

# THE MIDDLE

BRIGHTON .. APRIL 9 - 22 1969

NO. 16 6d

1) RESOLUTION 254..Labour Party Conference 1968

## **CALLING FOR ABOLITION OF WAGE-STOP**

2) RESOLUTION 4b..Labour Party Conference 1968

## **CALLING FOR WITHDRAWAL OF PRESCRIPTION CHARGES**

3) MOTION 41..Trades Union Congress 1967

## **CALLING FOR ABOLITION OF POVERTY**

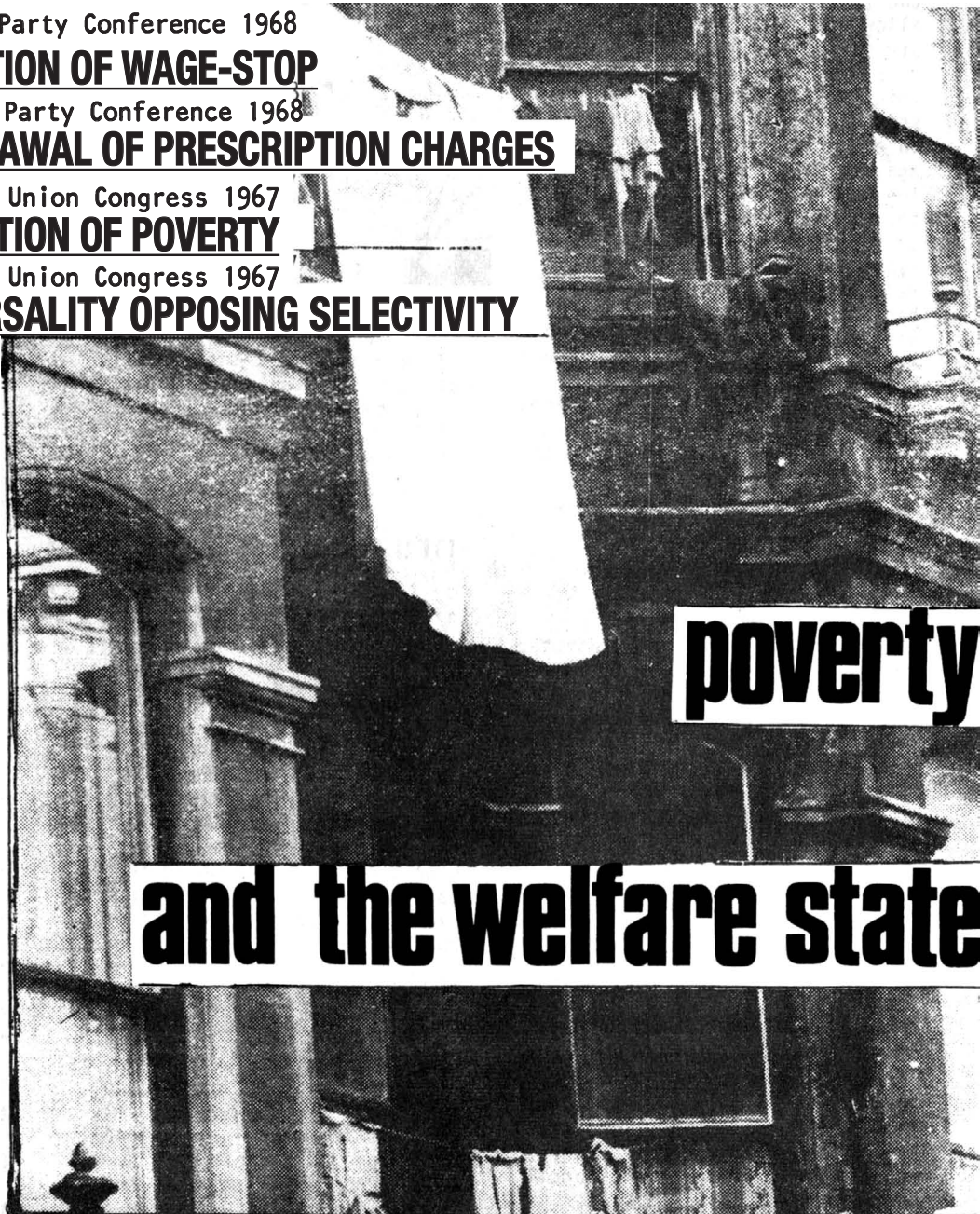
4) MOTION 16..Trades Union Congress 1967

## **AFFIRMING UNIVERSALITY OPPOSING SELECTIVITY**

### CASE HISTORY No.1

Mr. R. Revell is disabled, a father of 9 children, 3 of whom are in care. His wife is subject to epileptic fits, a doctor's certificate to say she should not be left alone has so far been ignored by social security. They live in a house in Lavender St., the only one left, all the others have been pulled down. The council have up to now refused to rehouse Mr. Revell (even though as the new flats opposite go up Mr. Revell's ceiling comes down, often causing injury to his children). The reason for refusal - Mr. Revell is supposedly £200 in arrears with his rent. Investigation by the Claimants Union has shown that the money is owed by the Social Security who are supposed to directly pay his rent.

Mr. Revell has been unemployed off and on since 1959 - obviously his handicap and his wife's disability mean that he should never have to work. The S.S. thought otherwise and threatened to cut off his allowance of £13.6.0; at one time they were even suggesting that his wife should work! Mr. Revell despite all his difficulties, is prepared to work, recently he went for a job with the Parks and Gardens. The pay for a 6 day week, compulsory work on Bank Holidays, from 8am. till dusk was £11 per week, basic with occasional overtime. Like many others Mr. Revell is being forced to accept bad pay, bad conditions due to a Social Service which serves only to force the conditions of its applicants down. Mr. Revell has been for jobs before - and was successful, he began to work on the buses but half an hour



later was sacked - the reason S.S. had just telephoned and checked up as to whether he had arrived. The manager didn't want employees who had to be checked upon. Mr. Revell's case is one of many; treated with contempt and intimidation; the problems of his everyday life worsened by the treatment he gets when he asks for money to keep his family together, fed and clothed.

