

—SOLIDARITY

FOR WORKER'S POWER —

CONSTRUCTION NEWS

BOWATER LILYS

LETTERS & REPORTS

FEATURES A FULL & FRANK REPORT INTO
WITCHCRAFT IN THE C.E.U. EXECUTIVE
in Colour

No 10

South London

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in colour

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EXPO' 70

C.E.U. E.C.

The Kingsnorth Site at Hoo, nr. Rochester, Kent has been buzzing with rumours for weeks. Hughie Barr the Shop Steward and Convenor of all Shop Stewards on the Site and President of the Constructional Engineering Union had sworn that he would have Danny Reardon "run out of the Union, run off the job and out of the industry" for allegedly distributing the journal Solidarity.

We didn't believe he would for a number of reasons 1) he is always making rash threats and never doing anything about them, at least as far as the management is concerned that is. 2) Hughie Barr has always said on every election address that he was against all forms of Blacklisting, therefore no one believed that the President of a National Union could stoop so low.

PROSECUTOR, JUDGE AND JURY

On March 18th, 1970 Bro. Danny Reardon was summonsed before the C.E.U. Executive Council to answer charges of "having distributed Solidarity on or about the 4th February 1970". Who was bringing the charges? Why none other than Hughie Barr himself. Strange though for on March 18th he was also acting as the Chairman of the E.C. meeting, who would first of all hear the case and then judge it. Just to make sure he had brought along three of his Greenwich Branch Spies to give evidence.

No one knows exactly what went on at the actual meeting because no one was allowed in, not even Danny Reardon's legal adviser who had been sent by the National Council for Civil Liberties.

The next day Hughie Barr appeared on the Kingsnorth Site looking very pleased with himself but refusing to say what decision the E.C. had made, insisting that on this occasion Danny Reardon would be the first to be informed of what the E.C. had decided on this issue.

Later in the week Danny Reardon told us he had recieved a letter from the E.C. informing him of his expulsion from the Union. The whole site was up in arms and Hughie Barr and his three Spies began to look a bit sheepish.

REHEARSALS BEGIN

From the 23rd March we knew something else was afoot; you can always tell when the little clique who think they run this job

begin meeting every day, sometimes all day. We know they're planning a mass meeting. Or should I say rehearsing a mass meeting.

We learnt that the mass meeting was due to take place on the Thursday lunch time just prior to the Easter Holiday, after the meeting we would be going home. This is an old tactic of the BARRisters when they want to get some quick decisions, because they know no one normally wants to prolong a meeting. We heard through the grapevine that they intended to challenge Bro. D. Reardons right to attend the mass meeting.

THE MEETING

On the day of the meeting Bro. D. Reardon walked in with the rest of us. The Chairman George (Singh) Taylor asked Bro. Reardon to leave on the basis that he was no longer a member of the Union.

Bro. Reardon replied "I have been expelled from the Union by the E.C. but I have taken Legal Advice and intend to challenge that decision. I am prepared to leave the meeting if the members present indicate by vote that they want me to leave."

The meeting turned to uproar as members demanded that Bro. Reardon be allowed to stay. One member shouted "this is a C.E.U. problem and shouldn't be discussed at a general meeting." Bill Thomson then shouted from the platform that it would be out of order for a non trade unionist to be present at the meeting.

A member of the A.E.F. said lets put it to a vote and see if the majority of members want him to stay at the meeting. Bill Thomson shouted back "its out of order discussing C.E.U. business you cant talk about it." The member replied " don't you dictate to me what we can talk about."

Danny was asked to leave again, this provoked loud jeers and boo's at the Platform and several people proposed that the Chairman, George Taylor, put the matter to a vote. But George Taylor has been so well trained on the Kingsnorth Site that he ignored all proposals in favour of letting Danny stay.

Hughie Barr then asked him to leave the meeting again and said, "if he doesn't we will call off the meeting as per the rule," but he was too late, the majority of the men had already left the meeting in disgust even many of the previously loyal Barrister clique until only Hughie Barr, Bill Thomson and George Singh Taylor remained. It was quite clear from this meeting that a very large majority of the men were disgusted with Hughie Barr's actions and had turned completely against him and his clique. But we knew Hughie Barr had some other dirty tricks up his sleeve.

BROTHER REARDON - KIDNAPPED

On Tuesday 31st March, we returned to work. The stewards announced that there would be another meeting after the morning Tea Break. Some of us questioned Bro. Reardon and asked him if he intended to go, Danny said that he did. It was soon after this that he was called into the office. Immediately the grape-

vine started buzzing to the effect that the management was warning Bro. Reardon against going to the meeting.

We had already heard that Comrade Barr was going to ask the management to keep Bro. Reardon on his job whilst union meetings were taking place in future, and as he had been seen sneaking out of the Office earlier we guessed this is what he had been up to.

THE SNATCH

After tea break we began to leave the hut when Ernie Hombden, Foreman, went up to Bro. Reardon and said you wanted in the office again and escorted him round there while we went to the meeting.

The Barr Clique were on the platform and immediately under it looking innocent, but pleased with themselves. Before the meeting opened the Chairman, George (this is a lovely way) Taylor, asked Danny Reardon to leave the meeting if he was present. This sparked off a load of Boos and jeers, men started shouting "come off it -- you know bloody well he's not here -- the managements nobbled him, Barrs' got the management to do his dirty work for him. Let's get Danny Reardon out here and we'll vote as to whether we want him at this meeting or not, or are you frightened because you know we would vote to keep him here?"

THE SHOW BEGINS

Ignoring all the shouting and demands George Taylor attempted to open the meeting. For a full five minutes he was unable to make himself heard as men shouted and chanted. When the noise subsided several men attempted to put resolutions demanding a vote as to whether Bro. Reardon should be allowed to attend the meeting; on each occasion George Taylor ruled them out of order, some of the men reacted by calling him a dictatorial old b----- and demanded he resigned as Chairman.

