

WORKERS' FIGHT

No 10

8-22 July 1972

4p

CORRUPTION? THE TORY SYSTEM IS BASED ON LEGALISED CORRUPTION!

DOCKS

National action by dockers snatched the Chobham Farm three out of the hands of the NIRC only three weeks ago.

Now dockers are again facing a jail threat for continuing their campaign to re-claim for registered dockers the work of container packing at the Inland container depots.

Seven men, including Vic Turner and Bernie Steer, have been ordered to stop picketing the Midland Cold Storage Depot, London. If they do not comply they can be jailed. Unlike Jack Jones, they continue non-recognition of the Court and refuse to attend.

In the NIRC hearing, attempts were made to set the scene for a witch-hunt against dockers by accusing them of 'violence'. But, as one of the pickets told a newspaper, "The allegations of violence are a lamentable excuse by the employers to harden their case. If the employers want to play really rough and we did likewise, they wouldn't know what hit them. And this could well come about this week."

Will the dockers be sentenced? We don't know. The 'Official Solicitor', a man the government used to pull itself back from the brink, is 'publicly' taking an interest - this time from the beginning.

But it is intolerable that workers' liberty should depend on the legalistic haggling of lawyers they don't employ, in a court they don't recognise. Yet the TUC is now asking for the Act to be 'put on ice' (ie. kept in reserve) and clearly want to abandon even the pretence of a fight to smash it.

The only way to end the cat-and-mouse game to which the bosses' courts have subjected the workers is to smash it. That's why it is still true that a general mobilisation of the labour movement - that is a general strike - against the Act is in the most pressing interests of the working class.

A small corner of the curtain of secrecy which normally surrounds the affairs of the business community was raised in the bankruptcy court last week - and revealed part of the vast network of 'corruption', rake-offs, and backhanders in public life.

John Poulson, a Yorkshire architect, declared that he had paid out large sums of money to politicians (Tory and Labour) and to civil servants.

One of them is Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, who, it seems, asked for £22 000 to be paid into a certain charitable trust. Alfred Roberts, Labour MP for Normanton was said to have got £11 500 and admits to £5 000 (over about 2 years). John Merrit, former Principal officer of the Ministry of Health, on Leeds Hospital Board, also received payments.

What services did these expensive 'friends in high places' render for their rake-offs? They were, it

seems, of service mainly as 'diplomats' and public contact men. That Architect Poulson was very much concerned with the business of building hospitals, was, we must believe, irrelevant

Maudling was chairman of the International Technical Constructional Services company. The same gentleman was not long ago President of the Real Estate Fund of America and writing letters commending his REFA colleague, Jerome D Hoffmann, who is now charged with corruption.

The Liberals have demanded a Parliamentary debate on "corruption in public life" (Labour didn't support them), and the government is conducting an enquiry.

By "corruption" they mean breaking the normal rules of the game, the rules under which all the parasites together make money in fantastic sums out of the workers. They do not consider it corrupt that there should be a high business value on

the services of MPs and that ministers like Maudling should be valuable to the tune of £22 000.

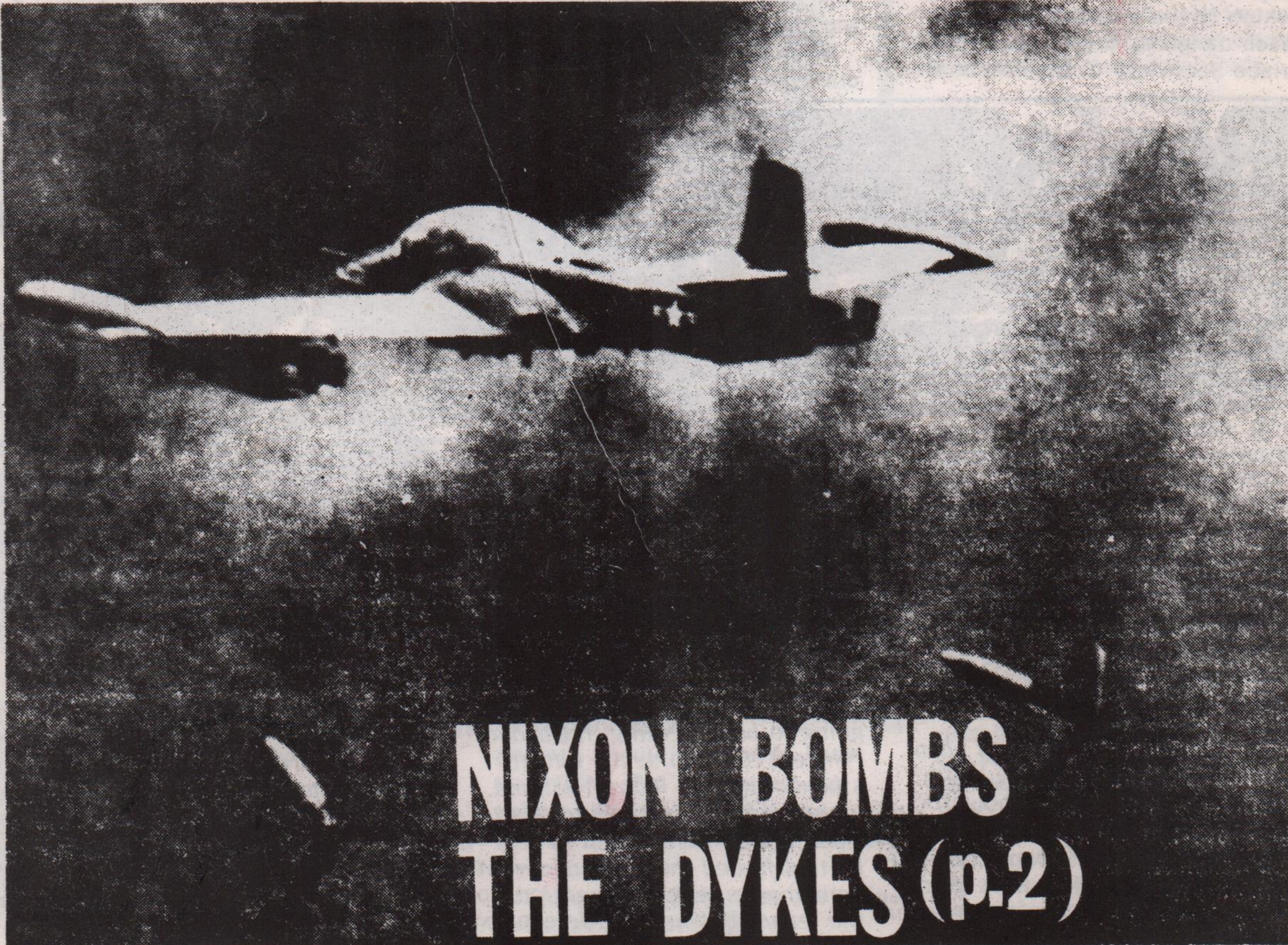
Why are they valuable? It is not prestige, but contacts, knowledge of how the system works and can be bent to the interests of those in the know This applies to Labour as well as Tories. A few years ago George Brown was admitted to have been for many years on a secret retainer fee as consultant to the Daily Mirror.

It is only 'corruption' if it shades into explicit fixing and direct bribery. In fact the shading is meaningless. The 'network', the 'business', political and civil service Mafia, has by definition sticky fingers.

Grab as much as you can - That's the rule. The "honest hard day's work" philosophy is for the workers. Sacrifices are for the poorly paid, the aged, and the working class schoolchildren.

The Tories talk about 'fair' rents. Mr Poulson's transactions show the

continued page 3



NIXON BOMBS THE DYKES (p.2)

Nixon's Bombing: the complicity of Russia and China

"TO SPEAK PLAINLY, THE chief running dogs of US imperialism now seen to be Brezhnev and Chou-en-lai. This is how it must look from Hanoi. Ignominious as Hitler's appeasers were in the Thirties, he was never dined as a honoured guest in Paris, London, or Washington while he bombed Guernica and destroyed the Spanish Republic."

IF Stone's article in the June 15 *New York Review of Books* goes on:

"True, without Soviet and Chinese supplies, the North Vietnamese and the NLF would soon be forced back to low-level protracted warfare, as they may be in any case if the bombing and blockade continue long enough. But without the enormous resolution and courage of the Vietnamese, what would Moscow and Peking have to offer Nixon, what would they have to sell?"

"Peking bought its admission to the United Nations, bought its way out of containment, with the blood of the Vietnamese people. The same commodity — in such plentiful supply — has brought Nixon to Moscow. All those bright hopes of expanded US trade and credits which Nixon's emissaries have been dangling before the Kremlin since Secretary of Commerce Stans

went there last year rest on Nixon's desire to buy some Soviet 'restraint' on Hanoi. If it were not for Hanoi, Moscow too would have little to sell."

NATIONAL INTEREST

The North Vietnamese themselves share Stone's view. Hedrick Smith reported from Moscow in the June 20 *New York Times*:

"On the day before President Nixon arrived in Moscow, the North Vietnamese Army newspaper accused the Kremlin of having showed weakness towards the American president and of having put its own 'national interests against the interests of world revolution'. The charges did not mention Moscow by name but it was clearly the target."

"Five days later, on May 26, *Novoye Vremya*, a Communist party weekly on international affairs, carried a sharply worded and unusually explicit rebuttal written by Vadim V Zagladin, deputy chief of the Central Committee's department for relations with other Communist Parties."

"The article denied that Moscow was shirking its socialist duty. It argued for proceeding with the summit meeting in the interest of major achievements, such as an agreement to limit arms, through the policy of peaceful coexistence..."

The Soviet betrayal of the Vietnamese could not be clearer if it were publicly announced in Moscow. The Kremlin bureaucrats have in fact come very close to such a declaration. Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny's June 15-18 visit to Hanoi, for example, was remarkable for the fact that he was not accompanied by any senior Soviet military officials, as he had been during his previous visit last October.

CHINA

In a June 18 dispatch from Moscow in the *Washington Post*, Robert G Kaiser reported that public lecturers are telling Soviet audiences that the Chinese government has 'categorically refused' to allow Soviet ships carrying cargo for North Vietnam to unload in Chinese ports.

"Even when North Vietnam itself asked China for this cooperation", Kaiser wrote, "Peking refused, according to official lecturers here. They add, however, that the Chinese have unloaded four Polish and four East German freighters carrying goods for North Vietnam".

Nothing that the Soviet bureaucrats say can automatically be

taken at face value particularly when they are speaking about their political opponents. But in this instance, other reports have tended to back the charge against the Maoist regime, and none have been denied by Peking. In the June 19 *New York Times*, for example, Robert Kleiman of the paper's editorial board wrote:

"... six weeks after the mining of Haiphong and other North Vietnamese harbours, Moscow and Peking evidently have been unable as yet to agree on increased land shipment across China of Soviet aid to compensate for the halt in sea supply"

"Of all the Soviet ships en route to North Vietnam when the blockade was imposed, only one tanker has put into a Chinese port, and that briefly for emergency reasons. It now is reported to have left without unloading. Three or four Soviet ships have put into Hong Kong and Singapore. Some are back in Vladivostok. Others are still at sea, apparently awaiting instructions".

GENEROUS

Whatever the truth of the charges, as long as the Chinese government does not publicly declare its willingness to ship supplies for North Vietnam through its ports, its silence provides the Soviet bureaucrats a convenient pretext for not supplying the necessary aid.

The Kremlin is obviously grasping at any pretexts it can find. In the article quoted earlier, Kaiser described one of the sophistries being dished out by the Soviet lecturers:

"Lecturers are telling the public that immediately after the United States laid mines along the North Vietnamese coast in early May, nine Soviet minewepers set out towards North Vietnam from Vladivostok."

"One reason these sweepers were never used, Soviet audiences are being told, is that the United States could have quickly replaced its mines if they were swept".

Presumably a similar logic explains the Kremlin's failure to provide the missiles that could stop the genocidal bombing of North Vietnam: if the planes were shot down, Nixon would just send more.

The lack of sufficient Soviet aid to North Vietnam is not due to stinginess. The Kremlin can be very generous to bourgeois governments. Egypt received weapons valued at \$250 million in 1970 and \$420 million in 1971 in Aircraft and missiles. India has been licensed

to make MIG-21 aircraft and has received tanks, planes, and anti-aircraft missiles. \$2 million worth of arms were supplied to Ceylon last year to suppress the revolt of the left-wing youth. In 1970/71 Egypt's Sadat received \$670 million in sophisticated weapons; military aid of all kinds to North Vietnam totalled \$170 m.

