Miners show the way to kick out Tories

THE TORIES CAN BE BEATEN—that is the message from the miners’ great wages breakthrough last week. Militancy, solidarity and determination at rank and file level brought this big business government to its knees.

A tough union leadership prepared to hold out for a few more days could have routed Heath and company completely. Gormley and Doherty were not prepared to do that. But although the final settlement was a compromise it was 90 per cent on the miners’ side and marked the greatest industrial defeat suffered by any government since the war.

The miners’ victory must be the springboard for the rest of the trade union movement. From now on, 20 per cent must be the only ‘norm’ acceptable to workers.

Railwaymen, teachers, building workers, London hounen, public printers, nurses, textile workers and agricultural workers—-all have crucial pay talks coming up.

Industrial power

And every one of them is a ‘special case’. Like the miners, they have seen their wages and salaries decline in recent years as a result of government policy and weak union leadership. Railwaymen, like miners, have seen thousands of jobs and productivity fall while farm workers are claiming a minimum of £18 the same as the miners’ before the strike.

And like the miners all these groups can win substantial increases if the rank and file mobilise and use their industrial power to hit big business where it hurts. Teachers and nurses must seek support from industrial workers if they are to succeed.

The miners have shown where the real power of the working class lies. It was the pickets and support from other trade unions that forced the Tories to retreat, not backing from the official trade union movement. In six short weeks, the miners proved that the Tories anti-union laws, which came into full effect this week, can be brushed aside.

by the Editor

This week the General Council of the TUC organised a national action to support the miners. They knew that a stoppage by 10 million trade unionists could have brought the government down. But they are dedicated to working within the capitalist system and refuse to take such action.

The successful settlement has also shown up the leaderships of the power unions, like Frank Chapple, who surrounded the government’s wages ‘norm’ rather than take industrial action. This must be no complacency as other groups of workers put in their pay claims. The government has lost a battle but determined to lose the war.

Army grabs our cameraman—held for six hours

FREELANCE photographer George Snow, commissioned to take pictures for Socialist Worker in Northern Ireland, was grabbed by the British Army in Derry last week after taking pictures of a clash between Bogside and troops.

He was held for more than six hours and was interrogated by the army, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and Special Branch. His picture was taken and he was asked detailed questions about ‘terrorists’, local organisations and the IRA.

The film in his camera, with shots of soldiers coming to take him in for questioning, was destroyed, but he was able to save the pictures of earlier clashes. Socialist Worker congratulates George on his refusal to be intimidated by the uniformed defenders of ‘freedom’.

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INDIA is preparing for state elections next month, but while the politicians make promises, some interesting developments are taking place within the Indian labour movement.

Like many countries, India has several trade union federations and the politics of labour is closely associated with a different political party. The three largest, at the prompting of the government, have agreed to ban strikes in so-called "productive areas" or departments in any plant on strike. This astonishing agreement means that workers in struggle should voluntarily give up their most powerful weapons. It is part of a general programme by all three unions to prevent competition between themselves, and to avoid conflict with the bosses "in the interests of national development." The agreement is not based on any kind of working unity between the unions; rather it is the by-product of an alliance between the three parent political parties—the Congress Party, the Right Communists, and the Praja Socialists—for the coming state elections.

We think this agreement was fantastic enough. Particularly since the contradiction between the setback without any initiative without anything in return from the employers.

World trade crisis will give Japan's militants a chance

by Edward Crawford

and partly by the Kemp, the89ed secret police.

When several dodgers were used to prevent the growth of militancy in the Indian workers, they were divided into two categories—"established" and "unestablished." The established workers, who were in the majority, were never sacked or made to work even for two or three months' pay. An any worker who joined a trade union put himself at risk of being fired. Only the unestablished workers, who, if they were sacked, were forced to leave the firm and go somewhere else. The big, heavily capitalized firms were closely tied to the banks in the form of debt repayments. So they could not vary much, except upwards, so they could put the main burden of unemployment on the man of small firms in which they subcontracted.

Now, however, this is partly to change. There are several new trends that have started to come about. So far, there are not many new trends, but the new trends will be important. The situation in the 1920s and 1930s that a large trade union, including many skilled workers, developed. Between 1914 and 1938, industrial production increased by more than five times. But even then the workers were held in check, mainly by fixing their heads with rubbish about patriotism and the Empire.

The Minister of Labour and the employers expressed satisfaction at the agreement, then the Minister immediately raised his demands. He reminded the trade union leaders that Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi had appealed for a ban on ALL strikes for three years; and he told them set about securing a ban.

The three federations would not doubt be happy to oblige, if the government could protect them while they did it for work. But unfortunately Indian workers are not so easily straight-jacketed. They will take unofficial action when it is needed. And in any case there are certain federation unions.

The Left Communist union federation, CITU, has denounced the agreement. The Left Communists fear that these continuous political attempts to de-materialize them and to wipe them out physically. CITU claims that in West Bengal alone 250 trade unionists have been murdered over the last two years. But the threat of a CITU appeal to workers of the other three federations makes the leaders of these unions remain cautious.

There has been increasing unofficial action recently simply because the big federations refuse to fight. Two major battles in Madras recently took place outside the union federations. In one, the ruling party of Madras state, DMK, tried to muscle in on the federations and build its own trade union federation. But the leaders of the new DMK union were too quick to sell out to the bosses. There was a mass revolt by the workers, and the DMK was forced out of the factories.

Workers in Bombay textile mills met last summer to try to create a federation of independent mill committees for the struggle. It practiced nothing much came of it, however, because it faced an important change.

