

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Woodcock and the Freeze : Roberts-Arundel workers fight on : LSE students in revolt

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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AFTER THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

AT LAST the Government decided to put into print what they intend doing after June 30. I think it would be a reasonable assumption to say that the policy contained in the White Paper was a cabinet compromise—in other words, Stewart and Callaghan would have liked to have kept the screws on, but were persuaded to give this so-called moderation a spin first.

The introduction to the White Paper contains the usual flannel on how the period of severe restraint so far has been due largely to the voluntary acceptance by the management and unions. I know many of the unions caught a touch of the co-operation bug, but managements were immune from the virus and the old cost of living index climbed like a good'un (and it's weighted against us). The Government proudly boast that only in a relatively small number of cases has it been necessary to make Orders under Part IV of the Prices and Incomes Act. If ever a political party has

ponced on the loyalty of its rank and file it is the present Labour Government. It should take the Oscar.

The aim of the incomes policy is to "improve the competitive position of the economy". But, says the White Paper, "prices will not be competitive unless the management continue their efforts to keep down costs and prices and *actively reduce prices wherever possible*" (my italics). Sure, managements will endeavour to keep down costs at their employees' expense, but prices—no! The Prices and Incomes Act gives them an out; seasonal rise in prices, rise in price of materials—one could drive a coach and horses through that loophole.

LEARN NOW OR PAY LATER

There is the "early warning" system for notification of proposed price increases. The Government look to all those concerned to continue to operate the existing early warning system and they will consult with those concerned the possibility of further developments. In the meantime, the existing general request for advance notification will lapse on June 30.

The criteria laid down for Price Behaviour (increase) are: if productivity cannot be raised, if there are unavoidable increases in non-labour costs (such as materials, fuel, services) or if every effort has been made to reduce costs and the enterprise is unable to secure the capital required to meet home and overseas demand. To any employer worth his capitalist salt, the out should be more than big enough. There is a criterion for *price reductions* but unfortunately I am long passed being amused!

On the question of incomes the White Paper is very specific and can be summed up in two words—the workers

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Murder at Mytons

NOW entering into its sixth month, the Mytons dispute promises to become one of the longest and bitterest of the struggles which have faced the building industry over the last five years. The basic issues are still the same.

When the dispute first started, there was little doubt that it was an attempt by the building employers to break the back of site organisation in London. In the last week of October last year, the employers closed down the site after 200 men had downed tools over the dismissal of three steel-fixers, who, it was alleged, were "not giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay". This is one of the oldest catch-alls in the building trade. It is meaningless, because if there is no production bonus or piece work system it is impossible to check output.

After the lockout, the T & G declared the strike official. District officials of the brickies' and carpenters' unions also recommended that their sections should make the strike official. After two weeks out the men went back, on the understanding that the three steel fixers went back with them, until negotiations decided otherwise. Mytons shut the site down two days later "until further notice".

It became obvious, early in the dispute, that the company did not wish to deal with the stewards, but with union officials. This tactic, usually quite effective, has backfired in their faces.

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Aussie seamen black Viet arms

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY had to man freighters carrying ammunition to Vietnam last month after seamen at major Australian ports refused to do so. First the Aussie seamen refused to take the freighter *Boonaroo* to sea with military supplies for Australian troops in Vietnam. A few days later they stopped work in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart, Adelaide, Port Kembla and Newcastle and held meetings at which they decided to do the same with the freighter *Jeparit*. The *Jeparit* had been due to leave Sydney on March 10.

Strikers fight on at Roberts-Arundel

THERE HAVE been further developments in the 16-week-old strike at Roberts-Arundel in Stockport (see DIRECT ACTION, March), including a number of demonstrations of solidarity in support of the 145 sacked men.

At the end of February, eight pickets were arrested on charges of obstruction and disorderly behaviour. These included the local AEU President. Just after this, there was a demonstration in Stockport. Workers downed tools in the afternoon in several factories. The march itself began fairly quietly, but more workers joined in as it progressed towards the factory. When the 2,000-strong march arrived, the police were surrounding the place. The workers charged the police, breaking windows and nearly breaking down the locked steel gates of the factory. It is estimated that £4,000 worth of damage was done. Four policemen were injured, including the Chief Superintendent, whose arm was broken. There were nine arrests altogether. Several of those arrested protested about the brutal treatment the police gave them. At the court, it was mentioned that this was an "unusual" strike, because the management had refused to recognise or negotiate with the union.

On March 4, a march was to be organised, from the Bear Pit, which is in the centre of Stockport. However, the authorities took fright, especially when they heard there was a possibility of 25,000 workers turning up. So they told the organisers the march must start at a place out of the centre and that no more than 2,000 could take part in it. In actual fact there were almost 3,000 taking part, despite the lack of publicity. After marching through the centre of the town, a

meeting was held in a park, fairly near the Roberts-Arundel factory. Union leaders spoke, announcing that the negotiations which had been taking place in the Town Hall between unions and management, and including the Mayor and Maurice Orbach MP, had broken down. They also pledged further union support for the strikers. The end of the meeting was rather an anti-climax, as the workers just drifted away from the park. The police were obviously prepared for trouble, as they had sealed off all the streets leading to the factory. One might have thought the Social Revolution was imminent by the number of police around the place.

