

THEY FINALLY THROW THE TOWEL IN

BY OUR OWN REPORTER

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They promised the government that if the hospital workers get a few pence more, other unions will be told to keep inside the Tory £1 plus 4 per cent wage limit.

The pledge came at a special meeting of the TUC inner cabinet—the finance and general purposes committee—which discussed the hospital workers' fight.

After the meeting the TUC chiefs said they would help in negotiations between the government and the two unions involved in the dispute.

In other words they are telling the working class: 'Stop fighting, the struggle's over, accept the pay law and let us get on with more talks with the Tories on the next round of wage cuts.'

The exact passage which contains this promise reads:

The finance and general purposes committee express the willingness to assist directly in the negotiations and to give an assurance to the government that if the hospital ancillary workers' claim could be considered on its merits as an exceptional case, the TUC would call upon its affiliated organizations not to quote any settlement on behalf of these workers in justification of any claim on their own.

Hospital workers' leader Alan Fisher carried this message from the TUC to Tory health chief Sir Keith Joseph yesterday.

But this further capitulation by union leaders is unlikely to impress the Tories.

They know they are dealing with men who will not fight. The government will hold out until it gets its full pound of flesh from the strikers.

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All the manoeuvring has occurred before the TUC-organized May Day protest.

THE TUC ACCEPTS PHASE TWO

**£100,000
PARTY
BUILDING
FUND
FOURTH DAY**

WE'VE certainly got off to a good start. A generous donation of £1,000 from V.L., an active trade unionist and member of the Socialist Labour League, has brought the fund up to £1,078.

Many, many thanks. Now keep it up. Who will be next?

Post to:
Party Building Fund
186a Clapham High Street
London SW4 7UG



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● See story page 3.

May Day: Final fling for the TUC

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The men who carried the message from the trade union leadership were TUC general secretary Victor Feather and Jack Jones of the transport workers, once described as a 'left' in the movement.

They saw Labour leader Harold Wilson and Party secretary Ron Hayward and asked them to prevent the Party's national executive committee from supporting the 'day of protest stoppage'.

The secret summit represented a major step in the bid by Feather and other TUC leaders to defuse the May Day action of any explosive political content.

The TUC decided some time ago that the strike movement must be prevented at all costs from turning into a political showdown with the Tories.

Jones and Feather in particular have been speaking in top labour movement circles about the need to 'head off the revolution'.

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No real lead was given when the committee met, but Labour MPs were given the green light to speak at workers' rallies on May Day.

Even this limited commitment angered the right. Shopworkers' leader Alf Allen declared the NEC decision a 'wrong move' and joined Sidney Greene of the railwaymen and Frank Chapple of the electricians in opposing the one-day strike.

These crucial manoeuvres are well known to the Tory leaders. They know that beneath the reformist protests, made to

placate their militant members, the union leaders are ready to talk.

Heath and company were completely unimpressed by plans for May Day and the Labour Party 'support'.

They went right ahead—much encouraged by the offer of a deal from engineers' leader Hugh Scanlon—and organized Wednesday's NEDC meeting.

There, it is understood, Feather, Scanlon, Greene, Allen and Jones had a friendly chat with the Prime Minister and his lieutenants about the economy and the next round of wage control under Phase Three.

As the 'Financial Times' shrewdly observed, May Day 'should be the final fling in oppo-

sition to the government which has built up since last autumn's tripartite talks gave way to the pay freeze'.

FOR the thousands of workers who take part May Day will be an expression of the desire to get rid of the Tory government.

FOR the men who walk in front of the processions it will be a last act of defiance before the next round of talks with the Tories.

May Day will give workers an opportunity decisively to reject these politics of class-collaboration and go forward to mobilize the working class to bring the Tories down and replace them with a Labour government pledged to socialist policies.

Workers press

INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTER • SATURDAY APRIL 7, 1973 • No 1042 • 4p

DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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Two set-backs for Stalinists at students' conference

Grants fight still on

ALL THE major political contradictions which have characterized the five-day National Union of Students' conference here came into the open during the 12-hour debate on grants.

Despite their frustration with the union leadership's policies, conference had, nevertheless, earlier voted in a new Stalinist-dominated executive.

But yesterday, a card vote banned the executive from accepting any grants offer the government may make until the system of discretionary awards is ended.

UPROAR

The substantive resolution on grants calling for the campaign for an increase to go on was passed overwhelmingly.

Up to half the NUS's 500,000 membership work in further education courses where their grant is at the discretion of local authorities.

These students have been badly hit by rising prices and are fast becoming the poor men of education.

Yesterday's successful amendment—209,000 votes to 203,000—reflects both the urgency of

FROM IAN YEATS IN EXETER

the students' need for a pay rise and their distrust of the Stalinists.

Uproar broke out among delegates when the executive was accused of lobbying students to get a second card vote aimed at defeating the amendment.

Another vote was taken, but it produced an even more massive condemnation of the executive, with 228,000 voting for and only 170,000 against.

The second major setback for the Stalinists came when conference insisted that all delegates attend the summer re-call conference for a report-back on any grants offer.

The executive claimed they had

not enough money for such a conference. But conference agreed to levy the largest unions to meet expenses.

PRECIPICE

In line with the miners and other sections of workers, students realize the battle ahead is to force the government to resign, but lack of confidence in their leadership has left them on the brink of a political precipice.

A further attempt by the Stalinist-led executive to call off the rent strikes is expected at the re-call conference.

First steps were taken on Thursday when delegates were told there was no legal justification for them.

Decision 'impossible and impractical'—Jacks

COMMENTING on the conference decision not to accept a grants award until the system of discretionary grants was ended, retiring NUS president and Communist Party member Mr Digby Jacks said yesterday:

'It is impossible and impractical for the NUS to say to its mem-

bers, return the extra money to the Treasury. The government has the power to impose a settlement on the grants system.

'I construe this mandate to mean that we will profoundly attack any settlement which does not include the abolition of the discretionary award.'



Delegates in conference this week.

Whitelaw draws IRA into web

IN PREPARATION for the elections to the bogus Northern Ireland Assembly—now scheduled to be held in June—Ulster supremo William Whitelaw is casting a friendly, if benevolent eye, in the direction of the Official IRA.

He has secured the unstinted co-operation of the Communist Party Stalinists, the Social Democratic and Labour Party and the Labourites in the implementation of the White Paper proposals and the creation of a new administration firmly controlled by Westminster and supervised by the army, yet suitably camouflaged with the fig leaf of proportional representation.

He has split the Unionists into two hostile and contending groups—one led by William Craig of the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party, who is opposed to the new Assembly, and the other, led by Brian Faulkner, who is in favour of a political deal with the Catholic petty bourgeoisie under the aegis of the British crown.

The only outstanding problem for Whitelaw was how to secure the co-operation of the reformist and utterly opportunist Official IRA without immediately legalizing the Sinn Fein Party (Gardiner Street).

The Officials have long since relinquished their role of opposing British troops in Ulster and have confined their activities to seeking a closer relation with the Stalinists—and through them—with Whitelaw. From time to time they issue statements threatening to resume civil war, but only in order to secure even more cordial relations with Whitelaw and the army.

For the last year they have been looking desperately for a way to establish their image of respectability and conformism and their manifest desire to be a loyal constitutional opposition.

For their obsequious behaviour they are now to be rewarded. Whitelaw has decided to lift the proscription on Republican Clubs to allow them to put up candidates in both local and provincial elections.

This, of course, does not apply to Sinn Fein, which is still threatened by legal prosecution and government proscription. But even this anomaly, it is rumoured, will be gradually phased out once the Official Republicans are assimilated into the new administrative set up.

This is a double-edged sword for Whitelaw. He seeks not only to integrate the Officials, but at the same time, hopes to split the Provisionals and ruthlessly decimate the terrorist wing with the active support of the new Dublin coalition.

Whitelaw's problems, however, are far from over. Ominous rumblings of industrial discontent can be heard from the shipyards where Harland and Wolff issued 2,000 sack notices to steel workers after the breakdown of talks aimed at ending an eight-week non-co-operation campaign by boilermakers over a pay claim.

Two years' hard labour for journalist

A RHODESIAN court has sentenced journalist Peter Niesewand (28) to two years' hard labour for a breach of the Official Secrets Act.

Niesewand's Press and BBC reports were too close to the truth to be to the liking of the Smith regime which set out to get him. He was arrested on February 20 under the Emergency Powers Regulations and later charged under the Official Secrets Act.

The trial was held in camera and details of the charges have not been revealed. His lawyer said that he had been charged on two counts and had been convicted on one of them.

'Bloody diabolical' was the reaction of Mr Gordon McLean, secretary of the Central London branch of the National Union of Journalists.

Only yesterday the branch sent a circular to Fleet Street offices asking for support for a fund to help Niesewand and his family after his conviction.

One year of the sentence was suspended conditionally.

The assistant editor of 'The Guardian', Mr Geoffrey Taylor, who said Niesewand did a lot of work in Salisbury for the paper, called the sentence 'unbelievably savage'.

And he added 'I think this sentence must obviously be a political one, not a judicial one.'

Labour MP for Derby North, Phillip Whitehead, an NUJ member, described the sentence as 'monstrous'. 'This is a disgraceful conclusion to a disgraceful case', he went on, 'since it comes the very day after Mr Smith has announced in Rhodesia that he wants to reopen talks with Britain.'

A BBC spokesman said they were 'shocked both by the secrecy of the case and by the severity of the sentence. It is intolerable that nothing should be known of the case.'

He added: 'We retain our full confidence in Peter Niesewand as our man in Salisbury.'

Nixon drops his FBI chief

PRESIDENT Nixon has had to drop his nominee for the post of Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Patrick Gray, as a result of the political outcry about the bugging of the Democratic Party headquarters during the election campaign.

Gray, who has been acting head of the FBI since the death of J. Edgar Hoover and is a close friend of Nixon, admitted that he had handed files on the Watergate bugging case to the President's legal adviser, John Dean.

Democrats accused him of yielding to White House pressure and failing to conduct a proper investigation.

He was closely questioned by the Senate Judiciary Committee where it was pointed out that the decision to hand over the files was a breach of the FBI policy not to allow outsiders to see the records of an investigation in progress.

Gray's withdrawal is a defeat for the President, who is being seriously embarrassed by his political opponents over the Watergate case.

