on the one hand to the American blacks and their miserable position in American society and on the other hand to the imitation and the protraction of the war in Vietnam, America is obviously in a state of enormously complicated disintegration at many, many levels.

The Soviet Union possesses an apparatus of power over expression, of power over action which

surpasses anything that's experienced in social democracies, with the exception of those which are actually openly fascist regimes like Greece, Spain and Portugal. So far the Soviet Union has managed to contain dissent and revolt, criticism and rebellion largely by the export of the dissenters to camps or to mental hospitals, but there are signs that the Soviet Union too has a growing opposition within itself.

Then there is the question of China, that, to my mind, rather enigmatic revolution which one does not hardly understand at all in its present form, partly because, in my case, I don't really know much about Chinese history and therefore the characteristics of the revolution as determined by their historical antecedents escape me. The peculiar character of the Chinese revolution is a bit of an enigma to me. But there are these three great powers I would say, in a very ironic moment in time where it looks as if the neo-Stalinist system which continues in the Soviet Union is probably, almost certainly, going to collaborate with the United States of America in order to police the world according to the notion of the means of production and, ultimately, of course, in their own self interest.

But you're probably going to have a growing collaboration, I would say, between the Kremlin and Washington—with China as the apparently unpredictable maverick; China as the intransigent supporter of national liberation movements, wherever they occur. Whether China is doing this, whether the Chinese Party is supporting these movements for cynical reasons or not, objec-

## Clergymen and strikers

THE ACTION of the St Helens clergy in supervising the General and Municipal Workers' Union ballot for a return to work at Pilkington's recalls many other instances of such intervention in the trade unions. Perhaps the most famous was Cardinal Manning's work in ending the 1889 'dockers' tanker strike. The Cardinal had some connection with the docking industry: his father and his brother were chairmen of dock companies! After three weeks on

strike for 6d an hour, and 8d an hour for overtime, the dockers had decided to call out other workers in sympathy. This was when Manning stepped in. Together with the Lord Mayor of London, he used all his skill and experience over the next two weeks to persuade the strike leaders to take the 'reasonable' course. Just as massive aid was arriving from the Australian workers' movement, Manning devised a series of compromise schemes. The final one was accepted by the committee, Manning himself speaking at the decisive meeting.



AFTER HAGGERTY: '... What I wanted to remind both myself and people in Haggerty was that there are actually people in the world making revolution...'

The main concession he got the dockers to accept was that blacklegs would be kept on as permanent employees, although all other dockers were casual workers. A large minority of strikers opposed the settlement, and many refused to work with the scabs. In 1970, as much as in 1889, workers must beware of 'help' offered by 'impartial well-wishers', with or without a dog collar.

## As the actress said...

STAYING on a theological note, did you see the interesting account in the 'Daily Express' about the Bishop of Southwell? This prince of the Anglican Church recently recorded a message for the BBC's morning 'Pause for Thought' programme, before going to the Canary Islands to become chaplain at Tenerife. His listeners might have paused a little longer if he had mentioned his close connection with the staff at the Eve Club in Regent Street. According to the 'Express', this establishment is 'London's most lavish late-night glamour show'. The Bishop was a frequent visitor, says the 'Express', where 'he would host parties for the statuesque showgirls who appear there topless in exotic cabaret. Is that what they call the Hot Set? Memo to J. Klugmann: how about changing the venue for the next round in the 'dialogue' between the Communist Party and the Church? So much more informal than the local chapel, don't you think?

## Maudling along

3,500 CLYDE shipyard workers face the sack. At Harland and Wolf and Cammell Laird, the threat of redundancy hangs over thousands of workers. Seamen

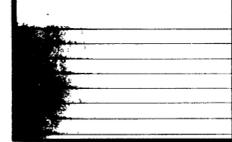
can condition people and create psychological attitudes in people through the mass communication and media. They can mystify people to an extent which has never been possible in history before. Therefore to the extent that people can be mystified and continue to be mystified, to that extent repression can succeed. But, of course, it will generate by its repression the demystification process, I would say.