As to the future, sitdown strikes in many factories were planned, as a continuation of lightning strikes, which have already taken place. But the AEU has now banned this course of action. They seem to think sending a deputation to Gunter will be more effective. As the AEU is backing down, it remains to be seen whether any rank and file action will take place. It is obvious that this firm will be brought to its knees only by militant action. If they are allowed to beat the strikers, it will give other bosses the idea that they can play the same tricks with their workers—and this would be a step backwards for the working-class movement.

● A pamphlet has been produced on the background of the Roberts-Arundel dispute, price 6d. All proceeds to strike fund, all donations to the Treasurer, The Strike Committee, 125, Wellington Road, South Stockport, Cheshire. Copies of the pamphlet are obtainable from Colin Barker, 43, Daisy Bank Road, Manchester 14.

RON MARSDEN

LORD MAYOR'S SHOW (cont.)

will get f—all! "Less regard should be paid to such factors as general comparison with incomes in other employments." For railwaymen and workers in service industries where productivity cannot be measured the outlook is pretty bloody. Less regard should also be paid to changes in the cost of living, says the White Paper; obviously the Government expects this to rise like a rocket, hence the warning.

The criterion for a wage increase is pure *unadulterated lies*. "Where there is a general recognition that existing wage and salary levels are too low to maintain a reasonable standard of living." By Christ! The drapery workers must go potty on their income, and the PIB had the criminal audacity to turn their increase down.

Dividend standstill will end in July but companies should exercise moderation in distribution during the following year. What a load of bull. I would like to know how many companies got round the Treasury and increased their dividends; we never did hear how Cyril Lord and Lord Snowdon got on with their intentions to increase dividends.

All in all, we are still *frozen solid*. The TUC held up the candle as rallying light, but they are only choked because they want to impose the freeze themselves. The Government will give them enough rope, but reserves the right to be the executioner if they muck it up. The future looks grim to say the least, and will get worse if we continue to swallow the "national interest" line. Surely we have learned our lesson by now, or does it have to be spelt out in further reductions in earnings and increased unemployment?

BILL CHRISTOPHER

MURDER AT MYTONS (cont.)

The union officials were only too willing to come to an agreement.

In fact they were falling head over heels to shake the hands that pour the brandy. Unfortunately, even after agreeing, it was discovered that the men the employers were nattering with were not the same lads that were shoving up the building. So they pointed out that, having obtained agreement among themselves like gentlemen, the union officials ought to go out and teach the illiterate idiots who forked out for their wages to learn to obey agreements made between gentlemen. There comes a time, however, when these sons of bitches can no longer con the lads that they are doing them a favour when they flog the clothes they are standing up in. The average London site worker is fed up to his back teeth with the paid official and his pet vultures and loathes the sight of him.

After agreeing about all sort of bonus whips and devices to screw a bit of extra sweat, they then committed the worst crime of all—they signed a Scab Agreement. They instructed their members to return to work—*without their stewards*! They must think the lads are green under the eyes! On top of that, they were supposed to take a bonus scheme which would entail a 10% wage cut and a site negotiating scheme which wouldn't allow the men, *via* their stewards, to have a say in anything until the local hack came down from Union HQ to lay down the law. It meant, in fact, the loss of every item of importance negotiated and won during the job.

The federation steward, Lou Lewis, reported back to Barbican site committee who said that if scabs are brought in the whole site stops. And there the matter rests. Oh, except for a large notice at the entrance to the site, proclaiming that good unionists can work there. Like in the ETU, there seems a movement afoot to build up a flying squad of union scabs. I wonder if Len Eaton and the rest of the local officials are working on the shovel today?

SPARKS

'BETTER THAN DICTATORSHIPS'

When you ask me about recalcitrants, I tell you this. If there's anybody in this country can deal with recalcitrants it is us. Nobody else can deal with them as well. You take 50,000 workers, are they going to be dealt with by a red-robed judge? No, but they might be dealt with by their own executive, if they're up against their own union's policy, or the TUC if it's the executive that's going to strike . . . You might say the judge will make his solemn decision and go home and have his tea in the certain knowledge that the police can deal with the matter. But if there's so many that you have to call in the military then you're in a hell of a position. That is no way to go on."

George Woodcock, 2.3.67.

IT'S DOUBTFUL if anyone, let alone Woodcock himself, thought Wilson would hand over the Freeze to the TUC just like that. After all, it's about all the Labour Government really has to offer over the Tories. Why else should

Do-or be done!

APRIL 3 is D-Day for some 76,000 building trade workers.

It is on this day that they start their campaign for 100% trade unionism in an effort to smash once and for all the "labour only" contractors. The Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers (AUBTW) aims to spotlight 174 key sites for treatment. Laings, McAlpines, and Mowlems can be in for a rough time unless they are prepared to withdraw from the jungle and talk sense.

