Socialist Worker

For workers control and international socialism

140 2 October 1969 every Thursday 3d

German strike wave

Eye-witness analysis on page 2

FIRST REBEL TENANTS BARRICADE GOES UP

THE FIRST BARRICADE has gone up in the Greater London area as tenants prepare for eviction battles against the Tory-run council. Mr and Mrs Mclechen (holding poster) live in a prefab in Dagenham Avenue, Becontree and the GLC is anxious to evict them from this substantial, modern dwelling for arrears of rent. But aided by the 'Flying Squad' of the United Tenants' Action Committee, the Maclechens have erected an electrified barbed-wire barricade that will give the bailiffs a nasty shock. Picture: JEFF PICK

WILSON'S BOAT MUST BE ROCKED

Roger Protz

MRS BARBARA CASTLE's declaration on Monday that the government intends to go ahead with part two of the Prices and Incomes Act to hold up wage increases has disturbed the air of brotherly love at the Labour Party conference.

Until she spoke, the government's plans for a carefully stage-managed conference looked like being successful.

Delegates from right, 'left' and centre had agreed to smile sweetly at the television cameras in an attempt to foster an air of unity in the run-up to the next general election.

Just mention the word election and all the government's critics run for cover. The mouldering old Tory skeleton is dragged from the cupboard by Wilson and displayed to the assembled comrades with the warning: 'Support us or you might have Edward Heath as prime minister'.

THREAT

It is indeed a sombre threat. Just imagine what the Tories might do if they won the election.

They would attack the wages and living conditions of the workers. They would introduce measures to cut down on the right to strike in the hope that the TUC would capitulate and agree to do the job for them.

They would act as the champions of big business by handing out vast sums of public money as investment grants and encouraging the creation of huge private monopolies like GEC-AEI-EE which would sack thousands of workers and create a pool of unemployed skilled labour to further depress wages and conditions. Profits, prices, dividends and rents would continue to soar.

The Tories would water down the social services, re-introduce prescription charges, cut down on housing and school building and blame all the problems of the capitalist system on coloured immigrants and shop stewards.

WILSON: dragged out the Tory skeleton

It would be a thoroughly reactionary, anti-working-class government and it would be virtually indistinguishable from the present government's spokesmen at Brighton this week who may even mutter a few pieties about 'socialism' before the week is out.

The unions could mobilise their members to force a change of policy on Wilson. That could only be done outside the conference, not by opposing or supporting resolutions but by encouraging all trade unionists to fight against every manifestation of government policy such as productivity deals, measured day work time and motion study and smaller work forces.

Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon were angered by Mrs Castle but they joined in the ovation for Wilson's laboured jokes and distasteful jingoism on Tuesday. Scanlon may even organise a vote against Mrs Castle's policies this week. but it is all an empty game unless it is given flesh and blood by a real fight on the factory floor, in the docks, the mines and the shipyards.

And such a fight is necessary. It is made absolutely clear in the government's Agenda for a Generation document produced for the conference that the whole anti-worker bias of Labour's policy is to continue.

The document is cock-a-hoop about the balance of payments surplus, only made possible by the sustained attack on the workers' living standards. The continuation of that surplus determines future government policy, which means a further drive to boost profits and investment at the expense of the labour movement.

DOLE OUT

Mergers will be encouraged and a national investment board will be created to dole out further sums to industrialists. The document speaks of the domination of the economy by the new giant corporations. Labour is not against such monopolies, it says, and speaks of the work of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation which will continue to advise and finance mergers.

The document paints a picture of Wilson's 'New Britain'. It is a society increasingly dominated by a tiny handful of rich and powerful men like Arnold Weinstock of GEC, chalking up enormous profits from an ever-dwindling labour force while those who have lost their jobs join the dole queue or take unskilled work for lower rates of pay.

It is a blueprint for a planned society, but it has nothing to do with socialism. The Labour government talks the language of state capitalism, the scientific exploitation of the working class, the pillaging of their working conditions and of the whole quality of their lives in order that British capitalism can compete on better terms with her foreign rivals.

To oppose such policies is not to play the Tories' game, as Wilson and company say with boring regularity every five years. The government's policies are Tory policies and it is the duty of every trade unionist and socialist to fight them to the bitter end.

The general election is a convenient red herring. The real struggle against the rush to rationalise capitalism at the expense of the working class goes on among rank and file trade unionists.

Those delegates at Brighton who are more and more disgruntled with the parliamentary game of Tweedledum and Tweedledee must take the fight back to the grass roots of the labour movement.

They must raise again and again with other militant workers the role of the Labour government and the need to mount a major rank and file offensive against its policies as the first step towards building a real socialist movement dedicated to the struggle for workers' power.

When Wilson says 'Don't rock the boat' he means **capitalism's** boat. It must be rocked . . . and hard.

Troops use gas on Catholics as Orangemen attack

EDITORIAL

LATE LAST SATURDAY NIGHT mobs of Paisleyites once again attacked the Catholic workers of the Falls Road area in Belfast. Following a meeting addressed by the former Home Affairs Minister Craig, they marched from the Shankhill Road area to Coates Road where they began to dismantle the 'peace line', threw petrol bombs and burnt out five houses.

British troops did little or nothing to stop them. They only intervened seriously when people from Divis Street went to give assistance to those in Coates Street who were being burned out.

From this point on, rifle butts and CS gas were used against Catholics who had gone onto the street to defend their houses when the army had failed.

This is the reality against which Callaghan appeals at the Labour Party conference for Catholics 'to make gestures to overcome the genuine fears' of the majority.

It is a reality in which Paisleyite mobs can gather unimpeded by the RUC or the army, in which the nominally illegal Ulster Volunteer Force can train more or less openly in Orange areas, while the barricades that defend the Catholic ghettos have been dismantled under pressure from the troops.

