

weekly worker

20p

No 103

Thursday July 20 1995

National pay for a National Health Service

Demonstrate, Saturday July 29
Assemble - Embankment, 11.30am
March to Hyde Park for rally

The Unemployed Workers Charter has called for 100,000
signatures to take to the new health secretary. Its petition for a
health service we need demands:
No cuts in the NHS! No closures!
Healthcare for need, not profit!

For details and petition forms contact UWC, Box 28, 136-138
Kingsland High Street, London E8 2NS. Or call 0181-459 7146

Blair attacks welfare as bosses' pay soars

As the bosses agree that they are worth every penny of the millions they pay themselves, more and more they are looking to Tony Blair's 'new Labour' to screw down even harder on workers

FOLLOWING the outcry after Cedric Brown, head of British Gas, agreed to give himself a 75% pay rise, a committee of Britain's bosses was set up to recommend changes in the way top directors are paid. This week Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman of Marks and Spencer, backed by his devoted team of millionaires, finally announced the result of their careful considerations.

But don't hold your breath. The report recommends top knobs like themselves should continue to rake in their fortunes, to "attract, retain and motivate directors of the quality required."

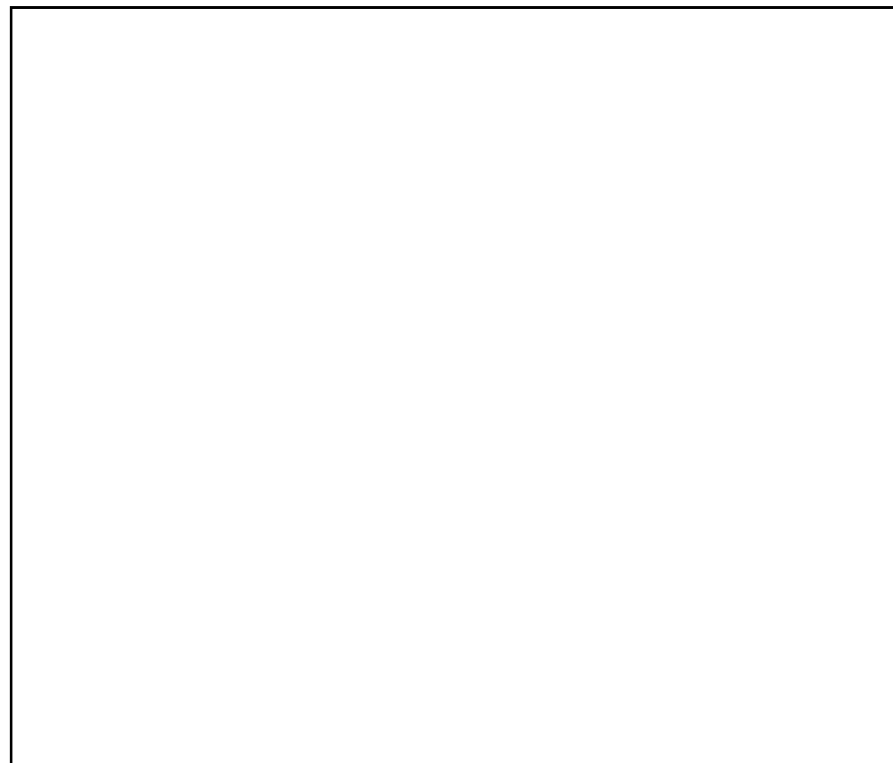
One of the biggest scandals that this bosses' committee was supposed to examine was the way they help themselves to extra bonuses through the right to buy their company's shares any time in the future at today's prices.

Last month Marks and Spencer decided that Sir Richard himself 'deserved' a cool half million-worth of shares. Their value has already increased by £24,000 in one month. The committee decided this was perfectly fair.

So how does Her Majesty's very loyal opposition, the Labour Party, react? Jack Cunningham, the industry spokesperson, could only complain that the committee had not tackled the "central problem" of abuses in the privatised industries.

But the party has committed itself to clamping down on 'abuses' of a different kind. It wants to stop ordinary people having the nerve to claim state benefits.

Following his recent outbursts on health and education, Tony Blair last week outlined his latest attacks on the working class, this time on welfare. He complained that 'the right' was spending one third of the government's budget on social security, while what he called 'the left' (he meant the Labour Party) "not before time, is facing up to the need



Two of a kind: Tony Blair with Australia's anti-working class Labour prime minister, Paul Keating

for a new approach".

He wants to 'reward steps into work' by making it less 'profitable' to live on benefit, 'enhance the family', promote 'personal responsibility' and deter 'fraud' - all clever ways of calling for yet more cuts in social spending and driving poverty-stricken working class families into even more desperate straits.

An earlier draft of his speech to a Press Gallery lunch contained a section which was dropped at the last minute: "The right to benefit must be matched by a responsibility to seek work and respect the system - or risk real punishment."

In his rush to cuddle up to the bosses, Blair is even sidelining the Labour Party's own national executive committee, elected by the party's conference to elaborate policy. Instead he has set up a new 'think tank' under rightwing hack man

Peter Mandelson and staffed by former members of the SDP.

No wonder Blair and Margaret Thatcher are exchanging expressions of mutual admiration. In a speech to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation in Australia he praised the governments of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan: They "got certain things right. A greater emphasis on enterprise. Rewarding not penalising success. Breaking up some vested interests. In that sense Mrs Thatcher was a radical, not a Tory."