"Labour only" contracting has expanded rapidly in recent years; workers on "labour only" now number 45,000, 33,000 of which are "fly-by-nights" according to the Construction Industry Training Board. Main contractors are in favour of this type of labour because it's mobile, because it's there when wanted during peak periods and away when the rush is over, with little or no worry to themselves. Plus the very important factor, that "labour only" contractors usually employ higher-paid non-union labour that is not likely to cause any bother by industrial action. Many building trade disputes have been broken by the use of this type of labour; the Barbican dispute 1965-66 was a classic example.

Some "labour only" contractors are worse than others; the dyed-in-the-wool villains are just a collection of pirates who negotiate a job and share out afterwards, providing the top man turns up with the cash—if he doesn't the main contractor has some screaming workers on his neck.

PUSSYFOOT UNIONS LOSING MEMBERS

The National Federation of Building Trade Operatives (NFBTO) is losing a substantial number of members, not just to "labour only" but to direct and self employment. The Federation describes "labour only" as a cancer in the building industry. It is not only the building unions who are concerned about "labour only" contractors. The Government is concerned for a different reason, tax evasion. They estimate that 30% of tax evasion cases are from the building industry. The Construction Training Board is concerned about the non-payment of levies for training apprentices.

This widening concern has resulted in the convening of an official enquiry into the engagement and use of labour in the building industry. This is all right on protocol but in the meantime "labour only" continues to eat away.

The point is raised, and rightly so, that it is a man's basic freedom to choose his own manner and means of livelihood.

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the bankers and employers whose interests the country's run in support Wilson & Co? Nobody can deny the Tories wouldn't like to impose a freeze, if they got back, but they'd never get away with it. The goods have to have the right wrapping—the Labour wrapping—for the workers to buy them.

When Woodcock outlined the TUC "voluntary" scheme of wage restraint at the Special TUC Conference last month, concluding with the words above, he knew that the Labour Party in power have done a lot more to help the employers than the TUC can boast of in any similar length of time. It's true that just after the 1966 General Election Woodcock could say the TUC had held back claims by a good percentage, official claims that is. But less than four months from the Election Wilson, Brown, Grunter and the others had imposed a national standstill.

The long term is what interests the TUC bosses. They swallowed the Freeze at the 1966 TUC Conference, "with great reluctance", as a "temporary measure". Now they oppose keeping it. This is not just because they're afraid that will leave them out in the cold, with no jobs as the middlemen in the labour market. A head-on clash between the working class, or a large part of it, and the State, which must come sooner or later, threatens seriously or even fatally to damage the good old wage system the officials live by and love.

"THE FINEST PROSPECT"

Harold the Good, OBE, may well be able to say to the employing class, "I've saved you millions and millions by freezing payrises on July 20, 1966." But can he equal the fine cumulative score of the Knights of the TUC Bent Table who've been sabotaging the workers' struggle from within since the year dot? Governments come and go, as the March by-elections remind us, but the TUC's outlived the lot since it began.

Later on the day of the Special Conference, Woodcock appeared on *This Week* (ITV) with Cousins to sell the TUC plan in public. "We", said Woodcock, sounding like a tout for Cup Final tickets, "offer the finest prospect." "Not only the finest prospect; *no other country in the world*", he emphasised, "can show you the same prospect of doing this kind of thing, not even the dictatorships."

Words like this, even from a TUC boss, can take your breath away. But don't think Woodcock doesn't *know*. The TUC's always sending delegations behind the Iron Curtain, and a couple of years back they also sent observers to the national conference of Franco's Fascist Labour Front in Madrid. You might expect the TUC to envy the bosses of the Commo and Fascist phoney unions, or even try to copy some of their tricks. However, you'd hardly expect them to say they can serve the boss class better than a direct arm of the State.

Perhaps, looking at the long term, it's only logical, though. Throughout history reform has saved reaction. Is a government, asked Woodcock, "to use the whole coercive power of the State to fix wages?" "I say you cannot do it, not whether it is right to do it or not, only that it isn't right in the sense that it is impracticable to do it." The choice lay "between our voluntary scheme and other more *frightful* alternatives."

MARK HENDY

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Direct Action

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WORKERS' FEDERATION, BRITISH SECTION OF
INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

Would you pay a man to pick your pocket?

THE LABOUR PARTY is never short of cash. The Labour Party has run every General Election since 1945 at a profit, and the Party's fund has grown as a result. With Trade Union political reserves at £1,300,000, the Labour Party in 1964 had money in hand to fight six general elections—and made another profit of £41,000 in the 1964.

Whence comes this great wealth? From official sources, there is no direct answer. But from the Party's own reports we can learn the true proportions of their sources of wealth. At the end of 1965 affiliation fees alone totted up to £323,466 for one year, from three sources:

Trade unions	£280,706
Co-ops	£1,068
Labour parties	£41,692

(Source: *Labour Party Annual Conference Report 1966*.)

The chief source of their wealth, overwhelmingly, is the trade unionists' subs. Without that source the Labour Party would crumble in the dust. The affiliation fees are but one part of the TU subscriptions to the Party, but they do indicate the proportion and sources of the levies. There are also such items as the election appeal, more than £350,000, the TU money which keeps going the local parties and the financing of thousands of Labour candidates for local council elections.