FEARED

The British government has made clear what we have been arguing in Socialist Worker all along. It sent in troops to prevent an open massacre of the Catholics because it feared the effects of a civil war on its investments in the Irish Republic.

But it has no intention of dismantling the Stormont regime or disarming its thugs, whether in or out of uniform. Its aim is to stabilise the situation in the interests of the investments of British imperialism.

It believes that an open regime of terror against the Catholic population would endanger these investments but it also sees any attempt to do away with the Stormont regime that rests upon discrimination, bigotry and terror as having the same effect.

So instead Callaghan blames 'both sides'.

WARNED

The result is that while they have been ordered to prevent a too blatant onslaught on the Catholic population, the troops have been warned against antagonising the thugs who roam the streets. They have also been told to prevent 'provocative', that is defensive, actions by the Catholic population.

Catholics in the ghettos cannot engage in a struggle to throw out the British troops at the moment. Reality forces them to take into account the difference of opinion between Callaghan and Paisley on how to preserve the Stormont regime.

This is to their advantage insofar as it gives them time to prepare their fight back.

CALLAGHAN
Blames both sides

Without it, many would be dead and many more burnt out.

But this does not mean putting any trust in the troops. After all, they have been trained in the past — in Kenya, in Cyprus, in Aden — to terrorise populations in exactly the manner of the B-men.

The events of last Saturday night showed that the Catholic workers can in no way depend on the determination or ability of British troops to defend them, let alone act in their interests. That is why the barricades have been rebuilt. That is why they must be defended, against troops as well as Orangemen.

ISOLATION

But the workers defending the barricades face one central problem — their weakness, isolation and shortage of arms.

Only the opening of a second front against British imperialism in Southern Ireland can overcome this. The demand for the opening of 'free state' armouries to provide means of self-defence for those under threat must be raised.

So must the demand for seizure of British factories and property in the south as ransom for the lives of those in the ghettos.

The Green Tory government in Dublin will not, of course, support such actions. Socialists and republicans must fight for these demands despite and against that government, as the only effective means of fighting off the terror that still threatens the beleaguered minority of the north.

In Britain we must show our solidarity with those fighting for their lives by material and moral support. Above all, we must expose the hypocrisy of a Labour government which, while still supplying the arms that flow from the RUC to the B-Specials and from the B-Specials to the Paisleyites asks the more or less unarmed Catholic minority to make concessions, tells its troops to take down their barricades and use CS gas against them.

Tough new rules for sparks

SW Reporter

THE BALLOT conducted by the executive of the Electricians' and Plumbers' Union to give them more power over the rank and file has resulted in a substantial victory for the leadership.

Militant electricians campaigned against the executive's proposals but problems of communication among the branches blunted their effort.

The executive now has power to appoint a trustee to be in charge of the union's finances. Previously, trustees were elected by the members.

Full-time officials will in future be appointed by the executive, not elected by the members. The vital link between officers and members has been severed.

The appeals machinery has been altered to the advantage of the leaders. Members expelled by the executive will appeal . . . to the executive, minus the president and general secretary!

These proposals were withdrawn by the leadership at the recent union rules revision conference when it became clear that they would not get a majority. They resorted instead to a ballot in which their proposals alone appear on the ballot paper, with no opportunity for opposing points of view.

The union is now saddled with a constitution that places enormous power in the hands of officials who are not elected or accountable to members. Had the former Communist Party leadership of the Electricians' Union introduced such steps, the millionaire press would be howling in anguish.

WHICH WAY TO SOCIALISM?
public debate

Paul Foot and John Palmer versus Eric Heffer MP and Sid Bidwell MP

Dome, Brighton 7 pm
Thursday October 2

AND
March against Labour's Tory policies: The Level, Brighton 4 pm Thursday October 2

Press clampdown as protest strikes swept the country

The German workers' winter sleep

from VOLKHART MOSLER in Frankfurt

FIRST SEPTEMBER 1969 will be remembered as the day when the German working class movement awoke from a long winter sleep.

The strike movement started by 20,000 workers of Hoesch steel works in Dortmund moved quickly to other steel factories in Gelsenkirchen, Duisburg and other towns of the Ruhr area, then spread to other areas and other industries.

Steel and metal workers in the Saar area, in Bremen, Osnabruck and several other towns, coal miners of six pits in and around Dortmund and six pits of the Saar followed. On 7 September100,000 workers were out on strike.

The press has partly stopped reporting strike news.The risk that such news might lead to an even bigger and more militant strike movement was too great.

With the general elections just around the corner everyone — employers, party officials, trade union bureaucrats—did their best to stop that menacing new movement. Nevertheless reports indicate that there must be fierce discussions, short protest strikes and meetings in manyfactories up and down the country.

Spontaneous movement

Reports by the right-wing press that the strikes were planned in detail by the newly founded German Communist Party (DKP) are pure lies. This was a spontaneous movement, started by no one else but rank and file workers who were fed up with getting nothing out of a booming economy but overtime work and speed up.

Since the economic crisis started in autumn 1966, their real wages have been stagnating. The incomes policy of the Social Democratic Minister of Economics, Schiller, had done its best to restrain the trade unions from fighting for the rights of their members.

The case of the steel workers is a good example.During the crisis of 1967/68 their real wages fell by 1-1 per cent.

SCHILLER
Pressure on unions

In mid-1968 their union negotiated, under heavy pressure from Schiller's Concerted Action Policy, a union agreement which was to last for 18 months until November 1969. It provided an immediate 5 per cent wage rise and another 2 per cent from March 1969 onwards or 3per cent a year.

The agreement coincided with the start of a new steel boom. Steel workers were well aware by the doubling of steel prices that profits were booming.