If a rank-and-file movement with real organization in the factories existed, it might force the revolutionaries to stop using the trade unions as pawns in middle-class politics, and make them start shaping their politics to fit the real interests of workers. Then, it might be able to prevent the carve-up between the three major federations.
Deathbed conversion to 'incomes policy'

NOW THAT THE MINERS have taken Ted Heath's advice and got their own back, known as the 'miner's wage', the millionaires have been quick to discover the virtues of conciliation, co-operation, industrial peace and the mixed economy.

The Heath philosophy was 19th century liberalism—no lame ducks, the bracing winds of competition and the week-long working week, because it works. But what has happened to this big business, Rolls-Royce was rescued and the biggest and most famous of all—Concorde—was nourished with endless subsidies. So you get the modern conglomerate system which exist without continuous state intervention and regulation.

What was intended was the use of the reactionary ideology of 'free enterprise', a smoke screen to cover up the attack on welfare services and real rates. In this the employers and their government had a great deal of success. They got away with successive welfare cuts and last year average real wages were reduced too.

As last week's International Labour Office Report shows, money wages increased a fraction more than prices in 1971, but the effect of tax and welfare changes was to cut average take-home pay. And that of course is for employed workers. When we add in the loss of earnings to the rapidly increasing number of unemployed workers, the reduction in real terms of what the bosses actually had to pay to the working class was pretty substantial.

Health was a success. He had not lost a major confrontation until the miners beat him. The miners' victory was not unqualified. There is no doubt that with a more determined leadership they could have won this battle. That was his lesson. He was on his knees. Nevertheless it was a victory, and a big one. The miners have driven a coach and horses through the pay norm, and we are why we are now hearing about 'an incomes policy' once again.

The great beauty of the incomes policy swindle, from the point of view of the ruling classes, is that it is not only applicable to the miners. As long as the straightforward union-bashing, 'stand firm and not an inch given' strategy shows no sign of winning, the miners are still useful buffers. Thus the postal workers were battered into submission.

Sense of fairness

When the unity and solidarity of important groups of workers makes the outcome unforbearable to the profiteers, important voices, who yesterday applauded government, begin to deplore 'the law of the jungle' and point to the plight of nurses, old age pensioners and so on. What is needed, they say, is a return to reasonable, equitable settlements that will do away with the need for all these strikes.

There is no doubt that this propaganda meets a ready response. Labour leaders may, as many groups of the bosses have noted, have a sense of fairness that is deeply embedded in the outlook of the best sections of the working class makes them the more ready to line up behind that song. The combination of 'every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost' is deeply offensive to millions of working men and women. So why not an incomes policy?

The first point to grasp is that what is being talked about is really a wages policy. There are, broadly speaking, two sorts of people: There are those, the vast majority, who demand wages and salaries. And there are those, a tiny minority, whose income comes in the form of profits, rent and interest. This minority more or less owns Britain—10 per cent of the population owns over 90 per cent of the wealth. They are doing very nicely.

A glance at the business section of a well known Sunday paper shows these titbits: 'Labourite makes counter offer for Caister confirming our view that the earlier bid was too low. Shares now up 175 per cent.' 'Higher profit forecast for General Wakeham helps shares to a 14 per cent gain.' 'Incubet half year profits up 55 per cent.' And so on and so on. No talk of 8 per cent norms here.

The criminals need to protect and further the interests of Caister, Waldeck, Incubet and the like. They exist to keep down that share of the wealth which workers produce. They reach this conclusion to increase that share which goes to the owners of industry.

Any incomes policy under capitalism is a device to persuade workers that the system is fair and just. Under imperialism and exploitation. There is an alternative—a system based on production for human need, not for profit. The first step towards it is to take this big business government, that requires a fight on many fronts, but the wages struggle is the key one. The miners have rocked the first 'firewall', a smoke screen to defying the Industrial Relations Act, can bring it down.
Letters

Ireland's missing national liberation

I doubt whether Padraig Yeates (Letters, 5 February) can find a statement in Eamon McCann's or Sue Kelly's articles to substantiate his view that they see in the Belfast IRA a new kind of working-class movement.

He says that even if this were the case it is the Official Republican Movement which he wishes to defend and put forward as a new and different movement - the 'stage' theory to which its leaders appeal and to which he appeals in his letter to the County Committee against the Commonwealth Market, i.e., not even national liberation!

The best outcome of a strategy successfully implemented by the IRA will be the reordering within the internationally-framed political and economic structure in the North and East of the island of Ireland.

Padraig Yeates quite correctly points to the limitations of the Provisional strategy.

He will find much that is similar in the strategy of his own movement. But his appeal to the Nationalist intelligentsia is an illusion of a new and different movement.

Free, from control by the capitalist market and trade, is hard to be.

In the case of the Provisional movement, it is not as explicit as it is in the Official movement, but the same idea is there. Otherwise why advance such a limited limitation of the island.

Tragedy

Neither section of the republican movement has a meaningful class strategy for the South. The Official Republican Movement, which nowadays says it is revolutionary - has no demands that would benefit the working people of the island.

It is a tragedy that there is no revolutionary strategy at all, whether in the Provisional or in the Official. This is a tragedy that there is no revolutionary strategy at all.

Ireland's missing national liberation

I was proud of the miners

WAS in London on the Sunday when the miners gathered for their march from the Highgate Cemetery to Trafalgar Square.

The idea was that the miners should be proud of their achievement.

They marched towards the National Union of Mineworkers, which is the miners' trade union.

The march was a way of showing support for the miners' strike.

They chanted with good humour and good will, their pride was evident in the marchers' faces.

It was a demonstration of solidarity with the miners.

The miners' strike was a significant event in the history of the working class.

It was a proud moment for the miners and their supporters.

