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**Life and Death of the Party
Islington Break-up
King of the Hacks
Sabotaging the Boss
Constructional Engineering News**

**Kingsnorth
Northfleet
Fawley**

No 6



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LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE PARTY

The Labour Party is in a bad way. All the time the Government is making propaganda against it by freezing wages, increasing unemployment, running down services, and pushing prices ever upward.

To counter this vicious onslaught the Labour Party is fighting back with everything it's got. The trouble is, it has got less and less these days. It recently lost 208,000 members ("Daily Mirror" 1.9.69) and that represents a lot of cash. It is now threatening to sell off investments - for not content with poncing off the member's subscriptions it also holds stocks and shares in the sweat of thousands of workers.

From September to December this year the Labour Party is to spend £100,000 on a campaign to win back members. It will then spend another £100,000 on keeping them till it launches its General Election Campaign.

TOMCATS AND WILDCATS

The slogan is: "Labour's got life and soul. When it comes down to it, aren't Labour's ideals yours?" This claptrap was invented by one Michael Oxley. Mr. Oxley would like to have been a vet ("Sunday Times" 31.8.69) but instead of carving the balls off tomcats he is now helping the Labour Party to exterminate the wildcats. He is an advertising man who has written successful advertisements for Aspro, disposable ladies' panties, and Durex rubber goods.

His slogan for Durex was "Pitter Patter, Pitter Patter. The most beautiful sound in the world. Or the most menacing." This is said to have reminded Harry Nicholas, the Labour Party's National Secretary, of the sound of papers falling into a ballot box and Mr. Oxley was hired. An alternative version is the story that Mr. Vic Feather, who was the man who invented the light lubricant for Durex and the Government, giving them one of their favourite models "The Featherlite", recommended Mr. Oxley personally.

It seems to have been no easy job to find anything to say for the Labour Party, but, says Oxley, one weekend "I sat at my desk in a corner of the room, with the record player turned up, smoking my opium pipe, drinking tea till the cows came home ----" By thus shutting himself off from the realities of Labour-ruled Britain and half drugging himself he eventually came up with the corn. The Desperate Men of Transport House grabbed; they are in a bad way.

The Labour Party has lost 33,000 individual members. Most of these will just have let their membership lapse. But it has also lost 175,000

workers who are Labour Party members through paying the political levy to their trade union. The political levy accounts for 90% of the Labour Party's income from membership.

It's believed that even the Communist Party, who have been one of both the Labour Party's and Mr. Oxley's staunchest supporters, is losing members. The "Morning Star", which has faithfully carried Mr. Oxley's advert for Durex even when they have blacklisted all the other advertisers over the years, is losing readers and subscribers at an alarming rate.

Are you subsidising Labour's Pitter-Patter-Life-and-Death campaign? Join the 175,000 workers who have contracted out of the trade union political levy.

DON'T PAY THE BUMS

Paying the T.U. Political levy means helping to keep this rotten government in power. It is paying to have your wages frozen, reduced by taxation and inflation, to have your job threatened or abolished by deflation and Government-backed take-overs and productivity deals.

Get a form now and contract out. Get your mates to do the same. And keep contracting out - in many unions you can only contract out for a quarter or a year at a time, then you must do it again.

Contracting out may not get rid of the Labour Party altogether, or even cut it down to the size of the Liberals. It won't get rid of the stinking system. But it is a step in that direction.

Don't pay the bums to pick your pockets.

R. SOULS

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REVOLTING REVOLUTIONARIES

The Kingsnorth Power Station site is at Hoo, near Rochester, Kent. The main contractor is International Combustion Ltd., employing some six hundred men but there are over two thousand employed by other contractors on the site.

The British Communist Party is well organised there and its cadres hold positions of Convenor and shop stewards, and the rank and file are very active selling some 100 "Morning Stars" daily and systematically taking over control of all strategic positions in the industry - sometimes in the face of extreme opposition. Below is an account of one of their hardest struggles.

MAKING THE REVOLUTION

SOLIDARITY reporters recently uncovered a conspiracy at Kingsnorth to take over the Tackle Shed by the Communist Party's Industrial Committee in the C.E.U.

Reliable information has revealed that the aim of this conspiracy was to undermine the whole structure of the Tackle Shed and bring about the overthrow of its leadership.

The long-term objectives of this planned coup was that with control of the Tackle Shed in their hands and its contents - three bent shackles, one 3/8" wire lashing and a three-month old copy of the "Morning Star" - they would be able to negotiate with management from a position of strength.

THE SPY COMES IN FROM THE COLD

The first phase of the attack came when, with diabolical cunning, the Communists successfully installed on the site one of their chief undercover agents, Comrade Tug Wilson, in the disguise of an International Engineer. (He had previously been very active in the trials of the counter-revolutionaries at Tilbury "B" Power Station.)

The Party had done its ground-work well! The position of Maintenance Engineer became available after the mysterious disappearance of the previous Engineer, M. Daley, and Comrade Tug Wilson slid smoothly into his job. This gave them partial control over the Tackle Shed. Only one man stood between them and their ultimate goal; he was a well known ultra-militant who had been running the Tackle Shed for the past two years.