Comrade Barr was asked to explain why Bro. Reardon was being held in the office. Comrade Barr denied that he had any knowledge that he was in the office.

The first item on the agenda was a report from Bill Thomson on the activities of the Safety Committee. This passed without much comment. The Chairman, George Taylor, announced that Poodle Barr would give his Shop Stewards Report. This began with a short description of a Ministry of Labour Tribunal concerning one of our members who had been victimised by the management. This was followed by a blood thirsty account of the Stewards attempts to discuss the redundancy payments issue with the management, after which he went on to report that the first redundancy could be expected around the September, October period. During all this time attention to the meeting had been very slack, then suddenly all eyes were focussed on Poodle Barr as without warning he made reference to the case of Mr. D. Reardon.

THE CZARS SERMON ON SOLIDARITY

Comrade Hughie Barr opened his attack on Bro. Reardon by waving some sheets of paper and screaming; "I have here a photostat copy of Solidarity which proves that Solidarity is anti-trade

union and anti-trade union movement." Then he proceeded to read out the first part of an open letter to the C.E.U. Executive Council.

Without further ado he then made a direct attack on Bro. Reardon by saying that this individual - because of whom we are now losing a £1 per man, because this is an unpaid meeting - is an anti-trade unionist. (He didn't say that he and his little clique were the only ones who had arranged the meeting!)

Not alone was Reardon anti-trade union and anti everything the trade union movement stood for, but he was also a liar who hadn't the courage of his convictions and had told a pack of lies about his part in the Solidarity movement at the E.C. Meeting. At this point members demanded again that Czar Barr release Bro. Reardon from the managements office.

WHO'S A LIAR?

Czar Barr then said that the Engineer, Kenton, had told him that morning that he would not allow Bro. Reardon to attend the meeting. On hearing this one man jumped up and said "So now you admit going in the office over Reardon". Czar Barr began to stutter and turn from pink to red from the collar up, as he had already denied having been in the office that morning.

But Bill Thomson acting as Czar Barr's second line of defence began to bawl out another attack on Solidarity by claiming that even Union members on the site had been attacked in the most vile way, men such as Ginger Richards, the out of work film star, and Len Kiely. The men's reaction to this statement was another outburst of laughter.

FOUR LETTER WORDS

Czar Barr continued by pointing out some four letter word attacks that had been made on Union Officials like Flexibility Fred Copeman and gave one specific example, which provoked yet more laughter.

With arms waving like a lunatic Czar Barr went on to say that there was a tiny minority who distributed Solidarity on the Kingsnorth Site and these were the people who wouldn't speak at the monthly meetings. Men began shouting "we've been trying to speak all morning but its absolutely useless when you have everything pre-arranged before hand."

Still foaming at the mouth Czar Barr lashed out at the Solidarity sellers before going on to say that Solidarity was poisoning the minds of trade unionists "because this," and he waved the photostat copy of Solidarity is not just being distributed here but is being sold all over the country make no mistake about it the C.E.U. and other trade union leaders intend to crush Solidarity." After a few further remarks in a similar vein his speech came to an end; and with that the derisory attitude of the blokes gave way to emotional outbursts of more laughter.

BARR TURNS RED ?!

In the latter stages of the meeting a member of the B.M.S. asked Czar Barr to give the meeting a directive as to whether or not the men should continue to work with a non-trade-unionist. Barr refused saying "Its up to you to decide for yourselves." He went on to say that he was waiting for a directive from the local Officials. Asked from the floor when he was likely to receive this directive he said, that Fred Copeman and John Baldwin were both on holiday, but one of them would be visiting the site in the near future. This provoked more laughter and jeering. Someone demanded to know since when did two officials from the same office go on holiday at the same time, and how many holidays per year do Union Officials have these days?

When the meeting ended it was quite clear that Hughie Barr's attempts to smear the good name of Bro.Reardon had failed completely and had only served to confirm what a pathetic but dangerous little creature Hughie Barr really is.

I have never written in Solidarity before but I hope you will be able to publish the facts of this case in order that the broad membership of the C.E.U. can see for themselves just how far the Union has degenerated in the hands of people like Hughie Barr and the rest of the C.P. hacks on the E.C.

I have been a Steel Erector for 20 years since leaving the Merchant Navy, and I am a travelling man so I've worked on Sites all over the country but I've never seen a situation compared with the one we are in at Kingsnorth, where the President of the Union is laughed at, jeered and boo'ed because the majority of men refuse to sink to the level that he and the rest of our Executive Council has.

Bro. Reardon has always been a good militant, and has never pulled any dirty strokes or scabbed, if he had of done he would have been defended by the E.C. and fined at worst.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN

We think that Bro. Reardon is a victim of our circumstances. For too long the rank and file has stood by and watched while the right and left wing of the Union has fought it out for control of the Union bureaucracy at the expense of the rank and file.

The so called left wing in the shape of the communist party have been winning the battle from an electoral point of view although less and less of the membership participate. Having gained control, they are now refusing to accept criticism, while at the sametime inflicting policies on the rank and file in the shape of Productivity Agreements and union discipline that would delight the heart of Edward Heath and his conservative party. Bro. Reardon is not the only victim, members with no connections with Solidarity at all, have been threatened, one only has to read the Executive Council minutes to see that more and more people are being referred to the procedure of the Union and the penalties for ignoring it.

At site level Bro. Barr and a very small number of supporters mainly C.P. members and fellow travellers have successfully taken over effective control of the site organisation on the basis that they represent the Union. It has taken this case of Bro. Reardon's persecution and the methods used, to bring it all home to us.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

Bro. Barr's intention last week was obviously an attempt to justify his actions and to get endorsement from the membership. We let him know in no uncertain terms that we are not as gullible as the E.C. Now we must go further.