The March of the Miners

Invasion

Meanwhile, a few people anywhere were prepared to put much faith in the old Kominjant government of Chiang Kai-shek.

It was a government that had never managed to keep in check the rival warlords who dominated different parts of the country.

It had failed miserably in defending China against Japanese invasion.

The main member of the US government was driven to describe Chiang's regime as "just a bunch of crooks".

The Chinese government was facing a crisis of leadership.

The removal of the Chiang Kai-shek regime was necessary for the survival of China.

Obstacles

Mao's model was Stalin's Russia, which had been able to build up industry, although only by denying the mass of workers and peasants the most elementary rights.

It was confronted immense obstacles to the way forward.

In 1948 it was not even certain that Russia's capital had been lost.

The economy of the advanced capitalist countries had expanded enormously.

The gap between the love of the Chinese was greater than the Russians had faced.

For about ten years the Chinese seemed to have believed that a close alliance with Russia could help them solve their problems.

They backed up Russian policy all down the line. Scale was continually praised, and when Kuchiev smashed the Hungarian revolution in 1956, it too was given an unprecedented backing.

But the alliance gave few real benefits to the Chinese. For instance, total aid from Russia between 1950 and 1963 was a mere 600m dollars. Yet the Egyptian government, which imprisoned communists, got 400m dollars in the year 1959 alone.

Bitter

Nor was aid to the Chinese a gift.

Far from being free, Soviet aid was rendered mainly in the form of trade. What's more, the price of many goods from the Soviet Union were much higher than those in the world market.

Friction began to develop between the Russian and Chinese leaders, which came to a head in the early 1960s. The Russians suddenly withdrew all their technicians from China, leaving many industrial projects half-finished and doing huge harm to the Chinese economy.

This time on itrier polices between the two powers gave way to physical clashes on their borders.

Socialists in the West sometimes tend to play down the depth of the antagonism between the 'communist' powers. But the fact is that the Chinese describe Russia as a 'military dictatorship', while the Chinese call Russia 'social imperialism' and its leaders 'the new czars'.

On the border between the two countries there are, according to Chu En-lai, 'a million Russian troops'. There are probably a similar number of Chinese.
Poverty: the key to failure

Western commentators have no doubt influenced by the new cordiality between Beijing and Washington—tended recently to draw a fairly glowing picture of the Chinese economic recovery. They may have been driven by the fact that in the past few years the peasants seem, since the curtailment of food subsidies, to have been allowed to keep much of their produce. This means, of course, in their miserable living standards a bit.

From the point of view of China's rulers the living standards will never be enough. It means that the urban workers and the industrial workers in China are not only able to meet with basic needs, but also to meet with the demands of the workers for reasonable living standards. It means the workers have easier lives.

Lin Piao's downfall shows that in a country which is ruled by a large bourgeoisie, the workers and peasants are more and more falling out among themselves. The pressing economic problems explain their foreign policy. They feel that if they can make deals with the rulers of other countries, however reactionary their policies, they will be able to increase the business and improve their economic problems.

To get these deals they are prepared to offer not only help at the diplomatic level, but also to deal with the internal problems facing the ruling classes. The idea of the Pakistanis and Mrs Bandarinsah proves this.

Friendly

But that behaviour is not new. As we go back in time we find that ever since the Chinese workers went on strike they were accused of being 'bourgeois'. The friendly attitude towards Nixon is a reflection of a trend that has existed since the beginning. The ideal of the Chinese leaders has always been to build up industry on a national basis and to subordinate everything else to that end.

This does not prove that revolution is such a must fail. It does not point to the limits of the sort of revolution that happened in China, which was not based upon the working class. As the Chinese workers had as its goal merely the building of the party in one country, in isolation. Only a genuine working class revolution which saw itself as the first bridgehead towards revolution throughout the world, could have a chance of avoiding the problems that have faced China's rulers.

The Chinese workers could take the wealth needed to overcome the poverty of China from the hands of the ruling classes of the advanced countries, instead of attempting the impossible job of squandering it from the already impoverished Chinese peasants.

Fight for union rights

A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT

by Roger Rovellen

PART TWO

Law aims to smash the organised workers

UNDER THE Industrial Relations Act, as currently interpreted by the Employment Department, it is possible for a union to be a member of no trade union... or to refuse to be a member of any particular trade union. In order to protect 'ions', the Act declares that it is an unfair industrial practice for an employer to discriminate against any individual for exercising his right to be a non-unionist.

WHERE such discrimination does take place, if the employee can prove that he was pressurised into it, then the person causing this discrimination can be warned of monetary compensation.

By giving a worker the legal right to belong to a union, registered or not, the Act effectively destroys the bones of the closed shop.

It is estimated that two out of five of Britain's 10 million trade unionists belong to some form of closed shop. The Act is not merely concerned with hampering trade union organisation. It also affects those well-organised sections which led the battle for better wages and conditions.

It attempts to do this through the invention of the 'agency shop', which allows workers the benefit of trade unionism without their participation.

An arrangement stating that a person must be a member of a certain union in order to be employed is known as the pre-entry closed shop--therefore, you are not allowed to join the union. This is not a written agreement or merely informal custom, and is a legal requirement.

Typically, only a worker desiring a job in this area must conform to the Act, or he will lose the job.

The New Industrial Relations Act does not apply to those who are employed in the retail trade or are employed in a factory or similar premises where the Act applies.

Closed shops exist where the employer has the right to require the worker to join the union after he has been employed. These are also outlawed by the Act.

Seamen

But there is a special provision for "apprentices" and "apprentices" can be used in the same way by an employer to pressure members of the Act.