A directive was sent out from Party Headquarters. The Militant had to be eliminated at all costs. To accomplish this task they would need

a specialist. On expert advice from King Street, they flew in their No.2 hatchet man under the code name the Penpusher. He was given the cover of Secretary to Comrade Tug Wilson.

The Penpusher went to work systematically, taking over piece by piece the Militant's responsibilities until all he had left under his control was the 3/8" wire lashing.

Despite these terrific odds, the Militant fought back, stubbornly refusing to give up an inch of the wire lashing, even though it now had the whole weight of the Communist Party on the other end of it. While this battle was raging inside the Tackle Shed, ominous events were taking place outside. Two prominent members of the C.P.-controlled Rescue Squad, known as Burk and Hare (the body snatchers) were feverishly engaged in the construction of a lime pit at the back of the Tackle Shed.

PEACE PACT

Despite all attempts, the Militant had become so well entrenched that not even the Party could dislodge him. The battle had reached a stalemate. Winter was approaching with no prospect of a victory in sight.

The Party convened a Secret Conference in a telephone box somewhere in New Cross, where they discussed "What is to be done"- and the other 49 volumes of Lenin. Desperately some of the more militant members began to flick through the pages of Chairman Mao's little red book, always searching for the right tactics or strategy with which they could dislodge the Militant and take over control of the Tackle Shed. It was rumoured that one member dared to consult Trotsky himself and came up with the suggestion that they should Nationalise it. Finally they found the solution in Construction Engineering Union Rule Book.

ON TWO FRONTS

They'd learnt that the Militant had not taken his annual holiday. If they could persuade management to send him on his holiday, they could make sure he never returned to the Tackle Shed. To achieve this aim they secretly entered into a non-aggression pact with the International management. (The text of the agreement is not available because it was later eaten by the Penpusher.) In return the management agreed to send the Militant on a fortnight's holiday.

Now fighting on two fronts with the enemy at the front and the Red Army at the rear, the Militant was forced to give ground. Leaving the Site, he vowed he would return to continue the struggle. True to his word he returned three days later only to be instructed to go home and finish his holiday by one of the Party's Double Agents- Mr Roberts, the I.C.L. Personnel Officer.

Now in full control of the Tackle Shed the Party proceeded to consolidate their position by getting management to agree that the Militant would be deported to No.1 Boiler after his holidays. In the meantime, the Militant had made two more unsuccessful attempts to return to the site; at one stage it was felt his holidays might last until Christmas.

FATE TAKES A HAND

The struggle appeared to have been lost! Comrades Tug Wilson and the Penpusher had achieved their ends- the Militant was out, the Party had

triumphed. But suddenly fate took a hand ! For no apparent reason I.C.L. tore up their non-aggression pact with the C.P. Without any ultimatum, the Penpusher was thrown out of the Tackle Shed and sent to work on the boilers. At the same time an inter-party war broke out between Comrade Tug Wilson and other leading C.P. members on the site. This dispute was caused when Wilson wanted one of the leading Party members to clean the car of Mr. Kempton (the Resident Engineer) and the member refused, exposing the lack of Party discipline on the site.

With the Party's position now weakened the Militant went on the offensive, bringing up his reinforcements in the shape of Flexible Fred Copeman, the C.E.U. Organiser for the Kent Area.

Flexible Fred immediately took a revolutionary line by promising to put the Militant's case through the Steam Generating Plant Procedure.

Will the Communist Party be able to regroup and recover its discipline enough to take over control of the Tackle Shed and its contents of three bent shackles, one 3/8" wire lashing and a three-month old copy of the "Morning Star"? Or will the combined efforts of the Militant, Flexible Fred, and the procedure put the Militant back into position? We hope to bring you the next thrilling episode in this real-life struggle in a future issue.

WIRE BOND

E G G H E A D



I like union meetings. I like to watch clever people talk about rules and things I don't know about. It's not like real life at all.

....but you should know

WHAT HAPPENED AT FORDS by Ernie Stanton (NUVB) and Ken Weller (AEU)

The story of the 1962 strike by one of the victimised stewards. How management and the unions together destroyed job organisation.

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79 Balfour Street, London S.E.17.

NO FREEDOM OF THE

PRESS AT KINGSNORTH

Recently one of the lads working on the site agreed to sell SOLIDARITY (on a non-commission basis) during the tea and dinner break periods. This was a valuable contribution, as the nature of his work enabled him to display SOLIDARITY copies in full view of the men walking to and from the boilers. Prior to this the lads had had to buy their copies from an individual who crept around the site in a clandestine fashion. This previous means of distribution had its disadvantages: the only way a man could recognise the pedlar was by his apparent fantastic increase in bulk on the day SOLIDARITY was published, which was due to his efforts at trying to conceal 200 copies on his person. This new and additional means of distribution enabled the lads, who at one time found it difficult, now to obtain a copy on the day of issue.

However, this happy state of affairs did not last long before some members of the site elite became aware that SOLIDARITY was now openly on sale. Having very good reasons for suppressing the distribution of the popular journal they immediately warned the lad selling it that certain privileges he now enjoyed (selling cigarettes, confectionery and Durex) would be withdrawn by the management.