Talks move

NEW TALKS with Britain have been proposed by Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith in an attempt to solve the dispute over the unilateral declaration of independence by the white settler regime seven years ago.

Admitting that Rhodesia was entering a period of speculation and uncertainty, Smith told parliament:

'The moment has come for the government to take positive action.'

He said he would try to convince the British government of the need for a settlement along the lines already put forward.

This was overwhelmingly rejected by the African majority at the time of the Pearce Commission's visit in 1971.

Smith's initiative has been attacked by the right-wing of the white settlers and has not been welcomed in London.

Raising of the controversial Rhodesian issue at the present time could disrupt British relations with black Africa, where the economic stakes are now much bigger than in Rhodesia.



Peter Niesewand

US continues war through cash aid

THE UNITED States is accused of scheming to continue the war in Vietnam through economic aid to the south in an article in the Hanoi army daily 'Quan Doi Nhan Dan'.

It sees the visit by President Nguyen Can Thieu to Nixon as 'an image-building opportunity and occasion to beg for more weapons and money to fight the people at home.'

'The only point worth noticing in the Nixon-Thieu communique', it goes on, 'is the design to consolidate the American neo-colonialist regime in Saigon-controlled areas.'

'It leaves no doubt as to the intention of the US to continue its military involvement in South Vietnam and the use of American armed

forces as a means of intimidation and to maintain its control over South Vietnam through "economic assistance".'

Thieu received promises from Nixon of aid running at about \$500m a year subject to Congressional approval.

The Nixon-Thieu communique accused North Vietnam of sending troops and weapons into the south and threatened 'appropriately vigorous reactions'.

Nixon has already twice said that renewed bombing would take place if the alleged infiltration did not stop.

'Glamour' shares in Wall St scandal

A MAJOR financial scandal has erupted on Wall Street with the collapse of the Equity Funding Corporation, until recently one of the glamour shares on the stock market.

Trading in the company's shares was suspended on Tuesday and since then things have moved fast. The Securities and Exchange Commission (the government's 'watchdog' on Wall Street) has accused the firm of deceiving the auditors by forging phantom insurance policies and death certificates.

These measures appear to have been used in a last-ditch attempt to inflate the company's credit balance and prevent withdrawal by depositors. Equity Funding has now been cited in a bankruptcy order taken out by a Federal judge in Los Angeles.

The company's collapse has brought an avalanche of creditor's claims.

Among firms which may have been caught in the Equity Funding bankruptcy are Loew's Corporation, Chemical Bank, Bankers Trust, the Ford Foundation, the Sears Roebuck Pension Fund and the Morgan Guaranty Company.



Anti-picket squad out in force at St Thomas'

BUILDING SITE workers from as far away as Liverpool and Southend joined pickets outside the St Thomas' Hospital site on the South Embankment yesterday.

But the show of solidarity was no match for the huge contingent of police.

Several busloads of police who form part of the new anti-picket squad successfully divided the pickets into two groups and kept them about 20 yards from the gate.

Only a handful of leading stewards from the site were allowed to picket the main entrance as two coachloads of scabs were driven through.

Electricians on the new hospital site have been out on strike since February 1 over a wage claim for £1 an hour.

Their fight has been undermined by an alignment of interests which stretch from the leadership of the electricians' union, Laing's constructors, and the police.

Each morning for many weeks police-styled coaches have broken the picket line and

carried alternative labour into work.

At the same time police photographers have taken pictures of pickets.

Yesterday morning a company official used a movie camera to film the confrontation on the picket line from a safe vantage point on the site.

Delegations included electricians from the Inland Revenue Office at Bootle, Liverpool, who have been engaged in a struggle for more than two years.

A Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians' steward on the St Thomas' site told Workers Press that his union had instructed members 'not to get involved' with the picketing.

'But I've come out because you have to, don't you?' he said.

'We can't let these blokes get carved up.'

Confused vote

FORD workers on Merseyside have finished voting on the company's latest offer in confusion. The assembly plant has decided to accept and the transmission section to reject the £2.40 dictated by the Tory government.

At a stormy meeting transmission workers heard a demand for the re-call of the national committees of the two main unions, the AUEW and the T&GWU.

They should organize a stoppage throughout the car industry in defiance of the government pay laws.

But a resolution de-

manding this and a campaign to mobilize the whole trade union movement in a General Strike to bring down the government was not put to the meeting by T&GWU official Bill Godrick.

Instead a recommendation to turn down the offer was accepted.

At a poorly-attended meeting in Liverpool Stadium, assembly workers accepted the offer.

T & G W U convenor Billy McGuire broke union policy and recommended the £2.40, which is well below the current rise in the cost of living.



Cheng not on students' agenda

THE Steering Committee of the National Union of Students' Conference meeting in Exeter has refused an application to devote five minutes of conference time to the case of Tzu Tsai-cheng.

Cheng is awaiting a

judgement from the House of Lords in his appeal for political asylum.

Instead, the Committee gave five minutes to a joke discussion on a fictional college in Scotland and its non-existent problems.

Cheng is seen (left) with his wife.

Panic flight from money

THE BIG monopolies which dominate Japanese economic life are at the centre of a panic rush out of paper money as they try desperately to protect themselves against an imminent crash.

'Gold rush mentality' as commodities are grabbed

BY FOREIGN EDITOR JOHN SPENCER

Earlier this week the 'Los Angeles Times' reported from Tokyo that 'a gold rush mentality has swept across Japan and engulfed one commodity after another in a wild orgy of speculation'.

Evidence or strong suspicion that speculation and hoarding are taking place has included stocks, land, lumber, soya beans, red beans used in Japanese sweets, animal fodder, silk, wool, cotton, electrical wire, paper for printing, bandages, gauze, tuna, cod roe and membership rights in private golf courses (!), the paper says.

Naturally the staple food, rice, has not been overlooked by the speculators.

These are not small-time operators, but the most important firms in the land.

The Minister of Finance has twice called the executives of the top companies to beg them to stop the panic.

At the first meeting with the Finance Minister, on March 1, the companies denied the charge of speculation outright.

But seven days later the Minister called them into his office again for another—and equally unsuccessful—confrontation.

Customs officers are now investigating the six major trading companies on suspicion of falsifying documents to avoid payment of tariffs on pork imports.

Evasion of £500,000 in taxes has already been uncovered.

Branch managers in Yokohama for three of the four major stock brokers have been arrested on charges of manipulating the sale of more than 6 million shares in Kyodo Feedstuffs Co, whose vice-president was also arrested.

In all, five executives of the three broking firms—Daiwa, Nomura and Nikko—were charged.

The three firms between them control a majority of the trading on the Tokyo stock exchange.

Other firms have received 'warnings' from the Finance Ministry.

There have been wild fluctuations on the stock and commodity markets.

On February 2, the stock market average set a record for a single day's fall, only to shoot up two trading days later to a record day's peak.

Trading has fluctuated from 100 million shares a day to 1,000 million.

An index shows that stock prices have doubled in relation to profits over the three years to last September.

Even wilder gyrations have been witnessed on the commodity markets.

The three Japanese wool exchanges were ordered to close on March 8 after prices reached levels far beyond what could be explained by a world-wide shortage of the commodity.

When the markets were closed the prices had risen

uninterruptedly by over 300 per cent and the trading volume had gone up ten-fold.

Similar developments forced the closure of the silk exchanges.

The panic flight from money has uncovered all manner of sharp practices

which were previously concealed from view.

The 'Los Angeles Times' comments:

'A new mentality has gripped the nation [sic]. The password now seems to be "anything goes" in business and it has assumed bandwagon proportions.'

When the capitalist rats bale out, there's no question of women and children first!

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BY DAVID MAUDE

It was hardly a surprise on Monday that the TUC's proposal for the establishment of a national register of building workers, similar to that existing in the docks, should be met with little response from Tory Ministers, Paul Channon and Robin Chichester-Clark.

The Private Members' Bill drawn up by Labour MP Eric Heffer, which says roughly the same thing, is not expected to survive the committee stage in parliament, even if the Tories let it get that far.

And the building employers, who pumped thousands of pounds into the Tory party during their last financial year, have made clear that as far as they are concerned 'the lump', which the register is designed to eliminate, is here to stay.

'Lump' labour is one of the main weapons used by the building employers in their bid to undermine the confident, even aggressive trade union organization built up in many areas during the course of last year's building strike.

Labour-only subcontracting, 'the lump', now provides an estimated 25 per cent of the building labour force nationally.

Labour councils who have tried to ban the system in London have been given an ultimatum by big employers that they either lift their bans on 'the lump' or the firms refuse to tender for contracts.

Since in most cases major, and badly-needed housing programmes were involved many of the councils concerned have had to back down.

Casuals: 'a social evil'

During Monday's meeting with Channon and Chichester-Clark, respectively Minister of State for Housing and Construction and Minister of State at the Department of Employment, members of the TUC construction industry committee accurately described casual employment 'a social evil that must be eliminated'.

They pointed out that because of its job and wage security were virtually non-existent in the building trade, firms commonly experienced rates of labour turnover of 200 to 300 per cent, high levels of dismissal were widespread and workers found it impossible to accumulate pension rights.

Moreover, they said, it hindered the improvement of safety and conditions of employment in the industry as a whole. The elimination of casual labour would both improve efficiency and make for more stable industrial relations.

The Ministers, of course, smiled sympathetically.

But their suggestion that the TUC go away, put 'more flesh' on their proposals and come back again when the Ministers have had a chance to talk to the building employers understandably sounds to most building workers like the kiss of death.

No one knows, of course, exactly what the Ministers said to the committee. But the claim of George Smith, the committee's chairman, that the issue is going to be 'the subject of continuing activity' by the government sounds a bit of an exaggeration.

Labour-only subcontracting is undoubtedly the biggest source of casual employment in the industry.

In its worst form, 'the lump' consists of mobile gangs of building workers who paid no

'THE LUMP' AND HOW TO FIGHT IT



Building workers marched with the backing of trade unionists from all over the country, in Shrewsbury, when a group arrested during last year's building strike were brought to trial.

income or selective employment tax, who buy no insurance stamps and who hawk themselves round from site to site without a union card.