It must be noted that the principle of minimum wages is not included in the Act, but this is not a great problem for those who are employed in the retail trade or are employed in a factory or similar premises where the Act applies.

Employees who are employed in the retail trade or are employed in a factory or similar premises where the Act applies.

The whole irregularity is then repeated.

The closed shop is not so much the agency shop, as the right of workers not to belong to the union. We stand not merely for the definition of the closed shop, but also for its extension into areas where it does not yet hold.

To defeat this perilous legislation, factories must register as such in which it is decided that if it is ever found that there are non-unionism on the premises, then an immediate stoppage of work will take place. Trade unionists must give official backing to such policy.
Socialist Worker looks at the destruction caused by DEATH AND MINING FAMILIES: CALL DOCTOR'S GRIM FINDINGS

Throughout the miners' strike the newspapers have been covered with tales of picket line 'violence', of miners holding the nation to ransom by their techniques of mass picketing. Little or nothing is said or written of the systematic violence inflicted on the mining community in the National Coal Board's ceaseless pursuit of profit.

In the main this takes the form of industrial mainings, killings and chest diseases for miners themselves. But in many cases these are shared out and suffered by the whole community—wives, husbands and children—so too is the havoc caused by the mining industry.

This is shown by the work of a General Practitioner in South Wales, Doctor Tudor Hart of Glyncynwyd. He has shown conclusively how the gap between the health of the miner and his family and that of the rest of the population has become growing progressively wider for the last 50 years. It's bad news for those with any faith left in the 'welfare state'.

RELENTLESS

In 1962 Tudor Hart left a mixed working and middle class residential area in London to practice medicine in South Wales. In those days Glyncynwyd had four pits. The last closed a year ago.

This means more work for the doctor. When pits are open miners are reluctant to disclose symptoms that might lead to his being taken away from the front line. The lower-paid workers elsewhere or even to being classified as unfit to work.

Tudor Hart is dedicated to the care of the community and research which tends to demonstrate the inadequacy of the present medical services. Shunning interviews and publicity, he has become a legend in the area.

Cliff Jones, compensation secretary for Cyg. Colliery, explained how Doctor Tudor Hart is looked upon with respect by miners in South Wales whom miners can rely on to support them against the demand for the mines.

Tudor Hart has repeatedly pointed to the hollowness of industrial injury tribunals and the administrative inaction.

He suggests a double remedy:

1. We must help men to participate in decisions about themselves at every stage from the time of an accident, which means permitting and encouraging them to ask questions and to insist upon reasonable answers.

2. Any man out for more than 12 months really needs a case conference, which must include someone who knew him well before his accident. In practice neither of these lessons is generally accepted despite any amount of lip service.

What happens at present is well illustrated by the recent experiences of Alan Jones, a 31 year old face worker of Merthyr colliery, in Merthyr Tydfil. He tore a cartilage in his knee in November last year, and got a sickness certificate. He was given £15 a week from Social Security.

When the strike started he was sent back to the Coal Board doctor in Pontycyldyldy who told him that although his knee was still bad he was fit for work.

So he went back to his own doctor in Merthyr, Doctor Singh Gupha, who gave him another certificate. When he took this to the Social Security office they refused to accept it.

PRESSURE

The result is that his benefit is now cut back to £9 a week—too keep himself and his wife and the two children.

But connections between the so-called welfare services and doctors often work the other way around, with employment exchanges applying pressure to get doctors to certify men as unfit for work when they can't find work for them.

But that isn't the only medical problem in the area. Doctor Tudor Hart shows that infant mortality for England and Wales as a whole has fallen by more than two thirds over the last 50 years, from 76 to 18 per 1000 live births. In 1921 the difference between Glynnwyd and the rest of the country was only 2 per cent.

But today there are now more than twice as many cases of infant mortality in Glynywyd than in the country as a whole. The figures show only too clearly that in a capitalist society the function of medicine is to keep the workers in production. If an area of production is contracting the health of the next generation of workers can be neglected.

BRUTAL

Doctor Tudor Hart makes no bones about the reasons for the growing ill-health of mining communities. The really big difference lies in social history, including contemporary history, a part of mass unemployment and emigration of the healthiest young men on a mass scale, together with brutal working conditions in coal mines, steel works and foundries, malnutrition in infancy and youth, remote government—and a good deal more of these in the present than many care to admit.

He concludes: "The health of mining and probably of other residual industrial populations is getting worse relative to that of the nation as a whole. Most of this probably arises from differences in earnings, housing, education and social amenity, rather than access to medical care."

The problems of industrial and consequent social decay, like the parallel problem of urban slums, are a hitherto permanent feature of our society, and as the pace of technological change accelerates in an essentially unplanned economy without agreed social objectives, they may become relatively worse off than they are.

In the wake of the magnificent 1972 strike, the miners can begin to plan the road towards putting this robbery and exploitation to rights. Though difficult in detail, they have a common case with millions of other workers and their families.
When 13 pickets appeared in Dun-"The law ‘impartial’
termine court last week after clashing with police
system that props up the rule of rich and powerful
at Longannet power station, the charge against them said that they ‘formed part of
The court

This is all-important, as it is the
market-place, and courtplace, meeting point between the
ordinary man and woman and the majesty of the law. The
offence may be trivial, the punish-
ment appallingly severe. A huge
smear is made to impress and intimidate the
prosecution by the use of strange
rituals and language.

The word 'justice', which is the
magistrate's court, simple class
justice prevails. The magistrates
are almost always the same, but are
paid for their services, and so are
inevitably local middle-class
officials with class worthies with time on
their hands and

But it is further up the ladder
that the real skulduggery begins, and the real
professional sharks operate. These are the solicitors,
the barristers and the judges.

