FOURTEEN DEAD— That was the death toll the morning after Monday’s disaster at Markham Number two Colliery near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. Other men lie wounded in hospital and may well be crippled for life.

So far this year 60 miners have gone to their deaths in the pursuit of coal and high output per man shift. Countless others are crippled by the deadly dust disease.

Listen to the words of Coal Board boss Derek Ezra on Monday night. “Safety precautions will be doubled and redoubled,” he told a press conference at Markham.

“But,” he added, “everything that could have been done has been done at the pit on which the board had spent a very great amount of money and which is expected to build up to a production of more than two million tons a year, mainly for power stations in the Midlands.”

PROFIT

There can be no question that the death toll at Markham would have been more terrible still but for the fact that the miners, as usual, found the will and the spontaneous organisation to defy all the odds and bring their comrades to the surface.

But how many more must die?

How many more Losstones and Markhams must there be before the miners—like all workers—use their skill and their tenacity to run their industry so that such incidents born of the pursuit of profit and high productivity per man shift are removed once and for all?

Sinking pound: page 3
Shrinking money: page 7

CLOSE the collihouse door...there’s blood inside. Tuesday, the day after the ‘disaster’ that claimed 14 more miners, and a worker hesitates at the top of the shaft that takes him down to the coal face while the cage is out of action.

Picture: PETER HARRAP (Report).

THE GREEK referendum on Sunday was worthy of the best traditions of election rigging. In a straight “yes” or “no” confrontation, the colonels asked voters to confirm the regime as a republic, Papadopoulos as president for the next eight years and legitimise his exclusive power over foreign affairs and security and the right to suspend the constitution.

After making sure the right questions were asked, the junta made sure it got the right answers. It produced a 78 per cent majority in favour of itself. “Produced” is the right word because its regime through gradual reconciliation with right-wing politicians and King Constantine, majority varied according to its ability to intimidate.

In Athens, where the eruption of the student movement and growing working-class militancy have loosened the junta’s grip on terror, the colonels’ majority went down to 51 per cent. In the countryside, where the struggle is being crushed under the regime’s economic and repressive measures, it shot up to 95 per cent.

In any case, fraudulent ballots counting by hand-picked army officers and polling stations where only “yes” ballots were available made sure there were no surprises.

Papadopoulos: difficulties ahead

But instead of being a sign of strength, the referendum, despite its outcome, showed the weakness of the military dictatorship. He hopes for this year was for a slow but quiet strengthening of its

Towns snub Greek regime

Only seven months ago, General Angeli, chief of staff and vice-president, was negotiating with the king with apparent success and many politicians were shaping up to join the government. The re-emergence of a militant mass movement put an end to the honeymoon.

Earlier this year there were almost daily confrontations between students and the police in Athens, Salonika and Patras. At the same time working-class militancy began to defy the colonels openly. Printers, journalists and airport workers have been on strike, and many other sectors are mobilising.

Despite the junta’s electoral fraud, the message from Greek workers is coming out loud and clear... the struggle goes on.

CLAY CROSS FIGHTS ON: P2/TWO YEARS OF INTERNMENT: P6/DOCKS MASSACRE: P8
Black youths framed by law and order 'mugging squad'

Police lays exposure

The police: muggers at work

A SMALL PART OF the scandal of police muggings in London has finally been exposed.

At the appeal of the Oval Four—four black youths who were jailed last November after being mugged by the transport police 'anti-mugging squad'—and in a programme on BBC television's Nationwide on Monday, at least some of the facts about Detective-Sergeant Ridgewell, formerly of the British South African police, now of the British transport police, have come out.

In 1972 and in the early part of this year Ridgewell was in charge of the transport police anti-mugging squad.

During that period he and his fellow muggers arrested 16 young black men in London underground stations, took them to local police stations and, after beating some of them up, extracted 'confessions' to crimes which had never taken place.

Nine of the 16 men were later convicted in the courts. Four were sent to prison, three to borstal and two detention centres.

Defiant Clay Cross goes on fighting

They include miners, foundry workers, a housewife and one un-employed. They face complete bankruptcy and further sacrifices of as much as £30,000 for the rest of the year could be added if they continue their defiance.

But the defiance will continue. After the hearing, the 11 said they could go on acting as the Labour council of Clay Cross, even though they are barred from office as a result of the surcharge.

Graham Skinner said: 'They will have to evict us physically from the council chamber.'

And Labour group leader Arthur Wellon declared: 'The decision was no surprise and if they want their money they will have to whittle for it. You can't get blood out of a stone.'

What happens next in Clay Cross is not clear. The Tories can put in a Housing Commissioner or make Derbyshire County Council the tenants' agents for Clay Cross.

Enraged

But whatever steps the government takes, there is no doubt the tenants will fight the rent rises by direct action.

The High Court judgment could also give a boost to the tenants' movement nationally. With the first of the Rent Scrutiny Board decisions resulting in 'Fair Rents' two to three times higher than the present rents, many tenants will be enraged.

With four million tenants paying further rent increases in October at a time when prices are booming and wages are frozen, Clay Cross could be the spark which sets the tenants' struggle alight.

Enraged by Hugh Kerr

The decision of tenants associations in the North West to call a national rents action conference in Manchester on 23 September must be important. This conference could see the tenants' struggle established on a national scale and the prospect of big rent strikes in October.

They can whistle for the money

CLAY CROSS councillors from Derbyshire declared their determination to fight on against the Tories' 'Fair Rents' Act on Monday night and blasted the appeal against the surcharge of £26,000.

The surcharge was slapped on when the 11 councillors refused to put up the rents of the 1536 council tenants in the town. Now they face a bill for the surcharge plus legal costs of £2000.

Councillor David Skinner said that Socialism had been on trial in the High Court. He added: 'We will close down the rent offices tomorrow and the tenants will be on a total rent strike.'

Giving his judgment, Lord Justice James said that the District Auditor was entitled to make a surcharge under the Local Government Act of 1933. This was the only way the ratepayers could be protected and however sincere the councillors' motives, it was quite clear they were deliberately breaking the law by not putting up the rents as the Housing Finance Act required.

Rejected

Council for the 11 pointed out that the Clay Cross authority, by not implementing the Act, had actually saved the ratepayers £2500 because of the costs of the government rent increases. It was declared that the councillors should not have to pay the legal costs, but this was rejected.

The 11 are all working people.

Don't keep the good news to yourself: urge your friends to buy SW
Building men for trial for anti-lump protest

FIVE BIRMINGHAM building workers, members of UCATT, three Associated Television film crew members and a second member of the ATC, are due to answer a series of charges of unlawful assembly and breaches of the peace in Birmingham last week.

The prosecution admitted that the building workers' anti-lump protest occupation of the SOS employment agency offices in the Rotunda in Birmingham was entirely peaceful. Howard Smith, leader of the ATC, Alan Anerl for the prosecution, the men intended to assemble unlawfully with the object of securing the normal running of the bureau and preventing the closure of the bureaus' records in a way that would endanger public peace.

This second prosecution of building workers also followed the intervention of the Director of Public Prosecutions who again decided that conspiracy charges would be brought against the five building workers.

Arguing that the three TV men should be committed, Mr Anerl alleged that the TV crew 'created the protest and participated in the incident with a view to reporting it'.

This statement was made by counter defence contentions that journalists had a duty to report the news and were therefore in a different category from the building workers.

Interestingly enough three other journalists who also entered the SOS offices at the same time as the TV men and who were reporters have not been accused of 'creating, promoting and participating in the incident with a view to reporting it'.

Admitted

Under cross examination Inspector Walters of the City Police admitted that he had recognised Mr Roger Busby of the Birmingham Evening Mail.

A statement had been taken but there were to be no proceedings, he said. Inspector Walters also admitted that Busby was now working for the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary as a press officer.

A DEFENCE application to have the trial of the 24 North Wales building workers transferred from Shrewsbury to another court was rejected last Friday.

At a hearing in private with Mr Justice Mans, who was sitting in the case, the defence argued that it might be prejudicial to stage the trial in Shrewsbury. This is where the alleged incidents of damage to property and vandalism were claimed to have taken place.

He also turned down a plea based on the same court and inconvenience to the defendants of a trial in Shrewsbury.

