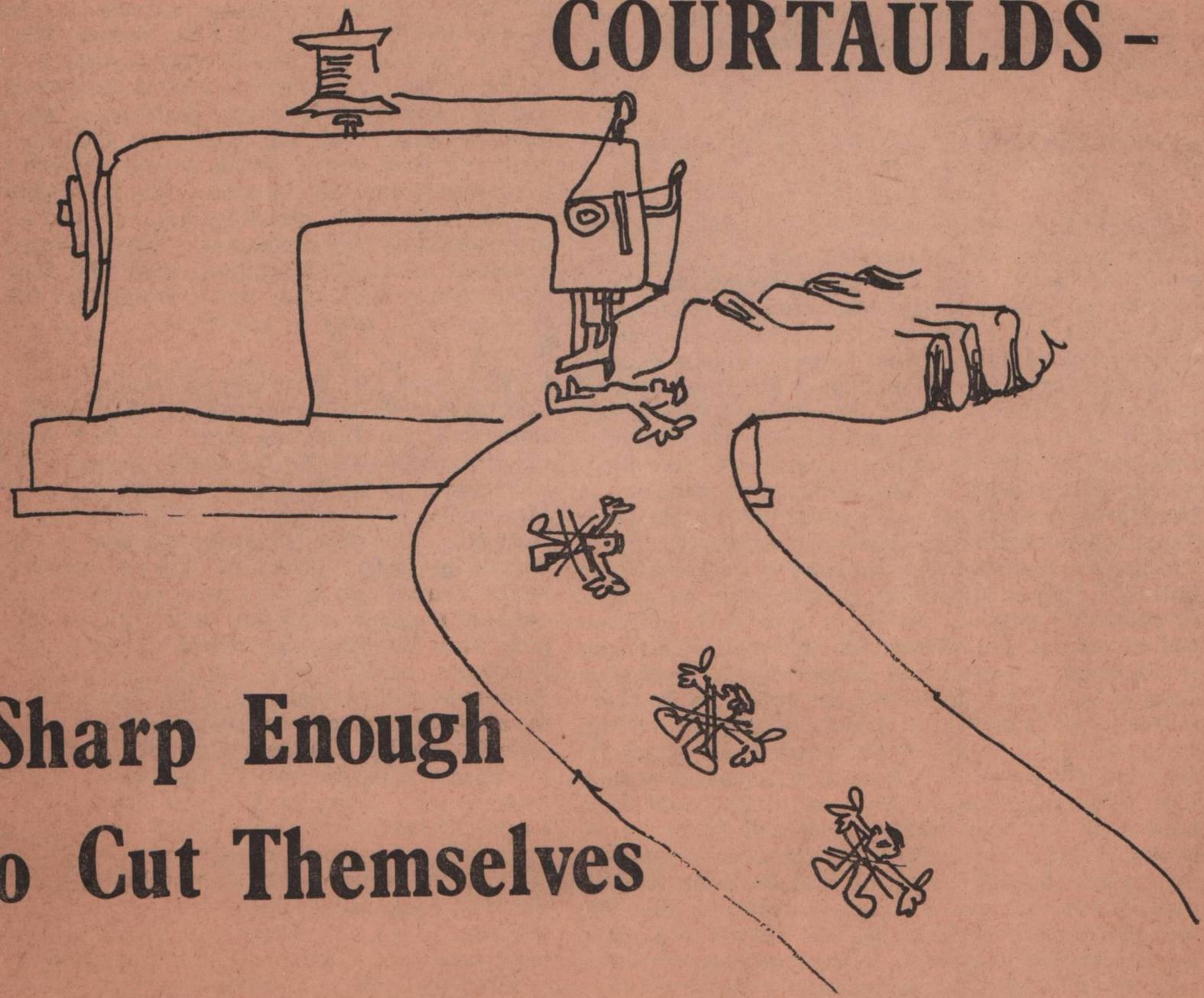


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OUTLOOK



COURTAULDS -



Sharp Enough To Cut Themselves

Mill work got a bit of a bad name for itself in the 1950's and 60's, as widespread redundancies threw thousands out of work in our Lancashire textile towns. In those days it seemed that there wasn't much future for them "as worked in't mill". Young lads coming out of school were told to serve their time to a trade and to stay out of the mill. Most people began to see working in the mill as being a dead-end job, more so since there were few families up here that didn't have somebody gasping as a result of some industrial disease or other, caused by working in the mills. As the old mills closed down the crafty firms like Courtaulds and I.C.I., started to move in and buy up the best businesses. The industry was suffering from a slump, so this pair could take over on the cheap.

Mill workers had never been very militant, and the massive redundancies plus plenty of female and immigrant labour has provided combines such as these with a ready supply of cheap labour. For many years these big companies have been exploiting and screwing these workers, organising housewives' shifts and shoving the coloured workers onto the night shift. By playing white off against black, and women against the men, they have kept the upper hand thus keeping the worker and his wages down. The tiny textile unions have not put up much of a fight against the big combines. These unions, faced with the widespread shutdown of mills over the last two decades, have got used to eating humble pie and have never really been off their knees. Unions of this kind are in no fit form to tackle firms like Courtaulds, some of them don't even have recog-

nized stewards on the shop floor. How can we ever get better pay and conditions with unions like these? How can our interests be protected by unions such as these? Even the conservative textile trade unionist Jack Peel of the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers & Textile Workers, has called for a bigger union in the industry so as to match the giant firms now forming in the industry around Courtaulds and I.C.I.

TEXTILE GIANTS CASH IN

While the unions lie around in a feeble condition the Courtaulds' management crash on with their plans for modernisation. The women workers are really getting it in the neck, as the housewife shift is abandoned in favour of night and multiple-shift work. Courtaulds policy prevents the employment of fresh female labour where part of a factory has gone over to multi-shift working. Workers are being sacked and started according to each managerial whim as firms are modernized. We are now in the age of high-powered management, and the old easy-going mill owner is of a dying race.

Man-made fibres are bringing with them the fast frames and machines in the mad rush for higher output, while work study and job measurement is disrupting the old happy-go-lucky friendly relationship between the mill owner and his workers. Courtaulds is onto a good thing at the moment with a steadily increasing demand for its man-made fibre products and not much opposition from the unions to its brutal policies of reorganisation in the industry. The multiple-shift work systems (seven-day round-the-clock working) which the company is introducing must indicate, as Dr. Marris¹ has pointed out, a stable order book where not much fluctuation in demand is expected. Firms which only experience short upturns in trade are really best off laying on a bit more overtime than going over to multi-shift systems. So if you're on multi-shift you can expect that the company doesn't envisage a slump in trade for the particular thing they are producing. Even if you're not multi-shift the Joint Textile Committee's "Economic Assessment" suggests that things are bucking up a bit for the textile trade generally. Between 1968 and 1972 they reckon that man-made fibre sales will go up by 11½% or to £232 million in hard cash, and that 43,400 people will be in the industry by 1972, which represents a 3% rise in the 1968 employment figures. Even this year according to their own interim statement Courtaulds expect to clear £40 million in profits before tax. So they're not really going down the nick at all. In any case many observers seem to think that the man-made fibre industry is in for a good rake-off in profits soon:—

On January 21, Peter Hill in "The Times" noted that, "Recent signs of greater confidence in textiles have come from the man-made fibre producers. Courtaulds and I.C.I. last week announced price increases of up to 9% in their acrylic and polyester fibres. Some observers now predict a steady improvement through 1972."