Blair is winning the support of the entire ruling class. The bosses know their thieves' gold will be safe under him. They can rely on him to turn the screw even tighter on the working class.

We need our own genuine working class voice. We must start to build it now!

All out for health

COMPLAINTS against the health service increased by 29% last year, according to the NHS ombudsman's annual report. Many of the complaints are horrific but revealing.

For example a woman with chest pains and shortage of breath had to wait 19 hours on a trolley in the emergency room at King's College, London. The trust's charter standard that patients should be admitted within four hours was "a dead letter", the ombudsman, William Reid, commented.

Staff were not to blame for that incident nor many other complaints, and many of them were working "under conditions of great stress and unremitting pressure".

However, Alan Langlands, the NHS chief executive, took a different attitude. Commenting on the cases involving a patient's death, he said, "Failures of tact and care at times like these are inexcusable."

What is really inexcusable is the hypocrisy of a man charged with overseeing the run-down of the health service and enforcing the government's poverty pay policy on healthworkers.

However, healthworkers and all their supporters will have a chance to demonstrate their anger on the July 29 demonstration. Members of the Royal College of Midwives, who have proposed a vote of no confidence in their leaders, ought now to swell the numbers, as should RCN members. The demonstration, called by the other main unions, is against the government 'offer' of one percent plus local bargaining. All who believe in a health service based on what we need, not profit, should be there.

Alan Fox



Communist Party Offensive 95

A SPECIAL Summer Offensive meeting in London last week detailed our plans for a bigger paper and our preparations already underway for the next general election. To make our intervention into the election as effective as possible we need new printing equipment, computers and office space.

Our resources may not be as expansive as the Labour Party's, but we intend to make sure that the Communist Party alternative to Labour's planned attacks on the working class is posed at that election.

Over £2,000 of new pledges were taken at the meeting, bringing the total so far to £22,252. We need your help to close the gap to reach our £25,000 target in the next week. The supreme efforts of all those involved so far shows that it can be done. Rush cheques in now to reach us by July 29 for our celebration meal.

If you have not made a pledge yet, you can still show your support by joining us at the meal on Saturday July 29. Tickets for the meal are £20. Please write or call for more details.

Linda Addison

Workers' fight against bosses' pay attack!

Letters

Shop Stewards

I am writing in criticism of your reference to the Colin Roach Centre supporters in your article, 'Revolutionaries, unity and the SWP' (*Weekly Worker* 102). Far from tailing any spontaneous movement within the class, most Colin Roach Centre activists are shop stewards and, unlike your organisation, we have many manual workers who are materially and consciously working class.

All our workers argue revolutionary politics in their work places and are to a degree responsible for the movements that you wrongly label spontaneous.

The Colin Roach Centre trade union section sees a need for a shop stewards' movement to organise the working class and, through struggle combined with political action, to form an organisation which will eventually have the ability to lead the working class to revolution.

We are not an exclusive organisation like the CPGB which demands 10% of their members' money, control over their jobs and has political schools in - of all places - Bulgaria (That will draw in the working class, won't it?). We are in fact just an organisation that incorporates wide ranging views from communist to anarchist, but after open debate we act in unity. This in my view is a proto-communist party - of the class, for the class.

Unlike yourselves, we are not made up of professional revolutionaries and white collar workers. We suggest that if you are serious about rapprochement you should at least research your facts about other organisations before criticising them.

Steve Hedley
Colin Roach Centre

Activist formulas

I wish to support Ray Hickman's comments in *Weekly Worker* 101 about the recent Open Polemic conference. Stan Kelsey's subjective and impressionistic views about the conference do not accurately portray the high level of productive discussion which took place about philosophy, history and revolutionary politics.

For example, this included discussion of whether it is possible to overcome tendencies towards philosophical dogmatism about the relationship between reality and thought which could justify the role of authoritarian leaderships.

In contrast your call for Open Polemic to place emphasis upon political practice adds nothing of a constructive character to the discussion which took place. Instead such activist formulas seemed designed as a means to dismiss Open Polemic, and to justify avoiding real dialogue which is not reduced to support for the grandiose pronouncements of your individual leaders.

Phil Sharpe
Trotskyist Unity Group

Note: Letters may have been shortened because of space. Some names may have been changed.

Dundee vote for real change

THE DEATH of the Dundee lord provost means that there will be a by-election for the Lochee West ward within three months.

I was the Communist Party candidate for this ward in April and found the response to be encouraging. The problems in this area are similar to those faced by people everywhere: unemployment, deprivation, poverty.

People are sick to death of the excuses given by politicians in the SNP, Labour and Tory Parties. Every day we are told that services in the public sector are going to be cut because 'we' can't afford them. Jobs in the private sector will be sacrificed in the name of the market.

In Dundee we have seen how this affects ordinary people. The threats of hospital closures are galvanising health

service workers to form an alliance against cuts and closures.

Train drivers are taking a stand against the poverty pay being imposed, not just by British Rail, but by bosses everywhere.

I ask you all - can you truly say you feel that *your* pay, *your* job is secure, that the future of your family, your neighbourhood, your town is safe from the ravages of the money-grabbing, parasitic bosses, who are awarding themselves huge pay rises while attacking our pay and services.

Nobody is safe. When the Lochee West election takes place say, 'Enough is Enough!'

Vote for change, vote for an end to the dog-cat-dog society and join us in fighting back.