The Thursday before Easter Mr. Revell and his joined a demonstration by the Claimant's Union at the S.S. building in St. James St. After the demonstrators entered the building the police arrived to remove them, when Mr. Revell's turn arrived his wife

became very distressed and it was evident that she was about to have a fit. The police took no notice of repeated warnings and continued to manhandle her with the result that she went into a very bad coma and had to be taken to hospital - her shoulder was also hurt.

Mrs. Revell's illness is not likely to improve, unless the family's inhumane treatment is ended. Mr. Revell obviously should not be expected to work and should not be kept under constant pressure, the S.S. should take notice of the new medical certificate issued by the hospital and not attempt to ignore the fact that Mrs. Revell cannot be left alone.

# brighton schools a shameful record

Brighton Council recently rejected another plan for comprehensive education in the town. They are determined to preserve the grammar schools until, they hope, the Tories win the election and allow them to shelve comprehensive for good.

This is happening in a town which spends below the national average on education (£26.9.7 per head as against £30.9.0 in England and Wales) and spends most of that on the grammar schools. An example of the Tories' level of argument is the view of Alderman Fitzgerald that only the parents of backward children want comprehensive schools. Presumably therefore most of the kids in Brighton are backward - for most parents in fact want comprehensivisation. Most parents know that the grammar schools and selectivity ensure that educational achievement is largely reserved for middle class kids, and that most working class kids have no chance at all of higher education.

## PTA

Whereas many people are apathetic on matters concerning themselves, they become much more militant when their children are involved. This has been shown by the formation of parents', teachers' and community organisations as well as P.T.A.s, to demand comprehensives. The trade union movement under the auspices of Trades Council Secretary Dennis Hill are also organising themselves to fight. The Trades Council and Teachers' Unions have also called for a town poll and other measures, one of which (the idea comes from a militant section of teachers) is for a teacher-pupil strike.

The real question involved is privilege. One can understand why some members of Brighton Council are concerned for that's one thing they have in abundance.

## COMBINATION TRAVELS

The Combination theatre troupe was at the CND festival in London over Easter, where they staged the "Earth Show". The "Earth Show" is a pollution play, starting from a family having a stylised picnic on the grass, and developing into a sketch on pollution.

First an estate agent tries to sell land and a house to the family, then gradually a scaffolding factory is set up over the family, producing soap powder. The manager and his entourage are at the top of this pyramid,

shit falls on the family, which they have to clear up with more powder in a repetitive circular process.



There was some antagonism from the crowd initially, from a group of skinheads, but since people did not reply by rival antagonism they stayed to watch. The play will probably be shown again at the Level on Mayday.

## prices up vitamins down

The price of school meals as from the 1st April went up from 1/6 to 1/9. Brighton Council has just approved a plan for the provision of frozen food for school meals - this at a time when medical reports from the P.S.M.O. show a general increase of vitamin deficiency, which also can be traced back to the ending of free school milk for certain categories of pupils.

The widespread effect of this policy in Brighton is shown by the following figures. The average number of meals served per day is 14,413; this is out of a school population of 20,746 (i.e. 75%), which is incredible as nationally the figure is somewhere near 40%. Even more alarming is the distribution of these figures. In the working class estate areas the percentage of school meals is up to 90%, the obvious reason for this is the fact that most mothers are out working. These figures exclude the Brighton, Hove and Sussex Grammar School.

## DEATH ON THE BUSES

The following notice has been put up in the conductors' room at the Conway St. garage of BH & D for some months:

"It has come to the attention of the management that employees who have been dying on the job are either refusing or neglecting to fall over. This practice must cease forthwith: any employee found dead on the job in an upright position will immediately be dropped from the payroll. "In future, foremen noticing th-

at an employee has made no movement for a period of two hours or more, are asked to investigate as it is almost impossible to distinguish between death and natural movement of some employees. Foremen are asked to make a careful test such as holding a paypacket in front of the suspected corpse. Care however should be exercised with the paypacket, as there have been cases where the natural instinct has been so deeply ingrained that the hand of the corpse has made spasmodic clutching movements, even after rigor mortis has set in."

## incriminating evidence

Last November a carload of CID men trailed a "left-wing trouble maker" all over Folkestone. Deciding this was becoming tedious he eventually rang the police and the following conversation took place:

This is the Police, can I help you.

Caller: I'm walking up Sandgate Road and I'm being followed by three men in a car, they followed me all round the town.

Yes, what sort of car is it, Sir?

Caller: It's a van.

Yes, colour?

Caller: Grey.

Registration number?

Caller: It's EKL 861C - it's a Hillman.

EKL 861C and it's a Hillman is it and you're in Sandgate Road at the moment - where exactly?

Caller: I'm in a phone box on the corner by the Bank.

By the Bank in Sandgate Road and this is Folkestone is it?

Caller: Yes.

Your name Sir?

Caller: Mr. WESLEY.

Right Sir, if you would like to wait at the Kiosk and we'll come along and see you there.

Caller: O.K.

When the police arrived he was arrested and was later jailed for 6 months. The offence? "Misuse of public funds..."

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# TAKING BRIGHTON FOR A RIDE...

## *How the Busmen are fighting back*

There can be few industries where the morale of the workers is as low as it is among busmen. Older busmen have seen their industry and their jobs decline from a position of real importance and security before the war, to the present state. Many blame the war for the decline in their pay and conditions, using the argument that during the war they kept going, for the sake of the nation while factory workers continually struck for cost-of-living increases, until they overtook busmen in terms of pay and prestige. Why were sections of the working class able to use a situation for their own interests (remembering that the interest of the worker is the interest of the nation) while busmen were not?