Employers will often pay a 'lump' bricklayer £20 a day as against the national union basic of £26 a week because he will rush around the site doing any job required, working any hours demanded and thus seriously weakening trade union organization.

Though the rates paid to these men seem relatively high, they are really a source of cheap labour.

A big employer will fix a rate with a subcontractor for a gang of workers. Often this cuts out holiday pay, sickness pay, guaranteed time in bad weather, travel money and other fringe benefits.

After fixing an overall rate the subcontractor—a mere go-between supplying labour—gets his cut by paying his 'lump' workers less and pocketing the difference.

It is estimated that an average employer might save as much as £8 or £9 per man per week by taking on 'lump' labour in this way. In bad weather his savings might top £30 a week.

Small wonder that figures released recently by the tax authorities reveal the issue of more than 460,000 tax exemption certificates as compared with 353,000 in October 1972 and 262,000 last May an increase which has paralleled a big rise in self-employment in the building industry.

Violation of rule

At the same time there has been a significant stepping-up of building industry activity by private employment agencies, some of whom work in total violation of the working rule agreement between the building unions and employer.

Writing in a recent issue of the 'Building Workers' Charter', Birmingham sites'

leader Peter Carter reports an interview between a union investigator and one of the three agencies.

Any vacancies for bricklayers?

Yes sir, plenty.

What are the wages?

It depends on what sort of bricklayer you are. We grade you into A, B and C. if you are in grade A and you bull on we pay £1.25 per hour. If graded B or C, you will get less. The agent on site will grade you. It is possible to be graded A this week and B next, but it all works out in the end.

What happens to my insurance cards?

We have these and put a full insurance stamp on.

What about my income tax?

We don't want your P45. Take it round to the tax office, and they will issue you with a tax exemption form right away. If you prove satisfactory, we can explain how to avoid paying tax. We can work it so you only pay £100 on say, £3,000.

You will need to form yourself into a company, use your wife as secretary, and one can say you're in business. By the way if you have any trouble with the tax you can start Monday, but the firm will stop you 33½ per cent.

Do I get any holiday pay?

No sir.

Do I get guaranteed time for inclement weather?

No guaranteed payments are made, but if you work in the rain you will get paid. We have no objection to your working in the rain. It's up to you.

What about travelling time and expenses?

This is your own responsibility, sir.

What are the hours?

You can work as many as you wish. We do not pay overtime rates.

What about termination of employments?

We can give you a minute's notice—you can do the same.

This gives something of the atmosphere.

Moreover in London alone there are now over a dozen building labour subcontractors, one of which, London and Provincial Labour Hire, openly advertises with the slogans: 'Payments to the men are our sole responsibility' and 'No National Health insurance, No SET, No graduated pension or holiday stamps and no CITB [training board] levy'.

London and Provincial has about 100 self-employed men on its books and hires them out by the hour. Rates are: bricklayers 160p, labourers 105p—plus a 10 per cent surcharge on the total bill.

The company, which as a limited liability company claims exemption from deducting 30 per cent from the pay of men not making tax returns, says it and other concerns like it have regularized 'lump' labour.

The TUC's main proposals for dealing with 'the lump' are a public inquiry into the problem of casual labour and the creation of a construction industry Manpower Board.

Registration, says the memorandum submitted to the Tory Ministers on Monday, is 'an essential precondition' of the move towards decasualization of the industry.

The committee also proposes moves towards country-wide framework agreements, a public procurement agency to ensure a steady flow of work and a stable labour force for the industry, and insertion of clauses in public contracts outlawing 'the lump'.

According to the TUC, the Phelps-Brown report of 1968 showed that the problem of casual labour is most serious among large and medium-sized civil engineering and building companies and among some of the smaller specialist building concerns.

Decasualization 'would improve both the efficiency of the industry and the working conditions in the industry and would contribute to the development of stable industrial relations', the memorandum says.

Labour-only subcontracting is a 'corrupting influence' on the industry and, says the TUC it is clear that the new tax rules introduced in 1971 are doing nothing to eradicate it.

The ultimate aims of the proposed register of employers and workers would be to act as a job machine service, to control entry into the industry of both companies and workers, to provide fall-back pay for workers temporarily out of a job and 'perhaps' to facilitate the function of a quality licensing system for companies.

Although it is recognized it would take some time for a register to build a comprehensive record of the industry, it should cover all companies, and all workers should be registered by skill.

No call for nationalization

The TUC says the register and the Manpower Board could be financed out of the surplus of the Building and Civil Engineering Holidays with Pay Scheme.

A public inquiry is required 'with the specific task of proposing a firm programme for decasualizing the Construction Industry'. But, says the TUC, such inquiries are of little use unless there is provision made to follow up the recommendations.

The government could do more to encourage decasualization by 'greater co-ordination and scheduling of government contracts in construction to maintain a steady workload and stable workforce'.

In addition, there should be clauses in public contracts to specify that labour employed by the main contractor and specialist subcontractors (not including labour-only subcontracting) should be not less than a certain percentage employed on a permanent basis. The TUC suggests a starting figure of 60 per cent, rising annually.

Nowhere in this reformist screed do the building union leaders call for the nationalization of the building industry under workers' control. Yet this is the only way to really end the employers' attacks on wages, conditions and organization—of which 'the lump' is merely the most concentrated expression.

And neither was nationalization anywhere mentioned in the policy statement agreed by the recent national conference organized by the Communist Party-backed 'Building Workers' Charter' in Birmingham.

This is the policy on which the CP would like building workers to fight their current campaign of industrial action and political pressure to end 'the lump', which is scheduled to culminate in a nationally-supported strike on June 7.

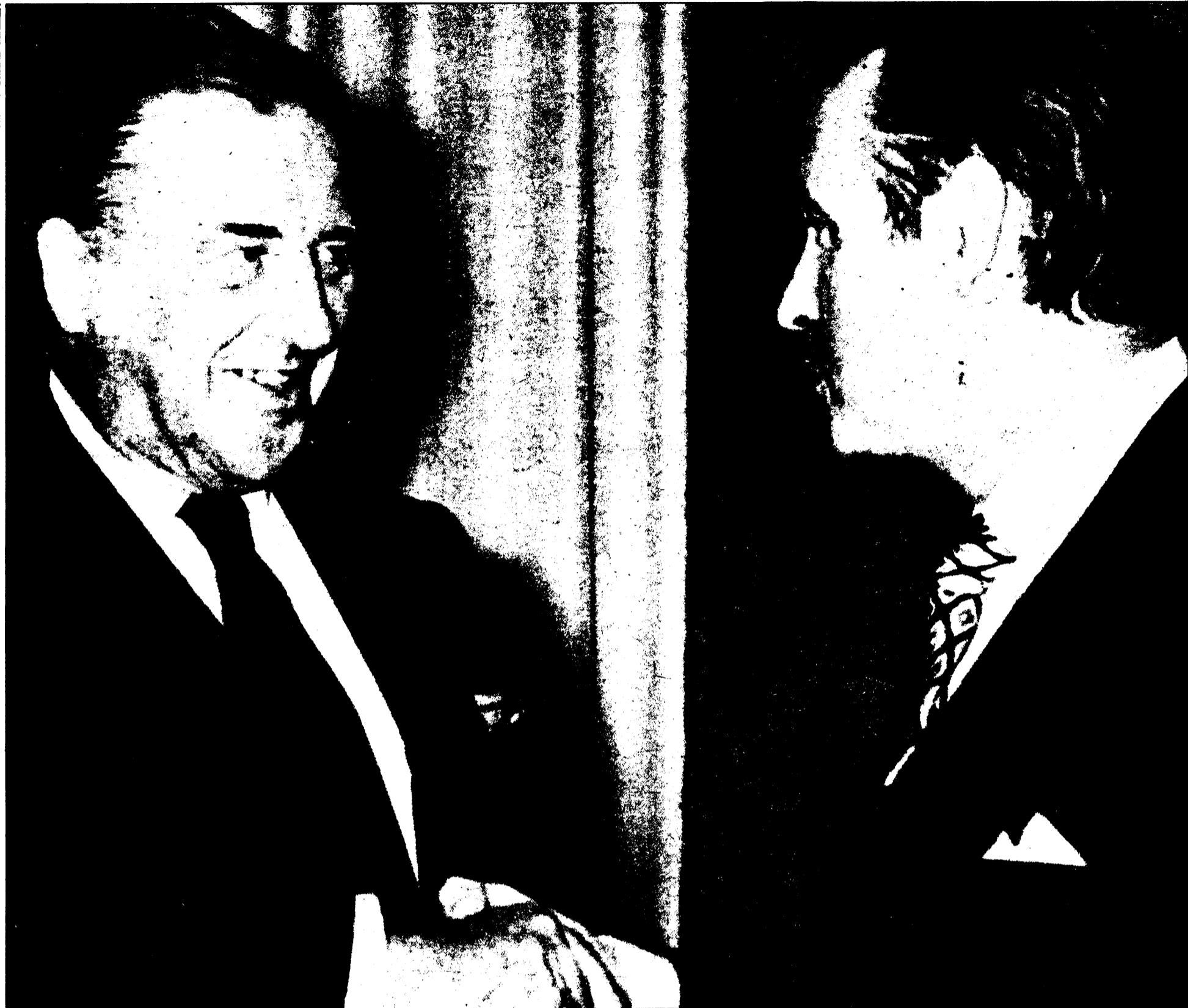
The policy statement of the 'Charter' conference agreed that: 'Conference must reflect the growing mood of workers throughout industry to campaign for an end to this Tory administration and a return to a Labour government pledge to socialist policies'.

But how this is to be achieved is left as vague as how 'the lump' is to be got rid of.

Clearly there can be no 'campaign for an end to this Tory government' which does not confront the central political issue: force the TUC to call a General Strike to make the Tories resign.

And similarly a campaign for registration of building workers, without the nationalization of the building industry under workers' control, can only foster dangerous reformist illusions.

General Strike to force the Tories to resign and replace them with a Labour government pledged to nationalization of the building industry under workers' control—that must be the policy for all building workers today.



THE LABOUR 'LEFTS' AND SPAIN

BY JUAN GARCIA

After the impassioned attack by Labour Party leader Harold Wilson against the Franco regime at the last party conference, protesting against repression in Spain has become very fashionable among certain radicals.