Earlier "The Economist", on November 14 last year, was saying of Courtaulds that "the greatest strength of the group lies in the fibre/textile vertical linkage, which few other fibre companies (formally) have. If the cycle is on a genuine upswing . . . the shares at 21/6d., look good for the mid-1970's". Only last month "The Times" reported the output of man-made fibres to be up and the demand stable.

TROUBLE AT ARROW MILL

Now that we know the score, let's take a look at a textile mill which six months ago started the introduction of multiple-shift work. When the management of Courtaulds' Arrow Mill at Rochdale decided to introduce multi-shift work they created a fresh department and brought in new labour from outside the firm. In this way they clearly avoided negotiations with their existing work force who would have demanded a higher rate of pay than those paid to the new workers on the multi-shift system. When it dawned on us that we'd been done, and that our basic rate was low we started to grumble, but we were told more or less to take it or leave it by the management. The union which had allowed the management to put one over on us, hadn't even disputed the pay scale imposed on us; because the firm was giving us over the union rate, that was good enough for the union boss. To counter this nearly all the workers on "multi" then signed a petition, calling on the management to explain their wage policy and to allow shop-floor representation. The labour force of which four out of five are Pakistanis, then made our local union official, Arnold Belfield, see the management over our demands. He came back empty-handed with a few promises that our pay may rise when we get on "full production". That was six months ago and we are still waiting, while the firm muck about with a work study report saying that they soon hope to tell us what we are worth.

Encouraged by this lack of action by Belfield, Courtaulds last January started to crack down on the workers in the Rochdale area. At their Eagle Mill the firm made plans for the change to multi-shift work which involved the sacking of one in every three men. Meanwhile back at Arrow Mill, manager George Norman, a bit of a has-been, started to act like the boss of the Mafia. It was the time for nominations for works' council and he was keen to keep the militants out, an assistant supervisor being forced to do his dirty work for him. This supervisor put pressure on a libertarian worker—who had been put up by the Pakistanis—telling him that if he didn't drop out of the elections he'd soon be getting his cards and coppers from Courtaulds. Our supervisor then began spreading it around that the lad was a "communist". The English workers with their inbred deep distrust of politics tended to take these stories more seriously than the Pakistanis, who stuck to their choice. This niggled Norman and he openly urged several Pakistanis to cross the lad's name off the list of nominations. All to no avail as the lad was elected onto the council, management subsequently denying that it was company policy to interfere in the nominations, even so the supervisor who intimidated the workers has left since the elections.

In February we saw the results of work study at its worst, with machinery being speeded up as the management's greed for more productivity increased. The "quack" work study engineer has now succeeded in getting most of the workers here running about like blue-arsed flies, as work loads have been pushed up. The speeding up of frames is also being used to create a feeling of insecurity among the workers, with two of the speed-frame operators already been given the push. The firm appeared to be victimising one of the lads—a Pakistani—who had been trying to get the work loads reduced, and were merely using redundancy as an excuse to get rid of him. Belfield bungled this case, as he has on other occasions. The best course now for the union would be to stop the management doing what it likes. To bring about a situation in

which the workers are consulted before, not after, job changes take place, and to move in the direction where the workers would have more control over the productive processes.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

It's beginning to dawn on us at Arrow that the management is using work study men and smooth talk to turn the multi-shift shop into a seven-day a week sweat-shop. Right enough they may pay us a bit more money, because they will want to use this as an incentive to get the other flats on "multi", but any rise is bound to be wrapped up in piecework and incentive schemes. They will very likely offer a juicy carrot to part of the workers, so that once we bite they can squeeze the scheme through before we had a chance to get a decent rate of pay for everyone. We must beat them by uniting behind our shift representatives. We must seek an end to the speeding up of the machinery by management and the work study engineers. We must get the support of workers in other flats, since the grave we agree to lie in today is being prepared for them as well. We should go in for a big rise in our basic pay now, and the setting up of shop stewards' committees to replace the tell-tales tea-party which constitutes the management's works' council. We should demand more say in how the firm is run, as already happens in other factories, and get more information on managerial intentions before, not after, they are carried out.

What will happen if we don't get this? Well, partly through bad management and partly due to breakdowns, production has already fallen off; as we warned

them weeks ago. We have been stopped for bobbins more often because they have sacked the speed-frame operators. But apart from this, what many workers regard as sharp practices and deceit on the part of management has led to the workers losing interest and this seems to have caused a slow-down in output. This drop in output has already hit the winders downstairs once or twice, and if the multi-shift workers seriously decided to adopt a work-to-rule or a go-slow the whole productive process would be disrupted throughout the mill. Because of the dependence on highly productive machinery, any slow-down or stoppage even by a handful of workers on "multi" would put the firm in "Shit Street" rapidly. Whether it be a stoppage of the card operators or the spinners, or the MS2 lads the effect would be to prevent production throughout the whole shift, capital intensification producing this situation. Under the present conditions on "multi" at Arrow Mill, the bosses are in a weak position because not only can they not afford bad publicity for their new six-month-old multi-shift system (the first in Rochdale), but because the machinery is so fast and valuable, and the demand for the finished article so high,² that even a short stoppage by a part of the labour force would lead to pounds and pounds of lost production.

The Arrow Mill multi-shift may only be a hole in the corner affair, but it indicates—in its way—the need for a new, more bold, approach by trade unions and workers to the monster combines. The cap-in-hand approach is no good these days, even, nay especially, in the textile industry.

NORTH-WEST WORKERS.

¹Multiple-shift work.

²"The Times", 24.3.71.

Towards a Rank & File Press

In capitalist society, not only do our rulers and bosses own the homes we live in and the places where we work, they own and control the sources of information and the means of communication. We must accept what they want us to know and swallow their opinions with our breakfast.

Their press—despite all the guff about a "free press"—is a prostitute press and an enemy of Freedom. Every day, strikers, squatters, students, immigrants, sexual minorities and anyone else who doesn't fit their rigid, conformist bill, are attacked, insulted and distorted.

The "political" papers—including those of the so-called Left—are no better. The parties and the groups seek only recruits, and thereby power for themselves.

There exists, of course, the new "Underground" press, which claims to be "liberated" and yet is well filled with big adverts from the capitalist record companies seeking to flog their mumblings and electronic noises. The hippy papers of the underground press exist for a middle class youth audience.

The real struggle facing common people takes place on the factory floor and on the council estate.

People seem to have the strange idea that there is something wonderful about writing and producing a paper. There isn't. Every worker can be his own journalist. Not one single word of "Outlook" has been written by a paid writer.

People can only begin to lay the foundations of a new, socialist,



society when they understand the fundamental need for human solidarity. The little games of employer and politician can only be challenged when people know what's up with the world. Struggles such as strikes and rent protests only succeed when people stand united, which sets up a great need for free, really free, means of communication.

That's where a rank and file paper comes in. Workers in all parts of the country are facing the same problems, rising unemployment, union leaders jumping into bed with

the bosses, rents soaring up, etc. Over us all hangs the threat of the Industrial Relations Bill, leading right up the garden path to a long stretch as a guest of Her Majesty.