DYKES

While the Soviet bureaucrats look the other way, there have been increasing indications that Nixon is moving towards an attempt to destroy completely the dykes that protect North Vietnam from flooding. Bombing of the dykes on a lesser scale has already occurred, presumably with the intention of gradually accustoming world opinion to the idea.

On June 22, Vo Van Sung, a member of the North Vietnamese delegation to the suspended Paris talks, reported that between April 10 and June 10 US planes had attacked dykes sixty-eight times, dropping a total of 665 bombs.

"Mr Sung asserted", the *New York Times* reported, "that the American aim was to spread death and famine among the civilian population and lower morale. The possible rupture of the dykes in North Vietnam during the season of cresting rivers would threaten millions of inhabitants and create the danger of submersion of hundreds of thousands of acres of cultivated land", he said".

Sung's charges were denied by the US Defence Department, but a June 24 *Agence France Presse* dispatch from Hanoi by Jean Thoraval indicated who was lying. Thoraval described what he had seen of the dyke system about 60 miles south of Hanoi:

"One of the embankments was completely cut. Several were gutted, with gaps in the dyke itself and hollows, evidently caused by bombs, alongside. Deep cracks were visible everywhere. The landscape was almost what one might have expected to find on the moon".

As the history of US aggression in Indochina has shown, the present refusal of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies to respond to Nixon's escalation will only encourage new and more dangerous actions — such as bombing the dykes.

As IF Stone observed in the articles quoted above, "Nixon has been given a green light to smash North Vietnam".

abridged from *Intercontinental Press*.



Of all the spineless creatures that the world has known, the Labour councillors of Manchester must surely rate as unique. While throughout the country a battle has been raging over the Tories' Fair Rents Bill, the Labour controlled council of Manchester has yet to come to a decision as to whether or not to implement the Tory legislation. Not only that — they haven't even discussed the question!

When the Labour group of councillors met on Tuesday July 4th, they were besieged by about 100 council tenants from a dozen different Tenants Associations, demanding to know what they were going to do. Were they going to implement

the Bill or not? The tenants were told not only that the subject hadn't been discussed, but that it wasn't even on the agenda! That is, four days before the national meeting of Labour councillors in London, Manchester councillors weren't going to bother themselves with the 'Fair Rents' Bill at all. Indeed, several councillors seemed totally ignorant of the fact that there was going to be a meeting in London.

Incensed by this, the tenants stormed into the Town Hall and picketed the room in which the meeting was being held. These tactics forced the councillors into agreeing to meet a delegation from the tenants. When the delegation

reported back the tenants learned that Manchester was to be represented at the meeting in London.

And what policy would the Manchester councillors be advocating in London? None! They were going there with 'open minds'.

'Empty minds' would be a better description. Empty minds which always seek short cuts when there are none. Vacillating minds which seek to avoid a decision, when what it needs is a clear declaration that the Tory bill will not be implemented.

Empty, vacillating minds which have nothing but contempt for those who put them where they are. Listen to Alderman Sir Robert Thomas, Labour chairman of the Housing Committee, describing the tenants: "They turned out to be a nasty lot. They were shouting and carrying on (!!). The police arrived and appeared to be trying to restrain them, although I don't know if it was necessary". Well, if it wasn't necessary this time, Sir Robert, be sure that it will be necessary next time if Labour decides to implement the Bill!

In Droylsden, just outside Manchester, the Labour Party has fared no better. Here there was a resolution not to implement the Tory Bill and it was defeated, despite the fact that Labour has a majority, because two Labour councillors couldn't be bothered to turn up and two left before the vote was taken. Council Tenants in the Greater Manchester area have had just about enough of the Labour Party and it's refusal to fight. In Droylsden a tenants' Association has been formed and has collected signatures from practically all the council tenants on petition, which demands to know why the four councillors weren't there for the vote. The feeling of many tenants is summed up by the secretary of the Moss Side District Centre Tenants' Association (himself a Labour Party member) who told a beleaguered councillor "For three months the Labour Party has treated us as a joke. Well if they implement this bill then they'll be a joke, because we'll put up candidates in every ward and make sure none of them get elected".

Joe Wright.

A BLACK & TAN COMES HOME TO ROOST

WORRIED LABOUR MPs QUESTIONED THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE, LORD BALNEIL, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON JUNE 22 ABOUT THE VIEWS OF CERTAIN RIGHT-WING ARMY OFFICERS.

The 'Times' had earlier published interviews with named high-ranking officers who fulminated against 'industrial anarchy', and expressed the belief that the army must begin to play a major role in containing and smashing industrial unrest.

One of them had said: "... the whole period of the miners' strike made us realise that the present size of the police force is too small.... We have got to the stage where there are not enough resources to deal with the increasing numbers who are not prepared to respect the law!" Which is where they see the army coming in, and why the ideas of a certain Brigadier Frank Kitson are important, and are rapidly becoming notorious.

Kitson's book, 'Low Intensity Operations', is the result of much experience in 'counter-insurgency' in Kenya, Malaya, Cyprus, and, very recently, Northern Ireland. It is a serious attempt to examine the possibilities of applying some of the methods tried and tested on the colonial peoples against strikers and other 'subversives' in Britain. It advocates direct and continuous involvement of the army in policing Britain, and clearly represents the views of sizable sections of the army brass. It has a recommendation from Sir Michael Carver, Chief

of the Imperial General Staff, dedicating it to "the soldiers of today" to "prepare for the operations of tomorrow".

Kitson foresees the time when unrest in Britain might reach a stage where the "army would be required to restore the situation rapidly". Internal subversion and civil anarchy are the dangers of the future, rather than wars between nations. The major role of the army will be in combatting subversion at home — and that is always 'political'. The army must abandon the pose of being an impartial and non-political body, and step right into the conflicts of British society flying its true colours as the naked defender of the British bosses, their property, their profits, and their parasitic existence. He puts it less frankly, but that is what he wants, what he sees as necessary to the ruling class in the coming period. He advocates a specially trained force for strikebreaking against dockers, railwaymen, and others.

Such a direct involvement could mean troops breaking picket lines, acting as scabs, breaking up demonstrations, and so on. The miners would have faced rubber bullets, CS gas, and all the weapons that were used in Northern Ireland long before the IRA campaign got really under way. As conceived by Kitson it would also mean involvement in 'anticipatory' undercover work, spying and provocation — and that's probably the tack they'll try first.

What's new about Kitson is not

his theories — he learned to practise what he theorises about in a wide range of countries, as a licensed terrorist for the British Empire.

The difference now is that he is advocating the same treatment for the British labour movement. This 'black and tan' has come back home to do some roosting.

Nor is it an accident, or merely reflection of the Northern Ireland conflict, that his theories are now advocated openly and taken up by sections of the army. They answer a need felt by sections of the ruling class, in face of the militancy of the labour movement, of which the mass pickets of the miners and dockers have been the most powerful expression to date.

Because of the inhibitions imposed by a tradition of an aloof army staying mainly in the background — a tradition the ruling class are probably not prepared to abandon yet — the most likely form an application of Kitson's theories to the labour movement would take is that of a para-military police, specialising in 'riot' control and strikebreaking. In France such a force has been in existence since just after the war — the vicious CRS

That the bosses feel the need for such an instrument is increasingly obvious. But if they try to build it, the mass pickets that worry them so much now can rapidly become a mass militia for workers' defence.

Alan Theasby.

Police today — army or armed police tomorrow ?



continued from page 1

real finances of the building industry; while millions live in dire housing conditions these parasites live off the fat of the land and scratch each others' backs with bank-books.

The network of graft — legal and, possibly, illegal — revealed in the public scrutiny of Paulson's affairs is a very very small part of the

system's corruption.

If we could readily see the whole picture, observe the lice on our backs in close-up, then the working class would not tolerate the system run by these vermin for a week.

"Open the books" has for long been an important demand put

forward by Marxists. It means: the workers should demand to know everything that's going on, to examine the accounts of every firm, to look into the procedure of every bureaucracy.

It is a demand that has lost none of its importance. ■

French CP accepts NATO

Following years of haggling over the dowry and the future prospects, a marriage contract has finally been signed. The Communist Party of France has reached agreement on a programme for a coalition government with the Socialist Party, one of the most right wing, and also one of the most corrupt, 'socialist' parties in Europe — and in no sense a party of the working class.

Marchais, leader of the CP, has proudly claimed that the agreement means that the two parties have evolved a complete and practical common platform "leading towards a socialist society". But in fact the programme is not, and makes no serious pretence at being, a programme for a struggle now for socialism. The stated aim of the programme is to bring in "an advanced form of democracy", which can be transformed into socialism at some indefinite future date, through the normal processes of parliamentary democracy.

The programme is tame reformism indeed; nationalisation of 13 basic industries; a curb on the power of the 'strong' Presidency; pensions at a level of the national basic minimum wage; local Councils to be given the right to preempt building land; improved Social Services, and so on. France would remain in the EEC, working to turn a "Europe of big business" into a "Europe for the workers".

N A T O

Most important, however, is the agreement on NATO. On taking office the new version of the 'Popular Front' would do its socialist duty by calling for the simultaneous dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. But calling for it won't make it happen. And when it fails to happen? It is implied that the 'New France' would remain in NATO.

Previous negotiations between the two parties have stuck on foreign policy differences. To be exact, on the CP's long-standing allegiance to Moscow's foreign policy, which clashed violently with the SP's support for a foreign policy which serves best the French bourgeoisie.

The CP's concessions here must be seen in the context of the growing cordiality of capitalist-Soviet relations. But still it is a departure which could mark a qualitative transformation for the French Communist Party.

TWO SOULS

For long the two souls of the modern mass Communist Parties have been at war with each other. The one expressed the day-to-day reformism of the Parties in their own country, the other their subservience to Moscow's foreign policy.

The latter meant that the CPs, for all their reformism, were unacceptable to the bosses as an ordinary Government party, and led to much frustration for the careerists in the Parties. Since the early '60s, and the open breakdown of the 'monolithic' unity of the world official Communist movement, the tendency has been towards loosening the ties with Moscow. The Italian CP has already travelled far in that direction. The new French CP line on NATO is a major step towards the logical goal of this tendency — a break with Moscow.

The CP remains the main workers' party in France, but it is now being seen by an increasing minority of workers as the major obstacle in the struggle for socialism. Since 1968 the revolutionary socialist groups have been gaining support. The new blatantly reformist programme, with its open capitulation to imperialist military alliances, can only help them.

Stan Lomax.

In Brief

THE COMMON MARKET SIDESHOW

The biggest, most cynical fraud in current politics is the anti-Common Market lobby. If Wilson, Foot, and the other heroes of the Crusade For Little England were running a fairground sideshow they'd be had up under the crooked gaming laws. They use the Common Market as a means of drumming up support, of distracting attention from the real interests and the real battle of the working class.

At the same time they concoct a formula of 're-negotiation' to allow them later, having misled the labour movement into a blind alley of chauvinism, to switch back into line with the bosses' EEC policy.

The Jenkinsites are known and justly branded as traitors for saving the Government. But in fact there is a firmly linked chain of double-dealing, connivance and mutual protection going all the way from Edward Heath to Michael Foot, with the Jenkinsites as only one crucial link.

They protect Heath from defeat. Wilson, frantically balancing, protects their flank from attacks: moreover he is lobbying to stop the Unions really rocking the boat and committing a Labour Government to withdraw from the Common Market, thereby seriously disrupting the EEC.

And the bold Michael Foot? He protects Wilson's flank by putting 'unity' with the Jenkinsites above everything else - that is, unity with the Jenkinsites who put unity with Heath above the demand of the working class to bring down the Tory Government...

European capitalist civilisation in the 1970s: over 500,000 children between 8 and 15 are illegally employed as child labour in Italy.

OH PAIR!

When the TUC delegation went to visit Heath the other day they no sooner entered No.10 than Heath darted out as fast as his awkward bulk could manage.

Could it be fear that the TUC Gen. Sec. would get out the knuckle-dusters (or Feather dusters as they're called these days)? Could Heath be fleeing once more before the wrath of the trade union movement?

I'm afraid not. It's like this. If an MP finds the pointlessness of the Parliamentary charade too much for him and feels like slipping down to the bookies to lay an each-way on the 3.30, he can "pair off".

