

workers power

for social revolution

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15 MONTHS HARD LABOUR

A FEW MONTHS AGO, CHANCELLOR OF THE Exchequer Denis Healey threatened that if "excessive" wage rises did not stop, he would take the money back in taxation. In the Budget he's done just that - and as well as putting up income tax, he's slashed government spending. Industrialists and financiers have welcomed the Budget - and Labour Party general secretary Ron Hayward defends him by saying that he had no choice but to make a million people unemployed by the winter!

Ever since they won the last election, the Labour Party have been promoting what's called the Social Contract - this is basically an agreement between the government and the trade union leaders where they agreed to co-operate in keeping Labour in power. The government also promised subsidies on certain foods - these were cut by £150 million in the Budget. The union leaders don't want compulsory wages legislation like Heath's Phase III, but were willing to operate a voluntary system of wages control. They didn't think to ask their own members how they felt about this idea.

In reality, the Social Contract means that union leaders must try to stop their members demanding better wages and conditions (or if they do, make them "moderate their demands - i.e. ask for less).

The Labour government's attempts to introduce anti-strike legislation (Barbara Castle's plans in *In Place of Strife*) were defeated: Labour now depend on less formal methods, using links with the unions and the fact that union leaders will act against the interests of the workers so as to control wages. Not that Labour has any hesitation in turning nasty when workers ignore the Social Contract and the tame union leaders. The first Labour government with a clear majority was elected in 1945: it used troops to break strikes and prosecuted gasworkers for going on strike: in 1966 Wilson's government used troops in an attempt to break the seamen's strike. Now troops have been used to break the dustcart drivers' strike in Glasgow, backed by a massive publicity campaign about the "health hazard". If Glasgow Corporation were so worried about people's health, why didn't they simply settle with the drivers? But the government were desperate to stop the Social Contract being broken again, so they used troops - and now Healey's Budget! Labour is showing what their election promises are worth when they are in office and having to administer an economy based on production - the profits come first,



working people's wages and standards of living a long way behind: Healey is enthusiastic about stopping "excessive wage increases" but company profits have not been touched - *Corporation Tax* wasn't increased in the Budget.

Within four days of the Budget, it was announced that over the last year inflation averaged over 21%. If this continues, employers won't have to plot to reduce wages as they did in the 1920's - at the present rate of inflation, the real value of money (and wages) will be halved in less than four years. If we don't want our standards of living to be drastically cut we'll have to see the Social Contract for what it is and fight for the biggest wage increases possible. And if we don't want to have to struggle like this for ever, we'll have to organise together to rid ourselves of the whole system which produces the wages-prices treadmill.

WORKERS POWER

WORKERS POWER is produced by the *Social Revolution* group. The paper aims to say why we think current "events" and the everyday existence of people in this society point towards the need for, and also show trends towards, workers acting to create a free socialist society. By "worker", we mean anyone who has to sell their ability to work to an employer before they can get a wage which they depend on to live.

For this, the first issue, the editing and layout were done by the

members in Aberdeen and the articles were written by members from Aberdeen, Hull, London, Mansfield and Oxford. The London group will be editing and laying out the next issue - we intend this job to be rotated round as many groups as can manage it. Initially, *WORKERS POWER* will probably come out about once every 2-3 months.

If you'd like to find out more, or if you'd like an article or letter to be considered for publication in the next issue, please write to your nearest contact,

We'd like to thank *Aberdeen Peoples Press*, who, in addition to printing *WORKERS POWER*, provided us with facilities for layout and other help without which the paper would never have appeared.

It is our aim to help in the establishment of a new system of society based on the common ownership of land, factories, transport, communications, etc. and the democratic control of all social affairs, including production of goods and services, healthcare, education, etc, so that each person may give according to their ability and take according to their needs. To this end we will encourage all those workers' activities which help develop an awareness of the need for such a society and the ability of workers to begin its construction without the surrendering of control to a leadership of specialists or elites.

IMPERIALS:

The occupation of the *Imperials* typewriter factory in *Hull* was a last-minute attempt to force the government and the employers, *Litton Industries*, to make some move towards safeguarding the workers' jobs. It followed a long series of more moderate "token" protests, largely initiated by "professional mediators" such as *John Prescott*, local Labour MP, and *Peter Grant*, T&GWU official. There were petitions, Parliamentary lobbies and private talks with Ministers involving the minimum of participation from the *Imperials* workers themselves. It was only after the occupation had become an accomplished fact that these notables were to champion its cause.

At Leicester things were much worse and there was no real fight back at all. The bitter racial divisions amongst workers there following the long drawn-out struggle of militant Asians against discrimination was undoubtedly the main reason for this, though the unemployment hasn't been quite as bad as in Hull and there wasn't perhaps, therefore the same urgency about the affair. Local union officials had also, it seems, approached the company earlier to see if it was possible to keep the Leicester plant open with only a third of the workforce - meaning, in effect, on the principle of "last in, first out", that the "troublesome" Asians should get the boot.

There have been divisions amongst workers at Hull of course. Whilst the *Imperials* management failed to avoid the occupation by giving the laid-off workers the last Friday as a paid holiday and informing them by post, they nevertheless prevented the occupation being voted on at a mass meeting as might otherwise have happened, with the result that accusations were made about "undemocratic action by militant minorities", etc. The management also refused at first to pay out redundancy money and wages due to those workers who were originally intended to stay on a few extra weeks for maintenance work so long as the factory was occupied.

A lot of faith was pinned on the "independent" report to the government of *Imperials'* feasibility as a future profit-making concern; the MPs and trade union officials, however, wouldn't divulge its contents when first published since it was "confidential". *Jim Marshall*, Leicester's Labour MP, did however let slip that probably only *one* factory would be viable, in which case he was ready to do battle on behalf of Leicester, whose workers were (according to him) more experienced and more responsible!

What then has been offered as a solution to the Imp-

erials redundancies? The Tories and their ilk plainly have nothing to offer except that the workers should accept their lot; that is, take their redundancy money and look elsewhere for a job. But with over 7,000 unemployed in Hull and growing numbers of redundancies and short-time working this looks a bit sick.

Moderate opinion in the Labour Party tends to favour some kind of "workers' co-operative", but experience so far doesn't recommend the idea very highly. It needs substantial backing from the government, who won't play ball unless the workers themselves can raise a large percentage of the necessary capital - by borrowing it at high interest rates from private sources and by sinking their own meagre resources (savings and redundancy money) into the venture. If the main reason for the closure really is low profits, then the workers' co-operative will be forced to impose drastic cut-backs *on itself* in order to compete on the market. And if they are successful enough in cutting their profit margins and relative wages in comparison to their private competitors, then they'll be doing their bit to put some other group of workers on the dole.

The left-wingers are predictably united in their calls for "nationalisation", usually adding the now popular, if vaguely defined, "under workers' control"; and the more extremist elements add "without compensation", though none of them honestly expects the Labour government to implement this last proposal. It's an automatic response, a rallying cry rather than a



"solution" determined by any careful analysis of the practical situation and follows from their view that nationalisation is the same as socialism, or at least a step towards it. In fact, Tory, Liberal and Labour governments have *all*, despite the fact that they are supposed to have different sets of beliefs, used nationalisation in an attempt to *strengthen capitalism*.

The Labour government is willing to nationalise large and crucial companies in the present crisis *not* out of

The Rabbis & The Pill

The Pope isn't the only religious despot who orders working people what they must and must not do. The decisions of the Chief Rabbis of Israel on the contraceptive pill were recently reported in the papers.