Straight away we are up against
one of the most 'restrictive prac-
tices' of all time. In Britain, law-
yers are divided up into solicitors
and barristers. Only barristers
are allowed to appear for a
client in a High Court.

This division only occurs (out-
side Britain) in South Africa, Rhodense, parts of
Australia and Ceylon. It is a gigantic fiddle
forcing the client to pay for the services of two
wielders of them cheap.

The 'barrister' services have been engaged, a client is not
allowed even to talk to him with
out the solicitor being present as
well and drawing his fees.

Finally, there are the judges who
really take the biscuit. There are only
about 100 of them, and some of
them are multi-millionaires, others
are barristers, so they are fairly
case hardened by the time they get on
the bench.

They are solid allies of the
ruling class. Most of them, in fact,
are part of that class. Of the 159
judges on the 1968 Law List, 292
had been to public school, 273
to either Oxford or Cambridge.

Take as examples the two most
famous 'disciplinarian' judges, the
most famous for their harsh
treatment of 'agitators'. Millford
Stevenson, who sent the Cambridge
students to prison for demonstrat-
ing against the Greek dictatorship,
and who sentencedJake Proctor
in 1942 to prison for an ex-

The state

As a general rule, wherever
there is trouble in the colonies, or
among the workers, an 'independ-
ent inquiry' is not far behind.
This is a cheap, easy and reliable
method of getting results for the
Establishment.

It also has the merit of seeming
impartial. It is always headed by a
Law Lord, and usually by a
Judge. Take three examples.

In 1966 the striking seamens
had their case referred to an
inquiry headed by Lord Pearson,

by Martin Piper

RULING-CLASS MILITANTS HAND OUT ROUGH JUSTICE...
In September, the company announced an "exciting" new plan. In conjunction with Town and City Properties they were going to redevelop an area in Covent Garden for £65 million. This was part of the illustrious Covent Garden Development Plan that aims to push thousands of working people out of their community in the centre of London, and create flats, hotels and offices for the rich, and a new road to the City, so business men can drive in easier. And the MAMS scheme did not disappoint: it is to create 165 flats, 19 shops and 200,000 square feet of office space as well as a theatre for 1,600 and a cultural and sports centre.

Marina

But before you get the wrong idea: MAMS, who are putting up 25 per cent of the money, are not the only ones who profit from the hundreds and 25 per cent of the profits from the offices and shops, so there won’t be much charitable support of the arts around. Not long after this another scheme was announced: a £300,000 marina near Burnham in Essex, with room for 300 boats and 250 dinghies in its 40 acres. First year profits were expected to reach £60,000.

And on the board of the new company, these well-known representatives of the working class and buyers of Englebert's and Tom’s records: MAMS directors Major General Sir Gerald Duke and Lt Col T. McMullen.

This story is not exceptional: most of Britain’s pop stars are owned by companies, who are using the profits to ravage towns and cities in property redevelopments and are pouring the money of ordinary people into profitable schemes providing luxurious leisure pursuits for the rich and idle.

RISING PRICES are one of the great scandals of our time. While Tories and bosses blame workers for the faults of the economy, our living standards are being systematically slashed by soaring prices, rents, fares and welfare charges.

As the house-party season gets underway, so does the cost of living. At the weekend, two-thirds of the average income of households in the South East was spent on food. For those on low incomes, the strain is almost insufferable.

Compromise

If prices can be held just below the threshold, workers will suffer. If they go above this level, they will have no alternative but to rely on the goodwill of the employers to make a reasonable “compromise”. As long as employers are out to maximise their profits and workers to increase their wages, there must be a struggle between them. This fact is ignored by the policy of “threshold agreements”.

It was born out of a political attitude of compromise that accepts that workers share a responsibility for rising prices.

It is high time that workers fought through the trade union movement for an independent policy on fighting price increases. This would mean an immediate wage increase to compensate for the rise in prices and a more active policy aimed at improving the standards of living of all workers.

This could be backed by a mass scale of action, which provides full and automatic compensation for every increase in the cost of living. Only such a measure will really give any protection to the purchasing power of wages.

Housewives have first-hand knowledge of how prices are soaring in the shops. It is vitally important to draw them into the struggle to defend wages.

For such a policy to work we need to be able to measure the increase in the cost of living. If it applies to working-class families, existing methods don’t do this.

The Index of Retail Prices gives no indication of the differences between the cost of living for a working-class family and that of a well-off middle-class family.

Disguise

The index excludes only the wealthiest 10% of the population from its calculations and leaves out of the cost of living for such families. This is what is worked out in averages: we spend more on certain things than others. For example, the broad pattern of food consumption shows considerable difference in diet and cost.

So the cost of living will go up for the working class as well as for others. There must be a movement to spend more on some things than others. For example, the broad pattern of food consumption shows considerable difference in diet and cost.

This is what is worked out in averages: we spend more on some things than others. For example, the broad pattern of food consumption shows considerable difference in diet and cost.

In general the middle class eats more high quality products such as meat, fish, cheese and fruit while workers buy more meat and fish products such as pies and fish paddles as well as bread, vegetables, especially potatoes and a few beans of margarine and lard. The biggest change is that workers buy fewer things or go without while the middle class can afford their standard of living by spending more of their savings.

Instead of relying on the government’s army of paid handouts, the union leaders should mobilise their own army of millions of workers and file workers and housewives who know much more about the cost of living than the statistics of Whitehall.

Compromise of housewives with trade unionists should be set up in every area to draw up their own cost of living index.