Dominic Handley

Fight against the cuts

THE DUNDEE branch of the Communist Party is continuing its campaign against the planned closure of the Dundee Royal Infirmary after handing in its petition to the trust in May. The closure would mean the loss of around 100 nursing jobs and 190 ancillary workers' jobs, as well as 59 beds.

The trust is also looking at the possibility of closing Kings Cross Hospital and the Dundee Limb Fitting Centre.

Any closure is unacceptable. We are continuing to campaign every Saturday

in the town centre and are working with healthworkers in the Dundee Campaign Against Hospital Cuts and Closures. A demonstration is planned for Saturday September 23.

Dundee CPGB branch has regular branch meetings. For details and for more information of local activities, contact us at PO Box 6773, Dundee, DD1 1YL

From *The Call*, paper of the British Socialist Party, July 22 1920

The following wireless message from N Lenin has been received by the Provisional Committee of the Communist Party:

HAVING received the letter of the Joint Provisional Committee of the Communist Party of Britain, dated June 20, I hasten to reply in accordance with their request that I am in complete sympathy with their plans for the immediate organisation of a Communist Party in England. I consider the policy of comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and of the Workers' Socialist Federation in refusing to collaborate in the amalgamation of the BSP, Socialist Labour Party and others into one Communist Party to be wrong.

I personally am in favour of

participation in parliament and of adherence to the Labour Party on condition of free and independent communist activity. This policy I am going to defend at the 2nd Congress of the Third International on July 15 at Moscow. I consider it most desirable that a Communist Party be speedily organised on the basis of the decisions and principles of the Third International, and that party be brought into close touch with the Industrial Workers of the World and the Shop Steward Committees in order to bring about their complete union.

From *Workers' Dreadnought*, paper of the self-styled 'Communist Party (British Section of the Third International)', July 24 1920

An open letter to comrade Lenin

IT IS reported in the press that you have sent a wireless message from Moscow stating: "I consider the tactics of comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and of the WSF are wrong," and "I am personally in favour of participation in parliament and in favour of adherence to the Labour Party. I will defend these tactics at the 2nd Congress of the Third International on July 15 in Moscow."

My reply to you is that I also would desire to defend my tactics in the Moscow congress, but I have been refused a visa by two intervening countries.

If you, through the influence of the Labour Party or your parliamentary friends, can obtain for me a passport, I shall gladly meet you in debate -

With communist greetings, I remain, honoured comrade,

Yours, till the British workers' revolution,
E Sylvia Pankhurst

C · P · G · B · 75 YEARS
JULY 31 1920
JULY 31 1995

The Communist Party past, present and future

Special seminar on July 30 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party and the end of this year's Summer Offensive

This week's seminar (July 23) is on the economic aspects of **Marx's theory of alienation**

All seminars are in central London on Sunday at 5pm. For more details, call 0181-459 7146

Dave Douglass

Dave is vice chair of South Yorkshire NUM panel

Taking sides in South Africa

THIS YEAR'S NUM conference agreed a resolution from the Scottish area applauding the new government and congratulating "the people of South Africa" for the peaceful creation of democracy.

The resolution had been amended by the Yorkshire area but due to a series of accidents we were unable to attend the conference, so the resolution went through unamended. This is what I would have said.

Winnie Mandela told a mass rally of impoverished shack dwellers: "Some of you may well ask, why should we continue supporting you when so little has changed? When the inequalities remain, when there is no reduction in the shack-land population, when the unemployment has barely abated, when those without houses remain without houses, when those who had no electricity or water yesterday continue to have no water or electricity today."

We could add to Winnie's list when the hundreds upon hundreds of miners killed under apartheid continue to be killed today, when the tens of thousands suffering serious injury and disease in the profit soaked gold and coal mines continue to suffer serious injury and disease.

There is no political liberty when there is no social justice and our union has to recognise that if congratulations have to go anywhere it is to the long down-trodden South African working class. A class which is still in the thick of conflict with its true enemy, South African capitalism and the South African ruling class.

It is true that that class is more likely to become multiracial, but it remains the enemy class of South African workers.

Last month more than a hundred thousand trade unionists demonstrated in Johannesburg. They were protesting against the new government's Labour Relations Bill.

They were demanding an end to management's right to lock out workers, which the new government is prepared to support. They were demanding the right to strike and central bargaining, neither of which the new government is prepared to support.

Comrade Mandela addressed the crowd saying that although Cosatu had always employed strikes for political ends before, they should not do so now.

There is a side to take here, there is solidarity to be shown. That is with the poor and exploited, not with the rich and exploiting.

The class antagonisms existing in South Africa will not be fudged out of existence and the working people know only too well the harsh realities of life. The resolution talks of almost impossible tasks. Are we to tell those people that basic conditions such as clean water, power, sanitation and a house are almost impossible to achieve?

The new government sets itself a target which does not even keep up with the population increase, and the ANC reconstruction and development programme states: "Most of the expenditure is not in fact new... Existing funds must be reallocated and rationalisation be effective in many areas ... New and improved tax systems collect more tax without having to raise tax levels"

If you are not prepared to take the wealth and power from the rich and landowners, then of course it will be almost impossible to do even the most basic things to improve life. That is why the democratic revolution, important though it was, heroic though it was, is not enough. The needs of the working people of South Africa can only be met by a socialist transformation of society. Taking back the means of creating and distributing the wealth - or is that a goal we keep for ourselves in the West?