Yosef, Chief Rabbi of the Sephardi (Eastern) community - which, together with the Palestinian Arabs, includes the most unskilled and impoverished workers - decreed that the Pill was forbidden, as all contraception was murder. Perhaps, though, if the woman's life would be in danger, an exception could be granted. This is the famous flexibility of the Jewish religious Law.

Gonen, Chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazi (Western) community, maybe with an eye to the more modern attitudes of his flock, took a more liberal line. Not only life and health of the women could justify using the Pill, but anyone could use it, providing she had borne already at least one son and at least one daughter.

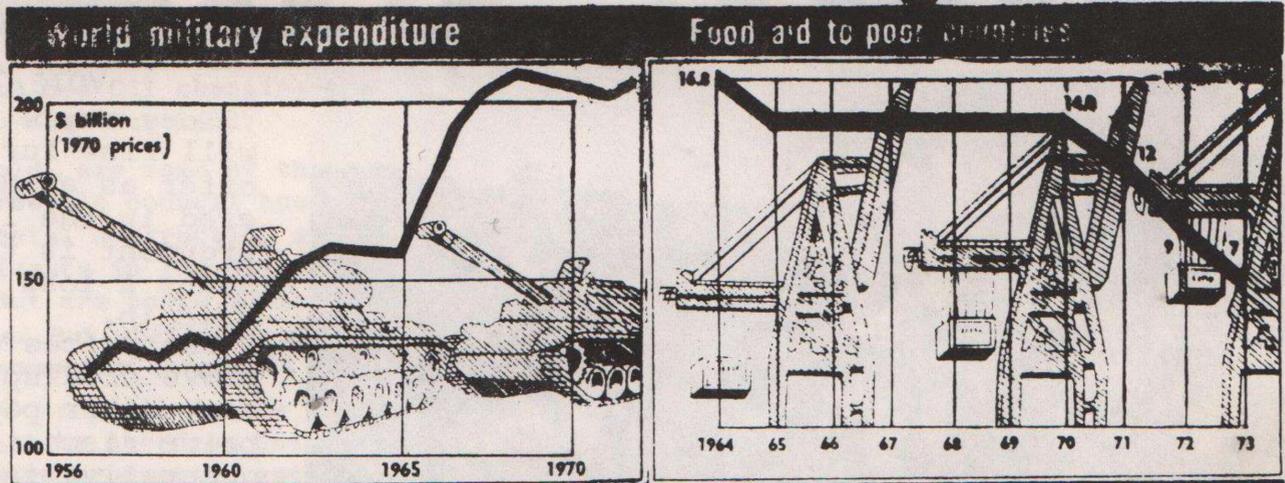
But wait a minute - though using the Pill in these circumstances may not contravene religious Law, says *Gonen*, it is unpatriotic. The settler State needs "all the Jews we can get, whether by getting them from abroad or producing our own". So young Israelis are encouraged to marry early and have big families; it not only discourages them from questioning what they have been taught and considering their future carefully, but guarantees more and more people to fill up the workforce and keep the State "Jewish". Last but not least, there'll be no shortage of new victims of the war machine to fill up the gaps left by their sacrificed parents.

The major "success story" of recent medicine has been the massive use of tranquillisers, anti-depressants and stimulants - all psychoactive drugs which affect the emotions of the people who take them. While politicians rave about drug abuse, and the police raid thousands of young people in every country, vast amounts of Valium, Largactil, Triptofen, etc, are prescribed every day and make a vast international business: remember the La Roche affair?

For every psychological condition there is a pill. Often they are explicitly used to cover up social problems. One advert aimed at doctors shows a woman with a number of children living in a slum. "You can't solve her problems, but you can help her to cope with them," says the caption.

Today there is increasing awareness of the problems. Doctors real-

Food for Thought



The UN World Food Conference has recently been held in Rome. In Africa and Asia millions are hungry. But instead of trying to help feed people, the Conference was dominated by power struggles between the different governments and commercial interests. "World Food: A Victory for the USA" was the headline in the *Business Guardian*.

The US rulers won out, because the World Food Council that was set up by the Conference will be dominated by the governments of the US and the Western states, rather than by the "underdeveloped" states. Also, the developed countries effectively put a stop to proposals for internationally held and managed that could be rushed to emergency areas. They were worried that such a move might upset their control of the market and reduce profits.

So the Conference went well for the fattest bandits. But what about the people who are on the verge of starvation? Despite the fact that

it was recognised that the resources did exist to feed the world - no emergency plans were made to rush food to the most desperate areas. No plans were made to divert any of the \$207,000 millions worth of resources spent annually on armaments. There was no question of doing anything about the insanity of farmers being paid *not* to produce food and beef and butter rotting in huge stockpiles in the EEC.

And as for the idea that it might just be better if food production was a co-operative effort to feed people, instead of a profit-making business used as a weapon in international rivalries - well, if any of the "experts" thought of such a thing, they no doubt immediately dismissed it as a utopian dream.

Meanwhile the "practical" results of the Conference will be, a senior UN official reckons, that 40 million people will starve to death in around 22 countries in the next seven to eight months.

Meanwhile, in the Palestinian Arab expellee camps, women are exhorted by their (male) political leaders to have child after child in terrible conditions:

"Have a baby for Palestine"

One more offering to heroic suffering and death.

Not only on the battlefield, but also in the sex life of their people, do the capitalists, landlords and bureaucrats of the Middle East wage war. Let the working people of the region answer back with a rapid fall in the birth rate.

DRUGS



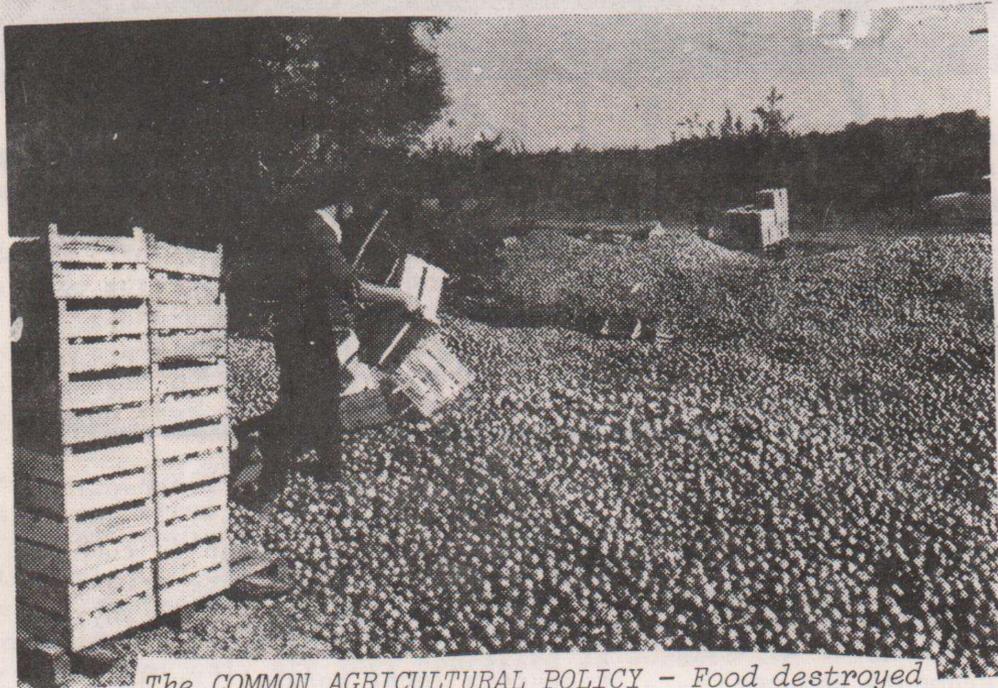
ise these drugs have more hazardous effects than they thought. The British Medical Journal commented on the discovery that the effect of drugs depends on the environment they are taken in. This was first noticed 30 years ago, but it takes a long time for news to reach the medical profession.