AGAINST THE AXEMAN

Why pay a man to pick your pocket? Stop your political levy, fill in a form and hand it to your TU branch secretary. Get your mates to do the same, do it together, disaffiliate your branch from the Party of the Wage Cut. Now more and more trade unionists are turning to this decisive weapon against the Axeman.

In Lancashire, where the cotton workers have been badly let down, the movement against keeping the Labour Party rich is growing. John Goudie, Secretary of the Power Loom Overlookers' Assn, has invited his members to fill in forms contracting out of paying the political levy, saying, "I feel that the money would be more useful to my members in benefits. Why should we pay our own hangman?" John Goudie is also chairman of Blackburn Textile Trades Federation, where a mass withdrawal of cotton unions from the Labour Party is also being organised.

Join in the fight. Only a degenerate mug would consent to be robbed.

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Freeport, Fla., H.H. 14s; Red Deer, Alberta, B.G. 13s; Huddersfield, A.L. 13s 6d; Tadworth, N.W. 2s; London N.W.10, A.R. 10s; London S.W.7, R.O. 1s; London S.W.17, R.W. 3s 6d; Northolt, J.McL. 1s 6d; Morongo, Cal., A.R. £1 1s 6d; G.F. ("Seaman's Voice") 18s; London SWF Group £3 15s 3d. Total £8 13s 3d.

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WORKERS' CONTROL —NOT HOME RULE

AS THE recent by-elections have shown, there is a growing desire for home rule among the populace of certain sections of Britain today, especially Wales and Scotland. The Welsh have a Nationalist MP (though he had to swear allegiance to the British way of life in order to be admitted into Parliament) and, so we are told, a fairly well equipped Republican Army. The Scottish National Party (SNP) now has more members than any other Scottish political party.

While we realise Scotland would benefit in certain ways from home rule—a Scottish government would probably attempt to repopulate the Highlands, reopen the railways, etc.—we must be awake to the fact that if we did achieve home rule it would not be so very different from our present situation, as we'd still be living under capitalism.

To keep our financial position o.k., wages must not rise at a higher rate than profits and in the past few years in Britain they've done just that. The result is the Wage Freeze. Under home rule, the situation would be no different and the Scottish workers might well find themselves tied down by a freeze imposed by a Scottish government. In fact, it's more than likely that a Wage Freeze or some similar step would have to be taken to get the Scottish government onto its feet.

FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR

The basic structure of existence would remain the same. A very, very small percentage of the population would own and control most of the wealth. Workers would still be exploited, hard up, ordered about, sacked and kicked around generally. Only they'd be asked to work harder for the glorious patriotic Republic instead of the glorious democratic(?) World Power(!).

There would still be a government to pass laws which state that we cannot pee in someone else's front garden even though there's no public convenience within four miles and there'd still be bosses buying Mk.10 Jaguars from the profits of our labour.

The real message for Scotland is the one message for workers everywhere. Organise from the factory floor and wrench the factories from the hands of the bosses. Organise now—and do not give up the fight until every workplace is under the control of the people who work in it.

IAIN MacDONALD

GROUP NOTICES

ABERDEEN: Contact Ian Macdonald, 15 Cotton Street, Aberdeen.

BELFAST: Contact Tony Rosato, 103 Deer Park Road, Belfast 14.

BRISTOL: Contact Adam Nicholson, 10 Bellvue, Bristol 8.

GLASGOW: Contact R. Lynn, 2B Saracen Head Lane, Glasgow, C.1.

HULL: Contact Jim & Shelagh Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hessle Road, Hull, Yorks.

LIVERPOOL: Contact Vincent Johnson, 43 Millbank, Liverpool 13.

LONDON: Weekly meetings at Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min. Kings Cross). Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m.

MANCHESTER & DISTRICT: Contact Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

POTTERIES: Contact Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Ave., Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

SOUTHALL: Contact Adrian Derbyshire, 2 Oakley House, Oakley Ave., London, W5.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS: Contact J. D. Gilbert Rolfe, 4 Mount Sion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

WITNEY: Contact Laurens Otter, 5 New Yatt Road, North Leigh, nr. Witney, Oxon.

MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS

LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY were the watchwords of the French Revolution, but the Middle Class revolutionaries meant only equality before the law, not social and economic parity. A few generations later Socialists were, in contrast, proclaiming the economic egalitarianism of Socialism, in most cases by gradual but definite progress towards that goal, through Parliament or, more rapidly, by *coups d'état* and dictatorship. Socialism and its offspring Bolshevism have had undreamt-of opportunities to exhibit the efficacy of their doctrines. Are they taking us towards equality?

More than 20 years ago, George Orwell in his satirical picture of Communism, *Animal Farm*, showed the animals being led by pigs to the slogan "All animals are equal," and, once the pigs had power, the extension of the slogan to "but some are more equal than others." Since *Animal Farm* has been printed in many languages, dramatised on radio and expressed in an excellent cartoon film, the degradation of Socialism to the social principles of the sty continues.