### IN THE THIRTIES

In the thirties, only London bus workers had a good union organisation, and they emerged from the war years noticeably better off than their provincial brothers. Most busmen outside London before the war did not see the need for unity: their wages were better than most, and their future seemed secure. With ten applicants for every vacancy, and waiting lists of five or six years, management could afford to be careful about whom they employed, and a man who had waited so long to get on the buses was unlikely to want to make trouble, especially when there seemed so little to make trouble about. In recent years, however the situation has been very different, and for many busmen who recognise the need for a strong union acting in the men's interests, it has seemed that they have left it too late.

### DIVIDED

It is difficult for busmen to organise. Shiftwork makes it impossible to get everyone together at one time for regular meetings, and the resulting lack of solidarity has led to one-man drivers, two-man crews, and coach drivers fighting each other instead of the managements for improvements, with the result that nobody gets any worthwhile improvement at all, and managements make use of this to further divide the workers. The division between one-man drivers and other crews is particularly serious: the feeling that the one-manners have somehow 'sold out' causes resentment among many of their fellow busmen, and the one-manners in return see themselves as having interests differing from those of the others. There are other divisions between men who have been on the job for a long time, and those who go on the buses for a few months, until they find a 'proper' job. Most of the short-term busmen have little interest in fighting to improve pay and conditions, while many of the older men are disillusioned and believe that things will never change.

But change is beginning to come. Increasing unemployment has lowered staff turnover, and a new militancy has swept through bus depots all over the country. The last year has seen strikes and overtime bans in many places. Liverpool busmen held a long and successful strike over pay, and 6,000 Scottish crews have just received an important pay deal after eleven weeks of strikes and other action. In Brighton, too, busmen are beginning

The group have, however, remained in the background of union branch because they have felt that to establish themselves as a faction within the union would encourage people to 'leave it to the militants' which is the opposite of what they hope for. Over the last few months, there has been a resurgence of interest in the union on Southdown: membership is now approaching 100%, branch meetings are well attended, and people are beginning to realise that a strong union at local level can and will act for them.

### BROADWAY MELODY

Just a tiny cut in services  
(Say twenty-five per cent)  
A thousand more 'Red Arrows'  
To help to pay the rent,  
Five miles-an-hour more on speed  
Two thousand more one-manners,  
With coin-box fares to help us turn  
All 'fourpennies' into 'tanners'.

Then eighteen-hour spreadovers  
Would save us lots of lolly,  
While bunks for crews inside the bus  
Would make the day quite jolly,  
It's a piece of 'Productivity'  
And that is how it's meant,  
We wouldn't charge you for the kip  
See what you'd save on rent?

And so, dear brother Nobby Clarke  
They're after you again,  
They want to drive you harder yet  
With sweat and toil and strain,  
If you're prepared to take it on  
When all this you've digested,  
You really ought to nip off quick  
And have that big bonce tested.

From a poem written by George Moore, editor of the PLATFORM, the London busmen's rank and file paper during the 1968 productivity talks, as a contribution to the fight against acceptance of that deal. It was first published in a special issue of PLATFORM in August 1968.

to organise themselves so that they can have more say in their future and end the vicious circle that has worsened conditions for themselves and for their passengers.

### LEAFLETS

Just over a year ago, a small group of Southdown drivers and conductors issued a series of leaflets aimed at putting across the message that the only hope for improvement in the bus industry lay in the busmen themselves, acting through the union, and that the union would not act fully in the interests of its members until they themselves decided union policy by attending branch meetings and taking an active part in union affairs. The leaflets were a big success, and the group has formed itself on a more permanent basis around the production of a regular bulletin, the 'Southdown Platform', and making contact with other Southdown depots and busmen from other companies.

### NEW SPIRIT

Brighton, Hove and District garages are also feeling the stirrings of the new spirit among busmen. Attendance at fortnightly branch meetings since the new year has regularly reached three figures, and up to 150, against an average attendance a year ago of five or six. The branch meeting on March 24th put forward a series of demands, including 100% union membership within a month. The meeting called for a 5-day, 37½ hour week, with no compulsory overtime (against the present six day week averaging 52 hours) and for basic rates of £18 5s by July and £20 by January 1971, with no strings attached, against a basic now of less than £15.

The first issue of a rank and file bulletin, 'The Brighton Busman' has appeared to keep BH&D men informed of the latest developments.

The divisions among the busmen are being overcome, and they are beginning to unite in their union branches to fight for the future of their industry. But the major division has yet to be dealt with. Only when the crews of all three Brighton bus companies fight together will their strength be felt.

### FIGHTING FOR ALL

What is needed is a joint committee of delegates from the three union branches to co-ordinate demands and strategy, and there are signs that this essential development may take place before long. The 'Southdown Platform' and the BH&D's 'Brighton Busmen' are exchanging news to keep people informed of what is happening on the other's companies, and in this way it is hoped that the mistrust which exists may be overcome.

When Brighton's busmen do unite and fight together, they will be fighting not only for themselves but for everyone who uses the buses. They need support. When Brighton's busmen do unite and fight together, they will need the support of all union branches in the town -- because they will be fighting not only for themselves but for everyone who uses the buses.

(Written by a Brighton busman)

# social insecurity — claimants

A few days ago representatives from Birmingham, London, Liverpool, Newcastle and Brighton met for discussions about the formation of a national union for claimants receiving supplementary benefit (national assistance) from the Department of Health and Social Security. It is less than 2 years since the first Claimants' Union was started in Birmingham and less than 2 months since the Brighton group was organised. The phenomenal growth of Claimants' Unions - Birmingham have won about £3000 to date in extra benefits and Brighton has 60 cases on its books - shows that there is a pressing need for an organised voice for the lowest-paid and hardest-done-by people in our society. The invalids, crippled workers, fatherless families and old-age pensioners have flocked to organise in areas as diverse as Birmingham and Brighton to fight in solidarity against the tyranny of the welfare system as it exists.

## NATIONAL POLICY OF THE CLAIMANT'S UNION.

- 1) The right to an adequate income without any means test for all people.
- 2) Free welfare state for all with services controlled by the people who use them.
- 3) No secrets and the right to full information.
- 4) These clauses to be applied without distinction or discrimination...i.e. no distinction between so-called 'deserving' and 'undeserving' cases.