We must let the whole Executive Council know in no uncertain terms what we think of their decision in expelling Danny Reardon, but even more important we must ensure that Hughie Barr is not allowed to carry out the rest of his threat of having Bro. Reardon run off the job and out of the industry, at the same time we as the rank and file must take back control of the Kingsnorth Site so that the Barristers are never in a position to do this sort of thing again.

Hughie Barr is not an elected Convenor but a self appointed one. We should start by sending him back to work also we don't need a full time Safety Committee and such like. We are working on a collective bonus system and there is no good reason why Hughie Barr and his little clique cant go back to work and contribute towards it instead of spending all of their time rehearsing our mass meetings.

The other and most important thing is that if it is necessary for the Chairman of the Safety Committe to give reports at every meeting once he has given his report he should be made to leave the platform and not stay up there as Barr's Protector, and the next meeting must start with an election of a Chairman.

We haven't got a lot of time left on this site but we should use all of our endeavours to ensure that we the rank and file take back the power that has been so blatantly misused, for make no mistake if Bro. Barr was successful in carrying out his threats he would do it in our name

p.pWorkers at Kingsnorth

KINGSNORTH WORKERS' NIGHTMARES

My name is John Smith. I could be any one of 1500 cons who arrive at the big Kingsnorth State Pen by coach and car every morning. Our crime: we were born of the working class - for which we were automatically sentenced at birth to penal servitude for life with no right of appeal.

Every weekday morning I get on a coach or into a car. It could be at Barking, New Cross, Gravesend, Canterbury, Chatham, or many other places. Just before eight the coach or car slows down and stops on a winding narrow road leading into Kingsnorth Power Station, which is situated in the marshes adjoining the Medway estuary in North Kent.

TRUNCHEON FOR LUNCHEON

I glance up from the paper I've been reading and peer through the windscreen at a line of vehicles immediately ahead. At the end of the long line of cars and coaches by some American-style gates I can see three or four faceless Securicor kapos inspecting the pass of each driver in turn. Behind these kapos and alongside the main Gestapo headquarters building stands another black uniformed guard trying to keep a snarling Alsatian quiet with his left hand while nervously holding a short truncheon with his right. At the rear of the building I can see several more hungry looking Alsatis trying to climb the sides of a wire compound. I am glad that I don't have much meat on me. If they break out perhaps they'll start eating the kapos first.

As we move closer and closer towards the Securicor guards I remember the phrase 'creeping Fascism' which was used by an ex-Nazi concentration camp inmate some years ago when we were talking together. He was trying to show me the real nature of the great industrial speed-up and the gradual strangling of individual liberty and initiative going on today, in the name of the Nation, Profit, Managerial Control, Exports, Balance of Payments, or any of the other false gods.

At this moment as I look at the 'creeping Fascists' just ahead and as I think about the scores of others waiting to take control of us as soon as we get inside the gate, I feel we have already entered George Orwell's 1984. And it is so much more horrifying than the fictional situation he portrayed because right now I am experiencing what it is really like to be at the mercy of Big Brother.

NEVER MIND

I glance at my paper once more. Some big nob is telling the workers yet again to get their fingers out. We must raise productivity, the tycoon says. We must not strike. Strikes hurt Britain (or managers' control). We must win the great international battle for economic survival. Our balance of payments must be favourable. We must not take time off from work. We must buy British. Work! work! work! We must speed up, work, speed up. Never mind if the workers in every other country are being told the same thing. Never mind if we are being run off our feet because the world is still divided into nation-states whose ruling classes are prepared to drain every drop of sweat and even blood of their working classes in the course of trying to dominate each other. Never mind if we are doing something socially useless like advertizing wholly unnecessary super-detergents whose use will cause the death of the life of our rivers and lakes. Never mind if we are building a power station which is helping to burn in 150 years the fossil fuels which nature took 300 million years to make, and which our descendants (if humanity survives its present attack of insanity) will need as raw material for plastics and the like. Never mind that the stinking smoke and fumes from the Kingsnorth chimney will add considerably to the filthy pollution which now threatens to destroy our whole Earth. So long as the tycoon makes his fast buck and the managerial baron keeps his control over us we are not supposed to care.

The paper is full of adverts: each one trying to create a usually senseless need while at the same time seeking to satisfy it. Buy. buy! buy! the adverts say. Your old car is out of date. You're not with it if you don't have the latest cooker, washing machine or spin dryer. You've never seen TV if you haven't got a colour set. Use only our brand of petrol! It has that extra ingredient. Even the political barons will not leave us alone. Vote Conservative! Vote Labour! Vote Liberal! - If there was any real difference between them so far as the working masses are concerned, it would not be so bad. But there isn't. All these parties see us as some great big political animal which must not be allowed to roam free; and which must at all costs be harnessed to some bandwagon or other and driven along a path not of our choosing by a gang of managerial barons in the pay of the big political bosses. And whether or not they call themselves Conservatives, Socialists, Liberals, Fascists, or Communists does not matter. In the end the workers of every country find out that the big political bosses and managerial barons which control them are all the same, no matter what colour of flag they wave.

DIE NOW, PAY LATER

Like puppets on a string we are continually being got at, being manipulated, being pushed and pulled. We are indeed nothing more than marionettes. Last night after being nearly twelve hours away from home I staggered indoors only to be told: "John! The Joneses next door are going to Morocco this year", or was it: "Mr. Jones has got a foreman's job, why can't you?" or perhaps it was: "Mrs. Jones has got a

new carpet for her front room'. How utterly absurd, irrelevant, and trivial the whole basis of my life suddenly seemed. And yet I agreed with my wife when she insisted on a holiday in Majorca, even though we haven't finished paying for last year's one.