It is essential for housewives to be involved in this. They manage the daily expenditure of the family and are the best source of information about how prices are affecting a working-class budget. They can give the most accurate assessment of how wages need to rise to keep pace with the cost of living.

Based on the fact that committees need not limit them- selves to drawing up a list of prices, but should develop into investigating committees to find out why prices are so high. A look at the costs and profits of food manufacturers and distribution for instance would show that large quantities of food are destroyed every year to keep prices high.

In a call by the trade unions for such committees to be set up it could meet with a tremendous response. They would not be hard to organise since trade unionists, housewives and small tradesmen could be linked through trade councils.

But the policy of a rising scale of wages backed by committees of housewives and trade unionists is a far cry from the course being pursued by the trade union leaders. They are trying to keep a foot in both camps.

On one side they represent workers and half-heartedly fight the bosses. On the other they accept responsibility with the employers for rising prices.

If the working class is to defend itself from the falling standards of living then such trade unions and trade unionists must challenge the union leaders to abandon a course of compromise and collaboration with the ruling class in favour of a real independent working-class policy.
BRECHT'S BACK IN TOWN

BERTOLT BRECHT began working and writing in the German theatre at the end of the First World War. As the doomed German republic moved towards catastrophe so his work moved from uncertain anarchism towards committed Marxism. He was not just a revolutionary in his politics but in his entire approach to the theatre; he turned to the study of class plays for the middle classes, and in displaying the Idiocy of our political system.

The revivals dealt with here, all the Brecht plays of the Third Reich at the Bristol Little Theatre, are based on little-known texts by Kipling and Brecht at the Mermaid, London, are fairly timely.

The industrializing economics, political struggle for a revival of interest in the great German playwright, which anybody found politically effective and artistic way of existence was revolutionary aspirations of the working-class — it was Brecht.

In the Jungle of the Cities (Half Moon Theatre, London) was later, written in 1921-22 when Brecht was 24, was a series of 30 one-act plays at a Munich theatre, his political outlook still evident and it reflects his taste for anarchistic romantic wild and uncontrolled.

It is a very complex play, set in a consequently more peaceful post-war Berlin, Chicago, and deals with the apparently innocent conversation of an idealistic young library clerk, and Shlein, a middle-aged woman librarian. Shlein is obsessed with the desire to dominate Garg, and Garg's growing obsession to try and buy Garga's opinion about a book.

REVERE

Garga refuses to be bought and then the play turns into a bitter conflict of interest, Indignant, Brecht in the form of a boxing match, reflected the social conflict of the time. And in it is in densely earnest.

Shlein's obsession with Garga over by making him a gift of his thinking Brecht thinks he can not because he has been the system of a private trip and renews himself by perpetrating a deliberate fraud designed to bring about Shlein's arrest as a svindler. When Shlein is about to be arrested, Garga intervenes and is, at the last moment, released and goes to prison himself, not because of a letter with a newspaper, to be opened just before his release is due, accepting Shlein of regaling himself on fact, deep in love with Shlein.

The news is then to lead Shlein's lynching, the being a yellow man involved in the lynching mob together. With the lynching mob with Shlein, Shlein and Garga talk about lynching, when they realize that human loneliness is no great than even a fight for one's own real contact.

Brecht was an audience of lynching, not to face with lynching mob, but to concentrate on the lynching, but concentrate on the stake, think freedom if they complete it without being caught.

In fact, they are watching the way and, win, lose, all die. The sheer cruelty of the process is well portrayed but the film reveals the limitations of Brecht's techniques and of his 'non-political' approach. He concentrates on this single part of the story, and the film is a statement of what he thought about the story not an exact cross-section of the Youth/Pacifist/Black movement that protested in Chicago in 1968. Some of the filmed scenes are taken straight from the trial that followed — even the point of having a bound and gagged political militant like Bobby Seale. There is no sense of the political context of the trial, much less any sense of the political context of the whole movement.

The working class appears only in the forms of a couple of union representatives on the tribunal. The only politics is in the stereotyped responses of the trial members (in some cases partly well shown) and in the arguments among the detainees between those liberal and pacifist) who want to try and complete the course within the 'rules' and those who want to fight. The latter are disappointed but both groups die, neither has a solution.

Mr Watkins gives us a caning

PETER WATKINS was the director of The War Game, in which the style of the television documentary, he depicted Britain under nuclear attack. Through Watkins showed himself capable to think about the politics of this situation, The War Game was a brilliant and harrowing experience of official nonsense.

Paul Goodman (Eumolpos, Chesham) was the same techniques to portray America as (presumably) Watkins was before in total and unassimilative, largely because (apart from the notion of the 'Park' staff), Watkins has not used his imagination in the content either. The distances are an exact cross-section of the Youth/Pacifist/Black movement that protested at the courthouse at all of the play's specifically anti-capitalist moments and this helped the more intelligent part of the audience's appreciation of the political nature of the play.

DOMINANT

The play's relevance to the current political situation hardly needs stressing. There are obvious affinities between Macbeth and the Prime Minister, apart from the similarity of names, in the way they ruthlessly strive to keep economic power in a small number of hands. The play establishes more clearly than any of Brecht's other works the nature of the mystification created by the bosses in their efforts to retain their dominant position.

Brecht's mature works like The Threepenny Opera should serve as a model to aspiring young socialists writing seeking to understand and communicate the nature of our present political and economic dilemma. His greatest plays present in popular and easily digestible forms, without any traces of oversimplification or oversubstitution, the gripping, shaming nature of our society and how it can be replaced by socialism.

That is why, for the working class, he is an essential figure to understand and why his sudden reappearance on the political scene is so timely. In the fifties and early sixties, he became a cult figure of the New Left and the working class acclaimed him as his own and used his successful Marxist and political commitment as a weapon in the present political and economic struggle.