This was followed by the report that taking of tranquillisers by mothers increases child-battering. Likewise, other forms of violence can be aroused.

After this, it has been reported that most psychiatric illness is caused by social isolation and poor conditions of housing, etc.

So we see that rather than attack problems at their source, the medicine industry prefers to provide palliatives which end up making them worse.

SOME CHOICE !!



The COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY - Food destroyed to keep up prices

ON JUNE 5TH, YOU'LL BE ASKED TO VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM ON WHETHER OR NOT BRITAIN SHOULD STAY IN THE COMMON MARKET.

There are various groups who are trying to persuade you to vote the way they want, but the arguments they use aren't necessarily the real reasons they are for or against the Common Market. What are their real reasons? And what difference will it make to you whether Britain stays in or gets out?

KEEP BRITAIN "IN" ?

The people who say that we should vote "YES" and keep Britain in usually argue that this is better because there will be an open market in Europe for British goods, we won't have to pay tariffs, and this will be good for British industry. Also, they argue, Britain isn't strong enough on its own to compete in the international market against the USA and the Soviet bloc: only when British industry cooperates with its "friends in Europe" will this be possible.

All these arguments ignore completely the fact that "industry", in Britain or anywhere else, is not a single unit - "industry" is made up of owners, directors and bosses on the one hand and workers on the other. The benefits from increased British exports to Europe go only to the first lot, the "captains of industry." The only exports the working class have a stake in are those they consume on a Saturday night. A "united Europe" could indeed become a major trading bloc, rivalling the USA and USSR - but what advantage is there from another super-power joining in the trade war and making the world an even more dangerous place. What's more, the Common Market doesn't even stop squabbles between member countries, like the one between Britain and France over the *Common Agricultural Policy*.

VOTE "NO" ?

They argue that prices, especially for food, will rise further if Britain stays in, and offer as evidence the rises which we've suffered in the last two years. The other main argument is that staying in the Common Market means a loss of national sovereignty for Britain.

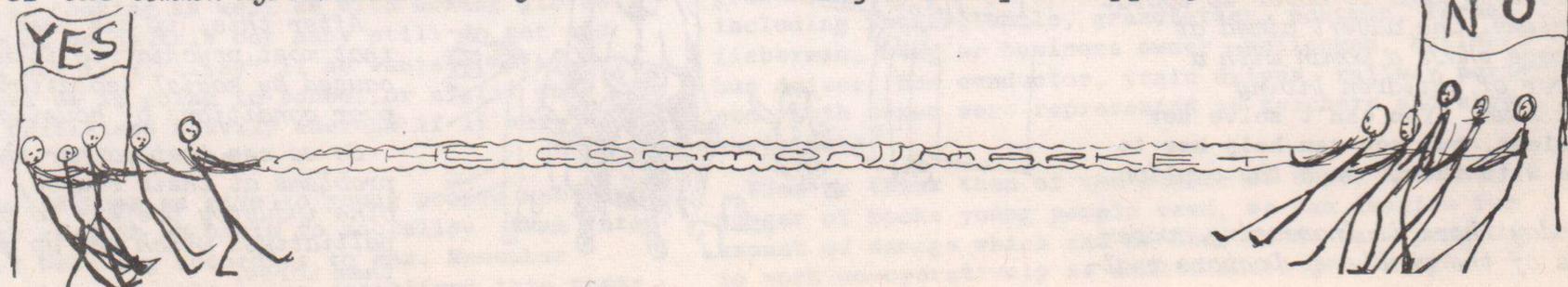
The prices argument is a complicated one to prove or disprove, mainly because there are so many other possible causes of price rises - price rises in oil and third world products generally, inflation, etc.

As for the national sovereignty argument, as long as things are run the way they are at present, whether the decisions that matter are taken in London or Brussels - or Cardiff, or Edinburgh - they will still be taken by government Ministers and top businessmen in the interests of profit.

The *International Socialists*, the largest group to the left of the Communist Party in Britain, are pushing for a "NO" vote without any of the nationalist nonsense other advocates of the "NO" vote are giving out. But it must be remembered that in terms of the referendum "NO" to Europe means "YES" to the alternative offered by the anti-Market Labourites.

So what *do* the left-wing Labourites offer instead of the Common Market? They've not mentioned it much in the campaign, but their general policies are along the lines of an independent Britain, with most of the economy nationalised - a State-run version of the present system. The objections to this plan are that it is simply not possible for any country to be "independent" - Britain outside the Market would still be subject to market forces and would suffer whenever there was a depression or when there were shortages, whether real or artificial. Besides, nationalisation has little to offer workers - ask any redundant steelworker, or remember how many miners still die in pit accidents or from respiratory diseases every year because of unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. In Russia, after 50 years of state capitalism (the ultimate in nationalisation) it's become clear that it means only a change of boss, and an alternative way of running what is basically the same system.

This system is just now in its worst crisis since the Depression nearly 50 years ago - there may be minor recoveries, but there's worse to come: the German economy, which a couple of years ago was called a "miracle" of prosperity, is now in serious trouble - unemployment is over a million already; Detroit, the industrial capital of the USA, has been hit by massive layoffs and food intended for developing countries has been sent there instead; in Portugal, workers are being threatened by inflation at rates of up to 40% and by rising unemployment - but there they are fighting back by occupying factories.



Spud Slavery

Surprising though it may be to the majority of the population, there are some people who (it seems) have never worked in a boring shitty job. So for the purpose of enlightening these deprived souls, I have here a small account of my own work experiences.

This particular experience occurred at a potato dressing factory, *Nesco Potatoes* at Dyce, five miles from Aberdeen.

The sorting took place in a large shed which started life as an aircraft hangar, and the work went on from November to January in the cold wastes of Aberdeenshire. In spite of the snow outside, there were only two one-bar electric fires where we were working. So we all wore lots of socks, woolly jumpers, scarves and coats. Yet there were two large paraffin blow heaters that were very efficient when working, but suddenly and mysteriously both of them broke down and no-one

As to be expected, I didn't work long at this place; I was sacked for being five minutes late twice. The second time there was two inches of snow on the ground, and it was widely known that I had to drive from Aberdeen to Dyce on a motorbike! Some of the other workers used to arrive 15 minutes early, the threat of the sack was so great.