If that is so, how dare we? How dare we suggest that the very things we take for granted for ourselves and our children are not to be on the immediate agenda right now for the poor and oppressed of South Africa? If they are not going to be given, then they have every right simply to take them and we should be supporting them when they do so.

For this reason we support the idea of twinning between British and South African trade unionists to make links, particularly between rank and file activists. We should do so in the recognition that the politics of national reconstruction and reconciliation supported by the government will be forced to give way to open class struggle. When that happens we should not be praying for some classless harmony, but standing in solidarity with the struggle for working class victory in a socialist South Africa.

Hertfordshire road hell

LOCAL GROUPS including Communist Party supporters have set up an umbrella group to oppose the proposed widening of the A1 motorway and other related road 'improvement' schemes in North Hertfordshire. The Department of Transport proposals will massively increase the traffic volume through North Herts and along the A1(M) corridor.

The social and environmental consequences will be catastrophic with inevitable increases in pollution, noise and the carving-up of countryside.

Asthma rates nationally have shown a relentless rise, especially in children, corresponding to the rise in traffic volume. In fact respiratory illnesses of all kinds are increasing in line with traffic volumes.

More roads equals more vehicles equals more noise and more pollution. These facts are overwhelming. Although the state pays lip service to this, its overriding

concern is definitely not for our health and well-being. Rather, the state's priority is to satisfy the interests of the hugely influential roads and transport 'lobbies' - those capitalist transnational corporations that have dictated government policy - Tory and Labour.

Since Beeching in 1963 both rail and road public networks have been crippled. De-regulation and privatisation pushed the process further. Public services are totally at the mercy of the boom-bust cycle inherent under capitalism.

The only real sustainable transport policy is one in which the working class - locally and nationally - has total power in decision making. This means that the powerful roads lobby will have to be confronted, literally if necessary, head on. **For a fully safe, integrated public rail and road network system which really serves the need of the working class!**

CPGB supporters, North Herts

Left relives World War II

THE LABOUR left is split over what to do in Bosnia.

The Benn/Skinner axis starts out by calling, 'Imperialist forces out,' and, 'Let them fight it out themselves'. But scratch the surface and you find anti-German jingoism. Dennis Skinner argues that "the German high command" is scheming to establish "the new German Empire" and the Croats and Muslims are only their cat's paws, while Serbia is Britain's natural ally against German expansion. They are nothing but little England chauvinists fighting World War II again.

For Michael Foot and his supporters, even for the 'radical hard left' film director Ken Loach, Bosnia is like the Spanish Civil War, or - to quote Callum MacDonald, Labour MP for the Western Isles - more like "Spain, Abyssinia and Czechoslovakia rolled into one". There is still time to stop 'fascism', however. 'How?' you ask; 'International Brigades,' they reply. 'Workers?', you say. 'No, the United Nations', is their answer. But the nations that control the UN are the biggest capitalist powers on earth. Why should they save us from fascism? Never mind - it is just Michael Foot's old popular frontism without the workers or even the Soviet Union.

Foot believes Bosnia's victory would be a victory for multinationalism - a way back to the old ethnically pluralist country of Yugoslavia. This ignores the fact that Tito's fragile bureaucratic unity in Yugoslavia disintegrated into the barbaric rivalry and butchery we see today as soon as the Soviet Union collapsed.

Yugoslavia never fully integrated the various peoples of the region into a common working class culture; it only contained the differences which exploded into reactionary civil war as soon as that unity was tested.

Now, separation is the only basis for bringing the peoples of the region back together into a voluntary union. Any attempt at forced or arbitrary 'unity' would be counterproductive, and hence reactionary.

Unfortunately for those who can only relate to quick fix politics there is no progressive side in this war to support.

Communists must fight for the democratic rights of all peoples if we are to win them over to socialism and genuine internationalism. Tragically, hatred and distrust is now so entrenched in the Balkans that only through separation can a basis be laid for the development of trust.

Phil Kent

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Abolish the death penalty

National demonstration on Saturday July 22 at 12 noon in Whitehall Place, London SW1 (Charing Cross tube)

March past US embassy to rally at Hyde Park

Why did the police murder David Ewin?

Public meeting at the Emerald Centre, 263 Hammersmith Road, W6 at 7.30pm, Monday July 24. Organised by the Justice for David Ewin Campaign, c/o Colin Roach Centre, 56 Clarence Road, London E5

Snoopers' charter

THE CHARMING Michael Howard proudly unveiled on Tuesday his latest measure to increase the power of the state, and create what can only be called a climate of fear and suspicion.

Howard has proposed that head teachers, hospital adminstrators, housing and social security officers - not forgetting any 'good citizens' out there - be encouraged *and trained* to identify suspected illegal immigrants and report them to the Home Office. The proposal has been attacked as a "snooper's charter" by immigration welfare workers.

Turkish paper banned

THE TURKISH daily newspaper *Evrensel*, distributed in Turkey and Europe, launched its publication on June 7 1995, aiming to be the voice of the opposition sectors of society. It has been banned five times already and copies confiscated.

The latest issues which were banned by the Istanbul State Security Court are the issues of July 15 and 16. The latter was banned because of an obituary for 13 people who were extra-judicially executed.

The issue on July 15 was banned because of an article on the Kurdish language written both in Kurdish and Turkish by Dr Haluk Gerger, who is now serving a prison sentence for an article expressing his views.