DM: I think it carries within itself the seeds of its own opposite. I think it carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction, but I suppose my fear is whether the actual materialistic conflict between workers and the unions on the one hand and other elements of revolt in society and the state on the other hand, can be translated into ideological terms. I think that England, being a country with such a long an extended tradition of capitalism and socialism in the labour movement, is going to have the greatest difficulty in making the transition from the economic interpretation of the workers' predicament into an ideological interpretation of his predicament.

It seems to me that insofar as one sees a revolution as revolutionary at all that one's concrete efforts must be not arrogantly to try and teach the workers anything, but to be amongst the workers, to represent the workers, to embody the predicament of the workers and try and embody this predicament and express it in such a way that the evolution from economic into an ideological interpretation will arise out of the very struggle itself. One can't be a kind of bunch of intellectuals trying to capture the working class. That's just nonsense.

BM: This is, of course, why we would stress the absolute urgency for the building of the revolutionary party.

DM: Without the revolutionary party—nothing, is the answer to that. The building of the revolutionary party is the only means which any of us, who are all workers after all, is the only means which any of us have, in the end, to present an opposition to capitalism, to neo-capitalism, to imperialism. It's the only means we have because I mean you know all the old clichés are there, the old clichés are all power to the people, and as soon as the people discover that power, guns and tanks and napalm and cops will in the end be useless although there might



that the £180,000 put up by King may not be enough to fill the finance gap (in the Poulson empire).

Maudling remains chairman of one part of the Poulson holdings, International Technical and Construction Services, which exports architectural services to the Middle East.

KESTREL FILMS, whose controversial 'Kes' finally opens at London's Academy Cinema on May 28 after considerable success in Yorkshire and elsewhere in the North, were reported at the weekend to have just completed their second film.

Called 'The Body', it is a 110-minute colour first feature about the human body.

While Kestrel is not saying much about the film until its release in a few months' time, producer Tony Garnett told us that the film aimed to 'celebrate life, show that the more we know about the way the body works in the world the more marvellous it is and say very clearly that more and more it's being messed up'.

'We've tried to look at the body in the world, the body in its social context,' said director Roy Battersby.

'The body isn't separate from the person, I am my body. And I am part of the material world — from that basic relationship with nature, everything else springs. 'If you like, the body is a brilliant window on the world. But we do look at the window in the film.'

Battersby went on to say that at the very heart of the film lay the basic contradiction between the beauty and possibilities of the human body — the human being — and the destruction and exploitation in our society. 'It's about the extraordinary process of development of the embryo, it's about being born and it's about the world into which we are born. It's about growing up, what we grow up into, growing old and what faces us. 'We've tried to say how it is.'

indeed be very bloody struggles in the process of this all over Europe and America and everywhere else, and indeed we can see them going on in Latin America.

I think Latin America exemplifies the contradiction par excellence. But hitherto the very fragmentation of Marxists has been inimical to their evolution into a revolutionary party. There's nothing particularly hideous or frightening or new about this. The Socialist Party of Russia was splintered and fragmented throughout its history, right up to the actual Bolshevik Revolution of October, and it continued to be. The point about a revolutionary party is not only that it is the only means by which the people will acquire and maintain and use power for themselves, but that the revolutionary party must also contain within itself these disparate elements somewhat. This was Lenin's mastery virtue as a Party leader, that he understood that you must contain disparate elements. That doesn't mean that you embrace fascists or wet social democrats, but certainly the dissenting views of Marxism, or Marxism-Leninism, or Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism, about the development of history. Dissenting views of what has happened and what is going to happen and what ought to be done. These will all have to be in the end contained, held within the revolutionary party.

BM: How do you see yourself as a writer and the future for you as a writer. How do you see yourself as a writer and your own role in this changing situation?

DM: I think that it puts me personally into a... it puts me right in front of a split in myself which I find it impossible to bridge, to reconcile the contradictions of the split.