TOWARDS WAGE EQUALITY

Strangely, in the opposite direction in "free" capitalist society a tendency towards equality of wages is noted. That is not to say that capitalism will reach a condition of equal pay for all workers, but there is a *tendency* in that *direction*. There are other conflicting tendencies, too, of course; the Socialists will see to that.

Fifty years ago a skilled worker received more than double the wage paid the labourer who worked with him and, outside of this general rule, there were even greater disparities unmodified by social insurance or income tax. But already very depressed groups of labourers, e.g. the dockers, were climbing up to the general wage level of labouring men and in the early 1920s the mate-craftsman wage ratio was almost 5 to 7 instead of 9 to 19, while outside groups of labourers were slightly surpassing groups of skilled men in other industries. Dockers for instance were paid more than engineering workers by 1922.

As "cost-of-living" rises were based on the price of such delicacies as bread and margarine, for many years skilled and unskilled received the same rise in wages and many years passed by before the craftsmen were able to regain some of their old differential and it was no longer argued that a shipwright needed no more margarine than the men who carried his tools. Eventually, the cost-of-living index, which was based on a bare fodder existence, was abolished—by the Tories—and an index of prices, including butter and luxuries, replaced it.

With the beginning of the Welfare State just before the 1914-18 War, wages were no longer the only source of income of the workers. Old-age pensions in 1911 and insurance against unemployment (the dole) and sickness payments, with free medical attention and drugs, with in some cases glasses and dentures, and maternity benefits in 1912, gave benefits to all men, skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled; these were equal, too, in all regions of the United Kingdom.

As labour became more militant and better organised the tendency towards equality increased. I am indebted to Ygaël Gluckstein, late of the dreaded London School of Economics, for quotations illustrating this. Between the two world wars, British moulders received 30% more than labourers, turners 27%, building tradesmen 47%. In more backward Romania the figures range from 100 to 200% more. In Spain a loco-

motive engineer received 3.3 times the wages of an unskilled man, while in New Zealand the ratio was only 1.2. (Clark, *Conditions of Economic Progress*.)

"The history of the workers' movement in Russia shows that whenever it was powerful, differences in wages diminished. Thus, during the 1905 revolution, while the wages of unskilled workers in St. Petersburg metal industry rose by only 12%, those of apprentices rose by 22% and of unskilled workers by 18%, thus diminishing the differential between skilled, unskilled and apprentices." (F. Semonov, *The Proletariat in the Revolution of 1905-07*, Moscow, 1930, p.32—quoted by Gluckstein.)

However, another factor, piece work, creates an opposite tendency—towards greater inequality. I have had the discomforting experience, over long periods even, of working piece for three times the wage of the clerk who made up my wage packet, and some of us earned twice the wage of some other piece workers. When capitalism gathers workers into a factory it willy-nilly creates a physical relationship making solidarity easy, but widely differing wages obtained by gang or personal initiative make this solidarity very difficult to maintain. To salve my conscience, I add that the activities of bold, cunning piece-workers tend to make the practice unprofitable to the employers and there is a tendency to drop it from big industry.

The Labour Government, by its prices and incomes policy, is trying to introduce (in blundering fashion) group piece work, a wage system "based on productivity". Personal piecework, too, is being encouraged.

In Russia, the splendid example of the workers of 1905, towards equality and solidarity, was reversed by Communism. Instead, we see the most vicious form of piecework, Stakhanovism, without mercy to the old, weak, slow or less athletic; an ever-increasing gulf between rich and poor appears, so that as long ago as 1944, British Communists were able to publish a pamphlet *Soviet Millionaires*, and rejoice at factory managers receiving each a wage equal to that of 100 workers.

DIVIDING THE WORKERS

In Communist China, too, piece work, the greatest evil of the capitalist system, is being enforced. In Hitler's Germany, National Socialism enforced piece work, not only for its own sake but also as a means of dividing and controlling the workers:

"It is essential that this problem (wage differentials) be understood not as an economic question but as the crucial political problem of mass control . . . Wage differentiation is the very essence of National Socialist wage policy . . . the policy is consciously aimed at mass manipulation. (F. Neumann, *Behemoth*, London, p.353.)

Now inequality is being thrust into the "Welfare State". Now of the old equality of the sick and out of work, a new principle is established—"the more a man has had the more he will get." A single man who has earned an average of £9 a week receives, if out of work or ill, £4 a week. A single man who has been earning £30 a week will, if sick or unemployed, receive £11 a week. But the person who most needs help if sick is the one who has had a low wage. He may have only one pair of shoes and nothing in a bank, or his larder; the £30 or £40-a-week man may have several suits, a dozen pairs of shoes, money in the bank. The low-paid always lives on the edge of disaster.

Equality, by Edward Bellamy, was a book sold at Labour Party meetings up to 30 years ago; but now, "the humans began to look more and more like pigs," as *Animal Farm* said. Or have I got it wrong?

TOM BROWN

MANCHESTER WORKERS' FORUM—Meets every other Tuesday, 8.00 p.m., at Wheatshaf Hotel, High St., off Market St., Manchester. Details from A. Barlow, 279 Cheetham Hall Road, Manchester 8.