Other issues have been arbitrarily banned and confiscated in order to intimidate and silence the opposition press.

Despite all these attacks *Evrensel* is determined to be the voice of workers, labourers and other opposition sectors of society.

We call upon everybody to protest against these attacks on our newspaper and support it.

Evrensel representatives in Britain

End to torture and disappearances

REVOLUTIONARIES in Turkey occupied the province building of the New Democracy Movement in Istanbul. The DHKC-DHG (Revolutionary Peoples Forces) demanded an investigation into the tortures in detention, the disappearances and murders of trade unionists and opponents of the Turkish state.

The police attacked the building, throwing gas bombs at the occupiers who were then beaten, dragged outside and taken away to be detained at the torture chambers.

Turkey has today turned into a country of disappeared persons and the torturers continue to oppress and exploit the people. Over 300 people have disappeared since 1994.

Revolutionary Peoples Liberation Front, Vienna Information Bureau

Campaign against the Criminal Justice Act

Free festival in Churchill Park, Bromley on Saturday July 22 from 12 noon to 7pm

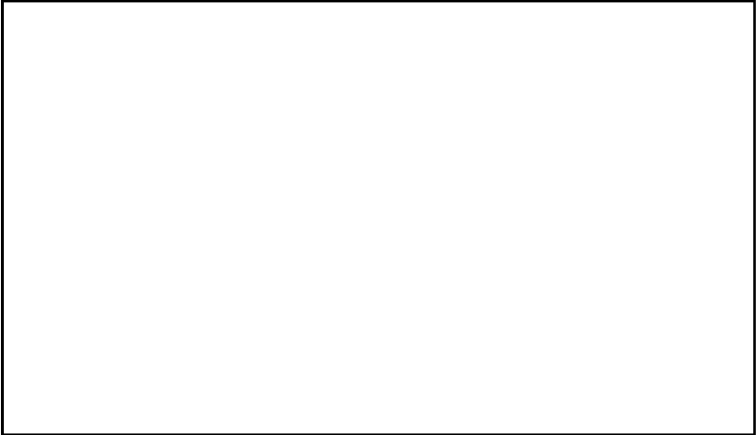
The response of Jack Straw, Labour's shadow home secretary, was so sickeningly mealy-mouthed that even *The Guardian* was forced to condemn it as "pathetic" (July 19). Straw blithely commented that he would judge Howard's package on its "merits", including whether the proposals were "effective and fair."

Last week, Howard also got another chance to display his profound humanitarianism. Following the brutal murder of Joy Gardner by the Aliens Deportation Unit, new procedures have been drawn up.

Reassuringly, arm and leg restraints can only be used now on an aircraft or before boarding, not while you are in your own flat. Even better, bodybelts with handcuffs attached - as were used on Joy - will be allowed only after a medical examination and in 'strictly controlled' conditions. We can all sleep safely in our beds tonight, thanks to that nice Mr Howard.

We must stand unequivocally against *any and all* immigration controls, which criminalise workers and legalise state barbarism and intimidation.

Eddie Ford



The Unemployed Workers Charter Jack Dash commemoration. Vic Turner (second left), honorary president of the UWC, said: "When I worked on the docks Jack provided the sort of inspiration that we need today more than ever. The scourge of unemployment that Jack fought against all his life is still with us. It is part and parcel of capitalism and its drive to keep everyone's wages down. We cannot accept it as a way of life, but must follow Jack's lead in never giving up the fight for a new society."

Review

Marvellous cruelty

Ben Jonson, *Volpone or the Fox - a Comedy*. Director: Katherine Bond. Large Door Productions, Greenwich Covered Market

SEEING HOW the unhealthy cult of Shakespeare still pervades 'official' society, especially in the schoolroom and lecture hall, it is always a relief to turn to Ben Jonson, a contemporary of the Bard and without much doubt a far more human character all round.

Jonson's *Volpone* is a comic masterpiece, outmatched only by his later play, *The Alchemist*, and was first performed in 1605. It is a savage and merciless satire on Elizabethan society and the emerging 'proto-bourgeoisie', who worship money - sometimes literally. Hence, at the beginning of the first act Volpone (the name, as defined in 1598, means "an old fox...slic...sneaking, lurking, wily deceiver...") looks at his piles of gold and exults, "Hail the world's soul and mine!"

The play, with marvellous cruelty, reveals how this new found worship of money - a consequence of the steady disintegration of feudal social relations - corrupts all of society with its corrosive individualism. This is what Marx called "the war of all against all". The director, Katherine Bond, sets the play in Canary Wharf, 1982, Volpone's house crammed with keyboard terminals and computer printouts. A nice touch, though it has to be said that the production did rather over-egg the pudding in places with its crude "anti-Thatcherism" and cudgel-like 'leftist' moralism.

The play rests upon the relationship between Volpone and "his parasite" Mosca, the cunning servant of theatrical folklore. Naturally, in the best theatrical tradition, Mosca eventually goes beyond his master in terms of Machiavelian scheme-mongering as he becomes drunk on his own ego. In this context he delivers

what could be called the 'punchline' of the play: "Almost...all the wise world is little else in nature but parasites and sub-parasites."