Take a few examples, starting with the paper mills. There are mills from Scotland to Southern England, mostly owned by a very few huge companies. Yet, the problems are the same—increasing work targets, swindling productivity schemes and big lay-offs. But do paper workers in Scotland know what's happening on the Medway? The only way

they'll know at the moment is through the employer-owned press—which is hardly likely to suggest joint struggles.

Or the building industry, falling into the hands of fewer and fewer giant employers? Or the motor industry, now dominated by four companies?

Every home buyer, every council tenant, every private tenant, faces huge rises in the future. But rent strikes and protests which are isolated are doomed before they start.

We need a fighting network of workers' papers, but where do we start? All you need is a sympathetic typist, a few stencils, and some paper. It doesn't have to be fancy, just put down what you think and flog it to your mates.

Help isn't far away. "Outlook" can give you the address of your nearest anarchist and syndicalist group, almost all of whom have access to duplicators and many of whom run their own magazines already. Most of them would be delighted to print what you want to say about your boss, your union, the government or the local council.

Students too, having easier hours than the average worker, can help with sales and distribution. Let's stop relying on the twisted muck of capitalist Fleet Street. Let the rank and file press flourish. What about it brothers?

PETER THE PAINTER.

Who's the Fool Now?

April Fools' day came early with the announcement of cuts in Social Security followed rapidly by a rich man's Budget. These two measures provide, however, further and rich insights into the mentality of our present system of government.

The new Social Security Bill, many of whose provisions were incidentally first proposed by the last Labour Government, is three-pronged and yet another desperate attempt by capital to crush the militant spirit existing within industry at the moment. The first blatant attack is made directly at strikers' families in the hope that by reducing benefit, sufficient dissent and hardship will be caused within the home to pressurise the striker back to work. Until this Bill the striker, although unable to claim for himself, has been able to obtain up to £4.35 from other sources without affecting the benefit for his wife and children. This will now be reduced to £1. Tax refunds will also in future be taken account of when calculating benefit and no longer will it be possible to claim social security in those desperately tight two weeks after a return to work. Instead, the worker will be at the mercy of a subbing system operated by an employer who will decide if, when and how much can be granted.

It has been said, however, that as only some 20% of strikers ever need to claim benefits these proposals are

not particularly significant, but looked at as one further turd in the cesspit of anti-strike legislation it must be considered as serious, proving again that the government will implement measures directly aimed at an underprivileged minority, even when the results will obviously be strictly limited. Meanwhile the credibility of a government which sees fit to differentiate in its Industrial Relations Bill between illegal and legal strikes but legislates elsewhere as if there were no difference, must surely be completely shattered. The gloves are off, make no mistake about it.

The second part of the Bill affects everyone not covered by a private sick pay scheme. It states that no person whether ill or equally justifiably absent from work can claim benefit for the first three days, thus pushing the spectre of financial hardship and ill health into almost every home.

The third part meanwhile attacks those who voluntarily leave work or are sacked for industrial misconduct, even though the latter may later be proved innocent by the Industrial Relations Tribunal. These people must receive £2.05 less than the normal rate.

No such victimisation however for those at the other end of the spectrum as the Budget declarations made quite clear. In fact through

reductions in corporation tax, income tax, death duties and capital gains, plus an increase in child tax allowances, millions of pounds have been poured back into the pockets of company shareholders and those with large incomes. This has been paid for inevitably by cut backs in public expenditure and increased National Insurance contributions gathered mainly from the average wage earner and scaled subtly so that it will be in the interests of an employer (who has to pay an equivalent sum) to keep wages low. But, some might say, it's in the interests of everyone to have low income tax and higher child allowances. It must be remembered, however, that the way in which our complicated tax system works ensures that the £5,000 per year man will gain ten times as much from these concessions as his £2,000 per

year counterpart. The person paying little or no tax will of course gain nothing at all. In fact, taking into consideration higher health charges, loss of free milk, increase in school meals, etc., he will be considerably worse off than before.

Some concessions have been made, however, for the government are not fools and cannot afford to alienate too large a part of the population too much of the time. Consequently the disabled and the old have been offered rises, the latter being largely illusory, however, for by the time it is implemented inflation will have cancelled it out.

But what does the Budget really mean and what is its purpose? The widely proffered explanation is that with more cash available the rich will invest more in industry which will expand, thus enabling the country to operate at a higher and more stable economic level. We all know what this means, however, fatter profits for the rich and a few handouts, with productivity strings attached, for the masses, for when does the working man ever share in the country's so-called prosperity? Wages might rise but so will prices, leaving the distribution of income and property, 25% of income and 90% of property in the hands of 5% of the population, unchanged.

The nature of these measures should not therefore surprise us, as they are entirely consistent with the capitalist philosophy, whose underlying assumption is that the vast majority should serve and sustain the existing order which is in no way, however, in business to improve the welfare of that majority, unless it considers it expedient to do so. At present the financial seesaw of our economy sees fit to hit hard at the majority and will continue to do so till more subtle exploitation is considered appropriate.

The feeble and ineffectual machinations of our trade union leaders do little to upset this degrading state of affairs, neither of course do our politicians, our so-called representatives, for all have a vested interest in its maintenance. The latest government legislation is therefore a manifestation of an illness existing within our society whereby 90% of the population are turned into automations subservient to the other 10%. Its malignance should not be underestimated though, for at this moment it is clear that disturbing numbers of people feel little sympathy for the so-called malingerers who are the direct target of the Social Security Bill. These same people are also duped into accepting claptrap about tightening one's belt in the national interest, thus even the Budget be-

comes acceptable.

These two pieces of legislation do then represent more than merely the sum total of their provisions. The criteria on which they are based and the implications which are revealed, are but strands from the net of dogma and misinformation which characterises the work of our politicians and their bureaucratic minions. As I have attempted to reveal, an upside-down approach to life is seen to be in operation in which a powerful and rich minority can make gains directly from the losses of the poorer and politically weak mass of the population. This, however, is an inevitable outcome of our leadership orientated society, where decisions can be made without reference to the people whom are allegedly represented. However, by probing beneath the surface and initiating others into the exercise, the full extent of our political blindfold can become clear. When this has been done one can then decide what policies are really needed and, in association with other like minds, decide how they should be implemented. Thus the redundancy of those in authority can be revealed and their complacency ripped to shreds.

DEREK RELPH.



Well worth What?

Wellworthy Ltd., Leeds, is about to be closed down. And in this area with the closure of woollen mills in Bradford throwing thousands out of work, the case of Wellworthy's perhaps doesn't seem significant. But the background to this factory closure makes it of more than local significance. It shows the extent to which managements will lie, cheat and procrastinate but, more important, it shows how weakness in the workers' organisation lets them get away with it.

Wellworthy Ltd. occupies a building which makes a convincing attempt to look like an industrial prison. The roof drips when it rains and it used to be unbearably hot in summer (there's a foundry) until a walkout persuaded the management to put in some proper ventilation. It is now just very hot in summer. But it isn't so very different from a lot of other factories in Leeds—and for a long time it was typical in another way: shop floor organisation was pretty well non-existent.

This can be seen by the way wages in the factory compared with the district average. In about 1959 they were equal to the average but by 1970 had slipped to about £4 or £5 below it. Towards the end of this ten years things began to move again at Wellworthy's but we should be clear that this slip in wages represents the decreasing control of their working life by the workers on the shop floor. And this meant vindictive sackings by new chargehands out to prove how butch they were, it meant lousy prices accepted out of fear and it meant the fungoid growth of blue-eyed arsehole creepers.