At the same time their moderate wage rises were eaten up by the accelerating rate of the cost of living.

The Hoesch steel workers knew that profits were high, that their union would not act for two decisive months and that the opportunity to press for higher wages just before the elections was very favourable.

Their demand was 'sixpence an hour more now' on top of any wage rise negotiated by the union. Within three hours they could be seen parading through the streets of Dortmund celebrating their easy success.

Their demand was taken up quickly by other steel workers and by coal miners, transport workers and beer brewers.

Like everyone else in Germany, the trade union officials were taken by surprise by the wave of unofficial strikes, although they should have known. Opposition to their wage policy had been expressed for several months before, especially in the Metal Workers Union.

There was open dissent in August on the executive committee of the union when a meagre 8 per cent wage rise was agreed on for one year for two million metal workers.

There were plenty of warnings by local union branches to the national executive about growing unrest within the steel factories. Yet the union leaders were thinking not in terms of their members' interests but of the election campaign of the Social Democrats (SPD).

But when the strikes started, the union, for the same reason,was quick to put itself ahead of the movement and so get it under control. By mutual agreement the Union and the Employers' Federation decided to bring forward this year's wage talks, due at the beginning of November. Within a couple of days the new agreement was signed: 11.2 per cent wage rise and 3-4 days more holiday.

'Utopian' demand

The Miners' Union reacted even quicker. When the first strikes started the union bureaucracy called the workers 'irresponsible elements' who were acting against the recognised union procedures. The miners asked for a 1000 marks minimum wage, a demand which was labelled 'utopian' by union leader Arendt but the agreement was signed even more speedily than in the steel industry.

Within a few days what had started as an unofficial strike movement became an official wage movement.One of the most holy principles of German industrial law, the binding power of wage agreements for an agreed period, broke down.

Frightened union officials and equally frightened employers of several industries re-negotiated wages long before old agreements expired. The Public and Transport Workers' Union went as far as to make some strikes official.

The reaction of the trade unions was by no means unified. In some of the first steel works to strike (Hoesch) Mannesmann and Rheinstahl) shop stewards and even works councils played an important role on the side of the strikers.

Local branches of the steel union, IG Metall, were 'neutral' between the strikers and union headquarters. But overall the union apparatus reacted sharply against the unofficial strikes.

This was even more so with the Miners' Union which is probably the most bureaucratic of the 17 industrial unions in Germany. The whole apparatus of the union came out solidly against the strikers.

There was a sharp clash between strikers and the union bureaucracy. That is why the 10,000 workers of the six coal mines around Dortmund elected a strike committee which tried to spread the strikes to other mines.

Bureaucrats' quick reaction

They failed partly because of bad communication and organisation of the strike committee itself (it was, after all, the first strike of its kind for more than 40 years) and partly because of the quick reaction by the union bureaucracy. At first the strikers refused the new official union agreement but after a few days the strike collapsed without leading to any gains for the strikers other than those made by the union.

The Miners' Union even made sure that the strikers did not get paid for the days lost. In the miners' strikes in the Ruhr and Saar strong anti-union feelings were expressed. This happened much less in the steel industry and the transport and public workers' strikes.

One of the best organised sections of workers were the dockers of Kiel where a strike committee reported every morning to a general assembly of all dockers for over a week.

Politicians of both major parties reacted cautiously when their ele ing was dis strike news. speakers took 'illegal action'

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Sharp reaction

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A 'semi-fascist' state? It's a woman 'slightly

LETTERS

STEPHEN MARKS (18 September) wrote: 'As Socialist Worker has always pointed out, it is British imperialism which lies at the root of the present crisis, by imposing the partition of 1921, by erecting a semi-fascist Orange police state in the Six Counties which denied the oppressed Catholics the most basic rights and by keeping whole areas of the Six Counties in misery'.

Fascism is a mass movement, based primarily on the lower middle class, with radical, even revolutionary pretensions. It arises as a direct result of the growth of revolutionary consciousness and action among large numbers of the working class and is capitalism's final line of defence against the revolution.

In order to carry out its task it must not only destroy what Trotsky called 'the strongholds and bases of proletarian democracy' but also the whole political structure and replace them by one totally subordinate to 'the military organisation of the bourgeoisie'(Stalin).

There is only one fascist movement in Ulster and that is Paisley's little band of brothers and it hasn't seized state power yet. The Unionist Party is a bourgeois party which holds power in the interest of the Ulster ruling class which is running Ulster's industry for the benefit of the British ruling class.

The only things that the Ulster state has in common with a fascist state are (a)the same mode of production and (b) the same class basis. As for the idea of 'semi-fascism', one might just as well believe that women can be slightly pregnant.

When is a capitalist state not a police state? There has been for some months a tendency in Socialist Worker to make vague insinuations about a 'police state' in Ulster.Now there is nothing wrong with insinuation except when it is vague and, worst of all, incorrect.

Ulster is **not** a fascist state and no amount of mud will turn it into one. It may well be true that life for the working class in Ulster is hard, bitter and unrewarding, but that does not mean it is a fascist state. The Paisleyites may roam the streets at night with little to fear from the RUC or B-Specials, but that does not mean it is a fascist state either.

Little pleases me more than revolutionaries being justly rude to the forces of reaction. On the other hand the attack tends to lose its bite when it contains inaccuracies such as these. - **PETER GLATTER, Richmond, Surrey.**

Middle East confusion

RACHEL MATGAMNA on the Middle East (18 September) is wrong and also confused.

On the one hand she seems to see the Arab struggle against Israel as not just a lever for an effective anti-imperialist struggle in the Middle East but as a substitute for it in the present stage. (The stages theory is made explicit at the end of the article: first 'a multi-racial Israel', then an alliance 'with the masses of the Middle East to combat imperialism and develop the whole area'.).