It must be admitted here that sooner or later I.C.L. Management would have suppressed the sale themselves, but it does not justify our own "representatives" attempting to speed the process of suppression up. These individuals would soon become indignant at the prospect of the Morning Liar being closed down, in the unlikely event of that paper printing something controversial. Apparently these characters only pay lip service to the right of free expression.

Despite the attempts of the C.P. groups and Management to suppress the distribution of SOLIDARITY it continues to have an increased circulation at Kingsnorth and on other construction sites up and down the country. We will continue to expand the coverage of the magazine as long as the lads on the job need it.

FOREMAN TURNED PRIVATE EYE

It appears that International's supervision have untapped talents that the company is now only just beginning to utilise. Recently a man was sacked by I.C.L. for allegedly stealing oilskins. I.C.L. have reported this matter to the RSPCA and on humanitarian grounds have

issued the naked oils running loose about the site with green-and-white boiler suits. In the interest of the species becoming extinct the Public are asked not to feed them. At the trial of the sacked man evidence was given by the prosecution in the shape of one Dick Able, foreman of the Prefabrication Shop. He informed the court that he had apprehended the criminal with the skins in his possession. The man was found guilty and fired on the strength of this statement. But it was later learnt from a reliable source that Slick Unable did not catch this man red-handed. It transpired that this particular foreman had been looking for an excuse for a long time to get this man the chop, evidently his face did not fit. Unable had got into the habit of following this man's every move on the site in the hope of catching him out. On the occasion in question the reliable source alleges that he searched the boot of this lad's car, without his knowledge or consent. Unfortunately, this piece of information cannot be proved, possibly because Unable is very able at covering his tracks. He certainly enjoyed the prospect of this lad being deprived of his living. An eye witness remarked, "Unable was grinning with uncontrollable mirth as the man sacked packed his gear and left the site." Unable has a reputation on past contracts of underhand activities of this nature.

He is reported to be 70 years old. If he was an ordinary worker I.C.L. would have kicked him out long ago, at the retiring age of 65. It appears that as long as he continues to get a perverted kick out of putting men on the stones and spying on them in the interest of his masters International will continue to guarantee his employment until he is one hundred and seventy. There is one important question to ask ourselves about this episode. Is management justified in depriving a man and his family of a living for allegedly stealing a couple of oil-skins on the biased evidence of that dubious character Unable. Under the British legal system the punishment is supposed to fit the crime. We are all aware that the powers that control us only pay lip service to this principle, but someone who is convicted of a petty crime as a first offence in a Court of Law usually gets away with a fine. He is not deprived of his living for an indefinite period and possibly blacklisted. Recent information leads us to believe that I.C.L. management have seen to it that this lad is blacklisted by every contractor at Kingsnorth for good measure, with the added bonus of being refused his Dole money for six weeks. Evidently International Combustion's legal department have the authority to dish out sentences far more severe than any British Court of Law is empowered to do.

If the information we received is correct regarding Unable's searching a man's car without his knowledge or consent (going by past activities of supervision on this site there is good reason to believe that the information is correct) it stands to reason that this encroachment by management on our personal liberties will eventually lead to them holding search parades every time we leave the boiler.

SON OF IVAN ERECTION

ISLINGTON

BREAK-UP

It was tempting to turn this account into a sentimental elegy on the destruction of a community covering just under 12 acres of the London Borough of Islington. However, there would not be much point to this, particularly as I am not one of the people living there. They call it the Westbourne Road Redevelopment Scheme. It is an area of about 8 or 9 streets of oldish, large houses - the sort of place that has many small shops, a few pubs and cafes, a school and a club.

PULL IT DOWN FOR THE UP AND COMING

Those who know Islington will know that it is an up-and-coming area, to which the middle classes are moving in droves. I have my suspicions that the Council are glad of this and feel the Redevelopment will be a boost for their prestige. I imagine one gloomy day a councillor was walking down Westbourne Road and saw children overflowing onto the steps of the houses and out into the street, a few black people talking on the street corner, an elderly woman watching everyone who went by from her window, and a girl he thought might be a prostitute, and thought to himself, "This looks like a good place to pull down". And so they set about pulling it down.

There are over 2,000 people who will have to move out and 443 new homes being built. It may be that a large number of people will benefit from the scheme, but my objection is the way the Council have gone about it.

WHO'S DIRTY WORK

I became interested in the area when I was helping with a survey to find out what happened to people when the Council embarked on this sort of project. A "Housing Action Group" and Housing Advice Centre had already been set up. The first aim of the housing group was to get the councillors to explain their policy and to pin them down on the question of rehousing, (At first they said they would only rehouse unfurnished tenants, now they have undertaken to rehouse everyone who is made homeless.) and interestingly it did not consist only of tenants but landlords as well. The exploiters are now being exploited in their turn by the Council and wondering what action to take. The Housing Advice Centre is really doing the Council's dirty work for them: telling people their legal position, how they can be rehoused, etc. But the Council still see it as a threat to them as obviously the more people just move out of their own accord, the less trouble it will mean for them. The Centre will also help landlords who question the value they are getting for their house from the Council.