If I was to be completely honest with myself, I would have to admit that I had little choice about the matter. Because every thought, word and deed of mine springs from the principle of 'I'm alright Jack' and is directed almost entirely towards the goal of keeping up with the Joneses next door, it is impossible for me to act any other way. Like a cork in the middle of a raging river I am being borne along by fierce eddies and currents towards I don't know what. This is what I really feel. But I would never dare admit it to anyone other than myself.

BIG BROTHER'S BOOT

With a jolt I am awoken from my reverie by the mean looking mug of a goggled Securicor guard as his soulless eyes peer at me through the windscreen. For a moment I feel like getting out and kicking that stupid, moronic face. But the feeling passes, and I take my eyes off the leering kapo as he motions us on. Almost immediately we are passing by the huge grey coloured switch houses and the still bigger buildings housing the boilers and turbines. My spirits sink even lower. In a few minutes time hundreds of us will be driven out by yet more kapos to work in and around these buildings - which I have grown to hate as if these lifeless structures were themselves part of the monstrous managerial heel which crushes us.

In a few moments our vehicle arrives at some low dark grey wooden huts of the same kind as those of Dachau and Auschwitz, which used a slightly different form of forced labour. There is a bustle of activity going on outside. A number of coaches and cars which arrived before us are spewing their occupants out on the road. Shivering in the cold north-west wind they move like men going to their execution towards a row of clocks attached to the wall of a hut facing the road. There is a short queue at one or two of the clocks. A spatter of rain falls. The men in the queues press their chins down on to their chests and try to turn their faces away from the biting wind. In a few moments they have all registered as inmates for the day and have thus saved themselves from being marked a.w.o.l. with all the dire consequences for themselves and their families which this could bring.

JEKYLL AND HYDE

Once outside on the roadway I have to literally force myself towards the clocks. I try to appear happy. I even manage to chuckle over some odd remark made by a mate. But it is an empty chuckle, as hollow as I myself feel right now. This is the moment of the workday which I hate most. No matter how much money I get; no matter how many things I own, at this particular moment I - in common with countless others in factories, offices, research establishments, hospitals, and so on - am in the process of becoming a manual or clerical order-taking slave.

I am ceasing to be a person and like it or not I am being turned into a thing under the direct control of a dictatorial order-giving managerial bureaucracy, within whose little kingdom mere caricatures of human beings, jealously guarding their positions of status in the local feudal hierarchy, have more power over workers than police and magistrates have over people on the 'outside'.

As I clock in and exchange my name for a number and my personality for a function, I reflect upon remarks continually being made by our political lords and masters about us never having it so good. They tell us we have cars, washing machines, TVs, and all the other gadgetry of our tin can age. On top of this they keep reminding us that we have pension and insurance schemes together with paid holidays and other so-called benefits - which, by the way, have been won from their lordships only by decades of struggle and sacrifice on our part. Why then, they ask, are we not contented like cows in the middle of a meadow in May?

At this particular moment in the morning when I am being forced into a situation which I hate, it is easy to see that in the final analysis all these material things mean nothing so long as I remain a manual or clerical unit of production under a management which quite deliberately sets out to strip me of all my manly qualities and to transform me into a crawling, fawning, servile, menial, submissive slave who can be bought for a bit of bonus or overtime.

BREAD ALONE

Like most other people I have a certain pride and self-respect. I am therefore more than an animal, however much the particular managerial bureaucracy I work for tries to turn me into one. Though I need food, clothing, shelter and sex in order to satisfy my basic physical and emotional requirements, I want more than a full belly and a few sticks of furniture if I am to lead a full and happy life.

But how can I ever feel that my existence is meaningful if my whole life is spent striving for things which I am told I must have if I am to stay with it - but which do not at all satisfy me? Or how can I be really happy if I feel that at heart my work is utterly irrelevant and unappreciated, or so long as I feel that I have no control over events resulting from decisions made by incompetent little dictators for whom I have no respect; because I know that they hold their positions of power either for the reason that they were born of the upper classes or because they are crawlers and yes-men - mere pygmies - by nature who have sold themselves body and soul to a clique of still bigger managerial sharks?

At first sight the right to lead a full and meaningful life might seem the very least every human being should expect in our so-called advanced world. But for the vast majority of people everywhere this is far from being the case. Only a tiny ruling majority of autocrats in every nation-state are able to determine the course of their indiv-

idual lives. For the great majority of the people in every country it is a case of submitting without question to the orders and the laws of the privileged few.

All this is pretty clear to most of the order-taking people I work with every day. But we continue to accept the existing situation because of the common assumption that this is the way things were designed, if not by God then by the force of historical circumstances. And so our enslavement to managers and false values and oppressive social conditions in general is perpetuated generation after generation.

STACKED CARDS

But I mustn't get hotted up too much. After all, I can always ask for my cards. But then there's the H.P. on the car and the holiday in Majorca and all the other things to pay for. It makes me wonder though what would happen if all the people in every construction site, and in every factory, hospital, laboratory, and office got together and decided to run things themselves. Fancy a blole like me with a pair of overalls on having a real say in the running of things. Come to think of it, there's nothing to stop us creating this kind of situation if we wanted to. How wonderful it would be for our kids to grow up in a world free from nanagers, armies, and mass killing and in which the difference between work and leisure would have disappeared. It certainly would be well worth fighting for.

MICHAEL TOBLIN.

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BOWATER

LILYS

Bowater paper mills are one of the largest producers of paper in the world. The report we print below was given to us by a worker at the Kemsley factory near Sittingbourne. It tells the same sort of story that SOLIDARITY has been reporting about at Kingsnorth over the past years; a struggle for more control over the work situation and a revolt against the appalling conditions which people are still working under in the 'civilised seventies'. The Company besides maintaining a virtual monopoly on the labour in the area also dominates the village in other ways. One being the great number of Tied houses it owns in which employees are obliged to live.