The reason for this is that she has illusions in the so-called 'progressive' Arab regimes, believing that they do still take up the national struggle of the Arabs against imperialism.

This is not true. They join rather in the **racialist** call for 'Holy War' against Israel — although even this, at the present time, they do not carry out. Rachel Matgamna covers up this embarrassing fact with the remark: 'We are not the racialists the Zionists are and neither are the Arab guerrillas.'

The question is, are the 'progressive' Arab leaders racialists and if they are,then do their posturings represent any progressive form even of nationalism? If their posturings are in fact reactionary, then is it not the case that these regimes are not simply 'bad and inefficient' in their prosecution of the national struggle but completely and utterly incapable of leading the struggle for national liberation at the present time?

These points not only seem to implicate us in the racialist rantings of the Arab leaders; they completely miss the main point about the present phase in the Middle East,as opposed to the period when Nasser did act to some extent against western imperialism. This is well put in Tony Cliff's IS pamphlet of 1967:

'The potential strength of the anti-imperialist movement lies in the mass of workers and peasants. The targets should be the oil fields, the oil pipe lines and refineries. The peasants should carry out revolutionary land reform, thus creating a base for guerrilla war.

'Nasser's military confrontation with Israel is exactly the opposite of the policy and tactics of the NLF (in Vietnam). Israel being modern and privileged is an even stronger bastion of imperialism than Saigon. Further, an anti-Israel campaign quite easily degenerates into a 'Jehad' (holy war), in which the most reactionary regimes save themselves by channelling the struggle into racial channels.' (The Struggle in the Middle East, page 4.)

To separate the social struggle from the national struggle dooms the latter; to separate the national struggle against Israel dooms the anti-Israel struggle.Although none of the Arab guerrillas may be racialists, those sections which do not base themselves on a social programme in the Arab countries avoid the main problem.

Nasser's bonapartist regime has not even the fighting capacity of Ho Chi Minh's state capitalism to mobilise the resources effectively for the national struggle against western imperialism and Israel. Refer 'masses thems real spearhead' if the role o 'progressive' fully exposed a for social st them offered.- **London N1.**

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Socialist Worker

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CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world—a tiny minority—subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through

WHERE WE STAND

a state of workers' councils and workers' control of production.

Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. **Only the working class**, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois.

International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper

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Trade unionists took an active part in the campaign against the neo-Nazi NPD party. Picture shows Communist and Social Democratic trade unionists protesting against fascism in the mining town of Remscheid

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left-wing Social Democrats and Communists played a leading part on strike committees or shop stewards' committees which acted as strike committees.

The great majority of the strikers — although conscious about the highly political timing of their strikes — reacted sharply against any attempts by Left-wing groups and organisations to radicalise and politicise the strikes from outside.

But in spite of its limitations, the strike movement marks a giant step forward for the once powerful German labour movement that was ruthlessly crushed by the Nazis in the 1930s.

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they were true. I do not know what is produced inside Arab countries, except through the rather unreliable medium of the Jewish press, but Fidel Castro has felt it necessary to condemn certain material in Egypt.

The struggle against Israel is to be carried out by Israeli socialists. The anti-Israel campaign in Arab countries (and the anti-Arab campaign in Israel) are, like all forms of nationalism and racialism, attempts to distract the people of these countries from their true enemies, their own rulers.

Those who support these campaigns are playing the game of reaction. I do not support the Palestine guerrillas because they are concerned with a comparative trifle compared to the massive task of the liberation of the Arab masses, of which we hear not a thing from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign

I do not support the Arabs who hi-jack Israeli airliners but leave the organisations of the Arab reactionaries alone, anymore than I support those who sit in Britain attacking Russia but defend British capitalism. Perhaps what we need is a campaign under the slogan 'Neither Tel Aviv nor Cairo, but international socialism'. - PHIL McSHANE, Glasgow, C4.

TROTSKY on GERMANY

Fascism, Stalinism and the United Front, 1930-34

A special double issue of INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM contains selections from Trotsky's brilliant analysis of German politics that is still highly relevant to the modern working-class movement. 5s 6d (inc. post)

IS, 36 Gilden Road, London NW5

Bureaucracy, restrictive practices and fixed prices: how the telly Tories make their profits

by PAUL FOOT

CRAWLEY: Tory MP who heads London Weekend with . . .

. . . FROST: 'classless' but profitable

LATE IN 1951, just after the general election which put the Conservatives into power, a young public relations man called Mark Chapman Walker applied for a job in the Labour Party press department at Transport House.

There was no room for him there, so he applied to Lord Woolton, head of the Conservative Party organisation, and was taken on.

Before long, Chapman Walker had changed the entire Tory 'image'. Popular Pictorial, the magazine presenting the Tory case, had a new bathing beauty on its cover every week. In 1957, Woolton described Chapman Walker as 'the greatest political propagandist in the country'.

Chapman Walker was not only a propagandist. He was a practical man who liked to get things done.

One of the things which had struck him most forcibly in America was the amount of money which people could make out of commercial broadcasting. It was, he noticed, the most effective way of popularising goods to the working class. Advertising revenue flowed in incessantly.

Chapman Walker's ambition from the moment he entered Conservative Central Office was to see such a system flourishing in Britain — especially in television, which, he reckoned would soon be infinitely more popular than radio.

HOWLING

In this aim he had many allies, especially on the back bench of the Conservative Party where several honourable gentlemen, tired of six years in opposition, were howling for a pay-off.

By July 1953 he had formed the Popular Television Association, whose President was Lord Derby. Other members of the committee were John Rodgers, Tory MP for Sevenoaks and Captain L P S Orr, Ulster Unionist MP for South Down, who was also a director of Pye Ltd. — a firm not unconnected with the broadcasting business.