CARRY ON REGARDLESS

I have seen over 200 families out of which 61 said they hated the idea of leaving and 25 said they were quite glad to be moving. The ones who want to stay are those who have made a lot of friends around there and feel that nowhere else will be quite the same, or relative newcomers yet find they have become part of a community in which they are accepted. The reasons for wanting to leave are many: "I'm not prejudiced but the area has gone down." "The landlord never does repairs anymore." "We feel so unsettled we'll be glad to leave." "We've been on the council list for 25 years and this is the only way of getting a council flat."

But as you can imagine, there are many people in the middle who feel, "The Council will carry on regardless of what we say. Now it's decided we'll just have to go." And they are right.

Although it was declared a redevelopment area last October no one was notified until owners of houses received letters from agents offering to represent them. Some of them don't know yet whether the Council intend to pull down their house and yet they say they want everyone out by the end of next year. Some landlords panicked, gave their tenants notice to quit and sold up to the Council. Now these houses are standing empty. The tenants got scared and moved out, thereby losing their right to be rehoused - and the Council weren't going to send anyone round to tell them. 15 out of 200 families did not know about rehousing, and this nearly a year after the area was designated for redevelopment.

IT'S ALL FOR YOUR OWN GOOD !

Not that everyone automatically welcomes the opportunity of a Council place. They can be the worst landlords of all. I met some people in a house owned by the Council. Their top floor was uninhabitable and has been for three years while they have been waiting for the Council to come and repair it. Next door also belongs to the Council and they have rats in the basement. And everyone knows that they offer you three choices and that if you don't accept one of the places you've had it.

BACK TO SCHOOL

One evening some councillors were eventually persuaded to come and answer questions on the proposed scheme. The various things we learnt were: that rents in Islington were going to be raised because of the high cost of housing problems in the area, that in 3 or 4 years the area will be a slum, that immigrants were going to do very well out of the whole thing, and that the poor councillors were only trying to do something for their fellow men without even being paid.

What the councillors already had learnt was deliberately to misunderstand all questions and avoid their real implications and that next time they'll avoid all problems by simply applying for compulsory purchase orders straight away.

PARTICIPATION GOES MARCHING ON

There are a number of people in this area who are being evicted already but who will not be rehoused until they have been through this process. The councillors could not understand the misery caused through their ruling, nor would they admit that these evictions are being caused by the

fact that the Council offers more money for a house with vacant possession. Even the people who own these houses are not doing well out of the scheme. One councillor told the assembled meeting that buying a house was still the best investment you could make - you only had to look in the financial journals ! ! Even if you have to sell to the Council you would get a fair price and you could go out and invest in another house. He was delighted to say he had a mortgage (£20,000 ?). In the local paper this meeting was described by the councillors as a step forward in public participation in planning. If that's participation I hate to think what non-participation would mean. The upshot of this participation i.e. bugging about by the Council was to divide people. As I have said, some have moved out, some are hanging on, some think it is too late to do anything. The more people move out and houses are left empty, the more people will get depressed and worried and instead of staying put, as they had originally intended, will half-heartedly follow the rest. I have met 30 or so who are firm about staying. One woman who'd had great difficulty finding a room when she was pregnant and unmarried said they would have to pull the house down with her and another said, "They'll have to bring a crane to get me out." And in the face of the Council if this is what they really want, this is the only power they have: to squat in their own houses and try to get others in the house to do the same thing.

It is true that many of the places are damp, overcrowded and much too expensive. Some of the people are convinced they would find nowhere else to live and would not feel so free in a Council flat. As a result some will go into Council places, but some will just move to another room or flat more expensive, and just as overcrowded. Ideally there should just be a place for everyone to live. Why should we have people like these councillors in their carpeted lav houses taking our decisions for us? These conflicts would never arise if we ran our own lives. There would not be 9 people living in two rooms, with no bathroom, and a cold tap on the stairs. If houses got too old we would build new ones, but people would not end up on the streets because of it.

JACKIE SHREEVE

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MURDER INC

AT NORFLEET

On the south side of the River Thames, a few hundred yards from Northfleet Power Station, several hundred construction workers are engaged in building a cement works for Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers.

The main contractor is Vickers Engineering Ltd., but only a few of the people there are employed by Vickers direct. Instead, they have let the work out to over 30 sub-contractors. This enables them to reduce costs by cutting across all established working methods and practices. The inevitable results are that the casualties are not only job organisation, but the men themselves.

Since the start of this contract 12 months ago, nine men have been KILLED. Five of these deaths occurred during the last six weeks. Six of the dead men were members of the Constructional Engineering Union ! Also a large number of men have been seriously injured.

ACCIDENTS ?

All of these are called accidents ! We think this is too mild a word to describe deaths and maimings of which the basic causes are clear.

The men on this site are working under conditions similar to those implemented by Al Capone in Chicago in the days of Prohibition. To use the work primitive would be an understatement!

One worker was killed recently by an object which fell from the steel-work and hit him on the head as he was attempting to wash his hands in a puddle.

There are no washing facilities at all. Safety precautions are non-existent. Men are working without ladders, scaffolding, or working platforms. There is not even an ambulance stationed on the site to take away the injured and the dead.