All he has to do is inform his whip or one of his minions; they then find some skiver in the other party - no problem there! - who, say, doesn't want to be seen kipping in the House and wants to get forty winks in private. These two then "pair off", each agreeing not to vote while his "pair" is away. But what has this to do with

Heath and the TUC delegation? Well, the same day Heath asked to be "paired off". But as it turned out no one would "pair" with him. (Can't blame them, can you?)

Doesn't it just warm the cockles of your heart with faith in democracy to see one overweight yachtsman rushing to vote in a debate he's not heard a word of?

LETTING DOWN THE CENTRE ?

Who's this making all that fuss about Harry "the Gannet" Hyams' profits from the empty block of offices known as Centre Point? Can it be Mr. Peter Walker the Minister for the Environment? You mean, Mr. Peter Walker who is the "Walker" in Slater-Walker, one of the country's biggest property developers?

What is it, Walker - jealousy?

SELLOUT TO THE BOSSES - YES SELLOUT TO THE TORIES - NO!

Imagine the scene: Vic Feather works out a plan with the CBI for a "conciliation" Board expressly excluding Tory ministers. Well, you don't need imagination because it's already happening.

It's a typical bit of the twisted logic of reformism. Feather says he's not sitting down with the Tories any more than he has to. Why? Because the Tories are enemies. Right! But aren't the bosses also enemies? Aren't they in fact the decisive enemy? Certainly!

Well then, why sit round the table with them? That's easy. It is the job of the trade union official to negotiate, that means "getting round the table", and if you get round the table with someone, you might as well sit down.

That's what the job's all about, it seems ...

WALL STREET 1929 - CLAPHAM HIGH STREET 1972?

"...All comparisons, even with 1929, are totally inadequate and misleading. Everything which has underpinned the continuance of capitalism since the Second World War has now been broken, and the consequences are literally incalculable. All relations established in the capitalist world in the post war period came to an end this morning..."

That was the Socialist Labour League Political Committee greeting the floating of the Dollar last August! That was the first Apocalypse. Last week the Pound was floated. Can we now expect the Second Coming?

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INCOMES POLICY: SHORT CUT TO A WAGE CUT

From the enormous welter of newsprint lavished recently on the economic situation facing British capitalism anyone might think that "floating" the pound was going to make an enormous difference to the way the economy is going. Nothing of the kind! As we said in WF no. 1, "In conditions of long run creeping stagnation measures such as devaluation will become increasingly in demand but decreasingly effective in stabilising the system."

The Tories were forced to "float the pound" by a number of both permanent and temporary factors. There was their failure to curb price increases; their inability to curb wages through a policy of the "7 1/2% norm", the cost of joining the Common Market together with the final blow of a threatened dock strike.

DEVALUATION

The floating pound is disguised version of devaluation. And just like devaluation this latest attempt to defend a decaying British capitalism can only mean a further attack on workers' living standards. For instance about two thirds of Britain's food is imported. The prices of these goods can be expected to rise by a scandalous 10% on top of the increases due to joining the Common Market and due to Value Added Tax.

If devaluation is to work for the ruling class, they must try to hold down the working class, and prevent it from increasing its wages as the tide of rising prices laps round our ears.

The old Labour trick - the "incomes policy" - is on the cards. And the Tories are being helped in this by those trade union leaders who are so eager to call off the confrontation between government and workers that they

have been almost running to support the Tories. This presents us with the ludicrous sight of Joe Gormley leader of the mine-workers' union that gave the Tories such a drubbing five months ago, actually supporting the idea of an "incomes policy".

Dressed up under varying names such as "Incomes Policy", "price policy", "Prices and Incomes Policy" it means, in essence, one thing only: wages control.

PROFITS DECIDE

Under capitalism, a system subject to its own definite laws, for the bosses and their government this is really the only "price control" either possible or desirable.

Of course there's plenty of jabber from the government about "profit control" as well but that is a sham to bamboozle the workers.

After all, if a worker foregoes a wage increase with prices rising all the time, he has in reality allowed his wages to be cut. What he has lost he has lost for good.

But profits, which are not drawn off are ploughed back into the company owned by the shareholder. The seeds are not eaten, but sown again, and a more bountiful crop is reaped later.

As we said, capitalism is subject to its own definite laws. Thus even if governments wanted to they couldn't curb profits without paralysing the whole economic system. For this system, profit is the "be-all and end-all", the petrol in the tank of economic activity.

The capitalist controls industry directly in so far as the decisions are his and his alone. If his profits are fixed and regulated by the government he rapidly loses the incentive for economic growth, for expanding the company's activity, for cutting costs of production.

With fixed control of the returns he will have little or nothing to gain by expanding. The inevitable result of tinkering with the profit mainspring of capitalism would thus be economic stagnation.

CON-TRICK

Similarly general price control is beyond the power of the bosses and their state. Control of the price of labour power either by brute force or by trickery - this is the only control open to the bosses which does not do violence to either

I would like to know more about Workers' Fight.

NAME

Address

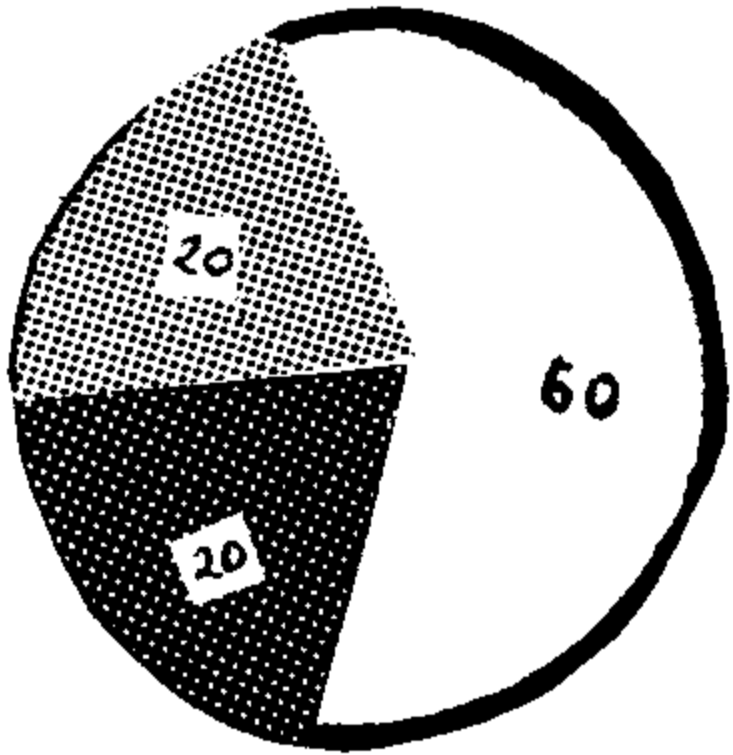
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Send to: John Sterling
98 Gifford Street,
London N.1.

themselves or their system. Having failed in a brute force confrontation they now seem set to fall back on trickery — Incomes Policy.

The most usual form of Incomes policy is to increase money wages by the same proportion as increases in productivity. We can illustrate the effect of this by an example.

Suppose that we have total output of 100 units made up of 60 units of machinery and raw materials used up in the process and out of the value created by labour 20 units are given out in wages and 20 units are given out in profits.

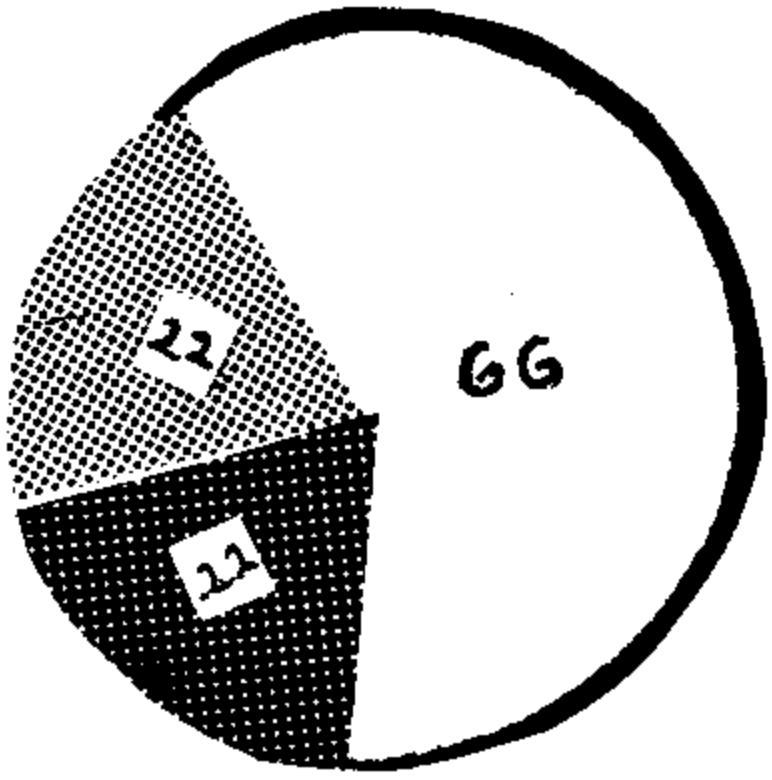


Value created by labour equals 40

Workers' share is 20/40, i.e. 50%

Bosses' share is 20/40, i.e. 50%

Now suppose productivity rises by 10%. The value of total output rises to 110 units. An increase can only be brought about if the amount of raw materials and machinery used up also increases by 10% to 66 units.



Value created by labour equals 44

Workers' share is 22/44, i.e. 50%

Bosses' share is 22/44, i.e. 50%

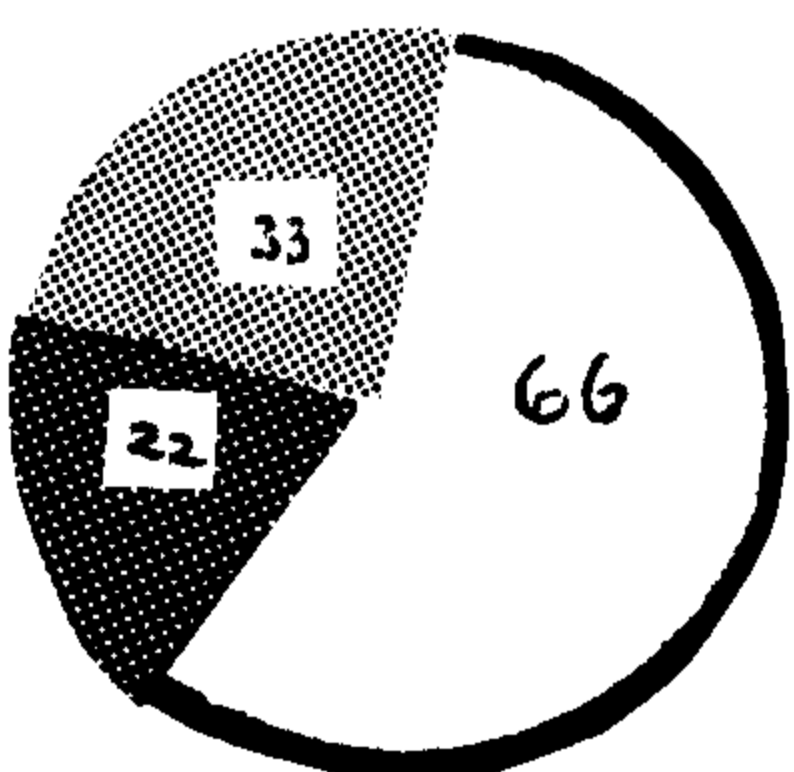
Under the "incomes policy", money wages are allowed to rise only by the same proportion as productivity rises. Therefore wages will be 22 units.

We see that although workers have increased total wealth their share of the added value that they have created is still the same (50%).

However the big con-trick of incomes policy is still to come. Wages in money terms are linked to real changes in productivity.