By the following year, the government collapsed before the massed might of commercial interest on its own back benches and in its own Central Office.

The Commercial Television Bill gave the lobbyists nearly everything they wanted, but it also set up an Independent Television Authority to control the use of advertising and to act as arbiter over the quality of programmes. The Authority also kept the power to remove the franchise from a licence-holder and to change the licence-holders every seven years.

Almost immediately the ITA started to farm out the contracts. Scottish television went to a company owned by Lord Thomson who was so startled at STV's fantastic profits that he described it as 'a licence to print money'.

The victorious company in in Wales was Television West and Wales, whose chairman was Lord Derby. The managing director of TWW was Mark Chapman Walker. Today, as a director of British Lion Films and with at least 10 other directorships, Chapman Walker is one of the richest men in England.

For 10 years and more the independent television men who landed the franchises for transmitting commercial television in the different areas minted money without interference from the ITA. £1 invested in TWW in 1957 rendered £144 10 years later. In its first eight years Scottish Television made some £8m in profit.

CARVED

The most successful of all the commercial television men was Lew Grade of Associated Television who carved himself a licence to print millions in the Midlands, and was duly knighted for public service. Sidney Bernstein, the formidable 'socialist' millionaire was a close runner-up with Granada.

The programmes of such companies started by appealing to the lowest common denominator and steadily deteriorated. This had an electric effect on the BBC.

The men interested in programmes were replaced at the top by men interested in ratings. The 'purge' in 1965 of Donald Baverstock and Alasdair Milne from the top echelons of the BBC marked the final triumph of 'the ratings' over programme content.

In 1967, the ITA made its first and only attempt to 'interfere'. In that year the contracts for the franchises came up again, and two new ones were created, one in Yorkshire, the other in London at weekends..

DYNAMIC

The ITA showed its teeth by kicking Derby and Chapman Walker out of Wales and giving the franchise to a Tory peer Lord Harlech. The London Weekend contract went to another Tory, Aidan Crawley, whose main supporter was the standard bearer of the fashionable 'radical, classless dynamic image', David Frost.

The other major contribution of the ITA in 1967 was to insist that major newspapers should 'have a stake' in commercial television. Thus the two major shareholders in Lew Grade's ATV are Beaverbrook Newspapers (Express, Evening Standard with 2,070,000 shares) and the International Publishing Corporation (Mirror. Sun. People) (with 7,932,008 shares).

The Daily Telegraph, the Observer and the New Statesman had substantial shareholdings in London Weekend.

All in all, the carve-up was so arranged as to preclude any possibility of editorial criticism of independent television by the major newspaper combines.

The architect of this jamboree, Lord Hill, yet another Tory Peer, who was then chairman of the ITA, was rewarded for his services by being appointed chairman of the BBC Board of Governors by the Labour government, in which capacity he has presided over a further collapse in the BBC's broadcasting standards.

Still the money men were not happy. When the results for the first year's trading of the new companies became known, it was clear that only Lew Grade had made as much money as he had expected Harlech and London Weekend were down to a mere £1m profit in one year.

The losses at London Weekend were at least partly due to the high fees charged for artists and performances by a group of companies called Paradine, which is the second name of David Frost.

The dynamic, classless Frost, who, with his mother owns all the shares in Paradine, had hired out artists contracted to Paradine to his own television company, London Weekend.

David Paradine Productions showed a profit of £3,164 in 1967, the year before the new contracts were announced. In 1968 the profits rose to £17,201. If London Weekend had not made as much money as the industrialists (notably Arnold Weinstock) on its board had hoped, David Frost could not complain.

Now London Weekend have sacked their managing director, Michael Peacock, formerly Controller of Programmes on BBC1. Peacock had dithered and prevaricated for two years at the behest of the money men. Now he was offered to them as a sacrifice.

From now on there will be no dithering, no prevarication — simply a helter-skelter stampede in the direction of less overheads, less talent, less originality, less comment, less criticism, less independence — and more profit.

The resignation of six programme heads now makes a lie of every promise and every assertion about 'quality programmes' made by the successful Frost-Crawley consortium to the ITA two years ago.

The press and television which have spent so much time and space recently hounding groups of workers for 'going back' on agreements and 'breaking contracts' are now united in defence of one of the most blatant and monstrous breaches of promise conducted even by private enterprise.

SINISTER

The arguments for commercial television as outlined by Chapman Walker and his friends in 1953 were that it would 'break the monopoly' and 'end the restrictive practices' of the BBC. Now, however, a new and more sinister monopoly has emerged in broadcasting — the monopoly of the advertising agency.

The supposed bogies of what the capitalist press calls 'socialism' — bureaucracy, restrictive practices, fixed prices — are now allowed to run riot in television, both at the BBC and in the commercial stations. The workers in these industries are ignored, the viewers patronised and exploited. Neither are even consulted.

Fortunately for the first time in the post-war history of British communications, there are signs that the workers in these industries are fighting back. Inspired by the militancy of radio and television workers (technicians and journalists) in the May events in France last year and during and after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the workers are beginning to form organisations of counter-attack.

Such an organisation is the Free Communications Group*, whose journal Open Secret has already started on the long and arduous task of exposing the hypocrisies of the Grades, the Bernsteins and the David Frosts.

Control over communications and the feeding of pap to the masses is one of the strongest weapons in the capitalist armoury. The FCG and the men and women around it deserve the support of socialists everywhere.

* 20 Greek Street London W1.