But as I say, things were beginning to move again at Wellworthy's. The A.E.F. stewards particularly were beginning to get an atmosphere of confidence and dignity on the shop floor. A strike improved ventilation. Another gained increases in wages. But this also allowed in Work Study Consultants—and this is where the story really starts since it was this which provided the smokescreen for the already planned closure of the factory. The fact that this was an expensive smokescreen (it cost £17,000) shows how vulnerable the Wellworthy group of factories were at this time. Effectively, the negotiations over the introduction of a Productivity Deal took up all the attention of the stewards: there were films, there were little courses, there were chats with this consultant and that, there was a thumping great wad of document to examine and deal with in detail, and there was negotiation after negotiation.

In the meantime most of the administration of the Leeds factory had been shifted to the main office of Wellworthy Ltd. at Lymington. The result of this later was that the income of the Leeds factory was arranged to be the bare costs of production—on paper. The factory could then easily be represented as being uneconomic. The most profitable section of the Leeds factory—the large piston section—was moved to the Ampress works at Lymington. The batches at Leeds got smaller and the big batch jobs were going to

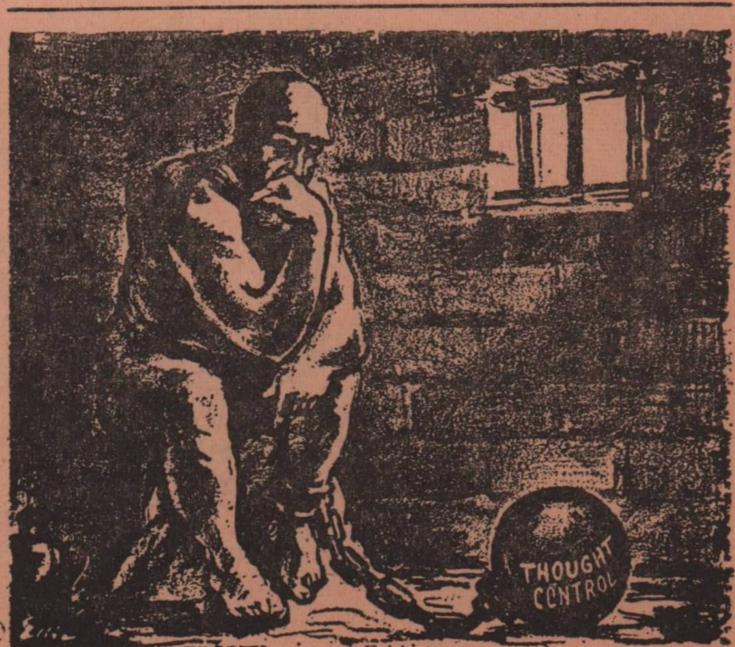
Ampress or the Bridgwater factory. Also the new factory at Sunderland was steadily nearing completion. But the stewards thought they'd stop this buggering about when the Prod Deal issue was settled.

Negotiations dragged on until the management produced draft proposals which the stewards rejected. The management stuck fast and the stewards put the proposals to a mass meeting which unanimously rejected them. The stewards then put in for a £12 a week increase. Negotiations on this staggered through procedure to the central conference at York. 'Failure to agree' was registered and the officials came and explained to a mass meeting how the management had said they would close the factory if there was a strike. A ballot was taken which showed that an overwhelming majority were for striking anyway. Then the management announced they were closing the factory whether there was a strike or not.

The local Tory crapsheet then, of course, claimed that the militants had disrupted things so much that the factory had to close. But at a recent meeting between shop stewards and management, the personnel director of Wellworthy Ltd. (for the Associated Engineering Group of which it is a part) said that the decision to close the Leeds factory was made in 1968 because of the limited life in the building.

Thus the stewards were outmanoeuvred. But this would not have been so bad if links with the other Wellworthy factories (in places like Weymouth, Bridgwater, Ringwood, Lymington and Salisbury) had been better. Unfortunately the organisation in these southern factories doesn't seem to be sufficiently militant and they have been unco-operative in linking up nationally. National link-ups could have either stopped the closure or obtained substantial extra redundancy pay by the threat or use of militant action (say the blacking of machines and jobs from Leeds). Lack of this sort of organisation has led to what is essentially a defeat.

LEEDS COMRADES.



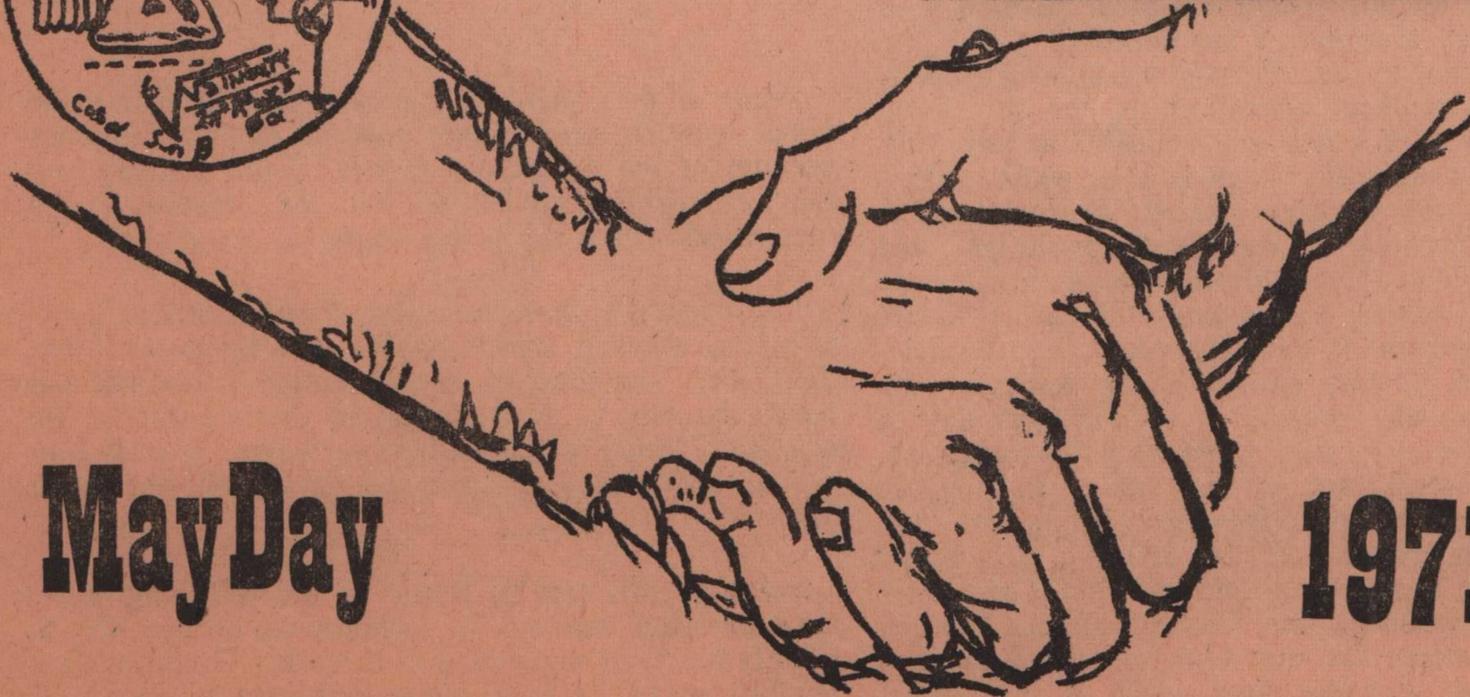
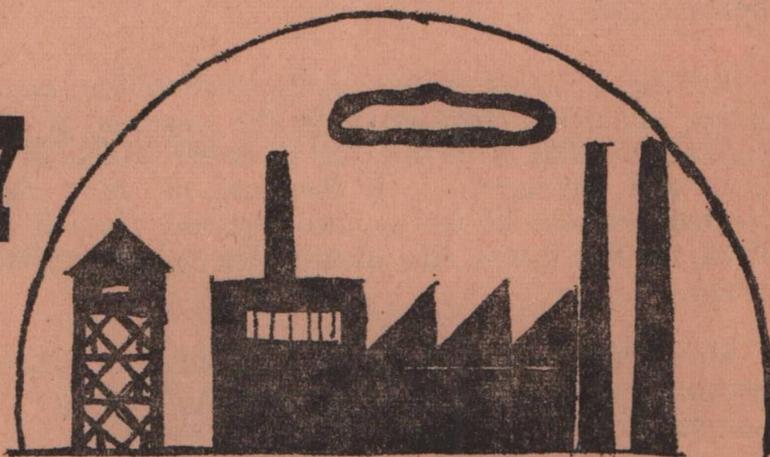
THE FACTORY COMMITTEE