On my last day there, at 4.30 pm, home time, the conveyor belt was still moving but there were no more potatoes coming along it. Glad to know it was the end of the day at last, I jumped off the platform and walked away, but the boss was there beside me. He grabbed hold of me and threw me back to where I was standing with the words:

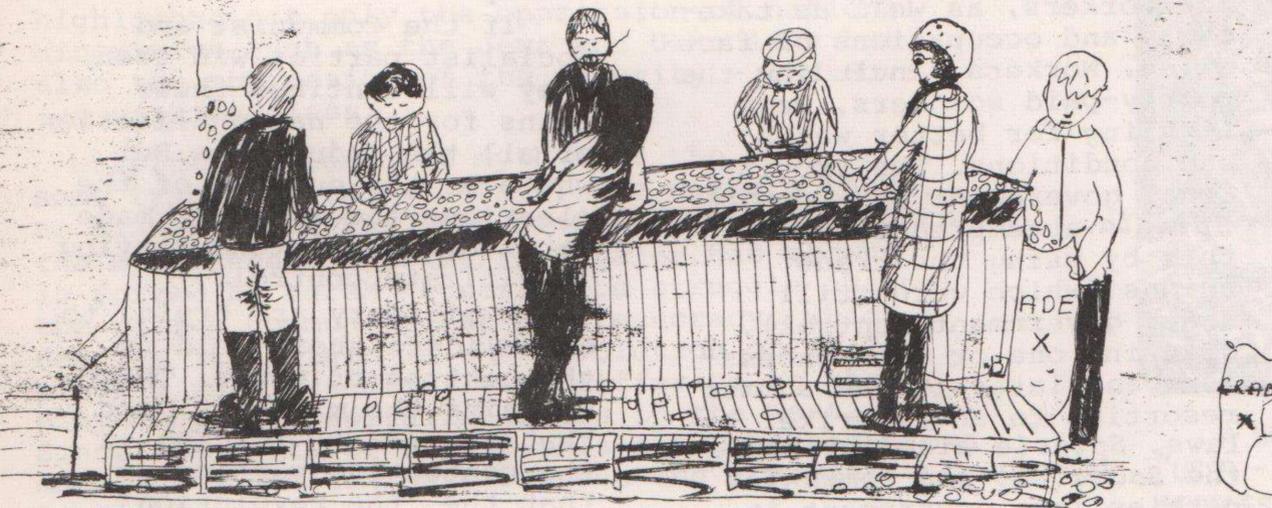
"You don't go until I tell you to."

Everybody else was standing respectfully like children in a school assembly. A few seconds later we were 'allowed' to leave.

"Right, you can go now," he said!

This, unbelievably, is a true story; I worked under these conditions for two weeks and two days. The worst thing about this whole episode is that the other people working there were prepared to accept it all. They accepted the half-hour dinner breaks and the five-minute tea breaks: they accepted the boss hammering on the rest-room door a few minutes before time was up: they even made him cups of tea and jam butteries: they accepted being chided along, and no-one ever went to the lavatory during work-time.

There are plenty of factories and probably offices as well, where people work under these sort of conditions and just accept them; while workers are still so apathetic even when it relates to their personal comfort things will never change. However if they realised that their own *combined* power is far greater than all the commands given by the bosses then people could start to have some real control and really *change* things.



To the uninitiated, this job involves simply sorting potatoes as they come along a conveyor belt, picking out the stones, pieces of mud and 'bad' potatoes. A bad potato was one that was bruised, cut or infected with minute white fungi called rust. Whatever the size of the disfigurement, one was expected to notice it, pick the potato out and throw it away. On occasions strange men in white coats would come and watch the work, or the boss would stand next to you and say:

"Look, you've missed one!"

There were about eight of us doing this job, mostly women and old age pensioners, and we spent all day standing on a platform alongside the conveyor belt watching tons of potatoes roll past. This sounds soul-destroying and it was, but worse than this were the conditions we worked in.

could mend them. So they sat there and we froze.

Apart from being cold, we had to stand in the same place for 7½ hours each day. It would be so simple to provide stools - but no. In fact on occasions I would lean against the side of the conveyor belt or stand on one leg, etc, and then the boss - a highly objectionable aggressive little man - would rush over and command me to "stand properly and concentrate on the job".

Once when we were cleaning the conveyor belt by scraping off the mud with sticks, I was working away but happened to be sitting on the edge of a large crate. Suddenly I found the crate moving, turned round and saw the boss driving a fork-lift truck. He came, picked up the crate and moved it a few feet away, so I couldn't sit on it, shook his fist at me and drove off!

No country, whether in or out of the Common Market, can avoid the results of the world recession. Our only chance is for workers in Britain and other countries to get together in opposition to the system which not only keeps them down but now threatens to make them suffer as they did in the 1930's as well. To press their interests, people must form their own organisations at work and in the community, based on equality and genuine democracy, so that the rank and file members are in full control.

Once the power and possibilities of democratic organisation have been realised, nothing will be able to prevent people forming such *workers councils* and linking up with their

friends in different areas, countries and continents, with the aim of establishing a society where human needs, not profits, will be the overwhelming consideration.

The Common Market referendum, whatever the outcome, will not bring this closer. Britain as part of a West European bloc, or Britain going it alone with a nationalised economy - both are attempts to shore up a decaying and redundant system.

We must realise that the really important question is not being asked - who should control society? A minority of industrialists, bankers and politicians or the great majority of working people?

WORLD WIDE

PORTUGAL



Whose Revolution?

Until a year ago Portugal had been under a very repressive and austere regime for 46 years - now this has all changed. Workers, it seems, are now experiencing what it's like to have some control over their destinies. However "the revolution" is not just-around-the-corner as certain left-wing papers tell us.

Certainly the workers have gone a lot further than the provisional government (composed largely of the middle ranks of the army) ever expected them to. All they intended was to establish "parliamentary democracy" and grant independence to the nationalist movements in the colonies so that they would be able to have better control over the new economic forces brought about by the world crisis, and also continue their commitments to Western Europe and NATO. Before the April coup, Portugal's economic situation was pretty grim: inflation was running as high as 25% and there were serious labour shortages, with two million Portuguese workers emigrating to seek better wages - as well as to avoid military service. On top of all this was the fact that the continuing guerilla wars against "national liberation movements" in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau were taking about 50% of the national budget.

When the coup finally came, it therefore had support not only from the working class in their own struggle for better living conditions but also from large "progressive" sections of industry (Portuguese and European) and of course the armed forces: power passed into the hands of the *Armed Forces Movement (AFM)* composed of junior and middle rank army officers. This was then followed by a wave of strikes all over the

country by textile, clothing, pharmaceutical and post-office workers, as well as take-overs and occupations of factories. Workers, including the poorly-paid soldiers, were fighting for better wages and conditions. The provisional government of *General Spínola* attempted to combat this by using the trade unions (which were still under government control), granting one or two concessions and later in the summer resorting to anti-strike laws. *Spínola* also invited the *Socialist and Communist* parties into government in the hope of policing the working class from within. In September *Spínola* and his right-wing crew were so worried that they tried to organise another military coup to weaken the growing workers' movement. However, it appears that the Left had mobilised the working class well enough to defeat the attempted coup and force *Spínola* to resign.



Since then the country has been firmly under the control of the military, which has been strengthened as a result of the abortive coup

Two left-wing parties have been outlawed from constituent assembly elections. A *Supreme Revolutionary Council* of military officers has been set up.

If the Communist and Socialist parties win then they will continue their plans for the nationalisation of all the industries. But whatever the outcome of the elections the *AFM* have made it clear they intend staying in ultimate control.

The military are trying to consolidate their hold on the centres of power. This explains the military pact that the *AFM* is forcing on the contesting parties so that the "the revolution" will not be "inverted" or "distorted". On the other hand, attempts by workers to improve their conditions, as for instance in the recent "illegal" demonstration by 40,000 against growing unemployment and also the presence of a large *NATO* fleet in Lisbon, are denounced by the C.P. as "reactionary" and "undemocratic". In recent elections for leadership of the Lisbon chemical trade union, the workers' and farm labourers' association defeated the C.P. and some of the successful candidates were later arrested by security forces. The C.P. depends on its control of the trade unions. There have been hopeful signs however with the growth in various industries of workers committees. Far from being a "threat to democracy" as the British press would have us believe, these organisations are the means through which workers are at last being able to gain some control over their working situation. For this to be taken further to the stage where genuine democracy will extend throughout society there must be the active involvement of the majority of workers, including those in the armed forces.