Because, on the one hand, of the way I operate or function as a writer, and this is doubtless to do with the kind of culture and society that I live in obviously, that my way of seeing as a writer is individualistic and instinctive and intuitive. If I interfere with that, if I permit that to be interfered with, if I substitute for that some kind of conscious or programmatic attitude to writing, I'm deeply convinced that I will destroy myself as a writer.

On the other hand, one is also living in the world, and one understands the world as I've already mentioned. The problem is that whatever the content of your work in a bourgeois society — you may be attacking institutions, you may be attacking hypocrisy, lies, mystification, you may be either directly or indirectly attacking the class struggle or the operation of vested interest or whatever — this content of your work, if you're a successful writer, becomes a product.

You're stuck with the awful reality that you can be burrowing away after your fashion at the very foundations of your society, the assumptions, the illusions about itself and all the rest of it, and this can be bought and sold as a consumable item.

This is, of course, what happens. I think that in a revolutionary situation, or in an actual revolution or in a post-revolutionary situation, is operating in a different kind of framework altogether. Whatever one may think of the Cuban regime I have had the experience of seeing there poets and graphic artists and painters and designers and actors and producers and playwrights, not in some capitulating fashion collaborating with the revolution, but in a calculated end, but existing as writers within the revolution in order to express and embody that revolution and to even express the contradictions within that revolution, the problems within that revolution, the problems of transition and all the rest of it.

LENIN: '... This was Lenin's mastery virtue as a party leader, that he understood that you must contain disparate elements...'

So I think that I feel almost inescapably split up, I know that a work of art, if it's an work at all, expresses the total man or woman and that the total man in my case is also a political man and therefore my plays will continue to have political meanings, political interpretations. At the same time I regard my position in my society with a kind of bewildered disgust. The things that I produced in my workshop upstairs are being bought and disseminated and take their life, such as it is, in society, almost like any other product in the great big supermarket of capitalism.

I'm afraid this is a contradiction. I just have to live with it at the moment because I don't see the resolution of it in myself. I mean I see that I must exist as a political being, but I know how I must exist also as an artistic being. Which is not to say that I think the artist is a kind of being apart.

But I don't think in bourgeois society the two can be integrated, really. The art can express the politics, or imply the politics or offer a political interpretation, but things being what they are the art itself will be used for consumer purposes and I have no control over that unless I and other writers, actors, directors, producers and so on maintain the struggle in our own institutions of communication if you like; in the theatre, in television and in films.

We struggle, and I know also in these areas for the transformation of the role of what they call the product.

DM: I think that it puts me personally into a... it puts me right in front of a split in myself which I find it impossible to bridge, to reconcile the contradictions of the split.