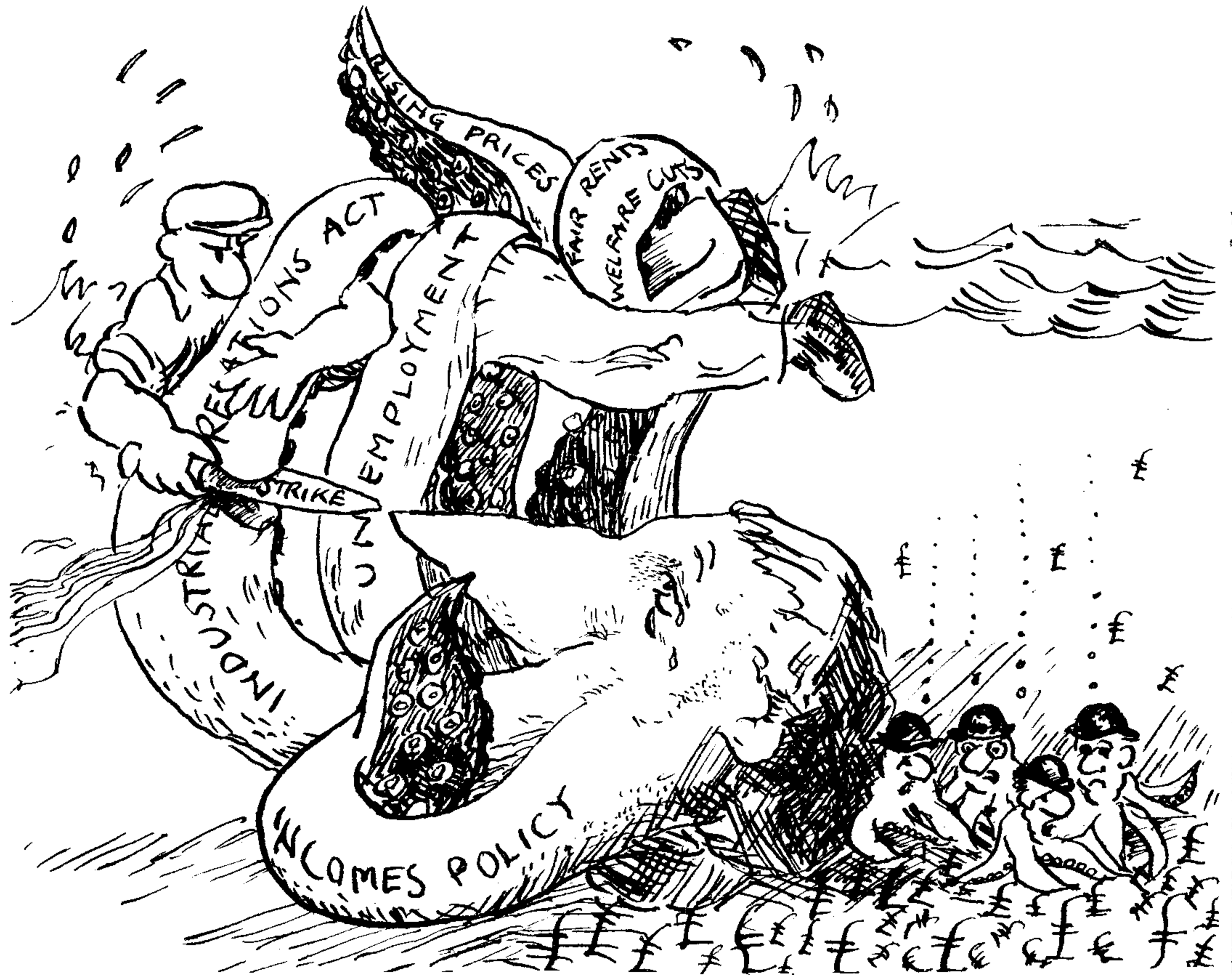
If prices rise by 10%, the price of the total output is now 121 units.

But under the incomes policy wages increase in money terms by the same rate as productivity, i.e. 10%. So wages are 22 units. Therefore we get the following:



Workers' share is 22/55, i.e. 40%

Bosses' share is 33/55, i.e. 60%



So we see that if workers accept the conditions of the incomes policy but the capitalists increase prices, the share workers get of the value they have created actually decreases. It is now 40%.

Even if wages increase in proportion to increases in productivity and price increases, their share remains only the same as before. Under incomes policy there is no way for the working class to increase its share of wealth.

If prices rise, the bosses are rewarded (inasmuch as their share of the total increases) for not keeping them internationally competitive. While on the other hand workers are penalised for accepting wage restraint.

Incidentally, the above model assumes that each enterprise realises the average increase in productivity. The problem is that in some industries the rise in productivity is below average. For this average to be maintained, therefore, the percentage wage increases in industries with above average productivity must fall below what would be a corresponding percentage increase in productivity.

Whatever form the incomes policy takes it makes the workers' wages and standard of living dependent entirely on factors totally out of his control. Under incomes policy the workers' share depends on productivity which in turn depends very largely on the employers' use of more efficient machinery. It also depends on prices, which again are determined by the market and by the bosses.

The bosses of course say that "productivity" is in the hands of the worker — he can work harder, longer, faster. In other words, according to the bosses, the only way in which workers are allowed even to the most marginal extent to determine productivity is by more sweat and sacrifice.

CLASS COLLABORATION

This means that if incomes policy is adhered to then the workers' standard of living is no longer determined by their collective bargaining strength but at the whim of the bosses.

Incomes policy is pernicious class legislation. However, because the class bias of it is veiled behind phrases like "national interest", "working together", "working for a better future for the industry", "helping the economy" etc, the ruling class has relied heavily on the workers' "own" parties to

sell the idea to the working class.

The class-collaborationist ideas which the incomes policy is founded on suit the equally class collaborationist Labour con-men down to the ground. Hence we have seen the support of large sections of the ruling class for Labour-type parties throughout Western Europe since 1960.

This was typified by the support for Labour at the time of the 1964 General Election by the bosses' magazine, *The Economist*.



Tory Macmillan follows policies pioneered by 'left-wing' Castle.



Precisely because of the class collaborationist content of "incomes policy" and its shop floor cousin the "productivity deal", we have seen attempts to subordinate the unions to the state by means of so-called "independent" arbitration committees.

The present talk of conciliation is part of the same mechanism of subordination of the unions to the state — at a time moreover when the union rank and file are hammering the government. This is often motivated by saying "it's better than legal sanctions". But the result is the same: subordination of the interests of the workers to those of the employers.

Some weeks ago (as we reported in WF no.8), Scanlon said — "I believe that conciliation will work far better than legal sanctions and the government's policy of abrasiveness and confrontation." And Tom Jackson (UPW leader), at the same meeting, said that a Council for Industrial Research, Conciliation and Arbitration should be set up.

The present Tory government, and the Labour government that preceded it, have tried the alternatives to incomes policy, but with little effect. Unemployment (the traditional way of reducing the workers' bargaining power and cutting imports) has hurt; but the self-confidence and the militancy of the employed has not only remained unshaken but in a number of sectors it has actually risen. Devaluations and floating exchange rates can only halt the course of the crisis temporarily.

WORKERS' STATE

One solution to the capitalist class's problem is to defeat or smash the workers' collective strength and reduce wages. Until they feel they have to do this — or when they feel they need to manoeuvre for breathing space to prepare themselves for such extreme action — the employing class tries a different tack.

It tries to immobilise that collective strength by submitting it (through the agency of the sell-out Labour and trade union leaders) to "conciliation", to "arbitration" and "industrial co-operation". In other words the ruling class tries to subordinate the workers' interests to some totally mythical "common", "national" interest. To what is, in reality, the interests of capitalism. Today they are itching to beat down the working class — and distracting attention while they gather strength, with talk of conciliation.

There is a third way: the smashing of the bosses' collective strength. In other words the socialist revolution. Indeed it is only in the state that such a revolution would set up — a democratic workers' state — that an incomes policy could be acceptable. For here the proportion of income not paid out in wages, instead of being profits in the hands of a small section of the community, is used for collective consumption and for accumulation to increase the wealth of the whole community.



The Black and Tans (above) began their operations in March 1920. They were Special Constables recruited mostly in England (the authorities showed a special preference for men with criminal records). They were aided by the Auxiliaries, recruited from ex-officers. These forces carried out atrocities against the Irish people, including for example the sack of Balbriggan, the burning of the centre of Cork city and the murder of its Lord Mayor Thomas MacCurtain.

Concurrently the Orange counter-revolutionaries in the North began a series of pogroms against Catholics (1920-22). Catholic homes and shops were burnt and Catholic workers were driven from jobs where Protestants predominated in the work-force. Altogether some 400 Catholics were killed, 1,766 wounded, around 18,000 driven from their jobs and 23,000 made homeless.

Finally the British Government opened negotiations with Sinn Fein and imposed its terms on the Irish delegation under the threat of "immediate and terrible war" (Lloyd George's phrase). The Dail backed the Treaty by the narrow margin of 64 votes to 57.

Griffith and Collins moved to set up the Free State, but were opposed in the political arena by De Valera and his fellow republicans, and also by the majority of the IRA.

Civil War finally broke out on June 28th, 1922 when the Free State Army attacked the Republican HQ in the Four Courts in Dublin, with the aid of artillery borrowed from . . . the British Army.

The Republican Army was led by middle class 'Republicans' like De Valera whose differences with the Free Staters were marginal, formal. The Republican forces, mostly farmers' sons and workers, confined themselves to warfare, and in no sense challenged the social domination of the middle class, whose mercenary Army it fought. The wealth of the Irish capitalists, the equipment of the British Empire combined with the disappointment of the common people to smash the Republic.

Invading areas of the Republican South West in seaborne landings, the Irish stooges of British Imperialism finally smashed those who wanted independence, without knowing that the only way to gain it, when the middle class was allied to imperialism, was to make James Connolly's revolution and build a Republic of the working people.



a Free State soldier searches a civilian during the Civil War

50 YEARS AFTER PA HOW BRI IS BLEEDING IRELAND !

by Chris Gray

IRELAND IS A COUNTRY under imperialist domination. This is as true of the supposedly independent Twenty-Six counties as of the six counties currently under direct rule from Westminster. Any serious assessment of the political situation in Ireland must start from this point.

A brief glance at Irish history over the past fifty-odd years will show the way in which British capitalism has continued to exercise control over the whole island.

At the general election of 1918 the people of Ireland voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence: out of 105 seats, 73 were won by Sinn Fein candidates pledged to a policy of withdrawal from Westminster and the establishment of an Irish parliament (Dail Eireann), which was duly set up on January 21st 1919.

The British coalition Government, acutely conscious of its strategic interests (an enemy in possession of Ireland can strike at almost any part of Britain) across the Irish sea, proscribed Dail Eireann and introduced a Bill which came into force the following year and is known as the Government of Ireland Act, 1920.

This was the legal instrument that divided the country in two; it provided for the setting up of two separate parliaments, one for the six counties and one for the twenty-six —the areas designated 'Northern Ireland' and 'Southern Ireland' respectively.

The British Government tried, by means of the Black and Tan terror, to bludgeon the Irish people into submission, but in spite of the terror the people stood firm and as a result Sinn Fein won 80% of the seats in the local government elections of 1920 and captured a majority in 28 out of 32 counties.

The Six County parliament envisaged in the Act was set up in 1921 and accepted partition — this despite the fact that Carson and the Unionists didn't want it: they wanted all Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom.

Sinn Fein was, of course, equally opposed to partition, but it was likewise imposed on them via the 1921 Treaty settlement. This Treaty led to Civil War in the South and the destruction of the Republic by the "Free State"

wing of Sinn Fein, led by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, on British Government instructions, with the aid of English guns.

"FREE STATE"

The so-called "Irish Free State" which emerged after the Treaty was a state with a truncated sort of freedom. Not only did it not control the national territory in its entirety, it also lacked complete financial independence from Britain. The banking system remained tied to the UK, with Irish banks being compelled to deposit one pound in London for every pound of cash reserves they themselves held.

The cost of buying out the Anglo-Irish landlords continued to fall on farmers in the Twenty-six counties (the so-called "Land Annuities") and the money found its way into the British exchequer.

English law was retained, together with the old civil servants and judges. Naval bases at Cobh and Lough Swilly were retained by Britain.

Last but not least, members of Parliament were compelled to take an Oath to the British Crown, provision was made for Appeals to the UK Privy Council in legal cases, and a Governor-General was appointed with power to veto legislation.

It was the achievement of Eamonn de Valera, whose party Fianna Fail came to power in the early thirties, to get rid of many of these encumbrances. He got rid of the Oath and the Governor-General and Appeals to the Privy Council, retained the Land Annuities as capital for use for industrialisation, and negotiated British withdrawal from the naval bases.