A public outcry was started recently after a report in the local press on the latest wave of fatal accidents. Belatedly, the site is now running alive with pompous little bureaucrats - factory inspectors and Union officials - attempting, we hope, to stop the mass slaughter before the entire workforce is eliminated. Yet all of them were aware of the conditions on this site before the mass murders took place, in fact as recently as a month ago, the London Divisional Conference of the Constructional Engineering Union, delegated the General and Assistant General Secretaries Bros. Eddie Marsden and Jack Johnson, to visit the Northfleet site. No doubt due to pressure of work they have not been able to do so yet - but since then another steel erector has lost his life.

PRODUCTIVITY AGREEMENTS.

In the past, big contractors like Vickers Engineering employed most of their labour direct. But with the Government's cut-back on capital expenditure in the construction industry has come full-scale unemployment. This together with the union's aid and complicity in forcing through productivity agreements, has been a major factor in growth of sub-contractors. Management and union leaders have been able to negotiate what they are pleased to call good productivity agreements all of which involve reductions in the take-home pay and clauses which take away the workers right to negotiate at the point of production. The workers have either rejected this outright by coming out on strike or have reluctantly accepted under pressure from the union officials. The results have been more or less the same everywhere-workers quickly lose enthusiasm in the work. You might say what the employers gained on the Productivity Swings they lose on the Workers' Enthusiasm Roundabout. So there is a general lowering of the volume of production.

EMPLOYERS SLICE THE BACON

The employers have reacted by cutting the contracts up into small pieces and handing them out to small sub-contractors, often referred to as "one man bands". The "subby" either works on a price basis or on a day rate, in many cases only employing a couple of dozen men. With a big contract split up into small sections, it becomes difficult to organise and fight against the appalling working conditions. Other perks offered are no tax and no insurance contributions. What they don't advertise is the bloody awful conditions and lack of equipment and safety.

When these so-called accidents occur the injured worker often finds that the subby has no insurance or capital behind him, and the victim is unable to get blood out of a stone. There have been many cases in recent years where a worker has been crippled or killed with no hope of any sort of compensation for himself or his dependants.

SUB - MAFIA

The organisation of the sub-contracting industry is comparable only to the Mafia. Everything is done by word of mouth under strict secrecy. An ordinary worker with no capital may start up in this dirty business overnight, employing 20 or 30 men. A few pints bought for an Engineer can result in a whisper in the right place.

Unions do little or nothing about the subbies apart from sending pious resolutions to the T.U.C. and the Government. Way back in June 1966, according to C.E.U. Executive Council Minutes (marked "Private and Confidential" !), the rank and file presented the C.E.U. Executive Council with numerous resolutions demanding action be taken against the sub-contractors. Each one was noted.

The Executive Council did discuss the issue though and Bro. Hughie (Four Ways) Barr moved the following militant resolution which was later seconded and passed unanimously.

"That in every case where a contractor has a past practice of himself doing certain types of work with members of the C.E.U., then only sub-contracting of such work should be allowed provided(a) that the

sub-contractor is a responsible employer with adequate equipment, insurance cover and capital and (b) that the employees of the sub-contractor shall be members of the C.E.U., provided that the C.E.U. can supply the kind of labour required. Where, however, a contractor has no past practice of doing certain types of work with their own employees (members of the C.E.U.) then there are no grounds for pressurising the firm in such circumstances! (Unanimous)

CALL FOR ACTION

We know only too well that Bro. Hughie (Four Ways) Barr is reluctant to pressurise either subbies or main contractors. Two weeks ago a number of C.E.U. members outraged by the slaughter at Northfleet, demanded a mass meeting at Kingsnorth Power Station with the view to calling a strike and marching down to Northfleet and holding a meeting with the workers on the Northfleet site. So as usual Hughie Barr (the Convenor at Kingsnorth) asked for no action to be taken until he and another steward had visited the site at Northfleet.

They later reported back to Kingsnorth that all the bad conditions at Northfleet had been cleared up and the site was working to maximum safety. The death of the steel erector the day before was described as a genuine accident. Some embarrassed union officials are even trying to cover it up by describing the site as an "unlucky" site or one that is a "Jonah".

We wish to point out to these class traitors that in June 1966, when the rank and file called on the Constructional Engineering Union to go on an all-out attack against the main contractors who employed subbies and their call was merely noted by the Executive Council, and instead the E.C. passed the usual peace-at-any-price resolution, there were many workers in the construction Industry who are not here today.

The membership, faced with the alternatives of working under a Union-negotiated agreement or being unemployed, will often choose the third alternative of working for a labour-only sub-contractor.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

We have been systematically bludgeoned into accepting either productivity deals from the main contractors or mass murder from their agents the sub-contractors. The unions can't help us because they were partly responsible for helping to create the circumstances in which the sub-contracting industry flourishes.

Surely we can no longer allow a situation to continue in which nine of our fellow workers have been killed in 12 months so that more profit goes into the coffers of Vickers Engineering.

What is needed now is the realisation that the unions will not and cannot do anything about it. We must do what is necessary ourselves. We suggest, as a starter, that all big well organised sites should lend their industrial strength to the not-so-well organised ones, particularly those of Vickers Engineering Ltd. All construction workers employed by Vickers should begin now to put maximum pressure on local management to clear up all safety hazards at Northfleet. It may be necessary to have 24 hour token stoppages followed by an all-out strike on every construction site in the country. Do something now to stop the mass murder at Northfleet Cement Works. Resolutions won't help unless they are backed up with positive action.