The other evening I was browsing through the local evening paper which serves the Medway towns and the surrounding district; and not being very happy with my present job I stopped when I came to a heading "SITUATIONS VACANT". I was immediately attracted to a large advertisement for skilled and unskilled labour. Reading on I was impressed by the offer of good money, hours and especially working conditions. The usual stuff I thought but at least it sounds a great deal better than the human pig sty where I was working, at least it couldn't be any worse.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Gradually I realised which particular benevolent employer was offering these seemingly wonderful conditions and when it did eventually click I nearly fell out of my chair laughing, so much so that the wife thought that she had missed one of Hughie Greens latest jokes. It might well have been it was that sick.

My laughter nearly turned to tears though, for the advert was for the Kemsley Mill one of the Bowater Group, the very mill that I was still working at, and you can take it from me that working there is definitely no joke by any bodies standards, even Hughie Greens.

Its true though, they do have a large and smart looking Canteen at the Kemsley mill but like most of my workmates I have never had a meal in it a-la-carte or otherwise. This is not because we

never get hungry, or that we are so absorbed in our work that we can't bear to break off to eat, or even that we have cast iron constitutions. No: the reason is the 'revolutionary' 'new deal for all' 4 shift system recently introduced by our management and agreed to by our own shop stewards.

MUTUAL ADVANTAGES?

There has been a lot of talk about the mutual advantages to be gained from this new system, and again it is true that it does seem to have some. For example it keeps the factory going 24 hours a day 7 days a week but unfortunately on the otherside it does not allow the shift workers a meal break at all in their eight hour shift. A small price to pay I suppose for the increased profits!!! It may be an advantage for the management, all I know is that it isn't for us who have to work without a meal break in conditions that would make a pig beg to become a piece of spare rib in a chinese restaurant.

However I wouldn't want to knock the management by saying that we have no facilities at all - we have. For example there is a kiosk open 6 hours a day for 800 men (the 400 hundred men working on the night shift don't get anything). On top of this vending machines are also provided which serve their usual delicate fayre of cheese and ham rolls usually with the additional flavouring of at least one king size cockroach per roll. Biscuits and crisps are also provided but the cockroaches are usually fairly crunchy themselves. I suppose the 'mutual advantage' of this arrangement is that we save on the biscuits.

SUICIDE BY WATER

In my entire working life I have never seen as many cockroaches as there are in No.3. roller.

They seem to be pretty miserable too with the conditions for whilst we hurriedly snatch a bite to eat in between keeping the machines going, the cockroaches often try and commit suicide by water in our homely brew of tea.

One possible reason for this is that they, like us, are sick and tired of being constantly soaked by the condensation which drowns the tables and chairs alike. The Thames new early warning flood system isn't going to help us or the cockroaches.

If you do have time to sit down to a cup of tea withall its hazards you also have to choose whether to sacrifice your dry newspaper or to read your newspaper and suffer a wet behind for the rest of the shift.

THE PIGS PARADISE

All in all with the cockroaches the condensation the food wrappings left by the previous shift and the rotten stuff they provide to eat for our own shift plus the constant cloud of dust and dirt you have the perfect working conditions described in the advert; only I thought they wanted human beings to work their plant not swine.

Not being a swine myself I strongly object to working in and amongst this filth, but so far neither my own complaints or any of those before me have made any difference and probably never will under our present system of organisation.

The system which appears to be preventing us from getting together and taking action seems to have been devised to be foolproof by the management since it has divided the mill into so many different sections that unity is impossible.

On top of this our shop stewards are completely controlled by the management under a system whereby if a man is made a shop steward he is automatically removed to a less essential part of the production process thus alienating him and isolating him from the work mates who elected him.

PAPER TIGERS

The managements excuse for this is that they are more free to carry out union duties and are not disturbing the production process in doing so. As a result, any complaints that are put forward by minority groups achieve very poor results from our polite management controlled shop stewards or as they are more popularly and appropriately called 'PAPER TIGERS'

It is a great shame that in a factory which produces ton upon ton of toilet paper for the 'national effort' under such appalling conditions there are so many arselickers working as our representatives and preventing us from getting anywhere ourselves.

Our fellow workers at the Kingsnorth Site where they are erecting a power station are struggling amongst other things for better conditions and canteen facilities and control over the job. They have shown that we could do the same even if it is only to prevent genocide amongst the cockroach population at Kemsley.

TOILET TISSUE TED

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Letters and reports to James Fearnley at same address

WILLIAM BROWN

A nice young man was William Brown,
He worked for a wage in a Yorkshire Town,
He turned a wheel from left to right,
From eight in the morning 'till six at night.

Chorus

Keep that wheel a turning,
Keep that wheel a turning,
Keep that wheel a turning,
And do a little more each day.

The boss one day to William came,
and said "look here, young what's your-name,
We're far from pleased with what you do,
So hurry the wheel on out your go."

So William turned and made her run,
Three times round in place of one,
He turned so hard he was quickly made,
The Lord High Turner of his trade.

The Nation thrilled to the wondrous tale
The news appeared in the Sketch and Mail,
The railways ran excursions down
And all to look on William Brown.

He turned all day with Saintly Smile,
The goods he made grew such a pile,
They filled the room and the room next door,
And overflowed to the basement floor.

But sad the sequel to our tale,
He turned out more than his boss could sell,
The market fell and the price came down,
Seven days more and they sacked young Brown.

(Traditional song written before
"Productivity")

DOWN WITH TYRANNY

A WORKER SPEAKS HIS MIND

For the past two years I have been employed as a cleaner by International Combustion Limited (I.C.L.) at Kingsnorth Power Station, near Rochester, Kent. During all of this time I have been a witness to the antics of a small clique of people there who run the job ostensibly in the name of the union.