No one will deny that capitalist society has entered a period of permanent crisis which induces it to re-assemble its weakened forces and to concentrate, more and more, all political and economic power in the hands of the state, by means of nationalizations. To this concentration of capitalist power, are we going to continue to oppose the scattered forces of the workers? To do so would be to run into definitive defeat. And one of the principal reasons for the present apathy of the working class resides in the interminable series of defeats suffered by the social revolution throughout this century. The working class no longer has confidence in any organization because it has observed them all at work, here and there, and seen that all of them, including the anarchist organizations, have revealed themselves to be incapable of resolving the crisis of capitalism—that is to say, of assuring the triumph of the social revolution. One must not be afraid to say that all of these organizations are outdated and no longer valid. On the contrary, only this very realization—the importance of which should not be reduced by more or less circumstantial considerations, nor by blaming others for the consequences of one's own errors—provides a point of departure from which we can truly prepare ourselves to revise all doctrines (which

today share a substantial portion of outdatedness), perhaps resulting in a fundamental ideological unification of the workers' movement in the direction of the social revolution. It goes without saying that I do not by any means dream of a movement whose thought would be monolithic, but a movement unified from within, and in which diverse tendencies could enjoy the most ample freedom to manifest themselves.

On the other hand, it is no less true that action is called for immediately. This action must obey two general principles: first, it must facilitate the ideological regroupment mentioned above; and second, it must cease considering the revolution as the work of future generations for whom we are supposed to make the preparations. We are faced with this dilemma: either the social revolution and a new impetus for humanity, or war and a social decomposition of which the past offers only a few pale examples. History is granting us a breathing space the duration of which we do not know. Let us make use of it to reverse the course of the present degeneration and to bring about the revolution. The present apathy of the working class is only temporary. It indicates, at this time, both the workers' loss of confidence in all organizations, and a

SOLIDARITY



May Day

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certain detachment on their part. It depends on us, as revolutionaries, to draw the lessons which will enable this detachment to be transformed into active revolt. The energy of the working class asks only to exert itself. Nevertheless, it is necessary to give it not only an end—it has had a presentiment of this for a long time—but also means of attaining this end. If the task of revolutionaries is to bring about a fraternal society, this necessitates, beginning immediately, an organism in which this fraternity can form and develop itself.

At the present time it is on the factory level that workers' fraternity attains its maximum. Thus it is there that we must act, but not in clamouring for a trade-union unity which is chimerical today, in the actual conditions of the capitalist world, and which, moreover, could only come forward AGAINST the working class, since the trade unions represent now only different tendencies of capitalism. In fact, a "united front" of the unions could happen only on the eve of the revolution—and would act against the revolution since the major unions would all be equally interested in torpedoing it to assure their own survival in the capitalist state. Henceforth, as integral parts of the capitalist system, they defend this system by defending themselves. The interests of the union are essentially their own and not those of the workers.

Moreover, one of the most powerful obstacles to a workers' regroupment and a revolutionary renaissance is constituted by the apparatus of the union bureaucrats, even in the factory, beginning with the Stalinist apparatus. The enemy of the worker, today, is the union bureaucrat every bit as much as the boss who, without the union bureaucrat, would most of the time be powerless. It is the union bureaucrat who paralyzes workers' action. And thus the first watchword of revolutionaries must be: Out the door with the union bureaucrats!

But the principal enemy consists of Stalinism and its union apparatus, because it is the partisan of state capitalism—that is to say, the complete fusion of the state and unionism. It is therefore the most clear-sighted defender of the capitalist system, since it outlines, for this system, the most stable state conceivable today.

Meanwhile, one should not destroy an existing organism without proposing another in its place, better adapted to the necessities of the revolution. And it is precisely the revolution that has taken it upon itself to show us, each time that it has appeared, the instrument of its choice: the factory committee directly elected by the workers assembled on the shop-floor, and the members of which are revocable at any time. This is the only organism which is able, without alteration, to direct the workers' interests within capitalist society while looking to the social revolution; and which is also able to accomplish this revolution and, once having attained victory, to constitute the base of future society. Its structure is the most democratic conceivable, since it is directly elected in the workplace by all the workers, who control its actions from day to day and are able to recall a member of the committee, or the entire committee, at any time, and choose another. Its constitution offers the minimum of risks of degeneration, because of the constant and direct control that the workers are able to exercise over their delegates. Furthermore, the constant contact between elected and electors favours a maximum of creative initiative of the working class, which is thus called upon to take its destiny in its own hands and to

directly lead its own struggles. This committee, which authentically represents the will of the workers, is called upon to administer the factory and to organize the workers' defence against the police and the reactionary gangs of Stalinism and traditional capitalism. After the victory of the revolution, it is the factory committee which must indicate to the regional, national, and international leaders (these also are directly elected by the workers), the productive capacities of the factory and its needs of raw materials and manpower. Finally, the representatives of each factory would be called to form, on the regional, national, and international scale, the new government, distinct from the management of the economy, and whose principal task would be to liquidate the heritage of capitalism and to assure the material and cultural conditions of its own progressive disappearance.

At once economic and political, the factory committee is the revolutionary organism par excellence. That is why even its **establishment** represents a sort of insurrection against the capitalist state and its trade-union branches, because it assembles all the workers' energies against the capitalist state, and even assumes the latter's economic power. For the same reason one sees it burst forth spontaneously in moments of acute social crisis. But in our epoch of chronic crisis, it is necessary for revolutionaries to passionately defend and advocate this conception starting now if they wish, in the first place, to put an end to the meddling of union bureaucrats in the factories, and to restore to the workers the initiative of their emancipation. Let us therefore destroy the unions in the name of the factory committees, democratically elected by all the workers in the plant, and revocable at any time.

BENJAMIN PERET.