Join the International Socialists

ABERDEEN Pete Drummond
19 High Street Aberdeen
ACTON Roger Cox
Flat 1 37 Queens Drive N4
ANGEL Barry Hugill
154 Downham Road N1
ASHFORD Phil Evans 'Eastside'
Ham Street Nr Ashford Kent
BARNSLEY Joe Kenyon
120 Standhill Crescent
BECKENHAM Mervyn Smith
9 Alton Gardens Copers Cope Rd
01 658 6552
BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster
128 Yardley Wood Rd B'ham 13
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14 Upper Wellington Road
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26 Elmdale Road Bristol 8
CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham
12a Metcalfe Road
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26 St Paul's Crescent NW1
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22 Estell Rd NW3
CARDIFF Nigel Walby
35 de Burgh Street
CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell
The Flat St Thomas' School
Eastworth Rd Chertsey Surrey
CLYDEBANK Eric Duncan
1221 Dumbarton Rd Glasgow W4
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CRAWLEY Babs Ward 59 Banks
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CROYDON Jenny Woodhams
26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon
DEPTFORD John Ure
172a Deptford High Rd SE8
DONCASTER George Yarrow
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2 Oster Tce Southcote Rd E17
EDINBURGH Brian Lavery
41 East London Street
ENFIELD Ian Birchall
109 Croyland Rd N9
FULHAM Brian Rose
49 Schubert Road SW15
GLASGOW North-Ian Mooney
4 Dalcross Passage W1:
South-S. Morris 4 Elphinstone
St Glasgow SW1
GLOUCESTER Tom Butler
36 Brook Street
GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters
c/o 1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex
HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker
36 Gilden Road NW5
HARLOW Hugh Kerr
70 Joiners Rd Harlow Essex
HARROW Kevin Simms
56 Salisbury Road
HAVERING Terry Ward
91 Heath Park Rd Gidea Pk
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
John Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane
HORNSEY Valerie Clark
18 Dickinson Rd N8
ILFORD Lionel Sims
16 Madras Rd Ilford 01 478 7311
IPSWICH Brian Mulvey
104 Westbourne Road
KILBURN Valerie Lloyd
37 King Henry's Rd NW3
KINGSTON John Owen
4 Sandown Court Esher
LANCASTER Don Milligan
56 Norfolk Street
LAMBETH Andy Smith
Flat 6 126 Streatham Hill SW2
LEICESTER Lynette Allham
Stanford Hall Stoughton Drive
South Oadby Leics.
LEEDS Vince Hall
Flat 3 25 Bagby Rd Leeds 2
Woodhouse-Viv Hopkins
25 Midland Rd Leeds 6
LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss
82 Blackheath Rd
MANCHESTER-J Sutton
11a Rowan Ave Walley Range M16:
Joni Jones 15 Parsonage Road
Manchester 20
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27a North St Newcastle Staffs
RICHMOND Edward Brown
4 Cheyne Ave Twickenham Mddx
SELBY John Charlton
12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks
SHEFFIELD Rick Osborn
159a Rustlings Rd Sheffield
S11 7AD
SOUTHAMPTON John Fisher
144 Thornhill Park Road
SOUTHEND Chris Peace
13 Stirling Ave Leigh-on-Sea Essex
STOCKPORT Geoff Hodgson
73a Forest Range M/C 19
STOKE NEWINGTON
Mike McGrath 28 Manor Road N16
SWANSEA Dick Jones
37 Bryn Road
TEESSIDE Phil Semp 72 Mersey
Rd Redcar: Rob Clay 33 Pasture
Lane Lazenby Teesside
TOTTENHAM Laurie Flynn
374 High Road N17
WANDSWORTH Mark Hutton
87 Broderick Road
Wandsworth Common SW17
WATFORD Paul Russell
61 Carpenders Avenue
Carpenders Park
WIGAN Ray Challinor
34 Whiteside Ave Hindley
YORK Bob Looker 22 Hobgate
VICTORIA Tony Dunne
14 Carlisle Mansions Carlisle
Place SW1

Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Send to 6 Cottons Gardens London E2

100,000 STRIKE TO BACK AEF RECOGNITION FIGHT

SW Reporter

MORE THAN 100,000 trade unionists in the West of Scotland took part in a half-day token strike on Wednesday against the refusal of the management of Better Sound Reproductions, East Kilbride, Lanarkshire, to recognise the AEF, the engineering union.

The strike was started by the Glasgow and Mid-Lanark District Committee of the AEF and the response has been overwhelming. The trouble at BSR, who make record players, started on 23 June when the management suspended a tool-room worker for 'no reason at all'.

Eighteen other tool-room workers were sacked on the spot for striking in support of the man.

The following week the AEF organised a recruiting campaign to get the 1800 workers at BSR, mainly women and girls, into the union.

The management attempted to counter a union lunchtime meeting by offering gramaphone units to the workers at 5s each — if they bought them during the lunch break. But the union meeting was successful and by the end of the following week more than 600 women had joined the AEF.

The management threatened that anyone taking part in union demonstrations would be sacked.

WALKED OUT

On 12 August, 20 girls walked out over a bonus dispute. The next day a thousand others joined them. Since then the 800-900 girls have remained out on unofficial strike and the management has obstinately refused to negotiate.

The management's 19th-century attitude has persisted in spite of pleas from the Department of Employment, the Confederation of British Industry, Judith Hart MP and East Kilbride town council.

BSR produce around 75 per cent of the cheaper record units sold in Britain. Their headquarters are in Cradley Heath, Staffs and they had a factory in Derry.

Monarch (a BSR subsidiary) employed 1500 Bogsiders but after getting N. Ireland investment grants and tax concessions until it was virtually being paid to stay in Derry, BSR decided to close the plant down when the grants ran out.

SUBSTANTIAL

The same thing is happening here. By choosing Scotland for their assembly work, BSR ensured that they would again get substantial government grants. But shop stewards say much of the plant is not being used at all because of the strike.