Led by a certain union functionary, who has the dubious honour of being one of the Constructional Engineering Union (C.E.U.) executive council members, this particular clique has its fingers well dug into the pie of power at Kingsnorth. Not alone is the local union organization securely in its hands — perhaps tentacles would be a better word — but it is also the 'guiding light' behind such things as the safety committee and the like.

The people making up this particular faction have had things their way for so long at Kingsnorth and other places that they now literally act like high priests who consider themselves so right and so infallible in regard to every matter under the sun that they tolerate no opposition whatsoever and consider any views opposed to their own as being both wrong and reactionary. In many respects this clique is nothing less than a second management which by means of a wide variety of tactics is able to exercise such a strong influence over the I.C.L. employees at Kingsnorth that most of the time we seem to be completely under its spell.

Any attempt on the part of the individual to kick over the traces meets with the most savage repression. The very latest example of this is the case of an erector named Danny Reardon, who has twice in the last twelve months been hauled before a kangaroo court made up of C.E.U. executive committee members. This young militant erector, well known on the Kingsnorth site for his strong independent views has now been expelled from the C.E.U. because a witness (or rather an Informer) stated at his trial that one morning some weeks back he saw Danny Reardon handing me some copies of the libertarian journal, Solidarity, which is very popular, by the way, on the Kingsnorth project. This was the only piece of concrete evidence they had to go on. All the rest was purely hearsay and would have had no place in a properly constituted court of law. But his inquisitors considered that this single proven

act of his provided sufficient grounds for them to expel him - and thus put his livelihood in jeopardy.

At this particular point one might well ask the question: why is all this happening to us? Why are we in such an unhappy position? Why do we allow ourselves to be taken for a ride on a never ending merry-go-round?

There are many ways of looking at this question. One can, for instance, blame the whole situation on the existence of politically motivated cliques which have gained control of the union at national, regional, or local level - as a result of which the great majority of us have become so indifferent to the whole set-up that we no longer even bother to vote during union elections, let alone attend branch meetings. At first sight this seems to be a good enough reason for the situation we find ourselves in at Kingsnorth. However, if one has the patience to dig sufficiently deep beneath the surface it becomes possible to see that the very existence of cliques of the Kingsnorth kind and the fact that they find such fruitful ground for their Jekyll and Hyde operations is due to the actual nature and organization of the trade union movement itself as it exists at this particular moment in time.

WHAT IS A TRADE UNION ?

In very general terms a trade union could be defined as an organization of workers who because they are engaged in similar occupations are formed into an association to protect their mutual interests. As such, a trade union is geared primarily towards serving the narrow sectional interest of its members.

From the point of view of a trade union it does not matter where you work. What does matter is what you work at, and that you belong to the appropriate union which may or may not have a monopoly in the particular trades or industries concerned.

This particular kind of workers' organization first emerged during the early part of the Industrial Revolution in 19th century Britain. It was created to cope with the new kinds of working conditions which the continual development of the new industrial means of producing goods were bringing about at that time. These new means of production were in the hands of private employers and took the visible form of factories and the like.

Because it had become traditional in Britain to allow the lord of the manor to have dictatorial rights over the employees, the beasts of burden, and everything else on his private estate, so the new lords of industry claimed the same kind of 'rights' within their factory estates. From the viewpoint of these lords of industry, therefore, the new industrial workers appeared to be nothing more than mere human donkeys who ceased to have rights inside the factory gates, and who could accordingly be dictated to at will while being paid the barest minimum possible.

In such a situation it was probably only natural for workers to adopt an attitude of self-interest for the sake of sheer survival; so that when they began banding together they organized themselves into associations geared both to protect and to promote their narrow craft interests. When in later decades modern industrial unions were formed they were built according to the same general organizing principle. This organizing principle was based and continues to be based upon the assumption that the employer - be he an individual owner or just a management acting in the name of some anonymous shareholders - had the right to have all the say in his factory, office, or construction site, etc.

The end result of all this is that trade unions have become national organizations of workers associated because they work in specific trades or industries. From the standpoint of these unions it is a matter of little consequence where their members work. What does matter is that their members pay their dues, refrain from breaking the rules, and toe the unions' general policy lines so far as basic economic and other issues are concerned. As such, trade unions are by their very nature divorced from the actual points of production, construction, distribution, communication, and transportation. They involve themselves with workplaces, such as construction sites, factories, and offices only insofar as their members immediate interests are concerned. They demand that a trade unionist's first loyalty is to his union, and only secondly - if at all - to the other employees at his place of work.

Because trade unions are national organizations run from a single national centre it is only to be expected, therefore, that they should possess a hierarchical structure with full or part time officials directing the associations' activities at national, regional, and local level. During the early days of trade unionism the existing shortcomings of this kind of structure were not so readily apparent. This was mainly because trade unions were numerically small while their members were very often dedicated men and women desperately trying to establish workers' organizations in the face of intense opposition from the employers of labour. However, as trade unions grew ever greater in size and became well established in the community they tended to become ever more bureaucratic in form while their officials became ever more divorced from the ever growing masses of workers in ever larger workplaces.

These developments have now led to a situation in which politically motivated cliques find it relatively easy and profitable to occupy positions of power within trade unions. At the same time union organizations have become dictatorial bureaucratic regimes bent primarily on survival and the extension of their power and influence at any cost. We have a situation where so-called productivity and other agreements are made between union executives and managements (with whom they have much in common) which may have the most harmful short and long term consequences for the working masses. And lastly great numbers of workers have become completely alienated from their respective trade unions -

a fact which was well demonstrated in the case of a recent C.E.U. election when only about one in nine of its members bothered to vote.