The Labour Party Young Socialists have run a long protest campaign against political prisoners in Spain, sponsored by engineers' president Hugh Scanlon, transport union secretary Jack Jones, and (of course) Anthony Wedgwood Benn.

The Labour Party has established a 'Spanish Democrats' Defence Committee'.

The Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists have always been in the vanguard of the defence of the Spanish working class. But it has been a defence based on principle.

There has been firm recognition that the best way of fighting against the Franco regime is through the struggle against the Tory plans for corporatism in Britain.

This fight has always been united with the struggle to build the Trotskyist movement in Spain.

The protest of the Labour Party, on the other hand, has been anchored in the traditions of radicalism, particularly in the remnants of the Popular Front of the 1930s.

In this way, strong words against Franco are backed by

... complete collaboration with Tory corporatism.

The defence of the Carabanchel Ten — alleged members of the illegal workers' commissions who face 15 to 20-year jail sentences—has become a step on the road to the European parliament and the Common Market.

The British 'left' is at last doing what the New Left wanted it to do—become more European. The case of Camacho and his companions is an excellent opportunity to show friends in the Italian, French communist and social-democratic parties that they too are good European democrats.

It was in this spirit that those intrepid socialists, Michael Foot, MP, for Ebbw Vale, and Will Paynter, ex-president of the National Union of Miners, ex-leading member of the Communist Party and one-time participant in the corporatist Commission of Industrial Relations, flew to Madrid on March 29 on a fact-finding mission.

'We were surprised to get in so easily', Mr Foot and Mr Paynter told a Press conference at Transport House after their return on March 31. 'But we didn't announce that we were going beforehand...'

Foot revealed that they had discovered that repression was on the increase in Spain, but there was tremendous courage and spirit in the opposition—'some splendid fellows'.

Dissatisfaction had even reached the bishops who were circulating a petition for the



Michael Foot (left) and Will Paynter—two visitors to Spain. Above: Henry Ford II with the Spanish Minister of Industry. Ford's are investing £2m in Spain to take advantage of cheap labour under the fascist state.

release of the ten workers in the Carabanchel jail, Madrid.

With off-hand cynicism, he added: 'Statistics show that more illegal strikes took place in Spain last year than anywhere else in Europe—although they tell me strikes are illegal here now.'

That was Foot on April 1, when Phase Two became law.

Will Paynter enthused about the 'liberal industrialists' in Spain: 'These men realize that if Spain is to join Europe, there must be some changes, more in the way of democracy...'

But he was unable to give any indication of the whereabouts of these gentlemen.

After all, the democratic capitalists who run the Seat car plant in Barcelona and Citroën in Vigo have never shown any dismay when workers in their factories have been shot by police.

Indications of what could be done to fight Franco were nonexistent. Consultations are necessary with trade union and Labour Party leaders: 'We must not rush ahead. Anyway the people we saw in Spain were terribly pleased that we were taking an interest and want the facts to get known outside of Spain.'

The fascists do not waste their time. Foot noted that the Spanish police had confiscated

the passport of Camacho's wife shortly after she had addressed a mass solidarity rally in Paris.

Tom McNally of the international department of the Labour Party stepped in to explain why workers in Britain should be concerned about Spain:

'Ford's are going to invest £2m in Spain because there are no unions. That is being taken from Dagenham. If there was more democracy in Spain, then Ford's might keep their money here.'

The Labour Party 'lefts', like the Spanish Communist Party, are using the Carabanchel Ten as a cover-up for their own opportunism and capitulation to the requirements of European capital.

Thousands of workers, from Baker Perkins in Peterborough, to the Renault plant in Boulogne-Billancourt, France, have supported the demand for the release of the Carabanchel Ten and the end of the Franco regime.

But this cannot be separated from the struggle against the Heath and Pompidou governments, which want to destroy the rights of trade unionists in Britain and France.

The construction of a revolutionary, Trotskyist, leadership in the European working class against the collaboration of Stalinism and social democracy in the capitalist conspiracy of the Common Market is the only way to ensure that the labour and trade union organizations and their members are defended.



FOOD: VANDALISM BY LAW

BY BERNARD FRANKS

The recent admission by some Tory and Labour MPs that western European beef prices have been forced up by wholesale slaughter of cows reveals only the tip of the iceberg as far as Common Market destruction of food is concerned.

An entire system of legalized vandalism is built into EEC agricultural laws which now apply to Britain.

Under this legislation each EEC country must set up organizations to control and supervise the 'denaturing' of any food alleged to be in surplus.

Denaturing is the system of deliberate contamination to make it unfit for human consumption.

The resulting substance can then be sold only as animal feed or as raw material for some industrial process.

The methods to be used in denaturing are also laid down by law. They are:

'Treatment with an approved dye, tainting with fish oil or mixing with a recognized animal meal.'

The process must be carried out under licence and in the presence of an inspector. Farmers are paid a premium if they denature large enough quantities.

At the moment warehouse and farm premises up and down the country are being examined for suitability as denaturing premises.

The rules laying down the procedure and amounts of dye, etc. to use are strict.

For example, the regulation for sugar intended for live-

stock feeds states that:

1. The member-states shall appoint competent agencies to supervise denaturing and ensure that the denatured sugar is only used for animal feed.

2. Denaturing shall be carried out in establishments which are approved by the member-state in which the denaturing is carried out. The member-states shall only approve factories manufacturing sugar or compound feeding stuffs, or warehouses in which denaturing can be supervised efficiently.

3. The minimum quantity to be denatured in one place shall be 20 metric tons.

(Article 19, Regulation 100/72/EEC January 14, 1972.)

In the denaturing process each 100 kilogrammes of sugar must be mixed with 'either (a) 2.5 kilogrammes of fish meal and one kilogramme of high

viscosity swelling starch or (b) 4 kilogrammes of chalk and 1 kilogramme of fenugreek flour.'

If the sugar is to be used for feeding bees, then ferric oxide or a mixture of garlic powder and charcoal may be used.

Fenugreek flour is described as a product 'with a characteristic smell'. The starch is added to prevent filtration. One of the reasons for strict control of denaturing is that enterprising farmers may find ways of un-denaturing their product and then selling it as normal produce or presenting it again for a second denaturing payment.

Incidentally, the 'animal meal' mentioned above as a denaturing substance does not refer to its use for feeding animals, but to its content. The sugar regulation describes it as a product 'obtained by drying and grinding carcasses

and parts of carcasses of warm-blooded land animals which have undergone high pressure steam treatment and which may then have been de-fatted by extraction'.

In this way the authorities kill two birds with one stone—contaminating sugar with a product which itself is a product of denaturing.

The supervising and controlling body for denaturing in Britain is the Agricultural Produce Intervention Board.

The board itself employs 400 staff centrally, but its operations in the field are carried out by two other organizations—The Home Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA) and the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) acting as the Board's agents.

Since February 1 this year the Board has been a buyer in the market place for certain cereals, dairy products, beef and pigmeat.



The Rt. Hon. JOSEPH GOBBI, M.P.





Far left: Dumping onions—one means of 'intervention' by the EEC. Centre: Sicco Mansholt—forecasts 25-30 per cent increase in farm prices. Left: Joseph Godber, Tory Agriculture Minister—recently announced a payment of £200 an acre to growers who put grubbers in their apple and pear orchards.

the trees being grubbed up to reduce future crops.

Cereals, meat and dairy products are bought up by the Intervention Authorities and 'stored'. Alternatively, some controlling body for a particular product is paid to do this.

Eggs are processed into powder form so they can be stored or used in industry. Grades of fruit and vegetables are manipulated to ensure that a greater mass of alleged second grade produce is rejected for sale.

Subsidies are paid for manufacturers to process milk, rice and tomatoes, also to sell abroad at the lower world prices, the difference from the EEC prices being made up by the Boards.

Import levies ensure that cheaper produce from outside the EEC cannot be brought in to undercut the home produce, a situation which has brought a new crisis for many underdeveloped countries which up to now have sold their crops in Europe.

The EEC figures for the destruction of some fruits and vegetables in 1968 are given in the table below.

In the following year 250,000 cows were slaughtered as a first step towards alleviating the 400,000 ton so-called 'butter-mountain'. The cost of this culling was enormous as at one time farmers were being paid £100 for each cow killed. To date 1.4m cows have been killed off in the EEC—6 per cent of the herd. No cows means no calves, so it is hardly surprising that there is a beef shortage.

Grants for modernization benefit only the largest and richest capitalist farmers. The same applies to price rises.

It is estimated that a 5-per cent rise for cereals increases the income of a 50-acre farmer by 8 per cent, but that of a man with 250 acres, by 18 per cent, because it is easier to increase production on the larger farm.

In Britain, Minister of Agriculture Joseph Godber recently announced an apple and pear-grubbing payment of £200 an acre to growers, subject to re-planting restrictions and in addition to standard grubbing costs. Some fruit-growers were disappointed that this could not be applied to back-garden growers as this cultivation is widespread and has a sizeable effect on the market.

The egg-laying flock was cut by a million (2.7 per cent) in 1972, which is expected to push up the price of eggs. On the other hand, there was an extra 4.8 per cent table fowls reared. But prices have been raised anyway 'in line with the general rise in meat prices'.

Butter and cheese supplies are both being stockpiled to keep them off the market. At the same time, measures have been taken to stem the 'flood' of surplus butter from other EEC countries.

During the last two years butter consumption fell in Britain by 25 per cent and cheese consumption 5 per cent.

In the recent price review, calf subsidies have been cut, a further discouragement for beef production. Also capital grants for modernization,

buildings and equipment have been reduced.

A new round of farm price increases in Britain for sugar, butter, cereals, bacon and other pig meat are due later this year in line with the transition to EEC levels.

Wages of workers in food production, transport and sale certainly give the lie to the Tory tale that it is pay increases which force up prices. These workers are some of the lowest paid and have for years had the least increases of any. Yet food prices have rocketed non-stop.

For months now there has been a complete ban on all wage increases, but prices have risen even faster.

Heath's pre-election promise to cut prices 'at a stroke' and Minister of Agriculture James Prior's remarks a year later—'Certainly, over a period of time the cost of food will decrease, of that I am absolutely certain'—were made in the full knowledge that prices would have to be raised by an enormous amount in line with Common Market entry.