The defence explained that the men would have to travel the 50-mile journey to Shrewsbury every day and would not be able to claim for travelling expenses.

It is likely to last for about six months. Accordingly, with their lives totally disrupted and conditions under which they were convicted, the 24 defendants have been severely punished even if found not guilty.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

MOST, if not all, of the recent depreciation of the pound was unavoidable sooner or later given the long-term effects on the cost of living. Standard of living are also unavoidable and cannot be wished away.

So write the economic "expert" of a Sunday newspaper editorial. This is not so. Standard of living does not have a belt to tighten, does not have a standard of living, does not earn wages, or does not matter. People have standards of living which implies some ability to live a normal life, and their standards of living are very unequal indeed.

Some belt-tightening has already been played by workers and their families. Consumer spending is down by 15 per cent in the last year. What is worse, in terms (that is allowing for the effects of inflation) as compared to the first three months of the year. With prices going up on average at an annual rate of 10 per cent. Heath's so-called incomes policy is really beginning to bite on wages. Most people are becoming worse off while the profiteers get steadily richer and social inequality gets steadily greater.

Last week's further slide of the sinking pond has been seen against this background. Its immediate cause is simply explained. The West German employers had pushed up interest rates in an attempt to damp down inflation. The men of money, big firms and speculators, moved in to take advantage of the free bonus that the high interest rates offered them.

High demand put Deutschemarks at a premium with respect to the pound and the dollar. And, because the currencies of most of the north European countries are tied together, they were dragged up after the mark and so the pound and the dollar fell against them too.

None of this had much to do with events inside Britain. Certainly nothing at all to do with that old soapbox, the wages of British workers. But it has affected them. Every depreciation of this kind—and it has depreciated by around 20 per cent since the end of 1971—pushes up import prices. These are passed on according to the law set by the so-called Price Commission in increased prices inside Britain.

As long as the freeze holds that means reduced real wages. And the government is preparing the way for more cuts in social services here, which may well check or even reverse the 'sink', also pushes up prices. Heads they win. Tails you lose.

It would be comic if it wasn't so tragic. For decades, we have been told by politicians, Tory and Labour alike, as well as by 'respectable' trade union leaders, that the answer to our economic and social problems was more production and more consumer productivity. They have got both and the economic and social problems get worse.

It is all too true. So, international capitalism is heading for deepening crisis. In the short run the only way to protect living standards is to smash the freeze by industrial action. In the long run we need a radical change in the economic and political system and the crazy situation in which more output means more inflation, more inequality and more attacks on the working class is to take power out of the hands of the corporations, speculators and governments dedicated to preserving their interests.

THE JUNIOR TORIES

A CERTAIN political party supports Incomes Policy (read wage freeze), the Industrial Relations Act, the Common Market, "free enterprise", NATO and "military deterrence". It isn't too keen on "the unacceptable face of capitalism" though, and so talks of company law reform, workers' participation and so on.

The Tories? The description fits them exactly but the party we have in mind is the Liberal Party. Liberals are a party that has given solid support to the disfranchised Tory voters demonstrating their dissatisfaction with the roiling inflation presided over by Ted "cut prices" Healey. Healey has been no slouch when it comes to increasing the cost of living, because he cut the spending of the Liberals has supported the Tory government. The idea that they represent a force for change is a joke. The only real force for change is the development of a socialist alternative to the Labour Party.

Police harass republican

JERRY Harte, aged 21, a member of Clann na hEireann, the Irish republican movement in Britain, was arrested by Liverpool Special Branch police officer last week on a charge of theft. It was his third arrest in four months.

He returned to England on 24 July after serving seven weeks in prison in Ireland, where he was arrested by the Irish army. On 20 July 20 all charges against him were dropped.

He refused to return to England on 22 July and told the police station that he would not answer to the charges.

The families of the three men are in despair. They know that they have been set up to suit them. Messengers and demonstrators are being held by special branch police until they are able to pay bail.

the picket outside Blackburn court last week

JERRY Harte, aged 21, a member of Clann na hEireann, the Irish republican movement in Britain, was again arrested by Special Branch.

Police were out in court and was asked to raise bail of £1,500, including two independent sureties by 2pm. He was unable to do this, so the police released him to one of the people prepared to stand bail. He was once more held in custody in Liverpool.

Jerry, married with a baby, worked as a plumber in Liverpool until he lost his job because of the arrests. He was first arrested after a day out on 13 April, carried on an exploratory meeting.

He was held in custody until 18 April, where Liverpool police charged him with an assault on property. He spent a week in prison and was then given bail of £300.

He returned to Ireland where he was arrested by his wife. On 20 July 20 all charges against him were dropped.

He was held in custody until 18 April, when Liverpool police charged him with an assault on property. He spent a week in prison and was then given bail of £300.

He returned to England on 24 July, as he met his wife on her return from Ireland, he was again arrested by Special Branch.

Police are now investigating the matter and may well file charges against him in court.

The picture shows the picket outside the court last week.
ITALY: THE FREEZE GOES SOUTH

WITH the words ‘We must demand sacrifices from everyone’ Italian Prime Minister Rumor launched the anti-inflation programme he launched two weeks ago to prop up the centrist-left coalition government.

But one—a partial 90-day freeze on some food and industrial prices and rents—has already begun. All the pronouncements of the new ministers point in one direction only—the problems of Italian capitalism must be paid for by the working class.

After the short price freeze intended to soften up public opinion, including the trade unions, the government is likely to impose a wage freeze, raise taxes, cut public expenditure, and even allow the notorious police law, which the Andriotti government drew up giving the police the power to arrest people for 6 hours without a warrant.

A so-called centrist-left government planning such an offensive should surprise no one. The Socialists, who form the weak left-wing of the coalition government, are revising the economy and curbing inflation, while the left opposition, in its present state, can only mean freezing up productivity.

CRISIS

The rise in the cost of living in Italy is one of the highest in Europe, between June 1972 and June 1973 commodity prices almost doubled, while the lira plunged in value, depreciating as much as 35 per cent against the yen and some European currencies.

Italy is racked not only by inflation and stagnation but by a serious political crisis. Housing, transport, the health service are in a desperate state. The recently formed socialist weekly Avanguardia Operaia claims the average cost of admission into hospitals in Italy is the highest in the world.

TANZANIA

is the one African country reputed to be socialist. Its leader, Julius Nyerere, and his theory of rural socialism, are often heralded as fine examples for other developing nations to follow on a peaceful road to socialism.

Nyerere himself has taken a firm stand on a number of anti-imperialist and anti-racist issues, but if we look more closely at Tanzania we can see that its so-called socialism is an illusion.

In the first years after independence in 1961, there were many changes that affected the lives of ordinary Tanzanians. Most of the Civil Service posts were Africanized but there was no change in the structure of the country.

After the revolution in Zanzibar and the takeover of thousands of the Arab ruling class, the Karenje regime on Zanzibar and Nyerere agreed to unite the two countries into the United Republic of Tanzania. But the union was far from being more than nominal and Tanzania has continued to follow its own special nationalist road.

But an indication of the means Nyerere was prepared to use in the post-Liberation period came in 1964 when there was a mutiny among army officers and he called in British troops to restore law and order.

The crunch came for Tanzania in the mid-60s when there was a fall in world prices for sisal, the country’s main export. It had been used for rope-making but it was being replaced by artificial fibres. This really exposed the economic weakness of the country for she was now almost totally dependent on the small amounts of coffee, cotton and tea she could sell, and none of these enjoyed anything like a stable market. Apart from a small supply of diamonds, there were few minerals.

In 1967 Nyerere made the Arusha Declaration, outlining his ideas for using the traditional extended African family, the ujamaa, for social development.

Ujamaa villages would be set up all over the country in which the old tradition of helping one’s brother and one’s neighbour would be transformed into a social relationship that would promote development. Everyone in an ujamaa village would work together on the land and the income of the village would be used to fund education, to provide hospitals and clinics and to invest in further production.

Resented

The accumulation of wealth by individuals was to be discouraged. Government and party leaders were not to own shares in private companies and not to own more than one house. Banks and most major industries were nationalized.