It is the system that is at fault, not the individuals who work in Social Security offices - in fact when the D.H.S.S. has tried at ministerial or regional level to pass the buck onto the workers in various offices, the claimants' unions have always supported these workers against the inequities of the system.

## of the 20hr week

Dockers are a traditionally militant section of the British working class. What is more, they are often driven to take the fight beyond the localised trade unionist level to the point of a political confrontation with the state itself. (The national strike against the half-hearted, half-witted government nationalisation of the docks a couple of weeks ago is illustrative of this. The strike, whatever the monopoly press might have said about it, was for total nationalisation under workers' control.)

The traditional militancy we talk of has nothing to do with the 'psychology of dock workers' or with the ravishing greed of the higher paid worker, as the Daily Mirror would have us believe, but it has everything to do with the nature of their work.

Obviously any strike on Britain's docks poses a threat to the whole of the economy and, in consequence, to the authority of the government, which must react almost immediately. So in any struggle, no matter how 'economistic' the dockers are constantly faced with opposition from the state - political and drastic as it often is.

That's the first thing. The second is that under Devlin the working conditions on the docks have come under attack from savage kinds of productivity deals, and job security from encroaching containerisation.

Why last week's claim for a £60 wage and a 20 hour week is important is because, rather than just rejecting automation, it points to what modernisation should be about - higher wages, better conditions and a shortening of hours; not higher profits, unemployment and an intensification of working methods.

Of course, demands like this cannot be achieved unless (or until) the workers have control over industry and the exploitative profit system is eliminated. THAT IS THE POINT. What Liverpool dockers are doing is meeting a political assault from the employers, for that is what productivity deals are (see p.7), with their own politics: Socialist principles based on their experience as workers. Their situation and the solution that the dockers have brought to the working class will become increasingly important as more and more workers are confronted with automation and Measured Day Work.

MC

stem. A national organisation must be built, not to attack isolated cases or even isolated areas but the idea of a welfare system that allows the worst off group in the worst off class in society to be intimidated, deprived of the essentials of a dignified existence, forced into menial and underpaid jobs. Not only does it allow the disgusting treatment of the poor, the unprotected and the old, but the system can do no other.

For all this the maximum basic you can get as a single householder is £4.16.0 plus rent, a week, and 90% of all families on assistance get less than £5 a week. Yet the DHSS has recently formed a new 'Fraud Squad' to detect any fiddles (?). That cost £100,000 and only 8½% of the cases it investigates turn out to be fraudulent. However, precisely because claimants are weak they must organise and even more importantly they must organise with the strong members of their class - the workers in industry. In Birmingham there already is a militant conscious ness and the Trades Unions there are in contact with the Claimants' Union; in areas like Brighton where there is perhaps more need for a claimants' union (there being a greater percentage of old and needy) the Trades Unions are not strong. On these grounds alone a national union with affiliation to other workers' organisations is a necessity, and one that is taking place.

## 19C POOR LAW

In the course of the growth of the Claimants' Unions several facts have been brought to light concerning the activities of the men from the S.S. The very nature of the social security system of benefits, coming as it does from the 19th century Poor Laws, is geared to an idea of benefit as charity and no substitute for hard work or self-reliance. Of course, there are too many cases, in Brighton and the country as a whole (7 million of the population of the U.K. live on an income below the Supplementary Benefits Commission stipulated minimum), of people too ill or too old or too poor to be hard-working or self-reliant; it is not a matter of charity but of essential human needs - each person deserving enough to live as comfortably as the society can afford. Yet the society governed by the rules of capitalism cannot accept any form of equal sharing in its wealth. That would go against the rules of capitalism - that a man should provide for himself, even if he cannot provide for himself.

## "SCROUNGERS OFF STATE"

This is partly the reason why Supplementary Benefits are so low and why it is so hard to get your rights out of the S.S. Among the tactics used against claimants are those of intimidation and mystification. Everything in the power of the bureaucracy at the top of D.H.S.S. is used to keep the claimant down. First, he is told by the press that he is a "scrounger off the state" the true facts being that less than 2½% of all benefits go to out of work men and 67% of claimants are pensioners. His (or her: more than 50% of all claimants are women) first

THIS IS THE BASIC RATE, MANY ARE ENTITLED TO MORE. MAKE SURE YOU FIND OUT WHETHER YOU ARE.

PAY ALL YOUR RENT.

PLUS:-

HUSBAND & WIFE - £7 17s 0d.

SINGLE HOUSEHOLDER - £4 16s 0d.

OTHER PERSON AGED OVER 21 - £3 17s 0d.

18-20 - £3 4s 0d.

16-17 - £2 16s 0d.

13-15 - £2 4s 0d.

11-12 - £2 1s 0d.

5-10 - £1 3s 0d.

under 5 - £1 8s 0d.

LESS

1/- for every £25 of savings over £300.

Family allowances, maintenance received etc.

PLUS.

10/- for Old Age Pensioners and claimants of 2 yrs standing.

encounters with the machinery confirm this view: he is subjected to hours of waiting in dingy rooms, has to repeat his details each time he sees somebody who fills in endless forms (just to keep the machinery well-oiled, never mind if it does nothing), and is sent off to await 'interview' at his home.

# unionise..

## SECRETS

JOIN YOUR LOCAL  
BRANCH : ADDRESS  
ON BACK UNDER  
SOUTHERN CLAIMANTS'  
ACTION GROUP.)

Second, all the means whereby he is assessed are kept closely guarded secrets: forms S1 and S1b, printed at great expense by the department, set out the basic rules that dictate how much you get, depending on your circumstances. These forms are at least in Brighton, kept hidden although they should be openly displayed; if you ask for one you are met by a steely glare and "What do you want it for?" - as if they needed to know! In addition, the actual details of assessment are worked out in codes (called A, LR, AP, and AX) which are kept under lock and key, even from the prying eyes of parliament.