Ben Jonson's genuinely dangerous, subversive humour is always a welcome antidote to the slightly depressing conservatism of Shakespeare. Volpone and Mosca are not entirely anti-heroes, to be viewed with *simple* disgust. Their exhortatory quest for wealth - which leads Volpone to declare, "I glory more in the cunning purchase of my wealth than in the glad possession" - is a symptom of the decline of the stagnant feudal order and the rise of a new dynamic social class. For Shakespeare, quite naturally, this rise was more a source of dread, as all his plays were written with the specific intention of ingratiating himself into the Tudor court.

This is highlighted by Edward Bond, in his brilliant play, *Bingo*, which is just about to start a tour of Britain. Shakespeare's valuable role in upholding the system of naked, brutal exploitation is exposed by a true-life incident, in which our gallant Bard colludes in the violent expulsion of peasants from previously communally owned lands - to build his own private property.

Jonson, too, appears as a character in *Bingo*, berating Shakespeare for his hypocrisy and sycophancy. Bond is warning that underneath Shakespeare's 'poetic beauty', his *pseudo-universality*, lurks class exploitation and violence.

The vibrant, if not feverish, nature of *Volpone* is infectious and his on-the-edge, racy humour is worlds apart from the 'jolly japes' and safe farces of the Bard.

Danny Hammill

What we fight for

- Our central aim is to reforge the Communist Party of Great Britain. Without this Party the working class is nothing; with it, it is everything.
- The Communist Party serves the interests of the working class. We fight all forms of opportunism and revisionism in the workers' movement because they endanger those interests. We insist on open ideological struggle in order to fight out the correct way forward for our class.
- Marxism-Leninism is powerful because it is true. Communists relate theory to practice. We are materialists; we hold that ideas are determined by social reality and not the other way round.
- We believe in the highest level of unity among workers. We fight for the unity of the working class of all countries and subordinate the struggle in Britain to the world revolution itself. The liberation of humanity can only be achieved through world communism.
- The working class in Britain needs to strike as a fist. This means all communists should be organised into a single party. We oppose all forms of separatism, which weakens our class.
- Socialism can never come through parliament. The capitalist class will never peacefully allow their system to be abolished. Socialism will only succeed through working class revolution and the replacement of the dictatorship of the capitalists with the dictatorship of the working class. Socialism lays the basis for the conscious planning of human affairs, ie communism.
- We support the right of nations to self-determination. In Britain today this means the struggle for Irish freedom should be given full support by the British working class.
- Communists are champions of the oppressed. We fight for the liberation of women, the ending of racism, bigotry and all other forms of chauvinism. Oppression is a direct result of class society and will only finally be eradicated by the ending of class society.
- War and peace, pollution and the environment are class questions. No solution to the world's problems can be found within capitalism. Its ceaseless drive for profit puts the world at risk. The future of humanity depends on the triumph of communism.

We urge all who accept these principles to join us. A Communist Party Supporter reads and fights to build the circulation of the Party's publications; contributes regularly to the Party's funds and encourages others to do the same; where possible, builds and participates in the work of a Communist Party Supporters Group.

I want to be a Communist Party supporter. Send me details. ☐

I wish to subscribe to the Weekly Worker. ☐

WW subscription £ _____

Donation £ _____

Cheques and postal orders should be in sterling.

	6 m	1yr	Institutions
Britain & Ireland	£7.50	£15	£25
Europe	£10	£20	£35
Rest of World	£14	£28	£40

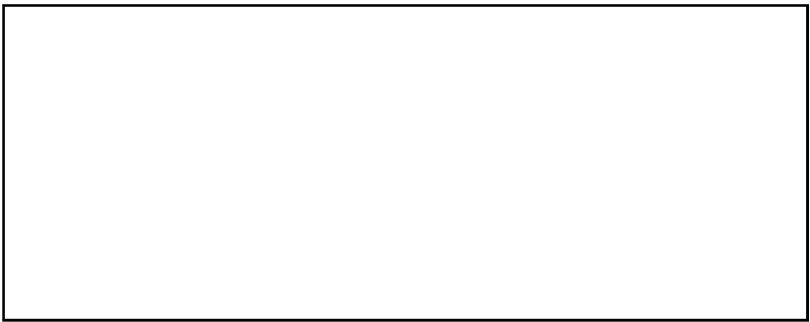
Special offer to new subscribers: 3 months for £3.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL _____

Return to: CPGB, BCM Box 928, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: 0181-459 7146 Fax: 0181-830 1639.



Talks falter on

GERRY ADAMS said of the British Government's demand that the IRA must decommission their weapons before Sinn Fein would be allowed a seat at the negotiating table, "The British government are saying that the peace process is finished ... We are starting to go down a slippery slope from whence we came."

Sinn Fein wants to be an all-Ireland, fully legal, nationalist party. It entered negotiations with the British because it saw no future in continuing armed resistance.

Both sides know that the threat is a negotiating tactic, as indeed is the British demand for the arms to be handed in.

Both sides have constituencies to appease.

Adams later said, "I would not be surprised if there was movement on the prisoners." Obviously behind-the-scenes negotiations are continuing as usual.

The release of Private Clegg demonstrates that the whole 'peace process' is being paced to bring maximum advantage to the beleaguered Tory Party. The problems of Ireland, which imperialism can only solve negatively, at the expense of working class rights, are very much secondary considerations.

Arthur Lawrence

Inla POWs dirty protest

IRSP says prisoners will not be used as hostages

A MEETING of the national executive of the Irish Republican Socialist Party expressed its concern at the deterioration in conditions of Irish political prisoners held in English jails.