LSE students slam education factory

OVER the last two weeks, if you have been watching closely, a revolution has occurred in the slums of learning. A revolution of realisation. The students at their benches fulfilling their daily quotas on a murderous competitive basis of favouritism have woken up and realised that the Hallowed Halls have institution paint and the quiet cloister is filled with the mental and physical turmoil of capitalism and competition. That the scholar is turned into an all-purpose pedant and study is a production line of books. The chips are down and the romance and nonsense and myth are destroyed. The gowns are in the dustbins and the computer needs brains to syphon dry. Minds are produced for the assimilation of knowledge to useless and destructive purposes and personality warped in a passion to justify the School's existence in a world that no decent scholar who believes in liberty of the individual would ever accept.

NOT ON SYLLABUS

They were taught liberty to take it away from others. Industrial relations so that they could rob a man of his rightful wage, psychology so that they could make men's minds accept the unacceptable and sociology to explain an unjust society. They learnt that liberty is the love of life, that men should not be robbed, that sick minds are products of a sick society and only change from below can make a just society. Having learnt this they saw its contradictions amongst themselves and in the relationships of those within the school around them. So they learnt the lessons they were taught and started to change society in the only way they knew, in the place in which they worked. But it spread and the idea will spread. Start where you are. Revolutionary action is not on the syllabus.

The students have shown very great courage so far, let us hope that they go on and win the reinstatement of their two spokesmen Bloom and Adelstein. The issues that they are fighting for must be made quite clear however. They are fighting for control over the place of work; in this they are supported by half the staff. They do not want to become the brain-fodder of a society which is encroaching all the time on the individual in his life and in his work. That is what the revolt is about. That is why it will spread.

DIRECT ACTION REPORTER

APATHY IN THE NORTH-EAST

STUDENTS received the decision to raise fees of their overseas colleagues with benign passivity. Most signed a petition destined for the Ministry of Education litter bin and doubtless slept sounder for it. At Newcastle University students hold a protest meeting; their President reads a mild message from the Registrar deploring the government's action and saying "it makes it impossible for a university to keep its moral obligations to students." This is dismissed by the next speaker, that courteous man, Labour MP Bob Brown as "an outright lie"; he then rants away about the need for State control of the universities. Despite this splendid incitement to strike action nobody walked out.

Only students at Newcastle College of Commerce denied themselves the joys of exam education on February 22. Why? 21% of the students are from overseas, and, equally important, the students have a thoroughly democratic union with autonomy from the principal, autonomy over local

affairs for the five separate centres and, most important, executive policy is invalid unless made or ratified at general meeting; what's more this has been fought for over two years. These students know as much about controlling officials as anyone, after all, they had to cope with diktats in their bulletin from the President who objected to having to report back, and an unhappy lad, who as vice-President, before he left, disciplined meetings and socials at *gunpoint*. The students refused to affiliate to the NUS, realising that "it was just a training ground for Transport House hacks; all they wanted was our money."

Fully realising their lack of an economic lever but that there was a principle involved, the token strike went ahead, 90% effective, but only two lecturers came out in sympathy. A march was held through the city; only one banner supported the government, it was carried by a University "Socialist"—he was set upon.

So what's Lord Thomson?

"I AM a Conservative, but I support the Labour Government."—Newspaper tycoon Lord Thomson, 5.3.67.

"When Mr Michael Foot said that the Government's incomes and prices policy was fascism, he was right."—Tory MP Enoch Powell, 11.3.67.

"In our view it is only necessary for the Government to intervene at two key points: wages and sometimes prices." "Give Government the power to regulate the wage relation between the various complexes of industry, the reward relation between wage and profit, and the relation of both to reserve and future development, you will then find that the people's government has quite enough power to lead the economic system in the best interest of the nation whose voters supply the mandate."—Sir Oswald Mosley, *Right Or Wrong?*, 1961.

LETTER

FELLOW WORKER,

Well, here I am writing you a few lines. Hoping that you are all fine over there. I am fine and trying to do some organising if I can, but it is a hard job; but I am trying anyway.

I am not working now. There are a lot of men and women out of work over here and the wages are all the way from 85 cents to \$3.25 an hour. I hope that you Fellow Workers are lining up some of the slaves over there which it is damn hard to do over here.

I am sending you \$2 for the paper and I hope that you will put my name and address in your paper so that if any of your members come this way they will come and see me and if any come they can come at any time of day or night.

1896 W. 1 Ave., Fellow Worker J. McAndrew
Vancouver, B.C., Canada.
Rear basement room.

Do, or be done (cont.)

By the same token men should be able to choose with whom they shall work, particularly if they are having their conditions cut from under their feet. The proud boast of the "labour only" contractors is the fact they pay higher than union rates; while one could argue it is because they haven't the overheads of main contractors, the blame can also be attributed to the way the building unions pussyfoot their way in wage negotiations. Unless the building unions can prove to their members that this time they mean to FIGHT AND WIN "labour only" is here to stay and increase.