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## WEDNESDAY TV

BBC 1	ITV	REGIONAL ITV
9.28 a.m.-12 noon Schools. 12.25-12.50 p.m. Appa hi ghar samajhiye. 1.00-1.25 Dose a dawn. 1.30 Watch with mother. 1.45-1.53 News and weather. 2.05-2.25 Schools. 4.20 Play school. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Six blue horses. 5.15 Vision on. 5.44 Adventurers of Parsley. 5.50 News and weather. 6.00 London—Nationwide. 6.45 The doctors. 7.05 Tomorrow's world: Special broadcast on man's exploitation of the sea. 7.30 All gas and gaiters: 'When in Rome'. 8.00 It's a knock-out! Timothy Bateson and Rhyll v Caernarvon. 8.50 News and weather. 9.10 Wednesday play: 'Chariot of Fire' by Tony Parker. Play about a housewife who is a voluntary associate—a type of prison visitor. One of the men she visits has spent 20 years in prison because of his association with small boys. 10.25 24 hours. 11.00 The Open University: An investigation. 11.25 Weather.	11.00 a.m.-2.55 p.m. Schools. 3.30 Charlie Chaplin: 'The Cure'. 3.50 Skipper. 4.17 The Tingha and Tucker Club. 4.30 Crossroads. 4.55 Anything you can do. 5.20 Freewhatever. 5.50 News. 6.03 Today. 6.30 The Ghost and Mrs Muir. 7.00 This is your life. 7.30 Coronation street. 8.00 It takes a thief: 'The Second Time Around'. 9.00 Callan: 'Amos Green Must Live'. 10.00 News. 10.30 Shine a light: Timothy Bateson and Tony Selby in 'The Chips Are Down'. 11.00 Wrestling: Tug Holton v Johnny Kwango and Mike Marino v Jock Cameron. 11.45 What the papers say. 12.00 Midnight trends or gimmicks.	CHANNEL: 11.00-2.55 London. 4.02 Puffin's birthday greetings. 4.14 Zing-a-lings. 4.25 Open house. 4.55 London. 6.00 News. 6.10 African patrol. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Treasure hunt. 7.30 London. 8.00 Baron. 9.00 London. 11.00 Epilogue. News and weather in French, weather. WESTWARD: As Channel except: 4.00 News. 4.02 Gus Honeybus show. 6.00 Diary. 1.45 Faith for life. 11.51 Weather. SOUTHERN: 11.00-2.55 London. 4.00 Houseparty. 4.15 London. 6.00 Day by Day. Crime desk. 6.30 Doris Day show. 7.00 London. 8.00 Avengers. 9.00 London. 11.45 News. 11.55 Weather. Langley House. HARLECH: 11.00-2.55 London. 4.25 Piper. 4.30 London. 6.01 Report. 6.10 F troop. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 8.00 Marcus Welby. 9.00 London. 11.45 Weather. HTV (Wales) colour channel 41 as above except: 11.45 Y dydd. 12.10 Weather. HTV (Cymru/Wales) black and white service as above except: 6.01 Y dydd. 6.30-6.55 Report Wales.
BBC 2	REGIONAL BBC	
11.00-11.20 a.m. Play school. 7.05 p.m. Square two. 7.30 News and weather.	All regions as BBC 1 except at the following times: Midlands and East Anglia: 6.00-6.45 Midlands today. Look East, weather. Nationwide. 11.27 News, weather. North of England: 6.00-6.45 Look North, weather. Nationwide. 11.27 News, weather. Wales: 12.50-1.30, 3.00-4.20 Cricket. 6.00-6.45 Wales today, weather. Nationwide. 6.45-7.05 Heddw. Scotland: 6.00-6.15 Reporting Scotland. Nationwide. 6.15 General assembly. 6.30-6.45 Nationwide. 11.27 News, weather. Northern Ireland: 6.00-6.45 Scene around us, weather. Nationwide. 11.27 News, weather.	

# C&B strikers determined on closed shop

THE issues involved in the protracted strike of 630 production workers at the Crosse and Blackwell plant, Peterhead, Scotland are increasingly becoming clear.

Despite management attempts to whip up a scare about the 'undemocratic' character of the strike, the workers remain solidly determined to win the closed shop and a substantial pay increase.

Management last week sent a letter to all workers at the plant saying that an attempt was being made to win something which did not exist in the United Kingdom food industry and which was completely undemocratic.

Shopworkers' union organizer Frank Carroll commented:

'They were referring to the fact that the workers are on strike because they want the management to make it a condition of employment that all new employees join the union.'

'If this was meant to scare our workers into going back to work, it is a failure. They are as united as they were when they first withdrew their labour six weeks ago.'

But despite the strikers' solidarity, there are dangers in front.

The intervention of TUC general secretary Victor Feather—who last week discussed the dispute with USDAW chief Alfred Allen—raises the spectre of another settlement—like that at BSR, East-Willbridge.

Many of the strikers are critical of the fact that their union has not linked the claim for 100 per cent membership to their wage demand.

The shopworkers' union has blacked Crosse and Blackwell goods and is likely to extend the strike to other Crosse and Blackwell factories if the demand for the closed shop is not granted.

# S. Wales miners demand

SOUTH WALES miners have demanded a national strike in support of a new pay demand. Delegates to last week's conference in Porthcawl voted unanimously in favour of a £5-a-week rise bringing underground workers to a £21 minimum and surface workers to £20.