## EMERGENCY SERVICE

Third, he is kept waiting for his money. If he needs it desperately while the office is open, he is more than likely told to await the arrival of a Girocheque at his home (if he has one). That cheque has been known to go "astray in the post", as in one case in Brighton recently. If the office is closed there is an emergency service which few people know about. But the phone numbers of the service are kept with the police, who legally have no right to vet any urgent phone calls; however in the Brighton area the police often refuse to give the numbers if they consider the case unworthy.



Unemployment.

## APPEAL

Fourth, if and when he gets his money he has no way of knowing how the figure was reached even though form A124.R, which is a breakdown of the figure, is available. He is kept ignorant of the procedure for appeal and his rights on appeal (in the St. James at. office there is no notice informing claimants of the right to appeal although this notice is required legally). He is told he must appeal on an appeal form, although he can appeal on any piece of paper, and then he is often told that they are out of appeal forms. Appeal forms too often "go astray" in the Post or in the office and no receipts are given unless they are demanded. If the appeal goes through, the independent tribunal is empowered to condemn the particular S.S. office - most claimants are brought off before the appeal goes through, yet in Brighton the Claimants Union has managed with appropriate advice to get every appeal through and accepted.

## EXTRAS

Fifth, he is not told that he can claim for all sorts of extras whilst receiving benefit. Among these are: free milk, orange juice, codliver oil and school meals for appropriately aged children; bedding, furniture, clothes and footwear, crockery, heaters, cookers, radios or practically anything that there is a special need for; heating allowance for old people; free prescriptions, dental service and so on. Even so, in one case of a family of five in Brighton, the husband claimed for new bedding and was given a voucher for the WVS where he received one old sheet, three worn blankets, and a pillow case with holes in it - he was entitled to get everything new but he didn't know it. Similarly an old woman in Hove was too frightened to ask for the heating allowance she so desperately needed.

Sixth, if you are a man under 45, they can stop your money if they consider you have refused to take a suitable job (the 'wage stop'). Thus you may be forced to take a job unsuited to you, poorly paid or below your abilities and moreover, in one case the S.S. threatened to stop a man's benefit after he had been for three jobs and refused by each. They told him he had not been for the jobs and refused to phone the prospective employers to find out. Similarly refusal

to take a job means you can be prosecuted for not maintaining your wife or family properly.

All this, however, is not merely cruelty on the part of the welfare 'service'. Rather it represents an attack on the working class very necessary to the maintenance of a floundering capitalist economy. The tactics of intimidation and secrecy operate to keep down the lowest sector of the economy, first through inducing a feeling of guilt directed at themselves rather than a feeling of anger directed against the system that allows them to suffer; second by keeping them split up and treated as individual cases. Thus Claimants Unions, which are run by claimants themselves, aim at abolition of means test and at making block demands for whole groups of people as short term tactics and aim at claimant control of welfare services as a long term demand. Intimidation is also used to divide the working class amongst itself, by promoting the virtues of work and self-reliance so that claimants feel guilty at relying on the state and workers will condemn many claimants for not working. To defeat this end, the Claimants Unions must build up alliances within the working class on the basis of class unity and of the essential class nature of welfare services.

Welfare services are necessary to the stability of a capitalist economy. In tapping off surplus value they increase consumption and hence stabilise an over-productive economic form. The attack on welfare services is as much a response to the need to reduce consumption and (in the case of the 'work stop') to increase production which is the only way the economy can remain competitive abroad.

Finally, the welfare services remain at such a low level precisely to maintain the class structure, to maintain a pool of labour for the worst paid jobs; and as with the 'wage-stop' to encourage a redeployment downwards, and a general lowering of wages. Whether or not we have suffered the indignities of the S.S. we must work for the strengthening and integration of these unions into the Labour movement. We must realise that in a capitalist society welfare serves the ends of the capitalists. The organisation of claimants to obtain their basic human needs in association with other members of the working class will bring socialism one step nearer.

## CASE 2.

On Tuesday 17th. March two men, with their dog (which the Social Security insisted would have to be put to sleep if they stayed in London) came down to Brighton to look for seasonal employment. On Wednesday they went to the Labour Exchange and around various hotels but found no work. That night walking around the town looking for somewhere to sleep one of these men was stopped by the police at 1.30am. and accused of 'trying door handles'. They left but at about 3.30am. stopped the man again and arrested him. He was taken to the police station. The next day the man, although obviously of a nervous disposition, was subjected to a harrowing three hour 'interview'. The police photographed and fingerprinted him although they are not allowed to do so to anybody unless convicted. He was remanded in Lewes jail for a week then released as no charges were brought against him. Without money he was forced to sleep rough over Easter weekend and on Tuesday went to the Social Security.

They refused to help him. Only agreeing to pay his board and lodgings at a cafe called Ted's in Gloucester Rd.. For £5 10s 0d per week he was entitled to breakfast and one meal between 1 to 3, however should he be kept waiting at Social Security or the Labour Exchange and not be able to return at this time, there's no meal till the next day and anyway should Ted's be crowded at this time the residents are likely to be shoved out. Equally appalling are the sleeping conditions, there is no proper heating in the rooms and men are often put 2 or even 4 to a room. A nice profit for Ted's at £5 10s 0d per week, per man. Yet the S.S. are prepared to pay although in the case of a disabled man with four children and a rent of £3, they would only give him £2 8s 5d towards this.

On the following Friday the man went again to Social Security - he wanted to look for a job, but his luggage had been at the station since his arrival in Brighton - and would now cost 36s to reclaim. Without his luggage he could not change, without fresh clothes he would not get a job. The Social Security refused to pay. Like Mr. Rewell this man is a victim of a system which condemns a man for not working but who when he is put of work forces him to accept the lowest paid jobs under appalling conditions or remain unemployed subject to the intimidation and constant pressure of the Social Security.

# the great law'n order hoax..

At last the Tories are on to a good thing. They have learned from Nixon that in times like these 'law and order' is an election winner.