THE SAME CLASS STRUGGLE

SOVIET UNION:

The recent visit of Alexander Shelepin, former head of the Soviet secret police and current overlord of the Soviet trade unions, once again highlights not only the oppression of national minorities such as the Jews and Ukrainians but also the oppression of the majority - the Soviet working class.

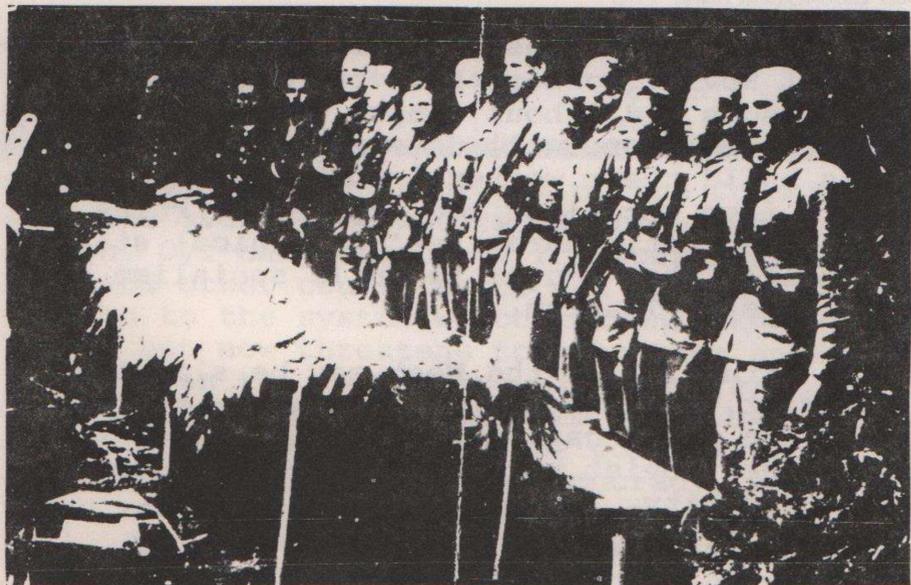
Despite the Leninist myth that the USSR is some type of workers' state, the workers there, as history from the Petrograd strikes of 1921 to the more recent strikes in Ukraine has shown, is forced by harsh necessity to struggle against the ruling Communist Party bureaucracy, which despite its origin in the revolution of 1917 plays a role essentially no different to that played by the capitalist class in the West. Since the death of Stalin this struggle has grown more acute and can have but one end - social revolution.



A UPA LEAFLET ISSUED IN 1949
"USSR - THE PEOPLES' PRISON; FREEDOM FOR PEOPLES - FREEDOM FOR INDIVIDUALS"

The workers fight back

Throughout the 'thirties the class struggle was stifled by the terrorist activities of Stalin's secret police who sent millions of workers to their deaths in the labour camps, slave labour camps, slave labour being not only a useful method of ridding the bureaucracy of real or imagined opponents but also an essential part of the Soviet economy. Therefore, it could only manifest itself in acts of sabotage analogous to the activities of the Luddites in 19th century Britain. However with the invasion of the Ukraine by the Nazis there arose the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) which put up to 100,000 people (mainly workers and peasants) in the field against both the German and the Red Army, fighting a guerilla struggle against the latter until 1950. Although



UPA GUERRILLAS

the UPA was fundamentally nationalist with no vision of any alternative to capitalism, there were within it semi-Socialist tendencies which came to realise that it was not Russians as such which were the enemy but the bureaucracy, which was analysed as state-capitalist.

The UPA was finally crushed by the combined military might of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania and the large scale deportation of Ukrainians to the labour camps. While there they worked with Russians and others who had arrived there during the purges of the 'thirties, or who had been accused of treachery during the war, organising a series of strikes and insurrections which went on from 1946 until the mid fifties. One of the most interesting of these was at Jorlisk where 2,000 veterans of the Red Army formed themselves into the Democratic Movement of the North of Russia and staged an armed uprising, only to be bombed out of existence by the Soviet airforce. With the death of Stalin in 1953 this movement reached a high peak, there were strikes and riots in towns such as Madanov, and in East Berlin the workers revolted. The answer of the authorities was wholesale slaughter, in the camp at Kingir 100 unarmed women were crushed by tanks.

At the same time and on up to the present day there arose an ever increasing number of oppositional groups and samizdat journals which attempted to analyse the bureaucracy from various semi-Marxist or Socialist positions and present alternatives to it. (continued overleaf)

soviet union & REVIEW

(con. from previous page) Amongst such groups were the Lenin's True Work Group, whose programme called for revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy, workers' councils in the factories and farms, the replacement of salaried officials by administrative committees of workers and the abolition of the standing army; the Russian Socialist Party which issued leaflets calling for a general strike; the Struggle Committee for Socialist Democracy; the Union of Communards; the Democratic Union of Socialists; the United Party for the Liberation of Ukraine; the Ukrainian National Committee, two members of which, the workers Bohdan Hrytsyna and Ivan Koval, were shot after a secret trial; and the Ukrainian Workers' and Peasants' Union, a member of which was sentenced to death later commuted to 15 years imprisonment.

The UWPU is the most significant group to have appeared in Ukraine. In its programme it attacked the bureaucratic methods of industrial and agricultural planning, the removal of the Ukrainian language from the industrial, social, and cultural spheres, the curtailment of the rights of workers and the incorporation of their unions into the state apparatus, and policies which promoted the oppression of the peasantry. Likewise, it came to realise that what was necessary for an improvement in the lot of Ukrainian working people was not secession but the overthrow of the bureaucracy. It is no accident that the majority of prisoners in the camps are Ukrainian.



ANOTHER UPA LEAFLET
"FOR A UKRANIAN INDEPENDENT
STATE - FOR FREEDOM AND A
BETTER LIFE"

THE WOODCUTS WERE MADE BY
UPA FIGHTER AND ARTIST
NIL KHASEVYCH

The working class has begun to stir. There have been strikes riots and demonstrations in Temir Tau, where barricades were thrown up and fraternization with troops took place; Novocherkassk, where several hundred workers were killed; Moscow, where building workers struck; Odessa, where dockers struck as they did in Archangel and Murmansk, Leningrad, where it was power station workers; Gorki Ryazan, Volgograd; Krivihy Rih; Donetsk; Taskent, Omsk, Vladimir; Ivanovo and Sverdlovsk.

In Kharkiv 100,000 workers waged a successful strike for lower prices. In Kiev 30,000 carworkers struck against bonus cuts. On the Black sea dockers struck against lay offs. In Dniprodzerzhynsk 10,000 workers rioted for two days over a dozen being killed. In Dnipropetrovsk police opened fire on strikers demanding better living standards.

At the construction sight of the Kiev hydro electric station, where earlier three young

The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists

This pamphlet was written by a group of anarchists who had experienced the defeat of the Russian Revolution. Much of the pamphlet is dated, but much more is relevant today.

They attacked the anti-organisational trend in anarchism, and blamed at least some of the ineffectiveness of the anarchists in the Russian Revolution on this. They rightly pointed out that such an organisation must be based on genuine agreement rather than an artificial coalition which inevitably breaks up.

The exact organisational programme we might not agree with (but then neither does the Anarchist Workers' Association who publish the pamphlet), but it should be clear now that it is the loose organisation which often denies control of the grouping to its ordinary members.

The General Section covers the basic anarchist viewpoint, stressing the respect of anarchists for the constructive power of the working class, as opposed to the Leninists who see workers as mere revolutionary fodder.