No Joy for Cotton Workers

While it may well be the case that in man-made fibres workers are turning toward greater militancy because of the prosperous nature of the industry and the technical process of the job, the situation in the cotton industry is much less happy in every way.

I've worked in three branches of cotton production—spinning, weaving and finishing—so I know what I'm on about. The situation in the average cotton mill can hardly be said to be congenial to the interests of the workers. What with rock-bottom wages, archaic conditions and insecurity of employment, it's not much fun.

Proof of this can be found in the following facts; the basic wage earnings for 40 hours are around £13.75, slightly more for nights and shift work. Conditions are terrible to say the least; air conditioning in most mills is medieval and totally ineffective.

Last summer, at Lily Mills, Shaw, near Oldham, which is in the Viyella group in the control of I.C.I., who were mentioned in passing in the last issue, the temperature rose above the 100°F mark. Short fibres floating around in the air are a great hazard; many people contracting bysinosis, a bronchial complaint, which can reduce a worker's life by around 5 to 10 years. One guy at the Lily, whose job is packing waste, probably the filthiest job in the industry, regularly coughs up blood and receives a pittance of a pension in return for permanent ill-health.

Many workers are severely injured every year owing to dangerous and loosely guarded machinery. Insecurity of employment is borne out by the fact that the mills in Lancashire are closing down at the rate of one a week, and the present work force of 100,000 will be reduced to 55,000 in the next four years.

WORKERS DIVIDED

Why is it then that such a state of affairs is tolerated by the rank and file, and the unions who are supposed to represent us. The principal reason is that a division of interests exists amongst the workpeople. Co-operation and comradeship between the immigrant workers and the whites is virtually non-existent. Also the women workers tend to be extremely apathetic when it comes to fighting for a more salutary existence.

Because of this lack of solidarity, a common fight against the bosses can't be put into operation, thereby resulting in a dearth of class-consciousness and a general air of despondency on the shop floor. At one mill I used to work at, a bloke in the blowing room, a staunch Tory (as many mill workers are) recounted to me an incident which occurred a few years ago. Apparently a rare dispute arose, probably the first since the General Strike, and as it was not possible to resolve it, the

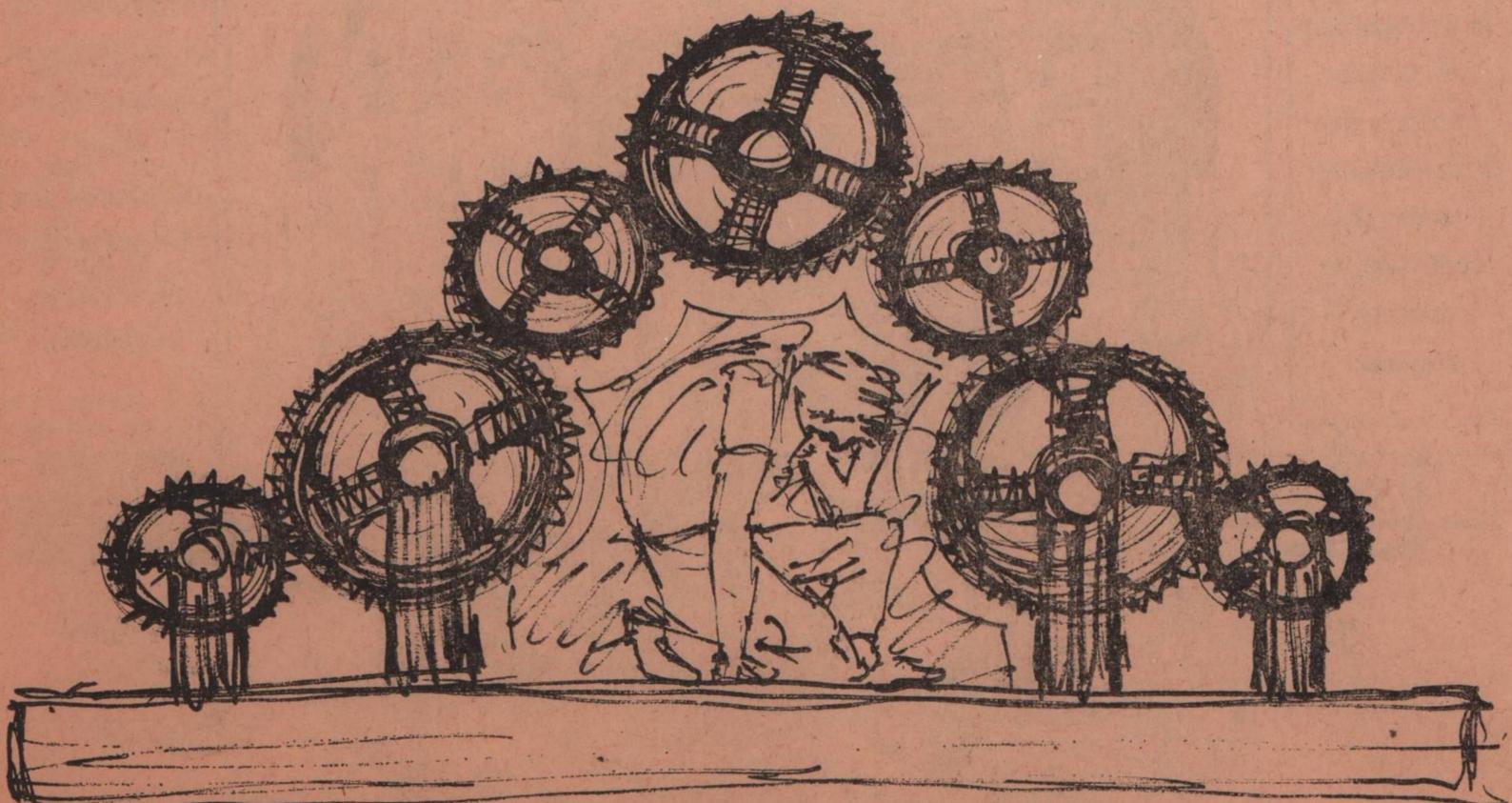
workers walked out, later however, one of these men came back and scabbed on his mates. This bastard was a former Tory Mayor of Shaw, surprisingly this blowing room chap came out with a heap of abuse condemning the scab saying, "No self-respecting Tory would ever blackleg on a strike."

The consequence of all this is the weak front shown by the various textile unions towards the bosses. This collection of petty officials are given a free hand owing to the lack of interest shown by the average worker. These union bureaucrats do all right for themselves and often work hand in hand with the bosses. The last wage deal negotiated between the employers and the unions proves this. They put in a claim for £3 a week, the bosses, in typical fashion, refused and offered a paltry £1.75 which the union immediately accepted—need I say more.

The unions are, as might be expected, extremely undemocratic. They consist of officials who, as far as I know, are not elected by the workers but have somehow instituted themselves in a privileged position. In the union I belong to, branch meetings are held quarterly, and at the last meeting I attended all the officials did was to talk about Pakistanis leaving rubbish around the lockers, and that was about it. Another fault with these textile unions is the absence of shop stewards and other shop floor representatives.

It all boils down to the same old issue. When the rank and file realise that action must be collective, and not individuals complaining to an overseer, in an attempt to rectify our miserable situation, and when they realise our strength lies in solidarity, then, and only then, the bosses, unions and governments will quake in their shoes.