The strike is still unofficial but the Transport Workers' Union and the Scottish Motormen's Union are blacking supplies to BSR.

Police stir trouble at seaside

John Field

FOLKESTONE:- Fighting broke out again between police and young people in this Kent seaside town when a wedding celebration in the High Street on Saturday was attacked and broken up by the police.

Among those arrested was Harry Brunt, a 28-years old militant building worker whose only 'crime' was to watch the fighting.

After mass arrests had taken place, a group of people went to the police station to register formal complaints. The police refused to listen to the youngsters and threw them out.

A girl's arm and ankle were crushed in a door and she was later arrested for 'causing wilful damage' to the door.

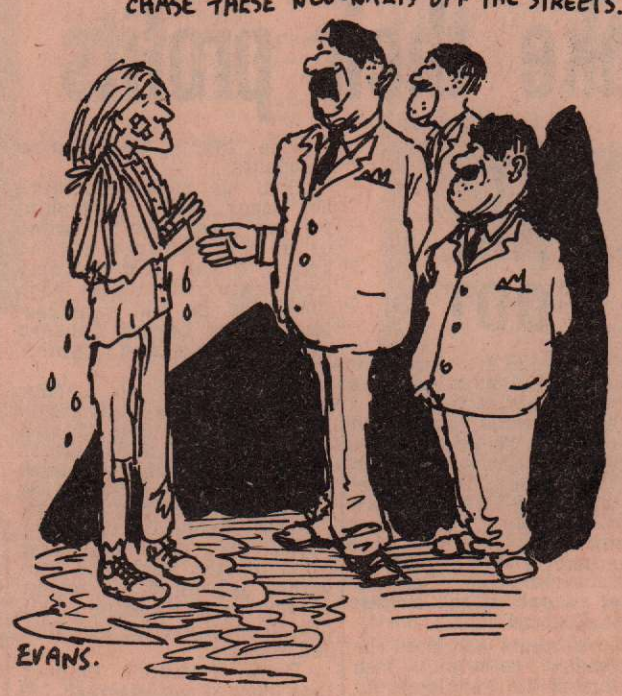
By Sunday the gutter press had played its usual role, distorting the facts and using smear tactics. In spite of lurid tales of broken shop windows, only one is smashed in the High Street and that had been done three days before by drunks.

Two Mirror reporters approached a group of young people in a cafe on Sunday. Although they were told they would be given no information, the reporters continued to press for a follow-up to their lurid tales of rampaging hippies.

They later approached Peter Wesley, an anarchist militant. One of them told him: 'We've got the power. We're going to fix you.'

The magistrates played their role as though they had been rehearsing for a week. No bail was granted for any of the accused on Monday, apart from one juvenile.

Those remanded in custody included married men with children, one man with five years' army service and a 19-years old merchant seamen. Sentences are likely to be harsh as the local ruling class restores 'law and order'.



Dustmen raise a stink in 10 London boroughs

Bob Light

THE STRIKE by Hackney dustmen for £20 a week basic wage spread to nine other London boroughs on Wednesday. Rubbish is piling up in the streets.

Behind the demand lies a general feeling of disgust at the low wages and bad conditions the job offers. The basic rate is £15 9s before tax, plus a 30s bonus which means working weekends.

To bring their money up to a living wage, dustmen take part in the age-old practice of 'totting' — selling pickings from the refuse to scrap merchants. Most dustmen would be happy to stop totting if their wages were improved.

FILTHY

Working conditions are particularly grim in Hackney. The men sweat in summer and freeze in winter and they get only one pair of overalls a year in spite of the filthy nature of the job.

Dustbins, which weigh 30lbs when full, are left on tenement landings or in back gardens and have to be carried long distances to the carts. The men's conditions at the depot are bad, with rat-infested locker rooms, washing facilities that date back to the middle ages and poor canteen facilities.

Things are bad and have been getting worse for the last couple of years. The council brought in a time-and-motion unit which, after a year's work, recommended a plan that amounted to one gang doing two rounds for £2 a week extra.

This was rejected out of hand by the men but since then the council has become even more crude in its attempts to 'rationalise'. Dust-carts are not being replaced and most of the present ones are falling to bits. And now the council has surpassed itself by trying to make gangs work up hill instead of down.

The Joint Industrial Committee has mentioned a rise of 15s a week. Local officials of the men's union, the Public Employees', who have opposed the strike from the start, have told the men to go back to work before they open negotiations, but the men have ignored this.

With rotting garbage piling up in the streets and the strike beginning to spread, the crunch looks like coming this week. On Wednesday Hackney dustmen stopped an attempt by the council to use private firms to shift the rubbish from street markets.

The dustmen are clearing garbage from hospitals and old people's homes without pay and the strike committee is confident that they will win with backing from other boroughs. Tower Hamlets, Islington, Lambeth, Havering, Leyton, Newham, Haringey, Walthamstow stopped work on Wednesday and Hackney council is on the verge of giving in.

Ford goes slow on parity talks as profits boom

Denis O'Flynn Ford (Dagenham) shop steward

THE WORD 'PARITY' has taken on a new meaning for thousands of Ford workers. The signs are that the company will enjoy another year of bumper profits, although the shop floor will not know the full extent of the profits until 1970.

The workers will remember the statements in February and March during the strike that forecast doom for both Ford and the British economy unless the strikers went back to work. Now both Ford and the economy are doing very nicely.

The table below shows the state of impoverishment of the major British car companies — although the term British is a bit of a laugh as only one of them is now controlled by British capitalists.

In spite of the fantastic profits at Ford, workers still had a tough job getting union officials to insist on parity with Midlands car rates being discussed on the National Joint Negotiating Committee. But although the matter is now up for discussion, the battle is not over.