Poor pay and conditions against a background of relentless pit closures brought 1,600 men out at 23 Welsh pits last October.

At that time Mr Ron Saint, lodge secretary at Coedely colliery, said:

'The miners will never again be docile in their attitude to strike action.'

Despite his optimism, some miners were docile and less than half the 43,000 men on the coalfield came out.

Things have changed since then, even in such a short time, and men who thought they could save their pit by playing the bosses' game and being good know how wrong they were.

Mr Saint told this year's conference at Porthcawl: 'Time and again it has been proved that one hour of action is worth years of argument.'

## Flames

'We as a lodge say that if this £5-a-week increase is not met, and if our own leadership don't call for a fight, then we can see a situation where the British coalfields will go up in flames.'

The motion to strike in support of more pay brought the liveliest discussion of the week and was supported by the NUM's area executive.

Now it has to go before the NUM's national conference in July and it is here that the Welshmen may, once again, find themselves betrayed by their leaders.

South Wales miners cannot fight alone, especially now that their numbers are depleted and their bargaining power weakened.

## Vigorous

At the July conference NUM leaders must pursue a vigorous policy of solidarity with the South Wales demands.

They must call for a national strike. Any other course will be betrayal.

The miners have also agreed to strike unless the National

# a national pay strike

From Ian Yeats

Coal Board (NCB) concedes their claim for a 74-hour day for surface workers. This was the issue which caused a national stoppages last October.

Mr Saint told delegates that the national executive should have one more chance to negotiate the claim, but if they failed they should be men enough to call a strike.

The Workers Press forecast last January, apart from pay, dust was also a major issue in delegates' minds.

## Dust

The conference called for efforts to suppress the dust caused by the machinery the NCB has brought in to force up profits.

Mr Tommy Walker of Cynheidr Colliery said: 'Conditions being created by this machinery are worse than I saw in 1934-1935.'

It is estimated that about 20 per cent of miners have pneumoconiosis, but hundreds more suffer from other respiratory ailments caused by the dust.

Mr Bernard Rees of Six Bells Colliery commented: 'If you look down the corridors of time you will see a long line of men shuffling into the grave.'

A compensation secretary Mr D. C. Davies told the conference that the union should have a greater say in the running of the Welfare State—a heaven for doctors, lawyers and drug manufacturers, but hell for widows and old-age pensioners.

## Drugs

'The drug industry should be nationalized. It would provide a cheaper service and a better service as far as our people are concerned,' he said.

And Mr Charlie Blewett of Penalla Colliery said that the government's earnings related pension scheme could lead to a new kind of social privilege.

But we must be clear. Welfare and security—which is what pensions are all about—will only be available to everyone on the basis of need within the framework of a socialist state.

The welfare state will never be adequate while it is shackled by capitalist economics.

## WEATHER

London area, SE, SW and central southern England, Midlands, Channel Islands: Dry, sunny periods. Wind NW, light to moderate. Warm. Max. 18C (64F).

NW and central northern England: Dry, sunny periods at first but cloud and rain spreading from NW later. Wind westerly, moderate, becoming strong for a time. Warm. Max. 16C (61F).

Edinburgh, Glasgow area, N Ireland: Cloudy, rain at times, becoming brighter with occasional showers. Wind westerly, fresh or strong, locally gale veering NW later. Near normal. Max. 13C (55F).

Thursday and Friday: Showers and bright periods. Becoming cooler.

## Suspension upheld

FEELING is again running high at London's Electra House overseas telegraph headquarters over the two-year suspension from office of Union of Post Office Workers' branch secretary Roy.

His appeal against the suspension, imposed by the union's executive in February for circulating copies of a secret Department of Employment and Productivity report on Electra House, was upheld by the UPW's rules revision conference on Monday.

Telegraphists allege that some branches were mandated to vote against the appeal before it was heard.

No amount of 'say' will bring about decisive, across-the-board improvements in benefits and pensions.

The capitalist economy will not operate more satisfactorily because the system is itself the decisive barrier to progress. It must be overthrown not collaborated with.