TEX TILE.



The Reluctant Guardians of the Flame

Every man and woman who has taken part in a strike action quickly learns the harsh and ugly facts of life in the first strike hour. It is in that first strike hour when the new strike pickets self-consciously take over their duty that the police car arrives and disgorges the duty policemen. One never learns who summons the police but they always appear to protect the factory and the scab labour and with a loosening of trousers' crutches and a refitting of helmets they take up their positions alongside the pickets secure in the knowledge that there will be no violence with the elderly "lads" and that their own pay packet is waiting for them at the end of the week.

It is in the vigil of the all-night strike picket that there is that guilty fraternisation of strikers and police as in the long cold night tea is brewed and courtesy and boredom dictate that one shares one's jar with them. They sympathise with the workers' problems and tell of their

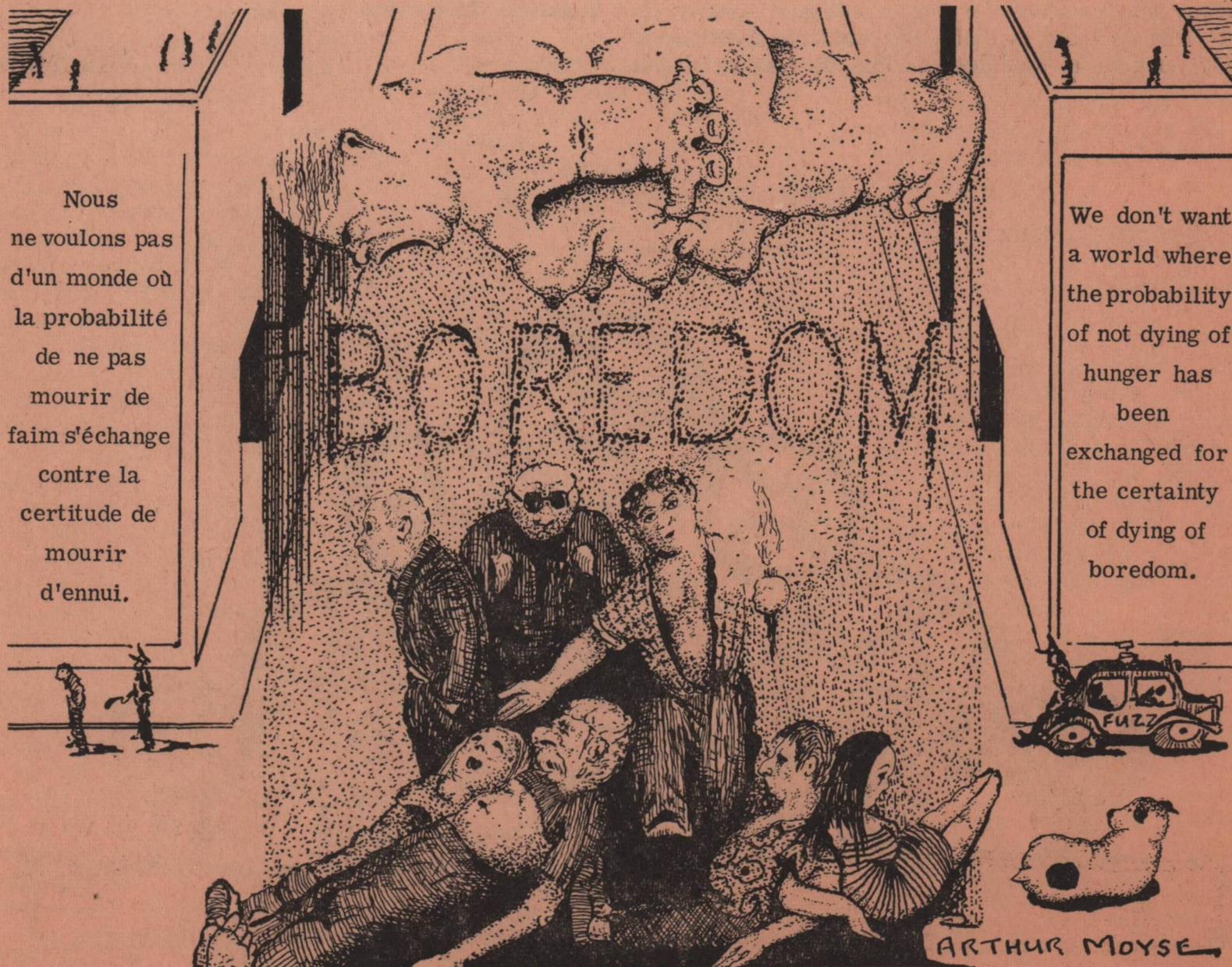
own claim to low wages and long working hours and in the dark confessional of the night traduce their sleeping superiors to masterless men seeking a return to the managerial bosom on their own small dictated terms.

It is in the light of the unfolding morning when the clerks scurry to their glass-bound offices and the middle-class hausfrau cocks her pink bum over her scented loo and the banks and the smart bistro blinds rise on the well-swept streets of Mayfair, Bath and the cathedral close, that the well-paid hacks of the national sewer press cry havoc that a handful of frightened men should have allowed themselves to be led into blind industrial anarchy by the malevolent plottings of footloose militants and irresponsible theorists and by doing so threaten the entire economic life of these islands.

It can be a traumatic experience for the sensitive soul waiting to bid

farewell to the bitter Churchill-oriented wife of his bed and the sneering O Level brats of his breakfast table to have to read that by his hesitant but proud vote for strike action he had betrayed not only the good but unknown City-bound American/French/German/Irish(?) employer who was already frantically seeking some negotiated way to improve the wage and working conditions of his hired rabble but he had betrayed the self-elected leaders of his company union, Mr. Carr, Mr. Heath, the Tory party and his country in that order of priorities.

If his strike is news-worthy enough, there will be a television trial, presided over by Robin Day, and a nation will sit and gawp as a handful of inarticulate men, thrown up by an act of history to speak for their fellow men and women on the stones, will be ordered to explain to the millions of watching viewers why they did not use the full machinery of negotiation and how can they



justify their refusal to work when little nurses earning less than they do are at that very moment courageously slicing hearts and livers, legs and lungs from the nation's sick and dying by the aid of a flickering first world war match or a rusty table knife depending on what the men or women on strike manufactured for their absent employer and an old woman will rise up from the television audience and cry that she is trying to live on her old age pension and she never goes on strike.

And that shrill, harsh, middle-class voice will ask the rhetorical question of what would happen if all the doctors working 168 hours a week without pause for food or sleep (and all for less than a job gets for dying in some fouled mine shaft) decided to go on strike, and that well-dressed young man, with the sour smell of the fascist out of office, will ask his oft-asked question of is this why we fought two world wars and men died in the mud and the

blood of Hollywood and the sands of Reagan's California and the confused and stuttering strike committee men will fumble for their pay slips to prove a point and gabble of broken agreements by the employers and of the months of deliberate delays over simple work or canteen negotiations and the sweaty slob with his own small and profitable business will roar communist and attempt to assault one of the elderly social democrats.

Little comrade, little comrade, it is all wasted effort, for you are facing your enemy and they despise your humble efforts to rationalise your actions to them.