The acceptance of these proposals was essential for Nyerere’s political survival. Clearly there must have been a lot of opposition from the groups of people who would, under other circumstances, have become capitalists. The rich farmer class that had emerged in the fertile coffee and cotton growing areas and had been educated by European farmers, feared this increase in state power but perhaps felt too weak to organize a protest. However, poor farmers and their children in the rural areas who had been promised a better life in the towns were very resentful and have never ceased to protest.

He has given real financial support to the Southern African liberation movements. For example, the fact he is building up a state capitalist economy in Tanzania is ignoring the fact that Tanzania is a small country with few resources. The Tanzanian government is apparently being made to make economic agreements with China, India and the Soviet Union which will benefit the people dear to them.

But however, do this if it is to continue to have access to the world market. We know that the way in which China, as in Europe, cannot be achieved by such means. This seems to be the cost of the war and the economic and political power.

In Africa and in the world, however, there is a little small but only when the economic class is capable of taking power will there be socialism in Africa.

Sincere Nyerere is wrong road

by Bob Cant

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Alfred and the links
ONE of the happiest onlookers in the vast crowd of goal-scorers who watched the European Cup semi-final between Manchester United and Juventus at Old Trafford, Athy, was Alfred McAlpine, chairman of Sir Alfred McAlpine and Company, one of the leading construction firms in the United Kingdom. McAlpine took a whole week off from business to watch the match and was careful to make sure that all his employees knew about it.

He was staying, naturally, in Scotland’s most luxurious hotel, the Glenelg, which is said to be even more extravagant than the Dorchester, London, which is owned by the McAlpines.

Every morning Mr McAlpine and his party were driven to the airport in a chauffeur-driven car and flown to Milan in a private jet. The cost of the four-mile return journey from Prestwick to Troon was £60 a day.

Mr McAlpine said he was keen on golf and had certainly enjoyed this week’s play. "To me, golfing is the most enjoyable way to spend an afternoon," he said.

"I do very well," he added, "and I have never lost a game of golf."
Two years of terrorism

ONLY THE NAMES ARE CHANGED

TWO YEARS AGO this week the Tory government, acting on the instruction of the Unionist Party and its political police, decided to round up as many of their political opponents in the north of Ireland as possible and imprison them without charge or trial.

Early on 9 August 1971 thousands of British troops invaded the Catholic ghettos, smashed down doors and dragged hundreds of men from their beds. Many were then tortured. All were intently in dingy nissen huts surrounded by barred wire and guarded day and night by machine gun posts, Aislaton dogs and armed troops.

But in the two years since then imprisonment has been abolished. The notorious Special Powers Act that permitted it has been removed from the statute books. Long Kesh internment camp no longer exists.

The Unionist Party that ruled Northern Ireland for 50 years and many times used internment to suppress its political opponents has been removed from the position of sole guardian of British interests in the north, and the parliament of Stormont which was its private possession has been abolished.

For the first time in 50 years the Catholic middle class is to be given a say in the running of the Six Counties.

Created

One might conclude—and many do—that the latest round of discrimination and violence against anti-Unionist people that have been the hallmarks of British rule no longer exist, and a democracy is being created for the first time under the benevolent rule of William Whitelaw.

But the reality remains unchanged. All that is gone are the old names.

Internment has been replaced by detention, Long Kesh has been renamed The Maze prison, the Special Powers Act has been changed to the Emergency Provisions Act, and whatever the arbitrary power of the Unionists to intern their opponents at will has been replaced by the equally arbitrary power of one pro-Unionist judge who conducts his trials in secret and can even exclude the accused man from the court when evidence is being given against him.

In many ways things have actually got worse for the hundreds of men locked in The Maze. Evidence that it was thus put to use in courts because it was got by torture is permitted in the secret courts, which are the Maze concentration camp itself. Police spies and vouts are having a field day.

The trials mean that the Tories can claim internment is over, and the British press and television have been quick to agree. For the men inside, the fact that they are detained with trial rather than interned without trial makes no difference whatsoever.

The concentration camp is still run on the same lines as before and that means continual harassment, humiliating searches, occasional beatings, denial of the most basic rights, and a regime clearly designed to break spirits, destroy morale and cause tension between the men.

The regulations are enforced arbitrarily. The interns have no set of fixed rules to judge the measures used against them. The authorities can do as they please with the men, break and break and ignore rules without warning or reason.

Ruthless

It is a common assumption that the internes have a great opportunity to educate themselves in the long hours when there is nothing else to do. The Whitewall regime even boasted recently that 100 men had entered for examinations. But even in this area the authorities have shown a ruthless determination to frustrate the efforts of the men.

Unionists are assigned for educational purposes are frequently seized by the soldiers. Men are moved from one compound to another to prevent them following any one course through to the end. The camp library, which it had taken the authorities two years to provide, consists of about 100 novels.

When the army carry out their frequent raids notebooks and textbooks, are often stolen or destroyed. Teachers who stated that they were trampled on and ignored by the authorities.

Most of those interned are young workers who left school at 15. Clear- ly the Tory rules want to ensure that they don’t rise above their station in life.

Recreational facilities don’t exist. One hour per week of organised sport is all that is allowed each man. There is one small minute billiard table, one tennis table and one punchbowl.

Overcrowding in the nissen huts where the men live and sleep has got worse since hundreds of prisoners have been moved in from jails too small to hold all those holding British rule. More join them every day.

There are about 600 men and women in the camp. At night the concentration camp is a mass of blinding light. Every corner is illuminated as troops in the watch-towers train their machine-guns on every movement that happens.

The new killer fire danger...

FIRES in houses and industrial premises in England and Wales killed 771 people in 1972—per cent more than in 1971—when 576 died. As a result 26,000 people were burnt to death. And the number of fires again increased substantially.

Commenting on this situation in his first annual report to the Home Office, which was published at the end of July, the Chief Inspector of Fire Services, Mr. R. L. Holland, stated that these figures were ‘very disturbing’. The number of fires and the number of people killed in them has been rising ‘dis disturbing’ for a number of years. And steady efforts to bring it down have failed. This will ensure that the Chief Inspector finds that the figures in his reports for 1973 and the years beyond even more disturbing.

Pursuit

The traditional causes of serious fires are still with us—cooking gas and main- tenance of gas pipes and the house and hotels which will remain a fire hazard as long as they are built and used for the purpose of providing.

But even since the terrible James Watt Street fire in 1971 furniture stores in Glasgow five years ago, the Furniture and Allied Trades Union and the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Association have been giving attention to a new source of household and industrial fabric which is a particular problem of motor insurance. This hazard has been identified as the risk of polyurethane foam, a combustion product which is being increasingly used in furniture manufacture and finds its way into virtually every household, par- ticularly working-class households. Both

by Mike Miller, Socialist Worker Belfast reporter

The Maze concentration camp, once Long Kesh

Firesmen tackling a recent fire blaze in North London

the FBU and PTA are convinced that it is this material which is directly responsible for a large proportion of the extra fires and deaths from fires.

In their search for low-cost, high- profit products, the furniture manufactur- ers have made a major switch to this material for cushioning and padding. The material has also been widely introduced for the same reasons in the clothing industry (to line and back overcoats for example) and also in the toy-making industry where it is used to stuff dolls and teddy bears.

Disasters

As the Department of Employ- ment is busy drawing up a code of practice referring to its ‘safe usage and storage’ in industry, this will not be legally en- forcible and will not deal with the problems unlinked on working-class families crowded into tiny living spaces where children can hardly be prevented from leaving their toys near heat.

The compound also threatens those who work with it, such as furniture manufacturers and other workers, and those who come to deal with the disasters it causes, the firemen. The Fire Brigade Union is acutely concerned at the increasing numbers among its members who are being crippled by fire in industry as a result of burning polyurethane.

And the same deadly compound is even finding its way to the breakfast table. One of its variants is used to make non-stick frying pans, which when cracked and subjected to normal heat, give off the same deadly fumes.
Questions
and answer
on inflation

Everyone knows that prices are going up-fast. But it is really a crisis.

Depends what you mean by a crisis. Prices overall are rising by about 5 to 10 per cent a year in Britain and even faster in a majority of the advanced capitalist economies.

Even the rate of inflation gets no worse, 10 per cent a year means that money halves in value about every 50 months—no one likes that, not even the ruling class.

But the government keep saying everything is under control.

Surely—but that is not what the ruling class really thinks. Look at how they are actually behaving.