A key issue was raised by Mr Glyn Williams, the South Wales miners' president.

He warned that pay and productivity deals at pit level could 'take the industry back to the era of intense competition, pit against pit, back to the rat race from which generations of miners struggled to emerge'.

Right. To go back can only weaken collective bargaining power and lead to serious in-

equalities in pay which those at the bottom may be helpless to redress.

Miners must fight any suggestion of local pay agreements if they want to safeguard their living standards.

## SE Asia

American intervention in Cambodia and the tour of the S African cricket team were condemned by the conference.

Freedom for the coloured workers of southern Africa and for the workers and peasants of South-East Asia will only be won through the overthrow of the world capitalist system.

It is the same system that confronts the miners of South Wales and workers everywhere.

# Tories mutual interest with racists

TORY backing for racist regimes in Africa is being stepped up.

A confidential defence planning document prepared by the Tory Commonwealth and Overseas Council has forwarded the views of leading Tories on foreign policy to Heath and his shadow cabinet.

The document states in relation to British imperialist interests in the S Atlantic: 'If the NATO area of command is not to be extended into this vital supply route [the Cape route] transporting by far the greatest part of the NATO strategic oil requirements, then on both political and strategic grounds a case might be made for a regional pact for the defence of southern Africa and the Cape route.'

This plan to safeguard imperialist supply routes demands a very close working relationship with the racist regimes of South and central Africa—and especially that of Smith.

'Politically a first step would be to restore relations based on the recognition of mutual interest with S Africa, to encourage trade and sell arms for external defence. The farce of Rhodesian sanctions should be ended.'

British Toryism plans to strengthen its 'law and order' from the picket line and the college to the high seas and the gold mines of S Africa.

A Tory election victory will be as much a blow against the peoples of Africa as the trade unions in this country.

Abstentionism only plays into the hands of the Tory imperialists and their racialist allies in Salisbury and Pretoria.

# Services face week of strikes

# Italy is near general strike situation again

ITALIAN PAPERS have been shut down for a week from Monday afternoon by a strike against the employers' refusal to negotiate acceptable terms with the trade unions.

BY DAVID BARNES

The stoppage will be the longest since the Second World War.

It will impede the 'democratic process'—the ability of the employers' newspapers to minimize and ignore workers' struggles—during a week which will bring out virtually every public service worker in Italy.

Negotiations resumed yesterday between government and trade unions on the demands for social reforms.

The trade unions made it clear over the weekend that they could not accept the offers made by Rumor on May 13 as any sort of starting point for a settlement.

Tension is high in one of Italy's most important factories—the Fiat Mirafiore plant in Turin—following a series of stoppages last week sparked by a dispute over the production bonus.

Fiat last month revealed that profits in the last year of operation were down

almost two thirds—from £24 million to £9 million—with a fall in overall production. Shop-floor representatives will meet management for negotiations tomorrow.

## 'ALARM'

With the campaign for the June 7 regional elections now in full swing, centre-left politicians are raising the alarm over the huge volume of claims for wages and reforms, hoping to stamper the middle class into providing a political counterweight to the working class.

The Treasury Minister Colombo, a right-wing Christian Democrat, speaking to a meeting of Catholic artisans, warned:

'We risk living outside reality if we pretend to be able to do everything, all together and right away, all irreparable damage can be the result if lack of foresight and irresponsibility carry the day.'

Workers and sailors marching in Genova, Italy, last week for government reforms. The growing pay claims, and the employers' refusal to concede anything, are leading to another general strike situation this week.

Similarly Republican leader La Malfa called for an end to the strikes, saying the state could simply not afford to pay up. Turning on the Communist Party he asked: '... how can they want to come to power in a country in ruins? What "revolution" are they planning, what social programme do they propose? Lenin had a plan, but Longo has nothing.'

(Longo is general secretary of the Italian Communist Party.)

## LOGIC

These statements are far from being unconsidered. Their logic is that the working class has gone mad and is on the verge of wrecking 'society' with its arrogant demands.