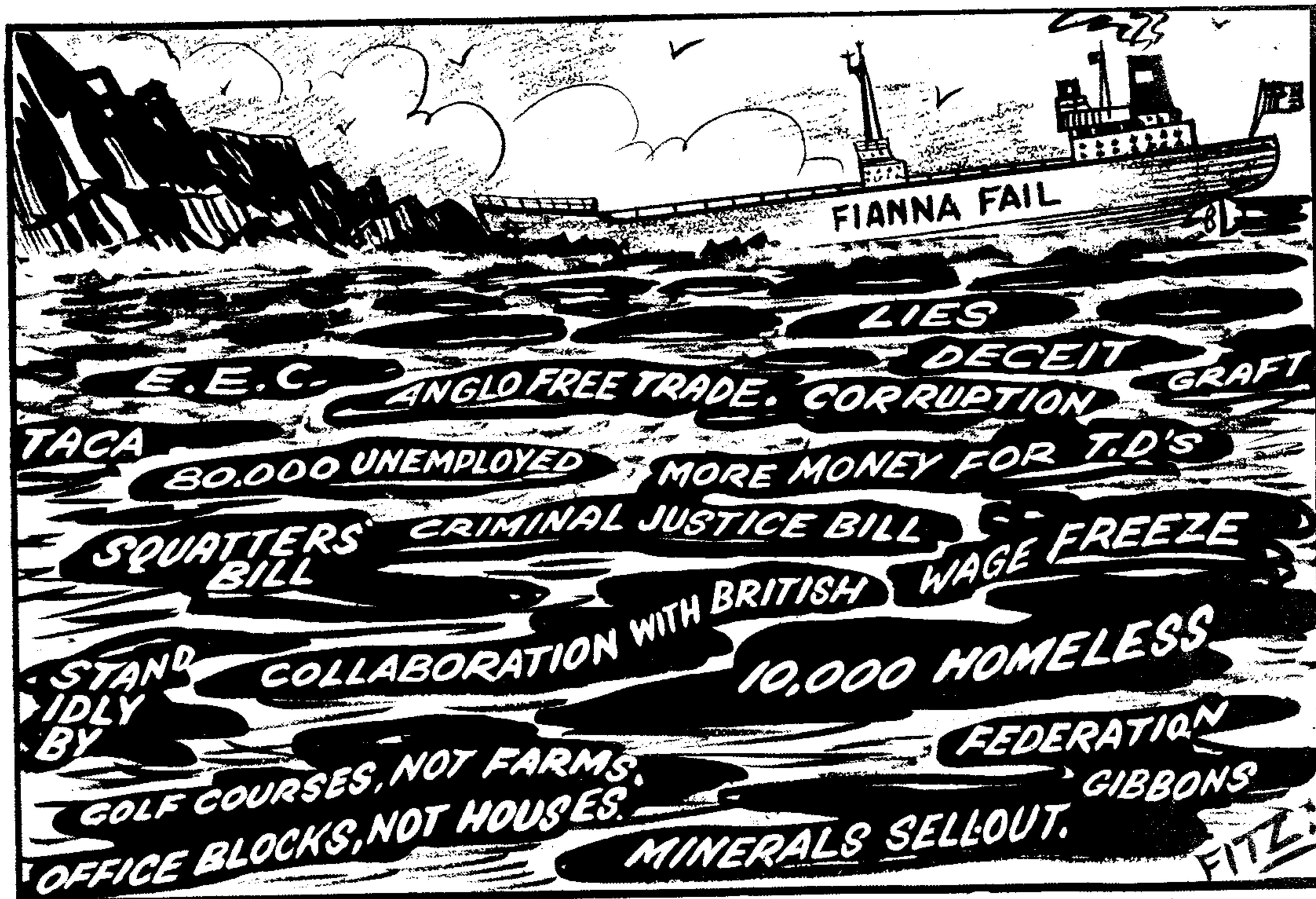
Financial independence, however, was not achieved; and partition also remained. In view of the fact that De Valera's main concern was to develop Irish capitalism as far as possible within the framework of the Twenty-six Counties, this is not surprising. He did in fact achieve his very limited object, and a number of new industries were established under protective tariffs.

EMIGRATION

By the late fifties, however, the limitations of this policy

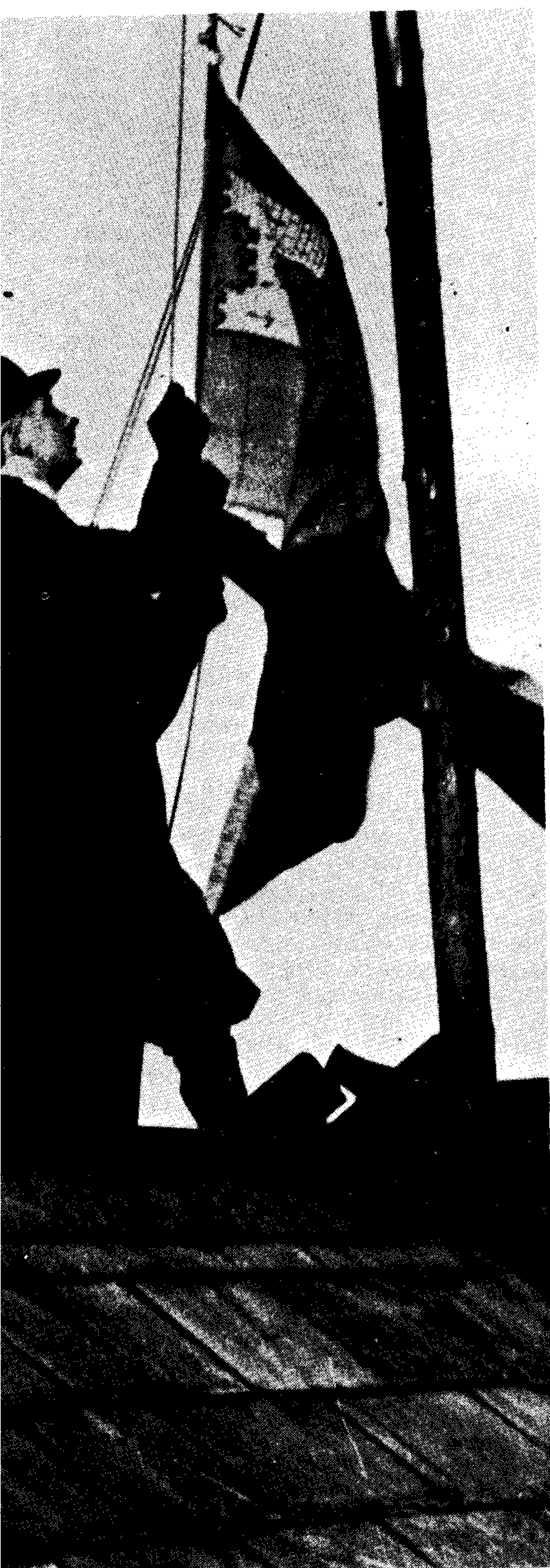
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POLLUTION '71

Homelessness, unemployment and capitalist graft and corruption together with indifference to the struggle in Northern Ireland: the condition of Britain's client 26-County Irish "Republic", seen by a cartoonist in the *United Irishman*, paper of the Official Sinn Fein.



Flag of neo-colonialism: bowler-hatter William Craig raises first flag of the Free State, of a deal between Green and British imperialism, in 1922. The flag was plain: even with the help of protective tariffs "Irish" capitalism was unable to provide enough jobs. A recent commentator has written - "Had it not been for the safety-valve of emigration (400,000 in round figures for the decade 1950-60), the frustration and desperation of these years must have led to mass riots." (T.P. Coogan,

"Ireland since The Rising" p.104).

De Valera's successor, Sean Lemass, changed course and began a policy of closer integration with imperialism. In 1958 the first breach was made in the Acts introduced by Fianna Fail to ensure Irish control of new companies: foreign-owned export firms could now be set up.

In 1965 came the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement, which offered the Twenty-six Counties improved access to the British market for agricultural goods, in return for the removal of tariffs on most UK goods entering the Twenty-six Counties.

Meanwhile a policy of lavish aids to foreign capital investment was started, which led to increasing penetration of the economy by foreign capital — mostly British, but also German, US and other E.E.C. capital.

This policy was successful for a time in reducing the high level of emigration which had built up in the fifties, as the following table shows:

Average Annual Rate of Net Emigration 1926-1966

Period	Rate %
1926-1936	5.6
1936-1946	6.3
1946-1951	8.2
1951-1956	13.4
1956-1961	14.8
1961-1966	5.9

"EXPANSION"

The ailing Twenty-six County economy had thus been partly revived — at the cost of increasing dependence on foreign capital. The logic of the trend as a whole is, of course, entry into the EEC, which both the major capitalist parties in the south have been pushing for and which received the overwhelming support of the electorate in this year's referendum.

In the meantime British capital maintains a strong hold on the economy. According to a recent estimate, over two thirds of the 100 largest companies in the Twenty-six Counties are wholly or partly British controlled, while over half the south's imports come from Britain. and

around two-thirds of its exports go to the British market.

The result is, as Charles Hultman succinctly puts it, "Growth in the Irish economy depends to a great extent upon developments in the British economy" (Hultmann "Ireland in World Commerce" p.20) or, in the words of the popular saying, "when England catches cold, Ireland gets pneumonia."

As a result, as the international economy grows more stagnant, the Irish economy suffers exceptionally. Unemployment is now the highest in Western Europe. (Throughout the 32 Cos. it is 10% with 80,000 in the north in a population of 3 million)

THE NORTH

If the Twenty-six Counties are a neo-colony or client state of British imperialist, the remaining six are most certainly a colony pure and simple.

Under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, Stormont was debarred from legislating on matters such as the Crown, war and peace, the armed forces, foreign trade, treaties with foreign states, radio, air navigation, coinage, weights and measures and other matters.

Just in case anything came up that wasn't provided for, section 75 of the Act states that "the supreme authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall remain unaffected and undiminished over all persons and matters and things in Northern Ireland."

Hence in the very unlikely event of a vote at Stormont to declare Unilateral Independence, section 75 could have been invoked immediately, and the Stormont members declared to have exceeded their powers under the Act. As we have seen, Stormont itself can be suspended and the whole territory administered from Westminster — not, however, without the aid of 15,000 British troops.

The economy of the Six Counties is also firmly under the control of British monopoly capital. By 1960-61 foreign (mainly British) investment was running at around £200 million and increasing by possibly £18 m

per year. By 1948 some 60% of total investment was held outside the Six Counties (mainly in Britain) and this figure has no doubt increased. Add to this that Stormont's powers of taxation only produced 10% of its revenue and we get a clearer picture of the Unionists' room for manoeuvre. (Needless to say the banks are similarly tied to the UK Big Four.)

It may be objected that 60% of the population of the Six Counties support the link with Britain, so that the area isn't really a colony at all, but an integral part of the United Kingdom. But in that case, how come "Northern Ireland" has this special relationship with the Westminster Parliament, a relationship quite different from that of Scotland or Wales or Devonshire, for example?

Because, say the objectors, the other 40% of the population are disloyal Fenians who require to be kept down by force.

But if we examine the grievances of these "Fenians" we come back to the developments of the last seventy years or so, which show quite conclusively that the very existence of the Six County statelet is a denial of the clearly expressed wishes (and needs) of the overwhelming majority of the whole Irish people for independence from Britain. Indeed, two of the County councils elected in 1920 — Tyrone and Fermanagh — voted allegiance to Dail Eireann, but they were not allowed to leave the U.K.

Similarly it was stated that "Ulster" must not be "coerced" — although British troops were simultaneously busy coercing the Irish people up until the 1921 truce, and subsequently the Free State Government received British aid in order to coerce those who rejected the Treaty.

Coercion, then, is fine — just so long as it works in the interests of British imperialism. In this case it has worked to produce in both parts of a divided Ireland states with a continuing colonial-type economic relationship with British monopoly capitalism.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE 1920-1972



'RED' TRICOLOR

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST Party was founded to lead the socialist revolution, but in fact it has succoured the capitalists through all their tribulations for nearly four decades. The construction of the Party, started under Lenin and Trotsky, completed under Stalin (though not on the same plans, nor for the same purposes) had made of the CPF a party in strong dependence on Moscow: at first the "Moscow" of the October Revolution; then the Moscow of the Stalinist counter-revolution. This dependence, true of all C.P.s, was perhaps especially true of the French.

The French CP was not built out of nothing. It emerged from the famous Congress of Tours (December 1920), when the majority of the Socialist Party, which had failed so helplessly during the war, decided to join the Communist International. The fact that people like Marcel Cachin, a vicious patriot during the war, remained with the majority, is the measure of the problems that had to be faced in transforming the movement into a Leninist organisation.

By the time the Stalinist reaction began in the Soviet Union — and also in the Communist International — the transformation had still a long way to go.