Not by the '2 per cent a year for six years' later claimed by Prior in November 1972, but by amounts in line with the 25-30 per cent increase in farm prices forecast by Sicco Mansholt, the EEC Commissioner for Agriculture.

Earlier, in October 1971 the chairman of Associated British Foods, one of the largest flour millers and bakers in Britain, had refuted the government's figure of 15 per cent for the rise in the price of bread under the EEC.

'Bread will be 50 per cent higher, not 15 per cent', he told the 'Financial Times'.

The main method of restricting farm output by the EEC Common Agricultural Policy is the plan to drive millions of farmers and peasants out of farming and take the land out of production entirely. Under the Mansholt proposals, 12½ million acres were to be withdrawn and the rural population in the EEC reduced by 5 million between 1970 and 1980.

However, according to the president of the Scottish National Farmers' Union, a recent meeting of Common Market officials in Berlin discussed taking three times that land area out of agricultural use.

'France alone has a farming area of 35 million hectares (87 million acres) and the EEC believes that to contain reasonable levels of production in the next ten years, they may have to take 11 million hectares out of farming,' he told the Scottish NFU's council meeting at Renfrew. ('Farmers Weekly' report, March 30, 1973.)

The EEC Common Agricultural Policy is in a state of near ruin, built as it is upon a non-existent joint monetary system, the so-called 'units of account'.

At the same time, millions of peasants and small farmers are becoming increasingly angry at their enforced impoverishment on the one hand and their compulsory eviction from the land on the other.

The existence side by side of mass poverty and mass destruction of the prerequisites of life further confirms the entire bankruptcy of capitalism and the urgent need for the implementation of the social revolution to develop the Socialist United States of Europe to plan agriculture and food supply on the basis of the 'Community's' needs and not the profits and trade war tactics of the capitalist governments in and outside the EEC.

The Rt. Hon. JOSEPH GODBER, M.P.

AW

In Britain, the main subject for denaturing so far has been wheat.

Already regional cereals Officers have been appointed to supervise denaturing and to authorize payment of the £7.29 per ton subsidy.

Once wheat is denatured it can only be sold at the lower price of barley and other animal feeds. The subsidy is paid to make up this amount to the wheat price and also to cover the cost of denaturing.

The rules for wheat say that it must be of sound marketable quality, be weighed on an approved weighing machine and be of EEC origin. If dye is used, the mixture must be at the rate of 30 grammes of dye in 2½ to 3 litres of water to each 500 kilogrammes of grain. This, in turn, is thoroughly admixed with four times its weight of untreated grain.

Farmers who want to use the subsequent feed for their own animals rather than sell it can either register themselves as denaturers, send the grain away to a compounder or rely on mobile denaturing services—Feedmobiles—which are now being established.

So far this year 17,000 tons of wheat have been denatured in Britain, but according to a farm trade paper, in future, 2m tons of a possible 4½m tons wheat harvest will go to human consumption:

'This leaves an estimated 2½m tons to be sold for animal feed. And, provided that it meets the quality criteria which make it acceptable for denaturing it is probable that most of the 2½m tons will be denatured.'

Already a variety of denaturing machines have been imported from Germany,

though at the moment the German manufacturers can barely produce enough to satisfy home demand. Prices range between £400 and £6,000 each machine.

A dual-purpose German model—dye or fish oil admixer—sells at around £1,647 in Britain and converts 20 tons an hour. The travelling Feedmobiles charge between £1.50 and £3 a ton, leaving the balance of the £7.29 as payment to the farmer.

The law requires that the equipment can process at least 40 tons a day in order to justify the cost of an inspector being present.

The HGCA has published a list of firms making or handling denaturing equipment.

Denaturing is not the only method of 'intervention' in the EEC. Money is paid for fruit to be left to rot on trees or in heaps in the orchards,

FRUIT DESTRUCTION

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| Cauliflowers | 37,440 metric tons | 2.9 | per cent of total EEC crop. |
| Tomatoes | 2,010 metric tons | 0.04 | per cent of total EEC crop. |
| Apples | 296,190 metric tons | 5.7 | per cent of total EEC crop. |
| Pears | 490 metric tons | 0.025 | per cent of total EEC crop. |
| Oranges | 31,700 metric tons | 2.5 | per cent of total EEC crop. |

BY JOHN SPENCER

OIL WAR IN OMAN

The eight-year war in Oman and the Arabian Gulf has entered a new phase with a frank admission by the country's British Defence Minister that it cannot be won militarily.

The war is a struggle between the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG) and the Sultan of Oman, who is backed by the imperialist powers.

PFLOAG is a left-wing liberation movement which stands for the overthrow of all the reactionary feudal rulers of the Gulf States.

These rulers are kept in power by the oil magnates who profit from the natural riches of this desert area. The British and American oil companies with interests in the Gulf want at all costs to prevent the spread of revolution.

British imperialism originally created the Gulf States with the purpose of grabbing strategic positions along the route to India.

Once oil was discovered in their territory the preservation of the servile rulers who owed their positions to British military strength became all important.

Britain pulled out of the Gulf over a year ago, because the government feared direct involvement of British troops would compromise the rulers of the Gulf States and lead to their speedy overthrow.

But these rulers, like Sultan Qaboos Bin Said of Oman, are unable to exist in genuine independence.

Not only are they dependent on continued handouts from the oil companies, they also require military assistance from the imperialist powers and their agents in the area.

This explains the presence in Oman of British officers, among them Colonel Hugh Oldman, the Defence Minister.

The war in Oman has been described as 'Brit down to its desert boots'. British officers are hired as mercenaries and detachments of such 'crack' units as the Special Air Service go to the Gulf for 'training'.

The British are not the only contingent involved. Among other units are 600 troops from neighbouring Iran, equipped with helicopters and the latest armaments.

There are 100 officers from Pakistan—which, like Iran, is a member of CENTO—and another ultra-reactionary Islamic state, Jordan, has sent officers too.

Oldman, however, has indicated that the war cannot be won on the ground. He said as much in a Press conference on January 26.

Increased strength

At this conference the colonel contradicted the previous excuses put out by the regime to explain the course of the struggle.

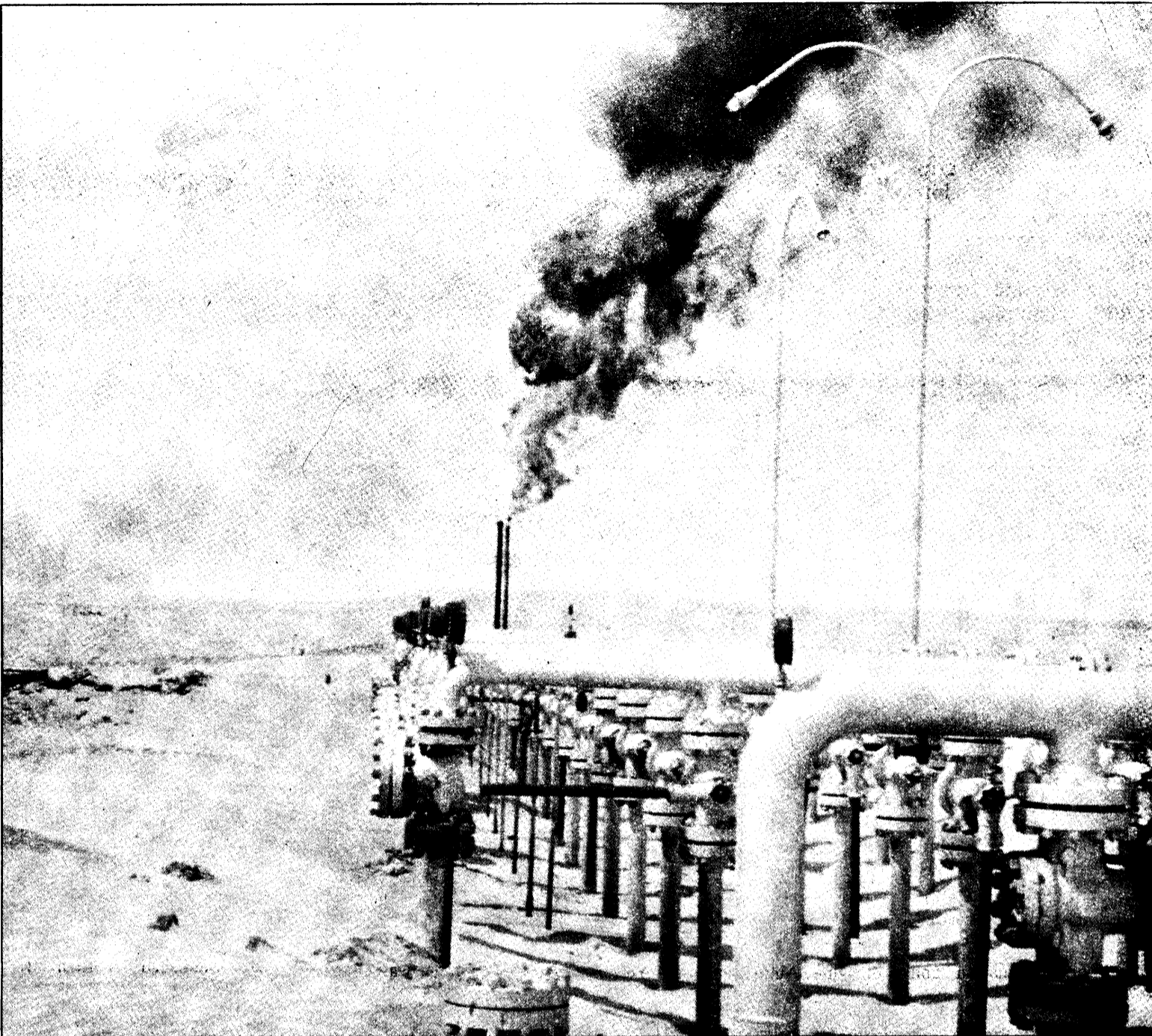
He admitted that the liberation forces' strength and popularity had increased since Sultan Qaboos ousted Sultan Bin Taimur in 1970.

The regime had previously claimed that Taimur's incompetence and 'mistakes' were responsible for the Oman uprising.

He added that even the children had begun to join in the struggle, throwing stones or hand grenades at the Sultan's troops following Taimur's departure.

Again, Oldman said that until recently the government had not been in control of the situation.