If the economy of the country is in peril by your strike then the fault is not yours, for the economy must be of a sickness beyond saving and if our social services are such that human life is in peril then the fault lies with those bureaucrats responsible for its maintenance who, with

long and overdue warnings, have never taken alternative but time-consuming actions for such emergency.

There is only one answer to those well-entrenched and well-fed and well-housed members of the middle class who, through their mediums of mass communications, sit in judgement on the working class and demand that the working class, and only the working class, must practise a public morality that every other class openly and daily dishonours and that is that we reject the right to be the only class so honoured. We are a class forever in the front line of the battle for economic existence and if we are fools enough to fight the middle-class battle for the life beautiful then let them know that it will only be fought when they tighten their own belts as well as ours. Otherwise it's all out, brothers, for the Queen's Birthday, and balls to the governor and Robin Day.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

Time & Motion Study

This is not an article on the pros and cons of Time and Motion Study, or on the methods used in job assessment. There are various good books on this subject, notably the AUEW pamphlet "Time Study".

No, this is a description of the cunning methods two employers have used to introduce it.

I quote two examples—one in a traditionally militant area, and the other in a quiet backwater.

If anyone still doubts the evils of Time and Motion Study, after reading any book on it, I say this to them:—

(1) If Time and Motion Study is not a deliberate attack on the living standard of factory workers, why do the employers go to such lengths to conceal their intentions?

(2) If you don't believe that, just go and work in a fully Time Study controlled factory. Then you'll know if you are equal to the fictitious "standard man"!

Example 1 (January 1969, Midlands machine tool factory, 1,500 men). The employer's offensive began as the shop stewards were trying to get the last three men in the shop into the union. Then, they hoped, they could campaign for a "Closed Shop". Suddenly, the employer told us that the firm had done particularly well, with massive export sales, etc., and as a gesture of thanks, we would all receive a "goodwill bonus". This was accompanied by pretty cards "with the compliments of the Works Manager", personally signed. We thought this was great, but of course, the three "nons" now rejected our arguments about "wicked employers" and the need for unity to smash them. So the closed shop move was defeated.

A few weeks later, in the same benevolent vein, the employer announced a "package deal", the essence of which was that "all distinctions between shop floor and staff shall end, we shall all be staff". Henceforth no time would be lost through lateness, a new sickness benefit and pensions scheme, overalls scheme and promise of a pay rise were projected. Of course the

shop stewards committee accepted this with open arms. Later the clock cards were abolished altogether! Then we were told that the pay rise would take the form of a reappraisal of the piece-work rates. "That can't be bad" we said. Within a week, the little men with stop-watches disappeared. Different shaped job cards appeared. When we asked how the job times were calculated, we were told they "came from the book".

We suddenly realised that we had unwittingly sanctioned the introduction of one of the most advanced forms of Time and Motion Study—PMTS, where every tiny eye and arm movement is analysed in thousandths of seconds. At first the times were very easy, and the pay was good. Just long enough had elapsed for the men to get used to not "clocking in". The men did not feel it worth fighting over in case the whole "package deal" was cancelled. Hence it was accepted. A well known and respected militant work force was effectively bound and gagged. The firm's fortunes have recently turned much to the worse. I wonder how the workers view the package deal now, as job times tighten daily?

Example 2 is almost the exact opposite—a very quiet shop of oldish workers—mostly over 55. A small country firm, 400 workers. The fortunes of the firm turn from bad to worse. The 62-year-old shop steward/convener has never been out of the district in his life. In October 1970 the employer summoned "Old Bill" to the office and read out pages of magical figures shewing that the firm was almost bankrupt, and the main cause was that the jobs cost too much to make because they spent too much time on the floor waiting to be machined. Would it be all right if a "Job-Planner" was employed? Of course, "Old Bill", with his 50 years' gold watch and pension in mind, readily agreed. It so happened that the Job-Planner also had a Diploma in Time Study!

Very much alarmed, a group of us protested, but "Old Bill" stuck to his line of "It won't happen here"

and his blind faith in the goodwill of the firm. Unfortunately he was wrong, and steadily, week by week, the Time Study man brought his system into the shop. At each stage we protested, but "Old Bill" silenced us by telling us that it was for our own good, as the firm would go bust if we didn't co-operate. The fear of losing our jobs removed all our fight, and the frustration and discouragement of fighting employer, blind shop steward and apathetic workmates, wore us out. Within five months TM 2 was in operation—a special form of "grouped" time study—i.e. a time is given for "pick up drill" instead of "move eyes 1 ft. left, 2 ft. down, move arm 1 ft. forward, grasp sharp round object, x in. dia. y lb. weight", etc. of PMTS. "Old Bill" just couldn't believe it. He had willingly accepted some-

thing he had completely failed to understand. He had been persuaded to ignore the protests of those who had worked elsewhere. Again we were caught, bound and gagged.

If any of this appears familiar—watch out brother—you're next! I have had the frustrating experience of being able to see what is going to happen, trying to warn the shop steward of what's going on, and being met with absolute disbelief. I just hope that something in either of these two examples might prompt a shop steward to look more closely into "package deals" and similar agreements, especially with the advent of the Industrial Relations Bill and legally binding agreements.

It must be stated clearly—"No Time Study here!"

PAUL CARTER

Anarchist Syndicalist

Alliance

(An extract from our Statement)

Our aim is to aid, by whatever means conducive to this end, in the creation of a free society. By free society, we mean that society in which there is no coercive authority; no police force, no civil service or bureaucratic machine, no political or other vested interest group which, by a standing accumulation of wealth or of physical strength, can ever be in a position to tell anyone what to do, and then by any kind of force make obedience mandatory. Thereby each person decides what course their life and activity takes.

In order to achieve this free, classless society, we aim to organise for social revolution in groups based on friendship and solidarity. These groups are free from any central control, and initially are built around a geographical location, organising at the place of work and of more local residence as numbers and interest grow. Rejecting all parliamentary activity, as such perpetuates the repressive machinery of capitalism and the state, we advocate direct action of the people themselves as the only way to achieve lasting gains, leading to the ultimate society of free peoples capable of using their own initiatives.

Since direct action on the part of the individual produces only partial and inadequate results, it is necessary for us to organise collectively. Anarchists advocate the organisation of the workers into Syndicalist unions, free from the craft divisions and bureaucracy to today's Trade Unions. While the trade unions seek to be permanent wage bargaining institutions, nationally capable only of keeping their own officers in the clover, Syndicalism sees no value in the reformist slogan of 'A Fair Days Wage For A Fair Days Work', but demands the abolition of the wage system, a system which perpetuates differential, enables money to rule man, and thereby widens rather than reduces the gaps between individuals. We demand the destruction of the property relations of existing society, property relations which lead individual workers to talk about 'my factory' when they don't

even own the grime beneath the benches. Property relations which enable big corporations to throw thousands of workers out onto the streets at the whim of an economic system that promotes the side-by-side existence of wealth and poverty, dependent on a 'pool of unemployment'.

FREEDOM NOW!

Today we must combat the authoritarian encroachments of the State and its armed wings, capitalism. We must combat those who seek to mystify us, and must fight those who would have us chained to the benches of their ideologies. Not with idle threats and empty minds, but with the strength of a working class united in full understanding of the aims of the free society, building now through our words and actions the new society in the shell of the old.

**M / C R A N A R C H I S T
S Y N D I C A L I S T S
33, C L Y D E R D
M A N C H E S T E R 20.**

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