Because they have so little confidence in the present or future value of paper money, they are doing their best to get out of money and into other commodities which preserve values more successfully. For instance, the rich have been buying paintings and works of art.

And more recently the big corporations and the wealthy have been stockpiling huge amounts of cocoa, coffee, tin, copper and other commodities—not in order to use them but to hold them as a money substitute.

So inflation rates are becoming frightening, but are they causing real trouble?

Too true. Evidence submitted by John Palmer and other economists and health bodies to the government recently confirms observation that real commodity prices are on the increase.

The hardest hit are the old and the poor. But in Wales there have been reports of an increase in illness called diabetes due to malnutrition—indeed evidence of effects of poverty. Of course it is not all the increase in frozen wages as well which are responsible. But the increase in food prices could be multiplied by the frosty attitude to the Tories and their press which is inflationary too.

A look at the figures over recent years suggests that the rate of increase in inflation started to take off in this country after the 1976 devaluation of the pound which directly raised the cost of imported food.

For the first 18 months or two years, prices were rising ahead of wages. It was not until late 1969 that the penny dropped for most trade unions and wage claims started to reflect past rates of real wages and expected future earnings.

In other words, wage demands were not inflationary in nature, the other way round.

But surely wages must have some effect on prices?

Of course they do. Quite simply, business raises its prices when increased costs change its profit margins.

Profit margins in recent years have not so much been threatened by increased wages but by the increase in the unit cost of production; this is partly due to unevenly charged labour (side plant and machinery for instance) and partly because of a slowdown in the rate of increase in productivity (output per worker).

If on top of that workers try to maintain the living standard of themselves and their families by buying as much as possible, the bosses will respond by pushing up prices even faster.

If productivity rates have been falling, doesn’t this mean that the workers must take some of the blame?

Absolutely not. Productivity rates have been slowing in spite of a massive wave of productivity deals which have involved increasing the work pressure, reducing manning, slashing safety standards, speeding up the production time and so on. In physical and mental terms workers are more productive than ever.

So why is industry not able to maintain the necessary levels of productivity which could ensure profit margins are not cut?

A major factor is the complexity of the one unit process. One reason is that in the general rise in expansion of the whole capitalist system productivity is slowing down.

A major cause of that is the reduction of the proportion of wealth in key capitalist economies like the US spent on the arms race. In the past this provided a floor for output and employment.

The slowdown of the government policies prancing too much money.

This is an illusion even shared by some on the left. Of course, in an inflationary situation they will print ever more money and this, in turn, will feed the trend towards rising prices.

What Powell really means when he calls for a nil growth in money supply is a massive deflation of the economy. That is, he wants a slump and massive unemployment to break the resistance of organised workers to cuts in real wages.

For the moment the Tories think this politically and industrially too risky a strategy. But sooner or later they will try this one.

Powell also says that capitalist competition can hold down prices. Rubbish. It is doubtful whether competition over worked that way for long.

Today the giant international firms which dominate all the major capitalist economies do not restrain prices. They try to maximise price increases to satisfy their massive appetite for finance for investment and promotion.

So is it correct to say that inflation really have an effect on the cost of living?

Not half. I mentioned massive investment in food and other commodities by big business. This is what has been behind the breathtaking rise in commodity prices which in turn are forcing up food prices in the shops and industrial costs.

Another way in which big business forces up prices is by charging much more to cover the cost of replacing plant and machinery—not at the original cost (the old system of accounting) but at what directors think the plant and machinery might cost given the continuation of inflation.

Workers are not allowed to anticipate higher living costs in wage demands, but the employers can do so to protect profits.

But on food prices, surely genuine shortages are partly to blame?

Right. One reason for the shortages is the past policy of government in America and elsewhere in paying farmers to restrict output in order to boost merchant profits.

But of course the complete inability of the state capitalist regimes in Russia and China to solve their agriculture crisis has also boosted world demand for wheat and other key foodstuffs.

Well what about the future—will things get better?

This is most unlikely. Inflation is now a world-wide problem. And the attempts by each capitalist government to solve it (for instance by credit squeeze, high interest rates etc.) only make the overall problem worse.

In addition, there are new doubts about whether the short-term boom in jobs and output can last. Long before we may return to rapidly growing unemployment and runaway prices at the same time.

What should workers do?

Go for threshold agreements to protect wages from further rises in prices.

Threshold agreements are a fraud. Firstly the government cost of living index understates the real increase in prices that faces the working-class shopper.

Yet it is this index (that is, it includes the cost of Ted Heath’s yacht, Lord Lambton’s champagne as well as the worker’s rent and food costs). Secondly threshold agreements assume that net take-home pay will fall below the prevailing rate of prices.

And thirdly workers only get part compensation (and that long delayed) for any further rise in prices.

In other words, threshold agreements represent built-in and repeated wage cuts. They must be opposed. Only by going for big pay claims do workers stand any chance of protecting living standards.

How can this best be ensured given the line-up of the bosses, the press, the government and so often the union leaders against militant struggle by workers?

Only by rank and file organisation and unity: within industries and unions with the aim of linking the entire working class. The rank and file must also fight on behalf of the weak (pensioners, nurses and so on), They must also fight for rank and file control of the unions.

And they must challenge the government and its policies head on. Not only on wages, but rents, union laws and also on all those issues which the ruling class use to weaken the labour movement: anti-immigrant laws, repression against militants and minorities.

But surely that is a political job as well as a trade union job?

Exactly. Which is why we need a fighting workers’ socialist party. The Labour leaders intend to put up no fight, indeed in Clay Cross they show, directly help the government to weaken its militant opponents.

There is never only one organisation that can be built into this kind of real socialist alternative.

You’ve said it. Join us and help end this whole rotten and unjust system.
WHEN A THOROUGH working-class account of the great frauds and swindles of our time is finally drawn up, Jack Jones and his associate Aldington are assured of at least a chapter in that reckoning.

Exactly one year ago the Tory government was rocking. With the docks employers, the Tories had gone the distance with their new weapon, the Industrial Relations Act.

Five London dockers had been jailed. The docks industry was paralysed and a mass movement to free the five was growing by leaps and bounds. For several days the situation threatened to engulf the government.

To commemorate this great occasion in British working-class history two gentlemen, one in OFF, the other in Labour, issued their own little pamphlet. Their miracle cure for the docks industry was published just one year ago this week.

In the Jones-Aldington report there was talk of new dockers and new ways so that they could not 'compete unfairly' with those where dockers were organized and strong. There was mention of negotiations to ensure that the more profitable non-union labour swindles like Midland Cold Storage in London employed registered men.

There would be a committee to look into the appalling working conditions and facilities (or lack of them) in the unregistered ports and wharves.

But mainly there would be large bribes to get the registered men to quit their jobs and leave an industry which everyone agreed was overmanned and in decline—except for the booming sectors outside the dock labour schemes.

Initial little faith was placed in the Jones-Aldington report. But Jones kept the official strike going for just long enough to get it called off and take the heat out of the situation and thus his union, the Transport Workers.

But what is the situation today—just one year after the miracle cure was forced on the dockers?

The so-called concessions in the Jones-Aldington report have never been implemented. In fact, dock workers have simply received massive amounts of public money to get rid of a record number of registered dockers in the shortest possible period.

By February, when the specially-boosted severance payments were to end, 9000 men who last summer had been willing to fight for job security and to take on the Industrial Relations Act, had been persuaded to pack it in.

There are now only 33,000 registered dockers left in the industry.

The situation in dockland is desperate. The employers, sensing one concession by Britain's biggest and most powerful trade union, have not relented.

Take Glasgow and Greenock—both major ports traditionally, but ports where dockers are registered workers and therefore benefit from the wages and conditions that the Dock Labour Scheme concedes.

But the ports lie strategically at the gateway to industrial Scotland, an area long affected with chronic unemployment. The Jones-Aldington report and its specially-boosted severance money has reduced the labour force by more than one third inside a few months. But that is not all.

Because the provisions about the unregistered ports in the report were only sald dressing, Jones-Aldington has opened the way to even more sinister developments.

Plans are now going full steam ahead to develop a new, rival unregistered port well away from any strategic area to service industrial Scotland (therefore increasing transport costs). It is positioned not only to threaten the registered dockers who remain in Glasgow and Greenock, but those in the North of England too.