A TIME FOR CHANGE

Some militant workers speak of reforming the trade unions. But for the life of me I cannot see how this can be done. In my opinion the whole trade union movement has become so perverted and corrupted in nature that a good man with the best will in the world would quickly become 'bent' within a year or two of becoming a trade union official. In fact, so disease-ridden has the whole union set-up become that at the moment union jobs are very often apprenticeships by means of which union officials fit themselves out for managerial careers in industry.

As a worker it seems to me that we have now arrived at a point in history when it has become necessary to build wholly new kinds of workers' organizations more in keeping with the unique and novel conditions of today, which differ so greatly from those of the 19th century when modern trade unions were born. I do realize however, that such new kinds of workers' organizations would have to be built in the face of great opposition from people, such as political party bosses, top level civil servants, trade union leaders and the like, with vested interests in keeping the workers organized much as they are at the moment. This is partly because these particular people occupy social positions of status and power and partly because it is easy for the Establishment (of which these people are part) both to control us and to make us toe their line. However, the existence of such opposition should not deter us from creating institutions in harmony with our modern times and reflecting the outlook of today's highly literate and independently thinking workers.

As I mentioned earlier, the I.C.L. workers at Kingsnorth are under the control of a clique. Now the point I want to make here is that it does not really matter who or what the individuals are that make up this particular clique. I myself believe that if its present members emigrated to Russia tomorrow, a similar kind of clique would quickly be re-established. It would appear that it is the way workers are organized at Kingsnorth and every other workplace and not the actual personalities involved which perpetuates the clique set-up.

What then could we do about the matter so that on future sites we could have truly democratic workers' organizations within the framework of which cliques would be unable to function?

A NEW LABOUR MOVEMENT

For long I've studied this particular question while on the job at Kingsnorth, and I've come to the conclusion that if workers banded themselves together because they worked on a particular construction project rather than because of their trade, etc. we would not only be in a stronger position to better our economic interests but we could also take a long step forward towards emancipating ourselves from being nothing more than muzzled industrial slaves.

Instead of being split up and of being dictated to by national and regional bureaucratic union officials, as is the case right now, all the workers on a site like Kingsnorth could be inducted into a site organization which by its very nature would be primarily concerned with the situation on the actual project itself and with the interests of the workers employed on it. The practical day to day activities of such a site organization could be co-ordinated by a large committee of thirty or forty people or more drawn from the workers, which would represent all shades of opinion amongst the men on the site, and each of whom might be expected to take his turn at serving on the committee. These representatives would be answerable at all times to the rank and file.

Old habits and old attitudes and ideas die hard; and the task of building a second and higher labour movement out of the second and higher phase of the continually developing Industrial Revolution will not be an easy one. But I sincerely believe that if we are not to be completely muzzled by bureaucrats, or run off our feet by productivity speed-ups, or turned into a lot of regimented tin soldiers by an ever more dominating Establishment we must organize ourselves to deal with social conditions which existing labour organizations are increasingly incapable of dealing with.

Like people in an old crumbling house which has ceased to serve its function we must now cast aside the old kinds of workers' organizations, and build new ones. For in the final analysis it is the people that matter, not the building; it is the workers that matter, not the unions.

MICHAEL TOBIN

STALINS' C.E.U. COVEN

The Constructional Engineering Union's Executive Council meets on the first night of every Full Moon. As the C.E.U. is one of the union's top Secret Societies no one is quite sure what goes on at these orgies, apart from the occasional human sacrifice one hears about from time to time.

As they had been poking their noses into SOLIDARITY business recently, we decided to send one of our ace reporters along to investigate.

It was 12-30a.m. when Harry Up-Yours arrived at the C.E.U. Head Office at Lower Marsh, London S.E.1. Except for a light burning on the top floor, he could see nothing unusual. He tried the front door and found it opened easily. As he crept forward along the narrow passage he stumbled over a copy of the British Road to Socialism and cursed silently. They were new boots that morning.

He continued along the passage and as he reached the foot of the stairs he stopped, his senses alert. There was a low sound coming from upstairs, it sounded like a chant or a group of people talking together in sing song voices.

Harry Up-Yours is a burly steel erector and not easily frightened by anything human, but this sounded like nothing he had ever encountered before. He remained still for at least five minutes listening, he could feel his hackles rising and cold sweat began to drip down his back.

Eventually curiosity got the better of his fear, slowly he began to climb the stairs. He reached the top and saw a light underneath a door marked Executive Council, he crept forward and put his head against the door.

Soon he was able to distinguish that there were about a dozen people in the room and they seemed to be calling on one Joseph Stalin to come in. What could they be doing? At first he thought they might be trying to radio someone. Harry Up-Yours hadn't had much of a political education but he did know that Joseph Stalin had been dead for years.

If only he could get into the room, but that was impossible without being seen, or was it ? He bent down to look through the keyhole, what he saw made him gasp ! The C.E.U. E.C. were all standing in a circle at the far end of the room, except for their safety helmets, belts and frogs they were all stark naked.

Harry Up-Yours decided there and then he had to get into that room at all costs. Slowly he tried the door handle hoping against hope that it wouldn't squeak. It turned without a sound and he pushed it open just enough to see and hear what was going on.

The C.E.U. General Secretary Eddie Marsden seemed to be in a trance (as usual) he repeated 'Comrade Joseph Stalin are you there ? please come in, your loyal subjects have need of your wise counsel.' The other members of the E.C. walked round and round in the circle holding hands and chanting "Sacrifice, Sacrifice, Sacrifice."

Harry Up-Yours was amazed, he knew the C.E.U. Executive Council was an extremely powerful body, but no one could raise the dead not even the E.C. or could they ?