If he gets it, we will know the Communist Party now has a Secret Weapon in a strategic position in Fleet Street. This will bring him up alongside the CP's other Secret Weapon, Mr Richard Briginshaw, Joint General Secretary of SOGAT.

With a dedicated Communist like Lawrie Kirwan at work there it can be only a matter of time before the CP brings to a victorious conclusion its crusade against the millionaire Press - and folds up that dreary sheet that even the members don't love any more: the "Morning Star".

J. BRADLEY

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Bromley, BR2-OTQ

SABOTING THE BOSS

Sabotage is a word which fills the hearts of every employer of men with fear. But in many cases it fills the hearts of its perpetrators with laughter, for sabotage as it was described in 1913 is the soul of wit. It is the embodiment of human initiative, the essence of real socialism - self management, the attempt of people who are being systematically exploited and destroyed in the productive machine to create a world in which they can live and laugh again.

Ironically, though, the whole capitalist system of management could not exist without massive "sabotage" in the form of disobedience on the part of the working man. If for just one day every worker obeyed every single instruction he was given the whole structure of capitalism would collapse, as indeed would half the power stations at present being built if the men employed building them didn't use their own initiative but instead built exactly according to the blue print exactly to the book.

If this 'work to rule' form of sabotage was carried out everywhere not only the power stations would collapse. The economy would collapse and I am sure many others would collapse in hysterics as the complete and utter irrelevance of management was exposed and revealed for just what it is - the industrial police force without uniform. People who had never let a smile cross their lips would I am sure roar so loud that even the size 16 boots of management's hired clowns would not be able to kick them back to work for their benefit.

SABOTAGE AND SELF MANAGEMENT

Unfortunately, though, it is hardly likely that a nationwide laugh-in will sweep the country tomorrow or any day within the foreseeable future. Neither is it possible to create it, for sabotage is a form of direct action whether collective or individual relying on the individual courage and initiative of one man or a group of men. It is also useless for those organisations who wish to control workers whether it be the employers for the purposes of scientific management and profit or the traditional left organisations for the purposes of scientific socialism and self-aggrandisement. It cannot be controlled for sabotage is the attempt of people at the point of production to take control themselves for themselves, with workers' control as the eventual aim.

It is also useless for people to claim that even by talking about sabotage you are inciting people to commit it, since sabotage exists on a massive scale everywhere whether they like it or not. Ford Motor Company alone claim that they lose £20,000 a year through it although

the real figure is probably ten times higher. As one person has written of sabotage:

"There can be no injunction against it, no policeman's club, no prison bars, it cannot be starved into submission, it cannot be discharged, it cannot be blacklisted, IT IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE. Like the aircraft that soars high above the clouds in the dead of night beyond the reach of the searchlight and the cannon and drops the deadliest bombs into the enemy's encampment."

STINK BOMBS OR PETROL BOMBS

Like the bombs from an aircraft perhaps, or like the cinema projectionists in Chicago struggling for better conditions who dropped their deadliest bombs, only this time stink bombs into a surprised audience who had broken a well-publicised boycott. Or like the construction worker who dropped a tennis ball into a joint where there should have been a bearing, or like the engineering workers who dropped emery dust into joints where there should have been oil, or like the Lyons silk workers who fought their employers long ago by dropping oil onto the finished product, or like the steel workers fighting an inhuman speedup by dropping a lump of iron on the foot of the speeder for, as they said, "Something dropped on their feet often affects their heads!" Like the perpetually misplaced spanner which inevitably turns up in the proverbial works. You could go on for ever. There are as many examples and varieties of "deadliest bombs" as there are different industries as there are different jobs, as there are different degrees of job control.

VARIATION ON A THEME

Whether it is stink bombs or petrol bombs it should be made clear that working class sabotage does not wish nor attempt to take life. This is the capitalist employers' version of the game, only their game is not so funny.

When a wall collapsed in Birmingham not long ago it was found that the builders had skimped on the foundations - for profit; four men were killed. When Ronan Point fell down it was found its builders had built cheaply and unsafely - for profit; hundreds could have been killed. When a pleasure boat sank at Swanage it was found that the owners had been running an old unsafe boat with inadequate liferafts - for profit; over 50 people were drowned. It has recently been reported that old and mouldy bread is being repacked and resold - for profit; literally millions could be involved - you and me. Two world wars have been fought to protect profit; millions of working men have fought and killed each other. Both the battlefield and the factory floor can testify to the horrible existence of capitalist sabotage.

Working class sabotage does not wish to destroy life. It aims to create it by destroying what is destroying us, by eliminating the vicious form of so called democracy which sanctions legal murder. Let no one criticise any attempt to achieve an end to the slaughter which the employing class have directly or indirectly caused. Sabotage is everyman's weapon, it is everyone's chance to not just hit back but to recreate, to be constructive while being destructive of the desire to profit by the exploitation of other men.