The new unregistered port is to be developed at Call buoy, on Loch Ryan near Stranraer where the ferries leave for Ireland. Indeed Call buoy is an old military port closed down in 1960. Now it is to rise again as part of the strategy to turn the port industry back to a position where the employer has untrammeled powers.

With Leith on the east coast, the situation is more or less identical. During the national strike last year Leith dockers piped the unregistered port of Montrose.

But because the trade union leadership crumpled the struggle in 1973 and had the pickets lifted, the registered dockers' picketing acted as an advert to employers about the delights of the unregistered port of Montrose. Montrose is now booming.

Massive

The situation in and around Mersyside is little different. In the period 1971-1972, 1260 freight ships used the port of Liverpool. Traffic was deliberately switched away, mainly to unregistered ports like Heysham.

Mike Wood of Liverpool International Socialists has been taking a look at the situation in this massive unregistered port.

His investigations reveal a great deal about the purpose of the operation and the employers' and government's strategy.

The port employs just 10 registered workers, all members of the National Union of Railwaymen. In addition there are about 50 men permanently employed. The rest are casual workers taken off the dole, paid £2.50 an hour and willing to work 60 hours a week or more from fear that their job will be gone the next day.

One casual worker interviewed by Mike described as follows the situation:

Wages are kept down by factors like lack of organisation, high unemployment and the cooperation of the local Departments of Social Security and Employment, who kindly send their clients along every so often.

In return, the main employer, James Fisher, keeps the Social Security informed about who's working there so that your dole will be docked.

The only represented union is the NUR, with 10 members. At a recent committee meeting of the NUR it was decided that any employee guilty of throwing the employers' produce around would face branch discipline. The decision was presented to the whole workforce in handouts specially photocopied by the management.

Until a few weeks ago gangs in the holds consisted of three men. Management have just come up with the argument that three-men gangs are only appropriate where there are electric cranes. Since there is only one electric crane, the gangs have been cut to two.

Causal stacking and unstacking is very dangerous. Fork lift drivers have a right to a bonus and go like hell. They have been known to knock people over, strike or squash them with pallets, drop whole loads or knock over whole stacks on to casuals.

The atmosphere is very dusty. There is no drinking fountain, though one decent foreman will obtain it. There is a medical room. It's so well equipped that it doesn't even have an aspirin. A casual had to go out for some tocol. He was docked time of course.

Heysham is booming. James Fisher and Co. has set up there and taken over the Israeli and Cyprus fruit trade from the registered ports of London, Hull and Liverpool. In this supposedly declining industry, Fishers have built a £250,000 terminal and are planning to build more.

The value of not confined to sitting there with a permanent pool. And the trade has been all too much. There have been 3600 registered dockers. Now 3600 registered dockers. Now.

In the meantime, theport has a man's job and demands of casuals in the.

Extra

Liverpool are the queue for big and long. And the men at amoment's notice. In London there are the docks. Midland open still and all Jack Jones.

Oliver's Wharf, by the sea...
The industry is quietly being massacred

Grahame Thackham and Ian Olley both work in the Royal Group of docks in London for the same company, Trower. They were intensely active in the picketing and blacking campaign last August.

And as far as they are concerned nothing is settled.

Neither of them are shop stewards. They do have more enlightened and militant rank and files in the Royals. Last week they told Socialist Worker about the continuing crisis in their industry.

IAN OLLEY: The massive attacks on us have brought a general feeling of alienation. Wherever and whatever the leadership were we got through the great picket line. And we felt very strongly.

That’s why we can do it. It’s a dying industry, going into containers, and there are less jobs.

But the truth is this is an expanding industry. New ports and steel plants are springing up everywhere outside the Dock Labour Scheme, and until we get the dockers into that scheme our first target is to bring the lot into the scheme.

Grahame Thackham: Our industry is in the same bloody corner where the men are treated as the industry leaders, and with added advantages it’s much better.

When we were down at Colchester there were three Dutch boats in, roughly 500 tonnes. There were men on the quay working from ship to ship within the kind of conditions required, switching from coal to grain.

We would have 20 men in proper conditions, and if they had been 10 or 15 people they would be let out of jobs or helping to do the dockers out.

IAN OLLEY: It’s not the dockers, it’s the bosses who are to blame. Some of them at Sea Transport are working in conditions where work is done all through the night and 24 hours a day.

They’re trying the only way they know how to get a living wage.

This does not mean that the trade union movement should put up with the situation. But the trade union leaders are willing to collaborate. They don’t want to rock the boat and believe that the return of a Labour government will solve everything.

In fact it won’t solve anything. The last Labour government promoted nationalisation of the ports and they were jobs. The prospect of nationalisation encouraged the spread of the picket and jobs. The employers thought they could do as much as possible to prevent it. As they found it profitable and just carried on.

Grahame Thackham: Trower, Jones, that’s collaboration. The unions were in a position to kick out the government this time last year. They will go on, but once the consequences scare them to death. There’s back to Downing Street for more of the same.

IAN OLLEY: Just look at Felixstowe this booming new port where money is being poured in. It’s based on a rail road.

We used to have a big rail system here in the Royals. What did they do? They ripped it up and cemented it into a service industry and it should be run by us for the benefit of the community.

Grahame Thackham: The problem is that you can’t get genuine nationalisation with a capitalist system. Look at the railways and the mines. They just take away every bit that’s profitable and make the worker pay for the rest.

IAN OLLEY: Nationalisation of the docks under workers’ control would be a first step. It would give us a chance to rid it of the profits and the ex-servicemen and army officers who think they know how to run a dock.

The only thing we really lack at the moment is good, tough leadership. Our paper, The Dockworker, is doing a good job. But leadership as far as the union is concerned takes time. And the one thing we don’t have too much of is time.
A READER from Bristol, K. Lowcock, writes of my article two weeks ago, 'No Through Road to Socialism': 'It is quite a while since I read such crude and feeble reasoning.'

It is worth quoting from his counter-arguments at length, because they sum up some of the most commonly-heard objections to revolutionary socialism:

"If the socialist organisation aspiring to political power is really an expression of the "self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority," then how can it fail to win the "battle of ideas"?" the letter questions. "What landlords, property speculators, company directors and shareholders also have a vote?"

"Hence there is right to stress the probability that sections of the existing state machine would try to obstruct or altogether stop the work of any genuine socialist government. But is it in itself as definite reason for rejecting the parliamentary road altogether?"

"If the political supremacy of the democratic socialists, or socialist government, were challenged by unconstitutional means, appeals could then be made to the workers."

"Of course it is necessary for the majority of the working class to want socialism before you can have a socialist revolution, but workers do not learn the need for such a change merely by being given socialist propaganda, however important this is. Large numbers of workers only learn that they have the power and the ability to run society through struggles in which the working class begins to strip the bosses of some of their power."

Learning that you can run society is rather like learning to ride a bike. You do not really know that you can do it until you are in the saddle. Workers learn the power of working-class solidarity through struggles in which they unite to win partial victories. Once workers can be forgotten quickly once the struggle is over, particularly if they are defeated. Inside

Massive

That is why no steward worth his salt will recommend an end to a strike before negotiations, unless there are genuine guarantees that management will make real concessions. Both the militants and the company know that once a mass strike is quickly once once management has the upper hand.

What is true of single strikes is also true of general strikes. They involve the whole working class.

In America, the power of the engineering factories across Northern Italy was taken over and run by the workers. The power of the workers power was capable of containing the workers' movement, but then the trade union leaders told the workers to return to normal conditions, and at the same time the local authorities were not ripe for a revolution.

The whole of their massive exertions had been useless, they lost faith in their socialist leaders, and within two years fascism was able to triumph with a virtually no resistance.

The British constitution had built into it several features that give the exploiting class ample opportunities to demoralise any working-class movement that threatens within its terms. If we had a general strike, in which the vast majority of the working classes were united behind the banner of which would not mean an immediate election and a socialist electoral victory.

The government chooses the time of an election and could put it off until a few more secure. Meanwhile the law would be used to harass workers, the press would pour out lies, the employers would vitiate the strike leaders, the racialists would be given a free hand. Waiting for an election would mean letting the workers re-establish their hold in the factories and letting the Tory press reason (to hold over many workers' minds).