This contradicted what the previous Defence Minister (another British officer) said



Oil field in Oman. British forces maintain the Sultan's regime to protect British and American oil interests.

at the time, not to mention the numerous newspaper reports paid for by the Sultan's Press adviser.

These uniformly maintained that the rebels were finished. At one point the Sultan's PR men claimed there were only six rebels left.

Oldman dated the 'turn of the tide' to the battle of Morbat last year, forgetting that the Sultan himself claimed before this battle that only a small number of rebels were left in the hills.

Now, the Oldman line that the rebels cannot be subdued by military means is endorsed in various keys by the other British officers serving in Oman.

Rather belatedly they are to 'win hearts and minds' in the mistaken impression that the men and women they have been shooting at can be won over by material benefits.

Hence the scheme to drill a water-hole deep in the arid mountains which are the heart of the rebels' territory.

Reuter's reporter Colin Fox, who visited the site of the drilling, reports:

'Omani commanders hope water will succeed where eight years of remote guerrilla warfare has failed in the fight for control of the vast Jebel mountain range.

'Jib Jat, the site of the drilling, is high in the savagely broken mountains which drop sheer into the sea along most of the south Arabian coast, except where they draw back behind Salalah and the Dhofar Plain.

'The rebels—PFLOAG—still largely control the Jebel, even after two years of more intense operations by the government military backed by jet fighters and helicopters.

'The Dhofar war, the army

here is quick to admit, will never be won militarily.

'They say the object of the drilling project to find water possibly 1,500 feet below the barren limestone surface would be to win the area's lasting loyalty through providing water for livestock and agriculture.'

The scheme involved bulldozing a track in order to transport the drilling rig to the site.

This took a steadily rising toll of killed and wounded as

the road passed through the territory of the various insurgent tribes.

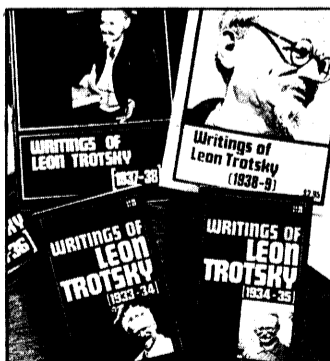
Arms supply from South Yemen

The military employ deserters from the rebel ranks to patrol the road to the drilling rig in case mines have been laid by the insurgents.

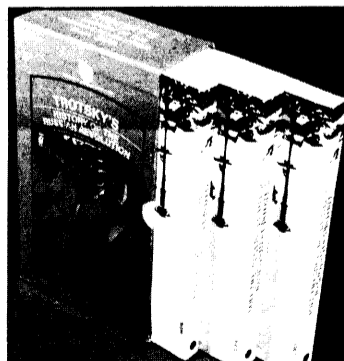
Qaboos' attempt at winning support locally looks like being too late. The revolt has spread from Dhofar in the south, where arms are supplied from the neighbouring South Yemen republic.

A total of 60 people were recently arrested in the north of Oman and charged with plotting to overthrow the regime, indicating that no part of the country is now safe for the Sultan and his British hirelings.

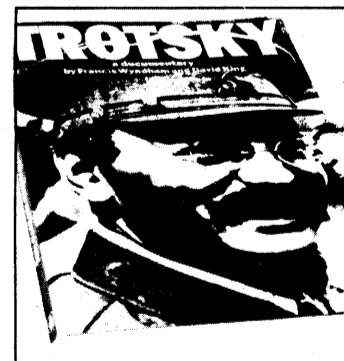
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FROST OVER UGANDA

TV REVIEW

It promised to be a gripping bout. In the white corner was Surbiton lightweight David Frost, while in the black corner was the all-time heavyweight champion of Uganda, Idi Amin.

The arena was a TV studio in Kampala where Frost promoters had arranged another 'scoop'.

The first round began very badly indeed. The lightweight began: 'I read in the British Press that the shops are closed here, but that's not so.'

'I also read that whites are badly treated here, but again that's not so.'

Amin beamed at this feather-duster treatment and even thanked his opponent for his generous remarks.

Then Frost altered his tactics: 'The other reports I cannot check,' he said, 'so I ask you to set the record straight'.

Where is the Chief Justice, Benedicto Kiwanuka? (Late last year the eminent judge was seen leaving the Supreme Court building in central Kampala flanked by soldiers. It was later reported that he had been put to death and his body burnt inside a car so that all evidence was destroyed.)

Amin took this one on the chin. 'I don't know,' he parried. 'It is so confusing.'

What about Alex Ojera, the Minister of Information and Tourism in Dr Milton Obote's government? At this point a picture was flashed onto the screen of the night that Ojera was paraded, stripped to the waist and in handcuffs, at a state function. He was photographed by the Press and interviewed before being taken away. He was never seen again.

Amin didn't bat an eyelid. He said Ojera escaped from prison. 'He ran away,' Amin said. 'I don't know where he is now.'

If Amin doesn't know, then the rest of the population of the country does.

One morning Ojera and other suspected Obote sympathizers were taken outside the jail and told to run towards a fence. As they moved they were shot down in cold blood by a firing squad.

Frost then asked the general



Frost (left) and Amin. Above: Troops in Kampala at the time of the coup which deposed Obote and brought Amin to power.

if it was true that more than 5,000 opponents of his regime had been executed.

No, said Amin, it was not true.

But what answer did Frost expect? Can anyone seriously imagine Amin replying: 'Yes, Mr Frost, as a matter of fact you're absolutely correct.'

'Since seizing Uganda with the help of the armed forces and imposing a military dictatorship I have been systematically shooting and hacking to death my opponents. The bodies have been dumped in Lake Victoria or dropped in chains into the River Nile.'

But Frost, the fearless interviewer, appeared quite happy with bland denials. He accepted the answer that Amin had not been responsible for wholesale purges and began asking about the expulsion of the Ugandan Asians.

About two-thirds of the hour-long programme was spent on this topic, as if it represented the single, most important aspect of the regime.

At the end of the encounter it was difficult to decide who

had scored the most points. It was probably a draw.

Frost had exposed himself yet again as one of the more sycophantic interviewers on television—and that is some league!

At one point he was almost on all fours pleading with Amin to retract a statement that expressed sympathy for Adolf Hitler's treatment of the Jews. But no, Amin wouldn't be drawn. The viewer was left feeling that Amin was still a Hitler-lover, even though 'our David' had tried to get him off the hook.

In that sense they complemented each other. There were times when the unanimity of views was such that one almost expected them to stage an impromptu minuet.

Amin came over as a slightly tongued-tied genial giant who had made some errors, but he loved the Queen, Mr Heath, all the British people, and he was working now to develop Uganda and make the African peoples strong so that one day they could be proud and free.

All this, of course, is com-

plete and utter rubbish. Amin's notorious history is well known. He served in the King's African Rifles and was promoted from the ranks because of his brutal efforts on behalf of British imperialism.

Step by step he climbed his way to the top of the Ugandan armed forces by a process of corruption and arm-twisting. Trusted by nobody, he was indispensable to every politician who craved power.

In the finish he pulled the rug from underneath all of them and began one of the most tyrannical regimes seen since the 'independence' movement in Africa.

He abolished parliament, elections, all political parties and the trade unions. The Heath government rewarded him by being the first country in the world to recognize his regime.

This was quickly followed by large sums of aid, including military equipment for the armed forces which he has doubled in size since coming to power in January 1971.

On all these issues Frost was absolutely quiet. He ended the programme with the most extraordinary plea to the general.

Do you really want to improve your image with the British public? Well, said Frost, the best thing you could do is to make a statement now that you intend making compensation to Uganda Asians and other non-Ugandans whose property has been taken over by the state!

It was such a revealing question to come from Frost. The only thing that bothers his entrepreneurial conscience is whether the refugees will receive compensation?

Amin muttered that he would. But if this question and answer was shown on television in Uganda it would cause bellylaughs from everyone who saw it. Such a gesture by Amin is out of the question. He doesn't intend giving them any money. Anyway why should he?

The powerful Asian community has been draining money out of the Ugandan economy for decades.

It's not the expropriation of the Asian bourgeoisie that is offensive, it's the fact that Amin has turned it into a racial issue; and he has only taken over Asian businesses so that they can be placed in the hands of the African bourgeoisie.

The programme concluded with the two relaxing in their armchairs chatting like two old acquaintances.

The most horrific thing was that outside in the streets of Kampala, terror, in the form of Amin's soldiers, was stalking with gun in hand.

They have butchered countless people since the general seized power. I wonder how many were dragged from their homes and their families last Sunday night while Frost was chasing the ratings with his amiable chat with Idi Amin, the butcher of Uganda?

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

Everyday life

Nicholas Winterton the pro-Orange Tory MP for Macclesfield, has launched a programme against certain books in Cheshire schools. He wants works like 'A Kind of Loving' and 'Billy Liar' put out of the reach of pupils because they 'lead young people to think that the incidents portrayed in such books are part of everyday life'. He wants books examined in the future for their 'points of view' and 'moral contents'. The two works Winterton highlights are notable for their critique of society — this appears to disturb the right-wing Tory MP.

Expenses

Despite the opening shots in the trade war, some Japanese companies still have largesse to cast around. Take Brother International of Nagoya. This company is one of Japan's largest sewing machine manufacturers.

Last month it flew 200 West European businessmen to the Far East on a ten-day junket. The air fares and expenses were all picked up by Brother International.

'It was a wonderful holiday,' said Peter Hobkirk (32), a managing director of William Hobkirk and Sons, the Blackburn-based sewing machine dealers.

'I was also impressed by the loyalty and dedication of the workers in the factory we visited,' he added.

We wonder how loyal and dedicated the Brother International workers would have been if they had known that the total cost of the junket was £110,000.

Old days

The cult of Stalin is growing again, but not among the people of the Soviet Union. His new supporters are in the west.

The butcher of the old revolutionary vanguard in Russia is gradually being portrayed as a 'hero'—a grandfatherly if stern leader of his people and a great patriot, etc.

The biggest public relations job was on television where Stalin was treated to a two-hour, 20 minutes documentary suggesting that his 'mistakes' originated from the real source of evil — Lenin and Leninism. (See Thursday's TV review.)

The latest to attempt a gradual rehabilitation is David Lewis. He reports in an article syndicated in the British Press that people in Russia are slowly beginning to hanker after their old leader.