He broke into another cold sweat as a cloud of pinkish smoke began to settle. Slowly it took the shape of a man, all of a sudden the smoke cleared altogether and there stood Joseph Stalin himself smiling. They had done it, they had raised the dead.

Joseph Stalin was the first to speak. "Strastugin Tvarich," he said in a friendly voice. Eddie Marsden threw himself down and kissed his feet and the rest of the E.C. followed suit except for Bro. J. Baldwin who seemed so over awed that when it came to his turn he tripped over his erector's belt and finished up kissing him between the legs. But Joe seemed to appreciate it just the same.

Eddie Marsden was the first to speak: "Comrade Joseph Stalin Sir, as you know the Communist Party members have worked long and hard in an endeavour to take over the leadership of the C.E.U. We have kept down the militants by fair means and foul, we have not tried to overthrow Capitalism. Our intention was to use the Union as a means of gaining political power for the Party.

The rank and file do not appreciate us and are continuously attacking us through this journal SOLIDARITY. Recently we have suffered some heavy defects in the elections. Bro.H.Barr who we had groomed as the next Assistant General Secretary is on the verge of a nervous breakdown and doesn't stand a chance of getting even a district organisers job now. He is also suffering from the dreaded disease of seeing "Reds under his Bed". What can we do ? Solidarity has set up a communications network that is undermining not only the leadership of the Communist Party but the whole morale of the Trade Union Officials. But worse still it is not setting up a leadership of its own and so it can't be infiltrated."

Joseph Stalin smiled and said, "In the long term comrades there's nothing you can do about the Solidarity of the rank and file. I tried with guns bullets and labour camps. The more I had shot and incarcerated the more came forward, they just didn't understand Comrade Lenin, and the discipline of the Party."

Hughie Barr spoke in almost a shrill screech, "Comrade Joseph Stalin Sir, we have served you well, our loyalty to your policies is well known, if Solidarity is allowed to continue I and all your other disciples will be forced to go back to manual work again. The Communist party will be destroyed and you our beloved saint will be forgotten."

Joseph Stalin chuckled and said, "look here Hughie, I said there was nothing you could do in the long term but there is a lot you can do in the short."

Hughie Barr brightened up a bit but still expressed doubts, as he complained, "but we can't use bullets in this country and we haven't yet got control of the Labour Camps and if Solidarity continues we'll lose what control we've got to the rank and file."

Joseph Stalin chuckled again, his humour seemed almost menacing but reassuring to those present, as he said, "look the best thing to do Comrades is to make a few examples. Expel someone from the Union, preferably a militant, how about that young Danny Reardon who is a lapsed member of our Party? You don't have to have any proof of his guilt. And if that doesn't do the trick expel a few more, keep on expelling them until all that are left are the C.E.U. members who are also in the Communist party thus ensuring your ability to hold onto the leadership of the C.E.U. forever." John Baldwin coughed, other E.C. members nodded their approval.

Eddie Marsden drew Joseph Stalin to one side and thanked him saying "I am sorry to have disturbed you Comrade but you can see how serious the situation is. I am retiring in a couple of years' time and we had hoped that Hughie Barr would have been able to succeed me. He's not much I know but he's the best we've got. About these expulsions, we will do exactly as you say, we will keep on expelling until only the C.P. members remain and in that way we will ensure complete control of the Union. Comrade Les Cannon of the E.P.T.U. has already been doing this but only managed to expel 29 members in 1969. We will contact our C.P. members in the B.M.S. and ask them to support us in this militant stand, although this may not be so easy as the President Danny McGarvey is not a Party member and I don't get on with him since I scabbed on his members at Grangemouth."

Harry Up-Yours had been watching for about 15 minutes when the E.C. began kissing Joe Stalin's feet again and he guessed that Stalin was about to make his departure. The circle was formed again and Joseph disappeared in a cloud of smoke.

The room remained silent for a few moments and then Hughie Barr spoke. " I am proposing that as I am president of the Union, when Eddie Marsden retires I am appointed as General Secretary, "members began to nod and wink their agreement when John Baldwin suddenly moved into the attack. He pointed out that while he had been pleased to meet Mr. Joseph Stalin and he had agreed with the expulsion policy, his support for it would be conditional on the rest of the E.C. guaranteeing him the position of General Secretary with a substantial increase in pay and a £20,000 house. The E.C. agreed, all barr one. Pandemonium broke out as Hughie Barr tried to recall Joseph Stalin but the full Moon had gone down.

Harry Up-Yours beat a hasty retreat but not before he had witnessed the closure of the meeting. The E.C. still stark naked except for their safety helmets belts and frogs took their helmets off and handed them to Eddie Marsden who filled them up with blood. Hughie Barr proposed a toast to Socialism and Joe Stalin, and another E.C. meeting was over.

Up-Yours.

P.S. Harry Up-Yours saw a figure of a man trussed up on the window ledge from which Eddie Marsden drew the Blood. He looked like a fitter's mate. At no time during the proceedings was this man's union card checked.

OTHER SOLIDARITY GROUPS

London (West) c/o M. Duncan, 15 Taylor's Green, London W.3

London (North) c/o Heather Russell, 53a Westmoreland Rd. Bromley Kent.

Aberdeen c/o I. Mitchell, 3 Sinclair Rd. Torry, Aberdeen.

Central

Scotland. c/o Les Morris, 13, Woodlea, Kincardine-on-Forth (Fife)

Dundee c/o Forbes Brown 444 Perth Rd. Dundee.

Edinburgh c/o Tom Woolley, 14 West Preston St. Edinburgh.

Clydeside c/o D.Kane, 43 Valeview Terrace, Bellsmyre, Dumbarton.
(See latest Pamphlet. CAPITALISM AND CONSCIOUSNESS)

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THE DEATH OF THE
CEU AT THE HANDS
OF THE CP



FALL OUT