The only way to prevent the employers regaining the initiative is to destroy their political and economic power—and that means taking action when the workers movement is at its strongest, regardless of parliamentary timetables.

Even assuming there is no socialist majority in parliament, time would still be on the side of big business. Under the British constitution such majority cannot pass new laws overnight. It has to have either got the support of the House of Lords or wait ten years...Meanwhile the old laws would remain in operation and be implemented by policemen, judges and senior civil servants who come from the same class as the owners of business. They would continue to use these laws against workers who attempted to silence the Tory press, to take over factories or to defend picket lines against the police. They would strengthen their hold over the rank and file of the army, police and civil service by weeding out socialist sympathisers.

Big business would be able to use its economic power to increase unemployment, push up prices, cause balance of payments crises.

All this would be quite constitutional, since existing law guarantees virtually untramelled freedom to property owners.

"Constitutional action" by the government could not deal with the situation. The judges, the civil service, police and army bosses would seek every loophole to avoid harming their friends in big business. And they would announce any hasty government orders to curtail big business as unconstitutional and not binding.

Watch-dogs

There would be only one way in which such sabotage by the people running business, the press and the middle class could be stopped—by workers mobilising in defiance of the existing laws and the constitution, seizing control of the press, the radio and the TV, taking lines factories to prevent their closure, putting their own watch-dogs on the managers of industry to stop them moving funds abroad, organizing for mutinies in the army and establishing airfields picked of their own.

This was what the workers in Spain had to do in 1936 to ward off bankruptcy, the Fascist threat and the原子 war. Even though the majority in parliament was opposed to Fascism. A mass movement outside parliament in defiance of existing laws and the constitution was required. Even if there was no such thing as a constitutional majority, and what does it mean to say that Fascism is constitutional in some corners of the world?"

What those who elect to stay are losers, and the only way they will use against us, so they decide we are weak enough to be crushed.

BOOKS

DEATH OF A COMMUNITY
INISHKILLANE by Hugh Brody, Allen Lane, £2.95.

EARLY last month, in an isolated farmhouse at Inishkllane, on the west coast of County Clare in Ireland, Joseph Murphy, a despised man of 53 whose only companion in his mother's cottage for the last 20 years, kicked at the chair in which he had been sitting a few moments before, and died.

The official coroner's report is that Mr Murphy was too old and too weak to be taken to hospital where he was inquiring about his 80-year-old mother who is being treated for senility. Mr Murphy's body was to be cremated and Mr Murphy's mother was taken to hospital the day before his death.

Mr Murphy's family, friends and neighbours have all been shocked and surprised by the news of his death. The local priest, Father Connolly, said that he had never seen Mr Murphy before and that he had never seen anyone like him before. Father Connolly added that Mr Murphy was a very kind and thoughtful man, and that he had always been a very popular figure in the community.

Inishkllane is a remote and isolated village on the west coast of County Clare. In the past, it has been the home of many families, but in recent years it has become a quiet and peaceful place. The village has a population of around 200, with a number of houses and a small shop.

Inishkllane is probably best known for its annual fair, which is held on the last weekend of August each year. The fair is a popular event, attracting visitors from all over the country.

The fair is a great event for the local community, as it brings people together from all over the county. It is also a great opportunity for local businesses to showcase their goods and services.

Squatting goes institutional

RON BALLEY admits the only answer to the housing crisis in the West is to adopt a more systematic approach through "official squatting" to prevent a situation arising where "people are living in squats as a last resort after being turned down for a house." The squatting movement instead of a confrontation with the law, Bailey argues, is needed to solve the problem of the lack of housing for the poor.

The squatting movement is in itself an extension of the council waiting list. The squatters seize housing for a role to play in reducing immediate human suffering within the housing crisis, Bailey argues. Experience of living under such conditions, far below those council houses the occupants would accept—AND some squats are a change rent. The Greater London Council, for example, collects no rent from condemned houses, yet both Student Community Housing and the Commonwealth Housing Organisation collect rent from their tenants and have condemned properties.

Mr Bailey's assertion that the squattting organisation would not only have to provide shelter for the homeless—but the squatters programme—proves itself only as an advocacy role. Experience of living under such conditions, far below those council houses the occupants would accept—AND some squats are a change rent. The Greater London Council, for example, collects no rent from condemned houses, yet both Student Community Housing and the Commonwealth Housing Organisation collect rent from their tenants and have condemned properties.

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ONE FIELD where the British have always excelled has been in the dramatic murder of passion that the Japanese are so fond of performing. But when the gaslights are switched on and the doors to the cinema flung open, the audience is gawping, poisoning, and—in the case of Jack the Ripper—enjoying their immorality.

So it is with the two latest episodes in the Jaws: The Revenge series. There are many clichés that date from the early real-life "Z-Cars," and Watt and Barlow have been allowed, as they become increasingly unreal characters, to investigate the horrific reality of the London of the 1980s.

The technique is tiresome: "Funny you should say that, just look in my pocket . . . But the content is fascinating.

Squallor

In the hold of the East End Jack the Ripper murdered at least five prostitutes, terrorising Whitechapel and crystallising the appalling decay and misery of the area, so rich in local monster.

In the epilogue, Watt and Barlow will no doubt be provided with a self-righteously Softly guaranteed ripper. The game of finding him (or her) has continued unceasingly since the 1980s. My own selection, for socialist reasons, has always been the Duke of Clarence, Queen Victoria’s son—but it’s just a game.

The real answer was provided by a recent production at Stepney’s Half Moon Theatre where the cause of the outrage was shown as the squallor of life in the East End. A mile from the centre of the financial power of the greatest empire on earth people live in conditions of the jungle. Destitute, thirty to a house, ridden by disease, the way out for many was petty crime, prostitution, the gin and maybe, the Salvation Army.

There was another way out too. The anarchists had some strength in the area, so did the socialists—and the Fabian Society. The British Brother’s League, the first home-grown fascist movement, was organised at the turn of the century in the slums of Stepney.

The final horrific irony can be found by taking a trip down Brick Lane, Shoreditch Park, Brick Lane Lane, Albury Street and Leman Street, where the Ripper found his victims, are still there. The slums are still there. The men, the drink, the despair, are still there. Paki-bashing has replaced jug-bashing as an occasional occupation, emotional release. Stepney remains the poorest borough in London, with a homeless population as big as in 1900. Jack has had the last laugh.

Paul Foot reviews the film State of Siege

SANTONI played by Yves Monand, wounded during the kidnapping, is questioned at guerrilla headquarters about his dealings with the secret police and American style torture methods.

Costa-Gavras, the film director who made Z and The Confession, is not popular with governments—not even the Chilean government, which originally gave him permission to shoot a film about the Tupamaros in their country.

He and his script writer, Franco Solinas, spent many months in research about the Uruguay guerrillas and their war against American imperialism. But when he returned from Uruguay he discovered that President Allende’s regime was not safe for him.

Allende himself was anxious to build bridges to the American government and their ‘aid agencies,’ did not want to be responsible for anti-American propaganda.

Then Chilean army generals joined Allende’s government, they protested bitterly at the government’s amnestiy to the maker of Z, which they secretly denounced as an ‘anti-military’ film.

Frontlines about the supply and military operation for the film were quickly broken.

TYRANNY

The Communist-controlled trade union of the nineties, the white loafers of to-day all. Their journals damned The Confession, which had exposed the political trials and executions in Czechoslovakia in the early 50s.

Then a Chilean army general joined Allende’s government, they protested bitterly at the government’s amnestiy to the maker of Z, which they secretly denounced as an ‘anti-military’ film.

Frontlines about the supply and military operation for the film were quickly broken.

The central event on which State of Siege is based happened on 31 July 1970, when D A Mirittone, an official of the American Agency for International Development (AID) was found shot in Montevideo, Uruguay, a week after he had been captured by the Tupamaros guerrilla movement. The Tupamaros had collected several hundred political prisoners in exchange for Mirittone’s life. Their demand had been rejected by the government.

A month before, the Uruguayan Minister of Defence had contrasted about Mirittone’s death and the plight of his wife, the writer Adina Frank. Sinatra held a concert in their honour—that no one Sودuced to (or perhaps interested in) see the film by an ageing and cynical Uruguayan theatre manager was an apparently obscure functionary of the film industry. Everyone, so far, was treated with such pity by the Tupamaros as the Uruguayan state machine?