'Just what is behind this change of heart?' he asks.

'The Russians to whom I spoke were prepared to talk in a guarded way about Stalin, but couldn't really explain why he should be finding favour.'

'However, there is a very real yearning for the old days, the terrors and hardships of which have been forgotten in the relative affluence of modern urban Russia.'

Stalin has some curious allies. David Lewis worked for Forum World Features which was financed by the Congress for Cultural Freedom — well-known front of the Central Intelligence Agency of America.

No politics

Definition of a trades council: 'We are here to look after trade unionists and not to talk politics. The trades council is not political in that sense. We are a body of men and women looking after the town.'

The remarks come from George Mills, Labour mayor of Middleton, Manchester, at the annual meeting of the Middleton Trades Council.

Mills has a curious interpretation of politics. Last year he broke ranks and voted with the Tories over the Housing Finance Act. Mills said he was not really voting with the Tories, but for 'law and order'.

In September he survived as president of the trades council when a vote of no-confidence in him was defeated by his own casting vote.

At the trades council meeting last week, Mills was demoted to vice-president.

Gas

Mrs Vera Bolter, JP, of Newcastle upon Tyne, has just been appointed deputy chairman of the Northern Gas Consumers' Council. The appointment was made last week by Peter Walker, the millionaire Secretary for Trade and Industry.

Mrs Bolter is assistant to the organizing secretary of Age Concern.

In the recent gas dispute Age Concern was one of the bodies which attacked gas-workers through the Tory Press.

Lancaster tenants face second 50p rent rise

ASK SKERTON tenant, Ray Wren, what he thinks of the Tories' Housing Finance Act and he says things which are almost unprintable.

Last weekend, along with other council tenants in Lancaster, Ray received notice of a 50p rent increase, the second within a year.

The continuous rises are dictated by the Tory Act to bring rents up to a so-called 'fair rent'.

The increase marked the final abandonment by Lancaster's Labour council of opposition to the Act. The initial 50p increase under the Act, last year, was brought in before it was made law by the Tories, who then controlled the city council.

BITTERNESS

Like other Labour Parties around the country, Labour in Lancaster swept into the council on a policy of declared opposition to the Tory Act.

But after their argument that existing rents were 'fair' under the Act, was rejected by the Heath government, Lancaster's Labour group voted along with the Tories to implement.

Only three Labour councillors voted to oppose the Act—Mike Lewthwaite, Bill Corr and Gordon Holding.

At his home on the Ridge estate, Mike Lewthwaite, a married man with two children, pointed to the anti-working class nature of the Act.

Councillor explains retreat

It would, he said, force up to 40 per cent of tenants on to the means test. In addition, a vast number of people on the borderline would have to juggle with their money in order to live.

Mrs Lewthwaite pointed out that many tenants would probably not claim rebates because of the means test.

It would be the higher-paid workers and the lower-middle class—not the wealthy people—who would pay for it all.

Mike Lewthwaite is particularly bitter about the way the decision to implement was taken.

'This Act is directly against the people the Labour Party is supposed to stand for', he said. 'If the whips were put on, it should have been the other way.'

Before the council meeting, Mike Lewthwaite told me, he had been approached by no less than three councillors to remind him that the whips were on, although they knew his position on the issue.

VICTIMIZED

When he referred to the detrimental effect of the Tory Act on the problem of 'twilight areas', with more tenants being forced to look for cheaper accommodation, the mayor Mrs Henderson, interrupted to tell him he was 'out of order' for raising 'fresh information'. She said she had been 'very patient' with him!

'The Tory group leader sat opposite me, smug and smiling,

watching the Labour group do their job for them. Not one Tory needed to get up and speak.'

Mike is an AUEW member. He was maintenance workers' convenor at Storeys, until sacked in 1971. A long strike by the maintenance men failed to win his reinstatement.

He is also a delegate on the trades council.

PRINCIPLES

He is particularly disappointed with a number of fellow trade unionists in the Labour group who had originally said they would oppose the Act, but who stayed silent at the council meeting and then voted for implementation.

'Although I expected some councillors to vote for the Act, I still expected a considerable number to oppose it,' he said.

Explaining his own opposition to the Act, he said he would argue that 'merely because a cabinet government has used parliament to carry out a policy in the interests of a small minority of capitalists is no reason why we should have to obey. If an Act is against the interests of the mass of the people, we should resist it. The only way we had to resist this Act was to refuse to implement it.'

He went on: 'If you are faced with the question of whether to implement something fundamentally against the interests of the people you represent, you have

to make a decision. Are you going to back down, just because people on your "own side" want you to back down?

'If your beliefs are really deep, you oppose, right down the line.'

'People who say they have socialist beliefs have got to ask themselves, what are they in the business for? For status, or personal gratification . . . or to fight for what you believe in?'

'If they are prepared to compromise, they could never have really held principles in the first place.'

And Mike warned: 'If you agree to implement all reactionary legislation by compromises, then the Tories can have implemented any legislation they want.'

So far as he was concerned, the Act was a matter touching basic principles. It represented the sort of profit system in land and property which Labour was supposed to be against.

NO LEAD

'I had to ask the question, myself, of what my motivations were for being on the council.'

'You can't compromise over a basic question of the shelter over a person's head.'

Both Mike Lewthwaite and Bill Corr blame the Labour Party leadership for failing to give a lead in the struggle against the rents Act.

Asked why, in his opinion, so many Labour councils had backed down over the Act, Mike Lewthwaite replied:

'I would blame the Labour Party. It has never taken the lead.'

Tories' production plans in crisis

STEPHEN JOHNS

AFTER a year of stagnant sales and declining investment we are told manufacturing is on the verge of an upswing.

But the signs are that the 'expansion' has been jagged and hesitant. The chances are that the industry will be caught in the gales of the trade war before it has left port.

The bad omens come in the form of figures on stocks held by the manufacturing firms. Experts are now puzzling over the failure of stocks to swing rapidly upwards as a first signal of boom.

Hopes of a dramatic revival have been dashed by government figures published two days ago showing that the fall in stocks continued in the final three months of last year—though the drop was not as great as the £145m decrease during the first three months.

The laggardly recovery has been blamed on two factors.

First since the 'big labour shake-out' between 1968-1971, manufacturing firms are more cost conscious and are not keen to bring the proportion of stocks to output to its pre-recession level.

But secondly the general uncertainty of future currency values, and the value of sterling in particular, has played havoc with the best-laid plans.

Firms in manufacturing buy the bulk of their raw materials and supplies that make up their stocks from abroad. The Tory devaluation of sterling since the Tories' forced 'float' of last July has hit them hard since this has the effect of increasing the price of all imports.

The desire to boost stocks through imports has therefore been curtailed somewhat.

But it is the rest of 1973 that gives Tory planners and industrialists the biggest headache.

If output is to pick up, stocks—and therefore imports—will have to be increased enormously. The problem is the balance of payments. Already economists are forecasting Britain's debt on world trade will reach an astronomical £900m by the end of the year.

Two things can happen. Either the pound can be allowed to drift downwards, so raising the price of goods abroad and choking off the demand for imports; or sterling can be supported by government intervention. But this would involve a deflation by the Tory Chancellor to halt the demand in the economy.

Either way manufacturing gets badly caught. If the pound keeps on falling, foreign stocks will be too expensive and the boom will never come. If the pound is supported, the resulting deflationary pressures will crush hopes of a business revival.

Meanwhile international competition gets fiercer as countries

like Japan and Germany look for new markets for goods now shut out of America by tariff walls.

Britain's ailing manufacturing industry simply will not be able to withstand such competition.

An answer might be to compensate for extra imports by exporting more. But this takes the hard-pressed industrialist to square one.

To export more he needs to increase output, to increase output he needs more stocks, if he buys more stocks he plunges the economy deeper into the red.

The dilemma is a general one facing the shaky British economy. In the past expansion has always immediately spilled over into

imports, and a balance-of-payments crisis has been the result. Hence the minor cycle of boom and recession.

But each time the curves connecting 'slump' to 'boom' have become more violent. This time the situation is unprecedented.

Expansion has not even begun and the debts have begun to pile up. But this domestic sickness is insolubly linked to the international economic crisis. The world currency system is in total chaos and the basis of international credit, which supports world trade, irrevocably undermined.

The capitalist nations have launched a trade war—Britain staggers forward like a dying man and the 'boom' in manufacturing may well be the killer blow.

SOCIALIST LABOUR
LEAGUE PUBLIC
MEETINGS

Liverpool

Transform the SLL into
the Revolutionary Party

TUESDAY, APRIL 10

8.30 p.m.

Mona Hotel
James Street
Liverpool 1

Lecture: The economic
crisis of world capitalism

Manchester

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

8 p.m.

Angel pub, Chapel Street.

SOCIALIST LABOUR
LEAGUE MEETING

Merthyr Tydfil

Build the revolutionary
party

Join the Socialist Labour
League

Defend basic democratic
rights

Make the Tories resign

TUESDAY APRIL 10
7.30 p.m.

Caedraw School
Caedraw
Merthyr Tydfil

Speaker: G. Healy
(SLL national secretary)

Registered as a newspaper at the
Post Office. Published by Workers
Press, 186a Clapham High Street,
London, SW4 7UG. Printed by
Plough Press Ltd. (TU), 180b Clapham
High Street, London, SW4 7UG.
Newsdesk: 01-720 2000. Circulation:
01-622 7029.

SLL LECTURE
SERIES

The revolutionary party
and the history of the
British working class

Merthyr Tydfil

Caedraw School
Merthyr Tydfil
7 p.m.

Sundays April 8 and 22
Lectures given by
Peter Jeffries

The Unions and the working
class in Britain.

The Revolutionary Past of the
British working class—and its
future.

The Transformation of the SLL
into a Revolutionary Party.

READING

Trotsky, Where is Britain
Going? Problems of the
British Revolution.

Perspectives for Transforming
the SLL into a Revolutionary
Party.

Marxist Analysis of the Crisis.

All Trades Unions Alliance MEETINGS

LEWISHAM: Monday April 9, 8 p.m. Deptford Engineers Club, New Cross Road (opp. New Cross Tube). 'Build Councils of Action. Force the Tories to Resign'.