A message of support was issued to the protest of republican socialist POW, Martin McMonigle, who is in his second month of solitary confinement in Whitemoor Jail.

His protest is against deteriorating conditions and the continued refusal by Michael Howard to repatriate six POWs, who were guaranteed transfer over three months ago.

The action was enhanced on Monday when three other republican socialist POWs - Liam Heffernan (Whitemoor),

Eamon O'Donnell and Sean Cruikshank (Full Sutton) - joined the protest.

IRSP prison spokesperson Gino Gallagher said, "Let no one be under any illusion about the gravity of the situation or the potential for escalation.

"The present demand from protesting republican socialist prisoners is for the restoration of proper conditions and medical care, followed by arrangements for their immediate transfer to prisons in the Six Counties.

"The IRSP demand this as a right and reject our POWs being linked as political hostages to decommissioning or any other redherring thrown up by the British as further obstacles to peace."

The Manchester Martyrs

Commemoration Committee issued the following statement:

THE RESPONSIBILITY for the 'dirty protests' by republican socialist POWs lies with the Home Office, which has forced them into this action.

We are led to believe by the British media that the peace process 'is moving on'. However since the ceasefire little has changed for POWs in England. Indeed conditions (which were inhumane to begin with) have deteriorated.

Visiting conditions continue to be more restrictive and are designed to humiliate both the prisoner and his visitors. Prisoners are being threatened with and subjected to searches before and after visits.

Some POWs are being held for long periods in special units (prisons within a prison) which cause lasting psychological and physical damage.

In May 1995 a number of IRA/Inla POWs were told that they would be transferred to prisons in the Six Counties. These unfulfilled promises and intolerable prison conditions, together with the glaring injustice of Private Clegg walking free while political prisoners remain incarcerated in English jails, has led to frustration for Irish republican and Irish republican socialist prisoners who have been given no option but to embark on prison protests.

The Manchester Martyrs Commemoration Committee feels that a hostage situation remains in English jails - that the British government is cynically trying to use the prisoners and their families as part of a 'prisoners for arms' deal. We believe that this

prevailing hostage and criminalisation strategy toward political prisoners is unhelpful to the peace process and in fact is a declaration by the British Establishment of its contempt toward bringing about a just political settlement in Ireland.

The MMCC demands that Michael Howard acts now to resolve the deteriorating situation in Whitemoor jail.

If the British government is genuinely seeking a peaceful settlement in Ireland, only a no-strings-attached amnesty of all political prisoners can forward the ongoing process.

Saoirse
campaign
for the release of
Irish political
prisoners
Thursday August 3
London meeting to
discuss action in
response to the
deteriorating condition of
Irish prisoners
7.30pm in the Camden
Irish Centre, 50-52
Camden Square, NW1

Rail unity urged

DAY TWO of the Aslef rail strike resulted in an almost complete shutdown of the system. British Rail managed to operate a tiny number of Mickey Mouse services, using RMT drivers who have been instructed to work normally by union leaders after the failure of their strike ballot. Very few passengers are using these trains, or the fleet of coaches hired at great expense to substitute for rail services.

Pressure is building up on the British Rail Board and government, as the two days of strike have cost over £20 million. More than enough to give drivers a six percent increase.

Ballots held on London Regional Transport have resulted in substantial majorities for action. London tube workers will be coordinating their strike days with Aslef railworkers, which will cause complete transport chaos in the capital.

The RMT nationally is threatening to re-ballot British Rail drivers over the board's inability to pay the agreed three percent increase to RMT drivers without also paying it to Aslef. RMT drivers in Manchester are pursuing two other local options to get a ballot.

Joint meetings are continuing in Manchester and a real unity has been forged at the grass roots. This has blunted management's attempts to cause animosity between Aslef and the RMT. Manchester Picidilly Aslef is calling on the trades council to support the drivers and to help set up a railworkers' support group. A rally at the Picidilly station picket is planned for Thursday July 27.

Paul Watkins, British Rail Board personnel director, has called for Aslef to reballot its membership, as he feels drivers are unhappy with the dispute.

Aslef has rightly rejected this, pointing to the 100% support of Aslef drivers on the ground. This is the only ballot we need.

Manchester drivers suggest that Watkins puts his idea to the Tory government, which clearly has an unhappy electorate. Maybe we should also ballot on whether drivers think Watkins and his cronies should receive their 25% performance bonus.

One-day strikes are all right as a start, but if drivers are to win this dispute we will need to escalate. It is vital that drivers link up with other railworkers and win their support. The example set by Manchester needs to be followed everywhere. Support groups must be built now to prepare for any escalation.

Aslef driver, Manchester

Support the railworkers

OVER 70 people attended a meeting organised by the Colin Roach Centre and the RMT London Midland District Council to organise support groups for Aslef and RMT strikers.

Over 50 railworkers from British Rail and London Underground attended with 20 supporters from various leftwing groups who understood the importance of a victory for railworkers to stop privatisation.

There was unanimous agreement from the meeting that we needed to put solidarity action on the agenda, not only in the rail industry, but to coordinate with other workers in dispute over pay - ie, healthworkers and teachers.

It was widely felt that a summer of discontent could bring down the enfeebled Tory government.

Railworkers were outraged to find out that the BR chairman had been given a wage rise of £60,000 and that BR bosses had given themselves a 20% bonus when workers are offered a pay-cutting three percent - inflation is at about 3.7%.