The millionaire press has taken up the issue enthusiastically. The Mirror runs a special feature on a day in the life of a police station, the Evening Standard runs a series on 'Crime in London', etc. etc. Even our own dear Argus 'discovered' that crime in Sussex has increased by 20.6% and calls for tougher sentences.

It would be a mistake to think that the Tories and their press have been afflicted by a sudden concern for old ladies who can't walk safely at night without having their handbags snatched, especially if you remember that they keep these same old ladies' pensions at a miserly five quid a week. The real targets of the campaign are:

1. Student 'violence' at universities
2. Squatting on private property
3. Political demonstrations at sports events
4. "Unofficial" strikes, and only finally
5. The general 'crime wave'.

The press usually reports strikes demonstrations, etc without saying what they're about. Instead they concentrate on labelling: "wildcat strikers", "academic hooligans" etc. Such definitions enable the issues of low pay, bad conditions, unemployment, homelessness, racism etc to be safely ignored. They reassuringly suggest that the disturbances may be confined within the scope of the criminal law: since you disapprove of crime, you'll disapprove of strikes and demonstrations.

## DELIBERATE CAMPAIGN

Such attempts to defuse and discredit political opposition are being raised to the level of a campaign precisely when the stability of post-war capitalism is beginning to falter. People are starting to feel less secure about their jobs, homes and the steady growth of their pay-packets. So on the one hand they are worried, and are easily panicked by hysteria about the breakdown of 'law and order', and on the other hand they are likely to start moving into opposition against the system itself.

But we also need to understand what is meant by 'the crime wave'. It may well be true that crime is increasing. After all, as life gets more insecure for everyone it's logical that more people should try to solve their problems through criminal activity. Yet the amount of crime is almost impossible to measure objectively . . .

Only a small amount of crime is reported to the police. Of this, only a small proportion leads to

the population, such as working class youth, and leaving others alone. It depends on their taking up 'fashionable' "problems", like drugs, on the skill of their targets in evading detection etc. When pin-striped, champagne swilling hooligans smashed up the Old Stock Exchange there were no arrests. But when Brighton police start prosecuting people for crossing the grass between the King and Queen and the Norfolk, a practice they had previously tolerated, Sussex crime figures soar . . .

## FORM OF PROTEST

Much (though not all) crime can be seen as a less conscious form of opposition to the system. Thus industrial vandalism is an individualistic way of expressing working-class hostility, which can become, as Luddism did, a means of collective bargaining by riot. In unorganised factories it is a way of asserting some degree of workers' control over production. As such, it tends to decline if the factory becomes unionised and it is replaced by organised opposition.

In this context the 'law and order' cry reasserts the authority of the capitalist state and prepares the ground for a major offensive against students and workers . . . it thus plays a similar role to the anti-immigrant campaign. The Tories plan to replace students' grants by loans, and to help university authorities chuck out militants. They also aim to make unofficial strikes illegal, thereby labelling militant workers as criminals. Success in this would be the real pay-off for their 'law and order' campaign.

Other forms of vandalism are a good deal less arbitrary and motiveless than usually presented. A recent U.S. Government Commission found that "In at least 9 of the

cities studied the damage seems to have been, at least in part, the result of deliberate attacks on white-owned business, characterised in the Negro community as unfair or disrespectful towards Negroes." And it has been found that in areas where Negroes take part in militant Civil Rights or Black Power activity, the amount of Negro crime decreases.

This is not to suggest that organised crime of the Mafia or Al Capone is preferable to that of Mayor Daley. Just that when the Tories (followed meekly by Labour) scream about crime they are focussing people's attention on some sorts of violence and making them ignore other sorts.

## BUILT-IN VIOLENCE

It's better for those who support the system that people worry about what is officially criminal rather than about the theft and violence that goes on all the same, but is institutionalized. For example, in all the fuss about bringing back capital punishment it's never mentioned that you are far more likely to be killed at work if you're a miner, a trawlerman, a railwayman or a building worker than a policeman. When some building firms prefer to "write-off" a certain number of workers a year, rather than cut their profits by obeying safety regulations, when upper middle class people die or average 10 years older than working class people, there's one hell of a lot of violence about.

A real war against crime would be a war against that criminal system, and Enoch Powell and Jim Callaghan are busy propping it up.

## Hooligans wreck Stock Exchange -no police action

About 2500 soccer hooligans, carefully disguised in pinstripe suits and bowler hats, completely disrupted the closing down ceremony of the old Stock Exchange in the City of London last Friday.

Cheerful London bobbies - who were completely fooled by the dress of the hooligans - stood smiling as telephones and light fittings were wrenched from the walls and carried away as trophies.

The final act of vandalism occurred when one fanatic set fire to a newspaper. A bonfire was built in the middle of the floor, where they all gathered round swilling champagne and singing their strange soccer songs.

Some of the hooligans were not content with smashing chairs and unscrewing door knobs and turned their attention to breaking chunks off the marble pillars.

The large number of Conservative MPs who were present seemed incapable of imposing law and order on the proceedings. By the time it became obvious that what the police had mistaken for a good-natured rag was in fact soccer vandalism at its worst, the hooligans had vanished in taxis and Rolls-Royces.

No arrests were made.

# PRODUCTIVITY DEALS

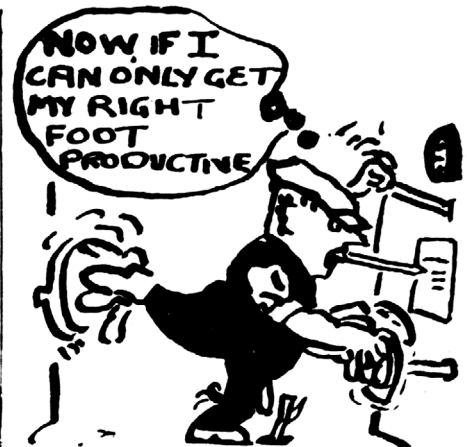
## Co-operation from both sides of industry?