WANDSWORTH: Monday April 9, 8 p.m. 'Kings Arms', High Street, SW18. 'TUC must call a General Strike'.

WATFORD: Monday April 9, 8 p.m. Trade Union Hall, Watford Road, nr Watford Station. 'The fight against Stalinism'.

CAMDEN: Tuesday April 10, 8 p.m. 'Prince Albert', Wharfedale Road, Kings X. 'The TUC must call a General Strike'.

CLAPHAM: Tuesday April 10, 8 p.m. Small Hall, Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor Street, SW4. 'The TUC must call a General Strike to make the Tories resign'.

ELLESMERE PORT: Tuesday, April 10, 7 p.m. Grosvenor Hotel, Ellesmere Port. 'Build the revolutionary party—Defend basic rights.'

COVENTRY: Tuesday, April 10, 7.30 p.m. Elastic Inn, Cox Street. 'VAT—the new attack on the working class. Fight rising prices. Force the Tories to resign.'

HARROW: Tuesday April 10, 8 p.m. Labour Hall, Harrow & Wealdstone. 'The TUC must call a General Strike'.

HACKNEY: Wednesday April 11, 8 p.m. Parlour Room, Central Hall, opp. Town Hall, Mare Street. 'The TUC must call a General Strike to make the Tories resign'.

CROYDON: Thursday April 12, 8 p.m. Ruskin House, Coombe Road, Croydon. 'The fight against Stalinism'.

FULHAM: Thursday April 12, 8 p.m. 'The Swan', Fulham Broadway. 'Forward to the Revolutionary Party'.

BERMONDSEY: Thursday April 12, 8 p.m. 'Havelock Arms', Balaclava Street, off Southwark Park Road. 'Build Councils of Action. Make the Tories Resign'.

WILLESDEN: Thursday April 12, 8 p.m. Labour and Trades Hall, High Road, NW10. 'Tory "Law and Order" — Preparation for dictatorship'.

HOLLOWAY: Thursday April 12, 8 p.m. Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road. 'Forward to the Revolutionary Party'.

SLL LECTURE
SERIES

The Socialist Revolution
in Britain

Middleton (nr Manchester)

Hollins Social Centre
Tintern Road, Hollins Estate
7.30 p.m.

Monday April 9 and 16
Lectures given by
Cliff Slaughter
(SLL Central Committee)

The Socialist Revolution in
Britain:

3. The state and revolution.
Reformism and revolution in
Britain. The fight for democratic
rights today means preparing
for working-class power.

Basic reading:
Perspectives for transforming
the SLL into a revolutionary
party.

Marxist Analysis of the Crisis.
Problems of the British Revolution
(Trotsky).

Death Agony of Capitalism and
the Tasks of the Fourth International,
Communist Manifesto.

Fresh rail talks fail

FRESH talks failed to break the rail pay deadlock yesterday. The three rail unions have rejected British Rail's Phase Two £1 plus 4 per cent pay offer.

But leaders agreed to meet the Board again next week for further talks.

NUR general secretary Sir Sidney Greene said afterwards the Board obviously could not improve its cash offer but they were hoping for better fringe benefits, pensions and holidays.

The unions could now decide to take their case before the Railways Staff National Tribunal.

300 food price rises in VAT's first week

IN THE first week of Value-Added Tax there have been over 300 increases in food prices and 'The Grocer' magazine reports an average rise in all food prices of 1.8 per cent.

Products involved in this new leap in the cost of living include a wide range of Heinz canned products, Spillers flour, canned meats and pet food; Pork Boy processed meats and Ratcliffe spices.

Big rises have occurred in both processed and fresh foods.

Flour has increased 5 per cent, bacon and ham over 2 per cent and fruit by an incredible 35 per cent in one week.

These increases come on top of evidence which showed cheese has risen 100 per cent since the Tories were elected and frozen chicken by 30 per cent.

A survey by 'The Grocer' shows that over the month

of March foods increased between 0.4 and 24 per cent in price.

The level of prices for March was 13.7 per cent higher than March 1972—the biggest leap in 12 months.

The food bosses are already warning that more big increases are on the way because of VAT and rises in packaging costs.

Anthony Beresford, presi-

dent of the Food Manufacturers' Federation, said the price of tin plate was expected to rise 12 per cent and that pulp paper would increase by a similar amount.

This would force firms like Heinz and the other big manufacturers to put up their prices.

On fresh food Beresford said there was a strong possibility that by the end of the year butter would be up 24 per cent, sugar by 18 per cent, dried eggs by 20 per cent, meat by 12 per cent and fish by 10 per cent.



Dockers voting to end their action.

APRIL FUND £119.71 STEP UP WEEKEND FIGHT

WE ARE now at the end of our first week, but are beginning to drop behind in raising this month's Fund. This weekend, give our Fund a boost. Press ahead as never before. We know we have two Funds to raise so let's do our best.

Everywhere, hospital and Ford workers, are determined to keep up a fight against the Tory government. Each day their living standards are threatened more and more as prices rocket high.

But the trade union leaders ignore these attacks against their members. Their actions today lead to even greater co-operation with the Tories and strengthen their attacks.

Workers Press is vital today. Thousands of workers everywhere are looking for an alternative to fight the Tory government. Only our paper can provide this lead.

Don't let's waste a moment, therefore, over this weekend. Use every opportunity you can for a big drive to raise April's Fund. See how much you can collect. Post every donation immediately to:

Workers Press April Appeal Fund
186a Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UG

Ford pay talks

UNIONS representing 50,000 Ford workers tried to reopen talks with the company yesterday to get some improvements in fringe benefits to add to the Phase Two offer.

The union side of the National Joint Council, meeting with shop stewards' leaders, endorsed the 'actions which our members are taking in imposing economic sanctions against the company.

'We would support the escalation of these actions.'

The unions are claiming that Ford's is now being hit badly by the overtime bans, work-to-rules, and withdrawal of co-operation being applied in various plants.

But all their actions indicate that the reformist leaders are keen to settle the dispute as quickly as possible.

● See confused vote, p. 3.

Cowley right-to-work strike ends

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

CARWORKERS at British-Leyland's Austin-Morris body plant in Oxford decided yesterday morning, by a narrow majority, to end a week-long 'right-to-work' strike.

Because of a dispute involving mechanical maintenance workers in the assembly plant, however, normal working will not be able to restart on Monday.

The maintenance men, who are fighting management's breach of a weekend shift agreement, have withdrawn their labour without safety cover.

If the company fails to meet their demands by Monday, they say, they will phase down the plant's boilers.

The 3,000 body-plant strikers will return to work on Monday with £12 in lieu of lost earnings during the recent assembly workers' strike and the promise of 'meaningful negotiations' on their chief complaint.

This is that during the assembly strike management broke an agreement covering the banking of bodies.

A mass meeting next Friday will review progress in the negotiations.

Full-time union officials unanimously recommended the formula and senior stewards went along with it 'reluctantly'.

But the shop stewards were divided on the issue—and the mass meeting itself was split almost 50-50.

The body plant workers say they are entitled to payment for full guaranteed shift pay for each of the days they were laid off during the assembly strike.

A shop stewards' leaflet explained that the dispute was not about lay-off pay.

'The issue', it says, 'is the right to work—i.e. the right to be called in for work whenever the assembly plant are called in.'

● Indirect and direct workers at the Oxford assembly plant yesterday afternoon rejected their stewards' recommendation to accept the company's offer on their annual pay review, which is in line with the Tory pay laws.

London stoppage ends Dockers thoughtful over return

LONDON DOCKERS yesterday voted two to one to end the stoppage which has crippled the enclosed docks for the last five days.

At an hour-long mass meeting inside the Royal Victoria Dock, men from the Royals, Tilbury, West India and Millwall rejected a proposal from their 18-man committee to continue the stoppage.

The committee proposed that the meeting reaffirm the policy, decided by a mass meeting last month, to withdraw from flexible manning arrangements because of dissatisfaction with a £2.60 pay offer.

BY DAVID MAUDE

If the dispute were continued, committee members claimed, support would be given by dockers working London's riverside wharfs.

It was also suggested that countryside backing might be gained from a meeting of the national port shop stewards' committee in Birmingham today.

But union officials insisted that the dockers' struggle was not political—and not a single member of the 18-man committee intervened to disagree.

This handed a powerful weapon to the right wingers who had argued that the game was not worth the candle since no more money could be won by the kind of limited struggle in which the enclosed docks were engaged.

As a result sufficient uncertainty was created in the meeting to swing the vote against going on with the dispute.

Thus the 7,500 men will return to work on Monday—ending the last of the current threats from the docks to the Tory pay laws.

Some 4,000 to 5,000 dockers attended yesterday morning's meeting. It was one of the biggest such meetings in recent years.

The recommendation of the 18-man committee, which comprises members of both the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, was put by chairman Maurice Foley.

In essence this is that dockers accept the principle

of the Tory state pay laws by taking the employers' government-controlled offer of £2.60 plus 4 per cent on differential payments.

But they will 'devalue' existing agreements with the employers by demanding extra men in gangs but refusing to do more than one job per shift.

Both Peter Shea, T&GWU London docks secretary, and Les Newman, of the NAS&D, supported the committee's recommendation.

And a number of floor speakers, including NAS&D steward Mickey Fenn, a supporter of 'The Dockworker', a 'rank-and-file' paper associated with the International Socialists group, welcomed the officials' attitude.

After the meeting several stewards began blaming rank-and-file dockers for the vote, ridiculing suggestions that the union leaders and the policy of the 18-man committee were in any way at fault.

But the ending of the enclosed docks stoppage is in no way the finish of the employers' and the government's problems on the docks.

Most dockers were in an extremely thoughtful mood after yesterday's vote.

A central talking-point was the kind of leadership now required to win future big battles.

These will centre on the growing use of non-registered labour, the introduction of 'casual' labour and attacks on the Dock Labour Scheme.

As one steward commented: 'You can't accept state control of wages and then expect men to follow you uncritically into an isolated struggle on some other issue.'

'We need a united fight of all ports— together with other sections of workers in struggle— directed at the main issue before the working class, getting rid of the Tory government.'

13th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG SOCIALISTS BLACKPOOL APRIL 14/15 1973

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, APRIL 14 & 15, WINTER GARDENS, BLACKPOOL

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