BUREAUCRAT

As Stalin replaced Lenin and the theories of "Socialism in One Country" replaced the revolutionary internationalism of Leninism, the blueprint on which those parties like the CPF were being transformed changed drastically.

The increasingly bureaucratized Communist International (Comintern), gradually becoming a tool of the bureaucratic apparatus which was gaining control in Russia, began to model not revolutionary workers' parties on Bolshevikism, but parties led by individuals who would be faithful and servile agents of the Soviet bureaucracy and its spokesman Stalin. In France, Maurice Thorez was to be such an individual.

Throughout the 1920s, as the Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky fought the bureaucratic tendencies in the Russian state and Party, the process waxed. It was not finally completed, the Thorez', Dutts, Fosters, Browders, Togliattis et al were not finally selected, until the end of the decade.

But it began in 1923/4. In France, under the slogan of "Bolshevisation", the CP was Stalinised. Shortly, by the mid-1920s, all the founding leadership had been driven out, together with a good portion of the ex-Socialist Party membership.

By the early 30s, the Party had a highly disciplined machine and had shed so many of its members that it was almost limited to its Moscow-orientated apparatus.

The Soviet bureaucracy, threatened after '33 by Hitler, began to seek some support from the rulers of Western capitalist countries. Under the now dominant schema which saw the world Communist Parties as pawns and frontier

guards for the Russian rulers, this meant a sharp turn to the right, away from the ultra-leftism of 1929-34 (known as the Third Period).

From now on the Communist Parties' role was to push their national governments into strong opposition to Hitler and alliance with the Soviet Union.

To do this the CPs started to become ultra-chauvinistic in their propaganda in their own countries, perhaps in an attempt to compensate for the 'foreignness' of their connection with Russia.

The French CP duly developed its own nationalist policy and consequently, as this implied an all-out effort for a national Front and thus concessions to the bourgeoisie — a reformist programme.

The famous Laval-Stalin communique of May 1935, in which Stalin announced that "Monsieur Stalin understands and fully approves the national defence policy of France in keeping her armed forces at the level required for security marked the open turning point, away from Communist opposition to capitalist militarism. (*) Soon the French CP began to carry the Tricolour and to sing the National Anthem.

Due to the world economic crisis the discontent of the working class increased to the point when it openly surged. Masses of workers then joined the ranks of the Party because it was the most radical, because of its direct affiliation to the Russian Revolution.

But nevertheless they joined on the basis of the Party's reformist and nationalist policies.

It was now out of the question for the CPF to lead the aroused working class to a socialist revolution, as this was against the interests of the alliance between Russia and the "Free Western Countries," as the Party designated non-fascist capitalism.

When the working class upsurge occurred spontaneously, the Party saw its job as being to control it and thus to demonstrate to the ruling class that fascism (that is, the smashing of the workers' organisations) wasn't really necessary: the Communist Party could, in return for political concessions, do just as good a job of holding back the workers and preventing revolution.

ANTI-NAZI

In 1936 in response to the election of the Popular Front Government (an alliance of the Socialist Party and radicals, i.e. liberal bourgeoisie, backed by the support of the CPF), the French workers responded with a General Strike and occupation of the factories.

It was a movement exactly like the 1968 one, only smaller. Capitalism could easily have been overthrown, given a revolutionary party. But the CP chose to give its full support to the government and help suppress the strike, thus betraying the workers to reaction.

It was at this point that Thorez uttered the now notorious dictum - "one must know how to end a strike."

In August 1939 a non-aggression pact was signed between Germany and Russia. With it came one of those violent swings characteristic of the Communist Parties as they rushed to do Moscow's bidding.

For 5 years they had peddled the anti-Nazi front, and preached class collaboration at home in defence of "democracy". (With some curious twists: In

the late '30s Thorez was so zealous in advocating the 'national Front' line that he took it to absurdity by calling for an alliance with "patriotic" — i.e. anti-German — Fascists!)

ZIG-ZAGS

Now the policy was reversed. The "Great Western Democracies" were as black, if not blacker, than had been, before the Pact, Stalin's new German allies.

The strain on the CPF was very heavy: it lost a huge part of its membership. And even those who remained with the Party were not always supporting the Party line. (*)

After 5 years of a nationalist and reformist policy, it was out of the question to find again a genuine proletarian internationalist attitude. The CP, as it then was, had not been constructed for that. Its opposition to both Imperialisms, first German and then British, was motivated, it claimed, by its concern for the unity of the French Nation, and for a "True National Policy".

Outlawed, under fantastic pressure from public opinion, it was in fact now waiting the signal for a new change. In June 1941 Russia was attacked by the German army, and the CPF in relief threw itself head first into the "Resistance" — and back to a new phase of collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Quickly it gained control of the whole of the Resistance, and though it spoke of "Revolution after the Liberation" (as in Spain the Communist Party had promised - First win the war against Franco, then have the Revolution), the alliance of the Soviet bureaucracy and the Western countries could not have allowed it even if the CP had had any will to revolution.

But it had not. What was left to it of revolutionary Marxism was just the terminology. The Resistance was at the service of the bourgeoisie, as decided in the deals cooked up at Yalta and Teheran by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill: East Europe was to be Stalin's domain, the west that of Imperialism.

So the Communist Parties of Italy and France complied. They disarmed the workers of the Resistance, allowing the capitalists to rebuild their state. The ineffable Thorez raised this slogan for liquidating the partisan movement in France: "ONE ARMY, ONE STATE, ONE PEOPLE"! (He had been given special permission to return to France in 1944; De Gaulle, commenting in his memoirs on his reasons for giving this permission, said: "Thorez is a useful man to have around"...)

* There is a story told by Koestler, who worked for the Comintern at the time, that when Stalin and French Premier Laval were discussing this, Laval asked Stalin: What if the CPF can't be got to agree to this? To which, characteristically, the cynical 'Leader of the World Revolution' replied by drawing his hand across his throat. "Hang them!" he said cryptically.

* The complete suddenness of the Nazi-Soviet pact meant it took a little while for the implication of the new international line-up to register with the national CPs, who had the difficulty that many of their members had been recruited on

So long as good relations were maintained between Moscow and Washington, the CPF was fully at the service of the bourgeoisie. At the Liberation the CP had partial control over the South of France, and tremendously strong influence elsewhere. The capitalists were totally discredited and almost disarmed. The Party used its influence to help rebuild the France of the bosses, and entered a coalition government with De Gaulle.

"Roll up your sleeves" was now the slogan. And they did. They voted in parliament the credits the Imperialist French army needed for the war in Indo-China, now Vietnam, as they were later to do for the French Army in Algeria. In fact throughout the war in Algeria the Party never took a clear position in favour of full sovereignty for Algeria, nor did it organise aid for the Algerians.

In 1968 the CPF rendered its greatest service ever to the French ruling class. Factories were occupied, ten million workers in every department of life on strike and straining for a complete change in society, the police half sympathetic, a conscript army confined to barracks for fear of 'infection' — the bourgeois state utterly helpless. An almost effortless destruction of capitalist society was on the cards. And the CPF? The CPF called for a return to work — so that a bourgeois election could take place to install, so it hoped, a coalition Government in which a few CP ministers might sit.

But still, even now, the CP can never be respectable enough in the eyes of the ruling class. The link with Moscow continues to cost it many opportunities in the sphere of its parliamentary activities — to which all other activity is geared. In the new CP generation allegiance to Moscow counts for little; thus there is increasing tension between the interests of the Russian bureaucracy and those of the actual, mass reformist basis (and the petit bourgeois political and ideological basis) of the French CP.

AGREEMENT

And thus we have seen a change in the relations with Moscow, a change which has been defined as "Polycentrism." Increasingly the Party's programme and methods of recruitment come into contradiction with its relations with Moscow.

The Moscow link, with its importance for foreign policy, has led the bourgeoisie to refuse the CPs participation in any government — except a coalition in conditions of extreme crisis and during alliances with Russia.

The break with Moscow is the necessary step to make the CPF acceptable to the bourgeoisie as a government party. That step has to be taken for any lasting realisation of that appealing prospect: "The Reunification of the Left."

Such a step will mean giving up any independent foreign policy and adopting the bourgeoisie's own one. Positions such as on Indo China and Algeria were already steps at concessions in this direction. The present Agreement with the Socialist Party and the implied acceptance of NATO is another major step towards a break with Moscow, holding out the hope that one day the CP might gain a hand in driving the capitalist machine which it has worked so hard for so long to maintain in running order.

a purely anti-fascist line. Thus they at first continued the old line and went on supporting their own countries against Germany.

In Britain Harry Pollitt, C.P. Secretary, actually issued a pamphlet supporting the British declaration of war — "How to win the War". When the penny dropped, once Stalin and Hitler had carved up Poland and called for peace, he had to resign as C.P.G.B. Secretary for a couple of years.

In France, however, things are always taken to extremes: on the outbreak of war Maurice Thorez joined the French Army, in person! A few weeks later he deserted and went to Moscow.

CAPITALISM

AND THE STATE



ON ALMOST EVERY MILITANT working class demonstration today the main cry is 'Heath Out'. But it is not just Heath that the demonstrators are protesting against. They know that the National Industrial Relations Court has been one of the bosses' main weapons against the labour movement. Those who have been involved with the Social Security recently, particularly strikers, will know about its mean and oppressive ways.

Detailed plans have been drawn up for army intervention in case of serious strikes. All the various parts of the bosses' State are appearing more and more openly in the class struggle.

In this situation a book which carefully takes up and demolishes the established theories about the State is particularly useful. Ralph Miliband's book *THE STATE IN CAPITALIST SOCIETY* (first published 1969) is the only substantial study of the State from a Marxist point of view to appear in recent years in Britain.

The established views go as follows. The State apparatus — civil service, army, police, the judges and the Courts — is regarded as a neutral machine, non-partisan, which serves society under the control of the democratic will of the people.

Different views exist on how this democratic will is exercised. Some defenders of the present system argue that parliamentary elections lead to democratic control of society. But many important public decisions — to say nothing of the private decisions of big capitalists which affect millions of ordinary people — are made without even formal democratic consultation. Take as examples the bringing in of 'In Place of Strife', or the new Immigration Act, or the cutting of school milk.

The widespread cynicism about elections and parliamentary politicians is only a natural reaction to the rigged nature of the whole system. At best the 'democracy' of elections amounts to a few minutes spent voting every five years or so — perhaps half an hour of democracy in a lifetime.

'PLURALISM'

Many apologists for capitalism have now retreated from the view that elections amount to a democratic running of society.

Their 'pluralist' view is summarised by Miliband. They admit "that there are elites in different economic, social, political, administrative, professional and other pyramids of power. But these elites altogether lack the degree of cohesion required to turn them into dominant or ruling classes. In fact, 'elite

pluralism', with the competition it entails between different elites, is itself a prime guarantee that power in society will be diffused and not concentrated. In short, the State, subjected to a multitude of conflicting pressures from organised groups and interests, cannot show any marked bias towards some and against others: its special role, in fact, is to accommodate and reconcile them all. In that role, the state is only the mirror which society holds up to itself."

The labour movement, in this view, is supposed to be one of the many competing pressure groups, and a powerful one at that. For the orthodox theorists you, the reader, have as much power as Lord Thomson — in fact, perhaps more since you probably have a vote and Lord Thomson hasn't.

Miliband points out that the 'pluralist' view doesn't recognise the enormous inequalities in society. In Britain 5% of the population own 75% of all private wealth (1960 figures) and 1% own 81% of all privately owned company shares.

The various dominant 'elites' are all closely allied with the wealthy class — usually they are the same people, at the very least they have close personal connections and closely similar attitudes. And in fact State policies do follow the general interests of the wealthy class.

Miliband explains these points carefully and so his book is worth reading.

MIRROR

But the main drift of Miliband's argument is summarised thus: "as a pressure group, vis-a-vis the state, business enjoys a vast degree of superiority over other groups and interests". He writes: "the legislative element of the state system, like all the other elements which have been considered previously, has normally remained, notwithstanding universal suffrage and competitive politics, much more the instrument of the dominant classes than of the subordinate ones, even though it is now rather less exclusively their instrument than in former days".

This approach accepts completely the basic assumptions of the 'pluralist' view, and questions it only as if it's a matter of whether the capitalist class has 40% of the power or 80%....! Miliband doesn't really break from the view of the state as mirror-reflection of society. He simply sees the social and economic power structure in society before he holds the mirror up to it.