NOWADAYS NO WORKER CAN AFFORD TO IGNORE PRODUCTIVITY DEALS. Ten years ago they were virtually unknown, today 30% of industrial workers are covered by some kind of productivity agreement and more and more they are proving to be a central part of the government's and employer's strategy. One would have thought that anything that evoked such unanimous enthusiasm amongst the bosses, their government and the press barons would have aroused the suspicions of the trade union leaders - surprisingly most of them openly support productivity deals whilst a few remain silent or make ritual sounds of opposition.

Yet the examples of firms where workers have undergone productivity deals show all too clearly their dangers, for although in the first instance workers are often offered substantial wage rises, the price they pay is a high one, the boss invariably insisting on workers abandoning conditions and control over the way work is done. In return for a rise the management gain increased production (and therefore higher profit) and greater control over the work force - the workers lose the defensive practices and controls that were one of their key ways of forcing wages up. Next time round the bosses are that much stronger and the workers that much weaker.

### COUNTER STRATEGY

No wonder the bosses are so keen to see the extension of productivity dealing! Trade Union militants everywhere should be extremely wary of their apparent advantages. But suspicion alone is not enough as this combined offensive of management and government requires a detailed counter-strategy to combat it - Cliff's book is an important beginning towards the development of this strategy.



Taken from "The employer's offensive: Productivity deals and how to fight them". By Tony Cliff. Pluto Press 6/-...available from Brighton I.S.

He shows how productivity deals gained popularity with the bosses at a time when the sharpening of international competition was forcing them to look for ways to hold down wages in order to force more money into investment and plan their expenditure more efficiently. Despite their rhetoric about the "national interest" and "co-operation from both sides of industry", Cliff illustrates (with a fund of examples) how their major aim is the strengthening of managerial control over the shop floor and the integration of shop-stewards organisations into the official union machine, which is itself rapidly becoming integrated into the structural apparatus of neo-capitalism.

Fighting productivity deals needs more than just standing on the side lines denouncing all such deals as bosses' plots and Cliff provides the outline of a total strategy to fight every aspect of the attack. Central to this is the need to strengthen worker's organisations by building links between workers in different shops

factories and firms as for too long workers have been weakened by the fragmented nature of their struggle. And when confronting productivity deals Cliff urges militants to insist that every part of the deal is discussed and voted on by all workers it concerns and attempts to undermine shop-floor control must be countered by demands for its extension - by the putting of demands for "mutuality" over speed, standards, movement of labour etc.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITANTS

For the coming of productivity provides a whole range of opportunities for the socialist militant in industry. It brings the question of shop floor control to the fore and enables socialists to bring out its importance and demonstrate the need for it to be extended beyond the factory to the whole of society. Similarly the age old distinction between "politics" and "economics" which has hampered the growth of a workers socialist movement for so long, is shattered as the politicians and bosses join hands to attack workers' shop-floor power. Politics can no longer be ignored or left to the experts but becomes the concern of every worker.

The opportunities for the building of a revolutionary socialist movement that links - in a real way - the day to day struggles of the workers with the struggle against the whole of the capitalist system are there as they have not been for a long time. This book, as a handbook for militants in day to day resistance to capitalism, helps too to take the movement beyond there, to the creation of new alternatives; it should be bought by every trade unionist and socialist.

PETE CAULDWELL.

## pop..

### ROCK PRESS

Until the last couple of years and the coming of the 'underground press' the range of periodicals devoted to pop in Britain was as narrow as it had been in the earliest days of rock 'n' roll. Charts, news, reviews, interviews; these were (and still are) what mattered to the four main weeklies. Of the four MELODY MAKER is, I suppose, the least dispensable, but for the quantity of the information it contains rather than for the quality of its articles. Still, its always been worth keeping an eye on RECORD MIRROR, a paper that over the last decade has seemed more in touch with the tastes of the various minorities of active enthusiasts than any of the others.

In the early sixties, when for a while it added 'NEW' to its title, it was a champion of Tamla, when Motown music was reaching most people only through records by the Beatles and other British groups. At that time too it ran a series of 'Great Unknowns' which brought Howling Wolf, Muddy Waters, Ike & Tina Turner and many other black artists into the light of day in this country for the first time. The NRM also had a feeling for what was happening under the surface of pop in Britain: I remember reading a report of a performance in a Birmingham club by a new blues group featuring a 15 year old singer named Steve Winwood.

More recently, RECORD MIRROR has got more distant from its readers, particularly since it was taken over by the American music-biz paper BILLBOARD and started printing on glossy paper so that the colour photos it is liberally strewn with would come out better. Yet it's still worth getting for one thing - a perceptive column by Charles

Gillett, who writes with the quietness and care of a real enthusiast for rock and soul. It's a refreshing contrast to the glibness of the pro journalists of MELODY MAKER churning out their pretentious generalisations about pop and society. DAVID LAING

# FANCY THAT

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CHURCHILL SQ. B'TON

FOR CHEAP POSTERS  
RECORDS, GIFTS & GEAR

# MOLE'S DIARY

## CINEMA

B.F.T. 29563.

Till Sat.11th.April: IN COLD BLOOD.  
Sat.11th..Late-night: SEVENTH SEAL  
(Bergman)

Sun.12th.(members only): THE BRIG  
Mon. 13th to Wed.15th: DIARY OF  
ANN FRANK.  
Thurs.16th.to Sat.18th: DR. FAUS-  
TUS.

DUKE OF YORK. 62503.

Till Sat.11th.April: HERE'S JACK  
Next week: IF HE HOLLERS LET HIM  
GO.

EMBASSY. 735124.

Thurs.5th.April(for 3 days)  
SMASHING TIME.  
Sun. 12th: THE GREEK BERETS.  
Wed.15th: THE ODD COUPLE.  
Sun.19th: BERLIN EXPRESS.

VOGUE. 63314.

Till Sun.12th April: THE BRAIN/  
FIVE CARD STUD.  
Sun.12th: A VEIL FOR LISA/ THAT  
COLD DAY IN THE PARK.  
Sun.19th: ROMEO AND JULIET (for  
2 weeks)

## MUSIC

SUSSEX JAZZ SOC. Fox & Hounds, Hay  
wards Heath.