More than once railworkers pointed out that we could not be content with getting rid of the Tories, but had to ensure through industrial action that

any incoming Labour government would realise that it faced a militant and organised workforce who would continue to battle against it.

Many workers expressed no confidence in Blair and some even called for a new party which would represent working class interests.

Confidence was bolstered when Euston railworkers told how they had refused to go on track at night for three weeks because of inadequate numbers of staff and faulty lighting. Their grievances have now been met in full.

To achieve this victory workers leafleted other depots and ensured that any victimisation would be met with immediate walkouts. This shows that solidarity gives us a real power to demand our rights.

Since the meeting collections have been given to strikers on Aslef picket lines and this has bolstered their already high morale. We all have our part to play in smashing the government's three percent pay limit, so please rush donations to the NLSW support group, c/o the Colin Roach Centre, 56 Clarence Road, London, E5 8HB or call 0181-533 7111.

RMT, member London

Disabled protesters caged in

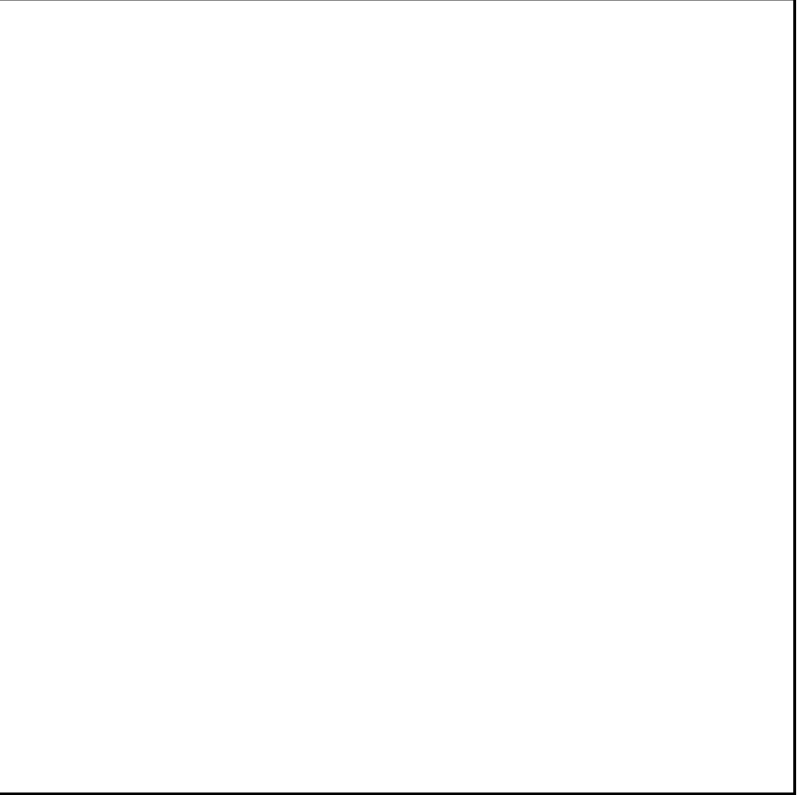
DOZENS of angry people with disabilities staged a demonstration outside parliament last week to coincide with the third reading of the Civil Rights (Disabled Persons) Bill. Several supporters of the Direct Action Network blocked the traffic.

The protesters were then penned behind speedily erected barriers by the police and not allowed to leave.

Thalidomide victim Mathew Fraser commented: "We say that non-violence is the only way forward, but it's as if they want to force us to use violence."

Inside parliament the private member's bill of Labour MP Harry Barnes was being 'talked out'. Instead the government is pursuing its own much more limited Disability Discrimination Bill. This proposes improved access and employment rights, but applies only to firms employing more than 20 people and does not provide for the enforcement of those 'rights'.

Rachel Hurst of the British Council of Disabled People expressed her contempt for the government's "useless" proposals: "We can't even pee in our own lavatories; we can't get out of our homes," she told me. "They confine us in regimented 'Royal Hospitals' like the one in Putney, where 700 people are incarcerated."



Demonstrators from Direct Action Network make their point outside parliament

But the Barnes bill is rejected as too expensive. According to the government, it would cost £17 billion to implement. Campaigners for his bill dispute this figure and claim that allowing people access to work would inject an extra £33 billion spending power into the economy every year.

This argument is identical to the one which states that giving workers large pay increases would result in their spending more and provide bigger profits. Unfortunately the 'short-sighted' bosses never quite seem to see the logic of it. Capitalism will not willingly fork out even a few million pounds today unless it can see an immediate return on its 'investment'.

Harry Barnes' 'civil rights' approach is useful in that it recognises that disability is "a process by which people with physical, mental and sensory impairments (and sometimes their relatives) are excluded from equal participation in society". But his proposal for a Disability Rights Commission to enforce any new measures would, on his own admission, be "on the same basis" as the toothless Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality.

Gareth Davies of the TUC-affiliated National League for the Blind and Disabled is a former communist and well aware that money is not the problem. The problem is the whole society on which it is based. Yet he believes that we are "ultimately onto a winner" with Labour. "Jerusalem won't come immediately, but ..."

The rest of the sentence was lost among the guffaws of those listening.

Kath Gillespie-Sells of Regard, an organisation which campaigns for the rights of gay and lesbian disabled people, recognises that alliances are necessary.

"Real progress could be made with the organised working class. That would be great - fucking brilliant," she said.

Peter Manson