JONATHAN HAMMOND

Mr Watkins gives us a caning

The result is a basically pessimistic film. This is the inevitable result of trying to deal with the complex issues of social and political conflict by the method of (fake) 'documentary' description. Without a hint of society, social conflicts, social force, social alienation, Watkins presents a film which is much in the fact of portraying 'types' rather than 'people' in the presence of any political understanding in a film which has been mocked at all.
TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND copies of the International Socialist were printed and distributed last week, it is revealed in the latest report, and means that it is now without doubt the biggest selling socialist weekly in Britain.

The paper’s rising circulation is a result of two connected factors: 1. The increased activity of the industrial and political crisis in Britain, which has made the miners’ strike not only rocked the Tores but has shown every other aspect of the working class in a new way to smash the wages freeze. 2. Socialist Worker was on sale in every mining area of Britain and was greeted with enthusiasm by the miners.

One Yorkshire miner rushed into a working man’s club, brandishing our front page with the headline ‘MINERS MUST WIN’ and declared: ‘Wherever last you see a paper saying that?’

Miners and other groups of workers recognize our paper as one that fights with them and for them, argues its case and presents calm and reasoned ways of winning their battles, And unlike reformist papers through a monthly paper, The Worker.

The second edition of the paper is published to coincide with the National Trade Union Congress on the Common Market, unemployment, and, not least, the problems of the Irish people. It can be obtained 10p for a year, through the Books, 20 Corns Gardens, London £2 6d. Bulk orders to: Printing Dept., 24 Ferme Park Road, London N4.

RUGBY—With unemployment on the rise in the Six Counties, a meeting was arranged with unemployed workers and active trade unionists to draw up a meeting for 30 Claims and Unemployed Workers Union.

Local International Socialist workers in initial activity at Social Security offices and in holding meetings. The International Socialist National officer speaks of the importance of claims workers in the fight against unemployment. He stressed the need for the unemployed to keep up the fight for the right to work, to force the official trade union to move into active fight for solicitors.

A number of Socialist members promised their support and united the fight by employing all means to stop the trade council and to win support from shop stewards, committees and union branches.

Mary Holland: a correction

I FEEL I must make it clear to your readers that I did not write the foreword on Siddy’s Bloody Sunday which appeared under my name in your issue of 24 February.

I was not in Derby on Bloody Sunday and I am not in the habit of writing pre-written accounts of events I did not see.

I did interview several of the families of the dead men and George Hall was one of these. It was by letter that the paper appeared.

Mary Holland, London N1.

Our sympathies to Mary Holland. The field of investigation is one on which we can stand understanding on our part. The article in question was written by Eamon McCracken, EDITOR,
Assembly is a red herring

AN 'Assembly of the Scottish people', organised by the Scottish TUC, met in Edinburgh last week with 1500 delegates, including reps from all parties, representatives of the churches, and the missions of British industries, as well as trade unions.

The idea for the assembly was first suggested by Jimmy Reid of the UCS shop stewards last October. The composition of the meeting, it was not suggested that it came up with any revolutionary policies on unemployment problems. After all, these were not the problems, the concerns of big business and the Tory government, were more pressing.

The organisers had decided in advance that it would be impossible to deal with the problem in a spirit of partnership and, the question of the Scottish TUC, Arts Day, a member of the community campaign, appeared at the Glasgow Trades Council for delegates to 'discuss' themselves into the composition of the gathering.

Rather, a large conference at the hotel had nothing to say on how to deal with unemployment. Meanwhile they continued to insist on themselves with signs about the need to develop 'the traditional industries' and to demand that life be made more attractive for working women who voted in Scotland by granting them bigger investment allowances and lower interest rates.

Demands

The tone of the STUC's statement was such that Sir William McMillan Younger, chairman of the Scottish Tories, could congratulise them on calling the assembly. He made it sound as though it was a matter of the greatest happiness that the question of a real fight against unemployment and the present government's harsh cuts would be avoided.

A few speakers did manage to inject some common sense into the discussion. Brother Walker of ASLEF called for more local government backing, and Genni Rums, from UCS, expressed growing concern at the adverse effects of the assembly's proposals.

Only a few small groups of workers could resist the upward tide of redundancies and fear companies to take on more workers. Those who spread illusions that something could be done in the next few months by any means, that is, like that of the assembly, bringing together to discuss matters, and those who suffer from it, only serve to divert attention from the real struggle and make it more difficult.

The political life and death of Captain Ray Gunter

As the Tory government tatters last week Captain Raymond Gunter, Labour MP for Southend, found time to interrupt the free holiday the South African government were giving him in that happy land.

He announced that he was resigning from the parliamentary Labour Party because he could not bring himself to vote against the Tory government on the defence bill.

Discipline has always been the bane of the Labour Party. This problem of modern Britain was, of course, that the trade unions did not see the connection between what was being done and the effect it was having on the world.

By 1964 Captain Gunter was Minister of Labour in the Conservative government. All his prescriptions could be freely dispensed.

In October 1964 he denounced the unofficial strikes as being a threat to nationalisation, to decency, to the health and to the education of children. In early June, when he was released after he had stopped the present strike, the government of the United Kingdom.

Private army

When Labour published its first radical programme after its unsuccessful election, Gunter was its most sturdy defender. Once again it was his well-known 'trenchant' speech. We should not, he said, give trade unionism the time of day that we saw the complete abandonment of the trade unions.

There was no sign that he was:a man of the world. In 1969 he had a meeting with the leaders of the Conservative government and they went on a tour of the country, but they never asked him to resign. When the government decided that there would be a new national airline, he left the meeting and went straight to the airfield.