April 5th. PENNY SIMKINS SEXTET.  
April 12th: BILL GREENOW (ALTO) and  
THE FOURTEEN FOOT BAND.

1970 JAZZ CLUB: Gay Highlanders,  
Peacehaven,

April 12: AUSTRALIA'S YARRA YARRA  
BAND.

ROYAL PAVILLION

Wed.April 22nd: Rosemary Williams  
accompanist:Brian Stanborough.

OTHER WEEKLY SESSIONS.

Mondays:GEOFF SIMKINS TRIO: King  
and Queen, Btn.

Tuesdays: GEOFF SIMKINS TRIO: Pier  
Hotel, Marine Parade.

Thursdays: APEX JAZZBAND: Mile Oak  
Inn, Portslade.

Fridays: HARRY STRUTTERS: King's  
Head Albourne.

" BENNY SIMKINS SEXTET: Imp-  
erial Hotel, Queen's Rd, Btn.

Saturdays: NEW EAGLE JAZZ BAND:  
Imperial Hotel.

Sundays: Stanford Arms Folk Club:  
Preston Circus, at 8pm.  
U.M.A. Heavy Disco + Light  
show.. Imperial Hotel 8pm

## THEATRE

WORTHING CONNAUGHT.

Tuesday 7th April (for 2 weeks)

'THE SEVERED HEAD'

Tuesday 21st. April:

'ROMEO AND JULIET'.

THEATRE ROYAL.

Mon. April 6th. (for 2 weeks)

'THE BOYS IN THE BAND',  
new play by Mart Crowley,  
unsuitable for children.

CONTINENTALE 681348.

Till Sat.11tn: SILKEN SKIN/ ONCE  
BEFORE I DIE.

Sun.12th: GENTLE/LES BICHES.

Thurs. 16th: BONJOUR TRIESTE/  
INTERLUDE.

Sun. 15th: THE POSSESSED/ A CURIOUS  
WAY TO LIVE.

CLASSIC. 29414.

Now showing.. MIDNIGHT COWBOY.  
Sun. 12th. (provisionally unless  
Midnight Cowboy is retained)  
HOMBRE/JESSIE JAMES.

Sat. 15th: 3 INTO 2 WON'T GO.

ASTORIA.(for a season)

PAINT YOUR WAGON.

REGENT. 25721

(for a season)

ANNE OF A THOUSAND DAYS.

A.B.C. 27010.

Thurs. 5th. April (for one week)  
Provisionally... THE MAGIC CHRIS-  
TIAN.

Thurs. 16th: THE ADVENTURERS.

' ARTICLES '  
31, TIDY ST  
SECONDHAND  
CLOTHES FOR THE  
DISCERNING AND  
THE DESTITUTE  
THIRTIES PRINT DRESSES  
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SCARVES & SHOES BEADS,  
BELTS, BAGS & BRIC - A - BRAC

## ADDRESSES

B.R.P. CONTACT SECRETARY.

17a, Hartington Rd.

Brighton.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU.

17, Ditchling Rise,

tel.61664.

I.S.

2, Montpelier Rd.

KEMPTOWN LABOUR PARTY.

176, Lewes Rd.

N.C.C.L.

37, Park Crescent.

Tel.65706

RENT TRIBUNAL

Anston House

137, Preston Rd.

C.P.B.(M-L).

7, Portland Place.

SOUTHERN CLAIMANTS ACTION GROUP.

Mrs.K.Oliver.

15, Sussex Rd.

Hove.

tel.777628

BRIGHTON LIBERAL CLUB.

12, Old Steine.

WOMEN'S ACTION GROUP

35, Lower Market St.

S.P.G.B.

39, Queen's Rd.

Meetings every Thursday..8pm.

IDIOT INTERNATIONAL:New socialist  
international newspaper 2/6 monthly  
Available from Unicorn, London Road  
Newsstand, U.O.S. SocSoc stall or  
from Idiot, 32, Paul St. EC2

## EVENTS

April 14th. Tuesday.,7.45..Commun-  
ist Party Meeting on "HOUSING AND  
RENTS". Speaker..WALLY GILL (Sec.  
National Association of Tenants and  
residents) Lecture Theatre,  
Lit: Annexe, Church St., Brighton.

POETRY READING

8pm..11th.April...Queen's Head hotel  
Queen's Rd.

Admission ...3/-

Bill Butler;Gary Chamberlain: and  
others.

MAY DAY FAIR...Saturday May 2nd.

Needed...

Organisers Vans + Lorries on day.  
Helpers Loan of trestle  
Ideas. tables.

Tradesmen of all descriptions....

DONATIONS DONATIONS

Contact Patric O'Reilly,  
6a, Vernon Terrace,  
Tel..732032.

MEDICAL AID WALK

Sunday 12th April...starting from  
Tower Bridge at 10.00 a.m.

WANTED: lots and lots of places  
for people to sleep during SOUTH  
SEA BUBBLE...May 22 to May 25  
(Whit weekend) Phone 735331  
or write.....7a St.Autyn's Mansion  
King's Esplanade  
Hove.

## SPORT

GREYHOUND RACING: Nevill Rd, Hove

April 11th: 15th: 18th: & 22nd.

RUGBY:

April 11th:Btn. 1st.XV v Reading,  
Sport's Arena, Btn,  
" Hove 1st.XV v Woolwich  
Poly: Hove Park.

April 18th: Btn.ex.1st.XV v Poly-  
technic: Sport's Arena.  
" Hove 'A' XV v Brighton.  
Hove Park.

FOOTBALL: Goldstone Gd. Hove.

April 15th: Btn. & Hove Albion v Mans-  
field.

April 22nd: Btn. & Hove Albion res.  
v Watford Res.

PLUMPTON RACES: Plumpton, Nr. Lewes

April 16th.

SWIMMING: King Alfred, Hove.

April 11th: Shiverers League water  
polo match.

" Sussex County A.S.A.  
Gala.

April 16th: "

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ALONG...