Miliband says little in the way of a positive general theory of the State other than to quote the famous statement of Marx and Engels from the 'Communist Manifesto' — "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". This polemical statement is, surely, one-sided and partial if considered as a comprehensive definition of the State.

If the State is just the committee of the bourgeoisie, then what is the difference between the State and the employers' Confederation of British Industry? How do we account for such cases as Fascism, where a political movement establishes, as Miliband writes, "a dictatorship over which they (ie. the privileged classes) have no genuine control at all"?

Miliband's approach leads to the following answer to these questions. "The dominant economic interests in capitalist society can normally count on the active good-will and support of those in whose hands state power lies.... But these interests cannot, all the same, rely on governments and their advisors to act in perfect congruity with their purposes". That is, the 'committee of the bourgeoisie' may be unreliable.

That doesn't explain much. There should be another definition of the State added to the statement that it is the 'committee of the bourgeoisie'. The State is also specifically the organ responsible for the general administration of society, and the arbitration of social conflicts. The arbitration is, of course, done in capitalist terms of reference, and based on a concept of the 'national interest' which regards the capitalist class as the 'nation'. But the State includes, for example, the legal system.

This legal system is not in the least an expression of eternal justice, free from class bias — it regards the hungry man who steals from a supermarket as a criminal, and the big capitalist owner of that supermarket, who grabs thousands of pounds from his underpaid workers in the normal course of business, is a fine upstanding citizen.

However, "In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic condition and be its expression, but must also be an **internally coherent** expression which does not, owing to inner contradictions, reduce itself to naught. And, in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class — this in itself would offend the 'conception of right'" (Engels, 1890).

An example of this point is given by the recent Appeal Court decision over the T & G's £55,000. The Court motivation was to preserve the coherence of legal precedents on the question of 'principal' and 'agent'. This preservation, considered in a long-term,

historical perspective, is definitely a capitalist policy. But it was not necessarily in line with the immediately perceived interests of the capitalist class.

And Marx's discussion, in 'Capital', of the Factory Acts is another example. He shows that these laws, enforcing certain safeguards on working conditions, were necessary from the point of view of capitalist production. However, a good many leading capitalist spokesmen opposed the Acts, and much of the Parliamentary support for the Acts came from backward-looking opponents of industrialism.

A positive theory of the State cannot be discussed properly without a **historical** study of the first appearance of the State, of the formation of nation States, and of the various developments of the State under modern capitalism. But even without being able to go into that historical study, we can indicate a number of political consequences

VARIETIES OF POWER

Working class militancy takes different forms. A basically negative, defensive militancy which stresses the advancement of the working class as an estate or interest-group within present-day society, is different from a positive militancy which sets its aim as the **transformation** of present-day society.

The same differences of form apply, though with modifications and less sharply, to the 'militancy' of the capitalist class. Individual capitalists and even employers' federations tend to steer their course by short-term sectional interests. The political arm of the capitalist class, the State, has to operate more in terms of comprehensive strategy.

For example, the employers' offensive which has developed since the 1960s has depended crucially on definite government measures — Incomes Policy, anti-union laws, racialist laws, and so on.

It is a general **employers'** offensive and not just the policy of particular governments. The Labour government pioneered all the Tories have done, and many government measures were directed towards servicing industrial attacks on the working class — for example, the Prices and Incomes Board and productivity dealing; the Redundancy Payments Act and redundancies. However, the government cannot be described as a **passive reflection** or servant of the employing class.

If we look at the State this way, then we see the inadequacy of Miliband's reply to 'pluralism'. The point is not **only** that the working class has **less** power than the capitalist class. The real reply to the 'pluralists', and also to the reactionaries who say "the trade unions have too much power", is that any power the labour movement has within the present system is a **different sort of power** from the capitalists' power. It's a negative, defensive power, a power to obtain partial reforms within a hostile total society.

We may gain unemployment benefit; but, within capitalism, we still have unemployment. We may gain wage increases; but we still have exploitation. We may have a vote; but only for capitalist alternatives. We may be able to halt or hinder some capitalist plans for rationalisation and redundancy; but the basic direction of industry is still determined by the capitalist priority of profit.

CONTRADICTION

The State, Engels wrote, "is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel." As the contradictions of decaying capitalism become sharper, so the intervention of the State increases.

Capitalist free enterprise leads to the elimination of the weak in competition with the strong, and thus to the negation of that free enterprise, the concentration of production in huge monopolies. The State promotes mergers, and takes over basic industries (communications, fuel) when private

Continued on page 11

WORKERS' FIGHT

Where we stand

■ Capitalism is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class 'at home' and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racialism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible, the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. And already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

■ Today the ruling class can keep their system going only at the price of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

■ The only way out is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private-profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

■ The working class has created political parties for this purpose - Labour Parties, Communist Parties, Social Democratic Parties. But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

■ The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class.. WORKERS' FIGHT is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

■ The basis of our activity is therefore the scientific theory of Marxism, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present-day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

■ We fight for the independence of the trade unions from all state control, and within the unions for democracy and militant policies. Although they are not enough for the struggle for workers' power, the trade unions are necessary for the defence of workers' interests. Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries in united class action, can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable and independent instruments of working class interests.

■ We fight against the Industrial Relations Act, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.

■ We fight against unemployment; for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.

■ We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for workers' control, with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.

■ We believe that the "Parliamentary road to socialism" is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully: no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine, which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.

■ We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples fighting against imperialism, and to their organisations leading the fight.

■ We fight racialism and against immigration controls. We support the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.

■ We fight for full and equal rights for women, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves."

■ British workers have - fundamentally - more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party. We give critical support to the Fourth International.

■ We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of the USSR and the other countries called 'communist', which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different Bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism. unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.

■ There are other political groups (including the official British section of the Fourth International) which have generally similar aims, but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously - sometimes grossly - inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

Review

MURDEROUS PROVIDENCE

HARRY ROTHMAN'S book describes and analyses the problem of pollution in industrialised societies, capitalist and non capitalist. The major part describes the effects on environment, together with its causes in greater depth than is usual. Rothman in fact approaches the 'environmental crisis' using a Marxist method.

His basic theme is that pollution is a direct result of the contradiction between the social nature of production and the private ownership of the means of production. Production in factories involves the whole of society, but is owned and organised by the bosses - who are primarily concerned with their own short-term interests.

In this situation, pollution is not caused by a simple, accidental oversight. Competition between employers, and the relentless drive to increase profits and stay on top, means that if a choice has to be made between profits and the environment, then the bosses choose profits every time. There is no such thing as a 'soulful corporation', let alone a socially responsible one.

The recent United Nations Stockholm conference on the environment indicated as much; the final declaration was no more than a vague collective wish of how nice it would be if...

No effective action is likely. How could it be otherwise with the giant international corporations at each other's throats in the fight for contracting markets?

In the USA pollution produced by cars is turning many centres into witches' cauldrons of poison. The lead in car exhausts has raised the level of this poison in rain to as high as six times the maximum level of lead allowed in drinking water by the US Public Health Service! Rothman describes how the petrol firms fought desperately against measures to control this, and concludes that "on such matters their vision is narrow and arrog-

ant; they have one concern, survival."

Pollution is only one expression of the truth that in capitalist society it is impossible to plan production in such a way that all aspects are integrated. Overall planning is absolutely necessary to ensure that production does not merely benefit some at the expense of others, and also to regulate the interaction of man and nature.

It is just possible to enforce such planning by a bureaucratic clique which imposes from above the way in which industry should be run, as in the Soviet Union. But there, despite the socialisation of the means of production, workers are still not in control of the running of industry. Rothman observes that "Rule by a minority, instead of by mass participation, will never produce the quality of information necessary for the total planning of the economy." Which indicates why the present day planned economies are far from free from pollution: the planning is crude and in the wrong hands.

Rothman's conclusion is that pollution can only be finally tackled by a socialist revolution, when the workers, controlling society, will themselves decide the priorities of production: "If pollution is to be cured and mankind to survive in a healthy world the individual enterprises of society have to be co-ordinated by a common goal directing the whole of society. Only by creating such a society, which governs its actions by a social instead of a private economic rationality, can mankind line in an affluent but non-polluting culture."

The book has unfortunately only a very brief discussion of the concrete political issues centred around the environment. There is little analysis of what socialists should do at the present, and also little discussion of the problems that would beset the transitional period after a successful revolution.

In the developing countries, for example, problems of socialist criteria for assessing the rate of industrialisation and the distribution of resources would pose themselves at a very early stage.

However, Rothman's aim seems to have been not to deal with any particular aspect, but to reveal that the corruption of nature is a symptom of a diseased society. His book is the only one in this area that adequately analyses this.

Neal Smith

Dave Brodie

There was reason to be grateful to the 'Threepenny Dreadful' (or Daily Mirror, whichever you prefer) on Friday of last week.

Whilst John Beavan was extolling the virtues of Sir Keith Joseph, Gruppenfuhrer for Social Services, he brought some facts to light hitherto unknown. To myself at least.

Did you know, for instance, and I quote - "That sheer poverty plays a big part in deprivation."

I always knew something was wrong. Thank you, John Beavan, and thank you, Sir Keith, for helping to enlighten me.

Here's another revelation. "Poor families, especially large ones, are in danger of marital breakdown if they live in bad housing conditions." Now who's have thought of that! Devilishly clever these Cabinet Ministers.

"What the parents need" Sir Keith assures us, "is an up to date British Parents Manual."

Are they edible?

He goes on. "A lot of good work is already being done with problem families." I'm not too clear what a problem family is. I think it means they have a problem paying the rent.

Mrs. Thatcher (she's the one who said "suffer little children." And they did.) suggests that young people should be educated in the problems of marriage, parenthood and children's needs. The cost of living being what it is, this should entail training their offspring to go barefoot and eat once a week.

"The Family Income Supplement is making a frontal attack on poverty" says Sir Keith. "A married man with three children earning £18 per week can claim up to £3 F.I.S."

The equivalent of a down payment on a pair of boot laces.

"Sir Keith is a man of understanding and compassion," comments John Beavan.

"We're just good friends" says Sir Keith.

MACHINE TOOLS

DAVENTRY NEXT TO GO

The Herbert-Ingersoll factory in Daventry was built in 1968, as the most advanced in Europe. Since then it has made a £1 million per year loss

And now it has brought in the Receiver. 175 workers were sacked last year, and now 280 out of the 450 left are to join the dole queue by order of the receiver, with very little chance of another job in the area.

Meanwhile workers at Churchills (Altrincham), another Alfred Herbert factory, are threatened again with

closure in August, after six months reprieve.

Other large Machine Tool firms are following suit. Clarksons International, specialising in cutting tools, have announced a 10% cut in their workforce. Brooke Tools in Birmingham have halved their workforce over the last two years.

Archdales of Worcester sacked 400 recently. Masson, Scott and Thrissell, who make machines for the paper and packaging industries, have closed down their Wimbledon factory, making 420 unemployed, and have put their Bristol workers on short time. There are further cutbacks at the Dowty-owned Coventry Precision factory in Exhall.

Some overall picture is given by the order book figures. In the Jan.-March quarter of 1972, home orders

were down 11% on the first quarter of 1971, and export orders down 44%. 1971 itself was a bad year, with home orders 37% down on 1970

AUEW REPORT

All this underlines the message of a recent report by the AUEW engineering section, which describes the prospects in the Machine Tool industry as "very bleak indeed" and calls for **the immediate and total nationalisation of the industry.**

Already it is said that the government will match any private buyer for Herbert-Ingersoll £ for £. But what is needed is not this sort of government payout to soften the blow for the bosses. If the bosses can't run industry properly, then their factories should be nationalised now, without compensation.

Nationalisation in itself does not prevent the toll of redundancies, as the miners or the railwaymen could tell you.

The struggle for workers' control must be taken up immediately in the form of a fight to control hiring and firing, for workers to exercise control over their own right to a livelihood. We cannot accept that the dictates of capitalist competition stand higher than that right.

If even the most moderate demands are not to be left as just recommendations in a report, organisation and information are necessary. As a start, some Machine Tools workers in the Coventry area, with the help of Workers' Flight, have launched a rank and file paper, the "Machine Toolworker".

Dave Spencer.

BISAKTA STRIKE

**12,000 in first
walk-off
since 1926**

12,000 BISAKTA men on Teesside have shown that there is militancy in the union after all!

Three shift foremen at Lackenby refused to take orders from steel managers in the managers' association, SIMA. In this they were following executive policy. SIMA is not recognised as a union by the TUC, and the British Steel Corporation has agreed that shift managers should be in BISAKTA.