The question and the answer is the same. As in the previous film, we are not in the circus, we know that Mirittone—Philip Santon in the film—is eventually shot. So the mystery is not what happened to him, but why.

Jack the Ripper on TELEVISION by NIGEL FOUNTAIN

State of Siege

The new State film, State of Siege and Son Ride Again, still maintains a ridiculously high standard after all three years and knacks those horrific soap opera like Love Thy Neighbour into Hercules’ nose bag. The same Simpson, the scriptwriters, made Steptoe’s unmissable. The characters live on the box and here again they catch some of the feel of London working-class life—the hoary funeral wake for the old man (so, the old sod isn’t really dead), a right out at the dogs, Mike O’Shea’s drunken driver who certifies the old ‘un dadr, and lots more.

Death dominates the film—the ‘death ofivo Diana Dion’s’ old man, the wake, the funeral, the march and ceremony are just right. But the essence, that good laugh sharply told, is still there.

Paul Foot

Stevepto won’t lie down

Levine

The Life of a Revolutionary

"We Communists are all dead men ourselves. Does it matter what you believe or whether I shall have to join you in the after life?

But I know, whatever your verdict, we have aalli if you tried to do your duty towards the international, the Communist movement."


Rosa Lewin-Bruhl

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Jak Hamilton

Levine

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These new Plato Press Booklets are:

April 1983 a reprint of a previously out of print book by the British library

March 1983 a paperback presentation of an important work of historical and theoretical importance to British Socialists, workers and students.

November 1983 a paperback presentation of an important work of historical and theoretical importance to British Socialists, workers and students.

March 1983 a paperback presentation of an important work of historical and theoretical importance to British Socialists, workers and students.
IN JULY last year the Tory government jacked five London dockers using the Industrial Relations Act. It was their first attempt to smash organised and effective picketing by trade unionists. 'Illegal,' they said, because every day the dockers spent in jail brought hundreds of thousands of workers out on strike.

The Tories were forced to take on the dockers in an effort to intimidate by example other sections of workers and prevent them from defending their living standards. To keep their profits high they had to keep wages down and allow prices to rise. They climbed down only because they were threatened with a total standstill throughout the country.

Today, while the Transport and General Workers' Union trade union continues to suffer, the bosses live in fear of the day when another section of workers combine with them in a wage claim backed by effective strike action and picketing. Today's need for a deterrent to effective picketing is greater than ever.

REPRESSION

Unwilling to re-enact the events of July 1972, they have searched their history books for repression of a more suitable remedy. Among the North Wales building workers now face 210 charges, including conspiracy to damage property, economic espionage and Protection of Property Act. This is the 13-week builders' strike of last year.

Their 'crime' was to organise effective picketing of building sites using mobile picket cars. Their 'crime' was to demand the highest wage award for building workers.

In the end they could face prison sentences. Already they are being hauled before the courts and are being forced to appear on the television screen.

The financial burden on the men facing trial and on their families is enormous and the selection and preparation of evidence is as large as the strike and the building workers.

The Tories have spent untold amounts of money on collection of evidence and preparing their case. And the trials are expected to last for three months once they start in October. Only last week the Tories added five more charges, this time from Birmingham, to the list of trade unionists preparing to appear in court.

SOLIDARITY

The length of time the case is taking is no accident. The government are attempting to bring the docks and their picket car to heel. The character of any campaign mounted on the docks behalf. This must not be allowed to happen. Throughout the country, trade unionists from every industry must show their solidarity in the form of mass demonstrations.

Already the leaders of UCATT have refused support, financial or otherwise, for their members involved. The TGWU has promised legal support. But remember Jack Jones' role when the five dockers were jailed? Not one word let alone a deed from him led to their release.

Only strike action of rank and file trade unionists forced the TUC general council to call for a one-day strike.

Remember also that months of debate and protest against the Industrial Relations Act preceded the dockers' arrest. The TUC is not committed to opposing the conspiracy trials as it was the Industrial Relations Act.

Vic Feather and Jack Jones will still feel able to continue their anti-Tory talks at No 10 even if building workers rot in jail and millions of workers and their families. But how will the consequences?

There is only one course open to socialists and trade unionists. Of course we must fight in and through our branches, trades councils and union machinery to win support.

For, with or without the support of the trade union leaders, the Tories and the bosses must be made to understand that any attempt to intimidate and restrict the rights of workers to organise effectively will be met with the same determined opposition which freed the dockers last year.

A North Wales Charter Defence Committee has been set up to help, and must be supported by representative defence committees that a national campaign can effectively co-ordinate for the maximum response.

Last year it was the dockers. This year it is the building workers. If the Tories are allowed to use this ancient act to do the job we stopped the Industrial Relations Court from doing, it will be our turn next.

by Keith Dobie, UCATT

London building workers march in support of the Shrewsbury 25

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London building workers, including some of those on trial, united with the general picketing action and called for international support.

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The LIBERALS: The dog's body, the poacher's story

GODFREY HART Copyright 

INSIDER STORY of yet another GRAZING FRAUD

The PROPOSED Companies Act, published last week and hailed as a ‘wide ranging reform’ is a fraud. As the Financial Times itself noted, it will be a means for the man responsible for it, ex merchant banker Peter Walker, the man who as chairman of a large British bank, refused to provide security of tenure to furnished tenants and who made it clear that as minister for companies he would be willing to sell lots of companies before setting the financial future of the City.

Whereas the Committees on both sides of the House, have been calling for a wide ranging reform of the law, this proposed Act will be a non sequitur for those who have been calling for reform.

When the Companies Act eventually becomes law, it will be too late for the man who is responsible for it, the ex merchant banker Peter Walker, the man who, as chairman of a large British bank, refused to provide security of tenure to furnished tenants and who made it clear that as minister for companies he would be willing to sell lots of companies before setting the financial future of the City.

But if several people own nine per cent, they are not obliged, and with no warning, a company can change its officers as being 30 per cent owned by someone else as all the different nine per cent stakes sold have been changed. The same holds true for every shareholder.

All the government intends to do is legislate to feed the reduction threshold to fire per cent, which means that the investor who just needs a few more friends.

The government is also going to give companies the right to cut dividends and to hold the shares of the beneficial holders, and so on.

In fairness, the government is going to make companies file their report and accounts, showing profits, share-holders etc, more quickly. This is too fast.

If the government was only to enforce the laws already in existence and increase the workforce at Companies House, which is all that the records are kept, the law would be observed more fully. It will not be a surprise if we see a further reduction in the reform of company law again. There is nobody in the City remotely concerned about these losses to the government, about anything.

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PROTEST BUILDERS TOLD: GET OUT!

HULL — Building workers on the big Royal dock development site this week became the latest victims of the lock-outs which are sweeping Hull. Workers on the £2 million project at McNab’s site were told to clock off after a protest meeting attended by 400 union men.

The 50 mill men and offshoot workers, including eight scab men, who belong to the TGWU and UCATT, have turned back from as far as Scotland. They are angry at site manager Richard Casey, who agreed to make an extra bonus payment but went back on his word. Casey later told the men to clock off.

There is a suspicion of deliberate provocation, as steel supplies urgently needed for work on the site have not arrived, and it may be cheaper for McNab to have the men outside the gate. Certain there are enough graziers to stop the men back to work, in breach of RPC, deep without shorting, and are not issued with uniforms, even.

The wage issue is very important. Johnny Greal, UCATT steward, says they areAward lesser wages for all House of Commons workers. “We are striking back for the bonz,” he added. “The money is theHumberside bridge which will take four years to build.

The lock-out was called two months ago, and the first strike on the North Bank of the Humber was called last week. It only lasted a day, but could be another one, workers are reported. We have not heard from the building workers on Humberside.

CHRYSLER MEN SHOW OUT

THE International Socialists at Chryslers, Coventry, which formed two months ago now has 38 members. The branch doubled in size during the recent dispute when some members were active on the picket line and in the Ryton Action Committee which, more than anything else, saved the strikers from a sell-out.

The Chryslers branch has given the IS the impetus for all kinds of new work in the Coventry area. It has stimulated IS activity on the trades council, in Marcy Ferguson, in the Hinckley area, and in building up the organisation round The Carworker.