KNOW YOUR FRIENDS

Sabotage is criticised, though, and not just by those who you might expect, but from people who are supposed to represent the same aims as ourselves. For example one member of what was at the time described as a degenerate workers' organisation (no prizes for guessing) apparently once commented, " I don't think sabotage has much political significance it can never be properly organised." That was seven years ago; more recently another dead hand organisation stated,

"There is some suggestion that the amount of industrial sabotage which characterises a particular industry is inveresely related to the strength of shop-floor organisation. In tactical terms, then, outbreaks of sabotage might indicate the need for organisational assistance - that is, the sort of assistance which IS typically provides to better organised and apparently more 'political' workers." ('We are all deviants now'- Laurie Taylor & Ian Taylor- IS Autumn 1968)

I think you can get a better idea of what both these statements mean if you change organisation for control. One represents a crude bureaucratic phobia, and the other sees sabotage as some sort of immaturity or as a disease which breaks out every so often - rather like athlete's foot or acne no doubt. Again, though, what both of them represent is a denial of the principle of self-management. By opposing sabotage they are opposing the ability of the mass of working people to take their own destinies into their own hands. The centralist organisations along with the trades unions and along with the employers oppose sabotage simply because it cannot be controlled.

SABOTAGE - DESTRUCTION OR PROTECTION?

The polular image of sabotage put out by the capitalist press is one of horror, rape, arson, arsenic in the tea and so on. It is one of violence, destruction, murder. And indeed it may be all of these things, depending on who's playing what version of the game. However, sabotage can more realistically be seen as involving more protection than destruction. Protection against unemployment, protection against victimisation, protection against physical deterioration.

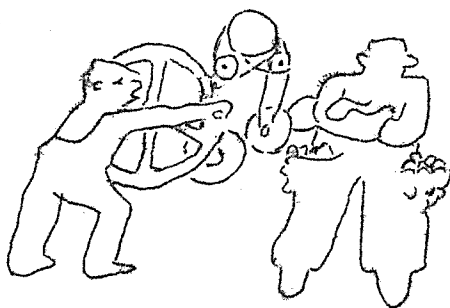
When the Luddites smashed the new machines brought in to increase productivity they were only protecting themselves from starvation through unemployment. By letting loose not just with their tongues but with their sledge hammers, too, they initiated albeit a rather crude but not to say outdated form of collective bargaining. With little or no job control, no security, NO POWER, there wasn't much else they could do, but by doing what they did they achieved a form of solidarity previously unheard of. In this case the sabotage was violent, it was destructive, it was a form of sabotage relating to the extent of exploitation and oppression which the textile employers held them in.

But there are other ways. Many other ways. Violence may be needed to meet violence; but in situations where there is a degree of control more subtle methods may be employed. Indeed, forms of sabotage may be employed which rather than being destructive are constructive. If instead of putting all the worst commodities into the product you are making put in the best. Refuse to build jerry houses, jerry walls. Refuse to work in unsafe conditions. Refuse to sell bad bread. Go out and tell the world

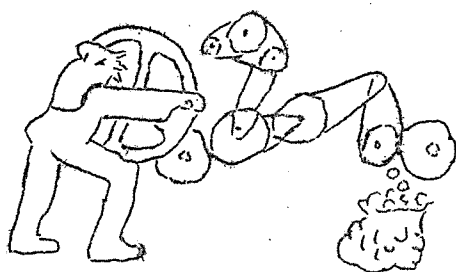
about your firm's trade secrets, tell the world about the shoddy products, the racketeering that goes on where you work. You don't necessarily have to use a sledge hammer: just open your mouth!

In this way you are protecting yourself in the long run and attacking the employer's pocket too. Whether constructive or destructive sabotage hits the most treasured spot of every employer, which contrary to what most people think is not between his legs but slightly to the left and right of that spot - his pocket. Destroy profit, destroy exploitation, and out of it will come something worth living for: a society managed by the people who produce and not by some impotent bureaucrat scratching his pockets in Whitehall. You can, of course, wait for the mythical socialist government, or the new Messiah, or you may still have some hope left for the trade unions to create this. Like the end of the world though, to these people its always coming tomorrow. Join them and you will be saved. On the other hand you could just do it for yourself, JUST FOR LAFFS.

I. SABOT



the boss needs you...



...you don't need him

FOUL DIGS AND DOINGS AT FAWLEY

Thirteen miles from Southampton, over 1,500 men are constructing the giant Fawley Power Station. With an output of 2000 megawatts, it will be one of the biggest in Europe. The main contractors - Mitchells, Dorman Long, Thompson, Clarke-Chapman and C.A. Parsons - are based in the North of England. The majority of the workers are 'travelling men', mostly also from the North. In the first part of this article, OUR KID describes their living conditions.

At Calshot, nearly a mile across the fields from the construction site of Fawley Power Station, was an old disused R.A.F. camp. Although it still looks like what it was, it ain't. It's now the Labour Camp. A lot of the Fawley workers live in it.

The camp is split into two sections, one for foremen and the other for the rest downward - although some tradesmen do stay in the foremen's quarters. I think it all depends who you see when you first arrive at the site as to where you stay. As I was working for a firm which was engaged in sub-contract work to C.A. Parsons, I had to report to their manager when I first arrived. I was booked into the foremen's quarters, which certainly are 'nt anything to write home about. I shudder to think what the others are like.

The long barrack huts are divided into about twelve rooms. They are kept reasonably clean and most of them accommodate two people. At the end of the hut I was in were two cupboards with baths in them. These looked as though they had just been brought up from the local council tip. The huts are quite colourful; a nice shade of dull brown and dirt-covered cream. The floors are tastefully covered in brown linoleum.