Ford will fight parity to the bitter end and their faithful allies, the right-wing union officials, will back them all the way. The shop stewards must lead the fight again to make sure that their members get their just rewards. The stewards should ensure, for a start, that the Ford UK shop stewards' conference in Coventry on 19 October is a success.

The management will postpone discussing parity for as long as they can and they will never talk about back pay. Ford workers must be prepared to apply pressure for they are fighting an employer who is a pastmaster at delaying tactics.

FORD MOTOR CO

	1965 £m	1966 £m	1967 £m	1968 £m
Sales	389	421	405	488
Trading profit	32.7	37.9	33.0	75.1
Ordinary dividend	4.5	5.2	7.0	10.9

VAUXHALL MOTORS

	1965 £m	1966 £m	1967 £m	1968 £m
Sales	195	178	190	216
Trading profit	33.2	19.9	25.2	31.0
Ordinary dividend	7.4	2.7	1.9	3.2

ROOTES MOTORS

	1965 £m	1966 £m	1967 £m	1968 £m
Sales	175	178	171	176
Trading Profit	3.8	3.5	2.4 LOSS	9.2
Ordinary dividend	0.2	Nil	Nil	Nil

BRITISH LEYLAND MOTOR CORPORATION

	1965 £m	1966 £m	1967 £m	1968 £m
Sales	699	746	772	974
Trading profit	59.3	57.5	42.4	86.9
Ordinary dividend	19.5	15.1	12.7	14.8

Penny-pinching bosses risk drivers' lives

SOUTHAMPTON:- Transportation of Ford van and cab bodies to the Langley plant has been severely restricted due to the failure of the sport department to have trailers road tested.

Fitters, whose job it is when fitters, whose job is to check the vehicles, condemned 22 out of 38 as unroadworthy. Drivers refused to take the trailers on the road as they would break the law without an MOT certificate.

Ford has been aware of the situation for some time. Fitters and union representatives have complained about the lack of attention paid to trailers for the past two years.

The affair is yet another glaring example of the lack of concern the bosses show for the welfare and lives of workers when a few pounds can be saved. Only when production is organised for need and not for profit and carried out under workers' control will incidents like this become a thing of the past.

SHELLSTAR 'VICTORY' SOON TURNS SOUR

SW Reporter

ELLESMERE PORT:- The 'victory' over redundancy at the Shellstar construction site quickly turned sour when the men returned to work.

The management had agreed to the following demands:

1. to reinstate 18 pipe-trade workers arbitrarily declared redundant.
2. to carry out a job evaluation together with shop-floor representatives.
3. to allow the men to decide how any proven redundancies should be put into effect.

On the first point, there was soon evidence of resistance by the management, for the 18 men were not allowed to restart work and were forced to sit in their cabin on pay.

More seriously, a vote was carried by the men to accept the redundancies in principle on the basis of the job evaluation given by their stewards. And the principle of 'first in — last out', for which they had earlier been prepared to strike, was voted out.

Insulators go back

LIVERPOOL:- 600 Merseyside Thermal Insulation Engineers, who have been on strike for five months, returned to work last Thursday after winning a partial victory.

A national agreement to take effect from January and remain valid for three years is to be negotiated. The deal will take into account existing site-rates. An interim award of one shilling on the basis rate has been granted in exchange for flexibility concessions.

The article on the Northfleet cement construction works in the last issue appeared by permission of the Solidarity group. The article is also available in the south London edition of Solidarity magazine (no 6), obtainable from Andrew Mann, 79 Balfour St.,

Irish militants to mount big campaign

Sean Treacy

THE IRISH CIVIL RIGHTS Solidarity Campaign, at its annual conference last weekend, pledged itself to build a mass movement of British and Irish working people in solidarity with the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland.

And in line with this objective, the conference decided to add to its aims 'the abolition of the Stormont regime'.

More than 50 delegates and observers from sympathetic civil rights groups in other parts of Britain also heard speeches from delegates direct from the front line of the anti-Unionist resistance. Peter Cosgrove, Joe Quigley and Cyril Toman from the militant People's Democracy all addressed the conference.

Peter Cosgrove spoke about the need for the Solidarity Campaign to increase its aid to Northern Ireland. He added that the tactics of the extreme right wing would probably be to pick out the Left in particular.

PD was responding by organising itself with a socialist programme. In the coming weeks they planned to increase recruitment from republican workers in particular and to establish groups of PD supporters in the 26 counties.

Although different views of the correct strategy for the civil rights movement emerged at the conference, there was widespread agreement that the development of a mass, militant civil rights movement in the south of Ireland was vital. For Britain the emphasis was put in involving shop stewards' committees and trade union branches

The conference also heard from Brian McCabe, a 26 year old building worker who is fighting the North Islington by-election for the civil rights movement. Brian McCabe said he would fight on a civil rights programme which would expose the complicity of the Labour government

As a revolutionary socialist he believed it important to win support from black immigrant workers and from trade unionists by showing the links between the grievances of workers in Ireland and those in Britain.

NOTICES

KINGSTON IS public meeting: Chris Harman on Czechoslovakia and the crisis of state capitalism. 8pm Sunday 5 October at The Three Compasses, Eden St, Kingston-on-Thames.

MARXISM or Anarchism? Angel IS. 8pm Thursday 9 October at The George Pub, Liverpool Rd N1.

RANK and File Teacher 9d, Teachers' Charter 3d, Order c/o 87 Brooke Rd N16.

DISCUSSION on 'The work of the IS teachers' group' Sunday 19 October, 6 Cottons Gardens, E2. All IS members welcome. 2 pm.

Prepayment essential for notices. 1s a line, average 5 words a line. Deadline Tuesday.

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottons Gdns, London, E2. Printed by S W (Litho) Printers, Registered with the GPO. Annual subscription £2.