CALLING THEIR BLUFF

CAULKERS at Vickers' Walker Yard really came in for it in January because they barred caulkers from the closed Blyth shipyard from working with them. There was nothing personal in this, it was just that they were dead worried about their own future and there seemed little point in sharing the work so as to do themselves and the Blyth men out of work even quicker—in fact they had banned overtime in addition.

Everybody waded in, stewards from other shops, Boiler-makers Union officials and the local *Journal*, which produced an editorial slating the men and invoking "trade union principles", something it has never done during a strike. It's worth pointing out that the convenor of the Blyth yard took the view that the caulkers' attitude was quite understandable in the situation.

The caulkers stuck to their position and (surprise! surprise!) a fortnight later all 3,000 men at Vickers threatened to move *en masse* unless the management came clean about the Yard's future, because there are no new orders on the books and current work should be finished by the summer.

At Doxford's Yard, Sunderland, cranemen are campaigning for an extra 37s. a week by a series of strikes and working to rule—this is to bring them into line with Doxford's Engineering cranemen. After the third strike, management issued a statement: "We shall have to consider seriously whether we can continue to keep the yard open if this continues", to which one craneman said "Talk about closing the yard is rubbish. Doxford's have a full order book for at least six ships."

Meanwhile a Chinese Embassy official visited the yard for the launching of the "Jinsha". He pinned a badge of Mao on shipwright Les Duncan and said "Under the present leadership of our great chairman Mao the situation in China is excellent." Who's bluffing who now?!

THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING

THE NE Federation of Trades Councils has resolved to call for May Day being a national holiday. Does this mean it will be "All Out" this year as a protest against the freeze, or in sympathy with the locked-out draughtsmen, or the closures, or could it be just another of those resolutions?

Ex-Mayor of Newcastle Labour Alderman Theresa Russell has called for the abolition of approved schools. So far so good, but she thinks they ought to be replaced by something like the Public Schools. What you might call "from one approved school to another." Can we expect the Alderman to support the prisoners' campaign for a two-week break at Christmas?

Meanwhile at Durham Gaol 300 prisoners staged a sit-down strike in the workshops on February 27 over the sadistic treatment and conditions.

Gateshead, Felling and Washington authorities hired a computer "to select optimum locations" for a giant refuse incinerator to serve all three areas. After spooning "the relevant information" into it, it coughs up three sites: two

in the middle of a Gateshead hospital, the other in the green belt!

Meanwhile a South Shields mother blamed the damp in her prefab for the death of her baby. In January another baby died in the same estate. The prefabs were condemned ten years ago.

LEARNING THE SCORE

TYNESIDE railwaymen (ASLEF) have decided to support the Wakefield, Yorks, campaign for travel allowances and against closures by working to rule and one-day strikes. Regional representative Frank Musgrove reporting to a mass meeting said "Wakefield are trying to do by unconstitutional means what we have been trying to do constitutionally for three years. Evidently this is the only way to do things with British Rail because we have got absolutely nowhere . . ." Since then all 200 wagon repairers at South Shields have walked out in sympathy with their chargehand because he was sacked after ten years. They will not return till he gets his job back.

THE RIGHT TO BE HUMAN

WORKERS at North Eastern School Furniture, Darlington, have just won the right not to clock into work. But for doing this as part of a work-to-rule campaign over differentials, draughtsmen at Caterpillar Tractors, Birtley, have been locked out.

The degrading practice should be dropped everywhere; in the meantime, its abandonment is a useful aid in any campaign of non-cooperation, though it could be taken further for example, by refusing to start work until top management clock in in the morning and after the lunchbreak!

BUSMEN v. THE REST

N.E. COMPANY busmen campaigned from Christmas for a rise to bring them into line with local authority busmen. This involved a work-to-law at Consett and full non-cooperation at Gateshead, including turning back before the end of the run if behind schedule, as in the rush-hour, and banning all Newcastle routes at the Tyne bridge. As everyone knows the companies conceded the rise, to be paid from March.

Gateshead busmen decided, against official advice, to continue the cross-Tyne ban until then; they would not work the same routes as Newcastle busmen for less pay, not even for two months, as a matter of principle. Two days later the manager issues an ultimatum that "the ban can no longer be tolerated". This is ignored and driver Reg Woods is suspended for refusing to cross the bridge, so up go the pickets and the Gateshead service comes to a standstill, followed by the Wallsend crews in sympathy; Tynemouth crews did not come out too but banned all routes coinciding with Wallsend's.

Alan Thompson, TGWU national bus secretary came up from London for talks with the manager: "very useful and fruitful"; he then pleaded for a return to work, this was thrown out.

Apart from protest-value a strike like this is bound to fail unless it spreads, and the official made sure that was not on, so five days later it was called off at another meeting, addressed by Larry Smith, another T & G bureaucrat up from London. It was he who announced that the Gray Grunter had made a decree postponing the rise till July. As lay-preacher Grunter should know, "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord." The only concession, apart from some vague puff about taking it up with the NJC was that Reg Woods was reinstated. And we thought T & G official policy was to fight the freeze, not its own militants!