THE OFFICE BUMS

The conditions in these huts are a hundred times worse than in the offices of the C.E.G.B. on the site. At least they have a shower, and the toilets are fitted out in blue tiles, with soft lights and soft toilet paper. Still, with the arsehole crawling that goes on in that place they have to keep their bums nice and soft, or else they might scratch their knees.

When you think of the money that's been spent in doing up the offices for people who are only in them for a few hours a day, and then look at the camp in which some men will live for about six years, it makes you want to throw up. A bloke tells me that the Nazi's forced-labour camps weren't much worse.

The canteen is also split up into two sections. Again, one part for people who stay in the foremen's quarters, or for those who prefer a slow lingering death, and the other part for the rest, those who prefer a quick death. The food can only be described as shit.

NAUSEATING EATING

My first trip up to the counter was a revelation. Every time I asked for something, the boy serving shook his head and looked at me as if he thought I must be crazy to be in there at all. I then realized I was in the sudden death section, so off I went to the foremen's canteen. There were women serving behind this counter. When I asked what the soup was made of, they said that they didn't know and it would be best if I didn't know either. In praise of the women, they did at least give you fair warning of what to expect from the various meals. Some of the food was just warmed-up left-overs from the day before. I don't really like to knock the chef, because having worked in hotel kitchens myself, I know what a poxy job he must have, cooking for the great number of men on the camp. But I'm sure he wouldn't have attempted to dish up muck like this anywhere other than a works labour camp.

I didn't meet anyone who was satisfied with the food at this place, which is supplied by a private catering firm. The ideal thing to do would be to boycott the canteen. But the problem here is that there is nowhere else to get food. There is a pub near by, but it's expensive and, in any case, the number of men wanting meals would make it a practical impossibility.

Another problem with eating in this canteen is that, after you have eaten your meal, you suffer from indigestion for a couple of hours. This is because you have to eat at such a fast pace. If you don't, the flies and wasps that also use the canteen will beat you to it.

CAMPERS CONNED

Most of the men who stay at these camps certainly wouldn't tolerate living under these conditions if they were at home. Of course, that's it—they're not at home. These men, quite a number of whom are middle-aged and single, travel from job to job. The construction sites are always miles from anywhere and firms don't supply adequate transport to any large town. Even if they did, the cost of digs in the towns is high.

So although, as I said earlier, all the men are thoroughly dissatisfied with the grub, a lot of them feel that they're pretty well off to have places like this where costs are low in comparison. It's all a big con. But apart from burning this camp down, it's hard to know what to suggest. Although I only spent a short time there, it left a nasty taste in my mouth.

ACKERMAN THE SACKERMAN

While we are on the subject of nasty things, there is a nasty thing working for C.A. Parsons. It's name is Graham Ackerman, and it's an engineer. This man recently got a welder sacked. The Welder, Bert Farmer, was working for Pratt's who are subbing for Parsons. Bert, who is in his mid-fifties, had been working on the Power Station for nearly two years. He had recently been having some trouble with his back, a pulled muscle I

believe, and so obviously didn't want a job that would be awkward to get at. Along comes Ackerman and tells him to go and do a job that was very awkward. So Bert tells Ackerman about his back ailment and asks him if he would ask one of the other three welders, who were employed by the same firm, to do the job.

Ackerman wouldn't hear of it, even though one of the welders, who was working in the fabrication shop doing bench work, offered to swap jobs with Bert. Ackerman then got onto Bert's firm and told his boss that he wanted him taken off the job. Bert's firm obliged and had him removed. When I spoke to Bert just before he left, he said that he would take a couple of weeks off to mend his back, and then his firm would place him elsewhere. I've since heard that his firm have now paid him off. So he's been shit on twice.

REPRESENTATIVES?

This wasn't the end of it though. The brand new District Delegate of the Boilermakers for the South Area put the final boot in. When he was told of what had happened, he gave the sort of answer that we have come to expect from the people who are supposed to represent us. "Well," he said, "you know the customer's always right" - meaning of course, Ackerman, Bert's firm, Parsons, anyone, as long as it's not a boilermaker in trouble.

So once again it's the same old story. Once again, in the face of the enemy, our union delegates show what they are worth - nothing! And after talking to local boilermakers on this site it's obvious the delegate down here is no exception. Time and time again they prove themselves to be worse than useless, as I have found out to my cost. Certainly the only time I've ever been involved in anything that could be called a victory was when we told our delegate in the North Kent area to piss off. Then we got on with it ourselves.

OUR KID

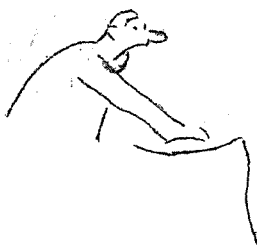
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has many enemies ... you can't guess what
they're saying about him

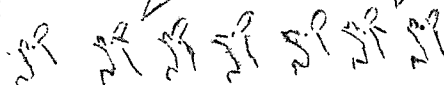


SELL OUT!

GUVERNOR'S MAN!

TRAITOR!

BUREAUCRAT!



Yes, that's exactly
what they say