The Constructive Section covers the tasks of the working class after a successful revolution. This is an aspect, which though often ignored, is essential if we are to ensure that the revolution does not fail to solve the problems we face now.

AVAILABLE FROM: A.W.A., 13 Coltman St., Hull,
Humberside.

workers had been imprisoned for distributing leaflets, workers demonstrated against bad housing under the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" In Moscow the clandestine Citizens' Committee distributed 10,000 leaflets calling for workers to struggle against the state-capitalist bureaucracy.

While these actions have been mainly economic there have been a number of political demonstrations in Red Square against the invasion of Czechoslovakia, through the demonstrations by Crimean Tatars for the re-establishment of their autonomous republic to the mass riot in Kaunas for an independent Socialist Lithuania.

As a result of these and other actions thousands of Soviet workers have been thrown into the prisons and labour camps. From these struggles the movement will develop till the working class build their workers' councils to establish a free socialist society on the ruins of the bureaucratic parasites' tyrannical state, as in 1917 they sought to build socialism on the ruins of Tsarism.

The situation in the West may be slightly different, but the aim is the same - to overthrow the world capitalist system. These imprisoned Soviet workers deserve our support and solidarity.

Those who wish to know more can do so by obtaining the pamphlet *Ukraine: Unrest and Repression*. Price 15p plus postage from:
83, Gregory Crescent, Eltham,
LONDON, SE9 5RZ.

THE OIL

How is the development of North Sea Oil changing the lives of working people in North-East Scotland?

Klondyke, Boom Towns, Black Gold, are some of the popular phrases thrown around. Aberdeen's council house waiting list of 4,500, environmental destruction and an estimated 100 deaths due to accidents in the oil industry are some of the realities. But are there no benefits? Certainly unemployment has fallen. But what's so great about working for a boss? And anyway how long will the jobs last? At present, oil development is still in its exploration stage. A recent report by Aberdeen University economists concludes that when production gets fully under way, the number of people needed will fall drastically.

This rush to make money out of the North Sea not only threatens hardship in the future when the boom ends. The increase in population and increased industrial and business activity resulting from the oil has brought about a desperate housing situation. The *Guardian* National Comparison of House Prices shows that Aberdeen prices are only topped by some of the more expensive areas in London. Rents are increasing similarly, with many flats being "converted" and re-let at much higher prices. Despite the situation, only 154 council houses were built in Aberdeen last year. Meantime, huge office-blocks have been sprouting merrily. In 1972, there were 140,000 square metres of office accommodation in Aberdeen - since then there has been planning permission for another 100,000 square metres!

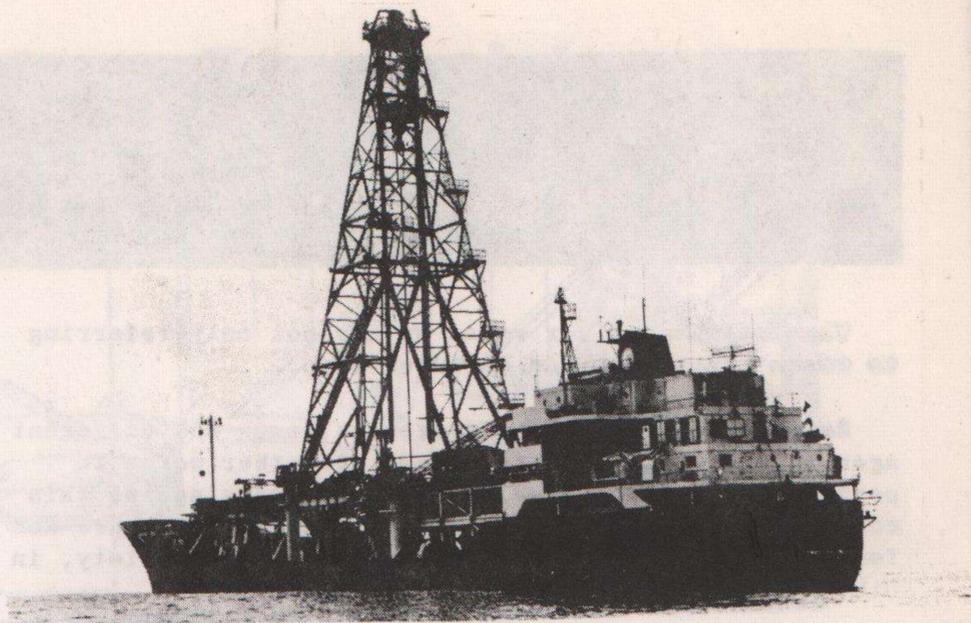
Thus rather than development being planned so that human needs in all areas are met, literally millions of pounds are poured into the extraction and refining of oil and related commercial ventures, while the provision of housing and social services lag far behind, and the general environment is allowed to deteriorate.

At *Brown & Roots* giant platform-building yard at *Nigg* in *Cromarty*, the priorities involved in oil development are equally apparent. For many of the workers, the only accommodation available is a cramped cabin in one of the two old liners moored near the yard. In fact many areas in the Highlands are threatened with ill-considered development as the oil companies search for sites to build their production platforms.

There is also the threat of oil pollution. The *single buoy moorings* which have caused over 150 spillages in various parts of the world are soon to be used to unload the first North Sea Oil from the *Argyll* field.

That the oil development is not meeting peoples needs is not surprising. People don't control the development. Control lies with a few giant corporations - such as *Shell/Esso*, *BP*, *Burmah Oil*, *Gulf Oil*, etc. The government have been extremely kind to the oil companies. When the exploration licences for the British sector were given out between 1964 and 1972, most were sold for several thousand pounds. It's now estimated that at peak production, *BP's Forties* field, for example, will yield £300 million net profit. The recently announced rate of 45% for *Petroleum Revenue Tax* was very much to the companies' liking. The driving force behind the big companies' actions is their need to expand by selling their oil as profitably as possible on the world market. With the raising of prices by the Middle East states, the North Sea is an even more profitable proposition.

It's the pressure of market forces, not the fact that they are run by evil people, which makes the oil companies act as they do. Thus the two "solutions" that are often put forward as an alternative to the present mess, Scottish Independence or nationalisation,



are in fact no better. The Scottish businessmen or the government bureaucrats who would control the oil industry would be forced to act in the interests of maximum profitability if the industry was to be competitive. Sir Hugh Fraser's exploits and the current redundancies in the *British Steel Corporation* illustrate well the priorities which would still operate. Working people would have no more say in the running of the oil industry than they do today.

In no aspect of "oil" is the lack of control suffered by workers more obvious than in the working conditions.

The rig supply boats and oil survey vessels are operated with a complete disregard for safety. Many of them fly flags of convenience, thus avoiding safety regulations. The oil survey vessel *Compass Rose III*, which was lost with all 18 hands this year, was flying the Panamanian flag. It was over 30 years old, built as a minesweeper, and was out of contact for seven days before the alarm was raised.

One of the greatest myths surrounding "the oil" is the image of the rig-worker. He is usually portrayed as having an income perhaps slightly above that of Paul Getty, with a life-style rather like that of a cross between James Bond and one of the more indulgent Medieval barons. In fact the general labourers on the rigs - the roustabouts and roughnecks - work 12 hours a day for seven consecutive days for around £100 - and then are not paid at all for their week off the rig. The work is extremely arduous and extremely dangerous. No official accident figures are kept, but it's estimated that around 20 roustabouts and roughnecks have been killed.