'DIRECT ACTION' REPORTER

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DRAUGHTSMEN LOCKED OUT

THE lockout of 1,800 draughtsmen by the Shipbuilding Employers is only a foretaste of things to come. Draughtsmen face a united front of Employers and Government in the first major battle in industry to decide the future of the Government's wage policies. If the draughtsmen win this battle the Pay Freeze is as good as finished. The Employers recognise this fact and so does the Government. Hence, there's so far been no attempt whatever by the Ministry of Labour to intervene in the dispute. However, should it become clear that the draughtsmen are going to win I expect the Ministry to act like the good alsatian dogs that the pastor's son has surrounded himself with. Assuming, of course, that MPs are all dogs of one breed or another.

The dispute arose over Swan Hunter's (Tyneside) Shipbuilders' refusal to discuss a pay award before July 1967 for 160 draughtsmen who are at the bottom of eleven separate grades of DATA members. This claim was quite separate from another national claim served on the shipbuilding employers and rejected by them. Strike notice followed and Swan Hunter were backed to the hilt by the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation who decided to lock out all shipbuilding draughtsmen. The Shipbuilders sought and received the support of the Engineering Employers' Federation, who gave instructions to their members not to employ any of the locked-out draughtsmen. What of the other side of the coin: solidarity with the draughtsmen by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions? The only "support" from that quarter came from the General Secretary of the Confederation, who said it was a pity the Employers should precipitate a breakdown in talks at this stage.

UP AGAINST UNITED FRONT

It is not only here that DATA is in conflict with the united front—Employers and Government. Some weeks ago, the Engineering Employers' Federation rejected a national payclaim submitted on behalf of DATA members who have lost 5% of their real income through price increases since the last national payrise in August, 1965. DATA has now submitted this claim to the members for their consideration. There is also the campaign being waged against "self-employed draughtsmen", which so far has had a limited success. In the light of this, Enoch Powell stepped in to describe DATA as being a "Gestapo union", citing the case

of Wolverhampton Tool Design and Wolverhampton Auto-Machinists.

For a long period Employers have resented the successful militancy of draughtsmen in the prosecution of their claims. They've succumbed to the militancy as they'd little alternative other than to "pack up and go to South Africa". Now they have been given a golden opportunity to get their own back—if the trade union movement stands on the sidelines. Employers have been given this opportunity through the policies of the Labour Government under Harold Wilson. The *Financial Times* commented that DATA national officials George Doughty and Jim Mortimer had the bite of Clive Jenkins's bark. This is a nice backhanded compliment, but the *Financial Times*, in common with the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Guardian* and others, has been full of such compliments in recent issues. The press is of course warning management to get busy, to put the pressure on now that DATA is apparently isolated from the other anti-freeze unions. It is the weakness or strength of such appearances that will be tested in the coming weeks. Cousins resigned from the Government in protest at the pay policy and has declared on numerous occasions that it will not work and "we will not co-operate." Jenkins has provided the legal profession with some work. DATA has challenged the pay policy at the point of production.

"LEVERAGE TECHNIQUE"

At C. A. Parsons, Newcastle, 650 draughtsmen recently got four weeks' holiday after a 15-week strike. Draughtsmen in Hawker Siddeley's also got an increase under strike threat as did numerous others. This method of securing local increases in the absence of a national increase is termed "leverage technique", and is resented by the Employers and, no doubt, the Government. This is what is being challenged by the Shipbuilding Employers. It has been suggested by the press in a very subtle manner that the "leverage technique" is not a legitimate way of winning an increase. No method of industrial action is really going to make the Employers happy!

Like Lord Thompson who says he is a Tory but supports Labour, now all the Employers are keen to back up the Government pay policy. Price control, however, is different; it would be impossible to control prices, says Mr. John Davies, Director-General of CBI. Employers want their own Tory Government back but at the same time want it to inherit a legacy of anti-trade union legislation made by the Labour Government. It is time trade unionists reconsidered our allocation of dog licences. Meanwhile trade unionists can support the draughtsmen by sending cash or cheque donations to:—

Swan Hunter Strike Fund, Onslow Hall, Richmond, Surrey.

DAVE PICKETT

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"It would be interesting to obtain detailed statistics applying to the grand total that is consumed by educational grants, national health expenses and subsistence payments that become immediately obtainable by the ever growing number of individuals who were not born in this country and have in no way contributed towards the setting up of the fund into which they so willingly dip their fingers. As they so ~~succintly~~ put it - in such a surprisingly short time after their arrival - they "know their rights". "

Said neither by Colin Jordan nor Sir Oswald Mosley but by the "worthy" knight (papal and feudal) of industrial arms, Sir William Carron, in his farewell presidential address to the A.E.U. national committee in Scarborough, 24 - 4 - 67.

Though the "Left" of the Carrion - Wilson Labour Party "achieved the passing" of a Bill to ban Incitement to Racial Hatred we doubt if Carrion will be prosecuted under this law, - that is kept only for use against those who do not wish to march with the S.L.L. at Brighton. This Racialist Carrion also called for 100% support for the Labour Government and its wage freeze, throwing in the comment that a policy of full employment "can only be classified as industrial bribery and blackmail."