Dealing

And above all, he has always been very concerned to deal with the matter of the daily bread. He has always been very concerned to deal with the matter of the daily bread. He has always been very concerned to deal with the matter of the daily bread. He has always been very concerned to deal with the matter of the daily bread.

As Gunter said in his capacity in the Minister in charge of industrial relations, it was quite clear that some of the problems were due to the differences between the factory and the factory owner. The factory inspectorate had been set up to deal with such problems, but the workers were still being dismissed in the pursuit of profits. Nothing had been done.

As Gunter said himself in 1967, I do wish so many of the comrades would stop squabbling profits with one another. If you have a reserve profit you have the means for further investment and further development and more jobs. Undertaking expanded fast in Southend.

WAKEFIELD.—The Wakefield Shirt Company has announced that with the cost of living's £4.3 billion, they will sack many of the 95 percent of its employees on the shop floor who do not replace them.

It was understood that the reason is to help reduce the number of men unemployed, and ignore the fact that most women would lose their jobs. The company does not see it as fair, because the low wages of their husbands do not allow them to raise a family in any other way.

Tenants ready for rents fight

HALSTEAD.—At a big meeting in this little Essex town last week, council tenants got the go-ahead for a rent strike.

The meeting, chaired by Halstead councillor Bill Jackson, was addressed by a leading councillor, who told the tenants he would take their cause very seriously.

The meeting also heard from two tenants who had been threatened with eviction for not paying the rent, and demanded that the council release funds to deal with their redundancies.

They also demanded a meeting with the council to discuss their claims, and that the council not evict them. They also asked for a meeting with the council to discuss their claims, and that the council not evict them. They also asked for a meeting with the council to discuss their claims, and that the council not evict them. They also asked for a meeting with the council to discuss their claims, and that the council not evict them. They also asked for a meeting with the council to discuss their claims, and that the council not evict them.
Miners rock Tories but there are snags ahead

A MASSIVE £1 million press campaign by the right-wing Aims of Industry group will be launched in April designed to influence union leaders from taking part in unofficial strike action.

Advertising copy is focused on ‘Work together and we’ll make it together’ and other slogans, including the ‘stop grunting and rally round the flag for the sake of the country’. But an internal memo from the advertising agency handling the campaign admits the real purpose.

‘The segment we are after is made up of about five per cent manual, semi-skilled and unskilled workers who find themselves on the margin when unofficial strikes are brewing and whose actions in the circumstance could be affected by the type of propaganda we shall be putting out,’ writes David Williams, the executive in charge.

The ‘Work together’ campaign, which will be much bigger than the dilated scale, include inserts in, the impression of Herbert G. Stanyon, managing director of Champion sparking plug company, of Fleetwood, it was put forward by the Tories after the Tories won the last general election.

In October, the Aims of Industry Council agreed to sponsor the campaign. Council members include Lord Rank, chairman of the House of Commons group. Sir John Rees, head of the main Associated Portland Cement monopoly, Frank Taylor, of Taylor Woodrow, Colonel Whittome, Peter Cadbury and Sir George Hartman (s-bmcs).

By December 1970 Henry Ford II and his UK board of directors agreed to ‘vary the main interest’ and pay £100,000 starting expenses.

As planning went on, fund raising was stepped up. By September last year Stanyon reported that £40,000 had been collected and there was little doubt that the fund would reach £1 million by Christmas.

Ford, Lucas Industries and Portland Cement were each thought to have contributed £50,000 over two years. There were ‘considerable deposits from firms they neither sold nor sold for a further amount’ from CKN (who probably double that seen later), from Whitbread, from Taylor Woodrow and from Rank Hovis.

Frank Taylor had agreed to call a meeting of the 10 leading building firms to enlist their support and Whitbread would hold a seminar as a prelude to the seven big brewe.

BOSSES’ £1 MILLION WAR AGAINST STRIKE-MINERS

by SW Reporter

Spike gun

In May, representatives were to meet Mr. Peter Hill, the Minister of Fuel and Power, to see if negotiations had been carried out to obtain his co-operation.

David Wilson mapped out a strategy to achieve this. He said that a bill, Mr. Frank Hardcastle ( plt) should present the additional power to Britain that he is so far away from the In Place Of Solution, of its power. It is not seen it is the Social Relations Act. I suggested he should enlist the support of Mr. Peter Hill and Mr. David Wilson.

LONDON bus workers reject pay offer that sticks to norm

by Chris Davison TGWU

The London bus workers’ campaign is now ready for the off. A lunch room in the Docklands has recently been booked for the launch press conference. Our stickers, badges and bill posters have been prepared in advance to the new action.

William Barteron, chairman and managing director, who runs the Routemaster, from the Yorkshire Post and a chain of bus companies, said that the plans had been backed up with favourable editorials in the local papers.

Aims of Industry has also decided to try to catch the worker ‘in the white teeth’ of their drive to push the workers’ union with its conference, which the workers will be able to take part in.

LAGGERS PROTEST OVER UNION’S REFUSAL

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE: 150 lagers—thermal insulation workers—protested this week at the regional offices of the General and Municipal Workers Union at the refusal of the union to make their 13-week-old strike official.

The strike is a demand for parity with larger workers, who earn £15 an hour more. North-Eastern employers pay the full rates to Northern workers on sites in other parts of the country, but not in their own region.

Six hundred lagers were threatened that if they did not return to work by Thursday they would be given their cards. Despite pressure from the men and from some union officials, the regional office, Alexander Andrew Cunningham, has stopped attempts to have the strike made official.

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottages Gardens, London E2 8DN.