It must therefore be brought to heel by 'responsible citizens', mustered behind the forces of 'law and order'.

# Poll decision

FROM PAGE ONE

With it will come the prospect of more devaluations, more deflationary packages, lower living standards and a dramatic rise in the hardship and misery of the working class.

The murder of students in Ohio and Mississippi and the widening of the Vietnam war is only a foretaste of what is to come.

These are the real issues behind the June general election which the working class must prepare to meet now.

Our first task is to keep the Tories out in June by voting Labour.

Unlike a right-wing Labour government the Tories would not feel inhibited by TUC pressure, political levy and all that in strengthening anti-union legislation and attacking left-wing groups.

The Pilkington strike and the witch-hunt in CAV-Girings has abundantly shown the Tories and their press considering attacks against social security benefits for 'unofficial' strikers as well as conspiracy charges against trade unionists.

## Betray

Those who say that there is no difference between Labour and Tory and that it would be better if the Tories get in—because it would hasten the revolution in Britain—are betraying the working class to the Tory janitors.

As the struggle against Castle's White Paper in 1950 proved, a Labour government, despite all its crimes and omissions, is preferable to the Tories not because it carries out socialist policies, but because it finds it increasingly difficult to carry through capitalist ones.

A vote for Labour may seem to the ultra-left cynics of the International Marxist Group and the anarchists as a stupid thing.

What it expresses is not confidence in Wilson or parliament, but the necessity of using every weakness in the Labour government to hit the Tories where it hurts most—in their pockets.

For the benefit of the abstentionist-confrontationist we say confidently that it is this struggle of the workers and not the abstention of ultra-lefts which is bringing the revolution nearer.

## Beginning

We say that a vote for Labour is only the beginning of political wisdom—but only its beginning.

Marxists must combat the illusion in purely trade union struggles by integrating this in the general struggle for socialist policies and a revolutionary communist leadership for the working class.

Such is the task posed by the June election. Not to turn 'Labour left', as the Communist Party states lyingly, not to abstain, as IMG urges, but to learn to combine our hatred of the Tories with a clear understanding of the crisis and the measures which it demands.

This means no confidence in Wilson and a resolute struggle for a socialist policy of nationalization of the basic industries under workers' control without compensation, withdrawal of all British troops from abroad, recognition of the NLF and a break with NATO.



# We're innocent pleads French C.P.

FROM PAGE ONE

fest of 2,000 Words', he defended the decision to allow its publication and then oppose it.

Those who signed it, he said, could not be dealt with by 'administrative measures'. But if the need arose 'in the factories there are 70,000 armed men ready to go into action' to defend the Party.

The notes underline the real reasons for the Soviet invasion—not the threat of counter-revolution, but the development of the political revolution against Stalinism.

But for the French Stalinist leaders to pretend that they could not be used to frame Dubcek is sheer hypocrisy.

## Scene set

The Soviet invasion set the scene for socialist legality to be crushed in Czechoslovakia.

The Husak regime is moving unmistakably towards trials of its opponents in the full tradition of Stalin's purges, together with autocratic expulsions from the Party and the reimposition of censorship.

The French Stalinists are desperate to disguise this fact—and their own complexity in it.

Accordingly they have made no mention of the speech by Indra, broadcast on Prague radio on January 14 this year, in which this arch-Stalinist henchman of Husak sought to lay the basis for framing Dubcek.

Indra, basing himself on the notes, asked 'Who was Alexander Dubcek? An incompetent man? Or something else?' and went on to accuse him of conniving at the free political activity of the Club-231 (an association of those unjustly imprisoned under the Novotny regime) and the Social Democrats.

# Tunisian land reform behind treason trial

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

UNOFFICIAL reports indicate that the trial of Ahmed Ben Salah—until recently Minister of Planning, Economy and National Education—started yesterday in the Tunisian Supreme Court.

Together with six other men, he faces charges which include 'high treason' and 'plotting against the security of the state'.

The trial is highly political.

Ben Salah, until he was sacked as Minister last September, was the main author of land reform in Tunisia.