But the bosses took the three foremen off pay. Even the right wing BISAKTA leadership had to respond with a call to strike action, which received massive militant support from the rank and file.

The three foremen were soon reinstated, though the general issue of SIMA remains to be negotiated nationally. The BISAKTA leaders

might now realise that the lads on the shop floor, having tasted the forbidden fruits of militancy, now require more fight from them.

Already — and it must have hurt them deeply! — they have granted strike pay.

The lesson that direct action works must now be applied to the crucial issue of redundancies.

Read Real Steel News

"Real Steel News is produced by steelworkers who don't believe that anything can be achieved in this society by sitting around waiting for a better day to come"

**New issue just out — available from
39 Clynes Rd, Grangetown, Teesside**

actually took power in civil society. They controlled the factories, they controlled the distribution of supplies, the bourgeoisie did not dare show themselves in the streets.

But the workers' anarcho-syndicalist leaders did not undertake the task of thoroughly smashing the old bourgeois State — the central banks, the administrative machine, etc — and building a new democratically-controlled workers' state. Within months, "the proletarian conquests in the economic field (were) slowly whittled down. Controlling the treasury and the banks, the government was able to force its will on the workers by the threat of withdrawing credits".

The State is the product of civil society; the capitalist economic structure dominates capitalist politics in the last analysis. But it is the conquest of State power which is the crucial problem for changing society.

A theoretical merging of the State and civil society leads to a belief that State intervention in sectional struggles necessarily makes them "political". But the fact that the State and the capitalist are involved together does not mean that the question of the State, of the general administration of society, and the sectional questions are the same question, in reality or in people's consciousness.

The true conclusion to draw from the increasing intervention of the State is not that sectional struggles are therefore "political", but, on the contrary, the crucial need to go beyond syndicalism, and the negative, defensive form of militancy. When, for example, the State uses racialism to attack the working class, the basic syndicalist reaction of "let's forget all this black & white business and unite to fight the bosses" is not enough. It amounts to an attempt to forget racialism; but when the State is on the offensive the only real alternatives are to fight

Engineers' Claim

ALIBIS FOR SCANLON

"FIRSTLY I TAKE IT WE ARE at one" were Hugh Scanlon's opening words when he addressed London Confed shop stewards on July 3rd. But, as the meeting showed, if the stewards were of one mind, then they were united in thinking that the union's local claim policy is wrong.

In London (and it was the same at Eastbourne and at Hastings), Scanlon's theme was 'alibis'. He spoke of those in the localities who were using the accusation of 'lack of leadership' as an alibi for their own inaction. It could be that he has a point ... in one or two cases. But the main thing is that he himself is using this line as a get-out.

This was clear right from the start when Tom Hillier from CAV Lucas spoke of the abrogation of

national leadership that had led to a 'national shambles'. Quite rightly he accused Scanlon and the rest of the union leadership of failing to take up the political challenge of the fight against the Tory government.

At this Scanlon launched into bitter accusations, **without evidence** or chance of reply, accusing Bro. Hillier and "people of his persuasion" of criticising while "doing nothing".

This demagoguery was not all that showed Scanlon up. Laurie Smith spoke of the support of the Erith (Kent) District Committee for national strike action and the need for a strategy against unemployment.

He also stressed the need to take on some of the biggest engineering bosses, firms such as GEC. Speaker after speaker came forward with proposals for more action. Men from the occupied Molins factory in South East London sat in the meeting with their placards. Scanlon's argument about lack of action in the localities is a sick alibi for him.

From page 9

THE STATE

enterprise can no longer run them at all adequately. This indicates the bankruptcy of capitalism, But the intervention of the capitalist State is in no sense socialist.

Indeed, the recent experience in Britain has been of the public sector workers being used as the first target of the capitalist offensive. In general the trade unions now "have to confront a centralised capitalist adversary, intimately bound up with state power. Hence flows the need of the trade unions — insofar as they remain on reformist positions, i.e. on positions of adapting themselves to private property — to adapt themselves to the capitalist state and contend for its cooperation". (Trotsky 1940). In 1931-2 there was only one Government committee on which the General Council of the TUC was represented; in 1934-5 there were six; in 1954, 81 — and the number is still increasing. Pay arbitration boards with Government and union representatives are a commonplace in advanced capitalist countries.

This development must not, however, be interpreted as a merging of State and civil society. The relations between the state apparatus and the capitalists may be closer; but the distinction between the two is not reduced.

The theoretical mistake of merging the two can lead to disastrous results. Syndicalists see the struggle in industry as being the crucial power struggle in capitalist society. But in 1936, in Spain, the working class of Catalonia

and fainthearts they are, for revolutionary ideas to come to the fore in the labour movement, and for the genuine achievement of a workers' state.

However, it is possible for the 'workers' government' slogan to be used as an abstract panacea just as much as 'Smash the State'. To be meaningful, it must be used in specific situations of the class struggle, where the question of government is to the fore, and where it is possible to be precise about the organisational form of the workers' government.

Today, to return to the beginning of the article, the question of government is certainly to the fore. But the question of organisational forms is not clear. The majority of the British working class still see political alternatives as parliamentary alternatives. At the same time, many workers have a hard-learned distrust of the Labour Party.

To fail to support the kicking out of the Tories, necessarily in favour of Labour, would be to collapse into the political fatalism of negative, 'syndicalist' militancy. But to present, today, any immediately likely Labour government as a workers' government would be to make a mystical equation between Labour Party and labour movement. It would wilfully obscure the lessons of 1964-70.

We raise the call for a **General Strike to Smash the Act** — an attacking slogan which we do not reduce to panacea by linking it in advance with the slogan of a workers' government, though its realisation would open the way for raising the question of a workers' government quite concretely. It is a specific call, for a specific situation. Other situations will require other ways of relating to the problem of the State.

John Sterling.

INDUSTRIAL FIGHT

STEEL

12 'Worker-Directors'

THE STEEL INDUSTRY IS undergoing a major upheaval at present and indeed for some time now. With the industry in such a state of flux, steelworkers are faced with serious threats, both to their work and trade union strength.

Since 1965 the industry has been in a state of near stagnation. There has been scarcely any increase in the level of steel output and moreover, the industry has only managed to average an annual growth rate of 1%.

If we care to make international comparisons then we find that from 1961-69 steel output in the USA increased by 39%, in the whole of the EEC by 44%, and in Japan by 165%. During the same period British steel output rose by only 15%. British steel exports in the same period rose by 22% — but those of the US went up by 230%, of the EEC by 190% and the Japanese by a massive 770%.

The fact is that for most of the period since 1945 the steel industry has been hopelessly out of date, due to a refusal of the steel bosses to reinvest more than a bare minimum of capital. The industry has been deprived of investment in modern plant. This exceptionally slow growth of capital formation, i.e. investment in capital equipment, has resulted in the low annual growth rate of 1% mentioned above.

The British Steel Corporation has raised its annual investment in the steel industry in capital equipment from about £80m to £120m each year, but the EEC countries have averaged £350m annual capital expenditure and have thus raised their production and exports faster than Britain. It becomes obvious then, that increases in productivity are mainly due to investment in new capital equipment.

Although increases in productivity in Britain have been low compared with other capitalist countries, there has nevertheless been a growth in productivity since 1966.

How has this affected the steel industry since nationalisation?

Since that time the catchword in the industry has been 'rationalisation', a catchword not unfamiliar to other workers in the public sector, for instance in the ports.

'RATIONALISATION'

Rationalisation in practice has meant the running down of the labour force by 'natural wastage' that is by redundancy

for older workers along with no recruitment of new workers.

Thus although there was hardly any actual increase in output in the industry between 1965 and 1970, B.S.C. policies led to a cut of nearly 10% in the labour force, amounting to some 30,000 men. And this policy has by no means been played out — by 1980 50,000 will have gone.

With these sort of policies BSC can claim a 10% rise in productivity — small consolation for men who lose their jobs after working in the industry all their lives.

These massive redundancies have been and are still being pushed through, with as yet little or no active protest on the part of the official trade union leaderships — at best. In fact there has even been what amounts to open trade union co-operation with management on this.

For instance, in the latest claim of the National Craft Coordinating Committee we can read:

"Having worked as in no other industry to get our members to share the vision of a 'high earnings - high efficiency' industry and have them co-operate for what is now a long time in certain plants with your consultants, you behaved like the Grand Old Duke of York — leading us up to the top of the hill and then down again."

So we are faced with the pathetic sight of the N.C.C.C. leaders with tears in their eyes, having by their own admission persuaded their members to accept the BSC's lousy deals, and now complaining that the BSC led them up the garden path!

Getting tame union 'leaders' to sell such policies to the men is not the only tactic used by BSC management.

'PARTICIPATION'

Once they had decided that the 'Green Shield Stamp' approach was not enough, what did their lordships come up with?

'Joint Consultative Committees' and 'Employee-Directors'. This scheme for "workers' participation in management" involves 12 'employee directors' joining 10 other part-time directors from private industry, universities etc. on the four Steel Company Boards in order to participate with top management in shaping the industry and its policies, and share responsibility for Board decisions.

It does not take much imagination to see that the role of these EDs in this period of 'rationalisation' is one of informing top management of shop-floor attitudes and, moreover, of selling unpopular closures and cut-backs to the lads on the shop floor.

Steelworkers should refuse to have anything to do with this small minority who claim to accept responsibility on behalf of the workers in the steel industry and give the impression that the workers have some say in the running of the industry.

The fact is that workers in the industry still have no real power in its running. Those unfamiliar with the industry might argue that the EDs must represent the workers to some extent: after all, who put them there?

Well, the workers certainly did not. At no time were workers given a chance either to propose members or to vote for them. The EDs were appointed by Lord Melchett from a short-list — by courtesy of the TUC! In a recent survey, only 30% of workers in the industry had heard of the existence of the scheme, and

even less knew who their EDs were.

As well as the ED scheme, Joint Consultative Committees have been set up throughout the corporation. Since their introduction, workers' representatives have become more and more disillusioned with the set-up, feeling that no real power lies in these Committees except the right to debate, endlessly, the state of lavatories, canteen mugs, and other such weighty matters.

In some areas this has led to a boycott of the Committees by the shop stewards — an attitude which needs to spread throughout the industry.

Steelworkers do not want trendy and time wasting offers of 'participation' and 'consultation'. They need to build a massive campaign against any further productivity deals and for a demand for no more redundancies.

... thousands for the Dole

The British Steel Corporation plans to make 1500 workers redundant at Stanton Ironworks, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, within two years. The blast furnaces and associated activities are to be closed at Stanton. Production of foundry pig iron will be switched to Workington, Cumberland.

The Managing Director at Stanton sent his deputy to announce the redundancies to union representatives: he didn't seem to think there was any need to be present in person. Perhaps the loss of 1500 jobs is not very important in his eyes.

Steel News, B.S.C.'s own paper, tries to sugar the pill by telling us that the first 200 to be affected will be found 'alternative work'. Stanton workers predict that these men will be given jobs in the department where working conditions are so appalling that 20 men leave every month.

Ilkeston's Labour MP, Raymond Fletcher, has promised to help. So far, he has tabled a motion in the House of Commons which asks for Government aid for the area "in view of the impending redundancies". This implies acceptance of these redundancies.

How effective can he be in helping the fight against redundancies if he already accepts that they will take place?

Fletcher (a member of the left Labour Tribune group) has also written a poem about the proposed closures. He talks of the loss of men's dignity and asks "Ted, what we know of the working class, to

"throw us a line".

Perhaps the most significant words he used are -

"We've no aptitude here for disruption, We prefer to discuss, not to flight."

Railwayworkers, miners and dockers have all found recently that action is much more effective than words. Simply discussing their grievances did nothing to remedy them.

Stanton workers have set up an Action Committee to fight the closures. There will be a march through Ilkeston on August 5th, which steelworkers from from other plants have promised to support. A petition will be handed in to Downing Street on July 19th.

The history of the labour movement shows, however, that such struggles cannot be won by relying on Parliament. Workers must be prepared to take action themselves.

It is bad tactics to fight such closures with economic arguments. If we argue that the plant should not be closed because the product can be made more cheaply here than elsewhere at another plant, we leave ourselves in a very weak position.

The whole emphasis of the fight should be rather on the principle of closures..

Unless we do this, we are accepting that management has a right to cut off the means of support for any number of wage-earners and their families, as and when it suits the Company account books.

Stan Staveley