By conventional standards, the divers on the rigs are well paid. But they have to reckon how much money their lives are worth. In 1974, the North Sea claimed the life of one diver every month.

By its very nature, work on a rig or on an "oil boat" would always be tough. All the more important, therefore, that the working conditions should be under the control of all the workers involved, with safety a primary consideration.

So far the oil companies have fought against the workers even joining unions. None of the thirty-odd rigs are unionised. However, the companies are no longer having things all their own way. At midnight on Sunday 13th April, an embargo was put on all supplies to the *ODECO* rigs. By 9am the next day the company had agreed to the workers' demands that union representatives should be allowed to visit the rigs to talk to the men. This shows the way for other workers in the area, and indeed working people everywhere. If we don't want to be trampled on in the rush for profits, we must be prepared to take action to fight for our needs.

*Acknowledgements and thanks to Aberdeen Peoples Press for most of the factual information contained in this article. * Acknowledgements also to CLASS WAR COMIX for the front page cartoon*

SEX ROLES

When talking of sex roles we are not only referring to women but to men and children also.

Society today channels different sexes and different ages into acting in certain ways, in other words to performing certain roles. Many individuals accept this completely and think it is right, they believe male and female should perform different functions in society, in other words they internalise their role.

However, a growing number of people challenge the idea of our areas of activity being laid down for us and say we should be allowed to determine for ourselves what we want to do, how we want to behave etc. be we male or female. Among the most vocal have been members of women's groups probably because women are doubly oppressed. Not only are they oppressed as workers in having to sell their ability to work for a boss, they are also oppressed in addition to that purely because of their sex (black women workers suffer further because of their colour as well as sex and class.) We think it is basic to a socialist outlook to challenge the idea of male and female having different roles in society and work for equality of the sexes and the right of each individual to find his/her own pattern of behaviour.

Let us look then at the way in which people are "socialised" into different sex roles. Almost all children are brought up in the nuclear family, where the mother and father and kids form a pretty tight knit and exclusive living unit. The parents are usually the only "grownups" who have any long lasting contact with their children. Thus they are likely to, unless they make a conscious effort to do otherwise, press their attitudes on to the children rather than encouraging them to develop freely in their own way.

Accordingly in most homes when a baby is born and she he is found to be of one sex or another the child is from that point treated as either a baby boy or a baby girl. The way these young people are dressed differs according to sex from a very early age, for no practical reason it seems. The way they are spoken to also differs, he's a "handsome little girl" or she's a "pretty little girl". In other words the foundations of the path are being laid. Soon the kids will be getting presents of toys, books, etc, these too tend to differ according to the sex of the one to receive them. Look at any toy cupboard and you will easily be able to tell if it is a boy's or a girl's. Boys tend to be bought teddys rather than dolls, they also receive cars, trains, footballs, and later construction kits etc. i.e. toys which are far more adventurous than the ones for girls who receive dolls, skipping ropes, prams, cookers etc. Passive little toys with a built in domestic training. Generally we do not think what we are buying and the way we are moulding a young mind; the advertisers tell us boys like science sets or boxing gloves or guns, never girls, they like to help mum in the kitchen and play with dolls houses etc. Surely it is time we thought about the importance of what we are doing at this early age. Our socialisation is hard (though not impossible) to undo. Give girls a chance with the science kit or the hammer and pieces of wood as well as dolls, let boys play at cooking as well as with boxing gloves. Obviously some of us do this but many still do not and indeed think a boy is a "cissy" if he wants to play w with a doll when he is going to school or a girl who gets dirty is criticised heavily whereas if it were a boy, well "boys will be boys".

Not only in the toys we give to young people but also in the books we read do we begin to socialise them into certain ways of behaving according to sex. Remember here that not only are girls being socialised into their

role of being passive, maternal, and home-loving etc. Glenys Lobban looked at sex roles in school reading schemes, she covered "Breakthrough to Literacy", "Ladybird", "Nippers", "Happy Venture", "Janet and John" and "Ready to Read". Briefly she found that girls generally played with dolls, skipping ropes, and dolls prams, whilst boys played with cars, trains, aeroplanes, boats, football, both sexes played with books, balls, paints, bucket and spade, dog, cat, shop. Of the activities in the books, girls only generally prepared tea, played with dolls, took care of younger siblings. Whilst boys only generally played with cars, trains, played football, lifted heavy objects, played cricket, watched adults in occupational roles, did heavy gardening, etc. Both sexes played with pets, wrote, read, visited the seaside and went on family outings.



On issues which involved taking a lead, girls generally did this in things such as hopping and skipping, whereas boys went exploring alone, climbed trees, built things, looked after pets, sailed boats, flew kites, washed and polished "dad's car".

As regards learning a new skill, girls were seen taking care of younger siblings, whilst boys took care of pets, built things, rescued people or pets and played sports.

Of the adult roles represented in the books looked at, women were mostly represented as mothers, aunts and grandmothers. Whereas men held a number of roles including father, uncle, grandfather, postman, farmer, fisherman, shop or business owner, policeman, builder, bus driver, bus conductor, train driver, railway porter, etc. Both sexes were represented as teachers and shop assistants.

When we think then of the number of times and the number of books young people read, we can imagine the amount of damage which can be done if we want people to work co-operatively as adults sharing on a non-

RESTRICT

sexist basis jobs to be done at home and in wider society. There is little wonder girls feel they cannot be adventurous and boys feel inferior if they are not the brave outgoing type. Surely our young people's minds and actions are being forced too far, rather than being allowed to develop as they wish according to their individual interests and potentials.

We cannot ignore when looking at sexual socialisation considering our "education" (schooling) system. It is said that both sexes have equal opportunities in education. In theory this may be true; in practice is it? Many parents see the need for boys to have a "better education" (i.e. more exam passes) than girls as they will have to be the bread winner. Sons are often pushed further in their academic careers than girls who will "only leave school and get married" fairly soon afterwards. This attitude may be breaking down but it is by no means disappearing. Of course told this often enough and the boy or girl concerned will in many cases come to believe it. Teacher training is said to be good enough for a girl whereas a boy should aim for university (the predominance of female teachers shows this). Nowadays most women do work for many decades, surely they need to find a job which fulfills their potential and does not frustrate them.

The subjects taken in school are supposedly open to all (but not in all school even now), yet boys tend to be channelled towards science and discovery subjects whereas girls are supposedly better at arts and domestic subjects. At many schools girls can take woodwork and boys domestic science (And needlework!! I doubt it in most cases) but often timetabling problems (!!) in the higher end of the school prevent or restrict this - so much for freedom of choice.

We should look also into everyday school life where the socialisation process continues. Girls are rarely asked to move tables or carry anything strenuous (even girls who are bigger than boys); boys must do that. Girls however are usually asked to do any cleaning or washing-up or carry light equipment. Punishments also tend to be far more severe on boys (they can take it!) than on girls. Girls rarely get caned whereas in today's progressive education system (!) boys still do. School therefore seems to mirror and uphold the traditions of wider society, girls and boys are encouraged generally to conform to the sex stereotype laid before them.

Socialisation into different roles continues at home as children grow into adolescents. Boys usually help Dad construct shelves, mend the car, etc, while girls help Mum with the dinner and dusting. Boys are encouraged to be gentlemen, open doors for ladies, give up seats on buses, etc, whereas girls should be attractive, feminine, passive, etc. When a boy is at the age at which he wants to go out with his mates, he has got to be independent to show himself a man, he's got to be able to take the lead with a girl and she has to learn to be patient and wait for his initiative, learning how to accept gracefully. He is of course allowed to "sow his wild oats", but a girl is still frowned on for doing the same and is usually told by Mum to watch out for boys, who are of course after



"one thing only". It's a game to be played, but a very tragic and sad game, both sides playing an expected part. Girls of course in this game must be careful. They cannot go out alone as boys can or they'll be seen as "waiting to be picked up", "cheap", etc. No one says that of boys who pop out for a "quick one".