He has always been a reformist, aiming at the development of a 'mixed economy' in Tunisia.

He represented the popular 'left' face of President Bourguiba's Destourian Socialist Party.

At the end of August 1969 Ben Salah put forward a bill to Bourguiba which would have integrated into the system of co-operatives about five million hectares of land from the big estates, purchased by the Tunisian landlords after the properties of the French colons were nationalized and resold.

Simultaneously the government received a report on the Tunisian economy from the World Bank—an organization, financed mainly by American finance capital, which offers loans to 'aid' the governments of underdeveloped countries, headed at that time by Robert McNamara, previously American Defence Secretary.

The report opposed Ben Salah's proposals, which it described as 'politically dangerous'. In other words: abandon these reforms, or no dollar loans.

Clearly, there is a pressing need to discredit the whole co-operative policy and those who advocated it. It is not yet known who will defend Ben Salah and his 'accomplices' in court, or even if they will plead guilty or not.

# Dominican dictator 're-elected' by terror

BY A WORKERS PRESS REPORTER

THE RE-ELECTION of President Joaquin Balaguer of Dominica last weekend formed the closing scene to a reactionary and bloody charade.

The small Caribbean dictatorship is dominated by American imperialism. For 30 years, until 1961, it was ruled with an iron fist by the notorious Trujillo.

When, in 1965, a popular insurrection tried to put the reformer Juan Bosch in place of Trujillo's successor, 'Mr. American Peace Force' of US Marines stepped in to restore 'order'.

Balaguer, who started his political career as Trujillo's protégé, conducted the election in a reign of terror.

Over 70 people were murdered in the course of the campaign, most of them workers or students.

Bands of thugs, working closely with Balaguer's police and militia, accosted people and demanded that they would vote for Balaguer, beating or killing them if they refused.

The low poll—over 40 per cent of the electors did not vote—represented a partial victory for Bosch, who called on his supporters to abstain.

Even to do this was an act of courage, as identity cards were stamped when voters went to the polls and employers threatened to sack workers who stayed away.

# World link-up

FROM PAGE ONE

be set up to create links between companies and to promote the setting up of 'transnational companies' also expected to contribute to a 'rationalization' of the European working class along these lines.

In this situation firms like British-Leyland, which does not have the international connections, will make an even more determined drive to discipline and control their workers and to increase profits with speed-up and wage cutting systems.

A purely national struggle against the world capitalist class is impossible. The struggle for a United Socialist States of Europe can bring an end to all attempts to divide the working class in the name of increased exploitation and can prepare for the defeat of the international strike breakers for good.

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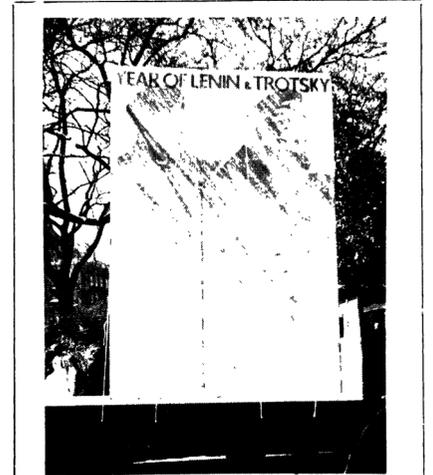
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## LATE NEWS

### ROLLS-ROYCE PROFITS HALVED

Rolls-Royce, the aero-engine company, yesterday cut its dividends and announced that profits fell by more than half last year from £15,919,000 to £6,407,000.

The news caused the firm's shares to fall another 6d to 16s 3d compared with last year's peak of nearly 50s. (See page one story.)

### 'WHY IT'S JUNE'—KREMLIN

Soviet government newspaper 'Izvestia' said yesterday that Wilson had called a General Election next month because he feared a 'hot summer' in Northern Ireland.

'Izvestia' said other reasons for the decision were Labour Party fears that rising prices could ruin its chances, and the government's concern to get the election over before negotiating on the 'more and more unpopular idea' of British entry into the European Common Market. (See page one story.)

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