The growth, success and influence of the Chryslers branch has given a tremendous boost to the IS membership in Coventry and to further recruitment in the area. The branch is planning for the future, for example, it is inspired to a large extent by Chryslers enthusiasm.

Chrysler workers have set up discussion groups in several areas, especially among housewives. The first meeting of such a group in the Soke Heath area last Friday — started as a discussion about what was wrong with capitalism and ended with the recruitment of seven new members, four to the Chryslers branch and three to the Coventry branch.

80 at anti-racist meeting

The enthusiasm of the great march on 22 July against government and Home Office racism was swiftly recapitulated at a meeting of more than 80 people, half of them black, organised by Bradford International Socialists last Thursday.

All three speakers were from the IS Sub-Committee against Racism, Nigel Harris, Darshana Tomkinson and Nigel Foden.

Nigel Harris spoke of the need for black workers in this country to fight against racism and capitalise here in Britain — and to put away all thoughts about returning to India or the West Indies.

Darshana Tomkinson spoke of the work the IS branch in Southall is doing among non-unionsised sweatshops in the area, and Herman Williams told about the meeting about a new group of West Indians in the International Socialists in the Brent area of South London.

All three speakers were well received and, six, five of them black, joined Bradford IS, taking the total membership in Bradford over the 50 mark.

The meeting launched a determined campaign in the Bradford area between the TUC and the IS on the Black minority group. A new IS paper, Chingari, is which is written in Punjabi.

Sales of Chingari have been organised around 16 textile factories in the town, as well as in Asian cafes and in the streets. Sue Strutt, secretary of Bradford IS Anti-Racism Sub-Committee, says that 500 copies of Chingari have been distributed, and have been "tremendously well received."

Elsewhere in Yorkshire, IS goes from strength to strength. The Barnsley branch, which has more than 30 members, has recruited three leading militants in local pits, and the Doncaster IS membership, now 52, has doubled in the past three weeks.

IS has set up a Leeds group and a new IS paper, "IS" has been set up in the North East.

Ready for the struggle

TWO Factory branches of IS formed in the Glasgow area before the summer holidays, in the Abbey and Chrysler branches. The Abbey branch is preparing for the major struggles likely in the plants soon.

Chrysler workers are preparing to push their claim for parity with the company’s Coventry factories. In his letter, Albert, the workers voted 2 to 1 just before the holiday to reject a management plan to pay workers the same as those in the plants without a full time shop stewards.

Meanwhile, Cumbernauld IS branch reports that a part of the part in getting the trades council to take up the case of the Stirling workers in the Clydeside factories to charge the charges. The trades council is set up to defend the workers and as the Stirling workers are the only holds of displays of material from the Morning Star and Socialist Worker.

The International Socialists set a new record last week — 113 new members joined the organisation.

DUST MENCAP PUTS TWO IN OXYGEN TENTS

by Thomas Gibbs

AUEW convenor, Raynolle Parsons

HEBBURN-CO.TYNE.—It has taken two men a month to treat in oxygen tents to get the Factory Inspectorate to do anything more than report on a factory where two disabled workers were forced to work in a moulding division.

For nearly two months the inspectors have been making reports which indicate how dangerous the work is for the two disabled men, but have done nothing about it.

Now the doctor is to visit the factory again and examine anyone who wants to see it.

But the proceedings for finding out the "facts" of the situation is causing the disabled men who live nearly every day to be checked every six months on six workers to see if their condition is improving, or if it may be as bad as it was.

The two disabled men are getting to be looked at by a gov¬ernment inspector, but the smoky atmosphere is the factory is hazardous—something in the nature of a killer—because the workers themselves are already this dangerous.
TUC and Heath get even cosier

TUC general secretary Vic Feather told pressmen last Friday that the TUC had signed a deal with prime minister Edward Heath had been one of the best ever between the government and the TUC. From the optimism the TUC leaders were exuding afterwards, they seemed to agree. They have got agreement from the TUC to go on talking right up to the beginning of phase three of the freeze, despite the way prices and profits are shooting up while wages are bound down. It seems things have been organised to ensure that whatever agreement is reached is not added to the embarrassing process of discussion at the annual Trades Union Congress at the beginning of September.

The TUC's Guardian put it on Saturday: "By the time Congress meets, Mr Heath will not have got round to making concrete proposals on what would follow Stage Three, because they are being decided by Congress." The Tories, in fact, seem quite happy for the talking to go on forever. Once every six weeks or so they listen respectfully to the trade union leaders and say a few kind words. But if they feel happy and go away to await further talks. Meanwhile, the governments can prepare its own plans for holding down wages, without committing price increases and pushing up interest rates, knowing that the union leaders will do nothing.

Embarrassed

The talks last Friday took place while the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Denis Healey, was announcing a further rate cut—the next in a series of rate cuts—which is to ponder the rate—on which interest charges are based and which are completely unprecedented above 11%. But there is another reason is that the 50 and 60 per cent increases. But the TUC leaders were merely "happy" to have had a friendly discussion with the men preparing to present their employers' wage packets and get their plans accepted.

It would be all the better for the unions. Leader Hugh Scallon, Jack Jones and John Giddens have warned recently that in the autumn the British will have more than working-class discontent at low wages and rising prices. But their determination to keep the lines of talking with Heath seems they have put up their shoulders and are making serious preparation for the battles to come.

Next week

The fourth next issue of Socialist Worker, which will come out to 12 pages while members of the editorial staff take their holidays.

I would like to join the International Socialists

Name

Address

Trade Union

Send to: IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN
Trouble earlier
with safety gear

From Laurie Flynn, at Markham Colliery, Derbyshire

THE DISASTER at Markham number 2 Colliery in North Derbyshire is the latest in a long list of industrial tragedies to beset the coal industry in recent weeks.

The disaster has been caused by a pit explosion which occurred on Monday morning. At least 18 men are believed to have been killed and several others are injured.

The explosion was caused by a fault in the electrical system of the mine, which ignited the methane gas that had built up in the mine shafts.

The mine had been operating under a cloud of safety concerns for several weeks, with reports of inadequate safety measures and equipment.

The disaster highlights the ongoing struggle for safety in the mining industry, where accidents continue to occur despite efforts to improve safety standards.

SMASHED

At 6.32am on Monday 30 of the 31 men working at the site were killed when a methane explosion occurred underground. The explosion was caused by an electrical fault in one of the mine shafts.

In total, 18 men were killed and a further 12 were injured. The UK government has launched an inquiry into the incident, which is being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive.

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COMPANY

For many years the North Derbyshire area has been a centre for coal mining. The town of Markham, which is home to Markham Colliery, has a long history of mining.

The town has a population of around 8,000 people and is home to several large mining companies, including British Coal and United Kingdom Coal.

The disaster has put the industry under pressure to ensure that safety measures are in place.

The government has pledged to review safety measures in the industry and to increase funding for safety improvements.

The disaster has also sparked a national debate about the future of the coal mining industry in the UK.

Anger as hospital faces the axe

LONDON - In a shock move, the NHS has decided to close the Accident and Emergency department at a hospital in the East End. The decision has been met with anger and outrage from local residents.

The hospital, which serves a large local community, has been in operation for over 50 years. The decision to close the department has been met with widespread opposition from local residents.

The NHS has stated that the decision was made due to financial pressures, but locals feel that this is a knee-jerk reaction to budget cuts and is not based on any proper consultation with the community.

The move has also been met with criticism from local politicians and health officials, who have called for a more comprehensive approach to hospital closures.

‘Spread long strike’ call

TAWORTH-AUEW members at Pentridge Engineering are on strike for three months after being sacked for supporting the May Day strike, are shouting the sound of a second hearing by the Industrial Relations Court.

The firm has always refused to negotiate, but when it first met going to the NICR, the court described the firm as ‘nudged and peevish’, and said it had no choice but to hold talks.

The firm will not listen and is using delaying tactics to get the case postponed. Now it seems it has been caught in an inspection against the strikers.

Meanwhile, support is being brought to the company by Smith Brothers, another harbour company (Director Charles Smith) of Polymeric is a cousin of the Smiths.

The strike ends today and details of the firm's products are available from AUEW offices, 1000 Avenue, Bath, England.