By the time it comes to finding oneself a steady boy/girl friend, expectations are also laid down. Men are encouraged to see women as sex objects (Miss World, strip shows, etc.) and women are socialised to respond to this with make-up, perfumes, etc. Girls have read in their magazines all the drooling love stories where the handsome young man sweeps her off her feet. The boy is expected to be tough and a bit of a rogue and have "them" swooning around him. Seldom does reality live up to this. Still, courtship rituals do take place and the expected marriage also, and once more the cycle begins. The woman's role is depicted on the front of many women's magazines - looking attractive (for her man) and looking after the house and kids and husband.

By looking at these things we need to consider how far we as individuals can do anything to break down this socialisation process whereby we restrict the potential of both male and female by constraining them into certain patterns of behaviour. We have minds which can overcome this indoctrination. It may be hard, it certainly will not be easy, but the product after the struggle and the satisfaction after untangling the mess will well justify it. We cannot have a complete change in the society we live in without a complete change also in the relationships which uphold that society.

In future issues we intend to look into how women are oppressed at work, through particularly low wages and bad conditions, and also examine the way in which children are especially oppressed as children.

CONTACT ADDRESSES:

M. Vallance
51, Richmond St.
ABERDEEN.

S.D. Ritchie,
Flat 12,
West Park House,
152-154 Spring Bank,
HULL.

R. Knight
Box 217,
c/o 197 Kings Cross Road
LONDON W.C.1.

C. Gascoigne,
2, Elton Road,
MANSFIELD,
Notts.

P. McShane,
11, St. Margerets Road,
OXFORD.

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GUARDING THE CHAINS at BUCKINGHAM PALACE

"Well, I've nothing else to do in the lunch hour," I heard a young woman telling the guard-
sman. He was standing there, all togged up in that ridiculous uniform with the plumed metal helmet. I didn't have anything else to do either, so I joined them. Only, she turned away from me - must have wanted him all to herself.

"Do you feel uncomfortable in that gear?" I asked him.
"Not really."

The poor fellow talked under his breath, with barely perceptible gestures. He must have been a raw recruit, because you could see how afraid he was - his fear had not yet been frozen into the mask of stone worn by hardened soldiers. Like the horseman suppressing all reaction to the children stroking his horse's face.

"Not supposed to talk." And he started stomping up and down.

"Do you have to do that at certain times, or can you do it when you feel like it?"

"Whenever we like ... No, can't walk in the ordinary way, have to do it like that."

"What happens if you break the rules then?"

"Fined. Taken off our wages. If you keep on breaking rules, you can be locked up in a cell for a few days."

"Military police?"

"No, no. Anyone can do it. He could."

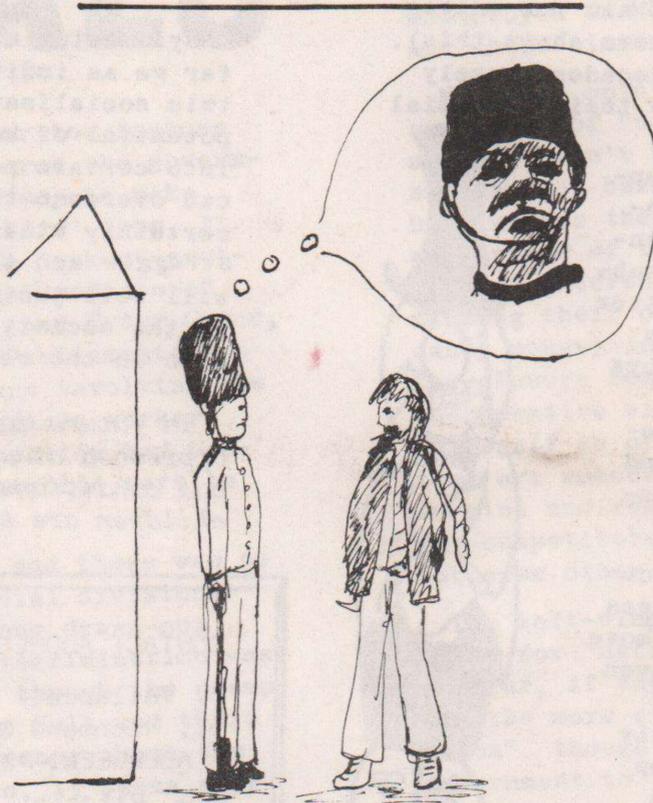
I hadn't noticed the officer in the observation post before. He was in a position to see what all the guards were doing. That was who the guard was

afraid of. The officer turned and looked in his direction.

After a while I said: "He's like that because he's forced to by the people on top of him."

"I don't know what he thinks."

Of course, I was next going to say that if we could all get together to stop obeying ... But I thought it was time to stop exposing him to danger, and waved goodbye as I returned to work - my own, rather less bru-



tal submission. He smiled slightly and was left with his usual companion.

I was walking down an alley, thinking "that's State power", and a man runs out -

"Get out. You're not allowed in here!". So I managed to shrug and walk back the other way with a show of nonchalance.

What about all the tourists, from all over the world, who

stand and gawp at the sights? Do they recognise the men, crushed into silent *things* to serve and glorify their masters, as brothers?

Oppression involves being deprived of humanity and made into a tool to increase the power of others.

In ceremonies this oppression is pressed into the hearts and minds of the oppressed. A man stands on a platform - the Duke of Edinburgh, or General Grechko or Chairman Mao - and thousands of other people are paraded past him. The idea is that the tools being paraded, and the other tools looking on forget that the man on the platform is only a man who takes his trousers down to shit the same as them. By the "masses" becoming nothing, he becomes a god.

All of us who have to sell our mental and physical energies to live are made things to generate the wealth and power of our bosses. And those of us in the police and the armed forces are used as tools to crush the rest of us, if necessary, when we fight back. But it's all a gigantic bluff, because it depends on us believing that we've no way to resist being used as things, that we can't develop the self-confidence, knowledge and organisation to free ourselves.

One trick used against us is that we're encouraged to see and use each other as things, as the tourists see the guards.

If a man's got a beautiful girlfriend to show off to his mates, then he's using her as a thing to bolster his ego: the manager is used by the boss, and is able to compensate by using his limited power against the workers under him, and the same with supervisors, foremen - all the way down the line.

(contd. from P.2)

any philanthropic desire to save jobs as such, but in order to try to save the profit-making system from economic chaos. As for the less important small companies, it will quite happily watch these go to the wall. Imperials may be "fortunate" enough to come into the first category, in which case pressure from the workers may result in some jobs being saved (at least temporarily) through nationalisation. The government, however, will be interested in making Imperials *more profitable* and will push hard for ever greater sacrifices from the already reduced workforce. Examples abound in mining, steel, railways, the postal and health services, etc,

where strikes, cut-backs, and all other aspects of the class struggle are still very apparent.

Illusions about the real purpose of nationalisation can only weaken workers in the face of this kind of government cajoling. The *best* that can be said for nationalisation is that it's the least offensive *capitalist* alternative in the circumstances. It is *not* socialism, nor is it a step towards socialism, since it leaves intact the whole market economy which is at the root of the present crisis, and whose abolition provides the only permanent solution to that crisis.